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## REEL ASIAN & HKETO CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF HONG KONG

Toronto, May 11, 2016 - the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, proudly presents the Hong Kong Spirit Spring Showcase, featuring notable works that highlight the formidable spirit of educators in Hong Kong. This event is proudly supported by Lead Sponsor, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office Toronto (HKETO).

The Hong Kong Spirit Film Showcase will spotlight the Toronto premieres of **LITTLE BIG MASTER** and **MY VOICE, MY LIFE**. Both films will be presented on Saturday, May 21, at AGO Jackman Hall. All screenings are free and open to the public.

*"We are excited to partner with HKETO to present two outstanding and heartwarming films that truly exude the spirit of Hong Kong's future generation and the social impact and importance of nurturing youth. Reel Asian has been proudly showcasing Hong Kong films and filmmakers for the past 20 years including works by Philip Yung, Fruit Chan, Dante Lam and Yim Ho. We are excited to bring more Hong Kong cinema to Toronto audiences and honoured to shine the spotlight on Academy award-winning director Ruby Yang on May 21st."* - Louanne Chan, Executive Director, Reel Asian

*"The two movies selected this time are of similar genres, each telling a story about Hong Kong people's optimism and resilience in overcoming challenges and adversity. This is the essence of the Hong Kong spirit."* - Kathy Chan, HKETO Director.

*"Hong Kong has been making movies for more than a century and the film industry continues to thrive. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government will continue to support and promote the Hong Kong film industry worldwide and we encourage more film co-production between Hong Kong and Canada through the Memorandum of Understanding over TV and film co-production signed between the two places," she added.*

### **LITTLE BIG MASTER**

Miriam Yeung stars in **LITTLE BIG MASTER** as Lui Wai-hung, a highly-paid headmistress of an international kindergarten, who quits her job and reignites her passion in teaching by taking on the Yuen Tin Kindergarten, which is on the verge of closure with only five students remaining. **LITTLE BIG MASTER** was a critical and commercial success, becoming the highest-grossing domestic film of 2015 in the Hong Kong territory. Also starring Hong Kong superstar Louis Koo.

**LITTLE BIG MASTER**'s director, **Adrian Kwan**, who is known as the "gospel director," studied films in Canada. He came back to Hong Kong in 1992 and has since been part of productions for such titles as **COMRADES: ALMOST A LOVE STORY** and **WHO'S THE WOMAN, WHO'S THE MAN** directed by Peter Chan. Kwan's directorial works such as **LIFE IS A MIRACLE**, and **MIRACLE BOX**, focus on spreading hope and positive core values through film.

### **MY VOICE, MY LIFE**

Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Ruby Yang's newest film, **MY VOICE, MY LIFE**, follows an unlikely group of misfit high school students from Hong Kong cast together for a musical theatre performance. From low self-esteem to blindness, each student confronts unique personal challenges in the process of developing his or her character. **MY VOICE, MY LIFE** was listed among "Hong Kong's 5 Most Essential Films of 2014" in the Wall Street Journal.

**Ruby Yang** is a noted Chinese American filmmaker whose work in documentary and dramatic film has earned her an Academy Award, two Academy nominations, and numerous other international awards, including an Emmy, the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Journalism Award, and the Global Health Council Media Award. Along with Producer Thomas Lennon, Yang founded the Chang Ai Media Project in 2003. Chang Ai's trilogy of short documentary films about modern China, all directed by Yang, include THE BLOOD OF YINGZHOU DISTRICT which won an Oscar in 2007, THE WARRIORS OF QUIGANG, which received an Academy Award nomination for best documentary short in 2011, and TONGZHI IN LOVE, which was short-listed in the same category in 2008.

Director Ruby Yang will be in attendance on May 21, along with one of the film's participants, Tabitha Chan.

**FILM SCREENING DATES & TIMES:**

**LITTLE BIG MASTER**

Saturday, May 21, 2016, 5:00 p.m.  
AGO Jackman Hall – 317 Dundas Street West (@ McCaul)  
Cantonese with English subtitles, 112 min

**MY VOICE, MY LIFE (director in attendance)**

Saturday, May 21, 2016, 7:45 p.m.  
AGO Jackman Hall – 317 Dundas Street West (@ McCaul)  
Cantonese with English subtitles, 92 min

**Open to the public - Free admission.**

Reel Asian® is Canada's premier pan-Asian international film festival, showcasing contemporary film and videos from East, South and Southeast Asia. This year's milestone 20<sup>th</sup> festival takes place November 10-19, 2016 in downtown Toronto, North York, and Richmond Hill.

For more information contact:

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