

INTERNATIONAL
SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

Online Festival Programme 2020
(May 8th-July 23rd)

Week 1: Local Docs

(Friday 8th May – 14th May)



Boat Life

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Sophie Carlarne)

A documentary about people who live on houseboats in Oxford. It follows the experience of a student filmmaker moving onto a houseboat for the first time.



The Indian Army In The First World War: An Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire Perspective

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Sharon Woodward)

This film documents research being carried out by an intergenerational and multi-faith group from the local community. Here they develop display panels for a touring Museum exhibition. They also access archive material previously unseen, and some not explored for 100 years or more. Reflecting on the involvement of the Indian Army during WW1.



The Oxford Pole

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Matylda Jablonka)

A short documentary exploring pole dancing through the eyes of three students at University of Oxford.



Unknown Ravens

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Sema Basharan)

Willie Heider, a 17-year-old German machine gunner, is drafted into the army in 1942. During his two years as a soldier, he never shoots a man. His rejection of armed conflict, and subsequent capture by Allied forces, leads him on a journey that would change the course of his life.

Week 1: Romance?

(Friday 8th May – 14th May)



Aurore

(France, subtitles, dir. Mael Le Mée)

Aurore, a sixteen years teenage girl, discovers her body with her friends... With a supernatural finger. (Contains adult content)



Conte Anglais

(UK, dir. Daniel Marc Janes)

A lyrical drama about love, Brexit, and Anglo-French differences set against the coast of Essex in the east of England.



Crimson Cuffs

(USA, dir. Madeline Vail)

Laurena reluctantly goes on a blind date at the behest of her pushy mother and learns it's always best to trust your instincts over other people's advice.



Disco Dynamite

(UK, dir. Tom Clover)

A washed up roller disco champion, who vouched to never put his skates on again, must overcome his fear of the rink to go on a roller skating date with the new girl at work.



Hidden

(UK, Dir. Jess O'Brien)

Solomon reads aloud a poem with a beauty that surprises his classmates except one, Katie. The poem has a meaning and two secrets only they know about.



Needletail

(UK, dir. Alice Hamilton)

A poignant will-they/won't-they love story about three birdwatchers who cross the country in search of something extraordinary.



Stroke Of Midnight

(Sweden, in English, dir. Niclas Ribbarp)

Keeping up appearances in the sphere of high society, whilst tolerating mutual infidelity - provided it's kept secret - seems to be the only thing left sustaining Elizabeth's and Leonard's marriage. But when celebrating New Year's Eve in the Swiss Alps, their loveless pact is broken. On returning home from a party to their luxury chalet the accusations start to fly. This is surely the end of their relationship - unless one of them is prepared to pay a very high price...

A huge thank you to our sponsors:



St John's College
Oxford

Week 2: Other Worlds

(Friday 15th May – 21st May)



Beyond Existence

(Canada, Dir. Zikang Chen)

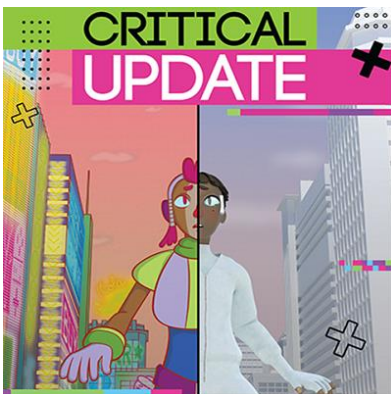
In the far future, humanity attempts to prolong its existence by storing people's consciousness inside machines. After humanity's extinction, one of the last surviving human consciousness ponders the purpose of its existence inside an empty universe.



Crimson Tower

(USA, Dir. Amario Andr )

"Crimson Tower" is a 2D/3D hybrid film about a little girl living in a cyber-punk inspired society, haunted by a monster who kills people in their sleep. The dream world is bright & vibrant while the real world is gritty & dark.



Critical Update

(UK, Dir. Brogan Jones)

Animation. In an envisioned future where everyone is constantly plugged in via AR visors called iVisions, the lines between what is real and important in life and what is not have become blurred. Taya's (aka SafariJack's), world shatters when their iVision AR-Visor breaks and they can't interact with the online world anymore. After a chance meeting and seeing how the real world is a blank canvas, can their views about their world change, or are they too plugged in?



Elara

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Ash Verjee)

The chance meeting between two people on the precipice of their own life-changing events results in a rare connection of souls.



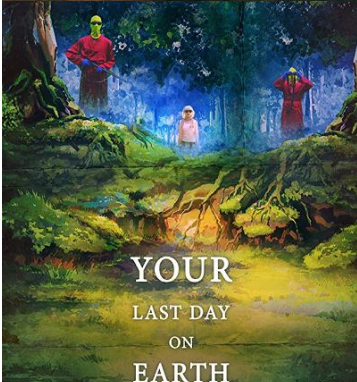
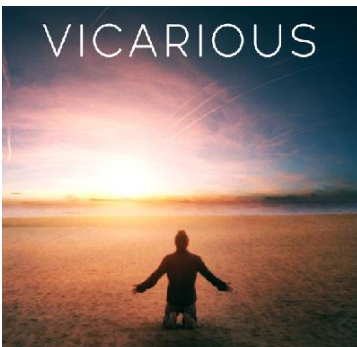
Honor Among Thieves

(USA, Dir. Justin Eugene Evans)

When a planet-hopping cowboy-criminal (Jason R. Moore, Marvel's The Punisher) returns to New Mexico after a heist-gone-wrong, he expects a hero's welcome. Instead, he finds his mutinous crew have decided he's no longer in charge.



The Second Hearing



The Second Hearing

(UK, Dir. Stuart Black, Nick Mather)

A futuristic prison. A broken prisoner. The AI that runs the institution summons Graham from his cell to face a parole hearing where he will have to re-enact his crime. Can he make it through the test without any re-offence? A tale of sex, death and vindictive algorithms.

Silicon Caesar

(USA, Dir. Chuck Griffith)

A megalomaniac CEO is fatally usurped the night before a new A.I. product release.

SPIRIT: A Martian Story

(USA, Dir. Stimson Snead)

NASA sought evidence of life on Mars. That search begins with water, and the search for water begins with the study of the rocks and the soil. That was the historic mission of the rovers SPIRIT and OPPORTUNITY. This is SPIRITS story. Nominated for three awards: special effects, best children's film and best science-fiction or fantasy film.

Triskelion

(UK, Dir. Stuart T. Birchall)

'Triskelion' weaves a dark abstract exploration of the 'Alice in Wonderland' theme and mind control. Three realities spiral as a woman sacrifices everything attempting to escape the labyrinth, fighting to become the master of her consciousness.

Vicarious

(Germany, subtitles, Dir. Dave Ardito)

Vicarious tells the story of the daydreaming office worker Jake Thompson. To escape from his boring reality, he reads exciting books and imagines himself as an action hero who saves the world. But sooner or later this does not fulfill him anymore. In search of a new way to feel alive again, he finds a new source of inspiration which forces him to a life-changing decision.

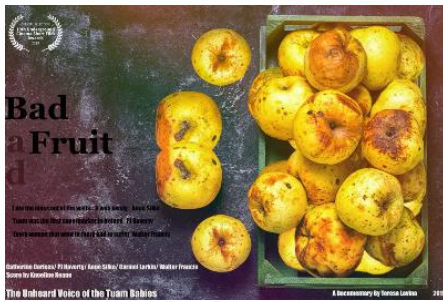
Your Last Day On Earth

(Spain, subtitles, Dir. Marc Martínez Jordán)

A Fox-dressed man breaks the space time limits with only one goal: to spend some time with his wife. But below this recreational act there's a far more complex and ambitious plan. Nominated for four awards: screenplay, cinematography, editing and best science-fiction or fantasy film.

Week 3: Documentaries

(Friday 22nd May – 28th May)



Bad Fruit (The Unheard Voice of the Tuam Babies) (Ireland, Dir. Teresa Lavina)

The Tuam babies in Ireland. 796 babies were thrown in a septic tank, no proper burials, no prayers, no respect. The nuns have not yet apologised for their actions. This film is a testimony told by the survivors of Tuam mother and baby home and their stories.



Bayandalai - Lord of the Taiga

(Spain, Subtitles, Dir. Aner Etxebarria Moral, Pablo Vidal Santos)

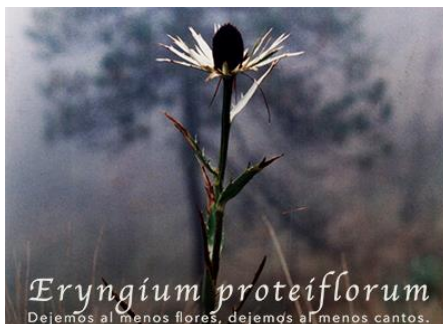
From inside his yurt deep within the heart of the Taiga, Bayandalai –an elder of the Dukhas tribe– muses about the significance of life and death in the largest forest on Earth. He is the last of the great reindeer herders of the Taiga.



Becoming Cherrie

(UK/Ireland, Dir. Nicky Larkin)

Diagnosed HIV-positive aged 19, Matthew Cavan struggled to find acceptance in conservative Northern Irish society. In a desperate attempt to escape his everyday reality and get back on stage, Matthew created his absolutely fabulous drag alter-ego Cherrie Ontop.



Eryngium Proteiflorum

(Mexico, subtitles, Dir. Dia Amida)

Environmental film which focuses on a unique flower from the mountains of Mexico.



From Rags To Cups

(Malawi, Dir. Nancy Durrell McKenna)

Dzaleka is home to 37,000 refugees. The film explores the challenges that menstruation adds to the lives of women fleeing their war-torn communities with only rags to use. The film describes a simple and economic solution - the menstrual cup which is a sustainable, hygienic, comfortable and environmentally-friendly product, providing women with a dignified choice each month.



George and the Whales

(Tonga, Dir. Nessim Stevenson)

A portrait of a Tongan whale-watching guide called George, and of the humpback whales that spend their summers in the warm waters around the islands of Vava'u.



Have We Met Before?

(UK, Dir. Oliver Mason)

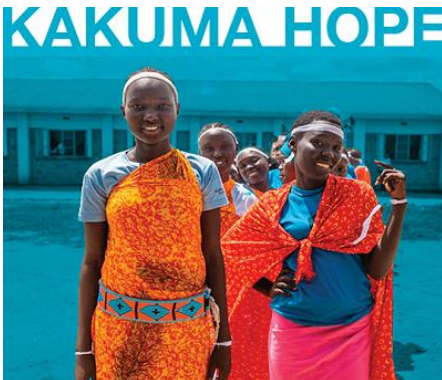
Have We Met Before? documents the different ways that gay men have met and dated over decades since the 1970s. More specifically, it explores the significant impact that the internet revolution has made on the gay dating scene.



If I Get Like That Just Shoot Me

(UK, Dir. Amy Clegg)

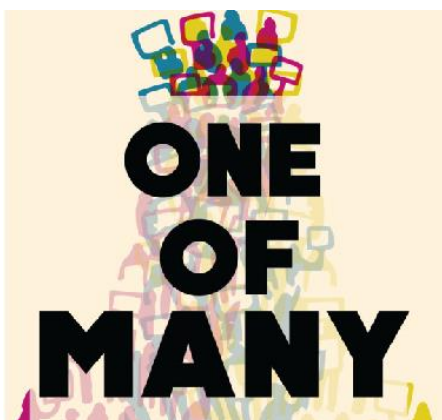
'If I Get Like That Just Shoot Me' is a short Documentary which aims to reveal how the perception and reality of informal care for the elderly is an ever-widening gap. It captures through one family unit; the exchange of Parent and Child roles and the shift of time over a matriarchal line and across generations between a Grandmother, Mother and Daughter.



Kakuma Hope

(Kenya, Dir. Caroline True)

Life in Kakuma, one of the world's largest refugee camps, can be incredibly difficult. Established in 1992, UNHCR's Kakuma Camp is home to more than 190,000 people forced to flee violence, persecution and war. Kakuma Hope is the story of the Morneau Shepell Secondary School for Girls, the young women and the boarding school making a difference in the region.



One Of Many (European Premiere)

(USA, dir. MJ Bernier)

A collection of powerful individual voices is documented in the short film, One of Many, reminding us of the anger, distrust, heartbreak and hope that merged together on January 21, 2017 at The Women's March on Washington.



Reef Revolution

(New Zealand, Dir. Rebecca Pratt)

An undocumented reef, 11km offshore of New Zealand, has captured the curiosity and passion of a dedicated team and their local community. Follow in this sentimental journey, as the younger generation join 'Project Reef Life' team members in their journey of ocean discovery, and in turn surprise an older generation about life under their local ocean.



Snow Warrior

(Canada, dir. Frederick Kroetsch, Kurt Spenrath)

Snow Warrior is a love letter to the splendour of winter. It captures the beauty of a northern city through the eyes of a bicycle courier named Mariah. We see her ready herself and her bike for a grueling day's work of racing through the snow and traffic to get her deliveries into the hands of her customers.



Waves

(South Africa/UK, Dir. Jessie Ayles)

Filmed in Cape Town's notorious Lavender Hill, Waves explores the perspective of three young girls growing up in one of South Africa's most violent communities.



WHAT HEAT

(UK, dir. João Cabrita)

In the wake of news revealing an impending climate catastrophe, Extinction Rebellion Scotland is formed. It's members show more than a fearless commitment to arrestable, non-violent direct actions. A deep compassion, an existential fear and an active hope born out of despair.



Winter Hill

(UK, dir. Lee Gray)

Winter Hill is a story about a relentless and driven young woman who finally opens up about the realities of living with a chronic disease (ME), both physical, emotional and social, in the face of government disability cuts and the feeling of being left behind whilst everyone moves forward.

Week 4: Nightmares

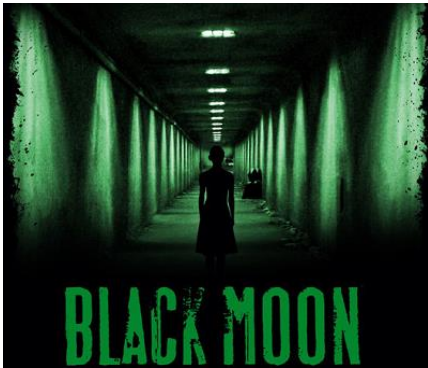
(Friday 29th May – 4th June)



2Colours

(UK/Bucks, dir. Shelley White)

Wherever you go, your shadow follows.
From first time filmmaker Shelley White.



Black Moon

(USA, dir. Ryan Graff)

On her walk home, a young mother is lured into a tunnel, unaware of what has been awoken inside on the night of a black moon.



Carrion

(UK, dir. Adam J Spinks)

The late shift can be killer...



Cassandra

(USA, dir. David E Tolchinsky)

A policewoman struggles to remember what happened at the old Wilson farm, the predicted site of the next murder of a serial killer named Cassandra..



Doll Baby

(USA, Dir. Grayson Wolfe)

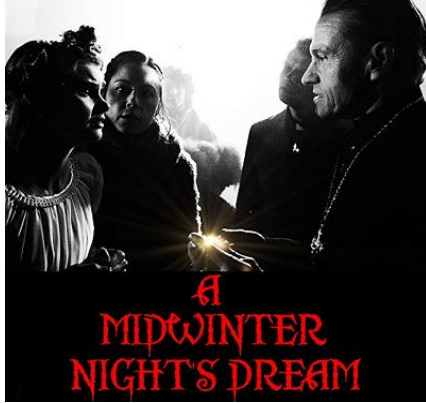
A doctor receives a mysterious package on his doorstep and is drawn into a deadly game with a sinister figure from his past.



Dona & Vixen

(UK, Dir. Alasdair Melrose)

A teenage girl discovers the truth about Father Christmas.



A Midwinter Night's Dream

(UK, Dir. Martin Gooch)

Every year on Midwinter's Eve the Sunstone must be returned to the Yew Tree Goddess or the darkness will last forever. However young Morrigan doesn't want to do it. But her mother and the Vicar insist.



Night Tide

(UK, Dir. Richard Miller)

Ryan is haunted by a persistent knock at the door which escalates into a nightmarish evening he will never forget.



Rachel

(UK, Dir. David L. Knight)

Alex; a junkie living on the streets wakes up to find himself gaged and tied. Realising his captors motives, a battle of wills ensues and Alex's only ally is a ghostly apparition of a girl he once knew.



Running Man

(UK, Dir. Chris Turner)

1991: In an attempt to escape the ghosts of his past, Fred Love convinces his mates take part in a clinical drug trial for cash. But events take a turn as the trial spirals into violent psychosis, forcing Fred to come face-to-face with the very thing he's been running from.



Scars

(Italy, Dir. Diego Di Iorio)

Late at night, a young girl wakes up to discover what lies behind a series of mysterious occurrences, only to step into a dark spiral of terror and buried secrets.



Sorrow

(UK, Dir. Sam Edwards)

Jacque meets with Red at a ruined church having committed an act of betrayal. Red says she'll never forgive her but Jacque repeatedly begs to be acknowledged. Red continually refuses her. Will they be trapped for eternity?



Stakeout

(UK/Oxon, dir. Harry Orme)

Two Paranormal Creature Dispatchers are on a stakeout after a tip-off that vampires are in the area. One is a veteran. One is a rookie. And the monsters couldn't come soon enough...



The Voodoo Man

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Jason Farries)

A mysterious man lives in the jungle and grants the wishes of people who have sought out his help. But his remedies come at a price.

Week 5: UK Drama

(Friday 5th June – 11th June)



Bad Mother

(UK, Dir. Marnie Baxter, Nicola Stuart-Hill)

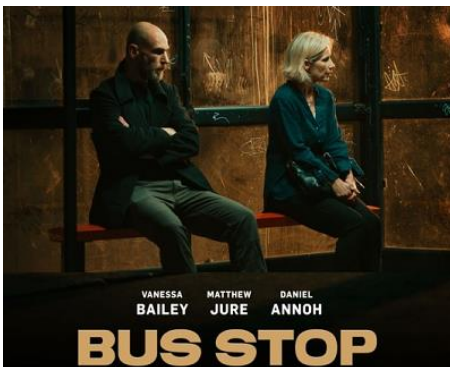
Based on the true story of a mother at the end of her tether who finds understanding and solace from a stranger on the beach. But is she right to trust this woman, another mother, with the care of her children? Bad Mother explores the struggles of motherhood, questioning our relationship with strangers in this modern world, and how we judge each other as mums. Nominated for best UK film.



The Box

(UK, Dir. Christopher Cook)

Following the disappearance of Rachel's husband Richard, a mysterious box is delivered to their home. In order to move on with her life, she must first bury the past.



Bus Stop

(UK, Dir. Vanessa Bailey)

Two very different people find themselves waiting together at a bus stop, late at night. Reluctantly forced into conversation by circumstance Rachel and Liam embark on a journey neither of them could have foreseen.



Colourblind

(UK, Dir. The Bashford Twins)

Based on true events. The story follows Amber's life falling for the wrong man who manipulates her over the years. From what appears to be a loving relationship quickly unfolds the reality of a victim unable to escape from domestic abuse. Supported by SafeLives charity.



The Cunning Man

(UK, Dir. Zoë Dobson)

The Cunning Man is inspired by a real Cunning Man, John Harries (c.1785 - 1839). It's an enchanted tale of compassion in the face of callous greed. Three award nominations: production design, music score and best UK film.



Kaleidoscope

(UK, Dir. Nicole Pott)

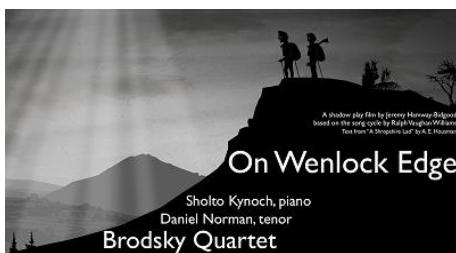
A young boy has his carefree childhood routines warped when he inadvertently witnesses something on his 7th birthday. Five award nominations including Best Film, best director, best actor and best young performer.



Office Song

(UK, Dir. Marcus Markou)

It's another office affair – one of thousands. But in Office Song, the inner world of ordinary office workers and their humdrum lives bursts into life with poetry and something greater than the sum of their tedious working day is revealed. Six award nominations including best director, best screenplay and best UK Film.



On Wenlock Edge

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Jeremy Hamway-Bidgood)

A shadow play film inspired by the song cycle of the same name by Ralph Vaughan Williams.



The Plagiarist

(UK, Dir. James Popplewell)

After his recent unsuccessful novel 'Where do I get off?', author Jason Harlow is struggling for ideas. A chance encounter with aspiring young writer Jemima Worthy gives Jason some new inspiration...



Starboy

(UK, with Yiddish subs, Dir. Joëlle Bentolila)

A mystical young Hasidic man increasingly doubts his identity, his gender, and the nature of being as conflict between him and his pious young wife escalates with shocking consequences. Five award nominations including Best Film, best director and best actor.

Week 6: Microshorts

(Friday 12th June – 18th June)



Baby Trap

(Brazil, subtitles, dir. Carlos Faria)

A desperate woman plans to rescue her baby with her cop friend.



The Battle Of Billy Joe

(USA, dir. Natalie LaTurno)

Rivals Annie Boakley and Bobbie-Sue battle each other in a wild west showdown over their beloved Billy Joe.



A Bird's Waltz - Quando Volo

(UK, dir. Mabelle Sawan)

Animation based on the love triangle in Act II of La Bohème, Marcello the kingfisher is on a quest to win the affections of the beautiful and flirtatious Musetta, but she has her eye on a much older and wealthier bird.



Calling Home

(USA, dir. Wes DeHart)

A David Lynch style ghost story involving a broken down payphone and a man with no eyes.



Choker

(UK, dir. Orson Cornick)

As a girl drops from the sky onto a crowded beach, a mysterious man drives at breakneck speed towards her.



The Competition

(UK, dir. Gloria Civantos)

What is a horse competition really about? First time animation from Gloria Civanto.

Fortem

(UK, Dir. Grace Reinhold-Gittins)

Many people rarely have the opportunity to channel bravery in their entire lives. A transgender person has no choice but to channel it every day just to leave their home looking the way that makes them feel the most comfortable and confident.

The Jump

(USA, Dir. Guido Raimondo)

A 14 year old boy sneaks into a pool at night with his friends to dive off the 10m diving platform. He will fail to demonstrate his courage to his friends but he will end up demonstrating it to himself?

Mortelle

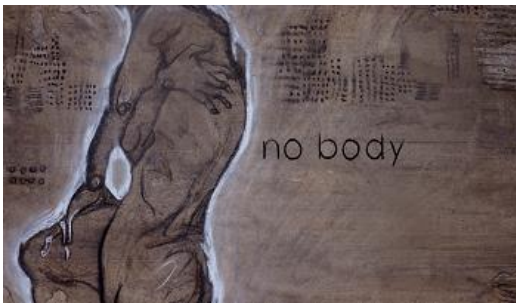
(UK/Oxon, Dir. Nicola Josse)

Mortelle sees herself through a distorted perspective. Our fight with self-image, anxiety and the ability hide our inner thoughts to face the world are expressed through movement.

Nevermore

(UK, Dir. Adam Tindall)

In this modern adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Raven', a heartbroken man is tormented by the memory of his former girlfriend.



No Body

(UK, dir. Haemin Ko)

Autobiographical charcoal animation. An experimental poem based on the director's immigration experience, Nobody explores her relationship with London through three emotional chapters: excitement, frustration and hope.



Nymphs Of The Wood

(Romania/UK, Dir. Iulia Matei)

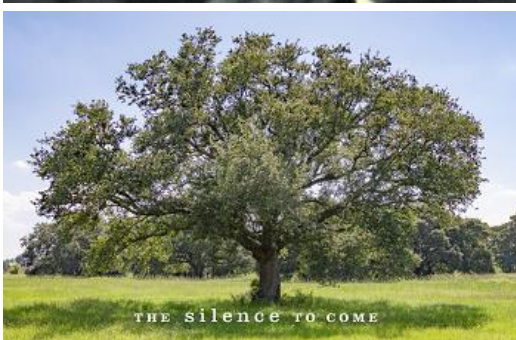
Animation. A man goes into the woods to look for his missing father when he stumbles upon a group of ancient female nymphs who are the guardians of the forest. Inspired by a Romanian folk myth.



Quiet Crossing

(UK, dir. Patrik Křivánek)

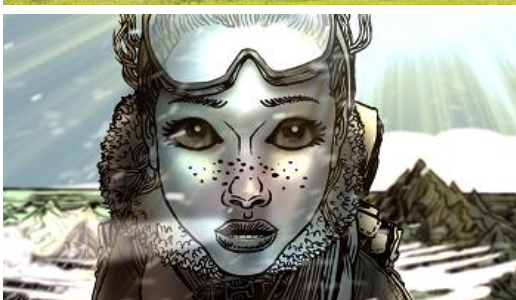
Opponents of the communist regime try to emigrate to West Germany hidden at the back of a delivery truck.



The Silence To Come

(USA, dir. Tom Varisco)

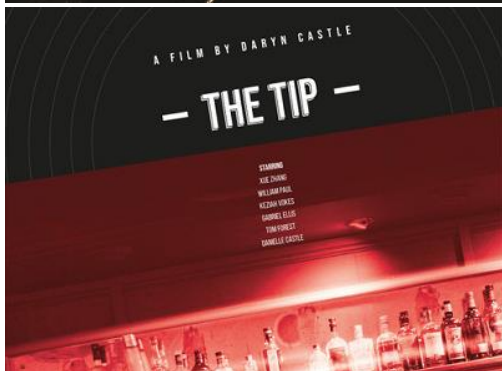
A brief meditation on the ongoing extinction of our forests and the paired silence of words we will lose when the last tree has been felled.



The Sun Will Fool You

(USA, dir. Daniel Bigelow & Talon Nightshade)

Music Video. A young girl grows up reaching out for our sun and finding him cold.



WHAT WE SAY



Time To Leave

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Danny Smith)

Danny Smith's new dance for camera film continues his interest into ancestral memory and the cultures of prehistory. Working with visual artist Roly Carline he created a fish-god costume with iconography portraying the frustrations in his life. The dance moves from the chaos he sometimes feels in his everyday life to the soothing calm of a waterfall where his fish-god is invoked.

The Tip

(UK/Oxon, Dir. Daryn Castle)

Big Jake and Miles, two happy-go-lucky friends meet in a quiet bar to celebrate the completion of a job well done. But Miles has some unexpected news for his friend that sours the party.

What We Say, What We Mean

(UK, Dir. Abigail Parmenter)

The closing scene of a relationship, weaving in and out of the reality of this last argument. What we say, what we mean aims to tell this most painful of life experiences with its full depth of thought and emotion - as the reality is never quite everything we meant it to be. Starring Scottish BAFTA winning Actor, Chris Reilly and new comer Charly Burridge- Jones.

Where Were You?

(UK, dir. Dan Emmerson)

A bitter-sweet portrait of Britain on its last legs as a part of the EU. The state of the nation. A time when it's never felt like more of an island. Young people have been deserted and lied to by a political regime they don't want to be a part of. Still living, loving and laughing in the midst of the madness. The past is the present, the future is prologue. Where were you?

You're Talking To Me?

(France, in French & English, dir. Isabelle Desalos)

While Eve is changing in a mixed locker room, a colleague puts her hand on her buttocks. In order to compose herself, she plays one of her favourite scenes. But the influence of the character will lead further than expected.

Week 7: Children's Films

(Friday 19th June – 25th June)



The Blues Crab

(USA, Dir. Ari Rubenstein)

Animation. An old gnarled crab tells his story of loss and sorrow, hoping to save a couple young crabs from the life of blues he's led.



Catastrophe

(Netherlands, Dir. Jamille van Wijngaarden)

Animation. When a pet bird keels over in its cage, suspicion naturally falls on the cat in the apartment.



Droplet

(UK/Warwick, Dir. Simon Deeley)

Animation. A young Raindrops journey to the ocean can be quite an experience.



Grandma's Supercharged Birthday

(UK, Dir. Matthew Kelterborn)

When Granny goes out to the café for her birthday treat, she ends up finding a new lease of life at the bottom of a flat white!



Have You Seen Buster?

(UK, Dir. Emmanuel Li)

Spirited, determined 12-year-old Jacob embarks on a search for missing dog Buster, encountering the wacky townfolk of Walthamstow Village. What starts out as a frenetic, fun and energetic comedy culminates in an unexpectedly heartfelt denouement.



Maestro

(France, Dir. Illogic)

Animation. Deep into a forest, a gathering of wild animals start a nocturnal opera, conducted by a squirrel.



Meow

(Taiwan/USA, dir. Yu Shu Grace Wang)

Animation. This is a story about a dog, who thinks he is a cat, meets a real dog for the first time.



Rescue

(UK, Dir. Jonnie Howard)

When revered knight Sir Tristan has travelled far and wide only to be redirected to a princess in another castle, his sense of duty is enflamed. Refusing to allow his quest to be delayed a second longer he storms the tall tower to save his destined love, Princess Theodora.



Viva la Revolución

(USA, Dir. Tony Estrada)

Dominick, an unpopular 4th grader, starts a revolution against the playground bully, only to become the ruthless dictator of the playground himself.

Week 8: International Dramas

(Friday 26th June – 2nd July)



An Auspicious Effort

(Turkey, subtitles, Dir. Deniz Uymaz)

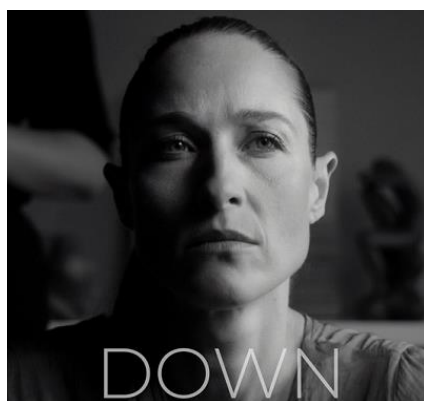
Meryem, is a religious muslim woman who stuck between faith, motherhood and conscience. What would she do if she finds out that her son is a monster in the name of God?



Brave Little Army (UK Premiere)

(Canada, dir. Michelle D'Alessandro Hatt)

The bold new girl at school inspires three classmates to follow her down a blissful path of self-realization, where they stumble upon a dark truth that forever galvanizes their friendship. Nominated for four awards: Best Director, Best Editing, Best Music and Best Young Performer.



Down

(Switzerland, subtitles, dir. Rzn Torbey)

Geneva 2019, EMMA (42), married to MARC (35). After 15 years of childless marriage, Emma becomes pregnant. Following the exams, it has been confirmed that the child will be born with Down's syndrome. Events accelerate with this result, different people intervene to help Emma make a decision to abort or keep the baby. Her husband, Marc, does not want to have a disabled baby. Emma suffers from a psychological crisis to the point of contemplating suicide. What will be the final decision? Abort or keep the baby? Nominated for best debut.



Gone

(France, subtitles, dir. Joan Bentosela)

A bickering family on a road trip stops at a gas station. Murielle, the mother, insists on having the car washed.



The Heavy Burden

(Turkey, subtitles, Dir. Yilmaz Özdil)

Hosted by his uncle in Turkey, a young Kurd from Syria decides to return to his country to bring back his young donkey to replace his uncle's old donkey recently "retired" by the municipality of the city.



How Do You Type A Broken Heart?

(USA, dir. Susannah Nolan)

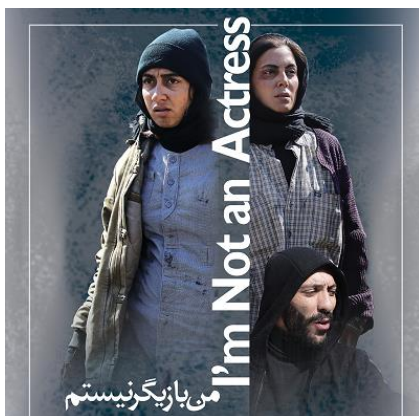
New mother Becky is awakened at close to midnight by Justine, an alcoholic bent on self-destruction. To reach Justine, Becky, must open her own padlocked past and finds herself drawn closer to the abyss than she ever expected. Nomination for best actress.



I'm Listening

(Finland, subtitles, Dir. Katja Korhonen)

In the last hours of the night, Mirja, a Night Radio host, gets a call on the air of a possible end of the world. Soon this unexpected call starts bursting Mirja's bubble in a way she never would have expected.



I'm Not An Actress

(Iran, subtitles, dir. Ali Jalali)

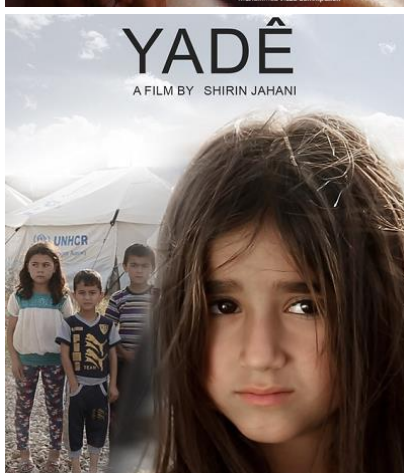
The story of an Iranian actress who seeks to research drugs and addiction for a role she is playing. In the process, she herself, falls into a drug addiction. Nominated for Best International Film and Best Actress.



King Of The Wind Demons

(France, subtitles, Dir. Clémence Poésy)

It's New Year's Eve. Sophie, a quasi-burnt-out intern at the psych emergency room, is in charge of admitting Marie, a troubled patient brought by the police following a crisis. Despite her ramblings and her obvious distress, Marie has something special that confuses Sophie. During their conversation, Marie sees right through Sophie and makes remarks that lead Sophie to question deeply her relationship with her boyfriend Vincent. After tonight, nothing will ever be the same.



A vagrant prostitute struggles to care for an abandoned baby through a night in Beijing. Stars Summer Wei and, Ziqing Zhang.

Once a daughter of a commune member feels neglected, she decides to take surprising actions to obtain more love and attention.

The young Iranian woman had not been expecting this kind of examination. She only wanted to renew her driver's license, but when the officials noticed a scar on her wrist and her tattoo, they began looking at her with suspicion. Suddenly she is trapped, forced to answer personal questions and exposed to insinuations. The camera captures the growing uneasiness with clinical precision.

Award Nominee for Best Film and Best Actress.

Yade (English: Mother) is a short movie that delivers Anit-war messages. It is about a 5-year old Kurdish-Syrian girl who missed their parents. She was fled to Iraqi Kurdistan with her grandparents and they are currently living in a Refugee-camp.

Week 9: Loss

(Friday 3rd July – 9th July)



Box

(UK, Dir. Rob Duffield)

They were BFFs, now they hardly speak. Can a cat cremation road trip save a friendship? A comedy short film about life, death and kitties.



Dorris 85 (UK Premiere)

(USA, dir. Grace Philips)

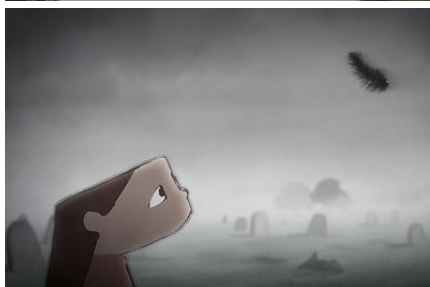
While trying to maintain composure and a sense of normalcy in a tough situation, Dorris Havemeyer struggles to keep up her spirits while celebrating a significant birthday.



Departures

(Italy, subtitles, Dir. Nicolas Morganti Patrignani)

How far would you be willing to push yourself for love? After a long and happy life spent together, Ludovico is coming to terms with the hard fact that his sick wife wants to die. The sacrifice is enormous; is he willing to accept the will of his beloved?



Featherweight

(UK, dir. Kayleigh Gibbons)

Expressive character animation about a Daughter and Father-figure coping with the loss of a central family member. They express their grief in opposite ways, and seek to proceed as a new family, smaller yet stronger.



Her Name Was Baby

(France, subtitles, dir. Laurent Helas)

They're old Zé and Baby. And they're in love. That was true yesterday; it'll be true tomorrow. But there's an intruder trying to drive them apart. A nasty little beast. A crab. While Zé ceaselessly battles the animal, Baby tries to tame it. Her name was Baby tells the improbable end of a great love story.



I Just Wanted You To Know

(Canada/Taiwan, dir. Kevin Feng)

Emotional and semi-autobiographical animation based on first time filmmaker Kevin Feng's experience dealing with different stages of grief from losing his mother.



Serpentine

(UK, Dir. Grace Fox)

A middle-aged Cornish fisherman, lives and works in the close-knit coastal fishing village. Ferocious waves, responsible for a personal tragedy engulf his everyday life, leading to a debilitating fear of the sea - his only source of income supporting his ill wife. As debts begin to arise, and with his wife growing concerned over their financial stability, he forces himself to face his fear and go back to work.



Sophie's Map

(UK, Dir. Maciej Stolarczyk)

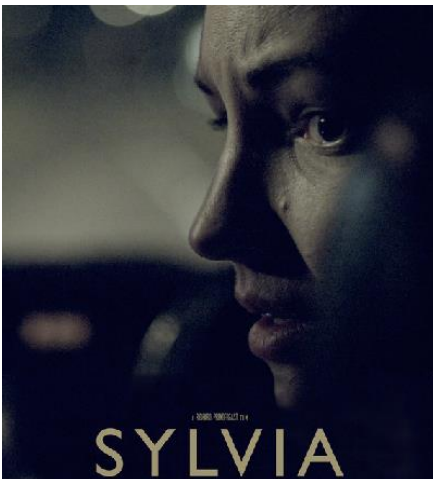
Sophie's Map is a short film about a young boy named Jamie, who goes on an adventure with his older sister Sophie one last time. They venture on to their favourite places, fighting monsters and avoiding lava and he finds precious artefacts along the way, in the same way his idol Indiana Jones would. The strength of a child's imagination is a great superpower, taking Jamie on big adventures like this one, but also forcing Jamie to comprehend his own feelings and understand what it means to let go.



Sweet Release (UK Premiere)

(Canada, dir. Meeshelle Neal)

When the love of her life falls ill, a headstrong and passionate woman learns that keeping someone alive, at any cost, might not be worth it in the end.



Sylvia

(UK, Dir. Richard Prendergast)

In a heartbeat, the things we hold dearest can so easily be stripped away. Music, ice-cream and games, Sylvia is the story of a normal family road trip. However, as the journey continues, a sense of anxiety suggests that all is not as it seems. When the final destination is reached, the heart-breaking conclusion of this true story is revealed; it is one that will stay with you forever. Award nominations for best actress and best UK film.

Week 10: Thrillers/Crime Doesn't Pay

(Friday 10th July – 16th July)

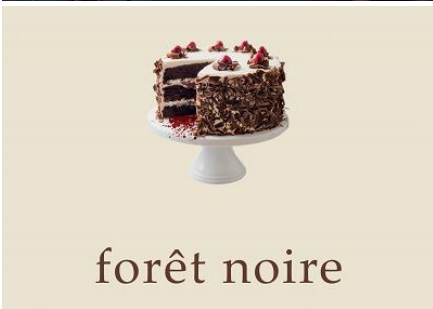


Acide

(France, subtitles, Dir. Just Philippot)

A disturbing cloud takes shape somewhere in the west. It slowly goes toward the center of the country, throwing the population on the roads. In view of the inexorable arrival of the cloud, it is the global panic. This cumulus is acid.

Nominated for Best Film, best director, special effects, best young performer and best horror.



Black Forest

(France, subtitles, Dir. Jean-Marc E.Roy, Philippe David Gagné)

Jura, in France. A judge asks for a reconstruction of a crime scene to shed light on all the unresolved questions of a murder. The accused, a family of three Quebecois, have to strictly recreate the crime's day in front of Justice. Nominated for Best Film, production design and best thriller.



From The Thunder

(Canada, Dir. Daniel Everitt-Lock)

From The Thunder is a visually striking yet poignant depiction of the horrors of war on soldiers of all countries. Shown on a more personal scale than that of a large war piece, we follow three Canadian scouts as they come across a lone German deserter when looking for shelter from the impending storm. We share in the terrors of battle from both sides of the war and how these soldiers handle their shared trauma in very different ways...



Hide And Seek

(China, Subtitles, Dir. Qiusi Qu)

In order to get the money to save his sick father, an upright policeman is forced to risk helping a drug dealer. With a sense of duty, he secretly plans to find the leader of this criminal group. Is he setting a trap or walking into one?



La Hague

(France, Subtitles, Dir. Mathieu Naert)

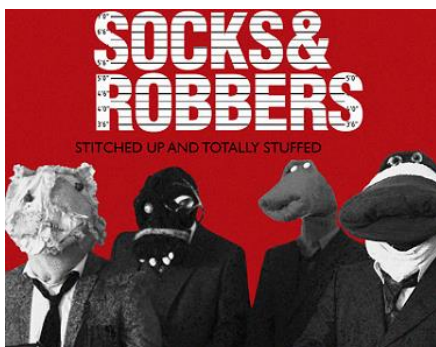
Julien lost his job from the local factory "La Hague". He tries to convince Louis, his friend and engineered, still employed at the factory, to join him in blackmailing the factory's HR manager in order to find his work and his old life back. However, unforeseen events will change his plans.



Miracle Desert

(USA, Dir. Mark Hosack)

Two would-be criminals buried up to their necks in the desert must outwit a dangerous lawman before the real killer arrives. Anything goes in this darkly comic, supernatural thriller, shot entirely on location in the Mojave desert – a film where Casper and Henry have nothing but their wits... or lack thereof... to survive.



Socks and Robbers

(UK, Dir. David Lilley)

A gang of notorious sock-headed criminals commit the biggest bank heist of their careers. Things start to fall apart when they find out an undercover cop has infiltrated their ranks.



Stalker

(UK, Dir. Christopher Andrews)

In the remote forests of the Scottish Highlands, an ageing stalker sets his wits and grit against a young poacher, who is taking the heads of his best stags. Nominations for best actor and best thriller.



Sui Caedere

(Italy, subtitles, Dir. Fabrizio Accettulli)

A man who has lost every hope in life thinks he finds a way out thanks to an app. Nominated for best screenplay.



Tomatic

(France, subtitles, Dir. Christophe Saber)

Three best friends, Jimmy, Samy and Sofi, have the trailblazing idea: to turn a chocolate dispenser into a pot-vending machine. Also, there's a dog in the film! Nominated for four awards including Best Comedy and Best International Film.

Week 11: Comedy/Kooky

(Friday 17th July – 23rd July)



The Audition

(UK, Dir. Kit Loyd)

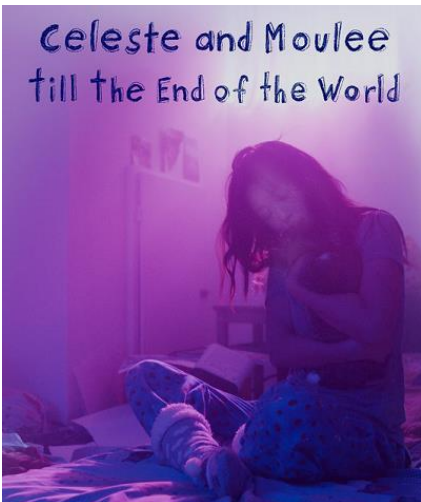
Phil has an idea - he's going to put on a play. Film directed by and featuring first time filmmaker Kit Loyd.



Big Wok Chef

(Hong Kong, subtitles, Dir. Hoi Wong)

Chef Aaron's claypot rice is excellent, but has never been popular. Drowning his sorrows dulls his sense of taste, yet he continues to cook heartlessly. Perhaps a change is just around the corner?



Celeste and Moulee till the End of the World

(Canada, Dir. Celeste Koon)

Celeste and Moulee till the End of the World is a comedic account of the survival of a woman, Celeste (Andrea Bang), and her rabbit in the aftermath of an apocalyptic catastrophe. When tragedy strikes, heroes rise from the wreckage! However, sometimes it's easier to crawl back under the blankets and hope to the god you were never too sure existed that it will all pass. This film is about the latter... a quirky oddball and a fluffy rabbit waiting for the mess (the apocalypse) to pass.



Funemployed

(UK, Dir. Elliot Taylor)

A surreal comedy about despondent office worker, Sally. Unable to hold down her day to day job, she builds a fake office in her own home, in the hope of creating a more healthy work environment. An old colleague reaches out and Sally must decide whether to stay in her flawed utopia or return to the cold light of day.



Huntington Gardens

(UK, Dir. Elliot Barker)

Huntington Gardens is a post-Brexit comedy about three families who battle it out for the best parking spot on their street.



Jonty Velcro

(UK, Dir. Jonathan Small, Maxine Mason)

Second World War dark comedy short about a team of elite special forces operating behind enemy lines. 30 years after their last mission in Northern France in 1944, the two surviving members meet by chance. They reminisce about the war, but their recollections of what happened seem to differ, and the mission may not have been quite as it seemed...



Ouija Sex

(UK, Dir. Mondo Ghulam)

When a heart-broken man tries to contact his deceased girlfriend, he discovers she wants more than just a chat...



Phoebe

(USA, Dir. Kyra Gardner)

Phoebe is a real catch... she just doesn't know it yet. Far from home, she tackles a new sea of challenges during her first weeks at college. With her flamboyant roommate Adam as her navigator, she no longer feels like a small fish in a big pond, and she learns to feel comfortable in her own skin.



Quiet Carriage

(UK, Dir. Ben S. Hyland)

A man must decide whether to intervene and stop a casual commuting rule breaker, or live with a lifetime of regret. A comedy about a passive man with an overactive imagination. Stars Amit Shah and Emma Sidi.



Raging Cult

(France, in English, Dir. Meagan Lopez)

Agoraphobe Sandra literally lives her life through social media. She's angry at all the smiling women online - why aren't they as angry as she is at men, the world, everything!? She enlists her friend Molly to start a cult of feminine rage to change the face of social media...and hopefully the world.



Thirsty?

(Ireland, dir. Oliver Richards)

Thirsty? Drink anywhere, any device... Comedy from iPhone solo film and effects maker Oliver Richards.



Two Dum Micks

(USA, Dir. D.B. Sweeney)

Two unlucky guys meet in the drunk tank and hatch a plan. Stars Sean Astin and D.B. Sweeney.

TALKS and WORKSHOPS

(all times BST)

Live Q&A's with Filmmakers - every Thursday at 8pm

The festival team host a live Q&A session with filmmakers focusing on the films playing each week. These talks are available for any festival attendees, who are also encouraged to ask questions.

Wednesday 3rd June, 5pm

Driving Towards Your Script's Midpoint: Understanding Screenwriting from the Inside Out with David E. Tolchinsky

Professor David E. Tolchinsky is the founding director and current co-director of Northwestern University's MFA in Writing for Screen and Stage program. He is a longtime screenwriter (for various Hollywood studios), as well as sound designer/composer, emerging playwright, director, and producer.

Tuesday 9th June, 3pm

Should I Submit My Film To Festivals During CV19?

The Film Festival Doctor; Dr. Rebekah Louisa Smith, will be discussing why it is important to submit your film to festivals during the CV19 Pandemic and how festivals are adjusting and responding to the situation.

Monday 15th June, 6pm

Adobe Premiere Pro Virtual Workshop

The SAE team will be walking you through the user interface, a number of different features along with editing a live project. This will be followed by a Q&A with SAE Oxford Digital Film Production lecturer Patrick Watremez. The workshop is aimed at both amateur filmmakers and those with experience and is open to all. Find out more here:

<https://www.sae.edu/gbr/sae-oxford-adobe-premiere-pro-virtual-workshop>

Monday 22nd June, 6pm

Virtual Masterclass: Using Animation In Live Action Filmmaking

SAE Oxford Animation lecturer Aidan Coughlan will host the hour long session covering Matte painting. This will give an overview of creating a background for a shot to be used as a background replacement for Film/TV. The virtual masterclass will include where it is used and why. Aidan will create a desolate landscape that could be used in something like the Mandalorian in Photoshop and provide a look at the use of Unreal for background replacement.

The masterclass is open to all, find out more here:

<https://www.sae.edu/gbr/sae-oxford-virtual-masterclass-using-animation-live-action-filmmaking>

Tuesday 7th July, 3pm

How Do I Adapt My Film Festival Strategy Around CV19?

The Film Festival Doctor; Dr. Rebekah Louisa Smith, will be discussing how to adapt your film festival strategy around CV19 and why your strategy needs to be closely monitored.

Oxford International Short Film Festival Award Nominations

Best Film

Acide, Black Forest, Kaleidoscope, Starboy, Tattoo

Best Director

Acide (Just Philippot), Brave Little Army (Michelle D'Alessandro Hatt), Kaleidoscope (Nicole Pott), King of the Wind Demons (Clémence Poésy), Office Song (Marcus Markou), Starboy (Joelle Bentolila)

Best Lead Actress

Gone (Aurelie Pitrat), How Do You Type A Broken Heart (Emily Donahoe), I'm Listening (Marjaana Maijala), I'm Not An Actress (Yasaman Moavi), Sylvia (Jolie Lennon), Tattoo (Behdokht Vallian)

Best Lead Actor

Dorris 85 (Chiz Schultz), Kaleidoscope (Ian Virgo), La Hague (Victor Pontecorvo), Stalker (Sean McGinley), Starboy (Barney Harris)

Best Screenplay

Bad Mother, I'm Listening, Miracle Desert, Office Song, Sui Caedere, Your Last Day On Earth

Best Cinematography

George and the Whales, I'm Listening, Office Song, The Jump, Tomatic, Your Last Day On Earth

Best Debut

2 Colours, Down, Hide and Seek, I Just Want You To Know, Meow, The Audition, Winter Hill

Best Editing

Brave Little Army, Gone, Kaleidoscope, Miracle Desert, Running Man, Your Last Day On Earth

Best Production Design

Black Forest, Cassandra, I'm Listening, The Cunning Man, Tomatic, Vicarious

Best Music Score

Brave Little Army, George and the Whales, Starboy, The Box, The Bronze Fly, The Cunning Man

Best Sound

Bad Mother, Black Moon, Choker, Office Song, Snow Warrior

Best Special Effects

Acide, Aurore, Phoebe, Socks and Robbers, SPIRIT: A Martian Story

Best Young Performer

Acide (Antonin Chaussoy), Brave Little Army (Lyla Elliott), Have You Seen Buster? (Will Jacobs), Kaleidoscope (Harry Tayler), Sophie's Map (Liam Middleton), Viva La Revolucion (Ian Inigo)

ScreenTalk Prize for Best Oxfordshire Film 2019

On Wenlock Edge, Stakeout, The Oxford Pole, The Voodoo Man, Unknown Ravens

Additional Genre Awards

Best Action or Thriller Film:

2 Colours, Black Forest, La Hague, Stalker, Vicarious

Best Animation:

Catastrophe, Featherweight, I Just Want You To Know, Maestro, The Blues Crab

Best Childrens film:

Catastrophe, Have You Seen Buster?, Maestro, Meow, SPIRIT: A Martian Story, The Blues Crab

Best Comedy Film:

Huntington Gardens, Jonty Velcro, Ouija Sexx, Quiet Carriage, Tomatic

Best Documentary:

Becoming Cherrie, Have We Met Before?, If I Get Like That Just Shoot Me, One of Many, Waves, Winter Hill

Best Horror Film:

Acide, Black Moon, Cassandra, Running Man, Stakeout

Best International Drama:

Dorris 85, I Just Want You To Know, I'm Listening, I'm not an Actress, King of the Wind Demons, Tomatic

Best LGBTQ+ Film:

Becoming Cherrie, Fortem, Have We Met Before?, Hidden, Phoebe, Starboy, Sweet Release

Best Microshort Under Five Minutes:

Choker, Crimson Cuffs, Ouija Sex, The Jump, Waves, What We Say - What Me Mean

Best Musical or Experimental film:

Disco Dynamite, Highland Home, Mama, Mortelle, Office Song, Time To Leave

Best Science Fiction Film:

Elara, SPIRIT: A Martian Story, The Second Hearing, Triskelion, Your Last Day On Earth

Best UK Drama:

Bad Mother, Featherweight, Office Song, Sylvia, The Cunning Man

For more information, please visit:

Our website: <http://www.oxisff.co.uk>

Our blog: [Follow our blog for additional festival information](#)

Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/oxisff>

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