

## 44th Asian American International Film Festival Announces Award Winners



August 23, 2021, NEW YORK – The 44th Asian American International Film Festival (AAIFF44) announced the award winners of this year. The award of Emerging Director - Narrative Feature went to KEFF, director of *TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY*, and the award of Emerging Director - Documentary Feature went to Wei Deng, director of *FATHER*. The full list of award winners and nominees is highlighted below. A hybrid festival combining in-person events with online screenings, AAIFF44 took place from Aug. 11-22.

AAIFF44 celebrated storytelling by the AAPI community with 102 feature and short films, in-person events such as *Comedy Night Out* and *Music Video Showcase*, as well as in-person and livestreamed panels including *Americanish: A Case Study in American-Muslim Representation*, *35 Years of Taipei Stories*, and *A Paradise Lost: Hollywood's Effect on Hawai'i*. 13 jury prize award winners were determined by leading industry professionals including Isabel Sandoval, director/producer/screenwriter of *LINGUA FRANCA*, Bao Tran, director/producer/screenwriter of *THE PAPER TIGERS*, and more. The full lineup of jurors is listed below.

### **AWARD NOMINEES & WINNERS**

- ❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - NARRATIVE FEATURE**  
**TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY, dir. KEFF - Taiwan**  
**INBETWEEN GIRL, dir. Mei Makino - USA**

WAIKIKI, *dir. Chris Kahunahana - Hawai'i*

❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**

**FATHER**, *dir. Wei Deng - China*

BOOKMARK 14, *dir. Ryo Takebayashi - Japan*

CANE FIRE, *dir. Anthony Banua-Simon - USA*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN SHORT FILMMAKING - NARRATIVE**

**APART, TOGETHER**, *dir. Olivia Hang Zhou - USA*

LEARNING TAGALOG WITH KAYLA, *dir. Kayla Abuda Galang - USA*

LITTLE SKY - *dir. Jess X. Snow - USA*

MAGIC KINGDOM, *dir. Nelson Ng Chak-Hei - USA, Hong Kong*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN SHORT FILMMAKING - DOCUMENTARY**

**MAHALANG: A LOVE LETTER TO GUAM**, *dir. Elliot de Bruyn, Nathaniel Brown, Caili Quan - Guam*

3 CENTS A KILO, *dir. Shao Min Chew Chia - Singapore*

SÔNG Ở ĐÂY (TO LIVE HERE), *dir. Melanie Ho - USA*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN CINEMATOGRAPHY - FEATURE**

**BOOKMARK 14**, *Tatsuyuki Kozen, Kazuko Yonezawa - Japan*

**TAIPEI SUICIDE STORY**, *Tzu-Hao Kao - Taiwan (Honorable Mention)*

MICKEY ON THE ROAD, *Shen-Siang Fan - Taiwan*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN CINEMATOGRAPHY - SHORT**

**LAST FERRY FROM GRASS LAND**, *Giorgos Valsamis - Hong Kong, USA*

MAGIC KINGDOM, *Taylor Mcintosh - Hong Kong, USA*

WHO CAN PREDICT WHAT WILL MOVE YOU, *Jack Davis - USA*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN EDITING - FEATURE**

**THE KNOT**, *Vibhav Nigam - India*

DINNER PARTY, *Chris Naoki Lee - USA*

IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE, *Masaya Tsutsumi - Japan*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN EDITING - SHORT**

**FISHBOWL**, *Jacqueline Chan - USA*

FAMILY HEIRLOOM, *William Pinke - USA*

MAHALANG: A LOVE LETTER TO GUAM, *Elliot Debruyn - Guam*

❑ **EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN - FEATURE**

**MICKEY ON THE ROAD**, *Yu-Ting Weng - Taiwan*

AMERICANISH, *Caley Bisson, Kait Murphy - USA*

WAIKIKI, *Analu Tomoso - USA*

- ❑ **EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCTION DESIGN - SHORT**  
**HELLO FROM TAIWAN, *Shi Min Yong - USA, Taiwan***  
LADY APSARA, *Lianne Arnold - USA*  
THE BLACK KITE, *Hsuan Lee - Taiwan*
  
- ❑ **EXCELLENCE IN SCREENWRITING - FEATURE**  
**INBETWEEN GIRL, *Mei Makino - USA***  
IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE, *Masaya Tsustumi - Japan*  
SEE YOU THEN, *Kristen Uno, Mari Walker - USA*
  
- ❑ **EXCELLENCE IN SCREENWRITING - SHORT**  
**APART, TOGETHER, *Olivia Hang Zhou, Jess Kohs - USA***  
DISASTER PANTIES, *Amanda Centeno - USA*  
GOOD NEWS, *Osrice Chau - Canada*
  
- ❑ **FOR YOUTH BY YOUTH ONE TO WATCH**  
**THE GULL'S SHRIEK, *Ava Ghahremanifar - Iran***  
BEYOND THE MODEL, *Jessica Lin - USA*  
GERALD'S BAD JUJU, *Sandeep Vadlamudi - USA*  
MY PUMPKIN, MY BOO, *Marina Yap - Canada*

## **JURORS**

- ❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - NARRATIVE FEATURE**  
Cat Kim (Programmer/Writer; Associate Director at Cinema Arts Centre)  
Isabel Sandoval (Director/Screenwriter/Actor, LINGUA FRANCA)  
Bee Vang (Social Justice & Media Activist/Actor/Writer, GRAN TORINO)
  
- ❑ **EMERGING DIRECTOR - DOCUMENTARY FEATURE**  
Robert Chang (Coordinating Producer of AMERICAN REFRAMEND)  
Alexandra "Allie" Cuerdo (Director/Writer/Producer, ULAM: MAIN DISH)  
Selena Yip (Festival Director at Philadelphia Asian American Film and Filmmakers)
  
- ❑ **EXCELLENCE IN SHORT FILMMAKING NARRATIVE & DOCUMENTARY**  
Jenn Kim (Senior Client Partner at IW Group)  
Joann Park (Director of Audience Development and Publishing at Headspace)  
Melody Shang (Actor/Producer; Owner of Dreaming Studio)
  
- ❑ **Cinematography - Feature & Short**

Ante Chang (Cinematographer, BLUE BAYOU, MS. PURPLE)  
Roland Lazarte (Cinematographer/Video producer, THE YEAR I DID NOTHING)  
AnRong Xu (Photographer/Director)

❑ **Editing - Feature & Short**

Son Duong (Video Editor at Outlier.org)  
Julian Kim (Director/Animator, HAPPY CLEANERS)  
Ellison Shieh (Artist/Filmmaker/Arts Organizer; Co-director of Seattle Asian American Film Festival)

❑ **Production Design - Feature & Short**

Prisca Choe (Production Designer/Visual Artist; Co-founder and Director of Asian Womxn in the Arts)  
Yiyi Han (Director/Screenwriter/Producer, SOMETHING ABOUT WONDER)  
Vivian Hua (Director/Writer/Organizer; Executive Director of Northwest Film Forum in Seattle and Editor-in-Chief of REDEFINE)

❑ **Screenwriting - Feature & Short**

Derek Nguyen (Director/Writer/Producer, THE HOUSEMAID)  
Tera Tolentino (Writer, MAGNUM P.I.)  
Bao Tran (Director/Writer/Editor, THE PAPER TIGERS)

❑ **For Youth By Youth One To Watch**

Christina DeHaven-Call (Producer, WEDNESDAY MORNING; Associate Chair of Production for Undergraduate Film & TV at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts)  
Joanne Kwong (President of Pearl River Mart)  
Samantha Seid (Digital and Educational Media Professional; Digital Associate Producer at NBCUniversal)

**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 44th Asian American International Film Festival is made possible with support from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts And Sciences, Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, Citibank, AARP, Taipei Cultural Center of TECO in New York, Philippine Consulate General in New York, Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, NYU Special Collections, SAG-AFTRA, CUNY Graduate Center, and the friends of ACV. We are also pleased to have AsAmNews as Media Partner this year.

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