

AESTHETICA FILM FESTIVAL: WINNERS ANNOUNCED FROM THE 2018 EDITION



The closing night of the eighth **BAFTA-Qualifying Aesthetica Film Festival (ASFF)** was filled with excitement, anticipation and celebrations as the Awards Ceremony took place after a five-day run at Yorkshire Museum. Welcoming filmmakers, festival-goers and industry delegates, curated a screening programme, followed with the announcement of 19 awards.

Over 300 films from this year's Official Selection were in competition to receive awards recognising outstanding talent in filmmaking practice, in addition to becoming eligible for consideration at the BAFTAs. Taking home the **Best of Fest**, as well as the **Best Documentary** was *Black Sheep* which told the story of Cornelius Walker and the murder of Damilola Taylor, in what became one of the UK's most high-profile cases. Directed by Ed Perkins, the film also received the **Northern Film School Award for Best Screenplay**, judged by Cherie Federico, Director of *Aesthetica*, Annabelle Pangborn, Director of the Northern Film School, and Dan Weldon, Senior Lecturer.

Sponsoring a brand new award, Film Hub North and BFI NETWORK presented Faye Carr-Wilson, director of *Venus*, with the **Film Hub North Filmmaker Award**. Screened as part of Northumbria University's Showcase Screening, the awards presents an opportunity to develop a new project with the editorial and professional development support of the BFI NETWORK Northern Talent Executives.

This year saw the addition of Feature Films to ASFF's programme for the first time, with the **Best Narrative Feature** going to Dimitri de Clercq's *You Go To My Head*, recounting the narrative of a woman with amnesia, who, following a mysterious car accident, meets a man claiming to be her husband. Clercq won an International Emmy for *The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl*. **Best Documentary Feature** was awarded to *Almost Heaven*, directed by Carol Salter, which explores the tender and life-affirming portrait of a young woman training to be a mortician in one of China's largest funeral homes. Salter is a documentary director who specialises in telling intimate stories from around the world. Her short *Unearthing the Pen* was the winning film of the *Aesthetica shorts 2011 DVD*, launched in conjunction with *Aesthetica Magazine*.

Celebrating the development of new technologies, this year also welcomed VR and Immersive films into the competition, in partnership with London College of Communication. The **Best VR & Immersive** film was awarded to Ingejan Ligthart Schenk and Jamille van Wijngaarden's *Ashes to Ashes*, the story of a dysfunctional family burdened with the bizarre final wish of their deceased grandmother.

For shorts, the **Best Drama** award was presented to Christopher Haydon's *In Wonderland*, the story of a life experienced together, beginning and ending in the same moment. Looking towards the darker side of humanity, Barnaby Blackburn's *Wale* was awarded **Best Thriller**, the story of an 18-year-old mechanic, who learned his trade whilst at a young offenders institution.

As one of ASFF's most popular genres, Alice Seabright's *Sex Ed* took home the award for **Best Comedy**, the story of a teacher who can't keep personal problems to himself. Whilst revelling in the liberation of creativity, Ian Bruce's hand-painted animation *Double Portrait* won **Best Animation**.

Tapping into brand ethos, Giacomo Boeri and Matteo Grimaldi's *Start the Buzz – Milan Fashion Week* was awarded **Best Advertising**, whilst **Best Fashion** went to *C41 Magazine X Adidas Originals Prophere*, directed by

Leone Balduzzi. Celebrating the art of performance, **Best Dance** went to Paul McLean's *Dances with Circles*, and **Best Music Video** went to *I Am Sex*, directed by Yuval Haker.

As one of the most visceral strands of the festival, **Best Artists' Film** was given to the dual screen video installation from bielecki&bielecka, titled *Author of Expectations*, and **Best Experimental** awarded to Jay Bernard's *Something Said*, a curious response to the black British archives.

Across the weekend, festival-goers also had a chance to nominate their favourite film, awarding the **People's Choice Award** to Andrew Muir's *Turning Tide*, the story of a young boy who is thrown into a life-changing situation when he comes face to face with a down trodden German pilot in 1940.

Lastly, the **York Youth Award** was chosen by students who attended the Youth Engagement Programme, featuring a series of curated films designed to encourage critical engagement and understanding of the film. This year the award was given to *Camlo*, directed by David Moody.

The eighth edition saw entries from over 45 countries and welcomed thousands of visitors, including a diverse mix of industry professionals, students, tourists and attendees to the festival, some travelling from as far afield as USA, Canada, Germany and Australia.

Entries for the ninth-edition open 1 December, with the festival returning next year, 6-10 November 2019. For more information visit: www.asff.co.uk

-ENDS-

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Press images can be downloaded here: <http://www.bit.ly/2Ar5pvl>

- Aesthetica Short Film Festival (ASFF) runs 7 - 11 November across York, UK. www.asff.co.uk
- The ASFF 2018 Jury included practitioners from the industry whose expertise span directing, editing, producing and film criticism. Jury members are: Aleks Dimitrijevic (The Small Film Festival), Alice Ramsey (Creative England), Emmanuel Anyiam-Osigwe (British Urban Film Festival), Gideon Koppel (Filmmaker), Iain Gardner (Edinburgh International Film Festival), Jackie Okwera (Duck Soup Films), Jaime Estrada-Torres (Editor), Julian Foddy (Industrial Light & Magic), Lauren Houlton (Jerwood Visual Arts), Mike Stubbs (FACT), Niccolò Montanari (Co-Founder of the Berlin Fashion Film), Rebecca Mark-Lawson (Tyke Films), Sheyma Buali (BBC Arabic Festival), and Simran Hans (*The Observer*).
- The ASFF Northern Film School Best Screenplay Jury members were: Annabelle Pangborn (Northern Film School), Dan Weldon (Northern Film School) and Cherie Federico (Aesthetica Magazine).
- The festival is produced by [Aesthetica Magazine](http://www.aestheticamagazine.com), one of the leading publications for Visual Art, Design and Photography. The bi-monthly publication highlights the most important artists at work today, both established and emerging, through detailed features and stunning imagery.
- Connect with the Aesthetica Short Film Festival on social media:
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