

88↑

Jamojaya

written & directed by Justin Chon
written by Maegan Houang

Logline

A father-son relationship is put to the test when an up-and-coming rapper at the crossroads of his career makes the tough decision to let go of his manager, who is also his father. This decision forces them to confront the past and figure out what they want from each other and themselves before they possibly never see each other again.

Introduction

Global music sensation Rich Brian stars as James, an up-and-coming rapper who struggles with the fact that he has outgrown his longtime, eccentric manager, Joyo, who is also his father. After James fires Joyo for failing to advance his career and being increasingly socially awkward on the job, James heads to Hawaii to record what should be his breakthrough album with the help of a new industry-savvy manager. One morning, he wakes to find that his father Joyo has suddenly returned, convinced James will not have a good life without him. Unable to send his father away, James wrestles with where the relationship between them stands as he learns to heal deep-seated wounds.

This gritty, emotional two-hander, between father and son, will explore the intense personal dynamics when business turns into family as well as what it means to make it in America as an immigrant from Asia, particularly under the bright lights of celebrity. Set in Hawaii, which reminds James and Joyo of their old lives in Indonesia, it becomes a constant reminder of how far away they are from the culture they cherish. The film will be driven by powerful character relationships and moments of serene surrealism akin to *ATLANTA*, *AN ELEPHANT SITTING STILL*, *TREE OF LIFE* and *LOST IN TRANSLATION*.

Characters

RICH BRIAN IS James

James is an up-and-coming Indonesian rapper who has just hired a new manager and signed with a big time record label. He made the tough decision of firing his previous manager, who also happened to be his father. James is extremely appreciative for everything Joyo has done but he now needs space to grow as an artist. He also sees it as an opportunity for his dad to retire and move back home to Jakarta to take care of his health. But how will James handle the constant reappearance of his dad, who just wants to spend more time with his son? Not to mention dealing with the pressures of a big label who are trying to while still maintaining his voice and identity that got him there in the first place.



Joyo

Joyo is an Indonesian man who dresses like he's from the rural streets of Gampong and looks extremely out of place in the music world. He has been the manager for his son from the beginning, his life always revolving around James. He's extremely proud of his son's success and knows he needs to eventually let James become his own man, but just can't let go. Haunted by the traumatic death of his firstborn and battling through his own health issues, Joyo is unable to leave his son, always returning and convincing himself that being there is best for James.



Shannon

Shannon Greene is a fierce executive type with gentle eyes who is always in a suit. She is a bad ass music manager who has turned many of her clients into high profile artists. She's great at finding talent and believes in the music but also knows that this industry is a business and to succeed you have to play the game to get to the next level. She won't stand for bullshit and will do what she thinks is best for her clients. She has conflicting feelings with the constant reappearance of Joyo, and sees how family priority can derail where James wants to go, a feeling that she can relate to.

Michael

Michael is the owner of the record label, the money man who is in the business of creating superstars. He doesn't waste his time and invests heavily in talent but he expects his artists to be able to handle the pressures and needs of a bigger label. At the end of the day it is his company and his money and considers James lucky to be having this opportunity.

Sean

Sean is an outgoing music producer, Post-Malone type. He started from the beginning with James and both have helped each other get to where they are now. He isn't a big flashy name yet but he knows James better than anyone else. They have a loyalty and a comfortability working together and James needs Sean to make the album that he wants, especially with all the other changes happening around him.

Synopsis



Our story begins with up-and-coming rapper JAMES (20, Rich Brian) in a greenroom filled with people getting hyped before a big show in Miami. We see James' manager and dad JOYO (50's, a rotund Indonesian man with a peaceful nature. A Benedict Wong-type), who sticks out like a sore thumb in this crowd, helping set up the room and keeping company with SEAN (20's, an outgoing music producer. A Jackson Wang-type), James' producer that's been with James since the start of his career. Joyo is happy to always be near his only son James because they had a mysterious family tragedy and lost James' brother Jaya at a young age. James still has not fully processed this loss. Before the show, James introduces SHANNON (40s, a fierce executive type. An Elisabeth Moss-type) to Joyo, explaining that she's a manager with high-profile clients. Before James goes on stage that night with the beloved Indonesian Children's Choir as his backup singers, he tells Joyo that he needs space from him to grow as an artist and Shannon is his new manager instead of Joyo. James has purchased a ticket and is sending Joyo back to Indonesia.

James flies to Honolulu to meet new manager Shannon. James has signed a new record label deal and is recording his next album while staying at the record label owner MICHAEL'S beachside guesthouse. James aims to maintain his identity as an artist and connection to his culture with producer Sean while also reaching a wider audience with the next album with the help of his new team behind him.

Joyo did not fly back home to Indonesia but instead changed his flight to fly through Hawaii for a surprise visit to James. James is surprised and frustrated seeing his dad and at the fact that his dad still mentions his brother Jaya and carries an old photo of all three of them. James wants to bury that memory of Jaya forever and can't do that with Joyo around. James is forced to tell Shannon that he has to take some time away from the recording studio to spend time with his dad. Shannon thinks Joyo is a distraction to James at a time when he needs him to focus. James is in a tough situation with his dad and buys another plane ticket for Joyo to go back home. James spends the time he does have in the studio with Sean and they are really proud of the new song they produced for the next album.



A scene from a television show depicting a meeting. Three individuals are seated around a white conference table. On the left, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a purple blazer and a gold necklace, looks towards the center. In the middle, a man with thinning hair, wearing a tan blazer over a yellow t-shirt, is speaking. On the right, a man with a beard, wearing a maroon blazer over a teal shirt, has his arms crossed and listens intently. The table is set with a pen holder, a glass of water, a plate of food, and a blue napkin. In the background, a wall features the text 'OM GEM' and 'ORDS' in large, dark letters. A potted plant is visible on the right side of the frame.

In a meeting with Shannon and the record label executives, James pours his heart and soul in pitching his vision for his album. He wants to build off his last album and use the Children's Choir again. The executives undercut James' vision for the album and have a very different plan for him. James is warned that he needs to play ball and do everything they tell him to do because they are investing a lot of money and going to throw him a big party.

ON THE PHONE:

**FUAD
SHARUJI**

V.P. OPERATION CONTROL, MALAYSIAN AIRLINES

**BEIJING CAPITAL
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

**KUALA LUMPUR
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

During a one-on-one meeting with the record label owner, James is stunned to hear the breaking news that the Malaysia Airline flight that his father was supposed to be on has **DISAPPEARED**. [Our story takes place in 2014. The year Malaysia Flight 370 disappeared into the Indian Ocean.] James leaves and can't get confirmation from the airline that Joyo was actually on that flight. He is stricken with worry and can't sleep. Then one morning, Joyo mysteriously appears at the house. James is relieved, but knows he can't keep Joyo around, so he tells everyone that Joyo is now his assistant so that he can accompany him everywhere.

BREAKING NEWS

360

**MISSING MALAYSIA AIRLINES FLIGHT WAS
EN ROUTE TO BEIJING FROM KUALA LUMPUR**

**LIVE
CNN**

REPORTS OF A "PRETTY STRONG DISAGREEMENT" BETWEEN PRES

CNN.com



A man with dark hair, wearing a patterned long-sleeved shirt, is shown in profile, looking down with a somber expression. He is in a dimly lit room with blue and purple ambient lighting. In the background, there are out-of-focus lights, possibly from a stage or a club setting.

James is at brand photo shoot for the label and is miserable because he feels like a sellout. He also feels sick watching his father act so subservient to everyone taking lunch orders and being bossed around. At the afterparty of the shoot, James can't bring himself to fully partake in partying at a strip club with his dad around. This is all hard for James to navigate. When Joyo senses James needs support, he tells James the story of his birth. He was born with three patches of hair that formed a triangle on his head. Their close-knit Catholic community viewed the triangle as demonic and James' mom pressured Joyo to shave his head. Joyo always regretted shaving James' head thinking he should have just let James be himself.

At the night big record label party, James is disappointed that nobody genuinely cares about him. One bright spot in the party is Shannon flew in the Children's Choir to perform at the party. James and Joyo are so happy to see them and touched by their performance, but the label executives are underwhelmed and record label owner Michael tells James that he's killing the idea of the Children's Choir and producer Sean for his future album. Brian objects and Michael gets carried away and continues to belittle James and says he'd be a failure without his support. Joyo and the rest of the party witness Michael's very public dressing-down of James and Joyo's protective parent comes out in him and he throws Michael in the swimming pool.



After the party, James processes the repercussions of Joyo's actions. Michael is pulling the plug on the studio sessions and all the work he's done is going to be buried. James' has a huge realization that all the money and resources were only if he followed the rules and let go of his creative say. Joyo sincerely feels guilty of what he's done to damage his son's career. He tells James that he just wanted him to be happy and it brings him joy in his life to be his father and be around him. He brings up that his brother Jaya would have been proud. James has had enough and doesn't want to hear about his brother. James is moving to a hotel room away from him.



With his hat in his hand, James finds Michael at his house and begs for a second chance. James says he will not resist any decisions they make for him and offers all the worldwide rights for all his music. James understands that he's sacrificing his creative freedom for fame. Michael agrees to the new terms.

As time passes, James with a newly appointed producer produce a new song that James hates. The label just thinks of him as a product and not an artist. Now they want to change his look and give him absurd hair extensions so that as they say he will not look like all other Asian people.



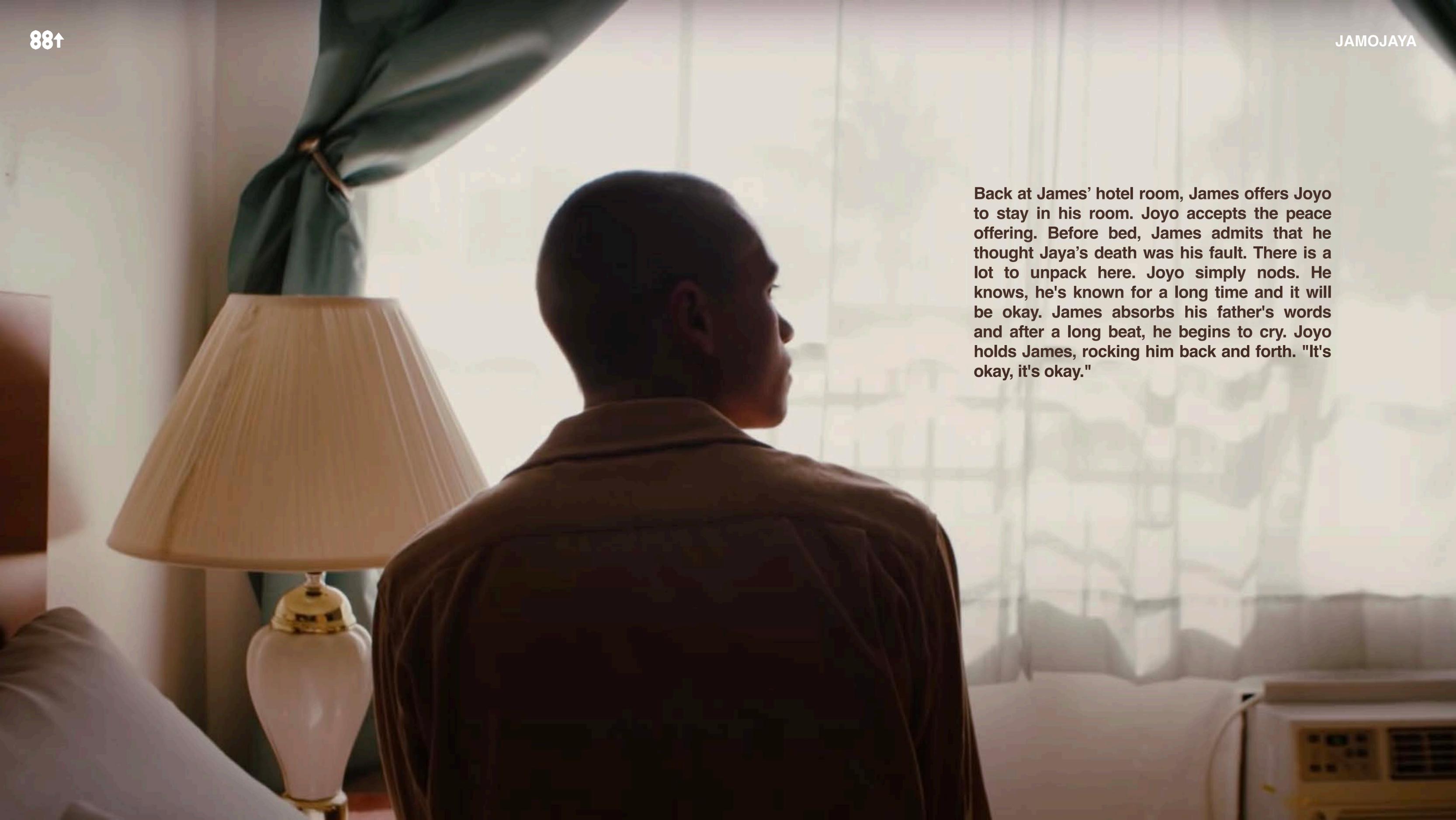


Before Joyo leaves, James comes over to say goodbye. When he's over he sees happy birthday balloons, a cake and a small shrine with Jaya's picture. James wasn't expecting this. Joyo explains it's about confronting the past, which incenses James so much that he can't hold his tongue any longer and blurts out that Joyo doesn't know how to let go. James won't be guilted into dragging Joyo everywhere he goes anymore. He just doesn't want to see his father again. Joyo snaps calling James an ungrateful child. James explodes and says he wishes Joyo had died on that plane. Joyo looks back at him, speechless." James storms out.

James is thinking about everything that happened in that blow up fight. That night he has a vivid dream that feels very real where he sees Joyo and Jaya holding hands with their backs to James. Internally, he's battling deep feelings about Jaya's death that he wants to bury deep.

At a music video shoot, James is getting treated like a piece of meat again and has had enough. In a fit of rebellion, he shaves off his absurd hairdo and leaves three patches of hair just like when he was a baby. Michael shouts at James to get in line and shave his head fully so they continue. Security guards come over to restrain James and actually hold him down to shave his head, when Joyo enters and fights off the security guards. Joyo is there to save the day.





Back at James' hotel room, James offers Joyo to stay in his room. Joyo accepts the peace offering. Before bed, James admits that he thought Jaya's death was his fault. There is a lot to unpack here. Joyo simply nods. He knows, he's known for a long time and it will be okay. James absorbs his father's words and after a long beat, he begins to cry. Joyo holds James, rocking him back and forth. "It's okay, it's okay."



Years have passed. A framed photo of Joyo and floral wreaths adorn a casket in a church in Indonesia. The Children's Choir performs nearby for a small, mourning crowd. This is a funeral for Joyo. James is surprised to see Shannon in attendance. James asks why she came and she explains that she grew to really like Joyo and saw through everything that he was a good dad trying to protect his son. She wishes she was as good a parent as Joyo was and chose family over work. The words stay with James.

THE END

MAIN ACTOR

Rich Brian

Rich Brian is arguably the most popular Asian rapper globally. Signed to 88rising, Brian is a breakout star of our label, bringing his Asian and Indonesian roots to his lyrics and is based in Los Angeles.

Brian's made history by topping the iTunes Hip-Hop charts with his debut album AMEN - a first for an Asian musician. Brian has since gone on to sell out shows across North America, Europe and Asia, and festivals around the world including Bonnaroo and Rolling Loud. His newest EP "1999" (Aug 2020) explores sophistication of his artistry.

From collaborating with the likes of 21 Savage, Offset, and Playboi Carti, to selling out shows and playing festivals around the world, Brian is the world's preeminent Asian rapper. Brian is (confidentiality) working on a collaboration with Wu-Tang Clan.

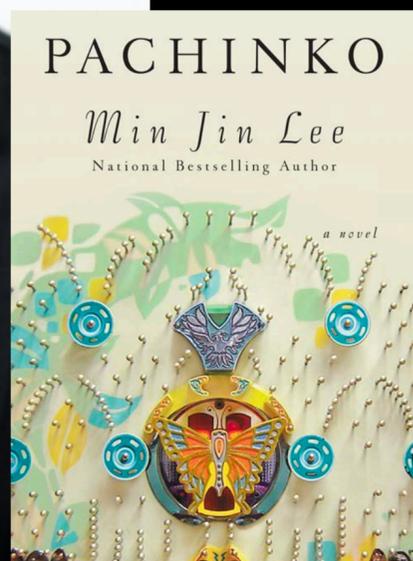
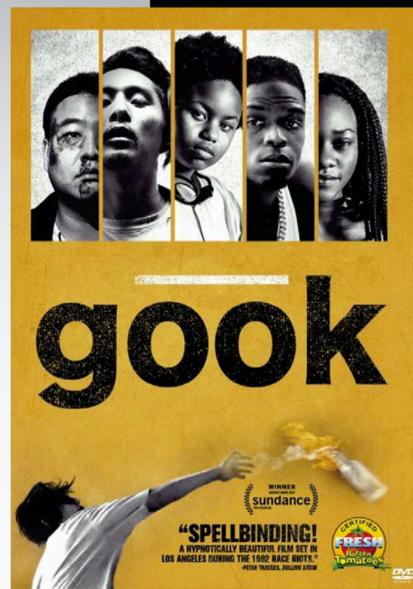
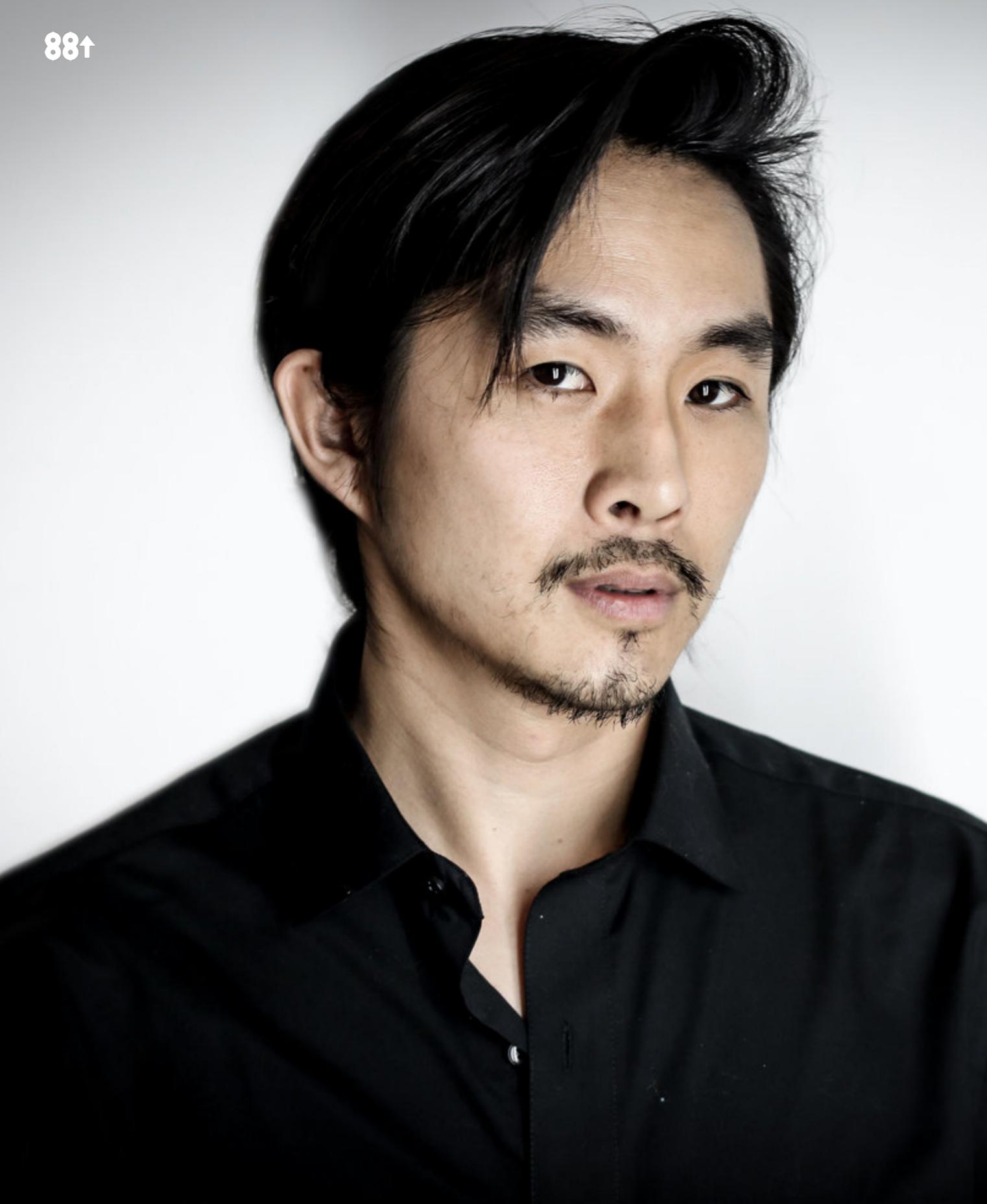
Music videos - [BALI](#), [LOVE IN MY POCKET](#)

1.7B+ TOTAL
STREAMS

6.5M MONTHLY
SPOTIFY LISTENERS

3.6M+ INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS





WRITER/DIRECTOR

Justin Chon

Justin Chon is a writer, director, and actor. He has established himself as an award winning independent filmmaker and has a track record of making financiers profitable projects, convincing top A-list talent to work with him on indie budgets and is proven enough that he's trusted with big Hollywood budgets. His 90's LA riots drama *GOOK* (2017) won the audience award for Best of Next category of the Sundance Film Festival and he went on to win the Independent Spirit award for "Someone to Watch" in 2018. His follow up film was a contemporary Koreatown sibling drama entitled *MS. PURPLE* (2019), which also premiered at Sundance.

Justin is making a big moves in 2021. He writes, directs and stars in *BLUE BAYOU*, which also stars Oscar-winner Alicia Vikander (*EX MACHINA*, *TOMB RAIDER*). *BLUE BAYOU* is set to be in theaters this June. On the TV side, Justin is onboard directing Apple TV+'s upcoming flagship epic series *PACHINKO*, which is based on Min Jin Lee's popular award winning novel.

COMPARABLES

BLUE BAYOU

Budget: \$4M

Releasing in Theaters June 29, 2021

THE FAREWELL

Budget: \$3M

Sale: \$6M

Domestic Box Office: \$17.6M

International Box Office: \$5.2M

HONEY BOY

Budget: \$3.5M

Sale: \$5M

Domestic Box Office: \$3M

International Box Office: \$3.4M

VARIETY

Justin Chon's 'Blue Bayou' Sells to Focus
Features Out of Cannes Virtual Market
(EXCLUSIVE)



Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP/Shutterstock

COMPARABLES

THE LAST BLACK MAN IN SAN FRANCISCO

Budget: \$2M

Domestic Box Office: \$4.6M

BLINDSPOTTING

Budget: \$1.2M

Worldwide Gross: \$5M

NOMADLAND

Budget: \$5M

Golden Globe Winner Best Motion Picture - Drama

Golden Globe Winner Best Director

MINARI

Budget: \$2M

Golden Globe Winner for Best Motion Picture - Foreign Language

Hollywood
THE
REPORTER

**Golden Globes: Chloe Zhao's
'Nomadland' Wins Best
Motion Picture, Drama**



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