



## Media Release

For immediate release

# Australian Academy celebrates 2nd year of Asia International Engagement Program in Shanghai

## Event Series included announcement of films in competition for 2018 Best Asian Film Award and new partner; and first-ever masterclass in China

A year after the historic launch of the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA)'s Asia International Engagement Program in June 2017, AACTA returned to Shanghai to present an exciting Event Series, including the Academy's first-ever masterclass in China – **Animal Logic: Reimagining Story Through Animation and VFX** – and an exclusive cocktail event to mark the launch of the 2018 Program.

At the exclusive event, AACTA announced several of the films in competition for the 2018 AACTA Award for Best Asian Film, as well as a new Presenting Partner for the Award; Eureka International Group (EIG).

The event was attended by **Tony Jaa** and **Tiger Hu Chen**, two of the stars of action film **TRIPLE THREAT**, as well as **Zhenjian Yang**, producer of the upcoming epic fantasy film **ASURA**. Both films will be in competition for the AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by EIG.

The Best Asian Film Award is the cornerstone of AACTA's Asia International Engagement Program and acknowledges the finest films of the last twelve months from 19 Asian regions, reflecting the popularity and importance of Asian films in Australia.

Among the films from the China region competing for a nomination for year's Best Asian Film Award presented by EIG, are: the second all-time highest grossing film in China, action war film **OPERATION RED SEA**; Chinese-Australian co-produced sci-fi thriller **GUARDIANS OF THE TOMB**; award-winning films **GIRLS ALWAYS HAPPY** and **YOUTH**; Chinese-Hong Kong adventure film **MONSTER HUNT 2**, the sequel to the box-office record breaking **MONSTER HUNT**; romantic comedy **HOW LONG WILL I LOVE U**; sci-fi thriller **BATTLE OF MEMORIES**; and upcoming film **DETECTIVE DEE: THE FOUR HEAVENLY KINGS**.

Japanese films competing for a nomination will include: this year's Palme D'Or winner **SHOP LIFTERS**; multiple Award-winning drama and Japan's Oscars® entry **HER LOVE BOILS BATHWATER**; one of the top performing Japanese films at the Australian box office, **MARY AND THE WITCH'S FLOWER**; award-winning film **LEGEND OF THE DEMON CAT**; and upcoming animation **MIRAI NO MIRAI**.

Also in competition are: the second most viewed film in South Korean history, **ALONG WITH THE GODS: THE TWO WORLDS**, which is also currently the number one South Korean film at the Australian box office; upcoming South Korean spy drama **THE SPY GONE NORTH**; and Malaysian action-adventure **TOMBIRUO**, directed by Australian and past AACTA Award winner **Seth Larney**. These films join the previously announced Indian films in competition for the Best Asian Film Award.

Following a sold-out event at Vivid Sydney last year, AACTA's **Animal Logic: Reimagining Story Through Animation and VFX** masterclass was the first of the events to take place in China as part of the Official Program of Shanghai International Film Festival. Hosted at the Shanghai Film Plaza on Tuesday 19 June, the session explored the creative process behind making films with insights from Animal Logic's CEO and co-founder **Zareh Nalbandian**, production designer **Grant Freckelton** and VFX supervisor **Will Reichelt**.

The panel showcased a selection of stunning visuals from some of Animal Logic's most iconic productions, giving the 400 Chinese film fans and students in attendance an exclusive look at the techniques used to create some of cinema's most memorable scenes, from development to release.

"It has been amazing to watch the Chinese film industry go from strength to strength in scale, diversity and creative ambition, and I see growing opportunities for exciting creative collaborations between Australian and Chinese filmmakers," said **Animal Logic CEO and co-founder Zareh Nalbandian**. "Animal Logic's partnership with great Chinese filmmakers goes back decades and has been the source of some of our most artistic accomplishments. We were honoured to be at the Shanghai International Film Festival to share our history of creative collaborations with some of the world's greatest filmmakers and to have the opportunity to connect with so many talented film enthusiasts who attended our masterclass."

In addition to the Presenting Partnership for the AACTA Award for Best Asian Film, EIG's sponsorship will also extend to the wider Asia International Engagement Program as well as the annual AACTA Awards in Sydney.

"We are extremely proud to partner with AACTA on their exceptional Asia International Engagement Program during this exciting time of growth for both the Australian and Asian screen industries," said Eureka International Group Chairman **Kelvin Dong**. "As the Australian Academy shows the best and brightest of the Asian and Australian film industries to new audiences through their Program, EIG aim to do the same, using our expertise to guide companies, such as Feeling Fruity and UGG Tasman, to successfully expose their products and services globally."

"We have been thrilled to see such rapid growth and interest in our Asia International Engagement Program over the past year and this year will only continue to see the program grow," said **AFI | AACTA CEO Damian Trehwella**. "This week saw the Academy present our first-ever masterclass in China as well as another successful industry-attended cocktail event promoting positive relationships and collaborations between the Australian and Asian film industries. This is an exciting time of growth for our industries, with some of the world's highest quality films coming out of Asia and Australia – such as Palme D'Or-winning productions **SHOP LIFTERS** (Japan) and **ALL THESE CREATURES** (Australia) as well as box office hits **PETER RABBIT** (Australia) and **OPERATION RED SEA** (China) – and we look forward to continuing to encourage, promote and watch our neighbouring industries thrive."

– ENDS –

The AACTA Awards are supported by the New South Wales Government via its tourism and major events agency, Destination NSW.

## PRESS RESOURCES

Event photos as well as selected film stills and posters from the films in competition for Best Asian Film can be downloaded from Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/f0hxbggz65kmqoj/AADkCIEFjpPoaae0lxkTmSiSa?dl=0>

## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Official hashtag: #AACTAs | Facebook: /AACTAawards | Twitter: @aacta | Instagram: @aacta

For further information about AFI | AACTA visit: [www.aacta.org](http://www.aacta.org)

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## AACTA ASIA INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The key aim of AACTA's Asia International Engagement Program is to foster the burgeoning relationship between the film industries of Australia and its closest Asian neighbours. The Program not only champions the skills and achievements of Asian filmmakers to audiences and industry in Australia, but also promotes Australia's highly skilled practitioners to the booming industries of Asia, developing meaningful pathways for collaborations between Australia and the Asian region.

The cornerstone of the Program is the **AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by EIG**, recognising excellence in filmmaking throughout the Asian region. The Award reflects the growing popularity and importance of Asian films in Australia, with the growing Chinese and Indian diaspora having had a substantial impact on Australian box office and cinema trends.

The AACTA Award for Best Asian Film presented by EIG will be presented at the 8th AACTA Awards presented by Foxtel, held on Wednesday 5 December 2018 in Sydney and telecast on Channel 7 for the fourth consecutive year, with encore screenings on Foxtel.

#### **ANIMAL LOGIC**

Animal Logic is one of the world's leading digital production studios, creating award-winning animation and visual effects for the film and television industries for over 25 years. Animal Logic collaborates with world-class filmmakers to develop and produce compelling stories with universal appeal. From teaching penguins how to dance in **HAPPY FEET**, to bringing bricks to life in **THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE**, to producing the recent global box-office success **PETER RABBIT**, Animal Logic has developed a unique style of visual storytelling that uses ground breaking technology, innovative thinking and creativity to capture the imagination of audiences throughout the world.

#### **EUREKA INTERNATIONAL GROUP (EIG)**

EIG is a global company with over 20 years' experience in international business and relationships. With major head offices located in Melbourne, Beijing and Shanghai, EIG specialises in business across the globe, including Australia, China, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Korea, Japan, Dubai, USA and various regions across Europe.

EIG is built on strong business values – transparency, honesty and openness. The multifaceted business provides services and products including: property development; project financing; fund management; immigration and education services; high-end tourism; agriculture and horticultural farming; international trade; retail franchise (food and beverage); and software development.

A strategic leader in the marketplace, EIG has an in-depth knowledge of all aspects of modern business, marketing and international trade. EIG's companies are constantly growing and evolving, allowing them to be innovate, strengthen their international business relationships and help guide other companies to successfully expose their products and services globally.

**Thanks to the generous support of our partners and sponsors:**

