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POWERFUL DRAMAS, INSPIRING DOCUMENTARIES, AND INNOVATIVE FILMMAKING MAKE UP THE 2018 REEL ASIAN FESTIVAL

Festival announces full programming lineup, new VR installation, and Canadian Spotlight Artist Min-Sook Lee

Festival runs November 8 to 16, 2018

Public tickets on sale today at reelasian.com

(TORONTO – October 11, 2018) The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), Canada's premier pan-Asian festival, today announced its complete programming lineup for the 22nd edition, over 50% of which are directed by women. Returning programmes include Marquee, Vista, Pulse, Reel Asian X, Wee Asian and Reel Ideas. This year's festival consists of 62 titles from 17 regions including Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Laos, Nepal, the Netherlands, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Trinidad and the United States. The Reel Asian Film Festival will take place **November 8 to 16, 2018**.

"It's a very exciting time for Asian cinema as we are seeing more and more content reach a wider audience and earn both box office and streaming success," said Savine Wong, Interim Executive Director, Reel Asian. "As a leader in the presentation of Asian cinema, we look forward to continuing our efforts to expand the space that connects our audience to universal stories from around the world and in our own backyard."

MARQUEE

The festival's Marquee section welcomes the stars of the red carpet who are master storytellers that perfect the craft of story, design, acting and adaptation. The lineup includes the previously announced Opening and Closing Night Galas *Dear Ex* and *Wish You Were Here*, as well as the Centrepiece Presentation *Inuyashiki*, a masterful reinvention of the superhero genre based on the popular manga by Hiroya Oku. The programme also includes *House of the Rising Sons*, chronicling the chart-topping success of 1970s Hong Kong pop sensations, *The Wynners*, co-written and directed by the band's drummer, Anthony Chan, who will be in attendance; Mamoru Hosoda's latest animation *Mirai*, a heartwarming look at a growing family through the eyes of a child; *Tomorrow is Another Day*, a drama about a working-class woman's struggle to break through her midlife crisis and care for her autistic son, which earned newcomer Ling Man Lung (who will be in attendance) and veteran actress Teresa Mo accolades at the 2018 Hong Kong Film Awards; and Eric Khoo's latest film, *Ramen Shop*, which follows a young man's culinary journey from Japan to Singapore to discover the truth about his family.

VISTA

Dare to explore outside the box with filmmakers from the Vista Section, as they take you through their worlds of fiction and documentary, reflecting on connections with their community and their culture. The lineup includes *One Cut of the Dead*, a zombie comedy directed by newcomer Shinichiro Ueda, which has taken the Japanese box office by storm; *High Flash*, an intricate balance between plot-driven thriller and character-driven social drama; and Cathy Yan's directorial debut, *Dead Pigs*, a dark comedy centered around thousands of dead pigs floating down the river toward a rapidly-modernizing Shanghai. There will also be seven documentaries in this section, including Minji Ma's feature debut *Family in the Bubble*, featuring her own family still reeling from South Korea's 80s economic boom; Kulap Vilaysack's directorial debut, *Origin Story*, chronicles a road trip into her complicated past as she seeks out her biological father for the first time; *This Shaking Keeps Me Steady*, Shehrezad Maher's (in attendance) visually reflective documentary on the lived trauma of the first responders in Karachi and the victims and survivors whose experiences are shown via televised re-enactments;

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Nang by Nang, a vivid portrait of Toronto-based Trinidadian filmmaker Richard Fung's previously unknown cousin (Fung will be in attendance); from Montreal-based filmmaker Ashley Duong (in attendance), ***A Time to Swim***, follows Indigenous activist Mutang Urud as he returns home to Sarawak, Malaysia for the first time since his exile in 1992; award-winning filmmaker Kathleen S. Jayme's (in attendance) latest doc ***Finding Big Country***, which chronicles her mission to find her childhood hero the Vancouver Grizzlies Bryant 'Big Country' Reeves; and ***Ulam: Main Dish***, a delicious introduction to the exploding Filipino food movement in North America, from Alexandra Cuervo (in attendance), who was recently named one of the 100 Most Influential Filipina Women In the World.

Canadian Spotlight Retrospective: ***Hogtown: The Politics of Policing*** is an unblinking look at the Toronto Police Services Board. More than a decade after its Hot Docs premiere where it was awarded Best Canadian Feature, Reel Asian returns the film to the big screen to re-examine how the Toronto Police Services Board stands today, followed by a special panel discussion with director Min Sook Lee.

WEE ASIAN

Wee Asian returns for its third year! Kids can explore the art of moviemaking and fuel their creativity through films, crafts, and dance. Wee Asian takes place Saturday, November 10 in the TIFF Bell Lightbox Green Room. This event is free.

REEL IDEAS

The Reel Ideas program blends education and industry at the Toronto Reel Asian Film Festival. The program provides local emerging talent, visiting delegates and established filmmakers an opportunity to connect and explore multiple facets of Toronto's entertainment industry. Reel Ideas is an extension of Reel Asian's ongoing mandate to nourish the growth of Asians in the arts.

Reel Ideas kicks off with the previously announced keynote event with American comedian, writer and podcaster, Hari Kondabolu.

Panel topics include how to elevate your pitch, social influencer impact, documentary storytelling and a conversation with Sook-Yin Lee about interdisciplinary artistic practices. Guests will include filmmaker Sook-Yin Lee, Sherren Lee, Farah Merani, Ashley Duong and more.

PULSE (Shorts Programme)

This year's shorts programming features thought-provoking films from around the world that encourage discussions on important topics such as race, gender, activism and anxiety.

This year's Pulse programming includes:

SPECTRUM: This collection of shorts shares the intricate and intersectional experiences of the queer Asian community.

COUNTERBALANCE: These films address how race, gender and class establish one's identity.

ENTANGLED TALES: In a world of growing connections, these stories of coincidental encounters and fragile relationships reveal a broader discussion on what it means to be connected.

IN THEIR WORDS: Touching on labour, activism, migration, and self-perseverance.

NOT IN UNIFORM: These films deal with potential and overflowing anxieties in school

UPROOTED: These ten shorts cover a range of family intimacies.

UNSUNG VOICES 7: Youth participants of Reel Asian's intensive summer-long video production workshop will present the World Premiere of their first short films.

REEL ASIAN X

Reel Asian X showcases film and video projects that stretch beyond the four walls of a cinema.

VR Installation: ***Homestay*** is a multi-layered experiment that incorporates the latest in VR technology, from creator Paisley Smith. *Homestay* shows one family's story with international students and examines how complete immersion in another culture can create a clash of expectations and change our understanding of family, hospitality, nationality and love.

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival gratefully acknowledges the support of Presenting Sponsor National Bank, and government funders the Canada Council for the Arts, Government of Canada, Telefilm Canada, Government of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Creates, Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund, and Toronto Arts Council.

Tickets go on sale today on reelasian.com.

About Reel Asian

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), presented by National Bank, is a unique showcase of contemporary Asian cinema and work from the Asian diaspora. As Canada's largest pan-Asian film festival, Reel Asian® provides a public forum for Asian media artists and their work, and fuels the growing appreciation for Asian cinema in Canada. This year's festival runs in November 2018 in Toronto and North York. Reel Asian will be showcasing special projects featuring prominent artists, content creators, up-and-coming filmmakers and will also include the "Reel Ideas" program for creative minds in the industry to connect. Works presented at Reel Asian include films, videos, and presentations by East, South and Southeast Asian artists in Canada, the U.S., Asia and all over the world.

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