Images: Adam James Smith; Winter photo, replica town of Jackson Hole, Wyoming in China, courtesy of the community's Promotions Department

"Americaville," Documentary by Adam James Smith Screened Internationally
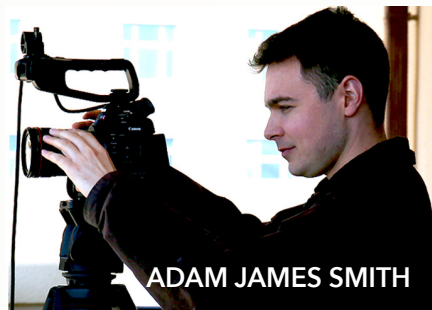
The film was awarded Best Feature Documentary at the Swedish Architecture Film Festival

A film by Adam James Smith, MFA, Assistant Professor of Multimedia Studies in the School of Communication and Multimedia Studies (SCMS), is currently being screened in Europe with in-person screenings in Vienna, Austria; Rotterdam, the Netherlands; Copenhagen, Denmark; and Lund, Sweden. The film, titled "Americaville," was awarded Best Feature Documentary at the Swedish Architecture Film Festival.

"Americaville" centers around a replica of the Wyoming town of Jackson Hole, Wyoming that was built in China, north of Beijing. In the film, Annie Liu escapes China's increasingly uninhabitable city of Beijing to pursue happiness, freedom, romance and spiritual fulfillment in Jackson Hole, only to find the American idyll harder to attain than what was promised to her.

"Americaville," Documentary by Adam James Smith Screened Internationally

ANNIE LIU OUTSIDE HER HOME

ADAM JAMES SMITH

"I chose the topic of this film because I'm very interested in American culture and Chinese culture and this is a place where the two cultures are colliding"

- Adam James Smith, Assistant Professor, (SCMS)

The film has been featured on two Apple podcasts. The "What's Your Why" segment can be found here: **https://tinyurl.com/y59zv39t** and the "Passport" segment here: **https://tinyurl.com/y4t2otc4**

A trailer of the film can be found here: **https://www.americavillefilm.com/about**

After finishing his first feature documentary in China, "The Land of Many Palaces," Adam began work on "Americaville" in late 2014. While "The Land of Many Palaces" focused on the movement of rural people into a new city, "Americaville" focused on the opposite movement, of a wealthy urban elite leaving China's increasingly uninhabitable cities to live out an imagined American small-town life.

The film premiered to sold-out audiences at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival in January 2020, followed by a press week in California where the film was screened with talks about the film by Smith at the U.S. - China Institute at University of Southern California; the Long Institute at University of California Irvine; and the Center for Chinese Studies at University of California, Los Angeles. Smith also partnered with the National Endowment for the Humanities to present the film in the original town of Jackson Hole, Wyoming, where the auditorium at the Jackson Hole Center for the Arts was filled with locals curious to understand why the Chinese replicated their town.

Despite the coronavirus pandemic causing festivals to cancel during the spring and summer of 2020, Smith managed to continue screening throughout the United States at online versions of existing film festivals, such as the San Francisco Documentary Film Festival and the Salem Film Festival. He is currently exploring television broadcast opportunities throughout the United States and the world, as well as distributing the film on a streaming service.

Smith's areas of expertise include documentary filmmaking, video journalism, video art, ethnographic and anthropological filmmaking, Chinese documentary film, urbanization in China, and replica foreign town developments in China. He also advises on video projects at FAU student media. He is currently an Affiliated Filmmaker at Cambridge University's Visual Anthropology Lab. His film "The Land of Many Palaces" participated in the Sundance Institute workshop and premiered at the 2015 Santa Barbara International Film Festival. The film then went on to screen at festivals around the world, picking up awards in Moscow, Rome and Kyoto. Adam also embarked on an academic tour in North America, screening at Harvard, Columbia, Duke, Stanford, the Asia Society, and many more universities and organizations.

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