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ABOUT INDIE LENS POP-UP



Indie Lens Pop-Up is a neighborhood series that brings people together for film screenings and community-driven conversations. Featuring documentaries seen on PBS's *Independent Lens*, Indie Lens Pop-Up draws local residents, leaders, and organizations together to discuss what matters most, from newsworthy topics and social issues to family and community relationships.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Indie Lens Pop-Up is virtual. Audiences can watch films together from the safety of their homes on OVEE, the Indie Lens Pop-Up virtual theater. Make friends, share stories, and join the conversation at an Indie Lens Pop-Up screening online: bit.ly/ILPOP-Screenings.



LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKER



Born and raised in Los Angeles, a child of Chinese immigrants, I grew up like any other normal American kid. I had loads of friends and took loads of lessons—ballet, tennis, piano, you name it. I went to sleepovers, ate hamburgers, and pursued the career of my dreams.

I learned of Ted Ngoy's story after having a conversation with my nanny about "Cambodian donuts." I pressed her to explain what exactly a Cambodian donut was, and she said it was a donut made by Cambodian people. I argued that it was still just a donut, not a Cambodian donut. This seemingly innocuous conversation led me to research more about Cambodian donuts, and I found an article about Ted Ngoy—the Donut King. In delving deeper, I discovered that there are an estimated 5,000 independent donut shops in California and that Cambodians own up to 90 percent of them. I became fascinated by the irony that one of the most American of foods, the donut, is nearly entirely made by Cambodians, at least west of the Mississippi. I found the Donut King, now living in Cambodia, and two months later I was there filming.

Ted's story was much more than I had initially imagined. He and his wife fled Cambodia in the mid-1970s, escaping the Khmer Rouge and genocide, and arrived as a refugee at Camp Pendleton, a military base in Southern California. Then, by virtue of hard work, he became a millionaire in under a decade. Although my parents were neither Cambodian nor shop owners, I instantly connected with Ted's story because of my parents' story—they fled China during the Communist Revolution.

While making this film, I couldn't ignore the parallels regarding immigrants/refugees in 1975 and immigrants/refugees in 2019, nor could I ignore the difference in attitudes and leadership between then and now. Also while making this film, I couldn't have felt prouder to be an American and couldn't have felt prouder of American ideals, or rather, what I know American ideals to be.

Through my travels over the years, I have come to realize that we all, collectively, are not so different from one another. We want the same basic things—to be loved, to feel secure, to have food, to have opportunity, and to be able to provide. In a time of such divisiveness, I wanted to present a story of the American Dream and togetherness. I hope audiences have fun watching the film—after all, it is about donuts—but I also hope it gives a human face to refugees and an understanding that their dreams, too, can be realized if they are just given a chance.

Alice Gu, Director/Writer



ABOUT THE FILM



How to Watch the Film

Virtual Indie Lens Pop-Up Screenings:

April 24-May 31, 2021

Independent Lens Broadcast Premiere:

May 24, 2021

Stream online at video.pbs.org:

May 24-June 22, 2021

Film Synopsis

The Donut King is Ted Ngoy's rags-to-riches story of a refugee escaping Cambodia, arriving in America in 1975, and building an unlikely multimillion-dollar empire baking America's favorite pastry, the donut. Ngoy sponsored hundreds of visas for incoming refugees and helped them get on their feet by teaching them the ways of the donut business. By 1979, he was living the American Dream—but a great rise often comes with a great fall. The Donut King is a tale of hard knocks, redemption, wealth, survival, risk, and donuts.

ABOUT THE FILM



Screening Objectives

Since 1975, more than 3 million refugees have resettled in the United States, in all 50 states, with thousands more every year, according to the USA for UNHCR. Your screening events for *The Donut King* are an opportunity for the local refugee and immigrant communities to share stories about their experiences coming to America. We hope that your guests will be inspired to reflect on the significance of the American Dream and discuss ways to make communities welcoming and inclusive for all. As a screening partner for *The Donut King*, we invite you to help us meet these objectives:

- Celebrate and support local refugee communities as well as immigrant-owned, family-operated small businesses.
- Educate audiences about past and present refugee resettlement programs in the United States.
- Discuss ways to make your community a safe and welcoming place for refugees and immigrants to resettle their lives.
- Foster cross-cultural relationships and intergenerational conversations among immigrant families and the community.

Relevant Topics and Themes

- · Refugees and immigrants
- Resettlement
- · American Dream
- · Cambodian American history
- · Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders
- · Small businesses
- · Donuts, food, and culture

Potential Audiences

- · Asian American and Pacific Islander organizations
- · Humanitarian and international organizations
- · Chambers of commerce and small business owners
- Food bloggers and followers
- Students and faculty in culinary, business, history, ethnic studies, and other relevant programs
- · Coffee shop and bakery customers



BACKGROUND INFORMATION



These facts related to *The Donut King* can help prepare you for a conversation with event attendees. You can also use them in your event promotions and on social media.

Cambodia is a Southeast Asian country bordering Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand. In the early ninth century, it became home to the powerful Khmer Empire that dominated much of the mainland. Over a period of 600 years, from 802 until 1431 CE, the Khmers built hundreds of temples. The Angkor temples were at times Buddhist and at times Hindu, some switching back and forth multiple times, and they are among the most well-known artistic wonders in the world. Ted Ngoy is shown touring the temples in the film.

After several centuries of slowly dissolving into small tributary states that ultimately became Thailand, Cambodia itself became a small Buddhist kingdom. Then in 1863, it became a French protectorate, and except during World War II when it was occupied by the Japanese, Cambodia remained a French colony until 1953 when it gained its independence.

Source: asiasociety.org/education/cambodia-historicaloverview

 In the late 1960s, Cambodia, which at the time was governed by pro-American leadership, was drawn into the Vietnam War when the United States began a then-secret bombing campaign in Laos and eastern Cambodia against the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong troops. In 1975, the Khmer Rouge seized power from the pro-American government, and over the next four years, under Marxist dictator Pol Pot and the Communist regime, the Cambodian people were subjected to forced labor, and nearly 2 million mass executions were carried out.

Source: ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries/cambodia/case-study/introduction/cambodia-1975

- The United States withdrew from the Vietnam War in 1975
 and, under U.S. President Gerald Ford, passed the Indochina
 Migration and Refugee Assistance Act, a resettlement program
 to bring 130,000 Southeast Asian refugees into the United States.
 Among them was Ted Ngoy's family. The legislation faced strong
 opposition in the United States, and many refugees experienced
 prejudice when they arrived.
 - Source: cfr.org/timeline/us-postwar-immigration-policy
- Not long after, Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980 to formalize its refugee resettlement program and provide more organized support to newcomers. As a result of this act, each year, the U.S. president, in consultation with Congress, sets the number of refugees accepted into the country. In 2021, the U.S. refugee limit is 15,000, the lowest it has been since the passage of the act.

Source: immigrationforum.org/article/fact-sheet-u-s-refugeeresettlement



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Under the Trump administration, from 2017 to 2018 there was a
 279 percent increase in the deportation of Cambodian nationals.
 And as of January 2021, approximately 15,000 Southeast Asian
 Americans had been issued a final order of removal: about 1,800
 Cambodian, 4,900 Laotian, and 8,700 Vietnamese nationals.
 Source: nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/immigration-reform-bill-could-allow-southeast-asian-american-deportees-return-n1255857
- A refugee is defined as someone who has been forced to flee their country because of persecution, war, or violence. In 2019, a record 79.5 million people were forced to flee their homes, an increase of 8.7 million over 2018.

Source: unrefugees.org/refugee-facts

 Before a refugee is admitted to the United States, they go through a rigorous screening process that involves eight federal agencies, security checks, a medical screening, and three in-person interviews. Since 1975, 3 million refugees have resettled across all 50 U.S. states.

Source: unrefugees.org/refugee-facts/usa

program-explained

- The top states for refugee resettlement in 2020 included:
 California, Washington, Texas, New York, Michigan, Kentucky,
 North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Arizona, and Ohio. The majority of refugees in 2020 came from the Democratic Republic of Congo,
 Myanmar, Ukraine, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

 Source: unrefugees.org/news/the-u-s-refugee-resettlement-
- Immigrants are more likely to start small businesses and contribute to economic growth than non-immigrants. A report finds that although immigrants make up 13 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 18 percent of small business owners. Between 1990 and 2010, the number of small business owners grew by 1.8 million—immigrants made up 30 percent of that growth.

Source: inc.com/jessica-stillman/immigrants-play-an-outsize-role-in-small-business.html

 Within 10 years of arriving in the United States, Ted and Christy Ngoy were millionaires and had sponsored more than 100 Cambodian refugee families, often setting them up with a home, a loan, and a donut shop.

Source: bbc.com/news/stories-54546427

 In the mid-1990s, the Los Angeles Times reported that there were 2,400 Cambodian-owned donut shops in Southern California.
 Currently, there are an estimated 1,500 stores run by Cambodian refugees and their children.

Source: foodandwine.com/travel/southern-california-donut-empire-origin-story

- Small businesses, especially minority- and immigrant-owned businesses, have been heavily impacted by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic. A study early in the pandemic showed that from February through April 2020, the number of small Black-owned businesses fell by 41 percent, the number of small Latinx-owned businesses fell by 32 percent, and the number of small Asian-owned businesses fell by 26 percent—all higher than the national average.
 - **Source:** bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-04/new-york-fed-study-shows-why-more-black-owned-firms-are-closing
- Women workers have been hardest hit by unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic, and Asian American women account for the highest rates of long-term unemployment. Forty-four percent of unemployed Asian American women have been out of work for six months or more, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Source: nbcnews.com/news/asian-america/why-asian-american-women-have-had-highest-jobless-rates-during-n1255699

 Reports about recent hate crimes in New York and the San Francisco Bay Area have raised concerns about anti-Asian prejudice stoked by political rhetoric around the COVID-19 pandemic. The New York Police Department reported that hate crimes motivated by anti-Asian sentiment jumped 833 percent in the city in 2020. Shortly after taking office in 2021, U.S. President Joe Biden signed an executive order denouncing anti-Asian discrimination.

Source: time.com/5938482/asian-american-attacks



FRAMING THE CONVERSATION



The Donut King uses donuts to draw people into a conversation about refugee experiences in the United States. Your events can do the same. Even if your community does not have a Cambodian-owned donut shop, it will likely have a small business that is owned and operated by a local immigrant family. Your events are an opportunity to celebrate the stories, accomplishments, and contributions of these community members.

During your discussion, keep an eye out for myths about immigrants and refugees. For example, a widely circulated myth about immigrants is that they "take American jobs." It's important to recognize that these myths perpetuate xenophobia, which is defined as a dislike of people from other countries. Your event is an opportunity to frame the conversation around the facts, in particular, how immigrants more often play a complementary role to the existing workforce and positively affect local economic growth by opening small businesses. Your discussions can play a role in interrupting xenophobic misinformation and healing political divisions around immigration. For more facts about common myths around immigrants and the economy, see this PBS NewsHour article: pbs.org/newshour/economy/making-sense/4-myths-about-how-immigrants-affect-the-u-s-economy

You can also use your conversation to look at the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on local small businesses and the Asian American community. The pandemic has created challenging economic consequences for all small businesses, but especially minority owned, as well as for Asian American women facing an extended period of unemployment. At the same time, Asian American communities have experienced rising prejudice and hate crimes since the pandemic began. Your event discussions can be part of the healing process by encouraging people to stand in solidarity with Asian American neighbors and small businesses.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Start a conversation with your guest speakers or your audience using these questions inspired by the film. You can also use questions to generate online conversations before or after your screening event.

- Ted Ngoy, the Donut King, established a path to opportunity for Cambodian American refugees. In what ways did he shape the Cambodian American community in California?
- Can you relate to the experiences of the families in the film who own a donut shop? Have you ever been part of a family-run business?
- "I'm so proud I live in America. I have my freedom, I can do whatever I want," said Chuong Lee, owner of DK's Donuts. What did the American Dream mean to the Cambodian Americans interviewed in the film? What does it mean to you?
- What does it take to run a family-owned donut shop? What are the challenges of running an independent business?
- How did the experience of surviving the Khmer Rouge and coming to the United States as a refugee shape the Cambodian Americans interviewed in the film?
- What did you learn about the Southeast Asian refugee crisis during the 1970s and 1980s from watching the film? Does your family have an immigration story that they've shared with you?
- How did it feel to see archival clips of politicians speaking about refugee resettlement in the film? How did the political messages about refugees in 1975 compare with messages you hear today?
- In 2021, the number of refugees allowed into the United States is limited to 15,000 people—the lowest since 1980. What forces caused this shift?
- How do immigrant and small family businesses contribute to communities and the national economy? What did you learn about family businesses and how they build opportunities for those new to the country?

- How did it feel to see the images of the refugee camp at Camp Pendleton? What did you hear the Ngoy family and the Cambodian refugees say about the experience of arriving in the United States?
- In what ways was the surrounding community welcoming to the Ngoy family? In what ways could it have been more welcoming?
- 12 How can communities promote a welcoming environment for all of its residents regardless of where they were born?
- Where are current refugees and immigrants arriving from in your state? What does the community do to help them resettle?
- [4] Can family-run businesses compete with corporations in today's economy? Is there a strong "buy local" culture in your area?
- What differences did you see across generations in the film? How are the children of donut shop owners innovating their family businesses?
- How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected local immigrant business ownership? How can the community help revitalize local small businesses?
- 17 Anti-Asian sentiment and violence have risen since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. What factors have contributed to the increased prejudice? How might we address this and support the AAPI community?



POTENTIAL PARTNERS AND/OR SPEAKERS



Partnering with organizations and businesses can help you connect with potential speakers and audience members for your screening of *The Donut King*. Here are some recommendations:

- Invite immigrant-owned, family-run small business owners to share their work and their stories with the community. Look for the local immigrant business leaders who have supported the surrounding immigrant community, like Ted Ngoy did. Try local bakeries, restaurants, and corner stores for connections, and contact your city's Chamber of Commerce for recommendations. The chambers involved in the New American Economy network are a great place to start: newamericaneconomy.org/globaltalent-chamber-network/#members.
- Reach out to local refugee resettlement organizations to learn more about how they are working with recently arrived families. Partnering with a refugee service organization can also connect community members to opportunities to get involved in supporting local resettlement efforts. For local refugee resources, see this map Office of Refugee Resettlement: acf.hhs.gov/orr/map/find-resources-and-contacts-your-state. Look for local governments and nonprofit organizations in the Welcoming America Network: welcomingamerica.org/programs/ our-network.
- Partner with an Asian American and Pacific Islander cultural center. For example, your city may have an Asian American film festival, a religious network for the Asian American community, or a community resource center dedicated to supporting local Asian American residents. Check out this directory of Cambodian Associations in the United States for groups near you: nationalcao.org/directory.html. You can also look through the member organizations of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans: ncapaonline.org/member-organizations.
- Invite local historians who are knowledgeable about refugee
 resettlement in your area over the years. Check nearby
 colleges and historical societies for recommendations on local
 specialists. Connect with leaders from the Association for Asian
 American Studies: aaastudies.org/about/board-of-directors.
 To find a local historical society, visit: preservationdirectory.
 com/preservationorganizationsresources/OrganizationListings.
 aspx?catid=123.



ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES BEYOND A PANEL

Encourage your audiences to interact with the film in creative ways. These recommendations can be organized in addition to or in place of a panel of speakers.

- Organize a Shop Local campaign to support and revitalize family-run, immigrant-owned small businesses affected by the pandemic economy. You could have attendees enter their name for a drawing to receive a dozen donuts shipped to them in exchange for signing up for your organization's email list. DK's Donuts, which is featured in the film, ships to anywhere in the United States if you would like to encourage your viewers to support a Cambodian donut shop: dksdonuts.com/shop.
- Partner with a refugee resettlement organization to organize

 a day of action. Find an activity to do with and for the
 communities they serve. This can be a clean-up day, meal or
 food distribution, community cultural event, and other COVID safe activities.
- Incorporate art into your event. Be inspired by the illustrations, music, and artful culinary photography included in the film and look for local artists that could contribute to your event. For example, a short film or photography collection about local immigrant-owned businesses, such as Beloved Donuts, created by Denver-based photographer Theo Stroomer: theostroomer. com/content/beloved-donuts.
- Encourage attendees to try mentoring. Hello Neighbor coordinates a mentorship program that pairs community members with new refugees: helloneighbor.io/program. You can nominate a recently resettled refugee family or your own family to Hello Neighbor's mentorship program here: helloneighbor. typeform.com/to/Hhii93.
- Invite people to create a welcoming community with the Belonging Begins with Us campaign. The Welcoming America campaign recommends small acts of kindness for residents to do to create a friendly community atmosphere for all residents: belongingbeginswithus.org/join-in. You can also plan ahead to participate in the Welcoming Week held each September: welcomingamerica.org/programs/welcoming-week.

- Ask participants to record an oral history for your local public radio station or by using the StoryCorps app: storycorps. org/participate/storycorps-app. Learn more about how your organization can participate in American Pathways, a StoryCorps collection featuring interviews with refugees and immigrants: storycorps.org/discover/american-pathways. Be sure to tag any recordings with #DonutKingPBS so Independent Lens can share submissions with the filmmakers.
- Report a hate crime with Stop AAPI Hate, an initiative to track
 and respond to hate, violence, harassment, discrimination,
 shunning, and child bullying against Asian Americans and Pacific
 Islanders in the United States: stopaapihate.org.
- Organize a book club reading of Ted Ngoy's autobiography, The Donut King: The Rags to Riches Story of a Poor Immigrant Who Changed the World: abebooks.com/9780999432600/Donut-King-Rags-Riches-Story-0999432605/plp.
- Organize a list of immigrant and refugee resettlement organizations (locally, statewide, or nationally) that may want volunteers or that people can donate to.
- If someone you know needs support with a gambling addiction,
 please connect them to the confidential National Gambling
 Helpline, available 24/7 at 1-800-522-4700. See more resources
 here: sumhlc.org/resources/problem-gambling-hotline/national-gambling-addiction-hotlines-and-additional-resources/.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Below are more links and organizations to help you plan your screening event for *The Donut King*.

- New American Economy is a bipartisan research and advocacy organization fighting for smart federal, state, and local immigration policies that help grow our economy and create jobs for all Americans. newamericaneconomy.org
- Refugee Congress is a nonpartisan national advocacy organization built and led by former refugees, asylumseekers, and other vulnerable migrants to promote the wellbeing, integration, and dignity of all vulnerable migrants.
 refugeecongress.org
- Refugees International are advocates for lifesaving assistance and protection for displaced people and promotes solutions to displacement crises. refugeesinternational.org
- Southeast Asia Resource Action Center is a national civil rights organization that empowers Cambodian, Laotian, and Vietnamese American communities to create a socially just and equitable society. searac.org
- UN Refugee Agency USA supports and educates asylum-seekers in the United States. unhcr.org/en-us/united-states-of-america. html
- U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement leads America's humanitarian response to refugees. acf.hhs.gov/orr
- Welcoming America leads a movement for inclusive communities becoming more prosperous by making everyone feel like they belong. welcomingamerica.org



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INDEPENDENT LENS

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing on PBS Monday nights at 10:00 PM. The acclaimed series, with Lois Vossen as Executive Producer, features documentaries united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of independent filmmakers. Presented by ITVS, the series is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding from PBS, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Wyncote Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit

Join the conversation: With #DonutKingPBS @IndependentLens on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

ITVS is a San Francisco-based nonprofit organization that has, for over 25 years, funded and partnered with a diverse range of documentary filmmakers to produce and distribute untold stories. ITVS incubates and co-produces these award-winning films and then airs them for free on PBS via our weekly series, Independent Lens, as well as other series through our digital platform, OVEE. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. For more information, visit itvs.org.

CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA

The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) presents innovative, engaging Asian American works on public television through our dynamic documentary programs. CAAM's award-winning public TV programs are seen by millions of viewers a year across the United States, including 47 documentary shows in the last four years and more than 200 films since 1982. CAAM is a member of the National Multicultural Alliance (formerly the National Minority Consortia), designated by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to provide diverse programming to PBS. For more information, visit caamedia.org.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967, is the steward of the federal government's investment in public broadcasting. It helps support the operations of more than 1,500 locally owned and operated public television and radio stations nationwide. CPB is also the largest single source of funding for research, technology and program development for public radio, television and related online services. For more information, visit cpb.org, follow us on Twitter @CPBmedia, Facebook and LinkedIn and subscribe for other updates.











