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Seven New Asian American Documentaries Premiere on PBS and World Channel in May

*Presented by the Center for Asian American Media, these films will
premiere during Asian Pacific American Heritage Month*

San Francisco, April 13, 2017 – In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) is proud to present the following broadcast premieres on national public television: **LUCKY CHOW SEASON 2; MELE MURALS; FOREVER, CHINATOWN; GOOD LUCK SOUP; RELOCATION, ARKANSAS – AFTERMATH OF INCARCERATION; FINDING SAMUEL LOWE;** and **BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY**. These films will screen on PBS, PBS affiliated channels and public media-funded World Channel throughout the month of May. Check your local PBS channel and World Channel for airdates. Films will be available to stream for free online for a limited time.

These seven new documentaries represent the breadth of the Asian American experience, from a profile on a formerly incarcerated man, to the search for a lost grandparent in China with Jamaican roots, the stories cover themes of immigration, resilience, memory and perseverance through arts, culture and historical memory.

“These moving stories of individuals and communities show beyond individual’s stories, what we share as Asian Americans crosses a broad spectrum of society,” said Stephen Gong, Executive Director of CAAM. The films are made possible with funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

This year, CAAM continues our partnership with PBS Digital and World Channel, PIC and POV for the #MyAPALife social media campaign.

[LUCKY CHOW SEASON 2](#) (dir. Francisco Aliwalas) - PBS

In Season 2 of *Lucky Chow*, we wander up, down and across America to discover how deeply Asian culture and cuisine are rooted in our everyday lives. Our appetite for everything Asian leads us to bowls of noodles and skewers of barbecued meats, to heaping Japanese okonomiyaki and velvety Indian duck curry. And along the way we were lucky enough to step into the lives of sumo wrestlers, Buddhist monks, seriously hip Korean

American farmers and a pair of Chinese newlyweds raucously merging old and new world traditions. Now we're hungrier than ever. *Will stream on PBS.org.*

MELE MURALS (dir. Tadashi Nakamura) - April 24 on World Channel & Pacific Heartbeat on PBS

Mele Murals is a documentary on the transformative power of modern graffiti art and ancient Hawaiian culture for a new generation of Native Hawaiians. At the center of this story are the artists Estria Miyashiro (aka Estria) and John Hina (aka Prime), a group of Native Hawaiian charter-school youth and the rural community of Waimea, dealing with the ill effects of environmental changes and encroaching modernization on their native culture. Set against the resurgence of Hawaiian language and culture of the past twenty years, Estria and Prime tell how their street art has taken them on personal journeys to discover their history, identity and responsibilities as Hawaiian people. Through the personal stories of these two renowned Hawaiian graffiti artists and their joint quest to uphold Hawaiian culture through mural-making, *Mele Murals* shows how public art rooted in underground graffiti combines with Native Hawaiian traditions and contemporary life to impact the students, the town of Waimea, and most of all the artists. *Streaming 5/1-5/30*

FOREVER, CHINATOWN (dir. James Q. Chan) - May 8 on World Channel's Local, USA
Forever, Chinatown is a story of unknown, self-taught 81-year-old artist Frank Wong who has spent the past four decades recreating his fading memories by building romantic, extraordinarily detailed miniature models of the San Francisco Chinatown rooms of his youth. This film takes the journey of one individual and maps it to a rapidly changing urban neighborhood from 1940s to present day. A meditation on memory, community, and preserving one's own legacy, Frank's three-dimensional miniature dioramas become rare portals into a historic neighborhood and a window to the artist's filtered and romanticized memories and emotional struggles. In his compromise with immortality, Frank announces plans to cremate his exquisite works with him upon his death in order to 'live inside them forever' in his afterlife. *Streaming 5/9-6/7*

GOOD LUCK SOUP (dir. Matthew Hashiguchi) - May 9 on World Channel's America ReFramed

When we think of Asian America, Cleveland is not the first place that comes to mind. In *Good Luck Soup*, filmmaker Matthew Hashiguchi shows us why this often overlooked part of the country is as important as others in understanding the Asian American story. Through interviews, personal home movies and thoughtful narration by the filmmaker, Hashiguchi shows us what it was like to grow up mixed race in a predominantly white Midwestern neighborhood, where it wasn't always welcoming or accepting. In addition to a feature film, *Good Luck Soup* also includes an interactive documentary that can be experienced by visiting www.goodlucksoup.com. *Streaming 5/10 - 8/7*

RELOCATION, ARKANSAS – AFTERMATH OF INCARCERATION (dir. Vivienne Schiffer) - May 12 on World Channel

In 1942, nearly 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were forced into prisons in the interior because they looked like the enemy. Two of those prison camps were in Arkansas, a land of deep racial divide. Paul Takemoto's mother and grandparents had been imprisoned in one of the Arkansas camps. Ashamed of his heritage and deeply rebellious, he didn't want to know the details. A man of powerful revelations: of his past, of his parents' past and what they mean to his self-identity, he grieves over lost time and years spent fighting a ghost he never understood. After the war, Richard Yada's family refused to return to California, where violence against Japanese Americans was worse than it had been before the war. They became sharecroppers in Arkansas. But a code of segregation in the South ruled every interaction. A person could be only be black or white. Where did these non-white, non-black newcomers fit in? Mayor Rosalie Gould's deep Southern accent belies a fierce determination. Her neighbors threatened her life because she had the audacity to see the prisoners not as the enemy, but as Americans who had been wronged. *Relocation, Arkansas – Aftermath of Incarceration* weaves these remarkable stories into a surprising tale of prejudice and perseverance, hurt and healing, and ultimately, the triumph of reconciliation. *Will stream on PBS.org*

FINDING SAMUEL LOWE (dir. Jeanette Kong) - May 14 on World Channel's Doc World
Three successful black siblings from Harlem discover their heritage by searching for clues about their long-lost Chinese grandfather, Samuel Lowe. Retired NBC Universal executive Paula Williams Madison and her brothers, Elrick and Howard Williams, were raised in Harlem by their Chinese Jamaican mother, Nell Vera Lowe. Nell encouraged them to realize the rags-to-riches American dream, resulting in their growth from welfare recipients to wealthy entrepreneurs. In order to fulfill a promise to their mother to connect to her estranged father's people, they embark on a journey to uncover their ancestral roots. Taking family tree research to an epic proportion, the siblings and 16 of their family members travel to two Chinese cities, ShenZhen and GuangZhou. Together, they visit their family's ancestral village, finding documented lineage that dates their family back 3,000 years to 1006 BC. The trip culminates in an emotional and unforgettable family reunion with 300 of their grandfather's Chinese descendants. At its heart, this is a story about familial love and devotion that transcends race, space and time. *Streaming 5/15-6/13*

BREATHIN': THE EDDY ZHENG STORY (dir. Ben Wang) - May 23 on World Channel
Arrested at 16 and tried as an adult for kidnapping and robbery, Eddy Zheng served over 20 years in California prisons and jails. Ben Wang's documentary paints an intimate portrait of Eddy — the prisoner, the immigrant, the son, the activist — on his journey to

freedom, rehabilitation and redemption. *Breathin'* moves with a deep, critical love, unafraid in confronting the hard truths of Eddy's crime, the harsh realities of mass incarceration and the intertwined emotional hardships experienced by all involved. The film finds Eddy at many crossroads — in and out of parole hearings, organizing in the community, othered and at risk of deportation — his resilience and astounding compassion resounding throughout. In chronicling Eddy's decades-long struggle for freedom, the film interrogates the complexities and hypocrisies of crime and punishment in the United States, raising the greater question: For whom are prisons for? *Streaming 5/24-8/22*

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

About CAAM's Public Broadcasting History

CAAM presents innovative, engaging Asian American works on public television through our dynamic documentary programs. CAAM's award-winning public TV programs are seen by millions of viewers a year across the United States, including 47 documentary shows in the last four years and more than 200 films since 1982. Since launching the groundbreaking Asian American anthology series *Silk Screen* (1982-1987) on PBS, CAAM has continued to bring works to millions of viewers nationwide. CAAM is a member of the National Minority Consortia, designated by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to provide diverse programming to the Public Broadcast Service (PBS).

CAAM is widely recognized for its artistic and programmatic excellence. Films supported by CAAM include *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1989) by Christine Choy and Renee Tajima Pena (Oscar nominee), *Days of Waiting* (1988) by Steven Okazaki (Oscar winner), *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision* (1994) by Freida Lee Mock (Oscar winner), *a.k.a. Don Bonus* (1995) by Spencer Nakasako and Sokly Ny (Emmy winner), *Jake Shimabukuro: Life on Four Strings* (2013) by Tadashi Nakamura (Gotham Audience Award winner) and *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs* (2014) by Grace Lee (Peabody Award).

These and other CAAM supported films have formed the canon of Asian American studies programs and virtually defined the development and evolution of a distinctive Asian American voice in the media for over three generations.

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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