

Hong Kong Film Festival opens in Singapore (with photos)

Hong Kong Film Festival (HKFF) – Project HK, co-organised by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (HKETO) in Singapore and Singapore Film Society, opened in Singapore today (March 12). The film festival features 11 movies and short films selected from across a variety of genres to excite and entertain Singapore audiences.

To be held over three days from March 12 to 14, HKFF is a hybrid event with both cinema and online screenings. The majority of the titles are recent releases, with some of them being showcased as regional premieres. To provide opportunities for audiences to deepen their understanding of the films and to encourage exchanges between the creative industries of Hong Kong and Singapore, all cinema screenings are followed by a live-streamed Q&A with filmmakers in Hong Kong.

Speaking at the Opening Night of HKFF, the Director of the HKETO in Singapore, Mr Wong Chun-to, expressed appreciation for the overwhelming support Singapore audiences have given for the film festival and noted that the close connection and affinity between the two cities played an important role.

Mr Wong said, "Hong Kong has one of the most dynamic film industries in the world. The prosperous development of the film industry can be attributed to Hong Kong's diverse and international culture, a wealth of experience in movie making and large pool of creative talents, its freedom of expression as safeguarded by the Basic Law, a solid legal system that protects the intellectual property rights of filmmakers, and the city's status as a premier fundraising capital."

HKFF presented "Lion Rock", an inspirational feature based on the true story of former Asia's top rock climber Lai Chi-wai, as the opening film. Two documentaries, "Bamboo Theatre" and "Keep Rolling", were selected to pay tribute to Hong Kong's unique cultural heritage of using bamboo to build temporary theatres and to internationally acclaimed director Ann Hui respectively by offering audiences a close look at both through the lenses of Hong Kong filmmakers. Three Fresh Wave short films produced by emerging local filmmakers will also be presented in virtual screenings, showcasing future talents in Hong Kong's film industry.

To actively support and promote Hong Kong's film industry, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has been providing various initiatives, such as the Film Production Grant Scheme and the First Feature Film Initiative, for the long-term sustainable development of the industry.

"To address challenges faced by the film industry under the COVID-19 pandemic, the HKSAR Government announced last July that around \$260 million

has been earmarked under the Film Development Fund to implement comprehensive measures for supporting the film industry, so as to increase local film productions, nurture talents and help the film industry tide over the difficult times," Mr Wong added.

The HKFF Opening Night was well attended by representatives of arts and cultural organisations, people from the government sector, academics, business leaders and members of the media. HKFF has received support from Create Hong Kong, a dedicated agency of the HKSAR Government established to lead, champion and drive the development of the creative economy in Hong Kong.

