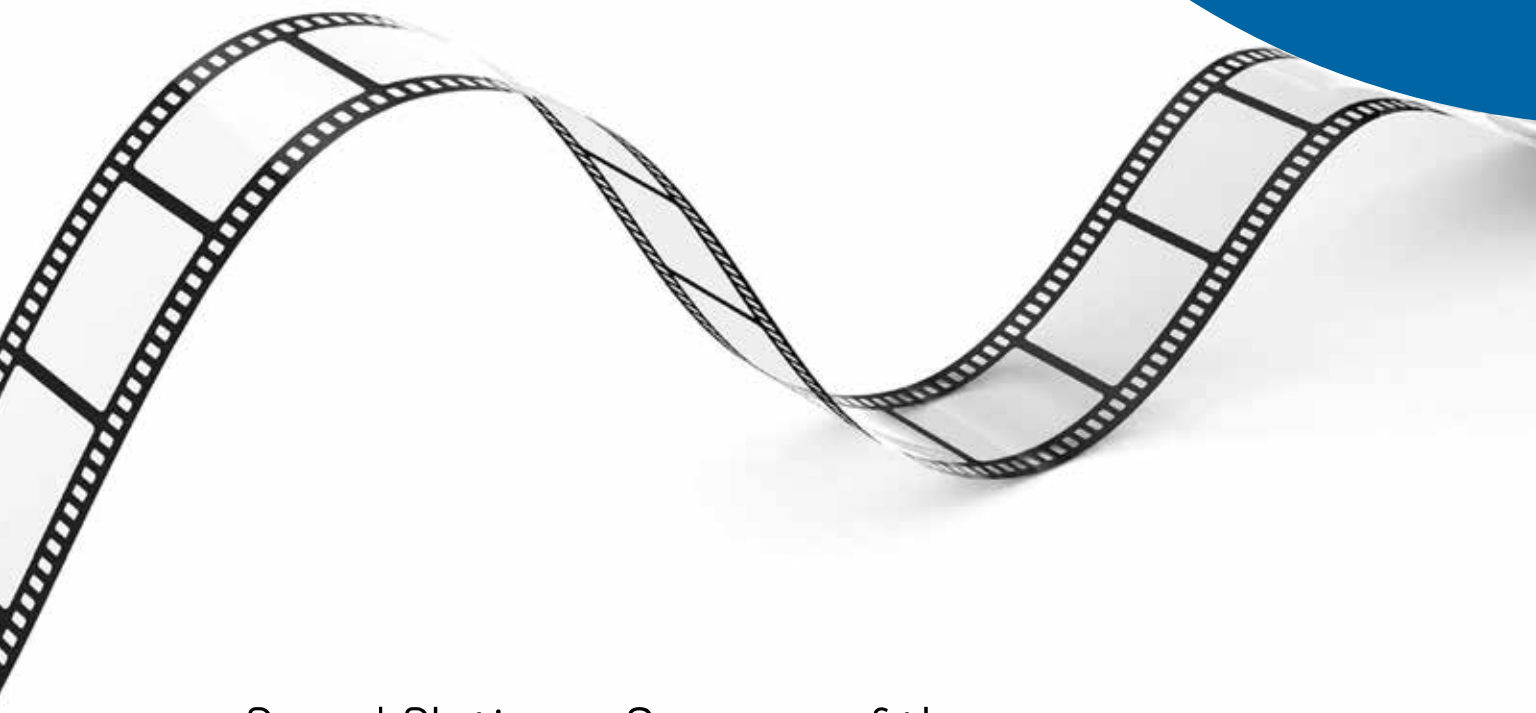
23rd
Edition

TORONTO REEL ASIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



Proud Platinum Sponsor of the

Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

Bell Media

TORONTO REEL ASIAN
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
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Toronto, ON M5V 3A8
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Charitable registration number
#87002 1383 RR0001

Base artwork on cover by:
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#REELASIAN23

Programmes

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It is my distinct honour and pleasure to welcome you all to the 23rd edition of the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival as returning executive director.

This year we are honouring the past by looking toward the future. We've reached a critical point in media where Asian talent is finally being recognized both in front of and behind the camera. Now, Asian-centred stories are making people in the "mainstream" sit up and take notice – but how did we get here?

For more than 20 years, Reel Asian has provided a platform – in the early days, sometimes the *only* platform – for Asian artists to show their work publicly in Canada. It's also worth noting that for decades, organizations like Reel Asian have been behind the scenes, building a strong and supportive community that has laid the foundation for the current proliferation of Asian-made work to happen.

The diversity of experiences (and languages, and cultures, not to mention subcultures) that are found in the word "Asian" is vast, almost dizzyingly diverse. But nothing close to the full spectrum of experiences is on the horizon, at least not yet.

It's these dizzyingly diverse experiences that Reel Asian continues to support and amplify, actively pushing newer and more marginalized voices into the centre, as well as continuing to push the boundary edges, to include even more divergent stories. This year, nearly 60 percent of the works we've programmed are by women and non-binary artists. Our slate of films includes artists of Korean and Filipinx descent, two countries that are celebrating 100 years of cinema this year. We also have artists joining us from around the world, from the US, Japan, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, in addition to homegrown talent.

To nurture a new crop of storytellers, we've expanded our Reel Ideas conference, open to the public, to two days of back-to-back artist talks, panel discussions, and networking opportunities for filmmakers and industry professionals.

Finally, I'd like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to all of our sponsors, donors, community partners, supporters, and volunteers who've been involved in putting together this year's festival. A special thanks to our tireless staff, whose hard work cannot be overstated. Thanks also to our artists, whose work continues to surprise and delight. And finally, a warm thank-you to you, our audience members, whether you've been coming for years or for the first time. Ultimately, this festival is for you. Enjoy!

Deanna Wong
Executive Director

In fraught times we look to the past to centre ourselves, to learn from mistakes, and to look for guidance from our ancestors.

Film and art allow us a chance to reflect on and share where we've been as a community. This year's programming will provide opportunities to do just that with programs like Joy Kogawa's interactive story *East Of The Rockies*, and documentaries *Love Boat: Taiwan* and *Jeronimo.* And our screening of Sessue Hayakawa's 100-year-old silent film *The Dragon Painter* is a reminder that self-representation of Asian stories has been a long fight.

We celebrate the homecoming of Canadian filmmakers Samuel Kiehoon Lee and Helen Lee, with new works in hand, and our Canadian Spotlight artist, the acclaimed documentary filmmaker Yung Chang – all of whom have a long history with our festival. And we fête the ambitious ascendance of returning filmmakers like Johnny Ma, whose tender elegy *To Live To Sing* opens our festival.

At the same time, every year brings new friends into the Reel Asian community that we're excited for audiences to meet. The eighth edition of our filmmakers program, Unsung Voices, features an all-women cohort for the first time. Meanwhile, films like Alfred Sung's *The Last Stitch*, Mariam Ghani's *What We Left Unfinished*, Sasie Sealy's *Lucky Grandma*, and our first-ever Filipinx Gala film, Diane Paragas's *Yellow Rose*, reflect Reel Asian's mandate for diverse storytelling with nuance, reverence, and humour (and… country music!).

I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with our returning executive director Deanna Wong again. Her passion for what Reel Asian stands for has never wavered from the first time I met her in 2003 and first worked with her over ten years ago.

And so with friends new and old we charge forward into the unknown, bolstered by the winds of the past.

Aram Siu Wai Collier
Acting Head of Programming

MEMBERSHIP

JOIN THE REEL ASIAN FAMILY TODAY!

BECOME A REEL ASIAN MEMBER TODAY TO ENJOY THE PREMIER EXPERIENCE OF ASIAN MEDIA ARTS AND CHAMPION DIVERSE STORYTELLING IN CANADA.

FESTIVAL BENEFITS	Friend $60	Supporter $150	Partner $270	Champion $500	Patron $1000
Discount on Downtown Festival Tickets	25%	25%	40%	40%	40%
Discount on Uptown Festival Tickets	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year-end Impact Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to Reel Asian Festival Lounge	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Recognition in Festival Program Guide		✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to Member-Only Advance Box Office		✓	✓	✓	✓
Invitation to Opening Night VIP Cocktail Reception		✓	✓	✓	✓
Secondary Account Holder to the Membership			✓	✓	✓
Festival Bag				✓	✓
Reserved Seats at Festival Screenings				✓	✓
Tickets to Downtown Regular Screenings	2	2	4	8	16
Tickets to Programmers' Pick Screenings	2	2	6	8	10
Tickets at Downtown Gala Presentations	N/A	2	2	6	10
Tickets to Uptown Screenings	N/A	2	2	4	6
YEAR ROUND BENEFITS					
Recognition on Reel Asian Website	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Member E-newsletters with Exclusive Offers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Invitation to Year Round VIP Events	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tickets to Co-Presentation Screenings	✓	✓	✓	PRIORITY ACCESS	PRIORITY ACCESS
10% Discount to Annual Fundraiser			✓	✓	✓
CHARITABLE TAX RECEIPT	N/A	$40	$100	$170	$510

SIGN UP TODAY AT WWW.REELASIAN.COM/MEMBERSHIP

Credits & Acknowledgments

Top L-R: Seungwoo Baek, Brooke Banning, Chris Chin, Christine Vu, Deanna Wong, Ravi Sidhu, Amanda Clarke, Joshua Lang, Aram Siu Wai Collier, Nicolas Uribe
Bottom L-R: Kelly Lui, Jason To, Nirujaa Vasantharajah, Jasmine Gui

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Reel Asian: X - East of the Rockies
PRODUCED & DISTRIBUTED BY
Jam3, National Film Board of Canada

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* Marketing Assistant and Communications and Outreach Assistant positions made possible by the Government of Canada's *Canada Summer Jobs programme.*

Thank Yous

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Insomniac Film Festival
IntersectTO
Koffler Centre of the Arts
Pleasure Dome
Pluma Collective
Project 40
Regent Park Film Festival
Return Trip Magazine
sisterhood media
Toronto Silent Film Festival
Toronto Youth Shorts
Workman Arts

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...and all our amazing volunteers!

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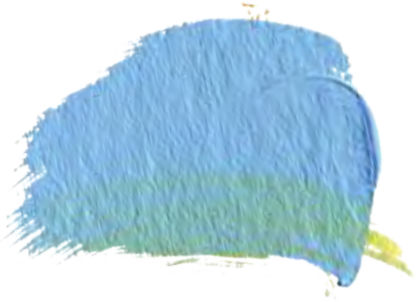


Festival Maps

SCREENING & INDUSTRY VENUES

01: Isabel Bader Theatre ♿ (⁝⁝) 2⚇
93 Charles St W • (416) 585-4498

02: TIFF Bell Lightbox 4♿ (⁝⁝) 4⚇
350 King St W • (416) 599-8433

03: Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space/ The Commons ♿ ⚇
401 Richmond St W, Suite 440
(416) 703-9333

04: Innis Town Hall 4♿ 4⚇
2 Sussex Ave • (416) 946-7066

05: Centre for Social Innovation - Annex ♿ ⚇
720 Bathurst St • (416) 979-3939

06: Kobayashi Hall ♿ ⚇
(Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre)
6 Garamond Ct • (416) 441-2345

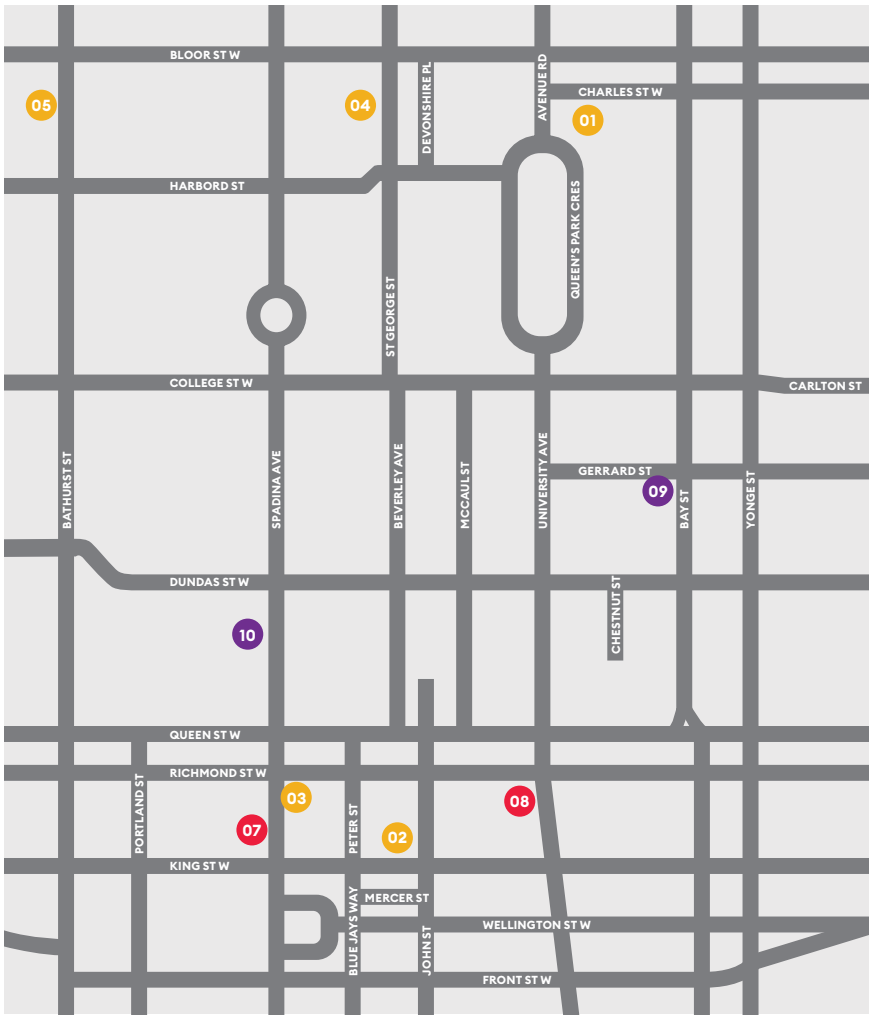
EVENT VENUES

07: Contact Photo Gallery ♿
80 Spadina Av, #205 • (416) 539-9595

03: The Commons and Festival Lounge ♿
401 Richmond St W, 4th Floor
(416) 703-9333

05: Centre for Social Innovation - Annex ♿
720 Bathurst St • (416) 979-3939

08: Momofuku Kōjin ♿
190 University Ave, 3rd Floor • (416) 253-6227



ACCOMMODATIONS

09: The Chelsea Hotel ♿
33 Gerrard St W • (416) 595-1975

10: Super 8 ♿
222 Spadina Ave • (647) 426-8118

ACCESSIBILITY

- ♿ fully accessible / seats available
- (♿) partially accessible / seats available
- ⁝⁝ braille throughout the venue
- (⁝⁝) limited braille at the venue
- ⚇ seating available for support persons

All our venues welcome service animals and guide dogs. Films not in English are presented with English subtitles.

For more information on accessiblity, please visit our website **reelasian.com**, email **access@reelasian.com** or call **(416) 703-9333**.

Ticketing

TICKET TYPES	REGULAR*	MEMBERS	
		FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS	PARTNERS, CHAMPIONS & PATRONS
REGULAR & YOUTH SCREENINGS	**$15**	**$11.25**	**$9**
OPENING NIGHT & CLOSING NIGHT GALA	**$25**	**$18.75**	**$15**
OPENING NIGHT & CLOSING NIGHT PARTY (AT THE DOOR)	**$10**	**FREE**	**FREE**
JAPANESE CANADIAN CULTURAL CENTRE PARTNER PRESENTATIONS	**$15**	**$12**	**$12**
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT			
PRE-FESTIVAL SPARK SCREENING: COME DRINK WITH ME (NOV 1)	**FREE**	**FREE**	**FREE**
RETROSPECTIVE SCREENING: EARTH TO MOUTH (NOV 11)	**FREE**	**FREE**	**FREE**
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT GALA: EGGPLANT (NOV 14) (INCLUDES LIVE SCRIPT READING, ARTIST TALK, AND RECEPTION)	**$20**	**$15**	**$12**
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT RECEPTION (AT THE DOOR)	**$5**	**FREE**	**FREE**
REEL IDEAS			
REEL IDEAS CONFERENCE (NOV 15) – DAY PASS (INCLUDES LUNCHEON)	**$20**	**$20**	**$20**
REEL IDEAS CONFERENCE (NOV 15) – PER SESSION (DOES NOT INCLUDE LUNCHEON)	**$6**	**$6**	**$6**
THE CBC ROOM: AN INDUSTRY PANEL (NOV 10)	**FREE**	**FREE**	**FREE**
WHAT'S BREWING AT THE FESTIVAL FILMMAKERS SOCIAL (NOV 11)	**FREE**	**FREE**	**FREE**
MEASURING UP WITH THE TALLBOYZ + RECEPTION (NOV 13)	**FREE**	**FREE**	**FREE**

* Students (with valid current ID) and seniors over 65 (no ID required) are eligible for a $2 discount off regular priced screenings (does not apply to partner presentations or conference fees) and **free admission to films that start before 5:00 PM**. All tickets purchased through the Festival Box Office are subject to additional per-item service fees.

BUYING TICKETS IN ADVANCE – FESTIVAL BOX OFFICE

Advanced tickets for shows playing at the **TIFF Bell Lightbox** and **Isabel Bader Theatre** venues go on sale at 10:00 AM on October 7, 2019 and are available through the following:

- In person at TIFF Bell Lightbox box office (350 King St W · Mon–Sun, 10:00 AM–10:00 PM)
- By phone at (416) 599-TIFF (Mon–Sun, 10:00 AM–7:00 PM)

The Festival Box Office does not sell tickets to screenings held at the **Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space**, **CSI Annex**, partner presentations (**Innis Town Hall** & **Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre**) or the **Reel Ideas Conference**.

BUYING TICKETS IN PERSON

Walk-up sales are available from the venue box offices as follows:

- for shows at **TIFF Bell Lightbox**, walk-up sales are available from the Festival Box Office right up until showtime
- for shows at **Isabel Bader Theatre** and **CSI Annex**, walk-up sales are available on the day of the show starting an hour before showtime
- for shows at **Bachir-Yerex Presentation Space**, walk-up sales are available on the day of the show starting at 9:30 AM
- for shows at **Innis Town Hall**, same-day tickets are subject to availability on a first-come, first-served basis starting an hour before show time
- for shows at the **Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre**, walk-up sales are available on the day of the show starting an hour before show time
- for sessions of the **Reel Ideas Conference**, same-day admissions are available at the door starting 15min before session's scheduled start time, subject to capacity. A limited quantity of Day Passes are available on the day of the conference from 10:00 AM to 10:30 AM only.

BUYING TICKETS ONLINE

- for shows at **TIFF Bell Lightbox**, online sales are powered by TIFF Ticketing & continue right up until showtime
- for shows at **Isabel Bader Theatre**, online sales are powered by TIFF Ticketing & continue until 5:00 PM on the day of the show. Buy in person at the venue starting an hour before showtime.
- for shows at **Bachir-Yerex Presentation Space** and **CSI Annex**, online sales are powered by EventBrite & end at 10:00 PM the night before the show. Buy in person at the venue after that.
- for shows at **Innis Town Hall**, admission is free but tickets must be reserved through the Asian Institute's system: **munkschool.utoronto.ca/events**
- for shows at the J**apanese Canadian Cultural Centre**, tickets are available exclusively through our presentation partner: **www.jccc.on.ca**
- tickets & passes to the **Reel Ideas Conference** are available through **reelasian.com** (powered by EventBrite)

Tickets purchased online for shows at the **TIFF Bell Lightbox** or **Isabel Bader Theatre** can be picked up at the Festival Box Office 24 hours after purchase. For shows at the TIFF Bell Lightbox and Closing Night only, you may carry your e-tickets on your mobile device – please be sure to download your tickets (with a barcode) completely to your device. **All tickets expire 15 minutes before scheduled show time, subject to the discretion of the festival**.

For more information visit **reelasian.com/ticketingFAQs**

2019 Schedule

	9 AM	10 AM	11 AM	12 PM	1 PM	2 PM	3 PM	4 PM
THURS NOV 7								
FRI NOV 8		REEL IDEAS **REEL IDEAS CONFERENCE** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space						FEATURE **JOHN DENVER** TIFF Lightbox C3
SAT NOV 9	WEE ASIAN P.46 **WEE ASIAN** TIFF Lightbox Green Room							
		REEL IDEAS P. 76 **THE CBC ROOM** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space				REEL IDEAS P. 76 **EXPLORASIAN** Research Centre at 401 Richmond		
			FEATURE P.31 **THE LAST STITCH** TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A		SHORTS P.56 **TURNING POINT** TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A			FEATURE **LOVE** TIFF
SUN NOV 10		REEL IDEAS P. 79 **PITCH LIVE FINALE** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space					FEATURE **JERONIMO** TIFF Lightbox C3	
MON NOV 11						REEL IDEAS P.75 **WHAT'S BREWING AT THE FESTIVAL?** The Commons		
			YOUTH SHORTS P. 60 **WOMXN** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A		YOUTH SHORTS P. 62 **SPATIAL AWARENESS** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A			
TUES NOV 12			YOUTH SHORTS P. 64 **DRAWN CLOSER** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A					
					YOUTH SHORTS P. 66 **DOUBLE ARTICULATION** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A			
WED NOV 13			YOUTH SHORTS P. 68 **NINE COURSES** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A		YOUTH SHORTS P. 70 **LINGER** Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space Q&A			
THURS NOV 14								
FRI NOV 15								

MARQUEE	VISTA	CDN SPOTLIGHT	WEE ASIAN	REEL ASIAN X	PULSE	REEL IDEAS
P.17	P.29	P.39	P.46	P.49	P.53	P.73

5 PM	6 PM	7 PM	8 PM	9 PM	10 PM	11 PM
			OPENING NIGHT GALA+FEATURE P.18 **TO LIVE TO SING** Isabel Bader Q&A		GALA RECEPTION P.19 **OPENING NIGHT GALA RECEPT...** Contact Photography Gallery	
P. 74						
P.30 **TRENDING**	FEATURE P.21 **MS. PURPLE** TIFF Lightbox C3		FEATURE **LUCKY GRANDMA** P.22 TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A			
P.32 **BOAT: TAIWAN** Lightbox C3 Q&A	SHORTS P.54 **UNSUNG VOICES 8** TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A		FEATURE P.33 **GYOPO** TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A			
P.35 Q&A	FEATURE P.23 **WE ARE CHAMPIONS** TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A		FEATURE **WE ARE LITTLE ZOMBIES** P.25 TIFF Lightbox C3 Q&A			
	RETRO SCREEN... P.41 **EARTH TO ...** Bachir/Yerex... Q&A		FEATURE P.36 **THE DRAGON PAINTER** Innis Town Hall Q&A			
			READING+SHORT P. 72 **R.A. ROUNDTABLE** Innis Town Hall Q&A			
	ARTIST TALK P. 78 **TALLBOYZ** Bachir/Yerex Pres...	RECEPTION P.78 **TALLBOYZ** The Commons				
			FEATURE P.37 **WHAT WE LEFT UNFINISHED** Innis Town Hall Q&A			
		FEATURE P.38 **THE MIRACLE OF CRYBABY SHOTTAN** Kobayashi Hall				
			LIVE SCRIPT READING P.43 **EGGPLANT** CSI Annex		SPECIAL EVENT P.43 **CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT GALA PARTY** CSI Annex	
		FEATURE P.26 **YELLOW ROSE** Isabel Bader Q&A			GALA RECEPTION P.27 **CLOSING NIGHT GALA RECEPTION** CSI Annex	

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Festival Awards

Reel Asian Best Feature Film Award
All feature works are eligible for this prize.
$1,000 cash prize

Fasken Audience Award
All feature works are eligible for this prize.
$2,500 cash prize

CHCH TV Best Canadian Film or Video Award
All first feature films are eligible for this prize.
$1,000 cash prize

Osler Best First Feature Award
All first feature films are eligible for this prize.
$1,500 cash prize

Animasian Award
All Canadian animated works are eligible for this prize. This award celebrates the greatness of Asian Canadian animation artists!
$600 cash prize

The Truth to Power Award
All feature length documentary films are eligible for this $1,250 cash prize, donated by Karla Bobadilla, Diang Iu, Immanuel Lanzaderas, Sonia Sakamoto-Jog and Victoria Shen.

DGC Ontario & WIFT-T Film Award
All films made by female Ontario-based artists are eligible for this prize. $1,000 cash prize, $1,200 programming pass and one-year membership to WIFT-T.

Air Canada Short Film or Video Award
All Canadian short films and videos are eligible for this prize. Opportunity to broadcast on Air Canada's in-flight entertainment screens on international flights.

Change Connect Award
All Canadian filmmakers under the age of 30 are eligible.
$500 cash prize

Welcome to the 23rd Annual
Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

Storytelling is an art form that is at once, entertaining, informative and inspiring. It is a reflection of who we are and who we wish to become. And when told through films, stories are translated into indelible images that often leave us spellbound.

For 23 years, the Toronto Reel Asian festival has given creators a unique platform to share their stories and showcase their films. The festival is the largest continuously running presenter of contemporary pan-Asian cinema in Canada. In addition, it provides a year-round slate of educational and outreach initiatives to the public, cementing the future of culturally diverse storytelling in Canada.

To the filmmakers and artists: Thank you for sharing your stories with us. You inspire us all with your creativity and talent.

I wish everyone a memorable experience!

Julie Payette

Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette
Governor General of Canada

I'm delighted to extend greetings to everyone taking part in the 23rd Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian).

I want to thank the team at Reel Asian for organizing this much-anticipated festival. I'd also like to recognize everyone who helped to make it a success, including the participating filmmakers and media artists, and the event's sponsors and volunteers.

As Premier, I'm proud that Ontario is host to this terrific opportunity for movie enthusiasts to enjoy some of the best contemporary Asian films from across Canada and around the world.

And to all those who travelled to Toronto to take part in this event, I hope you enjoy your stay in our province's capital, and have the chance to take in some of the city's exciting attractions.

Have a great time at this year's festival.

Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to welcome everyone to the 23rd edition of the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

Each year, Reel Asian gives Toronto audiences a unique chance to see a wide array of quality films. I want to thank the staff and volunteers who make it happen. Your efforts help to give diverse voices in the film industry an important platform to showcase their work and share their stories.

The Ontario government is pleased to provide support for this festival. I hope you enjoy the films, and I wish you all a memorable festival!

Kindest regards,

The Honourable Lisa MacLeod
Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport

Dear Friends,

As Member of Provincial Parliament for the riding of Spadina-Fort York, it is my great pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 23rd edition of the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

This festival gives audiences a unique opportunity to enjoy the best of contemporary films by East, South and Southeast Asian filmmakers from all over the world. It also offers attendees a chance to learn more about Asian life and culture and to celebrate the many aspects of Asian diversity.

I congratulate those artists presenting works this year for sharing their talent and heritage through cinema. I would also like to applaud the board members, staff and volunteers for organizing such a successful festival.

Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable experience.

Sincerely,

Chris Glover
Member of Provincial Parliament
Spadina-Fort York

It is my pleasure to extend greetings and a warm welcome to everyone attending the 23rd Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

Best wishes to all attendees who are attending this festival dedicated to the work of South, East and South-East Asian diasporic filmmakers. Congratulations to Toronto-based Jam3 and Toronto filmmaker Yung Chang, who will be showcasing their work at this year's film festival.

The arts are an integral component of Toronto's cultural and economic fabric that enrich and enhance the lives of many.

I am delighted that wonderful events like this are taking place in Toronto. Arts and culture can be incredible forces for the development of an individual, group or community, and they promote intercultural connections including tolerance, understanding, friendship and social cohesion.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable event and continued success.

Yours truly,

John Tory
Mayor of Toronto

Jury

FEATURES JURY

Ishani Nath was born and raised in Ottawa, though that's never stopped Uber drivers from asking her where she's *actually* from. She is currently a freelance writer and editor who has appeared on CBC and has bylines in *FLARE, Maclean's* and *Reader's Digest Canada*. Covering everything from the latest must-see movie to the cultural significance of Indian jewelry for second-gen kids is the reason why Nath loves her job– even on Mondays.

Stephen Gong is the executive director of the Center for Asian American Media, having been associated with CAAM since its founding in 1980. He lectured in the Asian American Studies program at UC Berkeley, teaching and writing on Asian American media history. Gong has provided critical commentary on projects including the *Treasures From American Archives, Chan is Missing*, and is the featured historian in the documentary *Hollywood Chinese*. He is board chair of the Center for Rural Strategies and serves on the advisory board of the San Francisco Silent Film Society.

Tiffany Hsiung is a Toronto-based filmmaker. Her documentary debut, *The Apology* ('16, NFB) has won awards internationally, including the Peabody Award and the Allan King Memorial Award. Hsiung co-created and co-directed the award-winning interactive web documentary *The Space We Hold* ('17), directed episodes of *Dino Dana* ('18) and participated in the Academy Women Director Mentorship Program. She just completed a short documentary hybrid *The Bassinet* ('19) for *Five @ 50: An Intimate Look at Contemporary LGBTQ2+ Lives and Identities* (NFB) and is in post for her short documentary *Sing Me a Lullaby* ('19, CBC).

SHORTS JURY

Jenna Tenn-Yuk is a writer, speaker, and facilitator who empowers people to share their stories and truths. She has spoken internationally at Harvard, The Walrus Talks and TEDx, exploring the complexities of race, faith, and queerness. Her writing has appeared in *HuffPost, CBC, Broadview* and *Ottawa Citizen*. She is a founding member of the Asian Canadian Women's Alliance. Tenn-Yuk believes in the power of storytelling to break silences, connect people and change the world around us.

Mariam Zaidi is a South Asian filmmaker and arts manager based in Toronto. Zaidi's work has been funded and supported by the CBC, LIFT, TAC, OAC, Canada Council for the Arts, BravoFACT! FACTOR Canada, and the NFB. Alongside her independent film work, Zaidi is currently associate programmer at the Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival and executive director at the Breakthroughs Film Festival.

Nicole Mendes has spent the past decade working in Scripted Content at the CBC. As executive in charge of production for CBC Drama, she currently oversees *Murdoch Mysteries, Anne With an "E,"* a co-venture between CBC and Netflix, as well as Canada/New Zealand co-production *The Sounds* with Shaftesbury and South Pacific Pictures. Mendes has served and sat on multiple juries and various industry panels with TIFF, WGC, DGC, and WIFT-T. She also serves on committees for POV 3rd Street and BIPOC TV & Film, organisations addressing inclusion and representation in the industry.

PITCH JURY

Born in Seoul, Korea, writer/director **Gloria Ui Young Kim** is an alumnae of the Canadian Film Centre's Director's Lab and TIFF Talent Lab. She recently directed, wrote and produced her first feature, *Queen of the Morning Calm*, (Women in the Director's Chair Feature Film Award, Harold Greenberg Fund, Telefilm), currently in post. She has won numerous Golds for her commercial work at the Bessies, Cannes Lions, ADCC, Marketing Magazine Awards, was chosen by Women in View as one of 2017's Five in Focus, and is on the board of directors for WIFT-T.

Amar Wala's debut feature, *The Secret Trial 5*, received the Emerging Filmmaker Jury Award at Hot Docs, and the Magnus Isacsson Award at RIDM. Using his cinema to deconstruct notions of race and identity, Amar has directed series for CBC, Viceland, and Shopify Studios. Amar served as the chair of the Images Festival from 2015 to 2018, and received the 2018 VANGUARD Award from the Documentary Organization of Canada. He is currently director and consulting producer of CBC Arts series *In The Making*.

Michael Fukushima is studio head and executive producer of the National Film Board of Canada's world-renowned English Animation Studio. Fukushima joined the Animation Studio in 1990 as a filmmaker, became a studio producer, and is now head of the fabled studio, with over 200 films (and some awards and nominations) under his belt. These days he produces one or two films per year by veteran creators like Torill Kove, Alison Snowden and David Fine, otherwise offering up pearls of wisdom and wise-cracking bon mots.

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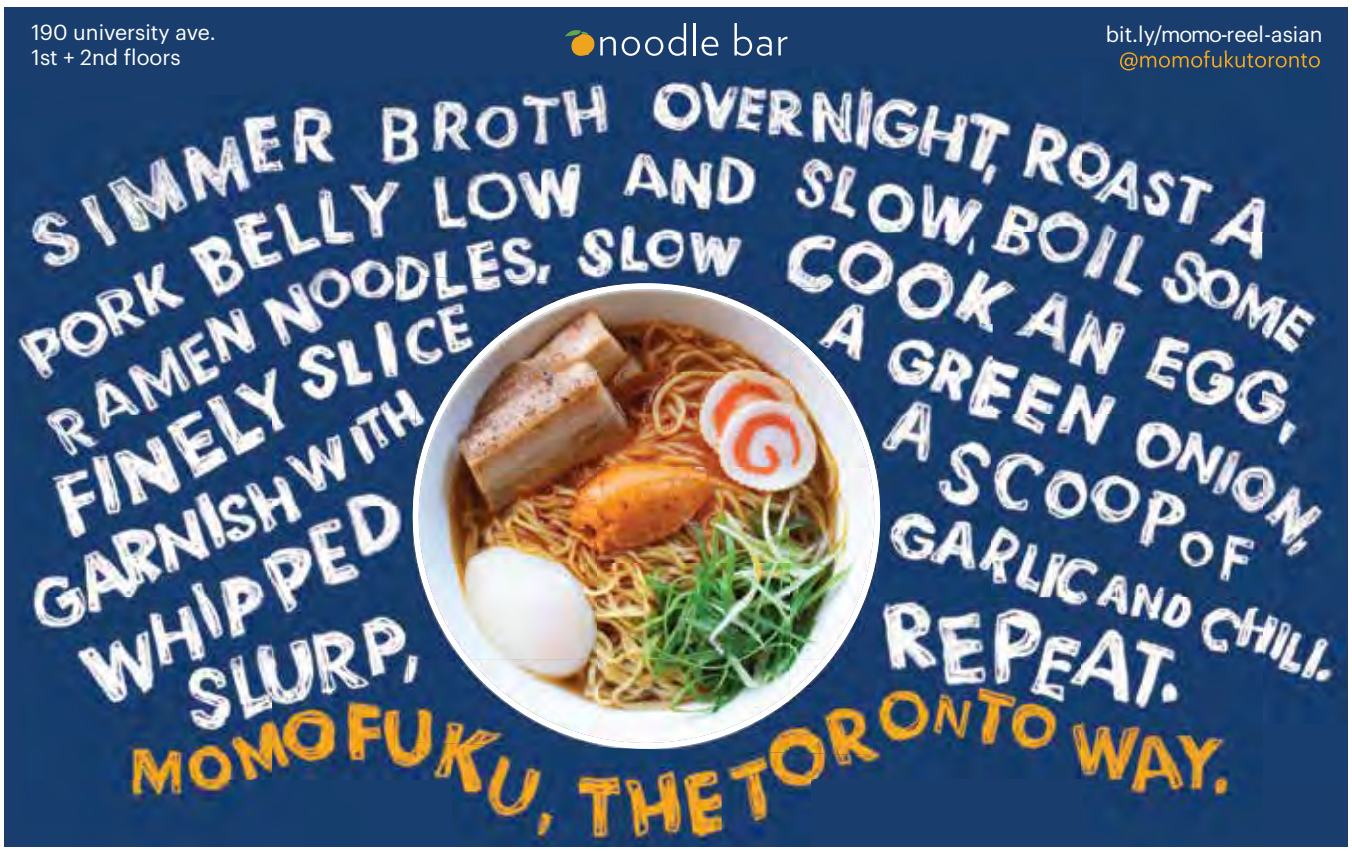

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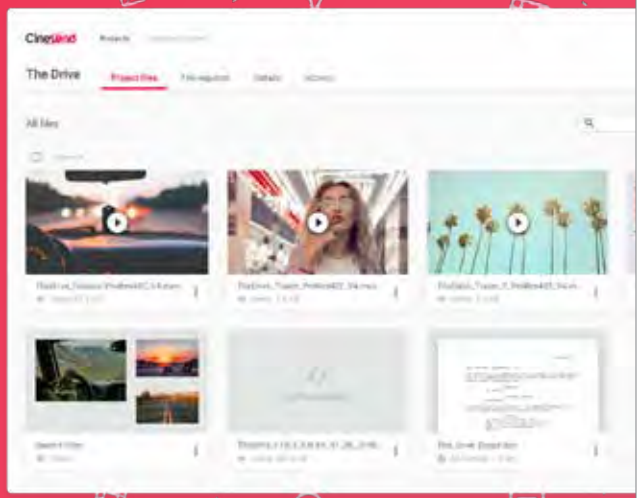

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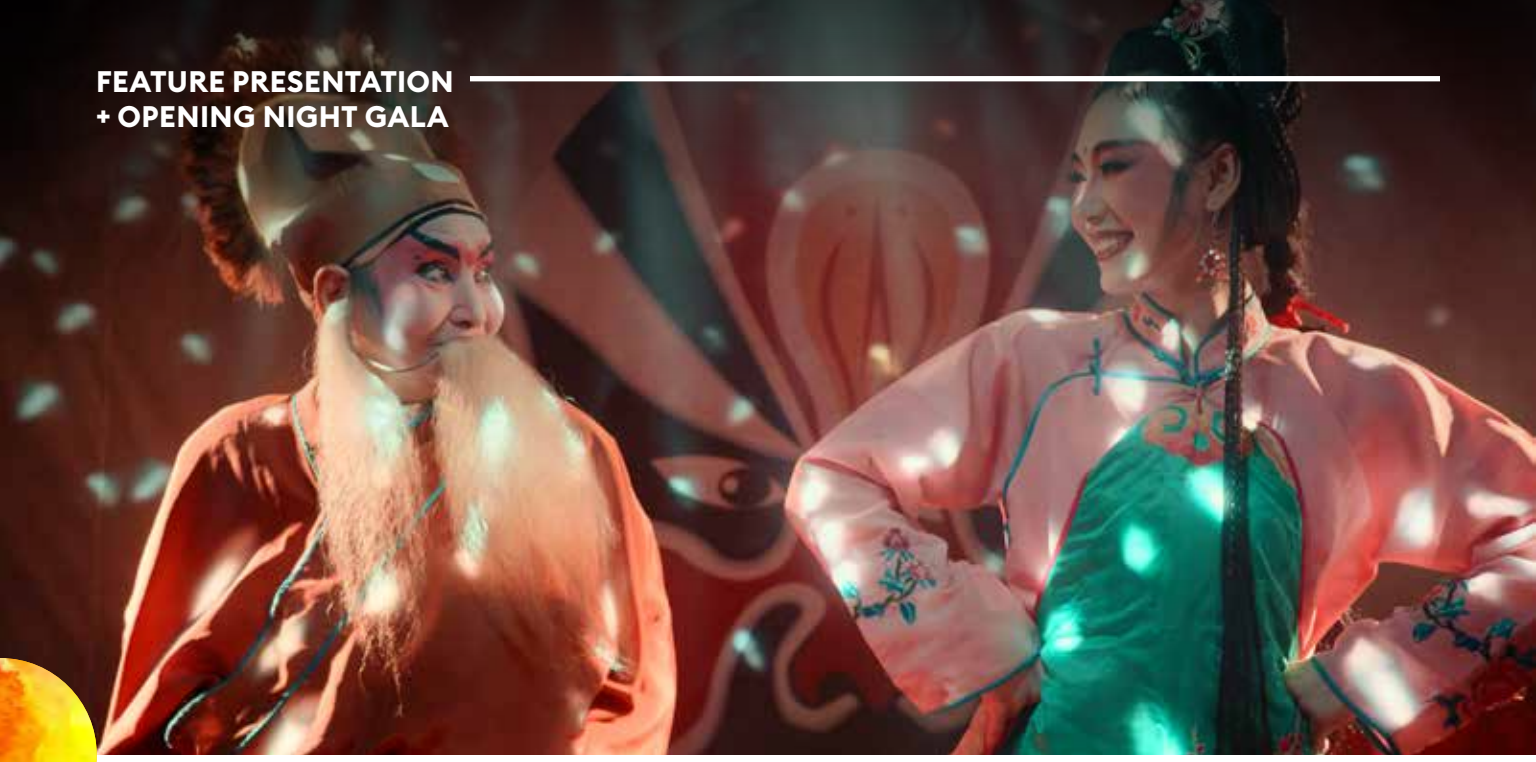

To Live To Sing
活着唱着

China 2019
105:00
Mandarin with English subtitles
PG • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Johnny Ma 马楠
(in attendance)

CAST
Zhao Xiaoli
Gan Guidan
Yan Xihu

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Cannes Film Festival, Directors' Fortnight

2019 BFI London Film Festival

As the stern leader of the Sichuan Opera Group, Zhao Li has been fighting a losing battle to save her opera troupe from extinction. Operating out of a run-down theatre that is scheduled for demolition and playing to half-empty houses every night, she tries to save the troupe from being swept away in the tide of modernization. Her "family," disheartened by the challenges they face, begins to seek new opportunities in order to survive. As Zhao Li continues to struggle, the fantasy world of her operas slowly begins to seep into her real life.

Anchored by a compelling and empathetic performance by lead actress Zhao Xiaoli, herself an opera performer turned actor, Johnny Ma's second feature is a compassionate and impactful glimpse into urban redevelopment and the annihilation of the old to make way for the new. The motley crew at the heart of *To Live To Sing*, played by professional opera singers and musicians in fictionalized versions of themselves, brings a touch of realism to the plight that they face in China's transformation as a growing global economic power. - SW

Born as Ma Nan in Shanghai, China, **Johnny Ma** first immigrated to Toronto at the age of 10. Ma graduated from the film program at Columbia University and was a fellow at the Sundance Institute Screenwriting and Directing Lab in 2014. In 2016, *Old Stone*, Ma's directorial debut, world-premiered at the Berlinale. It was awarded the Best Canadian First Feature Award at the Toronto International Film Festival and Best First Feature at the Canadian Screen Awards. The film was nominated in five other categories, including Best Film. Ma currently resides in Shanghai.

ISABEL BADER THEATRE

THURSDAY, NOV 7TH
7:30 PM

SPECIAL EVENT

Opening Night Gala Reception

9:30 PM–12:00AM
CONTACT PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY
(80 SPADINA AVE, SUITE 205)

$10 AT THE DOOR/FREE FOR MEMBERS OR WITH OPENING NIGHT TICKET STUB

Join us, along with *To Live To Sing* director Johnny Ma, at the Contact Photography Gallery in our old home at 80 Spadina Ave to raise a toast to the opening of Reel Asian's 23rd edition!

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FEATURE PRESENTATION — **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3** — **FRIDAY, NOV 8TH 6:15 PM**

Ms. Purple

Justin Chon was born in Orange County, California, where he learned to drag race Honda Civics. His previous film *Gook* won the NEXT Audience Award at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival and he was also the winner of the Kiehl's Someone to Watch Award at the 2018 Film Independent Spirit Awards. He loves long walks on the beach and reading romance novels by candlelight.

In the dark karaoke rooms of Los Angeles's Koreatown stripmalls, Kasie works as a *doumi* girl, a young hostess paid to cater to rich businessmen's capricious whims. As she struggles to hide her sorrow through soju-and-MDMA-fueled nights, her mind is focused on one thing: earning enough tips to provide for her bedridden father. When her father's caretaker unexpectedly quits, Kasie seeks help from her estranged brother, and the siblings are forced to reconnect and reconcile the suppressed trauma that led to their separation.

The follow-up to Justin Chon's award-winning debut *Gook* (2017), *Ms. Purple* (2019) digs beneath the veneer of the model minority myth and delivers an antidote to the polished onslaught of K-Pop and Korean dramas. Chon isn't afraid to unravel the darker and complex corners of the Korean-American experience. Tiffany Chu delivers a layered performance as Kasie, navigating the fine line between desperation and determination, immersed in lush cinematic moments reminiscent of Wong Kar Wai's *In the Mood for Love* and Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight*.

Backed by executive producer and *Lost* alum Daniel Dae Kim and featuring a cameo by *Single Parents* Jake Choi, *Ms. Purple* premiered in competition at Sundance and solidifies Chon as a filmmaker to watch. - JL

USA 2019
87:00
English, Korean with English subtitles
14A • Canadian Premiere

DIRECTOR
Justin Chon

CAST
Tiffany Chu
Teddy Lee
Octavio Pizano
James Kang

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Sundance Film Festival
2019 CAAM Festival

WITH SUPPORT FROM

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS
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NAAAP Toronto

FRIDAY, NOV 8TH
8:30 PM

TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
CINEMA 3

FEATURE PRESENTATION

Lucky Grandma

USA 2019
100:00
English, Mandarin with English subtitles
PG • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Sasie Sealy

CAST
Tsai Chin
Corey Ha
Michael Tow
Woody Fu
Wai Ching Ho

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Tribeca Film Festival

2019 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival

2019 BFI London Film Festival

Writer Angela Cheng and producer Cara Marcous in attendance for post-screening Q&A

In the heart of Chinatown, New York, an ornery, chain-smoking, and newly widowed 80-year-old grandma (Tsai Chin) is eager to live life as an independent woman, despite the worry of her family. When a local fortune teller (Wai Ching Ho) predicts a most auspicious day in her future, Grandma decides to head to the casino and goes all in, only to land herself on the wrong side of luck...suddenly attracting the attention of some local gangsters. Desperate to protect herself, Grandma employs the services of a bodyguard from a rival gang (Corey Ha) and soon finds herself right in the middle of a Chinatown gang war.

Legendary actor Tsai Chin (*Joy Luck Club*) plays a character we rarely see beyond stereotypes or comic relief, and plays Grandma with verve, sensitivity and snark. Meanwhile, director Sasie Sealy brings to life a dark comedy about immigrant life, the vulnerabilities of aging and an unexpected friendship. Set in alleyways and underground mahjong parlors with a cast of richly drawn characters *Lucky Grandma* is a love letter to Chinatown and an homage to all the badass elderly women who inhabit it.

Sasie Sealy is an award-winning writer/director from North Carolina, known for combining visually striking imagery and playful moments. She has twice been awarded the short filmmaking prize at the Tribeca Film Festival. A fellowship and new short with HBO in 2014 led to a chance to direct episodic television and her first DGA nomination for her work on *Gortimer Gibbons' Life on Normal Street*. She has directed multiple projects for Amazon and most recently an episode of *Fresh Off the Boat*. Sealy is currently based in New York City where she directs commercials. *Lucky Grandma* is her feature debut.

WITH SUPPORT FROM

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FEATURE PRESENTATION — **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3** — **SUNDAY, NOV 10TH 5:15 PM**

We Are Champions

Chang Jung-chi began his career in documentary filmmaking and won the Golden Horse Award for Best Documentary in 2006 with *My Football Summer*. His first feature, *Touch of the Light* (2012), produced by Wong Kar-wai, was Taiwan's entry for Best Foreign Language Film at the 85th Academy Awards and won him the Golden Horse Award for Best New Director. His 2014 film *Partners in Crime* was screened at major international film festivals including Toronto, Busan and Tokyo.

WITH SUPPORT FROM

MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

With memories of the Raptors championship still fresh in our hearts and minds, we now know how hard the journey is to be a champion. It takes endless amounts of strategy, skill, and a few bounces of good luck (say, about four bounces on the rim?). It also takes the intangibles of heart and kinship.

Born into the bottom rungs of society, two teenage brothers with nothing but each other hope to change their fate through their love of basketball. Little brother Tung-hao joins an elite school and transforms into a dazzling James Harden-esque superstar; big brother Hsiu-yu brings his scrappy Steve Nash-game to a ragtag squad about to be disbanded, finding an unexpected camaraderie in his never-say-die teammates. Inevitably the brothers must cross paths on their way to ultimate basketball glory in the HBL tournament (a March Madness-style Taiwanese high school basketball championship). With authentic basketball action from actors who have laced it up, celebrated Tawainese director Chang Jung-chi returns to his "sports as a metaphor for life" roots in *We Are Champions*, where these young ballers will discover that some things are more important than winning.

Taiwan 2019
115:00
Mandarin with Chinese and English subtitles
G • Canadian Premiere

DIRECTOR
Chang Jung-chi
(in attendance)

CAST
Fandy Fan
Berant Zhu
Tuan Chun-hao
David Wu

Proud to play our part

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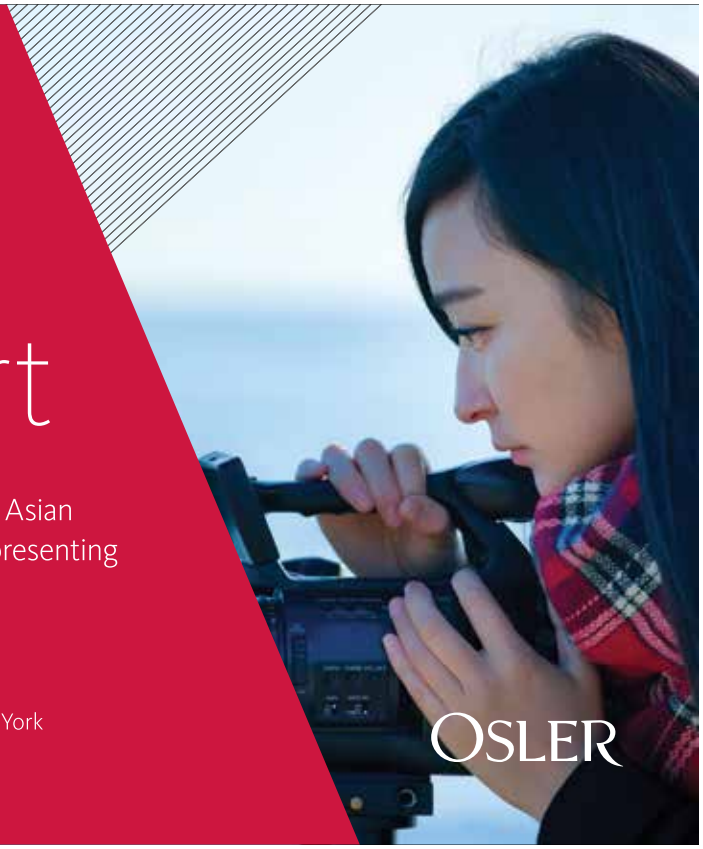

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FEATURE PRESENTATION — **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3** — **SUNDAY, NOV 10TH 8:15 PM**

We Are Little Zombies
ウィーアーリトルゾンビーズ

Japan 2019
120:00
Japanese with English subtitles
PG • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Makoto Nagahisa 長久允

CAST
Satoshi Mizuno
Sena Nakajima
Keito Ninomiya
Mondo Okumura

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Sundance Film Festival

2019 Berlin Film Festival

2019 Hong Kong International Film Festival

AWARDS
2019 Sundance Film Festival World Dramatic Special Jury Award for Originality

2019 Berlin International Film Festival Generation 14plus Special Mention

Makoto Nagahisa directed films and music videos while working at a major ad agency as a commercial planner. In 2017, Nagahisa wrote and directed the short film *And So We Put Goldfish in the Pool*, and was the first Japanese to win the Short Film Grand Jury Prize at the 33rd Sundance Film Festival. *We Are Little Zombies* is his first full-length feature film.

This screening is followed by a Q&A with producer Yasuo Suzuki

Standing outside a crematorium on a sunny day, four young strangers–Hikari, Ikuko, Ishi, and Takemura–meet by chance. Having each lost their parents under absurd circumstances, ranging from a car accident to murder, they are drawn together by their shared inability to shed a tear over their loss. Like zombies, the quartet are devoid of all emotions and they possess no motivation or goals in life. So, what are they to do? Of course, form a kick ass rock band! This is the story of how four "zombies" become viral sensations and take the world by storm on their quest to recover what they have lost–their emotions–and perhaps gain something greater than that in the end.

Makoto Nagahisa's directorial debut is a fascinating and inventive look at grief and loss that never sacrifices its emotional rawness. The film keeps audiences entertained through its creative use of video game wackiness, vivid imagery and an unforgettable soundtrack. Featuring cameos from some of the best names in Japanese cinema, including Rinko Kikuchi and Sosuke Ikematsu, *We Are Little Zombies* reminds us that in order to find ourselves again, often it just takes something as simple as a great rock song.
- SW

WITH SUPPORT FROM
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Canada Japan Society of Toronto

Yellow Rose

USA/Philippines 2019
94:00
English, Tagalog with English subtitles
PG • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Diane Paragas

CAST
Eva Noblezada
Lea Salonga
Princess Punzalan
(in attendance)
Libby Villari
Dale Watson

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival

2019 CAAMFest

2019 Bentonville Film Festival

2019 Hawaii International Film Festival

AWARDS
2019 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival Breakthrough Performance
North American Narrative Feature Grand Jury Award
North American Narrative Feature

2019 Bentonville Film Festival Jury Award Feature Narrative

2019 CAAMFest COMCAST Narrative Award

Rose is an undocumented Filipina teenager who lives with her mom at a small-town Texas motel and spends her days writing country songs and dreaming of stardom. When her mom is targeted and arrested in an immigration raid, Rose is left alone to deal with a world full of adult problems that she doesn't quite understand. Her only solace is in the music that is bursting from inside her.

Tony-nominated Broadway performer Eva Noblezada (*Hadestown*), in her film debut, dazzles as Rose. She fills the screen with charm and innocent wonder, and she possesses a knockout voice that will captivate audiences. Equally impressive is the supporting cast, including Broadway legend Lea Salonga (*Miss Saigon*), veteran Philippines actor Princess Punzalan and acclaimed country musician Dale Watson.

In her stirring feature film debut, veteran documentary filmmaker Diane Paragas has crafted an ambitious American country music fairy tale that is of our time yet timeless. And like many fairy tales where the danger and cruelty of the larger world is always close at hand, our heroine must rely on her extraordinary gift and a few helpful friends that she encounters on her journey in order to find her happy ending.

- AC

ISABEL BADER THEATRE

FRIDAY, NOV 15TH
7:00 PM

Diane Paragas is an award-winning documentary, commercial and narrative film director, and writer. She co-directed, shot and edited *Brooklyn Boheme* (featuring Spike Lee and Chris Rock), which premiered on Showtime and won the Black Reel Award for Outstanding Television Documentary. Paragas participated in the Sundance Creative Producing Lab with her documentary, *The Three Lives of David Wong*, and has won grants from BERTHA and the Center for Asian American Media. She is also the founder and owner of Brooklyn-based Civilian Studios.

SPECIAL EVENT

Closing Night Gala Reception

9:30 PM–12:00AM
CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION – ANNEX
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Join us as we take over the CSI Annex Lounge space to wrap up Reel Asian's 23rd edition! We're in a gorgeous new venue in the Annex, just west of midtown, with Filipino hors d'oeuvres from Tita Flips.

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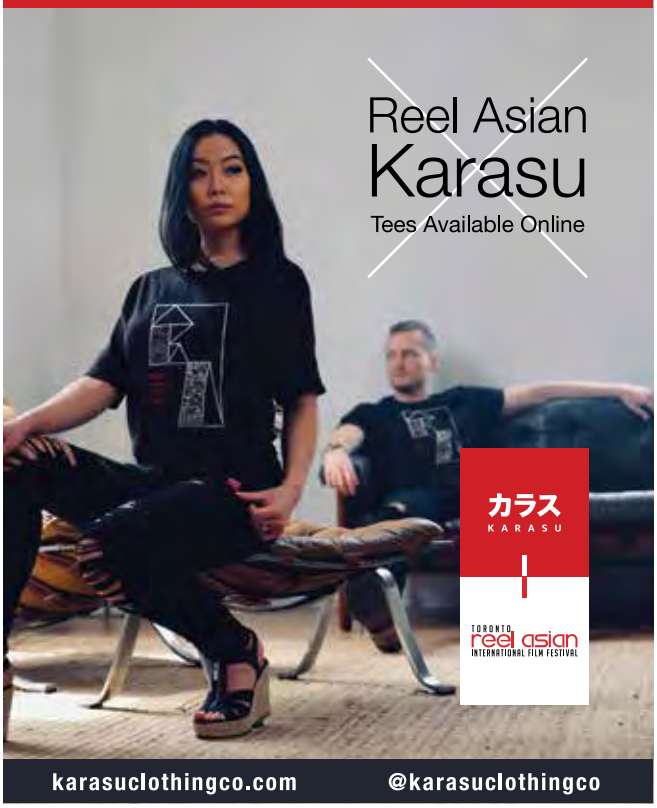

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VISTA

Look beyond the horizon, below the surface, outside the box. Dare to explore with filmmakers as they take you through their worlds of animation, fiction, and documentary, reflecting on connections with their community and their culture

FRIDAY, NOV 8TH
3:30 PM

TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
CINEMA 3

FEATURE
PRESENTATION

John Denver Trending

Philippines 2019
96:00
Tagalog and Kinaray-a with English subtitles
R • Canadian Premiere

DIRECTOR
Arden Rod Condez

CAST
Jansen Magpusao
Meryll Soriano
Glenn Mas
Sammy Rubido

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Busan International Film Festival

2019 Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival

John Denver Cabungcal is determined to pass 8th grade while helping his widowed mother make ends meet. After a school performance rehearsal, however, his life is upended after one of his classmates accuses him of stealing his iPad. This has not been the first time that he has been accused (and caught) for stealing, but John Denver is mad, because this time, he's innocent. He snaps and gets into a fight with his accuser, but his accuser is popular, and his friends have recorded the assault and posted it on social media. The weaver town of Antique goes into a frenzy, and John Denver and his mother are caught in the vicious social media aftermath that cannot be undone.

Director Arden Rod Condez, who also hails from Antique, based the film on several true stories circulating on social media today. Shot with almost all non-professional actors, speaking in Antique's native tongue Kinaray-a, *John Denver Trending*'s message is universal in its distressed signal on the safe spaces social media fails to provide for people coming of age. - KE

Arden Rod Condez hails from Pandan, Antique, Philippines. He has been a writer of ABS-CBN Corporation for almost 15 years. He is a graduate of the University of the Philippines in the Visayas with a degree in Broadcast Communication. He took a second major in literature, specializing on the Western Visayas in the Philippines, where Condez is from. *John Denver Trending* is Condez's directorial debut and is based off of his Palanca Award winning story of the same name.

WITH SUPPORT FROM

CHANGE CONNECT

COMMUNITY PARTNER
Philippine Canadian Charitable Foundation

Content warning: This film contains scenes that depict suicide which viewers may find triggering. Kids Help Phone: Need help right now? Text CONNECT to 686868 to chat with a volunteer Crisis Responder 24/7

FEATURE PRESENTATION — **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3** — **SATURDAY, NOV 9TH 11:00 AM**

The Last Stitch

Alfred Sung worked at Hong Kong NOW TV and TVB Network Vision as Senior Research Writer from 2008 to 2014. He has published six books, including two graphic novels, *The Sung Family* and *The Sung Family 2*, both depicting his family's life. Sung's first feature film, *The Last Stitch*, received Hong Kong CNEX Pitching Master Workshop "Best Pitch" in 2014. Clips from *The Last Stitch* were featured in CTV's 2017 documentary, *Canada in a Day*.

The 1997 British handover of Hong Kong to China prompted the Sung family, like many others, to immigrate to Canada. Relinquishing his father's tailoring business in Repulse Bay, Tommy Sung, along with his wife Connie and their sons, came to Toronto in 1996 in search of a better future.

Previously focused on creating Western-style dress that catered to wealthy British patrons, the Sungs have continued to tailor over the last 20 years, making cheongsam and predominantly Chinese-style wear for the Chinese diaspora in Toronto.

The Last Stitch highlights the everyday details of the family business in tender emotional beats, juxtaposing contemporary scenes of the Sung's life with archival family videos and photos, presenting evolving ideas of home and homeland across three generations. These perspectives bear gentle witness to the different seasons of life that families continually experience, while illustrating how some concerns change and others stay the same.

Sung deftly weaves intergenerational perspectives in his finely crafted documentary to offer a heartwarming and deeply personal look at the legacy and impact of the family's tailoring business that is sure to resonate with audiences. - JG

Canada/Hong Kong 2019
69:00
English, Cantonese with English subtitles
PG • Canadian Premiere

DIRECTOR
Alfred Sung
(in attendance)

WITH SUPPORT FROM

HONG KONG
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (Toronto)
We work across Canada

SATURDAY, NOV 9TH
3:45 PM

TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
CINEMA 3

FEATURE PRESENTATION

Love Boat: Taiwan

USA/Taiwan 2019
60:00
PG • Canadian Premiere
English and Mandarin
with English subtitles

DIRECTOR
Valerie Soe
(in attendance)

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival

2019 CAAMFEST

This screening will be followed by a Q&A moderated by journalist Jan Wong

Love Boat: Taiwan explores the Overseas Compatriot Youth Study Tour, a cultural exchange program that started in the 1960s. Once used as a political tool by the KMT Nationalist government to reach generations of diasporic Chinese youth, the program is often colloquially referred to as the Taiwan Love Boat due to its reputation as a place for participants to fall in love (and party, drink, and fight).

One of the longest-running summer programs in the world, Love Boat spanned a number of large political shifts in the region, aspiring to connect young people to their roots through cultural programming–or, some would say, propaganda.

Director Soe, who was herself a Love Boat participant in the '80s, presents the differing positionalities and experiences of program participants from the '60s to the present day, who in one way or another find themselves part of this program and are expected to cultivate a relationship with their Taiwanese homeland and develop new understandings of their identity. *Love Boat: Taiwan* bears witness to the evolving intricacies of what it means to be a hyphenated Asian. - JG

Since 1986, **Valerie Soe**'s experimental videos, installations, and documentary films have won dozens of awards, grants, and commissions, and have exhibited worldwide at venues such as the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles, MOMA, and the New Museum in New York City. Her published works include *Countervisions: Asian American Film Criticism; Asian Cinema*, and *Amerasia Journal*, among many others. Soe is the author of the blog, beyondasiaphilia.com.

WITH SUPPORT FROM

文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

FEATURE PRESENTATION | **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3** | **SATURDAY, NOV 9TH 8:00 PM**

Gyopo

After 12 years in Seoul, **Samuel Kiehoon Lee** has returned to his hometown of Toronto and is currently attending the York MFA film program. Many of his works have travelled the world and have garnered several awards, most notably his short documentary, *How to Make Kimchi: according to my Kun-umma*. A graduate of the Canadian Film Centre 2011 Director's Lab, Lee continues to hone his craft through various formats, including music videos and experimental works. *Gyopo* is Lee's first feature-length film.

Helen Lee is an award-winning Korean Canadian writer/director based in Toronto and Seoul.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

JETAA Toronto

Korean Canadian Scholarship Foundation

Department of Cinema & Media Arts, York University

A "gyopo" is someone of Korean descent who has been raised abroad. Samuel Kiehoon Lee's first feature tells the intimate stories of gyopos who have made a pilgrimage to Korea, only to find themselves outsiders in the country that gave birth to their parents. Inspired by films like *Playtime* and *Dazed and Confused*, Lee weaves together vignettes from a diverse band of well-educated 20- and 30-somethings as they get drunk, laugh, fall in love, and get into fist fights over a 24-hour period in Seoul.

Lee has made an energetic and inventive portrait of a generation of gyopos like himself who find themselves immersed in but apart from Korean culture. Creatively shot utilizing improvisation and told with nuance, heart, humour, and snark, *Gyopo* gives us a portrait of the gyopo experience that will resonate with anyone who struggles to feel at home. - AC

PRECEDED BY

INTO SUCH ASSEMBLY
Helen Lee (in attendance) • Canada • 2019 • 5:00
English, Korean with English subtitles
A video essay adaptation of Korean American poet Myung Mi Kim's iconic work.

Canada/Korea 2019
95:00
14A • World Premiere
English, Korean with English subtitles

DIRECTOR

Samuel Kiehoon Lee (in attendance)

CAST

Bobby Choy
Sally Yoo
Paul Hwangbo
Nikki Webster
Kevin Kim
Young Joo Lee
Jake Kwon
Chloe Lee
Samuel Kiehoon Lee
Eun-Young Jeong
Seung-Hyun Chong
Haeryun Kang

TORONTO reel asian INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

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FEATURE PRESENTATION

TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3

SUNDAY, NOV 10TH 2:30 PM

Jeronimo

Joseph Juhn is a second-generation Korean American lawyer-turned-documentary filmmaker. A serendipitous backpacking trip to Cuba in 2015 changed Juhn's life when he ran into a Korean descendant by chance, inspiring him to rekindle his storytelling ambitions. Juhn studied for a BA in Film & Video at UC San Diego. His most notable student work, *Story of Daniel Matthews*, is a short about the identity crisis of a Korean adoptee into a Caucasian family in the US. Since then he has made *Letter to My Children* (2018), in which a Korean immigrant to Cuba reflects on what homeland means to him.

In 2015, lawyer-turned-filmmaker Joseph Juhn embarked on a backpacking trip to Havana, where the first person he struck up a conversation with was his airport taxi driver, a Korean-Cuban woman. What began as a vacation became a candid journey of discovering the untold history of Korean-Cuban diaspora centered on the legacy of one man: Jeronimo Lim.

Born in the 1920s to servant parents in Cuba, Jeronimo Lim became the first Korean-Cuban to enroll in university. He eventually became a prominent member of the Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro's government.

Over the course of three years, Juhn unravels a remarkable network of stories that not only illustrates the impact Jeromino had on the Korean-Cuban community, but the deep ties forged by his family's legacy between the troubled past of Cuba and a divided Korea. *Jeronimo* is an exemplary film that defies borders and brings new meaning to identity and self-discovery. - PL

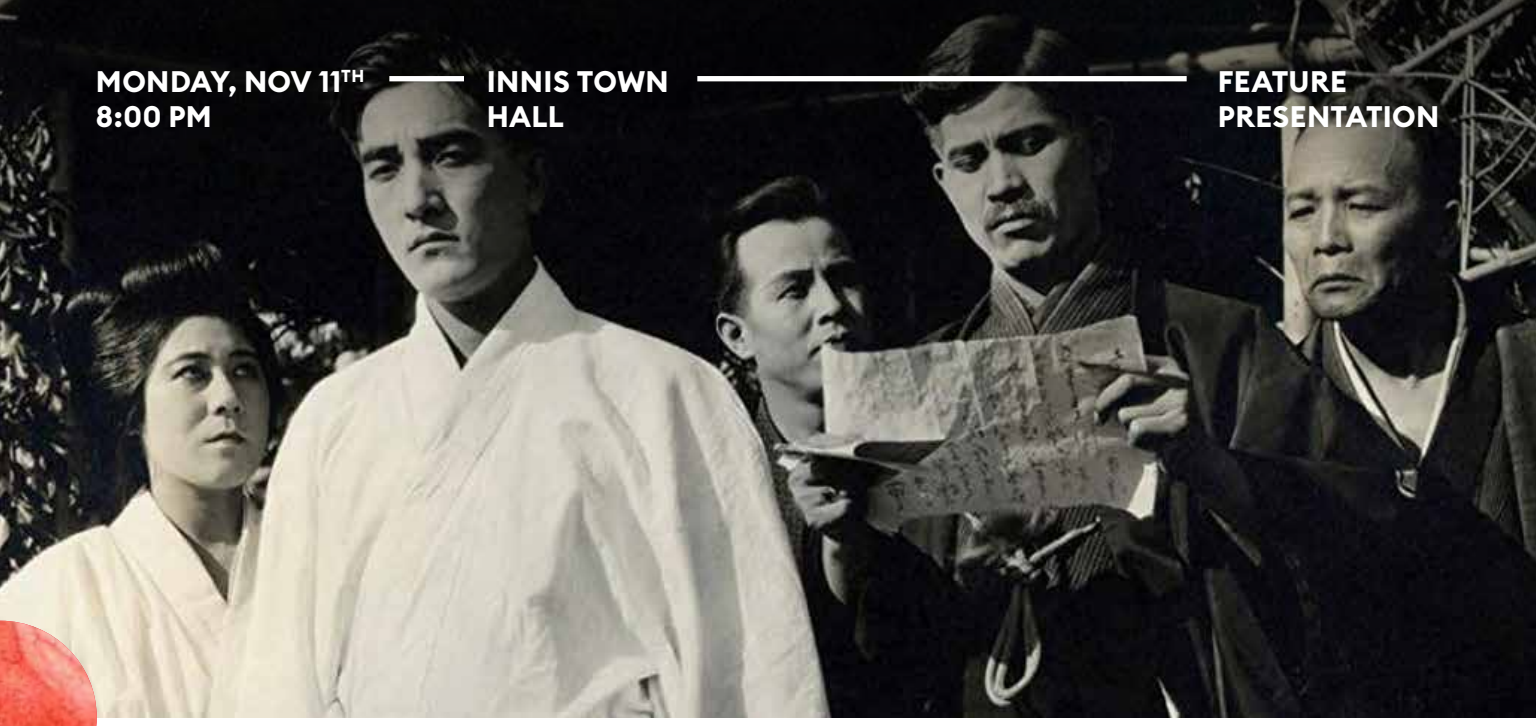
USA/Cuba 2019
100:00
English, Korean, Spanish with English subtitles
PG • Canadian Premiere

DIRECTOR
Joseph Juhn
(in attendance)

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Dallas Asian Film Festival

2019 Asian American International Film Festival

COMMUNITY PARTNER
Korean Canadian Scholarship Foundation



MONDAY, NOV 11TH
8:00 PM

INNIS TOWN HALL

FEATURE PRESENTATION

The Dragon Painter
with live score

USA 1919
53:00
Silent with English intertitles
G

DIRECTOR
William Worthington

CAST
Sessue Hayakawa
Tsuru Aoki
Edward Peil
Toyo Fujita

Guests must register for this **FREE event** through Asian Institute at: **munkschool.utoronto.ca/events**

WITH SUPPORT FROM

munk school OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS & PUBLIC POLICY | UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DR. DAVID CHU PROGRAM IN ASIA-PACIFIC STUDIES

An early Hollywood silent film, *The Dragon Painter* is a fantasy romance about love and creative inspiration. Tatsu (Hayakawa) is a reclusive artist who lives in the mountains of Japan painting images of the dragon princess he loved in another life. He comes to believe the daughter of a wealthy art collector is his lost princess, but as Tatsu finds happiness in love, his art begins to suffer.

In his prime, Hayakawa was as popular as Charlie Chaplin, as rich as Douglas Fairbanks, and to this day, the only Asian American to own his own Hollywood studio. Hayakawa founded Haworth Pictures Corporation after becoming fed up with the self-proclaimed Orientalist roles in which he was cast by the major studios, including his character in Cecil B. DeMille's *The Cheat*. Hayakawa's studio subsequently released 19 films between the years of 1918 to 1922.

Although set in Japan, *The Dragon Painter* was shot on location in Yosemite National Park and stars a predominantly Japanese American cast, including Hayakawa's wife, Tsuru Aoki. Produced by Hayakawa's own studio, the film deliberately strived to provide an authentic perspective on Japanese culture that countered the dominant narrative of stereotypes, violence, and melodramatic conflict expected in so-called "Oriental" films of the period. For these reasons, it is considered to be one of the first Asian American films in history. - RB

On the occasion of the film's 100th anniversary, *The Dragon Painter* will be presented with a live musical accompaniment and an original score by Los Angeles-based musician **Goh Nakamura** that was originally commissioned by the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival. A presentation on Hayakawa's work and legacy will be given by **Stephen Gong**, film archivist and executive director of the Center for Asian American Media, who was responsible for locating and overseeing the restoration of the last existing print of *The Dragon Painter*.

This screening will be followed by a discussion moderated by Takashi Fujitani, professor of history at the University of Toronto, where he is director of the Dr. David Chu Program in Asia-Pacific Studies.

FEATURE PRESENTATION — **INNIS TOWN HALL** — **WEDNESDAY, NOV 13TH 8:00 PM**

What We Left Unfinished

Mariam Ghani's previous projects in Afghanistan have documented the spatial politics of the post-war constitutional assembly, real-estate speculations in reconstructed Kabul, afterlives of former secret prisons, diasporic translators in theatres of war, and forgotten histories of Afghan modernists, artists and intellectuals. *What We Left Unfinished* is her first feature.

From 1978 to 1991, the Afghan Films Institute had been producing propaganda features to fit with the times. This documentary follows the incredible story of five of these unfinished works from Afghanistan's Communist era, when the constantly shifting political regimes resulted in films remaining unfinished, unedited, and thought to be destroyed.

In her debut feature, Mariam Ghani pieces together fragments of this once-lost footage, from *The April Revolution* (1978), *Downfall* (1987), *The Black Diamond* (1989), *Wrong Way* (1990), and *Agent* (1991), unedited (and therefore, uncensored). Just as the original filmmakers did when they shot action scenes with real bullets, hired ex-agents to play spies, or restaged the Communist coup d'état with the army, air force, and an awful lot of tanks and missiles, *What We Left Unfinished* interweaves histories and fictions.

Ultimately, we come to understand both the price paid by Afghan filmmakers for the benefits they gained under Communism and the reasons they persisted despite the risks they faced – and why they still believe that film could save Afghanistan from the divisions tearing it apart today.

Afghanistan/USA 2019
71:00
Dari with English subtitles
PG • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Mariam Ghani
(in attendance)

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Berlinale Forum
2019 SFFILM
2019 Sheffield Doc/Fest

Guests must register for this **FREE** event through Asian Institute at: **munkschool.utoronto.ca/events**

WITH SUPPORT FROM

This screening will be followed by a discussion moderated by Shahrzad Mojab, a professor in the Department of Leadership, Higher and Adult Education at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

THURSDAY, NOV 14TH
7:00 PM

JAPANESE CANADIAN CULTURAL CENTRE

FEATURE PRESENTATION

The Miracle of Crybaby Shottan 泣き虫しょったんの奇跡

Japan 2018
127:00
Japanese with English subtitles
G • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Toshiaki Toyoda

CAST
Ryuhei Matsuda
Yojiro Noda
Shota Sometani
Jun Kunimura
Takako Matsu
Satoshi Tsumabuki

OFFICIAL SELECTION
2019 Japan Cuts New York

Toshiaki Toyoda's star-studded biopic tells the true story of *shogi* (Japanese chess) player Shoji "Shottan" Segawa. Despite consistent dedication, Shottan (Ryuhei Matsuda) fails to go professional by the time he turns 26, permanently forfeiting his chance according to the game's strict rules. Shottan does not abandon his dream and continues as a top amateur until, at 35, he makes an unprecedented bid to go professional.

Informed by Toyoda's personal shogi experience (he trained to go professional as an adolescent), this tale of late-blooming self-realization is an inspirational study of perseverance against all odds. Both a sensitive character study and fascinating glimpse into the closed world of shogi, director Toyoda's (*Blue Spring, I'm Flash*) film builds to a rousing conclusion.

Born in Osaka in 1969, **Toshiaki Toyoda** participated in the Shogi League Encouragement Meetings (Shorei-kai) from age 9 to 17. He used these experiences to script Junji Sakamoto's *Checkmate* (1991), and continued to work with the director on several films. His own directorial debut, *Pornostar* (1998), starring Koji "Junia" Chihara, won several awards that year on the festival circuit, and his manga-to-film adaptation *Blue Spring* (2002) became a mega-hit. His filmography also includes *I'm Flash* (2012) and *Crows: Explode* (2014).

Tickets for this event are sold exclusively through the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre. Visit **torontojff.com** or call **416-441-2345**.

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT

PHOTO CREDIT: LUIS MORA

Challenging norms, paving the road, and telling fresh stories, our Canadian Spotlight Artist program is dedicated to a member of the dynamic and talented Asian Canadian film community.

This program celebrates a selected artist through activating their journey, process, and future works

Yung Chang 張僑勇

Reel Asian has closely followed Yung Chang (張僑勇)'s journey as a multi-award-winning documentary filmmaker whose artistic practice aims to critically capture and interpret reality. We are pleased to showcase Chang's work as well as spotlight his transition into developing his first dramatic feature, *Eggplant*.

Chang is the director of *Up the Yangtze* (2007), *China Heavyweight* (2012), *The Fruit Hunters* (2013), and *Gatekeeper* (2016). In 2015, he was a Fellow at the prestigious Sundance Institute Directors and Screenwriters Labs, where he worked on *Eggplant*. Chang's latest feature documentary, the NFB-co-produced *This Is Not a Movie*, follows Robert Fisk, the controversial Middle East correspondent.

Chang's films have screened at international film festivals, including Sundance, Berlin, and Toronto, and have played theatrically in cinemas around the world. *Up the Yangtze* was one of the top-grossing documentary releases in 2008. In 2013, *China Heavyweight* became the most widely screened social-issue documentary in Chinese history, with an official release in 200 mainland Chinese cinemas. In addition, his films have been viewed by millions thanks to broadcasters such as National Geographic, Channel 4, CBC, PBS, NHK Japan, and ZDF Arte.

Chang's films have also received critical acclaim in cities across the globe, from Milan to Vancouver to Taipei, winning Canadian Screen Awards, Golden Horse Awards and Cinema Eye Honors, among others, and garnering nominations from the Toronto Film Critics Association, Sundance, the Emmys and the Film Independent Spirit Awards.

Chang is a member of the Directors Guild of Canada, the Writers Guild of Canada and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT LEAD SPONSOR

Bell Media

VARIOUS VENUES

FRIDAY, NOV 1ST, MONDAY, NOV 11TH + THURSDAY, NOV 14TH

EARTH TO MOUTH

MON, NOV 11TH
6:00 PM AT BACHIR/YEREX

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT RETROSPECTIVE SCREENING OF *EARTH TO MOUTH*
Yung Chang • Canada • 2002 • 41:00 • Cantonese and Spanish with English subtitles

Filmed at the Wing Fong Farm in Ontario, *Earth to Mouth* (2002) follows the tilling, planting and harvesting of Asian vegetables destined for Chinese markets and restaurants. On 80 acres of land, Lau King-fai, her son and a half-dozen migrant Mexican workers care for the plants. For Yeung Kwan, her son, the farm represents personal and financial independence. For his mother, it is an oasis of peace. For the Mexican workers, it provides jobs that help support their children back home.

OTHER CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT EVENTS:

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1ST
8:00 PM AT INNIS TOWN HALL
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT SPARK SCREENING OF *COME DRINK WITH ME 大醉俠*
See page 42 for details.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH
8:00 PM AT CSI – ANNEX
CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT GALA LIVE SCRIPT READING OF *EGGPLANT*
See page 43 for details.

A Statement from the Artist:
It wasn't easy growing up in small-town Ontario. The '80s and '90s, my formative years, were tough on me. I experienced racism and self-hatred. I felt like an outsider. As a result, I grew up angry and shameful for being Chinese. This was instilled in me at a young age in the school playgrounds, from the unconscious bias of my teachers to daily interactions with the majority Caucasians who made me feel invisible. Something happened to me when I was around 12, after protesting at the Chinese consulate in Toronto in support of the 1989 student demonstrators. Seeing these heroic Chinese figures with their unrelenting courage and defiance, I realized that the world–my world–was much larger than Oshawa. These students were my modern wushu heroes. I decided at this time to become a filmmaker. Struggling with cultural identity, I discovered Frank Chin's *Donald Duk* and *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*. I fell in love with and in awe of Chinese Fifth-Generation filmmakers. I dove into arthouse films, sneaking out of high school classes and going to movie houses throughout Toronto to watch weird films. My eyes were opening. The world was bigger than even I could understand. We'd visited my grandparents in Taiwan when I was younger, but it wasn't until I went to Beijing with my grandfather for the first time that I finally reached some sort of peace with my cultural conflicts. I shed the self-hatred when I learned to embrace my outsider status.

My uprootedness, neither Canadian nor Chinese, helps me make my films. It's in the in-between that I thrive. Displacement, pariahs, and alienation are my themes. It's taken a lifetime for me to become a filmmaker, and I'm still struggling and learning, taking risks and challenging myself to work harder on my craft. The filmmaker's path is not a straight line. I only hope that this special recognition does not predict an imminent decline, for it is a fickle "business" too.

FRIDAY, NOV 1ST
8:00 PM

INNIS TOWN HALL

SPARK PRESENTATION

Come Drink With Me 大醉俠

Hong Kong 1966
95 min
Mandarin with English subtitles
18A • Other

DIRECTOR
King Hu

RECTOR
Cheng Pei-pei
Yueh Hua
Chan Hung-lit

Ever wonder what films inspire great filmmakers? Our Canadian Spotlight Artist Yung Chang hosts *Come Drink With Me*, a film he first saw on VHS as a little kid.

Long before *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* wowed the western world, *Come Drink With Me* set an entirely new standard for martial arts movies in the Far East. Director King Hu (a.k.a. Hu King-chuan) not only broke new ground but set the groundwork for all the action films that followed. The film tells the story of a mysterious swordswoman nicknamed Golden Swallow, and the even more mysterious swordsman, Drunken Cat. They join forces to free a kidnapped official from a Buddhist monastery run by a corrupt abbot with incredible kung-fu powers. Golden Swallow is played by none other than Zhang Ziyi's evil old nanny from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*, Cheng Pei-pei. Here, Cheng is anything but old and evil, but rather a 20-year-old force on the verge of one of the most spectacular careers in Hong Kong martial arts history.

The film is a superb example of how Hu melded the martial aspects of Beijing opera with the stoic brutality of the popular Japanese samurai films to create a whole new lyrical realm in filmmaking and action swordplay. What you can expect from this film is ingeniously staged action scenes and a cast of characters that looks as cool today as when the film burst upon the cinema scene in 1966.

A leader among filmmakers, with his cinematic approach and fight choreographic aesthetics, **King Hu** changed the direction of swordsman films and set the standard for all martial art–stylized action movies to come.

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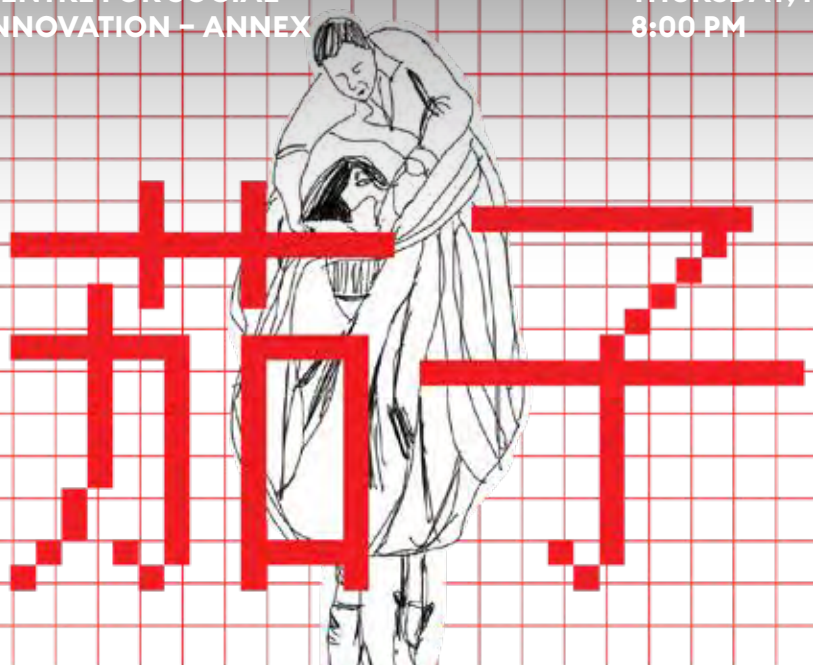
LIVE SCRIPT READING + ARTIST TALK — CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION – ANNEX — THURSDAY, NOV 14TH 8:00 PM



Eggplant 茄子

Vivian Lin (moderator) is a writer, producer, and director. She has written on the television series *Killjoys, Bajillionaires, Carter,* and is currently on CityTV's *Hudson and Rex.* She directed the horror short *And They Watched* as part of the anthology Fun Size Horror volume 2 (Hulu) and produced the short *Abhorrent* as part of the series "Fun Size Horror's ShockTale Party" (Amazon Prime). She is a partner at Midnight Print Studio, a commercial production company, but also a studio for dorks and nerds.

CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT GALA RECEPTION
9:30 PM–12:00AM
$5 at the door/free for members or with canadian spotlight gala ticket stub

Following the live script reading of his debut narrative feature, *Eggplant*, join Canadian Spotlight artist Yung Chang in celebrating his extensive body of work. Meet the cast of the live script reading and hang out with rising stars of Asian Canadian talent!

A neo-noir love story set in China, *Eggplant* follows Yang Meng, an outsider who's never fit into traditional societal expectations. She works as a wedding grifter who steals bride fees from desperate countryside bachelors. In a collision of fate, she runs into her ex-lover, Wu Kang, a wedding photographer escaping a troubled life in Taiwan. The past quickly confronts the present in an explosion of events as Yang Meng fights to break out of a system that can't be broken, forcing these two Chinese millennials to survive in a society fixated on money, materialism, and duty.

Eggplant is Yung Chang's first narrative feature script, and Reel Asian is excited to share his process in bringing the script to life at this live-read event featuring local star power. The live-read will lead into a special artist talk between Yung Chang and moderator Vivian Lin and culminate in a reception to celebrate Chang's works. Join us as one of the first to witness Chang's highly-anticipated narrative work.

Canada 2019
45:00 (Live Script Reading)
+ 30:00 (Discussion)
English
Unrated Event

DIRECTOR
Yung Chang 張僑勇

CAST
Andrea Bang, of CBC-TV's *Kim's Convenience*
TBA

WITH SUPPORT FROM

Writers Guild of Canada

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Bring your kids – the next generation of media makers – for a fun day of activities, as they enjoy the moving image through crafts, film, and storytime with local authors

FREE admission . All ages welcome

STORYTIME WITH TYPE BOOKS
Cuddle up with a book in our mini-library nook or listen to a special selection of tales told by our lineup of extraordinary storytellers, curated by local independent bookstore, TYPE Books.

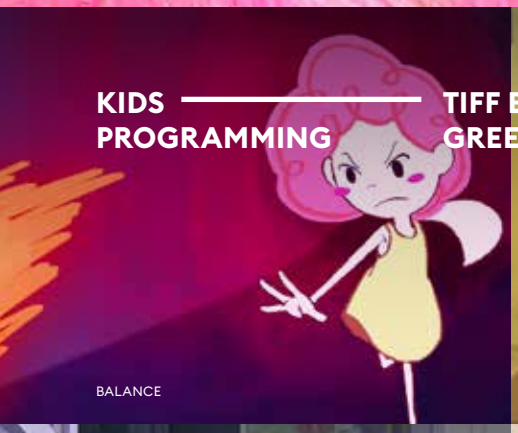
Thao Lam, illustrator and author of *My Cat Looks Like My Dad*
Sam Dizon, storyteller and origami artist
Charlene Chua, illustrator of *Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao*

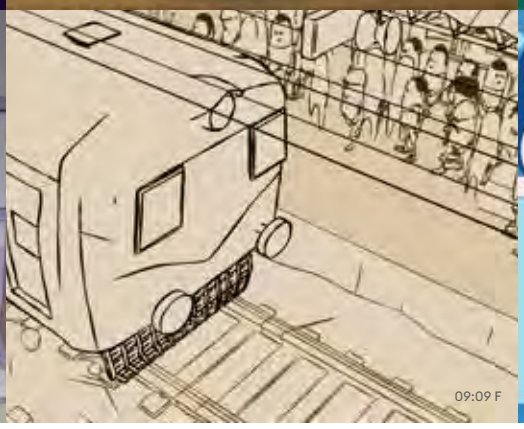
COLOUR WITH LYNN SCURFIELD
Breathe colourful life into the delightful drawings of this year's programme guide artist, Lynn Scurfield.

Lynn Scurfield (she/they) is an illustrator living in a sleepy town just outside of Toronto, Ontario. Her work is defined by vibrant colours and textures with strong emotional qualities.

CRAFT: HENNA ART | 12:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Adorn your wee ones with fun henna art by local artist Pepper Ventresca.

KIDS PROGRAMMING — **TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX GREEN ROOM** — **SATURDAY, NOV 9TH 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM**





FREE SCREENING | Playing on a loop

Enjoy these short and sweet animations specially selected for little ones!

IN PASSING (Esther Cheung, 4:08)
A portrait of Hong Kong in the seventies as the director's parents remember it.

BALANCE (Raymond Limantara, 3:38)
"There isn't enough room for the both of us." Two painters battle out what space they have to paint in their own style.

LITTLE BIRD (Sun Yeo, 2:26)
A poetic animation that follows Mila's encounter with a little bird who takes her on a journey to her memories, hopes, and love in her dreams.

RAY'S GREAT ESCAPE (Jie Weng, 7:00)
With a neighbouring volcano about to erupt, Ray decides to do whatever he can to bring his home with him.

PIT STOP (Raship Trikha, 1:28)
With the washroom out of service, an astronaut ends up relieving themselves elsewhere. Little do they know who they've woken up.

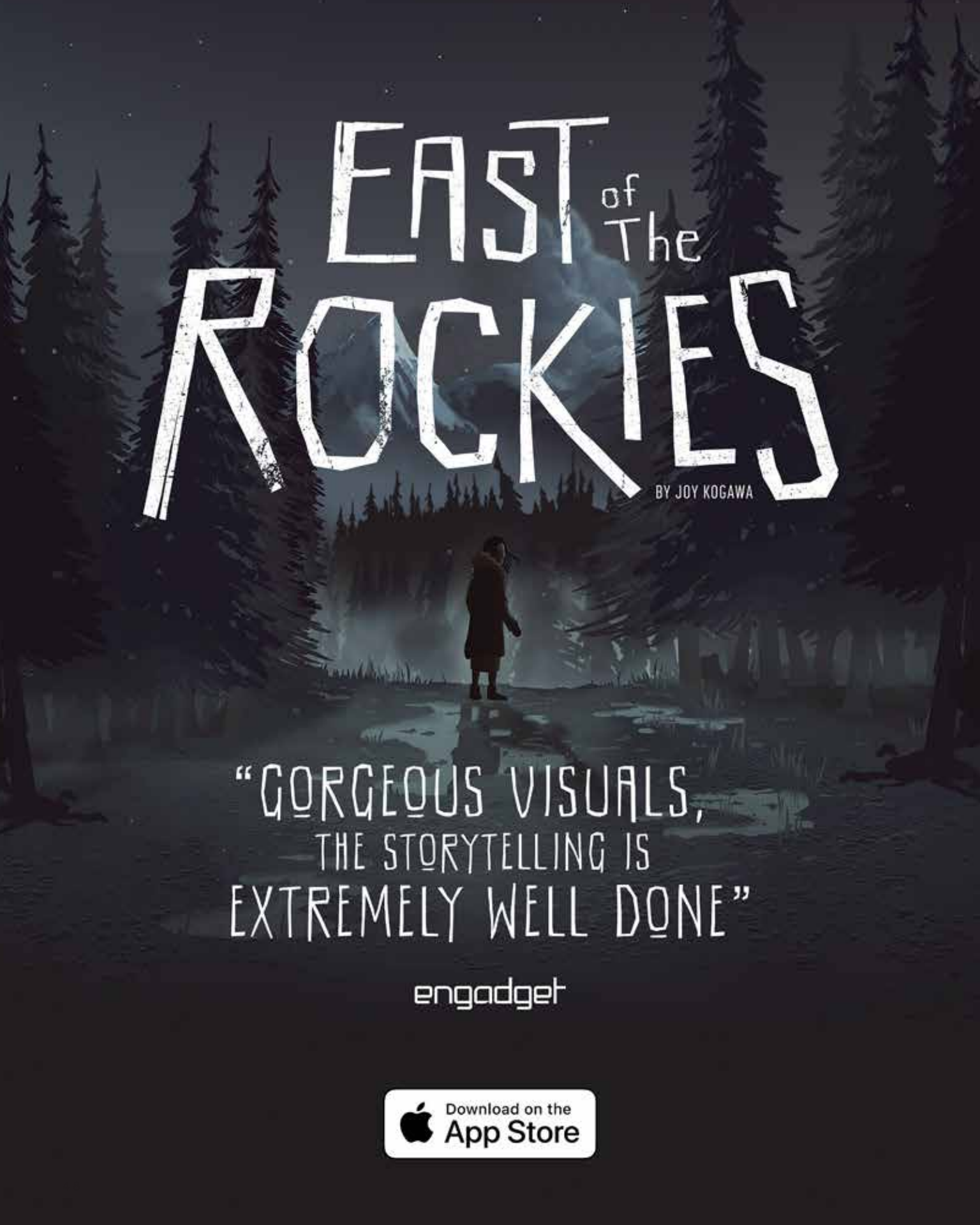
09:09 F (Avinash Medhe, 5:04)
What can you do to get on an overcrowded train?

PUSH (Trilina Mai, 4:02)
Grandpa and grandson are the best of friends until the grandson meets some other kids his age.

TWINKLE TWINKLE LITTLE STAR (Sun Yeo, 4:31)
Reimagining the classic song, this whimsical animation follows the journey of three little kids into the world of dreams.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

TYPE books


EAST of The ROCKIES
BY JOY KOGAWA
"GORGEOUS VISUALS, THE STORYTELLING IS EXTREMELY WELL DONE"
engadget
Download on the App Store

REEL ASIAN: X

Reel Asian: X is the variable. The unknown quantity that escapes the constants of the screen, time, and space. Everything that is not everything else is X

East of the Rockies

Reel Asian: X is the variable. The unknown quantity that escapes the constants of the screen, time, and space. Everything that is not everything else is X. This year, we are pleased to present *East of the Rockies* in a free experiential pop-up presented in partnership with Jam3, the design and experience agency that created the immersive AR app.

Come by the Reel Asian Festival Lounge and experience storytelling that goes beyond the screen.

Admission:
FREE and open to the public

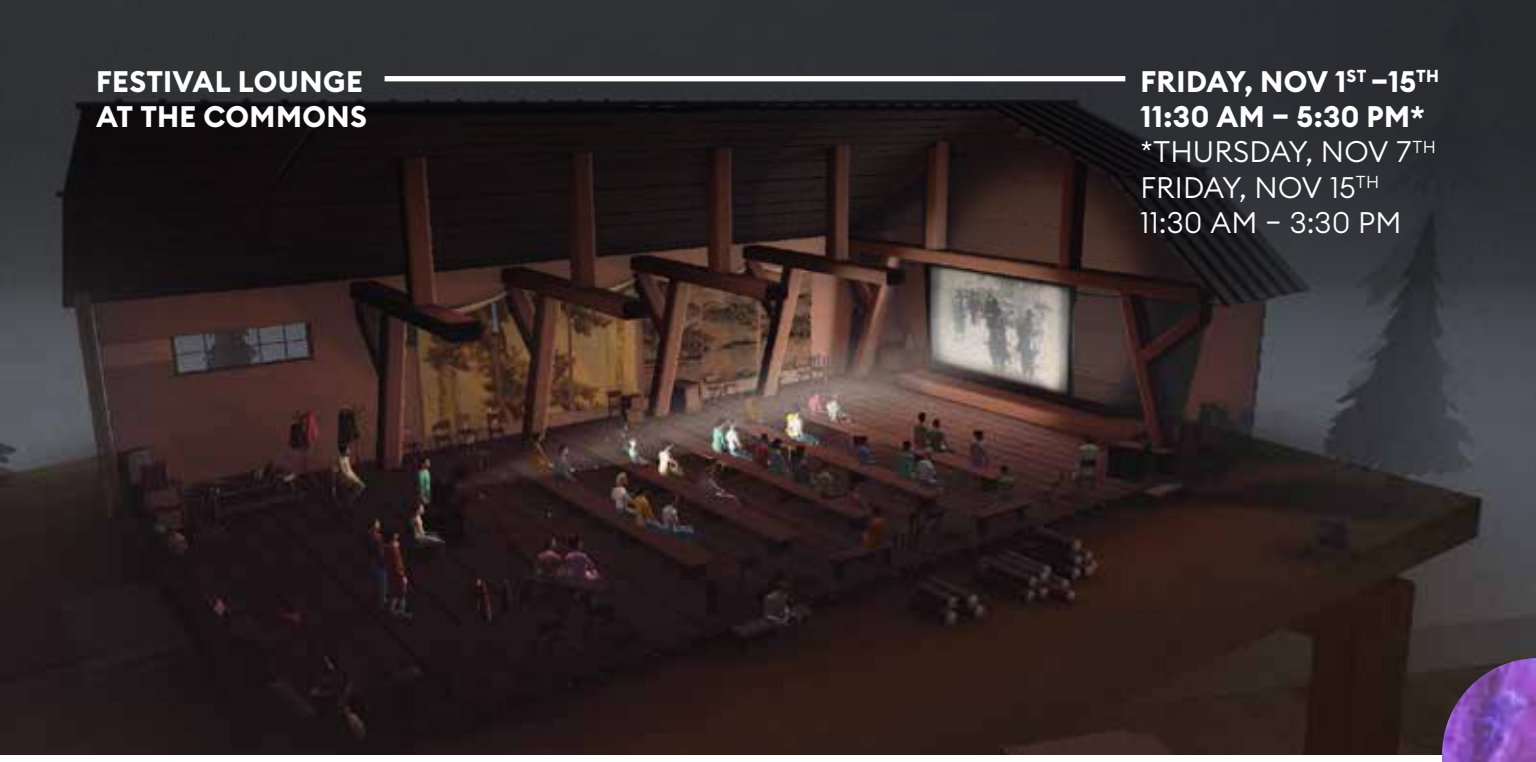
East of the Rockies is an AR (augmented-reality) experience written by 83-year-old Joy Kogawa, one of Canada's most acclaimed and celebrated literary figures. Kogawa is also a former internee at the Japanese Canadian internment camp at Slocan, BC.

While narrated by Kogawa's real life grandchild, Anne Canute, this interactive story is told from the perspective of Yuki, a 17-year-old girl forced from her home and made to live in the Slocan internment camp during the Second World War. In reflection, Kogawa has said how important it is to, as a community, help people who are also suffering; and that "we can stand with people who suffer, because we know what suffering is."

Canute's hope is that this story about the Japanese Canadian internment is an opportunity for audiences to reflect not only on this dark part of Canadian history, but on their relationship to it, and as an extension, to look at our current relationship to what Canute calls "the frankly racist movements that are happening right now." Today's rise of xenophobia and concentration camps, in the form of migrant detention centres, are a few similarities that come to mind – making *East of the Rockies* a timely contemplation. - JT

FESTIVAL LOUNGE AT THE COMMONS

FRIDAY, NOV 1ST –15TH
11:30 AM – 5:30 PM*
*THURSDAY, NOV 7TH
FRIDAY, NOV 15TH
11:30 AM – 3:30 PM



One of North America's most celebrated writers, **Joy Kogawa** is the award-winning author of three novels, seven collections of poetry, and two books for children. *Obasan*, which *The New York Times* called "a tour de force… brilliantly poetic in its sensibility," continues to be taught across North America. Kogawa has worked to educate Canadians about the history of Japanese Canadians and is a long-time activist in the areas of peace and reconciliation.

Jam3 is a design and experience agency known for smart, innovative and inspired work. They work closely with their clients to first understand their problems and then solve them in creative ways. From their offices in Toronto, Los Angeles and Montevideo, they team up with forward-thinking brands from around the world. Their diverse work has received global recognition from Cannes to The One Show, and even the Pulitzer Prize.

Anne Canute is a multiracial, multidisciplinary designer based in the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. They are in their final year at the University of British Columbia, where they study Cognitive Systems and Asian Canadian and Migration Studies. Their interests lie in digital storytelling, intersecting the arts with technology, and community-driven media. Following ***East of the Rockies***, Canute continues to explore forms of storytelling and recently worked on their first short film, *Ricecake*, which premiered at the 2019 Vancouver Queer Film Festival. Currently, they are in the process of putting together an art show about mixed identity called *Canned Foreign*. The exhibit, featuring installation art, experimental video, soundscapes, and drag, will go up at the Hatch Art Gallery in November 2019. Canute hopes to continue work in immersive storytelling and emerging media.

Canada 2019
40:00 - 60:00
English with English captioning

CREDITS
Joy Kogawa
Anne Canute
Jam3
The NFB Digital Studio

COMMUNITY PARTNER
CFC Media Lab

NAJC (National Association of Japanese Canadians)

Asian Canadian Women's Alliance

Canadian Race Relations Foundation

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Jam3

Let's face it, this entertainment industry is not an easy one. The world of acting in film & television seems borderline impossible – there are so many roadblocks and challenges thrown at anyone who is interested in coming into the entertainment industry. Most actors, including me, need to catch a break... **Reel Asian's Unsung Voices Program is that break!** For 2018's *Time, Space & Lee*, they gave me an opportunity to work with a crew, and it's not just for actors but specifically for anyone wants to gain mentorship as a DP, AD, or writer. Not only did they give me my first acting job but Hollywood star **Simu Liu** (*Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings*) got his first acting opportunity in a 2012 UV short and later became a graduate of the 2013 class of directors, making his own short film. **We need more programs like Unsung Voices and many more organizations like Reel Asian!**

– CHASE TANG, ACTOR
JUPITER'S LEGACY, SLASHER, VIEW

Born in Taipei, Taiwan, Chase Tang's family immigrated to Halifax, NS, where he grew up playing hockey. He is the youngest of three boys; his mother was a stay-at-home mom and his father an entrepreneur. After earning a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Guelph in Ontario, Chase was a successful corporate executive before deciding to leave it behind so he could follow his passion for the film and entertainment industry.

PULSE

Great things come in small packages. Our eclectic short film programmes, like your favourite mixtapes, are sure to have something for everyone. Laugh, cry, sing, and shout with these powerful bursts of cinema

Unsung Voices 8

Fearless first-time filmmakers embarked on an intensive summer-long video production workshop and now show their work in the world premiere of Unsung Voices 8.

English and various languages with English subtitles
PG • World Premiere

All filmmakers in attendance

WITH SUPPORT FROM

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FAMILY STYLE | Angela Feng • Canada • 2019 • 8:00
English, Cantonese & Mandarin w/ English subtitles
A student bends the truth of her home life in order to nail her anthropology presentation.

When **Angela Feng** was five years old, she played "Thursday - Jambalaya" in a locally-televised elementary school play. This has been her greatest accomplishment thus far.

CLICK HERE TO PLAY | Shubhi Sahni • Canada • 2019 • 8:00
English
When gaming online, one must choose their battles carefully especially when an all-night session leads to a questionable encounter.

Shubhi Sahni is an aspiring filmmaker. She recently graduated from the University of Toronto where she double majored in English and Book & Media Studies.

THE ROOMMATE | Ciwing Wang • Canada • 2019 • 8:00
English, Korean w/ English subtitles
For international students, roommates come and go through their rooming houses. But a fleeting moment of connection might be possible.

Ciwing Wang studied at the University of Windsor and would like to present more stories about international students in future films.

TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
CINEMA 3

SATURDAY, NOV 9TH
6:00 PM

HOME AWAY | Nancy Yu • Canada • 2019 • 8:30 • English
Renata is crushed by the conflict of sublimating her cultural identity for a writing job in this stylistic ode to '90s cable dramas.

Nancy Yu is from a small, South-Western town named Kingsville, ON. She moved to Toronto seven years ago and she hopes to share her contemporary Asian Canadian experience through her writing and filmmaking.

NAI NAI'S LETTER | Aimee Wu • Canada • 2019 • 8:00
English, Mandarin w/ English subtitles
A WeChat video call, a birthday, and a hand-written letter bring out the subtle differences between three generations of Chinese women.

Aimee Wu is an interdisciplinary artist and designer from Toronto.

KAR | Sahar Golshan • Canada • 2019 • 8:00 • English
A weekend drive around Scarborough between father and daughter prompts reflection on cars, labour, and family.

Sahar Golshan 杜秀秀 سحر گلشن is a Teochew-Persian writer and language learner living as a guest on Turtle Island. She is a Creative Writing MFA candidate at the University of Guelph.

LITTLE RED | Jacqueline Shi • Canada • 2019 • 8:00
English, Mandarin w/ English subtitles
As a country song says, *"If this old house could talk / What a story it would tell /It would tell about the good times / And the bad times as well."*

Jacqueline Shi is a second year film and business student at Western University. Besides film, her passions include traveling, photography, and binge watching crime or dystopian dramas.

PRODUCED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

University of Windsor

FILMLOFT MEDIA INC.

KASHIF

NORAH & POPPY

SHOOK

NOT YOUR PANDA

Turning Point

Caught in a standstill, these films follow the choices made and risks taken by characters to impel even the smallest of pivots.

English and various languages with English subtitles • 14A

*Indicates guests in attendance

WITH SUPPORT FROM

文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

JAPANFOUNDATION

COMMUNITY PARTNER
sisterhood media

KASHIF | Haaris Qadri* • Canada • 2019 • 9:00 • English, Urdu with English subtitles
World Premiere
Kashif feels trapped by his struggle of straddling the pressures of being both the dutiful son and a supportive friend, leaving him in a difficult position when his friend Omar owes someone money.

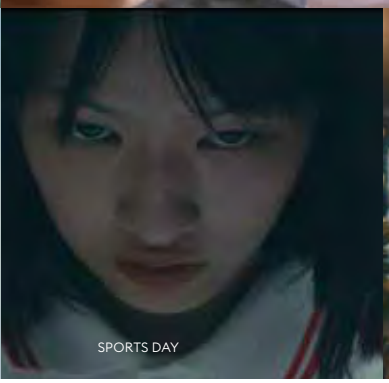
Haaris Qadri is currently finishing his fourth year at York University for a BFA in Film Production. Qadri aims to create films with meaningful stories that focus on characters that are often underrepresented in mainstream media.

SHOOK | Amar Wala* • Canada • 2019 • 11:33 • English • Canadian Premiere
This day starts off like any other for Ash (or Asheesh) until he sees a note from his Mom about reaching out to his estranged father.

Born in India and raised in Toronto, **Amar Wala**'s work often explores themes of immigration, justice, and identity such as his award-winning debut film *The Secret Trial 5* ('14). Often using his cinema as activism, Wala has firmly planted himself as a daring and vital young voice in Canadian film.

NORAH & POPPY | Bea Macapagal* • Canada • 2019 • 13:01 • English
World Premiere
Norah and Poppy are two sisters with an unbreakable bond, despite having just lost their mother. When Poppy falls ill, Norah considers what she can do to make Poppy better.

Born in Manilla, Philippines, **Bea Macapagal** and her family immigrated to Toronto, Ontario before the age of one. Growing up with multiple families under one roof, Macapagal found it hard to be seen and heard. Movies were her escape. She now uses filmmaking as her method of communication and creative expression.



TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX CINEMA 3

SATURDAY, NOV 9TH 1:15 PM

NOT YOUR PANDA | Tigris Alt Sakda • Canada • 2018 • 5:19
English, Chinese and English subtitles • Other
Who doesn't love pandas? Think again with this experimental film that offers insight into a critical, alternate history of this charismatic animal.

Tigris Alt Sakda, blue banner Manchu, was born in Beijing and moved to Canada as a teen. She first studied biology and anthropology, later found herself graduating in film animation. She lives and works in Montreal.

LONG DISTANCE | Anoop Lokkur • Australia • 2019 • 7:16
English, Hindi with English subtitles • Other
How do you handle your nagging parent while living abroad? Aayushi tries her best to balance her needs while being understanding of her mom.

Anoop Lokkur is a Melbourne-based filmmaker focused on exploring the subtleties of identity within a contemporary setting, particularly those aspects which are affected by inter- and intra-cultural differences. He is currently developing a feature script based on *Long Distance*.

SPORTS DAY | Lin Tu • China • 2018 • 10:54 • Mandarin with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
On an ordinary hot summer day, Bai and Zhao decide to escape their high school's mandatory sports day to spend some private time together. Bai becomes apprehensive when she realizes that all is not what it seems.

Lin Tu is a director, screenwriter and playwright, born and raised in Beijing, China. Tu was 16 when her writing was first published by the most widely circulated teen literature magazine, Top Novel. *Sports Day* is her first film.

MAY FLOWERS | Marianna Phung* • Canada • 2018 • 6:33
English • Other
A misunderstanding occurs when Jimmy goes to pick up an order for his boss at a flower shop.

Marianna Phung is a Toronto-based director, writer and actor of Vietnamese descent. Phung is an emerging artist seeking to break boundaries and challenge the status quo in front and behind the camera while telling stories that entertain and enlighten audiences.

LEXICAL GAP | Yoko Okumura • USA • 2018 • 6:54 • English
Canadian Premiere
A wild lady-punk musical that follows Lex and her quest to redefine virginity.

Yoko Okumura is an award-winning writer, director, producer, and performer. Born in a Buddhist temple in Japan and raised in the frostbite of Minneapolis, Okumura now lives and works under the blazing sun of Los Angeles.

SECRET LIVES OF ASIANS AT NIGHT | KEFF • USA • 2018
18:00 • English, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, & Mandarin with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
What does the model minority do at night? A screwball noir in five different languages.

KEFF is a Taiwanese-American writer/director, musician, and artist based in NYC. His various works have been featured in reputable cultural publications such as TIME, VICE, Highsnobiety, and more. He currently attends NYU Graduate Film and is the recipient of the Willard T.C. Johnson Fellowship and the Spike Lee Film Fellowship.

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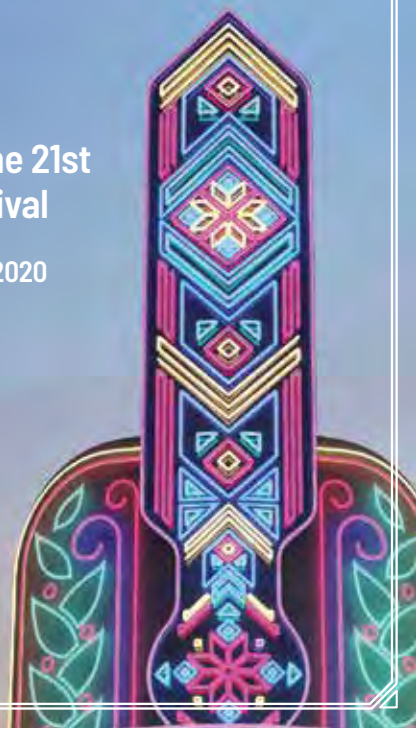

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STEAM WHISTLE

STEAM WHISTLE
CANADA'S PREMIUM PILSNER

BREAKAWAY

AS I HEAR

GAMERS

SIXTEEN

Womxn

Films by womxn with womxn at the forefront. These stories delve into the nuanced roles womxn take up to be resilient, resourceful, and responsive regardless of what comes their way.

English and various languages with English subtitles • 14A

*Indicates guests in attendance

COMMUNITY PARTNER
FEM Script Lab

BREAKAWAY | Jenny Lee-Gilmore* • Canada • 2019 • 8:55 • English • World Premiere
Set in 1970s Vancouver, 11-year-old Sammy is a huge hockey fan. Despite having to deal with her bully of a brother and balancing responsibilities at home, she dreams of becoming a hockey player.

Jenny Lee-Gilmore is an English-born writer and director. After moving to her mother's hometown of Vancouver, she fell in love with filmmaking. Lee-Gilmore hopes to tell stories that reflect her diverse and multiracial upbringing.

GAMERS | Searit Huluf • USA • 2018 • 9:43 • English • International Premiere
When Jamie gets an invitation from a pro Esports team to participate in their upcoming recruitment, she starts to question her own ability.

Searit Huluf is a graduate of UCLA's Theater, Film and Television School. Huluf has taken roles such as production coordinator for the Art and FX department on *Incredibles 2* and directing a late-night show called *Talk of the Town,* fundraising over $3,000 for Oakland A's Foundation. Huluf currently lives in Oakland, CA.

AS I HEAR | Rachel Chow* • Canada • 2019 • 9:56 • English • World Premiere
Experience a day in Rachel's shoes as someone who has hearing loss.

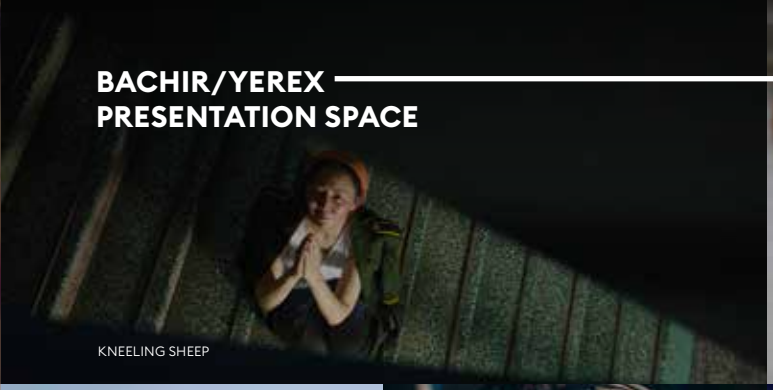
Having spent half of her life in Canada and the other in Hong Kong, **Rachel Chow** has constantly been torn between two different cultures, lifestyles, and communities. As a filmmaker and artist, she hopes to inspire others with the stories she tells.

SIXTEEN | Maddy Chang* • Canada • 2019 • 9:05 • English • World Premiere
Nora is turning 16, which means party time. Except it doesn't seem to feel that way when Nora feels caught between her parents and friends.

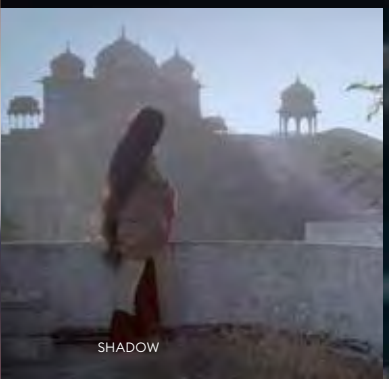
Maddy Chang is a film student at the University of British Columbia. This is her first time directing a short film and she took great pleasure in bringing *Sixteen* to life.

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

MONDAY, NOV 11TH 10:30 AM


KNEELING SHEEP

CA$H


SHADOW

MAY FLOWERS

LOVE LETTERS FROM EVEREST

KNEELING SHEEP | Hai Rihan* • China, USA • 2019 • 14:30
Mandarin and Mongolian with English subtitles
International Premiere

A Mongolian mother does whatever she can to try and save her son from being wrongly accused of a crime he did not commit.

Hai Rihan is a multi-award-winning LA-based Mongolian (Chinese minority) director. Film to her is a comprehensive art form capable of carrying social responsibilities and promoting positive social changes. As an Asian female filmmaker based in LA, she hopes to bring deep and profound voices to the noisy world we live in.

SHADOW (SAYA) | Fawzia Mirza* & Anam Abbas • Pakistan
2019 • 7:25 • Urdu with English subtitles • Toronto Premiere

A woman dismisses the warnings of her taxi driver to visit an abandoned building said to be haunted by Jinn.

Fawzia Mirza is an actor, writer, creator, who believes in the power of comedy to tackle divisive topics & break down stereotypes. Her first feature, *Signature Move*, world premiered at SXSW, screened 150+ film festivals and won 14 awards.

Anam Abbas runs Other Memory Media in Pakistan and Zunn Productions in Canada. She is a Locarno Open Doors 2017 alumni and Berlinale Talents 2018 fellow and currently in residence with Film Independent Global Media Makers.

MAY FLOWERS | Marianna Phung* • Canada • 2018 • 6:33
English • Other

A misunderstanding occurs when Jimmy goes to pick up an order for his boss at a flower shop.

Marianna Phung is a Toronto-based director, writer and actor of Vietnamese descent. Phung is an emerging artist seeking to break boundaries and challenge the status quo in front and behind the camera while telling stories that entertain and enlighten audiences.

CA$H (一万八) | Tan Wei Ting • Singapore • 2018 • 7:25
English, Mandarin with English subtitles • Other

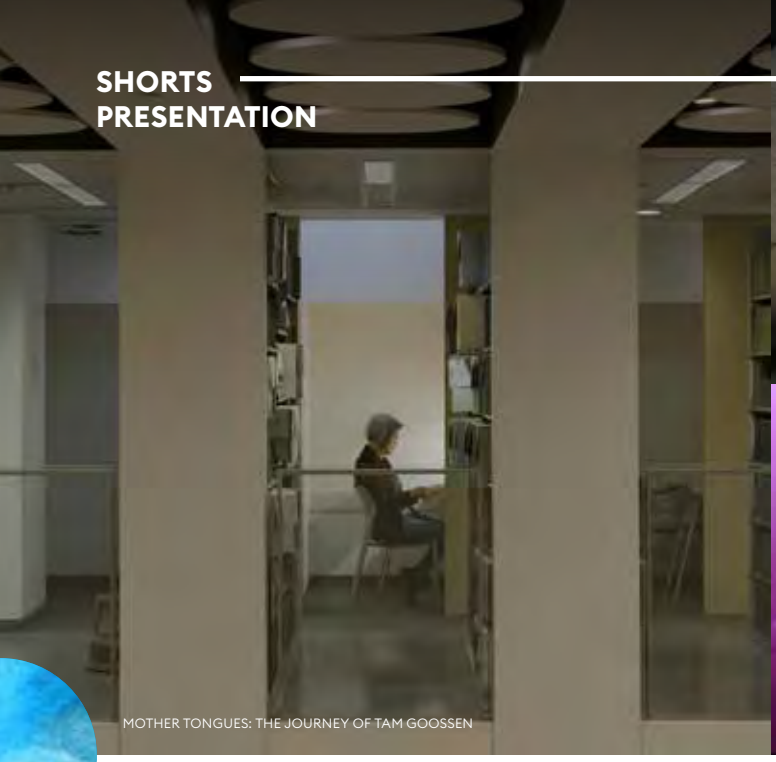
Four cashiers decide to lock themselves in the grocery store as an act of protest when they find out they will be replaced by a self-checkout system.

Tan Wei Ting was first trained in storytelling in theatre but discovered the wonders of film in university, and has never looked back. Being slightly introverted, she often finds herself in the role of a writer and editor telling honest local stories. *CA$H* is her directorial debut.

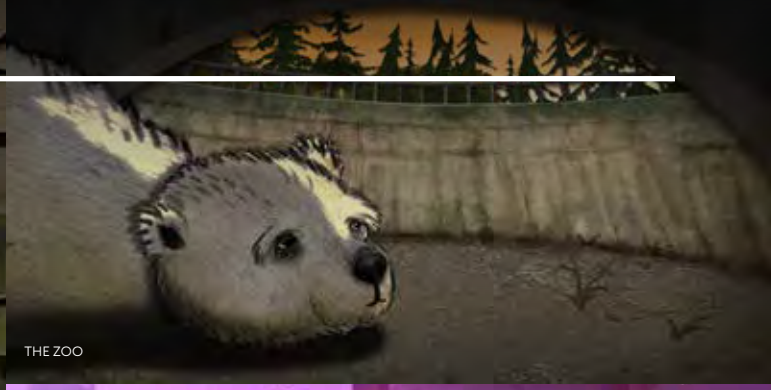
LOVE LETTERS FROM EVEREST | Celeste Koon* • Toronto
2019 • 7:25 • English • Toronto Premiere

Uncovering the letters exchanged between her grandparents in 1956, Celeste retells an incredible love story that reaches even beyond Mt. Everest.

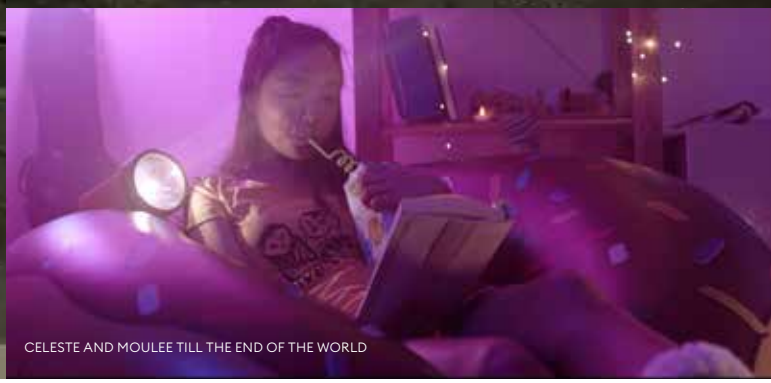
Celeste Koon is a fun and adventurous filmmaker known for her creative mixed media style. She has written, directed, and produced a number of short narrative films screened in festivals across the globe including TIFF Kids, Clermont Ferrand, and Cinekid.



MOTHER TONGUES: THE JOURNEY OF TAM GOOSSEN



THE ZOO



CELESTE AND MOULEE TILL THE END OF THE WORLD

Spatial Awareness

How are we tied to the spaces we inhabit? These shorts consider our impact and influence on the environments we move through and, simultaneously, how these spaces inform and shape our actions.

English and various languages with English subtitles • PG

*Indicates guests in attendance

COMMUNITY PARTNER
Tea Base
Canadian Race Relations Foundation

MOTHER TONGUES: THE JOURNEY OF TAM GOOSSEN* | Cailleah Scott-Grimes • Canada • 2019 • 22:00 • English • World Premiere
This film follows the story of Tam Goossen, a Chinese-Canadian community activist and organizer who advocated for the Heritage Language program as a TDSB school board trustee in the 1990s.

Cailleah Scott-Grimes is a Toronto-based film director dedicated to inspiring confidence in people whose stories often go untold. She holds an honours BA in East Asian Studies and Visual Studies from the University of Toronto.

THE ZOO | Julia Kwan • Canada • 2019 • 11:39 • English • Other
Tuk and a baby polar bear's life seem entwined as they both witness the gradual changes in their living environment.

Julia Kwan is a Vancouver-based filmmaker who studied film at Ryerson University and was a director resident at the Canadian Film Centre, where she made her award-winning short, *Three Sisters on Moon Lake*. In 2005, Kwan made her feature film debut with *Eve and the Firehorse*. The film premiered at TIFF and played at Sundance, where it won the coveted Special Jury Prize for World Cinema.

CELESTE AND MOULEE TILL THE END OF THE WORLD
Celeste Koon* • Canada • 2019 • 12:47 • English • Canadian Premiere
Celeste and her rabbit Moulee somehow wake up in the aftermath of an apocalyptic catastrophe. Now what?

Celeste Koon is a fun and adventurous filmmaker known for her creative mixed media style. She has written, directed, and produced a number of short narrative films that have screened at festivals across the globe including TIFF Kids, Clermont Ferrand, and Cinekid.

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

MONDAY, NOV 11TH 1:30 PM

RED NIGHT

WORTH

UNSPOKEN

WORTH | Meelad Moaphi* • Canada, Pakistan • 2019 • 13:50
Urdu with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
A single father struggles with the decision to sell his infant baby for money so he can safely escape with his daughter.

Toronto filmmaker **Meelad Moaphi** is a BFA ('10) and MFA ('19) graduate of York University's Film Production program. His works have screened internationally, including at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and Montreal World Film Festival. Moaphi's unique international upbringing has informed his culturally diverse body of work, which include pieces in English, Spanish, and even Farsi and Japanese. *Worth* – his latest piece, shot in Pakistan with Urdu dialogue – was distilled from his first feature screenplay.

RED NIGHT | Hunter Wu • China • 2019 • 11:39 • Cantonese and Mandarin with English subtitles • World Premiere
Set in Shanghai, Lian Yi longs for Hong Kong and finds herself one evening in a Hong Kong-style cafe, sharing a meal with the two brothers who run it.

Hunter Wu was born into a family who operates a movie theatre in Guangzhou. Wu's first contact with cinema was through early impressions of the quotidian movie theater environment and memorabilia – movie tickets, the sound of film rolls going through the projector, and the murmurs of Cantonese dialogue in the background. Realizing film would become a lifelong commitment, Wu enrolled in Shanghai Vancouver Film School and is currently studying film production.

UNSPOKEN | Patrick G. Lee* • USA • 2019 • 17:07 • English
Canadian Premiere
What does it mean to create, find, and nurture chosen community? *Unspoken* shares the collective conversations of six queer and trans Asian Americans around their experiences on kinship, queerness, and acceptance.

Patrick G. Lee (he/they) is a queer Korean American documentary filmmaker, writer, and community organizer. He's interested in building collaborative, community-based approaches to filmmaking that reject traditional hierarchies of authority and that equip queer and trans people of colour with media-making skills. His reporting has appeared in *Mother Jones, ProPublica, The Atlantic,* CNN.com, and more. In 2018, Lee helped organize KQTcon, the first national Korean queer and trans conference in the US. His favourite snack is *kongjang* (soy-braised black beans).

PORTRAIT OF A LADY

I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW

IN PASSING

ANOTHER WORLD

THE ZOO

Drawn Closer

Paying attention to every detail, these animations, though whimsical and even fantastical, position themselves as a deeper inquiry into the world we live in.

English and various languages with English subtitles • PG

*Indicates guests in attendance

PORTRAIT OF A LADY | Kenny Leoncito • Canada • 2019 • 6:12 • English titles
Canadian or Toronto Premiere
Andrés navigates memories of his deceased mother through his father's paintings.

Kenny Leoncito is a Toronto-based Filipino Canadian designer, art-maker and recent graduate from Sheridan. He makes background art for the animation industry and is passionate about representative media and Asian Canadian visibility.

I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW | Kevin Feng* • Canada, Taiwan • 2019 • 6:10
English titles • Canadian Premiere
A letter written to the director's mother, this tender and haunting animation shares the process of working through the grief of losing someone you love.

Born in Taipei, **Kevin Feng** is an animation and creative writing student at OCAD University. His work deals with grief, loss, and death, finding the multifaceted nature of mourning beautiful and magical.

ANOTHER WORLD (世外) | Ng Kai Chung* • Hong Kong • 2019 • 14:01
Cantonese with English subtitles • Toronto Premiere
Little Ghost seems to be aimless until he encounters a little girl who is trying to find her brother. Together they search for him, only to uncover the dark past of what might best be forgotten.

Ng Kai Chung graduated from the School of Creative Media in Hong Kong City University. Besides being an award-winning animator, his commercial credentials include Assassin's Creed and Nike Air Max.

IN PASSING | Esther Cheung • Canada • 2019 • 4:08 • Cantonese with English subtitles • Other
A snapshot of Hong Kong in the '70s as the director's parents remember it.

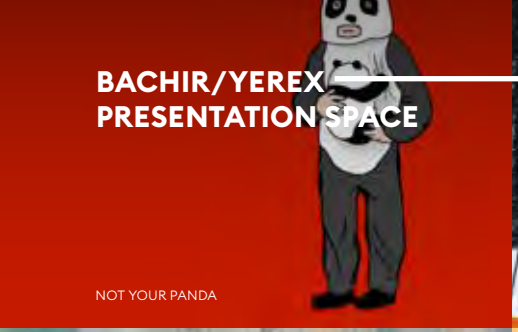
Esther Cheung is a Toronto-based artist and recent Sheridan grad. Animation being the perfect marriage of art and cinema, she hopes to create films that explore her cultural identity and heritage.

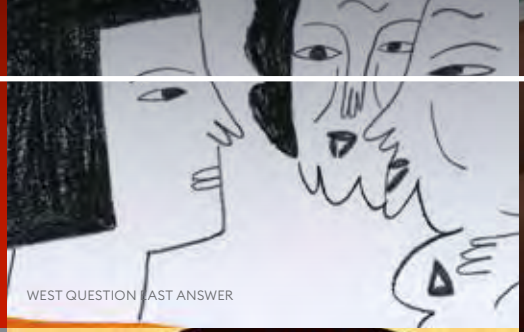
WITH SUPPORT FROM

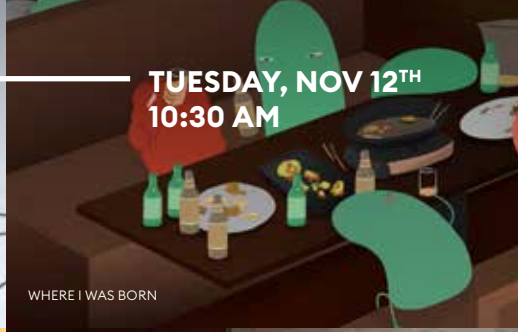
文化部
MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

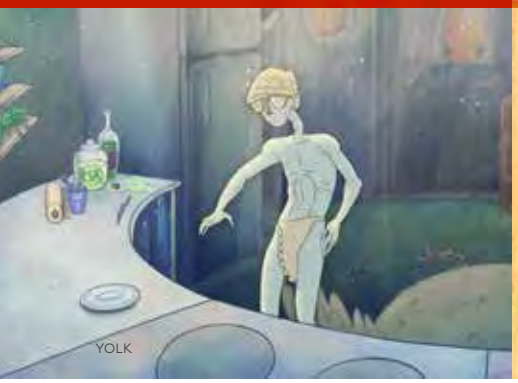
BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

TUESDAY, NOV 12TH 10:30 AM


NOT YOUR PANDA


WEST QUESTION EAST ANSWER


WHERE I WAS BORN


YOLK

GRANDPA

THE LEVERS

THE ZOO | Julia Kwan • Canada • 2019 • 11:39 • English • Other
Tuk and a baby polar bear's life seem entwined as they witness the gradual changes in their living environment.

Julia Kwan is a Vancouver-based filmmaker. Kwan's feature film debut *Eve and the Firehorse* ('05) premiered at TIFF and won the Special Jury Prize for World Cinema at Sundance.

NOT YOUR PANDA | Tigris Alt Sakda • Canada • 2018 • 5:19
English, Chinese and English subtitles • Other
Who doesn't love pandas? Think again with this experimental film that offers an insight into the critical and alternate history of this charismatic animal.

Tigris Alt Sakda, blue banner Manchu, was born in Beijing and moved to Canada as a teen. She first studied biology and anthropology and later found herself graduating in animation. She is based in Montreal.

YOLK | Renee Liang* • Canada • 2019 • 2:45 • Other
Ever wonder what an egg experiences? This wacky animation follows the life-cycle of one particular egg.

Renee Liang loves to eat eggs. They were her go-to student meal, and now she's pleased to ruin it for everybody else. She hopes to keep making experimental film of different mediums and genres.

WEST QUESTION EAST ANSWER | Dal Park • United Kingdom
2018 • 6:26 • English, German and Korean with English subtitles
Canadian Premiere
A documentary that explores the historical and cultural communication gaps between a Korean grandmother and her granddaughter who grew up in Germany.

Dal Park is a Berlin-based animator with an MA in Animation from the Royal College of Art. She combines a visual style with playful movements, camera, and exaggerated and metaphorical imagery to capture and evoke emotions.

GRANDPA | Zozo Jhen, Tena Galović, Marine Varguy,
Liu Yen-Chen & Ellis Kayin Chan • France • 2018 • 5:00
Mandarin with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
A 7-year-old boy processes the death of his grandfather during a traditional Taiwanese funeral procession.

Zozo Jhen is a Paris-based visual artist and illustrator from Taipei.
Tena Galović is an MA animation student in GOBELINS from Zagreb.
Marine Varguy is a student in animation at GOBELINS.
Liu Yen-Chen is a Paris-based visual artist from Taiwan studying animation at GOBELINS.
Ellis Kayin Chan is a Barcelona-based animator from Hong Kong.

WHERE I WAS BORN | Jungmin Cha • USA • 2018 • 4:26 • Other
A playful inquiry into the various societal issues that exist in South Korea.

Jungmin Cha is a filmmaker from Seoul and is studying in the MFA Experimental Animation program at the California Institute of the Arts.

THE LEVERS | Boyoung Kim • South Korea • 2018 • 9:24
Korean with English subtitles • Toronto Premiere
What would you do for money? A man is given an opportunity too convenient to turn down.

Boyoung Kim is a Korean animator, graphic designer, and independent filmmaker. She is the creator of *Replacement, Impersonation* and *Prey.*

NO CRYING AT THE DINNER TABLE

GHOST

SKIN

Double Articulation

Where does the story begin? These films invite us to uncover the ongoing and concurrent influences we find ourselves in oscillation with whether through format, content, or style.

English and various languages with English subtitles • PG

*Indicates guests in attendance

NO CRYING AT THE DINNER TABLE* | Carol Nguyen • Canada • 2019 • 15:48
English, Vietnamese with English subtitles • Other
A collection of family secrets, confessions, and confrontation are heard for the first time.

Carol Nguyen is a Vietnamese-Canadian filmmaker based in Montreal. Nguyen is a TIFF Share Her Journey ambassador, an Adobe Creativity Scholar, and a 2018 Sundance Ignite Fellow. Today, Nguyen is continuing her passion for filmmaking at Concordia University.

GHOST | SJ Son & Woody Fu • USA • 2018 • 4:28 • English • Other
What do ghosts and Asian Americans share in common?

SJ Son is a Korean American actor, writer, and director. She is known for writing and starring in the Amazon & Funny Or Die short film, *Soojung Dreams of Fiji*, which won the Audience Award at AAIFF41. She's appeared on *Search Party* and will be in the upcoming A24 feature *False Positive* and *Servant* for Apple TV. As a duo, SJ and Woody created and starred in the UCB/Nerdist series *UR Asian Friend*.

Woody Fu is an actor, writer and comedian. He performs at UBC Theatre on *Maude Night, Characters Welcome*, and in his one-man show *Too Many Asians!* He stars in the feature *Lucky Grandma* opposite Tsai Chin, which premiered this year at Tribeca. His series *Asian American Studies* was an official selection at Slamdance 2019. He is 100% Irish.

LIFE IS LIVE

VIDEO HOME SYSTEM

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

TUESDAY, NOV 12TH 1:30 PM

SKIN | Alexander Desouza* • Canada • 2019 • 13:58 • English
World Premiere

Addison and Brandon struggle with their respective insecurities about body image, especially when it begins to erode the trust in their relationship.

Alexander Desouza is an award-winning Indian Canadian director and producer. Currently holding a BFA in Film from York University, he first began to make films when he was just 13 years old. Desouza is currently a volunteer for Sustainable Media Production Canada and serves on the programming team for the Toronto New Wave Film Festival and the board of directors for Neo Filmmakers Toronto. He is currently in development on his feature film *Places Up Here*.

LIFE IS LIVE | Keziah Wei* • China, Singapore • 2019 • 15:27
Mandarin with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere

A short documentary following the life of Danny, a live-streaming celebrity living in China.

As a child, **Keziah Wei** was glued to the television for hours on end, enthralled by the nature of film and storytelling. She started her career with assisting under all types of roles on all kinds of video shoots to learn about the art of filmmaking, before managing to score a larger role of assistant producer and assistant director on the music video *Robot* by The Sam Willows (2017). *Life is Live* is her capstone project and the biggest piece of work she has directed and embarked on thus far.

VIDEO HOME SYSTEM | Sharlene Bamboat* • Canada • 2018
19:11 • English and Urdu • Other

An experimental documentary that traces the convergence of popular culture and politics in Pakistan during the '80s and '90s. This video shows the connections between pop culture and nationalism, and how bootleg economies kept the cinema industry alive during periods of censorship.

Sharlene Bamboat is a video and installation artist. Her work is anchored in the absurd and mundane, retracing of history through queer aesthetics and popular culture. She has exhibited internationally, including: the Sharjah Film Platform (U.A.E.), the Berlin Film Festival: Forum Expanded (Germany), Aga Khan Museum (Canada), London Film Festival (UK), Malmo Queer Film Festival (Sweden), and Vasakh Film Festival (Pakistan). Bamboat frequently works in collaboration, most notably with artist Alexis Mitchell, under the name Bambitchell. Bamboat lives and works between Toronto and Montreal, Canada.

MẸ

YOLK

OBENTO

SHOOK

Nine Courses

We all have some connection to food: survival, pleasure, longing, remembrance. These nine films showcase the myriad of ways food impacts us in our lives.

English and various languages with English subtitles • PG

*Indicates guests in attendance

WITH SUPPORT FROM

文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

JAPANFOUNDATION

COMMUNITY PARTNER
The 519

MẸ | Derek Kwan* • Canada • 2018 • 10:14 • English, Vietnamese with English subtitles
Toronto Premiere
Following the story of two generations of mothers in the process of creating a new dish for their restaurant, this documentary tells the story of a Vietnamese family legacy through their humble family restaurant.

Derek Kwan is a Vancouver-based actor and filmmaker. *Mẹ* was funded by Telus Storyhive and won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Short Documentary at the 2019 Seattle Asian American Film Festival, as well as Best Short Documentary at the 2019 DisOrient Asian American Film Festival of Oregon.

OBENTO | Kazuma Yano • Japan • 2019 • 9:14 • Japanese with English subtitles
Canadian Premiere
A contemplation on the philosophy of care embodied in the making of a bento.

Kazuma Yano was born in 1974 in Kobe. He is a filmmaker at Tearful Production Committee. His previous work includes the short film *The First Feeling in My Life,* which was awarded the Audience Award at the Linkage Short Film Festival.

YOLK | Renee Liang* • Canada • 2019 • 2:45 • Other
Ever wonder what an egg experiences? This wacky animation follows the life-cycle of one particular egg.

Renee Liang loves to eat eggs. They were her go-to student meal, and now she's pleased to ruin it for everybody else. She still loves eggs though. In the future, she hopes to keep making experimental film of different mediums and genres.

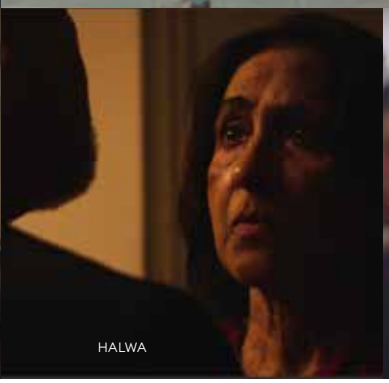
SHOOK | Amar Wala* • Canada • 2019 • 11:33 • English • Canadian Premiere
This day starts off like any other for Ash (or Asheesh), until he sees a note from his Mom about reaching out to his estranged father.

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

WEDNESDAY, NOV 13TH 10:30 AM

SIXTEEN

LES LÈVRES GERCÉES


HALWA

THANKSGIVING

BUNNY MAN

Born in India and raised in Toronto, **Amar Wala**'s documentary and fiction work explores themes of immigration, justice, and identity. Using his cinema as activism, Wala has firmly planted himself as a daring and vital young voice in Canadian film.

SIXTEEN | Maddy Chang* • Canada • 2019 • 9:05 • English World Premiere
Nora is turning 16, which means party time. Except it doesn't seem to feel that way when Nora feels caught between her parents and friends.

Maddy Chang is a film student at the University of British Columbia. This is her first time directing a short film she took great pleasure in bringing *Sixteen* to life.

HALWA | Gayatri Bajpai* & Nirav Bhakta • USA • 2019 • 15:00 English, Hindi with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
On the eve of her wedding anniversary, empty-nester Sujata finds the courage to reach out to Premila after being out of touch for over 30 years.

Gayatri Bajpai is the director of the short films *Muck* ('14), *Housewarming* ('17) and *Rio* ('17). With a multiethnic, international upbringing, Bajpai is interested in stories about people caught between cultures.

Raised as an undocumented immigrant in motels, **Nirav Bhakta** began his journey in film as an actor. With the lack of authentic roles for Asian Americans, Bhakta began to create narratives focusing on the immigrant experience.

THANKSGIVING | Van B. Nguyen • USA • 2018 • 10:43 • English, Vietnamese with English subtitles • International Premiere
Ma and Ba are preparing a huge Thanksgiving dinner for the entire family. They did not anticipate seeing their son, Tuan, bringing home another man.

A first-generation Vietnamese-American, **Van B. Nguyen** is an LA-based Texas-native writer/director. Video-chatting with her niece and nephew keeps her grounded and reminds her to inspire kids of different ethnic backgrounds that it is possible to pursue your dreams.

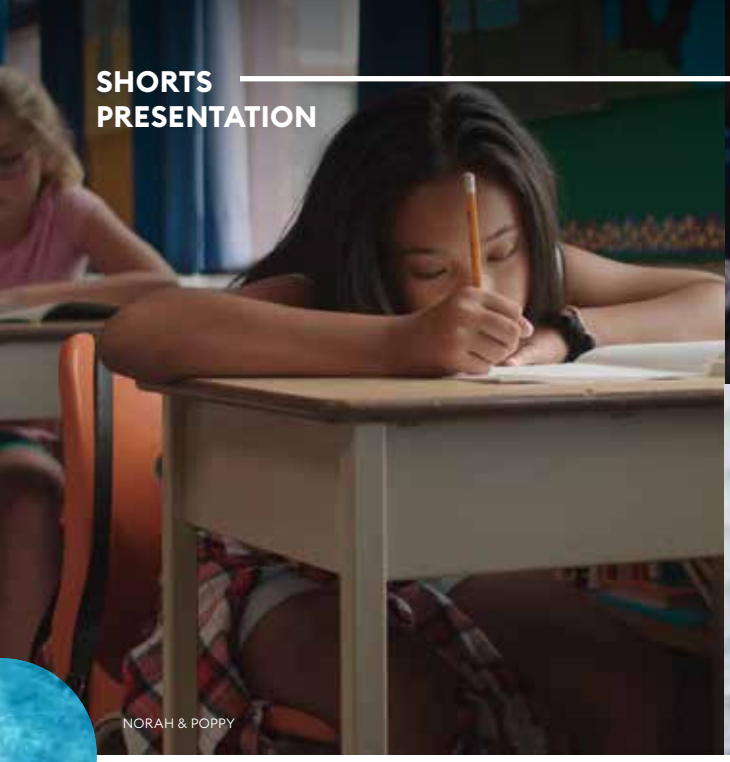
LES LÈVRES GERCÉES | Kelsi Phung & Fabien Corre • France 2018 • 4:51 • French with English subtitles • Other
Over a series of meals, a child and their mother try to establish a connection in conversation.

Kelsi Phung is a student in the Animation Cinema department at the GOBELINS school. Phung's artistic approach revolves around their commitment to the LGBT+ community to which they seek to give more visibility in the animation film landscape.

Fabien Corre is a graduate of GOBELINS from Brittany, France. Corre moved to Paris to learn animation cinema, where his passion continues to motivate him to continue developing his personal projects.

BUNNY MAN (人中之兔) | Athena Han 韓睿芷 • Canada • 2018 • 7:51 English and Mandarin with Chinese and English subtitles • Other
Four Taiwanese friends get into a heated conversation about the differences between the categories of CBC (Chinese Born Canadian) and FOB (Fresh Off the Boat) over a meal when a mysterious bunny enters the restaurant.

Athena Han 韓睿芷 is a Taiwanese-Canadian writer-director based in Vancouver. *Bunny Man* (人中之兔,) her latest film, was selected for the Mighty Asian Moviemaking Marathon, winning first place for the 10-Minute Short category and the People's Choice Award for Best Overall Short.



NORAH & POPPY

IN FULL BLOOM

HANA

Linger

Coping with losing someone or something you love is never easy. Starting from a place of loss, these stories ruminate on what remains and what it takes to move on.

English and various languages with English subtitles • PG

*Indicates guests in attendance

WITH SUPPORT FROM

文化部 MINISTRY OF CULTURE
Taipei Cultural Center in New York

JAPANFOUNDATION

NORAH & POPPY | Bea Macapagal* • Canada • 2019 • 13:01 • English • World Premiere
Norah and Poppy are two sisters with an unbreakable bond, despite having just lost their mother. When Poppy falls ill, Norah considers what she can do to make Poppy better.

Born in Manila, Philippines, **Bea Macapagal** and her family immigrated to Toronto before she turned one. Growing up with multiple families under one roof, Macapagal found it hard to be seen and heard. Movies were her escape. She now uses filmmaking as her method of communication and creative expression.

IN FULL BLOOM | Maegan Houang • USA • 2018 • 10:40 • Other
Cecile, a recent widow, copes with the loss of her husband through gardening. When she buys worms to grow a rare plant, the worms end up creating a black hole that begins to absorb everything she cherishes.

Maegan Houang grew up watching Hong Kong movies her father showed her on repeat. The films offered a glimpse into the culture of her extended family, who lived thousands of miles away. Houang has directed several music videos, such as Mitski's *Happy* and has been featured in *1.4*, *Noisey*, *Videostatic*, *Promo TV News*, *Shots Magazine*, and *Fangoria* among others.

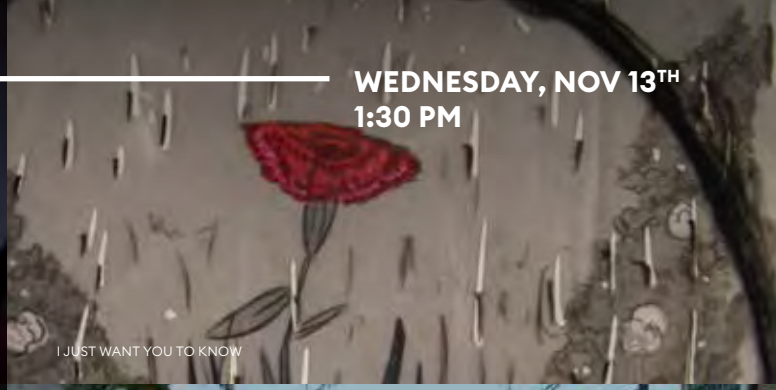
HANA | Mai Nakanishi • South Korea • 2018 • 12:42 • Korean with English subtitles
Canadian Premiere
Hastily hired as a babysitter for Hana, Sujin realizes she's in for way more than she asked for.

Born in Tokyo but spending most of her youth abroad, **Mai Nakanishi** has been involved in filmmaking since 2013. She has worked on a variety of projects, including working as assistant director for Asia's prominent arthouse auteur Eric Khoo and producing for Japanese genre maven Sion Sono. Nakanishi is currently doing her filmmaker residency at Busan Asian Film School in South Korea to develop *Hana* into a feature.

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

WEDNESDAY, NOV 13TH
1:30 PM

ANGELS LANDING


I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW

WORTH

HOMESICK

ANGELS LANDING | David Liu • USA • 2019 • 5:00 • English
International Premiere
At a nostalgic meeting spot, two estranged brothers seek to reconcile and catch up over lost time.

David Liu grew up in an immigrant family in the San Gabriel Valley region of Los Angeles. He earned his MFA at the USC School of Cinematic Arts, where he co-directed a feature for James Franco's Elysium Bandini Studios and served as lead producer on the Warner Bros.-funded anthology feature *Samir.* He is fluent in Mandarin and has translated stories and screenplays for clients such as TenCent Pictures, Ivanhoe Pictures, and 20th Century Fox.

WORTH | Meelad Moaphi* • Canada, Pakistan • 2019 • 13:50
Urdu with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
A single father struggles with the decision to sell his infant baby for money so he can safely escape with his daughter.

Toronto filmmaker **Meelad Moaphi** is a BFA ('10) and MFA ('19) graduate of York University's Film Production program. Moaphi's unique international upbringing has informed his culturally diverse body of work, which include pieces in English, Spanish, and even Farsi and Japanese. *Worth* – his latest piece, shot in Pakistan with Urdu dialogue – was distilled from his first feature screenplay.

I JUST WANT YOU TO KNOW | Kevin Feng* • Canada, Taiwan
2019 • 6:10 • English titles • Canadian Premiere
A letter written to the director's mother, this tender and haunting animation shares the process of working through grief from losing someone you love.

Kevin Feng was born in Taipei, Taiwan. He is an animation and creative writing student at OCAD University. Motivated by his life experiences, Feng's work deals with themes of grief, loss and death. He finds the multifaceted nature of mourning beautiful and magical.

HOMESICK | Koya Kamura • France, Japan • 2019 • 28:18
Japanese with English subtitles • Canadian Premiere
Despite the risk, Murai is known to travel into the closed-off radioactive zone from the Fukushima nuclear disaster to retrieve lost items for those who ask.

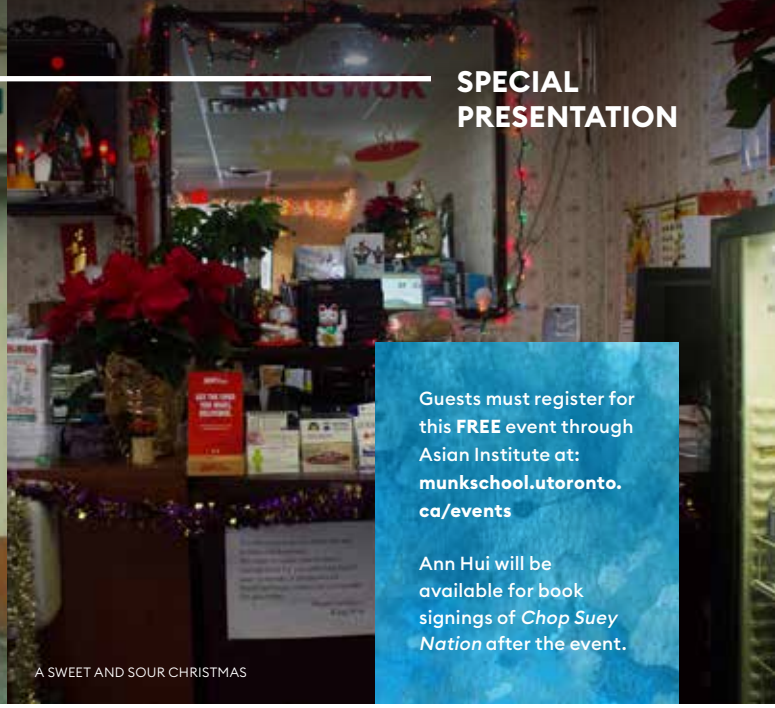
Since he was a kid, **Koya Kamura** has been fascinated by the power of image seen in films like *The Godfather* (Francis Ford Coppola), *Memories of Murder* (Bong Joon-ho), and *A Prophet* (Jacques Audiard). Half-French and half-Japanese, Kamura was strongly impacted by the Fukushima disaster. Despite directing commercials for almost 10 years, it took him several years to process the catastrophe before writing and directing *Homesick*, his first short film.

TUESDAY, NOV 12TH
8:00 PM

INNIS TOWN HALL

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

CHOP SUEY NATION



A SWEET AND SOUR CHRISTMAS

Guests must register for this **FREE** event through Asian Institute at: **munkschool.utoronto.ca/events**

Ann Hui will be available for book signings of *Chop Suey Nation* after the event.

Reel Asian Roundtable

CHOP SUEY NATION
Douglas and McIntyre, 2019

AUTHOR
Ann Hui*

A SWEET AND SOUR CHRISTMAS
Canada 2019
16:00
English, Cantonese with English Subtitles
G • Toronto Premiere

DIRECTOR
Aram Collier*

PRODUCER
Betty Xie*

*Indicates guests in attendance

WITH SUPPORT FROM

How do food stories speak to a convoluted history of multiculturalism? What does it take to trace back the stories of diasporic community to its roots? If and when we do arrive, what next? This special presentation explores these questions through an excerpt reading of *Chop Suey Nation,* a screening of *A Sweet and Sour Christmas* , and a roundtable discussion.

In 2016, journalist Ann Hui drove across Canada seeking answers to two questions: Why is there a Chinese restaurant in every small town? Who are the families who run them? Meeting with owners and eating at their restaurants, Hui shares stories of diasporic Chinese communities in her book *Chop Suey Nation*, while unexpectedly, uncovering her own family history - revealing the importance of these restaurants to Canada's history.

In *A Sweet and Sour Christmas*, director Aram Siu Wai Collier and producer Betty Xie follow two types of holiday meals at the King Wok Restaurant: the deep-fried take-out Chinese Canadian food staples delivered to families across Kitchener, and the traditional Cantonese meal for a family sharing a rare Christmas celebration. This film is a CBC Short Doc to be released on CBC Gem and the CBC Short Docs Channel in December 2019.

Join Hui, Collier, and Xie in a conversation moderated by multidisciplinary artist Shellie Zhang to discuss the Chinese-Canadian cuisine known as chop suey. These four artists dive by way of food stories into a deeper inquiry around constructs of citizenship, belonging, and tolerance. - KL

Raised in a Chinese-Canadian family in Vancouver, **Ann Hui** grew up in a food-obsessed household to parents who always knew where the freshest Cantonese seafood or barbecued duck could be found. Since 2015, Hui has been *The Globe and Mail's* national food reporter. Her work includes investigations into the role of lobbying in the development of Canada's Food Guide, and a 2018 story that uncovered widespread sexual harassment in one of the country's most prominent wineries.

Aram Siu Wai Collier is a Toronto-based filmmaker, educator, and film festival programmer. His omnibus live music and film project *Suite Suite Chinatown* ('11-'14) toured Canada, Asia, and the USA. His Telefilm Canada-funded feature, *Stand Up Man* ('17) premiered at multiple international film festivals. Collier is a mixed-race Asian Canadian/American who has a BFA and MFA in Film Production from the University of California at Santa Cruz and York University respectively.

Betty Xie is a Chinese Canadian filmmaker and a festival curator. Her short documentary *The Home Promised* ('14) won the Air Canada Best Short Film at the Reel Asian Film Festival and played at various international festivals. She produced the Telefilm Canada-funded feature, *Stand Up Man* ('17), which premiered at multiple international film festivals. Her film *Chado: A Way of Tea* was selected as a top 10 finalist of the 2018 TVO ShortDoc Contest.

REEL IDEAS

Bringing ideas to the screen is a delicate balance of art and business. Immerse yourself in our dynamic community sessions where emerging and established creative minds come together through panels and artist talks, to envision and inform the future of Asian cinema in Canada and around the world!

Reel Ideas Conference

The Reel Ideas Conference enriches the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival's vision by championing industry and education initiatives. Our programming nurtures networking and skillshare opportunities between emerging talent, visiting artists and established filmmakers. The Reel Ideas mandate supports the growth of Asian creatives within film and the arts at large, seeking to generate dialogue at the intersections of Toronto's creative industries in nuanced ways.

Admission: $6 per session
Day Pass: $20 (lunch included)

INTERSECTIONS: NEW MEDIA BLITZ TALKS

10:30 AM

Start your morning with a series of dynamic lightning talks, featuring artists who are exploring and innovating film as a transdisciplinary medium. How is film traversing mediums and art practices? What does the moving image look like in an evolving field of interdisciplinary art? Why use film specifically? Each featured speaker will receive 15 minutes to share about their work and engage in an open Q&A with the audience.

Speakers:
Kevin Matthew Wong, theatre creator and projection designer
Broom Closet Collective (Amanda Low & Tommy Truong), new media art collective
Jennifer Chan, new media artist
Shaheer Tarar, documentary artist

RE-IMAGING ASIAN

12:00 PM

With an increase of multimedia platforms, visible conversation around identities, communities and histories, and a growing abundance of Asian storytellers looking for opportunity, how do we navigate filmmaking? How have these evolutions in film and storytelling impacted our work and our professional decisions? What are topics or issues that Asian communities today have to contend with and address? This panel explores what it means for Asian creators to tell good stories in the contemporary film scene.

Moderator: V.T. Nayani, director, writer, and performer

Panelists:
Panelist TBA
Fawzia Mirza, actor, writer, and creator

REFLECTING (ON) ASIAN

3:00 PM

Join Asian Canadian veteran filmmakers as they deep-dive into the implications of our filmmaking history and its ongoing impact on our evolving present. This panel engages filmmakers whose bodies of work paved the way for today's creative environment and today's filmmakers. What did it mean to do work in a landscape of scarcity and what did it mean to create as an Asian filmmaker? What changes have they weathered and how have those impacted their craft? What topics are recurring or evolving in their work? How might collective memory and access to their work impact and inspire up-and-coming filmmakers?

Moderator: Elaine Chang, writer-critic and professor

Panelists:
Jeanette Kong, documentary filmmaker
Arshad Khan, filmmaker and film festival director
Michael Fukushima, NFB Executive Producer

SPECULATING ON FICTIONS / DREAMING IN COLOUR: A PROGRAMME OF WORK + ARTIST TALK BY MIDI ONODERA IN PARTNERSHIP WITH VTAPE

5:00 PM

Midi Onodera is an artist, a filmmaker, an innovator, and an inveterate experimenter. Flowing seamlessly from toy cameras to high-end editing formats, her works engage with technologies in playful ways to produce documents of cultural and political critique that are dead serious. We've selected works exploring the variety of production platforms, technologies, and presentation formats used by this prolific and poetic artist of both the analog and the digital. From the early *The Displaced View* (1988), through the experimental shorts *Slightseer* (2001) and *Nobody Knows* (2002), ending with her more recent works that reside on the WWW: *the coyotes must see the moon* (2017), *The Outsider* (2019), *68 Trace Decay Theory* (2019), and *Travel* (2019).

Vtape is a vibrant distribution organization that represents an international collection of contemporary and historical video artworks.

Featured Artist: Midi Onodera, filmmaker and media artist
Moderator: Lulu Wei, filmmaker

EVENT

What's Brewing at the Festival

MON NOV 11
2:00 PM–4:00 PM
THE COMMONS LOBBY
401 RICHMOND ST W, SUITE 440

FREE

Rub shoulders with Asian & Asian Canadian filmmakers & creatives in an informal social setting designed to facilitate networking. We've got beers! Bring your film's postcards and trade them with your new friends. Cash bar will be in effect.

KIYOKO'S SITUATION (MAKO IDEMITSU,1989)

Reel Ideas All Access

Admission:
FREE and open to the public

Research Centre Hours
at The 401 Commons
Nov 7, 15 • 11:30 AM – 3:30 PM
Nov 8 – 14 • 11:30 AM – 5:30 PM

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

CBC

FOR THE CBC ROOM - AN INDUSTRY PANEL

V tape
www.vtape.org

FOR EXPLORASIAN: INTO THE ARCHIVES

THE CBC ROOM - AN INDUSTRY PANEL

10:00 AM @ Bachir/Yerex Presentation Space

Spend the morning up close and personal with the CBC mothership and hear from executives on the types of projects they're looking for. Pick up some tips and tricks on how to connect and pull off a successful pitch.

Panelists:
Jessica Schmiedchen, Head of Unscripted and Digital Development
Melanie Nepinak Hadley, Production Executive, Drama
Andrew D'Cruz, Executive Producer, CBC Arts
Sue Baker, Manager of Business & Rights, Unscripted, CBC Television

EXPLORASIAN: INTO THE ARCHIVES

Guided tour 2:00 PM @ Research Centre at The 401 Commons

As part of this year's festival, Vtape will be pulling a list of Asian filmmakers from their database and making computers in the Research Centre available for the public to drop in and use to explore their archives during the festival.

Join Vtape for a tour through the Research Centre and learn how you could use Vtape's extensive archive for your work.

Vtape's research collection is available free of charge for use by curators, programmers, scholars, critics, students, and the general public. The Research Centre shared by 401 Commons Collective offers computer stations with access to Vtape's Video Catalogue and Critical Writing Index. Here, Vtape videos can be viewed, and users can have access to key writings, additional print materials, and our library of publications and exhibition ephemera.

In 2014, Vtape launched the Digital Preview Access Project. Newly digitized titles are accessible through Vtape's password-protected portal that provides temporary access for scholars, curators, programmers and institutions considering research, purchase or exhibition. To date, we have digitized and uploaded over 3,000 titles of a collection that supports 6,000+ titles.

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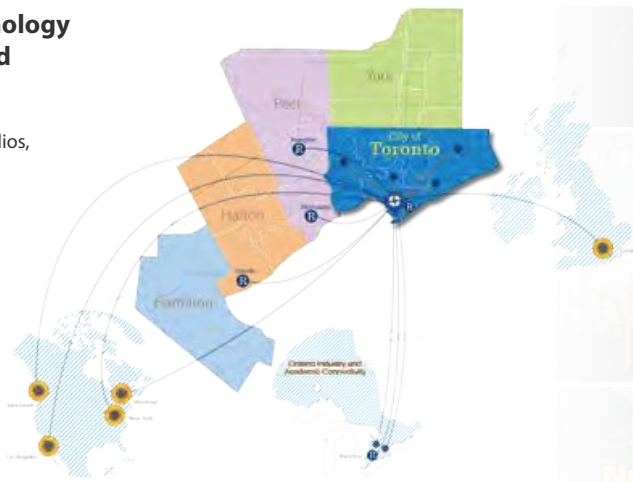

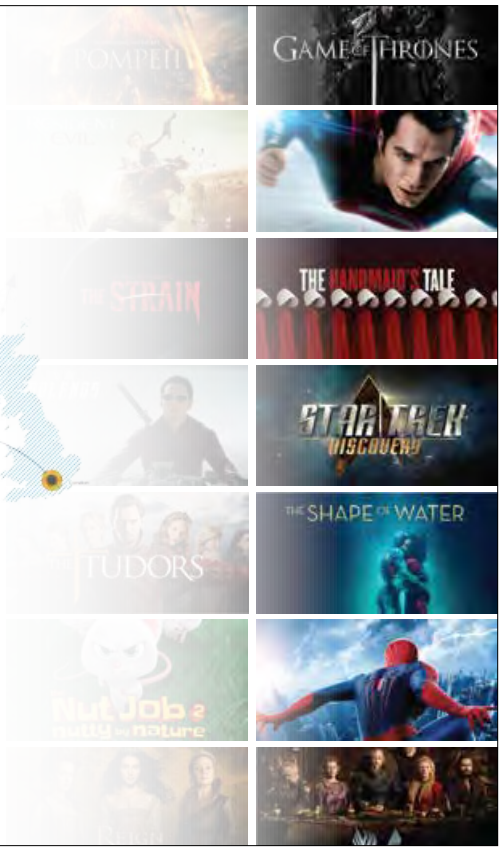

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www.sirtnet.ca

Contact us for more information:
Wayne Kim wayne.kim@SirtNet.ca

WEDNESDAY, NOV 13TH – BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE – ARTIST TALK + RECEPTION
6:00 PM

Measuring Up With TallBoyz

Come and hang out with the cast of TallBoyz as we deep-dive into their creative processes, what it was like to produce the show with CBC, and what it takes to translate comedy sketches into television.

This event will be a moderated artist talk followed by a reception.

Admission:
FREE and open to the public

Guled Abdi is a Toronto-based comedian, writer and 1/4 of the multi-award winning sketch troupe TallBoyz II Men. He's performed at OFF-JFL, Montreal Sketchfest and the Toronto Fringe Festival. You can catch Abdi performing weekly at Bad Dog Theatre as part of Drosselmeyer or at random bars you didn't know had a comedy show.

Vance Banzo is a Saulteaux/Cree comedian, actor, and writer born and raised in Edmonton, Alberta. Currently residing in Toronto, Ontario, Banzo is a proud member of the award-winning sketch comedy troupe Tallboyz II Men. Banzo is a band member of Fishing Lake First Nation, Saskatchewan.

Franco Nguyen is a comedian, writer and actor. He is a proud Bob Curry fellow, a Tim Sims finalist, an alumnus of Toronto's Second City Touring Company and has showcased in Chicago for the NBC Breakout Fest and StandUP NBC. His one-person show *Good Morning, Viet Mom* received critical acclaim and sold-out runs at the Toronto Fringe Festival, the Next Stage Festival and was picked up by Cahoots Theatre for a cross-Canada tour. He's also modelled for previous Reel Asian campaigns.

Tim Blair was born and raised (in that order) in Toronto, Ontario. At the age of 15, he fell in love with comedy after being forced to do stand-up for a school assignment. Since then he's graduated from Humber College's Comedy program, been a part of the casts of Second City's House Company, The Bad Dog Featured Players, and The Sketchersons and performed at festivals such as JFL42, OFF-JFL, and the NBC Breakout Festival.

PANELISTS
Vance Banzo
Guled Abdi
Franco Nguyen
Tim Blair

Moderator TBA

WITH SUPPORT FROM

CBC

PITCH COMPETITION

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE

SUNDAY, NOV 10TH 10:00 AM

So You Think You Can Pitch?

Catch the live showdown between finalists as they pitch their film projects to a jury for a chance to win a prize package of industry support and cash funding. Cheer on the hard work of emerging Asian Canadian talent and support your favourite film-to-be, or learn some tips and tricks for when it's you up there next year.

Admission:
FREE and open to the public

GOLD PRIZE AWARD

- $4,000 cash prize
- Business affairs & legal consultation with Behind The Scenes Services
- Acting support (if applicable) from ACTRA Toronto, including consultation, coaching, and more
- Opportunity to premiere work at the 2020 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (subject to review), with full festival accreditation
- Digital film and festival strategy consultation with CineSend
- A production workflow consultation with Charles Street Video, which includes:
  - $2,700 in edit suite access and/or production equipment rentals
  - Two sessions with Charles Street Video's in-house editor
  - One-year membership with Charles Street Video

SILVER PRIZE AWARD

- $1,000 cash prize
- Business affairs & legal consultation with Behind The Scenes Services
- Acting support (if applicable) from ACTRA Toronto including consultation, coaching, and more
- Opportunity to premiere work at the 2020 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (subject to review), with full festival accreditation
- Digital film and festival strategy consultation with CineSend
- A production workflow consultation with Charles Street Video, which includes:
  - $1,400 in edit suite access and/or production equipment rentals
  - One-year membership with Charles Street Video

Pitch Jurors:
Michael Fukushima
Gloria Ui Young Kim
Amar Wala

Pitch Mentors:
Carolyn Wu
Qais Pasha

Pitch Finalists:
Andy Wong - *Hold Still*
Christopher Yip - *Fishboy*
Noor Khan - *PostScript*
Shazia Javed - *The Bus Ride*
Varundeep Chawla - *Little Brown Mumma*
Vince Ha - *Earthworms*

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EAST OF THE ROCKIES
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GAMERS
Director: Searit Huluf
Producer: Tiajha Nakahara
gamersshortfilm.com

GHOST
SJ Son & Woody Fu
www.soojeongson.com
www.woodyfu.com

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PORTRAIT OF A LADY
Kenny Leoncito
www.kenesu.com

PUSH
Trilina Mai
www.facebook.com/pushshort2019

RAY'S GREAT ESCAPE
Director: Jie Weng
Production company: Realwood Studios (www.realwoodanimation.com)
International distribution company: Yilisoo Films

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Hunter Wu
13533829788@163.com
Shanghai Vancouver Film School

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www.facebook.com/sixteenshortfilm

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