

CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA PRESENTS

# CAAMFEST2016

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## *CAAMFest 2016 Paints Compelling Portraits of Chinese and Chinese Americans*

**SAN FRANCISCO, Feb. 11, 2016** – Paying homage to the ancestry and history of the Asian American experience, the slate of Taiwanese, Chinese and Chinese American films at CAAMFest 2016 is rich in culture and perspective. From the smooth brushstrokes of Tyrus Wong in Pamela Tom's opening night film *TYRUS*, to the harsh growing pains of Sunny Yu's *THE KIDS*, this year's filmmakers showcase the bold and courageous stories in the lives of Chinese and Chinese Americans.

### **PORTRAITS OF CHINESE AND CHINESE AMERICANS**

From a 105-year old living treasure and one of Hong Kong's most acclaimed female directors, to an ex-convict avoiding deportation and an artist recreating old Chinatown by way of miniatures, CAAMFest 2016 continues to share the inspiration and impact of the Chinese and Chinese American experience.

#### *OPENING NIGHT FILM: TYRUS*

CAAMFest 2016 opens with an unforgettable cinematic experience, the Bay Area premiere of Pamela Tom's documentary, *TYRUS*. Take an inspiring journey chronicling the art, life, and enduring impact of 105 year-old pioneering Chinese American artist Tyrus Wong, best known for the conceptual artwork that gave Walt Disney's *Bambi* its distinctive and unforgettable look. From his arrival at the Angel Island Immigration Station as a nine-year-old and his battle for identity in the workplace, to the evolution of his voice and legacy, Wong's ups and downs have shaped the previously undiscovered Asian American into the courageous, funny and wise visionary that he is today. *TYRUS* will be shown at the majestic Castro Theatre, and is part of a special spotlight series, in partnership with Pixar Animation Studios and the Walt Disney Family Museum, *ASIAN AMERICANS IN ANIMATION*.

#### *SPOTLIGHT: MABEL CHEUNG*

Mabel Cheung is one of Hong Kong's most prominent directors. Her international acclaim reflects over 30 years of award-winning works, beginning with her "Migration Trilogy." CAAMFest presents two of Cheung's influential films. Up first is her newest feature and CAAMFest's Centerpiece Narrative, *A TALE OF THREE CITIES*, which transports us to Hong Kong during the turbulent times of war in the 1930s and 1940s, focusing on an epic story of romance and tragedy between the real-life parents of Jackie Chan. Starring Lau Ching-wan (*MAD DETECTIVE*) and Tang Wei (*LUST, CAUTION*). The second film, *THE SOONG SISTERS*, was originally released in 1997, and is considered one of the highlights in Cheung's ongoing

career. The true story explores the three fascinating sisters whose high-profile marriages, celebrity status and family ties elevated them to positions of wealth and power where they used their influence to shape Chinese history in the early 20th century. Starring Maggie Cheung (HERO), Michelle Yeoh (CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON) and Vivian Wu (THE LAST EMPEROR).

#### *BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY*

Arrested at 16 and tried as an adult for kidnapping and robbery, Bay Area local Eddy Zheng served over 20 years in state prison. Ben Wang's BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY illuminates the story of Zheng — the prisoner, the immigrant, the son, the activist — on his journey to freedom, rehabilitation and redemption.

#### *SNEAK PEEK: FRANK WONG'S CHINATOWN (working title)*

CAAMFest presents a sneak peek of local artist and CAAM alum James Q. Chan's work-in-progress, CAAM-funded documentary, FRANK WONG'S CHINATOWN (Working Title). Chan's film highlights the fascinating story of 81-year-old Frank Wong, an unknown, self-taught artist who has created extraordinarily detailed miniature models of San Francisco's Chinatown from his fading memories.

#### *MEMORIES TO LIGHT: CHINESE AMERICAN HOME MOVIES*

For the fourth CAAMFest iteration of our innovative home movie initiative, we are thrilled to present a compilation of Chinese American home movies from the 1930s through the 1970s, with live musical accompaniment by acclaimed jazz musician Francis Wong. Memories to Light is a project that collects and digitizes home movies — and the stories they tell — to share with the broad public.

### **FRESH PERSPECTIVES ON ASIAN AND ASIAN AMERICAN STORIES**

This year's Asian and Asian American filmmakers and features share Chinese and Taiwanese-influenced stories that reflect on themes of family life, age, immigration, prison, loyalty and romance. Chinese director Zhao Qing's documentary, PLEASE REMEMBER ME, produced by Chinese American and Academy Award-winning Ruby Yang, follows Qing's octogenarian great-uncle and his devotion, pragmatism and quiet courage as he tends to his Alzheimer's-stricken wife. Dax Phelan's Hong Kong-set psychological thriller JASMINE follows a grieving man who becomes obsessed with a stranger whom he believes is responsible for his wife's murder, and takes matters into his own hands. Recognized as Singapore's first erotic film, Eric Khoo's Hong Kong/Singaporean film, IN THE ROOM, visits a dilapidated hotel room and the many illicit encounters that happen there over several decades. Taiwanese director Sunny Yu's THE KIDS tells the tale of a man, his wife and baby daughter and how love and sacrifice are often intertwined. Also from Taiwan is Tso-Chi Chang's THANATOS, DRUNK, a film that explores love and loss in the midst of two brothers trying to make their mark, and their dysfunctional relationship with their mother.

### **FESTIVAL TICKET INFORMATION**

Pricing for all regular screenings: General admission tickets - \$14. Tickets for students, seniors (65+) and disabled adults - \$13 (Limit 1 per program with ID only). Tickets for Center for Asian American Media members - \$12 (Limit 2 per program per membership

ID). Pricing excludes special events and galas. Tickets go on sale to CAAM members only on Thursday, February 11, 2016 (online only) and open to the general public beginning Monday, February 15, 2016 (online only). Tickets can be purchased in-person at our CAAMFest box office at Alamo Drafthouse starting Thursday, March 3, 2016.

**About CAAMFest:**

CAAMFest, formerly the San Francisco International Asian American Film Festival (SFIAAFF), takes place March 10-20, 2016 in the Bay Area. CAAMFest is a celebration of film, music, food and digital media from the world's most innovative Asian and Asian American artists.

**About CAAM:**

CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) is a non-profit organization dedicated to presenting stories that convey the richness and diversity of Asian American experiences to the broadest audience possible. CAAM does this by funding, producing, distributing and exhibiting works in film, television and digital media. For more information on CAAM, please visit [www.caamedia.org](http://www.caamedia.org).

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