

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

THE 33RD HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES AWARD WINNERS FOR BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE AND BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE

THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE AND TO THE WEST, IN ZAPATA

Best Short Film Winners Include *SAMMI, WHO CAN DETACH HIS BODY PARTS*
and *CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG*

Feature Films *SENTIMENTAL VALUE* and *THE EYES OF GHANA* and Short Films *LIGHTNING BUG*
and *ISLAND WILLING* Receive 2025 Audience Awards

Additional Special Award Winners Announced

East Hampton, NY (October 14, 2025) – The Hamptons International Film Festival (HIFF), presented by Artemis Rising Foundation, announced its winners for feature and short competition sections and audience awards. The 33rd edition of the festival featured a lineup of films with 89 features and 57 shorts with 12 World Premieres, 2 International Premieres, 8 North American Premieres, 20 US Premieres, 21 East Coast Premieres, and 27 New York Premieres.

Awards were presented in the narrative and documentary categories, sponsored by Fox Rothschild.

THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE directed by **Hasan Hadi** won the Award for Best Narrative Feature. The film received a \$2500 cash prize plus a film production package of in-kind goods and services valued at \$92,500 from TCS, Neon Diesel Finishing, Hamptons Locations, and On Location Education.

"Through the eyes of a young girl torn between tradition and survival, Hasan Hadi's expansive drama shows us what's really at stake in a dictatorship led with violence and fear," said Narrative Competition Jury members Jody Arlington, Matt Donnelly and Brian Burns.

TO THE WEST, IN ZAPATA, directed by **David Bim** received the Award for Best Documentary Feature. The film received a \$2500 cash prize plus a film production package of in-kind goods and services valued at \$50,000 from Neon Diesel Finishing, TCS, and Greenslate.

"No film quite took this jury's breath away like the stunningly gorgeous TO THE WEST, IN ZAPATA. David Bim's black-and-white cinema verite-style masterpiece is a heartbreaking look at the struggle of everyday Cubans in the face of insurmountable odds, yet it is told with such compassion and love. This documentary can move an audience without words and capture its attention just by depicting the care this family has for each other. For its extraordinary achievement, we are awarding the best documentary feature prize TO THE WEST, IN ZAPATA," said the Documentary Competition Jury members Monica Castillo, Agnes Chu and Loren Hammonds.

SAMMI, WHO CAN DETACH HIS BODY PARTS, directed by **Rein Maychaelson**, received the Award for Best Narrative Short Film, and **CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG**, directed by **Hao Zhou**, the Award for Best Documentary Short Film, with each taking home a \$1000 cash prize and qualifying for consideration at the Academy Awards® for Best Live Action Short Film and Best Documentary Short, respectively.

The Narrative Competition Jury recognized **Hanna Heckt (SOUND OF FALLING)**, **Baneen Ahmad Nayyef (THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE)**, and **Molly Belle Wright (OMAHA)** with a Special Jury Prize for their performances. "This trio of young women actors, in three different narrative competition titles, showed skill and presence far beyond their years," said the jury. "Vulnerable and daring, these performances give us a timely reminder of the consequences familial and societal abuse pose to children."

Additional Special Jury Prizes for screenwriting and directing, respectively, included **Mehmet Akif Büyükkatalay's** "intellectually stimulating" script for **HYSTERIA**, and **THE CURFEW**, directed by **Shehrezad Maher**, "for subverting expectations with a short that proves communication transcends language."

The Documentary Competition Jury recognized **ANDRÉ IS AN IDIOT** with a Special Jury Prize for director **Tony Benna's** impactful storytelling. In the short films category, the jury recognized **HOOPS, HOPES & DREAMS** with a Special Jury Prize for director **Glenn Kaino's** innovative storytelling through his artistic use of animation, social commentary, and interviews.

Hamptons International Film Festival audiences selected narrative feature **SENTIMENTAL VALUE**, directed by **Joachim Trier**, and documentary feature **THE EYES OF GHANA**, directed by **Ben Proudfoot**, for this year's Audience Awards. **LIGHTNING BUG**, directed by **Zane Pais**, and **ISLAND WILLING**, directed by **Cece King**, received this year's Audience Awards for Best Short Film for narrative and documentary, respectively.

The festival also announced winners for additional awards:

ALL THE EMPTY ROOMS, directed by **Joshua Seftel**, was awarded the Subject Matter Award, which is awarded to a documentary film in the HIFF program that highlights an urgent social issue. Subject Matter awarded the film a \$25,000 grant in an effort to reach more audiences, along with a \$25,000 grant to a nonprofit working on the issue featured in the film. The Subject Matter team attended the festival screening to invite inspired audiences to create a positive community action in response to the film.

THE CYCLE OF LOVE, directed by **Orlando von Einsiedel**, was awarded the 2025 Artemis Rising Foundation Award for Social Impact. The Artemis Rising Foundation champions powerful stories about our most challenging social justice issues by raising the vibrations. The award is accompanied by a \$10,000 cash prize.

PUNTER, directed by **Jason Adam Maselle**, was awarded the 2025 Peter Macgregor-Scott Memorial Award. The award, which is accompanied by a \$10,000 cash prize, aims to continue the celebrated producer's mentorship for a new generation of passionate filmmakers. Sponsored by Susan Macgregor-Scott, this award is specifically designed to recognize narrative short filmmakers and reward creative approaches to solving practical production challenges in the service of storytelling.

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN, directed by **Bill Condon**, was awarded the 2025 Sherzum Award. Sponsored by producer Jayne Baron Sherman, a long time LGBTQ+ activist, this award is designed to acknowledge and foster stories about LGBTQ+ people, issues and concerns. Named for Jayne and her wife Deborah Zum, the Sherzum Awards encourages films that show the realities and challenges—as well as successes—of the people and communities it represents. The film was awarded a \$5,000 cash prize.

HOLDING LIAT, directed by **Brandon Kramer**, and **THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB**, directed by **Kaouthar Ben Hania**, were awarded the Brizzolara Family Foundation Award for Films of Conflict and Resolution. The films will each receive a \$5,000 cash prize. This award recognizes films in the Films of Conflict & Resolution program, which is dedicated to showcasing films that focus on the realities of human conflict and injustice around the world, and inspire discussion about the possibilities for resolution.

LET'S NOT SUFFER AT THE END OF THE WORLD, directed by **MC Harvey**, was awarded the 2025 Suffolk County Next Exposure Grant. The \$3,000 Suffolk County Next Exposure Grant is awarded to a film in the Views From Long Island section. This program supports the completion of high quality, original, director-

driven, low-budget independent films from both emerging and established filmmakers who have completed 50% of principal photography within Suffolk County. Sponsored by the Suffolk County Film Commission.

TRADE SECRET, directed by **Abraham Joffe**, received the Zelda Penzel “Giving Voice to the Voiceless” Award, presented to a film in the Compassion, Justice and Animal Rights section that raises public awareness and provokes discussion about contemporary issues of social concern, with a focus on the rights, as well as moral and ethical treatment of animals. The \$2,500 award is presented to a film that inspires compassion, motivates action, and compels change, and is given by Zelda Penzel—a long time educator, advocate, and a volunteer at HIFF since its inception.

THE LIBRARIANS, directed by **Kim A. Snyder**, was presented with the Victor Rabinowitz & Joanne Grant Award for Social Justice. The annual award, which is accompanied by a \$2,000 cash prize presented by Mark Rabinowitz, is presented to a film that exemplifies the values of peace, equality, global justice, and civil liberties, and is named in honor of two people who spent their entire lives fighting for those values: civil rights lawyer Victor Rabinowitz and his wife Joanne Grant, an author, filmmaker and journalist.

ALL THAT'S LEFT OF YOU, directed by **Cherien Dabis**, and **NATCHEZ**, directed by **Suzannah Herbert**, were awarded the New York Women in Film & Television Award for Excellence in Narrative Filmmaking, and the New York Women in Film & Television Award for Excellence in Documentary Filmmaking, respectively. These awards honor outstanding female filmmakers who have demonstrated exceptional artistic vision and dedication to their craft. Both films received a \$1,000 cash prize and a one-year membership to NYWIFT.

The festival also announced the recipients of the University Short Film Awards, honoring emerging young talent and awarding five filmmakers cash prizes of \$500 each. Awardees include **BREASTMILK**, directed by **Ifeyinwa Arinze** (NYU), **CRAZY FOR YOU**, directed by **Greta Díaz Moreau** (Columbia University), **MOTHER AND ULYSSES**, directed by **Mushi Cai** (London Film School), **OUR OWN SHADOW**, directed by **Agustina Sánchez Gavier** (Academy of Media Arts Cologne) and **PUNTER**, directed by **Jason Adam Maselle** (NYU).

As previously announced the festival honored **Sydney Sweeney** with the Achievement in Acting Award; **Tonatiuh** with the UBS Breakthrough Performer Award; **Eva Victor** with the UBS Breakthrough Director Award; and **Bernard Telsey** with the inaugural Achievement in Casting Award.

This year's Narrative Feature Competition Jury was composed of former communications and film programmer **Jody Arlington**, *Variety* senior entertainment and media journalist **Matt Donnelly**, and screenwriter and producer **Brian Burns**. The Documentary Feature Competition Jury included film critic and programmer **Monica Castillo**, co-founder of Firecracker Media and former President of Condé Nast Entertainment **Agnes Chu**, and TIME Studios Head of Documentary **Loren Hammonds**.

This year the Festival was honored to partner with the New York Film Critics Circle for the seventeenth year.

“We congratulate all of our award winners for sharing their incredible stories and creative work with our audience,” said HamptonsFilm Chief Creative Officer David Nugent. “This year's filmmakers brought projects from across the globe, bringing a true international perspective to our East End audience. We are thankful to everyone involved in the festival including our staff and volunteers, filmmakers, jury members, sponsors, board, and audiences who bring the festival to life each year.”

Festival attendees included Huma Abedin, Lynsey Addario, Allison Argo, Bob Balaban, Alec Baldwin, Michael Barker, Ellen Barkin, Tony Benna, Bonnie Berman, Sam Bisbee, Sol Bondy, Desmin Borges, Vera Brandes, Christie Brinkley, Mary Bronstein, Carter Burwell, Candace Bushnell, Moses Bwayo, E. Jean Carroll, Maria Cuomo Cole, Katie Couric, Grace Coddington, Bill Condon, Marshall Curry, Cherien Dabis, Blythe Danner, Pamela Dias, Orlando von Einsiedel, Arthur Elgort, Ansel Elgort, Sophie Elgort, Warren

Elgort, Mireille Enos, Libby Ewing, Josephine Exner, Patricia E. Gillespie, Robert Gordon, Ido Fluk, Jodie Foster, Maria Friedman, Geeta Gandbhir, Sebastian Gerdes, Michael Godere, Hasan Hadi, Steve Hartman, MC Harvey, Ethan Hawke, Peter Hedges, Susan Hess, Abraham Joffe, Molly Jong-Fast, Donna Karan, Clara Khoury, Brandon Kramer, Nikon Kwantu, Richard Ladkani, Jerry Larsen, Joe Lauro, Terri Lichstein, Doug Liman, John Magaro, PK Mahanandia, Matthew Maher, Kayo Martin, Randy Mastro, Fern Mallis, Ivy Meeropol, Marilyn Minter, Tim Blake Nelson, Alessandro Nivola, Bao Minh Nguyen, Mark Obenhaus, Elizabeth Olsen, Alisa Payne, Amanda Peet, Perri Peltz, Ben Proudfoot, Odessa Rae, Sendhil Ramamurthy, Karim Raoul, Will Rexer, Keith Richards, Alan Ruck, Lotta von Schedvin, Teddy Schwarzman, Richard Saperstein, Jason Sarlanis, Ari Selinger, Jerry Seinfeld, Sascha Seinfeld, Matthew Shear, Miriam Shor, Samantha Smart, Lois Smith, Kim A. Snyder, Darren Star, Alison Stewart, Sydney Sweeney, Bernard Telsey, Christy Turlington Burns, Tonatiuh, James Vanderbilt, E. Chai Vasarhelyi, Eva Victor, Petra Volpe, Max Walker-Silverman, Cole Webley, Mari Yamamoto, and more.

The festival awarded prizes to filmmakers in cash and goods and services of over \$246,500 this year, with over \$5 million awarded in competition funds and services over the past 33 years.

HIFF thanks this year's festival sponsors: Presenting Sponsor Regina K. Scully's Artemis Rising Foundation; Premier Sponsor Audi; Signature Sponsors UBS, il Buco, Redbreast; official Media Partners WNBC, *The Atlantic*, *The East Hampton Star*, *Hamptons Magazine*, LI Digital, *Variety*, WLIW and VVH-TV; Premiere Contributing Sponsors Assemble Media, Rox Rothschild, King & Spalding, Louisville, Luminara, Naturopathica, Netflix, Sigma, Sotheby's and Twomey Latham; Contributing Sponsors 91 East Production, Amagansett Wine & Spirits, The Baker House 165C, Calissa, Coracho, Guild Hall, Halsey Dermatology, Hampton Jitney, LDV At The Maidstone, Moby's, Montaukila Tequila, Nick & Tony's, Regal, Sage & Madison, Salcombe Gin, Serafina, Silvercup Studios, Southampton Playhouse, Village Bistro and Wölffer Estate Vineyard; foundation supporters New York State Council on the Arts and Suffolk County Film Commission. For more information, please visit www.hamptonsfilmfest.org.

HAMPTONS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL CONGRATULATES THE 2025 WINNERS:

HIFF Award Winner for Best Narrative Feature

THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE, directed by Hasan Hadi

HIFF Award Winner for Best Documentary Feature

TO THE WEST, IN ZAPATA, directed by David Bim

HIFF Award Winner for Best Narrative Short Film

SAMMI, WHO CAN DETACH HIS BODY PARTS, directed by Rein Maychaelson

HIFF Award Winner for Best Documentary Short Film

CORRECT ME IF I'M WRONG, directed by Hao Zhou

HIFF Best Performance Special Mention

THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE, Baneen Ahmad Nayyef

OMAHA, Molly Belle Wright

SOUND OF FALLING, Hanna Heckt

HIFF Best Screenwriting Special Mention

HYSTERIA, written by Mehmet Akif Büyükcatalay

HIFF Best Narrative Direction Special Mention

THE CUREFEW, directed by Shehrezad Maher

HIFF Best Documentary Feature Special Mention

ANDRÉ IS AN IDIOT, directed by Tony Benna

HIFF Best Documentary Short Film Special Mention
HOOPS, HOPES & DREAMS, directed by Glenn Kaino

HIFF Audience Award Winner for Best Narrative Feature
SENTIMENTAL VALUE, directed by Joachim Trier

HIFF Audience Award Winner for Best Documentary Feature
THE EYES OF GHANA, directed by Ben Proudfoot

HIFF Audience Award Winner for Best Narrative Short Film
LIGHTNING BUG, directed by Zane Pais

HIFF Audience Award Winner for Best Documentary Short Film
ISLAND WILLING, directed by Cece King

The Subject Matter Award
ALL THE EMPTY ROOMS, directed by Joshua Seftel

The Artemis Rising Foundation Award for Social Impact
THE CYCLE OF LOVE, directed by Orlando von Einsedel

The Peter Macgregor-Scott Memorial Award
PUNTER, directed by Jason Adam Maselle

The 2025 Brizzolara Family Foundation Award to Films of Conflict and Resolution
HOLDING LIAT, directed by Brandon Kramer
THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB, directed by Kaouther Ben Hania

Victor Rabinowitz and Joanne Grant Award for Social Justice
THE LIBRARIANS, directed by Kim A. Snyder

The Zelda Penzel Giving Voice to the Voiceless Award
TRADE SECRET directed by Abraham Joffe

Suffolk County Next Exposure Grant
LET'S NOT SUFFER AT THE END OF THE WORLD, directed by MC Harvey

The Sherzum Award
KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN, directed by Bill Condon

New York Women in Film & Television Award for Excellence in Narrative Filmmaking
ALL THAT'S LEFT OF YOU, directed by Cherien Dabis

New York Women in Film & Television Award for Excellence in Documentary Filmmaking
NATCHEZ, directed by Suzannah Herbert

University Short Film Awards
BREASTMILK, directed by Ifeyinwa Arinze (NYU)
CRAZY FOR YOU, directed by Greta Díaz Moreau (Columbia University)
MOTHER AND ULYSSES, directed by Mushi Cai (London Film School)
OUR OWN SHADOW, directed by Agustina Sánchez Gavier (Academy of Media Arts Cologne)
PUNTER, directed by Jason Adam Maselle (NYU)

Previously Announced Awards:

Achievement in Acting Award

Sydney Sweeney, CHRISTY

UBS Breakthrough Performer Award

Tonatiuh, KISS OF A SPIDER WOMAN

UBS Breakthrough Director Award

Eva Victor, SORRY, BABY

Achievement in Casting Award

Bernard Telsey, KISS OF A SPIDER WOMAN

HIFF Narrative Feature Competition Jury

Jody Arlington, former communications and PR director for SXSW and Silverdocs/ AFI Docs Documentary Festival, co-founder, former VP at Fleishman Hillard

Matt Donnelly, senior entertainment and media writer at *Variety*

Brian Burns, screenwriter and producer (YOU STUPID MAN, HIFF 2002)

HIFF Documentary Feature Competition Jury

Monica Castilo, critic and film programmer, member of the New York Film Critics Circle

Agnes Chu, co-founder of Firecracker Media, former President of Condé Nast Entertainment

Loren Hammonds, Head of Documentary at TIME Studios (VIKTOR, HIFF Best Documentary Feature Winner 2024)

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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 33rd 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 \$241,500 this 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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