



Media Contact: Nick Harkin / Matthew Bryant
Carol Fox and Associates
773.969.5033 / 773.969.5034
nickh@carolfoxassociates.com
matthewb@carolfoxassociates.com

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54TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES SHORT FILM SERIES SELECTIONS

Highlights of the eight shorts programs include Guy Maddin's *Accidence*, Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Blue* and actor Dev Patel's *Home Shopper* (starring Armie Hammer)

CHICAGO – The **54th Chicago International Film Festival**, presented by Cinema/Chicago, today announced eight programs of outstanding short films that will be presented throughout the Festival. The showings, which will take place from Oct. 10-21 at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois St.) in Chicago, range from animated films to documentaries to bold, boundary-pushing narrative films.

The first series of shorts, **Around the Corner**, spotlights films made in Illinois. **Outside the Lines** goes worldwide, featuring animated films from both Europe and the U.S. Late-night fare can be found in **Bad Don't Sleep** — part of the After Dark program. **In Real Life** brings audiences back to reality with documentary short films. A truly global selection of drama, from China to Singapore to Portugal and more, is on display in **Searchers**. **Laughing Matters**, showcases comedic short films from around the world.. **Beyond a Boundary**, part of the Black Perspectives Program, features works by and about Black filmmakers from the U.S. and abroad.. **Meditations**, is a collection of films that employ experimental storytelling.

Further details on each short-film in the series follow:

Shorts 1: Around the Corner – City & State

Thursday, Oct. 11, 6:15 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 13, 12 p.m.; Thursday, Oct. 18, 3:30 p.m.

These innovative shorts showcase the very best in Chicago and Illinois filmmaking across a wide variety of genres and forms. In the animated **Opening Night** (dir. Margaret Bialis), a man reflects on his life's formative moments with humor and a musical twist. **Hashtag Perfect Life** (dir. Michael Paulucci) chronicles one woman's attempt to clear her name after a public breakdown. **Accident, MD** (dir. Dan Rybicky) is a survey of attitudes about America's healthcare crisis filmed in the small town of Accident, Maryland. In **I Am Not Broken** (dir. Felix

Piñeiro), a young man struggling with his own sexuality goes on a time-bending journey of psychological self-discovery. **Mike Mollo Prepares for a Fight** (dir. Jake Zalutsky) is a reflective portrait of a boxer and his family. The docu-drama **Whimper** (dir. Pamela Austin) follows 13-year-old Tony as he retreats to the woods to cope with his apocalyptic surroundings. **Commodity/Fetish** (dir. Spencer Parsons) is a wry examination of consumer culture and the relation between tiny crackers, haunted furniture, and poop. *81 min.*

Shorts 2: Outside the Lines – Animation

Wednesday, October 17, 3:30 p.m.; Thursday, October 18, 7:45 p.m.

Animal dreams, supernatural landscapes, and a variety of styles come to life in this collection of animated short films. In **Blau** (dir. David Jansen, Germany), a whale imagines an entire life in vast shades of blue. **Obon** (dir. Andre Hörmann, Germany) emotionally documents the memories of one of the last survivors of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. **Bloeistraat 11** (dir. Nienka Deutz, The Netherlands) employs a deft collage of animation styles to weave a tale of awkward, pubescent friendship. A young boy shuffles between his divorced parents' homes in **Weekends** (dir. Trevor Jimenez, U.S.)—a dreamlike portrait of a struggling family. In **Relax, It's Probably Just a Parasite** (dir. Joel Benjamin, U.S.), a hypochondriac attempts to identify what's ailing him. Intrepid explorers take a **Solar Walk** (dir. Réka Bucsi, Denmark) in this sumptuously-animated journey through space, time, and creation. *81 min.*

Shorts 3: Bad Don't Sleep – After Dark

Tuesday October 16, 1 p.m.; Friday, October 19, 10:30 p.m.

Horror films, late-night comedies, and hypnotic tales of obsession meet in this program of hair-raising short films. In **Hair Wolf** (dir. Mariama Diallo, U.S.), the staff of a black hair salon fends off a strange new monster: white women intent on sucking the lifeblood from black culture. **Icebergs** (dir. Eirini Vianelli, U.S./Greece) is a dark comedy featuring 14 stop-motion vignettes both mundane and absurd. Late at night, a teenager goes into the kitchen for a glass of **Milk** (dir. Santiago Menghini, Canada) and finds his sleepless mother waiting for him. **The Fall** (dir. Boris Labbé, France) is a harrowing, animated rendering of mankind's fall from grace and the intermingling of heaven and hell. At a ski resort in the French Pyrenees, Ivan longs to win back his motorcycle—the sentient, loving, breathing **La Persistente** (dir. Camille Lukan, France). In **Home Shopper** (dir. Dev Patel, U.S.), Penny, trapped in a loveless marriage, turns to a shopping channel to solve her problems. *83 min.*

Shorts 4: In Real Life – Documentaries

Friday, October 19, 5:15 p.m.; Sunday, October 21, 3 p.m.

From the tragic to the comic to the extraterrestrial, these nonfiction films explore a wide range of global, human experience. Three- and four-year-olds compete for the title of Miss Baby Brazil in **Mini Miss** (dir. Rachel Daisy Ellis, Brazil), which exposes the world of child beauty pageants. Circle (dir. Jayisha Patel, U.K./Canada/India) is a harrowing portrait of a young girl entrenched in a cycle of familial abuse. A foam-filled ring in the south of France becomes the site of an absurd spectacle in **Tourneur** (dir. Yalda Afsah, Germany). On **Crisanto Street** (dir. Paloma Martinez, U.S.), a young boy documents a neighborhood changing in the shadow of Silicon

Valley. **IFO** (dir. Kevin Jerome Everson, U.S.) looks to the skies as it chronicles and describes UFO sightings over Mansfield, Ohio. In **The Waterslide** (dir. Nathan Truesdell, U.S.), the rush to complete the construction of a new ride becomes a stark lesson in corporate malfeasance, one with dire human consequences. **Our Song to War** (dir. Juanita Onzaga, Belgium/Colombia) reckons with the ghosts of a massacre as it explores the space between the human and spirit worlds. *87 min.*

Shorts 5: Searchers – Drama

Sunday, October 14, 3 p.m.; Wednesday, October 17, 1:30 p.m.

Deeply-felt characters and stunning visuals take center stage in this program of films exploring longing, desire, and the mysteries of being human. A teenage boy living **On the Border** (dir. WEI Shujun, China) of China and Korea longs for a different life. A woman headed to the audition of a lifetime is walking down **Patision Avenue** (dir. Thanasis Neofotistos, Greece) when she discovers that her son has been left home alone. Tensions are high in **Nyi ma lay** (dir. CHIANG Wei Liang, Singapore) when a woman sitting on top of an apartment building threatens a fall to her death. A grisly murder on an apartment balcony becomes a small piece in a frenzied puzzle of strange occurrences in **Accidence** (dirs. Guy Maddin/Evan Johnson/Galen Johnson, Canada). In **L'été et tout le reste** (dir. Sven Bresser, The Netherlands), two friends working on a vacation island are left to themselves when the tourist season ends. **Onde o Verao Vai** (dir. David Pinheiro Vicente, Portugal) finds a group of teenagers grappling with their desires as they spend a leisurely day in the forest. *94 min.*

Shorts 6: Laughing Matters – Comedy

Sunday, October 14, 12 p.m.; Thursday, October 18, 5:30 p.m.

Drunken businessmen take their revelry to a local theme park where the **Merry-Go-Round** (dir. Ruslan Bratov, Russia) is too enticing to pass-up. **The Moonshiners** (dir. Juho Kuosmanen, Finland) re-makes the now-lost first Finnish silent film *Salaviinanpolttajat*, in which a couple sets off on an odyssey bearing only moonshine and a pig. An **Exemplary Citizen** (dir. Kim Cheol-hwi, South Korea) is disgusted at the state of a racetrack bathroom and decides to clean it. An Iranian refugee couple living in Norway invite a pair of Jehovah's Witnesses into their home in **Welcome Home** (dir. Armita Keyani, Norway). In the deadpan **Perisher** (dir. Gabriel Hutchings, Australia), a teenage girl, a businessman, and a retired horse confront their uncertain futures. When journeying out **To Plant a Flag** (dir. Bobbie Peers, Norway/Iceland), two astronauts-in-training run into trouble with a local farmer. In **Mamartuile** (dir. Alejandro Saevich, Mexico), a Mexican President bent on a scandal-free final term is thrown for a loop when an international conflict interrupts his designs on peace and quiet. *90 min.*

Shorts 7: Beyond a Boundary – Black Perspectives

Sunday, October 20, 2 p.m.; Sunday, October 21, 11:30 a.m.

This program showcases talented African-American filmmakers and paints an image of black life in the United States and abroad. **Edgcombe** (dir. Crystal Kayiza, U.S.) reveals a portrait of a shared history, place, and experience in the historic South—where maintained plantations and Confederate monuments stand as reminders of an ongoing struggle. Faced with an **Emergency**

(dir. Carey Williams, U.S.) situation, a group of young black and Latino friends carefully weigh the pros and cons of calling the police. **Walker's** (dir. Kyle Myers-Haugh, U.S.) observes an historic black barbershop in Wilmington, NC and its lively, loyal customers. In **Room Tone** (dir. Morgan Cooper, U.S.), a freelance sound mixer can't seem to let go of his unfulfilled dream. **Rebirth is Necessary** (dir. Jenn Nkiru, U.K.) is an archival exploration of the magic and dynamism of blackness in a world where time and space are altered. **The Life of Esteban** (dir. Inés Eshun, Belgium) follows the story of a boy destined to for Olympic greatness. **Black 14** (dir. Darius Clark Monroe, U.S.) uses archival footage to tell the story of a racial protest at the University of Wyoming in 1969. 91 min.

Shorts 8: Meditations – Experimental

Monday, October 15, 8: 30 p.m.

Blue (dir. Apichatpong Weerasethakul, France/Thailand) is a sublimely orchestrated journey into the realms of sleep and landscape. In **The Remembered Film** (dir. Isabelle Tollenaere, Belgium), young soldiers in a forest recall memories from wars they could never have experienced, recounting scenes from lives they did not live. **Optimism** (dir. Deborah Stratman, U.S.) is a portrait of Dawson City in Canada's far North that reveals a rich history of a town looking for gold while enveloped in shadow. **Creature Companion** (dir. Melika Bass, U.S.) is set in the American suburbs, where two women mysteriously and sensuously entwine in this slow-burning, saucy, abstracted fable on the longing and laboring female body. 74 min. This program will be followed by an extended panel discussion featuring Melika Bass (Creature Companion).

Festival and Ticket Information

The 54th Chicago International Film Festival runs Oct. 10-21, 2018 at the AMC River East 21, 322 E. Illinois St., and features more than 150 films featuring numerous competitive categories and several highlight programs such as Black Perspectives, Cinemas of the Americas, International Comedy, Spotlight: Italy, Women in Cinema, Out-Look, After Dark and the City & State program (showcasing films made in Chicago and throughout Illinois.) Festival passes (\$110 - \$270) are currently on sale. Individual tickets (\$8 to \$20) and Gala Presentation tickets (\$20 to \$150) will go on sale Sept. 18 for Cinema/Chicago Members and Sept. 21 for the general public. Discounted parking is available at AMC River East 21 (322 E. Illinois Street). For more information, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or call 312-683-0121.

Festival Sponsors and Partners

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About Cinema/Chicago

[Cinema/Chicago](#), the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year-round nonprofit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. Cinema/Chicago's programs include the Chicago International Film Festival, International Screenings Program, Chicago International Television Festival, CineYouth Festival, and year-round Education Program. Celebrating its 54th edition October 10-21, 2018, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#) and [Twitter](#).

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