

CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA PRESENTS

CAAMFEST2014

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CAAMFest 2014 Concludes After 11 Days of Asian and Asian American Storytelling in Film, Food and Music

SAN FRANCISCO, March 26, 2014 – CAAMFest 2014 successfully concluded after 11 days of film, music and food programming. As the largest festival of its kind in the country, CAAM welcomed over 260 participants and showcased over 120 films from 19 countries, including 29 narrative films, 15 documentaries, 77 short films as well as 7 World premieres, 2 North American premieres and 17 San Francisco premieres. The festival saw a 20 percent increase in attendees, welcoming over 26,000 audience members.

CAAMFest Highlights

This year's winners include: FARAH GOES BANG, dir. Meera Menon for Comcast Narrative Competition; CAMOBODIAN SON, dir. Masahiro Sugano for Documentary Competition; LAN YAN, dir. Danielle Schmidt and GRAND CANAL, dir. Johnny Ma for the APCA Student Film Award; ILO ILO, dir. Anthony Chen for the Remy Martin Filmmaker Award; EAST SIDE SUSHI, dir. Anthony Lucero for Best Narrative Audience Award; AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS, dir. Grace Lee for Best Documentary Audience Award; and WHY WE RISE, Dirs. Corrine Manabat and Brian Redondo for the Loni Ding Award for Social Issue Documentary.

HOW TO FIGHT IN SIX INCH HEELS opened CAAMFest 2014 at San Francisco's historic Castro Theater with a red carpet that welcomed star, producer, and Bay Area native Kathy Uyen, actors Sigmund Watkins and Truc Diem as well as director Ham Tran, producer Tim Bui and writer Tim Tori. The festivities continued with the Opening Night Gala at the Asian Art Museum which included an exclusive viewing of *Yoga: The Art of Transformation*, a fashion presentation by Retrofit Republic, music from local DJs and delicious bites and beverages courtesy of local restaurants and vendors.

This year, CAAMFest showcased two centerpiece presentations: AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS and COLD EYES. Directed by acclaimed director Grace Lee, AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS spotlights the iconic Grace Lee Boggs, the 98-year-old outspoken activist, feminist, author and philosopher. The film played to a packed house at the Castro Theatre, followed by an inspirational Q&A with director Grace Lee and the American revolutionary herself, Grace Lee Boggs.

The night continued with the international centerpiece, COLD EYES, a remake of the 2007 Hong Kong film EYE IN THE SKY, directed by Jo Ui-seok and Kim Byung-seo. The crime thriller follows an elite police surveillance unit as they track down a ruthless string of robberies. Director Jo Ui-seok and Producer Song Dae-chan were present for the screening of South Korea's biggest hit of 2013 and the Q&A after.

CAAMFest was proud to host Curatorial Residents, Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam for this year's retrospective sponsored by the Asian Cultural Council. Sarin and Sonam are the directors of the new Dharamsala International Film Festival in India and bring the best of contemporary, independent Indian and world cinema to the city that is home to the Dalai Lama and the capital of the Tibetan community in

exile. The festival featured two of their films: THE SUN BEHIND THE CLOUDS and DREAMING LHASA which were featured in the Committed Cinema series at the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive. Since the inaugural festival in 1982, the PFA has been a generous co-presenter of programming at CAAMFest.

The historic Great Star Theater located in San Francisco's Chinatown was home to two special presentations spotlighting the works of the Grandview Film Company as well as the late Sir Run Run Shaw. Thanks in part to the Hong Kong Film Archive, CAAMFest had the privilege of showcasing two films by the legendary Chinese American producer Joseph Sunn Jue (1904-1990) and the Grandview Film Company. For the first time in 67 years, festival attendees were treated to screenings of BLACK MARKET COUPLE and WHITE POWDER NEON LIGHTS, two of seven surviving films from the collection. The festival also paid tribute to Run Run Shaw, the Hong Kong media mogul. As the founder of Shaw Brothers Studios, he elevated the kung fu movie genre to global proportions. CAAMFest honored his legacy by screening three movies produced by the Asian cinema pioneer: THE KINGDOM AND THE BEAUTY, COME DRINK WITH ME and KING BOXER (FIVE FINGERS OF DEATH).

CAAMFest kicked off the second weekend with the *Superawesome* launch at the Oakland Museum of California along with a sold-out screening of AWESOME ASIAN BAD GUYS with filmmakers Stephen Dypiangco and Patrick Epino and star Dante Basco in attendance. The festival continued with a full weekend of programming at its newest venue, the New Parkway Theater.

Closing night's DELANO MANONGS, at the New Parkway Theater in Oakland, documents the overlooked story of the Filipino leader Larry Itliong and his role in the creation of the United Farm Workers Union. The film screened to a sold out house and was followed by an insightful Q&A with the director, Marissa Arroy. Festival attendees celebrated the culmination of CAAMFest 2014 at the closing night party at Vessel Gallery.

World Premieres at the festival included AWESOME ASIAN BAD GUYS (dirs. Stephen Dypianco and Patrick Epino, USA), FAMILY INGREDIENTS (dir. Heather Huana Giugni, USA), FLAT3 (dir. Roseanne Liang, New Zealand), HULA: MERRIE MONARCH'S GOLDEN CELEBRATION (dir. Roland Yamamoto, USA), JEEPNEY (dir. Esy Casey, USA), LORDVILLE (dir. Rea Tajiri, USA) and STORIES FROM TOHOKU (dirs. Dianne Fukami and Eli Olson, USA).

Directions in Sound

CAAMFest's premiere Asian and Asian American music program continued to serve as a platform for emerging and cutting edge artists. The *Korean Showcase* featured MC Kero One, and the bands Love X Stereo, Glen Check, Rock N' Roll Radio and SmackSoft. *Here Comes Treble* was a showcase of female talent in hip hop, folk and soul with the Bay Area-based MC Rocky Rivera, the contemporary sounds by Cynthia Lin and the Blue Moon All-Stars and a roster of turntablists including DJ Umami, DJ ThatGirl and DJ Roza.

2014 Comcast Narrative Competition

The Comcast Narrative Competition celebrates this year's selection of filmmakers, whose films redefine our perceptions of family, friendships, self-identity, morality and even reality. The 2014 jury included Melissa Hung, founding editor of Hyphen magazine and director of WritersCorps; Musa Syeed, director and writer of VALLEY OF SAINTS; and Nicholas Chee, award-winning Singapore-based photographer, filmmaker and co-founder of Sinema Old School & Sinema TV.

Winner: FARAH GOES BANG, dir. Meera Menon

Jury statement: The lineup this year was very strong and led to some spirited debate amongst the Comcast Narrative jury, which is always a good sign. The Comcast Narrative award goes to a film that not only captures the changing landscape of America with intelligence and honesty, but also creates a

refreshing, vital, and often hilarious portrayal of female friendships. The winner of the Comcast Narrative Award is FARAH GOES BANG, by director Meera Menon.

We, the jury, would like to give a special mention to BRAHMIN BULLS, by director Mahesh Pailoor for its portrayal of a complicated father-son relationship.

2014 Documentary Competition

This year's documentary competition brought a batch of films from around the world that chronicle the lives of people from all over the globe in their boundless search for home, identity, human connection and perhaps even fame. The 2014 jury included Cheryl Hirasa, Director of Program Development & Content Strategy for Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC); Michael Fukushima, award winning producer of CNOTE and JAIME LO, SMALL AND SHOW.

Winner: CAMOBODIAN SON, dir. Masahiro Sugano

Jury statement: We chose a film about a fascinating character and in the process of learning about his story and journey we learn about a little-known but compelling community of Asian American exiles.

By unanimous choice, we award the prize to CAMBODIAN SON.

APCA Student Film Award

The AT&T Student Film Award recognizes promising voices in Asian and Asian American media and is presented to college students that exemplify the voice of a new generation.

Winners: LAN YAN, dir. Danielle Schmidt; GRAND CANAL, dir. Johnny Ma

Remy Martin Filmmaker Award

CAAM uncovers and nurtures talent from around the globe. With the generous support of Rémy Martin, we are proud to present the Rémy Martin Filmmaker Award to an outstanding filmmaker.

Winner: ILO ILO, dir. Anthony Chen

Statement from Alan Way, Senior Director of Remy Cointreau USA: ILO ILO's impeccable cinematography drives the story of a dysfunctional family. Through a densely plotted, visually driven story, Director Anthony Chen weaves beautifully the rebellious nature of Jiale, his relationship with Theresa, the mother and father, classmates and teacher. The film reveals complications within a modern day family and brings light to domestic workers working away from home. Rémy Martin is happy to award the Rémy Martin Filmmaker Award to Mr. Anthony Chen for this artistically stirring film.

2014 Audience Award

The Audience Award gives valued members of our audience the honor of selecting their favorite films of the festival. The 2014 Audience Award winners are:

Best Narrative Feature: EAST SIDE SUSHI, dir. Anthony Lucero

Best Documentary Feature: AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS, dir. Grace Lee

Statement from director Anthony Lucero: Thank you to Masashi Niwano for taking a chance and programming my film, to the CAAM staff and of course the great Bay Area audience that came out in full force to watch our film. EAST SIDE SUSHI is a film that I, my cast and crew poured everything into and the recognition is more than gratifying. It's a special honor to receive this award and acceptance from the CAAMFest audience. Much love to you all.

Statement from director Grace Lee: We are incredibly honored to win the Audience Award for Best Documentary at CAAMFest. The screening at the Castro was such a moving community event for our entire team and for Grace Lee Boggs as well. To see so many people embrace not only the story but get so excited about the ideas in the film and to do it with Grace Lee Boggs herself in the room will be a highlight of our film's trajectory for years to come. Thank you so much, Bay Area audiences and CAAMFest for bringing us all together.

2014 Loni Ding Award

Loni Ding devoted her life to advocacy and public service, and played a key role in the founding of several public media organizations, including the Center for Asian American Media. The Loni Ding Award for Social Issue Documentary was created in 2011 to honor the film and filmmaker that most reflect the passions of the late TV producer.

Winner: WHY WE RISE, Dirs. Corrine Manabat and Brian Redondo

Guests in Attendance

Special guests in attendance at this year's festival included actor/producer Kathy Uyen, director Ham Tran, producer Tim Bui, actor Sigmund Watkins, actor Truc Diem writer Tim Tori and costume designer Nuchuda Charmreongpucksa (HOW TO FIGHT IN SIX INCH HEELS); director Grace Lee and subject Grace Lee Boggs (AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY: THE EVOLUTION OF GRACE LEE BOGGS); director Jo Ui-seok and producer Song Dae-chan (COLD EYES); director Anthony Chen (ILO ILO); director Masahiro Sugano (CAMBODIAN SON); director Meera Menon (FARAH GOES BANG); director Anthony Lucero, actors Yutaka Takeuchi and Diana Torres (EAST SIDE SUSHI); director Mahesh Pailoor and actor Sendhi Ramamurthy (BRAHMIN BULLS); director J.P. Chan, actors Jodi Long, Jo Mei, Lucas Dixon, Teyonah Parris and producer Yasmine Gomez (A PICTURE OF YOU); directors Stephen Dypiangco and Patrick Epino and actor Dante Basco (AWESOME ASIAN BAD GUYS); director Roseanne Liang (FLAT3); director Louisa Wei (GOLDEN GATE GIRLS); directors Ritu Sarin and Tenzing Sonam (DREAMING LHASA, SUN BEHIND THE CLOUDS); director Tenzin Tsetan Choklay (BRINGING TIBET HOME); directors Dianne Fukami and Eli Olson (STORIES FROM TOHOKU); director Keo Woolford (THE HAUMANA); director Ty Sanga (FAMILY INGREDIENTS); director Sun Kim and producer Trip Hope (INNOCENT BLOOD); director Baby Ruth Villarama and producer Chuck Gutierrez (JAZZ IN LOVE); director Esy Casey and producer Sarah Friedland (JEEPNEY); director Visra Vichit-Vadakan (KARAOKE GIRL); director Rea Taijiri and producer Sian Evans (LORDVILLE); director Hao Wu (ROAD TO FAME); director Richie Mehta and actor Rahesh Tailang (SIDDHARTH); director Marissa Aroy and producer Niall McKay (DELANO MANONGS); and director/producer Duc Nguyen (STATELESS); Supervisor David Chiu, City and County of San Francisco District 3; California Assemblymember Rob Bonta, District 18; Martin Yan, Yan Can Cook Inc, and Roy Yamaguchi, Roys' Restaurants.

Coming soon from CAAM

The Center for Asian American Media continues to provide Asian American programming throughout the year. During May, CAAM will celebrate Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month with the series *Japanese American Lives* which will be available on national public television. CAAMFest will continue to bring Asian and Asian American programming and events later this summer when the festival heads to San Jose.

Membership

Members support CAAM's year-round programming, including CAAMFest. They receive fantastic benefits including discounts on CAAMFest tickets, invites to events throughout the year, and complimentary CAAMFest tickets.

For more information on membership and more CAAM events visit CAAMedia.org.

CAAMFest gratefully acknowledges its sponsors

CAAMFest is supported in part by the following: Xfinity, Asian Art Museum, Buick, Singapore Airlines, Asian Americans for Civil Rights & Equality (“AACRE”), AARP, Cooper White & Cooper, FilmFest, Gala Festival Engine, Pacific Islanders in Communications, Pacific Standard Print, Remy Martin, Southwest Airlines, Asian Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Grants for the Arts/Hotel Tax Fund, and The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. CAAM is supported with major funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

About CAAM:

CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) is a non-profit organization dedicated to presenting stories that convey the richness and diversity of Asian American experiences to the broadest audience possible. CAAM does this by funding, producing, distributing and exhibiting works in film, television and digital media. For more information on CAAM, please visit www.caamedia.org.

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