Reel Asian’s offices and main activities are located on the treaty territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat nations. This territory is covered by the Dish With One Spoon covenant, a treaty of collective responsibility for the protection and sharing of land and resources. As we continue with a digitally hosted festival that will screen Canada-wide, we encourage audiences to learn the specific histories and stories of the lands they are settled on — the lands of Treaty 11, many treaty agreements, and traditional, unceded territories that continue to demand justice — and to support the ongoing work of Indigenous leaders and communities. As we enter our 26th festival, we acknowledge the festival’s history of growth and challenge, and are committed to animating more abundance and complexity in positionalities, communities, and relationships from Asian and Asian diasporic film and media arts. Regardless of our pathways of arrival, we all currently benefit from the Canadian government’s broken treaties and imposed violence, and reckon openly with our responsibility to this land and its caretakers. We name the ways we are complicit in structures of white supremacy, and, as part of this year’s hybrid format, wrestle with our use of tools and creation of spaces digitally and in-person. Reel Asian recognizes how ideas of “development” are mobilized to steal land and displace people, and how technology is wielded to suppress, surveil, and inflict violence on Indigenous communities. We also recognize that we are still in a time of great upheaval and need. We honour the longstanding work of organizers, creatives, and communities that continue to give us hope, language, and possibility. We practice critical and reflexive allyship with Indigenous Peoples all over Turtle Island who are exercising their sovereignty and working toward justice and freedom, whose histories, presence, and imagined futures inspire us over and over to envision what our future worlds must look like. May we be thoughtful with our intent, and intentional with our word and actions.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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LETTERS

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Coming after our triumphant 25th anniversary last year, the newest edition of the Reel Asian Film Festival represents both a celebration of our legacy and the beginning of a bold new chapter. We are also excited to be able to welcome people back for more in-person events again, while retaining the flexibility and reach of an online program.

Led by our artistic director, Aram Siu Wai Collier, and the incredible programming team, the time also feels both validating and path-breaking. We have exciting selections from established filmmakers like Ali Kazimi (Beyond Extinction: Sinixt Resurgence), Anthony Shim (Bamboat), which is opening the festival and Lloyd Lee Choi (Same Old), and bold talents like Sharlene Woon (If From Every Tongue It Drips), Ethan Eng (Therapy Dogs), and Tarun Padmakumar (The Commute).

The board is honored to introduce Padmakumar (<The Commute>), and Tarun Padmakumar (<The Commute>), and the incredible programming team — Vidhya, June, Mariam, Samir, and Jasmine — to bring that work to light. Faith in our programming committees to sift through the record amount of submissions received. Faith in the rest of the festival team to seek and adjust to safer and accessible-viewing practices. Faith that the work we’ve done over the past few years has allowed us to hope for possibilities present and futures.

And most importantly faith in you, the audience, our community to be present, to witness bold and intentional storytelling, and to continue engaging with the programming that we’ve done over the past few years. We hope to see you at the festival again, while retaining the flexibility and reach of an online program.

Faith in our programming team to continue against odds both new and old to make challenging work. Faith in our programming team — Vidhya, June, Mariam, Samir, and Jasmine — to make that plan and hoped for the best. But perhaps, faith is a better plan.

FROM THE FESTIVAL FOUNDER

In 1997, I founded Reel Asian as a place to create community and belonging in an industry for myself and other Asian filmmakers like me. It’s 26 years later and the festival still serves that purpose, except the community has grown and matured, and is creating work on screens big and small for diverse audiences interested in Asian Cinema. My fellow aspiring filmmakers from back in the day have become esteemed colleagues in the film and media industry. Bringing the stories we imagined to a whole new audience and creating opportunities for the next generation of creators. When you’re in the theatre with your fellow movie lovers, look around you — you might just meet your next great collaborator or someone to invest in your dream. Our hope is that these films will spark something in yourself or inspire someone else to explore an industry that is finally making way for the endless talent in our community.

FROM PROGRAMMING

What do we write to fully convey what happens in a year-long cycle of programming? We plan, we discuss, we research, we plan some more. For 2022, early on, using the best information at the time, we decided to have our festival return to in-person screenings (about which we are extremely excited). We made that plan and hoped for the best.

Contrary to the aphorism, Can hope actually be a plan?, as we’ve learned over the last few years of the pandemic, planning will often go out the window, until all you have left is hope.

But perhaps, faith is a better plan. Faith in the filmmakers to continue against odds both new and old to make challenging work. Faith in our programming team — Vidhya, June, Mariam, Samir, and Jasmine — to bring that work to light. Faith in our programming committees to sift through the record amount of submissions received. Faith in the rest of the festival team to seek and adjust to safer and accessible-viewing practices. Faith that the work we’ve done over the past few years has allowed us to hope for possibilities present and futures.

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FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

For two long years, the only way people could experience Reel Asian was at home on a small screen. So we are beyond excited to be welcoming audiences, filmmakers and our community back into cinemas this year, where we can watch films together, meet some of the talent behind them and discuss what we saw over a bubble tea afterwards!

In RA’s early years, the number of feature-length films made by Asian Canadians were few and far between. Former RA board member Keith Lock is widely known as the first Chinese Canadian filmmaker — when he started out in the film business in the 1960s, he worked in an environment that was lonely, unwelcoming and at times openly hostile. This experience compelled him to do what he could to smooth the way for others to make their way in the film and media arts industry. Over time, we’ve seen more and more artists like Keith finding ways to create work and using their experience and positions to open the door for others.

To mark our 25th anniversary last year, we acknowledged him far we’ve come by establishing the Fire Horse Award in honour of festival founder Anita Lee, now TIFF’s chief programming officer, and presenting it to Keith. His influence has been felt deeply, and the results can be seen in the plethora of Canadian films — including Riceboy Sleeps, our TIFF-award winning opening night film by Vancouver’s Anthony Shim — that our programming team had to choose from, and which we are proud to be presenting this year.

The pandemic has been a challenging time for all of us in the business of presenting artistic work. We couldn’t have come through it without the continued support of our sponsors, donors, community partners and members. Our esteemed board of directors have provided guidance and assistance in many countless ways and I’m grateful to them as well. I’m also extremely privileged to have worked with the same core team of talented individuals whose love for film and this community is unsurpassed. So my heartfelt thanks go to the Reel Asian staff for their hard work. And finally, to the artists whose work we endeavour to elevate and celebrate — we can’t wait to see what you have in store for us, now and in the future! Enjoy the festival.

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FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

Filmmakers, like many artists, have the ability to bridge matters of time, language, culture and borders through their work. They allow us to see the world through a different lens and to examine the issues that impact our communities every day. They show us the wonderful, the mythical and the mundane in equal parts — the challenges and beauty of life.

This film festival showcases cutting edge, contemporary Asian cinema, as well as productions from Asia and the Asian diaspora. Selected media artists have invested themselves fully in their creations, channeling their cultural identity and their passion for storytelling into their art. Filmgoers are fortunate to have this opportunity to share in their magic.

I congratulate the organizers, volunteers and all those involved in another successful festival season, and I wish everyone a memorable experience.

MARY SIMON
GOVERNOR GENERAL OF CANADA

FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

Dear Friends:

I am pleased to extend my warmest greetings to everyone attending the 2022 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

Since 1997, this festival has provided a platform for Asian identifying artists from Canada and around the world to showcase their work and share their stories. I am certain that audiences will be both entertained and engaged by the diverse selection of films being screened this year.

It continues to be a challenging time for planning and hosting events. That is why I would like to commend the organizers for their hard work and dedication in making this year’s edition of the festival a hybrid experience with both in-person and virtual programming. You can take pride in your commitment to celebrating Canadian filmmakers and to fostering diversity and inclusion in the screen industry.

Please accept my best wishes for a memorable and enjoyable experience.

Sincerely,

THE Rt. Hon. JUSTIN P. TRUDEAU, P.C., M.P.
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

FROM THE PREMIER

I want to extend warm greetings to everyone taking part in the 26th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

One of the many things that make Ontario great is our vibrant cultural scene. Over the years, Ontario has developed a reputation as an international film hub because, in part, we have such a rich pool of talent drawn from our many cultural communities.

I want to thank the stellar team behind the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival for, once again, bringing us this showcase of contemporary Asian cinema and providing a platform for Asian filmmakers, storytellers, and performers.

Events such as this help bring people together and re-energize our cultural scene so we can come back stronger and better than ever.

Best wishes for a successful festival.

DOUG FORD
PREMIER OF ONTARIO

FROM THE MINISTER OF TOURISM

On behalf of Premier Ford and the Government of Ontario, I am delighted to welcome everyone to the 2022 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

For 26 years, the festival has showcased the work of film artists from Asia and the Asian diaspora and helped to unite our diverse communities through a celebration of world-class film. We’re proud to support it.

Thank you to the organizers, artists and volunteers who make this event come to life each year.

I wish you all a memorable festival.

Sincerely,

THE HON. NEIL LUMSDEN
MINISTER OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND SPORT
FROM TELEFILM CANADA

We could not be more excited to come back to the festival circuit to celebrate the artistry of film and showcase Canadian creatives around the world and at home. That is why we are proud to support the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival!

At Telefilm, our mission is to elevate storytelling. It is to support Canadians of all backgrounds, especially underrepresented communities that deserve to be able to tell their own stories. Right now, our priority is to reflect the diversity of our country on screen and bring representation to the forefront of our initiatives and programs.

We want to thank and congratulate the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival for its continued support of diverse voices in film and for fostering the return to cinemas so we can all celebrate these talents from around the world in theatres once again.

And remember, keep supporting Canadian talent in theatres and online whenever you can!

FRANCESCA ACCINELLI
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO, TELEFILM CANADA

FROM THE MPP

Dear Friends,

As the Member of Provincial Parliament for the riding of Spadina-Fort York, it is my great pleasure to extend warm greetings to everyone attending the 26th Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

This festival allows audiences the unique opportunity to enjoy the best of contemporary films by Asian filmmakers from all over the world. It also offers attendees a chance to learn more about Asian life and culture and to celebrate the many aspects of Asian diversity. I congratulate those artists presenting works this year and for sharing their talent and heritage through cinema. This is especially important during this time when the Arts are striving to regain some momentum amidst a global pandemic.

I would also like to applaud the board members, staff and many volunteers for organizing this event.

Wishing you all the best for a memorable and successful festival!

Sincerely,

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MPP SPADINA – FORT YORK
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Victoria Morado
Farah Abdo

LIVE FINALE EMCEE
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BECOME A MEMBER

Enjoy full access to the festival and be a part of our growing community.

DONATE TODAY

Help us sustain a more diverse working environment for Asian Canadian creatives.

Reel Asian is a registered charitable non-profit that champions the future of diverse storytelling in Canada by advocating for Asian representation in the media arts. Donate at reelasian.com/donate!

Reel Asian celebrates the best of Asian cinema and fosters an Asian Canadian film community in the GTA. Sign up at reelasian.com/membership!

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$50 FUNDS ONE HOUR OF MENTORSHIP TIME
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ARTIST BIO
Brian Jiang (they/them) is a queer interdisciplinary artist of Chinese descent based in Tkaronto aka Toronto. Their multidisciplinary arts practice comprises painting, illustration, animation, and design. Jiang’s work explores topics such as speculative worlds, the natural world, identity, and community-building. They hold a Bachelors of Design (Major in Illustration) from OCAD University. Jiang has created work for clients such as LinkedIn, the City of Toronto, Toronto Fringe Festival, UofT Med Magazine, Xpace Cultural Centre, Pride Toronto, and more. Jiang and their work can be found on Instagram @_brianjiang.

ABOUT “CONSONANCE”
Consonance is an animation inspired by the collective power of community organizing and activism. This animation reinterprets the Chinese mythological tale that states, if a carp swam upstream and made the final leap over the waterfall to reach Dragon’s gate, it would be rewarded by being transformed into a dragon. The artist first heard of this tale in their childhood, when they were puzzled by why in the Pokémon video game series, the puny carp-like Magikarp, evolved into the mighty dragon-like Gyrados. Their interest in this Pokémon’s evolution concept led them to research the original myth it was derived from and it resonated with them since then. In this reimagined adaptation, a single carp struggles to swim upstream a waterfall and falls to the bottom. However, through the support of its fellow carp friends, they’re able to swim and push together to reach the top of the falls where they merge to become a single powerful dragon. This reinterpretation of the ancient tale encapsulates how the whole (community) is greater than the sum of its parts (individuals).
AWARDS

BLUE ANT MEDIA AUDIENCE CHOICE FEATURE FILM AWARD
$2,500 cash prize
The winner of the Blue Ant Media Audience Choice Feature Film Award is selected through a tally of votes from the viewers of the 26th edition Reel Asian International Film Festival.

REEL ASIAN AUDIENCE CHOICE SHORT FILM AWARD
$500 cash prize
The winner of the Reel Asian Audience Choice Short Film Award is selected through a tally of votes from the viewers of the 26th edition Reel Asian International Film Festival.

OSLER BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD
$2,000 cash prize
All feature films are eligible for this prize.

REEL ASIAN BEST CANADIAN FEATURE FILM AWARD
$1,500 cash prize
All Canadian feature films are eligible for this prize.

CINESEND BEST FIRST FEATURE AWARD
$500 cash prize and CineSend Files Team Annual Plan (valued at $4,500)
All first feature films are eligible for this prize.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA BEST CANADIAN SHORT FILM AWARD
$5,000 value
All short works made by emerging Canadian artists (fewer than 4 films) are eligible for this prize of post-production services.

REEL ASIAN BEST DOCUMENTARY AWARD
$1,500 cash prize
All documentary films are eligible for this prize, donated by Karla Bobadilla, Diang Lu, Immanuel Lanzaderas, Sonia Sakamoto-Jog and Victoria Shen.

One NFP

CINESEND BEST FIRST FEATURE AWARD
$500 cash prize and CineSend Files Team Annual Plan (valued at $4,500)
All first feature films are eligible for this prize.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA BEST CANADIAN SHORT FILM AWARD
$5,000 value
All short works made by emerging Canadian artists (fewer than 4 films) are eligible for this prize of post-production services.

ARMSTRONG ACTING STUDIOS OUTSTANDING PERFORMER
Canadian Feature Film $2,250 value
Canadian Short Film $2,250 value
The award recipient will receive full class tuition coverage of a class at Armstrong Acting Studios.

NATHALIE YOUNGLAI AWARD
$2,500 cash prize
New award recognizes a 40+ emerging Canadian creator in screen-based industries looking to accelerate and/or change the path of their career. Sponsored by Nathalie Younglai, with support from BIPOC TV & Film and Reel Asian.

AIR CANADA SHORT FILM OR VIDEO AWARD
$2,000 cash prize
All short films and videos are eligible for this prize. Opportunity to broadcast on Air Canada’s in-flight entertainment screens on international flights.

MICHAEL FUKUSHIMA ANIMASIAN AWARD
$600 cash prize
All animated works are eligible for this award. Co-sponsored by Ann Marie Fleming.

DGC ONTARIO AND WIFT TORONTO FILM AWARD
$1,000 cash prize, $500 in programming gift certificates, and 2 one-year memberships to WIFT Toronto
All films made by female-identified Ontario-based artists are eligible for this award.

REEL ASIAN BEST DOCUMENTARY AWARD
$1,500 cash prize
All documentary films are eligible for this prize, donated by Karla Bobadilla, Diang Lu, Immanuel Lanzaderas, Sonia Sakamoto-Jog and Victoria Shen.

Air Canada

OSLER BEST FEATURE FILM AWARD
$2,000 cash prize
All feature films are eligible for this prize.

REEL ASIAN BEST DOCUMENTARY AWARD
$1,500 cash prize
All documentary films are eligible for this prize, donated by Karla Bobadilla, Diang Lu, Immanuel Lanzaderas, Sonia Sakamoto-Jog and Victoria Shen.

NATHALIE YOUNGLAI AWARD
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DGC ONTARIO AND WIFT TORONTO FILM AWARD
$1,000 cash prize, $500 in programming gift certificates, and 2 one-year memberships to WIFT Toronto
All films made by female-identified Ontario-based artists are eligible for this award.

REEL ASIAN AUDIENCE CHOICE FEATURE FILM AWARD
$2,000 cash prize
All feature films are eligible for this prize.

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JURY

Ada Tseng is an assistant editor on the utility journalism team at the Los Angeles Times. The team publishes stories and information that help people solve problems, answer questions and make big decisions about life in and around Los Angeles. She previously led coverage of Orange County as TimesOC’s entertainment editor, and she co-hosts the Asian American pop-culture history podcast Saturday School.

Sami Khan is an Oscar-nominated writer and director whose work has been supported by the Sundance and Tribeca film institutes, Rooftop Films, the Gotham, the Berlinale, and the NBCUniversal’s Directors Fellowship. His films have screened at leading festivals, including Tribeca, Toronto, Hot Docs, and Mumbai. Khan’s latest release is “Guha,” an episode he directed for the Emmy-nominated Apple TV+ docuseries HOME.

Aashna Thakkar is a Toronto-based artist, writer, and film programmer. She is currently the manager of programming at the Regent Park Film Festival and has previously worked with Breakthroughs Film Festival and Hot Docs. Thakkar was a writer in the 2020–2021 cohort of TACLA Youth Critics Initiative. She has previously sat on juries for the Winnipeg Film Group and aluCine Latin Film + Media Arts Festival.

FEATURES
Ada Tseng
Sami Khan
Aashna Thakkar

SHORTS
Micah Kernan
Kim Sun-woo
Chris Chong Chan Fui

Micah Kernan is the development manager for both drama and comedy at CBC, where she coordinates the management, tracking, and distribution of projects. She is also the current programmer for Canada’s longest-running short-film showcase, Canadian Reflections.

Kim Sun-woo has produced short films in Korea for 10 years, and currently works as a programmer at the Cheongju International Short Film Festival. He has also programmed for the Chungbuk International Martial Arts & Action Film Festival for the past three years.

Chris Chong Chan Fui works with varying materials that connect early cinema, natural science, sports, and economics. Chong’s films have premiered at the Cannes Directors’ Fortnight, Vienna, BFI London, and have won TIFF’s Best Canadian Short Film two years in a row. He is a Smithsonian Institute fellow, a Ford Foundation fellow, and most recently, he was awarded the Rockefeller Foundation’s Bellagio Arts Fellowship in Italy.
RICEBOY SLEEPS
Opening Night Presentation

Set in the 1990s, South Korean immigrant and single mother So-young looks to make a fresh start in a West Coast Canadian suburb with her son Dong-hyun. Despite encountering the challenges of immigrant life at every step, they try their best to fit in at school and at work. As the angstful Dong-hyun grows up and grows apart from his mother, events propel them to deal with unspoken truths from the past.

A deeply personal second feature from writer-director-actor Anthony Shim, Riceboy Sleeps features dynamic performances from Seung-yoon Choi and Ethan Hwang as So-young and Dong-hyun, respectively. Their performances are enabled by precise but organic 16 mm compositions by Shim and cinematographer Christopher Lew. A commanding performance of Canadian film, Riceboy Sleeps is epic yet intimate, and ambitious yet simple in its truths that belonging is more important than fitting in.

- ARAM SIU WAI COLLIER

Anthony Shim is a Canadian actor and director, based in Vancouver. His films include Daughter (2019) and Riceboy Sleeps (2022).

OPENING NIGHT PARTY
9:30 PM–12:30 AM • CLIO • Tickets and details at reelasian.com

WED, NOV 9 • 7 PM • HOT DOCS TED ROGERS CINEMA

CONTENT WARNING
Racist language situations, sexist language situations, drug use, mental illness

DIRECTOR
Anthony Shim

CAST
Seung-yoon Choi
Ethan Hwang
Dohyun Noel Hwang
Anthony Shim

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Toronto International Film Festival, 2022
Busan International Film Festival, 2022

WITH SUPPORT FROM
2022 CANADA
117 MIN
ENGLISH, KOREAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
PG
Land of Gold

Kiran, a first-generation Punjabi truck driver, is about to become a father, but he is preoccupied by questions and reflections on family, fatherhood, and responsibility. He embarks on one last work trip to clear his head, but what starts as a peaceful, meditative journey shifts abruptly when he hears pounding inside a shipping container and discovers an undocumented girl named Elena inside. After much convincing, he agrees to set out on a cross-country road trip in search of her family, as the pair bond over music, culturally specific food, and what it means to be seen as “other” in white America.

Nardeep Khurmi skillfully directs and performs in an impressive feature debut to create a profoundly poignant and timely look at solidarity, difference, and found family, while asking us to contemplate the bonds we create with strangers and the memories and traumas that both haunt us and shape us into who we are.

– MARIAM ZAIDI

Nardeep Khurmi is an award-winning filmmaker whose narratives spotlight underrepresented communities. He hails from the ‘burbs of Philly by way of Switzerland and graduated from New York University. Land of Gold, his debut feature, is the recipient of the 2021 ATT Untold Stories grand prize and 2021 Fall ScreenCraft Film Fund.

Content Warning
Death/dying, suicide, racist language/situations, trauma, guns/gunfire

Director
Nardeep Khurmi

Cast
Nardeep Khurmi
Caroline Valencia
Pallavi Sastry
Riti Sachdeva

Official Selection
Tribeca Film Festival, 2022

Fueling the Growth

We proudly support Reel Asian in its mission to highlight the talent and showcase the work of the Asian diaspora.
**CROSSINGS**

**THU, NOV 10 • 7 PM • OCADU AUDITORIUM**

In a crucial feminist interrogation of inter-Korean politics and U.S. imperialism, Crossings follows international women activists attempting to cross the 38th parallel, demanding an end to the ongoing Korean War. With incisive style, Deann Borshay Liem documents the Women Cross DMZ movement — including Christine Ahn, Leymah Gbowee, and Gloria Steinem — as they undertake a precarious peacemaking journey.

Weaving interviews with modern and archival footage, Liem exposes the lingering scars of the so-called Forgotten War and the complexity of the political landscape left in its wake. Women Cross DMZ’s struggle to navigate conflicting political interests, including the movement’s own controversial racial and national politics, lays bare the frustrating and arduous nature of collective action.

With rare attention to the intersections of gender and war, Crossings offers not a romantic fairytale but a reckoning with the moral ambiguity of past and present — and dares to look to the future with hope.

— BLYTHE SHULAN HUNTER

**CONTENT WARNING**
Depictions of war and armed conflict

**DIRECTOR**
Deann Borshay Liem

**OFFICIAL SELECTION**
Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, 2022
Hawai’i International Film Festival, 2021
Asian American International Film Festival, 2022

**WITH SUPPORT FROM**

Deann Borshay Liem has over 20 years’ experience working in the development, production, and distribution of independent documentaries. She is the producer, director, and writer of the Emmy Award-nominated documentary, First Person Plural (2003), as well as the award-winning films in the Matter of Cha Jung Hee (2010) and Memory of Forgotten War (2015).

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**NOISE**

**THU, NOV 10 • 8:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX**

Keita is the hero and the hope of the remote island Shishikari thanks to his flourishing fig business, which is about to bring in a large government grant and revitalize the community. Then an ex-convict arrives, disturbing the island’s peace. Keita’s daughter goes missing, and because someone witnesses the ex-convict committing murder, they chase after the highly likely suspect in hopes of finding the child. But an accident ensues, and to make matters worse, Keita and his friends find themselves with unwanted corpses. Soon, detectives from the mainland arrive, and covering up what happened becomes increasingly difficult.

Based on a manga by Tetsuya Tsutsui, Noise is a suspenseful drama full of twists and turns. The great Battle Royale (2000) actor Tatsuya Fujiwara and Kenichi Matsuyama of Blue (2021) reunite after the Death Note films for another synergic collaboration. With the direction of Ryūichi Hiroki, a film and television veteran, Noise delves into more than just unravelling the mystery, through its study of friendship, grudges, and desires.

— JUNE KIM

**CONTENT WARNING**
Guns/gunfire, self-harm, death/dying

**DIRECTOR**
Ryūichi Hiroki

**CAST**
Tatsuya Fujiwara
Kenichi Matsuyama
Ryunosuke Kamiki
Masatoshi Nagase

**OFFICIAL SELECTION**
Udine Far East Film Festival, 2022

Born in 1954, Ryūichi Hiroki started his cinematic career in the pink film industry. In 1994 he made an international breakthrough with his critically acclaimed work 700 Two Lap Runners, an exploration of heterosexual and homosexual love. While still keeping his roots intact, Hiroki continues to explore and analyze contemporary Japan in his works.

But freedom is elusive in Julie Ha and Eugene Yi’s moving documentary, which covers the rise of a movement and the fall of a man too battered by prison to meet the expectations of him. Expertly layered with extensive archival footage of Lee and contemporary interviews with leaders of the freedom movement, Free Chol Soo Lee is at times a justice-system drama, and a character study — and always empathetic. And it resists the typical salaciousness of the “true crime” genre to show the true human impact, between despair and salvation, on a man yearning to be free.

– ARAM SIU WAI COLLIER

Shaunak Sen is a filmmaker based in Delhi. Cities of Sleep, his first feature-length documentary, showed at major international film festivals and won six international documentary awards. Sen has received the EFA Bertha Fund (2019), the Sundance Documentary Grant (2019), the Catapulta Film Fund (2020), and the Gucci Tribeca Documentary Fund (2020).

Julie Ha’s storytelling career spans more than two decades, in both ethnic and mainstream media, with a specialized focus on Asian American stories. Free Chol Soo Lee marks her first documentary-film project.

Eugene Yi is a filmmaker, editor, and journalist. His film-editing work has premiered at the Berlinale, Sundance, Tribeca, and others.
**STAY THE NIGHT**

2022 CANADA 94 MIN ENGLISH PG TORONTO PREMIERE

FRI, NOV 11 • 8:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE FROM NOV 14–17 ONLY

When reserved, late-bloomer Grace gets passed up for a major promotion at work, she tries to break out of her shell by pursuing a one-night stand at the club. Her choice in partner, Carter Stone, an NHL player at a crossroads, is having an equally rough night. After an initial meet-cute and disastrous attempt at a hookup, the two walk Toronto’s wintry streets, wandering from bar to skating rink to office, slowly but surely finding common ground as the night progresses.

Kim’s Convenience’s Andrea Bang shines in a dramatic role as rigid Grace, whose acerbic stubbornness lends the film a bumbling comedy, as she learns where she can bend without breaking. The feature debut of veteran Canadian TV writer and director Renuka Jeyapalan, Stay The Night showcases delightfully familiar locals-only Toronto hangouts, while asking us to lose ourselves in a version of the city where a brief encounter doesn’t have to mean a transaction.

– VIDHYA ELANGO

**BAD AXE**

2022 CANADA 94 MIN ENGLISH PG TORONTO PREMIERE

FRI, NOV 11 • 9 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX

How do you love a place that doesn’t seem to love you back? Director David Siev broaches that question in Bad Axe, a complicated love letter to his hometown. Siev’s dad, a survivor of the Cambodian Killing Fields, has spent decades building a new life in Bad Axe, Michigan, but the small town is not always hospitable to immigrants. Siev’s sister’s outspoken support for Black Lives Matter puts her at odds with her family restaurant’s most loyal, Trump-supporting customers. Unfolding across the turbulent year of 2020, this personal documentary follows Siev’s family as they struggle to keep their restaurant afloat amid family tensions, neo-Nazis, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

– RON MA

David Siev holds producing, camera, and consulting credits on everything from hidden-camera blockbuster comedies like Bad Trip (2021) to rock-and-roll biopics such as The Dirt (2019).

**CONTENT WARNING** Racist language and situations

**DIRECTOR** David Siev

**OFFICIAL SELECTION** SXSW, 2022

**AWARDS**

Audience Award Winner, Documentary Feature — SXSW, 2022
Special Jury Recognition, Exceptional Intimacy in Storytelling — SXSW, 2022

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Renuka Jeyapalan is a Toronto-based writer and director. Her shorts have screened at TIFF, Tribeca, and the Berlinale. She has directed episodes of Kim’s Convenience, Workin’ Moms, Sort Of, Children Ruin Everything, Son Of A Critch and the Netflix original series Ginny & Georgia. Her first feature, Stay The Night, premiered at South by Southwest.
SOME WOMEN

2021 SINGAPORE 71 MIN ENGLISH, MALAY, CANTONESE, HOKKIEN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES PG NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Quen Wong is Singapore’s first openly trans woman filmmaker, and *Some Women* is her first feature film. It was a recipient of the Tan Ean Kiam Foundation — SGIFF Southeast Asian Documentary Grant in 2019 and the IDFA Project Award at Docs by the Sea in 2020. It also won the coveted Audience award at the Singapore International Film Festival in 2021.

**DIRECTOR**
Quen Wong

**CAST**
Lune Loh
Sanisa
Quen Wong

**OFFICIAL SELECTION**
Singapore International Film Festival, 2021
Sheffield DocFest, 2022

**AWARDS**
Audience Award — Singapore International Film Festival, 2021

In this reflective documentary, director Quen Wong turns the lens toward the intimate and vulnerable in her own life as a trans woman in Singapore, making time and space to honour acts of looking and being seen, moments of being fearful and working to communicate, and reflecting on past decisions in order to make new ones. Though gentle and quiet, these gestures are powerfully earnest, and refreshingly honest.

Against the context of a conservative nation-state, *Some Women* also uses dialogue and gathering to address a fuller spectrum of queer life on the island, threading Wong’s own story with recollections and perspectives from other generations of trans women, through the accompaniment of Sanisa and Lune Loh. These moments in the film archive and celebrate trans and queer folks’ evolving strategies for survival, protest, celebration, and continuance. Through *Some Women*, Wong practices vulnerability so as to request it from others, and celebrates herself so she can celebrate others. The lens is up close and personal, enmeshed fully in the act of bearing witness.

— JASMINE GII

BEYOND EXTINCTION: SINIXXT RESURGENCE

2022 CANADA 98 MIN ENGLISH, Sn-salxcin WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES PG

**DIRECTOR**
Ali Kazimi

**OFFICIAL SELECTION**
DOXA Documentary Film Festival, 2022
Planet in Focus International Environment Film Festival, 2022

**AWARDS**
Audience Award — Singapore International Film Festival, 2021

When a man from the “extinct” Sinixt group in what’s called British Columbia’s Slocan Valley challenges his deportation to the United States, the question arises: How can his people be extinct when he is very much alive? Decorated filmmaker Ali Kazimi’s new documentary traces a decades-long fight by Sinixt elder Marilyn James to have her people’s existence recognized amid threats from colonial bureaucratic erasure, corporate interests, and land claims from other groups.

Told with the hallmarks of Kazimi’s style, *Beyond Extinction* involves a mixture of observational footage, contemporary interviews, oral histories, survival stories told by matriarchs, and personal as well as public archives, to tell a story that’s never been told before. Shot over decades from the 1990s to our present day, the temporal trajectory of the film and its featured subjects gives us vital perspective on our collective place on this land and how we choose to fight for our legacies.

— ARAM SIU WAI COLLIER

Ali Kazimi is an India-born and -raised Governor General’s Award-winning filmmaker whose work deals with issues of race, history, and memory. He is a full professor in the Department of Cinema & Media Arts at York University, where he has also served as department chair. Kazimi was also Reel Asian’s 2021 Canadian Spotlight Artist.

**CONTENT WARNING**
Racism

**WITH SUPPORT FROM**

K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
Creating new spaces within community.

**FEATURES**

K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
Creating new spaces within community.

Reel Asian

K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation
Creating new spaces within community.
If From Every Tongue It Drips is a documentary constructed between three locations that follows Ponni, who writes a form of 19th-century queer Urdu poetry called Rekhti, and her lover Sarala, a camera operator. As their personal lives unfold on camera, the lines between rehearsal and reality, location and distance, and self and other seem to dissipate. The couple’s conversations are interwoven with the director’s own reflections, connecting dots from each of their specific experiences and reference points.

By choosing to look at the personal and political through the framework of quantum physics, director Sharlene Bamboat draws connections between British colonialism and Indian nationalism, tracing the impact these distinct histories and realities have on queer art, politics, poetry, dance, and music. From landmark pieces of music and poetry composed by revolutionary figures to more contemporary works, the film shows us the politicization of South Asian pop culture and the possibilities of its reclamation.

— MARIAM ZAIDI

Sharlene Bamboat is a moving-image and installation artist based in Tio’tia:ke (Montreal). Her practice often engages with translation, history, and music, uncovering sensory and fractured ways of knowing. Bamboat’s work has been exhibited internationally, including at the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Art of the Real, Sharjah Film Platform, and Henry Art Gallery.

Unidentified is an allegorical, humanistic, and poetic film that reflects on mankind’s primordial need to seek answers. Through disparate, cohesive vignettes, Jude Chun’s existential debut uses fundamental science-fiction concepts to examine our inner selves, as only then may we know the things that bind or alienate us from one another. Combining multi-genre elements such as comedy, mystery, and even musical theatre to delve into the depths of soulful connection and the universal theme of social identity, the film also subtly comments on the repercussions of a nation’s traumatic past — and the vision of a transformative future.

— ROLANDO BASMA Y OR

Jude Chun is a Korean Canadian director currently working in Seoul. Unidentified is his first feature film. His 2016 short film The Time Agent won multiple awards at international film festivals, and has been optioned for feature development by Black Label Media.
SAT, NOV 12 • 8 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
+ AVAILABLE ONLINE

The Class of 2019 at Cawthra Park Secondary School is gearing up for their senior year. Teen angst fills the hallways. Nervous students convene in classrooms. Hopeful romantics ask each other out for prom. Amidst these moments of self-discovery, friends Ethan and Justin set out to shoot a film under the pretense of being a yearbook project, recording pivotal moments and character portraits during this tumultuous stage of adolescence. No one at Cawthra Park seems to be prepared for what will come next in their rebellious filmmaking adventure.

Ethan Eng’s debut feature film, Therapy Dogs, is an introspective look at the director’s coming-of-age in senior year. Combining elements from documentary, fiction, and experimental styles, Therapy Dogs navigates the quintessential Mississauga high school experience with evocative imagery and rhythmic sequences, offering an intensely rich window into Eng’s craft, interpersonal relationships, and his exploration of the near-universal rite of passage: the last year of high school.

— NICOLAS URIBE

Ethan Eng is the Toronto filmmaker behind Therapy Dogs, a movie shot secretly during his last year of high school in 2019. It had its world premiere at the Slamdance Film Festival, making him the youngest director to ever compete, and earned him the ABGO fellowship, presented by the Russo Brothers.

2022
CANADA
83 MIN
ENGLISH
PG
CANADIAN PREMIERE

CONTENT WARNING
Sexual language and situations, coarse language, smoking and drinking, drug use

DIRECTOR
Ethan Eng

CAST
Justin Morrice
Ethan Eng
Kevin Tseng
Kyle Peacock

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Slamdance Film Festival, 2022
Guanajuato International Film Festival, 2022

AWARDS
ABGO Fellowship Winner — Slamdance Film Festival, 2022

MAMA BOY
初戀慢半拍

SAT, NOV 12 • 9 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX

In this oddly sweet and gentle story, Hong, a shy young man, opens his eyes to love when he coincidentally meets Lele, the madam of a sex worker business.

After a disastrous blind date set up by his mother, Hong is dragged to Lele’s hotel by his cousin. Not yet ready to lose his virginity to one of Lele’s girls, Hong finds himself strangely attracted to the older woman instead. This comes as a revelation for Hong, who has been under the thumb of his mother Meiling all of his life, and has never acted out of his own will. Little does Meiling know that the spark in Hong’s heart for this older, experienced, and unapproved woman will truly mark the beginning of Hong’s growth into adulthood.

Two multi-talented singer-actor heartthrobs from different generations, Kai Ko and Vivian Hsu, play the awkward yet warm couple who find comfort in each other. After a break of almost 10 years since Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow?, Mama Boy is a welcomed return for Arvin Chen that will bewilder you with its magical colour palettes and characters that grow in you as well as on the screen.

— JUNE KIM

Arvin Chen is a Taiwanese American director and a familiar name to Reel Asian. He attended the festival with his debut feature, Au Revoir Taipei, which was invited as the closing film for the 14th festival in 2010. Chen has been recognized and awarded by many festivals, including the Berlinale, where he won the NETPAC Award for Au Revoir Taipei.

2022
TAIWAN
98 MIN
MANDARIN
WITH TRADITIONAL CHINESE AND ENGLISH SUBTITLES
PG
CANADIAN PREMIERE

DIRECTOR
Arvin Chen 陳駿霖

CAST
Kai Ko
Vivian Hsu
Yu Tzu-yu

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Udine Far East Film Festival, 2022
Taipei Film Festival, 2022
New York Asian Film Festival, 2022

WITH SUPPORT FROM
BIG FIGHT IN LITTLE CHINATOWN

Taking a wide scope, Canadian documentary filmmaker Karen Cho’s Big Fight in Little Chinatown traverses Chinatowns in New York City, Montreal, Vancouver, Toronto, and San Francisco, shining a light on the twin legacies of displacement and resistance that characterize these neighbourhoods. Through interviews with business owners, community groups, and academics, Cho draws a line between the midcentury urban renewal projects that decimated North American Chinatowns and the current development pressures that threaten to drive away residents and organizations — and the community struggles against both.

Amid rapidly gentrifying urban landscapes that jeopardize the future of not only Chinatowns but many other urban racialized communities across the continent, Cho offers an incisive look into what it means to decide to stay rooted in a place that, despite all odds, has become a home.

– VIDHYA ELANGO

Karen Cho is a Chinese Canadian filmmaker from Montreal known for her socio-political documentaries that explore themes of identity, immigration, and social justice. Her work has touched on subjects such as the Chinese Head Tax and Exclusion Act, asylum seekers, the Japanese internment, artist-activists and women’s rights.

AN ACT OF WORSHIP

Following three Muslim women activists who have come of age since 9/11, An Act of Worship is a unique glimpse into the lives of a new generation of American Muslims deeply impacted by over 40 years of history that has shaped their lives and trajectories in powerful and irreversible ways.

Aber is a community organizer leading a sanctuary city initiative in New York. Khadega is finding her way while advocating for her community in Michigan. Ameena is a civil-rights lawyer in California navigating motherhood while fighting for change. Interwoven with their stories is a historical timeline skilfully combined with home movies to create a deeply moving and meaningful tapestry of shared trauma, culture, joy, and resistance. An Act of Worship is an emotional portrait about a community that has undergone enormous change, but one that is taking control of their narrative on a path towards power and defiance against further marginalization.

– MARIAM ZADI

Naushen Dadabhoy is a director and cinematographer whose work spans fiction and documentary. She has lensed an Oscar-nominated film, an Emmy-winning documentary, and films that have played at Sundance, TIFF, and Locarno, as well as on Al Jazeera, HBO, and PBS. Her directorial debut, The Ground Beneath Their Feet, premiered at EIWA.

Naushen Dadabhoy

DIRECTOR

OFFICIAL SELECTION

TORONTO PREMIERE

SUN, NOV 13 • 2:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
+ AVAILABLE ONLINE (EXCEPT QUEBEC)

2022 USA 82 MIN ARABIC, ENGLISH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES PG CANADIAN PREMIERE

2022 CANADA 87 MIN ENGLISH, CANTONESE, MANDARIN, TOISANESE, FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES PG CANADIAN PREMIERE

CONTENT WARNING Coarse language, smoking, drinking, racist language and situations: historic depictions of racist violence

2022 CANADA 87 MIN ENGLISH, CANTONESE, MANDARIN, TOISANESE, FRENCH WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES PG CANADIAN PREMIERE

DIRECTOR Karen Cho

OFFICIAL SELECTION DOC NYC, 2022 RIDM Montreal International Documentary Festival 2022

SUN, NOV 13 • 3 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
+ AVAILABLE ONLINE

OFFICIAL SELECTION

DOC NYC, 2022 RIDM Montreal International Documentary Festival 2022

OFFICIAL SELECTION

Tribeca Film Festival, 2022
DREAM PALACE
드림팰리스

SUN, NOV 13 • 5 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX

Hye-jeong leaves a protest group of closely knit families, mourning the victims of an industrial accident, to which she also lost her husband. To move on with her life, she buys a sparkly new apartment with the settlement money, but things go awry when she notices the unit’s construction defects that render her and her son without any usable water. When she attempts to get the problem fixed, an unexpected group stops her in the act: her new neighbours. Beyond being ostracized and called a traitor for accepting the settlement money, Hye-jeong must now stand up against her neighbours, who would do anything in their power to stop her from making the defects publicly known, for fear of their real estate getting devalued.

Having a place you can call your own in this day and age is a luxury, amid skyrocketing housing prices. That is why what seems very local and realistic in Dream Palace also resonates internationally. Seasoned actress Kim Sun-young of Three Sisters (2020) plays Hye-jeong, while the film makes a new discovery with Lee Yoon-ji, who puts up her most persuasive performance to date. The fresh yet ironic struggles between victims against victims will leave an unsettling aftertaste that tears one apart between conscience and the desperate need to survive.

— JUNE KIM

Ka Sung-moon

was born in South Korea, studied film since high school, and is the winner of 2019 Korean Film Council’s screenplay competition. Dream Palace is his first feature following shorts. Story about K (2006) and Mongrels (2017), Mongrels screened at several film festivals domestically and internationally, including the Brussels Short Film Festival.

THE GRIZZLIE TRUTH

Centrepiece Gala

SUN, NOV 13 • 7:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX
+ AVAILABLE ONLINE FROM NOV 14–17 ONLY

To most basketball fans, the late 1990s Vancouver era of the Grizzlies franchise is a minor footnote to the exciting and fast-rising current Memphis-based team. But to Grizzlies superfan and director Kat Jayme, the team means so much more to her and her hometown, even 20 years after its departure.

Following her previous basketball documentary Finding Big Country (2018), Jayme embarks on an equally quixotic journey to find out why the Grizzlies abandoned Vancouver. Endearingly framed as a tongue-in-cheek detective-style mystery, Jayme chases leads, discovers clues, and surprisingly confronts a long-held villain.

Not just for sports fans, The Grizzlie Truth speaks to the heart of an inferiority complex imbued in Vancouverites and Canadians. Through her journey, Jayme is able to commiserate and heal with fellow fans whose identities have been shaped by their love of — and betrayal by — a sports team.

— ARAM SIU WAI COLLIER

Kat Jayme

is an award-winning Canadian filmmaker based in Vancouver who is passionate about telling meaningful and personal stories. Her breakthrough documentary Finding Big Country was the winner of the 2018 Vancouver International Film Festival’s People’s Choice Award and Best Canadian Film at Reel Asian.

CENTREPIECE RECEPTION

9:30 PM–12:30 AM • CSI Spadina • Tickets and details at reelasian.com

Kat Jayme

is an award-winning Canadian filmmaker based in Vancouver who is passionate about telling meaningful and personal stories. Her breakthrough documentary Finding Big Country was the winner of the 2018 Vancouver International Film Festival’s People’s Choice Award and Best Canadian Film at Reel Asian.
MOVING ON

These films do not shy away from difficult and layered stories, distant memories, and buried feelings. Our characters ground, trace, and reconnect pathways toward recognizing the resiliency within oneself through their roots and relations to the places around them.

THU, NOV 10 • 6:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE
PG
CONTENT WARNING
Blood, death, drugs, violence, gore, extreme audio, eating disorder, body dysmorphia, nudity, sexism, racism

IN THE DRY STREAM (유빈과 건)
Kang Ji-hyo • South Korea • 2022 • 26 min • Korean and Jeju dialect with English subtitles
Deep in the dry stream, Yu-bin and Geon are each other’s only friends. To them, this place is the best hideout and playground — but no one seems to understand.
Kang Ji-hyo majored in film studies in college. Her previous short film Interpreting Nyun-ju (2020) won the Grand Prize at Aichi International Women’s Film Festival, and screened in festivals locally and internationally.

UYAAFUJII’S REFUSAL: AN ODE TO THE YANBARU
Shō Yamagushiku • Canada • 2021 • 11 min • English and Uchinaaguchi text
A tribute to ancestors, uyaafuji in Okinawan language, who appear to intervene in our daily lives, refusing to let us forget, refusing to let us compromise, and refusing to let us live restrained by the laws of the nations that seek to claim us.
Shō Yamagushiku is committed to cultivating the space to tell difficult and complicated stories in hopes of dismantling the separation and stagnation that inform the world he was born into.

THE HOUSE OF BRICK AND STONE
Ananth Subramaniam • Malaysia • 2022 • 16 min • English, Malay, Tamil and Mandarin with English subtitles
In the aftermath of the world’s greatest financial sham in 2015, this docu-fiction follows a Malaysian child who finds solace and guidance from an unlikely figurehead.
Ananth Subramaniam is a Malaysian-based filmmaker and architect. His films often explore his ancestral identity and family within the context of a multi-layered genre.

THE HEADHUNTER’S DAUGHTER
Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan • Philippines • 2021 • 15 min • Ilokano with English subtitles
Lynn leaves her family behind and traverses the harrowing roads of the Cordilleran highlands to try her luck in the city as a country singer.
Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan is an independent filmmaker born of Ifugao and Visayan descent. The Headhunter’s Daughter premiered at Sundance 2022, where it won the Short Film Grand Jury Prize.

A FELLER AND THE TREE
Kalainithan Kalaichelvan • Canada • 2022 • 3 min • Tamil with English subtitles
A feller cuts down a forest until he arrives at the last tree standing. The tree confronts the feller.
Kalainithan Kalaichelvan is a Toronto-based filmmaker known for directing music videos for some of Toronto’s leading artists, and was nominated for a JUNO award for Music Video of the Year in 2022.

2166
Anna Phuong Nguyen, Winston Liu and Lilian Yu Wen Cao • Australia • 2022 • 4 min • English, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Cantonese with English subtitles
Snippets of daily lives, sensory experiences, and the overwhelming feeling one might get in Cabramatta that memories are constantly created all around you.
Lilian Yu Wen Cao, Winston Liu and Anna Phuong Nguyen are recent graduates of University of Technology Sydney. 2166 is their love letter to Cabramatta and Canley Vale.

IN THE DRY STREAM (유빈과 건) KANG JI-HYO • SOUTH KOREA • 2022 • 26 MIN • KOREAN AND JEJU DIALECT WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

DEEP IN THE DRY STREAM, YU-BIN AND GEON ARE EACH OTHER’S ONLY FRIENDS. TO THEM, THIS PLACE IS THE BEST HIDEOUT AND PLAYGROUND — BUT NO ONE SEEMS TO UNDERSTAND.

KANG JI-HYO MAJORED IN FILM STUDIES IN COLLEGE. HER PREVIOUS SHORT FILM INTERPRETING NYUN-NU (2020) WON THE GRAND PRIZE AT AICHI INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S FILM FESTIVAL, AND SCREENED IN FESTIVALS LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.

UYAAFUJII’S REFUSAL: AN ODE TO THE YANBARU SHŌ YAMAGUSHIKU • CANADA • 2021 • 11 MIN • ENGLISH AND UCHINAAGUCHI TEXT

A TRIBUTE TO ANCESTORS, UYAAFUJI IN OKINAWAN LANGUAGE, WHO APPEAR TO INTERVENE IN OUR DAILY LIVES, REFUSING TO LET US FORGET, REFUSING TO LET US COMPROMISE, AND REFUSING TO LET US LIVE RESTRAINED BY THE LAWS OF THE NATIONS THAT SEEK TO CLAIM US.

SHŌ YAMAGUSHIKU IS COMMITTED TO CULTIVATING THE SPACE TO TELL DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED STORIES IN HOPES OF DISMANTLING THE SEPARATION AND STAGNATION THAT INFORM THE WORLD HE WAS BORN INTO.

THE HOUSE OF BRICK AND STONE ANANTH SUBRAMANIAM • MALAYSIA • 2022 • 16 MIN • ENGLISH, MALAY, TAMIL AND MANDARIN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE WORLD’S GREATEST FINANCIAL SHAM IN 2015, THIS DOCU-FICTION FOLLOWS A MALAYSIAN CHILD WHO FINDS SOlace AND GUIDANCE FROM AN UNLIKELY FIGUREHEAD.

ANANTH SUBRAMANIAM IS A MALAYSIAN-BASED FILMMAKER AND ARCHITECT. HIS FILMS OFTEN EXPLORE HIS ANCESTRAL IDENTITY AND FAMILY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A MULTI-LAYERED GENRE.

THE HEADHUNTER’S DAUGHTER DON JOSEPHUS RAPHAEL EBHALAN • PHILIPPINES • 2021 • 15 MIN • ILOKANO WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES

LYNN LEAVES HER FAMILY BEHIND AND TRAVERSES THE HARRROWING ROADS OF THE CORDILLERAN HIGHLANDS TO TRY HER LUCK IN THE CITY AS A COUNTRY SINGER.

DON JOSEPHUS RAPHAEL EBHALAN IS AN INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER BORN OF IFUGAO AND VISAYAN DESCENT. THE HEADHUNTER’S DAUGHTER PREMIERED AT SUNDANCE 2022, WHERE IT WON THE SHORT FILM GRAND JURY PRIZE.
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FILMS • EVENTS • COMMUNITY

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Celebrating Asian Cinema in Canada

Fasken is proud to support the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival.

Fasken is a leading international law firm with more than 800 lawyers and ten offices on four continents. Clients rely on us for practical, innovative and cost-effective legal services.
MUSCLE MEMORY
How do our bodies and environments absorb and hold onto repetitive patterns, habits, and routines? This presentation of shorts exercises the capacity to confront harmful structures, encourage reflexivity, and affirm the embodied knowledge we carry.

MAJBOOR-E-MAMOOL
Haaris Qadri • Canada • 2022 • 9 min • English and Urdu with English subtitles
Sania must take her mother, Noor, for a doctor’s appointment — serving as her parent and translator.
Haaris Qadri is an emerging filmmaker based in Brampton and a graduate from York University’s Bachelor of Fine Arts in Film Production Specialized Honours. Qadri is drawn to diasporic stories, contemplating questions of identity, home, and belonging.

HINDSIGHT
Shubhi Sahni • Canada • 2021 • 3 min • English
A fleeting and poetic retrospection of a young woman who develops a chronic illness.
Shubhi Sahni is an Indian Canadian filmmaker based in Los Angeles and Toronto. She makes intimate films in the spaces between documentary and fiction. Sahni is an Annenberg Fellow at the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts.

TO KILL THE BIRDS & THE BEES
Calleen Koh • Singapore • 2021 • 11 min • English
Following three separate stories, four average Singaporeans encounter a sexual situation in the course of their day.
Calleen Koh is BAFTA-nominated animated-film director and artist from Singapore. She loves to make people laugh but also be disturbed by her sexy, manic, animated films.

FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY
(PHINGAI DACH ALAI)
Polen Ly • Cambodia • 2022 • 24 min • Khmer and Bunong with English subtitles
Indigenous Bunong siblings spend one last day in their rural village in northeastern Cambodia, before an impending move to the capital city in search of a more prosperous life.
Polen Ly paused his studies in medicine to pursue filmmaking in 2012. He has directed several shorts and documentaries, exploring environmental and human rights issues, including LGBTQ+ and Indigenous experiences.
Initiated in 2002, S-Express is a short film program exchange. This year, we spotlight Indonesian filmmakers with a programme curated by Fransiska Prihadi of Minikino that hopes to recharge your festival experience.

**A GRANDPA’S UNIFORM AND OTHER THINGS OF FEAR (PEDHUT)**

Christian Banisrael • Indonesia • 2021 • 22 min • Javanese with English subtitles

Trapped in his past, an old man steals an army uniform to chase away the ghosts that terrorize his long nights.

Born in Indonesia, Christian Banisrael directed his first short film Mist of the Past (2018), which premiered at the 2019 Hong Kong International Film Festival.

**MAKASSAR IS A CITY FOR FOOTBALL FANS (LIKA LIKU LAKI)**

Khozy Rizal • Indonesia • 2021 • 20 min • Makassarese and Indonesian with English subtitles

In a city where “men” are fanatics about football, Akbar is compelled to pretend he loves the game to avoid being rejected by his new college friends.

Khozy Rizal is a filmmaker based in Makassar, Indonesia. In 2020, he founded Hore Pictures, an independent production house that has produced several short films.

**JAMAL**

Muhammad Heri Fadli • Indonesia • 2020 • 15 min • Bahasa with English subtitles

Nur’s husband, who had previously left for Malaysia as a migrant worker, returns home in an unexpected condition.

Born in Central Lombok, Indonesia, Muhammad Heri Fadli began his career as a filmmaker in 2013. Since then, Fadli has directed over 10 short films in seven years.

**THE ARCHIPELAGO (NUSA ANTARA)**

Azalia Muchransyah and Firman Widyasrama • Indonesia • 2021 • 7 min • Indonesian with English subtitles

The Archipelago brings together the perspectives of four Indonesian filmmakers as they interpret contemporary Indonesian society.

Azalia Muchransyah is a filmmaker, writer, and scholar from Indonesia who currently teaches at Bina Nusantara University film program in Atma Sutra. Firman Widyasrama was an illustrator and a bank analyst before becoming an animator in 2005. Together with colleagues, he founded Lanting Animation.

**THE SEA CALLS FOR ME (LAUT MEMANGGILKU)**

Tumpal Tampubolon • Indonesia • 2021 • 17 min • Indonesian with English subtitles

Sura is a young boy who lives in a fishing village. One day he finds a broken sex doll washed ashore and tries to fix it.

Holding a bachelor’s degree in math, Tumpal Tampubolon has written and directed several short films, which have screened in various domestic and international film festivals.

**THE ARCHIPELAGO (NUSA ANTARA)**

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UNSUNG VOICES 11
Six first-time and emerging filmmakers embarked on a summer-long filmmaking journey online. We’re proud to present their world premieres here.

PROGRAM

SAT, NOV 12 • 3:45 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE
PG
CONTENT WARNING
Depictions of mental illness, sexual violence

PERENNIALS
Hannah Polinski • Canada • 2022 • 6 min • English with English subtitles
After a pineapple shows up at her front door, Lia returns to her childhood home in search of her father, who hasn’t been seen in months.
Hannah Polinski is a writer currently based in Montreal. Her work explores familial memory, shifting landscapes, and poetry as a daily practice.

IN SILENCE, WE SING
Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li • Canada • 2022 • 12 min • English, Cantonese with English subtitles
Following her grandfather’s death in China during the pandemic, Ai must confront her depression, the silences in her home, and her parents’ unsung frustrations — including the ancestors now possessing them.
Vivian (Xiao Wen) Li is a queer writer, director, musician, and interdisciplinary artist. A MFA candidate at the UBC School of Creative Writing, her first chapbook will be released in fall 2022, and she is working on her thesis novel.

PAPAYA
Dédé Chen • Canada • 2022 • 11 min • French with English subtitles
A Sino Canadian adoptee breaks the silence of incest by responding to her family archives through dance. In the ritual sacrifice of a papaya, she reenacts her traumatic past to emancipate her adult self.
Born in Nanchang, China, Dédé Chen now lives in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal where she creates works about the performance of filiation. She is interested in autoethnography as a source of creative writing.

ONCE IN A RED MOON (月出几时)
Yi Shi • Canada • 2022 • 10 min • English, Mandarin with English subtitles
As Mid-Autumn Festival approaches, a lonely young Chinese immigrant finds comfort in a romance with a mysterious hometown queer crush who seems too good to be true.
Yi Shi is a queer Chinese multidisciplinary artist and tattooer born and raised in Hangzhou, China, currently based in Toronto, Canada. Their works seek to investigate the complexity of human emotions — vulnerability, grief, and diasporic longings.

MĀYĀ
Samyuktha Movva • Canada • 2022 • 9 min • English, Telugu, Hindi with English subtitles
As a wife prepares to celebrate her wedding anniversary, a painful reminder threatens to spoil the evening.
Samyuktha Movva is an Indo Canadian writer and filmmaker based in Toronto. In her work, she seeks to explore our complex experience of time, memory, beauty, loss, and loss through intimate character studies that traverse languages and cultures.

PAPAYA
Dédé Chen • Canada • 2022 • 11 min • French with English subtitles
A Sino Canadian adoptee breaks the silence of incest by responding to her family archives through dance. In the ritual sacrifice of a papaya, she reenacts her traumatic past to emancipate her adult self.
Born in Nanchang, China, Dédé Chen now lives in Tiohtià:ke/Montreal where she creates works about the performance of filiation. She is interested in autoethnography as a source of creative writing.

DUTAR (راتود)
Roda Medhat • Canada • 2022 • 8 min • English, Farsi, Kurdish with English subtitles
A young woman escapes into a fantasy world where she imagines what life would have been like if she never left her birth country. Faced with who she wants to be, she must come to terms with the in-between.
Roda Medhat is a Kurdish Canadian multidisciplinary artist mainly working in photo and sculpture based work. Dutar (راتود) is Roda’s writing and directing debut, a story that reflects on his own life living in between cultures.
ENCOUNTERS
Missed chances, unspoken conversations, fated meetings, connections sparked in the most unexpected places: these shorts delve into the weight of all our relations in their fullness and in their absence.

SAT, NOV 12 • 7 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE
PG
CONTENT WARNING
Racism

LUCKY FISH
Emily Jampel • USA • 2022 • 8 min • English
Maggie and Celine meet in the bathroom of a Chinese restaurant while having dinner with their respective families. Based in New York City, Emily Jampel is a filmmaker from O‘ahu who currently works as a development executive at the Oscar-nominated and Peabody Award-winning production company, the Department of Motion Pictures.

BLUE GARDEN
Natalie Murao • Canada • 2022 • 5 min • English and Japanese with English subtitles
Filmmaker Natalie Murao asks her mother, “Why have I never liked tomatoes?” This simple question leads to an unearthing of a Japanese Canadian fisherman’s story during the World War 2 internment.

COMPANY (Company)
Ilnaz Kheyrkhah • Iran • 2021 • 10 min • Persian with English subtitles
A young boy feels obliged to write a will for a dying woman who lives alone.
Born in Iran, Ilnaz Kheyrkhah has a law degree from the International University of Ghazvin. Company is her first film.

EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT
Farhad Pakdel • Canada • 2021 • 16 min • English, Arabic and French with English subtitles
Amid the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Montreal, Leila, who has been keeping a secret from her family, finds herself in a predicament after her father falls ill and she is called back home.
Farhad Pakdel is a Montreal-based filmmaker whose work explores identity (de)construction, liminality, absence, place, and memory.

KNOTS
Stephanie Sy • Canada • 2022 • 13 min • English and Tagalog with English subtitles
Musician and songwriter Kimmortal stars as Gracie who meets the younger version of herself as the two share a common thread.
Stephanie Sy is a Filipino Chinese Canadian artist born and raised on Treaty 1 Winnipeg. Knots is Sy’s debut work as a writer and director.

DESI STANDARD TIME TRAVEL
Kashif Pasta • Canada • 2022 • 20 min • English and Urdu with English subtitles
When Imran suddenly loses his dad, an opportunity to travel back in time for an evening gives him a chance to face him again.
Kashif Pasta is an award-winning director, writer, and producer using film and storytelling to tell character-driven stories centered on South Asians and Muslims with a sense of joy and wonder.
MIDNIGHT SNACK 2.0

Festival favourite Midnight Snack returns for another bite! This time, 2.0 features six talented female directors who cook up tales full of intrigue and awareness, boldly confronting themes that are often left indigestible.

SAT, NOV 12 • 10:15 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE

PG

CONTENT WARNING
Eating disorder, body dysmorphia, racism, sexism

THE LAW OF THE JUNGLE GYM
Cho Yoon Hei • USA • 2022 • 6 min • No dialogue
During a peaceful school lunchtime, children discover they can transform into animals — the only problem is will they ever stop?
An animator and director from Korea, Cho Yoon Hei is located in Los Angeles and creates horrifying hand-drawn animations.

SHALLOTS AND GARLIC (BAWANG MERAH BAWANG PUTIH)
Andrea Nirmala Widjajanto • Canada • 2022 • 17 min • Indonesian with English subtitles
When polar-opposite sisters reunite for their grandparents’ wedding anniversary dinner, Karina starts to itch and blames Nur for putting garlic in her food.
Andrea Nirmala Widjajanto is an Indonesian writer and director residing in Vancouver. Her works explore genre films as a medium to depict the current condition surrounding political, social, and cultural issues.

TONGUE
Kaho Yoshida • Japan • 2022 • 2 min • English
Tired of her date’s racist and sexist comments, a woman decides to liberate his tongue.
Kaho Yoshida is a director and animator with a special passion for stop motion and mixed media. Her fresh aesthetics and sense of humour bring life to every frame, and her love for storytelling makes her work relatable and approachable.

TONGUE
Kaho Yoshida • Japan • 2022 • 2 min • English

AFTERTASTE
Christianne Cruz • Canada • 2022 • 10 min • English
Following the death of her mysterious amah (grandma), Kat is haunted during her first night of dinner service at a high-pressure Michelin-star kitchen.
Christianne Cruz is a Filipinx writer, director and independent producer born in Toronto and based in LA. She is the mother of two young daughters and producing/life partner to Alex Ott.

CANKER (口腔溃疡)
Tu Lin • China • 2022 • 13 min • Mandarin with English subtitles
As the flashy life of the influencer 33 becomes more intense, the canker sore inside her lower lip keeps growing larger...
Tu Lin is a writer and director based in Beijing whose previous short films have screened internationally on the festival circuit. She is a BIFAN Fantastic Film School (2020) alumni.

59
SHORTS

SWALLOW
Mai Nakanishi • Taiwan, Japan • 2021 • 22 min • Taiwanese with English subtitles

As the flashy life of the influencer 33 becomes more intense, the canker sore inside her lower lip keeps growing larger...

Tu Lin is a writer and director based in Beijing whose previous short films have screened internationally on the festival circuit. She is a BIFAN Fantastic Film School (2020) alumni.
NIGHT SHIFTS
From dusk 'til dawn, the night takes centre stage as a mood, setting, tone, and place for our characters’ lives and their environments to be illuminated on screen.

SUN, NOV 13 • 5:30 PM • TIFF BELL LIGHTBOX + AVAILABLE ONLINE

PG

NANITIC
Carol Nguyen • Canada • 2022 • 14 min • English and Vietnamese with English subtitles
Titled after the term “nanitic,” referring to first-generation worker ants who care for their offspring as well as the Queen Ant, we witness the structure of a multigenerational family through the eyes of Trang and Mai.
Carol Nguyen is a Vietnamese Canadian filmmaker based in Montreal who is working toward her first documentary feature as well as an animated short.

DINNER’S READY
Yuan Li Elizabeth Xu • USA, Singapore • 2022 • 4 min • English
Why should I make dinner if we are both in love? A story of gendered roles and the ethics of care.
Born and raised in Singapore, Elizabeth Xu attends the Rhode Island School of Design for animation. They are excited by the potential of analogue mediums and tangible surfaces, and in their free time, they make books and think about conversation as a beautiful medium.

SAME OLD
Lloyd Lee Choi • USA • 2022 • 15 min • English and Mandarin with English subtitles
One night for Lu, a New York City delivery driver.
Lloyd Lee Choi is a Korean Canadian writer and director living in Brooklyn who was named 30 Under 30 by Marketing Magazine. Choi is compelled to tell stories that reflect the real world around us.

HONEY (MADHU)
Tanmay Chowdhary and Tanvi Chowdhary • India • 2022 • 13 min • Bengali with English subtitles
Satakshi and Madhyama reunite at a celebration during Durga Puja. Over the course of the night through rides, snacks, and glances, we feel their relationship charged with an energy that lasts years.
Tanmay Chowdhury is a cinematographer, editor, photographer, and filmmaker. His photography has been published in various magazines and publications worldwide, including Rolling Stone and Vogue.
Tanvi Chowdhury is a writer and filmmaker who seeks to explore and tell stories about human dynamics, identity, and gender.

CARRION
Yvonne Zhang • USA • 2022 • 22 min • English and Mandarin with English subtitles
In an isolated desert motel, Mengmeng digs up a rotting carcass. Later that night, something long buried is unearthed in her mother.
Yvonne Zhang is a British Chinese director and writer who uses folklore, dream logic, and digital media to explore immigration, memory, and loss.
RA: X PUNCTA
A multidisciplinary exhibition and program

FEATURED ARTISTS
Vince Ha
Jes Hanzelkova
Brannavy Jeyasundaram
Noor Khan
Mo Phùng

BACHIR/YEREX PRESENTATION SPACE
A collaborative exhibition by Jasmine Gui (special projects programmer, RA) & keiko Hart (co-curator), RA: X Puncta aims to present a plurality of punctum moments (as defined by Roland Barthes) that disturb and prick at diasporic Asian narratives and slip beyond an easy legibility of “Asianness”.

The five works presented in this exhibition are honest yet uneasy, confrontational, and tender provocations that push in creatively personal ways, against and through the pressures and questions of their socio-political moments. Through our sustained attention, they may shake us up in particular and precious ways.

PROGRAM FUNDING BY

EXHIBITION HOURS
Nov 10 – 11, 1 PM – 6 PM
Nov 12 – 20, 11 AM – 6 PM

IN-PERSON CURATOR WALKTHROUGH
Join co-curators in the exhibition space for a walkthrough and casual Q&A. This program overlaps with the festival’s happy hour programming.
Fri, Nov 11 + Sat, Nov 12
6 PM

PUNCTA: ONLINE ARTIST TALKS I
Moderated conversation between co-curator keiko Hart and featured Puncta artists.
Tues, Nov 15
6:30 PM – 8 PM

PUNCTA: ONLINE ARTIST TALKS II
Moderated conversation between co-curator Jasmine Gui and featured Puncta artists.
Thurs, Nov 17
6:30 PM – 8 PM

ONLINE EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGHS
Hop onto Instagram Live to see the installation work digitally and chat with members of our exhibition team.
Sat, Nov 19
4 PM – 5 PM
Featured Artists

NOOR KHAN • PRESCRIPTION
Video installation

“Prescription” is a film of old footage and new components that draws parallels between communities by unravelling similar stories of cultural practice retained with the support of local stores and restaurants, and the conditions of gentrification that threaten cultural and economic livelihood throughout the West.

VINCE HA • DANGER COMES THROUGH THE MOUTH
Photographs and sculpture

When I was younger, my mother would often remind me that “danger comes through the mouth,” with the goal of maintaining family or community unity. This work uses family photos, stripping them from their original coherence and weaving them into new contexts to encourage space for alternating narratives and messiness, possibly transcending the boundaries of our biological social institution.

JES HANZELKOVA • I COULDN’T SEE BUT IT DIDN’T SEEM TO MATTER ANYWAYS
Photographs and sculpture

As a series of photos taken within two years, this work documents an ongoing project in mask-making and performance art. A push and pull between culture, place-memory, and constraint affects the ease of movement and the amount of face shown from image to image as the project progresses in time.

BRANNAVY JEYASUNDARAM • TOUCH & FLESH
Video installation

touch & flesh is a visual rendering of a workshop facilitated as part of Healing Arts Dinner Circle, a segment of Tamil Archive Project. The work is an attempt to understand our bodies as archives of tenderness, joy, laughter, and love. It was produced in April 2020, at the onset of the pandemic.

MO PHƯNG • MIGRATION & (RE)EMERGENCE
Mixed media

This documentary photo essay and installation was an opportunity for me to reach far into my past and into a time when I did not exist, into bodies and spirits that came before mine. I carry these past histories and stories in my body. I have generations of trauma, life, and love within me. This is one part of my story.

Osler is pleased to support the Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival where we will be presenting the Osler Best Feature Award.

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WEE ASIAN
Tune into this beloved section online to access free programming for all ages that will spark joy, inspire creativity, and encourage wonder.

LISTEN:
Wavelength Music
Our friends at Wavelength Music curate a special playlist for Wee Asian featuring independent artists to listen, dance, or relax to!

CREATE:
Wee Asian Arts Channel
Season 3 brings together four spectacular local artists who will guide you through simple and playful pre-recorded activities all from the comfort of your home:

- Maryanna Chan will show you how to take everyday objects around you and transform them into fun characters and puppet pals.
- Author and screenwriter Catherine Hernandez will share her blanket-fort building skills.
- Illustrator and official 2022 Reel Asian Festival Creative Artist Brian Jiang shows you how to express movement through sequential art-making.
- Show your sparkle and festive spirit with artist Maria Patricia Abuel as you create star ornaments inspired by the parol, a traditional Filipino star lantern!

COLOUR:
Festival Creative
Reel Asian’s festival creative Brian Jiang transforms their animation into a colouring sheet! Show off your artistry and share your colouring sheet with us by tagging @reelasian on social media.
WATCH: Short Films

Short and sweet, this delightful collection of films presents stories of tenderness, curiosity, and possibility.

THE COMMUTE
Tarun Padmakumar • Canada • 2022 • 2 min • English

A newcomer to the city tries to figure out their commute.
Tarun Padmakumar is a Toronto-based animator who hails from the state of Kerala in South India. Though he’s worked with many mediums, he enjoys creating with animation above all.

WHEREVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER I AM
Kay Chen • Canada • 2022 • 3 min • English, Cree, and Cantonese

A pair of Two-Spirit Métis Chinese youth soften a deer hide together.
Kay Chen (they/he/she) is a Two-Spirit and non-binary Tkaronto-based artist who was raised across Turtle Island/Canada. With their mixed Métis Chinese heritage, Chen transforms their many experiences, passions, and identities into a vision while weaving together the traditional and digital art mediums they have accessible.

IN SIGHT
Wendy Lu, Natalie Tran, and Cindy Zhi • Australia • 2021 • 6 min • English with English subtitles

Charlie and her dog, Doug, set out on a journey up a mountain to shoot down the brightest star in the sky.
Wendy Lu, Natalie Tran, and Cindy Zhi are an Asian Australian group of motivated ragtag animators from Sydney, Australia. With hopes of creating a story that would matter to themselves and others, the three teamed up to create In Sight.

AKI
Wanci Hua • USA • 2022 • 4 min • English

Aki, a beginner chef, must make a delicious meal for the emperor’s banquet, however, things don’t go as planned.
Currently studying at the California Institute of the Arts, Wanci Hua is a Taiwanese animator who loves creating whimsical worlds and sharing tender stories.

BATTERY DADDY (건전지 아빠)
Jeon Seung-bae • South Korea • 2021 • 6 min • Korean with English subtitles

Battery Dad is in charge of every corner of the house from children’s toys to remote controls and door locks. What can Battery Dad do when a sudden downpour floods the valley?
Jeon Seung-bae graduated from Chung-Ang University of Advanced Imaging Science in multimedia and film. He works at Toyville Animation Studio as an animation director.

FOOTPRINTS IN THE FOREST
Juhaidah Joemin and Sandra Khoo • Malaysia • 2022 • 18 min • No dialogue

A recently orphaned rhino tries to find a new home in the wilds of the Borneo rainforest.
The first generation of filmmakers in her native Borneo family, Juhaidah Joemin draws inspiration from her rich cultural heritage and vast natural surroundings where she grew up. Sandra Khoo is a director by day and works on her own pet projects and animated shorts by night.

HEART IS A WITNESS
Mirusha Yogarajah • Canada • 2021 • 5 min • English with English subtitles

A young boy looks for love from his older self, while seeking sanctuary in nature.
Mirusha Yogarajah is a writer, filmmaker, and housing advocate based in Toronto.

KID TERMINATOR (FILM UNTUK BABEH)
Rayhan Dharmawan • Indonesia • 2022 • 14 min • Indonesian with English subtitles

Abbas and his friends are out to create the most epic action film in 2005! What will Abbas encounter along the way?
Rayhan Dharmawan is a freelance screenwriter for feature films and a director of independent short films and music videos under the collective, Poolside Studios. He may have not determined his true path yet but he’s enjoying every step of the way.

WHEREVER YOU ARE, WHEREVER I AM
Juhaidah Joemin and Sandra Khoo • Malaysia • 2022 • 18 min • No dialogue

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The first generation of filmmakers in her native Borneo family, Juhaidah Joemin draws inspiration from her rich cultural heritage and vast natural surroundings where she grew up. Sandra Khoo is a director by day and works on her own pet projects and animated shorts by night.

IN SIGHT
Wendy Lu, Natalie Tran, and Cindy Zhi • Australia • 2021 • 6 min • English with English subtitles

Charlie and her dog, Doug, set out on a journey up a mountain to shoot down the brightest star in the sky.
Wendy Lu, Natalie Tran, and Cindy Zhi are an Asian Australian group of motivated ragtag animators from Sydney, Australia. With hopes of creating a story that would matter to themselves and others, the three teamed up to create In Sight.

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So You Think You Can Pitch?

SUN, NOV 13 • 3 PM • THE PARADISE THEATRE

PITCH WINNER PRIZE PACKAGE
- $8,000 cash prize
- Business-affairs and legal consultation with Behind the Scenes Services Inc. and Lewis Birnberg-Hanet LLP
- Acting support (if applicable) including consultation, coaching, and more with ACTRA Toronto
- Two-hour studio rental at Armstrong Acting Studios for casting (if applicable)
- One-on-one consultation with Blue Ant Media
- A production workflow consultation with Charles Street Video, which includes
  - $3,000 in edit suite access and/or production-equipment rentals
  - One-year membership
  - $500 cash award/artist fee for third-party equipment rental
- Opportunity to premiere work at the 2023 Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival (subject to review), with full festival accreditation

PITCH SHORTLISTING PACKAGE
- $1,000 cash for participation (the pitch winner will not receive this $1,000 cash prize)
- All-access pass to the 26th Reel Asian International Film Festival
- $350 equipment-rental credit plus one-year membership to Charles Street Video

PITCH WINNER
- Yazmeen Kanji, One Day
- Carol Nguyen, Beyond Borders
- Alice Wang, Family Business
- Eman Ayaz, You Are Not A Muslim
- Reşat Fuat Çam, The Art Of Vanishing

PITCH SHORTLISTING JURORS
- Janet-Rose Nguyen, Actor, Writer, and Creator
- Michael Fukushima, Producer
- Samir Ballou, Industry and Education Programmer, Toronto Reel Asian International Film Festival

PITCH EMCEE
- Rabiya Mansoor, Comedian, Actor, Writer, Producer

PITCH FINALISTS
- Carol Nguyen, Beyond Borders
- Alice Wang, Family Business
- Eman Ayaz, You Are Not A Muslim
- Reşat Fuat Çam, The Art Of Vanishing

PITCH FINALE LIVE JURORS
- Victoria Morado, Media Director, Universal Studios Canada Inc.
- Farah Abdo, Producer
- Shazia Javed, Founder and Producer, LifeSketch Media

PITCH MENTORS
- Rahul Chaturvedi, Director-Writer
- Kyle Credo, Filmmaker

PRIZE PACKAGE
- $8,000 cash prize
- Business-affairs and legal consultation with Behind the Scenes Services Inc. and Lewis Birnberg-Hanet LLP
- Acting support (if applicable) including consultation, coaching, and more with ACTRA Toronto
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PITCH FINALIST PACKAGE
- $1,000 cash for participation (the pitch winner will not receive this $1,000 cash prize)
- All-access pass to the 26th Reel Asian International Film Festival
- $350 equipment-rental credit plus one-year membership to Charles Street Video

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WITH SUPPORT FROM
ONLINE — This year’s Reel Ideas Conference gathers industry professionals, filmmakers, and performers to reflect on the specificity in their works, representing their own nuances along with their communities’ lived experiences. These conversations offer insights and tools to help future generations build their own storytelling skills, allowing them to share confidently.

PRODUCERS’ TABLE TALK
MON, NOV 14 • 4:30 PM
This panel brings together Asian Canadian media producers to discuss the current Canadian film and TV landscape. They’ll discuss their path and expertise in producing stories across a variety of genres and formats. What are the stories they’re focused on producing? What is the role of producers in this current landscape, and what is being done to increase the number of projects produced by Asian creatives?
MODERATOR: Shreya Patel, Actress, Filmmaker, Producer
PANELISTS: Rua Wani, Producer and Co-President, Adani Pictures
Shant Joshi, President, Executive Producer, Fae Pictures
Priscilla Galvez, Producer and Co-Founder, Silent Tower

ASIAN JOKES
TUES, NOV 15 • 4:30 PM
Asian Canadian comics will discuss the ways they’ve broken down barriers to tell their jokes to a wide audience on stage, in sketches, and on film and TV. Together, they’ll discuss their individual approaches to the craft, how they navigate stereotypes, personal experiences in their work, and how comedy has allowed them to challenge, explore, and find comfort in their identities.
MODERATOR: Alia Rasul, Comedian, Tita Collective
PANELISTS: Franco Nguyen, Comedian, Writer, Actor
Rob Michaels, Writer, Director, Actor
Panelist TBA

SECOND TIME AROUND
WED, NOV 16 • 4:30 PM
Considering the need to keep creating within Asian Canadian cinema, this panel gathers filmmakers and artists to discuss the implications, complexities, and pressure one might face when delivering their second artistic work. Together, they offer tips, anecdotes, and lessons learned in bringing their stories into the foreground for the second time around.
MODERATOR: Anupa Mistry, Producer, Writer
PANELISTS: Aliya Kanani, Actor, Comedian, Writer
Jasmin Mozaffari, Writer, Director
Albert Shin, Filmmaker, Timelapse Pictures

UPLIFTED BY UPROOTED: THE PLANTEMIC
FRI, NOV 18 • 4:30 PM
Deep-rooted dive into Uprooted: The Plantemic, a show about houseplants surviving the pandemic, with us. We’ll explore the narrative construction of short-form web series, the development from concept art to animation, and contextualize the series not only in its time, but also in contemporary conversations, as storytelling methods evolve. In an era of remote working, what would my houseplants think of me? Do they root for me? Find out from the creative team behind Uprooted.
MODERATOR: Lillian Chan, Animation Filmmaker
PANELISTS: Betty Xie, Filmmaker
Joyce Hui, Art Director
Andrea Bang, Actress, Screenwriter

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Image credit: "Huwag Mataranta," Pantayo, directed by Tricia Hagoriles
Image credit: Habib - Marvel’s First Arab Superhero by Kenzie Yango
Reel Asian is proud to present a special evening celebrating the traditions and spirit of Tết beautifully shown in "Li Xi", season 1, episode 9 of Run The Burbs. Tết is the most important annual holiday in Vietnamese culture, gathering families and friends in the celebration to usher in the new year. This moderated discussion will explore the behind-the-scenes research and decisions made in authentically portraying the music, decor, food and celebrations of Tết in the Pham household, alongside the episode’s cultural consultant. What does authentic representation mean? What are considerations in representing the family values of a Southeast Asian-South Asian Canadian family?

SAT, NOV 19 • 7 PM • HOT DOCS TED ROGERS CINEMA

MODERATOR: Aleysa Young, Director

PANELISTS:
Andrew Phung, Actor, Comedian, co-creator of Run the Burbs
Rakhee Morzaria, Comedian, Actor and Writer
Vinh Nguyen, Cultural Consultant
Joyce Wong, Director, Writer

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Challenging norms, paving the road, and telling fresh stories, our Canadian Spotlight Artist program is dedicated to a member of the dynamic and talented Asian Canadian film community. This program celebrates a selected artist by activating their journey, process, and future works.

ROME CANDIDO
Romeo Candido is a singular talent. A writer, director, and musician, his creative catalogue of work comprising musicals, horror, and comedy is a unique adventure. What else would you expect from the first Filipino born in Newfoundland? His genre-hopping career has been weaved into the fabric of Reel Asian, from his first feature film Lolo’s Child (1999) to the horror film Ang Pamana: The Inheritance (2006) to the bring-down-the-house live performance of the web musical Prison Dancer (2012) to his numerous short films in between. While we’ve recently seen exciting work from emerging Filipinx Canadian artists, Candido was an original. But like us, he’s far from done, as we feature Topline (2022) with a one-time-only live performance of his latest musical series.
ANG PAMANA: THE INHERITANCE
Retrospective Screening

2006
CANADA, PHILIPPINES
105 MIN
TAGALOG WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES
PG

SPECIAL SCREENING • FRI, NOV 4 • 7 PM • INNIS TOWN HALL
• AVAILABLE ONLINE

Inspired by age-old Filipino folklore, this frightening thriller is a chilling story about the resurfacing of dark family secrets. When word arrives that grandmother Lola has died, Johnny and his sister Anna travel back to the Philippines to learn that they’ve inherited the matriarch’s country estate. They begin to realize that not only is the farm haunted by Lola’s ghost, but also deeply connected to perilous supernatural forces.

With no way out, Johnny must call upon Lola’s legendary lessons to vanquish monsters and ultimately save his family from doom. Featuring an almost entirely Canadian cast, this modern-traditional horror flick breathes some fresh Filipino life into the genre.

HEATHER KEUNG

CAST
Darrel Gamotin
Nadine Villasin
Phoemela Baranda
Nicco Lorenzo Garcia
Caroline Mangosing

WITH SUPPORT FROM

ARTIST TALK
Join Romeo Candido and writer/director/broadcaster Amanda Parris as they discuss Candido’s career.

PRISON DANCER
Canada • 2012 • PG • 60 min • English

Inspired by the real-life dancing rehabilitation program that became a worldwide viral sensation on YouTube, Prison Dancer details the poignant and hilarious stories of six prison dancers who turned a maximum-security prison into a world stage.

DANCERS PICK UP YOUR BAMBOOS
Canada • 2002 • G • 26 min • English

A documentary following members of the Toronto Filipinx Canadian community preparing for Fiesta.

KUYA
Canada • 2003 • G • 8 min • English

A fly-on-the-wall look at the early days of R&B group Kuya as they perform for New York’s top labels.

SUNS
Canada • 2015 • G • 4 min • English

A music-video collaboration between dance troupe Hataw and Candido’s music project A La Una (née Datu).

SHORTY
Canada • 2021 • G • 8 min • English

A father gives his daughter a history lesson of the greatest small NBA players to illustrate that height isn’t all you need.

ROLLING LONGANIZA
Canada • 2004 • PG • 12 min • English

This collaboration with comedian Ron Josol is a farcical time capsule of Asian male aughts humour.

ONLINE — Retro screenings and artist talk — presenting a collection of short and mid-length work from Candido’s career

80 REEL ASIAN CANADIAN SPOTLIGHT 81
TOPLINE
Closing Night Event

Romeo Candido’s latest musical foray Topline takes us into the world of topliners: the people who write the lyrics, melodies, and hooks for the industry’s biggest stars.

SUN, NOV 20 • 7 PM • ISABEL BADER THEATRE
Tala is a reclusive singer-songwriter whose alter ego is named Illisha. When Tala is discovered by and joins a hitmaking team of topliners, she must secretly follow her passion while dealing with her family’s grief over their mother’s passing. And in the process, Tala just might find her voice. Topline features many of Candido’s hallmarks: dramatic, funny, and touching, with an amazing soundtrack. This web series has something for everyone. Featuring emerging talent from across the Greater Toronto Area, the Topline cast will perform its songs live, for a one-of-a-kind experience.

CLOSING NIGHT PARTY
9:30 PM–12:30 AM • CSI Annex
Tickets and details at reelasian.com

VIDEO AND LIVE PERFORMANCE
2022
CANADA
120 MIN
CAST
Cyrena Fiel
Clarence Jura
Ginette Claudette
REEL ASIAN 26

FILM FESTIVAL

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