



Artis—Naples Naples International Film Festival

Home of The Baker Museum & Naples Philharmonic

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Artis—Naples Announces official selections for 16th annual Naples International Film Festival (October 24-27)

**NIFF presents a New Perspectives celebration of
short films on Opening Night and closes with
Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989) accompanied live by
the Naples Philharmonic**

**Shaun Seneviratne's *Ben and Suzanne, A Reunion in
4 Parts*, Matthew Leutwyler's *Fight Like a Girl* and
Steven Grayhm's *Sheepdog* compete for
Narrative Feature Juried Prize**

**Joe Wein's *76 Days Adrift*, Anthony Wonke's
The Accidental Spy and Jeremy Power Regimbal's
Between the Mountain and the Sky compete for
Documentary Feature Juried Prize**

Naples, FL (September 25, 2024) – Artis—Naples announced today the film lineup for the 16th annual Naples International Film Festival (NIFF), to be held October 24-27, 2024.

NIFF 2024's Opening Night screening features a celebration of short film as an art form, marking the second time the festival showcases specially curated short films. This year's opening night shorts package is titled *Opening Night Shorts: New Perspectives*, featuring six creative short films. The festival will close with a presentation of Tim Burton's *Batman* (1989), featuring a live performance of Danny Elfman's one-of-a-kind score by the Naples Philharmonic and conducted by Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly.

This year, NIFF will include 58 films (10 narrative features, 12 documentary features and 36 short films) representing 26 countries, with several of those films including in-person post-screening filmmaker Q&A conversations. Select filmmakers will also participate in panel discussions during the festival. All screenings and associated events will be held in person in Hayes Hall, Daniels Pavilion or Norris Garden on the Artis—Naples Kimberly K. Querrey and Louis A. Simpson Cultural Campus or at the festival's new venue partner, Alamo Drafthouse Cinema at Mercato.

"We are thrilled to present this year's selection of films, each offering a unique lens through which audiences can explore the creativity of the human spirit," said Artis—Naples CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen. "The Naples International Film Festival is an opportunity to enjoy the power of storytelling

reflected across experiences, cultures and artistic expression. This year's lineup embodies our ongoing commitment to celebrating the diversity of perspectives offered by independent film, inspiring introspection and connection within our community. We look forward to the profound conversations and shared experiences these films will undoubtedly spark."

"Our team has worked diligently to craft a slate of films that is representative of the diverse landscape of independent cinema," said David Filner, executive vice president, artistic operations. "Whether through emotionally resonant documentaries or engaging narrative features, we've designed this year's festival to provide audiences with an immersive cinema experience. NIFF continues to be a distinctive platform where filmmakers and cinephiles alike can come together, exchange ideas and celebrate the multidisciplinary nature of film as an art form."

Festival Producer Shannon Franklin emphasized the lasting impact NIFF has on both audiences and filmmakers alike over the years. "Every year, NIFF serves as a dynamic meeting point for filmmakers and audiences, and this year is no exception. The festival has become a cornerstone for both emerging and established filmmakers, and we're proud of the reputation it has earned as a welcoming, inspiring environment. We can't wait to share these powerful stories with all the attendees who make NIFF so special."

On Thursday, October 24, the Opening Night shorts program at Hayes Hall (5833 Pelican Bay Blvd) will feature: Adam J. Graves' *Anuja* about a 9-year-old girl working in a back-alley garment factory who is offered a rare chance to attend boarding school; Nick Russell's thriller *Favourites*, in which two young parents deal with an impossible choice during a family camping trip in the Australian Outback; Jumai Yusuf's *Nate and John* about a friendship that develops in the 1960s between a young Black barber's assistant and a surly teenage hippie who's forced to get a haircut by his father.

Also screening that night will be Ballard C. Boyd's wry comedy *Night Session*, during which a burglary quickly morphs into an impromptu therapy session where the burglar assists the resident in processing his impending divorce—all while the resident assists the burglar in robbing his apartment. TJ O'Grady-Peyton's Irish drama *Room Taken* follows a homeless man who secretly takes up residence in the home of an elderly blind woman—which results in an unexpected bond forming between the two. Sam Cutler-Kreutz and David Cutler-Kreutz's SXSW special jury prize winner *Trapped* is centered on a janitor at a prestigious high school as he confronts a group of boys in the middle of a senior prank—putting him between the boys, his boss and his moral compass.

Hayes Hall will also be the location for the special presentation of Tim Burton's colorfully eccentric superhero classic *Batman* (1989) on Closing Night, Sunday, October 27. The presentation of a classic or beloved film accompanied by a live performance of the film's score has become a tradition and one of the celebrated highlights unique to the Naples International Film Festival. Under the baton of Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, the Naples Philharmonic will perform Danny Elfman's groundbreaking score live as the film screens over the stage.

NIFF's popular "Screenings Under the Stars," shown on a large outdoor screen in beautiful Norris Garden on the Artis—Naples cultural campus on Friday, October 25, will include a special presentation of Dianne Houston's *Freedom Hair*, which pits a determined, business-savvy mother starting a natural hair braiding business versus a powerful cosmetology cartel and her home state of Mississippi. On Saturday, October 26, Jeff Toye's crowd-pleaser *The Opener* tells the tale of a struggling street musician who gets noticed after one of his songs goes viral and is offered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity as an opening act on tour for one of his musical heroes. Director Jeff Toye and the documentary's subject, Philip Labes, will be in attendance for a post-film Q&A and a brief performance by Labes.

Films in the Naples International Film Festival's competition categories will vie for more than \$10,000 in cash prizes, including the Audience Awards for Best Narrative Feature, Best Documentary Feature and Best Short as well as the Focus on the Arts Award, given to a feature-length narrative or documentary film with an emphasis on one or more of the visual or performing arts. For the fifth consecutive year, NIFF will

also present juried awards in the Narrative Feature and Documentary Feature categories. Selected award winners will be announced at the Closing Night Awards Ceremony in Daniels Pavilion.

The Narrative Feature Juried Competition slate includes Shaun Seneviratne's romantic comedy-drama ***Ben and Suzanne, A Reunion in 4 Parts*** about a man who visits Sri Lanka to rekindle his relationship with his girlfriend after a long separation and is thrown for a loop when her boss demands that she works throughout their vacation. Matthew Leutwyler's ***Fight Like a Girl*** follows a young woman, kidnapped from her village in the Congo and forced to work in an illegal mineral mine, who escapes and joins a renowned all-women boxing club. Steven Grayhm's ***Sheepdog*** explores the physical and psychological repercussions of war. The film follows a combat veteran who is ordered into the care of a trauma therapist in training but is soon faced with overcoming a new hurdle, the arrival of his father-in-law, a Vietnam veteran who arrives on his doorstep, fresh out of prison.

The Documentary Feature Juried Competition includes Joe Wein's ***76 Days Adrift***, about Steven Callahan's harrowing tale of survival alone on an inflatable raft in the Atlantic Ocean. Making its North American Premiere will be Anthony Wonke's ***The Accidental Spy***, an incredible true story of America's jihadist spy and how he was thrown to the wolves once he stopped being useful to his CIA spymasters. Jeremy Power Regimbal's ***Between the Mountain and the Sky*** focuses on Maggie Doyne, the 2015 CNN Hero of the Year, a devoted humanitarian who became guardian to over 50 Nepalese children after meeting a six-year-old who survived by breaking stones into gravel.

Additional highlights among the festival's selected narrative features include H. Nelson Tracey's award-winning ***Breakup Season***, which stars *The Walking Dead*'s Chandler Riggs as a young man, who brings his girlfriend, Cassie, home to meet his family over the Christmas holiday only to have her promptly break up with him and get snowed in together. Tom Waller's ***Kiss of the Con Queen*** focuses on an actor who arrives in Indonesia to play a huge role in a blockbuster film and soon discovers he's been caught in a global scam. Anthony Lucero's heartfelt ***The Paper Bag Plan*** follows the efforts of a father, just diagnosed with cancer, who must race against time to train his disabled son on how to bag groceries in hopes of landing his first job and a life without his dad.

Additional documentary feature highlights include Sally Aitken's ***Every Little Thing*** which traces Terry Masear's care for fragile hummingbirds. Dennis Scholl and Kareem Tabsch's ***Naked Ambition: Bunny Yeager*** tells the story of trailblazing photographer Bunny Yeager and highlights her influence on pop culture—from the bikini and *Playboy* magazine to the modern selfie. Making its world premiere is Herbert James Winterstern's ***Sanibel***. The film began as an exploration of the people and businesses central to seashell culture in Southwest Florida. However, the arrival of Hurricane Ian, one of the most destructive hurricanes in history, changed things radically as the cameras caught the devastating effects on the area.

Themes for the Naples International Film Festival's curated short film programs include ***Unexpected Journeys, Made for Each Other, Odds and Ends, Family and Community*** and the recurring ***Student Filmmaker Showcase***.

Tickets for all screenings and activities at Alamo Drafthouse go on sale September 26. Tickets for the Opening Night Film and Party; the Closing Night Awards Ceremony, Film and Wrap Party; and *Batman* in Concert are on sale now. For more information, visit artisnaples.org/niff.

NIFF extends deep appreciation to Festival Presenting Sponsors Dr. Richard Lublin 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, an anonymous Closing Night Awards Ceremony, Film and Wrap Party sponsor, and Theater Sponsors Entech, DeVoe Automotive Group, Bobbi and David Drobis, Debra and Vincent Maffeo and Tes and Brian Manley. NIFF is pleased to partner with Gulfshore Life and The Naples Press as exclusive Media Sponsors.

The 2024 Naples International Film Festival (NIFF) Official Selections:

OPENING NIGHT FILM PRESENTATIONS

Anuja

Director: Adam J. Graves

Countries: India/U.S.; Running Time: 22 minutes

When an intelligent 9-year-old girl working in a back-alley garment factory is offered a rare chance to attend boarding school, she faces a choice that will determine the fate of her future and her family.

Favourites

Director: Nick Russell

Country: Australia; Running Time: 5 minutes

When a family's camping trip in Australia's Outback turns deadly, two young parents are tested and soon come to grips with an impossible choice.

Nate and John

Director: Jumai Yusuf

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

John and Nate first meet in the 1960s, when John, a surly teenage hippie, is forced by his father to get a haircut. Nate, a young Black barber's assistant, obliges. From this ordinary beginning, a deep and enduring friendship blossoms between the two men over years of haircuts.

Night Session

Director: Ballard C. Boyd

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

When a burglar runs into the resident of an apartment he just broke into, the burglary quickly morphs into an impromptu therapy session where the burglar assists the resident in processing his impending divorce—all while the resident assists the burglar in robbing his apartment.

Room Taken

Director: TJ O'Grady-Peyton

Country: Ireland; Running Time: 18 minutes

When a man newly arrived in Ireland finds himself experiencing homelessness, he secretly takes up residence in the home of an elderly blind woman. As he tries to remain unnoticed, an unexpected and unique bond forms between them, reshaping their lives in ways neither could have imagined.

Trapped

Directors: Sam Cutler-Kreutz, David Cutler-Kreutz

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

A special jury prize winner at SXSW, *Trapped* follows Joaquin, a janitor at a prestigious high school, as he confronts a group of boys in the middle of a senior prank—putting him between the boys, his boss, and his moral compass.

CLOSING NIGHT FILM PRESENTATION

Batman (1989)

Director: Tim Burton

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 126 minutes

The Dark Knight of Gotham City begins his war on crime with his first major enemy being Jack Napier, a criminal who becomes the clownishly homicidal Joker.

NARRATIVE COMPETITION FEATURES

Ben and Suzanne, A Reunion in 4 Parts

Director: Shaun Seneviratne

Countries: U.S./Sri Lanka; Running Time: 110 minutes

When Ben Santhanaraj visits Sri Lanka hoping to rekindle his relationship with American NGO worker Suzanne Hopper after a long separation, their second chance at love is thrown for a loop when Suzanne's boss demands that she work during their vacation, effectively blocking Ben's attempts at intimacy.

Fight Like a Girl

Director: Matthew Leutwyler

Countries: Rwanda/DR Congo; Running Time: 118 minutes

A young Congolese woman, kidnapped from her village and forced to work in an illegal mineral mine, escapes her captors and makes a new life for herself after joining a renowned all-women boxing club in the border city of Goma.

Sheepdog

Director: Steven Grayhm

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 122 minutes

Decorated U.S. Army combat veteran Calvin Cole is court-ordered into treatment and the care of a V.A. trauma therapist in training. Things become even more complicated when Calvin's father-in-law, a Vietnam veteran, shows up on his doorstep ... fresh out of prison.

DOCUMENTARY COMPETITION FEATURES

76 Days Adrift

Director: Joe Wein

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 110 minutes

Alone on an inflatable raft in the Atlantic Ocean without food or water, Steven Callahan gives a gripping first-hand account of finding the strength to survive in this stunning retelling of his *New York Times* bestselling memoir, *Adrift: 76 Days Lost at Sea*.

The Accidental Spy

Director: Anthony Wonke

Country: UK; Running Time: 97 minutes

The Accidental Spy tells the gripping tale of one man's entanglement in a dangerous complex geopolitical web, his ultimate sacrifice to protect his loved ones ... and the crushing betrayal by the nation he risked everything to defend.

NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Between the Mountain and the Sky

Director: Jeremy Power Regimbal

Country: Canada; Running Time: 93 minutes

After being named CNN 2015 Hero of the Year, Maggie Doyme, guardian to over 50 Nepalese children, faces a devastating loss. Following a chance encounter amidst her grief, Maggie allows a filmmaker into her life to document herself, her family, and soon enough, their love story.

ADDITIONAL NARRATIVE FEATURES

Breakup Season

Director: H. Nelson Tracey

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

Ben, an ambitious yet unemployed young man, brings his girlfriend, Cassie, home to meet his family over the Christmas holiday. But after a winter storm hits his rural hometown and a late-night conversation fractures their relationship, Cassie becomes stranded with her newly-minted ex and his family.

Days of Happiness

Director: Chloé Robichaud

Country: Canada; Running Time: 118 minutes

In this Canadian drama written and directed by Chloé Robichaud, rising conductor Emma attempts to navigate a toxic relationship with her father/agent, Patrick, and her budding new romantic relationship with a cellist as she considers a new career opportunity with a prestigious orchestra.

Freedom Hair

Director: Dianne Houston

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

When a determined, business-savvy mother decides she no longer wants to live paycheck to paycheck and sets out to achieve financial independence by starting a natural hair braiding business, she is soon faced with overcoming unexpected obstacles imposed by a powerful cosmetology cartel and her home state of Mississippi.

Kiss of the Con Queen

Director: Tom Waller

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 116 minutes

An actor thinks he's hit paydirt after he's offered a huge role in a blockbuster film. But after arriving for a shoot in Indonesia, nothing goes as planned, and he uncovers a shocking truth: He's been caught in a global scam.

My Sunshine

Director: Hiroshi Okuyama

Country: Japan; Running Time: 90 minutes

On a Japanese island, Takuya becomes captivated by Sakura, a rising figure skater. Under the guidance of former champion Arakawa, they train as a duo for an upcoming competition. As winter deepens, so does their bond—but like the first snow, even strong connections can melt away.

Never Not Yours

Directors: John Klein, Steve Kniss

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 82 minutes

Chaos ensues when retired parents announce their divorce to their three 30-something children, and the family must grapple with their changing relationships and identities.

The Paper Bag Plan

Director: Anthony Lucero

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 107 minutes

Oscar has dedicated his life to the well-being of his disabled son, Billy. But when Oscar is diagnosed with cancer, he must race against time as he trains his son on how to bag groceries in hopes of landing his first job and preparing for a life of independence.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTARY FEATURES

Every Little Thing

Director: Sally Aitken

Country: Australia; Running Time: 93 minutes

Every Little Thing uncovers profound truths in a simple story. As Terry Masear cares for fragile hummingbirds, their small victories and tragedies reflect Masear's journey, reminding us that grace and healing can be found in the smallest acts in this beautifully shot film that brings these tiny creatures to life.

Giants Rising

Director: Lisa Landers

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 82 minutes

Giants Rising takes us deep into America's iconic forests, unveiling the secrets of the towering redwoods—some of the tallest and oldest living beings on Earth. Through the voices of scientists, artists, Indigenous communities, and others, we explore the redwoods' resilience, connections to humanity and the trees' roles in shaping our future.

Mad About the Boy

Director: Barnaby Thompson

Country: U.K.; Running Time: 90 minutes

Using his own words, music, and home movies, *Mad About the Boy* tells the amazing life story of writer, director, actor, singer, songwriter, and poet Noël Coward as he rose from poverty to become one of the greatest multitalented artists the world has ever known.

Naked Ambition: Bunny Yeager

Directors: Dennis Scholl, Kareem Tabsch

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 73 minutes

You may not know her name, but you've probably seen her work. This documentary feature tells the story of trailblazing photographer Bunny Yeager and highlights her influence on pop culture—from the bikini and *Playboy* magazine to the modern selfie.

The Opener

Director: Jeff Troye

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 72 minutes

After a struggling street musician goes viral playing songs from his bedroom, he's offered the chance to prove himself on the big stage as the opening act for sing Jason Mraz, one of his musical heroes.

Porcelain War

Directors: Brendan Bellomo, Slava Leontyev

Countries: Australia/U.S./Ukraine; Running Time: 87 minutes

Porcelain War is a powerful tribute to the resilience of the human spirit, following three Ukrainian artists as they find beauty amid war's destruction. Filmed by ordinary civilians, this extraordinary documentary shows that, while fear is easy to create, passion and creativity are indestructible.

Rise Above

Director: Maryilene Blondell

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 53 minutes

Born into a life of poverty and not far from the rolling greens, dramatic slopes, and azaleas of Augusta National, Carl Jackson defied fate to become golf's greatest caddie.

Sanibel

WORLD PREMIERE

Director: Herbert James Winterstern

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 65 minutes

Sanibel started as an exploration of the people and businesses central to seashell culture in Southwest Florida. Six weeks into production, Hurricane Ian, one of the most destructive hurricanes in history, nearly wiped the island off the map.

Shari & Lamb Chop

Director: Lisa D'Apolito

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

The legendary ventriloquist Shari Lewis rose to stardom with her beloved sock puppet, Lamb Chop. When her popular children's TV show is canceled, Lewis must find a way to make peace with her alter ego. Together, they spend decades reinventing themselves in this uplifting documentary.

ADDITIONAL SHORT FILMS

À toi les oreilles

Director: Alexandre Isabelle

Country: Canada; Running Time: 13 minutes

While the townsfolk celebrate the village's anniversary with a parade, Étienne tries the impossible: to show them the beauty of his family's noisy chaos.

And Granny Would Dance

Director: Maryam Mohajer

Country: U.K.; Running Time: 10 minutes

Six-year-old Marmar cherishes the stories her grandmother's friends share, always remembering how granny would light up and dance whenever her grandad would play the accordion.

Beautiful Men

Director: Nicolas Keppens

Countries: Belgium/France/Netherlands; Running Time: 19 minutes

Bald and insecure, three brothers travel to Istanbul for hair transplants in this animated short. Stuck with each other in a hotel far from home, the middle-aged brothers see their insecurities grow faster than their hairlines recede.

Bogotá Story

Director: Esteban Pedraza

Countries: Colombia/U.S.; Running Time: 16 minutes

In an era of drug violence and corruption, a young mother in Bogotá, Colombia, receives an internship opportunity in the United States and must decide between her dreams and her family.

The Bullfighter

Director: Giselle Bonilla

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

Since retiring, ex-bullfighter Felipe Fernando de la Fernand has struggled to maintain the heroism he once felt in the arena. Now working as a flag-waving parking attendant, he finds himself corralling more chaos than any bull he's faced.

The Calm Under the Water

Director: Cam Brooks

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

The Calm Under the Water follows the emotional journey of an artist paralyzed from the neck down following a skimboarding accident. With the help of friends and the community, he confronts and overcomes the obstacles that have kept him from reconnecting with the place he once treasured—the ocean.

Cantata

Director: Dave Fox

Country: Ireland; Running Time: 12 minutes

Darren needs help. His fears are manifesting in the most unusual of ways—through opera. After visiting his therapist, he discovers that, to restore harmony in his life, all he has to do is simply face the music.

The Car That Came Back from the Sea

Director: Jadwiga Kowalska

Country: Switzerland; Running Time: 11 minutes

Six friends, full of exuberance and frivolity embark on a carefree road trip to the Polish Baltic coast, but as their car—and country—fall apart, they discover that life, like their journey, keeps moving forward.

Catherine & Michael

Director: Kathy Fusco

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

An unhappily married couple's weekend at their friends' idyllic country home leads them to an unexpected—and unconventional—way to reignite their fading spark.

Collage

Director: Màrius Conrotto

Country: Spain; Running Time: 10 minutes

Two museum employees, intrigued by a couple of patrons, embark on a “scientific” experiment to determine whether they're flirting. What they uncover is a universal truth about love.

The Day Keeper

Director: Mark Kiefer

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

Cliff Wentworth, a Cape Cod lighthouse keeper who works the dayshift, struggles to keep his own inner light shining in this short, amusing mockumentary.

Hearts of Stone

Director: Tom Van Avermaet

Countries: Belgium/Croatia; Running Time: 31 minutes

In the heart of a bustling metropolis, an impossible love blooms between Paula, a lonely street artist who entertains people as a living statue, and the silent stone statue she stands beside each day.

The Ice Cream Man

Director: Robert Moniot

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 34 minutes

Shortly after the Nazi invasion of the Netherlands, a popular Jewish ice cream parlor owner finds himself targeted by the infamous “Butcher of Lyon.”

I See You

Director: Briar March

Country: New Zealand; Running Time: 17 minutes

After encountering a charismatic young man with Down syndrome, Julia, a young mother struggling to love and accept her daughter, senses a shift and finally begins to see her daughter for who she is—a beautiful baby girl.

L+T

Director: Nevena Nikolova

Country: Bulgaria; Running Time: 18 minutes

A young woman makes a heartbreaking confession of love to a stranger in a bar. Neither of them imagined how far this would go.

Lip Virgin

Director: Shimrit Eldis

Country: Israel; Running Time: 11 minutes

In *Lip Virgin*, a short dramedy from Israel, a 13-year-old girl imagines her first kiss in a very romantic and detailed manner. But, just like all important life events, it isn't what she expects. Her pursuit of the perfect first kiss becomes a journey of disillusionment.

LUKi & the Lights

Director: Toby Cochran

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

Robot LUKi displays unwavering resilience when his battle against ALS transforms into a testament to the human (and robotic) spirit's ability to find light in the darkest of times. With every choice he makes and second he cherishes, *LUKi & the Lights* paints a portrait of what it means to truly live.

Night Session

Director: Ballard C. Boyd

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

When a burglar runs into the resident of an apartment he just broke into, the burglary quickly morphs into an impromptu therapy session where the burglar assists the resident in processing his impending divorce—all while the resident assists the burglar in robbing his apartment.

Saving Superman

Directors: Adam Oppenheim, Samuel-Ali Mirpoorian

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

When the town hero, a man with autism, faces eviction, the community rallies to save the person who has always been there for them.

SilverSizzle

Director: Brian Russell

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 13 minutes

Two recent widowers enlist the aid of a cemetery caretaker as they embark on a quest to find new love among widows visiting their departed spouses.

Walk with Me

Director: Adrien Boubilil

Country: Colombia; Running Time: 12 minutes

A man delves into his past, uncovering the influence of a pivotal figure in his life, as he seeks strength and reassurance on the day of his wedding. Directed by Adrien Boubilil, *Walk with Me* was ranked in the top five among 300 short films produced in Colombia in 2023.

Wander to Wonder

Director: Nina Gantz

Countries: Netherlands/France/Belgium/UK; Running Time: 14 minutes

After the creator of an '80s children's television series dies, the show's miniature stars—Mary, Billybud and Fumbleton—are left alone in the studio and continue to make increasingly strange episodes for their fans.

Yuck!

Director: Loïc Espuche

Country: France; Running Time: 13 minutes

In *Yuck!*, an animated short from France, little Léo plays along with his friends at summer camp. He says kissing on the mouth is gross, but secretly he wants to give it a try.

STUDENT FILMS

Cakewalk

Director: Lauren Best

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 2 minutes

In an unapologetically pink world, an exceptional bakery delivery girl does whatever it takes to deliver a perfectly punctual cake.

WORLD PREMIERE

Coercion

Director: Kamdyn Atkinson

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 13 minutes

A man wakes up bound to a metal chair in a garage. With his memory hazy and the situation unclear, he faces a teenage interrogator who demands a confession. The only problem? The man has no idea what he's guilty of.

Contracting the Cooties

Directors: Skylar Levine, Maya Bayewitch

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

When second-grader Maggie catches the dreaded cooties from a boy on the playground, her best friend Parker races against time to find the cure before it's too late.

Gone

Director: Hunter Nickless

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

Haunted by the guilt of being the driver in a car crash that killed his friends, high school film student Luca uses pre-recorded video footage to mask his grief.

The Lake in the Sky

Director: Caleb Reese Paul

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

Warren is a nostalgic teenager stuck in his worst nightmare: the present. He attempts to relive every day over again, scouring for moments and memories worth recording. The only memories he does have that are worth preserving are locked away inside a mysterious machine.

The Lights Above

Director: Luke J. Salewski

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

Months after Pearl Harbor, a determined journalist teams up with a Japanese American photographer to investigate mysterious aircraft sightings over Los Angeles and prevent a potential attack.

Weathered

Director: Patrick Jang

Country: U.S.; Running Time: 9 minutes

In this documentary short, three teenagers share personal stories of struggle, resilience, and growth, demonstrating their incredible ability to weather turbulent inner battles.

When Beverly Met Reita

Director: Brianna Schatt

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

Reita Green, an 87-year-old former Hollywood star, finds new purpose wallpapering homes with her best friend, about 60 years her junior. Together, they brighten lives and inspire others in this uplifting documentary.

ARTIS—NAPLES

Home of The Baker Museum and the Naples Philharmonic, Artis—Naples is unique among cultural institutions nationwide, equally dedicated to both the visual and performing arts featuring artists of global distinction.

KIMBERLY K. QUERREY and LOUIS A. SIMPSON CULTURAL CAMPUS

Led by CEO and President Kathleen van Bergen and Sharon and Timothy Ubben 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 music directors. Following a successful designate year in 2023-24, Alexander Shelley begins his new role as artistic and music director in the 2024-25 season. Renowned violinist James Ehnes continues as artistic partner through the 2024-25 season, working with Naples Philharmonic musicians in a variety of settings with a focus on inspiring and embodying a high level of artistry. Podium leadership also includes Principal Pops Conductor Jack Everly, celebrating 15 years in this role in the 2024-25 season and bringing pops performances that celebrate music across genres.

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 4,000 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 collections reflect the generosity and commitment of area collectors, including significant gifts from the collection of the late Olga Hirshhorn.

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 recently 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.”

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