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present

# APPRENTICE

a film by  
BOO JUNFENG



OFFICIAL SELECTION  
**UN CERTAIN REGARD**  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES

**INTERNATIONAL SALES AGENT**

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### LOGLINE

Aiman, a 28-year-old correctional officer, is transferred to the territory's top prison. He strikes up a friendship with Rahim, who is revealed to be the chief executioner of the prison, and one of the world's most prolific. Can Aiman overcome his conscience and a past that haunts him to become the executioner's apprentice?

### SYNOPSIS

Aiman is a 28-year-old Malay correctional officer who is recently transferred to the territory's top prison. He lives with his older sister Suhaila in a modest housing estate.

At his new workplace, Aiman begins to take an interest in a 65-year-old sergeant named Rahim. Soon, it is revealed that the charismatic Rahim is actually the long-serving chief executioner of the prison. Rahim also takes notice of the principled and diligent Aiman. When Rahim's assistant suddenly quits, he asks Aiman to become his apprentice. Aiman tells Suhaila of his new job position, but Suhaila becomes upset, as their father was actually executed by Rahim. Aiman knew this all along.

Can Aiman overcome his conscience and a haunted past to possibly take over as the next chief executioner?

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Written and Directed by	BOO Junfeng
Story by	BOO Junfeng, Raymond PHATHANAVIRANGOON
Producers	Raymond PHATHANAVIRANGOON, Fran BORGIA, TAN Fong Cheng
Executive Producers	Eric KHOO, PANG Ho-Cheung, Subi LIANG, Jim ROGERS, Paige PARKER
Co-Executive Producers	Alvin CHAU, Alex DONG
Co-Producers	Jonas KATZENSTEIN, Maximilian LEO, Tom DERCOURT, Sophie ERBS
Associate Producers	HUANG Junxiang, Rachel HIGGINS, Philipp STENDEBACH
Director of Photography	Benoit SOLER
Production Designer	James PAGE
Editors	Natalie SOH, Lee CHATAMETIKOOL
Art Director	Andy PHUA
Costumer Designer	Meredith LEE
Supervising Sound Editor	Ting Li LIM
Composers	Alexander ZEKKE, Matthew James KELLY

Countries	Singapore/Germany/France/Hong Kong/Qatar
Duration	96.05 min
Language	Malay/English
Format	Digital 2k
Image	Colour
Shooting Format	ARRI ALEXA
Ratio:	1.85:1
Shooting Locations	Singapore, Australia

## CAST

Aiman	FIR Rahman
Rahim	WAN HANAFI Su
Suhaila	MASTURA Ahmad
James	KOH Boon Pin
Joseph	Nickson CHENG
Randy	Crispian CHAN
Hock	Gerald CHEW

## **DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**

Capital punishment, in countries where it is still practised, is often viewed as the ultimate form of justice and a deterrent to crime. Amidst the debates and narratives surrounding the subject, a key character whose point of view we tend to neglect is the person tasked to pull the lever – the executioner. What does it mean to be empowered to kill? Is he merely doing a job? Where does he see himself in the moral and ethical equation?

Also absent are voices from family members of the executed. Prisoners on death row often come from an already impoverished stratum of society – how would the death penalty further affect these families?

The film looks at both perspectives through our conflicted protagonist, Aiman. His struggle to reconcile authority with morality presents dimensions to the issue rarely brought up in discussions.

### **A Psychological Space**

Larangan Prison (literally meaning “Forbidden Prison”) is a spatial representation of Aiman’s mental state. It is a character in its own right – dark yet sterile, with corridors echoing faraway sounds as if haunted by the past.

As Aiman navigates the corridors in search of spaces his father spent his last days, he is also journeying deep into himself. He stares into the abyss and confronts his fears, eventually finding his way into the gallows. I intend the atmosphere of the prison to evoke mystery and loss. The light and shadows cast by fluorescent lights and grille windows set a caliginous tone for the film.

The only place that offers Aiman some warmth and solace is the flat he shares with his sister Suhaila, a typical public housing unit in a working-class suburb of Singapore. Here, we can feel the textures and rhythms of everyday life.

The languages spoken are determined by the characters’ ethnicity. Aiman, Rahim and Suhaila are Malay, the indigenous minority of Singapore. Malay is usually spoken at home, but English, Singapore’s lingua franca, is used for work. So when Rahim talks to Aiman in Malay in the prison, a more intimate bond between them is forged.

### **Four Years of Research and Production**

In the course of writing, research and production over the past four years, I have interviewed many people whose stories have inspired and disturbed me. Among them are former executioners and religious counselors who have worked inside the system, and families trapped in a poverty cycle worsened by the execution of breadwinners.

It has been a fascinating (and often tormenting) journey, trying to put myself in Aiman’s shoes. At a more visceral level, it has forced me to examine the complexity of the issues surrounding capital punishment – issues we have conveniently put out of sight and out of mind.

Boo Junfeng

## DIRECTOR'S BIOGRAPHY



**BOO Junfeng** made his feature-length directorial debut in 2010 with *SANDCASTLE*, which premiered at the International Critics' Week at Cannes Film Festival. The film was subsequently invited to film festivals including Toronto, Pusan, Vancouver and London, among others. It won several awards, including Best Film, Best Director and NETPAC Jury Award at the Vietnam International Film Festival, Best Cinematography and Special Jury Mention at the Gotham Screen International Film Festival, Best Local Film & Best Local Director at the Singapore Entertainment Awards 2011, and was listed by The Wall Street Journal as one of Asia's most notable films of 2010.

Trained in film schools in Singapore and Spain, Boo Junfeng's award-winning short films include *UN RETRATO DE FAMILIA* (2005), *STRANGER* (2005), *THE CHANGI MURALS* (2006), *KATONG FUGUE* (2007), *KELUAR BARIS* (2008) and *TANJONG RHU* (2009). In 2009, he became the first recipient of the McNally Award for Excellence in the Arts – the valedictorian honour of Lasalle College of the Arts. He was also conferred the Young Artist Award in 2009, and the Singapore Youth Award in 2011 by the government of Singapore.

## FEATURES

### **Apprentice (2016) (2<sup>nd</sup> feature film)**

Official Selection, Cannes Un Certain Regard 2016

### **7 Letters (2015) (omnibus)**

Official Selection, Busan Film Festival 2015

### **Sandcastle (2010) (1<sup>st</sup> feature film)**

In Competition, 49<sup>th</sup> International Critics' Week, Cannes Film Festival 2010

Official Selection, Toronto, Busan, Vancouver, Chicago, Seattle and London Film Festivals

*Best Film, Best Director & NETPAC Jury Award* – Vietnam International Film Festival 2010

*Best Cinematography & Special Jury Mention* – Gotham Screen International Film Festival 2011

*Special Mention* – Hong Kong Asian Film Festival 2010

*Best Local Film & Best Local Director* – Singapore Entertainment Awards 2010

### **Lucky 7 (2008) (omnibus)**

Official Selection, 37<sup>th</sup> Rotterdam Film Festival

In Competition, 21<sup>st</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

Official Selection, Vancouver, Bangkok and Vladivostok Film Festivals

## **SHORT FILMS**

### **Tanjong Rhu (The Casuarina Cove) (2009)**

Official Selection, Berlin Film Festival Panorama 2009

*Audience Award* – Torino LGBT Film Festival 2009

### **Keluar Baris (Homecoming) (2008)**

In Competition, 31<sup>st</sup> Clermont Ferrand Short Film Festival

*Best Film, Best Director and Best Cinematography Awards* – 21<sup>st</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

### **Katong Fugue (2007)**

In Competition, 30<sup>th</sup> Clermont Ferrand Short Film Festival

*Special Jury Prize* – 20<sup>th</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

### **The Changi Murals (2006)**

Official Selection, 20<sup>th</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

### **Guo Ke (Stranger) (2005)**

In Competition, 18<sup>th</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

### **Un Retrato de Familia (A Family Portrait) (2005)**

*Best Film and Special Achievement Awards* – 18<sup>th</sup> Singapore International Film Festival

**Of Punishment and Forgiveness, Deterrence and Compassion:**  
**AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR BOO JUNFENG**

**Capital punishment is a frequent topic in movies, but this film surprisingly portrays the executioner Rahim as unrepentant and even proud of his profession. What prompted you to create such a character?**

When I first began researching on the film, it was the bureaucratic stoicism surrounding executions that fascinated me. I wanted to believe that there was something human underneath it. We often see executions as an institutional thing, but ultimately, it is a human being who needs to pull the lever. I was interested to find out how one comes to terms with routinely performing capital punishments. Rahim's character is a result of that.

I initially expected executioners to be more haunted by the experience of their profession, and wrote an early treatment based upon this assumption. But when I met them in person, I was surprised that this was not necessarily the case. In fact, the ones whom I had interviewed took pride in what they did. They believed that they were helping to deliver justice on behalf of the state, and were among the very few who could bring themselves to do it. As such, they were able to morally justify the executions that they had performed without remorse. Moreover, what I found most shocking was how likable they were, and how normal their lives seemed to be – as parents, as co-workers and as citizens.

Admittedly, I was not expecting this, and this revelation completely upended my early interpretation of Rahim and his character. I was honestly at a loss for a while as to how I was going to rewrite Rahim – how is it possible to portray an executioner who is remorseless, yet still seems humane and relatable? After a period of time, it dawned on me that, in many ways, this was as much my own story of discovery about the hangman as it is Aiman's. And I began to rewrite Rahim's character to reflect the realities of the executioners whom I had met.

**Conversely, how Aiman is characterized is much more ambiguous from the start, from his intentions to his personal attitude about executions. This despite him being personally adversely affected by the death penalty. Why did you decide to make him less sure of his stance on executions, when it was clear how badly he was affected by the law?**

To me, Aiman's journey reflects in many ways my own journey into this story. Although I have my own perspectives about the death penalty prior to making this film, the research process definitely challenged many of my preconceived notions about the subject matter, even if in the end it did not change my views. Therefore, I intentionally wrote Aiman's character to hew close to the audience's point of view – his ambivalent, conflicted feelings about capital punishment from the start reflects many viewers' positions as well.

On one hand, Aiman has every reason to despise what his father did, and how it had adversely affected his own life. And to show that he is not like his father, he purposefully sides with the law by becoming its enforcer. With this line of thinking, Aiman could easily be seen as a proponent of the death penalty, as he would feel that his father deserved his punishment under the law. On the other hand, the fact that Aiman grew out of his delinquent past despite the sins of his father demonstrates that people are capable of changing. With this viewpoint, he ends up empathizing with the offenders and thus believes in rehabilitation and second chances – notions at odds with capital punishment.

This contention between what is right and wrong is, in effect, a reflection of the disparate views surrounding capital punishment. And Aiman's unique position as both victim and enforcer of the law means that he embodies all of these conflicting ideals. The tensions between punishment and forgiveness, deterrence and compassion are central to any debate about the death penalty. As such, Aiman acts as a conduit whereby people form their opinions on the issue based upon where their conscience lay.

For Aiman himself, this issue is also clearly a personal one. As he enters the spaces where his father spent his last days, he is also trying to find a sliver of redemption for the man whom everyone else has deemed a monster. The conflicting emotions that come his way – from his responsibilities as a prison officer, the executions he witnesses, his friendship and respect for Rahim, his sister's incessant concern and imminent departure – they all pile up, and pushes him into a crisis of conscience.

### **What is the ending about? Why did you decide to cut to black before the final scene ends?**

The original intention for wanting to write the film this way was to let viewers decide for themselves, based on their own position on capital punishment, whether or not Aiman pulls the lever. However, as the story and characters came to life, it became no longer just about the audience's inherent position on the issue. It is Aiman's story – who he is and what he has become – which brings us to this moment in the film.

Still, I did not want to define the ending for the audience. I wanted to cut to black with the audience being in Aiman's shoes, feeling his angst and uncertainty and deciding for themselves what happens next. Whether or not he does it, or whether or not he should do it, needs to be up for discussion. And we want those bigger discussions to happen.

### **The lead characters in the film are all Malay, but it seems clear that the majority of officers in the film are Chinese. How did you decide to make the leads all primarily Malay? And were racial aspects figured into the film?**

I had the intention of casting "colourblind" from the start and was ready to sculpt the characters according to the chosen actors. We invited actors of different races to try for the lead roles. In the end, we found Wan Hanafi Su and Fir Rahman to have the best chemistry between them. That was when I decided to make both characters Malay. This required a substantial rewrite to include cultural and racial nuances, but we kept the characters and their relationships intact.

Moreover, I believe the race factor added an interesting layer to their relationship in the film. Both characters were originally written as outsiders who did not completely fit into the system. Now that they are both from the same minority group and speak the same language, they form an even stronger bond with one another.

### **How were the scenes in the prison shot? Were they shot on location?**

I wanted to make use of the architecture of a prison as sort of a projection of Aiman's psychological space. The labyrinth of cell doors and layers of secured gates disorientate him. As he gets closer to the gallows, the spaces get darker and more ominous. Hence, even if the prison was fictional, it had to be real spaces that I could depict cinematically.

The two-story gallows was shot in a set built within an abandoned building in Singapore. Its design is based on information we had gathered from the executioners we spoke with, and references from publicly available information of decommissioned gallows in the UK and South Africa. We constructed it carefully so that the rooms and hallways and the gallows were interlinked, and that the trapdoor was real.

For the other parts of the prison, I was looking for a historic British-colonial style facility with modern security features but none of the locations in Singapore or other British colonies in Southeast Asia were suitable or available. In the end, we shot most of the prison yards, cellblocks, armoury and watchtowers in Australia – at Maitland Gaol and Parramatta Correctional Centre, both decommissioned facilities in New South Wales. The offices, archives, locker room and stairwells were then separately filmed in multiple locations scattered throughout Singapore.

The key challenge was in making sure that all these disparate locations matched one another, because in one scene, the characters could be walking from an admin office shot in a Singaporean warehouse, through an armoury in Parramatta, to a walkway in Maitland, and then a gallows corridor at the constructed set in Singapore. We planned it very carefully with our production designer, art director and cinematographer and their teams so that it was all very meticulously pieced together to form one coherent prison complex.



## CAST



**FIR Rahman (as Aiman)**

Fir Rahman is a versatile actor with a foundation from the local Malay theatre and TV entertainment scene. He emerged as winner in a Singaporean network's talent competition, Juara, in the 'Suria's New Face' category. Over the years, Fir has honed his craft across multiple leading and supporting roles, appearing in a string of popular Singaporean television programmes. APPRENTICE (2016) by Boo Junfeng is his first feature film.



**WAN HANAFI Su (as Rahim)**

A veteran actor in Malaysia who has had extensive background in theatre, Wan Hanafi Su has worked in the entertainment industry for over 20 years. A reclusive talent, his discerning nature has seen him appear in just a handful of films – works which have earned him popular and critical acclaim. With his deep baritone and distinguished yet weathered look, Hanafi Su delivers roles with gravitas. Some of his famous works include THE MALAY CHRONICLES: BLOODLINES (2011) by Yusry bin Abdul Halim, BUNOHAN: RETURN TO MURDER (2011) by Dain Said, and Liew Seng Tat's MEN WHO SAVE THE WORLD (2014), among others.



### **MASTURA Ahmad (as Suhaila)**

A versatile theatre, television and film actress as well as TV host, Mastura Ahmad is a familiar face in Singapore and Malaysia. She is a regular award-winner at Mediacorp TV Suria's Pesta Perdana Awards, having won Best Actress twice for JERITAN SEPI in 2001 and 2002 as well as Best Supporting Actress twice for DIMENSI KE-4 (2007) and MANDAI UNITED (2009). Apart from hosting numerous television programmes, her feature film starring roles include SALAWATI (2008) by Marc X. Grigoroff (2008) as well as 2014's BANTING, directed by Raihan Halim.

### **CREW**

#### **Benoit SOLER (Director of Photography)**

Benoit Soler graduated from the National Film and Television School in the UK, where he learned his skills under the mentorship of Brian Tufano (TRAINSPOTTING, BILLY ELLIOT), Sean Bobitt (HUNGER, SHAME), Billy Williams and Roger Deakins. Since his graduation he has been working as cinematographer on feature films, TV dramas and commercials. He has shot acclaimed short films such as THE BOY WHO WANTED TO BE A LION (dir: Alois di Leo, Cannes Critic's Week 2010), PEOPLE ARE STRANGE (dir: Julien Hallard, Clermont-Ferrand 2013) and VIOLENCE EN REUNION (dir: Karim Boukercha, Venice Orizzonti 2015). He worked on his first feature film with Anthony Chen on ILO ILO (2013) which premiered at the Directors Fortnight in Cannes and won the Camera d'Or.

#### **James PAGE (Production Designer)**

James Page is a UK-born art director based in Singapore who has been heavily involved in film, television, theatre and commercial works for the past 10 years. His film works include Ho Tzu Nyen's EARTH (2009, Venice Orizzonti) and CLOUD OF UNKNOWING (2011, Venice Biennale 2011, Sundance New Frontiers 2012), Boo Junfeng's SANDCASTLE (2010, Cannes Critics' Week), James Leong's CAMERA (2014) as well as other projects in post-production.

#### **Natalie SOH (Editor)**

Natalie Soh joined the post-production company Infinite Studios in 2008 and quickly gained experience and recognition as an adept and versatile editor of films, television series, and commercials. She has worked on over a dozen feature films, ranging from arthouse films to commercial box office hits. Her feature film credits include the award-winning drama SANDCASTLE (2010) by Boo Junfeng, music drama THAT GIRL IN PINAFORE (2012) by Chai Yee Wai, festival favourite IN THE ROOM (2015) by Eric Khoo, among others. To escape the cabin fever of long hours in the editing suite, Natalie hangs out with her best friend Miro, a violin.

### **Lee CHATAMETIKOOL (Editor)**

Lee Chatametikool is an award-winning editor and filmmaker. His move back home to Bangkok in 2001, for Apichatpong Weerasethakul's first feature, *BLISSFULLY YOURS*, was the start of a decade of fruitful collaboration with Thailand's new generation of filmmakers. After working on films such as the horror hit *SHUTTER* (2004), he was twice awarded Best Editor at the Asian Film Awards, for Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *SYNDROMES AND A CENTURY* (2006) and Chris Chong's *KARAOKE* (2009). The Bangkok Film Critic's Assembly also named him Best Editor in 2008 for Aditya Assarat's *WONDERFUL TOWN*. He took a break from editing to direct his debut feature film, *CONCRETE CLOUDS* (2013), which premiered in Busan New Currents and won Best Film and Best Director at Thailand's National Film Association Awards.

### **Ting Li LIM (Supervising Sound Editor)**

Ting Li Lim is a Singaporean sound designer whose works have been presented at film festivals such as Cannes, Berlin, Rotterdam and Busan. She won the Verna Fields Award in Sound Editing at the MPSE Golden Reel Awards in Los Angeles in 2014 and was one of the two sound designers selected to attend the prestigious Asian Film Academy headed by Abbas Kiarostami in 2010. She currently heads the sound department at Mocha Chai Laboratories in Singapore.

### **Alexander ZEKKE (Composer)**

Alexander Zekke is a composer and cellist who is the only composer to have composed for Pina Baush (*Como el mosquito en la piedra, ay sí, sí, sí*). He works regularly with Carolyn Carlson and composes music for many choreographers. He studied the cello in St. Petersburg, Frankfurt Main and London, and played as a soloist and chamber musician in Mexico, Brazil, France (including the Louvre and Chaillot) and in various locations across Europe. His film compositions include Marcela Said's *THE SUMMER OF FLYING FISH* (2013, Cannes Directors' Fortnight), Pierre Léon's *DEUX REMI, DEUX* (2015, Locarno), *(EASTERN DRIFT* (2010, Berlinale Forum) and *PEACE TO US IN OUR DREAMS* (2015, Cannes Directors' Fortnight) by Sharunas Bartas, among others.

### **Matthew James KELLY (Composer)**

Matt Kelly has enjoyed a broad range of musical experiences as a multi-instrumentalist performing, composing and producing. He studied at NFTS and has collaborated with artists including Coldcut and Vashti Bunyan, worked as a producer for Ninja Tune records and also as assistant to film composer Patrick Doyle. Recent works include BBC documentaries, TV work on *RIPPER STREET* (2012- ) for BBC2 plus numerous shorts including the BAFTA-winning *SLEEPING WITH THE FISHES* (2013) by Yousif Al-Khalifa as well as the Best Student Foreign Film Academy Award winner *MISS TODD* (2013) by Kristina Yee. Feature film credits include *AS YOU WERE* (2014, Tokyo Film Festival) by Liao Jiekai, *IO, ARLECCHINO* (2014, Rome Film Festival) by Matteo Bini and Giorgio Pasotti, among others.

## PRODUCERS' BIOGRAPHIES

**Raymond PHATHANAVIRANGOON** is a film producer and an international film festival programmer who is currently an official delegate for Cannes Critics' Week and programmer at the Bogota International Film Festival. He acted as a Reading Committee Member for the Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) and was an advisory member of the Asian Film Awards (AFA). Previously he served as international programmer for the Toronto International Film Festival and the Toronto Reel Asian Film Festival as well as Programme Consultant for the Hong Kong International Film Festival. Prior to that, he was the Director of Marketing & Special Projects (Acquisitions) for international sales agent Fortissimo Films. He has served as jury at festival such as Sarajevo, Vladivostok, Antalya, Cinema One and others. Most recently he co-founded the Southeast Asia Fiction Film Lab (SEAFIC), a 9-month intensive script lab for Southeast Asian filmmakers.

### Filmography:

- 2016 Boo Junfeng's APPRENTICE (Producer) – Cannes Un Certain Regard
- 2015 Josh Kim's HOW TO WIN AT CHECKERS (Co-Producer) – Berlin Panorama
- 2014 Pang Ho-cheung's ABERDEEN (Co-Producer) – Opening Film, Hong Kong
- 2011 Pen-ek Ratanaruang's HEADSHOT (Producer) – Berlin Panorama, Toronto Film Festival
- 2010 Boo Junfeng's SANDCASTLE (Associate Producer) – Cannes Critics' Week  
Pang Ho-cheung's DREAM HOME (Co-Producer) – Opening Film, Udine
- 2008 Kiyoshi Kurosawa's TOKYO SONATA (Associate Producer) – Cannes Un Certain Regard

**Fran BORGIA** was born in southern Spain and is based in Singapore since 2004. Borgia is the founder of Akanga Film Asia. He was the Producer and Editor for HERE, Ho Tzu Nyen's first feature film that was presented at Cannes Directors' Fortnight in 2009; and for the medium-length film, EARTH, presented at Venice Film Festival in 2009. Since then he has produced noteworthy feature films such as SANDCASTLE, Boo Junfeng's first feature film that premiered at Cannes Critics' Week in 2010; DISAPPEARING LANDSCAPE by Vladimir Todorovic, which premiered at International Film Festival Rotterdam 2013, and MISTER JOHN by Christine Molloy & Joe Lawlor, an UK-Ireland-Singapore co-production, which premiered at Edinburgh International Film Festival 2013. In 2015 he produced K Rajagopal's segment for the omnibus feature 7 LETTERS (Busan International Film Festival 2015). Recently he co-produced Lav Diaz's A LULLABY TO THE SORROWFUL MYSTERY, which premiered in competition at the Berlinale 2016 where it won the Silver Bear Alfred Bauer Prize for "a feature film that opens new perspectives".

### Filmography:

- 2016 Boo Junfeng's APPRENTICE (Producer) – Cannes Un Certain Regard  
Lav Diaz's A LULLABY TO THE SORROWFUL MYSTERY (Co-Producer) – Berlin Competition
- 2015 K Rajagopal's 7 LETTERS (omnibus, segment THE FLAME) (Producer) – Busan
- 2013 Christine Molloy & Joe Lawlor's MISTER JOHN (Producer) – Edinburgh  
Vladimir Todorovic's DISAPPEARING LANDSCAPE (Producer) – Rotterdam
- 2011 Christine Molloy & Joe Lawlor's TIONG BAHRU (short) (Producer) – Rotterdam  
Ho Tzu Nyen's THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING (short)(Producer) – Sundance
- 2010 Boo Junfeng's SANDCASTLE (Producer) – Cannes Critics' Week  
Michael Kam's MASALA MAMA (short) (Producer) – Berlin Generations
- 2009 Ho Tzu Nyen's EARTH (short) (Producer) – Venice Horizons  
Ho Tzu Nyen's HERE (Producer) – Cannes Directors' Fortnight

**TAN Fong Cheng** cut her teeth in the industry producing television commercials since 1995. She has worked with all manner of clients, from MNCs to governmental bodies. In 2001, she decided to concentrate on movies and came on board Zhao Wei Films. Since then, she has produced many of the company's most noteworthy TV series as well as films including Khoo's BE WITH ME and NO DAY OFF, as well as Royston Tan's 15 and 881. A crowning achievement for her was producing Eric Khoo's MY MAGIC, which was invited to compete in the prestigious Main Competition of the 61st Cannes Film Festival.

Fong Cheng also produced Eric Khoo's first animation feature film, TATSUMI, which was invited to the 64th Cannes Film Festival and made its North American premiere at The Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). A stalwart in the Singapore film industry, she recently produced Eric Khoo's IN THE ROOM (40<sup>th</sup> Toronto International Festival, 20<sup>th</sup> Busan International Film Festival) and Boo Junfeng's upcoming film APPRENTICE.

**Filmography:**

- 2016 Boo Junfeng's APPRENTICE (Producer) – Cannes Un Certain Regard
- 2015 Eric Khoo's WANTON MEE (Producer) – San Sebastian, Berlin  
Eric Khoo's IN THE ROOM (Producer) – Toronto, San Sebastian
- 2013 Gilbert Chan's GHOST CHILD (Producer/Writer)
- 2011 Gilbert Chan's 23:59 (Associate Producer)  
Eric Khoo's TATSUMI (Producer) – Cannes Un Certain Regard
- 2009 The Mo Brothers' MACABRE (Associate Producer)
- 2008 Brian Gothong Tan's INVISIBLE CHILDREN (Producer)  
Eric Khoo's MY MAGIC (Producer) – Cannes Competition
- 2007 Royston Tan's 881 (Producer) – Busan Film Festival
- 2005 Eric Khoo's BE WITH ME (Co-Producer) – Cannes Directors' Fortnight  
Royston Tan's 4:30 (Associate Producer) – Berlin Forum
- 2004 Toh Hai Leong's ZOMBIE DOGS (docu) (Producer)
- 2003 Royston Tan's 15 (Producer) – Venice Film Festival

## **COMPANY PROFILES**

### **Peanut Pictures (Singapore)**

**Director BOO Junfeng & Producer Raymond PHATHANAVIRANGOON**

Peanut Pictures was formed in 2009 with the aim of producing quality films in Singapore. Its first feature film, SANDCASTLE by Boo Junfeng (2010) was produced in collaboration with Fortissimo Films and Zhao Wei Films and funded by the Singapore Film Commission. It was the first film from Singapore to be selected at Cannes Film Festival's International Critics' Week. APPRENTICE is Peanut Picture's second film.

### **Akanga Film Asia (Singapore)**

**Producer Fran BORGIA**

Akanga Film Asia is an independent production company created in 2005 in Singapore to produce quality films. Our projects aim to create a cultural link between Asia and the rest of the world. Titles produced by Akanga include Ho Tzu Nyen's HERE (Cannes Directors' Fortnight 2009), Boo Junfeng's SANDCASTLE (Cannes Critics' Week 2010), Vladimir Todorovic's DISAPPEARING LANDSCAPE (Rotterdam 2013), Christine Molloy & Joe Lawlor's MISTER JOHN (Edinburgh 2013) and Lav Diaz's Berlinale Alfred Bauer prizewinner A LULLABY TO THE SORROWFUL MYSTERY (Co-Producer).

### **Zhao Wei Films (Singapore)**

**Executive Producer Eric KHOO & Producer TAN Fong Cheng**

Zhao Wei Films, helmed by Eric Khoo, is committed to the nurturing of local Singaporean talent. Its maiden film, MEE POK MAN, provided a jolt to the local scene in 1995 when it paved the way for the resurgence of filmmaking in Singapore. 12 STOREYS (1997) followed, being the first Singapore film ever to have been invited to the Cannes Film Festival Un Certain Regard section.

In 2003, Zhao Wei Films produced 15, the critically acclaimed film exposing juvenile delinquency in Singapore directed by Royston Tan. BE WITH ME (2005), directed by Eric Khoo, was selected to be the opening film of the 2005 Cannes Directors' Fortnight and in 2008, MY MAGIC was selected for Cannes Film Festival's Competition section. In 2010, it produced Boo Junfeng's SANDCASTLE. The subsequent year saw Zhao Wei Films embark on its first animated effort, TATSUMI (2011), which was screened at Cannes Un Certain Regard and MoMA.

Their latest productions IN THE ROOM (2015), were screened at the Toronto and Busan while CINEMA (2015) was shown at the Telluride Film Festival.

### **Making Film Productions (Hong Kong)**

**Executive Producers PANG Ho-cheung & Subi LIANG**

Producer-director Pang Ho-Cheung and Producer Subi Liang established Making Film Productions in 2001. Since then, it has gone on to produce award-winning titles such as 2004's BEYOND OUR KEN, listed as one of the 10 best Chinese movies of the year by the Hong Kong Film Critics Association; EXODUS (Best Cinematography, San Sebastian Film Festival), LOVE IN A PUFF (Best Screenplay, Hong Kong Film Awards) and DREAM HOME (Best Actress and Best Special Makeup, Sitges Film Festival). In 2012, the company produced two box-office hits, LOVE IN THE BUFF and VULGARIA. Other projects included 2010's short film NAIL CLIPPERS MONSTERS, co-presented by Samsung and Sina, had over 400 million click-throughs. Its latest production, Jordan Schiele's DOG DAYS (2016) was selected for Berlin Panorama.

Making Film started to explore the English film market in 2015 and founded a sub-brand Making Horror. Its productions include BORDER CROSSING, YOU WERE NEVER HERE and DISMISSED.

**augenschein Filmproduktion (Germany)**  
**Co-producers Jonas KATZENSTEIN & Maximilian LEO**

The company was founded in 2008 and is located in Cologne and Hamburg. augenschein produces and co-produces feature films. The focus is on auteur driven movies with the potential for A-festivals and an impact on audiences worldwide.

augenschein is currently producing the Romanian-French-German movie ANA, MON AMOUR by Calin Peter Netzer (director of CHILD'S POSE, Berlin Golden Bear winner 2013), as well as the Argentinian-German-French movie INVISIBLE by Pablo Giorgelli (LAS ACACIAS, Cannes Camera d'Or 2011). Its latest productions are MY HAPPY FAMILY by Simon Gross and Nana Ekvimishvili (IN BLOOM, Berlinale 2013 and Georgia's Foreign Film Oscar entry 2014), as well as the German first feature MONSTER by Kerstin Polte, starring Corinna Harfouch.

Its latest releases include, among others, the Kazakh-French-German co-production THE WOUNDED ANGEL by Emir Baigazin (Berlinale Panorama Special 2016) and the Romanian-German-French feature BOX by Florin Șerban (Karlov Vary 2015 FIPRESCI prize, Toronto and BFI London Film Festivals).

**Cinéma Defacto (France)**  
**Co-producers Tom DERCOURT & Sophie ERBS**

Film producer since 1996, Tom Dercourt was joined by Sophie Erbs in 2004, and they created Cinéma Defacto in 2007. Mainly focusing on coproducing internationally as lead producers but also as co-producers, they have acquired a sense of expertise on every aspect of the cinematographic work. From script development to financing engineering, shooting & film editing, and sales & festivals marketing strategies. They both aim to accompany a director's vision, from aesthetic sense to political commitment.

The catalog of the company includes 26 feature, almost all of which were made in co-production and premiered in A-list festivals. Titles include THE PAGE TURNER by Denis Dercourt (Un Certain Regard 2006), THE HERE AFTER by Magnus Von Horn (Director's Fortnight 2015), LAYLA by Pia Marais (Berlinale Competition 2013), THE SUMMER OF THE FLYING FISH by Marcela Said (Director's Fortnight 2013), WE ARE NEVER ALONE by Petr Václav (Berlinale Forum 2016, Tagesspiegel preis).

## **COMPANY CREDITS**

Production Companies	Akanga Film Asia, Peanut Pictures, Zhao Wei Films (Singapore)
Co-Producers	augenschein Filmproduktion (Germany), Cinema Defacto (France)
Executive Producers	Making Film Productions, Sun Entertainment Culture (Hong Kong)
Associate Producer	Birdcage Films (Sydney, Australia)

## **FUNDERS AND SUPPORT**

Rotterdam Cinemart 2012 (Netherlands)  
Busan Asian Cinema Fund Script Development 2012 (South Korea)  
Media Development Authority Development Fund 2012 (Singapore)  
The Jerusalem International Film Lab 2013 (Israel)  
Film- und Medienstiftung NRW 2013 (Germany)  
CNC–Ministère des Affaires Etrangères–Institut Français–Aide aux cinémas du monde 2013 (France)  
ZDF / Das Kleine Fernsehspiel 2014 (Germany)  
Media Development Authority Production Grant 2014 (Singapore)  
Doha Film Institute Post-production Fund 2015 (Qatar)  
Région Île-de-France 2015 (France)  
TorinoFilmLab Audience Design Fund 2016 (Italy)

## **POST-PRODUCTION**

Infinite Frameworks (Singapore)  
Ike no Koi (Paris, France)  
Kantana Sound Studios (Bangkok, Thailand)  
Sounds Good Collective (Singapore)  
Home Studios Pte Ltd. (Singapore)

## **SPONSORS**

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