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**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS AND PROJECTS**

Toronto, October 8, 2014– The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, celebrates its 18<sup>th</sup> annual edition from November 6 to 16, 2014. This year, Reel Asian highlights five diverse special presentations by Asian filmmakers. From 3D and multichannel video installations, to live music, to nuggets from our personal archives, Reel Asian presents five unique projects that share a concern for where we have been and where we are going. Reel Asian is honoured to welcome these filmmakers, artists and guest speakers to the festival.

**CANADIAN ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: JACQUELINE HOANG NGUYEN (November 10-15)**

Frustrated by the scarcity of institutional records of Canadian immigrants and inspired by her father's photo collection, Nguyen initiated *The Making of an Archive*, a project that seeks to collect images of everyday life photographed by Canadian immigrants, with a direct, collective and exploratory approach. *The Making of an Archive* invites newcomers and families of newcomers to Canada post-1967 to digitize their photographic documents and share their personal histories. These scanned documents together with their corresponding narratives will eventually be made public via an online platform. With this project we ask, how do we come to understand our own pictures? Co-presented by Gendai Gallery, Reel Asian will present host Nguyen's photo-scanning sessions at dates and locations throughout the festival.

Nguyen will also be featured through an artist talk and her film *1967: A People Kind of Place*.

**LIVE PRESENTATION: FILM & MUSIC: HIMALAYA SONG (USA 2012, performers in attendance, Toronto Premiere)**

*Himalaya Song* is a multimedia performance that incorporates live storytelling, music and film to examine the Himalayas as they undergo major environmental and ecological change. A collaborative project, *Himalaya Song* includes narration and video by Mridu Chandra and musical performances by Gingger Shankar (vocals and double violin) and Dave Liang (keyboards) of the electronic group The Shanghai Restoration Project. The music transports audiences to the Himalayas, exploring the intersection of modern sounds and ancient Indian and Chinese instruments. The video is crafted from materials created by traditional artists, computer artists, scholars, NGOs, climate scientists, and travelers. *Himalaya Song* had its world premiere at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival with sold out performances and was chosen as one of the Top 10 Music Films by Rolling Stone Magazine. Presented at the Aga Khan Museum, admission to the film will include a post-screening reception and ability to tour the galleries of Toronto's newest cultural institution.

**LIVE PRESENTATION: FILM & MUSIC: MEMORIES TO LIGHT (USA/Canada 2014, performers in attendance, Canadian Premiere)**

*Memories to Light* is an ode to the inexplicable power of the pre-digital, pre-video home movie. Grainy and soft-focused, home movies provide glimpses into the past, where, in the everyday actions of others we see ourselves. Moreover, seeing Asian Americans and Asian Canadians in these films serves as a crucial document for remembering our experiences and history in North America. *Memories to Light* is an initiative of the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM), where home movies from the Asian American experience are preserved and shared through public screenings. Highlights from this presentation include family films from San Francisco's 1930s Japanese American community that would be lost after internment, a Chinese family's relocation to San Francisco's newly integrated neighbourhoods in the 1950s, and a trip to the legendary Expo '67 in Montreal. This one-time only unique presentation of *Memories to Light* features live narration by CAAM Executive Director Stephen Gong and musical accompaniment by Toronto artist Casey Mecija (Ohbijou).

**INSTALLATIONS:**

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**Fair Play, Artist: Ali Kazimi** (Nov 7 – Nov 16, Open Gallery, OCAD University)  
Co-presented by South Asian Visual Arts Centre

Fair Play is a 3D stereoscopic video installation that marks the centennial of the infamous Komagatu Maru Incident of 1914, when British Indian subjects were denied access to Canada and sent back to India where many were imprisoned or executed. *Fair Play*, through ten quiet vignettes, depicts the lives of ordinary people who were affected by the arrival, detention and departure of the Komagata Maru. *Fair Play* provides a view into the private lives of South Asians on shore during a time of extreme racial tension. Through his documentary film and photographic work, Ali Kazimi has worked extensively to contextualize this incident by creating work that explores themes of race, migration, memory and history. *Fair Play* opens a window into the past and places viewers in the presence of material, historically accurate, life-sized people. With the immediacy and presence that only stereoscopic 3D moving images can evoke, Kazimi asks the viewer to rethink history and immerse themselves in the spaces and lives of the characters.

**If All You Have Is A Hammer, Everything Looks Like A Nail, Artist: Will Kwan** (Nov 12 – Dec 12, Trinity Square Video, 401 Richmond Street West #367)  
Curated by Maiko Tanaka, co-presented by Gendai Gallery and Trinity Square Video

*If All You Have is a Hammer, Everything Looks Like a Nail* is a newly commissioned three-channel video installation by artist Will Kwan. The piece responds to a canonical piece of Canadian video art—an early multi-channel video installation by the Toronto artist John Massey titled, *As the Hammer Strikes* (1982). Re-making this work and replacing Massey and his hitchhiker with a white real estate agent and a Chinese home-buyer, the artist addresses the aspirations of the East Asian community, often cast as the “model minority.” Kwan offers a refractive mirror for how perceptions of self, other, and community are culturally interpolated, emphasizing their intersections and collisions.

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