

⊗ a VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS production

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL

presented by  LEXUS

No. 32 | APRIL 21 – 28, 2016

LITTLE TOKYO

KOREATOWN

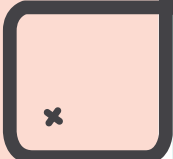
WEST HOLLYWOOD



No. 32



WEST HOLLYWOOD



KOREATOWN



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WELCOME



Welcome to the 32nd edition of the **Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival!**

🦋 Visual Communications is excited to open the Festival in the cultural eco-district of Little Tokyo and we hope you follow us as we navigate westward from downtown Los Angeles, through Koreatown, to close the Festival in West Hollywood at the Directors Guild of America. 🦋 We are proud to present the world premiere of Lena Khan's **THE TIGER HUNTER** as our Opening Night film, Pamela Tom's **TYRUS** as our Centerpiece, and Jonathan Lim's **PALI ROAD** as our Closing Night film.

Prolific filmmaker Dai Sil Kim-Gibson ignites our Artist's Spotlight with the exhibition of her earlier and impactful works of **SA-I-GU: FROM KOREAN WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES** and **SILENCE BROKEN: KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN**, culminating with her Los Angeles premiere of her latest feature documentary, **PEOPLE ARE THE SKY**. 🦋 In addition to our shorts programs, International Showcase, and other feature narratives and documentaries, we are thrilled to exhibit **FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!** by FORM follows FUNCTION. Composed of a VR short film and a site-specific projection installation, FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO! invites you to experience **WALKING WITH GRACE**, a 360 virtual reality narrative documentary through the perspective of Grace Chikui, a blind woman and long-time resident of Little Tokyo, and **312 AZUSA STREET**, a historic site-specific installation about the original site of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church (FAME) and birthplace of Pentecostalism. As emerging and immersive technologies shape the way artists create and present stories, we hope participants will engage with and understand the specific (and often forgotten) histories of the spaces and places we navigate. 🦋 With the ongoing discourse about diversity and inclusivity, Visual Communications strives to find and create sites of dialogue and solutions. While VC has created a space for our filmmakers and stories in the last 32 years through the Festival, we have also served our creative artists – actors, writers, editors, and directors – through **C3: The Conference for Creative Content**. In our overarching pursuit of progress and change, we are proud to present the 6th edition of C3 – a series of six panels where creative and industry leaders come together with the community to create a dialogue regarding important issues and trends transpiring in the entertainment arena. 🦋 And finally, we are humbled to showcase the latest cycles of our **ARMED WITH A CAMERA** Fellowship and **DIGITAL HISTORIES**, as we continue our mission of developing and supporting the voices of Asian American & Pacific Islander filmmakers and media artists who empower communities and challenge perspectives. 🦋 Thank you to all of our VC members, donors, sponsors, partners, friends, and families for believing in what we do and what we make happen. I am immensely grateful and proud of our VC and Festival staff – dedicated and hardworking individuals who have collaborated in the spirit of connecting communities. 🦋 On behalf of the VC Staff and Board of Directors, Happy Festival!

Francis Cullado
Executive Director

SONY PICTURES ENTERTAINMENT
Warmly Salutes

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival



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Women in Film

YOMYOMF



The thrill of seeing a story unfold

Films have the ability to tell stories in new and creative ways that capture our imagination and whisk us far, far away.

We applaud the 2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film

Festival. wellsfargo.com

Together we'll go far



ABOUT VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Since 1970, Visual Communications has created award-winning productions, nurtured and given voice to our youth and seniors, promoted new artistic talent, presented new cinema, and preserved our visual history. We have served a complex, diverse constituency by providing innovative, effective, and socially responsible programs and services to meet the changing needs of our communities. Our mission is to develop and support the voices of Asian American & Pacific Islander filmmakers and media artists who empower communities and challenge perspectives.

🎬 VC programming includes: the annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival and year-round screenings; the Armed With a Camera Fellowship for Emerging Media Artists; the Digital Histories video production and digital storytelling program for seniors; and the Conference for Creative Content (C3). Visual Communications is also home to the VC Archives, one of the largest photographic and moving image archives on the Asian Pacific experience in America. 📺 We see media as a powerful tool to create and share meaningful perspectives, and our programs ensure that the AAPI community has access to the resources to tell our unique stories.

ARMED WITH A CAMERA (AWC) FELLOWSHIP

The Armed with a Camera (AWC) Fellowship for Emerging Media Artists nurtures the next generation of Asian Pacific American media artists to capture their world, surroundings, and outlooks on life. Through this five-month program, VC supports several filmmakers and media artists a year in efforts to create artistically and culturally significant short films. The AWC Fellowship offers training, mentorship, and funding to up-and-coming artists to create new work that will screen at the annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival in the prestigious Aratani Theatre. Established in 2002, the AWC Fellowship is open to promising APA media artists who demonstrate artistic innovation as well as a firm commitment to a career in the media arts. VC provides the resources for several Fellows to each create a five-minute short film, including a cash stipend, training workshops and mentoring from industry professionals, opportunities to collaborate with other Fellows, and access to equipment rental and editing facilities.

DIGITAL HISTORIES

Since its creation in 2003, Digital Histories has provided a professional and artistic work environment for underserved, ethnic-minority seniors in the Los Angeles-based Asian Pacific American community. Their media art works consist of lasting, personal and place-based stories while gaining hands-on experience in creating, producing, and editing an original short through a five-month, two-phase program, culminating in their premieres at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival. Many of these works have been chosen for exhibition in film festivals across the nation.

C3: CONFERENCE FOR CREATIVE CONTENT

The Conference for Creative Content (C3) is a two-day media arts conference focused to provide our creative community a space for meaningful discourse on media and entertainment. With panel and seminar topics covering new media technologies, media platforms, and distribution, C3 celebrates creativity and diversity through a forum with established pioneers in entertainment, academia, and professional guilds. Within this intimate space, it is our goal to connect our aspiring and emerging content creators with creative individuals leading the charge.

VC MEDIA ARCHIVES

Visual Communications is also home to one of the largest photographic and moving image archives on the Asian Pacific experience in the United States. The VC Archives serves as an integral part of our documentary-based production activities as we have documented various Asian American social movements and communities in California. Additionally, preserved films and videos were used for education and organizing work around setting up ethnic studies programs on local campuses, city redevelopment issues, the redress campaign for Japanese Americans interned during World War II, and the declaration of martial law in the Philippines. VC's own past in all media, narrative films, documentaries and educational projects are intertwined with the Asian Pacific American movements of the 1970s, and in itself represents a rich resource of the Asian Pacific American movements for students, researchers, and filmmakers. To date, VC materials have been used in numerous films, videos, educational materials, publications, and major photographic exhibits across the United States.

LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL

The annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival (LAAPFF) showcases important new work by established filmmakers, and supports local, emerging Los Angeles talent. The Festival takes place annually during the month of April as a kickoff to Asian Pacific Heritage Month. The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival has an annual audience of over 19,000 individuals in attendance at its screenings, educational seminars and artist talks, and other special events. For more information, visit our Festival website at: www.vconline.org/festival.



VCMEMBERSANDDONORS

Visual Communications is a full-service media arts organization serving the Asian Pacific American (APA) community year-round. Outside of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, VC offers support services to filmmakers, maintains one of the largest archives of APA media in the nation, and provides media training, educational workshops, and seminars for youth, seniors, and community members. Our programs are only possible through the support of many VC Members and individual donors. We would like to acknowledge our awesome contributors! (Reflects 2015-2016 from April 1st, 2015 to April 1st, 2016)

\$40,000+

Aratani Foundation

\$20,000+

James Irvine Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
SAG-Producers IACF

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Henry Chan
California Humanities
Department of Cultural Affairs, Los Angeles
Los Angeles County Arts Commission

\$5,000+

Asian Pacific Community Fund

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BECOME A VC MEMBER

Attend the 2016 Festival as a VC Member, and get premier insider benefits, discounts, and special invitations to events. Purchasing a VC Membership is a rewarding way to show your support for VC. Our VC Members are a community of filmmakers and filmgoers who champion the spirit of diverse, independent Asian Pacific American voices in film and media. There are various VC Membership levels to suit your ability to give, and a portion of each contribution is tax-deductible.

Sign up at www.vconline.org/membership, or call (213) 680-4462 x32.

VC SUPPORTER \$40

(100% of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS:

- Discount on all VC merchandise and event admission, such as the LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL (LAAPFF), LAAPFF seminars, and all VC production training workshops for one year
- Donor recognition on vconline.org and LAAPFF Program Catalog
- Invitations to Members-only screenings and special events

VC FRIEND \$60

(\$40 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- Advance ticketing to LAAPFF programs before sale to the general public
- 2 complimentary LAAPFF regular screening tickets (\$24 value)

VC FILMMAKER \$100

(\$60 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- 4 complimentary LAAPFF regular screening tickets (\$48 value)
- Eligibility for fiscal sponsorship
- One-on-one fundraising consultations
- LAAPFF Entry fee waived (one per year, \$35 value)
- 25% discounted access to the Media Resource Library, facilities, video editing lab, and production equipment rental for your production needs

VC SPONSOR \$250

(\$100 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Opening Night gala (\$90 value)
- 6 complimentary LAAPFF regular screening tickets (\$72 value)

VC PATRON \$500

(\$250 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Opening Night gala (\$90 value)
- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Closing Night gala (\$90 value)
- 8 complimentary LAAPFF regular screening tickets (\$96 value)

VC BENEFACTOR \$1000

(\$650 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Opening Night gala (\$90 value) + 2 goody bags
- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Closing Night gala (\$90 value)
- 10 complimentary LAAPFF regular screening tickets (\$120 value)
- Complimentary LAAPFF Program Catalog

VC DIRECTOR \$2500

(\$1850 of your donation is tax deductible)

BASIC BENEFITS, plus:

- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Opening Night gala (\$90 value) + 2 goody bags
- 2 complimentary tickets to the LAAPFF Closing Night gala (\$90 value)
- 2 Festival Passes - complimentary access to all general LAAPFF screenings (\$400 value)
- Complimentary LAAPFF Program Catalog

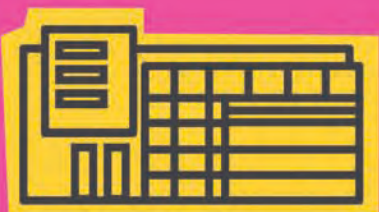
NINE QUESTIONS

THE FILM FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING TEAM HAS THE LAST WORD





Normally around this time, Festival Senior Programmer Abraham Ferrer would produce an overarching programmer's overview of the program line-up of The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival. This year, we decided to try something a little different: instead of one person's perspectives, we wondered how the divergent perspectives of our team of programmers would add a little bit of "spice" to our assessment of this season's programming process. Thus, we issued an invitation to respond to a set of questions that would serve to foreground their thoughts and opinions on what they all observed. Though it took them awhile to respond (our curators were still hammering out their programs as of this writing and did not participate), our core program committee members answered the call. The following is a reflection of what we all thought... 🍷





Sami (Danny Pudi) finds that “roughing it” takes many forms, as seen through a viewfinder in Lena Khan’s *THE TIGER HUNTER*, this year’s Film Festival Opening Night feature. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

ABRAHAM FERRER: We’ve concluded a months-long programming process during which we’ve screened, as a group, over 500 individual entries from all over the world. Tell me, what kinds of thematic directions in Asian Pacific cinema have you identified during the course of your viewings this season?

ESEEL BORLASA: In the shorts, it seems that food was prevalent: docs on food, narratives about restaurants. Also, I see that animation/slick graphics are on the rise.

ELAINE DOLALAS: More stories about women and LGBT, which I greatly appreciate. Stories dealing with family struggles were also something I saw frequently. There were also a lot of films about Fukushima. They seemed to all highlight the same theme: loss and rebuilding.

CHANEL KONG: It is difficult to point out any definite direction(s) taken cumulatively by the works we’ve seen; I rather take that as a healthy sign – filmmakers are feeling empowered to make works that aren’t necessarily part of a larger movement or a trend. Nonetheless, many feature-length narrative works we’ve viewed this season notably explore the limits of genre film. Relying upon genre film vocabulary, these films tell stories that seem familiar and strange at once; they play with audience expectations of genre structure and character development. These filmmakers are clearly also people who enjoy genre films. From thrillers and crime noirs, to comedies and family dramas, these films are produced with an audience in mind. The sense of fun and exploration in these films are clearly palpable, both in works that try to perfect storytelling and in ones that offer twists to particular tropes. These filmmakers’ comfort with utilizing well-established forms of storytelling suggests that they’d like to distinguish themselves by their craft, rather than by the potential

or latent ethno- or socio-cultural markers in their work.

KRISTEN LEE: Thematic elements include dealing with mental disease in family, aging and its limits, tragedy and obviously finding love. I also believe the relationship between parent and 1.5 child is also a prevalent theme in past/present films. I was concerned with the limited number of quality documentaries and the large presence of PSA entries. I was discouraged by the lack of Polynesian flicks as well.

LINDY LEONG: Stories of extraordinary APA creative pioneers and elders continue to surprise and delight. Asian Americans have been doin’ it all this time! A swath of suppressed historical chapters and perspectives on war and trauma come to the foreground, providing catharsis for those victimized. DIY and micro indie cinema prevailed in scrappy, innovative, passion projects. The tried and true meets the funky and experimental characterize much of this year’s slate. #OscarsSoWhite... whatevah.

KIRBY PEÑAFIEL: There were plenty of thematic directions in the entries we’ve received for this year’s Film Festival, however, the one I identified with the most is the generational gap amongst families. It was a perspective I’m not quite aware of, but was fascinated to witness, in contrast to how well my rapport is with my parents and grandparents and their generation.

QUINCY SURASMITH: There’s a lot of films dealing with death and family as recurring themes and motifs this year.

SO YUN UM: It’s varied but mostly forward-thinking, boundaries-pushing and widespread representation and experiences shared-kind of films.



A cameraman lines up a shot during the production of Cellin Gluck's **PERSONA NON GRATA**, a feature-length depiction of Japanese diplomat/humanitarian Chiune Sugihara. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

RYAN WU: The common thread tying Asian American features is really a lack of one. We saw plenty of genre films where identity of an Asian American lead is implicit, like *THE UNBIDDEN*, *COMFORT*, and *GRASS*. Filmmakers are asking, "Why can't a movie like *BEFORE SUNRISE* or *THE CONJURING* feature a yellow or brown person in the lead? And, why don't I make that?"

More obvious thematic throughlines can be found in documentaries. We screened plenty of films exploring the vicissitudes of the immigrant experience or trying to find a new angle on historical atrocities like the Khmer Rouge or the My Lai massacre. We noted several odd trends with entries that we didn't end up inviting to screen for various reasons. One involved documentaries exploring fallout from Fukushima. The other involved documentaries featuring an elderly curmudgeon recounting his life. My theory is that young filmmakers, confronted with how much more eventful and dramatic their grandparents or great-grandparents' lives were compared to their own, are rushing to document their stories before they pass on.



It seems that particularly with the documentaries that we've had the pleasure to screen, Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders have a LOT of things on their minds. Whether it's immigrant rights, electoral politics, mid-career crises, or the impact of external world events on our lives – it really seems as though our artists have things nagging at them. Or, they're looking at age-old issues in an entirely new way. What do you guys think?

ESEEL: The vision/storytelling this year is more diverse. I don't recall seeing the "culture clash" types of tales that was so popular a few years back. I think, especially with stuff like *PALI ROAD*, *JOHN HUGHES RUINED MY LIFE*, and even *BE ABOUT*

IT, we're seeing human stories with our faces on the screen (as opposed to our ethnicity specifically driving the story).

ELAINE: I liked the more topical documentaries. When films covered the identity issue topic, it bored me. While these films should have a place, the self-identity "discovery" story is tired.

CHANEL: The bulk of Asian Pacific documentaries we've reviewed this year harks back to familiar topics – identity, family and history. These films uncover more stories of displacement, loss and/or reconciliation, told by both experienced and new filmmakers. The fact that these types of documentaries continue to be made (and hopefully, continue to be seen) compels the argument for them to not only exist as a fundamental part of Asian Pacific and Asian American documentary filmmaking practice, but also as continued testimony in both personal and collective histories. On the other hand, we've also seen recent documentaries tackle fresh topics in new ways – which suggests that some filmmakers are rather interested in how documentaries can be a great way to tell stories that are current and developing, regardless of its previous relationship to APA/API issues.

KRISTEN: Either these filmmakers are not staying up to date with their resources on certain topics, or just lazy and submitting outdated films. Personally, I wish we had more Asian American political documentaries, especially with the elections looming during our festival time.

LINDY: I think the Film Festival boasts some of the strongest documentary programming around. As this is first and foremost a community-based festival, the stories presented about Asian American and Pacific Islander life, experiences, and perspectives remain invaluable to the society at large. As our creative



Director Alexandra Hsu (front) and crew run through a shot with lead actress Charlotte Cheung during location production of *SOPHIE*, the latest in a long line of short works produced through New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Asia. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

community of color remains under siege from a variety of forces, presenting their works serves as a conduit for conversation and, hopefully, change.

KIRBY: I think the way API artists have dealt with issues have been more aggressive, considering how technology has expanded our way to express ourselves. Being able to express and tackle these issues in new progressive ways has enabled many unknown issues to be put under the spotlight in the public eye – which is always a great thing.

QUINCY: I think that as these filmmakers increase in their number and diversity of individual backgrounds and interests, the breadth of the work and content will follow that trend and cover more and more diverse issues and content – a great sign of pluralization of the artists and work.

SO YUN: I think they know they are living in a more progressive age and so, they are tackling it with a modern-day perspective with a universal message.



I remember at one point that, when the dust settled and we were able to look at the final program line-up, we talked about the idea of “intersections” through which disparate themes and topics converged – you know, the intersection between perpetrator and survivor; between criminal and activist; between friends and (possible) lovers; even between youth and adulthood. When you consider that this is an especially crucial election year, intersections and polemics stand out as pervasive flashpoints throughout this year’s program line-up.

ESEEL: Was this a features convo? You guys have the best chats. I think the lineup reflects conversations that can tie into

our experience as Asian Americans here in the U.S. To me, that’s part of what makes LAAPFF valuable to an audience. It’s this yearly opportunity to “absorb” or experience a story, to silently meditate on it during the screening, and then have a post-screening discussion with the creators or fellow audience member.

ELAINE: ... huh?

CHANEL: Yes, there is an intersectionality in many of the stories depicted in our program line-up this year. Many characters face binary decision-making and dilemmas in our films this year, and that stark difference makes their eventual choice all the more compelling to watch. These themes really do parallel the polemical, political, and social atmosphere in society today, and may well serve to propel filmmakers in the next years as they continue to explore and maybe even exploit a dogmatic approach in storytelling and character development.

LINDY: Absolutely. What we are seeing more and more in APA filmmaking revolves around entertaining these “intersections and polemics.” Nothing is “either/or” anymore. Our communities of color and those continually underrepresented in mainstream media must embrace this new world order if coalition building is gonna happen in good faith.

QUINCY: They sure do.



One of the challenges, I think, when assessing this year’s crop of narrative features and shorts is weighing technical accomplishment versus the challenges of effective storytelling. Kinda like, we’ve seen quite a bit of form-conscious cinema that fails at being “conscious” or clear on



Director Ben Wang (seated left) and crew capture a key moment during a scene from Wang's *BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY*, which premieres locally at the Film Festival in Documentary Feature Competition. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

their purpose. I dunno, do you think that's a trend?

ESEEL: I'm not sure if I understand the question. Do I feel that some narratives are a bit "too much" and "aware" of their aesthetic? Totally. Does it miss the mark? Yah. But it's not too often; more like 50/50. Is it a trend? I hope not. Some scenes in some narratives felt hurried. I could feel that it was performed to fulfill a shot.

ELAINE: I think it's bad storytelling. Perhaps the directors need more mentorship or guidance.

CHANEL: I'm not sure. In my experience of screening feature films for this year's Festival, I found that many filmmakers' attempts at using form and technique have only been moderately successful; in fact, many have a misguided reliance on using form and technique to overcome or cloak mediocre storytelling. However, I do recall that there have been certain features made outside of the U.S. which presents another more uplifting scenario: those films have proven that form and technique can indeed take precedence in a film, without compromising or dragging down the importance of a good script.

KRISTEN: Agreed. Although we all don't like the "talking head" interview, I believe its absolutely necessary to find valuable sources when researching a story. I believe new Asian American production companies lack this racial conscious storytelling. (Works from) Chapman University's film program, especially, disappointed us this year. I would love a panel on "the racially conscious filmmaker in Asia America."

LINDY: Not necessarily. I think new forms of media content primarily generated as digital and streamlined for online consumption have tremendously affected expectations

surrounding media spectatorship. Shorter attention spans, click bait-driven content, and swiping screens have catastrophically rewired us in how we consume, absorb, and interpret film and media. Film and media artists at all levels are struggling to negotiate a balance between commercial expedencies and artistic expression.

KIRBY: While technology continues to progressively change our way to express, I think effective storytelling still provides a challenge that many artists deal with; visuals are being supported by the story, rather the other way around – which is sadly still an ongoing trend.

QUINCY: To me, so very many of the films lacked core stories/ storytelling. I am a) not a filmmaker and b) new to this process, but from my performance and writing backgrounds, a frustrating part of viewing these films is how relatively few of them had a clear idea of what its own story was, much less how to tell that story well. And even the ones where they were more "style over substance," had bad style – a certain action thriller short with painfully long and awkward fight choreography comes to mind. I think beyond just a separation of technical versus storytelling, there's a core issue of filmmakers not knowing what they're trying to tell or convey.

SO YUN: It's not a trend. It seems as though most filmmakers are not as skilled storytellers as they thought they were. They have the equipment and money to back them up, but without a proper story and a fundamental knowledge of storytelling and screenwriting, their story falls apart.

RYAN: Not sure if it's a trend or just speaks to the difficulty of putting it all together. Certainly the programmers rarely achieved unanimity in our views of any one particular film, but



Director Saman Hosseinpour (peering through the camera lens) lines up a shot during the production of *AUTUMN LEAVES*, the latest of this filmmaker's ingenious micro-movies from Iran. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

overall, I'd say our differences generally related to the writing. As someone who's very attentive to a film's formal qualities, I'm pleased that, whatever our opinions are of any given film, all the narrative features being screened were technically proficient.



Let me ask you all: what portions of our programming do you see as pointing to any distinct thematic (or creatively/socially/politically) directions or trends?

ESEEL: I hope RICERCA by Yo-Yo Lin is a sign of more experimental and animation works to come.

ELAINE: If last year was the year of violent Korean films, this year, what stood out to me was Fukushima fallout documentaries, family stories that focused on women, and LGBT stories. With the coming election, perhaps next year's films will be blowback from what the current election cycle looks like, or the rise of global terrorism.

CHANEL: The clearest direction can be observed in our documentary selection and our Special Presentations this year. Asian Pacific documentary filmmakers are rightly lauded and recognized for their work in effectively using documentaries to tell stories about APA/API experiences and history. This type of work must be continually renewed and cannot be replaced, especially as documentary films are enjoying a critical and popular spotlight in film culture today.

KRISTEN: I believe the influence of TYRUS and several of our experimental shorts point in the direction of "creative" over political. Although we can never get enough colorful storytelling, I wish we had more of a politically energized program, especially with this being an election season.

LINDY: In the documentary slate, I think we have gone all out with activist-driven, social justice-oriented works. They are among the strongest, most meaningful works, especially for the community it serves. It strikes into the heart of our core mission and values.

In the narrative slate, there is a balancing act going on between the tried and true, and the funky and experimental. I think also the aspirations to reach a broad demographic beyond the APA sphere are goals shared by many contemporary narrative filmmakers (and rightly so!).

In the international slate, we are full up on some accomplished pieces of arthouse cinema, especially in recent years, coming from Southeast Asia. I think I am particularly enamored of them because it is straight cinephilia love for me. In terms of genre fare, I feel like there is some exhaustion going on with already established "Asian" tropes, and we need more films to shake things up again. At least, this is what I have been seeing (or rather, not seeing). This is coming from someone who will watch a great genre film over a mediocre art film any day.

KIRBY: The documentaries in our program definitely pointed to thematic directions and trends, as they show perspectives of not only issues that are unknown to the masses, but issues that the masses are currently up in arms about today.

QUINCY: There's a lot of how the exploration of individuals, self, and everyday life – the routine and normal – can reflect a greater political theme and journey via Justice, Art, Food, Home, LGBTQ, and other issues.

SO YUN: Our documentaries have always been political and about our identity. I think it'll continue to stay that way, considering the amount of hurdles and injustices that we have all faced throughout time.



As his fellow crew members look on, director Stanley Wong assesses the shot composition on the set of his film *HAND FARTS*, part of the latest cycle of Visual Communications' *Armed With a Camera Fellowship*. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

RYAN: The trend I see is both formal and thematic. I think the programmed docs show that the sprawling Wiki-doc format is truly a thing of the past, as filmmakers continued to narrow their focus in exploring one story, or one particular facet of a hot political issue or historical event. For example, *BREATHIN'*: *THE EDDY ZHENG STORY* is about one guy's redemption, but also makes a larger point about a system that permits someone who grew up in the U.S. to be deported. *OUT RUN* focuses on a LGBT party seeking to gain legitimacy in the Philippines' political system, even as it makes a broader point about the difficulty of effecting change in a fledgling democracy.

By narrowing the focus, filmmakers are able to find interesting stories from marginalized groups that would previously merit maybe five minutes in a traditional PBS-style documentary about Filipino politics or the American immigration system.



Just to follow up on the last question, would you say that a distinct thematic direction is more characteristic of the documentary selections or of the narratives?

ELAINE: Documentaries fall into whatever news story is trending. Narratives focused on women and LGBT stories.

LINDY: I would say the documentary selections, with its activist-driven, social justice-oriented works, dominates the slate.

KIRBY: The characteristics of the documentary selections have definitely more impact on the public, as they bring light to issues that many previously do not know but may be interested in afterwards. The characteristics of the narrative selections have more of a cerebral and internal effect on its audience as it provides a glimpse of an issue that we might be aware of, but

were afraid to explore because it's from within.

QUINCY: More on the documentary side.

SO YUN: Progression.



What do you think our program line-up tells Festival Week 2016 audiences, in terms of which filmmakers we find to be important to them? What can they take away from it?

ELAINE: A reflection of what is currently an "Asian" or "Asian Pacific American" story. These stories are varied. I'm curious to see what comes out of Malaysia or Singapore. The character studies that came out of the films we saw from that region were entertaining.

KRISTEN: Good question. I think the casting in several of these lineups addresses the movement of inclusion of Asian American actors (ie. *FRESH OFF THE BOAT*'s Randall Park, *THE TIGER HUNTER*'s Danny Pudi, etc.) "Don't take us for granted" is how I read this year's programming. We are a multifaceted festival with a damn good eye/heart/soul for quality cinema.

LINDY: I think we want to serve a broad demographic in terms of generations (immigrant, American-born, older, young) and cultures (Asian/American and especially for me, folks who are not Asian and don't have a clear connection to the community). I feel like we have been making a good faith effort to be conscious of the potential audiences.

Our main mission is to showcase and cultivate filmmakers of Asian descent and color, from all walks of life, whether they are film schooled or self-taught and anywhere in between. That being said, we are always looking for those "intersections and



While preparing a scene from her documentary feature *TYRUS*, director Pamela Tom receives a lesson in the intricate art of kitemaking from still-active centenarian Tyrus Wong in his San Fernando Valley home. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

polemics” to explore. To that effect, I think we are getting there.

KIRBY: Taking our place in the world – granted it’s such a generic phrase to say, but with so many flavors from our program selections – it was daunting to see so many perspectives from the cerebral to the external. Artists were intent to showcase their thematic muscles, no matter how miniscule the issue was, and that kind of gamble was the most inspiring to me.

QUINCY: Again: Relationships to family, love, and self, as well as handling loss and death.

SO YUN: I think audiences will take away that right now is a crucial time for us to create change and that there is progress being made. People will take away that they themselves can start creating their own stories just like many of these filmmakers have done.



Lately, it seems that the term “diversity” has been bandied about, especially in light of the recent #OscarsSoWhite controversy. I wonder out loud if we, through our Festival Week programming this season, have assembled a line-up that offers our take on fully-dimensional perspectives, visions, and representations...

ESEEL: I think so...most ESPECIALLY with Yo-Yo’s piece. I think that programming “shouts out” the APA talent pushing the boundary in new platforms. For me, I like that it’s a piece that challenges an audience. Something that encourages a critical

Beyond the #OscarSoWhite controversy...the goal of the Film Festival was to create space that highlights Asian/ APA filmmakers, since they weren’t being picked up by the Hollywood mainstream.

– Elaine Dolalas

conversation about the experience...not just “I like it”.

ELAINE: Beyond the #OscarSoWhite controversy, I’ve always thought the goal of the Film Festival was to create space that highlights Asian/ APA filmmakers, since they weren’t being picked up by the Hollywood mainstream. With that in mind, that is why we program serious documentaries, touching narratives, and campy midnight films. So in short, yes, I think the line up reflects a fully-dimensional perspective, vision, and representation. Could there be more? Absolutely.

CHANEL: In some ways, yes. This year’s films at LAAPFF (and, for that matter, all previously shown films at LAAPFF) indirectly address this issue of representation, but unfortunately, it cannot be said that they have successfully arrived at a way to communicate the depth and breadth of these issues, in a way that matches the vigorous polemics that they have recently

become on social media. I am not too disappointed or worried about that, though; representation in cinema is a long game, and I believe that it’d be better for filmmakers to focus on their work and their passion rather than merely addressing it in a short-term / short-sighted way.

KRISTEN: I think we are beyond the Oscar’s white party. Our presence alone speaks volumes as we infiltrate White Hollywood, in the heart of SOCAL.

LINDY: I think so. We are woke. We are not an industry festival that would have a different mission and set of core values. Our



Lead actors Chris Dinh and Julie Zhan in a playful moment between takes on the set of William Lu's *COMFORT*. Lu is an alumnus of Visual Communications' Armed With a Camera Fellowship. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

community-based purview drives our programming efforts.

KIRBY: Thanks to the low bar set by this year's Oscars, it would be almost too easy to not have fully-dimensioned perspectives, visions, and representations kind of programming, which I feel this Film Festival has accomplished quite well.

QUINCY: As someone who has put together two genre fiction programs, at least as far as representations and works, I think we have put together a program that reflects breadth and pluralism: that we don't have to hit specific "ideal" representations – we just have to present a large body of work that conveys MANY different representations, interests, settings, character types, etc.

SO YUN: I think we have. There are so many of us with such distinct voices, it really shows a range of how big and vast the Asian-American community is.

RYAN: I'm proud of the Film Festival's emphasis on female filmmakers, particularly in the Masters program. I think we also succeeded in capturing some of the diversity within the API community. Not only did the program feature diverse groups, spanning American Muslims, Indian Americans, Korean Americans, Cambodian Americans, among others, but we're showcasing sides of Asian American life that we're all familiar with, but have rarely seen on film. I'm talking about the Asian pothead, the Asian hip-hop enthusiast, and the Asian foodie.

Likewise, on the international front, we strove to broadly cover the Asian region. We were able to land excellent films from South Asia, East Asia, the Philippines, and Southeast Asia.



And one last question: suppose you were given the opportunity to assemble an "official" Film Festival 2016 mix CD. What ONE song could you not do without, and why? Only one, now...

ESEEL: Selena Gomez, "The Heart Wants What It Wants," ...aka PALI ROAD

ELAINE: Kendrick Lamar, "Alright."

LINDY: Warren G and Nate Dogg, "Regulate" (1994) featured on the film soundtrack, ABOVE THE RIM. All of us are trying to come together and work towards empowering our APA communities. We overcome personal agendas and obstacles in order to work as a collective. Together, we "regulate" against forces that want to tear us down. Also, it name checks the LBC and the 213, 'hoods we circulate in and represent.

KIRBY: Joe Hisaishi, "Summer." It's quite melodic and surprisingly somber, maybe I'm too close to the song and the movie it's featured in, but I feel it's a good encapsulation of my time with the programming duties of the Film Festival.

QUINCY: Camera Obscura, "Honey in the Sun."

Thank god none of you guys named any K-Pop songs. But then, Eseel, you selected Selena Gomez, which is kinda like K-Pop Chicana. Oh well. In any event, thank you all, and good night!



To see what our full program committee wants Festival Week audiences to not miss out on, please turn to page 44 to find out what they recommend.

LEARNING TO WALK FIRST STEPS IN MULTIPLATFORM STORYTELLING

By JOEL QUIZON Grace Chikui is a long time resident of Little Tokyo, an ethnic enclave in Downtown Los Angeles. Around the age of 12, Grace lost her eyesight due to glaucoma. I first learned about Grace during a brainstorming session at the Visual Communications office in the basement level of the historic Union Center for the Arts in Little Tokyo. VC was archiving boxes and boxes of old photographs by local resident and avid shutterbug, the late Eddie Oshiro. We eagerly looked ➡





On the streets of Los Angeles Little Tokyo: VR camera in hand, the author (right) with Elaine Dolalas and Vicky Huang accompany Grace Chikui on one of her walks through the neighborhood. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

through these photographs that depicted daily life in Little Tokyo. Eddie was also the subject of a short film that we also watched that day, Jeff Man's **THAT PARTICULAR TIME**. That film also featured lengthy interviews with Grace, a long time friend of Eddie and frequent focal point of Eddie's camera.

To go back a bit, this brainstorming session involved VC and Form follows Function, a collaborative media group for which I am a contributor. Founded by Maya Santos, Form follows Function is a group consisting of filmmakers, photographers, graphic designers, musicians, architects and artists who are passionate about the built environment, space, place, and place-making. As our press release reads: "FfF seeks to create media that nurtures awareness and engagement with our surroundings, and highlights people with unique relationships to the space around them." FfF was given the opportunity to create two projects for the 2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival that would delve into the world of transmedia narrative or multi-platform storytelling (something new for Form follows Function) and feature the Little Tokyo district, its historical significance and its current outlook. Through this opportunity, FfF Interactive took shape as an initiative for the studio to explore immersive technologies, and FfF Interactive Little Tokyo! would be the pilot collaboration with VC for the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival.

The first project, **312 Azusa Street**, will be a site-specific video projection in Little Tokyo. The public exhibition will be located in the JACCC Plaza, adjacent to Azusa Alley, the original site of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church (FAME) in 1888, the Apostolic Faith Mission in 1906, and the birthplace of Pentecostalism. The projection experience will be on the land originally owned by Bridget "Biddy" Mason, former slave and FAME Church Founder. This installment is in partnership with experiential designer and audio/visual installation artist Eddy Vajarakitpongse.

The second installation is **Walking With Grace**, a documentary viewable via virtual reality (VR) headsets. Using 360° video and spatial audio, this short documentary

will highlight Little Tokyo places and streets through Grace's perspective. This will be an exclusive preview, in advance of the full interactive launch on multiple platforms in Summer 2016. The documentary will be presented at JACCC on LAAPFF's opening weekend, and will continue to be on view at various Festival sites throughout the week.

This is when we go back to Grace. As part of the team that would work on the VR documentary, we all left that meeting with lots of ideas, but unsure as to what angle and perspective we would use. After days of ruminating, we all eventually came back to this woman who appeared in countless photos by Oshiro. When we sifted through those glossy 4" x 7" pics of Little Tokyo through the years – the festivals, the businesses no longer there, and the people in the community – we would eventually come upon photos of Grace. Her image: a small wrist purse in one hand, her cane in another, wearing a visor or hat, wearing a simple dress usually in some hue of red left an indelible mark on all of us. Could our venture into VR filmmaking, the newest and most heralded technology in visual media today, begin with a photograph, the foundation of motion pictures? Could our film using the most current, visually immersive and sensorial medium, more so than IMAX, Cinerama, or 3D, be about a woman with no vision? In our minds, we just wanted to tell her story. A person whose only lasting image of Little Tokyo and the surrounding area is that from a 12-year-old child, and whose only image since then, now at the age of 58, is only in her imagination, built from her other senses. Grace's Little Tokyo now is the change in the air as she maneuvers between buildings, the texture of the ground, the smell from the restaurants, the sound of the water fountain to mark that she's at 3rd and San Pedro, or the sounds of people speaking in different languages. In so

many ways, Grace is the perfect guide for our film. Her unique relationship to the area is rich with memories of the past when her vision was still intact, and now, with her surroundings rapidly changing as development and gentrification takes over. With VR filmmaking, we are able to immerse the viewer in her world. But I wasn't fully convinced...yet.

As for myself, I went to film school quite some time ago. I mean, I first learned to edit with a Moviola on 16mm. And while most of my recent experience in filmmaking is in the digital realm, I still have an affinity with film and the classic and fundamental elements of movie-making. I am always drawn to films that take full advantage of the concepts of framing and composing a shot, and am also excited when a film takes an adventurous and experimental approach to editing. I still love seeing films shot on Super 8mm. Some of my favorite movies are just people talking a lot. I'm pretty old (school). I get skeptical when it comes to new technology in filmmaking, when I know you can still tell a pretty great story by shooting with the most basic and archaic tools. I just think 3D is as viable a form of storytelling as Smell-O-Vision. As FFF began its mission of sorts to plunge into non-traditional forms of filmmaking, I wondered if I could be on board. Perhaps I'd be the traditional ballast to help us balance new endeavors into state-of-the-art media forms. I was still dubious, but kept an open mind. I had a lot of faith in our Creative Director, Maya Santos, our Co-Director and VR expert Vicki Huang, and the rest of the team that included Eesel Borlasi and Elaine Dolalas.

It was a warm day in mid January when I first met Grace. We all met her waiting at the front door of the San Pedro Firm Building in Little Tokyo where she lives. We were to take a walk with her that day to see what her normal day would be like. Her daily walk would be the construct of our film, now titled WALKING WITH GRACE. I never really spent any time with a person who was visually impaired. I knew this was going to be an educational experience. What I didn't know was that it would eventually open my eyes to a lot of interesting and exciting possibilities when it comes to our new approach of filmmaking.

Grace led us on her route, first to the post office located in the old Los Angeles Mall, an antiquated, almost ghost town-like, underground shopping and eating area located below Fletcher Bowron Square, then back up to street level, returning to Little Tokyo via Judge John Aiso/San Pedro Street. As the walk continued, Grace would mention what it was like in that area when she was a kid, and the businesses and friends that are no longer there. She would also describe and point out landmarks that help guide her so she wouldn't get lost, and remark on sounds and smells that would tell her where she is. The water fountain with a faint trickle in a parking garage entrance would tell her a right turn to 3rd Street is near. The change in the texture of the pavement tells her that she is entering the lower level of the Little Tokyo mall. We all started to pay attention to everything. Listening closely to cars as they sped through intersections and bikers passing by on sidewalks. I, myself, started to get a little nervous as we crossed the street hoping cars would see Grace and making sure they slowed down before they reach the crosswalk. Grace told us that the intersection of 1st and San Pedro was the only intersection in Little Tokyo that had a beeping sound at the crosswalk for the vision impaired, making crossing all the other streets a stressful endeavor. Especially for me!

We were a little tired after our walk, exhausted after our senses got a full workout. Grace looked as energetic as when we

first started. I was feeling appreciative of that time and had an even greater appreciation for those living with blindness. Their courage and fortitude is remarkable. The walk also provided me with a new way of looking at Little Tokyo, a place where I thought I was already familiar with. Most importantly, the experience opened my mind to what we can do with alternative film experiences and in this case, Virtual Reality. What better method to immerse a viewer into what we experienced that day; to be fully engrossed and engaged in such an experience is the best way to tell her story. I was imagining how we can present Grace with the proper perspective and scale as she traverses through the obstacle course that is downtown Los Angeles, with hurdles and challenges coming in all directions.

I was all in. Our equally enlightening and invigorating shooting experience that took place a few months later is for telling at another time, as that also provided lots of illuminating and educational moments in VR filmmaking. But what that first walk we took with Grace did was to give me a wake-up call of sorts with regards to filmmaking (or any creative endeavor). Embracing change – while holding close the history that created it – is a common thread in films of Form follows Function. For any defined space, the uneasiness and fruitfulness that occurs there when history and future intersects eventually define the people that inhabit within. Re-imagining the familiar and presenting it unhindered by convention is what multiplatform storytelling offers. As the consumer version of the Oculus Rift headset becomes available, and as Samsung and Google release their own versions, Virtual Reality presents reality re-imagined and re-purposed for the willing audience. These audiences may not lose it like those first people who saw Auguste and Louis Lumière's THE ARRIVAL OF A TRAIN AT LA CIOTAT STATION, springing from their seats as the train enters the screen, but it's all part of the visual medium's timeline of innovation. I began to see the possibilities.

At age 12, Grace lost her sight. She told us her story of how she had to learn how to walk again. First without a cane, and then with a cane. She said: It's like when you put the cane on the left side, your right foot goes out. And then when your left foot goes out, your cane goes on the right side. It was like a soldier walking at first, but I had to practice walking and then it becomes normal. At age 40, she decided to move back to the Little Tokyo area and live on her own. She told us how she had to get orientation and mobility lessons so she can walk around her own neighborhood where she spent so much time as child. She had to learn to walk again.

She told us these life events with no ounce of grievance but only merely as an opportunity to re-imagine something familiar, to adapt and eventually thrive. Valuable lessons.

JOEL QUIZON: *Los Angeles based/Manila roots filmmaker, arts organizer, and music curator. Contributing member of Form follows Function, a collaborative media studio creating non-fiction, short format, place-based videos.*

FFF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE:

312 AZUSA STREET

April 22 and 23, 2016

Exhibition Hours: 7-10 PM

JACCC Noguchi Plaza
244 So. San Pedro Street
Los Angeles, Little Tokyo



WALKING WITH GRACE

On view at various locations
throughout Festival Week;
look for the mobile VR kiosk

For a complete description,
turn to page 52



SPOTLIGHT ARTIST DAI SIL KIM-GIBSON AN APPRECIATION OF A CAREER

ARTIST'S SPOTLIGHT | DAI SIL KIM-GIBSON

By ABRAHAM FERRER To generations of Asian Pacific American cinema artists and arts policymakers, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson has been many things — maverick filmmaker, staunch arts advocate, devoted spouse and closet renaissance woman. While I have not known her as long or as intimately as her contemporaries, she has certainly been impactful to me in the years that I have been involved with organizing this very Film Festival. 🙌



Director Dai Sil Kim-Gibson in Cuba, circa 2006 to shoot her documentary **MOTHERLAND**. (Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

👉 **For one thing, Dai Sil has been That Filmmaker Whose Screening You Don't Want to Screw Up, Or Else:** the first time we screened her magnum opus on Korean sexual slavery, **SILENCE BROKEN: KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN**, back in 1999, we learned too late that her 35mm film print was mixed in Dolby SR, which could not be read back clearly by the theater's sound system. As a result, all the subtlety of Jon Oh's sound design was lost, reducing her Los Angeles premiere to a screening that might as well been in mono. That cringe-worthy experience paled in comparison to my first face-to-face meeting with Dai Sil, whom I had previously met through a series of phone calls in the weeks preceding Festival Week. Approaching her in the lobby while her film was screening for what turned out to be an otherwise oblivious audience, I offered a weak apology for the audio issues that turned up. To this day, I don't really remember her actual comments which were icy enough, but I could never forget the withering glare she fixed on me through her wire-framed glasses as she expressed a series of "these things happen" laments – as if she was telling me through those "look-daggers": You Eff'd Up. Royally. Afterwards, as she conducted an impassioned Q&A session with the audience, I made myself scarce, so embarrassed was I at screwing things up so badly. Apparently, I still had much – so much – to learn about correctly presenting a filmmaker's work.

Dai Sil has also been **That Artist Who Offered Second Chances:** four years later, I had the fortune of organizing another Los Angeles premiere for her, this time a screening of **WET SAND**, an even-handed, nuanced assessment of Los Angeles ten years after the Rodney King beating verdicts and the 1992 L.A. Rebellion that quickly followed it. The stakes were arguably higher this time, as her latest film sought to contrast the differing community-rebuilding trajectories of African American and Korean American communities after The Rebellion. The

large audience that turned out was understandably apprehensive about how an elderly Korean American woman – an outsider from New York City, at that – would portray their lingering issues of perceived animosities toward one another. This time, the screening was received much more positively, and, through working largely by phone from opposite sides of the continent, Dai Sil and I were able to actually pull the screening off (admittedly, with the help of the Visual Communications staff and the large network of Korean and African American churches and community organizations that she tapped to host a pre-reception and develop her premiere audience). One big takeaway: the lingering mantra by African American tastemakers in reaction to the premiere: "Her story treated us fairly." The other takeaway: that Dai Sil and I were speaking and working together again. To this day, that was and remains a huge relief to me.

Of course, I wasn't acquainted with Dai Sil Kim-Gibson prior to meeting her in 1999. But as I learned in subsequent years, her impact on Asian Pacific American cinema might not have been as splashy as other, more self-aggrandizing personalities. It has simply been more profound.

Dai Sil was, arguably, **The Last Line of Defense Against Lynne Cheney:** in 1978, Dai Sil transitioned from being a university professor of religious studies to serving a stint as a senior program officer in the Media Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Cheney, the wife of future Vice President and Republican Party mouthpiece Dick Cheney, served as the Chairperson of the NEH in the years subsequent to Dai Sil's departure in 1985 and, given the tenor of the Reagan Years, sought to abolish the NEH in 1995 as a perceived target of the Christian Coalition. Dai Sil, by then the director of the New York State Council on the Arts' Media Program, joined other arts advocates to argue strenuously against the efforts by Cheney

and another NEH chair, William J. Bennett to eviscerate the NEH.

As if to drive home the point of her antipathy toward Lynne Cheney, I clearly remember her acceptance speech in 2000 for the Steve Tatsukawa Memorial Fund Award, part of the festivities celebrating Visual Communications' 30th Anniversary. A couple of years earlier, the efforts to abolish both the NEH and the National Endowment for the Arts ended with an uneasy stalemate and restoration of most the agencies' pre-Reagan budgets. That didn't stop Dai Sil from talking about Lynne Cheney. No, sir! From the podium at the then-Japan America Theatre, Dai Sil spent a good portion of her acceptance speech articulating what a danger Cheney was to community-based arts and media, and that if we valued the work that cultural institutions like VC and the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center were doing, we should do everything we can to insure that her husband and George W. Bush were NOT elected President and Vice President that year. As entertaining as her speech was (and as I clearly remember, it generated a lot of knowing laughter from the audience), I think we all knew how the election turned out that year. And though arts funding was largely spared during the Dubya Era, I have to believe it was because Dai Sil and others like her so forcefully advocated for the Arts in those years.

Dai Sil was also **The First One to Cross the Aisle to Meet You:** in 1991, she would produce and write *AMERICA BECOMING*, a documentary feature that examined the new and ever-more diverse generation of immigrants to America and their interactions with more established residents. *AMERICA BECOMING* would mark the first in an ongoing series of collaborations with Los Angeles-based director Charles Burnett, whose *KILLER OF SHEEP* (1977) would come to be recognized as a classic of African American cinema. In the pre-L.A. Rebellion years, the idea of a seemingly unassuming African American filmmaking luminary from Los Angeles joining forces with a pushy Korean American neophyte documentarian from New York City was unlikely at best, and inconceivable to most. Three collaborative efforts in, it could be said that Burnett and Kim-Gibson's creative alliance offers a much-envied template for those who have been too reluctant or pre-occupied to pursue the possibilities of cross-cultural and cross-ethnic creative partnerships.

To this point, I only have to cast an eye on what American society has become in the twenty-three years since Dai Sil teamed with Christine Choy and Elaine Kim – two other strong-willed Korean American women producers – to complete *SA-I-GU* (1993), a first-out-the-gate examination of the L.A. Rebellion as seen through the eyes of Korean immigrant women. As if to riff off the themes of *AMERICA BECOMING*, this country's society has become even more cosmopolitan and polyglot than even seventy years ago, when the confluence of changing immigration policies in the post-WWII years and the civil rights movement served to change America's homogeneity and political attitudes. Only today, as I cast an eye on the L.A. landscape, I ponder the impact of a multi-ethnic society and the ongoing struggles for cultural plurality and equity. This Film Festival offers a microcosm of those inherent contradictions: as Asian Pacific Americans, we celebrate the broad spectrum of our AAPI-ness at cultural gatherings as diverse as various Asian-centric film festivals, receptions, networking soirees, and empowerment events; we revel in our communities' culinary offerings through This Night Market and That Plate-by-Plate; hype our Asian-centric food

trucks, and champion our AAPI-owned pop-up eateries and barrio barbecue hangouts; and we clamor for full participation and recognition in American society through the realms of politics and mainstream entertainment – vocations that, in a bygone era, would have made our parents keel over in horror and abject disappointment.



Dai Sil Kim-Gibson visits with former "comfort woman" Song Shin during the making of *SILENCE BROKEN: KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN*.
(Photo: courtesy the filmmaker)

I don't know what Dai Sil Kim-Gibson thinks of all the changes in Asian Pacific America during the three decades of her creative career. As her latest cinematic effort *PEOPLE ARE THE SKY* points out, in the years since she lost her husband, fellow arts advocate and administrator Don Gibson to a prolonged illness, Dai Sil has turned to painting to keep up her creative chops even as she has been slowly easing back into the director's chair. I wonder, though, if she's had a chance to observe this new energy that has emerged in the last decade or so – a new and aggressive push into the mainstream entertainment arena as seen by the likes of directors Justin Lin and John Chu; the rise of AAPI internet celebrities as Wong Fu Productions, Kev Jumba, or even The Fung Brothers; entertainment empowerment initiatives as Kollaboration or the International Secret Agents; or even game-changing broadcast programming as that current flavor-of-the-month, *FRESH OFF THE BOAT*. Is she heartened by it all? Or is there some unexpressed sense of dissatisfaction in how all these new developments are happening within some kind of "silo," sealed off from the rest of society and from the challenges and possibilities of cross-cultural collaboration and partnership? I suspect Dai Sil might very well take the long view on this question. That is, we've come a long way since she emerged onto the media arts arena. But we all – old-timers and young-bloods alike – still have so very, very far to go.

ABRAHAM FERRER is the Exhibitions Director at Visual Communications and has been involved with organizing the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival since 1988.

FESTIVAL AWARDS

HONOR ROLL: OUR PAST FESTIVAL AWARD WINNERS

The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival has conferred filmmaker awards beginning in 1995, when short films were recognized. The impact of short film and video on the growing Asian Pacific cinematic community was confirmed in 1998, when the awards were named the King Hu Award (later the Festival Golden Reel Award) to recognize overall excellence in the short subject format, and the New Directors/New Visions Award in recognition of innovative and original use of cinematic language and vision. The New Directors/New Visions Award was augmented in 2004 to recognize the efforts of former Visual Communications Executive Director Linda Mabalot to nurture and develop emerging Asian Pacific filmmaking talents.



1995

Narrative Short
ASIAN STUDS NIGHTMARE
Dir: Lawrence "Kip" Fulbeck

Documentary Short
THE TRAINED CHINESE TONGUE
Dir: Laurie Wen

Honorable Mention, Narrative Short
MR. LEE
Dir: Greg Pak



1999

Golden Reel Award
THE LAST SEVEN DAYS OF ANNIE ONG
Dir: Derek Vertongen

New Directors/New Visions Award
ROSEWATER
Dir: Kimi Takasue

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
ROOTS IN THE SAND
Dir: Jayasri M. Hart (Documentary)
FRESHMEN
Dir: Tom Huang (Narrative)



2001

Golden Reel Award
BODY AND SOUL
Dir: Puntip Limrungrroj

New Directors/New Visions Award
CUT CUT RECUT
Dir: Sara Kealani Takahashi



2003

Golden Reel Award
THE ANNIVERSARY
Dir: Ham Tran

New Directors/New Visions Award
THE ANNIVERSARY
Dir: Ham Tran
REVOLVE
Dir: Gene Sung



1998

King Hu Award
DOUBLE SOLITAIRE
Dir: Corey Ohama

New Directors/New Visions Award
RED PERIL
Dir: Khmasea Hoa Bristol



2000

Golden Reel Award
TURBANS
Dir: Erika Surat Andersen

New Directors/New Visions Award
IMAGINING PLACE
Dir: Anita Wen-shin Chang

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
CONSCIENCE AND THE CONSTITUTION
Dir: Frank Abe (Documentary)



2002

Golden Reel Award
BARRIER DEVICE
Dir: Grace Lee

New Directors/New Visions Award
THE QUEST FOR LENGTH
Dir: Gene Rhee

Honorable Mention
KITCHEN KATASTROPHE
Dirs: Derrick Auyoung, Andrew Huang



2004

Golden Reel Award
ETERNAL GAZE
Dir: Sam Chen

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
PERFECTION
Dir: Karen Lin
JESUS HENRY CHRIST
Dir: Dennis Lee

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
KEKA
Dir: Enrique "Quark" Henares (Narrative)

Beginning in 2004, after a five-year break, the Film Festival resumed handing out awards for feature-length film and video works. Recognizing the growing technical accomplishment and vision of our communities' cinematic artists, the Festival in 2006 instituted Grand Jury and Special Jury Awards in both narrative and non-fiction feature-length film. Complementing these awards are the Festival Audience Awards recognizing the Festival audience's favorites in both narrative and non-fiction, and Special Jury citations for excellence in Acting. 🌟 Here's the complete list:



2005

Golden Reel Award
SOPHIE
Dir: Helen Hauyoung Lee

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
TAMA TU
Dir: Taika Waititi



Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
TO YOU SWEETHEART, ALOHA
Dirs: S. Leo Chiang, Mercedes Coats (Documentary)



2006

Golden Reel Award
MISSING
Dir: Kit Hui

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
NEW YEAR
Dir: Susan Tuan



Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
THE MOTEL
Dir: Michael Kang (Narrative)

**THE QUEEN FROM VIRGINIA:
THE JACKIE BONG WRIGHT STORY**
Dir: David Ngo (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
COLMA: THE MUSICAL
Dir: Richard Wong (Narrative)

JOHN & JANE TOLL-FREE
Dir: Ashim Ahluwalia (Documentary)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
ASIAN STORIES (BOOK 3)
Dirs: Kris Chin, Ron Oda (Narrative)



2007

Golden Reel Award
**THE BLOOD OF
YINGZHOU DISTRICT**
Dir: Ruby Yang

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
PILGRIMAGE
Dir: Tadashi Nakamura

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
THE REBEL
Dir: Charlie Nguyen (Narrative)

THE CATS OF MIRIKITANI
Dir: Linda Hattendorf (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
BBY
Dir: Juwan Chung (Narrative)

NA KAMALEI: THE MEN OF HULA
Dir: Lisette Marie Flanary (Documentary)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
AMERICAN FUSION
Dir: Frank Lin (Narrative)

NEW YEAR BABY
Dir: Socheata Poeuv (Documentary)

Special Jury Citations - Acting
ESAI MORALES
American Fusion
MEREDITH SCOTT LYNN
Finishing the Game

DAVID HUYNH
(Outstanding Newcomer) Baby



2008

Golden Reel Award
**TAILOR MADE:
CHINATOWN'S LAST TAILOR**
Dirs: Leonard Lee, Marsha Newbery

Golden Reel Award - Honorable Mention
THE POSTCARD Dir: Josh Kim

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
SWEAT Dir: Na Hong-jin

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
OCEAN OF PEARLS
Dir: Sarab Neelam (Narrative)
OH, SAIGON
Dir: Doan Hoang (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
ALWAYS BE BOYZ Dir: John Kwon
(Narrative - Best First Feature)

OPTION 3 Dir: Richard Wong
(Narrative - Technical Achievement:
Richard Wong, H.P. Mendoza)

UP THE YANGTZE
Dir: Yung Chang (Documentary)

LONG STORY SHORT
Dir: Christine Choy
(Documentary - Honorable Mention)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
OCEAN OF PEARLS
Dir: Sarab Neelam (Narrative)

LONG STORY SHORT
Dir: Christine Choy (Documentary)

Special Jury Citation - Outstanding Newcomer
JIMMY TSAI (Screenwriting; Acting)
PING PONG PLAYA

MORE ➤



2009

Golden Reel Award
**A GREEN MOUNTAIN
 IN THE DRAWER**
 Dir: Lee Hwa Jun

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
WET SEASON Dir: Michael Tay

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
CHILDREN OF INVENTION
 Dir: Tze Chun (Narrative)

WHATEVER IT TAKES
 Dir: Christopher Wong (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
THE REAL SHAOLIN
 Dir: Alexander Sebastian Lee (Documentary)

ALL ABOUT DAD Dir: Mark Tran
 (Narrative - Outstanding First Feature)

TREELESS MOUNTAIN Dir: So Yong Kim
 (Narrative - Outstanding Achievement, Directing)

WHITE ON RICE Dir: Dave Boyle
 (Outstanding Screenplay: Boyle, Joel Clark)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
KARMA CALLING
 Dir: Sarba Das (Narrative)

WHATEVER IT TAKES
 Dir: Christopher Wong (Documentary)

Special Jury Citation - Outstanding Newcomer
MICHAEL CHEN CHILDREN OF INVENTION
CRYSTAL CHIU CHILDREN OF INVENTION
HEE YEON KIM TREELESS MOUNTAIN
SONG HEE KIM TREELESS MOUNTAIN
JUSTIN "BOB" KWONG WHITE ON RICE



2010

Golden Reel Award
BICYCLE Dir: Dean Yamada

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
TELEVISNU Dir: Prithi Gowda

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
THE TAQWACORES
 Dir: Eyad Zahra (Narrative)

LAST TRAIN HOME
 Dir: Lixin Fan (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
IN THE MATTER OF CHA JUNG HEE
 Dir: Deann Borshay Liem
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Directing)
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Editing: Vivien Hillgrove)

LAST TRAIN HOME Dir: Lixin Fan
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Cinematography)

THE TAQWACORES Dir: Eyad Zahra
 (Narrative - Outstanding Achievement, Directing)

SF STORIES Dir: Raul Jocson
 (Narrative - Outstanding Screenplay)

KTOWN COWBOYS Dir: Daniel Park
 (Narrative - Outstanding First Feature)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
THE TAQWACORES
 Dir: Eyad Zahra (Narrative)

A VILLAGE CALLED VERSAILLES
 Dir: S. Leo Chiang (Documentary)

Special Jury Citation - Call to Action Award
A VILLAGE CALLED VERSAILLES
 Dir: S. Leo Chiang (Documentary)

(Narrative - Best Ensemble Acting)
NAV MANN THE TAQWACORES
BOBBY NADERI THE TAQWACORES
DOMINIC RAINS THE TAQWACORES
NOUREEN DEWULF THE TAQWACORES



2011

Golden Reel Award
TEAMWORK Dir: Hong Seo Yun

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
FIRECRACKER Dir: Soham Mehta

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES
 Dir: Ian Gamazon (Narrative)

THE HOUSE OF SUH
 Dir: Iris K. Shim (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
THE HOUSE OF SUH
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Directing - Iris K. Shim)

ONE BIG HAPA FAMILY
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Cinematography - Jason Woodford)
 (Documentary - Outstanding Achievement, Editing - Jeff Chiba Stearns)

LIVING IN SEDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES
 (Narrative - Best Director - Ian Gamazon)

SAIGON ELECTRIC
 (Narrative - Best Screenplay - Stephane Gauger)

WHERE THE ROAD MEETS THE SUN
 (Narrative - Best Cinematography - Gavin Kelly)

BANG BANG
 (Narrative - Best First Feature - Byron O)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
RAKENROL
 Dir: Quark Henares (Narrative)

AMONG B-BOYS
 Dir: Christopher Woon (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Human Rights Award
FINDING FACE
 Dir: Skye Fitzgerald, Patti Duncan (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Breakout Acting Performance
RYAN GREER
 ONE KINE DAY

(Narrative - Best Ensemble Acting)
ERIC MABIUS
FERNANDO NORIEGA
WILL YUN LEE
LUKE BRANDON FIELD
 WHERE THE ROAD MEETS THE SUN



2012

Golden Reel Award
NANI Dir: Justin Tipping

Linda Mabalot New Directors/New Visions Award
TSUYAKO Dir: Mitsuyo Miyazaki

Honorable Mention
THIEF Dir: Jay Chern

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
VALLEY OF SAINTS
 Dir: Musa Syeed (Narrative)

WHERE HEAVEN MEETS HELL
 Dir: Sasha Friedlander (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film
SEEKING ASIAN FEMALE
 (Documentary - Best Director: Debbie Lum)

WHERE HEAVEN MEETS HELL
 (Documentary, Best Cinematography: Sasha Friedlander, Bao Nguyen)

CHINA HEAVYWEIGHT
 (Documentary, Best Cinematography: Sun Shaoquang)

VALLEY OF SAINTS
 (Narrative, Best Director: Musa Syeed)

YES WE'RE OPEN
 (Narrative, Best Screenplay: H.P. Mendoza)

MODEL MINORITY | TWO SHADOWS
 (Narrative, Best Cinematography: John Matysiak)

SHANGHAI CALLING
 (Narrative, Best First Feature: Daniel Hsia)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film
TWO SHADOWS
 Dir: Greg Cahill (Narrative)

GIVE UP TOMORROW
 Dir: Michael Collins (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Human Rights Award
GIVE UP TOMORROW
 Dir: Michael Collins (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Best Newcomer: Acting
NICHOLE BLOOM ONE KINE DAY
KEVIN WU HANG LOOSE

Special Jury Award - Best Actor
DANTE BASCO PARADISE BROKEN, HANG LOOSE
(Narrative - Best Ensemble Acting)
SUNG KANG, MONIQUE CURNEN
MICHELLE KRUSIEC, SANDY MARTIN,
JOSHUA LEONARD
 SUNSET STORIES

C3: Project Market/Jury Award
SEEING RED Liselle Mei, Derek Nguyen

C3: Project Market/Honorable Mention
THE DOCTOR Musa Syeed, Nicholas Bruckman



2013

Golden Reel Award

ADVANTAGEOUS Dir: Jennifer Phang

Linda Mabalo New Directors/New Visions Award

PAULINA Dir: Caylee So

Honorable Mention

ORIOLE Dir: Kaynipa Polnikorn

HOW I LEARNED TO TELL A LIE

Dir: Guo Shang-Sing

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

ABIGAIL HARM

Dir: Lee Isaac Chung (Narrative)

WHEN I WALK

Dir: Jason DaSilva (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

A RIVER CHANGES COURSE

(Documentary - Best Director: Kalyanee Mam)

A RIVER CHANGES COURSE

(Documentary, Best Cinematography: Kalyanee Mam)

HARANA

(Documentary, Best Cinematography: Peggy Peralta - Honorable Mention)

JAKE SHIMABUKURO:

LIFE ON FOUR STRINGS

(Documentary, Best Editor: Tadashi Nakamura)

ABIGAIL HARM

(Narrative, Best Director: Lee Isaac Chung)

SAKE-BOMB

(Narrative, Best Screenplay: Jeff Mizushima)

THE HAUMANA

(Narrative, Best First Feature: Keo Woolford)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film

THE HAUMANA

Dir: Keo Woolford (Narrative)

YELLOW FACE

Dir: Jeff Liu (Narrative)

JAKE SHIMABUKURO:

LIFE ON FOUR STRINGS

Dir: Tadashi Nakamura (Documentary)

Remy Martin Emerging Filmmaker Award

EVAN JACKSON LEONG

Dir: LINSANITY

Special Jury Award - Breakout Performance: Acting

VERA MIAO BEST FRIENDS FOREVER

JASON TOBIN CHINK

Project Catalyst Award

RUN THE TIDE Soham Mehta, Rajiv Shah

Project Catalyst/Honorable Mention

NEW GIRL: THE JAR AND THE BAR

Viet Nguyen, Christopher Dinh Nguyen



2014

Golden Reel Award

ABOVE THE SEA Dir: Keola Racela

Linda Mabalo New Directors/New Visions Award

MILKYBOY Dir: Arnold Arre

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

CICADA

Dir: Dean Yamada (Narrative)

THE ROAD TO FAME

Dir: Hao Wu (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

9-MAN

(Documentary - Best Director: Ursula Liang)

JEEPNEY

(Documentary, Best Cinematography: Esi Casey and Sarah Friedland)

THE ROAD TO FAME

(Documentary, Best Editor: Hao Wu and Jean Tsien)

STORIES FROM TOHOKU

(Special Jury Award: Dianne Fukami and Eli Olson)

HOW TO FIGHT IN SIX INCH HEELS

(Narrative, Best Director: Ham Tran)

A PICTURE OF YOU

(Narrative, Best Screenplay: J.P. Chan)

A LEADING MAN

(Narrative, Best Cinematography: Robert Lam)

FARAH GOES BANG

(Narrative, Best Actor: Nikohl Boosheri)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film

100 DAYS

Dir: Henry Chan (Narrative)

9-MAN

Dir: Ursula Liang (Documentary)

Project Catalyst Award

THE TIGER'S CHILD Abel Yang, Burlee Vang

Project Catalyst/Honorable Mention

CHINATOWN SQUAD

Stephane Gauger, Feodor Chin



2015

Golden Reel Award

90 DAYS Dir: Timothy Yeung

Linda Mabalo New Directors/New Visions Award

JULIET JULIET - THE SOUND OF LOVE

MUSICAL Dir: Ken Ochiai

Honorable Mention

QUYEN Dir: Lucretia Stinnette

THICKER THAN WATER

Dir: Seung Yeob Lee

Grand Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

JASMINE

Dir: Dax Phelan (Narrative)

TWINSTERS

Dir: Samantha Futerman, Ryan Miyamoto (Documentary)

Special Jury Award - Feature-Length Film

CHANGING SEASON

(Documentary - Best Director: Jim Choi)

EVERYTHING WILL BE

(Documentary, Best Cinematography: Patrick McLaughlin)

TOP SPIN

(Documentary, Best Editor: Sara Newens and Summer Henderson)

WINNING GIRL

(Special Jury Award: Kimberlee Bassford)

ADVANTAGEOUS

(Narrative, Best Director: Jennifer Phang)

MISS INDIA AMERICA

(Narrative, Best Screenplay: Ravi Kapoor, Meera Simhan)

JASMINE

(Narrative, Best Cinematography: Guy Livneh)

JASMINE

(Narrative, Best Actor: Jason Tobin, Drama)

MISS INDIA AMERICA

(Narrative, Best Actor: Tiya Sircar, Comedy)

JASMINE | ADVANTAGEOUS

(Narrative, Best Editor - Tie: Chris Chan Lee | Sean Gillane, Jennifer Phang)

K-TOWN COWBOYS

(Narrative, Best Ensemble Cast)

JASMINE

(Narrative, Best Sound Design: Lisa K. Fowle)

ADVANTAGEOUS

(Narrative, Best Musical Score: Timo Chen)

MAN UP

(Best Animation in a Non-Animation Film)

EVERYTHING BEFORE US

(Narrative, Best New Actor: Brandon Soo Hoo)

LOVE ARCADIA

(Narrative, Best New Actor: Anthony Ma)

THERE IS A NEW WORLD SOMEWHERE

(Narrative, Best First Feature: Li Lu)

Audience Award - Feature-Length Film

HOW TO WIN AT CHECKERS

(EVERY TIME) Dir: Josh Kim (Narrative)

THE KILLING FIENDS OF DR. HAING S.

NGOR Dir: Arthur Dong (Documentary)

Linda Mabalo Renaissance Spirit Award

JACQUELINE KIM ADVANTAGEOUS

NARRATIVE AWARDS

2016 JURY AWARDS FINALISTS: FEATURE NARRATIVE FILM

The feature-length narrative films vying for the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival's Grand Jury Award are distinguished by a mix of debut efforts by first-time feature directors, as well as veteran artists with astounding new works. All of this makes for a suspenseful evening when the Awards for the feature-length narrative film will be presented prior to Festival Closing Night on Thursday, April 28, 2016 at the Directors Guild of America. The Directors of the juried awards nominees in the feature-length narrative category are:



WILLIAM LU
Director, **COMFORT**

A late-night courier agrees to pick up the feisty daughter of an important client. The two youngsters form a close connection and spend two nights exploring LA's local food scene while their romance blossoms.

William Lu attended the graduate film conservatory at Florida State University where he received his MFA in film and television production. He spent three years at Herzog & Company where he produced content for clients like Disney, Paramount, Dreamworks and Sony Pictures. In 2005, he was a member of Visual Communications' Armed with a Camera Fellowship, through which he produced SPY MOMS. He was subsequently hired at Maker Studios, where he produced content for their gaming vertical. In 2012, he switched to freelance producing, serving as a co-producer for Rosanna Pansino's NERDY NUMMIES blockbuster YouTube series while simultaneously developing feature content that he could later direct.



TANUJ CHOPRA
Director, **GRASS**

Two girls. A park. And a backpack full of someone else's weed...

TANUJ CHOPRA holds a BA in Art Semiotics from Brown University and an MFA in film direction from Columbia University, where he was awarded the Dean's Fellowship. His first feature film PUNCHING AT THE SUN (Festival 2006) about South Asian teenagers coming of age in Elmhurst, Queens premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, and won the Grand Jury Prize at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival. Variety called his fiery debut "Distinctive, original and iconoclastic." Other award-winning titles he's directed include BUTTERFLY, CLAP CLAP, CARBON DATED and the ITVS "Futurestates" film PIA about a runaway genderbending android.



RYUN YU
Director, **THE LAST TOUR**

A mercenary guarding a hostage has an attack of conscience, and the two of them make a run for freedom. A kidnapping thriller with a twist.

RYUN YU is the first Korean American to train at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. He also has the first theater degree ever awarded by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He played DHH in David Henry Hwang's YELLOWFACE, the first adaptation of a major play for YouTube. He has performed extensively in the theater and on television, most recently in HOLD THESE TRUTHS at the ACT Theater in Seattle, playing Gordon Hirabayashi and about 37 other characters. As a director, he has directed ROMEO AND JULIET and TWELFTH NIGHT for the Lodestone Theater Ensemble. THE LAST TOUR is his feature-length directing debut.



JONTHAN LIM
Director, **PALI ROAD**

A young doctor wakes up from a car accident and discovers she is married to another man and living a life she can't remember. Her search for the truth to her past life will lead her to question everyone around her and her entire existence.

JONATHAN LIM, a graduate of Beijing Film Academy and New York Film Academy, wrote and directed his feature film SLAM in 2009, which was then later distributed worldwide by Sony Pictures Television. In 2010, he co-wrote and directed Sony Pictures' SOPHIA'S DIARY, an interactive web/TV drama series which successfully grabbed a viewership of over 100 million viewers in Mainland China. Lim has recently completed his first U.S.-China co-production PALI ROAD, a mystery/thriller/romance which was shot in Hawaii. PALI ROAD is currently scheduled for an April 29th theatrical release in the U.S.



LENA KHAN

Director, **THE TIGER HUNTER**

A clever young man immigrates to 1970s Chicago to pursue "greatness," but when his job falls through, he resorts to an elaborate charade with misfit friends to woo his childhood sweetheart.

LENA KHAN is a writer/director who allows her work to be an organic blend of her wit, a slightly eccentric outlook on life, and her rich emotional aptitude. Lena holds a master's degree from UCLA's prestigious school of Theater, Film and Television. Since then, she has been directing short films, commercials, and music videos. Her videos have placed in major festivals, broadcast on major network television channels across the world, and received over 20 million hits on YouTube. Aside from conducting workshops across the country for young filmmakers, Lena now brings her unique vision and visual style to her first feature film, **THE TIGER HUNTER**.



QUENTIN LEE

Director, **THE UNBIDDEN**

THE UNBIDDEN is a supernatural thriller about four women confronted by a mysterious young man who unburies a dark secret from their past.

QUENTIN LEE is a filmmaker based in Los Angeles, Vancouver, and Beijing. With a Premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival in 1997, Quentin Lee's first feature **SHOPPING FOR FANGS** (co-directed and co-written with Justin Lin) opened to critical acclaim during its limited theatrical release in the U.S. Lee self-distributed **SHOPPING FOR FANGS** through Margin Films, a company he founded in 1997. Born and raised in Hong Kong, he attended high school in Montréal, holds a B.A. in English from UC Berkeley, an M.A. in English from Yale University, and an M.F.A. in Film Directing from UCLA.



MATTHEW ABAYA

Director, **VAMPARIAH**

A skilled vampire hunter becomes the hunted when she learns that she may have been turned by her sworn foe.

A graduate of San Francisco State University's Asian American Studies Department, MATTHEW ABAYA is a writer, director and visual effects artist whose work has been seen in award winning music videos and short films. His first feature length motion picture **VAMPARIAH** (2016) is based on his short film **BAMPINAY** (Festival 2004) which uses cultural influences and the horror/sci-fi genre as a vehicle to discuss race and identity. He currently teaches a Digital Arts class for at-risk high school students in the San Francisco Bay Area.

DOCUMENTARY AWARDS

2016 JURY AWARDS FINALISTS: FEATURE DOCUMENTARY FILM

Our line-up of documentary feature film nominees offers a penetrating lens into the harrowing and courageous lives of its subjects: topics range from those who commit to social justice in the face of impossible odds, to an artistic genius with unrelenting conviction, and from a man who battles for his dream in an unconventional fashion to today's spiritually innovative youth in the midst of artistic expression. The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival's juried awards for feature-length documentary film will be presented prior to Festival Closing Night on Thursday, April 28, 2016, at the Directors Guild of America. The directors of the juried nominees in the feature-length documentary category are:



BEN WANG

Director, **BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY**

Arrested at 16 and tried as an adult for kidnapping and robbery, Eddy Zheng served over 20 years in California prisons and jails. Ben Wang's **BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY** paints an intimate portrait of Eddy – the prisoner, the immigrant, the son, the activist.

BEN WANG's previous documentary films include **AOKI** (Festival 2010) and **MAMORI** (2013). **AOKI** has screened at the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival, Black Panther Party Film Festival, Chicago Asian American Showcase, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, DC Asian Pacific American Film Festival, Vancouver Asian Film Festival, and the Boston Asian American Film Festival. Wang also co-edited **Other: An API Prisoners' Anthology**, the first anthology of writings and artwork featuring Asian American & Pacific Islander prisoners.



MICHEL SIV

Director, **DAZE OF JUSTICE**

DAZE OF JUSTICE follows a small group of Cambodian American survivors of the Killing Fields as they return to Cambodia after nearly thirty-five years in search of justice at the Khmer Rouge Trial.

At six years old, MICHAEL SIV immigrated to San Francisco with his mother as refugees, leaving behind his father and brother in Cambodia. He became involved in filmmaking through an after-school media program located in the Tenderloin neighborhood of San Francisco, run by award-winning filmmaker Spencer Nakasako. At 24, he was featured in Nakasako's film **REFUGEE**, documenting his return to Cambodia to meet his father and brother. Siv's first documentary **WHO I BECAME**, was part of the "Matters of Race" series that premiered nationally on PBS in 2003. Siv recently completed **DAZE OF JUSTICE** as a culminating project through which he will establish himself as an independent documentary filmmaker.



S. LEO CHIANG and JOHNNY SYMONS

Directors, **OUT RUN**

Mobilizing working-class transgender hairdressers and beauty queens, the dynamic leaders of the world's only LGBT political party wage a historic quest to elect a trans woman to the Philippine Congress.

S. LEO CHIANG is a Taiwan-born, San Francisco-based filmmaker. His documentary **MR. CAO GOES TO WASHINGTON** (Festival 2013) won the Inspiration Award at the 2012 Full Frame Film Festival. His previous film, the Emmy®-nominated **A VILLAGE CALLED VERSAILLES** (Festival 2010), picked up eight film festival awards, aired on PBS's *Independent Lens*, and has been acquired by more than 200 universities. His other films include **TO YOU SWEETHEART**, **ALOHA** (Festival 2005) and **ONE + ONE** (2002). Leo received an MFA in film production from USC, and lectures in the Social Documentation program at UC Santa Cruz.



JOHNNY SYMONS is a Bay Area documentary filmmaker focusing on LGBT cultural and political issues. His award-winning feature documentaries include **DADDY & PAPA** (2002), which was nominated for a national Emmy® for Best Documentary; **BEYOND CONCEPTION** (2006), which premiered at the Florida Film Festival and was broadcast on The Discovery Channel; and **ASK NOT** (2008) which aired on PBS' "Independent Lens" and screened on Capitol Hill for members of Congress. He co-produced the Academy Award® nominated **LONG NIGHT'S JOURNEY INTO DAY**, the Grand Jury Prize winner for Best Documentary at Sundance in 2000. Johnny has a master's in documentary production from Stanford and is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the Documentary Program in the Cinema Department at San Francisco State University.



MARYAM KASHANI
 Director, **SIGNS OF
 REMARKABLE HISTORY**

From the San Francisco Bay Area to New York, from the Qur'an to Oscar Wilde, **SIGNS OF REMARKABLE HISTORY** offers a contemplative view of American Muslim intellectual landscapes and life.

MARYAM KASHANI completed her doctorate in social anthropology from the University of Texas at Austin in 2014. Her research and filmmaking are organized around the centrality of visual culture to Muslim everyday life and its critical relation to questions of morality, politics, ethics, and social justice. Her dissertation, "Seekers of Sacred Knowledge: Zaytuna College and the Education of American Muslims," is based on eighteen months of fieldwork conducted at Zaytuna College, an emergent Muslim liberal arts college that was established in 2009 in Berkeley, CA. A native of San Francisco and formerly a musician before transitioning into filmmaking, Kashani, who earned her M.F.A. in film/video from the California Institute of the Arts in 2003, screened her debut documentary feature **BEST IN THE WEST** at the 2007 Film Festival. She is currently pursuing post-doctorate studies at Washington University in St. Louis, MO and resides in Chicago.



MIKIKO SASAKI
 Director, **THE GREAT SASUKE**

A masked wrestler turned one-time politician climbs back into both rings for a final battle royale.

MIKIKO SASAKI is a documentary filmmaker based in Oakland, CA. She grew up in Morioka, Iwate, the same hometown as *The Great Sasuke*. Her award-winning short documentary, **STORY OF A BUSINESSWOMAN** (Festival 2010), screened at numerous film festivals around the country and was broadcasted on MNET in 2011. She also works as a documentary and commercial editor in the San Francisco Bay Area and is currently developing a few documentary projects.



NANFU WANG
 Director, **HOOLIGAN SPARROW**

Known as "Sparrow," Ye Haiyan has a long history of activism related to women's rights, child abuse and sex work in China. She blogs avidly about women's rights and is most known for her protest in 2012 as a free sex worker at a "Ten Yuan Brothel" to expose the poor working conditions of migrant sex workers.

NANFU WANG is an independent filmmaker based in New York City. Born in a remote farming village in Jiangxi Province, China, Wang was forced to forgo formal education after losing her father as a pre-teen. At age 22, she was awarded a full fellowship to attend a graduate program in English Language and Literature at Shanghai University. Wang holds three master's degrees from New York University, Ohio University, and Shanghai University, and continues to seek out and tell the stories of people who have been ignored by their societies. Wang is a recipient of the Sundance Documentary Fund and Bertha Britdoc Journalism Fund, and is a Sundance and IFP-supported filmmaker. **HOOLIGAN SPARROW** is Wang's feature debut.



PAMELA TOM
 Director, **TYRUS**

TYRUS observes the life, art, and enduring impact of 105-year old Chinese American artist and Disney Legend, Tyrus Wong.

PAMELA TOM is a writer, director and producer whose work includes documentary and narrative film and television. Tom served as a production executive at KCET, was the postproduction producer on the BBC/PBS national series **WW2: BEHIND CLOSED DOORS: STALIN, THE NAZIS, AND THE WEST**, and the network producer on **WIRED SCIENCE**. Tom's award winning narrative short film **TWO LIES** (Festival 1990), about a divorced Chinese woman who has plastic surgery to make her eyes rounder, screened at hundreds of film festivals including the Sundance Film Festival, New Directors/New Films, and aired on numerous PBS stations. Tom is the recipient of the Walt Disney Writing Fellowship, the Dorothy Arzner Award For Outstanding Woman Director, the Edna and Yu Shan Han Award, and the Asian Pacific Women's Network Award. She has taught documentary film at UC Santa Barbara and Loyola Marymount University as well as film directing at UCLA Extension, and served as the Director of Diversity at Film Independent where she was a leading spokesperson on issues related to diversity in the film industry. She received her BA with Honors from Brown University and an MFA in film from UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television.

SHORTSAWARDS

2016 JURY AWARDS FINALISTS: SHORT FILM

The Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival is pleased to announce finalists for the 2016 Festival Golden Reel Award for Short Films, to be presented at the Festival Closing Night on Thursday, April 28, 2016. The award will be presented to an Asian Pacific American filmmaker whose work, presented in this year's Festival, displays both a high degree of excellence and promise of continued creative activity. The Award, presented annually at the Festival, also serves to promote and perpetuate the creative endeavors of Asian Pacific American cinema artists. Let's meet the directors of this year's nominees for the Festival Golden Reel Award.



EMILY CHAO

Director, **BRUCE TAKES
DRAGON TOWN**

Upon discovering her uncle's lost kung fu film, the filmmaker travels to Taiwan during Ghost Month to uncover his past. During her stay she confronts signs of her family's history of displacement. From an outdoor 35mm film screening for the ghosts to an abandoned utopian pod village, she searches for remnants of home.

EMILY CHAO, a native of San Jose, CA, is a film and videomaker based in Los Angeles where she recently received her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Her parents were born in Taiwan and, as a child, she grew up helping her father at his Taiwanese style restaurant. Her series of diverse, short-form nonfiction films focus primarily on identity and diaspora, history and representation, and the relationship between the lost past and the future present.



BYUN SUNGBIN

Director, **THE CHICKEN
OF WUZUH**

Wuzuh, a girl with Down's syndrome, has a secret crush on her class teacher. However, one day, she finds out that one of her classmates has received from the teacher the same hairclip as hers, which she had thought that he has given only to her as a thoughtful present...

Born in 1991, BYUN SUNGBIN is currently studying Film TV & Multimedia and Eastern Philosophy at Sungkyunkwan University. His first short film 170mm (2007) received The Best Picture Award from Korean Youth Media Festival. His follow-up, THE SHADOW RABBIT (2009) was also well received in several film festivals, garnering the Artistic Experiment Award from Seoul International Youth Film Festival. HORN, his most recent short film was invited to the 2014 Busan International Film Festival.



CHAO KOI-WANG

Director, **COME, THE LIGHT**

Fighting for a lottery ticket, two star-crossed lovers and a big flock of greedy fools experience an eccentric night.

Born and raised in Macau, CHAO KOI-WANG is currently pursuing his studies at Taipei National University of the Arts' Department of Filmmaking.



AMELIE WEN

Director, **FATA MORGANA**

A Chinese couple must examine their relationship's fractures – and future – after they arrive in the United States to organize the funeral rites for their only child.

Originally from Beijing, AMELIE WEN was accepted as a directing fellow at the prestigious American Film Institute Conservatory, receiving the Bison Fellowship for promising Chinese filmmakers. Her first short film, **HOME**, premiered at the 2015 Los Angeles Film Festival and went on to win Best International Short at the Raindance Film Festival and the HBO Films Student Competition Award at Savannah Film Festival, among others. Her AFI thesis film, **FATA MORGANA**, had its World Premiere at the 2016 Clermont-Ferrand Short Film Festival.



ERICA R. CHO

Director, **GOLDEN GOLDEN**

When two broke 20-somethings from San Bernardino visit a Los Angeles fortuneteller, conjoined crystal balls and queer, pop song visions open up new spaces for desiring, belonging, and becoming – across Asian, Black, and Latinx imaginaries.

ERICA CHO believes in making powerful, queer experimental images. Her first DIY stop-motion animation **KIMBERLY BAHF MAKES SUSHI FOR TWO** premiered at the MADCAT WIMMIN'S FILM FESTIVAL in 1998. Other films include **SCHOOL BOY ART**, **WE GOT MOVES YOU AIN'T EVEN HEARD OF**, **OUR COSMOS**, **OUR CHAOS**, and the **ARE YOU ME?** video poem series. Cho is also an accomplished visual artist, with an MFA in Studio Art from UC Irvine and a BFA in Printmaking from Pennsylvania State University. She is the LGBT film curator for the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival and a Assistant Professor in Visual Arts at UC San Diego.



JOSEPH HSU

Director, **THE LOBSTER KID**

13-year old teenager Siang, a precocious street vendor, partners with a silent street monk in order to escape their troubles to Taitung, their dreamland in the south of Taiwan.

JOSEPH CHEN-CHIEH HSU was born and raised in Taiwan. After pursuing a nuclear engineering degree while working as a cartoon scriptwriter, Joseph has realized his true love is filmmaking. He is currently an MFA candidate in film production at NYU TischAsia. Joseph has been working on short films around Asia including Korea, Japan, Nepal, Singapore and Taiwan. Joseph's latest short, **THE LOBSTER KID**, had its World Premiere at the Oscar-qualifying Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2015 at Asia International competition. The film has been invited into more than 15 festivals including winning the best short film in Asian Film in Dallas and Best Air Canada short in Canada ReelAsian Film Festival. He is currently a member of Tokyo Talent Camp, which cooperates with Berlinale Talent Camp 2014 and Kyoto Filmmaker Lab 2015.



CHENG YU-CHIEH

Director, **OLD SEAFARER**

Set on Taiwan's Blue Island, young lovers who are members of the Dewa tribe find themselves negotiating a bittersweet reunion after many years apart while negotiating the trials of adapting into cosmopolitan Taiwanese society.

A graduate of the National Taiwan University, Department of Economics, CHENG YU-CHIEH made a conspicuous international directorial debut in 2006 with **DO OVER** (Festival 2007), which won the Audience Choice Award at that year's Taipei Film Festival, and went on to screen at numerous international film festivals. His well-received follow-up **YANG YANG** (2009) premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival and garnered numerous awards at the Taipei Film Festival including a Best Leading Actress Award for Sandrine Pinna. Prolific as a television director as well as a screenwriter and actor, director Cheng is currently working on a new feature that he is attached to as screenwriter and director.

MORE 



ALEXANDRA HSU
Director, *SOPHIE*

Eight-year-old Sophie Cheung from Hong Kong is abandoned by her mother, which in turn forces Sophie to live and connect with her grandmother.

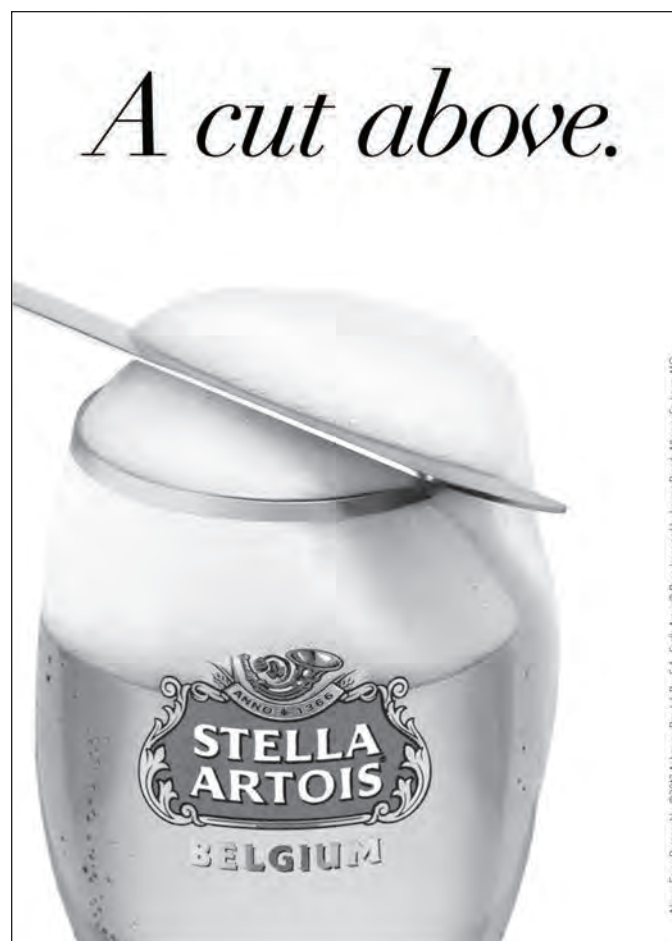
ALEXANDRA HSU was born and raised in Orange County, California. She fell in love with the art of filmmaking in high school, and has been making films ever since. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Scripps College of the Claremont Colleges, double majoring in Media Studies (Film Production) and East Asian Studies. Her thesis, "Women: Cultural Revolution to Capitalist Revolution" received the Media Studies Award and the Pomona College Museum of Art "China Insights" Exhibit Grant in 2011. She completed the required classes towards her MFA in Film Production at NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Asia in 2015. Alexandra is currently in post-production on a passion project of her own – a dramedy about a female farmer who tries online dating in Dordogne, France. The story is a representation and portrayal of modern technology and daily life seeping into traditional lifestyles. She is currently writing and developing two other short films to be made in California this year.



NEANG KAVICH
Director, *THREE WHEELS*

One lonely night, Nath meets a woman who reminds him of his past. Returning home, he confesses to his wife that he wants to move, which foregrounds the unspoken realities of their marriage.

NEANG KAVICH studied Cambodian music and dance at Cambodian Living Arts from 2002 to 2009, and he graduated from Limkokwing University in 2013, majoring in graphic design. In 2010, he made a short documentary film, *A SCALE BOY*, while attending a documentary film workshop led by Rithy Panh, the internationally-acclaimed Cambodian documentary filmmaker. In 2013, he joined the Busan International Film Festival's Asian Film Academy as the program's first-ever Cambodian filmmaker.



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WATCH THESE FILMS...

To curate the perfect selection, we considered dozens of programming proposals and combed through 600 individual feature-length and short films. Finally, our intrepid team of programmers arrived at a slate of approximately 140 works to be screened at this year's Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, but we had to ask them, which films excite them? What is not to miss? Of course, they'll say, EVERYTHING. But alas, they were told to limit their recommendations and raves to a maximum of FIVE selections. After much deliberation and consideration, here they are:



ESEEL BORLASA Recommends...

THE LASTING PERSIMMON by Kei Chikaura

Chikaura delicately paints the in-between. This is a poignant piece about tradition and convenience.

DIAN by Tamara Shogaolu

A heartbreaking journey into a young woman's world. With strong photography and a meditative score, the film invites you to share her desperation and loneliness.

BE ABOUT IT by Christopher Wong

This doc is an excellent balance of vérité and interview. In an age of self-narrated documentaries, Wong continues to show that patience and access are keystones to solid documentary filmmaking.

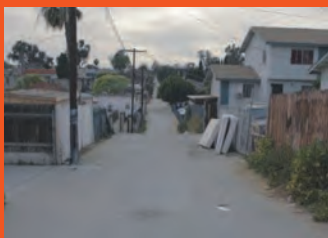
GOLDEN GOLDEN by Erica Cho

This is bold and graceful storytelling. It is a fresh approach to something that is familiar to all of us.

JOHN HUGHES RUINED MY LIFE by Milton Liu

This is that film festival crush you've always hoped for. It's referential, witty and "whoa I didn't see that coming at all."

ESEEL BORLASA loves mixtapes, films & community. She brings that passion to her work as a publicist at After Bruce PR. 2016 marks her ninth year with LAAPFF. She still rocks a white flower in her hair and is always down to have a snack.



ERICA CHO Recommends...

EXCERPT: FENCES by Vincent Hoang

A moving experimental documentary, beautifully shot, featuring six Vietnamese Americans candidly sharing their different perspectives

on growing up poor in the Bay Area. A story of sibling solidarity and love.

ERICA CHO is an artist/filmmaker, independent curator, and Assistant Professor of Narrative Media at UC San Diego.



ELAINE DOLALAS Recommends...

OUT RUN by S. Leo Chiang and Johnny Symons

OUT RUN is a well-made documentary concerning the political process in the Philippines. It follows the activities of the Ladlad, the first-ever LGBTQ political party in the predominantly Catholic country.

VAMPARIAH by Matthew Abaya

VAMPARIAH is a fun midnight movie romp. Blood, guts, and gore are mixed in with snark and sass in this tale about monster hunters and the legendary Filipino aswang.

ELAINE DOLALAS is a Los Angeles based writer, podcaster, and independent curator. She curates Color Your Troubles Away, a monthly arts event that offers stress relief, healing, and meditation through coloring. Her essays, podcasts, and CYTA events can be found at ObliviousNerdGirl.com.



GARY GABISAN Recommends...

THE WATTS RIOTS: DAYS OF RAGE, FEAR, AND SURVIVAL by Gerry Chan

Gerry Chow dissects the fear behind the 1965 Watts riots by getting the story from both sides of the tracks.

A TIME OF WAR: WEST OF JAPAN, EAST OF IRAN by Glen Kanemoto

Glen Kanemoto finds Japanese culture in the midst of the Iran/Iraq war.

GARY GABISAN, sometimes known as Giro Gary or simply UN-G, is a digital media professional, with over 15 years of experience in the corporate (MTV, Walt Disney Studios) and non-profit sectors (Planned Parenthood), filmmaker, musician and martial arts instructor.



JUNE KAEWSITH Recommends...

CHANTHADETH by Chanthadeth Chanthalangsy

CHANTHADETH speaks loudly to me as a Southeast Asian American and having to constantly correct the pronunciation of my last name.

US by Seth Ronquillo

Being conscious of undocumented Asian Americans through US is also pervasive to how the fear of deportation goes beyond the U.S.-Mexico narrative.

JUNE KAEWSITH, also known as "Jumakae", is an multidisciplinary artist, organizer, educator, and curator based in Long Beach, CA. Through her involvement with LAAPFF, she aims to further co-exist with narratives of young people left out of mainstream media and to lessen the divide between art and social justice: jumakae.com.



CHANEL KONG Recommends...

THE DOG by Lam Can-zhao

An unexpectedly fresh yet piercing piece of cinema by a promising young talent, THE DOG is a monochrome vision of modern Chinese society through the eyes of an oft-abandoned pup.

TYRUS by Pamela Tom

Pamela Tom's masterful tribute to an amazing Asian American figure evokes forgotten histories and stories of quiet courage. Watching it compels one to make art, or to simply fly a kite.

CHANEL KONG has worked in film-related festivals, events, forums and cultural organizations in the U.S., Europe and Asia. Her writing has appeared in various publications such as Sight & Sound. She also works as a translator/interpreter and is trained in film restoration. She's currently the Festival Manager for the 32nd LAAPFF. —



KRISTEN LEE Recommends...

FÜR ELISE by Albert Ventura

Every AAPI, who's played this Beethoven banger, understands the emotion behind this repetitive classic. Taiwanese director's motif will leave you baffled.

OLD SEAFARER by Cheng Yu-chieh

Director's talent for pacing and storytelling is timeless. A tale of the evolution from innocence into wisdom.

SOPHIE by Alexandra Hsu

Remember that childhood fear of being left behind? Well, Sophie's scenario will leave you hopeful.

METAMORPHOSIS by Elaine Zia

Red lipstick. Bloody widow hands. Daughter serves up dad meat. 'Nuff said.

BRUCE TAKES DRAGON TOWN by Emily Chao

This CalArts trained director proves that vulnerability on screen is risky and very rewarding.

KRISTEN LEE continues her VC support from humble archival intern beginnings to sixth year programmer. Five years ago, she was sitting in a haunted basement, captioning hours of Japanese internment redress footage, first captured by VC. Kristen believes the cinematic stories we methodically choose to share with the #laapff public are essential to keeping the APA experience relevant. #hapaklee



LINDY LEONG Recommends...

DAZE OF JUSTICE by Michael Siv
Siv chronicles what happens when Pheng, the son of a Khmer Rouge leader, attends his father's war tribunal in the very company of those who survived torture.

PEOPLE ARE THE SKY
by Dai Sil Kim-Gibson
How do today's Koreans from both sides of the 38th parallel feel about their country divided? Gibson takes to the streets and asks the tough questions.

LINDY LEONG is a film and media educator, archivist, programmer, and unapologetic cinephile. She enjoys supporting community building through the arts. Wanderlust defines her daily reality. She recently pulled off becoming vegetarian in a traditional East Asian household.



KIRBY PEÑAFIEL Recommends...

FATA MORGANA by Amelie Wen
This is as close you'll feel grief without dealing with tragedy. Absolutely moving.

COME, THE LIGHT by Chao Koi-Wang
How far would you go to maintain your winning lottery ticket? For the characters of this film, it varies.

THE BOARDWALK by Ougie Pak
The family "trips" you deign might be harder on the people you love. This one is about the perspective you don't see.

MITSUJU by Nao Nakazawa
A period piece made with intricate detail, fleshed out ideas, and masterful storytelling. Ideas and conviction trump big budget in this amazing CSUF piece.

THE CHICKEN OF WUZUH

by Sungbin Byun
Story, delivery, performances, originality, and charm are combined into a near perfect film. DON'T MISS IT.

KIRBY PEÑAFIEL is a first-generation Filipino American who fell in love with films by watching many double features at a young age. The love continued through his film education and various film-related employment. From his beginnings as a volunteer to current LAAPFF programmer, he's combined his love for film and his community.



QUINCY SURASMITH Recommends...

THREE WHEELS by Neang Kavich
Ride along with beautiful, earnest slices of Cambodian life and soak in the gorgeous cinematography and mid-century Khmer soundtrack.

THE LOBSTER KID

by Joseph Chen-Chieh Hsu
An unlikely friendship to survive street life will warm your heart along the beautiful backdrop of urban Taiwan.

JAYA by Puja Maewal
JAYA explores the heartbreak of the families you lose and those you choose across class lines in Mumbai.

NOODLE DELI by David Liu
This mouthwatering documentary presents a San Gabriel culinary gem with ballet-like elegance, visual grace, and music.

SUMO ROAD - THE MUSICAL
by Ken Ochial
A heroic journey. Sportsmanship. Sumo wrestling song and dance numbers—the hilarious and stylistic SUMO ROAD knocks it all down.

QUINCY SURASMITH is a Thai-Chinese American jack-of-all-trades artist: actor, improviser, photographer, pop-up chef, and public radio nerd. He is an associate producer with the Tuesday Night Project and also produces the podcasts Asian Americana and #GoodMuslimBadMuslim. Quincy is passionate about storytelling's potential to validate and amplify our experiences and selves.



SO YUN UM Recommends...

CRUSH THE SKULL by Viet Nguyen
CRUSH THE SKULL is the most scary and fun time you will have! I guarantee it!

THE GREAT SASUKE
by Mikiko Sasaki
I had a lot of fun watching THE GREAT SASUKE as you see an idiosyncratic and passionate man who will stop at nothing to achieve his dreams.

SO YUN UM is a Korean American filmmaker and film critic. She runs a film website and YouTube channel called "So's Reel Thoughts," writes the bi-weekly column "Badass Femmes for Crome Yellow," and programs for various L.A. film festivals.



RYAN WU Recommends...

BAD RAP by Salima Koroma
Timely and immensely entertaining, BAD RAP celebrates Asian-American creativity while chronicling the obstacles—racially imposed and not—faced by talented Korean-American rappers Dumbfoundead, Awkwafina, Rekstizzy, and Lyricks.

CHINESE COUPLETS by Felicia Lowe
An antidote to the Age of Trump, Felicia Lowe's CHINESE COUPLETS is both a searing account of her mom's perilous journey to the U.S. via Cuba and a moving exploration of her Chinese-American identity.

A native of Southern California, RYAN WU spent much of his youth in local repertory cinemas, where he developed an abiding passion for classic Hollywood and international cinema. When he's not watching movies, Ryan is a class action attorney. Last year, he was named one of the Attorneys of the Year by California Lawyer magazine.



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~ Ryan Coogler on directing *Creed*

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We're again ecstatic to bring the sixth edition of C3 to the opening weekend of the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, Saturday, April 23rd and Sunday April 24th at the Japanese American National Museum, located in the historic Little Tokyo district of Downtown Los Angeles.

Building off of our previous C3 Conferences, the way we view, consume and create content continues to shift and evolve rapidly - it's our goal to dive in and hear from the forerunners of this change, especially from Asian Americans leading the way. For a complete panel line-up, please turn the page:

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2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival**



C3 CONFERENCE DAY 1



SATURDAY, APRIL 23

12:00 PM – Opening Remarks

12:15 PM

SAG-AFTRA:

“The Great Equalizer - How New Media Gets You Noticed”

Whether you're a filmmaker still trying to get a studio meeting or a working actor looking to showcase your talent and boost your career to the next level, what better way to do so than to create your own web-series or New Media content? Join our panel of actors, writers, casting directors and distributors who are leaders in New Media. After the panel, stay for an interactive Q&A where you'll get the opportunity to pitch your idea for input and guidance from our experts.

Sheri Bryant | Executive Producer

Tim Chiou | Actor

Sujata Day | Actor

Brad Gilmore | Casting Director

Danny Pudi | Actor

Moderator | Jenny Yang, Actor/Writer/Comedian

2:15 PM

F This Weekly Podcast:

“Women For the Win – Transcending the Inclusion Crisis and Gender Gap in Hollywood”

Women filmmakers, producers, and executives team up to discuss their careers and solutions to issues faced by Asian American women and other women of color working in Hollywood. Join the conversation on Twitter using #WomenFTW!

Effie Brown | Producer

Lena Khan | Director, THE TIGER HUNTER

Pamela Tom | Director, TYRUS

Janet Yang | Producer

Moderator | Paola Mardo, Annapurna Entertainment

3:45 PM

Writers Guild of America/west:

“Writing for Diverse Voices in Film and Television”

WGA Writers from film and television will share their personal experiences, as well as discuss the broader topic/issues/questions relating to diversity in the industry and in the characters they create.

Sameer Gardezi | Screenwriter, THE TIGER HUNTER

Michael Golanico | Screenwriter, GRIMM

Peter Saji | Screenwriter, BLACKISH

Moderator | Neil Sadhu, Asian American Committee, Writers Guild of America/west

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

12:15 PM - Opening Remarks**12:30 PM**Motion Picture Editors Guild:
"Editing – The Last Rewrite"

From sound to visuals, award-winning narrative and documentary Hollywood film and sound editors discuss how your story can drastically change in the cutting room.

Bobbi Banks | Sound Editor**Lillian Benson** | Documentary Editor**Richard Chew** | Editor**Tom Cross** | Editor**William Hoy** | Editor**Gail Yasunaga** | Documentary Editor*Moderator* | Maysie Hoy, Editor**2:00 PM**Directors Guild of America:
"Utilizing Emerging Technology
To Enhance Your Storytelling"

Renowned directors of blockbuster television series and feature films bring their years of experience in discussing how they utilized tech and the future of storytelling.

Joseph Kahn | Director, TORQUE**Veena Sud** | Director, THE KILLING; SALTON SEA**Ian Truitner** | Commercial Director**James Wan** | Director, FAST 7

Moderator | Kevin Berlandi, Asian American Committee,
Directors Guild of America

3:30 PMYou Offend Me You Offend My
Family (YOMYOMF):
"The New Indie Cinema:
Opportunities for Diverse Filmmakers
in the Digital World."

Created by Justin Lin and other collaborators to be an online source for content, You Offend Me You Offend My Family (YOMYOMF) are bringing together studio executives, distributors, agents and artists all working in the digital space to discuss the opportunities and landscape for filmmakers in this exponentially growing field.

Joey De La Rosa | Full Screen**Karen Horne** | Comcast**Diana Mogolion** | Warner Bros. Digital*Moderator* | Philip Chung, YOMYOMF**5:00 PM - 7:00 PM**

At the conclusion of C3 on Sunday, April 24, the Post-Reception will take place around the corner at THE FAR BAR, 347 E. First Street, LA, CA 90012.



I.A.T.S.E. Local 700



Motion Picture Editors Guild

**Securing wages, benefits and safe working conditions
for the Post Production community for over 70 years**

Job Classifications

Animation Editor	Engineer	QC Operator	Sound Technician
Apprentice Editor	Foley Artist	Recordist	Story Analyst
Assistant Editor	Lab Film Technician	Re-recording Mixer	Technical Director
Cinetechnician	Librarian	Scoring Mixer	Telecine Operator
Colorist	Music Editor	Sound Editor	Trailer Editor
Digital Technician	Picture Editor	Sound Reader	Videotape Operator

Los Angeles:
7715 Sunset Blvd.
Suite 200
Hollywood, CA 90046
(323) 876-4770

New York:
145 Hudson St.
Suite 201
New York, NY 10013
(212) 302-0700

(800) 705-8700
www.editorsguild.com



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FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!

Concept Art: Courtesy Eddy Vajarakitpongse

EXHIBITION TEAM: FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!

PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRODUCER;
WALKING WITH GRACE CO-DIRECTOR
Maya Santos

WALKING WITH GRACE CO-DIRECTOR / PRODUCER
Joel Quizon

VR DIRECTOR, SPATIAL AUDIO/APP DESIGNER
Vicki Huang

PROJECT ASSISTANT PRODUCER
Elaine Dolalas

WALKING WITH GRACE BEHIND-THE-SCENES
Rani de Leon

WALKING WITH GRACE BEHIND-THE-SCENES
Jaison Cabebe

PROJECT MOTION
GRAPHICS / 312 AZUSA STREET ANIMATION
Francisco Garcia Nava

312 AZUSA STREET MUSICIAN / COMPOSER
Gifted & Blessed

312 AZUSA STREET TECHNICAL DESIGNER
Eddy Vajarakitpongse

312 AZUSA STREET TECHNICAL OPERATOR
Erwin Encarnacion

PROJECT INSTALLATION CONTRACTOR
Levi Brewster

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Eseel Borlasa
Visual Communications
Sharon Lee

WALKING WITH GRACE CAST
Grace Chikui
Arthur Nakane

PLACE-BASED COLLABORATIVE FORM follows FUNCTION (FfF) joins Visual Communications in unveiling a spatial, interactive multi-media presentation that celebrates the diverse histories and viewpoints of the downtown Los Angeles community of Little Tokyo. Using virtual reality (VR) storytelling techniques and historic site-specific projection, **FfF Interactive Little Tokyo!** aims to bring new interest in Little Tokyo's rich legacy, stories of which are often overlooked.



The two-day exhibition kicks off on Friday, April 22 with a special evening of food and music in the JACCC's Noguchi Plaza. There, we will present the first installation, **312 Azusa Street**, a historic site-specific video installation in the JACCC Plaza, adjacent to Azusa Alley - the original site of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church (FAME) in 1888 and Apostolic Faith Mission in 1906; and the birthplace of Pentecostalism. Audiences will experience the piece as it is projected on the land originally owned by Bridget "Biddy" Mason, former slave and FAME Church Founder.

FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!



The second installation will be **Walking with Grace**, a documentary viewable via virtual reality (VR) headsets. Using 360° video and spatial audio, this short documentary will highlight Little Tokyo places and streets through the perspective of Grace Chikui, a blind woman and long-time resident. This will be an exclusive preview, in advance of the full interactive launch on multiple platforms in Summer 2016. Walking with Grace will be presented at JACCC on opening weekend, and will continue to be on view at various festival sites throughout the week.



This presentation is powered by FfF Interactive (ffmedia.com), an initiative aimed to use immersive technology to highlight the history of neighborhoods through local perspectives.

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE:

312 AZUSA STREET

April 22 and 23, 2016
Exhibition Hours: 7-10 PM
JACCC Noguchi Plaza
244 So. San Pedro Street
Los Angeles, Little Tokyo



WALKING WITH GRACE

On view at various locations throughout
Festival Week; look for the mobile VR kiosk

FfF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO! Exhibition Reception

Friday, April 22nd, 7-10pm
JACCC Noguchi Plaza
244 So. San Pedro Street
Los Angeles, Little Tokyo

Beer & Sake cash bar
Music by Dublab DJ, Rani de Leon

VENUE SPONSOR

Japanese American Cultural &
Community Center

For more info visit: ffmedia.com



UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE *and* REFLECT|ON

UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE (United States, 2015)

DIRECTOR

Giovanni Ortega

SCREENPLAY

Giovanni Ortega,
Adapted from the play
written by Caridad Svich

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Evan DeLorenzo

MUSIC

Evan DeLorenzo

EDITOR

Evan DeLorenzo

STARRING

Olivia Buntaine
Juan Zamudio
Mary Lyon Kamitaki
Harrison Goodall

D-Cinema, 12 minutes, color,
experimental narrative

AS A PRELUDE TO THE FILM FESTIVAL'S highly anticipated debut of FORM follows FUNCTION's INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!, we are pleased to present a special screening/performance of two new works by up-and-coming mixed-media artists based in Southern California's Claremont College system. Both produced in a current era of uncertainty, each work offers a unique viewpoint that references the current social and political climate. In acclaimed stage director Giovanni Ortega's **UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE**, issues of isolation and hope are filtered through multiple perspectives that reflect the precarious state of society – from political and student unrest, institutional terrorism, to the consequences of a pseudo-police state. Preceding Ortega's directorial debut is Angela Jihyun Han's **REFLECT|ON**, a tone-poem of sorts in which the questions of dissonance and "otherness" are communicated through the prism of mirrors, a device that allows commentary on fluidity, assimilation, and whiteness. A talk-back session with directors Ortega and Han will follow the presentation. – **ABRAHAM FERRER**

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 5:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- **East West Players**
- **Tuesday Night Cafe**

REFLECT|ON (United States, 2015)

DIRECTOR

Angela Jihyun Han

STARRING

Lushia Anson

VOICE TALENT

Yasmin Adams
Zayra Lobo
Haley Ferguson

D-Cinema, 5 minutes, color,
experimental narrative



RICERCA

A MAN EMBARKS ON A SEARCH THROUGH LIFE, traveling through different memories and worlds to find something he has lost or what was never his to begin with in the first place. As the director puts it, "RICERCA, which in Italian means 'search,' is a cinematic installation experience. As human beings we are constantly looking for signs, meanings, patterns because these images and memories ultimately make up what we each call our lives." She adds: "As my favorite street artist Swoon once said, 'There is strength in dwelling in the realm of infinite possibility'." Nothing seems to ring more true as technology and how we experience media continue to develop at an exponential rate. From self-mapping projectors to virtual reality headsets, we as artists are constantly confronted with the challenge of 1) making good art, and 2) how we choose to do it."

First realized as an award-winning, site-specific, multi-screen installation, director Yo-Yo Lin's mesmerizing multimedia work is now re-imagined as an immersive virtual-reality experience, to complement our additional transmedia presentations UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE and FFF INTERACTIVE LITTLE TOKYO!. — ABRAHAM FERRER, ADAPTED FROM PRODUCTION NOTES

Various Venues Throughout Festival Week

(United States, 2015)

PRODUCER
Will Cherry

DIRECTOR
Yo-Yo Lin

SOUND DESIGN
Elle Callahan

MUSIC
Michael Matchen

FEATURING
Stella Cho

Virtual-reality experience
(originated as multi-screen
installation), 12 mins., color,
experimental narrative

PROGRAMSCHEDULE

THURSDAY, APRIL 21

ARATANI 7:00 PM Page 62 THE TIGER HUNTER

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

TATEUCHI 5:00 PM Page 54 UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE and REFLECT[ON
DTIND 6:30 PM Page 127 People, Places, and Things
TATEUCHI 7:00 PM Page 94 BREATHEIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY
ARATANI 8:30 PM Page 91 THE UNBIDDEN
DTIND 9:00 PM Page 103 BITCOIN HEIST
TATEUCHI 9:30 PM Page 130 Quietus
DTIND 11:30 PM Page 92 VAMPARIAH

SATURDAY, APRIL 23

TATEUCHI 11:30 AM Page 122 From Visions to Reel 2016
JANM 12:15 PM Page 48 C3 Conference: SAG-AFTRA
DTIND 1:30 PM Page 99 SIGNS OF REMARKABLE HISTORY
TATEUCHI 2:00 PM Page 75 FORGETTING VIETNAM
JANM 2:15 PM Page 48 C3 Conference: F This Weekly Podcast
ARATANI 3:30 PM Page 111 PERSONA NON GRATA
JANM 3:45 PM Page 48 C3 Conference: WGA/west
DTIND 4:00 PM Page 98 OUT RUN
TATEUCHI 4:30 PM Page 105 THE DOG
DTIND 6:30 PM Page 126 Love?
TATEUCHI 7:00 PM Page 96 THE GREAT SASUKE
ARATANI 8:00 PM Page 64 TYRUS
DTIND 9:00 PM Page 87 GRASS
TATEUCHI 9:30 PM Page 128 New Student Movements, Asians On Campus

SUNDAY, APRIL 24

JANM 12:30 PM Page 49 C3 Conference: MPEG
TATEUCHI 12:30 PM Page 124 Generations
DTIND 1:00 PM Page 76 REBEL WITH A CAUSE:
THE LIFE OF AIKO HERZIG YOSHINAGA
ARATANI 2:00 PM Page 120 Digital Histories 2016: Let Me Tell Ya' a Story
JANM 2:00 PM Page 49 C3 Conference: DGA
TATEUCHI 3:00 PM Page 95 DAZE OF JUSTICE
JANM 3:30 PM Page 49 C3 Conference: YOMYOMF.com
DTIND 3:30 PM Page 78 FAMILY INGREDIENTS
TATEUCHI 5:30 PM Page 70 SA-I-GU:
FROM KOREAN WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES
DTIND 6:00 PM Page 88 THE LAST TOUR
ARATANI 8:00 PM Page 132 VC Digital Posse, ver. 2016
TATEUCHI 8:00 PM Page 97 HOOLIGAN SPARROW
DTIND 8:30 PM Page 86 COMFORT

MONDAY, APRIL 25

CGV 2 4:30 PM Page 94 Encore: BREATHEIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY
TATEUCHI 4:30 PM Page 96 Encore: THE GREAT SASUKE
CGV 3 6:45 PM Page 110 MOTHER
CGV 2 7:00 PM Page 74 CHINESE COUPLETS
TATEUCHI 7:00 PM Page 108 LOEV
DTIND 7:00 PM Page 125 I Got Your Back
TGC 8:00 PM Page 82 TOP 8
TATEUCHI 9:15 PM Page 118 Connect/Disconnect
CGV 3 9:15 PM Page 136 What's In A Name
CGV 2 9:30 PM Page 135 What Have I Done to Deserve This?
DTIND 9:30 PM Page 113 TEN YEARS

TUESDAY, APRIL 26

CGV 2 4:30 PM Page 88 Encore: THE LAST TOUR
TATEUCHI 4:30 PM Page 76 Encore: REBEL WITH A CAUSE:
THE LIFE OF AIKO HERZIG YOSHINAGA
CGV 3 6:45 PM Page 109 MANANG BIRING
CGV 2 7:00 PM Page 106 DREAM LAND
TATEUCHI 7:00 PM Page 81 "Fresh Off The Show"
DTIND 7:00 PM Page 134 The Unready Hero
CGV 3 9:15 PM Page 119 Daughters Rule the World
CGV 2 9:30 PM Page 80 CRUSH THE SKULL: THE FEATURE
TATEUCHI 9:30 PM Page 131 See U See Me
DTIND 9:30 PM Page 104 DISTANCE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

CGV 2 4:30 PM Page 87 Encore: GRASS
TATEUCHI 4:30 PM Page 71 SILENCE BROKEN:
KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN
DTIND 6:30 PM Page 114 ZEN AND BONES
CGV 1 7:00 PM Page 113 Encore: TEN YEARS
CGV 2 7:00 PM Page 102 A COPY OF MY MIND
TATEUCHI 7:00 PM Page 72 PEOPLE ARE THE SKY
CGV 1 9:30 PM Page 79 BAD RAP
CGV 2 9:30 PM Page 112 REACH FOR THE SKY
DTIND 9:30 PM Page 107 THE KIDS

THURSDAY, APRIL 28

DGA 7:00 PM Page 66 PALI ROAD

THEATER AND VENUE LEGEND

ARATANI	Aratani Theatre @ Japanese American Cultural & Community Center
CGV	CGV Cinemas
DGA	Directors Guild of America
DTIND	Downtown Independent
TGC	The Great Company
JANM	Aratani Central Hall @ Japanese American National Museum
TATEUCHI	Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ Japanese American National Museum

All programs subject to change or cancellation without prior notice. For updated program information please visit: www.vconline.org/festival

TICKET INFORMATION:

ADMISSION:

- \$14** - General
- \$13** - Students & Seniors
- \$12** - Members of VC

SPECIAL PROGRAM PRICES:

OPENING NIGHT at the Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

\$50 - Screening & Gala Celebration

\$45 - Students, Seniors, & Members of VC/JACCC

FESTIVAL CENTERPIECE at the Aratani Theatre @ JACCC:

\$20 - Screening & Party*

Screening only:

\$16 - General

\$15 - Student & Seniors

\$14 - Members of VC/JACCC

* Includes admission to Saturday Night Celebration party @ Mumford Brewing

CLOSING NIGHT at the Directors Guild of America:

\$50 - General (Screening and Gala Reception)

\$45 - Students, Seniors, & Members of VC/DGA

DIGITAL HISTORIES at the Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

\$10 - suggested donation

C3: CONFERENCE FOR CREATIVE CONTENT

C3: Conference for Creative Content panels are slated for the weekend of April 23 & 24 at the Aratani Central Hall @ JANM

\$40 - General (both April 23 & 24)

\$35 - Students, Seniors, & Members of VC & JANM (both April 23 & 24)

\$25 - General (One day)

\$20 - Students, Seniors, & Members of VC & JANM (One day)

TICKET PACKAGES:

\$100 (member) / **\$110** (non-member) - Festival 10-pack

10-pack vouchers can be redeemed for all ticketed programs EXCEPT for Opening Night, Closing Night, and C3 Conference. No limit per program. Ticket packages must be redeemed in advance; vouchers do not function as an admission ticket. Ticket package sales end FRIDAY, April 15.

How to Use Ticket Packages: Upon purchase of the 10-pack ticket package, our Box Office will send you a voucher code via e-mail. Please use your voucher code to redeem your tickets online at www.vonline.org/festival starting on MONDAY, MARCH 14 (for VC Members) and MONDAY, MARCH 21 (for the general public) or in person during the Festival. You will not receive a physical voucher at any time.

THE FINE PRINT:

- All programs are subject to change and/or cancellation without prior notice. For updated program and event information, please check our website at www.vonline.org/festival.
- **ALL WORKS PRESENTED IN THE FESTIVAL ARE UNRATED. PLEASE CONSULT PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS CONTAINED INSIDE. PARENTAL GUIDANCE IS SUGGESTED.**
- For information on the Festival, or to obtain a Festival calendar of events, please visit www.vonline.org/festival or call the Film Festival hotline at (213) 680-4462 x68.
- **NOTE:** Please arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled program. Seating cannot be guaranteed for ticket holders who arrive after the program begins. Empty seats may be resold; no refunds will be issued.

FREE PROGRAMS:

- "UPON THE FRAGILE SHORE + REFLECT|ON" (Transmedia)
Friday, April 22, 5:00 PM, Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM
- "FROM VISION TO REEL 2016" (Youth Media)
Saturday, April 23, 11:30 AM, Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

Free to the Public. Tickets are required for admission into the theatre and will be distributed online and at the Box Office. First come, first served.

HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS:

1. ONLINE: The quickest and easiest way to purchase your tickets is by ordering online. Tickets will be available for purchase online beginning MONDAY, MARCH 14 (VC Members only) and MONDAY, MARCH 21 (general public). Online ticket sales for individual programs end one (1) hour prior to its screening.

2. PHONE: From MARCH 21 to APRIL 20, you may also order tickets by calling the 2016 Festival Ticket Line at (213) 680-4462 x59, Monday - Friday, 12pm - 5pm.

NOTE: Service fees apply to online and phone orders.

3. IN-PERSON: Tickets available for all shows can be purchased at the following locations during the Festival.

- **FESTIVAL HQ @ Far East Lounge April 22 - April 24**
- **Aratani Theatre @ JACCC | April 21 - 24**
- **Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM | April 22 - April 27**
- **Downtown Independent | April | 22 - 27**
- **Aratani Central Hall @ JANM | April 23 - 24**
- **CGV Cinemas | April 25 - April 27**
- **The Great Company | April 25**
- **Directors Guild of America | April 28**

Box Office opens one (1) hour prior to the first show of the day. Please purchase tickets early as programs may sell out.

GROUP DISCOUNTS:

Bring your friends and save! Discounts for groups of 10 or more people are available in advance; cost is \$10 per person. Deadline is FRIDAY, APRIL 15 for group orders. To order, call (213) 680-4462 x59.

RUSH TICKETS:

In the event of a sold-out program, a limited number of seats may become available immediately prior to screening. A Rush Line will be formed next to the Box Office. Seating and pre-purchased tickets are not guaranteed for late arrivals.

REFUND/EXCHANGE POLICY:

All Sales Are Final. No refunds or exchanges will be given except for program cancellations.



VENUES & PARKING

ARATANI THEATRE @ Japanese American Cultural & Community Center

244 South San Pedro Street | Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking: Several pay lots available in Little Tokyo. Metered street parking is also available.

TATEUCHI DEMOCRACY FORUM @ Japanese American National Museum

111 N. Central Avenue | Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking: Several pay lots available in Little Tokyo. Metered street parking is also available.

ARATANI CENTRAL HALL @ Japanese American National Museum

100 N. Central Avenue | Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking: Several pay lots available in Little Tokyo. Metered street parking is also available.

DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENT

251 South Main Street | Los Angeles, CA 90012

Parking: Several pay lots available in Downtown LA. 24-hour parking lot behind the theater (enter on Spring Street or Harlem Lane).

CGV CINEMAS

621 S. Western Ave (between 6th St and Wilshire Blvd) | Los Angeles, CA 90005

Parking: CGV parking available at the Madang site through an entrance on Manhattan Street. Parking tickets validated by CGV grant 3 hours of free parking at the Madang parking complex. Please arrive early to access parking. Otherwise, pay lots are available in the surrounding areas.

THE GREAT COMPANY

1917 Bay Street | Los Angeles, CA 90021

Parking: Street parking is available; please be aware of parking restrictions and red zones.

DIRECTORS GUILD OF AMERICA

7920 Sunset Blvd (at Hayworth Ave, one block west of Fairfax) | West Hollywood, CA 90046

Parking:

Option #1: Underground parking structure beneath DGA (entrance on Hayworth Ave)

Option #2: Overflow parking structure across Hayworth, beneath Sunset-Lofts development.

There is a designated parking level for DGA patrons.

Please arrive early to access complimentary parking. Otherwise, pay lots are available at 8000 Sunset Blvd. LAAPFF requests that all patrons DO NOT park in the surrounding residential areas.

For more information, please visit www.vconline.org/festival



PARTIES & AFTERHOURS

Whether it be a post-screening Gala, or a happy hour meet-up after a long day of Festivaling, we have an enticing line-up of parties, meet-ups, and networking events for those seeking a live “community” to compare notes on this year’s screenings. Be sure to check back, more info to come!

**LAAPFF + AAM
FESTIVAL KICKOFF PARTY**

SAT APR 2 @ 7PM | \$20
USC Pacific Asia Museum
46 N Los Robles Ave
Pasadena, CA 91101

OPENING NIGHT GALA

THU APR 21 @ 9-11PM
\$25 (FREE for badge holders
and ticket holders)
JACCC Plaza
244 S San Pedro St, Los Angeles

OPENING NIGHT AFTER PARTY

THU APR 21 @ 11PM-close
Far Bar
347 E. First St, Los Angeles

FESTIVAL PUB HUB: Little Tokyo

FRI APR 22 - WED APR 27 @ 5PM-close
(specials for badge holders
and ticket holders)
Far Bar
347 E. First St, Los Angeles

FILMMAKER FRIDAY

presented by HBO

(invited filmmakers and guests only)
FRI APR 22 @ 8PM
Señor Fish
155 S Main St, Los Angeles

FESTIVAL BRUNCH

presented by FilmLA

(invited filmmakers and guests only)
SAT APR 23 @ 10AM
Far Bar
347 E. First St, Los Angeles

SATURDAY NIGHT CELEBRATION

SAT APR 23 @ 10PM-12AM
(\$10, FREE for badge holders)
Mumford Brewery
2416 Boyd St, Los Angeles

DIGITAL HISTORIES RECEPTION

(for invited guests only)
SUN APR 24 @ 4-5:30PM
JACCC Garden Room
244 S San Pedro St, Los Angeles

AWC + C3 RECEPTION

SUN APR 24 @ 5-7PM
(for invited guests and
C3 ticket holders only)
Far Bar
347 E. First St, Los Angeles

FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY

THU APR 28 @ 5-6:30PM
Directors Guild of America - Atrium
7920 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles

CLOSING NIGHT PARTY

THU APR 28 @ 9-11PM
\$25 (FREE for badge holders
and ticket holders)
Directors Guild of America
7920 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles

A complete listing of parties and special event updates will be available at: www.vconline.org/festival

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FESTIVAL GALA PRESENTATIONS

The 2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival's Gala Presentations are one-of-a-kind events not to be missed. Slated for the Aratani Theatre in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo and the Directors Guild of America in West Hollywood, we celebrate the best and brightest of new Asian American & Pacific Islander Cinema, allowing these works to take us on a journey to vistas previously untraveled by Festival audiences. From the excitement of the Opening Night Celebration and Festival Centerpiece Presentations, to the anticipation of the Festival Closing Night and Filmmaker Awards Ceremony, we urge you to make time to check out this stellar line-up of remarkable selections.







THE TIGER HUNTER

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 94 minutes
Color, Narrative

FIRST OFF, LET'S JUST COME RIGHT OUT AND SAY IT: DANNY PUDI IS A LEADING MAN. There is scant sign of Abed Nadir (his character on the influential television series *COMMUNITY*) anywhere to be found in Lena Khan's handsome and assured debut feature, *THE TIGER HUNTER*. Pudi, who also executive produces, seems tailor-made for this fish-out-of-water period piece. Smart thing, too. The Desi filmmaking universe has come a long way from its previous epicenter of East New Brunswick, NJ, home to Rutgers University and its large Indian American community. Nowadays, old-school classics as *MISSISSIPPI MASALA* (1991), *PRAYING WITH ANGER* (1992), and works of more recent vintage as *AMERICAN CHAI* (Festival 2001) and *OCEAN OF PEARLS* (Festival 2008) have given way to a new generation of Indian American producers who are too preoccupied with telling "American" stories to care much about the occasional *GANDHI* or *SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE*. With his relatable and earnest Jimmy Stewart Everyman persona on full display in *THE TIGER HUNTER*, Pudi may possibly be the ideal for the new modern age of Indian American cinema.

That persona is well-suited to director Khan's story, set in 1979: Sami Malik (Pudi) is a young South Asian man who idolizes his father, a legendary tiger hunter in their village. When an opportunity to travel to America to accept a job as an engineer in a big Chicago corporation beckons, Sami packs his bags and leaves his home and those he values most – his relatives, good friends, and in particular, Ruby (Karen David), his childhood crush. Arriving in Chicago, Sami is in for a rude awakening: the company has downsized, and with no other job opportunities for a Indian engineer, he is forced to accept a position, deep in the company basement, as a draftsman. Other indignities soon follow: having already been mugged on his first day in America, Sami soon meets the company's "golden boy" (Sam Page), a hot-shot engineer who exemplifies the modern-day pejorative of "white privilege"; agrees to a most unusual living arrangement courtesy of Babu (Rizwan Manji), himself a recent well-educated immigrant who's forced to work as a parking valet; and finds himself challenged to move up in the company, to full-time status, before his 30-day visa runs out. When Ruby calls to announce that she and her military father Gen. Iqbal (Iqbal Theba) are coming to America to size up possible suitors for her hand in marriage, Sami embarks on a hair-brained charade aided by his roommates and the one co-worker he's connected with, Alex (Jon Heder), hoping to convince Ruby and her father that he's far more successful than he truly is...or perhaps ever could be.

Benefitting from a script co-written with Sameer Gardezi, director Khan gets the tone of this charming period romantic comedy just right. With a nod to production designer Michael Fitzgerald and cinematographer Patrice Lucien Cochet (*BETTER LUCK TOMORROW*, Festival 2002), Khan also pulls off her own elaborate charade in somehow convincing us that her L.A.-lensed locations are actually Windy City locales. In the end, though, it all comes back to Danny Pudi who, with the help of an all-star Desi cast including fellow television luminaries Manji, Theba, David, and Film Festival fave Parvesh Cheena, offer us a new, urbane, and surprisingly familiar Asian American archetype – us. – **ABRAHAM FERRER**

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 7:00 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles
- Women in Film

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Alan Pao
Nadeem Siddiqi
Danny Pudi

PRODUCER

Megha Kadakia
Nazia Khan
Lena Khan

DIRECTOR

Lena Khan

SCREENPLAY

Lena Khan
Sameer Asad Gardezi

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Patrice Lucien Cochet

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Michael Fitzgerald

ART DIRECTOR

Aidan Fiorito

SET DECORATION

Siobhan O'Brien

COSTUME DESIGNER

Justine Seymour

SOUND

Caleb Mose
Thomas Cassetta

MUSIC

Paul Masvidal
Amy Correia

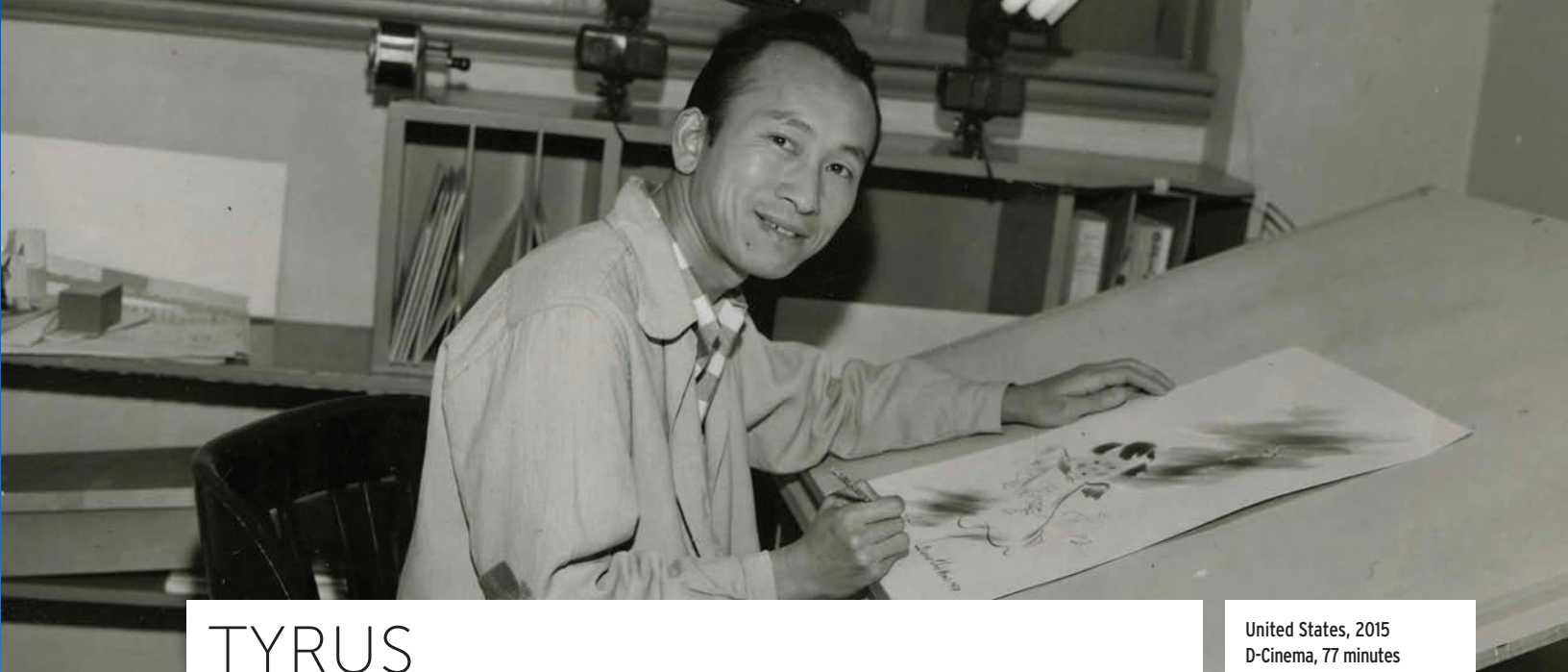
EDITOR

Jon Berry
Dan Bush

STARRING

Danny Pudi, Jon Heder,
Rizwan Manji, Karen David,
Iqbal Theba, Sam Page, Anand
Desai-Barochia, Parvesh
Cheena, Eve Gordon, Mayank
Bhattar, Patricia Belcher,
Michael McMillian,
Kevin Pollak





TYRUS

LIVING THROUGH A CENTURY'S SOCIAL PROGRESS and shifting perspectives on art and creativity, artist Tyrus Wong's life and times defy simple classification. To say he was the Chinese American painter who broke through to achieve mainstream recognition in the most virulent periods of racial discrimination does him a tremendous disservice. To dub Wong as "the eldest [living] California artist" and "...one of the most prominent" offers a truer description. To call him "a quintessential 20th century artist working in different areas" offers, perhaps, a more precise canvas to draw in the various shapes his creativity and exuberant spirit took form. **TYRUS**, director Pamela Tom's eagerly-anticipated film memoir takes us on an inspirational journey into both Wong's artistry and humility.

Emigrating with his father from Guangdong, China as a young child to California, Wong learned early on that long-term survival in America required not only a tough backbone, but an intrinsic *joie de vivre*. Thankfully, Tyrus possessed the latter in spades. A rambunctious free-spirit who was bad at math and skipped school out of boredom, he found solace and engagement in his doodles and illustrations. His introduction to the art world materialized when he and his Asian American artistic peers, Hideo Date, Benji Okubo, and Gilbert Leong met antiques dealer Eddie See (grandfather of novelist and historian Lisa See), who organized the first Asian American art exhibition in Los Angeles. Depression-era poverty and unemployment compelled See to open the Dragon's Den, a restaurant business conceived to support his struggling artist friends. This alignment of food and art proved tremendously successful in solidifying professional ties between these Asian American artists and in gaining them wider exposure to the larger arts community, including a Hollywood clientele that boasted regular patron Walt Disney - whose stature dramatically altered the direction of Tyrus' life when he accepted a job at Disney Animation. Wong's brief stint as a Disney conceptual artist was distinguished through his game-changing visual concepts for **BAMBI**.

After he left Disney in 1942, Wong embarked on serendipitous forays into greeting card and chinaware design during breaks in employment, garnering new enthusiastic fans from the commercial art world. Wong later joined Warner Brothers Studios and worked on many live action films as a motion picture illustrator. It is by no means an exaggeration to assert that many Warners Bros. classics (**REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE**, **THE WILD BUNCH**, **SANDS OF IWO JIMA**, **IT'S A MAD, MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD**) have greatly benefitted from his creative stamp. Through these many creative incarnations, Wong's wife, Ruth, provided encouragement and counsel, not to mention a generous dose of business acumen. Her passing indelibly impacted his late life's philosophy to carry on and to realize his full creative curiosity. In his beautiful kite making, which he carries on to this day, we see this actualized.

In this year's Centerpiece Presentation, we celebrate Tyrus Wong's incredible versatility and resilience as an artist who survived multiple hostile environments and lived to tell and thrive. Art curator Sonia Mak describes Wong's story as being like "an incredible flower growing amongst concrete and stone...it is so unlikely and that is why it is so incredible." As we learn of his story, this becomes undisputable fact in our minds. - **LINDY LEONG**

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 8:00 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Chinese American Museum
- Film Independent
- OCA-GLA

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 77 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Don Hahn
Robert Louie
David W. Louie
Buck Gee

PRODUCER

Pamela Tom
Gwen Wynne
Tamara Khalaf

DIRECTOR

Pamela Tom

WRITER

Pamela Tom

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Shana Hagan

ART DIRECTOR

Susan Bradley

SOUND

Jon Oh
David F. Van Slyke

MUSIC

Derek Baird

EDITOR

Carl Pfirman
Tim Craig
Walt Louie
Angela Park

FEATURING

Tyrus Wong
Lisa See
Ellen Harrington
Sonia Mak
John Canemaker
Gordon T. McClelland
Mark Dean Johnson
Kim Wong
Milton Quon
Kay Fong
Joe Musso





PALI ROAD

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 100 minutes
Color, Narrative

AS STYLISH AS IT IS MYSTERIOUS, PALI ROAD by Jonathan Lim echoes the most daring and challenging of classic Hollywood mysteries. If you look closely, you'll find a hint of Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 romantic mystery REBECCA starring Joan Fontaine; and maybe even espy a nod to George Cukor's legendary GASLIGHT (1944) starring the great Ingrid Bergman. Granted, it may be a bit premature to position PALI ROAD's lead actress, the luminous Michelle Chen, in the same league as Bergman and Fontaine. It isn't a stretch, though, to see Chen's breakout role in the Taiwanese blockbuster YOU ARE THE APPLE OF MY EYE (2011) as a portent of good things to come for this erstwhile USC alum; the distances between countries across the Pacific grows smaller through the agency of motion pictures. PALI ROAD, director Lim's international feature directorial debut and follow-up to his earlier feature drama SLAM (2009), is as much a showcase of Chen's enormous international potential as it is for well-known stateside acting luminaries Sung Kang (the FAST & FURIOUS series), Jackson Rathbone (the TWILIGHT saga), Henry Ian Cusick (LOST), as well as Film Festival mainstays Elizabeth Sung and Tzi Ma.

Working from a story that limns the plot points of mysteries of recent vintage as David Lynch's MULHOLLAND DRIVE (2001), PALI ROAD observes the trials of one Dr. Lily Zhang (Chen), a Chinese medical student deep into her residency program in Hawaii. Despite the challenges of med school, Lily is seemingly set in her life. A romance with Neil (Rathbone), a local elementary school teacher, heats up when Neil proposes marriage, while her mentor, the dreamy Dr. Mitch Kayne (Kang), encourages her career advancement by bringing her to a major medical networking gathering. Despite her fears of failure, Lily's life seems poised to advance to a new and exciting vista. That is, until the night of Qixi, or the Chinese Valentine's Day, when a lover's quarrel between Lily and Neil, a roadside accident on a lonely stretch of the old Pali Road, and a bout of amnesia turns the trajectory of this seeming love story entirely around. Suddenly, Lily finds herself in a marriage to Dr. Kayne, with a six-year old son, and a completely different life than what she has established. Worse, no one – not Mitch, the stern psychiatrist she is ordered to see (Cusick), nor even her parents (Sung and Ma) have any knowledge of Neil or that he even exists.

Benefitting from lush visuals courtesy of prolific cinematographer Quyen Tran (AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS, Festival 2014) and production designer Richard Romer, PALI ROAD takes the well-worn suspense mystery movie tropes and successfully transfers them to this Pacific Paradise. In director Jonathan Lim's world, Lily is figuratively and literally "trapped" in Paradise, or at least a demented version of it. Will she regain her memory? And if so, will she regain her previous life, and all the good things that have been positioned for her? PALI ROAD, which embarks on a coveted theatrical engagement immediately following Festival Week, delivers a surprising answer, but only after multiple layers of story complication peel away. We anticipate that audiences will want to find out.

— ABRAHAM FERRER

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 7:00 PM | Directors Guild of America | Theater 1

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Jon Chiew
Ricardo S. Galindez
Ling Geng
Roy Tjioe
Grace Zhang

PRODUCER

Kenneth Burke
Jonathan Lim
Daxing Zhang

DIRECTOR

Jonathan Lim

SCREENPLAY

Doc Pedrolie
Victoria Arch

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Quyen Tran

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Richard Romer

SET DESIGNER

Tom Curtis

COSTUME DESIGN

Cathie Valdovino

SOUND

Taylor DePamphilis

MUSIC

Jeff Marsh

EDITOR

Jason Schmid

STARRING

Michelle Chen
Jackson Rathbone
Sung Kang
Henry Ian Cusick
Tzi Ma
Elizabeth Sung

USC Pacific Asia Museum

46 N. Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena
Tickets at: pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu

DISCOVER THE MING DYNASTY,
ASIA & THE PACIFIC ISLANDS IN
THE HEART OF PASADENA.

ROYAL TASTE

THE ART OF
PRINCELY COURTS
IN 15TH-CENTURY
CHINA

FEB 26—JUN 26, 2016

PROGRAMMING INFORMATION

APRIL 13

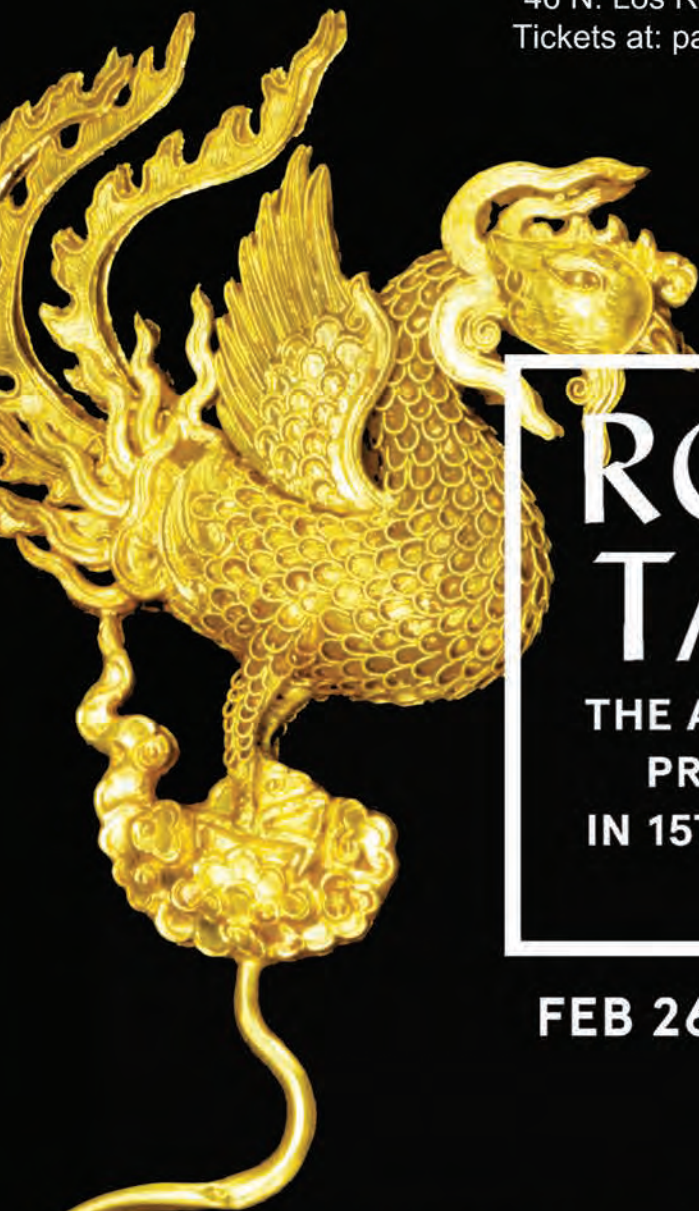
CONVERSATIONS@PAM:
The Science of Chinese Acupuncture

JUNE 12

FREE 2ND SUNDAY
Celebrate Imperial China

JUNE 17

FUSION FRIDAY
Cocktails, music, art





ARTIST'S SPOTLIGHT: DAI SIL KIM-GIBSON

Unwavering in her staunch clarity of artistic vision and embracing of the realities and possibilities of a multi-ethnic America, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson's filmography offers both an expansive world-view of historical and contemporary issues affecting Asian diasporic communities, and an unflinching perspective honed by years as an educator, grants officer, and arts advocate. On the occasion of the Los Angeles Premiere of her latest feature documentary **PEOPLE ARE THE SKY**, the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival casts a much overdue spotlight on the career of this one-of-a-kind talent, who, at age 78, is still surprisingly perceptive and feisty as ever.



SA-I-GU: FROM KOREAN WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES

United States, 1993
36 minutes
D-Cinema (originated
on 3/4" u-Matic)
Color, Documentary
in English and Korean w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Elaine Kim
Dai Sil Kim-Gibson
Christine Choy

DIRECTOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson
Christine Choy

WRITER

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

NARRATOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Christine Choy
Hak Soon Kim
Charles Burnett

MUSIC

Edmund K. Choi

EDITOR

Richard Stilwell

FEATURING

Jung Hui Lee
Young Soon Han
Choon Ah Song

APRIL 29TH MARKS THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE L.A. REBELLION, an event that is an integral component when talking about the history and landscape of Los Angeles. Violence, looting, and chaos erupted on the streets of South Central Los Angeles when the news of the acquittal of four white policemen who beat African American resident Rodney King broke out. During the tragic days of the 1992 riots, Korean Americans suffered from the millions of dollars in property damages that left many emotionally and psychologically broken. While the focus should have been on the systematic racism that festered since the Watts Riots in 1965, the emphasis instead fell on escalating tensions between African American and Korean American communities – a symptom, though not a direct cause of the riots. The years immediately following the Rebellion has since left a strain among both communities, especially among Koreans who owned and operated small liquor and grocery stores as well as their Korean clientele.

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson and Christine Choy's short film SA-I-GU (which literally translates to April 29) focuses on the many Korean woman shopkeepers who came to the "land of opportunity" and were devastatingly met with broken dreams after the riots. These mostly voiceless Korean women share their experiences and perspectives on the trauma and sacrifice in lieu of this tragedy. Among them is the mother of Edward Lee Song, the boy who was accidentally shot and mistaken for a looter. It's an emotional and compelling look that'll bring equal tears and heightened perspective on an event most Korean and African Americans in Los Angeles and beyond have yet to forget. – **SO YUN UM**

FOLLOWING THE SCREENING OF SA-I-GU: Join us for an artist's talk with director Di Sil Kim-Gibson, longtime collaborator and independent filmmaker Charles Burnett, and Marcia Choo, former head of the Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center.

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 5:30 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Korean Film Council USA
- Alliance of Women Directors
- Koreatown Youth Community Center



SILENCE BROKEN: KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN

IN AN ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER CHAMPIONING THOSE MOST VULNERABLE TO SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS' cruel mistreatment, scholar-media arts administrator-activist-filmmaker Dai Sil Kim-Gibson hits her thematic stride in this late '90s documentary on the history and plight of Korean comfort women who were forcibly enslaved by the Japanese during WWII. Coerced into performing sexual services for Japanese soldiers on various warfronts from China, Taiwan, and parts of Southeast Asia, young adolescent girls from age twelve to fifteen were tricked into "volunteering" to serve the war effort through the pretense of factory employment. In droves, they were shipped off to foreign lands where they were immediately thrown into the clutches of men no less traumatized by violence but indoctrinated into its culture.

Director Kim-Gibson presents her case for the irrefutable existence of these Korean comfort women's forced conscription through her assemblage of various elements: invaluable, highly intimate interviews with survivors, former Japanese soldiers and young contemporary Japanese; contextual, historical archival footage; re-enactment vignettes based on these women's personal accounts; and interviews with Japanese academics who support or, in most cases, deny this sordid historical chapter. Capturing in close-up these women's emotions and words, Kim-Gibson creates key oral histories and provides a vital outlet for these victims to tell their stories after years of neglect and silence. Before WWII ended Japanese imperialism, Koreans and Taiwanese lived as Japanese nationals and were subject to the Emperor's dominion. Due to this political status, the Japanese still view any scrutiny of this period particularly with great sensitivity and wounded pride. Kim-Gibson doesn't let them off the hook by digging into the not-so secret conspiracy to redact and destroy historical documents within the archives of the Allied Forces.

In this Artist's Spotlight, we present the original director's cut (87 min. version), shot by respected indie cinema filmmaker Charles Burnett, structured as a bifurcated narrative with the first 40 minutes heavily devoted to the survivors' gut-wrenching accounts and former Japanese soldiers' rationalization for their conduct. The final 40 minutes interweave a service for former Korean comfort women from China, with reenactments of their "seduction" into the life. The recent Korean box office success of *SPIRITS' HOMECOMING*, a work about this exact subject matter, can thank this earlier documentary for jumpstarting a proper conversation. — **LINDY LEONG**

United States, 1999
D-Cinema, 88 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary
in English and Korean w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Charles Burnett
Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

DIRECTOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

WRITER

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Charles Burnett

SOUND

Jon Oh, Kim Young Ju

MUSIC

Donald Sur

EDITOR

Charles Burnett

FEATURING

James Mackay
Ikeda Masae
Tokuda Masanori
Kimura Kaoko
Fujioka Nobukatsu
Kawakubo Toshio
Yoshimi Yoshiaki
Chung Seo Woon
Song Shin Do
Yun Doo Ri

ARTIST'S SPOTLIGHT: DAI SIL KIM-GIBSON

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 4:30 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Alliance of Women Directors
- KOFIC
- Tayo Literary Magazine
- Korean American Forum of California



PEOPLE ARE THE SKY

North Korea/
United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 94 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary
in English and Korean w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

DIRECTOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

WRITER

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

ARCHIVAL RESEARCHER

Sheila Maniar

NARRATOR

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Willem Lee

SOUND DESIGN

Jon Oh

MUSIC

Stephen James Taylor

EDITOR

Linda Hattendorf

FEATURING

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson

IF, AS VETERAN DOCUMENTARY DIRECTOR DAI SIL KIM-GIBSON INSISTS, PEOPLE ARE THE SKY is destined to be her last film, then it would be a fitting valedictory to a filmmaker whose filmography may pale in comparison to considerably more prolific contemporaries as Christine Choy, Trinh T. Minh-ha or even the late, sadly-missed Loni Ding. But hold on a minute! The creative and inquisitive impulses this 78-year-old displays in her latest film's opening scenes in her New York apartment studio definitively belie the image of a wizened old-timer settling into oblivion. Far from it: the Dai Sil Kim-Gibson in PEOPLE ARE THE SKY may be temporarily beaten down, but here, she is as sharp, acerbic and as insightful as ever. Indeed, the tenacious creative qualities that have distinguished such watershed films as AMERICA BECOMING (1991), SA-I-GU: FROM KOREAN WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES (1993, with Christine Choy), SILENCE BROKEN: KOREAN COMFORT WOMEN (Festival 1999), WET SAND (2003) and many others are brought to bear in what is undoubtedly the most arduous and personal work of her cinematic oeuvre.

As laid out in the film's prologue, Kim-Gibson's life and career are inseparable from that of her longtime husband/confidante/partner-in-arms Don Gibson, the late arts advocate and former acting chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Upon Don's passing in 2009 and a subsequent period of bereavement, Dai Sil embarked on a prolonged journey of rediscovery that ultimately took her to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Setting foot on the country of her birth, she set out on a mission to assess whether she can figuratively reclaim North Korea as her home. Granted unprecedented permission by the North Korean government to film the country from within its borders, director Kim-Gibson seemingly goes into overdrive observing the landscapes, public edifices, and particularly the people of the self-styled "hermit kingdom" - to the apparent exasperation of both cinematographer Willem Lee and the DPRK handlers assigned to shadow and discreetly "monitor" what she could and could not capture on film. Simply put, for large segments of the shoot they could barely keep up with this supposedly decrepit old woman. The results are at turns poignant and comical: while shots of "approved" landmarks extolling the accomplishments of Dear Father Kim Il Sung and his offspring certainly pop up here, impromptu encounters such as when director Kim-Gibson and crew chance upon a gaggle of pre-teen schoolgirls on a field trip to one of many national landmarks, puts the director's hallmark inquisitiveness (read: nosiness) on full display. By utilizing a different skill set of her estimable filmmaker's tool bag - namely, her warmth, quick wit, and disarming sense of humor - director Kim-Gibson's "valedictory" is as charming as it is elegiac. Somehow, I seriously doubt this is the last we'll see of her. - ABRAHAM FERRER

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Alliance of Women Directors
- Korean Film Council USA



MASTERS: ASIAN AMERICAN WOMEN PIONEERING DIRECTORS

As a complement to our Artist's Spotlight on Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival welcomes the latest films from veteran women filmmaker talents whose works have radically altered the landscape of Asian American & Pacific Islander Cinema. Riffing on issues of family, transnationalism and advocacy, the works of longtime Festival artists Felicia Lowe, Trinh T. Minh-ha and former VC staff member Janice D. Tanaka remind us of the necessity to continually recount our stories, reframe our histories and validate our place in society. Their long-term impact upon the landscape of Asian Pacific American cinema cannot be challenged.



CHINESE COUPLETS

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 57 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary

PRODUCER

Felicia Lowe

DIRECTOR

Felicia Lowe

WRITER

Felicia Lowe

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Emiko Omori
Vicente Franco

EDITOR

Joseph De Francesco

FEATURING

Felicia Lowe

VETERAN FILMMAKER FELICIA LOWE HAS EXPLORED FACETS OF THE CHINESE

AMERICAN experience in her work for almost four decades, in films such as *CHINA, LAND OF MY FATHER* (1979) and the renowned Angel Island documentary *CARVED IN SILENCE* (1988). As one of the first Asian female journalists working in American television, Lowe's expertise in developing and researching stories has informed much of her documentary work. Her latest film, *CHINESE COUPLETS*, goes beyond investigating the socio-political circumstances that shaped generations of Chinese-Americans to offer a personal, intergenerational story between mothers and daughters. Memoiristic, elegantly visual and yet rigorously researched, *CHINESE COUPLETS* unbinds hidden family secrets that speak to the complexity of the greater immigrant history and diasporic experience in America.

The film begins by presenting Lowe's family story, and focuses on her somewhat strained relationship with her mother, Lettie Kam Jue. Fiercely guarded about how she arrived in America during the era of the Chinese Exclusion Act, Lettie had never opened up to Lowe about her past. It is only via a conversation that Lowe's daughter, Alana, had with Lettie that Lowe, then at 50, finally discovered that her maternal grandfather had gone to Cuba before her mother was born. This knowledge set Lowe out on a search for more information about her mother, and the reasons behind each of the several names for which Lettie had been known throughout her remarkable life. In a journey between California, Cuba and China, she uncovers clues to how her grandmother arranged Lettie's identity as a 'paper daughter' for a Chinese family in Hawaii, and begins to understand the tribulations borne by the maternal grandparents she had never known.

"Until you see our history in print, in media, in all the ways that other people get to learn about their history – it doesn't exist," said Lowe during a recent interview. Offering a distinctly female perspective on one family's reconciliation with the past, *CHINESE COUPLETS* not only highlights the ties that bind mothers and daughters, but also the inextricable bond that the past has with the present, and how that link can better guide our relationship with future generations. – **CHANEL KONG**

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 7:00 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- **Alliance of Women Directors**
- **Chinese American Museum**
- **Chinese Historical Society of Southern California**



FORGETTING VIETNAM

ONE OF THE DEFINING MOMENTS IN MODERN AMERICAN HISTORY and global politics: Vietnam. The word itself conjures images of war and suffering in the mysterious jungles of a foreign land, of men, women, and children displaced and incarcerated by various occupying powers, and for many in the diaspora, forever a painful wound on their national and cultural psyches. Feminist filmmaker, film theorist, and experimental artist Trinh T. Minh-ha, one of the diaspora's most prominent voices in arts and activism, returns with this capstone documentary project commemorating "the 40th anniversary of the end of the war and its survivors." At the same time, she connects this legacy with what is going on in today's world stage regarding culture and politics ("In the current era of terror, Vietnam, for a change, is one of the safest places to travel to," citing Hong Kong's Political and Economic Risk Consultancy).

Employing her trademark experimentation in poetic, ethnographic, and sensory-driven image and sound construction, she juxtaposes scrolling text, video footage and formats, and sound effects to engage the spectator actively to ponder on the continuing, complex issues of postcoloniality and neocolonialist enterprise; women's roles in society; and the links between collective and personal trauma in her homeland. "Scarred. Sprayed. Contaminated. The earth remembers," she notes pointedly before a touristic backdrop of Vietnam's cultural landmark - Halong Bay and its iconic scenes of sea and boat.

Reminiscent of *A TALE OF LOVE* (Festival 1995) and *SURNAME VIET GIVEN NAME* (Festival 1989), she delves into the heart of these issues by building and compressing, showing and hiding, and telling and withholding ideas and concepts through a kaleidoscope of old and new footage of Vietnam, shot from 1995 up to her last visit in 2012. Her audiovisual aphorisms range from the more abstract and ponderous ("the eye sees but the eye sees not itself seeing") to the brutally exacting and blunt ("the bogey of modern civilization: Vietnam's raising labor export, sex trade, and human trafficking"). Between these divergent approaches, Minh-ha underscores a multi-layered truth: in the intervening years since the Fall of Saigon, Vietnam remains a land still haunted despite the onset of globalization and its open access. However, she is and will remain hopeful: "before blood, there is water [...] water dissolves" and "survives the ravages of history... the laundering of events." — **LINDY LEONG**

Vietnam/United States 2015
D-Cinema, 91 minutes
Color, Documentary
in English and Vietnamese w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Jean-Paul Bourdier
Trinh T. Minh-ha

DIRECTOR

Trinh T. Minh-ha

WRITER

Trinh T. Minh-ha

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Jean-Paul Bourdier
Trinh T. Minh-ha

SOUND

Dan Olmsted

MUSIC

The Six Tones

EDITOR

Trinh T. Minh-ha

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 2:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association
- Red Cross International Services



United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 83 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary

REBEL WITH A CAUSE: THE LIFE OF AIKO HERZIG YOSHINAGA

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Tomo Mizutani
A.I. Tokuno

PRODUCER

Thuy Phan
Janice Tanaka

DIRECTOR

Janice D. Tanaka

WRITER

Janice D. Tanaka

RESEARCHER

Joan Yoshiwara

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Mik Ayers
Akira Boch
Nathan Stoll
America Maldonado

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Bob Brnett

VOICE OVER

Janice D. Tanaka
Mark Bland
Nadja Hoyer-Booth
Stephen Thomas

MUSIC

Associated Production Music

EDITOR

Janice D. Tanaka

FEATURING

Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga,
David L. Abe, David T. Abe,
Kimberly Abe, Tomie Arai,
Julie Azuma, S. David Bailey,
May Chen, Rocky Chen,
Erin Duggar, Thomas Fujita
Rony, Lisa Furutani, Warren
Furutani, Donald T. Hata,
Peter Irons

VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS ALUMNUS JANICE D. TANAKA has been active in the film and media industry for over 30 years. Aside from working as a producer and educator, Tanaka has also served as the Manager for Diversity Development at Fox, where she worked on initiatives to employ professionals of color. Her works *WHEN YOU'RE SMILING: THE DEADLY LEGACY OF INTERNMENT* (1999) and *RIGHT OF PASSAGE* (2014) have anchored key moments in Japanese American history. Tanaka's latest documentary feature, *REBEL WITH A CAUSE: THE LIFE OF AIKO HERZIG YOSHINAGA*, is an endearing and essential portrait of a woman whose discovery of premeditated governmental misconduct during the WWII was crucial – not only to the landmark 1987 *coram nobis* cases of Gordon Hirabayashi, Fred Korematsu and Minoru Yasui, but also the National Council for Japanese Americans Redress (NCJAR) lawsuit of 1983.

The film's point of departure is a personal one: Tanaka's mother was best friends with Yoshinaga, and the pair's internment experience during the war have subsequently shaped each of their postwar lives. While Tanaka's mother followed the path of the "Quiet American", Yoshinaga moved across the country to settle in New York and raised three children as a two-time divorcee. Having already been familiar and sympathetic to the ongoing Civil Rights Movement during her time working in Harlem, Yoshinaga embarked on her path as a radical advocate for social justice when she came upon Michi Weglyn's book, *Years of Infamy: The Untold Story of America's Concentration Camps*. As one of the first volumes written by an internee about Japanese American internment, Weglyn's book sparked the redress movement that led to reparations for Japanese Americans interned during World War II.

Presented with interviews and key archival material, *REBEL WITH A CAUSE* pays tribute to a woman whose colorful, productive life defied expectations. Marking her evolution from internee, single mother to one of the vanguards of a national movement, Tanaka's must-watch film celebrates the life and work of an intrepid yet unassuming woman who has left a truly heroic impact on Japanese American history.

– CHANEL KONG

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 1:00 PM | Downtown Independent

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 4:30 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress
- Women in Film

The background features a white field with a pattern of small red dots. Overlaid on this are several large, colorful geometric shapes: a yellow triangle in the top left, a purple triangle in the top right, a green triangle in the middle right, and a large orange triangle in the bottom left. A yellow line also runs diagonally across the top left.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

This year's Special Presentations is a yummy smorgasbord of fresh works, ranging from a special glimpse at foods that nurture the soul, an exclusively curated shorts program, a "revisit" of a recent indie hit, a peek at a favorite television program, and an entertaining look at an important subcultural phenomenon. With this slate of works that give added dimension to our collective image, we hope that you'll have much to savor.





HAWAI'I: POI

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 27 mins
Color, Documentary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Heather Haunani Guigni
Leanne Ferrer

PRODUCER

Heather Haunani Guigni
Renea Veneri Stewart
Dan Nakasone

DIRECTOR & WRITER

Ty Sanga

CINEMATOGRAPHER & PRODUCTION DESIGN

Renea Veneri Stewart

SOUND

Nevada Jones
Jason Kagimoto

EDITOR

Daniel Bernardoni, Ty Sanga

FEATURING

Beverly Noa, Ka'ua Neumann,
Robert Kealoha Domingo,
Daniel Anthony, Ryan
Taniguchi, Stacy Sproat-Beck

HOST Ed Kenney

PUERTO RICO: GANDULE RICE

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 25 mins
Color, Documentary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Heather Haunani Guigni,
Leanne Ferrer

PRODUCER

Heather Haunani Guigni,
Renea Veneri Stewart, Dan
Nakasone

DIRECTOR & WRITER Ty Sanga

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Renea Veneri Stewart

FEATURING Tiara Hernandez

HOST Ed Kenney

FAMILY INGREDIENTS: HAWAI'I – POI AND PUERTO RICO – GANDULE RICE

Following in the footsteps of his pilot installment of the food and culture series FAMILY INGREDIENTS (Festival 2014), longtime Festival favorite Ty Sanga and Executive Producer Heather Haunani Guigni brings Festival audiences new episodes that showcase the ongoing adventures of food and lifestyle advocate Ed Kenney.

This new set of programs includes a portrait of Kenney himself, whose own ancestral story revolves around Hawai'i's indigenous kalo (taro) root and its famous by-product, poi. More than just a look at one of Hawaii's original staple foods, HAWAI'I: POI delves into the ways that kalo is cultivated and prepared. This episode also includes a sojourn to a land conservation center and a community college, where we learn the ways in which poi is used, and how family stories and traditions revolve around it.

PUERTO RICO: GANDULE RICE profiles Tiara Hernandez, a member of an entertainment family whose Puerto Rican roots inform the creation of gandule rice, a staple of the Hernandez family during Tiara's formative years. Tracing the migration of Puerto Ricans to the rural town of Waipahu, Ed travels to the origins of gandule rice to see for himself how a Puerto Rican staple dish has adapted to an adopted locale and culture.

With a briskly-paced storytelling style, director Sanga (STONES, Festival 2010; VISIONS IN THE DARK: THE LIFE OF PINKY THOMPSON, Festival 2015) brings a uniquely focused gaze that, combined with the aw-shucks congeniality of chef/host Ed Kenney (the owner and head chef of Town Kaimuki Suprette and MudHenWater), offer much more than just a foodie high. Indeed, FAMILY INGREDIENTS is an immersive adventure into food and its unique relationship to family, culture, and traditions. – ABRAHAM FERRER

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 3:30 PM | Downtown Independent



BAD RAP

IF YOU ASK ANYONE TO NAME AN ASIAN AMERICAN RAPPER, you may see a lot of scratching heads. Considering how few have been able to cross over to mainstream media, that doesn't come as a surprise. Thank goodness, then, for Salima Koroma's debut documentary **BAD RAP**, which follows four Asian American rappers who dream of succeeding in the mainstream, making mad money, and becoming household names. Hailing from Los Angeles' Koreatown, Dumbfoundead (né Jonathan Park) has been in the game for 10-plus years, getting his start in freestyle battle league "Grind Time." Reppin' from Queens, Awkwafina's (Nora Lum) quirky and humorous flow in "My Vag" became a viral sensation, garnering recognition that most Asian American male rappers have yet to attain. Controversial wild card Rekstizzy (David Lee) dares to push the envelope further with his outrageous antics and ideas. And then there's Lyrics (Richard Lee), an old school soul who is conflicted with keeping his rapping dreams alive while helping out with his family business.

Accompanied by a booming soundtrack, behind-the-scenes footage, and raw intimacy, **BAD RAP** follows these rising stars as they share their experiences from a journey filled with hungry passion, bittersweet hope, and the day-to-day challenges in a music industry that constantly wants to pigeon-hole them as the model minority. With additional testimonials from Asian American artists like Far East Movement, Korean hip-hop sensation Jay Park, and various industry insiders, **BAD RAP** exposes the daily struggles of Asian American rappers in today's age of social media. Through their enlightening words and personal stories, we see these creative makers endure Asian stereotypes and contend with familial expectations.

Director Salima Koroma and producer Jaeki Cho allow the viewer to get up close and personal with the most prominent Asian American rappers working today, and explores what it really means to be an Asian American artist today and what it will take to smash through the bamboo ceiling. — **SO YUN UM**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 9:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 1

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Kollaboration
- Traktivist

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 82 minutes
Color, Documentary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Johnjay Chon
Charlie Shin

PRODUCER

Salima Koroma
Jaeki Cho

DIRECTOR

Salima Koroma

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Salima Koroma

ANIMATION

Justin Weiss

SOUND

Marcus Hahm

EDITOR

Salima Koroma

FEATURING

Jonathan "Dumbfoundead" Park
Nora "Awkwafina" Lum
David "Rekstizzy" Lee
Richard "Lyrics" Lee
MC Jin
Shogunna
Trophik
Jay Park
Kero One
The Fung Brothers
Far East Movement
Ted Chung
Danny Chung
Oliver Wang



CRUSH THE SKULL: THE FEATURE

United States, 1989
D-Cinema, 80 minutes
Color, Narrative

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Joan Huang
Jeffrey Gou

PRODUCER

Chris Dinh
Viet Nguyen
Aya Tanimura
Jimmy Tsai

DIRECTOR

Viet Nguyen

SCREENPLAY

Chris Dinh
Viet Nguyen

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Tuan Quoc Le
John Reyes-Nguyen

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Eloise Ayala

COSTUME DESIGNER

Mayumi Masaoka

MUSIC

David Frank Long

EDITOR

Viet Nguyen

STARRING

Chris Dinh
Katie Savoy
Chris Riedell
Tim Chiou
Lauren Reeder
Walter Michael Bost
Lincoln Hoppe
Devyn Stokdyk
Nathan Moore
Justin Ray
Leonard Wu
Jerry Ying
Michelle Grondine

WHENEVER A THIEF IN A FILM SAYS "ONE LAST JOB," you just know it's not going to end well. That's exactly how Viet Nguyen's feature directorial debut film, **CRUSH THE SKULL: THE FEATURE**, starts off. Ollie (Chris Dinh) and his girlfriend Blair (Katie Savoy) are moonlighting as professional thieves who specialize in robbing upper-class homes while disguised as house painters. Sadly, their "last job" ends with them getting caught, landing Ollie in jail, and almost getting everyone murdered when they try to save someone from a cheating spouse situation. Having fallen into debt, the thieving posse is forced to take one "one last job" – a secluded vacation home in the mountains, perfect for Blair and Ollie's skill set. Unknown to them, they unwittingly target the home of a deranged serial killer (note to viewers: don't pick a desolate vacation home in the middle of nowhere to rob). With doors sealed, soundproofed walls, and the setup of a torture maze before them, Ollie, Blair and their Scooby gang (which includes Blair's brother Conner and his friend Riley) must find their way back out or face a grisly demise.

CRUSH THE SKULL: THE FEATURE was born from a hybrid of two award-winning online shorts, **CRUSH THE SKULL** and **THINGS YOU DON'T JOKE ABOUT**. This feature film iteration went on to win the Nightfall Award for Best Horror Film at the 2015 Los Angeles Film Festival. Every line of the dialogue delivers with a zing and stuns with a bang (literally). What sounds like a terrifying premise surprisingly turns out to be filled with laugh-out-loud moments, yet coupled with palpable fear that'll make you more skittish than intended. It's always a balancing act when trying to seamlessly blend slapstick comedy and horror tropes, but Viet Nguyen and co-writer Dinh does it with effortless ease and success. The unbeatable chemistry between the cast members makes you root for all involved. Belly-achingly hilarious as it is nail-bitingly frightening, **CRUSH THE SKULL** soars and will have you hollering and jumping from your seat from giddy terror. – **SO YUN UM**

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 9:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- **YOMYOMF.com**



FRESH OFF THE SHOW

FRESH OFF THE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENT that the hit ABC comedy series FRESH OFF THE BOAT has been renewed for a Season 3, LAAPFF invites you to join us as we present the two latest episodes of this groundbreaking television show. In a fun-packed viewing party, we will present that evening's episode as well as offer a sneak-peek at the following week's episode. Afterwards, Visual Communications boardmember Phil Yu (aka Angry Asian Man) and actor/writer/comedian Jenny Yang will host a special installment of their live online call-in post-screening fan program FRESH OFF THE SHOW!. As an added bonus, select cast and crew will be joining Phil and Jenny for a Q&A after the screening. So join us, as we celebrate television broadcast history!

For more program details: www.vconline.org/festival

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 7:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM



TOP 8

BIRTHED FROM THE #WEOWNTHE8TH MOVEMENT, in conjunction with the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, TOP 8 is a program of short films showcasing works from API filmmaking talent nationwide. Spearheaded by actor/artist Dante Basco (THE DEBUT; HOOK) to showcase works from the AAPI community, TOP 8 seeks to foster creation of opportunities while providing a platform for supportive and positive mutual growth. Following up on last year's successful inaugural event, submissions are now being winnowed down by the organizers of the 2016 TOP 8 program, and will be announced on April 8, 2016 at #WeOwnthe8th.

For directions to The Great Company, please see page 58 or write: info@thegreatcompany.com

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 8:00 PM | GREAT COMPANY

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- **The Great Company**



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NARRATIVE FEATURE COMPETITION

If there is one word to describe the 2016 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival's roster of Narrative Competition features, that word would possibly be "whimsical." Indeed, stories driven by childhood aspirations, dreams and (sometimes) nightmares, supernatural entities, and even some, ahem, controlled substances rule the day in a line-up that welcomes both reliable Festival returnees as well as remarkable discoveries from first-time feature filmmakers. Prepare to be challenged, enlightened, shocked, and above all entertained as we proudly roll out this year's slate of nominated narrative features.





COMFORT

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 103 minutes
Color, Narrative

PRODUCER

Mark Heidelberger

DIRECTOR

William Lu

SCREENPLAY

William Lu

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Aashish Gandhi

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Julian Brown

COSTUME DESIGNER

Jordy Scheinberg

SOUND

Cameron Selan

Michael Huang

MUSIC

Scott Gilman

EDITOR

Brady Hallongren

STARRING

Christopher Dinh

Julie Zhan

Kelvin Han Yee

Billy Sly Williams

Michael Bow

IN THE YEARS SINCE HIS 2005 MICRO-CINEMA WORKOUT SPY MOMS (a product of Visual Communications' Armed With a Camera Fellowship), William Lu has graced the Film Festival with short works that clearly indicate his ambitions to tackling long-form narratives (ATF: ASIAN TASK FORCE, Festival 2007; GOLDEN BOY, Festival 2009). Given the rise of a new crop of filmmaking and acting talents who have been nurtured in the netisphere, it's no surprise that COMFORT, Lu's feature-length directorial debut, gleams liberally from this fertile talent base. To wit: Chris Dinh, an alumnus of UCLA's seminal theatre troupe Lapu, The Coyote That Cares (LCC) who made an electrifying Festival debut in Vu T. Thu-ha's KIEU (Festival 2006), has carved out an enviable career as a YouTube actor and producer. So too has Julie Zhan, whose own acting credits for online destinations Wong Fu Productions and The Jubilee Project have been supplemented by an executive-producing turn for Kane Diep's UPLOADED (Festival 2012).

COMFORT's storyline may seem incredible, but actually echoes Japanese director Norihiro Koizumi's MIDNIGHT SUN (2006) and the subsequent serialized television drama of the same name. Here, the heroine Kaoru is re-imagined as Cameron (Chris Dinh), a nighttime courier and aspiring chef who pays the bills and socks away money to one day own a food truck. Compassionate to a fault, Cameron works the graveyard shift making deliveries all over Los Angeles, yet is too busy taking care of other people to put his own dreams first. One day, he is asked to do a favor for Martin (Kelvin Han Yee), a longtime client: pick up his daughter Jasmine (Julie Zhan) from the airport. Attractive and headstrong, Jasmine chafes at being neglected by her father, who is too preoccupied with a potential business deal to pay her much attention. Soon, Cameron and Jasmine take the first halting steps to a relationship – in spite of the anticipated disapproval from her unsuspecting father. Yet this budding romance is threatened by a secret that Cameron has been hiding from Jasmine, and indeed from most everybody else in his life. As kindred spirits Cameron and Jasmine, Chris Dinh and Julie Zhan transcend their individual personas as online phenoms, offering performances that belong on a big screen. And director Lu gives his two leads the space to roam, both literally and figuratively. The result is a sturdy rom-com that not only satisfies, but promises more good things from a director we've been showcasing here at the Film Festival for a while now. – **ABRAHAM FERRER**

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 8:30 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Chinese American Museum



GRASS

IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME before longtime Film Festival artist Tanuj Chopra would bring his career-long observations on romantic and responsibility-challenged ennui to bear on the foibles of women. And no, we're not talking about the two-season workout NICE GIRLS CREW (Festivals 2012 and 2013), created in close collaboration with producer Christine Kwon, whose BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY by director Ben Wang is playing elsewhere in this year's Film Festival. We're talking about his observations on Desi males, specifically those of his East Palo Alto, CA hometown, as seen in formative Film Festival selections ULJHAN (Festival 2000) and BADI BADIYA (Festival, 2002), among many others. Meticulously lensed during one oppressively brutal summer heatwave in L.A.'s Griffith Park, GRASS plays as a gender-reversed stoner comedy. But like most Chopra opuses, it has weightier things on its mind. In it, Festival perennials Emily C. Chang and Pia Shah play best buds Cam and Jinky, two women with a seemingly good problem to have: Cam (Chang), a good-girl academic in a co-dependent relationship with an unseen lothario of a fiancé, is tasked with delivering a large bag of weed to an unknown buyer. On one hand, she feels a sense of loyalty to her partner, yet she doesn't want to feel like a mule. In the park with her lifelong stoner best friend Jinky (Shah), she ruminates on what she will do. But then, Jinky has an idea: the two should "inspect" the product and test its quality. With a wink-wink to the audience, what transpires over the course of a very long day is an epic adventure in which the two, increasingly blazed as the minutes tick by, ruminate on relationships, the meaning of life, and pizza. With significant writing contributions by actors Chang and Shah (who brilliantly seem to free-associate their way through the whole affair), director Chopra takes a completely different tact from his career-long examination of Desi male insecurities and, with big helping hands from his two leads, turns the whole conversation, figuratively and literally, on its head. — **ABRAHAM FERRER**

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 99 minutes
Color, Narrative

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Tanuj Chopra

PRODUCER
Tanuj Chopra

DIRECTOR
Tanuj Chopra

SCREENPLAY
Tanuj Chopra
Emily C. Chang
Pia Shah

CINEMATOGRAPHY
Tanuj Chopra

EDITOR
Rachel Tejada

STARRING
Pia Shah
Emily C. Chang
Anthony Ma



PRECEDED BY: WEEKDAY GIRLS

(United States, 2015) Dir./Scr.: Jeff Mizushima

Anthony doesn't do online dating. He dates the old fashion way. The kind where you don't know if what you're doing is a date or not. The type of situation where you feel uncomfortable but you can't pinpoint the source of the tension. It's a weekday, so it couldn't be a date, right? D-Cinema, 13 mins., black & white, narrative

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 9:00 PM | Downtown Independent

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 4:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles
- Women in Film



United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 72 minutes
Color, Narrative
Korean and English

THE LAST TOUR

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Ryun Yu
Jeff Liu
Franz Elizondo Schmelkes

PRODUCER

Ryun Yu
Ethan Wolf
Franz Elizondo Schmelkes

DIRECTOR

Ryun Yu

SCREENPLAY

Jeff Liu, Ryun Yu

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sean Jui

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Abra Brayman
Kelly Weaver

MAKE UP

Yoko Kagaya

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER

Ron Balicki

SOUND

Mark Sutton

MUSIC

Tom Zehnder

STARRING

Ryun Yu, Jeff Liu,
Elizabeth Ho, Michael
Yama, Diana Lee Inosanto,
James Huang, Mimi
Cozzens, Ron Balicki,
Garret Sato, Greg
Watanabe, Alex Jovica,
Charles Kim, Chil Kong,
Anthony Delongis, Cheryl
Utsunomiya, Franz
Elizondo Schmelkes

JUN, A BURNED-OUT GULF WAR VETERAN, is kidnapped from his L.A. neighborhood, flown to North Korea, and pressed into service for one last, secret mission: to watch over a hostage and insure that no harm comes to him while Jun's employers extract an unspecified confession out of the prisoner. A crisis of conscience, a daring escape, and suddenly, this international prisoner drama literally shifts scenes from a North Korean gulag into... well, somewhere else?!? And what exactly WAS that "confession" that was being extracted, anyway?

Suffice it to say that **THE LAST TOUR**, a virtuoso turn by actor/co-screenwriter/director Ryun Yu (**THE MIKADO PROJECT**, Festival 2010) is nothing if not a vanity project. Bearing all the "kitchen sink" hallmarks of veteran stage producer and playwright Jeff Liu (who takes on the pivotal role of Paul The Hostage), Yu's directorial debut shamelessly reunites alumni of L.A.'s renegade Lodestone Theatre Company and mainstays of the entertainment web blog YOMYOMF.com. Of course, we've seen past examples of Asian American multi-ethnic stories set in the far reaches of suburbia – Eric Byler's 2006 "Brokeback"-esque relationship drama **TRE** is a prime exemplar. Aided with an all-star cast of APA acting luminaries primed to go to the "cray-cray" places only Liu and Yu are willing to take this story, **THE LAST TOUR** makes no pretenses of being serious-minded indie cinema. Indeed, the narrative veers wildly from observing re-heated Cold-War tensions and state terrorism to, uhh, marriage equality, immigrant rights, and even a misplaced display of a mother's love. Add to the mix a nod to action and social-issue dramas as divergent as **BILLY JACK** and **TREMORS**, and it's clear that director Yu cares not a whit about following the traditional playbook of onscreen political correctness. Equal parts **EL MARIACHI**, **PRISCILLA**, **QUEEN OF THE DESERT**, **HOMELAND**, and **THE DEFIANT ONES**, director Yu's serio-comic farce walks the fine line between social commentary and puerile popcorn cinema. He leaves it up to the audience to determine if he's succeeded.

— ABRAHAM FERRER



PRECEDED BY:

N. KING

(United States, 2014) Dir./Scr.: Kali Kasashima

North King Street runs through Kalihi, a rough neighborhood in Honolulu far from the tourist spots and beaches of Waikiki. Kalany is lost and is looking for his place in life. At the encouragement of his friend and mentor, Micah, he's finally going out on his first job in a local grocery store. After finally mustering up the courage, Kalany enters the store to find he's outmatched by the store clerk. Micah comes to the rescue, and Kalany gets to see a possible glimpse of his future. Growing up far from the beaches of Waikiki, Kalany is faced with the decision of what he wants his life to become.

D-Cinema, 11 mins., color, narrative

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 6:00 PM | Downtown Independent

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 4:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- East West Players
- Asian Pacific American Friends of the Theatre



PALI ROAD

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 100 minutes
Color, Narrative

Narrative Competition selection PALI ROAD by Jonathan Lim is the Film Festival's Closing Night Presentation. For a complete program description, please see page 67.

THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 7:00 PM | Directors Guild of America | Theater 1

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Jon Chiew
Ricardo S. Galindez
Ling Geng
Roy Tjioe
Grace Zhang

PRODUCER

Kenneth Burke
Jonathan Lim
Daxing Zhang

DIRECTOR

Jonathan Lim

SCREENPLAY

Doc Pedrolie
Victoria Arch

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Quyen Tran

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Richard Romer

SET DESIGNER

Tom Curtis

COSTUME DESIGN

Cathie Valdovino

SOUND

Taylor DePamphilis

MUSIC

Jeff Marsh

EDITOR

Jason Schmid

STARRING

Michelle Chen
Jackson Rathbone
Sung Kang
Henry Ian Cusick
Tzi Ma
Elizabeth Sung



United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 94 minutes
Color, Narrative

THE TIGER HUNTER

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Luke Daniels
Brandon K. Hogan
Alan Pao

PRODUCER

Alan Pao
Megha Kadakia
Nazia Khan

DIRECTOR

Lena Khan

SCREENPLAY

Lena Khan
Sameer Asad Gardezi

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Patrice Lucien Cochet

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Michael Fitzgerald

ART DIRECTOR

Aidan Fiorito

SET DECORATION

Siobhan O'Brien

COSTUME DESIGNER

Justine Seymour

SOUND

Thomas Cassetta
Caleb Mose

MUSIC

Amy Correia
Paul Masvidal

EDITOR

Dan Bush

STARRING

Danny Pudi
Jon Heder
Rizwan Manji
Karen David
Iqbal Theba
Samuel Page
Parvesh Cheena
Kevin Pollak

Narrative Competition selection THE TIGER HUNTER by Lena Khan is the Film Festival's Opening Night Presentation. For a complete program description, please see page 63.

THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 7:00 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles
- Women in Film

NARRATIVE COMPETITION FEATURE



THE UNBIDDEN

United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 84 minutes
Color, Narrative

LAUREN (TAMLYN TOMITA), A MYSTERY NOVELIST, LIVES ALONE IN A CREEPY OLD HOUSE on a quiet, unassuming suburban street. Lately, she experiences restless sleep due to a progression of unexplained nightmares involving a bloodied and tortured man (Jason Yee). Their severity pushes her into a near catatonic state. As a reprieve and possible cure, she enlists her lifelong besties Kat (Julia Nickson), Anna (Elizabeth Sung), and Rachel (Amy Hill) for a Halloween séance. As horror film buffs know full well, women in the genre often don't fare well. They are either killer bait or the big bad behind the supernatural shenanigans. In indie cinema filmmaker and Festival veteran Quentin Lee's **THE UNBIDDEN**, the machinations of women drive forward a narrative in which an either/or back story rarely defines any woman's character.

Rooted in the American horror tradition of the 1960s-1970s (e.g. **THE HAUNTING** to **ROSEMARY'S BABY**) **THE UNBIDDEN** honors a genre in which women's sexuality and its alignment with evil made provocative social critique by highlighting the power of female agency. Lee presents us with dynamic personalities portrayed by a quartet of veteran Asian American actresses who are joined by a new generation (Karin Anna Cheung, Akemi Look, Michelle Krusiec, and Kimberly-Rose Wolter) who play their younger selves in various flashbacks. Asian girl power abounds, but this time around, they aren't crying over what their fathers, brothers, or husbands did to them. In fact, this is the anti-**THE JOY LUCK CLUB**. All of Lauren's lady friends think they can help but they don't all agree on the methodology. Rachel, a practitioner of the occult, oversees the spiritual ritual with pragmatic aplomb while Kat and Anna go at it in the classic Hollywood camp glamour of Bette Davis and Joan Crawford. Did one of them play a role in Lauren's current unraveling? The drama kicks into high gear when Lauren's long-lost son, Derek (Hayden Szeto) unexpectedly crashes the party.

Reuniting acting talent from many of his previous films, **ETHAN MAO** (Festival 2005), **THE PEOPLE I'VE SLEPT WITH** (Festival 2010), **WHITE FROG** (2012), and working from a screenplay by filmmaker NaRhee Ahn (**PURITY**, Festival 2006), Lee turns the screws on well-known horror tropes and explores the depths (and depravity) of female friendship in this darkly humored tour de force.

— LINDY LEONG



PRECEDED BY: CARNAL ORIENT

(United States, 2016) Dir.: Mila Zuo; Scr. Mila Zuo, Angela Seo

In a dirty kitchen, a disgruntled cook prepares a meal for a clientele of increasingly hungry and impatient male diners. As the cook presents exotic, colorful dishes, the men respond with gusto and fervor. Suddenly, a beautiful, mysterious Asian woman arrives, inciting the guests' appetites further. Their desire for her and the food become conflated. The woman proceeds to give them a spectacular show – but she's not so easily consumed.

Digital, 16 mins., black & white, documentary

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 8:30 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

• Asian Professional Exchange (APEX) • East West Players

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Yan Xiaoming

PRODUCER

Charles Lei
Stanley Yung
NaRhee Ahn
Quentin Lee

DIRECTOR

Quentin Lee

SCREENPLAY

NaRhee Ahn

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Len Borruso

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Reed Johns

ART DIRECTOR

John Physioc
Maria Trujillo

COSTUME DESIGNER

Melynda Choothesa

SOUND

Chris Polczynski

MUSIC

Steven Pranoto

EDITOR

Matthaeus Szumanski

STARRING

Tamlyn Tomita
Julia Nickson
Amy Hill
Elizabeth Sung
Hayden Szeto
Jason Yee
Karin Anna Cheung
Kimberly-Rose Wolter
Akemi Look
Michelle Krusiec



United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 83 minutes
Color, Narrative

VAMPARIAH

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Bob Abaya, Matthew Abaya,
Nikki Aclaro, Felipe Niera,
Elizabeth Lorenzana Abaya,
Michael Belmessieri,
Woody Garrett,
Jennifer Siemer-Abaya

PRODUCER

Roberto Divina,
Alan Kao, William Lee

DIRECTOR

Matthew Abaya

SCREENPLAY

Matthew Abaya,
Lawrence Yaghmour,
Shannon Lee L. Pacoan

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Aja Pilapil

ART DIRECTOR

Desciple

ANIMATOR

Julius Sanchez

VISUAL EFFECTS

Julius Sanchez, HazMadt

VISUAL EFFECTS MAKE-UP

Melissa Capistrano,
Shannon Burle

COSTUME DESIGN

Jeff Lunzaga, Alex,
Peake, Marilyn Yu

SOUND

Erika Arakaki-Barbanica, Grant
Inaba, Julie Kosh, Felipe Neira

MUSIC

[Cynical_Mass], Armor Rapista

EDITOR

Matthew Abaya,
Lawrence John Iriarte

STARRING

Kelly Lou Dennis, Aureen
Almario, Arlene Boado,
Scott Mathison, Roberto
Divina, Daniel Miller, Alex
Benjamin, Doug Shoemaker,
Ryan Liquid, HJ Day,
Ken Shaw, Bo Campbell,
Micheal Dorado, LJ Moore

MAHAL (KELLY LOU DENNIS), AN ELITE MONSTER HUNTER, patrols the sinister streets of San Francisco as members of the undead lurk in every dark corner of The City, preying on unsuspecting humans with their bloodlust. Bampinay (Aureen Almario), an aswang (a supernatural, vampire-like creature from Filipino folklore), embarks on a serial killing rampage on men who sexually objectify and use women. Unsurprisingly, girl-on-girl action naturally ensues in all of its spectacular variations.

Director Michael Abaya returns to Festival Week with a feature-length expansion of his 2004 short subject BAMPINAY, and what a ramped-up affair it is. With its B-movie schlock, DIY CGI aesthetics, and its intriguing Philippine mythology, VAMPARIAH observes what happens when Buffy-esque slayer Mahal sets out to vanquish aswang Bampinay: intent on conquest, Mahal instead discovers in Bampinay a kindred spirit. Abaya grafts influences as divergent as DRACULA and INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE onto 1980s-1990s-era Asian cult horror film, and channels them into what is essentially a female-driven revenge movie. Mahal's desire to kill aswangs comes from her own personal tragedy of losing her mother to one of these creatures. She soon encounters unforeseeable complications in her single-mindedness and discovers her true calling.

While very much a fun midnight movie, Abaya imbues VAMPARIAH with socially observant critiques regarding race, sexuality, and identity. The aswang's typical incarnation as a beautiful, young woman comments on perceptions of Asian women as submissive or dominant ideals. Asian fetishization gets called out in the most virulent, awesome (and bloodiest) manner. Propelled by a goth-slash-dance inspired soundtrack reminiscent of THE HUNGER as well as an ominous mood and neo-noir palette, VAMPARIAH makes for some sexytime machinations. In director Abaya's imagining, the cult of machismo takes a bludgeoning as Mahal and Bampinay find themselves in a fight against the keepers of the status quo.

– ELAINE DOLALAS, WITH ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY LINDY LEONG

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 11:30 PM | Downtown Independent

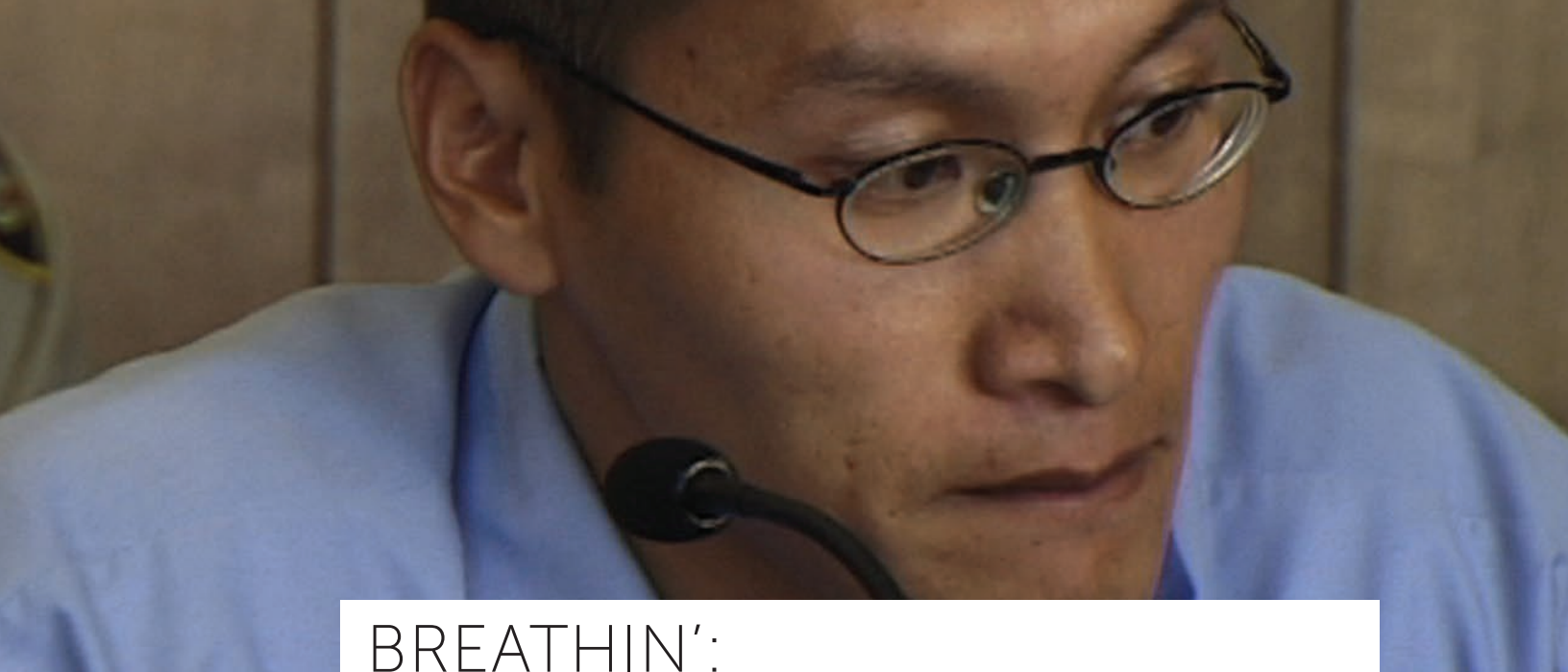
COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Fil Am Creative



DOCUMENTARY FEATURE COMPETITION

New artists and exciting, untold stories combine with hot-button productions by key Festival veterans to distinguish this year's Film Festival Documentary Competition. Offering views of the world, both local and global in scope, this new septet tackle stories of spirituality and literacy, revolution and immigrant rights, and political, sexual, and moral equality. Our Documentary Competition slate offers the full range of stories and experiences as observed and produced by our communities' intrepid and committed documentarians.



BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 60 minutes
Color, Documentary

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Deann Borshay Liem

PRODUCER
Ben Wang
Christine Kwon

DIRECTOR
Ben Wang

CINEMATOGRAPHER
R.J. Lozada

MUSIC
Scott "Chops" Jung

EDITOR
Ken Schneider

FEATURING
Eddy Zheng

MAINSTREAM STORIES OF U.S. MASS INCARCERATION often cite the overwhelming numbers of African American and Latino men within the prison system, yet largely neglects the reality of incarcerated Asian Americans. Director Ben Wang (AOKI, Festival 2010) returns with this compelling documentary on the life and times of Chinese immigrant Eddy Zheng, a community activist who spent over 20 years of his life in California prisons and jails.

As a latchkey kid who grew up an outsider in the Bay Area during the early 1980s, Zheng fell in with the wrong crowd and ended up committing a felony act of robbery and kidnapping. Without financial means and the connections to seek a more lenient sentence, Zheng, at age 16, was charged as an adult and sentenced to 7 years to life in prison. Interweaving contemporary interviews with Eddy, his family and his girlfriend, along with dramatized transcripts recounting Zheng's crime, Wang also traces Zheng's physical and intellectual growth throughout his stint in prison: he becomes an experienced bodybuilder, learns English, and earns his college degree. His regret for his youthful folly and subsequent understanding of its consequences becomes the impetus for his activism and advocacy for immigrant educational rights, catalyzed by an 11 month-long stint in solitary confinement that he served for waging a campaign to include ethnic studies in the prison curriculum.

Smashing the model minority stereotype head-on, Zheng struggles to reconcile with his family and with those he victimized. While he sought redemption through his current work as a recognized leader on prison reform and youth violence prevention, his circumstances became further complicated by the threat of deportation back to China (as a convicted felon, he couldn't go through the naturalization process). Director Wang, with a huge assist from producer Christine Kwon, executive producer Deanna Boshay Liem (KELLY LOVE TONY; AKA DON BONUS) and composer Scott "Chops" Jung, crafts a nuanced portrait of a resilient man trapped in a crisis of his own making and, ultimately, finding the strength to come up for fresh air.

— ELAINE DOLALAS, WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY LINDY LEONG



PRECEDED BY:

LAPS

(United States, 2015) Dir./Wtr.: Roldan Lozada

The San Quentin 1000 Mile Running Club is comprised of inmates of mixed age, race, and ethnicity at California's historical San Quentin State Prison. The men, who are serving time for anything from drug possession to first degree murder, find temporary solace in long distance running. They are coached by runner Franklin Ruona, who comes in from the outside and with a small set of other supportive running coaches, volunteer time to help these men train for their annual marathon. LAPS is a film that captures a regular training day in the recreation yard.

Digital, 16 mins., black & white, documentary

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 7:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 4:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Center for the Pacific Asian Family
- Asian Pacific American Bar Association(APABA)
- Asian Americans Advancing Justice



DAZE OF JUSTICE

IN MICHAEL SIV'S MEDITATIVE AND MOVING ACCOUNT of a group of American Khmer Rouge survivors' journey back to Cambodia to witness the war tribunals of those responsible for their collective pain, they join others from all around the world in a prayer ceremony at Choeung Ek, the epicenter of "The Killing Fields," where over 1 million people were executed between 1975-1979 under the Pol Pot regime. As the camera surveys the scene of the silent mournful to the emotionally wrecked, we see a Buddhist stupa filled with thousands of human skulls on public display. This gruesome, physical marker of the Cambodian genocide aptly symbolizes the tremendous psychological stakes of Siv's project to document these survivors' ultimate search for a higher justice.

Just as last year's festival entries *THE KILLING FIELDS OF HAING S. NGOR* and *THE LAST REEL* helped to diversify the overall historical narrative of the Khmer Rouge with their accounts of individuals swept up into political chaos, *DAZE OF JUSTICE* offers, perhaps, the most intimate gesture towards closure. Siv shadows Leakhena Nou, a sociology professor at California State University, Long Beach, as she wrangles elders Sophany and Sarit Bay, Sarem Noeu, and Marie Chea together for this physical and psychological journey. What seemed like a clear, straightforward agenda gets a shot in the arm when the resourceful professor manages to connect the survivor group with Hong Siu Pheng, the son of Kaing Guek Eav ("Comrade Duch"), one of the perpetrators on trial. Siv, in his embedded journalist status, smartly trains his lens on Pheng's voluntary inclusion into the proceedings. From there, tension escalates all around as we wonder how the survivors will respond to this man's presence. Will the sins of the father pervert this gathering of hearts and minds towards the common goal of healing? It is a welcome plot twist that ends up complicating an earlier sense of what justice would encompass.

Funded by the MacArthur Foundation and the Center for Asian American Media, Siv builds upon his own personal story of reunion and reconciliation - famously featured as the central subject in award-winning filmmaker/mentor Spencer Nakasako's *REFUGEE* (2003). Noting full well that "The Khmer Rouge is an ongoing trial," this Cambodian son is paying it forward to the next generation by breaking the silence, once and for all, on his homeland's complicated, historical past. - **LINDY LEONG**

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 3:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Cambodia Town Film Festival
- Royal Consulate General of Cambodia in Long Beach, California
- Cambodian Coordinating Council

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 66 minutes
Color, Documentary,
in English and Khmer w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Stephen Gong
Spencer Nakasako
Jean Tsien

PRODUCER

Don Young

DIRECTOR

Michael Siv

WRITER

Michael Siv

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Michael Siv
Richark Parks

SOUND

Richard Parks

EDITOR

Lou Nakasako
Tiffany Peckosh
Michael Siv

FEATURING

Dr. Leakhena Nou
Sophany Bay
Sarit Bay
Sarem Noeu
Marie Chea
Hong Siu Pheng



THE GREAT SASUKE

Japan/United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 70 minutes
Color, Documentary
in Spanish and Japanese w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Jonathan Schwarz
Mikiko Sasaki

DIRECTOR

Mikiko Sasaki

WRITER

Mikiko Sasaki

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Jonathan Schwarz

MUSIC

Aiko Fukushima

EDITOR

Mikiko Sasaki
Alex O'Flinn

FEATURING

Masanori Murakawa
Takao Yoshida

IMAGINE A STADIUM FILLED WITH MANICALLY SCREAMING FANS chanting your name, flashing lights from the paparazzi, and the heart-pumping adrenaline of being the source of everyone's entertainment. Sounds pretty incredible right? Well, that was the reality of The Great Sasuke's wrestling career during which he was considered a God for his astonishing stunts which were as dangerous as they were elegant in execution. After being inspired by Mexico's Lucha Libre, Sasuke brought this form of the sport to Northern Japan, thereby revolutionizing the wrestling world and cementing his name as the creator of Michinoku Pro Wrestling. Simultaneously, during his rising fame, he embarked on a political career in his run as a legislator for Iwate's Prefectural Assembly. His election gave him the distinct notoriety of being the first actual masked legislator in history.

Fast forward twenty years later, The Great Sasuke is still feverishly passionate about his career. However, the times are a-changin' and the wrestling scene isn't what it used to be anymore. Stadiums have turned into community spaces and his political career has seemingly come to an end after losing in a race for governor. Nowadays, he struggles with debt while desperately trying to maintain his career through promoting himself, no matter what it entails. Reflecting on his two decades in the wrestling ring, Sasuke decides to make a last ditch attempt for success in both arenas of wrestling and politics.

Oakland-based documentary filmmaker Mikiko Sasaki (STORY OF A BUSINESSWOMAN, Festival 2010) shows us a portrait of an idiosyncratic and passionate wrestler who has never given up on his dream even for a second, let alone ever taken off his mask. His courageous story will elicit deep reflection on what success entails, and how to maintain that success on one's own terms.

—SO YUN UM

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 7:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 4:30 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Little Tokyo Historical Society



HOOLIGAN SPARROW

IN NANFU WANG'S DOCUMENTARY DEBUT FEATURE, HOOLIGAN SPARROW, she follows the feminist activist Ye Haiyan (aka Sparrow) and her fellow colleagues to Hainan Province as they protest the case of six elementary school girls who were sexually abused by their principal. Framed as the enemy, the activists are constantly under Big Brother's surveillance. As the protesters are harassed by thugs hired by the government, and threatened with imprisonment by the local policemen who refuse to protect them, it seems that in China, there is no greater threat to the country than being a woman – especially a women's rights activist.

Sparrow gained notoriety when she decided to become a sex worker and offered free sex to migrant workers to expose the poor working conditions of sex workers. Subsequently, Sparrow and her 12-year-old daughter bounced from home to home after facing multiple evictions from various neighborhoods and ongoing harassment from the government that undermines her basic human rights at every turn.

Executive produced by the team behind NEVER SORRY: AI WEIWEI, HOOLIGAN SPARROW debuted at this year's Sundance Film Festival to exhilarating reviews. As a one-woman crew, director Wang stood on the frontlines with the activists, encountering the same mistreatment from mobs and the police, both who made threats against her and smashed her equipment at will. Despite these inherent risks, she relentlessly kept shooting with her hand-held camera and then subsequently captured her footage with her hidden-camera glasses and secret recording devices. The resulting film, completed in New York after the footage was spirited out of China, is a brave testament to Wang's potential as a filmmaker. HOOLIGAN SPARROW foregrounds the very real danger and jarring state of the activists, who live under the extreme pressure and weight of an oppressive government in which rules and laws don't necessarily apply. It is the resilience and heroism of Ye Haiyan and director Wang that made this film possible. Just watching this work feels like an act of defiance, knowing the difficult production circumstances involved. It stands as one of the most important activist-driven films made in recent times. – **SO YUN UM**

SUNDAY, APRIL 24, 8:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- **Immediate Justice**
- **Coalition Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST)**

Peoples Republic of China/
United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 84 minutes
Color, Documentary
in English and Mandarin w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Andy Cohen
Alison Klayman

PRODUCER

Nanfu Wang

DIRECTOR

Nanfu Wang

WRITER

Nanfu Wang
Mark Monroe

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Nanfu Wang

SOUND

Nanfu Wang
Ron Bochar

MUSIC

Nathan Halpern
Chris Ruggiero

EDITOR

Nanfu Wang

FEATURING

Ye Haiyan
Huang
Shan Lihua
Tang Jitian
Wang Jianfen
Jia Lingmin
Wang Yu



OUT RUN

Philippines/United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 75 minutes
Color, Documentary
in Tagalog w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Sally Jo Fifer

PRODUCER

S. Leo Chiang
Johnny Symons

DIRECTOR

S. Leo Chiang
Johnny Symons

CINEMATOGRAPHY

S. Leo Chiang

SOUND

Johnny Symons
Erik Foreman
Zack Martin

MUSIC

Nathan Halpern
Chris Ruggiero

EDITOR

Tina Nguyen
J. Christian Jensen

FEATURING

Bemz Benedicto
Santy Layno
Bhuta Adelante
Raymond Alikpala
Danton Remoto

IN THIS MOST CONTENTIOUS OF ELECTION YEARS IN THE U.S., the current political climate in the Philippines offers a frightening corollary in its specific cultural and religious contexts. Directors S. Leo Chiang (MR. CAO GOES TO WASHINGTON, Festival 2012; A VILLAGE CALLED VERSAILLES, Festival 2010) and Johnny Symons (BEYOND CONCEPTION, ASK NOT) team up for this highly topical look at the emergence of Ladlad, the first Filipino LGBT political party, and its members' struggles for representation in the national government.

The filmmakers follow key Ladlad members Bemz Benedicto, a LGBT activist, trans woman, and "public face" of the party; Raymond Alikpala, a recently "out" attorney passionate about advocacy; and Danton Remoto, one of the party's founders. OUT RUN follows this grassroots team as they campaign to win three government seats and root the fledgling party into the corridors of power, in the hope that they can effect long-term change. As baklas (Filipino for gay and lesbian people) in a fundamentally Catholic nation, they are all well-acquainted with daily, in-your-face discrimination, in which some are overt but more commonly in the form of microaggressions. Even as recent surveys reveal a growing acceptance of the LGBT community, the Ladlad members face an uphill political battle as conservative candidates like Christian pastor Benny Abante play upon Filipinos' homophobic fears. Abante's brand of political rhetoric convinces particular LGBTQ community members to back his platform under the unfortunate acronym, A.I.D.S. ("Alyansa ng Ikatlong lahi ng Distrito Sais"). When compared to people of color and women who misguidedly support Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump, the comparisons are chilling.

In their quest for political inclusion, the Ladlad agree to a seemingly fatal compromise in the hopes of bettering their election chances. Directors Chiang and Symons highlight these milestones and missteps among the candidates and within the rank-and-file party membership. While the compromises made may seem steep, these intrepid Ladlad activists see them as building blocks towards a more equitable future in Philippine society. – ELAINE DOLALAS, WITH ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY LINDY LEONG



PRECEDED BY:

NBC LIFE STORIES: RINI SAMPATH

(United States, 2016) Dir./Wtr.: Benjamin To

Rini Sampath is the first woman in a decade to be elected Student Body President of the University of Southern California. Tracing the story of her family's immigration to America in search of better opportunities for their children, Sampath recounts the trials of running as a woman of color and Asian American for a campus position traditionally reserved for white males, and expounds a message of engagement and activism for those wishing to become a part of American society.

Digital, 6 mins., color, documentary

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 4:00 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Fil Am Creative
- Asians and Pacific Islanders for LGBTQ Equality
- Fil Am Arts
- GLAAD
- Outfest
- APASA



SIGNS OF REMARKABLE HISTORY

A CALL TO PRAYER FOR REFLECTION ON MODERN ISLAM'S ROLE in higher education characterizes anthropologist and filmmaker Maryam Kashani's observational documentary on the essential role of reading among a cross-section of students, alumni, faculty, and staff at Zaytuna College, the first Muslim liberal arts college in the U.S. Building on her academic research, Kashani uses her camera to capture and communicate the essence of the "mystical component to reading in Islam." Working from the belief that "reading for insight and knowledge" reflects "the roots of Islam," she asks this community group to select passages of texts with which they feel a connection, and to pick a place and time of day they would typically read them. Proceeding along this premise, she takes us on a spiritual road trip within local communities and suburbs in Northern California, from the college's Berkeley campus, San Francisco, Oakland, and to the outskirts of the East Bay with stops in mosques, cultural centers, and individual homes.

At these sites, she films the reader reciting their selected passages in its entirety. The decision to not cut away from the reader or truncate these readings invites the viewer to absorb the full meaning of the words. The intonation and emphasis of the reader on the passage ground us into a kind of realism about their faith in practice. Herein, the medium of film renders the physical embodiment and material reality of the individual in a form of prayer that can't be surpassed. Whether taking in the serenity of the mountainous hills, huddled into the dim corner of one's bedroom, or sitting before the dead in the local cemetery; be it midday or midnight, Kashani depicts each community member in their natural element, fully un-tethered.

Funded by the California Council for the Humanities and various educational research awards, Kashani's latest documentary work investigates how these representatives of a cross-cultural and interfaith higher education curriculum come to be part of a greater social experiment. Ultimately, **SIGNS OF REMARKABLE HISTORY** presents us with accurate, diverse, and contemporary representations of Muslims who grew up American. In the current climate of renewed xenophobia, director Kashani's fieldwork and research help us to understand that "Islam is about the collective imperative to spread peace." – **LINDY LEONG**

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1:30 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Muslim Public Affairs Council
- Tayo Literary Magazine

United States, 2016
D-Cinema, 80 minutes
Color, Documentary

PRODUCER

Maryam Kashani

DIRECTOR

Maryam Kashani

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Maryam Kashani
Haroon Sellars
Martin Aranayod
Sarah Ihmoud

SOUND

Alex Ingilizian

MUSIC

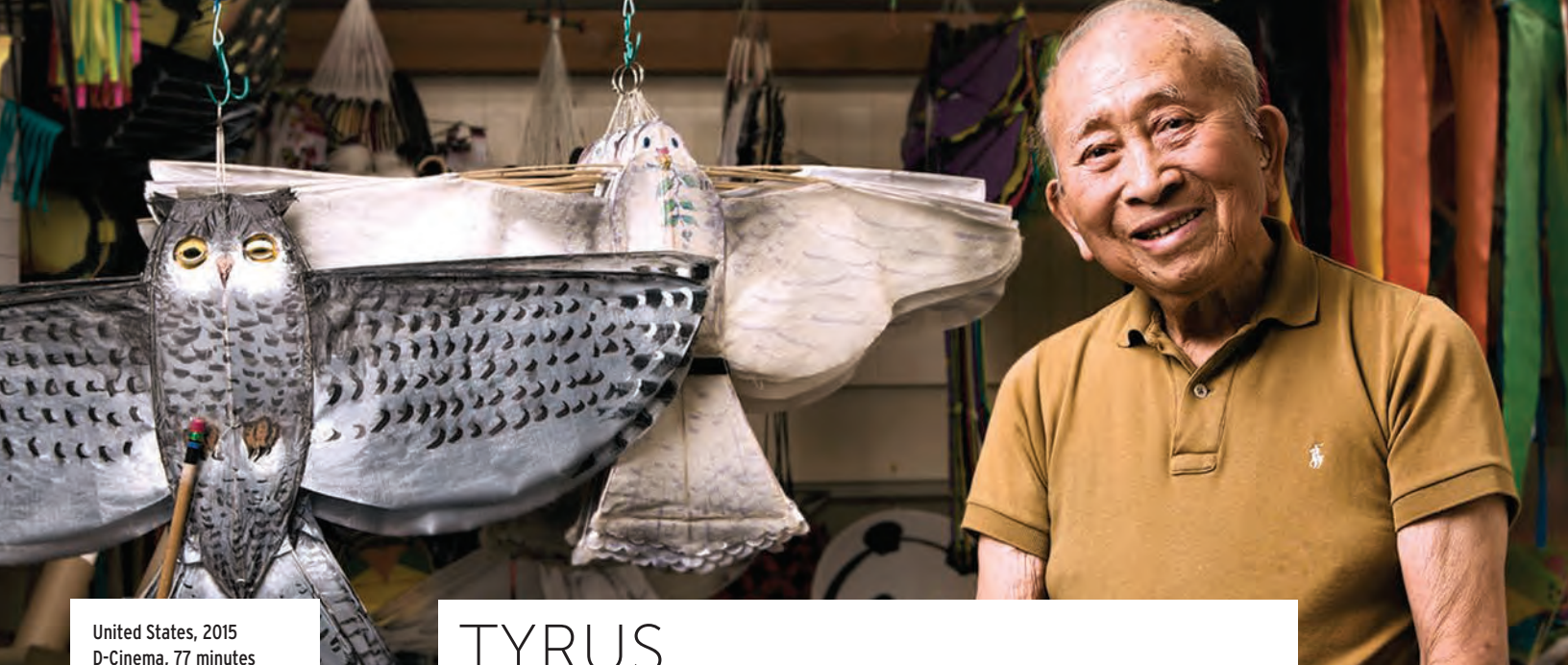
Idris Muhammad

EDITOR

Maryam Kashani

FEATURING

Siddique Abdullah
Hatem Bazian
Chris Cusano
Abbas Darab
Enrique Dussel
Veronica Hernandez
Adil Khan
Ali Kirat
Fatimah Knight
Sumaya Mehai
Yahya Rhodes
Haroon Sellars
Zaid Shakir
Hamza Yusuf



United States, 2015
D-Cinema, 77 minutes
Color and Black & White
Documentary

TYRUS

Documentary Competition selection TYRUS by Pamela Tom is the Film Festival's Centerpiece Presentation. For a complete program description, please see page 65.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Don Hahn
Robert Louie
David W. Louie
Buck Gee

PRODUCER

Pamela Tom
Gwen Wynne
Tamara Khalaf

DIRECTOR

Pamela Tom

WRITER

Pamela Tom

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Shana Hagan

ART DIRECTOR

Susan Bradley

SOUND

Jon Oh
David F. Van Slyke

MUSIC

Derek Baird

EDITOR

Carl Pfirman
Tim Craig
Walt Louie
Angela Park

FEATURING

Tyrus Wong
Lisa See
Ellen Harrington
Sonia Mak
John Canemaker
Gordon T. McClelland
Mark Dean Johnson
Kim Wong
Milton Quon
Kay Fong
Joe Musso

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Chinese American Museum
- Film Independent
- OCA-GLA

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 8:00 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC



INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE

The Film Festival's popular showcase of international Asian feature-length productions continues our long-standing observation of emerging Asian "tigers" from Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam; and offers new, younger perspectives from Japan, Mainland China, and Hong Kong. Bolstered by highly-lauded new works from Pakistan, Thailand, Singapore, and other nations, our International Showcase reflects the mood and tenor of Asian societies during these uncertain times in which we live, and offer Festival Week audiences a glimpse into worlds that are not so much different than our own.



A COPY OF MY MIND

Indonesia/South Korea, 2015
D-Cinema, 116 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Indonesian w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Joko Anwar
Uwie Balfas
Tia Hasibuan
Tae-Sung Jeong
Wendy Lona
Annisa Mulyani

PRODUCER

Uwie Balfas
Tia Hasibuan

DIRECTOR

Joko Anwar

SCREENPLAY

Joko Anwar

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Ical Tanjung
SI

ART DIRECTOR

Windu Arifin

COSTUME DESIGN & MAKE UP

Edo Rahmat

SOUND

Yusuf Patawari
Khikmawan Santosa

MUSIC

Rooftopsound

EDITOR

Arifin Cuunk

STARRING

Tara Basro
Chicco Jerikho
Maera Panigoro
Paul Agusta
Ario Bayu

RENOWNED INDONESIAN DIRECTOR JOKO ANWAR UNRAVELS A SLICE OF LIFE, romantic drama about a young beauty-salon worker and a pirate-DVD enthusiast who float aimlessly in the megalopolis known as Jakarta. They get in over their head, however, when they come into possession of some incriminating evidence of high-level political corruption, and the film soon morphs into a dark thriller filled with sly allusions to Indonesia's political climate.

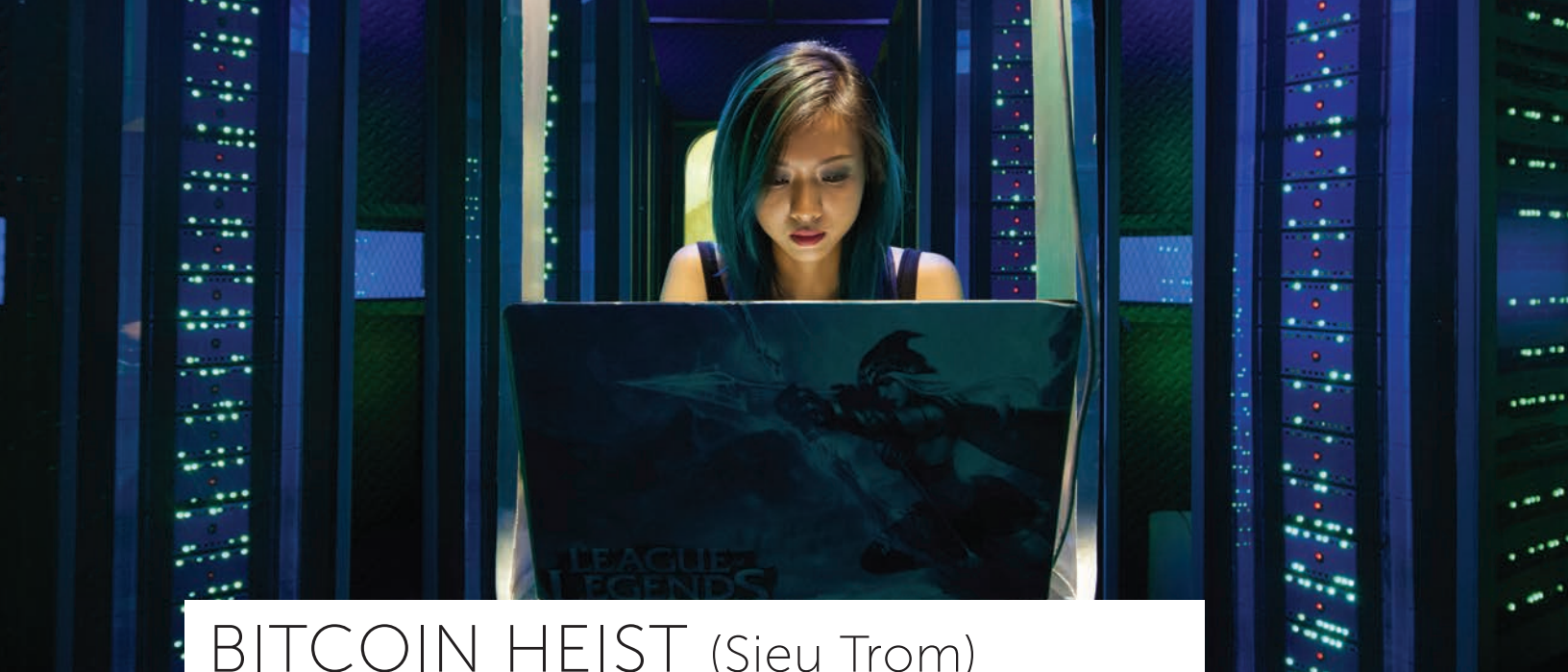
After two years in the city, Sari (Tara Basro) is still working in a bargain basement beauty salon (popping pimples off clients' faces), and is still living in a dorm room, where she regularly eats instant ramen and watches pirated DVDs. It's a ho-hum, solitary and minimalist existence. But it's one of those DVDs that leads her to Alek (Chicco Jerikho); they meet when Sari returns a DVD to the owner of the store she frequents, complaining that Alek's subtitle work is just awful. Coincidentally, Alek is also at the store, dropping off his latest inventory, and gains the upper hand when he catches her trying to steal a DVD as retaliation for the owner's "no refund" policy. He follows her and they strike a conversation that eventually leads into a peculiar love story. However, this new love is put to the test when Sari's shoplifting sensibilities gets her in the middle of a conspiracy. While giving a facial to a high-profile convict in a local penitentiary, Sari snatches a DVD from the convict's collection – only to discover that what she's stolen isn't another one of her beloved monster movies, but evidence of corruption in a presidential campaign. Sari and Alek are then set on a bewildering course soon after the convict figures out what has gone missing from her shelf.

Joko Anwar, whose *JOHNNY'S PROMISE* (2005) announced his arrival as one of Indonesia's most celebrated directors and public personalities (he was once listed in a top ten most influential people on Twitter in the world), delivers a lyrical film that is a hybrid of genres. The film's keen observations flow naturally with the eye of the camera, as it follows these lost souls in search of fleeting moments of joy and love amidst the choking haze of the big city. From the tactile and sensory overloads of honking cars and labyrinthine alleyways, to a one-of-a-kind portrait of lovers on the run, *A COPY OF MY MIND* is the kind of film that sticks with you after you leave the theater. – **ANDERSON LE**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Indonesian Film Festival of LA
- Consulate General of Indonesia in Los Angeles



BITCOIN HEIST (Sieu Trom)

THE LOS ANGELES ASIAN PACIFIC FILM FESTIVAL NURTURES THE CAREERS OF ASIAN AMERICAN FILMMAKERS and, in many instances, serves as a timeline, presenting the works of said filmmakers throughout their career. In the case of Vietnamese American director and UCLA Film School alumnus Ham Tran, we have presented all of his works since his first student film *THE PRESCRIPTION* (Festival 2000) to his Student Academy Award short-listed *THE ANNIVERSARY* (Festival 2003) as well as his first feature film, *JOURNEY FROM THE FALL* (Festival 2006). Like many overseas Vietnamese who returned to the Motherland after Vietnam's economic boom, Tran has worked consistently in directing local commercial films for the burgeoning entertainment industry. Indeed, the Festival has had the pleasure to present his two most recent Vietnam features, *HOW TO FIGHT IN SIX INCH HEELS* (Festival 2014) and *HOLLOW* (Festival 2015).

Nothing short of prolific, Ham returns to the Film Festival with his latest feature effort *BITCOIN HEIST*, a heist action comedy set in the crypto-currency world that is shaking up world markets and paving a new industry in the corners of the dark web. Inspired by classic heist movies as *SNEAKERS*, *OCEAN'S ELEVEN* and most recently, *NOW YOU SEE ME*, *BITCOIN HEIST* opened in Vietnam during the Tet holidays (Lunar New Year) to solid box office results and some of the best reviews for a Vietnamese film this year.

In order to catch Interpol's most wanted hacker who calls himself "The Ghost", special agent DaDa assembles a team of thieves to plan the ultimate heist. There is Jack Magique, a street magician and master pickpocket; Luhan and Linh, a father and daughter grifter duo; Vi, a League of Legends champion, manga fan and expert hacker; and Phuc, a skinny accountant, who works for The Ghost. He has decided to work with the police in exchange for protection against his notorious employer, who we find out is a Korean-German tech industrialist playboy (with ties to the mafia) named Thomas Nam. However, there is more than meets the eye in the world of the Ghost; as any good criminal knows, "there is no honor among thieves." *BITCOIN HEIST* continues director Tran's second phase in his directorial career: to produce and direct commercially viable films and introduce unique genres to Vietnamese cinema. It is an amalgam of art and commerce, and is reminiscent of pre-hallyu wave Korean cinema. It is only a matter of time before Vietnam also has its moment in the international cinema spotlight. — **ANDERSON LE**

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 9:00 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- **8Asians.com**

Vietnam, 2016
D-Cinema, 112 minutes
Color, Narrative,
in Vietnamese w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Nsut Ngoc Hiep
Jayvee Mai The Hiep
Anderson Le

DIRECTOR

Ham Tran

SCREENPLAY

Ham Tran
Scott Nguyen
Anderson Le

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Trang Cong Minh (F.N.P.)
Kevin Pham

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Do Khai An

SOUND

To Hieu
Nguyen Tuong Quan

MUSIC

Tristan Leral

EDITOR

Ham Tran
Than Trong Tuan Anh

STARRING

Nhung Kate
Thành Pham
Petey Majik Nguyen
Suboi
Lam Thanh My
Jayvee Mai The Hiep
Ngô Thanh Vân
Teo Yoo

People's Republic
of China/Singapore/
Thailand, 2015
D-Cinema, 108 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Chinese w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Anthony Chen

PRODUCER
Wenhong Huang
Zhang Jianbin

DIRECTOR
Xin Yukun
Tan Shijie
Sivaroj Kongsakul

SCREENPLAY
Anthony Chen
Xin Yukun, Tan Shijie
Aditya Assarat

CINEMATOGRAPHY
He Shan
Nathanael Carton
Sarun Srisingchai

ART DIRECTOR
Yu Shuyao
Junior Foong
Rasiguet Sookkarn

SOUND
Zhe Wu
Tingli Lim
Maiken H. Hansen

MUSIC
Stuart Earl

EDITOR
Chen Hoping
Joanne Cheong
Sitthisak Kum-Ai

STARRING
Chen Bolin
Yeo Yann Yann
Paul Chun
Jiang Wenli
Tony Yo Yang
Feng Li
Chayanit Chansangavej

DISTANCE

TEAMING UP WITH NOTABLE YOUNG CINEMA TALENTS FROM CHINA, Singapore and Thailand, Anthony Chen (known for his Cannes Caméra d'Or-winning feature ILO ILO) produces a film that explores the idea of alienation and displacement within a globalizing society. Elegantly shot and edited, DISTANCE is composed of three stories that seem discrete in content, and yet are ultimately linked in spirit. Taiwanese actor Chen Bolin stars in all three segments of this ambitious triptych, embodying a generation of Asian millennials whose search for connection and belonging ultimately becomes thwarted in the age of facile travel, migration and escape.

DISTANCE begins with Xin Yukun's segment, "The Son," where Chen plays a businessman who goes on a business trip to China's Guangxi province and becomes intrigued by an older Cantonese-speaking janitor (Paul Chun) at his client's shipping company. The film then continues with "The Lake" (directed by Tan Shijie), where a young Taiwanese father is summoned to Singapore by a prisoner – a childhood friend (Tony Yo Yang) – who is soon to be executed. Completing the anthology is Sivaroj Kongsakul's "The Goodbye," where a young Chinese professor is invited to lecture at a Bangkok university and meets his former professor (Jiang Wenli) after more than a decade.

Simply told and quietly executed, the personal stories in DISTANCE intersect in ways which illuminate not only the effects of globalization and virtual interconnectivity, but also an increasing human need for genuine connection. Depicting a world where people increasingly move about and relate to one another within liminal spaces – airports, hotels and mobile messaging, among others – DISTANCE questions how this modern generation can overcome temporal, historical and physical distances between one another. "We live in a world without borders," says Chen's character in the last segment. "The world has gotten smaller." Nonetheless, these stories between family, friends, colleagues and lovers suggest a challenging narrative: home isn't always where the heart is – and, despite the times, people yearn ever more to find where they belong. – **CHANEL KONG**

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 9:30 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS
• **8Asians.com**



THE DOG

BLENDING DOCUMENTARY AND GUERILLA FILMMAKING TECHNIQUES, THE DOG announces the arrival of precocious twenty-year-old helmer Lam Can-zhao, who tracks a stray dog through the streets of Guangzhou City in his debut feature.

Featuring non-professional actors and photographed in high-contrast black and white digital, THE DOG unfolds through a series of vignettes, recording seemingly banal conversation and pregnant silences of ordinary Chinese. By making the wandering dog the central conceit (though the titular dog disappears from the screen for long stretches), Lam is able to escape the tyranny of conventional storytelling. His film has a loose, improvisational feel that constantly surprises.

The real star here is the young director. While he favors the patient, observational style of early Jia Zhangke, director Lam is not afraid to mix it up. He transitions easily from street scenes captured on hand-held to long, willfully artless static two-shots that depict ordinary Chinese people doing ordinary things – all in strikingly original compositions. In this way, THE DOG embodies the bold, experimental spirit of China's new generation of filmmakers like Liu Jiayin (OXHIDE, OXHIDE II) and Huang Weikai (DISORDER), who aim to capture the real China through a neo-realist aesthetic and an unflinching use of duration. With THE DOG, making its United States bow at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, Lam finds a seat in this bracing new Chinese Cinema movement that takes its cues from Chantal Akerman rather than Zhang Yimou. – **RYAN WU**

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 4:30 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- **NewFilmmakers LA**

Peoples Republic
of China, 2015
D-Cinema, 87 minutes
Black & White, Narrative
in Mandarin w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Lam Can-zhao

DIRECTOR

Lam Can-zhao

SCREENPLAY

Lam Can-zhao

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Lai Jinghua

ART DIRECTOR

Li Hengyi

SOUND

Lai Wanhua
Xian Yeshe

EDITOR

Lam Can-Zhao

STARRING

Zhou Lexin
Zhao Yue
Tian Jinggang
Yang Mingying
Li Hengyi
Kong Weiquan
Yuan Xingyu
Luo Yi
Cao-Cao



DREAM LAND

(ktei so be nt php preahangkear)

Cambodia, 2015
D-Cinema, 90 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Khmer w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Steve Chen

DIRECTOR

Steve Chen

SCREENPLAY

Steve Chen

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Douglas Seok

SOUND

Rin Takada
Ezekiel Honig

MUSIC

Keiichi Sugimoto

EDITOR

J. Samson Lee

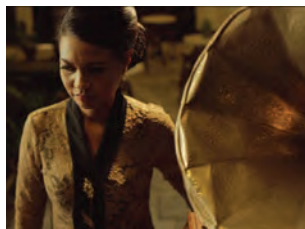
STARRING

Lida Duch
Hak Kim
Sokun Nhem
Sambath Sem
Kanitha Tith

DREAM LAND, the debut of Taiwanese-American filmmaker Steve Chen, offers a rare glimpse into the lives of the fledgling Cambodian bourgeoisie. Da (played by the popular Cambodian model Duch Lida) peddles luxury condos to the newly affluent in the booming capital city of Phnom Penh. A workaholic with a finely tuned instinct for her buyers' desires, Da is seemingly thriving. Surrounded by upscale trappings, she's nonetheless dispirited, consumed by her faltering relationship with model-photographer boyfriend Kun (Sokun Nhem). Only in karaoke haunts does Da perk up, and in one scene, a karaoke music video with sing-along titles articulating her unspoken feelings is played in full. Eventually, she tries to shake off her doldrums, and in the story's more languid second half, Da and a group of friends make way to the seaside resort of Kep. There, in a French colonial villa that survived the devastation wrought by the Khmer Rouge, Da plunges deeper into her obsession with Kun, which is given weight by flashbacks to the romance's halcyon days.

Trained as an architect, Chen has an exquisite eye for framing urban space. In **DREAM LAND**, he masterfully conveys Da's loneliness through master shots of a shadowy brooding figure in an empty penthouse suite. And like the late Edward Yang's **TAIPEI STORY**, director Chen's take on Phnom Penh is populated by the unhappy strivers encased in steel and glass coffins, bearing the toll of rapid modernization. Taking its ironic title from an amusement park representing commercial development on steroids, **DREAM LAND** heralds Phnom Penh's coming of age as it barrels its way towards becoming the next soulless Asian megalopolis.

An outsider, Chen visited Phnom Penh for the first time in 2009. On that trip, he assisted Khmer-French director Davy Chou on his acclaimed documentary on Cambodian cinema, **GOLDEN SLUMBERS** (Festival 2012). Upon revisiting Phnom Penh in 2012, Chen began filming **DREAM LAND**. Although the pressure to tackle the Khmer Rouge and abject poverty – subjects that have dominated films about Cambodia for the past twenty years – must have been strong, Chen maintains an unwavering focus on the problems of Cambodia's striving middle class. That perspective is one that's sadly underserved in contemporary cinema. – **RYAN WU**



PRECEDED BY

IN THE STILL OF THE NIGHT (BILA LARUT MALAM)

(Singapore, 2015) Dir./Scr.: Sanif Olek

In this juxtaposition of P Ramlee's *Nak Dara Rindu* (Young Maidens' Longing) and Zubir Said's *Semoga Bahagia* (May You Achieve Happiness), we hear the individual and the national, romantic doubt and decisive confidence. In this film, three women struggle with an acute sense of loss related to the men in their lives, but find new strength amid the sorrow. D-Cinema, 14 mins., color, narrative, in Malay w/E.S.

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 7:00 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Cambodia Town Film Festival
- Honorary Consulate General of Cambodia in Long Beach, California
- Cambodian Coordinating Council



THE KIDS (Xiao hai)

Taiwan, 2015
D-Cinema, 90 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Mandarin w/E.S.

THE KIDS bypasses the swooning period and plunges straight into hangover phase of young love. The story opens with an odd meet-cute, as the non-descript Bao-li (Wu Chien Ho) spirits his school crush Jia-jia (Wen Chen Ling) away from a bout of violent slut-shaming. In an abrupt flash-forward several years later, the film next finds Bao-li and Jia-jia toiling away at dead-end jobs in Taipei. The morose Jia-jia serves coffee to society ladies at a chic café while carrying on an affair with her middle-age boss, Zhe-wei (played by veteran actor Lawrence Ko). The unsuspecting Bao-li works as a short-order cook. After work, they return together to a squalid apartment, where they raise their infant who is otherwise cared for by Bao-li's hectoring mom (Yang Chi). Toggling between the dire present and the halcyon days of first love, the film slowly ratchets up the stakes. When his mom gambles away his savings and runs up a substantial debt, a desperate Bao-li starts making risky moves to make quick cash. Meanwhile, Jia-jia and the baby ditch Bao-li and move to a flat paid for by Zhe-wei. Still facing bleak prospects, Jia-jia is ultimately presented with a stark decision: relinquish her baby to Zhe-wei's affluent friend, with the promise of a better future for the kid, or continue down the same barren path.

In her feature directorial debut, Sunny Yu orchestrates the lovers' plight with a light hand. Avoiding the temptation to moralize in a "social issue" picture, Yu simply trains her camera on the teens' daily routine – laboring through their McJobs and rearing a baby in cramped quarters – observing them closely without passing judgment. Her heart seems to be with the teen mom Jia-jia, a pale enigma straight out of a Haruki Murakami novel. Instead of scolding her, director Yu carefully lays out the difficult choices faced by a young woman buffeted by financial headwinds, self-serving elders, and a well-meaning husband who is not quite ready for adult life. Two-parts Shunji Iwai to one-part Mike Leigh, **THE KIDS** captures the hopelessness of these lost Taiwanese kids with empathy and grace. – **RYAN WU**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 9:30 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Taiwanese American Professionals

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Arvin Chen

PRODUCER
Chang Chao-Cheng

DIRECTOR
Sunny Yu

SCREENPLAY
Sunny Yu

CINEMATOGRAPHER
Pei Chi-Wei

PRODUCTION DESIGN
Liao Jian-an

ART DIRECTOR
Bobby Wang

COSTUME DESIGN
Emily Hsu

SOUND
Tist Kao

MUSIC
Wen Hsu

EDITOR
Arvin Chen

STARRING
Wu Chien Ho
Wen Chen Ling
Lawrence Ko
Kao Meng Chieh
Hong Chun Chun
Yang Chi
Bi Zhi Gang
Shirley Chien
Yang Jing
May Hong
Amy Tsai
Yu Chieh Yang
Nsu Nai Han
Roger Huang
J.C. Lei
Lin Mu-jung



LOEV

India, 2015
D-Cinema, 89 minutes
Color, Narrative
in English and Hindi w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Arfi Lamba
Katharina Suckale
Jasleen Marwah
Sudhanshu Saria

DIRECTOR

Sudhanshu Saria

SCREENPLAY

Sudhanshu Saria

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Sherri Kauk

ART DIRECTOR

Sweta Gupta

COSTUME DESIGNER

Rohit Chaturvedi

SOUND

Pritam Das

MUSIC

Tony Kakkar

EDITOR

Nitesh Bhatia

STARRING

Shiv Pandit
Dhruv Ganesh
Siddharth Menon

PROTESTS GREETED DEEPA MEHTA'S LESBIAN-THEMED FIRE after it opened in 1998 in India, where same-sex activity remains criminalized as officially “against the order of nature.” No wonder Sudhanshu Saria shot his debut film, the English-language LOEV, in complete secrecy. While its very existence is something of a bold political statement, Saria smartly doesn’t dwell on the novelty of the LGBT content. LOEV simply tells a tender, often hilarious road movie capturing a knotty love affair between two Indians who just happen to be gay.

Arriving in Mumbai for a short business trip, Jai (Shiv Pandit), a handsome Wall Street banker, meets up with his old pal Sahil (Dhruv Ganesh), a young music-producer. The excitable Sahil leaves his volatile boyfriend Alex behind and earnestly plans out the road trip to the canyons of Western Ghats, after Jai proposes to take a short pleasure trip. As these old friends drive and hike the trails, their fascinating dynamic – sometimes easy and jokey, at other times thorny and awkward – emerges. Leaving many things unsaid, the pair engages in a feverish tryst. Outwardly confident but actually confused and struggling with his sexuality, Jai unleashes his frustration on Sahil in a brutal scene. Things come to a head at dinner, between the would-be lovers as well as Alex and his new boy toy, when Sahil – who turns out to be the more self-aware of the two – puts all his cards on the table.

Thoroughly engaging, LOEV is told in an assured, shorthand style that evokes Richard Linklater. Director Saria has a light touch, and he’s not afraid of ambiguity. Eliding standard exposition, he lets his actors play out their complicated relationship through silences and gestures. Pandit wears the alpha dog mask well, and Ganesh is absolutely dynamite – his Sahil is at once brash, funny, insecure, and all too human. Tragically, Ganesh died of tuberculosis at the age 29 shortly after making LOEV, and the film is dedicated to his memory. – **RYAN WU**

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 7:00 PM | Tateuchi Democracy Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

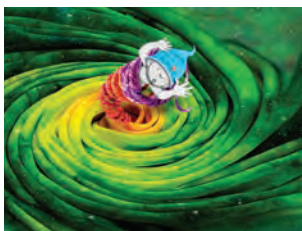
- **Satrang**
- **Outfest**
- **Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles**
- **Los Angeles LGBT Center**



MANANG BIRING

UNSPooling almost entirely in gorgeous black-and-white rotoscope (the animation effect used in *Waking Life* and *A Scanner Darkly*), *Manang Biring*, set in the Philippines, tells the story of the title character (Erlinda Villalobos) who hopes to live long enough to spend Christmas Day with her estranged daughter. The film, divided into monthly chapters, tracks Biring through a series of encounters as she battles stage IV breast cancer. These episodes, alternatively comic, surreal or sad, and sometimes all at once, finds the witty, fiery Biring trading barbs about loose vaginas with her friend Eva (a winning Mailes Kanapi), blissfully clubbing, and tending to her cancer. In one powerful scene, the unflinching camera fixes on Biring as she caresses and cleans the wound on her breast, silently. As her prognosis worsens, Biring and her friends hatch a desperate plan to find an impersonator to attend the Christmas reunion party in her place. Surviving to December, she is faced with attending the party or leaving the task to her impersonator.

Winner of Best Film at the Cinema One Originals Film Festival in Manila, Carl Joseph Papa's second feature is an audacious and mature offering. The rotoscoping simulates the fugue-state that cancer patients sometimes experience, a dissociated reality where time feels like it stands still, while the abstract black-and-white color scheme foregrounds the characters and places Villalobos's charismatic performance in stark relief. Ostensibly a two-hander, *MANANG BIRING* is also surprisingly funny – laced with black humor, slapstick, and bawdy exchanges. In one scene, Manang catches a thief and then offers him a meal. During the conversation, in between ducking objects hurled at him by Biring, Terrence (Alchris Galura) convinces her that they can partner up and sell her belongings in the antiques market. Later, the pair, along with Eva, make like Omar from the *THE WIRE* and swipe drugs from a dealer, except that instead of a shotgun, Biring feigns a collapse. Mixing bathos and comedy with aplomb, *MANANG BIRING* might be the most moving – and most human – rotoscope feature yet. – RYAN WU



PRECEDED BY: FABRIC COSMOS

(South Korea, 2015) Dir./Scr.: Jung Seung-hee

A curious little paper-boy and a bouncy chipmunk live on a small planet in a fabric cosmos. One day, the boy who wonders about the nature of the universe around him sets off on a mysterious adventure as he pulls at a strange ribbon while trying to find the chipmunk. D-Cinema, 11 mins., color, stop-motion animation

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 6:45 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 3

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Search to Involve Pilipino Americans
- Fil Am Creative
- Fil Am Arts

Philippines, 2015
D-Cinema, 88 minutes
Black & White
Rotoscopic Animation
Tagalog w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Ronald Arguelles

DIRECTOR

Carl Joseph Papa

SCREENPLAY

Carl Joseph Papa

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Manuel Abanto
Rap Ramirez

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Matthew Erickson Echague

ART DIRECTOR

Jigs Ancheta
Jyx Guerrero

ANIMATORS

Matthew Erickson Echague
Nico Francisco
Carl Joseph Papa
Carmina Sheilah E. Papa
Eru Petrasanta

SOUND

Andrew Milallos

MUSIC

Dinno Christopher
Parafina

EDITOR

Carl Joseph Papa

STARRING

Erlinda Villalobos
Mailes Kanapi
Alchris Galura
Lance Raymundo
Bea Benedicto
Patrick Sugui
John Carlo Tan
Cherry Pie Picache



Pakistan, 2015
D-Cinema, 119 minutes
Color and Black & White
Narrative, in Urdu w/E.S.

MOTHER (Moor)

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Tahir Moosa
Amin Farooqui

PRODUCER

Nadeem H. Mandivwalla
Nazira Ali

DIRECTOR

Jami Mahmood

SCREENPLAY

Jami Mahmood

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Farhan Hafeez

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Namsa Abbasi
Tahir Mahmood

ART DIRECTOR

Namsa Abbasi
Tahir Mahmood

SOUND

Kashif Ejaz

MUSIC

Strings

EDITOR

Sourath Behan

STARRING

Hameed Sheikh
Samiya Mumtaz
Shaz Khan
Abdul Qadir
Sultan Hussain
Ayaz Samoo
Nayyer Ejaz
Sony Hussain
Abdullah Ghaznavi
Joshindar Chaggar
I.r Omar

PAKISTAN'S OFFICIAL SUBMISSION TO THE ACADEMY AWARDS, Jami Mahmood's gorgeously-shot MOTHER (Moor) is spearheading a new wave in Pakistani cinema. An eventful family drama about generational misunderstandings, MOTHER follows Wahid (Hameed Sheikh), a stationmaster in a declining village in the southwestern Balochistan province, as he tries to resist mounting pressure to sell the abandoned train station to his brother. As Wahid's resolve is tested, his wife Palwasha (Samiya Mumtaz) suddenly dies.

Palwasha's spirit haunts the film. Rushing back from Karachi, her estranged scam-artist son, Ehsaan (Shaz Khan) is looking to profit from the sale of the train station. As Ehsaan and Wahid quarrel, the film flashes back to Wahid's courtship of Palwasha, during an idyllic time when vibrant Balochistan villages were connected by the extensive rail system – a system that was deliberately wrecked by a network of unscrupulous officials and robber barons. These warm, elegiac scenes, intercut with the hard-edge of a bustling Karachi, a city riven by rampant corruption and rapacious capitalism, underscores the transformation of modern Pakistan. MOTHER is ultimately about the costs of progress, chronicling how the profit motive is laying waste to traditional values embodied by Palwasha.

Beautifully acted and mounted, MOTHER is a step forward for Pakistani cinema. Decimated by a 30-year hiatus from film production and a protracted ban on Indian film imports, Pakistan's national cinema profile is re-emerging, and director Jami Mahmood is at the forefront of these efforts. Educated in the U.S., with roots in music video, Mahmood spent eight years bringing MOTHER to the screen. Mahmood's ambitions and skill shine through, as each shot is invested with thoughtfulness and rigor, and the infectious pop score, by Strings, is sheer perfection. With its more patient rhythms and arthouse trappings, MOTHER was an unlikely hit for local audiences weaned on popular Bollywood and Hollywood fare, and it deserves to be seen on the big screen. (Note: the version that will be screened will be 119 minutes, not the 90-odd minute international release cut or the 150-odd minute cut released in Pakistan.) – RYAN WU

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 6:45 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 3

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- **Pakistan Arts Council of the University of Southern California**



PERSONA NON GRATA

(Sugi hara moto tazuneru chi se une)

CHIUNE SEMPO SUGIHARA, also known as the “Japanese Schindler,” was Vice-Consul for Japan in Kaunas, Lithuania starting in 1939 and responsible for tracking the movements of the Germans and Soviets. Sensing the Nazi approach, he helped upwards of 6,000 European Jews flee Lithuania in 1940 by issuing transit visas in defiance of Japan’s official policy. Without Sugihara’s help, most of them would have perished following the Nazi invasion of Lithuania in the summer of 1941.

Directed by Hollywood veteran Cellin Gluck (who directed the Japanese version of *SIDEWAYS*), *PERSONA NON GRATA* provides fuller context to Sugihara’s heroism. We first encounter Sugihara (Toshiaki Karasawa) in his posting in Harbin, Manchuria in 1924, where he was already a thorn in the Japanese government’s side. Caught in the middle of Japanese machinations against the Soviets, Sugihara is seen as a troublemaker when he protests witnessing a massacre of surrendering Soviet soldiers. Eventually assigned to Kaunas in 1939, he hires a Polish intelligence officer, Pesh (Borys Szyc). Together, these unlikely friends gather intelligence amid the Nazis’ relentless march forward. In Kaunas, Sugihara befriends a Jewish family, and during a dinner, two survivors of a brutal Nazi massacre tell their harrowing tale. When Jewish refugees surround the consulate to beg for visas, Sugihara relents, and soon the consulate is a well-oiled factory for visa issuances. Even Sugihara’s German driver, who had spouted anti-Semitic invectives, became a convert to the cause. Sugihara, who had vocally criticized Imperial Japan’s war plans, is ultimately exiled to Romania, where he and family remained until the end of the war.

While his exploits were recounted in Chris Tashima’s 1997 Academy Award-winning short *VISAS AND VIRTUE*, the slickly produced *PERSONA NON GRATA* is only the second full-length feature about Sugihara (following a Japanese made-for-TV film called “Visas for Life”). The film proceeds as a straightforward hagiography, largely avoiding any razzle-dazzle save for a nice scene cross-cutting between an elegant ballroom dance and certain major events during the war. Exceedingly respectful of Sugihara’s legacy, *PERSONA NON GRATA* shows how good deeds can inspire others to do the same. – **RYAN WU**

SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 3:30 PM | Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Red Cross International Services
- Japanese American Cultural & Community Center
- Sustainable Little Tokyo

Japan, 2015
D-Cinema, 139 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Japanese, English, Polish,
Russian, German, Yiddish,
Lithuanian, and Hebrew w/E.S.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Seiji Okuda

PRODUCER

Nobuyuki Iinuma, Kazutoshi Wadakura

DIRECTOR

Cellin Gluck

SCREENPLAY

Tetsuro Kamata, Hiromichi Matsuo

CINEMATOGRAPHER

Garry Waller

PRODUCTION DESIGN

Przemek Kowalski

ART DIRECTOR

Anna Anosowicz, Jacek Czechowski, Włodzimierz Szyrie, Radosław Zielonka

SET DECORATION

Kinga Babczynska, Kazumi Osaka

COSTUME DESIGNER

Kazuko Kurosawa, Doreta Roqueplo

SOUND

Tetsuo Segawa

MUSIC

Naoki Sato

EDITOR

Jim Munro

STARRING

Toshiaki Karasawa, Koyuki, Borys Szyc, Agnieszka Grochowska, Fumiyo Kohinata, Cezary Lukaszewicz, Gaku Hamada, Takashi Tsukamoto, Ken'ichi Takito, Fumiyo Kohinata, Satoshi Nikaido



REACH FOR THE SKY (Gong-bu-un Na-ra)

South Korea/Belgium, 2015
D-Cinema, 91 minutes
Color, Documentary
in Korean w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Ha Si-Nae
Gert Van Berckalaer
Steven Dhoedt

DIRECTOR

Choi Woo-Young
Steven Dhoedt

WRITER

Steven Dhoedt

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Steven Dhoedt

SOUND

Raf Enckels

MUSIC

Regina Lok Yan To

EDITOR

Gert Van Berckalaer

FEATURING

Hyunha Hwang
Minjun Kim
Hyein Jung
Kihoon Kim

YOU THOUGHT THE SATS WERE A BIG DEAL? Imagine a society where the college entrance exam is a national holiday; where companies – even the Korean stock market – open up for business an hour later than usual to reduce traffic jams; where police can provide escorts to take tardy students to their testing centers; where planes are grounded for an hour during a crucial part of the exam; and where high schoolers can enroll in one-year boot camps that separate them from their families, to simply study for said exam, 24/7. Every year, on the 2nd Thursday of November, the entire country of South Korea is put to the test as more than half a million senior high school students take part in the National Exam, better known as “Suneung siheom” in Korean.

Months or even years before the exam takes place, Korean students often live a life of strict routine. On an average day, they rise as early as 6 AM to go to school. When school is finished, they then attend a hagwon, a private academy, where they are primed for the big day for months in a row. Usually the school day comes to an end when they arrive home well after midnight. Suneung isn't a regular high school test. The test will not only determine where the high school seniors will attend university, but ultimately also their status in the Korean hierarchical society. At the most prestigious universities, spaces for freshmen are very limited, with chances of acceptance being less than 1%. Getting into a university with a good reputation is one of the most competitive experiences Korean students will ever experience in their life. Temples and churches are flooded with parents, praying for their students to do well. It is THE initiation for many Korean youths into adulthood.

In the same vein of other documentaries like *SPELLBOUND* and *TOP SPIN* (Festival, 2015), *REACH FOR THE SKY* follows three youths on their year-long journeys to Suneung day. It also eye-openingly shows the “big business” in exam prep as tutors are treated like rock stars and command stadium-filled sales pitches to convince parents to open their pocketbooks and enroll their children in their hagwon. Conveying the hopes, dreams and disappointments of today's South Korean youth, *REACH FOR THE SKY* is a snapshot of how the young nation has become an economic and cultural powerhouse. But, at what cost? – **ANDERSON LE**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 9:30 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 2

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- Korean Film Council USA
- Consulate General of Belgium in Los Angeles



TEN YEARS (Sap nin)

OUTPERFORMING THE LATEST STAR WARS INSTALLMENT at one local cinema's box office, the Hong Kong film *TEN YEARS* earned a state-run media outlet's disparaging remark as a "virus of the mind". When the film won Best Film at the Hong Kong Film Awards, studio heads slammed the Awards voting as having been "hijacked [by] politics over professionalism". The newsworthiness of *TEN YEARS* – an omnibus film made by local film graduates and independent filmmakers – speaks precisely to the somewhat outré dystopia depicted in its five short films, and serve as evidence for the critical pessimism that drives much of the film's alarming premise.

Conceived months before the so-called Umbrella Movement, *TEN YEARS* offers five visions of Hong Kong in 2025. "Extras" is a monochrome satire that depicts mainland officials staging an attack on local candidates to achieve favorable political ends, and the pair of hitmen who practices the hit while weighing the value of their payoff. In the dreamlike "Season of the End," two rebel archeo-preservationists recover and carefully label the ruins of a destroyed home while considering their own turn as specimens for an expiring world. In the foreboding "Dialect," a Cantonese-speaking taxi driver contends with newly imposed language requirements as his failure to speak Putonghua threatens to take away more than his livelihood. "Self-immolator," a pseudo-documentary, investigates the identity and cause of a self-immolation that took place following the death of a leading activist. Finally, in "Local Egg," a shopkeeper braces against wide-ranging censures by budding youth guards – one of whom is his son.

"The recent atmosphere in Hong Kong has become deadeningly stagnant," co-producer Andrew Choi says. "Everyone has been asking: 'How can we change [this]?'". Co-producer Ng Ka-leung (who also directed "Local Egg") felt that it was important to dramatize a dark view: "The film doesn't depict a future we'd like to see. [...] If viewers...don't wish to see such changes in ten years, then it's crucial that we work harder now to make sure it doesn't happen."

While *TEN YEARS* is making today's headlines, it would well serve as a reminder in the future: despite potential flaws, young independent cinema is still most capable of giving voice to the threatened, marginalized and even the simply stagnant. Following the footsteps of works such as Park Kwang-su's *A SINGLE SPARK* (Festival 1996) and paying indirect tribute to the cinema of Ousmane Sembène, *TEN YEARS* offers a cautionary view of society all while giving viewers a chance – and time – to change their world. – **CHANEL KONG**

MONDAY, APRIL 25, 9:30 PM | Downtown Independent

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00 PM | CGV Cinemas | Theater 1

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS

- The Great Company
- Hong Kong Forum, Los Angeles

Hong Kong, 2015
D-Cinema, 104 minutes
Color, Narrative
in Cantonese w/E.S.

PRODUCER

Andrew Choi, Ng Ka-leung

DIRECTOR

Kwok Zune, Wong Fei-pang,
Jevons Au, Chow Kwun-wai,
Ng Ka-leung

SCREENPLAY

Leung Pui-pui, Fean Chung,
Wong Ching, Wong Fei-pang,
Jevons Au, Ho Fung-lun,
Ching Chui-yi, Lulu Yang,
Chow Kwun-wai, Ng Ka-leung

CINEMATOGRAPHY

Mike Mak, Lau Tsz-kin,
Ho Chiu-yuen, Twinsen Ng

ART DIRECTOR

Vincent Cheung,
Ma Wing Yu, Ho Fung Lun,
G Tsu, Charlie Choi

SOUND

Bone Chan, Wong Chun Hoi,
Chan Ying Wai, Thomas Lo

EDITOR

Kwok Zune, Wong Fei-pang,
Samuel Chan, Gigi Li,
Ng Ka-leung

STARRING

Zerisawa Courtney Wu,
Peter Chan, Lau Ho-chi,
Wong Ching, Leung Kin-ping,
Ng Siu-hin, Liu Kai-Chi,
Tanzela Qoser



Japan, 2015
D-Cinema, 123 minutes
Color, Documentary
in English and Japanese
w/E.S.

ZEN AND BONES (Henry Mittwer zen to hone)

PRODUCER
Takayuki Nakamura
Kaizo Hayashi

DIRECTOR
Takayuki Nakamura

CINEMATOGRAPHER
Kensuke Nakazawa

CHARACTER DESIGN
Kyo Machiko

ANIMATORS
Zhu Yantong
Chen Chen

SOUND
Masaya Kuranuki
Nobuyuki Kikuchi
Shigeru Fujibayashi

MUSIC
Yusuke Nakamura & Eddie Ban
Yuichi Kishino
Comoesta Yaegashi
Junko Onishi
Konno Tomoko
Shingo Terasawa
Takeki Muto Ygal

EDITOR
Kazuhiro Shirao

FEATURING
Henry Mittwer
Sachiko Mittwer
Eric Mittwer
Shizuka Mittwer
Gretchen Mittwer
Genshitsu Sen
Susie Matsumoto
Sadao Nakajima
with Eiji Wentz
Shiro Sano
Kimiko Yo
Go Riju
Masatoshi Nagase

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FILM SOMEONE? Director Takayuki Nakamura (YOKOHAMA MARY, 2005) deals with the ethical and aesthetic complexities of documentary filmmaking in *ZEN AND BONES*, a staggering work on the life of nonagenarian Japanese-American Zen Buddhist priest Henry Mittwer. Sprawling between documentary, memory and reimagination, *ZEN AND BONES* uses dramatized scenes, animation, interviews, music, captured footage and archival material to flesh out the life – and death – of a man whose myriad experiences, passions and activities are as kaleidoscopic as they are incredible.

Entwined with major events in 20th century history, Mittwer's storied life began as a child born in 1918 Yokohama. As the youngest son to a Japanese mother and an American father, Mittwer was repeatedly confronted with his dual heritage during the escalation and tumult of World War Two. He was at turns suspected by both Japanese and American authorities as an "enemy alien", and was sent to Japanese American internment camps for over three years.

Nonetheless, the contradictory nature of Mittwer's identity and the vicissitudes of history did not seem to have impeded his zeal for life. A Renaissance man of sorts, Mittwer dabbled in drawing, ceramics and furniture making; when he became a Zen Buddhist monk, Mittwer also excelled as a tea ceremony and ikebana master. Most of all, however, he loved making films. He committed many years in developing and seeking financing for his film project, *RED SHOES*, which was eventually completed and screened years after his death.

Much of Mittwer's eventful life was driven by his relationships with his family, as well as his rapport with friends, colleagues and even the filmmaking team – especially when Nakamura continued to film the ailing 93-year-old during his last days. The film brings forth candid sequences of conversations, scuffles and bits of things left half-said, all which offer a full-bodied portrait of a willful, outspoken, unconventional and passionate person whose passing lends as much significance as his extraordinary life. More than a recounting of a life's milestones, turbulences and achievements, *ZEN AND BONES'* meandering narratives ultimately capture the chaos, tragedy and beauty of human experience. – **CHANEL KONG**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 7:00 PM | Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTERS
• **Asians Doing Everything**



getting real '16

september 27-29
los angeles

ida documentary film conference
registration begins june
documentary.org/getting-real



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FESTIVAL SHORTS PROGRAM

Whether local, regional, or even international, the Film Festival's complement of short film programs celebrates not only the diversity of cinematic voices and perspectives among our Asian Pacific filmmakers, but also offers a glimpse into the future, as many of our past makers of short films have gone on to produce and direct feature-length productions. So score yourselves a ticket, sit in, and pay close attention – we just might be seeing some, if not all, of these fine filmmakers back here one day with first, second or even third features. Clearly, the future is now, and here is where the “up” elevator loads up...

CONNECT/ DISCONNECT

TRT: 98 mins.

Stories of yearning, love, and loss – the basis of how we relate with each other – lie just beyond the usual introspection and political allegory of science fiction. This selection explores how we connect – or disconnect – with people through the lens of technology.

– QUINCY SURASMITH

**MONDAY, APRIL 25
9:15 PM**

Tateuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- Taiwanese American Professionals

STILL BETTER THAN LOVE

(Taiwan/United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Diane Kang**

Couples now use an electronic patch to activate feelings of love; that works “better than the real thing.” When the device fails for Tang and her boyfriend, he breaks up with her on the spot. Unable to return the patch, a store clerk suggests that the two of them give it a go. They ride their love-high into a blissful relationship—until another malfunction seemingly puts an end to the fun.

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.

THE SWEETENING

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Grace Rowe**

Sadie, a lonely and depressed woman, takes part in the beta testing of a virtual reality program and meets a man named Jack in a florist shop. Desperate to find out if he's a real person or just an avatar, Sadie uses the program to discover the truth, which leads to the destruction of her life as she knows it.

Digital, 21 mins., color, narrative

SOCIOPATHS

(Japan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Takeshi Asai**

An android helps a girl in need. With her curiosity piqued, the girl follows the android as it shows kindness to various people. In turn, the girl approaches the android to convey “a certain thing.”

Digital, 6 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.

FROZEN EXPECTATIONS (JOUNETSU NOBARA)

(Japan, 2015) **Dir.: Shinichi Kudo; Scr.: Masatoshi Nagase**

A man goes mad and snatches the body of the woman who was the love of his life. Still reeling from the loss and yearning for her to be by his side, he struggles with the complications of this unconcealable reality; he puts her body in cryopreservation. She remains beautiful behind the wall of ice while he ages with the time. With his imminent death approaching, he's faced with a dilemma that comes with irreversible consequences.

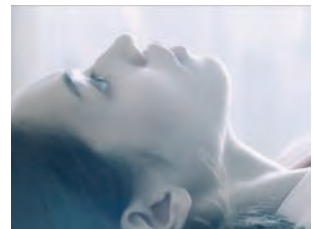
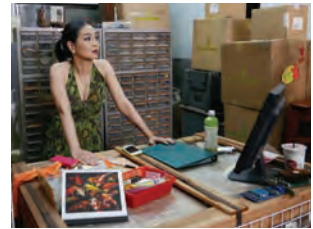
Digital, 26 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.

ASO -ETERNAL GRASSLAND-

(Japan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Hiroshi Iwanaga**

In a world in which worsening pollution threatens the human race, Tatsu has managed to survive alongside his robot companion, Kei. Eventually, the two arrive in oasis-like lands that brim with the sources of life, known as ASO. However, Tatsu and Kei are mysteriously assaulted by flying rocks and are rendered unconscious. However, while his consciousness is fleeting, Tatsu catches a glimpse of an enormous floating crag. When Tatsu regains consciousness, he finds himself in an unknown cave. Standing in front of him is a girl clad in fur skin. The girl's name is Tsuime, and the giant crag is called “the mountain of God”...

Digital, 30 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.





SOPHIE

(Hong Kong/Singapore/United States, 2015) **Dir.: Alexandra Hsu**

SOPHIE is a heart-rending, engrossing and ultimately loving story of a young girl whose grandmother assumes custody after Sophie's mother abandons her child in order to reconcile with her husband.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative, in Cantonese w/E.S.



ALL MEN ARE FLOWERS

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Shirley Kim-Ryu**

Kara, 15, misses an opportunity to ask her first high school crush out before leaving for Korea for summer break. When she returns to her mother's hometown, she encounters her grandfather's spirit who gives her a vision that allows her to forgo traditional expectations.

Digital, 17 mins., color, narrative, in English and Korean w/E.S.



AUTUMN LEAVES

(Islamic Republic of Iran, 2015) **Dir.: Saman Hosseinpour**

A girl's walk to school gets interrupted with ironic results.

Digital, 4 mins., color, narrative, in Kurdish w/E.S.



THE LASTING PERSIMMON (NAGORI GAKI)

(Japan, 2015) **Dir.: Kei Chikaura; Scr.: Kei Chikaura, Yukinari Takamura**

Risaki is coming back home from Yamagata, her wintery countryside, which is 400 km away from Tokyo. There is a seemingly unchanging snowy life for her beloved family and home village – shoveling snow, making pickles, passing bridges covered with snow, and leaving kaki fruits unharvested on its tree.

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.



MIDNIGHT DANCE

(Taiwan, 2015) **Dir.: Lu Mian Mian; Scr.: River Wu**

After being fired from her restaurant job, Qin-Qin, a 30-year-old beer girl, gets drunk and wanders through the darkened lanes of a fish market searching for the meaning of life. She unexpectedly finds what she's looking for when she walks into a late night seafood stand.

Digital, 27 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.



PARACHUTE GIRLS

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Alex Rubens; Scr.: Emily C. Chang**

Essentially abandoned as children by their parents, two estranged sisters are reunited when younger sister, Ellie, crashes older sister Evelyn's dinner party and begins to destroy her suburban illusion of the perfect family.

Digital, 10 mins., color, narrative

DAUGHTERS RULE THE WORLD

TRT: 86 mins.

John Mayer sang it (#daughters). Toni Morrison wrote it. Grace Lee Boggs lived it. For the womyn, her journey is arduous because she is salt of the earth. These cinematic daughters flaunt how they survive and thrive.

– KRISTEN LEE

**TUESDAY, APRIL 26,
9:15 PM**

CGV Cinemas

Theater 3

**COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER**

- **Alliance of Women Directors**
- **Silent River Film Festival**

DIGITAL HISTORIES 2016: LET ME TELL YA' A STORY

TRT: 75 mins.

My approach to leading the 2016 Digital Histories program was that a filmmaker's tools may change, but the storytelling principles stay the same. My goal was not to show the group how to use the latest camera gear, but to sharpen and harness their innate storytelling skills. In my (ahem) not-so-humble opinion, the results are amazing!

— GARY GABISAN

**SUNDAY, APRIL 24
2:00 PM**

Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

Digital Histories is sponsored by grants from Cal Humanities, The Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, Weingart Foundation, and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

**COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER**

- Little Tokyo Historical Society
- Sustainable Little Tokyo

71°10'21"N (LAND OF THE NORTH STAR)

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Frances Ito**

With temperatures in the 40's in the Arctic Zone in the summer, the midnight sun never sets. Journey with me to the North Cape of Norway, the northernmost point in Europe. We will travel via Flam Railway and witness spectacular views of snow-capped fjords and cascading waterfalls – in July.

Digital, 5 mins., color, documentary

NOT JUST GARDENING...

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Cathy Uchida**

"For my children, I have been working from yard to yard for fifteen years."

Following World War II, many Japanese American men turned to gardening to support their young growing families. To most of their wealthy or middle-class customers, they were just gardeners who were employed for their loyalty, work ethic, and artistic flare. Known for their stylized landscapes of manicured lawns, bonsai-like shaped trees, and shrubs, they left an indelible imprint on landscapes across the nation. This is the story of how one generation's struggle and sacrifice for the sake of their children's success influenced geo-political and economic ties between America and Japan.

Digital, 7 mins., color, documentary

FANTASY COME TRUE: PETER LAI'S JAPANESE VILLAGE

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: David Osako**

An eye-popping dreamscape made real by an eccentric Chinese-American Japanese antique collector who constructs a fantasyland venue on the edge of Los Angeles' Little Tokyo and the Arts District. This short film pays a visit to the Japanese Village and its unique and charming proprietor, Peter Lai.

Digital, 9 mins., color, documentary

I AM AN AMERICAN

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Robert Shoji**

Her only crime was being born to Japanese parents in America. Toshiko Shoji Ito discusses some of her Seattle childhood memories and her forced internment to the Minidoka War Relocation Center in Idaho.

Digital, 13 mins., color and black & white, documentary

IT AIN'T HEAVEN, BUT CLOSE 'NUFF

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Michi Tanioka**

From the director: "I never thought we would ever leave our home of over 45 years, but circumstances change, and we found ourselves moving to a retirement home. There is a sacred aura about this place, and I think living here will add years to our lives!"

Digital, 8 mins., color, documentary



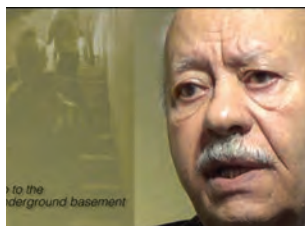


COOK IT YOURSELF

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: N.J. Nakamura**

If you love eating Japanese foods, why not make it yourself? From start to finish, a cooking class at the San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center makes a one-pot meal.

Digital, 4 mins., color, documentary

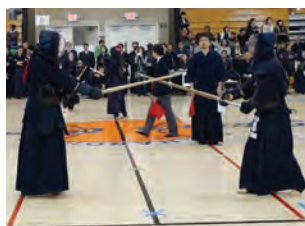


A TIME OF WAR: WEST OF JAPAN, EAST OF IRAN

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Glen Kanemoto**

A story unfolds from within a time of contrary and uncertain memories. At the height of the Iran-Iraq War in the late 1980s, families lived daily in fear of enemy bombings and curfew restrictions. Filled with anticipation, each week, viewers awaited "Oshin," a Japanese TV show set in post-feudal Meiji era Japan. A young girl, Shin ("Oshin") Tanokura survives and persists, emerging an unlikely heroine for Iranians, at this time.

Digital, 7 mins., color, documentary



TORRANCE KENDO DOJO

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: George Takaki**

Discover what goes on in the Torrance Kendo Dojo, a very special place. Is the Torrance Kendo Dojo simply a place where swordsmanship is practiced, or is something else also occurring?

Digital, 5 mins., color, documentary



THE WATTS RIOTS – DAYS OF RAGE, FEAR, AND SURVIVAL

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Gerald Chow**

A coworker's family discusses their experiences during the Watts Riots of 1965.

Digital, 6 mins., color, documentary



WHAT IS LITTLE TOKYO?

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Steve Nagano**

After surviving forced evacuation, eminent domain, redevelopment, and economic downturns, present-day Little Tokyo has become a serene place, a place to drink, a second home. Gentrification, rising rents, and changing demographics continue to change its identity, but will it retain linkages to its past and its central role to many Japanese Americans? A nostalgic past and wishes for its future are presented to stimulate discussion, and encourage involvement to shape this 130-year old community in the midst of changing demographics.

Digital, 7 mins., color, documentary

DIGITAL HISTORIES 2016: LET ME TELL YA' A STORY

FROM VISION TO REEL 2016

TRT: 75 mins. + Performances

Visions are turned into reality by exploring the places we come from, and connecting it to who we are becoming. This year's program takes us to the indigenous community in the Philippines to the struggle of being an undocumented Filipino American. We will march the streets alongside Viet Rainbow of Orange County for New Year, and reclaim a Laotian birth name too difficult for teachers to pronounce. We will challenge stigmas of domestic violence and mental illness in South Asian communities, and find joy in the darkness of Guamanian legends. Join us as we explore the imagination and resiliency of emerging Asian American and Pacific Islander storytellers.

— JUNE KAEWSITH

SATURDAY, APRIL 23
11:30 AM

Tateuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM

PANGANDOY: THE MANOBO FIGHT FOR LAND, EDUCATION, AND THEIR FUTURE

(Philippines, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Hiyasmin Saturay**

The indigenous Talaingod Manobo tribe lives in the Pantaron Range, one of the last remaining untouched forests and sources of water in Mindanao, Philippines. For years, they have resisted mining and logging companies who are attempting to take their land. PANGANDOY ("Aspiration") documents how the Talaingod Manobo tribe are building community-based schools as a part of their resistance against exploitation, government neglect, and land grabbing.

Digital, 20 mins., color, documentary, in Cebuano and Tagalog w/E.S.

TET (NEW YEAR)

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Peterson Pham**

A gay Vietnamese American celebrates Tét with a different outlook from years before.

Digital, 15 mins., color, documentary

CHANTHADETH

(United States, 2015) **Dirs.: Joseph Mills, Chanthadeth Chanthalangsy;**
Wtr.: Chanthadeth Chanthalangsy

Chanthadeth "Lucky" Chanthalangsy grew up hating his name. Though born of Lao and Cambodian parents, he grew up with his Cambodian mother, and he did not have a connection with his Lao father and relatives. This left him with a sense of being incomplete — and his name felt like a burden. Through self-reflections and interviews, Chanthadeth explores his bicultural identity and the meaning of his name, and learns the importance of acknowledging both of his cultural heritages.

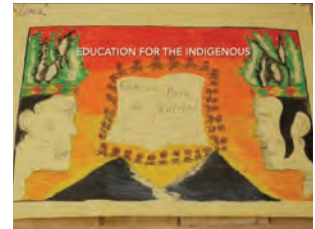
Digital, 12 mins., color, documentary

US

(United States, 2013) **Dir./Wtr.: Seth Ronquillo**

The narrative of today's Dreamer movement has highlighted the experiences of students who desire to become part of American society, but what's been missing are the experiences of the siblings, the parents, and the families of immigrants. US charts the director's family's immigrant narrative as undocumented people in the U.S., and their efforts to make a home in a once-foreign place.

Digital, 11 mins., color, documentary



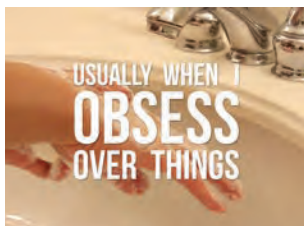


SCARS

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Vivian Ortega; Scr.: SAHARA 2015 Youth Ensemble**

A young woman walks home with her boyfriend when an argument breaks out between them. This PSA was created by a talented group of high school students to help raise awareness of a different kind of domestic abuse.

Digital, 2 mins., color, narrative

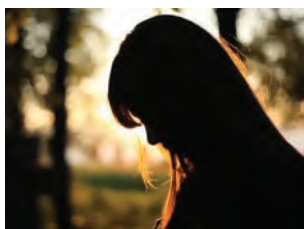


OBSESSED

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Michelle Zhao**

OBSESSED offers both a professional and personal look at Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). Professionals and the public offer views on the disorder, followed by an intense sequence based on Neil Hilborn's slam poem "OCD".

Digital, 5 mins., documentary



DEPRESSION

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Len Killeen**

A poem about a person struggling with depression. Based on a true story.

Digital, 3 mins., color, documentary



DUENDES GONE BAD

(United States, 2016) **Dirs.: FYI Guam Youths; Scr. Alex Munoz, FYI Guam Youths**

When a drunk teen runs over the dingha (twin) of a Duendes, it becomes bloated with vengeful anger. The following day the teen driver and his teammates find themselves bunkered down in a typhoon shelter when suddenly the Duendes launches a brutal attack. Assorted screams of terror and agony escalate, and the Duendes promises to continue the bloody rampage until the killer of his dingha confesses.

Digital, 10 mins., color, narrative

FROM VISION TO REEL 2016

COMMUNITY CO-PRESENTER

- Fil Am Creative
- Center for Pacific Asian Family
- International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines
- Viet Rainbow of Orange County
- Teada Productions
- Educated Men with Meaningful Messages
- ASPIRE-LA
- SAHARA
- Films by Youth Inside
- GLAAD

AS PART OF "FROM VISION TO REEL 2016":

Special performances by local youth artists Alex Siv and Bo Thai:

ALEX SIV is a 2nd generation Cambodian American born in Philadelphia, but raised in Long Beach since 10 months old so is proud to call it his hometown. He has always been surrounded by a group of diverse people, but was a very shy kid until joining Educated Men with Meaningful Messages and other youth empowerment groups during high school. This fueled his passion for poetry, music, and skateboarding. He is committed to his family, friends, and community and is grateful to all those who have shaped who he is today. Alex is currently a student at Poly High School in Long Beach, and recently passed his driving test.

BOONYARIT "BO" DARAPHANT is an undocumented student at UC Irvine where he is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in International Studies. Bo came to the United States from Thailand in 1996 and grew up in Los Angeles. Bo attended High Tech High Los Angeles where he was active in sports and leadership activities, and also received prestigious honors like Philosophy award as well as Creative Writing award. Currently, Bo is a member of ASPIRE LA, the first pan-Asian undocumented youth group in the nation to support Asian undocumented immigrant communities. Bo is also an intern at Korean Resource Center where he organizes Youth Academy and coordinates conventions for Asian American Pacific Islander DACA Collaborative.

GENERATIONS

TRT: 96 mins.

The bonds of our family, whether natured or nurtured, reveal the core of our human soul. These relationships test the limits of our love, the boundaries of our actions, and the depth of our compassion. These films look at humanity through the lens of the people that we love, or should love the most.

— KIRBY PENAFIEL

SUNDAY, APRIL 24
12:30 PM

Tateuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- Little Tokyo
Historical Society

EL CAMINO

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Alexander Lee**

When 16-year-old Jorge's father Diego dies while serving time in a California prison, he and his mother Gabriela must race across the state to claim Diego's body before prison authorities cremate him against their wishes. For Jorge, this is his last chance to say goodbye. For Gabriela, this is Diego's last chance to find redemption in the afterlife.

Digital, 20 mins., color, narrative, in English and Spanish w/ E.S.



THE BOARDWALK

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Ougie Pak**

Jung Soo, an 8-year old Korean American boy, goes on a road trip with his father to Atlantic City, New Jersey.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative, in Korean w/ E.S.



FATA MORGANA

(Peoples Republic of China, 2015) **Dir.: Amelie Wen; Scr.: Jon Keng, Amelie Wen**

A Chinese couple must examine their relationship's fractures – and future – after they arrive in the United States to organize the funeral rites for their only child.

Digital, 21 mins., color, narrative, in English and Mandarin w/E.S.



BA

(Brazil/United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Leandro Tadashi**

Little Bruno's life is turned upside down when his "Bá" (from Bachan, grandma in Japanese) is brought to live in his house.

Digital, 14 mins., color, narrative, in Portuguese w/E.S.



COME, THE LIGHT

(Macao, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Chao Koi-Wang**

Fighting for a lottery ticket, two star-crossed lovers and a big flock of greedy fools experience an eccentric night.

Digital, 28 mins., color, narrative, in Cantonese w/ E.S.





MOTHERLAND

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Dew Napattaloong**

Jen, a young Thai man in his early 20s, learns from his young mother, Marlee, that everything is not what it appears in their family. The morning that she leaves, Jen frustratingly packs his mother's bags for her as she hides in the bathroom refusing to come out. This will be the last time they get to be together before she returns home to Bangkok, Thailand. They leave for the airport and attempt to talk to one another, but conversation comes right back to the elephant in the room...

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative, in Thai w/E.S.



THE DISAPPOINTMENT TOUR

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Erica Liu**

Meg, Hettie and Mei-Ling are three generations of the Huang family who hit the road to drop off Mei-Ling at a cancer treatment center. Forced into a tiny car with all of their emotional baggage, there are moments of tension and conflict, but also levity and connection. When it comes to family, sometimes the people you take most for granted have the greatest capacity to surprise you.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative



JAYA

(India, 2014) **Dir.: Puja Maewal**

Jay and her fellow thieves, Amar and Dev, snatch purses and wallets to survive Mumbai's dangerous street life. Amar is enamored of Jay, but she won't give him the time of day, because she's too afraid to admit her feelings for him. On this sweltering Mumbai morning, a local gangster steals all their earnings, so they are forced to attempt a snatching in Bandra, one of Mumbai's wealthiest neighborhoods. In the middle of their robbery, the sight of a wealthy businessman exiting a bank distracts Jay; he resembles her father who abandoned her long ago.

Digital, 19 mins., color, narrative, in Hindi w/E.S.



DIAN

(Indonesia, 2015) **Dir.: Tamara Shogaolu; Scr.: Georgia Lin Sundling**

Dian is a woman trapped in the mundane expectations of daily life in her traditional Javanese village. Her marriage to Arief has grown cold, and she longs for love and affection. When Dian is unable to bear Arief children, his parents arrange for him to take on a second wife. Desperate, Dian seeks the help of a powerful Shaman in hopes that he can help her get pregnant. The Shaman refuses to help. Left with no options, Dian steals an object powered by dark magic, which ultimately leads to the truth that frees her.

Digital, 19 mins., color, narrative, in Indonesian and Javanese w/E.S.



VENOM THERAPY

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Steven Murashige**

A young family struggles with the debilitating effects of multiple sclerosis to their mother and wife, Clara. After hearing of an experimental "healing" treatment for MS sufferers called "Bee Venom Therapy", they begin administering multiple bee stings to Clara on a daily basis, eventually totaling more than 3,000 stings over 422 grueling days. The story follows the family's journey with this treatment and the unexpected results it produces.

Digital, 18 mins., color, narrative

SONG ON CANVAS

(United States, 2016) **Dir.: Keo Woolford; Scr.: David Chan**

After the death of his father, Thomas Song decides to set aside his paintbrushes to pursue a more corporate lifestyle. A year passes when he receives a call from his sister, Sarah, informing him that his mother has just passed as well. As Thomas returns home to pay his respects, he is awoken in the middle of the night from an unexpected visitor who reminds him the importance of following one's passion.

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative

I GOT YOUR BACK

TRT: 99 mins.

When life bears down on you, it's natural to lean on a trusted friend, a family member, or even a loved one. As this collection of new works clearly spell out, "having one's back" isn't a guarantee of anything. A crisis of conscience, a moment of clarity, even an acknowledgement of utter futility can lead to a mind-altering, life-changing, and even spiritual epiphany.

— ABRAHAM FERRER

MONDAY, APR 25
7:00 PM

Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- NewFilmmakers LA
- Silent River Film Festival

LOVE?

TRT: 84 mins.

What happens after that first blush of romance? If you follow your heart, where will it take you? This program explores the possibilities, featuring directors from across the globe, each with a fresh and powerful point of view. With each film ask yourself, "is this love?"

— ESEEL BORLASA

SATURDAY, APRIL 23
6:30 PM

Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- Outfest
- Center for Pacific Asian Family

GOLDEN GOLDEN

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Erica Cho**

Two broke 20-somethings from San Bernardino arrive in Los Angeles to see a Filipina fortune teller known for her conjoined crystal balls. When Nao and Loop can't afford the fortuneteller's steep fee, her assistant takes pity on them (mistaking the two queer Asians for middle school students.) As they gaze into the magic orbs, each is confronted with their own set of secret desires – enacted within the space of a song.

Digital, 15 mins., color and black & white, experimental narrative

THREE WHEELS

(Cambodia, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Neang Kavich**

On a lonely night, Tuc Tuc driver Nath meets a woman who reminds him of his past. Returning home, he confesses to his wife that he wants to move. This realization ultimately reveals the unspoken realities of their marriage dating from the Khmer Rouge period.

Digital, 20 mins., color, narrative, in Khmer w/E.S.

FISH

(Islamic Republic of Iran, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Saman Hosseinpour**

An old couple lives in an apartment, where the man sleeps while the woman does housework. On the day they've run out of water, the lady wants to change the fishbowl's water, but it slips out of her hand and falls to the ground.

Digital, 4 mins., color, narrative, in Kurdish w/ E.S.

METAMORPHOSIS

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Elaine Xia; Scr.: Feiyang Sun**

May Wong suffers in her life because of family violence. She is resigned to thinking that her life will go on like this until she eventually dies a peaceful death. However, her story takes a turn when her husband dies in an accident involving their daughter. To protect her daughter, May finds a unique way to dispose of the evidence.

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative, in Cantonese w/E.S.

EMPTY SPACES

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Erin Lau**

An introverted widow, Mayumi, continues to carry out her daily tasks as a wife in order to cope with her loss, but once her constructed world starts to crumble she is finally forced to confront the truth of her husband's death.

Digital, 14 mins., color, narrative

ALWAYS IN MIND

(Peoples Republic of China, 2013) **Dir./Scr.: Lin Xujian**

On a hot summer afternoon, a man visits a woman in her apartment. He is clearly familiar with the place. After a drink, the two get in bed together. They make love but she seems forlorn, distant, and sad. This cycle repeats the next day. Are they married or are they just lovers? What is the story between this couple?

Digital, 16 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.





NOODLE DELI

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: David Liu**

From China's Shanxi Province to the San Gabriel Valley region of Los Angeles, chef Jeffrey Zhifeng Yang continues one of the world's most fabled culinary traditions – the art of making noodles. NOODLE DELI captures a day in the life of Yang's restaurant in Temple City, California, home to a group of new immigrants on a united quest for community, identity and the American Dream.

Digital, 14 mins., color, documentary, in Mandarin and Shanxi w/E.S.



MADRAS GOOD OL' MADRAS

(India, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Mukesh Vidyasagar**

To director Mukesh Vidyasagar, Madras was a town where (and when) people had a spark in their eyes, the streets were clean, there were no floods – there was only innocence and a future for the city's young. Yet even before the city's name was changed in 2002 to Chennai, Madras probably died a long time ago. While on a trip back, the director's grandmother gave him an old photo album with a treasure trove of pics of old Madras, some going back to the 1920s.

Digital, 4 mins., color and black & white, documentary



I HATE BIG PHONY

(United States/ South Korea, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Milton Liu**

For all intents and purposes, 2015 was seemingly a banner year for singer/songwriter Bobby Choy (aka Big Phony). His melodic and quiet songs had garnered him a following as he performs at SXSW while also starring in his first feature film. However, returning back to the States from living abroad in South Korea, questions remain: has he made the right decisions in life? Is he his own worst enemy?

Digital, 32 mins., color, documentary

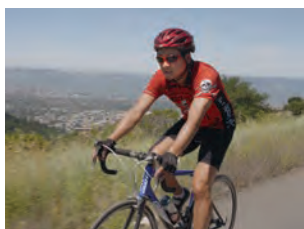


GAYSIANS

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Vicky Du**

Five queer and trans Asian Americans from the New York City area explore their relationships with their family and culture in this patchwork documentary. Features Joanne Hsu, Alok Vaid-Menon, Kevin Su, Suma Reddy and Mashuq Deen.

Digital, 13 mins., color, documentary



BE ABOUT IT

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Christopher Wong**

BE ABOUT IT is the story of two fathers, two families and their battle against a potentially deadly disease impacting the Asian American community. Both Alan and AJ contracted the hepatitis B virus (Hep B) at birth. Alan, a TV news reporter, saw several family members suffer and die from liver complications due to Hep B and now diligently monitors his own health. AJ, a radiology technician and triathlete, lost his father to liver cancer ten years ago. The cause of the cancer – Hep B – was not often discussed in AJ's family. Often stigmatized and misunderstood, Hep B is the most common cause of liver cancer among Asian Americans. Through the lives of Alan and AJ, director Christopher Wong (WHATEVER IT TAKES, Festival 2009) observes how two families cope with the impact of this potentially life-threatening virus.

Digital, 39 mins., documentary

PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS

TRT: 102 mins.

Long a strength of the Film Festival, real-life stories of ordinary people and the extraordinary things they accomplish or overcome makes for a heartening movie-going experience. This meeting of both Festival veterans and newcomers yield moving, contemplative, and even whimsical portraits of people and places that we willingly want to make time to know.

– ABRAHAM FERRER

**FRIDAY, APRIL 22
6:30 PM**

Downtown Independent

**COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER**

- 626 Night Market
- Kollaboration
- Asians and Pacific Islanders for LGBTQ Equality
- Pasadena Playhouse

NEW STUDENT MOVEMENTS, ASIANS ON CAMPUS

TRT: 77 mins.

As the per student public spending for University of California students decreases, the enrollment of "international" undergraduates has increased dramatically. What impact do these large student migrations have on how art and film are taught on public university campuses? What can student films made within a visual art program tell us about a changing "Asia America"? Highlighting recent student work produced in the Department of Visual Arts at UC San Diego, this program explores the unique creative junctures that can happen in such contexts.

— ERICA CHO

SATURDAY, APRIL 23,
9:30 PM

Tateuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

• Pacific Ties

FINGER RUNNING

(United States, 2014) **Dir./Wtr.: Diana Li**

Two women run their fingers through each other's hair.

Digital, 9 mins., color, experimental



CHOHEE PARK

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Chuxin Huo**

A portrait of a Korean American student by her former freshman year roommate.

Digital, 5 mins., color, documentary



STATUS

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Eun Lee**

Rachel came to the United States with her mother when she was 10-years old. STATUS highlights their reasons for staying in the United States, the sacrifices they make in order to do so, and the barriers they continue to face as undocumented Korean immigrants.

Digital, 6 mins., color, documentary

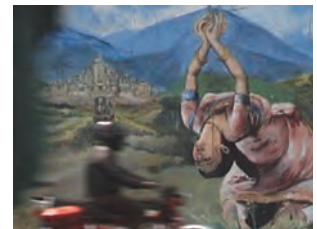


DIFFERENT COLOURFUL DESIGNS

(India/United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Sindhu Thirumalaisamy**

Described as "a beautification exercise", the Bangalore Beautification Project is a city-sponsored effort to prevent posters and advertisements from being pasted on public walls. In 2010, several painters were employed in the painting of a number of prescribed images that were meant to sanctify these walls in a spirit that has come to be valorized as "Swachh Bharat". This film aims to inspect, isolate and blow-up these images, along with the city that etches over them in every way.

Digital, 15 mins., color, experimental documentary





INSIDE THE BATIK

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Tiffany Kurnia**

A personal journey to find a Kebaya turns into a deeper exploration of Indonesian culture and history, when a daughter asks her mother to explain things she doesn't understand.

Digital, 8 mins., color, documentary



EXCERPT: FENCES

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Vincent Hoang**

Images of present-day San Diego are paired with a candid conversation among six Vietnamese American adults who recall their childhood experiences of poverty, parental care, foster care, and sibling solidarity in California's Bay Area.

Digital, 10 mins., color, documentary

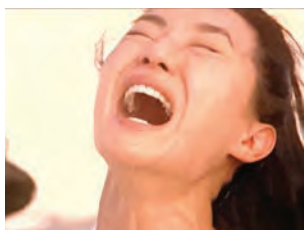


GROWING UP RED

(United States, 2015) **Dirs./Wtrs.: George Fu and Emily Zheng**

A former Chinese opera singer and teacher shares her personal experience during China's Cultural Revolution of the '60s and '70s in a documentary co-directed by two young filmmakers - one, her own grandson.

Digital, 19 mins., color, documentary



TEARS OF ZHANG YIMOU

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Sabrina Wang**

A rhythmically edited collection of shots of women crying in the films of director Zhang Yimou to explore questions of East-West cultural difference and feminist representation.

Digital, 3 mins., color, experimental

NEW STUDENT MOVEMENTS, ASIANS ON CAMPUS

QUIETUS

TRT: 98 mins.

The concept of death is abstract and cerebral. The fear of death, though, is visceral and innate. These films tear into the visceral and drag to the forefront the existential fears of our own mortality. And through their terror, bring about the catharsis for us to face these fears.

— KIRBY PEÑAFIEL

FRIDAY, APRIL 22
9:30 PM

Tateuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- Taiwanese American Professionals

FÜR ELISE

(Taiwan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Albert Ventura**

Ashin meets Elise at a night market. She looks like an innocent girl until she involves him in a mysterious game that consists in catching her. They run through the streets until she leads him to this apartment. Not knowing whose house he is stepping in, Ashin then realizes that the game has gone too far. Elise is not there, and he gets caught by the police.

Digital, 25 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin and Taiwanese w/E.S.



MITSUJU

(Japan/United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Nao Nakazawa**

Mitsu-ju ("secret beast") is a monster that consumes people's secrets. This original story is inspired by Japanese folk stories and set in 16th century Japan. It follows a female shaman Shizume who discovers a dark and violent secret of her feudal lord Tadayoshi. Mitsuju was filmed on location in Nagano, Japan with crews from San Francisco Bay Area and Japan.

Digital, 25 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.



FAMILY BONDS

(Japan, 2015) **Dir.: Takashi Yamamoto; Scr.: Saki Matsumoto, Takashi Yamamoto**

Shinji and Yuko were a happy couple living in the suburbs until an unspeakable tragedy caused them to grow apart. With this tragedy's first anniversary approaching, the distance between them continues to grow. How will these two face the reality of this tragedy? Only together can they find the answer.

Digital, 20 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.



THE GHOST

(Taiwan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Chang-Hao Hsu**

Nian-Chia serves as a night guard for a neighborhood. For several days in a row, Nian-Chia finds an old lady visiting her son in the midnight. One day, he hears from the daytime guard that the old lady has already passed away. This night, same time as usual, the old lady pays a visit to Nian-Chia's community again...

Digital, 28 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.





THE LOBSTER KID

(Taiwan, 2014) **Dir./Scr.: Joseph Chen-Chieh Hsu**

Siang, a 13-year-old orphan girl, works for a gang as a street vendor. Her dream is to move to pursue a better life. When she attempts to get secretly on-board a train to Taitung, her boss disposes of her train ticket. When Siang meets a street monk, who begs for money on streets, she becomes intrigued by his silent kindness. To fulfill her duty as a street vendor, Siang joins the monk traveling door to door in a fun and unexpected journey.

Digital, 20 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.



ROBO SAINTS

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Peter Wonsuk Jin**

Best friends Joy and Chris are cosplayers who dress up as characters from their favorite anime show "Robo Saints." When Chris' girlfriend Kaylee – who cosplays as the character Yuna – dumps him, he falls into a deep depression. Joy feels bad for Chris, having developed feelings beyond mere friendship for him. When Kaylee drops off her Yuna costume with Joy, he decides to dress up as Yuna and confess his feelings to Chris.

Digital, 12 mins., color, narrative



THE CHICKEN OF WUZUH

(South Korea, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Sungbin Byun**

Wuzuh, a girl with Down syndrome, has a secret crush on her teacher, who gives her a hair clip as a present. When one of her classmates receives a similar hair clip from him, Wuzuh brings a chicken to the classroom to avenge her feelings of betrayal.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative, in Korean w/E.S.



PAPER TIGER

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Chu-Jen Wu**

After witnessing a scene of violence en route to his performance, master monk Shi Wen Long is deeply troubled by his inability of upholding kung fu monks' honor code of defending those in need. Indeed, who needs a vigilante martial arts hero in this day and age? Now rendered as nothing but a show pony on stage, the Monk struggles to defend the honor of his tradition against unruly gawkers while fighting against his own inner shame.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative, in English and Chinese w/E.S.



FOR OFELIA,

(United States, 2014) **Dir./Scr.: Christopher de las Alas**

In 1960's Philippines, Peter, a rebellious young boy, struggles against his mother's obsession with dressing him as a girl so that he may gain acceptance from the village and the affections of the prettiest girl in school.

Digital, 15 mins., color, narrative, in Tagalog w/E.S.



OLD SEAFARER

(Taiwan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Cheng Yu-chieh**

In this short film effort by the director of Festival 2007 selection DO OVER, young lovers are lost trying to identify themselves with contemporary Taiwanese culture while being the new generation of the Dawu tribe, the original indigenous people of Taiwan.

Digital, 21 mins., color, narrative, in Mandarin w/E.S.

SEE U SEE ME

TRT: 94 mins.

The sense of self is a dynamic journey. Sometimes one can be distracted trying to manage perceptions of others, rather than focusing on their own personal growth. Watch how these characters gracefully stand tall, leaning on inner strength and integrity.

– ESEEL BORLASA

**TUESDAY, APRIL 26
9:30 PM**

**Tataeuchi Democracy
Forum @ JANM**

**COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER**

- **Fil Am Creative**
- **Fil Am Arts**
- **Search to Involve
Pilipino Americans**

VC DIGITAL POSSE, VER. 2016

TRT: 57 mins.

Stories of intriguing personalities, dubious connections, and one whopper of a fairy tale are on tap as Visual Communications and UCLA's Center for Ethnocommunications reconvene for the fourteenth edition of our popular showcase of emerging and "on the verge" cinematic artists. Inventive and resourceful in equal measure, the "VC Digital Posse" is once again poised to set the stage for exciting things to come, so please make it out, and do stay tuned...

— ABRAHAM FERRER

SUNDAY, APRIL 24
8:00 PM

Aratani Theatre @ JACCC

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

- UCLA Center for EthnoCommunications
- Tuesday Night Project

BEHIND THE MASK: THE STORY OF NATHAN PHUONG

(United States, 2015) **Dirs./Wtrs.: Kristy Ishii, Andy Ta, Tony Zhang**

High school student Nathan Phuong comes home sore every day from his late night lion dance practice with The Immortals. But his hard work and dedication pay off as he learns about his culture, finds community and makes lasting friendships.

Digital, 7 mins., color, documentary

MASTER OF THE SKY: THE LIFE AND ART OF SAM KOJI

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Sumiko Braun**

With his epic mythological storytelling, distinct mixed Japanese American aesthetic, and unique blend of live action tabletop puppetry and CGI animation, Sam Koji Hale leads a new generation of puppeteers who embrace film as he brings to fruition his vision and first feature film, YAMASONG: MARCH OF THE HOLLOWS.

Digital, 10 mins., color, documentary

FAMILY PORTRAIT

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Wtr.: Tulica Singh**

After her husband's death, the director's Grandmother was very strict with her children – so much so it caused a divide between them. But when this control caused her son to push her away during his dying moments, she begins to let go of her grip. In her final chapter of life, she shares the darkest moments in a journal to her daughter and opens a door that had been closed long ago.

Digital, 5 mins., color, documentary

HEART OF MIND

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Sumiko Braun**

En route to a momentous dinner in downtown L.A., lovebirds Haunani Gordon and William Ellis are held at gunpoint by a deranged madman. What transpires blurs the line between innocent impulse and intimate betrayal, proving to be the ultimate test of love, trust, and expectation.

Digital, 5 mins., color, narrative





HOME IS WHERE THE SUNSETS

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Kayla Tong**

Hong Kong-born Alison's life and identity turn awry when her family visits her in L.A. for the first time. Stress grows in her as they continue to wreak havoc. She is forced to come to terms with their differences.

Digital, 5 mins., color, narrative



HAND FART

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Stanley Wong**

A young man goes to the doctor for a checkup and discovers he has a life-threatening ailment from making fart sounds with his hands.

Digital, 5 mins., color, experimental narrative



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CLAIRE

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Conrad Lihilihi**

A broken couple pushes the limits of their humanity for the preservation of tradition and family.

Digital, 5 mins., color, narrative



NUOC

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Quyen Nguyen-Le**

A Vietnamese American teen attempts to piece together and understand their mother's experience as a Vietnam War refugee. The journey pulls us into a fantastical series of iconic historical photographs and images, ultimately highlighting the complexity of fully understanding others' experiences – and opens up possibilities for building relationships based on presence and co-existence.

Digital, 5 mins., color, experimental



SAMEER AND THE GIANT SAMOSA

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Faroukh Virani**

In this dark comedy from the director of VIMANA (Festival 2014), a newlywed Indian couple's diverging views on marriage and tradition give way to a surreal turn of events that reveals the groom's true, hidden appetites.

Digital, 5 mins., color, narrative

VC
DIGITAL
POSSE,
VER. 2016

THE UNREADY HERO

TRT: 95 mins

A nostalgic throwback to weekend action television, this lineup brings together exciting stories of unready heroes. Join them as they embark on journeys armed with bold visual direction, a flair for homage, and just enough determination to take on their challenges...even if they've yet to get their lives together.

— QUINCY SURASMITH

TUESDAY, APRIL 26
7:00 PM

Downtown Independent

COMMUNITY
CO-PRESENTER

• Artists at Play

LOVE, WORK & OTHER DEMONS

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Gorby Shih; Scr.: Sam Boyer, Gorby Shih**

Stubborn Chinese waitress by day, kick-ass demon hunter by night, tomboy Joanna has never given much thought to being what her traditional father, Harry, calls a "girly girl"—until she meets Ryan. With a little help from her undead ancestors, hilarity ensues as Joanna battles lipstick, heels, and demons in this coming-of-identity story.

Digital, 20 mins., color, narrative



GENGHIS KHAN CONQUERS THE MOON

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Kerry Yang; Scr.: Aaron Bush, Steve Emmons, Kerry Yang**

In Genghis Khan's last days, an encounter with a Wizard sends him to the Moon. Just when the Mediaeval anti-hero thinks he's made his greatest conquest, he finds himself on a spiritual quest, realizing the absurd clash between one man's need and the silence of the Universe.

Digital, 17 mins., color, narrative



HIMIKO THE GODSLAYER VS. THE DAEMON LEGION OF AZURE DRAGONS

(Japan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Hikaru Tsukuda**

In an ancient capital, Kyoto! The guardian Gods who protect the four quarters suddenly revolt against human beings! To save the world, a Godslayer, Kaguraoka Himiko, takes action. She beats three of them and obtains their power. Eventually, Himiko Kaguraoka sets foot in these woods, home to the strongest guardians, the Azure Dragons.

Digital, 6 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.



HERO SHOW

(Japan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Takumi Kondo**

At the sparsely-attended Kiryugaoka Amusement Park, a cosplay performer continues to perform his hero show at a very low price. Hoping to increase the popularity of this amusement park, our hero and the amusement park employees plan an event around a decisive battle with an evil secret society seeking world domination.

Digital, 27 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.

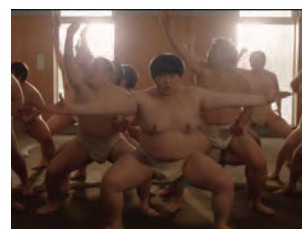


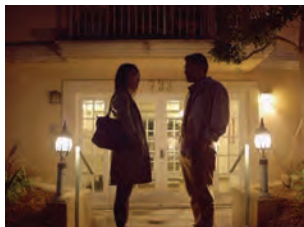
SUMO ROAD ~ THE MUSICAL~

(Japan, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Ken Ochiai**

Kure, an overweight exchange student from Taiwan, has a hard time fitting in at the Japanese university. Bullied by others because of his weight, he decides to join the sumo team, where he is welcomed with open arms. But Kure's spot on the team is put in jeopardy when he is caught trying to cheat. To regain his place on the team and redeem his name, he must face off against his mentor and the team leader. Along the way, Kure discovers what it truly means to be a sumo and to embrace the sumo road - ultimately finding a place where he truly belongs.

Digital, 25 mins., color, narrative, in Japanese w/E.S.





SOUNDS WE HAVE NO LETTERS FOR

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Bernard Badion**

As a blind date goes wrong, a man (Eugene Cordero) and a woman (Julia Cho) agree to end the night early, but struggle to leave the conversation when they connect on a 'dystopian view of dating' over boba.

Digital, 12 mins., color, narrative



BRITNEY-HOLICS ANONYMOUS: A SPEAR-ITUAL AWAKENING

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Scr.: Jerell Rosales**

Freddie gets a "Spear-itual" awakening when he joins an anonymous support group for closeted Britney Spears fans.

Digital, 10 mins., color, narrative

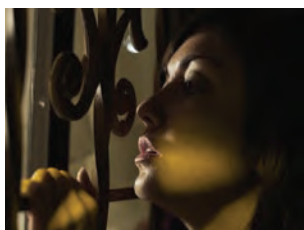


MOVE OUT NOTICE

(Singapore, 2015) **Dir.: Leon Cheo; Scr.: Chen Yingxuan**

Wei, 21, has not clashed with her real estate agent mother for over a year since they started a new system - "talking" to each other solely through cheerful-looking notes. However, when Wei clumsily announces that she is moving out to live independently, her obstinate mother declares war.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative, in English and Chinese w/E.S.



NIGHT OUT

(United States, 2015) **Dir.: Jeff Man; Scr.: Jeff Man, Shanon Serikaku**

After a long night of partying, a series of events on their way home leaves Jessie locked outside of her friend Kelly's apartment on a cold night in an unfamiliar neighborhood alone, cold and forgotten.

Digital, 13 mins., color, narrative



JOHN HUGHES RUINED MY LIFE

(United States, 2016) **Dir./Scr.: Milton Liu**

Based on a feature script by director Milton Liu (a "Best Screenplay" winner of the Tribeca All Access program), JOHN HUGHES RUINED MY LIFE is about Sam, who lives her life idolizing the romantic ideal of John Hughes' movies (SIXTEEN CANDLES, PRETTY IN PINK, SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL, FERRIS BUELLER - and even HOME ALONE to some extent.) However, her rose-colored glasses begin to come off as reality (and her roommate) steer her to the conclusion - John Hughes really did ruin her life.

Digital, 34 mins., color, narrative

WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE THIS?

TRT: 82 mins.

Sometimes, the comings and goings of our friends and significant "others" are simply out of our control - the people we date, the people we love, even the people we party with. We can't even control what happens in chance encounters and blind dates. Meet five forlorn souls, each negotiating their own challenges and random opportunities. For each, let's hope for happy endings...

- ABRAHAM FERRER

**MONDAY, APRIL 25
9:30 PM**

—
CGV Cinemas

—
Theater 2

WHAT'S IN A NAME

TRT: 107 mins.

Naming is historical and cultural. It is carefully prayed over and researched. However, it's not etched in stone. Rather a name evolves from experiences. Discover these fictional and documentary stories of people articulating their fate.

— KRISTEN LEE

MONDAY, APRIL 25
9:15 PM

CGV Cinemas

Theater 3

A PLACE CALLED HOME

(Peoples Republic of China, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Xiaoxiao Chen**

A PLACE CALLED HOME depicts the daily lives of the 70 abandoned children, ages 1 month to 18 years old, residing at Zhang Jiakou Welfare Center in China. Left as infants by poor parents, these children, many severely disabled or mentally challenged, manage to overcome individual limitations and exhibit surprisingly active and beautiful minds. This documentary takes an unflinching look into an institutional world where heartbreak and tragedy, though routine, co-exist with the simplest, smallest, and most unexpected everyday triumphs.

Digital, 29 mins., color, documentary, in Mandarin w/E.S.

FROM TONGA

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Huay-Bing Law**

Euless, TX is home to one of the largest Tongan populations in the United States. As a result, the Polynesian presence heavily influences the city's high school football team.

Digital, 13 mins., black & white, documentary

BRUCE TAKES DRAGON TOWN

(United States, 2015) **Dir./Wtr.: Emily Chao**

In this film, the director offers a meditation on the experience of displacement as a form of historical disembodiment. Lost souls are immortalized through cinema.

Digital, 15 mins., color, experimental documentary

-IN-WAITING

(United States, 2014) **Dir./Wtr.: Atsuko Okatsuka**

-IN-WAITING tells the story of a Taiwanese mother and daughter whose dynamic resemble comedic duos such as Laurel and Hardy. As they go through their day to day activities by going to doctors visits, hair appointments and sharing meals, it becomes apparent that the youngest and third member of the family, the documentarian, will one day have to replace one of the two as the caretaker in-waiting.

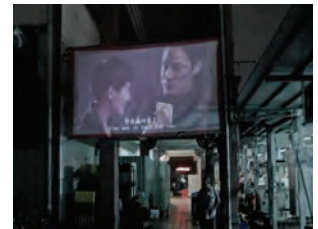
Digital, 23 mins., color, documentary

FALL SEVEN TIMES, GET UP EIGHT: THE JAPANESE WAR BRIDES

(United States, 2015) **Dirs./Wtrs.: Karen Kasmauski, Kathryn Tolbert, Lucy Craft**

A short film about three Japanese women who emigrated to the U.S. in the 1950s as war brides of American men. Their recollections are further refracted through the eyes of their Japanese American daughters – a photojournalist, a newspaper editor, and a freelance journalist. Personal photographs and visuals from U.S. archival sources help bring to life this fascinating episode in U.S. history.

Digital, 27 mins., color, documentary



"psst...meet me in the alley..."

"Yo...meet me in the lounge..."

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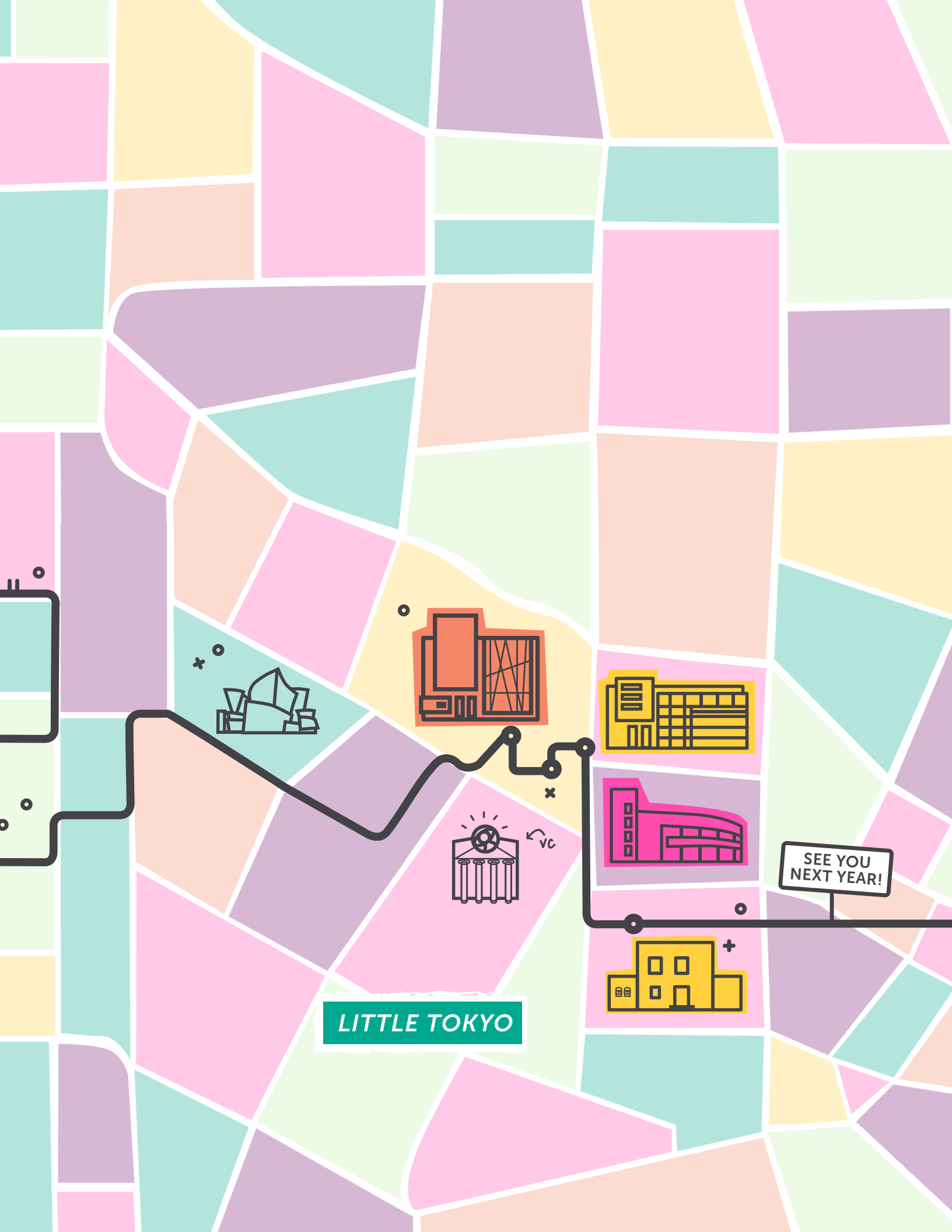
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