

NEW PROJECTS IN FOCUS AT 2ND ANNUAL AUSTRALIA CHINA CO-PRODUCTION FORUM

There was standing room only at the 2nd Annual Australia China Co-production Forum held today on November 22, 2016 at Fox Studios Sydney. Following on from the success of the inaugural event held last year and aimed at establishing business and creative connections between the Australian and Chinese film industries, the second annual event focused on new co-production projects. It was hosted by the Australian Screen Association (ASA), Motion Picture Association (MPA) International Chinese Film Festival (ICFF), China Co-Production Film Corporation and the China Cultural Center in Sydney.

Many markets around the world are competing to work with the Chinese film industry. Australia is fast attracting the interest of the Chinese with its offer of attractive production incentives, highly skilled crews, world-class sound stages, globally awarded post and VFX studios and diverse locations. Across the Asia-Pacific, emerging film industries are looking to adopt competitive film and production tax incentives as a means of stimulating film industry activity in their local market.

Direct outcomes from the inaugural Co-production Forum in Sydney last November included an announcement that Sky Films+ and Darkroom Films will collaborate on two co-production projects with anticipated locations involving Beijing, Shanghai, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia. Additionally, Yan Wang, founding partner of SkyFilm Capital is collaborating with Ausfilm member, Plastic Wax in Sydney on the project *My Robot Brother*.

Australia and China are developing a close film industry relationship which is already demonstrating notable results in the form of a number of co-productions such as *Nest*, *Tying the Knot* and *33 Postcards*. By way of encouraging this continuous level of engagement, in November last year a significant cross-section of the Australian film industry met with a major film delegation from China for the first Australia China Co-production Forum. This year's event took on a similar format with an extended focus on individual project development with producers from both countries, China and Australia, presenting their projects.

The first session to kick off was "Effective Australia China Collaborations" where attendees heard from *Nest* Producers, Mark Lazarus and Tim Phillips and the team on *Bleeding Steel* - Ellen Eliasoph - President and CEO, Village Roadshow Pictures Asia and Producer - Paul Currie, moderated by Asia Editor of Variety magazine, Patrick Frater.

In discussing their co-production, Mark Lazarus made mention of how encouraging he found the China Film Coproduction Corporation in helping them "realise a strong vision for our film". "They wanted us to succeed and to contribute a new film experience to Chinese audiences", he said.

Ellen Eliasoph referred to the "Holy Grail" as the opportunity to partner the energy, spontaneity and dynamism of Chinese crews with the sophisticated production and expertise of Australia.

Part two of this session featured Writer/Director Pauline Chan, CEO of China Lion Entertainment, Jiang Yanming and VP & Head of Greater China, MPA, William Feng. In reaching out to filmmakers, Pauline stressed the importance of coming to China with a project at the earliest stage of a film idea, as most Chinese partners will want input into the

script process.

Ausfilm's CEO, Debra Richards moderated a session on maximising Australian film incentives featuring Tony Clark from Rising Sun Pictures and Adam Scott from Spectrum Films. Adam reinforced the message that you can shoot your film anyway, anywhere and come to Australia for your post-production, sound and music requirements.

For the finale, the ICFF's Lanwei Gong hosted a presentation on China's newest projects including *Young Dragon in Paradise, Pay or Die, Bus Coffee* and *Lost in Australia*. Lanwei also announced a new ICFF Film Fund aimed at funding Australia China Co-productions.

The event was supported by Ausfilm, Fox Studios Australia, Village Roadshow Pictures Asia, Allianz Global Corporate and Specialty, Variety, .film and the China Culture Centre (Sydney), Screen NSW and in association with Screen Australia.

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ABOUT ASA

The **Australian Screen Association** (ASA) represents the film and television content and distribution industry in Australia and our core mission is to advance the business and art of filmmaking, increasing its enjoyment around the world - www.screenassociation.com.au

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