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46th Asian American International Film Festival Announces Full Lineup



July 06, 2023, NEW YORK – The 46th Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF46), known as the “First Home of Asian American Cinema”, announces its full lineup. The Festival runs from July 26 - August 6, 2023 as a hybrid festival, both in-person and streaming online in North America.

The full lineup consists of 16 World Premieres, 21 East Coast Premieres, and 20 New York Premieres. The films represent a total of 29 countries and 27 languages. This year’s program includes 111 directors. More information on the full lineup can be found at <https://www.aaiff.org/program>.

General Screening Tickets (either in-person/online) are available at \$16/\$10. Tickets for General Admission Spotlight screenings are available now at the following prices:

- Opening Night Screening + Reception | **JAMOJAYA**, July 26 at 6:30pm ET at Museum of the Moving Image - \$80
- Closing Night Screening + Reception | **RAGING GRACE**, July 30 at 7:00pm ET at Quad Cinema - \$70

Pre-sale — up to 20% off — for Cine Passes and Gold Passes which are currently on sale at <https://www.aaiff.org/ticketing> for \$96 and \$200 respectively through July 9th. Regular prices for Cine Passes and Gold Passes are \$120 and \$250 respectively.

Other ticket deals are also available now:

- Online Festival Pass: Admission for one to all AAIFF46 online programs. \$100
- 3-Pack (in-person): A pack of 3 tickets that can be used for any in-person general screening. Does NOT include admission to spotlight screenings or receptions. \$40.
- 3-Pack (online): A pack of 3 tickets that can be used for any online screening (video on demand). \$25.
- 5-Pack (in-person): A pack of 5 tickets that can be used for any in-person general screening. Does NOT include admission to spotlight screenings or receptions. \$65.
- 5-Pack (online): A pack of 5 tickets that can be used for any online screening (video on demand). \$40.

SPOTLIGHTS

JAMOJAYA - Opening Night Presentation | East Coast Premiere

July 26 at 6:30pm ET at the Museum of the Moving Image

Directed by Justin Chon - U.S./Indonesia - English, Indonesian

A father-son relationship is put to the test when an up-and-coming rapper at the crossroads of his career decides to let go of his manager, who is also his father. This decision forces them to confront the past and figure out what they want from each other.

RAGING GRACE - Closing Night Presentation | East Coast Premiere

July 30 at 7:00pm ET at Quad Cinema

Directed by Paris Zarcilla - U.K. - English, Filipino (Tagalog)

A bold coming-of-age story where Joy, a Filipina immigrant, and her daughter, Grace, encounter a darkness that threatens all they have worked for. Deeply personal, RAGING GRACE is a nightmarish fever dream from an exciting new voice.

MUSIC NIGHT OUT! - Centerpiece Presentation | July 29 at 8:00pm ET at Hana House

Break down boundaries and bring down the house at Music Night Out! Featuring a selection of music videos and a stellar performance of H.P. Mendoza's ATTACK, DECAY, RELEASE.

- **ISLANDS**

Directed by Lili Fang - U.S. - English

An ode to queer and transgender love, ISLANDS is a dreamlike visualization of human connection and our desire for love in its many forms.

- **HEI, I'M HOME**

Directed by Lo Lam - Hong Kong - Chinese (Cantonese), English

An aspiring singer/songwriter, Hei, has to decide whether to donate part of his liver to his estranged dad.

- **SUBLIMINAL - East Coast Premiere**

Directed by Jess X. Snow - U.S. - English

In a dark bedroom, when Hollis uses breath work to soothe herself, she is transported to a desert where she encounters her wounded inner child. Over the course of a sunset, they reconcile their lost relationship.

- **THE BODY OF MY NAME (名自字体)** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by Rosie Choo Pidcock - Canada, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong - Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Cantonese), English
Five Chinese Canadians return to their elementary school to reclaim their names through dance.
- **I WISH I DIDN'T CARE (LIKE I DO)** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Katherine A. Baguio - U.S., Philippines - English
A woman questions her sanity as she comes to terms with the truth of a failed relationship.
- **SO BEAUTIFUL, SO LONELY**
Directed by Xiao Han - U.S. - English
A red-haired girl is always on the move, darting through the streets of a futuristic city in search of something unknown.
- **ATTACK, DECAY, RELEASE** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by H.P. Mendoza - U.S. - English
When Earth is ravaged by a deadly virus, the remaining survivors study the history of humanity in order to build an ark that would transport them to the moon and beyond.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

- 72 HOUR SHOOTOUT Top 10 Premiere - DiscrimiNATION: A Thousand Tiny Cuts**
World Premiere hosted by the Asian American Film Lab - U.S. - English
The 72 Hour Shootout is an annual global filmmaking competition run by the Asian American Film Lab (www.film-lab.org) to provide a platform for Asian American and other underrepresented stories and voices.
- 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.
- RETROSPECTIVES IN DIALOGUE**

"Retrospectives in Dialogue" is a programming bloc that aims to bring filmmakers across generations in conversation with one another by pairing restorations of seminal, older films with contemporary films that explore similar themes. This year's themes revolve around: the relationship between filmmaking and activism and the impact of urban development and gentrification on Asian communities. In addition to the program, there will be an online panel discussion with the filmmakers moderated by Abby Sun, Director of Artist Programs and Editor of Documentary Magazine at IDA.

- **The Fall of the I-Hotel - East Coast Premiere**
Directed by Curtis Choy - U.S., - English, Filipino (Tagalog)
After a decade of spirited resistance to the razing of San Francisco's Manilatown, America's most dramatic affordable housing battleground ends in the August 4, 1977 brutal eviction of the elderly tenants of the International Hotel.
- **Hito Hata: Raise the Banner - East Coast Premiere**
Directed by Robert A. Nakamura, Duane Kubo - U.S., Japan - English, Japanese
HITO HATA: RAISE THE BANNER draws upon the realities of Little Tokyo redevelopment struggles throughout the 1970s and the displacement of longtime Japanese American residents as gentrification set in.
- **Big Fight in Little Chinatown**
Directed by Karen Cho - Canada - English, Chinese (Mandarin), French
BIG FIGHT IN LITTLE CHINATOWN documents the collective fight to save Chinatowns across North America.

THINK! CHINATOWN SHORTS - 26 mins

- **Baihuayou**
U.S. - Chinese (Mandarin)
Part of Think!Chinatown's *Everyday Chinatown* series, BAIHUAYOU explains the expansive medicinal properties of white flower oil.
- **Medicine Pot**
U.S., China - Chinese (Cantonese)
Part of Think!Chinatown's *Everyday Chinatown* series, MEDICINE POT is an animated short paired with recorded oral history from Chinatown community members, who share memories from their childhood that involve medicine pots.
- **Art of Storytelling: Rocking the Boat featuring Yee Ling Poon**
U.S. - English
Part of Think!Chinatown's *Art of Storytelling* series, ROCKING THE BOAT focuses on the pioneering advocate Yee Ling Poon, following her time with Asian Americans for Equality (AAFE) and the Basement Workshop. Animated illustrations by Sophia Deng.

- **She Says**

U.S., China - English, Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Cantonese)

SHE SAYS is a dance film featuring the work of dancer and choreographer, Mei-Yin Ng. The stories of two women in two different time periods of Chinatown come to life through this film.

- **Interactive Media Gallery**

The projects at the third annual Interactive Media Gallery and first ever in-person exhibit, reflect the Asian American diasporic experience as essentially defined by these traits of liminality, disappearance, and becoming, embodied by the loss of original culture both their material presences, as well as in how they are embodied and shaped by distance from elders and ancestors. The experience is imagined as generative, taking the lost elements of an identity not as absolute, but as a making-way for new practices, cultural worlds, and essentially diasporic and transnational Asian American narratives.

NARRATIVE FEATURES

- **AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

Directed by Makbul Mubarak - Indonesia, France, Singapore, Poland, Philippines, Germany, Qatar - Indonesian

Young housekeeper Rakib forms a bond with retired general turned mayoral candidate, which kicks off an escalating chain of violence.

- **EGGHEAD & TWINKIE - New York Premiere**

Directed by Sarah Kambe Holland - U.S. - English

After coming out to her conservative parents, seventeen-year-old Twinkie takes off on a roadtrip to meet her online crush with the help of her nerdy best friend, Egghead.

- **SAMSON - World Premiere**

Directed by Ruth Du - U.S. - English

A recently broken up couple must find a way to work together when they are kidnapped by two masked men.

- **THE ACCIDENTAL GETAWAY DRIVER - New York Premiere**

Directed by Sing J. Lee - U.S. - English, Vietnamese

During a routine pickup, an elderly Vietnamese cab driver is taken hostage at gunpoint by three recently escaped Orange County convicts.

- **THE HARVEST - New York Premiere**

Directed by Caylee So - U.S. - English, Hmong

As cultural traditions are becoming a burden of the past, an estranged son returns home to his ailing and traditional Hmong father, only to set off a chain of events that will affect his entire family.

THE LONELY SPIRITS VARIETY HOUR - *North American Premiere*

Directed by Platon Theodoris - Australia - English

When verbose radio host Neville Umbrellaman lands in hospital, a group of unexpected performers crash his show, THE LONELY SPIRITS VARIETY HOUR.

*Preceded by the following short:

DEATH & RAMEN

Directed by Tiger Ji - U.S. - English, Korean

A ramen chef spends his final night alive hanging out with the Grim Reaper.

THIS TIME - *East Coast Premiere*

Directed by Sebastien Tobler - U.S. - English

Long lost high school sweethearts, Laela and Colin, unexpectedly reunite in Los Angeles 23 years after being separated during the 1998 Jakarta riots. They must decide if they're still in love or just nostalgic for the past.

WAITING FOR THE LIGHT TO CHANGE - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Linh Tran - U.S. - English, Chinese (Mandarin)

During a week-long beachside getaway, Amy, having recently undergone dramatic weight loss, finds herself wrestling between loyalty to her best friend Kim and her attraction to Kim's new boyfriend.

YAObIKUNI'S LOVE (Yaobikuni no koi) - *North American Premiere*

Directed by Kentarou Miura - Japan - Japanese

A woman who has become immortal from eating a mermaid is known as a Yaobikuni. When Miike starts spending time with and interviewing three modern day Yaobikuni women, those involved with it gradually start to disappear.

*Preceded by the following short:

THE OLD YOUNG CROW

Directed by Liam LoPinto - U.S., Japan, Iran - Japanese, Farsi

An Iranian boy befriends an old Japanese woman at a graveyard in Tokyo.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

DEAR MOTHER I MEANT TO WRITE ABOUT DEATH (我们在黑夜的海上) - *North American Premiere*

Directed by Siyi Chen - U.S., China - Chinese (Mandarin)

When a physician becomes a cancer patient and her filmmaker daughter becomes her caregiver, the two estranged women are forced to rethink everything they know about caregiving, mortality, and love.

FINDING HER BEAT

Directed by Dawn Mikkelson, Keri Pickett - U.S., Japan - English, Japanese

A master of Japanese drumming and a Korean adoptee from Minnesota boldly convene an all-female troupe to perform Taiko, the Japanese drumming art that has been off-limits to women for centuries.

FLY IN POWER

Directed by Yin Q, Yoon Grace Ra - U.S. - English, Korean, Chinese (Mandarin)

A film exploring a community of Asian and migrant massage parlour workers, sex workers, and allies in their practices of care, survival, and community amidst the fight against the machinations of incarceration and trafficking systems.

NURSE UNSEEN - East Coast Premiere

Directed by Michele Josue - U.S., Philippines - English, Filipino (Tagalog)

NURSE UNSEEN explores the little-known history and humanity of the unsung Filipino nurses risking their lives on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic while facing a resurgence of anti-Asian hate in the streets.

ONLOOKERS

Directed by Kimi Takesue - U.S., Laos - English, Lao

A visually stunning, immersive meditation on travel and tourism in Laos, reflecting on how we all live as observers.

PHOTOGRAPHIC JUSTICE: THE CORKY LEE STORY

Directed by Jennifer Takaki - U.S. - English

Using his camera as a “weapon against injustice,” Chinese American photographer Corky Lee brought art and politics together through decades of documentation of the Asian American experience. Lee’s photographs empowered generations of AAPI pride.

STARRING JERRY AS HIMSELF

Directed by Law Chen - U.S. - English, Chinese (Mandarin)

A family documents how their immigrant father Jerry, a recently retired Florida man, was recruited by the Chinese police to be an undercover agent, only to discover a darker truth.

WISDOM GONE WILD

Directed by Rea Tajiri - U.S. - English

A vibrant tender cine-poem. A filmmaker collaborates with her nisei mother as they confront the painful curious reality of wisdom ‘gone wild’ in the shadows of dementia.

Ones to Watch: Filmmakers Under 21 - 67 mins

Celebrate our future filmmakers as they explore identity and community through diverse forms such as animation, dance, documentary and drama.

- ONE LAST TIME** - *World Premiere*
Directed by John Kim - U.S. - English
 As she gets ready to leave for college, a girl undertakes a psychedelic journey to find emotional closure with her deceased ex-boyfriend.
- I MISS YOU (보고싶어요)** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Hyungjin Lee - U.S., Korea - Korean
 This autobiographical animation traces the filmmaker's reaction to an old cassette recording of her grandfather speaking about the Korean War. Memories of war, tragedy, and heartbreak are brought to life through her grandfather's voice.
- MY SISTERS IN THE STARS: THE STORY OF LEE YONG-SOO**
Directed by Ian Kim - U.S., South Korea - English, Korean
 A short documentary about the life of Lee Yong-soo, one of eleven remaining Korean Comfort Women of the Japanese WWII era, told through multimedia stop-motion animation.
- DANCE IN CIRCLES** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Yuming Zhang - U.S., China
 Two women dance a duet piece together, using their movements to explore their collective traumatic experiences.
- THE SUN RISES DIFFERENTLY** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by Jiayang Liu - U.S. - English
 After one of them gets accepted into a top university, two brothers grapple with the prospect of change as they struggle to accept their futures.
- 18 ROSES**
Directed by Danielle Coronado, Ben See-Tho - Canada, Philippines, U.S. - English
 After a significant father figure passes away, Janelle and her estranged mother Tess must join forces and reconcile as they collaborate in planning Janelle's 18th birthday (known as her "debut").
- UPROOT** - *International Premiere*
Directed by Queena Liu - Canada - English, Chinese (Cantonese)
 UPROOT explores a family's silent struggles with mental health care in immigrant communities, 10 years after the director's father was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

Metamorphosis - 98 mins

You may never be the same after meeting this magical medley of characters undergoing transformations both literal and figurative.

WHITE NOW PLEASE

Directed by Kyle Lau - U.S. - English, Chinese (Cantonese)

Twelve-year-old Asian American Bryan Chen wants to be a hero, so he tries to become the thing he knows all heroes need to be.... White.

FISH

Directed by Jeremy Hsing - U.S. - English

Tiger never received the love he desired from his estranged late mother; however, when his mother is reincarnated as his pet goldfish, Tiger must set aside his grievances for one last chance at maternal love.

THE STRANGER - World Premiere

Directed by Tin Pak Lau - Canada - English, Chinese (Cantonese)

Jackie wakes up to find a stranger in her apartment.

A ROADSIDE BANQUET (鸡毛掸子)

Directed by Peiqi Peng - U.S., China - Chinese (Mandarin)

An eleven-year-old Chinese girl turns into a feather duster at her baby brother's first birthday party, soon after learning her parents only ever wanted a boy.

AMORGH (HEN-FATUATION) - World Premiere

Directed by Mohsen Ghezelsoflou - Iran - Farsi

The man who fell in love with his neighbor's hen.

THE 25TH FILIAL EXEMPLAR (第二十五孝)

Directed by Leon Cheo - U.S.- Chinese (Mandarin), English

A man dresses up as his late sister to help his mother deal with grief, and to prove that he's the most filial son.

Brace Yourself! - 98 mins

Stay on the edge of your seat with these thrilling short films that will take you as high as the stars and as deep as the creatures under your bed. Science-fiction, horror, dark comedy: you'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll want to watch them again.

EYECATCHER - East Coast Premiere

Directed by Jun Shimizu - U.S., Korea - English, Korean, Spanish

In the heart of Koreatown, Los Angeles, a young woman must protect her ailing father from a sinister entity.

WAIPO (外婆) - World Premiere

Directed by Stephen Law - U.S. - Chinese (Mandarin), English

When American-born Chinese student Kelly visits her mother-in-law living alone in upstate New York, she begins to suspect ill intentions from her fiancé's family.

- HOUSE RULES** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by Aimee Pham, Kai Sampadian - U.S. - English, Vietnamese
 An Asian American teenage girl, dying to lose her virginity, breaks some house rules (among other things) in order to get what she wants.

- ZENAIDA** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by San-San Onglatco - U.S. - Filipino (Tagalog), Spanish, Arabic
 Complications arise when an undocumented Filipino-Muslim caregiver, who works for an aging diva suffering from dementia, secretly borrows her glamorous outfits to add pizzazz to his new drag act.

- HALMONI'S POT (GRANDMA'S POT)** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by A. Lauren Lee - U.S. - English, Korean
 A dutiful, loving halmoni reluctantly agrees to buy pot for her grandson. But pay full price? Never!

- AUTOPILOT** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Jennifer Zhang - U.S. - English
 A lone pilot on a homebound space vessel finds herself trapped in a waking nightmare when her holographic "virtual companion" begins to defy his own programming.

Fire & Water: Elemental Shorts - 88 mins

Quench your thirst for exciting stories with these shorts that bring the heat.

- SKIN CAN BREATHE**
Directed by Chheangkea - U.S. - English, Khmer
 While living in America, a Cambodian teenager named Soda finds home inside the water of his high school pool.

- INHERITANCE**
Directed by Erin Lau - U.S. - English
 A struggling nature photographer is forced to confront the pain his family has carried for generations.

- HONOLULU** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Maya Tanaka - U.S. - English, Japanese
 Yuki, a young girl with a vivid fantasy life, complicates her already morose beach vacation with her father and grandmother.

- THE OCEAN DUCK**
Directed by Huda Razzak, My Anh Ngo - U.S. - English

A woman visits her ailing grandmother in a hospital during a flood, bringing back fond memories of the past – spilling over into fantastical visions in the present – as an ancient tale comes to life.

ROOTED (防己) - *North American Premiere*

Directed by Wu Yi-Wei - Taiwan - Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Min Nan)

After nearly drowning, a teenager finds he cannot hide his homosexual desires any longer.

THE ROARING OF THE CARABAO - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Angeline Meitzler - U.S., Philippines - English, Filipino (Tagalog)

Born in the United States, a daughter visits the Philippines, her mother's homeland. On the night of her arrival, a volcano erupts.

New York Rhapsodies - 87 mins

The rumbling of a passing F train. The chatter and footsteps along Canal Street. The sizzle when oil hits the wok. The music of the city rings through these eclectic short films about our city.

BAYARD STREET

Directed by Cindy Chu - U.S. - Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Cantonese)

In 1980s Chinatown, NYC, two Chinese restaurant workers find love while facing hardships chasing their American dreams.

GOODBYE, SAMMY - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Eric Yang - U.S. - English

A phone call from an ex-girlfriend forces a woman to re-evaluate her journey towards moving on, as she grapples with the complexities of love and closure.

THE 44TH CHAMBER OF SHAOLIN (少林四十四房) - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Jon Truei - U.S. - English, Chinese (Mandarin)

A mischievous, prank-loving kung fu master creates fake training for a gullible teenager who still believes fantastical myths about martial arts.

HEPTAPUS

Directed by Cooper Troxell - U.S. - English, Russian

After an octopus attacks his dog, an amateur boxer wobbles on his feet.

SUCKER - *World Premiere*

Directed by Deni Cheng - U.S. - English

After Andy loses his job at a local restaurant, he must find a way to take care of his little brother, Tom Tom.

A LOVE SUPREME

Directed by Noah Namgoong - U.S., South Korea - English, Korean
A green-haired Korean punk tries to quiet the love from the window across.

JARED AND DAUGHTER

Directed by Darin Quan - U.S. - English

When an aging table wiper faces a grim diagnosis, his underappreciated daughter must step forward to save the family business.

Decisions To Leave - 81 mins

Decisions, decisions, decisions. One decision that won't be hard is selecting this block of shorts about characters pulled in different directions and on the brink of life-altering choices.

RED BALLOON (红色气球) - East Coast Premiere

Directed by Jiaxun Gao - U.S., China - English, Chinese (Mandarin)

Julie, a middle-aged housewife, goes to an abortion center because of her husband's demand. After struggling for a long time, she makes an unexpected decision at the end of the day.

THE COUSIN - World Premiere

Directed by Amitabh Joshi - Nepal - Nepali, English

In the heat of an argument over Bagel Bites, Arjun threatens to report his undocumented cousin to Homeland Security.

HALF-METER (半米) - East Coast Premiere

Directed by Zebang Yang - China - Chinese (Hokkien), Chinese (Mandarin)

Guo and Pao are childhood friends who grew up together. However, as they grow older and build new houses a mere half-meter apart, conflict arises between them and almost breaks their friendship....

SILK AND RUSHES (絹と藷草) - North American Premiere

Directed by Ryushi Lindsay - Japan - Japanese

An innkeeper must convince an unwelcome guest to leave, while fighting her growing attraction towards him.

THE MESS WE'RE IN - New York Premiere

Directed by Jamie Lam - Canada - English, Chinese (Cantonese)

Still living in the hoarder's house she grew up in, young adult Dara contemplates moving forward in life.

OH-CHA - New York Premiere

Directed by Lilan Bowden - U.S. - English

When a man-child refuses to get over his breakup, his two best friends try to cheer him up by taking him on a five-round drinking adventure around Koreatown.

This Must Be The Place - 95 mins

These contemplative short films yearn for and examine what it means to belong.

- TUO TUO (陀陀)** - U.S. Premiere
Directed by An Chu - Taiwan - Chinese (Mandarin), Taiwanese
During his weekend leave from the military, Hai goes home to help out at the family deer farm. The humid air, the smell of grass, and blood mix with his memories. The deer that once cured Hai's childhood illness is sent away.
- HERE, HOPEFULLY** - New York Premiere
Directed by Hao Zhou - U.S. - Chinese (Hubei), English
Zee, a non-binary aspiring nurse from China, strives to build a life in rural Iowa, U.S.A.
- MOTHERLAND**
Directed by Christina Yoon - U.S., South Korea - English, Korean
Leah, a Korean adoptee raised in America, returns to Korea to search for her birth mother. She remains relentless on her solo journey, driven by her longing to discover the truth of her origins.
- BALIKBAYAN**
Directed by Rebecca Rajadnya - U.S., Philippines - English, Filipino (Tagalog)
A Filipina immigrant grapples with the physical distance from the family she left behind and the cultural disconnect from her daughters in the United States.
- WHERE NO ONE LIVES** - New York Premiere
Directed by Li Anne Liew - U.S. - English, Chinese (Mandarin)
One night, three lonely next-door neighbors find themselves in search of connection, forgiveness, and company in an old apartment building.
- TUĪ NÁ (推拿)** - North American Premiere
Directed by William Duan - Australia - English, Chinese (Mandarin)
A teenage boy struggles to reconcile his burgeoning queer identity with his filial duties and expectations from his Chinese immigrant mother.

The Kids Are Alright - 94 mins

Spanning decades, this peek at the lives of children fills us with hope, nostalgia and regard for the struggle of growing up.

- YOUNG PEOPLE, OLD PEOPLE & NOTHING IN BETWEEN (เยาวชนกับคนเฒ่า)** - New York Premiere
Directed by Parida Tantiwasadakran - Thailand, U.S. - Thai
7-year-old Juice has one mission this year: to help Grandma Lovely retain as many memories as possible in order to halt the onset of her early dementia.

- CHAMPION (챔피언)** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by Kim J.Y. Han - U.S., South Korea - Korean, English
 After moving to California without her father, a nine-year-old Korean girl seeks to rebuild a sense of community and mend her broken heart.

- LUKE AND EMMA AND A GAS STATION ON FRANKLIN AVENUE**
Directed by Levi Wilson - U.S., Thailand - English, Thai
 A mundane trip to a gas station turns into an unexpected lesson for a young mixed-race boy growing up in a small town in the 80s.

- TRUMPERS???** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Han Tang - U.S. - Chinese (Mandarin), English
 Amidst the rise of anti-Asian hate, a six-year-old Chinese American girl comes up with a creative solution to fix a mishap and celebrate her mom's birthday.

- PLAYING HOUSE (소꿉놀이)** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Eunjin Lee - South Korea - Korean
 Seven-year-old Shio desires only the love of her mother, but is cast aside to spend her days alone. Shio ventures outside one day, and something unusual happens that breaks down her world.

- EID MUBARAK** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Mahnoor Euceph - Pakistan - Urdu
 A privileged six-year-old Pakistani girl embarks on a mission to save her beloved pet pgoat from being eaten on the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Azha, only to learn the meaning of sacrifice.

Forward Momentum: Documentary Shorts - 99 mins

Run with the horses. Take to the street. Pedal to the metal. Start a revolution. But never forget your past in these documentary selections.

- SHE MARCHES IN CHINATOWN** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Della Chen - U.S., China, Spain, Philippines - English
 The Seattle Chinese Community Girls Drill team is the only one of its kind and is celebrating 70 years of Asian American Women empowerment.

- WHITE GRASS** - *New York Premiere*
Directed by Justin Kim WooSök - Mongolia - Mongolian
 In Mongolia, Munkhjargal dreams of following in her father's footsteps as a horse trainer. Unfortunately, her entire way of life is threatened by the increasingly common phenomenon of extreme and unrelenting cold known as dzuds.

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN (A HUI HOU) - *East Coast Premiere*

Directed by Kainoa Presbitero - U.S. - English

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN follows Joyce Kobayakawa as she recalls the life and death of her true love, Stanley, who died 50 years ago. Her health is deteriorating, but she can't part ways with the home that she built together with Stanley.

RIDING HAN (Riding 汗) - *East Coast Premiere*

Directed by Pak (박) Eugene - U.S., South Korea - English, Korean

Three Korean Americans bike across the U.S. while exploring their identities. Han (汗) is an inherent and complex part of being Korean and manifests itself through adversity with emotion, expression, and creation.

BLOOD OF IRAN (خون ایران) - *International Premiere*

Directed by Alicia Afshar - U.S., Iran - English, Farsi

BLOOD OF IRAN is a poetic yet political film that uplifts the women behind the Iranian Revolution and gives hope for a future free from oppression.

Tapestries: Animation Shorts - 74 mins

This rich tapestry is woven from personal histories and folk tales and spans multiple forms such as collage, video essay, as well as 3D and 2D animation.

HANDWRITTEN

Directed by Jaime Sunwoo - U.S. - English

Artist Jaime Sunwoo examines her shapeshifting penmanship and wonders why she's never had a consistent style. Through paper puppetry, she reflects on the significance of handwriting throughout history and its relevance in our computerized world.

THE ABSENCE OF MEMORY

Directed by Brian Yulo Ng - Singapore - English

THE ABSENCE OF MEMORY is an animated documentary on the collective experience of multiple individuals and how they survived an atmosphere designed to suppress their individuality.

THE COCOON

Directed by David Shen Miller - U.S., Uruguay, Mexico

Trapped inside a room covered with muddy footprints, a man will stop at nothing to mop the floor perfectly clean. But with every step he takes to wipe away a footprint, he leaves a new one behind him.

BREATHE - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Loi Huynh - U.S., Vietnam - English

When a loud and energetic boy spends a day at a quiet Buddhist temple, he crosses paths with a fiery friend that leads him on a spiritual adventure.

- MY MOTHER'S TONGUE (LA LANGUE DE MA MÈRE)** - *North American Premiere*
Directed by Jean Baptiste Phou - Cambodia - French
 MY MOTHER'S TONGUE explores the delicate relationship between a mother and son who don't speak the same language.
- FORGET ME - A GOODBYE LETTER (永訣書)** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Ryan Shih - U.S., Taiwan - Chinese (Hokkien)
 A belated letter from 60 years ago explains a past event that was rejected by the family.

Was It All A Dream? - 76 mins

Step into another realm with these surreal shorts that shine a light on our waking world.

- Māyā** - *International Premiere*
Directed by Samyuktha Movva - Canada - Telugu, English
 While preparing to celebrate her wedding anniversary, a woman is forced to reconcile with her long-held identity as a "wife."
- SHAMAN (BARQSY)** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Dana Mussa, Alexander Murphy - Kazakhstan - English
 A young woman with a passion for dance and spirituality crosses paths with an old shaman who passes on her knowledge through a shamanic initiation rite.
- GOODBYE, HELLO** - *World Premiere*
Directed by Omkar Phatak - India - English
 On a quiet, little terrace, a ghost must find what he is looking for before the night ends. Things take a dramatic turn when a human comes to the terrace looking for something.
- JOUISSANCE** - *East Coast Premiere*
Directed by Sadeq Es-haqi - Iran - Persian
 The life of a gay couple is interrupted by the ghost of an ex-boyfriend.
- UP ALL NIGHT (밤새도록, UNE NUIT SANS FIN)** - *U.S. Premiere*
Directed by Andrew The-Anh Luk - Canada, U.S. - English, French, Korean
 A Korean artist in Montreal re-questions his ambitions as he faces his responsibilities and failures.

Love Is... - 81 mins

Open your heart to these films which celebrate the many different ways we love and the people who love us.

- ETERNAL SUNDAY (周日永恒)** - *North American Premiere*
Directed by Rhyme Lu - China - Chinese (Mandarin)

When quarantine and social distancing become the norm in post-pandemic times, people interact in a virtual reality called SUNDAY. When the government terminates SUNDAY due to health concerns, a SUNDAY couple's relationship is at the verge of breaking down.

BREAKDOWN - *East Coast Premiere*

Directed by Hon Hoang - U.S. - English

With a broken car, a couple finds themselves lost.

ALL I EVER WANTED

Directed by Erin Lau - U.S., Vietnam - English, Vietnamese

Rom-com obsessed teen Christine has always longed for the picture-perfect romance...but she's soon confronted with the fact that her ideal Prince Charming might actually be a Princess Charming instead.

KNOW YOU TWICE - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Andrew Chan Gladstone - U.S. - English

When a policy shift puts NYC-raised Paloma at risk of deportation, she pushes her girlfriend Claire for help, revealing expectations that threaten to unravel their future together.

MYSORE MAGIC

Directed by Abijeet Achar - India, Mauritius - English, Kannada, Hindi, French

A true story of an unlikely romance at a 1982 disco competition in Mysore, India.

THE ALBATROSS CAFE - *World Premiere*

Directed by Amrita Vijayaraghavan, Andrew Stephens - U.S. - English

When a perpetually-single woman's best 'Judy' asks for his spare apartment keys back, she is sent on a whirlwind emotional journey to the liminal land of the non-partnered, aging woman.

BAD ASIAN - *New York Premiere*

Directed by Kim Marcelino - U.S. - English

An Asian American woman's internalized racism stands between her and a steamy one-night stand.

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 2023 ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MARY LI HSU CHARITABLE TRUST, MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, TAMIMENT LIBRARY ROBERT F. WAGNER LABOR ARCHIVE, NYU SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, ASIAN/PACIFIC/AMERICAN INSTITUTE AT NYU, SAG-AFTRA, CUNY AAARI, CUNY GRADUATE CENTER, AND THE MANY FRIENDS OF ACV.

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