



SXSW FILM & TV FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES 2024 JURY AND SPECIAL AWARDS

Austin, Texas, Wednesday, March 13, 2024 – [EMBARGOED 8:00 PM PT / 10:00 PM CT / 11:00 PM EST or when alerted Awards show concluded] The South by Southwest® (SXSW®) Conference and Festivals announced the 2024 Jury and Special Award winners of the 31st SXSW Film & TV Festival. Feature films receiving Jury Awards were selected from the Narrative Feature and Documentary Feature Competition categories, plus all other juried sections, including Shorts, Independent TV Pilots, Music Videos, Design and XR Experience Awards. Special Awards announced included the SXSW Best of Texas Award, the Kickstarter NextGen Award, and the Janet Pierson Champion Award presented by *Indiewire*.

All 2024 film categories will be eligible for category-specific Audience Awards that will be certified by the accounting firm of Maxwell Locke & Ritter. Audience Award Voting will conclude on Saturday, March 16. Winners will be announced via sxsw.com that week.

“What an extraordinary week of film and TV premieres we’ve had here at SXSW, and there is more to come through Saturday,” said Claudette Godfrey, VP, Film & TV. “Our theaters have been bursting with incredible and vocal audiences celebrating the exceptional and diverse work in our lineup, and we’re so excited to celebrate this year’s jury and special award winners!”

The SXSW 2024 Film & TV Festival Award Winners:

FEATURE FILM GRAND JURY AWARDS

NARRATIVE FEATURE COMPETITION

Winner: *Bob Trevino Likes It*

Director/Screenwriter: Tracie Laymon, Producers: Tracie Laymon, Sean Mullin, Edgar Rosa, Felipe Dieppa

“Tracie Laymon’s semi-autobiographical story of a struggling young woman who finds anchor in an unlikely connection feels at once familiar and yet surprising. Laymon’s sure hand transforms what might have been saccharine into something raw thanks to vulnerable lead performances from Barbie Ferreira and an unusually uncool John Leguizamo. Refreshingly real and wrenchingly bittersweet, *Bob Trevino Likes It* stole our hearts and earned this prize.”

Special Jury Award for Performance: Maria Rodríguez Soto, *Mamifera*

“Detailed, unflinching, and unquestionably palpable, Maria Rodríguez Soto in Lilita Torres’ *Mamifera*, an aching character study of motherhood, breathes life into a complex character by

way of a probing and dedicated sense of curiosity and play. We are elated to recognize Maria Rodríguez Soto with a SXSW Special Jury Award for Performance.”

Special Jury Award for Filmmaking: Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu, *We Were Dangerous*

“*We Were Dangerous*, a spirited and affecting tale of female rebellion at a 1950s New Zealand reform institution for so-called delinquent girls, heralds the arrival of an exciting new filmmaking talent in Josephine Stewart-Te Whiu. Her feature film directorial debut confronts a sobering and all-too-relevant history with a sly sense of absurdity and the camaraderie of its three young leads, played by Erana James, Nathalie Morris and Manaia Hall.”

Narrative Feature Competition Jury: Jake Coyle, film writer and critic, *The Associated Press*; Robert Daniels, Associate Editor, *RogerEbert.com*; Joanna Robinson, podcaster and cultural critic, *The Ringer*

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE COMPETITION

Thank you to our Jury Award sponsor, *The Hollywood Reporter*: entertainment’s #1 news source that champions Hollywood’s world-class and world-changing documentaries and filmmakers through journalism.

Winner: *Grand Theft Hamlet*

Directors/Screenwriters: Pinny Grylls, Sam Crane, Producers: Rebecca Wolff, Julia Ton

“A unique mix of 16th century drama and 21st century online gameplay, Pinny Grylls and Sam Crane’s chronicle of two actors attempting a multiplayer production of Hamlet within Grand Theft Auto was easily one of the funniest, moving and profound works in competition. A stunning testament to the connection between storytelling and community, and proof that there are more ways in Heaven and Earth to craft a personal, nonfiction narrative — even when chased by police helicopters and shot at with rocket launchers.”

Special Jury Award for Bravery and Empathy: Carina Mia Wong, Alex Simmons, *We Can Be Heroes*

“Carina Mia Wong and Alex Simmons’ documentary about a live-action role playing camp in upstate New York exemplifies a moving and hopeful approach to storytelling. Their empathetic direction gives voice to their subjects — a group of queer, neurodivergent and self-proclaimed nerdy adolescents — which leaves audiences rooting for them on and off the battlefield.”

Documentary Feature Competition Jury: Siddhant Adlakha, critic and entertainment journalist; David Fear, Senior Editor + Film Critic, *Rolling Stone*; Lovia Gyarkye, critic, *The Hollywood Reporter*

SHORT FILM COMPETITION GRAND JURY AWARDS Presented by You42

NARRATIVE SHORT COMPETITION

Winner: *Dissolution*

Director/Screenwriter: Anthony Saxe, Producers: Thomas Lopez, Anthony Saxe

“Merging decades of footage into a poignant short film that delves into the complexities of love and marriage. Showing exceptional directorial restraint. This introspective journey transcends time and space, leaving a lasting impact through its exploration of human connections and the fleeting nature of life. With stunning performances from the director’s actual parents, *Dissolution* somberly pulls at the many threads which make up our lives.”

Special Jury Award: Sam Cutler-Kreutz, David Cutler-Kreutz, *Trapped*

“A tense story of a janitor father and a spoiled kid's prank gone awry, delivering a suspenseful narrative brimming with surprising twists and turns. This short film has earned a Special Jury Award for its thematic resonance, masterfully exploring the consequences of actions, the weight of responsibility, and the complex dynamics of social economic disparity and privilege.”

Narrative Shorts Competition presented by You42 Jury: Clementine Quittner, Co-CEO, *Small Ideas*; Kristian Mercado Figueroa, filmmaker and previous winner of the Music Video and Animated Short Jury Awards at SXSW; Chris Rosati, Vice President of Development and Production; *Monkeypaw*

DOCUMENTARY SHORT COMPETITION

Winner: *Remember, Broken Crayons Colour Too*

Directors/Screenwriters: Shannet Clemmings, Urša Kastelic, Producers: Filippo Bonacci, Gabriel Grosclaude

“This artfully crafted film showed a true confidence of vision. Directors Shannett Clemings and Urša Kastelic have displayed a remarkable amount of bravery in reclaiming a story of violence, bias, and hatred in a way that is both harrowing and enlightening. The cinematography and editing were exquisitely matched with the soul-stirring storytelling, blending elements of experimental narrative in with the non-fiction heart of the film.”

Special Jury Award: David Gauvey Herbert, *Frank*

“*Frank* is a tautly crafted yet story-rich documentary short that touches upon a range of themes -- from aging, to kinship, to the trauma of violent crimes. David Gauvey Herbert captures the witty, enduring and at times melancholic legacy of a 99-year-old criminal defense attorney with deft tenderness and potency through striking visual language.”

Documentary Shorts Competition presented by You42 Jury: Loren Hammonds, Peabody and Emmy® Award-winning producer; Christine Kecher, Senior Commissioning Editor, *Op-Docs*; Tina Nguyen, VP of Documentary Programming, *HBO*

MIDNIGHT SHORTS COMPETITION

Winner: *Transylvanie*

Director: Rodrigue Huart, Screenwriters: Rodrigue Huart, David Alexander Cassan, Axel

Würsten, Producer: Lucie Vigier

“Enigmatic tone, sweeping cinematography, and spectacular performances are rife in this contemporary execution of the classic vampire myth. Following the journey of a young vampire, the short oozes with tension, visual flair, and teeth (pun intended!). The mastery of the technical elements are seamlessly combined with the daring vision to create a piece that elevates itself beyond expectation.”

Special Jury Award: *Eros V, Meat Puppet*

“Creative, propulsive, and with outstanding technical rendering, *Meat Puppet* took an ambitious, wacky conceit and knocked it out of the park with hysterical absurdist humor, clever narrative choices, and heart underneath it all. From the editing to the effects, the film impressively kept us on our toes while also embodying the gonzo energy of a Midnight screening.”

Midnight Shorts Competition presented by You42 Jury: Mariama Diallo, writer-director; Alex Kim, Vice President of IP Scouting and Acquisitions, *Monkeypaw*; Nick Romano, Creative Executive, *18Hz*

ANIMATED SHORTS COMPETITION

Winner: *Wander to Wonder*

Director: Nina Gantz, Screenwriters: Nina Gantz, Simon Cartwright, Daan Bakker, Stienette Bosklopper, Producers: Stienette Bosklopper, Maarten Swart, Annemie Degryse, Ben Tesseur, Steven De Beul

“A profoundly immersive stop motion short that combines an unapologetic dark, humorous, and heartfelt story. The filmmaker’s direction expertly navigates the sense of deep loss and artistic purpose through multi-layered storytelling devices and phenomenal stop-motion animation that resonates emotionally with audiences. It’s a rare story that leaves us craving more from its otherworldly setting and popular fictitious TV show premise.”

Special Jury Award: Phoebe Jane Hart, *Bug Diner*

“This filmmaker cleverly uses stop motion to showcase her comedic voice in a fresh take on modern dating. The film’s quirky setting, hilarious voice acting, and overall direction add layers of charm, solidifying her talent as a standout filmmaker. We’re excited to watch her rise as a dynamic up-and-coming director.”

Animated Shorts Competition presented by You42 Jury: Bryan Dimas, award-winning animation and live-action Producer, Line Producer, Development, *Warner Bros. Animation and Cartoon Network Studios*; Angeline Izquierdo, creative force, *Shadowmachine*; Ivana Kvesić, director, *Fantoche – International Animation Film Festival*

MUSIC VIDEO COMPETITION

Winner: *Célen - 'Mom told you so'*

Director/Screenwriter: Cécile Cournelle

“We were blown away by the fresh, unique take on the experience of being a woman walking home alone in a city late at night through the lens of a video game. As compelling as it was anxiety-inducing, it’s an apt reflection of the perils people who look like the main character “Camille” and others on similar journeys face that command hyper-vigilance of their surroundings after dark. It is rare that a video transmits a confluence of thematic, poetic, and narrative layers with such impact and clarity.”

Special Jury Award for Technical Wizardry: Joe Nicolosi, *The Burning Hell - 'All I Need'*

“Our special jury winner is being awarded for a technical feat in stop-motion and animation achieved by a small team. While visually astounding, this piece is emotionally compelling. It expresses a lot about companionship and tells a profound and shattering post-apocalypse era love story between two robots. We were immensely struck by the ambition of this project and how seamlessly it brings all its elements together.”

Music Video Competition presented by You42 Jury: Oualid Mouaness, director, writer, producer; Kimberly Stuckwisch, director, producer; Brittany Spanos, Staff Writer, *Rolling Stone*

TEXAS SHORTS COMPETITION

Winner: *Jedo's Dead*

Director/Screenwriter: Sara Nimeh, Producers: Michael Mittelstaedt, Jeff Walker, Ellyn Church

“An intimate portrayal of grief, this film follows two young siblings navigating their emotions as they try to process the death of their grandfather. The film lingers on the quiet moments, letting the siblings’ emotional journey — confusion, despair, and anger — take center stage. The cinematography accentuates the theme of loss with shadows and dark spaces while letting natural light from windows stream in to suggest an afterlife. Weaving in aspects of their Middle Eastern culture and traditions, it tells a moving story about loss that’s universal.”

Special Jury Award: Fatima Wardy, *Hair Care*

“Taking a number of creative risks, this film is a fantastical portrayal of a young Ivorian-American’s trip to the hair braider. At times surreal, this ambitious short tells a story about culture and connection while playing with different visual forms, including animation, fiction, and television, taking the “barber shop” storyline to a whole new level.”

Texas Shorts Competition presented by You42 Jury: Cat Cardenas, writer, photographer; Barak Epstein, filmmaker; Chelsea Hernandez, filmmaker

INDEPENDENT TV PILOT COMPETITION

Winner: *Marvin Is Sorry*

Showrunners/Screenwriters: Brett Morrow, Alex Gehrlein, Jack Gacek, Director: Clint Pang, Producers: Aidan Erbter, Kenzie Packer

“Imbued with a serio-comical tone and particular brazenness, combined with an unlikely pair of very charismatic, very problematic leads, the end of this pilot story stuck its landing by its sheer

force of a sharp-edged point of view that feels super timely. For promising an ongoing entanglement of messy characters and an apt level of sticky story to unpack, and for its quest to interrogate if not skewer today's media influencers' disingenuous and self-serving co-opting tactics for the sake of audience/fan base. We give the Jury award to *Marvin is Sorry*."

Special Jury Award for: Zeke Nicholson, *Halfrican American*

"For being so deeply real and lived in from the first frame to the last. It's a warm, engaging pilot that makes you want to stay longer and hang out with each member of the excellently written and performed ensemble. The authenticity in this exploration of identity, community, and family will stick with us and it's exciting to think of what the filmmaker will create from here."

TV Pilot Competition Jury: Kat Candler, filmmaker; Christine Dávila, freelance producer; Caroline Vanstrom, Director of Development and Production, *Fifth Season*

POSTER DESIGN COMPETITION

Winner: *7 Beats Per Minute*

Designer: John Godfrey

"The poster's design effortlessly captivated us, skillfully balancing mysterious calmness with unconventional composition choices. From the strategic use of empty spaces to the non-traditional placement of the title and billing block, every decision contributed to an aesthetically pleasing and thought-provoking visual narrative."

Special Jury Award: *If I Die in America*

Designer: Andrei Captan

"Featuring a sophisticated, confident, and effective design, this poster cleverly conceals multiple concepts which reveal themselves upon closer inspection. Through detailed illustrations and strategic use of negative space, the deliberate and smart choices in the design create a visually compelling narrative that not only captures attention but effectively communicates the essence of the film.

Poster Design Competition Jury: Oliver Barrett, artist, designer; Jenny Jacobi, CEO, *Mutant*; Kevin Tong, freelance graphic designer

XR EXPERIENCE COMPETITION

Winner: *The Golden Key*

Directors: Marc Da Costa, Matthew Niederhauser

"*The Golden Key* ingeniously fuses cutting edge experiments in generative AI technology with the oldest storytelling traditions, allowing us to collectively share in the creation of new narratives while sparking our individual imaginations in an endless cycle of creativity. Awarded for its innovative approach to immersive storytelling, its addictive application, and its uncanny ability to organically build community."

Special Jury Award:**Winner:** *Soul Paint***Directors:** Sarah Ticho, Niki Smit, **Producer:** Anna Firbank, **Screenwriter:** Sarah Ticho

“*Soul Paint* is epic and intimate in its scope and potential. This finely-tuned experience gives XR new possibilities for its application across disciplines and research that explores and interrogates the human experience. This piece encourages us to engage in creative play while also inspiring us to actively discover and share our innermost feelings without judgment.”

XR Experience Competition Jury: Jimmy Cheng, *Atlas V / Karman Line / Sandman Studios*; Jacqueline Lyanga, Founder, Executive Director, *Global Cinematheque*; Landon Zakheim, Executive Director, Co-Founder *Overlook Film Festival*

SXSW Special Awards***SXSW Best of Texas Award***

Presented to a feature film world premiering at SXSW that was shot primarily in Texas or directed by a current resident of Texas. This year’s award goes to *Preconceived*, a riveting documentary about the pervasive, but overlooked presence of Crisis Pregnancy Centers, and the complex role of deception, finances, faith, and privacy amid a shifting legal landscape.

SXSW Best of Texas Award Winner: Preconceived

Directors: Sabine Keane, Kate Dumke, **Producers:** Heather Keane, Sabine Keane, Maggie Contreras

Janet Pierson Champion Award presented by Indiewire

To honor Janet Pierson, Director Emeritus of the SXSW Film & TV Festival after 15 years of leadership, a prize was created in 2023 called the Janet Pierson Champion Award. As part of IndieWire’s dedication to elevating Film & TV creators, IndieWire is proud to present the Janet Pierson Champion Award rewarding innovation and excellence in the art of storytelling to Kara Durrett.

Janet Pierson Champion Award**Winner: Kara Durrett**

“Kara Durrett, President of Pinky Promise Films is known for her tireless work championing filmmakers and helping them develop sustainable careers. She has produced more than a dozen films, including nine SXSW Film & TV Official selections between 2018 and 2024. The SXSW World Premiere of the short film *Caroline* was shortlisted for the 2019 Academy Awards. The SXSW World Premiere of *Topside* won a Special Jury Award for Directing in 2020. Other films include: *Save Yourselves!*, *Ayar*, *If You Were the Last*, *The Starling Girl*, and this year’s World Premiere of *I Don’t Understand You*. Kara clearly has an incredible filmmaking future ahead of her, and we cannot wait to see what she brings us next.”

Kickstarter NextGen Award

Over the past 15 years, [Kickstarter](#) — the go-to crowdfunding platform for creative projects — has helped trailblazers like Spike Lee, Issa Rae, Andrew Ahn, and Phoebe Waller Bridges get the funds they need to bring their projects to life. Continuing Kickstarter's legacy of championing generation-defining creatives, the Kickstarter NextGen Award recognizes a first-time filmmaker whose bold and inspiring work promises to offer audiences a new and fresh perspective.

Kickstarter NextGen Award Winner: *Family*

Director/Screenwriter: Benjamin Finkel, Producers: Lynette Howell Taylor, Samantha Housman, Benjamin Finkel

“This chilling and disorienting film has the viewer calling into question what is real and what is imagined, and who — if anyone — is the narrator we can rely on. The film is anchored by an exceptional performance from the young lead, portraying her character's fear and confusion in the face of dislocation and grief. As viewers, we were safe in the hands of this accomplished cast, who in turn were safe in the hands of the debut writer-director. The Kickstarter NextGen Award goes to Director Benjamin Finkel for his film *Family*.”

SXSW is proud to be an official qualifying festival for the Academy Awards® Short Film competition. Winners of our Best Animated, Best Narrative and Best Documentary Short Film categories become eligible for Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awards (Oscars). Any British Short Film or British Short Animation that screens at SXSW is eligible for BAFTA nomination. Films are also eligible for the Independent Spirit Awards, more information on eligibility [here](#).

Press Links:

Project Stills can be found at: <https://filmmaker.sxsw.com/media>

Publicists for projects in program: [Publicist List](#)

(if you are unfamiliar with airtable, you can click on the three dots above the category column to export into CSV.)

About SXSW Film & TV Festival

Now in its 31st year, the SXSW Film & TV Festival brings together creatives of all stripes over nine days to experience a diverse lineup and access to the SXSW Music and Comedy Festivals plus SXSW Conference sessions with visionaries from all corners of the entertainment, media, and technology industries.

About SXSW

SXSW dedicates itself to helping creative people achieve their goals. Founded in 1987 in Austin, Texas, SXSW is best known for its conference and festivals that celebrate the convergence of tech, film and television, music, education, and culture. An essential

destination for global professionals, the annual March event features sessions, music, and comedy showcases, film and television screenings, exhibitions, professional development, and a variety of networking opportunities. SXSW proves that the most unexpected discoveries happen when diverse topics and people come together. SXSW 2024 will take place March 8–16 in Austin. Learn more at sxsw.com. To register for the event, please visit sxsw.com/attend.

SXSW 2024 is sponsored by Volkswagen, C4 Energy, Delta and *The Austin Chronicle*.

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