



BACKGROUND

Updated 6/14/22

OVERVIEW

Forty years after the murder of Vincent Chin and the miscarriage of justice that followed, amid a climate of anti-Asian hate similar to today's, a four-day commemoration will be held in Detroit and virtually, June 16-19, 2022.

KEY EVENTS

From film screenings to panel discussions to public art and performances, numerous events are planned for the Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance & Rededication. For the most updated schedule visit www.VincentChin.org. Notable events include:

- **Complicating Narratives: Diverse Voices of the American Midwest
2022 Midwest Asian American Documentary Filmmakers Convening**

Thursday, June 16 - Friday, June 17
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
International Institute of Metro Detroit

The first ever Midwest Asian American Documentary Filmmakers Convening will bring together artists, filmmakers, and experts in the field to discuss strategic collaborations and opportunities for filmmaking, media arts organizations, and Asian American documentary filmmakers. *This event is by invitation only.*

- **Vincent Chin 40th Commemorative Film Series**

Thursday, June 16 - Friday, June 17
7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.
Detroit Film Theater

The Commemorative Film Series will include screenings of two important documentaries that honor the legacy of Vincent and Lily Chin, co-presented with the Freep Film Festival, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and American Documentary/POV.

The first film gives voice to new generations fighting for a more just America, and the second film is an iconic documentary that has influenced generations of filmmakers. *Bad Axe* by David Siev will screen on June 16th, and the recently restored Academy Award-nominated *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* by Christine Choy and Renee Tajima-Peña will

screen on June 17th. *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* was restored by The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Film Archive and The Film Foundation, in association with the Museum of Chinese in America. Restoration funding provided by the Hobson/Lucas Family Foundation, with additional support provided by Todd Phillips.

Filmmakers and guests will be in attendance.

Day 1 – Thursday, June 16: *Bad Axe*

Filmmaker Q&A with Director David Siev & Family, moderated by Thúy Trần

Day 2 – Friday, June 17: *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*

Filmmaker Q&A with Director Renee Tajima-Peña, Associate Producer Nancy Tong, Executive Producer Juanita Anderson, moderated by Donald Young.

- **National Conversation on Asian Americans, America, and Democracy**

Saturday, June 18

1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. ET

Detroit Film Theater – Live Program & Virtual Livestream

Join us for a community watch party of the pre-recorded program about American democracy, racial justice and Asian Americans. This will be a cornerstone event of the four days of Remembrance and Rededication to Justice, featuring a thoughtful exchange with Michael Eric Dyson, Min Jin Lee, and Helen Zia, moderated by Amna Nawaz of PBS NewsHour. The program will include live opening remarks and post Q&A with the co-founders of American Citizens for Justice. Moderated by Stephen Gong.

- **Celebrating Asian American Arts, Community & Culture**

Saturday, June 18

7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. ET

Detroit Film Theater & Virtual Livestream

Join Asian American artists and activists for an engaging evening of performance embodying the collaboration, healing, and spirit of unity necessary to push our communities forward. Through song, poetry and movement, these artists affirm our vow to future generations.

Performers include poet Frances Kai-Hwa Wang, Electronic Music Ensemble of Wayne State (EMEWS) directed by Joo Won Park, dancer Joori Jung, and Nobuko Miyamoto, singer, composer, artist and activist, joined by producer, composer Derek Nakamoto, bassist Juan Perez, and singer and percussionist Asiyah Ayubbi.

- **Community Dialogues: Remembrance and Rededication**

Sunday, June 19
11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. ET
Detroit Film Theater & Virtual Livestream

Two historic panel discussions – one that reunites original Vincent Chin activists and one that brings together emerging leaders – will examine where the modern Asian American civil rights movement started and where it is going.

Panel 1 - Remembrance

Richard Lui of NBC News and MSNBC moderates the Remembrance panel. This panel will reflect on the beginning of American Citizens for Justice (ACJ), the genesis of the justice movement for Vincent Chin, and the significant and relevant takeaways from the coalition building and legal battles that occurred 40 years ago.

Panelists include ACJ co-founders Helen Zia, Roland Hwang, and James Shimoura; Daphne Kwok, Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and AAPI Audience Strategy at AARP, and former executive director at OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates; and David Inoue, Executive Director of Japanese American Citizens League (JAACL).

Panel 2 - Rededication

University of Michigan Assistant Professor Ian Shin moderates the Rededication panel featuring community leaders who will discuss what the AAPI and broader civil rights landscape looks like now and what it should look like for the future, focusing on Detroit. The panelists will cover matters for cooperation and coalition building. Panelists include Rima Meroueh, Advocacy and Community Engagement Director at ACCESS; Horace Sheffield, III, leader of Detroit Association of Black Organizations (DABO); Celeste Goedert with Rising Voices of Asian American Families; Ceena Vang, Co-founder of Whenever We're Needed (WWN), and Rebeka Islam, Executive Director of APIA Vote-Michigan and Director of the Vincent Chin 40th Commemoration.

- **Interfaith Remembrance Ceremony**

Sunday, June 19
3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Location TBA & Virtual Livestream
Registration and check-in is at 1:30 p.m.-2:15 p.m. at the lobby of the DIA.

Interfaith leaders and a family member of Vincent Chin will offer reflections and meditations on the legacy of Vincent Chin and the solidarity against hate and in the quest for justice for all. At graveside, the U.S. flag that draped the casket of Chin's father, a veteran of World War II, will be unfurled.

The Interfaith Remembrance Ceremony is located a short driving distance away from the registration site. The Ceremony will be outdoors on uneven terrain and involves standing for approximately one hour.

A very limited number of seats will be available on a shuttle bus that is not ADA accessible. We encourage carpooling from the Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA) to the ceremony. Driving instructions to the ceremony will be provided from the registration and departure site at the DIA.

- **NATIONAL PBS Broadcast of “*Who Killed Vincent Chin?*”**

Monday, June 20 | 10 p.m. ET

POV, now in its 35th year as America’s longest-running independent documentary series, presents a Special Encore Presentation of the gripping 1988 Academy Award® nominated film, ***Who Killed Vincent Chin?***

On a hot summer night in Detroit in 1982, Ronald Ebens, an autoworker, killed Vincent Chin, a young Chinese American draftsman with a baseball bat. Although he confessed, he never spent a day in jail. This gripping Academy Award-nominated film relentlessly probes the implications of the murder, for the families of those involved, and for the American justice system. *Best Documentary Feature Nominee, 61st Annual Academy Awards. A co-presentation with [Detroit Public Television](#) and the [Center for Asian American Media](#).*

A legacy title from POV’s archives, *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* returns for a special encore presentation. Watch the Academy Award-nominated film Monday, June 20th, on PBS.

- **The Vincent Chin Legacy Guide: Asian Americans Building the Movement**

In conjunction with the Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance & Rededication, a 64-page legacy guide has been published. This reference and teaching tool provides important historical context about why we remember Vincent Chin and how his legacy helped ignite the pan-Asian civil rights movement, ultimately building a multiracial, multicultural coalition united for equal justice and human dignity which stands as a landmark of American history. The Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center assisted with the guide, which will be both printed, available online and translated into various Asian languages. Share the guide at VincentChin.org.

- **Vincent Chin Mural in Historic Chinatown, Detroit**

Located in Detroit’s historic Chinatown, a newly commissioned tribute to honor and celebrate Vincent Chin will be unveiled by Detroit artist Anthony L. Lee. Originally meant

to be a mural, it is now a mounted painting located on the northwest corner of Peterboro Street and Cass Avenue. The mural will be digitally expanded to a vinyl version at a later date.

Lee hopes his art will bring a sense of healing to the Asian American community in Detroit. The painting reveals traditional Chinese ancestor offerings: incense, symbolizing modesty for an ancestor and loved one who has passed; a bowl of rice and chopsticks, a delicious entrée; roast pork; fruit to cool down; and delightful biscuits for dessert.

“In Chinese culture we send offerings to our ancestors as a gesture to show we are thinking of them. Although the gesture is about sending an abundant loving meal to one’s afterlife, it’s really just about showing love and enduring values.”

— Anthony L. Lee, Artist

- **Detroit AAPI Self-Guided Walking Tour**

A map and route identifying the key downtown landmarks in the Asian American campaign for justice for Vincent Chin helps tell the story of how Asian American community members and organizers turned the 1983 moment into a civil rights movement whose legacy offers inspiration and lessons for today.

DPTV Programming

Available on <https://onedetroitpbs.org/vincentchin> after air date.

- **“Who Killed Vincent Chin?” – Revisited
Airs on One Detroit, June 9**

One of the most important documentaries that’s helped frame the Asian American experience called *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*, released in 1987 by POV, will be rebroadcast on PBS stations nationwide on June 20th at 10pm ET.

Detroit Public Television helped create the film, which received a lot of national recognition including an Academy Award nomination.

The story: A Chinese American, Vincent Chin, brutally killed in 1982 when the auto industry collapsed and Japan was blamed – the killers never spent a day in jail. New York filmmakers Christine Choy and Renee Tajima-Peña teamed up with Detroit Public TV’s Juanita Anderson at a time when making a documentary of this scope by a local PBS station was a gargantuan challenge. Now all prominent in their field, they discuss making *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*. *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* is a co-presentation with DPTV and Center for Asian American Media (CAAM).

- **AAPI Artist: Anthony L. Lee**
Airs on One Detroit Arts and Culture, June 13

It's been forty years since the death of Vincent Chin put Detroit in the national headlines as the automakers were in crisis and scapegoated Japan for their problems. Chin, a Chinese American, was killed when anti-Asian bigotry was on the rise. Now, a series of events about that case and the new rise of anti-Asian hate crimes are happening including a showing of the 1987 film co-produced by Detroit Public Television called *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* happens this month. Plus, a Vincent Chin mural by Anthony L. Lee is on display at what was once Detroit's Chinatown. One Detroit's Bill Kubota takes a look.

- **Vincent Chin's Legacy**
Airs on One Detroit on June 16

It's been forty years since the death of Vincent Chin, etched in Detroit's history— and nationally, Asian American history, too. For a Chinese American killed as the U.S. was mired in a recession and Detroit automakers blamed Japan for their woes—bound Asian Americans together not just in the city, but across the country. Now, Vincent Chin's killing is seen in a new light with another wave of anti-Asian hate, and in the decades since, there's more Americans of Asian descent who call Michigan home.

WHY TODAY?

In 1982, the horrific baseball bat beating death of Vincent Chin on the eve of his bachelor party, and the miscarriage of justice that followed allowed his two white killers to be freed without spending a day in jail. In 2022, 40 years later, the legacy of Vincent Chin and the campaign for justice offers lessons to all on how people of all races, including between Asian and Black Americans, and from all creeds and walks of life, can organize and come together to stand against intolerance of all kinds to build a beloved community that is safe and welcoming to all. That is the message and the goal of the Vincent Chin 40th Remembrance & Rededication, June 16-19, 2022.

www.VincentChin.org