TORONTO reel asian INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL presented by NATIONAL BANK

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

###

REEL ASIAN CELEBRATES 19TH YEAR

Toronto, October 6, 2015 — The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, celebrates its 19th annual edition from November 5 to 15, 2015 with high-profile guests from around the world, screening venues in Toronto, North York, and Richmond Hill, and a special exhibition by acclaimed Canadian filmmaker and artist, Randall Okita. This year, Reel Asian will present 72 films from over 10 regions including Afghanistan, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Canada and the United States.

This year's festival will take place November 5 to 15, 2015 in Toronto, North York and Richmond Hill. Highlights include:

- **TORONTO OPENING NIGHT GALA:** DRIVING WITH SELVI (director Elisa Paloschi in attendance, Canada 2015, Ontario Premiere)
- **CENTREPIECE PRESENTATION:** OUR TIMES (director Frankie Chen in attendance, Taiwan 2015, North American Premiere)
- **TORONTO CLOSING NIGHT GALA:** SEOUL SEARCHING (director Benson Lee in attendance, USA 2015, Toronto Premiere)
- **RICHMOND HILL OPENING GALA:** TWO THUMBS UP (director Lau Ho-leung, Hong Kong 2015, Canadian Premiere)
- **RICHMOND HILL CLOSING:** FULL STRIKE (directors Derek Kwok and Henri Wong, Hong Kong 2015, Toronto Premiere)

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES: INTERNATIONAL PREMIERES

- CHANGING SEASON: ON THE MASUMOTO FAMILY FARM (director Jim Choi, USA 2015)
- KIRUMI (director Anucharan Murugaiyan in attendance, India 2015)
- MISS INDIA AMERICA (director Ravi Kapoor, USA 2015)
- OFF THE MENU (director Grace Lee, USA 2015)

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES: NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERES

- I AM SOMEBODY (director Derek Yee, China 2015)
- MCDULL: ME & MY MUM (directors Brian Tse, Hong Kong 2015)
- BALI BIG BROTHER (director Toshio Lee, Japan 2015)

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES: CANADIAN PREMIERES

- INITIATION LOVE (director Tsutsumi Yukihiko, Japan 2015)

INTERNATIONAL FEATURES: TORONTO PREMIERES

- MISS HOKUSAI (director Keiichi Hara, Japan 2015)
- THE ROYAL TAILOR (director Lee Won-suk in attendance, South Korea 2014)
- SITI (director Eddie Cahyono, Indonesia 2014)
- ZINNIA FLOWER (director Tom Lin, Taiwan 2015)
- PORT OF CALL (director Philip Yung in attendance, Hong Kong 2015)

CANADIAN FEATURES: TORONTO PREMIERES

- MINA WALKING (director Yosef Baraki, Afghanistan/Canada 2015)

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CANADIAN PROGRAMMING:

- Canadian Artist Spotlight with filmmaker Randall Okita in attendance
- *Badlands:* Shorts Presentation with director Sumit Judge in attendance
- *Born to Run:* Shorts Presentation with directors Alex Humilde and Aram Collier in attendance
- *Hungry Heart:* Shorts Presentation with directors Eui Yong Zong in attendance
- *Lucky Town:* Shorts Presentation with directors Celeste Koon, Shaleen Sangha, and Kendra Legault in attendance
- *The World's A Stage*: Shorts Presentation with directors Gloria Kim and Howie Shia in attendance

PITCH COMPETITION

Reel Asian's annual *So You Think You Can Pitch*? competition is back for its 9th year. A collaboration between Reel Asian and post-production facility, Charles Street Video, this competition features prizes with a combined value of more than $35,000 including $4,000 cash from National Bank, and equipment and production services from Charles Street Video valued at $10,000 and $18,000 for the emerging and professional categories respectively. Teams of filmmakers will each have six minutes to pitch their short film projects.

REEL ASIAN IN RICHMOND HILL

In response to the growing demand for Asian films outside of the downtown Toronto core, Reel Asian returns to Richmond Hill for the 6th year, to present a weekend of Hong Kong films at the SilverCity Richmond Hill multiplex theatre. We will be opening our Richmond Hill weekend on Saturday, November 14th with the Canadian premiere of *Two Thumbs Up* with director Lau Ho Leung in attendance. On Sunday, November 15th the festival wraps up the last day of the festival with Hong Kong helmer Derek Yee's *I Am Somebody* and *Full Strike*, with veteran actress Susan Shaw in attendance.

NEW PROGRAMMING SECTIONS: MARQUEE, VISTA, PULSE, REELASIAN:X

In response to the growing spectrum of Asian cinema, festival programming has been divided into sections that highlight new genres, master works, and trailblazers that have influenced Asian film culture across the borders. We would like to introduce the 4 new sections of programming this year, entitled MARQUEE, VISTA, PULSE, and REELASIAN:X.

MARQUEE titles spotlight gala presentations, featuring notable directors, actors, and writers who have traversed the international red carpet. The films in section VISTA introduce the new wave of critically acclaimed contemporary Asian cinema. PULSE features short films from around the globe, including the world premieres of the Unsung Voices summer workshop. Finally, REELASIAN:X transcends media, genre, and form, introducing a new body of work that expresses the Asian diaspora beyond the traditional.

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE, BY SECTION

MARQUEE (chronologically, by date)

Toronto Opening Night Gala Presentation:
Driving With Selvi
Thu Nov 5, 7:30 PM – Isabel Bader Theatre
Director: Elisa Paloschi | Canada 2015 | 74:00 | Kannada with English subtitles | Rated PG | Ontario Premiere

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An inspiring documentary that spans over a decade, the film follows Selvi, who ran away from an abusive child bride marriage and changed her life to become South India's first female taxi driver.

Feature Presentation:
Miss India America
Fri Nov 6, 7:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Ravi Kapoor | USA 2015 | 98:00 | English | Rated PG | International Premiere
Ambitious valedictorian Lily has it all: the perfect GPA, the ideal boyfriend, and a well-thought-out life plan but this plan is suddenly ruined when her high school boyfriend runs off with the reigning Miss India Golden State. Determined not to lose, Lily joins the Miss India beauty pageant where, in order to crush the competition, talents must be learnt, dresses must be stolen, and lies must be told!

Feature Presentation:
The Royal Tailor
Fri Nov 6, 9:15 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Lee Won-suk | South Korea 2014 | 127:00 | Korean with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere
A royal tailor's promotion is threatened when a young designer earns the queen's favour with his refreshing take on traditional garb. Stitch by stitch, on the surface the two tailors duel for the ultimate masterpiece. But beyond the clothing, a larger war is being waged between the two women in the king's life.

Feature Presentation:
McDull: Me & My Mum
Sat Nov 7, 12:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Directors: Brian Tse | Hong Kong 2015 | 81:00 | Cantonese with English subtitles | Rated G | North American Premiere
McDull, Hong Kong's most beloved cartoon pig, recalls his childhood days when he watched his mother make ends meet by working countless jobs, including appearing as a superheroine in a traveling roadshow where she dispenses handy life hacks. Although it seems that he may not be destined for great things in life, McDull never gives up trying.

Feature Presentation:
Miss Hokusai
Sat Nov 7, 9:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Keiichi Hara | Japan 2015 | 93:00 | Japanese with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere
Based on the manga *Sarusuberi* by Hinako Sugiura, *Miss Hokusai* is the untold story of O-Ei the uncredited painter and daughter behind the famous work of her father. O-Ei's father, more renowned now as Katsushika Hokusai, is most known for such works as *The Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa.*

Feature Presentation:
Bali Big Brother
Sun Nov 8, 1:00 PM– AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Toshio Lee | Japan 2015 | 107:00 | Japanese with English subtitles | Rated PG | North American Premiere
Eccentric real estate magnate Aniki has an out-of-the-box philosophy when it comes to acquiring wealth. A charming comedy that focuses on the "richness of life," the film transports the viewer to the tropical paradise of Bali, and helps clear the mind to redefine happiness.

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Centrepiece Presentation:
Our Times
Sun Nov 8, 8:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Mon Nov 9, 4:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Frankie Chen | Taiwan 2015 | 134:00 | Mandarin with English subtitles | Rated 14A | North American Premiere
It's Taiwan in the 1990s, and high school student Truly Lin is a plain, clumsy girl who spends her days goofing around with friends and fawning over the most popular boy in school. An unfortunate incident leads Lin to become an errand girl for the school's notorious troublemaker Taiyu. The pair soon forms an unlikely friendship forged with a similar goal: break up the school's "perfect couple" so that Truly and Taiyu can win them over!

Feature Presentation:
Port of Call
Wed Nov 11, 8:45 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Philip Yung (in attendance) | Hong Kong 2015 | 121:00 | Cantonese with English subtitles | Rated 18A | Toronto Premiere
A sex worker is found brutally murdered and Detective Chong (Aaron Kwok) is determined to solve the mystery with his partner Smoky. Loosely based on a true murder case, *Port of Call* is a crime thriller stylized by the cinematography of Wong Kar Wai's favourite partner in crime, Christopher Doyle.

Toronto Closing Night Gala Presentation:
Seoul Searching
Fri Nov 13, 8:00 PM – Isabel Bader Theatre
Director: Benson Lee (in attendance) | USA 2015 | 105:00 | English and Korean with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere
In the 1980s, the Korean government began a summer camp for gyopo (foreign-born) teenagers to visit the motherland. The camp would help the government re-establish ties with the diaspora, parents would get a sponsored trip, and teenagers would learn about Korean culture. What could possibly go wrong?

Richmond Hill Opening Night Gala:
Two Thumbs Up
Sat Nov 14, 7:00 PM – SilverCity Richmond Hill
Director: Lau Ho Leung (in attendance) | Hong Kong 2015 | 103:00 | Cantonese with English subtitles | Rated PG | Canadian Premiere
Disguised as police, Hong Kong gangster Lucifer and his gang of four steal abandoned police vans in order to create the perfect heist vehicle. Unfortunately for them, another team of robbers has the same plan in mind. How will Lucifer and his brothers save the day? Featuring favourite Hong Kong actors Francis Ng, Simon Yam and Patrick Tam and the nostalgic aura of '90s action comedy movies, *Two Thumbs Up* is among this year's best Hong Kong films.

Richmond Hill Closing Night:
Full Strike
Sun Nov 15, 7:30 PM – SilverCity Richmond Hill
Directors: Derek Kwok and Henri Wong | Hong Kong 2015 | 108:00 | Cantonese with English subtitles | Rated PG | Toronto Premiere
Badminton. Kung fu. Cousin Suck Nipple Cheng. *Full Strike* is a hilarious sports comedy that combines all these three, and no sports knowledge is required to enjoy the film!

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REEL ASIAN:X

Canadian Spotlight Artist: Randall Okita
Retrospective on Randall Okita
Sat Nov 7, 4:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall (Shorts Presentation)
Director: Randall Okita | Canada | 70:00 | English
Things I Can't Tell You, a gallery exhibition featuring three large-scale artworks that correlate to the cinematic work of Canadian filmmaker Randall Okita. In the spotlight screening of Okita's shorts, the artist presents a series of his short films and discusses the influences and processes involved in *Portrait as a Random Act of Violence, Machine with Wishbone, Fish in Barrel, No Contract,* and *The Weatherman and the Shadowboxer.*

Things I Can't Tell You gallery exhibition runs from November 8 – 28, 2015. Gallery hours: Tuesday –Saturday from 11:00am – 6:00pm. Location: Robert Kananaj Gallery.

VISTA (in chronological order)

Feature Presentation:
Changing Season: On The Masumoto Family Farm
Sat Nov 7, 2:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Jim Choi | USA 2015 | 57:00 | English | Rated G | International Premiere
"How many harvests do you have in you?" *Changing Season* chronicles a transitional year in the life of famed farmer and slow food advocate David "Mas" Masumoto and his compelling relationship with daughter Nikiko, who returns to the Masumoto family peach farm to continue in her father's footsteps.

Feature Presentation:
Kirumi
Sat Nov 7, 6:30 PM– AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Anucharan Murugaiyan (in attendance) | India 2015 | 97:00 | Tamil with English subtitles | Rated 14A | International Premiere
Egotistical and unemployed, Kathir has no problem gambling away his family's hard-earned money. Capitalizing on his knowledge of Chennai's underground and his desire to rat on those who have embarrassed him, he finds his calling as a secret police informant. Success is swift as he becomes a favourite amongst officers, but his arrogance soon compromises his hidden identity as Kathir learns there are consequences for tattling on the city's most ruthless gangsters.

Preceded by
Sudden Master
Director: Romeo Candido (in attendance) | Canada 2015 | 6:00 | Rated PG | World Premiere
When Alex Cheng reluctantly inherits her estranged father's Martial Arts school, it is up to her to defend the family legacy in an underground competition. *Sudden Master* is a story about tradition, vengeance and love.

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Feature Presentation:
Zinnia Flower
Sun Nov 8, 3:15 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Tue Nov 10, 4:30 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Tom Lin | Taiwan 2015 | 96:00 | Mandarin with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere
On the same day, in the same accident, twin tragedies: Wei loses his pregnant wife, while Ming loses her fiancé. Intercutting between two parallel storylines, the film follows the hundred-day journey that Wei and Ming each embark on to mourn for the dead.

Feature Presentation:
Siti
Mon Nov 9, 8:30 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Eddie Cahyono | Indonesia 2014 | 88:00 | Javanese with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere
Siti, a young and beautiful woman, has to find the means to care for her son, her paralyzed husband and her mother-in-law. By day, she sells snacks on the beach; by night, she sells herself in an illegal karaoke bar. Her encounter with a policeman, who falls in love with her, makes her life even more complicated.

Feature Presentation:
Off the Menu
Tue Nov 10, 7:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
Director: Grace Lee | USA 2015 | 55:00 | English | Rated PG | International Premiere
What does it mean to ”eat local”? How does ”hometown” taste? We follow award-winning Korean American filmmaker Grace Lee as she savours courses coast to coast, from Texan tofu tamales to the octopus hunt and Hawaiian grill. On her tour of mind-melting fusions, farms, and kitchens, Lee meets a diverse slate of Asian Americans who devote some part of their lives to cuisine.

> Preceded by
> **Dandekar Makes a Sandwich**
> Director: Leena Pendharkar | USA 2015 | 10:00 | English | Rated G | International Premiere
> With too much time on his hands, Dandekar heads off to the grocery store to gather only the best ingredients to make his perfect sandwich, much to the chagrin of the shop owners who have to wait on him.

Feature Presentation:
Initiation Love
Thu Nov 12, 7:00 PM – Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre
Director: Tsutsumi Yukihiko | Japan 2015 | 110:00 | Japanese with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Canadian Premiere
Set in Shizuoka City in the 1980s, awkward and overweight Yuki Suzuki is invited on a group date, where he meets the pretty and disarmingly forthright Mayu. Years later, he is transferred to Tokyo, where he soon finds his allegiance to Mayu seriously tested by sophisticated coworker Miyako. How will this love triangle end?

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Feature Presentation:

Mina Walking

Thu Nov 12, 8:00 PM – Aga Khan Museum

Director: Yosef Baraki (in attendance) | Afghanistan/Canada 2015 | 110:00 | Dari with English subtitles | Rated 14A | Toronto Premiere

Mina is a typical feisty and energetic 12-year-old girl, except she lives in modern day Kabul, Afghanistan and her circumstances are anything but typical. After losing her mother to a Taliban attack, Mina is left alone to take care of the household, looking after her senile grandfather, while her drug addict father wastes away. Eager to learn, Mina must skip school in order to earn a meager living for the household, peddling souvenirs on the street.

Richmond Hill Feature Presentation:

I Am Somebody

Sun Nov 15, 4:30 PM – SilverCity Richmond Hill

Director: Derek Yee | China 2015 | 134:00 | Mandarin with English subtitles | Rated PG | North American Premiere

In this bittersweet dramatic feature, former martial arts superstar Derek Yee pays tribute to the thousands of Chinese young migrants who flock to Hengdian, China, the Hollywood of the East, to pursue their dream of "becoming somebody."

PULSE (in chronological order)

Shorts Presentation:

Born to Run

Sun Nov 8, 5:30 PM – AGO Jackman Hall

All films rated G

What's the first thing you throw in your suitcase? Spanning continents and genres, this buffet of stories is a smiling wink and a knowing nod to cities, cultures, and creatures on the move. Featuring short films by Alex Humilde, Sarmad Masud, Rekha Ramachandran, Tony Nguyen, Lynn Kim, and Aram Collier.

Youth Shorts Presentation:

The World's A Stage

Mon Nov 9, 1:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall

All films rated PG

A delightful mix of short films that see life as it is—a giant stage with a final curtain call. Featuring works by Joseph Chen-Chieh Hsu, Boyoung Kim, Lyka Gonzalez, Gian-Paolo Mendoza, Chris Cheung, Annie Amaya, Judy Chu, Gloria Ui Young Kim, Howie Shia, and Ken Ochiai.

Youth Shorts Presentation:

Unsung Voices 4

Mon Nov 9, 6:45 PM – AGO Jackman Hall

All films rated 14A

Fearless first-time filmmakers embarked on an intensive ten-week video production workshop this summer and now show off their chops in this year's presentation of Unsung Voices 4. Featuring works by Seden Lai, Bruce

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Ravichandran, Lakshya Dhugana, Ammar Keshodia, Melissa Tran, Iris Ni, Anthony Tran, Natalie Yiu, Veronica Tsui, and Camille Bertrand-Morel.

Youth Shorts Presentation:
Lucky Town
Tue Nov 10, 1:00 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
All films rated G
Across the street, across the ocean, key in hand or hand in hand, these films ask: "In whose footsteps do you follow; what kind of world will you create?" Featuring works by Chloe Booher, Celeste Koon, Shaleen Sangha, Debraj Sarkar, Norbert Shieh, Robin Takao D'Oench, Kendra Legault, Adinah Dancyger, and Michelle Kee.

Shorts Presentation:
Badlands
Tue Nov 10, 8:45 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
All films rated 14A
These short films steer us through global junctions of hardships and dreams, where traffic is crossed without stop signs and with barely a road to follow. Featuring works by Sumit Judge, Qi Dong Peng, Alton Valadares, Mark Wee, Anam Abbas, Kathleen Jayme, Leslie Supnet, and Jane Dyson.

Shorts Presentation:
Hungry Heart
Wed Nov 11, 6:45 PM – AGO Jackman Hall
All films rated 14A
Incisive short films that have the effect of acupuncture: pin-pointing invisible tensions and different weights of gravity on powerful characters and relationships. Featuring works by Hajime Kimura, Eui Yong Zong, Philip Liao, Carol Nguyen, Lucretia Stinnette, Dahee Jeong, and Aleem Khan.

SCREENING VENUES

Isabel Bader Theatre 93 Charles St. W., Toronto
Art Gallery of Ontario (**AGO) Jackman Hall** 317 Dundas St. W., Toronto
Aga Khan Museum 77 Wynford Dr., North York
Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Kobayashi Hall 6 Garamond Ct., North York
SilverCity Richmond Hill 8725 Yonge St., Richmond Hill

INDUSTRY SERIES VENUES

AGO Weston Family Learning Centre 317 Dundas St. W., Toronto

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TICKET PRICES	Regular Price	Discount Price*
Regular screenings (Toronto & Richmond Hill)	$12	$10
Toronto Opening Night Gala (includes party)	$20	$15
Centrepiece Presentation	$15	$12
Toronto Closing Night Gala (includes party)	$20	$15
Richmond Hill Opening Night Gala (includes reception)	$20	$15
Richmond Hill Closing Night	$15	$12
Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre: Special Presentation	$12	$10 (JCCC members)
Aga Khan Museum: Special Presentation	$15	n/a

- Discount applies to students (with valid current ID) and seniors over 65 (no ID required).

HOW TO BUY TICKETS

Tickets for all screenings go on sale October 6 at 8pm at reelasian.com.

Buying Tickets for the Toronto Festival In Person – walk up sales are available from venue box offices, starting one hour before the first show of the day at the following venues:

- November 5 & 13: Isabel Bader Theatre
- November 6-12: AGO Jackman Hall

Note: Isabel Bader Theatre only sells same-day tickets

Special Ticketing for November 12

- **MINA WALKING** tickets will be sold through akdn.org/museum.
- **INITIATION LOVE** tickets will be sold through jccc.on.ca

Tickets for these special presentations will not available through Reel Asian's venue box office.

Buying Tickets for the Richmond Hill Festival In Person

- November 14-15 at the Reel Asian Box Office in the lobby of SilverCity Richmond Hill

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of Presenting Sponsor National Bank, platinum sponsor Bell Media and government funders the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canada Council for the Arts, Telefilm, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Ontario Media Development Corporation, Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, Business for the Arts and the Town of Richmond Hill through the Mayor's Endowment Fund for the Arts.

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Visit www.reelasian.com for further press information, digital images, press releases, and accreditation.

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