
Award-winning Artist Shezad Dawood Wins the Artists' Film Award

Aesthetica Short Film Festival Awards Ceremony 2015



Image: Shezad Dawood, *Towards the Possible Film*

The last night of the BAFTA Qualifying [Aesthetica Short Film Festival](#) (ASFF) saw filmmakers and filmgoers alike making their way to the beautiful and historic National Centre For Early Music to find out who has won each category.

After a jam-packed four days of films, networking, panels, masterclasses and sessions, Aesthetica Short Film Festival celebrated its 5th anniversary with a grand finale by announcing the category winners.

Best Artists' Film went to award-winning artist, Shezad Dawood for *Towards the Possible Film* co-commissioned by [Film and Video Umbrella](#) and [Delfina Foundation](#). The film

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operates between the real, the surreal, the past and present. It is a study in parallel universes, and the sparks that fly when worlds collide.

Dawood was present at ASFF 2015 to collect his award at the closing night ceremony, and spoke about his film and its supporters following a short clip in front of an audience of 200 guests. The work was praised for its stimulating cinematography.

The 20 minute film follows two blue-skinned astronauts who emerge from the sea and are confronted by the desolate landscape's local inhabitants, a group of post-apocalyptic cavemen, resulting in a tense stand-off. It is a highly conceptual piece of work, otherworldly and incredibly vibrant.

BAFTA Qualifying ASFF is a leader for film culture across the UK, and champions artists' film and moving image. The festival welcomed Maggie Ellis, Head of Artists' Moving Image at FLAMIN. Together with filmmakers, this masterclass looked at the evolving world of Artists' Film and particularly at the Jarman Award which celebrates the spirit of experimentation, imagination and innovation in the work of UK artist filmmakers.

ASFF also brought together a producer, director and cinematographer from Rankin Film Productions who spoke about how visual storytellers approach their craft, while Stephen Whelan, Executive Producer and Founder at Production Company White Lodge (*Vogue*, Karen Millan and Louis Vuitton) discussed some of their recent and outstanding projects and the rise of fashion film as a major force in today's visual culture.

The Artists' Film strand also represented contemporary artists working in the USA, Israel, Switzerland, Germany, France, Ireland and the UK. The Experimental category featured Jason Wishnow's *The Sand Storm* with Ai Weiwei. The winner of Best Experimental was *Drifters*, an invitation by director Anu Valia to explore a portrait of a lonely actress. It's a haunting film that stays with the viewer long after it has ended. The Best Dance award went to Tom Rowland for his study of human motion on film, *Primitive*.

ASFF is a festival for discovery; it's an event which encourages its attendees to try something new, step out of their comfort zones and experience new cinema.

With special premieres and programmes from Creative England's iShorts, and guest country screenings from Cuba, Brazil and China, the festival brought together different cultures and experiences whilst promoting and celebrating the art of short filmmaking.

The fifth edition of ASFF welcomed thousands of visitors to the city including a diverse mix of industry professionals, artists, film fans, students, tourists and more, some travelling from as far afield as Brazil, USA, Canada and Australia.

Cherie Federico, Festival Director, says: "ASFF 2015 screened over 375 films, we increased our masterclass selection and through our programming we invited participants to experience the breadth of new cinema being produced. This year's selection has been

the biggest yet, and has represented 49 countries. Looking back, the past five years have been incredible and I am looking forward to the next. We are truly excited to open for entries for ASFF 2016 in December, and hope to see some familiar faces alongside new filmmakers and attendees at next year's festival."

Ends

- **ASFF 2015 Winners:** <http://aestheti.cc/d9ocd>
- **For Press Images see:** <http://aestheti.cc/qusu1>
- **ASFF 2015 Programme:** <http://aestheti.cc/m24ks>
- **ASFF 2015 Trailer:** <http://aestheti.cc/trailer2015>

Notes to Editors:

1. ASFF 2015 ran 5 - 8 November across the city of York. Visit www.asff.co.uk and [@asffest](https://www.facebook.com/aestheticmagazine) and www.facebook.com/aestheticmagazine
2. ASFF 2015 screened over 375 films from 49 countries worldwide, including USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, Chile, Spain, Italy, Brazil, Switzerland, France, Germany and the UK.
3. ASFF 2015 categories: advertising, animation, artists' film, comedy, dance, documentary, drama, experimental, fashion, music video and thriller as well as a Family Friendly Programme.
4. It featured the premiere of Creative England iShorts as well as screenings by guest countries: Cuba, Brazil and China.
5. Industry delegates include representatives from Channel 4, Warp, Rankin Film, Ridley Scott Associates, Oscar and BAFTA Award Winning VFX giant Framestore (*Gravity*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*), Association of Camera Operators (*Star Wars*, *James Bond*) RADA, *Little White Lies* and more. See www.asff.co.uk/tickets
6. Meet the Film Festivals attendees include: Edinburgh International Film Festival, Encounters, Glasgow Short Film Festival, London Short Film Festival, ECU, Castellinaria in Switzerland. For the full list see www.asff.co.uk/asff2015/meet-the-film-festivals

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7. The festival is produced by Aesthetica Magazine. Visit www.aestheticamagazine.com
8. York St John University, BFI, City of York Council, York Science Park, University of Arts London, Grand Central, Creative England, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Creative Skillset, The Guild of Television Cameramen, Brandy Brown's Cinema, York Museums Trust, Visit York, York Conferences, Riding Lights, Mosaic Events, Firefly, According to McGee, New Visuality, Make it York, York Means Business, Richer Sounds, Cellhire, Tate. See all partners www.asff.co.uk/partners

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