

Whānau
Mārama

New Zealand
International
Film Festival

24 July —
2 August

NZIFF.CO.NZ

An abstract graphic design featuring a series of red triangles of varying sizes and orientations, some pointing upwards and some downwards, creating a dynamic, fan-like pattern against a black background. The triangles are arranged in a way that they appear to radiate from a central point, with some overlapping each other.

Whānau

Mārama

At Home

— Online





**Congratulations to the Films from Aotearoa
Selected for Whānau Mārama
New Zealand International Film Festival 2020**

**New Zealand
FILM COMMISSION**

Before Everest
Directed by Richard Riddiford



Te Tumu Whakaata Taonga

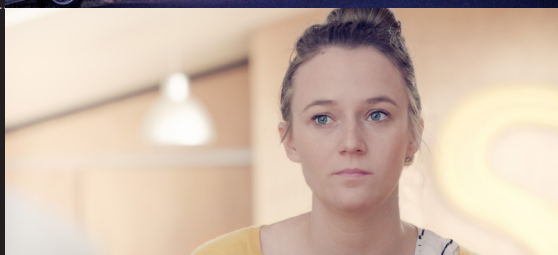
LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears
Directed by Anna Marbrook



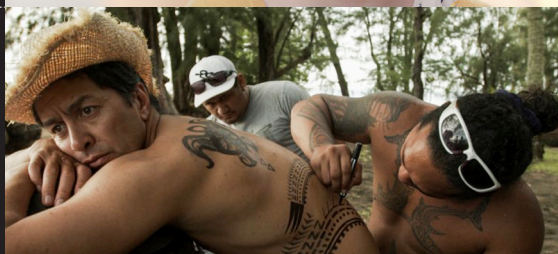
Rūrangi
Directed by Max Currie



The Girl on the Bridge
Directed by Leanne Pooley



Tupaia's Endeavour – The Director's Cut
Directed by Lala Rolls



**Gala
Premieres 23–27**

Our opening and closing
night events, hosted online
for the very first time.

Premieres 29–83

Join filmgoers on
every weeknight and
weekend of the Festival
in a virtual audience.

Widescreen 87–131

A panorama of the best
and brightest films that
drew our attention on the
world stage this past year.

Spotlight 135–185

Extraordinary cinema
from filmmakers out to
make a difference, or
simply be different.

Curated 187–215

Our annual special and
short film collections,
including Square Eyes,
Animation NOW! and
Incredibly Strange.

**Whānau Mārama
proudly supported by**



inhouse

Making the logo bigger since 1995

Nau mai, Haere Mai



2020, what year! And it's only July... But what a Festival we have for you.

Since we've all shared the arc of this extraordinary year so far, I'm sure it's needless to say the unique 2020 New Zealand International Film Festival isn't exactly the one I'd imagined when I took up my position as Director — Kaiwhakatere in October 2019.

In many ways it's been like coming home to Aotearoa and being unexpectedly signed up for a whole bucket list of adrenalin sports; white-water rafting, bungee jumping, skydiving, black-water caving and even shark diving could be metaphors to describe any given day for myself and our team over the past six months as we've forged, hacked and white-knuckled our way through the uncharted territory COVID-19 has presented to us and the world.

But the challenges we've met and the risks we've taken have led to innovation and discovery. These discoveries you'll find not only in the world-class selection of films you'd expect from your favourite film festival, but also in the way you experience them both online — at home, and in cinemas across the country.

You'll find entirely new ways to mine the riches of our programme; **Premieres**, **Widescreen** and **Spotlight** strands suggest a baseline profile of all our films but these are further curated into 14 **Collections**, binding films together by a shared theme, tone or attitude. Digging deeper still, you'll find each film is connected in many different ways all of them searchable on our website.

Of course, our favourite curators are back bringing you **Square Eyes** (formerly For All Ages) for children and youth, **Incredibly Strange** for genre film lovers and **Animation NOW!** for devotees of drawn, painted and graphic storytelling. All these can be found in the new Curated section of the programme.

Also for the first time, both our **New Zealand's Best** and **Ngā Whanaunga Māori Pasifika Shorts** curations will be competitive, with new prizes soon to be announced for *Ngā Whanaunga*. Both competitions will be judged by international juries of esteemed figures from the world of film, arts and culture.

Lastly, I hope the newly launched Festival identity and branding is already unavoidable as you leaf through this catalogue and scour our website for your 2020 film selections.

We hope you love it as much as we do as it was devised to reflect our crucial relationship to you, our festival audience. The new Festival identity is defined first by the descriptor **Whānau Mārama** — family of light, to suggest the community which unites every July and August, to share the light — mārama, to be found in the films, stories and ideas projected on screens across the country.

Enjoy the 2020 New Zealand International Film Festival whānau!

Film is light, mārama; captured in a camera then set free on the screen.

Marten Rabarts
Director — Kaiwhakatere

And the entire team of Whānau Mārama:
New Zealand International Film Festival

Collections

Collections are curated sections to help you navigate the programme's key themes, guide your discovery of films and filmmakers, and enrich your festival journey through new and unexpected connections.

Aotearoa

We're proud to provide a premiere platform for striking work made within our shores.

The documentaries we champion this year all engage powerfully – and positively – with deep personal and generational histories, while for the first time we present a web series, one which sets a new bar for queer and trans (self-) representation on screen.

We're also thrilled to elevate short filmmaking in Aotearoa with our two annual programmes for emerging talent, *New Zealand's Best* and *Ngā Whanaunga*, plus a third programme of Kiwi gems from around the country.



The Girl on the Bridge

Dir: Leanne Pooley • NZ
#documentary #worldpremiere

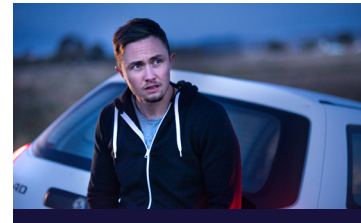
30



LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears

Dir: Anna Marbrook • NZ/Sāmoa
#documentary #worldpremiere

32



Rūrangi

Dir: Max Currie • NZ
#LGBTQI+ #worldpremiere

34



Before Everest

Dir: Richard Riddiford • NZ
#documentary #worldpremiere

36



Tupaia's Endeavour

Dir: Lala Rolls • NZ
#documentary #worldpremiere (dir's cut) 88



New Zealand's Best 2020

Dir: Various • NZ
#shorts #competition

38



Ngā Whanaunga Māori Pasifika Shorts 2020

Dir: Various • NZ/USA
#shorts #competition

40



Kiwi Shorts

Dir: Various • NZ
#shorts #comedy

202

Aotearoa films
are proudly
supported by



Indigenous Voices

As much about migration as homeland, the native filmmaking voices in this collection tell stories of both upheaval and return. Their remarkably diverse experiences reflect on opportunity, displacement, strife and spirituality.

We've also programmed Peter Weir's *The Last Wave*, one of the earliest films to interact thoughtfully with Indigenous Australia.



Identifying Features

Dir: Fernanda Valadez • Mexico/Spain
#humanrights #crossingborders

64



The Last Wave

Dir: Peter Weir • Australia
#thriller #retro

126



Black Milk

Dir: Uisenma Borchu • Mongolia/Germany
#crossingborders #familystories

148



They Call Me Babu

Dir: Sandra Beerends • The Netherlands
#documentary #foundfootage

150



You Will Die at Twenty

Dir: Amjad Abu Alala • Sudan
#comingofage #spirituality

152

Becoming

Films that explore growing pains, regardless of experience or generation.

You'll find rites-of-passage tales here both arresting and achingly familiar in their depiction of youth and young adulthood, and crucially, coming-of-age portraits of people late in life, about to begin a new life, against the grain of social norms.



Driveways

Dir: Andrew Ahn • USA
#familystories #seniors

44



Wendy

Dir: Benh Zeitlin • USA
#adventure #basedonbooks

46



Lessons of Love

Dir: Małgorzata Golińska/Kasia Mateja
Poland • #documentary #seniors

108



Mi Vida

Dir: Norbert ter Hall • The Netherlands
#travel #seniors

110



Perfect 10

Dir: Eva Riley • UK
#comingofage #sports

112



A Year Full of Drama

Dir: Marta Pulk • Estonia
#documentary #theatre #youth

114



Drama Girl

Dir: Vincent Boy Kars • The Netherlands
#documentary #youth

162



Sick, Sick, Sick

Dir: Alice Furtado • Brazil
#lovestories #youth

164

Belonging

Families, both conventional and makeshift, are prized, fought for and sought after in this series of films about staying together.

In three unforgettable documentaries centred on places of congregation – a dive bar, a luxury cruise liner and the largest retirement village in the world – the desire to belong is palpable.



Some Kind of Heaven

Dir: Lance Oppenheim • USA
#documentary #seniors

48



In the Name of the Land

Dir: Édouard Bergeon • France/Belgium
#familystories #ruralife

50



Lara

Dir: Jan-Ole Gerster • Germany
#familystories #seniors

118



My Little Sister

Dir: Véronique Reymond/Stéphanie Chuat
Switzerland • #familystories #theatre

120



If Only

Dir: Ginevra Elkann • Italy/France
#familystories #travel

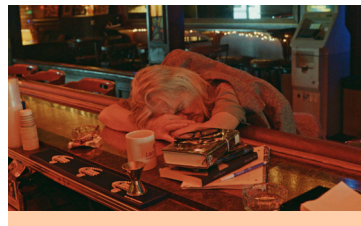
122



King of the Cruise

Dir: Sophie Dros • The Netherlands
#documentary #travel #seniors

124



Bloody Nose, Empty Pockets

Dir: Bill Ross IV/Turner Ross • USA
#documentary #americana

168



Kids Run

Dir: Barbara Ott • Germany
#familystories #sports

170

Mobilise

Four documentaries of defiance and protest that take us to the frontlines of activism today and face-to-face with the people fighting – and dancing – for their cause.

The two fiction films here galvanise with their own brand of headstrong storytelling about fighting the establishment, a classic cinematic narrative if ever there was one.



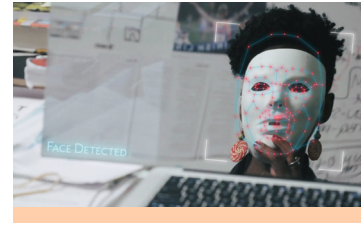
True History of the Kelly Gang

Dir: Justin Kurzel • Australia
#openingnight #basedonbooks 24



The County

Dir: Grímur Hákonarson • Iceland
#closingnight #comedy 26



Coded Bias

Dir: Shalini Kantayya • USA
#documentary #activism 136



Dark City Beneath the Beat

Dir: TT the Artist • USA
#documentary #music #dance 138



Hong Kong Moments

Dir: Zhou Bing • Hong Kong
#documentary #activism 140



Vivos

Dir: Ai Weiwei • Germany/Mexico
#documentary #humanrights 142

Radical Empathy

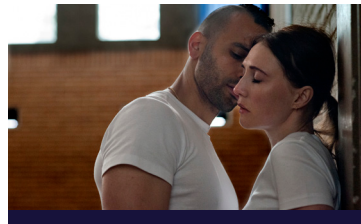
These extraordinary films all have in common a rare commitment to portraying troubled individuals through fearlessly compassionate means.

They not only open the door to places where empathy exists in spite of stigma or taboo, but ask us to see the world from the eyes of the marginalised and the shamed, reframing their behaviours and our own understanding of where they come from.



Corpus Christi

Dir: Jan Komasa • Poland
#youth #spirituality 78



Instinct

Dir: Halina Reijn • The Netherlands
#feminism #sexuality 80



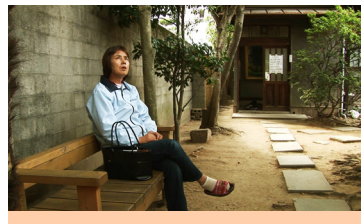
Charter

Dir: Amanda Kernell • Sweden
#familystories #travel 102



Tench

Dir: Patrice Toye • Belgium
#youth #crime 172



Mental

Dir: Soda Kazuhiro • Japan
#documentary #wellbeing 174



Zero

Dir: Soda Kazuhiro • Japan
#documentary #wellbeing 176

Political States

Between documenting reality and dramatising history, these cogent narratives grapple with degrees of political ambition in countries with long, chequered pasts.

In each situation, be it democracy in action or a dictatorship rising from the ashes, the parallels to our current world political climate are devastatingly clear.



The Kingmaker

Dir: Lauren Greenfield • USA/Denmark
#documentary #humanrights 62



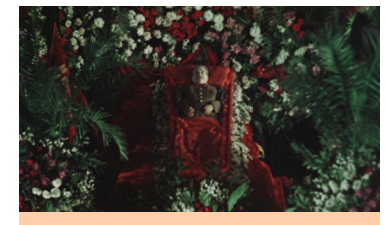
While at War

Dir: Alejandro Amenábar • Spain
#historical #warzones 64



Mayor

Dir: David Osit • USA/UK/Palestine
#documentary #humanrights 130



State Funeral

Dir: Sergei Loznitsa • The Netherlands
#documentary #foundfootage 178

Visions

Visionary artists working outside the boundaries of conventional cinema to expand the form and take it to new, exciting realms.

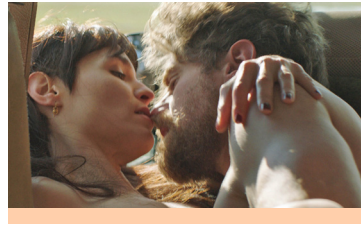
Includes animation programmer Malcolm Turner's annual international festival of animated shorts from around the world.



If I Were the Winter Itself

Dir: Jazmín López • Argentina
#filmsaboutfilm #youth

180



Kala azar

Dir: Janis Rafa • Greece/The Netherlands
#lovestories #wtf?

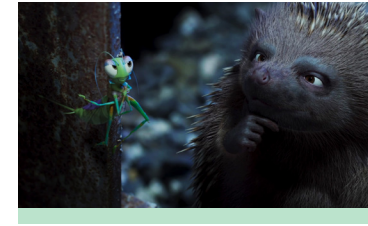
182



Last and First Men

Dir: Jóhann Jóhannsson • Iceland
#sciencefiction #music

184



Animation NOW! 2020

Dir: Various
#shorts #animation

200



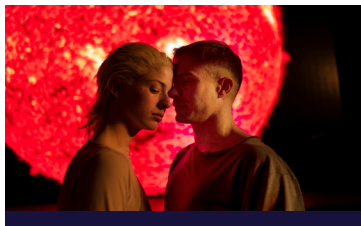
Art Shorts

Dir: Various • New Zealand/Italy
#shorts

204

Breaking Through

Revolting against tradition and cultural norms, the agitators of this section challenge their families, their social structure and the conventional wisdom of their peers, ultimately striving to define themselves in opposition – or in the spirit of non-binary action, not at all.



Ema

Dir: Pablo Larraín • Chile
#rebellion #dance

68



The Perfect Candidate

Dir: Haifaa Al-Mansour • Saudi Arabia
#feminism #humanrights

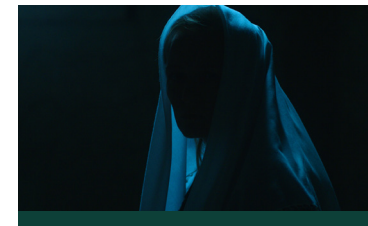
70



The Surrogate

Dir: Jeremy Hersh • USA
#LGBTQ+ #familystories

104



Zana

Dir: Antoneta Kastrati • Kosovo/Albania
#familystories #warzones

106



Family Members

Dir: Mateo Bendesky • Argentina
#familystories #travel

160

Proud

Celebrate pride, whatever your stripes. Not every character here is out and proud in ideal circumstances, but the importance of reckoning with the disempowerment of LGBTQ+ communities everywhere, while also rejoicing in self-expression and diversity, is not lost on the artists of these films, either.

Several of their works also contend with the fluid intersection of cultural and sexual identity, and the fascinating push-pull between those two hemispheres (see also: *Black Milk*).



Steelers: The World's First Gay Rugby Club

Dir: Eammon Ashton-Atkinson • UK
#LGBTQ+ #worldpremiere #sports

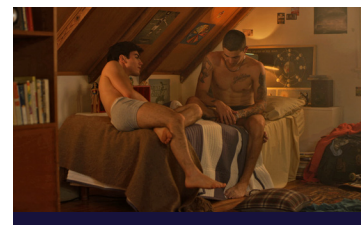
72



Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)

Dir: Monica Zanetti • Australia
#LGBTQ+ #comedy #youth

74



Young Hunter

Dir: Marco Berger • Argentina
#LGBTQ+ #crime #thriller

76



No Hard Feelings

Dir: Faraz Shariat • Germany
#LGBTQ+ #crossingborders #youth

154



Suk Suk

Dir: Ray Yeung • Hong Kong/China
#LGBTQ+ #lovestories #seniors

156

Encounters

Cinema that transports you to another time, place or situation, by directors in total command of the form.

Whether executing genre in entertaining and coolly unconventional ways, or heightening psychological unease through masterful visual and sound design, these are films that will take you away.



1982

Dir: Oualid Mouaness • Lebanon
#comingofage #warzones 90



Exile

Dir: Visar Morina • Germany
#crossingborders #thriller 92



Heroic Losers

Dir: Sebastián Borensztein • Argentina
#crime #comedy 94



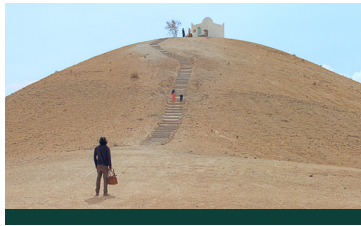
Just 6.5

Dir: Saeed Roustayi • Iran
#crime #thriller 96



To the Ends of the Earth

Dir: Kurosawa Kiyoshi • Japan
#crossingborders #travel 98



The Unknown Saint

Dir: Alaa Eddine Aljem • Morocco
#comedy #spirituality 100



The Long Walk

Dir: Mattie Do • Laos
#sciencefiction #horror 144



Paradise Drifters

Dir: Mees Peijnenburg • The Netherlands
#crime #youth 146

Incredibly Strange

Midnight movies, cult oddities, outstanding genre cinema – in other words, films selected to keep you wide awake and save us from respectability by Ant Timpson, founder of the legendary Incredibly Strange Film Festival.



Relic

Dir: Natalie Erika James • Australia/USA
#horror #thriller 82



Dinner in America

Dir: Adam Rehmeier • USA
#comedy #rebellion 206



Jumbo

Dir: Zoé Witttock • France/Belgium
#comedy #lovestories 210



Jesus Shows You the Way to the Highway

Dir: Miguel Llansó • Spain/Estonia
#sciencefiction #wtf? 208



Leap of Faith: William Friedkin on The Exorcist

Dir: Alexandre O. Philippe • USA
#documentary #filmsaboutfilm 212



Yummy

Dir: Lars Damoiseaux • Belgium
#horror #comedy 214

Explore Collections Online

Our curation continues in earnest at nziff.co.nz. Discover new collections, writing that takes you deeper inside the programme, staff picks, and genre tags to help you narrow down subjects and themes of interest. Extra collections you'll find online include:

Millennial Stories

Corpus Christi
Dinner in America
Drama Girl
Ellie & Abbie...
If I Were the Winter Itself
No Hard Feelings
Paradise Drifters
Rūrangi
Sick, Sick, Sick
A Year Full of Drama

Wellness & Wellbeing

The Girl on the Bridge
In the Name of the Land
LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears
Mental
Zero

EUROPE! Voices of Women in Film

Charter
Kids Run
Lessons of Love
My Little Sister
They Call Me Babu
A Year Full of Drama
Zana

Out of the Past

Before Everest
Kubrick by Kubrick
The Last Wave
Leap of Faith...
Martin Eden
State Funeral
They Call Me Babu

Portraits

By artists and about artists, this series features both portraiture and self-portraits on film, spanning legends of cinema, unsung musical heroes, a famed literary character, and a fashion iconoclast who finally breaks his silence.



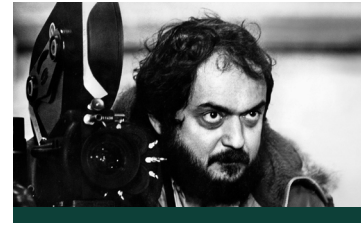
The Truth

Dir: Kore-eda Hirokazu • France/Japan
#filmsaboutfilm #familystories 52



Martin Eden

Dir: Pietro Marcello • Italy/France
#historical #basedonbooks 54



Kubrick by Kubrick

Dir: Gregory Monro • France
#documentary #filmsaboutfilm 128



Martin Margiela: In His Own Words

Dir: Reiner Holzemer • Germany/Belgium
#documentary #fashion 58



Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band

Dir: Daniel Roher • Canada
#documentary #music 60



To Live to Sing

Dir: Johnny Ma • China
#familystories #theatre 158

Square Eyes

Brave young activists lead the way alongside enchanting animations from Germany and France, a splendid tale of friendship, and not one, but two animated short film collections.

Selected by Nic Marshall of Square Eyes Film Foundation, ardent promoters of international cinema to our youngest audiences and their movie-going companions.



Forward: Tomorrow Belongs to Us

Dir: Gilles de Maistre • France
#documentary #activism 188



Fritzi: A Revolutionary Tale

Dir: Ralf Kukula/Matthias Bruhn • Germany
#animation 190



My Extraordinary Summer with Tess

Dir: Steven Wouterlood • The Netherlands
#comingofage 192



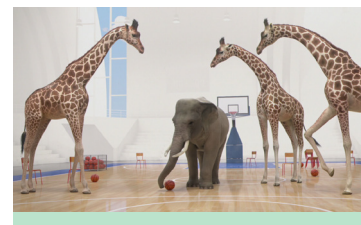
The Prince's Voyage

Dir: Jean-François Laguionie/Xavier Picard
Luxembourg • #animation 194



Animation for Kids 4+

Dir: Various
#animation #shorts 196



Animation for Kids 8+

Dir: Various
#animation #shorts 198

Watching At Home — Online

NZIFF At Home — Online brings the festival experience to the comfort of your living room.

This year we've curated a special programme of more than 80 features and short film collections for streaming on your television, computer, handheld device or home cinema setup.

At Home — Online films are available to watch as:

Online Rentals, viewed within 48 hours of purchase*, or

Online Premieres, viewed at a set date and time, many with special Filmmaker Extras and post-film Q&As.

You'll find everything else you need to know about watching At Home — Online, including pricing, FAQs, How-tos, tech support, film classification, and the full programme and film schedule, at

NZIFF.CO.NZ

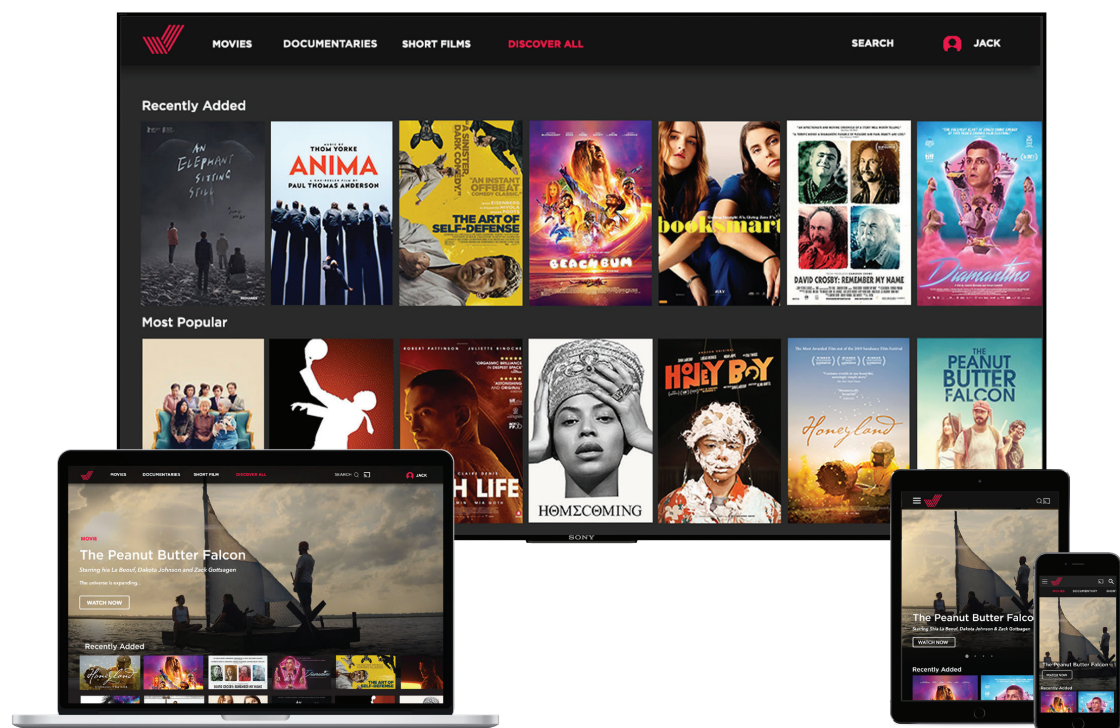
*There are some exceptions. Please check details before purchasing.

Online Premieres are on sale from 10 July. Online Rentals are on sale starting 25 July, with new rentals made available each day of the Festival. For now, you may wish to create an account and try our test film trailer on athome.nziff.co.nz, and create your Wishlist on nziff.co.nz.

Terms & Conditions apply.

The leading online video platform for Film Festivals and Cinemas.

Deliver premium viewing experiences to film lovers at home.



Future proof your cinema or film festival in today's digital world by engaging people right in their living room. 2020 is the year to think outside the cinema.

Explore our online video platform for yourself.

www.shift72.com

Film Classification



Classifications will be published on nziff.co.nz, athome.nziff.co.nz and displayed at venue box offices for in-cinema screenings.

Some content screening exclusively online has been classified by Festival staff in accordance with the NZ Media Council Video-on-Demand Classifications Code, with the aim to classify content in a socially responsible way that enables people to make informed viewing choices for themselves and/or their families.

At the time of publication, some films have not been rated. Until they receive a rating, they are considered R18 (unless clearly aimed at children) and can only be purchased by and for people aged 18 and over. For more information, please visit nziff.co.nz.

TBC	Classification pending
E	Documentary film exempt from NZ Classification labelling requirements
G	Suitable for general audiences
PG	Parental guidance recommended for younger viewers
M	Unrestricted. Recommended more suitable for mature audiences 16 years and over
RP13	Restricted to persons 13 years and over, unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian
RP16	Restricted to persons 16 years and over, unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian
R13	Restricted to persons 13 years and over
R16	Restricted to persons 16 years and over
R18	Restricted to persons 18 years and over

In Cinemas

With COVID-19 restrictions eased, we are actively working towards bringing a selection of anticipated films to a number of the cinemas and venues around the country.

At the time of publication, screenings will be held at the following participating venues.

For updates, visit nziff.co.nz or follow us on social media.



Indicates selected films also screening in cinemas during the Festival.



Indicates films with online guest appearances via special Filmmaker Extras and post-film Q&As.

AUCKLAND

ASB Waterfront Theatre
138 Halsey Street, Wynard Quarter

Hollywood Avondale
20 St Georges Road, Avondale

The Capitol Cinema
610 Dominion Rd, Balmoral

Monterey Cinemas (Howick)
4/2 Fencible Drive, Howick

Bridgeway Cinema
122 Queen Street, Northcote

CHRISTCHURCH

Isaac Theatre Royal
145 Gloucester Street

Lumière Cinemas
26 Rolleston Ave

DUNEDIN

Regent Theatre
17 The Octagon

GORE

SBS St James Theatre
61 Irk Street

HAWKE'S BAY/NAPIER

MTG Century Theatre
9 Herschell Street, Napier

NEW PLYMOUTH

Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/ Len Lye Centre
42 Queen Street

TAURANGA

Rialto Cinemas
Level One
Goddard Centre
21 Devonport Road

WELLINGTON

Roxy Cinema
5 Park Road, Miramar

City Gallery Wellington
Civic Square
101 Wakefield Street

Film classifications, in-cinema screenings and guest appearances indicated in this catalogue are correct at the time of publication.



ENTERTAINMENT
IS CALLING

From one unforgettable experience to another

In Auckland, the good times never end.
So, why end yours when the credits roll?

From the beauty of the harbour by day to the allure of the city by night, Auckland is ready to entertain you. With sprawling vineyards and beaches either side of a city bursting with world class bars and eateries, Auckland is sure to keep the good times coming. Where will they take you?

Welcome to Tāmaki Makaurau,
Auckland. **Be entertained.**

aucklandnz.com

Gala Premieres

Our opening and closing night events, hosted online for the very first time.

Bookending the Festival are two emphatic features about iron-willed crusaders: Ned Kelly in Justin Kurzel's punk, postmodern *True History of the Kelly Gang*; and Nordic farm-warrior Inga in Grímur Hákonarson's rousing *The County*.



Films in this strand are available to watch as Online Premieres and Online Rentals.

True History of the Kelly Gang

Opening Night

From Sir Sydney Nolan's epic paintings to Peter Carey's Booker Prize-winning novel, Ned Kelly has come a long way to find himself thundering on horseback across a barren moonlit landscape, dressed only in boots and a flowing lace frock, in this dazzling postmodern version of the outlaw legend.

Adapting Carey's 2001 novel of the same name, director Justin Kurzel's *Ned Kelly* (1917's George McKay as an adult) lives out his short but audacious life writ-large in punk graffiti scrawled across a canvas far bigger and more surreal than any other film or cultural depiction to date.

Ned spends the film failing to win the love of his mother Ellen (Essie Davis, more complex and luminous than ever), who at one point sells the child to her sometime-lover and bushranger Harry Power (Russell Crowe) – a gesture one wonders might be as much to deflect Ned's burgeoning Oedipal gaze as it is to earn a pretty coin. Ned finds some consolation in the arms of young sex worker Rose (Thomasin Harcourt McKenzie), a cynical soulmate of sorts, while we're encouraged to deduce he also shares something deeper than just fraternal bro-hood with his loyal friend and Kelly Gang member Joe Byrne (Sean Keenan). No putting this gang into any binary corner.

Kelly's justified rage against the colonial constabulary, endowed with some disconcerting allure in Charlie Hunnam's predatory Sgt O'Neil and the louche decadence of Nicolas Hoult's Constable Fitzpatrick, fuels his rapid ascent to anti-heroic superstardom. — Marten Rabarts

About the Filmmaker

Justin Kurzel is an Australian director based in London. His debut film was the acclaimed, controversial *Snowtown* (NZIFF11). He has also directed adaptations of *Macbeth* (2015) and the popular video game series *Assassin's Creed* (2016), both starring Michael Fassbender.

24 **Gala Premieres**

Mobilise

Australia 2019

Director
Justin Kurzel

Producers
Hal Vogel, Liz Watts,
Paul Ranford, Justin Kurzel

Screenplay
Shaun Grant. Based on the
novel by Peter Carey

Photography
Ari Wegner

Editor
Nick Fenton

Music
Jed Kurzel

With
George MacKay,
Essie Davis, Nicholas Hoult,
Charlie Hunnam,
Russell Crowe,
Orlando Schwerdt,
Thomasin Harcourt McKenzie,
Sean Keenan, Earl Cave,
Marlon Williams, Louis Hewison

Festival Premiere
Toronto 2019



124 minutes
In English
This film contains strobe effects

Presented in association with

PHANTOM
BILLSTICKERS

NZ CLASSIFICATION

R16

Violence, sexual violence,
offensive language
& content that may disturb



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Fri 24 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Thu 30 Jul

The County

Closing Night

We close the Festival with this quintessentially Icelandic comedy about one woman's fight against a monopolistic co-op stifling the livelihoods of farmers in a remote valley near Reykjavik. Adroitly blending humour and injustice together with the lightest of touches, it's a worthy successor to NZIFF18 audience favourite *Woman at War*.

It is predictably Nordic that a film portraying the struggle for justice against a mafia-like co-operative in a windblown Icelandic hamlet, where the elements have etched the passage of time into the handsome but weathered faces of both Inga and her husband Reynir much as the rugged terrain they call a farm, would be described as a comedy.

What's more, the story kicks off with the unexpected death of Reynir as his truck rolls into a ravine – the catalyst for Inga's grizzled yet fiercely entertaining crusade for the future of her fellow farmers in a remote valley in Iceland. Arndís Hrönn Egilsdóttir is tremendous as the grieving widow who suspects more was at play to her husband's passing than the natural hardships of agricultural life. Uncovering a trail of bullying and anti-competitive behaviour by the farming co-op and its disarmingly corrupt CEO, she sets out to level the playing field – mansplaining and mudslinging be damned.

Somehow Grímur Hákonarson – director of the wryly observed *Rams* (NZIFF15) – manages with his deft touch and a heart as big as a tractor to find a tone that smoothly melds trademark Icelandic gruffness with a good dose of Erin Brockovich in gumboots. — Marten Rabarts

About the Filmmaker

Grímur Hákonarson was born in Iceland. His second narrative feature, *Rams*, screened at NZIFF after winning the Prix Un Certain Regard at Cannes in 2015. Selected filmography: *A Pure Heart* (2012), *Summerland* (2010).

Mobilise

Iceland/Denmark/
France/Germany 2019

Héraðid

Director/Screenplay
Grímur Hákonarson

Producer
Grímar Jónsson

Photography
Mart Taniel

Editor
Kristján Loðmfjörð

Music
Valgeir Sigurðsson

With
Arndís Hrönn Egilsdóttir,
Sveinn Ólafur Gunnarsson,
Sigurður Sigurjónsson,
Hinrik Ólafsson,
Hannes Óli Ágústsson,
Edda Björg Eyjólfsdóttir

Festival Premiere
Toronto 2019



90 minutes
In Icelandic with
English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION
Offensive language



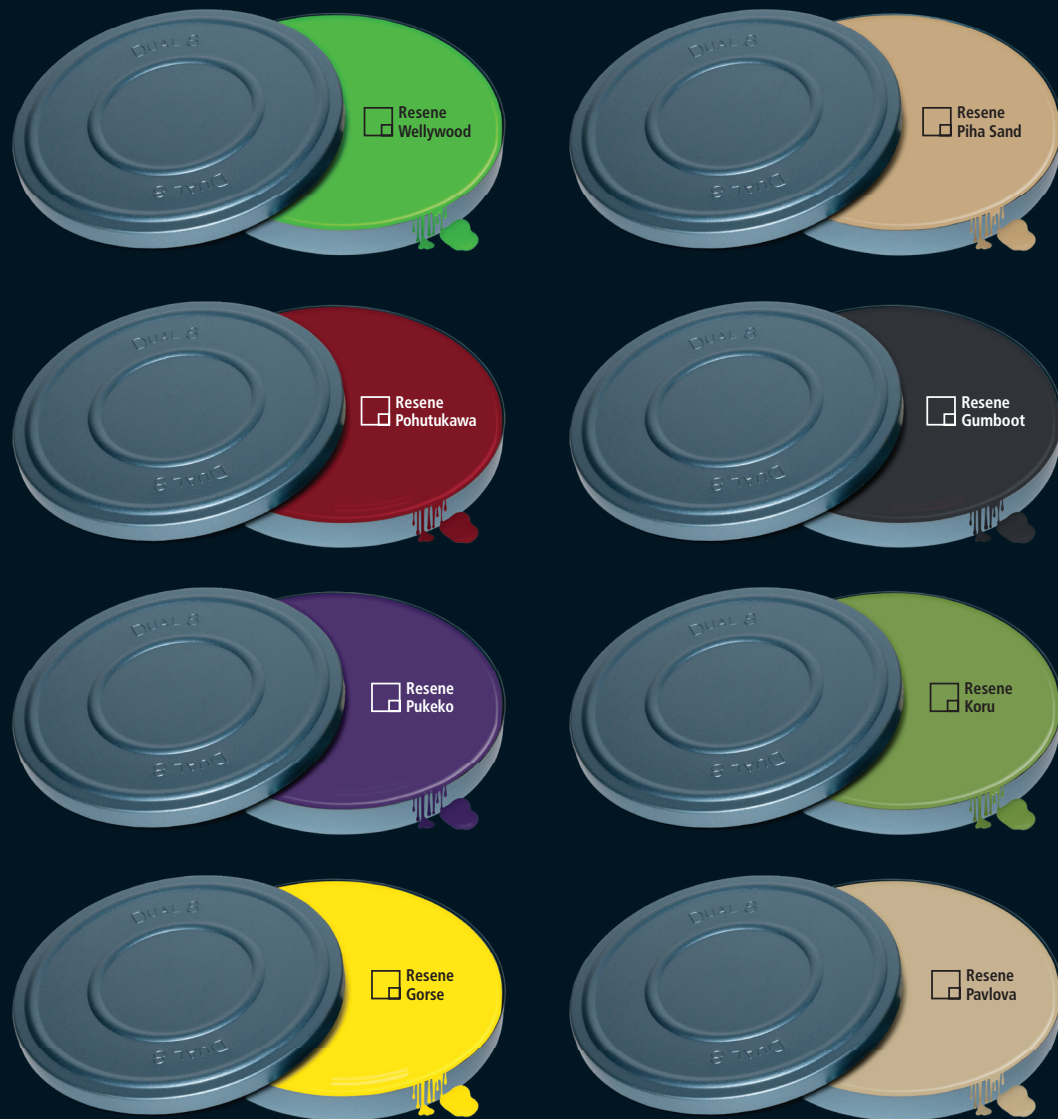
Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 2 Aug, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 3 Aug until Sat 8 Aug



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Premieres

Join filmgoers from around the country on every weeknight and weekend of the Festival in a virtual audience.

Selected online premieres will also feature special guests and filmmaker appearances.



Films and short film collections in this strand are available to watch as Online Premieres and Online Rentals.

Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt) available as an Online Premiere only.

The Girl on the Bridge

World Premiere

In the increasing public discourse on mental health, Leanne Pooley's inspiring and fearless documentary tracks an extraordinary young woman's journey from suicide survivor to advocate for those struggling. The fact it leaves you hopeful and with tangible advice makes it vital viewing.

Almost a film-within-a-film, *The Girl on the Bridge* explores the emotional tightrope to be walked when tackling a taboo and emotional topic. It follows 21-year-old Jazz Thornton during the pivotal two-year period she was emerging out of her own struggles with suicide to become a powerful advocate for mental health. During this time, she was also embarking on a personal project, the award-winning 2019 web series *Jessica's Tree*, which pays reflective tribute to the eponymous friend whose life she could not save.

New Zealanders are aware of our suicide statistics and with a similar kaupapa to *Maui's Hook* (NZIFF18), director Pooley and Thornton demand that the silence be lifted. Jazz, who has lived experience of eight years of depression, understands first-hand the power people find in realising they are not alone.

Thanks to Jazz's extraordinary vision, and her authentic and engaging manner, her story provides epiphanies for every viewer concerned about Aotearoa's suicide statistics and the fate of our rangatahi. Tangibly carrying the weight of responsibility intrinsic in such sensitive subject matter, Pooley's film opens a window, through Jazz, for us all to lean in to the challenge to be part of making the world better.

About the Filmmaker

Leanne Pooley has worked as a documentary filmmaker for 25 years. She was made a New Zealand Arts Laureate in 2011. Selected filmography: *We Need to Talk about A.I.* (2020), *25 April* (2015), *Beyond the Edge* (2013), *The Topp Twins: Untouchable Girls* (2009).

Aotearoa

New Zealand 2020

Director

Leanne Pooley

Producers

Cass Avery, Alex Reed

Executive producer

Timothy White

Co-executive producers

Adrian Burr, Prospect Group, Michael Harper

Photography

Simon Raby, David Paul, James Moore

Editor

Margot Francis

Music

Karl Steven

With

Jazz Thornton

Festival Premiere

Whānau Mārama 2020



91 minutes
In English

NZ CLASSIFICATION



Deals with suicide, sexual abuse themes and self-harm references



Guest appearance



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 26 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears

World Premiere

Director Anna Marbrook honours the last voyage of the great waka maker, sailor and mentor Ema Siope, whose journeys between Aotearoa and Sāmoa in search of healing, and her family's reckoning with systemic abuse, are powerfully documented.

The redemptive tale of waka builder and captain Lilo Ema Siope's final years, the stunning *LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears* is a chronicle of journeys – journeys of migration, spirituality, voyaging, healing and coming home. Confronting intergenerational trauma head on, the Siope family returns to their homeland of Sāmoa. For Ema's father, this is his first time back to his birthplace since leaving in 1959. The result is a poignant yet tender story of a family's unconditional love for each other, and a commitment to becoming whole again.

Ema was born and raised in South Auckland as a child of Samoan migrants. She captained both the Haunui Waka Hourua and Aotearoa One, both of which belong to the great waka master Hoturoa Barclay-Kerr. Ema's key role in the revival of voyaging saw her become an important mentor for future generations of voyagers.

Directed by Ema's friend Anna Marbrook, the project developed alongside the pair's friendship while spending time together on the waka. *LOIMATA, The Sweetest Tears* builds on Marbrook's previous documentary works which highlight both the resurgence of voyaging and the silencing of its history by colonisation, while extending a raw and stirring tribute to an extraordinary truth seeker. — Lana Lopesi

About the Filmmaker

Anna Marbrook comes from a theatre and live performance background. Her screen work, which focuses on Pacific themes, includes *Waka Warriors*, *Real Pasifik* and the documentary *Te Mana o te Moana: The Pacific Voyagers*.

Aotearoa

New Zealand/Sāmoa
2020

Director
Anna Marbrook

Producers
Anna Marbrook, Jim Marbrook

Executive Producers
Dr Tamasailau Suaalii-Sauni,
Dame Gaylene Preston

Faufautua
Dr Ai'iloilo Elise Puni,
Dr Leulua'iali'i Laumua Tunufa'i

Tohunga Ahurewa
Hoturoa Barclay-Kerr

Tohunga tārai waka
James Eruera

Screenplay
Anna Marbrook, Jim Marbrook

Cinematographer
Jess Charlton

Editor
Malcolm Clarke

Music
Matthew Suttor

Festival Premiere
Whānau Mārama 2020



96 minutes
In English and Samoan,
with English subtitles



NZ Classification tbc
Contains discussion of sexual abuse which
may be disturbing for some viewers



Guest appearance



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 2 Aug, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 3 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

Rūrangi

World Premiere

Premiering their forthcoming web series as a special festival presentation, director Max Currie (*Everything We Loved*, NZIFF14) and writer Cole Meyers' queer and trans-celebratory drama swells with character and heart.

A young trans activist, Caz (Elz Carrad), breaks down in tears in front of a support group towards the start of *Rūrangi*. He doesn't know how he can help the queer people in front of him, and feels entirely guilty, even shameful about that fact. Like many of our young queer people, he's burned out not by his struggle, but by the struggle of those around him. Having fled his hometown of Rūrangi to find himself, Caz returns hoping to connect not just with his father (Kirk Torrance), who he left ten years ago, pre-transition, but the small community whose residents are having struggles of their own now as well.

Rūrangi is unapologetically frank and unapologetically queer, with not just a strong ensemble – Ramon Te Wake, Arlo Green and Kirk Torrance being special standouts – but a diverse, inclusive cast. But the calling card for the web series, packaged here into a slick five-episode binge watch, is the searing screen debut of Elz Carrad. Carrad carries the entire series on his shoulders; he externalises, with detail and charisma, the struggles of a person stuck between wanting, nay, needing, to talk about and express his own demons, but always caught dealing with the needs of others. — Sam Brooks

About the Filmmakers

Max Currie is a writer and director. He hosted *Queernation* for two years, before writing full-time for *Shortland Street*. His debut feature *Everything We Loved* screened at NZIFF14.

Cole Meyers is an educator and activist. He works as a consultant on trans and gender diverse narratives and inclusion in film, television, web series and theatre, including *Shortland Street*, where he is currently a dialogue writer.

Aotearoa

New Zealand 2020

Director
Max Currie

Producer
Craig Gainsborough

Co-producers
Cole Meyers, Max Currie,
Tweedie Waititi,
Melissa Nickerson

Screenplay
Cole Meyers, Oliver Page

Photography
Johannes Louis

Editors
Brough Johnson, Dan Kircher

Production designers
Henric Matthiesen,
Nick Lowry

Music
Lachlan Anderson

With
Elz Carrad, Kirk Torrance,
Āwhina Rose Henare Ashby,
Arlo Green, Ramon Te Wake,
Renee Lyons, Aroha Rawson,
Renée Sheridan, Sonny Tupu

Festival Premiere
Whānau Mārama 2020



96 minutes
In English and Te reo Māori,
with English subtitles



NZ Classification tbc



Guest appearance



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 26 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Before Everest

World Premiere

“I’d never share a rope with him” is about as damning a comment as anyone can make about a fellow mountaineer. Sir Edmund Hillary’s words about Earle Riddiford in his last autobiography set the uneasy tone of this nuanced documentary by Earle’s son Richard Riddiford.

In 1951, climber Earle Riddiford organised New Zealand’s first Himalayan expedition, inviting an Auckland beekeeper by the name of Ed Hillary along. The successful ascent of Mukut Parbat (7,242 metres) opened the pathway to Everest for Hillary, a debt our national hero never fully acknowledged.

Upset and confused by Hillary’s comment, Earle’s daughter Anna Riddiford was driven to find answers, and to better understand her difficult father, on a journey spanning 15 years. Brother Richard’s reluctance to engage forms part of the film, as they confront the highest stakes in mountaineering history. “What do you do when the man on the \$5 note disparages your father?”

Using interviews with Riddiford’s climbing companions, archival audio and photographs, modern footage of the Southern Alps and a trek through the Indian Himalayas, *Before Everest* explores the determination of a man who catapulted New Zealanders to Everest. Anecdotes from Hillary writer Tom Scott also lend further clues to the nature of Sir Ed’s relationship with Riddiford and his peers.

Beyond its appreciation of mountains and climbing, the film’s discovery of truths makes for a compelling and ultimately uplifting journey through one family’s history. — Shaun Barnett

About the Filmmaker

Richard Riddiford is a director and producer. His documentaries span finance, politics, history and the arts, notably *The Temptation of Rossano Fan*, which premiered at NZIFF in 2011.

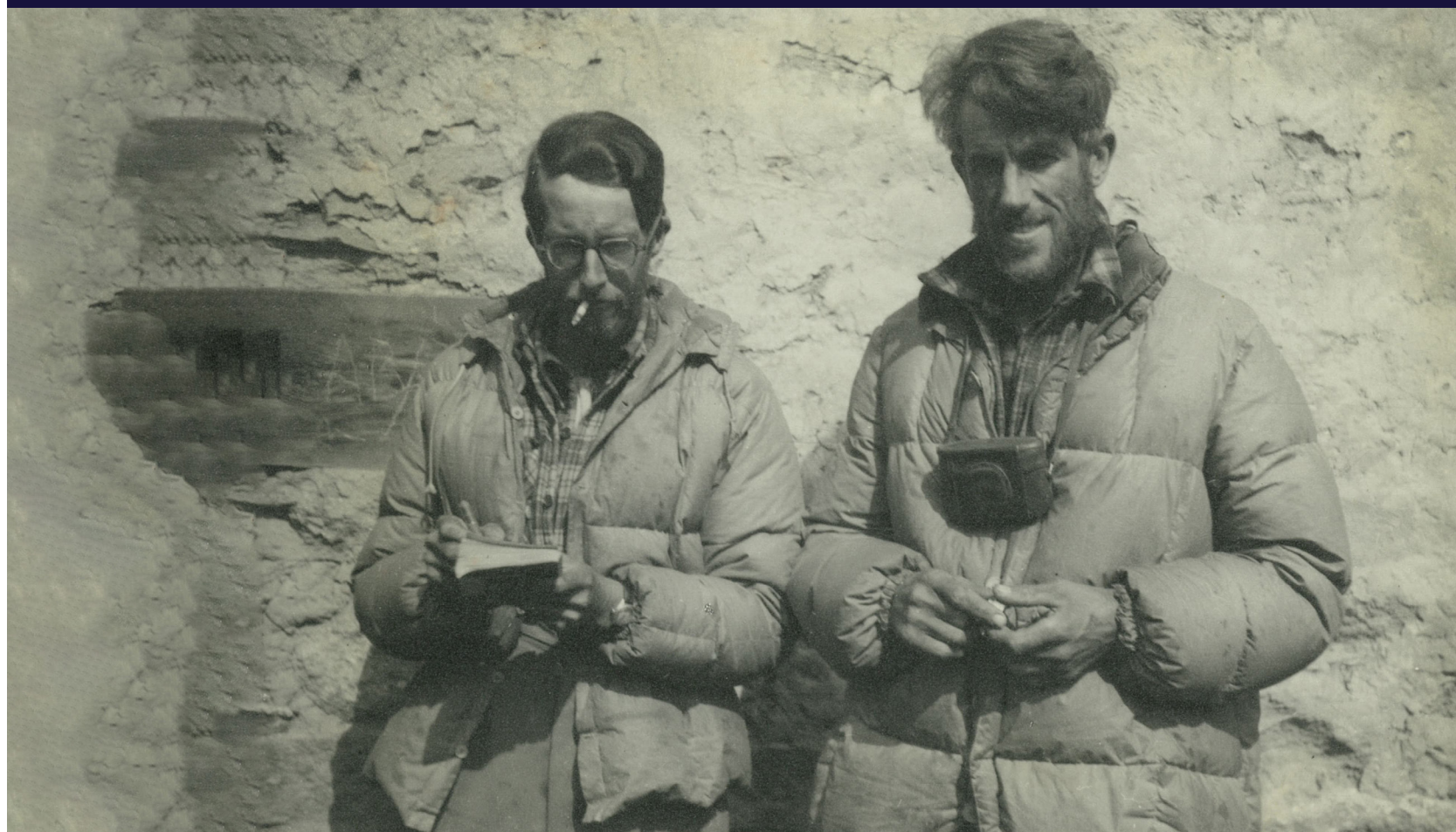
Aotearoa

New Zealand 2020

Director/
Producer/Screenplay/
Photography/Editor
Richard Riddiford

With
Anna Riddiford, Tom Scott

Festival Premiere
Whānau Mārama 2020



92 minutes
In English



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements



Guest appearance



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 2 Aug, 4.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 3 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

New Zealand's Best 2020

Guest Curator: Tusi Tamasese

Help give the year's best New Zealand short films the homegrown recognition they deserve by voting for your favourite.

For this year's *New Zealand's Best* short film competition, Festival Director Marten Rabarts, Head of Programming Michael McDonnell, and Paris-based Senior Programmer Sandra Reid viewed 78 submissions to make a shortlist of 12, from which director Tusi Tamasese selected these six finalists. A jury of three will select the winners of the \$4,000 Creative New Zealand Best Short Film Award and the \$2,000 Madman Entertainment Emerging Talent Award, while the winner of an audience vote takes away the Audience Choice Award, consisting of 25 percent of the box office from this year's online screenings.

Daddy's Girl (Kōtiro) (12 minutes)

Te Puhi shares kai with her father when the harsh reality of his dementia forces her to face a painful truth.

Safety Net (12 minutes)

Cheeky 12-year-old Terry is taken into emergency care when his mother is arrested and finds an unlikely connection with one of his guardians.

Daniel (19 minutes)

A young novice at an isolated convent is confronted with the sudden desire to explore her sexuality when she meets the mysterious Daniel.

Love Is Real! (13 minutes)

Feuding couple Jamie and Millie are brought back together with the help of their AI home-assistant Ada and a musical extravaganza.

Oranges & Lemons (13 minutes)

Bullied at school and ignored at home, a young girl finds her voice in the strangest place in this evocative and atmospheric film set in a balmy 70s summer in rural New Zealand.

Pain (9 minutes)

A young girl's adoration of her father is dented when an indoor cricket mishap exposes his vulnerability.

Aotearoa

2020 Competition

78 minutes approx.
In English and Te reo Māori,
with English subtitles

Daddy's Girl (Kōtiro)

New Zealand 2019

Director/Screenplay: Cian Elyse White

Producer: Tweedie Waititi

Co-producer: Te Rahui August

Photography: Fred Renata

Editor: Annie Collins

With: William Davis, Ngapaki Moetara

Safety Net

Australia 2020

Director: Anthea Williams

Producer: Naomi Just

Screenplay: Julian Larnach

Photography: Tania Lambert

Editor: Chris Plummer

With: Nikki Shiels,
Steve Rodgers, William Best

Daniel

New Zealand 2019

Director/Screenplay: Claire van Beek

Producer: Alix Whittaker

Photography: Simon Baumfield

Editors: John Gilbert,
Conan Mornard-Stott

With: Edith Poor, Matt Whelan,
Elizabeth Hawthorne, Nancy Brunning

Love Is Real!

New Zealand 2020

Director/Editor: Calvin Sang

Producer: Briar Collard

Screenplay: Natasha Lay, Calvin Sang

Photography: Stefan Coetzee

With: Sarah Nessia, Tyler Wilson Kokiri

Oranges & Lemons

New Zealand 2019

Director/Screenplay: Robyn Grace

Producer: Rory Macgillcuddy,
Robyn Grace, Jarl Devine

Photography: John Cavill

Editor: Kerri Roggio

With: Skyler Sylvester,
Saskia Shand, Olivia Mueller

Pain

New Zealand 2019

Director/Screenplay: Anna Duckworth

Producer: Ilai Amar

Photography: Nina Wells

Editor: Brendon Chan

With: Eva Gardner, Wesley Dowdell



Creative New Zealand
Best Short Film Award



Madman Entertainment
Emerging Talent Award



NZ Classification tbc



Guest appearance



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 26 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Ngā Whanaunga Māori Pasifika Shorts 2020

A collection of Māori and Pasifika short films curated by Leo Koziol (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Rakaipaaka), Director of the Wairoa Māori Film Festival, with guest co-curator Craig Fasi (Niue), Director of the Pollywood Film Festival. Curators' comments on each film appear in italics.

Purea (7 minutes): Māori elder Hamo must bear the burden of carrying the spirits of her ancestors to their sacred mountain. *Respectful and heartfelt. Deep in meaning and unlimited in vision.* — CF

Forgive Me (11 minutes): Student Sina meets his professor in a cafe for their weekly game of chess, but soon discovers real life is more complicated than just a game. *In an unbearable political climate, forbidden love is punishable by death. Would you give your life for love?* — CF

Kapaemahu (8 minutes): Four mysterious boulders on Waikiki Beach hold ancient spiritual powers. *This stunning animation respectfully reawakens the long lost story of Māhū, who journeyed from Tahiti to Hawai'i bearing healing gifts.* — LK

Emily (15 minutes): After a terrible accident a mother faces her worst nightmare. *A powerful story of loss and the human condition to overcome tragedy or accept defeat.* — CF

I Am the Moment (11 minutes): An innovative Pasifika artist is unmasked. *In pre-pandemic Tokyo, Tongan performance artist Kalisolaite 'Uhila naturally visualises the creator becoming the created.* — CF

Money Honey (9 minutes): The chance discovery of a \$20 note opens up a world of opportunity. *Drift back to the 80s Spacies parlours (or was it the 90s?) when life for kids was not so serious – or was it?* — LK

Gurl (20 minutes): An infamous Māori drag queen falls for a fading rugby star on an ill-fated night in 1975. *We're gonna go way back to a Vivian Street parlour serving instant coffee and toasted sandwiches, and a hypnotic glimpse into the life of the diva, the goddess, the one, the only Carmen.* — LK

40 Premieres

Aotearoa

2020 Competition

81 minutes approx.
In English, Te reo Māori, Tongan, Farsi, Hawaiian, with English subtitles

Purea
New Zealand 2020
Director/Screenplay:
Kath Akuhata-Brown
Producers: Julian Arahanga,
Verity Mackintosh, Becs Arahanga

Forgive Me
USA/New Zealand 2020
Director/Screenplay:
Chelsea Winstanley
Producers: Jennifer Semler,
Michael Pogarian, Shaun Toub

Kapaemahu
USA 2020
Directors/Screenplay/Producers:
Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu,
Dean Hamer, Joe Wilson

Emily
New Zealand 2020
Director: Mark Papalii
Producer: Amy Laura Jansen
Screenplay: Mark Papalii,
Alex McKenna

I Am the Moment
New Zealand 2020
Director/Screenplay: Robert George
With: Kalisolaite 'Uhila

Money Honey
New Zealand 2019
Director/Screenplay:
Isaac Knights-Washbourn
Producers: Lissandra Leite,
Robby Peters

Gurl
New Zealand 2020
Director/Screenplay/Producer: Mika X
Consulting Producers:
Georgina Allison Conder,
Philippa Campbell

In 2020, for the first time,
*Ngā Whanaunga Māori
Pasifika Shorts* will be a
competitive section in the
Festival, with prizes to be
confirmed in July.



Purea

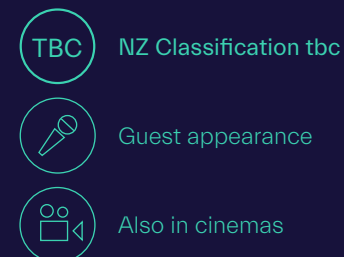


Forgive Me



Gurl

Presented in
association with



BUY

Online Premiere
Mon 27 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Sun 2 Aug



Enjoy a date night in with
Whānau Mārama
 NEW ZEALAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL



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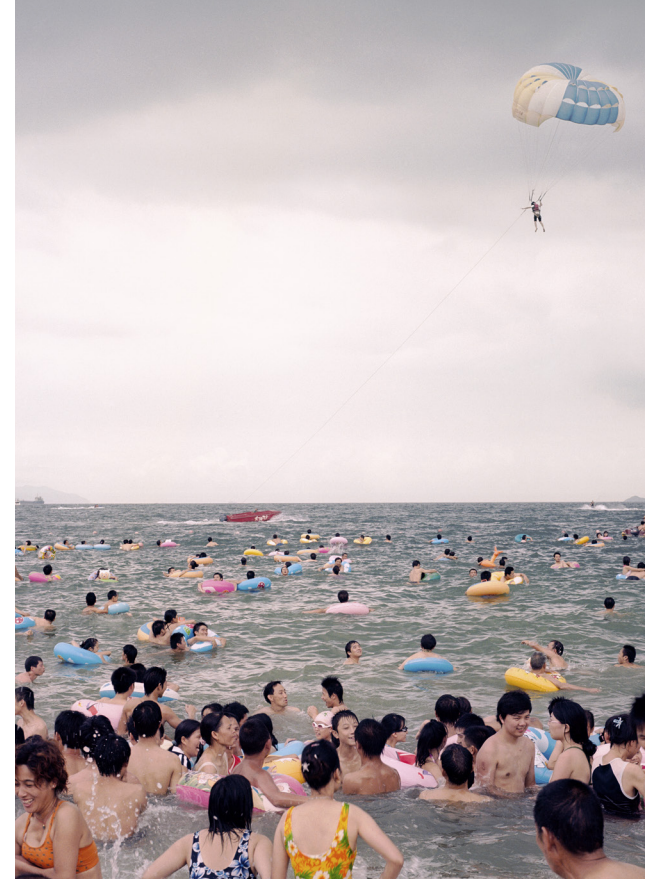
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Co-produced by the Foundation for the Exhibition of Photography and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art of Korea with Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki.

Zhang Xiao Coastline
 No.2 2009, giclée print
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Driveways

The definition of a small but perfectly formed gem, the gracefully understated *Driveways* centres on a young Asian boy who develops a precious friendship with the lonely war vet living next door, played memorably by the late Brian Dennehy.

Korean-American director Andrew Ahn's sophomore film follows single mother Kathy (Hong Chau) and her eight-year-old son Cody (Lucas Jaye) to an unfamiliar New York town to settle the estate of her deceased sister. Upon entering the house, Kathy discovers her sister's hoarding compulsion and has to face the posthumous secrets between the estranged pair in an effort to find closure. Meanwhile, Cody sparks an unlikely connection with the next-door neighbour, widower and Korean War veteran Del (a quiet yet soulful Brian Dennehy, in one of his final film roles). Ahn's careful direction draws three tender and nuanced performances from three guarded characters, crafting a credible portrait of real lives while their past lingers in the present.

Kathy and Cody's Asian American identity bypasses the obvious conflicts of race in a refreshing turn, a choice in casting suggested by Ahn. Instead, the film chooses to focus on life's familiar quotidian struggles and incremental victories to normalise the Asian American experience. As a result, *Driveways* captures the verisimilitude of ordinary life with its unobtrusive plot and eye for detail, creating a gentle meditation on connection through grief and change. — Nahyeon Lee

About the Filmmaker

Andrew Ahn is a Korean-American filmmaker born and raised in Los Angeles. His first feature, *Spa Night* (2016), premiered at Sundance in the US Dramatic Competition. The film's lead, Joe Seo, won a Special Jury Award for Breakthrough Performance. It went on to win the 2017 John Cassavetes Independent Spirit Award.

Becoming

USA 2019

Director
Andrew Ahn

Producers
Joe Pirro, James Schamus,
Nicolaas Bertelsen,
Celine Rattray, Trudie Styler

Screenplay
Hannah Bos, Paul Thureen

Photography
Ki Jin Kim

Editor
Katherine McQuerrey

Music
Jay Wadley

With
Hong Chau, Lucas Jaye,
Brian Dennehy,
Christine Ebersole,
Jeter Rivera,
Sophia DiStefano, Jerry Adler

Festival Premiere
Berlin 2019



83 minutes
In English

Presented in association with

 **canvas**



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Premiere
Thu 30 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

Wendy

Something completely different from the director of *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (NZIFF12), this swirling, kaleidoscopic take on the adventures of Peter Pan and Wendy in Neverland is uniquely for both mature kids and wide-eyed adults.

The eight long years since Benh Zeitlin's magical first film landed countless awards and four Oscar nominations have created both buzz and speculation, owing to the mythic status a project by a director of Zeitlin's instant acclaim deserves. His adaptation of the classic J.M. Barrie tale, at last complete, is every bit the original, defiantly alternative reimagining we expected – and just maybe, is destined for cult status.

Centred on a hardscrabble Louisiana family, the film introduces young Wendy (Devin France), whose obsession with a mysterious boy seen leaping between railcars compels her to jump aboard a train with her twin brothers, where they meet the one and only Peter Pan (Yashua Mack). Whisked off to a strange volcanic island, the kids revel in an untamed landscape that promises they'll never grow old. Hurdling between images of Disney-like wonder, scenes of salty mischief-making (reminiscent of *The Florida Project*) and darker encounters that may frighten younger viewers, it's a film that plays to its own beat, rebelling against the conventional wisdom of what a Peter Pan story should look and feel like, and say about innocence and growing up, to be precisely the thing it wants to be.

About the Filmmaker

Benh Zeitlin is a writer, director and composer based in New Orleans. His feature debut, *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (2012), received the Camera d'Or at Cannes and Academy Award-nominations for writing, direction, best film and best actress. He has composed music for his own films and others, including *Brimstone & Glory* (NZIFF18).

Becoming

USA 2020

Director
Benh Zeitlin

Producers
Becky Glupczynski,
Dan Janvey, Paul Mezey,
Josh Penn

Screenplay
Benh Zeitlin, Eliza Zeitlin

Photography
Sturla Brandth Grøvlen

Editors
Affonso Gonçalves,
Scott Cummings

Music
Dan Romer

With
Devin France, Yashua Mack,
Gage Naquin, Gavin Naquin,
Ahmad Cage, Krzysztof Meyn,
Romyri Ross, Lowell Landes,
Kevin Pugh, Shay Walker

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



112 minutes
In English

Presented in association with

MOREFM



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Fri 31 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Thu 6 Aug

Some Kind of Heaven

A peek behind the curtain of the self-proclaimed “Disneyland for Retirees”, first-time director Lance Oppenheim’s humorous and bittersweet documentary follows four recent arrivals as they search for the American Dream.

Welcome to The Villages in central Florida, the largest retirement community in the world. Pitched as a literal fountain of youth complete with precision golf cart drills, pickleball rallies and singles mixers. It’s a chance for retirees to live the American Dream in their golden years, but debut director Lance Oppenheim’s quirky and insightful documentary picks beneath the surface to find that one person’s paradise can be another’s burden.

Married nearly 50 years, Anne and Reggie seem like a normal couple, but The Villages’ cookie-cutter lifestyle awakens Reggie’s rebelliousness, leading him to explore Eastern spiritualism and experiment in drug use. Meanwhile 81-year-old ladies’ man Dennis lives out of his van and must evade security as he searches for a “classic looking” widow to take him in. Barbara is looking for a more meaningful relationship after having recently lost the love of her life, but is a dashing golf cart salesman really the answer?

Taking inspiration from the photography of Larry Sultan and the Technicolor sheen of Douglas Sirk’s melodramas, Oppenheim opts for a vibrant visual style that accentuates the absurdity of this manufactured utopia. — Michael McDonnell

About the Filmmaker

Lance Oppenheim is a filmmaker from South Florida. He graduated from Harvard University’s visual and environmental studies programme in 2019. *Some Kind of Heaven* is his debut feature.

Belonging

USA 2020

Director

Lance Oppenheim

Producers

Darren Aronofsky,
Kathleen Lingo, Jeffrey Soros,
Simon Horsman,
Melissa Oppenheim Lano,
Pacho Velez,
Lance Oppenheim

Photography

David Bolen

Editor

Daniel Garber

Music

Ari Balouzian

Festival Premiere

Sundance 2020



83 minutes
In English

TBC

Classification tbc

BUY

Online Premiere
Wed 29 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

In the Name of the Land

A revelation at the French box office that's also bound to resonate with heartland New Zealanders, *In the Name of the Land* humanely and bittersweetly celebrates the life of a stoic farmer over four decades of struggle.

In this heart-aching family saga set in the Mayenne district of France, the elemental and emotional challenges of farming are depicted with poignant, personal force. French star Guillaume Canet, in a deeply affecting performance, plays Pierre, who takes over his father's farm as a young man in the late 70s. Marrying his sweetheart (Veerle Batens) and raising a son and daughter on the land gives rise to many joyous moments, but also never-ending adversity against the changing landscape of modern, corporate-driven agriculture. Finance and misfortune eventually take their toll, as Pierre goes to a dark place that echoes the vulnerability of farming communities everywhere and the pressures they face to survive, much less prosper.

Based on his own childhood and dedicated to his parents, Édouard Bergeon's debut feature comes from a genuine place of admiration for the resilience of men and women like his father. It also sensitively broaches the subject of mental health and the boundaries of masculinity explored as indelibly in our own national cinema with its archetypal portrayal of tough rural life – most memorably at this festival in *The Ground We Won* (NZIFF15) and last year's *Bellbird*.

About the Filmmaker

Édouard Bergeon is a journalist with a background in writing and directing documentaries for television. Inspired by the life of his father Christian Bergeon, who became a farmer in 1979, *In the Name of the Land* is his first narrative film.

Belonging

France/Belgium 2019

Au nom de la terre

Director

Édouard Bergeon

Producers

Christophe Rossignon,
Philip Boëffard

Screenplay

Édouard Bergeon,
Bruno Ulmer,
Emmanuel Courcol

Photography

Eric Dumont

Editor

Luc Golfín

Music

Thomas Dappelo

With

Guillaume Canet,
Veerle Baetens,
Anthony Bajon, Rufus,
Samir Guesmi, Yona Kervern



© Nord-Ouest Films

103 minutes

In French with English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION

Offensive language



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere

Sun 26 Jul, 1.45 pm

BUY

Online Rental

Mon 27 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

The Truth

Portraits

After conquering Cannes with *Shoplifters*, Japanese auteur Kore-eda Hirokazu breathlessly transposes his beloved cinema of families, food and slow-burning truths to Paris, with an all-star cast led by two doyennes of the French silver screen.

Japan's modern master of the family drama slides gracefully into the annals of French film history with *The Truth*, his fourteenth narrative feature and the first made outside of his homeland, boasting no less than the inaugural pairing of icons Catherine Deneuve and Juliette Binoche.

Playing an equally luminous, if far more imperious version of herself, Deneuve is superb as the prickly Fabienne, a legendary actress about to publish her memoirs. Arriving in Paris for the book launch is screenwriter daughter Lumir (Binoche), her second-rate TV actor husband Hank (Ethan Hawke) and their little girl Charlotte (Clémentine Grenier, proving yet again Kore-eda's eye for child actors is impeccable). All appear not as close to Fabienne as her writings suggest.

Meanwhile, Kore-eda's interests in memory and familial resentment shimmer in the reflective surfaces of the sci-fi movie Fabienne is shooting, about a mother-daughter relationship age-inverted by the time dilation effects of space. It's a pleasure to witness this dynamic further mirrored in the exchanges between Deneuve and Binoche, here revelling in the subtle and not-so-subtle friction of their mingling screen personas.

About the Filmmaker

Kore-eda Hirokazu is an acclaimed Japanese director. He has twice been lauded at Cannes for *Like Father, Like Son* (Jury Prize, 2013) and *Shoplifters* (Palme d'Or, 2018). Selected filmography: *The Third Murder* (2017), *Our Little Sister* (2015), *I Wish* (2011), *Still Walking* (2008).

France/Japan 2019

La Vérité

Director/Editor

Kore-eda Hirokazu

Producer

Muriel Merlin

Screenplay

Kore-eda Hirokazu, Ken Liu

Photography

Eric Gautier

Music

Alexeï Aïgui

With

Catherine Deneuve, Juliette Binoche, Ethan Hawke, Clémentine Grenier, Manon Clavel, Alain Libolt, Christian Crahay, Roger Van Hool

Festival Premiere

Venice 2019



107 minutes

In French and English,
with English subtitles

Presented in association with

THE BREEZE



NZ CLASSIFICATION

Coarse language
& sexual references



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sat 25 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

Martin Eden

Portraits

In the earthy, captivatingly idiosyncratic *Martin Eden*, a lowly sailor romances a sophisticated young woman while plunging into an epic love affair with literature and intellectual curiosity in 20th-century Italy.

Jack London's sweeping semi-autobiographical novel gets an unexpectedly poetic Neapolitan translation in this ambitious new feature from Italian director Pietro Marcello. Long known for making cryptic, beautiful miniature length films (*Lost and Beautiful*, NZIFF16) that combine dramatic and documentary elements with archive footage, Marcello here attaches his exquisite eye, attention to lived-in detail and mountains of archive footage to a compelling narrative of artistic aspiration, class struggle and desperate romance.

Grounded in Luca Marinelli's towering and award-winning performance as the hardscrabble undereducated sailor with literary dreams and dogged determination whose talent and arrogance grow in equal proportions, *Martin Eden* deftly moves from decaying celluloid and stunning monochrome glimpses of history to freshly-exposed 16mm film, and from heaving sea and grimy alleys to sprawling estates, sumptuous countryside and decadent apartments. Equally besotted with language and images, *Martin Eden* embraces the contradictions of the spirited artist who sows the seeds of his own self-destruction, and delivers its emotional payloads with unflinching honesty and uncommon brio. — Doug Dillaman

About the Filmmaker

Pietro Marcello was born in Caserta, Italy and attended the Academy of Fine Arts in Napoli. His fiction feature debut, *Lost and Beautiful*, screened at NZIFF in 2016. Selected filmography: *The Silence of the Pelesjan* (2011), *The Mouth of the Wolf* (2009), *Crossing the Line* (2007).

Italy/France 2019

Director

Pietro Marcello

Producers

Pietro Marcello,
Beppe Caschetto, Viola Fügen,
Thomas Ordonneau,
Michael Weber

Screenplay

Maurizio Braucci,
Pietro Marcello. Based on the
novel by Jack London

Photography

Francesco Di Giacomo,
Alessandro Abate

Editors

Fabrizio Federico, Aline Hervé

Music

Marco Messina, Sacha Ricci

With

Luca Marinelli, Jessica Cressy,
Vincenzo Nemolato,
Marco Leonardi,
Denise Sardisco,
Carmen Pommella, Carlo Cecchi

Festival Premiere

Venice 2019



© Francesca Errichiello – SHELLAC

128 minutes

In Italian and French,
with English subtitles



NZ Classification tbc



Also in cinemas

BUY

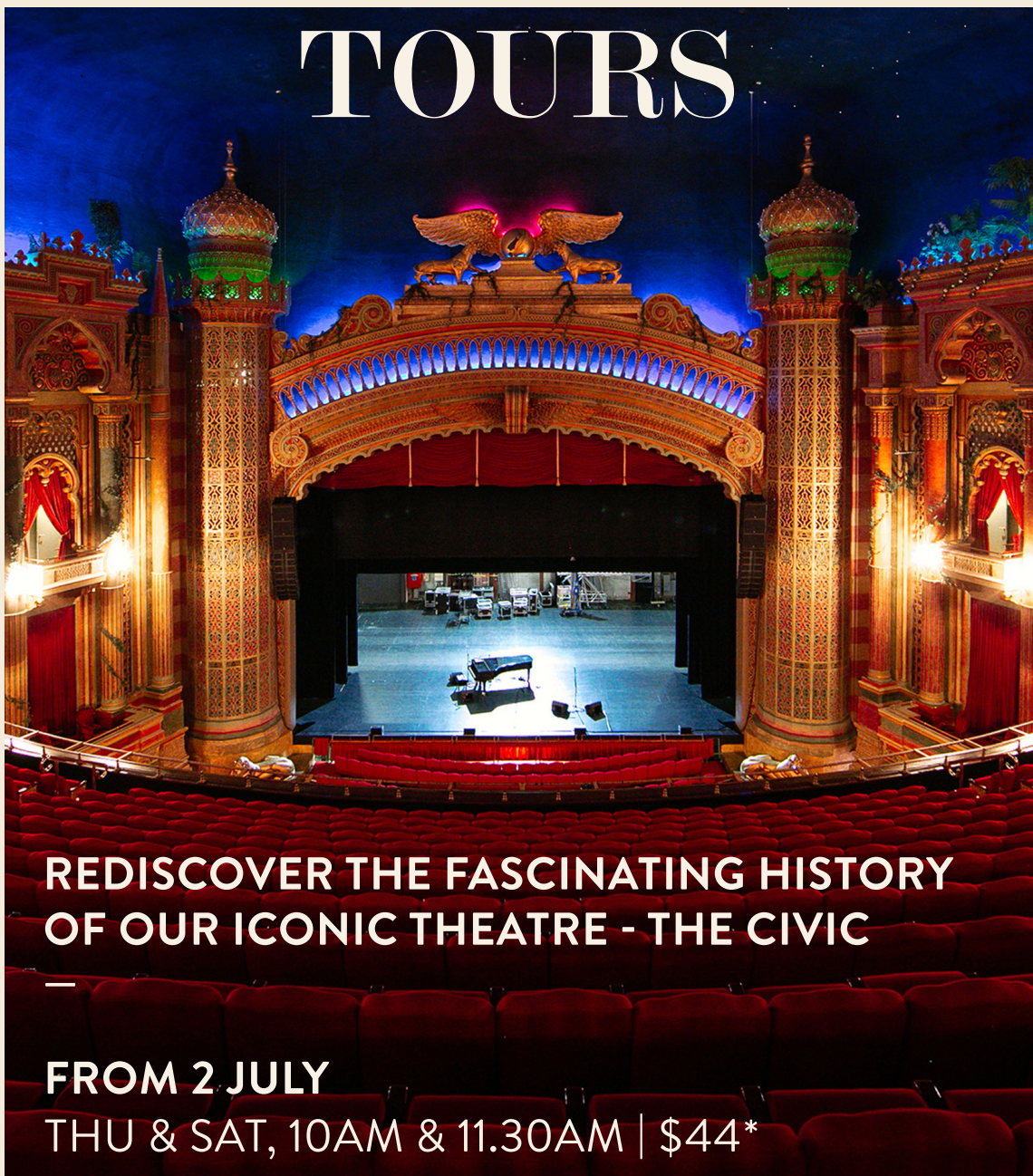
Online Premiere
Fri 31 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Thu 6 Aug

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Martin Margiela: In His Own Words

A belated and buoyant documentary portrait of Martin Margiela, celebrated for his trailblazing designs and humble, enigmatic persona within the flamboyant fashion world.

One of the most influential and intriguing figures in recent fashion history, Belgian designer Martin Margiela is the pivotal yet unseen subject of this captivating and sensitive documentary from Reiner Holzemer (*Dries*, NZIFF17).

A protégé of Jean-Paul Gaultier, Margiela's anonymity is mythical and an enduring point of industry fascination; during his two decades helming Maison Martin Margiela, he was never photographed, seen or interviewed by the press – any communication was conducted via fax. The mystery deepened when he walked away from the industry without warning in 2009. It is here that the film begins, with his final show, before tracing his childhood, education and career with gentle revelation.

Finally voicing his story, Margiela discusses his groundbreaking work and enduring legacy. Much of what the 63-year-old pioneered – street casting, reissues and upcycling – is now commonplace. By allowing him to remain faceless Holzemer reinforces the power of Margiela's reticence; we don't need to see his face to understand his work and appreciate its impact, and now in the midst of a dramatically shifting industry, Margiela's enduring critique of pace and publicity feels more relevant than ever. — Emma Gleason

About the Filmmaker

Reiner Holzemer is a Munich-based documentarian best known for his artist profiles. Selected filmography: *Dries* (2017), *Anton Corbijn: Most Wanted* (2014), *William Eggleston: Photographer* (2008).

Portraits

Germany/Belgium 2019

Director/Screenplay
Reiner Holzemer

Producers
Reiner Holzemer,
Aminata Sambe

Photography
Reiner Holzemer,
Toon Illegems

Editor
Helmar Jungmann

Music
dEUS

With
Martin Margiela,
Jean-Paul Gaultier,
Carine Roitfeld, Cathy Horyn,
Olivier Saillard

Festival Premiere
DOC NYC 2019



90 minutes
In English and French,
with English subtitles

Presented in association with

māhsa



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Premiere
Mon 27 Jul, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band

The saga of The Band, whose iconic farewell concert was immortalised in *The Last Waltz*, continues to captivate in this new documentary shaped from the perspective of guitarist-songwriter Robbie Robertson, only one of two surviving members.

In a sense Robbie Robertson only has one story, but it's a great one: how four Canadian rockers and an Arkansas drummer set out together in the early 1960s and wound up in the eye of that decade's cultural hurricane. The story of The Band was the basis of Martin Scorsese's *The Last Waltz*, and has been revisited by countless rock chroniclers since.

But the years since *The Last Waltz* have given it a sad coda, with several of Robertson's bandmates falling to addictions and early deaths, and a bitter disagreement between Robbie and his southern confederate Levon Helm, who accused him of using The Band to further his own ambitions.

It's hard not to see *Once Were Brothers* as Robertson's response to *Ain't It For My Health* (NZIFF11), the unvarnished 2010 documentary that told the tale from Helm's point of view. Robertson's version is more magnanimous, yet one can't help feeling he is, once again, furthering an agenda. And yet the whole thing is brought to life with a wealth of rare and unseen images, plus revealing interviews including the uproarious Ronnie Hawkins and the rarely seen Dominique Robertson, Robbie's wife. There is also plenty of The Band's music which, of course, sounds as great as ever. — Nick Bollinger

About the Filmmaker

Daniel Roher is a Toronto filmmaker. He has directed multiple non-fiction shorts and the documentary *Ghosts of Our Forest* (2017). *Once Were Brothers* is his second feature film.

Portraits

Canada 2019

Director
Daniel Roher

Producers
Stephen Panicia,
Andrew Munger,
Sam Sutherland,
Lana Belle Mauro

Photography
Kiarash Sadigh

Editors
Eamonn O'Connor,
Daniel Roher

With
Martin Scorsese,
Bruce Springsteen,
Eric Clapton, Ronnie Hawkins,
Dominique Robertson,
Van Morrison, Taj Mahal

Festival Premiere
Toronto 2019



100 minutes
In English

Presented in association with

MUSIC
magic
AND TALK



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 2 Aug, 2.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 3 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

The Kingmaker

Lauren Greenfield (*The Queen of Versailles*, NZIFF12) harnesses extraordinary access and the boastful, unrepentant nature of her subject, Imelda Marcos, in this unsettling chronicle of ill-gotten wealth and political corruption.

We've all heard about the 1,220 pairs of shoes Imelda Marcos abandoned when she fled Manila in 1986, a symbol of the wealth she and her dictator husband, Ferdinand Marcos, embezzled while running the country's economy and human rights into the ground. Now in her 80s, the former first lady of the Philippines is still as extravagant – and impenitent – as ever. Captured like never before, this eye-opening documentary paints a damning picture of Marcos' ego in private, and her vanity in public as she flexes her political ambitions once more through son Bongbong, a vice presidential candidate, and other insidious networks of corruption.

As astute as it is ominous, *The Kingmaker* examines a staggering sense of denial and self-importance that resonates today for obvious reasons, but even more potently, a history of violence that threatens to resurface. Interviews with Marcos' allies and enemies, and reflections on the suffering of communities during martial law, reveal the horrors behind the legacy. So confident of her importance to the Philippines, Marcos believes she's starring in a hagiography, but what director Lauren Greenfield gets on camera is much closer to *The Act of Killing*. — Tim Wong

About the Filmmaker

Lauren Greenfield is an Emmy Award-winning filmmaker and photographer whose work spans consumerism, youth culture and gender. Selected filmography: *Generation Wealth* (2018), *The Queen of Versailles* (2012), *Thin* (2006).

Political States

USA/Denmark 2019

Director/Screenplay
Lauren Greenfield

Producers
Frank Evers, Lauren Greenfield

Photography
Shana Hagan, Lars Skree

Editor
Per K. Kirkegaard

Music
Jocelyn Pook

With
Imelda Marcos,
Ferdinand 'Bongbong'
Marcos Jr,
Leni Robredo,
Noytoy Aquino III

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



100 minutes
In English and Tagalog,
with English subtitles

Presented in association with

MUSIC
magic
AND TALK



NZ CLASSIFICATION
Violence, cruelty
& content that may disturb

BUY

Online Premiere
Tue 28 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

While at War

The acclaimed director of *The Sea Inside* returns with his most handsomely mounted film yet, an expansive yet deep-focus drama detailing events around the Spanish Civil War and the rise of Franco's fascist dictatorship.

In Alejandro Amenábar latest film, celebrated Spanish writer Miguel de Unamuno becomes a lens through which a critical moment in the country's history is refracted back to our unstable political present. Building meticulously to Unamuno's famous speech of protest, *While at War* chronicles the consequences of complacency – and how easily tyrants can ascend to power – with chilling majesty.

"It is 1936 and the Spanish Civil War is in its infancy. We quickly learn that Unamuno – the dean of Salamanca University – has vacillated between sides in terms of his writings, although he would say it is other people, rather than his philosophy that has shifted. Now elderly – and played thoughtfully and soulfully by Karra Elejalde – Unamuno enjoys a small intellectual bubble with friends, a priest Atilano (Luis Zahera) and Salvador (Carlos Serrano-Clark), a young and feisty Marxist, but is dismissive of their fears of the rise of fascism. Meanwhile, in Morocco, in scenes threaded through with inky humour that recalls *The Death of Stalin*, we see Franco [Santi Prego] carefully and almost imperceptibly manoeuvring his way to the top." — Amber Wilkinson, *Eye for Film*

About the Filmmaker

Alejandro Amenábar was born in Santiago, Chile. He first came to prominence with the cult thriller *Thesis* (1996) and is best known for directing the Academy Award-winning *The Sea Inside* (Best Foreign Language Film, 2004). Selected filmography: *Agora* (2009), *The Others* (2001), *Open Your Eyes* (1997).

Political States

Spain/Argentina 2019

Mientras dure la guerra

Director

Alejandro Amenábar

Producers

Domingo Corral,
Hugo Sigman,
Alejandro Amenábar

Screenplay

Alejandro Amenábar,
Alejandro Hernández

Photography

Alex Catalán

Editor

Carolina Martínez Urbina

Music

Alejandro Amenábar

With

Karra Elejalde,
Eduard Fernández,
Santi Prego, Luis Bermejo,
Tito Valverde,
Patricia Lopez Arnaiz,
Inma Cuevas,
Carlos Serrano-Clark,
Luis Zahera

Festival Premiere

Toronto 2019



107 minutes

In Spanish with English subtitles

Presented in association with



NZ CLASSIFICATION

Violence & coarse language



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere

Mon 27 Jul, 6.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental

Tue 28 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

Identifying Features

Travellers and migrants who vanish without a trace – and the desperation of the families they leave behind – come to light in this tense, enveloping drama set in the shadow of the US–Mexico border.

An absorbing debut feature, *Identifying Features* follows Magdalena (Mercedes Hernández), an illiterate Mexican woman, as she leaves her rural home in search of her teenage son, missing since departing for the US border with a friend two months prior.

Director Fernanda Valadez and her largely female crew deftly and inventively frame this story of dogged maternal love in a violence-plagued world. With Hernández's stunning performance at its heart, the film – much of it shot with a team of only three – balances the horrors facing migrants before they even reach the border with the power of human resilience. The story follows other mothers, other sons: all eventually intersect with Magdalena. Claudia Becerril Bulos' lyrical camera often rests on Magdalena's face: that of her interlocutor is withheld until long into the scene (if shown at all). Glimpses of a migrant shelter, armed checkpoints and the imposing border itself build a sense of scale without losing intimacy. A hallucinatory score from Clarice Jensen is used sparingly, to immersive effect.

Dread builds as Magdalena's odyssey takes her into an increasingly remote and empty landscape: the climax hits with extraordinary force. — Catherine Bisley

About the Filmmaker

Fernanda Valadez is a director and producer. Her first short, *De este mundo*, won the Best Short Film Award at the Guanajuato Film Festival. *Identifying Features* marks her directorial feature debut.

Indigenous Voices

Mexico/Spain 2020

Sin Señas Particulares

Director

Fernanda Valadez

Producers

Astrid Rondero,
Fernanda Valadez,
Jack Zagha Kababie,
Yossy Zagha

Screenplay

Fernanda Valadez,
Astrid Rondero

Photography

Claudia Becerril Bulos

Editors

Fernanda Valadez,
Astrid Rondero, Susan Korda

Music

Clarice Jensen

With

Mercedes Hernández,
David Illescas,
Juan Jesús Varela,
Ana Laura Rodríguez,
Laura Elena Ibarra

Festival Premiere

Sundance 2020



97 minutes

In Spanish with English subtitles

TBC

Classification tbc

BUY

Online Premiere

Tue 28 Jul, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental

Wed 29 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

Ema

Pure, unadulterated cinema, the latest from Chilean maestro Pablo Larraín is straight fire: a scorching character study of one woman's pursuit of sexual and political liberation, lit up by Mariana Di Girolamo's sensational lead performance.

Few films in recent memory have blazed a trail as passionately as Pablo Larraín's *Ema*, which signals the director's return to the present and his native Chile via the incandescent city of Valparaíso.

Mariana Di Girolamo, in a star turn you won't be able to take your eyes off, plays the titular dancer, mother and pyro-lover impervious to social norms. On a quest to reclaim her adopted son Polo, whose absence explains her deteriorating marriage to choreographer Gastón (Gael García Bernal), Ema sets out on a path of deliberate resistance, embracing the orgasmic street movement of reggaeton and embarking on a fluid succession of relationships with people of all genders in her orbit. For reasons that don't need explaining, she also owns a flamethrower and rejoices in burning shit down – a none-too-subtle metaphor for her relentless pursuit of catharsis and the film's white-hot energy through which creative and sexual expression bursts forth.

Every bit the firecracker that had critics in Venice, where it premiered, clamouring for superlatives, Larraín's film is visually stunning, fuelled with combustible symbolism and physicality, and a genuine war cry for dancers, lovers and the patriarchy everywhere. — Tim Wong

About the Filmmaker

Pablo Larraín was born in Santiago, Chile. His international breakthrough, *Tony Manero* (2008), was followed by *Post Mortem* (2010), *No* (NZIFF12), *The Club* (NZIFF15) and *Neruda* (NZIFF16). In 2016 he directed his first English-language film, the Oscar-nominated *Jackie*.

Breaking Through

Chile 2019

Director
Pablo Larraín

Producer
Juan De Dios Larraín

Screenplay
Guillermo Calderón,
Pablo Larraín,
Alejandro Moreno

Photography
Sergio Armstrong

Editor
Sebastián Sepúlveda

Music
Nicolas Jaar

With
Mariana Di Girolamo,
Gael García Bernal,
Paola Giannini,
Santiago Cabrera,
Cristián Suárez

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



102 minutes
In Spanish with English subtitles

Presented in association with

George
beats working...

NZ CLASSIFICATION

R16

Sex scenes,
offensive language & nudity



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Fri 31 Jul, 9.15 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Thu 6 Aug

The Perfect Candidate

Saudi superstar director Haifaa Al-Mansour's latest is a winning homecoming; a serio-comic look at the daily struggles of a doctor running for council – and her fellow women and outsiders – within an Islamic society undergoing dramatic change.

In Haifaa Al-Mansour's Arabic follow-up to her NZIFF13 crowd-pleaser *Wadjda*, we first meet Maryam (Mila Al Zahrani) wearing a niqaab and driving to work at the local hospital, something that has only been possible since 2018. As the female doctor she faces discrimination not only from a male patient but also a colleague reprimanding her for not kowtowing to the patient's demands.

Her attempt to attend a Dubai medical conference is thwarted by bureaucracy. A race against the clock to get her visa cleared drolly concludes with her signing up to run for the municipal elections. Her new agenda: to get the road paved outside her hospital so that patients can access necessary healthcare.

With the sibling support of entrepreneurial wedding photographer Selma and begrudging assistance from teenage Sara, Maryam sets out to win hearts and minds. All the while Dad is away touring the country as an accomplished singer and oud player – itself a controversial occupation in a country where public music performances must have prior approval. What plays out is a subtle and engaging portrait of life's little challenges for those on the outside finally being let in, bit by bit, to a society that is rapidly evolving. — Rebecca McMillan

About the Filmmaker

In 2012, Haifaa al-Mansour became the first Saudi woman to ever direct a feature film. Her debut, *Wadjda* (2012), was the first feature to be filmed entirely in Saudi Arabia. She has also directed two English-language films, the biopic *Mary Shelley* (2017) and *Nappily Ever After* (2018) for Netflix.

Breaking Through

Saudi Arabia/Germany
2019

Director
Haifaa Al-Mansour

Producers
Haifaa Al-Mansour,
Brad Niemann,
Gerhard Meixner, Roman Paul

Screenplay
Haifaa Al-Mansour,
Brad Niemann

Photography
Patrick Orth

Editor
Andreas Wodraschke

Music
Volker Bertelmann

With
Mila Al Zahrani,
Dhay, Khalid Abdulraheem,
Shafi Alharthy

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



© Razor Film

105 minutes
In Arabic with English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION
Adult themes



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sun 2 Aug, 4.30 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 3 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

Steelers: The World's First Gay Rugby Club

World Premiere

The Steelers journey to compete in the World Cup of gay rugby in this hopeful yet emotionally honest sports documentary about playing for pride, whoever your team is.

In 1995 a bunch of gay men formed the first gay rugby club while sitting in a pub in London, the spirit of comradeship (and beer) already apparent. More than 60 clubs have formed around the world since, coming together to play for the Bingham Cup every two years.

The road to the World Cup, the journey to the championship – it's a tried-and-true sports narrative and one that *Steelers* revels in as we head to Amsterdam for the 2018 tournament. For sports fans, rugby is certainly a constant in this uplifting debut feature from Eammon Ashton-Atkinson, but it's the players and their stories that really shine through.

The Cup forms the backdrop as we meet one of the newer players on the team, battling depression on and off the field; a key forward who dabbles in drag; and the female coach who still has to battle sexism while participating in a competition that fosters equality and inclusivity. It's a lo-fi portrait with a wonderfully big heart to it.

Ultimately, the rugby club has become a place to belong, where you can be whatever you want. As the players find their self-confidence on the pitch, you can't help but root for them and celebrate gay sporting lives. You might appreciate the many shots of topless men in speedos, too. — Steph Walker

About the Filmmaker

Eammon-Ashton Atkinson is an Australian news reporter living in New York working as a foreign correspondent for Network 10. Previously he was the Europe Correspondent based in London. *Steelers* is his debut feature-length documentary.

Proud

UK/The Netherlands
2019

Director/Screenplay/
Photography/Editor
Eammon Ashton-Atkinson

Producers
Eammon Ashton-Atkinson,
Grace Tobin, Jared Watmuff

With
Nic Evans, Simon Jones,
Andrew McDowell

Festival Premiere
Whānau Mārama 2020



80 minutes
In English



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Mon 27 Jul, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Tues 28 July until Sun 2 Aug

Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)

In this bright, affirmative lesbian teen rom-com, a girl awkwardly angles for the attention of her high school crush with a little help from the ghost of her aunt, a queer activist with a poignant history in the fight for LGBTQI+ rights.

It's hard enough being a high school student, but Ellie (Sophie Hankshaw) also has to stress about how to ask her crush Abbie (Zoe Terakes) to the formal without the certainty Abbie is into girls. If that's not complicated enough, how about blurting out your plan and inadvertently coming out to your high-strung mum (Martha Dusseldorp), who did not seem to take the news very well? On top of that, Ellie gets a surprise visit from her dead aunt Tara (Julia Billington), in the form of a fairy godmother ghost, to help her coming out process! Along the way, Ellie discovers some family secrets that she might not be ready for.

Ellie & Abbie may have all the hallmarks of a classic high school rom-com, but first-time director Monica Zanetti also manages to subvert the genre and bring some genuine surprises to the table, including salient reminders of historical LGBTQI+ struggles that came before. The charming young leads are supported by a great cast, including New Zealand's own Rachel House, who gives a deeply moving performance as Ellie's surrogate aunt. Winner of the Audience Award at the Mardi Gras Film Festival, *Ellie & Abbie* combines romance, comedy and a nod to pride history in an impressive debut. — Vicci Ho

About the Filmmaker

Monica Zanetti is an award-winning Australian screenwriter and director. *Skin Deep* (2015), for which she wrote the screenplay, was honoured at Austin Film Festival with an award for Best Narrative Feature. *Ellie & Abbie (& Ellie's Dead Aunt)* is her debut feature as a director.

Proud

Australia 2020

Director/Screenplay
Monica Zanetti

Producers
Patrick James,
Mahveen Shahraki.M

Photography
Calum Stewart

Editor
Nicole Thorn

With
Sophie Hawkshaw,
Zoe Terakes, Marta Dusseldorp,
Rachel House, Julia Billington,
Bridie Connell

Festival Premiere
Mardi Gras 2020



85 minutes
In English



NZ Classification tbc



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sat 1 Aug, 7.00 pm

Young Hunter

Proud

A smart and nuanced portrait of gay love matched with suspenseful and unexpected turns, Marco Berger's latest film continues his acclaimed run of dramas exploring queer male desire and romance.

With his family on an extended holiday in Europe, 15-year-old Ezequiel (Juan Pablo Cestaro) has a pool in the backyard, a fridge of cold beer, a stack of porn and a raging teenage libido. He's smart, cool and attractive, but neither his artfully casual seduction scenarios nor his carefully calibrated sleepovers with local boys from his wealthy Buenos Aires suburb deliver anything approaching reciprocity. A despondent trip to the skate park reverses Ezequiel's fortunes however, where he's quickly and effectively seduced by slightly older Mono (Lautaro Rodríguez), a skater boy whose origin from the other side of the tracks only adds to his allure.

Ezequiel's newfound summer idyll is derailed with the unexpected return of his parents and younger sister. Mono's older cousin has a weekend house in the country, and it's there where this innocent teenage love story takes a much darker turn. Ezequiel is first hunted, and then must become the hunter himself, to escape an underworld where innocence and youth are the most highly prized commodities.

With his sixth feature, Marco Berger reaffirms his place among the leading talents of the New Argentine Cinema alongside Mateo Bendesky (*Family Members*) and Jazmín López (*If I Were the Winter Itself*) at this Festival. — Marten Rabarts

About the Filmmaker

Marco Berger is an Argentine director. His films are characterised by the theme of sexual tension between seemingly heterosexual men. His third feature, *Absent* (2011), won the Berlin International Film Festival's Teddy Award for Best Queer Film. Selected filmography: *Taekwondo* (2016), *Butterfly* (2015), *Hawaii* (2013), *Five* (2010), *Plan B* (2009).

Argentina 2020

El cazador

Director/Screenplay/Editor

Marco Berger

Producer

Alberto Masliaht

Photography

Mariano De Rosa

Music

Pedro Irusta

With

Juan Pablo Cestaro,
Juan Barberini,
Lautaro Rodríguez,
Patricio Rodríguez

Festival Premiere

Rotterdam 2020



101 minutes
In Spanish with English subtitles

TBC

Classification tbc

BUY

Online Premiere
Wed 29 Jul, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Corpus Christi

An ex-con masquerading as a priest works to heal the wounds of a grieving congregation with his unorthodox brand of faith and forgiveness in this darkly compelling Oscar-nominated Polish drama.

In Jan Komasa's enthralling redemption tale, troublemaker Daniel (a magnetic Bartosz Bielenia), released from juvenile detention, desires to break free from a chequered past. After wandering into a village church, he's mistaken for a new priest and seizes the divine opportunity to alter his life's trajectory.

This close-knit village, fractured by recent tragedy, provides just the freshly turned soil Daniel needs to flourish. After shaky beginnings in the confessional booth, the young man discovers a natural empathy that elicits vulnerability and openness in his parishioners as he honestly seeks to aid a community in distress. Vicarious redemption and forgiveness seem within his grasp, but can Daniel's transformation hold fast as harsh reality encroaches?

Riding high on the deservedly lauded lead performance of actor Bielenia, *Corpus Christi* weaves its existential concerns into a gripping drama, shot evocatively in muted colours and with a visual potency befitting Poland's reputation for cinematography. Likewise, Bielenia's Daniel exudes an unpredictable intensity throughout the entire film; an electric presence that energises even its darkest emotional turns. — Jacob Powell

About the Filmmaker

Jan Komasa is an acclaimed young Polish film director and screenwriter. His short film *Nice to See You* won third prize in the Cinefondation section at Cannes in 2003. Selected filmography: *The Hater* (2020), *Warsaw '44* (2014), *Warsaw Uprising* (2014), *Suicide Room* (2011).

Radical Empathy

Poland/France 2019

Boże Ciało

Director

Jan Komasa

Screenplay

Mateusz Pacewicz

Producers

Aneta Cebula-Hickinbotham,
Leszek Bodzak

Photography

Piotr Sobocinski Jr.

Editor

Przemysław Chruscielewski

Music

Evgueni and Sacha Galperine

With

Bartosz Bielenia,
Eliza Rycembel,
Aleksandra Konieczna,
Tomasz Zietek, Leszek Lichota,
Łukasz Simlat, Lidia Bogacz

Festival Premiere

Venice 2019



118 minutes
In Polish with English subtitles

NZ CLASSIFICATION

R16

Violence, offensive language,
drug use & sex scenes



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere

Sun 26 Jul, 7.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental

Mon 27 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Instinct

Radical Empathy

Halina Reijn's astonishingly assured directorial debut tensely interrogates the fantasies of a veteran therapist (Carice van Houten, *Game of Thrones*), whose attraction to a sex offender patient escalates into a dangerous cat-and-mouse game.

A bold and brilliant study of the borderlines between desire and domination, *Instinct* poses startling questions throughout every turn of its psychological duel between Idris (Marwan Kenzari), a prisoner undergoing treatment for violent sexual crime, and his therapist Nicoline, who may be developing feelings for him against her own best interest.

At a secure rehab facility, Nicoline is assigned the case of Idris, a volatile yet calculating serial rapist whose five years of institutionalisation have brought him close to freedom. While at first opposing his approval for unsupervised leave and alarmed at the audacity of his behaviour, Nicoline is gripped inexplicably by Idris' dangerous charisma and her own fears and instincts, which play out in scenes of intense close-quarter confrontation.

Deserving of a content warning for survivors, director Halina Reijn's film bravely seeks to understand the complexity and ambiguity of human nature without undermining the experience of the victim. It's a fascinating tightrope walked as both a clinical thriller (shot potently by *Monos* cinematographer Jasper Wolf) and a multifaceted response to similar stories that suppress or simplify the woman's perspective, with stunning performances that are equally vital to its purpose.

About the Filmmaker

Halina Reijn is a Dutch actress, director, writer and producer. Alongside Carice van Houten she is the co-founder of Man Up, a production company formed with the goal of exploring darker, edgier stories that often remain untold from a female perspective. *Instinct* is her first film as director and Man Up's first production.

The Netherlands 2019

Director
Halina Reijn

Producers
Frans van Gestel, Laurette Schillings, Arnold Heslenfeld

Screenplay
Esther Gerritsen, Halina Reijn

Photography
Jasper Wolf

Editor
Job ter Burg

Music
Ella van der Woude

With
Carice van Houten,
Marwan Kenzari,
Marie-Mae van Zuijlen,
Pieter Embrechts,
Betty Schuurman,
Ariane Schluter,
Maria Kraakman,
Tamar van den Dop

Festival Premiere
Locarno 2019



98 minutes
In Dutch with English subtitles

R16

NZ CLASSIFICATION
Rape, sexual material,
violence & content
that may disturb

BUY

Online Premiere
Thu 30 Jul, 8.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

Relic

A female-centric, intergenerational haunted house story of the highest order, *Relic* takes the terrifying conceit of senile dementia and transforms it into a supernatural entity that engulfs sufferers and those who care for them.

Like the much-heralded *The Babadook* (NZIFF14), *Relic* was a Sundance standout that announced a major talent from down under: Japanese-Australian director Natalie Erika James, whose spooky new feature landed with the backing of Hollywood heavyweights Jake Gyllenhaal and the Russo Bros (*Avengers*).

Refreshingly observant and tender for a horror film, *Relic* is made all the more arresting through the intimate performances of its three leads. When her disconcertingly odd mother Edna (Robyn Nevin) is reported missing, Kay (Emily Mortimer) travels with her daughter Sam (Bella Heathcote) to her mother's isolated house in the countryside. When Edna reappears with injuries, she refuses to talk, setting the stage for a slow descent into psychological horror, with the house itself intensifying the claustrophobia and atmospherics at hand.

Like its cinematic forebearers *Legend of Hell House* and *The Haunting*, a long-simmering arcane history of a home begins to leak out and smother the occupants. This simmering fusion of J-Horror spookiness and the real life terror of caring for parents nearing their final departure makes James' debut that rare beast in genre film – a stylistic triumph that is equally scary and compassionate. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Natalie Erika James is a Japanese-Australian writer and director based in Melbourne. *Relic* is her debut feature. She is next set to direct a feature-length version of her 2018 Japanese folk horror short film, *Drum Wave*.

Incredibly
Strange

Australia/USA 2020

Director

Natalie Erika James

Producers

Jake Gyllenhaal, Riva Marker,
Anna McLeish, Sarah Shaw

Screenplay

Natalie Erika James,
Christian White

Photography

Charlie Sarroff

Editors

Denise Haratzis, Sean Lahiff

Music

Brian Reitzell

With

Emily Mortimer, Robyn Nevin,
Bella Heathcote,
Jeremy Stanford, Chris Buntton

Festival Premiere

Sundance 2020



89 minutes
In English

Presented in association with



NZ Classification tbc



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Premiere
Sat 25 Jul, 9.00 pm

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

Whānau



At Home

Mārama



Online

"Kumeu Village is my
house Chardonnay"

- Bob Campbell MW



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Widescreen

A panorama of the best and brightest films that drew our attention on the world stage – and demanded a captive audience back home – during our intense engagement with international cinema on the festival circuit this past year.



Films in this strand are available
to watch as Online Rentals.

Tupaia's Endeavour

World Premiere (Director's Cut)

Lala Rolls' fascinating quest to examine what happens to a Tahitian high priest and navigator when he travels across the Pacific – and further on towards England as a translator and guest (or is it as a living trophy?) – aboard Captain James Cook's HMS Endeavour.

This new feature-length film, re-edited from director Lala Rolls' earlier Māori TV series, now includes enlightening new material which helps us understand Tupaia's fateful journey and pre-European Polynesian navigation.

Using a rich array of documentary tools, Rolls freely re-imagines Tupaia's experience with the help of actor Kirk Torrance as Tupaia. She also weaves in the personal journey of artist Michel Tuffery, who travels to modern day Raiatea following the traces of his own family connections to the historical figure.

With Tuffery, Rolls seeks to pluck Tupaia from the sidelines of history to which he'd been relegated by the British version of Cook's voyage, and restore him to a rightful place of honour as a guiding force in Cook's exploration of the Pacific. Along the way, Tupaia's descendants assert ownership of Tupaia's personal taonga, which now rest in British museums having been attributed to the collection of Joseph Banks on the Endeavour's return to London.

Tupaia's Endeavour retells what we think is a familiar story, but from the point of view of the Pacific people who lived it, and of their contemporary descendants who seek a deeper understanding of their ancestor, and his role in shaping history. — Marten Rabarts

About the Filmmaker

Lala Rolls is a Fijian-born director and editor. Her filmmaking explores Polynesian and Māori culture, most notably in the documentaries *Children of the Migration* (2004) and *Land of My Ancestors* (2007), both of which premiered at NZIFF.

Aotearoa

New Zealand 2020

Director/Producer/Editor
Lala Rolls

Photography
David Paul

Music
Riki Gooch, Stephen Gallagher

With

Professor Paora Tapsell,
Dame Anne Salmond,
Anne Iranui McGuire,
Taha Natua Manutahi,
Nick Tupara, Wayne Ngata

Festival Premiere

Whānau Mārama 2020



119 minutes

In English, Te reo Māori, Tahitian
and French, with English subtitles



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

1982

Encounters

The near and present danger of Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon is the nerve-wracking backdrop to this expertly directed coming-of-age tale, centred on one boy's all-consuming crush amidst the encroachment of war.

On the last day of school, heightened by end of term exams, 11-year-old Wissam has only one thing on his mind: to confess his feelings to classmate Joanna. Fumbling comically through love notes and best laid plans with his friend Majid belies the very real threat of war on the horizon. Wissam's teacher Yesmine (Lebanese star Nadine Labaki, director of the Cannes-winning *Capharnaüm*) and the faculty try to keep a lid on their emotions and see out the day. But as radio reports grow grimmer, distant explosions edge closer and then the sudden, deafening roar of fighter jets drowns out everything, reality sets in and their attention turns to how to get the children to safety.

With an outstanding command of tension, director Oualid Mouaness – drawing on his own experience as a kid in Beirut – brings to life a collective memory of personal and political fear for civilians on the ground that fateful day. Unnerving sound design lends a knife-edge quality to even the stillest moments, while the film's recreation of the surrealism of chaos, seen from both young and adult points of view, is riveting – and instantly relatable for anyone who knows the feeling, in times of panic and uncertainty, of wanting to get home.

About the Filmmaker

Oualid Mouaness is a Liberian-born producer, writer and director who grew up in Lebanon. His short film *The Rifle, The Jackal, The Wolf, and the Boy* was shortlisted for an Oscar in 2017. He has also produced music videos for David Bowie, Annie Lennox, Lana Del Rey and Justin Timberlake. *1982* is his feature debut as a director.

**Lebanon/USA/
Norway/Qatar 2019**

Director/Screenplay
Oualid Mouaness

Producers
Oualid Mouaness,
Alix Madigan-Yorkin,
Georges Schoucair,
Myriam Sassine,
Christopher Tricarico

Photography
Brian Rigney Hubbard

Editors
Jad Dani Ali Hassan,
Sabine El Gemayel

Music
Nadim Mishlawi

With
Nadine Labaki,
Mohamad Dalli,
Rodrigue Sleiman,
Aliya Khalidi,
Ghassan Maalouf, Gia Madi

Festival Premiere
Toronto 2019



100 minutes
In Arabic and English,
with English subtitles



War scenes, mild violence

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Exile

Encounters

Racial and psychological tensions, claustrophobically observed in both the workplace and at home, come to a head in Visar Morina's masterfully directed thriller about one man's identity crisis as a foreigner in Germany.

Are you ready for a virtuosic masterclass in sustained discomfort? From *Exile's* opening scene, where chemical engineer Xhafer walks home through his bucolic German suburb only to find a dead rat hanging from his front gate, there's no escape in this immaculately crafted pressure cooker.

Born in Kosovo, Xhafer (Mišel Matičević, in a compelling, controlled performance) begins to see racism around every corner. But where he finds microaggressions, gaslighting and hatred at every turn, his German wife (*Toni Erdmann's* Sandra Hüller) only sees paranoia and honest mistakes. As it becomes clear Xhafer is no innocent himself, the line between real and imagined slights blurs, and his simmering anger slowly rises to a boil.

Director Visar Morina – writing from personal experience as a German immigrant from Kosovo – has gained comparisons to masters of unease like Michael Haneke and Ruben Östlund. But with a canny use of sustained tracking shots and a minimal yet striking score, Morina's unique voice shines as he builds relentlessly rising tension. It's an unlikely comparison, but in many ways *Exile* resembles 2020's *The Invisible Man*: it's what you can't see that can drive you mad. — Doug Dillaman

About the Filmmaker

Visar Morina was born in Kosovo and studied at the Cologne Academy of Media Arts. His debut *Babai* (2015) received multiple awards, including Best Director and European Cinema Label in Karlovy Vary and Best Script at Filmfest München. *Exile* is his second feature.

92 Widescreen

Germany/Belgium/
Kosovo 2020

Exil

Director/Screenplay
Visar Morina

Producers
Janine Jackowski,
Jonas Dornbach, Maren Ade

Photography
Matteo Cocco

Editors
Laura Lauzemis,
Hansjörg Weißbrich,
Visar Morina

Music
Benedikt Schiefer

With
Mišel Matičević,
Sandra Hüller, Rainer Bock,
Thomas Mraz, Flonja Kodheli

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



© Komplizen Film

121 minutes
In German and Albanian,
with English subtitles



NZ Classification tbc



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

Heroic Losers

After being scammed into bankruptcy, a community of working-class Argentines band together to devise the ultimate payback – an elaborate money heist inspired by the movies – in Sebastián Borensztein's winning underdog comedy.

Ricardo Darín, Argentina's rustic leading everyman and no stranger to the crime-caper genre, stars in this endearing, old-timey heist movie about sticking it to the man. When Darín and his hardworking neighbours are fleeced of their life savings on the eve of the country's 2001 financial crisis, the future looks grim, until they get a tip-off that the devious lawyer who swindled their cash has hidden it all in an underground vault, presumably for a rainy day. Revenge has never felt so satisfying – or sweetly ironic – as the titular losers plot to reclaim what's rightfully theirs on the night of a torrential downpour.

"Empathetic and entertaining... *Heroic Losers*' always timely, universally relatable tale goes a considerable way. Pitting ordinary folks against the rich, powerful and unscrupulous has long given Robin Hood-style stories an appealing glow, as has exploring the economic disparity and potential for corruption inherent in such class clashes... Transforming bleak reality into an uplifting fantasy... it's pure cathartic escapism... [and] when the central heist clicks into gear, the film cracks its way into rousing territory." — Sarah Ward, *Screendaily*

About the Filmmaker

Sebastián Borensztein was born in Buenos Aires. Before directing features, he was a prolific and award-winning TV producer, writer and director. *Heroic Losers* is his latest film. Selected filmography: *Kóblic* (2016), *Chinese Take-Out* (2011), *Sin memoria* (2011), *The Die is Cast* (2005).

Encounters

Argentina/Spain 2019

La Odisea de los Giles

Director

Sebastián Borensztein

Producers

Hugo Sigman, Ricardo Darín, Matías Mosteirín, Chino Darín, Federico Posternak, Leticia Cristi, Fernando Bovaira, Simón de Santiago

Screenplay

Sebastián Borensztein, Eduardo Sacheri

Photography

Rodrigo Pulpeiro

Editor

Alejandro Carrillo Penovi

Music

Federico Jusid

With

Ricardo Darín, Luis Brandoni, Chino Darín, Verónica Llinás, Daniel Aráoz, Carlos Belloso, Marco Antonio Caponi, Rita Cortese, Andrés Parra

Festival Premiere

Toronto 2019



117 minutes
In Spanish with English subtitles



Offensive language



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

Just 6.5

Encounters

A box office behemoth in its homeland and a daring breakthrough for its 30-year-old director Saeed Roustayi, this visceral policer tackles the maelstrom of Iran's war on drugs through propulsive action and real political bite.

Opening at breakneck pace as a police officer chases a suspect on foot through the back alleys of Tehran, *Just 6.5* crackles with relentless intensity. Iran's exploding drug use – in this case, its epidemic of crack addiction – forms the backdrop to this riveting blend of police procedural and gripping bureaucratic thriller, following the efforts of a handful of cops to bust their way up the drug hierarchy.

As irascible a bunch as you'll see on screen anywhere, the investigators are nominally led by Samad (A *Separation*'s Peyman Maadi), who has to overcome his own challenges amid the police bureaucracy even as he catches, cajoles and loudly threatens his quarry. Samad and his colleagues arrest and flip their way from user to dealer to courier in search of an elusive kingpin, with *Just 6.5* – somewhat sarcastically named after Iran's 6.5 million addicts – earning comparisons to classics like *The French Connection* and offering unique insights into the specifics of Iran's police and justice system. Familiar genre beats are skillfully handled as cops and criminals vie for supremacy in grotesquely overcrowded jail cells, and in cat-and-mouse encounters as thrilling as the busts setting them in motion. — Steve Newall

About the Filmmaker

Saeed Roustayi is a graduate of filmmaking from Soureh Film College. His debut feature film, *Life and A Day* (2016), won nine main awards at Tehran's Fajr Film Festival, as well as accolades from the Iranian Film Awards and Iranian Film Critics ceremonies. Selected filmography: *The Light-Colored Manteaux* (2012).

Iran 2019
Metri Shesh-o Nim

Director/Screenplay
Saeed Roustayi

Producer
Seyed Jamal Sadatian

Photography
Hooman Behmanesh

Editor
Bahram Dehghan

Music
Payman Yazdani

With
Payman Maadi,
Navid Mohammadzadeh,
Hooman Kiaie, Parinaz Izadyar,
Farhad Aslani, Maziar Seyedi,
Ali Bagheri

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



134 minutes
In Farsi with English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION

Violence, drug use
& content that may disturb

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

To the Ends of the Earth

Personal, cultural and imagined fears are brought to the scenic surface of Kurosawa Kiyoshi's superb new film, about a young woman navigating the customs and language of a foreign country while on assignment there as the host of a TV show.

Kurosawa Kiyoshi, the prolific auteur behind such modern Japanese masterpieces as *Cure* and *Tokyo Sonata*, takes his enduring fascination with psychological dread into a new realm with this enormously satisfying drama shot on location in Uzbekistan.

Exploring the idea of culture clash as a state of mind, Kurosawa's latest gets inside the head of Yoko (Maeda Atsuko), a TV reporter touring the central Asian country with a crew from Tokyo. As they move from region to region, shooting shallow lifestyle and sightseeing segments for a travel show, cracks in Yoko's forced on-camera delivery, and in the frustrated crew's morale, begin to appear. Yoko's alienation, compounded by the language barrier (Uzbek dialogue is intentionally not subtitled for effect) and the oppressive stares of locals, is expertly crafted in scenes that pinpoint the unease of existing in a totally unfamiliar place, but with an added complexity that Yoko's anxiety might be projected, and not necessarily the result of being an unwanted woman and foreigner in a strange land. Building to a series of bold emotional flourishes in its third act, *To the Ends of the Earth* earns both its tension and humour in surprising yet profoundly relatable ways. — Tim Wong

About the Filmmaker

Kurosawa Kiyoshi is a Japanese director. He first came to prominence with the revisionist serial killer film *Cure* (1997), and was judged best director in the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes for *Journey to the Shore* (2015). Selected filmography: *Foreboding* (2017), *Before We Vanish* (2016), *Daguerrotype* (2016), *Creepy* (2016), *Tokyo Sonata* (2008).

98 Widescreen

Encounters

Japan/Uzbekistan/ Qatar 2019

*Tabi no Owari Sekai
no Hajimari*

Director/Screenplay
Kurosawa Kiyoshi

Producers
Jason Gray, Eiko Mizuno Gray,
Nishigaya Toshikazu

Photography
Ashizawa Akiko

Editor
Takahashi Koichi

Music
Hayashi Yusuke

With
Maeda Atsuko, Kase Ryo,
Sometani Shota, Emoto Tokio,
Adiz Rajabov

Festival Premiere
Locarno 2019



121 minutes
In Japanese and Uzbek,
with English subtitles



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

The Unknown Saint

A bumbling thief plots to infiltrate a mausoleum built inexplicably on top of his buried loot in Alaa Eddine Aljem's delightful, deadpan tale of spirituality and greed in rural Morocco.

Landing somewhere between the drollery of Aki Kaurismäki and the surreal spin on crime and punishment perfected by the Coens, this tight little caper is a genuine calling card for its debut director Alaa Eddine Aljem. His brand of gentle absurdity is caked into the very premise: a thief, running low on time as the cops close in, buries a bag of stolen cash on a hill in the desert, fashioning a makeshift grave with rocks to better identify the spot later. When he's finally released from prison, he returns to the spot to collect... only to discover that locals have mistaken his assembly of random rubble as a miracle grave for a non-existent saint. Not only have they erected a lavish shrine above the hiding place, but an entire village has been built below.

As the thief and his dim-witted accomplice begin a long-winded stake-out, Aljem expands the scope to involve a cast of oddball villagers, all unnamed archetypes whose fates converge in a manner perfectly befitting of the film's fable-like structure. With a light comic touch, Aljem strings up the absurdity of blind faith while unearthing the humanity that draws us to such beliefs in the first place. A real find. — Judah Finnigan

About the Filmmaker

Alaa Eddine Aljem is a Moroccan director best known for the award-winning short film *The Desert Fish* (2015), which took the Critics, Screenwriting and Grand prizes at the Moroccan National Film Festival. *The Unknown Saint* is his first feature.

100 Widescreen

Encounters

Morocco/France 2019

Director/Screenplay
Alaa Eddine Aljem

Producers
Francesca Duca, Alexa Rivero

Photography
Amine Berrada

Editor
Lilian Corbeille

Music
Amine Bouhafa

With
Younes Bouab,
Salah Bensalah,
Bouchaib Essamak,
Mohamed Naimane,
Anas El Baz, Hassan Ben Bdida,
Abdelghani Kitab,
Ahmed Yarziz

Festival Premiere
Cannes 2019



© Le Moindre Geste – Altamar Films

100 minutes
In Darija with English subtitles



Mild violence
& coarse language

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Charter

Dramatising the turbulence and ambiguity of custody battles with emotional precision and complexity, *Charter* focuses on a mother's impulsive decision to abscond with her estranged children to a holiday resort, and the consequences of her actions.

In this vividly tense and realist follow-up to her outstanding debut feature *Sami Blood* (NZIFF17), writer/director Amanda Kernell deftly considers the fraught intersection of motherhood and self-determination.

It's been months since Alice has seen her children when she gets a distressed call from her young son. She races north to ensure her children's safety, only to find her bitter ex-husband prohibiting her from seeing them. With only a week until the final custody verdict, Alice makes the desperate decision to abduct her children and spend the week vacationing together in the Canary Islands, reconnecting and convincing them she can be a good mother, whatever that means.

Charter is at once a stressful character drama, a mother-daughter love story, and a frenetic on-the-run film about betrayal and forgiveness. Ane Dahl Torp is excellent as the magnetic, complex Alice, an imperfect mother torn between independence and responsibility. First-time actor Tintin Poggats Sarri, too, is a standout as Alice's surly 14-year-old daughter, Elina. Throughout the film, Alice and Elina perform a delicate dance of trust, heightened by the daunting possibility that their illegal escapade could fall apart at any moment. — Amanda Jane Robinson

About the Filmmaker

Swedish filmmaker Amanda Kernell is a trained director of the National Film School of Denmark. *Sami Blood* (2016), her feature film debut, premiered at the Venice Film Festival and won the Europa Cinemas Label for Best European Film. *Charter* is her second feature film.

102 Widescreen

Radical Empathy

Sweden/Norway/
Denmark 2020

Director/Screenplay
Amanda Kernell

Producers
Lars G Lindström,
Eva Åkergren

Photography
Sophia Olsson

Editor
Anders Skov

Music
Kristian Eidnes Andersen

With
Ane Dahl Torp,
Sverrir Gudnason,
Troy Lundkvist,
Tintin Poggats Sarri,
Johan Bäckström,
Eva Melander

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



94 minutes
In Swedish, English and Spanish,
with English subtitles

Part of EUROPE!
VOICES OF WOMEN IN FILM

efp european
film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival

M Offensive language

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

The Surrogate

In this fiery conversation starter, tough ethical quandaries agitate the sophisticated New York lives of three friends, whose best intentions behind a surrogate pregnancy are complicated when nature intrudes.

Selected for SXSW 2020, Jeremy Hersh's debut feature missed out on a prestigious premiere slot when the hip Austin festival became one of the earliest COVID event casualties. We're pleased to bring his thoughtful human drama to our At Home — Online edition.

With their roots in the New York theatre scene clear to see, Hersh and his terrific cast bite deep into a rich layer cake of issues, requiring the audience to interrogate their own responses to the choices confronting the characters; choices that would challenge the legendary wisdom of Solomon.

Jess (Jasmine Batchelor) is thrilled to be bearing a child for her best friends, gay couple Josh (Chris Perfetti) and Aaron (Sullivan Jones), until their perfectly modern arrangement flounders on an unexpected prenatal diagnosis of a birth disorder. When nobody is wrong, and no answer is right, how do you do the right thing? *The Surrogate* is intelligent, heartbreaking and entirely human. — Marten Rabarts

"Hersh's briskly economical yet intensely emotional film... [is] without an ounce of preachiness or melodrama... [and] asks tough questions... in a manner... always compelling and grounded in a firm foundation of what feels like authentic experience." — David Rooney, *Hollywood Reporter*

About the Filmmaker

Jeremy Hersh is a New York filmmaker. His undergraduate thesis film *Natives* premiered at SXSW in 2013, and was followed by the acclaimed short *Actresses* (2015). Partly crowdfunded on Kickstarter, *The Surrogate* is his debut feature film.

Breaking Through

USA 2020

Director/Screenplay
Jeremy Hersh

Producers
Jonathan Blitstein,
Julie Christeas, Taylor Hess

Photography
Mia Cioffi Henry

Editor
Cecilia Delgado

With
Jasmine Batchelor,
Chris Perfetti, Sullivan Jones,
Brooke Bloom, Eboni Booth,
William DeMeritt

Festival Premiere
SXSW 2020



93 minutes
In English



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 July until Fri 31 Jul

Zana

In Kosovo, the pressure on a mother to conceive, from both her conservative family and superstitious village community, builds with intensity in this nightmarish, emotionally charged drama tackling themes of war, trauma and oppressive gender roles.

A taut, suspenseful drama about the toll war can take on a mother, *Zana* is set in a small Kosovar village and follows Lume as she attempts to conceive a child ten years after losing her young daughter in the war. With medical assistance failing, the taciturn Lume reluctantly turns to the mysticism of a traditional healer in an effort to appease her mother-in-law's desperation for a grandchild. In her attempts to fall pregnant, Lume finds her repressed trauma rising rapidly to the surface, straining her relationships and violently disrupting her state of mind.

With an exquisite lead performance by the compelling Adriana Matoshi, *Zana* is a deeply personal portrait of a mother's grief in the shadow of wartime trauma. A survivor of the war which killed her mother and sister, director Antoneta Kastrati brings a visceral authenticity to the film, lodging the viewer in Lume's unravelling spirit with crisp cinematography and harrowing dream sequences. *Zana* is a deft turn towards drama from Kastrati – a long-time documentarian – and a gripping study of the cavernous connection between mother and child. — Amanda Jane Robinson

About the Filmmaker

Antoneta Kastrati was born in Zahaq, Kosovo. She holds a master's degree in journalism from the Kosovo Institute of Journalism and Communication, and attended the American Film Institute Directing Workshop for Women. She has directed the short documentaries *Seeking Magic* (2008) and *She Comes in Spring* (2013). *Zana* is her feature debut.

106 Widescreen

Breaking Through

Kosovo/Albania 2019

Director
Antoneta Kastrati

Producer
Casey Cooper Johnson

Screenplay
Antoneta Kastrati,
Casey Cooper Johnson

Photography
Sevdije Kastrati

Editors
Antoneta Kastrati,
Brett W. Bachman,
Michal Reich

Music
Dritero Nikqi

With
Adriana Matoshi,
Astrit Kabashi, Fatmire Sahiti,
Mensur Safqiu, Vedat Bajrami,
Irena Cahani, Shengyl Ismaili,
Bislim Muçaj

Festival Premiere
Toronto 2019

97 minutes
In Albanian with English subtitles

Part of EUROPE!
VOICES OF WOMEN IN FILM

eefp european
film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival

TBC Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

Lessons of Love

This surprisingly touching romantic odyssey documents charismatic Jola, a stylish sexagenarian embracing newly won love and liberation after an abusive, decades-long marriage.

When the title of Polish documentary *Lessons of Love* first appears, it seems ironic. Jola, a strong-willed and intimidatingly fashionable Polish woman nearing her seventies, has just fled her Italian country home and her four-decade marriage to a truly hideous man. Compellingly captured by co-directors Małgorzata Goliszewska and Kasia Mateja, we follow Jola to her hometown where a relationship with another man begins to flourish. It's here that the title sheds its irony as the tremulous early throes of true love begin to manifest for the first time in their lives.

A thrillingly woozy romance, *Lessons of Love* excels in its refusal to adhere to expectations, much like its central subject. The composed filmmaking captures the spirit of a woman rebelling against the conservatism of her generation, where divorces don't happen and women don't speak out against their husbands. Jola is a tremendous subject, her magnetic presence allowing only occasional glimpses of vulnerability; the vulnerability of a woman opening herself up to something new. The relationship between Jola and her new amour Wojtek is a marvel, captured in warm, candid conversations by its patient observers. — Tom Augustine

About the Filmmakers

Małgorzata Goliszewska and Kasia Mateja are Polish filmmakers with a background in experimental film and short documentaries. *Lessons of Love* is their first feature film collaboration as directors.

108 Widescreen

Becoming

Poland 2019

Directors

Małgorzata Goliszewska,
Kasia Mateja

Producer

Anna Stylińska

Screenplay

Anna Stylińska,
Małgorzata Goliszewska

Photography

Kasia Mateja,
Mateusz Czuchnowski,
Tymon Tykwiński

Editor

Alan Zejer

Festival Premiere

IDFA 2019



72 minutes
In Polish with English subtitles

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VOICES OF WOMEN IN FILM

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film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Mi Vida

Becoming

Defying family expectations and maternal norms, 63-year-old hairdresser Lou travels to start a new life abroad, settling on the Spanish port city of Cádiz, where adventures in language and friendship await.

In the empowering spirit of *Educating Rita* and *Gloria*, this sun-soaked Dutch dramedy follows sexagenarian Lou Welter (Loes Luca), who arrives in Cádiz seeking to rediscover the magical feeling she had when she visited there as a child with her father. However, any initial frisson quickly fades. Living with her host family proves intolerable and Lou instantly finds herself offside with her Spanish course tutor Andrea Cruz (Elvira Minguez), especially after she is the one who has to bail Lou out of her accommodation bind.

Gradually finding her feet, a rooftop room and friendship, both with fellow (and much younger) language students and a gaggle of Pilates classmates, Lou's newfound bliss is then threatened by the unannounced arrival of her pregnant daughter.

Director Norbert ter Hall and actress-turned-screenwriter Roos Ouwehand have crafted a charming character study which makes clever use of sound and focus to evoke the excitement, confusion and fear of arriving in a new city. It's also a fabulous showcase for Minguez and Luca, who get plenty of moments to shine in authentic and substantive lead roles that, as ter Hall rightly points out, rarely exist for women of their age. — James Croot

About the Filmmaker

Norbert ter Hall is a director and producer who's worked extensively in Dutch television. Selected filmography: *De Belofte van Pisa* (2019), *&Me* (2013), *Monte Carlo* (2001).

110 Widescreen

The Netherlands/Spain
2019

Director
Norbert ter Hall

Producers
Maaïke Benschop,
Petra Goedings

Screenplay
Roos Ouwehand

Photography
Richard van Oosterhout

Editor
Wouter Jansen

Music
Jasper Boeke

With
Loes Luca, Elvira Minguez,
Fermí Reixach,
Loïc Bellemans,
Anniek Pfeifer, Jason Mba,
Diewertje Dir

Festival Premiere
São Paulo 2019



90 minutes
In Dutch, Spanish and English,
with English subtitles



BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

Perfect 10

Gymnastics, an unknown half-brother and a streak of petty crime set in motion a teenage girl's coming-of-age in suburban Brighton, in Eva Riley's sensitive, spirited first feature film.

The debut feature from Scottish writer/director Eva Riley, *Perfect 10* is set in Brighton. But don't expect fun at the pier: this is the outskirts. Following in the strong tradition of British social realism, the film is about Leigh, an aspiring teen gymnast who is up against it. As if the nasty bullies on her squad aren't enough to deal with, Leigh is lonely and struggling to cope with a complicated home life. The fraught family dynamic is further destabilised by the arrival of a half-brother, Joe. Leigh didn't know he even existed and soon he and his even older mates are partying in the lounge.

Haunted by absence, and driven by an unruly longing to belong, newcomer Frankie Box compels as Leigh. The camera stays close to her youthful, increasingly reckless, energy. Joe is involved in petty crime and she starts to tag along. Brother and sister's growing sense of kinship is underpinned by something volatile and dangerous, much like the motorbikes they start to steal. Leigh is bound to fall (and does) but this is a narrative that takes some unexpected, affirming turns. Life might not be perfect, but Leigh gains confidence and balance and sticks the landing.

About the Filmmaker

Eva Riley is a Scottish director and screenwriter, based in Brighton. She graduated from the National Film and Television School in 2015, with her final year film *Patriot* premiering in competition at Cannes. Her short films have screened at festivals including London, Edinburgh and Telluride.

Becoming

UK 2019

Director/Screenplay
Eva Riley

Producers
Jacob Thomas,
Valentina Brazzini,
Bertrand Faivre

Photography
Steven Cameron Ferguson

Editor
Abolfazl Talooni

Music
Terence Dunn

With
Frankie Box, Alfie Deegan,
Sharlene Whyte, William Ash,
Billy Mogford, Nicola Wright,
Emily Gibson, Leia Desseaux,
Jenna Goodwin

Festival Premiere
London 2019



© Nick Wall

84 minutes
In English

Presented in association with

The
edge



Offensive language,
drug use & low level violence

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

A Year Full of Drama

Nourishing and unexpectedly moving, Marta Pulk's documentary takes us to theatre-mad Estonia, where a young, inexperienced woman wins a job to watch and critique every theatre production in a calendar year.

A Year Full of Drama revolves around an experiment in the form of a job listing: a paid position for someone who has never been to the theatre before, to watch and review theatre full-time for a year.

Hundreds of applications from across Estonia pour in and a candidate is selected: 21-year-old Alissija, a magnetic, working class girl from a rural, Russian-speaking family. Adrift and curious, she packs up and moves to the capital for a year-long immersion into the country's performing arts scene.

This intimate documentary charts Alissija's coming of age as she contends with loneliness, doubt and writer's block. "I don't know how to live," she declares, more than once. Through patient, perceptive camerawork, we watch as Alissija settles into her role as audience member and critic. As the months pass, the shows she attends begin to provoke a questioning of her own life; her traumas, fears and ambitions. One year and 224 shows later, she is a changed woman.

With its gentle pace and poignant observations, director Marta Pulk's empathetic portrait of a young person coming into their own is energising and honest, making a strong case for the notion that art really can transform a life. — Amanda Jane Robinson

About the Filmmaker

Marta Pulk holds a master's degree in filmmaking from the Baltic Film and Media School. *A Year Full of Drama* is her debut feature.

114 Widescreen

Becoming

Estonia 2019
Aasta täis draamat

Director
Marta Pulk

Producer
Paul Piik

Screenplay
Henrik Kalmet, Paavo Piik

Photography
Aivo Rannik

Editor
Hendrik Mägar

Music
Jakob Juhkam

Festival Premiere
IDFA 2019



109 minutes
In Estonian and Russian,
with English subtitles

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eefp european
film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival



BUY

Online Rental
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and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on
the Kosovo declaration of independence.



QUEENSTOWN AUCKLAND



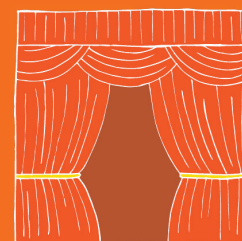
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Lara

Belonging

Corinna Harfouch is unforgettable as a mother reaching out, in her own severe way, to her classical pianist son and her own erstwhile artistic ambitions, in director Jan-Ole Gerster's high-tensile drama.

A lacerating character study of a contentious woman, *Lara* is a thoroughly compelling drama that spans a day in its eponymous heroine's life. It's not just any day: Lara is turning 60, although this gives her little reason to celebrate. More importantly, that evening her son Victor, a virtuoso pianist, will perform an original composition for the first time. However, Lara isn't invited and Victor has been ignoring her calls – for weeks. But on Victor's big night, Lara shall not be shunned.

Lara's complex and unnerving personality is revealed through her interactions with former work colleagues, a cab driver neighbour, her ex-husband, her mother and her own piano teacher, among others, each encounter adding a brushstroke to the portrait. The picture, while not pretty, is engrossing: monstrous castrating mother, envious of and undermining her son's talents which she spent years moulding; an embittered woman riddled with thwarted ambition; a manipulative boss who once filled her underlings with fear, possibly just because she could. Corinna Harfouch's nuanced performance makes *Lara* entirely believable and in less accomplished directorial hands, this tale could have swerved into farce or melodrama. Lara has her reasons, and although not necessarily defensible, she completely fascinates. — Sandra Reid

About the Filmmaker

Jan-Ole Gerster is a German director based in Berlin. His debut feature, *Oh Boy* (NZIFF12), starring Tom Schilling, was a surprise hit on the international festival circuit. *Lara* is his second feature film.

Germany 2019

Director
Jan-Ole Gerster

Producers
Marcos Kantis,
Martin Lehwald,
Michal Pokorny

Screenplay
Blaž Kutin

Photography
Frank Griebe

Editor
Isabel Meier

Music
Arash Safaian

With
Corinna Harfouch,
Tom Schilling, André Jung,
Volkmar Kleinert, Rainer Bock

Festival Premiere
Karlovy Vary 2019



© Frank Griebe, Schiwago Film

98 minutes
In German with English subtitles

M Contains suicide references

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

My Little Sister

A heavyweight drama elevated by two outstanding performers, Lars Eidinger (*The Clouds of Sils Maria*) joins Nina Hoss (celebrated star of *Barbara* and *Phoenix*) as inseparable twins fighting serious illness with their undying passion for the theatre.

A brilliant playwright, Lisa (Nina Hoss) no longer writes. She lives in Switzerland with her family but her heart has stayed in Berlin, beating to the rhythm of her twin brother's heart. The deep ties between the twins have grown even stronger since Sven (Lars Eidinger) was diagnosed with an aggressive type of leukaemia, for which Lisa as his twin has naturally provided bone marrow. He's a famous theatre actor and while he struggles through the aftermath of the transplant, Lisa starts to move heaven and earth to get him back on stage, which she believes is the place where he most truly lives.

She will give her all for her soulmate to the point of obsession; neglecting everything else, even risking her marriage to Martin (Jens Albinus), her children and the relationship with her self-absorbed but well-meaning mother (Marthe Keller, deftly adding a light touch as her twin children struggle with questions of life and death). Hoss and Eidinger seem to revel in the meaty material and deliver nothing less than absolute authenticity and truth from the first dramatic note to the last. — Swiss Films/Marten Rabarts

About the Filmmakers

Stéphanie Chuat and Véronique Reymond are both childhood friends and accomplished actresses. Their award-winning first feature film, *The Little Bedroom* (2010), premiered at the Locarno Film Festival. Their documentaries include *Evening Class for Adults* (2005), *Buffo, Buten & Howard* (2009) and *Ladies* (2018).

120 Widescreen

Belonging

Switzerland/Germany
2020

Schwesterlein

Directors/Screenplay
Véronique Reymond,
Stéphanie Chuat

Producer
Ruth Waldburger

Photography
Filip Zimbrunn

Editor
Myriam Rachmuth

Music
Christian Garcia

With
Nina Hoss, Lars Eidinger,
Marthe Keller, Jens Albinus,
Thomas Ostermeier

Festival Premiere
Berlin 2020



99 minutes
In English, German and French,
with English subtitles

Part of EUROPE!
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film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

If Only

Ginevra Elkann's lovely directorial debut, set in the early 90s and based on her own childhood, finds three siblings arriving in Rome from Paris on a visit to their unreliable father, where family tensions and spontaneous fun mix.

Peppy 8-year-old Alma (Oro De Commarque, an adorable new face to remember) prays secretly for the reunion of her divorced parents over one indelible winter in this brisk, instantly appealing family drama. Torn between France and Italy, Alma and her two older brothers are shipped off by their pregnant – and very Catholic – mother to spend time with their father (Riccardo Scamarcio), a struggling screenwriter whose parenting skills also lack finesse. What unfolds, to everyone's surprise, is a freewheeling season of beach outings, daytrips to Rome and joyrides with a gang of cooler, older kids, one of whom Alma falls for and fantasises about their future marriage alongside the day her parents will renew their vows.

Directing with a remarkable lightness of touch, Ginevra Elkann guides her ensemble cast (which includes *The Wonders'* Alba Rohrwacher and *Fleabag's* greasy Brett Gelman) through scene after scene of effortless naturalism and mischief. No single event in *If Only* feels outlandish or contrived, a testament to its portrayal of the way the fondest memories often feel incidental in the moment and only later – like the charms of this splendid first feature – catch you off guard.

About the Filmmaker

Ginevra Elkann (notably a granddaughter of Gianni Agnelli, founder of Fiat) is an Italian producer and director. She was assistant to Bernardo Bertolucci on *Besieged* (1998), and currently chairs the production companies Asmara Films and Good Films. *If Only* is her directorial feature debut.

122 Widescreen

Belonging

Italy/France 2019

Magari

Director

Ginevra Elkann

Producers

Lorenzo Mieli, Mario Gianani,
Lorenzo Gangarossa

Screenplay

Chiara Barzini, Ginevra Elkann

Photography

Vladan Radovic

Editor

Desideria Rayner

Music

Riccardo Sinigallia

With

Riccardo Scamarcio,
Alba Rohrwacher,
Milo Roussel, Ettore Giustiniani,
Oro De Commarque,
Céline Sallette, Brett Gelman,
Benjamin Baroque

Festival Premiere

Locarno 2019



104 minutes

In Italian, French and English,
with English subtitles

NZ CLASSIFICATION



Sex scenes
& offensive language



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

King of the Cruise

Intrigued by cruise ships and the people who frequent them, Sophie Dros' fascinating documentary focuses on an extravagant Scottish Baron whose love of luxury liners masks a very human need for affection and validation.

The massive cruise ships that slink by each other in *King of the Cruise* resemble floating micro-societies where, as director Sophie Dros puts it, "passengers are confined... with a few thousand people who don't really know each other. There is no escape. Which does not seem to bother anyone." Whether the notion of the cruise appeals or revolts, this entertaining documentary invites us to set sail.

Among the passengers is Ronald Busch Reisinger, an avid cruise fan. This larger-than-life personality, both in his body mass and in the seemingly outlandish stories that he tells, is quick to announce to anyone who'll listen: "I own a county." Whether sporting a kilt as Baron of Inneryne or a royal red cloak as king of a bit of land in Africa, he is a striking and incongruous figure. As the film coolly observes life aboard, from waiters cajoling breakfasting patrons with "happy coffee!" to motivational pep talks about exercise delivered to folk becalmed in their chairs, in his cabin, the Baron's garrulous façade slips. Ultimately, despite being "born with a gold spoon" in his mouth, in his search for recognition and to fend off loneliness, Ronnie resembles any other common mortal. — Sandra Reid

About the Filmmaker

Sophie Dros is an Amsterdam-based director whose films tackle politically incorrect subjects and lifestyles outside of social norms. She has made documentaries about genderfluidity (*Genderbende*, 2017), sex dolls (*My Silicone Love*, 2015) and S&M relationships (*Rubber Romance*, 2014).

124 Widescreen

Belonging

The Netherlands 2019

Director
Sophie Dros

Producers
Olivia Sophie van Leeuwen,
Gijs Kerbosch,
Roel Oude Nijhuis,
Gijs Determeijer

Photography
Boas van Milligen Bielke

Editor
Erik ten Brinke

Music
Thomas Goralski

Festival Premiere
IDFA 2019



74 minutes
In English and Russian,
with English subtitles

PG

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

The Last Wave

An ancient doomsday prophecy haunts Australian lawyer Richard Chamberlain while freakish weather plagues Sydney in Peter Weir's newly remastered murder mystery-turned-apocalyptic chiller from 1977.

As relevant today as it was more than 40 years ago on first release, Peter's Weir's supernatural Australian classic returns newly remastered from the original 35mm interpositive.

"Opening with the uncanny sight of a sunny, cloudless sky erupting into a torrential ice storm, Australian New Waver Peter Weir's hallucinatory follow up to *Picnic at Hanging Rock* is part murder mystery, part apocalyptic chiller. When he agrees to defend a group of Aboriginal men charged with homicide, a Sydney lawyer (Richard Chamberlain) is plunged into a shadow world of secret societies, shamanic rituals, and an ancient doomsday prophecy. And then the black rain starts to fall... Surely one of the wettest films ever made – nearly every frame is drenched in ominous, aqueous imagery – *The Last Wave* sustains an air of dream-state dread as it builds towards its brain-bending climax." — Film at Lincoln Center

"Strange, foreboding and brilliantly different from any film ever made in Australia, *The Last Wave* is time past, future and present, a mingling of Aboriginal Dreamtime, Revelations, doomsday predictions and the Deluge." — *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1977

About the Filmmaker

Peter Weir is one of Australia's most important directors. A leading figure in the Australian New Wave, the success of his early films such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975) and *A Year of Living Dangerously* (1983) led to Oscar-nominated works like *Witness* (1985) and *The Truman Show* (1998). Other key films include *Dead Poets Society* (1989), *Fearless* (1993) and *Master & Commander* (2003).

126 Widescreen

Indigenous Voices

Australia 1977

Director
Peter Weir

Producers
Hal McElroy, Jim McElroy

Screenplay
Peter Weir, Tony Morphett,
Petru Popescu

Photography
Russell Boyd

Editor
Max Lemon

Music
Groove Myers

With
Richard Chamberlain,
Olivia Hamnett, David Gulpilil,
Frederick Parslow,
Vivean Gray,
Nandjiwarra Amagula,
Peter Carroll



106 minutes
In English



NZ CLASSIFICATION
Violence



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

Kubrick by Kubrick

In this fresh cinephilic appreciation, French film critic Michel Ciment's taped interviews with Stanley Kubrick breathe new life into the legacy of one of the most celebrated and studied directors of all time.

If you're wondering what more can be said about filmmaking giant Stanley Kubrick, Gregory Monro's documentary – hot on the heels of the equally fascinating *Filmworker* (NZIFF18) – goes where few have been able to before: straight to the source.

Notoriously reclusive, Kubrick's guarded genius has served to fuel endless theories and interpretations on the meaning of his cinema. Meanwhile, films like *Room 237* have only deepened the mystery with their imaginative speculation on how Kubrick's mind worked. Through rare audio recordings of the auteur in dialogue with Michel Ciment – a writer who had privileged access to Kubrick over 30 years – *Kubrick by Kubrick* allows the director to illuminate his work, both graciously and with an air of finality, in his own words.

Film excerpts from all the classics are elegantly combined with crisp insights into creative practice, but it's what's revealed in the intellectual rapport between Kubrick and Ciment that is the surprise revelation here. Their relaxed conversational flow, running counter to the taciturn image instilled by the legend, finds Kubrick at his most open, humble and philosophical, and is a testament to Ciment's renown as *the* Kubrick authority.

About the Filmmaker

Born in Paris, Gregory Monro is a documentary filmmaker. He was nominated for an International Emmy Award for *Michel Legrand: Let the Music Play* (2018). Selected filmography: *James Stewart, Robert Mitchum: The Two Faces of America* (2017), *Jerry Lewis: The Man Behind the Clown* (2016), *Calamity Jane: Wild West Legend* (2014).

128 Widescreen

University
Book Shop

Portraits

France 2020

Director

Gregory Monro

Producers

Martin Laurent, Jeremy Zelnik

Screenplay

Gregory Monro. Based on Michel Ciment's interviews

Photography

Radosław Ładczuk

Editor

Philippe Baillon

Music

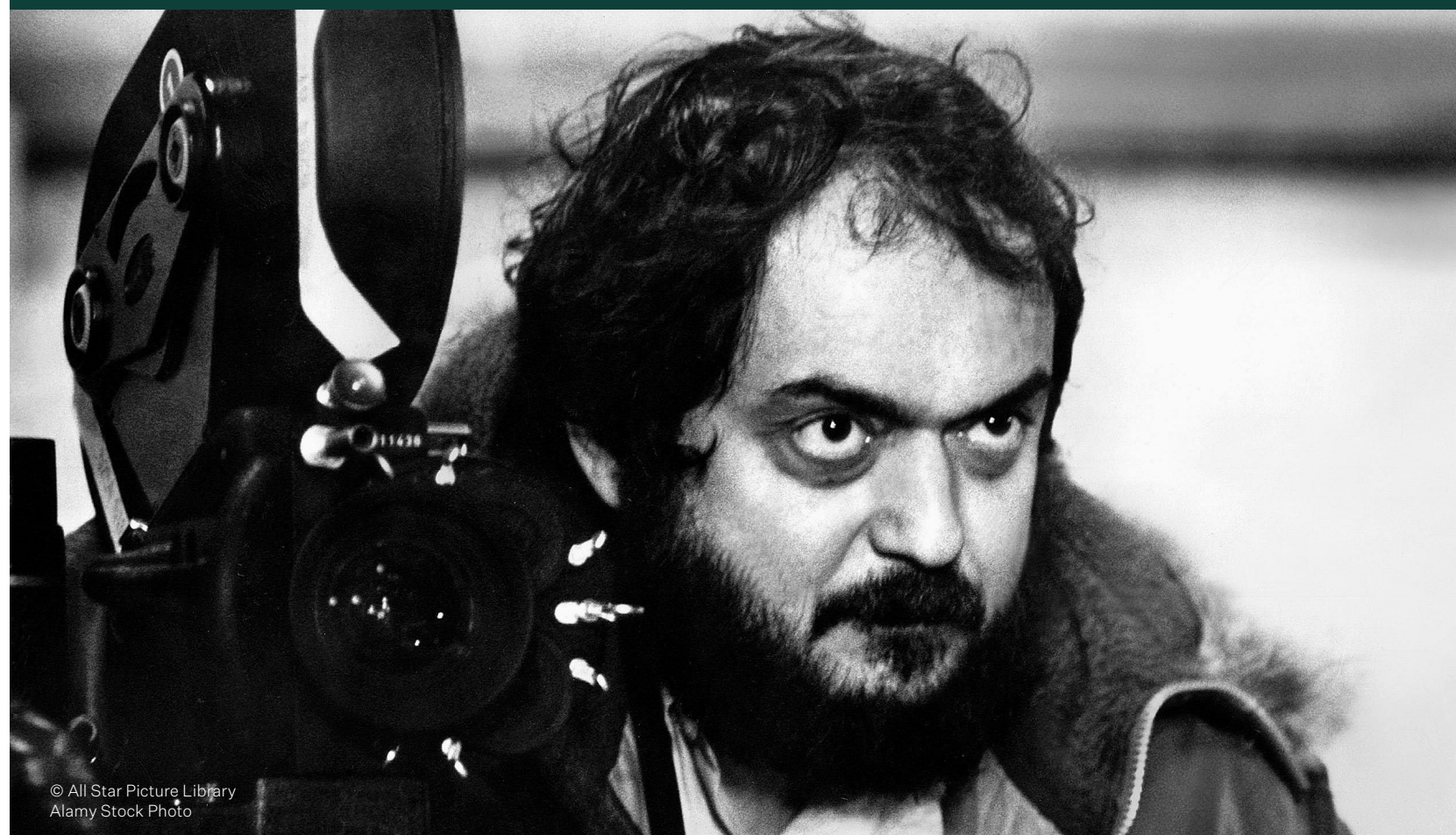
Vincent Theard

With

Stanley Kubrick, Michel Ciment

Festival Premiere

Tribeca 2020



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73 minutes
In English and French,
with English subtitles

Presented in
association with



16

Violence, sex scenes

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

Mayor

By turns comedic and Kafkaesque, this fly-on-the-wall doco observes the fortunes of Ramallah, an epicentre of Palestinian commerce and culture, and its tireless mayor, whose work to better the city is met with danger and frustration.

Shadowing the likeable, assiduous Musa Hadid on his day-to-day leadership of the West Bank's de facto Palestinian capital, *Mayor* is a grounded portrait of a municipality in action, and a not-so-average tour through the practical realities of life under occupation. From its calmly matter-of-fact perspective, the charming mundanity of local body politics contrasts harshly with the geopolitical minefield that is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Ramallah, perched only a few miles north of Jerusalem, remains conspicuously in the crossfire.

Shooting over two years during Hadid's second term, director David Osit's roving camera finds riveting drama in the juxtapositions between dryly entertaining council meetings, city plans for Christmas celebrations (roughly a quarter of its citizens are Christians, Hadid among them), an official visit from Prince William, and the heavy blow of Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital. The gravity of the situation pulls into sharp focus during sudden moments of military engagement, but it's the grace and good humour of Mayor Hadid, whose city continues to thrive against the odds, that gives this documentary a stirring life force of its own. — Tim Wong

About the Filmmaker

David Osit is an Emmy Award-winning documentary director, editor and composer. Selected filmography: *Thank You For Playing* (2015), *Building Babel* (2011).

Political States

USA/UK/Palestine
2020

**Director/Producer/
Photography**
David Osit

Editors
David Osit, Eric Daniel Metzgar

Music
Geinoh Yamashirogumi,
Toru Takemitsu,
Sam Thompson, David Osit

With
Musa Hadid

Festival Premiere
True/False 2020



89 minutes
In Arabic and English,
with English subtitles



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul



Whānau



Mārama

At Home

— Online

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Many are new and diverse voices; some from parts of the globe where artistic freedom isn't necessarily a given.

Others inspire through bold creative choices or are heroes in the eyes of the marginalised communities they represent.



Films in this strand are available to watch as Online Rentals.

Coded Bias

“Algorithmic justice” is one of the most important civil rights issues today, says computer scientist and digital activist Joy Buolamwini, in this accessible and compelling documentary about artificial intelligence and the biased algorithms that power it.

Joy Buolamwini, who found that facial recognition software does not ‘see’ dark-skinned faces, is one of the activists challenging gender and racial bias in the decision-making software that increasingly impacts on our lives.

We travel to London, where police trialling facial recognition surveillance apprehend innocent, mostly black, people for questioning. In New York, an apartment tower manager requires residents to submit to a biometric security system. But people are fighting back. In Hong Kong, pro-democracy protesters confuse and disable facial recognition software by waving laser pointers and spraying the lenses of CCTV cameras.

Inequitable algorithms developed by white men using “pale, male datasets” are also used to sort college applications, rank resumés, set insurance premiums and evaluate prisoner recidivism risk. Unsurprisingly, the technology repeatedly fails people with non-white skin, women and youth.

How relevant is this to New Zealand? In May this year, our police conducted a trial of Clearview AI’s facial recognition software – which illegally uses images scraped from social networks – without consulting the Police Commissioner or the Privacy Commissioner. — Rebecca Priestley

About the Filmmaker

Shalini Kantayya is an American director, producer and environmental activist. Her feature debut *Catching the Sun* (2015) centred on the global race to lead the clean energy future. *Coded Bias* is her second feature documentary.

Mobilise

USA/China/UK 2020

Director/Producer
Shalini Kantayya

Photography
Steve Acevedo

Editors

Alexandra Gilwit,
Zachary Ludescher,
Shalini Kantayya

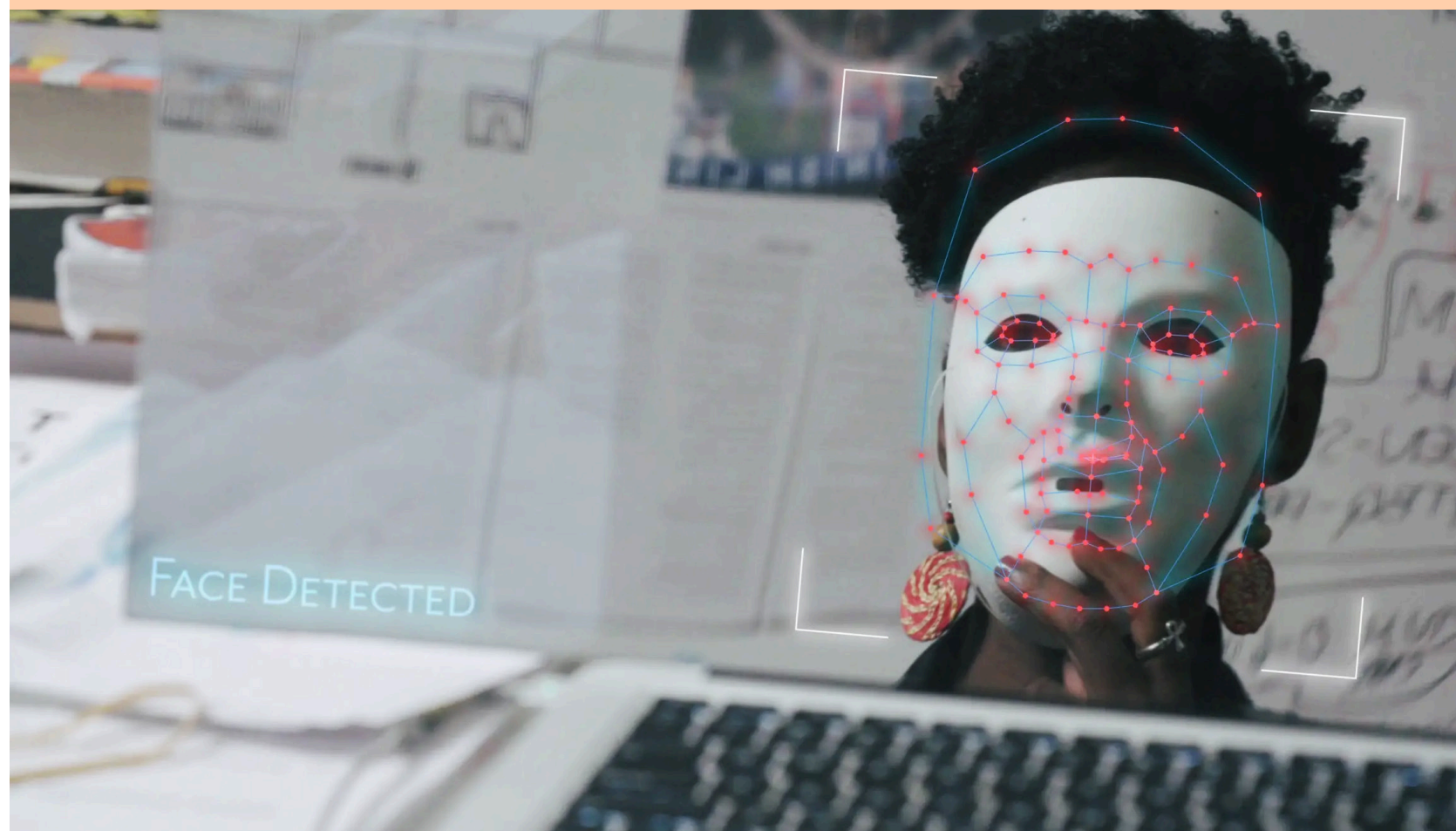
Music

Katya Mihailova

With

Joy Buolamwini, Cathy O’Neil,
Virginia Eubanks,
Safiya Noble, Zeynep Tufekci,
Silkie Carlo, Ravi Naik,
Meredith Broussard

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



83 minutes
In English



BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

Dark City Beneath the Beat

The untold story of Baltimore club music is brought to ecstatic life against the backdrop of the city's depression, and through the black and LGTBQI+ communities galvanised by musical expression, in TT the Artist's bristling documentary.

If you've watched *The Wire* or read the crime stats, then the picture you have of the city of Baltimore will be a dark one indeed. This high-energy, rhythmically-propelled and dazzlingly colourful film doesn't deny that picture, but it shows a vibrant cultural community that is persisting in spite of it.

TT the Artist (aka Tedra Wilson) is a singer, rapper, producer and now filmmaker who for the past decade or so has been a force in the Baltimore dance and music scene. In her directorial debut she takes us on a quick-fire tour of her world. We meet DJ/producer Mighty Mark, who demonstrates how to make a Baltimore Club beat, which dictates the film's pulse, visually as much as sonically.

Polished set pieces are dovetailed with raw actuality, like the heats for the King and Queen of Baltimore dance contests. With sparing use of dialogue, much of the story is left for the viewer to intuit, but the personal testimony in the songs, or a dance involving a rapper and an armed cop, say everything that is needed.

Dark City Beneath the Beat feels hopeful, even uplifting, but this is art born out of desperation. As one of the subjects says: "We dance in the streets because we don't have anywhere else to go." — Nick Bollinger

About the Filmmaker

TT the Artist, is a leading voice in the Baltimore music scene. She has worked with Grammy Award-winning producer Diplo and high profile musical acts as well as directed, produced and edited many of her own music videos.

138 **Spotlight**

Mobilise

USA 2020

Director/Editor
TT the Artist

Producers
Astrid Curet, Issa Rae,
Deniese Davis

Photography
Kirby Griffin

Choreographers
Terry Wedington, Sayquon
Keys, Bmore Than Dance

Festival Premiere
SXSW 2020



65 minutes
In English

Presented in
association with



Offensive language

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Thu 6 Aug

Hong Kong Moments

Vivid and strikingly objective, Zhou Bing's in-the-field documentary covering both sides of Hong Kong's pro-democracy Umbrella Movement examines the personal and political identities at odds in this ongoing conflict.

Hong Kong Moments follows seven of its citizens during the city's 2019 protests as activists flooded the streets to rally against a controversial extradition bill – one which stood to undermine their civil rights granted under the “one country, two systems” arrangement with Mainland China. Over two protest days leading up to local elections, the documentary's seven subjects – a frontline protestor, two politicians, a police officer and a volunteer first-aider among them – express how the protests affect them as filtered through their own personal contexts, revealing a web of clashing opinions aggravated by generational divide, but united by a loyalty to their Hong Kong identity.

This documentary is not a primer or historical lesson. Rather, interwoven moments of our protagonists going about their day – snapshots of police brutality, conversations between shop owners and customers, and the juxtaposition of pro-Beijing and pro-democracy campaigning – elegantly convey both the micro anxieties of daily life and the high stakes of this moment in history. It's a timely feature in more ways than one: though ending on a hopeful note, a Chinese-imposed national security bill recently approved means protests still rage on as we watch this. — Jean Teng

About the Filmmaker

Zhou Bing is a Chinese documentary maker who has lived and worked in Hong Kong for more than five years. He was also a co-producer of the feature film *Crosscurrent* (2016), winner of the Silver Bear at the Berlin International Film Festival.

Mobilise

Hong Kong/Germany
2020

Director/Producer
Zhou Bing

Photography
Wade John Muller, Xue Ming,
Lin Qian Sha,
Chung Cheuk Fan,
Tang Chi Long, Chen Xu Jian,
Yi Bing Quan

Editor
Jeff Kwok

Music
Sonic Lee

Festival Premiere
Hot Docs 2020



96 minutes
In Cantonese and English,
with English subtitles

TBC

Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jun until Sat 1 Aug

Vivos

The great Ai Weiwei, giant of contemporary Chinese, activist and human rights art, directs with breathtaking outrage this soul-searching documentary on the devastation of a Mexican community gutted by a mass abduction of students.

In 2014, students from the Ayotzinapa Rural Teachers' College in Mexico were attacked by masked assailants and police forces while travelling through the town of Iguala, Guerrero, leaving six dead. Forty-three students were abducted, never to be seen again. World-renowned Chinese artist and filmmaker Ai Weiwei visits the Guerrero region to craft an affecting and gut-wrenching document of this tragedy through the families of the students.

Through intimate interviews with the families, Ai allows their grief and trauma to be given a voice, and allows us to bear witness to this scandal, where a corrupt government's investigation is seen as more a cover-up. *Vivos* also shows the strength that the families draw from each other as they continue to fight for justice.

Ai, who has gifted the world stunning visual works across multiple disciplines, has always used his art to shine a spotlight onto human rights struggles. He provides stunning camerawork through the rural landscape of Mexico, as well as close-ups of these testimonies, lending incredible power to the quiet observational scenes of the lives of the families. Their stories of grief and cries for justice deserve to be heard loudly across the lands. — Vicci Ho

About the Filmmaker

China's most famous artist, Ai Weiwei is internationally renowned as an activist, architect, curator and filmmaker. His best known works bring to light human rights abuses and actively critique the Chinese government. He has made numerous documentary works, including most recently the features *The Rest* (2019) and *Human Flow* (2017).

142 Spotlight

Mobilise

Germany/Mexico 2020

Director/Producer
Ai Weiwei

Photography
Ernesto Pardo,
Carlos F. Rossini,
Bruno Santamaría Razo,
Ai Weiwei, Ma Yan

Editor
Niels Pagh Andersen

Music
Jens Bjørnkjær

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



112 minutes
In Spanish and English,
with English subtitles



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

The Long Walk

Somehow both thoughtful and thrilling, Laotian-American filmmaker Mattie Do's ghostly time-travel tale unravels into unexpected places, blending intimate drama with tense horror and sci-fi genre elements.

In a near-future Laos, one lonely man travels down a dusty country road as a silent young woman follows from a distance: a ghost who will soon transport him back to fix his painful past. We, too, follow the man – an old farmer – as he ventures into town to sell scrap bike parts for payment he receives via a chip in his wrist. Meanwhile, a neglected young boy holds the bloodied hand of a dying woman, later revealed as our pivotal ghost.

These are the tangled past and present timelines of *The Long Walk's* unnamed protagonist; hazy fragments which blur and cross as the old man jumps back and forth to remedy the suffering of his dying mother, a childhood memory which leaves him so guilt-ridden, he copes in adulthood by quietly euthanising sick local women to relieve their pain. The changes the man makes in his fraught youth inadvertently trigger sinister alternate realities and reveal uncomfortable truths.

Do – Laos' first and only female director – cleverly uses time travel to explore different shades of grief, personal and collective trauma set in a troubled country rarely seen on screen. Mysterious, meditative and lingering: a ghost story for more than just genre fans. — Jean Teng

About the Filmmaker

Los Angeles-born Mattie Do is a pioneering Laotian filmmaker who directed her debut feature – a horror film – in a country where horror movies were banned for decades. *The Long Walk* is her latest genre film. Selected filmography: *Dearest Sister* (2016), *Chanthaly* (2012).

Encounters

Laos 2019
Bor Mi Vanh Chark

Director
Mattie Do

Producers
Mattie Do,
Christopher Sean Larsen,
Douangmany Soliphanh,
Annick Mahnert,
Justin Deimen, Abhi Rastogi

Screenplay
Christopher Seán Larsen

Photography
Matthew Whitcomb Macar

Editor
Zohar Michel

Music
Anthony Weeden

With
Yannawoutthi Chanthalongsy,
Por Silatsa, Noutnapha Soyda,
Vilouna Phetmany,
Chansamone Inoudom,
Brandon Hashimoto

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



116 minutes
In Lao with English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION

Violence, offensive language
& content that may disturb

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Thu 6 Aug

Paradise Drifters

Exciting young director Mees Peijnenburg and ace cinematographer Jasper Wolf (*Monos*; *Instinct*, NZIFF20) immerse us in the gritty world of a trio of disadvantaged Dutch youths en route to Marseille, where either hope or failure awaits.

Far from the canal houses and modernist villas where the well-heeled burghers of most Dutch cities reside, lies a different world. Here lives an unexpected underclass: young, ethnically mixed, struggling to survive having somehow missed the boat, bus or train to a better life than the one they were born into. From a script developed at the Cannes Cinéfondation, Mees Peijnenburg, a talented director not much older than his young protagonists, scratches the underbelly of Europe and finds a festering wound hidden there. — Marten Rabarts

“*Paradise Drifters* introduces us to three young adults who have no sense of security or belonging in their lives. Chloe (van Waning) is pregnant. The relationship with her mother is revealed in a single encounter marked by anger and violence. Naive Lorenzo (Jonas Smulders) hero-worships his feckless older brother Ivan (Joren Seldeslachts). He will do anything to secure a better future for them when Ivan is released from prison. Anxious, introverted Yousef (Bilal Wahib) seems ill-prepared for the moment he leaves a care home and enters the world... There is a dynamic energy to Peijnenburg’s storytelling... [and] a documentary-like edge to [his] depiction of the tensions in the banlieues of Marseille.” — Allan Hunter, *Screendaily*

About the Filmmaker

Mees Peijnenburg studied at the Netherlands Film Academy, where he made his award-winning graduation film, *Even Cowboys Get to Cry* (2013). In 2015 he directed TV drama *We will never be royals*, whose international title was inspired by the hit Lorde song. *Paradise Drifters* is his first feature film.

146 **Spotlight**

Encounters

The Netherlands 2020

Director/Screenplay
Mees Peijnenburg

Producers
Pieter Kuijpers, Iris Otten,
Sander van Meurs

Photography
Jasper Wolf

Editor
Imre Reutelingsperger

Music
Juho Nurmela,
Ella van der Woude

With
Tamar van Waning,
Jonas Smulders, Bilal Wahib,
Joren Seldeslachts,
Camilla Siegertsz,
Steef Cuijpers, Micha Hulshof

Festival Premiere
Rotterdam 2020



85 minutes
In Dutch with English subtitles



Violence, coarse language,
sex scenes & drug use

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Thu 6 Aug

Black Milk

Indigenous Voices

On the Mongolian steppes, one woman's cultural and sexual identity is reckoned with in Uisenma Borchu's fierce, hypnotic drama of two sisters coming to terms with their expression of heritage and independence.

Mongolian-born, German-based filmmaker Uisenma Borchu is the star, writer and director of *Black Milk*, her deeply personal second feature. She plays Wessi, an immigrant disillusioned with her life in Germany, who returns to her nomadic homeland to visit her sister Ossi. Though overjoyed to be reunited, it does not take long for the more independent-minded Wessi to clash with her sibling over the traditions of her nomadic heritage that she left behind. As Wessi becomes attracted to a mysterious older man also living on the steppes, her sexual candour is both threatening and fascinating to the pregnant, more conservative Ossi. Meanwhile, the tribal elders are finding Wessi's free-spirit something they need to bring under control.

Working with a largely non-professional cast, Borchu examines the complexities of reconciling feminism, culture and tradition with brutal honesty (be warned: there are graphic scenes of animal slaughter) and mythical whimsy. Blending realism and fantasy with sharp editing, *Black Milk* provides no easy answers, but leaves little doubt on how the two sisters, brilliantly played by Borchu and Gunsmaa Tsogzol, will always be there to love, support and inspire each other. — Vicci Ho

About the Filmmaker

Originally from Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, Uisenma Borchu moved with her family to East Germany in 1988. Her debut film *Don't Look at Me That Way* (2015) was lauded at the Bavarian Film Awards, and the Munich and Taipei film festivals. *Black Milk* is her second feature.

Mongolia/Germany
2020

Schwarze Milch

Director/Screenplay
Uisenma Borchu

Producers
Uisenma Borchu, Sven Zellner

Photography
Sven Zellner

Editors
Uisenma Borchu,
Christine Schorr

Music
Daniel Murena

With
Gunsmaa Tsogzol,
Uisenma Borchu,
Franz Rogowski,
Terbish Demberel,
Borchu Bawaa,
Bayarsaikhan Renchinjugder

Festival Premiere
Berlin 2020



91 minutes
In Mongolian and German,
with English subtitles



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

They Call Me Babu

Indonesia's shifting colonial landscape is examined through startling archival footage and the remarkable story of one nanny who, while caring for a Dutch family, braved occupation and social upheaval to find her own independence.

A narrator's voice speaking to her dead mother floats through this engaging and enlightening piece of cinema, harking back to ancient home movies and newsreels. Yet these artefacts are bound together to make a thoroughly modern statement. We follow the Indonesian *babu* (nanny) of the title, Alima, as she escapes an arranged marriage and seeks the opportunity to travel and broaden her horizons. The Dutch family with whom she is employed is symbolic of seemingly benevolent colonisers, yet are entrenched in the belief in their right to rule, even as World War II intervenes and sees the country overrun by another invading force. All the while we see Alima's growth as an independent woman who, when allowed to be educated and have free thought, understands the shackles of colonisation must be thrown off to achieve real freedom.

Director Sandra Beerends has expertly assembled the testimonies of several nannies of this time and threads this through archival film prints which dance with life even as they reveal an age that has long since passed. In the end, we're left with a profound and moving statement from a woman who speaks with a voice of clear conviction for self-determination. — Chris Hormann

About the Filmmaker

Sandra Beerends is a script editor, creative producer and writer/director who works for the Dutch broadcaster NTR and runs her own company, Beruang. *They Call Me Babu* is her debut feature as a writer/director.

150 Spotlight

Indigenous Voices

The Netherlands 2019

Ze Noemen me Baboe

Director/Screenplay

Sandra Beerends

Producer

Pieter van Huystee

Editor

Ruben van der Hammen

Music

Alex Simu

With

Denise Aznam

Festival Premiere

IDFA 2019



78 minutes

In Indonesian with English subtitles

Part of EUROPE!
VOICES OF WOMEN IN FILM

eefp european
film
promotion

in association with Sydney Film Festival



Violence & discrimination

BUY

Online Rental

Fri 31 Jul until Thu 6 Aug

You Will Die at Twenty

Sudanese filmmaker Amjad Abu Alala's beautifully realised fable of a child living with the knowledge his life will end the moment he becomes an adult is a coming-of-age tale like no other.

Condemned to an early death from birth, young Muzamil waits despairingly for the day he will turn 20 and die. His father, grief-stricken by the holy prophecy, has already abandoned him, while his mother mourns her son in the only way she knows how – to protect him from the world. Hope flickers in the Quran, which Muzamil is eventually granted permission to study, and the gentle paternal friendship of Suleiman, a village elder who opens his eyes to the joys of cinema. As adulthood draws nearer for the teenager, we come to understand Muzamil's fate is held not so much in the fear of dying, but living – a notion, neither spiritual nor secular in tone, that shrouds this haunting poem of a film.

"The visual assurance of *You Will Die at Twenty* is the most immediately notable element of Sudanese director Amjad Abu Alala's accomplished feature debut. Beautifully composed and boasting the kind of sensitivity to light sources and color tonalities usually ascribed to top photographers, the film lovingly depicts the remote east-central region of Sudan as a quasi-magical place of sand, sky and the colors of the Nile... a touching, nonjudgmental depiction of people circumscribed by superstition." — Jay Weissberg, *Variety*

About the Filmmaker

Amjad Abu Alala is a Sudanese director and producer. Among his short films, *Studio* (2012) was developed in a workshop under the supervision of Abbas Kiarostami. He currently heads the Programming Committee in the Sudan Independent Film Festival and is Sudan's representative at the Arab Film Institute.

Indigenous Voices

Sudan/France 2019

Director/Screenplay
Alaa Eddine Aljem

Producers
Francesca Duca, Alexa Rivero

Photography
Amine Berrada

Editor
Lilian Corbeille

Music
Amine Bouhafa

With
Younes Bouab,
Salah Bensalah,
Bouchaib Essamak,
Mohamed Naimane,
Anas El Baz, Hassan Ben Bdida,
Abdelghani Kitab,
Ahmed Yarziz

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



105 minutes
In Arabic with English subtitles



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

No Hard Feelings

Understated yet emotionally resonant, Faraz Shariat's semi-autobiographical coming-of-age drama is both timely in its exploration of a global humanitarian crisis and a testament to the transformative power of queer love.

When we have no choice about the life we are born into, what choice do we have in the life we want to live? Faraz Shariat's assured debut feature examines this by setting a queer love story against the realities of life as an immigrant in modern-day Germany. With dreamy cinematography that invokes summer crushes and stolen moments, *No Hard Feelings* is at turns sexy and romantic but nevertheless refuses to let its characters escape the pasts they are running from.

As a second-generation Irani-German millennial, Parvis has struggled to understand his heritage. Instead, he seeks solace in gay clubs and casual hook-ups. Sentenced to community service at a shelter for refugees, it's there he meets the smouldering Amon and his older sister Banafshe, recent arrivals from Iran. As the trio's friendship blossoms, Parvis is confronted with a glimpse of what his life could have been had his parents not fled Iran, while a burgeoning love affair with Amon begins, even as the threat of deportation looms. Shariat's light directorial touch eschews audience manipulation for clear-eyed reality, allowing the characters' fates to unfurl organically as they face a future that holds both hope and disappointment. — Chris Tse

About the Filmmaker

Growing up in Germany the son of exiled Iranis, Faraz Shariat studied media art to explore his experiences as a gay, second generation migrant. For *No Hard Feelings*, he won Best Feature Film at the FIRST STEPS Award 2019, Germany's most important film prize for young filmmakers.

154 Spotlight

Proud

Germany 2020

Futur Drei

Director

Faraz Shariat

Producers

Paulina Lorenz, Faraz Shariat

Screenplay

Faraz Shariat, Paulina Lorenz

Photography

Simon Vu

Editor

Friederike Hohmuth

Music

Jakob Hüffell,
Säye Skye, Jan Günther

With

Benjamin Radjaipour,
Banafshe Hourmazdi,
Eidin Jalali

Festival Premiere

Berlin 2020



© Juenglinge Film

92 minutes

In German and Farsi,
with English subtitles

16

Sex scenes, sexual themes,
offensive language & drug use

BUY

Online Rental

Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Suk Suk

Proud

Director Ray Yeung breaks new ground with *Suk Suk* ('uncle' in Cantonese), an affecting portrayal of two gay men in modern Hong Kong as they find each other in their later years and struggle with enduring matters of identity, desire and belonging.

70-year-old married taxi driver Pak meets single-father Hoi, 65, on a park bench. The two embark on a friendship which quickly develops into a secret relationship, cautious but genuine: they swap stories during clandestine trysts at a gay sauna, laugh together while winding through the fruit stands of a wet market, and savour hidden moments of intimacy in secluded spaces.

But there are limitations to their love story. Hoi has a devoutly Christian son and a granddaughter he can't lose; Pak is settled into the comfortable routine of a decades-long marriage. They're skittish about spending time in public together, and when Hoi attends meetings led by a gay activist group, we better understand what it means to be out in Hong Kong society – and not just out, but out and without youth on your side.

Yeung's third feature is culturally intelligent, depicting the realities of Pak and Hoi's familial situations – framed by traditional Chinese values – without judgement, and instead explores different nuances of what it means to be happy with assuredness. Sure, it would have been easy to lean into melodrama, but *Suk Suk* never does; its smart observations lie in the intricacies of everyday lives. — Jean Teng

About the Filmmaker

Ray Yeung is a Hong Kong-born director. He received a master's degree in filmmaking from Columbia University in 2008. His three feature films to date have explored queer representation in Chinese culture. Selected filmography: *Front Cover* (2015), *Cut Sleeve Boys* (2006).

156 Spotlight

Hong Kong/China 2019

Director/Screenplay
Ray Yeung

Producers
Michael J. Werner,
Teresa Kwong, Sandy Yip,
Chowee Leow

Photography
Ming Kai Leung

Editors
Chang Suk Ping William,
Chan Chui Hing Nose

Music
Veronica Lee

With
Tai Bo, Ben Yuen,
Patra Au Ga Man, Lo Chun Yip,
Lam Yiu Sing, Kong To

Festival Premiere
Busan 2019



92 minutes
In Cantonese with English subtitles



Mild sex scenes

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

To Live to Sing

Poignantly capturing the agony and ecstasy of the arts, Johnny Ma's colourful ode to performing artists stars a real-life Sichuan Opera troupe struggling against modernity and bureaucracy on the outskirts of Chengdu, China.

Tough, tenacious Zhao Li manages a Sichuan Opera troupe. Staging cheap and cheerful performances for an aging community in a rundown venue keeps the tradition alive. But times are changing for her theatre and its misfit outfit. Notwithstanding Zhao's rascal husband, whose face-changing side gig at a hot pot restaurant is unfaithful to the operatic arts, or her beautiful niece, whose dreams of pop stardom see her moonlighting at a garish nightclub, the government has just notified her that the theatre is due to be demolished.

Discovering Zhao and her opera troupe in a documentary and casting them in a fictional reimagining of their artistic life, director Johnny Ma's bittersweet drama portrays a funny, folksy company of actors holding onto precious old ways amid rapid social and economic change. The realities they face – dwindling attendance, unrelenting progress – aren't so easily mitigated, but they can be momentarily escaped. Bursts of dreamy, fantastical sequences convey the feeling of stepping into another world – and transporting the audience along with you – that Zhao lives for as a performer. These joys and sorrows are lovingly rendered in this gentle, wistful musical film. — Tim Wong

About the Filmmaker

Johnny Ma was born in Shanghai and raised in Canada. His award-winning debut feature, *Old Stone* (2016), won Best Canadian First Feature at the Toronto International Film Festival and Best First Feature at the Canadian Screen Awards.

158 Spotlight

Portraits

**China/France/
Canada 2019**

Huo zhe chang zhe

Director/Screenplay

Johnny Ma

Producers

Wu Xianjian, Jing Wang

Photography

Matthias Delvaux

Editor

Ana Godoy

Music

You Jong-ho, Kim Jim-in

With

Zhao Xiaoli, Gan Guidan,
Yan Xihu

Festival Premiere

Cannes 2019



© ImageX Productions

105 minutes

In Sichuanese with English subtitles



NZ CLASSIFICATION
Violence

BUY

Online Rental

Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Family Members

Stranded after their mother's passing, a teenage brother and sister awkwardly socialise, take long walks on the beach and get serious about fitness in this dry, Jim Jarmusch-esque hangout film.

Full of droll comic situations punctuating the stasis of a small seaside town, *Family Members* is a wry and gently absurdist look at sibling bonds in flux.

Somewhere on Argentina's Atlantic coast, Gilda and Lucas return to their mother's home, left vacant following her sudden death. On the beach, they reach into a box and ceremonially toss a prosthetic hand into the ocean – their mother's, in lieu of ashes from her yet-to-be-cremated body. Later that day, when a drivers' strike cancels all buses back to Buenos Aires, the pair decide to take an extended vacation in their new surroundings. Gilda makes the most of her free time meditating with chakra stones and perfecting nude selfies; Lucas, meanwhile, brags about his martial arts prowess to Guido, a local Instagram fitness guru and potential first love for the sexually frustrated teen.

Parties, fight clubs, tarot card readings and strange messages from a hole on the beach instigate a delicate tension between adolescence and mourning. Sweetly observing this state, Mateo Bendesky's languid sophomore feature explores the forming of identity and a sense of self through the sibling's shared grief and growing pains as young adults.

About the Filmmaker

Mateo Bendesky is a graduate filmmaker of Universidad del Cine. His shorts and features have screened at Cannes, Berlin, Toronto and Rotterdam film festivals, among others. He is currently developing *La fiebre*, his third feature film. Selected filmography: *Acá dentro* (2013).

160 Spotlight

Breaking Through

Argentina 2019

Los miembros de la familia

Director/Screenplay

Mateo Bendesky

Producers

Agustina Costa Varsi,
Diego Dubcovsky,
Mateo Bendesky

Photography

Roman Kasseroller

Editor

Ana Godoy

Music

Santiago Palenque

With

Tomás Wicz, Laila Maltz,
Alejandro Russek,
Sergio Boris, Edgardo Castro,
Ofelia Fernández,
Javier Abril Rotger

Festival Premiere

Berlin 2019



Alejandro Russek © VolpeFilms

86 minutes

In Spanish with English subtitles

16

Drug use, suicide references,
offensive language
& content may disturb

BUY

Online Rental

Mon 27 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

Drama Girl

Becoming

Playing outside the boundaries of drama and documentary, this adventurous self-portrait of a 20-something artist and dancer asks the question, “if you could star in the film of your life, how would you rewrite the script?”

With the explosion in popularity of docu-series centred on larger-than-life personalities, Vincent Boy Kars’ *Drama Girl* is a refreshing entry that toes the line between fantasy and non-fiction. Opening on leading lady Leyla de Muynck, we are introduced to the deceptively simple experiment: Leyla will play the title role in a film about her life.

As the film progresses, we understand Leyla has taken this opportunity to find closure from major life experiences that have stuck with her. But with ongoing input from behind the camera, one may begin to wonder how much agency Leyla has in retelling her own story. While the push and pull between star and director (largely) avoids confrontation, it does beg questions of authenticity, authorship and the ethical boundaries of documentary filmmaking. Alongside Kars’ interventions, could we as viewers be provoking Leyla for our own entertainment?

So is Kars’ film the critique of the medium he claims it to be, or is it a doco masquerading as an art piece? There are myriad ways to read the film. Whether you consider yourself a true cinephile or watch films for the simple joy of it, *Drama Girl* makes for a truly enjoyable, puzzling and entertaining watch. — Kailey Carruthers

About the Filmmaker

Vincent Boy Kars is a Dutch filmmaker whose films investigate identity, self-image and sexuality. His 2017 documentary *Independent Boy* also flirts with the borders between fiction and reality. *Drama Girl* is his second feature.

The Netherlands 2020

Director

Vincent Boy Kars

Producer

Olivia Sophie van Leeuwen

Screenplay

Vincent Boy Kars,
Jolein Laarman

Photography

David Spaans

Editors

Albert Markus,
Vincent Boy Kars

Music

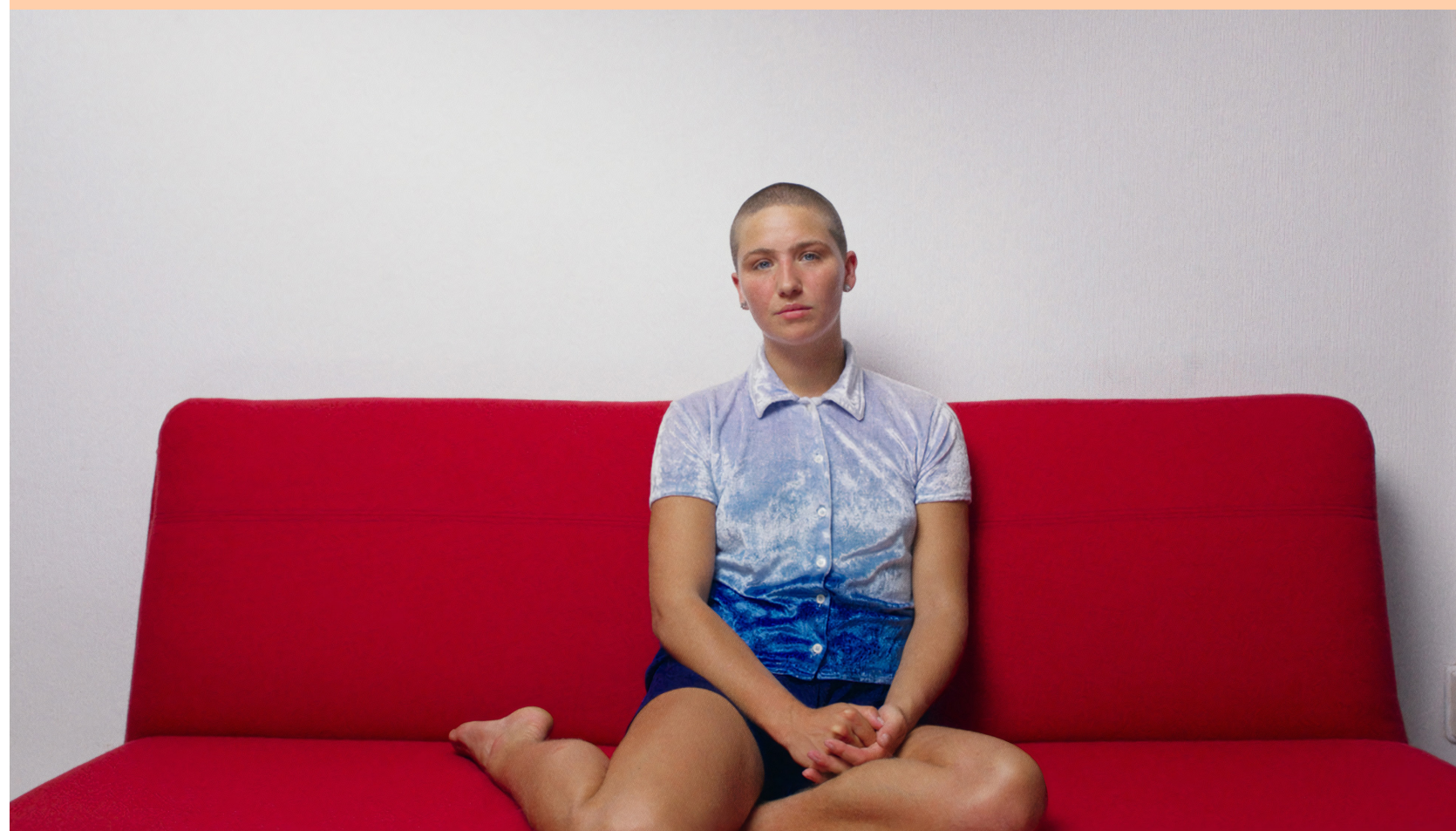
Beau Zwart

With

Leyla de Muynck, Jonas
Smulders, Pierre Bokma, Elsie
de Brauw

Festival Premiere

Rotterdam 2020



90 minutes
In Dutch with English subtitles



Coarse language, nudity
& drug references

BUY

Online Rental

Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

Sick, Sick, Sick

An intense teenage romance morphs into a hypnotic tale of resurrection and saudade in this visually lush meditation on all-consuming love from emerging Brazilian director Alice Furtado.

A fever dream of love sickness and female desire, Alice Furtado's moody debut feature centres on Silvia (mesmerising newcomer Luiza Kosovski), a brooding teenager whose first love arrives in the form of bad boy Artur. Silvia's attraction to this new and destabilising presence in the classroom is uncontrollable; they hook up immediately and spend every waking moment together, that is until Artur's life is cut short by his haemophilia in an otherwise ordinary accident.

Exploring Silvia's grief in a series of elegiac, slow-burning episodes, Furtado's narrative draws blood from both genre film inspiration and personal heartbreak. Manifesting first literally in an unexplained illness, then existentially through an obsession with voodoo and bringing Artur back from the dead, Silvia's journey from love to loss, and then loss to longing, metastasises as a kind of pure cinematic reverie.

Tutored by Claire Denis as a student, the influence of the French auteur's sensual aesthetic runs deep in Furtado's style, while echoes of horror touchstones *I Walked with a Zombie* and *Pet Semetary* quietly reverberate. A striking first film with a real sensibility for desire as an uncanny and intoxicating force.

About the Filmmaker

Alice Furtado is a filmmaker and editor. A graduate in cinema at Universidade Federal Fluminense (Brazil) and a post graduate at Le Fresnoy (France), her debut feature *Sick, Sick, Sick* premiered at Cannes in the Directors' Fortnight section in 2019.

Becoming

**Brazil/France/
The Netherlands 2019**
Sem Seu Sangue

Director
Alice Furtado

Producers
Aline Mazzarella,
Matheus Peçanha,
Thiago Yamachita

Screenplay
Alice Furtado, Leonardo Levis

Photography
Felipe Quintelas

Editors
Alice Furtado, Luisa Marques

Music
Orlando Scarpa Neto

With
Luiza Kosovski, Juan Paiva,
Digão Ribeiro, Silvia Buarque,
Lourenço Mutarelli,
Ismar Tirelli Neto,
Valentina Luz,
Nahuel Pérez Biscayart

Festival Premiere
Cannes 2019



100 minutes
In Portuguese and French,
with English subtitles

16

Sex scenes, violence
& content may disturb

BUY

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Bloody Nose, Empty Pockets

Turner Ross and Bill Ross IV (*Western*, NZIFF15) turn their instinctive, unblinking documentary lens on the patrons of a grimy Las Vegas bar enjoying one last round – a glorious snapshot of Americana that’s at once dark, moving and flat-out funny.

“When you get lonely, you have no friends, you can come to this bar and fit in here.” It’s a sentiment that could be spoken by any of the bar-room poets, veterans, drag queens, miscreants, hipsters and forces of nature that comprise the clientele of the Roaring 20s, a Vegas dive bar that time forgot. But what happens when the only place you belong is going away for good? The obvious answer: one final all-day, all-night party.

The Ross Brothers continue their winning streak of intimately observed, artfully shot documents of humanity with this portrait of one booze and smoke-filled day, as lost souls gather for wildly inappropriate bonhomie and conversations ranging from profound to incomprehensible. At the centre of all stands – well, slumps – Michael, a “58 year old that looks 70” regular who reads at the bar, shaves in the sink and is there from opening to last call. As the evening progresses and the full spectrum of alcoholic emotion displays itself, the film masterfully careens from riotously funny to tender to ominous, as only a dive bar can. All the while, one question remains unspoken: what happens to people with nowhere else to go when they lose the place they feel at home? — Doug Dillaman

About the Filmmakers

Turner Ross and Bill Ross IV form the Ross Brothers filmmaking duo. Together they’ve directed documentaries on their hometown of Sidney, Ohio (*45365*, 2009), New Orleans (*Tchoupitoulas*, 2012), the US–Mexico border (*Western*, 2015) and David Byrne and his collaborators for the concert *Contemporary Color* (2016).

Belonging

USA 2020

Directors/Photography
Bill Ross IV, Turner Ross

Producers
Michael Gottwald,
Chere Theriot, Bill Ross IV,
Turner Ross

Editor
Bill Ross IV

Music
Casey Wayne McAllister

With
Michael Martin, Bruce Hadnot,
Pete Radcliffe, Pam Harper,
Shay Walker

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



98 minutes
In English



Exempt
Documentary film exempt from
NZ Classification labelling requirements

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

Kids Run

Belonging

A tough-as-nails boxing drama in the vein of *Raging Bull*, German filmmaker Barbara Ott's *Kids Run* is a captivating portrait of precarity that pulls no punches.

A heady blend of social realism and hardscrabble boxing drama, *Kids Run* is a powerful slice-of-life fight flick not for the faint-of-heart. Newcomer Jannis Niewöhner gives a fascinating, difficult performance as Andi, a desperate young father-of-three who enters an amateur boxing competition in the hope of paying off his escalating debts. Trapped in a wintry working-class wasteland, Andi and his ilk know only struggle and hardship, not so much living on the brink of disaster as skating constantly along the edge of it. The prize – 5,000 euros – offers less of a path out than a way to simply stay afloat.

Making her feature debut, German filmmaker Barbara Ott's work here is sensitive but unflinching, never sugar-coating Andi's bleak circumstances nor making allowances for his violent, hair-trigger personality. Ott commendably shirks the familiar rhythms of the boxing-movie genre – don't expect a *Rocky*-esque climactic showdown here. As with British social-realists like Ken Loach, Andrea Arnold and Mike Leigh, Ott's vision of a hand-to-mouth existence is at times a tough watch, but coloured with vivid, lived-in performances that add a touch of grace to even the toughest situations. — Tom Augustine

About the Filmmaker

Born in 1983 on the German-Czech border, Barbara Ott took a degree in fiction directing at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. Her graduation film *Sunny* (2013) screened successfully at national and international festivals and received numerous awards. *Kids Run* is her directorial feature debut.

170 Spotlight

Germany 2020

Director/Screenplay
Barbara Ott

Producers
Gabriele Simon, Martin Heisler

Photography
Falko Lachmund

Editor
Gregory Schuchmann

Music
Paradoz Paradise

With
Jannis Niewöhner,
Lena Tronina,
Peter Schneider,
Carol Schuler,
Kazim Demirbas,
Oleg Tikhomirov, Lorna Ishema

Festival Premiere
Berlin 2020



104 minutes
In German with English subtitles

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Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Tench

A young paedophile's return to society is calmly explored in Belgian director Patrice Toye's powerful, thought-provoking new film. Based on Inge Schilperoord's controversial novel *Muidhond*.

This fearlessly empathetic drama about a young man fighting his dark nature asks us to bravely walk in the shoes of a character condemned to the extreme margins of society. Jonathan (23), released from prison and into the care of his mother, resumes a normal, diligent life while grappling with compulsions he desperately wants to escape. When a lonely 10-year-old girl moves in next door and innocently pines for his friendship, his genuine resolve is tested in no uncertain terms.

At once a compelling study of the capacity for rehabilitation and a clear-eyed, visually literate portrait of a tortured inner life, director Patrice Toye's delicate film holds a steady focus on the human dimension behind paedophilia's terrifying profile. Its bold questions, more existential than plainly moral, surface through a performance of rare sensitivity and intensity by Tijmen Govaerts, and a remarkable turn by Julia Brown, the little girl whose presence gives rise to both tenderness and very real tension. *Tench* will challenge every viewer's notion of empathy – and in tandem with the protagonist's painful struggle to suppress the unthinkable, the impulse to rush to judgement before understanding.

About the Filmmaker

Patrice Toye is a Belgian director and film teacher based in Brussels. Her second feature film, *Nowhere Man* (2008), won the NHK International Filmmakers Prize at Sundance and benefited from Wim Wenders' personal support. *Tench* is her fourth feature. Selected filmography: *Little Black Spiders* (2012), *Rosie* (1998).

Radical Empathy

**Belgium/
The Netherlands** 2019
Muidhond

Director
Patrice Toye

Producer
Antonino Lombardo

Screenplay
Peter Seynaeve, Patrice Toye.
Based on the novel *Muidhond*
by Inge Schilperoord

Photography
Richard van Oosterhout

Editors
Ewin Ryckaert,
David Verdurme

Music
John Parish

With
Tijmen Govaerts, Julia Brown,
Ina Geerts, Greet Verstraete,
Line Pillet, Jackie Gilles,
Dominique Van Malder,
Rashif El Kaoui

Festival Premiere
Rotterdam 2020



95 minutes
In Dutch and French,
with English subtitles

R16 NZ CLASSIFICATION
Sexual abuse themes

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 2 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

Mental

In this genuinely powerful and illuminating documentary, we step inside an outpatient mental health clinic run by a sympathetic elderly doctor to pull back “the invisible curtain” obscuring the world of Japan’s mentally ill.

Committed to humane, eye-level methods of documentary filmmaking, Soda Kazuhiro is a humble radical in this often sensationalist genre. We’re proud to present both his latest work, *Zero*, and the award-winning film that first introduced the world to Dr Yamamoto. Soda’s empathetic camera reveals the difficulties and hopes of the modest clinic Yamamoto founded alongside the lives of his patients, whose raw experiences are alleviated by simple acts of listening and kindness.

“In Japan, people with mental illnesses have long been stigmatized, marginalized and isolated from broader society. In 2009... Soda Kazuhiro released *Mental*, a film about Yamamoto Masatomo, an elderly psychiatrist in Okayama Prefecture who respected his patients as individuals and built close relationships with them. In the process, he challenged standard psychiatric methods that leaned heavily on medication and institutionalization. As Soda’s fly-on-the-wall camera makes clear, this was no way to get rich. Yamamoto’s hours were long and his clinic was small and rundown. Meanwhile, his wife, Yoshiko, kept domestic and professional wheels turning smoothly. Theirs was a family enterprise, with the ‘family’ including Yamamoto’s patients.” — Mark Schilling, *Japan Times*

About the Filmmaker

Soda Kazuhiro is a Japanese independent filmmaker based in New York. He is regarded for his strict “ten commandments” of filmmaking, which characterise his observational philosophy towards documentary. Selected filmography: *Zero* (2020), *Inland Sea* (2018), *The Big House* (2018), *Peace* (2010), *Campaign* (2007).

Radical Empathy

Japan/USA 2008
Seishin

Director/Producer/
Photography/Editor
Soda Kazuhiro

Festival Premiere
Busan 2008



135 minutes
In Japanese with English subtitles

16

Deals with suicide, self-harm,
abuse & mental health

BUY

Online Rental
Mon 27 Jul until Sun 2 Aug

Zero

This essential follow-up to Soda Kazuhiro's taboo-breaking documentary on mental illness in Japanese society revisits the pillar of that film, Dr Yamamoto Masatomo, as he prepares to bid his patients farewell and enter into retirement.

A decade after *Mental* (also presented at NZIFF20), filmmaker Soda Kazuhiro returns to Chorale Okayama, the mental health clinic run by Dr Yamamoto Masatomo. A deeply compassionate portrait of a doctor who spent decades dedicating his life to the mental health community, Soda captures the many intimate moments between Dr Yamamoto and his patients, including their frank conversations as they try to come to terms with losing a doctor they deeply trust. In a society that shows no respect for their conditions, the patients must navigate the difficult path to mental wellness, and for some, mere survival in everyday life, without the support they have relied on for so long.

As Dr Yamamoto wraps up his professional life, we get an intimate look at his relationship with his wife Yoshiko, whose mind and body are slowly withered by dementia. Soda, as filmmaker and cameraperson, records the casual moments as the couple goes about their daily routine, as Yamamoto is now tasked with caring for his wife after decades of Yoshiko's unwavering support. At once deeply moving and keenly observed, *Zero* strikes a deep emotional chord with its subtle and non-sentimental approach. — Vicci Ho

About the Filmmaker

Soda Kazuhiro is a Japanese independent filmmaker based in New York. He is regarded for his strict "ten commandments" of filmmaking, which characterise his observational philosophy towards documentary. Selected filmography: *Inland Sea* (2018), *The Big House* (2018), *Peace* (2010), *Mental* (2008), *Campaign* (2007).

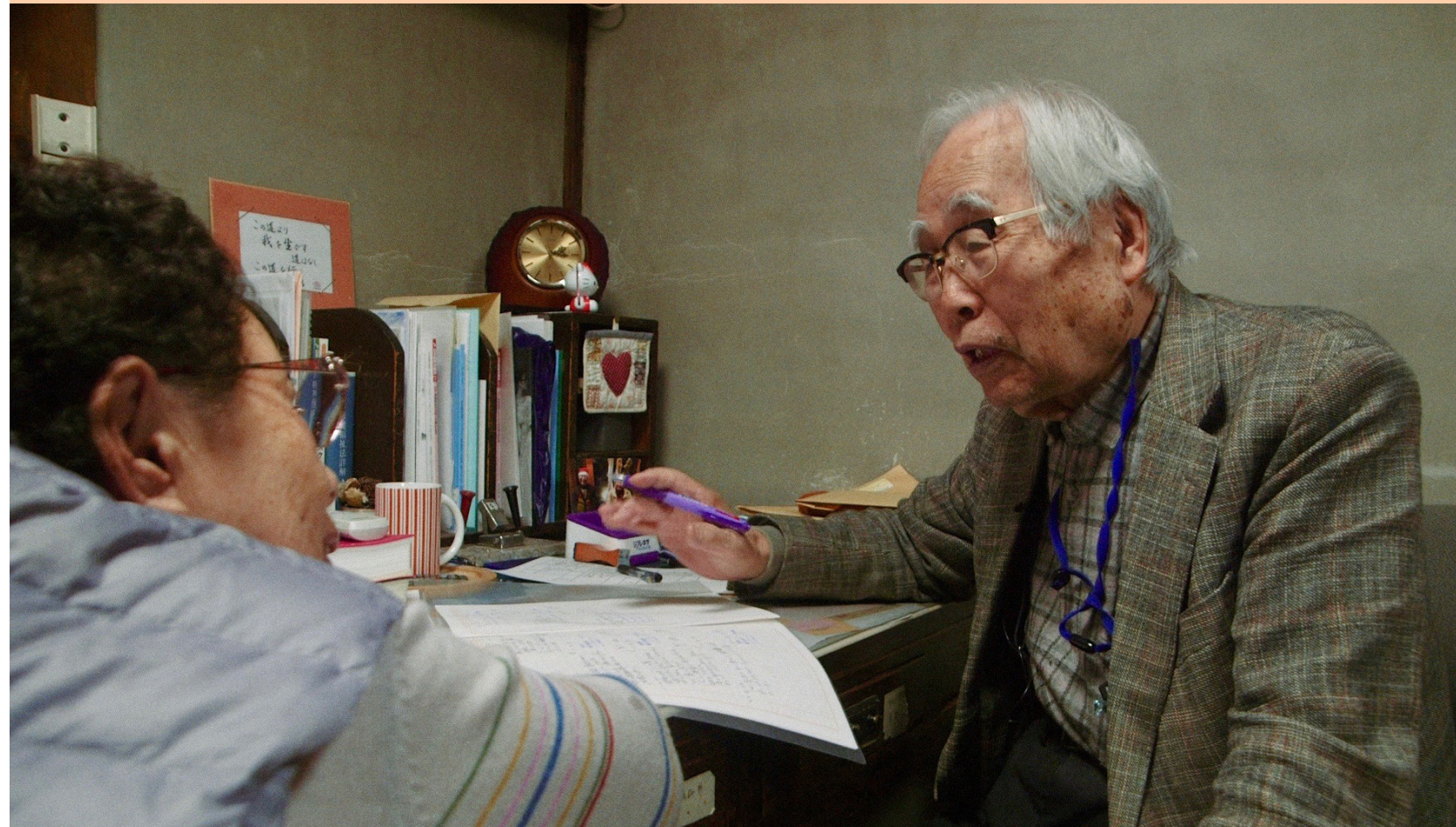
Radical Empathy

Japan/USA 2020
Seishin 0

Festival Premiere
Berlin 2020

Director/Producer/
Photography/Editor
Soda Kazuhiro

Producers
Soda Kazuhiro,
Kashiwagi Kiyoko



128 minutes
In Japanese with English subtitles

16

Deals with suicide, self-harm,
abuse & mental health

BUY

Online Rental
Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

State Funeral

Compiling rare found-footage into an unnerving visual essay on Stalin's cult of personality, this disquieting film observes the notorious Soviet leader's 1953 funeral procession – and with it, the end spectacle of a tyrannical regime.

Transporting us into a thronging mass of humanity amidst the state-mandated mourning and burial ceremony for Joseph Stalin, renowned Ukrainian filmmaker Sergei Loznitsa's latest experimental documentary dives deep into long-forgotten government archives to patiently reveal a surreal picture of, as the director terms it, "terror-induced delusion".

Visually captivating, *State Funeral* utilises both colour and monochrome footage – remarkably crisp and clean at almost 70 years old – to produce an immersive experience, at once expansive and claustrophobic. Crowds amass in capacious town squares, with Stalin's likeness looming large over all in the form of oversized statues and banners and the unending monologue of the public address system. Conversely, inside the Moscow House of Unions, the leader's pale white corpse is dwarfed by its bed of floral wreaths; the cameras look away to individual displays of grief (or lack thereof) as mourners pass the bier. It is difficult not to wonder how much of the grief is authentic or staged. Without commentary, Loznitsa's assemblage exposes the uneasy mix of reality, falsity and distortion presented in official documentation. — Jacob Powell

About the Filmmaker

Sergei Loznitsa is an award-winning Ukrainian director of 21 documentaries and four fiction films. He received the Best Directing prize of the Un Certain Regard section at Cannes for *Donbass* (NZIFF18). Selected filmography: *A Gentle Creature* (2017), *Austerlitz* (2016), *Maidan* (2014), *In the Fog* (2012), *My Joy* (2010).

Political States

The Netherlands/
Lithuania 2019

Director/Screenplay
Sergei Loznitsa

Producers
Sergei Loznitsa,
Maria Choustova

Editor
Danielius Kokanauskis

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



135 minutes
In Russian with English subtitles



BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

If I Were the Winter Itself

Indulging in the thrill and heartbreak of the artistic process, this unabashedly avant-garde take on the iconic works of Godard, Mendieta and Farocki explores cinema as both a political and playful act.

Join us deep in the Argentine woods for a mesmerising cinematic tour de force.

In Jazmín López's dazzling and disorienting film, four friends gather at a vast, run-down mansion to film re-enactments of three key activist artworks of the late 60s/early 70s: Jean-Luc Godard's Marxist playdate *La Chinoise* (1967), Ana Mendieta's gender-bending performance piece *Untitled (Facial Hair Transplants)* (1972), and Harun Farocki's deadpan napalm exposé *Inextinguishable Fire* (1969). Bertolt Brecht and Kate Bush also get roped into the fun and games. (Don't worry, no prior knowledge of any of these works is necessary!) The decay of the estate looks sensational in extreme widescreen and slinky long takes as the camera dances through the maze of the house.

But lead actress Carmen is haunted by a recently ended relationship, and her distraction slowly infects the project and her fellow filmmakers. Time starts to slip, and the characters' own lives seem to become re-enactments too. What might look dry and esoteric on paper soon turns into something richer, stranger and much more playful: a one-of-a-kind cocktail of self-reflexive movie-movie, architecture porn, Slow Cinema eye candy and ghost story. — Andrew Langridge

About the Filmmaker

Jazmín López is a Buenos Aires-based visual artist and filmmaker. As a director and screenwriter, she debuted with the feature *Leones* (2012). Her visual artworks have been exhibited at MoMA, Lincoln Center, Centre George Pompidou and KW Institute Berlin, among others.

180 Spotlight

Visions

Argentina 2020

Si yo fuera el invierno mismo

**Director/Producer/
Screenplay/Editor**
Jazmín López

Photography
Rui Poças

With

Clara Trucco,
Rafael Federman,
Martín Shanly, Laila Maltz,
Gianluca Zonzini

Festival Premiere
Rotterdam 2020



92 minutes
In Spanish with English subtitles



Sex scenes & nudity

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

Kala azar

Working to care for dead animals, a young couple collect deceased pets from people's homes, while also scavenging for neglected roadkill, in Greek video artist Janis Rafa's uncanny first feature film.

A defiantly singular addition to the Greek New Wave canon, even by star alumnus Yorgos Lanthimos' standards, *Kala azar* fuses the seemingly incongruous worlds of humans and animals to striking effect. Centred on Penelope and Dimitris, nomadic lovers who work for a crematorium service, the film follows their daily routine of house calls to bereaved pet owners, and more surreptitiously, their eye for the corpses of stray animals, an allusion to the titular disease that has killed many canines across the Mediterranean.

The grim pragmatism of their job masks a sincere commitment to respectfully sending-off dead animals. Although director Janis Rafa never shies away from the miasma of the life and death cycle, there's equal attention given to the wellbeing of animals, and to well-meaning characters – like Penelope's parents, seen living in filthy domestic bliss with a pack of dogs – who seek genuine cohabitation between species. This raw and improbably beautiful film, a top prizewinner at the Rotterdam International Film Festival, is also uniquely tactile in its visual language, tracing the bodies of humans and animals within a stark environment as if they were endlessly connected landscapes.

About the Filmmaker

Janis Rafa is a Greek artist whose moving image work walks a fine line between subjective interpretation and the authentic representation of landscapes and events. In 2013, she created the *Three Farewells* trilogy. *Kala azar* is her debut feature.

Visions

Greece/
The Netherlands 2020

Director/Screenplay
Janis Rafa

Producer
Digna Sinke

Photography
Thodoros Mihopoulos

Editor
Patrick Minks

Music
LOOR/Gwilym Sainsbury

With
Pinelopi Tsilika, Dimitris Lalos,
Michelle Valley,
Tassos Rafailidis,
Oğuz Han Kaya, Gökhan Kaya,
Maria Alliferi, Adrian Frieling

Festival Premiere
Rotterdam 2020



88 minutes
In Greek with English subtitles



Sex scenes, nudity
& some scenes may disturb

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Last and First Men

Prodigiously talented composer Jóhann Jóhannsson makes his posthumous directorial debut with an austere, hauntingly gorgeous sci-fi symphony voiced by Tilda Swinton and laced with sadness, wonder and hope.

When Jóhann Jóhannsson died too young in 2018, he left behind a treasure trove of haunting and evocative music, from groundbreaking albums besotted with obsolescence to dense, grimy and unforgettable scores for films like *Sicario*, *Arrival* and *Mandy*. But only a few realised he'd left a film as well. *Last and First Men* had premiered with live orchestral accompaniment just months before his death, at the Manchester International Festival.

Adapted from the 1930s novel by Olaf Stapledon and completed posthumously – Jóhannsson was re-orchestrating the film to the last – *Last and First Men* is as uncompromising and solemn as you'd expect. Filming largely at gargantuan abandoned Balkan monuments in grainy black and white, Jóhannsson eschews niceties such as "conventional drama" or "on-screen actors" in favour of mesmerising slow camera movements, Tilda Swinton's hypnotic and quietly despairing narration from '2000 million years in the future', and a signature score that combines ethereal moments with impossibly dense soundscapes. Jóhannsson's requiem for humanity has echoes with *La Jetée*, *Tales From the Loop* and the films of Béla Tarr, but ultimately this last and first film is a singular monument. — Doug Dillaman

About the Filmmaker

Jóhann Jóhannsson was an Icelandic composer. He released his first solo album, *Englabörn*, in 2002. Best known for his original film scores which blended elements of electronic and classical music, he was nominated for two Oscars for *The Theory of Everything* (2014) and *Sicario* (2015).

Visions

Iceland 2020

Director

Jóhann Jóhannsson

Producers

Jóhann Jóhannsson,
Thor S. Sigurjonsson,
Sturla Brandth Grøvlen

Editor

Mark Bukdahl

Music

Jóhann Jóhannsson,
Yair Elazar Glotman

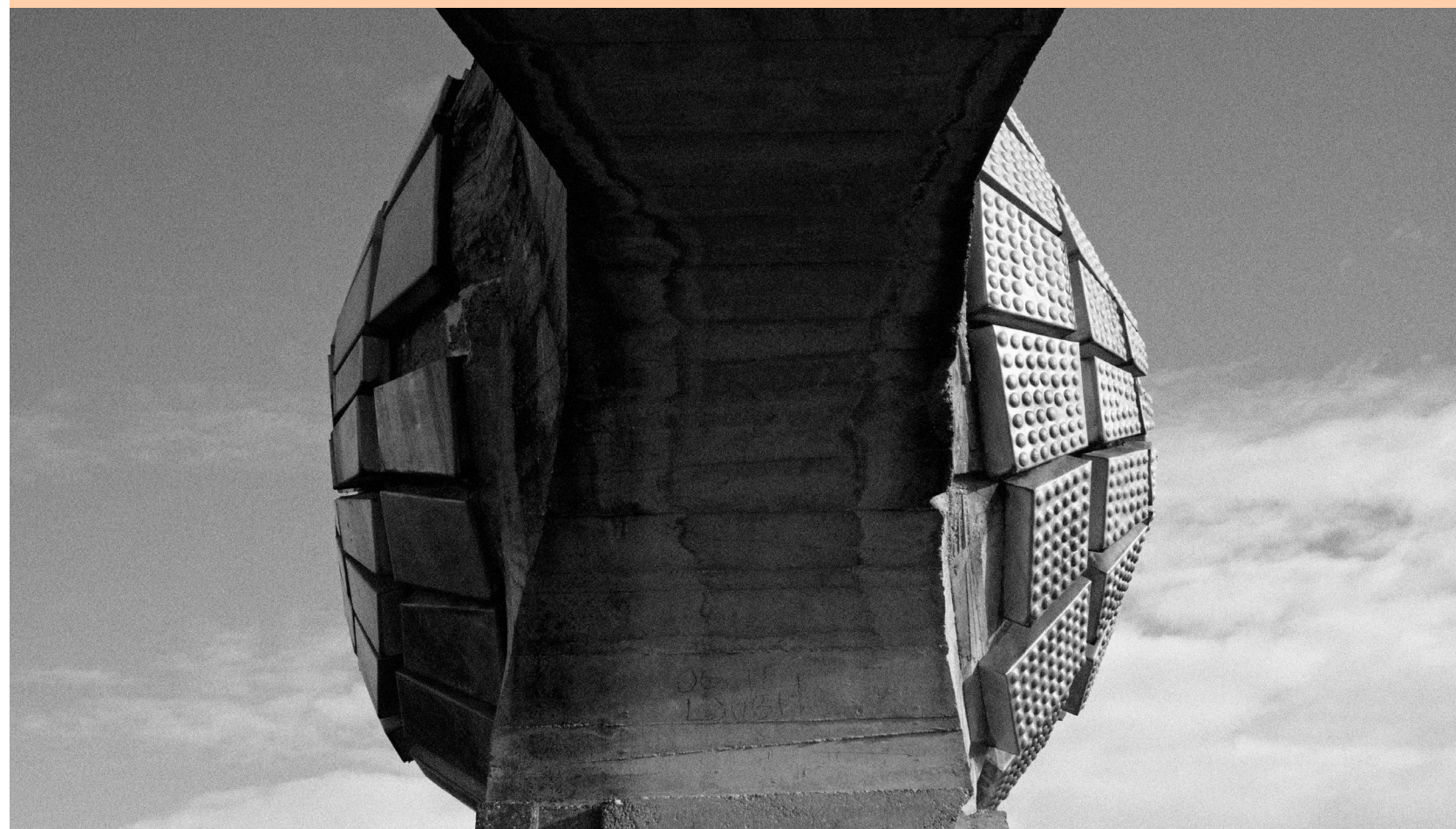
Voices

Tilda Swinton

Festival Premiere

Berlin 2020

This film has been selected by renowned filmmaker and New Zealand Arts Foundation Laureate Pietra Brettkelly, recipient of the 2019 Dame Gaylene Preston Award for Documentary Filmmakers.



70 minutes
In English



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental

Sun 2 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

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Waterbaby Bagatelles

ALICE TOPP

Aurum

ANDREA SCHERMOLY

Within Without

SARAH FOSTER-SPROULL

Ultra Folly

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IMAGE Christina Pataialii *Band on the Run* 2019

Photo by Russell Kleyn, courtesy of McLeavey Gallery

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In our Premieres strand, see also *New Zealand's Best*, from Festival programmers and guest selector Tusi Tamasese, and *Ngā Whanaunga Māori Pasifika Shorts*, from curators Leo Koziol and Craig Fasi.



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in this strand are available to
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“Suppose you were invited to a party along with José Adolfo the Peruvian environmental-minded banker, Arthur the French community organizer for the homeless, Aïssatou the Guinean gender equality advocate, Heena the Indian reporter and teacher, and Peter, Kevin and Jocelyn, three Bolivian child rights campaigners. All of them enjoy international recognition. All of them have created amazing social change in the lives of others and in their communities. Some have won prestigious awards. Surely you would look forward to picking their brains, maybe fish for sympathy about the lamentable state of world affairs, or simply listen to their educated discourse. But what if you arrived and realized that these highly successful movers and shakers were all only between 10 and 15 years old?” — Natja Igney, *Riviera Buzz*

About the Filmmaker

Gilles de Maistre is a French journalist, director and producer. He has won numerous international awards for his documentary and feature films, including an Emmy Award and the French journalism prize, the Prix Albert-Londres. Selected filmography: *Mia and the White Lion* (2018), *The Quest of Alain Ducasse* (2017), *Ferocious* (2002).

Square Eyes

France 2019
Demain est à nous

Director
Gilles de Maistre

Producers
Gilles de Maistre,
Catherine Camborde,
Jean-François Camilleri,
Philippe de Bourbon,
Yves Darondeau,
Serge Hayat, Emmanuel Priou

Screenplay
Prune De Maistre

Editor
Michèle Hollander

Music
Marc Demais

Festival Premiere
NYICFF 2020



84 minutes
In French and Spanish,
with English subtitles



BUY

Online Rental
Sun 2 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

Fritzi: A Revolutionary Tale

A riveting animated tale of the fall of the Berlin Wall – and people brave enough to change the world – told through the eyes of a courageous 12-year-old girl.

East Germany, 1989. Summertime. While her best friend Sophie visits Hungary, 12-year-old Fritzi dog-sits her little pup, Sputnik. When Fritzi discovers public protests stirring around her, she realises that Sophie may have left for more than a summer break, so she and Sputnik set out to find her. Historically accurate and authentic, and loaded with rich period detail and atmosphere, *Fritzi: A Revolutionary Tale* shares a powerful all-ages story of peaceful revolution and social uprising. — Nic Marshall

“[*Fritzi*] does a great job of showing what happened in 1989 in the former communist countries. And it also does a great job of giving kids a lesson to be remembered: how a non-violent protest can cause substantial, long-lasting social and political change – and how the voice of the many can disrupt the power of the few... The parallel with the migrants and refugees of the present day is difficult to miss, no matter the age of the viewer. *Fritzi*... [reminds] us that everyone, at a certain point in history, was a fugitive, a person searching for a better place to live and raise a family. And this turns *Fritzi* not only into a history lesson, but also into a lesson in compassion.” — Stefan Dobroiu, *Cineuropa*

About the Filmmakers

Ralf Kukula and Matthias Bruhn are German animators and directors. Kukula is the co-founder of the German Institute for Animated Film; Bruhn is the chief executive of animation studio Trick Studio Lutterbeck. *Fritzi: A Revolutionary Tale* is their first collaboration as filmmakers.

Square
Eyes

Germany/Belgium/
Luxembourg/Czech
Republic 2019

*Fritzi: Eine
Wendewundergeschichte*

Directors

Ralf Kukula, Matthias Bruhn

Producers

Matthias Bruhn, Ralf Kukula,
Richard Lutterbeck

Screenplay

Beate Völcker, Péter Palátsik.
Based upon the book *Fritzi
war dabei* by Hanna Schott
and Gerda Raidt

Editor

Stefan Urlaß

Music

André Dziezuk

Festival Premiere

Francophone 2020



80 minutes
In German with English subtitles



Some tense scenes
may be distressing to
very young children

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 2 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

My Extraordinary Summer with Tess

A charming and sensitive all-ages drama that explores life's lightness and gravity with uplifting emotional depth. Winner of a special mention from the Berlinale Generation KPlus' adult jury, and the NYICFF Grand Prize Feature Film Award.

10-year-old Sam is enduring a summer family holiday on a Dutch island, but things are far from idyllic – his brother has a broken leg, his mum has terrible migraines, and his dad is constantly trying to encourage togetherness. Sam, who has an imaginative morbid streak and a desire to unpack life's big questions, embarks on "aloneness training" to prepare for the fact that as the youngest he'll likely outlive his family. But his training quickly changes tack when he meets 11-year-old Tess, an enigmatic and electric force, with a secret and quest all of her own. — Nic Marshall

"My Extraordinary Summer with Tess is particularly affecting when it's in quiet rather than breezy mode, and its central duo rise to the task of conveying complicated emotions in tender, telling glances. It helps that Sal Kroonenberg's scenic cinematography not only makes a visual impact, but reinforces the feature's thematic journey. In a movie about young hearts and minds trying to find their place in the world – one by accepting life's losses as well as its connections, the other by exploring her origins – continually placing its searching characters amongst sandy dunes, sprawling hillsides and ocean expanses is a smart and fitting touch." — Sarah Ward, *Screendaily*

About the Filmmaker

Steven Wouterlood is a Dutch filmmaker. He directed the children's television film *Alles mag* (Anything Goes) in 2013, which won an International Emmy Kids Award and the Kids Award at the Toronto International Film Festival, among other prizes. *My Extraordinary Summer with Tess* is his debut feature film.

Square
Eyes

The Netherlands/ Germany 2019

Mijn bijzonder rare week met Tess

Director

Steven Wouterlood

Producers

Joram Willink,
Piet-Harm Sterk

Screenplay

Laura van Dijk. Based on the book by Anna Woltz

Photography

Sal Kroonenberg

Editor

Christine Houbiers

Music

Franziska Henke

With

Sonny van Utteren,
Josephine Arendsen,
Julian Ras, Tjebbo Gerritsma,
Suzan Boogaardt,
Johannes Kienast,
Terence Schreurs,
Jennifer Hoffman

Festival Premiere

Berlin 2019



© Bert-Nijman

82 minutes
In Dutch with English subtitles



NZ Classification tbc



Also in cinemas

BUY

Online Rental

Tue 28 Jul until Mon 3 Aug

The Prince's Voyage

Another distinguished and mesmerising animation from celebrated filmmaker Jean-François Laguionie (*The Painting*, NZIFF12), with co-direction by Xavier Picard, *The Prince's Voyage* is a unique and astute tale of friendship, tolerance and revelation.

After an aging monkey prince washes up injured in an unfamiliar land, he is rescued by Tom, the sharp and inquisitive chimp-kid of two scientists, who have their own interest in the curious newcomer. As the intrepid boy and the wise royal embark on a series of brilliant escapades, their capacity for mutual respect and understanding begins to break down the borders between their worlds.

With cross-generational connection and acceptance of difference at its thoughtful heart, this beautifully hand-drawn philosophical fable will also delight film buffs with its nods to cinema history, from *The Planet of the Apes*, to *Tarzan*, to *King Kong* and *Alexander Nevsky*. — Nic Marshall

"Jean-François Laguionie is a world-renowned master of French animation whose major works are all characterised by an air or style that is difficult to pinpoint – at some moments they strongly resemble fairy tales, at others they're more like science-fiction epics; invariably, though, at the core of it all, there's a mythology whose realisation has earned him many fans. He gives us something extremely rare: adult animations that children and youngsters can thoroughly enjoy as well." — International Film Festival Rotterdam

About the Filmmakers

Jean-François Laguionie is a renowned French film director and producer of animation. He is a protégé of legendary animator Paul Grimault, who produced his first work, *The Lady and the Cellist* (1965). In 1978 he won the Short Film Palme d'Or for *Rowing Across the Atlantic*. Selected filmography: *Louise by the Shore* (2016), *The Painting* (2011); *Gwen*, *The Book of Sand* (1985).

Square
Eyes

Luxembourg/France
2019
Le voyage du prince

Directors
Jean-François Laguionie,
Xavier Picard

Producers
Armelle Glorennec,
Eric Jacquot

Screenplay
Jean-François Laguionie,
Anik Lerayt

Editor
Patrick Ducruet

Music
Christophe Héral

Voices
Enrico Di Giovanni,
Thomas Sagols,
Gabriel Le Doze,
Marie-Madeleine Burguet-Le
Doze, Célia Rosich

Festival Premiere
Annecy 2019



77 minutes
In French with English subtitles



BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

Animation for Kids 4+

Collected from far and wide, we know this latest selection of short film delights from brilliant animated artists the world over is sure to charm and captivate our favourite little audience – and all those indie-animation admirers we know get just as big a kick out of these terrific films as their little pals do.

Goldie (5 minutes)

Goldie feels out of scale in her colourful little town, only to realise she takes up just the right amount of space.

The Last Day of Autumn (7 minutes)

The forest animals are preparing for an unusual race towards their cosy winter shelters.

o28 (5 minutes)

Tourists riding a legendary tram face a harrowing adventure.

Bloated (2 minutes)

In a dark forest, food is light – and this greedy little bird wants as much as it can get its beak on.

Hair Love (7 minutes)

An Academy Award-winning story of an African American father learning to style his daughter's hair for the first time.

Du Iz Tak? (11 minutes)

A sprouting plant and a community of insects offer a microcosmic view of the unstoppable cycle of life.

Handshake (1 minute)

Two long-lost friends bump into each other and find themselves in a super special handshake.

A Lynx in the Town (7 minutes)

A curious lynx gets tired of his forest life moves to the big city.

Melting Heart Cake (11 minutes)

To share her treat, Anna must cross a dangerous glacial forest.

Elsa and the Night (9 minutes)

Elsa hasn't slept a wink for 30 years. The night visits to take her on a reflective and moving journey.

Square Eyes

Goldie USA 2018

Director: Emily Brundige

The Last Day of Autumn Switzerland 2019

Director: Marjolaine Perreten

o28 France 2019

Directors: Otilia Caussé, Antoine Marchand, Geoffroy Collin, Fabien Meyran, Robin Merle, Louise Grardel

Bloated France 2009

Director: Baptiste Tassin

Hair Love USA 2019

Director: Matthew A. Cherry

Du Iz Tak? USA 2018

Director: Galen Fott

Handshake Argentina 2018

Director: Martin Schurmann

A Lynx in the Town France/Switzerland 2020

Director: Nina Bisiarina

Melting Heart Cake France/Switzerland 2019

Director: Benoît Chieux

Elsa and the Night Sweden 2018

Director: Jöns Mellgren



Hair Love

A Lynx in the Town

o28

64 minutes approx.
In English



BUY

Online Rental
Sat 25 Jul until Fri 31 Jul

Animation for Kids 8+

On your mark, get set, it's time for a whole lot of animated brilliance from all corners of our big wide world. Join us for metaphysical musings and reflective moments, laugh-out-loud gags and a load of animal antics – it's your annual wintery fix of animated inventiveness and imagination.

Athleticus: Middle-distance Race (2 minutes)
Competitors are taking off from the starting block...

Cloudy (5 minutes)
Mr Gnome just wants to sunbathe in peace!

Maestro (2 minutes)
A group of wild animals performs their nocturnal opera.

Things You Could Do With Extendable Arms (2 minutes)
Imagine if you could bring a whole new world within your reach.

Athleticus: Synchronised Trampoline (2 minutes)
Hippos watch the perfect performance of two slick seals.

Matches (11 minutes)
Seven-year-old LS shares his dreams, fears and hopes, while inventive stop-motion matchsticks bring his visions to life.

Ties (8 minutes)
A young woman leaves home but remains super connected to where she's from, in the very first film created completely with 3D pen.

Athleticus: Training Room (2 minutes)
Overexcited young flamingos work out on treadmills.

Heatwave (7 minutes)
In the midst of an insane heatwave, two kids find a way to cool everyone down.

And Yet We Are Not Super Heroes (12 minutes)
Pocked-sized philosophers share their thoughts as they map a contemplative path to growing up.

See nziff.co.nz for the full line-up of animated short films.

Square Eyes

Athleticus:
Middle-distance Race/
Synchronised Trampoline/
Training Room/Gymnastic
Rings/Gym Keeper
France 2017
Director: Nicolas Deveau

Cloudy
Czech Republic 2018
Directors: Zuzana Čupová, Filip Diviak

Maestro
France 2019
Director: Illogic

Things You Could Do With
Extendable Arms
UK/Italy 2018
Director: Luca Paulli

Matches
Hungary 2018
Director: Géza M. Tóth

Ties
Russia/Germany 2019
Director: Dina Velikovskaya

Heatwave
UK 2019
Director: Fokion Xenos

And Yet We Are
Not Super Heroes
Belgium/France 2020
Director: Lia Bertels

Away
Belgium 2019
Director: Mathilde Pepinster

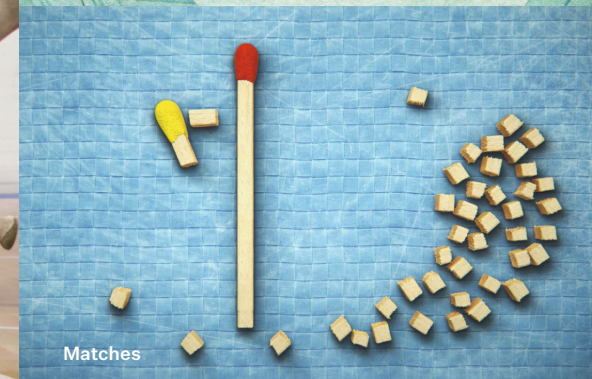
Emily
The Netherlands 2018
Director: Marlies van der Wel



Athleticus: Gym Keeper



Cloudy



Matches

71 minutes approx.
In English and French,
with English subtitles



BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Animation NOW! 2020

A celebratory showcase of some of the year's best and brightest animated shorts. If you're looking to sample the animation ecosystem in all its multi-coloured, variously-shaped glory, there's no better place to begin.

Welcome to Animation NOW!

Diversity was the guiding light in bringing together this single programme of animation from the 3,000+ submissions we received this year. Techniques range from paint-on-glass and hand-drawn, to the exquisite precision of 3D digital animation and the beautiful imperfections inherent in all stop motion work. Storylines, too, range eclectically from classic narrative right across the creative tundra to the kind of uncannily malleable chronicles animation often does so well.

Violent Equation brings a polished digital elegance to the surrealist labyrinth it navigates while the simple grace of *Moth* relies as much on its striking, painterly style as it does its humble inspiration.

The inspiration behind *Girl in the Hallway* is all too clear and as one of the most affecting films submitted this year it had to close the programme, simply because it was hard to imagine what could follow it. But opening *Animation NOW! 2020* is the latest film by one of New Zealand's most accomplished animators. James Cunningham's *Prickly Jam* showcases both the extraordinary technical virtuosity and the wickedly off-beat humour for which he is internationally renowned. — Malcolm Turner

Visions

Prickly Jam
New Zealand 2019
Director: James Cunningham

Rain
Poland 2019
Director: Piotr Milczarek

There Were Four of Us
USA 2019
Director: Cassie Shao

Trauma Chameleon
USA 2019
Director: Gina Kamensky

Moth
USA 2019
Director: Allison Schulnik

Holodomor. Cookie
UK 2019
Director: Olena Maksymova

Cante
Estonia 2019
Director: Teresa Baroet

I-I-I
Canada 2019
Director: Brandon Blommaert

Bubbles
Ireland 2019
Director: Rachel Fitzgerald

Kids
Switzerland 2019
Director: Michael Frei

Locomotor
Japan 2019
Director: Kaneko Isaku

Live a Little
UK 2018
Director: Jenny Jokela

2.3 x 2.6 x 3.2
UK 2019
Director: Jiaqi Wang

Violent Equation
Greece 2019
Director: Antonis Doussias

Under the Canopy
France 2019
Director: Bastien Dupriez

Girl in the Hallway
Canada 2019
Director: Valerie Barnhart



Prickly Jam



Bubbles

Cante

83 minutes approx.
(101 minutes inc. intros)
In English



Classification tbc



Online Rental
Sun 2 Aug until Sat 8 Aug

Art Shorts

These four works of art cinema explore the feeling of loss, looking back to the past with anxiety for the future. New Zealand artists Gavin Hipkins and Virginia King explore foreign but familiar spaces, creating new memories for a forgotten time. Dane Mitchell's Venice Biennale 2019 installation explores vanished phenomena as the city slowly sinks, while Italian collective Flatform brings the effects of global warming in the Pacific to vivid life.

Album (15 minutes)

A young man's letter to his mother, sent home to New Zealand from England during the First World War. London's Royal Parks provide a painterly setting for this meditation on Empire, travel and longing, that features Gavin Hipkins' grandfather's photography and writings from his enlisted travels.

Lettre de Venezia (7 minutes)

Virginia King captures footage of her textual sculpture *Floating Alphabet* drifting through the Grand Canal in Venice during the Biennale 2019, combining it with imagery of both the faded opulence of the sinking city's 15th-century buildings and the gorgeous illuminated manuscripts that her work echoes.

A List of Lost Poems (28 minutes)

New Zealand artist Dane Mitchell's exhibition for the Venice Biennale 2019 *Post hoc* employed modern technologies to invoke the memory of the lost. Adam Luxton's short doco explores Mitchell's process from his Auckland studio, to a cell tower factory in Guangzhou and the final installation in Venice.

That Which Is to Come Is Just a Promise (22 minutes)

A single shot takes us through Funafuti in Tuvalu as overheated sea water rises up through the drought-parched earth and floods the atoll. A portrait of a territory in flux, land that is becoming ocean and the concrete effects of global warming writ large.

Visions

Album

New Zealand 2020

Director/Producer: Gavin Hipkins

Lettre de Venezia

New Zealand 2020

Director/Producer: Virginia King

A List of Lost Poems

New Zealand 2019

Director: Adam Luxton

Producers: Adam Luxton,
Lucy McMillan

That Which Is to Come Is

Just a Promise

Italy/The Netherlands/
New Zealand 2019

Directors: Flatform

Producers: Giulia Achilli, Marco Alessi,
Marc Thelosen, Catherine Fitzgerald

Festival Premiere: Cannes 2019



That Which Is to Come
Is Just a Promise



Lettre de Venezia



Album

73 minutes approx.
In English

G

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Kiwi Shorts

This collection of Kiwi gems from around the country is guaranteed to put a smile on your face. We have a light-hearted tale of childish entrepreneurship and a unique take on growing up and letting go. We find electoral shenanigans and lockdown memories in the suburbs, while crayfish cravings call us to the sea and daring adventure is found on the farm.

Triple Scoop (7 minutes)

Two nine-year-old girls find an enterprising way to satisfy their craving for ice cream in this playful short made in Dunedin.

Childhood Room (13 minutes)

In the midst of packing up the room she grew up in, 21-year-old Rebecca inexplicably comes face to face with her nine-year-old self.

Missy Fishy (12 minutes)

An unusual discovery at the beach turns Miss Fish's world upside down. Can she resist the call of the sea or will she be doomed to a fishy fate?

Democracy (15 minutes)

Dad is voted out of the family and when he mounts a campaign for re-election, he finds out he's not the only one in the running.

Stuntman (9 minutes)

11-year-old Frank is an aspiring stuntman determined to practice his art in a derelict factory, only his kid sister insists on tagging along. What could go wrong?

Garage Stories:

A Strange Collective Experience of Isolation (12 minutes)

Made under COVID-19 Level 4 lockdown around New Zealand, this thoughtful portrait beautifully captures the strange experience of a nation in isolation.

Aotearoa

Triple Scoop

New Zealand 2019

Director/Producer/Screenplay:

Ruby Abbott Harris

Photography: Laura Tait

Editor: Lyra Stewart

With: Amali Addai, Niamh East Giles

Childhood Room

New Zealand 2019

Director/Screenplay: Duncan Dykes

Producer: Unitec Institute of Technology

Photography: Maihi Diamond

Editor: Kevin Zhang

With: Jules Robertson, Rosa Lawrey

Missy Fishy

New Zealand 2020

Director/Screenplay: Erin Murphy

Producer: Alex McShane

Photography: Celeste Fontein

Editor: Gilbert Patten-Elliott

With: Petra Wood

Democracy

New Zealand 2020

Director/Screenplay: Finnius Teppett

Producers: Bevin Linkhorn,
Sadie Wilson

Photography: Matt Henley

Editor: Mathieu Fraser

With: Gavin Rutherford,
Katherine McRae

Stuntman

New Zealand 2019

Director: Pavel Kvatch

Producers: Pavel Kvatch, Katie Frost

Photography: Waka Attewell

Editor: Owen Ferrier-Kerr

With: Flynn Steward, Addison Kelly

Garage Stories: A Strange Collective Experience of Isolation

New Zealand 2020

Director/Screenplay: Catherine Bisley

Producers: Catherine Bisley, Kat Lintott

Editor: Paul Wedel



Garage Stories



Democracy



Childhood Room

68 minutes approx.
In English



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

Dinner in America

This sweet and sour coming-of-age comedy smashed into Sundance with anarchy on its mind and a kickass soundtrack on its turntable. The bad boy-meets-good girl setup has been fodder for cinema for aeons, so it was about time someone took a chainsaw to the status quo.

Adam Rehmeier's rebel yell of a movie is as if *Valley Girl* was accidentally shunted into a teleportation machine alongside *Sid & Nancy* and the whole soupy stew beamed into the 90s. Funny and fucked up like some speed-snorting comic on an all-time bender, there's a hypnotic lure in watching two worlds slowly inch towards an inevitable beautiful collision.

Our two loveable misfits here are Simon (Kyle Gallner), an obnoxious anarchist musician whose hobbies include pyromania and drug-dealing, and Patty (Emily Skeggs), an awkward pet store employee and the target of bullies. Hiding out from the cops, Simon runs into Patty, a simple geek whose one emotional lifeline is punk rock. Eventually these two outcasts will learn more about each other, and in the banality of suburbia, may just end up saving each other from the hand life has dealt them.

Both leads deliver star-making performances in showy roles. They're ably supported by a fun mix of fan faves, from horny MILF Lea Thompson to stoned squares Pat Healy and Mary Lynn Rajs kub. Accompanied by an electro-thrash score and cool widescreen lensing, this warped comedy will delight those who like their laughs with a healthy side of teen alienation and suburban neurosis. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Adam Rehmeier spent a decade working in Hollywood as a cinematographer, editor and documentarian, before making his debut as a director with *The Bunny Game* (2011). *Dinner in America* is his fourth feature film. Selected filmography: *H.P. Lovecraft: Two Left Arms* (2013), *Jonas* (2013).

Incredibly Strange

USA 2020

Director/Screenplay/Editor
Adam Rehmeier

Producers
David Hunter, Sam Slater,
Ben Stiller

Photography
Jean-Philippe Bernier

Music
John Swihart

With
Kyle Gallner, Emily Skeggs,
Pat Healy, Griffin Gluck, Lea
Thompson,
Mary Lynn Rajs kub

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



106 minutes
In English



Classification tbc

BUY

Online Rental
Wed 29 Jul until Tue 4 Aug

Jesus Shows You the Way to the Highway

Miguel Llansó's sophomore feature is a glorious cherry bomb of outsider psychotronics. Grandiose and enjoyably nutty, no recent film has managed to excite about the future of independent cinema as much as this joyous everything-and-the-kitchen-sink approach to the ultimate conspiracy flick.

A potpourri of kitsch art direction and surreal absurdism in a steaming crockpot of 70s martial art capers, outré science-fiction, European James Bond rip-offs, Filipino exploitation, electronic muzak, free jazz and cold war paranoia, *Jesus* is the hallucinatory tale of CIA Agents DT Gagano (on his last job) and Palmer Eldritch. Both are guinea pigs in a top-secret experiment where they'll go into a coma to fight a Soviet computer virus named Stalin in a virtual reality world. If you're wondering what that looks like, imagine jiggly live-action animated agents wearing Robert Redford and Richard Pryor cardboard masks fighting evil *everywhere*.

When the bad guys in the virtual world wound Gagano, he becomes stuck in his comatose state back in the lab. His wife Malin, a Teutonic specimen twice his size, is crestfallen as she'd been planning on opening a kickboxing studio pizza parlour with him following his forthcoming retirement. This bonkers Euro-mad production is one for the ages so grab some [insert choice of mind-altering substance here], a bunch of likeminded friends and get ready to witness this utter marvel of low-budget ingenuity. It may just make you love indie cinema all over again. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Inspired by experimental-punk-weird music and films, Miguel Llansó studied philosophy and cinema before directing *Crumbs* (2015), a post-apocalyptic Afro-futuristic adventure in Ethiopia. *Jesus Shows You the Way to the Highway* is his second feature film.

Incredibly
Strange

Spain/Estonia/
Ethiopia/Latvia/
Romania 2019

*Jesús te muestra el
camino a la autopista*

Director/Screenplay
Miguel Llansó

Producers

Mesereta Argaw,
Miguel Llansó, Liis Nimik,
Kristjan Pütsep, Israel Seoane,
Sergio Uguet de Resayre

Photography

Israel Seoane, Michal Babinec,
Erik Pollumma

Editor

Velasco Broca

Music

Bill Dixon, Grosgoroth,
Atomizador

With

Daniel Tadesse,
Guillermo Llansó,
Agustín Mateo,
Gerda-Annette Allikas

Festival Premiere

Fantasia 2019



82 minutes
In English

16

Violence, sex scenes,
offensive language & drug use

BUY

Online Rental
Sun 26 Jul until Sat 1 Aug

Jumbo

Who would have thought one of the most oddly romantic films of recent years would be based on the true encounter of a woman and her love for nuts and bolts?

In *Jumbo*, Zoé Wittock's sublime Spielbergian love story, Jeanne finds herself drawn to the mechanical object of her desire, an enormous Tilt-A-Whirl ride. Played by Noémie Merlant (*Portrait of a Lady on Fire*), she's an attractive recluse of sorts, preferring to hibernate in an enclosed world with her overbearing single mum. Early on we get an inkling of her hidden needs when we catch her masturbating to various objects, in a bedroom cluttered with lights and miniature fairground rides. At night she works as a cleaner at the local amusement park. When a new attraction begins to weave a pneumatic spell, she becomes convinced it is alive and communicating with her.

Jeanne's pushy mum thinks her boss Marc is a catch and in any other film of this ilk he would be the man with all the right moves. This isn't that film. Not one for hiding her true desires, much of the film's sincerity and awkward humour comes from Jeanne attempting to bridge the gap of understanding with those dearest to her. gorgeously lensed throughout with smart production design to match, *Jumbo* features a rich soundscape and score that breathes life into both the living and inanimate, creating one of the more remarkable debut films in recent times. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Zoé Wittock is a Belgian filmmaker currently based in Paris. Her debut feature film *Jumbo*, which explores objectum-sexuality, was developed from the true story of Erika Labrie, an Olympic gold medal winner in archery, who got married to the Eiffel Tower in 2004.

Incredibly Strange

France/Belgium/
Luxembourg 2020

Director/Screenplay
Zoé Wittock

Producers
Anaïs Bertrand, Gilles Chanial,
Annabella Nezri

Photography
Thomas Buelens

Editor
Thomas Fernandez

Music
Thomas Roussel

With
Noémie Merlant,
Emmanuelle Bercot,
Bastien Bouillon,
Sam Louwyck, William Abello,
Tracy Dossou,
Jonathan Bartholmé

Festival Premiere
Sundance 2020



© Caroline Fauvet

94 minutes
In French with English subtitles

16

Sex scenes, sexual content
& violence

BUY

Online Rental
Fri 31 Jul until Thu 6 Aug

Leap of Faith: William Friedkin on *The Exorcist*

Unpacking one of *the* landmark films of the 1970s, William Friedkin talks big on the secrets and success of *The Exorcist* in this stellar cinematic essay, framed around an epic six-day interview with the maverick director.

William Friedkin was a smoking hot wunderkind fresh off the success of *The French Connection* when he decided to adapt William Peter Blatty's bestselling novel *The Exorcist*. No one could have predicted the shattering effect the film would have on audiences around the world.

Alexandre O. Philippe, an astute chronicler of genre film, goes one-on-one with cinema's greatest raconteur in a fireside chat dissecting the film that changed the cinema landscape forever. A fascinating lapsed Catholic and a naturally gifted filmmaker, Friedkin is never short for words about his films and cinema in general, whether he's referring to the emotional austerity of Carl Dreyer's *Ordet* or the subliminal nod to Magritte's painting *The Empire of Light*. Opinionated, arrogant, fearless, bullying and brilliant, the man affectionately known as 'Wild Bill' reveals behind-the-scenes anecdotes about a moment in cinema that will never be repeated. Throughout this zigzagging conversation, his manner ranges from thoughtful and playful to contradictory and prickly.

Endlessly absorbing for fans, this self-interrogation about the creation of "the scariest film of all time" will even entertain those who've never had the courage to watch it. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Alexandre O. Philippe is a Swiss director with an interest in examining influential works by master filmmakers and dissecting seminal screen moments. He has deconstructed the shower scene in *Psycho* (78/52, 2017) and the mythologies of the *Alien* franchise (*Memory: The Origins of Alien*, 2019), among other film-focused documentaries.

Incredibly
Strange

USA 2019

Director/Screenplay
Alexandre O. Philippe

Producer
Kerry Deignan Roy

Photography
Robert Muratore

Editor
David Lawrence

Music
Jon Hegel, Anthony Weeden

With
William Friedkin

Festival Premiere
Venice 2019



105 minutes
In English

16

Horror scenes
& offensive language

BUY

Online Rental
Thu 30 Jul until Wed 5 Aug

Yummy

Those with a voracious appetite for fresh variations on the zombie genre will lap up this juicy Belgian horror comedy about a virus outbreak in a run-down hospital offering cheap cosmetic surgery to desperate clients.

The zombie film is forever springing back to life like some cheap jump scare. In the funny and grotesque *Yummy*, the playbook gets a new chapter with director Lars Damoiseaux's lively Flemish take on the genre, drawing some fresh blood onto an already heavily coated crimson canvas.

Early signs of a splatter shit-storm on the horizon are apparent when a young couple travel to a dubious Eastern European hospital for some cosmetic surgery. Alison (Maaïke Neuvillet), the girlfriend, wants a breast reduction while her surgery-addicted mother has also tagged along for yet another facelift. Eventually her boyfriend Michael (Bart Hollanders) wanders off to an abandoned area of the hospital, only to find a woman gagged and strapped to an operating table. She's actually patient zero in a rejuvenation experiment and in releasing her, he unwittingly releases a virus that proceeds to infect and tear through all and sundry.

The film, much like its characters, resembles old flesh given a slick nip/tuck job via the talented hands of an up-and-coming European director. The end result is brimming with enough humour, outlandish gore and nudity to satiate the old-school horror cognoscenti and newcomers alike. — Ant Timpson

About the Filmmaker

Lars Damoiseaux is a writer and director born in The Netherlands. His short film *Patient Zero* (2016) was the basis for his feature debut, *Yummy*.

Incredibly Strange

Belgium 2019

Director

Lars Damoiseaux

Producers

Kobe Van Steenberghe,
Hendrik Verthé

Screenplay

Lars Damoiseaux,
Eveline Hagenbeek

Photography

Daan Nieuwenhuijs

Editor

Pieter Smet

Music

Nico Renson

With

Maaïke Neuvillet,
Bart Hollanders,
Benjamin Ramon,
Clara Cleymans,
Annick Christiaens,
Eric Godon, Joshua Rubin,
Taeke Nicolaï, Tom Audenaert

Festival Premiere

SXSW 2020



96 minutes
In English and Dutch,
with English subtitles

16

Violence, gore, offensive
language, nudity & horror

BUY

Online Rental
Sat 1 Aug until Fri 7 Aug

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Whānau Mārama New Zealand International Film Festival 2020

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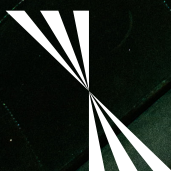
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