



AAS2021 *Film Expo*

P R O G R A M



Association for
Asian Studies



Asian Educational Media Service

Schedule At-a-Glance

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A Long Way Home

**Directed by Luc Schaedler. 2020. Switzerland.
73 minutes.**

Country/region featured: China

“A Long Way Home” reflects on the grim days of recent Chinese history from the perspective of the dazzling cultural scene in present-day China. The film centers around the work and lives of five leading artists in contemporary Chinese counterculture: the visual artists the Gao Brothers, the choreographer and dancer Wen Hui, the animation artist Pi San and the poet Ye Fu. With bravery and subversive wit, they shed light on the social problems in their country and their visions for a democratic and humane civil society.

Distributed by *Documentary Educational Resources*.
<https://store.der.org/a-long-way-home-p1031.aspx>



A Woman Who Paints Thangkas

Directed and produced by Ming Xue. 2019. United States / China. 25 minutes.

Country/region featured: Qinghai, China

**Q&A chat session with Ming Xue
Thu, 03/25/2021 - 11:00a EST**

Rebgong (Qinghai province, China) is well-known for its Tibetan Buddhist thangka art for centuries. However, Tibetan women were not allowed to learn or to paint thangkas until recent years. Lutso is one of the first Tibetan women who received systematic training in thangka painting, and is the only female painter in the region who operates a thangka studio of her own. She is also a mother, a wife, and the oldest daughter in the family. The film captures Lutso's unique life as a thangka painter, who has a career to develop and a family to support.

Distributed by the filmmaker.
Contact: echoxuepku@gmail.com

Broken Harmony: China's Dissidents

A film by Risa Morimoto and Diana Chiawen Lee.
2019. United States. 51 minutes.

Country/region featured: China

Q&A chat session with Risa Morimoto
Fri, 03/26/2021 - 2:30p EST

Broken Harmony: China's Dissidents tells the story of Hua Ze, an ordinary Chinese citizen for whom a discovery of corruption led her into a hidden world of dissidents, citizen journalism, police harassment and kidnappings.

"Broken Harmony is a great teaching resource to put students in touch with the gritty reality of China today."
-Andrew Nathan, Professor of Political Science,
Columbia University Chair, Center for The Study of
Human Rights

Distributed by the filmmaker.
<http://www.brokenharmonyfilm.com/>



Denise Ho - Becoming the Song

A film by Sue Williams and Helen Siu. 2020.
United States. 83 minutes.

Country/region featured: Hong Kong

"Denise Ho – Becoming the Song" profiles the openly gay Hong Kong singer and human rights activist Denise Ho. Drawing on unprecedented, years-long access, the film explores her remarkable journey from commercial Cantopop superstar to outspoken political activist, an artist who has put her life and career on the line to support the determined struggle of Hong Kong citizens to maintain their identity and freedom.

Distributed by the Kino Lorber, Inc.
<https://www.kinolorber.com/film/denise-ho-becoming-the-song>

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Finding Yingying

A film by Jiayan "Jenny" Shi. 2020. United States. 98 minutes.

Country/region featured: United States, China

Q&A chat session with Jiayan "Jenny" Shi, producer Diane Quon and co-producer Shilin Sun.

Thu, 03/25/2021 - 5:00p EST

After a young Chinese student goes missing on a university campus, her family travels to the U.S. for the first time. While unraveling the mystery of her disappearance, they discover how much her life has touched others.

Yingying Zhang, a 26-year-old Chinese student, comes to the U.S. to study. In her detailed and beautiful diaries, the aspiring young scientist and teacher is full of optimism, hoping to also be married and a mother someday. Within weeks of her arrival, Yingying disappears from the campus. Through exclusive access to Yingying's family and boyfriend, *Finding Yingying* closely follows their journey as they search to unravel the mystery of her disappearance and seek justice for their daughter while navigating a strange, foreign country. But most of all, "Finding Yingying" is the story of who Yingying was: a talented young woman loved by her family and friends.

Distributed by the *Kartemquin Films*.

<https://kartemquin.com/>

<https://www.findingyingying.com/>

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Mountain Medicines: The Cultural Context of Chinese Wild Animal and Herbal Healing Materia Medica

A film by Gary Seaman and Joe Juanyao Zheng. 2020. United States. 51 minutes.

Country/region featured: Taiwan

Q&A chat session with Gary Seaman and Joe Juanyao Zheng

Thu, 03/25/2021 - 2:00p EST

Chinese herbal medicines have a long and venerated history. We follow the forays of a "barefoot doctor" to the mountains to collect herbs in central Taiwan, and observe his religious practices to cure his patients using these herbal medicines as well as summoning spiritual forces. This film reveals the cultural and religious context of Chinese medicines --the intertwined dimensions of physical and spiritual energy that relate to human fate.

Distributed by the *Ethnographics Media, LLC*.
Contacts: seaman@usc.edu; juanyaoz@usc.edu



The Revolution They Remember - Part 1 & 2

A film by Dr. Edward M. Gunn. Produced by University of Pittsburgh Library System. 2020. United States. 53 minutes.

Country/region featured: China

Q&A chat session with:

- Edward M. Gunn, director
- Haihui Zhang, executive producer
- Kun Qian, assistant director
- Karl Nykwist, editor
- Sandi Ward

Fri, 03/26/2021 - 2:00p EST

“The Revolution They Remember” compiles selected excerpts from interviews of Chinese who recall their experiences of the Cultural Revolution era, 1966-1976, drawing on more than 120 interviews in the oral history projects of the University of Pittsburgh Library and the Dartmouth College Library. The film offers rich visual material, arranging the interviews according to the historical chronology of events, with attention to age, gender, geographic breadth, and social groups. It concludes with reflections of participants and scholars on the era and its legacies today.

Distributed by the *University of Pittsburgh Library System*.
Contact: qiankun@pitt.edu



8:15

Directed by J.R. Heffelfinger. Executive Producer Dr. Akiko Mikamo, Producer Nini Le Huynh. 2020. United States. 50 minutes. (English/Japanese with subtitles)

Country/region featured: Japan & New York

Q&A chat session with J.R. Heffelfinger and Dr. Akiko Mikamo.

Mon, 03/22/2021 - 5p EST

Akiko Mikamo is a child of Hiroshima, living in the US as a doctor and educator. She sends the young generation a message of human resiliency and forgiveness for world peace and harmony from the true story of her father Shinji's, who miraculously survived the Hiroshima atomic bombing as a teen at 3/4 of a mile from the epicenter. In his agonizing journey of recovery and rebuilding of life, he never hated Americans and raised Akiko to become a bridge across cultures and differences. This inspirational story shows our worst enemies from yesterday could become best friends tomorrow.

Based on "8:15 - A True Story of Survival and Forgiveness from Hiroshima" by Dr. Akiko Mikamo

Distributed by 815 Documentary, LLC
815documentary.com

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Bernard Leach Films Japanese Puppetry, 1934

Directed by Marty Gross. 2020. Canada. 6:36 minutes.
Country/region featured: Japan

Q&A chat session with Marty Gross
Thu, 03/25/2021 - 10:30a EST

British potter Bernard Leach made 16mm films during his travels in Japan and Korea in 1934-35. In this short film, Leach is clearly fascinated by the special "Kuruma Ningyo" (cart-doll performance) practiced in Hachioji, a suburb of Tokyo. Commentary by puppeteer Nishikawa Koryu V was recorded at his rehearsal studio and added to the film.

The Mingei Film Archive is building the definitive audio-visual media resource on the Mingei pottery-making traditions for craftspeople, collectors, students, historians and the general public. Through restored film and new commentary from scholars and makers, the archive charts the development of the core ideas of the Mingei Movement, and traces its roots in Japanese Buddhist philosophy.

Distributed by Marty Gross Films.
mingeifilm.martygrossfilms.com

Bernard Leach Films Papermaking in Japan, 1934 (Version One)

**Directed by Marty Gross. 2020. Canada. 6:19 minutes.
Country/region featured: Japan**

**Q&A chat session with Marty Gross
Thu, 03/25/2021 - 10:30a EST**

In this short film Bernard Leach follows the papermaking processes at the workshop of renowned papermaker Abe Eishiro, one of the early members of the Mingei movement. The entire process of making Japanese washi in Yakumo Village, Shimane Prefecture, is shown. The voice of Abe Shinichiro, grandson of the Eishiro was recorded as commentary.

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Distributed by *Marty Gross Films*.
mingeifilm.martygrossfilms.com



Songs Still Sung: Voices from the Tsunami Shores

**Directed by Suzuki Yoi. Produced by Arai Takako. 2020. Japan.
80 minutes.**

Country/region featured: Japan

**Q&A chat session with Suzuki Yoi, Arai Takako, and Kendall Heitzman (translator)
Tue, 03/23/2021 - 10:00a EST**

A Gift from Their Generation to the Future!

After the Tohoku Triple Disaster of 2011, the poet Arai Takako led a series of translation workshops with tsunami survivors in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, using short poems by the early 20th-century poet Ishikawa Takuboku. Takuboku was from Iwate, too, but he wrote his poems in a literary standard Japanese. Workshop participants translated his poems into their regional dialect, called “Kesengo.” A collection of 100 Takuboku poems with their translations was published in 2017.

In this documentary film, a companion to the book, Arai interviews five women from Ofunato, ages 79 to 100, who have survived as many as three tsunamis in the past century! They talk about their childhood memories, their fortitude in the face of war and natural disaster, and the extraordinary depth of spoken Kesengo. Director Suzuki Yoi’s rich poetic sensibility offers a vision of humanity in all its complexity, as the film weaves together their Takuboku translations, poetry by the women themselves, and local songs. Their stories and their language will become a part of everyone who listens to their voices.

Distributed by Arai Takako.
<http://www.mi-te-press.net>



The Silence

A film by Park Soonam. 2017. Japan / Korea. 117 minutes.

Country/region featured: Japan / Korea

Q&A chat session with Park Soo-nam, Park Maeui, and Shota Ogawa (translator)

Thu, 03/25/2021 – 10:00a EST

The Silence narrates the 30 years' struggle of fifteen "comfort women"—former sex slaves by the Imperial Japanese Army during WWII—for recognition and reparation. It is a vivid and down-to-earth testimony of the comfort women history, in a documentary which took Director Park 20 years to make in Japan. This film is the record of struggles carried on by the victims of comfort women, including Ms. Lee Oksun who reveals a deep resentment endured for half a century.

Distributed by Ariran Production.

<https://nutigafu.wixsite.com/park-soonam/english>

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Three Films from the Mingei Film Archive

Directed by Marty Gross. 2020. Canada. 53 minutes.

Country/region featured: Korea, Okinawa, Japan

Q&A chat session with Marty Gross

Thu, 03/25/2021 - 10:30a EST

As an introduction to the Mingei Film Archive, this film includes restored and enhanced versions of, "Potters from 'In the Land of the Morning Calm'", "Mingei Potters of Okinawa" and "Onda 1954".

The Mingei Film Archive is building the definitive audio-visual media resource on the Mingei pottery-making traditions for craftspeople, collectors, students, historians and the general public. Through restored film and new commentary from scholars and makers, the archive charts the development of the core ideas of the Mingei Movement, and traces its roots in Japanese Buddhist philosophy.

Distributed by Marty Gross Films.
mingeifilm.martygrossfilms.com

Edo Avant Garde

A film by Linda Hoaglund. 2019. Japan / United States. 83 minutes.

Country/region featured: Japan / United States

Q&A chat session with Linda Hoaglund
Fri, 03/26/2021 - 11:30a EST

Edo Avant Garde reveals the untold story of how Japanese artists of the Edo era (1603 -1868) set the stage for the "modern art" movement in the West. During the Edo era, bold artists innovated abstraction, minimalism, surrealism and the illusion of 3-D. Their originality is most striking in images of the natural world depicted with gold leaf on large-scale folding screens. To capture the dynamism, scale and meticulous details of the art, Hoaglund worked with Japan's Academy Award-winning cinematographer, Kasamatsu Norimichi, and filmed masterpieces in museum and private collections across the U.S. and Japan.

Distributed by *Edo Avant Garde LLC*.
<http://www.edoavantgarde.com/>

Japan Invented Modern Art



Every Day Is a Holiday

A film by Theresa Loong. 2020. USA/Japan/Malaysia. 56 minutes.

Country/region featured: USA/Japan/Malaysia

Q&A Chat Session with Theresa Loong
Fri, 03/26/2021 - 1:30p EST

Chinese-American filmmaker Theresa Loong explores her father's time as a POW in WWII Japan, his subsequent quest to become an American, and the birth of his optimistic philosophy. "Every Day Is a Holiday" includes footage and stories from Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan and Korea.

Distributed by *FORM360*
<http://www.everydayisaholiday.com>

Jeronimo

A film by Joseph Juhn. 2019. Cuba / South Korea / United States. 93 minutes.

Country/region featured: Cuba, Asia, United States, Canada

Q&A chat session with Joseph Juhn

Thu, 03/25/2021 - 2:30p EST

Born in 1926 to Korean indentured servant parents in Cuba, Jeronimo Lim becomes the first Korean to enroll in university in the same school and year as Fidel Castro. Jeronimo joins the Cuban revolution and later becomes a Vice Minister in the Castro government, crossing paths with Fidel and Che Guevara. However, after being disillusioned with the unfulfilled promises of communism, and after visiting his homeland, Korea, in 1995, Jeronimo becomes a changed man and dedicates the remaining years reconnecting to his Korean roots and singlehandedly rebuilding the Korean community in Cuba.

Distributed by *Diaspora Film Production* (USA) / *Connect Pictures* (Korea).

<http://www.jeronimothemovie.com/>

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A Virgin Vote: In a Time of a Pandelection

A film by Udan Fernando. 2020. Sri Lanka. 12 minutes.
Country/region featured: Sri Lanka

Q&A chat session with Udan Fernando
Wed, 03/24/2021 - 10:30a EST

A 53-year-old man arrives at the voting booth for the first time in his life, to vote for an election of the country that he holds dear to him. He crosses the ballot card with a fervent hope and resolve that his country deserves an overall transformation, including a new constitution, new leadership that drives the country towards progress and a fresh political culture that unites the people towards progress. Upon casting his maiden vote, he goes for a stroll to discover an area he had not hitherto seen in his own neighborhood and of himself. He wonders if the vote he just casted is by chance or choice. Perplexed by this question and lost in a labyrinth of newly discovered neighborhood and his own thoughts on democracy, motherland and patriotism, he fumbles to find his way back home. A story of one man's self-discovery and his quest to find his political self in a climate of uncertainty amidst forces of misfortune and misery created by the recent pandemic.

Distributed by *ROAR Global*.
www.roar.global



Bread and Belonging

A film by Sonia Filinto. 2020. India. 50 minutes.
Country/region featured: India

Q&A chat session with Sonia Filinto
Wed, 03/24/2021 - 10:00a EST

As Goa, India's smallest state, comes to grip with growing migration, three stories unfold around pão, Goa's unique bread. Stories of people dealing with migration, changing culture and the ever present need to earn a living.

Distributed by *Street Katha*.
www.breadandbelonging.com

Half Widow

Directed by Danish Renzu. Written by Gaya Bhola and Danish Renzu.

Produced by Gaya Art Films & Renzu Films. 2019. India. 91 minutes.

Country/region featured: Kashmir

Q&A chat session with Gaya Bhola and Rhonda Leal.

Wed, 03/24/2021 - 1:30p EST

Amid the backdrop of the Kashmiri conflict, a young woman must come to grips with the disappearance of her doting husband and embarks on a harrowing journey of self-discovery.

Distributed by *Rock on Music, UK.*

<https://www.rockonmusicuk.com/about-us>

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Singing A Great Dream: The Revolutionary Songs and Life of Khusiram Pakhrin

A film by Anna Stirr and Bhakta Syangtan. 2019.

Nepal / United States. 39 minutes.

Country/region featured: Nepal

Q&A chat session with Anna Stirr

Thu, 03/25/2021 - 4:30p EST

People's singer, songwriter, and Maoist cultural leader Khusiram Pakhrin's musical journey through nearly 4 decades of political movements and revolution in Nepal. This is the first film about Nepal's revolutionary singer-songwriter Khusiram Pakhrin, and so far the only film that focuses on the songs of Nepal's Maoist movement. From the 1980s through 2006, their live performances were often banned and rarely photographed or recorded; hence we rely on Khusiram Pakhrin and his fellow performers for oral history and rare photos and footage of underground performances.

Distributed by the filmmaker.

www.singingagreatdream.com

The Last Man

Directed by Dakxinkumar Chhara. Produced by *Shatterproof Productions*.

2020. United Kingdom. 61 minutes.

Country/region featured: India

Q&A chat session with director Dakxinkumar Chhara, and producers Dr. Manisha Maganji and Naveen Judah

Tue, 03/23/2021 - 10:30a EST

The Last Man is a documentary filmed on human condition of manual scavengers and the role of caste system in Indian societies defining the destiny of many poor and low class communities within the subcontinent. Manual scavenging is a term used in India for the manual removal of untreated human excreta from sewers, bucket toilets or pit latrines by hand with buckets and shovels. In complete Violation of basic human rights and dignity. Incredibly they belong to one specific community now known as the Valmikis who have been engaged in this occupation for hundreds of years. India has succeeded in sending its mission to the Mars with technological and engineering advancements, but India's caste-based social system has failed to stop sending human beings into the pit full of muck, poisonous gases and infectious diseases. 'The Last Man' aims to show the ground reality through everyday life of manual scavengers engaged in different types of manual scavenging, endangering and losing their lives in cleaning the choked sewers, and manholes.

Distributed by *Shatterproof Productions*.

<https://thelastman.shatterproofproductions.com/>

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A is for Agustin

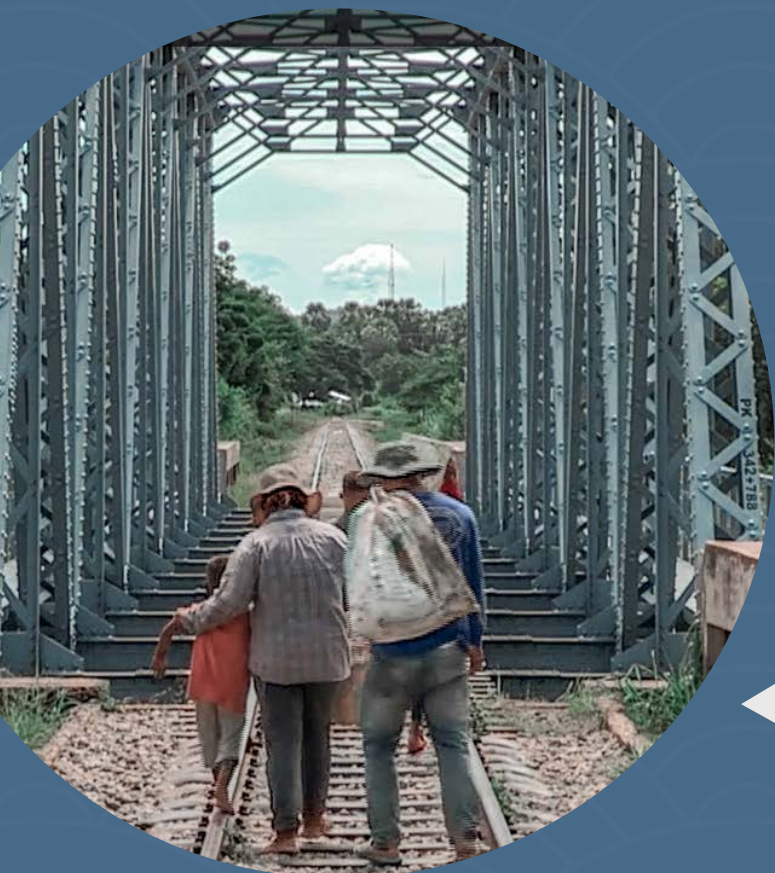
A film by Grace Pimentel Simbulan. 2019.
Philippines. 73 minutes.
Country/region featured: Zambales, Philippines

Q&A chat session with Grace Pimentel Simbulan.
Wed, 03/24/2021 - 11:30a EST

Living in a remote corner of the Philippine islands, Agustin is a tribesman who loves to sing, but never had the opportunity to learn to read or write. When his boss cheats him out of his wages seemingly for the thousandth time, 40-year old Agustin decides to enroll in grade 1. Over the next six years, however, Agustin becomes increasingly torn between two realities —the children's world in school, and the increasing challenges of the world outside. Presented in an immersive style, the film invites audiences to hope and dream with Agustin, and to understand the harsh reality that makes his optimism —and the optimism of many indigenous in his situation —ultimately so fragile.

Distributed by the filmmaker.
<http://www.aisforagustinfilm.com/>

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No Choice

A film by Roda Din. 2020. Cambodia. 11 minutes.
Country/region featured: Cambodia

Q&A chat session with Sopheap CHEA.
Friday, 03/26/2021 - 10:00 AM EST

Mrs. Roun and her family were working in Thailand, but the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic required them to return to Cambodia. Now, she and her husband work on a construction site at the Teuk Thla Bridge in Serey Sophoan in Banteay Meanchey province. However, J Roun and her husband are forced to bring their three children — ages 4, 12 and 14 — with them to work every day because they cannot afford to send them to school.

Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center:

One of the main objectives of Phnom Penh-based Bophana Center is offering young Cambodians vocational media production training as well as professional support. Archivists, film and audiovisual technicians as well as young filmmakers have been trained at the Bophana Center. AAS Film Expo is pleased to present three young filmmakers representing documentaries supported by the center, which represent the archives of tomorrow.

Distributed by *Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center*
<http://bophana.org/movies/no-choice/>

On the Move

A film by Minea HENG. 2019. Cambodia.
12 minutes.

Country/region featured: Cambodia

Q&A chat session with Sopheap CHEA.
Fri, 03/26/2021 - 10:00a EST

In Banteay Meanchey province, Mom Beng, Vai Sok and their daughter Chanra are homeless and have to move their temporary shelter as they get evicted from the land where they settle. They use their cart both to move their belongings and to offer delivery services. Mom would like to go and work in Thailand but Vai feels happy as it is, with his family around.

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Distributed by *Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center*
<http://bophana.org/movies/on-the-move/>



Subali-Sugriwa: Battle of the Monkey Kings - The Documentary

A film by Nezia AZMI. Produced by *Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai'i*.

2018. United States. 78 minutes.

Country/region featured: Indonesia, Bali

Q&A chat session with Nezia AZMI.
Wed, 03/24/2021 - 4:30p EST

In conjunction with the 2020 Kennedy Theatre wayang listrik production of the Last King of Bali, this documentary on the 2015-2016 Balinese wayang listrik production of Subali-Sugriwa: Battle of the Monkey Kings, showcases the unique Asian Theatre Program at the *University of Hawai'i*. The film takes a viewer through the 4-month process of rehearsals and training to produce a professional award-winning theatre production with a primarily student cast and crew and a core team of Balinese guest artists. The majority of the cast had not studied any Balinese performance nor had ever been to Bali.

Distributed by *Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Hawai'i*
<https://www.cseashawaii.org/projects/theatre-performances/wayang-listrik/>



Wild Honey: Caring for Bees in a Divided Land

A film by Lisa Palmer. 2019. Australia. 30 minutes.
Country/region featured: Timor-Leste and Indonesia border

Q&A chat session with Lisa Palmer
Wed, 03/24/2021 - 5:30p EST

For more than a century, the island of Timor has been divided by a colonial border, a border that has displaced and separated the people of Lookeu, dividing their land, water and history. Timor's migratory wild honey bees challenge this division. This film portrays a border community who, despite changing farming practices and increasing commodification, are determined to maintain the bees' movement across the region and preserve their shared identity.

Distributed by *Ronin Films*.
<http://www.roninfilms.com.au/>



Worry

A film by Chhouk Loeurn and Pring Proel. 2019.
Cambodia. 15 minutes.
Country/region featured: Cambodia

Q&A chat session with Sopheap CHEA.
Fri, 03/26/2021 - 10:00a EST

Phuon Keo lives with her two grandsons who joined her in the province of Banteay Meanchey because their mother's husband, who lives in Koh Kong, is an alcoholic and treats them badly. She would like to be able to reunite the family to give her grandchildren a chance to go to school, but her entourage advises her to stop thinking about her daughter and only care for her two grandchildren.

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Distributed by *Bophana Audiovisual Resource Center*
<http://bophana.org/movies/on-the-move/>

AEMS

Established in 1998, the **ASIAN EDUCATIONAL MEDIA SERVICE (AEMS)** of the **CENTER FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC STUDIES (CEAPS)** at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign promotes the understanding of Asian cultures and peoples by assisting K-16 educators in finding and using multimedia resources for learning and teaching.

AEMS serves educators nationally and internationally through its lending library, media database, and film programming. CEAPS, a Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center, stewards campus wide educational and scholarly activities with respect to East Asia, Southeast Asia and greater Pacific region. Our online resource Digital Asia offers augmented versions of contemporary documentary films about China, Japan, and Korea for K-12 education.

www.aems.illinois.edu | www.ceaps.illinois.edu

AAS

The **ASSOCIATION FOR ASIAN STUDIES (AAS)** A non-profit dedicated to the advancement of the field of Asian Studies through international exchange, networking, publications, research support, and career development. With approximately 6,500 members worldwide, representing all regions and countries of Asia and all academic disciplines, the AAS is the largest organization of its kind.

Through its publications, online resources, regional conferences, and annual conference, the AAS provides its members with a unique and invaluable professional network.

www.asianstudies.org

AAS 2021 Film Expo Credits

Curator:

Jason Finkelman, Director, Global Arts Performance Initiatives; Event Programming, *Asian Educational Media Service*

Film Reviewers:

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