

HAMPTONS FILM

31st Edition of the Hamptons International Film Festival
Announces Full 2023 Slate

Festival to Close with MAESTRO From Director Bradley Cooper

Signature Programming Including “A Conversation With...”
Series to Return with Todd Haynes and Paul Simon

PAST LIVES Director Celine Song
to Be Honored with 2023 Breakthrough Artist Award

Additional Spotlight Selections Include:
A LITTLE PRAYER, AMERICAN FICTION, DREAM SCENARIO, EILEEN, EX-HUSBANDS,
FINGERNAILS, THE HOLDOVERS, and QUIZ LADY

Competition Titles in Documentary and Narrative Sections Revealed

Full Lineup of World Cinema Section and Complete Shorts Lineup Announced

2023 Edition to Run October 5 - 12

Feature Images Available [HERE](#)
Shorts Images Available [HERE](#)

East Hampton, NY (September 14, 2023) - HamptonsFilm announced today the full slate of programming for the 2023 edition of the Hamptons International Festival (HIFF), including the Closing Night presentation of Bradley Cooper’s **MAESTRO**, additional Signature Programming including “**A Conversation with...**” Series with **Paul Simon**, and the full film programming lineup including additional films to screen within the Spotlight section, Documentary and Narrative Competition titles, short film sections, as well as Signature Programs including Views From Long Island; Conflict and Resolution; and Air, Land & Sea. The Festival also announced filmmaker **Celine Song** will attend the festival for a Special Screening of her latest narrative feature **PAST LIVES**, and will receive the festival’s **Breakthrough Artist Award**. The 31st edition of the festival will feature a lineup of films that are 49% female-directed and represent 42 countries from around the world. The festival had a record number of submissions this year and will screen 70 features and 46 shorts with 8 World Premieres, 2 North American Premieres, 11 US Premieres, 13 East Coast Premieres, and 8 New York Premieres.

MAESTRO is a towering and fearless love story chronicling the lifelong relationship between Leonard Bernstein and Felicia Montealegre Cohn Bernstein. A love letter to life and art, Maestro at its core is an emotionally epic portrayal of family and love. The film marks Bradley Cooper’s second directorial film after A STAR IS BORN (2018). Cooper stars in the film alongside Carey Mulligan, Matt Bomer, Maya Hawke, and Sarah Silverman. The film will screen on October 12 as the Closing Night presentation, and is set to be released by Netflix later this year.

“MAESTRO is a beautifully crafted, raw, and heartfelt film. We look forward to sharing this glimpse into the love story between Leonard Bernstein and Felicia Montealegre Cohn Bernstein,” said HamptonsFilm

Executive Director Anne Chaisson. "We are thrilled to have Bradley Cooper's next directorial outing after *A STAR IS BORN* as the closing film of our 31st edition."

From Saturday, October 7th through Monday, October 9th, the festival will also host a series of "A Conversation With..." discussions, sponsored by The Macallan. Along with the previously announced conversation with Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Todd Haynes, who will attend the festival on behalf of Netflix's *MAY DECEMBER*, and will receive the festival's Achievement in Directing Award. The festival will also host a discussion with documentary subject and Grammy Award-winning musician Paul Simon, who will attend on behalf of Alex Gibney's *IN RESTLESS DREAMS: THE MUSIC OF PAUL SIMON*, screening as this year's Centerpiece presentation, sponsored by UBS and Purist Magazine.

HIFF has also announced director Celine Song will receive the 2023 Breakthrough Artist Award during a Q&A on October 11, following a special screening of *PAST LIVES*, which follows two deeply connected childhood friends who drifted apart after one's family emigrated from South Korea, as they reunite for one fateful week as they confront notions of love and destiny. *PAST LIVES* marks Song's debut feature film which premiered at Sundance 2023. The film was released by A24 in the U.S. in June to critical and audience acclaim, and will be released globally throughout the year. Her play *Endlings* received its world premiere in 2019 at American Repertory Theater and had its New York premiere in 2020 at New York Theatre Workshop. She has been a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and a semifinalist for the American Playwriting Foundation's Relentless Award.

Additional programming announced includes:

Newly announced Spotlight titles, sponsored by AUDI, include the New York Premiere of Sony Picture Classics' **A LITTLE PRAYER**, directed by Angus MacLachlan, following a man who tries to protect his daughter-in-law when he discovers his son is having an affair; the East Coast Premiere of MGM Studios' **AMERICAN FICTION**, Cord Jefferson's directorial debut, which confronts our culture's obsession with reducing people to outrageous stereotypes; the New York Premiere of A24's **DREAM SCENARIO**, written and directed by Kristoffer Borgli, following a hapless family man who finds his life turned upside down when millions of strangers suddenly start seeing him in their dreams; NEON's **EILEEN**, directed by William Oldroyd, following a young woman's friendship with an intoxicating woman that entangles her in a shocking crime; the North American Premiere of **EX-HUSBANDS**, directed by Noah Pritzker, following a man going through a crisis when his parents divorce after 65 years, his own wife leaves him, and his two sons face struggles in their own lives; the the East Coast Premiere of Apple Original Films' **FINGERNAILS**, directed by Christos Nikou, which follows a couple, Anna and Ryan, who have found true love, proven by a controversial new technology. When Anna takes a position at above testing institute, she meets Amir, an instructor who makes her questions her result; there's just one problem: Anna still isn't sure; the East Coast Premiere of Focus Features' **THE HOLDOVERS**, directed by Academy Award-winning director Alexander Payne, which follows the story of a curmudgeonly instructor at a New England prep school, who is forced to remain on campus during Christmas break with the handful of students with nowhere to go, as he gradually forms an unlikely bond with brainy troublemaker and the school's head cook; and the US Premiere of Hulu's **QUIZ LADY**, directed by Jessica Yu, which follows a brilliant but tightly wound, game show-obsessed young woman and her estranged, train-wreck of a sister as they work together to help cover their mother's gambling debts. Previously announced Spotlight titles include **ALL OF US STRANGERS**, **AVENUE OF THE GIANTS**, **FRESH KILLS**, **I'LL BE RIGHT THERE**, **MAY DECEMBER**, **RUSTIN**, and **THE ZONE OF INTEREST**.

"It is with great excitement that we are able to share the final additions to our well-rounded and diversified programming, including our Signature Programs, and additional spotlight and competition selections," said HamptonsFilm Artistic Director David Nugent. "It is an honor to host so many talented filmmakers and artists as they share their stories with our film-loving community, including the legendary Paul Simon and accomplished filmmaker Celine Song."

The Narrative Competition section of this year's festival, sponsored by Silvercup Studios, will include the US Premiere of Utopia's **RED ROOMS**, directed by Pascal Plante, which exposes the underbelly of the

internet through an unflinching critique of our society's fascination with violent crime; the East Coast Premiere of Sony Picture Classics' **SHAYDA**, directed by Noora Niasari, following a young Iranian mother and her six-year-old daughter who find refuge in an Australian women's shelter during the two weeks of the Iranian New Year (Nowruz); Magnolia Picture's **THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING HAS PASSED**, directed by Joanna Arnow, following the life of a woman as time passes in her long-term casual BDSM relationship, low-level corporate job, and quarrelsome Jewish family; the New York Premiere of **TIGER STRIPES**, directed by Amanda Nell Eu, following an 11-year-old girl who is carefree until she starts to experience horrifying physical changes to her body; and the New York Premiere of Film Movement's **20,000 SPECIES OF BEES**, directed by Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren, following an eight-year-old and her mother who experience revelations that will change their lives forever while living in a village house linked to beekeeping in the summer.

The Documentary Competition section of this year's festival, sponsored by Silvercup Studios, will include the East Coast Premiere of **ANGEL APPLICANT**, directed by Ken August Meyer, which tells the story of a man who discovers empathetic wisdom on how to cope with his deadly autoimmune disease within the colorful expressive works of the late Swiss-German modern artist, Paul Klee; Sideshow/Janus Films' **ORLANDO, MY POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY**, directed by Paul B. Preciado, which tells stories of transition through unique reenactments and visual interpretations of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*; the New York Premiere of Greenwich Entertainment's **SMOKE SAUNA SISTERHOOD**, directed by Anna Hints, following a multigenerational group of women who embark on a smoke sauna tradition known as "savvusanna kombõ," as they come together in protective darkness to share secrets and wash off the shame that has accumulated in their bodies; the East Coast Premiere of **THIS WORLD IS NOT MY OWN**, directed by Petter Ringbom and Marquise Stillwell, which vividly brings to life the dynamic story of Nellie Mae Rowe, the daughter of a former slave who made brilliant art in obscurity for her entire life, until she met wealthy gallerist Judith Alexander; as well as previously announced **TELL THEM YOU LOVE ME**.

As part of the Signature Programs, the Conflict and Resolution section, sponsored by MUBI, will include **A REVOLUTION ON CANVAS**, directed by Sara Nodjoumi, working with co-director and husband, Till Schauder, for her directorial debut with this personal film, diving into the mystery surrounding the disappearance of more than 100 "treasonous" paintings by her father, seminal Iranian modern artist Nickzad "Nicky" Nodjoumi; **BEYOND UTOPIA**, directed by Madeleine Gavin, which is a suspenseful look at the lengths people will go to gain freedom, embedded with a courageous pastor as he works tirelessly to guide various individuals attempting to flee one of the most oppressive places on Earth: North Korea; **INVISIBLE NATION**, directed by Vanessa Hope, which is a living account of the election and tenure of Tsai Ing-wen, the first female president of Taiwan, and her tightrope walk as she balances the hopes and dreams of her nation between the colossal geopolitical forces of the U.S. and China; the East Coast Premiere MTV Documentary Films' of **MOURNING IN LOD**, directed by Hilla Medalia, which follows the fates of three families that are inextricably intertwined in a vicious cycle of violence in the city of Lod, Israel, where Israelis and Palestinians live side by side; and the US Premiere of **THE OLD OAK**, directed by Ken Loach, about the future for the last remaining pub, The Old Oak, in a village of Northeast England, where people are leaving the land as the mines are closed.

As part of the Signature Programs, the Views from Long Island section will include the World Premiere of **MARY HEILMANN: WAVES, ROADS, & HALLUCINATIONS**, directed by Matt Creed, which invites viewers into the extraordinary life of artist Mary Heilmann, who ranks amongst the most influential American abstract painters of her generation; and the World Premiere of **THESE DAYS**, directed by Junior Gonzalez, a docudrama about Jay, a 15-year-old talented artist trying to understand his own journey in life; as well as previously announced **FRESH KILLS**. With support from the Suffolk County Film Commission.

As part of the Signature Programs, the Air, Land, and Sea section, sponsored by HC&G, will include **COMMON GROUND**, directed by Josh Tickell and Rebecca Tickell, which profiles a hopeful and uplifting movement of white, black, and indigenous farmers who are using alternative "regenerative" models of agriculture that could balance the climate, save our health, and stabilize America's economy—before it's too late; the World Premiere of **SILENT FALLOUT: BABY TEETH SPEAK**, directed by Hideaki Ito, which unveils the shocking legacy of nuclear testing in the US and the ongoing policy decisions shaping our

future with a post-screening discussion led by HamptonsFilm board member Alec Baldwin; and the East Coast Premiere of HBO's **TREES AND OTHER ENTANGLEMENTS**, directed by Irene Taylor, following the entangled lives of people and trees they love grow in a contemporary tale of time and our connections to the natural world and one another.

In the World Cinema Documentary section, sponsored by Dragon Hemp, the slate includes the New York Premiere of IFC Films' **THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SHERE HITE**, directed by Nicole Newnham, which shines a light on a forgotten feminist figure who was ahead of her time, silenced by Americans unwilling to confront the honesty of women's sexual agency and desire; the US Premiere of **FOUR DAUGHTERS**, directed by Academy Award®-nominated Tunisian Kaouther Ben Hania, which reconstructs the story of Olfa Hamrouni and her four daughters, two of whom were radicalized by Islamic extremists; Zipporah Films' **MENUS-PLAISIRS - LES TROISGROS**, directed by Frederick Wiseman, which centers on the day-to-night operations of the legendary restaurant Troisgros, founded 93 years ago and currently being passed down to the 4th generation in a family of chefs; the New York Premiere of National Geographic's **THE MISSION**, directed by Emmy-winning documentarians Jesse Moss and Amanda McBaine, which examines the fateful journey John Chau took to bring Christianity to the isolated indigenous people of North Sentinel Island; Apple Original Films's **THE PIGEON TUNNEL**, directed by Academy Award-winning documentarian Errol Morris, which pulls back the curtain on the storied life and career of former British spy David Cornwell, better known by his pen name John le Carré; the US Premiere of **PRAYING FOR ARMAGEDDON**, directed by Tonje Hessen Schei and Michael Rowley, which reveals the power and influence of U.S. fundamentalist Evangelicals as they aim to fulfill the prophecy of a Holy War that will trigger the Second Coming of Christ; **RON DELSENER PRESENTS**, directed by Jake Sumner, which takes audiences on a tour through a half-century of live music with music business pioneer Ron Delsener; **RULE OF TWO WALLS**, directed by David Gutnik, which is an intimate look at the war in Ukraine, as seen through the eyes of Ukrainian artists who remained in their country to make art as a defiant act in the face of aggression; the US Premiere of **SONGS OF EARTH**, directed by Margreth Olin, who embarks on a yearlong existential journey, reconnecting with her aging parents as they reflect on both their long and happy marriage and their place in the natural world; the US Premiere of **SUMMER QAMP**, directed by Jen Markowitz, following a group of LGBTQ+ youth at an idyllic lakeside camp in Alberta, Canada where campers enjoy the traditional summer camp experience in a safe, affirming environment deepening their connections with their community and themselves; as well as the previously announced World Premieres of **STORY & PICTURES BY**, and **THEY CALLED HIM MOSTLY HARMLESS**.

In the World Cinema Narrative section, sponsored by Naturopathica, the slate includes NEON's Palme d'Or winning **ANATOMY OF A FALL**, directed by Justine Triet, following a woman who becomes the main suspect when her husband falls to his death in a remote town in the French Alps, with their young son as the only witness; the US Premiere of **CHUCK CHUCK BABY**, directed by Janis Pugh, a film of love, loss, music, and female friendship set in and around the falling feathers of a chicken processing plant in industrial north Wales; Janus/Sideshow Film's **EVIL DOES NOT EXIST**, directed by Academy Award winner Ryūsuke Hamaguchi, which follows Takumi and his daughter Hana, who live in a village threatened by a plan to build a glamping site near Takumi's house that would damage the environment; MUBI's **FALLEN LEAVES**, directed by Award-winning filmmaker Aki Kaurismäki, a timeless, hopeful and ultimately satisfying love story about two lonely souls' path to happiness – and the numerous hurdles they encounter along the way; **FANCY DANCE**, directed by Erica Tremblay, which follows a Native American hustler who kidnaps her niece from her white grandparents after her sister's disappearance and sets out for the state powwow in hopes of keeping what is left of their family intact; **GREEN BORDER**, directed by three-time Academy Award nominee Agnieszka Holland, following the dangers faced by asylum seekers along European borders while reflecting the moral choices that fall to ordinary people every day; NEON's **LA CHIMERA**, directed by Academy Award nominee Alice Rohrwacher, taking place in 1980s Tuscany, where Arthur leads a band of tombaroli, thieves of ancient Etruscan relics and archaeological wonders, while also searching the mythological afterlife for Beniamina, the woman he has lost; the US Premiere of **MONSTER**, directed by Kore-eda Hirokazu, which unfolds through the eyes of a mother, teacher, and child following a mother who notices her son is acting strangely and discovers that a teacher may be responsible; NEON's **ORIGIN**, directed by Ava DuVernay, which chronicles the remarkable life and work of Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson as she investigates the genesis of injustice and uncovers a

hidden truth that affects us all; the US Premiere of **THE PEASANTS**, directed by DK Welchman and Hugh Welchman, which tells the story of Jagna, a young woman determined to forge her own path within the confines of a late 19th century patriarchal Polish village; NEON's **PERFECT DAYS**, directed by Academy Award-nominated director Win Wenders, following Hirayama, a toilet cleaner living in Tokyo, whose restrained, structured life is disrupted when he strikes up an unexpected friendship with a young girl; the East Coast Premiere of Sony Picture Classics' **THE PERSIAN VERSION**, directed by Maryam Keshavarz, which tells the story of Iranian-American Leila, who navigates her relationships at arm's length in an effort to balance her opposing cultures; the East Coast Premiere of Magnolia Pictures' **THE PROMISED LAND**, directed by Nikolaj Arcel, which follows the impoverished Captain Ludvig Kahlen in 1755 as he sets out to conquer a vast uninhabitable land to cultivate valuable crops and build a colony for the King in exchange for a desperately desired royal name for himself; **RADICAL**, directed by Christopher Zalla, based on a true story of a frustrated teacher in a Mexican border town plagued by neglect, corruption, and violence, who tries a radical new method to break through his students' apathy and unlock their curiosity, their potential, and maybe even their genius; NEON's **ROBOT DREAMS**, directed by Pablo Berger, based on the popular graphic novel by the North American writer Sara Varon, following the adventures and misfortunes of Dog and Robot in NYC during the '80s; the North American Premiere of Netflix's **SOCIETY OF THE SNOW**, directed by J.A. Bayona and telling the true story of Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571, which in 1972 crashed in the heart of the Andes and trapped a team of rugby players in one of the most hostile and inaccessible environments on the planet; IFC Films' **THE TASTE OF THINGS**, directed by Tran Anh Hung, set in France in 1889, following Dodin Bouffant, a chef living with his personal cook and lover Eugénie; the East Coast Premiere of Sony Pictures Classics' **THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE**, directed by İlker Çatak, which tells the story of an idealistic new teacher decides to get to the bottom of a series of thefts at a German high school when students point fingers at their Turkish classmate and tensions rise; and **TÔTEM**, directed by Lila Avilés, which follows a seven-year-old Sol, who spends the day at her grandfather's home preparing for a surprise party for Sol's father, Tonatiuh as she comes to understand that her world is about to change dramatically.

HIFF also announced nine programs of short films this year, including Narrative Competition, Documentary Competition, New York Women in Film & Television: Women Calling the Shots, the University Short Films Showcase, Fly! Shorts for All Ages, Fish Out of Water!, Without a Roadmap, State of the Union, and the Views From Long Island shorts program.

In addition, the festival has announced the jury members for the 2023 festival. The Narrative Jury will include **Arianna Bocco**, considered one of the most seasoned and powerful content strategy and distribution leaders in the independent film industry, most recently serving as the President of IFC Films, leading the acquisition of over 600 films and developing long-lasting relationships with renowned, award-winning filmmakers; **David Koepp**, American film director and screenwriter who has written or co-written the screenplays for more than thirty films, best known for writing JURASSIC PARK directed by Steven Spielberg, THE LOST WORLD: JURASSIC PARK, MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE, INDIANA JONES AND THE KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULL, and SPIDER-MAN directed by Sam Raimi; and **Matt Singer**, the editor and film critic of ScreenCrush.com, and the current chair of the New York Film Critics Circle. **Caryn Coleman**, the founder of The Future of Film is Female, a non-profit organization that amplifies the work of all women and non-binary filmmakers through its short film fund, commitment to exhibition, and community building programs; **Marie Therese Guirgis**, the Head of Documentary at Play/Action Pictures, with producing and EP credits including 2022 Academy Award-winner SUMMER OF SOUL by Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson; MLK/FBI and THE LEAGUE, both by Sam Pollard; TOTALLY UNDER CONTROL by Alex Gibney, and more; and **Carlos Sandoval**, Emmy-nominated and Sundance award-winning filmmaker, best known for AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, CLASS APART, and FARMINGVILLE; will make up this year's Documentary Jury.

As previously announced, the festival will open with the East Coast Premiere of Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi's narrative feature debut, Netflix's **NYAD** on October 5. The film, which stars Academy Award® nominee Annette Bening, Academy Award® winner Jodie Foster, and Rhys Ifans, tells the remarkable story of American marathon swimmer Diana Nyad (Bening), and is based on Nyad's 2015 autobiography *Find a Way*. The festival will also host the New York Premiere of **IN RESTLESS DREAMS**:

THE MUSIC OF PAUL SIMON as this year's Centerpiece Film, set to screen on October 6. Directed by Alex Gibney, the documentary is the definitive portrait of Paul Simon that follows him inside the studio as he makes his new album *Seven Psalms*, while also looking back on his six-decade, Grammy Award-winning career with countless musical peaks from *Sounds of Silence* to *Graceland*. The previously announced Compassion, Justice & Animal Rights Signature Program, sponsored by Dragon Hemp, will include documentary features **ROWDY GIRL** and **WILDING**, as well as documentary short **HAPPY**.

The 31st Annual Hamptons Film Festival will run October 5-12, 2023. HIFF thanks sponsors and supporters for this year's festival, including returning Premiere Sponsor Audi; Lead Sponsor The Macallan; Signature Sponsors King & Spalding, and UBS; Supporting Sponsors Naturopathica, Dragon Hemp, Silvercup, and Regal Cinemas; as well as official Media Sponsors *Variety*, WNBC, *The Purist*, *The East Hampton Star*, Signature Sponsor *The Atlantic*, and new supporting sponsor MUBI; Contributing Sponsors Assemble Media, Montauk Brewing Company, Natural Geographics, Netflix, Owl's Brew, Wolffer Estate Vineyard, and long term support from New York State Council on the Arts, and Suffolk County Film Commission. For more information, please visit www.hamptonsfilmfest.org.

2023 Hamptons International Film Festival Lineup:

OPENING NIGHT FILM

Sponsored by AUDI

NYAD

East Coast Premiere

dir. Jimmy Chin & Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi (USA), 2023

A remarkable true story of tenacity, friendship and the triumph of the human spirit, NYAD recounts a riveting chapter in the life of world-class athlete Diana Nyad. At the age of 60, three decades after giving up marathon swimming in exchange for a prominent career as a sports journalist, Diana (four-time Academy Award® nominee Annette Bening) becomes obsessed with completing an epic swim that always eluded her: the 110-mile trek from Cuba to Florida, often referred to as the "Mount Everest" of swims. Determined to become the first person to finish the swim without a shark cage, Diana goes on a thrilling, four-year journey with her best friend and coach Bonnie Stoll (two-time Academy Award® winner Jodie Foster) and a ragtag but dedicated sailing team. Academy Award®-winning directors and HIFF alums Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin (THE RESCUE, FREE SOLO) make their narrative feature debut with this visceral, heartfelt testament to the importance of determination at any age. A Netflix release.

CLOSING NIGHT FILM

With support from Riki Kane Larimer

MAESTRO

dir. Bradley Cooper (USA), 2023

Academy Award® nominee Bradley Cooper takes up the complicated life of legendary conductor and composer Leonard Bernstein (Cooper), digging beyond his musical brilliance to tenderly chronicle his lifelong relationship with Felicia Montealegre Cohn Bernstein (Academy Award nominee® Carey Mulligan). This towering, fearless love story is punctuated by a score of Bernstein's own music, soulful imagery from Academy Award®-nominated cinematographer Matthew Libatique, and never-better performances from Cooper, Mulligan, and an all-star supporting cast, including Carey Mulligan, Matt Bomer, Maya Hawke, and Sarah Silverman. A love letter to the passions that define us, MAESTRO is a layered, epic portrayal of family, creativity, and emotion. A Netflix release.

CENTERPIECE FILM

Sponsored by UBS

IN RESTLESS DREAMS: THE MUSIC OF PAUL SIMON

New York Premiere

dir. Alex Gibney (USA), 2023

This definitive portrait of Paul Simon follows the Grammy Award®-winning musical artist inside the studio as he makes his new album *Seven Psalms*, while also looking back on his unparalleled six-decade career. Six-time HIFF alum and Academy Award® winner Alex Gibney (*TAXI TO THE DARK SIDE*, *CITIZEN K*, *CRAZY NOT INSANE*) returns with a comprehensive exploration of Simon's undeniable influence on the history of American music and his countless musical peaks, from *Sounds of Silence* to *Graceland*, providing an inner glimpse of his vibrant creative process. Nostalgic and surprising, *IN RESTLESS DREAMS: THE MUSIC OF PAUL SIMON* captures the essence of an American icon while taking audiences on an epic musical journey.

SPOTLIGHT FILMS

Sponsored by AUDI

A LITTLE PRAYER

New York Premiere

dir. Angus MacLachlan (USA), 2023

In *A LITTLE PRAYER*, an extraordinary ensemble cast brings empathy and witty charm to a deeply personal tale of complex family dynamics. In a small Southern town in North Carolina, Bill (Academy Award® nominee David Strathairn) begins to suspect his son is having an affair. He is caught between an urge to protect his daughter-in-law Tammy (Jane Levy) and his fatherly duty to his son David (Will Pullen), a veteran struggling with PTSD. Writer and director Angus MacLachlan explores a variety of pressing issues in today's changing modern South, including the limits of patriarchal influence and a woman's right to choose. A Sony Pictures Classics Release.

ALL OF US STRANGERS

dir. Andrew Haigh (UK), 2023

On a lonely night in contemporary London, Adam (Emmy® nominee Andrew Scott) has a chance encounter with mysterious neighbor Harry (Academy Award® nominee Paul Mescal). As a relationship develops between them, Adam finds himself drawn back to the suburban town where he grew up, and to the childhood home where his parents (Claire Foy, *The Crown*, and Jamie Bell) appear to be living, looking exactly as they did on the day they died 30 years earlier. Director Andrew Haigh (*45 YEARS*, *WEEKEND*) returns to HIFF with this stirring, quietly metaphysical story of love and loss, based on the novel *Strangers* by Taichi Yamada. A Searchlight Pictures release.

AMERICAN FICTION

East Coast Premiere

dir. Cord Jefferson (USA), 2023

Tony and Emmy Award® Winner Jeffrey Wright stars in this clever, biting comedy as Thelonius "Monk" Ellison, an under-appreciated author fed up with the state of Black literature in America who stumbles upon a surprising and ironic source of success. Acclaimed writer Cord Jefferson (*Watchmen*, *Master of None*, *Succession*) makes his feature directorial debut with this warm, whip-smart satire featuring an all-star cast, including Tracee Ellis Ross, Issa Rae, Leslie Uggams, Sterling K. Brown, and Adam Brody. Based on Percival Everett's award-winning novel *Erasure*, *AMERICAN FICTION* playfully grapples with issues of race, visibility, representation, and artistic integrity in modern America. A United Artists Release.

AVENUE OF THE GIANTS

World Premiere

dir. Finn Taylor (USA), 2023

Herbert Heller (Stephen Lang, *AVATAR*) carries a traumatic secret: now the beloved owner of a toy store in Northern California, Herbert is a Holocaust survivor. The Nazis forced him into the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp at age 12, but he managed to escape and kept the secret from everyone—including his own children—for 60 years. When Herbert is diagnosed with a terminal illness, he befriends Abbey (Elsie Fisher, *EIGHTH GRADE*), an isolated teenager whose own struggles inspire him to open up. Based

on a true story, AVENUE OF THE GIANTS is a tender depiction of an intergenerational friendship that offers the unlikely pair a path toward healing.

DREAM SCENARIO

New York Premiere

dir. Kristoffer Borgli (USA), 2023

Paul Matthews (Nicolas Cage) is an evolutionary biology professor with keen insight into wild animal behavior, but little understanding of how to navigate the world of his fellow humans. His uneventful life turns upside down one night when millions of strangers around the world see him in their dreams. As his nighttime appearances take a nightmarish turn, he is thrust into a singular type of stardom that even those who crave the limelight would be hard-pressed to navigate. Kristoffer Borgli's surreal and hilarious satire of influencer culture and modern stardom boasts a stellar cast and is sure to be one of the most provocative films at this year's festival. An A24 release.

EILEEN

dir. William Oldroyd (USA), 2023

Based on the book of the same name by literary powerhouse Ottessa Moshfegh, EILEEN follows a peculiar young woman whose dreary life stretches on toward unending misery. In frigid 1960s Boston, Eileen (Thomasin McKenzie) shuffles between her father's dingy, emotionally haunted home and the prison where she works alongside colleagues who have ostracized her. When an intoxicating woman (Academy Award® winner Anne Hathaway) joins the prison staff, Eileen is taken. Just when the possibility of a salvational friendship (or maybe more) takes hold and forms a singular glimmer in Eileen's darkness, her newfound confidant entangles her in a shocking crime that alters all. A NEON release.

EX-HUSBANDS

North American Premiere

dir. Noah Pritzker (USA), 2023

Griffin Dunne (THE DISCOVERERS, HIFF 2012) stars as Peter Pearce, a New Yorker reeling from his parents' recent divorce and his own wife (Rosanna Arquette, reuniting with her AFTER HOURS co-star) leaving him after 35 years. When he crashes his son Nick's (James Norton) bachelor party in Tulum, Peter soon realizes he's not the only Pearce man in crisis. Set against the spectacular backdrop of the Yucatán, writer/director Noah Pritzker (QUITTERS) has crafted a witty and deeply human drama about divorce, heartache, fathers and sons, and getting away from it all.

FINGERNAILS

East Coast Premiere

dir. Christos Nikou (USA), 2023

Anna (Jessie Buckley, WOMEN TALKING, HIFF 2022) and Ryan (Jeremy Allen White, *The Bear*) have found true love—a fact that can now be verified using a controversial new technology. When Anna meets the charming Amir (Riz Ahmed, SOUND OF METAL) at her job at the love-testing institute, she begins to question whether she should in fact trust her true feelings over the decision of a mysterious machine. Shot on 35mm film, FINGERNAILS is Greek director Christos Nikou's (APPLES) English-language debut, an offbeat romance brought to life by Emmy Award®-winning cinematographer Marcell Rév's (Euphoria) striking and colorful visual palette. An Apple Original Films release.

FRESH KILLS

dir. Jennifer Esposito (USA), 2023

In her debut as a writer-director, actress Jennifer Esposito (Blue Bloods, SUMMER OF SAM, CRASH) brings late 1980s Staten Island to vivid life through the lens of Rose Larusso (Emily Bader), an inquisitive young girl who discovers her father (Domenick Lombardozzi) is an emerging mafia kingpin. Rose's growing desire to break free from the path set before her soon threatens her existence and alienates her from her closest allies: her mother (Esposito) and sister (Odessa A'zion). Smart, thrilling, and nuanced, FRESH KILLS turns the classic mob movie inside out, shining a light on the stories of the women operating within mafia life and the fear, violence and rage that dictate who they become.

**This film also screens as part of Views From Long Island.*

THE HOLDOVERS

East Coast Premiere

dir. Alexander Payne (USA), 2023

Academy Award®-winning director Alexander Payne (ELECTION, SIDEWAYS) returns to HIFF with the story of a curmudgeonly instructor (Academy Award® nominee Paul Giamatti) at a New England prep school, who is forced to remain on campus during Christmas break with the handful of students with nowhere to go. Gradually, he forms an unlikely bond with brainy troublemaker Angus (newcomer Dominic Sessa) and the school's head cook Mary (Da'Vine Joy Randolph), who is grieving her son's recent death. Brought to life through instantly memorable and comedic performances coupled with a nostalgic soundtrack and lived in design, THE HOLDOVERS transports audiences to a bygone era in this heartwarming holiday story of friendship.

I'LL BE RIGHT THERE

World Premiere

dir. Brendan Walsh (USA), 2023

Emmy Award® winner Edie Falco (The Sopranos, Nurse Jackie) delivers an affecting performance as Wanda, a woman who barely has time for herself, not that she would know what to do with it anyway. Her very pregnant daughter (Kayli Carter, HIFF 2018 Breakthrough Artist) wants a wedding, which her ex-husband (Emmy Award® winner Bradley Whitford) is flaking on paying for. Her mother (Jeannie Berlin) thinks she's dying. Her son (Charlie Tahan, Ozark) is going into either rehab or the army. And her boyfriend (Michael Rappaport) doesn't excite her, but does her new girlfriend (Sepideh Moafi)? I'LL BE RIGHT THERE is a heartfelt comedy about a family falling apart and one mother's role in bringing it all together.

MAY DECEMBER

dir. Todd Haynes (USA), 2023

Twenty years after their notorious tabloid romance gripped the nation, Gracie (Julianne Moore) and Joe (23 years her junior) brace themselves for their twins' high school graduation. When actress Elizabeth (Natalie Portman) comes to spend time with the family to better understand Gracie—whom she will be playing in a film—family dynamics begin to unravel. Joe (Charles Melton) gradually confronts the reality of what happened in his youth, and as the two women study each other, their similarities and differences begin to ebb and flow. Academy Award®-nominated director Todd Haynes crafts an exploration of truth, storytelling, and the challenges of fully understanding another person. A Netflix release.

RUSTIN

East Coast Premiere

dir. George C Wolfe (USA), 2023

The architect of 1963's momentous March on Washington, Bayard Rustin (Emmy Award® winner Colman Domingo, Euphoria) was one of our country's greatest unsung activists and organizers. He challenged authority, and never apologized for who he was, what he believed, or who he loved. He made history, and in turn, he was forgotten. Directed by DGA Award and five-time Tony® Award winner George C. Wolfe, RUSTIN shines a long overdue spotlight on the extraordinary man who, alongside other civil rights giants, dared to imagine a different world, and inspired a movement in a march toward freedom. A Netflix release.

THE ZONE OF INTEREST

dir. Jonathan Glazer (USA/UK/Poland), 2023

Based on a novel of the same name by the late Martin Amis, THE ZONE OF INTEREST is the latest feature from English director Jonathan Glazer (UNDER THE SKIN). This Cannes Grand Prix-winning film centers on the domestic lives of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss (Christian Friedel) and his wife Hedwig (Sandra Hüller, 2006 HIFF Rising Star), as they strive to build a dream life for their family, whose home is mere yards away from the setting of the worst atrocities of recent history. Shot in and around the historic site of Auschwitz and anchored by Mica Levi's haunting score, THE ZONE OF INTEREST is an unforgettable meditation on the banality of evil. An A24 release.

AIR, LAND & SEA

COMMON GROUND

dir. Josh Tickell and Rebecca Tickell (USA), 2023

In an investigation into agricultural solutions to climate change, Josh Tickell and Rebecca Tickell offer a comprehensive profile of an uplifting food sustainability movement. COMMON GROUND follows white, Black, and Indigenous farmers using alternative regenerative agriculture that demonstrates potential to balance the climate, save our health, and stabilize America's economy—before it's too late. Narrated by an all-star cast, including Jason Momoa, Laura Dern, and Ian Somerhalder, this crucial film fuses journalistic exposé with deeply personal stories to both unveil a dark web of money, power, and politics behind our broken food system and offer radical, hopeful solutions for our planet's future.

SILENT FALLOUT: BABY TEETH SPEAK

World Premiere

dir. Hideake Ito (Japan), 2023

In 2001, 85,000 baby teeth were discovered in Missouri, collected 50 years earlier in a study on the radioactive consequences of nuclear testing conducted on US soil. Carried by the wind, radioactive material produced by more than 100 nuclear explosions contaminated pastures, vegetables and water across the continent. Scientists and mothers in St. Louis, who launched the ambitious project to measure Strontium 90 in baby teeth, uncovered the disturbing environmental consequences of nuclear arms testing. Featuring narration from Alec Baldwin, director Hideaki Ito unveils the shocking legacy of nuclear testing in the US and the ongoing policy decisions shaping our future. **Panel to follow discussing today's use of nuclear power and its effects on our environment, featuring experts and the film's narrator Alec Baldwin.

TREES AND OTHER ENTANGLEMENTS

East Coast Premiere

dir. Irene Taylor (USA), 2023

The entangled lives of people and the trees they love take center stage in this contemporary tale of our connection to the natural world and to one another. Lyrical and meditative, TREES AND OTHER ENTANGLEMENTS traces an array of deeply human stories, among them a young boy kidnapped and hidden amongst trees; an artist refining American bonsai; a photographer who artfully observes trees; and a man who steadfastly plants them. Director and photojournalist Irene Taylor (HEAR AND NOW) puts forth an earnest appeal for conservation at a time when an emotional reconnection with our environment has never felt so urgent. An HBO release.

COMPASSION, JUSTICE & ANIMAL RIGHTS

ROWDY GIRL

US Premiere

dir. Jason Goldman (USA), 2023

Unable to come to terms with the cruelty of animal agriculture, former Texas cattle rancher Renee King-Sonnen goes vegan, transforming her husband's beef operation into an animal sanctuary. When their story goes viral, she realizes her true calling: helping farmers transition to a more sustainable and financially-viable, plant-based agriculture. Centering the personalities of former ranchers and the animals they care for, Jason Goldman's feature debut ROWDY GIRL is an honest and compelling study challenging the normalized violence against animals within food culture. This captivating documentary showcases the inspiring work of an activist building common ground between farmers and vegans in a shared mission of compassion and sustainability.

WILDING

North American Premiere

dir. David Allen (UK), 2023

Inspired by Isabella Tree's captivating best-selling novel, David Allen's *WILDING* introduces us to a young couple who bet on nature for the future of their failing, four-hundred-year-old estate. In daring resistance to entrenched tradition, they bravely take a gamble by ripping down their fences, entrusting the land's recovery to a motley mix of animals both tame and wild. This pivotal moment marks the inception of a grand experiment, one of Europe's most significant rewilding projects to date. *WILDING* seamlessly combines scientific exploration, natural history, a healthy dose of suspense, and above all, a beacon of optimism.

HAPPY [short film]

US Premiere

dir. Laura Rindlisbacher (UK), 2023

Happy the elephant was captured as a baby and has been confined for the past 40 years. An historic court case examines the question: is she also a person?

CONFLICT AND RESOLUTION

Sponsored by MUBI

A REVOLUTION ON CANVAS

dir. Sara Nodjoumi & Till Schauder (USA), 2023

First-time director Sara Nodjoumi teams with her husband and co-director Till Schauder to uncover the story of her father, seminal modern artist Nickzad "Nicky" Nodjoumi, who fled Iran after the vandalization of his 1980 exhibition criticizing the Iranian Revolution. Decades later, with Iran once again embroiled in protests, Sara and Nicky attempt to track down and reclaim the paintings he left behind. Equal parts gripping political thriller and verité portrait documentary, *A REVOLUTION ON CANVAS* uses the soul-searching of one family to expose the cultural and personal costs of political turmoil, exploring the power of art, sacrifice, and family bonds. An HBO Films release.

BEYOND UTOPIA

dir. Madeleine Gavin (USA), 2023

Courageous South Korean pastor Seungeun Kim acts as a guide for those risking their lives to flee the oppression of North Korea, a land they grew up believing was a paradise. When a family of five—including small children and an elderly grandmother—contacts Kim for help, he embarks with them on a treacherous journey into the hostile mountains of China and through southeast Asia. Gripping, thrilling, and timely, director Madeleine Gavin's Sundance Audience Award-winning film uses harrowing verité footage to embed the viewer with the subjects during their perilous escape, crafting a suspenseful, riveting portrait of the lengths people will go to gain freedom.

INVISIBLE NATION

dir. Vanessa Hope (USA/Taiwan), 2023

With unprecedented access to Taiwan's sitting head of state, director Vanessa Hope investigates the election and tenure of Tsai Ing-wen, the first female president of Taiwan. Thorough, incisive and bristling with tension, *INVISIBLE NATION* is a living account of Tsai's tightrope walk as she balances the hopes and dreams of her nation between the colossal geopolitical forces of the U.S. and China. Hope's restrained observational style captures Tsai at work in her country's vibrant democracy at home, while seeking full international recognition of Taiwan's right to exist. At a time when Russia's invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated the ever-present threat of authoritarian aggression, *INVISIBLE NATION* brings punctual focus to the struggle of Taiwan as it fights for autonomy and freedom from fear.

MOURNING IN LOD

East Coast Premiere

dir. Hilla Medalia, (Israel), 2023

Esteemed documentarian Hilla Medalia (*TO DIE IN JERUSALEM*, *DANCING IN JAFFA*) returns to HIFF with her newest work, which follows the fates of three Israeli and Palestinian families intertwined by a vicious cycle of violence in the city of Lod, Israel. In depicting the complex mixture of anger, grief, love and forgiveness that unfolds, Medalia both gives voice to the pain and loss of victims on both sides of the

conflict and dares to imagine a brighter dawn for the region, founded in reconciliation and hope. An MTV Documentary Films release.

THE OLD OAK

US Premiere

dir. Ken Loach (UK), 2023

Legendary, two-time Palme d'Or-winning British director Ken Loach (I, DANIEL BLAKE, SORRY WE MISSED YOU) returns to HIFF with what may be his final film, a timely and deeply affecting drama set in a once-thriving mining village in northern England. The Old Oak is the last pub standing, a gathering space for a community that has fallen on hard times. When a group of Syrian refugees arrive in the village, a decisive rift fueled by prejudices develops between the community and its newest inhabitants. Poignant and stirring, THE OLD OAK is a quietly moving film about loss, fear, and the difficulty of finding hope. A Kino Lorber release.

VIEWS FROM LONG ISLAND

Sponsored by Suffolk County Film Commission

MARY HEILMANN: WAVES, ROADS, & HALLUCINATIONS

World Premiere

dir. Matt Creed (USA), 2023

Mary Heilmann ranks amongst the most influential American abstract painters of her generation, revered for her unique approach to color and form. Now in her 80s, Heilmann still questions how her creative practice coexists within a highly commercialized art world. Director Matt Creed offers an intimate and vivid experience that follows Heilmann for seven years in her natural environments, from her studios in Bridgehampton and Tribeca to her installation at the Hamburger Bahnhof Museum in Berlin. Incorporating rare archival material, found footage, and original in-studio moments of Heilmann at work, the film creates an immersive odyssey into the mind and work of a legendary living artist.

THESE DAYS

World Premiere

dir. Junior Gonzales (USA), 2023

Burgeoning muralist Jay (Billy Mayorga Reyes) lives in Brentwood, NY, where his neighborhood of Salvadoran immigrants offers a rich tapestry of stories, traditions, and perspectives that have often been marginalized and overlooked. At age 15, he is involved in a local youth program aimed at both healing generational trauma and combating the lure of gang violence. While his survival depends on street smarts, his loving single mother (Carla Vila) uses tough love to keep him on the right path. A heartfelt debut from director Junior Gonzalez, THESE DAYS is a thoughtful, moving docudrama portrait of a vibrant Long Island community, as seen through the eyes of a promising young artist.

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION

Sponsored by Silvercup Studios

ANGEL APPLICANT

East Coast Premiere

dir. Ken August Meyer (USA), 2023

In 1933, as German modern artists were increasingly persecuted by the rising Nazi Party, painter Paul Klee escaped to Switzerland, where a mysterious disease wreaked havoc on his body and profoundly changed his artwork. After being diagnosed with the same rare and life-threatening disease, now known as systemic scleroderma, artist and aspiring director Ken August Meyer begins working on ANGEL APPLICANT, which becomes an unforgettable, yearslong undertaking. In this SXSW award-winning documentary, Meyer takes audiences on a humorous and affecting journey through Klee's colorful and expressive work, while at the same time gaining powerful insights as he faces his own mortality.

ORLANDO, MY POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY

dir. Paul B. Preciado (France), 2023

The gender fluidity of the eponymous hero/heroine of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando: A Biography* has inspired readers for almost a century. Taking Woolf's novel as his starting point, academic virtuoso-turned-filmmaker Paul B. Preciado mixes personal essay, historical analysis, and social manifesto. In his brilliant Berlinale prize-winning directorial debut, Preciado casts a diverse cross-section of more than twenty trans and non-binary individuals in the role of Orlando. Weaving scenes from Woolf's narrative with the cast's own stories of identity and transition, the documentary interrogates the relevance of Orlando in the continuing struggle against anti-trans ideologies and the fight for global trans rights. A Sideshow/Janus Films release.

SMOKE SAUNA SISTERHOOD

New York Premiere

dir. Anna Hints (Estonia/France/Iceland), 2023

In the Vana-Võromaa region of South Estonia, a multigenerational group of women embark on a smoke sauna tradition known as "savvusanna kombõ," coming together in protective darkness to share secrets and wash off the shame that has accumulated in their bodies. *SMOKE SAUNA SISTERHOOD* is a deeply moving, breathtaking journey of trauma, healing, transformation, and community that explores what it is to be human within a female body. Winner of the Directing Award at Sundance, filmmaker Anna Hints uses enrapturing, intimate cinematography and an authentic cultural voice to capture the bodies and spirits of women with stunning emotional veracity and deep empathy. A Greenwich Entertainment release.

TELL THEM YOU LOVE ME

World Premiere

dir. Nick August-Perna (USA/UK), 2023

TELL THEM YOU LOVE ME explores the extraordinary story of university professor Anna Stubblefield who becomes embroiled in a controversial affair with Derrick Johnson, a non-verbal man with cerebral palsy. After Anna says she unlocked Derrick's mind from his body by teaching him to communicate using a keyboard, a relationship develops between them, leading to a criminal trial that challenges our perceptions of disability and the nature of consent. Through exclusive footage and devastating interviews with those on both sides of the case, Nick August-Perna's documentary weaves a riveting and endlessly nuanced story about communication, race, and sex. A Kino Lorber release.

THIS WORLD IS NOT MY OWN

East Coast Premiere

dir. Petter Ringbom & Marquise Stillwell (USA), 2023

Directors Petter Ringbom and Marquise Stillwell vividly bring to life the dynamic story of Nellie Mae Rowe, the daughter of a former slave who made brilliant art in obscurity for her entire life, until she met wealthy gallerist Judith Alexander. By mixing traditional documentary techniques with animations and scripted scenes featuring Uzo Aduba (*Orange is the New Black*), Ringbom and Stillwell immerse the viewer in Rowe's visual world, an imaginative oasis filled with vibrant drawings, dolls, handmade sculptures, and collected objects. Through innovative storytelling and stunning imagery, *THIS WORLD IS NOT MY OWN* celebrates Rowe's work while tracing the personal and political events that shaped her life as an outsider artist.

NARRATIVE COMPETITION

Sponsored by Silvercup Studios

THE FEELING THAT THE TIME FOR DOING SOMETHING HAS PASSED

dir. Joanna Arnow (USA), 2023

In this Cannes breakout hit, writer/director/actor Joanna Arnow stars as Ann, a morose New Yorker in her 30s who feels stuck in all areas of her life. To her dismay, the years have gone by quickly in her long-term casual BDSM relationship, low-level corporate job, and quarrelsome Jewish family. As she becomes increasingly alienated, she begins to wrestle more deeply with her sense of self and her relationships. This self-deprecating auto-fictional comedy challenges audiences to question their definition of intimacy.

through frank and funny depictions of sex, relationships, and the banality of the passing of time. Contains scenes featuring mature sexual situations. A Magnolia Pictures Release.

RED ROOMS

US Premiere

dir. Pascal Plante (Canada), 2023

Fashion model Kelly-Anne (Juliette Gariépy) spends every night sleeping outside the courthouse to secure a seat at the high-profile trial of Ludovic Chevalier (Maxwell McCabe-Lokos). He is accused not only of committing gruesome crimes involving three young girls, but also broadcasting the heinous acts via “red rooms,” live-streamed videos only accessible on the dark web. As the trial unfolds, Kelly-Anne’s morbid fascination with the killer encroaches on the rest of her life, and she begins her own online search for the missing pieces to the case. Artfully suspenseful, director Pascal Plante’s latest feature exposes the underbelly of the internet through an unflinching critique of our society’s fascination with violent crime. A Utopia release.

SHAYDA

East Coast Premiere

dir. Noora Niasari (Australia), 2023

The brilliant Zar Amir Ebrahimi (2022 Best Actress Award winner at Cannes for HOLY SPIDER) stars as Shayda, an Iranian woman living in Australia who flees her husband Hossein (Osamah Sami) and finds refuge in a women’s shelter, with her frightened 6-year-old daughter Mona (Selina Zahednia) in tow. When a judge grants Hossein visitation rights, Shayda fears that he might attempt to take Mona back to Iran. Winner of the Sundance Audience Award, director Noora Niasari’s powerful debut feature—based on her own childhood—is a beautifully crafted portrayal of courage and compassion that captures the radiant soul of a woman who boldly reclaims her human rights. A Sony Pictures Classics release. Australia’s Academy Award® submission for Best International Feature.

TIGER STRIPES

New York Premiere

dir. Amanda Nell Eu (Malaysia/Taiwan), 2023

When rebellious and carefree 12-year-old Zaffan (Zafreen Zairizal) becomes the first of her friends to experience puberty, she discovers a terrifying secret about her body. Undergoing horrifying, surreal physical changes, she quickly becomes ostracized from her former friends and her rural Muslim Malaysian community. To fight back, Zaffan must embrace the body she fears, revealing the entirety of her wrath, rage, and beauty. Winner of the Critics Week Grand Jury Prize at Cannes, first-time director Amanda Nell Eu plays in the space of myths and folktales to tell a personal, empowering story dissecting the horrors and triumphs of coming of age in a woman’s body. A Dark Star Pictures release.

20,000 SPECIES OF BEES

New York Premiere

dir. Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren (Spain), 2023

In this heartwarming story of gender identity and self-discovery, 8-year-old Aitor (Sofía Ortera), nicknamed Coco, favors long hair and feminine clothes, aggravating tensions between Coco’s mother Ane (Patricia López) and family members who disapprove of this behavior in a young boy. Coco’s only solace is with Aunt Lourdes (Ane Gabarain), who empowers Coco’s identity by sharing the family’s beekeeping tradition, which has been passed down through generations of women. First-time director Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren delivers a visually enrapturing story set in the sleepy Basque countryside, driven by the moving, nuanced Ortera, the youngest-ever winner of the Berlinale Silver Bear for Best Lead Performance. A Film Movement release.

WORLD CINEMA DOCUMENTARY

Sponsored by Dragon Hemp

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SHERE HITE

New York Premiere

dir. Nicole Newnham (USA), 2023

Feminist sex educator Shere Hite created controversy with her 1976 bestseller *The Hite Report*, an expansive survey of women revealing intimate details about their sexual pleasure. From filmmaker Nicole Newnham (CRIP CAMP) and narrated by Dakota Johnson (FIFTY SHADES OF GREY), the documentary admirably dives into Hite's groundbreaking ideas and how they shaped the way we talk about gender, sexuality, and bodily autonomy today. *THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SHERE HITE* shines a light on a forgotten feminist figure who was ahead of her time, silenced by Americans unwilling to confront the honesty of women's sexual agency and desire. An IFC Films release.

FOUR DAUGHTERS

US Premiere

dir. Kaouther Ben Hania (France/Tunisia/Germany/Saudi Arabia), 2023

In this riveting exploration of rebellion, memory, and sisterhood, Academy Award®-nominated Tunisian director Kaouther Ben Hania reconstructs the story of Olfa Hamrouni and her four daughters, two of whom were radicalized by Islamic extremists. By casting professional actresses to play Olfa and the missing daughters, Ben Hania uses intimate interviews and artful reenactments to offer the women agency to tell their own story. Winner of four prizes, including Best Documentary, at Cannes, *FOUR DAUGHTERS* is a compelling portrait of five women, and a unique, ambitious work of nonfiction cinema that explores the weight of inherited trauma and the ties that bind mothers and daughters. A Kino Lorber Release.

MENUS PLAISIRS - LES TROISGROS

dir. Frederick Wiseman (USA), 2023

Renowned documentarian Frederick Wiseman returns with his latest deep dive into the fabric of modern culture, introducing us to the entire community behind a three-Michelin star restaurant in central France. The film centers on the day-to-night operations of the legendary restaurant Troisgros, founded 93 years ago and currently being passed down to the 4th generation in a family of chefs. In addition to examining the exemplary and painstakingly sustainable practices that go into providing the highest quality ingredients, preparation, and service, Wiseman shows the restaurant staff's extraordinary artistry, ingenuity, and dedication in presenting meals with exquisite detail. Don't come on an empty stomach! A Zipporah Films release.

THE MISSION

New York Premiere

dir. Jesse Moss & Amanda McBaine (India/USA), 2023

John Chau, a young American missionary, went missing in 2018 while attempting to contact one of the world's most isolated indigenous peoples on remote North Sentinel Island. Longtime collaborators and Emmy Award-winning directors Amanda McBaine and Jesse Moss (*BOYS STATE*) uncover the gripping story through exclusive interviews and unprecedented access to Chau's secret plans, personal diaries, and video archives. *THE MISSION* deftly examines the eternal mythology of exploration that inspired him, the evangelical community that supported his quest, and Chau's father's heartbreak when a youthful thirst for adventure became a dangerous obsession. A National Geographic release.

PRAYING FOR ARMAGEDDON

US Premiere

dir. Tonje Hessen Schei, Michael Rowley (Sweden/Norway/Germany/Finland), 2023

PRAYING FOR ARMAGEDDON is a chilling political docu-thriller that reveals the power and influence of U.S. fundamentalist Evangelicals as they aim to fulfill the prophecy of a Holy War that will trigger the Second Coming of Christ. Award-winning director Tonje Hessen Schei (*iHUMAN*, *DRONE*) gains unprecedented access to Evangelical preachers, politicians, and the self-proclaimed "warriors of God" who are fueling the volatile situation in Israel and Palestine. From grassroots rallying to megachurch empires to the dark backrooms of Washington, D.C., this alarming film uncovers the insidious movement behind escalating spirals of violence in the Middle East, with the ultimate aim to destroy our civilization.

THE PIGEON TUNNEL

dir. Errol Morris (UK), 2023

Academy Award®-winning documentarian Errol Morris (THE THIN BLUE LINE) pulls back the curtain on the storied life and career of former British spy David Cornwell—better known as John le Carré, author of classic espionage novels *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. Spanning six decades, from the turbulence of the Cold War to present day, the film highlights le Carré's final and most candid interview, punctuated with rare archival footage and dramatized vignettes. *THE PIGEON TUNNEL* is a deeply human and engaging exploration of le Carré's extraordinary journey and the paper-thin membrane between fact and fiction. An Apple release.

RON DELSENER PRESENTS

dir. Jake Sumner (USA), 2023

For generations of New Yorkers, no three words evoke iconic live music like 'Ron Delsener Presents'—the words that preceded the name of every major act playing New York, from the Beatles at Forest Hills Tennis Stadium to David Bowie at Carnegie Hall and Patti Smith at the Palladium. Director Jake Sumner pulls back the curtain on Delsener's empire-building sixty-year career, as told by the concert promoter and showman himself. Taking audiences on a tour through a half-century of live music, *RON DELSENER PRESENTS* is a portrait of a music business pioneer who, to this day, can't stop hustling.

RULE OF TWO WALLS

dir. David Gutnik (Ukraine), 2023

In this rousing and intimate look at the war in Ukraine, executive produced by Liev Schreiber, the conflict is seen through the eyes of Ukrainian artists who remain in their country to make art as a defiant act in the face of aggression. Using live music performance, painting, street art, and the act of filmmaking itself, David Gutnik's radical documentary aims to illuminate the psychological frontlines of the crisis: how to process, react, and resist while having to go about the rhythms of daily life. Blurring the lines between what is seen in front of and behind the camera, *RULE OF TWO WALLS* probes what it means to make cinema in a time of war.

SONGS OF EARTH

US Premiere

dir. Margreth Olin (Norway), 2023

Using her native Norway's dizzyingly beautiful mountain landscapes as a monumental backdrop, director Margreth Olin embarks on a yearlong existential journey, reconnecting with her aging parents as they reflect on both their long and happy marriage and their place in the natural world. As she exquisitely documents her 84-year-old father's hikes through magnificent fjords and across glowing glaciers, he quietly bears witness to how the vast expanses of his surroundings have complemented the joys of his inner life. Executive produced by Wim Wenders and Liv Ullmann, *SONGS OF EARTH* is a stunning, cinematic work about life, love, death, nature and simply being present in the world.

STORY AND PICTURES BY

World Premiere

dir. Joanna Rudnick (USA), 2023

STORY & PICTURES BY takes us on a journey through the beloved world of children's picture books, led by three contemporary stars of the new "golden age" of kids' lit—Christian Robinson (*Last Stop on Market Street*), Yuyi Morales (*Dreamers*), and Mac Barnett (*Extra Yarn*). Emmy Award®-nominated director Joanna Rudnick uses archival access, untapped insights, and stop-motion paper animation to explore their timely new work, as well as timeless classics such as *Goodnight Moon* and *Where the Wild Things Are*. Delightful and family-friendly, *STORY & PICTURES BY* shows how this singular art form can champion the marginalized, provide children with ways to make sense of their place in the world, and foster a lifelong love of reading.

SUMMER QAMP

US Premiere

dir. Jen Markowitz (Canada/USA), 2023

At an idyllic lake in Alberta, Canada, a group of LGBTQ+ youth find a traditional summer camp experience that welcomes them with open arms through its safe, identity-affirming environment. While many of the teenagers feel misunderstood and isolated in their daily lives, the camp allows them to discover a newfound sense of belonging and deepen their connections to themselves. Fresh off its premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, Jen Markowitz's heartwarming debut feature documentary is a joyous testament to the transformative power of community, especially crucial at a time when trans and nonbinary children have become the targets of discriminatory legislation across the country.

THEY CALLED HIM MOSTLY HARMLESS

World Premiere

dir. Patricia E. Gillespie (USA), 2024

When the emaciated body of an unidentified hiker is found in the Florida wilderness next to plenty of cash and food, mystified authorities release a sketch that sparks internet fascination, leading to a viral 2020 article in WIRED. Multiple hikers call in claiming to have met the man on trails from Florida to Appalachia, but there's one problem: he never told them his name. It would take two years, thousands of devoted internet sleuths, and a miracle of science to identify him—and that's only the beginning of the story. True crime veteran and HIFF alum Patricia E. Gillespie (*THE FIRE THAT TOOK HER*) returns with a character-centric reimagining of a classic genre. An Anchor Entertainment release.

WORLD CINEMA NARRATIVE

Sponsored by Naturopathica

ANATOMY OF A FALL

dir. Justine Triet (France), 2023

When Samuel (Samuel Theis) falls to his death in a remote town in the French Alps, his wife Sandra (Sandra Hüller, 2006 HIFF Rising Star) becomes the main suspect and their young son Daniel (Milo Machado Graner) is the only witness. Winner of this year's prestigious Palme d'Or at Cannes, director Justine Triet skillfully spins an investigation of the circumstances surrounding Samuel's death into an unsettling psychological journey through the depths of a conflicted marital dynamic. *ANATOMY OF A FALL* is a legal thriller about perception, deceit, and the elusive nature of truth. A NEON release.

CHUCK CHUCK BABY

US Premiere

dir. Janis Pugh (UK), 2023

Nestled amongst the falling feathers of a chicken factory in industrial North Wales—and featuring the perennially uplifting music of Neil Diamond, Janis Ian, and Minnie Riperton—*CHUCK CHUCK BABY* follows Helen (Louise Brealey), a thirty-something woman packaging poultry by night and caring for her dying ex-mother-in-law by day. Her mundane routine is jolted when Joanne (Annabel Scholey), her secret childhood crush, returns home. As they reconnect, their romance begins to flourish, but can they move on from the weight of their pasts? With plenty of heart, director Janis Pugh delivers a joyful, honest story about finding the courage to let go and allow love to prevail.

EVIL DOES NOT EXIST

dir. Ryūsuke Hamaguchi (Japan), 2023

Directed by Academy Award® winner Ryūsuke Hamaguchi (*DRIVE MY CAR*, HIFF 2021), *EVIL DOES NOT EXIST* is an empathetic, simmering slow burn. In the rural Japanese village where Takumi (Hitoshi Omika) and his young daughter live, tensions rise when two agents arrive with plans to build a glamping site for tourists. As villagers react to the catastrophic ecological damage they believe would result, the agents attempt to change their minds, while also wrestling with their own culpability. Punctuated by Eiko Ishibashi's melancholy score, this profound drama asks the viewer to contend with both the growing threat of environmental capitalism and the costs to those tasked with the dirty work. A Sideshow/Janus Films release.

FALLEN LEAVES

dir. Aki Kaurismäki (Finland/Germany), 2023

Masterful Finnish filmmaker Aki Kaurismäki (*LE HAVRE, THE OTHER SIDE OF HOPE*) returns with a timeless and hopeful love story about two lonely souls who meet by chance and find a path to happiness. Their journey is filled with life's natural obstacles big and small, including alcoholism, lost phone numbers, and not knowing each other's names or addresses. Winner of the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, Kaurismäki's playful and idiosyncratic *FALLEN LEAVES* is a tender tragicomedy punctuated by deadpan humor and a heartwarming conclusion. A MUBI release.

FANCY DANCE

dir. Erica Tremblay (USA), 2023

Native American hustler Jax (Lily Gladstone, *KILLERS OF THE FLOWER MOON*) searches tirelessly for her missing sister while caring for her niece Roki (Isabel Deroy-Olson). When child services places Roki under the care of her white grandparents (Shea Whigham, Audrey Wasilewski), Jax and Roki run away together in hopes of reuniting their family at the state powwow. Director Erica Tremblay delivers an affecting, accomplished debut feature full of heart, which premiered to critical acclaim at Sundance. Anchored by tender, powerful performances from Gladstone and newcomer Deroy-Olson, *FANCY DANCE* captures both the devastation of loss and the resilience of those left behind.

GREEN BORDER

dir. Agnieszka Holland (Poland/France/Czech Republic/Belgium), 2023

Three-time Academy Award® nominee Agnieszka Holland's (*THE SECRET GARDEN, EUROPA EUROPA*) eye-opening new feature immerses audiences in the dangers faced by asylum seekers along European borders while reflecting the moral choices that fall to ordinary people every day. Set in the treacherous forests that make up the so-called "green border" between Belarus and Poland, the lives of a Syrian family, a young Polish border guard, and a newly minted activist intersect in this thorough examination of the migrant crisis. Thrillingly shot and emotionally gripping, *GREEN BORDER* unveils the humanity, resilience, and sorrow unfolding within today's greatest geopolitical conflict.

LA CHIMERA

dir. Alice Rohrwacher (France/Italy/Switzerland), 2023

In 1980s Tuscany, Arthur (Emmy Award® winner Josh O'Connor, *The Crown*) leads a band of tombaroli, thieves of ancient Etruscan relics and archaeological wonders, while also searching for Beniamina (Yile Yara Vianello), the woman he has lost. To find her, he must go inside the earth in search of the door to the mythological afterlife. Academy Award® nominee Alice Rohrwacher (*HAPPY AS LAZZARO, HIFF 2018*) returns with this vivid, adventurous journey, using her signature magical realism to excavate the intertwined worlds of the living and the dead. Featuring brilliant performances from O'Connor, Isabella Rossellini, and Alba Rohrwacher, *LA CHIMERA* is an expertly crafted, mystical story interrogating what it means to strive for the unattainable. A NEON release.

MONSTER

US Premiere

dir. Hirokazu Kore-eda (Japan), 2023

When young Minato (Kurokawa Soya) starts to behave strangely, his mother Saori (Ando Sakura) searches for an explanation. She demands answers from her son's school, and in the process unwittingly discovers an unexpected dynamic between the teachers and their students. Winner of the Award for Best Screenplay at this year's Cannes Film Festival, *MONSTER* intricately unfolds through the intertwined perspectives of mother, teacher and child. Palme d'Or winner Kore-eda Hirokazu (*SHOPLIFTERS, HIFF 2018*) imbues the film with deep social commentary about acceptance and humanity, and raises the question—what makes someone a monster? A Well Go USA release.

ORIGIN

dir. Ava DuVernay (USA), 2023

Origin chronicles the remarkable life and work of Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson as she investigates the genesis of injustice and uncovers a hidden truth that affects us all.

THE PEASANTS

US Premiere

dir. DK Welchman & Hugh Welchman (Poland/Serbia/Lithuania), 2023

Simultaneously lush and harrowing, *THE PEASANTS* is the latest accomplishment from DK Welchman and Hugh Welchman, the visionary directors of the Academy Award®-nominated *LOVING VINCENT*. Through meticulously hand-painted animation, the film introduces Jagna (Kamila Urzędowska), a young Polish woman determined to forge her path within the confines of late 19th-century patriarchy. In her village, a hotbed of gossip and ongoing feuds, Jagna finds herself caught between the conflicting desires of the village's most affluent farmer and his eldest son, putting her on a tragic collision course with the community around her. Contains a scene featuring sexual violence.

PERFECT DAYS

dir. Wim Wenders (Japan), 2023

Legendary Academy Award®-nominated director Wim Wenders (*PARIS, TEXAS*; *WINGS OF DESIRE*) returns to HIFF with his latest poetic meditation on everyday beauty, following Hirayama (Koji Yakusho), a toilet cleaner living a restrained, structured life in Tokyo. His quiet routine—guided by his appreciation for music, books, and the natural world—is disrupted when he strikes up an unexpected friendship with a young girl. *PERFECT DAYS* is a gentle, shining testament to the small joys of life, featuring a tender, brilliant performance from Yakusho, who won the Best Actor Award at this year's Cannes Film Festival. A NEON release.

THE PERSIAN VERSION

East Coast Premiere

dir. Maryam Kesharvarz (USA), 2023

Punctuated by a bright color palette, snappy comedic relief, and vibrant dance numbers, Sundance award-winner *THE PERSIAN VERSION* tells the story of Iranian-American Leila (Layla Mohammadi), who navigates her relationships at arm's length in an effort to balance her opposing cultures. When her family reunites for her father's heart transplant, Leila's secret romantic life is unceremoniously exposed, and so are the distinct parallels between her life and that of her mother Shireen (Niousha Noor). Writer-director Maryam Kesharvarz joyfully crafts a universal and timely story about family, belonging, and the undeniable influence of pop music. A Sony Pictures Classics release.

THE PROMISED LAND

East Coast Premiere

dir. Nikolaj Arcel (Germany/Denmark/Sweden), 2023

In 1755 Denmark, the impoverished Captain Ludvig Kahlen (a formidable Mads Mikkelsen) receives a seemingly impossible assignment from the King: cultivate valuable crops in a vast, uninhabitable land in exchange for a royal name he desperately desires. Upon his arrival, he finds a merciless adversary in Frederik De Schinkel (Simon Bennebjerg), a landowner who clings to power over the local people by resisting Kahlen's efforts at progress. Director Nikolaj Arcel (*THE ROYAL AFFAIR*, HIFF 2012) reteams with a magnetic Mikkelsen for this brutal, thrilling period Western, in which outcasts and rulers fight for power and vengeance against the backdrop of an inhospitable wasteland. A Magnolia Pictures release.

RADICAL

dir. Christopher Zalla (USA), 2023

In a Mexican border town plagued by neglect, corruption, and violence, frustrated teacher Sergio (Eugenio Derbez, *CODA*) experiments with inventive new methods to break through his students' apathy and unlock their curiosity and potential. Based on a true story, *RADICAL* is a playful and honest look at how children can discover the joy of learning, even when the odds are stacked against them. Highlighting Derbez's signature comedic charm in a heartfelt performance and rounded out by a wonderful ensemble of young actors, writer-director Christopher Zalla's inspiring new film earned the Festival Favorite Award at Sundance.

ROBOT DREAMS

dir. Pablo Berger (Spain/France), 2023

In the bright and bustling world of 1980s New York City, a lonely dog living in Manhattan builds himself a robot as a companion. Their bond soon grows into a beautiful friendship, until one summer night when they become separated at the beach. In his animation debut, award-winning Spanish director Pablo Berger tells a delightful, touching story based on the beloved graphic novel of the same name by Sara Varon. Critically lauded after its premiere at Cannes this year, this family-friendly adventure uses vivid, playful animation to tell a deeply human story about the meaning of friendship. A NEON release.

SOCIETY OF THE SNOW

North American Premiere

dir. J.A. Bayona (Spain/Uruguay/Chile), 2023

In 1972, Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571, which had been chartered to fly a rugby team to Chile, crashed in the heart of the Andes. Only 29 of its 45 passengers survived the accident. Trapped in one of the most hostile and inaccessible environments on the planet, they have to resort to extreme measures to stay alive.

THE TASTE OF THINGS

dir. Tran Anh Hung (France), 2023

Set against the deliciously vibrant backdrop of 1889 France, THE TASTE OF THINGS follows the life of Dodin Bouffant (Benoît Magimel, THE PIANO TEACHER), a brilliant chef living with his personal cook and lover Eugénie (Academy Award® winner Juliette Binoche). When Eugénie refuses to marry Dodin, he decides to do something he has never done before: cook for her. Winner of the Best Director Award at Cannes, Tran Anh Hung tells the story of a couple tied together by gastronomy and love, immersing audiences in a romantic, sumptuous visual feast in this celebration of the way food brings us together. An IFC Films Release.

THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE

East Coast Premiere

dir. İlker Çatak (Germany), 2023

When a series of thefts occur at a German high school and students point fingers at their Turkish classmate, idealistic new teacher Carla Nowak (Leonie Benesch) decides to get to the bottom of it. Tensions mount between outraged parents, opinionated colleagues, and aggressive students, and the more desperately Carla tries to mediate, the more she threatens to break. Director İlker Çatak's THE TEACHERS' LOUNGE is a nuanced study of power relations and racism within the structures of a rigid institution, anchored by a riveting breakout performance from Benesch. A Sony Pictures Classic release. Germany's Academy Award® submission for Best International Feature.

TÓTEM

dir. Lila Avilés (Mexico/Denmark/France), 2023

Seven-year-old Sol (Naíma Sentíes) spends the day at her grandfather's home, helping her aunts prepare a birthday party for Sol's mysteriously absent father, Tonatiuh (Mateo García Elizondo). As the day goes on, Sol and the rest of the family grapple with a difficult truth: Tonatiuh has terminal cancer, and this birthday party is likely his last. Through atmospheric, intimate cinematography and outstanding performances from an ensemble cast, Berlinale Award-winning debut director Lila Avilés shapes an honest portrait of complex family dynamics, inviting audiences into the eyes and heart of a child embracing the essence of letting go. A Janus/Sideshow release.

SPECIAL SCREENING

PAST LIVES

dir. Celine Song, (USA/Korea), 2023

Nora (Greta Lee) and Hae Sung (Teo Yoo), two deeply connected childhood friends, are torn apart after Nora's family emigrates from South Korea to Canada. Two decades later, with Nora in a long-term relationship with Arthur (John Magaro), they are reunited in New York for one fateful week as they confront notions of destiny, love, and the choices that make a life. With PAST LIVES, acclaimed writer-director Celine Song (HIFF 2023 Breakthrough Artist) crafts an elegantly written, visually enrapturing

modern romance, which premiered at Sundance earlier this year to widespread critical acclaim. An A24 release.

NARRATIVE SHORT FILM COMPETITION

BOGOTÁ STORY

US Premiere

dir. Esteban Pedraza (Colombia/USA), 2023

In 1992, as Colombia faces an era of drug violence, car bombs, and daily power outages, a young mother in Bogotá receives an opportunity in the US and must decide between her dreams and her family.

EEVA

New York Premiere

dir. Lucija Mrzljak & Morten Tšinakov (Croatia/Estonia), 2022

It's pouring down rain at the funeral. A lot of crying, too much wine, several woodpeckers and a couple of dreams fill in the gaps.

THE GOLDEN WEST

East Coast Premiere

dir. Tom Berkeley & Ross White (Ireland/UK), 2023

Having fled the Great Famine, two warring Irish sisters search for gold in the mountains of North Wales. But with winter approaching and nothing to show for their efforts, their age-old feud soon threatens to become deadly.

NOBODY WANTS THE NIGHT

New York Premiere

dir. Remi Itani (Lebanon/Germany), 2023

Accompanied by her best friend, pregnant Layal drives through the night to a clandestine abortion clinic in present-day Beirut.

XIAOHUI AND HIS COWS

North American Premiere

dir. Xinying Lao (China/USA), 2023

Xiaohui lives with his grandfather, a mother cow and her calf in a Chinese village. When Grandpa intends to sell the calf, Xiaohui goes to great lengths to hide the pair in the mountains.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILM COMPETITION

BREAKING SILENCE

New York Premiere

dir. Amy Bench & Annie Silverstein (USA), 2023

A portrait of a Deaf activist and his formerly incarcerated daughter, who build new bonds through their experiences in the criminal justice system.

MERMAN

dir. Sterling Hampton IV (USA), 2023

A 59-year-old black, queer man speaks his truth about his life as an emergency nurse, leather enthusiast, husband and Civil Rights advocate.

TIERRA DE LECHE "Land of Milk"

dir. Milton Guillén & Fiona Guy Hall (USA/Nicaragua), 2023

An interrogation of capitalism and the American dream through the lenses of migrant labor, new technologies, and dairy cows.

THE WAITING

US Premiere

dir. Volker Schlecht (Germany), 2023

Researcher Karen Lips observes frogs while living in a tiny shack in Costa Rica. When she returns to the cloud forest after a short time, the frogs are gone. Karen sets out to find them—and encounters a horrible truth.

WILD SUMMON

East Coast Premiere

dir. Karni Arieli & Saul Freed (UK), 2023

A natural history fantasy film following the dramatic life cycle of the wild salmon in human form. Narrated by Marianne Faithfull.

NEW YORK WOMEN IN FILM & TELEVISION: FILMMAKERS CALLING THE SHOTS

BLACK GIRLS PLAY: THE STORY OF HAND GAMES

dir. Michèle Stephenson & Joe Brewster (USA), 2023

Discover the origins of the hand games that young Black girls have played for generations, and their influence on music, dance, and community across the American creative landscape.

FLOWER

dir. Lauren Finerman (USA), 2023

Starring and produced by world-renowned ballerina and African-American icon Misty Copeland, this movement-based piece seeks to highlight intergenerational struggles and the effects of the housing crisis.

GOLDBLOCKS

New York Premiere

dir. Meryl Jones (USA), 2023

Two siblings learn a painful lesson when one secretly pursues the other into the woods in search of an elusive mountain lion.

HALMONI'S POT (GRANDMA'S POT)

dir. A. Lauren Lee (USA), 2023

A loving grandma (halmoni) reluctantly agrees to buy pot for her grandson. But pay full price? Never!

HONOLULU

New York Premiere

dir. Maya Tanaka (USA), 2022

Flaming lobsters, menstruation woes, sunburns, and family scuffles plague 12-year-old Yuki's doomed Hawai'ian beach vacation with her aloof father and her elegant grandmother.

2023 UNIVERSITY SHORT FILMS SHOWCASE

AS THEY SAY (ASÍ DICEN)

New York Premiere

dir. Natalia Luque (Chile/USA), 2023

Rumors spread like wildfire in a small Chilean town, as an aborted fetus is found floating on a lake.

CLASSMATES

World Premiere

dir. Major Dorfman (USA), 2022

When an apathetic teenager is dropped off on the outskirts of town to work on a project with the school outcast, the pair form an unlikely connection.

DAYDREAMING SO VIVIDLY ABOUT OUR SPANISH HOLIDAYS (LA HERIDA LUMINOSA)

New York Premiere

dir. Christian Avilés (Spain), 2022

Sun-starved teenagers take a dreamy trip to the Balearic islands in the pursuit of light and warmth to bring back to their heavy, clouded kingdom.

FIRST, I DREAM (PRIMERO, SUEÑO)

East Coast Premiere

dir. Andrés Lira (USA), 2023

An insightful look into the working lives of undocumented farmworkers in America and their experiences with migration, exploitation, and poverty.

ME & AYDRAROUS

New York Premiere

dir. Sara Balghonaim (Saudi Arabia/USA), 2023

Set in Saudi Arabia, a gutsy young woman sneaks off for a date, only to butt heads with her chaperoning chauffeur.

FLY! SHORTS FOR ALL AGES

BLEWISH

dir. Ezra Edmond (USA), 2022

Ezra, who is Black and Jewish (aka Blewish) struggles to fit in; can he manage to embrace his whole identity?

POND (TÜMPEL)

New York Premiere

dir. Lena von Döhren & Eva Rust (Switzerland), 2023

One small herring gets separated from the shoal during a seagull attack and must join forces with other sea creatures for protection.

RACHEL

dir. Toko Shiiki (USA), 2022

Animator Rachel Reid exudes joy as she talks about being an animator, encouraging others to follow in her footsteps.

THE SOCIAL CHAMELEON

dir. Alex Ross (USA), 2022

When Cosmo the chameleon doesn't fit in with the other animals, he must learn to stay true to his own colors.

STARLING

dir. Mitra Shahidi (USA), 2023

The spirit of a little girl shoots down from the heavens to spend her birthday with her family.

THE TURNIP (NAERIS)

dir. Piret Sigus & Silja Saarepuu (Estonia), 2022

A twist on a Slavic folktale told from the perspective of some underground critters!

WINTER IN A DAY

New York Premiere

dir. Liddy Salter (USA), 2022

When Bear dreams of experiencing winter instead of going into hibernation, her best friend Fox creates

winter in a day, just for her.

WITCHFAIRY

dir. Cedric Igodt & David Van de Weyer (Belgium), 2022

Rosemary, a young fairy, leads a boring life at the fairytale castle. She packs her bags and sets off to the mysterious witch forest.

FISH OUT OF WATER!

THE BREAKTHROUGH

dir. Daniel Sinclair (USA), 2023

Jane and Teddy are on the brink of divorce—but just when their marital problems come to a sticking point, they have an unexpected breakthrough.

THE LEE FAMILIES

North American Premiere

dir. Seo Jeong-mi (South Korea), 2023

The Lee family's grandfather passes away, leaving behind a country house, an inheritance that turns out to be anything but simple.

MY EYES ARE UP HERE

dir. Nathan Morris (UK), 2022

A disabled woman sets off on a mission to get the morning-after pill. The only thing in her way is... everything.

PILLOW FORTRESS

dir. Zander Coté (USA), 2022

When Lana's new boyfriend Bart and her friend Tommy realize they knew each other as young children, the two men clash over their memories of a specific, trivial event.

SWEET REFUGE

dir. Maryam Mir (USA), 2022

A passionate baklava baker encounters a savvy ladoo maker on the streets of Brooklyn.

WITHOUT A ROADMAP

AN AVOCADO PIT (UM CAROÇO DE ABACATE)

dir. Aryn Zara (Portugal), 2022

Larissa, a trans woman, and Cláudio, a cis man, meet one night in the streets of Lisbon, dancing their differences away till morning light.

BLUE BOY

dir. Tyler Riggs (USA), 2022

Insecure New Jersey bodybuilder Joey Rossi—aka Joey Muscles—starts doing steroids in a last ditch effort to go pro.

ESSEX GIRLS

International Premiere

dir. Yero Timi-Biu (UK), 2023

Flipping the "Essex Girl" trope, this coming-of-age film explores Black British girlhood and magical female friendships in 2009 Essex.

HELP ME UNDERSTAND

New York Premiere

dir. Aemilia Scott (USA), 2023
Six women come to a consensus.

SHADOW BROTHER SUNDAY

dir. Alden Ehrenreich (USA), 2023
A down-on-his-luck musician returns home on the day of his younger brother's movie premiere to steal his brother's computer and sell it to the paparazzi.

STATE OF THE UNION

THE ABC'S OF BOOK BANNING

World Premiere

dir. Trish Adlesic & Naz Habtezhgi (USA), 2023
A love letter to reading and education that begs us to consider what gets lost as books continue to be banned across the country.

THE DADS

New York Premiere

dir. Luchina Fischer (USA), 2023
Fathers who love and support their LGBTQ children break barriers of prejudice, embrace diversity, and highlight the power of important conversations.

HOW WE GET FREE

dir. Geeta Gandbhir & Samantha Knowles (USA), 2022
Over the course of two years, Elisabeth Epps works to abolish cash bail in Colorado and put an end to the criminalization of poverty.

UNDER G-D

dir. Paula Eiselt (USA), 2023.
The lived experiences of women impacted by the Dobbs decision are interwoven with the various lawsuits Jewish and interfaith leaders are currently launching to challenge the overturning of Roe v. Wade, state by state.

VIEWS FROM LONG ISLAND SHORTS PROGRAM

FORGOTTEN FOUNDERS: DAVID HEMPSTEAD, SENIOR

dir. Sam Hamilton & Julian Alvarez (USA), 2023
In showcasing David Hempstead, Sr.'s journey from slavery to freedom on Long Island's East End, this insightful short also follows the Plain Sight Project, uncovering legacies of people of color in the region.

MERV

East Coast Premiere

dir. Sam Roebing (USA), 2023
Simon is unexpectedly summoned to his grandmother's house to meet her new boyfriend, Merv (Hal Linden), who upends Simon's understanding of love, loss, and Chinese takeout.

THE PEDESTRIAN

dir. Nora DeLigter & Claire Read (USA), 2022
A pedestrian sets off on a nine-day walk from Brooklyn to Montauk

ABOUT HAMPTONSFILM

HamptonsFilm, home of the Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF) was founded in 1992 to celebrate the art of film and to introduce a unique and varied spectrum of international films and filmmakers to our audiences. A non-profit organization with year-round screenings of global narrative and documentary films, an annual Screenwriters Lab, a summer documentary showcase, and extensive educational initiatives, HamptonsFilm offers programs that enlighten, educate, and provide invaluable exposure for filmmakers, while also providing the East End of Long Island with an educational and cultural experience that enriches the lives of its citizens and contributes to the local economy. HIFF, celebrating its 31st year, is an annual premiere film event in New York State, and an intimate showcase of some of the year's best offerings in contemporary cinema from around the world. Awarding prizes to filmmakers in cash and goods and services of over \$130,000, each year, with over \$5 million awarded in competition funds and services over the decades, our program continues to play an important role during awards season. For more information, please visit hamptonsfilmfest.org.

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