

## 44th Asian American International Film Festival Announces Full Lineup

*LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE and THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS as a Double-Feature Special Presentation Event, BLUE BAYOU to Close the Festival*



July 27, 2021, NEW YORK – The 44th Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF44) announces its full lineup. "Filipinos in Focus: LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE and THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS," will play as an in-person double feature Special Presentation event on Aug. 18. Cast and crew of both films will be attending the event. The Closing Night film will be BLUE BAYOU, with an in-person screening and reception on Aug. 22. AAIFF44 will take place from Aug. 11-22 as a hybrid festival.

- **Special Presentation - "Filipinos in Focus: A Double Feature of LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE and THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS"**
  - Aug. 18 at the Philippine Center New York (556 5th Ave, NY, NY 10036)
  - 4:30 pm - Screening of LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE + Q&A
  - 6:30 pm - Reception
  - 7:30 pm - Screening of FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS + Q&A
  - \$30 for double feature + reception, \$20 for single film + reception
  - Get tickets at <https://www.aaiff.org/aaiff44/filipinos-in-focus-a-double-feature>
  
- **Closing Night - BLUE BAYOU**
  - Aug. 22 at Quad Cinema (34 W 13th Street, NY, NY 10011)

- 6:00 pm - Screening
- 8:00 pm - Reception
- \$40 General Ticket
- Get tickets at  
<https://www.aaiff.org/aaiff44/closing-night-screening-reception-blue-bayou>

The full lineup consists of 25 International Films, 13 World Premieres, 14 East Coast Premieres, and 18 New York City Premieres. This year's program includes 92 directors and 15 returning AAIFF alums. More information on the full lineup can be found at <https://www.aaiff.org/program>.

Early Bird Gold and Cine Pass are currently on sale at <https://www.aaiff.org/ticketing> at \$90 and \$175. The early bird pricing will end on Aug. 4. Other ticket tiers are also available now:

- **3-Pack:** Providing a pack of 3 tickets that can be used for any online screening at \$25
- **5-Pack:** Providing a pack of 5 tickets that can be used for any online screening at \$40
- **Regular Ticket:** Providing admission for single viewer for the program specified on the ticket at \$10
- **Household Ticket:** Providing admission for viewers living in the same household to view the program specified on the ticket together at \$15

## **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

- ❑ **SNAKEHEAD - Opening Night Screening - East Coast Premiere**  
*Directed by Evan Jackson Leong - U.S. - English/Mandarin/Cantonese*  
 An immigrant gets caught up in an international crime ring of human smuggling while attempting to make a better life for her family.
- ❑ **THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS - Special Presentation - New York City Premiere**  
*Directed by Dante Basco - U.S./Philippines - English/Tagalog*  
 From Northern California to the Philippines, four brothers confront their issues with love, family, and culture, surrounding a highly controversial Filipino wedding.
- ❑ **LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE - Special Presentation - New York City Premiere**  
*Directed by Patricio Ginelsa - U.S. - English/Tagalog*  
 The LUMPIA-armed avenger reappears in Fogtown and teams up with high school student Rachel to prevent a crime syndicate from selling drugs masked as food in this crowdfunded action comedy.
- ❑ **BLUE BAYOU - Closing Night Screening - New York City Premiere**

*Directed by Justin Chon - U.S. - English/Vietnamese*

A Korean adoptee raised in a small Louisiana town works hard to care for his wife and stepdaughter until his life is derailed by the threat of deportation.

❑ **THE TERRORIZERS - Retrospective**

*Directed by Edward Yang - Taiwan - Mandarin/Taiwanese*

A metaphysical mystery about the lives of three couples in Taipei that continually intersect over a span of several weeks.

*This screening is co-presented by MUBI.*

❑ **CUNY SHORTS SHOWCASE**

Since 2004, the CUNY Asian American Film Festival (AAFF) has recognized and awarded over \$13,500 in cash prizes to student filmmakers enrolled at the City University of New York, including City College, Brooklyn College, Hunter College, Lehman College, College of Staten Island, and Queens College. The CUNY AAFF helps to promote the artistic visual talents and stimulate communication among CUNY students who are separated by the different campuses, and serve as a central location to display their creative works. Finalists screen at the Asian American International Film Festival.

- **MORKOVCHA [KOREAN CARROT SALAD] (Морковча)**

*Directed by Lidiya Kan - U.S./Russia/Uzbekistan/Kazakhstan - Russian/English*

This documentary tells the story of Lidiya Kan's Korean family's nearly century-long journey from the Russian Far East to their new home in the United States.

- **SOCIAL ANXIETY**

*Directed by Philip Choi - South Korean - English*

A young student from South Korea holds on to his last hope—his faith—while suffering social anxiety and a traumatic event in America.

- **DEEPEST MEMORY**

*Directed by SiaoMin Loh - U.S - Mandarin*

In this animated short, the filmmaker recalls their deepest memories and the atmosphere of celebrating Lunar New Year Eve with family in Malaysia as a child—something they haven't experienced since coming to the United States.

- **IN LOVING MEMORY (OF WHO WE USED TO BE)**

*Directed by Vicky Lee - U.S. - English/Cantonese*

*IN LOVING MEMORY (OF WHO WE USED TO BE)* is reminiscent of the growing pains and awkward tween years of a Chinese-American girl.

- **THE DISTANCE BETWEEN US - International Premiere**

*Directed by Kainoa Presbitero - U.S. - English*

After a miscarriage, Alex and Christina deal with the loneliness and hurt of the emotional distance that has come between them.

❑ **The Film Lab's 2021 72 Hour Shootout TOP TEN: BE A HERO** - *World Premiere*

*Hosted by the Asian American Film Lab - U.S. - English*

The 72 Hour Shootout filmmaking competition (the “Shootout”) is an annual global filmmaking competition celebrating diversity in front of and behind the camera.

## **NARRATIVE FEATURES**

❑ **AMERICANISH**

*Directed by Iman Zawahry - U.S. - English*

In Jackson Heights, Queens, two sisters and their fresh-off-the-boat cousin try all the conventional ways to earn the love and respect of the matriarch of their family, only to learn that life works out in the most unconventional ways.

❑ **DINNER PARTY** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Chris Naoki Lee - U.S. - English*

If you met your childhood friends today, would you still f\*ck with them?

❑ **IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE (もうひとつのことば)** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Masaya Tsutsumi - Japan - Japanese/English*

Tokyo, Summer 2020. In a “One Coin English Cafe” where participants can enjoy English conversation for a small price, a man and a woman start playing a game in which they act like different people only when they speak English.

❑ **INBETWEEN GIRL** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Mei Makino - U.S. - English*

After her parents' sudden divorce, teen artist Angie Chen turns to secret hookups with the heartthrob of her private school.

❑ **MICKY ON THE ROAD (迷走廣州)** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Mian Mian Lu - Taiwan/China - Mandarin/Taiwanese*

Two young Taiwanese women travel to Guangzhou in pursuit of elusive dreams.

❑ **SEE YOU THEN** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Mari Walker - U.S. - English*

Kris, a transgender computer programmer, and Naomi, an Asian American performance artist, dated in college but haven't seen each other since Kris left town 15 years ago.

❑ **TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY (安眠旅舍)**

*Directed by KEFF - Taiwan - Mandarin*

Over the course of one night, a receptionist at a suicide hotel in Taipei, Taiwan forms a fleeting friendship with a guest who can't decide if she wants to live or die.

❑ **THE KNOT (Uljhan)**

*Directed by Ashish Pant - India - Hindi*

An upper middle class couple hits a rickshaw driver with their car and must face the moral implications of their actions when the driver's younger brother shows up at their doorstep informing them the injured man is fighting for his life.

❑ **WAIKIKI**

*Directed by Christopher Kahunahana - Hawai'i - English/Hawaiian*

In this cinematic allegory of love and loss, a hula dancer fights for survival and her sanity in the shadows of Waikiki.

## **DOCUMENTARY FEATURES**

❑ **A SEXPLANATION - New York City Premiere**

*Directed by Alex Liu - U.S., Canada - English*

To right the wrongs of his all-American sex education, 36-year-old Alex Liu goes on a quest to uncover naked truths and hard facts—no matter how awkward it gets.

❑ **A RIFLE AND A BAG**

*Directed by Cristina Hanes/Isabella Rinaldi/Arya Rothe (NoCut Film Collective) - India/Romania/Italy/Qatar - Hindi/Madia (tribal)/Gondi (tribal)*

A young Indian couple of surrendered communist rebels, the Naxalites, is fighting for their children's future.

❑ **BOOKMARK 14 (Juuyonsai no Shiori) - International Premiere**

*Directed by Ryo Takebayashi - Japan - Japanese*

This is a documentary about youth that closely follows all of the students in a single second-year junior high school class.

❑ **CANE FIRE**

*Directed by Anthony Banua-Simon - U.S. - English/Pidgin English/Olelo Hawaiian*

CANE FIRE examines the past and present of the Hawaiian island of Kaua'i, creating a kaleidoscopic portrait of the economic and cultural forces that have cast indigenous and working-class residents as "extras" in their own story.

❑ **FATHER (爷爷和父亲) - U.S. Premiere**

*Directed by Deng Wei - China - Chinese/Leiyang Dialect*

This film captures the fraught relationship between the director's father, a property developer, and his grandfather, a blind fortune teller, as they negotiate past resentments and an uncertain future.

❑ **WUHAN WUHAN** - *International Premiere*

*Directed by Yung Chang - China - Mandarin/Chinese Dialects*

As the city of Wuhan, China locked down at the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, filmmaker Yung Chang and a group of intrepid videographers were able to document life at the epicenter.

## **SHORT FILM PROGRAMS**

### **The Art of Identity** - 72 mins

What is art and how can we see it in our lives? These stories explore what art means and how it helps us connect to our world.

❑ **HAWAIIAN SOUL** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by 'Āina Paika - U.S. - English*

I can recall the way your voice would fill the room and we would all be stilled by your melody.

❑ **MAHĀLANG**

*Directed by Elliot deBruyn, Nathaniel Brown, Caili Quan - U.S., Guam - English*

Chamorro Filipino choreographer and dancer Caili Quan pays tribute to the family and culture of Guam that sparked her love of music and inspired her dream of dancing.

❑ **LADY APSARA**

*Directed by Zi Alikhan - U.S./Philippines/India - English*

Apsara, a hard-working NYC actress whose identity is both Filipina and Indian, sings her way through a two-audition day... to an extraordinary conclusion.

❑ **AND THEN**

*Directed by Ravenna Tran - Japan - English*

AND THEN is a short film about two women who meet and grow closer to each other through insomnia, art, and exploring a new city.

### **Between the Lines** - 94 mins

Can you repeat that? I don't understand. Borders, social distance, and language create barriers to understanding and connection. For many, these have never been more vast, nor more

necessary to overcome. In these shorts, crossing these borders may start best with reading between the lines.

- ❑ **POST OFFICE** - *New York City Premiere*  
*Directed by Courtney Loo/David Karp - U.S. - English/Mandarin*  
When a Chinese-American mother and her children come upon a seemingly abandoned little girl, their attempts to help have unforeseen consequences.
  
- ❑ **LEARNING TAGALOG WITH KAYLA** - *New York City Premiere*  
*Directed by Kayla Abuda Galang - U.S. - English/Tagalog*  
In this lesson, Kayla will teach you Tagalog, the language of her homeland.
  
- ❑ **LONELY BLUE NIGHT** - *New York City Premiere*  
*Directed by Johnson Cheng - U.S. - Mandarin/English*  
The consequences of a mother's decision to leave her daughter in the care of an American homestay family are unearthed when they reunite for dinner one lonely blue night.
  
- ❑ **DISASTER PANTIES** - *World Premiere*  
*Directed by Alisha Bhowmik - U.S. - English*  
Quarantining alone, anxious millennial Lacey discovers something awry with her vagina and must take her gynecologist appointment over video call.
  
- ❑ **TRANSLATION OF SILENCE (Traduction du Silence)** - *International Premiere*  
*Directed by Nate Cuboi - France, Vietnam - Vietnamese, French*  
A young Vietnamese man travels to Paris to reunite with his long-lost father, only to discover the truth behind his family's separation.
  
- ❑ **MICHELLE**  
*Directed by Kenya Gillespie - U.S. - English*  
A shy Asian American girl fights off her bullies with a little help from her idol: decorated U.S. figure skater Michelle Kwan.
  
- ❑ **FARANAK**  
*Directed by Mehrnoush Alia - Iran - Persian*  
A new driver at a ride-hailing company in Iran has hit rock bottom and accepts a ride to a dog, knowing too well that it is against the Islamic law of his country. What he does not know is that this dog is experiencing a crisis just like him.

**In a Different Light** - 106 mins

“When drinking water, always remember the source.” A pair of young siblings grapple with a family curse. A young drag performer tip toes behind his father’s traditional beliefs. A man and his son take a fateful trip to Disneyland. The water’s source looks different under new light.

❑ **EVA** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Ming Jue Hu - U.S. - English/Mandarin*

Jenny’s father is getting remarried this weekend. She has to make a decision if she wants to be friends with her new stepsister.

❑ **BIRDWATCHING** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Maryam Mir - U.S. - English/Urdu*

When a daughter discovers her divorced mother setting up an online dating profile, she is forced to witness her as a woman with desire for the first time.

❑ **MARIAM** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Reem Jubran - U.S. - English/Arabic*

Zaid, a young Arab-American amateur drag queen, has to confront his conservative father and grandfather who has Alzheimer’s about his identity on an average night that goes terribly wrong.

❑ **APART, TOGETHER**

*Directed by Olivia Hang Zhou - U.S./China - Mandarin/English*

Yiru, a Chinese teenager, travels to Los Angeles with her mom in search of her long lost sister.

❑ **THE LAST FERRY FROM GRASS ISLAND**

*Directed by Linhan Zhang - Hong Kong/U.S. - Mandarin/Cantonese*

A Hong Kong hitman retires as a fisherman on the peaceful Grass Island. One day, his Chinese apprentice shows up, tasked to kill him before the last ferry departs.

❑ **SNAKE TRAIL** (仿佛有人触碰过) - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Shicong Zhu - China - Mandarin*

Urged to complete the traditional Chinese death ritual as her mother’s only daughter but lacking the legal documentation to prove their kinship, a girl finds herself in an institutional conundrum.

❑ **MAGIC KINGDOM** (夢樂園) - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Nelson Ng Chak-Hei - Hong Kong/U.S. - Mandarin/Cantonese/English*

Kit, a middle-aged single parent, brings his son from Hong Kong to California under the pretense of visiting Disneyland.

❑ **BEYOND THE LAKE MY SISTER SLEEPS** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Mel Guo/AnQi Yu - U.S. - English*

*BEYOND THE LAKE MY SISTER SLEEPS* is tale of a young boy, his sister, and their family curse.

**Ones to Watch: Filmmakers Under 21 - 61 mins**

A collection of short films by talented filmmakers under 21.

❑ **MY PUMPKIN, MY BOO**

*Directed by Marina Yap - Canada - English*

A curious pumpkin and a shy ghost go on an adventure to find candy, only to fall in love after the events of Halloween.

❑ **THE BLACK COLLECTIVE - U.S. Premiere**

*Directed by Roxy Morris/Shiva Kansagara/Sophia Lee - U.S. - English*

Three businesspeople of color discuss the Black Lives Matter movement, supporting Black businesses, and the small shop in Encinitas, CA that showcases their products.

❑ **PLEASE LAUGH**

*Directed by Kristoffer Bradley Cruz - Canada - English*

An aspiring comedian kidnaps his friends to prove to them that he is objectively funny.

❑ **LEMONS**

*Directed by Siena Kuan - U.S. - English*

LEMONS is an one-and-half minute long short film which explores the idea of perfection and the pursuit of perfection. Of course perfection is hard to achieve and even if we cross our t's and dot our i's, sometimes it doesn't work out.

❑ **SNAIL MAIL - East Coast Premiere**

*Directed by Andrea Baek - U.S. - English*

Pairs of pen pals share their sides of the letters—what they've learned, why they write, and what makes penpalling special.

❑ **THE GULL'S SHRIEK (جینگ مرغ دریایی) - North American Premiere**

*Directed by Ava Ghahremanifar - Iran - Persian*

Susan and Raha are two senior students studying Dramatic Arts in an art school. They are both candidates for the role of Johnathan Livingston Seagull.

❑ **GERALD'S BAD JUJU - World Premiere**

*Directed by Sandeep Vadlamudi - U.S. - English*

A young man must overcome his childhood trauma in order to win over the girl of his dreams.

### **Taiwan: Lost & Found - 98 mins**

Sift through this special selection of Taiwanese shorts in which the search for human connection overcomes loss, borders and political strife. Peace lost, but hope found.

- ❑ **KUROSHIO CURRENT (黑潮)** - *East Coast Premiere*  
*Directed by Kun-Yu Lai - Taiwan/U.S. - Mandarin/Taiwanese/English*  
A Taiwanese guy goes on a road trip to avoid facing his guilt, but the memories from the past haunt him to face the mistakes he has made.
  
- ❑ **PIGLET PIGLET (美豬肉圓)** - *New York City Premiere*  
*Directed by LIN Tsung-Yen - Taiwan - Mandarin*  
The sudden pregnancy and miscarriage of a young woman results in a turbulent day of anxiety and loneliness, set in a monumental day of a country's search for hope.
  
- ❑ **HELLO FROM TAIWAN**  
*Directed by Tiffany Frances - U.S./Taiwan - Mandarin/Taiwanese/English*  
After a year of separation, a young Taiwanese American girl and her mom struggle to reconnect with her dad and two older sisters across familial and cultural divides.
  
- ❑ **THE BLACK KITE (黑風箏)** - *New York City Premiere*  
*Directed by I-hui Lee - Taiwan - Taiwanese*  
A 7-year-old girl's only wish is to fly a kite again with her father.

### **New York, I Missed You - 81 mins**

A dash of coming of age; a pinch of the foibles of pandemic dating; then, simmer with the ghosts of the past. No matter how far you've been flung in the last year, these hearty shorts will welcome you back to the eclectic melting pot we call home.

- ❑ **POSTMAN** - *East Coast Premiere*  
*Directed by Minkyu Kang - U.S. - English*  
A postman meets a dying painter while delivering mail.
  
- ❑ **SEEDS** - *North American Premiere*  
*Directed by Denise Zhou - U.S. - English/Cantonese*  
Desperate to salvage her less-than-remarkable 13th birthday, Georgia plots an escape to the crowded streets of Brooklyn with her little sister Cassie in tow.
  
- ❑ **CORONA DATE** - *North American Premiere*  
*Directed by Simeon Hu - U.S./China - Mandarin*

A sexually frustrated girl stuck in New York City during the pandemic is desperate to meet up with someone she met online, while her paranoid mother is desperate to extend her web of protection... all the way from China.

❑ **LITTLE SKY** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Jess X. Snow - Canada/U.S. - English/Cantonese*

A non-binary Chinese-American drag queen returns to their hometown to confront their estranged father about the childhood memories that continue to haunt them.

❑ **FITNESS! OR A STORY ABOUT SWEAT**

*Directed by Kana Hatakeyama - U.S. - English*

A titillating spiritual comedy about seeking your joyful, deepest nature through technology, human connection...and sweat.

❑ **TRUMPET** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Kevin Haefelin - Switzerland - English, Japanese, Spanish*

A Japanese trumpet player is on a cultural pilgrimage to discover New York City jazz and experiences a hell of a night after getting lost in Brooklyn.

**Not On Your Terms: Queer Shorts** - 96 mins

“Queer’ means anything is possible” - Apichatpong Weerasethakul. These shorts don’t play by anyone’s rules but their own.

❑ **GRADUATION (親如一家)**

*Directed by Robin Wang - U.S. - English/Mandarin*

Following a graduation celebration, four Chinese people must navigate the future of their relationships as dictated by the circumstances of life and their families.

❑ **PINK & BLUE** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Carmen LoBue - U.S. - English*

After a surprise first-time pregnancy, a trans couple of color wrestles with how the new baby will affect their relationship and how to raise their child in a binary world.

❑ **FISHBOWL** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Jacqueline Chan - U.S. - English/Mandarin*

Navigating the Chinese New Year festivities now tinged with a foreign animosity, Natalie struggles to keep the growing attraction to her childhood friend, Joanne, from the prying eyes of those she once called home.

❑ **BRIDGET** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Zon Chan/Kayue Li - Singapore - Malay*

On the night before his debut, Isa decides to open up to his parents about his long-hidden pursuit.

❑ **ANYTHING FOR YOU** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Matt Ferrucci - U.S. - English*

It wouldn't be cheating, it would be experimenting.

❑ **GOD'S DAUGHTER DANCES** (신의 딸은 춤을 춘다) - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Sungbin BYUN - South Korea - Korean*

A transgender dancer, Shin-mi, gets a call from the Military Manpower Administration to attend the Military Service Examination. Shin-mi takes her steps to the Military Manpower Administration.

**Love Stories** - 86 mins

Grab a coffee, light some candles, and get to know these romantic short films about what is and what could have been. You may have a future together even when these couples don't.

❑ **THE NEGOTIATION** (교섭) - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Robert Joe - South Korea/U.S. - Korean/English*

A couple wake from sleep and discuss their dreams, but the more they talk, the more reality starts to skew around them.

❑ **CANDLEPIN** - *New York City Premiere*

*Directed by Gautam Chopra - U.S. - English*

A high-school math teacher on a hot date runs into a group of his students.

❑ **CHECKING OUT**

*Directed by Vick Krishna/Piyali Syam - U.S. - English*

Two Indian-American group therapy members check into a hotel room to carry out a suicide pact.

❑ **GOOD NEWS** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Osric Chau - Canada - English*

Happily married without kids and with an intent to focus on his career, Ryan struggles with the news of an unplanned pregnancy and his wife Nicole's decision to keep it.

❑ **FAMILY HEIRLOOM** - *World Premiere*

*Directed by Will Pinke - U.S. - English*

Guy is finally ready to propose to his girlfriend Emily. When he visits her father Marty to ask for his blessing, Marty says yes, but only if Guy can pass a twisted test to prove his devotion. How far will Guy go for the woman he loves?

- ❑ **DELIMERENCE** - *World Premiere*  
*Directed by Stanley Wong - U.S. - English*  
 A couple meets up for Valentine's Day despite breaking up days before.
- ❑ **WHO WILL PREDICT WHO WILL MOVE YOU** - *World Premiere*  
*Directed by Livia Huang - U.S. - English*  
 Two boys caught in a rivalrous relationship spend one last night together in Brooklyn.
- ❑ **THE PERFECT POST** - *East Coast Premiere*  
*Directed by Jonathan De Guzman II - U.S. - English*  
 In an attempt to show that she is "winning" post-breakup life, Jenna and her two best friends try to create the perfect social media post.

**Open for Business** - 86 mins

The past year has made the world focus on the difficulties of everyday people getting a business up and running and doing their best to serve their local community. These films offer some insight into the day to day of this life.

- ❑ **TO LIVE HERE (sống ở đây)** - *East Coast Premiere*  
*Directed by Melanie Dang Ho - U.S. - Vietnamese/English*  
 Exploring the intimacy of the mundane, SỐNG Ở ĐÂY focuses on the lives of Vietnamese shrimpers and elderly farmers in New Orleans, understanding the reverberations of the past and present in day-to-day labor.
- ❑ **3 CENTS A KILO** - *World Premiere*  
*Directed by Shao Min Chew Chia - Singapore - English/Mandarin/Cantonese*  
 3 CENTS A KILO documents the day-to-day lives of three cardboard collectors. It takes us through their routines and ruminations, showing us how they meet unremitting hardship with grit, humour, and back-breaking hard work.
- ❑ **FUGETSU-DO**  
*Directed by Kaia Rose - U.S. - English*  
 An intimate portrait of the 117-year-old Japanese sweet shop that has become a memory bank for the Little Tokyo community.
- ❑ **PHOENIX BAKERY: SWEETS FOR THE SWEET**  
*Directed by Janet Chen - U.S. - English*  
 As Chinatown's Phoenix Bakery in Los Angeles celebrates its 80th anniversary, three generations of the Chans explore their family legacy and contemplate the future.

❑ **KOTO: THE LAST SERVICE** - *East Coast Premiere*

*Directed by Joella Cabalu - Canada - English/Japanese*

After nearly 40 years in operation, the family-run Koto Japanese restaurant is closing down in Campbell River, Canada. A meditation on how to say goodbye with grace and the legacy of investing care in relationships through sushi.

### **About the Asian American International Film Festival**

The Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF) is proudly known as "The First Home to Asian American Cinema." Organized by Asian CineVision, it's the first and longest-running festival dedicated to showcasing the moving image work by media artists of Asian descent for and about the Asian diaspora experience. The Festival takes place in New York City, the second-largest Asian-American market in the U.S. Every year, AAIFF attracts audiences from all five boroughs of New York City, the tri-state region, and around the world.

### **About Asian CineVision**

Asian CineVision (ACV) is a media arts nonprofit devoted to the development, exhibition, promotion, and preservation of Asian and Asian American experiences through storytelling. Our mission is to nurture and grow the community of makers and lovers of Asian and Asian American independent film, television, and digital.

Films submitted and screened at the festival are eligible to participate in our National Tour program, bringing Asian diaspora stories to broader audiences across North America through a rental service for cultural and educational institutions.

### **Thank You**

The 44th Asian American International Film Festival is made possible with support from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts And Sciences, Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, Citibank, AARP, Taipei Cultural Center of TECO in New York, Philippine Consulate General in New York, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, NYU Special Collections, SAG-AFTRA, CUNY Graduate Center, and the friends of ACV. We are also pleased to have AsAmNews as a Primary Media Partner this year.

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