

GUEST PROGRAMMES: INCLUSIVITY & REPRESENTATION



(Left to Right) 1. Still from *Spinosaurus*. Courtesy of *Cinesisters*. 2. Still from *She*. Courtesy of *Directors Notes and Can We Talk DXB*. 3. Still from *Northern Ballers*. Courtesy of *Dec. Society*.

A predominant, longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion lies at the heart of Aesthetica Short Film Festival's guest programme. With an expanded online programme this year for the festival's 10th Anniversary Edition – running from 3-8 November – that commitment has only broadened, with a host of new perspectives being presented to virtual visitors via prominent, committed figures and organisations who want to educate, interrogate and celebrate themes via moving image. All of the guest programmes will be released on 3 November and will be available via ASFF's online viewing library until 30 November.

Highlights of this year's programme include *I Still Can't Breathe*, a reactionary strand curated by **Directors Notes and Can We Talk DXB** that comes in the wake of George Floyd's murder and creates a portrait of a life lived within a marginalised population. In *Indigenous Cinema: Celebrating Sovereignty*, the **Native Spirit Film Festival** presents a ground-breaking selection of short films by First Nations and indigenous filmmakers from Canada, USA, Norway and Aotearoa that spotlights the languages and traditions of people who are often sidelined in cinema.

ASFF always honours its collaboration with **Iris Prize, the Welsh LGBT+ Film Festival now in its 14th year**. This year, Irish Prize will be present short films that address mental health and the search for love. In a move to boost the exposure of trans filmmakers who so often don't receive recognition nor opportunity within the film industry, **the Transgender Media Portal** will be exclusively guiding viewers through the work of trans, Two-Spirit, nonbinary, intersex and gender- nonconforming artists, with an emphasis on Black and Indigenous individuals.

Disability has always been an underlying issue within film though even more so of late, with a stronger push for better representation both on screen and behind the camera. For ASFF, **Oska Bright Film Festival** – the world's leading platform for learning disability films – will be lifting the voices of storytellers who are differently abled with their guest programme *Fresh Perspectives: Making Space for Disability*.

Finally, in a unique addition to the 2020 line-up, a special **ASFF 10-Year Anniversary** strand includes contributions from alumni from past editions of the festival. This unique programme spotlights films that reflect our turbulent times. Key themes include *Our Fragile Existence: Witness to the Climate Crisis*; *Global Migrations: Populations in Transit*; and *The Future is Now: Humans and Technology*.



Notes for Editors:

For press information please contact **Kate Simpson, Assistant Editor**, kate@aestheticamagazine.com
Images are available to download here: asff.co.uk/press.

- **About the Festival:** The Aesthetica Short Film Festival is one of the UK's leading film events founded in 2010. It is a unique gathering point for filmmakers, industry delegates and audiences. This year, ASFF marks its 10th Anniversary Edition with an extended six-day festival, running virtually from 3-8 November, in association with Film Chief. All content, including all films and events, are available On Demand until 30 November.
- **The Film Programme:** This year's festival features over 300 works in the Official Selection across 12 short film genres. ASFF presents an extensive and diverse programme, with works participating from around the world. This year's Official selection will be released as part of six daily curated strands from 3-8 November, titled *Just Another Day on Earth*; *Humans and their Environment*; *Connections: People, Places and Identity*; *Breaking Down Barriers*; *Reclaiming Space: Universal and Personal Narratives*; and *Keep on the Sunny Side of Life*.
- **Guest Programmes and Showcase Screenings:** This year's extensive Guest Programmes include specially curated screenings from 13 organisations. Key topics and themes include *Defining Gay Cinema*, *Tales from Isolation*, *Documenting Modern Britain*, *Indigenous Cinema*, *I Still Can't Breathe* and *The Future of AI*. Showcase Screenings offer films from 9 of the UK's leading institutions including London College of Communication, London College of Fashion, Arts University Bournemouth, Regent's University London, University of York, York St John University, University of Lincoln, Falmouth School of Film and Television and Ravensbourne University.
- **Live Industry Events:** ASFF boasts one of the biggest and most exciting industry programmes in the UK, with over 100 masterclasses, spotlights, panel discussions, networking opportunities and pitching sessions. Key speakers include Andrea Arnold (*American Honey*), Sarah Gavron (*Suffragette*), Sam Feder (*Disclosure*) and Paul Franklin (*Inception*), as well as delegates from BBC, Film 4, Industrial Light & Magic, Dazed, Compulsory, Nowness, Framestore, Birds Eye View, Storyville, Short of the Week, Potboiler Productions and more.
- **Industry Marketplace:** A virtual meeting place with over 40 exhibitors including distributors, film festivals, universities and more. Access is open to all pass-holders. asff.co.uk/industry-marketplace.
- **Tickets, Events & Passes:** Unlimited Screening Passes, Week Passes, 24-Hour Passes and Film Only Passes are available. Prices start from £25 and cover an entire household. To book your ticket, visit asff.co.uk/tickets.
- **Press Credentials:** ASFF offers journalists an unparalleled opportunity to immerse in a cinematic playground for the duration of the festival, taking advantage of our both live and on demand events. To register for accreditation visit: asff.co.uk/press or email kate@aestheticamagazine.com.
- **The Aesthetica Short Film Festival is produced by Aesthetica Magazine**, one of the UK's leading publications for contemporary art and culture. aestheticamagazine.com.
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