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**Five Asian American Documentaries Premiere on PBS May 2016, Presented
by the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM)**

CHANGING SEASON: ON THE MASUMOTO FAMILY FARM, GIAP'S LAST DAY AT THE IRONING BOARD FACTORY, CHINESE COUPLETS, THE LAST SEASON and OPERATION POPCORN premiere on PBS during Asian Pacific Heritage Month

San Francisco, April 11, 2016– In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) is proud to present the following award-winning documentaries on national public television: **CHANGING SEASON: ON THE MASUMOTO FAMILY FARM, GIAP'S LAST DAY AT THE IRONING BOARD FACTORY** and **CHINESE COUPLETS**. These films will screen on PBS and PBS affiliated channels throughout the month of May. In addition, the following documentaries will play on World Channel's Emmy-nominated America ReFramed program: **THE LAST SEASON** and **OPERATION POPCORN**. Check your local PBS channel and the World Channel for airdates.

The five programs represent the diversity of the Asian American experience, from personal stories of parents and children to ones about communities that came to the U.S. as a result of the war in Vietnam.

"These stories of newer communities, contrasted with families who have been in the U.S. for many generations, mirrors the larger picture of the Asian American experience," said Stephen Gong, Executive Director of CAAM.

The films are supported or co-produced by CAAM, with funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

CHANGING SEASON: ON THE MASUMOTO FAMILY FARM (dir. Jim Choi)

"How many harvests do you have in you?" is the perennial echo that reverberates across the Masumoto Family farm. **CHANGING SEASON: ON THE MASUMOTO FAMILY FARM** chronicles a transitional year in the life of famed farmer, slow food advocate and sansei David "Mas" Masumoto, and his compelling relationship with daughter Nikiko, who returns to the family farm with the intention of stepping into her father's work boots. Mas' hopes and hesitations for the future are shored up with his daughter's return, as the family navigates implications of Mas' 60th birthday, an ongoing drought, and Mas' health issues. The film is interspliced with Nikiko's razor sharp meditations on her family's incarceration

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during WWII and her role as a queer, progressive farmer in the conservative Central Valley. The documentary received the Best Feature Documentary Award at the Sacramento Asian Pacific Film Festival and Best Director for a Documentary Award at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival.

GIAP'S LAST DAY AT THE IRONING BOARD FACTORY (dir. Tony Nguyen)

In 1975, a seven-months pregnant Vietnamese refugee, Giap, escapes Saigon in a boat and, within weeks, finds herself working on an assembly line in Seymour, Indiana. 35 years later, her aspiring filmmaker son, Tony, decides to document her final day of work at the last ironing board factory in America. **GIAP'S LAST DAY AT THE IRONING BOARD FACTORY** follows Tony on a painful, but loving journey. The half hour film explores the refugee experience, the communication gulf between parent and child, and how racism shapes the Asian American experience. It will stimulate insight, discussion and understanding of the hardships of assimilation.

CHINESE COUPLETS (dir. Felicia Lowe)

One of Asian America's most distinguished godmothers of cinema, Felicia Lowe, presents perhaps her most personal film with **CHINESE COUPLETS**. Lowe specializes in Chinese American documentaries with universal appeal, including works on San Francisco's Chinatown and Angel Island. With her latest, Lowe looks at her own mother—whom she calls “the hardest story for me to crack.” Lowe deftly brings in history while weaving in fascinating personal narrative, bringing her on a surprise trip to Cuba, a family history in Hawaii, and Lowe turning to her own daughter for help in understanding her mysterious mother. Through tough conversations that take place during filming, a more complete history is told—on a personal level, for Chinese Americans, and about the painful and triumphant lives of all immigrants who come to the U.S.

THE LAST SEASON (dir. Sara Dosa)

Amid the bustling world of central Oregon's wild mushroom hunting camps, the lives of two former soldiers intersect. Roger, a 75 year-old sniper with the U.S. Special Forces in Vietnam, and Kouy, a 46 year-old platoon leader of Cambodia's Khmer Freedom Fighters who battled the Khmer Rouge, come together each fall to hunt the elusive matsutake mushroom, a rare mushroom prized in Japanese culture and cuisine. However, the pair discover more than just mushrooms in the woods: they find a new life, and livelihood; and, a means to slowly heal the scarring wounds of war. Told over the course of one matsutake mushroom season, **THE LAST SEASON** is a journey into the woods, into the memory of war and survival, telling a story of family from an unexpected place. The film was nominated for Independent Spirit's “Truer than Fiction Award” and received the Golden Gate Award for Best Bay Area Documentary at the San Francisco International Film Festival.

OPERATION POPCORN (dir. David Grabias)

They fled Laos after fighting for the U.S. as our allies in the Vietnam War, and settled in California, living the American Dream. Nearly 40 years later, 10 Hmong elders are arrested by the FBI, accused of trying to buy arms so they could return to their homeland and overthrow the government. **OPERATION POPCORN** tells their epic story from the perspective of Locha Thao, the alleged ringleader. When a video is smuggled out of Laos showing that the present-day Communist government continues to persecute the Hmong

minority still living there, Locha lobbies the UN for aid, and discovers few politicians care about stragglers from a decades-old conflict. But then a shady arms dealer contacts Locha, offering a way for the Hmong in Laos to defend themselves. Locha believes that he has been sent by the CIA, and falls into a web of deceit and intrigue. Showing how the aftershocks of war reverberate across continents and generations, OPERATION POPCORN is a true-crime tale of an opportunistic community activist transformed into an international terrorist.

Online screeners and interviews with filmmakers and subjects are available upon request.

About CAAM

CAAM (Center for Asian American Media) is a nonprofit 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.

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