

Kartemquin Films Announces the Peng Zhao and Cherry Chen Fund for AAPI Voices

New Initiative Will Support Filmmakers Producing Documentaries Elevating the Experiences of AAPI Communities

CHICAGO, Apr. 4, 2022 – The non-profit documentary filmmaking organization Kartemquin Films today announced a substantial commitment from Peng Zhao, CEO of Citadel Securities, and his wife, Cherry Chen, to support AAPI documentarians and the development of high-impact stories that reflect the varied experiences of their communities.

“Documentaries have the power to open our eyes to new perspectives,” said Peng Zhao and Cherry Chen. “We believe supporting filmmakers who can tell the unique stories of the AAPI community will advance cultural dialogue and help build the understanding required to create a more inclusive future for us all.”

“Peng and Cherry share our belief that the stories we share shape the world we live in,” said Kartemquin Executive Director Betsy Leonard. “We are grateful for their commitment to bringing these important stories to life and to our mission of empowering socially-responsible filmmakers to produce documentaries that promote cultural exchange and community engagement.”

The fund will span across two years and four funding cycles and will include both co-production awards through an application process and seed funding for projects in early development through open calls.

This effort builds on Mr. Zhao and Ms. Chen’s longstanding commitment to accelerating opportunity and prosperity for the 23 million members of the AAPI community in the United States. Mr. Zhao is a founding board member of The Asian American Foundation (TAAF), which has become a catalyzing force for improving AAPI advocacy, power, and representation across American society.

Mr. Zhao and Ms. Chen have also convened and funded a variety of other initiatives focused on supporting their home community of Chicago and elevating AAPI voices, including through their support of the award-winning documentary “Finding Yingying,” which will be screened at the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago on April 9 as part of the Asian American Showcase.

About Kartemquin Films

Sparking democracy through documentary since 1966, Kartemquin is a collaborative community that empowers documentary makers who create stories that foster a more engaged and just society. Kartemquin's films have received four Academy Award® nominations, and won six Emmys® and three Peabody Awards, among several other major prizes. In 2019, Kartemquin was honored with an Institutional Peabody Award for "its commitment to unflinching documentary filmmaking and telling an American history rooted in social justice and the stories of the marginalized." Recognized as a leading advocate for independent public media, Kartemquin has helped hundreds of artists via its filmmaker development programs and championing of documentary. To learn more about Kartemquin Films, visit www.kartemquin.com.

Contact

Whitney Spencer, Director of Marketing
whitney@kartemquin.com
773.270.0460