



The
Chicago
International
Film Festival

56th Chicago International Film Festival
October 14-25, 2020

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**56TH CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL SELECTS
FOUR FILM PROJECTS FOR “THE PITCH”**

Filmmakers Compete for Prize Worth More Than \$20,000 To Make their Movies

CHICAGO - The 56th Chicago International Film Festival announced a slate of four narrative feature film projects in active development that will be pitched live in front of a virtual audience and a panel of distinguished industry judges during the Festival’s Industry Days on **Sunday, Oct. 18, 2020**. Now in its sixth year, **The Pitch at Industry Days** has established itself as a leading industry showcase spotlighting bold, original work from the Chicago region.

Past projects from The Pitch at Industry Days have gone onto completion, including Jennifer Reader’s *Signature Move*, and two films showing at last year’s Chicago International Film Festival: *Knives and Skin*, also directed by Jennifer Reeder, and Haroula Rose’s *Once Upon a River*.

This year’s filmmakers represent a diversity of voices that continue to reinforce the breadth and vitality of Chicago-area filmmakers and projects: from a sci-fi comedy horror film set in the suburbs to a drama set along the Mexico-American border, to the story of a sexual assault within a Black community and an estranged daughter in an Iraqi-American family who impersonates her recently deceased father. See below for loglines.

The winning pitch receives an awards package of in-kind goods and services worth tens of thousands of dollars. Contributors include Keslow Camera, IFA Chicago and The Story Stage at CineSpace, Chicago Media Angels, Ramo Law PC, and the Sundance Institute.

“Right now, during the pandemic, it’s the perfect time to develop, workshop, hone, and fine-tune feature film projects and make them great,” said Chicago International Film Festival and Industry Days Senior Programmer **Anthony Kaufman**. “The Pitch is a terrific way for the Festival to support and encourage local filmmakers and help push their projects forward.”

This year's Pitch will be hosted by IFA Chicago Executive Director and producer **Angie Gaffney**, and this year's jury includes: **Bronwyn Cornelius**, producer of Sundance Film Festival Grand Jury Prize winner *Clemency*; **Ilyse McKimmie**, Deputy Director for Sundance Institute's Feature Film Program; and **Yvonne Huff Lee**, co-CEO of Lagralane Group.

The Pitch at Industry Days will take place at 3pm CST on Sunday, October 18th, 2020.

To register for Industry Days, go to:

<https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/festival/industry-days/>

For more information on The Pitch, go to: <https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/festival/industry-days/the-pitch/>

The selected projects for 2020's The Pitch at Industry Days are:

Anchor Baby

After witnessing his father nearly beat a Mexican immigrant to death while patrolling the desert border, a thirteen-year-old boy growing up in the Arizona Border Militia finds solace in an unlikely place -- the arms of the new undocumented migrant girl in town.

Screenwriter: Anna Hozian

Director: Danny Mooney

Producer: Dale Armin Johnson



Go to the Body

After Sanaa, a rising racial justice organizer, is sexually assaulted by a fellow activist, she tries to push past her trauma and return to her normal life. The only thing standing in the way is her fiancé, Kendrick, an overprotective boxer who has his own idea of justice.

Writer/Director: Kyra Jones

Producer: Angellic Ross



Invasion of the Housewives

In order to survive the night, a group of suburban housewives attempts to sort rumor from reality when their girls' night is interrupted by an alien invasion.

Writer/Director: Zach Lorkiewicz

Producer: Grace Hahn



Izza

An outsider to her Iraqi/American family, runaway Izza Bet'Yusuf, returns home fifteen years later and reconnects to her estranged roots by impersonating her freshly dead father.

Writer/Lead Actor: Atra Asdou

Producer: Karla Huffman



About Industry Days

The Chicago International Film Festival's hub for filmmakers and industry professionals to connect, share ideas and inspire each other, the Industry Days (Oct. 14-18) program includes panels and workshops as well as roundtable meetings, networking events, and a competitive pitch session, which all take place during the Festival (Oct. 14-25, 2020).

This year's Keynote Conversation, "**At the Vanguard with Dede Gardner, Producer of *Moonlight* and *The Big Short***" will take place on October 15. Other highlights include conversations with screenwriter John Logan, composer Terence Blanchard, and producer and CEO Effie Brown.

Since its inception in 2015, Industry Days has hosted an impressive lineup of film executives and entertainment professionals, including Michael Barker (Sony Pictures Classics) and Charles D. King (Macro), Hollywood producers Gigi Pritzker and James D. Stern, and award-winning and celebrated filmmakers, including Stephen Cone, Julie Dash, Steve McQueen, and Sam Pollard.

Industry Days is supported by Camera Ambassador, Cinespace Chicago Film Studios, Gamechanger Films, IFA Chicago, Keslow Camera, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy in the United States. Additional support is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Illinois Arts Council Agency, the

Illinois Film Office, City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events (DCASE), and the Chicago Film Office.

Festival Sponsors and Partners

The 56th Chicago International Film Festival's sponsors include Major Festival Sponsor: Goldman Sachs, Xfinity; Festival Sponsors: Aberlour, Baker Tilly, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Gamechanger Films, William Blair; Official Agency: Ogilvy; Festival Supporters: National Endowment for the Arts, Illinois Arts Council Agency, Chicago Film Office, Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE), The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, Telescope Film; Media Partners: CHIRP Radio 107.1 FM, WBBM, WTTW; Cultural Partners: Consulate General of Italy in Chicago, Italian Cultural Institute in Chicago, Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest, Goethe-Institut. With additional support from the John and Jacolyn Bucksbaum Family Foundation, Robert and Leslie Zentner, Paul and Ellen Gignilliat, The Byron Pollock Trust.

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](#). For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [Twitter](#).

More information can be found at <https://www.chicagofilmfestival.com/>.

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