PAST // FORWARD is Visual Communications’ series of signature events to celebrate the organization’s upcoming 50th anniversary. Our goal is to celebrate VC’s past, present, and future by (re)connecting with people and communities who made great things happen.

Founded in 1970 with the understanding that media and the arts are powerful forms of storytelling, Visual Communications has dedicated five decades to creating cross cultural connections between peoples and generations through the media arts. While Visual Communications’ mission and programming has shifted to meet the changing needs of our diverse communities, the organization has always had a constant element — a group of people passionate about social and cultural acceptance through the arts.

PAST // FORWARD recognizes and appreciates the people behind the charge for change (builders + connectors + mobilizers + believers + storytellers) and what we have all accomplished together.

Saturday, May 12, 2018
USC TOWN & GOWN BALLROOM
665 Exposition Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90089
Welcome to PAST//FORWARD. Today, we celebrate our builders, artists, and storytellers. And we express gratitude to our Visual Communications (VC) members and donors, our community partners, and our believers who have been with us for five decades.

Constructing a singular narrative of fifty years of VC presents a challenge. From our early days as an artist collective, to becoming a media arts center, and to our current state of connecting our communities, our story arc splits and projects towards different directions and tangents. Reflecting our own lives, we have commemorated several milestones, while engaged in struggles and losses. Regardless of however complex VC’s story is, it can be simply stated that at any given point in time, there’s always a group of people coming together to make something great happen.

I am grateful for VC’s past that includes hundreds of cultural workers and artists, while appreciative of our current staff and advocates, who tirelessly work towards creating our ideal communities. And as we move forward to another fifty years of VC, we continue our core spirit of creating cross cultural connections between peoples and generations.

I am humbled to be the steward of an organization that is central to all our lives. Thank you for work and actions that have become our own stories and memories.

Francis Cullado
Executive Director
Welcome to our Past // Forward Gala!

My grandfather immigrated to Portland, Oregon from Japan in 1900. During World War II, my mother and her family was interned at Minidoka while her brother fought Germans in Europe.

I became involved with the LAAPFF when a film I wrote and produced was accepted into the Festival and as a fledgling filmmaker; their support and guidance was invaluable. After five years on the Board of Visual Communications, I currently serve as President of the Board.

2015’s C3 conference was the first time the various guilds with Diversity initiatives, SAG-AFTRA, DGA, WGA, MPEG (with support from Sony Pictures Entertainment and the Motion Pictures Sound Editors) came together. And what a conference it was! Two producers from ABC’s FRESH OFF THE BOAT revealed they had originally met at one of the C3 conferences! Now that is success!

Up until 2016 no Asian or Asian American Festival in the world was an Academy Qualifying Festival for short films. As an Academy member, I knew a recognition like this could drive quality content to the Festival while sending a signal to the entertainment community that our stories are integral to the diverse fabric that makes up this Country. So with the help of some intrepid Academy and Board members, we got it passed. We increased VC’s revenue while providing an important springboard for our content creators.

So there looks to be a sea change, finally. Taken to task for #OscarsSoWhite by Asian, Black and Latino leaders there is a growing awareness within the Industry that inclusion is a necessity; and whitewashing and stereotypes are no longer acceptable. And that is progress! I sometimes marvel at what my grandfather would say.

But we can’t stop here. There is much work yet to be done and I am happy to report Visual Communications is still keeping up the good fight and the charge for change.

Jodi Long
President, Board of Directors
Our mission is to develop and support the voices of Asian American and Pacific Islander filmmakers and media artists who empower communities and challenge perspectives. Visual Communications (VC) is the first non-profit organization in the nation dedicated to the honest and accurate portrayals of the Asian Pacific American peoples, communities, and heritage through the media arts. VC was created with the understanding that media and the arts are important vehicles to organize and empower communities, build connections between peoples and generations through the development of AAPI film, video, and media. The organization 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.

Founded in 1970, VC has been a pioneer in the development of Asian Pacific American film, video, and media. VC was founded by Duane Kubo, Robert Nakamura, Alan Ohashi, and Eddie Wong. Along with a core group of artists, filmmakers, photographers, and educators, VC’s founders began searching for visual resources to build a greater consciousness of Asian Pacific history in America. Fueled by the burgeoning Civil Rights and Anti-War movements, they set out creating learning kits, photographing community events, audiotaping stories, and collecting historical images of Asian American lives.

In 1980, VC premiered HITO HATA: RAISE THE BANNER, the first independently-produced full length narrative feature principally created by and starring Asian Americans. This landmark film was a building of a community-in-progress, involving artists, professional media personnel, scholars, community organizations, and countless number of individuals and community businesses in the making of the film. Beginning in the 1980s, VC transitioned from a film production collective to a full-service media arts center. While VC still produced
films in this period, the organization also provided support services for Asian American artists and filmmakers, workshops and trainings for the community, and more presentation opportunities for independent media in Los Angeles.

Throughout our history, VC programs have evolved to meet the changing needs of a diverse Asian Pacific Community of over 25 different languages, cultures, and nationalities. The organization has created award winning productions, nurtured and given voice to our youth, promoted new artistic talent, presented new cinema, and preserved our visual history. Today, VC continues to be a conduit for the Asian Pacific global communities to the American public through its numerous arts programs.

Our programming includes: the annual Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival and year-round screenings and exhibitions; the Armed With a Camera Fellowship for Emerging Media Artists; the Digital Histories media production and digital storytelling program for senior citizens; a Film Development Fund for independent filmmakers; and C3: The Conference for Creative Content. VC 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 tell their unique stories.
PAST//FORWARD GALA: COMING HOME
A VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS FUNDRAISER

Entertainment provided by:
The LosAKAtombros Trio
DJ Icy Ice

A Film by Daniel Hsia
HOW TO DO THE ASIAN SQUAT

Welcome from
Amy Okuda & Parvesh Cheena

VC50 Trailer

“Cornerstone Award”
presented by Duane Kubo

Linda Mabalot Video

“Influencer Award”
presented by Tim Chiou

Armed with a Camera Film
LOST & FOUND

Visual Communications Board President Remarks
Jodi Long

Visual Communications Video

Past//Forward Award
presented by Tadashi Nakamura

Special Message
Renee Tajima-Peña, Tamlyn Tomita, Dom Magwili

Armed with a Camera Film
MY NAME IS ASIROH

Closing Remarks by Executive Director
Francis Cullado
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Actress & Filmmaker

Phil Yu
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Janice D. Tanaka
Visual Communications / Armed With a Camera
Visual Communications / Digital Histories
Visual Communications Founders
Phil Yu/Angry Asian Man
Amy Okuda is an actress based in Los Angeles who got her start portraying Tinkerballa in the web series THE GUILD, created by Felicia Day. In 2017, she starred in the Netflix comedy series ATYPICAL, and she will be reprising her role as Julia Sasaki in the upcoming second season. Her filmography also includes appearances on HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER, THE GOOD PLACE, and MacGYVER. On her spare time she’s a absolute homebody and enjoys binging shows on her couch with her dog Lola.

Parvesh Cheena is from Naperville, Illinois but lives in L.A. He is currently recurring on CRAZY EX-GIRLFRIEND on the CW. Parv is a local L.A. board member for SAG-AFTRA. Thank you for supporting Visual Communications.
DOUG AIHARA

Doug Aihara is a third generation Japanese American, born and raised in East Los Angeles and Montebello, where he attended Montebello High School. A proud UCLA alum, Doug is currently the president of Aihara & Associates Insurance Services, a provider that services Little Tokyo as well as the greater Los Angeles and Orange Counties areas. Married for over 30 years to Chris Aihara, he is the father of four kids and a grandfather to two.

He currently serves on the boards of Visual Communications, Senshin Buddhist Temple, Southern California Nikkei Golf Association, and the Little Tokyo Community Council; and loves to golf, fish and ski. Doug is an avid fan of the Los Angeles Lakers and UCLA Bruins, loves watching old movies, and is a big fan of THE VOICE and THE SING OFF.
Comcast Corporation (Nasdaq: CMCSA) is a global media and technology company with two primary businesses, Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal. Comcast Cable is one of the nation’s largest video, high-speed internet, and phone providers to residential customers under the XFINITY brand, and also provides these services to businesses. It also provides wireless and security and automation services to residential customers under the XFINITY brand. NBCUniversal operates news, entertainment and sports cable networks, the NBC and Telemundo broadcast networks, television production operations, television station groups, Universal Pictures and Universal Parks and Resorts. Visual Communications, through the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, has provided a great platform through which NBCUniversal has been introduced to incredible Asian Pacific American talent. Additionally, NBCUniversal has been able to highlight important conversations over the years through Conference for Creative Content (C3) panels. Visit www.comcastcorporation.com for more information.
RENEE TAJIMA-PEÑA

Professor Renee Tajima-Peña is an Academy Award®-nominated filmmaker whose credits include the documentaries, CALAVERA HIGHWAY, SKATE MANZANAR, LABOR WOMEN, MY AMERICA...OR HONK IF YOU LOVE BUDDHA and WHO KILLED VINCENT CHIN? Her films have premiered at the Cannes, Locarno, New Directors/New Films, San Francisco, Sundance and Toronto film festivals and the Whitney Biennial.

Her current works are the documentary and transmedia project, NO MÁS BEBÉS POR VIDA (No More Babies For Life) about the sterilization of Mexican-origin women at Los Angeles County-USC Medical Center during the 1960s and ‘70s, and an interactive history documentary and video game-based learning project on the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, BUILDING HISTORY 3.0.

Tajima-Peña has been deeply involved in the Asian American independent film community as an activist, writer and filmmaker. She was the director at Asian CineVision in New York and a founding member of the Center for Asian American Media (formerly National Asian American Telecommunications Association). As a writer, she was a film critic for The Village Voice, a cultural commentator for National Public Radio and editor of Bridge: Asian American Perspectives.
A SPECIAL THANKS TO...

Angry Asian Man
Chris Aihara
Doug Aihara
Yaeko Aihara
Christine Balance
Vivian Bang
Eseel Borlasa
Tammy Borrero
Derrick Cagaanan, Flipcause
Asiroh Cham
Parvesh Cheena
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May and Rocky Chin
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Alvin and Marsha Wakasa
Clayton Yeung
Dorothy Xiao
Oris Yamashita
Janet Yang
Akemi Yano
Jin Yoo-Kim
Evelyn Yoshimura and Bruce Iwasaki
Phil Yu
Kimberly Zarate
A VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS MEMBERSHIP IS A REWARDING WAY TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE ORGANIZATION AND OUR PROGRAMS.

VC Members are a community of creators and supporters who champion the spirit of Asian pacific American stories 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.

**STUDENT $30 (proof of enrollment required)**
- Same benefits as FRIEND level

**SUPPORTER $50**
- Subscription to VC’s weekly newsletter
- Invitation to members-only screenings
- Discounts on tickets, events, and merchandise
- Recognition on VC website

**FRIEND $75**
- SUPPORTER level benefits
- Two (2) LAAPFF regular screening tickets

**FILMMAKER $125**
- SUPPORTER level benefits
- Four (4) LAAPFF regular screening tickets
- One (1) LAAPFF badge - priority seating
- Waived LAAPFF film submission entry fee
- Access to apply for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status through VC’s Fiscal Sponsorship
- Discounted access to VC facilities and equipment

**SPONSOR $250**
- SUPPORTER level benefits
- Six (6) LAAPFF regular screening tickets
- Two (2) LAAPFF tickets to Opening or Closing Night
- One (1) LAAPFF badge - priority seating

**PATRON $500**
- SUPPORTER level benefits
- Eight (8) LAAPFF regular screening tickets
- Two (2) LAAPFF Opening Night tickets
- Two (2) LAAPFF Closing Night tickets
- One (1) LAAPFF badge - priority seating
- One (1) complimentary copy of 2018 Armed With a Camera or Digital Histories DVD

**BENEFACTOR $1,000**
- SUPPORTER level benefits
- Two (2) LAAPFF Festival Passes
- One (1) LAAPFF badge - priority seating
- One (1) complimentary LAAPFF tote bag
- One (1) complimentary copy of 2018 Armed With a Camera DVD
- One (1) complimentary copy of 2018 Digital Histories DVD
Visual Communications is a full-service media arts organization serving our Asian Pacific American communities year-round. Our programs are only possible through the support of many VC Members and individual donors. We would like to acknowledge our awesome contributors! (from April 1st, 2017 to April 1st, 2018)

**BENEFACTOR**
Gwen Yamasaki

**DIRECTOR**
Linda Aratani

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Albert Aubin
Joanne Cabanting and
Johann Diel
Jandiz Cardoso
Sofia Chang
S. Leo Chiang
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