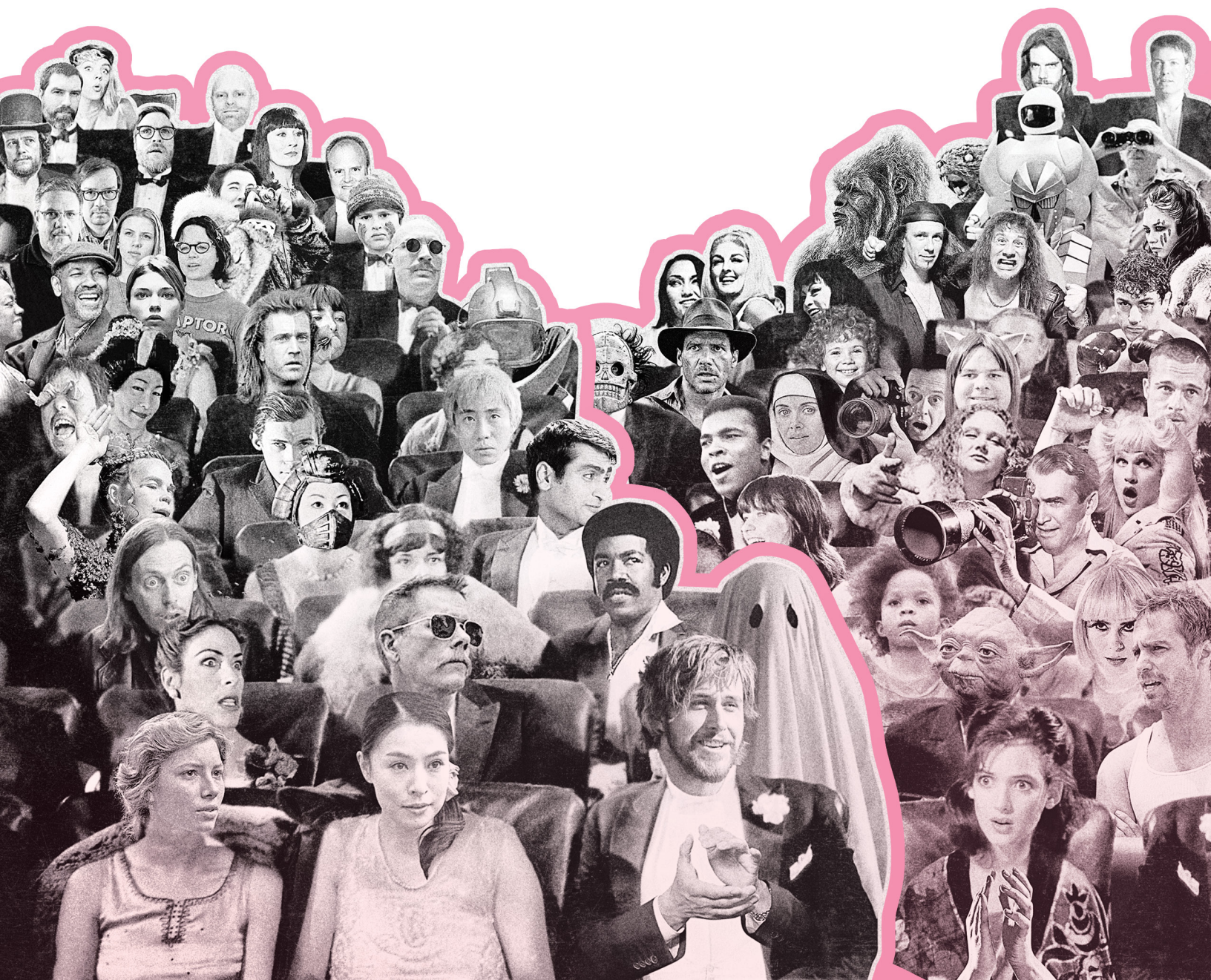


PROGRAMMER'S PICKS





BETH BARRETT • ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

ABOUT SIFF

The **SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL** is the largest film festival in the United States, with more than 140,000 people attending each year. The 25-day event, held each May and June, is renowned for presenting over 400 features, short films, and documentaries gathered from more than 80 countries. We receive over 4,000 independent film submissions annually, and screen debut features and shorts alongside works by established master filmmakers and arthouse cinema hits. More than 70% of the films screened at the Festival will not return to theaters, making SIFF an amazing place to discover and celebrate new work from around the world.

PURCHASE PASSES & TICKETS AND COMPLETE LINEUP AT SIFF.NET • BOX OFFICE: 2016.324.9996



LEAVE NO TRACE

Debra Granik and Anne Rossellini (*Winter's Bone*) return with a pitch perfect tale of a father and daughter who exist outside of society, and the changes they go through when that changes. Sweet, haunting, and tender, this story will stick with you.

EIGHTH GRADE

Elsie Fisher in a star-making role as Kayla, enduring the last week of eighth grade. By turns sweet, hilarious, and completely cringeworthy as only being thirteen can be.

AMATEURS

A true gem of a film, set in a Swedish town competing for a German big-box store with dueling videos. A surprisingly insightful take on immigration, coming of age, and a rapidly diversifying society.

CHEDENG & APPLE

Two 60-something best friends set out to find a never-forgotten love in this hilarious *Thelma & Louise*-style road trip romp from the Philippines—with an unforgettable Louis Vuitton bag...

WILD NIGHTS WITH EMILY

Madeleine Olnek (*Codependent Lesbian Space Alien Seeks Same*) returns with a slightly revisionist history of the lesbian loves of Emily Dickinson—starring the always amazing Molly Shannon.

THE GREENAWAY ALPHABET

A letter-by-letter investigation of the mind of Peter Greenaway, interviewed by his teenage daughter and made by his wife.

DEAD PIGS

Chinese comedic drama starring Vivian Wu as a woman unwilling to leave her family home, even as the developers tear down everything around her, and the pigs are mysteriously dying. An acerbically funny take on the rapid pace of modernization in China.

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST

Director Desiree Akhavan wins here with a story of forced gay conversion, friendship, and what it really means to find your people. Sidestepping the obvious clichés, there is an honesty and depth impressive for a second feature.

HOT MESS

Never has being so messy in your 20s been so funny in this Aussie comedy starring the irrepressible Sarah Gaul.

And then there are the animals (**CATWALK**, **PICK OF THE LITTER**), the classic TV (**FREAKS & GEEKS**, **LOVE**, **GILDA**) and our Galas (**THE BOOKSHOP**, **SORRY TO BOTHER YOU**, and **DON'T WORRY, HE WON'T GET FAR ON FOOT**).... don't miss any of them!



ANGELO ACERBI • PROGRAMMER

EDWARD II

Having the chance to see this masterpiece in its gorgeous big-screen version is a gift not to be missed. This is a film that carves its way into your mind and soul and stays there forever. The best film of Derek Jarman; one that defined his craft and style.

LITTLE TITO AND THE ALIENS

Surreal, funny, and sweet, it's the story of two orphans that are sent from Naples to the USA to stay with their weird uncle scientist. A little film with a big heart, with sincere laughers, heartfelt tears, and an irresistible kid, Tito, who has to come to term with death and extraterrestrial existence. You will keep smiling for days after watching this.

SWEET COUNTRY

Who says westerns have to be USA-exclusive? This Australian version of a typical western genre film is mesmerizing in its beauty, bold in his narrative, and fascinating all over. Incredible landscapes frame the harsh and violent life in the Australian Outback where the Aborigines were stripped of their land and turned into slaves. Rigorous and elegant.

THE HEIRESES

A surprising first feature, a drama about solitude told in whispers and murmurs, delicate and intense at the same time, with naturalistic acting and humor. A simple story, about women ageing and the ghost of the future—family, love, and friendship—with award-winning actresses, masterfully led with a firm hand by a young director who will be around for a long time.

NICO, 1988

Nico was an icon with Warhol and The Velvet Underground. What happened to her? Here is the story of the last years of Nico, as a solo artist and a woman and a mother. This adds to the image of the icon and goes further, celebrating the woman and the real artist beyond the glamour and the beauty. And a hell of a soundtrack, too.

AFTER THE WAR

The 1970s were the years of terrorism in Italy. An ex-terrorist who's now a refugee in France is accused of planning the killing of a judge in Italy, and he has to flee again. The film starts from this moment to paint a fresco of a family who stumbled into history, torn between the responsibility of family ties and the violence of a country who does not want to forget or forgive. A deep family (and political) drama.

HARD PAINT

Filipe Matzembacher, Marcio Reolon, the fantastic duo of New Brazilian Cinema, are back. With their typical grace and lightness, they tell the story of a young guy who earns his living as an erotic performer on the internet, painting with neon colors. Delicate and powerful, the film is a window into the life of young people in Porto Alegre, a city where everyone is passing by, waiting to leave for a better place.

BEAST

You will be bewitched by the beauty of the images (the Isle of Jersey is the strongest character here), shocked by the harshness of some people in it, and seduced by the developments of this thriller, one of the most promising first features in ages. Even if it sounds like something you've seen, this film will surprise you until the very last minute.

REVENGE

A blast. An over-the-top action film about revenge. A woman enters a spiral of violence when seeking revenge for a sexual assault. Everything is pushed to the limit and beyond, and the lead character and the director both being women gives the film an additional significance. Cars, violence, blood, guns, hate, and revenge: a highly entertaining romp, fearless and extreme. Big cinematic fun.

MY BIG GAY ITALIAN WEDDING

If you want some healthy slapstick fun, you must see this film. When an Italian gay guy who lives happily in Berlin has to go back home to tell the parents that he is gay and he's getting married, anything can happen—and it does. An important cast for an intelligent and easy-going film on an issue not so easy to handle in Italy. Seriously funny, and campy.



MARYNA AJAJA • SENIOR PROGRAMMER

SCARY MOTHER

An audacious exciting debut, as young director Urushadze (daughter of Zaza Urushadze, *Tangerines*) hits major notes in her film about a Georgian housewife's writing obsession and her clash with patriarchy.

BIRDS ARE SINGING IN KIGAL

Two women, a young Rwandan and a Polish ornithologist, survive the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. In the aftermath in Poland, their relationship is rough and complex. After returning to Rwanda, they find the way to heal and learn to love and respect each other.

RYUICHI SAKAMOTO: CODA

Musician Sakamoto wanders around Fukushima, plays a piano that survived the tsunami/nuclear disaster, speaks about cancer, and then plays his familiar haunting melodies (1983's *Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence*, 1987's *The Last Emperor*, and 1993's *Little Buddha*).

LEMONADE

Simply put, this narrative feature debut is about a Romanian immigrant's nightmare US Green Card application going off the rails and an immigration officer from hell.

AFTER THE WAR

A mature and convincing portrait of a teenage girl's strength, moral struggle, and resilience when she and her radical father (who is accused of murder) hideout in France from extradition to Italy.

THE OTHER SIDE OF EVERYTHING

A door in this filmmaker's apartment has been sealed for 70 years. A visually intimate yet politically sharp and insightful documentary that opens a door a bit wider for further understanding of the breakup of Yugoslavia on a homey and personal level.

THE BOTTOMLESS BAG

Forget the story line told from many voices in the style of Rashomon. Just immerse yourself in this fantasy fairy tale's visual lushness, shadows, lights, and absurdities. A storyteller at the palace of Czar Alexander II is telling us a story about a murder that took place in medieval Russia...

MARLINA THE MURDERER IN FOUR ACTS

A brilliant dark comedic shaggy-dog "feminist western," which takes place in the surreal landscape of Sumba Island, Indonesia. Marlina the Widow, to the best of her ability, avoids victimization. However, one cannot control ghosts.

THE BLESSED

This subtle narrative feature opens the crack further in the generation gap and clash of cultures with natural dialogue, fantastic city views, and characters blessed and burdened in radically different ways.

WHO RUNS THE WORLD

(Shorts Package) Particularly the Swedish dance short *Thrust* (*Juck*). The word "Juck" is Swedish for "hump." Their groundbreaking appearance pushes the boundaries for how we are used to seeing the female body move.



JUSTINE BARDA · SENIOR PROGRAMMER

AMATEURS

Funny, affecting story about two raucous teenage girls making a film about their small Swedish town—and how immigration has changed the face of Europe.

THE BLESSED

Dedicated to her parents' generation, the impressive debut film of Algerian director Sofia Djama offers a bittersweet, compassionate look at a society struggling with its past.

PIG

A strobe-lit, pop art-colored black comedy about a serial killer stalking film directors in Tehran, and artistic vanity run amok! Mani Haghighi is truly unique among Iranian filmmakers working today.

THE REPORTS ON SARAH AND SALEEM

Rising star of Palestinian cinema Muayad Alayan follows up his charming first film *Love, Theft, and Other Entanglements* with another exploration of the effects of politics on personal relationships.

GODARD MON AMOUR

Clever, with a light touch, this bright, funny biopic captures the master largely through the eyes of actress and writer (and his long-suffering wife) Anne Wiazemsky. Based on her 2015 memoir "One Year After."

SOMETHING USEFUL

It's still surprisingly rare to see a movie about a woman who is neither someone's wife nor someone's mother, but a fully fleshed individual complete unto herself, living life on her own terms. A film for our times.

THE CHARMER

Smart, nuanced film about the fateful intersection of the unfeeling bureaucracy of immigration and the unpredictable vulnerabilities of the human heart.

THIS IS HOME

Five million Syrians have fled their war-torn country, but the US has only taken in 21,000, largely because of political fearmongering. Come meet some of the people whose lives are at stake.

SCARY MOTHER

And the film I haven't seen but am most excited for? *Scary Mother*, based on my colleague Maryna Ajaja's description: "What I loved was the sheet ambition, the Lilith obsession, the ironic end." What more could a girl want?

A MAN OF INTEGRITY

Iranian director Mohammad Rasoulof is one of the most courageous filmmakers working today, defying both a ban on making movies and a suspended prison sentence to continue to produce powerful indictments of injustice in his home country.



JAMES DAVIS · PROGRAMMER

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR

An intimate, behind-the-scenes look at the creator of one, if not the most, influential children's shows of all time.

SCOTCH—A GOLDEN DREAM

A tour through the Scottish whisky regions that will leave you thirsty.

MICHELIN STARS: TALES FROM THE KITCHEN

An exciting look at the Michelin Guide and what it takes to to earn those stars.

BREWMASTER

Be careful. You may just want to quit your job and start making beer.

THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS

This is a fascinating story about triplets that is funny, crazy, and tragic all at the same time.

BLUE MY MIND

A dark, coming-of-age story about body transformation that we can all probably relate to in some way.

SOUFRA

An inspirational doc about women in a Lebanese refugee camp starting their own business.

SHORTS WEEKEND

An international buffet of some of the best short films out there right now.

THE DRUMMER AND THE KEEPER

A charming story of an unlikely friendship that is honest, funny, and heartwarming.

PICK OF THE LITTER

Follow five dogs from birth all the way through guide-dog training school. A sweet and charming film.



SAM DITTY · PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU

For those looking for social commentary and insanity, look no further.

ANIMATION4ADULTS

For those who love animation in all its forms but want to see some stuff that maybe those under the age of 13 should wait till they're older to see.

HAL

One of my mother's favorite films is *Harold & Maude* but she knew nothing about the director Hal Ashby. Through this doc I've learned so much about him, and being able to share everything with her was amazing.

SCOTCH— A GOLDEN DREAM

I'm more a Bourbon fan myself. However, Scotch has always held a fascination for me. By the end I had a list of what I wanted to try and a better understanding of the whole process. You will too if I had to guess.

MUTAFUKAZ

This insane animated melee had me hooked from the moment I saw the title.

CHEDENG & APPLE

Picture *Thelma & Louise* blended with *Arsenic and Old Lace* and the result is absolutely hysterical. I do not want to say anymore, just know you are in for a good time.

BLINDSPOTTING

My sister introduced me to "Hamilton" and by extension Daveed Diggs. Lets just say his star will continue to rise up if he keeps making films like this one.

HIGHLANDER - QUEEN REMIX FEATURING DJ NICFIT

It's A Kind of Magic to see this cult classic with One('s) Vision with live music. Don't Stop Me Now because I'll be first in line... Sorry, people sometimes tell me, Don't Try So Hard.

LOVE, GILDA

My father is a huge comedy fan and he adores "Saturday Night Live." This film presents Gilda Radner with all of her issues and struggles with lots of laughs. After watching it I feel as if I have inched closer to my father's level.



DAN DOODY · PROGRAMMER

ERREMENTARI: THE BLACKSMITH AND THE DEVIL

My favorite film at SIFF this year. A wicked, historical horror-comedy from the Basque region of Spain, produced by Álex de la Iglesia; if you loved *Day of the Beast*, then you need to see this film.

GOOD MANNERS

Out of Brazil, this film is a spectacularly... well, let's just say there's a nasty twist halfway through, and I'm not going to spoil it for you.

TIGERS ARE NOT AFRAID

Real world and supernatural horrors converge, à la *The Devil's Backbone*, in *Tigers Are Not Afraid*, a haunting crime thriller set against the ongoing Mexican cartel wars.

THE DEVIL'S DOORWAY

I often find found-footage films to be tedious, but I absolutely loved *The Devil's Doorway*, an Irish Gothic chiller that's best described as *The Exorcist* meets *The Magdalene Sisters*.

MAKING THE GRADE

A delightfully entertaining documentary about piano lessons.

THE DRUMMER AND THE KEEPER

This film is a charming bromance between a bipolar musician and a rec-league goalie who has Asperger's syndrome.

STREAKER

The funniest comedy I've seen this year is the Swiss film, *Streaker*, in which a cash-strapped teacher and his bookie/barber organize a streaking ring to disrupt soccer matches for the purposes of betting.

THE RUSSIAN FIVE

Excited about the NHL coming to Seattle? This film is an entertaining and compelling documentary on how the Detroit Red Wings built a Stanley Cup winning team by poaching Russia's best hockey talent before the Iron Curtain fell.

BREWMASTER

Crack open a cold one for *Brewmaster*, which follows those individuals who are seeking or have achieved a career in the brewing industry, and includes valuable insights into the craft brew revolution.

SHORTSFEST WEEKEND

Every year ShortsFest Weekend brings SIFF audiences a scintillating collection of short films from up and coming filmmakers—if you're curious, check out the opening and closing night packages, but my favorite is *Terror Internationale*, a collection of seven terrifying tales from around the world. *Thunder Road*, recent winner of the Grand Jury Prize at SXSW, it's adapted from a short film that played SIFF 2016, and is one of the strangest, yet heart-rending comedic dramas that I've seen in quite some time.



ILIA GERBER · PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

MUTAFUKAZ

The cultural love story between France and Japan, crystallized in a brilliant and wacky animation masterpiece. This project brought the finest and goofiest animators, musicians, voice actors in France to deliver pure fun!

THE BOTTOMLESS BAG

When less is more—an absurdist masterpiece, gorgeously filmed in black and white. Will please cinephiles as much as diverse, intoxicating, substance users.

NEAREST AND DEAREST

Russian realism at its finest. Real, truthful, without filter. It speaks from the heart, and pictures with great precision the everyday life of so many.

SEE YOU UP THERE

To be seen by the whole family! Paris, right before the *Années folles*—embark on a journey with a formidable trio of friends, and with them, become the wealthiest scammer in the whole country!

SCARY MOTHER

Scary Mother brings an in-depth perspective on the clash on mentalities and is a maturity not only of the cinema industry but also of the cultural wisdom of modern Georgia. The cultural boom of the last years in the country is exposed here in all of its greatness through topics that many will be able to relate to.

ANIMATION4ADULTS

Because animation doesn't know frontiers nor limitations in its expression of ideas and aesthetical visions!

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU

Simply one of the best comedies at the Festival this year! This is our centerpiece, and for a good reason!

SCOTCH—A GOLDEN DREAM

Because it's more than a craft—it's a culture! Not only a fascinating documentary, but also a great excuse to go for a drink! Or two...

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DESIRE

A journey into the virtual world of chinese streamers—a parallel world, with huge stakes involved and amounts of money. A glimpse into the future, fascinating and somewhat chilling...

UNDER THE TREE

When Icelanders decide to do black comedy, it gets dark, and so hilarious! Oh by the way, did you see my cat?



LAURA GOOD · PROGRAMMER

AMATEURS

Prepare to be charmed by this celebration of misfits and the power of cinema. This Swedish comedy about a small town that rolls up its collective sleeves to make a movie is a favorite from the 2018 Tribeca Film Festival.

AVA

This understated, female-driven coming-of-age film won the FIPRESCI Prize at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival. It is strikingly cinematic and marks a confident debut from Iranian Canadian filmmaker, Sadaf Foroughi.

NEVER STEADY, NEVER STILL

I was very struck by this nuanced and carefully rendered study of grief and identity by Canadian director Kathleen Hepburn, which premiered at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival.

SASHINKA

A young aspiring musician's unstable mother comes back into her life on the eve of a big gig in what I like to describe as a *Mommy-meets-Lady Bird* family drama.

SCARY MOTHER

I was completely taken in by this bold and surprising feminist drama/psychological thriller centered on creative compulsion. There's a reason that it won the honor of Best First Feature at the Locarno International Film Festival.

WHO RUNS THE WORLD

This female-driven short film program, directed entirely by female filmmakers, celebrates women on both sides of the camera!

SUPA MODO

This film, about an entire town that comes together to make the dreams of a terminally ill girl come true, received special mention for the Crystal Bear at the 2018 Berlin Film Festival and is guaranteed to make your heart grow three sizes.

A SKIN SO SOFT

The latest from acclaimed Canadian auteur Denis Côté is a vignette-like essay film (think *Bestiaire*) that gives an understated glimpse into the lives of a handful of bodybuilders. It has a mesmerizing interiority despite its focus on the bulging and glistening muscles of its subjects' exteriors.

UNARMED VERSES

Don't miss Charles Officer's beautiful and affecting documentary about a 12-year-old girl finding her voice through a community hip-hop music and poetry program, as her government subsidized housing development faces forced relocation. Winner of the Best Canadian Feature Documentary prize at Hot Docs 2017.

THE POETESS

Discover what the 70 million viewers of the Arab world's largest televised poetry competition "Millions Poet" already know: Hissa Hilal, the first female finalist ever to appear on the show, is a force of nature and a voice of change.



MARCUS GORMAN · PROGRAMMER

BLUE MY MIND

Two of my favorite genres—body horror and angsty teen drama—smash into each other in this story about a girl who hits puberty and finds that she's slowly becoming a mermaid.

EVERY ACT OF LIFE / HAL / THE KING / LOVE, GILDA

Four excellent biographical portraits of life in the arts, covering theater (playwright Terrence McNally), film (director Hal Ashby), music (Elvis Presley), and comedy (Gilda Radner).

FREAKS & GEEKS: THE DOCUMENTARY

It's a sheer pleasure to see the cast and crew of "Freaks & Geeks" reunite to talk about one of the best and most influential TV shows of the past 20 years, the dozens of careers it launched, and the changing landscape of television comedy.

GOOD MANNERS

A Brazilian werewolf movie that's also a tender romantic drama that's also a commentary on economic inequality, all done up as the weirdest fairy tale you're likely to see this year—matched only by another one of our WTF entries, *Errementari: The Blacksmith and the Devil*.

MARLINA THE MURDERER IN FOUR ACTS

A dark, wickedly funny, feminist revenge western set in Indonesia about a woman who, after making quick work of her would-be attackers, discovers that the rigid rules of her rural island's patriarchal system are hard to break.

MOBILE HOMES

A young mother (Imogen Poots) and her eight-year-old son hustle their way from motel to motel along the US/Canada border in this Andrea Arnold-esque bit of social realism about life on the fringes of society.

MY NAME IS MYEISHA

The most formally inventive film in our New American Cinema competition, based on a play by Rickerby Hinds. At the moment of African-American teenager's death at the hands of police, we enter a dreamscape of her mind and learn of the life she leaves behind, all told through hip-hop, spoken word poetry, and dance.

NEVER STEADY, NEVER STILL

There's one soul-crushing domestic drama each year that hits me right in my emotionally masochistic heart (don't worry, I'm fine). I'm in love with this tough, tender film out of British Columbia, starring Shirley Henderson as a woman dealing with Parkinson's disease and Théodore Pellerin as her son struggling with his sexuality while working at an oil field work camp.

SHUTTLE LIFE

A Malaysian youth heads into the streets of Kuala Lumpur, hoping to raise enough money to make a forged birth certificate to retrieve his sister's body from the morgue. It reminded me of the Safdie Brothers' film *Good Time*, but less frantic and with a more sympathetic lead character.

THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS

Truth is stranger than fiction in this documentary about identical triplets, raised by three different families, who joyously reunite as adults only to uncover the horrible secret behind their separation. A beautifully sad rumination on nature versus nurture.

THUNDER ROAD

I like movies that straddle genre lines, and this comic portrait of a Texas cop whose life spirals out of control after his mother dies is uproarious, cringe-inducing, and heartbreaking. How it navigates its emotional and comedic tonal shifts is a thrilling experience.



RUTH HAYLER · PROGRAMMER

THE CRIME OF MONSIEUR LANGE

Discover one of Jean Renoir's best but least-known films, a hilarious comedy with heart, made in 1936 immediately before *Grand Illusion* and *Rules of the Game*. Amadee Lange is a naïve daydreamer, author of the incredibly popular Western serial "Arizona Jim," but his sleazy publisher has been stealing all the profits. Shown in a new digital restoration.

SANSHO THE BAILIFF

Director Kenji Mizoguchi achieved the unprecedented feat of winning prizes at the Venice Film Festival three years in a row for *The Life of Ohayu* (1952), *Ugetsu* (1953), and *Sansho the Bailiff* (1954). *Sansho* is a sublimely beautiful story, heartbreaking and unforgettable, of a brother and sister sold into slavery in 11th century Japan, trying to cling to their humanity. Shown in a new digital restoration.

HAL

Director Hal Ashby was a real free spirit who flourished in the 1970s (*Harold & Maude*, *The Last Detail*, *Shampoo*, *Bound for Glory*, *Coming Home*, *Being There*) but constantly warred with studio personnel, and was unable to make the movies he wanted in the 1980s, despite his great track record. Dramatic readings of his letters are hilarious and sad.

SUMMER 1993

In writer/director Carla Simón's touching autobiographical drama, orphan six-year-old Frida is taken to live with her aunt, uncle, and three-year-old cousin in the idyllic Catalan countryside. But Frida misses the city and hates the country and has trouble adjusting. *Summer 1993* is as memorable a portrait of childhood as *Spirit of the Beehive* or *Forbidden Games*.

RACER AND THE JAILBIRD

Matthias Schoenaerts (*Far From the Madding Crowd*) and Adele Exarchopoulos (*Blue Is the Warmest Color*) ooze charisma and sex appeal in this tragic love story. He is secretly a member of a bank robbing gang; she is a risk-taking racecar driver. They meet, sparks fly, and amour fou takes over their lives.

PUZZLE

An unfulfilled wife and mother finds unexpected satisfaction in assembling jigsaw puzzles (for which she has remarkable aptitude) and meets an intriguing man. Kelly Macdonald and Irfan Khan star in a quiet movie that is surprisingly rewarding.

NANCY

Andrea Riseborough (*The Death of Stalin*) gives a subtly haunting performance as a lonely woman who hears about a couple whose five-year-old daughter was stolen 30 years ago, and becomes increasingly convinced that she could be that missing daughter. Writer/director Christine Choe won the Screenwriting Award at the Sundance Film Festival.

MOUNTAIN

Full of breathtaking footage, both beautiful and thrilling, narrated by Willem Dafoe, *Mountain* is a dazzling exploration of our obsession with mountains, and their power to inspire wonder and awe. A unique cinematic and musical collaboration between the Australian Chamber Orchestra and director Jennifer Peedom, filmed all over the world—an extraordinary experience.

WESTWOOD: PUNK, ICON, ACTIVIST

Dame Vivienne Westwood is a rousing rebel figure, the influential punk fashion designer (starting with Sex Pistols manager Malcolm McLaren) and activist. Intimate and inspiring, this highly entertaining documentary traces her 40-year career shocking people and making waves.

EIGHT HOURS DON'T MAKE A DAY

Don't miss your chance to see R.W. Fassbinder's 1972 German TV mini-series (all eight hours of it!), an epic of life and love in the working class, featuring Fassbinder regulars Gottfried John and Hanna Schygulla (co-stars in *The Marriage of Maria Braun*).



DUSTIN KASPAR • PROGRAMMER

LITTLE TITO AND THE ALIENS

An Italian treasure which sees a pair of orphaned children go to live with their scientist uncle outside Las Vegas. There are aliens as the title promises but the emotional depth is wonderful for adults and older kids alike.

MAKI'LA

A hard-hitting drama from Democratic Republic of Congo which illuminates the misogyny of life on the street through the eyes of a strong young woman.

MARLINA THE MURDERER IN FOUR ACTS

An Indonesian feminist western that delivers a fabulously stylized revenge fantasy.

MY NAME IS MYEISHA

A social justice-oriented, beatboxing-infused, spoken word feature that takes Rickerby Hinds' stage work ("Dreamscape") and amplifies it for the screen.

SILAS

A young activist against deforestation in Liberia finds his community organizing legs in a truly inspiring and powerful documentary portrait.

SUPA MODO

A breathtaking portrait of a young Kenyan girl with a terminal illness who loves superhero movies...so the town comes together to treat her like she is a superhero. Beautiful, bittersweet, and profound.

VILLAGE ROCKSTARS

On the surface it's about a group of children who want to start a rock band, but at its core it is a gorgeous portrait of children in rural India and their joys and challenges of growing up.

WARRIOR WOMEN

Last year was Dolores Huerta. 2018 is Madonna Thunder Hawk. *Warrior Women* pulls back the curtain on the women who have been the foundation of the American Indian Movement in the '60s/'70s and are still fighting at Standing Rock.

WARU

Eight Maori female directors. Eight single-take female-centric stories. Each exploring a different facet of how a community grieves. Exceptional.

ZOMBILLENIUM

Super fun animated feature for older elementary students through adults. A theme park full of demons, werewolves, and zombies are pitted against the sparkly vampires to attract new audiences.



MEGAN LEONARD • PROGRAMMER

BODIED

Prepare to be offended, leave angry, start yelling, discuss, and then realize they've won. Let it happen. The best rap movie since *8 Mile* pulls no punches and will force you to confront your white guilt and your worst privileged PC-police officer. Calum Worthy (*American Vandal*) leads you into to the depths, and don't worry, you don't need to like him.

EIGHTH GRADE

Cringeworthy at every turn... it just hurts watching the adults attempt to assimilate with the youth. PSA FOR ANYONE OVER 40: NO DABBING! YOUR'RE EMBARRASING YOURSELF. Actually, forget the age restriction. Everyone stop dabbing! Also, praise be I never had to deal with a cell phone when I was in middle school.

MATANGI / MAYA / M.I.A.

I came of age with M.I.A.'s music and will always be in love with the way she rejects the mainstream and makes the most original pop around. This not only gave us an inside look at her creative process, but also the continuous controversy and racism she's dealt with throughout her career. Must see for all M.I.A. lovers.

NOBLE EARTH

A stunning portrait of a woman finding her own agency in a place where it's meant to get lost. Striking, frustrating, and beautiful.

SHAKEDOWN and THIS ONE'S FOR THE LADIES

The double feature that puts all other double features to shame. These two documentaries take you into the counterculture realms of exotic dancing in black communities. The first, an all women's queer nightclub, the second, a traveling male troupe. These WIDE EYE OPENING docs are not to be missed. Like whoa.

SKATE KITCHEN

An ode to the trials and tribulations of female friendship set against the backdrop of a sick girl skate group. All I want to do is join their girl squad. Jealous all day.

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU

100% bonkers. Lakeith + Tessa + Armie + Boots = Everything.

THUNDER ROAD

Based on the short film of the same name (named after the Springsteen classic), Jim Cummings' feature invites us to his tour-du-force one man show. You'll laugh, you'll cry; maybe both at the same time. JUST GO HOME AND WATCH THE SHORT.

UNDER THE TREE

When I say this is an Icelandic black comedy, I mean PITCH-black. I knew neighbors could be awful, but this is some next level ish. Don't deprive Icelanders of their sunshine!

WHO RUNS THE WORLD and WTF SHORTS

While I recommend all of shortsfest this year, make sure you don't miss these two programs. The first is a feminist anthem program to make Bey proud—you'll leave feeling flexy AF. The other... puts the WTF in WTF.



JUAN MANUEL DOMÍNGUEZ · PROGRAMMER

BLUE MY MIND

Just when you think that movies can't surprise you when it comes to fantasy, this mermaid coming-of-age (yes, I wrote "mermaid coming-of-age") story arrives and changes everything you thought about mermaids, "sensitive-yet-deep" movies, and even the old "smells like teen spirit" cliché.

THE BIG BAD FOX AND OTHER TALES

Well, you didn't expect this, specially in beautifully hand-crafted 2D French animation, but this is as Looney Tunes as a movie can get these days. And that's a guarantee, folks.

GIRLS ALWAYS HAPPY

A comedy. A quick comedy. A quick comedy in China, showing China complexities and also this mother-daughter relationship and it's daily Via Crucis through a fast-paced absurdist sense of happiness and, of course, being aware of what can makes us laugh even though it hurts so bad.

MUTAFUKAZ

Fast-paced French animation. A weird mash-up between *Blade Runner*, *Akira*, Studio Ghibli creatures, and the city of Los Angeles, one that actually becomes an effervescent noir and a proudly trashy yet extremely well-crafted animated flick.

VIRUS TROPICAL

On the steps of *Persepolis*, this animated Colombian miracle is also based on a sensitive graphic novel, one created by Power Paola that shows her own life before becoming an international comic book artist. Emotional, smart, driven by feelings and amazing visual ideas: *Virus Tropical* is a must.

BREWMASTER

Besides drinking it, the best thing you can do today when it comes to beer is learn something about it. Brewmasters from all around America are the perfect red carpet for a brew's night out with your drinking buddies.

VALLEY OF SHADOWS

A gothic tale that believes, as Tim Burton has taught us, that nothing defines us more than our reaction to creepy beautiful trees and what lurks in the dark. Edward Gorey fans, beware.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ANDRE

"I don't live for fashion, I live for beauty and style," say André Leon Talley. And his life, told here by his words and words of fashion icons like Anna Wintour or Marc Jacobs, is a magnificent proof of why he's more than haute culture: he's a smart and glaring guiding light when it comes to style.

THE KING

Elvis is America. At least from my foreign eyes. His miracles, his complexities, his absurd and epic tale, the '68 Comeback, the Las Vegas performer, his presence in day to day American society. All are shown in this devil-in-disguise X-ray documentary look at the Elvis phenomenon.

MOOMINS AND THE WINTER LAND

Moomins are an extremely popular phenomena in Europe. It even has fans like Neil Gaiman. So truly believe us when we say it's about time to see a different movie for kids, one that has a deep sense of beauty and discovery.



ALEXANDRA MAREZ · PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

SHORTSFEST OPENING NIGHT

Why miss the opening night of the shorts program, when you can watch amazing short films? These films will make you laugh, cry, think, and want to hug your neighbor. My favorite is *Wave* because it made me both upset and happy at the same time and I hope you enjoy it as well!

LEGENDS OF THE PNW

This shorts package is sure to make you feel nostalgia for our beloved PNW, if not then at least appreciate the extraordinary filmmaking of fellow PNW-ians! My favorite out of the bunch is *Her Room by the Kitchen* because it offers a nice slice-of-life piece of Rosalba, an au pair living in Seattle with her children.

TERROR INTERNATIONALE

Take it from someone who really doesn't like scary things—these films are worth the watch! Comedic, surreal, and thrilling, these 10 shorts will make you feel it all. My favorite is *Little Donnie* because I had a good laugh watching this, and it's really well-made!

¡TAPAS!

A great representation of Latin culture from each aspect of life that are all compelling, brutally honest, and enchanting.

WHO RUNS THE WORLD

Treat yourself by watching these woman-directed short films that cover various topics and keep you wanting more! My favorite is *Caroline* because it was extremely powerful and heartbreaking.

THE FAMILY PICTURE SHOW

These films highlight the best of animation, family adventures, and feel-good stories that are lighthearted and will leave you with a smile. A favorite of mine is *Post No Bills* and I hope you enjoy it also!

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

What happens in the family, stays in the family. Stories of budding romance, forbidden love, heartbreak, typical family drama, and harsh realities, these shorts films express the motions all families have gone through.

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT?

Take a look at the daily lives of young adults who deal with bullying, personal experiences, and things that affect their lives for good. These stories capture youth experiences and are very well done. My favorite so far is *The Beep Test*.

GLOBAL FRAMES

Some of the best shorts for this festival are in this shorts program! My favorite is *Manila Death Squad*. Enjoy!

SHORTSFEST CLOSING NIGHT

Send off all of the incredible hard work of all the filmmakers for all shorts programs on our closing night and enjoy some quality filmmaking. After all, it's why you came, isn't it?



CORY RODRIGUEZ · PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR

BREWMASTER

So you want to know how to work your way into the craft brewery scene? Grab an ice-cold beer (or several) and come find out.

EIGHTH GRADE

Relive your terrible, horrible, no good, very bad days of middle school with this charming dramedy from comedian Bo Burnham. Come for the laughs, stay for the awkwardness.

HAGAZUSSA: A HEATHEN'S CURSE

An Austrian folk tale of witchcraft that creeps along with enough dread to fill the void left after *The Witch* came off the big screen.

L'INFERNO WITH LIVE SCORE BY MY GOODNESS

Experience an impressive 1911 depiction of Dante's nine circles of hell, fittingly accentuated by some local garage rock.

LOOKING FOR?

What do guys really find on apps like Grindr and what does that say about those who go searching? This thoughtful documentary from Taiwan strives to answer these questions.

PICK OF THE LITTER

A heartwarming look at guide dogs in training to become man's best friend and his eyes/ears. Prepare for the collective "Awww"s from the audience during the entire film.

QUEERAMA

If you're fan of Collide-O-Scope here in Seattle and you're interested in LGBTQ history (British in this case), then boy do I have the perfect mash-up for you!

REVENGE

The only thing better than a revenge tale is one led by and told by a woman. Thankfully that is the case here with this bloody and unforgiving manhunt.

RYUICHI SAKAMOTO: CODA

A gorgeous musing on the beautifully rendered music that Oscar®-winning composer Ryuichi Sakamoto (*The Last Emperor*, *The Revenant*) has graced the world with over the years.

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU

This is going to be the wildest Centerpiece Gala ever! Don't miss director Boots Riley's insanely entertaining debut.



STAN SHIELDS · FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING MANAGER

AMATEURS

This award-winning Swedish film about two teenagers who set out to make a documentary about the "real" people in their town is a wry, witty, and nuanced satire that may make you rethink your feelings about selfie sticks.

AMERICAN ANIMALS

2018 has seen a ton of fiction/documentary hybrids, and none is as slick and thrilling as Bart Layton's heist caper, anchored by great performances from Evan Peters and Barry Keoghan.

THE CHARMER

A fascinating tale of a handsome Iranian man in Denmark, who pursues Danish women in the hopes of getting citizenship but has his plans turned upside-down when he falls in love with a member of the Iranian community.

THE DEVIL'S DOORWAY

Everything old is new again in newcomer Aislinn Clarke's invigorating update to the gothic horror film.

HEARTS BEAT LOUD

Brett Haley (*The Hero*) has done it again with this charming father/daughter piece that manages to be simultaneously heartwarming, bittersweet, and (stage-of-) life-affirming. And has a great soundtrack!

MATANGI / MAYA / M.I.A.

Musician M.I.A. opens up her astonishing trove of home videos and archival footage to chart how she channelled her tumultuous family history into her unapologetically political music—and how those politics made her both a star and a target.

THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST

Desiree Akhavan's adaptation of Emily Danforth's acclaimed coming-of-age novel brims with youthful talent and captures an era not yet left far enough behind.

SCARY MOTHER

Ana Urushadze's remarkable debut feature takes a tale of a woman's struggle to become a novelist against her family's wishes and transforms it into a fascinating allegory about the creative drive itself.

SUPA MODO

This simple story about a small town uniting to make a little girl's dream come true totally caught me off-guard and may be one of the more moving experiences that I will have in the cinema this year.

THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS

A surprising tale of three charming strangers who discover as adults that they are actually part of an identical set of triplets starts off as a simple "truth is stranger than fiction" tale, then grows into something much more far-reaching.



CLINTON MCCLUNG · PROGRAMMER

BEING FRANK: THE CHRIS SIEVEY STORY

The real person that inspired the papier-mâché-headed musician of the indie comedy *Frank* is even more fascinating. From his music with UK band the Freshies to his transformation into Frank Sidebottom, Sievey is thoughtful, hilarious, uncompromising, and an inspiration to creative artists everywhere.

THE CHANGELING

A classic, creepy haunted house film starring George C. Scott with gorgeous production design, cinematography, and iconic horror movie moments that spooked the hell out of me as a kid. Set in Seattle (with a couple of lovely shot-on-location scenes), this restored version is going to look amazing on the big screen!

A FIELD GUIDE TO EVIL

From the masterminds behind *The ABCs of Death*, a yummy anthology of horror shorts based on some truly dark folk tales featuring the directors behind *Goodnight Mommy*, *The Duke of Burgundy*, *The Lure*, and SIFF 2016's short film *The Procedure* (a.k.a.: the one with the butthole).

FOUND FOOTAGE FESTIVAL: CHERISHED GEMS

Bizarre exercise videos, creepy facial massagers, angry RV salesmen—you just never know what gems these VHS collectors are going to uncover. A truly hilarious show mixing the best of the worst of their finds with live comedy, FFF consistently sells out when they come to Seattle, and now they join us for a special "Best Of" show.

FREAKS & GEEKS: THE DOCUMENTARY

The story behind the best high school set television show (I will fight you over how good it is!) with all the major players chiming in—Apatow & Feig, all of the cast (even Millie, Harris, and Cindy Sanders), and even the studio heads that couldn't see the forest through the low ratings.

HIGHLANDER - QUEEN REMIX BY DJ NICFIT

I've been a fan of Seattle DJ NicFit for a while and I really love what he does—providing inventive new soundtracks spun live over the top of classic films. Can't wait to revisit this classic '80s action-fantasy film (whose director also made the best music video of all time, "Total Eclipse of the Heart") only now with ALL of the music by Queen.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENT -

THE STORY OF WAX TRAX! RECORDS

The story behind one of my favorite record labels—and favorite record stores—of all time is not just a vibrantly told history of the industrial music scene with an amazing soundtrack, but also a really sweet, personal love story about following your bliss.

THE LONG DUMB ROAD

A sweetly endearing and totally bonkers bromance comedy reimagined through the lens of talented indie director Hannah Fidell, with a script co-written by Carson Mell (whose last film *Another Evil* was a fave of mine at SIFF 2016), and lead by the great comic actors Tony Revolori and Jason Mantzoukas in his best performance to date.

MAKING THE GRADE

Who knew that watching a group of Irish music students (many, but not all, kids) and their piano teachers interact could be so utterly delightful and engaging and affecting? This simple fly-on-the-wall documentary is a truly refreshing discovery.

QUEERAMA

A history of LGBT rights in the UK as told entirely through gorgeously restored TV and movie footage from the BFI archives and set to music by the great John Grant of the Czars. Like the documentary version of a great Collide-O-Scope show.



COLLEEN O'HOLLERAN · PROGRAMMER

VALLEY OF SHADOWS

This gothic Norwegian film tells the story of a young boy who embarks on a journey into the woods near his home. Artful cinematography and a mesmerizing score make this a dreamlike film with layers of mystery and beauty. *Valley of Shadows* feels rooted in expressionism while containing narrative qualities which make it unique.

GOOD MANNERS

Good Manners begins as a mystery and unfolds as a tale about devotion and the lengths we go to for the ones we love. This is the best werewolf movie I've seen in years. *Good Manners* is the werewolf movie we deserve!

SANSHO THE BAILIFF

Directed by Kenji Mizoguchi, *Sansho the Bailiff* is a masterpiece of cinema. This moving, beautiful, tragic movie made a deep impression on me when I first saw it as a young person. There's no way I'll miss this opportunity to see it on the big screen at SIFF.

THE DEVIL'S DOORWAY

This is not your typical found footage horror movie. Northern Irish director, Aislinn Clarke, shot this in 16mm, and her film breathes new life into antichrist, religious mystery, witch, and possession tropes. I enjoyed every moment of this movie and was completely enrapt; it kept me guessing (and jumping) until the very end.

RUIN ME

Horror fans like me will delight in welcoming this solid new addition to the slasher cannon. Think *The Game* meets *The Final Girls*. A young woman signs up for a weekend campout horror game where the goal is to avoid being fake-killed. But as things get progressively stranger, the woman begins to wonder if it's more than just a game.

TIGERS ARE NOT AFRAID

Both socially relevant and darkly fantastical, *Tigers Are Not Afraid* follows a band of street children orphaned by the drug war in Juarez, Mexico. Mexican writer and director Issa López is a master storyteller who uses both literal and figurative shadows to illuminate a story of friendship and survival.

THE CHANGELING

George C. Scott stars in this classic haunted house tale set in Seattle. *The Changeling* has been unavailable on DVD and streaming in recent years, so this SIFF screening is a real treat. After all, if Patton is scared, then we all should be scared!

THE FIELD GUIDE TO EVIL

A horror anthology that explores the universal nature of fear, featuring eight talented filmmakers from around the world including *Goodnight Mommy*'s Veronika Franz and Severin Fiala and *Berberian Sound Studio*'s Peter Strickland. Some of the stories are funny, some are gruesome, and all are creepy to the core.

ERREMENTARI: THE BLACKSMITH AND THE DEVIL

An entertaining fantasy film based on a Basque folk tale, *Errementari: The Blacksmith and the Devil* is set in the Basque region in 1845. A young girl stumbles into the home a reclusive blacksmith only to find that he is keeping someone—or something—under lock and key. I love old fairy tales, especially macabre ones, so this was right up my alley.

REVENGE

Basks in the warpath of a badass woman intent on obliterating the dirtbags who did her wrong. Written and directed by Coralie Fargeat, this primarily English-language French film is a delight of color (think neon pink contrasting with a desert background) and a body horror extravaganza that will make even the most ardent horror fan squirm.



ANDY SPLETZER · PROGRAMMER

ALT SHORTS

Experimental films that include everything from found footage to surreal narratives, and are almost equal parts local and international, male and female.

ANTONIO LOPEZ 1970: SEX FASHION AND DISCO

The story is more about late-'60s NY art and fashion world than Lopez himself, and that's okay! This loving portrait of the era includes interviews with Jessica Lange and the fantastic Bill Cunningham.

BEING FRANK: THE CHRIS SIEVEY STORY

I enjoyed the movie *Frank*, I've enjoyed hearing author Jon Ronson talk about being in Frank's band on NPR, and now I can't wait to see this documentary about the man in the papier-mâché head.

GODARD MON AMOUR

A comedy about Jean-Luc Godard making *La Chinoise*, falling for lead actress Anne Wiazemsky, and his turn toward political filmmaking. Made by the guy who wrote and directed *The Artist* and based upon Wiazemsky's book.

THE GREENAWAY ALPHABET

This artfully built portrait of Peter Greenaway manages to dig into his personal life by exploiting the techniques he employs in his own films. It's a playful documentary that works as an effective primer on his work.

IN PRAISE OF NOTHING

62 cinematographers were given the assignment to "shoot nothing," and the footage they returned is narrated—in rhyme—by none other than punk icon Iggy Pop.

JOHN MCENROE:

IN THE REALM OF PERFECTION

It's like an Andy Warhol screen test if Warhol was obsessed with educational tennis films. Here the star is previously unseen footage of John McEnroe at the height of his skills, leading up to his match against Ivan Lendl at the French Open in 1984.

PROSPECT

This acclaimed sci-fi story was shot in and about Seattle and is yet another movie that shows the beauty and the talent that abides in the Pacific Northwest.

SADIE

A new Megan Griffiths film? Yes, please. She's a filmmaker who puts real people onscreen and makes you care about them in the best possible way.

WESTWOOD: PUNK, ICON, ACTIVIST

Vivienne Westwood was the designer who helped define the fashion of punk rock, having dressed the Sex Pistols back in the day, and she has kept that iconoclastic spirit alive in her work. It's another fashion doc that's more about the spirit of the times.



HEBE TABACHNIK · SENIOR PROGRAMMER

KILLING JESUS

A thrilling and powerful autobiographical story from co-writer and director Laura Mora, winner of multiple awards including the 2018 Goya for Best First Feature, it follows university student Paula as she seeks revenge after his father's assassination. When she finds herself immersed inside the killer's poverty-stricken world, she discovers that they might both be victims of the same broken system.

LOTS OF KIDS, A MONKEY AND A CASTLE

All 70-something Julita wanted out of life was to have lots of kids, a monkey, and a castle but when her country's tough economy forces her to give up her home, her colorful and dysfunctional family comes together for one last hurrah in this poignant, touching, and often hysterical love letter to life, winner of the 2018 Goya for Best Documentary.

HARD PAINT

Haunted by loneliness and the aftermath of a violent attack, online sex performer Pedro finds his isolation challenged by fellow erotic dancer Leo, leading to an unexpected connection and the possibilities of love and a new life in this electrifying and hypnotic winner of the Teddy Award at this year's Berlinale.

GIANT

Home from war, Basque farmer Martin discovers his brother Joaquin (Eneko Sagardoy, Goya for Best New Actor) has grown to an enormous size, driving the ambitious elder brother to exploit his brother's condition and into a reckoning with his own soul in this stirring film based on a true story, winner of 10 Goya Awards including Best Cinematography and Screenplay.

THE HEIRESESSES

A daughter of Paraguay's fading aristocracy who's on the cusp of financial ruin, introvert Chela finds work as an ad hoc chauffeur, leading to an encounter with earthy, sexually adventurous Angy—and an unexpected late-in-life coming of age—in this sly, subtle, and brave feature debut from writer/director Marcelo Martinessi, a double Silver Bear-winner including Best Actress at this year's Berlinale.

RUSH HOUR

From cities as disparate as Istanbul, Mexico City, and Los Angeles, director Luciana Kaplan has crafted a searing and poetic look at the lives of three souls who each spend half of their work day traveling to and from their jobs, and the costs of simply keeping dreams alive in an increasingly demanding world. Winner of Best Documentary at Morelia Film Festival.

SUMMER 1993

Sent to live with her uncle and his family following her mother's untimely death, six-year-old Frida acts out her unspoken hurt in a strange new place in this autobiographical debut feature from writer/director Carla Simon. Winner of the Best First Feature Award at the 2017 Berlinale, *Summer 1993* is an unforgettable film of disarming authenticity and beautifully crafted in every way.

CHAMPIONS

For pro-basketball coach Marco (Javier Gutiérrez, *The Olive Tree*) life is a game that's played hard and played to win. But when everything falls apart around him, he's thrown an unexpected lifeline: to coach a team of intellectually disabled basketball players. *Champions* is not just Spain's newest box office smash, but a rollicking and unforgettable reminder that none of us is truly "normal."

VIRUS TROPICAL

Conceived in spite of her parents' best efforts during a stormy night in Quito, little Paola struggles to find her place within her boisterous middle-class home. This animated tale, winner of this year's SXSW Audience Award, breathes to the rhythms of real life, relatable to anyone who's fought to find themselves within the din of a troubled yet loving family.

RUBEN BLADES IS NOT MY NAME

Singer, songwriter, musician, acclaimed actor, Harvard educated lawyer, successful politician. The life and career of Ruben Blades has taken anything but the expected, well-trod path. On the cusp of retiring as a performer, salsa's renaissance man takes an honest and unflinching look back on a life rich with triumph, heartbreak, and above all, a deep and unshakeable love for his people.



CALEB WARD · PROGRAMMER

SHAKEDOWN

This look inside the mobile lesbian dance club in Los Angeles from '02 to '15, chronicling the struggles and performers, is some of the most bold documentary filmmaking I've seen in years, brilliantly directed by Leilah Weinraub.

THUNDER ROAD

As a massive fan of the short film, this was one of my most anticipated feature adaptations and the results are wonderful. Jim Cummings is a name to look out for in the future.

RYUICHI SAKAMOTO: CODA

Ryuichi, forever. His music transcends cinema.

THREE IDENTICAL STRANGERS

A story that you have to see to believe and even then you still may have doubts. Wonderfully heartbreaking.

BODIED

Rap battle has never been better.

AMERICAN ANIMALS

A groundbreaking tale as American as apple pie and as intricately crafted as... apple pie.

NOBLE EARTH

A beautiful portrayal of female representation within Italy's elite.

SERIESFEST / AWARD WINNERS

SeriesFest brings the best of the best from 2017's award-winners Public Housing, Disengaged, and Urbance. Episodic content is in the midst of a wild west renaissance and these are a couple of fine examples.

I AM NOT A WITCH

This film blew me away at every turn with its true to form story of a young girl sent to a witch's camp.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DESIRE

If you don't become obsessed with YY after watching this doc, then you didn't watch it.



CILIN DENG · PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

POST-GAY EVERYDAY

What is my everyday life like, in a world where gay people are fully accepted and can do what they want? Post-Gay Everyday is a selection of five short films about the everyday problems of life, love, and sex – they just happen to be gay.

GIRLS ALWAYS HAPPY

Deeply grounded in the everyday life of the Beijing Hutong neighborhood, this is a *Lady Bird* comedy about an intense relationship between a mother and a daughter who both aspire to be good writers. Come to meet the multi-talented filmmaker Mingming Yang, who is the writer, director, lead actress, and editor of this film!

VILLAGE ROCKSTARS

Documentary-like film about a 10-year-old girl of a remote Indian village fights against stereotypes and poverty to pursue her dream of owning a guitar and forming a rock band. Self-taught director and producer Rima Das won the Best Feature Film at the National Film Awards with this tender, nuanced, and observational portrait of the kid.

LAST CHILD

Sungcheol and Misook's son is dead when trying to save a friend from drowning. The couple only finds solace in trying to befriend with the child who was saved by their son. However, the shocking truth gradually unfolds and torments the couple. An emotionally intense film about grieving that makes me feel beaten, mentally and physically, in the theater.

SUSU

"Strange things always happen to beautiful, mysterious and gifted people." In an often over romanticized British historical mansion, the tragic death of Chinese Opera star *Susu* haunts and shadows the family. A classic British thriller with a Chinese twist, the three screenings of *Susu* was sold out within 20 seconds as the box office opens at the Beijing International Film Festival.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF DESIRE

Fascinating investigations into Chinese live-streaming idols who provide virtual companions in their online chatrooms and make thousands of dollars through soliciting virtual gifts from viewers. End of year, the idols come up with their strategy to compete for the Most Popular Online Idol Award, in hope to gain the recognition and best promotional position at the streaming website. I find it extra interesting seeing the film in light of movie stars' PR campaigns for Oscars®.

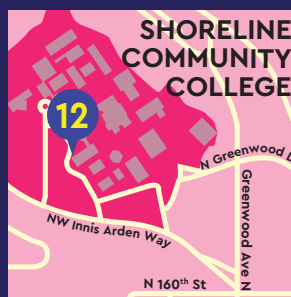
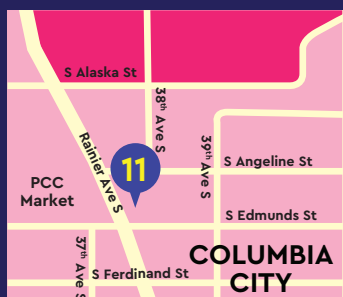
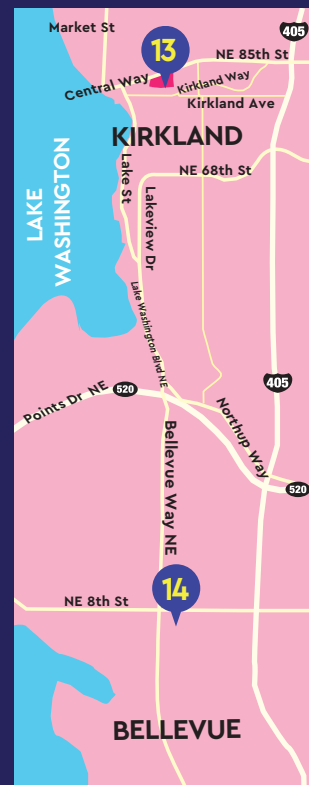
THE TASTE OF BETEL NUT

In tourist Hainan Island lives two boys, one works as a clown at a dolphin show and the other one impersonate movie star Leslie Cheung for a living. When a young woman joins this polyamorous couple, they set out to explore their own sexuality. Busting with youthful energy, watching the film may feel like taking a walk by the beach on a hot summer day.

THE WIDOWED WITCH

There are a few films with 'Witch' in their titles this year, but this is the one you shouldn't miss. A third-time widow who falls on hard times is declared cursed, but turns superstition to her advantage by offering supernatural advice. A humorous story told with a few experimental touches and starkly beautiful cinematography, the film won the Tiger Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

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