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SINGAPORE MEDIA FESTIVAL RETURNS WITH EXPANDED OFFERINGS FOR MEDIA LEADERS, FANS AND CREATORS

Festival attendance expected to more than double, with vibrant showcase of regional talent and content; gathering of thought leaders; new Festival Village opened to public

Singapore, 7 October 2019 – The sixth edition of the **Singapore Media Festival (SMF)** returns with an expanded line-up and a strong spotlight on propelling the voices of Asian talent. This year's festival will see wider offerings for both industry players and the public alike – across film, television, comics and popular culture, digital video content, VR and AR technology, and more – with new avenues for emerging players and talent to be part of the region's vibrant ecosystem.

Over 50,000 thought-leaders, creative professionals, and members of the public from Asia and around the world are expected to be part of the festival this year, more than double the number last year.

Robert Gilby, Chairman of the SMF Advisory Board, said, "There is a rising wave of Asian creativity driving growth opportunities in the media sector, as global players look to tap the stories and market in this region. The Singapore Media Festival plays an important role in bringing together the best of Asian content and talent across different formats, genres and platforms, to create potential for creative, collaborative and commercial partnerships to happen. We look forward to taking the future of Asian storytelling forward together."

Hosted by the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA), the Singapore Media Festival will take place from 21 November to 8 December 2019, and consists of the **Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF)**, **Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF)** and **ScreenSingapore (SS)**, **Asian Academy Creative Awards (AAA)**, and this year's new addition, **Singapore Comic Con (SGCC)**. The two-day **VidCon Asia Summit** will also be held in conjunction with SMF.

SPURRING LOCAL AND REGIONAL CREATORS

This year, SMF offers new programmes and enhanced platforms to propel the voices of rising media talent and content creators, taking their stories to a bigger stage.

- For the first time, Singapore Comic Con will be introducing a new initiative, the Work in Progress Programme, to support the discovery of local and regional talent. It offers aspiring comic writers a platform to bring fresh and original content ideas to life, and the chance to be matched to Singapore and regional publishing houses – Asiapac Books, Shogakukan Asia and Vividthree + Darkbox Studio.
- In light of its 30th anniversary, the Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) has commissioned three short films that will centre on the theme of celebration by Southeast Asian directors Yeo Siew Hua (Singapore), Mouly Surya (Indonesia) and Anucha Boonyawatana (Thailand). These films will make their world premiere at the festival's opening night on 21 November.
- SGIFF's line-up will include a Focus on Southeast Asian cinema, titled *Stories We Tell: Myth, Dreamscape and Memory in Southeast Asian Cinema*, encompassing four features that trace imaginative and dreamlike storytelling, a characteristic of films from the region. The line-up includes *Mysterious Object at Noon (2000)* by Thai filmmaker Apichatpong Weerasethakul, seminal Singaporean omnibus, *Lucky 7 (2008)* directed by seven local filmmakers (Sun Koh, K Rajagopal, Boo Junfeng, Brian Gothong Tan, Chew Tze Chuan, Ho Tzu Nyen, and Tania Sng), *A Short Film About the Indio Nacional (2015)* by Filipino director, Raya Martin, and *The Missing Picture (2013)* by Cambodian filmmaker Rithy Panh.
- ATF's Animation, Chinese and Formats Pitches are platforms that showcase Asian originality, and expose ideas for export and development within and outside of the region. Riding on its success in 2018, the ATF Chinese Pitch widened the doors for more scriptwriters to enter Chinese-speaking territories by accepting both Chinese and English submissions this year. Past winners of the Animation and Formats Pitches have made great strides, with *Piggy* (winning concept for Animation Pitch 2017) expected to be released by early 2021 and *Serenade* (winner of ATF Formats Pitch 2018) now being considered by regional and international networks.
- The Southeast Asian Film Financing (SAFF) Project Market, organised by ScreenSingapore in partnership with the Southeast Asia Audio-Visual Association

(SAAVA), returns this year to connect promising project ideas to potential investors and financiers. A successful case study is Laotian director Mattie Do's *The Long Walk*, which was a finalist at the inaugural SAFF Project Market in 2015. The film, completely produced and funded by Singapore's Aurora Media Holdings as well as 108 Media, is presently making waves in the international festival circuit to high acclaim, most recently at the Venice International Film Festival and Toronto Film Festival.

CONVENING WITH INTERNATIONAL MEDIA THOUGHT LEADERS

As a key event promoting collaboration, knowledge exchange and thought leadership, SMF charts the way forward for the advancement of the region's industry.

- SMF 2019 will host its inaugural CEO Mixer – a networking event which will bring together about 60 top executives and thought leaders from both the media and technology spheres, such as iQiyi, Netflix and Disney (Southeast Asia). A prelude to ATF Leaders' Summit on the following day, the CEO Mixer will offer local media companies the opportunity to network, exchange ideas and discuss key media trends and developments with global media players at this event.
- Delegates at ATF's Leaders' Summit can look forward to an insightful session featuring keynote speakers like Gong Yu, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of iQIYI and Shibasish Sarkar, Group CEO of Reliance Entertainment who will shed insights into the growth, trends and challenges facing two of the world's biggest markets. Also headlining the summit will be Giorgio Stock, President, WarnerMedia Entertainment Networks, Distribution & Advertising Sales (EMEA & APAC).
- SGIFF's Southeast Asian Producers Network has expanded to a three-day industry programme where 25 invited producers and established professionals from Singapore and Southeast Asia, including Tran Thi Bich Ngoc, Vietnamese veteran producer and co-founder of Autumn Meeting, and Xie Meng, CEO of Beijing-based Rediance will engage in dialogue and seek opportunities for collaboration. Through roundtable sessions, talks and case study presentations, they will discuss pertinent topics relating to the latest developments and strategies of content production in the region.
- With the rise of episodic content as a top choice of entertainment among consumers, SGIFF's *The Future of Cinema – Storytelling through Episodes* forum will enable storytellers and content developers to gain insights into creating captivating characters, developing engaging stories, growing and connecting with audiences with evolving

consumption patterns. Guest speakers include Singaporean filmmaker Ler Jiyuan who is showrunning HBO Asia's drama series *Invisible Stories*, Thai director and writer Ekachai Uekrongtham who helmed the second season of HBO's *Halfworlds* and Netflix's *Bangkok Love Stories*, Erika North who oversees Netflix's content development, and Tanya Yuson who is the founding partner and Chief Creative Development officer of BASE Entertainment.

- On 3 and 4 December, the world's largest online video convention, VidCon, will bring its Asian debut to Singapore. The two-day VidCon Asia Summit will be an interactive digital media playground that explores the future of online video in Asia. This year's focus is the VidCon Industry Track, featuring the platforms, creators and brands leading innovation and creativity in the online video ecosystem. The line-up includes keynotes and panel discussions by experienced storytellers, social media stars, marketers, and technologists, as well as deep-dive workshops on audience engagement and building influence in the era of video.

A FESTIVAL FOR ALL

This year's Festival will also be complemented by an array of exciting programmes, allowing members of the public – from families, children, young adults, film buffs or pop culture enthusiasts, to be a part of the celebration of the diverse talent and content that Asia has to offer.

- SMF 2019 will introduce a new Festival Village, held at Armenian Street, where members of the public can look forward to a slew of film screenings under the stars, including Japanese filmmaker Naoko Oigami's *Rent-a-Cat (2012)*, other entertainment, workshops, talks and masterclasses, immersive VR showcases, over two action-packed weekends.
- SGIFF has gathered nine local film and media personalities including Fiona Xie and Oon Shu Ann, alongside filmmakers such as Kirsten Tan, to share their self-portraits inspired by nature, at a mixed-media exhibition, Nature's Playground, held at Gardens by the Bay as it celebrates 30 editions of championing local storytellers and their creative narratives.
- The Asian Academy Creative Awards (AAA) is emerging as one of Asia-Pacific's most prestigious awards for creative excellence and a raft of broadcasters have taken up the broadcast or streaming rights to this year's ceremonies. International broadcaster

E! Entertainment has not only renewed their 34-country deal to broadcast "E! on the Asian Academy Creative Awards Red Carpet" but will be extending the coverage to a full hour (up from 30 minutes in 2018). Regional streamer HOOQ will screen both awards nights live into Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and exclusively into Indonesia. BHD's Danet Vietnam will also stream the entire awards programmes in Vietnam.

- New broadcast deals for 2019 have been announced with free to air broadcaster ViuTV Hong Kong, Mediacorp's streaming platform Toggle who will stream both nights live, and Malaysia's first and largest home-grown streaming service tonton with around 7.6 million registered users. The AAA also announced a massive digital media push with the establishment of AAA[tv] to be fronted by actress and influencer Munah Bagharib. AAA[tv] is expected to reach an audience of around 400 million people.
- The AAA also announced that this year's awards would be staged at the historic Victoria Theatre in Singapore (on 5 & 6 December) and the glittering Red Carpet would be held indoors for the first time. Lawrence Wong (who found fame in China by virtue of his role in *The Story of Yanxi Palace*) has confirmed his attendance for the awards along with Hong Kong born, US based Oli Pettigrew who will host the 2 nights of ceremonies. Yvette King is confirmed to host E!'s Red Carpet broadcast. The rest of the celebrity line-up will be shared after the Regional Winners are announced at an exclusive party in Cannes, France in mid October.

Howie Lau, Chief Industry Development Officer, IMDA, adds, "Singapore is at the heart of Asia, and home to where East meets West, and tech meets media. As a multi-genre, inclusive festival that reflects the converging media landscape, the Singapore Media Festival aims to be a platform that encourages the creation of "Made-with-Singapore" content, where everyone can participate, learn and appreciate the best that Asian content and talent have to offer."

For more details of the Singapore Media Festival, visit www.sgmediafestival.com.

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<http://www.facebook.com/sgmediafest> | #SGMediaFest

Related Resources

ANNEX A: Quotes from Partners

ANNEX B: Information on the Singapore Media Festival and its constituent events, and the SMF Festival Village

ISSUED BY THE INFOCOMM MEDIA DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

About the Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA)

The Infocomm Media Development Authority (IMDA) leads Singapore's digital transformation with infocomm media. To do this, IMDA will develop a dynamic digital economy and a cohesive digital society, driven by an exceptional infocomm media (ICM) ecosystem – by developing talent, strengthening business capabilities, and enhancing Singapore's ICM infrastructure. IMDA also regulates the telecommunications and media sectors to safeguard consumer interests while fostering a pro-business environment, and enhances Singapore's data protection regime through the Personal Data Protection Commission. For more news and information, visit www.imda.gov.sg or follow IMDA on Facebook and Twitter @IMDAsg.

About the Singapore Media Festival (SMF)

The Singapore Media Festival, hosted by the Infocomm Media Development Authority, is one of Asia's leading international media events, where the industry meets to discover the latest trends, talents and content in Asia for film, TV and digital media. Taking place from 21 November to 8 December 2019, the Singapore Media Festival brings together the Asian Academy Creative Awards (AAA), Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF) and ScreenSingapore, Singapore Comic Con (SGCC), and Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF). VidCon Asia Summit will also be held in conjunction with SMF. For more information about the Singapore Media Festival, please visit www.sgmediafestival.com.

For media clarifications, please contact:

Sarah-Marie Teo
Tate Anzur
T: +65 6568 9154
E: sarah-marie.teo@tateanzur.com

Cherell Soon
Tate Anzur
T: +65 6568 9143
E: cherell.soon@tateanzur.com

Lee Wai Leng
Manager (Communications & Marketing)
Infocomm Media Development Authority
T: +65 6202 4930
E: lee_wai_leng@imda.gov.sg

Priscilla Gan
Manager (Communications & Marketing)
Infocomm Media Development Authority
T: +65 6202 4417
E: priscilla_gan@imda.gov.sg

ANNEX A: QUOTES FROM SMF PARTNERS

“There’s certainly a lot happening at the **Asian Academy Creative Awards** with announcements coming thick and fast including the historic Victoria Theatre as this year’s venue, bringing “The Story of Yanxi Palace” star Lawrence Wong back home for the awards, Oli Pettigrew to host, a raft of new broadcasters and sponsors, including HOOQ, ViuTV Hong Kong (free to air channel), tonton Malaysia, Toggle, Danet Vietnam, E! Entertainment extending the Red Carpet to a one hour live broadcast across 34 countries, the creation of the fan friendly AAA[tv] fronted by actress and influencer Munah Bagharib.”

- Michael McKay, President, Asian Academy Creative Awards

“We are very excited to mark ATF’s 20th anniversary this year. But beyond celebrating our success to date, we also have the future in sight. With ‘Streaming the Future’ as this year’s theme, we will lead the industry in the way forward, with the brightest minds, biggest brands and freshest content all congregating at **Asia TV Forum & Market and ScreenSingapore.**”

- Yeow Hui Leng, Group Project Director, Asia TV Forum and Market & ScreenSingapore, Reed Exhibitions

“**Singapore Comic Con** is excited to be part of SMF this year with a range of top-notch experiences from esports, tabletop tournaments, event exclusives & collectibles and a whole lot of fandom. We hope to be the platform for new talents to be discovered, through our Championships of Cosplay competition and Work in Progress programme.”

- Suhaimi Sainy, Senior Manager of Pop Culture, Reed Exhibitions

“**Singapore International Film Festival** is proud to be part of the Singapore Media Festival once again. We celebrate 30 editions of SGIFF this year, rooted to our commitment in celebrating the region’s diverse voices and stories in the everyday life. We look forward to continue our partnership in propelling the voices of Southeast Asian talent and grow the vibrant ecosystem together.”

- Yuni Hadi, Executive Director, Singapore International Film Festival

“**VidCon** has always represented the intersection of where online video is today and where it is heading tomorrow, and so we’re hugely excited to bring the world’s biggest and most loved celebration of online video to Asia for the first time. This region is producing some of the most exciting online video growth globally, and so it makes sense to bring together creators, brands, platforms, technologists and media companies together to explore the latest trends, learn the secrets of building online video success, uncover the source of the tomorrow’s online video superstar, and celebrate the global rise of community-led media.

Over the coming weeks we’ll be announcing a stellar line-up of speakers from the biggest global and local brands and video technology platforms, and I can’t wait to share more.”

- Jim Louderback, VidCon General Manager and SVP

“The Singapore Media Festival will continue to add to the vibrancy of our b2b2c events calendar and position Singapore as the hub for the development of film, television, online video and digital content. We are happy to welcome Singapore Comic Con and VidCon Summit Asia to the festival for the first time. These events will provide networking avenues for fans, creators and delegates, promote capability development opportunities, and build industry thought leadership for the region. We are heartened that Singapore continues to be recognised as the preferred MICE destination for first-in-Asia shows, offering the platforms for innovation, growth and opportunities.”

- Mr Andrew Phua, Director of Exhibitions and Conferences, Singapore Tourism Board

**ANNEX B: INFORMATION ON THE SINGAPORE MEDIA FESTIVAL AND ITS
CONSTITUENT EVENTS**

SINGAPORE MEDIA FESTIVAL 2019

21 November to 8 December 2019

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More information will be announced in the run-up to the 6th Singapore Media Festival. For updates, please visit www.sgmediafestival.com.

SMF 2019 Festival Village

Armenian Street

22 to 24 November, 29 November to 1 December

Opening hours: 11.00am to 10.00pm on Fridays and Saturdays, 11.00am to 6.00pm on Sundays

Admission is free. Sign-ups required for selected programmes.

CONSTITUENT EVENTS

 <p>ASIAN ACADEMY CREATIVE AWARDS</p>	<p>Asian Academy Creative Awards 5 – 6 December 2019</p> <p>The Asian Academy Creative Awards (AAA's) is established by the Asian Academy Creative Awards Pte Ltd to serve the creative industries, as the pinnacle of their achievements in content creation and media production.</p> <p>Open to countries throughout the Asia Pacific region, the AAA honours excellence in craft and technical disciplines across multiple platforms, including television, digital, streaming and emerging technologies.</p> <p>For more details on the AAA, please visit www.asianacademycreativeawards.com.</p>
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 <p>20th atf ASIA TV FORUM & MARKET <small>in association with mptv and mibcom Asia's entertainment content market</small></p>	<p>Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF) 2019 3 – 6 December 2019</p> <p>Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF) – the region’s leading entertainment content event – is the platform of calibre to acquire knowledge, network, buy, sell, finance, distribute and co-produce across all platforms. It is the premier stage in Asia to engage with the entertainment industry’s top players from around the world. It’s where the best minds meet and the future of Asia’s content is shaped.</p> <p>ATF also offers the opportunity to discover vital trends, crucial statistics and significant foresight in TV’s digital, kids and formats arenas. Its business match-making opportunities open doors to some of the best new offerings in the region. With over 5,600 international buyers and sellers from more than 55 countries, ATF presents valuable business prospects for top of the line benefits. ATF will be celebrating its 20th edition this year.</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.asiatvforum.com.</p>
 <p>ScreenSingapore</p>	<p>ScreenSingapore 2019 4 – 6 December 2019</p> <p>ScreenSingapore – Southeast Asia’s definitive marketplace for filmmakers, producers, distributors, financiers and film buyers to explore co-production opportunities, seek financing, make deals and learn about the changing film landscape.</p> <p>After its continued success in 2018, ScreenSingapore will once again host the Southeast Asian Film Financing (SAFF) Project Market, in partnership with the Southeast Asian Audio-Visual Association (SAAVA) and Ties That Bind: Asia/Europe Producers Workshop (TTB) to connect promising filmmakers and producers from Southeast Asia and Europe with international co-producing partners, festival programmers, distributors, commissioners, and financiers.</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.screensingapore.com.sg</p>
 <p>SINGAPORE COMIC CON <small>by pop</small></p>	<p>Singapore Comic Con (SGCC) 7 – 8 December 2019</p> <p>Singapore Comic Con (SGCC), previously known as Singapore Toy, Game & Comic Convention (STGCC), is Southeast Asia’s ultimate celebration of the best of Western and Asian pop culture content. From toys, collectibles, comics, cosplay to gaming, there is something for everyone to experience.</p> <p>Singapore Comic Con is within the ReedPOP portfolio, which includes New York Comic Con, Chicago Comic & Entertainment Expo, OZ Comic Con, PAX and Star Wars Celebration.</p>

	<p>For more information, please visit: https://www.singaporecomiccon.com/en-gb.html</p>
	<p>Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF) 21 November – 1 December 2019</p> <p>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.</p> <p>For more information, please visit www.sgiff.com.</p>
HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH SMF	
	<p>VidCon Asia Summit 3 – 4 December 2019</p> <p>VidCon is the world’s largest celebration of digital video and online creators, where people who make the most interesting and successful video content on the internet can get together, connect with their communities and discuss what’s coming next.</p> <p>Launching VidCon Asia in Singapore establishes the vibrant growth and universality of this digital creative community and anchors Singapore alongside London and Melbourne as a regional hub for the industry. In 2019, VidCon will be launching the Industry Track in Asia, and scaling this up to the signature three-track VidCon model (Community, Creator, Industry) in 2020 and beyond.</p> <p>For more information, please visit: https://vidcon.asia/</p>