For Immediate Release

Contact: Wellington Love
15minutes
212.366.4992
wellingtonlove@15minutespr.com

LGBT FILMS AT 30TH ANNIVERSARY ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

July 12, 2007 (New York, NY) – Presented by Asian CineVision, in association with the Asia Society, the New York Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF) is proud to highlight its line-up of lesbian, gay, transgendered and bisexual films for its 30th Anniversary year. Representing the latest and best in Asian and Asian American filmmaking, AAIFF will run from July 19–28, 2007, at the Asia Society (725 Park Avenue, at 70th Street).

FEATURES:

- **ETERNAL SUMMER. (New York Premiere)** Directed by Leste Chen. Starring Bryant Chang, Joseph Chang, and Kate Young. Taiwan. The award-winning film follows the lifelong friendship of quiet, A-student Jonathan and class rebel Shane. They are first introduced as kids, when their teacher pairs them together. Ten years later, nothing much has changed: Jonathan still excels at academics, and Shane still lacks school smarts but has grown into a hunky basketball star. As the two prepare for college, the new girl in school, Carrie, takes an immediate liking to Jonathan. When Jonathan dismisses Carrie's affections, she turns to Shane. Her influence in this newfound trio only serves to focus the boys' long dormant feelings for each other. All three struggle with feelings of love and friendship, a seemingly clear distinction that is blurred with the passing of time and sudden physical intimacy. The third feature by precocious director Leste Chen (he was only 24 at the time) is an old-fashioned melodrama and an intriguing example of traditional LGBT comfort cinema. The film garnered a Best New Performer prize for Bryant Chang at the 2006 Golden Horse Awards in Taipei.
- **KING AND THE CLOWN. (New York Premiere)** Directed by Lee Jun-ik. Starring Karm Woo-Sung, Jung Jin-young, Kang Sung-yeon, and Lee Joon-gi. South Korea. A stylish period piece chock full of dichotomies, the film is an exquisite dramedy about a boorish king who falls in love with the gentle jester who mocks him. When a troupe of peasant entertainers lampoon the king, they must save themselves from execution by making him laugh. The group eventually charms its way into the royal court as his personal jesters, but when the disarming male clown Gong-gil (Lee Jung-gi) unintentionally draws the king's attentions, his protective best friend and the king's nasty mistress are each overcome by a toxic jealousy that threatens the political stability of the legendary Chosun dynasty. Until Bong Joon-ho's *The Host* opened, this film was the highest grossing film in South Korea, though the Korean press rather obviously avoided mention of the transgender love story that forms the plot's core. Punctuated by breathtaking tightrope maneuvers, roguish theatrical masks, and racy double entendres, the film dishes up intense romantic intrigue with astonishing ease and whimsy.

over→

SHORTS:

- **TALKING ABOUT AMY.** Directed by Yorico Murakami. Japanese pop artist Emi Iijima, founder of street performance art shows "Aozora Art" and the comic book *Ricatte kanji?*, explores an alternative view of life.
- **LAST STRANGER UNDER THE HEAVENS.** Directed by Weijie Lai and Elizabeth Wijaya. Two young men stay in similar hotel rooms, both unsure of their truest desires.
- **THE ESSAY ASSIGNMENT.** Directed by Jennifer Lin. An eighth-grade girl living in a small town in Ohio writes her observations on same-sex marriage eliciting much controversy among both her conversative and liberal friends at school.
- **LALA.** Directed by Elizabeth Hemphill. Women who love women are give the opportunity to speak for themselves and define the term LALA, as well as their own identities, however they choose.

As the longest-running Asian American film festival, AAIFF has established itself as the premier venue for filmmakers of Asian descent, providing a platform for the latest and best in Asian and Asian American cinema. For three decades, the festival has sought out innovative works by emerging filmmakers and Asian directors, often introducing their films to American audiences for the first time.

Asian CineVision, founded in 1976, is a nonprofit media arts organization dedicated to promoting and preserving Asian and Asian American media expressions. ACV is committed to developing and supporting both emerging and experienced Asian American film and video makers and other media artists working in a range of genres and styles; and to ensure that the full spectrum of Asian and Asian American media works reach diverse audiences in Asian American communities and beyond. For more information, visit AsianCineVision.org.

Asia Society is the leading global organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of Asia and the United States. We seek to enhance dialogue, encourage creative expression, and generate new ideas across the fields of policy, business, education, arts, and culture. Founded in 1956, Asia Society is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational institution with offices in Hong Kong, Houston, Los Angeles, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, New York, San Francisco, Shanghai, and Washington, D.C. For more information, visit www.AsiaSociety.org.

For more information, please visit AAIFF.org.

For press inquiries, please contact Wellington Love at 15minutes at phone: 212.366.4992 or email: wellingtonlove@15minutespr.com.