

WINNERS ANNOUNCED: ASFF 10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



(Left to Right) 1. Still from *Night Bus*, dir. Jessica Ashworth & Henrietta Ashworth, Best Thriller at ASFF 2020. 2. Still from *The Fantastic*, dir. Maija Blåfield, Best of Fest at ASFF 2020. 3. Still from *The Conversation*, dir. Lanre Malaolu, Best Dance at ASFF 2020.

The winners of the 2020 edition of the Aesthetica Short Film Festival have been announced, from poignant documentaries that tap into the climate crisis to touching dramas about loss and forgiveness.

As the 10th Anniversary Edition of the Aesthetica Short Film Festival draws to a close, we are thrilled to announce the winners from this year. As a BAFTA Recognised festival, ASFF victory can bolster the success of these standout films. Previous winners have gone on to win Oscars, such as Chris Overton's sweet-natured *The Silent Child* and Benjamin Cleary's *Stutterer*. The awards this year – which were judged by experts from **Film4, BFI Network, ICA London and Nowness** – are as follows:

Best of Fest & Best Documentary

***The Fantastic*, dir. Maija Blåfield**

Eight former North Koreans tell about illegal foreign movies they watched in their homeland. How did they imagine the reality based on fictional films? *The Fantastic* isn't about North Korea.

The Hijack Visionary Filmmaker Award

***Thinking About the Weather*, dir. Gardar Thor Thorkelsson**

Desperate to resolve his anxieties about the looming climate apocalypse, the filmmaker embarks on an odyssey that takes him around Britain, speaking to coastal inhabitants resting on a rising coastline as well as Extinction Rebellion protestors.

Best Advertising

***Safe Water*, dir. Mario Dahl**

A girl walks right to the edge of the board, breathing deeply, ready to make the biggest jump of her life. But what's waiting for her down there? Safe water is more important than ever.

Best Animation

***The Passerby*, dir. Pieter Coudyzer**

On a summer day, the paths of two boys unexpectedly cross. *The Passerby* is about what happens when two lives become intertwined, and the possibilities of a new journey together.

Best Artists' Film

***Factory Talk*, dir. Lucie Rachel and Chrissie Hyde**

Factory Talk is an intergenerational conversation about identity, sexuality and masculinity. Through the clanging of metal, they make small talk, but the dialogue turns from mere nostalgia.



away

Best Comedy

***Maradona's Legs*, dir. Firas Khoury**

During the 1990 World Cup, two Palestinian boys are looking for *Maradona's Legs* – the last missing sticker that they need in order to complete their world cup album and win a free Atari.

Best Dance

***The Conversation*, dir. Lanre Malaolu**

Through a dynamic fusion of movement and dialogue, *The Conversation* explores the challenges black people experience when communicating their racial experience to white partners.

Best Drama

***The Present*, dir. Farah Nabulsi**

On his wedding anniversary, Yusef and his daughter Yasmine set out to the West Bank to buy a gift. Between the soldiers, roads and checkpoints, how easy is it really to go shopping?

Best Experimental

***Softer*, dir. Ayanna Dozier**

Dozier examines the demands that black women's bodies be made "softer" – be that in their voice, manners, or, critically, their hair. This experimental short plays upon grooming rituals.

Best Fashion

***Baba*, dir. Sarah Blok and Lisa Konno**

A combination of design and documentary, blending elements of truth, fiction and constructed narrative. *Baba* provides a surreal but nonetheless light-hearted portrait of a Turkish immigrant.

Best Music Video

***Adventure*, dir. Zak Marx**

Adventure explores the world of competitive moto-racing in finely textured, surreal miniature. It follows the #2 rider as he ruminates in the shadows of world champion, Jammin' Jackie Hudson.

Best Thriller

***Night Bus*, dir. Jessica Ashworth and Henrietta Ashworth**

Driving through the nocturnal streets of London on the eve of her 30th birthday, a night bus driver discovers a supernatural entity who has boarded her vehicle and threatens to stay.

Best 360 Film

***VR Free*, dir. Milad Tangshir**

VR Free explores the nature of incarceration whilst capturing the intimate reactions of inmates as they encounter virtual reality and immersive videos of life outside of prison.

Best Feature – Documentary

***Neighbors*, dir. Tomislav Zaja**

An observational documentary about people who experience mental illness but are leaving their institution after decades spent in isolation. The film follows the individuals as they venture out into the big unknown.

Best Feature – Narrative

***How to Stop A Recurring Dream*, dir. Edward Morris**

Faced with a split custody break up, a family's older daughter kidnaps her hostile sister in order to embark on a journey and reconnect before they are forced to part. Shot in and around locations pertinent to the director's childhood.





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.
- **Connect with ASFF on social media:**
[Twitter @asffest](https://twitter.com/asffest) | [Facebook @aestheticashortfilmfest](https://facebook.com/aestheticashortfilmfest) | [Instagram @asffestival](https://instagram.com/asffestival)

