

TORONTO reel asian INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

REEL ASIAN EXPANDS PROGRAMMING TEAM; WELCOMES ROGER GARCIA AS STRATEGIC CONSULTANT

(TORONTO – April 24, 2019) The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian), Canada's premier pan-Asian film festival, has expanded its programming team to meet the festival's evolving artistic objectives.

The festival welcomes Roger Garcia as a programming consultant to work with Executive Director, Deanna Wong, and Head of Programming, Kristine Estorninos, for its 23rd edition in November. Garcia served as Director of the Hong Kong International Film Festival when it began in the late 1970s, establishing the first international film festival in Asia. He returned to the festival as Executive Director from 2010-18. He also led the Asian Film Awards from 2010–13 before being appointed Executive Director of the Asian Film Awards Academy upon its establishment in 2013 and served until 2018. He has served as advisor, consultant, programmer and juror for many international festivals, including the Venice Biennale, Locarno, Berlin, San Francisco and Far East Film Festival Udine, among many others. Publishing credits include *Asiaweek*, *British Film Institute*, *Cahiers du cinéma*, *Film Comment* and *Variety*, among others. He was awarded the prestigious Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Government of France earlier this year.

"It is incredibly exciting for the festival to bring on Roger Garcia as a programming consultant," says Deanna Wong, Executive Director of Reel Asian. "Mr. Garcia brings a wealth of experience from his work on an international stage to Reel Asian."

Reel Asian also welcomes back two key team members from previous years in new roles. Filmmaker and programmer Aram Collier will focus on features from the Asian diaspora as Programmer, North America and Industry, while former Reel Asian Interim Executive Director Savine Wong returns as Programmer, East Asia.

"Both additions to the team bring such valuable insight from their experiences as programmers and from their rich history with the festival," says Sidney Chiu, vice-chair of Reel Asian's Board of Directors. "The festival is incredibly fortunate to work with such knowledgeable industry professionals as we move toward our 25th anniversary."

The 23rd edition of Reel Asian will take place in downtown Toronto and North York in November 2019.

About Reel Asian

The Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (Reel Asian) 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. 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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