



MEDIA RELEASE

THE BEST IN ASIAN CINEMA UNVEILED AT 26TH SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL'S SILVER SCREEN AWARDS

Singapore, 5 December 2015 – The 26th Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) announced its winners of the Silver Screen Awards at The MasterCard Theatres at Marina Bay Sands this evening.

This year saw 12 awards being presented, with the two crowd-favourite competitions – **Asian Feature Film Competition** and the **Southeast Asian Short Film Competition** being presented nine awards altogether.

Asian Feature Film Competition

Indian film *The Fourth Direction*, the sophomore feature by Gurvinder Singh emerged as the Best Film of the Asian Feature Film Competition. Set during the historical conflict between Sikh separatists and the military, the film impressed the jury with its 'masterful execution' which makes the audience 'experience the fear and tension of the era and how the political situation is influencing the life of this family.'

Israeli film *Tikkun* by Avishai Sivan was given Special Mention by the jury for the director's ability to 'guide us seamlessly through the complexities of the character's spiritual journey' as it discusses the nature of sexuality, life and death.

Japanese director Ryusuke Hamaguchi won the Best Director for *Happy Hour*, his first fiction film in three years, which offers an intimate gaze into a close group of friends as they pass through the joys and tribulations that mid-life offers to them.



Turkish cast Taha Tegin Özdemir, Yakup Özgür Kurtaal and Ömer Uluç were also awarded Best Performance for their roles in *Snow Pirates* by Faruk Kacihafizoğlu. Set against the 1980 coup d'état in Turkey, the film tells the story of three teenage friends who spent their school holidays trying to find coal for warmth against all odds amidst sharing their personal stories and dreams.

The award winners of the Asian Feature Film Competition are selected by a jury panel, headed by Brillante Mendoza, one of the most important and prominent filmmakers of Philippines cinema today. His award-winning debut film which won the Golden Leopard Award at the 2005 Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland, paved the way for the rise of alternative cinema in the Philippines. He is also the only Filipino director that has been accorded the singular distinction of the Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters) from the French government. Other jury members include Managing Director and Producer of Irresistible Films Ivy Ho, member of the European Film Academy Karel Och and South Korean producer, Oh Jung-wan.

The Fourth Direction will be re-screened at the National Museum of Singapore tomorrow, the last day of the SGIFF, together with the winning film of the Audience Choice Award to be announced tomorrow morning, replacing the festival's closing film.



Southeast Asian Short Film Competition

In the Southeast Asian Short Film Competition, *The Fox Exploits the Tiger's Might* was awarded Best Southeast Asian Short Film. The Indonesian film presented the story of two pre-teen boys who discover the relation between power and sex amid their burgeoning sexuality and the jury found it thought-provoking on issues of race and repression, with its 'strong visual language and a deft use of sexual tension'.

The film also won Best Director for Lucky Kuswandi, one of Indonesia's most exciting young directors. The jury was impressed by his 'strong direction' which was evident in the cast's performance, and his success in introducing the audience to the many eclectic characters while 'telling a story that is layered, provocative and entertaining at the same time.'

Singaporean filmmaker Gladys Ng also won the Best Singapore Short Film for *My Father After Dinner*, which shares the nuances of Asian familial love through the story of a father who prepares dinner while waiting for his children to return home. The jury liked Ng's acutely observant and fresh take on the everyday life and saw the short film as an 'honest and heart-warming portrait of a slice of life in Singapore'.

Thai film *Ferris Wheel* by Phutti Phong Aroonpeng was given Special Mention by the jury for how this powerful and urgent story about a mother and child seeking refuge across the border 'inspires empathy for the experiences of illegal migrants through the point of view of the characters'.

The jury head for this year's Southeast Asian Short Film Competition is Boo Junfeng. He is a well-known local filmmaker who won Best Film and Special Achievement Award for his debut short film – *A Family Portrait* – at the Silver Screen Awards in 2005 and



whose omnibus film '7 Letters' this year is Singapore's official entry to the Oscars' Best Foreign Language Film category. Other jury members include Malaysian actress and filmmaker Sharifah Amani, and Chairman of the Association of Indonesian Film Producers, Sheila Timothy.

The jury also shared that all the films shortlisted for this year's Southeast Asian Short Film Competition 'had something the filmmakers wanted to say about the cultures, societies and the world they live in. The diversity of the perspectives and genres makes the selection this year a very interesting one.'

Participants of the Youth Jury & Critics Programme, an SGIFF initiative to nurture critical cinema writers for the region, also selected this year's **Youth Jury Prize** for the best Southeast Asian short film, which was presented to Cambodian film *Three Wheels* by Kavich Neang. It features a tuk-tuk driver, who was reminded of his former lover from the days before Khmer Rouge rule, and the last request from his wife before he acts to move out of the family home. The Youth Jury liked how the short film 'silently weaves through the lives of its modest characters' and gives a face to these characters and 'draws us closer to them'.

Established players in the Asian Cinema recognised

In recognition of his lifelong dedication and contribution to cinema, acclaimed Iranian filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalbaf received the **Honorary Award** from Kim Ji-Seok, founding member of Busan International Film Festival and SGIFF's International Advisory Board member, and Yuni Hadi, Executive Director of SGIFF. Internationally acclaimed actress and producer Michelle Yeoh was also conferred the **Cinema Legend Award**, which recognises Asian actors and their outstanding achievements in bringing Asia's story to life on screen. This inaugural award for SGIFF was presented by film



producer of acclaimed action film *Reign of Assassins* (2010) and Head of SGIFF's Southeast Asian Film Lab, Terence Chang, and one of Singapore's veteran actress Zoe Tay at the Silver Screen Awards.

A platform to recognise talents for the future of Regional Cinema

The **Most Promising Project** of the Southeast Asian Film Lab, an SGIFF initiative to nurture the future of Southeast Asian filmmaking, was also awarded this evening to one of the region's emerging filmmakers, He Shuming from Singapore. His project *A-Joom-Ma (Auntie)* tells the story of a Korean drama-obsessed widow who learns to find her way home after getting lost on her first trip abroad in Seoul. This was awarded after a six-day story development lab attended by 11 young talents and a pitch in front of an industry jury including Terence Chang and Cora Yim, Vice President for Chinese Movie & Entertainment Channels at FOX International Channels. The jury shared that the project 'strikes a chord across cultures through a relatable character that is crafted in a personal and very familiar manner' and they hope this 'will take the Southeast Asian experience beyond our shores'.

Yuni Hadi, Executive Director of SGIFF said, "The Silver Screen Awards has always been a key component of the Singapore International Film Festival. As the longest-running international film platform in Southeast Asia that inspires the discovery of independent cinema, the SGIFF always strives to heighten awareness of the rich filmmaking talents and quality works in the region. The Silver Screen Awards is one such platform to chart the rise of Asian cinema and recognise the talents of filmmakers, including up-and-coming players, many of whom become the most prominent filmmakers of our time. Congratulations to all award winners this year and we look forward to discovering and showcasing more quality works with innovative cinematic presentations, and rich perspectives from the regional cinema next year."



The Silver Screen Awards saw a total of 10 feature films and 20 short films, including four Singapore short films, vying for the awards. The glittering red carpet affair was also graced by Slumdog Millionaire star Dev Patel and saw a surprise appearance by international icon David Beckham, who co-presented the award for Asian Feature Film – Best Director with Marina Bay Sands President and Chief Executive Officer Mr. George Tanasijevich.

The SGIFF is an event of the Singapore Media Festival, hosted by Media Development Authority (Singapore). SGIFF's Official Sponsors include Presenting Sponsor, Marina Bay Sands; Official Festival Time Partner, IWC Schaffhausen; Official TV, Fox International; Official Airline, Singapore Airlines; Official Technology Partner, Mocha Chai Laboratories and Official Art Magazine, Art Republik.

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Please also find enclosed in the media kit –

Annex A: Award winners at the Silver Screen Awards of the 26th Singapore International Film Festival

Annex B: Prizes presented at the Silver Screen Awards

Annex C: Quotes from winners of the Silver Screen Awards

About the Singapore International Film Festival

The Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) is the largest and longest-running film event in Singapore. Founded in 1987, the festival has become an iconic event in the Singapore arts calendar that is widely attended by international film critics, and recognised worldwide for its focus on Asian filmmakers and the promotion of Southeast



Asian films. The SGIFF is committed to nurturing and championing local and regional talents in the art of filmmaking. The festival serves as a catalyst in igniting public interest in the arts, and encouraging artistic dialogue and cultural exchanges. The SGIFF is organised by the Singapore International Film Festival Ltd, a non-profit organisation and holds the Institution of a Public Character (IPC) status.

For more information, please visit www.sgiff.com.

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ANNEX A: AWARD WINNERS AT THE SILVER SCREEN AWARDS OF THE 26TH SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

<p>Asian Feature Film Category</p>	<p><u>Best Film</u></p> <p><i>The Fourth Direction</i> by Gurvinder Singh</p> <p>Based on two short stories by Waryam Singh Sandhu, <i>The Fourth Direction</i> is set during the historical conflict between Sikh separatists and the military. Two Hindu friends Jugal and Raj missed the last train to Amritsar. They barge into a cargo train, where they find themselves in the company of other illegal passengers. Months earlier, a family living in a rural farmhouse is caught between the opposing forces when their dog barks ceaselessly at night, breaking the veil of silence.</p> <p>An elastic atmosphere of paranoia stretches over both narratives so tightly that it might just snap at any moment in the film’s tense setup. Coupled with a formal and minimalist execution and its air of silence – the slightest gestures and sounds become amplified bolts of resounding tension in this simulation of the collective experience of common folk caught between the excesses of warring factions.</p> <p><u>Jury Citation</u></p> <p>Through a masterful execution, the film makes us experience the fear and tension of the era and how the political situation is influencing the life of this family.</p>
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Special Mention

Tikkun by Avishai Sivan

Haim-Aaron is an outstanding religious scholar living in an Ultra-Orthodox district in Jerusalem. A near-death accident leads him to experience a newly-heightened awareness of his corporeal form as part of God's creation. Suspecting that God is testing him, Haim-Aaron begins to challenge the rigid religious rules of his community and wanders through the sensuous urban landscape of Tel Aviv after dark in an attempt to understand and rekindle his faith, to dangerous consequences.

The meaning of the word "tikkun" refers to a soul returning to the living world in order to rectify an unresolved issue to redeem itself before transitioning to the next world. Through surrealistic sequences and motifs such as the kosher sacrifice of a cow and the crushing of a cockroach, *Tikkun* meditates on the nature of sexuality, life and death.

Jury Citation

The jury appreciated the director's ability to guide us seamlessly through the complexities of the character's spiritual journey

Best Director

Ryusuke Hamaguchi (*Happy Hour*)



	<p><u>Best Performance</u></p> <p>Taha Tegin Özdemir, Yakup Özgür Kurtaal and Ömer Uluç (<i>Snow Pirates</i>)</p>
Southeast Asian Short Film Category	<p><u>Best Southeast Asian Short Film</u></p> <p><i>The Fox Exploits The Tiger's Might</i> by Lucky Kuswandi</p> <p>Two pre-teen boys discover the relation between power and sex amid their burgeoning sexuality.</p> <p><u>Jury Citation</u></p> <p>With strong visual language and a deft use of sexual tension, the film provokes discussion surrounding the issues of race and repression.</p> <p><u>Best Singapore Short Film</u></p> <p><i>My Father After Dinner</i> by Gladys Ng</p> <p>The preoccupations of modern life allow Ying to only come home late in the night, where dinner prepared by her father, awaits. What builds up is a portrait that magnifies in its minutiae of her father's daily life, as well as the nuances of Asian familial love.</p> <p><u>Jury Citation</u></p> <p>An honest and heart-warming portrait of a slice of life in</p>



Singapore. Acutely observant, it's a fresh take on everyday life.

Special Mention

Ferris Wheel by Phutti Phong Aroonpheng

A mother and son leave Myanmar in hopes for a better life in Thailand. But what lies across the border are big lessons on discrimination in seemingly small injustices – stories of the many who have gone their way before.

Jury Citation

A powerful and urgent story about a mother and child seeking refuge across the border in a neighbouring country. The film inspires empathy for the experiences of illegal migrants through the point of view of the Characters.

Best Director

Lucky Kuswandi (*The Fox Exploits The Tiger's Might*)

Jury Citation

All of the actors performed very well and organically because of the strong direction. The director manages to introduce the audience to the many eclectic characters and succeeds in telling a story that is layered, provocative and entertaining at the same time.



	<p><u>Youth Jury Prize</u></p> <p><i>Three Wheels (Kong Bei)</i> by Kavich Neang</p> <p>Under the strain of the capital's bright lights, a tuk-tuk driver is reminded of his former lover from the days before Khmer Rouge rule. As he acts to move out of the family home, his wife has one last request.</p> <p><u>Jury Citation</u></p> <p>This is a piece of work that is interested not in grand gestures but in silently weaving through the lives of its modest characters. The film gives a face to these abstract characters and draws us closer to them.</p>
Honorary Award	<p><u>Mohsen Makhmalbaf</u></p> <p>Mohsen Makhmalbaf is a singular figure in the legacy of Iranian cinema. His self-taught filmmaking practice is an astonishing exemplar of the power and urgency of cinema in its use as cultural weapon wielded for the ceaseless fight against oppression, and an educative art form that reflects the conditions of life and society. Since 1983, he has released more than 20 feature films that have been critically received internationally. At the 2015 Venice Film Festival, he was awarded the prestigious Robert Bresson Award, dedicated to 'a director who has given testimony of the difficult path towards the search for the spiritual meaning of life.'</p>



	<p>The 26th Singapore International Film Festival also presented a special showcase of Makhmalbaf's work as part of its <i>Tribute</i> segment, including the screening of his latest feature, <i>The President</i> (2014).</p>
Cinema Legend Award	<p><u>Michelle Yeoh</u></p> <p>Michelle Yeoh is an internationally acclaimed actress and producer, who has starred in more than 30 films. Born in Malaysia, she is known for her strong female roles in her films, starting out as one of Hong Kong's biggest action stars known for performing her own stunts. Her dynamic body of work includes internationally renowned films such as <i>Tomorrow Never Dies</i>, <i>Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i>, <i>Memoirs of a Geisha</i> and <i>The Lady Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon</i> earned her three nominations for Best Actress at the Taipei Golden Horse Awards, the Hong Kong Film Awards and the BAFTA Awards. She was a jury member at the Berlin International Film Festival and the Cannes Film Festival in 1999 and 2002 respectively.</p> <p>Besides her film activities, Yeoh is also known for supporting charitable and social endeavours. She is ambassador of amfAR (the foundation for AIDS research), AIDS Concerns, Hong Kong Cancer Fund, Live to Love and The Brain & Spine Institute (ICM). Yeoh is also a Global Road Safety Ambassador for the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, and a board</p>



	<p>member of the Suu Foundation, an initiative aimed at improving health care and education in Burma.</p> <p>Yeoh has received many honours including the <i>Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur</i> in 2007; the <i>Officier de la Légion d'honneur</i> in 2012 and the <i>Excellence in Asian Cinema Award</i> at the Asian Film Awards in 2013. For her achievements, her birth country Malaysia honoured her with <i>Panglima Setia Mahkota</i> which carries the title, <i>Tan Sri</i>.</p>
The Most Promising Project of the Southeast Asia Film Lab	<p><u>A-Joom-Ma (Auntie) by He Shuming</u></p> <p>When a Korean drama-obsessed widow gets lost on her first trip abroad in Seoul, she must learn to find her way home.</p> <p><u>Jury Citation</u> This is a project that strikes a chord across cultures through a relatable character that is crafted in a personal and very familiar manner that we hope will take the Southeast Asian experience beyond our shores.</p>



ANNEX B: PRIZES PRESENTED AT THE SILVER SCREEN AWARDS

Southeast Asian Short Film Category	Asian Feature Film Category
<p><i>Youth Jury Prize</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$500	<p><i>Special Mention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$1,500
<p><i>Special Mention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$1,000	<p><i>Best Performance</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$2,000
<p><i>Best Director</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$2,000	<p><i>Best Director</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$5,000
<p><i>Best Singapore Short Film</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$4,000• Blackmagic URSA PL camera worth S\$7,775• Production Services Package at Shooting Gallery Asia worth S\$15,000• Soundstage Usage (1 day) and Offline Edit (3 days) Package at Infinite Studios worth S\$10,000• Online & DCP Package at Mochai	<p><i>Best Film</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$10,000• Blackmagic URSA PL camera worth S\$7,775• Online & DCP Package at Mochai Chai Laboratories worth S\$20,000



<p>Chai Laboratories worth S\$5,000</p> <p><i>Best Southeast Asian Short Film</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certificate, Trophy and Cash Prize of S\$5,000	
<p>Southeast Asian Film Lab</p> <p><i>Most Promising Project</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cash prize S\$5,000 by Giraffe Pictures	



ANNEX C: QUOTES FROM WINNERS OF THE SILVER SCREEN AWARDS

Cinema Legend Award

“I am really deeply honoured and touched by this award but I was going to ask the organisers if they could put a youth in front of the Legend. Thank you SGIFF for this amazing award. Thank you to my mentor – Terence Chang. He’s actually the one who encouraged me to go to Hollywood but I’m very proud to call him my dearest friend. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the SGIFF for the wonderful work that you are doing especially for this region. We need to bring more international filmmakers here and we need for the international audiences to see our local works, our Asian talent. Because they are quite brilliant. A special thanks goes to every single one that I have worked with in front and behind the camera because without their unique vision, their talent, their passion, I would not be standing here today. And as a filmmaker you know only too well filmmaking is a collaboration. It’s teamwork. There is no one person. It is all of us together, for better or worse. A special thanks always to my family, my friends, people who love me because without their support and constant encouragement, I would not be so courageous and face the world. I would like to dedicate this award to my father. He taught me that imagination has no boundaries, to live your life to its full potential and believe in yourself. And my thanks to all of you, the best is yet to come. Thank you.”

- Michelle Yeoh, Cinema Legend Award Winner

Honorary Award

“For me, filmmaking is like putting light on the darker side of our society with the hope to change it for a better place for everyone to live. In the same sense, awards are like spotlights that we shed on those people who are important but we may have forgotten



their rolls and impact on our lives. That's why whenever I receive an achievement award, I use the opportunity to reflect the light on someone who is more important than me and my films. This time I would like to dedicate this shining award to my teacher, a man who has been behind the growth of Busan Film Festival for the past twenty years. The man who has supported the Asian cinema like a father, the man without him, the Asian cinema wouldn't have been as important as it is today. For the past 20 years he has been constantly supporting thousands of artists and has given lots of awards to the film makers across the world. Today, I deeply believe he deserves this award much much more than me. The name of this great man is Mr. Kim Ji Seok."

- Mohsen Makhmalbaf, Honorary Award Winner

Asian Feature Film Competition

"This feels really great and special. We are impressed with the Festival and amazed by the crowd's response during the film screening. It feels great because winning in Asia and in India is special even though it is an international co-production."

- Kartikeya Singh, Producer of *The Fourth Direction*, the Best Asian Feature Film

"I'm proud. I think it is a tremendous film. It is really deep and strong in many layers and beautifully shot, acted and directed. We started screening Tikkun at festivals since last summer and this is the fifth award we have won."

- Ronen Ben Tal, Producer of film *Tikkun*, recipient of Special Mention at the Asian Feature Film Competition



Southeast Asian Short Film Competition

“I think first of all thank you to the festival for having this film. Thank you to my family because without them, I don’t think this film could have been made. And along the way in my filmmaking career, I think I have had a lot of support. Thank you so much.”

- Gladys Ng, Filmmaker of *My Father After Dinner*, the Best Singapore Short Film

“I’m humbled and honoured because I didn’t know they would give two awards to the same film, I saw the shorts and they were really strong. It’s great especially for the local film industry in Indonesia. It’s going to give a lot of inspiration to other filmmakers back home to keep on making works that are more truthful.”

- Lucky Kuswandi, Best Director of Southeast Asian Short Film Competition, for his film *The Fox Exploits The Tiger’s Might*, which also won the Best Southeast Asian Short Film

Southeast Asian Film Lab: Most Promising Project

“This has been an amazing week with all these very talented filmmakers and the great mentors that we have. So I just want to thank everyone and this goes out to all the participants of the lab and thank you to the Singapore International Film Festival. It has been a great week for films.”

- He Shuming, recipient of Southeast Asian Film Lab: Most Promising Project for his project *Ah-Joon-Ma (Auntie)*