



Singapore International Film Festival appoints new Programme Director and announces its inaugural SGIFF Film Fund recipients

- *Taiwanese film curator, Kuo Ming-Jung takes over the reins as Programme Director*
- *SGIFF Film Fund is part of the newly-introduced SGIFF Film Academy, the region's first initiative centred on the growth of Southeast Asian film talents, professionals, critics and lovers*

Singapore, 17 May 2019 - The Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) has appointed Taiwanese film curator, Kuo Ming-Jung, as its new Programme Director to lead the Festival alongside Executive Director, Yuni Hadi. Entering its 30th edition, the Festival continues its commitment to grow the independent film ecosystem in Southeast Asia through the introduction of the SGIFF Film Academy. It will bring together the Festival developmental programmes under one umbrella to support the growth in expertise and experience of Southeast Asian film talents while elevating the level of cinematic appreciation among film lovers.

New programming leadership at SGIFF

A previous Programme Consultant of SGIFF, Ming-Jung takes over from Thai filmmaker and critic, Pimpaka Towira, to lead the Festival's film curation and programmes. Pimpaka will continue to lend her expertise as one of the Festival's Programme Consultants.

Yuni Hadi commented, "Southeast Asian cinema is poised to become an important player in the international film industry. Ming-Jung brings on board her passion for Asian cinema for discovering new directors which complements our current team and will allow us to shape the next chapter of SGIFF as we enter into our 30th edition. We would also like to thank Pimpaka for her contribution to the Festival and championing new developmental programmes with us, such as the Southeast Asian Producers Network, to bolster the regional film scene."

An experienced film industry professional, Ming-Jung was the Programme Director at Taipei Film Festival from 2014 to 2018. She has also served on several juries and selection panels including



at Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival, International Film Festival Rotterdam, and Locarno Film Festival.

“SGIFF is an anchor Festival in the region where the best and budding Southeast Asian talents gather to exchange ideas, deliberate and share their voice through cinematic works. I continue to be inspired by the community’s openness to collaborate, its camaraderie, and the beautiful stories told as a result of this unique spirit. I look forward to working closely with the SGIFF team to contribute and grow the ecosystem in my new role,” said Ming-Jung.

Recipients of SGIFF Film Fund announced

The Festival also announced its shortlist of seven compelling short films and documentaries from Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam which will receive its inaugural SGIFF Film Fund. Comprising Tan Ean Kiam Foundation-SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant (SEADOC) and SGIFF Southeast Asian Short Film Grant (SEA-SHORTS), the fund will help support the development and production of these stories to build the region’s portfolio. The strong entries received also prompted the jury panel to award the Grant to an additional short film - *Nursery Rhymes* by Singapore filmmaker Michael Kam.

The SGIFF Film Fund is part of the SGIFF Film Academy (SFA) umbrella, the region’s first holistic training initiative to support Southeast Asian film talents and nurture film appreciation among the audience. A launch pad for mentorship, exchange of ideas and strengthening film literacy, the developmental programmes - Southeast Asian Producers Network, Southeast Asian Film Lab, Youth Jury & Critics Programme, SGIFF Film Fund, New Waves, Film Immersion Programme for Schools and Film Navigation Programme - will enhance the capabilities of the regional film scene collectively.

Yuni added, “SGIFF has always been a firm advocate of Southeast Asian cinema, and the SGIFF Film Academy will enable us to holistically look at the support extended to the ecosystem and



identify potential gaps and areas of synergy. We hope that this will bolster the development and growth of the industry in the long run. We would also like to congratulate our recipients of the inaugural SGIFF Film Fund and look forward to seeing these productions come to fruition.”

Veteran producer and transmedia filmmaker, Michel Reilhac, will take on the role as Head Mentor for the 2019 Southeast Asian Film Lab, bringing his experience as Head of Studies at the Venice Biennale College and former Executive Director of Arte France Cinema. He will work alongside two Lab Mentors - Hong Kong film producer, Teresa Kwong and Thai film editor, Lee Chatametikool. This year’s Youth Jury & Critics Programme will also be led by esteemed Thai film critic, Kong Rithdee.

The 30th SGIFF will run from 21 November to 1 December 2019. Its call for entries for Feature and Short Films, Southeast Asian Film Lab, and Youth Jury & Critics Programme is now open and will continue till 19 August 2019.

SGIFF is an event of the Singapore Media Festival (SMF), hosted by Info-communications Media Development Authority of Singapore (IMDA). SGIFF 2019’s Official Sponsors include Official Red Carpet Venue Capitol Theatre and Official Hotel Shangri-La Hotel Singapore.

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

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About the Singapore International Film Festival

Founded in 1987, the Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) is the largest and longest-running film event in Singapore. It has become an iconic event in the local arts calendar that is widely attended by international film critics; and known for its dynamic programming and focus on ground-breaking Asian cinema for Singapore and the region. Committed to nurturing and championing local and regional talent, its competition component, the Silver Screen Awards, brings together emerging filmmakers from Asia and Southeast Asia while paying tribute to acclaimed cinema legends.

With its mentorship programmes, masterclasses and dialogues with attending filmmakers, the Festival also serves as a catalyst for igniting public interest, artistic dialogue, and cultural exchanges in the art of filmmaking. The SGIFF is organised by the Singapore International Film Festival Ltd, a non-profit organisation with Institution of Public Character (IPC) status.

The 30th Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) will be held in Singapore from 21 November 2019 to 1 December 2019.

For more information, please visit www.sgiff.com. Follow us on Instagram @SGIFFest and on Facebook @sginternationalfilmfestival.



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Annex A: Bio of Kuo Ming-Jung, Programme Director, SGIFF

KUO Ming-Jung 郭敏容 **Programme Director, SGIFF**

A film curator, Kuo Ming-Jung has spent much of her career in film festival management, programming and distribution.

Her work as Programme Director for Taipei Film Festival, carried a balance of showcasing new talent as well as celebrating cinema heritage. During her time at the Taipei Film Festival, Kuo had developed new programmes such as *In Progress: VR* and the workshop initiative *Produire au Sud Taipei* which emphasised script development, co-production and marketing strategies. She also edited special issue publications, *Portuguese Cinema* (2015) and *Twenty in An Instant* (2018).

Kuo has served on several juries and selection panels including for the Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival and International Film Festival Rotterdam, and was a Programme Consultant for SGIFF in 2017 and 2018. Kuo is a member of Selection Committee for Locarno Film Festival Open Doors section and is currently the Programme Director for the Singapore International Film Festival.



Annex B: About SGIFF Film Academy (SFA)

The SGIFF Film Academy (SFA) is the region’s first holistic training initiative to support Southeast Asian film talents and nurture film appreciation among the audience. A launch pad for mentorship, exchange of ideas and strengthening film literacy, the developmental programmes - Southeast Asian Producers Network, Southeast Asian Film Lab, Youth Jury & Critics Programme, SGIFF Film Fund, New Waves, Film Immersion Programme for Schools and Film Navigation Programme - aim to enhance the capabilities of the regional film scene collectively.

<p>Southeast Asian Film Lab</p>	<p>The Southeast Asian Film Lab provides an intimate and collaborative setting for Southeast Asian filmmakers embarking on their first feature-length film. It’s as much about providing feedback as it is about forming a tight-knit community. Over the course of seven days, filmmakers will receive personal feedback from the three mentors, and also get to hear from established industry guests sharing their experiences and insights. The programme will end with a pitch in front of an industry panel for a development prize—the Most Promising Project—that will be awarded at the Silver Screen Awards.</p> <p>Southeast Asian Film Lab projects have gone on to thrive in other prestigious workshops and markets, such as SEAFIC, TorinoFilmLab, Cannes L’Atelier and the Asian Project Market.</p>
<p>Southeast Asian Producers Network</p>	<p>The Southeast Asian Producers Network brings together producers from the region to share their wealth of knowledge and information with one another in an open exchange of ideas. Created as a platform for long-term lasting friendships and opportunities for collaboration, the two-day programme includes select dialogue sessions open to the public, talks between regional financiers and producers, case studies examining successful production models and strategies, discussions of pertinent issues relating to producing in Southeast Asia, and ample networking opportunities.</p>
<p>Youth Jury & Critics Programme</p>	<p>The Youth Jury & Critics Programme aims to nurture and guide a generation of young writers on cinema from the region. In its lead-up and during the Festival, the young critics’ articles and video essays will</p>



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	<p>be published in the festival's film journal, Youth Meets Film. The programme will conclude with the young jurors awarding the Youth Jury Prize to one of the films competing in the Southeast Asian Short Film Competition during the Silver Screen Awards. One of the participants will also receive the Young Critic Award, awarded for originality of writing and for their contribution to cinematic discussions in the region.</p>
SGIFF Film Fund	<p>As part of the Festival's ongoing efforts to champion the independent film industry in Singapore and Southeast Asia, SGIFF will be launching two new grants, the Tan Ean Kiam Foundation-SGIFF SEA-DOC Grant and the SGIFF SEA-SHORTS Grant, dedicated to supporting filmmakers with compelling stories to tell across both fiction and non-fiction genres.</p> <p>Tan Ean Kiam Foundation-SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant (SEADOC)</p> <p>The Tan Ean Kiam Foundation-SGIFF Southeast Asian-Documentary Grant (SEADOC) aims to support the development and production of compelling stories told through the art of documentary in Southeast Asia. SEA-DOC will support four mid-length or feature projects annually, with a cash amount of S\$25,000 each.</p> <p>SGIFF Southeast Asian-Short Film Grant (SEA-SHORTS)</p> <p>The SGIFF Southeast Asian-Short Film Grant (SEA-SHORTS) aims to be the launch pad for the brightest upcoming names in filmmaking from the region. SEA-SHORTS will support two short films annually, with a cash amount of S\$4,000 and post-production support worth S\$4,000 each. Applications are open for all genres including drama, animation and experimental short films.</p>
New Waves	<p>New Waves shines a spotlight on young filmmakers making waves through the archipelago, forming an emerging community within Southeast Asia. Though film screenings and dialogue sessions with guest speakers from different disciplines, the programme centers on their unique and personal approaches in utilising film as a mode of</p>



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	<p>expression.</p> <p><i>Sessions for New Waves 2019 will be updated at a later date.</i></p>
Film Immersion Programme for Schools	<p>To expand on on-going initiatives and to continue nurturing media literacy and appreciation of the film medium and the creative process among our youths, we have designed the Film Immersion Programme for Upper-Secondary, Post-Secondary, and Tertiary Institutions. It consists of 3 main components: Immerse, Volunteer & Experience. More information on 2019's plans here.</p>
Film Navigation Programme	<p>A series of pre-festival public talks aimed to create conversations between our film curators and festival-goers. Each session is crafted thematically to shed light on hidden cinematic gems in the official selection. It is an open platform for our curators and guest speakers to discuss why the films in selection deserve an audience, how the films relate to our society and time, and to answer any pressing questions the audience may have in anticipation of the Festival.</p>

Annex C: Bios of Mentors for Southeast Asian Film Lab and Youth Jury & Critics Programme

Southeast Asian Film Lab

Michel REILHAC
Head Mentor, Southeast Asian Film Lab

Michel Reilhac is a narrative architect and long-time transmedia and immersive media pioneer. Reilhac is known as a leading international expert for innovation in hybrid storytelling across participatory, interactive and immersive experiences. As the Head of Studies at the Venice Biennale College and the VR competition curator for the Venice Biennale International Film Festival since its inaugural competition in 2017, Michel is regularly invited to speak and teach at major international events, including the Cannes International Film Festival, SXSW, Tribeca Film Festival, TEDx, CPH:DOX, Dixit, Power to the Pixel, Sunny Side of the Doc, FEMIS and many more. From 2002-2012, Michel was Head of Cinema & Film Acquisitions at Arte France and executive director of Arte France Cinema, co-producing around 30 international independent feature films each year, including Lars Von Trier's *Antichrist* and *Melancholia*. In 2013, Michel was named Man of the Year 2012 in Film by industry magazine *Le Film Français*. Michel is also a virtual reality filmmaker himself - his first production *Viens!* premiered at Sundance in 2016. In 2017-2018, Michel was head of the award-winning independent production company Submarine Channel in Amsterdam. Currently, he also curates the immersive content program at Series Mania in Lille, France.





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Teresa KWONG
Mentor, Southeast Asian Film Lab

Teresa Kwong is a promoter, curator and producer for film and cross-disciplinary arts practices. Currently the Programme Director of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, she is committed to nurturing and promoting the next generation of arts talents. She has started producing feature films with independent filmmakers in Hong Kong and China since 2006. She has been selected to participate in the renowned Produire au Sud Workshop 2008 – Nantes (France) and Rotterdam Producer Lab 2013 for co-production. Her titles as the producer include *Addicted to Love* (directed by Liu Hao, 2010), *Big Blue Lake* (directed by Tsang Tsui Shan, 2011), *Flowing Stories* (feature documentary by Tsang Tsui Shan, 2014), *Dot 2 dot* (directed by Amos Why, 2014), *Napping Kid* (Amos Why, 2018) and *Suk Suk* (Ray Yeung, post-production).



Lee CHATAMETIKOOL
Mentor, Southeast Asian Film Lab

Lee Chatametikool is an award-winning editor and filmmaker. A long-time collaborator with Apichatpong Weerasethakul, including the Palme d'Or winning *Uncle Boonmee Who Can Recall His Past Lives*, he has also worked with key filmmakers in the Thai independent scene such as Anocha Suwichakornpong and Aditya Assarat, and on commercial hits such as Thai horror film *Shutter*. He was awarded Best Editor at the Asian Film Awards three times. He took a break from editing in 2013 to direct his debut feature film *Concrete Clouds*, which premiered in Busan and in competition in Rotterdam. Chatametikool co-founded White Light Post in 2010, a one-stop post production facility that has worked on films such as *Railway Sleepers*, *Call Me By Your Name*, and *Cemetery of Splendour*. Chatametikool also teaches at Mahidol University in Thailand.





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Youth Jury & Critics Programme

Kong RITHDEE

Head Mentor, Youth Jury & Critics Programme

Kong Rithdee works at the Thai Film Archive as Deputy Director, handling programming and archival management. He was previously Film Critic and Arts Editor for over 20 years at the *Bangkok Post*, Thailand's leading English language newspaper. He has written about film for international publications such as *Cahiers du Cinema*, *Sight and Sound*, and film festival catalogues. Rithdee has also co-directed documentary films on the subject of Muslim minorities in Thailand and written screenplays such as *The Island Funeral*. His co-directed work *The Convert* (2008) was screened at Vancouver, Busan, Yamagata and other festivals. *Baby Arabia* (2010) was shown at Vancouver, Hawaii, and other festivals. Their latest short doc *Gaddhafi* (2013) was invited to International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam (IDFA). In 2014, Kong was awarded *Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* from the French government for his writing. Most recently, Rithdee translated the Thai novel *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth*, which is available worldwide.



Annex D: Recipients of SGIFF Film Fund

TAN EAN KIAM FOUNDATION - SGIFF SOUTHEAST ASIAN DOCUMENTARY GRANT (SEADOC)

S\$25,000 cash from Tan Ean Kiam Foundation

***Some Women* by Quenyee Wong (Singapore)**

What does it mean to be transgender in Singapore in 2019? From the glorious past of Bugis Street to the country's seemingly progressive present, some trans women - including the director herself - tell their own stories of hope, fear and inspiration.

***68* by Tan Biyun (Singapore)**

The last street vendor in Singapore struggles with the sudden loss of livelihood after being evicted. He seeks help from the state but runs into a wall of bureaucracy, regulations and language barrier.

***Aswang* by Alyx Ayn Arumpac (Philippines)**

When men turn up dead, the old folks whisper of the *Aswang*, a shape shifting beast from folklore. In Manila, bodies pile up and lives entwine as the state wages a brutal war against drugs and crime.

***Ploy* by Prapat Jiwangsan (Thailand)**

A story of Ploy, who's an entry point to real stories of Thai migrant workers in Singapore. It is also a story about an artist searching for ways to represent Ploy. [SEP]



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SGIFF Southeast Asian-Short Film Grant (SEA-SHORTS)

S\$4,000 cash from C47 Pte Ltd and S\$4,000 in post-production services from White Light Studio Co.,Ltd

Judy Free by Che Tagyamon (Philippines)

A father who has been abroad for work for eight years intrudes upon his young daughter Judy when he comes home to the Philippines as an animated doodle figure.

Binh by Ostin Fam (Vietnam)

Lost in the heart of a half built temple, a young boy, Binh, looks for his father who works there as an electrical engineer. A local self-proclaimed fortune-teller shows him the way.

****Nursery Rhymes by Michael Kam (Singapore)***

Set during different times before its independence, when Singapore belonged to Britain and Japan, two different children each struggle to conform in two different yet similarly oppressive environments.

**Special Mention Prize awarded by White Light Studio Co.,Ltd*