



Basketball as Ritual in Video and Film

Co-presented by Chinatown Basketball Club and Chinatown Partnership
Sunday, March 22, 2-6pm
21 Pell Street, First Chinese Baptist Church

Featuring short films and videos by: Alex Tiernan, Benjamin Manno, Connor Sen Warnick, Ho Tam, Jason Duval, Junan Wang, L'Jai Brown / Basketdolls, Lu Zhang

Chinatown Basketball Club (CBC), in collaboration with Chinatown Partnership, presents a Sunday afternoon of short films exploring basketball as a form of collective creative expression and of personal meditation. The works by 8 artists and filmmakers, most of whom also play with CBC, range from documentary essays, fast-paced highlight mixtapes, and impressionistic montages.

The screening will be held at the historic 21 Pell Street, First Chinese Baptist Church in Chinatown after our Sunday morning pick-up basketball gatherings. The selection of films proposes the court as both a sacred and open space for the weekly ritual of basketball.

A post-screening conversation moderated by Herb Tam, a CBC co-founder, will feature artists Jason Duval, Benjamin Manno, Lu Zhang, Connor Sen Warnick, Junan Wang and Devin Myers of Basketdolls.

Screening: 2-4pm. Film makers in conversation: 4-5pm

Poster designed by [Caren Wenqing Ye](#)

Short Films by:

[Alex Tiernan](#)

<https://alextiernan.com/>

The Ritual (Ang Ritwal), 2024. Running time: 7 minutes



In Manila's tenements and cemetery slums, community pride is decided on the basketball court. During the Day of the Dead, two boys take us into the heart of the streetball scene where immortality is the ultimate prize.

Alex Tiernan is a self-taught film director fascinated by subcultures, myth, collective memory and the ways these shape us. An itinerant upbringing and a career zigzagging through journalism, illustration and late nights in the kitchen pits, sharpened his instinct for stories of outsiders and hidden worlds. Often collaborating with real communities on location, his films blend elements of fiction and documentary and have been recognized for their closely observed, visceral style.

His work has appeared on Dazed, NOWNESS and Director's Library, gathering honours from the 1.4 Awards, Cannes YDAs, Shots Awards, UKMVAs and Vimeo Staff Picks, amongst others. His most recent film *The Ritual*, premiered at the 2025 Brussels Short Film Festival and has gone on to earn international festival acclaim. Alex is currently based in London and works globally.

[Jason Duval](#)

A Few Minutes with the Chinatown Basketball Club, 2024. Running time: 5 minutes



A Few Minutes with the Chinatown Basketball Club was filmed spontaneously during a typical late-winter Sunday School run of the CBC. Shot at the sidelines and from the hip, this document of the Club at play is a personal tribute to CBC's "hoops ethics" and joyful spirit of community. Previously, the film was screened at Metrograph, The Film-Makers' Cooperative and the Institute for Public Architecture.

Artist Jason Duval works with painting and analog film, exploring the expressive potential of abstract form with an emphasis on painterly materiality and pictorial structure. With his partner and fellow artist, Dorota Kolodziejczyk, he is co-founder of Black Rock Arts, an artist-run exhibition and project space in the historic Black Rock neighborhood of Buffalo, New York.

[Benjamin Manno](#)

<https://www.benjamin-manno.com/>

CBC Autumn Classic 2023-2025, CBC Free Throw Comp 2025



Benjamin Manno has been documenting the CBC Autumn Classic 3x3 Tournament since its inception in 2023 and weaving the footage into quick cut highlight packages set to pulsating music. The mixtapes tell the story of these basketball festivals. Seeing them together shows how much the tournament has grown and how the spirit of competitive but supportive community remains constant.

Benjamin Manno is a NYC based videographer, sound recordist, and filmmaker who specializes in documentary, broadcast, narrative, and commercial projects. This indie film & theatre kid from Texas became a Queens based documentarian; looking at life in front of him, and saying how can we capture meaningful frames.

Connor Sen Warnick

CBC Interviews 2023



CBC Interviews 2023 is re-edited from *The Story of CBC: Autumn Classic 2023* for this screening, recounts CBC's history, leading up to the inaugural Autumn Classic in 2023.

Connor Sen Warnick (b. 1996) is an independent filmmaker and writer working across narrative, fine art, performance, sports, fashion and editorial spaces. Based in New York.

Connor received a double B.A. in Film Studies and Fine Art from Columbia University in 2018. He was unanimously selected as the 2022-23 A4 Van Lier Fellow in Visual Art. Previous work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *Filmmaker Magazine*, and *Far-Near*, and presented at the Guggenheim Museum, Anthology Film Archives, Metrograph, San Diego Asian Film Festival, New/Next Fest and CAAMFest, among other venues.

[Ho Tam](#)

<https://www.ho-tam.com/videofilm.html>

Season of the Boys, 1997

Filmed in Video 8, analogue editing. Running time: 4 minutes



Shot at the Chinatown Basketball Tournament in New York City, August 1997 when the video maker stumbled upon it by chance. *Seasons of the Boys* is about the myth of a “boy-season” that all men have been waiting for, which comes just once and only for a brief moment. The video documents the Asian boys who can jump, or at least pass the ball. Living between Black and White Americans, the yellow boys attempt to negotiate a space for themselves. Mixing unlikely subjects of athletics, voyeuristic desire and poetic expression, *Season of the Boys* explores how the culture of youth and beauty is constructed and influences us from an intimate viewpoint of the video maker.

Ho Tam is a Canadian artist whose practice spans video, photography, painting, drawing, graphics and print media. His work often concerns mass media representations of race and identity politics. His short video 'Season of the Boy' will also be exhibited in Seoul's Art Sonje Center from March 20 to June 28.

[L'Jai Brown](#) / [Basketdolls](#)

Every Court Has a Story: Tales from T.Boy Park, 2025



A finalist submission for Project Backboard's "Every Court Has a Story" court renovation contest, "Tales from T.Boy Park" tells the story of Basketdolls at Thomas Boyland Park in Ocean Hill, Brooklyn. Produced by BasketdollsVideo, audio and editing by L'Jai BrownVoiceover by Devin Myers & Zoey Bocchichio

Basketdolls, founded in 2024, is a NYC-based basketball club dedicated to serving trans and gender non-conforming people through competitive joy, community building and mutual aid.

[Junan Wang](#)

Common Ground, 2024. Running time: 9:05 minutes



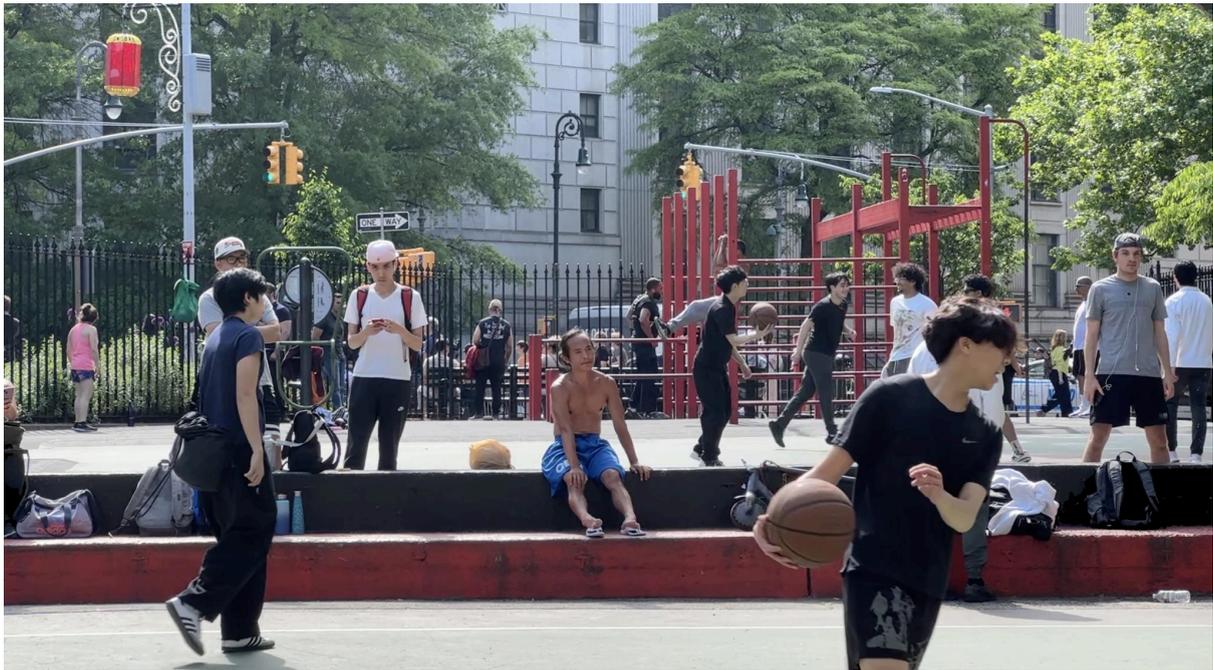
A halftime dance at the CBC Autumn Classic turns the basketball court into common ground, where rhythm, witness, and community briefly feel more real than everything outside the gym.

Junan Wang is a China-born, Brooklyn-based director/DP/editor. After years shaping stories in the Bay Area tech world, he became more interested in what can't be optimized: belonging, attention, and how people gather, move together, and keep each other brave. With a cross-cultural lens shaped by life between China and the U.S., his work explores how we find ourselves through one another.

[Lu Zhang](#)

See You At The Park: Notes on Smiley (篮球而已), 2024

Running time: 23 minutes



Zhang's film documents a day in the life of Smiley He, a CBC member, a guardian of Columbus Park mainstay and an immigrant who's worked in restaurants but whose passion and world view is driven by a devotional relationship to basketball.

Lu is a New York-based artist originally from Xi'an, China. Through participatory installation often incorporating ceramics and video, Lu creates intimate experiences that invite the public to explore the relativity and ambiguity of relationships and offer an access to reconnect with cultural ancestry, and visualize the transference of existing knowledge and cognitive experiences. Lu is the founder of Wildman Club (HuaiErDeMan Club artist book released 2024), member of P_____Lub (Painting Club), and a co-founder of Chinatown Basketball Club.