



**UK PREMIERE OF TSAI MING-LIANG'S FEATURE-LENGTH  
VIRTUAL REALITY FILM, *THE DESERTED***

**London – March 2019** – The UK premiere of *The Deserted*, Tsai Ming-Liang's 2017 feature length virtual reality (VR) film, is one of the highlights of the inaugural Taiwan Film Festival UK. The initial screening is on 3 April 2019, at a specially designed VR pop-up cinema at Asia House in central London, and will then be open to the public from 4-8 April, with seven showings a day.

*The Deserted* tells the surreal story of a man living in a ruined house in the mountains with two ghosts and a fish. Recovering from an illness and unable to communicate with the ghosts, his only companion is the lone fish who swims with him in the bathtub.

A lauded master of slow cinema, Tsai Ming-Liang chose this film to open the retrospective that he curated in close collaboration with Festival director, Aephie Chen for the Taiwan Film Festival UK. This includes a selection of his fiction feature-length films and shorts showing at the Tate Modern's Starr Cinema from 5 – 7 April and Tsai will participate in post-screening Q&As, as well as lead a filmmaking masterclass at the Tate. This is a rare opportunity to hear him in conversation as Tsai has not been to the UK for over a decade.

The VR cinema is in partnership with Art Cinema and sponsored by HTC Vive Arts and MSI, the Festival's virtual reality partners. The UK premiere of *The Deserted* will be shown in 8K resolution, which is a significant improvement on the 4K resolution of the original world premiere at the 2017 Venice Film Festival.

Director Tsai Ming-Liang collaborated with Taiwanese architect Rain Wu to create the cinema, incorporating visual clues from the *The Deserted*'s film set – a rural ruin with lush tropical nature visible through the wall punctures. High performance gaming computers from MSI and HTC's groundbreaking VR Theatre Management System will be used to create a synchronised, immersive cinema experience where 20 people can watch the film at the same time. This technology has influenced the design of the physical space which resembles the lobby of a cinema, typically seen as a waiting space. It represents the area in between constant reality (the

outside world) and a temporal reality (the cinema screen), a Purgatory space between the living and the dead of the film.

“Art Cinema is thrilled to work with Taiwan Film Festival and help stage the UK premiere of *The Deserted* by the highly-acclaimed Director Tsai Ming-Liang. This installation aims to bring the most thrilling experience to an array of audiences ranging from Film d’Auteurs lovers all the way to the most savvy explorers of virtual reality realms. Such encounters establish what 21st century paradigms of art display and engagement are all about,” says Art Cinema founder, Myriam Blundell Phillips.

The Taiwan Film Festival is a collaborative effort between FilmTaiwan and the Cultural Division of the Taipei Representative Office in the UK to showcase the talented and distinct cinematic voice of Taiwan through a programme of classic and new independent films. It also aims to provide opportunities for Taiwanese filmmakers and producers to showcase their works to Icelandic and UK distributors with the goal of creating interactions between the countries.

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For further information or high resolution imagery, please contact Melissa Ramos at [press@filmtaiwan.org](mailto:press@filmtaiwan.org) or +44 (0)7810 484213

#### NOTES TO EDITORS

- Tsai Ming-Liang is one of the most prominent film directors of the new cinema movement in Taiwan. His films are acclaimed worldwide and have won numerous awards including: a Golden Lion (Best Picture) for *Vive L’Amour* at the 51st Venice International Film Festival; the Silver Bear – Special Jury Prize for *The River* at the 47th Berlin International Film Festival; the FIPRESCI award for *The Hole* at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival; and the Alfred Bauer Prize and Silver Bear for Outstanding Artistic Achievement for *The Wayward Cloud* at the 55th Berlin International Film Festival; the Grand Jury Prize at the 70th Venice International Film Festival for *Stray Dog*. In 2003, Tsai was voted by The Guardian as number 18 of the 40 best directors in the world.
- The seven daily VR screenings will take place between 11am – 9pm from 4-7 April. The full timetable is at [www.filmtaiwan.org](http://www.filmtaiwan.org).
- FilmTaiwan is a new initiative that aims to make the voice of Taiwanese cinema heard around the world. The collective has organised the Taiwan Film Festival in Iceland and the UK and also curates the FilmTaiwan webzine.
- Aephie Chen is a Taiwanese-born filmmaker, based in London, and the founder and artistic director of the first Taiwan Film Festival in the UK and Nordic countries. After studying architecture and fashion, she has been practising her concepts and themes across set design, costume design, radio and visual artworks in Europe, USA, Japan and Taiwan. She completed

an MA in filmmaking at the London Film School and now writes and directs. She has lived in many countries in her life and the stories she tells are often drawn from relationships, dreams, struggles, identities and self-exile in contemporary society.

- Art Cinema is a production company, founded by Myriam Blundell Phillips, devoted to crafting and generating high quality, cutting-edge and immersive creative content in the fields of film, performing and applied arts, as well as publishing.
- The VR cinema was designed by Taiwanese architect and designer, Rain Wu who has previously worked on the Taiwan Pavilion for the London Design Biennale and the London Design Festival, as well as projects for the Tate, Frieze and the Design Museum.
- World-leading technology companies, HTC VIVE Arts and MSI are the virtual reality partners for the Festival.
- EVA Air, Taiwan's leading independent airline, is the official airline partner for the Taiwan Film Festival UK. EVA Air's sponsorship of this high profile event demonstrates the airline's continued commitment to supporting a diverse range of events and organisations.
- The full programme for the Festival is available at [www.filmtaiwan.org](http://www.filmtaiwan.org). Tickets are available to purchase directly from the venues, aside from the VR screenings which can be bought via the Film Taiwan website.

[www.filmtaiwan.org](http://www.filmtaiwan.org)

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