



SEATTLE
INTERNATIONAL
FILM
FESTIVAL
MAY 16 to JUNE 9 2019



2019
PROGRAMMERS'
PICKS

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 5,000 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: 206.324.9996**





BETH BARRETT
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

THE APOLLO

Thrilling history of a legendary landmark of Black and US culture, with incredible historical footage and interviews.

CELEBRATION

Not available for almost 20 years, this complicated portrait of Yves Saint Laurent bringing his final collection to life is complex and fascinating.

THE EXTRAORDINARY JOURNEY OF CELESTE GARCIA

Consistently interesting Cuban debut that mixes absurd humor and wry political commentary with light science fiction and aliens among us.

THE GALA SCREENINGS

Sword of Trust, *Late Night*, *The Farewell* are all accomplished comedies from women directors that you should NOT miss!

HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD

Coming of age so lightly told, gorgeously created, and with such sensitivity to all the characters, all fully realized—a joy to watch.

A DOG CALLED MONEY

A fascinating journey into the creative process of musician PJ Harvey, as she travels the globe preparing her new album.

RETROSPEKT

Esther Rots' brilliant, non-linear thriller follows a driven domestic violence caseworker who dangerously blurs the line between her work and home.

Q BALL

This inspiring documentary follows the all-inmate San Quentin Prison basketball team as they pursue victories both on and off the court.

VAI

These captivating, eight vignettes tell the life of a woman named Vai, through eight different actresses & filmmakers, spanning seven islands.

WILD ROSE

Jessie Buckley leads a knockout cast in this crowd-pleaser about a young Glasgow woman dreaming of becoming a Nashville star.

STAN SHIELDS FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING MANAGER



A DOG CALLED MONEY

Seamus Murphy meets PJ Harvey for a documentary that is an indisputable and essential view on the world. Through great music, obviously.

GHOST TOWN ANTHOLOGY

Enter a world of white snow and black souls, where supernatural is a good thing, never scaring but somehow positive. A gently surreal ghost story.

THE MAN WHO BOUGHT THE MOON

A film for the romantics: a man buys the moon for his wife. Is it possible? Love is fantastic and funny and heartwarming. A great first feature.

NON-FICTION

The ironic take of the French helmer Assayas on a group of self-assured intellectuals whose wise lives are not what they preach. A sheer pleasure, honestly.

PIRANHAS

Innocence is easy to lose when you are a child in the Naples suburbs where mafia is the law. An outstanding film, impressive cast—kids are all non professional actors—and a Silver Bear Award for Best Screenplay at Berlinale 2019.

ANGELO ACERBI
PROGRAMMER



MARYNA AJAJA
SENIOR PROGRAMMER

AYKA

A visceral and energetic camera follows Ayka, an illegal migrant worker in wintry Moscow as she desperately seeks work.

CRYSTAL SWAN

In a rare balance of angst and lightness, wanderlust young DJ in 1990s Belarus must travel to a backwater village as part of her scheme of attaining the American dream.

I DO NOT CARE IF WE GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS BARBARIANS

I am in awe of this actress, Iolana Iacob in her role of Mariana and the ambitious filmmakers who grapple with questions of history, violence, nationalism, and art.

RETROSPEKT

A woman on maternity leave from her job at a domestic violence clinic brings her work home in a thriller that comprehends the horrid chemistry of abuse.

TOUCH ME NOT

The film is part documentary, part feature film hybrid and an audacious and eye-opening exploration of intimacy.

I DO NOT CARE IF WE GO DOWN IN HISTORY AS BARBARIANS

The story of a nation reckoning with its troubled past and the role of art in helping to do that.

MIDNIGHT TRAVELER

An Afghan filmmaker fleeing his country records the harrowing journey on cell phones. Remarkable creative expression under the direst circumstances.

NON-FICTION

Everything you want in a French film: gorgeous Parisian apartments, rigorous philosophical debate, sophisticated adulterous intrigue, and Juliette Binoche.

SIBEL

While timeless in its setting, it's also fresh and feminist, with one of my favorite performances onscreen this year.

TEL AVIV ON FIRE

Sameh Zoabi's master class in wringing wry, insightful comedy out of political and historical tragedy.

JUSTINE BARDA
SENIOR PROGRAMMER



NICK BRUNO
PROGRAMMER

FOR SAMA

Perhaps the most personal and direct view into the Syrian conflict to date. Al-Khateab's video diary has, improbably, been formed into an essential viewing experience.

IN FABRIC

Peter Strickland's films envelop you, designed, as they are, within an inch of their life, logic be damned. *In Fabric* may be the pinnacle of his masterful technique.

KNIFE+HEART

Who would have thought that a perfectly realized tribute to the Italian giallo genre could also be a deeply affecting take on the chosen family trope?

THE NIGHTINGALE

Jennifer Kent follows up *The Babadook* with an even stronger film. Difficult, though it may be, this phoenix tale is impossible to ignore.

NON-FICTION

Color me impressed that a film about the publishing industry ended up being this entertaining. Somehow, it points to everything there is to say about life in the digital age.

CHEF'S DIARIES: SCOTLAND

Discover the culinary wonders of Scotland through the eyes of Spanish chefs. No, it's not just haggis.

FUNKE

You'll never want to eat store-bought pasta again.

LE CHOCOLATE DE H

Tsujiguchi Hironobu has won a number of awards at the Salon du Chocolat in Paris. Find out what he's working on next!

SHORTSFEST WEEKEND

Spend the weekend with us and enjoy a smorgasbord of short films from around the world.

STUFFED

A charming look inside the world of taxidermy.

JAMES DAVIS
CINEMA COORDINATOR



DAN DOODY
PROGRAMMER

FUNKE

Follows chef Evan Funke, a traditional pasta maestro, as he opens a new restaurant in the volatile Los Angeles culinary scene.

HERE COMES HELL

This delightfully fun midnighter mashes up *The Old Dark House* and *The Evil Dead*; it's a witty cocktail party of gore.

IDA LUPINO DOUBLE BILL

The Bigamist and *The Hitch-Hiker*, two indisputable classics brilliantly restored from Golden Age Hollywood's sole woman director.

METAL HEART

A completely charming coming-of-age film about fraternal twins—goth-metal Emma & sunny Chantal—home alone for their last summer together.

WHAT SHE SAID: THE ART OF PAULINE KAEI

The life and times of the still-controversial *New Yorker* film critic, who was alternately loved, feared, and despised.

ANTHROPOCENE: THE HUMAN EPOCH

A timely and visually arresting meditation on the current state of the earth from the team who brought you *Watermark* and *Manufactured Landscapes*.

A COLONY

This Quebecois gem, which won the Crystal Bear at the Berlin Film Festival is a fresh, beautifully rendered, and radically optimistic take on the coming-of-age genre.

THE FAREWELL

Come prepared to cry both sad and happy tears, contemplate the meaning of home, and to have your faith in humanity restored.

FIRECRACKERS

This vibrant, Andrea Arnold-esque, critique of small town patriarchy is also a testament to the fire and resilience of young women.

SHORTSFEST WEEKEND

Check out a bold and diverse sampling of the world's best short format cinema on memorial day weekend!

LAURA GOOD
PROGRAMMER



MARCUS GORMAN
PROGRAMMER

ALICE

This SXSW Grand Jury Prize winner is a clear-eyed look at survival sex work that never teeters into melodrama or finger-wagging.

BURNING CANE

An 18-year-old made this film about faith and family in the Louisiana cane fields. When I was 18 I could barely dress myself.

THE INNOCENT

This Swiss spiritual thriller about a neurologist's struggles with her Christian faith has been haunting me for months. Your turn!

THE NIGHTINGALE

Writer/director Jennifer Kent proves that *The Babadook* was no fluke. I did not mean for that to rhyme.

THEM THAT FOLLOW

Walton Goggins. Olivia Colman. Snake-handling cults. Appalachian Mountains setting. TEENAGE SECRETS! This wins American indie film bingo.

EL ÁNGEL

Super-stylish crime saga of a baby-faced thief-turned-killer in 1971 Buenos Aires; erotic, violent, and suspenseful.

I AM CUBA

New 4K restoration of this jaw-dropping 1964 masterpiece. Deliriously beautiful, with mind-bending gonzo tracking shots. Unforgettable!

MAIDEN

The first all-woman crew in an around-the-world sailing race, totally dismissed by the men, didn't let that stop them. Thrilling and inspiring.

PALACE FOR THE PEOPLE

A fascinating treat for architecture buffs: an insider's tour through five Soviet-era monumental buildings, no expense spared.

WHAT SHE SAID: THE ART OF PAULINE KAEI

Highly entertaining portrait of the most influential film critic of all time, and the films she loved and hated.

RUTH HAYLER
PROGRAMMER



DUSTIN KASPAR
PROGRAMMER

CITIES OF LAST THINGS

An engrossing Taiwanese drama presented in reverse chronology grabs with its opening futuristic segment and deepens with its subsequent chapters.

FIG TREE

This autobiographical coming-of-age drama features a dynamic lead performance and a unique Jewish perspective on the Ethiopian Civil War.

THE SWEET REQUIEM

A beautiful and heartbreaking portrait of the emotional cost for Tibetan refugees living outside of their homeland.

VAI

A spiritual companion to 2018's *Waru* beautifully presents eight shorts from many Pacific islands united by each lead woman's name.

WE ARE THE RADICAL MONARCHS

A pair of dynamic mothers create a leadership development organization for young women of color built around social justice activism.

THE FAREWELL

Awkwafina gives everything. Laughs, tears, and heartfelt moments with grandma.

GREENER GRASS

A twisted *Stepford Wives*-esque world of adult braces, underwear scarves, and bizarre parenting. Watch the short online for a taste.

KNIFE+HEART

Horror intersects with kink in this gender-bending giallo murder mystery set on a gay '70s French porn shoot.

SHORTSFEST WEEKEND

Check out everything during ShortsFest, but pay special attention to *WTF* and *Glitorus Maximus* programs for... extra surprises.

THEM THAT FOLLOW

Coming-of-age as the pastor's daughter in a snake-handling church can prove dangerous when the snake's bite is God's will.

MEGAN LEONARD PROGRAMMER



CLINTON MCCLUNG PROGRAMMER

FLY ROCKET FLY

The Fitzcarraldo of the space race, this adventurous documentary follows a German engineer's formation of a private space exploration company—in the Congolese jungle in the mid-'70s!

INTERNATIONAL FALLS

The always delightful Rachael Harris plays a Marge Gunderson-esque housewife who becomes a modern Mrs. Maisel with the help of a depressed comic (Rob Heubel).

THE LEGEND OF THE STARLIGHT BROTHERS

Rocky Horror meets *The Apple* meets *A Hard Day's Night* meets manga in this bonkers, recently rediscovered Japanese New Wave musical.

PIGEON KINGS

A real discovery of a film that shows a fascinating group of men in South Central L.A. who find a sense of purpose through their devotion to...somersaulting pigeons!

SHUT UP AND PLAY THE PIANO

From early collaborations with Peaches to concert hall respectability, the story of pianist Chilly Gonzales is the stuff that art-punk dreams are made of.

GREENER GRASS

Directed by Uprights Citizens Brigade veterans Jocelyn DeBoer and Dawn Luebbe, suburban life explodes on the screen in this satire.

THE INNOCENT

The Innocent follows a Swiss scientist who discovers the friction and intersections among science, religion, and magic.

KNIFE+HEART

Director Yann Gonzales is not making an homage to giallo—he is treating giallo as a contemporary filmmaking technique.

KOKO-DI KOKO-DA

This movie takes you on a demonic carnival ride into the existential darkness of your own soul.

HERE COMES HELL

A 1930s dinner party descends into entertaining hellfire in this British horror comedy.



TRACY RECTOR
PROGRAMMER

COLD CASE HAMMARSKJÖLD

A completely unHINGED documentary about a potential global conspiracy rooted in western-influenced Africa. It's a completely shocking WTF experience.

THE FAREWELL

First heard on "This American Life," this story of universal truths is brought to a new level of brilliance with Awkwafina in the lead.

ONE CHILD NATION

Revelatory stories of lost babies, stolen children, and ruined lives are shared throughout shrouded in a canopy of surreal Chinese propaganda song and dance.

SĠAAWAAY K'UUNA (EDGE OF THE KNIFE)

The first all Haida language film is groundbreaking cinema, which offers a rare powerful glimpse of Haida people on their own terms.

SHORTSFEST WEEKEND: DO THE WORK!

While I recommend all of ShortsFest, don't miss the Indigenous doc package *Do The Work!*, with brave bareback horse racers to the fancy footsteps of sweetheart dancers.

COLLEEN O'HOLLERAN
PROGRAMMER



SHORTSFEST WEEKEND: GLITORIS MAXIMUS

You definitely can't miss this powerful lady package.

GREENER GRASS

Brace yourself for this absurd, Barbie-esque late night comedy.

LYNCH: A HISTORY

I'm just writing this so I won't get fined.

PIGEON KINGS

Somersaulting pigeons!

WE ARE THE RADICAL MONARCHS

These Oakland-based young women on the front lines of social justice are a must see!



ANDY SPLETZER
PROGRAMMER

BARBARA RUBIN & THE EXPLODING NY UNDERGROUND

Captures the drug-fueled enthusiasm of the '60s through a portrait of the little-known experimental filmmaker who influenced people like Allen Ginsberg, Andy Warhol, and Bob Dylan.

EASTERN MEMORIES

An 100-year-old travelogue through Mongolia—made by a Finnish linguist, no less—is layered over modern footage of the same landscapes to fascinating results. My favorite discovery.

INVEST IN FAILURE

An experimental, found footage portrait of James Mason, based on 50 years of film roles, that becomes a critique of every brooding, romantic anti-hero in a Hollywood film. Makes you think.

LYNCH: A HISTORY

The movie jumps around, juxtaposing pop culture images with news clips of racist incidents with sports and mythology and the biography former Seahawk Marshawn Lynch. It's exhilarating.

STORM IN MY HEART

Cinematic essayist Mark Cousins examines the racist history of Hollywood musical conventions by showing the most famous musicals by Lena Horne and Susan Hayward side-by-side.

ASHLEY SOARES
PROGRAMMING COORDINATOR



ANOTHER DAY OF LIFE

In 1975, journalist Richard Kapuscinski arrives in Angola to cover that country's bloody civil war. What he witnesses changed him forever. 2019 Goya Award for Best Animated Film.

THE AWAKENING OF THE ANTS

A young mother finds herself at a breaking point and awakes to her own long-suppressed sexuality and the possibilities of a life lived on her own terms.

THIS IS NOT BERLIN

Shy, suburban teen finds a new world of expression within Mexico City's mid-'80s underground punk scene, giving him his first taste of freedom.

YOUR TURN

Vital documentary of the student-led social movements that have rocked Brazil in an unprecedented act of self-empowerment.

YULI

Legendary Cuban dancer Carlos Acosta looks back on a troubled, transcendent life—from a tough working-class upbringing to the pinnacle of his artistry.

HEBE TABACHNIK
SENIOR PROGRAMMER



HELENE DE LACOSTE
PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

ANOTHER DAY OF LIFE

The incredible destiny of a world famous reporter that covered 27 revolutions and has been kidnapped many times narrated in an unusual way.

FIG TREE

The untold story of Ethiopian Jews that had to escape from their country during the Ethiopian Civil War.

SAUVAGE/WILD

A harrowing journey into the daily life of a young male prostitute through his different encounters.

INVISIBLES

This feel-good movie gives visibility to those we usually forget by showing, with a sensible gaze, the reconstruction of several homeless women.

SIBEL

A captivating portrait of a young woman fighting for her freedom in a remote village of Turkey.

BURNING CANE

18-year-old filmmaker portrays the life of a mother in rural Louisiana dealing with multiple external and internal troubles.

MIRIAM LIES

An important watch sharing a young Afrolatina's personal conflict with race among a white Hispanic family and culture.

PACHAMAMA

A wholesome kid-friendly tale highlighting the beauty of adventure and Indigenous art through animation.

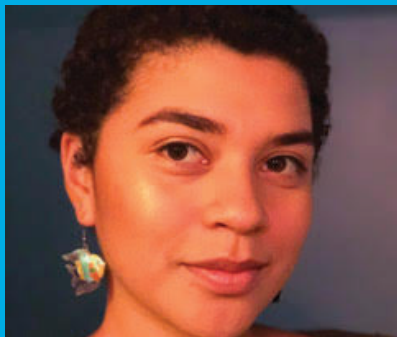
PREMATURE

A talented girl with a promising future must make a decision under the spell of her first true love.

SOCRATES

This Brazilian drama provides representation for the overlooked story of young teens' struggle with homelessness.

GABRIELLA SEGOVIA-BREAUX
PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT



ANDREW WALKER
PROGRAMMING ASSISTANT

HUMAN NATURE

Science is moving us into the future; how soon until we can control our genes?

KOKO-DI KOKO-DA

Through the depths of mourning, how many layers must we fight through to find the surface?

STUFFED

Taxidermy is simply keeping an animal as a trophy.... or can it be art?

WHO LET THE DOGS OUT

One song, one legend, but did anyone really know how deep the rabbit hole actually goes?

X&Y

Part art, part mad science, what would it feel like to interact with fractions of oneself?

MY PICKS

MY PICKS
