



**COLORADO
DRAGON BOAT
FILM FESTIVAL**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANNOUNCING THE COLORADO DRAGON BOAT FILM FESTIVAL LINE-UP

*Ji-young Yoo to receive inaugural Golden Dragon Award
as part of celebration of best in AANHPI+ programming*

Tickets on sale at <https://www.denverfilm.org/>

DENVER – Feb. 12, 2024 – Denver Film and Colorado Dragon Boat have announced the line-up for the 9th Annual Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival, opening March 14 and running through March 17 at the Sie FilmCenter, 2510 E. Colfax Ave. Full festival passes are \$65 for Denver Film Members/\$75 Non-Member, and individual film tickets are \$12 for Denver Film Members/\$15 Non-Member. Individual tickets and full festival passes are on sale at [denverfilm.org](https://www.denverfilm.org/).

Founded in 2016, this year's Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival continues its fifth-year partnership with Denver Film. The four-day all Asian and Asian American Film Festival is programmed with the theme "Connecting Through Cultures," which honors individuals, organizations and films that highlight the rich cultures and experiences of AANHPI communities.

The Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival returns to the Sie FilmCenter March 14 with an Opening Night presentation of *Happy Sandwich*, a colorful exploration of Okinawa cuisine and culture told through a blend of documentary and fiction. The Festival will conclude March 17 with a presentation of the science fiction comedy *Moon Man*, which follows an astronaut who finds himself stranded on the moon after an asteroid wipes out life on earth. A reception will follow the screening.

"We are honored to continue our partnership with Denver Film and the Sie FilmCenter to provide Colorado audiences with the only Asian and Asian American Film Festival," said Colorado Dragon Boat Executive Director Sara Moore. "This year's theme for the Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival is 'Connecting through Cultures: Art, Food, Cinema, & Beyond!' Attendees will have the opportunity to immerse themselves with films from all over Asia and the USA, explore interesting topics at our free community conversations, shop til they drop at our Asian marketplace, and have their taste buds explode with flavor at our culinary event. There is truly something here for the whole family."

In addition to a diverse film lineup, this year's festival includes Q&As with filmmakers, two creative conversations featuring local community members, and the special presentation of the Golden Dragon Award on Friday, March 15 to actress Ji-young Yoo.

Born in Denver, Ji-young Yoo attended Colorado Academy, before moving on to the University of Southern California to major in Cinema and Media Studies. In addition to *SMOKING TIGERS*, which Yoo won the Best Performance in a U.S. Narrative Feature at the 2023 Tribeca Festival, she can currently be seen in the Amazon Prime series, *EXPATS*, opposite Nicole Kidman. Yoo also stars in *FREAKY TALES* by filmmaking team Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck which recently premiered at the 2024 Sundance Film Festival. Previous credits include *MOXIE*, *THE SKY IS EVERYWHERE* and *SWEET HOME*.

On Saturday, March 16 from 10 to 11 a.m., Colorado Dragon Boat will host "Connecting Through Cultures with Asian American Adoptees," a community conversation exploring the ways in which Asian American adoptees add texture to the dissonance they may encounter and honoring the multifaceted layers of their cultural journeys. On Sunday, March 17 from 10 - 11 a.m, Colorado Dragon Boat will host "Connecting Through Cultures with Food & Food Ways," showcasing how food becomes a powerful vehicle for connection to one's home culture. Attendees are encouraged to participate and bring their own experiences to share. Both conversations will be held at the Sie FilmCenter.

The festival will also feature live Q&As with filmmakers immediately following the Saturday, March 16, 11:30 a.m. presentation of the Short Films Showcase and the Emerging Artist Showcase, Sunday, March 17 at noon.

Other highlights include: An Asian Marketplace featuring gifts, artwork, crafts and novelties from local AANHPI-owned businesses on Saturday, March 16 from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. in the Sie FilmCenter lobby, a Centerpiece presentation of the Taiwanese family drama *Old Fox* on Saturday, March 16 at 7:15 p.m, and a culinary experience and reception in the Sie FilmCenter lobby on Sunday, March 17 at 11 a.m.

[Click to see the full schedule and purchase tickets and passes.](#)

Members of the press interested in covering the Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival may contact Denver Film's Ambriehl Turrentine at ambriehl@denverfilm.org, Marty Schechter at marty@schechterpr.com, or Colorado Dragon Boat's Sara Moore at sara@cdbf.org.

FILMS IN PROGRAM:

HAPPY SANDWICH

Director: Tsukasa Kishimoto

Opening Night - Thursday, March 14, 7 p.m.

In this uplifting documentary/fiction hybrid, Shogo Manna, the owner of a local BBQ joint, is told by Shinto priests to make a sandwich to offer to the gods. In order to fulfill this request Manna travels around to interview people involved in all aspects of food in Okinawa. In his conversations with the producers and chefs, he listens to their thoughts on their food and lifestyles, and moves toward his own idea of what could be a "Sandwich for God."

Includes a pre-film reception featuring food and drinks at 6 p.m.

YOU & ME & ME

Directors: Wanweaw Hongvivatana, Weawwan Hongvivatana

Friday, March 15, 1:15 p.m.

In 1999, while the world is gripped by Y2K hysteria, identical twin sisters “You” and “Me” are also concerned for their future. The twins share a uniquely close bond together. That is until a charming teenage boy enters their lives in this pleasant coming-of-age romantic tale.

BECKY & BADETTE

Director: Jun R. Lana

Friday, March 15, 4 p.m.

In this heartwarming comedy about friendship and second chances, high school best friends Becky and Badette find themselves struggling in their mid-40s. Despite this, they never lose hope that one day their big dream will come true: to become the famous celebrities they were always meant to be.

SMOKING TIGERS

Director: Shelly Yo

Golden Dragon Presentation - Friday, March 15, 7 p.m.

Hayoung, played by rising star Ji-young Yoo, is a lonely 16-year-old Korean-American girl struggling with her identity at an elite summer boot camp. Full of teenage angst, hidden shame, and the desire to fit in, Hayoung hides her problematic family woes and lower-income background. She staggers between the demise of her parent's marriage while attempting to make new friends, only to discover the bittersweet pains of coming-of-age.

Includes post-film Q&A with director Shelly Yo, actress Ji-young Yoo, and producer Guo Guo and a post-film reception

SHORT FILMS SHOWCASE

Saturday, March 16, 11:30 a.m.

The Short Films Showcase is BACK! Join us in feeling a wide range of emotions as we see the new short films coming out of the Colorado and USA AANHPI communities. Learn about the amazing stories that are being told from our local filmmakers, actors, talent, and more. For more information on the amazing talent and films we are showcasing, please visit the website: www.cdfilm.org.

Includes post-screening Q&A

ELEGIES

Director: Ann Hui

Saturday, March 16, 2 p.m.

Venice Career Golden Lion-winning auteur Ann Hui documents a topic she holds most dear – poetry. Through her personal encounters with some of Hong Kong’s most notable poets, Hui shows the topography of contemporary poetry on and of the city. Two poles of reality, the unrestrained Huang Can-ran and the cosmopolitan Liu Wai-tong, are juxtaposed to reveal two distinctively different personalities, ideals, and ways of life.

ONE WITH THE WHALE

Directors: Pete Chelkowski, Jim Wickens

Saturday, March 16, 4:30 p.m.

Hunting whales is a matter of life or death for the Indigenous people of St. Lawrence, a tiny island in the Bering Sea. So, when Chris Agra Apassingok becomes the youngest person to ever harpoon a

whale for his Alaskan village, his mother proudly shares the news on Facebook. To her surprise, thousands of keyboard activists brutally attack Chris without fully understanding the scope of his accomplishment. *One with the Whale* is a heartwarming yet thrilling documentary of one family's struggle to rebuild their shattered identities and regain a new foothold in both the ancient and modern world.

OLD FOX

Director: Hsiao Ya-Chuan

Centerpiece Presentation - Saturday, March 16, 7:15 p.m.

In this '80s set family drama, eleven-year-old Liao Jie and his father have been saving money to buy a home. However, things do not go as planned and Liao Jie comes to realize the harsh reality of being poor. He then forms a relationship with "Old Fox", their landlord who mentors Liao Jie to survive in a rapidly changing society.

EMERGING ARTIST SHOWCASE

Sunday, March 17, 12 p.m.

We are proud to showcase the short films from our amazing Emerging Artists right here in Colorado! Join us for an experience full of films from students, professors, and up and coming talent from all over Colorado. Here we will laugh, cry, and feel the immense Coloradan and AANHPI pride as we witness these amazing works of art. For more information on the amazing talent and films we are showcasing, please visit the website: www.cdfilm.org.

Includes post-screening Q&A

MOON MAN

Directors: Chiyu Zhang

Closing Night - Sunday, March 17, 3 p.m.

A Chinese box-office smash hit, this comedic sci-fi adventure finds an asteroid on track for a direct impact on Earth. A plan is hatched to deploy an Earth saving shield on the moon. But when things go awry, astronaut Dugu Yue becomes the "last human in the universe."

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Sponsors

Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office, San Francisco; Britt, Tshering, & Wang Attorneys at Law; Colorado Asian Pacific American Bar Foundation; Taipei Economic & Cultural Office of Denver; Holland & Hart LLP; Meow Wolf; Filipino Community Groups (PASCO, FACC, NaFFAA Region 5, APIA Vote); Crowe LLP; Love Tito's; Snell & Wilmer; Sakura Foundation; International School of Denver; Alpine Travel & Tours Inc; Denver 7; Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media; The Scientific & Cultural Facilities District; Colorado Creative Industries; Asian Avenue Magazine, Mile High Asian Food Week.

About Colorado Dragon Boat

Colorado Dragon Boat is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to build bridges of awareness, knowledge, and understanding between the AANHPI community and the general public through cultural education, leadership development, and athletic competition.

Colorado Dragon Boat advocates for the community through its four programs: the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival, the Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival, the AANHPI Emerging Leaders Program, and the *new* Riverdale Regional Park Dragon Boat Regatta. For more information visit our website at www.cdbf.org.