



Presented by Cinema/Chicago  
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**NEWS**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **52nd CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES AUDIENCE AWARD WINNERS, FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS**

*LION and MOONLIGHT share top Audience Award honors;  
Festival celebrates a banner year of sold-out crowds and special guests*

**Chicago (October 28, 2016)** - The Chicago International Film Festival today announces Festival Audience Award winners and the top highlights from the 52nd edition of the annual film festival.

Calculated by votes directly from Festival goers, **the Audience Award for Short Film is presented to THUNDER ROAD**, written and directed by Jim Cummings. In documentaries, **Raoul Peck's poignant I AM NOT YOUR NEGRO takes Audience Award honors**; and marking a tie in narrative feature honors, **Garth Davis' LION and Barry Jenkins' MOONLIGHT share top Audience Award honors this year**. The Audience Awards are sponsored by Verizon Cellularsales.

The 52nd Chicago International Film Festival was, by all accounts, an unqualified success. Hosting filmmakers and special guests from around the world, presenting hundreds of films to sold-out crowds and honoring both established and emerging talents in the art of cinema, this year's Festival will be remembered as a banner year, including these exceptional highlights:

**Spanning the Globe:** filmmakers and special guests traveled from dozens of countries to join us in Chicago, logging a whopping 244,000 miles traveled to be here for screenings, panels, parties and conversations.

**Packed Houses:** In the course of fifteen days, over sixty screenings went to "rush" status, meaning every ticket for every seat in the house was sold out. From a Tuesday afternoon documentary to Closing Night, audiences couldn't get enough of the unique film experiences featured at the Festival.

**Rolling Out the Red Carpet:** Nearly every night at the Festival featured another exciting special guest, sometimes more than one! Lifetime and Career Achievement honors presented to Peter Bogdanovich and Geraldine Chaplin were followed by honors for Alfonso Arau, Pablo Larrain, Steve McQueen and more. Other familiar faces on the red carpet included: Damien Chazelle and Rosemarie DeWitt (*La La Land* writer/director and co-star, respectively) at Opening Night; Tracy Letts (playwright and co-star of Festival official selection *Christine*); Jim O'Heir (Chicago native and star of *Parks & Recreation*); Chicago-based documentarian Steve James and the subjects of *Abacus: Too Small To Jail* (feted with a standing ovation following a sold-out screening); veteran actor Danny Glover (featured in two Festival official selections); NFL players Tony Rice, Pat Terrell and more at the World Premiere of *Catholics vs. Convicts*. See all of the Red Carpet photos [here](#).



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**Educating the Next Generation:** Cinema/Chicago's Education Program welcomed over 2,000 Chicago Public School students to exclusive screenings of some of the Festival's most compelling films, including *Girls Don't Fly* and *Kills on Wheels*. With filmmakers in attendance, students received unprecedented access to industry professionals and independent filmmaking.

**Twenty Years of Black Perspectives:** From a tribute to acclaimed filmmaker Steve McQueen to a conversation with Taraji P. Henson to a sold-out screening of MOONLIGHT with cast and crew in attendance, the 20th Anniversary Black Perspectives programming solidified the Festival's commitment to a diversity of stories and viewpoints. Featuring compelling conversations around Black Lives Matter and Black Cinema: Then and Now, the entire program proved an essential part of a robust Festival.

**An Industry Essential:** In just its second year, the Festival's Industry Days program skyrocketed to sold-out success with standing-room-only panels and meetings, networking and socializing. Elevating the film industry in Chicago, guests from every aspect of the business participated in a weekend of events culminating in The Pitch, a chance for working filmmakers to get valuable feedback and resources from trusted sources.

**Feel The Love, Fly the W:** With so much happening in Chicago the entire month of October, the Festival proudly staked its claim as a cultural highlight, featuring the "Feel the Love" messaging on billboards, bus shelters, street banners and more. And as the Cubs headed into the World Series, Festival social media lit up with a shared love of all things Chicago, featuring [filmmakers](#), [volunteers](#) and even [Festival staff flying the W](#) and rooting on our hometown team.

The 52nd Chicago International Film Festival ended opened on October 13 and ended on October 27, 2016; over 140 feature films from over 50 countries were featured across fifteen days of screenings. Images from the entire Festival are available [here](#). The 53rd Chicago International Film Festival will take place October 12-26, 2017, just 348 days away.

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### **About Cinema/Chicago**

Cinema/Chicago, the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year round not-for-profit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. Proceeds from the Festival benefit Cinema/Chicago's programs throughout the year, including the International Screenings Program, the Chicago International Television Festival, CineYouth Festival, the Education Program and Members Film Screening Series. Celebrating its 52nd edition October 13-27, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival.

### **FESTIVAL SPONSORS AND PARTNERS**

The 52nd Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Official Airline: American Airlines; Official Wine: Chloe Wine Collection; Gold Sponsor: Wintrust Community Banks; Host Hotel: Public Chicago; Bronze Sponsors: AARP, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Columbia College Chicago, FilmFreeway, Stella Artois, Wansas Tequila; Participating Sponsors:



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