

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

When white people who do and say racist things—and the white friends who love and forgive them!

A-POP! A COLUMN ABOUT ASIAN-Y STUFF IN POP CULTURE!

By Stacy Nguyen
NORTHWEST ASIAN
WEEKLY

In this column, there's a lot of white nonsense. You have been forewarned!

When white-savoring goes wrong: the dark side of being a righteous white hero

Y'all, it is hard when you want to be a role model in the eyes of your 700K followers, but then they get all pissed at you when you return a kid that you capitalized financially on for years.

take full responsibility for all of the hurt that I have caused." She explained that she was unprepared for the adoption and needed more training (Huxley is autistic and has a sensory processing disorder; Myka admitted to having done only a day's worth of training via online videos, which seems like enough to me, too).

Myka described the process of rehoming Huxley as "the hardest thing I have ever been through," and also said she was "naive, foolish, and arrogant." (While that sounds kinda self-aware, it should be noted that throughout the documented adoption process, a number

TV producer called out for past racist, anti-Semitic, ableist (and more!) tweets; her white friends accept her apology



"Good Place" co-executive producer and writer Megan Amram came under fire on Twitter last month because some super offensive past tweets came to light.

Back in 2011 and 2013, Megan wrote stuff like, "It's not politically correct to say 'retarded' anymore, you have to call them 'Asian-Americans,'" and "I can never tell the difference between your/you're/Asians," and "If I had a time machine, I'd go back in time and kill Hitler and all of the Jews and gypsies and gay people."

Really weird and aggressive jokes, right? I guess I can kind of see where she was going with the Hitler joke, but the Asian ones feel like she just hates Asians and wish she didn't have to put up with any Asians. But also, I'm not a comedian so it's possible I'm just not getting the fine art of white people comedy.

On June 19, Megan wrote a lengthy apology that said, "Also, I specifically would like to apologize to the Asian-American community, who I have hurt the most with my tweets. I very much understand why you are hurt."

After that, a bunch of her white fans (and a few Asians—I am not impressed with you!) went ahead and accepted her apology and told her she's still

a good person. Famous white man actor Dax Shephard, in particular, said on a podcast, "Inviting judgment in 2020 for things you said in 2006 is just a bad idea, because, again, we do lose sight of how different things were. I was a part of storylines in 2004, '05, '06, you just wouldn't be in those storylines now ... It's so funny because I know her. I know how unequivocally she's on the side of good. So I read her tweet with the most good faith I possibly can."

Y'all, you know what? Dax is *right*. All white people with power *should* get a free pass for every dehumanizing thing they said and believed about other people from before like ... 2015. Because like, that discounts all of the growth that happened in the span of a few years. Like, at one point, people are a lot racist and then seven years later, they are totally less overtly racist! Like, these people deserve credit for putting in the work!

Who dat Asian on Netflix? (Asians that piqued my interest! For no special reason! I just like them!)

I know, you're like, "Why are you singling out Netflix, Stace? I want to know who dat Asian on Amazon Prime Video, too!"

Sorry. It's because I watch a lot of Netflix and keep forgetting that Amazon Prime Video is an option I have. I'll try to do better next column.

Who: Veronica Ngô Thanh Vân, Vietnamese film director, action star, music artist

What she's in: "The Old Guard" with Charlize Theron and also Spike Lee's "Da 5 Bloods"

Why she caught my attention: Because this lady is a badass, that's why! Also, she stars in a lot of Vietnamese-language films that I have seen over the years. It's extra exciting



Veronica Ngô Thanh Vân

for me to see her crossover into English-language movies so that y'all can also see her talents.



Momona Tamada

Who: Momona Tamada, plays Claudia Kishi on "The Baby-Sitter's Club" reboot; also shoutout to Takayo Fischer, Aya Furukawa, Diana Bang, and Kevan Ohtsji

Why these folks caught my attention: Uh, because Claudia is the *coolest* Baby-Sitter's Club member and seeing an entire Asian American family on TV is still kind of novel in 2020. Plus, Momona and her clothes in the show are really, really cute.

see A-POP on 11

KING COUNTY NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Sealed bids will be received for C01474C20, Judd Creek Bridge No. 3184 Repair; by the King County Procurement and Payables Section, via email, at procurement.submittals@kingcounty.gov, until 1:30 PM on August 25, 2020. Late bids will not be accepted. The public bid opening will only be conducted via Skype or telephone following The Bid Due Date and Time. See Invitation to Bid for details regarding the public bid opening.

There is a 3% minimum Apprentice Utilization

Requirement on this contract.

There is a 10% minimum requirement for King County Certified Small Contractors and Suppliers (SCS) on this contract.

Brief Scope: This project provides for the repair of Judd Creek Bridge No. 3184 by replacing the north expansion joint and adjacent portion of the deck and ledge beam, detour signing, temporary traffic control, planting, erosion control, and other work, all in accordance with the attached Plans, these

Special Provisions, the Standard Specifications, the KCRDCS, and the APWA/WSDOT Standard Plans for Road, Bridge, and Municipal Construction.

Estimated contract price: \$190,000

Complete Invitation to Bid Documents, including all project details, specifications, and contact information are available on our web page at: https://procurement.kingcounty.gov/procurement_ovr/default.aspx

ASTROLOGY

Predictions and advice for the week of August 15–21, 2020

By Sun Lee Chang



Rat—A moment of clarity allows you to see things in a different light. Make the most of this newfound insight.



Ox—Rather than skipping over it for another day, take the time to learn what you don't understand.



Tiger—If you see an irregularity, hit the pause button to address it. Better to tackle it early on.



Rabbit—Although you are tempted, it is in your best interest not to fight every battle that comes your way.



Dragon—When you are considering whether to go forward, take into account both the time and expense.



Snake—Are you beginning to connect the dots where there was confusion before? Soon you will see the whole picture.



Horse—Keep a low profile if you aren't ready to stand out. There's no hiding when you are front and center.



Goat—Worried about the outcome? Instead of fretting about something outside your control, appreciate the possibilities instead.



Monkey—Your enthusiasm is a boon to those around you. It will inspire action where there was indifference previously.



Rooster—Is it a one-off or a sign of things to come? Pay close attention so that you can respond accordingly.



Dog—An uncomfortable topic needs to be discussed. It should be a relief just to start the conversation itself.



Pig—Before you agree to an attractive proposal, it is worth asking how it will benefit the offering party.

WHAT'S YOUR ANIMAL SIGN?

RAT 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020 OX 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009 TIGER 1914, 1926, 1938, 1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010 RABBIT 1915, 1927, 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011 DRAGON 1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012 SNAKE 1917, 1929, 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013 HORSE 1918, 1930, 1942, 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014 GOAT 1919, 1931, 1943, 1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015 MONKEY 1920, 1932, 1944, 1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016 ROOSTER 1921, 1933, 1945, 1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017 DOG 1922, 1934, 1946, 1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018 PIG 1923, 1935, 1947, 1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019

*The year ends on the first new moon of the following year. For those born in January and February, please take care when determining your sign.

A-POP from 8



Justin H. Min

Who: Justin H. Min, plays Ben Hargreeves in “The Umbrella Academy”

Why he caught my attention: Because I just binged the entire second season this past weekend! Because Ben is now a series regular, and I'm so happy for Justin because he deserves a starring role! Because I have so much I want to talk to you about but I don't want to say any spoilers so ugh, maybe we should just meet back here next month after you've caught up so we can dish, okay? Yay, Justin!

Speaking of the best reality TV show of all time ...



Did y'all watch “Indian Matchmaking” on Netflix yet? Surprisingly, this deliciously melodramatic, highly addictive

popcorn-y series was brought to us by Academy Award nominee Smriti Mundhra.

The documentary series follows superstar marriage consultant Sima Taparia as she tries to find matches for a number of her clients. Each episode of this series looks at various ways the practice of arranged marriages exhibit in today's changing world—not at all in a deep or introspective way, and that's okay! The way it is presented is cheesy at times, irreverent at times, and endearing at times. There's also the spectre of caste and colorism hanging over the series' head sometimes, too. There's just a lot going on!

The cast of folks on this show are also entertaining as hell. There's Aparna from Houston who thinks she's perfect and flawless and not at all high maintenance (love her!), and there's also Akshay, whose professed perfect woman is one who is *exactly like his mother*—these people are good TV!

Allison Brie says sorry for voicing Vietnamese American character



Allison Brie

Actor Allison Brie, a white woman, apologized in June for voicing the character of Diane Nguyen in the animated show, “BoJack Horseman,” since 2014. In an Instagram post, she wrote, “I now understand that people of color should always voice people of color. We missed a great opportunity to represent the Vietnamese-American community accurately and respectfully, and for that I am

truly sorry.”

Diane Nguyen was created by series creator Raphael Matthew Bob-Waksberg, a white dude. About this situation, he has stated, “Even in the small ways we wrote to Diane's experience as a woman of colour, or more specifically an Asian woman, we rarely got specific enough to think about what it meant to be SPECIFICALLY VIETNAMESE-AMERICAN and that was a huge (racist!) error on my part.”

He added, “We should have hired a Vietnamese writer, and a Vietnamese actress to play Diane – or if not that, changed the character to match who we did hire.”

Man, I just can't muster up any energy to get mad at these two. Because the way they responded to this was *loads* better than how “Simpsons” creator Matt Groening and actor Hank Azaria repeatedly responded over the years when the character of Apu was called out.

Jackson Wang breaks record on U.S. charts



Jackson Wang

A summer jam that you might've heard is “100 Ways,” a pop hit by Jackson Wang, 26. “100 Ways” hit the top 30 for U.S. pop radio, making Jackson the first Chinese solo artist to be featured this high. This song was released back in the spring, but I am only learning about it now because I

was driving to Fred Meyer for some plain yogurt yesterday and listening to the radio like a 50-year-old. The DJ announced that the artist of this song was “Jackson Wang,” and I was like, “WHAT! THAT'S AN ASIAN NAME!”

So then I looked him up via a website browser on my desktop computer. After watching the music video, I am 100% convinced that I have aged out of being the target demographic for this kind of celebrity and this kind of music, but I keep mining for this type of pop culture news because I want the both of us to stay hip for as long as we can, okay?

So here's what I have learned: While Jackson is ethnically Chinese, he is a South Korea-based artist and part of the boy group Got7.

And for those of you wondering—I already Googled that, too. Jackson's English is so bizarrely American-sounding because he attended the American International School in Hong Kong, where he grew up. There! We're hip and up to date, now!

There's a viral makeup trend—and it might be racist!

I know many of us haven't worn makeup in months, but apparently there's a viral “fox eye” makeup trend on social media. Um, it looks a lot like Katharine Hepburn's Yellowface from way back in the day. You know, eyebrows that are drawn slanted up, elongated eyeliner that makes eyes look extra almond-y.

I spent an hour combing through photos of white women sporting this look so that I can assess, for you, if this is racist or nah. A lot of the time, the look is kind of subtle on people not-Katharine Hepburn, so for a

while, I was kinda doubting its racistness, thinking, “Hey, are Asians just being extra sensitive about this?”

But *then* I noticed that a *huge* feature of this trend is white women pulling back the skin at their temple, to *stretch* out their eyes—and then I was like, oh damn. That's racist as hell!

RIP, Grant Imahara



Grant Imahara

On July 13, Grant Imahara died of a sudden brain aneurysm. He was only 49. Grant was an electrical engineer, roboticist, and general all-around genius. We watched him on “MythBusters” for years. Behind the scenes, he worked on movie franchises like “Star Wars,” “Jurassic Park,” “The Matrix,” and more.

On Grant's passing, “MythBusters” co-host Adam Savage wrote, “Grant was a truly brilliant engineer, artist and performer, but also just such a generous, easygoing, and gentle PERSON. Working with Grant was so much fun. I'll miss my friend.”

I used to binge-watch “MythBusters,” and Grant's knowledge and creativity was so apparent and so immense. It's sad that he died so young, but I'm glad that he made such an impact in the time that he was here. ■

Stacy Nguyen can be reached at stacy@nwasianweekly.com.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

On dogs, public-shaming, accidental racism, and true love!

A-pop! A column of API-things in popular culture

By Stacy Nguyen
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

What's up! Hope you are doing well and not spreading a deadly virus to all of your family members this holiday week!

In this column, there is honestly a lot of controversy. You are welcome.

JAPANESE CELEB LOSES JOB DUE TO EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIR—AS AN AMERICAN, I'M LIKE, WHAAAT?

Masahiko Kondo, 56, is a Japanese singer, former J-pop idol during the 1980s, semi-pro racing driver, and owner of Kondo Racing. He seems like a busy dude.

But evidently not too busy to step out on his wife. Earlier this month, Japanese gossip magazine Shukan Bunshun reported that he's been cheating on his wife with a 31-year-old woman. Kondo totally confirmed this in a kind of honesty that I frankly find bizarre coming from a public figure. Furthermore, his employer—Johnny & Associates Inc., one of Japan's

Masahiko Kondo

most powerful talent agencies—publicly shamed the dude and said he was “thoughtless” and “lacked an awareness and sense of responsibility” before the powers that be suspected him indefinitely so that Kondo can think about what he has done. They straight up called it the “right” punishment for “the oldest” talent.

Guys, I'm not going to even focus on how oddly puritanical Japan apparently is with its public figures. I'm just so charmed because I live in a country that has been totally okay with our president being a menace to women. How novel! Getting condemned publicly for cheating on your wife! Wow!

Applause for Sacramento County, California, which is among the latest local governments across the country declaring racism a public health crisis. (That's right! And it is!) You know what's unfortunate though? During the passage of the resolution—which was a unanimous decision— Sacramento County Health Director Dr. Peter Beilenson expressed his support by saying, “It's a crucial thing we need to be doing to address the issues of the African American and brown and yellow folks in our country as well as the white folks.”

SACRAMENTO COUNTY DECLARES RACISM A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS—THEN IN A CRUEL TWIST OF FATE, ITS HEALTH DIRECTOR ACTS ALL RACIST!

I know what you're thinking. Yes, he totally forgot to include red folks.

Actually, the dude has been getting so much earned backlash for calling us Asians yellow. He says he feels really bad about it. He says, “In my 30-year career in public health, I've never had an issue like this before.”

For the record, social media hasn't been around for 30 years. So technically, he could have called people by colors before, and he just wasn't caught. But I get the sentiment of what he was saying. He's saying: “I very much apologize for that and will certainly use Asian Pacific Islander in the future.”

You know what is kind of weird about this whole thing? That he is kind of getting off scot-free over the whole brown thing. Like, I don't think this dude should be calling people brown, either, man.

CARDI B IS SORRY FOR APPROPRIATING HINDU CULTURE ON SHOE MAGAZINE

Rapper Cardi B made headlines in a bad way in November when she posed on the cover of Footwear News holding a shoe. On the cover, she is shown with multiple arms, which, according to Footwear News, was meant to be an homage to the Hindu goddess Durga.

Clearly no one Hindu was consulted on this idea because a number of violations occurred in the photo: Shoes are banned in temples, Durga is not supposed to be depicted bare-bodied, and she is also not a device used to sell freaking Reeboks, of all things.

see A-POP on 9

Hello Neighbors!

The pandemic postponed our grand opening ceremony, but we at the Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) were thrilled to move into our new offices in Little Saigon on the first floor of An Lạc Apartments in April. Located at 1253 S. Jackson St., An Lạc features 69 units of affordable housing. While we have many staff working remotely, please be assured that our programs that serve the community are operating at full capacity: Affordable Housing, Tiny House Villages, Urban Rest Stops, and Supportive Services

Our programs are thriving during the pandemic in part thanks to our many generous 2020 sponsors who helped us raised over \$230,000.

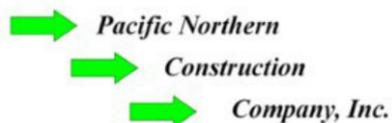
Have a wonderful holiday season! —Sharon Lee, Executive Director

~~~~~ Thank you Sponsors! ~~~~~

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An Lạc Apartments



LIHI's latest building, Othello Park Apartments, will open in Summer of 2021.

[www.LIHI.org](http://www.LIHI.org)

**BLOG from previous page**

Chinese Post. The unexpected record-breaking number of political ads for both publications, print and online thanks to my crew, gave us much hope to celebrate. We are grateful to all the candidates and organizations. Thank you, thank you.

**OUR RECORD-BREAKING JOURNALISM AWARDS**

At our Lunar New Year dinner in January, I announced to our amazing writers that we would increase the rates for every article they wrote. They deserved it. Then COVID struck... We had to cut back on everything, from publishing the number of pages to staff hours. I felt miserable when I had to call each staff member personally. Surprisingly, everyone understood and one even consoled me not to worry. It was especially hard for me to withdraw my offer from the freelancers, as they were already getting so little pay.

However, none of our writers quit. Instead, they poured their heart and soul in their stories and they won 24 journalism awards on Oct. 9 from the Washington Newspapers Publishers Association. About 58 community newspapers participated.

Mahlon Meyer received eight awards from covering business to community stories. No one in our 38 years of existence has ever won that many awards. Their loyalty moved me to tears. A couple even said they wanted to volunteer.

"I almost had a heart attack," wrote reporter Kai Curry. "I thought this email (not increasing rates) was going to be a lot worse. I know this is a terrible time for small businesses and I understand and support your decisions. I am willing to help keep the Weekly going. Please do not pay me for April...I hope it will be a small donation in this tough time. Also, please do not be silent if the Weekly's situation deteriorates further. I have a little bit set aside, and I

would be able to make a donation if things were dire.

"The Weekly—you, Ruth, John, your husband—have been there for me through what were some very tough times in my life...The Weekly has given me so many things that do not have a price tag... and my own 15 minutes of fame at the top of the Space Needle interviewing the cast of Crazy Rich Asians."

Our writers' commitment to Asian Weekly was never about money. We are so grateful for the journalism recognitions and our writers' contribution. Thank you writers for your devotion and support.

**LIFE-SAVING SUPPORTERS**

During the early days of the pandemic, a tsunami of advertisers emailed and called to cancel their advertisements. I really believed we were done. But miracles happened repeatedly. Call them supporters, readers, and community advocates. They reached out to lift up the Asian Weekly when we were in crisis. Community leader Bettie Luke was the first one to send us a check and card to encourage us, followed by attorney Charles Herrmann.

"I'd like to increase our advertisements," said Herrmann. That message sounded surreal. It was a generous offer.

A few days later, Markham McIntyre of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce emailed me, "How can I help?" And then, Elaine Ishihara, of Asian Pacific Islander Coalition Advocating Together, emailed that she liked to advertise in both papers.

Tim Otani of Union Bank, an event sponsor, knew that we couldn't have an event due to the pandemic. But he checked with us to see how he could offer support.

A few days later, Pradeepa Upadhyay of InterIm emailed us to advertise. I was grateful for their gesture. These people came to help us at a critical juncture, even if they didn't know it. But they have rescued us from falling, and we are grateful.

We lost so many long-time advertisers during this period that we couldn't even keep track. But we understand they are hurting, too. The whole community has been hurting.

What we have lost came back in another form. COVID presents a health crisis, it also creates opportunities. Several health ads from government and private corporations knocked on our door. We are grateful for their series of ads and attractive contracts.

**A BETTER BODY**

Early this year, I was reading a book, "How to Do Nothing," by Jenny Odell. Ironically, it prepared me to define productivity in a meaningful way. Looking busy at your desk and a full schedule don't necessarily mean you are productive.

The author taught us to find joy in doing simple things, such as walking in nature, finding ducks in a lake, and bird-watching. How fortunate I was to stumble upon the book in the library before shutdown.

The lockdown forced me to slow down and focus on self-care. I thought my health was great as my body was often full of energy. A few years ago, an acupuncturist told me when you don't feel tired, it doesn't necessarily mean you have good health.

"You are stressed out because your body does not feel tired after long hours of work. It's not a good sign when your body resists fatigue and rest." Now, I understand what he meant. I used to have poor sleep, cold hands and feet during winter. Not only has my sleep improved the past months, my hands, feet, nose, and ears are warm at bedtime without needing a hot pad. Sheltering-in has given me a completely new body. I can feel the difference of my body then and now.

**ORIGINAL THANKSGIVING STILL APPLIES TODAY**

The history of Thanksgiving began in

1621 when the Pilgrims celebrated their safety, food, and support from Native Americans. They witnessed the deaths of loved ones during their journey from England to America and even after they arrived, just like our pandemic. This Thanksgiving, we celebrated our survival. No matter what happens, we still have food on our table, and the support of family and friends.

Being alive is an immense gift. If you and your family are doing OK, you should thank God and/or the people who help you. If you have loved ones who suffered from COVID, you still should. Things could be worse. This mental exercise will spare you from mental agony, at least for a short while. It's enough to shift our mindset to a relaxed state of being. Pause a while and write down the good things that happen in your life.

Like us, our struggles are part of our journey. We are more resilient after challenges.

A Zoom dinner with your family is not ideal, but it's still good. I am looking forward to Thanksgiving. As long as we have some activities and celebrations in our lives, it's better than nothing. Finding options are survival strategies. Being happy about small things will keep us going.

For those who complain that you have nothing to be thankful for, think again!

Reflect hard and deep. Go years back. In times of crisis, such as dealing with COVID and our election, gratitude saves the day. Please don't take life for granted. Many people long for your blessings and what you have!

Give thanks to what you have, and don't focus on what you don't have—message of the Pilgrims. So whatever gifts you receive in 2020, cherish them, as they may vanish next year. ■

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**VANGUARD from 5**

Enter "Vanguard," a super-secret organization designed to protect anyone good and right. A long look inside their super-secret (but somehow huge and sprawling) headquarters turns up, eventually, Jackie Chan himself as the leader, Tang Huanting. He's sitting behind a desk. He's wearing glasses. This doesn't bode well for the action/comedy master we know and love.

And indeed Chan doesn't take the lead for the early action sequences. Tong, who also wrote the script, rolls out some newcomers to take the heat: Lei Zhenyu (Yang Yang), Zhang Haixuan (Ai Lun), and Miya (Mu Qimiya). They're all young. They're all pretty. They're all remarkably fit. They all seem to be doing at least a

reasonable amount of their own fight work (bolstered by Tong again, who collaborated with several others on the fight sequences).

But they don't carry a movie, or a fight, the way Jackie Chan could in his prime. A rundown in a kitchen leads to all kinds of cookware and implements thrown around. It moves, but it reminds longtime fans of how many times Chan's used a kitchen as a battleground. They run all over the planet, running down the bad guys. But that reminds us of how Chan used to do it faster, smarter, and sweeter. With a smile.

And Jackie Chan himself? When he finally comes out from behind the desk, he manages okay. Even with the glasses. But only okay. Sad to see him in the twilight of his physical prime. He looks back on a lifetime of

filmmaking (he started out in front of a camera at age 8), a lifetime of broken bones, and the inevitable toll of aging. He's still lovable and he will always be loveable. The time's come, though, for him to concentrate on straight dramatic roles, and/or singing (he manages one of the soundtrack tunes quite ably).

Chan just about drowned doing one of the stunts shown here. The obligatory set of outtakes, played over the credits, seems to show the actual footage. He laughs it off, just as he's always laughed off danger. But why all these unnecessary risks, at his age, with so shallow a gain? ■

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**A-POP from 6**

In response to getting called out for this, Cardi said, "If people think I'm offending their culture or their religion, I want to say I'm sorry. That was not my intent. I do not like disrespecting nobody's religion. ... Maybe I should have done my research. I'm sorry, I can't change the past, but I will do more research for the future."

Cardi really shouldn't have trusted Footwear News to do the Googling.

**WHO DAT API?!**

Hey, guys. Here's my very sporadic and random round-up of cool APIs that I have accidentally seen on TV. This list is never comprehensive, just circumstantial!

Linh Iacona, Vania Zuniga, and Kioni "Kentucky" Russell Gallahue, seen on Amazon Prime Video's "The Pack"

"The Pack" is a reality show featuring dogs and their owners (or as I like to say, their human mommies and daddies). Each team goes around the world competing in athletic challenges for a chance to win \$500,000.

The show is def super duper American (every contestant is beautiful-looking and TV-ready, there's

a lot of slow-motion PG-porn of cute dogs running in water, and the suspenseful editing will drive you mad as it entertains you). I loved it. I was super glad to see APIs rep with their pooches.

(FYI, I am guessing Kentucky is API from looks alone. I actually am not 100 percent sure. Do you happen to know?)

**VIEN HONG, SEEN ON ABC'S "THIS IS US"**

Vien Hong plays a new mysterious character named Hai on "This is Us," but I prefer to call him 'Hot Viet Grandpa.' Not much is known so far about Hot Viet Grandpa, just that he likes to fish and was in an interracial relationship with a woman who seems to be the love of his life. I can't say anymore. I don't want to spoil it for you.

**MIDORI FRANCIS, TROY IWATA, JODI LONG, JAMES SAITO, JENNIFER IKEDA, AND AGNEET THACKER, SEEN ON NETFLIX'S "DASH & LILY"**

"Dash & Lily" is a cute rom-com series for the Gen-Z crowd, about a boy and a girl who are probably meant for each other, but they take the entirety of 12 episodes

to get together because there's a narrative arc they have to follow. The maternal side of Lily's family is Japanese! Her dad is white! She sometimes doesn't feel pretty because she's Asian. What girl can't relate?

It was cool to see Jodi Long and James Saito on screen together. Saito played Oroku Saki—aka the original Shredder—don't even pretend like you didn't know. ■

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## ARTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

# Three white ladies Columbus'd mahjong ... and other stories!

## A-pop: Asian-y things in popular culture

By Stacy Nguyen  
NORTHWEST ASIAN WEEKLY

Welcome to the first 2021 edition of A-pop! I have some reheated leftovers from the end of 2020 for you (mmm, I love leftovers!) as well as some shiny new items to share. Let's get to it!

### Three white ladies Columbus'd mahjong for \$425, get accused of cultural appropriation

#### About Us



Annie, Kate and Bianca

On a quest to purchase her first Mahjong set, Kate discovered that the artwork of the traditional tiles, while beautiful, was all the same – and did not reflect the fun that was had when playing with her friends. And nothing came close to mirroring her style and personality.

It's a story as old as time: Three white women named Annie, Bianca, and Kate—originators from Dallas—discover, all on their own, a super awesome, slightly exotic game. They tell their other white friends all about this so that white Americans can get hip to Mahjong, too. The only problem is that the existing tiles of this game are so ugly and boring and not reflective of Annie, Bianca, and Kate's personal styles—so here's an idea! Why not redesign the uggo tiles of this game so that it appeals more to cultured people with good taste and sell these game sets for \$425 a pop so that the masses can get exposed to mahjong?

Unfortunately though, once they started marketing their awesome new and improved version of the game, haters came out the woodwork and just started hating! Annie, Bianca, and Katie just cannot catch a break! Mere months after the launch of their company, The Mahjong Line, a bunch of Chinese Americans took to social media to attack out of jealousy, saying stuff like, "Stop appropriating my culture!"

Whomp whomp. I sincerely hope our intrepid heroines do figure out a way to claim and profit off of "their discovery and refresh" of a game that is centuries old and played by Asian septuagenarians in Hing Hay Park.

### Bling empire is ridonkulous



Y'all, Netflix is raising their monthly prices by a dollar again, saying it's because they want to bring us newer, awesomer content. Shows like "Bling Empire," apparently. OMG have you seen?

It's a reality show featuring a cast of obscenely rich Asian and Asian Americans (duh, they are mostly all Chinese) and one super hot male model who is not as rich but is fun to look at and acts as a stand-in for us, the audience. Each episode of "Bling Empire" details how cool and fabulous life is when you don't have a real job because, well, why work when you have a trust fund?

In all seriousness, it's actually a fun watch and I couldn't tear my eyes away. Hidden under layers of disgusting capitalism and excess are just a bunch of human people (like us!) who are stuck in abusive relationship cycles, who have shitty friends, who have really good friends, who seek out the approval of the parental units way too much, and who just want answers from the people who abandoned them as children. It's good reality TV! And I also like that non-Asian folks are getting to see a different kind of Asian!

### Vogue runs cover of Vice President Kamala Harris in front of wrinkled curtains

Vogue ran a bit of a weird and awkward photo of new Vice President Kamala Harris on its cover. On it, she is wearing a dark jacket by Donald Deal, skinny pants, and her signature Converse sneakers. Behind her is a green wall that is cut by a messy spill of wrinkled pink curtains, probably a shoutout to her Alpha Kappa Alpha (AKA) roots from her Howard University days. Harris's smile is a little strained, a little tense—as if caught unaware for a split second.

It looks like an accidental photo or a test photo, definitely not the first fashion magazine cover after such a historical event—the U.S. inauguration of its first-ever Black and South Asian vice president.

The photo was widely seen as disrespectful and Vogue naturally got hit with a lot of criticism. Apparently, the gossip is (and none of this is verified) that there were two cover options considered and Harris's camp widely preferred the portrait where she is dressed in a Michael Kors powder blue suit and actually looks awesome

and relaxed. They assumed that was the cover image and the other pink curtain one was gonna appear inside. But I guess nothing was set in writing because there was a switcheroo at the last minute and the awkward cover—pushing casualness and kind of ignoring the gravity of the moment—went to press.

Y'all, at Northwest Asian Weekly—which I know is totally not a fashion magazine or anywhere close—we can get a lot of heat for unintentionally running unflattering photos of folks. I can't even imagine intentionally running an unflattering photo of the vice president of the United States! Can you?

### Simi Liu is disappointing

Mark Wahlberg is a scumbag. I know he continually tries to rehab his image by playing hypermasculine whiteass, heroic men in movies, but let's never forget that in 1988, he assaulted two Vietnamese men while calling them gooks. And that was an



Let me get this straight, Mark Wahlberg beat a helpless Vietnamese man with a stick until he passed out when he was 16, and is attempting to get the courts to grant him an official pardon on the basis that he's "turned his life around"? incident in which he was caught (he was arrested), which means that there were and probably are a number of countless incidents that went unreported. There are stories about how he used to pelt rocks at yellow school buses holding Black kids. This asshole has never admitted that he was so very obviously racist. Like white men who have come before him and after him, he has said that his problem was that he was young (and thus kinda stupid—though I know a lot of young people who

see A-POP on 10

## YEAR OF THE OX celebration



NWAW's LNY Costume Contest 2020's winners, from left: Laurie Yaokum, Vivian Zhao, and Natalie Lo.



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# CLASSIFIED

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The **Office Coordinator** will ensure that the organization's office operations, fundraising activities, and garden events are efficient, accurate and smooth. The position works closely with board members, garden employees, and volunteers. Mandarin and Cantonese required. Please send cover letter and resume to [president@seattlechinese.org](mailto:president@seattlechinese.org).

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## A-POP from 7

aren't super racist, sooo...).

Anyway, this bit of news isn't about that human stain, Mark Wahlberg. It's really about actor Simu Liu, who once called out Wahlberg for being a terrible racist (on Twitter), but then the second Liu booked a movie with Wahlberg, he totally deleted the tweet!

Worse yet, when caught deleting the tweet, Liu defended himself like such an Asian dude: He became defensive and self-righteous.

Liu said this:

"I deleted a couple of tweets I made regarding the past actions of one of my

costars as a gesture of professionalism and to open the door to progressive conversations and (hopefully) positive change. ... But that doesn't mean I don't think there's room to grow and work together to find an opportunity to educate and do some good—which I'm excited to do in addition to shooting the movie."

I can't even make any jokes about this. I am just too busy rolling my eyes super hard at what a sellout this dude is turning out to be.

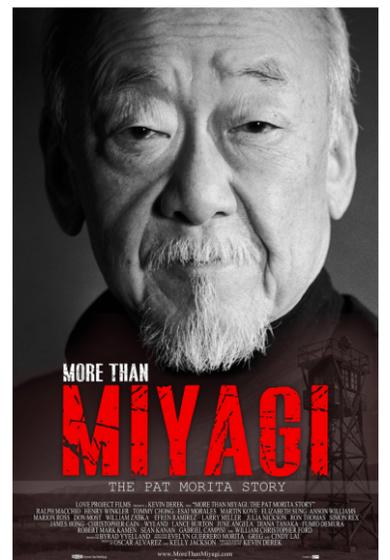
## Pat Morita documentary out

Here's a salve for you: There's a documentary about Pat Morita coming

out on Feb. 5, tellingly called "More Than Miyagi: The Pat Morita Story."

Morita died in 2005, after a long and amazing career. His family story included incarceration by the U.S. government during World War II. He was an actor during a time when actors of Asian descent basically only had a tiny number of stereotypical roles to them. Many of us grew up watching him not just as Mr. Miyagi, but also as Mulan's dad and for his guest starring stint on every 90s sitcom. I'm super excited for this documentary!

Stacy Nguyen can be reached at [stacy@nwasianweekly.com](mailto:stacy@nwasianweekly.com).



## SYMPHONY from 3

"We are working out procedures and how we can accommodate an audience," said Thiagarajan of the plan when live audiences return. Once given the go ahead by the state, the Seattle Symphony will allow 25% capacity for live concerts and then go from there. "My hope is that this will happen sooner rather than later."

In the meantime, the weekly concerts will continue online. And the performers will continue to adjust without concertgoers.

"We are still trying to figure out how to take a bow." ■

For more information on the Seattle Symphony and its online performances, visit [seattlesymphony.org](http://seattlesymphony.org).

Jason can be reached at [info@nwasianweekly.com](mailto:info@nwasianweekly.com).

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SOLUTION from SUDOKU on page 4.

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