2025 ACFM Conference Official Report

Entertainment Finance Forum Busan I

Session Topic: Financial Investment Strategies in the Asian Film Industry

Key Remarks by Speaker

- **CHOI Pyeungho(CEO, Solaire Partners LLC / Co-founder, K Wave Media)**: Highlighted the crisis of financial investors leaving the market due to a sharp drop in ROI (-16%). He is pushing for a structural shift in profit-sharing from 4:6 to 3:7 or 2:8 to create a more investor-friendly environment.
- **Neerja NARAYANAN(Multi-Hyphenate Producer/Studio Executive/Writer)**: Stressed the need for a European-style (CNC) model that treats film as a "protected resource" and levies fees on streamers. Proposed forming Pan-Asian producer alliances and treaties to safeguard IP ownership.
- **Bennett Pozil(Executive Vice President, East West Ban)**: Emphasized risk mitigation by adopting proven financial tools like pre-sales and tax credits. Recommended building a Korean-led OTT channel to secure an independent revenue chain and reduce reliance on global platforms.
- **Jerry Kyoungboum KO(Head of Global Film Project, CJ ENM)**: Pointed out the industrial shift where capital is migrating from theatrical films to profitable dramas

and OTT series. Expressed concern over the resulting employment crisis and the weakening of the traditional film production base.

Q&A and Key Arguments

- **Realizing Revenue Structures**: Discussed the impact of increasing investor profit shares on the motivation and sustainability of production companies.
- Reshaping Platform Power: Explored strategic alliances to defend IP rights and escape subordination to global OTT platforms through Pan-Asian cooperation.

Industrial Implications

- **Restructuring the Investment Climate**: Necessity of revitalizing capital inflow by adopting investor-friendly profit splits and advanced financial systems.
- **Building a Self-Sustaining Ecosystem**: Crucial to secure IP sovereignty and global competitiveness through independent platforms and a Pan-Asian co-production framework.

Session Theme: Achievements of Asian Animation

Key Remarks by Speaker

- **JANG Seongho(Chair, Mofac Studios Inc.)**: <King of Kings> depicts the life of Jesus through Charles Dickens' framing narrative. Its success in English-speaking markets stems from delicate direction that avoids being "preachy" and the rarity of a theatrical animation about Jesus.

- **Christopher CHEN(Executive Producer, Reno Studios)**: Innovated by scanning Balinese woodwork to give CGI the warm texture of stop-motion. He emphasized that "Authenticity"—staying true to one's cultural roots—is the key to capturing global audiences.
- **Mia SANTOSA(Co-Producer, Visinema)**: Cited the Indonesian film <Jumbo> to show how universal themes like family bonds can evoke local pride. She noted that as long as the style is familiar and authentic, audiences from different cultures, like China, can fully relate.
- **Michael FAVELLE(Founder, Odin's Eye Entertainment / Odin's Eye Animation)**: Attributed the rise of Asian animation to returning talent and lower production costs. He analyzed that while Hollywood loses originality by chasing broad demographics, Asian animation succeeds by deeply embracing specific cultures, aided by global streamers.

Q&A and Key Arguments

- **Global Release Strategy**: Building on its success in English-speaking territories, the session discussed preparations for a massive rollout in non-English speaking Europe and Asia for the Christmas season.
- **Shared Asian Values**: Confirmed the potential for emotional connection and collaboration among Asian nations with different backgrounds through the medium of animation.

Industrial Implications

- **Harmonizing Tech and Narrative**: A core global strategy involves utilizing advanced technology (like CGI scanning) while integrating local storytelling that carries the creator's sincere vision.
- **Niche Market Strategy:** Instead of mimicking Hollywood, Asian animation should deeply embrace its unique cultural assets to provide new visual and emotional experiences to global audiences.