



Winners Announced at the Closing Night Awards Ceremony

BAFTA Qualifying Aesthetica Short Film Festival 2016

The final night of the sixth annual Aesthetica Short Film Festival (ASFF) was filled with anticipation as over 200 people gathered to see which 15 people had been chosen to take home the coveted Festival Awards.

In addition to selecting a winner from each category, the Jury also presented four other awards on the night: The Festival Winner, the People's Choice, the York Youth Award and The Northern Film School Award for Best Screenplay.

This year, a new award was introduced for Best Screenplay in the Official Selection. Sponsored by The Northern Film School at Leeds Beckett University, this award is accompanied by a £1000 cash prize. The inaugural winner of the **Best Screenplay Award** was Daina O.Pusic with her comedy *Rhonna & Donna*. Conjoined twin sisters are having their biggest fight to date. Donna is in the school production of *Romeo and Juliet* whilst Rhonna has no desire to be involved.

The overall **Festival Winner** was Fabio Palmieri, chosen for the powerful film *Irregulars*, also **Best Documentary**, shown at the ASFF Opening Night, whilst Stephen Parker captivated audiences with short drama *Dust and Resin*, taking home the **People's Choice Award**.

A specially curated programme of short films from the Official Selection were shown to young people aged 11-14 at the **ASFF Youth Engagement Day on Thursday**. This programme aims to inspire young people to develop a life-long relationship with cinema. These young festival-goers were invited to nominate their favourite film for the **York Youth Award**, and the winner was Peter Stanley-Ward with *Litterbugs*.

After four days packed with international visitors, masterclasses, industry networking, film screenings and panel discussions, the breadth demonstrated by the festival in its Official Selection resulted in a startling and beautiful collection of films.

Amidst this fierce competition the category winners were chosen: Victor Claramunt's *Breaking Rules* received the **Best Fashion Film Award** and the **Advertising Winner** was John Wright with *Robo-Trumble*.

The winning film of **Best Experimental** was *Two Signs' Den: Epilogue* by Bruno Decc, while the **Dance Award** went to Marlene Millar for *Lay Me Low*. In **Animation**, the winner was Sunit Parekh-Gaihede's *Machine*, revealing a couple struggles to cope with tragedy. Whilst living in the midst of a massive reconstruction in a small village by the sea, they must confront the changes that surround them.

As a supporter of cross-discipline arts and the publishers of the international art and culture magazine, *Aesthetica* was pleased to offer the **Artists' Film Award** to Callum Hill for *Solo Damas*, the portrayal of a fragmented journey through the dark canal ways on the outskirts of Mexico City. The female protagonist attempts to reconcile with the past through an unsettling pilgrimage.

The **Best Music Video** went to *Beardyman – Mountainside* by Lewis Rose. This is a unique music video for UK Beatbox champion and musical chameleon Beardyman. The unexpected story follows a funny and simultaneously bittersweet tale of lost raver love.

The **Drama Award** went to *Silence* by Dejan Mrkic. A young musician begins to tackle the fragility of her own identity when her hearing – and in extension her livelihood – starts to fade into a seemingly muted existence.

Best Comedy was awarded to Detsky Graffam's *90 Grad Nord* while **Best Thriller** went to Dawn Han for *Cork Man*. A man with a hole in his head tries to hide his deformity from the world until one day he is pursued by a mysterious stranger.

As a BAFTA-Qualifying festival, all films selected to screen at ASFF are also then eligible to be nominated for a BAFTA. This year, in its sixth incarnation, ASFF further proved its reputation and influence as a promoter and supporter of film culture across the UK. BBC Commissioning Editor, Kristian Smith, joined writer of *Raised by Wolves* Caroline Moran to discuss development and pitching at a sell-out masterclass, while actress and writer Alice Lowe (*World's End*, *Sightseers*) spoke about how to bring a character to life to an audience of over 400, including education groups, industry professionals, filmmakers and film fans.

Other hosts included representatives from Creative England, Creative Scotland, Whitechapel Gallery in London, Ecosse Films, BBC, London College of Fashion, UAL and more. BAFTA-award winning directors, storytellers and other industry specialists joined filmmakers and film fans from around the world to celebrate short film and encourage discovery.

With a showcase series of independently curated guest screenings from cultural organisations throughout the UK running alongside the Official Selection, ASFF invites filmmakers from all contexts and backgrounds to share in the spirit of the festival and present their work to an audience of enthusiasts. This year, the Official Selection filmmakers were also able to take part in intimate Q&A sessions hosted by contemporary art gallery, According to McGee.

To mark the Centenary of the landmark documentary and acclaimed film, *Battle of the Somme*, ASFF partnered with the Imperial War Museum, London, to bring audiences a unique showing of the film within the walls of the York Army Museum. New to ASFF were specially tailored baby screenings, further demonstrating the festival's commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming cinematic event and introducing a whole new generation to the joy of short film.

Filmmakers could network and build industry contacts at several events including Meet the Film Festivals Marketplace, UK Screen Agencies Drinks Reception and London College of Fashion, UAL, Drinks Reception as well as the hosted Networking Sessions. Many also met peers and fans from around the world, as the festival welcomed thousands of visitors to the city, some travelling from as far afield as Los Angeles, Israel, and across Europe.

Cherie Federico, Festival Director, says: "The National Centre for Early Music was a fitting location for the festival's closing ceremony, and we were delighted to see so many people present

to discover the 2016 Winners. It has been fantastic event, there has been a real buzz across the city of York as festival goes journey from venue to venue, excitedly discussing the new films that they have experienced. Not only have we celebrated the power of film and recognised outstanding practice by presenting awards, we have also created a place for the exchange of ideas and the creation of future projects and collaborations. It has been a great success and we can't wait until 2017!"

For Press Images see:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/972dl3c1bt11c4o/AACYut46L_parYEsQzFUx5fGa?dl=0

View the Programme: <http://aestheti.cc/2016-programme>

Notes to Editors:

1. **ASFF 2016** was the festival's sixth edition, running 3 to 6 November in York.
2. **There were** 18 venues used for screenings and events. See all venues: www.asff.co.uk/venues
3. **New events for 2016:** Meet the Film Festivals Market Place, UK Screen Agency Drinks Reception, Showcase Screenings, Cinema Bambino, London College of Fashion Drinks Reception, Morning Coffee at McGee's, 2015 Winners Showcase and *Battle of the Somme* screening. See all events: www.asff.co.uk/asff2016/events
4. **There were over 25 industry-led masterclasses.** See all talk descriptions: www.asff.co.uk/asff2016/masterclasses and all speakers: www.asff.co.uk/asff2016/speakers
5. **The Official Selection** featured UK premieres and previously screened films by emerging and established practitioners from across the world. It includes 400 films from 40 countries.
6. **All films in the Official Selection were in competition for the following awards:** Festival Winner, Best of Category, People's Choice and Best Screenplay from the Northern Film School at Leeds Beckett University. See all awards: www.asff.co.uk/awards
7. **ASFF is presented by Aesthetica Magazine.** Intelligent, beautiful and informative, Aesthetica is one of the leading publications for art, design and photography. The bi-monthly publication highlights some of the most important artists at work today, both established and emerging, through detailed features and stunning imagery. Each edition includes in-depth coverage of new exhibitions and artists, photography, film and performance. www.aestheticamagazine.com
www.facebook.com/aestheticamagazine and [@AestheticaMag](https://twitter.com/AestheticaMag)
8. **ASFF 2016 partners and sponsors include:** Aesthetica, York St John University, BFI, City of York Council, Leeds Beckett University, Northern Film School, 1331, Grand Central, Creative England, Make It York, University of the Arts London, Visit York, York Means Business, York Museums Trust, York Theatre Royal, York Conferences, The National Centre for Early Music, City Screen Picturehouse York, Bootham School, Reel Cinema, St Peter's School York, Vertigo Restaurant, Belfrey Hall, Friargate Theatre, Riding Lights, According to McGee, Best Western Plus, York Explore Library, Barley Hall, York Army Museum, The Imperial War Museum London, Virgin Trains, House of Trembling Madness, Marriot York, Safestay, Holiday Inn, Park Inn, Brandy Brown's Little Cinema, Mosaic Events, Firefly, Shooting People, Yorkshire Soap Company, York Cocoa House, Ffilm Cymru Wales, Middlesex University, NAHEMI, Northern Ireland Screen, Plymouth College of Art, University of York, Norwich University of the Arts. See all partners: www.asff.co.uk/partners