

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**The Northwest Film Center Announces Full Slate for**  
**The 44th Portland International Film Festival**  
**March 5-14, 2021**



(PORTLAND, OR) – The Northwest Film Center reveals the full slate for the [44th Portland International Film Festival](#) (PIFF 44) lineup. A creative, multi-media feast, PIFF 44 spotlights artists both around the corner and across the globe—embracing the future of storytelling in all its forms. Full festival details, plus passes and ticket sales, can be found at: [cinemaunbound.org](#).

A program of the Portland Art Museum's Northwest Film Center, one of the oldest and most distinguished media arts centers in the country, PIFF 44 is both a showcase and a celebration of the best of international and regional storytelling. 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 feature and short films from over 34 countries.

“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.”

PIFF embraces the idea of *Cinema Unbound*. Through this concept, PIFF aims to challenge by whom, for whom, and how cinematic stories are told. In addition to programming and events, this year’s edition features renowned visiting curators, esteemed guest artists and innovators, industry leaders, and jury members in attendance—all of whom represent major film festivals, museums, and distribution companies around the globe.

The Northwest Film Center’s second annual [Cinema Unbound Awards](#) will kick off the festival on March 4, 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 new Northwest shorts exploring what the future can be.

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## Programmer Picks

For the first time, this year’s programming was [co-curated](#) by a mix of local and international artists, producers, curators and programmers. Below, they share their top festival picks.

### **Amy Dotson, Northwest Film Center Director and Portland Art Museum Curator of Film and New Media**

The Northwest Film Center director recommends the [Cinema Unbound Drive-In at Zidell Yards](#); the [Future/future](#) competition highlighting boundary-pushing new cinema from emerging filmmakers; [Where There's Smoke](#), an immersive, interactive conversation about life, loss, and memory from storytelling pioneer Lance Weiler; and [Spectral Transmissions: Ghosts of Futures Past](#), a multimedia event in the style of a 1930s/1940s radio show.

“I continue to be a passionate champion of filmmakers, artists, curators, and undefinable work that is not content to be contained,” says Dotson, who headed programming at the Independent Filmmaker Project in New York before taking the helm at the Northwest Film Center in 2019. “While PIFF continues to retain the awesome boundless creativity that only Portland brings, we’re particularly excited to be a place and space that welcomes everyone—in a

space both online and at our Drive-In where art and cinema collide with abandon.”

### **Gina Duncan, Curator & Producing Director, Sundance Film Festival**

For this year’s festival, guest curator Gina Duncan has put together [Cinema//Care](#), a special program exploring how the independent filmmaking community can come together in this precarious time. Supported by the Museum and Film Center’s [Re:Imagine Artist Fund](#) helping artists sustain their creative practices during the coronavirus pandemic, the Cinema//Care program features four recent independent films and a March 6 discussion with their acclaimed filmmakers—Andrew Ahn ([Driveways](#)), Debra Granik ([Leave No Trace](#)), Loira 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.

“Cinema//Care 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,” Duncan says.

### **Jim Kolmar, Programmer, SXSW**

“It’s always a pleasure to celebrate emerging, innovative filmmakers, particularly when they have the kind of vision and conceptual clarity explored in this year’s titles,” says Jim Kolmar, a veteran SXSW feature programmer with a focus on Latin America and Latinx films. “Despite the strictures of our current reality, these filmmakers succeed in looking outward and considering possibilities beyond the limits of expectation, form and genre.”

Kolmar recommends [PIFF features](#) by Brielle Brilliant ([Firstness](#)), Yoni Goldstein and Meredith Zielke ([A Machine to Live In](#)), Zora Iman Crews and Alec Tibaldi ([The Daphne Project](#)), and Emma Seligman ([Shiva Baby](#)). Among the [short films](#), his picks include Savannah Reich’s [Men Among Men](#), Shenny de Los Angeles and Maria Marrone’s [The Ritual to Beauty](#), and Brooke Ross’ [Feeling Sexual](#).

### **Ben Popp, Head of Artist Services, Northwest Film Center**

“The Northwest, while small in size, usually produces incredibly large, heartfelt works, and this year is no different,” says the Film Center’s Ben Popp. “From deep dives into the intricacies of relationships between persons, families and whole communities, to the ever standing fervor for animation, and experimenting with form, the selections of films from the Northwest span all of these and more, from new comers, past award winners, and like the hidden faces in the many trees, those who have been there all along, but never recognized.”

Popp's Northwest picks include features by Portland-based filmmakers Alicia J. Rose ([A Kaddish for Bernie Maddoff](#)), Skye Fitzgerald ([Hunger Ward](#)), and Devin Fei-Fan Tau ([Who's on Top: LGBTQ's Summit Mt. Hood](#)). His must-see shorts are Dawn Jones Redstone's [See Me](#), Karina Lomelin Ripper's short documentary [La Tienda](#), and [Tides of Hyperion](#) from Seattle's AJ Lenzi. Don't miss [Poetic Cinema and Persona Tales: Three Short Films by Sky Hopinka](#), featuring a conversation between the artist and Kathleen Ash-Milby, the Portland Art Museum's Curator of Native American Art.

### **Shrihari Sathe, internationally renowned film producer and director**

"In this particularly isolating time, international filmmakers are continuing to transport us to their regions by presenting cinematic works that transcend form, genre and substance," says Shrihari Sathe, who directed 2014's acclaimed *1000 Rupee Note*. "From Mongolia to Mexico, these filmmakers shed a light on the world as they see it and invite you to experience their realities."

Sathe's globe-spanning PIFF recommendations include [The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs](#) (India), [Identifying Features](#) (Mexico), [Bitter Love](#) (Sweden, Finland, Poland), and [There is No Evil](#) (Czech Republic, Germany, Iran), as well as shorts [Entre Tú Y Milagros](#) (Colombia, US), [Bittu](#) (India, United States), [Tears Teacher](#) (Japan), and [Mountain Cat](#) (Mongolia).

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## **PIFF 44 OPENING NIGHT PROGRAM**

PIFF 44 Opening Night radically presents varying 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 content will be viewable throughout the festival and goes live at 6 PM PST on March 5th. Passholders will get automatic access through our virtual watch portal.

### **Spectral Transmissions: Ghosts of Futures Past**

A multimedia event in the style of a 1930s/1940s radio show. In this special festival edition of Spectral Transmissions, a host of filmmakers, writers, and artists explore how the past and the future haunt us today.

### **See Me**

Directed by Dawn Jones Redstone; Produced by Kisha Jarrett

United States | 2021 | Drama

Daily routines intersect with the turmoil of the world outside as three Black Portlanders go about their day during the COVID shutdown in Oregon.

### [I Like Tomorrow](#)

Directed by Nancy Andrews & Jennifer Reeder

United States | 2020

Sci-fi, surreal, musical, comedy

*I Like Tomorrow* is a sci-fi comedy musical that combines live-action and animation. This short hybrid film is set in an orbiting space station where a lonely lady astronaut works out a love triangle between her past, present, and future self. Each woman has a different but meaningful relationship to "space" and are all portrayed by the same actor.

### [Entre Tu Y Milagros](#)

Directed by Mariana Saffron

Colombia, United States | 2020

Coming of Age, Drama

Subtitles: English

15 year-old Milagros' world still revolves around her mother's affection. This summer an unexpected encounter with death will make her question her own existence.

### [Minari](#) (drive-in only)

Directed by Lee Isaac Chung

PG-13 | 1h 55min | Drama | USA

AWARDS

Grand Jury Prize

2020 Sundance Film Festival

U.S. Dramatic Audience Award 2020 Sundance Film Festival

A tender and sweeping story about what roots us, *Minari* follows a Korean-American family that moves to a tiny Arkansas farm in search of their own American Dream. The family home changes completely with the arrival of their sly, foul-mouthed, but incredibly loving grandmother. Amidst the instability and challenges of this new life in the rugged Ozarks, *Minari* shows the undeniable resilience of family and what really makes a home.

### [The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs](#)

Directed by: Pushpendra Singh

2020 | Drama | 1h 38m | India

Ethnographic, Music

Subtitles: English

*The Shepherdess and the Seven Songs* is part allegory, part ethnographic study, and part feminist fairy tale, using the narrative device of local folk songs to describe the inner and outer worlds of Laila, the protagonist.

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### **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\*](#)
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### **FILMS PREMIERING AT PIFF 44**

- [\*A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff\*](#)
  - [\*Everything in the End\*](#)
  - [\*Faces, Displays, and Other Things\*](#)
  - [\*Firstness\*](#)
  - [\*Hard Disk\*](#)
  - [\*I Like Tomorrow\*](#)
  - [\*Jean\*](#)
  - [\*Kin\*](#)
  - [\*Mission Control\*](#)
  - [\*No Leaders Please\*](#)
  - [\*Noösphere\*](#)
  - [\*Rehab Cabin\*](#)
  - [\*See Me\*](#)
  - [\*The Daphne Project\*](#)
  - [\*Zombie Walk\*](#)
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**PIFF 44 CINEMA UNBOUND DRIVE-IN: THE FUTURE IS NOW**

Featuring 10 popular independent and classic 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.

**Feature and short films include:**

- March 5 [Minari](#) w/ Sassy Black - [Fluidity](#)
- March 6 [Snowpiercer](#) w/ [Hard Disk](#)
- March 7 [Sorry to Bother You](#) w/ Sassy Black - [Fluidity](#)
- March 8 [Eternal Sunshine of a Spotless Mind](#) w/ [Cabin For Two](#)
- March 9 [The Sticky Fingers of Time](#) w/ [Cabin For Two](#)
- March 10 [Children of Men](#) w/ [Zombie Walk](#)
- March 11 [The Matrix](#) w/ [Zombie Walk](#)
- March 12 [The Never Ending Story](#) w/ [Old Dog](#)
- March 13 [Iron Giant](#) w/ [Old Dog](#)
- March 14 [Dune](#) w/ [Hard Disk](#)

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**[PIFF 44 SPECIAL EVENT HIGHLIGHTS](#)**

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.

**Thursday, March 4**

**[Cinema Unbound Awards 2021](#)**

March 4

Drive-In: Doors: 5:30 PM PST | Event: 6:45 PM PST

Virtual: 6:45 PM PST

An annual fundraiser for Northwest Film Center, [the Cinema Unbound Awards](#) is a celebration honoring boundary-breaking multimedia storytellers working at the intersection of art and cinema. It honors artists and nonconformists who are not content to be contained but instead expand the notion of what's possible. The Cinema Unbound honorees defy expectations and refuse to embrace labels using their creative vision to inspire and push us to look at what is beyond the norm.

The 2021 Cinema Unbound Awards honorees are **Steve McQueen, Garrett Bradley, Gus Van Sant, Mollye Asher, and Alex Bulkeley**: boundary-breaking multimedia storytellers

working at the intersection of art and cinema. The awards will be presented on March 4, 2021, kicking off the [44th Annual Portland International Film Festival](#) running from March 5 to March 14, 2021.

This year's Cinema Unbound Awards will reflect the unboundedness of this moment, welcoming our local and global communities through both a [Drive-In Experience](#) and a [Virtual Experience](#). [The Drive-In Cinema Unbound Awards at the Zidell Yards](#) will feature live entertainment, food, and drink, and a FREE screening of [Minari](#) immediately following the Cinema Unbound Awards presentation at 8 PM. The Virtual Cinema Unbound Awards will be available for FREE worldwide.

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## **DETAILS FOR PIFF 44:**

### **HOW TO FEST**

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

### **Tickets and Passes**

Tickets to individual screenings and festival passes are currently available for sale at [www.cinemaunbound.org/passes](http://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
- Drive-In Screenings: \$40 cars | \$50 trucks, vans, and SUVs | \$60 Premium Seating
- [Opening Night Program](#): \$27 general admission

### **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.

### **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](http://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](http://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](http://portlandartmuseum.org/access).

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