



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

April 21, 2017

MPA & APSA ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF 2017 FILM FUND

Emerging Chinese filmmakers awarded at MPA-BFM Film Workshop pitch competition

BEIJING/SINGAPORE – On April 20, the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) and its Academy, and the Motion Picture Association (MPA) Asia Pacific officially renewed their successful partnership at an event held during the MPA-BFM Film Workshop at the 7th Beijing International Film Festival, announcing the eighth round of the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund open for submissions.

Chairman of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards and its Academy, Michael Hawkins said, “As we celebrated APSA’s 10th edition in November, the APSA Academy passed 1,000 members, comprised of the exceptional filmmaking talent from this diverse region. With the support and partnership of the MPA, we now enter our 8th year of supporting those Academy members with script development grants, to tell the stories of Asia Pacific. I know the members of the APSA Academy are very grateful, as am I, to the MPA for the opportunities that these grants provide.”

Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director Asia Pacific MPA, said, “It is a pleasure to launch the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund for 2017 in what is now its eighth year. As the body of work produced by the fund grows in size, as does the APSA Academy, the anticipation of what new projects will be submitted is also greatly increased. The MPA is enormously proud of the Asia Pacific stories it has helped realise with this fund and is greatly looking forward to again working with APSA to provide the opportunity for another round of projects to be developed for the screen.”

The MPA APSA Academy Film Fund was created to support, at script stage, new feature film projects originated by APSA Academy members and their colleagues across Asia Pacific. The fund awards four development grants of US\$25,000 annually. The 8th round of the Fund will bring the total number of projects funded to 32. The recipients of the grants will be announced during the 11th Asia Pacific Screen Awards Ceremony on Thursday 23 November 2017 in Brisbane, Australia.

A snapshot of MPA APSA Academy Film Fund success stories:

- Kazakh filmmaker and 2010 recipient, Sergey Dvortsevoy (Tulpan), is currently in production on his film *AYKA (My Little One)*.
- The first completed film, from the inaugural round of the Fund in 2010 was Asghar Farhadi's *A SEPARATION* which went on to win over 100 awards internationally including an Oscar®, Golden Globe®, Golden Bear and APSA for Best Film.
- 2011 Fund recipient Maryam Ebrahimi's *NO BURQAS BEHIND BARS* was recognised worldwide, winning awards at major festivals around the globe, including the biggest TV award in Europe - the Prix Europa Award for Best TV Documentary and an International Emmy Award.
- Shawkat Amin Koriki's *MEMORIES ON STONE* began its development as a 2011 Fund recipient and since completion, has garnered more than a dozen international awards including the 2014 APSA UNESCO Award. The film had an official screening at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris and at the MPAA headquarters in Washington and was Iraq's official submission for the 88th Academy Awards® for Best Foreign Language Film.
- Completed MPA APSA Academy Film Fund projects *A SEPARATION*, *NO BURQAS BEHIND BARS* and *MEMORIES ON STONE* have received special screenings at the MPAA headquarters in Washington DC.

The Film Fund was launched during the MPA-BFM Film Workshop, which involved: A Warner Bros panel discussion on "Best Practices in Filmmaking" featuring WB's Richard Fox in conversation with Cary Cheng, Assistant to the President of Wanda Culture Group, Vice General Manager of Wanda Media, Andrew Lazar, Producer *American Sniper*, Chantal Nong, VP Feature Development and Production, Warner Bros. Pictures, Tao Kun, Producer CFK Pictures, Shan Tam, Producer *Finding Mr. Right*, and Lionel Wigram, Producer *Harry Potter* series and *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*; a panel discussion on "Revenue Sources and Business Models for Web Movies"; and a third panel discussion on "The Characteristics of Web Movie Content Production". The MPA-BFM feature film pitching competition was won by Zhang Chi and Zhu Jie for their film *Cosplay*. The two will attend a five-day film immersion course in Los Angeles in November, thanks to the MPA. Zhang Hansheng was awarded the President's Special Recognition Prize for his film *Forest of Tumor*, winning a trip to the Asia Pacific Screen Awards in Brisbane, Australia, in November.

The 4th US-China Film and Television Expo also announced their events for 2017. The organization will hold the UCFTI Expo in Los Angeles from October 19-20 and the 2nd Golden Screen Awards, in partnership with the MPA, China Film Coproduction Co. and the Hollywood Reporter on October 29. The U.S. China Film Summit will be held Oct 30-31.

Images of the events are available [here](#). For more information on the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund,

please click [here](#).

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MPA APSA ACADEMY FILM FUND RECIPIENTS 2010 – 2016

2016 Haifaa Al Mansour, (Saudi Arabia)
Joo Young Park, (South Korea)
Rolf de Heer, (Australia)
Emir Baigazin, (Kazakhstan)

2015 Ami Drozd, (Israel)
Annemarie Jacir, (Palestine)
Cliff Curtis, (New Zealand)
Surabhi Sharma (India)

2014 Signe Byrge Sørensen, (Denmark)
Dror Moreh, (Israel)
Panah Panahi, (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, (Bangladesh)

2013 Ainsley Gardiner, (New Zealand)
Jeannette Hereniko, (Marshall Islands)
Reis Çelik, (Turkey, Iraq)
Garin Nugroho, (Indonesia)

2012 Kath Shelper, (Australia)
Mohammed Rasoulof, (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Suha Arraf, (Israel)
Zeynep Özbatur Atakan, (Turkey)

2011 *No Burqas Behind Bars*, Maryam Ebrahimi, (Afghanistan)
Payman Maadi, (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Pryas Gupta, (India)
Memories on Stone, Shawkat Amin Korki, (Iraqi Kurdistan)

2010 *A Separation*, Asghar Farhadi, (Islamic Republic of Iran)
Lee Chang Dong, (Republic of Korea)
The Cremator, Peng Tao, (People's Republic of China)
Ayka/My Little One, Sergey Dvortsevov, (Russian Federation)

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ABOUT THE ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN AWARDS & ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN ACADEMY

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards, based in Brisbane, are presented by Treasury Casino & Hotel, supported by Brisbane City Council and managed by economic development board Brisbane Marketing. APSA has the privilege of a unique collaboration with Paris-based UNESCO and FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations, and recognises and promotes cinematic excellence and cultural diversity of the world's fastest growing film region: comprising 70 countries and areas, 4.5 billion people, and is responsible for half of the world's film output.

APSA and its Academy is committed to its ongoing partnerships with UNESCO, FIAPF, the European Film Academy (EFA), the Motion Picture Association (MPA), NETPAC (the Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema), the Asia Pacific Screen Lab (APSL) and Griffith Film School.

All nominees, International Nominations Council, Nominee Selection Panels and APSA International Jury members are inducted into the APSA Academy presided over by President, Australian screen legend Jack Thompson AM PhD. The Academy boasts over 1000 of the region's leading filmmakers and provides exclusive networking, development and funding opportunities available to Academy members through the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund, and Academy mentoring opportunities for the next generation of Asia Pacific filmmakers through the Asia Pacific Screen Lab. The APSA's Academy partner, the European Film Academy shares the common interest of presenting pan-International Awards that promote and award excellence in cinema.

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About the MPA:

Promoting & Protecting Screen Communities in Asia Pacific

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Motion Picture Association International (MPA-I) represent the interests of the six international producers and distributors of filmed entertainment. To do so, they promote and protect the intellectual property rights of these companies and conduct public awareness programs to highlight to movie fans around the world the importance of content protection. These activities have helped to transform entire markets benefiting film and television industries in each country including foreign and local filmmakers alike.

The organizations act on behalf of the members of the Motion Picture Association of America, Inc (MPAA) which include; Paramount Pictures Corporation; Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.; Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation; Universal City Studios LLC; Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures; and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. The MPA and the MPA-I have worldwide operations which are directed from their head offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. and overseen in the Asia Pacific by a team based in Singapore. For more information about the MPA and the MPA-I, please visit www.mpa-i.org.

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