

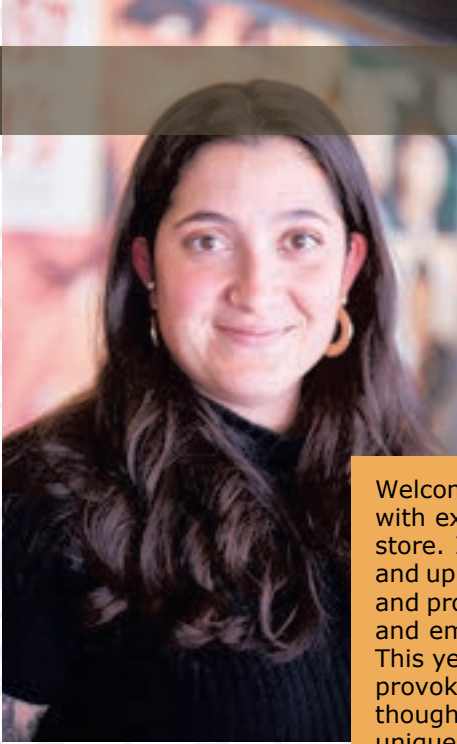
Minnesota Film Festival **Guide**



APRIL 3 -7, 2024



**5 Days • 10 Short Blocks • 14 Features • 100+ Films Total
10 Pitch Competitors • Panels, Events & More!**



Vera Bianchini Festival Director

Welcome to the 2024 Minnesota Film Festival! I am bursting with excitement and cannot wait to share what we have in store. It is my honor to curate a program that showcases and uplifts diverse voices, sparks meaningful conversations, and provides a safe space to foster connections among local and emerging filmmakers, artists, and audiences alike.

This year's lineup is filled with powerful stories that inspire, provoke, and unite us. From captivating narratives to thought-provoking documentaries, each film presents a unique lens through which to explore the complexities of the human experience.

The festival includes a variety of educational components. We have a stacked Pitch Competition and a number of panel discussions about the industry and the art of filmmaking. Our region is on the verge of a film production

boom and this is our response to that.

Everyone is invited to join us and immerse themselves in this journey of discovery, to engage with stories that challenge perspectives, open ourselves to others, and create a thriving story sharing community. Together, let's celebrate the magic of filmmaking and the endless possibilities it holds.

A special and sincere thank you to the Zeitgeist and MFF team for their commitment and hard work to make this festival a success. And thank you for joining us on this cinematic adventure. Enjoy the show!

*Sincerely,
Vera Bianchini*

Tony Cuneo Executive Director



If you're here, joining us at the Minnesota Film Festival, I'm guessing you have a deep appreciation for the power of stories to change our lives. That said, you could just as easily be at home, streaming movies by yourself. That you're here says you also recognize the power of connecting with others, sharing experiences with our community, and coming together to celebrate creativity and cultural expression. If that's true, you're at the right

place. Everyone of us here at Zeitgeist works every day to use the power of storytelling, connection and creative expression to build a connected, creative community where all feel welcomed and valued. This festival is a part of that effort. Thank you for being here and for supporting our work, and our vision for this community.

*Sincerely,
Tony Cuneo*



Meet our Team

Sponsors & Community Partners



**Minnesota
Film Festival**

**Elizabeth
Chatelain**

**Programming
Director**

**Graham
Holford**

**Head
Programmer**

**Kendra
Shoemaker**

**Programming
Coordinator**

**Khayman
Goodsky**

**Indigenous Films
Programmer**

**Kelly
Florence**

**Horror Films
Programmer**

Screening Team Members:

Abigail Aune, Nathan Carroll, Laila Davis, Nick Fadz, Jack Feudner, Crista Fleck, Elizabeth Gade, Aglaia Gelpke, Mark Jensen, Jay Krajic, AJ Larson, Sarah Mayne, Deano Pape, Mickey Pearson, Oogie Push, Lori Sam, Veronica Scott, Dylan Sjolie, Isabel Skye, Hannah Smith, Heather Trieschmann, Raenel Williams



Blandin Foundation
TRANSFORMING RURAL MINNESOTA



**DULUTH SUPERIOR AREA
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION**



AICHO
American Indian Community
Housing Organization



**NORTHLAND
SPECIAL
EVENTS**





How to — — Fest



Minnesota Film Festival 2024

All are Welcome — Join us!

The Minnesota Film Festival (MFF) will take place **April 3-7, 2024** at the Zeitgeist Center for Arts and Community, Zeitgeist Arts Building in downtown Duluth, MN!

MFF will celebrate a variety of local, national, and international films, host post-film conversations and Q&As with filmmakers, community events and parties! Our spotlight country this year is Iran, so expect powerful and inspiring Iranian films throughout our program.

Also plan to attend our MFF Pitch Competition, where emerging filmmakers from the Midwest compete for grants to fund their films. This year we plan to award almost \$20,000 in cash awards for both film competition winners and pitch competition winners.

LOCATION

Zeitgeist Arts Building

222 E Superior St
Duluth, MN 55802

PARKING

Garage parking – Medical District Ramp, 302 East Street

Metered parking – available all around Zeitgeist on Superior St, 3rd St, and 2nd St.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Find your route here:
www.duluthtransit.com

**EATS +
TREATS**



ACCESSIBILITY

Wheelchair Access to Theaters 1 and 2 can be obtained by taking the elevator in the Teatro Lobby.



MFF FAQs

What is the MFF Pitch Competition?

The MFF Pitch Competition is an annual competition where filmmakers from across the Midwest have ten minutes to pitch their next film production for financial support. Participants present their concepts or works in progress to a panel of judges composed of filmmakers and industry professionals, who will offer constructive feedback to all participants.

What's some general festival etiquette?

Please turn off mobile devices when entering the theater. No talking or texting is permitted during film presentations.

No recording equipment is allowed in the theater.

All theaters must be cleared between showtimes.

Filmmakers will be in attendance so please be respectful when criticizing films!

Tickets and Passes Info:

Passes are \$75, \$25 for students

Single General Students are \$15, \$12 for students.

Award Ceremony tickets are \$20.

All ticket reservations are Print at home or Mobile sent via email.

Tickets are sold out, but I really wanted to watch that film! Now what?

The Rush Line! Even if a film is sold out, tickets might become available. If a film is sold out, a Rush Line will begin in the lobby. Everything is first come first serve.

Will films have subtitles?

All non-English language films will have English subtitles.

Who can attend the Minnesota Film Festival?

Everyone! The Minnesota Film Festival welcomes anyone who is interested in stories and community through the medium of film.

Where do I pick up my pass?

Passes will be available for pick up at the Welcome Table by the entrance at Zeitgeist.

What's the Refund Policy?

All Sales are final! Thank you for understanding.

Where will films be screened and events take place?

All films in the lineup will have in-person screenings. The majority of the screenings will take place at the Zinema at Zeitgeist 222 E Superior Street. Some events will take place at the Teatro and surrounding areas.

Any more questions? Reach out to mff@zeitgeistarts.com!



Minnesota Film Festival 2024

Features



OPENING NIGHT

Without Arrows

Directed by: Elizabeth Day, Jonathan Olshefski

Feature • 2024 • United States • 95 minutes

Filmed over the course of thirteen years (2011-2023), WITHOUT ARROWS chronicles the vibrance and struggle of a Lakóta family. Delwin Fiddler Jr., a champion grass dancer from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, left his reservation as a young man to escape a trauma that splintered his family and built a new life in Philadelphia. A decade later he abandons it all and returns home to fulfill his mother's ambition and carry on the legacy of their thiyóšpaye (extended family).

Filmmakers & Guests in attendance



CLOSING NIGHT

On By

Directed by: Megan McGarvey & Isaac Quick

Feature • 2023 • United States • 74 minutes

Through the dark of night to the serenity of the sunrise in the North Woods of Minnesota four mushers share their never-before-seen journey on the trail from Duluth to Grand Portage.

Filmmakers in attendance

*Preceded by short film
BIRTH OF A SNOWMOBILE
directed by Nate Sheppard*



**NORTHERN MN
SPOTLIGHT**

Canusa Street

Directed by: Zack Morrison

Feature • 2023 • United States • 34 minutes

In a small town absurdly divided by the US/ Canada Border, a jaded US Border Patrol agent solves local cases while engaging in a fierce rivalry with her counterpart in the Canadian Mounties: her twin sister.

Filmmakers in attendance



**NORTHERN MN
SPOTLIGHT**

Abroad

Directed by: Giovanni Fumu

Feature • 2022 • United States • 85 minutes

A Korean couple, Taemin and Minji, travel to the north woods hoping to see the aurora borealis. On their first night, Minji disappears under mysterious circumstances. The local Sheriff suspects Taemin of foul play. Now it's up to Taemin, who doesn't speak English, to navigate his way through this insular town and find Minji before it's too late.

Filmmakers in attendance



IRANIAN SPOTLIGHT

A Revolution on Canvas

Directed by: Sara Nodjoui & Till Schauder

Feature • 2023 • United States • 95 minutes

In this hybrid political thriller and verité portrait documentary, Sara Nodjoui, working with co-director and husband, Till Schauder, makes her directorial debut with this personal film, diving into the mystery surrounding the disappearance of more than 100 "treasonous" paintings by her father, seminal Iranian modern artist Nickzad Nodjoui.



Chuck Chuck Baby

Directed by: Janis Pugh

Feature • 2023 • United Kingdom • 101 minutes

Helen's humdrum world takes a surprisingly interesting romantic turn with the return of her charismatic childhood friend Joanne. Moving, funny and charming, this is the musical rom-com set in a Welsh chicken processing plant you never knew you needed.

Filmmakers in attendance



Dancing Queen

Directed by: Aurora Gossé

Feature • 2023 • Norway • 90 minutes

Mina (12) gets her world turned upside down when the famous dancer Edvin moves to her town. She falls head over heels in love, and when he invites the local kids to an audition for a new dance crew, Mina sees her chance and signs up. Intoxicated by love she throws herself into the excitement. But there's one essential thing she has forgotten: She can't dance!



MINNESOTA MADE

The Electric Indian

Directed by: Leya Hale

Feature • 2023 • United States • 57 minutes

THE ELECTRIC INDIAN follows Ojibwe hockey legend, Henry Boucha. A stand-out hockey star from Warroad, Minnesota, Boucha impressed on the ice from the 1969 Minnesota High School Hockey Tournament to the 1972 Olympics to the NHL, but an on-ice assault and injury ended his athletic career that unexpectedly led to a journey of healing and cultural reclamation.



MINNESOTA MADE

Minnesota Mean

Directed by: Dawn Mikkelsen

Feature • 2023 • United States • 81 minutes

MINNESOTA MEAN takes you into the thrilling world of roller derby, following the lives of six badass women as they chase after the ultimate prize, the Hydra. When the team's top player gets sidelined with an injury, the question looms large: can they still clinch the victory?

Filmmakers in attendance



Mountains

Directed by: Monica Sorelle

Feature • 2023 • United States • 95 minutes

While looking for a new home for his family, a Haitian demolition worker is faced with the realities of redevelopment as he is tasked with dismantling his rapidly gentrifying Miami neighbourhood.



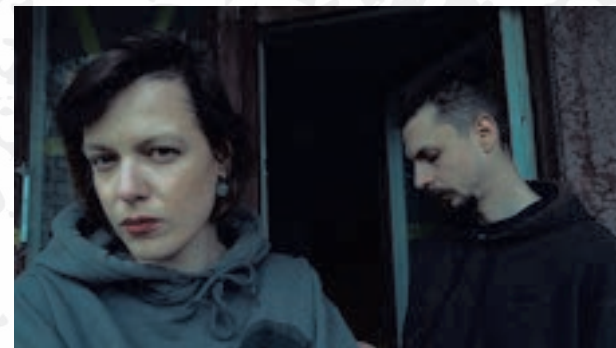
IRANIAN SPOTLIGHT

Opponent

Directed by: Milad Alami

Feature • 2023 • Sweden • 108 minutes

In the aftermath of a devastating rumor, Iman and his family have been forced to flee Iran. As refugees, they end up in a run-down hotel in northern Sweden. To increase their chances of asylum, he breaks a promise to his wife and joins the local wrestling club. As the rumors start to resurface, Iman's fear and desperation begin to take a hold.



Rule of Two Walls

Directed by: David Gutnik

Feature • 2023 • Ukraine • 77 minutes

RULE OF TWO WALLS is an intimate look at the war in Ukraine, as seen through the eyes of Ukrainian artists who remained in their country to make art as a defiant act in the face of aggression.

Filmmakers in attendance



MINNESOTA MADE

Seed of Doubt

Directed by: William J. Cox

Feature • 2024 • United States • 83 minutes

Melissa and Scott's dream home turns into a nightmare for the young couple when they take on new tenants to make ends meet. As Melissa descends into paranoia and delusion, they must fight to save their unborn child.

Filmmakers in attendance



Summer Qamp

Directed by: Jen Markowitz

Feature • 2023 • Canada • 80 minutes

Buried within the woods of Alberta, Canada sits camp fYrefly, a haven for LGBTQIA2S+ teens, far away from the fierce political battle currently being waged against queer expression and gender identity. SUMMER QAMP invites audiences into the innocence and joy of a summer away with friends, while never losing sight of the bravery of these young protagonists whose very existence is challenged in their normal lives.



Minnesota Film Festival 2024

Shorts

Filmmakers in attendance!

Ties That Bind: Stories about families and friendship.



Carving

*Directed By: Laura Shatkus and
Russell Leigh Sharman*

United States • 2023 • 16 minutes

A simple lesson on how to cut the Thanksgiving turkey turns darker by degrees as a young woman reveals to her father the real reason she so desperately wants to learn how to carve.

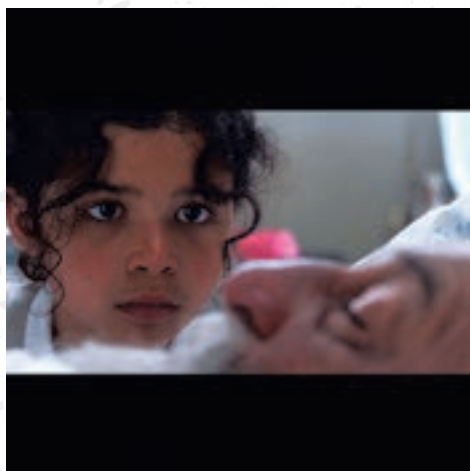


I Promise You Paradise

Directed By: Morad Mostafa

Egypt, France, Qatar • 2023 • 25 minutes

Following a violent incident, Eissa, a 17-year-old African migrant in Egypt, is on a quest against time to save his loved ones.



Jedo's Dead

Directed By: Sara Nimeh

United States • 2023 • 11 minutes

During the social and political turmoil of 9/11, a young girl and her brother intimately confront loss when they discover their dead grandfather's body.



serenity

Directed By: Ryan Stopera

United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

As Li struggles with the death of his sister Jessie, he finds himself falling down the same path by abusing drugs, but the strength of their love allows them to reach each other after she has passed away.



Soft Lights and Silver Shadows

Directed By: Ian Kelly

United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

A family reconstructs the fragments of memories forgotten by a loved one, in this kaleidoscopic animated documentary.



Somewhere to Stay

Directed By: Amirhossein Hatami

Iran • 2023 • 15 minutes

To conceal a devastating secret about his daughter, a father has told everyone that she is missing, while pretending to search for her alongside his son. Unable to bear the burden of the deceit any longer, the son takes a step that profoundly impacts their family's life.

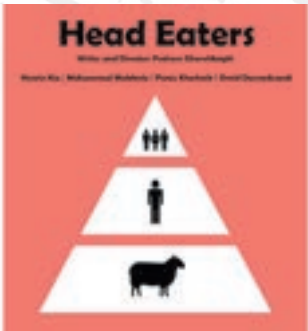


Horror: Films curated from across the horror genre ranging from comedy to gore, you'll laugh and be terrified.



From The Story of Elin
Directed By: Louise Parker and Louis Heilbronn
United States • 2023 • 11 minutes

Northern Minnesota, 1900. Elin, on the run, stumbles upon a vicious crime.



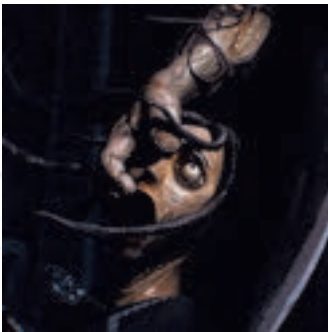
Head Eaters
Directed By: Pedram Gharehbaghi
Iran • 2023 • 15 minutes

An unsuspecting man gets invited to dinner with a strange group of people without realizing what their appetites truly crave.



Lost Boys Pizza
Directed By: Cassie Llanas
United States • 2023 • 14 minutes

Once upon a Halloween Night, two theater kids have such a fright. Right before their unsuspecting eyes is Dracula (not so in disguise). Utilizing the power of dance, they put Dracula into a trance and, just in the nick of time, they strike Dracula where the sun don't shine.



Malakout
Directed By: Farnoosh Abedi
Iran • 2020 • 10 minutes

A piano player tries to bring his wife back to life, but the deal awakens the devil inside him.



Murder Camp
Directed By: Clara Aranovich
United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

Two slasher serial killers make the shameful error of serial killing at the same summer camp on the same night, challenging the very fabric of their friendship... and identities.



Skörda
Directed By: Charlie Edwins
United States • 2023 • 7 minutes

A girl ventures into the forest, looking to harvest a mystical herb that only appears during the winter solstice. She finds herself in a place where evil spirits dwell, looking for a harvest of their own.



Sleep Study
Directed By: Natalie Metzger
United States • 2023 • 10 minutes

A restless new mother confronts a dangerous terror whenever she tries to sleep.



The Knowing
Directed By: Erin Lovett
United States • 2023 • 16 minutes

A grieving artist seeks solace in the woods after the trauma of a recent miscarriage. As she wrestles with her past, and possible future, a terrifying force pays her a visit – provoking a confrontation and ultimately, a choice.



The Morgue
Directed By: Majid Farzolah
Iran • 2024 • 1 minute

A zombie girl comes out of the morgue and is horrified by the image of the movie The Ring that is playing.



Times, Places and Spaces: Explorations of the relationships we have with spaces.



4DWN

Directed By: Danny Schmidt
United States • 2023 • 17 minutes

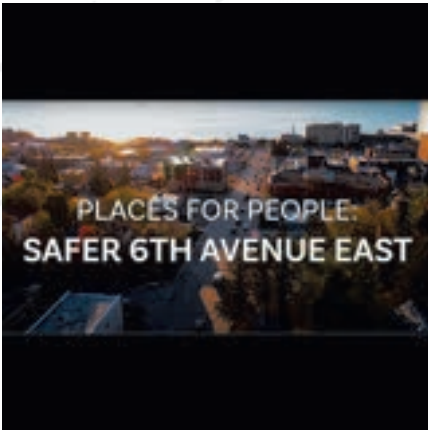
4DWN chronicles the past and present lives of this skatepark-turned-urban farm's founders and one budding young skater who finds kinship, camaraderie, and a reason to keep pushing.



A'ai

Directed By: Kalie Granier
France • 2023 • 5 minutes

A dialogue between an Ohlone Costanoan Esselen Nation woman and a pelican on the shore, as the avian messenger solemnly heralds the funeral dance of the endangered kelp forest.



**Places for People:
Safer 6th Avenue East**

Directed By: Jacob White
United States • 2023 • 17 minutes

6th Avenue E is a relic of the former highway system that divides the Hillside neighbourhood and is set to be reconstructed within the next ten years, with a chance to test new designs starting in 2024.



Quiet in the Wild

Directed By: Jeremy Nelson
United States • 2024 • 20 minutes

A woman steps into the quiet in the wild, a forest bathing walk. After recognising all she has gained from the architects and caretakers of this trail, she is inspired to do her part.



Smoking In Public

Directed By: Stelios Kouk
UK • 2023 • 5 minutes

A calm middle-aged executive, enjoys a cigarette outside of his office building when he's approached by a young hipster. Things get rather interesting when the police get involved.



The Site of Unsure

Directed By: Zachary Howatt
United States • 2023 • 3 minutes

A colorful and expressive film/animation hybrid in memory of the filmmaker's late mother.



The Wayfarer

Directed By: Izzy Shinn
United States • 2022 • 3 minutes

A witch named Ardem visits a forest to investigate claims of spirit attacks, and discovers a young inexperienced witch is behind the incidents.



	ZINEMA 1	ZINEMA 2	TEATRO	SPECIAL EVENTS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3				6:00 PM OPENING CEREMONY/ DRUM GROUP IN THE ATRIUM
	7:00 PM "WITHOUT ARROWS" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A			
		7:30 PM "WITHOUT ARROWS" SHORTS BLOCK, FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
				9:00 PM FESTIVAL TOAST & OPENING NIGHT PARTY AT RESTAURANT
THURSDAY, APRIL 4			3:00 - 5:00 PM PITCH COMPETITION	
	5:00 PM SHORTS - OUR STORIES FOLLOWED BY Q&A	5:00 PM SHORTS - MINNESOTA MEDIA ARTS SCHOOL STUDENTS FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	7:15 PM "A REVOLUTION ON CANVAS" FEATURE FILM	7:30 PM "MINNESOTA MEAN" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	9:30 PM SHORTS - HORROR/LATE NIGHT FOLLOWED BY Q&A			9:30 PM SOCIAL AT THE FLAME NIGHT CLUB
FRIDAY, APRIL 5			1:00 - 3:00 PM PITCH COMPETITION	
		2:30 PM SHORTS - LUV SUX FOLLOWED BY Q&A		3:00 - 5:00 PM UMFO HAPPY HOUR AT BLACKLIST BREWING
	3:00 PM "CANUSA STREET" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A			
	4:30 PM "SEED OF DOUBT" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A	4:30 PM SHORTS - THE SHOW MUST GO ON FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
			5:30 PM FROM PAGE TO SCREEN, BY KELLY FLORENCE AND MEG HAFDAHL	
	7:00 PM "ABROAD" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A	6:45 PM SHORTS - PERSONAL RESISTANCE FOLLOWED BY Q&A		7:00 - 10:00 PM SOCIAL HOUR AT RESTAURANT
			10:00 PM COMEDY/IMPROV	



Minnesota Film Festival

APRIL 3 -7, 2024

	ZINEMA 1	ZINEMA 2	TEATRO	SPECIAL EVENTS
SATURDAY, APRIL 6		10:00 AM UMD STUDENT REEL		
	11:00 AM SHORTS - INDIGENOUS FOLLOWED BY Q&A			
		11:30 AM SHORTS - TIES THAT BIND FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	1:30 PM "SUMMER QAMP" FEATURE FILM		1:30 PM MAKING FILMS IN NORTHERN MN HOSTED BY UMFO	
		2:00 PM "OPPONENT" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
			3:00 PM MADE A FILM, NOW WHAT? CONVERSATION WITH DISTRIBUTOR AND PRODUCERS.	
	3:30 PM "THE ELECTRIC INDIAN" FEATURE FILM			
		4:30 PM "RULE OF TWO WALLS" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	5:00 PM "CHUCK CHUCK BABY" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A			8:00 PM AWARD CEREMONY (DOORS OPEN @ 7:00 PM) @ GREYSOLON
				9:00 PM AWARD CEREMONY AFTER PARTY @ ZEITGEIST RESTAURANT
SUNDAY, APRIL 7		11:00 AM SHORTS - TIME, PLACES & SPACES FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	11:30 AM SHORTS - COMING OF AGE FOLLOWED BY Q&A			
		1:30 PM "MOUNTAINS" FEATURE FILM		
	2:00 PM "DANCING QUEEN" FEATURE FILM			
		4:00 PM "ABROAD" FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A		
	4:30 PM "ON BY" CLOSING NIGHT FEATURE FILM, FOLLOWED BY Q&A			7:00 - 9:00 PM CLOSING NIGHT PARTY @ CARMODY IRISH PUB



Personal Resistance: Stories about characters that face tides and wade through them.



Animal Transport
Directed By: Iván Bustinduy
Argentina • 2022 • 19 minutes

A man returns to his job in a company that transports animals. On this particular trip, he discovers something strange inside one of the cages. The mystery lurking in his own truck pushes him to the limit of his own sanity.



Electra Wasp
Directed By: Wasan Hayajneh
United States • 2023 • 6 minutes

Having crashed on the shores of Gardner Island after her final flight, Amelia Earhart is bitten by a strange bug and undergoes a phantasmagorical journey down memory lane.



From The Heartland
Directed By: Matt Coddaira
United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

From the Heartland is a candid depiction of American Agriculture and the rural towns reliant on its success. But when an industry's ability to thrive is dependent on progress, how does a farm discard the traditional practices, to try something new and save the land?



Jesus Would Have Loved Punk Rock
Directed By: Abbey George
United States • 2022 • 12 minutes

Veronica and Annie, fed up with the oppressive and corrupt nature of their Catholic high school, are determined to make authoritarian teachers answer for their crimes and right the moral compass of the student body.



Small Changes
Directed By: Maya Bell
United States • 2023 • 25 minutes

A newly single mother trades her successful 2-acre farm for 71 acres of empty land and a dream. Now, she is alone with three young daughters to raise, a school bus to live in and an ambitious project ahead of her.



THE SPRAYER
Directed By: Farnoosh Abedi
Iran • 2022 • 9 minutes

In the land occupied by the Sprayers army, no one has the right to grow any kind of plants. But when a soft-hearted Sprayer finds a seed buried deep in the dust, his curiosity sparks something extraordinary, something big, something revolutionary.



Trying
Directed By: Emily Alpren
United States • 2022 • 7 minutes

She thought getting pregnant would be easy. Then she started trying.



Our Stories: Animation, comedy, documentary, experimental work from local artists from different groups in our community.

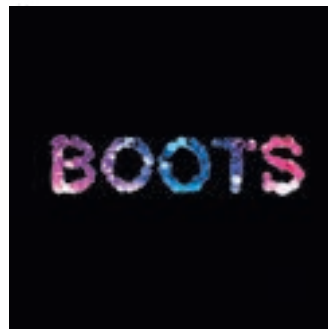


Xagal (Angle)

Directed By: Wasima Farah

United States • 2023 • 3 minutes

XAGAL (ANGLE) visualizes the transformations of an eldest daughter through the lens of a Somali-American raised by eldest daughters of eldest daughters. This film seeks to understand and question, why did we have to grow up so fast?

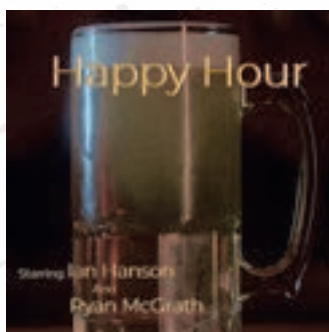


Boots

Directed By: Lily Berg

United States • 2023 • 2 minutes

I had a pair of boots for about 10 years, and now they are too worn out to wear. This is saying goodbye to them.



Happy Hour

Directed By: Gene Halverson

United States • 2023 • 5 minutes

Walter's day revolves around beer-thirty. He makes it to the bar just before the end of happy hour. Unfortunately, this is also just in time for the place to be robbed.



Love Lessons in a Time of Settler Colonialism

Directed By: Moira Villiard

United States • 2023 • 3 minutes

LOVE LESSONS IN A TIME OF SETTLER COLONIALISM is a poem by Tanaya Winder, exploring the roots of colonisation in the murdered and missing Indigenous relatives epidemic, while touching on our shared community histories of boarding schools.



Paprika

Directed By: Haley Jacobsen

United States • 2023 • 7 minutes

A young boy and a mysterious science project bring a family together again.

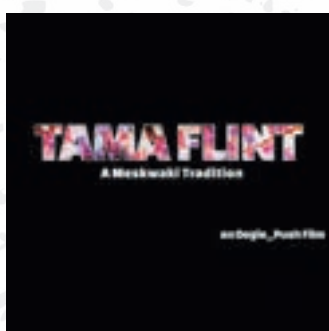


Standoff

Directed By: Lisa Channer

United States • 2021 • 15 minutes

A Feminist Western about a four way standoff at gunpoint that does not go as anyone expected.



Tama Flint: A Meskwaki Tradition copy

Directed By: Oogie_Push

United States • 2023 • 27 minutes

Tama Flint: A Meskwaki Tradition sheds light on the history, cultural teachings, and modern stories about Meskwaki corn.



That Streaming Life

Directed By: Jeremy Nordeen

United States • 2022 • 8 minutes

Cynical columnist Claire is given a human interest story assignment that might change her life.

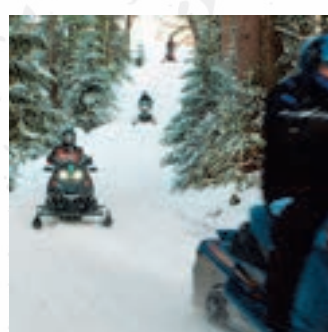


The Accelerators: Brains, Braids, & Bots

Directed By: Leah X Rathe

United States • 2023 • 23 minutes

The Accelerators, an all girls First Robotics team from Cass Lake-Bena High School in Cass Lake, MN, compete in their 10th season, striving to make it to State for the first time in their school's history.



The Birth of the Modern Snowmobile

Directed By: Nate Sheppard

United States • 2023 • 7 minutes

A short documentary chronicling the story of Wisconsin inventor Carl Eliason and his essential contributions to the development of the modern snowmobile.



Coming of Age: The first time we learned about life's harsh and sometimes beautiful realities.



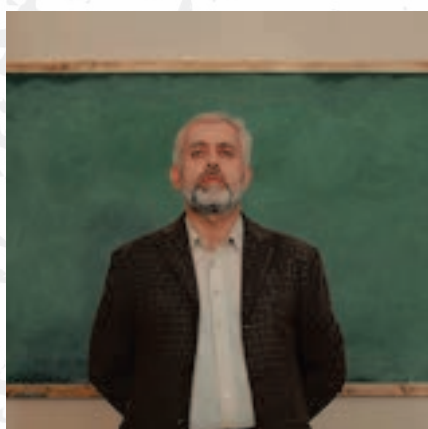
Ancient Tomb
Directed By: **Ali Masoumi**
Iran • 2023 • 18 minutes

Driven by poverty and desperation, Mr. Aghajan ventures to an old gravesite with his teenage son, Jalal in search of treasure.



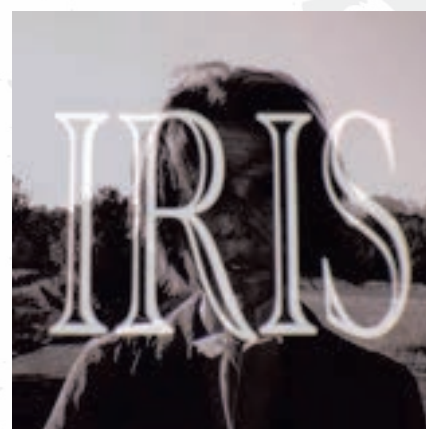
Chopstick
Directed By: **Leah Xiuzhen Rathe**
United States • 2023 • 3 minutes

A chopstick, adopted from one country and raised in one filled with forks, goes on a journey of self discovery and identity.



Entropy
Directed By: **Bamdad Aghajani & Arian Navabi**
Iran • 2022 • 14 minutes

When a physics professor tries to teach the concept of Entropy in his class, unusual things start to happen.



Iris
Directed By: **Georgia Didier**
United States • 2022 • 4 minutes

A middle-aged mother yearns for the childhood she once had as she sulks in the tedious life she has now. Reminiscent, she awaits her death in bliss.



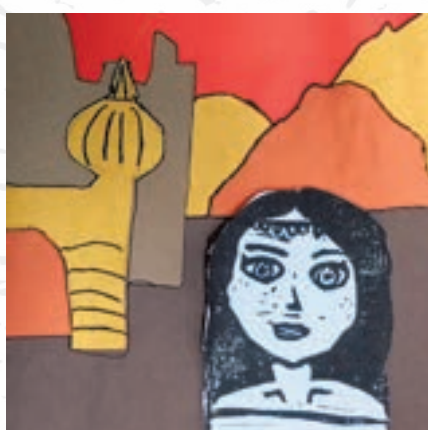
İkilem
Directed By: **Ebubekir Sefa Akbulut**
Turkey • 2022 • 10 minutes

In a world where vitality is gradually decreasing due to environmental pollution, a fisherman who cannot find food forms a bond with the fish he catches in the lake after long efforts. He is torn between hunger and conscience.



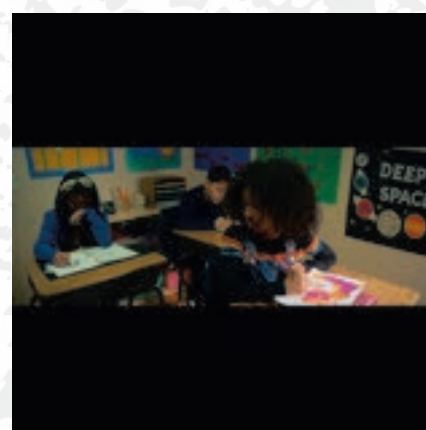
Reunion
Directed By: **Lindsey Martin & Sam Dodd**
United States • 2024 • 11 minutes

When life-long friends find their way to their 41st high school reunion, they grapple with shared histories and grief over their former school building and the shrinking town they still love.



Savitri
Directed By: **Crestwood Elementary 4th & 5th Graders**
United States • 2023 • 10 minutes

One girl's quest to find an equal becomes a journey beyond the grave. A witty and slightly irreverent retelling of a myth from India by the 4th and 5th grade students of Crestwood Elementary school in Madison WI.



Supa Hair
Directed By: **Glenís Hunter**
United States • 2023 • 14 minutes

After the death of her mother, Luna and her sister move from the Dominican Republic to Arizona to live with their estranged grandmother. When Luna decides to use an old comb she found in the DR, it activates a familial magic power that had been lost for decades.



The Show Must Go On!: Understanding the pursuit of the performance.



A Poem for Giselle, a Poem for a Peasant

Directed By: Diana Mora & Camilo Correa Costa
Germany • 2023 • 9 minutes

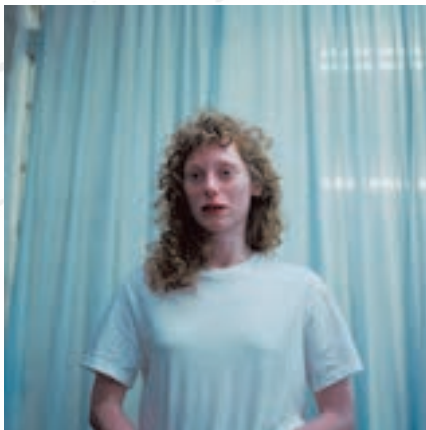
Through the reconstruction of memory and reinterpretation of the classical ballet "Giselle," Diana develops a message of solidarity with Bolivian peasants of the North Potosí, thereby illuminating the impact of racism in a postcolonial global society and mending her own connection with her lineage and personal identity.



Chiaroscuro

Directed By: Elias Djemil-Matassov
Canada • 2022 • 9 minutes

It is between the light and the dark that life operates in contrasts. Between the puppeteer and the puppet. Between shadow and light.



Maria

Directed By: Panagiota Florou, Kasia Sylwestrzak
Germany • 2022 • 11 minutes

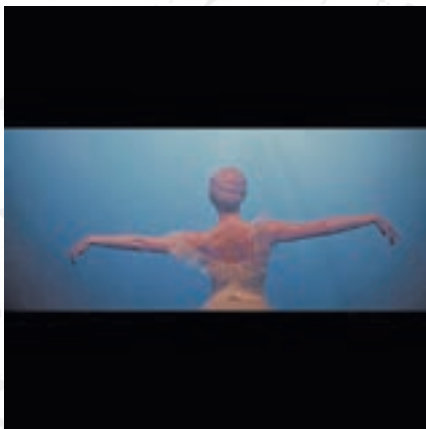
Maria, a young actress, tries to get to a casting that her agent thinks she is not ready for. Maria is determined to convince her. If she succeeds, she will finally recite a monologue that holds all her grim secrets.



Pasture & Storm

Directed By: Chris Frazer Smith
UK • 2023 • 19 minutes

Nicholas, born without his right hand, is an accomplished left-handed pianist who collaborates with composer Sadie Harrison on a new work for the performance, "Pasture and Storm."



Prima

Directed By: Daria Vorobeva
Russia • 2022 • 14 minutes

A ballet dancer tries to come back to being on stage after a car crash by proving her worth to an art director of a theatre where the main part in a new show was given to her best friend.



The Cherry Man

Directed By: Dudley Edmondson
United States • 2023 • 18 minutes

The Cherry Man is a collaboration between the two well-known Minnesota based Photographers, Dudley Edmondson and the film's subject, Walter Griffin. Walter's passion for life, photography and cherries take audiences through his unique life trajectory as an unlikely visual historian and world traveler.



Thrill-o-ween

Directed By: Andy Mor
Cameroon • 2023 • 7 minutes

THRILL-O-WEEN is a dance short film inspired by Michael Jackson's "Thriller", directed by Andy Mor and produced by Ryan Louprason.



Toccata

Directed By: Ben Stokes
United States • 2023 • 3 minutes

This stop-motion animation brings to life a musical piece where the wind section is asked to "play the notes without blowing."



Love Sux: The lengths we go to in the pursuit of love.



Bulletin

Directed By: Rachel Weber
United States • 2023 • 8 minutes

Maren is just trying to make friends; Lucas keeps getting in the way. An accidental love story set in the 90s featuring beer, wood, and bean bag toss.



Cringe

Directed By: Isaac Quick
United States • 2023 • 4 minutes

For the first time since being asked to be in a throuple, Janie returns to the park where it all happened to recount her year of abysmal dating.



Insta Gay

Directed By: Simon Paluck
Canada • 2023 • 12 minutes

A gay millennial reels after breaking-up with a popular influencer.



Queer Science

Directed By: Nicole de Meneses
United States • 2022 • 7 minutes

A comedian's romantic plans are thwarted when her scientist girlfriend accidentally shrinks her to the size of a Brussel sprout.



Safe Word

Directed By: Christopher Cunetto
United States • 2022 • 15 minutes

Cesar, an emotionally stunted masochist, must confront his self-loathing after his dom, Bear, reinterprets the rules of their game. They arrive at a paradigm-shifting result neither one of them expects.



Slow Dance

Directed By: Micah Streeter
United States • 2023 • 6 minutes

A break-up in reverse.



Small Talk

Directed By: Simone Hile Bassett
United States • 2023 • 4 minutes

A musician longs for a deeper connection with the person they are seeing, but the conversation never ventures past small talk.



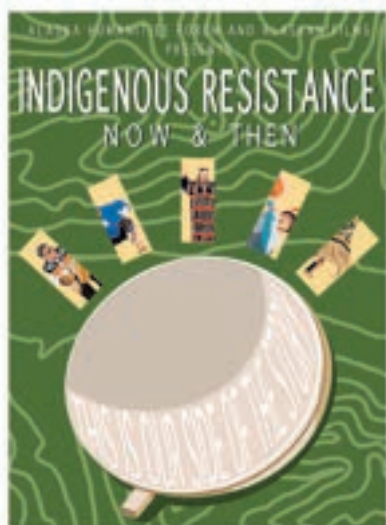
Tina

Directed By: Laura Sweeney
United States • 2023 • 14 minutes

When Tina and Ryan meet on an internet first date they quickly learn they share a past together. They also discover they're no longer the same people they once were.



Indigenous Stories: Documentaries and narratives by Indigenous and First Nation Filmmakers.



Indigenous Resistance: Now and Then

Directed By: Wáats'asdiyei Joe Yates

United States • 2023 • 14:40

We explore how it was for our people to go through statehood, blood quantum, ANCSA, boarding schools, stripping our language and dance away, and all that has done to our mental health. With that, we try to have a hopeful spin on this narrative and show how resilient our people are.



My Girl

Directed By: Megan Shott

Canada • 2022 • 6:22

Set in the Northern Boreal Forest, this story follows a young woman who rises from the moss and embarks on a path of self-discovery.

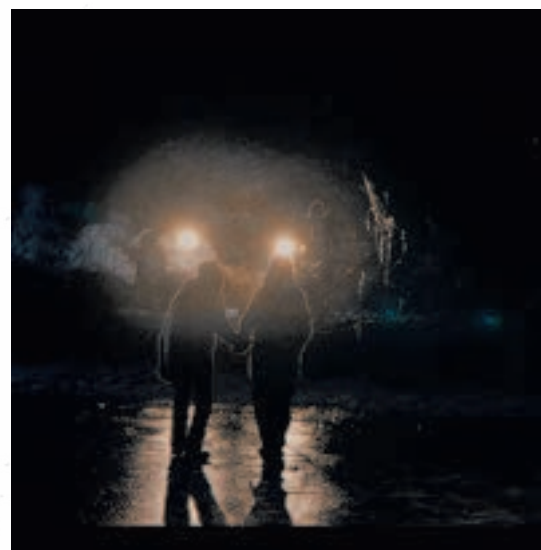


Native Hope Champions: Riding for the Missing

Directed By: Frank Blanquet & Sahar Khadjenoury

United States • 2022 • 8:58

In the face of the silent crisis plaguing Indigenous communities, Native American rodeo champions take center stage. "Riding for the Missing" delves into their inspiring journey, using their platform to demand justice and raise awareness for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG).



Ohskennón:ten Owí:ra (Little Deer)

Directed By: Jonathan Elliott

Canada • 2023 • 32:14:00

On Christmas Eve, 1967, two young Indigenous girls are forced to battle the elements, confront their darkest secrets and work together in order to return home to their families after a daring escape from the Mohawk Institute Residential School.



Running Rabbit

Directed By: Bret Kenworthy

Canada • 2023 • 16:15

A 20-minute documentary telling Regan's story about leaving home, venturing out and following his visions on becoming an MMA fighter. With his new found knowledge, he hopes to help inspire his people from Siksika.



Tama Flint: A Meskwaki Tradition

Directed By: Oogie_Push

United States • 2023 • 27:09:00

Tama Flint: A Meskwaki Tradition sheds light on the history, cultural teachings, and modern stories about Meskwaki corn.



Minnesota Media Arts School Shorts: Students of the Minnesota Media Arts School present their student films on the big screen! Come support our emerging filmmakers.



A Calm Spring

Directed By: Lillian Kainz
United States • 2023 • 14 minutes

A CALM SPRING is a poetic film showing the calmness of spring that is easily overlooked.



Annabella's Antique Mall

Directed By: Katherine Lean
United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

In the summer of 2007, two events happened that had a major impact on a small iron mining community in northern Minnesota. As a local highway is being rerouted to bypass its downtown, Annabella's Antique Mall had its grand opening. Now over sixteen years later, Annabella's continues to welcome customers daily to relive a bygone era while shopping for that perfect vintage or antique treasure.



Duluth for Mandela: A Northland Celebration

Directed By: Gerri Williams
United States • 2023 • 44 minutes

DULUTH FOR MANDELA: A NORTHLAND CELEBRATION chronicles how a northern Minnesota community honored the centenary of South African freedom fighter and Nobel laureate Nelson Mandela--exploring South African history, sampling the country's cuisine, moving to the rhythms of a South African choir, and more.



From the Front (Desk)

Directed By: Josif Nieto
United States • 2024 • 7 minutes

Follow Scott Yeazole, born in Superior and a Duluthian of over 20 years as he works to bring the community together as the Office Coordinator of Community Action Duluth. For their Dream Big Fundraiser Scott breaks tradition from a suit and tie event to a free to the public and feel more 'Homegrown' at Bent Paddle Brewing Co.



Prophesy

Directed By: Christy Rounds
United States • 2023 • 15 minutes

A psychic's prediction, followed by a vision of an old woman who appeared right in the middle of her daily run, prompted Christy to book a last-minute trip to Peru. Christy travels to 16,000 feet in the Andes, searching for 98-year-old Alto Mesayoq (Incan high priestess), Maria Apaza.



Soap Opera

Directed By: Lillian Kainz
United States • 2023 • 2 minutes

Soap Opera is a short animation that I made that shows my unique sense of humor and my love of the play on words.



The Animator

Directed By: Heather Kainz
United States • 2023 • 8 minutes

This is a short documentary about a young, aspiring animator and why animating is important to her.



Tiny But Powerful: The Duluth Punk Scene in 2024

Directed By: Laila Davis
United States • 2024 • 13 minutes

A short documentary about the Duluth/Superior punk and metal scene, featuring interviews and live footage from a number of local bands.



Trained to Adapt: Voices of a Canceled Marathon

Directed By: Elizabeth VanLoon
United States • 2023 • 7 minutes

At 5:30 a.m. on Sunday, October 1, the 2023 Twin Cities Marathon was cancelled due to extreme heat. The decision affected over 20,000 runners, as well as volunteers and spectators. This film spotlights how a few of them responded.

UMD Student Shorts: Short films made by University of Minnesota Duluth students!

2024 UMD Student Short Film Reel

Multiple Student Directors / over 30 student filmmakers
United States • 2024 • 61 minutes

A diverse collection of short films created by University of Minnesota Duluth Art & Design students in 2023-24. From animation and video essay to narrative shorts and social documentaries, the reel features the work of over 30 students across more than 20 different projects.



2024 Pitch Judges



Dawn
Mikkelson

3-time Emmy Award winning producer, and 2010 McKnight Filmmaking Fellow, Dawn Mikkelson's work has broadcast and screened internationally. Festival screenings include: the Galway Film Fleadh, Cinequest, DOC NYC, Heartland Film Festival, Newport Beach Film Festival, and Mill Valley Film Festival. Broadcast includes PBS and the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). Mikkelson has completed seven award-winning independent feature documentaries, Minnesota Mean (2023), Finding Her Beat (2022), Risking Light (2018), The Red Tail (2009), Green Green Water (2007), THIS obedience (2003), and Treading Water: a documentary (1999).

Mikkelson recently became an Cultural Envoy for the US State Department through their American Film Showcase program, in collaboration with USC's School of Cinematic Arts, representing Finding Her Beat. A former television news reporter at an ABC affiliate, Mikkelson has taught Documentary Film as Adjunct Faculty at Ottawa University in Kansas, as well as at Film North. Most recently she served as Broadcast Content Manager at PBS North in Duluth, MN.

Based in Lake City, Minnesota, Mikkelson is a proud member of the Film Fatales Minnesota Chapter and the DPA (Documentary Producers Alliance), as Co-Representative of the Midwest Region and Member of the Ethics Committee.



Feather
LaRoche

Feather LaRoche brings a rich experience to the judging panel, with a background that spans the NYC TV & film industry, strategic communication, and community advocacy. With over a decade of experience in logistics and project management within the film and television sectors, Feather has developed a keen eye for storytelling that resonates with diverse audiences. His unique blend of creative insight and a deep understanding of cultural nuances makes Feather an invaluable asset to our film festival's mission to discover and nurture emerging filmmakers.



Paige
Wood

PAIGE WOOD is an award-winning filmmaker, screenwriter, and multimedia producer. Based in Detroit, she's produced and/or co-written a number of critically-acclaimed projects such as several narrative and documentary films, an animated pilot, and even a video game -- her work receiving recognition from the likes of BlackStar Film Festival, Tribeca Festival, and Apple. Most recently, Paige served as the Supervising Producer for the Rise-Home Stories Project, which brought together artists and advocates to reimagine the stories told about land and home. Currently, Paige intends to make her directorial debut with her first short film project in 2024. In addition to her independent creative work, Paige also teaches at Wayne State University.

Paige is a 2023 winner of Constellations' Artist Disruptor Award, 2022 Gotham TV Lab Fellow, 2021-2022 USC Annenberg Civic Media Fellow, 2020 Kresge Artist Fellow, an alumni of Firelight Media's 2018-2019 Impact Producer Cohort, and a 2019 Sundance Institute | Knight Foundation Program Fellow. As a fan of comedic, fantasy, and animated storytelling, Paige loves to tell stories that subvert where surrealism, horror, and humor can exist by injecting a bit of absurdity into our current reality.

Awards & Prizes

- Short Film Pitch - First Prize \$1000, Runner Up \$500
- Feature Narrative Pitch - First Prize \$3000, Runner Up \$500
- Feature Documentary Pitch - First Prize \$3000, Runner Up \$500
- Local Filmmaker Pitch - First Prize \$3000, Runner Up \$500
- Indigenous Filmmaker Pitch Presented by AICHO - First Prize \$3000, Runner Up \$1000





2024 PITCH COMPETITION

Indigenous Filmmaker

Grime



Directed by: Cody James Yaekel

An alcohol fueled podcaster leads his entourage towards a dangerous musician and his sister, whom is being taken over by otherworldly eels, causing a string of deaths.

Indigenous Filmmaker

Native Love Jams



Directed by: Elizabeth Day

In this insightful Native romantic comedy, two cooks go foraging and find love in a berry patch.

Short Film

STFU



Directed by: Katie Dresner

A quiet middle-schooler must stand up to her friend's bullying before her reality completely shatters.

Short Film

People in a Box

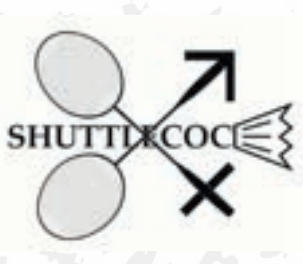


Directed by: M.r. Fitzgerald

Artists and performers are trapped inside a mysterious theater where they are forced to perform in order to survive.

Local Filmmaker

Shuttlecock



Directed by: Tapan Sharma

A pre-med, Indian-American rideshare driver (triple "non-threat") gets caught in a dangerous fraternity-sorority rivalry which turns out to be part of a war on the whole Greek system.

Local Filmmaker

Watercolors: A Documentary About SJ Nielson



Directed by: Kevin Jacobsen

WATERCOLORS documents Duluth, Minnesota watercolor artist + entrepreneur SJ Nielsen's journey to land her dream client: securing a partnership with a national park.

Narrative Feature

The Deep Fake



Directed by: Jhayla Mosley

A grieving mother inherits a financial addiction to virtually connecting with her deceased son.

Narrative Feature

The Punk Show in Chicago



Directed by: Erika Valenciana

iTHE PUNK SHOW IN CHICAGO! is a feature length comedy about Alicia, a timid Chicana punk, and Belén, her brash Filipina BFF, who travel to Chicago to see their favorite band play, meet up with a dreamboat, and get an abortion.

Doc Feature

Frames of Reference

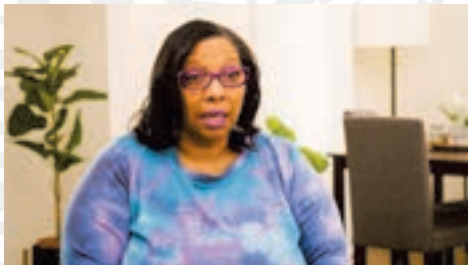


Directed by: Justin Joseph Hall

FRAMES OF REFERENCE is a feature-length documentary guided by an animated cowgirl through five continents encountering education perspectives like a meth addict teacher, transexuality being taught to kids, and outlaw students and faculty.

Doc Feature

Forgotten Names



Directed by: Katie Lindow

A mother's evolution from grieving mother to advocate in the fight for correctional system reform in Minnesota.



2024 MFF Panels & Events

Wednesday, 6:00 - 6:30pm

Zeitgeist Atrium

**Opening Ceremony
& Drum Group**
Opening Reception

The Minnesota Film Festival is opening up the festival with a special ceremony led by a local drum group!

Wednesday, 9:00pm

Zeitgeist Atrium & Restaurant

Toast & Opening Night Party
Party

Join us at the Zeitgeist Restaurant to celebrate the beginning of a cinematic adventure!

Thursday, April 4 at 9:30pm

Flame Night Club

SOCIAL
Party

Friday, 3:00 - 5:00pm

Blacklist Brewing Co

Filmmaker Happy Hour
Social/Networking

The perfect opportunity to meet local and visiting filmmakers, network, share ideas, and enjoy the company of other festival attendees. Hosted by UMFO.

Friday, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Teatro

From Page to Screen
Presentation

Authors and Screenwriters Kelly Florence and Meg Hafdahl discuss the process of adapting your novel, stories, or memoir into a script. They will touch on their experience developing both non-fiction and fiction scripts as well as character development, plot, and the collaborative process. Perfect for newbies or experienced screenwriters looking for a fresh approach to their next project.

Friday, 10:00 - 11:30pm

Teatro

THE REEL COMEDY SPECIAL
Improv/Comedy

Debuting at the Minnesota Film Festival, The Reel Comedy Special takes aim at all things cinema. With a mix of sketch comedy, silly films, improv, and lots of other shenanigans, this show will leave you starstruck.

Saturday, 1:30 - 2:30pm

Teatro

**Inside look into making films in
Northern MN**
Presentation

Northern Minnesota is home to a burgeoning film scene. This session will include a discussion about what it's "really" like to shoot here and a look into the resources (and incentives) that filmmakers can access to make their next project. We'll talk all things crew (including how to work on local crews) and welcome guests including filmmakers who have created projects, Zack Morrison (CANUSA ST), Keith Hopkins (Man has a Mania) and Mandy June Turpin (Rescuing Christmas, Merry KissCam, & Body Language)

Saturday, 3:00 - 4:00pm

Teatro

Made a Film, NOW WHAT?
Panel

These panelists discuss their unique experiences after a film production is completed, both from the filmmaker standpoint and from the distributor point of view.

Saturday, 7:00 - 9:00pm

Greysolon's Moorish Room

Awards Ceremony
Party

Join us as we celebrate a diverse group of filmmakers, and honor their accomplishments with film awards and almost \$20,000 in grant awards.

Saturday, 9:00pm

Zeitgeist

After Party
Party

Join us back at Zeitgeist immediately following the Awards Ceremony for the after party. Let the celebration continue!

Sunday, 6:30pm

Carmody Irish Pub

Closing Night Celebration
Social/Party

Join us at Carmody Irish Pub after the closing night films to celebrate our festival week.

Minnesota Film Festival



*Thank
You*

**to our community
partners and sponsors!**