



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paloma Concordia,
paloma@papalodown.com
or 415-992-1428

San Francisco is Epicenter for Asian American Arts in U.S *21st Annual United States of Asian America Festival showcases rising stars in Asian Pacific Islander Arts*

SAN FRANCISCO, April 10, 2018 - The 21st annual **United States of Asian America Festival (USAAF)** is making waves with a lineup featuring rising stars in the music, food, comedy, dance, and art scenes in the Bay Area and beyond. Produced by the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center (APICC), attendees can look forward to performances by **Sammay Dizon** (Dance), **Ruby Ibarra** (Emcee), **Aileen Suzara** (Food), and **Irene Tu** (Comedy), among dozens of other local artists.

The San Francisco Bay Area has a history of producing Asian American artists who achieve mainstream fame, including Chef Martin Yan, Dancing with the Stars' Cheryl Burke, comedians Margaret Cho, Ali Wong, and Hasan Minhaj; and in music, DJ Qbert and emcee Lyrics Born. Founded in 1996, APICC continues to grow alongside established arts organizations like Kearny Street Workshop, Bindlestiff Studio, SOMArts Cultural Center, Manilatown Heritage Foundation, CAAMfest, SOMA Pilipinas, and the more recently formed Filipino Food Movement; all based in San Francisco. There is a strong track record and deep roots in the city for APIA creatives to connect and make an impact.

"San Francisco has always been a hub for APIA artists who draw from the city's rich diversity and the struggles of immigrant APIA communities. The rich legacy and support system of artists and advocates for the arts are also drawn from this history," shares Raquel Redondiez, Executive Director of SOMA Pilipinas.

This year's festival performances range from innovative hip-hop to thought-provoking comedy, and multimedia dance theater to storytelling through the lens of food. San Francisco will be lit up with creative explorations of this year's USAAF theme, **Regenerative Community**, with a total of 14 programs and events throughout the city taking place from May 3rd to June 17th. For a full list of festival events, visit www.apiculturalcenter.org

HIGHLIGHTED FESTIVAL EVENTS

Festival Opening Reception & Betweenscapes | Co-presented by Kearny Street Workshop and curated by Roula Seikaly and Kathy Zarur (visual art exhibition)

SOMArts Cultural Center on May 3. What lies in the space between colonial power and indigenous resistance, diaspora and homeland, us and them, here and there? Betweenscapes presents the work of 12 artists that visualizes the in-between as a site of criticality, addressing unresolved histories and posing questions about colonialism, migration, and transnational solidarity. *This event is also the opening reception for USAAF.

Incarcerated 6x9 | Alleluia Panis & Kularts (dance theater, film)

Bindlestiff Studio on May 4-6 & 11-13. Panis' latest work features a 60-minute immersive dance-media workshop performance, energized by 6 dancers to an original music score by **Rachel Lastimosa** and video by filmmaker **Wilfred Galila**. Exploring the hopes, the delusions, and the will to survive the brutality of the American judicial industry through the lives of Pilipino American inmates Boying, Hes, and Ramon.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paloma Concordia,
paloma@papalodown.com
or 415-992-1428

Model Minorities Don't Cry | Irene Tu & Andrew Orolfo (stand-up comedy)

Bindlestiff Studio on May 18 & 19. In this stand-up comedy show, Irene Tu and Andrew Orolfo explore what it means to grow up Asian in America, living up to expectations of model minorities, and past trauma. After all, laughter is the best medicine. "Model Minorities Don't Cry" is their first solo show together.

APICENTER: Making Waves | Ruby Ibarra, LEX the Lexicon Artist (event producer), Chow Mane, and Rudy Kalma (music, performance)

Bottom of the Hill on May 19. Celebrates positive and innovative hip-hop by four Bay Area Asian-American emcees: Ruby Ibarra, LEX the Lexicon Artist, Chow Mane, and Rudy Kalma. Showcasing a diverse array of sounds, styles, and stories, APICENTER reinvents what it means to be a modern Asian-American musician.

The Rooted Recipes Project | Kim Boral, Joseph Nontanovan, Aileen Suzara, Thuy Tran (food, storytelling)

SOMArts Cultural Center on June 10. A regenerative evening of conversation and storytelling over a shared meal. The family-style menu will explore ingredients and dishes across the AAPI diaspora, specifically Filipino, Lao, & Vietnamese food traditions. Gain perspective on AAPI history, issues, and resistance through the lens of food.

H.O.L.Y. (Hate Often Loves You) CITY | Produced by Sammay Dizon & URBAN x INDIGENOUS (dance)

SOMArts Cultural Center on June 16 & 17. An investigation of what it means to cultivate "sanctuary" in the sanctuary city (San Francisco/Yelamu). It takes an uncomfortably intimate look at the violence against people of color and how we keep ourselves/one another "safe." Ritual, performance, and community gatherings are invoked to bring light to these often overlooked stories. H.O.L.Y. CITY is a featured presentation of the annual cultural convening Urban x Indigenous: Unite the Tribes.

WHAT/WHO

21st UNITED STATES OF ASIAN AMERICA FESTIVAL: Regenerative Community

Presented by **Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center** as part of Asian Pacific Heritage Month. Featuring 14 events in music, dance, film, comedy, food, theater, literature, visual arts, experimental media, and more showcasing Asian and Pacific Islander artists.

WHEN

May 3rd to June 17th

WHERE

Various Venues, San Francisco

FOR MORE INFO

www.apiculturalcenter.org

PHOTOS

High resolution (300dpi photos) available at:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/apicc/albums/72157689589975900>



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Paloma Concordia,
paloma@papalodown.com
or 415-992-1428

PRESS CONTACT

Paloma Concordia
Paloma@papalodown.com
415-992-1428

ABOUT USAAF

Each year, the **United States of Asian American Festival (USAAF)** presents up to 15 different programs reflecting the artistic accomplishments and cultural diversity of San Francisco's Pacific Islander and Asian American communities. USAAF showcases artists representing a diverse range of ethnic and cultural groups and aims to heighten the visibility of Asian and Pacific Islander (API) artists working in all disciplines - theater, music, dance, film, literature, visual arts, and more! Our goal is to nurture and empower these groups to be self-sufficient while providing the support they need to grow. USAAF is funded by the San Francisco Arts Commission and San Francisco Grants for the Arts.

This year's theme, **Regenerative Community**, explores what the API community does in order to care for ourselves, our community, and our culture. The festival highlights our collective regenerative practices - how they have evolved and how they are vital to our sustainability, including historical traumas Asians and Pacific Islanders have faced and how they have shaped our history, our culture, and present. The theme also mines how we as a community address these traumas and work towards a future of healing and restorative justice. Most poignantly, our festival programs investigate how the API community renews and sustains its drive and passion to be artists, organizers, cultural workers, and community leaders in the face of oppression.

ABOUT APICC

Our mission at the Asian Pacific Islander Cultural Center (APICC) is to support and produce multidisciplinary art reflective of the unique experiences of Asians and Pacific Islanders living in the United States.

APICC was founded in 1996 by representatives of five nonprofit arts groups: Asian American Dance Performances, First Voice, Asian Improv aRts, the Asian American Theater Company, and Kearny Street Workshop. Since 1998, the center has promoted the artistic and organizational growth of San Francisco's API arts community by organizing and presenting the annual United States of Asian America Festival as well as commissioning contemporary art for and by the Asian American and Pacific Islander community.