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### QUEER PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Toronto, October 8, 2013 – The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, celebrates its 17<sup>th</sup> annual edition from November 5 to 16, 2013 with high profile guests from across North America and Asia, an exciting expansion to include films from across South Asia, an energy-driven collaboration between and Toronto's hottest up-and-coming dancers and filmmakers and 60 films from 14 countries including Hong Kong, India, Japan, Laos, Pakistan, South Korea, Taiwan, Canada and the United States. Reel Asian has always strived to represent a multitude of communities within its programming. Queer programme highlights include:

#### **CANADIAN ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: RICHARD FUNG (October 25-26)**

Reel Asian is thrilled to partner with the Dr. David Chu Program in Asia Pacific Studies, Asian Institute at the University of Toronto to present *ReOrientations: A Retrospective on the Works of Richard Fung*. The two-day intensive spotlight on Richard Fung offers viewers the opportunity to revisit some of his most influential works, and includes talks by visiting scholars and a roundtable discussion that addresses some of the key themes that he has tackled in the last 30 years. The program will include a screening of Fung's most notable films including: *School Fag* (directed with AIDS activist and life partner Tim McCaskell), *Rex Vs. Singh* (directed with Ali Kazimi and John Greyson), *Orientations*, *My Mother's Place*, *Sea In The Blood*, *Islands*, *Dirty Laundry*, and *Dal Puri Diaspora*. Reel Asian's sold out screening of *Dal Puri Diaspora* won the Audience Award in 2012. Fung is a Toronto-based video artist, writer, theorist and educator. His work comprises of a series of challenging videos on subjects ranging from the role of the Asian male in gay pornography to colonialism, immigration, racism, homophobia, AIDS and his own family history. Fung is a public intellectual who has pushed forward the debates about queer sexuality, Asian identity and the uneasy borderlands of culture and politics.

**LIVE PRESENTATION: FILM & DANCE: SPRUNG** (Canada 2013, directors in attendance, World Premiere) SPRUNG features five new commissioned collaborations by film/media and dance artists curated by Heather Keung and Nadine Villasin. The evening will feature on-screen dance, as well as live multimedia works. The project promotes artistic exchange across disciplines and aims to look at the ways in which both dance and film represent culture, histories, and identity.

In *Waack Revolt* by Sonia Hong, Emily Law (aka Em Fatale) and Diana Reyes (aka Fly Lady Di)'s characters are forced to keep their love behind closed doors as they come up against public outrage. Sonia Hong is a Toronto-based filmmaker whose creative projects are often quirky, visually stimulating and explore elements of gender identity and empowerment. She was awarded Best Up-and-Coming Toronto Film or Video Maker at the Inside Out Toronto LGBT Film Festival for *A Dragged Out Affair*, a quirky musical short which challenged gender paradigms within the drag community. *A Dragged Out Affair* premiered at Reel Asian in 2010.

In *Paruparo* by Shasha Nakhai and Catherine Hernandez, a migrant Filipino nanny takes centre stage and externalizes her interior pain through dance, utilizing brilliant red fans in a dizzying and riveting blend of traditional Filipino and modern improvisational dance. Catherine Hernandez is a proud queer woman of colour and single mom. Her first play, *Singkil*, produced by fu-GEN Asian Canadian Theatre Company in association with Factory Theatre in 2007, garnered seven Dora Mavor Moore nominations including Outstanding New Play, Independent Division. She wrote and performed the critically acclaimed one-woman puppet show, *Eating with Lola* (Sulong Theatre and Next Stage Festival) and is the founder of Sulong Theatre.

**RIPPLES OF DESIRE** (director Zero Chou in attendance, Taiwan 2012, Canadian Premiere)  
Award-winning Director Zero Chou will be in attendance from Taipei to present the Canadian premiere of *Ripples of Desire*, the most prolific period drama to emerge from Taiwan in more than 15 years, featuring an all-star cast (Jerry Yan, Simon Yam, Sandra Ng). For her most ambitious film to date, Chou maintains a special sympathy for those who exist on society's margins, while working her distinctive allusive style that shifts seamlessly between realism and fantasy. Zero Chou started her career as a journalist and has won numerous awards for her films chronicling the Taiwan LGBT community. Her recent works include *Drifting Flowers*, *Splendid Float* (winner of three Golden Horse Awards, including best Taiwanese Film 2004), and *Spider Lilies* (winner of the Teddy Award at Berlin International Film Festival 2007).

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