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8TH ANNUAL PHILADELPHIA ASIAN AMERICAN FILM FESTIVAL

Showcasing 23 features and over 30 shorts from 17 countries, November 12-22



It's film festival season, you guys. And I am sucker for film festivals. Philadelphia, this one's for you. The 8th Annual Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival is going down next week, November 12-22, showcasing a slate 23 features and over 30 shorts from 17 countries. The festival promises to be the biggest one yet, kicking off with the Opening Night presentation of Benson Lee's teen comedy *Seoul Searching*.

Here's the official festival trailer:

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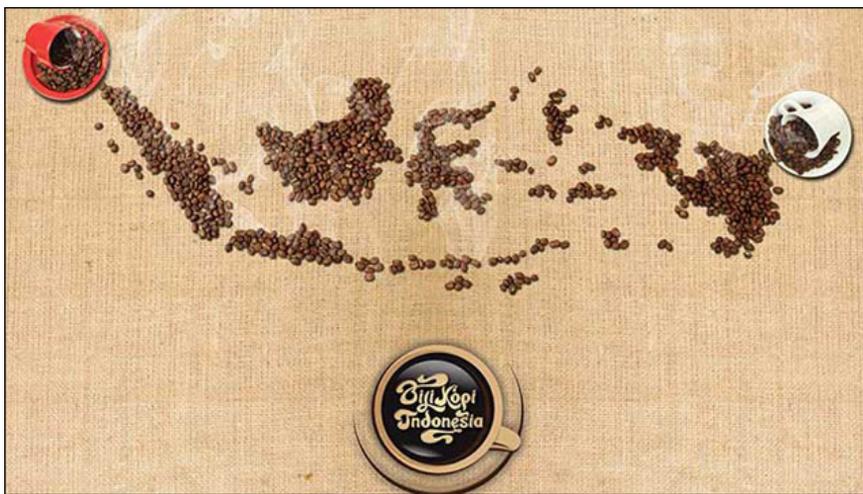
Japanese American Women Try On Geisha Halloween Costumes

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Here's rundown of the PAAFF feature lineup, in alphabetical order:



Aroma From Heaven (dir. Budi Kurniawan, Indonesia) – Featuring interviews with farmers, scientists, philosophers, academics, anthropologists, and business owners - this film explores 300 years of coffee production in Indonesia.

THINGS TO CLICK ON



Changing Season (dir. Jim Choi, USA) – Famed farmer, slow food advocate, and sansei David "Mas" Masumoto faces health challenges as his queer progressive daughter Nikiko, returns to the family farm with the intention of stepping into her father's work boots. EAST COAST PREMIERE.



Crush the Skull (dir. Viet Nguyen, USA) – A pair of professional burglars find themselves having to pull one last job and find themselves in a sadistic torture den where they now have to fight for their lives. Adapted from Nguyen's YouTube short of the same title. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



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Dukhtar (dir. Afia Nathaniel, Pakistan) – A mother kidnaps her ten-year-old daughter to save her from the fate of a child bride. Their daring escape triggers a relentless hunt and a cynical truck driver proves to be an unlikely ally. The trio embarks on an epic journey, where the quest for love and freedom comes with a price.

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Don't Think I've Forgotten (dir. John Pirozzi, Cambodia) – This compelling documentary uncovers the forgotten history of the Cambodian music scene during the Vietnam War era, which blended Western rock and roll with local traditions, and was suppressed by the Khmer Rouge.



For Here or to Go? (dir. Rucha Humnabadkar, USA) – Set against the backdrop of the 2008 recession, this dramatic comedy examines the many personal battles faced by immigrants living in America. Set in Silicon Valley, a software professional loses a plum position with a startup due to visa issues. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



In Football We Trust (dirs. Tony Vainku & Erika Cohn, USA) – This film is an insightful documentary exploring the so-called 'Polynesian Pipeline' to the NFL in the tightly-knit Polynesian community in Salt Lake City, through four young men striving to overcome gang violence and near poverty through the promise of American football. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Jalal's Story (dir. Abu Shahed Emon, Bangladesh) – This film follows an infant, rescued from a river and adopted, later abandoned, who becomes a gangster in adolescence. Recently chosen as the Official Selection

to represent Bangladesh in the Foreign-Language Category of the 88th Academy Awards. EAST COAST PREMIERE.



Jasmine (dir. Dax Phelan, Hong Kong) – A gripping and chilling psychological thriller about a man struggling to come to terms with his wife’s unsolved murder, who eventually decides to take justice into his own hands and things take a startling turn toward the unexpected. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Journey from the Fall (dir. Ham Tran, Vietnam) – Inspired by the true stories of Vietnamese refugees who fled their land after the fall of Saigon, and those who were forced to stay behind, this film follows one family’s escape by boat as its patriarch is imprisoned in a Communist re-education camp.



Live From UB (dir. Lauren Knapp, Mongolia) – This film follows the story of one of Mongolia’s most promising

independent bands, Mohanik, as they create a new sound for their country, combining traditional instrumentation with Western rock, and discover what it means to be Mongolian today. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Love Arcadia (dir. Lawrence Gan, USA) – This contemporary romance is set in a small town where a charming goofball becomes emotionally entangled with an ambitious executive and as tensions escalate between their families' businesses, their relationship is threatened. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Miss India America (dir. Ravi Kapoor, USA) – When an overachieving Orange County high school senior discovers her boyfriend has fallen in love with the reigning Miss India National, she decides she must pursue the crown in order to win him and the life she planned for herself back. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



My Voice, My Life (dir. Ruby Yang, Hong Kong) – This film follows an unlikely group of misfit students from

four of Hong Kong's underprivileged middle and high schools who are cast in an after-school musical theater program and where each of them confronts unique personal challenges in the process of developing character. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



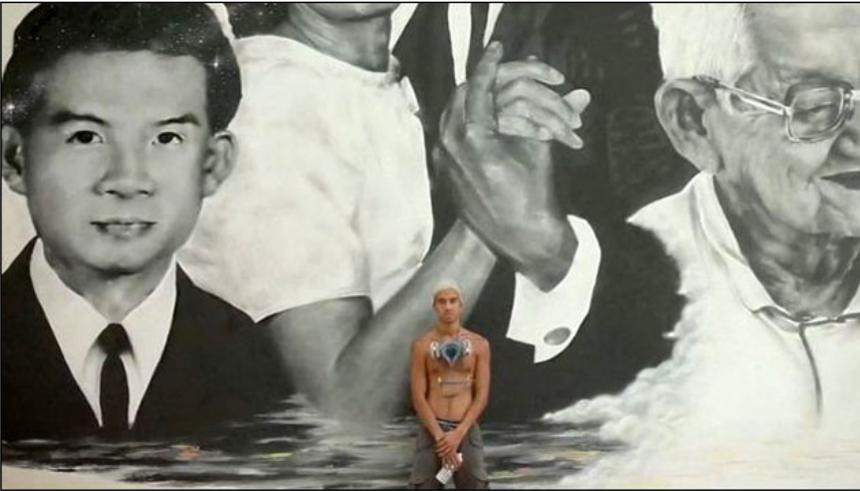
Off the Menu (dir. Grace Lee, USA) – Grappling with how family, tradition, faith, and geography shape our relationships to food, this film uses our obsession with food as a launching point to delve into a wealth of stories, traditions, and unexpected characters that help nourish this nation of immigrants. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Oh, Saigon (dir. Doan Hoàng, Vietnam) – Hoàng's family was on the last civilian helicopter out of Vietnam at the end of the war. Twenty-five years later, her family returns and reunites with the family they left behind, confronting their political differences and attempting to reconnect.



Right Footed (dir. Nick Spark, USA) – This film follows Jessica Cox, a Filipina American born without arms, who became the first person licensed to pilot an airplane with her feet, as she transforms from a motivational speaker to a mentor, and eventually into a leading advocate for people with disabilities. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



The Roots Remain (dirs. Jean-Sebastien Francoeur & Andrew Marchand-Boddy, Cambodia/Canada) – This film follows the story of Canadian-raised Cambodian French graffiti artist FONKi, as he reunites with his family, explores Cambodia's Hip Hop community, and dedicates a mural to his relatives in Phnom Penh who disappeared during the war. EAST COAST PREMIERE.



Seoul Searching (dir. Benson Lee, South Korea) – Set against the backdrop of 1980s Seoul and inspired by a summer exchange program that Lee attended in the summer of 1986, this John Hughes-esque teen comedy tells a universal coming-of-age story chock full of pop culture tropes, teen hijinks, and first love. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Someone Else (dir. Nelson Kim, USA) – A surreal drama about the clash of wills between two Korean-American cousins in New York City. A shy young law student hungry for a more vivid, risk-taking existence, visits his wealthy playboy cousin and attempts to shed his old identity, but spirals out of control. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



The Vancouver Asahi (dir. Yuya Ishii, Canada/Japan) - This tale of sports miracles and glory is based on the true story of a legendary baseball team in 1930s Vancouver examining the harsh realities of poverty and discrimination among 2nd generation Japanese Canadians. PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE.



Waiting for John (dir. Jessica Sherry, Vanuatu) – This film explores the John Frum Movement, now considered the last surviving Cargo Cult, from the perspective of the last village of believers, as they struggle to preserve their culture in the modern world. EAST COAST PREMIERE.



Winning Girl (dir. Kimberlee Bassford, USA) - follows the four-year journey of a part-Polynesian female teenage judo and wrestling phenomenon from Hawai'i, and in doing so tells the dynamic story of an elite athlete on her ascent, a girl facing the challenges of growing up and an entire family dedicated to a single dream. EAST COAST PREMIERE.

For further information the Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival, including the full program schedule, tickets and venue details, visit the [PAAFF website](#). Support Asian American independent media!

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