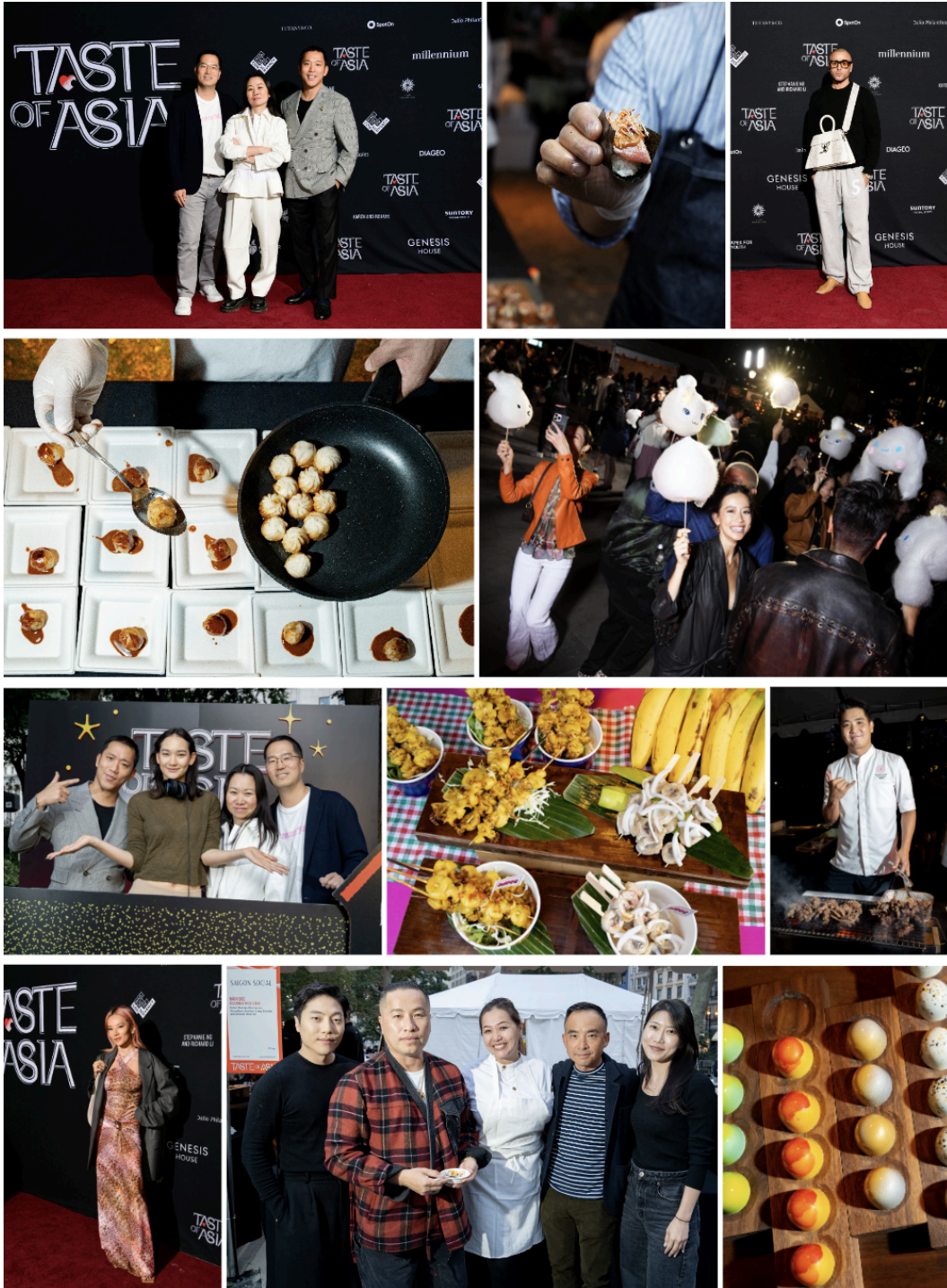




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TASTE OF ASIA RAISES NEARLY \$1.4 MILLION TO EMPOWER AAPI COMMUNITIES AND CELEBRATE ITS CUISINE**





From Top: Michael Chung, Wen Zhou, Simon Kim, Raul Lopez, Mona Matusoaka, Chef David Shim, Tina Leung, Phillip Lim (Courtesy of Jared Siskin of Getty, Max Flatow and Eric Vitale)

**New York, NY** - On Tuesday, October 8th, **Taste of Asia** held its third inaugural event in New York's iconic Madison Square Park, which gathered 40 of New York's leading restaurants to celebrate the city's vibrant Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities and its cuisine. The high-profile tasting event raised nearly \$1.4 million in support of Apex for Youth and Madison Square Park Conservancy.

Photos of the evening are available [here](#).

Curated by founder and co-chair Simon Kim of Gracious Hospitality Management, the hospitality group behind Michelin-starred COTE Korean Steakhouse and the newly opened COQODAQ, the event featured dozens of hand-selected restaurants serving Asian-inspired bites, honoring the diversity and vitality of AAPI culture and cuisine in New York City and beyond.

*"We are so humbled and grateful to everyone who showed up to support Taste of Asia this year, including the 1,000 attendees and 40 restaurants who all represented the true diversity of Asian cuisine. We had Korean restaurants, Japanese, Indian and Southeast Asian, mom and pop shops, eight Michelin starred restaurants, James Beard Award winners, World's 50 Best Chefs and more, all in support of two outstanding nonprofits, Apex for Youth and Madison Square Park Conservancy" said Kim. "I am also incredibly grateful to Madison Square Park and their efforts to bring new levels of sustainability to this year's event including a partnership with Common Ground Compost to divert as much waste from landfill as possible."*

Michael Chung, co-chair of Taste of Asia and Global Co-Head of Equities at Millennium Management, a global alternative investment firm continued, *"The AAPI community across New York City has come incredibly far with AAPI leaders across many disciplines, and yet there is still a need to combat conflict and vulnerability in the community. I was honored to co-chair Taste of Asia as we brought people together from different walks of life to celebrate diversity and community through delicious Asian food. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year another great success."*

*"Apex for Youth is proud to celebrate the vibrant AAPI communities and their invaluable contributions to the rich tapestry of New York City. The funds raised at this event will significantly bolster our ability to enrich Apex's programs that focus on the health and well-being of underserved AAPI youth and our pursuit of a more equitable future. By indulging in the diverse flavors and culinary traditions showcased at Taste of Asia, we not only nourish our bodies but also fuel the aspirations of Asian American youth from low-income and immigrant backgrounds,"* said Jiyeon Chung, Executive Director of Apex for Youth. *"Together, we're unlocking their potential today and opening a world of possibility tomorrow. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone—individuals and organizations—who contributed to making this remarkable event a*



success. Collaborations like Taste of Asia embody the spirit and energy we aim to foster in New York City.”

*“Madison Square Park is proud to be both the home and a beneficiary of Taste of Asia,” said Holly Leicht, Executive Director of Madison Square Park Conservancy. “Welcoming 60,000 visitors every day, our park embodies the cultural diversity that Taste of Asia celebrates. We are grateful to our trustee Simon Kim and the other co-chairs for recognizing the importance of supporting New York’s public parks to ensure they remain safe, welcoming spaces for all.”*

Participating restaurants for the event, co-chaired by **Simon Kim, Michael Chung, Philip Lim & Wen Zhou**, along with this year’s Restaurant Chair, **Jenn Saesue**, included Atoboy, Báhn By Lauren, Bangkok Supper Club, Chinese Tuxedo, COTE Korean Steakhouse, COQODAQ, Hainan Chicken House, Jungsik, Lula Mae, Lysée, Masalawala & Sons, Naks, Nami Nori, Nom Wah, Pecking House, Sushi Noz, Win Son and more.

*“Throughout the year, we focus mainly on our restaurants and the details that come with fine tuning our food, but through events like Taste of Asia, we get to come together and celebrate the AAPI community while giving back. Together we can accomplish so much more while giving back and building community. I think more and more people are realizing that these days.” – Chef Jihan Lee of Nami Nori*

Notable attendees included fashion designer **Raul Lopez, Tina Leung, Fiffany Luu**, furniture designer **Eny Lee Parker**, DJ **Vashtie Kola**, actor and editor **Blake Abbie**, fashion designer **Kim Shui**, DJ **Mona Matsuoka**, model **Ashley Graham**, photographer **Tyler Joe, Jian DeLeon, Do Kim**, writer **Delia Cai, Phillip Wong, Felicia Quanning, Jaeki Cho, Laura Kim, Ezra J. William** and more.

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## **ABOUT APEX FOR YOUTH**

Apex for Youth delivers possibilities to underserved Asian and immigrant youth from low-income families in New York City. We recruit working professionals to volunteer and



become positive role models who inspire youth to expand their horizons and envision what is possible for their lives. Through mentoring and educational programs that serve students from pre-K to 12th grade, Apex volunteers guide and support youth to become confident, be ready for college and career, and give back to the community.

#### **ABOUT MADISON SQUARE PARK CONSERVANCY**

Madison Square Park Conservancy is the nonprofit entrusted by the City of New York to operate Madison Square Park, a 6.2-acre public space in the heart of Manhattan. Our mission is to conserve, maintain, and program this ever-evolving historic green space, including raising 100% of the park's operating budget. Our dedicated team takes great pride in caring for and shaping an urban oasis for all to enjoy.

#### **ABOUT GRACIOUS HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT**

Established by restaurateur and visionary Simon Kim in 2017, Gracious Hospitality Management has conceptualized Michelin-starred and James Beard-nominated restaurants including COTE Korean Steakhouse in NYC, Miami, Singapore and soon-to-be Vegas, as well as the bespoke cocktail lounge Undercote and COQODAQ, with exciting new projects in the pipeline including the multi-level dining destination at the iconic 550 Madison Avenue in New York. The concepts have developed a distinguished reputation for providing outstanding food, wine, and hospitality spanning American, European, and Asian cuisine.

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