



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[The Northwest Film Center's 44th Annual Portland International Film Festival](#)

First Wave Programming Revealed

March 5-14, 2021



(PORTLAND, OR) – [The 44th Portland International Film Festival](#) (PIFF 44) is proud to announce the first wave of titles and special events. Taking place March 5 – 14, 2021, PIFF 44 is a program of the Portland Art Museum's Northwest Film Center, one of the oldest and most distinguished media arts centers in the country. The festival centers on both artists and cinematic storytellers who are bold enough to interrupt the status quo, and focuses on those changing for whom, by whom, and how cinematic stories are told.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, PIFF 44 will look very different from previous festivals. A combination of virtual and drive-in screenings and events will bring the world to Portland—and Portland to the world. Cinematic stories from the Pacific Northwest, Canada, Europe, Asia, Africa and the Middle East dominate this year's lineup of 93 total

feature and short films from over 34 countries. The approaches to storytelling in PIFF 44 are equally wide-ranging and innovative, building on the Cinema Unbound theme introduced in last year's PIFF festival. The Northwest Film Center's second annual Cinema Unbound Awards will kick off the festival, celebrating artists and leaders who are transforming cinematic storytelling, and throughout the festival the Cinema Unbound Drive-In at Zidell Yards will showcase independent features and 5 new Northwest shorts exploring what the future can be.

"Cinema Unbound continues to be the driving force of our festival, drive-in, and awards. This is especially true this year as PIFF and Cinema Unbound Awards go global, allowing audiences the world over to experience film, animation, performance, audio stories, and undefinable mash-ups that take cinema to new heights." says Amy Dotson, the Director of the Northwest Film Center, and Curator of Film & New Media at the Portland Art Museum. "PIFF exists in the midst of art and cinema, and we're thrilled to bring together artists and innovators who have created—and curated—new ways of seeing that can't be found elsewhere."

Other PIFF highlights include the [Future/future Competition](#) spotlighting boundary-pushing new cinema from emerging filmmakers around the globe; [Spectral Transmissions: Ghosts of Futures Past](#), a multimedia event in the style of a 1930s/1940s radio show; and [Where There's Smoke](#), an immersive cinematic exploration of memory and loss from writer/director Lance Weiler. This year a special [Cinema//Care](#) Program, guest programmed by Sundance Film Festival's Gina Duncan, will examine how independent filmmaking and festival support can help sustain a culture of care and community.

[HOW DID PIFF 44 COME TOGETHER?](#)

For the first time, this year's programming was co-curated by a mix of local and international artists, producers, curators and programmers to ensure varied perspectives. Programmers include:

- **Amy Dotson**, Director, Northwest Film Center
- **Gina Duncan**, Curator-at-large & Producing Director, Sundance Film Festival
- **Jim Kolmar**, Programmer, SXSW
- **Ben Popp**, Head of Artist Services, Northwest Film Center
- **Shrihari Sathe**, Internationally-renowned Film Producer
- **Jane Schoenbrun**, Independent Curator & Creator, *The Eyeslicer*

[WHAT WILL IT LOOK LIKE?](#)

[The Cinema Unbound Awards Experience](#)

Thursday, March 4

A virtual and drive-In experience celebrating artists and leaders trying new things, thinking bigger, and pushing forward to transform cinematic storytelling - and the world. Honorees for the first Cinema Unbound Awards last year included Todd Haynes, John Cameron Mitchell, Julia Goldman, Michel Reilhac, Rose Bond, Rajendra Roy and Amanda Needham. This year's honorees will be announced on February 7, 2021.

PIFF Opening Night

Friday, March 5

PIFF 44 Opening Night defies the notion that a singular cinematic experience represents the festival. Presenting various perspectives on what it means to be alive in this moment-- while reflecting on the past that has shaped us, this multi-perspective Opening Night panorama dives deep into unexpected places, expounding upon notions of race, gender, time, and nowness. Funny, painful, powerful, and electric in equal measure, PIFF 44 Opening Night subverts the notion that any one film is worthy of "Opening Night" attention. Instead, it embraces the interplay between these six storytellers and their collaborators.

Opening Night will feature:

- [Spectral Transmissions: Ghosts of Futures Past](#) (Virtual, Audio-visual Special Event)
- [Minari](#) (Cinema Unbound Drive-In)
- [The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs](#) (Virtual Feature Film)
- [Entre Tu Y Milagros](#) (Virtual Short Film)
- [I Like Tomorrow](#) (Virtual Short Film)
- [See Me](#) (Virtual Short Film)

Virtual PIFF

March 5-14

With 78 films from 34 countries, media art stories, and programs over a 10 day period, this year's offerings can be seen in Portland and throughout the U.S. The robust online watching portal allows for a true cinema-like experience and can be seen on a number of devices, including Apple TV and Roku Over The Top (OTT) devices.

Virtual offerings include:

- Over 40 films, cinematic stories, and art from black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC).
- Over 40 films, cinematic stories, and art from female and female identifying voices.
- 30 shorts: 9 Northwest shorts, 8 US shorts, and 13 International shorts
- 45 features: 8 NW films, 20 US films, and 17 International films

Cinema Unbound Drive-In: The Future is NOW

March 5-14

Featuring 10 popular independent features and 5 new Northwest shorts exploring what the future can be, the [Cinema Unbound Drive-In](#) at Zidell Yards allows guests to safely gather and experience the power that truly radical and entertaining cinematic storytelling can bring.

FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

Future/future Competition

The PIFF Future/future competition highlights boundary-pushing new cinema from emerging filmmakers and represents some of the most exciting new voices in global cinema. A mix of U.S. and international first and second-time feature filmmakers, the competition films include:

- [American Thief](#)
- [Everything in the End](#)
- [Identifying Features](#)
- [A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff](#)
- [A Machine to Live In](#)
- [A Rifle and A Bag](#)
- [A Son](#)
- [Sugar Daddy](#)

Special Events

A number of virtual special events will help make this year memorable. These include:

- [Spectral Transmissions: Ghosts of Futures Past](#)
An audio and video/multimedia event created in the style of 1930s/1940s radio show that includes folk tales, memories, and personal accounts of hauntings from the supernatural to the political.
- Lance Weiler's [Where There's Smoke](#)
Inspired by true events in writer/director Lance Weiler's life, this cinematic exploration mixes live documentary, immersive theatre and elements of an escape room to create an experience that explores memory and loss. Set within the aftermath of a blaze, participants race to determine the cause of a tragic fire by sifting through the charred remains.

Cinema//Care Program

Guest programmed by Sundance Film Festival's Gina Duncan, this program reinforces a commitment to care and community, and how through the programming of independent films at art houses, festivals, we can create and

sustain a culture of care right where we live. Featuring four recent independent films that reflect this value both in how the film was made and within the story itself, the program will also include a discussion with acclaimed filmmakers Debra Granik (*Leave No Trace*), Andrew Ahn (*Driveways*), Loria Limbal (*Through the Night*) and Crystal Kayiza (*See You Next Time*) focused on how we as artists and audience members can continue and sustain this care in our new reality.

HOW TO FEST

Tickets and passes are available to all U.S residents.

Tickets and Passes

Tickets to individual screenings will be available starting February 7, 2020. Festival passes are currently available for sale at www.cinemaunbound.org/passes.

Ticket and pass pricing are as follows:

- \$150 Virtual Screenings Pass (*All Access Virtual Offerings Only*)
- \$250 Cinema Unbound Drive-In Pass (*All Access Drive In Only*)
- \$350 Combined All Access Pass (*All Access to Virtual and Drive In Programming*)
- \$150 Student & New Wave Members Combined All Access Pass
- \$75 Student & New Wave Members Virtual Screening Pass
- \$9 Individual Virtual Tickets

Silver Screen & Portland Art Museum Members

NWFC members at the Director level and higher will get a **FREE** Virtual Screening Pass. NWFC and PAM members will receive 10% off any PIFF pass and \$5 off tickets to Cinema Unbound Drive-In screenings.

FAQ for PIFF 44

- Our online portal, [CineSend](#), will be the conduit to all experiences and films; the site will be live on January 28.
- Customer service and technical support will be provided by [CineSend](#) for Virtual PIFF.
- Customer service and technical support will be provided by [Ticket Tomato](#) for the Cinema Unbound Drive-In.

ABOUT NORTHWEST FILM CENTER

Established in 1971, the Northwest Film Center is a Portland, Oregon-based year-round organization and space where artists and audiences explore our region and the world through cinema and cinematic storytelling in all its forms.

Our mission is to expand the reach of cinema as an art form and challenge for whom, by whom, and how stories can be told. Through our screenings, events, guest speaker programs, classes, and workshops, audiences and artists form vital connections that bind our community and encourage a more vibrant, accessible, and diverse media-arts ecosystem.

The Northwest Film Center acts as an advocate for pioneering filmmakers and artists, giving a platform to voices that might not otherwise be heard and serves as a catalyst for cultural appreciation, conversation, collaboration, and community-building around new ways of seeing locally and globally. For more information, visit www.nwfilm.org.

ABOUT THE PORTLAND ART MUSEUM

The seventh oldest museum in the United States, the Portland Art Museum is internationally recognized for its permanent collection and ambitious special exhibitions drawn from the Museum's holdings and the world's finest public and private collections. The Museum's collection of more than 45,000 objects, displayed in 112,000 square feet of galleries, reflects the history of art from ancient times to today. The collection is distinguished for its holdings of arts of the native peoples of North America, English silver, and the graphic arts. An active collecting institution dedicated to preserving great art for the enrichment of future generations, the Museum devotes 90 percent of its galleries to its permanent collection.

The Museum's campus of landmark buildings, a cornerstone of Portland's cultural district, includes the Jubitz Center for Modern and Contemporary Art, the Gilkey Center for Graphic Arts, the Schnitzer Center for Northwest Art, the Northwest Film Center, and the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Center for Native American Art. With a membership of more than 22,000 households and serving more than 350,000 visitors annually, the Museum is a premier venue for education in the visual arts. For information on exhibitions and programs, call 503-226-2811 or visit portlandartmuseum.org.

The Portland Art Museum welcomes all visitors and affirms its commitment to making its programs and collections accessible to everyone. The Museum offers a variety of programs and services to ensure a quality experience and a safe, inclusive environment for every member of our diverse community. Learn more at portlandartmuseum.org/access.

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