

For Immediate Release

The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum Expands List of Work-in-Progress Projects with New Category for Documentaries

Hong Kong, 24 January 2019 – The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) today unveiled 20 projects shortlisted for its expanded Work-in-Progress (WIP) program that will include feature documentaries for the first time.

WIP, now in its third edition, is an important initiative to help filmmakers find post-production funds, sales agents and film festival support. It will take place from 18-20 March 2019 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre as part of the 17th HAF.

The expanded WIP program this year has doubled the total number of projects to be presented from 10 in each of its two previous editions. The shortlist now covers two sections, including 10 feature fiction films and 10 feature documentaries.

HAF Director **Jacob WONG** believes it is an opportune time to launch a documentary co-production event with substance and sustainability. “The WIP program has nurtured a number of successful film projects since its launch, such as *The Man Who Surprised Everyone* (WIP 2018) which won the Orrizonti Award for Best Actress in Venice Film Festival 2018, and *Ayka* (WIP 2018) which won the Best Actress Award in Cannes Film Festival 2018. Given the immense success of the last two WIP programs, HAF intends to take a leading role to further encourage the production of quality documentary works with an aim to provide filmmakers access to top-notch international buyers,” Wong said. “With the expanded platform, HAF will become the first project market to receive both fictional and documentary work-in-progress submissions with approximately equal strength and numbers.”

WIP’s objective is distinguished from the main HAF program, one of Asia’s most important film-financing forums, which provides a platform for projects in the pre-production or development stages. The WIP program further extends and complements the services of HAF by offering a platform for late-stage projects seeking closing funds, post-production partners, distributors, sales agents, festivals and other film-industry services. The 20 shortlisted projects are required to have completed or nearly completed shooting or production. This year’s works include diverse films from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, Japan, Philippines, Iran, Singapore and Malaysia.

Internationally Renowned and Award-Winning Filmmakers Behind Shortlisted Projects

Among the fiction projects, leading queer Hong Kong filmmaker **Ray YEUNG**, director of *Front Cover* (2015) and *Cut Sleeve Boys* (2005), returns with a new thought-provoking drama, *SUK SUK*, about two secretly gay senior men who struggle between their desire for each other and the commitments to their families. **Michael J. WERNER**, a long-time film industry executive and former partner in the pioneering sales company, Fortissimo Films, serves as producer along with **Teresa KWONG** and **Sandy YIP**. *To Live To Sing*, a new drama from Chinese director **Johnny MA**, whose directorial debut, *Old Stone* (2016) premiered at the Berlin Film Festival and was named the Best Canadian First Feature Award at the Toronto International Film Festival, follows the manager of a small Sichuan Opera troupe who must find a new home for her performers when their theatre is earmarked for demolition. From Taiwan, Malaysian-born director **Kethsvin CHEE's** *Hello! Tapir* is an animated tale of a nightmare-eating mythical creature.

Two projects from prominent filmmakers of the Philippines explore surviving in a country with harsh justice. **Brillante MENDOZA**, who was awarded Best Director at Cannes for *Kinatay* (2009), produces with **Carlo VALENZONA** for director **Raymund Ribay GUTIERREZ's** *Verdict*, the story of a wife and mother of a four-year-old child who files a legal case against her abusive drug-peddler husband. Director **Jun Robles LANA**, a frequent presence at HAF and whose previous films include *Die Beautiful* (2016) and *Bwakaw* (2012), is back with *Son of God* – a project he presented in HAF in 2014 – about a 15-year-old, HIV-positive boy who is abandoned by his mother and is in danger of sliding into a life of destruction and pain. LANA's new project *Between Sea and Sky* is also presented at the main HAF program this year.

On the documentary side, Academy Award-winning Hong Kong filmmaker **Ruby YANG** serves as producer of director **Jo CHENG Oi-yue's** first feature-length documentary, *Dear Daughter*, a story of hope in the life of a Vietnamese refugee 30 years after he fled the war in Vietnam. In Hong Kong, he continues to be a prisoner of poverty, drugs and crime. Acclaimed director **HOU Hsiao-Hsien** of Taiwan is among the producers of **HUANG Hui-Chen's** documentary *LOMA - Our Home*, her passionate examination of an ethnic Chinese journalist who joins forces with an indigenous tribe, whose illegal houses were repeatedly torn down by the Taiwanese government.

Other documentary WIP projects include *On High Ice*, directed by **Gary KAM Byung-Seok**, which follows the struggle of a group of girls in the Himalayan desert to uplift the stature of the women in India through ice hockey, was selected in the main HAF program last year. **OKUTANI Yoichiro's** *Odoriko*, an immersive journey into the dressing rooms of the Japanese

strip theater, where odoriko dancers bare all, and *Women of Azadi*, from Iranian directors **Sharmin MOJTAHEDZADEH** and **Paliz KHOSHDEL**, about a 27-year-old who fulfils her dream by defying Islamic law banning a female presence at sports stadiums.

“This year’s expanded shortlist of projects is a reflection of the greater number of high-quality films from both Asia and elsewhere,” said Jacob Wong. “The 20 films are among some of the strongest projects we have presented over the past three years. We are especially proud to give a larger platform to documentary filmmakers, whose works underscore the enormity of previously untold political and social issues that must be presented for a greater understanding of Asia.”

HAF to Present at “Goes to Cannes”

For the third year, HAF will again collaborate with Marché du Film, Festival de Cannes, to present a program offering market screening opportunities for 5 projects at this year’s Cannes film festival in May. “Goes to Cannes” presents opportunities for filmmakers to look for sales agents, distributors and film-festival opportunities. Priority will be given to WIP projects.

Details of the Open Pitch Sessions

Work-in-Progress Documentaries Open Pitch

Date: 18 March 2019 (Monday)

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Venue: N206-208, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

* HAF/Filmart badge holders may attend

Work-in-Progress Features Open Pitch

Date: 19 March 2019 (Tuesday)

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Venue: N206-208, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

* HAF/Filmart badge holders may attend

Guest and Media Accreditation for HAF

Investors, financiers and other film-industry guests are now able to register for HAF at <https://www.haf.org.hk/guest.php> and schedule individual meetings with filmmakers to discuss their projects. Guests will be given access to HAF, in addition to joining official networking events, screenings, seminars or other activities.

Registration details for the event among members of the media can be found here:
<http://www.hkiff.org.hk/society/#/media1Clone>

A complete list of the selected WIP projects for the 17th HAF can be found in the **Appendix**.
For more information about HAF, please visit the official website at <http://www.haf.org.hk/>
and the HAF Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/hafhkiffs/>.

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About Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF)

The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) is widely recognized as an established film financing platform in Asia. HAF brings Asian filmmakers with upcoming film projects to Hong Kong for co-production ventures with top film financiers, producers, bankers, distributors and buyers. Attracting more than 1,000 filmmakers and financiers from at least 35 countries and regions, around 25 to 30 projects are selected annually to participate in the three-day event. HAF has the added advantage of being held in conjunction with Hong Kong Filmart, Asia's largest film market which attracts over 8,000 professionals.

HAF has partnered with international organisations to provide a range of opportunities to participants. Partners include iQIYI (China), Fox International Productions (Greater China) (US), Cinemart (the Netherlands), Asian Project Market (South Korea), Golden Horse Film Project Promotion (Taiwan), New Cinema Network (Italy) and others. Cash and in-kind awards to the value of around US\$150,000 are made with support from Create Hong Kong and Film

Development Fund among others. Past participants include China's JIA Jiangke, JIANG Wen, LU Chuan and NING Hao; Hong Kong's Peter CHAN, Stanley KWAN, Ann HUI, Fruit CHAN and PANG Ho-cheung; Taiwan's TSAI Ming-Liang, WEI Te-Sheng, CHUNG Mong-Hong and Leon DAI; Japan's KORE-EDA Hirokazu, KUROSAWA Kiyoshi, KAWASE Naomi and IWAI Shunji; South Korea's PARK Chan-wook, KIM Jee-woon, BONG Joon-ho and IM Sang-soo; as well as Thailand's Apichatpong WEERASETHAKUL, Ekachai UEKRONGTHAM, Nonzee NIMIBUTR and Pen-ek RATANARUANG.

About The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited (HKIFFS/Society) is a charitable, non-profit and non-governmental organisation dedicated to the discovery and promotion of creativity in the art and culture of film.

The Society is committed to making world cinema accessible and affordable to the public. It organizes the annual flagship the Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) in March and April. Another annual highlight is the Summer International Film Festival (SummerIFF) held every August. The repertory HKIFF Cine Fan Programme was launched in April 2013 with the aim to enrich and deepen the experience of Hong Kong moviegoers through a monthly programme of contemporary, retrospective and thematic showcases.

Through its annual programmes, the Society promotes international appreciation of Asian, Hong Kong and Chinese film culture; introduces world cinema to Hong Kong audiences; and continues to underline Hong Kong's key position in the international film community.

HKIFFS's dedication to quality and intelligent programming, its devotion to the discovery of new areas of filmmaking in Asia and China, its exceptional work for Hong Kong cinema, seminars and acclaimed publications, gives it a unique and respected international reputation that helps promote Hong Kong cinema at home and abroad.

Appendix 附件:

The 17th Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum “Work-in-Progress” Project List
第十七屆香港亞洲電影投資會「製作中項目」入選電影計劃名單

WIP Documentaries 製作中紀錄片

1. Dear Daughter 給女兒的信

Hong Kong 香港

Director 導演： Jo CHENG Oi-yue 鄭藹如

Producer 監製： Ruby YANG 楊紫燁

Production Company 製作公司： Black Eye Production

2. Far Away My Shadow Wandered

**Singapore 新加坡, Japan 日本,
Hong Kong 香港**

Director 導演： LIAO Jiekai 廖捷凱, Sudhee LIAO 廖月敏

Producer 監製： Jeremy CHUA 蔡紹勇, Elysa WENDI 葉奕蕾

Production Company 製作公司： Potocol, Cinemovement

3. LOMA—Our Home LOMA—我們的家

Taiwan 台灣, France 法國

Director 導演： HUANG Hui-Chen 黃惠偵

Producer 監製： HOU Hsiao-Hsien 侯孝賢, Stefano CENTINI 陳璽文, Farid REZKALLAH

Production Company 製作公司： Volos Films PTE Ltd. 飛望影像有限公司

4. Nomad Meets the City

**Mongolia 蒙古, USA 美國,
Czech Republic 捷克**

Director 導演： Anji Sauv  CLUBB

Producer 監製： Alice TABERY

Production Company 製作公司： Cinepoint

5. Odoriko

Japan 日本

Director 導演： OKUTANI Yoichiro 奧谷洋一郎

Producer 監製： SHIOBARA Fumiko 塩原史子

Production Company 製作公司： Shiobara Office, Inc.

6. On High Ice

Israel 以色列, South Korea 南韓

Director 導演： Gary KAM Byung-seok 甘秉錫

Producer 監製： Naama PYRITZ

Production Company 製作公司： Ingenu Productions

7. The Platform

Georgia 格魯吉亞

Director 導演： Nino ORJONIKIDZE, Vano ARSENISHVILI

Producer 監製： Nino ORJONIKIDZE

Production Company 製作公司： Artefact Production

8. The River in Me 大河唱

China 中國

Director 導演： KE Yongquan 柯永權, YANG Zhichun 楊植淳, HE Yuan 和淵

Producer 監製： CAO Zhixiong 曹志雄

Production Company 製作公司： Insight Creation Co., Ltd. 北京觀正影視文化傳播有限公司

9. Silence in the Dust 塵默呼吸

China 中國

Director 導演： LI Wei 李維

Producer 監製： YANG Keruo 楊可若, QIU Yang 邱陽, LI Hongqi 李紅旗

Production Company 製作公司： Wild Grass Films 野草電影工作室

10. Women of Azadi

Iran 伊朗

Director 導演： Sharmin MOJTAHEDZADEH, Paliz KHOSHDEL

Producer 監製： Sharmin MOJTAHEDZADEH, Paliz KHOSHDEL,
Sahraa KARIMI (Co-Producer)

Production Company 製作公司： Sharleez Doc Production Studio

WIP Features 製作中劇情片

11. Hello! Tapir 嗨！神獸

Taiwan 台灣

Director 導演： Kethsvin CHEE 池家慶

Producer 監製： CHEN Chi-Yuan 陳其遠, Mark CHEN 陳南宏

Production Company 製作公司： mm2 Entertainment Co., Ltd. 滿滿額娛樂股份有限公司

12. Invitation

India 印度

Director 導演： Saurav RAI

Producer 監製： Ankita PURKAYASTHA, Saurav RAI, Sanjay GULATI

Production Company 製作公司： Tree Chirps, Crawling Angel Films (Co-Production)

13. Marygoround

Poland 波蘭

Director 導演： Daria WOSZEK

Producer 監製： Marcin LECH, Daria WOSZEK

Production Company 製作公司： Jutrzenka Studio

14. Occident's March 鹽谷

**USA 美國, Japan 日本, Sweden 瑞典,
United Kingdom 英國,
Hong Kong 香港**

Director 導演 : C.W. WINTER, Anders EDSTRÖM

Producer 監製 : C.W. WINTER, HU Mengchu 胡夢楚, WANG Yue 王越, Helen JONES

Production Company 製作公司 : General Asst., Lumieria Pictures 微光映畫有限公司,
Silver Salt Films

15. The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs

India 印度

Director 導演 : Pushendra SINGH

Producer 監製 : Pushendra SINGH, Gulab Singh TANWAR, Sanjay GULATI,
Ajit Singh RATHORE

Production Company 製作公司 : Saarthi Entertainment, Crawling Angel Films

16. The Shooter

Russia 俄羅斯

Director 導演 : Petr LEVCHENKO

Producer 監製 : Katia FILIPPOVA

Production Company 製作公司 : Atlantic Film

17. Son of God

Philippines 菲律賓

Director 導演 : Jun Robles LANA

Producer 監製 : Ferdinand LAPUZ, Perci INTALAN, Jane Jimenez BASAS

Production Company 製作公司 : The IdeaFirst Company, Cignal Entertainment,
Octobertrain Films

18. SUK SUK 叔·叔

Hong Kong 香港

Director 導演 : Ray YEUNG 楊曜愷

Producer 監製 : Michael J. WERNER 溫煦宇, Teresa KWONG 鄺珮詩, Sandy YIP 葉慧珊

Production Company 製作公司 : New Voice Film Productions Ltd. 先響電影製作公司

19. To Live To Sing 活着唱着

China 中國

Director 導演 : Johnny MA 馬楠

Producer 監製 : DENG Jie 鄧婕, WU Xianjian 鄔憲健, WANG Jing 王婧

Production Company 製作公司 : IMAGE X Productions 上海俊睿文化傳播有限公司

20. Verdict

Philippines 菲律賓

Director 導演：Raymund Ribay GUTIERREZ

Producer 監製：Brillante MENDOZA, Carlo VALENZONA

Production Company 製作公司：Center Stage Productions