Virtual Film Festival

SEE THE NEXT OF GENERATION FILMMAKERS

May 6–13 2021

CineYouth Festival
Make a big production less of a production.

The new Productions hub makes it easy to manage multiuser workflows and gives you the freedom and flexibility to have all of your editors working and sharing assets simultaneously—no matter the project size.

“We’ve got 2,600 VFX shots and probably 10 to 15 people in timelines, sharing in real time. Sharing is essential for these types of Hollywood movies, which makes Productions a total game changer for Adobe.”

—Jon W. Carr, Visual Effects Editor, Terminator: Dark Fate
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For more information, visit cdm.depaul.edu/film.
@depaulcinema
Welcome back to the CineYouth Film Festival! Though the festival’s 16th edition may look a bit different, our vision remains the same: showcasing the talented and creative young artists who are defining the future of cinema.

Originally scheduled for 2020, the evolving nature of the pandemic resulted in a decision to postpone CineYouth. In the yearlong interim, we welcomed new submissions to join last year’s selections to create a robust program that reflects the filmmakers’ visions, concerns, dreams, and desires from these past two years. Some of these filmmakers, ranging in age from five to 22 years old, have tackled the current crisis head on with empowering portraits of essential workers and narratives reflecting on community and isolation.

We are honored to present these 102 official festival selections as evidence of young, socially conscious filmmakers persevering in the face of a rapidly changing art environment. The virtual edition of CineYouth has enabled us to extend our reach to the global stage, connecting filmmakers from 25 different countries to audiences around the world through live Q&As and panel events.

We’re thrilled to take you on this exciting journey around our glove as seen through the eyes of the next generation of filmmakers. Whether you’re in the mood for outrageous comedies, eclectic horror, or emotional tales of family, we hope these diverse visionaries reshape the way you look at the world, as they did for all of us.

Mimi Plauché, Artistic Director  
Ryan Saunders, CineYouth Festival Director
We would like to thank our partners for their support.

**Major Festival Sponsors**

[Adobe] [DePaul University] [Hamilton]

**Additional Support**

[CHI] [Dcase] [FLM] [NFFT] [Ogilvy]

**Event Partner**

[Adobe] [DePaul University] [Hamilton]

**Additional Thanks**

[Chelsea Pillsbury] [Dan Hudson] [David Miller] [Dirk Matthews] [Federica Caponetto] [Gary Novak] [Jeff Pedersen] [Joe Sciarratta] [Jonathan Carrera] [Lambirni Lukidis] [Lisa Deakes] [Lucia Vaughan] [Rick Stevenson] [Sandy Cuprisin] [Sophie Hill]

**CineYouth Juries**

**Animation Award**
- Margaret Bialis
- Alex Moy
- Allie Trigoso

**Chicago 2020 Award**
- Ian Keiser
- Haroula Rose
- Alex Thompson

**Chicago 2021 Award**
- Jax Clark
- Ramone Hulet
- Andre Muir

**Comedy Award**
- Mariano Dimarco
- Ron Falzone
- Gary Fox

**Experimental 2020 Award**
- Cecelia Condit
- Susan Kerns
- Kellee Terrel

**Experimental 2021 Award**
- Amy Bestie
- Don Josephus
- Raphael Eblahan
- Samuel Flancher

**Drama 2020 Award**
- Angie Gaffney
- Aaron Greer
- Brian Kahn

**Drama 2021 Award**
- Lili Calfee
- James Choi
- Michael Flores

**Experimental 2020 Award**
- Hannah Welever
- CJ Arellano
- Ashley Battle

**Experimental 2021 Award**
- Emily Drake
- Emily Shinyi Hsu
- Maxwell Planck

**National Award**
- Jacalyn Gisvold
- Ray King
- Vejune Sidaugaite
- Nick Taylor
- Ananda White

**LGBTQ+ Award**
- Hannah Welever
- CJ Arellano
- Ashley Battle

**Pandemic Cinema Award**
- Emily Drake
- Emily Shinyi Hsu
- Maxwell Planck

**Rising Star Award**
- Jacalyn Gisvold
- Ray King
- Ananda White

**Additional Thanks**

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**Graphic Design**

Bridget Schultz

**Poster Design**

Ogilvy

**Motion Graphics**

Kaitlin Martin

**Web Manager**

Charles Riffenburg

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This project is partially supported by a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events.

This program partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.
HOW TO CINEYOUTH: VIRTUAL CINEMA

Films are available to stream starting at 12:00pm CT on May 6 through May 13 (exceptions as noted in the program descriptions). Once you press Play, you’ll have 48 hours to complete watching the short film program.

**Step One**
Register for your complimentary TICKET at chicagofilmfestival.com/cineyouth

**Step Two**
Receive a confirmation of your order and receipt via email

**Step Three**
Decide how you want to watch movies

- **BROWSER**
  View online at watch.chicagofilmfestival.com

- **APP**
  Chicago International Film Festival on AppleTV or Chicago Intl. Film Festival on Roku

- **TV**
  - Download our dedicated App Roku or AppleTV (Gen 4 and above)
  - Cast from a computer or Android phone/tablet using the Chrome browser to a Chromecast device
  - Airplay from a computer, iPhone or iPad to an AppleTV (Gen 2 and above)
  - or to any Smart TV bearing the “AirPlay” badge

- **Computer**
  - PCs running Windows 7+
  - Browsers: Google Chrome, Firefox, Microsoft Edge, Opera
  - Internet Explorer is not supported.
  - Intel-based Macs running macOS 10.12+
  - Browsers: Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, Opera

- **iPad + Tablet**
  - iPad use Safari on iOS 11.2 or later
  - Screen mirroring not supported, set to OFF
  - Tablet use Chrome on Android 6.0 or later

**Step Four**
Login or follow link in your confirmation email to access your movies.

**TICKET HOLDERS**
receive a Virtual Access email and link to watch their film one hour before the film watch window opens. Follow the link or open the Chicago International Film Festival TV app and submit your unique Voucher Code if prompted. Enjoy the show!

Visit our chicagofilmfestival.com for more detailed technical instructions.

**BADGE Holders**
receive a link to create an account at watch.chicagofilmfestival.com. Login to your account at watch.chicagofilmfestival.com or on the Chicago International Film Festival app. Find all your films in one place.

**Order and Receipt**
Receive a confirmation of your order and receipt via email.
Opening Night Q&A
Stream the program with us at 6:30pm CT on May 6 and then tune in afterward at 8:30pm CT for a livestream Q&A.

Our city has proven once again to be fertile ground for filmmakers to find sources of creative self-expression, and these shorts are a mere sample of what the future holds for Chicago cinema.

Note: Films in this program may not be suitable for all ages.

Opening Night Sponsor: DePaul University
Bats, birds, dogs, rams, monsters, and even mushrooms get their stories told in this wide array of animated delights from around the world. 40 mins.
honeyheart
Alice Langlois | Rhode Island | Age 21
Nestled in her cozy tree trunk home, a bird goes about her day until the arrival of a wild honeybee sets her on a strange and tumultuous journey of anxiety, fear, and finally self-acceptance.

Comfortable Position
DRF Children Animation Studio
Uzbekistan | Ages 8 to 12
When a person falls asleep, they are immersed in another reality where anything can happen. Through a series of animated vignettes, the beautiful and sometimes menacing world of sleep comes to life.

Monster Land
Students of Toon Club | India | Ages 8 to 13
A free form series of hand-drawn scenes that showcase the precarious routines of several silly monsters as they squash, fight, transmogrify, and bend the rules of their own universe.

Kinoko
Erika Gomi | California | Age 22
Two jovial mushrooms embark on a whimsical adventure in the woods. Curiosity may get the better of them when they stumble upon a seemingly cozy woodland residence.

Baofahu (The Evicted Millionaires)
Yufei Xiao | China | Age 17
A resident of an urban village set for demolition ignites his fireworks in view of the police. It's an apparent act of professional self-destruction, yet a frequent patron of his shop sees it differently.

Yayoi Kusama’s Magical Circles
Students of Eleni Pehlivani’s Art Workshop
Greece | Age 5
Setting off on a globe-trotting hot air balloon journey, Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama visits various lands and collects their magical circles. How will she use their power to rebuild?
Password to the * * * * *
Adél Szegedi | Hungary | Age 22

Haunting pen and paper illustrations bring a poem to life, evoking the way childhood memories and diary notes take on new meanings in adulthood.

Followers
Students at Veselka TV
Ukraine | Ages 12 to 16

Through vibrantly colored claymation, we witness a herd of curious rams as they’re led to a suspicious manor hosting a grand feast. But what’s the main course?

Best Seat in the House
Lily Gibbons | New York | Age 11

As the age-old sibling argument over who gets to sit where begins to escalate, is there anything that will make them give up their seat before mom intervenes?

Meeting at Half Past Five
Daria Litvichenko | Estonia | Age 17

Combining an unusual perspective with a variety of cutout animation styles, this amusing short features the somber Philip as he comes to terms with how cruel and corrupt the world can be.

Gekou
Ajisa | Japan | Age 22

On her commute home, a young student is inspired to take a new route. The mundane reality of her daily life suddenly shifts as she discovers a different world isn’t so far after all.

Night-Riders
Jules Chin Greene | New York | Age 22

Losing their natural habitat due to climate change and colonial forces, an endling bat reflects on displacement and extinction in this haunting, beautiful gothic animation.
COVID-19 may have locked everything down, but it couldn’t stop the creative energy and journalistic drive of these filmmakers who provide a fresh look at our tumultuous now. 41 mins.
Fragments of Gage
Emilio Nieto | Chicago | Age 21
A woman balances her bakery business with her medical work at a hospital threatened with closure in this pandemic portrait of Chicago’s Gage Park neighborhood.

“Only Love” by Gem Tree
Bridget Johnson | Chicago | Age 21
Two queer female skateboarders meet at their favorite spot: the skate park. They crush on each other and document their memories on a VHS, celebrating their love in this vibrant music video.

Under the Same Sky.
Trinitat From Within
Students of “Cinema en curs” (Catalunya) Spain | Age 12-13
While preparing a documentary about their neighborhood’s diversity, a group of students are sent home as schools close. They decide to explore their neighborhood from their windows.

this is a completely normal home movie
Tessa Hill | Canada | Age 19
Capturing mundane life through her laptop screen and layering sounds of the natural world, the filmmaker reflects on beauty, family, and creativity in the midst of lockdown.

Korridor
Walter Duncan | Germany | Age 7
A mother and son transform their home corridor into a ghostly and experimental place marked by gamelan sounds and transfixing light imagery in this playful lockdown collaboration.

Exposure
Claire Imler | California | Age 21
A year into the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, this intimate portrait of ICU nurse Deanna Okajima illustrates how this health crisis has impacted her professional and personal life.
A PERSONAL CLIMATE CRISIS

The climate crisis takes a personal toll in these films which investigate humanity’s relationship to nature through dystopian (but not so distant) futures, the damaging effects of commerce, and stresses on individual growth. 43 mins.
Unshopping
Rheannah Wynter | Florida | Age 21

Hoping to stay climate conscious, a sometimes-paranoid filmmaker ditches an alarming heap of fast fashion clothes. In the process, she encounters obstacles, misdirection, propaganda, rabbit holes, and a one-sided obsession with H&M CEO Karl-Johan Persson.

The Pleasure of Killing Bugs
Leonardo Martinelli | Brazil | Age 21

As the climate crisis reaches the point of no return, a nun and a priest grapple with their faith as they lament the disappearance of insects in this surreal and tense vision.

Those Who Move Mountains
Lauren Loesberg | Evanston, IL | Age 22

In a near-futuristic society that has left humans reliant on urban infrastructure and turned nature into a prison, a falsely convicted woman finds a new community in the wilderness.

Metamorphism
Kate Saitel | Texas | Age 17

Metamorphism is the change in a rock due to heat or pressure. This clever short expresses how humans undergo similar transformations under great pressure from family, school, and wealth.

Earth had issues Loading...
Leonardo Pirondi | California | Age 20

Lushly photographed on 16mm, this meditation on the relationship between humans, nature, and technology confronts the menacing effect machines and industry have on the planet’s well being.
PATHFINDERS

When it feels like the world has failed to provide us with an adequate instruction manual for life, we need to forge our own path to understand our place in the universe. 50 mins.
She Who Wasn’t Tamed
Saleh Kashefi | Iran | Age 19
Over the course of a day-long, school-wide poetry recital competition, a rebellious high schooler reaches out to an anxious classmate whose determination to be the best has pushed them to a breaking point.

Life in the Between
Siara-Lauren | Florida | Age 22
A tense first day of school causes young, biracial Sarruh to find herself stuck in identity limbo. She looks to her family for help in understanding how she fits into the world.

Grounding
Oisín-Tomás Ó Raghallaigh | Ireland | Age 19
Shy, 16-year-old Sarah finds the courage to open up while attending an appointment at a children’s mental health facility, 

Ida
Mirjam Thorkelsdottir | Norway | Age 20
Faced with crippling loneliness, Ida tries reaching out to old friends to keep herself from slipping away in this sensitively directed look at the value of companionship.

Beautiful Days
Klaudia Pashjari | Greece | Age 19
A lifelong friendship receives a meditative portrait as we accompany two women during their daily activities, from morning drinks to evening shoreline sunsets.

The Quiet
Radheya Jegatheva | Australia | Age 20
In this cosmically impressionistic animation, an astronaut ponders the quietude of space and comes upon a startling self-realization. The truth is written in the stars, but what will he uncover?
SPEAK, MEMORY: DOCUMENTARY

Memory and history inform the future in these six documentaries that consider the legacy of language, the power of collective identity, and the ripple effects of incarceration and climate change. 56 mins.
Scouring the internet for information about Inuktitut, Olivia considers the future of this complex, multi-dialectical language that evolves with new generations.

A few weeks after finishing parole, Antonio Brison returns to the spot that changed his life forever. Now an actor and performer, he utilizes the skills that he uses on stage to tell his story.

A uniquely reflective glimpse into a factory that manufactured graphite rods for cinema projectors. This enigmatic journey explores not only the factory itself but also the people who used to work there.

An impassioned and informative explanation from a young environmentalist on how humans contribute to climate change and the effects on our animals and planet, offering solutions in the process!

An animated history of Elizabeth Friedländer, the first woman to design a commercial Latin typeface—a feat she accomplished working as a Jewish woman in Nazi Germany.

Utilizing stock footage and confrontational narration, this visual poem unearths what binds Afro-Brazilians and African-Americans across continents and shared cultural connections of their resilient ancestors.

On the grounds of a unique Paraguayan high school where students leave home to study farming and entrepreneurship, a portrait emerges of teenagehood and the challenges facing educators in the 21st century.
IT’S ALL RELATIVE: SIBLINGS

Bonds are tested and renewed in these heartfelt stories of sibling rivalry and solidarity, revealing the ways brothers and sisters shape each other’s character. 48 mins.
My Brother’s Keeper  
Mariah Barrera | New York | Age 18

Combining family photos and dramatic footage, the filmmaker crafts a lyrical look at her father’s experiences with brotherhood, incarceration, and the relationship between the two.

Escape  
Laura Hadsund Baarstrøm | Denmark | Age 18

Fearing her neglectful parents will split them apart, teenaged Freja takes her younger brother into the woods. Insecurity over their escape settles in as she reflects on being a responsible older sister.

Stranger  
Chloe Caufield | Arizona | Age 20

Filmmaker Chloe Caufield creates a tender portrait of her brother, who shares his journey with autism and how it has shaped his perception and expression of self.

Delta  
Jules St-Jean | Canada | Age 22

Three sisters journey to fulfill the dying wish of their father: scattering his ashes at Prince Edward Island. Together they recollect their complicated family history, a life filled with both darkness and light.

Bru’dhars  
Sriram Papolu | Michigan | Age 20

Through his own tumultuous relationship and often violent power dynamic with his little brother, a young man confronts his own trauma from a generational cycle of abuse.
UP PAST BEDTIME: HORROR

True crime, creature features, and descents into the darkest depths of the mind are the jumping off points for these exciting and bold genre exercises. 58 mins.
Taming Kara
Naishe Nyamubaya | South Africa | Age 21

Poaching rare animals for the black market, a pair of hunters find themselves in over their heads after capturing the exotic Tokoloshe, a mythic creature whose touch leaves one with a menacing curse.

Wendigo
Max Hendrickson | Ireland | Age 15

Deliriously deadpan, this hybrid animation follows a young man who decides to visit an abandoned house in the mountains, only to be haunted by its baneful, pagan past.

Pogo
Ella McKeon | California | Age 12

This free associative dive into the mind of America’s most infamous clown paints a portrait of “Pogo” as the culmination of failed artistic impulses and dark desires.

Blue Zenith
Jacques Manjarrez, Nathan Kim
Chicago | Age 22 & 21

Sitting around a campfire, we are told the curious tale of Gregory, a young man who takes his maniacal obsession with eels to a gruesome extreme in this dark comedy horror.

Hollow
Max Buttrill | Florida | Age 15

Soaked in inky dread and featuring a Lynchian sonic preoccupation with electricity, this formally bold journey into darkness follows a young investigator as she experiences strange phenomena in a recently abandoned house.

Swipe Right for Murder
Raine Bracken | Canada | Age 21

An aspiring crime writer finds her perfect match through online dating. Unfortunately, their interests are a little too closely aligned: it’s not “fictional” crime he likes to dabble in...
HI, MOM! These six shorts celebrate the impact that mothers have on our lives, tugging at your heartstrings with dramatic stories of family, grief, and most of all: love. 52 mins.
The Memory Palace
Luke Alexander Harris | California | Age 21

Returning to her childhood home for the last time, Diamond finds her repressed memories triggered by artifacts that force her to re-live a painful history with her mom.

Neuma
Nikki Milan Houston | California | Age 21

As the last rays of a dying California summer shine through, young Neuma tries to mourn the death of her mother after the accidental killing of an animal.

Roti
Ariella Khan | Evanston, IL | Age 20

Sarah has the perfect dress in mind for Homecoming, but her mother insists it’s too short. With the help of some fresh roti and a comically well-meaning classmate, Sarah finds beauty in the different aspects of her life.

Mama
Simon Maria Kubiena | Austria | Age 19

After his mother has a stroke, Karner drives to bring her some essentials. With his daughter in tow, Karner finds more than he expects in his encounter with his childhood home.

Through the Looking Glass
Carolyn Carpenter | Minnesota | Age 22

Exploring her identity through technology, surveillance, water, and archival audio, Carolyn’s self portrait reveals the powerful influence of her mother over her body and mind.

No Crying at the Dinner Table
Carol Nguyen | Canada | Age 21

Using vulnerable recollections in the form of confession, filmmaker Carol Nguyen interviews her family to craft a portrait of love, grief and intergenerational trauma caused by cultural oppression.
JAM SESSION: MUSIC

Band mates and artists find their music and personal lives blend together in these visually arresting films, featuring energetic music videos to reflective dramas and absurdist comedies. 51 mins.
Mod Mod Teenage World
Adelaide Wilson | Chicago | Age 18
Mod teenager Julie becomes smitten with local cutie Winston and, determined to win him over, carefully follows magazine advice on “How to Get the Guy” in this lushly textured love letter to 1960’s Swinging London.

kʷənáŋət néʔ?
Marius Fernandes, Anthony Fernandes Canada | Age 14 & 16
An Indigenous youth artist transcends feelings of social isolation in the COVID-19 pandemic by connecting to community online, empowering his listeners to bond in a time of disconnection.

The Banshee
Eva Ulreich | Virginia | Age 12
Inspired by American composer Henry Cowell’s “The Banshee” from 1925, this short animated fairytale depicts the travel of The Banshee as she retrieves the soul of a dying young woman.

Spit Head
Theo Taplitz | California | Age 16
After the messy breakup of their band, John and Ophie try to make sense of their changed relationship as they reopen old wounds and revisit the underlying pain in the music they made together.

How Sad, How Lovely, How Brief
Olivia Lindsley | Chicago | Age 19
Inspired by the life of singer/songwriter Connie Converse, this experimental projection piece explores the isolation and desperation that can exist even in the most stimulating of environments.

The Artist, The Old Man and The Waiter
Gustav Bondeson Sweden | Age 21
In the midst of a creative roadblock, a young blasé artist is enlightened in the search for her upcoming musical single when she encounters an old man and a surprisingly talented waiter.

Everything Bagel
Brendan Lee Hickey Washington | Age 18
Following the devastating breakup and subsequent musical stagnation, a record store employee searches for a path forward as her band prepares for a show. An uproariously funny and absurd Seattle odyssey.
A NEW OUTLOOK: LGBTQ+

Self love triumphs in these six short films as the filmmakers come of age and come to understand their own identities.  
43 mins.
Baby Steps
Kira Findling | Ohio | Age 21

Through middle school texts, webcam videos, and secret moments, a young woman comes of age online. As she grows, she grapples with gender identity and sexuality, finding a new language for herself.

Out of the Box
Casey Gurtler | Colorado | Age 17

Unwilling to conform to social norms, filmmaker Casey Gurtler turns the cameras on her own mother-daughter relationship, crafting an authentic portrait of what it means to live an unshackled life out of the box.

Affection
Connor Williams | California | Age 20

Following an encounter with a homophobic stranger, two young gay men must confront their own attitudes towards public displays of affection, revealing the complexities that often lie within queer relationships.

This is a Teenage Love Letter
Tessa Hill | Canada | Age 18

Elliptical narrative rhythms and a preoccupation with physical media create a fresh perspective on this teenage romance in which a young woman writes a letter to her past, to love, and to what the future might hold.

Tender Hearts
Lauren Jevnikar | New York | Age 22

Remembering a warm summer afternoon, a woman unearths true feelings about intimate moments spent with her partner in this emotionally vulnerable and beautiful film.

Pitoc e Icinakosian
Jos-Onimskiw Ottawa-Dubé, Gerry Ottawa
Canada | Age 18 & 15

Gerry, an indigenous trans woman, and her brother paint a gentle and honest portrait of her identity and experience through the eyes of her family.
YOU HAVIN’ A LAUGH?: COMEDY

Come have a hearty chuckle with these goofy shorts where heroes are pushed to their limits in the fight to keep parrots missing and claim the last piece of pie. 49 mins.
No Fan of Andy
Kai Tomizawa | Oregon | Age 16

After her childhood friend becomes completely obsessed with recovering her missing bird named Andy, Rain must decide whether to help her find him or make sure he stays out of their lives.

Backwater
Mone Frogg Christiansen | Norway | Age 22

The weather is perfect. The river is serene. And Even has just proposed to his girlfriend Ida. But do either of them think getting married is a good idea?

Interdimensional Pizza Pushers
Lije Morgan | New York | Age 22

Travelling through time and space delivering pizzas, Fishlips and Honeybear encounter all manner of oddballs as they try to make all the orders before their shift ends.

Pie
Miro Alleyne-McCarthy
UK | Age 15

The lone witness of a grisly brawl recounts the downward spiral that led six strange individuals to fight to the death over the greatest prize of all - a perfect slice of pie.

STAY AT HOME movie
Sasha Lebedeva
California | Age 21

A playful narrator tries to convince herself that she is not bored during the COVID-19 isolation and that everything is okay in this comedy about the destructive nature of self-persuasion.

Happy Little Fly
Justin Fargiano
New York | Age 19

Staring down the business end of a flyswatter, a fly spirals into an existential crisis as its life flashes before its eyes in this tragicomic claymation.

A Bootless Grief
Nick Milczarczyk | Canada | Age 16

Four friends decide the best way to get revenge on an old man who stiffed them on their summer jobs: steal his fortune. But can they even trust each other?
Provocative and emotional, these shorts exhibit the power and resilience of survivors as they reflect on and recover from personal traumas. 38 mins.
The Lord’s Day
Simon Weizineau | Canada | Age 18
To get over his Sunday boredom, a young Atikamekw wanders around killing time with friends, reminiscing about troubles at school and his dogs.

Moira
Mckenna Ryan | Canada | Age 20
Slipping out of the present and into the liminal unconscious landscape of her anxious mind, a woman struggles through an existential crisis in this ghostly 2D animation.

The Words We Don’t Say
Jess O’Brien | UK | Age 18
As alcohol flows at a house party packed with teenagers, a nervous Ellie finds herself trapped in a dilemma that could compromise her sense of self and her relationship with a coercive partygoer.

The Year That Passed
Grace Simmons | Pennsylvania | Age 22
Minimalist, monochromatic animation accompanies this thoughtful look at addiction and grief, in which a young woman reflects on how the opiate epidemic has directly affected her life and her understanding of the world.

Witness
Kira Findling | California | Age 22
In a world where women go missing every day, the terror of going outside becomes personified in colorful paintings, Google Maps images, and the news.

An Alternative Method
Hannah Schierbeek | Chicago | Age 22
After a ballerina teacher is followed on her way home from work, her fears start manifesting in dreams and reality. To cope, she confides in her neighbor.
PROJECT A WORLD: EXPERIMENTAL

Experience the radically inventive approaches to imagemaking from these young visionaries, who create a cinematic language all their own. 67 mins.
I Am He Who Created Himself
Emma Penaz Eisner | California | Age 17

Joining with his shadow, the first god creates himself as the progenitor of humanity. This surrealistic mix of stop motion, time lapse photography, and live action sequences re-imagine the Heliopolitan creation story.

Wonderland
Ella Fields | California | Age 15

Waking up on the beach, a young girl battles peer pressure to find her own happy place in an absurd, dreamlike world full of animal masks and eyeball munching loonies.

Home(sick)ness
Daria Litvichenko | Estonia | Age 18

Observational photography finds poetry in the everyday as Estonians living abroad share their memories of home, reflecting on their old routines and the wonderful quiet.

Life’s a Blur
Shaun Louis Calleja | Malta | Age 21

A visual, abstract expressionist piece that finds vivid street lights meshing and colliding together to create a transcendent experience out of ordinary objects.

The Rose of Manila
Alex Westfall
Rhode Island/The Philippines | Age 22

Archival footage and reenactments evoke a formative moment in the life of young Imelda Marcos, the infamous wife of Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos, to investigate the nature of beauty and love.

CELEBRITISM
Mia Neumann | Chicago | Age 22

Hundreds of celebrity faces align in this kaleidoscopic collage, where endlessly generated media images create icons whose reality degenerates when fed to us at incredible speeds.
Same Everything  
Rachel Bowman | Chicago | Age 18

Chaotic text, music, and multiple exposed images represent the inner state of two teenage girls discussing feelings of fear, apathy, and uncertainty about growing up as they get ready for a New Year’s Eve rave.

Wash Day  
Kourtney Jackson | Canada | Age 22

As they prepare for the day ahead, three young Black women discuss the public perception of their Blackness in relation to their cultivation of a strong sense of self.

I look back and it’s gone  
Teona Galgoțiu | Romania | Age 21

Hoping to find a way to keep important memories from disappearing, three subjects interact with an experimental device designed to reconstruct memory fragments.
Experience the radically inventive approaches to imagemaking from these young visionaries, who create a cinematic language all their own. 67 mins.
Reflecting on his passion for gardening, a man finds the source of this infatuation in Mexico. Now living in the United States, he seeks to plant his pride from the Mexico family garden into his new one.

Unique love stories are touchingly explored from multiple perspectives through experimental animation of archival personal photographs, investigating what it means to love in this world.

In this visual adaptation of her own poem, filmmaker Samantha Ocampo reveals the little local things she appreciates in her life that help her escape the day-to-day banality.

An ominous presence comes from out of the darkness, terrorizing a cattle farm where a frightened grandfather and his grandchildren are trying to protect themselves and the farm.

This provocative look into Hollywood’s history examines the use of yellowface and its continued impact on the Asian-American community by projecting media onto the faces of the younger generation.

On warm summer days you can find Abraham and Ricardo selling ice cream along the Chicago lakefront, but a new perspective offers a glimpse into the often harrowing experiences of ice cream men.

Students from Free Spirit Media explore the topic of racialized mass incarceration and the U.S. prison system, asking why petty crimes have caused minorities to make up the majority of inmates.
Fear
Marjorie Matamoros
Chicago | Age 19

Visiting desolate and lonely spaces around Chicago, a young woman recites a poem exploring her fears and their relationship to her own grieving process.

71 Seconds
Jazmin Bryant | Chicago | Age 20

Mirroring the final moments in the life of Treyvon Martin and imagining the 71 seconds unaccounted for in the official report of his murder, an ordinary day takes a tragic turn in an all too common way, reminding everyone that Black Lives Matter.

As We Are Planted
Anna Lee Ackermann
Chicago | Age 21

To combat the effects of food insecurity in the South Side of Chicago, Just Roots Chicago and Saint James Catholic Church unite to bring fresh produce and smiles to the local community.

Fear Frenzy
Nikki Houston | Chicago | Age 21

After starting the fear-based competition game show Fear Frenzy to patch up his marriage, Tony must come to terms with how the game caters to a complacent audience only interested in watching him suffer.

Children Play With Fire
Samuel Johnson/Jakari Thompson
Chicago | Age 19-20

There's a party going on in Chicago's South Side neighborhood Bronzeville, and Kari asks his brother to pick something up from the store. What follows is a devastating journey through time and memory.

Phenomenally Me
Sahrmaria Wright, Jakia Walker, Amanee Muhammad, and Iyanna Jordon
Chicago | Age 16-17

This empowering portrait of four African American teen girls from Chicago explores the way hair shapes their individuality, expresses their creativity, and builds their confidence.

Dois Estágios
Lua Borges
Chicago/Brazil | Age 21

Exploring the beginning and end of a bloodline, this film delves into the personal history of the filmmaker's family and illustrates her longing memory of Brazil.
Panelists:

Lance Oppenheim is a filmmaker from South Florida. His films have been screened at film festivals across the world including Sundance, Rotterdam, Tribeca, True/False, and featured by the Museum of Modern Art and the Smithsonian. He was a 2019 Sundance Ignite Fellow, named one of Filmmaker Magazine’s 25 New Faces of Independent Film 2019, and is the youngest active contributor to The New York Times Op-Docs. He was featured on Variety’s “Power of Young Hollywood” list in 2020.

On the internet, his films have appeared on The New York Times (as four Op-Docs), The Atlantic, Vimeo (as six Staff Picks), NoBudge, and Short of the Week. Lance graduated from Harvard University’s Visual and Environmental Studies program in 2019. His first feature, Some Kind of Heaven, was produced by Darren Aronofsky and The New York Times. The film premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival and was distributed by Magnolia Pictures. It received rave reviews upon its release and was named a NYTimes Critics’ Pick.

Brett Story (moderator) is an award-winning filmmaker and writer based out of Toronto. Her films have been screened at festivals around the world, including at CPH-DOX, SXSW, Hot Docs and Sheffield Doc Fest, as well as in theatres and on television. She is the director of the recent films The Prison in Twelve Landscapes (2016) and The Hottest August (2019), and author of the book Prison Land. Brett is an assistant professor of Image Arts at Ryerson University and her work has received support from the Sundance Institute and the Guggenheim Foundation.

Presented by:
CINÉYOUTH PANEL

SUNDAY, MAY 9, 2021
11:00AM PT | 1:00PM CT | 2:00PM ET

MAKING THE MOST OF THE FILM FESTIVAL CIRCUIT, CO-PRESENTED WITH NFFTY

Navigating the world of film festivals can be daunting! Which festivals are most beneficial to attend, and how do you get the most out of attending? How do you figure out which festivals are a good potential fit for your film? What should you do after you’ve had a film accepted or rejected? Get answers to these questions and many more from a panel of seasoned festival pros!

Panelists:

James Choi (moderator) has produced two critically acclaimed female-led features. The first, Made in China by writer/director Judi Krant, won the Grand Jury Award for Best Feature and Best Female Director Award at South by Southwest (2009). The film received distribution by IFC films. More recently, Saint Frances, an indie dramedy by writer/lead actor, Kelly O’Sullivan, won the Jury Award for Breakthrough Voice and The Audience Award at South by Southwest (2019). The film is being distributed by Oscilloscope Laboratories has garnered two Gotham Awards nominations and a nomination for the Cassavetes Award at the 2021 Spirit Awards. An active member in Chicago’s filmmaking community, James was selected as one of Newcity’s Film 50 – the leaders of Chicago’s film culture for the past 3 years. Currently, his slate is buzzing with a Brazilian short documentary playing in museums and festivals around the world; his next writing/directing project All Things Considered set in Korea in the works; and numerous producing projects on his plate for production. James is based out of Chicago and also teaches film at DePaul University School of Cinematic Arts.

Raine Bracken is a filmmaker based in Toronto. She began making films in high school at the Etobicoke School of the Arts before further pursuing her passion at Ryerson University’s Film Studies program. Her work is fueled by her childhood love of literature and story telling and can be categorized as either whimsical or murderous, although it often lies somewhere in between the two.

William Alexander Boyd III is an award-winning Writer/Director. His Nigerian rooted shorts have qualified for both Oscar & BAFTA consideration, with his latest short premiering on AppleTV. William also shoots commercials in the UK & Nigeria alongside having a BA & MA from The Met Film School in Ealing Studios.

In 2019, Eblahan’s Umbilical Cord to Heaven won the 16th CineYouth Festival’s Best Experimental Film, screening at the 55th Chicago International Film Festival and the 13th NFFTY, winning the Best Experimental Film Award. In 2020, ‘Umbilical’ was an Official Selection at the 58th Ann Arbor Film Festival.

In 2021, Eblahan’s Hilum had its World Premiere at the 43rd Clermont-Ferrand International Film Festival at Clermont-Ferrand, France where it won the International Student Jury Prize as well as the International Jury’s Special Mention.

Jules Chin Greene (she/her and they/them) is an award-winning filmmaker, animator, and writer based in Los Angeles. She is a two time NFFTY and CineYouth alum, and graduated from Oberlin College in 2019. Her films Night-Riders and The Hammer and the Lamb have screened at film festivals around the world.

Theo Taplitz A returning NFFTY and Cineyouth alum, Theo Taplitz is currently in his senior year at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, specializing in Visual Arts. His short films have been recognized by YoungArts, Scholastic, and numerous national and international festivals, and have been included in programs at the Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, RedCat, and the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. As an actor, Theo’s best known for his roles in Ira Sachs’ Sundance feature Little Men and Carlson Young’s Sundance short, Blazing World.

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WE ARE CINEMA/CHICAGO

Cinema/Chicago is a year-round non-profit cultural and educational organization dedicated to fostering better communication among people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. We present the annual Chicago International Film Festival as well as exciting education and community programs that engage, entertain, and enlighten Chicagoans of all backgrounds and ages.

FREE SUMMER SCREENINGS

Our Summer Screenings Program is a free weekly film series running from May through October that showcases films from around the world. Presented in partnership with the City of Chicago and various consulates and cultural organizations, it has become one of the most popular public programs in Chicago, bringing together film and cultural enthusiasts from all walks of life.

SEE THE WORLD

The Chicago International Film Festival celebrates its 57th anniversary in 2021! Showcasing the latest from cinema's grand masters and introducing the work of its newest visionaries, the Festival presents films representing more than 50 countries. Festivalgoers enjoy the amazing opportunity to meet film artists from around the world such as Guillermo del Toro, Steve McQueen, and Barry Jenkins, as well as attend tributes to international luminaries including Steven Spielberg, Carey Mulligan, and Helen Mirren.

SPOTLIGHT ON DIVERSITY

Now in its 23rd year, our Black Perspectives Program celebrates the richness and diversity of African American filmmaking and outstanding work by black filmmakers from around the world. The Program also pays tribute to notable African American artists including Spike Lee, Viola Davis, and Sidney Poitier among others. Cinemas of the Americas spotlights the fresh and vibrant work of emerging and veteran filmmakers from South and Central America. The Festival also presents Out-Look, celebrating LGBTQ+-themed films exhibiting new artistic perspectives on sexuality and identity.

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