

Fusionpolis: Arts, Business & Technology under One Roof

by Pearlynn Pek



Icon for Singapore's Global Media City: Artist impression of Fusionpolis, expected to be ready in about two and a half years' time.

Rising in the southwest of Singapore is Fusionpolis – the new and exciting choice location for top media and infocomm enterprises to work, live, play, learn and experiment.

Fusionpolis is where the arts, business and technology will meet, within the 200-hectare one-north. Spearheaded by Jurong Town Corporation (JTC), one-north will offer an intellectually stimulating environment for innovation and creativity. Development will focus on the media, infocomm technology and biomedical sciences industries in the next 15 to 20 years.

MDA is working with JTC and the Economic Development Board to develop a wide range of media facilities at Fusionpolis to attract local and overseas media companies as part of the effort to create a playground for the creative, innovative and visionary.

Looking into the Future:

As the place for Singapore's creative talents and services, Fusionpolis will have:

Clustering

Imagine being part of an entire media and infocomm ecosystem. Companies will be able to gain access to partners easily, from content providers to technology builders.

Technology Test-Bedding

Fusionpolis will be a vibrant hotspot for media enterprises and infocomm technologies to leverage on the cosmopolitan one-north population for varied test-bedding needs. Tenants and residents in one-north will have

access to the latest technology products and solutions.

Urban Entertainment Centre

Fusionpolis will be a one-stop entertainment point with state-of-the-art electronic games and rides, themed restaurants and specialty shops. Be transported to an imaginary world of adventures, thrills and gastronomy.

Artistic Experimentation

Experimentation is not restricted to the domain of technology. Artists of the world, from street-art performers to high-culture performers, will have an opportunity to showcase their talent and ideas at Fusionpolis. ■



Under one roof: Live, work and play in Fusionpolis, an artist impression. Fusionpolis is located in the southwest of Singapore, within the stimulating environment of one-north, a 200-hectare development to house the media, infocomm technology and biomedical sciences industries.

MDA at **MIPTV 2003**

by Lim Su Ling

MDA was in Cannes in March for the much celebrated and must-attend event in the TV industry calendar, MIPTV 2003. MIPTV is the marketplace where key international players from the TV industry congregate to strike and conclude major deals within a few days. Buying and selling, promoting, networking, learning, and discovering are all part of the MIPTV working week. Marking its 40th anniversary this year, the event was attended by 9,000 participants from all over the globe and saw an increased presence from Asian countries.

Taking place alongside MIPTV 2003 was also MILIA 2003, a marketplace for digital and interactive content. Held at Noga Hilton, it was the first time that MILIA 2003 was held together with MIPTV.

MDA will be returning to Cannes in October for MIPCOM 2003 and in March 2004 for the next MIPTV with a stronger presence. For both events, MDA will organise a Singapore Pavilion, together with local companies, to showcase and market made-by-Singapore content. ■



Happy Birthday: MIPTV turns 40.

Singapore makes **Debut** at **23rd American Film Market**

by Ahmad Shuhaimi

Earlier this year, Singapore made its debut in one of the top film markets in the world, the American Film Market (AFM), through the participation of the Singapore Film Commission (SFC) and MDA.

Held from 19 to 26 February 2003 in Santa Monica, Los Angeles, AFM is an international film and television market where over US\$500 million in production and distribution deals are closed annually. This year's AFM attracted over 7,000 participants.

Raintree Pictures was invited to showcase its slate of movies and explore co-

production opportunities for some of its current feature film projects in the SFC/MDA office at AFM.

Said Mr Seto Lok Yin, Director (Industry Development), MDA, "Our participation at this year's AFM was an important step and a necessary beginning towards building up the Singapore brand name and profile. The AFM was also a good platform for us to establish contacts with relevant industry players from the international arena to further facilitate our commitment in establishing Singapore as a global media city. We look forward to participating in more of such events to increase Singapore's profile." ■



Singapore makes its debut at the American Film Market, Los Angeles, USA.

Unearthing **Talent** in National Scriptwriting Competition

by Vivian Hoo

MDA gave away nine Golden Pen Awards totalling \$16,800 at the MDA National Scriptwriting Competition 2002 Awards Ceremony, which was held at the Asian Civilisations Museum on 10 April 2003.

At the close of the competition in November 2002, a total of 82 submissions were received. The participants were mainly professionals from the media industry, students, National Service men and professionals from all walks, ranging from a paediatrician to an economist.

The objective of the MDA National Scriptwriting Competition is to develop good scripts for television. Upon awarding the winning scripts, MDA and MediaCorp TV will work with the top three and selected merit-award winners to develop their scripts into a TV series. This will give the writers an opportunity to see their works produced for public viewing. To turn the scripts into TV programmes, MDA will be commissioning various production houses to produce the works. The first *Blueprint* series, which was aired in January this year, was a result of commissioning the winning scripts from the 2001 competition.

The Guest-of-Honour at the Awards Ceremony was Mr Yatiman Yusof, Senior



Audience caught up in the presentation during the ceremony.



Winners all: Mr Yatiman Yusoff congratulates Mr Amos Kwok (second prize winner, left) and Mr Vincent Wong (third prize winner, right).

Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts. Participants of the competition and members from the judging panel, comprising representatives from the broadcasting industry and academia, were also present at the occasion.

Mr Yatiman Yusof said, "MDA's Media 21 envisions Singapore to be a Global Media City in the next 10 years. One of the key strategies to realise this vision is to develop and export high quality Made-by-Singapore content. The MDA National Scriptwriting Competition is part of the Media 21 vision. This competition will strongly encourage the growth of our creative talent pool, and over time, position Singapore as a source of quality media content. Through the Scriptwriting Competition and other initiatives, Singapore would be able to produce quality TV and film productions that can travel internationally."

Mr Yatiman Yusof also announced the launch of the MDA National Scriptwriting Competition 2003 with two categories – TV Drama and Feature Film. MDA is looking forward to the addition of the Feature Film category and the opportunities to develop winning scripts into films. As with TV, a good

script is the foundation for a good film. MDA will be working with Digital Media Hub* as a development partner, under its Film Incubator Programme. The Film Incubator Programme will select at least one script from the competition and work with the scriptwriter to develop it into a feature film. MDA hopes to see more success stories, such as Jack Neo's *I Not Stupid* and Cheek's *Chicken Rice War*, which have proved that local films can have both local and international appeal.

The MDA National Scriptwriting Competition is an annual event. There are plans to involve more industry players and professional associations to provide additional opportunities to scriptwriters to showcase good scripts in TV programmes and films.

For additional information on the MDA National Scriptwriting Competition 2003, please visit MDA's website at www.mda.gov.sg ■

* Digital Media Hub offers hands-on, project-based training towards creating a more creative community. It is a centre for the development and advancement of digital media; a gathering point for digital media enthusiasts and professionals; a facility for media training and learning within traditional and digital media; and a place where talent and technology converge. For more information, visit www.digitalmediahub.org

2002 Winners

Award	Winner	Script Title
Golden Pen Award (Drama) – First Prize \$7,500 cash, a trophy and a certificate	Benjamin Tan	The 13-Year-Old Rambo and His Princess
Golden Pen Award (Drama) – Second Prize \$5,000 cash, a trophy and a certificate	Amos Kwok Kah Wye	Running With Scissors
Golden Pen Award (Drama) – Third Prize \$2,500 cash, a trophy and a certificate	Vincent Wong Chee Wai	Chase 'Pilot'
Golden Pen Award (Drama) – Merit Prize \$300 cash and a certificate	Gilbert Chan Khai Chuen Michael Wolfgang Lucht Tan Chee Wee Justin Anandan Santiago Andy Logam-Tan	Amnesia Biofuture Homeless Red Packets Those Who Care
Golden Pen Award (Documentary) – Merit Prize \$300 cash and a certificate	Chen Yihan Johanness	An Endearing Love For Stamps

Award	Script Title	Category	Synopsis	Winner
First Prize	The 13-Year-Old Rambo and His Princess	Drama	A story of first love, heartbreak, lust, the joy of learning, and the importance of the moon and apricots as seen through the eyes of a 13-year-old.	Benjamin Tan
Second Prize	Running With Scissors	Drama	Seventeen-year-old Matt discovers that his father has a second family when he dies in a car accident. He resolves to find out why his father did so despite his mother's objections.	Amos Kwok Kah Wye
Third Prize	Chase 'Pilot'	Drama	Adman Gabriel Peh lost his childhood sweetheart Ellie Chua to another guy when they were sixteen. 15 years later, she returns to Singapore from Australia, where she trained to be a vet, ostensibly to take care of her aging, eccentric uncle, but in reality to flee from a crumbling engagement.	Vincent Wong Chee Wai

Panel of Judges of the 2002 National Scriptwriting Competition

Chairman

Mr Seto Lok Yin
Director, Industry Development
Media Development Authority

Ms Koh Lee Lian
Senior Assistant Vice President,
Central Programming & On-Air Promotions
MediaCorp TV12 Singapore Pte Ltd

Mr Mohd Yusoff Ahmad
Managing Director,
Communications 2000

Members

Mr Vijay Chandran
Lecturer, Centre for Film and Media Studies
Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Mr Lee Thean-Jeen
Director of Production,
Film Formations

Mr Galen Yeo
Co-founder/Creative Director,
The Moving Visuals Co.

Mr Cheah Chee Kong (CheeK)
Vice President,
Network Editorial Strategy
MTV Southeast Asia

Asst Prof Sharen Liu
Head, Division of Electronic &
Broadcast Media
School of Communication and Information
Nanyang Technological University

Ms Jean Yeo
Vice President, Productions
Ochre Pictures

Mr Chong Gim Hwee
Senior Manager,
Programme Development, Network
Programming & Promotions 5
MediaCorp TV Singapore Pte Ltd

Mr Geoffrey Malone
Festival Founder,
Chairman, Organising Committee
Singapore International Film Festival

Mr Daniel Yun
Chief Executive Officer,
Raintree Pictures

Story Seminar debuts in Singapore

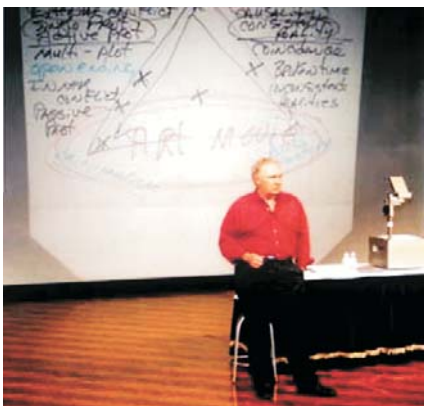
by Vivian Hoo

The start of the year saw an exciting event taking place at the NUS Theatrette – the debut of the Robert McKee Story Seminar in Singapore.

This was Mr McKee's first visit to the Asia-Pacific region. The scriptwriting guru was in Singapore to conduct his world-renowned "Story Seminar". The event, organised by the Screenwriters Association of Singapore, was supported by MDA and the Singapore Film Commission (SFC).

"We are pleased to support the Screenwriters Association of Singapore in their effort to bring Mr McKee to Singapore and to organise the seminar and workshop. This seminar is an excellent platform for the participants to gain an international perspective and hone their craft. We are excited by the response and see this as a positive step towards making Singapore into a competitive and vibrant media hub."

- Mr Lim Hock Chuan, CEO, MDA



Mr McKee takes centrestage at the Story Seminar.

For over 15 years, Robert McKee's Story Seminar has been the world's ultimate writing class for over 40,000 screenwriters, filmmakers, TV writers, novelists, industry executives, actors, producers, directors and playwrights. Mr McKee's students have written or co-written award-winning films scripts, TV shows and books, such as *A Beautiful Mind*, *The Lord Of The Rings*, *Monsters Inc*, *Shrek*, etc.

Held at the National University of Singapore (NUS) Arts Theatrette, the seminar took place over three days, from 24 - 26 January 2003. The Story Seminar touched on the principles of screenwriting and story design on the big screen, television, novel, stage and other creative work.

The seminar was open to members of the public and was attended by some 300 people, made up mainly of industry practitioners and aspiring writers.

The seminar was followed by an intense two-day workshop where participants were required to submit a five-page story outline. The participants were given an invaluable insight into the process and techniques of writing a good story. Five lucky participants benefited from Mr McKee's personal critique and advice on how to improve their scriptwriting skills.

The good turnout at the seminar and workshop shows that there is a lot of local interest in scriptwriting and story telling. MDA will continue to organise Masterclasses with the aim of boosting scriptwriting skills in Singapore.

In addition, MDA will continue to provide opportunities for scriptwriting enthusiasts



All eyes and ears during Mr Robert McKee's seminar.

and talents in Singapore through the MDA National Scriptwriting Competition, where the winning scripts will be turned into television programmes or feature films. The closing date for this year's competition is 1 December 2003. Details can be found at the MDA website at www.mda.gov.sg.

For more information on the Story Seminar, please visit the website at www.McKeeStory.com. ■

"Singapore is a very important city for the Story Seminar because it was the first time in the 15-year history of the class that it was presented in any Asian city. The fact that 300 people filled the theatre from Singapore, Japan, China, Korea, Thailand, etc., was not only gratifying, it was electric."

- Mr Derek Christopher, Business Associate with Robert McKee

"We were overwhelmed by the response of the writing community in the turnout for the seminar. What remains for us to do is to continue supporting, encouraging and servicing aspiring and professional screenwriters, and we can do all that now, with confidence that Singapore wants to speak to the world through its screen stories."

- Mr Daniel Chan, President (2000-2003), Screenwriters Association of Singapore

The Writer's Quarterly

Starting in September, Mr McKee will be putting out a quarterly publication written entirely by him. The publication will include:

■ **THE LESSON:** A new, original and in-depth lesson on the craft. The first issue will include an in-depth analysis on dialogue. Future topics will include Genre Studies (Love Story, Crime, Sci-Fi, Fantasy, etc.), Point of View and more.

■ **THE INTERVIEW:** In each issue, Mr McKee will interview a world-renowned writer about the art of writing. They will include screenwriters, novelists, TV writers and playwrights.

■ **WORKS/DOESN'T WORK:** Ever wonder why some movies work and others don't? Or what differentiates a good film from a great one? Each issue Mr McKee will dissect and review two recent films answering the question, "Why does a film work or not work for the

audience?" Is it the dialogue? Characters? Story? Image systems? Plot? WORKS/DOESN'T WORK will help give you insight into this perplexing and knotty question.

■ **THE CLASSIC:** People love to say, "They don't make movies like that anymore." Each issue Mr McKee will review and analyse a classic film; a classic being defined as a film that can be viewed an endless number of times with great pleasure each time. Learn what makes a classic a classic.

■ **ONLINE Q&A:** Each month, Mr McKee will take part in a three-hour online Question and Answer session in which participants can ask questions and Mr McKee will answer them live online.

For more information, please visit:

www.TheWritersQuarterly.com

Excerpts of Interview with Robert McKee:



MDA: What makes a good story?

McKee: A good story engages the intellectual and emotional interests of the audience almost immediately, then holds those interests for two to three hours, deepening the audience's involvement as it progresses, finally it pays off this interest at climax with a satisfying experience for both the head and heart.

MDA: Is there a set formula for writing a good script?

McKee: There is no formula for writing fiction in any medium, but there is an underlying form that the artist must master.

MDA: If I were an aspiring scriptwriter, what advice would you give for starting out in the business?

McKee: Do not see film and television as a "business", but as a communal art of storytelling in which the writer is the only original artist, the artist who creates the foundation upon which all other artists build.

MDA: What are your views on the quality of Singapore's writers? What is your opinion of our local writers?

McKee: My impression of the writers I met in Singapore was that they were talented, hardworking and energetic but lacking in essential knowledge of the art of story. What's more, they were holding back their most adventurous inspirations for fear that these ideas would not be commercial. I would ask of them a more serious dedication to the art in both directions – inwardly, the study of the form and, outwardly, a daring, risk-taking challenge to the audience.

MDA: What is your view of Asia as a market for film and screenwriting?

McKee: Asia is the future.

MDA: What did you want people who attended the seminar in Singapore to go away with? What should they have learned?

McKee: A deeper love and knowledge of the art of story on screen, page and stage. ■

Digital Media Hub launches Training Programme for Budding Filmmakers

by Vivian Hoo

Media Hive and Canon Marketing (Singapore), with support from MDA, have collaborated to give industry development a further push by providing professional training and development programmes in filmmaking at the newly opened Digital Media Hub (DMH).

DMH is a digital media training centre for new media start-ups, which aims to be a one-stop facility for film education, resources and information, production and distribution. DMH hopes that its training courses and creative programmes, aimed at budding filmmakers, will uncover Singapore's next generation of filmmakers.

"We do not want to teach textbook-based knowledge, but practical knowledge applicable to local industry requirements."

Mr Tony Chow, Managing Director/Principal, Media Hive Pte Ltd

Media Hive, Canon and MDA held a joint news conference on 18 March 2003 to announce the setting up of DMH. At the news conference, the panel, made up of Mr Tony Chow, Principal of DMH; Mr Jonathan Foo, Executive Director, Media Hive Pte Ltd; Mr Melvyn Ho, Senior Director and General Manager, Canon Marketing (Singapore); and Mr Seto Lok Yin, Director (Industry Development), MDA announced support for three courses that Media Hive was planning to launch in March 2003. They were the Practical 16mm Production course, Digital Filmmaking workshop and Introduction to Final Cut Pro 101. These courses address the current training gaps in the local

filmmaking industry. The objective is to help augment the pool of filmmaking talents in Singapore through upgrading and skills acquisition.

MDA supports in general private sector initiatives that seek to address the current needs of the media industry. In this instance, Media Hive's three programmes offer aspiring filmmakers and industry talents an opportunity to learn new skills or upgrade their knowledge.

Such initiatives are also part of the strategies outlined in the MDA's Media 21 report, with the aim to promote media as a key sector that can contribute to job creation and GDP growth for Singapore. The aim is to encourage the growth and competitiveness of the local media industry, and ultimately position Singapore as a global media city. ■

"Many filmmakers spend so much energy and time trying to do it that they become one-hit wonders who burn out after the first film and go back to their day jobs. We envision career filmmakers, who make films for a living and are able to eat and breathe filmmaking."

Mr Jonathan Foo, Executive Director, Media Hive Pte Ltd



A class in session at the Digital Media Hub.

"The initiative helps to nurture a larger pool of filmmaking talents for the local media industry. This would in turn help improve Singapore's competitive position in the international media scene. We are then able to attract more international media investments and projects to Singapore."

All these initiatives are in line with MDA's Media 21 strategic plan. We do this by promoting media as a key sector that can contribute to job creation and GDP growth for Singapore."

In the long run, we would need more of such initiatives from the private sector to realise our vision of positioning Singapore as a global media city."

Mr Seto Loke Yin, Director (Industry Development), MDA