

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 14th, 2024

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**Asian Cinevision Announces 47th Asian American International Film Festival Award
Winners**



August 14, 2024, NEW YORK – Asian CineVision is excited to announce the award winners for the 47th Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF).

Running from August 1 to August 11 over 11 exhilarating days, AAIFF celebrated storytelling from the Asian and Asian diaspora community with programming that included over 100 features and short films. Together, the Festival cultivated communal joy and forged lasting connections.

The Emerging Director Awards recognize first- or second-time feature film directors. The Emerging Director in Narrative Award went to Iram Parveen Bilal, director of WAKHRI, while the Emerging Director in Documentary Award went to Pascale Appora-Gnekindy and Ningyi Sun, directors of EAT BITTER. The complete list of nominees is listed below, with category winners bolded.

Eight Jury Prize Award winners were selected this year, including for the newly created Sikay Tang Critical Lens Award, which went to a filmmaker whose documentary explores complex issues with an innovative perspective. The winners were selected by leading industry experts, including noted creative director James Mao, Emmy award-winning filmmaker Iman Zawahry, and acclaimed filmmaker Sam Pollard, among others.

The full lineup of jurors is also listed below.

AWARD NOMINEES & WINNERS

EMERGING DIRECTOR - NARRATIVE FEATURE

FANTI, *dir. Andy Nguyen - Vietnam*

PAPER MARRIAGE, *dir. Jeff Man - USA*

WAKHRI, *dir. Iram Parveen Bilal - Pakistan*

JUROR STATEMENT: WAKHRI was a standout film in this category, celebrated for its excellent storytelling and script, breathtaking cinematography, and real, raw performances. The director skillfully captures the essence of the story's message while maintaining an entertaining narrative. The film's impact and strong acting make it a remarkable and compelling work overall.

EMERGING DIRECTOR - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE

DECOUPLING, *dir. Yinan Wang - China*

EAT BITTER, *dir. Pascale Appora-Gnekindy, Ningyi Sun - Central African Republic*

GUIAN, *dir. Nicole Chi Amén - Costa Rica*

JUROR STATEMENT: EAT BITTER offers a profound look into the complex interplay between characters and cultures. The film reveals the harsh realities of making ends meet while highlighting universal wants and needs. The personal stories, combined with the exploration of the Central African Republic's relationship with China and the exploitation of natural resources, make for a thought-provoking narrative.

EXCELLENCE IN NARRATIVE SHORT FILMMAKING

29 HOUR FAMINE, *dir. Vivienne Shaw - United States*

AMERICAN OXYGEN, *dir. Adam Hazelton, Emily Hazelton - USA*

CHILDREN OF LIGHT, *dir. Minkyu Kang - USA*

SHE AND HER GOOD VIBRATIONS, *dir. Olivia Griselda, Sarah Cheok - Singapore*

STEAK, *dir. Kiarash Dadgar - Iran*

JUROR STATEMENT: CHILDREN OF LIGHT masterfully tells a tragic real-life tale with a mature cinematic vision. With strong performances and beautiful filmmaking craft, the film grounds us in the tension and emotions of its characters, leading us through the story by bringing to life voices that weren't able to be heard.

EXCELLENCE IN DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILMMAKING

BENKYODO: THE LAST MANJU SHOP IN J-TOWN, *dir. Tadashi Nakamura, Akira Boch - USA*

DEAR DAD, *dir. Noah Kim - USA*

KOWLOON!, *dir. Mona Xia, Erin Ramirez - USA*

LOVE LETTER TO ASIAN WOMEN, *dir. Min Soo Park - USA*

MINSEO, *dir. Emily May Jampel - USA*

JUROR STATEMENT: LOVE LETTER TO ASIAN WOMEN beautifully and effectively captures the dual identities of the protagonist. The letter to the mother serves as a strong backbone to the narrative, complemented by a tender ending that intercuts between both personas.

❑ **ONE TO WATCH AWARD (for filmmakers under 21)**

BUTTERFLY: THE KING OF YUE, *dir. Jingxuan Qi - USA*

CLASS CRUSH, *dir. Katherine Lynn-Rose - USA*

MUTED, *dir. Chris Zou - USA*

'NORMAL GIRL', *dir. Kimmy Nguyen-Thoi - Australia*

RED GUARD, *dir. L-J ShenFilerman - USA*

THE STORY OF A STRANDED FROG, *dir. Steven Yao - USA*

WAIPO'S COMING OVER!, *dir. Shin Mun Yee, Glenda Quek - Singapore*

JUROR STATEMENT: *WAIPO'S COMING OVER!* resonated deeply with jurors through its sincere and touching portrayal of the bond between granddaughter and grandmother. The film succeeds in evoking personal reflections and emotional connections. The overall execution shows potential and the film's narrative effectively showcases its sweet and endearing subject.

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC VIDEO**

ALMOST HOME, *dir. Jen Kim - USA*

FIREWORK FAM, *dir. Alexander Nguyen - USA*

FROGS, *dir. Maya Marzuki Peters - USA*

I WISH U COULD LOVE ME TOO, *dir. Alex Chen - USA*

JANUARY 28TH, 2020, *dir. Kimberly Te - USA*

STOP ASIAN HATE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, *dir. Perry Yung - USA*

JUROR STATEMENT: FIREWORK FAM was highly praised for its visual storytelling and creative approaches, along with its captivating cinematography and intentional execution despite possible limited resources. The concept remains engaging throughout, with superb color and editing that support the song tastefully, making the film a joy to watch repeatedly.

❑ **ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCREENPLAY COMPETITION**

JOINTLY JUVENILE, written by Brian Du & Anne Mirrop Boyd

MISSUS, written by Marissa Carpio

RAISED ON HOOPS, written by Noah Kim

JUROR STATEMENT: We are proud to present MISSUS, a delightful, riveting, and meaningful screenplay that captivated our jurors with its relatable and nuanced protagonist. The prose, voice, and tone are exceptional, with brilliant pacing that skillfully

reveals Mallie's character through active decisions, punchy dialogue, and subtle moments.

❑ **SIKAY TANG CRITICAL LENS AWARD**

DECOUPLING, dir. Yinan Wang - China

HEAVEN RAIN FLOWS SWEETLY, dir. Shasha Li - USA

HOME COURT, dir. Erica Tanamachi - USA

JUROR STATEMENT: DECOUPLING is an intimate film that captures the struggles of a Chinese-American family during the Covid-19 pandemic. The filmmaker portrays the emotional moments and challenges of raising a child in America, offering a rich narrative that spans generations. The film's honesty, dignity, and profound impact make it a must-see. The thoughtful interweaving of cultural experiences and layered storytelling reflect the kind of nuanced, deeply resonant editing that Sikay Tang was known for, making this film a remarkable work in her honor.

❑ **AUDIENCE AWARD - NARRATIVE FEATURE**

FUTURE DATE, dir. Stanley Wong - USA

❑ **AUDIENCE AWARD - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

ASHIMA, dir. Kenji Tsukamoto - USA

❑ **AUDIENCE AWARD - SHORT FILM**

UME OR (THE WILL TO FLY BLIND), dir. Sam Kumiko Sheridan - USA, Japan

JURORS

❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - NARRATIVE FEATURE**

Faridah Gbadamosi (Senior Programmer at Tribeca Enterprises)

Lindsay Watson (Actress, FINDING 'OHANA)

Iman Zawahry (Director of Film Programs at Islamic Scholarship Fund)

❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

Felix Endara (Founder of Trans Affinity Group within the Documentary Producers Alliance)

Geeta Ghandbir (Peabody and Emmy Winning Producer/Director)

Tiffany Hsiung (Peabody and Emmy Nominated Director)

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN NARRATIVE SHORT FILMMAKING**

Jingyi Shao (Director/Writer, CHANG CAN DUNK)

Taylor Shung (Producer, PAST LIVES)

Irene Soriano (Short Film Programmer at the Sundance Film Festival)

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILMMAKING**

Pulkit Datta (Artistic Director of the International South Asian Film Festival of Canada)
Kitty Hu (Producer, *Taste the Nation*)
Chithra Jeyaram (Director/Producer, OUR DAUGHTERS)

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN MUSIC VIDEO**

Kenzo Le (Founder/Creative Director of Crimson Edge)
James Mao (Creative Director at 88RISING)
Alex Porat (Singer-Songwriter with 65 million streams worldwide)

❑ **YOUTH ONES TO WATCH AWARD**

Wu-Ching Chang (Assistant Professor of Communication Design at Shih Chien University)
David Tanh (Partnerships Director at the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival)
Sen-I Yu (Award winning director, writer, and editor)

❑ **ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCREENPLAY COMPETITION**

Alex Lin (Content Writer, A24 Films' Supercluster.)
Mohamad Saleh (Programs Manager at the Asian American Writer's Workshop)
Helen Shang (Co-Executive Producer, Netflix's *Avatar the Last Airbender*)

❑ **SIKAY TANG CRITICAL LENS AWARD**

Judy Doctoroff (Award-winning Executive Producer)
Sam Pollard (Award-winning Filmmaker)
Jean Tsien (Award-winning Producer/Editor)

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 2024 ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL IS MADE POSSIBLE WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MARY LI HSU CHARITABLE TRUST, THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT, TAMIMENT LIBRARY ROBERT F. WAGNER LABOR ARCHIVE, NYU SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, ASIA SOCIETY, ASIAN/PACIFIC/AMERICAN INSTITUTE AT NYU, SAG-AFTRA, FINAL DRAFT, CUNY AAARI, CUNY GRADUATE CENTER, AND THE MANY FRIENDS OF ACV.

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