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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Six Asian American Documentaries Premiere on PBS & World Channel May 2018, Presented by the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM)

- 5/6 - Resistance at Tule Lake (World Channel, co-presented by CAAM)*
- 5/8 - Finding Kukan (World Channel/America Reframed, co-presented by CAAM)*
- 5/15 - Random Acts of Legacy (World Channel/America Reframed, co-presented by CAAM)*
- 5/22 - Who is Arthur Chu? (World Channel/America Reframed, co-presented by CAAM)*
- 5/28 - Pacific Gateway: Angel Island VR, American Experience, co-produced by CAAM)*
- 5/29 - The Chinese Exclusion Act (American Experience, co-produced by CAAM)*

San Francisco, April 20, 2018 – In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the Center for Asian American Media is proud to present six documentaries on public television. Three of these films, FINDING KUKAN, RANDOM ACTS OF LEGACY and WHO IS ARTHUR CHU? will premiere on season 6 of America ReFramed, an award-winning documentary series on public television. RESISTANCE AT TULE LAKE and THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT will screen on PBS and World Channel. The CAAM-produced PACIFIC GATEWAY: ANGEL ISLAND VR will air digitally on PBS's American Experience.

Join us in watching these enlightening and inspiring films that spotlight the resilience of Asian Americans and the role of Asian Americans in shaping U.S. history. Share your thoughts using #MyAPALife. All of the films will stream online for a limited time following their respective premiere date.

The films are supported or co-produced by CAAM, with funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

RESISTANCE AT TULE LAKE (dir. Konrad Aderer, funded and co-presented by CAAM)
Broadcast - May 6, World Channel

A minority group is unjustly persecuted amidst racially-charged scapegoating by politicians. That's the eerily relevant backdrop for RESISTANCE AT TULE LAKE, Konrad Aderer's examination of the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, which couldn't come at a more important moment. Aderer, who documented the arrest and detainment of a Palestinian activist in ENEMY ALIEN (2011), focuses on Tule Lake, the notorious camp, where Japanese Americans who were labeled "disloyal" were held. Aderer's emotional, wrenching interviews with the "internees" – some of whom were deported to Japan because of answers to "loyalty" questionnaires - make clear the consequences of race, wartime hysteria and political expediency. RESISTANCE AT TULE LAKE dispels the myth of a passive Japanese American population in the camps, while also showing the torture and other abuse those resisting their treatment faced. The wartime footage cuts to a contemporary Tule Lake pilgrimage by the descendants of internees, an effort, like the film, to not forget and urge others to defend those today who may suffer the same fate.

FINDING KUKAN (dir. Robin Lung, funded and co-presented by CAAM)

Broadcast - May 8, World Channel

Streaming 5/9/2018 - 6/7/2018

Filmmaker Robin Lung documents her 7-year journey investigating the work and legacy of Chinese American visionary Li Ling-Ai, the uncredited producer of KUKAN. A landmark film, Kukan showcased China's resistance to Japanese occupation during World War II, and was one of the first American feature documentary films to receive an Academy® Award in 1942.

Lung discovers a badly damaged film print of Kukan, which had been lost for decades, and pieces together the inspirational tale of the two renegades behind its making – Li Ling-Ai and Rey Scott. Relentless, Ling-Ai was determined to shift America's perception of the Chinese plight by telling the story from a new point-of-view and not only hired Scott but sponsored the rare enterprise. FINDING KUKAN uses vintage and unseen archival footage to create an unforgettable portrait of a filmmaking pioneer, and shed a light on the longstanding underrepresentation of women and people of color in the movie-making business.

RANDOM ACTS OF LEGACY (dir. Ali Kazimi, funded and co-presented by CAAM)

Broadcast - May 15, World Channel

Streaming 5/16/2018 - 5/14/2021

Today, we have the luxury of being able to document our lives in an instant, but during the Great Depression and into the 1950s, this luxury was almost nonexistent. Filmmaker and director Ali Kazimi knew he stumbled upon a rare artifact when he found himself in an online bidding war for film footage from 1936 to 1951. The old home movies had a name attached to it, Silas Fung, and offered a little-seen glimpse into how a Chinese family embraced American customs. Fung was a first-generation Chinese American commercial artist who had a passion for filming home movies. Restoring Fung's films took years, but Kazimi succeeded in keeping this family's archive intact. What he found was a look at everyday life, from ice cream cakes on birthdays, to an obsession with the 1933 Chicago World's Fair.

WHO IS ARTHUR CHU? (dirs. Yu Gu and Scott Drucker, funded and co-presented by CAAM)

Broadcast - May 22, World Channel

Streaming 5/23/2018 - 6/21/2018

WHO IS ARTHUR CHU? follows 11-time Jeopardy! winner Arthur Chu, who won almost \$300,000 by using an unconventional strategy on the game show. The national attention led this insurance analyst to amass tens of thousands of fans and haters on Twitter. Arthur plans to put his 15 minutes of TV fame to good use, and launches a career as both a speaker and writer. By dissecting topics such as racism and sexism particularly in “nerd culture,” his posture shatters the “model” Asian American stereotype. A sheltered childhood and fraught relationship with his father led Arthur to wish he could “erase his identity” and be seen solely as an American—one who is valued for his ideas and ideals. Determined to find his purpose, Arthur believes that he has the right to be different, break the rules and have a say. He harnesses his passion and newfound notoriety to face-off with social media and gaming bullies. These struggles burden Chu and his wife, Eliza, both of whom are trying to build careers while supporting one another’s passions. The film tracks the ups-and-downs of Arthur’s life as a quasi-celebrity and observes the influence of TV and social media on individuals, the new American Dream, and the significance of going viral in this day and age.

PACIFIC GATEWAY: ANGEL ISLAND VR (dir. Felicia Lowe, co-produced by CAAM)

Broadcast - May 28, on American Experience’s FB live stream

Journey across the bay to Angel Island in this fully immersive virtual reality experience, exploring the poignant stories carved into the walls of the “Ellis Island of the West.” In her first foray into this new digital medium, veteran filmmaker Felicia Lowe uses the historic Angel Island Immigration Station to shine light on a dark part of America’s past.

Exteriors of the island and interiors of the station serve as the backdrop to the virtually unknown story of immigrants detained and interrogated after passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which banned laborers from entering the United States for more than 80 years before finally being dismantled with the signing of the Immigration Act of 1965. Those held on the island for long periods carved poems into the walls, forever etching their voices at what is now national historic landmark. Lowe weaves beautiful animations created by animator Ruth Lingford with historical images and 360-degree footage, shot by cinematographer Justin Chin, of Angel Island to bring the poems and memories of those detained to life.

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT (dirs. Li-Shin Yu and Ric Burns of Steeplechase Films, co-produced by CAAM)

Broadcast - May 29, a Special Presentation of American Experience

On May 6th, 1882 - on the eve of the greatest wave of immigration in American history - President Chester A. Arthur signed into law a unique piece of federal legislation. Called the Chinese Exclusion Act, it singled out by name and race a single nationality for special treatment: making it illegal for Chinese laborers to enter America on pain of imprisonment and for Chinese nationals ever to become citizens of the United States.

THE CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT, a two-hour film for national broadcast on PBS, will explore in riveting detail this little known, yet deeply resonant and revealing episode in American history – one that sheds enormous light on key aspects of the history of American civil liberties, immigration, and culture – during one of the most formative periods of U.S. history.

A deeply American story – about immigration and national identity, civil rights and human justice; about how we define who can be an American, and what being an American means – the film examines the economic, cultural, social, legal, racial and political dimensions of the law; the forces and events that gave rise to it; and the effect it has had, and continues to have, on American culture and identity. Directed by Ric Burns and Li-Shin Yu. Narrated by Hoon Lee and featuring the voices of Russell Wong, Fenton Lee, Yuet-Fung Ho and Josh Hamilton.

Screeners and interviews with filmmakers and subjects are available upon request.

ABOUT CAAM

CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) is a nonprofit 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.

About WORLD Channel

The WORLD Channel delivers the best of public television's nonfiction, news and documentary programming. The channel features original content by and about diverse communities to U.S. audiences through local public television stations and streaming online at worldchannel.org. WORLD reached 33.3 million unique viewers 18+ last year (52% adults 18-49) and over-indexes in key diversity demographics. WORLD is programmed by WGBH/Boston, in partnership with American Public Television and WNET/New York, and in association with PBS and National Educational Telecommunications Association. Major Funding for the WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. For more information about The WORLD Channel, visit www.worldchannel.org

About America ReFramed

AMERICA REFRAMED is a co-production of the WORLD Channel and American Documentary, Inc. AMERICA REFRAMED curates a diverse selection of films highlighting innovative and artistic approaches to storytelling from emerging and veteran filmmakers alike. Viewers will be immersed in personal stories from the streets of towns big and small to the exurbs and country roads that span the spectrum of American life. The documentaries invite audiences to reflect on topics as varied as culture, health care, politics, gun violence, religion and more. An award-winning documentary series, AMERICA REFRAMED is the recipient of an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for broadcast journalism. The series has earned several Christopher, GRACIE, Telly and Cine Golden Eagle Awards, as well as nominations for an EMMY, Independent Documentary Association, and Imagen Award.

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