

Filmmaker in Focus

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Hong Kong, 19 January 2011 –The 35th Hong Kong International Film Festival (March 20 to April 5, 2011) commends famous Hong Kong filmmaker, WAI Ka-fai, with a series of events during the festival, with screenings, seminars and the publication of a special catalogue.

**WAI Ka-fai, Filmmaker in Focus** will bring to the Festival audience eleven of WAI's most celebrated films made from 1995 to 2009.

“WAI Ka-fai, who works in both film and television, is one of Hong Kong's most talented writers and producers. The HKIFF is pleased to have a chance pay a tribute to him by reviewing and exploring his illustrious career. We also hope that this effort will inspire and encourage newcomers to the industry,” said LI Cheuk-to, Artistic Director of HKIFF.

No genre is safe from being upended in WAI Ka-fai's magical acts of commercial cinema. Celebrated for his creative partnership with helmer Johnnie TO in Milkyway Image, the Hong Kong production house established in 1996, WAI made his name as a writer and producer for TV before powering into film directing in the mid-1990s. The dusty Eastern Western *Peace Hotel* (1995) and the manic gangland mashup *Too Many Ways to Be No. 1* (1997) sounded a warning of WAI's push for shaking things up, and by 2000 Milkyway Image leapt from taut thrillers to risk-taking box-office smashes, with WAI taking on scriptwriting, producing and co-directing duties.

Often paired with the most commercial of hooks — emergency-room dramas, festive mahjong farces, a megastar in a muscle suit — offbeat explorations of fate, psychology and the metaphysical became hallmarks of WAI's canon. In more recent works *Mad Detective* (2007, with TO) and *Written By* (2009), pop norms are exploited and torn apart, intricate setups teeter on collapse and audiences are kept on the alert, clinging to every narrative thread. At a time that his city's filmmakers place ever more emphasis on the mainland blockbuster scene, WAI still favours a singular, challenging course in smaller widescreen experiments — and Hong Kong cinema is all the richer for it.

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society Limited  
香港國際電影節協會有限公司

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## Face to Face

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Face to Face features WAI Ka-fai sharing his insights on film, art and life. A complimentary bi-lingual publication on the filmmaker will also be offered to all participants.

Date: 4 April 2011

Time: 2:30pm

Location: Hong Kong Cultural Centre Grand Theatre  
10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong

Website: <http://jcca.hkiff.org/>

### List of titles screening at the 35th HKIFF:

- *The Peace Hotel*, 1995
- *Too Many Ways to Be No. 1*, 1997
- *The Longest Nite*, 1998
- *Needing You*, 2000
- *Help*, 2000
- *Wu Yen*, 2001
- *Fat Choi Spirit (Mahjong Warrior)*, 2002
- *My Left Eye Sees Ghosts*, 2002
- *Running on Karma*, 2003
- *Mad Detective*, 2007
- *Written By*, 2009

### About the Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS)

The Hong Kong International Film Festival Society (HKIFFS) is a charitable, non-profit and non-governmental organisation dedicated to the discovery and promotion of creativity in the art and culture of film.

Through its year-round programmes, the mission of the Society is to strengthen global appreciation of Chinese film culture and to promote inspiring films from around the world, enriching the cultural life of Hong Kong.

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Committed to the development of a vibrant film culture in Hong Kong and Asia, the Society presents three annual flagship events in March and April: The Hong Kong International Film Festival (HKIFF), the Hong Kong-Asia Film Financing Forum (HAF) and the Asian Film Awards (AFA)

Passionately believing in the power of films to unite cultures and generations, the HKIFFS is devoted to giving thousands of film lovers around the region direct access to the world's most inspiring films all year round.

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