



# NEWS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**

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**MPA GRAND PRIZE AWARDED AT MPA-BFM FILM WORKSHOP  
DURING 5<sup>TH</sup> BEIJING INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL**  
*MPA & APSA Announce 2015 Film Fund Now Open For Submissions*

**BEIJING/SINGAPORE** – The Motion Picture Association (MPA) – Beijing Film Market (BFM) Film Workshop concluded on April 18 with the announcement of the MPA Grand Prize feature film pitch competition.

Sci-fi love story, *The Gate*, a film about a happy-go-lucky tour guide who suddenly finds his world colliding with a virtual gaming world, was awarded the MPA Grand Prize. The film’s writer/director, Xin Cheng Jiang, is known as one of the 50 most influential commercial TV directors.

Mike Ellis, President and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, Motion Picture Association (MPA), said, “I was most impressed with the quality of the presentations at this year’s pitching competition. These are projects that have obviously been developed with a great deal of thought and imagination, and with a particular audience in mind – a necessary approach in this very competitive theatrical market. *The Gate* is highly deserving of the MPA Grand Prize which will see Xin Cheng Jiang attend a week long film immersion course in Los Angeles.”

In addition to the MPA Grand Prize, Mike Ellis awarded a President’s Special Recognition Prize to director Yang Jin for the project *Instant Love* – a comedic love story set in Tokyo about a Chinese man who will do anything to win the heart of a Japanese girl. The prize will see Yang Jin attend the Asia Pacific Screen Awards ceremony in late November in Brisbane Australia as the special guest of Mike Ellis.

The MPA-BFM Film Workshop, this year themed “Vision”, opened with keynote speeches from Zhao Zhiyong, Acting Secretary General of Beijing International Film Festival, Miao Xiaotian, President of China Film Co-Production Corporation and Mike Ellis.

Their remarks were followed by a panel discussion featuring André Morgan (Producer *Perhaps Love*), David Lee (Founder and CEO, Leeding Media), Pauline Chan (Director/Producer *33 Postcards*), Ye Ning (VP, Wanda Cultural Group), and Huang Qunfei (VP, Huaxia Distribution).

Moderated by Liz Shackleton, Asia Bureau Chief of Screen International, the forum took a health check of the Chinese film industry and asked whether the business was able to cope and put in place the required infrastructure during a dramatic period of growth.

A second panel featured Timon Birkhofer (Co-founder and producer, *Father&Sun*), Bennett Pozil (EVP, East West Bank), Mike Ellis, Eva Jin (Director/Scriptwriter/Producer, *One Night Surprise & Crazy New Year's Eve*) and Shao Yiding (Chairman and CEO, Beijing Union Voole Technology Co Ltd).

Moderated by Bao Ran, Chief of Digital Entertainment Industry, Applications Group, MIIT Interactive Media Industry Alliance, the forum explored how the Internet has influenced the way films are financed, produced, marketed and distributed, and how audiences will play a role in the financing and marketing of films in future.

In the afternoon, the audience was treated to three master-classes, including a presentation by Pauline Chan, who shared her experiences developing an Australian-Chinese co-production, an interview by Stephen Jenner, Regional Director of Strategic Communications and Third Party Outreach, MPA, on the script development process with high profile Chinese director Lu Yang (*Brotherhood of Blades*), and a frank and insightful illustration of the development and production minefield that emerging filmmakers may encounter in their early career from highly regarded producer André Morgan.

This was followed by a feature film project pitching advice and panel discussion moderated by Stephen Jenner and featuring observations from André Morgan, Lu Yang, Pauline Chan, Lucas Oliver-Frost, Timon Birkhofer and William Feng, Chief Representative MPA China.

During the MPA-BFM Film Workshop Closing Ceremony, Mike Ellis, Pauline Chan and Stephen Jenner joined Maxine Williamson, Director of Awards Competition, Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) at the launch of the 2015 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund. The film fund, supported by the MPA, is now open for submissions exclusively from APSA Academy Members.

The 2015 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund will take the total number of feature film projects supported by the initiative to twenty-four. The Fund was established in 2010 with the aim to stimulate film production in Asia Pacific. Four of the projects are already completed and have won multiple awards including an Academy Award®, (*A Separation*), an International Emmy Award for documentary (*No Burqas Behind Bars*), Best Film from the Arab World at the Abu Dhabi Film Festival and the APSA UNESCO Award (*Memories on Stone*) and have premiered at festivals including the Berlinale and the Toronto International Film Festival.

The 2015 film fund grant recipients will be determined in November by an expert industry panel drawn from the Asia Pacific and announced at the 9th Asia Pacific Screen Awards ceremony from the historic City Hall in Brisbane, Australia's New World City and the permanent home of the event, on Thursday 26 November.

The 2015 MPA-BFM Film Workshop was jointly hosted by the Motion Picture Association, Beijing Gehua Cultural Development Group and the 5<sup>th</sup> Beijing International Film Festival – Beijing Film Market, sponsored by Harmony & Harvest Cultural Media Co. Ltd., and Sohu, and supported by the Film Bureau of the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television of the People's Republic of China.

On the evening of April 17, the MPA held a special reception & dinner event *For the Love of Cinema* with partners IWC Schaffhausen and the Beijing International Film Festival at the Diaoyutai State Guesthouse. During the evening, IWC and the MPA honored renowned Hong Kong film director Peter Ho-Sun Chan with an acknowledgement for his outstanding contribution towards film industry collaboration between China and the United States.

Images for the events are available [here](#) and [here](#).

View the 2015 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund trailer [here](#).

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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](http://www.mpa-i.org).

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