



Artis—Naples Naples International Film Festival

Home of The Baker Museum & Naples Philharmonic

For Immediate Release

PRESS CONTACTS:

John Wildman, Wildworks PR

niffpr@artisnaples.org | 323-600-3165

Website: filmsonewild.com

Tim Hausler, Communications Manager

thausler@artisnaples.org | 239-961-2017

Website: artisnaples.org

Facebook: facebook.com/artisnaples

Twitter: [@artisnaples](https://twitter.com/artisnaples)

Instagram: [artisnaples](https://www.instagram.com/artisnaples)

Artis—Naples announces official selections for 18th annual Naples International Film Festival (October 22-25, 2026)

**NIFF presents its popular celebration of
short films on Opening Night and closes with
Superman, accompanied live by
Jack Everly and the Naples Philharmonic**

**Juried competitions include the
Narrative Feature Prize, Documentary Feature Prize
and an expansion of NIFF's Short Film Prizes**



Jazz Infernal, My Dog: The Paradox, Superman (1978)

Naples, FL (September 23, 2026) – Artis—Naples announced today the film lineup for the 18th annual Naples International Film Festival (NIFF), to be held October 22-25, 2026.

The festival opens on Thursday, October 22, with *Opening Night Shorts*, featuring five creative short films screened in Hayes Hall. This celebration of short film highlights the creativity and imagination that flourish within the form's concise mode of storytelling. The festival will close on Sunday, October 25, with a special presentation of *Superman* in Concert, featuring a live performance of John Williams' iconic score by the Naples Philharmonic, led by Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly.

This year's film festival includes 59 films, selected from among nearly 1,000 submitted films: 10 narrative features, nine documentary features and 40 short films, representing 13 countries and including 47 premieres (two world, four U.S., three east coast and 38 Florida premieres). Select filmmakers will participate in post-screening Q&A conversations as well as panel discussions during the festival. Screenings and other festival events will take place in Hayes Hall, Daniels Pavilion and Norris Garden on the Artis—Naples Kimberly K. Querrey and Louis A. Simpson Cultural Campus as well as at Paragon Theaters – Pavilion.

Artis—Naples CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen said, "Film holds an important place within the multidisciplinary mission of Artis—Naples, offering another way for artists and audiences to encounter ideas, perspectives and experiences beyond their own. As we welcome filmmakers and film lovers to the

18th edition of the Naples International Film Festival, we look forward to the conversations, connections and discoveries this year's remarkable lineup will inspire."

David Filner, executive vice president, artistic operations, added, "This year's slate of films reflects the extraordinary range of independent filmmaking, from intimate documentaries and inventive narratives to short films that accomplish something remarkable in just a few minutes. Across the lineup, audiences will encounter distinctive voices, ambitious storytelling and the unique pleasure of discovering a film they may not have encountered anywhere else."

"What makes NIFF stand out among film festivals is the sense of connection that develops between filmmakers and audiences over these four days," said Festival Producer Shannon Franklin. "We want artists at every stage of their careers to feel genuinely welcomed here, and we want audiences to leave each screening energized by the films and by the chance to experience them alongside fellow film lovers."



We Were Here, Life Goes On

On Thursday, October 22, NIFF's Opening Night Shorts program will screen five inventive short films in Hayes Hall (5833 Pelican Bay Blvd). The lineup includes Will Niava's **Jazz Infernal**, a semi-autobiographical story about a young trumpeter arriving in Montreal from Ivory Coast under the weight of his father's musical legacy; Matthew Inman's **My Dog: The Paradox**, a funny and heartfelt adaptation of his Eisner Award-winning comic about the strange bond between people and their dogs; Cassidy Rast and Odin Wadleigh's **Body of Work**, following Florida artist Eric Anfinson as he discovers painting after a spinal cord injury redirects his life; Pranav Bhasin's **We Were Here**, about three retirees waging war against household technology; and Daniel Audritt and Kat Butterfield's **Life Goes On**, a darkly comic tale of a hospice patient trapped in a time loop on the final day of his life.

NIFF's Closing Night on Sunday, October 25, will feature a beloved classic in a format unique to NIFF as Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly and the Naples Philharmonic present **Superman** in Concert, performing John Williams' soaring score from the 1978 classic live. This special event continues NIFF's tradition of pairing film with live orchestral performance for a memorable finale.

NIFF's signature "Cinema Under the Stars" in Norris Garden, located on the Artis—Naples cultural campus, will feature the East Coast premiere of Rebecca Tansley's documentary **Tenor: My Name Is Pati** on Friday, October 23. The film looks at charismatic Samoan tenor Pene Pati, whose against-the-odds journey from the South Pacific to the world's greatest opera stages has earned him comparisons to Pavarotti along the way. On Saturday, October 24, audiences will see Jeff Dickamore and Aurora Florence's **Too Soon** under the stars. The film follows a former singer-songwriter turned elementary school music teacher and a music producer as they navigate young widowhood and solo parenting after an accidental casket swap brings them together.

More than \$15,000 in cash prizes will be awarded at this year's Closing Night Awards Ceremony in Daniels Pavilion on Sunday, October 25. NIFF will once again present the Audience Awards for Best Narrative Feature, Best Documentary Feature and Best Short Film, as well as the Focus on the Arts Awards, the Impact Award, the Indie Spirit Award, the Programmers' Choice Awards, the Best First Feature Award, the Rising Star Award and the Florida Film Award. Additionally, 2026 marks the seventh consecutive year NIFF presents juried awards in Narrative Feature and Documentary Feature categories, and it is the second year the festival will present juried awards in the Short Films category, which have been expanded to include Best Live Action Short Film, Best Documentary Short Film and Best Animated Short Film.



A Woman's Work, Solitary, Their Town

The Narrative Feature Juried Competition slate includes A.R. Ephraim's award-winning feature directorial debut, ***A Woman's Work***, about a young woman in rural Kentucky who works as a coal miner to provide for her young sisters; Eamonn Murphy's Irish drama ***Solitary***, about a widowed farmer whose sense of security is shattered after a home invasion; and the Florida premiere of indie-stalwart Katie Aselton's ***Their Town***, about two teenagers from opposite ends of the social spectrum confronting uncertain futures over one night in their small town.



Tenor: My Name Is Pati, Fork in the Road, I Got Bombed at Harvey's

The Documentary Feature Juried Competition includes Rebecca Tansley's ***Tenor: My Name Is Pati***; Jonathan Nastasi and Vivian Sorenson's ***Fork in the Road***, which features Nick Offerman (*Parks and Recreation*, *The Last of Us*) bringing humor and authenticity to the movement supporting sustainable, regenerative farming, from Alaskan kelp harvesters to dairy farmers in Kentucky; and NIFF alumni Amy Bandlien Storkel and Bryan Storkel's ***I Got Bombed at Harvey's***, which recounts the events of August 26, 1980, when an elaborate bomb packed with 1,000 pounds of dynamite was wheeled into Harvey's Wagon Wheel Casino in Lake Tahoe alongside a demand for \$3 million.



Jackrabbit, Line Cooks

Beyond the juried slate, additional narrative feature highlights include NIFF alum Ballard C. Boyd's feature directorial debut, ***Jackrabbit***. The film is a mystery-comedy about an investigative journalist and struggling actress who despise one another and are forced to team up to solve the disappearance of their mutual best friend. John Mossman's mockumentary ***Line Cooks***, about a college student who takes a job as a line cook at a hole-in-the-wall Korean taco joint, only to discover that it's run by ex-convicts and cartel members, will make its world premiere. Jay Silverman's ***Yale*** is based on a true story written by Naples resident Van Billet. The film, which stars Caitlin McGee, Kevin Dunn and Rachael Harris, follows a young woman who must convince the father she has not seen in 30 years to donate one of his kidneys to save her son's life.



Dear Lara, Unspoken Bond

Additional documentary highlights beyond the juried competition include Arthur Egeli's ***Anne Packard: An Artist's Resolve***, which follows acclaimed Cape Cod painter Anne Packard as, at 92, she prepares to leave behind the gallery that helped define her career. Lara St. John's ***Dear Lara*** follows the renowned violinist as she exposes decades of sexual abuse and institutional complicity in the classical music world. Don Hardy's ***Unspoken Bond*** is a deep dive into the unique bond between humans and

animals, following three lives forever changed by an animal—a champion dressage rider confronting grief, a woman struggling with addiction who finds hope in the trust of a fox and a veteran finding his way back to the world through his service dog.

Themes for the Naples International Film Festival's curated short film programs include **Because We Care, Unexpected Outcomes, The Art of Animation, True Stories: Artists at Work, True Stories: How We Carry On** and NIFF's **Student Filmmaker Showcase**.

NIFF 2026's panel discussions include **Unscripted & Unfiltered: Tales from the Set** on Friday, October 23, and **The Mavericks of Cinema: Why Independent Storytelling Matters** on Saturday, October 24, both taking place at Paragon Theaters – Pavilion.

Tickets for all screenings and activities at Paragon Theaters – Pavilion go on sale September 23. Tickets for the Opening Night Screening and Party; the Closing Night Awards Ceremony, Film and Wrap Party; and *Superman* in Concert are on sale now. For more information, visit artisnaples.org/niff.

NIFF extends deep appreciation to Festival Presenting Sponsors Richard and Christine Lublin. Generous support is also provided by the Collier County Tourist Development Council.

Sincere thanks to Opening Night Film and Party Sponsor The Woodruff Institute; Closing Night Awards Ceremony, Film and Wrap Party Sponsor Scott Meloun; Friday and Saturday Night Norris Garden Screening Sponsors Vincent and Debra Maffeo; and Theater Sponsors Entech, Bobbi and David Drobis, FisherBroyles and Tes and Brian Manley. NIFF is pleased to partner with Gulfshore Life and The Naples Press as exclusive Media Sponsors.

The 2026 Naples International Film Festival (NIFF) Official Selections:

OPENING NIGHT SHORT FILMS

Jazz Infernal

Director: Will Niava

Country: Canada | Running Time: 17 minutes

A young musician arrives in an unfamiliar city with only the legacy of his father to guide him. To succeed, he must confront his roots and find his own voice.

My Dog: The Paradox

Director: Matthew Inman

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 7 minutes

Rambo is ridiculous, lovable and destined to break his owner's heart. From the creator of *The Oatmeal*, *My Dog: The Paradox* explores the strange joy and inevitable grief of loving a dog.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Body of Work

Directors: Cassidy Rast, Odin Wadleigh

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 25 minutes

After a spinal injury in high school redirects his life, Eric Anfinson discovers his true calling as a painter.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

We Were Here

Director: Pranav Bhasin

Country: India | Running Time: 11 minutes

In a crumbling Indian town, three retired men protest machines replacing human jobs by pretending to be household appliances.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Life Goes On

Directors: Daniel Audritt, Kat Butterfield

Country: U.K. | Running Time: 19 minutes

Bill is waiting for the sweet release of death. Unfortunately for him, he's stuck in an infinite time loop that causes the day to restart the second his heart stops.

EAST COAST PREMIERE

CLOSING NIGHT FILM PRESENTATION

Superman (1978)

Director: Richard Donner

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 143 minutes

Sent to Earth as an infant before Krypton's destruction, Clark Kent discovers his extraordinary powers and becomes Superman. In Metropolis, he battles evil genius Lex Luthor while working as a reporter and falling for colleague Lois Lane.

JURY COMPETITION NARRATIVE FEATURES

A Woman's Work

Director: A.R. Ephraim

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 92 minutes

After losing her parents to the opioid epidemic, a young woman in rural Kentucky takes a job as a coal miner to provide for her two younger sisters, but she must hide part of who she is to survive.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Solitary

Director: Eamonn Murphy

Country: Ireland | Running Time: 86 minutes

Solitary tells the story of Brendan, a widowed farmer living a quiet life on the edge of a village in rural Ireland. When his home is broken into, a growing sense of fear and isolation takes hold. As violence touches the community and trust in the system fades, Brendan must confront what it means to feel safe, to grow old and to be truly alone.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Their Town

Director: Katie Aselton

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 80 minutes

When Abby's boyfriend drops out of the high school play, she finds herself helping school outlier Matt step into the role opposite her. Over one long night wandering their small town, the two examine their futures and uncover surprises from their past.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

JURY COMPETITION DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

Fork in the Road

Directors: Jonathan Nastasi, Vivian Sorenson

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 88 minutes

Featuring Nick Offerman (*Parks and Recreation*, *The Last of Us*), a champion of regional agriculture and American farmers, *Fork in the Road* follows small farmers, visionary chefs and innovators working to heal the land, improve our food systems and build a more regenerative future for people and the planet.

I Got Bombed at Harvey's

Directors: Amy Bandlien Storkel, Bryan Storkel

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 93 minutes

I Got Bombed at Harvey's recounts how a gambler who lost heavily at the casino built an intricate 1,000-pound bomb, wheeled it into the casino lobby with a \$3 million ransom demand and triggered a massive FBI manhunt.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Tenor: My Name Is Pati

Director: Rebecca Tansley

Country: New Zealand | Running Time: 104 minutes

From Samoa to the world's great opera stages, Pene Pati and his brother Amitai pursue an unlikely path to international success. Bursting with humor, heart and soaring performances, the film reveals the resilience born of adversity, the richness of family and culture and the rewards that come from following an unlikely dream.

EAST COAST PREMIERE

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURES

A Real Man

Director: Lito Pedregal

Country: Spain | Running Time: 82 minutes

Maria has spent much of her adult life catering to her husband Guillermo's traditional, macho values. After she suddenly dies, the retired neurosurgeon must unlearn his old ways, learn to care for himself and reconsider what it means to be a "real man."

U.S. PREMIERE

Jackrabbit**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Ballard C. Boyd

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 96 minutes

An investigative journalist and struggling actress who can't stand each other are reluctantly forced to team up when their best friend mysteriously vanishes. As they search for answers, they discover her disappearance is only the beginning of the secrets she has kept.

Line Cooks**WORLD PREMIERE**

Director: John Mossman

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 83 minutes

In this mockumentary, straight-A college student Callie takes a summer job as a line cook alongside ex-cons and cartel members at a Korean taco joint. Determined to earn a letter of recommendation, she navigates dumpster rats, health hazards, a newfound family of misfits and one dreaded health inspector.

Merry Christmas Aubrey Flint**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Jack Spring

Country: U.K. | Running Time: 98 minutes

Aubrey Flint, a reclusive painter of model soldiers with a lifelong hatred of Christmas, is sentenced to community service at a struggling retirement home. Reluctantly roped into helping stage *A Christmas Carol*, he finds himself drawn into the lives of its eccentric residents and forced to reconsider the holiday he has spent years avoiding.

Too Soon**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Directors: Jeff Dickamore, Aurora Florence

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 99 minutes

After meeting on the day of their spouses' funerals, a young widow and widower form a two-person, music therapy-style support group. But when friendship begins to turn into something more, they face the question everyone around them is asking: Is it too soon?

Wake**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Devon M. Schwartz

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 102 minutes

Four semi-estranged siblings reunite on the day of their father's wake, navigating overbearing relatives, oblivious guests and a death-phobic funeral director as they fumble through their absurd new reality—one that, maybe, just maybe, could bring them closer together.

Yale**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Jay Silverman

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 123 minutes

Mac's life has been consumed by alcohol and run-ins with the law, but when her son needs an emergency kidney transplant, she turns to someone she hasn't seen in 30 years: her deadbeat father, Yale, who abandoned her as a child.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY FEATURES**4000 Days****FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Daniel E. Catullo III

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 112 minutes

After losing their sons to fraternity hazing, three families unite in a 4,000-day fight against a culture of secrecy and silence, transforming unimaginable grief into a national movement that changes the law and helps protect future generations of students.

Anne Packard: An Artist's Resolve

Director: Arthur Egeli

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 74 minutes

Painter Anne Packard once sold her work outside her Cape Cod home to help support her five young children. Now 92 and one of the most successful artists of her generation, she reflects on the choices, struggles and determination that shaped her creative life.

Dear Lara**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Lara St. John

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 94 minutes

When violinist Lara St. John goes public about the assault she endured as a child at an elite music school, she uncovers a global pattern of abuse in the classical music world and joins fellow survivors to confront an entrenched culture of silence.

Frampton**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Rob Arthur

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 104 minutes

From the arena-shaking triumph of *Frampton Comes Alive!* to the quiet introspection of a final tour shaped by a degenerative diagnosis, *Frampton* is an intimate portrait of a rock icon who soared, stumbled and rose again.

Unspoken Bond

Director: Don Hardy

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 80 minutes

Unspoken Bond makes the case for human-animal connection as it follows three lives forever changed by an animal: a champion dressage rider confronting grief, a woman struggling with addiction who finds hope in the trust of a fox and a veteran finding his way back to the world through his service dog.

Yuja**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Lorna Tucker

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 83 minutes

At the height of her career, celebrated pianist Yuja Wang opens a window into her personal world as a daring artist who plays by her own rules and constantly reinvents herself along the way.

JURY COMPETITION LIVE ACTION SHORT FILMS**32B – Internal Issues****FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Mohamed Taher

Country: Egypt | Running Time: 19 minutes

A single father struggles to connect with his teenage daughter as he realizes she is growing up.

The Decision Making Center**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Kevin Vincenti

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 19 minutes

A grieving former therapist is tasked with teaching a new AI how to understand empathy and help humans make difficult decisions.

Nostalgie**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Kathryn Ferguson

Countries: U.K./Ireland | Running Time: 19 minutes

An aging pop star is invited to perform at an event in Northern Ireland. Hoping to recapture his old glory, he arrives in a city he doesn't understand and encounters a disturbing truth about his music's legacy.

JURY COMPETITION DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILMS**The Art of Sharing****FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Ric Serena

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 20 minutes

Chef and artist Minh H. Phan bridges the gap between food waste and hunger, culminating in an evening of art and food that challenges how we feed one another.

The Second Life of Freddie Nole**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Dana Nachman

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 21 minutes

When Freddie Nole offers a ride to a man walking out of prison, a simple drive becomes the first step toward hope, dignity and a lasting second chance.

One Last Order

Directors: Lauren DeFilippo, Sam Soko

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 20 minutes

After 37 years turning drive-thru orders into personal connections, Sighle Williams expects a quiet farewell from a Florida burger joint, but her town has other plans.

JURY COMPETITION ANIMATED SHORT FILMS

Living with a Visionary

Director: Stephen P. Neary

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 15 minutes

After 50 years of marriage, John must care for his wife while learning to live alongside her vivid hallucinations. A true story.

Paper Trail

Director: Don Hertzfeldt

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 14 minutes

A life, seen through paper.

Plus

U.S. PREMIERE

Director: Renaud Hallée

Country: Canada | Running Time: 7 minutes

A plus sign carves a path to rebirth.

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE SHORT FILMS

Candy Bar

Director: Nash Edgerton

Country: Australia | Running Time: 6 minutes

A young girl waiting in a movie theater concession line thinks a stranger looks just like her dad.

The Collateral

WORLD PREMIERE

Director: Jacqueline Dow

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 11 minutes

When no bank will touch him, Spencer's last option for a mortgage is an unconventional lender who looks past credit scores and straight at the single most important thing in your life. You'll never miss a payment.

Crisis Actor

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Director: Lily Platt

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 12 minutes

Fired from her day job, an impulsive actress crashes a support group and spirals into a chaotic night that forces her to face her addiction to drama.

Daddy's Girl

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Director: Josephine Lohar Self

Country: U.K. | Running Time: 16 minutes

When her mother leaves for the weekend, a precocious 12-year-old plots to kill her well-meaning stepfather.

Emergency Accommodation

U.S. PREMIERE

Director: Kate Haley

Country: Ireland | Running Time: 14 minutes

Looking for a place to sleep, Joe slips Garda (Ireland's national police force) custody in a chaotic emergency department, hiding in plain sight as overworked staff battle relentless pressure.

Father on Fire

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Director: Rafa Piqueras

Country: Spain | Running Time: 15 minutes

Fulfilling his late father's last wish should be simple. For Javier, there's just one problem: His mother is still very much alive and very much against it.

Rose**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Justine Pesin

Country: France | Running Time: 11 minutes

A dreamy autistic child sees the world differently, challenging her loving father to understand the strength and beauty of her unique perspective.

Two Tears

Director: Josefina Pieres

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 19 minutes

On the eve of their *Nutcracker* debut, two young ballerinas discover a mysterious curse that can only be broken by shedding two tears of pure emotion on a stone at the Bass Museum.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY SHORT FILMS**Cindy Sherman: Picture This****FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Sophie Chahinian

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 23 minutes

In this intimate portrait, artist Cindy Sherman reveals her childhood preoccupation with family photos, what drew her to photography and the challenges she has overcome throughout her career.

Eterni: The Last Marble Sculptors**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Liam Tanguim

Country: Italy | Running Time: 20 minutes

A small group of artists in Carrara, Italy, fights to preserve the centuries-old tradition of hand-carving marble.

Like Father**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Jared Callahan

Countries: U.S./Austria | Running Time: 8 minutes

A poignant look at the work of renowned children's author Richard Scarry and the son who carries on his family's artistic legacy.

Women Laughing**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Directors: Kathleen Hughes, Liza Donnelly

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 38 minutes

The New Yorker cartoonist Liza Donnelly draws, laughs and reflects with fellow women cartoonists on the power and evolution of women's humor.

ADDITIONAL ANIMATED SHORT FILMS**La Fille du Lac (The Girl from the Lake)****FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Directors: Louise Bacou, Mathieu Leguay, Ludivine Miermont, Elisa Martin, Marion Fuchs, Achille Houplain, Olessia Fedko, Luna Schwartz

Country: France | Running Time: 10 minutes

Bombs sound in the dark and the house shakes. One night, something appears from the lake, helping a young girl learn to move forward while carrying the memories of her past.

Leg Day**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: João Lauro Fonte

Country: Brazil | Running Time: 5 minutes

To some, every day is leg day...

Les Vieux (The Seniors)**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Directors: Axelle Fuset, Boris Boidron, Fanny Ghesquiere, Lucile Brunet, Jérémy La, Lauren Félines, Maëlys Guillemoteau, Manuel Mabayog

Country: France | Running Time: 6 minutes

A group of seniors basking in the Côte d'Azur sun finds laughter, warmth and unexpected freedom as the end of life gently draws near.

Saba**FLORIDA PREMIERE**

Director: Liron Topaz

Countries: U.S./U.K. | Running Time: 10 minutes

In a surreal world where gravity flows upward, a young boy embarks on a poetic journey through grief, memory and the endless search for closure.

Sunspark

Director: Danny Bourque

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 11 minutes

While scavenging for spare parts in a post-human wasteland, a lonely robot discovers another who desperately needs his help.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

The Whistle

Director: Greg Franklin

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 8 minutes

Cologne, Germany, 1938. When a Jewish doctor defies a Nazi law forbidding him from treating non-Jews, empathy, courage and compassion emerge where he least expects them. Based on a true story.

STUDENT SHORTS K-12 DIVISION

The Chip

Director: Jack Curby

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 3 minutes

After being pressured into eating an extremely spicy chip, teenager Seth races across his high school in search of milk before the heat becomes unbearable.

EAST COAST PREMIERE

Evanescence

Director: Una Finn

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 10 minutes

In a near future where the government taxes memories, a teenage girl discovers her best friend has deliberately forgotten her.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

The Hard Way Home

Director: Hunter Nickless

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 16 minutes

Inspired by true events, this coming-of-age drama follows a boy whose innocence is shattered by domestic chaos, forcing him to confront the past he has spent years trying to escape.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

STUDENT SHORTS COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY DIVISION

Buck and Burrow

Director: Maya Oster

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 16 minutes

A 1970s Nashville country duo's rising fame exposes the cracks in their romance, turning heartbreak into their biggest spotlight yet.

U.S. PREMIERE

Franken Struck

Director: Sommar Boulware

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 5 minutes

A reckless hand, a lethal play, a love so pure now ripped away. Forged hot from rage and shocking light, the Creature's love must set things right.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

Gardeners

Director: Merry May Ma

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 17 minutes

On the verge of losing her research and her grip, an engineer encounters a mushroom musician who leads her toward an unexpected discovery hidden in the nano-landscape.

Timbertown: The Squirrel and The Lumberjack

Director: Avery Noble

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 4 minutes

New to a mountain town and overwhelmed by anxiety, Mr. Chestnut befriends a mythical lumberjack who helps him see that a change in perspective can change everything.

Watchdog

Director: Harsh Vardhan Singh

Country: U.S. | Running Time: 16 minutes

Desperate for work, a struggling migrant worker takes on a backbreaking job as a farm guard dog, where survival comes at the cost of submission.

FLORIDA PREMIERE

ARTIS—NAPLES

Artis—Naples, home of The Baker Museum and Naples Philharmonic, creates and presents world-class visual and performing arts. Through our multidisciplinary offerings, we inspire, educate and entertain to engage and enrich the growing and diversifying community.

KIMBERLY K. QUERREY and LOUIS A. SIMPSON CULTURAL CAMPUS

Led by CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen and Artistic and Music Director Alexander Shelley, Artis—Naples offers more than 800 paid and free events annually across its 8.5-acre Kimberly K. Querrey and Louis A. Simpson Cultural Campus. Artis—Naples welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year for a broad array of artistic and educational opportunities perfect for audiences of all backgrounds and interests. The cultural campus is home to five buildings, including two performance halls (Frances Pew Hayes Hall and Myra J. Daniels Pavilion), The Baker Museum, the Toni Stabile Education Building and the Kohan Administration Building.

NAPLES PHILHARMONIC

The Naples Philharmonic has long been recognized as one of the cornerstones of Southwest Florida's arts community. As part of Artis—Naples, the Naples Philharmonic performs more than 140 orchestral and chamber music concerts, as well as opera and ballet, education, community and special event concerts annually between September and June in the 1,477-seat Hayes Hall, the 283-seat Daniels Pavilion and around Southwest Florida. The Naples Philharmonic has enjoyed a history of working with world-class artistic leadership, a tradition that continues in 2026-27 with Alexander Shelley in his third season as artistic and music director, following two successful years in the role and an extended commitment through the end of the decade. Podium leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, marking 17 years in this role in the 2026-27 season and bringing pops performances that celebrate music across genres. Renowned violinist James Ehnes continues as artistic partner through 2026-27, working with Naples Philharmonic musicians in a variety of settings with a focus on inspiring and embodying a high level of artistry.

THE BAKER MUSEUM

The Baker Museum is the foremost fine art museum in Southwest Florida, presenting an ambitious slate of exhibitions annually to complement installations of works from its permanent collection. Comprising more than 3,000 objects, the museum's broad holdings of 20th- and 21st-century art reflect particular strengths in modern art of the United States and Mexico. The Baker Museum's collection demonstrates the generosity and commitment of area collectors, including significant gifts from the collection of the late Olga Hirshhorn.

In 2025, The Baker Museum was accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, the highest national recognition for museums in the United States, affirming the museum's commitment to excellence, accountability and public service.

With more than two decades of collecting and exhibiting, the museum is committed to the stewardship and scholarship of its collections and to fostering inspiring and transformative experiences with the visual arts. At the same time, The Baker Museum partners with the world's leading arts institutions to make extraordinary exhibitions accessible to the Southwest Florida community—including the National Portrait Gallery, London and the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation. In 2020, Artis—Naples celebrated the renovation and expansion of The Baker Museum and adjoining Norris Garden, designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architecture/Landscape/Urbanism, which created new spaces for multidisciplinary exploration and social interaction.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

In addition to creating and presenting visual and performing arts, Artis—Naples provides robust education and community activities for students of all ages in Collier and Lee counties. Each season, thousands of Collier County Public School students interact with Artis—Naples education programming, both on our cultural campus and in their classrooms. Beyond our commitment to youth education, the Lifelong Learning program provides informative lectures and study opportunities for adults seeking to engage more deeply with the arts.

The Friends of Artis—Naples, comprised of more than 3,500 donor households, offers activities, travel experiences and events designed to foster a deeper relationship between patrons and the arts.

In 2017, Artis—Naples acquired the Naples International Film Festival (NIFF), expanding its film offerings and providing a platform for the festival's continued excellence and growth. In 2023, the festival's 15th anniversary year, NIFF was named one of *MovieMaker* Magazine's "20 Great Film Festivals in Vacation Destinations."