



song of
earthroot

BY: AARON HWANG & JOSHUA PEI
An AAPI documentary about finding home.

An orphan of war. An adoptee of a different race. A music educator with no song. An Eastern body in the West.
In search of Home.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6KCpF1_rpE&t=105s

Logline

Song of Earthroot is a feature-length documentary that centers on Kinh T. Vu, a Vietnamese American gay music education professor, who was adopted at the end of the American War in Vietnam. We follow Kinh as he returns to Saigon, Vietnam for the 37th time in 11 years as he reclaims his story by writing his first song, titled "Việt Nam, Tôi Xin Lỗi" (I'm Sorry, Vietnam).





"This story is not about an adoptee's search for birth parents, blood belonging, or adopted belonging. Nor is it about the "heroism" of the West for saving kids via adoption - that white saviorism is best left for another author. Instead, this film is a yearning to re-assimilate and reconnect to roots, even in his middle age. Kinh attempts a rejection of the Western socialization forced upon him when he was adopted, paired with much deeper reluctance or perhaps inability to do so. There is guilt, driven by shame. There is delusion, driven by ego. There is the universal struggle to self actualize desperately as he grows older but fights to remain young at heart. Through song and conversation, we follow Kinh as he writes what he feels is the last piece of the puzzle before he can get a one way ticket to return Home."

- Aaron Hwang, co-director



Kinh T. Vu

For quite some time I've contended with the conundrum of home: what is it, where is it, and why do I feel as though I am lost? My name is Kinh T. Vu and I am excited to share a part of my life's story. I was orphaned in Saigon, Vietnam sometime during the end of the war in late 1974 or early 1975. As an adult adoptee, I've taken multiple journeys back to the country I've begun to call home. It's the one place where my soul seems to light up, electrified like the millions of flashing neon signs that give Ho Chi Minh City a luminous glow.

This feature-length documentary is more than an account of one person's struggle to make sense of loss, grief, shame, and personal struggle. Rather, *Song of Earthroot* is my love song to anyone who has felt somehow lost in the mysteries associated with their own childhood displacement and adoption. It's a story about how I've started to shine light into dark places in hopes of letting others who feel lost know that they are not alone in their search for truth, for home, for Earthroot.









"A unique story about a universal desire. That is what Song of Earthroot is. That is what Kinh's story is. To find the truest version of ourselves and to find belonging in where we call Home. Home is where your being is at peace, and where you can come as you are. It is thus also where you can dare to unabashedly seek who you will become. Home is your Earthroot.

Kinh's journey to find Earthroot is not easy. He is a war orphan. He is an Asian adoptee to a white family. He is a minority in America. He is an educator in America. He is a gay man. He is falling in love with his country that he does not know.

There are stories like Kinh's. There are stories that are not. But in them all lives our collective pursuit of love and self identity, a truth so beautifully expressed in this moment of Kinh's life, captured through Song of Earthroot."

- Joshua Pei, co-director

To tell this story, we need your help. Our amazing team has worked brilliantly to capture these moments in Kinh's journey both in Vietnam and here in the US. As we work through the post production phase of this story, we request your financial support.

We believe this is an important story that sheds light on a multitude of beautiful minority groups and experiences. We also believe this story of self discovery is a part of all of us. If you are able to support, please reach out to joshuapei@gmail.com.

Read more about Song of Earthroot: <https://www.aahwang.com/earthroot>

Read more about Kinh: <https://www.kinhtvu.com>

Thank you for being a part of this story.