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DOCUMENTARY PROJECT “K-TOWN ‘92” EXAMINES 1992 L.A. RIOTS 25 YEARS LATER

--An interactive documentary website and short film reveal new insights into the conflict through untold stories of diverse Angelenos in LA’s iconic Koreatown, then and now—

--Short Film, “K-TOWN ‘92 Reporters” to launch on Facebook Live, and broadcast nationally on the WORLD Channel in May--

(Los Angeles)—Peabody award-winning independent filmmaker [Grace Lee](#) will launch a groundbreaking documentary project to explore the impact and legacy of the 1992 Los Angeles riots on the upcoming 25th anniversary. Launching April 27, 2017, [K-TOWN ‘92](#) will present a collection of new and untold stories—including new interviews and riveting archival news footage in an immersive online experience, alongside a new short film that will premiere on Facebook Live on April 29, 2017, in partnership with the WORLD Channel, who will air the short nationally during the month of May.

Interactive documentary website:

The new website allows users to create their own media experiences through what Lee calls a “deconstructed documentary” approach. “There are thousands of untold stories about the 1992 civil unrest, but mainstream media often falls back on those which are reinforced by the news footage from that time. I wanted to provide a process of discovery for new perspectives,” said Lee, “and an interactive experience to power their journey—that’s our goal with K-TOWN ‘92.”

The website will feature new interviews from a variety of locations around L.A. that surface stories of the civil unrest that were overlooked by the media coverage at the time. Curated selections of archival TV news footage will round out the experience. Visitors to K-TOWN ‘92 will select from a mosaic of characters and prompts that enable them to explore the footage clip by clip — building their own documentary as they go.

“The main question for me, is who gets to tell the story of Los Angeles in 1992?” asks Lee. “The explosion of anger and disorder didn’t begin with Rodney King. We wanted to understand the larger forces that drove the civil unrest and expand our understanding of it from communities of color whose stories have not been widely heard.”

Like most people, Lee saw the upheaval unfold through live television news coverage. “Anyone watching TV that week remembers the turbulence and uncertainty. You kept clicking channels, looking for a different angle or more information,” added Lee. “That’s part of the dynamic of the site; everyone’s experience of the content will be a little different.”

Short Film:

As a companion piece to the interactive documentary website, Lee’s team has produced a short documentary film, ***K-TOWN ‘92 Reporters***, (15 min.) that explores media coverage at the city’s paper of record during the 1992 civil unrest. At that time, Hector Tobar, Tammerlin Drummond, and John

Lee reported from the field for the *Los Angeles Times*. Twenty-five years later, they revisit their stories and impressions of those tumultuous events, and reflect on the media coverage they helped to create.

K-TOWN '92 Reporters will premiere exclusively on Facebook Live on April 29th at 10:00 am Pacific, presented by the WORLD Channel, who will broadcast the film nationally during the month of May (dates and times TBD).

Koreatown in Context

Despite its proximity to the epicenter of the 1992 riots, [Koreatown](#) and its residents were largely missing from extensive news analysis of the day—and from the anniversary retrospectives to come. Twenty-five years later, Koreatown boasts a growing population and a national pop-culture identity. Immigrants from Central America, Mexico, Bangladesh, or from elsewhere in the U.S. live alongside Korean Americans, who have never been a majority community in the neighborhood.

“Koreatown is a community that is often overlooked and mischaracterized — not just in 1992, but today as well,” said Lee. “It’s one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the United States and a microcosm of greater Los Angeles. So, by centering the project here, I wanted to ensure that a fresh constellation of voices -- namely those of Latino and Asian Americans -- would be explored. I live in a city that is largely Latino and Asian — yet we rarely hear these perspectives, even today.”

Community Events:

In addition to the website and short film, K-TOWN '92 is also leading community engagement initiatives stretching across Los Angeles. K-TOWN '92 will be collaborating with select community organizations to create special events for community members and those interested in continuing the conversation in person.

Additionally, K-TOWN '92 will be presented at an event curated by the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture on April 27, 2017 in Washington, D.C.

Funders and Partners:

Funding for K-TOWN '92 has been provided by JustFilms/Ford Foundation.

California Humanities is proud to support Grace Lee’s interactive web documentary K-TOWN 92 through the California Documentary Project. By reframing the 1992 Los Angeles Riots through the lens of the Korean American community's experience, K-TOWN 92 is going to offer new perspective on this not-too-distant history.

K-TOWN '92 is a presentation of the Center for Asian American Media with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Additional support was provided by Latino Public Broadcasting and the National Black Programming Consortium with funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

WORLD Channel is produced and distributed by WGBH/Boston, American Public Television (APT) and WNET/New York in association with Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA). WORLD is distributed by APT and is now carried by 66 licensees/148 stations representing 61.16% of U.S. TV households.

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