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PRESS RELEASE

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Lao film is picked up by major international cable network

In an exciting new development for the Lao film industry, director Anysay Keola's 2011 film *At the Horizon* premiered on RED by HBO on 30 November 2016.

At the Horizon is Laos' first crime thriller, and now, Keola is the first Lao filmmaker with a movie on a major cable network. The film follows the privileged son of a wealthy man who gets kidnapped.

The screening on RED by HBO is part of a new series of Southeast Asian films specially curated by the Luang Prabang Film Festival (LPFF) for the television network.

LPFF, a project of the Lao PDR's Department of Cinema, is an annual celebration of Southeast Asian cinema held in the UNESCO World Heritage Town of Luang Prabang. The seventh festival screened 32 feature films and occurred earlier this month, 2-7 December 2016.

Keola reports that the deal was a surprise to him and his team. "It was an unexpected opportunity that the Luang Prabang Film Festival created for us," he said. "I think it's most important because, even if the market for 'art' films in Laos is still small, this shows that there are opportunities outside of the country for Lao artists to turn a profit. I hope this opens the door for future Lao productions to gain international distribution."

RED by HBO is a young and dynamic Asian movie channel powered by one of the world's most prestigious channels—HBO. Home to internationally acclaimed, award-winning and popular movies and series from the region, RED by HBO features local stories from Southeast Asia, Japan, Korea and Greater China, as well as HBO Asia Originals.

"RED by HBO is excited to be a part of the Luang Prabang Film Festival in the celebration of Southeast Asian cinema by broadcasting this specially curated collection. This showcase will expose viewers across the Asia region to more diverse local stories and at the same time provide filmmakers a wider platform to tell their stories," said Andrew Chin, the Vice President for Programming and Production for HBO Asia.

The other two films selected for the first series in the program include:

Ms J Contemplates Her Choice: Singaporean director Jason Lai's film—which screened at the 2015 festival—follows Jo Yang, a celebrity radio guest who receives a phone call while on air that sets in motion a series of events that threaten her life and her family.

The Last Executioner: Inspired by real events, Tom Waller's Thai film, which also screened at the 2015 festival, follows Chavoret Jaruboon, the last person in Thailand whose job it was to execute by gun.

For LPFF Director Gabriel Kuperman, the process of selecting these films was not easy. "We chose titles from past festivals that we thought would appeal to RED by HBO's viewership," Kuperman said. "Southeast Asia is extremely diverse, and so we wanted to offer stories from across the region that we thought would appeal to a wide range of audiences. Of course, our biggest priority was to get a Lao

film on the channel, and I am so pleased we were able to make that happen.”

Check RED by HBO’s website (www.redbyhbo.com) for updated screening times and stay up to date with news from LPFF on Facebook (www.facebook.com/lpffilmfest).