The Metroplex and Sundance Institute Proudly Present
2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong
September 22 to October 2, 2016

13 Independent Films Showcased, including Award-Winners and Hong Kong Premieres

(Hong Kong - 18 August, 2016) Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong returns for the third time in September, with a delegation of independent filmmakers presenting a line-up that includes premieres of award-winning films direct from this year’s Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, U.S.A. From September 22 to October 2, 2016, 13 selected films will premiere in Hong Kong, along with forum and panel discussions with filmmakers to satisfy every film lover’s needs.

Tickets will be for sale starting August 18 for The Metroplex VIP Metropolitans, and opens to the general public on August 22, 2016.

13 Independent Films Premiere in Hong Kong with Filmmakers in Attendance

The 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong will showcase 12 narrative and documentary films from the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, including films from the U.S., UK and China. In addition, this year’s lineup includes the festival’s first local Hong Kong production as well as the winning entries from the festival’s Short Film Competition for local filmmakers.

Themes range from romance and friendship to parenthood and sexuality. These 13 outstanding films are: Swiss Army Man; Captain Fantastic; Christine; Equity; The Free World; The Intervention; Life, Animated; Lovesong; Southside With You; Spa Night; The Lovers and the Despot; Pleasure-Love and She Objects. Full summaries of each film follow below.

The Festival’s opening film will be Swiss Army Man, starring Paul Dano and Daniel Radcliffe, winner of the 2016 Sundance Film Festival Directing Award (U.S. Dramatic), from director duo Daniel Scheinert and Daniel Kwan (aka The Daniels) – Swiss Army Man tells the story about a man going on an epic adventure with a dead body, which is also his last hope in escaping a deserted island. This outrageously imaginative indie hit will premiere in Hong Kong on September 23, with director Daniel Scheinert attending the post-screening Q&A session to meet the audiences.

Other filmmakers who will attend the 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong to engage in post-screening Q&As with audiences include: Matt Ross (Captain
Fantastic), Antonio Campos (Christine), Meera Menon (Equity), Jason Lew (The Free World), Clea DuVall (The Intervention), Roger Ross Williams (Life, Animated), Richard Tanne (Southside With You), Andrew Ahn (Spa Night), Huang Yao (Pleasure-Love), and Nicola Fan (She Objects).

Josephine Lam and Stuart Wang, Directors of The Metroplex, said, "The third edition of Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong comes back bolder and richer. The tremendous success of the last two editions has proven that Hong Kong embraces the creativity of independent filmmaking. We remain committed to supporting the strong emerging independent film culture in Hong Kong as we enter the third year of collaboration with Sundance Institute on the Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong in 2016. Recognizing the important role that shorts play in cinema storytelling, and to nurture the creativity of local independent filmmakers, this year a shorts competition and a new short film program from Sundance Film Festival was brought to Hong Kong for the first time. For years to come and together with Sundance Institute, we look forward to growing this world class film festival into a must attend event for moviephiles in Hong Kong."

John Cooper, Director of Sundance Film Festival, said, "This year's robust Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong lineup continues our tradition of connecting filmmakers and their unique stories to new audiences. We're pleased to expand this year's program to include the winning entry from our Hong Kong Short Film Competition alongside new feature-length works from American independent and international filmmakers."

**New section “World Cinema” to appreciate independent films worldwide**

To further convey the spirit of appreciating quality independent films from all over the world, this year we introduce a new section “World Cinema” to the program, which includes three films: The Lovers and the Despot (UK); Pleasure-Love (China); and She Objects (Hong Kong).

The Lovers and the Despot and Pleasure-Love were featured in the World Cinema session at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival in Utah. The Lovers and The Despot tells the true story of one of Hong Kong’s most controversial kidnapping incidents; back in 1978, a South Korean celebrity couple (film director Shin Sang-ok and actress Choi Eun-hee) was kidnapped by North Korean supreme leader and film buff Kim Jong-il to produce films for North Korea. Rare recordings of Kim Jong-il allow the world to have a glimpse of what was going through the dictator’s mind. Chinese director Huang Yao’s directorial debut Pleasure-Love was the only Asian film in Competition at the Sundance Film Festival this year; where audiences were intrigued by its beautiful images and portrayal on relationships.

Hong Kong production She Objects will bring some local flavor to the festival. This documentary discusses how the mass media and society's stereotypes of women affect young girls nowadays. As the only Hong Kong feature film showing in the festival, it also carries a symbolic meaning, introducing local indie films to an international platform and encouraging cultural exchange through films.

**Short Film Competition & Award-winning Shorts**

With the vision of nurturing local filmmakers, The Metroplex and Sundance Institute organized the 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong Short Film Showcase earlier this year, which featured a collection of award-winning shorts, Short Film Master Class and Short Film Competition.
A wide range of entries has been received for the competition, and a panel of judges from the U.S. and Hong Kong will deliberate. The most outstanding shorts will be screened during the festival, alongside the feature film lineup. Winners and official lineup will be announced during the opening ceremony on September 22, 2016.

**Panel Discussions & VR Forum**

**Hong Kong & U.S. Directors on Panel**

The Filmmakers Panel Discussion has become a tradition at the Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong, where each year local audiences, indie-film lovers, and fellow filmmakers can meet our visiting directors and hear firsthand stories of making their film, alongside insight on the business side of filmmaking, including funding, casting, releasing and festival strategy. This year, there will be two sessions of panel discussion: on September 24, U.S. visiting directors will be on the panel; and on September 25, we are bringing in Hong Kong directors to join the U.S. directors on the panel. These filmmakers will exchange experience and insights, and compare filmmaking in Hong Kong and the U.S. Both panels will be moderated by Trevor Groth (Director of Programming, Sundance Film Festival).

The rising popularity of Virtual Reality (VR) technology is exciting news for filmmakers, as it opens many new possibilities in terms of filmmaking. There will be a VR Forum on September 24 at The Metroplex, where industry experts and professionals will share their insights on the future development of VR, and how it could be incorporated into modern day filmmaking.

Admission fee for the above panels is HKD30 per person per show (with complimentary popcorn), interested parties can register online via [hk.sundance.org](http://hk.sundance.org). Panelist information will also be announced on the website.

**2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong** priority booking for The Metroplex VIP Metropolitans begins on August 18, and opens to the general public on August 22, 2016. Tickets can be purchased at The Metroplex Box Office, The Metroplex Internet Ticketing (www.metroplex.com.hk) and The Metroplex iPhone and Android Apps Ticketing (HKD8 handling fee will be charged for each ticket purchased online or via Apps).

Film ticket price: Adult - HKD90; Student/Child/Senior - HKD80. Become a VIP Metropolitan to enjoy **20% discount** on single ticket and **30% discount** on special package (includes 1 ticket for each film).

The **2016 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong** is co-organized by The Metroplex and Sundance Institute; with the support of the following parties –

- **Official VR Provider:** LeVR
- **Official Post Provider:** One Cool Production Ltd.
- **Official Providers:** Perrier, Samuel Adams Boston Lager
- **Media Partners:** Hong Kong Movie, Timable, alivenotdead.com
- **Friends of Festival:** Barco, Dolby, Hong Kong Film Development Council, Uber and U.S. Consulate General for Hong Kong and Macau.

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**Film Details**

**Swiss Army Man** (Director: Daniel Scheinert and Daniel Kwan) - Alone on a tiny deserted island, Hank has given up all hope of ever making it home again. But one day everything changes when a dead body washes ashore, and he soon realizes it may be his last opportunity to escape certain death. Armed with his new “friend” and an unusual bag of tricks, Hank goes on an epic adventure to get back to the woman of his dreams. Winner of 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Directing Award (U.S. Dramatic). OPENING FILM / HONG KONG PREMIERE

**Captain Fantastic** (Director: Matt Ross) - Deep in the forests of the Pacific Northwest, isolated from society, a devoted father (Viggo Mortensen) dedicates his life to transforming his six young children into extraordinary adults. But when a tragedy strikes the family, they are forced to leave this self-created paradise and begin a journey into the outside world that challenges his idea of what it means to be a parent and brings into question everything he's taught them. Prize for Best Director, Un Certain Regard in Cannes Film Festival. HONG KONG PREMIERE

**Christine** (Director: Antonio Campos) - Christine (Rebecca Hall) is an ambitious 29-year-old news reporter in Sarasota, Florida, circa 1974. Relentlessly motivated to succeed, she knows she has talent, but being a driven career woman in the 1970s comes with its own challenges, especially when competition for a promotion, unrequited love for a coworker, and a tumultuous home life lead to a dissolution of self. With ratings in the cellar, WZRB’s station manager issues a mandate to deliver juicier and more exploitative stories, a style firmly at odds with Christine’s serious brand of issue-based journalism. To accomplish her goals, she must overcome her self-doubt and give people what they want. HONG KONG PREMIERE

**Equity** (Director: Meera Menon) - Senior investment banker Naomi Bishop’s (Anna Gunn) world of high-power big money is brutal and fierce, and one she thrives in. When a controversial IPO threatens the fragile balance of power and confidentiality, Naomi finds herself entangled in a web of politics and deception. With an aggressive prosecutor (Alysia Reiner) from her past on her heels, and a strained relationship with her junior, Erin (Sarah Megan Thomas), Naomi is forced to reexamine her own ambitions and the cutthroat world she loves - one where women have yet to break the glass ceiling. HONG KONG PREMIERE

**The Free World** (Director: Jason Lew) - Mo Lundy (Boyd Holbrook) is a man attempting to move past a brutal two-decade stint in prison for a crime he didn’t commit. He spends his days caring for abused animals at a shelter while trying in vain to reintegrate into a world that feels utterly foreign to him. A chance encounter with Doris (Elizabeth Moss), an enigmatic kindred spirit equally scarred by violence, lands him in a situation where choosing to do the right thing means risking his hard-won freedom and his life. HONG KONG PREMIERE

**The Intervention** (Director: Clea DuVall) - Control freak bride-to-be Annie gathers her group of thirty-something friends at the picturesque Savannah family summer home of sisters Jessie (writer/director Clea DuVall) and Ruby to convince Ruby and her workaholic husband, Peter, that their relationship has turned irreparably toxic. Joined by Annie’s easygoing fiancé, Jessie’s partner, Sarah, and the reluctant Jack and his sprightly 22-year-old girlfriend, the group makes fumbling attempts to jump-start the intervention throughout the booze-fueled weekend, while resolutely avoiding dealing with their own vices and regrets. Winner of 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Special Jury Prize for Individual Performance (Melanie Lynskey) / HONG KONG PREMIERE
Life, Animated (Director: Roger Ross Williams) - At three years old, a chatty, energetic little boy named Owen Suskind ceased to speak, disappearing into autism with apparently no way out. Almost four years passed and the only stimuli that engaged Owen were Disney films. Then one day, his father donned a puppet—lago, the wisecracking parrot from Aladdin—and asked, “What’s it like to be you?” And poof! Owen replied, with dialogue from the movie. Winner of 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Directing Award (Documentary) / HONG KONG PREMIERE

Lovesong (Director: So Yong Kim) – Sarah (Riley Keough), a young mother, raises her precocious daughter in their country home while feeling abandoned by her husband, who perpetually travels for work. When Sarah’s old friend Mindy (Jena Malone) comes to visit, they decide to take a road trip, and after an alcohol-infused heart-to-heart, a long unspoken intimacy emerges between the longtime friends. Later Sarah is unable to articulate her thoughts about her husband or Mindy, and Mindy makes the decision to leave the trip and go home. Three years later, the two women are reunited for Mindy’s wedding, and Sarah is forced to reconcile the reality of her feelings. HONG KONG PREMIERE

Southside With You (Director: Richard Tanne) – Inspired by Barack and Michelle Obama’s first date, Southside With You recounts the eventful summer day in 1989 when a young law firm associate named Barack Obama (Parker Sawyers) tried to woo lawyer Michelle Robinson (Tika Sumpter) during a daylong date that took them from the Art Institute of Chicago to a screening of Spike Lee’s Do the Right Thing to the site of their first kiss outside of an ice cream parlor. HONG KONG PREMIERE

Spa Night (Director: Andrew Ahn) - David Cho is in that curious threshold between late teens and manhood. He lives in a tight-knit, traditional home in the heart of Koreatown, Los Angeles, with his first-generation parents. David works at the family restaurant, but business is slow and the restaurant is forced to close. His mother, Soyoung, finds another waitressing gig, but his unemployed father, Jin, begins to spiral downward. As the patriarchal balance teeters, tension builds at home. Winner of 2016 Sundance Film Festival: Special Jury Prize for Breakthrough Performance (Joe Seo) / HONG KONG PREMIERE

NEW “WORLD CINEMA” SECTION

The Lovers and The Despot (Director: Robert Cannan and Ross Adam) - They were the Brangelina of ’70s South Korea—the romance between the debonair film director Shin Sang-ok and glamorous actress Choi Eun-hee took them to the heights of South Korean society. Fame took a toll on their love, but it also attracted unbelievable twists of fate. The two find themselves kidnapped by the North Korean regime, and they are forced to play along with bizarre filmmaking project led by superfan cinephile Kim Jong-il. As they endure torture, imprisonment, and surveillance, their romance is rekindled, and they realize escape is only possible through filmmaking—but the smallest mistake in their plans could cost them their lives. HONG KONG PREMIERE

Pleasure·Love (Director: Huang Yao) - 20-year-old young man Jiang Nan meets a beautiful painter named Hu Yajie (36 years old), who has a butterfly-shaped birthmark on her body. They have sex in an old residential building and thereafter frequent this love nest of theirs. One year later the painter gets killed in a car accident, leaving a bottle containing her birthday wish note in a tree hole back in her hometown, which she hides many years earlier... 21-year-old college graduate Hu Yajie comes to Beijing and meets a middle-aged writer named Jiang Nan. When they are about to be consumed by erotic flames, Jiang Nan gets cooled off by the butterfly-shaped scar on Hu Yajie’s body... Pleasure·Love represents an intricate circle of love, capturing the agony and the ecstasy of two intertwined relationships that reflect back on each other. HONG KONG PREMIERE
**She Objects** (Director: Nicola Fan) - Every day, we are bombarded with mainstream media that objectifies women, glorifies thinness and portrays women in stereotypical roles. Given this generation’s mass consumption of social media, it becomes difficult to distinguish between airbrushed fantasy from reality. Featuring engaging insights from celebrities including singer-writer-actress Joyce Cheng and real-life stories, the documentary looks into the correlation between the media’s portrayal of women and eating disorders and self-esteem issues for girls. Commissioned by The Women’s Foundation, in partnership with Women Helping Women, and directed by 27-year-old Nicola Fan, *She Objects* is the first documentary of its kind in Hong Kong to explore how traditional and new forms of media create and exacerbate gender stereotypes with often damaging consequences.

**About The Metroplex**
In 2014 The Metroplex opened its doors to the public as a state-of-the-art 9 screen multiplex at the heart of Eastern Kowloon. The Metroplex is a self-operated independent cinema under Hopewell Holdings Limited, showing a wide range of films from Hollywood blockbusters, international award-winning pictures, film festivals, local, specialty and independent films. Located in one of the Group’s investment properties, E-Max of Kowloonbay International Trade and Exhibition Centre (KITEC), The Metroplex has the flexibility in cross platform entertainment such as film/music festivals, live streaming concerts and shows, multimedia conferences, and many other events of similar genre. For more details, please visit www.metroplex.com.hk.

**About Sundance Institute**
Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and new media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences to artists in igniting new ideas, discovering original voices, and building a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *Beasts of the Southern Wild, Fruitvale Station, Sin Nombre, The Invisible War, The Square, Dirty Wars, Spring Awakening, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join Sundance Institute on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.