



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **MPA APSA ACADEMY FILM FUND AWARDS FOUR SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS AT ASIA PACIFIC SCREEN AWARDS**

*2010 Film Fund Recipient "A Separation" Takes Best Film at APSA 2011*

**SINGAPORE/BRISBANE:** Script development grants totaling US\$100,000 were awarded to four filmmakers from the Asia Pacific region tonight at the 2011 Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

The grants are offered by the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund, an initiative of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) and the Motion Picture Association (MPA) now in its second year.

The four filmmakers, who will each receive US\$25,000 from the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund, to be allocated to the script development of new feature film projects, are:

- Shawkat Amin Korke (Iraq/Kurdistan) for his project *"Memories on Stone"*. Shawkat Amin Korke was previously inducted into the Academy in 2007 for *"Crossing the Dust"*, for which he received a Best Achievement in Directing nomination in 2007.
- Peyman Moadi, from the Islamic Republic of Iran for his film *"Those Days"*. Peyman was nominated this year for Best Performance by an Actor for *"A Separation"*, which was the first film to be completed with funding from the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund.
- Maryam Ebrahimi, Iranian-born Swedish filmmaker, for the documentary *"Burqas Behind Bars"*. Maryam was also inducted into the academy this year, winning the Best Documentary Feature Award for *"I Was Worth 50 Sheep"*.
- Piyas Gupta (India) for his *"The Cricket Tree"*. A former member of the APSA International Jury, Piyas was inducted into the academy in 2008. His film *"The Prisoner"* won the Jury Grand Prize that year.

More than 70 filmmakers from 25 countries submitted entries to the 2011 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund. The fund offers script development grants to stimulate the development of feature film projects originated by APSA Academy members and their colleagues across Asia-Pacific.

The three panel members for the 2011 MPA APSA Academy Film Fund were Australian/Chinese filmmaker Tony Ayres, Australian producer, film historian and distributor Andrew Pike and Chinese scriptwriter and director Xue Xiaolu.

Of the four projects to receive grants in 2010, Asghar Farhadi's "*A Separation*" has already achieved significant worldwide success. It premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival earlier this year where it won the Golden Bear for Best Film as well as the Silver Bears for Best Actress and Actor. It won the Sydney Film Festival's Sydney Film Prize in Australia and tonight it took home top honours as Best Film at the Asia Pacific Screen Awards.

Following the announcement, President and Managing Director Asia Pacific, Motion Picture Association, Mike Ellis said, "In our first year, the MPA APSA Academy Film Fund surpassed all of our expectations, and we are tremendously pleased for Asghar Farhadi and his colleagues on the success of "*A Separation*". This year, the quality of the submissions to the Fund was extraordinary, and we thank our esteemed Selection Panelists Andrew Pike, Xue Xiaolu and Tony Ayres for the difficult job in choosing the successful recipients. Congratulations to all four filmmakers on their achievement. We wish them a fruitful development process in the months to come and every success in their endeavor."

The APSA Academy includes almost 500 of Asia-Pacific's most influential filmmakers. All Winners, Nominees, Jury and Nominations Council members are inducted into the Academy. Since its formation in 2008, the APSA Academy has become a vital industry network. Co-production opportunities are fostered. Ideas and development opportunities are shared.

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**ABOUT APSA:** The Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) promotes and acclaims the cinematic excellence and cultural diversity of the vast Asia-Pacific region. An international cultural initiative of the Queensland State Government, Australia, it brings together in a unique collaboration Paris-based UNESCO and FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations.

APSA honours the film culture of a region stretching from Egypt in the west to the Cook Islands in the east, and from Russia in the north to New Zealand in the south. In total, an area representing four billion people; 60 percent of the global population; 70 countries and areas; one third of the earth; and half the world's film output.

Established in 2007, the annual Awards are the region's highest accolade in film. Winners are determined by an International Jury and films are judged on cinematic excellence and the way in which they attest to their cultural origins.

APSA's other initiatives include television production, development funding and its Academy of some 400 members made up of APSA Nominees, Winners, Nominations Council and Jury members – the region's most respected names in film which increases by 100 members each year as new nominees are inducted.

APSA joins with UNESCO to promote a greater understanding of the significance of all cultures in our world and furthers the common interest of Asia-Pacific film producers on behalf of FIAPF-International Federation of Film Producers Associations.

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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.

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