

Independent films from around the world



\$10 per
film session
\$50 full festival
November 5-15 online @
www.filmfestivalflix.com

2021

The 20th Route 66 Film Festival

Live & Zoom Awards Reception 2-4 PM Saturday November 13,
Prairie House Custom Frames · Complimentary hors d'œuvres

More information: www.route66filmfestival.net

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Route 66 Film Festival Programs

Select these program groups on Film Festival Flix. Release and availability dates are indicated for each feature or group of short films. See the page number after the film title for a film synopsis and director biography (on pages 9-33); films and filmmakers with records in the Internet Movie Database (at www.imdb.com) are marked "IMDb"

Awards Ceremony Live & on Zoom

November 13, 2021, 2:00 PM CST

From Prairie House Custom Frames, Springfield IL

Write in the award winners on page 33

FEATURE FILM 1, *November 5-7 & 12-15*

Count to 10 (p. 13), Iran, 01:20:00, Directed by Farid Valizadeh,
Experimental

SHORT FILMS 1, *November 5-7 & 12-15*

Return (p. 29), Uzbekistan, 00:12:01, Directed by Rustam
Khalikov, Drama

Cutstein (p. 15), Iran, 00:10:47, Directed by Hamidreza
Khosh-Bazan, Experimental

The Gatecrasher (p. 19), Iran, 00:14:59, Directed by Siamak
Kashefazar, Drama

Sky Sun, Tile Sun (p. 31), Iran, 00:06:14, Directed by Ziba
Arzhang, Animation



The War Within (p. 32), Iran, 00:14:59, Directed by Javid Farahani, Drama

The Dolls Game (p. 17), Iran, 00:24:58, Directed by Mehdi Mahaei, Debut Films

The Hidden Side of the Pocket Watch (p. 21), France, 00:08:14, Directed by Julie Zida, Student Showcase

Hush (p. 22), USA, 00:11:56, Directed by Joseph McGovern, Experimental

FEATURE 2, November 6-8 & 12-15

Kyungmi's World (p. 23), Republic of Korea, 01:40:00, Directed by Jihyun Koo, Foreign Language

SHORT FILMS 2, November 6-8 & 12-15

Nanay's Lullaby (p. 25), USA, 00:13:15, Directed by Drew Stephens, Drama

The Audition (p. 9), USA, 00:17:30, Directed by Eric Liberacki, Drama

The Better Angels (p. 11), Australia, 00:13:00, Directed by Michael Cusack, Animation

Duality Derby (p. 17), USA, 00:20:56, Directed by Mark Miller, Dave Fanzese, Comedy

Helicopter Mom (p. 20), USA, 00:02:12, Directed by Heewon Jeong, Animation

The Vanishing Hitchhiker (p. 32), Italy, 00:16:09, Directed by Rosario Brucato, Foreign Language

A Narration of a Funeral (p. 26), Iran, 00:12:40, Directed by Amir Sedghinir, Drama

FEATURE 3, November 7-9 & 12-15

Who Is It? (p. 34), USA, 01:34:00, Directed by Jim Menza,
Comedy

SHORT FILMS 3, November 7-9 & 12-15

Divertimento (p. 16), France, 00:30:00, Directed by Keyvan
Sheikhalishahi, Drama

No Trespassing (p. 26), USA, 00:07:20, Directed by Courtney
Grawe, Made in Illinois

Rimi (p. 29), India, 00:13:05, Directed by Nischhal Sharma,
Women in the World

Shadow (p. 29), Iran, 00:15:54, Directed by Farzin Taheri, Drama

The Recess (p. 27), Iran, 00:11:40, Directed by Navid Nikkhah
Azad, Foreign Language

Identibye (p. 22), Iran, 00:15:00, Directed by Sajjad Shahhatami,
Drama

Island Hopping (p. 23), USA, 00:05:53, Directed by Michael
Long, Animation

FEATURE 4, November 8-10 & 12-15

Bone Cage (p. 13), Canada, 01:29:00, Directed by Taylor Olson,
Drama, Debut Films

SHORT FILMS 4, November 8-10 & 12-15

Life For A Life (p. 25), USA, 00:07:45, Directed by Ben Harl,
Made in Illinois

Lake Forest Road (p. 24), USA, 00:07:30, Directed by Ashton
Avila, Drama

The Winter (p. 35), Australia, 00:05:00, Directed by Xin Li,
Animation

Debut (p. 15), USA, 00:17:11, Directed by Connor Hopkins,
Made in Illinois

West Park (p. 34), USA, 00:20:00, Directed by Stuart Elmore,
Drama

Between the Headphones (p. 12), United Kingdom, 00:22:40,
Directed by Matt Evans, Student Showcase

Dime Jar (p. 16), USA, 00:06:50, Directed by Randy Bernales,
Drama

Oldschool (p. 27), USA, 00:08:23, Directed by Zack Hosseini, Com-
edy

The Baking Competition (p. 11), USA, 00:03:20, Directed by
Annabelle M Reeder, Student Showcase (State Fair 4H)

FEATURE 5, November 9-11 & 12-15

Holes in the Sky: The Sean Miller Story (p. 21), USA,
01:54:01, Directed by Ash Hamilton, Made in Illinois

SHORT FILMS 5, November 9-11 & 12-15

The Guardian Angel (p. 19), Iran, 00:19:02, Directed by Afshin
Eisaei, Foreign Language

Hidden City (p. 20), USA, 00:19:00, Directed by Karen Elizabeth
Price, Drama

Kitchen Spaces (p. 23), USA, 00:09:06, Directed by Patrick
Brambert, Comedy, Made in Illinois

Last Day (p. 24), USA, 00:15:00, Directed by Ben Harl,
Made in Illinois

Timeline (p.31), United Kingdom, 00:04:43, Directed by
Osbert Parker, Animation

Love Blood Pain (p.25), Brazil, 00:11:09, Directed by
Magnum Borini, Foreign Language

House of Fortune (p.22), Iran, 00:15:55, Directed by Adel
Mashoori, Drama

Final Deathtination (p.19), Japan, 00:02:05, Directed by
Marika Tamura, Animation



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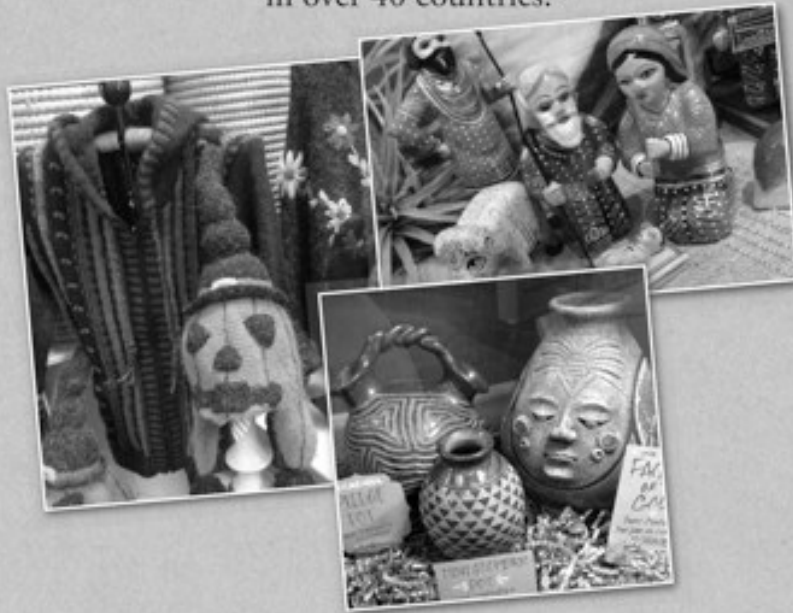


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Welcome from Siobhan Johnson, Festival Director

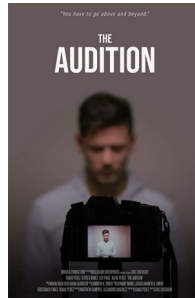
Welcome to the 20th Route 66 Film Festival! For 20 years, we've selected films to provoke thought, elicit laughter and tears, bring different points of view of global issues, and just entertain. This is our second all-online festival! – with a hybrid awards ceremony, in person and on Zoom on November 13.



As Festival Director since 2014, I am still amazed by the high quality films submitted for consideration. Our special category this year is “Women in the World,” a theme addressed in an unforgettable feature and several short films. I hope you enjoy this year’s festival. We remain committed to bringing independent films from around the world to Springfield. Enjoy the journey!



Film Descriptions & Filmmaker Biographies



The Audition (Short Films 2)

**Directed by Eric Liberacki, USA, Drama,
Made in Illinois, 17:50**

Tony Mendes is a Latino actor who doesn't fit the Hollywood stereotype. He has to go to great lengths to get casting directors to look beyond the surface to notice his talent. IMDb

In Detroit, **Eric Liberacki** shot movies on MiniDV tape by day, and made experimental 16mm films at night in the basement of the Detroit Film Center. After studying Cinematography, he was a freelance as Camera Operator and Assistant. He shot the feature films *Your Holy Eyes*, *Redemption Way*, *The Pale Man*, *A Chance in the World*, *Rucker* and many short films. These have played at Chicago International, Cleveland International, New Directors Showcase at the Directors Guild of America, and others film festivals. In 2015, Eric directed his first short film: *Anti-body*. IMDb



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The Baking Competition (Short Films 4)



Directed by Annabelle M. Reeder, USA, Student Showcase, 3:20

Two parents compete in a baking competition; who can make the best batch of chocolate chip cookies, using the same recipe?

A winning Illinois State Fair 4H film.

Annabelle Reeder, 13, has only recently made films, though she's always loved films and acting and is "all about that kind of stuff." In the future she plans to act more, but learning to make films has been exciting and a great talent to develop. She has a YouTube channel.



The Better Angels (Short Films 2)



Written and Directed by Michael Cusack, Australia, Animation, 13:00

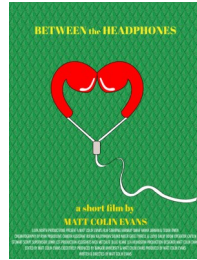
A young soldier trying to escape the horrors of war, finds an abandoned house and within its walls the stories of what might have been.

Michael Cusack has lived in Australia since he was 11 years old. His short film *Waltzing Matilda* was a 1985 Australian Film Institute Award winner. With his Producer, Richard Chataway, he set up the South Australian Film Corporation animation department. He's directed high end television commercials and many award-winning short films. He received the Adelaide Advertising and Design Club Master's Chair Award six times and, with Richard Chataway, the Adelaide Art Directors President's Award for outstanding achievements in TV/Cinema. His films *Sleight of Hand* (2014) and *Meanwhile, at the Abandoned Factory...* (2020) were also Route 66 Film Festival selections. IMDb



Interested in becoming a reviewer who selects films – or otherwise involved in the Route 66 Film Festival? Talk to a board member. We welcome new reviewers, board members and special project or festival volunteers!

Between the Headphones (Short Films 4)



Written and Directed by Matt Colin Evans, United Kingdom, Student Showcase, 22:40

Kyle, a socially awkward, office worker, wears his headphones to help him get through each day. His over-reliance on them begins to affect his relationships with others. The film explores the themes of loss, mental health and emotional incapability. IMDb

From Anglesey, North Wales, **Matt Colin Evans** recently completed a Masters in filmmaking at Bangor University and is developing LookNorth Productions, a commercial videography and photography service also producing their own fictional and factual storytelling projects. *Between the Headphones* was a part of his Masters dissertation, written, directed, edited, produced by Matt - and funded from his savings. His first film, *Barney Lee: My Long Walk Around Britain*, is a short documentary created entirely by Matt himself; screened internationally, it won the Wales International Film Festival's Best Short Documentary Award, among other awards. Matt is an English & Creative Writing graduate of Cardiff Metropolitan University, where he learned scriptwriting. He's written and directed for the stage in Cardiff & London, and has worked on several BBC short films and as a camera assistant. Matt is developing his first feature film. IMDb



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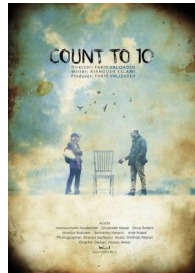
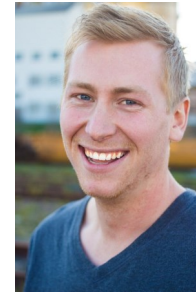


Bone Cage (Feature 4)

Directed by Taylor Olson, Canada, Drama, Debut Film, 01:29:00

Jamie (Taylor Olson) works a wood processor, clear-cutting for pulp in small-town Nova Scotia. After each shift, he searches the destruction he created for injured animals he can rescue. Adapted from a play by Nova Scotian author Catherine Banks, *Bone Cage* is Halifax actor/filmmaker Olson's first feature. IMDb

Taylor Olson (he/ him) is a Canadian Screen Award nominated filmmaker and actor in Mi'kma'ki/ Nova Scotia. He has directed over seven short films, many award-winning, and, with partner Koumbie, won Season 10 of CBC's Short Film Faceoff for the coming-of-age drama *Hustle & Heart*. *Bone Cage*, his first feature, won awards at the FIN Atlantic International Film Festival and other festivals. It was nominated for two Canadian Screen Awards for Adapted Screenplay & Supporting Actress. Taylor received the 2020 Arts Nova Scotia Emerging Artist Award. IMDb



Count to 10 (Feature 1)

Directed by Farid Valizadeh, Iran, Experimental, 1:29:00

A couple starts walking for as long as they can until one of them passes out. And whoever passes out first has to follow the winner's decision whatever it might be.

Farid Valizadeh, born in 1979 is an Iranian actor and director. A popular actor in Iran, he's known internationally for collaborations with Iranian writer and director Rakhshān Banietemad in *Mainline* (Khun bazi) (2006), with director Bahman Farmanara in *Khak Ashena* (2008), and as writer, director, and actor in *The Devil's Mirror* (2018) and *Count to 10*.



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Cutstein (Short Films 1)

Directed by Hamidreza Khosh-Bazan, Iran, Experimental, 10:47

The life of an editor works for Islamic Republic of IRAN Broadcasting and feels like Frankenstein, creating a monster. The film was made using only a cell phone.



Hamidreza Khosh-Bazan, born and raised in Tehran, the capital of Iran, majored in industrial engineering. He's worked as an editor for IRIB (Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting) since 2009. *Cutstein*, his autobiographical debut film, critiques media censorship.



Debut (Short Films 4)

Directed by Connor Hopkins, USA, Made in Illinois, 17:11



Debut follows aspiring independent professional wrestler Braeden Bend as he journeys from his last days of training to his first match on the scene.

Connor Hopkins graduated from Luther College with degrees in Communication Studies, Visual Communication and Journalism. He's currently a multimedia journalist for Driftless Multimedia in Decorah, Iowa. He has been enamored with the world of professional wrestling – the colors, the action, and the sport – his entire life. A professional wrestler himself, he drew upon his passion and knowledge of the business for this look at a would-be superstar's first match.



The **Central Illinois Film Commission** meets at 7 PM on the first Thursday of every month at the Hoogland Center for the Arts.

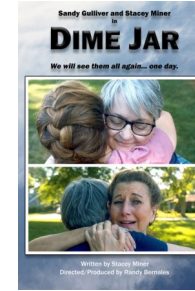
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Dime Jar (Short Films 4)

**Written by Stacey Miner,
Directed by Randy Bernales,
USA, Drama, Made in Illinois,
6:50**

What signs do your loved ones leave you after they're gone? Wouldn't you love to visit them one more time?



Stacey Miner wrote and acts in this debut short film



Divertimento (Short Films 3)

**Directed by Keyvan Sheikhalishahi,
France, Drama, 30:00**

Jonas Olsen, a chess player haunted by a tragic past, is given an opportunity to participate in a mysterious game, Divertimento.

Keyvan Sheikhalishahi is a 21-year-old French filmmaker. He made his first short film *Vesper* (2017) when he was 18 with German actor Götz Otto (*Schindler's List*, *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *Downfall*, *Pillars of the Earth*, *Cloud Atlas*, *Dignity*). He made his second short *Nox* (2019) with Australian actor Matt Passmore (*The Glades*, *Satisfaction*, *Jigsaw*). *Divertimento* is his third short film. Each of its actors agreed to shoot in less than two days, Keyvan was compared with a 'young Spielberg' by Kellan Lutz (pictured with Sheikhalishahi) and Otto on set.

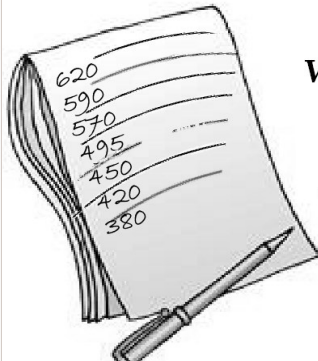


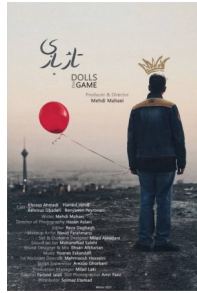
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The Doll's Game (Short Films 1)

Directed by Mehdi Mahaei, Iran, Debut Film, 24:58

The Dolls Game, originally named *Thazh Bazi* is a short film about a clown working in an Iran amusement park, trying to get salary owed him by his employer to pay for a lawyer to help him get custody of his daughter.

Mehdi Mahaei, born in 1992 in Iran, holds a bachelor's degree in telecommunication engineering from Imam Reza International University. He works as a feature films assistant director. This is his first short film. IMDb



Duality Derby (Short Films 2)



Directed by Mark Miller & Dave Fanzese, USA, Comedy, 20:56

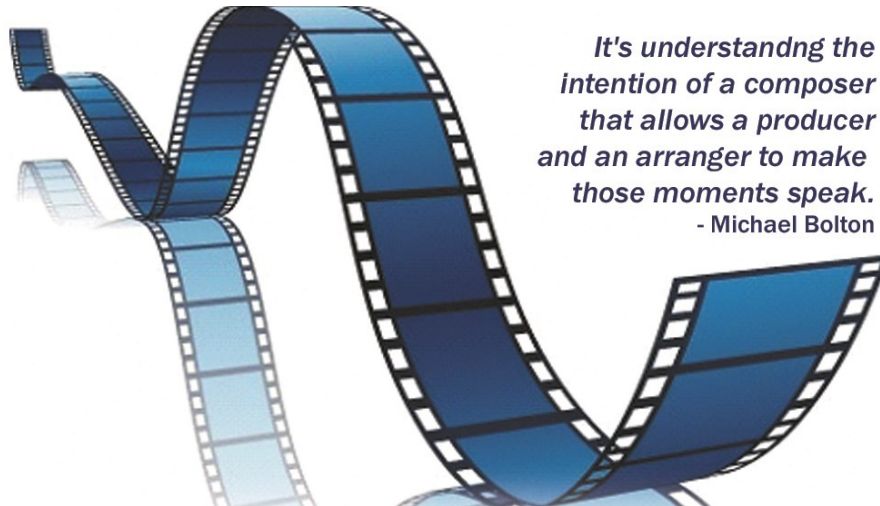
Local racing legend Victor Elaine squares-off against his greatest rival. Their opposing philosophies and impending destruction leave them wondering: Who is really behind the wheel?

Mark Miller and Dave Franzese co-founded Dark Igloo in 2008 as a design studio blurring the line between cutting-edge commercial work, global branding campaigns, and increasingly ambitious personal art projects. *Duality Derby* is their first short film, the culmination of a career blending introspection, humor and nostalgia, and the ultimate example of using branding and design as a vehicle for self discovery.



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intention of a composer
that allows a producer
and an arranger to make
those moments speak.*
- Michael Bolton

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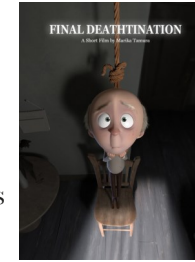


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Final Deathtination (Short Films 5)

**Directed by Marika Tamura, Japan,
Animation, 2:05**

A suicidal man encounters Death who is a "travel agent" to find the best place to die and goes on a world tour. Its message is "as long as you are alive, you can find a new joy and purpose to live." IMDb



Marika Tamura was born in Yokohama City, Japan in 1998, and received a BFA in 2021 from Ringling College of Art and Design in Computer Animation. Interested in arts and crafts since childhood, and wanting to work in a team, like the creative and collaborative environment of the animation industry. Marika's childhood, family and friend memories inspire her art. She has traveled extensively; world cultures and landscapes stir her imagination. She became an intern at LAIKA, LLC in June and currently lives in Hillsboro, Oregon. IMDb

The Gatecrasher (Short Films 1)

**Directed by Siamak Kashefazar,
Iran, Drama, 14:59**

A late-night party of boys and girls turns into a disaster after a transgender person joins them. IMDb



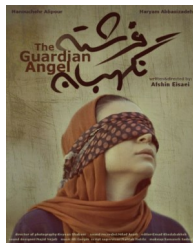
Siamak Kashefazar's career spans 27 years of artistic activity. Since 1994 he's pursued acting, costume design, playwriting, and directing. For 7 years he was a stage manager in cinema and television; for 3 years he was an Assistant director, programmer, and actor in cinema and television. He participated in three film projects as a director and deputy producer: *The Last Man*, *Copal*, and *Rohen*. IMDb



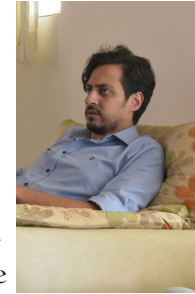
The Guardian Angel (Short Films 5)

**Directed by Afshin Esaei, Iran,
Foreign Language, 19:02**

A girl caring for her ailing father is offered an opportunity to emigrate. Because she needs money, and asks her father for it, old problems between them arise again. She is forced to do something drastic to emigrate from Iran.



Afshin Eisaei, born in 1988, studied architecture at university and has written short stories since the age of ten. He made his first short film with Handycam cameras at fifteen. His professional cinema career started at 22, with acting. He learned by watching films and reading books, and made his first professional short film at 28. Since then, he has made four short films with international awards and is writing a feature screenplay. He graduated in 2017 with a degree in filmmaking from the Young Cinema Association in the Tehran office.



Helicopter Mom (Short Films 2)



Directed by Heewon Jeong, USA, Animation, 2:12

A preteen girl who has an overly protective mom (with a head propeller) tries to escape from her mom. IMDb

Heewon Jeong, born in 1999 in South Korea, is an animation student who just finished 4 years at Ringling College of Art and Design, with a scholarship supported by the Korea Student Aid Foundation. IMDb

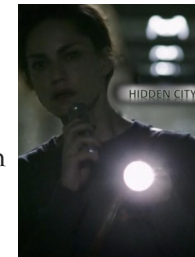


Hidden City (Short Films 5)

Directed by Karen Elizabeth Price, USA, Drama, 19:00

A psychological mystery, featuring Annabeth Gish, set in our age of political anxiety and culminating at a real-life democracy march. Mary Portman, a travel writer who explores lesser-known features of US cities, stumbles upon a voting-related crime in progress. To expose the scandal, she joins with a prominent journalist before realizing that her quest for truth has been a hall of mirrors. IMDb

Raised in North Carolina and based in Los Angeles, filmmaker **Karen Elizabeth Price** is best known for directing *Housequake*, a feature documentary about the battle for control of Congress featuring Rahm Emanuel, which won the Rhode Island International Film Festival's Directorial Discovery Award and aired on the Documentary Channel, VOD, and streaming platforms including Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon.



Price wrote and directed the narrative short *Gone* and the documentary *Living by Instinct: Animals and Their Rescuers*, which premiered at the Mill Valley Film Festival and the Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival, respectively, and aired on PBS stations. She co-produced the feature documentary *John Lewis: Get in the Way*, which premiered nationally on PBS, and has directed, produced, and written for shows on Lifetime, A&E, and Discovery. She's currently developing several fiction and documentary projects. On faculty at Duke University in Cinematic Arts and Documentary Studies, Price directs the Duke in Los Angeles academic program. She has an MFA from USC's School of Cinematic Arts, and won many awards, including a Student Emmy. IMDb



The Hidden Side of the Pocket Watch (Short Films 1)

Written and Directed by Julie Zida, France, Student Showcase 8:14

Jacques Fresnel, a 70-year-old French research scientist living in the nineteenth century, makes a stunning discovery while he is writing his will and testament. His pocket watch, which his grandmother gave him on his 10th birthday, shows him footage of the Earth in the twenty-first century, immersed in a huge wave of pollution and acid precipitation, caused by human activity.

Julie Zida, influenced in childhood by her African (Burkina Faso) and Asian (Vietnam) origins, and European and American education systems, constantly invents; her work isn't of any single theoretical or philosophical school. She studied drama at Cours Florent in France, economics and sociology at Maurice Genevoix high school, then art at Condé. She attended the Paris College of Art (formerly known as Parson Paris), exploring many art forms, and later specializing in Visual effects and 3D animation at SAE Institute, Middlesex University and Bournemouth University.

Holes in the Sky (Feature 5)



Directed by Ash Hamilton, USA, Made in Illinois, 1:54:01

In 2013 Sean Miller disappeared for four days. 7 years later a group of documentary filmmakers found out why. Is it Sci-Fi, Horror, Drama or Mockumentary? IMDb

Ash Hamilton, born in 1975, wrote and directed *Play With Me*, *The True Tale of Ole Splitfoot vs. The Lesbian*

Warrior Nuns of the Great White North, hosts the website horror-fix.com, lives in central Illinois, and remains somewhat mysterious. IMDb



House of Fortune (Short Films 5)



Written & Directed by Adel Mashoori, Iran, Drama, 15:55

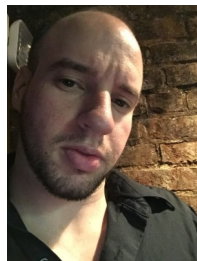
Rahil Mohajer was buried alive by her husband and her father on her wedding night because they thought she wasn't a virgin. IMDb

Adel Mashoori is the CEO of Tarlan Film Institute. He was born in 1985 in Mahshahr, Iran. He graduated from Ershad university with a B.A in Industrial management, from Farhang and Honar University with a B.A in Film Directing and from Azad University with an M.A in Dramatic Literature. IMDb



Hush (Short Films 1)

Written & Directed by Joseph McGovern, USA, Experimental, 11:56



Jeremy, in love with his best friend's wife, Suzanna, struggles unable to fulfill his desire. IMDb

Joseph McGovern is a writer and actor, known for *All Over Again* (2017), *Hush* (2018) and *Inside Jonathan Fox* (2022). IMDb



Identibye (Short Films 3)

Written & Directed by Sajjad Shahhatami, Iran, Drama, 15:00



The protagonist must choose between innermost feelings. He was always judged by those closest to him. Fear of these judgments fills him with doubt. He has to work against the clock to achieve his goal; he knows that one's true identity matters most. IMDb

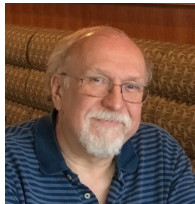


Sajjad Shahhatami was born in Tehran, Iran in 1994. He studied acting, theater and direction at Azad University in Tehran. IMDb

Island Hopping (Short Films 3)

**Written & Directed by Michael Long,
USA, Animation, 5:53**

A character learns that the only way to survive in an island world is to keep hopping (and hoping) from one island to the next.



Michael Long is an Assistant Professor of animation at Webster University in St. Louis, where he has taught for many years. His previous award-winning animated films include *Eyepiece* and *Follies: An Introduction to Don Quixote*. He also teaches foil fencing and performs close-up magic – both of which help him better understand the psychology behind creating illusions.



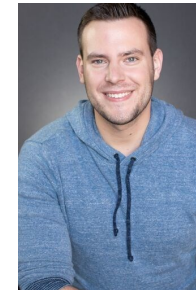
Kitchen Spaces (Short Films 5)

**Directed by Patrick Brambert, USA,
Comedy, Made in Illinois, 9:06**

Roy and Joy Wernecke show local TV host Mark Messina some secrets to cooking a perfect Thanksgiving dinner.

Patrick Brambert is a graduate of the Second City Theatre improv program in Chicago, IL. He completed acting training at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, and the MA School of Acting conservatory. *Kitchen Spaces* is his directorial and comedic writing debut; its screenplay earned him a scholarship from the Veterans in Media and Entertainment to study comedic writing with Brent Forrester (*The Office*, *King of the Hill*, *The Simpsons*).

Patrick Brambert wrote the screenplay for *Kitchen Spaces* while at his army basic training in Fort Sill, Oklahoma in 2021. IMDb



Kyungmi's World (Feature 2)

**Directed by Jihyun Koo, Korea,
Foreign Language, 1:40:00**

Soo-yeon, an unknown actress struggling to survive alone, working part-time jobs, and playing minor roles in plays, spent her childhood with her abusive grandmother Young-soon, but left after a big fight with Young-soon about her missing mother Kyungmi. One day, she gets a



phone call that the house that Young-soon rented was sold; the landlord says Soo-yeon must move her grandmother's things because Young-soon is in a nursing hospital. A reluctant Soo-yeon heads to Tongyeong and sees Young-soon. Disappointed, Soo-yeon decides to leave when she learns that Young-soon has dementia. Soo-yeon fears that if Young-soon loses her mind, her memories will fade away like her missing mother. Soo-yeon thinks about Young-soon and Kyungmi while moving out Young-soon's belongings.



Born in 1989, **Koo Jihyun** studied film directing at Korea National University of Arts. *Kyungmi's World* is her first feature film. She made the movie thinking about how subjective our memories are and how fragile our realities are built on them.

Lake Forest Road (Short Films 4)

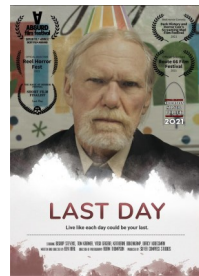
Directed by Ashton Avila, USA, Drama, 7:30

On their way home from a party, four friends find trouble in the woods. IMDb

Ashton Avila is a Mexican American writer-director whose work brings a unique and diverse perspective to each story she tells. Her past work includes PlayStation original pilot *Two Roads* and the award winning short films *I Got You Babe*, *Trying to Fuck: A Modern Day Romance*, and *Have A Little Faith*. She has worked in the entertainment industry since 2013 in various production jobs and has been mentored by some of Hollywood's most notable writers and directors. She is also a professor at the Harrington School of Communication and Media at the University of Rhode Island where she teaches production and critical studies courses. IMDb



Last Day (Short Films 5)



Directed by Ben Harl, USA, Made in Illinois, 15:00

Follow Andy on his...well...let's just say "interesting" last day before retirement! IMDb

With an eye on creativity, **Ben Harl** is a storyteller at heart. He has spent his life writing music, short stories, poetry, and novels. Ben moved his passion for storytelling from the page to the screen, learning the craft of filmmaking through trial and error (and



a huge amount of help from fellow local filmmakers!). As Owner and Creative Director of Silver Compass Studios, Ben focuses his energy on the creative processes of the company. He writes and directs almost all of the creative projects that SCS produces.

Life for a Life (Short Films 4)

**Directed by Ben Harl, USA,
Made in Illinois, 7:45**

Life For A Life is a short film about two people from very different walks of life finding one another during a particularly desperate time in their lives. IMDb

Ben Harl See *Last Day*, above. IMDb



Love Blood Pain (Short Films 5)



**Directed by Magnum Borini, Brazil,
Foreign Language, 11:09**

A mysterious photographer wanders through the São Paulo nightlife, in search for another subject for her work. An unusual encounter will lead to a mix of feelings and sensations.

Magnum Borini is a film director and professor. In 2013 he directed the short film *Beijo na*

Morte, which features actor and director José Mojica Marins, also known as Zé do Caixão. *Amor Sangue Dor* (Love Blood Pain) is his new short film, released in 2020, a poetic and reflective film that addresses themes such as existentialism, modern urban life, lightning relationships and vampirism. IMDb



Nanay's Lullaby (Short Films 2)



**Written & Directed by Drew Stephens,
USA, Drama, 13:15**

The morals of a Filipino-American family are turned upside down when the mother is diagnosed with mysterious illness. IMDb

Drew Stephens is a former Television and Radio host in Bangkok Thailand, and the host of Electric City TV in San Francisco. He has collaborated on many film

projects screened around the world, including the award-winning short films *Prinsesa*, *VDA: Tape 96* and *Bound 4 Heaven*. For the past decade, Drew has conducted motivational workshops to encourage aspiring filmmakers to create their own independent films. Drew's filmography is available on IMDB and at www.RDMstudios.com. IMDB



A Narration of a Funeral (Short Films 2)



Directed by Amir Sedghinir, Iran, Drama, 12:40

A woman named Tara, who after the funeral of her mother, who died due to Covid 19, encounters a strange call the hospital, where her mother's body is still there.

Amir Sedghinir was born in Hamedan Iran in 1999. He is an undergraduate student of Cinema at Tehran University of Arts. At 15, he took a short school trip to the cinema; several short films were screened. He stayed that night in the cinema and decided to make a better film than he had seen. Three years later, he was invited to a TV show as a successful young filmmaker. In 2016, he joined the Iranian Young Cinema society and began making fictional and documentary short films. With these, he won audience awards, best director and best documentary in national festivals in Iran. He is currently writing his first feature screenplay.

No Trespassing (Short Films 3)

Directed by Courtney Grawe, USA, Made in Illinois, 7:20

Follow the story of a dad and his daughter one afternoon spent hunting.



Courtney Grawe, was born and raised in the Quad Cities area. She graduated from Pleasant Valley High School, Bettendorf, IA and this is where her passion for film truly began. Courtney currently works in the service industry as a bartender, server, & cook. But on the sidelines she takes on the challenges of the film industry as a director, writer,



cinematographer, and more. Her dad has a passion for filmmaking, too, helping behind the scenes with special effects, equipment, and storytelling. Together they have formed Little Bug Productions.

Oldscool (Short Films 4)

**Directed by Zack Hosseini, USA,
Comedy, 8:23**

When an old-souled millennial is forced to sell his '65 Mustang, Bianca, he unearths the buyer's sinister

Intentions and launches into a wistful sermon to save her. IMDb



Zack Hosseini is an award-winning director of music videos, commercials, shorts, and branded content. He is the founder of Chaos Theory Media, a production company and video marketing agency. He is known for his work with the band Zanya, as well as *Alone in This House* (2017), *God Bless FM Radio* (2017) and *The Fall-out Shelter* (2016). IMDb



The Recess (Short Films 3)

**Directed by Navid Nikkhah Azad, Iran,
Foreign Language, 11:40**

Seventeen-year-old Sahar is determined to watch her favorite soccer team play for the league championship. Barred from attending sports events as a woman, Sahar disguises herself as a boy with the help of her friends.

Things take a tragic turn when Sahar's disguise is uncovered. Inspired by true events, this film explores gender oppression in Iranian society. IMDb

Navid Nikkhah Azad is an acclaimed Iranian film director known for *Suddenly Zinat.* (2012), *Motherly* (2013), and *The Recess* (2021). His short films were selected and screened in more than 100 international film festivals including a number of OSCAR, BAFTA, and GOYA qualifying film festivals around the world. He's earned 11 awards and 28 nominations in international film festivals. IMDb





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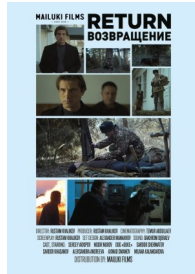
Sunday: 12 pm – 6 pm

LOCATION

1305 Wabash Avenue, Suite M
Springfield Illinois 62707

CONTACT

Phone: (217) 546-9463



Return (Short Films 1)

Directed by Rustam Khalikov, Uzbekistan, Drama, 12:01

Sergei starts his first day as game warden with his dog Duke because a dog is “the only animal on earth, whose fidelity is unshakable.”



Rustam Khalikov is a native of Kagan, Bukhara region, Uzbekistan. In 2010 He graduated from the Tashkent Automobile Road Institute, specializing in automobile construction. He also managed a family dairy farm. In 2020 He graduated from the State Institute of Arts and Culture of Uzbekistan, specializing in Film and Television Direction. The film *Return* is his graduation work. IMDb

Rimi (Short Films 3)

Directed by Nischhal Sharma, India, Drama, Women in the World, 13:05



Rimi, a housewife, stuck in a life of domesticity, is on the threshold of leaving everything behind and embracing liberation: desire awakens in her after meeting young, attractive Riya. IMDb

After making her first film at 14, **Nischhal Sharma** believes she can change the world through her films. A writer and director, Nischhal is inspired by society, and tells stories of the real world. A graduate of MetFilm School, London, she’s made several short films and ads; she’s currently developing a long term project. IMDb



Shadow (Short Films 3)



Directed by Farzin Taheri, Iran, Drama, 15:54

An old man who lives alone wants to commit suicide. While he tries, strange things happen in his house, causing him to change his decision.

Farzin Taheri, born in 1987, graduated from the Iranian Young Cinema Society in film making.





ILLINOIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

KEN LAM, MUSIC DIRECTOR

2021-2022 Season at a Glance

Resounding & Romantic

Illinois Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, November 6, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
UIS Performing Arts Center, Springfield, IL



Brilliant Brass

Illinois Symphony Chamber Orchestra
Friday, December 3, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
Sacred Heart-Griffin High School Theater, Springfield, IL

Holiday Pops in the Heartland

Illinois Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, December 18, 2021, 7:30 p.m.
UIS Performing Arts Center, Springfield, IL



Incredibly Italian

Illinois Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, January 29, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
UIS Performing Arts Center, Springfield, IL



Flora & Fauna

Illinois Symphony Chamber Orchestra
Friday, February 18, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
Sacred Heart-Griffin High School Theater, Springfield, IL

The Best of Queen & Journey

Illinois Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, April 23, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
UIS Performing Arts Center, Springfield, IL



American Journey

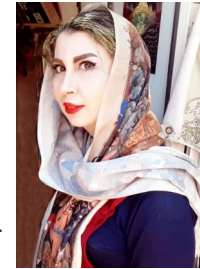
Illinois Symphony Orchestra
Saturday, May 14, 2022, 7:30 p.m.
UIS Performing Arts Center, Springfield, IL



Sky Sun, Tile Sun (Short Films 1)

**Directed by Ziba Arzhang,
Iran, Animation, 6:14**

After an intense explosion and bombardment of the sun, the tiled wall breaks and it gets dark. People help each other build a new sun for the sky.



Ziba Arzhang is a member of ASIFA Iran (Association of Animation Filmmakers). She studied filmmaking at the Iranian Youth Cinema Association. She is an independent filmmaker, especially interested in making animated documentaries. Arzhang has participated in more than seventy international festivals and won eleven awards for Best Animation, Best Animation Director, and Best Animated Screenplay. As a writer, director and animator, she's made four independent short animations: *Sky Sun, Tile Sun, Peace Carpet, My Sardasht*, and *Role*. She has worked with Iran TV for seven years as an animator, and animated and designed four 25-part animated series for children. She has illustrated more than sixty books for children.

Timeline (Short Films 5)

**Directed by Osbert Parker,
United Kingdom, Animation, 4:43**

Timeline is an artist commissioned film loop created for The Migration Museum exhibition, Departures. The film uses experimental animation techniques to explore migration triggering 400 years of emigration from Britain between 1620-2020 and beyond. A single footprint escalates into patterns of human travel, as 'abstract lines' within the natural world suggest epic voyages and connected narratives over long histories.



Three time BAFTA nominated director **Osbert Parker** has a signature style: cut-out animation mixed with live action to create one-of-a-kind imaginary landscapes in short films. He directed *Sir John Lubbock's Pet Wasp* (2018) with Laurie Hill. *Life on the Move* won the 2019 Arts and Humanities Research Council Best Social Media Award and was nominated for the Inspiration Award. Parker is a freelance director, working on many industry and personal art projects. His animated films receive acclaim at international film festivals like BAFTA and Cannes: *Film Noir; Yours Truly*. IMDb

The Vanishing Hitchhiker (Short Films 2)



Directed by Rosario Brucato, Italy, Foreign Language, 16:09

Franz meets a young and mysterious hitchhiker who says she's had a car breakdown, asks him for a ride. After some hesitation, Franz accepts and accompanies her home; he will later make a terrifying discovery. IMDb

Rosario Brucato was born in 1983 in Nicosia Italy. His interest in cinema (especially Hitchcockian suspense) began in elementary school. He graduated in Arts, Music and Performing Arts; his thesis was about Hitchcock's filmography. He studied Performing Arts and Multimedia Production Sciences, receiving the highest grade. In 2017 he wrote, directed and edited *The Different Being*, a zero-budget short film, born as an exercise, later presented at some festivals, and distributed by Amazon Prime Video. In 2020 he wrote, directed and edited *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*, inspired by urban legend. He has been named best director and best filmmaker at various international festivals. IMDb



The War Within (Short Films 1)

Directed by Javid Farahani, Iran, Drama, 14:59

A paralyzed man who lost his legs in a car accident stays at home, buying and selling dollars. He expects a war between Iran and The US, hoping the value of his dollars will soar - without regard for people who would die. The war and his profit from selling dollars afterwards, would make him rich, and fund a leg operation. And this is just the beginning of the story. IMDb



Javid Farahani, born in 1987 in Qom, Iran graduated with a BA in Cinema from Sooreh University in Tehran.





PRESENTS

Driving *Miss Daisy*

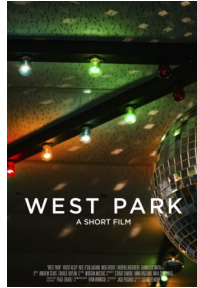
BY ALFRED UHRY
DIRECTED BY CHUCK MCCUE



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at The Hoagland Center for the Arts

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West Park (Short Films 4)

Directed by Stuart Elmore, USA, Drama, 20:00

On their way to their father's funeral, two estranged siblings rekindle their relationship through a visit to their old, family-owned roller rink. IMDb

Born and raised in Huntington Indiana, **Stuart Elmore** is a writer/director currently based in Chicago.

Surrounded by the arts in high school, he took many media classes. He studied Music Media Production and Telecommunications at Ball State University, where he continued to explore his love for filmmaking. In Columbia College Chicago's MFA Cinema Directing program, he directed and worked on numerous projects and short films. IMDb



Who Is It? (Feature 3)

Directed by Jim Menza, USA, Comedy, 01:34:00

Inept criminals are put on edge; one of their own seems to have turned against them. IMDb



Jim Menza, is a director, writer, producer, editor and actor who's spent most of his adult life in the entertainment industry. After two years on a successful sitcom, he made a 46-state tour as the on-air host and writer of the ABC Family Channel's TV show, *The Summer Drive-In Theater*. His films include *Dusting Cliff Seven*, which he also wrote, and *Nice Guys*, which he wrote, produced and starred in. Jim wrote directed, produced and edited the feature films *Patient*, *Foolish the Wise*, *Blood, Bagged*, *The List* (Feature Film Winner of the Key West Independent Film Festival), *Signed In Blood*, *Slight of Life*, *Execution* (winner of the Haunted Horror International Film Festival), *Rid*, and *Bloody Wings* (winner, Best Guerrilla Feature at The Temecula Independent Film Festival). His novels include *Clipped*, *Loonies* and *Daredevil: the Man Without Fear*. IMDb



The Winter (Short Films 4)



Directed by Xin Li, Australia, Animation, 5:00

Walking in a snowy forest, a peasant sees an unusual deer and goes to follow it. The deer allures him and the peasant even wants to catch it.

Xin Li is a Chinese born animator and filmmaker based in Melbourne, Australia. He specializes in the traditional method of paint-on-glass stop-motion animation. Through this technique he explores tranquil and often intimate moments of life through abstract narratives. For Li, both painting and animation capture the impression from the shape and movement and tell stories about life.



And the Award Winners Are...

Best Animated Film:

Best Made in Illinois Film:

Best Comedy:

Best Student Film:

Best Debut Film:

Hugh Moore Best of Fest:

Best Drama:

Outstanding Acting Award:

Best Experimental Film:

Women in the World:

Best Foreign Language Film:

Audience Favorite:

About the Route 66 Film Festival:

The festival began as a project of the Reel to Real Film Club at LincolnLand Community College. Inspired by Roger Ebert's film festival in Champaign, the club used a \$10,000 grant from LincolnLand to hold the film festival in 2002 at the old Esquire Theater, and workshops for students at LincolnLand.

The first festival was held on two weekends, in conjunction with the Route 66 Mother Road Festival from which it took its name. Bruce Campbell, star of *Evil Dead* movies and TV's *Burn Notice*, was a special guest, as was Martin Milner and the Corvette from his TV show *Route 66*.

LincolnLand did not continue to sponsor the festival, but founder Linda McElroy (with volunteers) hosted festivals in 2003 and 2004 at the Hilton Hotel, soliciting films from schools across the country. Filmmakers attended from across Illinois, and from New York and California.

Festival entries increased with the advent of internet solicitation and submission. From 2005-2011 the festival was a three-day event at the Hoogland Center for the Arts, with films submitted from all continents except Antarctica. Linda McElroy stepped down as director and a 6-member board has organized the now 2-day festival since 2012, when it was held at the Legacy Theater. From 2013-18, the Festival was held at the theater adjoining the Capital City Bar & Grill. In 2019, the Route 66 Hotel & Conference Center was both the Festival host and official lodging site. Tom Szpyrka was Festival Director from 2012-13, Siobhan Johnson has served in that capacity since 2014.

In 2020, the Route 66 Film Festival was held online, on the Film Festival Flix platform, because of the coronavirus pandemic. The 20th festival in 2021 is also online, on the same platform.

The Route 66 Film Festival is proud to introduce Springfield audiences to films from throughout the world and to provide an audience to new and veteran filmmakers. Those interested in becoming board members and volunteers may email route66filmfestival@gmail.com.

We welcome online reviewers/evaluators, festival staffers, sponsors and donors!



Thanks to all who made this festival possible

Board Members

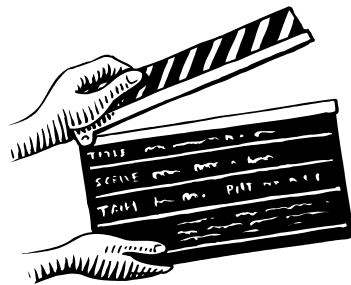
- ◆ Siobhan M. Johnson -- Festival Director
- ◆ Théa Chesley -- Media and Communication
- ◆ Laura Richter - Director at Large, Marketing/Public Relations
- ◆ Christine Samoore -- Director at Large
- ◆ Crissie Trigger -- Director at Large, Ads and Sponsorships
- ◆ Lana Wildman -- Director at Large, Film Coordinator

2021 Film Judges

- ◆ Théa Chesley
- ◆ Siobhan Johnson
- ◆ Linda McElroy
- ◆ Donna Pleshe
- ◆ Laura Richter
- ◆ Christine Samoore
- ◆ Crissie Trigger
- ◆ Lana Wildman

20th Festival Graphic Illustration Christine Samoore

20th Annual Festival Posters & Ads, Program Book
Design and layout by The Rainbow Writer





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