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Groundbreaking Stories Told By Chinese, Hong Kong, and Taiwanese Talent Take the Stage at CAAMFest 2023

SAN FRANCISCO, April 11, 2023 - CAAMFest 2023 returns to theaters with a multitude of works with Chinese, Hong Kong, and Taiwanese talent and stories. The festival returns **May 11-21, 2023**, taking place at multiple venues across San Francisco and Oakland. All programming with Chinese, Hong Kong, and Taiwanese talent can be found below.

HONG KONG CINEMA SHOWCASE

With support from the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco (HKETO), CAAMFest 2023 presents the following romantic-dramedy from veteran filmmaker Aubrey Lam.

***Twelve Days*, directed by Aubrey Lam**

Friday, May 19, 8:30 PM | SFMOMA Phyllis Wattis Theater

A spiritual and thematic sequel for writer-director Aubrey Lam's debut feature, *TWELVE DAYS* depicts the rise and fall of Jeannie (Stephy Tang) and Simon's (Edward Ma) marriage from its blissful beginning through its bitter collapse. Over 12 increasingly heartbreaking vignettes, we see the cracks forming and the issues, both big and small, that slowly eat away at their relationship. *This screening of Twelve Days is made possible with support from the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office in San Francisco.*

Expected guest in attendance: Filmmaker Aubrey Lam

- **Director Aubrey Lam is from Hong Kong.**

FEATURE FILMS

***Accidental Getaway Driver*, directed by Sing J. Lee**

Narrative Feature - Centerpiece

Long, a Vietnamese driver in Southern California answers a late-night call for a ride. Already in his pajamas, he reluctantly accepts, picking up a man, Tâ, and his two companions. But the men, recently escaped convicts from an Orange County jail, take Long hostage at gunpoint, thrusting him into their getaway plan. When complications arise, the fugitives and their hostage hole up at a motel, and a tense waiting game unfolds. Sing J. Lee's striking visuals and mood-driven aesthetic set the tone for unnerving intensity, punctuated by moments of humor and warmth. Inspired by a true story, this is not just a crime film, but a stirring portrait of this lonely, old man and his relationship with Tâ. It's hard to overstate the captivating presence and poignance of Hiệp Trần Nghĩa in carrying the burdens of Long's past—expressed through lyrical and gently surreal interludes: war, family estrangement, and now his marked isolation, having lost every "home" he's ever known.

- **Filmmaker Sing J. Lee is of Hong Kong descent**
- **Co-writer (and SF Playwright) Christopher Chen is Chinese American**

*screener available

***Big Fight In Little Chinatown*, directed by Karen Cho**

Documentary

Saturday, May 13, 2:30 PM | Great Star Theater

Big Fight in Little Chinatown is a story of community resistance and resilience. Set against the backdrop of the COVID pandemic and an unprecedented rise in anti-Asian racism, the documentary takes us into the lives of residents, businesses, and community organizers whose neighborhoods are facing active erasure.

- **Director Karen Cho is Chinese Canadian**
- **The film references San Francisco Chinatown and the fight to lift Chinatowns across North America**

*screener available

***Jeanette Lee Vs.*, directed by Ursula Liang**

Documentary

Sunday, May 14, 12 PM | Great Star Theater

Jeanette Lee Vs. is an intimate portrait about the life and career of the world's most famous pool player, Jeanette Lee—also known as The Black Widow. Rising to fame and dominance in the 90's the Korean American phenomenon took the world by storm. Her sex appeal, fierce play, and media savvy made her a household name at a time when strong women and Asian Americans were often marginalized. Directed by Ursula Liang (*Down a Dark Stairwell*) and produced by Cora Atkinson (*Summer of Soul*), this documentary takes fans and newcomers behind the glitz and glam. It shows Jeanette unfiltered and candid about her journey through fame, trauma, family, and pool.

- **Director Ursula Liang is Chinese American.**

*screener available

***Joy Ride*, directed by Adele Lim**

Narrative Feature

Thursday, May 11, 6:30 PM | Castro Theatre

The hilarious and unapologetically explicit story of identity and self-discovery centers on four unlikely friends who embark on a once-in-a-lifetime international adventure. When Audrey's (Ashley Park)

business trip to Asia goes sideways, she enlists the aid of Lolo (Sherry Cola), her irreverent, childhood best friend who also happens to be a hot mess; Kat (Oscar-nominated Stephanie Hsu), her college friend turned Chinese soap star; and Deadeye (Sabrina Wu), Lolo's eccentric cousin. Their no-holds-barred, epic experience becomes a journey of bonding, friendship, belonging, and wild debauchery that reveals the universal truth of what it means to know and love who you are. *This screening is made possible with support from Amazon.*

- **Filmmaker Adele Lim is of Malaysian Chinese descent**
- **Actor Sherry Cola is Chinese American**
- **Oscar-nominated actor Stephanie Hsu is Chinese Taiwanese American**
- **Actor Sabrina Wu is Chinese American**
- **Parts of Joy Ride takes place in China**

***Last Summer Of Nathan Lee*, directed by Quentin Lee**

World Premiere - Narrative Feature

Sunday, May 14, 6:30 PM | Castro Theatre

18-year-old Nathan Lee finds out he has brain cancer and asks his best friend Dash to document his remaining life which he vows to live with passion.

- **Director Quentin Lee is Chinese American/Canadian**

*screener available

***Starring Jerry As Himself*, directed by Law Chen**

Docu-Narrative

Saturday, May 13, 6:00 PM | Castro Theatre

Jerry is a retired, divorced Taiwanese immigrant living in Orlando. One day, he gets an urgent call from the Chinese police. They inform him that he's the prime suspect in an international money laundering investigation where \$1.28M was illegally moved through his Florida bank account. Under threat of arrest and extradition to China, the police force Jerry to cooperate and be an undercover agent in their case. After months of keeping the investigation a secret, Jerry finally reveals everything to his family. His three sons decide to document his ordeal and discover the truth about what really happened and how it changed Jerry's life forever.

- **Director Law Chen is Chinese American**
- **Producer Jonathan Hsu is Chinese-Taiwanese**
- **Actor Jerry Hsu is Chinese-Taiwanese**

*screener available

***Unconditional*, directed by Richard Lui**

Documentary

Saturday, May 13, 2 PM | San Francisco Public Library (Main)

Unconditional is a revealing film about the arc of mental health that challenges 50+ million families each year. It is a film that shows us how mental health is not what we think it is. It is not only the polar extremes of what the media often describes it to be. It comes in hundreds of shades and in places we do not notice. Filmed over seven years, three families open up their lives as they explore what a hidden wound is and how to talk about it. *This screening of Unconditional is made possible with support from AARP.*

- **Director Richard Lui is Chinese and Polynesian American**

*screener available

SHORT FILMS

***Autopilot*, directed by Jennifer Zhang**

World Premiere - Part of the Shorts Program: REALITY BITES

Thursday, May 18, 8:30 PM | Roxie Theater

On a homebound space vessel, a lone pilot finds herself trapped in a waking nightmare when her holographic “virtual companion” begins to defy his own programming.

- **Director Jennifer Zhang is Chinese American**

*screener available

***Carrion*, directed by Yvonne Zhang**

Part of the shorts program: THE MOURNING AFTER

Saturday, May 20, 9:00 PM | Roxie Theater

Living on an isolated desert motel with her grieving mother, a young girl must confront death after she digs up a rotting carcass.

- **Director Yvonne Zhang is Chinese British**

*screener available

***Don't Be Sorry*, directed by David Au**

Opening for feature film BIG FIGHT IN LITTLE CHINATOWN

Saturday, May 13th, 2:30 PM | Great Star Theater

A timid but resilient Korean American senior is empowered to fight back when she discovers face-slapping competition videos on the internet.

- **Director David Au is Chinese American of Hong Kong descent**

*screener available

***Elite Match*, directed by Kathy Meng**

Part of the shorts program: MAMA TRAUMA

Sunday, May 14, 3:15 PM | Roxie Theater

A single Chinese mother's preoccupation with her daughter's life and her desire to date come to heads when she attends a singles mixer.

- **Director Kathy Meng is Chinese.**

*screener available

***Hearsay*, directed by Banban Cheng**

Part of the shorts program: COMPANION PASS

Thursday, May 18, 5:30 PM | Roxie Theater

Gossip inflames a community when Lili, an outgoing and talkative hairdresser, discovers a damaging secret about a customer.

- **Director Banban Cheng is Taiwanese-Chinese.**

*screener available

***Here, Hopefully*, directed by Hao Zhou**

Part of the Shorts Program: OUT/HERE

Sunday, May 14, 12:30 PM | Castro Theatre

A non-binary international nursing student from rural China seeks to build a sustainable and gender-affirming life in the Midwest.

- **Director Hao Zhou is Chinese.**

*screener available

***I Can't Keep Quiet*, directed by Eurie Chung**

Saturday, May 20, 6:00 PM | SFMOMA Phyllis Wattis Theater

An intimate portrait of one woman's quest for healing reverberated around the globe through her song "Quiet," an anthem for the women's movement. Five years later, we take a deeper look into the song's impact on MILCK's journey of reclamation: reclaiming trust in herself, her sense of belonging, and her sisterhood with the song's co-creator, AG. As we follow MILCK's path of activism and artistry, we get a window into how she's awakened by the stillness of quarantine and the reckoning of our country's racial justice movement. Her acknowledgment and accountability for her blindspots give her and AG a renewed sense of freedom as they celebrate that it's never too late to reclaim our voices. A performance with MILCK, and a conversation with Director Eurie Chang, Executive Producer Grace Lee, Anna Saalfeld of P&G Studios, and MILCK to follow.

- **Singer Songwriter and subject, MILCK aka Connie K. Lim, is of Hong Kong descent**

***Last Hand*, directed by Chung Fan Lam**

World Premiere - Part of the Shorts Program: RITES & WRONGS

Sunday, May 21, 12:30 PM | New Parkway Theater

A gambling addict loses everything, including his grip on reality, at the card table.

- **Director Chung Fan Lam is Chinese American from Hong Kong.**

*screener available

***Let Me Take You Home*, directed by Evelyn Hang Yin**

Part of the Rea Tajiri Retrospective program: HISTORY & MEMORY

Saturday, May 20, 12:00 PM | SFMOMA Phyllis Wattis Theater

In a dreamscape of projections, Ah Yeh recounts the tale of how he came to this country and the hardships he faced.

- **Director Evelyn Hang Yin is Chinese.**

*screener available

***Little Sky*, directed by Jess X. Snow**

Part of the Shorts Program: JAM SESH

Saturday, May 20, 3:30 PM | Roxie Theater

A drag sensation returns home to confront their estranged father about the childhood memories that continue to haunt them.

- **Director Jess X. Snow is Chinese Canadian.**

*screener available

***Nǎi Nai & Wài Pó*, directed by Sean Wang**

Part of the shorts program: COMPANION PASS

Thursday, May 18, 5:30 PM | Roxie Theater

A filmmaker turns a loving lens on his two grandmothers and their special bond as they dance, stretch, and fart their sorrows away.

- **Director Sean Wang is Taiwanese American.**

*screener available

***Oyakodon*, directed by Roxy Shih**

Part of the shorts program: MAMA TRAUMA

Sunday, May 14, 3:15 PM | Roxie Theater

A single, immigrant mother struggles to keep traditions and a small noodle shop alive in a rapidly changing world.

- **Director Roxy Shih is Taiwanese American.**

*screener available

***Skin Can Breathe*, directed by Chheangkea leng**

Part of the Shorts Program: OUT/HERE

Sunday, May 14, 12:30 PM | Castro Theatre

Having to constantly negotiate his identity, a queer Cambodian American teenager finds a home inside the water of his high school pool.

- **Director Chheangkea Leng is Cambodian Chinese**

*screener available

***Still Queer*, directed by Yuelel Song**

Part of the Shorts Program: OUT/HERE

Sunday, May 14, 12:30 PM | Castro Theatre

After a long period away, asexual T struggles to maintain their strained friendship with Gwin, as they find themselves monitored by a persistent disembodied voice demanding an answer.

- **Director Yuelel Song is Chinese.**

*screener available

***Teen Troubles In Dirty Jersey*, directed by Waley Wang**

Part of the Shorts Program: JAM SESH

Saturday, May 20, 3:30 PM | Roxie Theater

Based on the music and memories of indie musician Bryan Cho, a 17-year-old Korean punk enjoys a carefree summer with this group of delinquent friends in 90's New Jersey.

- **Director Waley Wang is Chinese**

*screener available

***Tequila Sunset*, directed by Jinsui Song**

Part of the Shorts Program: REALITY BITES

Thursday, May 18, 8:30 PM | Roxie Theater

Overworked and lonely, an old woman caring for her ailing husband attempts to take a much-needed break from reality.

- **Director Jinsui Song is Chinese.**

*screener available

***The Body Of My Name* 名自字体, directed by Rosie Choo Pidcock**

Part of the Shorts Program: JAM SESH

Saturday, May 20, 3:30 PM | Roxie Theater

Five adults return to their elementary school to reclaim their Chinese names through a joyous celebration of dance and music.

- **Filmmaker Rosie Choo Pidcock is Hakka Chinese**

*screener available

***The Last September*, directed by Sophia Shi**

World Premiere - Part of the Shorts Program: COMPANION PASS

Thursday, May 18, 5:30 PM | Roxie Theater

Under the stress of applying to college, an Asian American high schooler begins to see himself—and his Black best friend—in a whole new light.

- **Director Sophia Shi is Chinese**

*screener available

Tracing History, directed by Jalena Keane-Lee

Opening for feature film *PHOTOGRAPHIC JUSTICE: THE CORKY LEE STORY*

A Chinese American filmmaker invites her mother on a journey of self-discovery and reclamation as they tour the railroad sites built by their ancestors six generations ago.

- **Filmmaker Jalena Keane-Lee is Chinese American**

*screener available

Wuss, directed by Rubing Zhang

Part of the *Shorts Program: OUT/HERE*

Sunday, May 14, 12:30 PM | Castro Theatre

A tomboy must choose where her loyalties lie when the chance to join the neighborhood's boys' squad comes at the cost of a girl she just befriended.

- **Director Rubing Zhang is Chinese.**

*screener available

IDEAS

Jarod Lew in Conversation with Helen Zia

Saturday, May 20th, 3 PM | SFMOMA Phyllis Wattis Theater

As “Please Take Off Your Shoes” will be on view at SFMOMA as part of photography exhibition, *Kinship: Photography and Connection*, starting May 20, we can't help but feel like this is a moment where the universe conspired to make this conversation happen, and not just for CAAMFest but for Asian American Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander Heritage Month too. Especially because it is Jarod Lew, who photographs the Asian American experience in hopes to visualize communities who would be otherwise overlooked or made invisible, and the one Helen Zia, award-winning author/ journalist, multi hyphenate truth seeker.

- **Photographer Jarod Lew is Chinese American**
- **Writer and activist Helen Zia is Chinese American**

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TICKET INFORMATION

General admission tickets for screenings and panels range from complementary to \$15. Special presentations and events range from \$20 - \$135. Tickets for students, seniors, and people with disabilities are at reduced prices for most events. For more information, please visit the box ticketing information page at: CAAMFest.com

CAAMFest COVID-19 POLICY

Masks are recommended for indoor events and venues and when not eating or drinking. This policy may change depending on each host venue's policy as well as any changing local and federal guidelines.

About CAAMFest

Celebrating its 41st year in 2023, CAAMFest is the nation's leading showcase for Asian and Asian American talent in film, food, music, and arts. CAAMFest takes place May 11-21, 2023. Check CAAMFest.com for more programming and ticketing details.

About CAAM

For over 40 years, CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) 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.