

Film Festival Integrates Asian Filmmakers with Hollywood and World

By Nicole Borgenicht

The Asian World Film Festival in its fifth year is showcasing over 50 countries with a main focus on films from the Asian continent from Wednesday, Nov. 6 to Thursday, Nov. 14. Many of the films being showcased at the festival held at Culver City's Arclight Theater at 9500 Culver Blvd. are submissions to the Oscars. Environmental and animal rights are also prominent features of this festival, as they host the special event 'Wild for Life Day' though the UN Environmental Programme and Snow Leopard Trust presenting four documentary films for wildlife and conservation.

Sea of Shadows, narrated and produced by Leonardo DiCaprio, is highlighted. Festival films range from documentary to action, drama and thriller. Furie is an official selection film from Vietnam about a gang mom hero saving her child from traffickers crosses several genres. The festival bridges countries and expands our viewership through numerous cinematic styles.

"This year we have a fantastic line up of Asian films which have been submitted to the 92nd Academy Awards for Best International Feature

Film. We are extremely grateful for the generous support of Culver City Council and I very much hope that you will have the chance to visit our Festival which is celebrating its fifth anniversary in the heart of historic screenland," says Brett Syson, Director of Operations of the Asian World Film Festival.

Eighteen Oscar submissions will be screened at this year's Asian World Film Festival. The festival started off with a bang at the Opening Ceremony, which was held on Nov. 6. The Snow Leopard Lifetime Achievement Award was awarded to actress Nancy Kwan. The Snow Leopard Outstanding Cinematic Achievement Award will be awarded to Japanese actor Hiroyuki Sanada and the Snow Leopard Rising Star Award will be awarded to actress Tiffany Chu.

The Closing Ceremony will take place on Thursday Nov. 14, and Snow Leopard Awards will be presented for Best Film, Acting, Audience, Jury and Discretionary Awards.

Expert Industry Forums will also be happening on Nov. 11-12 at the Culver Hotel, and will include Film Finance, Asia-Hollywood, Global Streaming, Festival Films, Trends, Asian Co-Productions, and an inter-

national Workshop.

An exciting world of industry films and filmmakers join in this festival expanding our knowledge and joy in viewing multifarious cultures. The theme of justice includes USA's Just Mercy an Opening Film about a civil rights defense lawyer's fight with Michael B Jordan, Jamie Fox and Brie Larson. The Closing Film, an Oscar submission is Japan's Weathering With You — the animated story of a young writer who flees to lonely days in rainy Tokyo where he meets a girl who mysteriously can stop the rain. This Asian World Festival covers the gamut of styles and emotional breadth of a variety of films.

Executive and Program Director, Georges Chamchoum shares, "Five miraculous years! We started with a mission to put Asian and Asian-American Cinema in the Hollywood spotlight, and it is now happening. The past few years have snowballed and now Asian Cinema has its rightful place in Hollywood. Out of 8000 plus Festivals all over the world we are unique in that we screen mainly Oscar and Golden Globes submitted movies and help them go to the next step which is the shortlist, then a nomina-

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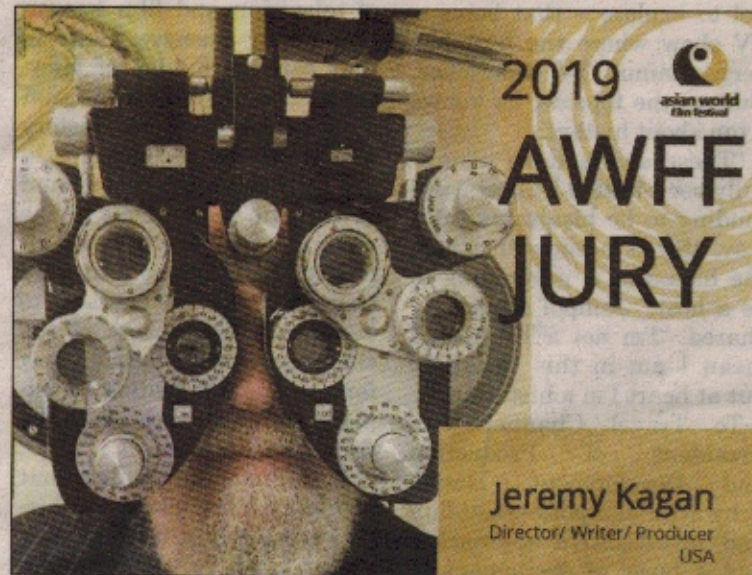


Photo courtesy of Asian World Film Festival

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tion and eventually a win. However, my heart really goes out to our parallel programs where we screen movies for the first time in the West from far away or very little-known Republics such as Yakutya, Buriatya and Bashkortostan to name a few.

For more information, visit asianworldfilmfest.org.

- Do you live in Culver City?
- Are you out and about?
- Go to new places to eat?
- Visit new stores and businesses?
- Have regular favorites you always tell your friends about?
- Are your children on sports teams?
- Would you like to see their pictures in the paper?
- Let the community know about the teams they compete on and with?

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