

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA PRESENTS

# CAAMFEST2015

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## *Influential LGBTQIA Filmmakers and Characters Take Center Stage at CAAMFest 2015*

**SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 12, 2015** — Whether its a transgender hula teacher in Hawai'i striving to keep her native Hawaiian roots alive or the landmark same sex-wedding performed in South Korea, this year's group of noteworthy LGBTQIA directors and powerful characters make their presence felt at CAAMFest 2015.

Taking center stage at CAAMFest 2015 with the Centerpiece Presentation is MARGARITA, WITH A STRAW. Director Shonali Bose's deeply personal film dazzles with moments of careful reflection and emotional struggle as she tells the compelling and inspiring story of Laila, a young woman with cerebral palsy who dreams of becoming a writer. A NYU transplant from India's Delhi University, Laila's journey begins when she falls for a fiery female activist who tests her creative and personal boundaries.

Renowned filmmaker and champion of LGBT storytelling Arthur Dong headlines the Spotlight feature presentation with THE KILLING FIELDS OF DR. HAING S. NGOR and a digitally remastered version of FORBIDDEN CITY, U.S.A. Known for his prowess utilizing the art of film as a means to investigate social issues and examine undisclosed parts of Asian American and LGBT history and identity, Dong's voice has spread much further than film alone.

### **WITHOUT BORDERS: LGBTQIA INFLUENCERS**

This year's collection of LGBTQIA films features characters from all facets of life. From Filipino immigrants, to a ground breaking Korean same-sex marriage, to a transgender Hawaiian native, these narratives and documentaries broaden the scope of what it means to be LGBT.

Representing the Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC) Pacific Showcase, KUMU HINA, directed by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson, follows a transgender hula teacher striving to keep her Native Hawaiian culture prosperous amidst the growing influence of Westernization. On a subject rarely spoken of in Hawai'i, this documentary pushes the struggles of being "in the middle" to the surface.

In the intimate and candid documentary MY FAIR WEDDING, Jang Hee-Sun accompanies Gwang-Soo and Dave as they plan their landmark wedding, the first same-sex marriage performed in South Korea. Although met with displeasure from gay marriage opponents before and during the special day, MY FAIR WEDDING is a light-hearted love story with strong undertones about marriage equality.

From a Filipino immigrant struggling with her life as an out lesbian in Penny Baldado's MY BEAUTIFUL RESISTANCE, to a child's point of view on the much debated subject of same-sex marriage in Quentin Lee's OPERATION MARRIAGE, this year's OUT/HERE shorts program collectively portray passionate LGBT figures.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION: PRATIBHA PARMAR**

Queer Conversations on Culture and the Arts presents a special screening and panel featuring festival filmmakers in conversation with director Pratibha Parmar (NINA'S HEAVENLY DELIGHTS) and moderated by CAAM festival director Masashi Niwano. Sponsored by Queer Cultural Center, California College of the Arts and CAAM.

**FESTIVAL TICKET INFORMATION**

Excluding special events, panels, galas and special screenings, advanced general admission tickets are \$14. Ticket for students, seniors (65+) and disabled adults are \$13 (Limit 1 per program with ID only). Tickets for Center for Asian American Media members are \$12 (Limit 2 per program per ID). Tickets go on sale to CAAM members only on Thursday, February 12, 2015 (online only) and open to the general public beginning Tuesday, February 17, 2015 (online only). Tickets can be purchased in person at our CAAMFest box office at Sundance Kabuki Cinemas starting Thursday, February 26, 2015.

**About CAAMFest:**

CAAMFest, formerly the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), takes place March 12-22, 2015 in the San Francisco Bay Area. CAAMFest is a celebration of film, music, food and digital media from the world's most innovative Asian and Asian American artists.

**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](http://www.caamedia.org).

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