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**CINEMA/CHICAGO'S CINEYOUTH FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES AUDIENCE AND JURY
AWARD WINNERS AFTER SUCCESSFUL 15TH EDITION**

Passionate crowds filled the Music Box Theatre, and filmmakers traveled from across the United States and from as far away as Germany to attend.

CHICAGO — **CineYouth Festival**, presented by **Cinema/Chicago**, announced award winners for the 2019 edition led by Best Overall Film winner *No Such Sunrise* by 22 year olds **Dana Brandes-Simon, Laura Li, and Cella Wright** from Oberlin, OH. The Audience Award was won by 22 year old **Kylie Murphy** of Shrewsbury, NJ for her short film *Mad Lib Pixie Dream Girl* which screened in the "She Persisted: Women in Cinema" program. Select prize-winning films will be screened together at the 55th Chicago International Film Festival, October 16–27, 2019 as well as on WTTW in the fall. In total, CineYouth 2019 showcased 64 films from 18 countries by filmmakers 8-22 years old over three days at the Music Box Theatre. Photos from CineYouth Festival are available [here](#).

"It felt like such an honor to get to be screened along with all those other great films," says *Blue Was Here* director **Tristan Jackson** from Portland, OR. "It has been the highlight of our year!"

"I've been a part of CineYouth since my first film at the age of 14, and CineYouth has been an important part of my extended film family ever since," said Canadian filmmaker **Morgana McKenzie** whose short film *Wild* won the CineYouth Women in Cinema Award. "Four key people in the *Wild* team also happen to be CineYouth filmmakers, and they have become my closest friends. Great relationships make great films, and CineYouth creates opportunities for filmmakers to be recognized and find each other."

"I watch a lot of movies at the Music Box, so this is pretty surreal," said Chicago filmmaker **Emilio Nieto** while receiving a Special Mention in the Chicago category for his film *PANZÓN*. "Thank you to everyone at CineYouth."

[CineYouth](#) celebrated Opening Night on April 26 with the Chicago premiere of feature documentary *Jawline* which won the Special Jury Award for Emerging Filmmaker at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. Director **Liza Mandelup**, recently included on Variety's [10](#)

[Documentary Filmmakers to Watch in 2019](#), attended CineYouth to present the film and give a post-screening conversation moderated by **Thavary Krouch** of the Chicago Film Office.

Screenings of festival films were held on Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28 at the Music Box Theatre. Filmmakers attending CineYouth to present their films included Germany's **Alexander Bergmann**, who won the festival's LGBTQ+ Award for his film *Julie*, and **Connor O'Keefe** who won the Chicago Award for his film *Our Transition*. **Sriram Papolu** from Ann Arbor, MI attended the festival both to present his short documentary *Boober* and to participate in the CineYouth Film Pitch at which selected participants presented their works-in-progress to a panel of industry professionals. The winner of the CineYouth Film Pitch was 20-year-old **Emily Gray** from DePaul University for her project *The Scholar*.

On Sunday, April 28 CineYouth presented "Cinema of Chicago", a program of films that showcases the work of a diverse range of filmmakers who call Chicago home. The program featured 7 short films and a post-screening discussion with the filmmakers in attendance including **João Pereira-Webber, Emilio Nieto, Christopher Rohrbeck, Natalie Braye, Liliana Bravo, Myles Keogh, and Connor O'Keefe**.

CineYouth is sponsored by Columbia College Chicago and Flashpoint Chicago, a Campus of Columbia College Hollywood, with additional support from WTTW, DCASE, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

The full line up of 2019 CineYouth award winners is as follows:

Best Overall Film

No Such Sunrise

Dana Brandes-Simon, Laura Li, Cella Wright | Oberlin, OH | Age 22

Award Partner: Chicago International Film Festival

Chicago Award

Our Transition

Connor O'Keefe | Chicago, IL | Age 21

Award Partner: Brenda Robinson

Special Mention: Chicago Award

PANZÓN

Emilio Nieto | Chicago, IL | Age 19

Best Animation

Everyflower

Cai Yuanqing | China/France | Age 22

Award Partner: Flashpoint Chicago, a Campus of Columbia College Hollywood

Special Mention: Animation

Pitiguá

Paula Martínez Cirilo | Puerto Rico | Age 22

Best Comedy

Harls

Kenzie Sutton | Longwood, FL | Age 21
Award Partner: Harold Ramis Film School

Best Documentary

Lost Time

Leo Pfeifer | Seattle, WA | Age 20
Award Partner: Columbia College Chicago

Best Drama

Wasteland

Gustav Bondeson | Sweden | Age 20
Award Partner: Byron and Judy Pollock

Special Mention: Drama

Ladies Day

Abena Taylor-Smith | UK | Age 22

Best Experimental

Umbilical Cord to Heaven

Don Josephus Raphael Eblahan | Philippines | Age 22
Award Partner: Dr. Jennifer S. Kim

Best Horror

Butterfly

Ella McKeon | Los Angeles, CA | Age 11
Award Partner: Charles Droege and Julie Wroblewski

Best International

Look Into My Eyes

Students of Rey Pastor High School (Madrid) | Spain | Ages 16-17
Award Partner: Pasfarda Arts & Cultural Exchange

Special Mention: International

Onye Nmefie (The Trespasser)

William Boyd | UK | Age 22

Best LGBTQ+

Julie

Alexander Bergmann | Germany | Age 22

Award Partner: Steven H. Kwate

Rising Star Award

Grey Heart

Theo Taplitz | Los Angeles, CA | Age 15

Award Partner: Chicago International Film Festival Associate Board

Special Mention: Rising Star

Socks

Callahan Bracken | Canada | Age 17

Women in Cinema Award

Wild

Morgana McKenzie | Canada | Age 18

Award Partner: Flashpoint Chicago, a Campus of Columbia College Hollywood

Special Mention: Women in Cinema

Party of Two

Maria Alvarez | Los Angeles, CA | Age 21

Audience Award

Mad Lib Pixie Dream Girl

Kylie Murphy | Shrewsbury, NJ | Age 22

Prodigy Camp Scholarship

Butterfly

Ella McKeon | Los Angeles, CA | Age 11

CineYouth Film Pitch Winner

The Scholar

Emily Gray | Chicago, IL | Age 20

For more information on the CineYouth Festival, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com/cineyouth.

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CineYouth Sponsors and Partners

The 15th annual CineYouth Festival sponsors include Lead Sponsors: [Columbia College Chicago](#) and [Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood](#); Media Partner: [WTTW](#); Award Partners: [Harold Ramis Film School](#), [Prodigy Camp](#), [Second City Training Center Kid and Teen Program](#); Host Partner: [Music Box Theatre](#). CineYouth is supported in part by a grant from the [Illinois Arts Council Agency](#).

About CineYouth Festival

CineYouth Festival, founded in 2005 and presented by Cinema/Chicago, is a free three-day international film festival for filmmakers 22-years-old and younger. Held annually in the spring, the festival showcases films created by youth, providing a public platform to highlight the next generation of filmmakers. Select filmmakers are awarded hands-on scholarship and internship opportunities in the industry in order to provide them with meaningful training and experience. CineYouth also presents free filmmaking workshops, discussions, panels and other hands-on development opportunities to inspire creativity in youth. CineYouth celebrated its 15th edition April 26-28, 2019 at Chicago's iconic Music Box Theatre. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com/cineyouth or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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, Summer Screenings Program, CineYouth Festival, and year-round Education Program. Celebrating its 55th edition October 16-27, 2019, 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](#), [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#).