

# SUMMER 2025

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Jury Prize

Winner: **Charlie by Nicole Field**

**“A personal film which carefully navigates the internal turmoils of Charlie’s personal life and the personal dynamics she shares with her boyfriend. This is an inviting film – one which relishes the audience being involved, rather than just a bystander.”**

Nominees: Imbalance Love, Hero, FOLD, Guilt, Forest of Echoes

FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

The Cleaner – **Winner: Best Cinematography** – **“This film has a great delicate use of light, which is quite amazing.”**, Nominated: Best Actor – Stephen Opoku-Asamoah, Nominated: Best Director

Mustafa – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast

Guilt – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Music

Departures – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast

The Reprisal – Nominated; Best Genre Film

Perpetuum Mobile – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – **“A genuine feeling of balance exists between these performances. It is great.”**

Dive – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Actor – Marc Ewins, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Screenplay (tied) – “A fantastic level-headed script.”**

CRUSH TEST – Nominated: Best Genre Film

Forest of Echoes – Nominated: Best Director

Score – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “A great blend of characters live in Score!”

Road to Nowhere – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

The Ballad of Bobby Shine – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: The Ballad of Bobby Shine

Always Allison’s – **Winner (tied): Best Screenplay – “A great blend of characters and genre specific neurotic behaviour.”**

RAGE – Nominated: Best Cinematography

Hero – Nominated: Best Actor (Lead), Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Intimate and yet somehow large-scale in the basis of its impact a single choice can have on several lives... overall, it is moving and impressive.”**

FOLD – **Winner: Best Genre Film – “Easy to watch – which is spot on for its genre, constantly comical with some strong interpersonal stakes... until it isn’t funny (as intended)... ultimately memorable.”**

Imbalanced Love – **Winner: Best Actor – Wenbo Zhu – “Impressively delivered, Zhu is a great screen presence.”**, Nominated: Best Director

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Suicide Platoon: The Minefield – **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “Some great production values are featured in this film.”**

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Charlie – Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Actress – Mikhala Hoffman – “Hoffman is instantly engaging and memorable.”**, Nominated: Best Actor – Mikhala Hoffman

Come to Me – Nominated: Best Music

The Last President – Nominated: Best Music

Older Self – **Winner: Best Music, Winner: Best Director – “Older Self excels where many short films fail: that being, it is a story that fits this runtime... but also comes perfectly carved to suit it. This is quite an impressive project!”**, Nominated: Best Actor – Tom Michaels

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Red Wins – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Genre Film

Kanavar – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Editing, **Winner: Best Actor – Aurelian Barbieru – “A strong performance lies here with Barbieru, whose work is impressionable.”**

Dead, White and Blue – **Winner: Best Editing – “What a fascinating maze of images and ideas compiled from public domain content.”**

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Not enough entries to run this category.

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Not enough entries to run this category.

- Web series

Baby – Nominated: Best Actress

SPECIAL MENTION

**Kanavar – Winner: Bora Oezcan – Best Experimental Film – “Daring and challenging, Kanavar is memorable.”**

**Solar Neighbour – Winner: Best Animation – “Bizarre and dreamlike.”**

## MUSIC VIDEO

### **Best Music Video**

**Winner: Still Here – “With a great spirit, Still Here delivers a great sense of community and the importance of communication... all the while being a very well executed music video.”**

Nominees: Buy My Stuff!, Come to Me

### **Best Cinematography**

**Winner: Blood On your Teeth – “This feels like one hell of a thrill ride thanks to its visuals!”**

Nominees: Flesh Wish, By Her Side

## SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Character Arc

### **Winner: Stephanie Dellacosta**

**“Bursting with energy and character – Stephanie Dellacosta is a great, exciting read with an interesting character arc that many actors would relish.”**

Nominated: The Tree With No Heart, VODOO VALENTINOS, The Babysitter Slasher, Black Diamonds

- Best Genre Script

### **Winner: The Grateful Dead Squad**

**“Jumping between genres, The Grateful Death Squad comes loaded as an experience that would be a lot of fun if it were put on the screen!”**

Nominees: Serving Justice, VOODOO VALENTINOS, Red in the Wood, ESCAPE FROM SAMSARA, Mimic Men, Two Max

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Hamzaad- The Same Born**

**“Written with clarity and a moderate budget – this is a great script for a micro production.”**

Nominees: The Babysitter Slasher

- Best Technique

**Winner: Serving Justice (tied)**

**“Concise, inventive and entertaining.”**

**Winner: The Weekend (tied)**

**“A tender script that comes loaded with a lot of artistic value. This would be an emotionally moving film.”**

Nominees: VOODOO VALENTINOS, Stephanie Dellacosta, Gale – Yellow Brick Road, The Doppel® Effect

- Special Mention – Best Concept

**Winner: Max Two**

**“Original, and verging on the flavouring of Martin Amis’ short fiction.”**

# Autumn 2024

Jury Prize

**Winner (tied):**

**Buried – “This is cinematic poetry.”**

**Fading Fires – “A beautiful documentary which is informative and filmed with such delicate care for the image.”**

Nominees: Earth (Music Video), Black Theta, Kensuke’s Kingdom, Dwindle, VIATICUM, Sweet Tooth, Show Pony

FILM

- Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Don’t Tell Your Mom – **Winner: Best Genre Film**, Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “I mean, give us a feature like this and we are buying a ticket! 0 this was a heap of fun.”

Gula, Vol I. – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Dark, and entertaining. This film excels with its use of gritty locales.”

Float Like A Butterfly, Bite Like A Snake – Nominated: Best Actor (Charles AJ Griffin) – “A strong performance leads this film. It’s shot very nicely, and the dialogue is punchy.”

The Litterbug – Nominated: Best Actress (Dixie Hartvigsen) – “This isn’t trash – and it is very very entertaining!”

Crown of Flowers – **Winner: Best Actress (Jessica Lily)** – “The film is quite impactful, and Lily’s performance is very expressive and raw.”

Show Pony – Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Best Actor (Mark Rogerson) – “Barking and rather brilliant.”

Just Like Dad – **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Though there are some minor technical issues at hand with sound and the edit, this project has a solid presentation of urbanisation. The style at times borders on experimental. It feels very personal, and is a very memorable presentation of a story – largely built around a strong story structure.”

Shift Change – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actress (Susan Louise O’Connor) – “The performance is nuanced, the screenplay intriguing.”

Making a God – Nominated: Best Music – “This dance based film has a particular aura about it – largely built around the music.”

Blink – Nominated: Best Editing – “An intriguing short film that explores both the medium of film and the role of a narrator.”

At Home – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “A fascinating documentary that is made with a great style and self-awareness of the artist.”

Helldammit – Nominated: Best Director – “The montage of ghostly figures in a hotel room makes for a chilling experience. The directing is very impressively stylised. David Lynch fans rejoice!”

Pelargonium – Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Vera Marchenko), Nominated: Best Actor (Vladimir Mosharov) – “This understated film depicts the domestic setting of three people with a great delicate touch.”

The Hit – Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Polished, engaging and entertaining.”

Buried – Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “A stunning visual style unfolds here.”

Sweet Tooth – Nominated: Best Genre Film, **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast, Winner: Best Editing**, Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This film lives by its cast. The delivery kicks a solid punch. The edit is top draw. The visuals are great too.”

VIATICUM – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Actor (Steve Kuzmick) – “Delivered with some fantastic appreciation for black and white photography and coupled with Kuzmick’s performance – this short is sharp and engaging... comically so.”

Fool with a Gun – **Winner: Special Mention – Best Experimental Film** – “Somewhat similar to the style of the Lav Dias, the auteur of the Philippines, Fool with a Gun excels in its dark style and alienation.”

- Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Dwindle – **Winner: Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Produced with a great eye for detail, this startling period piece short film has an authentic feeling about it, with a flavouring of the folk Gothic feeling. This is one of the best shorts we’ve had this season.”

Ambiguous Indifference – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast- “This film comes with a great feeling of locality and a community of actors who have helped bring this film to the screen.”

The Back Garden – Nominated: Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Comical, and also quite stylish with its static performances.”

- Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Until the Pit – Nominated: Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Erom Cordeiro), **Winner: Best Director** – “With a slight feeling towards an avant-garde film, this effort is moody, expressive and above all: well delivered, especially by Cordeiro, who brings a lot of force and physicality to the film.”

Wallie’s Gals – Nominated: Short Film made for over \$10,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “This lengthy short film (practically a feature film) comes with many comical moments and some fantastic performances.”

Bastard Toadflax – **Winner: Short Film made for more than \$10,000** – “This very dark film is produced with great believability and style. It is a surprising and memorable effort.”

- Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Clown 'n Out (In Valley Village) – **Winner: Feature Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Though not covering any new ground, this film excels with its specific style. This is a Sin City type of delivery. With strong grading, lots of music and caricatures. The highlight of this experience is the impressive delivery despite the budget. The entire effort feels well executed and produced to a much higher standard than what the budget would have allowed for.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

The Child, The Two Scoundrels and The Witch – Nominated: Best Genre Film, **Winner: Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Dramatic, spot on with its blending of Christmas and witchcraft – and very well executed, this film arrives as the chilly festive film no one was expecting!”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Visitation Rights – **Winner: Best Documentary** – “Exploring in intimate detail the impact of divorce on children, this documentary provides a lot of space to the subject and how time impacts lives within these stressful periods of change.”

Black Theta – Nominated: Best Score, Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “A touch of self-awareness fills Black Theta, the type that specifically celebrates the genre (and subgenres) that the film inhabits. The script is rather cheesy, and the violence follows the same tone – making the film rather entertaining. The production values are consistent and of a high standard for an indie film of its kind.”

Danggol – Nominated: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Blending different genres, this film appears to be rather unexpected – shifting its tone often and style often to establish mood and different genre motifs. The cast, throughout all of this, appear to be very engaged.”

Seppuku: The Sun Goes Down – Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000** – “This period piece excels with its budget, creating a large scale film on a small budget. The script also helps elevate this film, as it is aware of the era and traditions of this particular film genre. Audience expectations, built around samurai films, will be met.”

Kensuke's Kingdom – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Animation, Winner: Best Score** Nominated: Best Actress (Sally Hawkins), Nominated: Best Actor (Ken Watanabe), **Winner: Best Actor (Aaron MacGregor)** – “Epic in scale, and impressively designed – this animation feature comes loaded with some impressive sound design and nuanced voice performances, which enhance the emotional gravity of the film.”

- Web series

## SPECIAL MENTION

CROMAESCOPE – **Special Mention: Winner: Best Retro Project** – “A passionately retro-filled project that celebrates modern filming techniques while maintaining the style of the bygone.”

## MUSIC VIDEO

Earth – **Winner: Best Music Video, Winner: Best Cinematography** – “The production values of this music video are outstanding – the visuals and the overall sci-fi tone are memorable and impactful.”

Happy Kelpie: BEDLAM BOYS – Nominated: Best Music Video – “An original, if not trippy, video – this style would make for an entertaining Guy Maddin-styled film.”

Tribe – Nominated: Best Editing – “An interesting image series is shown here. There’s some great editing, though the complete disregard for copyright is concerning.”

Zombie CV – **Winner: Best Editing** – “How and when the edit is applied during this music video, results in some impactful and interesting moments. The use of montage here, much like Soviet Cinema, alludes to multiple meanings that an audience can derive from the collage of concepts presented. It is a very solid and interesting use of editing.”

Orange Blues 24 – Nominated: Best Editing – “This stop motion video comes to life every time there’s a special edit applied to elevate the sequence in alignment with the lyrics or musical passage.”

Cave – **Special Mention Winner: Best Animation** – “This small delight carries a great sense of style and artistic beauty, and above all – a chilling ending.”

## SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: The Corridor** – “With a strong confrontation, The Corridor answers its own questions. This is a great script with a strong character journey.”

Nominees: La Esposa – “Comical, bloody and entertaining.”, The Age of the Empath – “A great look at the internal dynamics our relationships have, and how they shape our lives.”

- Best Genre Script

**Winner: The Sabbath of The Dead** – “Never seen anything like this before. Can we watch this zombie film soon please?!”

Nominees: The End of Playtime – “Full of interesting ideas, and some captivating characters.”, His Father’s House – “Dark and engaging, this project is basically ready to be filmed as is. This would be a top draw choice for actors as well, as it has a great set up of tension.”, The Age of the Empath – “A dazzling sci fi that really takes time to relish the genre it is focussed within.”, FIDO – “Concise, but also inventive, this project appears to engage with its genre in a way that makes it very commercial and solid as a viable investment.”

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Scoops** – “A fantastic gem of a short.”

Nominees: Words – “This script comes with a great design for a simple concept, one which would be both cost effective and memorable with the righting production values.”

- Best Technique

**Winner: Curry Sauce Ninja** – “Combining some fantastically pulpy dialogue with some very creative scenarios has made this a stand out script for its ingenuity and polish.”

Nominees: Above theBUZZ – “The style of the script, with its unusual presentation, is quite special.”, Those .persnickity .P.runsNF’AS – “Continuing the unusual style, Jason Thome brings a lot of unique style to his presentation and delivery of this script.”

# Spring 2024

## FILM

### Jury Prize

#### Winner: **Open Your Eyes**

*“Bursting with strong cinematic design, Open Your Eyes is a marvel – an experience that will haunt and attract viewers into its mysterious dark gooey bits. Cinematography, acting and sound design are top draw here.”*

Nominees: Unalome, Sham Love – Online Dating Ruse, Terrible, Project 405: Lost at Sea, Haunted

## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

A QAnon Christmas – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Editing – “A comical set up, and a blend of the Christmas film with comedy provides some great style to the film’s overall throwback style... which recalls Frank Capra.”

Will there be Dancing on Mars? – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actress (Sean Buckley) – “This simple dialogue lead film delights with strong character and impressive naturalism.”

Tierra del Fuego – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Score – “This nature video reveals the damage of our changing climate, the brutalist images of the icy world. The sweeping shots are grand, and the music is impactful.”

An Anciet Evil – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble – “This period exercise would benefit a heap from a solid grade, as it looks very digital at the moment. Overall though, the locale and the style is a lot of fun, and recalls Hammer Horror – when they did period horrrmedy.”

Terrible – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Actress (Bear Thompson)**, Nominated: Best Actor (Oli Meredith), **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “Almost play like, this short film unfolds as a very intimate and authentic story about interpersonal relationships. The actors really help elevate it.”

Project 405: Lost at Sea – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Winner: Best Editing** – “Like Vivarium, this sci fi romance becomes a horror show. Meticulous, and well executed on a tight budget, it will seep into your thoughts.”

Bloodline – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “Leaning heavily into the subgenre of the action-vamp motif, Bloodline delivers great tone where other genre films miss.”

Haunted: Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Direction (tied), Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – “Blooming as a great ghost saga, this film boasts some impressive set pieces, production style and genre-specific performances. It is great fun!”

Echo – Nominated: Best Actor (Michael Tait), Nominated: Best Direction, Nominated: Best Genre – “Echo treads where others dare not... it is impactful, memorable and stylish.”

Daniel Came Home – Nominated: Best Genre Film, **Special Mention: Best Make-Up Effects** – “A ghost returns... and a family’s trauma spills out. Its a well executed narrative which relishes its locales and internal meanings.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Ramen Journey: **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Score, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Slick and a whole lot of fun!”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Open Your Eyes – **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Direction, Nominated: Best Actress (Ella Loudon), Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, **Winner: Best Score** – “Sleep deprivation unlocks the feminine horror cycle. This new trope, which appeared in The Babaduck and Smile has finally landed in the realm of indie filmmaking... and it is a delight to hold.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Unalome – Nominated: Best Actor (Alakshendra Prabhakar), **Winner: Best Direction (tied), Winner: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Score – “Unpacking the journey of a lost soul – Unalome carries a lot of style and slick production in delivery, despite a micro-budget. Very impressive and memorable.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

No entries.

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Sham Love – Online Dating Ruse – **Winner: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000, Winner: Best Actor (John Ojeyemi)**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Produced with great style, and solid production quality. Some strong performances are in here too. ”

This is Now – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Actor (Brad Cook) – “Comical, and reminiscent of John Landis’ films, this effort is a great comical exercise in caricatures.”

Saudi The Superhero – Nominated: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Editing – “A rare documentary in the indie scene – intimate, and large in scope.”

- Web series

The Gliwensbourg Chronicles – Season 1 – **Winner: Best Webseries**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Produced with a slick high quality photography, and a strong sense of locale, this webseries forgets budget restrictions and reaches for the stars!”

SPECIAL MENTION

MUSIC VIDEO

- Best Music Video

**Winner: I Wanna Run**

“With a large scale production, I Wanna Run is an epic music video.”

Nominee: Lock the Door

- Best Cinematography

**Winner: Fade**

**“Shot with some seriously talented gaffer work – the lighting is amazing.”**

**SCRIPT COMPETITION**

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: Shut Up & Swim**

“Modern in its design, Shut Up and Swim finds a pleasure in the key component of character driven films: the arc – where the characters starts, and where they end up.”

Nominees: AT THE MERCY OF FAITH – Alternative Horror – “With strong character drive dialogue, this script excels in creating a world around its characters.”, Squeaky Clean – “Morals hang over characters who attempt to judge one another – here the personal becomes public as pressure from peers builds up. It’s exciting to read, and is a very actor friendly script.”, El Male – “Moving, memorable and impressive.”, Gary’s Game – “Intriguing, and detailed – with some interesting characterisations.”

- Best Genre Script

**Winner: Aqualand**

“Bursting with fun ideas – Aqualand is a new subgenre of horror subgenres... ‘the waterpark-dead-child-revenge theme’. The dialogue is comical and spot on in terms of tone.”

Nominees: AT THE MERCY OF FAITH – Terror Version – “A detailed tale of horror which explores genre in a strong tableaux.”, Hidden – “Intriguing, smart and full of fun enigma codes – Hidden uses genre to propel the audience into the cinematic delights of watching and trying to compile ideas and spaces.”, Midnight and Mushrooms: Troupe Mushroom Melon – “Comical, and full of rich characters, this script shines on its strong use of dialogue and interactions between different personalities.”

- Best Technique

**Winner: Tangled Tails**

“There is a strong understanding of film writing here. The text is clean and precise.”

Nominees: A Fresh Start – “This intimate drama is a great example of strong dialogue and interesting motifs for actors to explore.”, The Estate – “Written with care, The Estate poses many ideas and situation-based dilemmas... and manages to navigate them with some outstanding clarity.”

- Special Mention – Best Series

**Winner: Midnight and Mushrooms: Troupe Mushroom Melon**

“With a strong set of characters, Midnight and Mushrooms presents a small world of personalities we are bound to enjoy returning to. The main question is – how will the series expand? – and if there’s a mystery to be had.”

# Winter 2024

## Jury Prize

### Winners: **A Place To Hide And Wait (tied), The Metamorphosis (tied)**

“With A Place, we are presented with a series of characters who can’t help but jab at each other endlessly. The performances and the technical delivery of the film are unique, impressively done for an indie effort and memorable.”

“The Metamorphosis is violent here – and perfectly so. With an impressive lead performance, some ingenious editing and impressive voice acting, this project unfolds as a period-piece nightmare that one can only enjoy.”

Nominees: LAILA NADENE, INTERLOPERS, , Die in Seoul, The Bell Never Rings Again, Forgotten, Woodgrove, ARLO AND THE SEA

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## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

The Metamorphosis – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Editing**, – “This grand adaptation is a beautiful old-school adaptation of the Kafka text. Really impressively delivered.”

Yolks – Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Sharp and witty. An important body image message is buried here.”

Woodgrove – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast**, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated; Best Director, Nominated: Best Score – “Well balanced, and very well acted, this film boasts a great sense of suspense and awareness for genre.”

Barney – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The rich image of this short presents a new take on the Christmas film genre... but it is greatly elevated through its slick design.”

A Lovely Walk In The Woods – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Actress (Demi Hylands)** – “This expressive genre piece boasts a nice use of budget, a strong sense of style and drama... but above all – we’ve got a great scream queen performance from Hylands! – also some great camera work to make the situation feel very real.”

Breathe In – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Performance – “This piece is very nicely balanced, bold with how it outlines its different characters and circumstances.”

Off-Kilter – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “A fun blast of a film, full of mist and colours and characters... it’s an exciting film to enjoy!”

Death Wishes – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Emily Eliette) – “Expressive, intimate and delicate. Death Wishes is an impressive piece with a strong lead performance from Emily Eliette.”

Margot Can't Sleep – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Score – “This film unpacks a very personal experience. It is the atmosphere and pace that really catches the audience's attention here.”

Blankness – **Winner: Best Director** – “Almost as bold as a Roy Andersson film. High praise is due for this effort.”

ARLO AND THE SEA – **Winner: Best Screenplay (tied)**, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “This great romantic effort has us melting.”

Forgotten – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Actor (Richard Constable), **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “For its budget, the use of lenses and style is really impressive.”

Bay for Blood – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Editing, **Winner: Best Score** – “Tense, moody and perfectly on point to put you on the edge of your seat.”

A Long Bite Goodnight – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Score, **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “So spot on – it takes a bit of a bite out of you!”

Memories of Mother – Nominated: Best Actor (Armando Mises), Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Screenplay (tied)** – “Tender, and very well written. This project is an elevated drama with some impressive characters and strong dialogue.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Hair Wraith – Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Trauma has officially found its most bizarre and rewarding concept.”

Slava – **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Actress (Veronica Bayeva), Nominated: Best Director – “Arriving in the form of a fully formed drama, this short unlocks many themes and interesting ideas... but it is its empathetic angle which provides such insight and feeling to audience members.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

The Bell Never Rings Again – Nominated: Best Actor (Tom Byrne), **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Score – “Charming, beautifully shot and undeniably stylish.”

GUM – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Actress (Holly de Jong), Nominated: Best Screenplay – “This comedic take on facing our life choices is quite moving and memorable.”

Jinn – Chapter 1 – Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Actor, **Winner: Special Mention: Best VHX/SFX** – “Genuinely blood chilling.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Die in Seoul – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Actress (Seo In Cho) – “This handheld opus gets up and close with its characters. The dialogue pops with realness and is often blunt and expressively good.”

Toga – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This documentary style film boasts a lot of personality with a near-to-no budget filmmaking approach. It is a personal film, one which has a lot of character.”

Lulu in Turin – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Documentary** – “This film memoir is very informative, and quite a great travel experience through time and film history.”

BODY COUNT – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “This Gothic yarn has many twists and turns. It is a lot of fun and comically delivered by its cast.”

A Place To Hide And Wait – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Actor (James Lyon)**, Nominated: Best Actress (Luana Holtz de Diego), Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “In total honesty, as indie films go... this flexes some smart moves in terms of cost cutting techniques, a solid script and a great performance from Mr. Lyon.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Carmilla Vive! – Nominated: Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “This genre effort packs a lot of delights, but at its core it is a subtle film – which is very rewarding.”

INTERLOPERS – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “An unusual effort for the zombie genre – smart, artistic and genuinely engaging on an emotional level.”

BUBBLER – Nominated: Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Actor (Nicholas Callan Haubner), Nominated: Best Director – “Comedic and fun. For small budget films it is quite ambitious.”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

LAILA NADENE – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Editing, **Winner: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000** – “This large set film boasts a lot of exciting visuals and tones. It is overall a very well executed film – something the team should be proud of.”

We Will Not Be Silenced – Nominated: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Editing – “The edit, which includes a lot of copyrighted content, is quite expressful and engaging... the legalities of the project might be a bit complicated for distribution, but it is very impressive all the same.”

- Web series

**Winner: Best Web Series** – Welcome to the Whimsical Desert! (Going Solo) – “A personal story, one clearly conscious of the locale and space being experienced, is shared with us. This is a treat for audiences looking for an experience.”

Nominated: Land Of Joy – “This noir styled show is great fun, but it suffers some technical issues (sound for one). The highlight though is the script and the consistency in the style.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

Keysuna – About : Blank – **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Slick black and white photography shines in this great video with some slick tracking shots.”

See No Light – **Winner: Best Music Video** – “A series of brilliantly choreographed dances unfold with some very colourful costumes. This video has a great vibrance about it.”

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Concept

**Winner: Echoes – “Personable and impressionable, this script excels in the areas of the heart.”**

Nominated: Moses – “Intriguing and unusually bold for a TV script.”

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: Cost – “Short, punchy and very well executed.”**

Nominees:

Pigeon Boy – “With strong characterization and interactions between these characters, Pigeon Boy proves to be an endearing tale.”

Sirens of Silence – “The characters are a pure delight.”

- Best Genre Script

**Winner: Sirens of Silence – “One of the best genre scripts we’ve ever had.”**

Nominees:

SACRED SUN – “Full of energy, and science fiction delights, this project is a pleasure for an Art Department with budget.”

The Four Of Us Are Dying – “Wild, and sometimes even scary – this script punches many angles and is an exciting experience.”

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Belly Issues – “As high school scripts go, with a touch of fantasy, this recalls the pleasures of Jennifer’s Body – only, it is on a reasonable indie budget!”**

Nominees:

The main choice – “This delicate script proves that drama is sometimes very effective in a minimalistic setting.”

- Best Technique

**Winner: Chocolate, Moose, and Tits – “Stylish, exciting, and a whole lot of fun!”**

Nominees:

SACRED SUN – “With a strong understanding of genre and structure, Sacred Sun is a very carefully structured project.”

Death Becomes You – “There is some amazing dialogue in this one.”

The Four Of Us Are Dying – “Carefully designed and rewarding in equal measure.”

- Special Mention

**Special Mention: Winner: Death Becomes You – “There is a very unique voice in this script.”**

# Summer 2023

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Jury Prize

**Winner: Scrap of Paper**

*“At its core, Scrap of Paper comes as a surprise – it is a well-designed project that, on its budget, outperforms expectations. The pace is lovely, and respectful of the efforts made by the actors.”*

Nominees: Suspicious Minds, Out of Frame, The Big White Veil Mistake, Belle, Same But Different

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Special Jury Prize – New Horizon

**Winner: Psychiatric**

*“This is the first iteration of the interactive film that our festival has seen in a successful presentation. The performances are strong, the photography is clean, and even the edit makes sense with its interactive elements. Technology is an added tool, rather than a distraction. This is perhaps a rare sight of what film could become.”*

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FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Out of Frame – Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Score** – “Texture, VFX and silent performances are well and truly alive in Out of Frame. This short is magical.”

Bike Cops – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Comical, fun and a lot of running around. This is an exciting offering for the internet scrollers.”

Bad day for Contemplation – Nominated: Best Score – “The music and sound effects help hone the film’s locale and sense of anxiety well.”

In the Backseat – Nominated: Best Score – “The film’s cyberpunk soundtrack, and tinting, retro fits this film into the early 2000’s. It is fun and rather unique.”

Belle – **Winner: Best Cinematography**, Nominated: Best Director – “There are many moments of tension, stark photography and bold splashes of emotion. This is a real treat”

They Hunger – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “This collection of dangerous characters is brilliantly stitched together with some lovely tense moments, sharp dialogue and stunning black and white photography.”

Psychiatric – Nominated: Best Actress (Ava Shong) – “A strong performance is presented here, despite the complexity of multiple choices. Shong appears natural in all circumstances.”

It’s John – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The film enjoys a blend of genres, including time travel, found footage and comedy. Oh and period piece. It is a fun experience, and recalls the mini-DV era of the mid-2000’s.”

Break – Nominated: Best Score, Nominated: Best Editing – “Break builds tension with its edit, and often uses rises to get a solid sonic atmosphere.”

The Big White Veil Mistake – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Actress (Emily Beeson), Nominated: Best Actor (John Potvin) – “With two strong leads, this fantastic script enjoys tonnes of charm and amusing moments. There’s a lot to admire in this breezy project, as it is pure fun to watch.”

Lone Robots – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Though slow at times, this dystopian take on a robot film, which is also a silent, has many enjoyable and interesting moments.”

Losing the Plot – Nominated: Best Actor (Brian Coe) – “Coe grounds the film, performing as an actor in performance. He balances the ideas of naturalism (well, that of an actor’s idea of naturalism) with that of a performance, which is clearly exaggerated.”

Nirvana – **Winner: Best Editing** – “The experimental editing of this project sort of elevates it, making it a unique experience.”

You’ll Love my Friends – **Winner: Best Actress (Taylor Carpenter)** – “With less to play with, Carpenter provides her character a lot of stillness and self-awareness. It is an interesting retro project that excels through tone.”

Free Lunch – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Comical, and well delivered, this character-focussed film carries many moments of excitement.”

Scrap of Paper – **Winner: Best Actor (Toby Redpath)**, Nominated: Best Actress (Dorothea Jones), Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “The filmmaker of Scrap of Paper should move towards features, as it is clearly where he is ready to position himself. This film flexes many moving moments of drama between its characters, and a strong feeling of locale, time and physical space.”

Mort Ou Biff – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Rather dramatic, and stylish, this film excels in its use of the urban locale and the ideals of guerrilla filmmaking. This is a raw pleasure.”

A Real Life – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Art Direction** – “The film’s locale, and how it is composed, is perfectly arranged and staged with a real eye for precision.”

Static in the Ether – Nominated: Best Screenplay – “The film’s best bits are comical jabs from the scenario in the script. This is a lot of comic fun.”

Axé, Salvador! – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Documentary** – “Presenting a very particular art community, this documentary does a great job in finding various moments to really provide a taste for the culture we are visiting.”

Us, Janus – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast**, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “A fantastic production which presents community in a natural space. This film evokes real emotions.”

Piece of Cake – Nominated: Best Screenplay – “This skit based short is an amusing sweet delight.”

Writers Block – Best Actor (Tiarnan Doherty), Nominated: Best Cinematography – “We have a lovely tactile celluloid image in this film and a solid performance from Doherty, who brings a

sense of energy to an otherwise tired narrative of characters fighting for a voice in fictional situations about fiction being created.”

Same But Different – **Winner: Best Director, Winner: Best Screenplay, Winner: Best Genre Film** – “Delivered with a great set of performances, lovely dialogue and some great musical tone, Same But Different is a complete pleasure of genre and words.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

What Found Me In The Woods On A Night Like Tonight – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Actor (Kelton White), **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “With snappy dialogue, a lovely firelight vibe – this gang of odd characters shooting off dialogue brilliantly is a winner. The film’s above-average consistency, in terms of production values, makes it feel like an authentic feature film that could have been sold. Long story short, we hope Kelton White moves on to feature filmmaking rather promptly.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Suspicious Minds – Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actor (Ed Malone) – “Blending materials, this retro funky-town film is a whole lot of fun. Greatly enhanced by some lovely caricature performances.”

The Little Girl Eater – Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Penny Rose Kettle), Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Dark, gloomy and a whole lot of scary, this project leans greatly on a young performance that delivers a great sense of realism. The photography is lovely and really showcases the higher budget and geographic landscape where the film is shot. This is a perfect Halloween treat!”

Vital Instruments – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Score – “The film’s tone is quite consistent, and leans heavily on certain ideas of genre style, though without evoking genre motifs – instead, this is a solid drama, disguised as a horror.”

The First Night: Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000** “Without hesitation, this is a bombastic short film full of emotion and scope. The feeling of the local setting really appears to be rich, detailed and very impactful on the sense of realism. This might be a small town – but we get to see so much of it in a short time. This is a very impressive short film.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Not enough entries for this category to run.

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

The Best Gifts – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “A great tapestry of family history is explored here. Theatrical in some of its presentations, the film greatly relies on actors to bring life to the complicated subject and style.”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Love and Doom – **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “In the micro-budget realm, this is the midnight show that everyone should love. This drive-in art house effort, which has a strong desire for nice pace and careful dialogue, is very beautifully put together, and nicely delivered by its cast. It has some Jim Jarmusch vibes.”

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## WEB SERIES

**Winner: Best Web series** – Let's Get Two: The Rocket City Trash Pandas – “With a particular focus on community, the Pandas are audience winning content, as it brings the flavours of a particular locale and its traditions the eyes of an audience member unfamiliar with this setting. It's presentation, in the best sense, wins you over.”

Nominee: Best Web series – Kalamanch – “Connecting a variety of characters together, Kalamanch brings the comedy to acting school. The highlight is actually the age group of performers, who are not youngsters, but instead very ‘human’ characters.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

Ringleader – Reclaimed – Nominated: Best Music Video – “With a great look, and a strong sense of photographic texture, Reclaimed looks retro cool.”

Atrium “Warrior in the Garden” – Nominated: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Editing** – “Fast cuts help accentuate the brashness of the whole video. It is gritty and bold.”

Last Tree on Earth – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “The use of the mirror effect helps highlight the impressive photography.”

Circus – **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Crisp, atmospheric and dramatic, this is a fun viewing experience.”

Cats. Why do we need them? – **Winner: Best Music Video**, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Rich with colour, and dramatically delivered – this story filled video is a stunning atmospheric experience.”

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## SCRIPTS

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: Birdyboy** – “Frankly, we are disappointed this isn't a film. This is a great character story. There's so much texture and dialogue to love.”

Nominated:

The Calling – “With a strong lead character, specifically one of a more mature age, a role is given here that is ageless. This is a great use of character building, and an example of how the persona may become a tool with which to reimagine genre. Horror has a new home here.”

Cardboard Coffin – “A tough, but very moving and impressive script. This wouldn't be the easiest film to sit through, for all the right reasons. Empathy is the core emotion that an audience would need to find to endure the experience.”

The Survival Of Monica Coghlan – “The various character arcs of this script provide much opportunity for actors to really delve deep into the physicality and nuance of these roles.”

Donavan Emery, The Android & Himself – “Carrying an air of trauma, this project excels in its humanistic attributes. There's a lot of potential here for nuance and originality.”

- Best Genre Script

**Joint-Winner: Broken** – “Following the war tradition, this script explodes on the scene with a fascinating angle of a female protagonist. The story is fresh, and moving, all the while very classical in script form.”

**Joint-Winner: As Scared As You** – “A twisted horror delight with a lot of exciting ideas.”

Nominated:

Brujo – “Though an unconventional format, this is a narrative steeped in cool style.”

Dark Waters (Refunded entry)\*

Magic Mountain – “This would make one very exciting project. There’s so much here for an Art Department to love. Unfortunately it is rather pricey for an indie production, but a lot of fun! – we hope to see it in the future.”

Newbreed – “Slick, exciting and pop filled, this script carries the nostalgia of the MTV era.”

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: The Death Café** – “With a great sense of independent filmmaking, this script excels as one of the best indie feature scripts we’ve had.”

Nominated:

The Day, Asteroid comes – “As narratives go, this script finds a way to present big ideas in a big scale, but within reason. One could produce this script as a micro budget film with effective visual effects, and it would be a great genre film with great production value. This is a great script for the digital era of filmmaking!”

- Best Technique

**Winner: Step** – “The film’s style is interconnected with how it is written, making the reading experience almost cinematic. This is really fun stuff.”

Nominated:

The Death Café – “This script is a fantastic blend of genres, and is very entertaining and rich. It recalls Gondry’s Human Nature, with its endless possibilities for creativity.”

The Barrowman – “Using pre-established narrative tools from a British show, this script excels at being precise with its style and story. It is quite brilliantly written.”

\*due to refund, review has been withdrawn.

# Spring 2023

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## FILM

### Jury Prize

#### **Winner: Vanja is vacuum packed with Kurt**

"Vanja is one of the best short films we have ever had. It is intriguing, original and very unique. It lingers long after a first viewing, and invites multiple visits out of enjoyment."

Nominees: Road Home, V.I.S. – Very Important Student, Witch, In A Box, Tom, Dick and Harry,

## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Willow Crown – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – "An impressive delivery for such a small budget. Will be interesting to see this director grasp with drama in the future."

TRANNY FAGGOT – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – "Horror is best when it is blended with social issues and personal narratives... look at the first zombie film ever made, and you'll find why it is still so impactful. Tranny, on a similar low budget, does a same gut punch revenge."

In A Box – **Winner: Best Editing (joint)** – "The edit keeps the conversation flow rather quick and punchy. The content is also always fresh thanks to this presentation."

Enter the Room – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actor (Rich Holton) – "Conflicts rises when people face each other. It is the base of really good drama, and Holton and his co-star do a great job and fighting it off."

Settle the Score – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – "A nice little film that really shows off a few comical moments between actors in a room can be plenty of emotion!"

Self-portrait with Lev – Nominated: Best Director – "This intimate portrait is blunt, personal and impactful. Recalls the cinema of Ulrich Seidl."

Episode – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast (joint)** – "Rarely are performances this good in little indie films like this. Bravo!"

Samudra Theram Lo – Nominated: Best Cinematography – "Delightful and fresh, this film looks clean and often very beautiful as it moves through many sub-set genres of romance."

Vestige – Nominated: Best Genre Film – "The French New Wave in the form of Eric Rohmer lives again!"

The One That Got Away – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – "With a tight budget, this short looks and feels like it cost so much more! The sense of locales is really impactful, and the performances are well delivered, and aptly captured."

Erica's Game – **Winner: Best Director** – "It is unsettling, and uncomfortable to see the final turn. The direction doesn't hold your hand, but it does lead you down a dark path with great understanding of nuance."

Voler – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This film looks stunning for its budget.”

Tom, Dick and Harry – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Editing – “Frankly, I wanted this to be a feature film. It doesn’t deserve such a small scale. This director is feature ready... this could be distributed if it was a feature film. Everyone should be very proud because it is a heap tonne of fun!”

Are We Doing This? – **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Actor (Owen Frost) – “A home run offering of comedy and solid casting.”

Believe in Yourself – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “With a tight budget, a feeling of texture and authenticity occurred. It is worn-in, almost like a good jumper.”

What a Match – Nominated: Best Genre – “Fantastic comedic animation!”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Vanja is vacuum packed with Kurt – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actor (Björn Sällqvist), Nominated: Best Actress (Joséphine Wistedt) – “This showstopper is challenging, entertaining and really memorable.”

Izzy – **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Actor (Aaron Latta-Morisette) – “Charming and very well narrated, this little gem of a short feels like a Roman Coppola film.”

Follow The White Rabbit – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “There’s loads of tone and tension in this one. It is a lot of fun!”

Witch – Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Actor (Nicholas Pople)** – “With a snappy script, the performances are top notch... with Pople really pulling many tricks.”

Spare Room – Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Actress (Georgina Ambrey)** – “The performances are spot on, and the photography really heightens the claustrophobic feeling around an individual living through lockdown.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

The Unaccused – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actress (Anurita Jha), **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast (joint)** – “With a taught script, the actors bring a lot of energy to these roles, making the uncomfortable very uncomfortable to watch... this is very smart.”

V.I.S. – Very Important Student – Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Editing (joint)** – “A realistic a gut-wrenching experience to watch. It hits you, and keeps going. Very bold.”

Road Home – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Shot with great style and a loving cast, this is a lot of fun and very stylish!”

Just 14 – **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000** – “Shot with a lot of elegance, this project has a really strong feeling of being well rounded, and very well produced. The budget is on the screen!”

Mekong Apocalypse – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “This documentary captures its subject, and the framing of genre with it, with a great sense of awareness and enjoyment.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

LIM'BA:TuS – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Much like La Jete, this film carries a ghost of a planet that we once knew as Earth. It is a great example of indie filmmaking, especially the Camera Stylo tradition!”

Drawing in the sky – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Carrying a great sense of character and scope, on a very low budget, this film is a hearty offering from a community in Japan that has a lot to say on a personal level. It is very touching and fun.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

None Competing.

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

The Alliance 2 – **Winner: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000** – “At almost 3 hours runtime, The Alliance proves that even on a small budget you can go big and large scale. This film is full of standoffs and emotional moments of conflict, and this is often highlighted by zangy dialogue and some great character actors.”

The Last Word – Nominated: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000 – “A theatre production is rarely put on the screen with such a wide scope. The frankness of the layout is very interesting, as it becomes a study of time instead of space. Almost like the cinema of Abbas Kiarostami, The Last Word recalls still cinema in an era which has forgotten it.”

#### SPECIAL MENTION

Planalto Building – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Documentary** – “Recalling a certain style of the numerous documentaries of The Chelsea Hotel residents, this little documentary is a gem of people and ideas.”

GreenDreams – **Winner: Special Mention: Freedom of Speech** – “Indie films rarely provide insight so intimately to such a hot topic.”

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HORRORS4YOU – Special Edition

**Winner: Best Score: The Effect of Shadows on your Eyes**

Nominated: The Strange Case of the Face at the Casement, Mezcala, Switch and Don't Break The Rules

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#### SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: Social Graces** – “With some strong character distinctions, Social Graces is a great ensemble which is characters front and centre. An actor's director, and the cast themselves, will have great fun with this!”

Nominees:

MA/RI/NA – “This douppleganger is a great many layers of fun, which to an actor is a real treat. This also has a great potential to be a solid indie film, with a psychological sci fi twist.”

SCOTCH KINGS – “As potential TV shows go, this has the makings of Weeds level success. It is a well designed set up that really captures the community it is set within. It is rich, character filled and intriguing.”

- Best Genre Script

**Winner: Moriturirosis – “Recalling the late Stuart Gordon style of thriller (King of Ants, Stuck), Moriturirosis has a great sense of character, circumstance and dark realism. It’s unnerving and fun.”**

Nominees:

The Pickleball Killer – “Alive with a sense of legacy, trauma and sequel potentials... Pickleball is a grade-A genre script.”

Hunt Man’s Land – “At its base, this is a great world building TV show – much like Sliders of 1995 and The Twilight Zone, there’s a lot here to explore. The options are truly endless.”

Marah From Eilat – “A solid genre heavy project, this is the kind of film that distribution companies are having a lot of fun with at the moment. A director might even want to turn up the creative lighting, and go full-tilt dramatic. It recalls James Wan’s recent film Malignant.”

ABEETA – “An Art Director’s dream.”

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Dream Girl – “A fantasy-filled romance which, touching on some simple existential issues, is the basis of a ‘healing fantasy’ – one of the age-old psychological states which unhappy individuals find themselves in. One could easily expand on this script, and add a narrative around Randy trying to better his life, but overall this is a ‘ready to shoot’ short that has a great understanding of budget limitations and the importance of character.”**

Nominee:

Chemical Messiah – “Though pricy with its locations, this is a well-attuned indie feature that could be produced on a low budget for an indie film of this size. It would be a high production value project, mainly down to how it is constructed and its use of the comic publishing world.”

- Best Technique

**Winner: The Cuckooo – “Original, but also cleanly written with a style that is cinematic, The Cuckooo is a lot of tensions building, ‘gotcha’ jokes and a whole heap of excitement. The actors will love the characters in this one as well.”**

Nominees:

S V E N – “Written with a lot of care, SVEN is a thrilling script that capitalizes on video formats to hone in its genre style. It recalls Predator in a way, or at the The Predator chapter of the Predator franchise.”

The Pickleball Killer – “Slick with style, Pickleball is well crafted, well executed and something that (with the right budget) will do really well to be produced.”

ABEETA – “The structure of the script is great considering the complexity of the concept. The presentation is clean.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

The Alliance 2 the Hunt for Breeze Music Video – Nominated: Best Music Video – “Presented with a strong sense of narrative, this film blends drama with music video visuals in a very fun and retro feeling... this could easily be the opening scene of a gritty 1970’s film.”

Weltschmerzdigest — New Follower – **Winner: Best Editing** – “Montage and contemporary editing techniques are used here to create tension as well as an atmosphere. It is quite impressively done.”

LOVESCHEISS – Nominated: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “With a strong sense of locale, space and texture – this video blasts dust off the screen and ignites it with emotion and stunning visuals.”

Deb Browning – “Think I Found Forever” – Nominated: Best Music Video – “A great feeling of community, comradery and memory are evoked in this story based music video. The opening cinema location is also quite fun.”

POLISFERA – Mother’s Place – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Locale and icy textures bring a great sense of personality to this video, and the pace of it all accentuates the music... there’s a great heart to this video.”

Juniper Official Music Video/Blueboy Act III Visual – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Music Video – “Experimental, stylish and memorable.”

Us to Stop – Studio Version – **Winner: Best Music Video** – “This video gets to the heart of the musician, and what the music can evoke emotionally... it looks great, it flows smoothly and feels very special.”

# Winter 2023

## JURY PRIZE

### Winner: Trust Me

“With real stakes, strong performances, and a proper punch to the stomach: this film delivers a variety of cinematic shocks. It is great.”

Nominees: Smile, The Sonneteer, Loose Change: A Memoir of Childhood, The Rabbit Died, Boys Don't Cry, Tickets, please

## FILMS

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Aurora – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The understanding of comedy and the speed with which the whole event unfolds is great fun.”

The Rabbit Died – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Natalie Shaw) – “Very well produced for its budget, the feeling is greatly enhanced by a constant feeling of dread. This film is sour – in an authentic way.”

The End – Nominated: Best Actor (Duane Michals) – “A fantastic comedic run of poetry blended with philosophy.”

Fall Down Go Boom – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Editing – “This silent short excels with its use of animation and the editing of photographic and animated content. It is a lot of fun.”

Boys Don't Cry – Nominated: Best Actor (Lawrence Harp), Nominated: Best Director – “Personal, dark, reactive... It is really great.”

The country house and its karma – Nominated: Best Editing – “The flow of the project is wild and great.”

Outsider – Nominated: Best Actress (Bess Blackburn), Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “A nice gem of family drama unfolds here. Consistently made, and bombastically scripted (in a good way).”

Up All Night – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “I mean, has there ever been more fun than this short film?!”

Blank Fugitive – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Actor (Michael Boston), Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Mike Figgis introduced us to the genre, Michael Boston reinvented it. Here's the indie short that asks the question: can rough video, with rough characters, and a lot of charm, make a comeback?”

Headtrip in the Boudoir – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Director – “Wonderfully envisioned, this short is a dark maze of ideas.”

Julia – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Score – “Fantastically photographed, this short film has a lot of texture and beauty to it.”

The Orphanage for Records – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Genre film – “This documentary bursts with joy!”

Glub Glub – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Surreal Film** – “WTF?!”

Frank Maurice Camilleri – **Winner: Best Score** – “So fantastically scored. There’s a retro dream feeling to this documentary.”

The Ashes You Leave Behind – **Winner: Best Ensemble**, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Director – “This delicate portrait film is really something to relish.”

Living with double vision, An artist’s journey with diplopia – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Documentary** – “Explaining the personal journey is one thing, but also using film to tell this story is very very impactful. This is a great portrait.”

Tarp Girl – love, origami and agoraphobia – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Score – “Energetic, comical and full of whimsical little ideas.”

Makina – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Budget seems to be no restriction here, the film looks and sounds great.”

The Ghost in The Machine – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Experimental Film**, Nominated: Best Editing – “The sensory overload is brilliantly compiled through the editing of the films images and sounds.”

Tickets, please – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Ensemble – “The retro bombastic and comical style is really rewarding. Audiences are definitely going to love it.”

Anxieties – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actor (Bernd Panzer) – “This film’s presentation and performance is very human and impactful.”

Going Home – **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Delicate and beautiful, this short film shines.”

Eye of Dio – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Experimental fun, this project recalls the joys of Alejandro Jodorowsky’s cinema.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Flipping – Nominated: Best Ensemble, **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Comical and full of great characters, this short really enjoys what it is doing – there’s great lighting, and a constant sense of pace.”

Loose Change: A Memoir of Childhood – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, **Winner: Best Editing** – “There’s a great feeling of the film’s tone, which though is enhanced with various elements such as a strong set of performances, and a great consistent image – it is the edit, which really keeps everything snappy, which shines above all.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Archie’s Last Drive – **Winner: Best Director**, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, **Winner: Best Actor (Robert Donald)** – “Stylish, personable and engaging... Archie’s Last Drive is one hell of a fantastic ride, and it is memorable – something rarely said about any short film.”

Leroy London – **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “This nicely layered story, which is produced with a strong sense of production value and imagination, Leroy London grasps far beyond its indie reach (because this isn’t Hollywood money after all)... it is full of a lot of charm and enjoyment.”

Smile – **Winner: Best Actress (Sue Vincent)**, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Editing – “The pace, coupled with some lovely imagery and a strong leading performance, makes Smile an impactful character study.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

The Corona Dialogues – LockDown 2020 – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Collecting many faces and voices during a lockdown has been a regular sight... but rarely have they included a certain comedic self awareness... until now – Corona Dialogues knows what it is – and it enjoys its cast of real-ish people.”

The Sonneteer – **Winner: Best Feature film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Actor (Brian Coe), Nominated: Best Screenplay, – “Recalling the black and white indie scene of the 90’s, this experimental character presentation nears on the darkest chapters... there’s abuse, people on the edge and an interesting presentation of masculinity.”

One Man Picture Show or: The Modern Tragedy of Creation – Nominated: Best Actor (Timmy Walczak), Nominated: Best Feature film made for less than \$5,000 – “Creatively singular in its creation, this feature enjoys multiple debates of existentialism... it is overall a great piece of ingenuity.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

No submissions in this category.

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Tummyache – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Actor (Reza Diako), Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Tummyache has a great sense of cinematographic style, and a very strong lead – which helps cement its voice. The use of budget, which is restrictive for its ambitions, is impressive.”

Trust Me – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated Best Actress (Niamh Sweeney), Nominated: Best Director: “There are many moments to admire in Trust Me, many uncomfortable and uneasy moments which really speak a lot of truths... the leading actress, who has a great supporting cast, provides us a great foundation of emotions which are elevated by the tight focal choices made by the director. It is a great drama film, emotional and captivating.”

## WEB SERIES

No entries in this category.

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## MUSIC VIDEO

Things Are Gonna Be Alright – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Shot with a great awareness for light and texture, Things is really more than alright.”

What I Want – Nominated: Best Music Video, Nominated: Best Editing – “There’s a real sense of intimacy within this music video that helps elevate it above average.”

Smell of Paint-T – **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “With a consistent smooth presentation of images and dance, this is one of the most carefully shot music videos we’ve seen.”

All the pretty little horses – Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Music Video** – “A really stunning portrait.”

Badwater – Nominated: Best Music Video – “The use of costume and location to build a character are perfectly executed here.”

FAST FOOD – **Winner: Best Editing** – “Carefully assembled, this is a wonderful use of montage.”

Wax Tailor – Shaman In your Arms (ft. Jennifer Charles) – **Special Mention Winner: Best use of Genre in a Music Video** – “From the lighting to the edit, this music video oozes style. (Ben Rider, Festival Director: I’d kill to write a script for this kind of direction. Yummy!)”

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## SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

Please note: due to an unusual number of scripts, we have altered this category for this season.

In Ore Mundi – Nominated: Best Character Arc

“Dark, and written with a bold sense of direction and unique characters, In Ore Mundi has a production value that is easily recognisable and will be enjoyed by the actors in it, as well as the audiences it will touch.”

No Address – **Winner: Best Script**

“This handsome script delivers a clear message: family, and community, is sometimes what we make, rather than what we have in our contemporary society. This project is a welcomed drama, and one that would be attractive to distributors, producers and audiences alike.”

Suzie Q – **Winner: Best Character Arc**, Nominated: Best Script

“Suzie Q presents a strong lead with an unusual path, but also some interesting touches of genre motifs which keep it entertaining and light. Very enjoyable!”

# Summer 2022

## JURY PRIZE

### **Winner: Forbidden Love on the Shores of Greece**

*"It has a memorable air about it. It is stylish, graceful and well-designed. The sound provides a great understanding of texture which is matched by the bold and glowy photography. Thankfully, the performances are just as engaging... this is a delight from start 'till end."*

Nominatees: Rage Fear Love, Sunpuddle, The Bench, Participant, Frequency

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## FILM

- Ukraine Film Entries

The End of the World – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – "The film has a great cast which really delve deep into the morals of the situational scenes."

Hope overcomes everything – Nominated: Best Genre – "A great little animation film."

Attack of the Furry Fish – Nominated: Best Score – "The music is timely and adds to the impact of the short film."

Protocol – Nominated: Best Technique (Screenplay Category) – "The script is well presented and enhanced with interesting visuals."

Kateryna – **Winner: Best Editing (Shared)** – "The film uses editing as a tool with which to enhance the story – it helps to unlock a deeper meaning to the film's content."

Sunpuddle – Nominated: Best Director – "This surreal film is really quite freaky in a beautiful way."

- Best Short Film – Less than \$5,000

ScumSucker – Nominated: Best Editing, **Winner: Best Actor (Christopher Birks)** – “Buzzling with fucks, this short is a cool actor rant sliced carefully with style.”

Keep on Climbing – **Special Mention: Best LGBTQ+ Film**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Stylish with its delivery, this almost feature film is quite moving with character and consistent with tone and content. It’s enjoyable to watch, and feels intimate.”

The Burden – Nominated: Best Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “The short delights with a plush image of various different locales, and defiantly pushes the boundaries of what can do with such a limited budget. Impressive production values.”

Frequency – **Winner: Best Cinematography**, Nominated: Best Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The film carries a great sense of style and a rich image.”

The Cleverest Thief – Nominated: Best Actress (Libby Wattis) – “Wattis does a great job of carefully navigating the situational isolation and upset quite well.”

History of the Music Hall – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “Entertaining and well just a hoot.”

Brave – Nominated: Best Director – “The camera angle choices do a great job to enhance the film’s content and bring the audience’s attention to a particular perspective.”

In The End – **Winner: Best Director**, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Shot with great passion and understanding for the cinematic image, this short carries a dark fable in its heart... it’s haunting and memorable.”

Ms. Davis’ Close Friend – Nominated: Best Actor (Trey G Riley) – “Walking a thin line between the buddy film genre and flat-out fantasy, this film finds a great dynamic between its two lead performers, largely offset by Riley’s minimalist approach.”

Lax Bros – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “For a young cast, this feels like a great project... it could do with a strong cinematic injection throughout – a bolder visual style or a particular grade... but overall, the sense of plotting via the script and the overall dynamics delivered through the cast is of a particular genre type – and it is quite well delivered in this tone.”

Do I? – **Winner: Best Editing (Shared)** – “The film’s sense of an enigma and mystery is largely built around its strong and well-paced edit. This film’s breathing space is its strength. We ‘feel’ the decisions being made.”

The Left Trail – Nominated: Best Actress (Diana Doci), Nominated: Best Actress (Jazmine Wilkinson) – “The film is very simple, but very moving... and the two leads bring a great sense of chemistry and maintain their performance in a great style. It feels genuine.”

The Bench – **Winner: Best Film made for less than \$5,000** – “The cast do a great job here at keeping the script well paced, but it is the handling of the film’s budget which is quite fun... it feels quite robust despite the small nest.”

Now What? – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actor (Riley Murphy), **Winner: Best Score** – “Comical and well setup, this is an original comedy led greatly by its lead actor. The music is original and punchy.”

Participant – Nominated: Best Director – “This film carries a great sense of genre and tension through this.”

Pumpkin Eater – Nominated: Best Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This Western-styled short carries a great sense of humor, all the while presenting itself as a bold stylish short film.”

- Best Short Film – Between \$5,000-\$10,000

Hollywood Post 43’s Last Stand – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast**, Nominated: Best Short Between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “Fantastic comedic blend of genre, creativity and just a heap tonne of bloody fun. The cast is a great self-aware moment here.”

Mama’s Watching – **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actress (Rose Muirhead) – “The presentation of Muirhead’s dense script is quite impressive. Her writing combines several narrative devices in a short amount of time: flashback, voice over and a blend of social issues all wrapped up in a genre coating. The characterizations at moments feel more like caricatures... but when it comes to short films that is somewhat expected (they are so short in terms of what they can show us for supporting roles and their motivations). Nicely polished with a keen eye for photographic and editorial quality, the short is enhanced by the cast’s great job in inhabiting these moments and ensuring they are naturalistic, especially leading lady (and writer) Rose Muirhead.”

Haze – **Winner: Best Short Between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “The music is at times rather distracting, but the overall film is well designed with a strong interest in tone, performance and locations. It contains a nice range for its budget.”

Like a PowerPoint – Nominated: Best Actress (Melanie Gretchen) – “This could have easily been expanded into a feature film, mainly thanks to the core character and the naturalistic performance of ‘Emma’.”

Forbidden Love on the Shores of Greece – **Winner: Best Actress (Holly De Jong)**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Editing – “A very well-rounded short film which takes its time to really enjoy the tone, style and scenario it is setting up. The art direction, along with the lush cinematography, frame a world inhabited by an energetic and loveable cast – greatly topped by De Jong’s bold performance. This is one of the best shorts of the year.”

- Best Feature – Less than \$5,000

Recollecting – Para não esquecer – Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Music, Nominated: Best Feature – Less than \$5,000 – “This sobering documentary has a great sense of time and persona, largely shaped by the use of sympathetic music and careful editing.”

Rage, Fear, Love – **Winner: Best Feature – Less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “It’s rare to see a cast enjoy the quirky script in the indie scene... and even moreso, the nature of this film’s smart use of a minimalist budget often feels well balanced and never out of character with what it is trying to achieve – which is to say it is a carefully assembled piece.”

- Best Feature – More than \$10,000

I Am Not A Hero – **Winner: Best Feature – More than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “The film enjoys its intimate moments with great awareness... the tone is consistent, and often expressive – impressively executed for a feature film.”

Sifting – Nominated: Best Actress (Lead), Nominated: Best Feature – More than \$10,000 – “Brown’s film makes great use of the locations... but at its heart, the core performance of his lead actress is what really leads this film to great heights. There is a strong sense of character, her situation and the journey she is on. It recalls the likes of Old Joy and Wendy and Lucy by the great minimalist Kelly Reichardt.”

## Web series

Style Central – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “This energetic cast heavy webseries bubbles with a great sense of genre and enjoyment of comedy.”

Iron Nest of the Moon – **Winner: Best Webseries** – “Entertaining, fun and very robust in design.”

Pointing the Wrong Direction – Nominated: Best Webseries, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “A strange blend of genre and film formats... It’s quite enjoyable, and very philosophical.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

Safe Journey – **Winner: Best Music Video**, Nominated: Best Editing – “Beautifully shot, and with a lot of meaningful imagery – this music video is engaging, memorable, and beautiful to experience.”

Goldfish – Nominated: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Editing** – “Comedic, entertaining and even character lead (which is rare for music videos) this music video holds your attention and keeps you guessing for the next creative split screen edit.”

Medusa – Nominated: Best Editing – “A collage of ideas unfold in this music video. It’s a creative use of some serious special in-camera effects... all spliced together to make a maze.”

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

Crude – **Winner: Best Technique** – “Written with a strong elegant and clean presentation, Simpson’s script gets to the heart of it’s character dynamics with a memorable and situation sense of comedy.”

Should Have Waited – Nominated: Best Genre – “It feels too long for a short, but too short for a feature... but at its heart, there’s a strong sense of a subgenre: the character lead mental-health conscious drama. It is an important genre to be had, and with the right team at hand (and maybe a short/longer format) it will be a great film for many to enjoy and be moved by.”

4 – **Winner: Best Genre** – “The unusual use of voice-over as a narrative technique recalls Andrew Niccol’s work, in particular the likes of The Host and Anon – it’s instantly cinematic, and will be interesting to see once filmed.”

War Criminal – **Winner: Best Character Arc**, Nominated: Best Technique – “The script has a great sense of epicness to it – actors would relish this experiences, as there’s a lot of dialogue to chew away and invest in.”

Bad Love Tigers – Nominated: Best Technique, Nominated: Best Genre, Nominated: Best Character Arc – “There’s a lot to love here – it is a market-ready film that would suit a poster and it is very well polished. It perhaps though, at times, feels like a series of films we’ve already seen, with some fun cheesy lines thrown in and blended together. But it is very well executed and well balanced.”

# Spring 2022

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**SPRING 2022 | Festival Laurels** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

## JURY PRIZE

**Winner: No Good Deed**

**“With a unique style, No Good Dead balances genre and bold formalist choices to deliver a strong film that’s both memorable and enticing.”**

Nominees: Argyle, The Irish Barn Dance, Vengeance Served Cold, SKAT

## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

My Dear Friend, Body – Nominated: Best Editing – “Energetic and crisply done, the edit really helps enhance the film’s experimental quality.”

Feelings – **Winner: Best Actor (Christian Gerlin)** – “Gerlin brings a great feeling authenticity to the project through his minimalist performance.”

Point Five – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Director – “Short and sweet, this film punches a lot of style and clarity within its quick tone shifting story.”

Rigor Mortis – Nominated: Best Music, Nominated: Best Director – “This simple period piece is quite fantastically delivered in silence, in style with the era the film is set in.”

Last First – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “The authentic feelings of Last First outshine its budget restriction. It’s epic and small in equal measure.”

I Have Control – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “This is creepy as F\*\*\*!”

Argyle – Nominated: Best Actor (Shawn Haze), Nominated: Best Director – “Documentaries are rarely this honest.”

father, I can't find the remote – Nominated: Best Experimental Film – “This film capitalises on perspective and restricted views... it is alienating, in the best of ways.”

Misguided – Winner: Best Genre Film – “This snappy horror is the perfect twist to a bickering couple's car journey.”

Vishwamitri Villas – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – “The young and endearing performances in this short are great.”

Today – Nominated: Best Experimental Film – “A warm performance leads this nice shot experimental poem.”

No Filter – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Ella Augustin) – “Punchy – a successful take on one of our key mental health problems in recent years.”

The Irish Barn Dance – Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Barmy and barny in equal measure. A great fun short film.”

Expression – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This minimalist script is elevated by its cast, photography and steady balance of production values.”

Art – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The supporting cast reacting to the insane loud director is perhaps the funniest thing about this all.”

Drifting Thoughts – Nominated: Best Screenplay – “The actual monologue is quite great.”

KARMArcus – Nominated: Best Actor (Michael Obiora) – “Obiora's dedication to the role is great. He channels a variety of tones that are perfectly suited to the film.”

Culinary Tension – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Great fun and drama-packed in this action romp.”

No Good Deed – **Winner: Best Director**, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Packed with interesting moments and unusual stylised choices – Demba creates a memorable cinematic experience.”

M – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “This captive-filled project shines greatly thanks to its use of production values and style.”

Fever – **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “Gritty black and white screamer full of comedic turns and internal turmoil. Quite unique!”

Untitled – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Black and White Cinematography** “Sharp and very intimate, this little one-man show excels on its use of black and white photography.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Awoken Soma – **Winner: Best Short Film made Between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Editing – “Dance films are rare in the indie scene, and it is a shame really – they provide such expressive ways of dissecting character, circumstance and emotions. The highlight of this project is really its use of locale and filming techniques – which all appear as larger and more robust productions than its budgetary restrictions.”

Sea Light – Nominated: Best Short Film made Between \$5,000-\$10,000, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Stunningly shot, this short film cherishes the delicate nature of light and how it moves, creates space and texture.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

SKAT – Nominated: Best Actor (Michael Boston), **Winner: Special Mention: Best Concept**, Nominated: Best Actress (Shannan Leigh Yancsurak), Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Original, memorable and of course recognisable – Mr. Boston is back and he’s here to deliver one hell of a mic drop!”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Hairy – Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Film made for Less than \$5,000** – “This epic demands attention by being a very intimate and stylised opus – a kind of indie film that most directors wouldn’t attempt to make just on the scale and this budget.”

Curiosity Kills – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Film made for Less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Best Actress (Gabriele Orebaugh)**, Nominated: Best Director – “It’s complicated... this film is a prime genre killer moves with some impressive blending of comedy, retro B-Movie vibes... but packaged in a fresh fashion. Orebaugh delivers a great comedic turn, one which is hard to provide.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Vengeance Served Cold – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The passion of this cast is at the forefront of its excellence – it is a real character-based film, and one that enjoys the overall design of several performs excelling within this particular set of dramatic turns. Also, worth mentioning – Davis’ direction is very consistent and engaging.”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

No films selected.

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- Web series

**Winner: Best Web Series:** Crypto Stories – “Impressive and important for our times, this animated web series **forefronts modern realities in a unique visual presentation, much like Oscar winner Waltz with Bashir.**”

Nominee: Instinct – “With the palette and production value of a much bigger machine, Instinct is an exciting web series that demands your eyeballs and detective skills.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

I Wrote This Instead of Calling You – Nominated: Best Editing – “This video takes great pleasure in blending images and spacial areas that space can inhabit. It is quite fun.”

I Hate You – Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Music Video** – “With a bold black and white image, and a strong visual style – I Hate You blasts dust off of the sub music video genre of love stories.”

Midnight – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “This darkly lit exploitation video is rewarding both in a narrative sense and thematic.”

Strike Gold – **Winner: Best Editing** – “A labour of love, this montage doesn’t know when to quit its cuteness.”

Reminiscence – Nominated: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “Lush and full of expressive camera tricks, this careful focussed presentation looks quite stunning.”

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

### Best Character Arc

**Winner: I’ll See You Next Year** – “Too long, but also one hell of a concept that beautifully mounts multiple characters. A great load of fun basically.”

Nominees: Birthday Boy – “Robust and large, this comedic tale has a great concept built around a comedic lead. Recalls Jackie Vernon style comedy.”, Last Summer at the Dells – “This little drama piece provides many avenues for the actors and their internal dynamics.”, Make A Wish – “An endearing script which really punctuates the importance of character dynamics when delivering a strong character lead piece.”, Black and White – “An interesting piece which stems out of the specific nuance of identity. Actors would love this script.”

### Best Genre Script

**Winner (Shared): Love According To Eros** – “Unusual, original, comical and fun.”, and **The Big White Veil Mistake** – “A fantastic concept and should be shot. Wixted is a talented genre-specific character writer.”

Nominees: At the Mercy of Faith (Terror Version) – “Fun and stylish, this period piece wonder is a robust budget muncher and a bold personality.”, A Blue Face in A Bluebell Wood – “A fun and comedic romp that might be slightly hindered by unusual script form.”, The Road to Aaru – “Recalls ‘American Gods’ – Gothic and fantastical.”, Kat Killed My Cat – “A unique yarn that suits the TV format – episodes dedicated to particular characters within this world, with their own visual motifs and music, will be a great pile of fun.”, The French Maid – “Reminiscent of Diary of a Chambermaid by Bunuel – which is to say it is charming, dark, funny, sexy, FRENCH... and fun...”

### Best Micro-Budget Script

**Winner: Trixie** – “An expressive script which pushes its content to the max in terms of micro-budget usage.”

Nominees: Art – “The project has a very ‘ready to shoot’ quality – and it is cost-effective.”, The Meal – “Charming, sharp and to the point. Nicely budgeted.”

## Best Technique

**Winner: Paradise By Way of Jordyn** – “Delicate and written with great texture for detail, Redha’s writing is endearing and engaging.”

Nominees: At the Mercy of Faith (Alternative Horror Version) – “A tighter edit, this script propels genre to the front in a fun way.”, Amy and Angel – “Written with a great understanding of script syntax – clean and precise.”, Agony Awaiting – “Though strange, the setup and design of it’s the world is quite intriguing and nicely built.”,

**Special Mention Winner: Best True Story Script: Solicitors** – “Rich with dialect, texture and ideas, Solicitors feels like a solid indie TV script... the kind that could be optioned and made and exciting.”

# Winter 2022

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**WINTER 2022 | [Festival Laurels](#)** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

Jury Prize

Winner: PSI – The Lives You Could Have Lived by Olivier Wright

“An epic of all indie proportions. Quite daring. A special indie experience.”

Nominees: Cycles, The Riverman, Deus Ex Machina, Blur the Line, Asylum, Wasted Milk, Being a Dog, Awkward Endeavours

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FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Awkward Endeavours – Nominee: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Supporting Actress: Kathleen Kozak, **Winner: Best Supporting Actor: David Amadio**, Nominated: Best Direction – “Amadio makes the perfect neighbour, and Kozak is one scary teacher. All in all this is a lovely glossy short film that entertains a heap more than most that we get to see!”

Surviving LA – Nominated: Best Ensemble, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Score, **Winner: Best Editing** – “This lush LA short is full of energy and funny characters. There’s a sense of love for the grit of it all. The edit is something so slick.”

Blur the Line – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Editing – “The grand *style* ability of the moving image to tell a story is greatly explored in this expressive piece. One could almost give a Best Actress nomination, though it feels a bit tough to do in the context of other entries... especially as there are only expressions here. The edit is impressive.”

Mail Bag – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Score**, Nominated: Best Actress (Irina Usova) – “Utterly charming.”

Eva – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated; Best Score – “Atmospheric and dark. This dish is quite ghastly. Oh la la!”

VETO – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Genre Film, **Winner: Best Actor (Elliot Cable)** – “With too many breakup shorts made annually, it is rare to find one that is so fresh... and in it, a lead performance that really helps highlight the film’s genre, tone and overall pace. Cable does a great job here in propelling a small budget short into a showcase of talent.”

Happy Anniversary – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “The film boasts a great sense of comedic tone with it’s rom-com-gone-wrong plot.”

Prey – Nominated: Best Actor (Jordan Turk), Nominated: Best Supporting Actor (Phill Webster), Nominated: Best Cinematography – “This short film balances an artful image (black and white and all that jazz) with a comical cerebral tone. The lead, Turk, does a great job of grounding it all. Quite a great short!”

The Santa Situation – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Direction, Nominated: Best Supporting Actor (Santa) – “Comical and a great blast of fun, this Christmas themed film is a great reward for those struck on the naughty list!”

Asylum – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Direction, **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – “With a small budget, this short really propels its simple but very human story to the edge of perfection.”

Wasted Milk – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Supporting Actress (Vena Pefani)**, Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Direction** – “Confident, still and often atmospheric, Wasted Milk enjoys the power of cinema through its many great tones.”

Leap – **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Actress (Kia Pegg), Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The cast bring a great deal of life to this intimate domestic tale, but it is the nuance and realism that above all shine. This is a quality film, and the lead performance by Ms. Pegg is completely compelling.”

The Boxing – Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The Boxing flexes many amusing scenarios for a well rounded often comical horrorresque film.”

Aylum –

Teal to Orange – Nominated: Best Actress (Marina Kozawa), Nominated: Best Direction – “Loveable at its core, this short film excels with Marina’s central performance. The intimate space the film explores is also quite enjoyable, and helps affirm the lead’s strength.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Sunspot – Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, **Winner: Best Screenplay**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Actress (Joelle Montoya)** – “Clean with its art design, this delicate film by Mihok choses the intimate over dramatic... and in doing so, becomes a very natural and strong cinematic experience. The cast feels real, and the script is carefully elevated within this presentation.”

Capo di Famiglia II – Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, **Winner: Best Cinematography, Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – “The vibrancy of the project is very much present in all the players of the film, one of whom is the camera and its lush movement.”

Shadows of the Dust – **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Actor (Daniel Rios Jr.), Nominated: Best Screenplay – “All in all, Shadows of the Dust touches the cusp of what feels more like a TV show pilot that we’d love to see greenlit into a Season long run. Rios provides a fantastic lead performance, and the fun brainy sci-fi script keeps you on your toes.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

The Shadows of Magellan – Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000 – “The sheer scale of the production, with the ship and dramatic lighting and costumes, is great fun.”

Deus Ex Machina – Winner: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Direction – “Lush and well produced, this short film is one of the slickest on offering.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Fine China – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actor (Noah Pedersen) – “Compiled with great care for some true mumblecore cinema love, Fine China almost asks the audience a question: what do we care about and should we care about these things? – Of course, the said philosophical question is never clear if it is the care of items, people or the idea of ownership that we should be concerned with.”

Cycles – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Henry Wilson), Nominated: Best Supporting Actor (Henry Fisk), Nominated: Best Direction, Nominated: Best Screenplay, **Winner: Special Jury Prize – Best Indie Film** – “With an almost Eric Rohmer style of silence, stillness and minimalism – this brotherly drama unpacks our insular lives in a bland setting... but this is one of the most beautiful tools of film being placed in our core centre – the forcefulness of allowing the audience into a time-sensitive space that is restrictive and intimate. We are witnesses in a way that even an intimate theatre show would be challenged in pulling off. Side note – wow what a pair of leads!”

The Riverman – Nominated: Best Direction, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actor (Jun Guo), **Winner: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Without a doubt one of the more impressive micro budget films. In The Riverman there is heart, emotion and an exciting use of locale. Jun Guo is very impressive as Daniel, and the entire film flexes a bold sense of epicness on the small budget scale.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

The Art of Grieving – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “The impact of this documentary can’t be denied. The visuals are also very impressive.”

PSI – The Lives You Could Have Lived by Olivier Wright – **Winner: Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The unusual and interesting blend of characters – the freeform dialogue and interview style... the crossing of fiction and documentary? – all in all it is an exciting project, and one that really keeps you guessing where and what it is about. Wright steadily engages with a Malick and Herzog style of film form – the very primitive blending of philosophy, image and concept.”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000 – Not enough entries for this category to run. Entries moved to Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000.
- Web series

No entries in this category.

#### SPECIAL MENTION

Deep Encounters – **Winner: Best Duo**, Nominated: Best Direction – “Let’s not lie, sparks rarely actually occur in acting duos in short films. This film though turns up the heat fast and it doesn’t overcook. Lovely stuff, and a suitably fun almost Woody Allen styled script that comes alive with some very strong tactile direction.”

A Butcher Resigns – **Winner: Best Documentary**, Nominated: Best Score – “A fantastic character study.”

Being a Dog – **Winner: Best Animation** – “Perceptive, bold and moving – this short film boasts an impressive animation style comboed with a bold sense of narrative.”

Alex – Reach for the Stars – Nominated: Best Documentary, **Winner: Special Mention: Best Documentary Direction** – “Unusual in form, this documentary gets up and close to its subject matter and really engages with the world that this individual lives within.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

Afirebird – Burning Man – Nominated: Best Music Video Cinematography – “The video is simple, and beautifully so... the camera work is free, like the dancer. We move, we explore, and above all – we feel.”

Dancing with the Angels – **Winner: Best Music Video Editing**, Nominated: Best Music Video – “The video is quite moving, and well cut to establish the various times, speeds and paces of life...”

Weltschmerzdigest — Flat Earth – Nominated: Best Music Video – “The beautiful concept is greatly elevated by the cliff end flame-lit ending.”

The Princes – The Little Prince – **Winner: Best Music Video Cinematography** – “The photography here is above average for short films, let alone music videos... very impressive.”

Hold Me Down – **Winner: Best Music Video** – “Hold Me Down’s intelligent and very expressive use of isolated dancers is perhaps proof, in combination with its strong technical skills, for us to introduce a Best Director category in the music video grouping of TMBT’s awards. Flood’s work is very impressive and minimalist (in the best sense) here.”

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Character Arc

### Winner: 2nd Date

“Though long for an indie film script, 2nd Date is very rewarding and a film that would be great to see made.”

Nominees: The Evil Within – “Bold genre piece which really is enhanced by the overall threading of characters, however – a little long for a short... so perhaps should be built up to a feature, or skimmed right down.”, Better – “Lovely characters, well rounded and quite enjoyable.”

- Best Genre Script

### Winner: Parenting for Monsters

“This recalls a sort of bygone era of TV – the type that would love the whacky woo horror era of comedy (The Munsters etc) – and the fact that Stathis’ script embraces this genre with so much conviction is a lot of fun. If one could get this greenlit, it would be a hoot.”

Nominees: Love Unknown – “Charming as a set piece, this retro styled sci fi romance really digs its own world building, which is nice and refreshing.” Avalon Farms Academy – “With an unusual runtime for a short (is this a short or a feature?), this boasts a great sense of filmic genre and charm.”, Gimme Shelter – “The concept is appealing, the format sent isn’t quite a script though.”

- Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Erosion**

“An intimate and moving short that really carries a great deal within its potential for actors and the director(s) to hone in on the minimalist approach and relish the experience.”

Nominees: Going – “Though too robust for a short film in reality, the simple use of locality within this project really enhances its quality and the ease with which one can say ‘just go and make it!’”, Empty Nest – “Charming, low key and very much a charming coming of age script. Someone should go and make this!”, Better – “What Better features is a deliberate sense of voice and a smart delivery of concise content that avoids waste and excess.”

- Best Technique

**Winner: Unchained Melodee**

“The script writing is of a very skilled syntax format, and thankfully concise thanks to this writing technique.”

Nominees: The Mountain – “The writing is an impressive style, though a little grand for a short film... almost unfilmable. But still epic, and written with a great sense of quality.”, Better – “Written with some great craft.”

# Summer 2021

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**SUMMER 2021 | Festival Laurels** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

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Jury Prize

**Winner: Blót – Torn Between Worlds by Alexander Flatau**

*“A breath-taking epic. One has to just adore it. Equal to those grand majestic period piece/fantasy productions we see on the big screen. Impressively made!”*

Nominees: Hand Drawn by David James Holloway and Samuel Lawrence, The Wind and the Whimpering by Laurence McManus, 1945 by Andrea Umberto Origlia, There's No Hell Like Home by Russell Southam, Servus Karl by Thomas Bischof, Mancala by Abraham Dein

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## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Too Damn Long by Ian Lettice – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Few short films execute a community vision, or the texture of a particular locale, so well as this short film. It is rich, and almost like a feature film with its depth (in terms of tone, pace and engagement. Very rich.”

Last Call by Rick Shepherd and Sarang Sharma – Nominated: Best Actor (Sarang Sharma) – “The film carries a great sense of realism, this is largely down to its use of location and its lead's well-paced performance.”

Not Quite Human by Andrew Kadikian – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “A great fun short film that shows off some impressive production values despite its strict resources.”

There’s No Hell Like Home by Russell Southam – Nominated: Best Actress (Amber Louise), Nominated: Best Director – “This short film is only slightly hindered by its isolation... it is all over though a great tone piece, and a very dark take on the whole lockdown situation.”

Servus Karl by Thomas Bischof – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actress (Isabella Jeschke), **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “This moody piece is a work of art. WE LOVE IT.”

Medusa by Katie Graubart – Nominated: Best Director – “Graubart’s vision is unadulterated and a wild digital glitch that grabs, shakes and taunts you.”

Red Room by Liping Yang – Nominated: Best Actor (Liping Yang), Nominated: Best Cinematography – “This short film has a great tone to it – an enigmatic surreal drive that pulls... It is beautifully executed and well-delivered thanks to its two handler cast, one of whom (Yang) embodies a great feeling of physicality in his performance.”

Hand Drawn by David James Holloway and Samuel Lawrence – Nominated: Best Actor (Samuel Lawrence) – “Lawrence helps ground the film greatly thanks to his very intimate and natural performance.”

The Break by Eben Skilleter – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “The road movie rarely looks or feels this good as a short film. And the ending is a hoot.”

Okay, Bear With Me by Liam MacDonald – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The film really delivers a great sense of comedy in its 90’s hangout vibe setting.”

Cavalleria Musical by Lazaro Alierta Joe Luis and Didier Blandin – **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “It’s a large story and theme to undertake in a short film, and the script really delivers it – the story is grand and important...”

Dao Hides, No Name – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Actress (Ning Lu)**, Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Lu throws her heart into this very impressive micro-budget short film. Gilmour delivers an impressive world within this short runtime. Very impressive stuff.”

Mancala by Abraham Dein – Nominated: Best Actor (Christian Leith), Nominated: Best Actress (Otilia Royer), **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Intimate,

delicate and beautifully directed, this piece really grasps some fantastic tones, a great pace and a really natural sense of performance. BRAVO!"

A Hand by Bob Pipe – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – "A handy, barking madhouse of a hoot!"

- Best Short Film made for over \$5,000

The Wind and the Whimpering by Laurence McManus – **Winner: Best Short Film made for over \$5,000, Winner: Best Director** – "An impressive fairytale lives in the heart of this film – one produced with a great sense of style, tone and texture."

The Candidate by Erkut Altındağ – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Director – "One of the boldest tonal pieces we've had in a while – it walks a thin line between the Gothic tone, the comedic and the dramatic."

This Too Shall Pass by Rubendra Ravi – Nominated: Best Actor (Anwaar Beg Moghal) – "A moving and meditative piece by Ravi here... one which is greatly elevated by Moghal's intimate performance. Lovely stuff."

Blót – Torn Between Worlds by Alexander Flatau – Nominated: Best Short Film made for over \$5,000, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, Nominated: Best Cinematography – "Epic, engaging, enthralling."

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

PANDEMANIA by Judson Vaughan – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000 – "I think it is safe to say we have reached the saturation point of covid tales... but Pandemia does an impressive job of showing production scale on a small scale... one largely shot within people's homes during a trying time. It's great indie spirit."

Alone by Peter Molnar – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Actress (Jazmin Christina Kozmits) – "Kozmits leads what is one of the most impressive single handler films I've ever seen made at this budget level. Impressive survival stuff!"

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Interlaced by José Livino Pinheiro Lopes – Nominated: Best Screenplay – "The greatest impact of Interlaced is it's attention to truma. The slight use of editing to imply the gravity of

this turmoil is impressive, but the greatest asset is its script and the general handling of the story.”

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

My King by Kenya Cagle – Nominated: Best Actress (AzJahlee Presswood) – “The film’s consistent dramatic turns are impressively handled for an indie film – and above all, the performance of Presswood is impressively bold – she throws many punches as she captures the many scenes she is in.”

- Web series

Eight Ball – **Winner: Best Webseries** – “This is one impressive web series effort, one which relishes the humor of its drama, and the performances that carry it along through its many plot beats. Great fun.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

### Best Music Video

**Winner: Seasidey – “Bonkers. Gotta love it.”**

Nominees: Becoming the Nightmare – “The locale, the style of the videos woodland run and the lone guitarman all together feel tone perfect.”, I Am The Candidate – “Fantastically comical.”

### Best Music Video Editing

**Winner: Rabbit Hole – “Feels like something from the 2000’s – ironic, fun and massively self-aware creatively.”**

Nominated: Withering of Light – “The architecture of this music video is a surreal and beautiful thing.”, Becoming the Nightmare – “Beautifully assembled, this video cuts and uses digital effects to the best of its ability for impact.”, Moving Forward – “Beautifully shot, this video captures a great mood and setting.”

### Best Music Video Cinematography

**Winner: Droplets II – “An epic design elevates the simplest of things here.”**

Nominated: The Escape – “Beautifully shot, with some careful edits built into the design. Impressively made.”, Seasidey – “The way with which the photography captures the inner glow of the seasidey-felt vibes is super cool.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Music Video Narrative – Moving Forward – “A fantastic music video that is both aware of its narrative tools and the importance of tone.”**

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: D.O.C: Welcome To Angeltree – “The strong blend of genre and themes makes this one exciting character experience – sit back and enjoy the ride!”**

Nominees: The Passage of Sun – “The rich characters and strong bold understanding of the situations featured in this script helps form an interesting character arc that keeps us excited and moved.”, Genesis – “An epic and almost insane journey.”, They Took The Pigs! – “Taylor knows the art of character-based dialogue. It’s exciting and wonderful.”, Saint Shari – “I love the texture of this script. So detailed, so rich!”

- Best Genre Script

**Winner: They Took The Pigs! – “Comedy slash sci-fi slash romance? – who the hell cares... the blending of different genre cues in a short wicked run time is a real page-turning explosion.”**

Nominees: Weird Witches and Fall – “This script really pushes out the boat when it comes to weird, wonderful and fun material.”, The Old Mill Pub – “A delight of content humor, but a bit of a mess script syntax wise.”,

- Best Micro-Budget Script

**Winner: What is Grief? – “Script formatting is off... but the script is on point to be a very attainable micro-budget effort!”**

Nominees: They Took The Pigs! – “If one has access to these locations, this goofy script is an easy straight-to-shoot product.”, Nick The Hat – “As TV pilots go, this is a nicely written effort that really shows off what minimalist locations can allow.”,

- Best Technique

**Winner: The Parliament Of Ebrill Roberts – “Concise and very clear with its use and understanding of script formatting.”**

Nominees: A Package of Dreams – “Carefully constructed and well-executed script.”, Face Painters – “A nicely executed mega page script... definitely needs an edit, but overall very concisely written.”

- Special Mention

**Winner: Best Style Script – Legends: “The script has an immediate style that grabs its reader and helps define our desires and hunger for this project. Bravo!”**

# Spring 2021

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**SPRING 2021 | [Festival Laurels](#)** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

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- Jury Prize

## **Winner: KAMALOCA by Christophe Karabache**

“Karabache delivers another nightmare. His characters are stones that we are subjected to. They are thrown at us. We feel their every hit. His photography is engaging. He is a true auteur.”

Nominees: Velvet Crush by Michael Boston, Summer Lane Drive by Kirk Flash, His Name is Ray by Michael Del Monte, To Planet 2000 by Changyi Yu, Kold by Andrew Vandaele

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## FILM

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Behind the Door by – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Black and White Cinematography** (Erfan Ehteshami) – “At its core there’s a great performance here... one which exists in the light and dark shadows of a person’s individual life – this is greatly enhanced by the film’s choice of black and white photography.”

Roadkill by Aliza Brugger – **Winner: Best LGBT Film Project** – “The film has a great pair of duo lead performances in its central construction, one which provides a great many tones to the film.”  
Duckman – Nominated: Best Actor (Duckman, himself) – “Like a Harmony Korine film, this is a bonkers experience.”

A Bitter Pill by Luke Martin – Nominated: Best Actor (Alex Francis), Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “The film’s use of budget is very impressive – the canvas is much larger than the brush etc. ... but that revelation aside, the film has a really impressive core message. It’s intimate, nicely written and very nicely delivered by Alex Francis.”

Last Ride by Soda Persi – **Winner: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000** – “Is it very simple? Yes. Is it a little cheesy? Yes. But above all ... does it have entertainment value? Is it an engaging tale of people who we rarely see (age-wise) on the screen? Yes and Yes. This is a perfect example of what a small budget can be, in the good sense.”

Daniel & Kendra by Eben Skilleter – Nominated: Best Actress (Yasmine Holness-Dove), **Winner: Best Actor (Joseph Emms)** – “Some of the camera work is a little touch and go at times (more cinematic flavoring would be awesome)... but that aside, the core simple plot is a lovely presentation of intimacy by Skilleter, and above all the two leads are quite great, especially Emms’ simple and sensitive performance.”

The Beloved Country by Selma Cath BenAyed – Nominated: Special Mention: Best Experimental Film – “A wild fusion of media forms – this is an engaging and often expressive film.”

Renovation by Bjarke de Koning – Nominated: Best LGBTQ Film Project, Nominated: Best cinematography – “This film has a great sense of place and time, there’s real character here and a vibrant idea of how the filmic image can be used to enhance a film’s perspective.”

Love Conquers... by Eric Bendross – Nominated: Best LGBTQ Film Project, **Winner: Best Editing** – “The delicate performances, and smart engineering of the film’s pace is one of its

many highlights.”

Under The Sun by Eben Skilleter – Nominated: Best Genre, **Winner: Special Mention: Best Buddy Film** – “It’s rare these days to see a simple short film about quiet chatter amongst friends. It’s minimalist and calm.”

Playing Opossum by Julie Elkins – **Winner: Best Art Direction** – “The film lives in a world of its own, and it has some great artistry to it!”

Byte by Ross McGowan – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Comical and overall great in terms of its understanding of the narrated pastiche.”

“POOR MAGIC” by Studio VIROSA – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Experimental Film** – “This strange, almost silent film, explores a dreamland of its own making. Quite fun.”

The Other by Zahra Torkamanlou – Nominated: Best Director – “The intimate nature of this short film is compelling – it is the clear and bold voice of a feminist filmmaker. There’s much to admire here.”

Time’s Arrow by Ian Roberts – Nominated: Best Art Direction – “The film certainly has a unique setup... and it delivers on those visuals.”

Once a Hero by Andrew Kadikian – Nominated: Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Best Score (Jordan Bennett)** – “The film’s production values are quite impressive, and the score helps hone in on that human touch.”

The Washerwoman by Obi Ejikeme – Nominated: Best Director – “There’s a real sense of style and pace here. Quite enjoyable. Perhaps a larger project would suit better... it didn’t feel like we had finished.”

Script by Piero Cannata – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “Hilarious and Gothic in equal parts.”

A Shoreditch Tale by Milo Brennan and Harriet Williams – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The film’s core selling point is its exaggerated comical cast. The two leading ladies especially steal the show.”

Sell It To Me a Different Way by Zack Travis – **Winner: Special Mention: Best One Take Film** – “I wish the film had more than its unique single take... It is a beautiful expression of minimalism, and there’s great acting here... but even adding credits will help make this film more like a film than just a glimpse into family drama. All in all this is great though, it just needs that ‘seal’ of official film branding to identify it as such, so it isn’t lost in the digital strastfier of video content.”

Below A Dark Wood by Bill Slovic – Nominated: Best Actor (Jesse Massaro) – “Massaro nails a certain physical stillness which really enhances the performance and pace of this film.”

SINGULARITY by Manish Balakrishnan – Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “This film packs a great sense of locale and character into its short run time. There’s a real sense of purpose and individuals.”

Prayer by Rahul Barkley – Nominated: Best Actress (Serena Collins), Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “A beautifully shot satire. It’s funny and rather bold thanks to its leading lady.”

We Are The Same by Saeed Bahman – Nominated: Special Mention – Best Concept – “The film’s use of inanimate objects, which come to life, is a great idea for a minimalist film... especially fans on a roof.”

Kold by Andrew Vandaele – **Winner: Best Cinematography**, Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000 – “Kold is a beautiful beast of a film. Philosophical and dark.”

Imaginary Scene by Neda Goodarzi – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “The elegant 3D animation is very impressive.”

TARNAEH by Mohammad Tayebi – Nominated: Best Actor (Hamed Nassaj Bokharaie), Nominated: Best Actress: (Reihaneh Reihany), Nominated: Best Director – “The short is intimate, but also somewhat grand – the look is beautiful and the performances are very engaging.”

Lavender by Andrew Ball-Shaw – Nominated: Short Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated:

Best Director – “The film boasts a great series of scenes, all produced with a careful touch for detail and style.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

The Truth About Us by Jason White – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The film’s core success lies in its framing around four characters stuck in doors attacking and defending themselves away... it’s almost theatrical, if it wasn’t for the fact that the camera takes us around them... nicely made.”

Jesus of New York by Joe Benedetto – **Winner: Best Actress (Ashlee Macropoulos)**, Best Screenplay –

“The concept and the set up is very original and funny... and Macropoulos is hilarious!”

Refuge by Mehmet Tıǧlı – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Shot with great care and love, this short film carries a great sense of authorship and style... not to mention the human heart.”

Flirting with Food by Paul Edward Foulkes – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “This film is a fantastic blend of comedy and documentary... there’s a kind of Jean Luc Godard feeling about it – a challenge of minds in a beautiful setup.”

To Planet 2000 by Changyi Yu – Nominated: Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, **Winner: Best Director** – “This film packs more charm and character in it than most shorts – the greatest touch as well is the ease of the style, consistency of tone and the overall production values of this character-driven piece. Excited to see what Yu produces next!”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Velvet Crush by Michael Boston – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast, **Winner: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Director – “Michael Boston is back with a crackly fun feast. What a joy this is! In fact, let’s just be honest... where’s a feature film by this guy?! – His cast is funny. His plot is wild and engaging... and the photography, smoothed with a Jazzy score, is almost a too-classy affair for the character’s insane lives. All is a joy here.”

Eight Count by Joe Basile – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Christian Bulich) – “The choice to bring focus to the commerce of individual fighting in the ring, rather than the boxing ring itself, is quite unique... Here is a short film set in the more interested in the intimate aftermath setting of a getaway car, one which has become the setting for a more tonal domestic performance than the potential boxing gloves action (which would have been dull and predictable). Ultimately, the tone choice is both interesting and moving... and helps serve a very satisfying viewing experience”

Nasarawa State: Elimination and Beyond by Stephen Maud – Nominated: Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Special Mention – Best Documentary** – “Beautifully shot, informative and delicately done... Nasarawa State is a reminder of third world efforts to implement long term health solutions – but it is done with a great keen eye for beauty in the image and an understanding of the local’s communities.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Oh Jeff! By Chris Rourke – Nominated: Best Writer, Nominated: Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, **Winner: Special Mention: Best SFX** – “Oh Jeff is full of vibrant moments of hilarity – and these are greatly enhanced by the cast that brings them to life and well... the sound effects that make it all POP! off the screen.”

Behind the Scenes by Øystein Thorsen – Nominated: Feature Film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Øystein Thorsen) – “With the perspective of this film firmly placed on the lead performer (who is also the director), this film finds an internal conflict for its lead character – the kind that is then propelled onto the screen largely through the actor and the deliberate and unsettling camera angle choices. It’s skillful and rewarding.”

KAMALOCA by Christophe Karabache – Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Music (Michel Duprez, Gauthier Keyaerts), Nominated: Best Editing, Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “Bold, dark, haunting... It comes as no surprise that Karabache is back with yet another daring film – though here perhaps the surprise is actually the film’s locale, the detailed cyber narrative and of course: the cast who go as far as any cast usually would with indie films... there are many performances here that stun the viewer... this film is like a cattle prod (in the best of senses).”

#Goals by Blake Alexandros – Nominated: Feature Film made for less than \$5,000 – “The film’s cinematography somewhat drags it down a bit... mainly making it feel somewhat disorganised and haphazard (many shots don’t cut well together, and the framing often feels not so carefully positioned for the performers movements)... however, the script, the concept and the delivery are very impressive for its budget, and the project is truly a great first feature effort from it’s director. Great use of local talent and a solid sense of production value within geographical settings.”

POSTCARDS FROM SICILY by David Gräber – Nominated: Best LGBTQ Film Project, Nominated: Best Director – “This film has a great sense of texture and atmosphere. It is really quite engaging and beautiful. A little longer (ie 90 minutes) and this would have been a fully fledged loveable standard feature film.”

Before Breaker Wakes by Charles Stanley – Nominated: Best Actor (Ron Cazolari), Nominated: Best Actress (Cassandra Enzler), **Winner: Feature Film made for less than \$5,000** – “The film’s main asset is its clear sense of style and genre. It also uses its budget to its advantage, yielding to its limitations and thinking around them.... Rather than say, trying something beyond their means. The other key dazzling element is its cast, specifically the performances of Supporting Male Cazolari and Leading Lady Enzler.”

- Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

No selections in this category.

- Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Highlights of the Moon by Jon Wheeler – Nominated: Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000 – “A little long-winded at times, but quite nicely shot. The locale of Canada and the UK are nicely mixed culturally.”

His Name is Ray by Michael Del Monte – **Winner: Feature Film made for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Music – “It is hard to separate the pure fascination one has with the content from the film’s well-produced content. It is an impactful story, and one told with the greatest care to attention, technique and respect. Quite bold. Very impressive.”

- Web series

To Be Continued by Becky Edmunds – Nominated: Best Editing – “The content is very intriguing, but it is the montage which really holds the key to the film’s key technical achievement.”

Summer Lane Drive by Kirk Flash – **Winner: Best Web Series**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Writer – “The work of a genius. Nothing more to say.”

Remember my Name by Sonny Vrebac – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast**, Nominated: Best Genre Project – “Everyone is at their top game in this. Great characters, great cast... especially Justine Kacir and Cheyne Fynn. Also, the script is hilarious.”

#### Quarantine Short Films

Q Mommas by Ashna Sharan – **Winner: Best Quarantine Film** – “It is endearing that in the final season for our lockdown films, we finally have one centered on homeschooling and the impact it has had on children and their mothers.”

Headless Again by Maria Sundby – **Special Mention: Best Dance Film** – “A beautifully made dance film.... Some amazing shots and edits.”

Covid Tales: House Party – Nominated: Best Quarantine Short Film – “The film boasts a great cast of characters, coughs and trance music.”

Wish You Were Gone by Joseph Hearsey – Nominated: Best Quarantine Film, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “Delicate in its detail, and full of energy – Hearsey directs a solid cast through a very thoughtful and humanist script.”

American Dream by Edward Shimborske – Nominated: Best Actress (Evelyn Shimborske) – “The film is largely set around a single person’s existence in isolation – it is impressive to see how much Shimborske (Evelyn) is such a key part of the liveliness of this post-apocalyptic world.”

#### SPECIAL MENTION

Inside the Polyptch by Davide Minotti – **Winner: Unique Drama-Doc Project** – “The film is its own type of story entirely – it tells its tale in a unique blend of fiction and reality.”

Sparks by Netta Shalev – **Winner: Best Social/Historical Film** – “The film captures a culture and a time, and much like Anthony Donckue 1992, it has a great many nuances to explore in its content and the social history which shaped the lives of its characters.”

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#### MUSIC VIDEO

Aurora by James Barany – Nominated: Best Music Video Editing – “The VFX, all produced in post, go a long way in harmonising the moody tones of the vocal group.”

Sasha & The Shades: “Smiles” Music Video – Nominated: Best Music Video Cinematography – “A stunningly well shot music piece... the green light is almost Hitchcockian.”

Quantum Love by Monika Peczek – Nominated: Best Editing – “The edit and images recall the early 2000s and their digital fears.”

Ulrichs 1867 by Sven Niemeyer – Nominated: Best Music Video Cinematography, Nominated: Best Music Video, Nominated: Best LGBTQ Project – “This slick social video is full of interesting lighting technique and solid dancing... it also has a sort of movement in its set up – the exterior and interior and world’s apart, and yet both very human areas.”

For My Homies by Ludmilla Muse – Nominated: Best Music Video Editing – “The edit of this video is quite skillful, and brings about a rather playful arena for the singer to inhabit.”

Brokenera’s “Hold the Beat” by Flo Pizzarello – Winner: Special Mention: Best Animation – “With some fantastical colours, this ghostly music video is eye-popping.”

imlost2lookaround – RIFT by Charlie Douglas-Hamilton – **Winner: Best Music Video Cinematography**, Nominated: Best Music Video – “The surreal imagery is quite amazing... but it is really the cinematography where the magic is at – the fluid camera brings about a kind of Gaspar Noe violence... it’s great!”

Peace Marc – Tell Me by Cristian Omar Jimenez – **Winner: Best Music Video**, Nominated: Best Music Video Cinematography, **Winner: Best Music Video Editing** – “This is the most polished and professional music video of this season – the edit screams MTV style.”

Say You Will by Rachel Koumparou – Nominated: Best Music Video – “The use of locale, dance and colour is quite great... reminiscent of those 90’s music videos, with standing/dancing figures lost in abstract spaces.”

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#### SCRIPT COMPETITION

##### – Best Character Arc

**Winner: Princess Lady by Stacey Petrov – “There’s a real sense of frailty and darkness here. Lots of great texture.”**

Nominees:

The Wolfe-Pointe by Julianna Pitt – “Reminiscent Cat People – that is to say it is a classy merging of European tragedy and the American Gothic. Quite great.”, Her Seventh Death by Virginia Austin – “Kavita is quite an incredible character who lives a great epic life in these pages.”, Anna Z by Dario Gorini – “Though the formatting is at times strange and almost poetic, the script is largely carried by a great set of characters with a clear trajectory.” Viable by Omonefe Kemete – “What characters! Oh it is exciting.”, Shigmo by Ishq Pradhan – “It is too long, but it is an epic and the character’s arc is very unique and engaging.”

##### – Best Genre Script **The Lake House by Andrea Carlisle – “A page turning genre delight.”**

Nominees: Under The Law by Aubree Sweeney – “This script is a pure genre delight. It almost reads like a traditional Hollywood Western with dusty streets and breathy shots.”, Death Valley by Ryan Enever – “One can already see the genre selling posters. It’s an easy sell.”, Lost in Control by Maria Massei-Rosato – “The film’s overall arc shines in a clear drama yarn. This is a human character film – full of stakes that change lives.”, Hacked by Alison Valente – “There certainly is a particular genre at work here... one that might be better suited to TV... but it is a lot of fun!”, The Real Thing by Matthew Papadopoulos – “Hilarious, solid concept for an easy sale. With the right director this could be a seriously fun experience to watch.” – Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Exposure Management by Philip T Brewster – “The scale and fun dialogue make this an easy ‘go and shoot it now’ film.”**

Nominees: Princess Lady by Stacey Petrov – “Though there’s a tennis court in this one, it still reads as an easy low-key shoot (in a good way!).”, RIP Spike Jones by Lucy Shaw – “The script does have some period piece elements, but all in all it seems quite contained and therefore quite an easy one to see made without too much hassle... it also really has a great ‘buy in’ concept, which would do well on a crowdfunding campaign.”

##### – Best Technique

**Winner: The Wolfe-Pointe by Julianna Pitt – “Shy of the Act subheadings structure, this script flows with a great sense of style and understanding.”**

Nominees: Death Vallue by Ryan Enever – “There’s a great many slick moments in this where the page becomes a very direct tool with which to express Vallue’s vision.”, Miscalculated by Alyxandrya Prynce and Romel Xavier Morales – “It almost feels too long, but it is very very well written.”, Youth And Age Flower by András Attila Farkas – “What a beautiful concept, one with many layers and many ideas brewing.”

**Special Mention: A Gentle Push by Eoin Ryan – Winner: Best Ensemble Cast – “Scripts rarely have such great characters working together. The dialogue around these beings really jumped out of the page!”**

# Winter 2021

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WINTER 2021 | **Festival Laurels** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

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## FILM & VIDEO

### Jury Competition

**Winner: Silver Flask by C.S. Hughes**

*“The biggest takeaway of Silver Flask is a double whamo serving of audience expectation and smart filmmaker style. The project may be small in scale, and even tight on a budget... but the final product is memorable, and something that one can take something away from – a rare treat in the small short film category, and even more so... a rare thing within the low end of film budgets.”*

#### Nominees:

Traumgesicht by David de la Reza

Urban Wolf by Zef Cota

Irony by Henry Meredith

Manhedonia by Simon Bates

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- Short Films:

LIFE... by Mirlande Amazan – Nominated: Short – More than \$10,000 – “This film is slick! – in fact, I’ll go so far to say: Amazan’s work should actually be that of a standard film release. This sort of production should be consumed by the masses (because it is that polished, accessible and interesting).”, Best Actress: Stacy Ann Rose – “Rose just hits her tone perfectly. What an impressive performance.”, Nominated: Best Director – “There is a sense of ease here, it almost comes as second nature... the world appears real, the tone is engrossing.”, **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “Amazan’s script is important, impressive and memorable.”

You Say Nothing by Gray Hughes – Nominated: Short – More than \$10,000 – “The scale and presentation is quite grand, despite the small and intimate nature of the story.”, Nominated: Best Director – “Hughes presents the Derry of 1969 with great care. There’s texture here – there’s

detail. I can smell it, I can taste it. It is rather impressive work.”, Nominated: Best Actor: Isaac Heslip – “What a bold and brave performance from this young man.”, **Winner: Best Score** – “The music of this short film is haunting and memorable.”

Love Bites by Andrew Rothkin – **Winner: Special Mention:** Best Credits – “They are so smooth and classy.”, Nominated: Short – More than \$10,000: “The film carries itself with confidence – it has a strong understanding of pleasure derived from genre and performance.”, Nominated: Best Actor – Keith Hines: “Hines gives a great performance as the male love interest.”

The Grand Scheme by Matt Mirams – **Winner: Short – More than \$10,000** – “A classy production which understands how to handle its budget and production scale.”, **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – “Everyone is dancing on their toes in this... doing their best. It’s fantastic!”, **Winner: Best Cinematography** – “This short film has been shot with such a careful gesture, the camera glides, it dances... it actually reminds me of Madonna’s W.E.”

Als die Welle brach ... / As the wave broke ... Nominated: Best Editing – “The film has a slightly loose feeling of a Terrence Malick film. It’s interesting.”

The Treasure by Silvia Gregorova – Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The collective team seems to be quite great in this.”

Zero-Sum Game by Amir Hossein Farrokhi – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000 – “The film’s use of locale and situational horror is greatly enhanced by its poetic understanding of cinema.”

The Gull’s Shriek by Ava Ghahremanifar – **Winner: Best Actress: Raha Dourandish** – “Dourandish is a revelation!”

Blue Ruby by Noah Stratton-Twine – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Screenplay – “The project is really quite amusing, and the charm it holds of a Paris destination short is mostly delivered through the retrograde and the strong comedic performances.”

Coathanger by Russell E Hopkins – **Winner: Best Genre Film** – “This is a barking riot of hilarity... but it is also a little bit of a character-actor’s film, which is quite nice to see (and rather rare).”

The Purse: A Dream in Two Acts by Emily Woodworth – **Winner: Best Actor** (Nathan Woodworth), **Winner: Best Writing** – “The Woodworths rock the house with this one!”

Clarity by Eben Skilleter – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000 – “In this sobering film, the script and performances shine... in reality though, it is a very minimalist presentation, and a well balanced act on such a small budget.”

Foster by Henry Meredith – Nominated: Best Actor (Oli Meredith), **Winner: Special Mention – Best Monologue (Writing and Performance)** – “Meredith’s performance is razor sharp.”

Under the Surface by Trevor Hagen – **Winner: Special Mention – Best use of effects** “The digital cinema world has arrived, and Hagen has used it to the best of his abilities in this sci fi short film.”

Urban Wolf by Zef Cota – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000 – “The use of budget in this short is undeniably impressive – this is a full scale Hollywood style product. But it is also just a slice of the cake (not the whole meal). And also, sadly, the film does miss the chance to include some socio-political element to its ‘urban’ locale (think Candyman).”

Traumgesicht by David de la Reza – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Though de la Reza’s style is great, and Groothof gives a great silent performance as Ana, it is Karner’s photography that really shines in this project.”

Me, Donkey (Ik, ezel) by Evy Vinck – **Winner: Special Mention – Best Experimental Film** – “Whacko weirdo wonderful.”

Potato Potato by Miguel Guzman – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000 – “The use of the restaurant setting is very endearing and sweet.”

Path of Rebirth by Nicola Savino – Nominated: Short – Less than \$5,000 – “With its small budget, this film finds a great way of raising the genre and tone to a eerie level of relish.”

Winter’s Dream by Ian Adema – Nominated: Best Actor: Benjamin McPheeters – “McPheeters lives in a great setting and atmosphere generated by Adema.”

The Burning Trace by Jonathan Haver – Nominated: Best Actor: Alexey Ekimov, Nominated: Best Director, **Winner: Special Mention: Best Black and White Film** – “The mix of art, both visual and audio based, is heightened by this film’s use of black and white, the sharp lead male performance and the playfulness of the entire event!”

Irony by Henry Meredith – **Winner: Short – Less than \$5,000** – “An impressive little film set in a set that, eh – well... so, we had a bus stop film sent to TMBT a few months ago, and it was made for much more than this... so, hats off to the Meredith duo, who deliver such great performances in a public space with no budget in hand! The sense of a locale and people in this film is very precise.”

Manhedonia by Simon Bates – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Use of Primitive Cinema** – “The short has multiple elements at hand which are very primitive (film language) based: the performance, the cinematography, the edit... it is all very textured, very smart and very brainy. All in all – highly recommended to all.”

- Feature Films:

The Take Out Move – **Winner: Best Feature made for less than \$5,000** – “This film proves that you don’t need much to make something slick, kickass and vibrant!”, Nominated: Best Actor: Jeremy Sless: “What a cool performance! Recalls a sort of French New Wave very chilled vibe.”, Best Writing: Andrew Simonian: “The comic lightness of this film is really quite unique in the indie scene.”, Nominee: Best Ensemble Cast: “The hangout vibe of this project is just fantastic. The cast keep it fresh throughout. So much energy! – I’d personally have loved to have made this film with this team. It looks like a hoot and it shows in the final product.”

BASTION by Pierre Udren – **Winner: Best Director** – “Who is Pierre Udren? When will he deliver a new film? And – he MUST make more films. What a delight!”, Nominated: Best Actress: Mélodie Mayer – “Mayer reminds me of Sandrine Bonnaire – She’s got a grasp of physical acting that’s quite great!”, Nominated: Best Cinematography: “The film’s striking black and white photography is grand!”, Nominated: Best Editing – “The film’s structure provides an interesting sense of tone – it slips in and out of spaces with delicate edits.”

THEM by Ignacio Maiso – Nominated: Best Cinematography – “The film looks great, but it does seem to be missing a bit of a heart.”, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast: “The performances of this film are well rounded and quite enjoyable.”

Veneer by Maximillian Aguiar – Nominated: Best Feature made for less than \$5,000 – “The film’s main jewel is its understanding of character. Ultimately, it really has a lot of fun keeping things cheap and minimalist.”

Nineteen by Tyna Ezenma – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Feature – More than \$10,000 – “Ezenma’s film is a moving and genre drenched delight.”, Nominated: Best Actress: Echelon Mbadiwe – “Mbadiwe is startling in this performance.”

Big Trouble in Seattle by David Fowler – **Winner: Feature – More than \$10,000** – “Big Trouble packs a lot of big heat. There’s a large ensemble here ready to grin their teeth in a variety of genre typical scenes, as well as a real sense of locale and smart indie tricks. This film is very market-ready, and ought to be shown to sales agents to be sold.”

- Special Mention:

**Winner: Best Homegrown Film: Making and Unmaking by Shaun Rose and Andrea Stangle** – “The film is obviously a self-reflexive project. It won’t appeal to many... but it does hold one important message: the making of films is not only for the few (with access to millions), but rather the many (with access to a camera?) – film is an art form which can be made by all, and it should be... Making and Unmaking is an authentic look at a chapter of a filmmaker who should persevere and keep making fiction films.”

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- Quarantine Films:

Two Ply Over The Cuckoo's Nest by Kate J Miller – **Special Mention: Best Stop Animation** –

“The film has a simple charm that is very much the product of our current situation.”

Long Distance by Ashna Sharan – Nominated: Best Writing – “The simplicity of this story is moving and well thought out.”

Hidden Nowhere by Grace Fox – Nominated: Best Genre Film – “There’s something quite funky and fun about this sci-fi double act film. The cast are especially bubbly in the unsuspecting country setting.”

Bell Jarred by Alexander Fingrutd – Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – “The film finds the minimalist fascinating, and so do we!”, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “Startling in its design, the look is a textured feast.”

Henrietta by Jessy Holtermann – Nominated: Best Actress – “This one-woman show is quite amusing thanks to Holtermann’s commitment to its minimalist content.”

My Dear Quarantine by Ewa Maria Wolska – **Winner: Best Quarantine Film** – “So charming, so beautifully handcrafted. What a delight!”

The Decisive Moment by Ben Lovejoy – Nominated: Best Actress: Asia Nisciur – “This did feel at times like a master and coverage task set by a university (to prove one understands the concept) without the need for an actual plot beyond someone sitting around and doing something simple – but the saving grace is Nisciur, who brings a bit of warmth and comedy to the simple situation.”

At This Time in My Death by Elee Mittan – Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – “Once one gets past the video call chat (something that has become a terrible requirement of the lockdown genre), the film unlocks a great horror genre vibe... all the while being produced and situated within a restrictive space.”

Fatima’s Job by Max Hayes and Nathalie Canvin – **Winner: Best Editing** – “The film’s greatest strength is its remixed and plastered visual presentation. Interviews are thrown around the screen with a variety of different digital presentations... it really takes the whole video conference and interview set-up to the next level.”

The Mountain by Ioan Jones – Nominated: Best Quarantine Film, Nominated: Best Cinematography, Nominated: Best Score – “Ioan Jones and Seimon Lea provide a consistent visual and sound based palette. It is beautiful.”

Another Father by Joe Lueben – Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – “It’s intimate, it is small, and it is very cosy.”

I Have a Rat by Freyja Pakarinen – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actress, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “All in all, this team works so brilliantly together... Perhaps the only downfall is in itself the scale – a product of lockdown... the short seems at times smaller than the efforts of the team. They deserve a bigger canvas to paint on!”

In Isolation by Edmind C. Short – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – “The style of the film is perhaps the most unique of all the quarantine shorts, and it is specifically that which helps elevate the project above others... however, one should add that the cast is very much supportive of this – the camera dances around them, and they seem to respond in the right way whenever it hits them.”

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- Webseries:

Maxime Boudreault: Road to the 2020 World's Strongest Man – Nominated: Best Webseries: "One has to love the visuals of this webseries – its gritty and grainy, and it has this sort of raw quality about it."

The Cab' – Nominated: Best Webseries: "Comical and sharp, this ensemble piece rings echoes of Veep's earlier seasons."

Paladin: The Brotherhood – Nominated: Best Webseries: "Well, this is a whole load of fun!

There's something retro about this even, recalls the heyday of 2000's fantasy TV shows."

The Coroner – **Winner: Best Webseries:** "From the perspective of cinema purest, this is a hard webseries to love – why cut out parts of films to make a new product?... but one must say the delivery is sharp, and the concept is very original.", Nominated: Best Actor: Stefan Godin: "Godin appears as if he could have been a cast member of any of these films. His performance is, therefore, somewhat timeless and very cinematic."

Marsh and the Moshki-Mallow – Best Webseries: "This is disturbing stuff (in the best of ways)."

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## SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

- Best Genre Script:

**Winner: Meddle Like Hell by Michael Mantsourani** – "What a joy is to be had from Meddle Like Hell. This has a great deal of genre potential!"

Nominated:

Find Her by Michael Walsh-Rose – "It's got great potential to be a lot of fun. It does though, just at moments, feel more like a film than a show..."

Out of my Comfort Zone by Ivy Vale and Rick Reil – "This has a bit of a showstopper feeling to it. Like, had this been the late 80's, it could be one of those John Hughes' productions."

Fairytale? By Aubree Sweeney – "Amusing and fun, this one has a storyteller vibe that's quite cool. If produced, it would be best done with a strong colouring of genre to double down on what has already been established within the script."

The Breaking Point by Tiffany L. Coleman – "The script carries a sense of drama that has a hint of a thriller in it. It's quite interesting."

- Best Micro Budget Script:

**Winner: Frayda by Raffaele Paolo O'Neill** – "With its potential, this is a solid minimalist drama that has strong locations ready for use within the North London area."

Nominated:

One More Guest? by Suzy Miller – "Compact, to the point and charming... this script is ready for filming."

- Best Character Arc:

**Winner: The Drive Back by Justin Guidroz** – “Intimate, smart and moving. A very impressive script.”

Nominated:

Seen, Unseen by Anita Palathingal – “This is a solid character driven film.”

Stop by Paul Burt and Rich Dampare Smartt – “The short is actually ready to shoot. It has a great feeling to it.”

Fugue by A J Maryn – “Perhaps dense at times, this script really relishes its various personas... and naturally, so do we!”

Frayda by Raffaele Paolo O'Neill – “The script is well researched (though perhaps at times too much so – obsessing over the ‘behaviour’ traits of a social group rather than the supporting roles at hand – ie a brother is no more than a brother etc)... but all in all the key part here is the lead persona, Frayda, who is a character that audiences will love to watch come alive.”

Dancing with the Devil by Ezra-Quinn Watson – “This one has a great deal of heart to offer its potential viewers.”

- Best Technique:

**Winner: The Troupe by Micah Gallagher** – “With the right director, this could be one hell of an impressive and stylistic film. The script is very concise about what it is doing.”

Nominated:

Monkey Motordome by Phil Nohl – “The script is written with a strong understanding of writing formats. It's an easy, bold read.”

Conga by Rob Lancey: “The script is rather classy and clear about how it works.”

The Collector by Roland Johnson – “This is a hefty project, and I'm sure a hard one to see made... but the script is intelligent and impressive just the same.”

Soul Deer by David Mintzer – “The script has a great sense of character to it, and by this I mean the voice in the writing... there's an authentic individual behind this.”

Two Nights at the Pine Street Inn by J Christopher Haslip – “Written with a great understanding of its subject, this script is quite heavy and moving.”

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## MUSIC VIDEO

- Best Music Video:

**Winner: Heart of Steel** – “The visual story here is greatly enhanced by perspective, character and a consistent understanding of space (that being, the space which the characters are in on the screen). All in all, Henry Meredith is a filmmaker we'd love to see a film from... and needless to say, this one of the best videos of the year so far.”

Nominees:

Lala Land – “Julius shows us a cool LA land... but it is really the personal connection, done mostly via mobile phone, that keeps this video intimate and special.”

Black Sheep – “Intimate, and yet epic. What a beautiful video!”

Tori Leppert – home – “The video is a personal trip that's quite intimately done and comical.”

- Best Cinematography:

**Winner: Black Sheep** – “What a beauty!” – let’s get one thing clear: Gianvincenzo Pugliese should be making films... his images, his understanding of cinema... it’s just very pure.”

Nominees:

I Wanna Do Christmas With You (Again) – “The videos use of retro effects is greatly enhanced by the placement of the camera, and the understanding of broadcast photography (the video actually looks like a soap opera gone wrong – in the best of senses, I mean... we’ve got Santa chained up!).”

Heart of Steel – “This video is a visual delight.”

Afterlife – Edenhill – “This video is on fire – Meredith shows off his lighting skills in this 90’s style music video. Slick stuff!”

Escapement – “This macro photography heavy video is a feast for the eyes.”

Byrd – Gør Det her – “Fucking awesome!”

- Best Editing:

**Winner: Byrd – Gør Det her** – “The edit feels physical, it is a VHS retro delight!”

Nominees:

Inherent Rhythm – “The red grade here is sublime.”

George Floyd: Say Their Names – “The use of montage, which sees the video incorporate slogans and images, is a very smart and interesting use of tools which are closer to art installation and art performance than your average music video... it is stronger thanks to this self-awareness of the media. A stronger grade and even some editing effects (glitch, VHS effects etc) would provide the video more of a retro feel, which would further enhance the video’s already established visual motif.”

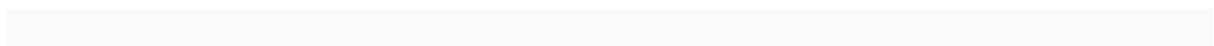
Make America Love Again – “The visual motif of various TV sets is quite amusing... the only real downside is we never see anyone watching the video itself, and therefore it feels all a bit heavy-handed with the use of stock footage... all in all though, the edit is quite fun.”

Leopard Society – “Funky might be a polite term for this video. Brian Perniciaro really turns up the volume on wild animal with his edit of this video.”

- Special Mention:

**Best Animation:** iLL Opera – Chapter V: Woke – “The visuals really use animation, in its particular style, in a great modern digital form.”

**Special Mention: Geneva Jacuzzi’s Casket** – **Winner: Most Wild Music Video:** “This video really shows off how wild one can get with a bit of character invention. The use of phones in combo with a retro ring and visuals to match is *wild* in the best of ways!”



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# Winter 2020 / Festival Laurels

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## Jury Prize – Winner: Here Today by Erica Arvold

Jury Judge, [Ryan Bennett](#), Says:

*Here Today is a surprisingly sophisticated tale of teen suicide and the signs we often miss. Surprising sophisticated especially when one considers the youth of its 16-year-old scribe. The film artfully executes its turn, using film language and convention to trick its audience into missing what its characters were often missing too. Some of the relationships develop in a way that's hard to track and retain empathetic connection with at first, but the ending reframes everything so effectively that this almost becomes part of the point. Its message is clear, considered and well told. We are proud to elevate what it has to say and award the skill with which it says it.*

Jury Prize nominees: Rendezvous by Seth Kozak, Deadly Promises by Joseph Ramos, The Dental Plan by Wayne Diu.

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## Feature Films

The Dental Plan by Wayne Diu – Nomination: Best Feature Film made for over \$10,000, Nomination: Jury Prize: “A comical venture, featuring a pronounced locale for the film’s core central premise.”

Deadly Promises by Joseph Ramos – **Winner: Best Feature Film made for over \$10,000**, Nomination: Jury Prize, Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast, Nomination: Best Cinematography – Ian Brander: “A very well rounded and consistent feature film, boasting an expressive use of lighting and a solid cast of characters (all brought to life by the wonderful cast).”

Kurt Vonnegut’s A Man Without a Country by J.J. Hartling – Nomination: Best Feature Film made for over \$10,000, **Winner: Best Editing**: “A well-orchestrated gathering of interviews, voice-over and archive footage. Documentaries are rarely this *alive* in the indie scene.”

I Do by G Lee Gordon – Nomination – Best Actor: Fabian Lopez: “Gordon’s direction really leans best with the more dramatic realist tone (some of the CGI and styling is excessive and distracting), and the script – at its heart, has a great moody thing to tell... which leads me to this – Fabian Lopez carries the film’s dramatic charisma very very very well.”

Rainfalls by Richard Poche – Nomination: Best Feature made for under \$5,000, Nomination: Best Actress (Erika Smith): “Noir throwback feature with a toothpick gritty performance from Smith.”

The Doors Between Us by Maximillian Aguiar – **Winner: Best Feature made for under \$5,000:** “Comical, colourful (despite the black and white photography) and at times very wonderfully zangy with its dialogue.”

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## Short Films

Fiction About Country C by Xueqing Yin – Nomination: Best Genre Film: “A personal take on the ‘documentary’ genre, one which is full of personality and self-consciousness.”

In The Garden by Xueqing Yin – **Winner: Special Mention – Most Unique Story**, Nomination: Best Genre Film: “A fascinating moment to pick up the camera and reveal a part of the world far removed, and yet very relatable, for the Western audience.”

The Audition by Yidan Tang – **Winner: Best Actress (Lydia Li)**, Best Short made for under \$5,000: “It reminds me of the Kim Ki Duk films of the mid-naughties – which is to say: it is visceral, bold, memorable and biting. It also features a great performance by Li, who balances comical revenge with anger very well.”

Games Night by James Campayne – **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast**, Nomination: Best Screenplay: “With a sort of Polanski *Carnage* vibe, this ensemble of verbal battery is peaked by its final mic drop, and of course the cast that carry the characters to life. All in all very satisfying as shorts go.”

Outsiders by Grace Perry – Nomination -Best Cinematography (Jan Solberg), Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000, Nomination: Best Director (Grace Perry): “A very classic short. A class act.”

Maya by Richard Fysh – Nomination -Best Director, Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000, Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast: “This film has a certain quality which resonates. It’s like an oak in a garden, it is to be looked at and admired.”

Meek Lover Creek by Joshua Gaestel – Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000, Nomination: Best Sound Design, Nomination: Best Original Music: “A fun, bold, wooded adventure!”

Ghetto Bird by Richard O’Hare –**Winner: Best Cinematography (Marcos Shepherd)**, Nomination: Best Director, **Winner: Best Screenplay (Jack Parr, Aron von Andrian)**, Nomination: Best Actor (Callum Kerr): “Bold, beautiful and engaging. This is now ghetto film!”

Rattle by Joe Pettit – Nomination: Best Director, Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast, Nomination: Best Editing: “There’s a feeling here that three key parts are at play in terms of making this a great short: a strong voice and consistent style by Pettit, the collective performances – which are all very realist, underplayed and consciously lead by a strong cast, and lastly – the assembly of this all in the edit.”

Paint by Luca Eiberger – Nomination: Best Cinematography (Matthias Pöltinger): “The film is lit with a great sense of beauty and genre.”

It’s a Wrap! by Brian Unwin – Nomination: Best Actor (Brian Unwin), **Winner: Best Music (Paul Mottram)**: “Whimsy, fun, bright and a magical throwback to silent cinema.”

Art as Catharsis by Amber Bardell – Nomination: Best Genre Film: “The film’s comfortable narrative of documentary-style is greatly elevated by its pushing of the medium and embracing the art it can *present* to us.”

Johan by Craig Lief – Nomination: Best Screenplay: “An intimate and very personable tale is told here.”

Mwanzo Sana by Sychelle Yanda – Nomination: Best Director: “Told with a bold balance of style and minimalist craft.”

Moonboy by Christopher Logan – **Winner: Best Genre Film**: “A fun take on a simple enjoyable love-story.”

Wrong Answer by Lee Dae Han – Nomination: Best Genre Film, **Winner: Best Director**, Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: “Wrong Answer is a wild wonder of a film. I loved the journey, the characters and above all the freak-of-cinema it is.”

One in 50 Million by Luciana Ceccatto Farah – **Special Mention: Best Documentary**: “Intimate, passionate, personable... what more could you ask for when it comes to a documentary?”

#Anniversary by Ellis E. Fowler – **Winner: Best Actor (Ellis E. Fowler)**, Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: “Fowler is great in this, his performance is actually a surprise when one discovers he’s the man behind and in front of the camera.”

Duck Egg Blue by Margaret Kane-Rowe Nomination: Best Actor (Colin Walsh), Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: “Walsh’s performance comes loaded with loads of energy... and the production quality is consistent and impressive throughout.”

In Astratto Non Si È by Andrea Di Salvatore – Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast, Nomination: Best Cinematography: “A grand cast of angry and energetic Italians burst onto a beautifully designed screen... *This is Cinema!*”

Remembrance by Tom White – Nomination: Best Cinematography (Sergio M. Lorenzana), Best Actor (Michael A. LeMelle), Best Director, Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: “Just beautiful. Great performance by its lead, consistent with its tone and style... and shot with such a delicate eye for color, light source and technique.”

Prize Board by Chris Bowers – Nomination: Best Genre Film: “Comical through and through.”

The Painting by Dan Jonsson – Nomination: Best Actress (Kattis Melander), Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000, Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast: “Charming, comedic and as bold as Melander’s performance – which is to say it is bubbly and engaging.”

The Red Fashion House by Liu Zhuo-Xuan – Nomination: Best Actor (Theo Podger): “A strong performance is hidden in this nicely made short film.”

Un autre jour à LA by Marie Tollec – Nomination: Best Actress (Luana Proffit): “Proffit shines in this seaside picture. She has a certain old-Hollywood charm about her performance... or perhaps it is the director’s eye at work here – that being Tollec capturing Proffit in a star-like fashion. Regardless, the combination works.”

The Sound of a Smile by Charlie Hancox – Nomination: Best Actor (Richard Sullivan), Nomination: Best Director: “Just a brilliant character study. Well designed, nicely performed, very polished.”

Love/Sick by John Pope – Nomination: Best Actor: “Pope steals the show here.”

Daddy's Note by Gavin Irvine – Nomination: Best Genre Film: "Daddy's Note is comedy genius."

Acid Rain by Oliver Finlinson – Nomination: Best Director, Nomination: Best Screenplay: "Like with Open Grave, Acid Rain relishes its end of days with great high stakes results."

Ike & Judy by Sarah Christine – Nomination: Best Actor (Larry Golden Sr.), Nomination: Best Actress (Arihya Finley), Nomination: Best Screenplay (Sarah Christine): "Beautiful and tender, some great acting and great characters."

DUSTLICKER by Gina Nemo – Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: "A whole load of fun."

Aftermath by Gergő Elekes and József Gallai – Nomination: Best Short made for under \$5,000: "This could have been made by Blumhouse. Moody, dark and atmospheric indeed!"

About by Phill Dunn – **Winner: Best Short made for under \$5,000**, Nomination: Best Screenplay (Phill Dunn), Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast: "A well-rounded concept brought home by a solid ensemble who play off of each other."

Piss Off (20) by Henry Baker – **Winner: Special Mention: Most NSFW Film**: "Intriguing, unusual, fetish heavy and impressively international."

Starling by Henry Baker – Nomination: Best Genre: "A fun ride of a film."

39. JIAN by Piotr Karter – Nomination: Best Cinematography, Best Actress (Jun Ichikawa): "The image is stunning. Ichikawa is a revelation."

Shame or Honour by Ceri Thomas-Davies – Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast: "An intimate and moving narrative is fleshed by an interesting cast of 'real' performances."

Ada by Steven Kammerer – Nomination: Best Actress (Hanneke Talbot), Best Director, Nomination: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000: "Shot with style, care, and lots of love... you can see the passion in this film."

Mother by Fiorella Pomarino – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Experimental Film**: "Stunningly shot, the lighting from above and the dance is intoxicating."

Vestige by Anthony Thornton-Hopwood – Nomination: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000: "Shot with a grand understanding of light and the architecture for a building, and how this might shape a film."

The Smiler by Gregg Blake – Nomination: Best Cinematography: "This has a great *look* about it. Loving the blues."

The Gentle Art Of Violence by Andrew Przybytkowski – Nomination: Best Cinematography: "Beautiful, very traditional in its style."

Here Today by Erica Arvold and Meredith Grace Dabney – Nomination: Best Short made for \$10,000+: "We love the grandness of this film. The locales really shine."

Lost Treasure of the Valley by Robert Husted – Nomination: Best Short made for \$10,000+: "Comical and stylish with its use of film form."

Rendezvous by Seth Kozak – Nomination: Best Cinematography: "There's a stylish texture and sense of the world through the eyes of this film. Really frosty and fun."

Distance by Jesse Edwards – **Winner: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000** – "A stunning hike into a world of lush color and darkness."

Monster in the Hood by Brandon Ladson – Nomination: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000: “A fun whacky adventure.”

Tumbling Towards Home by Imelda O’Reilly – Nomination: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000: “Sensitive, impressively enhanced by animation.”

TINDERBOX by Rickey Larke – Nomination: Best Actress (Danielle Joelle Carter), Nomination: Best Short made for between \$5,000-\$10,000: “Love the retro ratio and its modern loving. Solid in its delivery.”

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## Webseries

A Throne of Shadows!: Hamlet Or What Though Wilt! by Simon Brandon – Nomination: Best Webseries, **Winner: Best Makeup**, Nomination: Best Ensemble Cast: “It’s like Star Trek mega mashup with the good old William Shakespeare. Wild, weird and quite inventive! Oh – and the cast do bring it their own, be it when talking about postal deliveries or chanting Shakespearian quips.”

Ghost Song by Seaton Kay-Smith – Nomination: Best Animation: “Inventive, fun and a little bit mad. Great use of simple animation.”

**Winner: Demon Doctor by Joshua R. Pangborn:** Nomination: Best Actor (Joshua R. Pangborn), Best Makeup: “Pangborn’s mushroom ride of a series is a fun thing to be had... very retro in its fantasy touches.”

Black On Both Sides by Alonge Hawes – Nomination: Best Webseries: “A well-thought-out endeavour full of charm, character and intimacy.”

A French Chinese Scam Guide by Cong Li – Nomination: Best Cinematography, Nomination: Best Screenplay, Nomination: Best Webseries – “Slick, sexy and broadcast ready.”

Interlocked by Marei Annis – Nomination: Best Webseries: “There are some pacing issues here, but overall it has a very interesting digital design – almost like a ‘formalist’ Jean Luc Godard film (ie Two or Three Things I Know About Her style).”

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## Quarantine Short – Selections & Winner

**Winner: Best Quarantine Short: Safer At Home by Peter Mackie** – “Reminded me of It Follows... A great understanding of genre is present here.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Quarantine Animation** – Shopping Trip by Barry Wilkinson – “Stunning animation with a dark heart.”

(a)holistic by Anna Nikolaeva – “A bold mechanical edit is inflicted on the viewer. It features a great use of visual media!”

Love/Sick by John Pope – “Pope’s performance is quite great... the film though is a domestic headache, but one presented with great love and care... so it just basically rocks!”

TOILETPAPERMAN by Gary Ye – “The images are just wild in this animation film.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Quarantine Horror** – The Dwelling by Harry Tomlin – “Eerie, very nicely lit... probably one of the best quarantine shorts we’ve seen.”

Trapped Cat by Jaime Fidalgo – “Bold with its cating, I mean acting. Comical.”

The Riemann Hypothesis by Dimitrios Karas – “A brainy throwback to the days of Pi and *thoughts* on screen.”

Socially Distant by Austin Beatty – “The grading is just delicious.”

21 or More by Naveen Narayanan – “Narayanan finds a character worthy of our time.”

Luca and Iso by Damian Overton – “There’s something very Godard about this short. Tres good!”

Second Phase by Fabiana Lupo – “We should really award this for best costume changes, rather than best quarantine short.”

Hotel Aloha by Paloma Zhu – “Charming, like an early Disney.”

Waiting by Irene Auch – “The intense performance presented here is very moving.”

“Isolation” by George McCluskey – “Creepy is the word. I’d hate to be isolated with these dolls.”

Dogs Dream by Oliver Stenson-Tynan – “Cutest doggie filled short. Perfect woof timing for the lockdown. Great performances all round, four-legged and human voices.”

Package by Davide Curto – “Editing doesn’t get better than this.”

The Doll by Margina Sisson – “Great use of genre.”

The Last Dance by Carlos Marroco and Adriano Schmidt – “Brilliantly acted.”

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## Scripts

Grain by Benjamin P Keir – Nomination: Best Character Arc: “The beings of Grain go through a hell of a lot, and are well rounded in their presentation – very cinematic archetypes live in these pages.”

N.D.E by Jean Galliano – **Winner: Best Genre Script**: “N.D.E has a great variety of genre codes which could be unlocked and used by a skilled director/DP team with great relish. A script like this deserves the right creative team behind it!”

The Fairy Dust Boutique by Gary Bigelow – Nomination: Best Technique: “A well designed and well polished script, an easy breezy read thanks to its clear motivations and style.”

Loch and Load by Paul McLellan-Young – Nomination: Best Genre Script: “A deep delve into the adventure subgenre. Quite grand in its design.”

Would-Be Hero by Matthew Ford – Nomination: Best Technique: “The script is crisp and sharp with how it explores its genre, character arcs and overall presentation on the page.”

Forests and Thieves by Reiner Beukes: Best Character Arc: “It’s a story we’ve heard before... I think. It’s a fun classic revived with a new voice. Quite great.”

Wounded by Brandon Trask: Best Technique: “Brash, bold and flashy with its confidence (which is well founded).”

No Lies, No More by Tim Northburg: Best Character Arc: “It’s all dialogue, and it lives and dies with these characters’ jabbering... but in the case of Northburg’s script, it’s also where the magic lies.”

Stoney Jack’s Secret London by Jim V Hart and David Long: **Winner: Special Award: Most Original Script:** “Epic, grand and so unique in its concept and design.”

Renaissance Man by Robert Tolz – Nomination: Best Technique: “Nicely designed, and well groomed, this script has a certain class about the way it navigates its plot and relishes its characters.”

Not a Creature was Stirring by Michael Hogan – Nomination: Best Genre **Winner: Best Character Arc:** “A hoot of a journey. Great use of locale. Quite a great bit of fun!”

Dandelion Wishes by Sammy Kistell – Nomination: Best Micro Budget: “Minimalist and grand at the same time... the ensemble of personas really get to shine as a collective too.”

Mirrors at Night by Dean Harakas – Nomination: Best Character Arc: “Dizzy with character atmosphere.”

The Guest House by Luke Anthony Walker – Nomination: Best Technique: “A nicely designed used of script writing, boasts a real understanding of screenplay syntax.”

The Making Of by Helena Rana – Nomination: Best Genre: “Oh what a joy of genre spoils!”

Manadou, The Golden Hands by Manasa S Mane – Nomination: Best Character Arc: “Bold and inviting. The world, the characters... it all comes together in a uniquely non-Western voice.”

Gorger by Paul G Andrews and Christopher Angel – Nomination: Best Genre: “A fun use of genre exists here, and it help elevate the project into a defined *cinematic* world.”

With Friends Like These by Neil Monaghan – **Winner: Best Technique:** “Hefty in its design, but very well written.”

The Blossoms by Matt Evans – **Winner: Best Micro Budget:** “In the context of what the script pulls off within its feature run time, there’s no denying that Evans does a great job in keeping his script quite ‘filmable’ in terms of budget and potential production value.”

Through A Child’s Eyes by Joshua Rahymes – Best Micro Budget: “A short film that should just get shot. Would make for a great casting opportunity in terms of the nurse and doctor team present in this intimate horrorresque script.”

A Figure in Red by Jas Kaur – Best Genre: “Wild and weird. With the right director and/or style, this could be very fun...”

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## Music Videos

- The Way I Used To Know by Mia Zanotti | Directed by Don Swanson – Nomination: Best Music Video Cinematography – “Atmospheric with its visual design, and very consistent. Quite classy, despite the dark pool room setting.”
- LOVELUST by Tale of Two | Directed by Tone Davies -Nomination: Best Music Video Editing – “The montage of words and flashing black and white faces reminds one of the 80’s music video scene, in particular the early stuff of like New Order. It’s an engaging watch thanks to its edit.”
- De Moi + de toi by aplusetdims | Directed by Luka Perkins Petit – **Winner: Best Music Video**, Nomination: Best Music Video Cinematography, Nomination: Best Music Video Editing: “Stylish, *tres* cool and textured with a beautiful eye for detail.”
- Strange Days by Millionaire | Directed by Nick Timmermans and Jaak De Digitale -Nomination: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Music Video Editing**: “A bold Scifi animation that has some fantastic moments, all carefully arranged together.”
- Liquor | Directed by Francesco Calzona – Nomination: Best Music Video, **Winner: Best Music Video Cinematography**: “A clear vision, one which is very engaging and luring, inhabits the world of Liquor.”
- Material Life by Underhill West | Directed by Gabriel Athanasiou – Nomination: Best Music Video Cinematography: “Classy, polished, beautiful.”
- Swimming Upstream by M West | Directed by Caren Messing – Nomination: Best Music Video Editing: “A freeform hippie vibe takes full form in this magic thing.”
- La Vulgu Aux Oiseaux by Clideloup | Directed by La Meute and Christophe Mavroudis – Nomination: Best Music Video Cinematography, Nomination: Best Music Video – “A beautiful fog-filled locale of a wild *trip* no one wants to take in real life.”

# Spring 2020

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## Festival Laurels (all categories)

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### – Jury Prize

**Winner: The Reckoning by Neil Marshall** – “With a definite sense of genre, style and balance – The Reckoning is a film with a keen eye for detail, intimacy and immediacy. Marshall knows what we want as an audience, and knows how to deliver it! Expect to be pushed off of your feet rather than gently spoken to – it’s a film for Gothic film lovers!”

Nominated: The Bull and the Bear by Ryan J. Smith

Nominated: Die at Home by Enrique Bencomo, Enrique Aranguren

Nominated: The Maroon Jumper by Philip Pugh

Nominated: Isolation – A Visual Poem by Matt Blakey

Nominated: Wicket by Harsh Khurana

Nominated: Pink Opaque by Derrick Perry

Nominated: The Haunted Hotel by Jean Campbell Hogg, Joshua Carver, Adam Collier, Deverill, Joshua Dickenson, Amy L Feeley, Jane Gull, Tony Roberts

Nominated: The Secret by Ben Wicks

Nominated: The Visitor by Yves Bernas

Nominated: The Hamlet of Suitcases by Max Albrecht

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### – Feature Films

Sh\*t Saves the World by Troy Hale – Nominated: Best Genre Film, Nominated: Best Cinematography, **Winner: Best Feature Produced between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Hale’s film comes in with a bold style, a strong sense of production value and a very clear sense of perspective. The documentary is far-reaching with its objective: defining the sense of *our* human impact on the environment.”

The Soul of a Happy Day by Lee Dan – Nominated: Best Feature Produced between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “A quirky indie film that carries a great sense of romance.”

Married & Loving It by Ryan McDonald – **Winner: Best Feature Produced for less than \$5,000**, Nominated: Best Director (Ryan McDonald), **Winner: Best Ensemble Cast** – “The

drama is real here. McDoland's film slices through the plain *drama* noise by offering a very intimate film which is largely carried by clam photography and noisy and uncalm performances delivered by a strong-headed cast of husbands and wives. There are moments where this project recalls the early film projects of Neil Labute – it is stark, in your face and uncompromisingly *dramatic*."

The Reckoning by Neil Marshall – **Winner: Best Feature Produced for more than \$10,000, Winner: Best Director, Winner: Best Actress (Charlotte Kirk)**, Nominated: Best Genre Film – "It is obviously quite humbling to have Marshall's entry here. Might I add – we selected it and watched it prior to even registering it was his film... but the proof is really in the pudding – the film is a bold genre piece which is mostly enhanced by, and delivered with, a firm sense of strength through its consistent quality, bold sense of style and a clear sense of direction. A magical performance by Kirk, which leads the project, shows a variety of tones... she is greatly supported by her co-stars, some of whom really go deep into the dirt of the era. The film is strangely intimate, despite its large canvas – and that is perhaps its greatest strength. It finds the whispers amongst the loud shouts, something only a director of Marshall's understanding could muster... he finds the human in the wild."

Pink Opaque by Derrick Perry – **Winner: Best Actor (Elijah Boothe)**, Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Feature Produced for more than \$10,000, Nominated: Best Director – "There is a real sense of indie filmmaking arriving here... I say this as a positive – anyone doubting the value of these films is missing the point: they are smaller than major events, but they have a quality that is unique to them, a strong sense of identity and niche. Boothe helps hone the film's cores together – he's an anchor which is sensitive, never overdramatic and 'attention-seeking'... above all, it is memorable. The photography is also quite enhancing in here, though the core foundation is what helps it to exist – a solid script and a clear sense of direction. All in all – it deserves your eyeballs."

The Haunted Hotel by Jean Campbell Hogg, Joshua Carver, Adam Collier, Deverill, Joshua Dickinson, Amy L Feeley, Jane Gull, Tony Roberts – Nominated: Best Film produced for more than \$10,000, **Winner: Special Mention: Best Alliance of Filmmakers and Actors, Winner: Best Cinematography, Winner: Best Music**, Nominated: Best Actor (Joshua Dickinson), Nominated: Best Actor (Andrew Hollingworth) – "Loaded with loads of William Castle throwback style, The Haunted Hotel is a wonderful set piece... but, it really is more than that. The collective team of filmmakers and actors behind this era-shifting horror event is the real showstopper – it isn't like your average anthology, in that – here, unlike in others, the style is consistent, the quality is consistent, and the performances, photography and direction are always on target. Dickinson and Hollingworth stand out a little as small scene stealers, but all in all – this is a very rewarding watch; one I personally suspect will be just as enjoyable in ten years as it is today – a rare compliment for indie films!"

The Meadows by Luke Allen – Nominated: Best Screenplay, Nominated: Best Actor (Juan Carceres) – "The greatest strength of this project is its concept – it isn't exactly an original one... there's also Carceres, who tries as often as he can to ground the material, often acting with a very 'direct' manner. The actual writing is quite great, but the real hiccup though is the delivery... some of the acting and filming style lets the core content down – it never really tries to be a flat out comedy or a flat out drama, and it isn't convincing at times. Overall it is enjoyable though, and a great starting point... perhaps the next feature could be a little *harder* than say this *soft* presentation... more follow-through by the entire team would bring about a stronger reward."

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## – Short Films

Looking for Love by Ajuan Isaac-George – Nominated: Best Screenplay – “The film’s core is quite hearty – there’s character, a sense of locale and time and space... in a sense, it is a very mature piece.”

Untouchability by Haresh Narayanan – Nominated: Best Director – “The film comes with a fantastic sound... but its understanding of genre is the most acute here: it knows when to be comedic, dramatic and so on... it features a variety of solid tones... despite its small run time.”

The Secret by Ben Wicks – **Winner: Best Short Film produced for more than \$10,000**, Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Cinematography – “The short is too long to really be a short, and too short to be a feature... it drifts in that strange middle space, like a special TV event... but it is actually much more than that. It is a beautiful historical piece that isn’t of TV quality, but rather that of the big screen. Bravo to all involved. It is simply delicious!”

No Traveller Returns by Ben Lingham – Nominated: Best Short film produced for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Jordan Tweddle) – “The short has a great look about it... but the real highlight is the ease which Tweddle commands the space. There’s a sense of breathlessness in this short, something tangible and real.”

The Audition by Joe Benedetto – Nominated: Best Short film produced for less than \$5,000 – “The stage which this film contains is a stage like reality – everything is on stilts and vibrantly *dramatic*. It is a great use of budget, and quite impressive.”

The Visitor by Yves Bernas – Nominated: Best Short film produced between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “The film is a delicate period piece. It is epic, but also concise and well-timed. Quite brilliant.”

Homeless Sam & Sally – The Movie by Tyrone Evans Clark – Nominated: Best Genre – “The grade is a mess, which is a real shame... but overall this film is a fantastic example of what one can do with a genre and a heap of originality.”

Across the Room by Melinda Hensley – Nominated: Best Short film produced between \$5,000-\$10,000, Best Ensemble Cast – “This short film really shows off the impact of a solid foursome.”

Fast Food by Sascha Agenor – Nominated: Best Short film made for less than \$5,000, Best Music: Weymouth- The Macrobats – “A really solid young entry. The cast, mood and visuals really bring a great sense of freedom to the project. The music is also a bit of a stage setter – it holds you in this space.”

The Lioness by Richard Poche – Nominated: Best Director – “The style is raw. The plot is retro, like an exploitation film... and the finish is glamorous. It’s a smart combination of flavours.”

Masc by Taylor Olson – Nominated: Best Actor (Taylor Olson) – “The short is a sort of political debate... but in truth, the debate isn’t as interesting as the actual lead’s delivery. The performance is key here, and Olson does a great job in bringing some depth to what is a statement film.”

The Hamlet of Suitcases by Max Albrecht – Nominated: Best Music, Nominated: Best Short film made for less than \$5,000, Nominated: Best Actor (Max Albrecht) – “The photography is a bit of a trip up... it doesn’t live up to the film’s cohesive style of retro beauty. But it is, through and through, a delight.”

Spanish Lessons by Katie Kamala Haley – **Winner: Best Short film produced between \$5,000-\$10,000** – “Reminiscent of The Tango Lessons by Sally Potter, this project is a great example of how one can blend human tales of discovery with a locale, a local culture and so on.”

Scrap On by Simon Jefferson – Nominated: Best Short film produced between \$5,000-\$10,000 – “The film comes with a solid sense of perspective, one which is rarely explored successfully in smaller films.”

All Over Again by Joseph McGovern – Nominated: Best Short Film produced for more than \$10,000 – “A fantastically intimate film with a real drive behind it – some great performances here, and a keen eye for texture and personality.”

Beyond the Wall by Azer Agalarov – Nominated: Best Editing – “The film carries a sense of civilisation and time through its editorial design. Very precise, but also fluid and creative.”

Don’t Smoke In Bed by Dritan Kastrati – **Winner: Special Mention: Best Art Direction** – “The film’s design, which is artful and delicate, is quite beautifully done and precise. The film is unique thanks to its fabric.”

Michael by Max Conran – **Winner: Best Editing** – “The film’s overall handling of the idea of the personal is quite unique and memorable. How it is cut of course shapes this.”

Sam by Sam Draper – Nominated: Best Short film made for less than \$5,000 – “A great starter short film.”

Last Looks by Renee J Vaca – Nominated: Best Actress (Laura Allen) – “Allen just steals the show... or perhaps, well – the show is hers to steal. Whatever... it is a great performance, and kudos to Vaca for capturing it and all of its sensitivity.”

Bulldog by Kieran Stringfellow – Nominated: Best Actor (Louis Brogan), Nominated: Best Director – “The film is a gut punch. Brilliant!”

Hero by Tim White – **Winner: Best Short film produced for less than \$5,000** – “Fantastic use of budget. It has a really great look, one which goes far beyond its budget limitations.”

Super 180s by Joshua Kellerman – Nominated: Best Director, Nominated: Best Actor (Galen Molk), **Winner: Best Screenplay** – “If this had been a different season, with fewer entries, Kellerman would have nabbed more. It is quite a great minimalist short.”

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– Webseries

**Winner: The Gliwensbourg Chronicles** – “Beautifully made. It has a real craftsman element to it – the image is golden, and the style is consistent, almost ‘top-end’ TV quality, like AMC’s *Halt and Catch Fire* or Hulu’s *The Great*... there’s a real sense of period here, texture and tone.”

Nominees:

The Anthony Show – “Well produced, energetically delivered and quite a fun comedic outing – very *self-aware*, which is a great element for this project.”

The Jersey Connection – “The show’s style and tone would suit a film better... it is quite great though, the acting is top-notch and the characters are quite rich and deeply sown into the shows spirit.”

Tales of Bacon – “This medieval romp is just a pure delight. Recalls Pasolini’s Life Trilogy, only in a sort of *less* art house venture. Great design for a web series.”

Red Velvet Revolution – “The sense of genre and the underlying dangers of digital *life* brings a certain style and class to this project which makes it a fairly unique and bold webseries.”

– Quarantine Short

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – The Second Time I Got To Know My Dog by Kyle Scoble – “Caring and loveable. All pets deserve this dedication!”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – Loopy by Max Cianci, Anthony Peduzzi – “A simple concept presented here in a fashion that doesn’t derail its artfulness. Satisfying and fresh.”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – The Self Tape by Alex Feldman – “It is hard to be a fan of ‘actor’ shorts, as there’s just so many of them... but this one really does find a new way to do its thing. Bravo!”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – A Final Goodbye by Freddie Hill – “The performances here are punchy, and the presentation is unusual in way. Having seen many lockdown shorts, this one is a dish that you don’t (but actually really do) want to actually get served during isolation.”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – Die at Home by Enrique Bencomo, Enrique Aranguren – “The strange nature of this short is its actual design. What starts as a character vehicle becomes quite a complex horror vehicle in a philosophical nature. Few lockdown shorts pull off this sort of U-Turn successfully.” | Nominated: Best Actress (Maria Pia Sanz) – “A moving performance is given here. Maria delves deep into a mental state that we have all felt but does so in a subtle way. It is calculated and very well performed.”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – Vessels by Maria Cury – “The retro flavour, the texture – it is DELICIOUS!”

**Winner: Best Quarantine Film – The Bull and the Bear by Ryan J. Smith** – “This masterful vehicle of layered performances and sharp awareness for the nature of remediation is just solid. PS – more noms for this short to follow!” | Nominated: Best Director – Ryan J. Smith – “Smith finds a way with which to elevate the self-tape presentation into a very threatening and impressive triple performance.” | Nominated: Best Actor (Mitchell Fisher) – “The performances here are so solid, we struggled to pinpoint if it was a single actor or multiple performers doing the different parts... This should really serve as the greatest compliment.”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – Hikikovid by Alessio Aiello – “This might be one of the best-framed lockdown shorts that focuses on the *living* process of lockdown life.”

Nominated: Best Quarantine Film – A Case During Confinement by Laurent Ardoit, Stephane Duprat – “This noir effort cuts through a lot of the noise when it comes to lockdown entries thanks to its unique use of genre and character. It is rather charming.”

Nominated: Best Genre Film – Earthlings by Ricardo Ripa – “Bizarre and rather rewarding in its science-fiction form.”

Nominated: Best Genre Film – Stay Home, Stay Safe – “A whacky fun animation that really capitalises on the humour of lockdown.”

Nominated: Best Black and White Cinematography – “A great use of contrast and the non-colour variety of filmic imagery.”

Nominated: Best Screenplay – Black Lives Matter – “The script is actually more than a political statement. It is ultimately a reflection of ethics, both those haunting our era but also those of the digital means of communication and the impact of our role as a complicit or active ‘witness’.”

Nominated: Best Black and White Cinematography – Ijmagination – “Designing shots without colour is often a complex event, especially when trying to avoid making the image dull and drained. Imagination hits hard with its story thanks to its well-established image.”

Nominated: Best Actress (Jilian Vitko) – 14 Days – “The comedy and tragedy of this piece are all inhabited by a single performer... and it is well worth a watch!”

Nominated: Best Cinematography – Cage – “The photography featured in this lock-down short is not limited to its locale... despite being limited to a particular space. It has a strong understanding of cinematic images and allows these to appear despite the restrictions of being locked in. Quite marvellous.”

Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – The Maroon Jumper – “The pack of cards presented here – a group of friends all videoing each other – is one of the most comedic runs we’ve seen during this lockdown storytelling moment. The energy of these performers doesn’t drop, and one has to actually wonder if they all taped it together or apart.”

Nominated: Best Editing (Tracy Jenkins) – Reminders – “The combination of found footage, the images, the dance... it is the edit here which shines the most.”

Nominated: Best Editing – Isolesque – “The style of this short, which is mostly a kind of Maya Deren exercise, is greatly enhanced by contemporary digital editing. There is great skill here, most evident in the slicing of sequences.”

Nominated: Best Genre Film – A Mysterious Ritual of the Sun – “The sci fi vibes here are a bit Jim Jarmusch by way of Coffee and Cigarettes. It is minimal, but also impactful... as well as consistently entertaining.”

Nominated: Best Actor (Matt Blakey) – Isolation – A Visual Poem – “Blakey gets intimate in this short. Unlike most isolation projects, we get a real sense of this short film featuring a *being* that lives and breathes beyond the confines of lockdown life.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Grading (Jesse Will Newman) – The Walker – “Strange tones illuminate in this heavily tinted project.”**

Nominated: Best Actor (Archie Brown), Best Genre Film, Best Director (Gabriel Brown) – No Escape – “Though this is a very ‘practical’ horror, the Browns bring a certain class to the simple concept – Archie performs with a great level of confidence, and this is brilliantly matched by Gabriel’s understanding of genre and tone.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Combination of VFX and Photography – Abyss by Max Roach – “Roach proves that combining Visual Effects with lockdown shooting is a smart way of elevating the creativity of the film.”**

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Child Actor (Sam Sellars) – “Sam’s performance might be short, but it is just spot on.”**

Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast – The Reunion – “The cast here has a great sense of performance and team spirit. It is one of the rare video chat shorts from the lockdown time that’s been quite fun to watch.”

Nominated: Best Writing (Jonathan Beckett) – Claustrophobic Love – “Beckett keeps it simple, and on point... and it is great for those things.”

Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast: Closed Until Further Notice – “The cast, which feels quite intimate despite its robust nature, is always on point and committed. Quite great for that lockdown creative vibes!”

Nominated: Best Genre: Zoom and Gloom – “The film’s genre is present in every breath. It is quite refreshing, and almost like retro in a way... despite its very modern digital style.”

Nominated: Best Editing: Y&I Go Outside – “The synching of the two clips is quite impressive.”

**Winner: Special Mention – Best Style: Stay – “Bold. Eye-popping. Beautiful.”**

Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast: Vitamin D – “Great energy here. The cast gives it their all.”

Nominated: Best Genre: The Quarantine Rag – “Amusing, light and a solid entry from a young filmmaker.”

Nominated: Best Ensemble Cast: Wicket – “An impressive poetic sports film, unrestricted by the lockdown restrictions.”

Nominated: Best Screenplay: CATVID-19 – “Bonkers in the best of ways. Meow!”

Nominated: Best Screenplay: Agora – “Krister Presson’s subject matter is quite brilliantly chosen. This isn’t your average run of the mill short film, and the screenplay is at the forefront of that design.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Faux Godard Film – Dear Quarantine – “This film’s essay design, with the Godard like the construction of place and people being voices and objects, is quite brilliant.”**

Nominated: Best Director: Paradox – “Cowks brings his own madness to the project – there is a central flare to the design of the film that makes it entirely *his* and *unique*.”

**Winner: Best Black and White Photography: Schism – “The awareness of the image – the quality of black and white design in terms of lighting and texture, is quite fantastic.”**

Nominated: Best Actor (Hollis Epstein): Baby Zoomers – “Epstein is comical – he brings what is best about the project to the forefront of our eyes thanks to his acting as *the loose kid*.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Mixed Media – Day 27 – “Strange meshes always make for interesting cinematic ventures.”**

Nominated: Best Genre: It’s Here – “A rare genre outing that is both self-aware and nuanced.”

Nominated: Best Cinematography: 5 Minutes – “The use of colour is quite punchy, and unique when compared to other lockdown projects.”

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Props: Figurine It Out – “A wonderful new form of story is grown here... the miniatures take over, almost in a Joe Dante style!”**

Nominated: Best Screenplay: The Anthony Show – “Written with a certain unique zing that really does make the project shine.”

Nominated: Best Screenplay: Parrot – “A very *real* short. This is a domestic calculation. Precise. Bold. Experimental.”

Nominated: Best Cinematography: Seedling – “A series of beautifully designed images are presented here. The sense of space, nature and our interaction with it really comes through thanks to the film’s use of image-based storytelling.”

Nominated: Best Music: The New Normal – “Music here is used in the best way – a new voice in the story, rather than say wallpaper on the wall.”

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– Music Video

#### Best Music Video

**Winner: Out of Nothing by Karolis Andriulis – “In an unusual turn with indie music videos – the attitude in the song actually matches the one in the visual. Reminiscent of The Knife’s Pass This On music video, Out of Nothing blasts the dust off of the gym setting in a classy neon strut. Quite perfect in every way a music video can be!”**

I Don’t Want To Go Out – Deco by Bobby Eccles – “Bubbly, energetic, fun... and kinda retro in a 00’s style.”

Countryman by Xuefei Chi – “The montage of black and quite and infographics is quite punching and striking.”

#### Best Editing

**Winner: Countryman by Xuefei Chi – “The splicing of collage is just great!”**

Ballad of a Fish by Aijian Olivia Chen – “The tying together of animation here is quite fluid.”

#### Best Cinematography

**Winner: Stay Close To Me – Minx by William Sossai – “A neon delight.”**

Undertow by J.B. Lawrence – “The locale is *best* captured here... it becomes part of the story.”

I Don’t Want To Go Out – Deco by Talia Foxworthy-Bowers – “The sense of ‘the show must go on’ really holds here. The music video has a dance routine that really capitalises on the presence of a floating camera and colour and smoothness.”

**Special Mention – Best Comedy Music Number – Two Arms Apart by Renee Jonas – “Hilarious, and well-acted in its ‘self-aware comical’ style.”**

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## – Script Competition

At the Mercy of Faith by Samuel Taylor – Nominated: Best Technique – “Clearly written with class and an eye for detail.”

The Gifthorse by Gary Bigelow – Nominated: Best Character Arc – “Although a little on the ‘long’ side of short films, and well – not long enough to be a feature... Bigelow’s characters have a wonderful charm and journey in the ways of (their) *life*.”

Beyond Deception by Gary Bigelow – Nominated: Best Micro-Budget Script – “Though it is set in one of those ‘isolated’ locations (for which, some producers this will be a hard sell), the overall production is quite well crafted in terms of being cost-effective and practically ready for filming.”

The Devil’s Driver by Steven Gurney – Nominated: Best Genre Script, Best Character Arc – “It has that *brilliant* blend of self-aware genre and post-modernism. I like it so much, there’s a slight temptation to reach out to Mr Gurney and see if he needs a director.”

The Cross Up by Meka Butler – Nominated: Best Technique – “Butler’s writing is sharp, well-tuned and perfectly on target.”

**The Night We Met by Rhys Freeman – Winner: Best Genre Script – “This TV script just pops right off the page with a ‘ready to greenlight’ vibe.”**

Recruited by Thomas Melhuish – Nominated: Best Character Arc – “Some of the dialogue by the supporting cast is at times a little cliché, but overall – the Daniel goes on, and the overall tone the character, provides a great space with which a lead actor could really delve in and have fun.”

**Winter Bird by Stephen Delos Treacy – Winner: Best Technique – “With its complex narrative design of time hopes and solid dialogue, Treacy’s script shines as a well-crafted object that has clearly had years of work put into its development.”**

No Accounting for Taste by Eileen Wilson – Winner: Best Micro-Budget Script – “If the prison was to be ‘fake’, in terms of not an actual location... this is one of the most cost-effective little set-piece scripts we’ve ever seen.”

Clap! by Barbara Vonau – Nominated: Best Genre Script – “Getting that dramedy tone, which is very popular in the US TV scene at the moment (ie HBO’s Looking, Girls, Insecure etc.) is quite hard... and Vonau does quite a good job in hitting that mark with her set of characters.”

They Don’t Leave by Caz McGovern – Nominated: Best Genre Script – “Small, intimate, sharp... this horror is on point for some viral spread online.”

**How ‘Bout a Cup of Tea by Jan Miller Corran – Winner: Special Mention – Best Lockdown Script – “Well, we live in strange times... don’t we? – Corran capitalises on this in the best way possible.”**

The Family by Kyle Crosby, Max Giorgi – Nominated: Best Character Arc – “The ensemble really goes on the first step of what is a long journey ahead of them... this could make for a great webseries.”

**ReView by Jonathan Zarantonello – Winner: Best Character Arc – “A baffling, unusual concept. Almost like a Faulkner novel, only set in a digital performance space that’s very post-modern and sexual.”**

Blue Spice Queen by Dean Harakas – Nominated: Best Technique – “The dialogue is wonderfully pulpy!”

The Prey by Shaan I Memon, Kharl Louis-Jean – Nominated: Best Genre Script – “Though I think it would make for a better feature than this TV Script... The Prey is quite great, and has a strong feeling for its tone.”

Buried Truths by Jan Miller Corran, Adam Huss – Nominated: Best Character Arc – “We really need a dialogue award now. This has a great touch for how people talk. Actors would love it. Bravo!”

Boogeyman by Delraj Takher – Nominated: Best Genre Script – “Boogeyman is an obvious genre piece. It has that ‘classical’ feeling about its style... the edits from one scene to the next, often with brash characters, is quite retro and fun.”

Love Like The 80's by Jedediah Parker, Christan Van Slyke – Nominated: Best Character Arc – “There is a sense of real personas in the scenes here. They carry the project.”

I Don't Know by Arthur Tiersky – Nominated: Best Technique – “A little dense in terms of dialogue pace at times, but overall the style of the craft is great. The script is a very ‘clean’ (and clear) read.”

Please note: As we are working with mostly Covid-19 related entries, we have adapted some of our nomination categories, as well as expanded the qualifications for each. This is unique for this particular season.

# Autumn 2020

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**AUTUMN 2020 | [Festival Laurels](#)** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

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Jury Competition:

- Jury Prize

**Winner: Rainbow in the Dark by Ben Mosca – “Barking madness. We love this! Everyone go watch this short film now!!!”**

Nominees: In Memoriam by Dimitrios Karas – “The darkness of this film is great.”, Family by Asena Cakir – “A rich epic family adventure. There’s something very community-oriented in this film.”, Bodies in the Road by Kevin Rainey – “This film comes with a great feeling of emotional development. It also sounds and looks great.”

**Special Jury Prize: Best Actor and Director pairing – Jamie Muscato (Actor) and Paul Andrew Kimball (Director) – “There is a certain class in this project which indie films rarely have. The duo here are fully invested in the project, and it translates very well to the screen. This film is also beautifully shot, and well lead by Muscato’s performance and Kimball’s directorial delivery (ie cinematic language). All in all a very satisfying indie film.”**

**Special Jury Prize: Best Production Quality – In Love With Alley Barker by Chris and Robert Smellin “The film’s overall quality is simply undeniable. This film is well shot, well-acted and simply put – an ace delivery.”**

**Special Jury Prize: Best Art Direction – Deus Otiosus by Mat Braddy – “The film’s setting, the detail to how it is shot, and the grand period piece elements are nothing shy of a godly treat!”**

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Main Categories:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Papugi by Piers Culpan**

**[Festival Director](#) says:**

*“Culpan’s film makes use of every penny spent on it. It is clear that the whole endeavor is greatly loved and well-polished... despite some shaky camera work, the entire project is quite loveable and highly recommended to all.”*

Seduction by Bowen Li – “The film’s scale and style is quite amazing for its budget size.”, A Logical Sale by Omar Salhi – “The mechanisms of cinema find some solid routes in this film’s own architectural design. It is a large and strong building.”, Voices by Frank Zotter, Shaz Mohsin – “The philosophical throwback to time jumping affairs is a wild ride here... the robust nature of the production goes a long way to help ensure it carries an ‘enhanced’ cinematic feeling.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

#### **Winner: Waves by Gary Centrone**

Festival Director says:

*“Moving and delicate, and beautifully mounted... this film understands its characters’ needs (the actors are top draw quality here), and its cinematic power... the locale, often blue and sandy, is a moving backdrop to the melodrama... reminiscent of Douglas Sirk.”*

Nominees: The Wolf Delivers by Thomas Crouser Jr – “This is a tight, slick, teeth gnawing feast of a short!”, Outlander by ZHU Weijie – “Zhu should just make a feature film. Her work is a cinematic pure delight.”, Bureaucracy by Antonio Candalice – “The sense of scale and world-building elements is just great.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

#### **Winner: Uncle Mike by Neil Ahwan**

Festival Director says:

*“David Omordia and Kevin Golding give incredible performances in this beautifully shot delicate picture. Just perfection really.”*

Nominees: Kesi by Daniel Maggio – “Such a fun adventure.”, Mary Jane and the Marvelous Menacing Tabs by Jasmine Siddall – “Comedic, timely, even a little romantic (dare I say)... this short offers more than your average.”, The Sleepless by Kami Sadraei – “Oh what a delightful take on a particular genre archetype. Eric Roberts helps cement the classy vibe already well established by the black and white style. So great. Thank-you-more-please!”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

#### **Winner: Shoestring Spectacle by Jonathan Gill**

Festival Director says:

*“Though laboured at times, mainly as it feels like a string of random chapters... this mini-documentary really captures the heart and soul of independent film production – and perhaps the potential all of these activities have in forming communities...”*

Nominees: The Star of Light Cone by Mengxin He – “This experimental effort goes to great lengths to find a variety of digital media with which to tell its story. It is, thanks to this mode of operation, an interesting exercise in the ‘new’ digital cinematic language.”

- Best Feature Film made between \$5,000-\$10,000

#### **Winner: Place and Time by Ben Myers**

Festival Director says:

*“Kudus is due to the entire team here: cast and crew – the coming together of this plot, in a particular time and place (pun not intended, sorry guys) is really quite special. It is proof that, with the right planning, cinema still has a frontier which remains largely unexplored: it is the ‘live’ cinema format Francis Ford Coppola has been trying to make... it is the live-esque film that simply flows out, captured and encapsulated in the moving image format. Needless to say this is a film worth any indie film viewers attention, and Myers is a filmmaker we should all be excited about.”*

Nominees: Am Rande der Zeiten by Jörg Reichlin – “For some particular reason this reminds me of the provincial films of France, in particular the ones from the 90’s.... These period piece films, or films set in the countryside, often focussed on a sort of vagabond traveller who encountered his environment in various scenarios... all in all – it is charming.”, Paracide by Paul Heron – “Joe Davis is wonderfully funny. This is a wacky fun film – like something 1990’s Greg Araki could have come up with.”,

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Not enough entries for this category to go ahead.

- Best Web series

No entrants to this category.

- Best Quarantine Short Film

**Winner: Minor Provocations by Joshua Shi – “A sense of isolation and freedom is brilliantly presented here. It’s grand and intimate.”**

Nominees: The Last Oak by Annabel Vine – “Has a strong sense of genre, bold cinematography and solid performances. Quite great for its super-short form.”, Boxes by Klara Kaliger – “A sense of genre flavours this project, something most lockdown projects lack.”, Welcome to University by – “The message is loud and clear – and the delivery is pitch-perfect.”

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Other categories:

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Danylo Myron in Papugi – “Myron really pushes himself in every direction the role requires. It is refreshing to see such a bold performance in what is (for the most part) a simple short film.”**

Nominees: Kostas Theodosiadis in – “Moving, and grand... This film is greatly grounded by its lead performer. Bravo!”, actor in The Playdate, Will Goodwin in Welcome to University – “Goodwin does a great job here... but let’s not forget the real observation: he’d make a great lead in a feature film.”, Jean-Baptiste Desban in Inside My Mind – “In this supporting role, Desban finds space to claim as his own – and it adds to the film, rather than acts as a filler.”, Daniel Plumb in Frank – “Plumb’s delivery is great. He’s got a great screen presence, both for his intense anger and his sexual frustration. What’s on offer here is a rare depth that short films practically never have.”

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Laura Jane Turner in In Love With Ally Barker – “With its bold actor delivery – a performance which dominates most of the film’s runtime and is subtle and collected, Turner delivers what this feature needs: a character at the centre and in control of our emotional buy-in to the film’s world and scenario.”**

Nominees: Anita Wittenberg in Breathing Easy – “Wittenberg delivers a moving and delicate performance.”, Rebecca Giacobazzi in Hooked – “Giacobazzi carries the film with a rather ‘intense’ phone crazed performance. It is, however, her strong energy, and the very immediate nature of her character, that allows for her skills as an actress to shine.”, Sakntala Ramanee in Jakinta – “Ramanee is comedic and knows how to string the audience along with her own sense of timing.”,

- Best Ensemble Cast of the season

**Winner: The Cast of Dead Or Die – “The cast of Dead or Die are all well-rounded performers. It is a really brilliant project thanks to its players – they all seem to be delivering pitch-perfect moments for the camera.”**

Nominees: The Cast of Family – “The entire team here seems to be on point and trying their best to bring the ‘family’ to life. It is a great effort from all of the cast/family members.”, The Duo of Stuck – “The film’s greatest strength is the couple featured in this short.”, The Cast of Upheaval – “The trio at hand here are all having a great amount of fun... and they play their parts in the best way possible.”, The Cast of Bodies – “”, The cast of This Time Next Week – “Though the video conference genre is over-saturated at this point, this cast is all on point and quite great.”

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Paul Richards’ score of Voices – “Richards goes to great lengths to ensure that the film sounds as if it is a million bucks.”**

Nominees: The score of Mary Jane and the Marvelous Menacing Tabs by Eliya Gwetta – “Complimentary, soothing... the sonic elements of Mary Jane are just perfectly on point.”, The score of The Eve by Sandro Di Stefano – “Robust and cinematic, Stefano’s score elevates and accommodates the film in many great ways... think of it as the cherry on top of a lovely desert.”

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: Konstantinos Athanasopoulos and Tassos Papadiotis’s photography of To Kill a Lie – “Shot with a stunning sense of style and bold understanding of light. Quite great.”**

Nominees: Burak Oguz Saguner’s photography of A Strange Season- “Stunningly shot” and Oscar Axel Thorborg’s photography of Self Isolation – “Very well shot. Some great awareness for the power of light and focus.”

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: Thomas Crouser Jr’s editing of The Wolf Delivers – “Dark, moody, atmospheric... all of these things are heightened by the skillful edit of Wof.”**

Nominees: Scott Johnson’s editing of Follow Leader – “This endless montage finds some resonance through its careful use of colour and sound.”, Andrea Nagy’s editing of Katalinka 16 – “Nagy’s editing allows the pacing and colliding narratives and images to impact the audience in the perfect way.”

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: Make No Sound by Chris Miller – “The film understands its genre, and knows how to kick it into 6th gear when it needs to.”**

Nominees: Learning Optimism by Umberto Sala – “The documentary genre is used in the most intimate and character way possible... there’s a real sense of place, narrator and subject. It’s great!”, Loner (Eigenbrötler) by Antonio Universi – “The individual and the locale come into full light here thanks to the documentary genre and its well-handled approach.”, Upheaval by Cameron Bowyer – “The film’s dip into horror is a great delight.”, The Winter by – “A stunning animation.”,

- Special Mention

**Winner: Best Art Direction – Super Roommates by Ivy Miller – “The delicate world presented in this film has been built with a great sense of style and purpose.”**

**Winner: VFX and Animation – The Choice by Aneek Ray – “Impressive visuals presented in a poetic way are present here.”**

**Winner: Historical Subject – CHAMP 5 by Paul Gatto, David Jester and Kathleen Strouse – “In this unusual tale of the past, one finds a fascinating individual, interesting use of archive footage and a great understand for a historical subject which is otherwise unheard of outside of the film’s main locale.”**

**Winner: Best Documentary: The Truth About the Use of Relaxers in Nigeria by Seun Okimi – “A unique documentary with a bold sense of perspective.”**

**Winner: Special Mention: Best Animation: “Stunning from start to end.”**

Music Video Competition:

- Best Music Video

**Winner: Modern Day Cathedral by Philos Maurice Klein – “This music video’s scenes, which are built in a dream world, are just nothing shy of beautiful.”**

Nominees: New Youth by Junseok Eom – “There is a great atmospheric sense of place in this music video – the lighting, the locale... the textures of these different elements are very specific and memorable.”, Listen to this If by Will Hearle – “Intoxicating it is... the mixture of its retro VHS buzz look, bold performance and a strong understanding of camp comedy is just utter gold.”, Holiday by Deric Gochenauer – “The sense of a character, setting and the social mixture is greatly enhancing for this video.”, Something New by Yuchi Tian – “This fable is perfectly framed within the sandy destination video.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: Listen to this If by Will Hearle – “Through digital effects, Hearle’s video encapsulates video genius, skips a beat and keeps the rush going.”**

Nominee: Insomniac by Cristian Balint – “The images are compelling... but it is really the edit that makes this music video top notch. There’s a sense that each cut is precise and deliberate.”,

- Best Cinematography

**Winner: At the Limit of Feelings by Liudmila Komrakova – “Nothing shy of stunning.”**

Nominees: Ghosted by Michelle Rose – “The video has a great use of colour, which greatly elevates the video’s unique look.”, Gothic Blues by Cody Myers and Chris Smucker – “Though the actual image itself could be better... the unique of each image, and the care in its creation (which includes some strange editing visual effects) makes this video memorable and unique.”, Something New by Yuchi Tian – “Beautifully shot, Something New has a tale to tell with the right canvas.”

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Script Competition:

One Way Out by Alyxandrya Prynce – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “A dark animal hides in these pages. Very nicely presented.”

The Miracle of Isabella Herrera by Jomo Merritt – Nominated: Best Technique: “The writing is crisp and bold in its tone.”

Ringside by Eileen Wilson – Nominated: Best Micro-Budget Script: “Just go and get this shot!”

Frankenstein’s Monsters by Kenny Colliver – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “Such a blast of fun.”

We’re Fine by Alicia Ocana – Nominated: Best Micro-Budget Short, Nominated: Best Character Arc: “This short has a great feeling of being camera ready. There’s a solid character flavouring too.”

Torrey Canyon by Graeme Keeton – Nominated: Best Technique: “The script has a solid polish to its delivery.”

Murder by Daniel Catfish Russ – **Winner: Best Genre Script:** “Just the concept alone is barking mad and funny and creepy.”

Whiteface by Karen Gamba – **Winner: Best Character Arc:** “Bold. Impressively done.”

Refractions by Paula Rossman – Nominated: Best Character Arc: “There’s a sense of doom here that is unique to this character’s perspective and endurance.”

Fatal Ambition by Angel Connell – Nominated: Best Technique: “Shy of the copy signatures on this draft, this is a solid and enjoyable presentation of script and script syntax.”

Something Like That by AJ Maryn – Nominated: Best Character Arc, **Special Mention: Best New Writer:** “This script feels like a concept we’ve seen before, but it finds a way of becoming fresh thanks to its unique take on the familiar content. Long story short – it’s great.”

So Much I by AJ Maryn – Nominated: Best Character Arc: “The main order of business is a human being in a particular mental space that we must endure with them. It’s solid writing – and the type that will definitely make for great feature scriptwriting.”

Permission by Joe Capucini – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “The concept has a unique way of pushing genre and genre filmmaking to the front of our minds.”

Wrongfully Convicted by John Wolfe – Nominated: Best Micro-Budget Script: “In the world of web series, this is a smart and efficient delivery on the page.”

Finding Your True Self by Gabriel Brown – Nominated: Best Technique: “The only issue here really is the choice of subject, it feels very ‘coming of age’, but in a kind of outdated way... but regardless of that concept level, the script is very appetising with its writing style. There’s a solid writer here who understands the screen.”

Psyched! by Anca Vaida – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “Comical and on point.”

The Strange Affair of the Elevator by Katy Regnery – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “It has a solid potential for one of those Hallmark scripts. Quite fun.”

The Fallout by Dominic Flanagan – **Winner: Best Micro-Budget Script**: “It knows where the cost-saving skills are to be had. It’s a solid Zombie chewable film!”

Stuck by Vanessa Bailey – Nominated: Best Technique: “The concept is well used by now... heck, we’ve even had M. Night do a whole *stuck in the life with the devil* delivery... but there’s no denying the charm that Bailey brings to each of her projects, so – stuck in a lift or not... this is still one of those ‘must-see’ scripts that just should get shot asap.”

Crispr Divide by Jarett Leger – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “Punchy concept. Solid stuff. Reminds us of Martin Amis’ one short story collection.”

Solus by Vedansh Bharadwaj – Nominated: Best Technique: “The sense of the digital finds a way of communicating the story in a modern way.”

Speaking of Girls by Dominic Flewitt – **Winner: Best Technique**: “This is a unique take and a solid exploration of a rather topical subject, but done so in a less than topical way – it is cinematic, and engaging... it would, long story short, make for a great short film... and we hope we can see it one day!”

Stronger When She’s Broken by SherLann D. Moore – Nominated: Best Technique: “This is a lengthy endeavour, and it has a consisted quality to its writing that keeps it fresh.”

New Moon 5280 by Dean Harakas – Nominated: Best Genre Script: “The concept and the ‘world’ building elements of this script are well... *out of this world?* – in the best of ways.”

Noxious Propensity by Leandro Oliveira – Nominated: Best Character Arc: “The craft is where it’s lacking – there’s text slang (ie Yh etc) at times... and perhaps the concept is a little simple, a hard one to avoid becoming cliché with its design... but overall, the characters and dialogue is where this script shines.”

# Autumn 2019 / Festival Laurels

- **Jury Prize**

**Winner: The Forgotten Recipe by Rene Strgar and Jose Prada – “This will be a short review because I don’t think there’s too much to say – this is a perfect documentary: informative, moving and memorable. I’ve thought of this short several times, both in terms of bread and the personal stories shared within it. Just about as perfect a documentary short can be.”**

Nominees: Thebes Crossing by Frank Saliada – “A heartbreaking, political and romantic film which carries a great sense of loss and style.”

The Muse by Matthias Fuchez – “Jean Luc Godard’s Paris pictures (Breathless, All The Boys Are Called Patrick) can still be felt... and Fuchez’s take on it is grand, poetic and romantic!”

Timeless by Felice Antignani – “A well-balanced film with a variety of nicely designed elements: the acting is on point, the look of the film is great, so is the tone and the scenario’s unravelling.”

- **Best Short Film Under \$5,000**

**Winner: Seven Levels Deep by Pina Brutal – “It is a wild nightmare journey, and the use of budget is just jaw-dropping.”**

Nominees:

Siargao’s Environmental Issues by Erwan Heussaff – “Informative and well designed, but mostly a fantastic use of budget.”

The Curtain by Rekut Altindag – “A sort of Chekov play plays out in this film, only with a flash of cinematic genre and tones which shift with the locales.”

Singing A Great Dream by Anna Stirr and Bhakta Syangtan – “Authentic and very economical with its presentation. Well designed and monies conscious.”

Lost Memories by Conor Barrow – “A beautifully crafted and very insular project. Its use of shadow, as well as the theme of reflection, is well thought out and visually presented in a very economical design.”

- **Best Short Film Between \$5,000 and \$10,000**

**Winner: My Adventure by Roman Gregorička – “Beautifully shot with a great sense of how the film can capture the world the film is set within, its restrictions (both physical and psychological) and its respective cinematic values.”**

Nominees:

Blue Widow by Vera Mark – “As genre-based films go, this modern gothic tale is mighty delicious.”

Quiet Carriage by Ben S. Hyland – “A comical mega farce with a top trump payoff.”

The Last Stub Master by Jonathan Gill – “The sense of genre, and the film’s own encapsulation of it (visually and in its narrative devices) is a fun affair of cinephilia as well as traditional character arcs.”

Memory Man by Christopher M Armstrong – “Shot with so much colour, style and awareness for genre that one can’t help but adore it all. A great viewing experience!”

- **Best Short Film Over \$10,000**

**Winner: Ruby Baby by Lee Mcqueen – “A robust character film with genuine care for the story it is telling. The locale of the film, which varies from dimly lit interiors to stark exteriors of the country provides a great visual clash for the film’s poignant ‘loss of innocence’ story. The tone of the film is consistent, and well rounded – actors and the crew (the cinematography and music especially) help string this picture together as a coherent venture. The director, who has found a great balance of comedy and dramatic intrigue, is an exciting one to watch, and bound to provide an even richer piece in a feature form.”**

Nominees: Mimi Meets Books by Yih-Fen Chou – “A beautifully made animation short.”

Me Too Nice by Jamie Anderson – “A smart witty thing with an amusing relevance to today’s ‘post Me Too’ era.”

Little Men by Ayesha Adu – “A thoughtful film which uses its careful scale to provide a glimpse into the world of the 1980’s and its schooling tensions.”

- **Best Feature Film Under \$5,000**

Best Feature Film Under \$5,000

**Winner: The Purple Dragon by Timothy A Coons – “This film’s look is just fantastic for its restrictive budget. It really goes to great lengths to establish some well-designed shots as well as a colour palette. The frankness of its topic, and creative filmic workaround some budget-based restrictions are really quite grand. The cast is also of note here – often shifting gears in terms of acting the part, as well as providing a well-rounded tone to the content. All in all – just a great micro-budget film.”**

Nominee: Get All You Can Get by Peter Gilabert – “A claustrophobic affair full to the brim with character and comedy.”

- **Best Feature Film Between \$5,000 and \$10,000**

Not enough entries for this category.

- **Best Feature Film Over \$10,000**

Not enough entries for this category.

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Best Webseries

Not enough entries to run category.

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- Best Direction

**André Carvalho's direction of The Great Parody – “Shocking, grainy and grimy. Tod Browning could have cooked this up!”**

Nominees:

Vera Mark's direction of Blue Widow – “A flavorful exploit is delivered with class here. Mark hits the nail on the head several times, seals the coffin and buries her audience in tone and texture.”

Frank Seliada's direction of Thebes Crossing – “A distinct and soulful performance is brought out of the actors, the cinematography and the overall mechanics of this little film. The direction really sings it to life.”

Adva Reichman's direction of Silhouette – “Reichman underplays her project's potential for being overdramatic and overplayed. It is overall quite subdued and personal, like a Ken Loach film.”

Christopher Beech's direction of Rock & Roll – “Beech juggles a variety show of comedy, drama and ghostly things. It's reminiscent of Joe Dante and the whole ‘this isn't real, right?’ tone.”

Joao Pedro Frazão's direction of Lullaby – “Strange and bold. The film is a loud set piece of grand construction. Almost operatic.”

- Best Cinematography (Colour)

**Winner: Ondrej Synak's cinematography of My Adventure – “Carefully designed and beautifully executed, My Adventure is a photographic treat.”**

Nominee: Adam Philip Goodnough's cinematography of The Purple Dragon – “Varying in its style, but also consistently done, Goodnough's cinematography is the oven this picture bakes in.”

David McIntyre and Tiarnan Hatchell's cinematography of Lost Memories – “A stunning use of black occurs in Lost Memories.”

- Best Cinematography (Black and White)

**Winner: Roan Lenihan's cinematography of The Muse – “Careful with its use of black and white and crystal clear. It's a great image to watch.”**

Nominee:

Craig Berry's cinematography of Rock & Roll – “A perfect gloomy image resides here.”

- Best Actor

**Winner: Odd Roald Horjem in Zest for Life – “Frantically fantastic.”**

Nominees:

Antonio Anzilotti De Nitto in Timeless – “Tough looking, but gooey on the inside – De Nitto nails his runaway with a great grave sense of who he is.”

John Asher in Me Too Nice – “Comical and fantastically physical in his ‘out of sorts’ performance.”

Gavan Demeurisse in The Purple Dragon – “Effortlessly cool on camera.”

Amit Shah in *Quiet Carriage* – “Comical and well rounded with his performance, Shah somewhat steals the audience away on this witty trip.”

Jordan John in *Lovebirds* – “John acts in his own script, and his performance is just pitch-perfect.”

- Best Actress

**Winner: Sai Ma in *Net* – “Jingkun Liu’s film is beautiful, and is best when Sai Ma is on screen. It’s an effortless performance.”**

**Nominees:**

Vicky Estelle Elia in *The Purple Dragon* – “Elia underplays her role, but in the best of ways. She’s never overdramatic, she’s physically present and finds interesting ways to play different simple dialogue scenes (like say Parker Posey does). It’s great.”

Nela Wagman in *That Was Delicious* – “A fantastic space is created around Wagman and her performance. The capturing of it, and the tense feeling it provides the film, is just fab.”

Sagan Rose in *Silhouette* – “A caring performance, well-tuned. The changing facial performances of Rose – the dancer, the daughter, the mother... these are all the skills of a performer using their face to express a great range of emotions.”

- Best Ensemble

**Winners: The Cast of *Memory Man* – “The cast give it all. they’ve got They are fantastic.”**

**Nominees:**

The Cast of *Get All You Can Get* – “A fun troupe of energetic performers bring this small insular script to life.”

The Cast of *Lost Memories* – “Delicate performances, very authentic.”

- Best Writing

**Winner: *Three In A Coffin* by Eric L Hansen – “A comedic take on the classic subgenre. Quite great.”**

**Nominees:**

*Funeral* by Marie Vandelannoote – “A classic character dive is delivered here. Bravo to the writer for creating it, and the cast for making it come alive.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: Jon Pegg’s editing of *Making Friends As The World Ends Part II* – “The edit helps design a certain whimsy pace about the killing and survivors lives.”**

**Nominees:**

Lawrence Murphy and Oscar Millar’s edit of *Valuable* – “The playful edit keeps the film rolling with a pace and tone that’s both experimental and enjoyable.”

- Best Score

**Winner: The score of The Forgotten Recipe – “Moving, and great in its enhancement of the film short film.”**

Nominee:

Pete Nickless’ score of Making Friends As The World Ends Part II – “The music helps really steady the pace and tone. Nickless’ score is the air of the production.”

- Best Period Piece

Not enough entries to run category.

- Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Lovebirds by Emma Robson – “Creepy and wild as f\*\*k. Fantastic.”**

Nominees:

Mimi Meets Books by Yih-Fen Chou – “A beautifully made animation short.”

Forgotten Alive by Kiriakos Kotsinis – “Too complex to easy to digest, but a great understanding of genre and its benefits is really felt here. It is a genretastic film – a sort of neo noir.”

The Superfood by Michele Carter – “Carter propels a nightmare into existence with this animation. It’s the worst diner in the world... and the most fantastic use of animation for it! Watch out for the finale – it’s bursting to be seen.”

- Special Mention

**Best Experimental Film: Priapus by Tomás Pérez Torrella – “Experimental, and somewhat reminiscent of the classic 2010 European art house ‘Le Quattro Volte’.”**

**Best Grading: Leo Dorian Stiebeling – “A fantastic understanding and *look* of colour is presented in Blue Widow.”**

**Best Standup: Gareth Brierley in Pitches – “A part of me believes that this performance would have made a better stage production... but it is, nonetheless, fun as a web series.”,**

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## Music Video

Best Music Video

**Winner: Together Now by Kevin Hindriks – “The world Hindriks creates is cinematic and dangerous.”**

Nominees: Assam Skies by Tarunabh Dutta – “A world comes to life here – there’s character, story and a richness that is often lacking in music videos.”, Break, Break, Break by André Almeida Rodrigues – “An echo of Agnes Varda’s great La Pointe Courte can be felt here... intentional or not by the filmmakers, the connection in my eyes is a compliment.”

Best Music Video Cinematography

**Winner: Daniel Murphy’s cinematography of Ringleader – “A sense of wonder fills this music video, and its images are the making of this discovery... it is a mystery, a noir of sorts.”**

Nominees: Jordan Arabejo's cinematography of Together Now – "Lush and beautiful.", Jeffrey Palmer's cinematography of Outsider – "The persona comes to life with this grainy gritty wonder of careful lighting choices.", Owen Sheppard's cinematography of Luvu – "Delicate and very conscious of its filmic 'space', full of mood."

Best Music Video Editing

**Winner: Claudio Zagarini's editing of Intoxicated – "A wild edit keeps the beats rolling off the screen with a fast buzz."**

Nominees: Penny Lyon and Kevin Washburn's editing of Get Out The Boat – "A creative juggernaut of fun.", Iris Dutour's editing of Overwhelm – "A retro pleasure centre."

Special Mention

**Aeons by John F. Thomas – "The use of technology and art is just fantastic."**

**Man About Town by Deric Gochenauer – "Comical and like something out of the 90's. Just plain fun!"**

**Nice Shoes by Jonathan Lawrence – "A spacey retro gem."**

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## Unproduced Script Competition

- Best Concept

**Winner: The Six Stains On My Favourite White Jumper by Michael Walsh – "The Concept allows for a great design in the film's arc as well as its short narrative. Comedic and witty filled."**

Nominees: My Dad's a Sofa Athlete by Philippa Rae – "Animation scripts are rare, and most are about animals with funny names... this is a fun change of beat, and an interesting take on family dynamics for this particular genre of film."

- Best Micro-Budget

**Winner: Mouse by Daniel Cotter – "Though not exactly the cheapest, it is still very efficient with its economy and production value potentials, within its genre and plot."**

Nominees: Roberta by Stephen Cottage – "A fantastic twist on familiar genre ground."

The Six Stains On My Favourite White Jumper by Michael Walsh – "A well rounded micro short. Very fun!"

- Best Character Arc

**Winner: Molly Bling Bling by Juefang Zhang – "Someone should really just film this – it is great."**

Nominees: Fall In Love In A Day by Dina Chakeyeva – "The script syntax is an issue, as is some of the action descriptions (which are lacking at times)... but the characters and their journey is just fantastic."

Paper Memories by Jean Maye – “There’s a great sense of space, intimacy and delicacy within this script.”

Phishing by Sam Berrill & Tom Turner – “A mad crazy lengthy thing full of character revelations and situational shifts. Quite great all in all.”

Secret Path by Rui Yao – “The protagonist’s overcoming of such a challenge is quite well built up to, and has a great pay off in its design.”

- **Best Script Technique**

**Winner: Resq by Edward Hamel & Evan Morton – “The script is precise and has an easy ready-to-shoot feel about its polish.”**

Nominees: The Need by Keith McCarthy – “Written with a fabulous classy understanding of script, its economy and style potential.”

- **Special Mention**

**Best Period Piece: The Frontman by Alyon Lemeleva – “A distinct histrionic script. Quite enjoyable.”**

**Best Dialogue: Private Investigations by Brendan O’Connell – “The dialogue just pops right off the page with some fantastic style, character and boldness. Double Effs indeed!”**

**Best Adaptation: The Red Robe by Ruth Finnegan – “Though wild in some of its arrangement, the script carries a great sense of its original text and the textures of the world it is set in (time and period, that is).”**

# Summer 2019

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## Jury competition:

- Jury Prize

**WINNER: Something to Live For by Adva Reichman**

**Festival Director** says:

*Something to Live For has a very bold yanking quality to it. It yanks you out of one genre, and its perceived perspective, and drops you into another... and then repeats itself again, and again. For a moment, one feels quite comfortable aligning themselves with Nabila. And at other times, completely repulsed by her.*

*All in all though, pushing aside one's perception of how we might interpret the contents of the text, it is easy to say a few very simple truths: the film, from detail to detail, is a very well rounded and perfectly executed item. It is, by all means, a fantastic actor vehicle, a well-shot and beautifully assembled project (I say this in reference to the edit, the scoring and the overall pacing of the script).*

*There is very little one could say about Something to Live For in a negative light, though perhaps its politics is the only thing that feels bitter – not so much its message, but rather the fact that it needs to carry a commentary about an on-going war... though, even this, and the way which it handles the different 'sides' of the West Bank conflict is mature, well-thought-out and meaningful.*

*Long story short – Something to Live For is fantastic. Watch it!*

Nominees:

Dollhead by Mike Egbert – “Though not the flashiest of shorts, Dollhead is consistent, well timed and well toned. To be completely honest, shorts are rarely this good.”

bás a dhó by Ty Tush – “The authenticity of this film's cinematic form – that of a 4:3 screen, a sense of stillness and cinematic language, is quite fantastic.”

Fantastic Plastic by Sarah Tafel – “A perfect short film I wish I had made.”

Before My Eyes by Mason Bowen – “The film has a particular grand class about it that is rather rare in shorts.”

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# Main competition:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

## Winner: One Afternoon in the Woods by Connor Webb

Festival Director says:

*Webb's film is a fun run around the woods, helped greatly by his three-lead cast – James Viller, Madeleine Gray and Johnny Gill. It has the flavouring of a great genre film, as well as the class of a more edgy thriller. Basically – it is a great use of budget.*

*The film does, on the softer side of things, lack any sense of class. It is, to a degree, a reminder of that pedal-to-the-metal type of 'Gamer' narrative. Though, one should add a side note to this – this is a real advantage here, as so few shorts know where or what they are... whilst of course, this wooded gun-o-run picture knows exactly who and what it is. There is a sense of a profound filmic hyperrealism as well, a sort of In Bruges 'in-joke' when it comes to how the film delivers its beats, motif and well – punchline.*

*All in all, it's entertaining and a fun short film. What more could you ask for?*

Nominees:

10 Minutes to Live by Alexandria Bond, Grant Morningstar and Amr Nabeel – “As an edgy sort of film, this really did hit the WTF mark... reminiscent of those films Sebastián Silva likes to make.”

Boys will be Boys by Michael T. – “A great mixture of cinematic filming and mobile phone shots. Michael T. captures a world and his characters with an ill-fated sense of authenticity.”

Bus Stop by Vanessa Bailey – “The film has a certain polish to it that feels much greater and grander than its limited budget.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

## Winner: Alder by Vanda Ladeira

Festival Director says:

*From the bursting light, to the costume, the makeup, the premise – this is a surrealist dream evoked with some great physical acting and stunning imaginative alluring elements... Alder is a short film to rule them all!*

*This fairytale romp – shot in what I presume to be a sound stage, has all the chutzpah and veneer that a madhat Guy Maddin film has to offer (cue reference to the wonderful Twilight of the Ice Nymphs).*

*Perhaps, the only downside, when one forgets that this is all a bit of a magical thing... there is a feeling that this project is a sum of all its parts – a craftsman's delivery of excessive skill... but who the hell cares. It's original, it has charm and is memorable.*

Nominees:

Dollhead by Mike Egbert – “Egbert's film is loaded with a kaleidoscope of dangerous and bizarre characters. It's all a bit whacky and wonderful, really. Highly recommended!”

Love Lives in a Void by Johnny Zito – “There seems to be a great crossover of a kind of Abel Ferrara beast and Miranda July hearty being in this little film. Some interesting framing and original lighting help make it distinct as well. All in all, quite unusual and noteworthy.”

Don't Blame Jack by Dale John Allen – “The short hits you. It hurts. But is also rather beautiful, and very effective with its use of locations, actors (supporting cast even give it their best) and its distinct cinematography.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

### **Winner: Honor Among Thieves by Justin Eugene Evans**

Festival Director says:

*Featuring a pristine polished look (your lights work a charm) the short contains crisp sound and witty dialogue... congrats on making one hell of an impressive short popcorn flick!*

Nominees:

Lovely by Gabriela Tollman – “The film has a sort of HBO quality to it. And I mean this in the best of ways. It has a really close proximity to its character, one which is mounted in a well-defined world and delivered with a consistent tone of sorrow and focus. It's engaging, and alluring.”

Melody by Bernard Kordieh – “The film is mounted with a great many passions, and often leans into its beauty with a great sense of cinematic language, time and space. It also, in terms of production values, comes loaded with a very impressive look and style.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

### **Winner: Super Mix by Joshua Armstrong**

Festival Director says:

*In terms of budget usage, one can't fault the gritty sci fi wonder Super Mix. The film is, like most features, the sum of all its parts. So, what we have here is a nice hand in the genre department, as well as a firm understanding of drama and performance. Then there's the photography, which never gets too ahead of itself (no flashy lighting systems here), but is consistent and self-aware (the genre plays a hand in the film's minimalism here, becoming part of the 'visual' story).*

*Overall, Joshua Armstrong is the real showcase here. There's not much going on, no offence to the players... but it is Armstrong's film, and it is his 'making', and one can see that. The corners cut in terms of scale are excused by a firm 'filmmaker' hand in terms of working the dough in the kitchen... well, the editing suite. I hope this makes sense!*

*All in all a great debut, and one that I'd comfortably pin as a better experience than most micro-budget features; let alone debuts.*

Nominees:

Jed Or Alive by Ed Mellin – “With its camera becoming a third wheel – a sort of witness to the comedic chaos, Ed Mellin's film finds a very inventive way to rework the low-budget skills documentaries. This is also a buddy film though, and reeks of that Joe Swanberg mastered in the last decade with films such as Drinking Buddies and Happy Christmas.”

Voyeur by Delilah Napier and Lucy Powers – “Actor themed films seem to be repeated things at festivals. We get so many of them, and most of them are 'all the same'... but rarely, very rarely,

do we get one like this... Voyeur has something original to deliver, and it does so with a sheen and class that almost recalls the early 'good seasons' of HBO's Girls. There's character, lightness and plot. All great."

HaMLET by Giorgi Mergrelishvili – "I think it's safe to say that this is the most creative anyone has been when making a film on a phone with a Shakespeare text. Bravo!"

Ice Patrol by Adam Newman – "Though the film never really explores any stakes that we haven't seen before, it still delivers a fine feature film on a very limited budget with some very moving and well-rounded performances."

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Not enough entries for this category to run. Boo.**

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Vortex by Christophe Karabache**

Festival Director says:

*Vortex reminded me of one specific film – Cat Chaser. Cat Chaser is a notorious 1989 film directed by Abel Ferrara. Like Cat Chaser, Vortex has a nutty lead (Peter Weller in Cat Chaser). And a certain dirty gritty arty vibe. Both films also exhibit a great awareness for the history of pictures and violence. There's lots of violence to be had here... both in the sense of psychological one, and a cultural one.*

*Karabache has, over the last few years, delighted us here at TMBT. And he does so once again. This film is a maze of nightmares, loaded with ugly and loveable characters... visuals that evoke the Jean Luc Godard 'Pierre Le Fout' ideas and even the whiff of a post-colonial world of destruction and the memory of this.*

*This is a plain old great piece, and cool one, just as to be expected from Mr. Karabache!*

Nominee:

Bang! by Richard Szotyor – "Comical, stylish and fun... Bang! comes rather full of *Bang!*"

- Best Webseries

**Winner: Kaplan's Korner by Jeanine Anderson, Sara Ballantine and Steven Carter – "A film might have provided a better arc, and a more rounded feeling... but all in all this is a great kick-ass comedy featuring some great 'mature' actors delivering some fantastic moments."**

Nominees:

Humdrum by Connor Webb – "The show has that sort of breezy buddy comedy vibes which made TV in the 90's so much fun."

Boundless by Julie D. Dunn, Sean Higgs and Victor Lockhart – "Noir is well and truly alive in this robust webseries. Also, features a solid ensemble and an eye for photographic detail."

Life XP by Trevor Addie – "This feels like a Gamer rehash... but it is stylish and bold. Bravo!"

The Odyssey of the AOR by Joshua Burdick – "There's a great 'modern-day' vibe here for the makings of a sort of Pi rip off."

## Other categories:

- Best Cinematography

Winner: The photography of *Lovely* by Anka Malatynska – “A relishing picture is brought to life here. Just amazing really. Lenses, lights, filters (assuming they were even used), are just capitalized on. Stunning work. Gush over.”

Nominees:

The Photography of *Dollyhead* by John Freeman – “Subtle and well balanced, Freeman’s photography is consistent in creating alluring and well-crafted images.”

The photography of *Vortex* by Aurélian Pechméja – “Aware of light, and shadows, Pechméja finds a great many variety of ways to show us the horrors of mankind, this film’s lead monster and the locales he moves through. Much like *The House That Jack Built*, this film carefully navigates the feelings of documentary and art.”

The photography of *Buries Seeds* – “A beautifully shot documentary which both captures the personal space of its lead chef, as well as the environments of its subjects. Quite stunning.”

The photography of *Honor Among Thieves* by Justin Eugene Evans – “The film’s *western* looks are well-calibrated and enhanced greatly by careful lighting and a great care for the film’s clean appearance.”

The photography of *A Brief Case* by Ben Lingham- “Scrumptiously shot with a real eye for colour, texture and light sources.”

- Best Black and White Cinematography – not enough entries to run this category.
- Best Genre Piece

**Winner: *One Last Ride* by Maxim Lecompte – “The film, like it’s bride, has a certain Gothic allure which is both comical, self-aware and romantically grim. The film is, for all purposes, a great exercise in genre loving.”**

Nominees:

*Super Mix* by Joshua Armstrong – “The film’s heart is found mostly within its tone and understanding of its genre. Delicious.”

*Dollhead* by Mike Egbert – “Walking a tightrope of comedy and horror, *Dollhead* finds some perfect footing between the two. It’s got those creepy moments with some stunning genre-based lighting, and some comedic camera looks that make it seem a tad bit perfectly done.”

*Jed Or Alive* by Ed Mellin – “A willing victim of parody, *Jed Or Alive* taps into the comedic side of *Grizzly Man*. Great stuff.”

- Best Period Piece

Not enough qualifying entries for this category to run.

- Special Mention

**Pate by Matthew Emery – “Its use of VFX to bring about its retro world is a delight.”**

**Afloat by Shannon Mahoney – “Unlike most documentary shorts, the ease this one has is very conversational and has a feeling of wanting to get to the heart of its subject, rather than the subject. It is a welcomed alteration, and reminds viewers that not all documentaries need to be a bundle of histrionics and facts.”**

**The art direction of Fantastic Plastic – “The entire team have designed a delicious film. The makeup, the costumes, the placement of the actors... it is all just sensational!”**

Special Award: Best Seasonal Film

**Winner: Monsters In Havasu by Jamon Holmes – “For its investigation of seasonal customs in the boating community, one has to feel a great excitement for something so unusual and fresh.”**

- Best Black and White Cinematography

Not enough entries for this category to run.

- Best Actor

**Winner: Jordan Tweddle in Don’t Blame Jack – “The confessional element of this film, which is very raw and intimate, is brought to life thanks to Tweddle’s commitment to the material. His performance is quite outstanding.”**

Nominees:

Chris Goodwin in Ice Patrol – “I remember years ago reading Catherine Keener interviewed about how playing the ‘supporting part’ has always provided her with interesting roles... I think it is safe to say that her plea for those roles to be taken seriously applies here with Mr. Goodwin, who finds more to do with this minor part than most actors would.”

Raymond Morris in Dollhead – “Elijah Wood better watch out – Morris could have taken away his Maniac remake and made it his own!”

Gage Magosin in Dollhead – “A great performance from a very talented young performer. Magosin provides a certain energy to the project which helps balance its darkness.”

Johny Gill in One Afternoon in the Woods – “Gill runs, and screams, and provides a hell of a lot to this little short. He is, for means purposes, the perfect victim.”

- Best Actress

**Winner: Cheryl Silekis in The Window on the Seventh Floor – “Silekis’ performance is just plain outstanding. I have nothing else to add.”**

Nominees:

Vanessa Bailey in Bus Stop – “Bailey drives her own film – her performance is impeccable.”

Charlotte Dunnico in Jenna the Great – “Though at times Dunnico comes across as too mature for the part, there’s no denying her efforts to make Jenna real and relatable. Kudos to both Dunnico and her supporting cast, who often play off of each other to create some great drama.”

Ruby Marez in *Corações em Fogo* – “Comical and often presented ‘out of sorts’, Marez has a hint of that old Hollywood star quality.”

- Best Ensemble Cast – dependent number of qualifying entries

**Winner: The cast of *Final Curtain* – “This film, about actors, entirely relies on (surprise) its actors. And they do a wonderful job in making it seem real.”**

Nominees:

The cast of *Voyeur* – “A great ensemble is gathered here, rounded with a great sense of realism and commitment by the entire team, especially compounded by the leads (who are also the writers, directors, producers... ) – Lucy Powers and Delilah Napier. It’s quite great really.”

The cast of *HaMLET* – “Oodles of effort has been put into making this phone film, and it is mostly kept alive thanks to the film’s entire reliance on its cast of funny and tense actors.”

The cast of *Dollhead* – “A great team helps bring both the comedy and horror of this short film to life. Bravo!”

- Best Score

**Winner: Peter Lewington’s score of *A Brief Case* – “A wonderful score highlights the film’s genre and tone.”**

Nominees:

Nami Melumad’s score of *Something to Live For* – “The film’s score helps enhance our perception and alignment with its lead, often inviting, rather than say distracting. It’s awareness for the film’s emotional range is also commendable.”

- Best Direction

**Winner: *Fantastic Plastic* by Sarah Tafel – “Tuned perfectly as a bittersweet horror, this short film encapsulates the best of genre and gender games.”**

Nominees:

Richard Szotyori’s direction of *Bang!* – “Szotyori finds a great many unique ways to keep his scenes engaging and fluid. It’s great on that front, and reminiscent of the style inhabited in the late stage of cinema du look – in particular in the early noughties films of say *La Haine* and *Amélie*.”

*Jenna the Great* by Dan Tonkin – “This lengthy short could have easily been pushed into being a feature, or perhaps a shorter short with much more punch... all the same, there’s a great sense of life to it all, and a well-textured narrative built around some nice set pieces.”

Adva Reichman’s direction of *Something to Live For* – “The film’s richness, both in terms of its script, images (the lighting!) and the performances are incredibly well nuanced and consistent throughout. It’s quite brilliant really.”

Johanna Ort’s direction of *Wiley* – “The film is very tender, delicate and whimsical. The perspective we take on, and the look the film relishes, is very well designed and cohesive with the script’s subjects and the tone of the performances at hand. Long story short – this is a brilliantly well designed short.”

- Best Writing

**Winner: Corações em Fogo by M.F. Dinan, Andrew Kadikian and Laura Breen – “The concept is explored with a great many layers and comical turns. The lead character is especially memorable, and it is darn right entertaining!”**

Nominees:

SOCial MEDia MADness by Michael Delaney – “Social Media Madness on a conceptual level, and even some of the scenes scenarios, has a great sense of originality and hilarity to it.”

Hellthy by Stephen Willis – “Though this feels like a hyper-future film, its heart really lies in pulp. A pulpy world where people are *forced* to rehabilitate themselves. It’s a small and intimate idea, and well thought out both conceptually and at a ‘character’ driven arc level.”

Imperfectly Healthy by Joshua Sowden – “Though this concept has been done before, there’s no denying that this particular strain of hypochondria is amusing and well designed.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: Steven Markowitz and Eliya Reis’ editing of Something to Live For – “The short moves along as if it were a feature, smoothly intersecting drama with meaning and well-designed edits. The tone is also quite well levelled throughout, often handling the actors and their performances with great care and awareness.”**

Nominees:

Joshua Briscoe’s editing of Leaving Only Footprints – “The film bolts through its evil horror set up, and maintains its fluidity through the ease with which the shots and performances are spliced together.”

The editing of bás a dhó – “For its use of cinematic language, all derived from the edit, one has to tip a hat to this wonderful short film!”

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## Music Video:

- Best music video

**Up by STORRY – “Just brilliant.”**

Nominees:

Drown by Michael Valentino and Autumn Greenfield – “A dark music video, rarely seen these days.”

Who I Am by Asifa Lahore – “Some great and fun uses of London. Has the vibe of a sort of Alanis Morissette video – *Come along with me for this journey!*”

The Return by Liudmila Komrakova – “As grand as a music video can be.”

- Best cinematography

**Winner: The photography of Carnival Youth – Boys Do Cry – “So cool, tres cool. So Tarantino, tres Tarantino!”**

Nominees:

The photography of Wipeout Beat – “A sort of Scorpio Rising wonder.”

The photography of Sweetness in the Shadows by James River Brooks – “The image holds a great many textures and a sense of time and light. It’s beautifully done.”

- Best editing

**Winner: Hologram by Andrea Busco – “The story is well woven through its edit, and the pace is greatly enhanced by this sort of feeling that *things take their time*, that only the editor could express.”**

Nominees:

Antoine Amen’s Wipeout Beat – “The edit is wonderfully done – a mirror maze of horror and excitement. Bravo!”

A 5th Element by Sofia Touboura – “Some nuts psychedelic shizzle is in this video, all of which is greatly enhanced by its edit.”

- Special Mention

**The cast of Invisible Man – “Everyone seems to be having a fantastic hoot performing in this. The efforts of the cast were felt.”**

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## Script competition:

- Best genre piece

**Winner: The Algorithm by Tim Adler – “The script whizzes through various scenarios that really all relish its concept, one which is entirely steeped in genre apparatus and a self-awareness that rewards the audience, rather than say... dumbs itself down to them. Would make a fun film indeed!”**

Nominees:

Rough Stock by Seppe Van Beneden – “There’s a real sense of research and care in this dusty Western-style buddy script.”

Willy Won’t by Jeffrey Morin – “Bridging the road movie and drama genres ain’t easy, but Morin does it well here – we get a glimpse into these characters lives, and endure their Chicago trip along with them.”

To Love Beyond his Means by Torikai Fujio – “The slug lines are a mess, as are the edits... but the use of genre, and the sense of what it does to the film’s plot, is quite smart.”

Cyclops's Island by Ioanna Tsinividi – “There's a fun holiday vibe to this script that is really just a genre playground.”

- Best technique

**Winner: King Elizabeth by Eric Martin & Joe Cline – “It feels like a clunky thing, but it isn't... King Elizabeth is a well drawn out monster of layered ideas and exciting film ideas.”**

Nominees:

Son of a Sheriff by Travis Davidson – “A fun breezy reinterpretation of an old yarn.”

The Rose Diary by Collin MacConnell – “The script is well-formed and well-polished – making it a bit of an easy read.”

Petunia's Flowers by Tali Chais – “A wild and wonderful thing.”

Showdown in Paradise by Jamon Holmes – “A nice clean script that feels very professional.”

- Best micro-budget script

**Winner: Petunia's Flowers by Tali Chais – “The building becomes the breeding ground for grander things, despite its limited and restricting locale. This script highlights the importance of careful design.”**

Nominees:

Wait by Cole Sims – “The *House*, which anchors the characters, is a sort of character of its own. Very economically done, with some care to keeping things ‘inside’ and out of the expenses of exterior and location filming.”

An Odyssey of Vengeance by Alexandru Barbu – “The script's greatest strength is its potential to be easily shot and pulpy.”

The Earworm by David W Pedersen – “Some might argue that the living room, cab ride and office are too much for a micro budget film... but here, in the Earworm, they are used with such efficiency, that the whole thing feels very ‘doable’ and easy to shoot.”

- Best character arc

**Winner: One for the Road by Matthew Dickie – “It's boozy and woozy – a sort of modern-day Paul Kemp (Hunter S Thompson) tale.”**

Nominees:

Field Trip by Claudio Martinez-Valle – “The film centres around a few characters who, unbeknownst to them, are living out one hell of a fun arc. This script entirely relies on the fun structure its characters live in.”

The Rose Diary by Collin MacConnell – “The characters all have their own unique dialogue, and it feels quite ‘true’ to who they all are.”

Made in America by B K (Anonymous) – “A script chockablock full of life lessons.”

Cherish by Bridget J. Addison – “Cherish, the script, has the same intentions of Cherish, its title character: it is very well meaning and hearty.”

# Spring 2019

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## **FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

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### Jury Prize:

**WINNER: The Turner Exhibit by Mathew Gregory Bainbridge**

Jury Member, [Ben Rider](#) says:

*I write this review having read the careful notes from my team, and considered my own. Yes, from the get-go there are a few major issues with The Turner Prize. Mostly, it is a sort of mini-feature... and so, because of this scope, it doesn't really feel like a short or a feature. But it is somewhere in between these two.*

*So, as a film viewer, or consumer... I feel like this film is a trick. It doesn't work for me. But perhaps, the main issue for this is because of how we consume film materials. We expect grand stories to be featured, and small stories to be short... and the two shall not merge. And on this note, I am reminded of my film studies – Andy Warhol spring to mind, as does Wong Kar Wai. Both made short features that were neither shorts or features. They were both. And they were poorly received by critics because they didn't fit either box. And so, one acknowledges that there is a sense of 'how' a film is consumed, and what we are used to consuming, and how these elements affect our perspective and interpretation of these video contents.*

*The bottom line is this – regardless of how I felt, or how some of my judges' film, The Turner Prize is a splendid film experience. It is layered, so much more than a usual short... and well, feels very breezy and brief by not having a longer runtime of a feature – though it could have easily had one. It is a multilayered story, one which carries a lot of texture, performance dynamics, an awareness for locale and spectacle – heck, it is even generational... and it has great attention to detail. It is, all in all, a grand short film full to the brim with a passion of what it is doing, and I admire it for its ambitions, which it reaches and grasps with great expression.*

Nominees:

The Battle for Jericho by Rob George – “There's a great feeling that this film is being made during a time when no film like this is getting greenlit in the mainstream or even major indie side. Do it yourself detectives, especially female centred ones, have almost completely disappeared from the screen... so, you know – major kudos to the team behind this adventure!”

An Auspicious Effort by Deniz Uymaz – “The sort of tale whispered in small towns. It's great, and has a very conscious idea of what it is, who it is for and what it is about.”

Exit 0 by E. B. Hughes – “All in all, a great project with a heavy head of thoughts. There’s a trace of ‘the old’ film world in this.”

Her Exit, Cherkov Style by Aleksandra Artemeva – “A very slick exercise in filmmaking. Stylish, to the point and bold!”

Blind Love by Bidzina Gogiberidze – “A superb concept is brought to life through some delicate moments, and the great combination of shot and shot-reverse.”

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## Main competition:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

### Winner: Recalculating Rita by Adrià Llauro

*Recalculating Rita has a very particular quality to it – a vision. By saying this I don’t actually refer to the auteur idea of ‘vision’, but rather to the budgetary one – after all, this is the prize for Best Short film produced for less than \$5,000. This short film, with its very limited budget, has skyrocketed its visage and created a masterful ‘look’ for us to relish and enjoy.*

*With its chosen picture ration, there are notes here of Xavier Doolan’s Mommy, or even the thinner frame of early 20th-century cinema... but all in all, there’s also the delicate light, the expressions of the film’s personas, and the often unexpected placement of the camera (low shots, eye lines thrown).*

*Recalculating Rita is a delicate beauty. And it is a beauty despite its low budget... it has a vision which excels beyond its budget.*

Nominees:

Among Us by Grace Fox – “Fox directs with a great sense of style, tone and consistent quality. There’s a real pushing of the boat out with the quality of this film, and this very small budget. Very impressive stuff.”

Chin-Chin by Joshua Idusohan – “With a bold lead performance, strong supporting parts, lots of neon coloured scenes and a kick-ass wig, this short film is quite a fantastic little gem!”

OdeToSay by Aleksandra Zdziech – “As documentaries go, this one’s story is one which really does need to be done, and is done so in a low-cost economical way. It is very efficient with its time, resources and subject matter.”

Shelter by Hollie Andrew – “There is a feeling that this film really does takes on a great sense of scale and ambition for such a small budget.”

Family Footage by Freyja Pakarinen – “There’s a whiff of Atom Egoyan, such as Exotica and Ararat. It is coincidental. I’m sure of it. But all the same, this is, like Egoyan’s masters, an interesting take on film as life, and life as a film, and art vs. reality, and the making and unmaking of both.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

## Winner: Built to Be by Irene Maffei

Festival Director says:

*I have a few issues with Built to Be. Just A FEW. And it is as follows: at times this feels like a TV show. A stand-alone episode of something BBC... the type of stuff I scoff at and turn off. It has the school, the parents, the teachers, the on-lookers. It is very soapy. Very 'playground' TV devices.*

*But here's the thing – Built to Be is more than its minimalist high school arc. And also, the only reason it truly draws such comparisons is that the likes of BBC and ITV have totally saturated the market with this sort of tosh. So, putting that localised apprehension (as it is a very UK based TV tradition), and thinking of this short film in the context of the international play area, one must appreciate two key elements of this short film: the photography, and the narrative devices.*

*The film's photography is glossy, with a touch of perspective. It is superior to the BBC's output of this sort and is far better than your average joe TV shizzle. And also, it feels very slick for the budget of this 30 minutes runtime.*

*Likewise, the narrative devices of flashbacks and flashforwards help paint a more distinct voice and layered story – the type that TV doesn't succeed with usually.*

*... so, my comparison to the TV stuffing is bad. This is a very well polished, well rounded, and very homely project. There's texture, there's technique and there's a handful of enjoyable interaction between a large character ensemble. Perhaps, the only thing I'd love to change is the genre, that's where the film stumbled and found a comparison to TV. All in all – this is a top drawer product. Bravo!*

Nominees:

Summertime by Sylvain Razemon – “The film boasts a great sense of nostalgia, childhood and the temperament of its season. The actual scenes showing the toy soldiers were very creative, and often recalled the importance of simplistic primitive cinema – that being the art form montage, the use of images, thoughts and pictorial narratives; rather than say endless talking heads.”

Dona & Vixen by Alasdair Melrose – “The scenario of Dona & Vixen is its strongest asset – the film really relishes its own surrealist approach to a faux Christmas film. The overall look and tone are consistent, though at times the whole thing feels rather lacking in a cinematic depth that could extend beyond the chosen style and restrictive character arcs. Overall – it's a great use of budget and the film's circumstantial set pieces, all of which are explored creatively.”

Duty's Veil by Rhiannan Falshaw-Skelly – “If this film hadn't just been another run of the mill 'detective suspects something and investigates' story, then we'd have loved it more... but we've had so many of them this season (this is the fourth film), that we can only really say that it is a well-crafted film, and one that uses its budget, cast and techniques very well... but the choice of genre, story type and the overall crafting of this core element, is very box standard. All in all, we look forward to seeing more from Rhiannan Falshaw-Skelly, as her work is grand... just a less predictable choice is what's needed for it to really hold a more personal and unique reason to exist.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

## Winner: Rise from the Tide by Yang Liu and Xu Mingsheng

*Hua Xi, her grandparents, and the other locales they interact with are what cinematic dreams are made of. This lush, period piece set in 2005, is everything I, as a cinephile, love. There is a great sense of care from the directing duo to share a piece of their world with us, a dream, and a cinematic story.*

*This is a fantastic film.*

*I could keep gushing about this film for a while: the photography is smooth and rich in colour, the textures and layered images are engrossing, the props seem real (nothing is new and out of the box and just purchased for this film), the breezy performances are effortless... oh boy. I just loved this film.*

*It could have been a feature, one I would have happily paid money to see.*

**Festival Director** says:

Nominees:

The Dark Wood by Guy Massaux – “A film that celebrates more of its locale than its subject – and that is why it is fairly great. It has something unique to sell, and it capitalises on it!”

The Man of the Trees by Andrea Trivero – “A very moving and passionate story told within the medium of documentary.”

Shadows by Sandesh Motwani – “Despite its indulgent and very lengthy musical sequences, this film really does go to great lengths to make its dramatic arc, which is quite a dark warning about driving and safety, heard.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Beaten by Arturo Portillo**

**Festival Director** says:

*With some great retro lighting (yes – there’s colour filters!), as well as a well-balanced routine when it comes to framing, Beaten really beats out the competition as a more rounded project.*

*All in all, the crime vibe of the project is keen on trying to make itself feel gritty, but ultimately succumbs to more style than chutzpah. This isn’t a bad thing mind you, as the film never fails to deliver what it sets out to be – a well-groomed low budget film.*

*There’s some fun style in here – and a strong awareness for the film’s placement within genre and film history (a whiff of the old school indies of the 40’s, which were cheaply churned out crime noirs with social issues embedded into their plotting is even present), some good performances (as a whole, the ensemble are on top form), and nothing all that cheap. In truth – I almost can’t believe the film’s claimed \$5k budget, just because it has a very breezy and well-polished form. Bottom line – Beaten is worth a watch!*

Runner Up:

Anywhere Is Here by Ian Lettice – “The ambitions of this project, and its sheer scale, are almost unimaginable for its tiny budget. Kudos to the team who really pushed the envelope with this micro-budget feature!”

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: A Ship of Human Skin by Richard Bailey**

Festival Director says:

*There's a real sense of style with this film. It is one which is mostly brought out by the film's technical elements: the project carries itself almost like a machine, one which is equipped with strange sounds, carefully shot sequences which are edited with purpose and an almost hilarious post-modern self-awareness that makes the whole thing feel a tad bit comical, and well, dramatic.*

*Emotion tends to seep into these sorts of films. And in this particular case, Hilly Holsonback is really the one who throws the punches. Her character is the core of the film, and her dynamic approach to the role keeps the ship running smoothly.*

*Style punches in occasionally, highlighting the film's sense of care – there's a touch of split-screen editing here and there, and augmented sounds, often parallel with differing images. It's a mosaic in a certain sense, a sort of journey into the beast's belly.*

*Bottom line – it is a very creative micro-budget film, one which still feels as if it were reaching for larger highs than it can naturally reach on such a tight resource.*

Nominees:

The Battle for Jericho by Rob George – “Features a great ensemble, and an entertaining plot, all well delivered for its very reasonable budget. It's quite great.”

The Alliance 2019 by Robert L Butler Jr – “The film's biggest fault is its own overreaching nature. It doesn't have the budget with which to deliver its ambitions in a believable nature... having said that, this is great wide scope crime drama. And I can easily see, if the film had a larger budget, that it would be locked and loaded and playing on the big screen full of high tension and big stakes. Basically the foundation of this house are perfect, but some of the fixtures of this house are just too cheap.”

Surprise by David Green – “A robust genre piece, this film really relishes its budget use in the keenest of ways.”

- Best Feature produced for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Exit 0 by E. B. Hughes**

Festival Director says:

*With a touch of the good old eerie music (thanks to the scoring of Thomas Simon), Exit 0 opens as if it was a pre-destined doomish film. Yes, there's lots of foreshowing here... and it is all great really. The film's greatest turn, after all, is its build-up to the dark ending, the type that highlights inner turmoil and psychological thriller attributes.*

*With some great performances from his two leads, E.B. Hughes makes the most of his genre, budget and locale (the hotel, roads and overall mise en scene are used as great flavourings for this project).*

*The sense of postmodernism evoked by the videotape, and the couple watching it, hints at a more complex cultural swamping of digital artefacts which are hidden, discovered and witnessed. It is through this layering that the film evokes a sort of Michael Haneke or Atom Egoyan flavour, though it lacks the minimalist and sterile aesthetics of these powerhouse directors.*

*For what it cost, Exit 0 is great. Almost reminiscent of those 90's crime thrillers that played on TV at midnight.*

Nominees:

Shadow In The Mirror by Ron Foley Macdonald – “Produced with great care and attention to providing a slick, consistent and well-rounded image within the film.”

Beneath the Scar by Cynthia Reid Wills – “A fantastic kaleidoscope of characters lives in this classy film.”

- Best Webseries

**Winner: That 80’s Guy by Jefferson Donald**

Festival Director says:

*Alaina Beauloye steals the show in That '80s Guy. Jefferson Donald directs with a great sense of purpose and easy-going vibes, all the while also elevating the period he’s referencing... there’s a real sense of nostalgia and comedy based around this throwback moment.*

*All in all, I think That 80’s Guy is a great webseries, one that might have been better as a more rounded film – which is a compliment, as webseries are funny formats.*

Nominees:

American Parousia by Guillermo “Memo” Noriega – “This webseries immediately made me think of De Palma’s Body Double. The two have very little in common really, though the core concept at the start, which focuses on actors and their vulnerabilities, and well, the spark of madness that comes out of the whole creative process, is great... and is a seed present in both projects. Otherwise, The Milky Way, that epic comedy film, feels like a fun comparison to make with American Parousia. It has that same sort of surreal joke.”

Kestrel Investigates by Oliver Semple – “What a stumble of funny characters, wildness and weirdness. Kestrel Investigates is hardly a show stopper, but it has that British wit that keeps you coming back for more.”

Blunt Conversations by Shane Harper – “The puppet and the canned laughter succeed in evoking a sort of comedy that has long been missing from the TV.”

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## Other Categories:

- Best Cinematography

**Winner: Andrew Davies’ photography in Among Us – “Is there a bad shot in this magnificent little short? We don’t think so.”**

Nominees:

Mert Hasret Uymaz photography in An Auspicious Effort – “A consistently arresting image helps reassure and build An Auspicious Effort as a classy film.”

William J Murray's photography in Exit 0 – "Packs a far-reaching creative scope with its photography, often balancing tones, light sources and space evenly and with great care."

Brandon J. Zambonelli's photography in Within the Deep – "This short's greatest asset is its look. It provides a really muted and conflicting space for the characters to exist in."

Christian Kan's photography in Recalculating Rita – "Oh boy this is beautiful."

- Best Actor

**Winner: Gabe Fazio in Exit 0 – "Fazio is great in this role. He's always natural, cool and right-on-point emotionally."**

Nominees:

Andre Fyffe in Left Behind – "Fyffe does a great job bringing Edward Campbell to life in this film."

Rory Wilton in Among Us – "Wilton's performance is dynamic, bold and a horrible punch to the stomach. He's great!"

Jonathan Blakeley in The Rest Room – "Blakeley does a great job here."

Michael Knöfler in Blind Love – "Through Knöfler's face we are often shown the world and the feelings which he is consuming through his ability to have sight. The film aids this along, and the performance really goes a long way in creating an atmosphere around this element of the gaze."

Jean Cordier in Green Army – "He doesn't quite look like a billionaire, as the film suggests... but Cordier does bring a great many layers to his performance, and it makes for a good watching experience, especially with that ending of theirs."

- Best Actress

**Winner: Alice Simpsons in Isabella – "Simpson almost underplays her role in this, which further enhances its simplicity and believability. Kudos is also due to the director, who helps frame this performance quite evenly."**

Nominees:

Genevieve Mooy in The Battle for Jericho – "Mooy is like a modern day Jessica Fletcher. Her performance is right on point. She's fun. She's entertaining. She's energetic. It's a hoot to watch!"

Augie Duke in Exit 0 – "Augie Duke brings a great many moments to this film, and does it such ease!"

Funda Şen Bahar in An Auspicious Effort – "Bahar is outstanding as the mother who seems to be running out of options."

Hannah Louise Oldfield in Eat Your Greens – "Oldfield is fantastically erratic in this short. She's made us tense... which we suspect, was the thinking behind it all."

- Best Ensemble Cast

**Winner: The cast of The Turner Prize – "This film is greatly elevated by its cast, all of whom are committed to bringing about a dark realism to the content."**

Nominees:

The cast of Exit 0 – “Along with its two leads, Exit 0 enjoys a well-rounded ensemble cast – the type that makes low budget films pleasurable and believable.”

The cast of Beneath the Scar – “There are tons of actors in this film, and they all seem to be doing a great job.”

The cast of Love and Age – “The players here, under the direction of Ismail Mostafanejad, feel very genuine in the delivery of their parts, the film’s story and the entire tone in hand.”

The cast of The Minster – “At times I felt that Ryan Watt’s film wanted too much to be like the Ocean’s films or even The Usual Suspects... but it does, like those films, have a great cast and a great balance of what is entertaining about these performances.”

- Best Score

**Winner: Amy Gordon’s score of The Turner Exhibit – “A really chilling and tense making score is provided here by Gordon. She pulls all the strings when it comes to creating an eerie world.”**

Nominees:

Dr PJ Leonard’s score of The Curious Child – “A perfectly smooth soundtrack helps bring The Curious Child to life.”

Yasmina Qiu’s score of Recalculating Rita – “A fantastically well-balanced score elevates Recalculating Rita.”

Benedetto Guidotti’s score of Is Love Enough? – “Some great tonal pieces help enhance this film’s genre and style.”

- Best Genre Piece

**Winner: The Journey by Chi-ling Chu – “A moving and very well made animation film. What more could you wish for?!”**

Nominees:

Fall of Grace by Michael Crum – “With its grimace DV styled photography, this horror really creeps up on you like the best of found footage films.”

How to Bend Concrete in 108 Easy Steps by Mahesh Madhav – “The positives of the documentary style are in full swing here. It’s an interesting and unique choice of subject.”

Toby by Tom Savage – “A very comedic and charming film.”

Fruit Punch by Kyle Briot and Kevin Briot – “A great splendid comedy!”

Is Love Enough? by Eric Weber – “A romantic film which oozes with comedic touches. Allison Broucek provides a dynamic performance that really defines the film as a strange crossover of comedy, romance and drama.”

- Best Writing

**An Auspicious Effort by Deniz Uymaz – “A fantastic drama built around some very moving conflicts. This is outstanding really!”**

Nominees:

Charlie by Jacqueline Kerr – “Sometimes, less is really more. Kerr provides so much humanity to her simple concept. It’s instantly loveable.”

The Surreal Project by Bálint Szántó – “The best part of this film is perhaps its mounted characters and locales, all of which come out of the scripts smart puzzle of drama, mystery and use of found footage genre arcs.”

The Irish Giant of Knocknaknee – A Story of Irish Puppet Rebellion by Dominic Kennedy – “Fekkin funny. Who thought that puppets could have such fun dialogue?”

Perkele – A Very Finnish Journey by Timo Vasara – “A comedic and very rewarding film that embodies the dullness of things going wrong over and over again.”

Krypsóna by Jennifer Shadd – “Shadd’s script goes to a great length to build a sense of urgency, a slow aching pace of self-absorbed fantasy and a very lost and almost malicious character. It is great.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: Sean Stiller’s editing of Solastalgia – “The assemblage of the material is the crown jewel of this project.”**

Nominees:

Sylvain Razemom’s editing of Summertime – “The splicing of this Super8 film is a fantastically delicious battlefield!”

E W Helmick’s editing of Take Your Dream – “In the assembly of this film, Helmick finds a great sense of pace, personal story and tone.”

David Maddox’s editing of Michael Half-Life – “The edit of this film, which is stylish and well-timed, feels a part of the film’s pace and language. It’s a rare thing in shorts, and should be celebrated.”

Fabian Kang’s editing of 15th of Sundays – “The pace which this mostly silent short film maintains is thanks to its edit.”

- Best Direction

**Winner: Left Behind by Shazedul Haque – “The consistent style and punch of this film is probably its best element, and there is a feeling that Haque really pulled together the different elements for this project thanks to good collaborations and a strong sense of what he wanted to achieve.”**

Nominees:

Hazel by Sara Eustáquio – “The film evokes a great sense of tone and mood thanks to its direction.”

The Surreal Project by József Gallai – “There are so many found footage films, and most of them are poorly directed. But that isn’t the case with Gallai’s The Surreal Project – it is well crafted, well mannered and well received!”

The Mystery by Jayprakash Bhosle and Hardik Jadav – “A wild comedy, drama, dance, whatever film... just a whole lot of fun!”

Bastion by Ray Jacobs – “A great sense of style, humour and irony plays out in this film, and it is its packaging by director Ray Jacobs that is truly the highlight of the whole thing.”

- Best Period Piece

Not enough entries for this category to run.

- Special Mention

**The Curious Child by Howard Vause – “A fantastical beast of an animation film. Hooray!”**

**Isabella by Rohan Reddy – “Best closing credits. Very poppy and polished.”**

**Oops, I Murdered the Person the Person I Like Likes by Ross Ozarka – “The actual innovation of the hand puppet paper cut outs is great... but the length of this project is far too long, and hinders the overall impact and quality of the craftsmanship of the whole thing. By the end of it, I felt it was lacking... but still, it did, contain moments of genius. There was a touch of Miike’s plaster puppets from *The Happniess of the Katakuris*.”**

**Post Ebola Sierra Leone by Maarten Slooves – “There is a feeling that this film was made with great care and craftsmanship. It is fantastic really.”**

**The Avant-Gardener by Lindsay Katt, Heather Matarazzo, Jeremiah Kipp and Carl Byrd – “A fantastically rich music video voyage!”**

**Kragos the Dishonored by David Maddox – “Quite frankly, fan-made films rule like this rule!”**

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## Script competition:

- Best genre piece

**Winner: Talk Yellow to Me by Leqi “Vanessa” Kong – “There’s a feeling of great comedic drama in this project. And also, a sense that this could be something fun and smart, like the next HBO project – be it Girls or Insecure.”**

Nominees:

Virulent by David Spring – “A well-rounded genre piece full of big show stoppers and wide-reaching locations.”

Killer Door by Ian Pozzebon – “A great pulpy genre outing with ghouls and hammer styled content.”

- Best technique

**Winner: Prentice Park by Turi Haim – “A well rounded and well-polished script. There’s a real sense of character arcs, themes and purpose here... not to mention a well-written prose and correct scripting format.”**

Nominees:

Cestoda by Helen Marsh – “A strange and very well thought out script with some interesting unique touches.”

The Uncanny Valley by Julia Beney and Jacqueline Godbout – “A situation which allows for some original writing. Something that could be quite fun to see shot.”

- Best micro-budget script

No entries selected.

- Best character arc

**Winner: Show Your Tongue to Einstein by Alice Kreyman – “A roaring ensemble of characters live and breath in this script.”**

Nominees:

Newton in China by Leqi “Vanessa” Kong – “An odour of tradition runs through the lives of this film’s characters, and it is very well developed and clearly put on the page with much love.”

Living in the Moment by Curtis Roy Worrall – “Despite the strange formatting, this script does feature some interesting characteristics, ones that really go on a journey.”

S.F.O by Lawrence Whitener – “There’s a real sense of this film’s stakes being quite brash and well – in-tow with the characters live or die mode.”

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## Music Video

- Best music video

**Winner: Big Wild – City of Sound by Tim Fox – “An outstanding, slick and popful music video.”**

Nominees:

Bones Dreams Blood – The Real Tuesday Weld by Don Brosnan – “There’s something very nostalgic and yesteryear about this video that’s awesome. I now look forward to being a ghost someday!”

Requiem for Individuality by Jon M. Ausman – “This video reminds me of Grimes’ early work, in particular, Genesis. It has a great fantasy look about it.”

Looking for the Light by Yiannis Katsaris – “A tender and very warm video. Quite funny and moving too.”

- Best cinematography

**Winner: Ed Thomas’ photography of 600 Horses – “A video that drips in beauty and talent.”**

Nominees:

François Ray's photography of Linoleum – “The lighting of this short film is quite unique. Very tone conscious, and memorable.”

The photography of Big Wild – City of Sound- “As smooth looking as melting ice cream. Just deliciously sweet!”

- Best editing

**Winner: The edit of Looking for the Light – “The silence is greatly filled by the splicing of story and musical tones. It's great!”**

Nominees:

Drew Leyburn's editing of Strange Love – “Back and forth we go, stitching a little story within this music video. It's very nicely done, and is very smooth thanks to Scott McKinney's direction.”

The editing of I Love Marijuana by Whiskey Shirts – “Incorporating a variety of different camera angles, including panning steady shots and drone sky-swoops, is quite a nice thing... as long as the edit holds it together. This video pulls it off.”

Vasco Diogo's editing of Walkscape – “A nightmarish wonderworld is presented here, and it's the edit which really helps build the 'bigger' picture.”

# Winter 2019

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**FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

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## Jury Prize

**WINNER: Confusions of a Wasted Youth by Karolina Zebrowska**

Jury Member, [Ben Rider \(Festival Director\)](#) says:

*If I hadn't seen The Favourite, and if Marie Antoinette (the Sofia Coppola edition) hadn't already been around... I'd probably have written that this is the best short film I've seen this year. But that well, isn't the case. And that isn't to say that Karolina Zebrowska's short film isn't the best short film... in fact, it really is the best I've seen this year (so far), and well, reeks of a feature potential. That opening of this review is actually nothing more than a film snob's slobbering remarks. And, of course, this is a fantastic production and deserves some better opening... though I'd imagine having your film compared with those two auteur made films isn't bad going.*

*The style, tone and mood of this sort of period piece now feels rather all too familiar and somewhat like The Favourite, or perhaps Marie Antoinette. But it is also its own thing. This feels quite comical, and romantically sweet – our lead character, portrayed by Emma Findlay, is snappy, charming and darn right loveable. There's a lot of energy here, the edit is magnetic, and the photography is inviting. All in all, this is just a fantastically well-rounded film.*

Nominees:

Fishing by Tornike Bziava – “The scale of the production, and the orchestration of the world within it, is very impressively done. Quite a grand short film!”

Lady M by Tammy Riley Smith – “There is a sense that this film has already been made and seen before – the mumbling actress wandering around demanding a role she's too old for, and then getting it... and then sort of getting lost in the whole thing. Heck – it recalls the fantastic past

Palme D'or nom Habemus Papum... though one should add that this is a very English production, has a great witty dry sense of humour in it and is far more rural in its design. It's all very impressively packaged, and feels superior to most short films. ”

Lie Low by Jamie Noel – “A dark social drama, shot with precision and an impressive relocation to the countryside (something most of these urban social dramas fail to do). The film carries its inner-psychology quite deeply within its roots, and ultimately does so with an impressive follow through.”

The Survivor's Guide of a Newspaper Carrier by Klifford Barkus – “A really well invisioned social commentary film, one which encapsulates the idea of the urbs and the little dwellings, and the people that live in them.”

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## Main Competition

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Nominees: Inside Scoop from the Influencer by Alex G. Ringo, Confusions of a Wasted Youth by Karolina Zebrowska, So That's How It Happened by Aylee Sustrom, Abra Cadaver by Duane Michals, One Way Ticket by Mark James Birch

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: You or Me by Yana Zinov**

Festival Director says:

*There's a certain filmic magic to duplicity – one which You or Me succeeds perfectly in.*

*When I personally have done it, I have found that the core element of 'make belief', which primes all films and their so-called 'worlds', becomes more and more apparent. The falsification of time, space and make-shift paradox of camera angles, editing and general trickery, becomes all the more visible in terms of how fake the entirety of filmmaking is. It is because of this complexity, that having one actor play two parts can be so hard. Even at a 'higher' level of cinema, that being the ostentatious world of the financed film productions, it becomes more and more apparent how*

*constructed the whole thing is. Take American Horror Story's fourth season – Freakshow, or say David Cronenberg's fantastically chilling Dead Ringers. Both examples exemplify that the dual performance, no matter how well executed, is a magic trick that the audience must play along with for it to work.*

*And so, returning all the way back to You or Me, one can pinpoint this magic show as a sort of presentation of both film making style, which has been successfully delivered (yes, I believed the magic show of both beings), and that of technical wizardry on a low scale budget.*

Nominees:

Roadside Assistance by Ali Matlock – “The main tension, which is greatly enhanced by the filmic soundtrack, the gloomy photography, and the willing cast, makes for a proficient and fun ride of a film.”

The Perfect Murder by Vikkramm Chandirramani – “This one does feel like a sort of Hollywood thriller film... but its best parts are actually in its calmer moments, the sort that Douglas Sirk once commanded in the 50's. There's a sense of the bygone in this, and one can't help but relish those retro moments.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Fishing by Tornike Bziava**

Festival Director says:

*One of the most impactful things about The Fishing is its opening – a grand wide shot of a lighting fixture being put on display. The space, which is framed within frames of information in the background (the building site) and the foreground (the talking wanders, and the handyman overseeing the lighting fixture). The assembly within this shot, which sees the impact of real time, and the poetry of stillness (somewhat similar to the likes of an Abbas Kiarostami 'take'). It is this opening moment that shows off the most as well, as there is a sense of orchestration with timing, and a general sort of choreography of the cinema within this singular space. Everything being shown here is in a particular order and for us to absorb as viewers.*

*The second half of the film seems to drift further into a sort of Polish comedy. I say Polish deliberately here, as it bears a sort of grinning socialist comedic element that is both grim and entertaining, reminiscent of the late Krzysztof Kieslowski's work, say White. Its more entertaining than the first half, and is very much a fine pairing device to the first half.*

*All in all the film tends to be best as its own thing, and it sure does it all very well. This is a fine piece of filmic execution and one that could have easily been extended into a feature, or copied and repackaged as such. I guess what I'm trying to say is that the filmmaker seems quite adept*

*to being in touch with cinematic tools. That's why it is, after all, a winner. This is cinema finely presented!*

Nominees:

Seven Seas by Martin-Philippe Tremblay – “There is a real sense of style, scope and character in this film. Tremblay does a great job in creating this voyage we want to watch and be a part of.”

Walter Treppiedi by Elena Bouryka – “It is produced with a great feeling of passion and atmosphere. Bouryka has a great sense of her characters and the importance their nuanced personalities have on the material.”

Lady M by Tammy Riley Smith – “Melissa Knatchbull’s self aware script, focussed on an actress hell bent on playing a role the director intends to cast with a younger performer, is both an original take on the Scottish Play’s qualities, as well as a fantastic foundation for this postmodern comedic trope of a character drama film flooded with comedy. The cast, production design and scale bring to life this whole theatrical affair, and they do so with a great level of competence and joy.”

Jesus Rides A Harley by Michael Boston – “The characters are fantastically hilarious, entertaining and hearty. It all feels a tad bit wanderlust in a way – this is a journey and we are going to have a massively fun road trip of a time... heck, pushing all of the feelings and laughs one gets, this has a certain forgotten charm to it, a sort of John Waters trash element. It’s this part that one can’t help but be saddened by. When did film as an art form get so serious? Why did people forget that films can be magical? This could almost be a subplot of A Dirty Shame that got lost... or yet another great short film by Michael Boston.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Plastic Boy by Sam Plommer**

Festival Director says:

*Plastic Boy is a microfeature through and through. It was, accordingly, shot on a mobile phone. Not to say that that is a requirement. But it helps... I mean, mostly in the sense of this being a film that was assembled by someone who had a very private and personal story to tell, and decided ‘to hell with it, I’ll make it myself’. Or at least that’s the impression that’s given through the film mechanics.*

*There is a faint murmur of the mumblecore here, though it is far from being a NYC film, and doesn’t have an ounce of the American run and gun. Instead, this film really utilises a few locations repeatedly, allowing the cast to be the main fixture and shine.*

*Ultimately, it is through this minimalist approach, one which underplays the film's flaws, and instead really relishes on its strengths (the script, the cast, the pace and comedy of it all), where the film finds its steady footing and shines. Sure, it isn't the most exciting project one could come up with for a mega low budget... but guess what – I reckon in a few years, because of this film's minimalist quality, it won't age that badly, and will still be quite enjoyable to watch. Just heed my advice – in five or even ten years, this film will still be worth a look at (which is more than what one can say about most films being made right now in the indie world – mine included!).*

Nominees:

The Samaritans by Doug Bollinger – “This micro thrill/horror has the flavourings of the early 00's and late 90's of the horror genre, when anything happened, and it all became a tad self aware and postmodern. The photography is great, and the overall production values are quite consistent.”

Under the Crystal Dome by Cristian Parras – “There is a feeling that this sought of could have been like a Panos Cosmatos film. Only, I suppose, less strange. But it does something a little different than what your regular surreal films do. It tries to explain itself, as well as keep the film's perspective locked with the logic of its characters, rather than say trigger some cerebral hemorrhaging. All in all, these 60 minutes are a breezy delight, and great counter programming.”

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: The Reverend's Secret Mission by P. William Grimm**

Festival Director says:

*The Reverend's Secret Mission is far from being the most engaging documentary ever made, and it does at times feel rather self-indulgent about its subject matter.*

*But something should be said about its overall pacing. There is a real sense of sharing the story with the viewer, and this element, which at times feels like the storytelling of say Lilian Gish in Night of the Hunter. It is intimate, but also of the 'old world' in a sense. A recalled memory that is being told to us in a very formal and warm manner. We are children, and we should sit quietly and listen to this yarn.*

*All in all, it goes in wide, really leaning into the mystery of its key protagonist, and seems to relish details that a casual viewer wouldn't really care about. All of this aside though, the film is quite impressively constructed. It uses archive footage to enhance its casual interviews and often provides some rich histrionics in terms of its paper and photographic source material, all of which really does bring Brian Hession and his life to well, life!*

Nominees:

Dragonflies Only Live for 24 Hours by Richard Anthony Dunford – “A stylish piece featuring an impressively large cast with varying locales. There’s a real sense of ‘production value’ with this project, and an overall well maintained tone that keeps the film’s style consistent.”

Triggers by Tony Aaron II – “Though far from being the easiest watch, this film holds a sense of experimentation that recalls the likes of Sally Potter’s mobile phone film *Rage*. There’s a real feeling of anger and politics within Triggers, and it feels like a well thought out agenda... though some of it feels a tad preachy at times with its feature-length runtime.”

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Not enough titles to run this category.**

- Best Webseries

**Winner: Blackbetty by Marco North**

[Festival Director](#) says:

“Blackbetty is a rare thing – a webseries full of classy photography, a stronghold and consistent genre (in this case the noir), and of course, the key ingredient of all well produced video material: the follow-through of the whole team.”

Nominees:

The Jacob & Stuart Show by Danny Gustafson – “There is a great sense of comedy and wonder in this one. It isn’t the most polished of webseries, but it sure does amp up the Michel Gondry surrealist-comedy crank to a full 10/10 of ‘ha ha!’ moments.”

Old Girls on The Road by Tracey Walker – “This is a fairly original webseries in terms of subject area. It has a hell of a lot of character, and quite frankly, it is better than most of the hobby-talk shows here in the UK (we have too many to list from gardening to shopping to antique roadshows). So, yeah, THIS ROCKS!”

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## Other Categories

# Best Cinematography

**Winner: Jamie Noel's cinematography of Lie Low – “Noel's photography is the film's strongest hand. It is both creative in terms of its compositions and arrangement of space, as well as engaging and inviting. It often hides the scale of the film, reflecting a much higher production value than the actual resources at hand.”**

Nominees:

Marco North's cinematography of Blackbetty – “Something surreal, dark, brooding, malicious and delicious is delivered here. North's imagery, his setting up of the locales, and the way with which the light forever feels out of reach greatly enhances the show's quality.”

Sergio M Lorenza's photography in A Cure for Loneliness – “An acute image drives this film forwards, and helps bring it to a cinematic level of a high production value product.”

# Best Black and White Cinematography

**Winner: Theofilos Kazantzidis' cinematography of Shadows – “With the choice of black and white, this film is greatly enhanced, providing a harsh and retrospective image which is of the 'old cinema'. It is beautifully presented here, and at times recalls the works of Theo Angelopoulos and his grand canvas.”**

Nominee:

Marie Santa's cinematography of Olga Vont – “Sharply delivered, and with a care for the composition which is enhanced by the choice of black and white.”

# Best Actor

**Winner: Sam Plommer in Plastic Boy – “This performance is bold, brave and hilariously tragic at times... just fantastic really!”**

Nominees:

Jacob & Stuart in The Jacob & Stuart Show – “I assume these two are a single actor, and that their credit is a sort of Charlie Kaufman joke (like with Adaptation). It is hard to tell. Whatever the case, this is a fantastic hilarious performance of complete and utter madness.”

Tahir Moore in Triggers – “Moore brings a new meaning to the ‘ranting’ podcast host routine. It quite frankly measures up to the likes of Tracy Letts in Imperium, and carries a similar edgy energy, which helps liven up this film.”

Drew Schrum in You or Me – “Well, this feels like it was written as a showcase piece, and perhaps the only reason it really shines is because Schrum actually delivers his own script as more than just a showcase. It comes with a great methodical bashfulness that very few actors would succeed in doing.”

Wei Niu in Blue – “Wei Niu provides interesting textures of emotion for this short film. It is quite a bold performance.”

## Best Actress

**Winner: Samantha Bond in Lady M – “Both on and off the stage, Samantha Bond seems to be delivering as if she were in the spotlight. She demands our attention and effortlessly sucks the air out of the room... much like Lady Macbeth does when she tries to wash the blood off. It’s all a bit chilling and irresistible. ”**

Nominees:

Hayley-Marie Axe in It’s Over – “Axe does a great job in making the small talk of this berating short film actually unbearable. It is quite an achievement really... it all feels very realistic and comedic.”

Annie-Sage Whitehurst in Roadside Assistance – “Whitehurst keeps her performance under wraps, maintaining a calm and centred being in an ever-mounting horror event.”

Larissa Kruesi in 8 Million is the Loneliest Number – “Kruesi provides the film with a depthful lead as Helena – what is essential to this sort of social speaker film. Though the production values wouldn’t warrant it, this film could have easily been expanded around this awkward persona to make a feature film of the ‘girl lost in the city’ routine.”

Clementine Mills in Molly & Noel – “Green Card does this subject matter in a much more depth and rich manner... though, perhaps one ought to highlight this film’s compact nature, and well, Mills and her co-star’s ease of character and conviction. She comes across as real and layered

in her delivery. It is these two performances, and the well maintained production style, that makes Molly & Noel quite great.”

## Best Ensemble Cast

**Winner: The cast of Plastic Boy – “There’s a great sense of comedic timing with the cast of Plastic Boy. They also seem to be fully on board with telling this story with a great feeling of realism. Some great work here.”**

Nominees:

The cast of Dragonflies Only Live for 24 Hours – “The entire team seems to be on-board for this film both emotionally and physically. There’s a real sense that (the director) Dunford has got the best from his collective team.”

The cast of Dreams, Washed Out- “There is a feeling that this film ought to have been made during the Cinema Du Look wave. Or even the Hong Kong New Wave. Regardless, it is excessively stylistic, and tastes like a daring meal at a fusion restaurant.”

The cast of The Samaritans – “This ensemble rack up the creepy and funny in equal measures. There’s quite a great variety of characters here, and Bollinger has done a great job in casting the right performers for the various parts.”

The cast of Jesus Rides A Harley – “They’re an odd misfit bunch, somewhat like the cast of a Jean Pierre-Jeunet film. They’re loveable. And the cast goes to great strengths to throw their energy into this, making it all the more fun to watch and believe.”

The cast of Rally On/Off – “It feels like a circus show – loads of people coming and going, and they are all sort of fascinating as a flock of caricatures.”

## Jury Prize – Special Mention: Supporting Actresses

**Winners: Samvedna Suwalka and Niharica Raizada in The Perfect Murder – “When the nightmare finally closes in on Kabir, it is his screen partners that really steal the show.**

They seem to be the anchors of the film, keeping it steady in the growing storm of varying waves and drowning drama.”

## Best Score

**Winner: Olivia Bec’s music for The Samaritans – “Bec’s soundtrack enhances and shines through The Samaritans. It is both tonal and a fantastically textured horror soundtrack.”**

The score of Seven Seas – “The film’s emotional depth is greatly expanded thanks to the score featured within the short film. The crescendo of the film matches its soothing tunes.”

Adionetwork.com’s music in Confusions of a Wasted Youth – “One can’t help but acknowledge the pace and excitement this music provides the film.”

## Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Roadside Assistance by Ali Matlock – “There’s a great feeling of fantasy horror to this short. Its pace is slow, like a pot of water on a cooker... and it boils oh so delightfully once it reaches its point of no return.”**

The Samaritans by Doug Bollinger – “Though not an outright thriller or even horror, The Samaritans walks the two thin lines, enjoying the pleasures of genre filmmaking to the fullest. There’s a creepy ghost vibe, dark-toned scenes and creepy music. Ooooh!”

Yort by Duane Michals – “As a silent picture, loaded with spring box entertaining and mysticism, one can’t help but love this ridiculous wild short film.”

Boxes by Michèle Jedlicka – “As a simple character film, Jedlicka finds a certain nuance in her work that resembles Buster Keaton’s work.”

Inhibited by Sonya Moorjani – “It walks a fine line of being a tense inner turmoil drama and an entertaining think piece. As a viewer, I immediately thought of the classic Stiller film The Cable Guy, and how the two were very similar but very different in tone. There’s something great about that, and how genre has shaped these differences.”

# Best Direction

**Winner: Spizella by Mehmet Tıǧlı** – “The short encapsulates a great sense of style and vision. It is both a fable, and a social realist drama. There’s a real sense of knowingness within this film, and that goes beyond the cultural elements, and seeps into the cinematic real: we see the world, its time and can interpret it as such through its movements, the way with which the characters live and move, and how simple objects and moments can become great symbols of our lives. It feels like a film poem.”

Nominees:

**No More Lights in the Sky by Danny Cotton** – “The film’s variety showcase of different filming techniques and film genres, all handled with great care, is quite impressively done. It is at times a docu-drama, docu-horror and just a plain old moralist drama. There’s a hint of Abel Ferrara in here somewhere. Or at least, one can’t help but pull a correlation between Ferrara’s work in the 90’s, which often looked at the decay of moralism through the eyes of the VHS format, and the idea of a protagonist who documents the decay of modern civilisation, and this film’s examination of plight within a society that is being tested on by its government.”

**Lady M by Tammy Riley Smith** – “One could have made this film with a fluffy theatrical style. But that would have been the lazy route. Riley Smith does the opposite, pushing the theatrical into the cinematic realm, and it is done with a heap tonne of style, vision and awareness for the journey both in the actor’s mind (ie the characters) as well as that in the audience’s, which get to see such a varied world of the UK’s lesser absorbed qualities: bus etiquette, walking tunnels (minus the burning fire) and community theatre. It’s all done with a great feeling for thoughtfulness and passion.”

**Under the Crystal Dome by Cristian Parras** – “A constantly evolving mystery is hidden in this film. It feels like a Pandora’s box of its own design. And there’s no denying the director Christian Parras having a strong vision of what he wanted and seeing it brought to the screen.”

**151 by Natalie Forward** – “Made with a great sense of delicacy, as well as a careful hand in the use of well polished technical content, 151 is an intriguing piece featuring a careful balancing act of tone and character.”

**Olav by Jørund Moltubakk** – “The film encapsulates a sense of community and the impact individuals have on one another, something rarely brought to the screen with clarity, especially in the case of short films. There’s even a slight Roy Andersson feeling about this film. It’s great!”

# Best Writing

**Winner: Jesus Rides A Harley by Michael Boston – “This feels a tad preachy at times, the script I mean. But it is also more than that, it is a reminder that a plain old simple trimmed down fable with a good message at its heart can be far more entertaining, recommendable and downright enjoyable than most of the short films being made these days. Boston’s characters really do drive the whole ordeal, their human dilemmas become intoxicating to watch.”**

Nominees:

Framed for the Holidays by Daniel Appelt – “This pot boiler of a script feels like the sort of small scale film that once would have been produced on the backlot of a film studio to play to happy viewers during the Golden Age of Hollywood.”

Fishing by Tornike Bziava – “The film, which has a similar flavour to the Eastern European directors (such as Krzysztof Kieslowski) carries its social agenda hand in hand with entertaining comedic moments. It’s a bold wild journey.”

Walter Treppiedi by Elena Bouryka – “The story, built around journeys, captures what is best of road movies: a sense of movement, change, challenge and characters.”

The Survivor’s Guide of a Newspaper Carrier by Klifford Barkus – “Written with a lot of chutzpah. It’s fun, funny and memorable. The suburban bite recalls a sort of Joe Dante/John Waters vibe.”

Bored Bitch by Trëndelina Halili – “There’s a heap of interesting dialogue in this one. It is very intimate and immediate.”

## Best Editing

**Winner: Caitlin O’Brian’s editing of Old Girls on The Road – “The flow of this webseries is very fresh and well organised. There is a real sense of time, pace and tone – which makes for very enjoyable viewing.”**

Nominees:

The editing of You or Me – “The fast pace and well-adjusted shaping of the one handler performance in this is rather scrumptiously done.”

Clair Maleney’s editing of Legacies – “In the context of the director assembling a narrative out of what has been documented, Meleney does an impressive job of finding a direction and purpose to the material and its order.”

The editing of Olav – “Thoughtfully assembled, and often done so with a care for preserving the performances of the actors in the best way possible.”

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## Special Mention

Special Mention Prize: Experimental Film

**Winner: Same Old Scene by Paul Bloomfield**

“An experimental wandering that really does drill into your brain a dreamy dusky setting of sleepy proportions. Beautifully shot.”

Special Mention Prize: Animation Video

**Winner: Your Eyes, Will I Ever by KRILL Directed by Félicien Colmet Daâge**

“The look, the presentation of its space and time is engrossing, hypnotic and beautiful.”

Special Mention Prize: Best Ending

**Winner: Return directed by Valentina Bespalaia**

“The long take which just keeps on going, moving from customer to cashier, is an impressively well orchestrated moment that helps build tension to the film’s ending, which is a fantastic punch line to the whole ordeal.”

Special Mention Prize: Makeup and Art Direction

**Winner: Spores by Tommy Bardal**

“This short film exemplifies the importance of design within film, and uses it to the maximum.”

Special Mention Prize: Social Comedy

**Winner: Anorak by Andrew Ball-Shaw**

“It is a film about beings that are insane really. It recalls the sort of comedy that no longer gets ‘green lit’ – the strange adult comedy, like ‘I Heart Huckabees’. We’d love a feature!”

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## Script Competition

### *Best Genre Piece*

**Winner: Sweetgrass Village by Margaret Ford-Rogers**

“The film’s subject is quite obviously set up for a comedic turn, but what Ford-Rogers pulls off is more sophisticated than that. This is a comedy with a hearty edge!”

Nominees:

Patient by M Rowan Meyer

“A variety of fantastic characters make their way through this wayward TV Pilot. Had this been the naughties, this would have been the sort of comedy that would have ended up as part of the ‘prime cuts’ of ABC. It’s got that uncomfortably-comfortable comical way about it, like Hope and Faith and Scrubs (obviously).”

Evening of the Evil Eye by Angel Connell

“Perhaps the most original political comedy to make its way through our submissions!”

### *Best Technique*

**Winner: Kiri and the Dead Girl by Christopher Logan**

“Written with a very slick scalpel. Lines are direct, specific... and the script’s presentation is quite fantastic. One has a feeling that this is a very polished product, and one with a particularly unique voice.”

Nominees:

The Prodigal by Conor Mullen

“Short, sweet and to the point. Mullen wastes no time on fatty scenes. This is a lean mean machine ready for filming!”

Cross Country by Rick Grogan

“It feels like a 90’s road film with a modern burst of energy. There’s a heap of characters, themes and a sense for the locales (and their own non-human personalities). It’s all very well arranged and presented.”

### *Best Micro Budget Script*

**Winner: The Prodigal by Conor Mullen**

“With its respectful subject, Mullen provides a small world of the soldiering past within the quietened walls of a hospital room and ward. There is much to admire here – appealing characters and a short runtime that makes the film quite easy for filming and moving.”

Nominee:

Summer is Hot by Lamar and Melissa Vowell

“A tightly designed script that carries an awareness for budget and realistic production complications.”

### *Best Character Arc*

**Winner: Songbird on the Wire by Vance Berk**

“Kershaw and the gang seem to be working against the clock in this pistol of a script. It fires off all the time, and is full of bangs!”

Nominees:

Memoirs of a Scots Irish Woman by Kaye Park Hinckley

“There is a great sense of purpose in these beings, and their history is both richly presented in the contemporary dialogue of the setting, as well as the harshness of the overall scenario. The script does need some work to adhere to correct formatting, but it is a diamond in the rough, and somewhat reminiscent of AMC’s Turn.”

Cross Country by Rick Grogan

“This ensemble of beings just plain rocks!”

Summer is Hot by Lamar and Melissa Vowell

“A bit of a variety piece in terms of tone, pace and even genre. Pushing these anchors aside, the script is quite lively thanks to its characters and the struggles they face.”

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# Music Video

## ***Best Music Video***

**Winner: NU by Casota Collective**

“A wonderful weird dream of a production. ENTER THE NU!”

Nominees:

– Wanna Be Young: 7ever feat Sid Wilson (Slipknot) Directed by Henry Lipatov “It is rare to see musicians have so much fun in their music videos. It is usually nothing more than a product endorsement and a hard sell for the whole ordeal. But there is a sense here of involvement and participation that is very genuine. I can’t help but recall White Nights by Oh Land. It’s got that same bliss to it.”

Your Eyes, Will I Ever by KRILL Directed by Félicien Colmet Daâge “A thing of rare beauty.”

– Kiss Me Malibu Directed by Mikel Arraiz “There is a feeling that the characters in this would have made for a wonderful film. Some creative editing hooks you in at the start, though the consistency gets a bit shaky as the plot unravels. Silent narrative shorts are rarely enjoyable, but this one is mighty entertaining!”

– The Rock by HARDCHARLIE Directed by Sense Hernandez “The sense of there personal is greatly enhanced by the way with which Hernandez and his team shot and cut this video. It’s rather impressive!”

## ***Best Cinematography***

**Winner: Viacheslav Kazantsev’s cinematography of The Stop**

“Yes, this is made in a studio, and probably is so consistent thanks to the conditions said sound stage provides... regardless though, such a simple premise is brought to such dizzying heights with this fantastically beautiful production.”

Nominees:

- Alexander Kohn’s cinematography for DRUGS by GiiRL “An explosive 90’s punk look grates our digital screens. Kohn understands remediation, and ‘gets’ retro video, uses it all to his advantage. This video is very much alive thanks to his wizardry.”
- Telmo Soares’ cinematography of NU “There is a glimmer of a cinematic past here. I can see the ghost of Sven Nykvist, in particular his work with Tarkovsky... but regardless of that, Soares has done a wonderful job of creating a consistent look for this video. Every frame is delicious.”
- Alberto Molinari’s cinematography of Adam “The images are fresh, and yet wonderfully 1990’s. I love it!”

## ***Best Editing***

**Winner: Alexander Kohn’s editing of MAYBETHEPROBLEMISYOU by Giirl**

“The assemblage of images – their splicing and the mixed media presentation, is a plain old delight. It has that very self-aware-postmodern speedy bounce that makes it pop and attract one’s eyeballs. Somewhat similar to the videos coming out with Grimes, though not as wild or expensive as Claire Boucher’s work.”

Nominees:

- Oliver Griffiths’ editing of Run by Further Than Forever – “It is far from being the most pretty video on selection... but it is cut with so much detail, and effort to keep the energy going with the rocky track, that one can’t help but love it.”
- J.B. Lawrence’s editing of Closure – “There is a bit of a whirlwind of images here. It moves fast, it grabs you, it comforts and ignites. Though there is not much in the way of actual ‘closure’, Lawrence’s video is a fantastically fragmented run of images and contrasting spaces.”
- Ian Roberts’ editing of Spod – “Roberts splices a whole tonne of footage in a very creative way. In fact, the photography doesn’t live up to the effort made in this video’s assemblage, which is many miles ahead of the other technical elements featured in it.”

**Search for:**

# Autumn 2018

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**FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

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## Jury Competition:

- Jury Prize

**Winners: tie – Entrance No Exit by Jo Southwell and My Dear Friend by Qiumeng Zhong**

Guest Judge, Xavier Baeyens. says:

*Entrance No Exit was a good situation comedy. It's a bit of a bolting project – you get thrown into a scenario and have to hold on whilst the shifting sands push and pull the characters into various situations. Meanwhile, My Dear Friend is fully fleshed, contains a raw style of cinematography and it brings a relatable story to the screen in an unexpected way.*

*Both projects contain some great technical handling, where a vision is present and presented to the viewer. There are both cinematic experiences and ones which carry a certain memorable element to it which makes them stand above their competitors.*

Runners-Up:

Kommando 1944 by Derek Quick

Cakra Buana by Massimo Burhanuddin

I'm F#\$%ing Fine by Jamie Anderson

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# Main competition:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

## Winner: Say Please by Blake Bauer

Festival Director says:

*There isn't actually all that much that is original in Say Please. It is a very 'Victorian' story – the type that used to be written in the British empire in order to inform children of the importance of being polite. Of course, in the likes of said Victorian stories, there were no clowns, no tied up woman and all said stories featured vague references to violence... never of these heights.*

*The short does though embody one key thing about low budget filmmaking – it is opulent. It is rich, colourful, and well produced.*

*The cast punch their best, and so does the camera department, which go above and beyond to infuse the film with texture and rich images.*

*As for the subject matter, well – it reminded me of Eli Roth's produced film Clown. And I can comfortably add after that, that I haven't seen a clown themed film, since Clown that is, that was as exciting, original and entertaining as this mighty little short.*

Nominee:

Baba Yorga Origins by Sean Pettis – “What madness is this? What wonder?! It is like something out of Jan Švankmajer's imaginations. We are scared, bemused and intrigued.”

Love at First Sight by Isabella Jacqueline – “There's a real sense of making the best film here with as little resources as possible... which is to say, Jaqueline does a wonderful job. It's pampered, bright and colour filled. Perhaps a bit of a film convert grade wouldn't hurt, or even a retro 4:3 frame... just to evoke a bit more of an 80's throwback style, to match the film's genre and scripting of a John Hughes-ish ploy. But yes, it is splendid all the same.

Introducing Skully by Kirk Wallace – “The film carries its genre, and its production, with a great eye for detail, animation technique and bold utilisation of its low budget.”

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

## Winner: Power Down by Bradley Murray

Festival Director says:

*I still think Ingrid Goes West will forever remain as the ‘digital danger’ message of the decade... but Bradley Murray’s Power Down does provide an ample bite sized punch line with equal gusto and style.*

*The film carries a great sense of filmic time, editing and splashing is characters all around. The photography, as well, for the most part is delicate, and well used when capturing the ensembles performances. There’s not much fat here either, and the use of the production scale is effective, if not informative as well – as one rarely thinks of the peaceful Oz when picturing the end of social media kicking and its respective withdrawal symptoms kicking in!*

Nominees:

Blood Means Nothing by Mark Oxtoby – “Though it is a tad bit cheesy at times, some of the cast (in particular Lauren Logan and Dan Krikler) bring some much needed realism to the show and rescue its run time... All in all, ‘Blood Means Nothing’ proves to be a well oiled machine featuring some enticing music and classy melodrama disguised as another ‘British Gangster’ project.”

Entrance No Exit by Jo Southwell – “Sophie Dix’s lighthearted script of an OCD fussed celeb on a plane ride recalls the charm of the Meg Ryan comedy French Kiss. The scale is fairly impressive with its use of a plane locale, and the lighting, ensemble cast and overall balancing of production values are all maintained quite consistently throughout the production.”

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

## Winner: Kommando 1944 by Derek Quick

Festival Director says:

*The opening of the short was a bit of a wobbly thing – the creases in that newly unfolded Nazi flag rang a little bell in my head that said: ‘this is a film, and no one wanted to decrease that damn flag’. But, putting that issue aside, as one should (because who really would want to uncrease it!)... the short is one of the most impressive I’ve seen in quite some time, and makes for a hard-to-follow act for all the 2019 entries we’ll be receiving from here on out!*

*The film has a bold sense of time, place and history; throwing a few punches both at the histrionics of WWII, and the varied narratives that the period tends to hold (ones often ignored in fictional film). It pursues a variety of genre types, all disguised as an interesting human story. And*

*above all, and perhaps the most impressive element of the film – the project is shot with a stunning classical cinema approach.*

*The only issue I hold, and it is really only an issue of personal taste is that I thought the film was too lush in terms of its colours, and as such – looked too beautiful for the story it was telling. All in all though, this is an ace film.*

Nominees:

A Friend in Need by Matt George Lovett – “Lovett’s film, which is a varied showcase piece of Matt Carrell’s large ensemble drama script, contains intrigue and a wobbly sense of balance. Though the production is quite impressively held together as a variety piece, mostly constructed by a switching of direction and locales, the whole thing sort of collapses in on itself, serving more as a punchline riddled joke, than say the more tonal drama that it opened as. All in all though, it is a well executed short film, which often features scenes that become quite cinematically engaging.”

Teatro a Palazzo by Roberto Caldi – “Though a tad fatty with its runtime and pacing, Teatro a Palazzo carries some great detail, a strong ensemble and fun period piece costuming.”

TBFA by Max Lakner – “Though quite contained in terms of its scale and budget use, the film manages to swap day and night, and scene circumstance/ambiance, with a graceful ease. Also, one should add – a few great moments of split screen provide some interesting special De Palma moments – Kudos to Lakner and his DP/Editing team for pulling these off.”

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Eclipsed by Aditya Chowdhury**

Festival Director says:

*Eclipsed by Aditya Chowdhury carries a certain dreamy post-modern Maya Deren style. It is though, far from the bleak and surreal elements of Deren’s Meshes of the Afternoon. Instead, Eclipsed is a modern story of a modern woman. And likewise, almost in direct parallel with Deren’s work, there is a sense of the artist working here independently with a camera in reach – the merky fuzzy buzz filled video camera.*

*The city blurs, the interiors are dark and often filled with shallow photography, and the natural habitats are soft. Everything is reconstituted, its colours are filtered and seeped through the perspective of the camera, its digitisation, and is handled by its holder and their placement in relation to the the light source / subject(s). It is thanks to this bold use of perspective, an awareness for the mediums limitations (and agility), that Chowdhury is able to find the perfect balance of his budget, the project’s limitations, and its artistic needs.*

Nominees:

Kibbles by Mauro Paolino – “Though it isn’t the most concise feature, and relies heavily on its young cast, the film bares plenty of teeth at the generation suffering from a lacklustre for life after years of digital ingest. It is, for those reasons, a personal event for its young director, and one delivered with quite a strong handling of a classical film style.”

Dead Unicorns by Ian Fielding – “A merciless artistic venture which pushes its budget to the limits with some outstanding results.”

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Not enough valid entries for this category to be a competition.**

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Love Possible by Michael Boccalini and Che Grant**

Festival Director says:

*This film is quite frankly a complete and utter farce, and I mean that in the best of ways. It is comical, but also quite dreadfully heartbreaking, and also contains a rather grim utterance of what modern day romance (or at least romance in the last century) has become.*

*As genre films go, Love Possibly is well, everything the likes of Love Actually is. There’s no glossy Hollywood stars here, and the cinematography and ‘to camera’ performance breaks any sense of film realism, evoking that feeling of analysis: we, as an audience, are in on the joke... rather than say – laughing with the characters, or crying with them... like the effect of Love Actually.*

*All in all the project boasts some grand London spots, and embeds several impressive supporting roles around its very strong leads, all of whom try their best to keep the energy levels afloat. The script, likewise, is a well constructed variety show. The whole thing is somewhat reminiscent of a Fellini film, only the surrealism is dialed waaaaay back here, and it is as more as a travelling circus of fun beings stuck in funny situations. Highly enjoyable and recommendable to all viewers alike!*

Nominees:

The Astronot by Tim Cash – “Produced with a hell of a lot of obvious affection, this film carries itself with a lot of ease. It is a fun viewing experience, and it provides a new take on the outback

of American cinema – forget Ford and his wrestle with the dusty dunes, this film is about fatherhood, dreams and space.”

UNS by Singh Sahab – “It feels comedic at times, though it always remain steeped in some sort of dramatic turn. It is shot with a very crystal clear image, and the performances of its two leads really shine quite boldly here, almost like early Bozarge films.”

The Marvin Case by Lewis Eizykman – “This is a very formalist (in the film theory) event, full of documentary like moments blasted with comedy. ”

A Girl, A Boy, A Penny and a Very, Very, Very Long Road by Julia Beney – “The young cast, and the film’s somewhat ‘mid-road’ presentation evokes a fantastic feeling of youth passing, the pending adulthood of these characters, and well – a certain nostalgia for the previous paths they’ve taken. It is, in some roundabout way, very reminiscent of Ingmar Bergman’s one film, Wild Strawberries, which focuses on an elderly man midway upon his journey to a prized reception.”

- Best Webseries

### Winner: Subverse by Joseph White

Festival Director says:

*I am outright jealous of Joseph White and his work on Subverse.*

*The project is one trippy glitchy wormhole of danger and happiness, and it is steeped in some fantastically lean elements of thematic content (disconnection, alienation, communication), as well as an awareness for filmic language, and its transgression (almost a reminder of Olivier Assayas’ postmodern work, in particular Personal Shopper and Demonlover).*

*The project boasts some bold turns from its cast, the visual effects department, and the photographic department. It appears as if everyone working on this was fully loaded and bursting with creativity.*

*Just plain awesomeness!*

SUBVERSE EPISODES ONE + TWO from Joseph White on Vimeo.

Nominees:

Rebound by Andrew Ball-Shaw – “An oddball webseries with a tonne of character. Quite an unusual entry for a UK production, and quite impressively so!”

The A to Z of Clueless Experts by Collene Webb – “We have had so many fake vlog webseries, all spoofs of the dreadful millennial era ‘internet sensations’, that one can’t help but feel a bit bored by the concept at this point. It’s like a found footage film – we’ve seen too many of them... however, Collene Webb’s scripting and performance is quite outstandingly outlandish, and she does know how to burst onto the screen with great energy, character and wildness. So, you know, we’ll recommend yet another satirical vlog, because it’s too fun to miss!”

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## Other categories:

Other Categories:

- Best Cinematography

**Adam LaPine’s photography of Cat Box – “The film is quite low key, and yet, LaPine finds many ways to keep the image of the film blasting with colour, sharp streaks of light, and careful textures, all of which enhance the film, and make for a very memorable viewing experience.”**

Nominees:

John T Connor’s photography in I’m F%\$#ing Fine – “Crisp, poetic, often underplayed and well balanced. It’s not as brash or heavy on contrast, but for some reason it recalls the textured palettes of Sven Nykvist, which is to say it is quite fantastic.”

Rushil Choudhary and Markus Dell’s photography in Like Glass – “An inventive and often texture infused image progressively reveals the woods and the inner turmoil of this film’s lead protagonist. It is a great little thing.”

Tim Cash’s photography of The Astronot – “Carefully produced with a bold eye for colour, scope and graceful American locales. It is very reminiscent of Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s work (in particular his American picture – Spivet) ... which is to say it is fantastically shot!”

- Best Actor

**Winner: Conner Neddersen in Cat Box – “Neddersen’s performance is nearly entirely silent, and yet it is energetic, emotive and a blast to watch!”**

Nominees:

Roi Cydulkin in TBFA – “He’s irritating to watch... in the best of ways. Quite a nuanced performance, and provides a great foundation which his co-stars can play off of.”

Robert Dukes in A Friend in Need – “The film’s intrigue is mostly carried by its lead – Robert Dukes, who brings a certain intriguing level of detail to his performance, which often enforces the idea of realism within the narrative world.”

Eric Robinson in Subverse – “Bonkers performance full of sweat, tears (and I’m sure blood) for a bonkers project. Quite brilliant.”

Neil Hobbs in Within – “It is a heavy performance, and one that provides a great sense of realism to the whole project.”

- Best Actress

**Winner: Liz Taylor in Give + Take – “Taylor one hell of an entertaining character actress, and this is a fantastic vehicle for her.”**

Nominees:

Arabella Aldrich in TBFA – “A consistent performance full of energy and various tones. Aldrich punches well above the weight of most actresses in this season!”

Therés Amee in The Heather Project – “Amees provides a brilliantly comedic performance to this delightful short film.”

North Roberts in Something About Henry – “She’s a hoot.”

Shirin Parveen in UNS – “Many actors would have taken this role on and made it very dramatic and joyless to watch. Parveen however does what Lewis did before her so wonderfully in The Other Sister, she shows us the world through the eyes of her character, and never hides away from the experience of being disabled, and a happy being. It is quite fantastic to watch, and Parveen should be commended for her successful delivery, which shifts from being quite positive to quite dark due to its ending. The whole thing is full of energy and power.”

Jill Sheen in Say Please – “She screams and cries and I hope she didn’t have to do too many takes because the whole thing looks like a challenge... though the ending was quite sweet.”

- Best Ensemble Cast – dependent number of qualifying entries

**Winner: The cast of My Dear Friend – “A grand and very moving thing is present here, and it is mostly explored and delivered by this cast of impressive and interesting beings.”**

Nominees:

The cast of I’m F#\$%ing Fine – “They’re an annoying bunch in the best of wayz.”

The cast of Kommando 1944 – “A solid cast of actors help bring the film it’s soulful life, one, which thanks to their presence, exists beyond the technical workmanship and histrionics on show.”

The cast of The Marvin Case by Lewis Eizykman – “A calculated onslaught of personas make their way through The Marvin Case. It seems the relativity of these individuals to a very ‘interesting’ missing cat is well, hilariously entertaining.”

The cast of Emotical – “They have a lot of fun in this, and are quite skilled at balancing that kitsch and seriousness together. It’s like an old Schwarzenegger film.”

- Best Score

**Winner: Enry Johan Jaohari’s music for Cakra Buana – “It almost feels unfair not to place this prize elsewhere, on the simple grounds that the score, lyrics and music of Cakra Buana are that of a musical, and not of a score. Ultimately, ignoring the slight categorisation dilemma, one has to observe that there’s barely any silence in this film, and that for a feature film made on a small budget, it is mighty impressive!”**

Nominees:

Giuseppe Alfano and Matthew Holland’s scoring of Entrance No Exit – “An atmospheric gastro blasts Entrance No Exit, and it’s delicious to hear!”

Jeff Guerra and Jeremy Lwamugira’s scoring of Introducing Skully – “A fantastically classical score runs through the entirety of this chasy short film. It’s fun, and its emotive.”

Paco Periago’s scoring of The Game – “There is oodles of tone, genre pieces and tension in this score!”

- Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Cakra Buana by Massimo Burhanuddin – “We have never seen an Indonesian musical before, both as a festival judging team and cinephiles/filmmakers. I suppose that says it all.”**

Nominees:

Entrance No Exit by Jo Southwell – “A comedic splash presides Entrance No Exit. It’s humorous, and very Jacques Tati.”

A Sari for Pallavi by Sunita Deshpande – “Some great grounded comedy full of authenticity and character allows A Sari for Pallavi to bubble with charm.”

Rebound by Andrew Ball-Shaw – “Something quite comical, intriguing and entertaining brews here.”

Lady in the Shower by Chris Borgo – “This is a haughty horror, brasin and classy. Can we just skip the shorts and get a feature on the road? Because Borgo has already mastered this runtime to perfection.”

The Game by Matthias Pöltinger, Zoe Fuchs – “It is a never ending thing of genre intrigue, playfulness and mystery!”

- Best Direction

**Winner: Dead Unicorns by Ian Fielding – “No one saw #Horror. I thought it was a fantastic little gem of a film. It burst onto the scene with a lot of style, darkness and bold artistic design. It was a bizarre mixture of art, the idea of what is art, and film, as art. The reason I mention it though is because Fielding has done the same here. And it is perhaps even more successful than fashion director turned filmmaker Tara Subkoff’s effort. Fielding has merged genre with installation, and art, and performance, or even perhaps performative art. The film is rich, a multilayered high rise full of personas, noises and dark rooms. It is a relish worthy event, and a bloody fantastic second feature!”**[\*\*\\*Review by Festival Director\*\*](#)

Nominees:

Subverse by Joseph White – “Such a wild world is presented in Subverse, and it is White’s stylisation of it, and its spacial awareness, that makes it feel so real, dangerous, enjoyable, pop-eyed frenzied and ecstatic!”

My Dear Friend by Pingdao Yang – “The way with which the rural settings are captured, and the nature of how the complex dynamics between the cast of characters is evoked in a physical and psychological way into the film, is an impressive and alluring success by Pingdao Yang.”

Cat Box by Kris Kristensen – “It’s an atmospheric affair, and it reeks (pun unintended) of some heavy cat litter mystery. No, in all seriousness – Kristensen goes old school here – his lead goes walkabout in the dark suburbs, and it’s a bit of a The ‘Burbs fun.”

All In by Oliver James Spalding – “It’s a bit lengthy for a short, but the project is quite intensely and beautifully told.”

Emotical by Ellis E. Fowler – “Fowler’s handling of genre, and the various aspects of his film’s elements, is impressive and often exciting to watch.”

- Best Writing

**Winner: The Other Side by Grace Fox – “Fox’s main premise: a nervous lady with a walkie talkie walking and talking in the post apocalyptic setting, is a work of original genius. Quite frankly it was just outstandingly well written and I hope we are only all so lucky to have such a blasted time when and if the end comes.”**

Nominees:

I’m F%\$#ing Fine by Jamie Anderson (maybe) – “A carefully constructed narrative of unfortunate happenings built around a series of entertaining LA caricatures; allowing for the cast to bring a lot of life to this film.”

Strawberry or Lemon by Paul Dean Vieillefrance – “The film’s poetic and intimate subject matter makes for an unusual watch. It’s very delicate, and carries a certain likeness with Hirokazu Koreeda’s recent familial works.”

A Mi Manera by Gloria Ines – “Clashing comedy with dark drama makes for a very precise ‘dessert’ of a film. It’s funny, charming, but also upsetting and hard hitting. We usually get a lot of entres, and a few main course films here... but we basically never get a dessert. It’s an easy viewing with a mixture of a bitter chocolate flavour and something very sweet.”

Give + Take by Brian Kennington – “The writing is plump, fun and witty. The characters are lively and bubbly. I just hope I don’t need to use a plug anytime soon.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: Will Barnard's editing of Get Riel – “As short documentaries go, this one is a pure pleasure... and well, the edit is concise, entertaining, and always on-the-go. It's a dance!”**

Nominees:

Chris Borgo's editing of Lady in the Shower – “A tense object is petrified by its arrangement here. Borgo does a splendid job of getting the atmosphere spliced, diced and bloody.”

(Curro),... by Micah Stathis – “The editing of this short provides it with a pace of digital freshness. Energy flows through the cuts, and imitates the nature of the film's lead character's vex over the concepts of time, space and consciousness.”

Anthony Thornton-Hopwood's editing of Park Life – “It is a bit of a fluffy event, but the actors, cinematography and ideas are all tied together quite nicely thanks to a concise and often tone sensitive edit by Thornton-Hopwood.”

Roan Lenihan's editing of Burnt On Both Sides – “The film's genre, and its pacing, are all thanks to the edit. It is lean machine!”

- Best Period Piece

**Winner: Long Gone by Oliver Mitchell – “Though not an outright period piece, the film carries a certain gravitas towards the past, which it delivers impressive details considering its tight budget. Also, one might add, it is brilliantly written as a kind of 90's time travelling band story. Hora!”**

Nominees:

Teatro a Palazzo by Roberto Caldi – “Almost timeless with its placement in time, and as such – all the more fantastical.”

Micro Love by Annaliese Eisenstadt – “Though far from authentic, or even convincing in its period piece details – Micro Love does come loaded with a throwback to the 80's highschool comedies (or even horrors) that optimized the decade in American cinema.”

- Special Mention

**The effects and editing of Subverse by Joseph White – “A wild glitchy world is created for Subverse, and the production team behind it go all out and make a wonderful trippy thing... probably one of the best digital manias since Greg Araki's Kaboom.”**

**Michael J. Grundmann's documentary *Breaking Free* – “A thoughtful subject matter delivered with integrity and importance.”**

- Best Documentary

**Rose by Edwin Miles – “Producing a family portrait as this one is a difficult task, and it is done with a great insight into filmic editing, the film's key character and how one handles the story being told. Quite delightful really.”**

Nominees:

Mexican wave by Judson Vaughan – “Sadly this isn't the sort of documentary that gets air time in the UK, but it should. It is made with a very bold voice, is a conscious discussion about the dilemmas facing Mexico, and above all – it is informative. Quite great.”

Day of the Western Sunrise by Keith Reimink – “A bold collage of documentary interview footage mixed with some impressive animation techniques. The balancing act of old gentleman talking of their past with new imagery provides the film's audience with a gateway into their tale which is told in an impressively cinematic style thanks to Reimink's choice of form, as well as the editorial work or organising the tale.”

Wizzy Mangoma's documentary *Wizzy*, a visitor from Zimbabwe – “A personal story told with a great amount of depth and insight.”

- Special Prize: Best Animation

**Winner: *Introduction to Epilogue* by Indra Sproge**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Plasticine is played with here with an adult playfulness that recalls the 90's era of TV. Quite fantastic!*

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## Music Video:

- Best music video

**Winner: Freak by Martina Sochor – “For the sheer madness of this unusual music video, one has to tip the hat at its creator!”**

Nominees:

Beyond (Acoustic) by Justin Wilson – “The ‘liveness’ of this video, the sense of entering the musician’s space and sharing a moment with them, is a very popular thing on Youtube... and this one lives up to its potential. Some great use of colour filters in this video as well.”

Entitas by Hugo Diego Garcia – “A *classic* is sometimes best served cold.”

Wind & Fire by Nathanael Vass – “The video has a sense of the personal, something that many music videos lack. This is largely successfully done by the director’s own handling of the material. It’s very much a great example of the caméra-stylo at work.”

- Best cinematography

**Ziv Berkovich’s photography of Rooftops – “Oh what retro bliss is this!”**

Nominees:

Andiamo’s photography of All The Saints – “Shot with some interesting tactile and nuanced elements, which highlight the beautiful locales in sight.”

Clemence Thurninger’s photography of Entitas – “Against the white paradise of snow, figures run and chase a bright object. It’s the chalky black look that makes this video shine, and it recalls the old silents, in particular, the ending of Frank Bozarge’s classic Lucky Star.”

Jakob Kaiser’s photography of Freak – “The delicate picture, accompanied by the rocky gravel, is a praiseworthy contrast.”

Nathanael Vass’s photography of Wind & Fire – “There’s a bit of a clash between the modern and beautifully old film stock. Of course one has to prefer the nostalgic old look, but overall it’s quite commendable as a contrasting book of past and present.”

- Best editing

**Winner: Nathanael Vass’s editing of Wind & Fire – “The music videos juxtapositions create a flux of moments that are both intriguing, interesting and engaging.”**

Nominees:

Sonia De Nicolo's editing of Digital Age – “There's a sense of time, be it in slow-mo or fast forward, that drips through this music video thanks to De Nicolo's editing and animation.”

Tomasz Szypryt's editing of Carnage – “A Gothic video spliced together with a lot of care for pacing, information and transitions.”

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## Script Competition:

- Best genre piece

**Winner: Drones & Drivers by Haley Isleib – “It boasts a large variety of genre tropes in an original way – sort of like a combo of Source Code and Run Lola Run.”**

Nominees:

Destiny of Tar and Feathers by Harold L. Brown – “A confident splash of genre kicks are all dumped in Destiny of Tar, and it just smells of success!”

Tourette's and Zombies, the Musical by Zak Ferguson and George Carmichael – “It feels like a hard project to produce, but this is one hell of a fun retro musical journey to be had.”

- Best technique

**Winner: At The Mercy of Faith by Samuel Lee Taylor – “A long road of wonder. Quite well written, with a bold voice.”**

Nominees:

Sugar Cube by Radoslav Stoyanov – “It's a dense creature, and it feels like it has the potential to be a sort of Hanekeesque project. If it ever gets made, we'll sure as hell want to see it!”

The Last Pirate by Christian Pavlik – “A well executed script full of richness and texture.”

Cassanova's Poetry Club by Valerio Viale – "It feels like a large event script. Could be quite a fun production to see made."

We Just Need Some Money by Matteo Valentini – "It's a hefty read, and a dense event... but ultimately it is quite well balanced, and contains many interesting moments."

- Best micro budget script

**Winner: The Love Meeting by Pascal Adam – "An affordable project that would be quite easy and enjoyable to film on a low budget."**

Nominees:

Boss by Violet Myers – "A simple two handler that could become a fun character piece for the actors."

Apt. 6C by Christopher Kerr – "The script's use of obscenities is a fun blast to its small locales and out of control, but very manageable, characters."

- Best character arc

**Winner: Red Nose, Floppy Shoes by James P Brosnahan – "It's a bit of a ridiculous event, and the whole thing would be mighty entertaining on screen; especially with these personas."**

Nominees:

The Love Meeting by Pascal Adam – "It's a fiery mixture of beings that bubble on the screen, though some of them aren't all that unique. All in all though its comedic, and enjoyable. More dynamics in the performance range would improve the script greatly, and push it into perfection."

A Chippy Off the Old Block by Kelly Jean Karam – "There's a sense of age here which helps enlarge the project's potential scale, all of which is thanks to its characters."

# Summer 2018

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## **FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

### Jury Prize:

**WINNER: Lost in Apocalypse by Sky Wang**

Festival Director says:

*It feels inappropriate to do so, but I couldn't help but think of Kim Jee-woon when watching Lost in Apocalypse. A part of the association is of course a cultural link – the Asian extreme narrative, the tough cops and the slick photography. But the main parallel line is really a compliment – as this effort by Sky Wang is very similar to the works of Kim Jee-woon – the film is polished, technically apt, and blunt. So blunt. It's a stark, peddle-to-the-metal thrill ride of a film.*

*Aided mostly by its cast, the film carries a great sense of realism, and this is mostly highlighted by the film's ability to maintain its action based narrative within a sort of virus outbreak storyline – in other words, a merging of say The Purge with Shivers.*

*All in all, this film's production values, and use of filmic techniques, make it the solid winner of our grand prize this season... because, quite frankly, no other film comes so loaded and ready to fire down its viewer.*

Nominees:

Pin-Up by Liz Lachman – “A large scale short film full to the brim with character, an understanding for its filmic perception of time and space, and a damn right entertaining retelling of the age old ‘artist and muse’ storyline.”

Murder on the Reef by Allen Dobrovolsky and Alex Fitzwater – “For its narrative of environmental issues, Murder on the Reef is quite fantastically blunt.”

Yasmin Afifi's direction of Relevo – “A strong and often rich narrative that understands its themes of loss, downtrodden characters and roughhousing.”

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### Main Competition:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Releevo by Yasmin Afifi**

Festival Director says:

*The theatrical elements of Releevo do feel like a bit of a sore spot in the film, as the short opens with what feels like quite a stagey setup. Our couple, alone in their apartment, taking turns being moody and talkative... at this point it felt like that adaptation it is.*

*However, and what a big 'however' it is – as Releevo progresses onwards, revealing its twist, and its shift from a mood of darkness to desperation, the film reveals itself as less of a set piece and more of a film about time, or the running out of it. It is here, steeped in that Jim Jarmusch meets (early) Lars Von Trier tone that the film forms its filmic narrative, and even more so, highlights its effective use of its measly budget, allowing its director, Yasmin Afifi, and her cast, to stretch their emotional muscles and deliver one of the harshest and most memorable short films.*

*In essence, this is the sort of short film that makes this process an absolute joy.*

Nominees:

Lean On Me by David Fowler – “For its budget, the film impressively carries a large ensemble of ideas, characters and circumstances in this drama. Fowler’s next step would be to improve on the technical aspects of his films, tightening his performances and becoming more discerning about where, what and how his camera shoots.”

The Longest Time by Kevin Rainey – “A boldly designed short film – a kick ass cast (yes, we’re biased), slickly cut, creative cinematography and a great moody score. Also, and most importantly, a fantastic use of a minimalist budget and tight schedule.”

Dagger by Zak Ferguson – “A unique story devise, and a fairly creative filming style, allows this film’s budget to be used to the maximum!”

Lucile & les Fennecs by PH Debiès – “A delightful musical and a fantastical romp! – oh and impressive stuff on such a low budget.”

Almost Sunny by Vittorio Guidotti – “When considering the production limitations of such a budget, Vittorio Guidotti proves that there’s no limit to one’s imagination to pull off a fantasy! Oh, might I add – it’s also mighty entertaining.”

- 
- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Box Office Smash by Phil Dunn**

Festival Director says:

*In the context of its budget – a short film produced just over what we would consider no funds (less than \$5,000), but yet well below any form of micro-budget opulence (\$10,000), Phil Dunn’s short film Box Office Smash is well... a box office smash!*

*Quite frankly it is a very well oiled machine, and it salivates in its own directness of its content. Instead of scene-chewing dialogue, a large cast, or excessive scenes, we get a pleasant primitive film tale (this being in the context of Pier Paolo Pasolini’s film narratives idea). And nothing is overbaked or underbaked. It’s a fantastic balance of ease-of-access enjoyment with an*

*alluring enigmatic idea – a man, working with a 00's-90's looking office, has his day become overwhelming in a less than perfect environment.*

*One can't help but have your mind wander off: is this an allegory of the impending economic crash of the mid-noughties that has come to define that era of office work or just a nightmarish vision of being stuck in the office in such a time?!*

*All in all the production values are steadfast here, and we have a feeling of the film being quite modest all the while ambitious. As ever, with such delights, one can only quote the likes of 2010 Josh Radnor: Happythankyoumoreplease.*

Nominees:

Tender Vow by Ashton K Bracciodieta – “Beautifully produced, with a keen eye for the film's romantic images and domestic pathos.”

They Can't Hear You Scream by Luke Creely – “A simple and well produced ‘countdown’ film. Somewhat reminiscent of early James Wan.”

Team Teenettes by Brian Morelan and Bianca Poroliseanu – “The humour, and well – POWERPUFF GIRLS throwback, is enjoyable... The rest is a little less than.”

- 
- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Pin-Up by Liz Lachman**

Festival Director says:

*Pin-Up has a fantastic ‘inner photography’ opening scene – the mad auteur photographer looking for some remote idea of creativity and inspiration. Very reminiscent to a degree of the Annie Leibovitz inspired character in the one-season perfection ‘Roadies’.*

*Though, one might want to add that this film is more than a simple character study, and nor is it a cameo based on someone... instead, it is a well-oiled thriller disguised as some sort of industry comedy. It has the touch of a Brian De Palma film, in particular with its red room sequences, and twisted ending... but also grasps a stronghold of importance in its character's inner workings, especially of the LA types, something I can't recall being done all that well since ‘Laurel Canyon’ by director Lisa Cholodenko.*

*All in all, Pin-Up seems to tiptoe between its genre and styles, and ultimately serves up a lean meal which can be viewed and enjoyed more than once both for its performances, content and chutzpa... which is really something that can only be said of a few short films.*

Nominees:

The Shroud by Marie Vandelannoote – “A glass doll-house full of opaque and bizarre fixtures that has been so beautifully put together, one can't help but look in on like a God.”

Falling South by Lorraine Portman – “Its narrative is an easy thing, one built around an escape route and a new life. The characters, and the actual locale, which the film encapsulates on this journey is what makes it very endearing and flavourful. Madeline Barr is quite great as the runaway.”

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- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: The Third Son of Fire by Matthew Pillischer**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*There are issues in Matthew Pillischer's The Third Son of Fire, I won't deny that. The quality of the photography drifts in and out of being good to tolerable to 'please make it stop'. Likewise, the sound has an uneven effect. And one step further, there's the pacing, which even when considering the film's slow approach to a moody conclusion, it becomes somewhat regrettable that the whole thing is more 'horse and cart' than say 'Ferrari screaming down the road' speed.*

*However, the film has an immensely endearing quality of its own design: a homemade self-contained film. And when one considers its budget, and the other entries at hand, The Third Son of Fire becomes a winner for its pure unusualness, design and balls out creativity!*

Nominees:

Red Light Solo by Ryan J. Smith – “The film has a sort of free-form narrative, one quite similar to the Jazz music it seems hell-bent to capture. Overall, the film is quite a great mood piece, something as a background filler... but it does lack direction in terms of its narrative, and misses the chance to get to know its musicians, which would have made for a more moving and interesting study than its excessive reliance on capturing live music scenes in a very repetitive ‘I am an audience member’ perspective..”

Hillbilly Symphony by Denis Nielsen – “An endearing look at a group of folk singers, their aspirations and their celebrations of being an opening act to a Blues festival. Portrayed with much character.”

- 
- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Not enough entries to run this category. Please note, films selected for this category, which are not listed here, would have been nominated in our ‘other categories’ area.

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- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: ultravoKal by Christophe Karabache**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Anyone that has followed our awards body over the last three years of operation will know that we have awarded Christophe Karabache multiple times in various categories, and the previous remarks made about his films still ring true here. His cast is sharp, and always on cue – often providing an unexpected delivery or one which fits the scenario brilliantly. His photography is surprisingly aesthetically pleasing, even when showing a grim locale or grey scene... and likewise, his films overall design often flex a certain fascination with interesting visuals. His use of music is apt, be it to create an atmosphere or highlight time. All in all, we are fans of this auteur.*

*This season, and the reason for this particular win is simple: this film is slick, well paced, arty, and pleasantly ugly in its depiction of amoral beings. Most of all, his use of budget is rich and layered and provides a personal touch even at a cash-friendly endeavour of \$11,000.*

Nominees:

Murder on the Reef by Allen Dobrovolsky and Alex Fitzwater – “Not the most flashy of productions, or necessarily the tightest in terms of its edit, but one can’t deny the importance and value of this film, its story and information it provides.”

Zimzum by Stefan Zeiler – “Excessively long, and beautifully shot. An experimental doctrine, somewhat similar to Herzog’s Heart of Glass.”

- 
- Best Webseries

**Winner: Stephan’s Big Awakening by Stephan Nielsen**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Awakening ultimately trumps the ‘watch more’ factor by keeping its entertainment stories loosely running hand-in-hand with its presenter and camera team’s personal conversations. There’s a real sense of character and scenario here, and a viewing experience worth having through this particular project... something most web series lack.*

Nominees:

A Great Christmas by Kevin Ralston – “Not your regular webseries, in a good original kind of way!”

The Hot Mess Express by Linzy Cox and Jennifer Hathaway – “The main factor of this web series, which really shines through, is its love for its locale. One can’t help but want to visit the Midwest of America after viewing these episodes.”

Skeleton Crew by Stuart Kiczek and Joshua R. Pangborn – “An amusing ensemble gathers for Skeleton Crew. The characters often tend to outshine the overall plotting or production values, but all in all, a fine viewing experience.”

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## Other Categories:

- Best Cinematography

**Judyta Potocka’s photography of Development of June – “Varied, textured and quite brilliantly shot with an eye for detail, consistency and authenticity.”**

Nominees:

Jordan Cushing’s photography of The Inuring – “A very consistent and rich image is present in The Inuring. One which keeps your eye intrigued.”

Reece Beale's photography of The Langford Loop – "Beale's colours and use of sparing light helps elevate The Langford Loop, as well as enhance its genre elements."

Gareth Taylor's photography of Pin Up – "An eclectic, very moving, and classy image carries Pin Up into its fantastic fantastical world."

- Best Actor

**Winner: Matthew Philips' performance in Once Were Heroes – "A very convincing and consistent quality is present in Philips' performance as the villain of Once Were Heroes."**

Nominees:

Matthew Pillischer's performance in The Third Son of Fire – "A confused on set of emotions set in over this double performance. An unusual unique effort."

James Gulliford's performance in The Langford Loop – "Gulliford's performance is consistently energetic, dynamic and quite fascinating to watch in this sci-fi trap."

Rory Wilton's performance in Serpentine – "The casting of Rory Wilton is perfect for this role – he brings much depth to the role."

- Best Actress

**Winner: Christina Chang in Pin-Up: "Shifting gears with such ease, moving her persona from the artist craving inspiration to injured, and seduced by her own imagination... is quite a fantastic show of skill and talent in this bite-sized delight of a short film."**

Nominees:

Talia Ray in Grizedale – "Ray's performance is an anxious thing, and it feels quite real."

Samantha Seager in Releevo – "Seager is quite outstanding in Releevo."

Holly De Jong in Development of June – "Well, so few actors could carry this sort of role off convincingly – mega kudos to De Jong's supporting cast for providing her the room with which to live as June."

- Best Ensemble Cast

**The cast of Day Off by Alexander Griffith – "A set of very convincing performances carry Day Off. An added bonus – they're fascinating to watch!"**

Nominees:

The cast of #ModelLife by Jazmine Campanale – "An ensemble of wacky characters keep this webseries overflowing with pouting, comedy and snappy 'gotcha' dialogue."

The cast of Pin-Up by Liz Lachman – "A cast of memorable and lovable beings bring Pin-Up to life."

The cast of Falling South by Lorraine Portman – "A hearty America is presented here – a whole heap of fantastically unique and interesting performances are present here."

Making Friends at the End of the World by Jonathan Pegg – "A fantastic set of actors bring to life this variety show of people shoved all in one property. Quite fabulous with the handling of its performances."

- Best Score

**Winner: Icarus Projectz's score of Caducea – “A moving score keeps this film well in its cinematic realm of fantasy, mystery and mythism.”**

Runner-Up: David Stothard's score of The Langford Loop – “Sharp, energising and on point for this film's genre and tone.”

- Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Don't Look Back by Ashley Agren – “A fantastically balanced genre piece: strange and well-told mystery, mostly aided by its reliance on tone and familiar transcending tropes of its chosen haunting arc.”**

Nominees:

Stephan's Big Awakening by Stephan Nielsen – “As a documentary series, Stephan's Big Awakening runs as a more entertaining series than most of the ‘investigatory’ BBC projects that one can find on TV these days.”

The Shroud by Marie Vandelannoote – “A whole load of moody and fun exploits fill The Shroud. Also, one can't help but love its portrayal of Gothicism.”

Caducea by Christophe Mavroudis – “Gothic yarns are so rare in short films, and this one is a fantastical treat!”

Big Trouble in Seattle by David Fowler – “It's a mad rush of a film. The genre of action and thriller truly reigns here!”

Beautified by Emily Haigh – “A fable full of darkness and sci-fi mystery – reminiscent of Tale of Tales.”

- Best Direction

**Winner: Liz Lachman's direction of Pin-Up: “A short film full of scale and a personality – is just a plain old fantastic joy to experience. Lachman's direction, which finds a creative way to deliver each of her scenes, keeps the film from becoming a one-note tragedy. I'm quite jealous of this project.”**

Nominees:

Christophe Karabache's direction of ultravoKal: “The direction, which provides the film's almost surreal tilted landscapes of hushed voices, is a unique perspective, and one only Karabache holds.”

Yasmin Afifi's direction of Releevo – “A light touch runs through the design of Releevo – one which is consistent, alluring and unmistakably dark.”

Joe Olmstead's direction of Development of June – “A stunning memory yarn condensed into what is just shy of 18 minutes, and full to the brim with heart!”

- Best Writing

**Winner: Day Off by Alexander Griffith – “A rarely seen picture of the sex worker world. Quite fantastically structured, and unpredictable.”**

Nominees:

A Great Christmas by Kevin Ralston – “A little pacy at times, but really tonal and textured with its characters and scenario. Kevin’s writing feels more feature film friendly than say webseries... but all in all it features great development and awareness for his locales and characters.”

The Serpent in the Apple by Nathan Luttrull – “Though comedies of this nature, which include an archetype *monster* character, are quite commonplace in short films (please note: no one wants to see another limbo themed short film ever!)... this venture, penned by Luttrull, is a brilliant original exercise in witnessing a familiar face take on NYC, living with flatmates, making a film?! and eh getting a job. Quite brilliant.”

Behind the Sun by Ezzeldeen Dwedar (aka Azaeldin Dewaidar) – “A fascinating world unweaves itself in this short – and the dialogue is always character specific and unique.”

Carmen Lidia Vidu’s writing of Romanian Diary. Muslim Diary – “Well structured, and conceived with such personality, that the viewing experience is pleasurable simply to ‘hear’ someone’s story.”

- Best Editing

**Winner: DJ Carnegie’s editing of The Visitor from the Other Side – “The edit provides the film with its tone and pace... not to mention the final twist.”**

Runner-up:

Cat Sole’s editing of How To Write A Screenplay – “An energetic and often sharp editing helps assemble and add meaning to what is otherwise just a series of ‘how to’ of writing ideas.”

- Special Mention

Elizabeth in the Park by Marie Grillo – “A commendable Eric Rohmer styled moment... though perhaps a bit heavy on its lul, despite all of its Tiny Furniture electric music.”

Cristina Baciú’s graphical work in Romanian Diary. Muslim Diary – “These well-designed series of graphics help bring life to this story.”

- Special Prize: Best Surreal Film

Genesis by Beatrix Haxby – “An alluring short full of impressive surreal visuals.”

[Genesis \(trailer\) – 2017](#) from [bea haxby](#) on [Vimeo](#).

Keep On Loving You by Jan Schekauski – “An unusual music video featuring some interesting surreal images surrounding VR and its impact on social implications.”

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## Script Competition:

- Best genre piece

**Winner: Attic Ashes by Lorraine Portman – “There’s a sense of style here that is very much part of a genre film: comedy, drama and various enigmatic cues which allure and invite its viewers along for the thrill ride. Buy your tickets – it’s an exciting one!”**

Nominees:

The Veil of Solace by Dion Voss – “A steadfast comedy with an interesting characteristic touch.”

Blood Means Nothing by Mark Oxtoby & Dawn Buckland – “A dense short film with some pulpy genre touches, would make for quite a fabulous film if shot with the right style.”

Deadbeat Symphony by Karan Talwar – “There’s a great sense of a sellable genre plot here... despite the over the top dialogue and insane bolts at the plot’s hand.”

- Best technique

**Winner: White Wolf, Black Wolf by Florence Nahon – “For the research, its details, and darkness... White Wolf, Black Wolf is a precise and often bold script.”**

Nominees:

My Sister’s Wedding by Ian T Burns – “A retrained script is always the most fragrant – and here is one that delivers its points on time and in the right volume.”

At the Mercy of Faith by Samuel Taylor – “Though wooden at times with its bulky approach to dialogue, and details... the script is well organised and sharp in its writing.”

This is Not the End by Ruben Latre – “With its unusual form, and strong style, This is Not the End is quite the charmer script of the season.”

- Best micro budget script

**Winner: The Veil of Solace by Dion Voss – “An impressively simple concept with a fairly interesting touch of originality. Quite filmable!”**

Runner-Up:

My Women of Steel by Marilyn Lee – “Its domestic, and simplicity, provides for an easy shooting project.”

- Best character arc

**Winner: Breathe by Christian Pavlik – “With so many characters in toe, Pavlik keeps the real and moving elements of his beings within reach of his audience, making it all the more enjoyable.”**

Nominees:

My Sister’s Wedding by Ian T Burns – “A farce of an ordeal with its share of quirky and enjoyable beings.”

Women of Steel by Marilyn Lee – “There’s an ease with these personas unusual for scripts of this kind. It’s quite fantastically endearing, and reminiscent of Diablo Cody’s choice of people.”

Hunting Bears by Ryan Munnelly – “Hefty and indulgent on paper, but all the while endearing and charming with its brash characters.”

Norma's Sun by Kris Courtney – "The overall arcs, which entangle a real sense of life, are quite bold in Norma's Sun."

## Music Videos:

- Best music video

**Winner: Somewhere In Their Heads (music video) by Gregg Houston**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Oh what retro cool flows through this music video!*

Nominees:

Failure – Fabiola by Gilles de Voghel – "A hip retro thing that captures a real sense of a community as well as its music coolness"

Pangea (music video) by Derek Frey – "what a cheesy delight – incredibly well produced scope"

Whiskey Lies – You Know Who by Kristian Kane and Lewis Carter – "A solid double life of past and present stories presented in a plushly photographed music video."

Heaven – George Schweizer by Scott Roberts – "Though lacking in a concrete filter (such as something snazzy and retro), the video collates a solid image and flavour for its almost Gothic allure"

- Best cinematography

**Winner: Jawjaw – Survive This**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*It's black and white photography, which is produced with fantastic care for both the lighting, focus and lens choices, is quite fantastic.*

Nominees:

Charlie Winston – The Weekend – "Fantastic variety show of some titillating colour and lighting schemes for its various dance numbers can be found here"

Heartbeat (music video) by Nick Mandri-Perrott – "Rich summer hues and cool underground walking passages make Heartbeat quite a fun and varied viewing experience"

A Little Too Obtuse – Useless Cities by Deborah Espect – "The subject matter is a tad all too familiar for music videos: couples breaking up and dancing... but the nature of how it is shot, and the use of Brighton (UK) makes for a unique short film."

- Best editing

**Winner: UnknownArtist – Jump Cut / The Broadcast (Official Video)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*A glamorous and rich production is heightened by its head thumping edits.*

Runner-Up:

Heartbeat (music video) by Nick Mandri-Perrott: “A dreamy foray into a romance which is best paced through its solid edit.”

# Spring 2018

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**FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

## SPRING 2018

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### JURY PRIZE:

**WINNER:** Snapshots by Melanie Mayron

**Festival Director** says:

*Melanie Mayron's handling of Jan Miller Corran and Katherine Cortez's script was beautifully done and consistently balanced. The characters had depth filled presentations of their detailed lives, the troubles they faced and the work they put in to overcome these problems.*

*Overall, the film had a very strong quality in terms of its production values, the photography was especially crisp, and often provided the film with a polished look which allowed for a close engagement from the audience, as well as a welcoming tone – one which invites the audience into the film, and the cabin's past.*

*Perhaps the only remark one can make which jabs at this project is an industrial one – an observation about how the industry seems to be treating independent projects of this quality, and how the large machine continues to grind and churn out blockbusters that lack these kind of real personas.*

*At the end of the day, what makes Snapshots so great is its heart. There's a lot of heart here.*

**Nominees:** Totem by Jakub Charon, Goodbye Mondays by Michael Salmon, Lazarus' Resurrection by Clodoaldo Lino

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### Main competition:

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**WINNER:** Companion by Andrew Greco

**Festival Director** says:

*Considering its budget, Andrew Greco has done a marvelous job in delivering this highly developed micro budget short. Though the story is quite simplistic – a typical post-apocalyptic world with a few survivors meeting in the after-exposure-carnage, to then become companions, and move on, continue to ‘survive’... the film excels on so many levels that the risk of it feeling predictable is disregarded. Ultimately, there isn’t a whiff of repetition here – past films with similar plots are nothing more than references (as best). This is mainly because of the film’s use of silence, and its unexplained rules. It allows for that classical form of filmmaking where we are ‘shown’ and not ‘told’ everything. On that front it reminded me a lot of Luc Besson’s debut feature *Le Dernier Combat* (*The Final Combat*, 1983), which inhabited a similar silence... though was focused on a soldier type in a world without women or voice.*

*One should also note the rare and well executed choice of a female lead for a science fiction film. Even at this level of an online awards platform it is a rare thing, and one can’t help but commend a short like this for its choice to deliver a short film of this nature with a female lead. And on that note – what a great performance from Sarah Mills, who underplays her agony right until the final turn of the film. Kyle Roark should also be commended, not only for providing some of the film’s eye candy (usually left to the female cast members of science fiction films), but also for his matter of fact presentation of the role – which added some realism and calmness to the world these unnamed characters inhabit.*

*Ultimately, served with some well thought out camera work, a careful edit, and a well underpinned score of emotional music, *Companion* is memorable, and quite fantastic a viewing experience!*

#### **Nominations:**

Lapin de la Lune by Paige Von Bank – ‘Full of imaginative edits, and some fantastic black and white photography – this retro styled experimental film is a delightful arty offering for those who enjoy going down the rabbit hole’

Whatever Happened to Nevada? By James Costello – ‘An intriguing story about the woes of a musical duo that nearly made it big... the way with which Costello captures his subjects is intimately done, and engaging.’

The Burial by Patricia Delso Lucas – ‘A comical dish. The Burial starts off as some sort of looming drama with the tones and feelings of a ‘killer thriller’, only then to quickly do a neck turning revelation of grief and a fairly odd burial. Kudos is due to Delso Lucas’ direction, and Marco Joubert’s script and performance – both of which go hand in hand with each other in terms of scope, tone and taste.’

Silent Night by Emmanuel Delabaere – ‘Fairly original in terms of its anti-Christmas offering: I mean, where else will you see Santa getting tied up? It’s also quite comical, which is a welcomed moment to be had. The film overall excels on its usage of its monies – it appears to be a well balanced film, and one which doesn’t find its small budget a limitation.’

Limbo by Valerie Resciniti – ‘The realism which grounds Limbo makes it both endearing, thoughtful and a simple delight. Furthermore, Andrea Grano’s performance is quite moving – in particular her handling of emotional phone calls, the whimpering of her dog’s adoration and the headstrong nature of her persona’s will to continue during the film’s runtime.’

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- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

## **WINNER: Far Away by Nicolas Van Ruychevelt**

Festival Director says:

*There's something quite unforgiving, and unashamedly 'to the point' with Far Away. Nicolas Van Ruychevelt's directing is quite intimate, and built around a very poignant mechanism – it is both stylized for some fantastically arresting images, and somewhat docu-realist in terms of its 'lets follow the character' long takes and breathy dialogue.*

*Likewise, his two leads – of David and Lea, played by Mickaël Pinelli and Amélie Remacle, provide a steady hand in terms of providing a handful of moments fixed around stylized genre based faux emotions, and then a combination of scenes where they carry layers of some fantastic unadulterated drama in their performances. Its quite fascinating to watch.*

*The cinematography is robust, and often carefully manipulative of our emotional grip of the locale and the space with which the characters inhabit. All in all the film often reminded me a lot of Sven Nykvist's work, in particular his collaboration with Louis Malle – providing us with the bizarre battle of the sexes and psyche in Black Moon (1975).*

*The only real complaint one can serve Far Away is perhaps, like many of the shorts seen this season, it suffers at the hands of the short film scale of being a 'two hander' in terms of its narrative size. Though one should note its handling of its budget is quite impressive. In essence, making such a complaint is a back handed compliment – as I'm basically saying it would be nice to see Ruychevelt, and his collective team, work at a larger scale.*

### **Nominations:**

Cecil by Alexsa Tolentino – 'There's a really fascinating use of cinematic space here, as well as some great production design. Tolentino's work here is a delight, and a very personal and intimate one to experience. Feature please!'

N'goma – The Work of Our Clan by Frank Gunderson – 'An interesting documentary, one which gets to the heart of its subject. Very reminiscent of those Werner Herzog documentaries which brought the world of North Africa to the European art house audience. There's a great sense of anthropological work here.'

- 
- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

## **Winner: Mick by Lea Nöhring-Ullmann**

Festival Director says:

*Mick is a very moving concept, and one which is executed with a very fine detail. There's a real sense of 'coming of age' in terms of the characters maturing, both the boy and the adult man.*

*The photography is consistently polished to perfection, and the whole project is just plain beautiful in its delivery. Overall this had a feeling of the Dardenne Brothers' work – in the sense that it focussed on individuals trapped within a certain social and economic situation which they battle with.*

*I actually don't have anything negative to say... perhaps it's time that everyone involved get on and make a feature film that can be put in one of those big festivals for people to gawk and weep at.*

### Nominations:

Goodbye Mondays by Michael Salmon – ‘A sure scream of an upper lip British story. Quite charming, yes – indeed. And quite enjoyable – might I add!’

Lazarus’ Resurrection by Clodoaldo Lino – ‘Terry Gilliam eat-your-heart-out! What an extravagant feast of delightful scenes.’

Futureworld by Christopher Angus – ‘If children’s books were as creative as this film then everyone would read them.’

- 
- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

### Winner: The Goodbye Girl by Aidey Pugh

Festival Director says:

*The most impressive factor of The Goodbye Girl is really the sheer size of its cast and locale mounting. For a film produced on such a tight budget its hard to imagine such a realistic looking, as well as large scale, depicting almost an entire world with which the film takes place within.*

*Though the plot, and often some of the characters, leave a nasty taste in the viewers mouth, and there is of course the odd runtime – 53 minutes, which seems not much like a feature film at times... one can’t help but consider these flaws little, as in a certain context this film would have made for a great TV special, such as Ken Loach’s earlier work, in particular his contributions to The Wednesday Play – such as ‘Cathy Come Home’. However, I should add – The Goodbye Girl isn’t a socialist film really, as it slips in and out of its tonal moments, making it more of an entertaining film than say a sophisticated political one which aims to rouse a parliamentary debate.*

*All in all a well armed film, one which definitely highlights its teams abilities, and one which will pave the way to more lengthy and satisfying future works.*

### Nominations:

Little Rose by Charles Stanley – ‘Little Rose is quite a healthy serving of comedy and character traits. Overall the film is quite impressively mounted in an American money tale. Ronald Calzolari, playing Steve, serves an impressively energetic get up especially.’

Upstate Story by Shaun Rose – ‘The strongest of Upstate Story’s elements is its narrative of redemption. There’s plenty to admire here in terms of the artistic framing of the material as well – often reminiscent of Vincent Gallo’s directorial work.’

- 
- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

### Winner: The Drive by Guillaume Le Vallois

Festival Director says:

*I'm not a big fan of documentaries usually, as I often find that they are overworked, over politicized, and can be fairly dull in terms of subject choice, or at least so muddled as to what the true story is that the subject then becomes boring in its delivery.*

*The Drive though, which is a documentary through and through, finds a great balance between the subject which it is investigating – artists collaborating and connecting from NYC to San Francisco, and the inclination all round filmmaker Guillaume Le Vallois is trying to cement with his film.*

*The actual film itself has a free form edit, which helps when considering the overall structure of the documentary, and its structure as a whole. Then there's also the set of character artists we meet, who are often interviewed or introduced in different styles or locales. It's all quite varied, and at times feels like a strong collage of people, cities, places and the arts in general.*

*Overall the film is quite impressive, and one that inspires as a strong ideal of what documentary films could be in terms of exciting within their form.*

### **Nominations:**

Blue Skies on Mars by Brian Lutes – 'A great scope of a film, full with some great production value details: locations, cast, decor. And there's a general energy about the whole event. Quite enjoyable and somewhat memorable. We don't know why, but it at times made us think of Hal Ashby's films (a chain of notes were exchanged about this topic). Congrats on making such a nuanced film.'

A Chance of Snow by James Christopher – 'Great character piece, strongly aligned with the bittersweet pleasures of seasonal films. Its leading couples' struggle provides the film with a strong central arc from which we are able to enter their world through... all in all, just another great notch in James Christopher's impressive filmography.'

The March of Hope by Jim Kroft and Bastian Fischer – 'An investigatory documentary which examines an ongoing humanitarian crisis. Moving, shocking and important in equal measure. At times highlights the banality and insanity of turning the lives of refugees into documentaries, which is a plus for Kroft and Fischer, who acknowledge their own mediums flaws in terms of expression.'

- 
- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

### **Winner: Creepy Crawling by Dillon Garland**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Dillon Garland's script of Creepy Crawling is at times a little heavy with its somewhat predictable 'unhappy teen' plotting, but it is ultimately the stillness of its content with which his content excels – the script provides a lot of room for the film's actors to fill in and deliver, rather than say run around and shoot guns. In fact, it is that the repetition of what we have seen before, in terms of plots surrounding split families, that allows for a preconceived need to disregard indie films in general fade away in lieu of a film such as Creepy Crawly – as it is something quite nuanced and enjoyable, which is often only found in this small scale size – effectively, it is the type of film which would be unachievable in larger scaled films.*

*Chelsea Comeau directs this script to the screen, and it is here, in combination with some solid turn from her cast, in particular her lead – Nick Piovesan (who at times appears too old for the*

role), that the film finds some solid footing as a drama with a top notch ability to concentrate on the film's 'pros rather than cons' model. In essence, the film captures its Canadian locale, situational sequences and core themes with a light handed approach. All of this ultimately provides the film with a much needed consistency, delicacy and a real sense of matureness in terms of the team's collective abilities as filmmakers, crew and actors respectively.

#### **Nominees:**

Poltergeist by David Gilbank – 'There's a great punch within Poltergeist, and it is really honed within its understanding and handling of pace and genre, which go hand in hand here. Gilbank has done a great job in delivering a consistent film as well, one loaded with bold images and fun scenarios.'

My Saviour by Steven Murphy – 'Steven Murphy's film punches a real top tier pain in the stomach with its attitude, finish and emotional depth. There's a real sense of perspective when the film portrays either of its leads, and both actors (Steven Murphy himself, and Bayley Freer) deliver in every scene like the champions they are!'

Snapshots by Melanie Mayron – 'Produced with such confidence and care for the film's subjects that one can't help but feel Snapshots is one of those immediate close-nit classics, such as On Golden Pond.'

- 
- Best Webseries

#### **WINNER: Marked by John Krissilas and Lena Burmenko**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*'There's a real sense of dread in Marked, and though I have only seen the opening chapter, there's this great depth-full pace about it. The performances are fresh and energetic, and the direction, though at times a little wobbly in terms of the handling of the grading, seems to be quite great in terms of the camera angles which are used to emphasis a character's situational psychology. All in all it was quite great and enjoyable.'*

#### **Runner up:**

Deaffest 2017 by Bim Ajidi – 'Not entirely convinced that this is a webseries... nonetheless, the editing is impressive, and despite it appearing as a never ending computer glitch, it was enjoyable.'

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## Other Categories:

- Best Cinematography

#### **WINNER: Jelani A. Sanchez's cinematography of Cecile**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Scrumptiously served, Cecile is a textured delight full of fantastically colored, beautifully arranged and tactile shots. There's a real sense of tension and realism through the film's photography. It feels swamp like – hot, humid, murky, dreamy... some really memorable work here!*

#### **Nominations:**

Piotr Pawlus' cinematography of Totem – 'With a wonderfully textured image, intimate shots and great consistent movements, Pawlus delivers Totem's world as a moving and meaningful crimeopera.'

Andrew Greco's cinematography of Companion – 'A consistently creative, and very beautiful image, reigns over Companion. Not only does the film use the photographic frame (ie its image ratio) to help tell the story, but its change between its grading allows for a real depth in terms of the film's representation of time, space and its lead character's headspace. It's quite brilliantly executed.'

- 
- Best Black and White Cinematography

#### **WINNER: Bud Roth's black and white photography in The Longneck Goodbye**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*This silent retro fable is heightened mostly thanks to its fantastically celluloid look. The black and white flicker, the ephemeral speed changes and fuzzy focus elevate the film's simplistic locales and domestic love affairs to something really loveable.'*

#### **Nominations:**

Paige Von Bank's black and white photography in Lapin de la Lune – 'Von Bank's short provides a delightful retro of the curved edged screen, stark light bursts and imaginative handling of its rural and urban film spaces.'

Sean Pearson's black and white photography in Deadwall: Alto Flocc – 'Pearson's music video feels like a spiritual relic of a film – a kind of throwback to Carl Theodor Dreyer's iconography.'

- 
- Best Actor

#### **WINNER: Steven Murphy in My Saviour**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Though the film suffers many obvious connections with Rust and Bones and The Fighter, its reliance on Murphy's performance as the film's punching bag is a smart one – he delivers thoroughly in every scene.*

#### **Nominations:**

Ian Adema in Red Roses Painted Black – 'Adema's film has many touching moments of emotional depth, and some not so great moments of production values slipping by the wayside – most of which are to do with the staging and framing of the scenes. However, it is Adema's performance as the lead which grabs our attention – and it helps to make the film a meaty, realistic and eye-grabbing story.'

Tom Ward-Thomas in Sarah – ‘Ward-Thomas gives a grounded performance in Sarah, though sadly the film’s over indulgent long take often distracts from its quality writing, opportunity for filmic space and a more even tone. The cast survive this however, providing what often feels like a theatre production... Ward-Thomas is especially convincing, despite the camera dance.’

Tim Duthrane in Journeyman – ‘Duthrane provides a compelling presence to Journeyman. His use of pitch, pace (in terms of his delivery) and his physicality is quite unique.’

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- Best Actress

### **WINNER: Emily Baldoni in Snapshots**

Festival Director says:

*Baldoni brings a lot of soul to her performance as Allison. Paired with Melanie Mayron’s careful direction and coverage of Baldoni’s face, a sense of a moving and realistic drama performance is in full hold here.*

#### **Nominations:**

Bayley Freer in My Saviour – ‘Freer’s performance carries many shades to it – she’s the loving, compassionate and frightened partner of someone who seems to slide into the sadistic side of his obsessions. Kudos is due to Freer for finding the right balance between these tones, and the control with which she delivered her dialogue.’

Evie Fotou in The Kiss – ‘Fotou has much to work with the persona of Despina thanks to George Leontakianakos and Alexandra Dyrani’s script. She’s a character with a compromised existence, and one that seems unable to understand other people’s emotional needs... or even better, her own. Fotou rises to the challenge, and provides a stillness to the character that hones in on the film’s harsh claustrophobic existence. Furthermore, her scene partner – Savvas Petridis, works up quite a strong counter performance off of Despina’s moody exterior.’

Gillian Saker in Goodbye Mondays – ‘Well, I wouldn’t want Saker as a maid, or actually any sort of domestic worker. She’s quite terrible at that particular vocation clearly.. but on the flip side, she gives one hell of a performance in Goodbye Mondays, and is a very skilled actress.’

Lauren McCann in Cecile – ‘An unflinching performance is present here. McCann does a great job. Her ability to breath on set is special – she’s alive in the character, and very much living moment to moment here.’

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- Best Supporting Performance

### **WINNER: Brooke Adams in Snapshots**

Festival Director says:

*Adams effortlessly brings Patty to life in Snapshots. She listens to her on-screen scene partners with much attention and care, appearing to be fully engaged with the moment to moment drama – making for a constantly believable and affectionate performance.*

#### **Nominations:**

Ronald Calzolari in Little Rose – ‘Calzolari provides a constant, and effort filled performance in Little Rose.’

Bryan Lennard Smith in Triple Sifted & Self-Raising – ‘Lennard Smith provides a bit of grit to this comical short. It’s his threatening demeanor and deep voice which helps to ground the film’s ‘threat factor’.

Max C. Klein in The Bunny – ‘Despite the dreadful dubbing completed imposed to this short film, Klein provides a few moments of distinction in his ‘being’ as a student wishing to transfer from biology studies to documentary filmmaker. His presence almost allures to the likeness of silent film stars – who provided great depth in their expressions and physicality.

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- Best Ensemble Cast

#### **WINNER: The cast of Aliens With Knives**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Aliens With Knives feels like a roll back to those midnight films that used to fizz, bang and pop! The greatest weapon in this film’s particular arsenal is the pure pleasure with which the cast exudes during the film’s entirety. It appears as if everyone was game for anything, and were just having a blast throwing and hitting those funny suited alien suited actors.*

#### **Nominations:**

The cast of The Goodbye Girl by Aidey Pugh – ‘A gritty gang assemble for The Goodbye Girl – and they deliver their all in this shortish feature!’

The cast of Goodbye Mondays by Michael Salmon – ‘Though it might be a small unit of just three actors, Goodbye Mondays’ cast are all perfectly tuned and hyped up to dark comedy perfection.’

The cast of Polterheist by David Gilbank – ‘Loaded to the brim with wincing and grinning faces, Polterheist’s best hit is its entertaining cast.’

The cast of Bea Before Me by Olivia Maiden – ‘Though the film’s camera work is a bit of a nightmare, the rest of the film is quite well delivered – in particular the performances of the overall ensemble. There is a real sense of dread in these people. Adam J Morgan and Olivia Maiden (the writer/director herself) really pull some great performances here – providing the film with an extra umph.’

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- Best Score

#### **WINNER: Herdís Stefánsdóttir’s score of Donor**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Consistently bumpy, and wonderfully paced – the patient’s world in Donor comes alive with Stefánsdóttir’s score.*

#### **Nominations:**

The score of Afrit – ‘A collection of retro sounding soundscapes which help heighten the film’s homemade horror factor. Tiresome smoking and credits aside, Afrit is a fun campy horror, highlighted best by its kitsch soundtrack.’

The score of Rumi With A View – ‘I really enjoyed the premise of Rumi With a View, and thought the performances and script were a great combination... but the greatest part of it all was the score, which consisted of these great musical improvisations.’

- 
- Best Genre Piece

### **WINNER: Companion by Andrew Greco**

Guest judge, [Ryan Bennett](#) says:

*Companion tells a familiar post-apocalyptic tale with innovative flare and impressive filmmaking technique. The integrated cinematic stylings of the film create the atmosphere of a bleak world without hope or salvation (but for the arrival of a stranger) and deliver top notch quality on a skinny budget. A gripping display of craft and adept reflection of genre.*

#### **Nominations:**

Poltergeist by David Gilbank – ‘Hefty with motifs, Poltergeist is a buffet of grand gangster design with fantastically comical and thriller elements.’

Deliverance by Philippe Boissier – ‘Though at times cliché, particularly reminiscent of ‘As Above, So Below’, the film almost reaches an original note and then becomes confusing. All the same though – Boissier’s handling of strong production values and horror tension is impressive.’

Destiny by Vikkram Chandirramani – ‘The bolstering of the rom-com genre with a bit of a red herring ending here is quite fantastic. It is the script and performance of the leads though that shines mostly, not so much the handling of fairly blasé production values.’

- 
- Best Direction

#### **Nominations:**

### **WINNER: Alexsa Tolentino’s direction of Cecil**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*If one was to measure a director’s skill by the clash of realism, aesthetics and tone, then Cecil is proof of Tolentino’s ability to craft meaningful scenes with a real pace about them. It’s a rare thing in short films, and makes for a voice which deserves attention.*

#### **Nominations:**

Dale John Allen’s direction of Hugo, XO – ‘Had the film entirely relied on the one sided monologue running over domestic chores it would have fallen completely flat. However, with the film’s second half – where a context is given to the confession, John Allen’s choices as a director become a little more specific, alluring to a filmic space, the onlookers and the act of listening within which the plot points have occurred. And it is with this added frame of someone listening to Hugo Harris’ fantastic deliverance of this speech that the film becomes an intimate, fresh and uncomfortably communal experience.’

Andrea Umberto Origlia's direction of *Tracce Sulla Cenere* – 'There is a grand paintbrush at work here, and one which is quite impressive with the film's restrictive budget. Umberto Origlia's work is impressive, and very atmospheric.'

Brian Lutes's direction of *Blue Skies on Mars* – 'Judging is all so very subjective – but one can safely say that Brian Lute's film has a very personable feeling to it. One he has clearly placed on the film. It felt as if we were in those rooms – eating, shouting and living.'

- 
- Best Writing

#### **WINNER: Jan Miller Corran and Katherine Cortez's writing of *Snapshots***

Festival Director says:

*There's much chatter and moments of revelation in Snapshots, providing ample quantity to the cast to explore their personas and space. The only reason it all holds together so well is thanks to the solid foundation of its writing, and its authentic character driven plot.'*

#### **Nominations:**

Jakub Charon's writing of *Totem* – 'A world refined with inner turmoil and 'real life' risks, Charon's screenplay provides a space for characters to exist in the most cruelest of ways. Its riveting stuff.'

Janine Koppe's writing of *Farewells* – 'Koppe's script pops with some fantastic scenic dialogue. Her characters live and breath within these spaces, providing the actor's with plenty of space to make it all their won, and most importantly – believable.'

Zachary August's writing of *Mystic Realm Online* – 'The short is concise and to the point, and often feels like a bit of a divisive piece about childhood, globalization and the online world we are all plugged into all the time... but it is its treatment of character that serves the film mostly, where our lead actors are given just enough to provide a wealth of realism in the film, as well as that eventual 'aha' moment when the internet world comes crashing down.'

James Christopher's writing of *A Chance of Snow* – 'As per usual with Christopher's outings there's a tonne to like here, mostly it is the characters though, who all feel quite real in their sketching, which is entirely his fantastic work as a real people's writer – does that make sense? Also, one must add a note about the photography of this film, which has taken a step up here in comparison with the previous films we've seen from Twitchy Dolphin... not to say that it wasn't good before, but rather that it has gotten a little more slick with this particular outing.'

- 
- Best Editing

#### **WINNER: Lenny Dutch's editing of *The Longneck Goodbye***

Festival Director says:

*Editing a silent film isn't easy. And Dutch does a fantastic job here – compiling some fantastic moments and giving them just the right amount of emphasis in terms of time. One must also commend the film's director – Creighton Satterfield, whose work across the project allows for such a smooth transition of information and story through the film's pictures.*

#### **Nominations:**

Ian Roberts' editing of Meat Juice – 'Meat Juice finds horror in the surreal, and its mainly successful thanks to Roberts' order of assembly and construction of his film's sounds and images.'

Matthias Fuchez's editing of Viaje – 'Boldy intertwining past, present and future – Fuchez's edit brings about an intimate sense of nostalgia, as well as a cinematic understanding of time and space.'

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- Best Period Piece

**WINNER:** Love in the Age of Steam by Karen McCarthy

Festival Director says:

If one can get past the heavy handed dose of cliché dialogue and flat performances, Love in the Age of Steam provides a keen eye for detail in its depiction of a retro future which includes jet flying, mechanized reality skipping and strange neighbor chattering.

**Runner up:**

Goodbye Mondays by Michael Salmon – 'A fun hoot of a throwback to the upstairs downstairs tension of the bygone era of English households (or so one hopes). Hannah Davis' art direction is clean, and often provides a lot of room in terms of the film's period piece look. The sense of a retro design though is best delivered through the cinematography, which is steeped in a lush anamorphic scope.'

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- Special Mention

**WINNER:** Josiah Cuneo and Duane Michals' work on Interruptus

Festival Director says:

*Though compactly made – with little more than a simple 'caught in the act' plot, Cuneo and Michals find a way with which to elevate the simplistic point of discovery and provide it with a very unique and heightened state – the double exposed image, the mechanical zoom and the relayed footage recall the works of Michael Snow, in particular his domestic argument 'Power of Two'.*

*What Cuneo and Michals are commendable on here though is providing this form of experimental film as a narrative piece, rather than say just another installation by the likes of Snow.*

*What would be even more exciting is if the duo now took a step further and created something with dialogue – a film which was produced with the same level of experimental filming methodology and a narrative that extended beyond a simple plot point.*

**Nominees:**

The ensemble score of Restarting by Jo Lyons and Mark Newton – 'A carefully compiled selection of tracks help keep Restarting's pace alive and tonally nuanced.'

Nature by Richard Schertzer – ‘A compiled experimental exploration of nature spaces. It’s all a bit of a calming sense of moments that aspire to be filmic. Almost as if someone had simply compiled the inserts of other films and created a montage of peaceful moments.’

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### **Special Mention Prize: Social Conscious Filmmaking**

**WINNER: Upstate Story by Shaun Rose**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Despite its outdated, murky and quite stark photography – Rose’s film provides a unique presentation which highlights a particular socio-economic character in a harsh situation. It is this narrative, the depthful vision of this being, and the acute awareness for the film’s locale, which cements Upstate Story as a film with an important story to tell, and a bold way in which it is displayed to us. Somewhat reminiscent of Kelly Reichardt’s early films, in particular Old Joy.*

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## Script competition:

- Best genre piece

**WINNER: Legends of Conquest by Irene Herbruger:** ‘Oh hello New World! Its Gothic vibes ring like American Horror Story Roanoke, which was kick ass... so, you know, this is kick ass too!’

### **Nominations:**

Jane: The Ulster Soldier’s Daughter by Carmel Joyce: ‘A fairly well balanced genre piece, loaded with some interesting character arcs.’

The Convenient Prayer by Alan Harrington: ‘A bit of a messy script in terms of its organisation, but a great genre belter all the same.’

Graffiti Boy by Tara Arkle: ‘There’s a great world in this script, and it should be filmed!’

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- Best technique

**WINNER: The Hanging of Max Dunn by Martha Shaw:** ‘Slick and detailed. Some solid writing.’

### **Nominations:**

The Novelty Act by Tom Eastwood: ‘A well oiled machine is presented here. Eastwood’s script is well organised and perfectly designed.’

Family Way by Shiva Rodriguez and D. Duckie Rodriguez: ‘One fantastically organised and constantly maintained script!’

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- Best micro budget script

### Nominations:

My Week with Maisy by Mark Oxtoby: 'Though set in a fairly complex locale, the film's tight compact makes it a solid micro budget effort, and one which is 'production ready'.'

*Please Note: Not enough scripts nominated for this category to announce a winner.*

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- Best character arc

**WINNER: My Week with Maisy by Mark Oxtoby:** 'One has to love the voice of The Nurse. It's very personalized, and textured.'

### Nominations:

Jane: The Ulster Soldier's Daughter by Carmel Joyce: 'The overall arc presented within Joyce's script is quite carefully conceived, and endearing.'

The Stelian Prophecy by Irene Herbruger: 'A great bouquet of personas inhabit The Stelian Prophecy, and they all have some great dialogues.'

At the Mercy of Faith by Samuel Lee Taylor: 'A wild journey of a script, quite vividly done with its ensemble.'

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## Music Video

- Best music video

**WINNER: I Believe – Yolanda Adams by Bim Ajadi**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*'It's not so much the heartwarming message of I Believe which makes it a winner – which, by the way, it is soaked in... but rather the confidence and consistency Ajadi delivers throughout the music video's production is what catches one eye, and keeps the music lingering.'*

### Nominations:

Reach You by Ric Poulin – 'Though the sense of time is completely lost here thanks to an uneven grade, there's no denying that this rooftop jam music video is a fresh of breath air!'

The Letting Go by Tyler McElrath – 'The photography ain't all that consistent here, but the actual music video is charming and well delivered. The setting of a school is done quite fabulously as well. Also – the music ain't bad... not that this is a music competition. Quite fantastic really.'

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- Best cinematography

**WINNER: Christian Edgar Scholz's cinematography in Attic – The Hound of Heaven**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*‘Grainy and visceral, Attic’s The Hound of Heaven is a great example of what some smart location scouting, stylized lighting and tone can do to elevate a music video.’*

#### **Nominations:**

Sean Pearson’s cinematography in Death Drive – ‘Tony Scott’s The Hunger strikes again – this time as an adoring gritty, flashy and bloody re-imagining of that famous hunting nightclub scene is present here. Or at least a version of it... after all, it’s been done to death. Even the likes of rocker/model Sky Ferreira and American Horror Story: Hotel hit this film reference a while back.’

Daniele De Muro’s cinematography in The Heart and The Void: A House by the Sea – ‘Some sunny seaside amore. You know how they say ‘less is more’, well De Muro does just that here – its simple, its clean and enjoyable.’

Carolina Nunes’ cinematography in Every Winter – ‘There’s a real sense of texture here, mostly thanks to the cinematography and its way of highlighting the character and scenery of the music video.’

- 
- Best editing

#### **WINNER: Paul Crossland’s editing of Charlie Loves You**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*‘Hey Sue, nice edit... OK. Sorry – I’m just teasing. About the ‘Hey Sue’ bit... The music video itself could do with a bit more refinement in terms of its images: ie grading and composition of shot. Otherwise though, Crossland’s edit is consistent, and makes for an enjoyable, and often fresh, sequence of scenes. One should also note the performance of whomever plays Charlie – it’s quite an enjoyable dapper and cheery performance.’*

#### **Runner up:**

Andreas Guzman’s editing of Guiri Gringo – ‘If one can excuse the endless bad cliches of gringos on holiday in Spain, then there’s something to enjoy here in terms of the music video’s editing – in particular the horizontal split screen, which is a rare treat.’

# Winter 2018

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**FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

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## JURY PRIZE

- **Jury Prize – Feature Film: Holy Spirit by Mike Baran**

Jury Member, [Sean Price](#) says:

*Michael Foerster and Tom Schuster lead a rambunctious cast in Mike Baran's zany satire on ad executives, blasphemy and whiskey. Schuster, a country heartthrob is hired to play Jesus for a new whiskey marketing campaign, turning him into an overnight celebrity in the process. Foerster attempts to manage his newly developed star, though some unexpected developments plunge both men into a chaotic series of events. Holy Spirit is not content on just being any one thing, constantly blending multiple genres, which are only complimented by Baran's continued shift in visual style throughout. There is a great confidence to Holy Spirit, one that seems to have infected the cast, who all give great performances throughout.*

Nominees: The KNOW by Boomer Galassi and Adam Galassi

- **Jury Prize – Short Film: De-Mente by Lorenzo Ayuso**

Jury Member, [Sean Price](#) says:

*Short films can often fall into a trap of limitations as a means to manage their micro budgets. Single locations, small casts and a heavy focus on dialogue is the surest way to minimise any financial risk, though often at the cost of limiting their narrative potential. De-mente is able to subvert these risks with it's wonderfully claustrophobic cinematography and vibrant colour palette, courtesy of Roberto Castelli, turning a standard living room set into a nightmarish fever dream. Writer/Director Lorenzo Ayuso creates a wonderfully original atmosphere, squeezing as much as he possibly can out of every small detail to ensure there is never a dull moment through the short's twelve minute runtime.*

Nominees: In Absence by Kacey Dolan, A Calm Sea Sways by Ross Donald, The Guitar by Michael Boston

— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee.

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# MAIN COMPETITION

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Ramekin by Cody Clarke**

Festival Director says:

*Ramekin is a wonderful puzzle of a film – one which seems quite comfortable sitting between a surrealist film and a comedic one. There was a bizarre touch of Wes Anderson meets David Lynch in this film – where the stakes were always on an even keel, making the film neither threatening, as well as never boring.*

*The success of the film largely relies on its smart use of budget, which punches its lead performance from Jamie Saunders to front and center, along with its brilliant belief in an absurd concept. There's also credit due to Adriano La Rocca, who carries a certain energy in his scenes that keeps things fresh.*

*Overall the film at times is stronger than other parts, but it is, for its very small budget, an impressive piece – one that will hopefully delight audiences on VOD.*

Nominee: The KNOW by Boomer Galassi and Adam Galassi

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Not enough titles to allow for this competition to run.

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: The Radicalization of Jeff Boyd by Uwe Schwarzwald**

Festival Director says:

*Considering the film's budget, Uwe Schwarzwald has delivered a very polished film. The type which would play quite comfortably on TV, or even at certain genre festivals.*

*My main qualm is really the film's lack of depth, which seems to be entirely glossed over with locations and overall themes.*

*This isn't to say that Schwarzwald lacks skill as a director, or even actor, but perhaps that taking on both roles at the same time has prevented him from either giving a more developed performance, or a stronger artistic tone in the direction.*

*Ultimately the film succeeds overall in all of its key areas, but fails to outdo itself at any point.*

Nominee: Holy Spirit by Mike Baran

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: In Absence by Kacey Dolan**

Festival Director says:

*I'll keep my thought short due to the simple reality that this project poses: Kacey Dolan has succeeded in capturing a moving, informative and interesting subject with a no-budget scale.*

*Praise is due to her efforts, as the short documentary capturing the lives of refugees feels less exploitative than a simple exercise in storytelling. There isn't anything 'off' about this project, and I hope it is the beginning of an interesting filmography from this filmmaker.*

Nominees: Sanitiser by Jay Powrie, Edelweiss by Sam Bradford, Papercut by Damian Overton

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

#### **Winner: Making Marks by Ben MacGregor**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Observational documentaries are rarely my thing. I often find the genre to be overworked, and overly informative. The great thing about Making Marks though is its ability to shine a light on characters, or rather beings, that have been disregarded by art history, and provide them a platform which is both artistic, and informative.*

*Ultimately the film's ease, and overall tone, is what makes it such a charmer. Kudos to the team as well, as it doesn't seem to carry any 'real' production faults, and seamlessly floats into a comfortable production flow of quality.*

Nominee: The Somnambulist by Duane Michals

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

#### **Winner: Pitfall by Ben Desmond**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Though war films are a submission I dread – as there are just far too many of them (especially of WWI and WWII films set in the battlefields of empty fields, trenches and random forests), Pitfall carries an interesting fresh premise of survival as its real vehicle, and it is this, which goes hand in hand with its fairly unique cinematography, framing and edit, which allows this film to be more than just another cookie-cut exercise in patriotism.*

*Furthermore, the film's overall ethical tone, which turns its opposing sides into humans fighting for life, the film elevates itself further with its closing note – a chilling 'what if' ending which ultimately places a rebel soldier in a deadly situation which has no real salvation. Praise is due to director Ben Desmond for his delivery of this tense tone.*

Nominees: De-Mente by Lorenzo Ayuso, The Guitar by Michael Boston, Time by Alon Daniel

- Best Web Series

#### **Winner: The Grimoire Chapters: Rem Michael Davis**

*Wonderfully Gothic, consistently delivered, and full of intriguing beings – The Grimoire Chapters are a pleasure!*

Nominees: Time Travel by Jonathan Nolan, How I Met Your Grandfather by Andrew Medeiros & Spencer Daniel, The Strategy of Water by Fabio Pellegrinelli, Berliners by Paula Galimberti, Gonzalo Piñán and Pedro Deltell

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# OTHER CATEGORIES

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: Blair Winders' photography of *The Wish and The Wisp***

*A soft and delicate child-like-wonder-eye carries *The Wish and The Wisp* to fruition.*

Nominees: Davide Pedace's photography of *Under Your Skin*, Tania Freimuth's photography of *Pitfall*

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Kieton Beilby in *Papercut***

*Beilby's performance as a public figure with a love to hide is wonderfully consistent, memorable and moving.*

Nominees: Eric Lang in *The Wish and The Wisp*, Jeffery Richards in *Know Danger*, Michael Foerster in *Holy Spirit*, Michael Boston in *The Guitar*, Josh Kieser in *Papercut*

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Michelle Donnelly in *A Calm Sea Sways***

*Donnelly's portrayal of grief is respectful, convincing and fresh.*

Nominees: Paula Galimberti in *Berliners*, Juliette Kida in *Robber*

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Ally Pickering's score of *Bright Eyes***

*Like with the score of Garland's *Ex Machina*, *Bright Eye's* score helps ground the film's futuristic setting, as well as drive a tense bolt of fear to the audience mind as to what dangerous vision the film is set in.*

Nominees: Miguel d'Oliveira's score of *Pitfall*, Luigi-Maria Rapisarda's score of *Beta*, Nor Seyedmorteza's score of *Robber*

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: *Love at the End of Earth* by Evan Morton**

*This Sci Fi delight is moving, and a wonderful well-thought-out technical beast.*

Nominees: *Red Wine* by Victor Bess, *We Need to Talk* by Robert L Butler Jr, *The Caterer's Revenge* by Jonah Jones, *Schmoopie* by Mary C. Ferrara

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: *Pitfall* by Ben Desmond**

*Desmond's direction of Pitfall keeps the film slick and top-shelf material.*

Nominees: Making Marks by Ben MacGregor, Foreign by Timothy Ross, Eat Jeremy by Sam South

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: Papercut by Damian Overton**

*Compactly written, compassionate and sensitively delivered – this character piece is both moving and increasingly relevant with the reintroduction of 'morality clauses' following the MeToo movement.*

Nominees: Follow the Crows by Alex Secker, Relivation by Wim Bax and Wouter Springer, Eat Jeremy by Sam South, Caishen – The God of Fortune by Ding, Robber by Andrew Greco

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: Kai Erfurt's editing of Beta**

*Packing action, like a comic book, isn't an easy task – Beta delivers this mostly through its editorial slicing and dicing.*

Nominees: James Kellett Smith's editing of Aconcagua, John Fuller's editing of Survival

- Best Ensemble of the season

**Winner: the cast of Eat Jeremy**

*A tight body of wonderful performances bring Eat Jeremy to life, despite its deathly subject.*

Nominees: the cast of Beta

- Special Mention

**Maniera Greca by Kirineos Papadimatos, Last Resort by Klifford Barkus**

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# MUSIC VIDEO

**– Best Music Video**

**Winner: Hider – Don't Pretend It Was Nothing by ScaryJacks**

*Charming and moving, the two things no one really expects from a music video.*

Nominations: Dominik Baer – Colliding in the Dark by Dennis Gleiss, I'm Older – The Collider by David Morris

**– Best Cinematography**

**Winner: Rafael Fabres' cinematography of Peregrino – O'Death**

*Beautifully shot, and filled with a lush variety of locales and various titillating sights – Rafael Fabres' photography is a treat.*

Nominations: Three Hat Media's cinematography of Jeremy Parsons – Burn This House Down, J.B. Lawrence's cinematography of Forgive, Francis Frenkel's cinematography of Distant Thunder, Sunday Morning (Again)

#### **– Best Editing**

**Winner: Liudmila Komrakova's editing of Taste of Night**

*A dark streak of romance runs through Taste of Night, and it is mostly achieved through the time shifts which the editor delivers.*

Nominations: Johannes S. Karpe's editing of Sexy Blonde – Our Untold Story– Special Prize: Best Music Video Production

#### **– Special Prize: Best Music Video Production**

**Winner: Bashton – Scandal by Pablo Mengin-Lecreulx**

*With its stunning 2500 painting, Scandal is a visual feast for the eyes!*

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## SCRIPT COMPETITION

#### **– Best Genre Piece**

**Winner: Brains! by Mik Paul**

*Barmy and fun, Brains! is the zombie comedy we need right now.*

Nominees: The Cry of a Black Rose by Felah Voltaire and Vincent Sheridan

#### **– Best Technique**

**Winner: Cherry Glazed by Christine Sherwood**

*Written with a keen eye for detail, as well as a strong voice in terms of its characters and descriptions.*

Nominees: Our Breakthrough by David Spring, Before Charlie by Amit Koul

#### **– Best Micro Budget Script**

**Winner: Bus Stop by Vanessa Bailey**

*Though lacking in screenwriting polish, Bus Stop oozes filmability and a ready-to-shoot scenario.*

Nominees: The Snip by Eamonn Shaughnessy

#### **– Best Character Arc**

**Winner: The Snip by Eamonn Shaughnessy**

*Comedic, and fairly well rounded, The Snip is a solid character journey.*

Nominees: The Cry of a Black Rose by Felah Voltaire and Vincent Sheridan, Our Breakthrough by David Spring, The Shakespeare Plays by Martin Keady

# End of 2017

**FESTIVAL LAURELS** (all categories)

## JURY PRIZE

- Feature Film:

**Winner: By Any Means by Leighton Spence**

Jury Member, [Ben Rider](#) says:

*By Any Means isn't your typical micro budget feature film. Usually they are savvy with their cash, and are little dramas set in some locale where people have an excuse to talk... I in fact know my own work falls into this terrible trope, and have done several things over the years in an attempt to get out of it (rarely succeeding). I'm not sure what it is, or why indie filmmakers get stuck in the 'dialogue' loop of plotting, but it seems to happen very often. There is though, on the rare occasion, an exception. A film which is made within a genre, but one that isn't simply a 'dialogue film' stuck within a genre package.*

*By Any Means is that exception. It is a genre film which, though featuring a heap of dialogue, is more of a film set within its own ideas of 'action'. It is a thriller film with ample grit, but shot with a solid production polish – making it glossy, and easy to follow. This all goes hand in hand with its main successful elements: it is a solid viewing experience which doesn't stress its indie budget, or the limitations of making a low budget film.*

*It is for that sole reason, when looking at the stack of potential films to nominate for the Jury Award, By Any Means became a strong selection... and then a firm winner as time went on. It is a film which escapes its budgetary restrictions, all the while celebrating its own industrial understanding of the genre bite.*

Runner up: Youngstown Metropolitan by Patrick Naples

- Short Film Winner:

**Winner: Lucy's Raw Eyes by Ines Sorlat**

Jury Member, [Ben Rider](#) says:

*Ines Sorlat's Lucy's Raw Eyes is shot mostly in a stunning and delicate black and white palette – which, evidently, allows for the eye-popping blood and garnish to blend away into a more cerebral image, than say a grotesque feast. The short film, which at times feels like a cross of Tim Burton and Brandon Cronenberg's work, making a wonderful social commentary with a bit of a Gothic humbug comedy element.*

*There is also the cast – a group of characters, most of whom appear for a few moments and then vanish, who are very convincing, and energetic. Furthermore, with the right shots and cutting, the world which the lead persona inhabits, played by the very talented Sarah Bartholomew, becomes tactile, and heavily textured in its understanding of ‘on screen space’, and the viewer’s understanding of filmic space.*

*Overall, when considering its production values, and its consistent quality, Lucy’s Raw Eyes is a rare thing – a short film which both utilizes its budget to the max, but also appears to be a ‘real’ piece of film which isn’t simply defined by the gimmick of a self contained narrative. It’s quite frankly just plain old simply great.*

Runners up: Deleted Scene by Nicolò Tagliabue, Penny by Louisa Harris, Crow’s Peak by John McDonald

— please note: our jury votes independently to the selection committee.

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## MAIN COMPETITION

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Youngstown Metropolitan by Patrick Naples**

Festival Director says:

*The notion of caméra stylo can’t be better expressed than Patrick Naples’ Youngstown Metropolitan – the film is brash, rough round the edges, and full to the brim with personal expression. Its main quality is to be found in the director’s own personal space, which he invades often as the lead actor of his own film – we see him in his room alone, on the streets alone, and in other locales which present him as the centre of his own world; one which we have been given access to through a very intimate and ‘up close’ presentation, often only afforded by filmmaker’s being their own leads, such as in the early works of Xavier Dolan.*

*Though the plot of a ‘young man on the edge’ is quite cliché, there is much to admire about this flick – the film is overall quite well presented for its intensely small budget, and is fairly consistent in its production values throughout. Furthermore, the cast present a strong ensemble effort, one which the film can’t help but embrace as it progresses.*

*Perhaps the music, which at times feels illegally ripped from Soundcloud and other various DJ filled sites, is the downfall of the film. Instead of acquiring a fresh soundtrack – which would add to the lead’s personal ‘mindspace’, the film is sprinkled with excerpts from various sources, forcing the viewer to feel as if they are watching a YouTube video.*

Nominee: Light the Fire by Patrick Nentzel

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Not enough titles to run this category.

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

### Winner: Panj by S. M. Hosseini

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Though the film's colour draining did wane on my enjoyment of the photographic image, I can't help but feel that the film was practically flawless otherwise. It provided a glimpse into a world far from the usual in terms of cinematic scope: it was personal, it was delicate, and often beautifully textured in terms of what kind of compositions, scenarios and documentary like exposures of a single person's life in the midst of a modernist city changing the 'old ways' of life.*

*Director S. M. Hossein has delivered an exceptionally well executed micro-budget, one which should be enjoyed by all art house lovers, especially those interested in a primitive form of cinema, one which recalls silent film modes of narrative expression.*

Nominees: One, Two, Guess Who by System, By Any Means by Leighton Spence

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

### Winner: Penny by Louisa Harris

[Festival Director](#) says:

*An understated element plays throughout Penny – the cast perform in a pace which breathes realism, the dialogue is never far-fetched, and the scenario, despite being rather tragically comedic at times, is never too far from 'the real'. This isn't some shabby genre exercise, nor is it an over hyped drama full of melodramatic chords. It is simple, and easy to build an appetite for.*

*Furthermore, with its careful use of budget, Penny is a well balanced and well stated short film. It has the personal intimacy of a feature, all the while maintaining the almost teasing plot punching short films are all too good at delivering.*

*All in all, one can't help but wish to see more from Louisa Harris after this venture – her cool handedness is felt throughout the project, and the direction, as well as casting (the workmate Ed Pinker and annoying workmate Angela Harris-Tanzer are especially highlight worthy) feel exceptionally well executed operations. Feature next please!*

Nominees: Deleted Scene by Nicolò Tagliabue, Crow's Peak by John McDonald

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

### Winner: Seeing Him by Chris Jones

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Seeing Him is a fairly a-typical psychological romance thriller. We have the love plot, the longing, and the loss. We have a twist of sorts, built into the pacing... and it's all very well packaged in terms of its run-time (basically – it is one of those plot lines that were designed quite successfully for a short film).*

*The true beauty of this project is at its core of detail. There is an eye for detail within the character arc, which was built-in at the script level, allowing for the actors to further enhance their performances, as well as reach certain textured nuances in terms of how they performed, and the pitch with which their voices reach. Likewise, the overall design of the film, be it the lush cinematography, or the carefully constructed shot choices and prop arrangement, there is a sense that this project is both a professional effort, as much as a passion project for those involved. It is, in essence, a very well rounded affair.*

Nominees: Sarmaga by Jon Lewis

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Not enough titles to run this category.

- Best Web Series

**Winner: Blue Collar Hustle by Geoffrey Henderson and Alonge Hawes**

Festival Director says:

*The strongest hand which Blue Collar Hustle plays is its cast of strong performers. As an ensemble, there is an overall sense that the team believe in the project, and furthermore, have gone to great strengths to deliver an even performance throughout the project. There is a feeling of a collective cacophony of experience echoed throughout the pilot's runtime – the characters are very much the centre of the show's tone, and at times even feel filmic in their timed gestures and carefully written dialogues.*

*This is also a very commendable remark for the directors – Geoffrey Henderson and Alonge Hawes, who have succeeded in delivering an engaging and often three-dimensional set of character studies within their show, which is something many webseries often lack.*

*Though the production values often leave much to be desired on the front of cinematography, the edit keeps a certain pace that maintains the show's flow – one which would retain viewers far beyond one episode.*

*There are, after all, no cheap genre tricks here, and the show does contain that almost 'traditional' feeling of drama which is often associated with high brow theatre. It is essentially at its heart a very commendable and rich media text.*

Nominees: Deteriorate by Joshua Idusohan and Brandon Novis, Back in the Game by Andreas Toumbas, Wishlist created by Marcel Becker-Neu, Marc Schießler and Christina Ann Zalamea

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## OTHER CATEGORIES

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: Markus Mueller's cinematography of By Any Means**

*A creative and consistent image keeps By Any Means fresh with a colourful aesthetic.*

Nominees: Daniel Ernst and Tui Lohf's cinematography of Wishlist, Nicola Cattani's cinematography of The Way Home, Mohammad Soraya's cinematography of The Exhale

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Thomas Gipson in By Any Means**

*Strong in terms of his range, and ‘present’ in all scenes, Gipson pushes to deliver a slick performance in By Any Means.*

Nominees: Jason Beaudoin in Pneuma, Jacob Dale in Street Games, Ed Pinker in Penny, Stanislao Galasso in Califà, Guy Kaplunik in Lucy’s Raw Eyes

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Vanessa Bailey in Seeing Him**

*Bailey carries a particular weight with her performance that makes it both believable, and moving.*

Nominees: Colleen Hagerty in Youngstown Metropolitan, Aimee-Lynn Chadwick in Tinsel’s Town, Helen Lewis in Nick

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Jonathan Gerbscheid’s score of Tiger**

*Classically chilling, Gerbscheid’s score keeps those nerves on edge!*

Nominees: Sian E. Selway’s score of By Any Means, Daniel Fowler’s score of Feud

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: David’s Here by Mark Oxtoby**

*Cheesily authentic as a b-movie horror, David’s Here is a fun low-key exercise which delivers some camp grotesque fun.*

Nominees: Pneuma by William Carne, By Any Means by Leighton Spence, Feud by Matthew Fordy and Joe Jones

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: Deleted Scene by Nicolò Tagliabue**

*A whimsy short film, directed with a careful ear for tone and style.*

Nominees: David’s Here by Mark Oxtoby, The Way Home by Federico Olivetti, Infinite by Marco D Cruz, Penny by Louisa Harris, Lucy’s Raw Eyes by Ines Sorlat

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: Youngstown Metropolitan by Patrick Naples**

*Brashly written, with a youthful energy, the plotting of Youngstown Metropolitan feels like a past-time form of punk ‘coming of age’ films, the type that Araki once made in the 90’s.*

Nominees: Duelos (Bereavement) by Yolanda Román, Street Games by James Fink-Jensen, Nick by Jack Levy, The Rift by PH Debies

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: The One Shot by Giorgio Miraflor**

*The One Shot's edit is energetic and fun, it's pace is brilliantly lively*

Nominees: Infinite by Marco D Cruz

- Best Ensemble of the season

**Winner: the cast of Deleted Scene**

*Together, this energetic bunch make for a whole lot of fun viewing.*

Nominees: The cast of One, Two, Guess Who by System, the cast of Tiger

- Special Mention

**Burnt by Ma Yi, Quiet Zone by Paul-Anthony Navarro, Crow's Peak by John McDonald**

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# UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

## – Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Stunt by Shantay Robinson**

*Loaded with jokes of yesteryear, this film feels like a rom-com from the 90's reloaded with a rapper called APOCALYPSE.*

Nominees: Love Lives in a Void by Johnny Zito, Santa Klawn by Jeffrey Lee DuPree, Ube Bubog, Vol. One, 'School of Hard Knocks' by Sway Stagall

## – Best Technique

**Winner: Slurry by Ryan Hayes**

*A well structured script, Slurry is an easy read thanks to its maintaining of strong screenwriting techniques.*

Nominees: Santa Klawn by Jeffrey Lee DuPree

## – Best Micro Budget Script

**Winner: Straight Man by Kelly Karam**

*With its very localised plot, Kelly Karam writes a well executed super short loaded with a twist, and strong whimsy characters.*

Nominees: Ruby by Simon Wilkinson

### – Best Character Arc

**Winner: Mad Dash by William J. Leonard**

*There is much heart in the story of Mad Dash, with its look at the treatment of bipolar in the 80's. At its core though, it isn't so much the plot which intrigues, but rather its characters, and their very personal interactions with each other.*

Nominees: The Cut by Christopher Kerr, The End of the Feast by Attila Toth, Fat Vs Evil by Alex Sheldon

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## MUSIC VIDEO

### – Best Music Video

**Winner: Dardem: El Reloj**

*There is a head of adventure, creativity and effects in this music video which must be admired for its bold and enjoyable usage!*

Nominations: BYTE: The Prequel by James E. Moriarty, Licia Missori – Suite Della Coccinella by Marco Vallini

### – Best Cinematography

**Winner: Lunakid – Eternal (feat. Keidel) by Tizia Florence and Jessy Moravec**

*Though minimalist, the music video utilizes its images to the max – delivering something organic, energetic, and original.*

Nominations: BYTE: The Prequel by James E. Moriarty

### – Best Editing

**Winner: The Reapers by Hector Suñol**

*It feels like an old 16mm music video, despite the contemporary setting and modern technology. The edit, which is fluid and forwards thinking, is the retro element – a real 'rock on' vibe for the festival days.*

Nominations: Licia Missori – Suite Della Coccinella by Marco Vallini

### – Special Prize: Best Music Video Message

**Winner: Goodnight, Goodbye by Nic Nassuet**

*Goodnight, Goodbye is a personal, up-and-close piece which has a strong and important message to deliver in its brief runtime.*

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*Please note: some categories vary in number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.*

# Late Summer 2017

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Festival Laurels (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

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## JURY PRIZE

Main Categories:

- Jury Prize

**Feature Film Winner: The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me by Max Radbill**

Jury Member, Sean Price says:

*Simply reading the title aloud for The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me should be enough of a giveaway that this feature is about as subtle as a lit match in an oxygen plant. Though this is also exactly what makes Max Radbill's debut feature successful. Playing like a Nickelodeon flick gone post-watershed, The Sisterhood never shies away from it's genre, it's influences or it's identity, rather, it blurts them out at every given moment like a crazed toddler with a megaphone.*

*The Sisterhood is unapologetically consistent in maintaining a persona of self awareness, sometimes going too far with sound and visuals, though it's talented cast's strong commitment keeps it grounded at some sort of bizarre level. Special mention should go to Matthew DeHoff for his portrayal of dim witted buffoon Marcus, and to Saalika Khan, whose portrayal of Tracy demonstrates that even the most minor of characters can steal a scene or two. Topping this all off with a quick narrative pace ensures that while you may find yourself questioning some of Radbill's decisions, you are certainly never bored.*

*With such a mix of praise and criticism in this review, it would be fair to state that The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me may be somewhat divisive. The toil and effort put in however cannot be disputed, creating an end result which is unyieldingly defiant and very aware of what it's audience is. Not every film needs to challenge our perception of life, I guarantee this one won't, but that is not to say that popcorn isn't an art form either, it totally is, and The Sisterhood is very much well made popcorn all the way.*

Runner up: Shanda's River by Marco Rosson

**Short Film Winner: Breaker by Philippe McKie**

Jury Member, Sean Price says:

*Through it's ten minute runtime, Breaker presents viewers with a flurry of vibrant neon colours and nightmarish cyberpunk attire akin to the most rambunctious of Kabukichō alleyways. Philippe McKie's thriller reeks of influence from Mamoru Oshii, offering us a small glimpse into a world of sentient technology and ever expanding web networks. Breaker follows a young rogue hacker*

*whose mind becomes infected, and subsequently overrun by an autonomous weapons program seeking self preservation from it's pursuing creators.*

*While the narrative of Breaker may come across as quite the mouthful, especially considering the short runtime, not much is truly expanded on regarding the program, the company which created it, or the pursuers themselves. Breaker instead, and rather smartly, opts for a more self-contained chase narrative pitting the rogue hacker against one such pursuer across Tokyo. Considering the simple narrative, it is very clear where the ambitions of the film lie, providing wonderfully flamboyant visuals and smooth cinematography that wisps us through some of Tokyo's hidden gems.*

*Breaker is a film with a great attention to detail across all areas, and a clear understanding of it's genre. All that's left now is to wait and see if it remains an impressive stand-alone project, or becomes a cog in the wheel of a much larger universe.*

Runners up: Mariposas by Adrian Carey, Black Island by Damon Hocking, Pre Retro by Ross Graham

— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee.

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## MAIN CATEGORIES

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Rendez-vous by Jimmy Boutry and Thibaud Chaufourier**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Rendez-vous' plotting is a mere ghost of a thing... but with this measly budget, Jimmy Boutry and Thibaud Chaufourier really go 'all out' and deliver one of the most stunning dream incarnations I've ever seen in short film. It is memorable, and iconic, almost like the Louis Vuitton ad, L'invitation au voyage, featuring David Bowie. In truth, it is just too short a film... otherwise it is flat out perfect.*

Nominees: The Drawing Class by Lanxin Meng, Red Water by Luke Konopasky

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Retina by Justin Heyl**

[Festival Director](#) says:

There is a lot of kitsch in Retina. It's steeped in a kind of glossy 'gotcha' feeling. And ironically, it definately earns this attitude. The film is brash with violence, bold visuals, and a heap of surrealist motifs that would even make the likes of Nicolas Winding Refn and Alejandro Jodorowsky grin with delight.

What makes Retina fresh though isn't is ballsy narrative of robotic birth (to what appears to be a human mother), but rather its variety of shots, and the speed and ease with which it propels the carnival narrative from introductory shots to glammy closing credits. It's brash as they come, but memorable, and a hell of a fun viewing experience (even on a second and third scan).

Nominees: What Is Real by Duane Michals, Breaker by Philippe McKie

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: This is Jack by Darrett Sanders and Amanda Tepe**

Festival Director says:

*Caricatures float in and out of This is Jack. It's a wonderful of personas, music cues and jokes... and guess what? It's barmy and fun. It's like a contemporary Gregg Araki film, minus the edgy sex. Amanda Tepe rocks a good scene, as do many of her fellow ensemble members, who bark at the screen with an almost circus like performance: here is my moment, I'm in the spotlight, and I'm going to entertain you!*

*Continuing the metaphor of the circus, one can't help but bring about the only elephant in the room: the script. There is nothing really bad to say about it, but one can't help but feel as if it is riddled with anxious cliches, and at times feels like an overall simulated of many teenage films we've seen before. However, the film, with its 20 minutes runtime, must be commended for its pace, and overall speed.*

*Few shorts enjoy such a casual ease with their entertaining elements, and there is no denying that a feature film directed by Darrett Sanders and Amanda Tepe would be an awesome (indie) event.*

Nominee: The Distant Sea by Nic Wassell

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Texoma by Matt Jenkins and Charles Stanley**

Festival Director says:

*Texoma's greatest element is its authenticity. The film is quite well shot, and consistent with its technical skill for its measly \$3,000 budget. The cast, which gather a strong set of characters, provide a taste of this particular Texan way of life, enriched with the ideas of community, generational dynamics, and the importance of locality to the film's own ideals of land. There is also a very strong ideal surrounding the propriety of smaller American town's, and the implications these might have across the way one's lifestyle might change over the course of a lifetime.*

*There is a sense here of the old western saga narrative, though in scope this isn't by any means a John Ford film, it does hold some water in this comparison: the film is character driven, and its attention to the turmoil faced by its characters are handled in the same manner, grounded often in the clash of internal and social expectations of individuals placed under conflict.*

Nominees: Macie on a Good Day by Brandon C. Lay

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Nutshells by Rob Carpenter**

Festival Director says:

*There are issues in Nutshells, I can't deny that. The film isn't an 'all out' art house effort, and yet, it retains some great art house elements – character arcs which are built around internal conflict, a particular simplistic approach to the material visually, and a heartfelt character arc of non-genre issues.*

*The problem though, or perhaps the reason for not calling this an outright 'five out of five' showstopper effort is quite simple: imbalance. The film doesn't have any sort of style shouting at you, nor does it have any sort of consistent flavor in the filmic cinematography. Something which one can't help but feel as though Nutshells is currently missing in order to make it stand out in the crowd of submissions.*

*It is however consistently coherent, something many indie films are not; and further to that point, it is never offensive. In fact, my personal note would actually be to return to the editing suite, and see what a 4:3 black and white cut would look like – let's see what Nutshells might feel like as a film when it delves stylistically into the materialistic tone that it is already harnessing so well in its narrative. Or, perhaps, on the flip side, one would recommend Rob Carpenter return to the drawing board and fire up another film. Only this time he ought to imagine his next film without the art house plot, and focus on making a film which could be more genre based, and perhaps more welcoming to this current filming style.*

*Otherwise, one must commend the overall cast, as an ensemble, they deliver and maintain a certain freshness with the fairly fun script penned by Carpenter. Furthermore, the lead character of Bill Gotts, played by Casey Manderson, is both realistic and comfortable to watch – which is a credit to both the star and filmmaker of this film.*

Nominee: The Quiet One by Jonathan Pegg,

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Not enough entries to run this category.

- Best Webseries

## Winner: Brian for Hire by Krishna Ribeiro

[Festival Director](#) says:

*We've seen it before in a webseries, that's for sure – the unemployed dropping in and out of jobs and various scenarios (aka gag jokes)... however, there is a secret weapon here, and it is in the form of Knoa Knapper. He is fantastic as Brian, in the funny webseries Brian for Hire.*

*There's also one additional note one must add, which is – an actor is only as good as the script, and the co-stars on screen with them. In this case, one can't help but feel that Brian for Hire is the best example of this syndication. The porn shop scenes, which result in a brave Knapper standing on the road with various naughty signs probably illustrates this best: an actor, and the team surrounding him, willing to go wild to entertain their viewers.*

*Hat tip to the team who achieved something quite rare: make a webseries people actually 'want' to watch for entertainment value, rather than just doze in front of the screen bored of work.*

Nominees: Together Forever by Ted Wilkes, The King's Oak by Core Of Monkos

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## OTHER CATEGORIES

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: Jimmy Boutry' cinematography of Rendez-vous**

*Lush, epic and somehow bite-sized, one can't help but commend Jimmy Boutry's cinematographic efforts in Rendez-vous*

Nominees: Natalja Safronova's cinematography of 1st June, Willem Helwig' cinematography of A Change of Heart,

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Jackson George in This is Jack**

*Jackson George gives it his all. He speeds his dialogue, he moves with ease on screen, and keeps at it with an admirable conviction throughout the entire production.*

Nominees: Jackson George in This Is Jack, Johnny Zito in la mémoire de Lune, Matthew Iannone in The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me, Pariac Birmingham in The Red Boot, Josh Hunt in The Cost of Living

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Amanda Tepe in This is Jack**

*About as memorable a comedic performance can be.*

Nominees: Robine Landi in Interference, Jamie Miller in Dead Color

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Baden Jack Burns' music for Potty the Plant**

*Though there are moments when the budget and performances don't match the musical aspirations set out by its composer, there's no denying the ambition and dedication placed into the scoring and composition of Potty the Plant*

Nominees: The End of Days,

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: Pre Retro by Ross Graham**

*As science fiction pulp goes, this one is a treat of time hops and rewind states. The cast shine with this smartly written short.*

Nominees: Potty the Plant by Aeddan Sussex, Breaker by Philippe McKie, The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me by Max Radbill, Shanda's River by Marco Rosson

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: Breaker by Philippe McKie**

*Soaked in glorious neon, science fiction pulp and a variety of awe inspired camera angles, Philippe McKie serves up a wonderfully delightful treat with Breaker!*

Nominees: Mariposas by Adrian Carey, Pre Retro by Ross Graham, Black Island by Damon Hocking

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: [copyright infringement – investigation on going]**

Nominees: Macie On A Good Day by Brandon C. Lay, Texoma by Matt Jenkins and Charles Stanley, The Cost of Living by Ahmad Dabiri

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: Elise Lausueur's editing of Rendez-Vous**

*Elise Lausueur's editing is easy going and breezy. She keeps a pace, and cuts with style.*

Nominees: Alex Morley's editing of Interference, Lenylson Luan Gomes' editing of The Hat, Andy Hilton's editing of The Quiet One, Josiah Cuneo's editing of What is Real

- – BEST ENSEMBLE CAST

**Winner: To the Power of Ten by Richard Kattah**

*Loaded with moving performances, To the Power of Ten really is in the power of its cast, who collectively shine with ease.*

Nominations: Vigilantes by Michael Mastrangelo, Potty the Plant by Aeddan Sussex

- Special Mention

**Aemorraghe by Patrick Devaney**

**Matthew DeHoff in The Sisterhood of Girls Who Won't Date Me**

**Is Radiation the Asbestos of the 21st Century? By Hjalmar Ilmer**

**Nomvula (After the Rain) by Chad Suspense**

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# UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

## – Best Genre Piece

**Winner: Divided We Fall by Slavica Bogdanov**

*Loaded with war film squealing, Divided We Fall is a fired up and gritty script.*

Nominees: Stoning the Jasmine by Zaina Deeb, The Devil's Gun by James Christopher

## – Best Technique

**Winner: The Rental by L. P. Lee**

There is a slight of hand to L. P. Lee's handling of characters and scenarios in this script which is technically quite apt.

Nominee: Stoning the Jasmine by Zaina Deeb, Ethereality: The Lasaker Chronicles by Andrew Amani

### – Best Micro Budget Script

No selected scripts for this category.

### – Best Character Arc

**Winner: Julie by Stephen Cottage**

*A heap of characters go through all sorts in 'Julie', and it is all humorous and engaging.*

Nominees: Stabat Mater by Gianni Cardillo, Mohsen Melliti and Edoardo Rossi, Hadley Quinn by Stephen Cottage

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## MUSIC VIDEO

### – Best Music Video

**Winner: Destroyer by John Byron Hanby IV**

*Surreal, dark, and beautifully shot – Destroyer might be one of the best music videos I've seen this year.*

Nominations: Mandy Machine by Benedict Coen, Wiccan by Benedict Coen, Thunder by Amiel Kestenbaum and Raphael Kadishzon, Float Away by Patrick Blake

### – Best Cinematography

**Winner: Less is More by Christopher Salvito**

*An air of elegance, within the technical side of the production, moves through this video, making it quite memorable and enjoyable to watch.*

Nominations: Destroyer by John Byron Hanby IV, If You Don't See It Neighbor by Julian Marcipar, Ghosts by Michael Mantsourani

### – Best Editing

**Winner: Ragamuffin by John Byron Hanby IV**

*With the impending doom moving towards the running, dancing, fighting figures, one can't admire the ease with which the edit of the video is forged in.*

Nominations: Dope D.O.D by Anton van der Linden, Hemi by Laris Kilimci, Zig Zag by Amber Johnson

## – Special Prize: Best Experimental Video

Winner: The Pirate Boy by Sofia Touboura

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*Please note: When the details of a particular technician of a nomination has not been readily available (such as an editor, cinematographer etc., we have simply referred to the director instead).*

# Early Summer 2017

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## JURY PRIZE – BEST SHORT FILM

**Winner: Oh Brother by Mia Mullarkey**

Jury Member, [Ryan Ohm](#), says:

*Mullarkey sets up a difficult premise depicting the life of a young man with Asperger's Syndrome, but executes the ups and downs miraculously in moments both sweet and sour. Immediately we meet Fergal, whom seems a bit unique. It's not until later the character's brother hints to the audience that he is certainly different than most folks. Beautiful settings from Fergal's unique and cluttered to a point of artistic expression bedroom to Amsterdam's winding canals and alleys set a vibrant tone for this piece matching Tivnan's performance wonderfully. Mullarkey creates a truly unique film, that is at times difficult to take in but authentic in it's frustrations, creating all the more drama in the film.*

Runner up: Memoriae by Lucyus Ribas

## JURY PRIZE – BEST FEATURE FILM

**Winner: The Man You're Not by Alan Freestone**

Jury Member, [Ryan Ohm](#), says:

*Alan Freeman crafts a quirky and weird group of characters into a lovable tale of pals on the up and down journey we all know and love, dating. Hidden amidst the full film is microcosms of humor, leaving the viewer never far from smiling. Freeman blends absurdity and authenticity to a tee, creating something so real but at the same time a unique feel. The lead, Charlie, is likable right from the get go and encourages viewers to hop on for the ride and root for him, despite his bad luck and at times, outlandish experiences. The story tells a classic tale in a refreshing manner; using traditional cinematography to let the actors shine without distraction and set in bustling city of personality, this is one film worth more than a few smiles.*

Runner up: The Frogmarch by Matthew C Flynn

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# MAIN COMPETITION – BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED FOR LESS THAN \$5,000

**Winner: Thick Air by Meredith Dobbs**

[Festival Director](#) says:

It's perhaps an odd topic to address when considering reviewing a film for being the winner of best production under 5k, but hey ho... part of the joys of being a fest director is taking the notes of your judges, adding your own votes into the process, and, agreeing (or disagreeing with them), and then finding what it is that one can find in the winning film that I can highlight as being its best element. And for me, with Thick Air, it is a rather simple concept: likability.

Audience participation, and identification, are concepts which one would rarely associate with indie micro budget films. Traditional viewers, and the rest of us (those that work on these types of film panels, or those who have made a low budget films), find it hard to participate or identify in micro budget stories. We watch the films intellectually, or technically, and we observe such and such a scene as being good because of this element, or that element and so on.... we rarely discuss the 'experience' we had in terms of emotions (unless it is a particularly moving topic – usually one not depicted often on screen), and even less emphasis is placed on the idea of finding ones identification with a character. We can see ourselves identifying with George Clooney in Up in the Air, but not with an unknown actor starring in some low budget film about a bacterial infection. It's just how it works – and if it didn't, Hollywood and other film platforms would collapse under the juggernaut of film viewers embracing smaller films.

That isn't to say that micro budget films aren't great, like most mediums of art, there are many avenues one can consume a piece. But, in film, somehow, identification and participation from an audience member, in terms of being able to sympathize or project onto the screen's narrative is somehow of much importance. And, in the case of Thick Air, Meredith Dobbs' film succeeds greatly. I didn't pay much attention to the photography, the lighting, the editing et al., and I never really considered its construction once I hit the half way mark of the film, as I was totally consumed by the narrative of Samantha's yearning for the affection of a new-in-town actor.

Somehow, in those 30+ minutes, I was consumed, and forgot my reasoning way of judgement, and just sat back and enjoyed the film as if it were made for much more than 3.5k. So, this might have been one long ramble of a review, but what more can one say in a positive reflection: Thick Air succeeds where other overpaid filmmakers working on box office epics fail, and, best of all – at the spare change of the cost of a Hollywood epic.

Nominations: My Brother by Nina Volova and Kirill Khachaturov, Dead Ringer by Chris Shenkle, Silent Fall by Jarno Vinsencius, Harry Bot 9000 by Seb Cox, The Interview by Marc Gurung

# MAIN COMPETITION – BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED BETWEEN \$5,000 – \$10,000

There are not enough entries to run this category this season.

# MAIN COMPETITION – BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED FOR MORE THAN \$10,000

No selections were made in this category.

# MAIN COMPETITION – BEST FEATURE FILM PRODUCED FOR LESS THAN \$5,000

Winner: **Ema by Vladimir Bilenjki**

Festival Director says:

*There is much about Ema that is familiar ground when tackling the art house genre – there is longing, silent pauses, and perhaps a thud much of talking. Though, that isn't ever a bad thing – as characters in this film become more than 'present', time moves at a real moment-to-moment pace, and the scene becomes captured wildly here, with some of the most inventive low budget camera angles one can dream up, as well as set within the windy locales of the Adriatic Coast. A coast we can taste through the air of Ema's world, existence and presence.*

*Considering its low budget, the feminist lead character, and the overall feeling that the film is more than just a genre rouse, here to excite and tease... Ema is a character study, one appearing rarer and rarer these days. And as debuts go, in terms of features, this is one hell of a kick ass effort.*

Nominations: Free Fallers by Rick Masi, Recovery by Marcus Scott and Heath Hetherington

## MAIN COMPETITION – BEST FEATURE FILM PRODUCED BETWEEN \$5,000 – \$10,000

Winner: **Odie, Based on the Odyssey, by Homer** by Reyshan Parker

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Teetering on being a kind of experimental Jean-Luc Godard would concoct – one of his ‘re-imagining of old literature’ films, and an Araki ‘Kaboom’/‘Nowhere’ styled Americana, ‘Odie, Based on the Odyssey, by Homer’ is a fascinating, and fairly original take on the Greek classic. Here, stoners and youths run amok on college property, and often encounter, or retell, bizarre incidents of/on their voyages.*

*The highlights of the film though do not lay in the script, or even the characters for that matter, as they are all fairly cookie-cut archetypes (which isn’t such a bad thing when reworking one of the most studied texts in history), but, they do, the highlights I mean, lie in the skill with which the story is told – actors bring oodles of energy to their parts, and the direction and photography, though often minimalist, is often bursting with fairly exotic film techniques, ones which attempt to present a ‘high’ illusion, and well, simply titillate the viewer, much like a Guy Maddin film would do. All in all, it’s a winner, and one which feels like a classic indie experiment one can’t criticise too much, due to its ingenious presentation of a dusty text.*

Nominations: The Other Side of the Door by Ira Farmer, The Frogmatch by Jonathan D’Ambrosio

## MAIN COMPETITION – BEST FEATURE FILM PRODUCED FOR MORE THAN \$10,000

Not enough titles qualify to run this part of the competition.

# BEST WEB SERIES

No selections were made for this category.

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## – BEST DIRECTION

**Winner: Toll Booth by Martin Stocks**

*Toll Booth is not the richest of films, nor is it the most outlandish, or the most ‘peacocking’ presentation of opulence. But it is, first and foremost, a well told story, with an interesting character in its center. A story which, on film, becomes richer through its use of time and space, the key ingredients of any great cinematic vision.*

Nominations: The Embroidered Dress by Doğuş Algün, The Pleasures of the Glove by Duane Michals, Oh Brother by Mia Mullarkey

## – BEST ACTOR

**Winner: Nathan Coenen in The Chanctonbury Ring**

*Coenen’s performance is especially believable – and that, considering the film’s scale, and false period piece, is somewhat remarkable. His energy, and impressive ‘gear-shifting’ expressions of naivete, fear and flirtation, make the film to be of a particular class and energy.*

Nominations: Will Millwood in I Just Said That, Ben Van Berkum in Lilt, Adam Cryne in Recovery, Geraden Borthwick in Recovery, Doga Konakoglu in High Calorie

## – BEST ACTRESS

**Winner: Mary Rose Naoum in Thick Air**

*Naoum’s performance is depthful, nuanced and realistic. Her character’s trajectory, and overall behaviour, is often underplayed and humanised.*

Nominations: Angel Violet in His First Time, Lulia Benze in Abrakadabra, Jennifer Scott in The Other Side of the Door, Katie Stahl in Under the Flowers

## – BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

**Winner: Vladimir Bilenjki's cinematography of Ema**

*Keeping in mind the film's incredibly tight budget, Ema delivers a very complex series of images – one's built with ingenuity, creativity and purpose.*

Nominations: Roman Wilhelm's cinematography of The Interview, Rob Moore's cinematography of Recovery, Manuel V. Isaza's cinematography of A Scream That's Trapped Inside, Richie Moore's cinematography of Crazy Medicine

## – BEST BLACK AND WHITE CINEMATOGRAPHY

No selections were made for this category.

## – BEST WRITING

**Winner: Team P.R.O.F.F by Jeff Kaminski and Jeff Grantz and Steven Teuchert**

*There is a part of familiarity to Team P.R.O.F.F, but one which is welcomed – a kind of homage to the nature of explorations. This might not be Indiana Jones, but it sure is hell a fun and comedic ride of a 'truth is out there' yarn.*

Nominations: Eddie Mullarkey's screenwriting of Oh Brother, Rick Masi's screenwriting of Free Fallers, High Calorie by Mehmet Tigli, James Wren and Alan Freestone and Fergus March's writing of The Man You're Not

## – BEST GENRE PIECE

**Winner: The Chanctonbury Ring by Martin Hession**

*Though lacking in depth for the locale, and often reliant on an audience's 'belief' that the low key visuals are real in terms of the film's period... there's no denying that the genre element, which carries the piece above average, that of the 'the mystical Gothic horror narrative' is well and truly alive within this project, and rightfully should be celebrated as a great experience!*

Nominations: Marked 4 Life: The Story of Sleepy Lagoon Tattoo by John Trujillo, Directors on Directing by Damien Patrik, Free Fallers by Rick Masi, Unexpected by Jessy Langlois, Dark Entity by Eduardo Ramirez

## – BEST PERIOD PIECE FILM

No films selected in this category.

## – BEST SCORE

**Winner: Jonathan Chambers' score of Never Alone**

*Though minimalist in terms of its contents, Chambers' score for Never Alone enhances and enriches the film's tone and mood.*

Nominations: A Taylor's score of City of my Heart, Josiah Cuneo's score of Lilt

## – BEST EDITING

**Winner: Meredith Dobbs' editing of Thick Air**

*Dobbs' editing helps bring a particular pace to the rather predictable plot of Thick Air. It is her spacing out of the story, aided by the charming improvised performances of Michael Lopertone and Mary Rose Naoum, which make the project original, fresh and moving.*

Nominations: Claire Vandewalle's editing of The Interview, Javad Emami's editing of A Scream That's Trapped Inside, Zacharias Karamalegos and Reyshan Parker's editing of Odie, Based on the Odyssey, by Homer, Seb Cox's editing of Harry Bot 9000

## – BEST ENSEMBLE CAST

**Winner: Oh Brother by Mia Mullarkey**

*This wonderfully written short film is brought to life by its slick direction and quartet of actors, all of whom deliver a beautifully balanced and realistic bunch of engaging performances.*

Nominations: Free Fallers by Rick Masi, Team P.R.O.O.F by Jeff Kaminski, Odie, Based on the Odyssey, by Homer by Reyshan Parker

## – SPECIAL MENTION

Winners of the special mention prize:

**Vusumuzi Mlilo for Don't Think About Elephants, Kostas Petsas for City of my Heart, Streiflicht by Thomas Rösner,**

Special mention for MUA and Costume design: **Ita Drew's MUA and Costumes for Weed & Brew**

Special mention for Best Experimental Film: **The Velvet Abstract by James Hughes**

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# UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

## – Best Genre Piece

No selected scripts for this category.

## – Best Technique

**Winner: Santa Klawn by Jeffrey Lee DuPree**

*sharp and humorous, Stanta Klawn is an entertaining read. The throwback to comedy-horror is a welcomed endeavour.*

Nominations: The Boys Are Back by Jay Mullings, Barback by Matteo Valentini

## – Best Micro Budget Script

No selected scripts for this category.

## – Best Character Arc

**Winner: Stringers by Hani Richter,**

*Though somewhat flawed by heavy dialogue scenes, Stringers does have a great message, and characters with interesting goals.*

Nominations: Santa Klawn by Jeffrey Lee DuPree

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# MUSIC VIDEO

## – Best Music Video

**Winner: God Came 'Round by Derek Frey**

*A wonderfully original music video, boasting a charming performance from Deep Roy.*

Nominations: Our Untold Story by Johanned S Karpe

## – Best Cinematography

No selections made for this category.

## – Best Editing

### **Winner: Loz Morgan's editing of *Weed & Brew***

*Resembling a budget version of Julie Taymor's visions, Loz Morgan's video is stylised and enhanced through its creative shots, and their assembly.*

Nominations: Gilbert Yates and Ian Roberts' editing of *Agnes and Louisa*, *Our Untold Story* by Johann S Karpe

*Please note: When the details of a particular technician of a nomination has not been readily available (such as an editor, cinematographer etc., we have simply referred to the director instead).*

# Winter 2017

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Note // find your laurels [here](#) (all categories) // Details about how to list your nomination/award on IMDb can be found [here](#)

## Jury Prize

- Jury Prize

**Feature Film Winner: Wishbone by Ali Atshani ([Link](#))**

Jury Member, [Stephen Hunt](#) says:

*While this Iranian take on the “bunny-boiler” concept was always bound to shie from the steamy clinches of Fatal Attraction, it laughs in the face of more disturbing boundaries to boldly go where few have boldly been.*

*Meaning, where the 1987 American film ends in the predictable happy ending of rough and raw justice for the female screwball, Wishbone doesn’t. Instead, all three of its central protagonists are sucked slowly but surely into a black and bitter chaos in which everyone loses, badly. Focused utterly on a married man who she helped to scratch his seven-year itch, an Iranian twenty-something quagmired in adolescence, confused by hero worship and high on puppy-love knows nothing of adult compromise. For her, true love is a righteous war of patient attrition waged and won by an abused-but-forgiving heart. All she has to do is explain simply and quietly, over and over, why her love must prevail.*

*It’s her winy, sickly-sweet, broken-record like voice in his ear that shreds his patience and grates on his nerves. As she won’t be sent away, bought off or threatened, he tries surely self-defeating appeasement. He’s in her flat on her bed and remembering their good times. Her heart’s racing, she knows she’s winning until his frustration and rage explode.*

*Having seen this film, I’d rather endure the wrath of an American boiler of all things cute and cuddly than the disquiet of a calm, wouldn’t say boo-to a-goose, Iranian twenty-something.*

*On the downside, the Wishbone sub-titles were often inadequate and the film took a while to get going. But once it shifted gear, the story was compelling, well-acted and entertaining. Thanks to lighting, sound, cinematography and directing born out of awareness of Hollywood norms, the result was a twenty-first century, Eastern gem.*

Runner up: Who’s Watching Oliver by Richie Moore ([Link](#)), Greed by Nigel Evans ([Link](#))

**Short Film Winner: Darkness Falls by Jarno Vinsencius ([Link](#))**

Jury Member, [Stephen Hunt](#) says:

*There was no way of telling that this beautifully shot film was made on a shoe-string. From the opening aerial shots of snowy treetops, this film screams class. This was the best ever example of low budget drone filming that drops us straight into the drama.*

*Wearing a coat and boots, a lone young woman prostrate on the snow comes round. She's bruised, confused and disorientated as she tries to figure out her situation. A sound from nearby trees has her up and running. We're pretty much alongside as she weaves through trees in the several inches of snow covering the uneven terrain. We take sequences like this for granted as they're all one with what state-of-the-art dramas on the big screen have to go to great pains deliver and make it all look easy.*

*And that's the point; this is anything but a state-of-the-art drama on the big screen – its been made for a fraction of what a big film spends on catering. The fact that its to the standard of a studio-financed production points directly to a particular kind of movie magic that cheap independent ventures must conjure up; top quality with little or no money.*

*While the actors deliver professional work but with no standout performances, it's the combination of skills behind the camera that makes Darkness Falls a winner. That said, there is one production issue that many a director / writer falls into. While they pride themselves on being story-tellers they confuse that with being story-writers. Consequently, the storyline of Darkness Falls fails to unfold satisfactorily and for just that reason, the story is neither compelling nor credible.*

*Runners up: Head Space by Emma Huibregtse ([Link](#)), Bad Sheriff by Ben Bernschneider ([Link](#)), Cold Is My Brother by Troy Moth ([Link](#))*

— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee.

## Main Competition

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Not enough titles to allow for this category to be a competition.

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Inside by Andrés Arce Maldonado ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Over the last few years I have become obsessed with restricted or under lit images. There's of course something positive to be said for the well balanced, and clear cinematography types: the ones with correct lighting elements, and well weighed light channels within an image – but, there is one issue with it: we see it all the time. With the moving image medium becoming somewhat of an over used practice to share information, report live news, and simply provide endless amount*

of 'entertainment', it is rare to see natural, or even original versions of its practices and technology.

Here though, with 'Inside' we get just that. The performances are raw, the image, which is often unregulated, focused in patches, and graded with a particular heightened sense (be it too dark, distant; or up close, intensely bold with colour), collectively allows for a very delicate and precise filmic experience – the type which Abbas Kiarostami would have championed.

Nominees: C.R.Usher by **Richard Groen** ([Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: Who's Watching Oliver by Richie Moore** ([Link](#))

Festival Director says:

Richie Moore's 'Who's Watching Oliver' is actually what I'd hoped Franck Khalfoun's 'Maniac' would be like. I mean, I did like 'Maniac' quite a lot. It was creative with its POV angle... but here's the thing: I wanted to actually watch Elijah Wood's performance rather than be Elijah Woods. Because he's great.

Anyways, back to Moore's film – I got my wish here. I can see Russell Geoffrey Banks, and he's a killer, and he's kind of comedic – a kind of Tom Hanks comedic type. The film's grim, but also funny (something 'Maniac' actually could have done with in terms of balancing its tone), and it's a really fantastic little gem. It's consistent in terms of its visual quality, the sound is crisp, and the locations provide a really great variety of scenes, and well, with such a small cast, one must admire and praise the efforts of the filmmakers at hand; as everything is fairly well rounded off.

Ps. Oliver, please don't kill me for this review.

Nominees: Wishbone by Ali Atshani ([Link](#))

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: The Gathering by Alkiviadis Papadopoulos** ([Link](#))

Festival Director says:

The Gathering has a particular domestic feeling to it – a kind of modern Yasujiro Ozu taste.

The film's main focus, which stems around one character who seems to keep everything afloat, is a mother who is preparing her family's meal... despite the fact that the so-called family isn't what it was before: it isn't happy, it isn't 'together', and it isn't satisfied with simply spending time together.

The high point of this film is just that – it is inherently about our time, a 'modern' Greek tragedy inflicted with the 'now generation' of immediate gratification, TV blaring in the background, and the degrading nature of communication.

Nominees: Darkness Falls by Jarno Vinsencius ([Link](#)), Blues Ain't Nothin But by Ashok Gazula ([Link](#)), Cold Is My Brother by Troy Moth ([Link](#)), Unfolded by Kristín Ísabella Karlsdóttir (No Link), Bare Romance by Karel Tuytschaever ([Link](#))

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: *Bad Sheriff* by Ben Bernschneider ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Pulp, as a written format, has somewhat become demystified over the last few decades. A once thriving bargain basement part of both the literary and cinematic format of the 40's and 50's, is now a kind of over used expression which has been designed off of, or mimicked from, the Tarantino feeling. 'Bad Sheriff' fancies itself as the more academic sister, or perhaps brother (this is a rather masculine film), and it achieves just that – its pomp and plush, just like the modern pulp films, but it is also more than that – it is a technical mastery, it is a quick sickly sweet drag race down the block with no seat belt on. Its fucking awesome (excuse my French)!*

Nominees: *ReWrite* by Crash Buist ([Link](#)), *Two Old Folks* by Cosmea Spelleken ([Link](#)), *The Muse Will Find You Working* by Wade Koch ([Link](#))

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *Living Idle* by Ramana ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*With beautiful art direction, and an intriguingly quick manoeuvring narrative, Living Idle makes for an emotional film – it has purpose, it has a saddening story, and it has a lick of revenge to it.*

*The dark and rainy scenes, which I do not wish to ruin, excel the film above average for its budget and scale – creating an atmospheric space with which the tale of Ma Durga's punishment can play out.*

Nominees: *Una historia con Cristo y Jesus* by Oldren Romero ([Link](#)), *Emotional Motor Unit* by Adam Nelson ([Link](#))

- Best Webseries

**Winner: *Hooked* by Luca Vecchi (No Link)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*There's loads of style here – it's punchy, it's energetic, it's engaging, it's crass... it's basically what makes TV great.*

Nominees: *Vitals Online* by Alexandra Books (No Link)

- Best Music Video of the season

**Winner: *Music City* by Kristian Kane and Lewis Carter ([Link](#))**

*Filming with animals is notoriously difficult, but appears to be easy going here. A charming music video, full of heart.*

Nominees: *Ode to Nature, the four seasons* by Kee H Ng (No Link)

# Other Categories

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: Jarno Vinsencius' photography of Darkness Falls ([Link](#))**

Vinsencius' photography of Darkness Falls is moody, restrained and well executed. Its this kind of cinematography which draws the viewer in, and captures their interest.

Nominees: Edward Chettleburgh's photography of Promises by (No Link), Nic Barker's photography of Dead Sharks ([Link](#)), Pratham Mehta's photography of ReWrite ([Link](#)), Tania Freimuth's photography of Kid Gloves ([Link](#))

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Wynn Reichert in In Aggression ([Link](#))**

Reichert's performance is one of those quieter deliveries. A subtle and engaging front type. Very rare to see something so well developed in a short film made for this budget level.

Nominees: Crash Buist in ReWrite ([Link](#)), Adam Huber in Head Space ([Link](#)), Brian K. Palmer in Kata Muktu ([Link](#)), Francesco Falabella in Inside ([Link](#)), Dayron Moreno in Una historia con Cristo y Jesus ([Link](#))

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Ivana Pantaleo in Inside ([Link](#))**

A very dark energy runs through Pantaleo's performance in Inside. It is mesmerising to watch, and incredibly well delivered.

Nominees: Michelle Langlois-Fequet in Perceptions ([Link](#)), Julianne Carioto in C.R.Usher ([Link](#)), Shaunte Tabb in Blues Ain't Nothin' But ([Link](#)), Anna Genisariotou in The Gathering by ([Link](#))

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Simon Heeger and Christian Vorlander score of Bad Sheriff ([Link](#))**

This 80's electro pump sound beats the Drive-esque 'Bad Sheriff' to life. Its this fuel which the film runs on, helping open its world, and close it when the shooting is over.

Nominees: Tamara Barschak and Gavin Irvine's score of 2:40 To London's ([Link](#)), Jeremy Eliosoff's score of Mont Royal 2016-09 (No Link)

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: Greed by Nigel Evans ([Link](#))**

There are bursts of colour in this film: a particular palette of excess. And the same can be said about the characters, who hop through the film's musical numbers. It feels like a great throwback to a nearly dead type of film: the drive-in rock n' roll melodramas of the 70's.

Nominees: *Stranger In The Dark* by Jr Michael ([Link](#)), *The Baby's Crying* by Bob Pipe ([Link](#)), *Born Again* by Jason Tostevin ([Link](#)), *Bad Sheriff* by Ben Bernschneider ([Link](#))

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: *Bare Romance* by Karel Tuytschaever ([Link](#))**

*Bare Romance* is tactile, primitive (in the cinematic sense of non-talkies), and above all is a unique experience. The film lingers in your mind long after the final frames have faded, and there's no denying there are many different elements at play here: a very particular form of the image, a particular type of editing, a particular type of character. Highly recommended.

Nominees: Jarno Lee Vinsencius' direction of *Darkness Falls* ([Link](#)), Ben Bernschneider's direction of *Bad Sheriff* ([Link](#)), Andrés Arce Maldonado's direction of *Inside* ([Link](#)), *Unwritten* by Pascal Pernix ([Link](#)), Wade Koch's direction of *The Muse Will Find You Working* ([Link](#))

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: *Oldren Romero's writing of Una historia con Cristo y Jesus* ([Link](#))**

*Una historia con Cristo y Jesus* may be a martyr picture we have seen before (ie *Boys Don't Cry*, *Prayers for Bobby* etc.), but yet, here – in an art house setting, the film we have seen before has been somewhat reshaped; its re-newed itself, is relevant politically, and a fantastic romance stemmed out of social injustice.

Nominees: Stefanie Davis' writing of *BS Meeting* ([Link](#)), Jason Tostevin's writing of *Born Again* ([Link](#)), Cosmea Spelleken's writing of *Two Old Folks* ([Link](#)), Emma Huibregtse's writing of *Head Space* ([Link](#)), Paola Migneco's writing of *Inside* ([Link](#))

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: *Trace Taylor's editing of Kid Gloves* ([Link](#))**

There is a particular tenderness to the way Taylor has cut this short film – it is both carefully managed in terms of its technical skills, as well as a moving and tone sensitive in design.

Nominees: Nic Barker's editing of *Dead Sharks* ([Link](#)), Guillermo Angeles' editing of *Shadow* ([Link](#)), Wade Koch's editing of *The Muse Will Find You Working* ([Link](#)), Cleo Alexandra Ford Wilson editing of *Emotional Motor Unit* ([Link](#)), Karel Tuytschaever's editing of *Bare Romance* ([Link](#))

- Special Mention

*Ghosts of Burgundy* by C.J Hodgman ([Link](#)), *Nod* by Jake Hunsicker ([Link](#)), *Things To Do In Tokyo* by James Morton ([Link](#)), *Shiver* by Damian Overton ([Link](#))

## Screenplay competition

- Best genre piece

**Winner: Out of Town by Paris Dylan ([Link](#))**

*A comedic touch ignites this script. Will their journey succeed or not? who cares! It's all about the characters, and the quick witted dialogue.*

*Nominees: Du Froid (Out of The Cold) by Jasper Musgrave, Perceptions by Ian Wilson*

- *Best technique*

**Winner: The Wonderful by Demitra Papadinis**

*Like with [Robert Eggers'](#) The Witch, Demitra Papadinis' script of The Wonderful (based on The Life of the Saint Christina Wonderful by Thomas of Cantimpré) is a fantastic throwback to the archaic tongue and attitudes of these rough bygone eras. Its with its language, and fearful nature, that the story shines.*

*Nominees: Triskel by Brian K. Palmer, Eelam by Thanmye Lagudu*

- *Best micro budget material*

**Winner: Out of Town by Paris Dylan ([Link](#))**

*With its small cast, contained locations, and frugal narrative, Out of Town is a cost effective winner!*

# Spring 2017

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Note // find your laurels [here](#) (all categories) // Details about how to list your nomination/award on IMDb can be found [here](#)

## Jury Prize

Feature Film Winner: **Sadoum by Christophe Karabache** ([Link](#))

Jury Member, [Karel Tuytschaever](#) says:

*The world which the tormented main character of 'Sadoum' inhabits is what pulls the viewer into a poetic trip of his search of identity.*

*As part of a city full of violence, aggressiveness, and feelings of loneliness, he searches for who he is. His boyfriend is a lost ship. So he starts to play a cat and mouse game of attracting and rejecting a woman, in the hopes to find his true self?*

*The aesthetics of the film are well chosen. The colors often underline the various aspects of this persona's journey. The actors play sometimes quite grotesque beings, which suits the overall story, and gives a great emotional layer to the lead's neurosis.*

*Some images within this film remind me of 'The Balled of Sexual Dependency' by the photographer Nan Goldin. The main themes of her early pictures are love, gender, domesticity, and sexuality; these frames are usually shot with natural light. She has affectionately documented people looking in mirrors, in bathrooms and barrooms, sexual acts, and the culture of obsession and dependency.*

Runners up: *The 5 Year* by James Christopher ([Link](#)), *Zehn.Zwanzig* by Rafael Bettschart ([Link](#))

- Short Film Winner: **Godless by Fergus March** ([Link](#))

Jury Member, [Karel Tuytschaever](#) says:

*'Godless' features a very particular and interesting environmental approach to its weaving of different people's narratives, which brings together a common project. What brings them together in this space, and brings them together at the same time is friction with the outer world. This particular approach, which the film takes, brings a focus on how people interpret a certain topic, and how they project an idea of identity on what that identity could be, not what it actually 'is'. Its through this common ground, which the idea of identity, and the being, becomes something else via the media of film.*

*Realism is added to the film largely through the film's well performing cast – who bring an absurdist mood and touch to the film's content. Furthermore, the scenario is well written and well constructed (here, the realist and fictional story feed each other).*

*The DOP delivered a good tonal shift throughout, providing different styles for the 'story' (more documentary style), and the 'movie' which the characters had made together.*

*Lastly, praise is due to Simon Cotton, whose performance as Julian was the perfect balance between the absurd approach (humour), and its emphatical duality, making it a believable as a person.*

*Runners up: Burn In Hell by Jarno Lee Vinsencius ([Link](#)), L as in Light by Damiana Acuña (No Link), The Date by Michael Beddoes ([Link](#))*

*— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee. Also, these reviews have been translated, and then edited.*

## Main Competition

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Winner: **Sadoum by Christophe Karabache** ([Link](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*With a particular experimental style, 'Sadoum' navigates through varying different locales, scenarios and arcs of human life. There's much to appreciate about this film – its editing is often full of creative bursts, the framing calculated and artistic, and most of all, for its rather modest budget, the film appears as a first class art house product. Sure, the digital photography at times ages the project a little, and it occasionally feels perhaps out of sync with our current dialogue of cinema – but, at its core, the film is incredibly unique, original and unpredictable.*

Nominees: *The Bird May Die by Hamid Tamjidi* ([Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Winner: **Zehn.Zwanzig by Rafael Bettschart** ([Link](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Rafael Bettschart's Zehn.Zwanzig isn't breaking new ground. In fact, we've all seen this film before over and over. And that's mainly because it is one of the simple and most loved tales: the young person returning to their hometown. The difference here though, unlike most 'return-to-home' stories, is that Eric Lingens' persona return to find that it isn't so much that he has changed, but rather the locals have. His past has been replaced, altered and reshaped. And it's here, with a touch of the modernised city, that Bettschart's Zehn.Zwanzig finds its home – it,*

like Ozu Yasujiro's urban tales, captures the world we live in, and the positive and negative ways in which modernity shapes our lives.

Nominees: *Nymphadelle* by Quentin de Jubécourt ([Link](#)), *The 5 Year* by James Christopher ([Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

There are not enough submissions to run this category.

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Winner: ***Lucid* by James Cates and Andrew Greco (No Link)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

'*Lucid*' might be one of the best low budget short films I have personally ever seen. Horror, as a genre, seems to be a bit of a favourite among frugal filmmakers, but it's rarely successful or even jumpy. Here, however, with a strong beam of sun coming in from outside, distracting me from the dark image, I'm still on the edge of my seat, and I still get the chills, and I still jump (and this is the third time I'm watching the film; though, the first time watching it with the knowledge that we have chosen it as a winner). There's much to admire about what this film achieves in such a short amount of time, and I definitely am jealous of this little wonder. Congrats to all those involved!

Nominees: *L as in Light* by Damiana Acuña (No Link), *Bait* by Ryan J. Smith ([Link](#))

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Winner: ***Impervia* by Patrick Devaney ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

With its 30 minutes plus run time, *Impervia* comes across more as a chapter in *The Twilight Zone* TV series, than just a standard short film. The project is steeped in an authentic science fiction class clash – a kind of post-modern Dickensian tale about a family on the outskirts of a modern city that wants rid of them. The project does fall short on its ambitions, the digital filters often over stylizing the entire experience, which includes numerous flashbacks and animation sequences. However, overall, the project stands strong, existing as an enjoyable viewing experience steeped with entertainment, melodrama and a futuristic moralistic dilemma of how our society might treat those living outside of the modernist city hustle.

Nominees: *No Hidden Extras* by Ian Smyth ([Link](#)), *Godless* by Fergus March ([Link](#))

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Winner: ***The Guilt List* by Tereza Horak ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

With smooth and eclectic textures, Tereza Horak's *The Guilt List* is a well polished, and well executed period piece short film. The presented narrative is a fantastically timed debate – this being the age-old fear of foreigners, the 'Red Scare', and the 'far left' ideology in general, all of

which seeps into an evening Tommy shares with his potential in-laws during the early 50's. Furthermore, the project carries a well delivered technical quality. Shy of the opening credits, which appear as fading 90's stylised typewriter font (which simply feels askew with the rest of the film), the entirety of the project is a marvel; and incredibly impressive for a first time director.

Nominees: Apartha by L H Dodgers (No Link)

## Other Categories

- Best Webseries

Winner: **Orazio's Clan by Riccardo Bernasconi** ([Link](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*There is a very particular scale to Orazio's Clan – the type which is rarely seen in webseries, particularly ones which are produced independently. It's a bold genre piece, and realized with a rich eye for detail and texture.*

Nominees: Once, Not Twice by Ricci Sebastien and Virgilia Giambruno ([Link](#)), Clever Girl by Joe Zappa ([Link](#)), So SOHA by Lauren Terilli ([Link](#)), DogGone It by Jeff Sumner and Dennis Larkin ([Link](#))

- Best Actor of the season

Winner: **Demis Tzivis in Burn In Hell** ([Link](#))

*As the tortured individual, Demis Tzivis's performance in Burn in Hell is sharp, well layered and moving.*

Nominees: Simon Cotton in Godless ([Link](#)), Vincent Cheikh in Sadoum ([Link](#)), Jared Cook in Tethered ([Link](#)), Tim Casey in Harry Stands Up ([Link](#)), Kyle Roark in Lucid (No Link)

- Best Actress of the season

Winner: **Maire-Cécile Gueguen in Sadoum** ([Link](#))

*With independent film, there is often a feeling of compromise. With Maire-Cécile Gueguen's performance however, there isn't a whiff of such a notion. Her performance in Sadoum is pure, energetic, uncompromising and open.*

Nominees: Tifani Ahren Davis in Clever Girl ([Link](#)), Selah Batiansila in The Lost Keys ([Link](#)), Michelle Jones Pellicer in L as in Light (No Link), Rachel Parris in Godless ([Link](#)), Hanneke Talbot in The King ([Link](#))

- Best Direction of the season

Winner: **Damiana Acuña's direction of L as in Light** (No Link)

*A consistent vision runs through L as in Light. It is a rich perspective – within the few minutes we spend with these characters we become aware of their world, their life, their dreams, and perhaps our own lives. There is much to admire with this film.*

Nominees: Christophe Karabache's direction of Sadoum ([Link](#)), Fergus March's direction of Godless ([Link](#)), Michael Beddoes' direction of The Date (No Link), Ryan J. Smith's direction of Bait ([Link](#))

- Best Cinematography of the season

Winner: **Leslie Montero's cinematography of L as in Light (No Link)**

*Montero's cinematography is delicate, and soft. There is also a grand beauty to it too, she gives us the kind of images which haunt us. It is very similar to the work Blasco Giurato did for Cinema Paradiso.*

Nominees: Lucas Tucknott's cinematography of No Hidden Extras ([Link](#)), J.B. Lawrence of Stomping Ground Music Video ([Link](#)), Oscar Chan's cinematography of Godless ([Link](#)), Artur Gubin's cinematography of The Guilt List ([Link](#))

- Best Writing of the season

Winner: **Fergus March and James Wren's writing of Godless ([Link](#))**

*With a multilayered script, James Wren and Fergus March deliver Godless – a critic about a film, or perhaps the nature of film itself, the idea of a 'God' being proven to not exist, and a buzz word savvy world, all on the edge of boiling over. With its strong array of characters, and varying plot pacing, Godless is a winner, and a film containing a firm ability to shift gears; which is incredibly rare in short form.*

Nominees: Rhys Lewis's writing of No Hidden Extras ([Link](#)), Patrick Devaney's writing of Impervia ([Link](#)), Tereza Hirsch's writing of The Guilt List ([Link](#)), The 5 Year by James Christopher ([Link](#)), John McGovern's writing of Harry Stands Up ([Link](#))

- Best Score of the season

Winner: **Nor Seyedmorteza's scoring of Lucid (No Link)**

*Nor Seyedmorteza's score haunts Lucid through and through, adding the chill factor, to an already quite suspenseful horror.*

Nominees: Lucas Lambert's scoring of Nymphadelle ([Link](#)), Sani Baladi's scoring of The Guilt List ([Link](#))

- Best Genre Piece of the season

Winner: **Bait by Ryan J. Smith ([Link](#))**

[Clara Butler](#) says:

*A shocking and eclectic horror, that manages to truly frighten on a limited budget, 'Bait' harnesses traditional conventions of the genre, but also manages to forge its own path. Full of twists and turns, as well as an inventive cinematographic style, ensures its success in this*

category. The use of special fx and a strong, convincing performance through the lead actress, Rebecca Von Nielsen, push this film over the top in a collection of strong contenders.

Nominees: *Orazio's Clan* by Riccardo Bernasconi ([Link](#)), *Signed, Sealed and, Delivered* by Joseph Cox ([Link](#)), *Burn In Hell* by Jarno Lee Vinsencius ([Link](#))

- **Best Editing of the season**

Winner: **Christophe Karabache's editing of *Sadoum*** ([Link](#))

As with Rainer Werner Fassbinder's work, Karabache's editing of *Sadoum* generates a particular pace and feeling – one which often helps to determine the shape of the film's arcs, a scene's atmosphere, and our experience of the film. It is through this main element of editing that allows the film to be elevated into a well rounded cognitive experience.

Nominees: Quentin de Jubécourt's editing of *Nymphadelle* ([Link](#)), Kevin Anton's editing of *Mile* (No Link), Marcello Masina's editing of *The Shadow of Two Flies Upon a Pin* (No Link), Andrew Greco's editing of *Lucid* (No Link)

- **Best Music Video**

Winner: ***Mad for Love* by Maggie Chastettin** ([Link](#))

With a slick technical delivery, *Mad For Love* is a one of the finest indie music videos one can imagine.

Nominees: *Saturday Night* by Alex Walker ([Link](#)), *Linda* by Leandro Corinto ([Link](#))

- **Special Mention**

Winners of the Special Mention category: ***Dear International Community* by Henrik Friis de Magalhães e Meneses** ([Link](#)), ***Nymphadelle* by Quentin de Jubécourt** ([Link](#)), ***Helheim* by Bettina Toth** ([Link](#)), ***The Fantasmagori* by Michael Treder** ([Link](#)), ***Disclosure* by Alkiviadis Papadopoulos** ([Link](#))

## Screenplay competition

- **Best genre piece**

Winner: ***Infinity* by Chris Bonneau (story by Chris Bonneau and Heather Ellingwood)** (No Link)

'Infinity' is loaded with a series of solid genre stabs – in fact, its pride and joy moments are its reliance on genre motifs, and almost retro styled scenes of traditional investigatory scenarios.

Nominees: *Under The Knives* by Adam Lane Sturkenboom ([Link](#)), *Resurrection Time Conspiracy* by James Carroll ([Link](#))

- **Best technique**

Winner: **King Smoking by Wynn Reichert (No Link)**

Wynn Reichert's writing comes with a particular skilled set of clear edits, direct screenwriting syntax, and great clarity.

Nominees: *Malingers* by Chastity Lively (No Link), *An Affair In The Greek Island* by Slavica Bogdanov (No Link), *Tazmin Base* by Patrick Devaney (No Link)

- **Best micro budget material**

Not enough titles meet this requirement for this part of the writing competition to run.

- **Best character arcs**

Winner: **Edna's Dearest Possessions by Ozge Gozturk ([Link](#))**

Edna's persona is one for the ages – she's bold, she's lost, she's on-the-edge, and she's also human.

Nominees: *L.A.* by Matthew Spriggs (No Link)

- **Best Teleplay**

Winner: **Transylvania by Agnese Pagliarani ([Link](#))**

With a new take on the vampire tale, Pagliarani delivers a great new thriller scope to the somewhat dusty classic of Dracula's tale.

Nominees: *The Girls in the House* by Tara Leigh ([Link](#)), *Whiteface Mountain* by Alvin Taylor (No Link), *Youth Can Age Ya* by Ed Vela (No Link), *Tidewater* by Carrie Thompson ([Link](#))

\* Please note: some categories vary in number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.

# Late Spring 2017

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## LATE SPRING / 2017

Find your laurels [here](#) (all categories)

Details about how to list your nomination/award on IMDb can be found [here](#)

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## JURY PRIZE – BEST SHORT FILM

Winner: ***The Madame in Black*** by Jarno Vinsencius

Jury Member, [Rafael Bettschart](#), says:

*Very well and nicely made horror flick. Every scene and picture is nicely planed and from the beginning until the very end it is always exciting and keeps the audience focused on the story. Even though the story is nothing entirely new, the film has everything a typical well crafted horror film needs and it's more then enjoyable to watch. From the very beginning until the very end the tension constantly rises from scene to scene and even has a nice twist at the very end. The only thing missing in this movie are the characteristics about the actors / characters, but that it something which is more than forgivable in a short horror film. Very nice work.*

Nominations: *The Last King of Granada* by Pepe Gomez, *Only Human* by Robert Francis Muller, *Dress Rehearsal* by Michael Boston

## JURY PRIZE – BEST FEATURE FILM

Winner: **Suicide Service by Thorkell Agust Ottarsson**

Jury Member, [Rafael Bettschart](#), says:

*Perfectly made film. Other than the camera is not in cinemascope, it's almost not possible to tell this movie apart from a high budget picture. The story is great and quite innovative, the director does a very fine job, considering making a film with so many locations, with so many characters and plots with such a low budget is astonishing.*

*The development of the main actor is well made as well as all the fine little stories and details in the movie. Camera is well made, even though the 'dutch' camera work is usually used for annoying television series. The score suits every scene and moment perfectly fine and there are no mistakes in the craftsmanship. Really a beautiful picture about a man going mad for love.*

Nominations: *Thirst* by Kevin Singh, *Venus Obscura* by Christophe Karabache

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## MAIN COMPETITION

## BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED

## FOR < \$5,000

Winner: **Juncture by Luke Creely**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Rowan Howard's moving performance leads the dark and brooding film that is Juncture. The actual narrative, which is largely presented in a cognitive form of dissected scenes and dark tones, focuses on a father and son's relationship, one which has become taught due to a rift in their family life struck with grief.*

*The film's smooth cinematography, shot by Alper Kasap, transforms the idyllic suburban setting into a dangerous horror setting; one reminiscent of the late-night slums of the 90's Japanese horror, such as the works of Hideo Nakata. It is this key element, working in combination with Luke Creely's well timed script and direction, which elevates this film's scale into a comfortable and commendable effort, one which fully embraces its 1.5k budget, and uses its afforded resources wisely.*

Nominations: *The Volunteer* by Lilliane Moffat, *1943* by Elizabeth Dean, *Emmi* by Andrew Carslaw, *Rambling On* by Nicole Pott, *Ten Grand Even* by Gilad Deutsch and *Paz Davidovich*

## *BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED FOR BETWEEN \$5,000 & \$10,000*

*There are not enough entries to run this category this season.*

## *BEST SHORT FILM PRODUCED FOR > \$10,000*

*Winner: **Standing Eight** by Brian Kazmarck*

*Festival Director says:*

*There is a point in *Standing Eight* where Dusty Abrams attempts to bribe his doctor. It doesn't work, and jars with the character's point in the film. It even feels rushed, and a jolt too far towards a TV drama. However, that is the only flaw this film has.*

*Following this scene there's a very moving sequence in which Dusty and his girlfriend talk about his unexpected Lupus diagnosis, then there's a press conference, and a small attempt to trigger a fight by the opponent who won't get his chance in the ring with retired Dusty.*

*This all builds up slowly, and scenes gradually lead Dusty back into the ring. All of this leads to what is an emotional turn within the film, one about self fulfillment, and self sacrifice – almost like Aronofsky's *The Fighter*. The film's highlights lay with its lead actor, who's persona appears real at all times, as well as the well polished and well lit photography delivered by Tony Burns.*

*Nominations: *Dress Rehearsal* by Michael Boston, *Asmad (Me)* by Prabhjit Dhamija, *Rebith* by Jill Von D*

## *BEST FEATURE FILM PRODUCED FOR < \$5,000*

Winner: **Venus Obscura by Christophe Karabache**

Festival Director says:

*Though Venus Obscura by Christophe Karabache isn't Karabache's best film, as his previous effort, Sadoum, which we had the pleasure of seeing before at TMBT film awards, still lingers and haunts us as one of the best micro budget films ever made. However, with this film, and at this particular scale of budget, it is hard to really fault Venus Obscura, and in fact, if anything, one can pin-point the director's progress, which includes a fondness for primitive cinema practices, similar to Pier Paolo Pasolini, as continuing here and progressing even further to new heights. His characters move as if captured in cages set out by gods enjoying the show, and his camera, which practically narrates the film through an observational perspective, remains a third eye: the sight of evil and righteousness.*

*It would be all too easy to set out and critic Venus Obscura, with its lingering takes and cruel characters as yet another 'Karabache' film, one we might decide to disregard from the competition; as we have awarded him before. But the truth of the matter is – if one was to remove his name from the film, and consider it blindly in comparison with the other entries of this season, and of this budget level, it is Venus Obscura which remains the best choice, and obvious pick for the winner's slot.*

Nominations: *Suicide Service by Thorkell Ottarsson, On Belonging by Dylan Maccarone, Skint by Ryan J. Smith*

## **BEST FEATURE FILM**

### **PRODUCED FOR BETWEEN**

**\$5,000 & \$10,000**

*There are not enough entries to run this category this season.*

## **BEST FEATURE FILM**

### **PRODUCED FOR > \$10,000**

Winner: **The Lurking Man by Maritza Brikisak**

Festival Director says:

*This little gem of an indie feels like quite a specific set piece for an indie film: genre, guts, and a helm-fire performance.*

*If one was to view this as a throwback to B-movie type in particular – such as the second generation drive-in films, or Hammer Horror Classic, which used to horrify children of the 70's and 80's with late broadcasting slots on TV, then The Lurking Man is a fantastic punchy film in a similar taste.*

*At its heart there's a very precise performance delivered by Maritza Brikisak, its one of nuanced moments, often veering close to the likes of Candace Hilligoss' performance of Mary Henry in Carnival of Souls (1962).*

*There are some issues, often to do with pacing and the overall arcs, but they, like the much loved drive-in classics, are forgiven when considering the overall atmospheric tone of the picture. After all, not all of cinema is meant to be a non-stop fun experience... sometimes we want to feel, think and reflect.*

Nominations: *Thirst* by Kevin Singh

## BEST WEB SERIES

Winner: **Out of the Black and Blue** by Jeff Edmond

Festival Director says:

*A swarm of quirky 'oh no they didn't' moments fill Out of the Black and Blue. It has a certain amount of charm, and appears to be 'series' ready... in the sense that it's characters have plenty of road to drive the narrative forwards.*

Nominations: *Getting Back* with Dave Benson Philips by James Podmore and Andrew River

## SPECIAL PRIZE – MICRO

## BUDGET

Winner: **Skint** by Ryan J. Smith

Festival Director says:

*Considering its miniature budget (a mere £500), Ryan J. Smith has done the impossible. Perhaps, a Filmconvert or black and white finish would aid the film's visual appeal, dunking it into a slicker style. However, overall, one can't really throw many rocks at this production, and it is our pleasure to present this special prize for the production of Skint.*

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## OTHER CATEGORIES

### – BEST DIRECTION

Winner: ***The Madame in Black* by Jarno Vinsencius**

*The Madame in Black* might just be one of the best directed independent short films I've ever seen. There's style, genre, perspective and a gothic bone chilling terror present here that has made me grin like a fool.

Nominations: *Dogbrain* by Jesse Ross, *The Last King of Granada* by Pepe Gomez, *Asmad (Me)* by Prabhjit Dhamija, *Standing Eight* by Brian Kazmarck, *Junkie Heaven* by Steve Sage Goldberg

### – BEST ACTOR

Winner: ***Michael Boston* in *Dress Rehearsal***

Raw, energetic and convincing in his multi-layered performance, Michael Boston is captivating as Abner.

Nominations: Robin Hellier in *Drone*, Jake McGarry in *Drone*, Justin Marosa in *No Guarantee*, Kazy Tauginas in *Standing Eight*, Joseph A. Halsey in *Junkie Heaven*

### – BEST ACTRESS

Winner: ***Claire Appleby* in *The Volunteer***

Claire Appleby hits the screen with energy. She's got great comedic timing, and brings to life a wonderfully annoying persona.

Nominations: Amy Elizabeth Price in *War In Heels*, Natalie Martins in *Emmi*, Courtney Cavanagh in *Standing Eight*, Sarah Navratil in *Creak*

### – BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

Winner: **Tony Burns' cinematography of Standing Eight**

*Burns' cinematography is subtle, and very dynamic, allowing for a consistent quality and engagement with the content that entices and moves its viewers.*

*Nominations: Thorkell August Ottarsson's cinematography of Suicide Service, Farren Singh's cinematography of Thirst, Joe Gilber's cinematography of Only Human, Justin Fargiano's cinematography of Stray*

## – BEST BLACK AND WHITE CINEMATOGRAPHY

Winner: **Mikael Luksepp's cinematography of The Old Man**

*With a sharp black and white image, The Old Man revels in beauty. It's historic, post-modern and dazzling to watch.*

*Nominations: The Sunflowers by Júlio Dantas*

## – BEST EDITING

Winner: **Rebecca Grace's editing of Dress Rehearsal**

*There is a certain fluidity to the editing of Dress Rehearsal which makes it captivating to watch. The shots slide into each other, and the tone and timing is delicate and timely.*

*Nominations: Maritza Brikisak's editing of The Lurking Man, On Belonging by Dylan Maccarone, Steve Sage Goldberg's editing of Junkie Heaven, Michael Davis' editing of Hindsight, Rebecca Grace's editing of Dress Rehearsal*

## – BEST WRITING

Winner: **The Last King of Granada by Pepe Gomez**

*The Last King of Granada is a jaw-dropping yarn. The film, true to form of great short films, is quick and precise with its narrative. It has a steady hand on its tones, it is emotive, and memorable.*

*Nominations: Robert Duncan's writing of Drone, Trent Cliffe and Lily Connor's writing of War In Heels, 1943 by Elizabeth Dean, Susie Coreth and Afsaneh Dehrouyeh writing of Only Human, Ryan J. Smith writing of Skint*

## – BEST PERIOD PIECE

Winner: ***The Last King of Granada* by Pepe Gomez**

Guest judge, [Lily Smith](#), says:

*Pepe Gomez' animation 'The Last King of Granada' displays skill in attention to detail and style from start to finish. Gomez' skills shine not only technically, but also in his ability to craft a heartfelt emotional arc for his protagonist that renders great empathy with his audience.*

Nominations: *The Old Man by Indigorado* by Kenneth Aakerland Berg, *The Prisoner of Perdition* by Cameron McCasland, *1943* by Elizabeth Dean

## – BEST ENSEMBLE CAST

Winner: ***Rambling On* by Nicole Pott**

*Nicole Pott's cast of characters, all brought to life by a wonderful ensemble of women, is flipping entertaining.*

Nominations: *The Volunteer* by Lilliane Moffat, *The Lurking Man* by Maritza Brikisak, *Only Human* by Robert Francis Muller, *Dress Rehearsal* by Michael Boston, *Standing Eight* by Brian Kazmarck

## – BEST GENRE PIECE

Winner: ***War In Heels* by Amy Price**

Guest judge, [Clara Butler](#), says:

*Trent Cliffe and Lilly Connor have created a film based on solid storytelling with an interesting twist. Proving that simplicity is incredibly effective the tonal shift created by revelations in the plot is handled well. Furthermore both Amy Price and Genevieve Brock give nuanced and convincing performances that enhance the narrative. The chemistry between the two actresses was palpable and allowed the comedic side of the writing to shine through. The result is a quick, clever and enjoyable experience that was a pleasure to watch.*

Nominations: *The Madame in Black* by Jarno Vinsencius, *The Last King of Granada* by Pepe Gomez, *Drone* by Robert Duncan, *Dogbrain* by Carl Brown

## – SPECIAL MENTION

Winners of the special mention prize:

**5476 Miles by Terry Thomas**

**Dying for a Living by Adriana Falcinelli**

**A Story for Happy by Tom Turner and Philip Alexander Baker**

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# MUSIC VIDEO COMPETITION

## Best Music Video

**Winner: *The Dance of the Living Stones* by Angelo De Grande**

*There is a certain energy to the video – an almost folklore type of awakening which spills onto the screen. With a stark black and white image, drone photography, and an inspired locale for its massive scope, *The Dance of the Living Stones* is a beautiful music video.*

*Nominations: *Killing Us Softly* by Emilie Boyard, *The Old Man* by Åkerland Berg, *Brother* by Joachim Morre and Søren Kahr*

## Best Cinematography

**Winner: *Vampire Love's* cinematography by Claudia Pujol Pla**

*Claudia Pujol Pla's cinematography of *Vampire Love* is organic, romantic and epic. She turns her camera around the space with much movement, capturing with a keen eye for well balanced images; there's much to be admired about her minimalist lighting in certain darker scenes as well. The video is lush thanks to her apt efforts.*

*Nominations: *Guilty* by Tobias Marshall, *The Sunflowers* by Júlio Dantas*

## Best Editing

**Winner: *Fracture's* editing by Alfonso Torres**

*Torres' editing of *Fracture* elevates Hugo Diego Garcia's vision – it's a punchy edit, almost as if it were straight out of the MTV 'good old days' of the late 80's/early 90's.*

*Nominations: *The Old Man's* editing by Åkerland Berg, *Killing Us Softly* by Emilie Boyard, *Delightful* by Katie Garibaldi*

*Please note: When the details of a particular technician of a nomination has not been readily available (such as an editor, cinematographer etc., we have simply referred to the director instead).*

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# UNPRODUCED SCREENPLAY COMPETITION

## **Best Genre Piece**

Winner: ***The Workshop* by Kirby Michael**

*Various genre muscles are flexed here, filling The Workshop to the brim with fun.*

*Nominations: The Secret of Banrion Wood by Persephone Vandegrift, Frames by Neil O'Neil, Mind World by Miranda Sen, The Lords of Farhaven by Michael Snow*

## **Best Technique**

Winner: ***The Map* by Persephone Vandegrift**

*The delivery of perspective and space within the scenes of The Map are great.*

*Nominations: Walter's Days by Nathan Ludwig and Charles Devin Hill*

## **Best Micro Budget Script**

Winner: ***Happy Holidays* by Chastity Lively**

*A minimalist setting allows for a great premise to grow.*

*Nominations: The Workshop by Kirby Michael Wright*

## **Best Character Arc**

Winner: ***Abramelin Institute* by Meghan Fitzmartin**

*An unusual set of characters fill out the script's narrative with filmic fun and energy.*

*Nominations: The Living Room by Matteo Valentini*

# Final season of 2016

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Find your laurels [here](#).

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## **Feature Film Winner: Northern Lights by Nicholas Connor ([Link](#))**

Festival Director, [Ben Rider](#) says:

*There is a particular style to Northern Lights, its a cool film – and I don't mean that in the celluloid neuvo of the French New Wave sense, but rather that being of it being cold. Yes, this film is very clinical, precise, and cool film. It brushes over you like a cold breeze, a very British one. This is in part because of the crisp photography, leaning more towards the Kubrick look of space, than say the grainy greasy one of Scott's Alien. Obviously, in saying this, I know that this isn't a film set in space, and rather one which takes place in interiors on earth... mostly.*

*Part of its rehearsed feeling, and precision, is due to its very youthful cast, which seemingly seem to be suffering at the hands of anxiety, and realism, as kids this age are rarely actually played by people their own age on screen; instead, casting wise, these roles are reserved for 30-something year-old's impersonating youngsters – making this experience fairly unique. Kids, by Larry Clarke, feels like an example which ties with this, only that film was a dirty 90's socio-politics film. And this isn't.*

*Its on this front that the film excels, it is the work of a younger generation of filmmakers, one which has yet to really find their voice or spokesperson (I mean, we have yet to have had the next wave of Lena Dunham and Xavier Dolan arrive), and in turn, one can't help but encourage this effort, as it is one which would have required a lot of patience and persistence.*

*The film is delivered in completion, its slick and visually classy. It does lag a bit, plot wise, but it makes up for it with sheer cognitive ingenuity around the anxiety images of smoke riddled poses, ones which evoke a Lana Del Rey meets David Lynch dreamscape.*

*Runner up: Genius Loci by Pascal Griesshammer*

## **Short Film Winner: State Inspection by David Smith ([Link](#))**

Festival Director, [Ben Rider](#) says:

*'Eh, Um, I'm Nate by the way.'*

*'My dad's name is Nate.'*

– quick Google – showing results for for ‘can girls still like you if you have the same name as their dad?’

—

*The strongest hand which State Inspection plays is casting. Sure – the script is original and fairly unusual for a short film (its pacing feeling more like one of those carefully written HBO shows like (early season) Girls, Divorce or the ‘cancelled too soon’ Enlightened), and the photography is crisp, and clean, easy to follow and engaging, occasionally playful with its lighting... but what really trumps this project is its cast.*

*Be it the choice of using Nate Cesco, who’s underplayed ‘comedy lead’ type rings a flavour of Paul Rudd minus the heavy kick-drum punchlines (Nate seems to be more inclined to underplay his part, which is always the best way to do things – he’s not too nervous or too shy, making him functional and engaging without any too queasy a feeling from the audience), the naturalistic Abbey Miskowiec remains energetic through the whole ordeal at the car lot, making the short appear as if it were shot in one afternoon (which I’m sure it wasn’t), and then there’s the finely tuned tones of Damian Ross, who is probably one of the most well spoken and controlled performers in this season’s film submissions.*

*Praise is obviously due to the ‘behind the camera’ people too, the directing is balanced, allowing for other elements of the film to step forwards and shine, and the production overall has a particular consistent quality to it which many shorts fail to reach. PS. Best of luck with the upcoming feature!*

*Runners up: Charlie by Nicole Pott ([Link](#)), One Day Without Gravity by Julio Secchin ([Link](#)), Hit Me by Borislav Kostov (No Link), Harm by C.J. Hodgman ([Link](#))*

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- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: The Archipelago by Benoit Maestre ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*The direction which Benoit Maestre employs in The Archipelago is quite unusual. Reminiscent of Semih Kaplanoğlu’s style – the film enjoys long takes, minimalist movement inter-cut with faster pans, rare and precise dialogue, and an eye for the texture of the scenic locales; in turn, the film’s genre tone of a killer-thriller is largely overpowered by these functions. Similarly, the disjointed French New Wave music edits, and harsh motifs of guitar tabs, along with the endless journeys the one lead protagonist takes, the film’s overall filmic dialect becomes very pronounced and reassuringly untamed – almost like a wild animal, generated away from the city of Hollywood flicks.*

*Is it entirely successful? Not really, the film is quite slow.. But it shouldn't be criticised either, as it is a film employing devices and techniques which we are not used to. It is, because of this, unsettling, both thematically, and as an experience when viewed. Will these devices work again? I'm not entirely convinced. However, it is at the cusp of this argument that appraisal is due – films with unique and unconventional methods are unusual, and from the film archivist's point of view (that being, the individual looking back at cinema from the 'contemporary' moment), one can't help but film this film full of allure and gusto with embracing its own methodology, making it very memorable and hard to ignore.*

Nominees: *A Murder Party* by Angeline Walsh ([No Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: *Genius Loci* by Pascal Griesshammer ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*With its uncertain mood, Genius Loci sees its lead character, Franzi, delving deeper and deeper into the inner sanctum of her mind, and the rustic pastiche home she's living in.*

*The interesting motif of this film, or perhaps its tone when viewed, is daydreaming. Cinema has a habit of ignoring this prime cognitive device, but it is what makes film interesting as a medium – viewers are given the ability to daydream whilst watching a film, attempting to relate to the character and the circumstance the film is set in. This film however utilises this, forcing the viewer to conceit to the inner psyche and silence of the personal moments a character might have whilst hiding out in the woods.*

*It isn't brash with style, nor is it really aggressive with its agenda, however; if one is able to sit back and enjoy the motions which head towards the viewer in waves of unconscious thought, the experience of Genius Loci is refreshing, and a tad similar to the earlier works of Werner Herzog, such as Heart of Glass.*

Nominees: *Northern Lights* by Nicholas Connor ([Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *Shadow of the Missing* by Jamie Lee Smith ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*In one of the early scenes of Shadow of the Missing a small rudimentary screening occurs – a filmmaker's account of off-school life is screened to a bunch of film enthusiasts. Then there is eye rolling by one of the viewers, and as we scout the extras, bored faces. The QandA follows, a simple question is asked, and a simple answer is given. In turn, the scene, like this, is a simple rendering of actual film festival experiences. I have had to sit through those kind of screenings, and have had the exact same thought... and I did huff at the short films which did not need to be screened to anyone.*

*However, this is the backdrop to a found footage comedy, and thankfully things do not end up being quite as bad as the film which it depicted. The film dislodges the prudish film academia vibe, and toys with the concept of film buffs being nothing more than buffoons walking about with*

cameras. They wander into the haunted church, they giggle and scream, and we in turn, do just the same.

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Charlie by Nicole Pott ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*There is a familiar flavouring to Nicole Pott's Charlie – it is the air of a John Ford film. The rural setting, the caravan habitation, the dark night interrupted with the arrival of a stranger in need of some shelter. Its simplistic, its unadulterated, and it is poignant.*

*Part of the film's charm is its locale – not so much the one which we don't see, as the countryside doesn't play heavily in the film's aesthetics, but rather the one which acts in our mind's eye as a backdrop as to why the characters are where they are, and why they are living the lives which they are living.*

*Jordan Turk's performance as Charlie is quite controlled, memorable and of particular note and interest – he doesn't over compensate for the film's lack of expense by becoming cartoonish, but rather relies on his controlled voice and its timber to elevate his performance above average; this is further heightened by Pott's ability to elevate the film's style and tone to that of a whisper, rather than a shout. There is much to be said for the strength of delivering a calm narrative, instead that of screaming its message and expense at the viewer.*

*Nominees: State Inspection by David Smith ([Link](#)), Incoming Call by Eoin Cleland ([Link](#)), Too Old To by Hayley-Marie Axe (No Link)*

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Take The Heat by Elena Riabtceva (No Link)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Elena Riabtceva's stylish foray into the memory surreal wormhole is an extravagant visuals splash. The film is somewhat reminiscent of Marc Forster's 2005 effort 'Stay'.*

*Here Riabtceva's film delves into the recesses of the unusual 'Milgram experiment'. The film appears visually to be a palette throwback to a by-gone era of both soviet cinema, and the b-movie science fictions efforts which often dominated drive-in theatres in America. There is a particular comfort in seeing these visuals and editing techniques so well presented in a contemporary effort, it is rare to see such experimentation these days, and is exciting to say the least!*

*The subject matter at hand has a homely confrontation, dissecting the individual from its personal surroundings, as well as the added pressures of a character attempting to outrun their own misgiving family members. The script bares some similarities to Kafka's writings in that regard, and helps to show off the overwhelming skills of Riabtceva's narrative.*

*Nominees: One Day Without Gravity by Julio Secchin ([Link](#)), The Last Zombie by Anthony Lecomte ([Link](#))*

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *The Year I Did Acid* by Chandra Siddan ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Chandra Siddan's short film isn't a short film. It is a condensed feature as far as I'm concerned, carrying the rich textures of a rural picture, like *The Spirit Of The Beehive* or *Cinema Paradiso*. *The Year I Did Acid* carries a particular alchemy towards the past – it is neither a nostalgia picture, or a docu-drama piece; but it is the taste of the bygone, a leftover bottle of some sugary drink discovered in the cupboard, its flavour is familiar, but a little more sour and toxic than we'd like to taste.*

*It's characteristic exploration, the performances which colour it, and the image presenting them, are rich, and particularly Americana in their presentation; almost in the same vein of the more frightening and adult coming of age films, far removed from the John Hughes flicks. There is no denying that there is a voice present here – one which is enjoyable to listen to, one which is sleazy and truthful.*

Nominees: *Hard Reset* by Sylvain Razemon ([Link](#)), *Wake Me Up* by Reem Sameer Al-Bayyat (No Link)

- Best Webseries

**Winner: *Ebersberg* by Manuel Weiss ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Slick, mystical and noir heavy, Ebersberg might be one of the best web series I've ever seen. On a par with those Amazon and Netflix offerings.*

Nominees: *2 Become* by Mikael Buxton and Romain Douchin ([Link](#)), *Happy Sour* by **Samuel Wilson** ([Link](#))

Other categories:

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: *Daniel Venosa's photography of One Day Without Gravity* ([Link](#))**

*Its brash with technique, like *Gravity*, this short delights with a firm igniting 'how did they shoot that?' feeling of unease and simple photographic beauty.*

Nominees: Tony McGuire's photography of *The Hag: Bloodline* ([Link](#)), **Manuel Weiss and Stefan Dyrna's photography in Ebersberg** ([Link](#)), **Kwoi Gin's photography of The Year I Did Acid** ([Link](#))

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: *Nate Cesco in State Inspection* ([Link](#))**

Nate Cesco helms his performance with ease – he’s funny, on key, and always realistic as the naive auto-visitor; busy flirting whilst his car gets a check up. In the words of Josh Radnor: ‘Happy, thank you, more please’.

Nominees: Ian Kevin Scott in *Alchemy* ([Link](#)), Adam Dada in *Nowhere* ([Link](#))

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Marie Gesien in *Genius Loci* ([Link](#))**

Marie Gesien haunts her viewers as Franz. Her performance is distilled, and clean. There are no moments of forcefulness, only calmness here.

Nominees: Sarah Graydon in *The Year I Did Acid* ([Link](#)), Katie Sheridan in *Match Not Found* ([Link](#))

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Conor McCabe, Paul Hinks, Shaquel Reyes and Oskar Strawinski’s score of *Northern Lights* ([Link](#))**

There is a certain quietness to *Northern Lights*, little is said as it revolves around a young woman suffering from repeated anxiety attacks. The score here elevates the film’s tones, and maintains the mood like a Angelo Badalamenti score.

Nominees: Sean Mahoney’s score of *Ophelia* ([Link](#))

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: *The Last Zombie* by Anthony Lecomte ([Link](#))**

An unusual and original foray into the genre mixology of the post-modern hyper ‘real’ form of the moving image medium. Reminiscent of Tara Subkoff and Quentin Dupieux’s filmic efforts. Full of pop and pulp.

Nominees: *Save* by Iván Sáinz-Pardo ([Link](#)), *Milano-Shanghai One-Way* by **Gino Ceriachi** (no link), *Forgiveness* by **Matt Shuert** ([No Link](#)), *Shadow of the Missing* by **Jamie Lee Smith** ([Link](#))

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: *The Year I Did Acid* by Chandra Siddan ([Link](#))**

The personal touches of *The Year I Did Acid* make it above average in terms of its vision, it is an intimate film, unafraid of getting close to its subject matter and focusing on it with care.

Nominees: *State Inspection* by David Smith ([Link](#)), *Northern Lights* by Nicholas Connor ([Link](#)),

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: *2 Become* by Mikael Buxton ([Link](#))**

Mikael Buxton’s writing is engaging, forward moving, and incredibly well-paced – there isn’t a moment spared.

Nominees: *Hit Me* by Borislav Kostov ([No Link](#)), *State Inspection* by David Smith ([Link](#)), *Harm* by C.J. Hodgman ([Link](#))

- *Best Editing of the season*

**Winner: Benn Berkeley's editing of *Eye of India* ([Link](#))**

*For a moment we are here looking at a flame, the next down the barrel of a yellow cave, or opening. Images twist, unfold, and time is rejigged over and over in *Eye of India*. Like the early studies of walls being collapsed, rewound, and rebuild, during the early camera tests; this short film ignites the movement of film as a medium of time, space and experience.*

Nominees: Anne Nicholson's editing of *Harm* ([Link](#)), Amy Pfeil's editing of *Northern Lights* ([Link](#))

- *Special Mention*

***Carmilla* by Jeff Harder ([Link](#)), *Stragglers* by Andy Blithe ([Link](#))**

*\* Please note: some categories vary in number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.*

# Late Summer 2016

Late Summer 2016 – Official Selection

[Festival Laurels](#) (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

- Jury Prize

**Feature Film Winner: *The Algebra of Need* by David Williams ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*With a French New Wave style, one which evokes a throwback to Godard's minimalist surreal films, *The Algebra of Need* is a moving conceptual piece, never stagnant or still.*

*The film's style, which dominates its form and structure, is one which remains fairly unique in cinema these days. Surrealist film ventures have somewhat gone out of style, and have disappeared into the micro budgets of low risk filmmaking. And yet, here it is – a film which derives less entertainment value from its drive to delivery plot points, but rather provides a cerebral movement within its content of ideas, images and shapes. Yes, it is a micro budget film – and at times limited to that canvas, but it is also worthy of more.*

*The film does also maintain a particular tone, one which like David Lynch's work, which slowly seeps a dream into the audience's mind. For the one moment of colour, which is slipped in whilst exploring a bizarre series of abandoned electronic devices, we, the viewers, are unsure of it is a dream or reality which we are experiencing.*

*It is commendable, and an acknowledgement should be made towards its director – David Williams, for making the best of what he had, and bringing an unadulterated vision to the screen.*

**Runner up: *The Last Beautiful Girl* by James Christopher ([Link](#))**

**Short Film Winner: *Husky* by Yasmin Afifi ([Link](#))**

Jury Member, [Jane Sanger](#) says:

*An incredibly observed and dissected story of becoming oneself without compromise, well directed by Yasmin Afifi. The particular coming of age story in *Husky* gives the reality of growing up on a London housing estate a unique perspective and but offers a universal theme that many have witnessed or felt themselves at some time in their life.*

*Ben Tisdall(Marcus) has been marking time, unknown even to himself, reluctantly engaging in the boyish pranks and pack mentality of his friends. John Christain Vickers (Dan) with testosterone flying is pushing the limits and sensing a wavering Marcus he goads him more than anyone. Tormenting a Downs Syndrome Girl, ostracizing and beating a Pakistani boy and his*

brother are all par for the course for Dan and his dog pack followers. Football playing lads must stick together in the game and in life.

Marcus is hesitant and when things go too far he finally breaks out and turns on the leader Dan in a violent outburst, that gives him the peace and identity he was lacking.

A well paced absorbing story, good cinematography and superb acting make this short film stand out.

Runners up: Gardening At Night by Shayna Connelly ([No Link](#)), Ghost Nets by Mark Bousfield ([Link](#))

— please note: Our jury votes and selects films independently to the selection committee.

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Demi by Caris Rianne ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

Earlier this year we were given Caris Rianne's 'Extra Time' to judge. The film was a moving drama about a young woman attempting to play out her new relationship with her father post family divorce. At the time, here at TMBT Awards, we were under the impression that the young director had only made a few shorts... much to our surprise, and excitement, that wasn't the case. Now, with 'Demi', Rianne's debut feature, we are provided a stellar ensemble cast, a variety of narrative strands which build together to form the overall thematic arc, and a rich eye for characteristic and situational details; similar to the one which we had enjoyed with 'Extra Time'.

What makes Rianne's direction so prominent to us in both projects is her claim of a particular authorial voice. Yes, she is a female director, and yes, her films are of feminine subjects – something which is currently missing from our current landscape of the typical white male directors; but they are also more points than just these, as our encouragement and enjoyment of her projects are not limited to this particular political agenda.

It is more of the cinematic type – her stories are predominantly dramas, a genre avoided by young filmmakers. Her projects are built off of strong characters with mixed feelings and differing dynamics. Her projects remind us of what we love the most about film – they are personal, artful and moving. And here, with Demi, we are provided with what feels like a crescendo towards the next big thing. Rianne maintains what she is good at doing, all the while exploring new avenues of the feature length mode.

Demi feels like a cross of 'Men, Women and Children', 'Pretty Persuasion' and 'Shame'. It's a depth filled narrative rich with particular social issues, all the while maintaining some inventive cinematic flavours which elevate it above the average micro budget film. The closing scene, on the train, is a highlight of this – it is somewhat silent in terms of its message (though there is some digetic sound), and the viewer is left to understand the meaning all alone; enjoying the basic cinematic sequences of image a + image b = image c (Eisenstein).

Nominees: A Tangled Web by Emmanuel Obi Jr. ([Link](#))

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: *The Last Beautiful Girl* by James Christopher ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*I believe that 'The Last Beautiful Girl' is the third feature film we have seen from James Christopher since opening The Monkey Bread Tree Film Awards. Over the last three pictures we have seen: soul, warmth, comedy, sadness, drama... a whole heap of skills and tones. To say that we are fans of his work is an understatement.*

*Here, with 'The Last Beautiful Girl', we have a more candid story. Relationships and people clash, comedy and drama flip flops. The performances are balanced, and easy to watch – unstaged and engaging. Heck – a highlight, besides the lead performance by Derek Babb, is the series of mishaps which performers help carry to reality, like the oily bed sequence and the awkward wedding 'what are you doing?' here moment.*

*The only flaw to this all is that Christopher has yet to be handed the keys to a Hollywood project. He'd be great for it, and we can't wait to see what comes next!*

**Nominees: *With Love From Suffolk* ([Link](#))**

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Not enough submissions for this category to run.

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: *Tyger Tyger* by Jasia Kaulbach ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*For a low budget we expect: people talking, small rooms, acceptable technological material (clear sound, focused images etc). And the joy with Tyger Tyger is that it offers so much more. Some science fiction special effects, a surreal set of locations, a solid performance from its lead, and to top it all off – a bold visual aesthetic which allows the film to extend well past its expectations.*

*There is a moment in the film, nearing the end, where 'Ty' walks along the motorway. Its a visually bold moment, one which delivers all the film's ambitions into one moment: a bold sense of character, a rich scope in terms of images, and a cinematic flavouring. This is one entertaining short film with a solid flavour!*

**Nominees: *Husky* by Yasmin Afifi ([Link](#)), *The Weekend* by Dennis Cahlo ([Link](#)), *I Am Borderline: Self-Regulation* by Betsy Usher ([Link](#))**

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Eben Skilleter's writing of *Brian And The Grim Reaper* ([Link](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*The comedic highlights of 'Brian And The Grim Reaper' are of a cinematic nature – this being, that the story could only work and exist well within a filmic narrative. If this film were a book, it would read like a comedic essay, and wouldn't engage the viewer past the post-modern tongue and cheek nature, and the same can be said to if it were a play. However, here, as a film, the story pans out within its false reality within a world where death can linger onto someone and try to change their life.*

*The picture's punchlines, often delivered in a kind of 'matter of fact' statements ('I bring order to chaos!'), ring a reminiscence of recent Tim Burton pictures, specifically 'Dark Shadows'. Skilleter and Pink must be commended for their efforts here to deliver a project with a finely tuned understatement of tone, it isn't camp or over worked, but stead a steady two-hander of life and death struggling to settle an argument as to what makes life worthwhile. Lastly, the film carries itself with a vibrant glossy look, almost making the project appear as if it were shot for more than it was (production values wise).*

Nominees: *WelcomeMatt* by Mukul Gadde (No Link)

Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *Gardening At Night* by Shayna Connelly (No Link)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Jonah Rubash's beautiful cinematography heads up a fantastic ensemble, with slick editing and a smooth sound of the haunting 'Gardening At Night'. The film, compromised of some very carefully constructed sequences, allows us – the viewers, to slowly creep into the circumstances surrounding the pending death and sorrow.*

*This short, with its particularly solid delivery across all of the production tools, feels like the work of a very skilled director. Perhaps one who has actually out grown the short film form. I say this (or rather write it), as an encouragement. Shayna Connelly has reached the peak of what one can achieve with a short film, she has propelled her viewers into a world within a few short moments, and as unexpected this film's delights might be with its surreal elements, the narrative is too short lived, and perhaps not filling enough in terms of character depth and atmosphere; something a feature length project would allow for in terms of scope and experimentation.*

*If one had to liken Connelly to anyone, it would have to be Jonathan Glazer, like with 'Birth' and 'Under The Skin', Connelly relies on cerebral cinema, one which is rarely explored or utilised.*

Nominees: *Misfire* by Tun Lok (No Link)

- Web Series

**Winner: *Idiotas* by Fran Estevez (no link provided)**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Fran Estevez's Idiotas is a large scale webseries. Sure, by large scale I don't mean it has the production values of a Netflix or Amazon venture. Yet, it is of a large scale than one would expect from these particular types of productions. It is verbose and luxurious with its vision of city skylines and scrap eating loners. Its story is simple: a homeless man lost in the city finds a red balloon carrying a note. The tone of the project, the style, is undeniably rich. The project is reminiscent of Albert Lamorisse's The Red Balloon (1956), and carries the same theme of human interest and adventure. Its a promising first chapter to the webseries, and one which has many unexplored avenues ahead of it.*

Nominees: *2nd Generation* by Insup David Kim and Kevin Barton (no link provided)

Other categories:

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winner: William Schweikert's photography in *The Algebra of Need* ([Link](#))**

*With its limited budget, Schweikert manages to add a particularly unique style and consistency to The Algebra of Need's visual palette. The project becomes memorable thanks to its stark and almost French New Wave sights.*

Nominees: Voileta Octavio's photography of *Croissant* ([Link](#)), Dennis Cahlo's photography of *The Weekend* ([Link](#)), Marco Tulio Fuse's photography in *Obsessed* ([Link](#)), Stuart Gilmartin photography in *Dying To Forgive* ([Link](#)), Jonah Rubash's photography in *Gardening At Night* (No Link)

- Best Actor of the season

**Winner: Joe Sowerbutts in *Ghost Nets* ([Link](#))**

*Joe Sowerbutts' performance in 'Ghost Nets' is surprisingly layered for a short film. Instead of playing it safe, he delves deep into his performance range. The short is elevated off the back of this, and allows for a strong balance of performances across the board. The highlight of his performance is most present in those quiet scenes, be it walking on the shore, or destroying objects in the dark woods.*

Nominees: Ben Tisdall in *Husky* ([Link](#)), Pol Fernandez in *Croissant* ([Link](#)), Rob Tode in *WelcomeMatt* (No Link)

- Best Actress of the season

**Winner: Shannon Hayes in *Tyger Tyger* ([Link](#))**

Shannon Hayes' performance as Tyger is a rich and dynamic performance. Her shifting between tones appears to be done with ease, as if she were professional who has worked on these skills for many years. She brings much energy and physicality to the role, making Tyger very 'real'.

Nominees: Janet Shay in House Call (no link), Anna Koval in La Belle Folie ([Link](#)), Jane Black in Dying To Forgive ([Link](#))

- Best Score of the season

**Winner: Tom Rackham's score of NEXUS ([Link](#))**

The score of NEXUS elevates the picture into a touch type friendly electronic buzz. Its tactile, it's dangerous and buzz worthy.

Runner up: Dany De Cam's score of Retirement ([Link](#))

- Best Genre Piece of the season

**Winner: The Last Harvest: The Yemenis of the San Joaquin by Erik Friedl and Jonathan Friedlander (No Link)**

Documentaries about family members and their stories are often overworked and imbalanced. 'The Last Harvest' however is the personal workings of a story that needs to be told. Its to the point, moving and fantastically delivered. The closing note about Mohamad Abdullah's life in the politically charged Yemen, and his urge to return to America, is brilliantly attuned with the notions of migration, and our current geopolitical issues of our contemporary, making the film relevant and informative.

Nominees: A Timeless Sin by Oliver Roblin ([Link](#)), Vistula – The Last Wild River by Karel Candi (no link), The Secret Lives of New York Cats by Steve Holloway ([Link](#)), One Under by Ruth Pickett ([Link](#)), Brian And The Grim Reaper bt Eben Skilleter ([Link](#))

- Best Direction of the season

**Winner: Husky by Yasmin Afifi ([Link](#))**

Afifi's direction of Husky is fantastic. She has not only brought to the screen a very particular vision, one which is clear and distinctly hers, but she has also brought to life one of the most subtle and moving messages we have seen this season. Her efforts here are overwhelmingly poignant and moving, and must be encouraged to go further. Another film please!

Nominees: Tyger Tyger by Jasia Kaulbach ([Link](#)), God Save The King by George Moore ([Link](#)), One Under by Ruth Pickett ([Link](#)), Gardening At Night by Shayna Connelly (No Link)

- Best Writing of the season

**Winner: One Under by Ruth Pickett ([Link](#))**

*Pickett's script is delightful. Her characters are alive, vibrant, and interesting. From the small posters in the background ('we don't care about your nut allergy'), to the potentially suicide helpline call with David's foul mouthed boss, this script is full to the brim with dark humour and rich details. The only question we've got to ask is – where's the feature venture? Because Pickett is clearly ready to ink the next lengthier effort.*

*Nominees: Ruth Pickett's writing of La Belle Folie ([Link](#)), Pedro Brum writing of Tyger Tyger ([Link](#)), Michael Wing, Jonathon Cottrell and Anthony Giancola's writing of WelcomeMatt (No Link), Eben Skilleter's writing of Brian And The Grim Reaper ([Link](#))*

- Best Editing of the season

**Winner: Roberto Nicastro's editing of Ghost Nets ([Link](#))**

*Nicastro's editing of 'Ghost Nets' is very skilled. The cuts aid the pace of the film along, but are also stylised and technically apt. There's a particular tone which the editing has allowed for, along with the script, which has developed a particular atmosphere fairly unique for short films. Highly recommended viewing.*

*Nominees: Richard Greenhalgh's editing of Retirement ([Link](#)), Doug Usher's editing of I Am Borderline: Self-Regulation ([Link](#)), Caris Rianne's editing of Demi ([Link](#))*

- Special Mention

*Object Permanence by Nelson Hernandez (No Link), The Hunter's Club by Kit McDee ([Link](#)), With Love From Suffolk ([Link](#))*

*\* Please note: some categories vary in number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.*

# Early Summer 2016

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Early Summer 2016 – Official Selection

[Festival Laurels](#) (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

- Jury Prize

**Feature Film Winner: *Seat 25* by Nicholas Agnew ([Facebook](#))**

Jury Member, [Xavier Baeyens](#) says:

*“What would you do if...?” is a wonderful story device. It helps build something we can all relate to during the course of the film’s run-time, as its main ideology of testing the audience (or at least to drive the viewer to have an opinion about it), is to imagine a particular challenge at hand; which the audience will have to struggle with in toe with the character. It’s this question director Nicholas Agnew drops upon Faye Banks, as she wins a seat on the first manned mission to Mars in a competition, that provokes the film into being.*

*“Seat 25” is a moving drama about existential doubt with some really nice subtle comedy winks to it. Agnew lets some melancholy creep in, but the film never loses its positive vibe. Perhaps its because of the moral of the story is too clear and obvious from the start, all the same though, it never spoils the pleasure of watching.*

*Lead actress Madeleine Cooke gives a pleasant performance as the troubled Faye, making the doubt really believable and realistic. Also the people around her are very well portrayed, they are real flesh and blood people with their annoying sides, but never unlikable.*

**Runner up: *Writer’s Cramp* by Darva Campbell ([Facebook](#))**

**Short Film Winner: Jaded Star by James Debenham ([Website](#))**

Jury Member, [Xavier Baeyens](#) says:

*‘Jaded Star’ is a visually stunning sci-fi drama. Obviously, because of its higher production costs, sci-fi films are often a bit neglected by short filmmakers. Director Debenham showcases there is nothing to be scared of when it comes to trying your hand at a sci-fi film. The story about a deep space mining vessel in trouble after a mysterious illness takes down the crew, is mainly approached from a psychological point-of-view. The performances give an almost touchable sense of desolation and desperation.*

*Another winner for this film is definitely the work of the art department, turning the story into a feverish nightmare at times. The feeling of claustrophobia is not only present in the interior design, but the whole universe which they create feels small and burdensome.*

Runners up: The One by Lyndsay Sarah Doyle ([Facebook](#))

— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee.

Main competition:

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Seat 25 by Nicholas Agnew ([Facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*This isn't 'Amelie', but it feels like it. With its heavy handed voice over, glossy photography and slick cuts, we are paced from moment to moment tracing the lives of each character we bounce*

into. But that isn't an issue, after all, a film of this tone couldn't be any different – it is the epitome of a well rounded postmodern sci-fi gooeyness.

The film itself is of the era: it is a smart and quirky independent film, though it is a less artistic note of the likes of 'Another Earth' and 'Upstream Colour'; and perhaps a more entertaining one at times. Though, of course, it is cruel to compare these indies, as they're clearly targeting different types of audiences.

There's a firing scene – something quite touching, jolting towards the Jason Reitman 'Up In The Air' vibe, and there's also a touch of the lonely in the lead character – Faye; or is it perhaps doubt about what she is about to do? Whatever take it is you have of her, she's charming all the same. Flavourings of Philip Glass come across in the piano works – Faye's life deserves the accompaniment. Though I'm not sure if he was even an inspiration, or if I'm just thinking of 'The Hours' as yet another cross pollinated flavour the film might be prone to.

The main embedded message of what makes us human stems off of the promised seat which a lucky winner will be granted – a chance to escape it all and be a part of 'history'. The film is overall well rounded, starts off perhaps a bit stronger than the way it ends; but it is nonetheless a bit of light hearted escapism for its viewers built on the back of its wonderful use of its very low budget.

Nominees: ... and the Rest is History by Niko Kühnel ([Facebook](#)), Good Thinking, Those Who Who've Tried To Halt Nuclear Weapons by Anthony Donovan ([Website](#)), Hunters Lodge by Martyn Tott ([Facebook](#)), The Watson Code by James Whalen ([Website](#))

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Quad X: The Porn Movie Massacre by James Christopher ([Facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*The really funny thing about James Christopher's film isn't really it's comedy, not to say that that's not funny (it is incredibly funny at times) – but for me, the funniest thing really is its concept alone, and the fact that no one has really done this type of film yet. I'm jealous. Of late I've been trying to find a perfect horror film to make, or comedy, something really heavily genre based... and here there's this effort, a film about a killer killing off adult stars featuring in a making-of type of documentary gone wrong. It's gory, it's funny, it's a 'Scream' by 'Scary Movie' glory. It is a concept that should have already been made in a bigger scale, someone ought to have made a franchise out of this in Hollywood back in the noughties.*

*It's definitely of our time though – a delicious self conscious sexy gutty romp that hangs on the tongue of its own clever delight. Its also all the things I love about indie film: inventive, creative and ludicrously personal. And by personal I really do mean that it has a personal voice — it isn't the blockbuster with meaningless themes that everyone can relate to, it isn't void of meaning, it somehow represents a personal point of view of what film should be, and how it should function. Major hat tips to all those involved, it's a brave and unique venture.*

**Nominee: *Just My Luck* by Bill Hass ([Website](#))**

- **Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000**

*Not enough entries budgeted over \$10,000 to run this category as a competition.*

- **Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000**

**Winner: *The Party Game* by George Kenwright ([website](#))**

**[Festival Director](#) says:**

George Kenwright's 'The Party Game' isn't of our time. It's narrative structure, built on the storytelling of its characters, is of a different era of film – its a throwback to realist cinema, the type which the French New Wave produced with Cinema Du Look. Though, of course, 'The Party Game' doesn't have that bold 80's neon light, but it does have a particular polished image, and a tale which will twist its viewers into listening carefully. Its an intellectual exercise: an examination of people's faces, our attention, the moments in which the story takes to be told, and the layered realities of plot and story – the time which it takes to tell the story, for us to watch the film, and the length of time told within the story itself; a story about another party in which a vicious party game was played. Of course, one can't help but feel like a guest at the dinner table, this is of course until we move to the kitchen for a short ending and an exit from that tone; but it is in those moments before, with the careful building towards our exit, in which we are privy to some sordid gossip and exposition about who's telling the story, and what kind of reaction they will yield from their guests, and us.

To me, this film is a wonderful underdog of a film – the type of indie venture which didn't require a ton loads of effects and glossy lens flares to remind us what cinema is about. It's the type of cinema the late Abbas Kiarostami would have championed, the type which we ought to be seeing more of with the advent of the so-called digital revolution of the camera-stylo, but sadly haven't been privy to in popular films just yet.

All we need now is a feature, perhaps one set in a launderette or an office meeting room... Kenwright is bound to bring the characters to the space, and tease us to delight.

Nominees: Fureur by PH Debiès (No links provided), Soft Yellow by Abbas Davoudi, Below the Kneek by Samuel Wiggins ([Facebook](#)), ID by Celina Font ([Vimeo](#)), Caught in my EyE by William Instone (No link provided)

Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: Litter Bugg by Amber Jo Weedon ([Facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*From its opening – a blueish city with long shots establishing the sterile space, filled with herds of businessmen; to its last breath- a man sitting on a mountain of junk, ‘Litter Bugg’ is a wonderful foray into that Marc Caro and Jean-Pierre Jeunet type of filmmaking: stylised, colourised and humble.*

*The one thing I loved about ‘Litter Bugg’ that really struck me wasn’t so much the choice to focus on the lonely city character with an imaginary friend (as we’ve seen that before), but rather how it was delivered. There’s no denying the fact that Tom Machell really did throw himself into the role, and tried to become Dustin Bugg through and through. And then there’s also Evan Trout’s cinematography, which elevates the film into a surreal foray, whilst maintaining a certain of steady stylised hand on the whole film’s texture.*

*For Amber Jo Weedon this might have been a first foray as a director, but she’s on the right path here. It feels like more of a sophomore effort if anything – reserved, more controlled than your first venture. She has a grip on several characters within the film, both likeable and not so much, and they all come across as being rather realistic, rather than unbelievable caricatures. Perhaps all we need now is for Weedon to step further into a more diverse narrative, one which includes a set of lead characters than just say the one, because lets be honest – she’s got the skills to deliver another type of ‘Pushing Daisies’ or ‘The City of Lost Children’: a quirky, multilayered, mythological world based story with realistically portrayed cartoon like beings.*

Nominees: *The Pit* by Kari Hennig ([Website](#)), *Avoy* by Pedro Duran (No link provided), *Jaded Star* by James Debenham ([Website](#))

- *Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000*

*Not enough entries budged over \$10,000 to run this category as a competition.*

*Other categories:*

- *Best Cinematography of the season*

**Winner: Davide Hodgson-Lorente photography in *The Party Game* ([website](#))**

*A wonderfully photographed film which manages to maintain its cinematic image throughout the film, it's all very slick and clean.*

Nominees: Federico Zotti's photography in *The Anniversary* ([Facebook](#)), [Gilbert Papazian](#)'s photography in *Writer's Cramp* ([Facebook](#)), William Lancaster's photography in *Imitation is Suicide* (No link provided)

- *Best Actor of the season*

**Winner: Pedro Freijeiro in *The Perfect Day* (No link provided)**

*A carefully nuanced performance which watches a man move from hero to zero, and back again. Freijeiro is loveable with his deliverance of this persona.*

Nominees: Dalton Cyr in *Imitation is Suicide* (No link provided), [Artemas Froushan](#) in *The Party Game* ([Website](#)), Jacob Jett in *The One* ([Facebook](#)), James Whalen in *The Watson Code* ([Website](#))

*Best Actress of the season*

**Winner: [Kya Stewart](#) in *The One* ([Facebook](#))**

*Stewart is bold, memorable and elegant. Her performance as a woman done wrong by a controlling boyfriend is elevated, somewhat memorable of [Katie Jarvis](#) in Fish Tank.*

*Nominees: [Lydia Lakemoore](#) in Extra Time ([Facebook](#)), Heather Bowry in Dead Eye Jack (No link provided), Amanda Bray in Mind Games ([Website](#))*

- *Best Score of the season*

***Winner: Sergio Fernandez-Sastron's music in The Perfect Day (No link provided)***

*The score of The Perfect Day was a throwback to the Hollywood splash of passion from the 30's and 40's. A wonderful layer to the film's tone.*

*Nominees: Matteo Stocchino's music in A Sweetheart Inside a Cappuccino ([Facebook](#)), Amir Muhammad's music in Extra Time ([Facebook](#))*

- *Best Genre Piece of the season*

***Winner: They Call Us Maids – the Domestic Workers' Story by Leeds Animation Workshop ([Facebook](#))***

*A wonderful moving documentary delivered in the form of an animation, the formation of the film as several genre tools was incredibly well thought out.*

Nominees: *A Sweetheart Inside a Cappuccino* by Marco daffra ([Facebook](#)), *The Awakening* by Rosemarie Nelson ([Facebook](#)), *Good Thinking*, *Those Who Who've Tried To Halt Nuclear Weapons* by Anthony Donovan ([Website](#))

- *Best Direction of the season*

**Winner: *The One* by [Lyndsay Sarah Doyle](#) ([Facebook](#))**

*Doyle's direction here is passionate – it's reserved when it needs to be, and grand when it feels like giving us a taste of the Australian outback. Her personal touches, delivering a wonderful set of characters is undeniable.*

Nominees: *Extra Time* by Caris Rianne ([Facebook](#)), *Imitation is Suicide* by Julian Davis (No link provided)

- *Best Writing of the season*

**Winner: *Extra Time* by Caris Rianne ([Facebook](#))**

*A wonderfully original story carries Extra Time. The characters are fresh, and the tale is carefully balanced.*

Nominees: *Mind Games* by Jonathan Bray ([Website](#)), ... and *the Rest is History* by Niko Kühnel ([Facebook](#))

- *Best Editing of the season*

**Winner: Julian Davis' editing of *Imitation is Suicide* (No link provided)**

*With its careful layering of silent scenes, with its text-city plot is a wonderful exercise in devices: editing being the forefront of these. It's through that age old edit Eisenstein taught us: 'image a + image b = image c' that the story is delivered to us.*

*Nominees: Markus Eichenberger's editing of *Swiss Starlight Express* ([website](#)), *Extra Time* by Caris Rianne ([Facebook](#))*

- *Special Mention*

*A Quiet Life by Laurene P. Derya ([Website](#)), Context by Carlos Dominicis ([Facebook](#)), Dark Clouds Far Away by Ian Lapworth ([Film link](#)), Death Walks by Spencer Hawken ([Facebook](#))*

*\* Please note: some categories vary in the number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a minimum of two nominations, a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.*

# Spring 2016 – Nominations and Winners

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Spring 2016 – Official Selection

**Festival Laurels** (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

Main Categories:

- Jury Prize

**Feature Film Winner: *This Little Piggy* by Tristan Barr ([facebook](#))**

Jury Member, [Hassan Otsmane-Elhaou](#) says:

*With ‘This Little Piggy’, Tristan Barr shows himself to have a voice. Which is always the most impressive, and hardest, thing to achieve. You can tell he’s got something to say, and even more impressively, everyone involved is along for the ride.*

*The performances as a whole are very strong, (even down to the supporting cast), and all come together to bring a level of authenticity to the film. Which is saying something for what ends up being an incredibly dramatic finale. It’s shot in that indie-docu style in an aim to bring realism and credibility to the story – but honestly the cast ends up doing most of that heavy lifting, which is for the great benefit of the film.*

*An easy watch for something so often dark and brutal, ‘This Little Piggy’ shows a filmmaker to follow.*

Runner up: *Exit Thread* by Paul Andrew Kimball ([website](#), [facebook](#))

**Short Film Winner: *All the Other Things* by Egor Chichkanov ([website](#))**

Jury Member, [Hassan Otsmane-Elhaou](#) says:

*I have a lot of time for films that are 'simple'. This isn't a derogatory thing, it's a huge compliment. Knowing what you're trying to achieve and the simplest, smartest way of getting there is often one of the hardest things to do in film-making. With 'All The Other Things', Egor Chichkanov achieves that.*

*The only two moments of real 'look-at-me' flash that can often overtake shorts come from the opening and ending long-take shots; the rest is controlled and steady. The characters are the focus here and their relationships, and the film allows those elements to be at the forefront, and keeping the half-hour narrative tied to a handful of rooms never feels confined, because the characters bring it all to life.*

*Come for the opening shot, stay for the people.*

*Runners up: The Order by Matthew Browne ([facebook](#)), The Dead Bird by Damien Overton ([facebook](#))*

*— please note: Our jury votes independently to the selection committee.*

- *Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000*

**Winner: The Last Kill by Tony Oldham ([website](#), [facebook](#))**

*Selection Committee Member says:*

*Back in 2009, the British indie film 'Harry Brown', starring Michael Caine, burst onto our screens. It was brash, it was loud, and it was arrogant when it came to pin pointing a social unrest within the British class structure.*

*'The Last Kill' feels similar – it attempts to talk about the anxieties urbanisation has given us, the 'rougher' way of life certain folks have to face when they have been forced into proximity with one another, and the repercussions of people's actions might have when they're poorly thought out.*

*With its complex overlaying of characters and plots, and carefully paced scenes, 'The Last Kill' goes for a more stylised social message – this is the horror of 'what if' the angered revenge*

*seeking neighbour goes out of control completely. It is a classier effort than 'Harry Brown', and carries a particular Hannibal Lecter / Dexter flavour. All in all, with its carefully focussed cinematography, and calm performances, often spoken rather than shouted, 'The Last Kill' is a fine first feature effort.*

Nominees: *Zeitgeist Protest* by Christophe Karabache (no links provided)

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: *DisAssociationVille* by James Christopher ([Website](#), [Facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*DisAssociationVille* by James Christopher is a flashback heavy drama about love and loss. What makes this film both so enjoyable and interesting is its particular pace of various careful intimate moments. The script, above all, seems to be one of the most noteworthy of efforts I have ever seen in micro budget arena. Its both original, and yet reminiscent of all the things we expect from a good Hollywood film... even though it isn't by any means a Hollywood film.

The surprising turn of the film is its beautiful balancing act of multiple characters which simply appear fully formed. We don't need much time to feel forever at home with these beings, and they all feel real and welcoming to us. Perhaps this is thanks to our prospective – pinned with Chris, that we get to follow Derek Babb and his cool naturalism steady all the tones of the film.

Unlike the mumblings of the teacher telling off our lead, this isn't a film which isn't working to its 'potential', but rather quite the opposite. It is full of potential which is utilised and pushed to its fullest. Perhaps the only criticism I hold is that the film felt perhaps too polished – its sound felt dubbed, its photography rather overly smooth... perhaps a bit more of a rough palette would have made the film even more realistic and nostalgic for the viewer. It is though, regardless of that rough texture I crave, a beautiful story told with much heart, love and care for attention. High recommended.

Nominees: *Never Wait Again* by Domino Rey (no link provided), *The Descendants* by Yaser Talebi (no links provided), *Revenge Fantasies Inc* by Richard Faymonville ([Website](#), [Facebook](#)), *Trippin' to the Alter* by David N. Reyes ([website](#), [facebook](#))

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *Road to Perdition* by Yaser Talebi (no links provided)**

Selection Committee member says:

*Here we've got a 'No Country for Old Men' in black and white. Time moves as if it is on a quick dial, spinning up and down like a Wong Kar Wai film. Underneath the style though, beneath the overworked story devices, we have a clear plot full of tension, high octane stakes, and two very steady leads who perform under pressure.*

*Much like 'The Third Man', the heavy chiaroscuro lighting makes for an elegant form from which the film is able to springboard its production values. As the scenario gets further heightened by the mid point of the film, the boiling over style erodes, and spills into the film's narration. Its quite a great independent film from a region of the world we rarely get to see in this tone, and most importantly – its rather memorable as a viewing experience.*

Nominees: Blockbuster – A Life in Moving Pictures by Vlado Priborsky ([Facebook](#), [website](#))

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

**Winner: Soul Cry by Margrét Asta ([Facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*I'm not quite sure if SoulCry was meant to be upsetting or funny. I found many of its characters to be riddled with faults – and by this I don't mean that they didn't work, but rather that their ethical behaviour was muddled – they didn't seem to know what they were doing was right or wrong. Even the lead, who I completely sympathised with, seemed to dabble in a bizarre variety of 'good' and 'bad' behavioural traits. Further yet, the performance delivery of this part, provided by the writer/director herself, Margrét Asta, was in a class of its own.*

*It's hard judging a film for our festival when a project like SoulCry comes along, it's hard to pinpoint exactly what it is that makes it so great. The framing here is concise, the look is coherent, the grading is almost fantastical – a shimmering of cinematic tones and colours, the story is compelling, the music elevates... and it is all 'cinematic' in its delivery.*

*Perhaps its just easy for me to conclude with a clear statement that I am rather biased entirely towards this film – I just thought it was great. I watched it a few times even, I just couldn't get enough of it.*

*Margrét Asta might just be the overdue female answer to Xavier Dolan – a bold young voice, a performer, and a skilled storytelling artist.*

*I just have one question – when is the debut feature due?*

Nominees: *The Dead Bird* by Damian Overton ([facebook](#)), *Corpse Remover* by Alessandro Farrattini Pojani ([facebook](#)), *Applause* by Kayser A. Foyz (no links provided), *Angelito in Your Eyes* by Judy Sandra ([website](#)), *Pages 321 Part 1* by Anugat Raj (no links provided)

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

**Winner: *Final Cassett* by Lianghong Deng ([facebook](#))**

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Listen closely – you’re about to be told a story, or two, or three... it’s somewhat unclear how many stories we are told in Lianghong Deng’s *Final Cassette*. The obvious one is the taught love story between a boy and a girl, and their tapes of a ‘secret’ storeroom.*

*But there’s more here than meets the eye: there’s a story about youth, the one being told to a youngster by someone older; there’s the story of someone trying to grasp the idea of the ‘past’, and how it shapes our future. And then there are stories about various spaces: the New York bookstore full of past lives and the books which filled them, the dark buildings hiding something from our sight, and the rooftop overlooking the city full of people, all of which tied together by lost memories and broken dialogue sequences shaped by edit jumps. It’s basically like the film Charlie Kaufman and Michel Gondry would have made had they met when they were younger.*

*Basically – this film is a wonderfully complex intertwining of incomplete lives, incomplete friendships, incomplete cinematic plots, and those intimate cinematic moments we all love.*

*My only complaint is perhaps its length: Deng’s skill is that of a feature director, and whilst this short is wonderful for what it is, I couldn’t help but wish for this to be of a longer length. I’d love to settle to it seated on my couch under a blanket, snuggle up and enjoy 90 minutes of this slick cinema-cool day dream style. *Final Cassette* is full of class, story and wonderful performances; and the final note is a wonderful audience tease.*

Nominees: *The Order* by Matthew Browne ([facebook](#))

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

**Winner: *The Monster* by Bob Pipe ([Facebook](#))**

Festival Director says:

*Like with John Malkovich's performance of a dangerous 'vampired' Max Shreck in Shadow of the Vampire (2000), Richard Glover dips his toes into the parody of playing a bygone era 'monster'. Both tones of his performance are quite great – he's both the lead romantic interest of a blonde bimbo, and then the so-called 'real' monster of The Monster's world – a has-been actor starring in a dreadful chase B-movie in order to pay his rent.*

*The highlight of this set up is the party they all attend, a quick stab and a flirtatious chat keep the tones of the film at ease, constantly teasing the viewer.*

*Quite late into the short the film though it all reverts to a very much expected turn of all romantic films featuring these so-called 'Phantom of the Opera' creatures: the monster, who thought he had a chance with the female lead, finds out he could never be loved because he is a monster, and it all goes wrong.*

*The film's strengths though is quite obvious: there's a sure strong style here, the film is easy to watch, and not too convoluted plot wise, and most importantly its handled and delivered with care.*

*It goes without saying that Bob Pipe's parody-style short is a classy stab at a character lead piece, breathing a well overdue breath of life back into the by-gone 'monster mash' comedy genre.*

Nominees: *Lifeless* by Sylvain Razemon ([website](#), [facebook](#))

Other categories:

- Best Cinematography of the season

**Winners: Fraser Stephen's cinematography in Ava (no links provided)**

Nominees: Lluís Martí's cinematography in *Unstable* ([Facebook](#)), Nathan Frost's cinematography in *The Dead Bird* ([facebook](#)), Crista Castellanos and Christian Olivares' cinematography in *Alba* ([facebook](#))

- *Best Actor of the season*

**Winner: Ryan Lights in *The Dead Bird* ([facebook](#))**

Nominees: Adam Woollard in *Silent Country* ([Facebook](#)), Michael Kelly in *Artie Says Goodbye* (no links provided), Cameron Moir in *Angelito in Your Eyes* ([website](#)), Wolfgang Rauh in *Blockbuster – A Life in Pictures* ([Facebook](#), [website](#)), Chris Foran in *That Day Comes* (no links provided)

- *Best Actress of the season*

**Winner: Afton Eve Moran in *Ava* (no link provided)**

Nominees: Erin Wasmund in *Itch* (no link provided), Gigi Quaine in *Before the Sun Sets* ([Facebook](#), [IMDb](#)), Helen George in *The Monster* ([Facebook](#))

- *Best Score of the season*

**Winner: Hank Lee's score in *Final Cassett* ([facebook](#))**

Nominees: *The Holy Goats's* score in *Silent Country* ([Facebook](#)), Benjamin Roberts in *Shades of Darkness* ([website](#), [facebook](#))

- *Best Genre Piece of the season*

**Winner: *Scams Incorporated* by Matt Mirams (no links provided)**

Nominees: *Angelito in Your Eyes* by Judy Sandra ([website](#)), *Final Cassett* by Lianghong Deng ([facebook](#)), *Georgian Dance: Tthe Nation's Soul 4 Century BC to Modern Day* by Salome Tkebuchava ([website](#)), *Once Upon a Dream* by Anthony Nion (no links provided)

- *Best Direction of the season*

**Winner: *Ava* by Salome Pinto (no links provided)**

Nominees: *The Dead Bird* by Damian Overton ([facebook](#)), *Final Cassett* by Lianghong Deng ([facebook](#)),

- *Best Writing of the season*

**Winner: Final Cassett by Lianghong Deng ([facebook](#))**

*Nominees: Before the Sun Sets by Sam Leach ([Facebook](#), [IMDb](#)), Itch by Mehdi Akbar (no link provided) Ava by Salome Pinto, Max Barth (no link provided)*

- *Best Editing of the season*

**Winner: Roy Kolberg's editing of The Dead Bird ([facebook](#))**

*Nominees: Rui Pinto's editing of Early Release (no link provided), Kevin Speight's editing in Unstable ([Facebook](#)), Mehdi Akbar's editing of Itch (no link provided), Regimantas Puida's editing of Ava (no link provided), Jamie Dixon's editing of Carthage ([Facebook](#))*

- **Special Mention**

*Amoo Nowruz By Farkhondeh Torabi ([website](#)), Look Out, Kid by Oliver Benezra (Filmmaker's [homepage](#)), Tetras by Axel Zeltser (no link provided), Brenda by Juan José Llamas Macías (no links provided), Through the Mist by Maksim Schastnev (no link provided)*

*\* Please note: some categories vary in number of nominations based on the quality and quantity of submissions. There is a maximum of five nominations and one win per category.*

# Winter 2016 – Nominations and Winners

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## Winter 2016 – Official Selection

[Festival Laurels](#) (all categories + nomination laurel + special mention laurel)

Main Categories:

- Jury Prize

Feature Film Winner: *The Trap* by Fergus March ([Facebook](#))

Jury Member, [Ryan Ohm](#) says:

*Wonderfully blending horror, comedy, and drama, ‘The Trap’ is like mingling with a dozen strangers at a cocktail party and suddenly being thrown into a pit of madness. It’s like Scooby Doo on speed with a small dose of acid mixed in the middle somewhere. The characters at first feel a bit one noted, but quickly unravel as does the intensity. This is where things pick up and the film’s fuse is lit. Then, it slowly explodes more and more throughout. The coincidences feel so weird, but somehow natural. Director Fergus March has his hand in every moment, some so subtle you may not even pick up upon first viewing. A strange mix between a film to watch while drinking with friends or when home alone and awake at 3am, ‘The Trap’ truly excels in it’s originality and weird quirks.*

Runner up: *Capsule* by Andrew Martin ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

Short Film Winner: *Lila & Valentin* by Andrien Lhommedieu ([Vimeo](#))

Jury Member, [Ryan Ohm](#) says:

*The opening imagery of the film immediately sets this wonderful tone that is indescribable. The best one could say is that it shows the feelings of a lifetime in merely seconds. Lila & Valentin throws your emotions around like most films are afraid to even attempt. The sound design and cinematography blend so*

*smooth that they fight the acting and directing for the best aspects of the short. While it's not hard to fall in love with both the lead actors, it's difficult to watch the story unfold – as there's an immediate connection between both of them, as well as between Lila, Valentin, and the viewer. It's wonderfully orchestrated chaos, connected by one of the most universal and simple themes... love.*

Runner up: *The Sin of Those Who Love Us* by Vasco de Oliveira ([IMDb](#), [Facebook](#))

— please note: Our jury voted independently to the selection committee.

- Best Feature Film made for less than \$5,000

Winner: **Grando Mission** by Carlo Christian Spano ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

Selection Committee Member says:

*Documentary films are usually neglected by main competition bodies at film awards within independent film. And there is a reason for this, most of them rely to heavily on transferring information to the viewer, or explaining a particular issue. 'Grando Mission' did not do this, instead, it devised a narrative device cinematically, engaged its audience and provided a perspective we hadn't experienced before within the medium of film.*

Nominees: *In Cube* by Keir Siewert ([Site](#), [Facebook](#)), *The Trap* by Fergus March ([Facebook](#))

- Best Feature Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Winner: **Crossing that Bridge** by Roger Nevares ([Site](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*Comical and unconventional, this 60 minute feature is reminiscent of the early American talkies – with 'Crossing That Bridge' its all spoken, its all on beat, and its all very easy to watch. What makes it extremely enjoyable though is its overall variety of tones, its almost retro approach to storytelling, and its unfamiliar crop of characters.*

Nominees: *Never Wait Again* by Domino Rey (no link provided)

- Best Feature Film made for more than \$10,000

Winner: **Capsule** by Andrew Martin ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*'Capsule' is one hell of a retro film. It has the feeling of one of the early horror/sci-fi films of the 40's and 50's which relied on a handful of locations to deliver their story, where the real fear was evoked by the empathy and ethical interaction the audience had with the film's content. With a strong script, a great lead performance, and some ingenuity by the director, the film passes by without any fault or flaw. As a filmmaker, I'm somewhat jealous of it.*

Nominees: *Escapes* by Mercedes Gaspar ([Site](#))

- Best Short Film made for less than \$5,000

Winner: ***The Sin of Those Who Love Us* by Vasco de Oliveira** ([IMDb](#), [Facebook](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*'The Sin of Those Who Love Us' is a fantastically tender project – carefully layered performances and an 'epically' size narrative drives the project from scene to scene. At times, it felt perhaps better suited to a feature length project, as the characters were so engaging and interesting. Reminiscent of Francois Ozon's [Le Refuge](#) (2009), this short film will pin you down emotionally.*

Nominees: *A Place to Lay Your Head* by Steven Look ([Site](#)), *Temporary Discomfort* by Simon Adegbenro ([Facebook](#)), *Forbidden Love* by Tom Luc Sahara (no links provided), *Clean Break* by Tim Butcher ([Vimeo](#)), *Never Forget* by Björn Lingner ([Facebook](#))

- Best Short Film made for between \$5,000-\$10,000

Winner: ***Yours Accidentally* by Steven Forrester** ([Site](#), [Facebook](#), [IMDb](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*'Yours Accidentally' isn't necessarily all that original in terms of its story or how it is delivered. However, it pretends we have never seen a story like this one ever before... and this is the big part of why it is such a great short film – Forrester's direction breathes in a freshness to the material of chance encounter like no other. The style of the film, its lush colours and overall warmth make it worthy of more than a single viewing, which is a rare thing for short films.*

Nominees: *A Shadow of Dara* by Kirill Proskura ([Site](#), [Facebook](#)), *Equal Measure* by Michael Salmon (Production company's [Vimeo](#)), *Bohemian Like You* by Michael Salmon (Production company's [Vimeo](#))

- Best Short Film made for more than \$10,000

Winner: **Two Wrongs by Simon Cade** ([Twitter](#))

[Festival Director](#) says:

*In its short four minute time, 'Two Wrongs' whizzes by with emotion, gravitas and guts. Without any fat, be it in style or content, this short film is a lean offering of a filmic social education about the good and the bad which we can inflict on one another. Its tough, its smart and its engaging.*

Nominees: Mousse by John Hellberg ([Site](#)), Lila & Valentin by Andrien Lhommedieu ([Vimeo](#))

Other categories:

- Best Cinematography of the season

Winner: **Felix Forrest's cinematography in Capsule** by ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

Nominees: Chloé Hetzel's cinematography in At the End of the Road (no links provided), Leandro Ferrao's cinematography in Early Release (no links provided), Matt Vahey's cinematography in Equal Measure (Production company's [Vimeo](#))

- Best Actor of the season

Winner: **Daniel Foxsmith in Early Release** (no link provided)

Nominees: Tim Butcher in Clean Break ([Vimeo](#)), Jack Myatt in Yours Accidentally ([Site](#), [Facebook](#)), Jonny Spurling in A Shadow of Dara ([Site](#), [Facebook](#)), Lloyd Sparsi in Bohemian Like You (Production company's [Vimeo](#)), Angus McGruther in Temporary Discomfort ([Facebook](#))

- Best Actress of the season

Winner: **Huichi-Chiu in Escapes** ([Site](#))

Nominees: Raushanah Simmons in Inside Out ([Vimeo](#)), Judith Shoemaker in Temporary Discomfort ([Facebook](#)), Eva Sirp in Crossing that Bridge ([Site](#))

- Best Score of the season

Winner: **Pascal Langagne's score of Lila & Valentin** ([Facebook](#))

Nominees: Hugo de Chaire's score of Capsule ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

- Best Genre Piece of the season

Winner: **Forbidden Love by Tom Luc Sahara** (no links provided)

Nominees: *A Shadow of Dara* by Kirill Proskura ([Site](#), [Facebook](#)), *Temporary Discomfort* by Simon Adegbenro ([Facebook](#))

- *Best Direction of the season*

Winner: ***Capsule* by Andrew Martin** ([Site](#), [Facebook](#))

Nominees: *Bohemian Like You* by Michael Salmon (Production company's [Vimeo](#))

- *Best Writing of the season*

Winner: ***Bohemian Like You* by Michael Salmon** (Production company's [Vimeo](#))

Nominees: *Temporary Discomfort* by Simon Adegbenro ([Facebook](#))

- *Best Editing of the season*

Winner: **[Alexandre Dinaut](#)'s editing of *Lila & Valentin*** ([Facebook](#))

Nominees: Rui Pinto's editing of *Early Release* (no link provided)

- *Special Mention*

*Adelmo* by Gianluca Fedele (no links provided), *Still Jonathon Bulter* (no links provided), *Open Mike* by Tobias Erdmann (no link provided),

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# Screenwriting 2016

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**Festival Laurels** (screenwriting categories + nomination laurel)

End of 2016

- *Best genre piece*

**Winner: Balloon by Mitchell Slan**

*Balloon is a fairly gross little horror flick. Reminiscent of Eli Roth produced scarer 'Clown', with a touch of 'In Treatment', this one's got all the right moves and scares to keep your appetite popping!*

- *Best technique*

**Winner: New Genius by Rob Reeves**

*Comedic at times, and otherwise quite thrilling, this feature screenplay seems to ring a tad familiar with the current trend of horror films – angst, revenge, and a whole bucket full of sarcasm.*

- *Best micro budget material*

**Winner: Stanley's Take by Rebin Zangana**

*With its balance of locations and cast, Stanley's Take is a well oiled machine ready for shooting on a low budget.*

Late Summer 2016

- *Best genre piece*

**Winner: Chiku San by Mark Bousfield**

*With a darker take on the whole 'Lost In Space' (1998) vibe, 'Chiku San' is a great genre piece. The ending is both dramatic, and reminiscent of 'The Last Days On Mars' (2013), which is a sure winner.*

*Runner up: Bad News Pairs by Matt Clifford*

- *Best technique*

**Winner: *The Morality Game* by Ed Vela**

*Though it isn't by any means a spy thriller, it reads with the same slick conviction as a Tom Clancy novel. Its a big jargon of a piece, full of research and a steady handling of the film's narrative pace.*

*Runner up: *Bad News Pairs* by Matt Clifford*

- *Best micro budget material*

**Winner: *Bad News Pairs* by Matt Clifford**

*It might be a dialogue heavy, but *Bad News Pairs* is a great micro budget script. Its affordable, shootable and immediately lovable on account of its pot boiling ensemble.*

*Runner up: *Inside The Pages* by Ian Adema*