





GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL
MARCH 26-29
GSFF.ORG / #GSFFNJ



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Jersey Arts
New Jersey State Film Festival



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The Garden State Film Festival **Honorees**

Honorary Chair

Jason Fisher

Exceptional Women in Film & TV

Katherine Delaney

Educator of the Year

Timothy Byrne



The Garden State Film Festival 2026 Winners

Narrative Feature

“The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo”

Michael Walker– Director
Alfred Sapse, Michael Goodin – Producers

International Narrative Feature

“Just Live”

Aleksandra Hobs– Director
Ivan Trifonov, Aleksei Zyuzin – Producers

Narrative Feature Horror

“Plucked”

Usher Morgan, Katie Vincent – Directors
Katie Vincent, Usher Morgan– Producers

Narrative Feature LGBTQ+

“Beautiful Pam”

J.R. Stokes– Director
Peter Konsevitch, Sara Stabile – Producers

Narrative Feature Science Fiction

“Between Two Waves”

Courtney Sposato, Mark Sposato– Directors
Mark Sposato – Producer

M. Carroll Raver Award for Cinematography

“The Most Biodiverse Place in America”

John Fiske – Director
Thomas Love, Stephen Brucher – Producers



Lou Costello Award for Live Action Short Comedy

"Tub"

Kathreen Khavari – Director
Cam Fife, Cianna Leatherwood, Kathreen Khavari, Zack Charney Cohen –
Producers

Horror Short

"Blindsided"

P. Patrick Hogan – Director
Ana Krista Johnson – Producers

Science Fiction Short

"The Door"

James Graham – Director
Michael Keen, Tali de Assis – Producers

International Narrative Short

"No Nation"

Jeffrey Elmont – Director
Christine Park, Rachel Klein, Amira Adeeb, Paula Loos – Producers

Emanuel "Manny" Berlingo Award for Best Feature Documentary

"Brothers on Three"

Sean Mullin – Director
Sean Mullin, Brian Anthony – Producers

"Stronger Than You Think"

Janice Molinari, Melissa Forman – Directors
Allyson J. Davis, Melissa Forman – Producers

Documentary Short

"Gardener of the Galaxy"

Nick Natalicchio – Director
Nick Natalicchio, Alex Djordjevic – Producers



Animated Short-IRAN
“Holy Heavêness”

Farnoosh Abedi, Negah Khezre Fardyardad, Mohammad Ghaffari – Directors
Mohammad Reza Oviesi, DEFC – Producers

Animated Short – High School
“Luisa”

(San Domenico School)
Kiyomi DallasKidd, Director

Narrative Short – College/Graduate School
Are You Having Fun?

Nicole Cone – Director
Nicole Cone, Zenzele Ojore, Kyandrea Jones – Producers

Narrative Short – College/Graduate School International
“Grossness of Closeness”

Cathal Power – Director
Isabelle Rivera, Griffy Collins – Producers

Narrative Short – College
“Take Two”

Colleen Ryan – Director
Jules Santamauro – Producer

Drama Short – High School
“Full Mugs of Coffee”

(USC SCA Summer Program)
Sydney Wider, Director

Web Series/New Media
“My Dead Mom”

Chandler Levack, Wendy Litner – Directors
Lauren Corber, Palmer Baranek – Producers

Music Video
“Break The Mold”

Thomas Zabriskie – Director



Music Video-Horror

“Chokin”

Kai Straw – Director
Kai Straw – Producer

TV Pilot

“A Darker Place: Cases from the DCA”

Rowan Kelley – Director
Rowan Kelley, Alexis Souza – Producers

PSA

“Honoring Our Heroes”

Brian Noreika – Director
Christine Giordano Hanlon – Producer

Commercial

“Sketchers Football”

John Reavey – Director
James Mellish, Hannah Doherty, Lawrence Thomas – Producers

The Garden State Film Festival would like to recognize films shot in the State of New Jersey with the following winners in the “Home Grown Award” categories:

Home Grown Drama Feature

“Homebody”

Alex Alessi, Jamaal Green – Director
Alex Alessi, Jamaal Green, Alex Alessi, Jamaal Green, Mike Vernazza – Producers

Home Grown Documentary Feature

“Monmouth County at War: Rebels, Raiders, and Revolution”

Adam Worth – Director
Christine Giordano Hanlon, Ted Maturo – Producers

Home Grown Web Series

“History with Hanlon and Arnone”

Adam Worth – Director
Christine Giordano Hanlon, Ted Maturo – Producers



Home Grown Short

"Superimpose"

Steven Zang – Director

Steven Zang, Stephanie Ferreira, Seth Grant – Producers

Home Grown Short Science Fiction

"The Last Musician"

Matt Crick – Director

Ella Evans – Producers

Home Grown Horror Short

"CAROUSEL"

Christopher Kosakowski – Director

Christopher Kosakowski, Alex Muzila – Producers

Home Grown Documentary Short

"PIEGIRL"

Daniel Quiyu – Director

"A PLACE of HONOR"

Vanessa Roth – Director

Vanessa Roth, Jack Noone, Stephen Feuerborn – Producers

Home Grown Animated Short – Graduate School

"McIntosh"

Steven Hayet – Director

Gina Marie Rodriguez – Producer

Home Grown Narrative Trailer

"The FAME Project: Journeys in Science"

Sean Feuer, Xenia Morin, Dena Seidel – Directors

Jim Simon, Dena Seidel, Marissa Staffen, Oscar Schofield – Producers

Home Grown Documentary Short- College

"Navigating Underwater Volcanoes: Exploring 9° North"

Nicole Nikolova, Dena Seidel – Director

JP Isaacs – Producers



Home Grown Music Video
"I Just Wanna Be Your Lover Again"
Francesca Rose Fuentes– Director

Home Grown Narrative Short – Graduate School
"Housewife"
Dalton Ames Snider-Smith – Director
Robert Cunniff, Negin Sedaghat, Brian Molina – Producers

Voices of Neurodiversity in Cinema – High School
"The EarBud"
(FilmAcademy360)
Jacob Lesch, Director

Home Grown Comedy – High School
"What's Inside My Soup?"
(Howell High School)
Hayden Vigdor, Director

Home Grown Narrative – High School
"Puberty"
(Howell High School)
Nicholas Reseigno, Director

Home Grown Drama – High School
"Our DieNasty"
(East Brunswick Magnet School)
Josias Ortiz, Director

Home Grown Animated – High School
Sponsored by Great Mustachio Filmworks and All Love Productions

"Save Me"
(Donald M. Payne Sr. School of Technology)
Malachi Bennett, Director

Homegrown Documentary - High School
Sponsored by Great Mustachio Filmworks and All Love Productions

"More Than A Cafe"
(Holmdel High School)
Dylan Frigiola, Director



New Jersey Hometown Documentary Short – High School
Sponsored by New Jersey School Boards Association

Winner: “Bombers Beyond: The Happiest Place in Town”
(Sayreville War Memorial High School)
Kate Burns, Director

1st Runner Up: “Legacy On The Lanes”
(Hammonton High School)
Matthew Donio, Director

2nd Runner Up: “We Dream”
(Donald M. Payne Sr. School of Technology)
Kimberly Higgs, Director



The Garden State Film Festival
Movie Music Competition Winners
[Playlist](#)

Best Pop Song from a Music Video
Here In My Heart
Composer: Philip Curcuru
Performed by: The Atomik Age Project

Best Contemporary Pop Song
Whipstitch
Composer: Greg Mulyk
Performed by: Greg Mulyk



Best Composition from a Short Film

Norma Jeane

Composer: Jason Pelsey
Performed by: Jason Pelsey

Best Progressive Jazz Score

Renzo Djordan & Melodie Jazz Band - Red Balloon

Composers: Renzo Djordan & Philippe Pasquier
Performed by: Philippe Pasquier, Melodie and Renzo Djordan

Best Live Jazz Combo

Swingin' for the Fences

Composer: Logyn Okuda
Performed by: Logyn Okuda & Josh Plotner

Best Student Contemporary Pop Song

Blush'n

Composers: Victor Ramirez, Jordan Fouts, and Madison Hernandez
Performed by: Meghan Gray



Feature Screenplay Winner
BEDBUGGERS

Written by Tom Cavanaugh

Short Screenplay Winner
One Last Time

Written by Mark Buerck

Teleplay Screenplay Winner – NOT COMING
Man Out Of Time

Written by Daniel Colaianni



The Garden State Film Festival (GSFF) is proud to
announce the winners for its acting awards.

Garden State Film Festival Acting Awards

Best Actor in a Feature
Alexandro Byrd

The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo

Best Actress in a Feature
Anna Mirodin

The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo



Best Supporting Actor in a Feature

Richard Kind

Homebody

Best Supporting Actress in a Feature

Hannah Kepple

The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo

Best Ensemble in a Feature

The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo

Director: Michael Walker

Producers: Alfred Sapse, Michael Goodin

Best Actor in a Short

Gustavo Ramirez

Blue Evening

Best Actress in a Short, Web Series or Pilot

Annabel O'Hagan

The Door

Best Supporting Actor in a Short, Web Series or Pilot

Bradley Whifford

The Big Everything

Best Supporting Actress in a Short, Web Series or Pilot

Hillary Anne Matthews

Grossness of Closeness

Best Ensemble in a Short, Web Series or Pilot

The Big Everything

Director: Salvador Paskowitz

Producers: Andrew Carlberg, Gil Cates Jr., Ryan Lewis