

OVER \$46,000 IN AWARDS OFFERED TO MOVIEMAKERS

Toronto, October 6, 2015 – Winners of the 2015 awards will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on Sunday, November 8 at a private festival reception. An independent jury of distinguished media arts community members will select the award-winning films. Reel Asian is pleased to welcome back returning Awards Sponsors National Bank, CHCH, Fasken Martineau, WIFT-T, Menkes Developments and Air Canada. Over \$46,000 in cash and in-kind services will be awarded to this year's films and filmmakers in selection.

2015 FESTIVAL AWARDS

MENKES AUDIENCE AWARD:

All feature films are eligible for this prize.
\$2,000 cash prize

FASKEN MARTINEAU BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD:

All feature films are eligible for this prize.
\$2,000 cash prize

CHCH BEST CANADIAN FILM OR VIDEO AWARD:

All Canadian works are eligible for this prize.
\$500 cash prize

NATIONAL BANK BEST FIRST FEATURE AWARD:

All first feature films are eligible for this prize.
\$500 cash prize

ANIMASIAN AWARD:

All animated films and videos are eligible for this prize.
\$500 cash prize

AIR CANADA BEST SHORT FILM OR VIDEO AWARD:

All short films and videos are eligible for this prize.
Opportunity to broadcast on Air Canada's in-flight entertainment screens on international flights in 2016

WIFT-T AWARD:

All films made by female GTA-based artists are eligible for this prize.
\$1,200 programming pass and one-year membership from WIFT-T

TRUTH TO POWER AWARD:

All feature-length documentary films are eligible for this prize.
\$750 cash prize

2015 INTERNATIONAL JURY

James Heron has been the Executive Director of Toronto's Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre since 2000. He also founded and co-programs for the Toronto Japanese Film Festival and writes film reviews for Nikkei Voice and Bento Box Magazine. He is the president of the Chado Urasenke Tea Society of Toronto, holds a 2 dan in kendo and has lived in Japan for 11 years. His wife Masayo is from Kagoshima and is still trying to forgive him for Canadian winters.

Nicole Mendes has spent the past six years working in Commissioned and Scripted Programming at the CBC. As Executive in Charge of Production for the Drama Department, she oversees projects in both production and development for dramatic one-hour series, limited series, miniseries, movies of the week and specials. She currently works on the beloved program *Murdoch Mysteries*, and most recently worked on the hit series, *The Book of Negroes*.

A producer that focuses on films with international appeal, **Sidney Chiu's** credits include: *Coconut Hero*, *Three Days in Havana*, and *Bang Bang Baby*, which recently won the TIFF 2014 award for Best Canadian First Feature. Chiu also worked on Edko Film's Mandarin romantic comedy *Finding Mr. Right* starring Tang Wei with director Xue Xiaolu, and producers Mathew Tang and Shan Tam, which has grossed over US\$80-million in China according to Hollywood Reporter.

A graduate of the Canadian Film Centre's Producer's Lab, **Lea Marin** joined the National Film Board of Canada as a producer in 2006. Her recent film credits include *My Prairie Home* which premiered at the Sundance film festival in 2014 and was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award, and *The Portrait*, directed by Oscar nominated filmmaker Hubert Davis premiered on the BBC and won Golden Sheaf awards for Best Director and Best Documentary (Arts & Culture) in 2012.

Elisha Lim is a queer and transgendered artist whose goal is to effect social change. Elisha works through printed matter and video. Their work strives to investigate social issues around race, gender and sexuality by popularizing creative alternatives (for example, the gender-neutral pronoun "they"). They have exhibited art and videos internationally, have lectured on race representation and gender neutral pronouns on panels, artist talks and United Nations conferences, and directed Montréal's first Racialized Pride Week in 2012.

A Canadian Screen Award nominee for Best Leading Comedic Actress, **Grace Lynn Kung** has studied in England and Canada. She is a graduate of the Ottawa School of Speech and Drama (Chancellor's Trophy recipient), York University (two time awardee – Award for Acting) and holds two Certificates of Distinction for Speech and Drama from Trinity College London in the United Kingdom.

NEW THIS YEAR – DOCUMENTARY JURY

Karla Bobadilla is an entertainment and media lawyer, practicing primarily in film, television and new media rights acquisition, production and distribution/exploitation. Previously, she worked at the Canadian Media Production Association providing policy, regulatory, government relations, strategic planning, advocacy and lobby work. Before the CMPA, Karla was in-house legal counsel at Astral Media's Harold Greenberg Fund. Karla is also the former Chair of the Board of Reel Asian and is currently a Board Member of WorkInCulture which supports the HR and development needs of Ontario's arts and cultural community.

Immanuel Lanzaderas is a bilingual criminal lawyer for Legal Aid Ontario. He currently works at various courthouses and locations around the city, providing support to the duty counsel program. Before moving to the public sector, Immanuel worked at a union-side labour and employment firm in downtown Toronto. He is a founding member of the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, and served on their board of directors for five years. In his spare time, Immanuel plays as much tennis as he can. He is a fan of Fifth Generation Chinese Cinema.

Victoria Shen is a human rights and labour lawyer. She has worked with a range of union, non-profit, advocacy, government, and arts organizations. She has volunteered extensively in the Asian community. Notably, she was a board member of the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival from 2008-2014. She is a current board member of the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers, and previously President of the Chinese Canadian National Council, Toronto Chapter.

2015 PITCH JURY

Albert Shin graduated from York University with a B.F.A. in Film and Video Production in 2006 and directed his debut feature, *Point Traverse* in 2010. He returned to the director's chair for his second-feature, *In Her Place* (2014), which premiered at TIFF and went on to receive 7 Canadian Screen Award nominations including Best Picture, Director, and Original Screenplay. Albert was the 2015 recipient of the Jay Scott Prize for Emerging Artist by the Toronto Film Critics Association. Albert was also a producer on Igor Drljaca's *Krivina* (2012) and *The Waiting Room* (2015).

Michael Fukushima is an award-winning filmmaker and producer at the National Film Board of Canada's world-renowned Animation Studio. He has been making films since 1984, which is a lot of water under the bridge. Fukushima co-founded the NFB's flagship emerging filmmaker program, Hothouse, in 2002. He was appointed executive producer of the NFB's fabled Animation Studio in 2013. He now mostly produces the producers and offers up sagacity, but he continues to keep his hand in - this year with Oscar®-winners Alison Snowden and David Fine on their first short film in two decades, and on Oscar®-winner Torill Kove's next short film.

Lisa Valencia-Svensson is a Toronto-based award-winning documentary film producer. Her first feature documentary *Herman's House* won an Emmy for Outstanding Arts & Culture Programming and was broadcast on the prestigious PBS documentary series POV. She has associate produced several films, including Emmy nominated *The World Before Her*, which have screened and won awards at festivals including TIFF, Tribeca, and Hot Docs. Her passion is for film projects which explore issues of inequality and social justice, and which encourage audiences to view their world through a constructively critical and creatively unique lens.

2015 INDUSTRY SERIES AWARDS

The 2015 **SO YOU THINK YOU CAN PITCH?** competition includes up to 10 teams of filmmakers competing for over \$35,000 in prizes.

Emerging Filmmaker Category

This award comprises:

- \$2,000 cash prize
- Business affairs and legal consultation with Behind The Scenes Services
- Opportunity to screen work at the 2016 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
- Acting support from ACTRA:
 - Consultation with ACTRA Independent Production Steward
 - 2-hour Acting Coach Session
 - Audition space, access to CastingDiversity.ca and access to ACTRA Toronto members for casting (conditional on working with ACTRA members)
- Digital film and festival consultation with Cinesend, including 1 DCP and festival strategy consultation and inclusion in Cinesend's next beta registration
- A production package from Charles Street Video worth \$3,000 (\$10,000 at industry rental rates):
 - \$1,400 in edit suite access and/or production equipment rentals
 - \$250 artist fee
 - Two sessions with Charles Street Video's in-house editor
 - One-year membership with Charles Street Video

Established Filmmaker Category

This award comprises:

- \$2,000 cash prize
- Business affairs and legal consultation with Behind The Scenes Services
- Opportunity to screen work at the 2016 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival
- Acting support from ACTRA:
 - Consultation with ACTRA Independent Production Steward
 - 2-hour Acting Coach Session
 - Audition space, access to CastingDiversity.ca and access to ACTRA Toronto members for casting (conditional on working with ACTRA members)
- Digital film and festival consultation with Cinesend, including 1 DCP and festival strategy consultation and inclusion in Cinesend's next beta registration
- A production package from Charles Street Video worth \$5,000 (\$18,000 at industry rental rates):
 - \$2,700 in edit suite access and/or production equipment rentals
 - \$400 artist fee
 - Two sessions with Charles Street Video's in-house editor
 - One-year membership with Charles Street Video

MEDIA CONTACT

Virginia Kelly, V Kelly & Associates – 416-466-9799 – info@vkpr.ca
Visit www.reelasian.com for further press information, including digital images, press releases, and accreditation.

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