



NEWS RELEASE

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MPA & APSA ANNOUNCE LAUNCH OF 2016 FILM FUND

Script Development Grants Aimed to Showcase Multiculturalism and Diversity in Film

BEIJING/SINGAPORE – The Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) and its Academy, and the Motion Picture Association (MPA) Asia Pacific today officially renewed their successful partnership at an event held during the MPA-BFM Film Workshop at the 6th Beijing International Film Festival. Together they launched the 7th round of the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund and announced the distinguished film professionals who will be determining the recipients of four script development grants to nurture Asia Pacific stories in November 2016.

Returning Chair Andrew Pike (Australia) will be joined by André Morgan (USA/China), the Oscar®-winning founder of the international production powerhouse studio Ruddy Morgan Organisation, and Fujioka Asako (Japan), former director of the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival and longstanding member of the selection committee for the Busan International Film Festival's Asian Network of Documentary (AND) Fund.

Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director Asia Pacific MPA, said, "We are thrilled to launch the 2016 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund here at the Beijing International Film Festival. The Fund is committed to showcase the diverse and multicultural face of Asia Pacific and every year we are in awe of the high calibre of film projects that we receive from the region. The Fund has a notable record of identifying quality scripts which then go on to be produced, distributed and win a fair share of awards at festivals. We congratulate the Asia Pacific Screen Awards, in their 10th year, for their incredible contribution to film culture in Asia Pacific, and wish all Academy members well with their current projects."

Present at the event in Beijing, newly announced 2016 Fund panellist André Morgan said, "Entertainment underpins a nation's culture, and when you look at a nation's culture you are looking at the soul of its people and the glue that binds a society."

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 7th round of the Fund will bring the total number of projects funded to 28. The recipients of the grants will be announced during the 10th Asia Pacific Screen Awards Ceremony on Thursday 24 November 2016 in Brisbane, Australia.

Launching the 2016 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund at the event in Beijing, APSA Board Member John Kirby AM said, “The Asia Pacific Screen Awards is an outstanding cultural initiative from Brisbane, Australia. The awards are a vital platform that allows the voices and images of film to be promoted across the region and has an unrivalled role in Asia Pacific. The APSA Academy has opportunities to further their creative talents through dedicated funding initiatives.”

A snapshot of MPA APSA Academy Film Fund success stories:

- 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.

MPA APSA Academy Film Fund 2016 Panelists:

- **Andrew Pike** (Chair) is a film distributor, film historian and documentary filmmaker. With Ross Cooper, he co-authored Australian Film 1900-1977. His company, Ronin Films, distributed many Chinese Fifth Generation films in the 1980s, and many Japanese classics. The company’s Australian releases have included STRICTLY BALLROOM and SHINE. In 2007, he received an Order of Australia Medal and an honorary doctorate from the University of Canberra. For ten years until 2012, he served on various iterations of the Board of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. In 2007 he produced the documentary ACROSS THE PLATEAU for Chinese director Zhang Zeming. As a documentary director, his films include ANGELS OF WAR, THE CHIFLEYS OF BUSBY STREET, EMILY IN JAPAN, and MESSAGE FROM MUNGO (co-directed with Ann McGrath and winner of a United Nations Association Media Award in November 2014). In 2015 he was General Manager of the Canberra International Film Festival.
- **André Morgan** partnered with Albert S. Ruddy to found Ruddy Morgan Organization (RMO) in 1984. RMO produced more than 80 films, and hundreds of hours of television. Subsequently Mr. Morgan went on to advise many media groups including Bakrie Brothers, Media Asia, BAFTA (LA) and many of the American studios formulating a China strategy. His advisory work moved into large scale transnational projects in many non-media related fields. Morgan has been co-chairman of the Chinese American Film Festival for many years. He produced or co-produced MILLION DOLLAR BABY, THE LONGEST YARD, THE WHITE COUNTESS and these international films have won countless awards, including Golden Globe® and David di Donatello Awards, Japanese academic prizes and Academy Awards® including Best Picture,

Directing and Adapted Screenplay for MILLION DOLLAR BABY. His Chinese films (PERHAPS LOVE, THE WARLORDS and PROTEGE) also won his directors, actors and crews countless awards including best film, best director and the best leading actor in Hong Kong, Taiwan, China and across Asia.

- **Fujioka Asako** has worked with Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival since 1993 as Coordinator, Director, and is now on the Board of Directors. She has been a selection committee member and advisor for Busan International Film Festival's Asian Network of Documentary (AND) Fund since 2006. She organizes film "dojo" workshops to introduce Asian filmmakers to new experiences, distributes Asian documentaries in Japan, and handles international liaison for Japanese documentaries. She is one of the founders and board members of non-profit Independent Cinema Guild in Japan and recently joined the executive committee of Tokyo Docs, an international pitching forum.

Images of the event are available [here](#).

For more information on the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund, please click [here](#).

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ABOUT THE ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN AWARDS & ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN ACADEMY:

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards are the region's highest accolade in film and will in 2016 celebrate its tenth anniversary.

The Asia Pacific Screen Awards, now with a permanent home in Brisbane; Australia's New World City, 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.

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 870 of the region's leading filmmakers and provides exclusive networking, development and funding opportunities available to Academy members through the APSA Academy NETPAC Development Prize, 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.

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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