



## PARTICIPANTS



### Abby Sun

Abby Sun is the Director of Artist Programs at the International Documentary Association (IDA). As a graduate researcher in the MIT Open Documentary Lab, she edits Immerse, an online publication that champions and critically examines new technologies and documentary forms. Most recently, Abby is the Curator of the DocYard and co-curated My Sight is Lined with Visions: 1990s Asian American Film & Video with Keisha Knight. Expanding on the latter's programmatic urges, Abby and Keisha launched Line of Sight, a suite of artist development activities, in 2021. Abby has bylines in Film Comment, Filmmaker Magazine, Film Quarterly, Hyperallergic, and other publications.

She has served on festival juries for Dokufest, Cleveland, Palm Springs, New Orleans, and CAAMfest, as well as nominating committees for the Gotham Awards and Cinema Eye. Abby's latest short film, "Cuba Scalds His Hand" (co-directed with Daniel Garber), premiered at Maryland Film Festival in 2019. Her hometown is Columbia, Missouri, US.



### Alicia Soller

Alicia Soller is an emerging multidisciplinary filmmaker based in Chicago, IL, whose work is informed by Filipinx identity, memory, family, and intergenerational trauma. She earned a Master of Fine Arts in Documentary Media from Northwestern University and a Bachelor of Science in Journalism from the University of Florida. Alicia's primary goal is to unearth stories at the margins, exploring Filipinx/Asian American and BIPOC experiences through meditative and poetic imagery and oral history. Her short film "What We Carry" (2021) follows a Chicago nurse navigating the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic and the staggering rates of death among fellow Filipino nurses.

Alicia's most recent project "Of the Heart" – a personal documentary revealing the threads that connect mother and daughter – is currently in post-production.



**Amir George, Filmmaker & Programmer, True/ False, Chicago International Film Festival**

Amir George is an award winning filmmaker based in Chicago. George is a film programmer at True/False Film Fest and Chicago International Film Festival. George is the co-founder of the touring film series Black Radical Imagination. As an artist, George creates spiritual stories, juxtaposing sound and image into an experience of non-linear perception. George's films and film programs have screened at institutions and film festivals including Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Anthology Film Archives, Glasgow School of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Trinidad and

Tobago International Film Festival, BlackStar Film Festival and Camden International Film Festival, among others.



**Anny Cheung**

Huan Cheng (aka. Anny) is an Independent Filmmaker and multidisciplinary artist. Her works often explore the stories about philosophical living, women, and marginalized voices. Beauty, impermanence, nuances, and fleeting moments of everyday life are recurring themes. She was a Creative Leaders 2021 fellow at Pacific Arts Movement, and a selected annual fellow of Young Entertainment Professional 2021 at Hollywood Professional Association. Her previous films were selected in the 2021 Center for Asian American Media

Film Fest, the 2019 Beverly Hills Independent Film Festival, and the Method Film Fest of 2020. She is a Digital Graphic Designer and Video Editor at the Center for Asian American Media(CAAM). She is currently working on her directed and produced documentary, "Aftertaste" (Working Title), with Creative Producer James Q. Chan, an Emmy-nominated filmmaker of the documentary FOREVER, CHINATOWN (PBS).



**Ayesha Ghazi Edwin**

Ayesha has dedicated her career to helping to mobilize and fight for the rights of the Asian American community. She previously served as the Executive Director of American Citizens for Justice, worked for APIAVote-Michigan, and currently serves as the Governor Whitmer appointed Chair of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission (MAPAAC). Ayesha is an award-winning social justice activist, having previously worked in health care reform, labor rights, for immigration reform, for voting rights, and a variety of other social justice

areas. Ayesha's family is of Indian descent, and she grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan after immigrating here at the age of 3. In addition to serving as the current state Chair of MAPAAC, Ayesha currently



serves as the Deputy Director of Detroit Disability Power, an adjunct faculty member at the University of Michigan School of Social Work, an appointed Ann Arbor Human Rights Commissioner, and is a current candidate for Ann Arbor City Council, Ward 3.



#### **Baraka Elmadari**

Baraka Elmadari is an Arab American muslim woman who was born and raised in the Southend of Dearborn. She is an aspiring screenwriter and a recent graduate of Wayne State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Film. In the course of her time at WSU, she has produced, directed and written multiple short films. Growing up, she destested the inaccurate representation of Arab muslim woman in cinema/TV and had an

overwhelming urge to flip the narrative. Her goal is to write characters that represents muslim woman authentically for television shows and in film in hopes to satisfy that desire she and other muslim woman have had growing up. The desire to be not only be “like everybody else” but different in a way that doesn’t need explanation.



#### **Bill Kubota**, Senior Producer, Detroit Public Television, DPTV

Bill Kubota is the Senior Producer for Detroit Public Television’s One Detroit initiative, which provides programming and online content for PBS stations and the Detroit Journalism Cooperative.



#### **Bo Thao-Urabe**

Bo Thao-Urabe is a practice-based possibilian who impactfully builds community-centered, asset-based solutions. She recently transitioned as the founding executive and network director of the Coalition of Asian American Leaders (CAAL). Under her leadership, CAAL became a well-respected organization across the public, nonprofit and private sectors. Before CAAL, Bo served as Senior Director at Asian Americans/Pacific Islander in Philanthropy and was executive director of Hmong National Development in Washington, DC. Today she provides expertise to support efforts that build powerful local communities and advance social justice. In

addition to CAAL, Bo also co-created Hmong Women Achieving Together, RedGreen Rivers, BMPP Giving Circle, MaivPAC, Building Our Future: A Community Campaign, and the Asian Pacific Islander Institute on Gender-Based Violence. She has received numerous awards for her leadership and work. She currently serves on the Boards of The Minneapolis Foundation, Drake Bank, and Propel Nonprofits and is a Regent at the University of Minnesota.



### **Christian Yau-Weeks, CAAM**

Christian Yau-Weeks is the Center for Asian American Media's Program Assistant. He is involved in CAAM's yearly programmatic initiatives, CAAM's Memories to Light: Asian American Home Movies, and aids in the development of creative and festival strategy. Born and raised in Oakland, California, Christian holds a BA in Visual Culture and Race/ Ethnicity studies from Wesleyan University and is driven by the generative possibilities of accessible, multimedia storytelling, the preservation of culture, and the cultivation of community. Prior to his work at CAAM, Christian has been involved in various non-profit organizations focused on camp resources for people with disabilities and educational/ emotional-learning resources for California Bay Area youth.



### **Cindy Martin**

Cindy Martin is an award-winning documentary filmmaker committed to enhancing voices of underrepresented communities. In 2022, she was named a fellow of Kartemquin's Diverse Voices in Docs (DVID). In 2021, she was chosen to be a cohort of the Community Film Workshop's Production Institute, a partnership with the University of Chicago. Cindy is a proud first generation Asian-American and learned storytelling initially from her father, also a journalist and writer. She holds a bachelor's degree in Broadcast Journalism with a specialization in Psychology and Politics from the University of Illinois. In 1999, she moved to London where she worked for international news media outlets: Reuters, Associated Press, Getty Images and ABC News. In 2016, she moved to Los Angeles where she worked as the West Coast Producer for Sky News and won an award for Best Breaking News in 2018, about the deadly Kilauea volcano eruption in Hawaii.



### **Czarina Garcia**

Czarina Garcia is the Media Fund Manager at the Center for Asian American Media. Born and raised in the Philippines, she received a bachelor's degree in Communication Arts from De La Salle University-Manila. Prior to joining CAAM, Czarina has lived in the Middle East and has worked in various film and video production projects in Manila. Since migrating to the Bay Area and joining CAAM as an intern in 2017, she has worked with the organization in multiple capacities and has since honed her skills in fundraising and media production by working on projects such as the "Beyond Borders: Diverse Voices of the American South" filmmaker convening in North Carolina. During her spare time, Czarina works as a freelance video editor for other media organizations. She loves all things film, travel, and Asian American pop culture.





**David Siev, Director/Producer/Cinematographer, *Bad Axe***

After graduating from the University of Michigan, David left his small Midwest town of Bad Axe, MI for Los Angeles. He landed a home at Jeff Tremaine's production company, Gorilla Flicks, where he spent several years finessing the art of guerrilla filmmaking. As a jack of all trades filmmaker, David holds producing, camera, and consulting credits on everything from hidden-camera blockbuster comedies like *BAD TRIP* (Netflix) to rock and roll biopics such as *THE DIRT* (Netflix). David first made waves in the Asian-American festival circuit with the debut of his award-winning short film, *YEAR ZERO*. The film would go on to win Best Narrative Short awards from the DC Asian Pacific American Film Festival, Vancouver Asian Film Festival, Manhattan International Film Festival, and several others. David currently lives in New York where he is now focused on writing and directing his own projects.



**Lou "Din" Pastrana (she/they)**

Lou "Din" Pastrana is a recent graduate of Wayne State University with a Bachelors of Fine Arts in Film and New Media. As a humanitarian and historian at heart, they advocate for the advancement of human rights and ethnic studies. Their main focus is to produce narratives and documentaries addressing the human condition in unjust situations. They aspire to build solidarity within communities and create for the people - not for capital. Din currently serves as a member of Anakbayan Detroit pushing for anti-imperialism and liberation.



**Dinesh Sabu, Milwaukee, WI**

Dinesh Sabu is an independent documentary filmmaker. His feature and short work has appeared on PBS, HBO, and at numerous festivals around the world. Dinesh co-produced his feature directorial debut *Unbroken Glass* with Chicago's Kartemquin Films, where he also served as cinematographer of *American Arab* (2013), which premiered at IDFA in 2013. *Unbroken Glass* was screened at numerous film festivals and community-based events. Among its many distinctions, Dinesh won "Best Director" at the 2017 Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival. It was broadcast on the 5th season of PBS' *America ReFramed* in 2017. Dinesh was a 2014 fellow in Firelight Media's Documentary Lab. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 2006 and earned his MFA in Documentary Film and Video from Stanford in 2019. He currently teaches documentary production as Assistant Professor of Digital Media at Marquette University.



**Don Young**

Donald Young is the Center for Asian American Media's Director of Programs. He oversees CAAM's program areas, and specifically develops and implements CAAM's national productions and national PBS strategies. In public television, Donald has supervised the national



broadcasts of over 150 award-winning projects. As a producer, he has worked both in documentaries and independent feature films. Key projects include the epic five-hour PBS history series *Asian Americans*, a co-production with WETA and produced by Renee Tajima-Peña; *Family Pictures, USA* by Thomas Allen Harris; and a feature film adaptation of Chang-rae Lee's *Coming Home Again* directed by Wayne Wang.



#### **Eden Sabolboro**

Eden Sabolboro is EMMY® award-winning Filipino-American documentary producer and director based in Detroit, Michigan. Her work focuses on capturing authentic, immersive human interest stories especially from underrepresented perspectives. Shortly after immigrating from the Philippines in 2014, she co-founded Reel Clever Films LLC, a production company specializing in non-fiction storytelling and branded content. She has produced an immersive body of work for the non-profit and education sector, Fortune 500 companies, the local creative arts and small business communities, and leading advocacy organizations. As director, she has

created work for The Biden-Harris Inauguration Committee, Detroit Public Television, Kresge Arts in Detroit, and many others. She has helped produce pieces for Time Magazine, NPR, AJ+, and Huffington Post and other renowned media outlets. She is a part of the New York Foundation for the Arts' Immigrant Artist Program cohort, and was selected for Sundance Institute's Creative Producing Lab and Firelight Media's Groundwork Lab in Detroit. She is a member of Final Girls, a collective of professional women filmmakers in Detroit, Brown Girls Doc Mafia and the Asian-American Documentary Network. Continuously motivated to mentor the next generation of diverse voices, she served as Supervising Producer for "Shifting Urban Narratives", a multimedia fellowship for young Detroiters by Wayne State University and the Schultz Family Foundation.



#### **Eli Hiller**

Eli Hiller is a Filipino-American documentary filmmaker and photographer that has covered refugee crises, housing disparities, social movements, and environmental justice in North America, Central America, and Southeast Asia. Hiller honed his skills while double majoring in Geography and Photojournalism at Ohio University. After graduating from OU in 2016, Hiller moved to the Philippines for three years initially to grapple more deeply with his Filipino roots. Upon returning to the United States in May 2020, Hiller dove headfirst into the complex political interplay between local George Floyd protests and the crumbling of Republican trust in ballot

voting during the 2020 presidential campaign season. Through working for Getty Images through a wire agency, Hiller was able to cover a variety of Midwestern communities including Cleveland, Columbus, Louisville and Detroit. Hiller currently resides in Columbus, Ohio, working on local video production, editorial news assignments and working on his first independent documentary feature, "Becoming Us."



### **Grace Hwang Lynch**

Grace Hwang Lynch is a journalist with an eye for Asian American culture, food, and education. Her work has been published by outlets such as NPR, Public Radio International, and the San Francisco Chronicle. She's a member of Asian American Journalists Association and Asian American Women Artists Association and a graduate of UC Berkeley. In her free time, she enjoys cooking Taiwanese food and someday hopes to perfect the craft of wrapping bah-tsàng.



### **Grace Lee**

Grace Lee is an independent filmmaker who most recently produced and directed two episodes of the Peabody Award-winning *Asian Americans* series as well as *And She Could Be Next*, POV's first broadcast series about women of color transforming politics and civic engagement, which was nominated for an NAACP Image Award. Other credits include the Peabody-winning *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*, *The Grace Lee Project*, *Makers: Women in Politics*, *Off the Menu: Asian America* and *K-Town'92*, an interactive online project about the 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest. She is co-founder of the Asian American Documentary Network (A-Doc), a Directors Guild of America member as well as a member of the Documentary Branch of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. She's also host and executive producer of a podcast investigating systemic inequities at PBS called *Viewers Like Us*.



### **Hao Zhao, Director, *Homegrown* episode, Iowa City, Iowa**

Hao Zhou is a filmmaker from southwest China, currently based in the U.S. Midwest. Zhou's films often center on people seeking joy despite structural oppression and have been screened at the Berlinale, Hong Kong, Sarajevo, Frameline, BFI Flare, and other international festivals. Zhou's first feature, *The Night*, premiered at the 64th Berlinale and won the Critics' Prize at Black Movie (Geneva, Switzerland). In 2021, Zhou's short film *Frozen Out* won a Gold Medal at the 48th Student Academy Awards and was selected for "Five Films For Freedom," the British Council's global LGBTQ+ rights campaign. An alum of Cannes' Résidence, Berlinale Talents, and Talents Tokyo, Zhou has made work with support from Firelight Media, the Iowa Arts Council, Talents Tokyo/TOKYO FILMeX, Art With Impact, and the University Film & Video Association among

other organizations.



**Helen Zia**

Executor, Estate of Lily and Vincent Chin; Co-founder, American Citizens for Justice

Award-winning writer and social justice activist Helen Zia was a key spokesperson and organizer in the landmark civil rights movement for justice for Vincent Chin and is the Executor the Estate of Lily and Vincent Chin. Her role is documented in the Academy Award-nominated *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* Helen has written articles, essays, op-ed pieces, and analyses about Asian Americans, most definitively through her book *Asian American Dreams: The Emergence of an American People*. She has been outspoken in this current pandemic of

anti-Asian violence, appearing in the PBS series *The Asian Americans*; *New York Times*; *USA Today's* 100 Women of the Century; *Washington Post's* Race in America series; and Lisa Ling/CNN's *This is Life*, among others. Helen's most recent book, *Last Boat out of Shanghai: The Epic Story of the Chinese who Fled Mao's Revolution*, was an NPR Best Book of 2019. She was executive editor of *Ms. magazine* and testified before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights about media portrayals of Asian Americans. In 2010 she was a witness in the landmark case for marriage equality that was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. She is a co-founder of American Citizens for Justice.



**Isabelle Martin**, Kartemquin Media

Isabelle Martin (she/her/hers) serves as the Development Associate at Kartemquin Films. Previously, Isabelle worked as an Assistant, Foundation and Government Giving at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Isabelle holds a M.A. in Art History from the University of Illinois at Chicago and a B.A. in Art History & Visual Studies with a minor in Music Performance (Cello) from the University of Kentucky. Her research interests include the politics of race, representation, and in/visibility in contemporary

American art, as well as themes of photography, subjectivity, and memory in comics and graphic novels. Her scholarship has been published in the *International Journal of Comic Art*; *Trans-Scripts*, the student-edited interdisciplinary humanities journal based at the University of California, Irvine; and the Pace University Press *Journal of Comics and Culture*. In her spare time, she enjoys watching hockey, knitting, reading, and finding the city's best spots to grab a beer or bubble tea.



**James Shimoura**

Chair, Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance & Rededication; Co-founder, American Citizens for Justice (ACJ)

James Shimoura is a founding member and former President of American Citizens for Justice formed in response to the killing of Vincent Chin. James was a volunteer for Lily Chin and the Vincent Chin case.

James' career includes serving as staff counsel for two national insurance





carriers, a partner of a Detroit-area law firm, counsel to several Fortune 500 companies and providing pro bono legal services. Active in civic and political affairs, James has also been involved in national and regional election campaigns. He served as an advisor for the Clinton Presidential transition organization and was appointed by President Bill Clinton to the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. James served on several Michigan state commissions and advisory panels, including administrative hearing examiner for the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.



#### **Jasmine Rivera**

Jasmine Rivera is a filmmaker, director, writer and producer from Detroit, Michigan. She is a co-founder of Final Girls, a women's professional filmmakers collective, and has directed and produced narrative films and short documentaries with a social justice lens including "Nain Rouge", which won numerous awards at film festivals around the country, as well as "American Prophet", based on the life of peace advocate Bishop Thomas Gumbleton. Jasmine is the recipient of the Loreen Arbus Award from New York Women in Film and Television and was a Professional Media Fellow at the United Nations University. A Sundance Screenwriting Intensive Fellow and recipient of the

Kresge Arts Fellowship Award, she earned her MFA in Film Directing at Columbia University in the City of New York. Jasmine currently serves as Communications Director for Rising Voices, an organization dedicated to the advocacy and leadership development of Asian American women and families.



#### **Jason Matsumoto**

Jason is the co-founder and director of operations for Full Spectrum Features, a Chicago-based film company that drives equity into the independent film industry by producing and distributing the work of women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ+ filmmakers. Jason is the Director and primary composer for Chicago-based music ensemble Ho Etsu Taiko, and also consults for Miyamoto Unosuke Shoten (Tokyo), a 160 year old traditional Japanese instrument maker who officially serves the Emperor of Japan. Jason grew up attending the Midwest Buddhist Temple in Chicago, an organization rooted in his own

family's resettlement history following the unjust incarceration of Japanese Americans during WWII. He now proudly serves as the Temple's Board President. Jason previously spent 12 years in the financial derivatives industry, retiring in 2017 as Director of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange's strategic pricing team.



**Jason Rhee, Chicago, IL**

Jason Rhee (he/him) is a Korean American writer and director with a passion for telling stories centered around AAPI and his childhood. Jason was selected as a script intern and writer's PA for CONAN, as well as a writing intern and contributor for The Onion. With a background in screenwriting, comedy, and satire, he's co-produced two one-woman shows with stand-up comedian Kellye Howard entitled *Unmarried and Transparent*, which has been featured on ABC and described as "exposing admirable vulnerability and strength."

Jason recently wrapped up three years as The Onion's writer assistant to focus on personal projects, a new *Steppenwolf* show with Kellye, and "EJ Lee: All-American," his own documentary about a Louisiana legend, coach, and former All-American point guard who Sports Illustrated once called the "Korean Magic Johnson of NCAA women's basketball."



**Jiayan "Jenny" Shi**

Jiayan "Jenny" Shi is an Emmy-nominated documentary filmmaker and video journalist who is passionate about stories that find shared humanity and compassion. Her debut documentary "Finding Yingying" (MTV Documentary Films) has won numerous awards including the Special Jury Recognition for Breakthrough Voice at the 2020 SXSW Film Festival and a China Academy Award of Documentary Films, and was nominated for a News & Documentary Emmy award. Jenny's work has appeared on Paramount +, MTV, BBC News, PBS NewsHour, Business Insider and Bilibili. She has also contributed to work on Netflix, Discovery Channel, Tencent, Google, among others. Jenny is a

graduate of Kartemquin's Diverse Voices In Docs program, a TFI Network alum, a fellow of the Inaugural Women at Sundance Adobe Fellowship, and a DOC NYC "40 Under 40" filmmaker.



**Joua Lee Grande, Director, *Spirited***

Joua Lee Grande is a Minneapolis-based filmmaker and community educator whose goal to uplift untold stories and underrepresented communities drives her work. Her short documentary *On All Fronts* aired on WORLD Channel and PBS digital starting May 2022 as part of the Asian Americans Stories of Resilience & Beyond series. Her work has screened in festivals such as CAAMFest, L.A. Asian Pacific Film Festival, Qhia Dab Neeg Film Festival and more. She is currently a Jerome Hill Artist Fellow and a MediaJustice Network Fellow. She was a 2019 Diverse Voices in Docs Fellow. Joua previously worked as an editor at WCCO TV 4 News (CBS Affiliate). She has 10 years working in community to empower marginalized storytellers, families and youth through

organizing and nonprofit work. She designed and led various community art and media programs at institutions across the Twin Cities metro area.



### **Juanita Anderson**

Juanita Anderson, executive producer of *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1987), was born and raised in Detroit, MI. She heads the Media Arts and Studies program in the Department of Communication at Wayne State University where she has been a member of the faculty since 2003. Her multi-faceted career includes a combined 17-years at public television stations WSIU (producer/director, production manager) WTVS (executive producer) and WGBH (series producer), before becoming an independent producer/filmmaker in 1993. A long-standing advocate for diversity in public media, Anderson was a co-founder of the National Black Programming Consortium in 1978 (now Black Public Media), and

served on the board of directors of the Independent Television Service from 1998-2005. In March 2022, she was named to the board of directors of American Documentary, Inc. She is currently directing the documentary feature film *Hastings Street Blues*, and is a 2022 Firelight Media Spark Fund recipient for this humanities-based project examining African American life in Mid-20th Century Detroit.



### **Kat Vasquez, Producer, *Bad Axe***

Kat spent her childhood as a Navy brat moving from city to city across the country. Her home is now in Astoria, New York where she works as an independent filmmaker and producer for films, television, and digital media. Kat has served as a producer and columnist for Yahoo Lifestyle since 2017 where she writes and creates daily news, video content and XR experiences. Prior to moving to New York, Kat has worked on a number of Emmy award-winning TV shows (ELLEN DEGENERES, DOCTOR PHIL, FABLIFE). As

David's producing partner at Baker's Dozen Films, Kat played an integral role in the development of bringing David's vision for the documentary film, *BAD AXE*, to life.



### **Kristine Patnugot, Detroit, MI**

Kristine Patnugot is a Manila-born, Detroit-raised writer/producer. Grown in LA and NY editing rooms, Kristine's creative journey of documentary, television and commercial work has shaped an acute awareness of character and story. She has worked globally on award-winning documentary, television, and commercial productions for nearly two decades, is co-creator/writer of VH1's *TRANSform Me* and producer/writer of the documentary, *Style Exposed: Born Male, Living Female* for the Style Network. Upon returning to Detroit, Kristine joined Final Girls, a collaborative of female identifying filmmakers. With some of the Final Girls, Kristine has produced, written, and directed PSAs and political ads encouraging civic engagement in AAPI communities. Kristine is

committed to increasing access for and amplifying the stories of women, immigrant, BIPOC and LGBTQ folx. She has a BA in Film and Political Science from the University of Michigan and a MA in Communication, Culture and Technology from Georgetown University.



### **Laj P. Waghray**

Laj P. Waghray produced a 2-minute film in response to A-Doc's call for representation of Asian stories during the pandemic: "Together, Alone" is a glimpse into the life of a frontline worker. She is currently editing *Searching for Sparrows*, a documentary about four citizens who are finding solutions to the loss of bird habitats due to rapid urbanization in Hyderabad, India. As a resident artist of the ARTservancy program, she is making multiple short films at Donges Bay nature preserve. She directed and produced a documentary, *Sleepovers*, a 53-minute retrospective film documenting the coming of age of four suburban Milwaukee girls over the course of three sleepovers in 10 years. She directed and produced a 70 min non-linear narrative, *On Hands* which calls attention to an essential way of experiencing the world — by using our hands. In addition to her film work, Waghray volunteers for a domestic violence agency and is on the Board of Lynden Sculpture Garden.



### **Maggie Bowman**

Maggie Bowman is a Chicago-based filmmaker who brings together documentary and organizing experience in her work to strengthen the independent film ecosystem, advance equity and improve career sustainability. She is the facilitator of the NEA/Sundance-led Independent Media Arts Group, which convenes makers, exhibitors, and artist support groups for knowledge-sharing and networking. She directed programming and advocacy at the International Documentary Association for two years, where she led the 2020 Getting Real conference, attended virtually by 3,000 filmmakers from 52 countries. As a filmmaker, she co-directed *WE ARE WITNESSES: CHICAGO*—an Emmy-nominated series of shorts about Chicagoans affected by the criminal justice system. As Series Producer for *HARD EARNED*, she led the team at Kartemquin that made the duPont-winning 6-hour series about American families working low-wage jobs. Prior to her work in film, Bowman was a union organizer and consultant, working on campaigns with taxi drivers in the Bronx, nurses in Iowa, and home health aides in Brooklyn.



### **Nancy Tong**

Nancy M. Tong has been an active member of New York's Asian American film community since 1981. She held key positions on documentaries for HBO, PBS, and ABC. Her credits include Associate Producer of *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*; Co-Producer of the HBO documentary *Cancer: from Evolution to Revolution*; Director of *In the Name of the Emperor*, a film on the Nanjing Massacre; and Producer/Director of *Trailblazers in Habits*, which was aired on ABC network in 2014. Some of her work is on permanent exhibition at New York's Museum of Chinese in America (MoCA). In 2000, she moved to Hong Kong to teach documentary production to college students, and to Muslim women filmmakers





in China, Iran, Pakistan and Indonesia. Since 2019, she has been mentoring several young Hong Kong filmmakers on their documentaries on the 2019 protest movement.



### **Naomi Ko**

Naomi Ko (she/her) is an award-winning filmmaker, writer, performance artist, and cultural producer. She was born and raised in Minnesota to immigrant parents from South Korea, making her at once the most truculent and most passive person in any room. Her pilot, 'Nice,' which she wrote and starred in, premiered at Tribeca Film Festival. Her work has been developed by Warner Bros. Stage 13, and she has received support from the McKnight Foundation, the Knight Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board, and more. She is also a founding member of the Funny Asian Women Collective and the APIA MN Film Collective. Naomi is currently a Bush

Leadership Fellow and a Sundance Institute Interdisciplinary Fellow.



### **Phan Le**

Phan Le is a native of Chicago where she is an active organizer in the city's historic Chinese American ward. Her activism ignited from the flames of Northwestern University's Asian American Studies Program where a student-led hunger strike began the fight for Illinois's first and only Asian American Studies major. From there she has worked on various campaigns with reformist and socialist organizations on pressing city and state issues. She most enjoys volunteering with youth and for her favorite local paper Southside Weekly. During the day she works as a front end developer.



### **Razi Jafri, Director, *Hamtramck, USA***

Razi Jafri is a South Asian-American, Detroit-based documentary filmmaker and producer whose work focuses on race, immigration, democracy and human rights. His projects include "Hamtramck, USA," a film about democracy in America's first Muslim majority city. The film premiered at the SXSW film festival and was broadcast on the PBS program America ReFramed. His current project, in post-production now, is entitled "Loyalty," which follows three Muslim chaplains as they navigate religious freedom and Islamophobia in the US military. He has been awarded fellowships by Facing

Change: Documenting Detroit, the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), The Salzburg Global Forum, the Knight Foundation Fellowship at the Sundance Film Festival, and the Sundance Producing Lab & Fellowship. He received an MFA in visual arts from the Stamps School of Art + Design at the University of Michigan.



### **Rebeka Islam**

Director, Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance & Rededication

Rebeka Islam grew up in a tiny city located on the outskirts of Detroit. Growing up in a community consisting mostly of immigrants, Rebeka experienced first-hand how lack of opportunities and awareness, coupled with indifference and unresponsiveness from civic leaders was leaving her community behind. The experience nurtured a strong desire to create positive change for immigrants and minority populations through community service. She has been doing this ever since. For the past decade, Rebeka has worked with the Asian

Pacific Islander American Vote MI (APIA VOTE- MI), starting as a youth intern and working her way up the ranks as the current Executive Director. Under her leadership, the organization helped get a record number of AAPI residents to register and vote in the historic 2020 elections. In the past year alone she has not only helped get AAPIs to the polls, but she has rallied against aggressive voter suppression efforts, and ensured that immigrant communities had access to voting resources in multiple translated languages.



### **Regina Emiliano**

Regina Emiliano is a Freelance filmmaker passionate about lifting up BIPOC and womxn stories. She graduated from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign with a degree in Communication. Currently she is the Script Supervisor for Comedy Lights the Dark, Grant Writer for several upcoming documentaries such as *Traces of Home*, *Searching for Onoda*, *Love is a Stranger*, *BAPSI* and more. With a theatre background she is passionate about all aspects of film. Her DP debut was for a puppet satire called *Beverly Hills* and is currently in post-production. Active in Mezcla, she has helped with the programming of its International Women's Day Fundraiser, Pitch Workshops in collaboration with Chicago Media Project for the Shifting Voices Film Fund Project, and is currently

assisting with their Funding Retreat and marketing. Her days off she can be found with her pet dogs and snake, cooking up a storm, reading, or soaking up the sun!



### **Renee Tajima-Peña**

Oscar-nominated filmmaker Renee Tajima-Peña has chronicled the Asian American experience as Series Producer of *Asian Americans*, producer/director of *My America...or Honk if You Love Buddha*, and *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (with Christine Choy), and the May 19 Project that she co-founded and produced with Jeff Chang. Among her other films are *Best Hotel on Skid Row*, *Calavera Highway*, *The New Americans*, *Labor Women*, and *No Más Bebés*. Tajima-Peña's films have screened at the Cannes Film Festival, New York Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival and Whitney

Biennial. She was awarded two Peabody's, the Guggenheim Fellowship, the USA Broad Fellowship, and the Alpert Award in the Arts. In 2005 she launched the Graduate Program in Social Documentation at the



UC Santa Cruz and at UCLA is currently a professor of Asian American Studies and the director of the Center for EthnoCommunications, and holds an endowed chair in Japanese American studies.



**Roland Hwang**

Co-Founder and President, American Citizens for Justice (ACJ)  
PRESIDENT, AMERICAN CITIZENS FOR JUSTICE (ACJ)

Roland Hwang is a co-founder and President of American Citizens for Justice and currently teaches Asian Pacific American history in the Department of American Culture, A/PIA Studies at the University of Michigan. Roland is a former Assistant Attorney General Michigan and chaired the Michigan State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. He serves as Vice President for Public Affairs of OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates and previously served as president of the Association of Chinese Americans. Roland is an activist and lifelong Michigander, born in Detroit to parents who emigrated here from China.



**Ryan Pearson, Detroit Narrative Agency (DNA)**

Ryan Pearson is a Detroit native and the Director of Programs at Detroit Narrative Agency (DNA) where she focuses on shifting harmful narratives that are perpetuated about Black and Brown Detroiters to stories of liberation, beauty, and nuance. Her goal is to make DNA's programming the most accessible and pragmatic for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) Detroit creatives interested in media making with a social justice context. Ryan has been active in the media and the arts non-profit sector for over a decade. She has directed numerous plays and theater pieces that exhibit the complexities, power, and healing of the African Diaspora primarily centered on Black women + femmes. She has written, published, and presented on the experiences navigating the intersectionality of being Black, a woman, and a larger-bodied person in an antiblack and fatphobic society. She received her Bachelor of Theatre Arts from the University of Michigan and her Master's in Theatre Arts from the University of California - Santa Cruz.



**Sadia Uqaili**

Sadia Uqaili is the director/producer of BAPSI, the current documentary in production revealing the untold story of groundbreaking Zoroastrian novelist Bapsi Sidhwa. She is the founder of Explore Their Stories, Inc. a nonprofit to discover, document, preserve and share the extraordinary in our everyday lives. Filmmaker, artist and arts administration executive Sadia has led teams of filmmakers, writers, visual artists, and actors to fulfill productions and programs for at-risk youth and patients in hospitals. She curates film screenings and international multimedia exhibits, serves on juries, and hosts panels at Chicago film festivals. For the Indie narrative feature Signature Move (2017), Sadia was a language advisor, script translator and calligraphist for Urdu script, her voice is on



the soundtrack. During her tenure as Artistic Director at a Chicago based art education program, she managed and directed filmmaker on staff Sandeep Sharma to fulfill a unique production working with over 100 pediatric patients who crafted this tale of their imaginary travels outside of their hospital rooms. The project was inspired by [Where the Wild Things Are](#) is a 1963 children's picture book by American writer and illustrator Maurice Sendak, originally published by Harper & Row.



### **Sam Rong**

Born in China, Sam has immigrated twice in his life: once to the US, another to South Africa. Constantly moving about allowed him to develop a deep interest in stories of people living in the “in-between.” That’s why he took up journalism and eventually transitioned to documentary, where he has since established himself as an editor. His work has touched on the 2019 Hong Kong protests, South African sports, child trafficking in Cambodia, segregation in Chicago, and astrophysics. As a martial artist and classically trained pianist, Sam finds many similarities between film editing, musical composition, and athletic

performance. He thrives on finding order in the chaos of documentary, creating ebbs and flows with picture and sound, raising the intensity and hitting the audience with a solid one-two, and most importantly to him—giving his subjects the on-screen humanity they deserve.



### **Sangini Brahmabhatt**

Sangini Brahmabhatt is the Director of Development at Asian Americans Advancing Justice | Chicago. She comes to the position with an enthusiasm for the organization and deep understanding of the philanthropic sector in Chicago. Most recently, Sangini served as the Development Director at Arts Alliance Illinois and previously held positions at the Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago Cares, and The Night Ministry. Sangini is an alumni of Leadership in Democracy and Cultivate: Women of Color in Leadership

programs. The Robert R. McCormick Foundation launched the Leadership in Democracy Program in 2020 with the goal to develop high-capacity civic leaders, representative of the communities they serve, who invite constituent participation and advocate for and implement inclusive policies. Cultivate seeks to build a cadre of emerging women of color leaders engaged in social, economic, and racial justice movements in Chicago’s region. She is also a committee member of Edgar Miller Legacy and emeritus board member of Latitude Chicago. A first-generation Indian American and Chicago native, she resides in Chicago’s Andersonville neighborhood and is a novice art collector supporting Brown and Black artists. Sangini earned a BA from DePaul University in Chicago.





### Sapana Sakya

Sapana Sakya's background is in journalism and documentary filmmaking. She worked with the Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival (kimff) to create the kimff Doc Lab supporting Nepali filmmakers. Currently, she is the Talent Development & Special Projects Manager at the Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) designing filmmaker development and field building programming as well as overseeing funding for independent filmmakers. She trained with distinguished filmmaker Jon Else at the University of California, Berkeley and has produced and directed several documentaries including *Daughters of Everest*, *Red White Blue November*, and *Oklahoma Home*. Prior to her documentary work, she was a feature writer with the English language daily, *The Bangkok Post* and worked in communications at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). She currently lives in El Cerrito, California with family.



### Shiraz Ahmed

Shiraz Ahmed, Director and Producer, is a visual artist and award-winning journalist based in Hamtramck, Mich. He has produced journalism for 101.9 WDET, Detroit's NPR Station, MLK50: Justice Through Journalism and Texas Monthly, and his documentary work has been exhibited during Detroit Art Week, Dlectricity, and at Photoville in Brooklyn. He is a Kartemquin Diverse Voices in Docs Fellow (2019), Documenting Detroit Fellow (2018) and graduate of the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University.



### Stephanie Wang-Breal

[Stephanie Wang-Breal](#) is a writer/ director who uses film as a tool to subvert the narrative. Her work explores institutions and the people who reside at the core of these institutions. Stephanie's films include *Wo Ai Ni Mommy* (2010), *Tough Love* (2014) and *Blowin' Up* (2018). *Wo Ai Ni Mommy* was awarded the SilverDocs Grand Jury Prize, the SFIAAFF Best Documentary Award, as well as an Emmy nomination. [Blowin' Up](#) was a New York Times' critics pick and received the Society of Authors Award at the Film Des Femmes Festival in Paris, France. Each film was broadcast on PBS' POV. Stephanie is a co-founder of [Once in a Blue films](#), a female-run production company. Her work has been supported by the Sundance Institute, the Ford Foundation, NYSCA and the Jerome Foundation; she is the recipient of a 2019 Chicken and Egg Artist Award, as well as a 2020 Creative Capital Artist Award and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Stephanie is currently in development on one hybrid feature and one narrative feature and in 2020 she was a finalist for the Lynn Shelton "Of a Certain Age" Award. Stephanie is commercially repped by the good guys at [Good Company](#) and has directed campaigns for Planned Parenthood, Hewlett Packard, ESPN, Apple and Tiffany & Co.



### Stephen Gong

Stephen Gong is the Executive Director of the Center for Asian American Media. Stephen has been associated with CAAM since its founding in 1980, and has served as Executive Director since 2006. His previous positions in arts administration include: Deputy Director of the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive at the University of California, Berkeley, Program Officer in the Media Arts program at the National Endowment for the Arts, and Associate Director of the National Center for Film and Video

Preservation at the American Film Institute. He has been a lecturer in the Asian American Studies program at UC Berkeley, where he developed and taught a course on the history of Asian American media. In addition to writing about film history, Gong has provided critical commentary on several DVD projects including the *Treasures From American Archives*, Vol 1 & 5 (National Film Preservation Foundation), *Chan is Missing* (dir. Wayne Wang), and is the featured historian in the documentary *Hollywood Chinese* (Dir. Arthur Dong). He is the Board Chair of the Center for Rural Strategies and serves on the Advisory Board of the San Francisco Silent Film Society.



### Steve Byrne, FREEP

Steve Byrne is the co-founder and executive director of Freep Film Festival, a Detroit-based documentary-focused fest now heading into its 10<sup>th</sup> year. The idea for the event grew out of his longtime role as an award-winning arts & entertainment editor at the Free Press, where he was involved with cultural coverage for more than 20 years. He also works with the Free Press' documentary production team, including as an associate producer on "12<sup>th</sup> and Clairmount" (2017, about the Detroit riot/rebellion of 1967) and as a

producer on the upcoming "Coldwater Kitchen," which follows a gourmet culinary training program based in a Michigan prison. Distinct from his Free Press responsibilities, he is a co-producer and co-director on an in-production documentary about the author, outdoorsman and literary personality Jim Harrison.



### Sylvia Strobel, Twin Cities PBS

Sylvia Strobel joined Twin Cities PBS (TPT) in February of 2020. As the CEO of one of our nation's foremost PBS stations, she is leading the organization into an exciting new future: expanding TPT's content, distribution, and funding strategies to take full advantage of 21st century tools, technologies, and consumer interests. Sylvia has worked for more than 30 years in the public media industry, with positions at ideastream, American Public Media Group, Pennsylvania Public Television Network, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Sylvia has served on the boards of NPR, the Alliance for Women in Media, the Association of Junior Leagues International, and the FCC's Advisory Committee for Diversity in the Digital Age. She currently

serves on the boards of the MacPhail Center for Music and Latino Public Broadcasting. Sylvia earned her BA degree from St. Olaf College, her JD from Mitchell|Hamline College of Law, and her MBA from the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Business.



**Thavary Krouch**, Chicago Film Office/Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events

Thavary Krouch has an MFA in Writing & Directing for Film from Columbia College Chicago. Her thesis film, *Black Ink on Rice Paper* screened in various film and arts festivals such as The Forward Festival, a month-long programming of Cambodian arts and culture in Brooklyn, NY. Thavary has a background in film distribution, having managed the Facets label of art house and educational films. In 2014, she participated in Kartemquin's Diverse Voices in Docs Fellowship where she developed a documentary feature, *Water Spinach* focused on Cambodian water spinach farmers of Rosharon, Texas. Her most recent film, *Bitter Melons* was released during the pandemic, and screened virtually at national and international film festivals. She's currently producing a short documentary in collaboration with the National Cambodian Heritage Museum & Killing Fields Memorial and Crossing Borders Music. She's passionate about supporting other independent filmmakers in her role as Independent Film Coordinator for the Chicago Film Office. In 2019, Thavary was named one of Newcity's Film 50: Chicago's Screen Gems which featured Chicago film professionals working behind-the-scenes.



**Theresa Lenore Dumayas Campagna**

Theresa Campagna is a queer Filipinx-Sicilian journalist, supporter of media makers with disabilities, and trauma informed teaching artist. She has over a decade of experience in multiform journalism and filmmaking. Her work has appeared in PBS, XOJane, PRX, Getty Images, South Side Weekly, VOX, and LWC Studios. She is a 2016 Diverse Voices in Docs Fellow with Kartemquin Films. Her most recent documentary, *Ang Aming Palay (Our Rice)*, follows several Filipino rice farmers fighting for their land and livelihood in the face of a globalizing economy and global warming.



**Thúy Trần**, Festival and Exhibitions Director, CAAM

Thúy Trần is a multidisciplinary artist and experience curator. She was made in Vietnam, raised in Massachusetts, and matured everywhere in-between. A graduate of Georgetown University, she's been producing community-based multimedia programming to elevate the nuances of AAPI and BIPOC narratives and experiences for nearly a decade. She's been living in Thailand for the last two years and most recently worked with the Asian Art Museum as their Contemporary Art Curatorial Fellow. There she developed *Global Art Dialogues*, a series connecting emerging and established artists around the world to challenge and transcend physical, sociopolitical, and imaginary borders to empower change. Prior to that, she was an Associate Producer at the Jewish Community Center of San Francisco where she curated a number of programs from onstage conversations to festivals and gallery exhibitions in collaboration with local Bay Area artists and organizations. Thúy co-founded The Rooted Recipes Project in 2018 to reflect on the ways that food has played a role in AAPI identity and resistance through meal gatherings and workshops. She was part of the 2019 cohort of APAP's Emerging Leadership Institute, a 2017 YBCA Public Imagination Fellow and 2016 EAP Fellow with Emerging Arts



Professionals SF/BA. She is the inaugural recipient of the Ebony McKinney Emerging Arts Leadership Award in 2018 and the 2021 recipient The Asia Foundation's Margaret Williams Fellowship.



**Wojciech Zolnowski,**

Executive Director, International Institute of Metro Detroit

Director Zolnowski immigrated to the United States in 1996 from Poland.

He has been the Executive Director of IIMD since 2005. He is well known and trusted throughout Detroit's immigrant communities. He received his MBA in 2001 from University of Detroit Mercy [UDM] and has twenty years of experience providing organizational management, program development, evaluation and finance. His work has been paramount to integration efforts in the City of Detroit. As a founding member of the city's first immigration task force, Mr. Zolnowski helped to devise the initial

strategic plan which led to outcomes such as creating the Mayoral Office of Immigrant Affairs, Municipal ID program, branding of Banglatown, and expansion of the city's language access program. He also was instrumental in designing the city's first refugee resettlement program, which was implemented in 2016.



**Xiaolu Wang**

Xiaolu Wang is a documentary filmmaker, curator, and translator from the Hui Muslim Autonomous Region of China, whose practice is based in the mapping of interiority, with the use of video, poetry, memory, translations, and a decolonial lens. Their work has been screened at local venues and international film festivals. They contributed translations to journals including 單讀. They are a recipient of the 2019 Jerome Film and Media Grant, a fellow of DocX Archive Lab 2021-2022 organized by Duke University's Center for Documentary Studies. They are currently a part of On Being Project's inaugural artists-in-residence. Besides being

a practicing cinephilia, they occasionally host podcasts, and frequently read the Tao Te Ching. Their work has been generously supported by Metropolitan Regional Arts Council of Minnesota, Saint Paul Neighborhood Network, Jerome Foundation, Women Make Movies, and UnionDocs. They live on Dakota land (present day Minneapolis) with two cats, Marvin and Moto, who sleep on separate couches.



**Zosette Guir, Detroit Public TV**

Zosette Guir is a first generation Filipina American and the manager of content operations and production at Detroit Public TV, who believes in storytelling that reflects people's daily lived experiences. In her previous role, she was managing producer for DPTV's One Detroit, a news and public affairs program grounded in immersive community engagement. In her current position, she works with producers across the station's local news and public affairs and arts and culture programs and also currently leads the station's Asian American and Pacific Islander Advisory Committee, composed of community stakeholders within southeast Michigan. She has





worked on award-winning productions, honored with awards by the Society of Professional Journalists/Detroit and Michigan Association of Broadcasters. She was also recently named a cohort fellow for the CPB's Editorial Integrity and Leadership Initiative, which provides training to public media newsroom leaders through Arizona State University's Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

**Amanda Tingley**

**Jonathan Shead**

**Amy Watanabe**

**Jose Antonio Vargas**

**Aryani Ong**

**Linsey Luce**

**Asad Muhammad**

**Michael Mawilai**

**Christine Reglos**

**Nisa Khan**

**Debra Nakatomi**

**Ozi Uduma**

**Elizabeth Berland**

**Parag Mehta**

**ill weaver**

**Raven Martin**

**Jonathan Shead**

**Rishi Gudduguriki**

**Jose Antonio Vargas**

**Rosemarie Nahm**

**Vida Benavides**