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Denver Film Media Contacts:

Ambriehl Turrentine: ambriehl@denverfilm.org

Marty Schechter: marty@schechterpr.com

Colorado Dragon Boat Media Contact:

Sara Moore: sara@cdbf.org

ANNOUNCING THE COLORADO DRAGON BOAT FILM FESTIVAL LINE-UP

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

DENVER – Feb. 1, 2023 – Denver Film and Colorado Dragon Boat have announced the line-up for the 8th Annual Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival, opening March 9 and running through March 12 at the Sie FilmCenter, 2510 E. Colfax Ave and the Freyer – Newman Center, 1085 York St. 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 go on sale Feb. 2 at 10 a.m. at [denverfilm.org](https://www.denverfilm.org/).

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

The Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival returns to the Sie FilmCenter March 9 with an Opening Night presentation of *Arnold is a Model Student*, a satirical coming-of-age story examining contemporary Thai culture through the lens of the country's youth. The Festival will conclude March 12 at the Denver Botanic Gardens with a presentation of *I Am What I Am*, an animated comedy-drama following a teenage boy who sets out to master the traditional Chinese art of lion dancing. A reception, featuring food and a local Lion Dance performance, follows the screening.

"Learn our stories, hear our voices! There are so many narratives coming out of the Asian and Asian American Pacific Islander communities all over the world and right here in Colorado," said Colorado Dragon Boat Executive Director Sara Moore. "This year's film festival highlights those voices and experiences through film, cinema, community conversations, food, an Asian marketplace and more. Come join us at this year's Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival, in partnership with Denver Film, to hear our stories and to tell yours. We come together to share, empower, and to Celebrate Our Stories!"

In addition to a diverse film lineup, this year's festival includes two creative conversations featuring local community members. On Saturday, March 11 from 11 - 11:45 a.m., Colorado Dragon Boat will host "Celebrating the Stories of Our LGBTQ+ Asian American Pacific Islander Community," a community conversation highlighting the intersectional identities, multifaceted experiences, and valuable contributions of members of Colorado's queer AAPI community. On Sunday, March 12 from 11 - 11:45 a.m., Colorado Dragon Boat will host "Celebrating the Stories of our Multiracial AAPI Community," a deep dive into experiences and stories of multiracial panelists. 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 Friday, March 10, 7 p.m. presentation of *Big Fight in Little Chinatown*, the Short Films Showcase on Saturday, March 11 at 11 a.m. and the Emerging Artist Showcase, Sunday, March 12 at noon.

Other highlights include: A screening of an #IAMDenver documentary from the Denver Office of Storytelling *Reclaiming Denver's Chinatown* on Friday, March 10 at 2 p.m., a culinary experience and reception in the Sie FilmCenter lobby on Friday, March 10 at 6 p.m., an Asian Marketplace featuring gifts, artwork, crafts and novelties from local AAPI-owned businesses on Saturday, March 11 from noon - 5 p.m. in the Sie FilmCenter lobby, and a screening of the big-screen, must-see Indian action epic *RRR* on Saturday, March 11 at 12:30 p.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:

ARNOLD IS A MODEL STUDENT

Director: Sorayos Prapapan

Opening Night - Thursday, March 9, 7 p.m.

Arnold is a clever student who has won many academic awards. One day, he meets Bee who runs an underground business helping students cheat on their exams. Bee asks Arnold to join his cheating ring and offers him a lot of money. While Arnold considers working with Bee, many of his schoolmates, unhappy with their school's disrespect of their freedom, organize a big protest.

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

RECLAIMING DENVER'S CHINATOWN

Directors: Roxana A. Soto, Emily Maxwell

Friday, March 10, 2 p.m.

Chinese immigrants made a home in Denver a decade after the city's founding and were instrumental in completing the transcontinental railroad. They survived in spite of racist policies that relegated them to a place and a station. So why doesn't Denver have a Chinatown? In *Reclaiming Denver's Chinatown*, an #IAMDenver documentary from the Denver Office of Storytelling, their descendants recall with pride their ancestors' contributions and reject the notion that one tragic day in 1880 defined their community.

Includes post-screening Q&A

Sponsored by Britt, Tshering, & Wang Attorneys at Law

AJOOMMA

Director: He Shuming

Friday, March 10, 3:45 p.m.

A middle-aged, Korean-drama obsessed widow from Singapore travels out of the country for the first time to Seoul, and ends up getting lost. Her journey becomes an unexpected road of self discovery, as she comes to terms with the life she truly wants for herself, beyond her roles of daughter, wife and mother.

BIG FIGHT IN LITTLE CHINATOWN

Director: Karen Cho

Friday, March 10, 7 p.m.

Big Fight in Little Chinatown is a story of community resistance and resilience. Set against the backdrop of the COVID pandemic and an unprecedented rise in anti-Asian racism, the documentary takes us into the lives of residents, businesses and community organizers whose neighborhoods are facing active erasure.

Coast to Coast, the film follows Chinatown communities resisting the pressures around them. From the construction of the world's largest vertical jail in New York, Montreal's fight against developers swallowing up the most historic block of their Chinatown, big box chains and gentrification forces displacing Toronto's community, to a Vancouver Chinatown business holding steadfast, the film reveals how Chinatown is both a stand-in for other communities who've been wiped off the city map, and the blueprint for inclusive and resilient neighborhoods of the future.

Includes post-screening Q&A with director Karen Cho

SHORT FILMS SHOWCASE

Saturday, March 11, 11 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 AAPI communities. Learn about the amazing stories that are being told from our local filmmakers, actors, talent, and more. Join us after the screening in our filmmaker Q&A. For more information on the amazing talent and films we are showcasing, please visit the website: www.cdfilm.org.

Includes post-screening Q&A

Sponsored by Meow Wolf

RRR

Director: S. S. Rajamouli

Saturday, March 11, 12:30 p.m.

The biggest film of the decade is back on the big screen where it belongs! *RRR* is an exhilarating, action-packed spectacular mythologizing two real-life freedom fighters who helped lead India's fight for independence from the British Raj, Komaram Bheem (N.T Rama Rao Jr., aka Jr NTR) and Alluri Sitarama Raju (Ram Charan). Set in the 1920s before their fight for India's

independence began, *RRR* imagines a fictional meeting between the two, set into motion when a young Gond girl is stolen from her village by British soldiers.

With staggeringly choreographed action sequences, an all-timer of a musical number, and a powerful story, *RRR* is pure big screen joy from start to finish. Audiences across the world have been won over, it's a great big party, and you're invited- come join!

MY BEST FRIEND'S BREAKFAST

Director: Du Zheng Zhe

Saturday, March 11, 1:45 p.m.

For 17-year-old sophomore Xiang Wei-Xin, food is the most important and healing thing in her life. It is in the school's cafeteria that she meets senior Tao You-Quan. At that time, Tao offered NT\$5 to her so she can afford her favorite pineapple bread, for which she feels indebted to him. The next day, Xiang witnesses a breakup involving Tao and his cheating girlfriend by the school's swimming pool. Xiang gets the idea of taking her best friend and school beauty, as an excuse for Tao to break up successfully. She considers this a brave act and repayment to Tao.

The eventful year and the various questions about life are beyond their imagination at the beginning of the story. Fortunately, they finally find an answer during their growth together.

Sponsored by TECO Denver

A MOTHER'S TOUCH

Director: Junpei Matsumoto

Saturday, March 11, 4:30 p.m.

Satoshi loses his eyesight completely at the age of 9 despite numerous surgeries, but grows up with cheerful spirit thanks to his mother Reiko's unconditional love. Surrounded by affection and friendship at high school, Satoshi's future seems bright until one day his family realizes that he is losing his hearing as well. Determined to never give up, Reiko tries everything she can to give him hope. *A Mother's Touch* is the inspiring true story of a mother and son, who became the first blind and deaf professor in the world - Satoshi Fukushima.

Sponsored by Holland & Hart LLP and Sakura Foundation

FAR FAR AWAY

Director: Amos Why

Saturday, March 11, 7:15 p.m.

A 28-year-old IT geek, Hau, is a mediocre but warm-hearted introvert, who suddenly finds himself the object of affection for five attractive women within the same year. The quintet share virtually no similar traits except one quirky thing: they all live in remote corners of Hong Kong. Seeing our heartthrob's struggles in getting there's half the fun, though; all that traveling allows director Amos Why to offer his audience a chance to see and appreciate parts of the city they rarely get to experience.

Sponsored by the Hong Kong Economic & Trade Office, San Francisco

EMERGING ARTIST SHOWCASE

Sunday, March 12, 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 AAPI 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

I AM WHAT I AM

Directors: Sun Haipeng

Closing Night - Sunday, March 12, 4 p.m.

The animated comedy film *I Am What I Am* tells the story of three left-behind teenagers - Gyun, Kat and Doggie - from a small village in Guangdong, where they've been ignored and bullied by others and decide to join a group of lion dancers. They finally realize their dreams and become their own lions with their youthful passion and all-around drive.

Screening in the Freyer - Newman Center at Denver Botanic Gardens

Sponsored by the Denver Botanic Gardens

Includes a post-film reception featuring local a Lion Dance Performance

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Sponsors

Liberty Global, Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, San Francisco, International School of Denver, Sakura Foundation, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Denver 駐丹佛台北經濟文化辦事處, Britt, Tshering & Wang, Attorneys at Law, Colorado Office of Film, Television, and Media, Holland & Hart LLP, Meow Wolf, Botanic Gardens, Asian Avenue Magazine, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), National Endowment for the Arts

About Denver Film

Founded in 1978, Denver Film is a membership-based, 501(c)(3) nonprofit cultural institution that produces film events throughout the year, including the award-winning Denver Film Festival and the popular, summertime series Film on the Rocks. With a vision to cultivate community and transform lives through film, Denver Film provides opportunities for diverse audiences to discover film through creative, thought-provoking experiences.

The permanent home of Denver Film, the Sie FilmCenter is Denver's only year-round cinematheque, presenting a weekly-changing calendar of first-run exclusives and arthouse revivals both domestic and foreign, narrative and documentary - over 600 per year, all shown in their original language and format. Denver Film's one-of-a-kind programs annually reach more than 200,000 film lovers and film lovers-in-training.

About Colorado Dragon Boat

Colorado Dragon Boat is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization advocates for the Asian American Pacific Islander communities through our three programs: the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival,

the Colorado Dragon Boat Film Festival, and the AAPI Emerging Leaders Program. For more information visit our website at www.cdbf.org.