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REINVENTING STORYTELLING TAKES CENTRESTAGE AT THE SINGAPORE MEDIA FESTIVAL 2017

Singapore, 11 October 2017 – The Singapore Media Festival (SMF) will return for its fourth edition this year from 23 November to 3 December to celebrate the best of Asian storytelling. This year’s festival will feature a greater emphasis on emerging technologies and innovation, more platforms to springboard new content ideas, increased regional collaborations with Indonesia as SMF’s first country-of-focus, and a bigger festival village to bring the festival experience closer to the public. With a robust line-up of events in store, SMF 2017 presents fresh and exciting opportunities to discover the latest trends and reinvent the way Asian stories are told.

Hosted by the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA), the SMF consists of established constituent events including the Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF), Asian Television Awards (ATA), Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF), ScreenSingapore and IMDA-led SMF Ignite.

Robert Gilby, Chairman of the SMF Advisory Board, said, “This year’s festival continues its celebration of Asian storytelling, showcasing the region’s most talented creators and successful media businesses. Bringing the industry together provides an abundance of creative and commercial opportunities through cross-market collaborations and innovative stories that embrace new technologies.”

SPOTLIGHT ON EMERGING TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Putting a spotlight on emerging technology trends, **VR X SMF Ignite** - a new one-day conference and exhibition to be held on 29 November - will bring together technologists, creators, developers and users to exchange insights on the VR ecosystem and discuss how this new paradigm can create opportunities for businesses in media.

Participants can look forward to hearing from industry professionals such as Founder and CEO of Ultimate Creators Create Virtual Reality (UCCVR), Allen Foo, who will speak about key insights in the VR ecosystem in China. Managing Director of Vision Strategy Storytelling (VSSstory), Jacqui Hocking, who is nominated as one of Forbes’ 30 under 30 Asia’s young advertising, marketing and
media entrepreneurs, will also be moderating a panel on the use of VR solutions and immersive media for enterprises. Alexandre Regeffe, VR consultant and post-production specialist at Neotopy, will go in-depth into the post-production and storytelling process of 360 VR documentary “Expedition Antarctica”, which is a sequel to the Academy Award winning feature “La Marche de l’Empereur” (March of the Penguins). ILMxLAB will share insights about storytelling for immersive entertainment. Participants can also look forward to a larger VR Exhibition which will be located within ATF and ScreenSingapore’s market floor. The exhibition will showcase the innovative use of VR for entertainment, and explore immersive media solutions for enterprises.

**Creators X SMF Ignite**, a two-day event to be held on 28 and 29 November, will be organised in partnership with Bloomr.SG (Mediacorp Creators Network) to equip digital creators with skills that revolve around storytelling, creativity, technology integration and market grade pitching. Participants with outstanding ideas will have a chance to walk away with cash prizes. An open call for participation will be launched on the week of 16th of October to invite content creators from Singapore to be a part of the experience, where they will be able to learn from and interact with veterans and corporates in the industry.

**SGIFF’s Future of Cinema forum**, organised with Canadian filmmaker and Creative Director of EyeSteelFilm, Sandra Rodriguez, and Australian filmmaker Aaron Wilson, will delve deeper into how VR technology has allowed for more innovative storytelling on a medium that transcends film, television and traditional media.

As an associate event of SMF, Beach House Pictures will host a career and media workshop titled “Careers in Content in the Age of Digital Disruption” at PIXEL Studios on 27 and 28 November. The event will feature interactive workshops, the latest breakthroughs in technology such as VR and HDR, break-out sessions with industry professionals, panel discussions and screenings of award-winning content.

With widespread use of technology generating large amounts of data about consumers, **ATF Leaders’ Summit** will focus on big data, a key tool for uncovering audience behaviours and preferences. In addition to releasing exclusive data and delving into the rationale of modern business decisions, industry experts will shed light into today’s omniplatform environment – taking a look at how content producers can creatively utilise various technological platforms for seamless storytelling across multiple screens.
PLATFORMS TO RECOGNISE INNOVATIVE IDEAS

To recognise the best innovative ideas and stories, SGIFF’s Asian Feature Film Jury will be headed by award-winning film director behind Elizabeth and Bandit Queen, Shekhar Kapur (India). He is joined by Iranian-American screenwriter and film director, Ana Lily Amirpour (United States); filmmaker Clara Law (Hong Kong/Australia); and Locarno Festival’s Head of Programming, Mark Peranson (Switzerland). Separately, this year’s Southeast Asian Short Film Jury will be headed by the Programming Director of the Asian Future section at Tokyo International Film Festival, Kenji Ishizaka (Japan). He is supported by actress Marsha Timothy (Indonesia) and filmmaker K. Rajagopal (Singapore).

ATF will introduce its inaugural ATF Animation Pitch in search of the best ideas for original animation for children in the genres of Comedy, Adventure, Action and Fantasy. Organised in partnership with Green Gold Animation, a leader in India’s animation scene, the competition seeks to facilitate the exchange of ideas and talents between leading international television, distribution and Asian-based producers. Shortlisted participants will have the opportunity to present their ideas to a panel of experienced industry veterans, including senior executives from Disney, Netflix, Nickelodeon (a Viacom brand) and Green Gold Animation. The winner will take home a US$19,000 prize which comprises a US$2,500 cash award, as well as guidance and mentorship on their project worth US$16,500.

The Southeast Asian Film Financing (SAFF) Project Market, organised by ScreenSingapore in partnership with the Southeast Asia Audio-Visual Association and Ties That Bind, as well as the ATF Formats Pitch – which is backed by all3media international – will return this year to connect promising project ideas to potential investors and financiers. A successful case study is XTREME Media, which won the SAFF Project pitch in 2015 for “Happiness Revolution”, which is slated for release in early 2018. Xtreme Media also came out tops at last year’s inaugural ATF Formats Pitch. The format has since been adapted locally and commissioned for MediaCorp Suria, and will debut in February 2018.

To recognise significant contribution to Asia Pacific’s television industry, ATA will be presenting the ‘Award for Outstanding Contribution to Asian Television’ to the founder of Indonesian broadcasting companies, Trans TV and City Corp, Mr Chairul Tanjung on the trade Gala evening of ATA happening on 30 November.
GREATER REGIONAL COLLABORATION AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT WITH INDONESIA AS COUNTRY-OF-FOCUS

In line with the festival’s aim of driving investment opportunities into the region through collaborations, SMF 2017 will be spotlighting Indonesia as its very first Country-of-Focus. Commemorating 50 years of Singapore-Indonesia bilateral and diplomatic ties, the festival will highlight Indonesia’s rich stories, talents and achievements across all of its constituent events.

SGIFF will recognize Indonesia’s contributions to Asian Cinema by launching a Focus series titled *Histories of Tomorrow: Indonesian Cinema After the New Order*. The programme highlights the practice of filmmaking in Indonesia and explores diverse trajectories within Indonesian independent cinema.

ATF will also gather major stakeholders - particularly buyers and sellers interested to know more about the Indonesia market - as a global market intelligence firm shares its latest data on the country. The world’s fourth most populous nation will also have a strong showing at the ATF and ScreenSingapore market floor, where content producers looking to sell into Indonesia can look forward to interacting with buyers representing broadcasters and platforms such as Hooq, Indonesia Entertainment Group, MNC Contents, PT Cakrawala Andalas Televisi Antv.

ATA’s awards will feature popular Indonesian singer, songwriter and actor, Afgansyah Reza, who will take the stage to entertain and serenade audiences.

Prolific Indonesian filmmaker, Shanty Harmayn, who has been a creative force in Indonesia’s film industry for over a decade and sits on the SMF Advisory Board, said, “This is an exciting time for Indonesia’s media industry – local producers and content creators are taking risks, making bigger budget productions and telling a diversity of stories. My hope is for Indonesian content creators to be able to come to the Singapore Media Festival to have their voices and stories showcased, to exchange knowledge, and to share more about our market and potential.”
AN INCLUSIVE FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL

This year’s festival will allow members of the public to be a part of the celebration of the diverse talent and content that Asia has to offer.

From 11 November, members of the public can look out for pop-up events featuring interactive installations and short film screenings at several CapitaLand malls over the weekends. SMF 2017 will also anchor its Festival Village in Clarke Quay. The Festival Village will feature an exciting slate of fringe activities, outdoor screenings, performances, fun tech and immersive media demos and games, bringing the festival experience closer to the public on 25 and 26 November. Festival-goers will also be treated to exclusive dining offers at participating F&B establishments.

ATA will be providing fans an immersive experience of the entire "Live" show. On 1 December, ATA will open the red carpet and awards presentation to the public and broadcast it to over half a billion people across Asia Pacific. For the first time, tickets to the awards will be available on Sistic at $28, $38 and $98. The presentation and the exclusive post-party event will be broadcasted via its social media platforms in 360˚ video format. The event, which garnered over 33 million social media impressions last year, will be hosted by Baki Zainal (Malaysia), Stephanie Carrington (Singapore) and Wang Li Huan (China), with performances by world class acts such as renowned international electronic artist, GG Magree, who will be performing in Singapore for the first time, Kim Jong-kook (South Korea), who is best known as the host of the popular variety show, "Running Man", and Joanna Dong (Singapore), who finished third in last Sunday's "Sing! China".

More than 20,000 thought-leaders, creative professionals and members of the public from Singapore and around the world are expected to be part of the festival.

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

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About the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA)

The Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA) will develop a vibrant, world-class infocomm media sector that drives the economy, connects people, bonds communities and powers Singapore’s Smart Nation vision. IMDA does this by developing talent, strengthening business capabilities, and enhancing Singapore’s ICT and media infrastructure. IMDA also regulates the telecommunications and media sectors to safeguard consumer interests while fostering a pro-business environment. IMDA also 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 IMDAsg and Twitter @IMDAsg.

About the Singapore Media Festival

The Singapore Media Festival, hosted by the Info-communications Media Development Authority is set to become 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 23 November 2017 to 3 December 2017, the Singapore Media Festival brings together established media events such as the Singapore International Film Festival (SGIFF), Asia TV Forum & Market (ATF) and ScreenSingapore, the Asian Television Awards (ATA) and SMF Ignite. For more information about the Singapore Media Festival, please visit www.sgmediafestival.com.
APPENDIX A

“As the leading festival in Southeast Asia for the discovery of independent cinema, the 28th Singapore International Film Festival is committed to championing our regional films and talents. Our choice of jury members, the focus on Indonesian cinema and even the VR talk allow us to introduce the vibrancy of our region’s film scene, while looking towards its future. We hope these spark off greater public interest on where we are going as an industry, and facilitate the growth of independent filmmaking in Asia.” – Yuni Hadi, Executive Director, 28th Singapore International Film Festival.

Yuni Hadi, Executive Director, Singapore International Film Festival

“The Asian Television Awards currently has a broadcast reach of half a billion across Asia Pacific and social media impressions of about 33 million. This means that more than ever, television fans across the continent will have greater access to the Asian Television industry’s most significant and celebrated event. After our successful collaboration with Twitter last year, we are adding more social media platforms in the form of our partnerships with Dubsmash, Musical.ly, Smule and Steller. Watch out also for the 360 photos and videos which we are adding to the show, to give it a whole new dimension.”

Raymond Wong, Chairman, Asian Television Awards

“In the face of rising Asia, ATF and ScreenSingapore are the region’s leading platforms for engaging the entertainment content industry’s brightest minds and top players. With our well-rounded programme, attendees can look forward to gleaning fresh insight pertinent for succeeding in today’s content business, while securing strategic partnerships that will strengthen their foothold in Asia.”

Yeow Hui Leng, Senior Project Director, Asia TV Forum & Market and ScreenSingapore, Reed Exhibitions
“We at Bloomr.SG focus our attention on finding and fostering the next generation of content creators. By developing a network of possibilities for these new talents to evolve their video content, we aim to finesse their content from just being a hobby into becoming a sustainable passion. Through the feedback we’ve had at Bloomr.SG, we believe storytelling and creativity on social platforms has evolved in a way that the market is still trying to adapt to. This disruption has created an opportunity for budding creators to become novel voices in the industry. We see this as a great opportunity for the next generation of content makers to be seen and heard while influencing the future of creativity in Singapore, and SMF Ignite is a fantastic platform to unearth these creators and showcase their talent.”

Diogo Martins, Program Manager, Bloomr.SG (Mediacorp Creators Network)

“We are delighted to have the support of IMDA and WSG for this year’s BHP Workshop 2017 and are excited about being part of the Singapore Media Festival. We’re looking forward to two highly interactive days of insights and ideas exchange that will help to further grow and develop the media industry.”

Paul Stevens, Director, Beach House Academy