



NEWS RELEASE

Asian CineVision with Asia Society presents the Asian American International Film Festival '08, July 10–19, 2008

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL '08 ANNOUNCES AWARD WINNERS

July 22, 2008 (New York, NY) – The Asian American International Film Festival announced the winners of its Festival Awards at a ceremony on Saturday, July 19 at the Closing Night Awards Ceremony held at the Asia Society (725 Park Avenue). Hosted by co-writer, co-producer, and actor Jimmy Tsai of the Closing Night Presentation PING PONG PLAYA and with awards presented by director Jessica Yu (PING PONG PLAYA), actress Michelle Krusiec, and actor Ken Leung, the event wrapped up the Festival's successful 31st year. Awards were granted in seven categories.

Director **Jennifer Phang** was honored with the **Emerging Director in Narrative Feature Award** for her visually rich debut feature **HALF-LIFE**. Her philosophical film follows a disenchanted family living in a seemingly idyllic American suburb amid a time of global crises. This juried award recognizes the best narrative feature by a first- or second-time narrative feature filmmaker. Judges for this award included: L. Somi Roy, New York-based film and media curator; Paul Yi, Los Angeles-based film producer; and actress Michelle Krusiec (SAVING FACE).

Documentary filmmaker **Ann Kaneko** was honored with the **Emerging Director in Documentary Feature Award** for her film **AGAINST THE GRAIN: AN ARTIST'S GUIDE TO SURVIVING PERÚ**. The film follows the lives and work of four Peruvian political artists and their fight for the freedom of expression. Judges for this award included: Matt Dentler, head of marketing and programming at Cinematic Rights Management; Renee Tajima-Peña, Academy Award-nominated filmmaker; and Katy Chevigny, co-founder and executive director of Arts Engine.

KISSING COUSINS by director **Amyr Kaderali** was honored with AAIFF08's **Audience Award for Narrative Feature**. The **Audience Award for Documentary Feature** was given to **WINGS OF DEFEAT**, directed by **Risa Morimoto**.

Nathan Kitada was named the winner of AAIFF's **8th Screenplay Competition**. His screenplay, **CITIZEN KIM**, follows Korean American Ronald Kim who strikes a marriage deal with an amusement park heiress to try to gain
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citizenship. A reading of the screenplay, staged and directed by Mr. Miyagi's Theatre Company, was held on Sunday, July 13 at the Asia Society. This juried award was granted by a panel of three judges: Ramsey Fong, finance and business affairs manager at Killer Films; Sarah Kuhn, film and television writer for *Back Stage*; and Brian Yang, founder and principal partner of 408 Films.

The **Excellence in Short Filmmaking Award** was given to director **Mark Reyes** for his film **GOD ONLY KNOWS**. Judges for this award included Maggie Kim, shorts programmer for the Tribeca Film Festival; actor, co-writer, and co-producer Jimmy Tsai (PING PONG PLAYA); and Warrington Hudlin, president of the Black Filmmaker Foundation (BFF).

AAIFF also awards a **One to Watch Award**, open to all films made by youth in the For Youth By Youth shorts program. The winner was director **Lou Nakasako** of the film **BATMAN NOT CHINESE**, in which a childhood revelation takes on new significance through a series of interviews that shed light on the business of being Asian American in Hollywood.

As the longest-running Asian American film festival, AAIFF has established itself as the premier venue for filmmakers of Asian descent, providing a platform for the latest and best in Asian and Asian American cinema. For over three decades, the Festival has sought out innovative works by emerging filmmakers and Asian directors, often introducing their films to American audiences for the first time.

ABOUT THE ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL (AAIFF)

Since 1978, the Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF) has introduced new works by Asian and Asian American filmmakers to a curious audience of cultural enthusiasts. Premiering the works of then unknown directors such as Mira Nair (SO FAR FROM INDIA, AAIFF83), Ang Lee (FINE LINE, AAIFF 85), Wayne Wang (CHAN IS MISSING, AAIFF82), Park Chan-wook (JSA, AAIFF01) and Justin Lin (FINISHING THE GAME, AAIFF07), the AAIFF was the nation's first annual festival dedicated to screening works by media artists of Asian descent and films about the Asian community. It continues to be a leading showcase for independent Asian and Asian American film and video. For more information visit us online at AAIFF.org.

ABOUT ASIAN CINEVISION (ACV)

Asian CineVision, Inc. (ACV) is a not-for-profit national media arts organization dedicated to the development, promotion and preservation of film and video arts by and about people of Asian descent. Founded in 1976 by Hong Kong cinema legend Tsui Hark (ONCE UPON A TIME IN CHINA), Oscar-nominated director Christine Choy, Danny Yung and Peter Chow, ACV began as a media activism organization. The organization continues to serve the Asian American community by promoting the works of Asian and Asian American filmmakers, and providing a window to the diverse experiences and livelihoods of the Asian diaspora. For more information, visit asiancinevision.org.

ABOUT THE ASIA SOCIETY

The Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders and institutions of the United States and Asia. Founded in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller III, the Society reaches audiences around the world through its headquarters in New York and centers in Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington, DC, Hong Kong, Manila, Melbourne, Mumbai, Seoul and Shanghai. For more information, visit asiasociety.org.

ABOUT TOYOTA MOTOR SALES, U.S.A., INC.

Toyota Motor Sales (TMS), U.S.A., Inc. is the marketing, sales, distribution and customer service arm of Toyota, Lexus and Scion. Established in 1957, TMS markets products and services through a network of more than 1,400 Toyota, Lexus and Scion dealers. Toyota directly employs over 36,000 people in the U.S. and sold more than 2.6 million vehicles in 2007. For more information about our company, please visit toyota.com, lexus.com and scion.com.