



The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) Unveils a Robust Slate of Programming for CAAMFest 2021

SAN FRANCISCO, April 20, 2021 - [The Center for Asian American Media](#) (CAAM) is excited to announce its program for **CAAMFest 2021**. A celebration of the richness and diversity of the Asian and Asian American experience, the festival will take place from **May 13-23**, with an opening weekend featuring drive-in screenings at FORT MASON FLIX. The 11 day festival also incorporates live virtual film screenings and on-demand screenings.

After producing two virtual film festivals last year, **CAAM** continues this trajectory of storytelling and conversation with a schedule of over 50 events, including screenings, panels, and live performances. **CAAMFest 2021** has offerings for everyone from media makers to film lovers to those interested in Asian and Asian American representation, conveyed through unique voices highlighting the intersections of community - an apt marking of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month during this year when Asian Americans have been targeted for widespread violence.

"The current COVID-19 pandemic is a crisis of unprecedented scope, one that presents unique challenges to the Asian American community," says Stephen Gong, executive director of CAAM. "Now, more than ever, the power of storytelling is vital to the health and happiness of our diverse communities."

"The world may have paused due to the pandemic, but our filmmakers didn't," says Masashi Niwano, festival and exhibitions director at CAAM. "The vibrancy and energy of this year's programming is unmatched with our filmmakers bravely telling their unique and vital stories."

Key programming includes (all films are on-demand, unless otherwise noted):

OPENING NIGHT

TRY HARDER!, directed by Debbie Lum

Thursday, May 13, 6:30 p.m. and 9:15 p.m. at FORT MASON FLIX

At San Francisco's Lowell High School—where cool kids are nerds, nearly everyone has an amazing talent, and the majority of the student body is Asian American—the things that usually make a person stand out can feel not good enough, even commonplace.

CLOSING NIGHT

AMERICANISH, directed by Iman Zawahry

Sunday, May 23, 5:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

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.

CENTERPIECE PRESENTATION, DOCUMENTARY

MANZANAR, DIVERTED: WHEN WATER BECOMES DUST, directed by Ann Kaneko

Sunday, May 16, 6:00pm on CAAMFest.com

In this poetic documentary, we meet an intergenerational community of women as they fight for their land and their rights. They know that when they can align their diverse groups together, including Native Americans, Japanese Americans and environmentalists, their voice is amplified.

SPOTLIGHT: EVAN JACKSON LEONG

CENTERPIECE PRESENTATION, NARRATIVE

SNAKEHEAD, directed by Evan Jackson Leong

Saturday, May 22, 7:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

In this historical piece, we are transported to New York's Chinatown where Sister Tse (Shuya Chang) arrives by a snakehead, a human smuggler. There she fights to stay alive and in time she goes from surviving to thriving. Her morals are pushed to the limit and it's up to her where her story goes.

LINSANITY, directed by Evan Jackson Leong

One of the most popular CAAMFest Opening Nights of all time, LINSANITY is the eye-opening and award-winning documentary about the rise of legendary basketball player, Jeremy Lin. The film traces Lin's life from Palo Alto to his professional start with the NBA's New York Knicks.

SPOTLIGHT: DANTE BASCO

THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS, directed by Dante Basco

Friday, May 14, 6:30 p.m. at FORT MASON FLIX

Spotlight Honoree Dante Basco is making his directorial debut with THE FABULOUS FILIPINO BROTHERS. With his family in real-life playing his family on screen, the definition of "family affair" is taken to the next level with the beautiful chaos that plays out throughout the film. In the lead-up to a family wedding, four brothers experience shenanigans of a wide range, as captured in a series of vignettes.

THE DEBUT, directed by Gene Cajayon

Dante Basco (CAAMFest 2021 Spotlight Honoree) shines as Ben Mercado. With a wonderful ensemble cast and masterful direction by filmmaker Gene Cajayon, this enchanting film continues to be relevant and a pure joy to watch.

SPOTLIGHT: MARGARET CHO

IN CONVERSATION WITH MARGARET CHO AND PREMIERE OF KOREATOWN GHOST STORY

Sunday, May 16, 4:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

A live conversation with Spotlight Honoree Margaret Cho who stars and produced KOREATOWN GHOST STORY. Filmmaker duo Minsun Park and Teddy Tenenbaum will also participate.

HONG KONG CINEMA SHOWCASE

THE WAY WE KEEP DANCING, directed by Adam Wong

Saturday, May 15, 9:15 p.m. at FORT MASON FLIX

As neighborhoods change in the Kowloon Industrial District in Hong Kong, a small community of artists find themselves struggling with how to preserve their culture and way of life. The artists plan a publicity stunt to alert people of their current situation, but is it too late to combat the wave of gentrification that threatens their existence?

HAPPY TOGETHER, directed by Wong Kar-Wai

Saturday, May 15, 6:30 p.m. at FORT MASON FLIX

In this seminal and gorgeous film, Ho Po-Wing (Leslie Cheung) and Lai Yiu-Fai (Tony Leung) are lovers who fight to keep their relationship together. As their lives get more complicated, their love for each other is challenged. The emotional performances by Cheung and Leung continue to be legendary for their intensity, complexity, and humanity.

BETTER DAYS, directed by Derek Tsang

The film explores a high school in Hong Kong and a trouble incident that occurs. As the police investigate, we learn more what happens through a fascinating group of characters. This includes Chen Nian (Zhou Dongyu), a young english teacher trying to educate and inspire her students and Chen Nian, who is among her best students in class, but is also being bullied at school.

I STILL REMEMBER, directed by Lik Ho

P.E. Teacher Mr. Wong inspires his students by committing to run his first 10K race. The direction by Lik Ho and cinematography by O Sing Pui shine here with a film that's wonderful to look at and a story that will bring you to your feet. Especially now during the pandemic, this film inspires people to get up and run towards your dreams.

KEEP ROLLING, directed by Man Lim-chung

In Man Lim-chung's directorial debut, we go behind the scenes with one of Hong Kong's most influential Auteurs, Ann Hui. Hui's cinematic legacy is legendary and she's one of the forerunners of the New Wave movement. This observational documentary includes some candid conversations with Hui, as she talks about her thoughts on her four decade career and her mission as a storyteller.

PACIFIC SHOWCASE

ONE VOICE, directed by Lisette Marie Flanary

Every year in Hawai'i, 2000 high school students compete in the Kamehameha Schools Song Contest where young leaders direct their peers in singing Hawaiian music in four-part harmony.

Preceded by **LET'S REMEMBER OUR ANCESTORS (TA HASSO I MANAINA)**,
directed by Neil Tinkham

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, a Chamoru cultural foundation attempts to continue its mission by having members create a new chant together, while they all remain in isolation.

FAMILY INGREDIENTS, Season 1, Episode 1 and Season 2, Episode 1, directed by Ty Sanga

Join Ed Kenney, the perfect guide, as he travels with a guest around the globe in search of who we are and where we came from through a simple recipe. With a passion for “farm to table” and locally sourced meat, fish and produce, Ed is committed to family, community and what we eat.

FOCUS ON TAIWANESE CINEMA

TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY, directed by KEFF

At a Taipei hotel with a niche market catering to people who want to end their lives discreetly, a bored front desk clerk defies advice and strikes up an unusual friendship with one of the guests. TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY is an eerie and atmospheric story that will haunt the audience, with surprising emotions.

RADIO! READY! OH!, directed by Hong Zipeng

On a serendipitous New Year's Eve, a young interviewee lands a position at a company by mistake and encounters a series of quirky events. The only person who can save this miserable situation is locked in the storage room. While a radio station is facing bankruptcy, an evil cult is out for revenge, and a gathering of crazy DJs, a new battle is about to begin.

CAAMUNITY SCREENINGS

RICOCHET, directed by Chihiro Wimbush, Jeff Adachi

Saturday, May 22, 3:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

RICOCHET is a feature length film about the tragic death of Kate Steinle. Kate was walking on Pier 14 in San Francisco with her father when a shot rang out. An undocumented immigrant, Jose Garcia Zarate, was arrested and accused of murder. Matt Gonzalez, Chief Attorney of the San Francisco Public Defender's Office, is assigned the case and develops the evidence through a fascinating analysis of video evidence, forensic science and witnesses, including Garcia-Zarate. Gonzalez is assisted by Francisco Ugarte, who heads the office's immigration unit, and the defense team.

THE DONUT KING, directed by Alice Gu

Wednesday, May 19, 4:00 p.m. on ITVS

THE DONUT KING is Ted Ngoy's rags-to-riches story of a refugee escaping Cambodia, arriving in America in 1975, and building an unlikely multimillion-dollar empire baking America's favorite pastry, the donut. Ngoy sponsored hundreds of visas for incoming refugees and helped them get on their feet teaching them the ways of the donut business. By 1979, he was living the American Dream—but a great rise often comes with a great fall.

Other programming includes:

NEW DIRECTIONS

CLOSING NIGHT PARTY: “FOLX” DANCE PARTY WITH H.P. MENDOZA

Sunday, May 23, 7:00pm on CAAMFest.com

This thrilling conclusion of CAAMFest includes the world premiere of FOLX, H.P.'s new music album featuring Lex the Lexicon and Anna Ishida (I AM A GHOST). In a time of anxiety, join us as we come together to celebrate, laugh and dance the night away.

THE GOOD, THE BAD, THE DOKKAEBI (VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE), musician Dan Lee

Wednesday, May 19, 7:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

Dokkaebi are creatures in Korean mythology that are said to bring karmic justice to all. These Korean goblins possess supernatural powers and are always watching our deeds (good and bad), choosing to reward or punish accordingly.

DOCUMENTARIES

AMY TAN: UNINTENDED MEMOIR, directed by James Redford

Saturday, May 1, 8:00 pm on CAAMFest.com

James Redford's final film, AMY TAN: UNINTENDED MEMOIR, provides a deep glimpse into Tan's life and work; from the traumas of her past, to the solace she found in her writing, the pressure that came with her success, and how she has pursued other artistic forms for the sake of appeasing no one else but herself.

BECAUSE WE ARE GIRLS, directed by Baljit Sangra

BECAUSE WE ARE GIRLS explores the impact of sexual abuse on a traditional Punjabi family and shines a light on the nuances of gendered violence and the cultural systems that reinforce and perpetuate the trauma of abuse. Through intimate interviews spliced with home videos and old Bollywood footage, Sangra paints an intimate portrait of a family on their journey toward healing.

Preceded by **HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ME, directed by Baljit Sangra**

In this emotionally compelling short, acclaimed director Baljit Sangra shines light on North American's oldest running Sikh Temple and the struggle it represents.

IN THE SAME BREATH, directed by Nanfu Wang

Thursday, May 20, 5:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

Award winning director and CAAM 2021 Mentor, Nanfu Wang is back with her new eye-opening documentary, IN THE SAME BREATH. Official selections of Sundance Film Festival and South by Southwest, Wang's riveting new documentary explores how the Chinese and American governments reacted to the pandemic.

THE RACE EPIDEMIC, directed Tony Shyu

With a politicized pandemic sweeping through the country and a former President calling it the Chinese Virus, The Race Epidemic takes a close examination of xenophobia and racism against AAPIs caused by COVID-19.

SKY BLOSSOM: DIARIES OF THE NEXT GREATEST GENERATION, directed by Richard Lui

Tuesday, May 18, 6:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

When viewers say they cried, they say it was because of the uplifting hope of the courage and beauty the students share with us. As young as eleven years old, they are taking care of parents and grandparents who are battling sickness. We call them Care Heroes. And there are five million of them in America.

WHO IS LUN*NA MENOH, directed by Jeff Mizushima

From her early career in Japan to the underground music scene in Los Angeles. From sculptural designs on fashion show runways to her fantastical work in art galleries. WHO IS LUN*NA MENOH explores Lun*na's edgy, witty and beautiful creations, showcasing her uniquely individual expressionism and interviewing her family, gallery owners, models, fans, and fellow visual artists & musicians to find out who and what Lun*na Menoh.

- **WUHAN WUHAN, directed by Yung Chang**

Award-winning filmmaker Yung Chang (Up the Yangtze) and a group of intrepid videographers were able to document life at the epicenter of COVID-19, including portraits of a couple expecting a baby, quarantined families in a byzantine shelter, dedicated medical workers, and a psychologist facing her own family crisis while helping patients with the unknown threat.

NARRATIVES

DRIVE ALL NIGHT, directed by Peter Hsieh

Dave's stagnant life as a taxi driver is restarted when he meets Cara, a pro gamer, who's being hunted by an unknown entity looking to settle a score. An attraction develops between Dave and Cara while on the run, but Dave must decide to continue on or it's game over.

INBETWEEN GIRL, directed by Mei Makino

When she's blindsided by her parents' sudden divorce, teen artist Angie Chen turns to secret hook-ups with Liam, the heartthrob of her private school. Angie's set on a journey of sexual awakenings, racial insecurities, and artistic expression as she comes to discover what she wants—and who she wants to be.

JUNHO, directed by David Boo

When a rising Korean actor finds his theater troupe is embroiled in a scandal of sex abuse and violence, he flees Seoul and moves to San Francisco. Junho tries to start a new life, one that is far from acting, but his conscience will not allow him to outrun his past.

LUMPIA WITH A VENGEANCE, directed by Patricio Ginelsa

Friday, May 14, 9:15 p.m. at FORT MASON FLIX

The Lumpia-armed avenger reappears in Fogtown (aka Daly City) and teams up with high school student Rachel to prevent a crime syndicate from selling drugs masked as food in this crowd-funded action comedy. This is the long awaited sequel LUMPIA and includes a cameo by actor Danny Trejo (star of MACHETE).

SEE YOU THEN, directed by Mari Walker

Friday, May 22, 7:00 p.m. on CAAMFest.com

Filmmaker Mari Walker masterfully directs this grounded and touching story of two individuals, who have felt pain in the past. Actors Pooya Mohseni and CAAMFest favorite Lynn Chen showcase their talent with two outstanding and brave performances.

Preceded by **F1-100, directed by Emory Chao Johnson**

Art, animation, archival footage, and digital video are interwoven in this transnational meditation through time and space of an international art student carrying a heavy burden.

WHITE ELEPHANT, directed by Andrew Chung

Pooja is an Indian Canadian teenager trapped between two worlds and doesn't have anyone she can rely on. Pooja finds escape through movies, and fantasizes about love and along comes Trevor, a White heartthrob she instantly falls for. Her infatuation doesn't last when conflicts arise from a clash of cultures. Undeterred from her pitfalls, Pooja manages to find renewed confidence through adversary.

Preceded by **MICHELLE, directed by Kenya Gillespie**

Growing up can be hard, especially a shy Asian American girl who's being picked on by high school bullies. But when things get hard, it helps to find a hero to inspire you. For this young woman, it's figure skating icon: Michelle Kwan.

SHORTS

HE(ART)BEATS

Art has the power to inspire and heal communities. In these diverse shorts, we see how art impacts the audiences and the artists themselves.

BREATHE (HINGA), directed by Sammay Dizon

MAIA CRUZ PALILEO: BECOMING THE MOON, directed by Ligaiya Romero

CITRIC ACID, directed by Elenie Chung

CHINATOWN PRETTY, directed by Roy Chan

AT THE DINNER TABLE

Food brings families and communities together. AT THE DINNER TABLE showcases the power of food in our lives, from stories about restaurants impacted by the pandemic to stories from the dinner table where loved ones connect. We highly recommend watching this program with your favorite meal ready to devour.

LET'S EAT, directed by Dixon Wong

PHOENIX BAKERY: SWEETS FOR THE SWEET, directed by Janet Chen

LUNAR: THE JEWISH-ASIAN FILM PROJECT EP. 1: THE TASTE OF CONNECTION, directed by Jared Chiang-Zeizel, Jenni Rudolph

KOTO: THE LAST SERVICE, directed by Joella Cabalu

HAVE YOU EATEN?, directed by Lina Li

DON'T SCREAM

Don't scream... or the monster lurking in the shadows might find you. In this terrifying shorts program, these frightening visions of horror will make you laugh, cry and scream. You have been warned.

KOREATOWN GHOST STORY, directed by Minsun Park, Teddy Tenenbaum

HOW TO DIE YOUNG IN MANILA, directed by Petersen Vargas

AFTERIMAGES, directed by Bryan Sih

SMILEY DEATH FACE, directed by Andrew Patrick Torrez
THE APARTMENT, directed by Hyomin

CROSSCURRENTS

Growing up can be hard and for the characters in this fabulous and energetic shorts program, the struggle is real. These shorts expose the complexities in the world that make growing up trickier than it seems.

NICEVILLE, directed by Bree Nieves
BUT YOU DON'T LOOK BLACK, directed by Danielle Ayow
PARKED IN AMERICA, directed by Luke Salin

HINDSIGHT

CAAM and Firelight Media have partnered together for the inaugural Hindsight Initiative, which provides funding and support for diverse BIPOC filmmakers from the American South. In this shorts program, you will see work-in-progress cuts of two of our selected filmmakers.

UDAAN, directed by Amman Abbasi
WE STAY IN THE HOUSE, directed by Kiyoko McCrae

LEGACY AND LINEAGE

APICC presents Legacy and Lineage, a series of short films profiling the unique journeys of 5 Asian American community artists – Sammay Dizon, Genny Lim, Isabelle Thuy Pelaud, Sami See, Francis Wong – whose works consistently place community at the center. The films explore the reasons that drive these outstanding artists and legacies that may point to the direction of the future of Asian American artists in San Francisco.

LIFE, INTERRUPTED

The pandemic has interrupted the world including the protagonists in this shorts program.

COVID AND WHO I AM NOW directed by Diana Dai
OFF DUTY directed by Aizzah Fatima
THE COMPLAINT directed by Nelson Kim
VAN SANCTUARY directed by Saleem Reshamwala
FRESH PEACHES directed by Lana Nguyen
RADICAL CARE: THE AUNTIE SEWING SQUAD directed by Valerie Soe

OUT/HERE

CAAMFest's OUT/HERE shorts program has been a staple of our festival for over a decade now. In this program, we showcase and celebrate the unique and bold stories from the LGBTQ+ diverse communities. From lesbian vampires to a gay relationship in turmoil, OUT/HERE is a real treasure of stories and storytellers.

THE DUET, directed by Shae Xu
SUMMERWINTERSUMMER, directed by Thy Tran
THE LEAF, directed by William J. Zang
LOVE X BITES, directed by M. Noe, Yupar Momo
CLUB QUARANTINE, directed by Aurora Brachman
DRIVING WITH THE TOP DOWN, directed by Edward Gunawan

PACIFIC SHOWCASE SHORTS

Through a partnership with Pacific Islanders in Communication (PIC), every festival CAAMFest celebrates new Hawaiian and Pacific Islander storytellers through our Pacific Showcase program. In this shorts program, you will find four fresh stories that range from documentaries to narratives. From folklore to the pandemic, the diversity of stories is sure to impress.

HOW TO CATCH A TAOTAOMONA, directed by Neil Tinkman

HAWAIIAN SOUL, directed by 'Āina Paikai

DISTANT LEARNING, directed by Elena GK Rapu, Sergio M. Rapu

MAHALO COVID-19, directed by Matt Yamashita

DIRECT TO TAIWAN SHORTS

This shorts program celebrates the diversity and bold storytelling one can find in contemporary Taiwanese cinema. Both films are sure to charm audiences with their masterful storytelling and knock-out performances.

SWINGIN', directed by Shang-Sing Guo

KUROSHIO CURRENT, directed by Kun-Yu Lai

SHAKE IT OFF

Due to the global pandemic, many of us have been stuck inside our homes without the ability to move our bodies. In this dynamic shorts program, watch these characters dance, run, exercise and find creative ways to stay healthy. Come for the sweat, stay for the stories.

HIGH STRUNG, directed by Melissa Kan

FITNESS! OR A STORY ABOUT SWEAT, directed by Kana Hatakeyama

MAHĀLANG, directed by Caili Quan, Elliot deBruyn, Nathaniel Brown

13 MILES FOR TOILET PAPER, directed by Chalisa Phiboolsook

TRACE, directed by Wesley Chan

YUAN YUAN AND THE HOLLOW MONSTER, directed by Catherine Chen

WE LIVE HERE

In WE LIVE HERE, these diverse filmmakers explore who lives in the United States. Often unsung and under-represented, these subjects are a key part of the American tapestry.

KEEP SARAY HOME, directed by Brian Redondo

TO LIVE HERE (sống ở đây), directed by Melanie Ho

83 AND ALONE, directed by Alina Peng, Charles Zhang

STAND UP, directed by Dasha Masaltina, Kitty Hu

SELF | PORTRAITS SHORTS

In this thought-provoking and forceful program, these characters are exploring their complex histories and envisioning their futures. WHO I AM is a study on the power of identity and how we become who we are.

IN THE SHADOWS OF THE PINE, directed by Anne Koizumi

ONCE UPON A SCREEN: EXPLOSIVE PARADOX, directed by Kevin B. Lee

SYNCHRONIZED, directed by Corinne Manabat Cueva

THE BOAT NO. 5, directed by Reyhane Kavosh

WHEELCHAIR WENDY, directed by Shaina Ghuraya

DANNY, DANNY, directed by Huan Cheng

CHÁ SĪ / CHASM, directed by Waeli Wang

TICKET INFORMATION

General admission tickets for virtual screenings and panels range from complimentary to \$15. Drive In Experience ranges from \$45-\$50. For more information, visit the box ticketing information page at: www.caamfest.com

Thanks to Our Supporters!

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About Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, San Francisco

Established in 1986, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco seeks to strengthen and broaden Hong Kong's economic relations with 19 western states. The office also dedicates efforts to foster cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and the western states. Hong Kong is a dynamic and diverse cultural metropolis. The office is proud to be a presenting sponsor of CAAMFest 2021 and the Celebration of Hong Kong Cinema at FORT MASON FLIX.

About U.S. Bank

[U.S. Bank](http://www.usbank.com) is the fifth-largest commercial bank in the United States. The Minneapolis-based bank blends its relationship teams, branches and ATM network with digital tools that allow customers to bank when, where and how they prefer. U.S. Bank is committed to serving its millions of retail, business, wealth management, payment, commercial, corporate, and investment customers across the country and around the world as a trusted and responsible financial partner.

About CAAMFest

CAAMFest, formerly the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), celebrates the world's largest showcase for new Asian American and Asian film, food, and music programs.

About CAAM

For 40 years, the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) has been dedicated to presenting stories that convey the richness and diversity of Asian American experiences to the broadest audience possible. As a nonprofit organization, CAAM funds, produces, distributes, and exhibits works in film, television, and digital media. For more information about CAAM, please visit www.CAAMedia.org.

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