

For Immediate Release

## **The Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum Announces Shortlisted Projects for the Work-in-Progress Lab**

**Hong Kong, 5 February 2018** – The 16<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) today unveiled the 10 shortlisted projects for the Work-in-Progress Lab (WIP Lab), an initiative to help filmmakers secure post-production funds, sales agents and film festival support. The event will take place on 19 March 2018 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre as part of HAF.

HAF is one of Asia's most important film-financing forums, providing a platform for projects in the pre-production or development stages. The WIP Lab further extends 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 10 shortlisted projects, which were chosen from 141 WIP Lab submissions, are required to have completed or nearly completed shooting or production. This year's projects include five films from Asia and five from diverse countries around the world.

### **Shortlisted Projects by Established and New Filmmakers**

From Hong Kong, award-winning independent filmmaker **Fruit CHAN** (*Made in Hong Kong*, 1997; *The Longest Summer*, 1998; *Little Cheung*, 1999) serves as producer of director **Oliver CHAN Siu-kuen's** feature film debut, *Still Human*, about a paralyzed man and his Filipina domestic worker who strive to overcome their cultural differences and personal hardships.

Two dramas from mainland China explore families in conflict. Director **HUANG Zi's** first feature, *From Black and White to Shades of Grey*, which was previously selected at HAF 2014, looks at the agonizing trauma placed on a family when the father is diagnosed with cancer. In **ZHAI Yixiang's** *Mosaic Portrait*, a journalist investigates the rape of a teenage girl in a remote village. The project won the Million-Dollar Grand Prize of Taipei Golden Horse Film Project Promotion in 2016.

Three Russian films take on social issues confronting the lives of ordinary people. In director **Sergey DVORTSEVOY's** *The Little One*, an illegal immigrant woman from Kyrgyzstan working in Moscow attempts to find her abandoned baby. In *The Pencil* by **Natalya NAZAROVA**, a teacher defends her students against a gang leader. Co-directors **Natalya MERKULOVA** and **Alexey CHUPOV** offer a parable about a man who attempts to deceive death by changing his sex in *The Man Who Surprised Everyone*, a co-production with France and Estonia.

Two feature debuts by Asian filmmakers are also on the WIP Lab short list. Japanese director **SAKAHARA Atsushi**'s documentary, *AGANAI - The Atonement*, looks at his personal experience as a victim of the sarin nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway in 1995, which killed 13 people, injured nearly 6,000 and made headlines around the world. Bhutanese director **Tashi GYELTSHEN** describes *The Red Phallus* as "about the paradox of being a human".

Bulgarian director **Svetla TSOTSORKOVA**'s drama *Sister* tells "the story of how one girl becomes a woman," and how she learns that if one wants to stay human, sacrifices must be made. From Panama, **Félix GUARDIA**'s animated feature *The Sorcerer* is a wild journey through the absurd and surrealist universe of Panamanian artist Julio Zachrisson.

### **Post-Production Awards**

In addition to meetings with potential partners and investors during HAF, WIP Lab shortlisted projects are also entitled to compete for three post-production awards: the Wanda WIP Lab Award presented by Wanda Media Co. Ltd., offering a cash price of HK\$100,000 (approx. US\$12,800) to encourage the development of outstanding cinema; the G2D Post-Production Award and the White Light Post-Production Award each offering in-kind post-production services that is worth US\$15,000 respectively (approx. HK\$117,300 each).

### **The "HAF Goes to Cannes" Program**

For the second consecutive year, HAF will collaborate with Marché du Film, Festival de Cannes, to present an important program offering market screening and pitch opportunities for up to five projects at this year's Cannes Film Festival in May. "HAF Goes to Cannes" presents opportunities for filmmakers to look for sales agents, distributors and film festivals. Priority will be given to WIP Lab projects. Beijing Nicefilm Technology Co.,Ltd., a TV and film production company in China, will provide a traveling subsidy of HK\$100,000 in total to the projects selected for "HAF Goes to Cannes".

"The increase in applications this year and the 10 selected shortlisted film projects reflect the growing interest by filmmakers in Asia and from around the world in the Hong Kong - Asia Film Financing Forum's Work-in-Progress Lab," said Mr. Jacob WONG, Curator of the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society and Director of the HAF. "These exceptional projects represent a wide variety of cultures, languages and societies, and HAF is proud to offer a platform for these filmmakers to present their works to film-industry professionals," WONG said. "In addition, we look forward to working again with Marché du Film and offering a showcase for these independent filmmakers at Cannes this May."

### **Work-in-Progress Lab Open Pitch**

Date: 19 March 2018 (Monday)

Time: 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Venue: Screening Room (N206, N207), Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Remarks: HAF/ Filmart badge holders, registered media and press

### **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 our official networking events, screenings, seminars or other activities.

Registration for the event among members of the media began on 22 January, with further details here: <http://www.hkiff.org.hk/>

A complete list of the selected WIP Lab projects for the 16<sup>th</sup> HAF can be found in **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/hafhiffs/>.

### **For media enquiries, please contact:**

#### **VT Comms**

Ms. Alice Au Yeung

Phone: (852) 2787 0706

(852) 9887 9387

E-mail: [alice@vtcomms.com](mailto:alice@vtcomms.com)

Ms. Yuki Fong

Phone: (852) 2787 0220

(852) 6098 1568

E-mail: [yuki@vtcomms.com](mailto:yuki@vtcomms.com)

#### **HAF**

Ms. Winnie Cheung

Phone: (852) 2102 6803

E-mail: [winnie\\_cheung@hkiff.org.hk](mailto:winnie_cheung@hkiff.org.hk)

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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**

**第十六屆香港亞洲電影投資會「製作中項目推介會」入選電影計劃名單**

<b>A. AGANAI - The Atonement</b>	<b>Japan 日本</b>
Director 導演：SAKAHARA Atsushi 阪原淳 Producer 監製：SAKAHARA Atsushi 阪原淳 Production Company 製作公司：Good People Inc.	
<b>B. From Black and White to Shades of Grey</b> 慕玲、一鳴、偉明	<b>China 中國</b>
Director 導演：HUANG Zi 黃梓 Producer 監製：HUANG Zi 黃梓 Production Company 製作公司：Huang Zi Film Studio	
<b>C. The Little One 小家伙</b>	<b>Russia 俄羅斯， China 中國， Germany 德國， Poland 波蘭， Kazakhstan 哈薩克</b>
Director 導演：Sergey DVORTSEVOY Producer 監製：ZHU Li 朱力 Production Company 製作公司：Beijing JuBen Production Company 北京聚本文化傳媒有限公司	
<b>D. The Man Who Surprised Everyone</b>	<b>Russia 俄羅斯， France 法國， Estonia 愛沙尼亞</b>
Director 導演：Natalya MERKULOVA, Alexey CHUPOV Producer 監製：Katia FILIPOVA Production Company 製作公司：Pan Atlantic Studio	
<b>E. Mosaic Portrait 馬賽克少女</b>	<b>China 中國</b>
Director 導演：ZHAI Yixiang 翟義祥 Producer 監製：WANG Zijian 王子劍, CHENG Rui 程睿 Production Company 製作公司：Blackfin Production 黑鰭傳媒	
<b>F. The Pencil</b>	<b>Russia 俄羅斯</b>
Director 導演：Natalya NAZAROVA Producer 監製：Anastasia LUKOVNIKOVA Production Company 製作公司：Salt Studio	
<b>G. The Red Phallus</b>	<b>Bhutan 不丹, Nepal 尼泊爾</b>
Director 導演：Tashi GYELTSHEN	

Producer 監製 : Ram Krishna POKHAREL, Tashi GYELTSHEN, Kristina KONRAD

Production Company 製作公司 : Icefall Productions, Studio 108, weltfilm GmbH

#### H. Sister

Bulgaria 保加利亞

Director 導演 : Svetla TSOTSORKOVA

Producer 監製 : Svetoslav OVTCHAROV

Production Company 製作公司 : Omega films

#### I. The Sorcerer

Panama 巴拿馬

Director 導演 : Félix GUARDIA

Producer 監製 : Tomás CORTÉS-ROSSELOT

Production Company 製作公司 : ANIMAL

#### J. Still Human 淪落人

Hong Kong 香港

Director 導演 : Oliver CHAN Siu-kuen 陳小娟

Producer 監製 : Fruit CHAN 陳果

Production Company 製作公司 : No Ceiling Film Production Limited 無際電影製作有限公司