



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

November 28, 2014

2014 MPA APSA ACADEMY FILM FUND ATTRACTS OVER 100 NEW ASIA PACIFIC FILM PROJECTS

16 funded films to date include Academy and Emmy Award winners

BRISBANE-SINGAPORE: The Motion Picture Association (MPA) and the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) today announced a record number of submissions with more than 100 projects entered for the 2014 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund. Exclusive to APSA Academy members, four USD\$25,000 development grants will be awarded, supported wholly by the MPA, and announced at the APSA Ceremony on Thursday, 11 December.

The 2014 grants will mean that a total of twenty feature film projects have been funded since 2010, when the fund was established with the aim to stimulate film production in Asia Pacific. A significant number of these films have been successfully developed, produced and distributed to diverse audiences around the globe, winning dozens of awards including an Academy Award® and an International Emmy Award.

Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, MPA said, "As we enter the fifth year of the Fund it is extremely rewarding to celebrate the achievements on the world stage of some of our earliest recipients. Two feature film projects funded in the 2011 round are achieving great international success: Maryam Ebrahimi's documentary *No Burqas Behind Bars* this week won the prestigious International Emmy; and Shawkat Amin Korki's *Memories on Stone* won Best Film from the Arab World at the recent Abu Dhabi Film Festival, and is now nominated for two Asia Pacific Screen Awards including Best Feature Film. What is particularly note-worthy, the Fund-supported script for *Memories on Stone* has been nominated for an APSA Best Screenplay Award.

"Of course our most high profile recipient from the inaugural year was Asghar Farhadi for his project *A Separation* which went on to win almost 50 awards internationally including an Oscar®, Golden Globe®, Golden Bear and APSA for Best Film. The MPA welcomes Asghar Farhadi back to APSA in 2014 as President of the APSA International Jury. It is an honour to grow the Fund alongside the expanding Asia Pacific Screen Academy, and provide opportunities to this talented and esteemed network of filmmakers."

APSA Executive Chair Michael Hawkins said, "APSA's partnership with the MPA has been an extremely productive one, with great benefits to the filmmakers of Asia Pacific, and I join with Mike Ellis in congratulating Maryam Ebrahimi and Shawkat Amin Korki in the international recognition and success of their films. We are extremely proud to have been there to support them from the beginning."

2011 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund recipient Maryam Ebrahimi, who accepted the International Emmy award for *No Burqas Behind Bars* in New York this week said, "It was not easy to fund this film in the beginning of the production process. Without the MPA fund it would have been impossible to begin shooting in Afghanistan. By doing this we could further develop the film and fully finance it. Therefore as producer of the film I deeply appreciate this support. The film has been recognized worldwide, winning awards at major festivals around the globe, and was this month honoured with the biggest TV award in Europe - the Prix Europa Award for the Best TV Documentary and an International Emmy Award. I believe the subject of the film has played a big role in its success, as it is both controversial and important."

In 2014 the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund received over 100 project submissions from 23 Asia Pacific countries and areas. They are Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Georgia, Hong Kong (PRC), India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Iraqi Kurdistan, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Palestine, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

The projects represent a diverse range of stories and encompass feature films, children's features, animated and children's animated feature films and documentaries.

The 2014 panel that will determine the Fund recipients includes:

ANDREW PIKE OAM (Australia) - Chair

Andrew Pike is a film historian and documentary filmmaker, producer, film distributor and exhibitor. During the 1980s he specialised in bringing renowned films from Japan and China to Australian audiences and implemented many innovative distribution and marketing activities for which he won the Australian Film Institute's Byron Kennedy Award in 1986. He has distributed major Australian films including *Shine* and *Strictly Ballroom*, the work of documentary directors such as Dennis O'Rourke and Bob Connolly, and the early work of feature film directors such as Jane Campion, Baz Luhrmann, Vincent Ward and Scott Hicks. Pike directed *Angels of War*, which won Best Documentary at the 1982 AFI Awards and Best Documentary at the 1982 Nyon Film Festival, Switzerland. He co-authored a seminal book, *Australian Film 1900-1977*, published by Oxford University Press. In 2007, he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for his services to the film industry and the community, and an honorary doctorate from the University of Canberra. In 2003, Pike was appointed by the French government to the rank of Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres for his promotion of French cinema in Australia. He is a Board member of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia, was an APSA International Jury member in 2009 and has chaired the assessment panel for the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund since the inaugural fund in 2010.

ZOË CHEN (People's Republic of China)

Zoë Chen is the General Manager of leading boutique film production company Ruddy Morgan Organization (China) and is in charge of the business development in China for Sirens Productions (Shanghai) Limited. Zoë has directed and produced countless award-winning TV programs in China, worked for BBC, ITV, Channel 4 in the UK and since 2001 has had a significant role in development, investment and production for the Ruddy Morgan Organization. She recently produced the award-winning feature film *My Kingdom*. She holds a degree with a major in musicology of Western Classical music, an MA in Audio Visual Production and realising the changing dynamic of the capital development in the Chinese film and television industry, she studied business and obtained an EMBA Dual Degree at Euromed Marseille Ecole de Management (EMEM) and Shanghai Jiao Tong University (SJTU). A lifelong passion for film and entertainment started as a child when Zoë was selected as lead dancer of China's ambassadorial youth dance tour to the United States and later saw her become a presenter of Shanghai TV while still at school.

SHEILA TIMOTHY (Indonesia)

Before entering filmmaking, Sheila Timothy spent years of her life in the music business. She is also on the board of one of the oldest recording companies in Indonesia, PT Remaco. In 2008 she produced Joko Anwar's *Pintu Terlarang (Forbidden Door)* with her newly-established film company, LifeLike Pictures. The film went on to win best film in Puchon International Fantastic Film Festival (PiFAN) in 2009. In 2011 she organised the Fantastic Indonesian Short Film Competition (FISFiC) in a bid to find new and talented filmmakers in the country. In 2012 she produced, *Modus Anomali*, written and directed by Joko Anwar. The film premiered at South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW) in March 2012, and was distributed in Europe and the US. Her third feature, *Tabula Rasa*, a family drama directed by Adriyanto Dewo, was released earlier this year. Sheila is the President of the Association of Indonesian Film Producers (APROFI), 2013-2016.

View the full list of 2014 APSA nominees below and at:

<http://www.asiapacificscreenacademy.com/the-awards/2014-nominees/>

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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.

ABOUT THE ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN AWARDS

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards, proudly presented by Treasury Casino and Hotel, is supported by Brisbane City Council and managed by economic development board Brisbane Marketing in a unique collaboration with Paris-based UNESCO and FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations, recognising and promoting cinematic excellence and cultural diversity of the world's fastest-growing film region: comprising 70 countries and areas, 4.5 billion people, and responsible for half of the world's film output. In 2014, 36 films from 21 Asia Pacific countries received award nominations.

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