



MEDIA ADVISORY

The 20th Annual Vancouver Asian Film Festival Celebrates Reel Diversity

November 3–6, Vancouver hosts the best of Asian North American and International Cinema

Vancouver, BC— September XX, 2016—The National Bank Vancouver Asian Film Festival (VAFF) is pleased to announce the countdown to its much anticipated 20th Annual celebration of Asian diaspora and diversity in film, set for November 3rd to 6th, 2016 at the Cineplex Odeon International Village Cinemas in Vancouver 88 W. Pender St., in Vancouver's historic Chinatown district.

"We are extremely excited for this year's 20th festival," **stated Grace Chin, Festival Director.**

"Fostering the Canadian arts and culture community is a key element of National Bank's values, and providing ongoing support for the Vancouver Asian Film Festival is truly our honour," said **Richard Wang, Associate VP Commercial Banking (BC), National Bank.** *"We're very proud to support Asian cinema and help independent filmmakers realize their visions."*

"The VAFF program continues to showcase the breadth and depth of Asian diaspora filmmaking beyond mainstream film festival offerings, with programming that reflects the increasingly borderless creative and industry sensibility of Canada's west coast. We are proud to continue our VAFF Industry series this year with the AIM (Asians in Movies+Media+Music) Summit on establishing more diversity in our entertainment industry, and to launch the Best Canadian Feature Award, sponsored by the Directors Guild of Canada, as a companion to our longstanding Best Canadian Short Award."

With the theme "Homecoming," the VAFF 20 lineup invites us to explore different interpretations and accommodations of "home," and what it symbolizes—particularly for diaspora. The festival's 12 film programs include a local youth filmmaker showcase and 35 feature-length and short films of all genres, with English dialogue and/or English subtitles, from the local and international Asian diaspora. Highlights include four world premieres, including of the Canadian documentary feature "All Our Father's Relations" profiling Musqueam Nation elders from the Grant family in BC, as they explore their mixed race Canadian Chinese and First Nations heritage and visit their father's village in Guangdong, China for the first time; 2 North American premieres, and 10 Canadian premieres. An additional 6 films are Vancouver premieres. Forty filmmakers and panelists, from Canada and internationally, are expected to attend. Organizers anticipate close to 4,000 audience and industry members over the four-day festival.

The Best Canadian Short Award will be presented to one of seven nominated eligible short films by Canadian filmmakers. New this year, is the Best Canadian Feature Award sponsored by the Directors Guild of Canada, to be presented to one of three nominated eligible feature films by Canadian filmmakers. We will be presenting various People's Choice Awards, sponsored by National Bank, during the closing night screening and awards ceremony. The VAFF Industry AIM Summit provides a forum for discussion to provide actionable items for change to include diversity in movies, media and music.

The 20th Annual Vancouver Asian Film Festival will take place November 3–6, 2016, at the Cineplex Odeon International Village Cinemas at 88 West Pender Street in Vancouver's historic Chinatown. Close to 4,000 audience members and media are expected to attend the four-day festival.

The entire program schedule will be available online at www.vaff.org starting October 1. Tickets will be available online at www.vaff.org starting October 1, or at the VAFF table located in the lobby of the Cineplex Odeon International Village Cinemas, 88 W. Pender St., Vancouver, starting November 3.

Interviews and photo opportunities are available. Additional releases, images and screeners/links will also be available. Please email media@vaff.org or visit <http://vaff.org/about-vaff/press-media.php> for media accreditation forms and other information.

About the Vancouver Asian Film Festival

The Vancouver Asian Film Festival Society (VAFF) is a not-for-profit organization that celebrates diversity in film. The longest-running Canadian film festival of its kind, VAFF was founded by independent filmmaker and writer Barbara K. Lee in 1995 and debuted in September 1997. VAFF is entirely organized and produced by a group of dedicated volunteers, and is made possible by generous financial support from corporate sponsors, public funders and private donors.

Follow the festival as it unfolds at:
Facebook/VAFFVancouver
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VAFF 20: MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS

One-liner:

Vancouver, BC—The National Bank Vancouver Asian Film Festival celebrates its 20th year of showcasing the best of independent Asian international diaspora cinema in English, and with English subtitles, November 3–6 at the Cineplex Odeon International Village in Vancouver's historic Chinatown; get tickets and passes online at www.vaff.org from October 6, and at the theatre box office starting November 3.

Two-liner:

Vancouver, BC—The National Bank Vancouver Asian Film Festival showcases the best of independent Asian international diaspora cinema in English, and with English subtitles, including feature-length and short films in all genres. This 20th annual festival takes place November 3–6 at the Cineplex Odeon International Village in Vancouver's historic Chinatown, with 12 programs covering 35 films, and two afternoons of diversity panels. Tickets and passes are available online at www.vaff.org from October 6, and at the theatre box office starting November 3.

Paragraph:

Vancouver, BC—The National Bank Vancouver Asian Film Festival showcases the best of independent Asian international diaspora cinema in English, and with English subtitles, including feature-length and short films in all genres (narrative, documentary, animation, experimental). This 20th annual festival takes place November 3–6 at the Cineplex Odeon International Village in Vancouver's historic Chinatown.

With the theme “Homecoming,” the VAFF 20 lineup invites us to explore different interpretations and accommodations of “home,” and what it symbolizes—particularly for diaspora. The festival's 12 film programs include a local youth filmmaker showcase and 35 feature-length and short films of all genres, with English dialogue and/or English subtitles, from the local and international Asian diaspora. Highlights include four world premieres, 2 North American premieres, and 10 Canadian premieres. An additional 6 films are Vancouver premieres. The festival presents both adjudicated and audience choice awards, and VAFF Industry hosts the AIM Summit as a forum for change to include diversity in movies, media and music. Forty filmmakers and panelists, from Canada and internationally, are expected to attend. Organizers anticipate close to 4,000 audience, industry members and media over the four-day festival.

Tickets and passes are available online from October 6 at www.vaff.org, or at the theatre box office from November 3 at 6:00 pm. For more information, please email info@vaff.org.

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VAFF 20: HIGHLIGHTS

For the full program schedule, program and film synopses, and more detailed film and festival information, please refer to the online program at www.vaff.org.

- **Opening Night + Gala:** Romantic thriller “Pali Road,” LA Asian Pacific Film Festival 2016 Special Jury Award, Best Actress, winner
- **Centrepiece Presentation + Celebration:** Leo Award-winning Canadian (BC) drama “The Bleeding Edge”—VAFF Best Canadian Feature Award nominee
- **Closing Night + Awards + Afterparty:** “The Tiger Hunter,” LA Asian Pacific Film Festival 2016 Grand Jury Award winner—Screening followed by presentation of VAFF Best Canadian Short, Best Canadian Feature, and People’s Choice Awards
- **Family Friendly Doc Spot:** “Mixed Match” live action and animated documentary from award-winning Canadian (BC) filmmaker Jeff Chiba Stearns—VAFF Best Canadian Feature Award nominee
- **International Spotlight USA:** “The Last Smile,” a drama based on true events surrounding a Kashmiri-American father’s investigation into the sudden death of his son, implicating the unregulated American health industry
- **Canadian Curated Feature:** World premiere of Canadian (BC) documentary “All Our Father’s Relations,” relating the interconnected histories of Chinese Canadians and First Nations through the eyes of the mixed ancestry Grant family, Musqueam Nation elders—VAFF Best Canadian Feature Award nominee
- **To Catch A Killer:** North American premiere of Hong Kong psychological thriller “Heartfall Arises,” set across four countries (China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan), reunites the two stars of Chinese mega-hit “The Bullet Vanishes” (2012)—Nicolas Tse (“The White Haired Witch of Lunar Kingdom”) and Lau Ching Wan (“Too Many Ways to Be Number One”).
- **Brushstrokes in Hollywood:** Canadian premiere of award-winning documentary “Tyrus,” about the most legendary Asian American visual artist you’ve never heard of—105-year old Guangzhou-born, L.A.-based Tyrus Wong, whose unique artistic approach helped establish the signature visual styles for the Disney animated film Bambi (1942) and other early Hollywood studio movies.
- **Award-winning shorts programs:** One program of international shorts, and another of all-Canadian shorts, including the VAFF Best Canadian Short Award nominees
- **VAFF Industry AIMS for “reel diversity”:** AIM³ Summit (Asians in Movies + Media + Music) on establishing more diversity in the entertainment industry, with three separate panel discussions.

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VAFF 20: BEST CANADIAN FEATURE AWARD 2016

Sponsored by the Directors Guild of Canada, the VAFF Best Canadian Feature Award (BCFA) is presented annually to a qualifying Canadian independent feature film/filmmaker in the current year's festival. Now in its inaugural year, three Canadian feature films are eligible for the BCFA nomination. The annual winner is determined by a three-member film industry adjudication panel. The award will be presented in an awards ceremony after the Closing Night screening.

BCFA 2016 Adjudication Panel (alphabetical by last name):

- Allan Harmon, Chair—Executive Board, Directors Guild of Canada (BC District Council)
- Jennifer Liao, Independent Filmmaker
- Adelina Suvagau, President, Cineworks Independent Filmmakers Society

BCSA 2016 Nominees (in program screening order):

- "Mixed Match," Documentary/Animation, Canada: Jeff Chiba Stearns, Director
- "The Bleeding Edge," Drama, Canada, Canadian Premiere: Leon Lee, Director
- "All Our Father's Relations," Documentary, Canada, World Premiere: Alejandro Yoshizawa, Director

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VAFF 20: BEST CANADIAN SHORT AWARD 2016

Sponsored by the National Film Board of Canada, the VAFF Best Canadian Short Award (BCSA) is presented annually to a qualifying Canadian independent short film/filmmaker in the current year's festival. Now in its ninth year, an average of 3–6 films per year are eligible for the BCSA nomination. The annual winner is determined by a three-member film industry adjudication panel. The award will be presented in an awards ceremony after the Closing Night screening.

BCSA 2016 Adjudication Panel (alphabetical by last name):

- Paul Armstrong, Executive Director, Crazy8s
- Selwyn Jacob, Producer, National Film Board: Pacific and Yukon Centre
- Suzette Laqua, Executive Director, Vancouver Web Fest

BCSA 2015 Nominees (in program screening order):

- Canadian Shorts "Swim Low," Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Amanda Ann-Min Wong, Director
- Canadian Shorts "Medic," Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Kelly-Ruth Mercier, Director
- Canadian Shorts "Probability," Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Arun Lakra, Director
- Canadian Shorts "Fearless," Documentary, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Ryan Mah, Danny Berish, Directors
- Canadian Shorts "Under Fire: Inside A Chinese Roasted Meats Shop in Vancouver," Documentary, Canada: Christy Fong, Denise Fong, Directors
- Canadian Shorts "A Dwarf's Hideout," Documentary, World premiere, Canada: Alan Wong, Director
- Canadian Shorts "Seldom Looked Upon," Drama, World premiere, Canada: David Avelino, Director

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VAFF INDUSTRY presents: AIM³ SUMMIT (Asians in Movies + Media + Music)

For 20 years, VAFF has championed increasing diversity and representation in mainstream media, in front of and behind, the camera. Vancouver is the ideal location for like-minded advocates to gather—we are home to a large, active Asian filmmaking and acting population, affectionately referred to as "Hollywood North", and arguably the best gateway to Asia. VAFF fiercely supports campaigns such as #StarringJohnCho and #OscarsSoWhite, and will continue to help coordinate these passionate efforts into an actionable plan for substantial change.

For each of the three summit sessions, panel speakers will share personal stories, journeys, and experiences in their fields, then gather at the end of the session to participate in a roundtable discussion allowing for the audience the opportunity to join in on the conversations.

AIM³ session registration is open to VAFF Industry, Filmmaker and VIP Passholders, as well as festival ticket holders with membership. Panel topics this year feature:

SESSION 1: Asians in Comics: Genesis for Future Screenplays

SESSION 2: Asians in Music: In Search of Asian Rockstars in North America

SESSION 3: Asians in Movies: Casting for Asian Leads and Standing up for Change

DATE: Friday, November 4–Saturday, November 5, 2016

LOCATION: Cineplex Odeon International Village Theatres, 88 W. Pender Street, Vancouver

For the session schedule, description and panelist/moderator announcement updates, please refer to the online program guide at www.vaff.org.

Please email media@vaff.org or visit <http://vaff.org/about-vaff/press-media.php> for media accreditation forms and other information.

VAFF 20: MEDIA LOUNGE

Media Lounge

VAFF 20 will have a designated area for interviews and photo opportunities during the festival, November 3–6, 2016 inclusive:

- Venue: International Village, 88 W. Pender St., Vancouver (exact location TBA)

Schedule:

- Nov 3, 2016 | 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
- Nov 4, 2016 | 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- Nov 5, 2016 | 3:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- Nov 6, 2016 | 3:00 pm - 7:30 pm

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Please send interview requests to media@vaff.org.

VAFF 20: ATTENDING FILMMAKERS

Attending Filmmakers (As of September 26, 2016)

Feature Films:

- **Thursday, November 3, 2016**
 - Opening Night “Pali Road,” Mystery Drama, Canadian premiere, USA: Jonathan Lim, Director
- **Friday, November 4, 2016**
 - “CAMEO’n Me,” Science Fiction Drama, Japan: Toshihiro Soh, Director
 - **Best Canadian Feature Nominee:** Doc Spot “Mixed Match,” Documentary/Animation, Canada: Jeff Chiba Stearns, Director
 - **International Spotlight:** “The Last Smile,” Drama, USA: Shankey Srinivasan, Director
- **Saturday, November 5, 2016**
 - **Best Canadian Feature Nominee:** Centrepiece Presentation “The Bleeding Edge,” Drama, Canadian premiere, Canada: Leon Lee, Director
 - “Heartfall Arises,” Crime Thriller, North American premiere, Hong Kong: Ken Wu, Director
- **Sunday, November 6, 2016**
 - **Best Canadian Feature Nominee:** Canadian Curated Feature “All Our Father’s Relations,” Documentary, World premiere, Canada: Alejandro Yoshizawa, Director
 - Closing Night “The Tiger Hunter,” Comedy Drama, Canadian premiere, USA: Lena Khan, Director; Rizwan Manji, Actor

Short Films:

- **Friday, November 4, 2016**
 - “The Time Agent,” Drama, Vancouver premiere, South Korea: Jude Chun, Director
- **Saturday, November 5, 2016**
 - International Shorts “NYChapters Presents: Valerie Tom,” Documentary, World premiere, USA: Alexander Hankoff, Director
 - International Shorts “Nước (“Water/Homeland”),” Experimental Drama, Canadian premiere, USA: Quyen Nguyen-Le, Director/Writer; Jes Vu, Producer
 - International Shorts “The Waltz,” Drama, Canadian premiere, USA: Trevor Zhou, Director/Writer
 - International Shorts “Yakuza No. 2,” Drama, Canadian premiere, USA: Susumu Kimura, Director/Writer
 - International Shorts “Godlike,” Drama, USA: Mickey Finnegan, Director/Writer; Jennifer Khoe, Producer
- **Sunday, November 6, 2016**
 - **Best Canadian Short Award Nominees (in screening order):**
 - Canadian Shorts “Swim Low,” Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Amanda Ann-Min Wong, Director (N/A)
 - Canadian Shorts “Medic,” Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Alan Lolacher, Producer
 - Canadian Shorts “Probability,” Drama, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Arun Lakra, Director
 - Canadian Shorts “Fearless,” Documentary, Vancouver premiere, Canada: Ryan Mah, Danny Berish, Directors
 - Canadian Shorts “Under Fire: Inside A Chinese Roasted Meats Shop in Vancouver,” Documentary, World premiere, Canada: Christy Fong, Denise Fong, Directors

- Canadian Shorts “A Dwarf’s Hideout,” Documentary, World premiere, Canada: Alan Wong, Director
- Canadian Shorts “Seldom Looked Upon,” Drama, World premiere, Canada: David Avelino, Director
- o **VAFF Mighty Asian Moviemaking Marathon 11 (MAMM11) Winners:**
 - Canadian Shorts "Final Wishes," Drama, VAFF MAMM11 1st Place Winner, Canada: Phi Planta, Director
 - Canadian Shorts “Untitled: Manga Adaptation,” Comedy, VAFF MAMM11 2nd Place Winner, Canada: Harrison Houde, Director/Co-producer; Jerome Yoo, Co-producer/Writer/Actor