



For Immediate Release  
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## **Celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month With WORLD Channel**

*A series of featured documentaries showcase the Asian American Pacific Islander community and its culture in May*

Boston, MA (May 3, 2021) – WORLD Channel, which shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming, will celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with a series of featured documentary films in May sharing the culturally significant stories that represent the more than 20 million Asian or Pacific Islander Americans in the United States, according to the U.S. Census. The films will broadcast on WORLD Channel and stream on [WORLDChannel.org](http://WORLDChannel.org).

"In today's climate, it is more important than ever to foster understanding of the various cultures encompassing the Asian American and Pacific Islander community" said Chris Hastings, Executive Producer of WORLD Channel at GBH in Boston. "WORLD Channel provides a platform for sharing stories of marginalized communities, helping to break down barriers between cultures and races. We hope that people watch these films and take away a bit more understanding of the rich culture of others."

As part of the month-long initiative, WORLD Channel will be premiering four films as part of the *America ReFramed* series.

- ***America ReFramed: Far East Deep South***

*Far East Deep South* follows Charles Chiu and his family as they travel from California to Mississippi to find the grave of Charles' father, K.C. Lou. Their search leads to stunning revelations about their family, and they get a crash course on the history of Chinese immigrants in the segregated South. Through encounters with local residents and historians, this Chinese American family not only discovers their family's important role in the Mississippi Delta, but they also learn about the symbiotic relationship between the Black and Chinese communities during the Jim Crow era. [\*\*\*Far East Deep South\*\*\*](#) premieres on Tuesday, May 4 at 8:00 p.m. ET on WORLD Channel

- ***America ReFramed: Curtain Up!***

Another *America ReFramed* film featured in May, *CURTAIN UP!* follows the theater club of PS 124 in New York City's Chinatown as they prepare for a big musical production of "Frozen Kids." For over a decade, the school's theater group has been the only Asian

American team to compete in the renowned Junior Theater Festival. Their performance at the gathering of young thespians from across the world earned PS 124 the opportunity to stage this new adaptation of the film "Frozen." [Curtain Up!](#) premieres on Tuesday, May 11 at 8:00 p.m. ET on WORLD Channel

- **America ReFramed: FIRST VOTE**

FIRST VOTE is a character-driven verité documentary with unparalleled access to a diverse cross section of politically engaged Chinese Americans: a gun-toting Tea Party-favorite candidate courting GOP votes in the South; a podcaster in Ohio who became a citizen in order to vote for Trump; an outspoken journalist confronting Chinese Americans for Trump after moving to a battleground state; and a University of North Carolina professor teaching about race and racism in the U.S. Until 1952, federal law barred immigrants of Asian descent from becoming U.S. citizens and voting. Today, Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in the United States. Directed by Yi Chen, a Chinese immigrant and first-time voter herself, First Vote is a must-watch and rare long-form look at the diverse Asian American electorate. [First Vote](#) airs on Tuesday, May 18 at 8:00 p.m. ET on WORLD Channel

- **America ReFramed: Hamtramck, USA**

Filling out the May schedule is *Hamtramck, USA*, a documentary exploring life and democracy in America's first Muslim-majority city. Hamtramck, Michigan was established by German immigrants and thrived in the 20th century with an influx of Polish Catholic people drawn to the industrial boom of America. In recent years, Bangladeshi and Yemeni Muslim immigrants have revitalized Hamtramck, making it the first Muslim-majority city in the United States. The city prides itself on this diversity. However, as the election season begins, Hamtramck splits into factions, as each community jockey for representation in city hall. [Hamtramck, USA](#) premieres on Tuesday, May 25 at 8:00 p.m. ET on WORLD Channel

In addition to the film premieres, WORLD Channel will be hosting a series of events to support the programming. On May 7 at 1PM ET, join America ReFramed filmmakers Larissa Lam and Baldwin Chiu of *Far East Deep South*; Hui Tong and Kelly Ng of *Curtain Up*; Justin Feltman and Razi Jafri of *Hamtrack, USA*; and Yi Chen of *First Vote* for the ["Meet the Makers: AAPI Stories & Filmmakers"](#) event. The filmmakers will be discussing their films and stories of the Asian American diaspora. Register for this free virtual event at [WORLD Channel Events](#).

On Thursday, May 13, WORLD Channel is partnering with Boston public media producer GBH for **a forum on the rising violence against Asian Americans**. Moderated by John C. Yang, President and Executive Director of Asian Americans Advancing Justice, the panel will include Massachusetts Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins, Sovanna Pouy, Executive Director Of The Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association of Greater Lowell, Inc., Dr. Catherine Vuky, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology and Director of Asian Mental Health Program at William James College, and Ryan Doan Nguyen, Harvard College freshman and lead

organizer of Stop Asian Hate Boston Rally. The event will also feature an exclusive conversation with author Amy Tan. This event is free but [registration is required](#).

Finally, May marks the tenth consecutive season of [Pacific Heartbeat](#). Produced in partnership with Pacific Islanders in Communications (PIC), the anthology series that provides viewers a glimpse of the real Pacific—its people, cultures, languages, music, and contemporary issues. From revealing exposés to intimate personal stories, the series features a diverse array of programs that will draw viewers into the heart and soul of Pacific Island culture. In 2021, the series will feature four new documentary films recounting diverse aspects of Pacific lives, and two encore presentations that delve into the celebrated spiritual and cultural world of hula—from Hawai'i to Tokyo and beyond.

Pacific Heartbeat is presented by Pacific Islanders in Communications in partnership with PBS Hawai'i, and is distributed by Boston-based American Public Television (APT) and broadcast nationally on WORLD Channel (distributed by APT in partnership with WGBH & WNET), in addition to hundreds of scheduled broadcasts on local PBS stations. Films are selected each year from among numerous submissions, including projects funded by PIC with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Check out our [Asian American Pacific Islander Stories](#) collection of films and features and the [Asian American Pacific Islander Month Viewer's Guide](#) for a full listing of premieres for the month.

For more information about these films or any other, please visit [www.WORLDchannel.org/](http://www.WORLDchannel.org/) or follow **#AAPIstories** on WORLD Channel via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

### **About WORLD Channel**

WORLD shares the best of public media in news, documentaries and programming. WORLD's original series examine the issues and amplify the voices of those often ignored by mainstream media. The multicast 24/7 channel helps audiences understand conflicts, movements and cultures from around the globe. Its original work has won a Peabody Award, an Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award, a National News and Documentary Emmy Award and many others honoring diversity of content and makers. WORLD is carried by 176 member stations in markets representing over 70% of US TV households. Funding for WORLD Channel is provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts and Artworks. WORLD is produced by GBH in partnership with WNET and is distributed by American Public Television (APT). Find out more at [WORLDChannel.org](http://WORLDChannel.org).