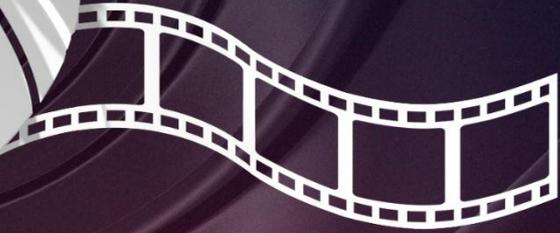


OXFORD



SHORTS

7

TH EDITION

2026 FESTIVAL OVERVIEW

THURSDAY 9 APRIL

41 19:15 Feature Corner: Dogspiracy + Filmmaker Q&A

FRIDAY 10 APRIL

04 09:20 Mental Wealth
 05 10:20 Let's Get Physical!
 06-07 11:00 Misconceptions
 12:15 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Morning Blocks
 08 13:50 Distortions and Dystopias
 09 14:45 Life Support
 10 16:00 Tensions
 17:00 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Afternoon Blocks
 11 19:00 Will They, Won't They?
 12 20:00 A Woman Wronged
 21:10 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Evening Blocks

SATURDAY 11 APRIL

13 09:25 Animal Crackers!
 14-15 10:00 Through the Eyes of a Child
 16 11:30 Underneath
 12:25 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Morning Blocks
 17 14:00 Acceptance
 18 15:10 Cure and Solutions
 19 16:15 Funny Thing
 16:40 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Afternoon Blocks

SUNDAY 12 APRIL

20 10:15 Communities and Cultures
 21 11:20 Snapshots
 12:25 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Morning Blocks
 22 13:50 Upcomers
 23 15:30 Local Snapshots
 16:10 Filmmaker Q&A Panel for Afternoon Blocks

ONLINE BLOCKS (14-18 APRIL)

24 Bring Them Back
 25-26 From A Dark Place
 27 Life Is Difficult
 28-29 Moments
 30 The Great Divide
 31-32 To Infinity and Beyond



FESTIVAL INFORMATION

33 About the Festival
 34-37 Festival Team, Award Judges and Nominees
 39-40 Block Content With Content Warnings
 42-43 Venue Map and Things To Do Information

Welcome to Oxford Shorts 2026

Welcome to our seventh edition, as you have probably spotted, we've been having fun with our theme this year! I'm a Bond fan. what can I say? After the success of last year, we decided to keep the Easter slot at the wonderful grounds of St John's College. What a wonder line-up we have for you this year!

There will be 90 short films played live over three very busy days. As tends to be the case, this edition has struck a different tone to the previous edition, the tone often reflecting what is going on in the world. Arguably this edition feels a little darker and more drama based than last year. This is not to say that we don't still have plenty of fun in the line up! Following on from audience feedback, we have created some guidance on the content (pages 38-40), just in case this might affect the choices of blocks you decide to watch. Of course, these might have spoilers, so we've put them in their own section away from the film descriptions. Once again it's great to see that we have an equal split between UK and International entries.

We continue to champion upcoming talent, over a third of our line-up comes from first time or student filmmakers. We also have a few established names lurking in the festival – see if you can spot them!

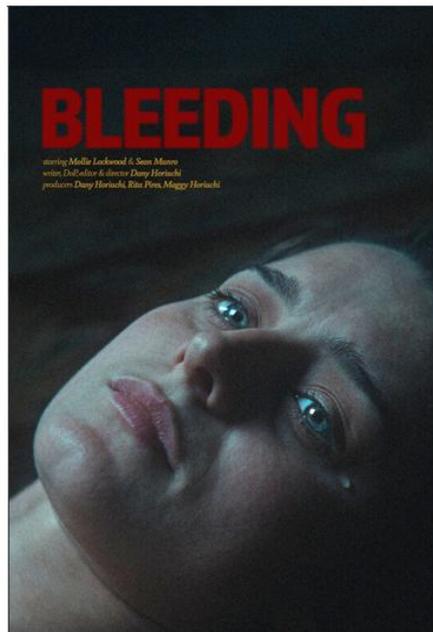
On top of the panels and short films playing Friday to Sunday, we also have some other amazing films to shout about! First off, on Thursday evening we have our Feature Corner which this year is a film called 'Dogspiracy' which will be followed by a Q&A with Dr Marc Abraham OBE. As if that wasn't enough, we also have six online blocks which showcase almost 40 more amazing films – so be sure to check these out (although note these are only available from 14-18 April!)

We really hope you enjoy the 2026 line up and we can't wait to hear what your favourite entries are.

Andrew Carslaw (Festival Director)



Bleeding



UK / 5mins / Dir: Dany Horiuchi

Mollie, a young woman in her twenties, is struggling with her mental health. She writes a diary entry, pouring out all the emotions she can't express aloud. Her words reveal the depth of her isolation and the hopelessness of feeling all this pain bleed out of her without anyone noticing.

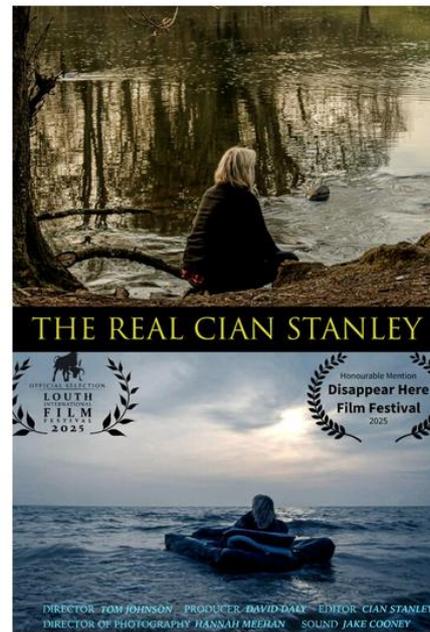
Rat Poison



NDL / 5mins / Dir: Mina Kaya

Rat Poison is a short movie inspired by personal life events. It's about being stuck after traumatic events and the subsequent events that follow. Not being able to understand the situation you are in, being stuck, having a fear of relapsing, and not being able to escape, but over time, healing.

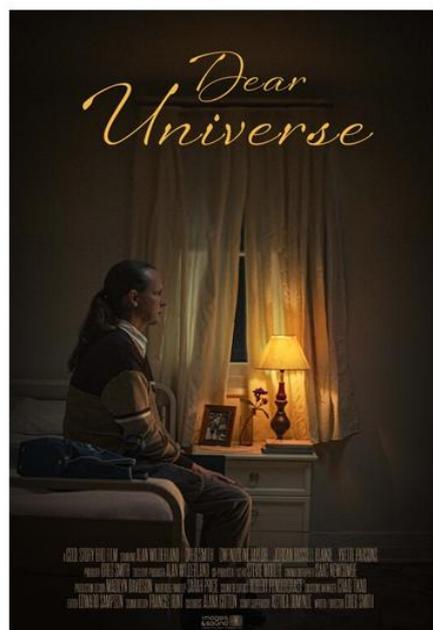
The Real Cian Stanley



IRE / 20mins / Dir: Tom Johnson

Beating the odds, Cian Stanley learns to play the drums not letting his diagnosis of dyspraxia stop him. Despite struggling with addiction and depression, Cian attempts to realise his dreams of being a content creator whilst not allowing other people's expectations define him.

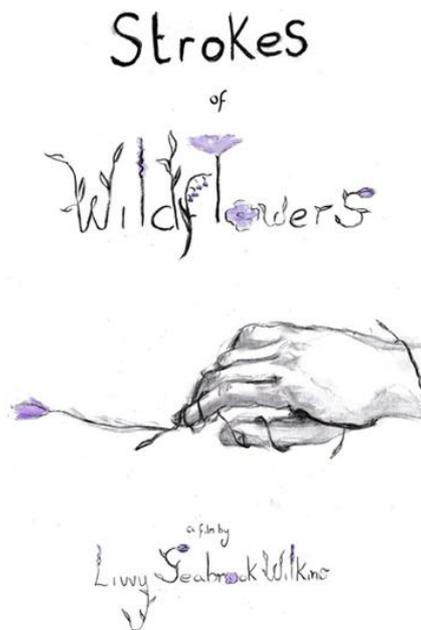
Dear Universe



NZL / 14mins / Dir: Greg Smith

Dear Universe is a story of resilience and hope, set against the backdrop of government funding for mental health community homes coming to an end in the late 1980s. House Manager Barry must find a way to prepare the residents in this gentle, charming, character-driven film.

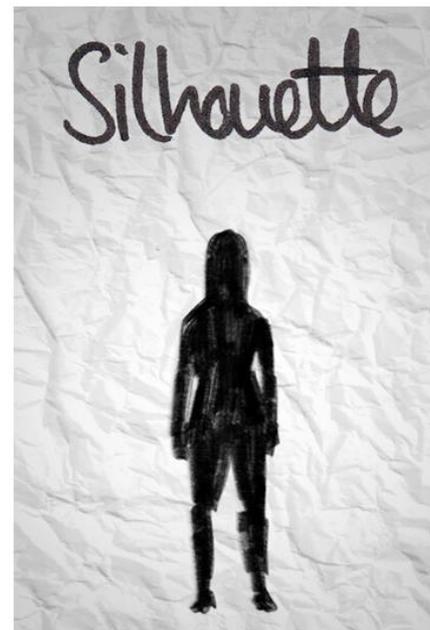
Strokes of Wildflowers



UK / 4mins / Dir: Livvy Seabrook-Wilkins

Stroke survivors share their stories about the mental and physical struggles they face and the importance of community within their recovery.

Silhouette



UK / 4mins / Dir: Sophya Kebets

'Silhouette' is an alt-pop song by Aphrah featuring an all-female team. The track plays alongside a lyric video which captures the song's journey from inner turmoil to growing self-confidence.

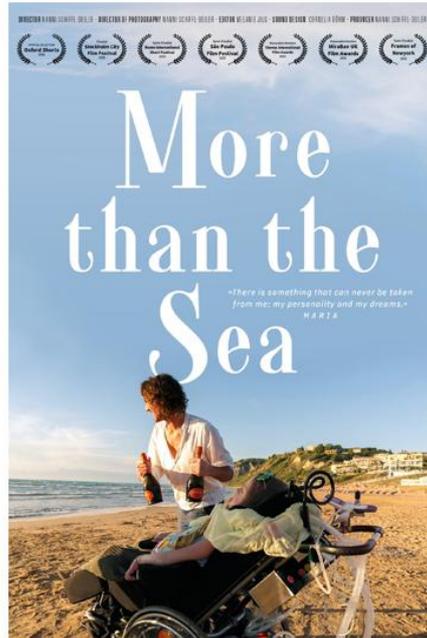
Empire Of Others



FRA / 8mins / Dir: Victor Boccard

Talia navigates a world that perceives her through the prism of her disability. In this autobiographical and intimate short film, she invites us into her daily life, between dreams and obstacles, challenging perceptions imposed by society.

More Than The Sea



DEU / 13mins / Dir: Nanni Schiffli-Deiler

Maria, 28 years old, has had neuronal muscular atrophy since birth. For years she has only been able to move her eyes, is ventilated and fed through a tube. The film shows that joy in life does not always depend on a healthy body. And what we can achieve.

The Long Run



UK / 11mins / Dir: Jim Fabio

Steve Edwards isn't just a runner. He's a living legend. On May 6, 2024, Steve became the first person in history to complete 1,000 marathons—faster than any other human on Earth. Behind this mind-blowing feat is a powerful story of discipline, setbacks, and recovery...

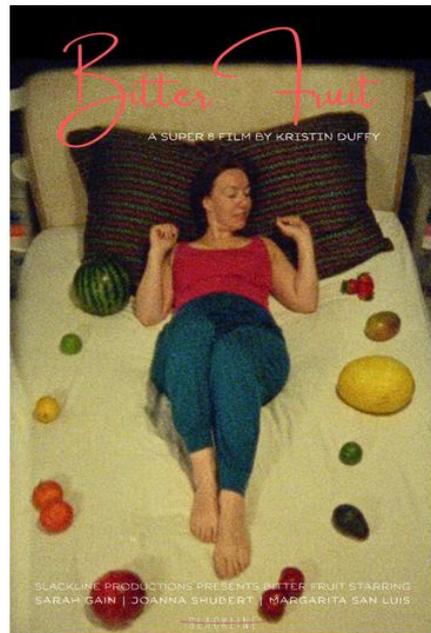
A Part Of Oneself



CAN / 15mins / Dir: Marie Carpentier

In Quebec, before the mid-1980s, abortion is permitted only if a therapeutic committee, composed of doctors, deems that the woman's life or health is at risk. Geneviève, who has just reached adulthood, is relieved when she is granted the right to have an abortion. But this decision will haunt her...

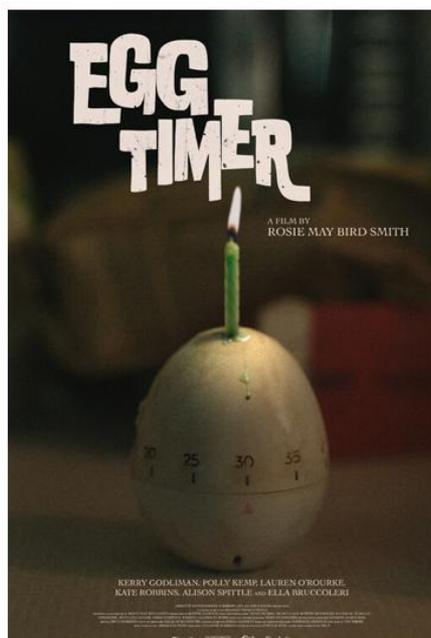
Bitter Fruit



UK / 3mins / Dir: Kristin Duffy

The older Clem gets, the more friends and family encourage her to try fruit. But when she finally decides to give fruit a go, her body won't cooperate, rejecting it again and again until she realises that not everyone can have fruit after all.

Egg Timer



UK / 13mins / Dir: Rosie May Bird Smith

As Megan faces her 30th birthday, the pressure to take the "next step" in life is overwhelming. But when her own opinionated ovarian eggs start chiming in on her every move, she finds herself navigating not just the expectations of family and friends, but also the brutally honest commentary from within.

Conception Game



UK / 8mins / Dir: Natalie Arle-Toyne

When single Missy (39), fresh from heartbreak and desperate to conceive, discovers a world of free sperm, she dives right in. But semen with no strings attached is scuppered when newbie Patrick (40) unwittingly breaks the rules of the game.

Two Heartbeats



USA / 14mins / Dir: Mariah Proctor

In 1953 and 2024, two expectant mothers navigate the timeless fears and fragile hopes of motherhood—within the confines of their very different worlds.

Two One Two



CAN / 4mins / Dir: Shira Avni

'Two One Two, by award-winning filmmaker Shira Avni, combines shimmering clay on glass animation with personal archives in this deeply intimate, experimental animated documentary love letter to motherhood, parenting on the spectrum, and two headed monsters everywhere.

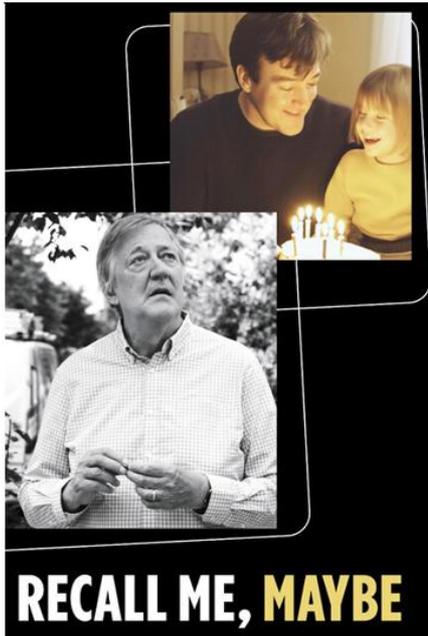
Essentially Painless



UK / 15mins / Dir: Sam Seccombe

When Ella makes an emergency visit to a sexual health clinic, her ludicrous experience leaves her questioning the value of her own voice. With the help her anarchic new co-worker Dom, Ella begins to find courage to advocate for herself.

Recall Me, Maybe



UK / 14mins /
Dir: David Baddiel, Juliet Riddell

Stephen Fry plays a grandfather with dementia who uses an AI tool to fill gaps in his memory. While reviewing the archive of his life his family makes a shocking discovery, throwing doubt on who he was as a father and what they choose to remember.

Mr Vertigo



UK / 21mins / Dir: Marios Hamboulides

Sam has a developing condition. He is losing his ability to feel. Vertigo is only one of the several symptoms. During a review of his ongoing diagnosis, he learns that in his new reality, pain is the price for the connection he craves. With his memory fragmenting, a mystery begins to unfold.

OK/NOTOK



UK / 13mins / Dir: Pardeep Sahota

OK/NOTOK is a genre bending love story set in the very near future with a darkly comic edge. Loretta, a working-class British Asian woman, attempts to navigate a turbulent world, a new stranger in her life and unskippable adverts.

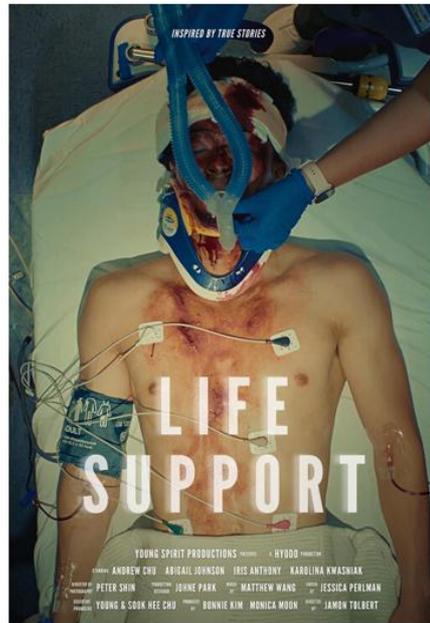
Far From the Plains



UK / 16mins / Dir: Luigi Sibona

As great storms loom and his mother fades into depression, 14-year-old Frankie finds refuge in a South London stable, but when the storm breaks, he must confront the reality of loss and find hope in unlikely places.

Life Support



USA / 10mins / Dir: Jamon Tolbert

Inspired by true stories, an emergency doctor struggling under the weight of life and death decisions must confront his own hidden traumas as he teaches a young medical student what it truly means to save a life.

Thin Line



DEU / 20mins / Dir: Alexander von Rappard

A courtroom battle and warm family memories collide after a tragic accident shatters the world of 8-year-old Maya's parents. While David clings to hope, unwilling to let go, Eva cannot bear to see her child suffer and takes matters into her own hands - raising difficult questions.

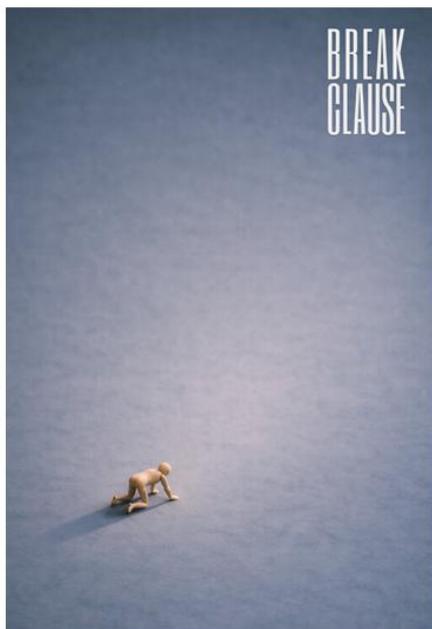
Safe



UK / 20mins / Dir: Govind Chandran

When a compassionate helpline counsellor begins to grow concerned for the safety of one of her clients, she's forced to decide whether to trust her instincts or follow protocol. Safe is a tense, quietly powerful drama about the weight of responsibility and the courage it takes to listen.

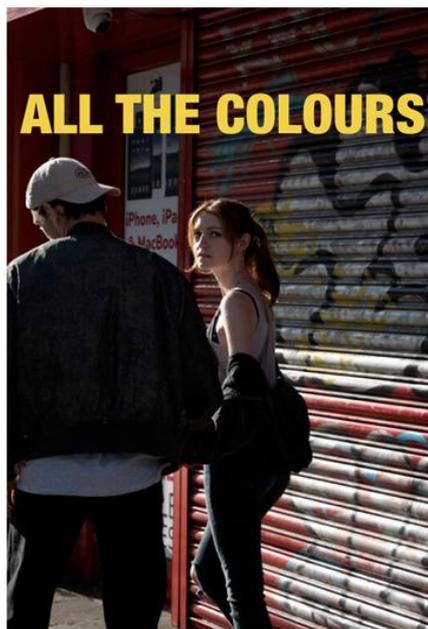
Break Clause



UK / 7mins / Dir: Laura Prendergast

House hunting in London has already pushed Barry and Alex to the edge, but when they meet an eccentric landlord at a viewing gone off the rails, they're forced to ask: is this madness or just the rental market?

All The Colours



UK / 21mins / Dir: Leo De Haan

When teenage Katie groomed to work for a local Brighton drug dealer is ordered to murder a rival she doesn't follow through and goes on the run finding sanctuary with her estranged ex-con father. When the gang track her down she is faced with a choice: let her father step up to face his demons, or to run and make a fresh start.

7 Times 7 Times 7



UK / 18mins / Dir: Anderson West

On a desolate bus stranded on a dark country road, three lives collide, revealing a shared tragedy that will force them to confront their past and the lingering pain it holds.

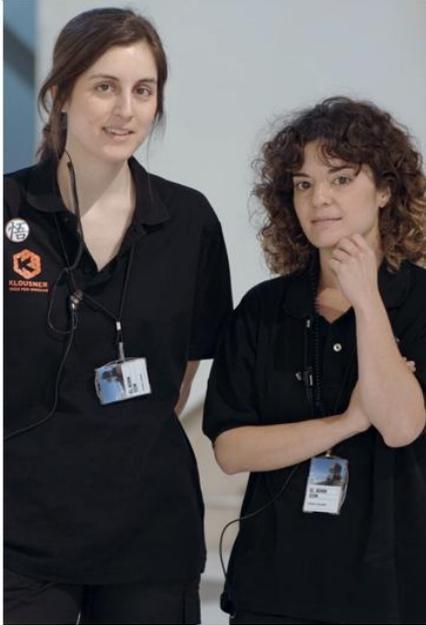
An Excess Baggage



FRA / 16mins / Dir: Myriam Garcia Marienstras

Sophie hides her unease within the intense bond she shares with her daughter, Lila. When Sophie finds herself alone for the first time, overwhelmed by separation and emotional dependency. As the day unfolds, she drifts through encounters and small gestures, trying awkwardly to fill the void.

Collage



ESP / 10mins / Dir: Marius Conrotto

A girl who works in a museum tries to convince another co-worker that two visitors are flirting. And how does she know? Scientific studies say that there are six signs that show one person's attraction to another.

Strolling Down Brighton Pier



UK / 5mins / Dir: Kenny McCracken

A young Edwardian gentleman, working as a photographer, falls madly in love with a captivating woman as she takes her daily stroll down Brighton Pier.

Alma



UK / 15mins / Dir: Lea Neumayer

Alma lives alone in her quaint cottage. When she starts to unexpectedly develop feelings for the shopkeeper Joan, Alma is confronted with mixed feelings about moving on from her late wife; contemplating going against a promise she made to herself to live the rest of her years alone.

Reliefs



MEX / 18mins /

Dir: Juan Manuel Gonzalez Fernandez

Carlos is approaching midlife trapped in a personal crisis that has lingered too long. Rosa, his mother, suffers from disabling pain that is only mitigated by the warm waters of hydrotherapy. One night, she offers to make the ultimate sacrifice so that they can both transit to a better place.

12,000 To 1



USA / 5mins / Dir: John Meyers

At the end of her shift, a faulty light switch at a bowling alley forces its overnight custodian to change her perception of what her future might hold.

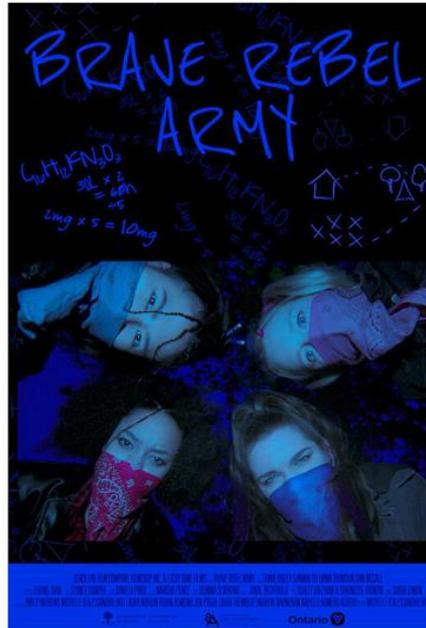
Wings



UK / 12mins / Dir: Fiori Miari

Wings is a story of two estranged friends forced to confront their past, when one unexpectedly re-enters the other's life seeking a dangerous favour that could either mend their fractured bond or tear them apart forever.

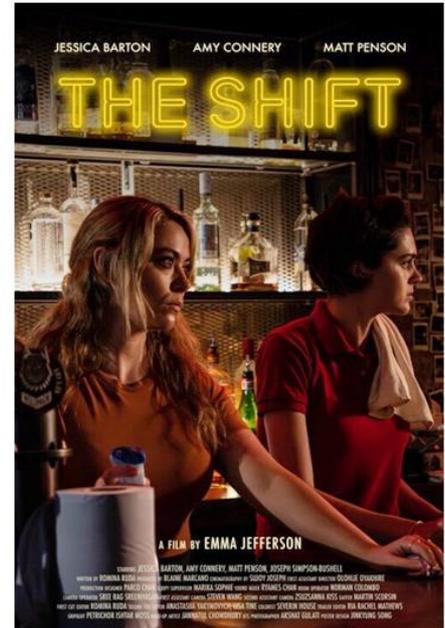
Brave Rebel Army



CAN / 8mins / Dir: Michelle D'Alessandro Hatt

After a terrifying incident on campus involving one of their own, four young women seek justice by taking matters into their own hands.

The Shift



UK / 11mins / Dir: Emma Jefferson

Leila and Claudia, are friendly and fun young managers at a London Pub. One night, a creepy client goes too far causing the girls to retaliate. Now a handsome detective is on the case, and as he searches for clues, finds love instead. Will he uncover what the girls are hiding?

Gilda



UK / 10mins / Dir: Matty Ride-Smith

A real-time short psychological horror following a struggling actor as she tries to survive running an afterschool club while being tormented by an occult presence.

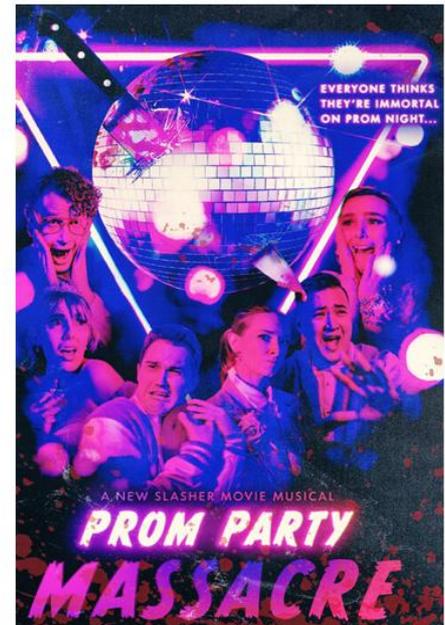
Keep Young and Beautiful



UK / 9mins / Dir: Neil Marshall

A dark comedy about the Pressure to stay "Young and Beautiful". The film uses a heightened comedy style, an increasingly comic surreal world to satirise the problems within the beauty industry. Directed by Neil Marshall (Dog Soldiers, The Descent).

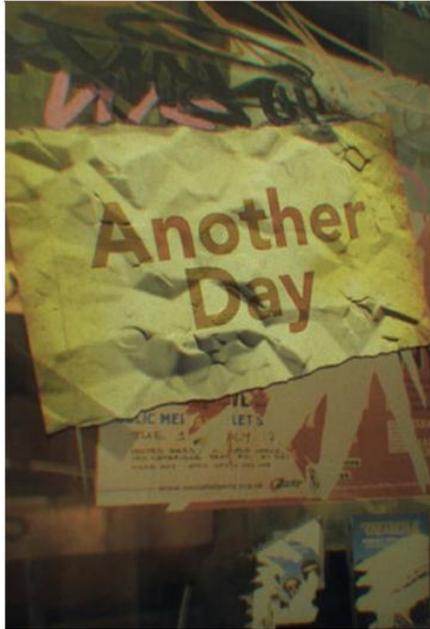
Prom Party Massacre



USA / 18mins / Dir: Jordan Gustafson

In a genre-bending musical full of teenage rebels, poodle skirts, and betrayal, a young gay man tries to woo his crush with a swinging prom party - but when popular kids start turning up dead, the partygoers discover a slasher killer amongst the student body!

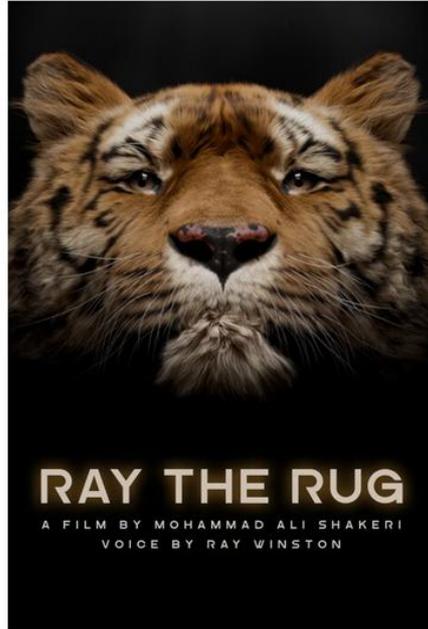
Another Day



UK / 7mins / Dir: Andrew Whitney

Tucked away in the modern city are lonely lives, marked out by dreary habits and routines, propped up by hopes, dreams and fantasies. The film explores the transformative nature of creativity through the eyes of a disabled man living at the edges of a world which threatens to entirely pass him by.

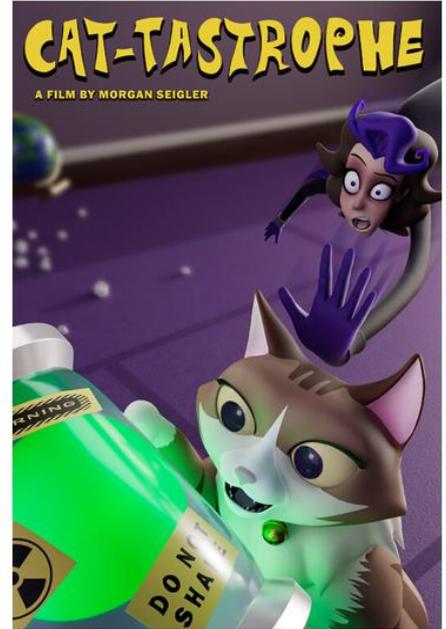
Ray The Rug



UK / 6mins / Dir: Mohammad Ali Shakeri

Ray shares his tragic past. The film's simple, innovative visuals and direct messaging cut through the noise, resonating with audiences. This campaign showcases the power of creativity to inspire action and highlights urgent need to save one of the world's most iconic species.

Cat-Tastrophe



USA / 3mins / Dir: Morgan Seigler

A cat, through its catastrophic antics, inspires a villainous inventor to devise her most evil plan yet. 3D animated slapstick comedy.

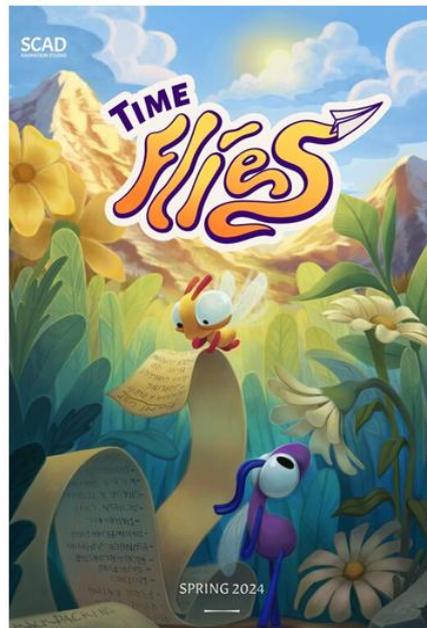
Bugster & Wingster



SRB / 1mins / Dir: David Miroslav Dereta

In imaginary world, two circus insects (Bugster (a roll bug) and Wingster (a butterfly)) are performing in circus. Being overshadowed by Wingster's star-dome, Bugster pulls a mischief, which ends hilariously.

Time Flies



USA / 16mins / Dir: LJ Burnett

In this fast-paced comedy adventure, two flies with opposite personalities struggle to make the most of a 24-hour lifespan.

Cell Buddies



NDL / 5mins / Dir: Melle Windig, Hidde Alberts, Miguel Reyes, Jurgen de Smit, Arjen van der Plas

Sam, a grumpy raccoon is stuck sharing a cell with Bob, a sweet but dim manatee. In their chaotic jailbreak Sam's hardened edges soften as Bob's loyalty shines. Will they escape?

Bluff



UK / 10mins / Dir: Naomi Wright

Under pressure from her older sister not to ruin a much longed-for seaside holiday, a young visually-impaired girl hides the fact that her sight is rapidly deteriorating – a lie that may alter her and her family's life forever.

Crane



USA / 8mins / Dir: Aiden Keltner

A young girl gets the opportunity to visit her father, who is in a psychiatric hospital for a serious mental illness. Crane is based on the director's own experience growing up with a parent with a serious mental illness.

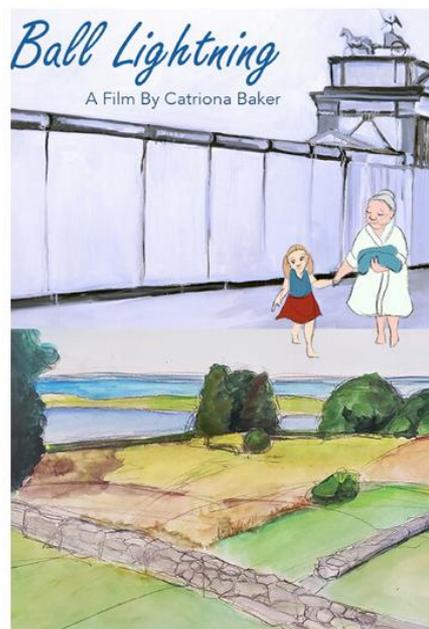
Ivanko's Childhood



UK / 15mins / Dir: Vera Graziadei

Eight-year-old Ivanko, a Ukrainian refugee, makes his solitary way through the English countryside with a determined purpose. His journey ultimately leads to a deeply moving revelation about family, loss, and the lengths a child will go to protect those he loves.

Ball Lightning



USA / 12mins / Dir: Catriona Trina Baker

The story follows Gusta, a refugee who fled East Germany after the end of WWII and immigrated to the United States in the 1960s. The story is told through the eyes of the surrogate daughter that she raised after she was forced to give away her own infant daughter as the iron curtain rose.

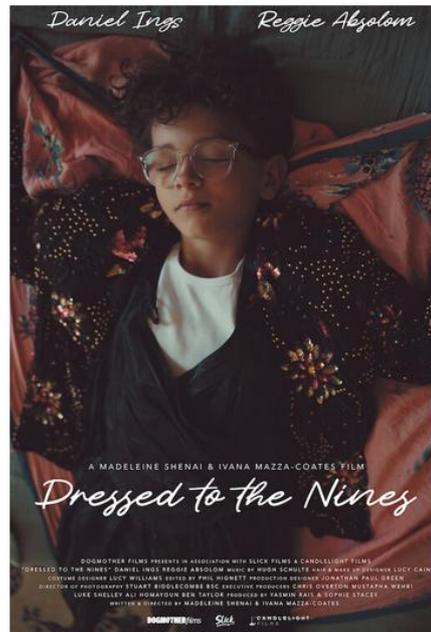
Alice



USA / 1min / Dir: Liz Van Verth

Alice enjoys taking baths but ends up taking an unexpected trip instead. Where will Alice end up next?

Dressed To The Nines



UK / 6mins / Dir: Madeleine Shenai, Ivana Mazza-Coates

Luke goes on a journey of self-discovery in his mum's bedroom. Playfully exploring various things he finds, he loses himself to the connection. Ron, his unsuspecting dad catches him and tensions in the house reach boiling point.

In-Out



LBN / 15mins / Dir: Yara Sharyan

12 year old Sama and 10 years old Yasmine arrive to at their grandmother's house after their parents' sudden divorce. The sisters struggle to adapt to their new living situation and cope with the emotional fallout together.

In The Clouds



UK / 13mins / Dir: Alexandra Bahiyiyh Wain

Sara, a six-year-old Iranian refugee, sneaks out with her sister to explore their new London estate, but strange encounters blur the line between reality and imagination in a world shaped by loss.

Fractured Frame



UK / 5mins /
Dir: Natalie Lauren, Simon London

A woman's psyche is haunted and fractured by the relentless demands of the predatory industry she sought to break into.

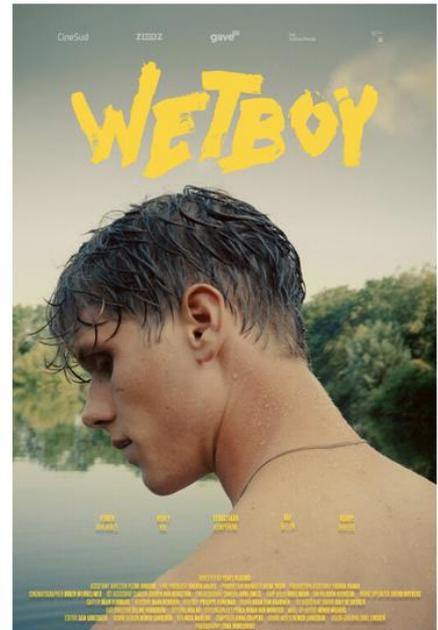
The Beneath



NDL / 7mins / Dir: Lisette Vlassak

Haunted by pressure and self-doubt, young model Lone retreats to her garden, her only refuge from a world that consumes her. But when a mysterious underground creature begins destroying her sanctuary, Lone's battle to save it forces her to confront something far darker: herself.

Wetboy



NDL / 10mins / Dir: Yentl Vlachos

The start of summer vacation envelops a group of friends navigating southern Limburg. 20-year-old Sef and his close friends decide to spend the day at a secluded spot along the local river. As the boys change into their swimwear, Sef feels confused and uncertain.

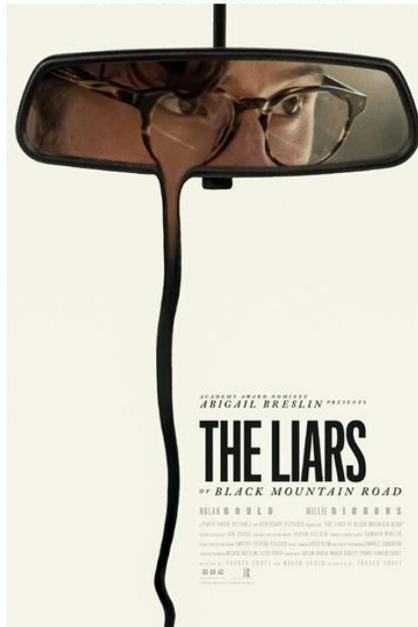
The Bottom Line



UK / 2mins / Dir: Ben Mallaby

Theo James plays a diner at a smart restaurant who orders a seemingly sustainable fish course. Stephen Fry plays a comedic, shadowy waiter, delivering the harsh reality of the seafood industry. The film was made in collaboration with Blue Marine Foundation.

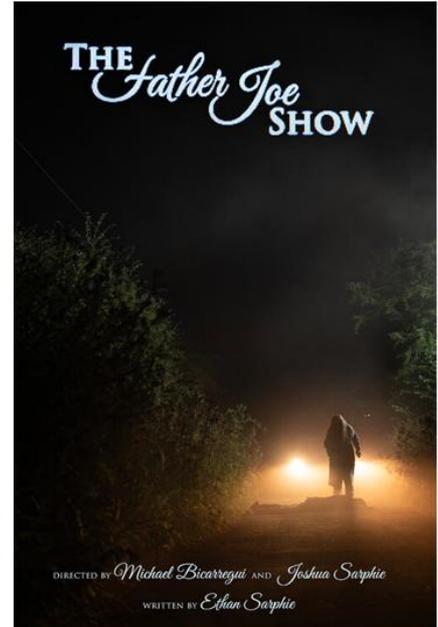
The Liars of Black Mountain Road



USA / 12mins / Dir: Parker Croft

When a couple runs over a stranger's dog, they compete for the moral high ground at any cost.

The Father Joe Show



UK / 15mins /
Dir: Michael Bicarregui, Joshua Sarphe

A middle-aged woman in rural England spends more and more time glued to the seductive sermons of her favourite televangelist. But one night in a moment of crisis, Father Joe's influence starts to cloud Denise's judgement...

Hold



USA / 14mins / Dir: Josiah Junqueira Spencer

An early morning phone call propels a mother and daughter on a path toward connection and the mysteries held in the act of letting go.

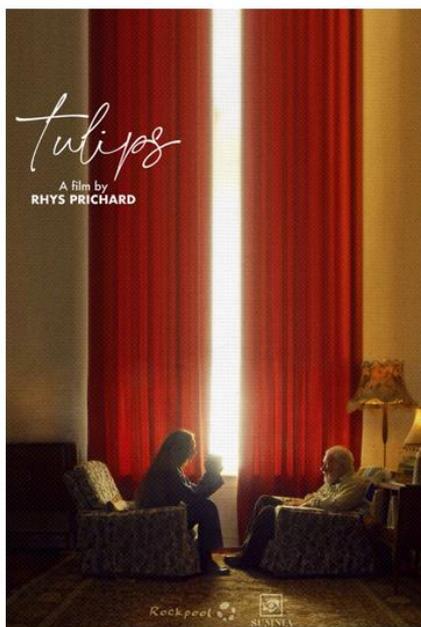
Clutter



UK / 14mins / Dir: James Card

Jean has a no nonsense attitude to both her cleaning job and her affluent clientele. But faced with the aftermath of a grieving drag queen's night of hedonism, she is forced to confront the pain of her own loss, and deep rooted prejudice.

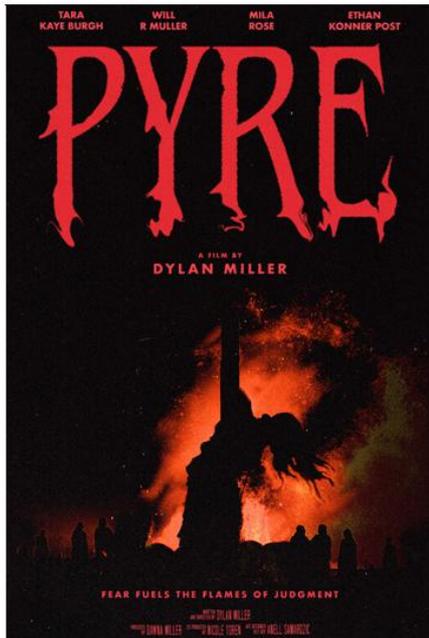
Tulips



UK / 16mins / Dir: Rhys Prichard

Student filmmaker Sophie accompanies her parents to document her grandfather's last day in his home before being relocated due to dementia. As she films, she becomes confronted by the ethics of creating work that is too close to home. together.

Pyre



USA / 19mins / Dir: Dylan Miller

In a remote 17th-century village, a widowed mother accused of witchcraft is interrogated by a charming but ruthless inquisitor, forcing an impossible choice to save her daughter.

The Lace



UK / 15mins / Dir: Nicole Sarah Fry

In Victorian England, Julia runs an apothecary shop that sells deadly poison to women in need of escape from their domineering husbands. Mrs Theodora Finchley, unknowingly to Julia, will be her most significant client yet, possessing the potential to unravel her meticulously laid schemes.

The Pearl Comb



UK / 20mins / Dir: Ali Cook

In 1893, a fisherman's wife becomes the first person to cure someone of tuberculosis. A doctor, intent on proving a woman's place is in the home and not practising medicine, investigates - only to discover the source of her unearthly power.

A Wonderful Neighbour



UK / 1mins / Dir: Alun Rhys Morgan

Mrs Thomas, a widowed lady who adores the tranquility of her garden, is disrupted by the noisy boy next door. One day, her faith is restored.

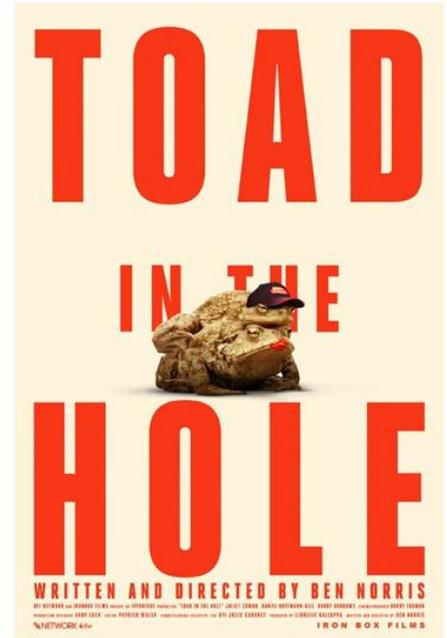
The Thieving Magpie



FRA / 14mins / Dir: Chloé Luizard

Nicolas is fighting an ongoing battle at the Gigamarché ; to spare the world of the uncatchable "Thieving Magpie", who persists in their rampage and mocks him with each of their crimes. Fortunately, Nicolas' team is there to support him.

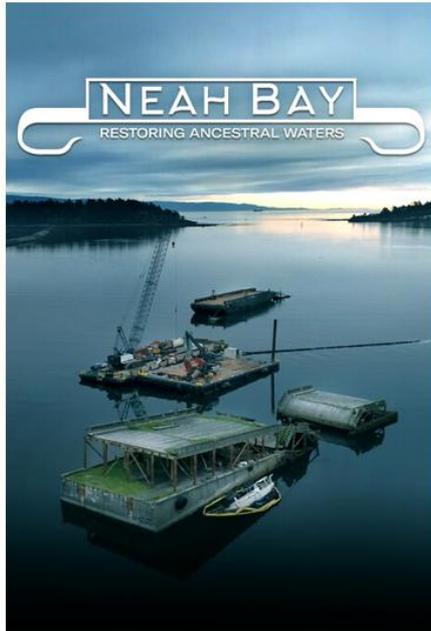
Toad In The Hole



UK / 10mins / Dir: Ben Norris

Stuck in a stagnant moment of her marriage, Kay (Juliet Cowan) orchestrates an evening away from family responsibilities to pursue a surprising liaison...

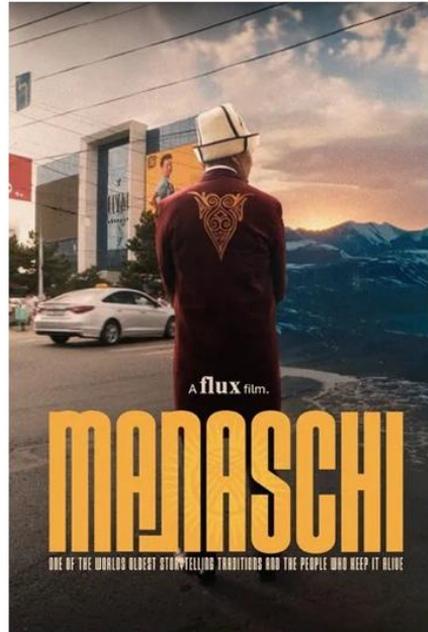
Neah Bay: Restoring Ancestral Waters



USA / 14mins / Dir: Nancy Donnelly

For thousands of years Makah Tribal fishermen hunted for traditional foods in the waters of Washington's Neah Bay. But today thousands of tonnes of marine debris literally loom over the Makah Tribe's ancestral waters, threatening to choke the waters that sustained these families for generations.

Manaschi



UK / 13mins / Dir: Peter Davies

In the mountains of Kyrgyzstan, one of the world's oldest oral storytelling traditions endures - the Epic of Manas. We follow Omurbek - a respected Manaschi - as he grapples with the changes faced with this ancient tradition.

Tschäggättä



SWI / 12mins / Dir: Raphael Stäger

Every winter in the Lötschental she wreaks her mischief: the Tschäggättä. In a world that grows faster, louder and more exposed, it embodies something that refuses to adapt, even though it ultimately must.

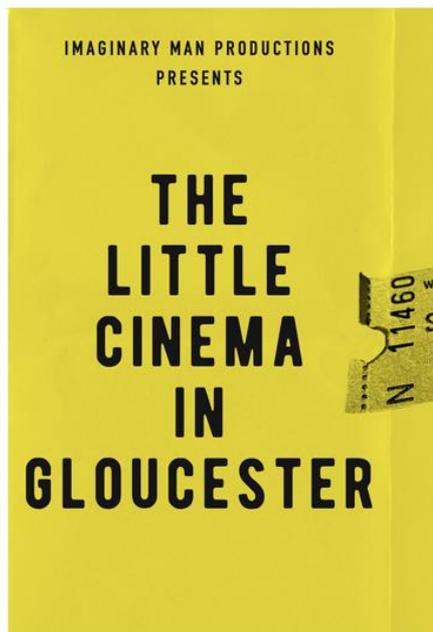
Tea Travel



FRA / 18mins / Dir: Julien Jean-Zayatz

Through travel, sensory experiences, memories, literature and encounters, we follow a man's transformative journey seeking light and a deeper purpose in life.

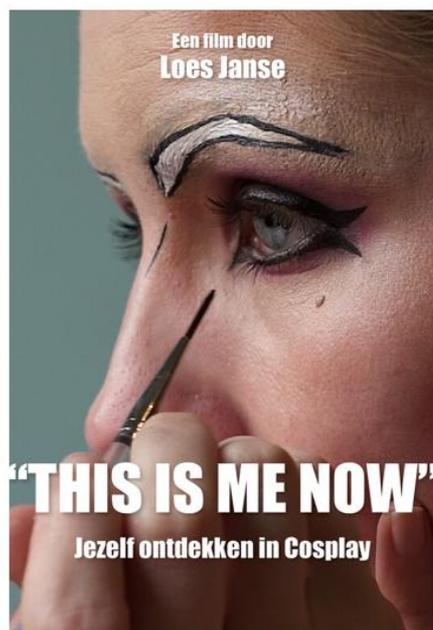
The Little Cinema in Gloucester



UK / 18mins / Dir: Samuel Pope

"The Little Cinema in Gloucester" chronicles two transformative days in the summer of 2023 when audiences flocked to the cinema for "Barbenheimer". This cherished single-screen community venue embodies the struggles facing independent cinemas across the UK, grappling with changing audience habits.

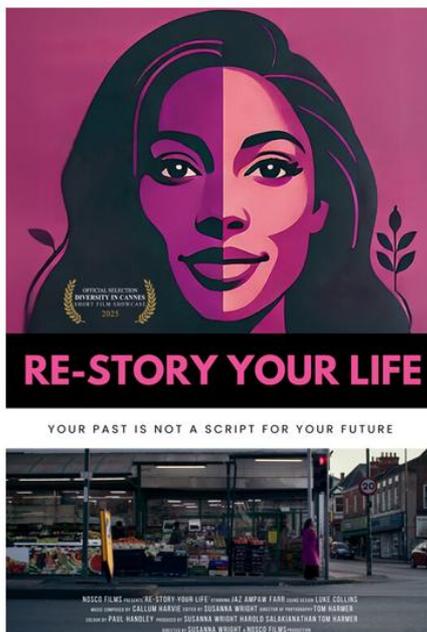
This Is Me Now



NDL / 12mins / Dir: Loes Janse

A portrait of Alexandra, her love of cosplay and her life with Asperger-syndrome.

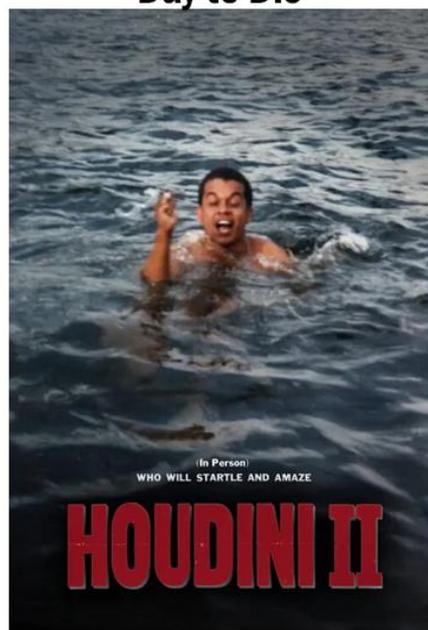
Re-Story Your Life



UK / 9mins / Dir: Susanna Wright

Re-Story Your Life is a deeply personal documentary about surviving trauma and neglect, and confronting the quiet mechanics of systemic racism. Told through lived experience, the film explores what happens when the stories written about us become the ones we live by, and what it takes to reclaim authorship.

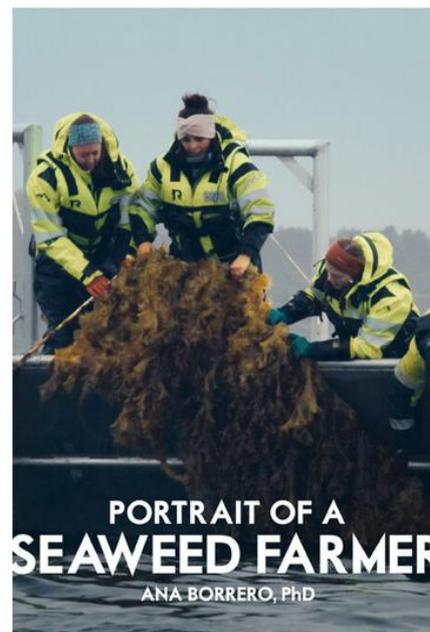
Houdini II: A Beautiful Day to Die



UK/USA / 17mins / Dir: Daniel McKee

Reframing the Houdini myth, an African American magician and escape artist claims the name of Harry Houdini and builds a legacy of his own. This intimate first-person account documentary unfolds through three key escapes, including to a defiant leap of faith off a Miami bridge in 1987.

Portrait of a Seaweed Farmer



USA / 10mins / Dir: Jeff Siebert

Ana Borrero, PhD, leaves behind a high-stress academic career to cultivate something far more sustainable—seaweed and a life in balance. Ana channels her scientific expertise into growing an industry poised to combat climate change through regenerative farming.

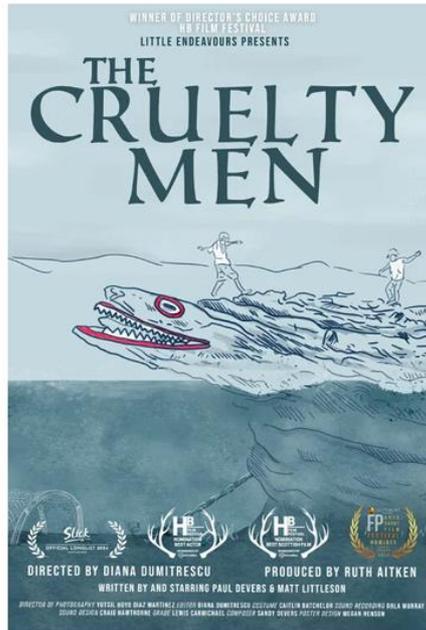
Seed



UK / 16mins /
Dir: Sara L. Roberts, Suzy Shepherd

Fiona has been struggling to get pregnant. Because she has become obsessed with wanting a baby, she now suffers from insomnia and her grip on reality begins to elude her. As it turns out, however, there is something growing inside her...

The Cruelty Men



UK / 15mins / Dir: Diana Dumitrescu

Euan hasn't heard from his cousin Rory in six years. They reunite on an island off the Ayrshire coast where they spent their summer holidays as children. While Rory wants to drag Euan on a tour of their youth, Euan does not share the same appetite for sentimentality and can't help but feel that something strange is happening in Millport.

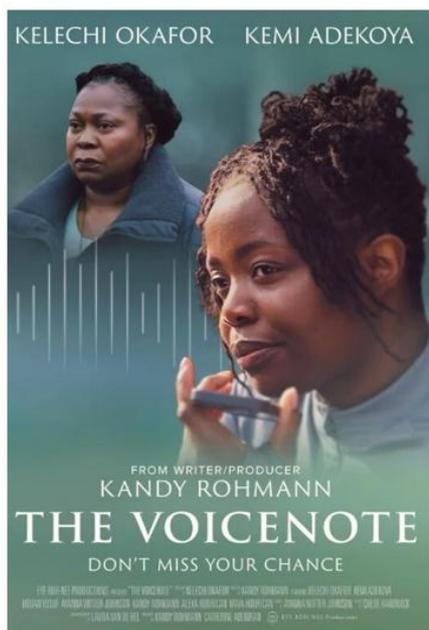
Battered



UK / 11mins / Dir: Michael Inglis

After a devastating loss in the cage, Jack struggles with getting where he wants to be in his career. He realises he sacrificed his health and relationship for fights he does not care to win, and he begins to question if his dreams are worth the sacrifices he has made.

The Voicenote



UK / 11mins / Dir: Kelechi Okafor

A woman sends a voicenote to a friend she has been meaning to reach out to. As we follow the journey of the message, we see her friend descending into crisis. We can only hope that she gets the message before it's too late, be it this world or the next.

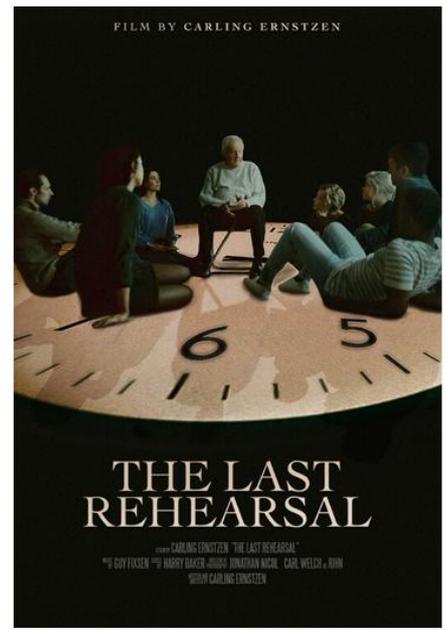
Decode Me



MLT/UK / 14mins / Dir: Sharon Sibyl Gatt

Jane is a 30-year-old programmer stuck in a long coding session, isolated in her bedroom and lost in her thoughts. When her close friend Elizabeth starts asking questions, Jane brushes them off at first, not realizing Elizabeth is trying to understand what's really going on.

The Last Rehearsal



UK / 19mins / Dir: Carling Ernstzen

Inspired by true events. Faced with terminal cancer, a beloved acting teacher rallies his favourite students one last time to stage his final play.

Walking with Dadima's Community



UK / 9mins / Dir: Nicola Schafer

An ethnically diverse, intergenerational walking group meets up to explore the wisdom, the science and the healing of Mother Nature.

Príncipe Past & Present



UK / 25mins / Dir: Sophie Carlarne

This documentary offers a rare window into life on Príncipe, a remote island in the Gulf of Guinea, off the west coast of Africa. Through direct interviews, local residents share their knowledge of environmental stewardship, traditional resource use, and the growing challenges of climate change.

Barry Pryke: The MG Man



UK / 3mins / Dir: Zakariya al-Bashar

Barry Pryke: The MG Man is a short documentary that tells the story of a man whose life has been deeply connected to MG cars. Barry Pryke's love for MGs began in his youth, working on his brother's car and dreaming of the day he'd have one of his own.

Qu LeiLei



UK / 9mins / Dir: Arthur Galley

Qu LeiLei a founding member of China's first contemporary art movement, reflects on his childhood, creative journey, and his ongoing project Silence and Screaming, where carved wooden figures fall to forces beyond their control.

Shape Of Stone



UK / 2min / Dir: Danny MacGregor

As time weathers all, Alex humbly re-shapes the features of our historical buildings, restoring them to their former glory, one stone at a time. This is a portrait of Alex as he reworks some of the finest gargoyles and stone carved features of Oxford historic buildings.

The Rescue Tender



UK / 1min / Dir: Laura Jones, Danny MacGregor

A day of fire station training with Kidlington's Specialist Rescue Tender.

Change Is Brewing



**UK / 5min / Dir: Laura Jones
Edit Producer: Katie Kinnaird**

We spend billions maintaining an outdated prison system - why not invest in something that actually works? Tap Social might have the answer.

One More Day



UK / 12mins / Dir: Toby Griffin

With the gift of time travel, Ed can live his perfect life. However, when his grandad dies, Ed discovers his gift is a curse.

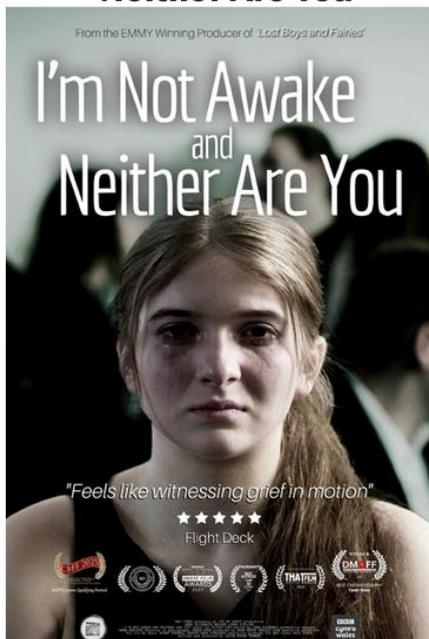
Machine Of Quiet Killing



UK / 10mins / Dir: Raphael Allason

Two brothers continuously subject themselves to 'The Machine', a mechanism they believe will let them see their deceased father again.

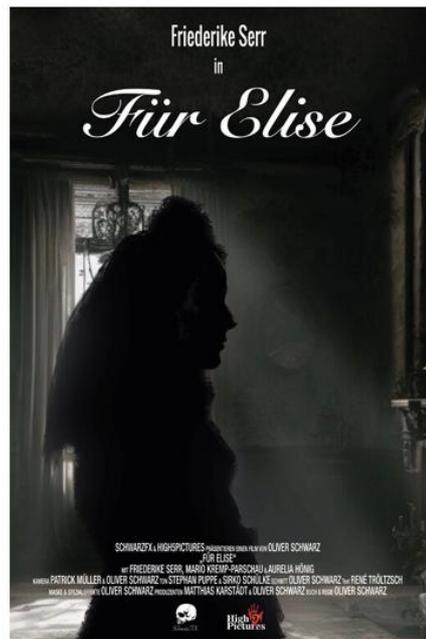
I'm Not Awake and Neither Are You



UK / 11mins / Dir: Jacob Ethan Tanner

After tragically losing her boyfriend, Laura's struggles with grief become unbearable. But when she's offered a pill that lets her see him again, Laura becomes obsessed; as her life, and addiction, quickly start spiralling out of control...

For Elise



DEU / 16mins / Dir: Oliver Schwarz

Amid the chaos of war, a young woman loses everything she has ever held dear. Left alone with her grief, she seeks release in death – but even in the afterlife, she finds no peace.

Silenced



IRN / 13mins / Dir: Zeynab Mousavi, Houri Shafieioun

Silenced is a short film that confronts the systemic abuse and exploitation of women within academic institutions. Through raw storytelling and emotional depth, the film exposes how fear, shame, and societal pressure force victims into silence.

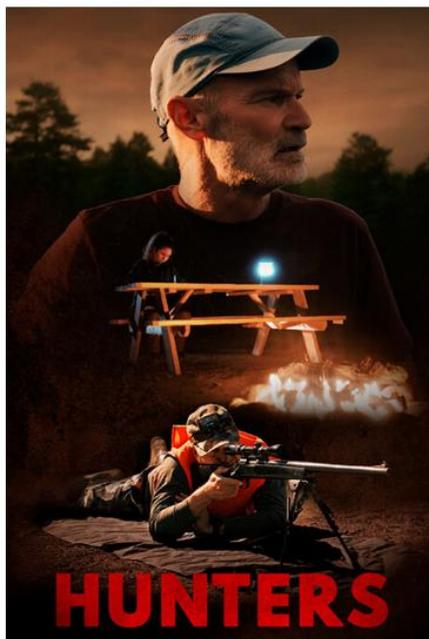
Voyeur



IRN / 6ins / Dir: Maryam Hashempour

A girl enters a coffee shop while waiting for her friend. An unknown number sends her a photo of her, taken just before she enters the coffee shop. The unknown person sends the photo several times until...

Hunters



USA / 14mins / Dir: Derek Bauder

In the remote New Mexico wilderness, a hunting retreat becomes a dangerous intersection for a wealthy client seeking trophies and two troubled employees with deadly secrets.

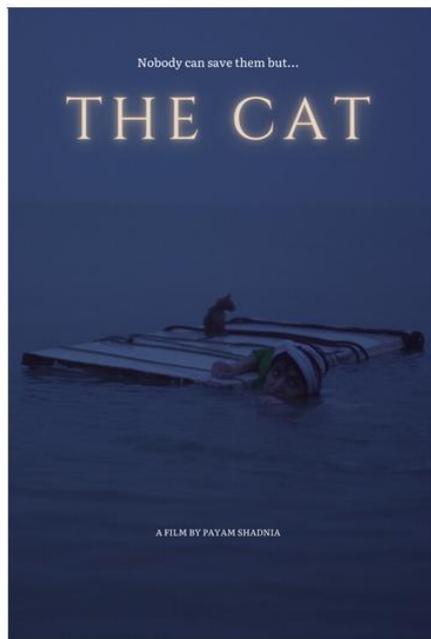
Avarice



CAN / 11mins / Dir: J.V. Hernández

After a by-the-book robbery goes south, Thiago, an overambitious and scheming gangster decides to overthrow the gang's leader by framing one of his brothers in crime, to claim the gang's riches and territory for himself.

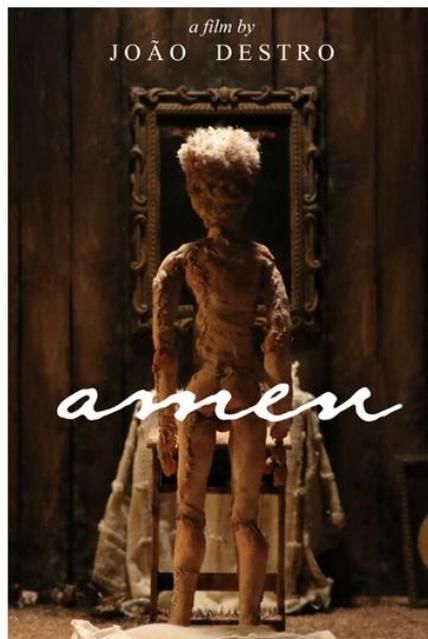
The Cat



IRN / 12mins / Dir: Payam Shadnia

It should be noted that the sitting cat symbolizes Iran's geographical map, which holds significant importance for Iranians. The short film "The Cat" follows the story of people forced to leave Iran due to economic and political challenges.

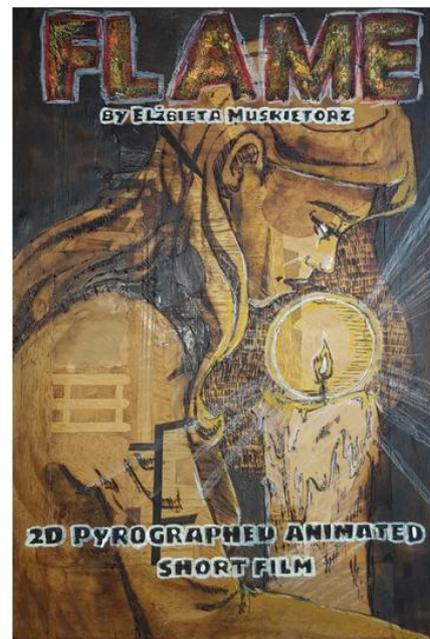
Amen



UK / 7mins / Dir: Joao Pedro Santos Destro

A deep and introspective analysis of the filmmaker's relationship to the Catholic God they grew up worshipping. Guilt, shame, and repressed desires are the themes explored, specifically in relation to being gay and dealing with the internal conflicts that this caused.

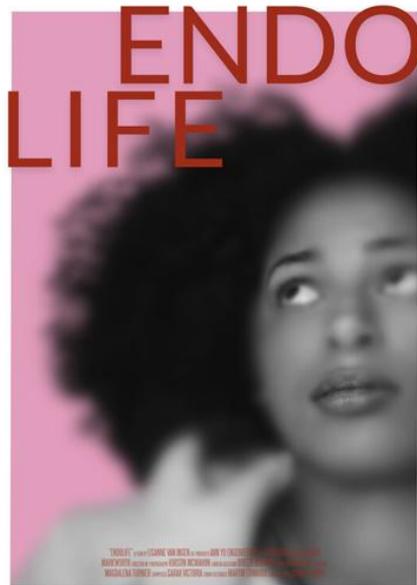
Flame



POL/UK / 2mins / Dir: Elzbieta Muskietorz

A retelling of a classic polish lullaby changed to reflect the issues of societal pressure on women and their stagnation in toxic relationships. The animation is done with original experimental technique developed by the creator of the short, using pyrography to present the story with each frame burned into the wood.

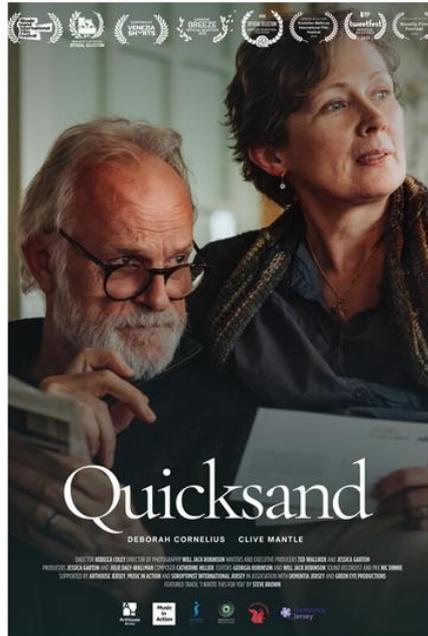
Endolife



UK / 12mins / Dir: Lisanne Van Ingen

Endolife is a hybrid documentary combining the experiences of over 120 people with endometriosis into a single, scripted narrative. Instead of focusing on the medical aspects of the disease, the film illustrates how it affects daily life.

Quicksand



JER / 11mins / Dir: Rebecca Coley

Cecilia embarks on a challenging new chapter, balancing the roles of both partner and carer for her husband, Albert, who is living with young-onset Alzheimer's disease. Starring Deborah Cornelius (Mr Selfridge) and Clive Mantle (Game of Thrones).

Heavy Weight



KOR / 14mins / Dir: Sea-Hoon Jeon

SeeWoo was playing with his little sister, SeoYeon, at home when a water balloon accidentally fell out the window, resulting in the death of the child living upstairs. The only ones who know the truth are SeeWoo and his mother. SeeWoo hesitates out of fear, but his mother strongly opposes his desire to confess.

Crit



UK / 14mins / Dir: Isabel Lea

A disillusioned student questions the value of her art education, while she struggles to find the meaning and motivation in making.

Place Under The Sun



MOL / 20mins / Dir: Vlad Bolgarin

A talented pianist and his 8-year-old son struggle to find a place to sell vegetables at the biggest market in Moldova's 2000'. When the father seems to give up under the burden of his precarious existence, a gesture from his son brings new hope.

Just One Moment



UK / 16mins / Dir: Myrto Makrides

Sarah hesitates to take the next step in her personal life; as she watches her customers' lives transform dramatically, in just one moment, during a whirlwind shift at the Nelson Pub.

Chhat



IND / 5mins / Dir: Vaidangi Sharma

'Chhat' is a homage to all those of us who have left our homes to shift to metro cities and our attempt to find a new sense of home. In pursuit of following our dreams and living up to certain promises made back at home, we sometimes end up losing out on time with those who we love the most.

The Look



UK / 5mins / Dir: Lucy Jackson

Two exes see each other for the first time post-breakup. They lock eyes as they both remember their past and realise they can move on without hate and remember their past fondly.

Do You Want To



UK / 6mins / Dir: Andy Berriman

Under the sheets, Connor and Jake's domestic bliss is put to the test. It's bedtime, and someone's in the mood - but do they actually know each other back to front, inside and out?... Porn, Plato, and power tools feature as they seek the answer in this silly, heartwarming romcom short.

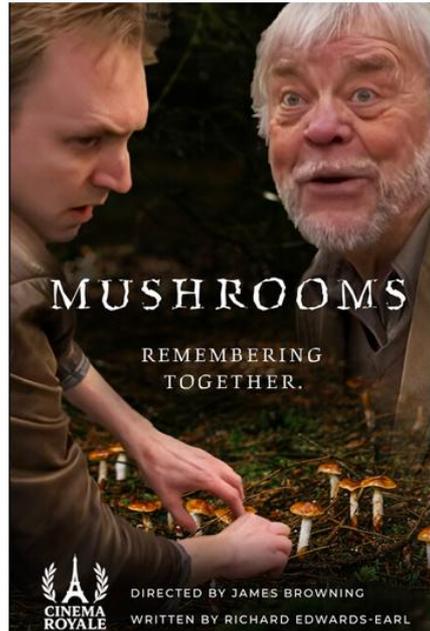
Uneven Bars



UK / 12mins / Dir: Amelia Guttridge

After an ill-fated affair with her boss, 30-year-old Heather is directionless, unemployed, and usually drunk. Fortunately she has a new plan: she's going to the Olympics! Uneven Bars is an uplifting comedy-drama short about optimism, effort and friendship.

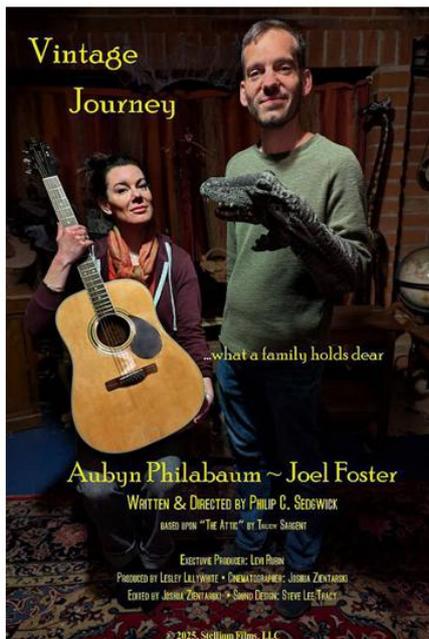
Mushrooms



UK / 5mins / Dir: James Browning

Paul lives in London, with his son Robin, he longs for the country life of his past, often believing himself to be back on the farm but his dementia makes it almost impossible to adjust to the city and the 21st century.

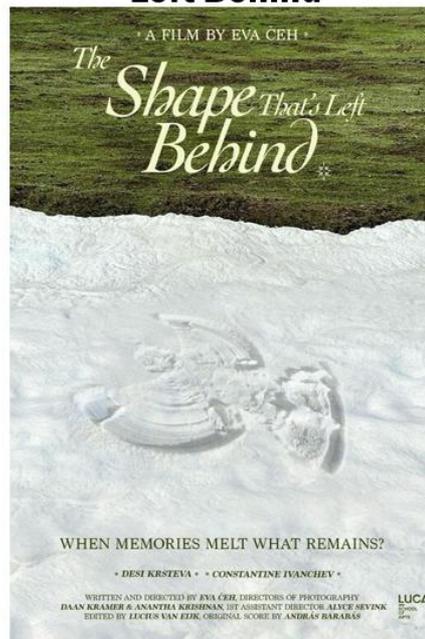
Vintage Journey



USA / 7mins / Dir: Philip C. Sedgwick

While attending a family reunion, siblings are prompted to search a storage shed on their legacy ranch, where they discover long lost secrets and the true source of fortune.

The Shape That's Left Behind



BEL/SVN / 13mins / Dir: Eva Ceh

In a climate-changed Brussels, where Christmas has become a summer affair, a grieving mother's attempt to revive snowy memories for her son forces her to confront the intertwined loss of her husband and the disappearance of winter.

Divide



USA / 9mins / Dir: Jeanette Buck

Two estranged siblings of opposing political persuasions cleaning out their mother's home after her death, fight over the inheritance of a sentimental souvenir

Put America First



USA / 15mins / Dir: Lana Marks

As Trump supporters gather in D.C. for the 2025 Inauguration, they reveal their hopes for America's future.

An Ordinary Insanity



USA / 23mins / Dir: Judith Irene Ehrlich

Before he released the secret history of the Vietnam War and became the most renowned whistleblower of the 20th century, Daniel Ellsberg was a nuclear war planner. Ellsberg lays out key facts about the planetary threat of nuclear war and talks about how to reduce the real and present risk of nuclear annihilation.

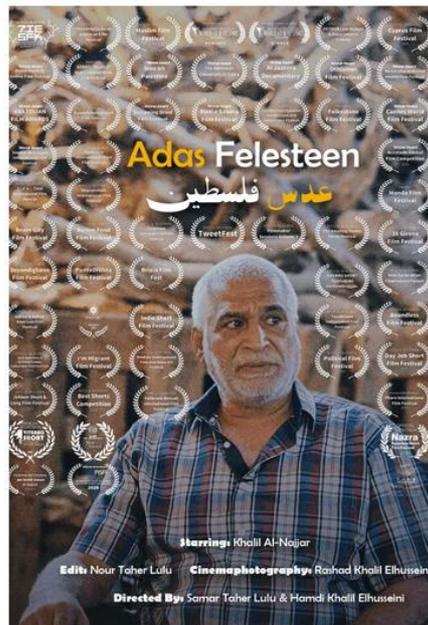
Hind



UK / 7mins / Dir: Jacob Ethan Tanner

Animation detailing the story of Hind Rajab and her family, who were brutally killed by the Israeli Occupation Forces on the 29th of January 2024.

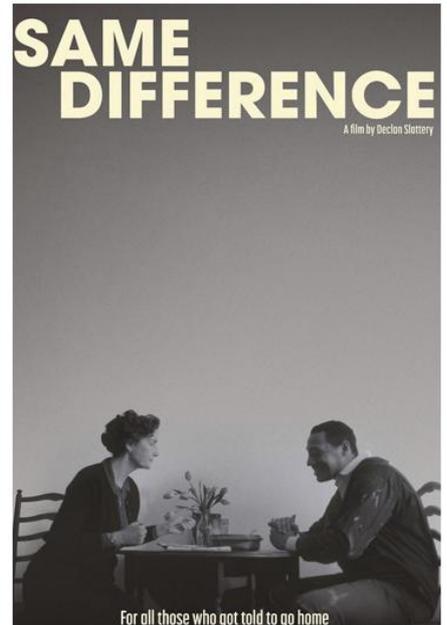
Adas Falasteen



State of Palestine / 8mins / Dir: Hamdi Khalil Elhousseini, Samar Taher Lulu

Short documentary film that tells the story of a Palestinian chef and his role in using his hobby as a shield against the famine caused by the war on Gaza, preserving the spirit of resilience and hope within his community.

Same Difference



UK / 6mins / Dir: Declan Slattery

In the era of No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish. Nora and Winston form a friendship born out of their shared experiences of racism and prejudice.

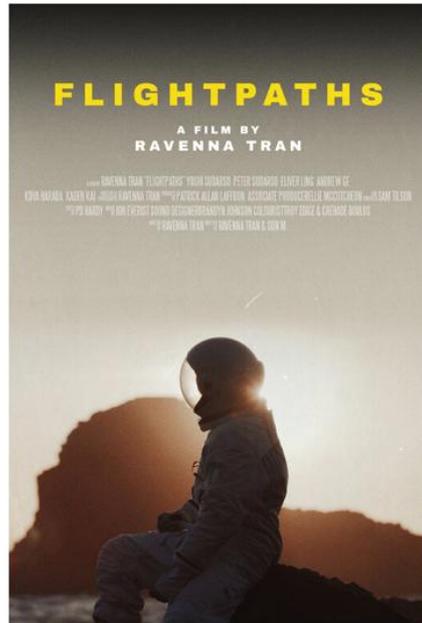
The Next Frontier Of Innovation



UK / 9mins / Dir: Sustainable Markets Initiative

Astronauts often mention the transformative experience of seeing Earth from space. Chris Hadfield has travelled beyond our planetary boundaries three times, and as he explains, there's a detailed understanding of our planet that can only be achieved by watching from the skies.

Flightpaths



UK / 6mins / Dir: Ravenna Tran

Flightpaths is a slice-of-life short film that explores the enduring legacy of a family of space travelers. When their father, an intrepid explorer of the cosmos, passes away, his two sons find themselves scattered across different corners of the galaxy, each continuing the legacy of space exploration he instilled in them.

The Family Photo



USA / 9mins / Dir: John Norris Ray, Maria Victoria Sanchez

What happened after an Earth astronaut left a family photo on the moon fifty-plus years ago? This animated short explores the butterfly effect of such an action. How will it affect us all?

Doomsday 2000



AUS / 2mins / Dir: Harrison Lysaght

News Years Eve 1999: day of Y2K software bugs. When midnight arrives, a working man's computer turns into a monster and tries to consume him. With the help of his computer's assistant, he is able to break free of the computer's hold and once again finds joy in the world around him.

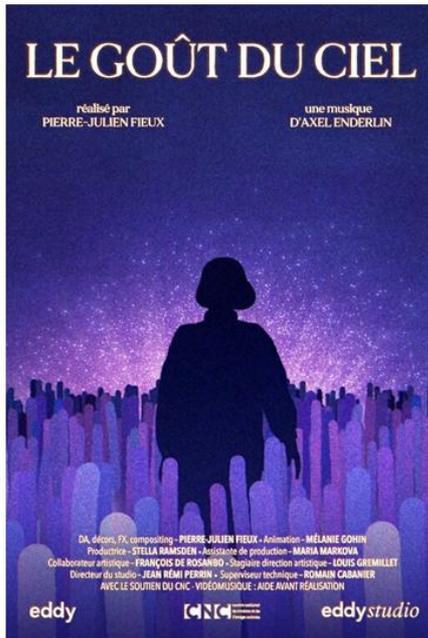
My Algorithm



FRA / 5mins /
Dir: Benjamin Efrati, Balazs Turai

One day, while scrolling through his Instagram feed, Benjamin Efrati meets his algorithm, a giant cosmic cat in neon colors. A pure reverberation of his behaviors, the algorithm is a golden prison that reinforces his beliefs, alienates and comforts him.

Le Goût du Ciel



FRA / 3mins / Dir: Pierre-Julien Fieux

In the stillness of a rainy night, a curious firefly appears in the countryside. It invites us to join a mysterious figure in the clouds and embark on an imaginary celestial journey.

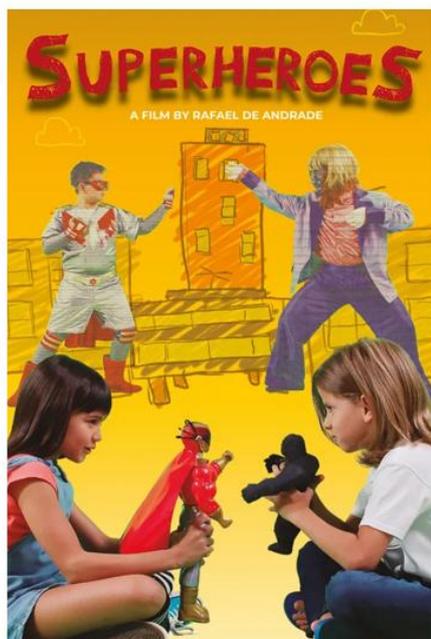
Night Light



USA / 4mins / Dir: Cierra Kelso, Ayah Hollie, Kelsey Latham, Emily Whittenberg

A young boy who is afraid of the dark loses his toy that makes him feel safe; his father helps him remedy the situation while reminiscing about his childhood fear.

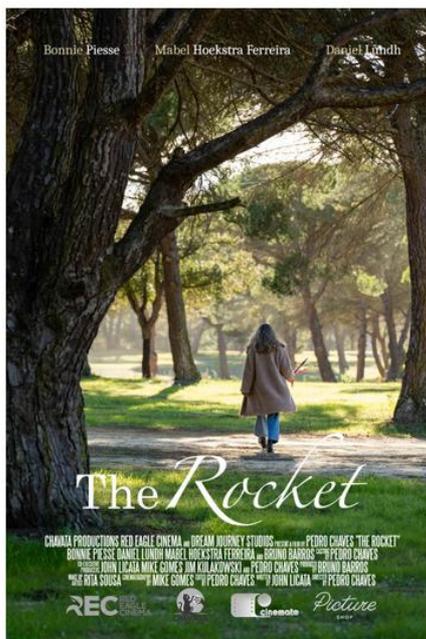
Superheroes



BRA / 12mins / Dir: Rafael de Andrade

Famous superheroes take care of adult problems, but children also have their superheroes, always ready to help solve their dilemmas. Anonymous heroes may be closer than we think, and in this fun movie, they will be taken back.

The Rocket



USA / 8mins / Dir: Pedro Chaves

A woman struggling with the loss of her father confronts her grief by restoring the model rocket they built during her childhood.

About The Festival

Oxford Shorts celebrates the diversity and creativity of short films. We believe short films are an art form in themselves, ideally one which should be experienced together. We look for great stories with strong characters, unique voices, or evocative worlds that are designed to stir emotions.

Our inaugural festival ran on Saturday 23rd March 2019 at St John's College, Oxford. Tickets to the event sold out extremely quickly. The day attracted over 200 audience members across

three onsite venues, with over 90 films being played. Our line-up included the 2019 BAFTA-award winning animation *Roughhouse* and a special interview with Academy Award-winning visual effects supervisor Paul J. Franklin (Oscar wins for *Inception* and *Interstellar*).

The pandemic forced the festival online for 2020. We played 135 entries over eleven weeks from 8 May to 23 July. Each week, we held live Q&A chats with filmmakers, and ran a number

of talks and masterclasses with our friends and sponsors. In 2023, we rebranded from 'Oxford International Short Film Festival' to 'Oxford Shorts'. 2025 introduced features to our Programme.

We are delighted to say 'Feature Corner' has returned again this year. 2026 marks our seventh edition. This time we will play 129 short films with live screenings and online blocks.



OXFORD SHORTS - FESTIVAL TEAM

Andrew Carslaw



FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Short films are Andy's passion! He has been helping to make short films since 2010. His directorial festival debut was the award winning film 'Emmi', which was made in collaboration with the Film Oxford Production in 2017 which he also helped to run. A year later, he founded Oxford International Short Film Festival (later to become known as Oxford Shorts). His work has gone on to win numerous festival awards including one project shortlisted at BAFTA. He also enjoys film composing and writes the music for the festival trailers (usually within a matter of minutes due to all the deadlines involved running a festival).

Laura Jones FRSA



DEPUTY FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Laura is an experienced Production Manager with over 15 years in the UK television industry. Her work spans award-winning productions across documentaries, live sports, outside broadcasting, and events for major networks, including BBC, PBS, Channel 4, CNN, ZDF, ESPN, Disney+, and National Geographic. Originally from Patagonia, Argentina, Laura combines her passion for film production along serving the local community as an elected Parish Councillor.

Olivia Chappell



DIRECTOR OF AWARDS / HEAD JUDGE

Olivia is an actor and teacher who has also dabbled behind the camera. Recently, she's been doing a lot of voiceover, working with brands like Audi, Standard Chartered, F1, and British Airways. As a voice actor, she's voiced characters in animations for the likes of Nickelodeon and Netflix, and computer games including the infamous Baldur's Gate 3 in which she did 13 different characters. Olivia has acted in numerous films, theatre, musicals, tv and commercials, and particularly loves comedy improv. She has lost count of how many short films she's been involved with over the years! www.oliviachappell.com

Alex Abbey-Taylor



Alex has known Andy for over 30 years and was one of his volunteers helping on short films projects such as Emmi. When Andy founded Oxford Shorts, Alex volunteered supporting the organisation and logistics of setting up and running the festival on the day. This has progressed into running the mixing desk during the event. Alex's favourite shorts are Thrillers & Comedies. Alex's day job is a Design Engineer at the Williams F1 Team in a Formula 1 career that has spanned 20 years. Other passions include skiing, karting and dinghy sailing.

Lucie Richardson



Lucie is a comedian, presenter and NCTJ-qualified journalist whose work spans international stages, live radio and print. As a presenter, Lucie has broadcast live to crowds of over 40,000 people at the Formula 1 British Grand Prix with Radio Silverstone. She's a current Journo Resources fellow and in 2021, was identified as a future female talent by KISS FM's Women in Radio Summer School. In 2025, Lucie produced and performed in 'Abridged-erton' (New Zealand Fringe Festival), a highly-acclaimed, sold-out improv show. She has performed internationally with numerous improv troupes (including Oxford Imps). She's also a writer for The Daily Mash and The Whakataki Times (NZ's biggest spoof newspaper).

Michael Bicarregui



Michael is an Oxford-based filmmaker. Their short mockumentary Overpowered was nominated for awards at festivals across the UK, winning Best Local Film at Oxford Shorts in 2024.

Michael is excited to be back at the festival - both hosting Q&As, and with another short film! Alongside their short films, Michael produces film and video for the charity sector, and teaches filmmaking on various programmes.

OXFORD SHORTS - FESTIVAL JUDGES

Ed Hicks



Ed's career began as a child actor. Graduating from London Film School, he has directed numerous shorts (festivals including BAFTA, Cannes, Munich and broadcast on Amazon). Directing credits include everything from a promo with Robbie Williams to theatre productions at Drama schools. He works as an industry acting coach (Universal, Ch4, Sky), is a regular speaker and judge at festivals (Aesthica, BAFTA, BFI, LFF and BBC Audio Awards), and has written for publications including The Stage, and The Guardian. Ed has taught at many esteemed places - East 15, Arts Ed, Shakespeare Institute, and Met Film School - and was Head of Film, TV & Radio at RADA for many years. Now, he is Principal of the Oxford School of Drama.

Laura Coquereau



Laura is a UK-based documentary producer and director working exclusively in non-scripted storytelling. Her work spans retrospective and observational documentaries, with a strong focus on character, archive and real-world intimacy. She travels the world, making films for international platforms and always brings a thoughtful, editorially rigorous approach to storytelling and evaluation. Credits include: "Breaking 4: Faith Kipyegon vs 4-minute mile" (Amazon Prime), "The Many Deaths of Nora Dalmasso" (Netflix), "The Boys from Brazil: Rise of Bolsonaro's" (BBC/PBS) and BAFTA-winning "Fearless: The Women Fighting Putin" (ITV).

Lorenzo Levrini



Lorenzo is a London based Director of Photography working between the UK and Italy. He shot BAFTA-nominated prison drama *Wasteman*, which played at TIFF and LFF and won 5 BIFAs in 2025. Other feature film credits include *The Kidnapping of Arabella* (Venice & LFF 2025) and *Amanda* (Venice & TIFF 2025) with director Carolina Cavalli. Lorenzo is also active in music videos, commercials and documentaries. Alongside his shooting he is a cinematography lecturer, podcaster and mentor on various programmes.
<https://www.lorenzolevrini.com/>

Lucy Mitchell



Lucy works in audio post production for TV, Film, Animation and Computer Games. Credits include: *Eastenders*, *Death in Paradise*, *Top Gear* and David Attenborough's *Rise of the Vertebrates*. Lucy judges multiple awards including BAFTA Craft, Broadcast Tech and Innovation, Women in Film and TV. Having started her career at Envy Post Production as a runner, she now runs LJ Studios - a full service audio post production facility offering everything you need for your projects: voice over and ADR recording, dialogue and effects editing, music composition and arranging, foley recording, sound design and final mixing.
<https://www.ljstudios.co.uk/>

AWARD NOMINATIONS

Best Film

Far From The Plains
In The Clouds
Reliefs
The Pearl Comb

Best Documentary

Houdini II: A Beautiful Day to Die
More Than The Sea
The Little Cinema In Gloucester
The Long Run
Tschäggättä

Best Drama

A Part Of Oneself
Hold
Safe
Thin Line
Tulips

Best Director

Bluff (Naomi Wright)
Far From The Plains (Luigi Sibona)
In The Clouds (Alexandra Bahíyyih Wain)
Two Heartbeats (Mariah Proctor)

Best Actor

Dear Universe (Greg Smith)
Heavy Weight (Dong-Hoon Lee)
Place Under the Sun (Grigore Bechet)
Toad in the Hole (Daniel Hoffmann-Gill)
Tulips (David Shaw Parker)

Best Actress

An Excess Baggage (Sophie Verbeeck)
Clutter (Suzanne Proctor)
Pyre (Tara Kaye Burgh)
Reliefs (Luisa Huertas)
Thin Line (Leoni Landa)

Best Young Performer

Bluff (Kayla and Kara Caldwell)
Far from the Plains (Amari Bacchus)
In Out (Bruna Geara/Olga El-Khoury)
In The Clouds
(Nika Roufi/Sophia Akraminejad)
Ivanko's Childhood (Luke Vorobei)

Early Career Filmmaker

An Excess Baggage (Myriam Garcia Marienstras)
Battered (Michael Inglis)
Break Clause (Laura Prendergast)
Pyre (Dylan Miller)
Tea Travel (Julien Jean-Zayatz)

Cinematography

Bleeding
Bluff
Empire of Others
The Father Joe Show
Wetboy

Best Editing

Dressed To The Nines
Fractured Frame
Life Support
More than the Sea
The Beneath

Best Song/Musical

Le Goût du Ciel
My Algorithm
Prom Party Massacre
Silhouette
Strolling Down Brighton Pier

Best Music Score

Decode Me (Alex Marchisone)
Far From The Plains (Hollie Buhagiar)
Hold (Gustav Karlström)
The Cruelty Men (Sandy Devers)
The Pearl Comb (Clark)

AWARD NOMINATIONS

Best Script

Conception Game
Essentially Painless
In Out
Liars of Black Mountain Road
The Thieving Magpie

Best Sound

All The Colours
OK/NOTOK
Reliefs
The Pearl Comb
The Thieving Magpie

Best Design

Egg Timer
Essentially Painless
Hold
Strolling Down Brighton Pier
The Lace

Best Animation

Another Day
Ball Lightning
Cell Buddies
Flame
Time Flies

Best Comedy

A Wonderful Neighbour
Egg Timer
Essentially Painless
Toad In The Hole
The Thieving Magpie

Best Horror/Thriller

7x7x7
Gilda
Prom Party Massacre
The Beneath
The Father Joe Show

Best Local Doc

Barry Pryke: The MG Man
Principe Past & Present
Qu LeiLei - Ed's winner
The Rescue Tender
Walking with Dadima's Community

Best Local Film

Alma
Safe
Seed
One More Day
The Bottom Line

Best Microshort

12,000 to 1
A Wonderful Neighbour
Alice
Bitter Fruit
The Bottom Line

Best Online Film

Amen
Chhat
Crit
Divide
Do You Want To
Endolife
Flame
Flightpaths
For Elise
Heavyweight
I'm Not Awake And Neither Are You
Le Gout du Ciel
My Algorithm
Place Under The Sun
Quicksand
Same Difference
Silenced
The Rocket
The Shape That's Left Behind
Uneven Bars

Best Online Doc

Adas Falasteen
An Ordinary Insanity
Hind
Put America First
The Next Frontier Of Innovation

Queer Stories Award

Alma
Amen
Clutter
Collage
Wetboy

Sci-Fi

Flightpaths
I'm Not Awake and Neither Are You
Mr Vertigo
OK/notOK
Recall Me Maybe

Green Award

Neah Bay: Restoring Ancestral Waters
Portrait of a Seaweed Farmer
Principe Past & Present
Ray The Rug
The Bottom Line

BLOCK CONTENT WITH CONTENT WARNINGS

Mental Wealth

FRIDAY 10th April, 09:20 (52mins)

Themes: mental health struggles, narrative, documentary, animation, experimental

They say mental health is wealth and you need to look after yourself. This block features six short films both narrative and documentary which showcase Mental Health struggles before ending on a more upbeat note.

Content warning:

Swearing, intense scenes and content relating to substance use, self-harm, eating disorders, depression and suicidal thoughts, mild comedic sex talk.

Let's Get Physical!

FRIDAY 10th April, 10:20 (33mins)

Themes: physical challenges, inspiring, disabilities, documentary

Not all struggles are mental - many can be physical. Once again this is a mixture of experimental narrative and documentary films which ultimate end in an inspiring place.

Content warning:

One use of mild bad language for comedic effect.

Misconceptions

FRIDAY 10th April, 11:00 (73mins)

Themes: drama, experimental, dark comedy, women, sexual health

Seven stories revolving around the biological pressures women face day-to-day. Tick-tock, to become a mother... or not...?

Content warning:

Sexual situations and discussions, swearing, pregnancy issues including abortion, miscarriage, brief nudity.

Distortions and Dystopias

FRIDAY 10th April, 13:50 (47mins)

Themes: science fiction, distorted realities

With AI and augmented realities on the increase, it is getting increasingly difficult to tell fact from fiction.

Content warning:

Swearing, flashing effects, blood, violence and implied violence with possible abuse.

Life Support

FRIDAY 10th April, 14:45 (67mins)

Themes: drama, moral dilemmas

Life Support, or support in life - everyone needs some additional help occasionally!

Content warning:

Upsetting scenes of parental illness, domestic abuse, gaslighting, swearing, injury details, medical scenes and ethics of continuing life support.

Tensions

FRIDAY 10th April, 16:00 (63mins)

Themes: drama, thriller, tension, absurdist

Are you sitting uncomfortably? Welcome to our drama/thriller block where tensions lie just below the surface.

Content warning:

Tension, surreal and eerie situations, jump scares, violence, swearing, threat, grooming, alcohol drinking

Will They, Won't They?

FRIDAY 10th April, 19:00 (53mins)

Themes: romance, whimsical, drama, LGBT+

Situations can flip like a coin toss - expect romance, heart-break, drama and rare events!

Content warning:

Swearing, nudity, tension and suicidal thoughts/themes

A Woman Wronged

FRIDAY 10th April, 20:00 (70mins)

Themes: women, drama, comedy, horror, thriller, revenge, absurdist

Best not to mess with some of these rather feisty women. As they say, Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned - or wronged!

Content warning:

Swearing, homophobic slurs, violence, threat, talk of drug taking, upsetting talk of sexual exploitation, modern day slavery, abuse and murder, domestic abuse, blood, gore, phallic balloons and content centred around sexual assault and harassment.

Animal Crackers!

SATURDAY 11th April, 09:25 (27mins)

Themes: animation, animals, comedy, environmentalism

Six short and sweet animations centred around the animal kingdom.

Content warning:

Conversations around animal cruelty, cartoon/comedy violence, sexual suggestion

BLOCK CONTENT WITH CONTENT WARNINGS

Through The Eyes Of A Child

SATURDAY 11th April, 10:00 (80mins)

Themes: [drama](#), [childhood](#), [innocence](#), [coming of age](#), [animation](#)

Eight tales where the stories are largely told from the perspective of a child, they grow up so quickly!

Content warning:

Swearing, tension and threat, one jump scare, mental illness themes, war time situations, animal cruelty, adult conversations and suggestion of child death.

Underneath

SATURDAY 11th April, 11:30 (52mins)

Themes: [drama](#), [thriller](#), [morality](#), [experimental](#)

Six narrative shorts where we get to discover what truly lies underneath?

Content warning:

Swearing and derogatory language, violence, suspense with jump scares, exploitative undertones, partial nudity, some suggestive material, dissociation, distressing animal death.

Acceptance

SATURDAY 11th April, 14:00 (60mins)

Themes: [drama](#), [emotional](#), [loss](#), [dementia](#),

Acceptance can come in different forms before someone is truly able to move on with their life. Some need to accept the difficult situation before them, other seek recognition from others.

Content warning:

Swearing, end of life, implied sex, drug use, dementia

Cures And Solutions

SATURDAY 10th April, 15:10 (57mins)

Themes: [period drama](#), [horror](#), [thriller](#)

They say prevention is better than cure. Make up your own mind in these dark, twisted and atmospheric period pieces.

Content warning:

Threat, violence, torture, horror, partial nudity, gore, blood

Funny Thing

SATURDAY 10th April, 16:15 (26mins)

Themes: [comedy](#), [absurdist](#)

Three very different short films which we hope will put a smile on your face!

Content warning:

Strong swearing, comedic violence, sexual talk and situations.

Communities & Cultures

SUNDAY 12th April, 10:15 (58mins)

Themes: [documentary](#), [communities](#), [interests](#), [disappearing cultures](#)

Join us for a trip around the globe showcasing stories focusing on various communities and cultures – both inspiring and rapidly disappearing due to the passage of time.

Content warning:

Scenes of dead marine life and mildly disorientating/unsettling scenes.

Snapshots

SUNDAY 12th April, 11:20 (67mins)

Themes: [documentaries](#), [people](#), [inspiring](#)

Five short documentaries centred around inspiring people. Expect quirky cinemas, people reframing their narrative, cosplay, escapology and seaweed!

Content warning:

Swearing with disrespectful racial slurs, talk about sexual/parental abuse and suicidal thoughts.

Upcomers

SUNDAY 12th April, 13:50 (88mins)

Themes: [new voices](#), [upcoming and early career filmmakers](#), [drama](#), [experimental](#)

We all start somewhere! This block showcases six films unique and upcoming voices who are early in their filmmaking career.

Content warning:

Swearing, sexual situations, disturbing imagery, unsettling tone, unresolved childhood trauma, sporting violence, mental health issues, isolation, implied suicide, cancer.

Local Snapshots

SUNDAY 12th April, 15:30 (55mins)

Themes: [documentary](#), [local filmmakers](#), [local issues](#)

Following on from the Snapshots block above, here are five more snapshot documentaries – all created by filmmakers closer to home!

Content warning:

Suitable for all

ONLINE BLOCKS: CONTENT WARNINGS

Bring Them Back

ONLINE (49mins)

Themes: loss, science fiction/fantasy, drama

Letting go can be hard.

Content warning:

Swearing, stylised violence, flashing and disturbing scenes, heart-attack, drug use, disassociation, conversations around death, childbirth complications, dark tone, suicide.

From A Dark Place

ONLINE (64mins)

Themes: thriller, animation, drama, horror, dark tone

Things can get dark very quickly - watch if you dare, but don't say we didn't warn you about the impending darkness which follows. Possibly our darkest block yet!

Content warning:

Swearing, threat, strong violence, talk of sexual exploitation and assault, sexual harassment, stalking, jump scares, themes of religious guilt with animated nudity, self-harm, body horror.

Life Is Difficult

ONLINE (72mins)

Themes: drama, dilemmas, dementia, physical and personal struggles

No one ever said life was going to be easy. Five narrative stories featuring a few of the everyday struggles some people face.

Content warning:

Swearing, frank discussions of medical condition, dementia, subject of child death and guilt, mild threat.

Moments

ONLINE (69mins)

Themes: drama, romance, moving on

Life is often categorised by a series of "moments".

Content warning:

Swearing, dementia, comedic sexual situations and talk.

The Great Divide

ONLINE (67mins)

Themes: documentary, narrative, dilemmas, worldwide politics

We live in turbulent times. This mix of narrative and documentary shorts starts with political division, before getting scary in the middle, yet ultimately ending on a slightly more hopeful note. Can we ever bridge the divide?

Content warning:

Divisive disrespectful attitudes including racism, swearing, upsetting imagery, war footage, tension, threat, distressing scenes, current world situations.

To Infinity And Beyond

FRIDAY 10th April, 16:00 (63mins)

Themes: space, science fiction, drama, animation, music, experimental, profundity, uplifting

Did you ever want to be an astronaut or superhero when you were growing up? Or perhaps you just wanted to find some deeper meaning to life. The world is your oyster, or indeed - cosmic kitten!

Content warning:

Flashing images, cartoon self harm imagery.

FEATURE CORNER: DOG\$PIRACY (98mins)

THURSDAY 19:15


**“AN IMPORTANT
AND FASCINATING
EXPOSÉ.
A MUST-SEE
FOR ALL
DOG LOVERS”**

DIANE
MORGAN

A FILM BY PAUL CROMPTON

PRESENTED BY DR MARC ABRAHAM OBE

DOG\$PIRACY

BULLDOG FILM DISTRIBUTION PRESENTS DOG\$PIRACY A FILM BY PAUL CROMPTON FEATURING DR MARC ABRAHAM OBE EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JURI TUCEK, JIM NALLY, JIAN JERABEK (SCREENPLAY BY JOHN BENAM, DANNY MCGREGOR)
 SOUND RECORDING GABBY STURGEON, DANNY MCGREGOR PRODUCTION MANAGER LAURA JONES RESEARCHER CHIARA ACHILLI SOUND DESIGN RICHARD MULLER IVAN HORAK VISUAL EFFECTS DINOSAUR ORIGINAL MUSIC PHASE
 GUEST DR MARC ABRAHAM OBE, PETER ERAN, GRACE KELLY, HERBERT EILEEN JONES, DR JENNY MAHER, VANESSA WOODON, JOHN P. GOODWIN, SENATOR BEN KRAMER, SENATOR TRACY PENNYCOCK, STATE REP. JEANNE MCNEILL, PENNSYLVANIA
 CAROLINE LUCAS MP, ROSIE DUFFIELD MP, SIR ROGER GALE MP, DR HAGAR HAUSER, DR TIM SCHWAB, SHERYL PETRILLO, DONNA SHERLOCK, MARCELLA WHITTINGDALE, HENRY SMITH MP, COUNCILLOR NAUSHABAH KHAN

THANKS TO FINDING SHELTER ANIMAL RESCUE, FRIENDS OF ANIMALS WALES, HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES, METROPOLITAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATES, HOPE RESCUE, WALES FOURPAWS UK

DONART Blue Eyes Film WOODPECKER syko BULLDOG

UK / 98mins / Dir: Paul Crompton

Across the globe millions of puppy breeders and rescue shelters supply dogs responsibly, but there is also a sinister world of abuse and exploitation. 'Dogspiracy' follows British vet, author and animal welfare campaigner Marc Abraham as he investigates the US puppy mill pipeline, canine fertility clinics and puppy smuggling. In America and the UK he meets decision-makers who have the power to change the law. But he eventually uncovers a conspiracy that prevents bipartisan laws from being passed. This leads to frustration and many more years of legalized abuse. 'Dogspiracy' aims to empower the public into knowing how to do the right thing, despite the disappointment from our politicians.

Content Guidance:

Upsetting scenes of animal cruelty, moderate injury detail, infrequent strong language. The film has been classified 12A



The Screening will be followed by a Q&A Session with Dr Marc Abraham OBE



Dr Marc Abraham OBE, or 'Marc the Vet' as he's usually known, is a multi-award-winning veterinary surgeon, author, broadcaster, and animal welfare campaigner.

Marc is the founder of puppy farm awareness campaign 'Pup Aid', and led the successful 'Lucy's Law' campaign in Westminster to ban commercial 3rd party puppy and kitten sellers, e.g. pet shops, making all UK dog and cat breeders accountable.

Based in Brighton, Marc is also the co-founder and secretariat of the All-Party Parliamentary Dog Advisory Welfare Group (APDAWG), appears regularly in the media, and visits local schools to chat with pupils about caring for animals and looking out for each other.

Marc was recently awarded the OBE for services to animal welfare by His Royal Highness King Charles III.

MAP OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

Please enter the venue via the FRONT LODGE on St Giles Street (post code: OX1 3JP)

For additional information please visit the following page: <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/visit-us>



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
OXFORD



The festival registration desk is on the Auditorium entrance. It will be open at 10:00am each day. Please make sure you collect your wrist band before you enter the screening venue. If anyone has mobility considerations, please let us know in advance so we can advise/help. Please note the Auditorium can be tricky to find. Please follow the signage on the day and we strongly recommend you look at our online video tour in advance:

<https://youtu.be/DSKYsVeGCRc>

Please note: No food or drink can be taken into the screening venue

ONLINE FILMS

All festival films including six Online blocks (Bring Them Back, From A Dark Place, Life Is Difficult, Moments, The Great Divide, To Infinity and Beyond) will be made available from 14-18 April. You will be able to access the links by visiting the following URL:

<https://www.oxfordshorts.co.uk/onlinefriends/2026.php>

THINGS TO DO IN OXFORD

Museums

- **Natural History Museum and Pitt Rivers Museum** – Explore these famous museums and their collection of historical artefacts <https://www.prm.ox.ac.uk/> and <https://www.oumnh.ox.ac.uk/>
- **Ashmolean Museum** – Visit the Ashmolean to relish at it's collection of historical pieces spanning hundreds of years and from all over the world <https://www.ashmolean.org/>

Sights of Interest

- **Bodleian Library** – Visit the World-famous Bodleian library which houses over 12 million items and is the 2nd largest library in Britain. <https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>
- **Bridge of sighs** – The Bridge of Sighs is one of Oxford's most recognisable landmarks
- **Oxford Castle and Prison** – Explore 1000 years of Oxford within these old buildings <https://www.oxfordcastleandprison.co.uk/>
- **University of Oxford** – The main reason to visit Oxford, take in as many colleges as you like as you visit the city <https://www.ox.ac.uk/visitors/visiting-oxford/visiting-the-colleges?wssl=1>
- **Oxford University Parks** – Take some time and explore the University parks for free and revel in the peace and quiet they hold <https://www.parks.ox.ac.uk/article/1>

Shopping

- **Westgate shopping centre** – If shopping is your thing, check out the latest shopping centre in the heart of Oxford boasting over 100 shops, restaurants and cinema <https://westgateoxford.co.uk/>
- **The Oxford Covered Market** – The Market has been open since 1774 and is the perfect place to explore the various stores <http://oxford-coveredmarket.co.uk/>

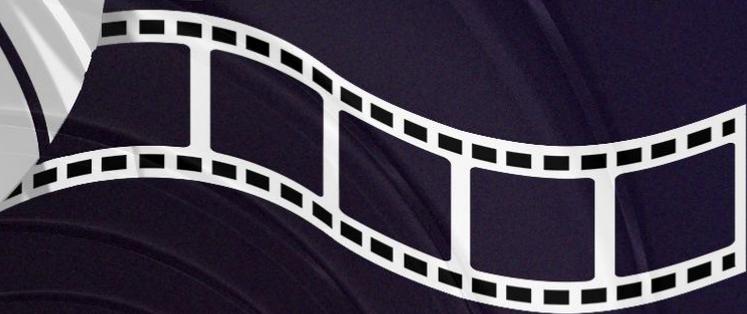
Fun Activities

- **Oxford Ghost Tour** – Take a tour around the spooky parts of Oxford in the city's own historical ghost tour <https://www.oxfordghosttours.com/>
- **Thirsty Meeples** – If board games are your thing, you should check out Thirsty Meeples, the board game café in the heart of the city centre, be sure to book though! <https://thirstymeeples.co.uk/>
- **Oxford Ice Rink** – If you fancy a spin in the ice, take a trip to the Ice Rink and glide round the rink <https://www.fusion-lifestyle.com/centres/oxford-ice-rink/>
- **Punting** – Take a trip on the world famous Oxford Punts and take a trip up the River Thames <http://www.oxfordpunting.co.uk/>





XFORD



SHORTS

2026