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NEWS

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**Cinema/Chicago, the Presenting Organization of the Chicago International Film Festival,
Receives National Endowment for the Arts Grant of \$65,000**

*Grant to support the 51st Chicago International Film Festival (October 15-29, 2015)
and 12th Annual International Screenings Program*

Chicago, IL (**December 9, 2014**)— National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Chairman Jane Chu announced December 2, 2014 that Cinema/Chicago is one of 919 nonprofit organizations nationwide to receive an NEA Art Works grant. Cinema/Chicago is recommended for a \$65,000 grant to support the 51st Chicago International Film Festival and the 12th annual International Screenings Program.

Cinema/Chicago is the parent organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, the oldest competitive international film festival in North America. Seeking out the best in world cinema, the Festival is dedicated to discovering new talents and opening windows to a world of film previously or otherwise unavailable in Chicago. The **51st Chicago International Film Festival**, October 15-29, 2015, will screen 100 narrative and documentary features and 50 short subject films from approximately 50 countries. Directors, jurors, critics, and visitors from all over the world will be in attendance. Films will be presented in our long-running competitions (International Feature, New Directors, Docufest, Short Subject) as well as in programs that showcase new trends in international and independent filmmaking and that highlight the work of under-represented filmmakers and alternative perspectives.

During the two weeks of the Festival, our free Education Outreach Screenings Program will give students from more than 20 Chicago Public Schools the opportunity to see films from around the world and engage in conversations with the artists who create them. Study guides prepare students for the screenings and provide educators with ideas for in-classroom discussion.

The Festival is also committed to promoting local filmmaking and offering workshops and master classes that foster filmmaker development. Most of the films shown at the Festival will not gain a wide release, secure a U.S. distributor, or become available to audiences (online or on video) in the U.S. At more than half of the screenings, filmgoers have the unique opportunity to meet the artists, including directors, actors, screenwriters, and producers.

Guided by a committee from Chicago's consular corps and cultural organizations, the **International Screenings Program** is a free 20-week public event that casts a spotlight on a national cinema each week, presenting films not widely available in the U.S. Held at the Chicago Cultural Center from May-September, each film is co-presented with the City of Chicago and with the consulate or organization representing that country. Discussions with film critics and cultural experts engage audiences following most screenings.

NEA Chairman Jane Chu said, "I'm pleased to be able to share the news of our support through Art Works including the award to Cinema/Chicago. The arts foster value, connection, creativity and innovation for the American people and these recommended grants demonstrate those attributes and affirm that the arts are part of our everyday lives."

"The support of the NEA is vital to achieving Cinema/Chicago's more than half-century mission of discovering and fostering new filmmaking talents as well as presenting the best in international cinema through both the Chicago International Film Festival and the International Screenings Program. We remain as committed as ever to advancing the art form of the moving image while building bridges across cultures and peoples through film," said Festival Founder and Artistic Director Michael Kutza.

Art Works grants support the creation of art, public engagement with art, lifelong learning in the arts, and enhancement of the livability of communities through the arts. The NEA received 1,474 eligible applications under the Art Works category, requesting more than \$75 million in funding. Of those applications, 919 are recommended for grants for a total of \$26.6 million.

For a complete listing of projects recommended for Art Works grant support, please visit the NEA website at arts.gov. Follow the conversation about this and other NEA-funded projects on Twitter at [#NEAFall2014](https://twitter.com/NEAFall2014).

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About Cinema/Chicago

Cinema/Chicago is a not-for-profit cultural and educational organization dedicated to encouraging better understanding between cultures and to making a positive contribution to the art form of the moving image. The Chicago International Film Festival is part of the year-round programs presented by Cinema/Chicago, which also include the International Screenings Program (May-September), the Chicago International Film Festival Television Awards (April), CineYouth Festival (May), Intercom Competition (October) and year-round Education and Member Programs.