

The 22nd Reelworld Film Festival announces **GOLDEN DELICIOUS** directed by fast-rising filmmaker **Jason Karman** as its Opening Night Film

The film is a deeply moving coming-of-age story following a teen caught between his father's expectations, his girlfriend's dreams, and his newly awakened feelings for the boy next door

GOLDEN DELICIOUS will open the 22nd Edition of Reelworld Film Festival on **October 12th**

Toronto, ON – September 6, 2022

The **Reelworld Film Festival** officially announces that its opening night gala film at the 22nd Edition of the Festival will be Vancouver-based Asian LGBTQ writer, director and producer **Jason Karman**'s debut feature **GOLDEN DELICIOUS** on **October 12th** at 7:00 PM at **The Royal Theatre (608 College St)**.

Passes are now available for purchase at www.reelworld.ca/festival

GOLDEN DELICIOUS is a deeply moving coming-of-age story following the journey of Jake, an Asian-Canadian teen caught between his father's expectations and his girlfriend's dreams discovers newly awakened feelings for the boy next door.

Everyone wants something from high school senior Jake: his father is pushing him to try out for the basketball team – an abandoned dream of his own – and his girlfriend wants to take their relationship to the next level. But it's not until Aleks, an openly gay teen with a love for basketball, moves in across the street that Jake begins to struggle with his own desires. To get closer to Aleks, Jake devotes himself to making the basketball team – only to realize it's not basketball he really wants.

Meanwhile, Jake finds out that his father is having an affair, which leaves him questioning his entire family foundation. Distraught and confused, Jake pulls away - until he's finally outed as gay. With the truth in the open, Jake and his father come to terms with the reality of their relationship and expectations for each other. At last able to find the courage to be himself, Jake is ready to face the future with his family and friends by his side.

"Golden Delicious is the first feature-length movie that I am directing, and it empowers me to share and commiserate on experiences that are challenging to talk about openly." said **Jason Karman**. *"Golden Delicious offers teachable moments by showing us possibilities in leading and sometimes failing; the feature-length format gives me the necessary space to examine how we conduct ourselves and dares us to ask if we can do better. Feelings of shame have largely prevented diaspora communities of gay Asian men from finding themselves and each other desirable. Golden Delicious shows that if we embrace who we are, we would all be happier."*

"Jason Karman brings a fresh perspective to coming-of-age stories with his feature debut, Golden Delicious. Rarely do you see the interior lives of queer Asian boys take centre stage and explored with such care without shunning away from the messiness of youthful sexual exploration. For this reason, Karman's meditative yet sweet film was unanimously selected by the programming team as our opening night film." said the **Reelworld Programming Team**.

The film stars **Cardi Wong, Chris Carson, Parmiss Sehat, Ryan Mah, Leah Wong, Claudia Kai, Jesse Hyde, Hunter Dillon, Zavien Garrett, Jeff Joseph, and Kameron Louangxay**. **GOLDEN DELICIOUS** is directed by **Jason Karman** and produced by **Kristyn Stilling**, with screenwriting by **Gorman Lee** and cinematography by **Alfonso Chin**.

The 22nd Edition of the **2022 Reelworld Film Festival** will take place from **October 12th – 18th, 2022**. The Festival will continue to showcase a wide variety of genres in narrative and documentary features and shorts.

With a focus on diverse works by diverse people, the **Reelworld Film Festival** showcases and supports Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour producers, directors, screenwriters, actors and all on and off-screen talent. They connect with agents, casting directors, broadcasters and distributors, invite them to the festival, and help them find new Canadian talent. The **Reelworld Film Festival** programming reflects the strong and authentic voices from across Canada and features 100%

Canadian Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour talent. As the country's largest socially impactful film festival, **Reelworld** has reached a diverse audience of over 350,000 engaged individuals to date.

Works selected for the festival will be screened and considered for awards by an independent jury of professional filmmakers and industry executives. This year the festival will increase the cash amount for two significant awards. Films in competition, which are Canadian or Ontario premieres, will be eligible for the cash awards of \$25,000 for *Outstanding Feature Film* and \$10,000 for *Outstanding Short Film*. **Reelworld Film Festival** is the only film festival in Canada with a mission and mandate that continues to support only Canadian filmmakers who are Indigenous, Black, Asian and People of Colour. It is also a Canadian Screen Award-qualifying festival.

The jury-selected awards granted at the festival include *Outstanding Feature Film Award*, *Outstanding Short Film Award*, *Standout Feature Film Producer*, *Standout Short Film Producer*, *Standout Feature Film Director*, *Standout Short Film Director*, *Standout Feature Film Actress*, *Standout Short Film Actress*, *Standout Feature Film Actor*, *Standout Short Film Actor*, *Standout Feature Film Writer*, *Standout Short Film Writer*, *Standout Feature Film Cinematographer*, *Standout Short Film Cinematographer*. There is also one *Audience Choice Award*, which goes to the highest-rated film by the audience.

About Reelworld

Reelworld was founded in 2000 by award-winning actress and producer **Tonya Williams** to advance opportunities for Canadians who are Black, Indigenous, Asian, South Asian, and People of Colour in the screen industries by providing professional development and advocating for racial equity in Canadian content and production.

Reelworld Screen Institute, a non-profit, provides training programs and presents the acclaimed **Reelworld Film Festival**, which celebrates stories by racialized Canadians. Providing access to opportunities is core to **Reelworld**, and **Access Reelworld** is Canada's leading hiring platform for racialized crews and talent. **Reelworld Foundation**, a registered charity, is transforming the industry by creating mechanisms that hold systems accountable for greater equity.

Reelworld Film Festival would like to thank all the sponsors, partners and funders who share our vision and values: **TD Bank Group (Opening Night sponsor)**, **Telefilm, CBC (Shorts Program sponsor)**, **Canada Media Fund, Canada Council for the Arts, Govt of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Ontario Creates, Toronto Arts Council, City of Toronto, Creative BC, Music Publishers Canada, Blue Ant Media, Shaftesbury, DGC National, Rogers Group of Funds, Canadian Media Producers Association, Independent Production Fund, AFBS, Hollywood Suite, ACTRA National, ACTRA Toronto, Writers Guild of Canada and FEVA TV.**

This year's media and community partners are **Bell Media, Rogers Sports & Media, Playback, Mogul Productions, SuperChannel, Afroglobal Television, CHCH, Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, Women in the Director's Chair, Women in Film and Television Toronto, the Black Academy, AstroLab Studios, Entertainment Partners Canada and Chargefield.**

Reelworld Screen Institute would also like to thank our 2022 year-round sponsors and funders: **CMF, Telefilm, Govt of Canada, RBC, WarnerBros Discovery Access, Bell Media, NBCUniversal, TVO, Bell Fund, Ontario Creates, Rogers Group of Funds, Ontario Arts Council, NABET 700-M UNIFOR, Meridian Artists Agency, Miziwe Biik and DGC Ontario.**

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