

For immediate release

THE 19TH HONG KONG - ASIA FILM FINANCING FORUM SELECTS 21 WIP PROJECTS, GOES VIRTUAL

Hong Kong, 2 February 2021 – The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) today unveils 21 projects for the fifth edition of its Work-in-Progress section (WIP). Established and emerging filmmakers such as CHANG Tso-Chi, HUANG Ji, Pierre SARRAF, TAN Chui Mui, and Jessey TSANG will present their latest work, along with 12 first-feature directors.

The WIP section will return to its regular slot this year, running from 15 to 17 March in conjunction with the main HAF programme and the 25th Hong Kong Filmart (FILMART). Given the COVID-19 pandemic's ongoing restrictions, the event will go online again following its first-ever virtual edition in August 2020.

WIP began in 2017 as a dedicated platform for later-stage projects seeking completion funding, post-production partners, distributors and sales agents, and film festival support, extending the services of the main HAF programme which is for projects in the pre-production or development stages.

There were 129 submissions from 50 countries and regions this year. Most of the shortlisted projects are at post-production stages, with several currently in production. The lineup includes 10 documentaries and 11 fiction films, mostly from Asia, with several European productions and co-productions.

Some of the project highlights are as follows:

FICTION PROJECTS:

Several Chinese-language projects spotlight on women. ***Red Horse In The Summer Sky*** by Taiwan's two-time Golden Horse Best Film winner CHANG Tso-Chi (*The Best Of Times* and *When Love Comes*), is about a runaway girl looking for her biological father in a seaside village. Husband-and-wife team HUANG Ji and OTSUKA Ryuji (*The Foolish Bird* and Rotterdam Tiger Award winner *Egg And Stone*) brings ***Stonewalling***, which centres on a college student who has an unwanted child in her belly.

The eleven fiction film directors include some of Asia's finest emerging talents. Louis YIN, whose Beijing-set ***As Day Comes And Goes*** tells the story of a young man who drives rideshare to escape reality when COVID-19 turns his life topsy turvy. ***A Light Never Goes Out***, directed by Hong Kong's Anatasia TSANG and produced by Saville CHAN (*The Way We Dance*), is about a

widow's attempts to retrace her late husband's past through re-building an iconic neon sign. Produced by award-winning Malaysian filmmaker TAN Chui Mui, Renai WEI's *The Wind Will Say* is about a divorced newspaper editor who finds out his daughter's secret only when held hostage a bus driver. Joining other debutants is GAO Linyang, whose *To Love Again* deals with old wounds from the Cultural Revolution when an ageing man wants to reinter his late wife with himself and his current wife.

Focusing on ethnic minorities, Iranian filmmaker Arsalan AMIRI sets his feature debut *Zalava* in a demon-plagued village where a police officer calls the haunting a fraud and apprehends the exorcist. Based on her childhood events, Kyrgyz director Dalmira TILEPBERGEN (*Under Heaven*) follows the tragic story of an eight-year-old girl who believes all her wishes will come true in *Lonely Pine*.

DOCUMENTARY PROJECTS:

Personal experiences have always been a useful source of inspiration for documentary filmmakers. In *Winter Chants*, Hong Kong Film Award's Best New Director Jessey TSANG (*Big Blue Lake*) observes the preparation of a traditional festival held once every decade in a historic local village. In *Scala*, Ananta THITANAT confronts her childhood memories as she documents the demolition of Bangkok's last standalone theatre where her parents first met when they worked there in the 1970s.

Forgotten elder women are the subject of two documentaries. From Mexico, Eden BERNAL's *The Siren Song* follows two ageing sisters in an isolated village who try to preserve the freedom that they can only find at sea as oyster collectors. *No Winter Holidays*, by Rajan KATHET and Sunir PANDEY from Nepal, is about two old ladies who, once shared a husband, are now tasked to take care of 200 empty houses during a snowbound winter.

Two co-productions have French partners attached. *Yasmine's Journal* by Lebanese director Christian ABBOUD (*Ubuntu*) follows two girls kidnapped by their Lebanese father in France, with Pierre SARRAF (*Capharnaum*) producing. *Forms Of Forgetting* by Turkish filmmaker Burak ÇEVİK (*The Pillar Of Salt*) is a creative documentary focusing on memory.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** for details on all shortlisted WIP projects.

WIP Open Pitch (Hong Kong Time):

Date	Monday, 15 March 2021	
Time	10am - 12pm	(documentary projects)
	2pm - 4pm	(fiction projects)

All accredited Filmart and HAF guests are welcome to attend the WIP Open Pitch through this link: www.hktdc.com/hkfilmart.

Awards:

Please refer to **Appendix 2** for a full list of the WIP awards and sponsors. For more up-to-date information about HAF and WIP awards, please visit our official website at www.haf.org.hk/awards.php.

WIP projects selected in the past achieved remarkable results last year. They include:

***Drifting*, Jun LI (Hong Kong)**

Big Screen Competition, International Film Festival Rotterdam 2021

***Summer Blur*, HAN Shuai (China)**

Feimu Awards, Pingyao Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon International Film Festival 2020
FIPRESCI Award, Busan International Film Festival 2020

***Wu Hai*, ZHOU Ziyang (China)**

FIPRESCI Prize, San Sebastian Film Festival 2020

***Faraway My Shadow Wandered*, LIAO Jiekai, Sudhee LIAO (Singapore, Japan)**

Singapore International Film Festival 2020

***Me And The Cult Leader (aka AGANAI: The Atonement)*, SAKAHARA Atsushi (Japan)**

International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam 2020

***Hello! Tapir*, Kethsvin CHEE (Taiwan)**

Nominated for Best Visual Effects, Golden Horse Awards 2020

***Marygoround*, Daria WOSZEK (Poland)**

Best Film, Best Director and Best Actress, Fantasia International Film Festival 2020

***Odoriko*, OKUTANI Yoichiro (Japan)**

Nominated for Best Feature-Length Documentary, International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam 2020

Guest Accreditation for HAF and WIP:

HAF and WIP guest registration is now open to investors, festival programmers and other industry professionals through <https://www.haf.org.hk/guest.php>. All guests will receive a

complimentary code for registration. Accredited guests can schedule one-on-one online meetings with HAF and WIP filmmakers to discuss their projects. For more up-to-date information about HAF and WIP, please visit our official website at <http://www.haf.org.hk/> or our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/hafhkiifs/>.

For media enquiry, please contact:

Strategic Public Relations Group (SPRG)

Ms Ezena TANG

Phone: +852 2114 4993

E-mail: haf.media@sprg.com.hk

Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF)

Ms Lizzie ZHANG

Phone: +852 5545 3639

E-mail: lizzie_zhang@hkiff.org.hk

- END -

About Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF)

HAF is considered one of the region's most recognised film financing platforms which, since its inception in 2000, annually brings Asian filmmakers to Hong Kong for co-production ventures with financiers, producers, bankers, distributors and buyers. In 2020, HAF18 attracted more than 350 filmmakers and industry professionals from 40 countries and regions to participate in the three-day online event which featured 32 HAF Projects and 22 WIP Projects. HAF has the added advantage of being held in conjunction with Hong Kong Filmart, Asia's largest film market which regularly attracts over 8,000 professionals.

Over the years, HAF has partnered with many regional and international organisations to provide participants with various opportunities. Past and current partners include iQIYI (China), Fox International Productions (Greater China) (US), Cinemart (the Netherlands), Asian Project Market (South Korea), Golden Horse Film Project Promotion (Taiwan), and MIA (Italy). With the support of, among others, the Hong Kong SAR Government's Create Hong Kong and Hong Kong Film Development Fund, HAF has made cash and in-kind awards available to participating filmmakers each year. Notable past HAF participants include China's JIA Zhangke, 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) is a charitable, non-profit and non-governmental organisation dedicated to discovering and promoting creativity in film's art and culture. Annually, HKIFFS organises the flagship Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF) and Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) in March and April, and the Cine Fan Summer International Film Festival (Summer IFF) every August. In 2013, HKIFFS launched the repertory HKIFF Cine Fan Programme to enrich and deepen Hong Kong filmgoers' experience through a year-round bi-monthly programme of contemporary, retrospective and thematic showcases. In 2017, HKIFFS set up the Film Industry Services Office (FIS) to promote non-mainstream cinema through co-production and support emerging filmmakers with consultancy on festival strategies and overseas distribution (HKIFF Collection).

Official website: <http://www.hkiff.org.hk/>

Appendix 1

Full list of the 5th WIP projects

A-J Documentary 紀錄片

A. Airborne Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	India 印度 Shaunak SEN Aman MANN Kiterabbit Films
B. Between the Hooks Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	Germany 德國 Ibrahim NASH'AT Florian SCHEWE Film Five GmbH, RMG 247 Productions GmbH
C. Forms of Forgetting Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	Turkey 土耳其 France 法國 Burak ÇEVİK Selman NACAR, Guillaume de SEILLE Fol Film
D. No Winter Holidays * Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	Nepal 尼泊爾 South Korea 南韓 Rajan KATHET, Sunir PANDEY Rajan KATHET, Sunir PANDEY, Gary KAM Byung-seok Salpa Films Pvt. Ltd., Mirror & Story
E. Our Second Home 日泰小食 * Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	Hong Kong 香港 Taiwan 台灣 Frankie SIN 冼濤楊 Stefano CENTINI 陳璽文, Peter YAM Yin-cheung 任硯聰 Volos Films Co., Ltd. 飛望影像有限公司, 70 Plus Production Company Limited 七十志製作公司
F. Scala * Director 導演： Producer 監製： Production Company 製作公司：	Thailand 泰國 Ananta THITANAT Abhichon RATTANABHAYON Bandai Dam Studio

G. The Return of Aaar 阿嘎日的天空 *	China 中國
Director 導演 :	YANG Bo 楊波
Producer 監製 :	XU Xiaofei 許小飛
Production Company 製作公司 :	Hainan Mind Image Film Productions 海南晴耕文化傳媒有限公司
H. The Siren Song * ^	Mexico 墨西哥
Director 導演 :	Eden BERNAL
Producer 監製 :	Polly YEUNG 楊寶文, Eden BERNAL
Production Company 製作公司 :	Sinapsis, The Lady Improper
I. Winter Chants 冬未來	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演 :	TSANG Tsui-shan 曾翠珊
Producer 監製 :	Teresa KWONG 鄭珮詩, Ken HUI 許志堅
Production Company 製作公司 :	River Vision Company Limited 河上風光有限公司
J. Yasmine's Journal	Lebanon 黎巴嫩 France 法國
Director 導演 :	Christian ABBOUD
Producer 監製 :	Pierre SARRAF
Production Company 製作公司 :	né à Beyrouth Films

K-U Fiction 劇情片

K. A Light Never Goes Out 燈火闌珊 *	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演 :	Anastasia TSANG 曾憲寧
Producer 監製 :	Saville CHAN 陳心遙
Production Company 製作公司 :	A Light Never Goes Out Ltd. 燈火闌珊有限公司
L. As Day Comes and Goes 朝來暮去 *	China 中國
Director 導演 :	Louis YIN 尹航
Producer 監製 :	LI Yanru 李彥儒, Seven BAI 白楊春暉
Production Company 製作公司 :	Beijing Straw Dog Culture Media Co., Ltd. 北京稻草狗文化傳媒有限公司

M. Lonely Pine ^	Kyrgyzstan 吉爾吉斯
Director 導演 :	Dalmira TILEPBERGEN
Producer 監製 :	Marina DESSIATKINA
Production Company 製作公司 :	Arno Film, Culterra Magica
N. Red Horse in the Summer Sky 夏日天空的那匹紅馬	Taiwan 台灣
Director 導演 :	CHANG Tso-Chi 張作驥
Producer 監製 :	KAO Wen-Hung 高文宏
Production Company 製作公司 :	SimpleView Production Co., Ltd. 簡單主張影音製作有限公司
O. Saving One Who Was Dead ^	The Czech Republic 捷克 The Slovak Republic 斯洛伐克
Director 導演 :	Václav KADRŇKA
Producer 監製 :	Václav KADRŇKA
Production Company 製作公司 :	Sirius Films
P. Sometimes It's Like Going Back to Childhood 深空 *	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演 :	CHEN Guan 陳冠
Producer 監製 :	CHENG Qingsong 程青松, HE Xuan 何旋, LI Tianyu 李天鈺
Production Company 製作公司 :	PAD International Limited 製片人發行聯盟集團有限公司
Q. Stonewalling 石門 ^	China 中國
Director 導演 :	HUANG Ji 黃驥, OTSUKA Ryuji 大塚龍治
Producer 監製 :	OTSUKA Ryuji 大塚龍治
Production Company 製作公司 :	Yellow-Green Pi Co., Ltd. 龍驥映畫(北京)文化有限公司
R. Sunshine of My Life 一路瞳行 *	Hong Kong 香港
Director 導演 :	Judy CHU 朱鳳嫻
Producer 監製 :	NG Kin-hung 伍健雄, Edmond WONG 黃子桓
Production Company 製作公司 :	Mandarin Motion Pictures Limited 東方影業出品有限公司

S.	The Wind Will Say 風過猶存	China 中國
	*	
Director 導演：	Renai WEI Yongyao 韋永垚	
Producer 監製：	TAN Chui Mui 陳翠梅, Annie SONG 宋曉佳	
Production Company 製作公司：	Yiti Film Productions Co., Ltd. 一啼影視文化傳播有限公司, Rapid Bus Films Co., Ltd. 深圳直達巴士影業有限公司	
T.	To Love Again 再團圓	China 中國
	*	
Director 導演：	GAO Lingyang 高臨陽	
Producer 監製：	LIANG Jing 梁靜, GUAN Hu 管虎	
Production Company 製作公司：	The Seventh Art Pictures Co., Ltd. 北京七印象文化傳媒有限公司	
U.	Zalava	Iran 伊朗
	* ^	
Director 導演：	Arsalan AMIRI	
Producer 監製：	Ruhollah BARADARI, Samira BARADARI, Ruth Yoshie LINTON	
Production Company 製作公司：	Touba Film	

* First-feature directors

^ Previous HAF projects

Appendix 2

Full list of the WIP awards and sponsors

WIP Fiction Award

- presented by Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund and HAF

One WIP fiction project will receive a cash award of HK\$78,000 (approximately US\$10,000) for its originality and creativity. All WIP fiction projects are eligible for this award.

WIP Documentary Award

- presented by Create Hong Kong, Hong Kong Film Development Fund and HAF

One WIP documentary project will receive a cash award of HK\$78,000 (approximately US\$10,000). All WIP documentary projects are eligible for this award to encourage and promote documentary filmmaking development.

White Light Post-Production Award

- presented by White Light Studio

To promote cinematic innovation and promising Asian directors, White Light Studio offers one in-kind award of US\$15,000 (approximately HK\$117,300) to one WIP project. The recipients will receive post-production services at White Light's facilities in Bangkok, Thailand.

HAF Goes to Cannes Programme

- presented by HAF and Marché du Film

In collaboration with Marché du Film, Festival de Cannes, HAF will bring up to **five** WIP projects for market screening presentation and pitching at the Cannes Film Festival. This programme aims to facilitate projects already in production to secure post-production funding, sales agents and film-festival support.