



28th Aspen Shortsfest

April 2-7, 2019 @aspenfilm #shortsfest19

one of the world's premier,
Oscar®-qualifying
celebrations of
international
short form
cinema

ASPEN FILM ANNOUNCES PROGRAM FOR 28TH ANNUAL ASPEN SHORTSFEST

Premier North American Festival to Showcase American and International Short Form Filmmaking Talent in Oscar®-Qualifying Competition, April 2-7, 2019

Aspen, Colo. (March 7, 2019) — Aspen Film, a year-round film arts and education organization, announced today its program for the 28th Aspen Shortsfest, which will bring the top international filmmaking talent to Aspen's Wheeler Opera House and Carbondale's Crystal Theatre from April 2-7, 2019. The festival explores unique themes through a series of 12 programs that feature the newest and most innovative works of short-form cinema. The 2019 program includes 69 films from 26 countries; 41% of which are female-directed.

"Once again we're excited to present a diverse and global lineup of films for our 28th Aspen Film Shortsfest. We had an unprecedented nearly 2600 submissions this year; our programming team worked tirelessly to craft a program that is depictive of today's world, showcasing film from all over of the planet, representing 26 distinct countries," says Aspen Film Executive Director Susan Wrubel. "In true Shortsfest fashion, this year's lineup promises a ground-breaking array of documentary, animation, comedy and dramatic offerings."

With a reputation as a premier North American festival, Aspen Shortsfest is Oscar®-qualifying in five categories of its international competition, which offers a diverse and exciting selection of drama, comedy, animation, and documentary—all at 40 minutes or less. Intimate in scale, attendees will also find creative inspiration in meeting guest filmmakers and industry experts at program Q&As, panels and receptions.

"We're absolutely thrilled to present this program of extraordinary films from some of the most passionate filmmakers from around the world," says Director of Programming Landon Zakheim. "The filmmaking prowess and storytelling skills on display throughout the entire lineup stunned our team and we can't wait to share them with our enthusiastic audience." Zakheim's programming team includes Opal Bennett, Emily Doe, Angie Driscoll, and Sudeep Sharma.

Shortsfest will screen a feature film for the first time in festival history, with filmmaker Destin Cretton in-person to present a special presentation of his feature film adapted from his award-winning short film of the same name, *SHORT TERM 12*, an indie darling that helped launch and further the careers of Oscar® winner Brie Larson; Oscar® winner Rami Malek and award winner LaKeith Stanfield.

For the second year, Aspen Film is proud to be able to present the Vimeo Staff Pick Award, a live iteration of the platform's Staff Picks laurel. This is a prestigious honor from the creator-first platform. The winning film will be available for viewing worldwide on the Vimeo Staff Picks channel on April 8th, the day after the Closing Night Awards Dinner.

In Shortsfest tradition, a special Ellen Jury will once again present the Ellen Award to a filmmaker at the Awards Dinner. The Ellen Award honors Aspen Film's founder and executive director Ellen Kohner Hunt, who retired in 1995.

The festival is an industry-recognized destination for discovering breakthrough talent. Damien Chazelle (*La La Land*), Jason Reitman (*Up in the Air*), Jean-Marc Vallée (*Dallas Buyers Club*) and Sarah Polley (*Stories We Tell*) are among notable alumni whose short films first screened at Aspen Shortsfest before they became household names.

Sponsors:

The 28th Aspen Shortsfest is made possible by the generous support of Aspen 82, Aspen Club Sports Medicine Institute, Aspen Public Radio, The Aspen Times, Fries Properties, The Gant, Hotel Jerome, Jimmy's Aspen, and Modern Luxury/Aspen Magazine. Aspen Shortsfest is also charitably underwritten by grants from AspenOUT, Colorado Creative Industries, Colorado Office of Film, Television & Media, National Endowment for the Arts, Les Dames d'Aspen, Thrift Shop of Aspen and the Wheeler Opera House (City of Aspen) Arts Grant Program.

28TH ASPEN SHORTSFEST PROGRAM**Alien Culture**

West London, 1979. Racial tensions are running high. Lucky thinks his younger brother is in trouble, but the truth is far from what he expected. (lesh Thapar, United Kingdom, 16 min.) **International Premiere**

All in My Family

A heartfelt, cross-cultural autobiographical story of Chinese-born filmmaker Hao Wu, who creates a thoroughly modern LGBTQ family with his gay partner in the US, only to face the dilemma of how to introduce his partner and two children to his very traditional parents and relatives back in China - some of whom don't even know he's gay. (Hao Wu, USA, 40 min.)

Alma

Alma has just entered a new high school and her classmate, Víctor, invites her to a party. The transition of her body and her hidden desires lead Alma to face her inner fears and thus take the first step to love herself as she is. (Santiago León Cuéllar, Colombia, 17 min.) **North American Premiere**

Appreciation

An African Pentecostal Pastor questions everything she believes after a life-changing event. (Tomisin Adepeju, United Kingdom, 15 min.) **North American Premiere**

Ashmina

In an impoverished country, rife with contradiction, a young girl is torn by her obligation to her family and the influence of foreign visitors. (Dekel Berenson, UK/Nepal, 15 min.)

Athleticus : Middle distance race

Wild animals compete in athletic events. (Nicolas Deveaux, France, 2 min.) **North American Premiere**

Bavure

In the beginning was the Stain. A paintbrush reveals a being of gouache, opens him, transforms him, twists him, completes him. From this accelerated evolution arises a conquering being... (Donato Sansone, France, 5 min.)

Brotherhood

Malik returns home after a long journey with a mysterious new wife. (Meryam Joobeur, Canada/Tunisia/Qatar/Sweden, 25 min.)

The Clinic

Amidst a devastating opioid epidemic, a needle exchange and free clinic operates in the shadows of Fresno, California. (Elivia Shaw, USA, 16 min.)

Connected

A short documentary about love and passion. (Aleksandra Maciejczyk, Poland, 18 min.) **North American Premiere**

Crannog

Nobody should have to die alone. A contemplation on life, death and kindness. (Isa Rao, United Kingdom, 15 min.)

Crowley-Cowboy Up

14-year-old Crowley faces the loss of his big brother by following his footsteps. The little Cowboy tries hard to become a great Bullrider. (Andre Hörmann, Germany, 15 min.) **North American Premiere**

Dios Nunca Muere (God Never Dies)

Living in hidden America, Paula, a Mexican farmworker struggles to raise two children on her own. When a new caravan arrives on the cramped lot they live on, Paula allows herself, and her children, to imagine the home is theirs—a fantasy highlighting the fragility of her reality and her family. (Barbara Cigarroa, Ireland/USA, 14 min.)

Dulce

On Colombia's Pacific Coast, a mother teaches her daughter how to swim. It is an essential skill in this remote region, where livelihoods are made on the sea and where rising tides, made worse by climate change, have swept entire villages away in recent years. (Angello Faccini, Guille Isa, Colombia/USA, 11 min.)

Edgecombe

Revealing the deeply personal truths of three local residents, Edgecombe is an examination of the ways trauma repeats and reinvents itself in rural Black communities. (Crystal Kayiza, USA, 14 min.)

Enforcement Hours

In a climate of xenophobia and confusion, a San Francisco hotline aims to provide limited assistance to a targeted population. (Paloma Martinez, USA, 12 min.)

Everything You Wanted To Know About Sudden Birth* (*but were afraid to ask)

The true story of how the Berkeley police department, the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands, an Academy Award winner and Mr. Spock of Star Trek fame are all connected by "Sudden Birth," one of the most unintentionally hilarious and disturbing educational films ever created. (Scott Calonico, UK/Germany, 11 min.)

Facing It

As a man anxiously awaits a meeting in the local pub, he is forced to explore his own difficult memories and relationships in an evening that will leave him changed forever. (Sam Gainsborough, United Kingdom, 7 min.)

Falling

In the winter of 1994, in the French suburbs, Baptiste and Leo, two polar opposite students, meet up one evening to work on a school presentation. (Benjamin Vu, France, 33 min.)

Feathers

Elizier, an emotionally-dejected new enrollee at The Edward R. Mill School for Lost Boys, must overcome memories of a tragic past and the present hazing by his peers in order to tackle larger issues dominating his young life. (A.V. Rockwell, USA, 19 min.)

The Field

A poor agricultural labourer leads a double life in the village's last remaining cornfield. But the harvest is approaching... (Sandhya Suri, France/UK/India, 19 min.)

The Fox and the Bird

A solitary fox finds itself improvising fatherhood for a freshly hatched baby bird. (Fred Guillaume, Sam Guillaume, Switzerland, 11 min.) **International Premiere**

Ghosts of Sugar Land

In Sugar Land, Texas, a group of young Muslim American men ponder the disappearance of their friend "Mark," who is suspected of joining ISIS. (Bassam Tariq, USA, 21 min.)

Green

Green, an undocumented Turkish pedicab driver, unwittingly draws police attention, endangering his brother, his community, and himself. (Suzanne Andrews Correa, USA, 12 min.)

Guaxuma

Tayra and I grew up on a beach in the north east of Brazil. We were inseparable. The sea breeze brings me back happy memories. (Nara Normande, France/Brazil, 14 min.)

Haunted

A mother who rarely sees her filmmaker son, suddenly encounters a ghost outside of his childhood bedroom. (Christian Einshøj, Denmark, 30 min.)

Helsinki Mansplaining Massacre

A horror comedy about one woman's desperate struggle to survive a pack of men who just want to explain everything to her. (Ilja Rautsi, Finland, 15 min.)

Hors Piste

The two best rescue workers of the region are ready for their new mission. Despite their professionalism and their determination, it will not go as planned...(Léo Brunel, Loris Cavalier, Camille Jalabert, Oscar Malet, France, 6 min.)

How to Make a Rainbow

The film observes a young girl and her mother over the course of two years as they move together through transitions of home, identity and name. (Ryan Maxey, USA, 16 min.) **World Premiere**

How to Swim

Abigail is heavily pregnant, But something is missing. Terrified about the imminent birth, she kidnaps a comforting partner in crime for one afternoon. (Noa Gusakov, Israel, 15 min.)

The Hunt

During summer holidays in the countryside, an 11-year-old boy goes through his first boyhood experience as he discovers the violence for the first time. (Mateusz Jarmulski, Poland, 8 min.) **North American Premiere**

The Infection

A film in the spirit of Ingmar Bergman's "Scenes From A Marriage", spiked with a dark sense humor. (Patrik Eklund, Sweden, 16 min.) **North American Premiere**

The Inner Side

Working at a family connection center, Aya, a social worker watching through the glass window observes meetings between children and their estranged parents. (Danel Elpeleg, Israel, 15 min.) **U.S. Premiere**

Jack

A man comes to grips with the fate of his sick cat, the only way he knows how. (Nick Paonessa, USA, 8 min.)

Kanari

Vala and Benni are leaving Reykjavik for a simpler life in the countryside and are struggling to find a common ground about what their future holds. Their journey comes to a violent stop when they get into a head on collision with another car. (Erlendur Sveinsson, Iceland, 14 min.)

Kevlar

Camilo, from the projects outside of Stockholm, sees Amina on her way to a party. He borrows his friend's expensive jacket and approaches her, offering to show her the way. (Tuna Özer, Sweden, 11 min.)

Las del Diente

Three women discuss the social pressure of having kids while celebrating the uniqueness of their bodies. (Ana Perez Lopez, Spain/USA, 6 min.)

Lavender

A young gay man grows increasingly entangled in the marriage of an older couple. (Matthew Puccini USA, 11 min.)

Liberty

Alex and Milagros deal with great life upheaval as they prepare to dance at their community's redevelopment groundbreaking ceremony. (Faren Humes, USA, 17 min.)

Life in Miniature

A celebration of one woman's mission to document the everyday. (Ellen Evans, United Kingdom, 5 min.)

Life Overtakes Me

Over the past fifteen years, hundreds of refugee children in Sweden have withdrawn into Resignation Syndrome, a sort of "willed death," remaining in a coma-like state for months, or even years. The film follows three families for more than a year. Viewers are immersed in their lives as the anguished parents struggle to care for their sick children. (Kristine Samuelsen, John Haptas, USA, 40 min.)

The Likes and Dislikes of Marj Bagley

A family creates their grandmother in stop-motion animation. (Taylor Stanton, USA, 14 min.)

Little Grey Bubbles

Kim travels from New York City to a small town in Canada to attend the funeral of one of her best friends, who she had only ever spoken to online. (Charles Wahl, Canada, 14 min.)

Lou

Lou, a teenage tomboy in a small Californian town, idolizes her single father. When he has a date over one night and she is cast out of the house, Lou wanders to the outer reaches of town and into a new era of teenage identity. (Clara Balzary, USA, 12 min.) **U.S. Premiere**

Lockdown

Struggling with feelings for her best friend, 14 year-old Marie stages an almost perfect plan. (Celine Held, Logan George, USA, 12 min.)

Mack Wrestles

Mack Beggs broke records and changed history when he won the Texas state title as a transgender wrestler. Now with high school ending and college on the horizon, the sports champion, national activist, and high school hero must grapple with what comes next. (Erin Sanger, USA, 26 min.)

Milton

A guy makes a bad first impression when he meets his girlfriend's family as they gather at her grandfather's death bed. (Tim Wilkime, USA, 11 min.)

The Minors

A slice of life film about a Grandpa and his Grandsons, the future and the past. (Robert Machoian, USA, 10 min.)

The Mute

A girl tries to find the answer about love before her big day, in a rainy night. (An Pham Thien, Vietnam/USA, 15 min.)

Nefta Football Club

In the south of Tunisia, two football fan brothers bump into a donkey lost in the middle of the desert on the border of Algeria. Strangely, the animal wears headphones over its ears. (Yves Piat, France, 17 min.)

Nest Egg

When a young American woman decides to become a gestational surrogate to a couple from China, her insecure husband tries to torpedo the arrangement. (Henry Loevner, USA, 13 min.) **World Premiere**

One Small Step

An ambitious young girl aspires to become an astronaut with the support of her humble father. (Andrew Chesworth, Bobby Pontillas, USA/China, 8 min.)

Patision Avenue

A single mother's most important roles in life will collide over the phone during a long take shot in the centre of Athens (Thanasis Neofotistos, Greece, 13 min.) **North American Premiere**

Scenes From a Dry City

In South Africa, an impending water crisis grips an entire nation. (Francois Vester, Simon Wood, South Africa, 13 min.)

Selfies

A fireworks display of grinning people who lose themselves in the abysses of human existence. A selfie race around the world. A view on people's every-day obsession with portraying themselves. (Claudius Gentinetta, Switzerland, 4 min.)

She-Pack

Anarchy emerges at a public pool party when a group of small girls push the limits of their strength and power. (Fanny Ovesen, Norway, 18 min.) **North American Premiere**

Sister

A man thinks back to his childhood memories of growing up with an annoying little sister in China in the 1990s. What would his life have been like if things had gone differently? (Siqi Song, China/USA, 8 min.)

sometimes, i think about dying

Fran is thinking about dying, but a man in the office might want to date her. (Stefanie Abel Horowitz, USA, 12 min.)

Splash

The splash of water is like a bomb, about to break the tranquility of the pool. (Jie SHEN, China, 9 min.)

North American Premiere

Street Flame

A crew of motley skaters and street teens commemorates their friend Jinx on their own terms. (Katherine Propper, USA, 12 min.)

The Summer of the Electric Lion

Hidden in a house far from the city, Alonso accompanies his dear sister, Daniela. She expects to become the seventh wife of The Lion, a prophet who (according to stories) electrocutes when you touch him. (Diego Céspedes, Chile, 22 min.)

Super Comfort

A tragic-comedy about a woman and the loneliness that can set in when the children are out of the house. (Kirsikka Saari, Finland, 15 min.)

Sweetheart Dancers

A gay couple returns to the Native American powwow where they were previously eliminated from a contest aimed at straight-only competitors called "The Sweetheart Dance." (Ben-Alex Dupris, USA, 13 min.)

Thatha's Secret

A young woman reminisces about her summer vacations with her grandfather as a child and that one camping trip that changed her life. (Sharanya Ramesh, India, 8 min.) **North American Premiere**

The Trial

Meet the lawyers tasked with defending 9/11 suspects against the U.S. government. (Johanna Hamilton, UK, 17 min.)

The Water Slide

In 2016, an accident happened at an amusement park in Kansas. The story is recounted through television coverage. (Nathan Truesdell, USA, 9 min.)

The Wiremen

A young girl must learn of the dangers new power brings, whether they step straight from her Grandmother's stories or the fast-changing world beyond her doorstep. (Jessica Patterson, Ireland, 9 min.) **International Premiere**

This Magnificent Cake!

Five narratives set in colonial Africa in the late 19th century tell stories about a troubled king, a middle-aged Pygmy who works in an upscale hotel, a failed businessman who goes on an expedition, a lost porter, and a young army deserter (Emma De Swaef, Marc James Roels, Belgium, 44 min.)

Transmitter-Receiver

In order to escape the monotony and boredom of the end of the school year, a young boy fabricates a transceiver-receiver to communicate with strangers in the sky. (Vincent Wilson, Canada, 9 min.)

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Tickets:

Tickets will go on sale to the public Friday, March 22. Advance tickets are available for purchase for Aspen Film members beginning Monday, March 18. All tickets will be available at the Wheeler Opera House Box Office and aspenshowtix.com. Tickets for the Crystal Theatre will also be sold at Bonfire Coffee in Carbondale. VIP and Priority Pass options are available to new and current members. Aspen Film will offer a Super Screener pass (\$150) for young professionals (35 & under), which includes access to all programs, panels and receptions, in addition to a one-year Aspen Film Director-level membership.

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About Aspen Film:

Established in 1979, Aspen Film is one of Colorado's most active film arts organizations, presenting dynamic programs and featured guest artists throughout the year. Internationally recognized, Aspen Film organizes a major film event in every season, along with an extensive education program: Aspen Filmfest, Academy Screenings, Aspen Shortsfest and FilmEducates. With a mission to enlighten, enrich, educate and entertain through film, Aspen Film stimulates thought, encourages dialogue and broadens understanding of our world and selves through the diverse spectrum of ideas presented by filmmakers worldwide. Learn more at aspenfilm.org.

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