



SHORTS



2023

FESTIVAL PROGRAMME

oxfordshorts.co.uk

Last updated: 18 August

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AUDITORIUM

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MARK BEDINGHAM ROOM

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Welcome to Oxford Shorts 2023

They say a lot can happen in a year! This certainly seems to be the case having taken a year off. For a start we've changed our name from Oxford International Short Film Festival (OXISFF) to Oxford Shorts, although we hope you should find that most things are still familiar.

Every edition has been different. The first year will always be special as it was the first time. For the second edition we were forced online thanks to the pandemic and our third we went hybrid. I'd like to think that our fourth edition brings the best of all previous years together.

In many ways this year feels like a return to our very first year. The world has thankfully opened back up again and it's great to be able to offer our international filmmakers onsite accommodation at the venue once more. It's also wonderful to see so many of our former filmmaking alumni returning. Things continue to evolve also. We are thrilled to be finally screening films in the venue's newest location (the Mark Bedingham Room). Whilst we are still largely the same team from year one, we also welcome Maria and welcome back Zay to the team. From a filmmaking perspective things continue to change also. Whether you like it or not - artificial intelligence has become more

dominant within the creative field and virtual productions and environments are becoming increasingly more accessible to filmmakers. This year we welcome back Academy Award winner Paul Franklin who will be showcasing his latest project *Fireworks* and talking about how the film was made as a virtual production. The film *The Well* was made using the Unreal game Engine and is definitely worth checking out. Exciting times!

What I love about short films aside from how diverse they are is how they are constantly pushing boundaries. They can afford to be experimental and take chances which more commercial projects can't. Not all shorts provide easy answers which also invite the audience to ponder. As always, we have tried to programme a large variety of short films this year everything from first time filmmakers right up to established Academy Award winners. We will be playing over 100 films in 20 thematic blocks, holding talks/workshops and conducting Q&As with the filmmakers in attendance. There should be something for everyone and we hope you all enjoy our 2023 line-up!

Andrew Carslaw (Festival Director)



Displaced

(58mins)

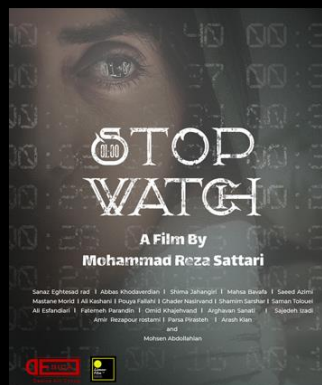
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

09:00-10:00

Auditorium

Verb: To move (something) from its proper or usual position or force (someone) to leave typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster.

Please note: This block contains some disturbing themes and images.



Plus

Ukraine / 10 Mins / Dir: Bohdan Romanko (first time filmmaker)

This Ukrainian short - created using state-of-the-art technology - follows a heart-breaking chat between an ordinary Ukrainian man, compelled to join the defense forces on the front-line of the 2022 Russian War, and his emerging girlfriend who anxiously follows his journey as war rages all around him doing what she can to help.

Our Males And Females

Jordan / 11 Mins / Dir: Ahmad Alyaseer

A father and mother are faced with the painful task of washing and shrouding their deceased transgender daughter. Shrouding is an Islamic religious practice that is deemed obligatory to carry out upon death. But when no one agrees to wash her and shame falls onto the family, how far is the father willing to go to make sure his "son" is washed?

Stopwatch

Iran / 16 Mins / Dir: Mohammad Reza Sattari

A person offers an American visa and to cover living expenses to the person who is able to convince him within a minute that are no longer able to live in the country. Different people come to tell their problems, but one person sticks out from the crowd...

Morin Khuur - The Horsehead Fiddle

Mongolia/USA / 20 Mins / Dir: Joshua Sternlicht

A Mongolian nomadic community contends with climate change as modernity and tradition clash. The lure of city life and illness of a beloved horse leads childhood friends onto divergent paths.

How Deep Is Your Love?

(64mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

10:00-11:30

Auditorium

Love is a powerful emotion which can consume, but is this love or something else?

Please note: contains some scenes of domestic abuse and mild sexual content.



Sirens

United Kingdom / 13 Mins / Dir: Charlie White

After Elliot arrives home late, his already volatile relationship with Isla takes a turn for the worse, resulting in an argument that could be fatal.

Puck

United Kingdom / 12 Mins / Dir: Rebecca Ozer

Puck follows a whimsical summer day of passion between the open-hearted American Mac and the mystical English Northerner David. During Mac's London travels, they meet for a simple hook-up, but their chemical connection boils more romance to the surface than expected.

Playing Away

United Kingdom / 14 Mins / Dir: A.D Cooper

An elderly couple escape for the day to re-discover their old seaside haunts and re-affirm their lifelong love affair. Stars Derek Griffiths MBE and Rowena Bentley.

Tell Me That You Love Me

United Kingdom / 11 Mins / Dir: Paulette Randall MBE (first time filmmaker)

Based on a true story - A rooftop party for two, a brother & sister celebrate their love. She has escaped from a violent husband but her scars run deep. She makes the ultimate choice. With Tamzin Outhwaite (EastEnders) and Danny Bayne (Hollyoaks, Winner of Grease is the Word).

Wake Up

United Kingdom / 12 Mins / Dir: Mary-Sue Masson

Sonny (Navin Chowdhry) and Layla (Clare Calbraith) are a happy couple... until he goes to sleep and Layla has the bruises to prove it.

Family Ties

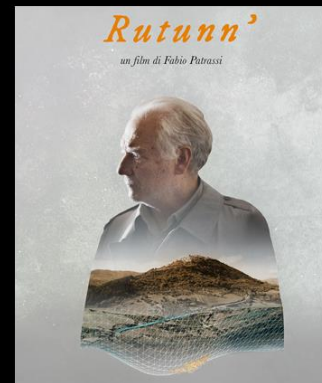
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

11:30-13:00

(66mins)

Auditorium

Blood is thicker than water, but family connections and memories are rarely straightforward.



Father's Day

South Africa / 26 Mins / Dir: Tumelo Lekena

Father's Day is a short film about Alakhe a 12-year-old boy who is raised by a single mother. Being the nerd of the class, Alakhe is selected to give a speech for a Father's Day school event. He decides to go against his mother's word and sets out to find the father he's never met which opens a can of worms.

Tommies

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Brian Fairbairn, Karl Eccleston

In Regency-era London five women waiting for carriage descend into a frenzy of vicious gossip about a notorious scandal - with devastating results.

Sola

United Kingdom / 14 Mins / Dir: Clàudia Orriols (first time student filmmaker)

An obedient housewife has planned to secretly leave her dismissive husband. But hours away from escaping, she is still struggling to find the one belonging she cannot leave without.

Rutunn'

Italy / 14 Mins / Dir: Fabio Patrassi

Where is the line between memory and reality? Michele returns to his hometown "Rutunn'" after many years and as an old man. Walking through the streets of his village he arrives at his old house, where memories emerge from the silence and dust: his son still young, his wife, music from another era and a terrace overlooking a limitless horizon. He sinks into the memory, he lives it as if it was all happening here and now. However, he has never been able to return to that house.

Child's Play

(1/2)

(60mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

13:00-14:30

Auditorium

Be it brotherly love, hopes for a new generation, or simple survival - nothing is purer than life through the eyes of an adolescent.



Brotherness

Romania / 8 Mins / Dir: David Power (first time filmmaker)

Brotherness is a playful and emotional look at the world through the eyes of two kids, who unknowingly embark on a journey to discover the essence of their relationship.

Flux

United Kingdom / 8 Mins / Dir: Perna Winter

When Mum's away the girls will play. A snapshot in the lives of three young girls as they push and pull against one another and against forces beyond their full understanding; as the girls test the boundaries and their meanings, and are themselves shaped by them.

Letter to Lia

United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) / 14 Mins / Dir: Nicky Larkin

Lia Cianetti-Larkin was born into a post-conflict society in the middle of a global pandemic. The Belfast-born child of an Italian mother and a Southern Irish father, Lia has British, Irish and Italian passports. Letter to Lia is Nicky Larkin's most personal work to date, a message to his daughter in the future, from here now in the past.

Child's Play (2/2)

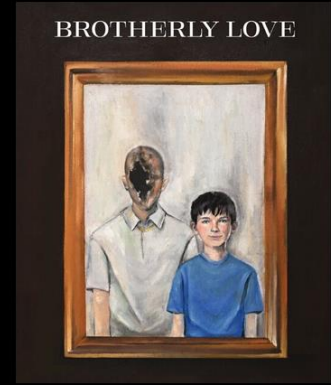
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

13:00-14:30

(60mins)

Auditorium

Be it brotherly love, hopes for a new generation, or simple survival - nothing is purer than life through the eyes of an adolescent.



I Spy With My Little Eye

Switzerland / 9 Mins / Dir: Annaka Minsch (first time filmmaker)

The view through the camera resembles the view of a child. The smallest things receive the utmost attention, everyday occurrences are brimming with stories and inexplicable things are explained by their own fantasies. This film invites us adults to abandon all logic and to immerse ourselves into this world once again. We can listen to Children talking about their ideas of the world, life and death.

Gladiators

Iran / 10 Mins / Dir: Maryam Rahimi

In order to avoid the early marriage of his sister Narghes, Ali has to pay a debt.

Brotherly Love

United Kingdom / 11 Mins / Dir: Connor Maclaren (student filmmaker)

When Jamie learns his older brother Dylan is leaving for good, he'll risk it all to make him stay.

Lost At Sea (1/2)

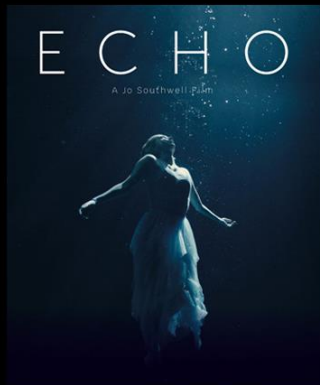
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

14:30-16:00

(55mins)

Auditorium

People have always been naturally drawn to the sea, seas can be reflective, calming or a force of nature.



Echo

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Jo Southwell (local filmmaker)

Alice is a grieving childless mother. Her deepest desire is to be with her lost child. Alice's grief manifests itself as Echo - a much wanted but imagined memory. As Echo draws Alice into her world - underwater- for a brief moment of joy, Alice is united with Echo before having to choose...

The Moon Followed Me To Falmouth

USA / 4 Mins / Dir: Joël Gibbs

A seafarer sings the story of how he, as a young man, left Falmouth looking for a new life on the High Seas. After months at sea, the ship arrived at a tropical island where the moon led him to his first true love awaiting on the beach. But the moon became envious of their love.

Time & Tide: A Trilogy

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dirs: Marc Green, Justin Spray, Jonathan Stow

Across time, the last lighthouse keeper prepares for his final voyage back to shore, the mother of a gladiator endures watching her son fight, and the legendary figure of Odysseus returns home to a less than hero's welcome. Stars John Locke, Dan Newman, Greta Scacchi, Samuel West.

Lost At Sea (2/2)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

14:30-16:00

(55mins)

Auditorium

People have always been naturally drawn to the sea, seas can be reflective, calming or a force of nature.



King Of Sea

France / 5 Mins / Dir: Stéphane Berla

On the coast of the Finistère department, a sailor bids farewell to his family. Soon he must go back to sea and this time he will not return... Years later, the boy who has become a sailor himself must also sail away. In the depths of the sea, a ghost from the past catches up with him...

The Storm Chaser

United Kingdom/Spain / 7 Mins / Dir: Jack Pirie

Storm-chasing legend Thomas Traversa embarks on a perilous journey in search of a mythical storm, the likes of which the world has never witnessed. A genre-blurring documentary about the profound encounters between humans and nature at its extremes, and the harmony that can be found within.

Ministry Of Surf

USA / 9 Mins / Dir: Keith C Reagan

An intimate look inside the healing power of water & surfing on autistic children and the surfers who offer "one perfect day" to kids worldwide for free. Featuring Izzy Paskowitz.

Wheels Of Fortune

(52mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

16:00-17:30

Auditorium

Let us take you for a ride, by bike or car. Deals, hustles, deadlines with a side helping of cheese - the wheels of fortune and allegiances continue to spin.

Contains swearing.



Midnight Ride

United Kingdom / 13 Mins / Dir: Alessandro Farrattini Pojani

A drug-dealing, Italian delivery rider resorts to robbing a South London burrito joint after his fortunes change.

Ride Or Die

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Steve Bright

A fast-paced dramedy set in the Yorkshire Dales. When a struggling actress gets a call about the audition of a lifetime, armed only with her phone, patchy signal, a neighbour's bike and a ton of desperation she has to get to the local station before time runs out! But is this 'dream job' as dreamy as it appears?

Get In

USA / 14 Mins / Dirs: Nicholas Jon Beaubien, Mike Brown

A lonely stoner, a mysterious burglar, and the World's most exotic cheese. Some collisions just hit different.

Two Stars Short

United Kingdom / 10 Mins / Dir: Zak Klein

A bridesmaid clashes with her cab driver over a tense journey to her friend's wedding. A wry comedy about what it means to have a 3-star rating.

Experimental (1/2)

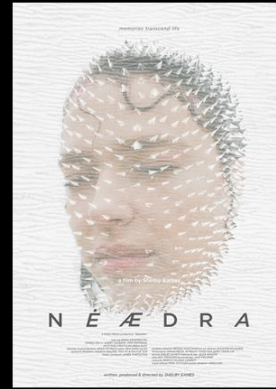
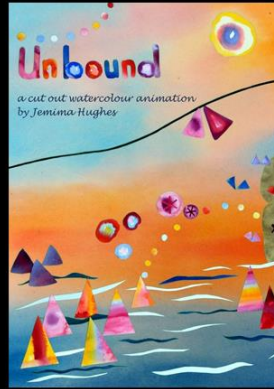
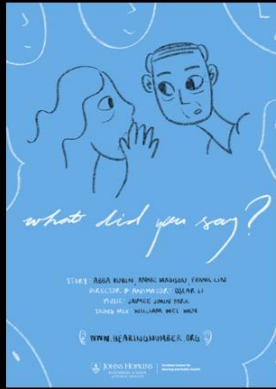
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

17:30-19:15

(70mins)
Auditorium

Looking for something abstract, quirky, musical, or different? The ten films in this block have you covered!

Please note: contains some mild sexual content and implied abuse.



...And Again The Bombs Are Falling

Germany / 12 Mins / Dir: Miriam Natascha Bergmann (first time filmmaker)

Past, present or future? Three little girls on the run - in search of a carefree childhood. Instead they find tickets to war. Germany, Ukraine or elsewhere? The borders blur and yet the perplexity remains the same. Will there ever be a generation ready to break the cycle of violence?

What Did You Say?

USA / 7 Mins / Dir: Oscar Li

This short, animated documentary by Johns Hopkins medical student Oscar Li follows two people and their hearing health journeys. Practicing otolaryngologist Frank Lin, MD, PhD, director of the Johns Hopkins Cochlear Center for Hearing and Public Health, weighs in on the importance of hearing to our health and how to understand your Hearing Number.

Unbound

United Kingdom / 3 Mins / Dir: Jemima Hughes

Unbound is a lively and colourful three minute abstract animation which presents the filmmaker's feelings about being perceived as "wheelchair bound" and her positive experience of physically exciting activities such as dancing and zip wiring.

Nëædra

United Kingdom / 7 Mins / Dir: Shelby Eames

When an alien soul from destroyed planet Merlershkö reincarnates into a human body, she finally remembers her past lives after a 2,000 year amnesic spell cast by her mother protected her from her memories.

i THINK about KILLING you

United Kingdom / 10 Mins / Dir: Joëlle Bentolila

A teenage girl reveals a deeply troubling family secret in a most peculiar way. "i THINK about KILLING you" addresses the fear, alienation, and the muteness - the 'silence' - that surrounds the trauma of family abuse and its concealment. Starring Lucan Gillespie (The Serpent).

Experimental

(2/2)

(70mins)

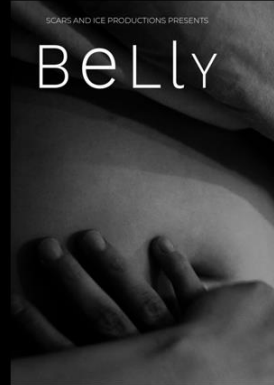
FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

17:30-19:15

Auditorium

Looking for something abstract, quirky, musical, or different? The ten films in this block have you covered!

Please note: contains some mild sexual content and implied abuse.



Psyche

United Kingdom / 7 Mins / Dir: Can Aksoy

Every time a man falls asleep, a stranger, a mysterious young woman (Lauren Babrée), awakens in the dark and finds herself falling down a deep well. While falling slowly, she undergoes a barrage of random, confusing images and quirky juxtapositions. When she reaches the bottom of the well, a humanoid figure who doesn't have a gender emerges amidst the gloom. Afterwards, the nocturnal fantasies of the man become by turns vivid, alluring, and hypnotic.

E c h o

United Kingdom / 5 Mins / Dir: Serena Aguirre (first time student filmmaker)

A reframing of the classic tale of Narcissus, the director draws on snippets of conversation with a trusted friend to muse on gender and identity. Just as shimmers are difficult to grasp as knowable entities, so does the concept of a gendered self feel unknowable except through reflection. Is it Narcissus that Echo truly longs for, or simply the Knowing he possesses when gazing upon himself?

BeLly

United Kingdom / 4 Mins / Dir: Magdalena Maria Herfurtner

'BeLly' is an experimental short film about body image and body dysmorphia.

I Know Two Boys

India / 4 Mins / Dir: Samanya Gandavarapu (first time filmmaker)

I Know Two Boys is a music video supporting LGBT movement in India.

All We Knew And Ever Loved: Earthside

France / 9 Mins / Dirs: Maxime Tiberghien, Sylvain Favre

In a dystopian world, two brothers embark on a surreal journey in the hope of confronting an ominous force that threatens their kind and the planet they inhabit. As experiences alter their individual understandings of the world and themselves, a far more terrifying foe comes into focus.

Macabre

(26mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

19:15-19:45

Auditorium

Who doesn't love a gruesome tale? Here are four animated shorts focus on the darker side of nature. Expect death, demon summoning, twisted nursery rhymes, and cautionary tales.



Nursery Crimes Part One: The Ominous Overture

USA / 5 Mins / Dir: Charles Kline

Classic English nursery crimes are reimagined with macabre flair in the first of this three-part animated short film series.

The Well

United Kingdom / 8 Mins / Dir: Peter Stanley-Ward

Known as the outsider, Trish leads three 'friends' to a secret well in the hope to build friendships. When they realise the potential of the well, they get a terrifying reminder to always be careful what you wish for...

Memento Mori

Ireland / 5 Mins / Dir: Paul O'Flanagan

A storm brews over Victorian Dublin as post-mortem photographer, Mr. Huxley, returns to his hallowed practice within the gloomy townhouse in which he resides. His latest subject is a recently-deceased young woman, whose presence conjures the demons of Huxley's character - compelling him to confront the narcissistic life he has chosen to lead.

A Bloody Graveyard Story

Germany / 3 Mins / Dir: Vanessa Stachel (Student)

Stop motion animation. Three teenagers have an unexpected encounter when they sneak into a cemetery at night to summon an exceptionally terrible ghost.

Things That Go Bump!

(1/2)

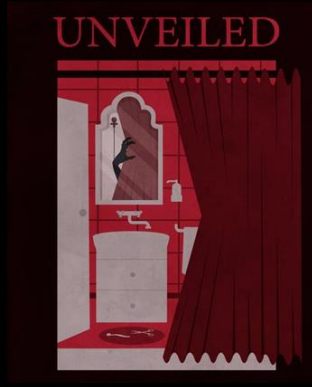
(76mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

19:45-21:30

Auditorium

Do you like scary movies? Here are six dark tales where things go bump in the night!



Bump In The Night

United Kingdom / 12 Mins / Dir: Isabel Steuble-Johnson

A woman's dreams are terrorized by a faceless man bent on her destruction. And one day he gets out.

Unveiled

Canada / 2 Mins / Dir: Ryan Graff

Something is moving in the shower, but it will take more than a curtain to unveil it.

Grogan's Lodge

Kenya / 23 Mins / Dir: Isaya Evans

Two young Kenyan girls travel to an up-country lodge in response to a job advert, to earn fees for college. The lodge appears to be deserted and derelict, but Mrs. Bird, the sinister housekeeper, assures them that there will be work.

Things That Go Bump!

(2/2)

(76mins)

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

19:45-21:30

Auditorium

Do you like scary movies? Here are six dark tales where things go bump in the night!



Forever Flowers

United Kingdom / 13 Mins / Dir: Joe Soloman

When a young caregiver and her unsavoury boyfriend attempt to steal from an elderly couple, their plans unravel as they meet an unexpected fate beyond their imagination.

3:33

Iran / 19 Mins / Dir: Azad Sadeghi (first time student filmmaker)

Set against the backdrop of Kurdish folklore, Akam moves into a mysterious house, one that has harbored terrible secrets for years before Sheikh Rezgar.

Bleep

United Kingdom / 8 Mins / Dir: Ben S. Hyland

A couple's relationship is pushed to the brink as they investigate a strange noise that's woken them in the night.

Broken Boundaries

(55mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

09:00-10:00

Auditorium

It's generally good to have boundaries, but have you ever overstepped the mark?

Please note: contains violence, disturbing content and implied sexual abuse.



The Banishment

Turkey / 20 Mins / Dir: Yilmaz Özdil

Ziko, the sleepwalker is banished from his village for committing a "serious sin" while asleep. This decision is also announced to all the surrounding villages so that no one hosts Ziko or feeds him. On a cold winter day, half-naked and hungry Ziko must reach the city traversing several villages not knowing what is waiting for him. However, on the same day, a deaf and mute hunter, unaware of all this, has to pass through the same villages.

Cendres (Ashes)

Tunisa/USA/France / 20 Mins / Dir: Mohammad Reza Sattari

With the help of a young Tunisian hunting guide, a retired French soldier sets out into the desert on a quest for redemption.

A Few Steps Further

Iran / 15 Mins / Dir: Lewis Martin Soucy, Mehdi Ajroudi (first time filmmaker)

Being an author is the highlight of humanity. Even sometimes, a soldier guarding the borders, has endangered his very existence out of respect for the one whose only weapon is a pen.

Letting Go

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

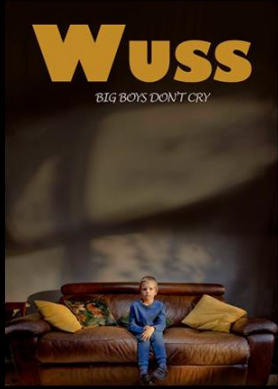
10:00-11:40

(66mins)

Auditorium

Letting go is never easy.

Contains some disturbing content.



Wuss

United Kingdom / 13 Mins / Dir: Nadine Wilson

Inspired by a true story, "Wuss" is about a sensitive six-year-old boy, Zach, who is already grappling with his father's abandonment. When his beloved cat goes missing he draws painful parallels believing he is to blame for both his father's and Jangles' departure.

Dig

United Kingdom / 7 Mins / Dir: G J Hewitt

A mother searches a secluded beach, determined to find a certain item that will bring her some closure.

The Wait

United Kingdom / 11 Mins / Dir: Rik Langan

Percy returns to the same spot every day to sit, watch and wait. Come rain or shine he never falters from his task. Even when Thandi, the leader of his community, tries to convince him to abandon his post Percy's determination never wavers. All he has to do is wait.

Jackdaw

United Kingdom / 17 Mins / Dir: Mac Nixon

A troubled vagabond who ends the suffering of strangers must make an impossible choice when the time comes to keep an old promise.

In Too Deep

United Kingdom / 17 Mins / Dir: Chris Overton

From the Academy Award Winning team behind The Silent Child comes 'In too deep'. Mourning the death of his young daughter, a grieving father goes to extreme measures to relive their fondest memories. Starring Academy Award Winner Rachel Shenton and Olivier Award Nominee Stephen Wight.

Role Models?

(43mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

11:40-13:00

Auditorium

There are good role models, there are bad role models. Not everyone has what it takes to be a good Role Model, but often they can be formed under the most extraordinary circumstances. Contains some upsetting content.



In The Shadow Of Darkness

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dirs: Manjeet Gill, Andrew Walker

Unable to move on with their lives, Charlene and Reon decide to confront their estranged father and their mutual childhood trauma.

Mask

Ireland / 11 Mins / Dir: Margaret Kane-Rowe

During the angst of the early pandemic in the corner of a dark underground car park, a troubled young father leaves his sleeping child alone in the car. An appalled woman intervenes.

Newbie

United Kingdom / 8 Mins / Dir: James Robert Skinner

Novice teacher Mike is worried his new class won't be able to see past his disability but soon realises that he too has lessons to learn.

Butterfly On The Beat

United Kingdom / 9 Mins / Dir: Charles Johannes Palmer

A British Police Officer, ground down from the job, comes home and relaxes by playing online with his best friend. Whilst talking via headset, he tells his friend about the terrible day he has had working on the County Lines project and how a child drug mule almost died in front of him. As he loses hope, his friend tells him how what he does matters in more ways than he can ever know.

The Fire Rises

(58mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

13:00-15:00

Auditorium

Thrills and spills as people are called into action. After the block has screened there will be a talk about Virtual Production with Academy Award winning filmmaker Paul Franklin (Inception/Interstellar)



Villain

United Kingdom / 10 Mins / Dir: Sparky Tehnsuko

After a dragon destroys young Georgia's home, she journeys to its lair to enact violent revenge but instead finds an innocent child in the cave. When the dragon then returns, Georgia must reckon with the price of vengeance. Stars Bella Ramsey (The Last of Us, Game of Thrones).

Takbir

Spain / 15 Mins / Dir: Jordi Calvet (first time filmmaker)

After two ISIS attacks eerily resemble passages from his latest book, a TV writer finds himself under thin ice when he realizes that the new TV show he's been approached to develop by a mysterious Turkish production company might be used as a blueprint for the terrorist group's new attack.

Trigger

United Kingdom / 11 Mins / Dirs: Corry Raymond, Ed Palmer

Trigger is a short about a soldier called Fletcher who returns home to the UK with PTSD whilst serving in Afghanistan. The film follows Fletcher as he struggles with his ever growing mental illness and his struggles to adapt back into civilian and family life. Until a tragic life-changing event happens that will change his and his family's lives forever.

The Book

Iran / 6 Mins / Dir: Farzad Foroughi

During the pursuit of a writer in the streets of Tehran, a security officer encounters various crimes and delinquencies that are taking place.

Fireworks

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Paul Franklin

A heart stopping political thriller set in an MI6 Ops Room starring Charlotte Riley (Peaky Blinders) and Denise Gough (Andor). The film was directed by Double Academy Award® winner Paul Franklin (for his VFX work on Inception and Interstellar).

Paul will give a talk about making the film and Virtual Production after the block has played.

Welcome To The Future

(67mins)

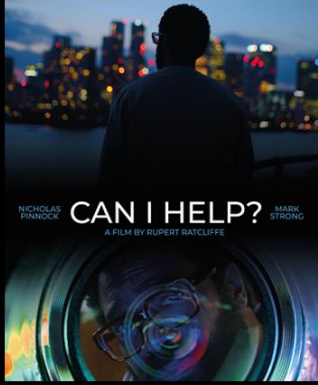
SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

15:00-16:30

Auditorium

The future is almost here and it doesn't look bright!

Contains some upsetting scenes and moderate violence.



Can I Help?

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Rupert Ratcliffe

An operating system (Walter) tries to help a successful and overworked architect (Daniel) get over the break up of his family. Stars Nicholas Pinnock (Marcella, Fortitude) and the voice work of Mark Strong.

Evolutionary

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Oliver Crawford (first time filmmaker)

The year is 2048, A military-led government 'Hunter' unit is sent out to track down and eliminate an alien being, but very soon they realise all isn't what it seems.

Edicius

United Kingdom / 22 Mins / Dir: Uzo Oleh

When things go sour with Jason's most powerful client, he knows his life is on the line. But a visit from his intuition, a man with his exact likeness, claims to have the answers to save him. All Jason has to do is trust him... But can he? Stars Michael Socha (This is England, Chernobyl).

Lighten Up Dude!

(1/2)

(61mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

16:30-18:00

Auditorium

Uptight people can be amusing, but it occasionally this brings out a darker side.

Contains occasional violence and mild nudity.



A Dishonourable Death

United Kingdom / 12 Mins / Dirs: BLOK (Paul Casey/Richard Jobson)

Set in 1837, we bear witness to a gentleman's duel on the outskirts of London, England... A case of mistaken identity, poor timekeeping, injured pride masquerading as honour, a set of incredibly old and unreliable duelling pistols, and what we have is a whirlwind journey of oddity and quite a bit of both intentional and unintentional death-doing..

Bingo

United Kingdom / 7 Mins / Dir: Mark Singer

Two childhood friends parting ways for the very last time. But saying goodbye is never easy.

Geronimo

United Kingdom / 14 Mins / Dir: Geraint Morgan

When Peter, an anxious arcade owner is prescribed an app rather than sleeping pills, he reluctantly tries it out. However, far from bringing rest, Erebus's soporific voice takes Peter into a waking nightmare from which he may never escape.

Lighten Up Dude!

(2/2)

(61mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

16:30-18:00

Auditorium

Uptight people can be amusing, but it occasionally this brings out a darker side.

Contains occasional violence and mild nudity.



Socks

United Kingdom / 9 Mins / Dir: Daryl Cockburn

Morris, a shoe shop owner, wakes up every morning not knowing what the day will bring. And neither do his customers. Is it mood swings or is it something else?.

Linda

United Kingdom / 8 Mins / Dir: Joe Lycett

Linda gets a job in a post office, but her tall tales soon raise suspicions.

Leave To Remain

United Kingdom / 11 Mins / Dir: Remy Bazerque

Things get wild at the 'VISA and immigration services' when Karim, a young Iranian father living in the UK is mistakenly threatened with deportation.

Locally Sourced - Documentary

(45mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

09:15-10:30

Mark Bedingham Room

Three short documentary films made by local filmmakers.



Life Stories

United Kingdom/Oxon / 11 Mins / Dir: Stan Mackrell (local filmmaker)

Life is all around us, no matter where you look. From the ground beneath you and the trees above. There's life in the middle of night and in the deep oceans. This film offers a small glimpse into all there is around us.

Expedition Wai Wai

United Kingdom/Oxon / 20 Mins / Dir: Charles Angus Montier (local filmmaker)

British adventurer Charles Montier joins forces with 3 Wai Wai men, to make a dangerous journey from their village in Guyana, all the way to the Amazon River in Brazil. Relying on hunting and fishing to survive - and building a dugout canoe to travel in - they risk it all to explore one of the most remote regions of the Amazon jungle.

The Symphony of the Brain

United Kingdom/Oxon / 14 Mins / Dir: Rob Key (local filmmaker)

When neurons, or nerve cells, in the brain communicate with each other, they generate synchronised electrical activities known as brain waves. But what is the function of these brain waves? Can we 'see' them? What happens if these collective activities go 'out of sync'? In this video, Demi Brizee, a PhD student in the Medical Research Council Brain Network Dynamics Unit at the University of Oxford, introduces us to the fascinating world of brain waves, and explains how a better understanding of them could lead to new therapies for neurological conditions.

Healing

(57mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

10:30-12:00

Mark Bedingham Room

Documentaries. Healing takes time and reflection.

Contains some upsetting content and phallic imagery.



Adaptive Adventure

United Kingdom / 14 Mins / Dir: Meg White (first time filmmaker)

While navigating her way through an arduous journey with lupus, Kate Appleby continually engages and wholeheartedly immerses herself in outdoor adventures. Spreading awareness of hidden illnesses, Kate has become a powerfully inspiring woman among those in the outdoor community. This documentary examines the psychological and physical benefits yielded through thoughtful and respectful engagement with one's environment and explores the human connection to nature.

Behind The Loom

USA / 11 Mins / Dir: Heejoo Kim

An experimental animated short film about the impact of war on women underscoring rape as a war crime in 1945. Told from the perspective of one family, this common yet forgotten story surrounding the Siege of Berlin.

Dicks That I Like

Germany / 13 Mins / Dir: Johanna Gustin (first time filmmaker)

Visual artist Daniela Torres creates colorful ceramic dick sculptures inspired by the men who have been dicks to her. In this intimate artist portrait, Daniela shares her struggles, anger and catharsis as she creates a sculpture modelled after a series of unsolicited dick pics. She also shares her process with a diverse group of women who come together in one of her popular Berlin-based dick sculpting workshops. It's a hands-on approach to healing trauma that yields beautiful results.

Interviewing Dad

United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) / 18 Mins / Dir: Nicky Larkin

When Kate Guelke was a child, her dad Adrian was shot in his bed by Loyalist paramilitary hitmen in Belfast. Kate was in the house when it happened. The film explores transgenerational trauma in post-conflict societies: how do we talk about the past, while also moving on?

Communties

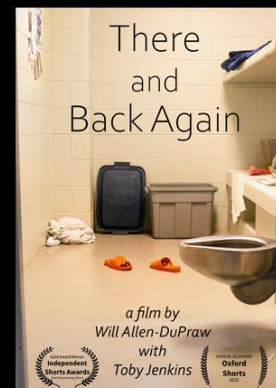
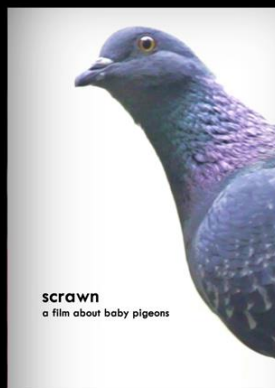
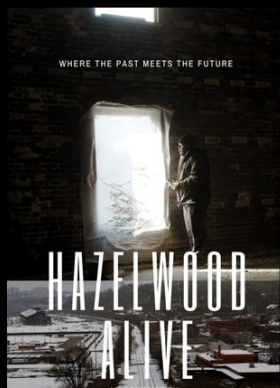
(69mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

12:00-13:30

Mark Bedingham Room

Five documentary films which focus on various communities in the US.



Hazelwood Alive

USA / 15 Mins / Dir: Bálint Oltvai

A young, Black, neighborhood historian reflects on his quest to preserve a Rust Belt town's rich history, and through his life's work, steer the community towards revitalization.

Friday Night Blind

USA / 13 Mins / Dir: Scott Krahn, Robb Fischer (first time filmmaker)

It's another Friday night at Burnham Bowl. Strikes, spares, gutter balls. With no shortage of trash talking and victory dancing. But the group that's making all the noise isn't just another bowling league. The Milwaukee Beer Barrels Blind Bowling League is an eclectic mix of visually impaired and sighted bowlers with a simple focus. Making friends, having fun, taking life one frame at a time. Friday Night Blind is the warm, quirky, inspiring story of three visually impaired bowling friends and the way they roll.

Scrawn

USA / 8 Mins / Dir: Samuel Harrison Crow

Scrawn is a short documentary about baby pigeons growing up in the wild - which, here, means a fire escape in Washington Heights, NYC. Ever seen a baby pigeon before?

The Luminarians - Making the Luminary Loppet

USA / 18 Mins / Dir: Amber Danger Johnson

One frozen night every year in Minneapolis, MN, a group of volunteers called the Luminarians create an immersive outdoor experience to bring the community together.

There and Back Again

USA / 15 Mins / Dir: Will Allen-DuPraw

The intersection of addiction and incarceration is often an insurmountable roadblock for those affected by both. There and Back Again follows Toby Jenkins, as he is released from incarceration at Chesterfield County Jail in Virginia and re-enters the public world.

Dilemmas

(59mins)

SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

13:30-15:00

Mark Bedingham Room

There is nothing worse than finding yourself in a situation where a difficult choice has to be made.



Parallel

United Kingdom / 15 Mins / Dir: Zoe Broad (first time student filmmaker)

Two people at pivotal points of their tumultuous lives meet on a rural railway bridge. One ready to jump, the other ready to walk away.

Washed Out

United Kingdom / 3 Mins / Dir: Mollie Leivars

A teen girl is about to leave the house to go shopping but what was once a simple task is now an endless cycle of panic, fear and paranoia.

Highlighting how debilitating having a phobia of germs can really be, Washed Out is a no-dialogue short film created by filmmaker Mollie Leivars.

Unthinkable Conversations

United Kingdom / 10 Mins / Dir: Emma Richardson (first time filmmaker)

Almost a year into a lawless war Amy and Jack have given up hope of anyone coming to help them. Hiding in their once beautiful home with their three young children, they are now starving. The violence rages around them and in the brutal world outside there is no value in anything except the lives of children. Bought and sold as cattle Amy and Jack begin to face up to the reality that the only way to save two of their children is to sell one.

Za Ra

Iran / 18 Mins / Dirs: Tahereh Fard, Elyas Askarpour

To become an actress, teenage Zahra decides to attend a mixed party of the school's theater group but this party is no ordinary party. Zahra now faces the biggest challenge of her life, a challenge that may leave her with no way back.

Sharing The Floor

United States / 17 Mins / Dir: Lily Brooks O'Briant (first time student filmmaker)

Sharing the Floor is the emotional journey of three teen girls who find support in one another while each copes with the stress, anger, pain, and isolation from having a parent who is an addict. The film explores how a parent's addiction affects their children from the teen's perspective and focuses on the journey from isolation and anger to acceptance and comfort when the girls realize they aren't the only ones grappling with the fallout that each of their addict parents have left.

Locally Sourced - Narrative

(1/2)

(101mins)

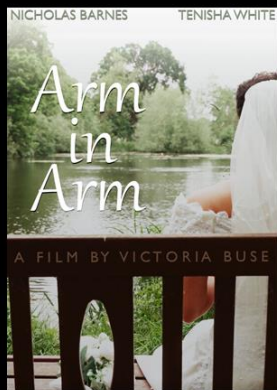
SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

15:00-17:30

Mark Bedingham Room

Ten narrative films from local filmmakers.

Contains some swearing, violence and disturbing content.



Arm in Arm

United Kingdom/Oxon / 5 Mins / Dir: Victoria Buse (local first time filmmaker)

The big morning has arrived, but a sudden surge of uncertainty from the bride means the only thing being thrown is bread, not confetti...

A Mosaic of All Possible Greens

United Kingdom/Oxon / 21 Mins / Dir: Rosie Robinson (local student filmmaker)

A Mosaic of All Possible Greens follows two young women, growing up and growing apart, each dealing in different ways with the loss of their mutual friend, Grace. One of the two, Sylvie, is making a film, a montage of places which remind her of Grace. The other, Claire, wishes Sylvie would give it a rest, and live in the present—with her.

The End of a British Summer

United Kingdom/Oxon / 10 Mins / Dir: Adam Thomas Wright (local student filmmaker)

During the final days of summer, Jay and Alice go on a camping trip in an attempt to fix their failing relationship. Jay wants to express his love for Alice, but she is distracted by a more exciting group of fellow campers, led by the handsome, spaced-out Seb. The ultra-masculine behaviour of the campers makes Jay feel inadequate, and as Alice distances herself further from him, he begins to see visions of her and Seb together.

Her Castle

United Kingdom/Oxon / 17 Mins / Dir: Daniel Ellerby (local first time filmmaker)

A reclusive hoarder finds her solitary existence upset when a kind-hearted social worker shows up at her door, and leaves her questioning if she can open herself up to the possibility of learning to live again.

Manmade

United Kingdom/Oxon / 5 Mins / Dir: Isabel Palma

Manmade is a dramatic, poetic short film that uses the visual language of horror film together with dance, words, music and sound to explore how it feels to be depressed and how we overcome our darkest selves.

Locally Sourced - Narrative

(2/2)

(101mins)

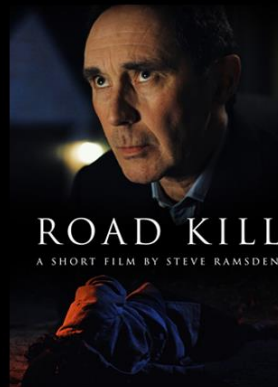
SATURDAY 16th SEPTEMBER

15:00-17:30

Mark Bedingham Room

Ten narrative films from local filmmakers.

Contains some swearing, violence and disturbing content.



Home

United Kingdom/Oxon / 3 Mins / Dir: Clive Davies (local filmmaker)

A small lockdown project about the ennui of being stuck at home in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire. Based on a poem by Emily Brontë, this was intended to be the second in a series of Romantic monologue projects.

Full Of Love

United Kingdom/Oxon / 5 Mins / Dir: Rauni Barros Da Silva (local filmmaker)

No matter how rich with experiences your love life is, your first love will always stay in your mind.

Time Spent

United Kingdom/Oxon / 12 Mins / Dir: Rob Daniel Hutt (local filmmaker)

Nathan and his girlfriend are struggling with the cost of living crisis in the UK, so when Nathan gets a chance to interview for a dream job, he jumps at it. After arriving in London for his interview, Nathan finds himself at a luxury apartment which feels a world away from his council flat on the estate. Nathan quickly realises that something is off when he's faced with making an impossible decision that will affect the rest of his life. With the clock ticking, Nathan will have to decide whether to accept an opportunity of a lifetime or give up his memory of these events.

Road Kill

United Kingdom/Oxon / 8 Mins / Dir: Steve Ramsden (local filmmaker)

An overworked and arrogant lawyer describes the terrifying incident he has just experienced on his drive home from the office... but his night may not be over yet.

How To Cope With Oliver Pope

United Kingdom/Oxon / 15 Mins / Dir: Alex Di Cuffa (local filmmaker)

How to Cope with Oliver Pope is the story of spouses Hannah and Jessica who kidnap and torture their local MP in the hope of changing his ways after he opposed an up-skirting bill and many other progressive bills in parliament!

Partner talks

LIVE TALKS:

FRIDAY 15th SEPTEMBER

Talks will be held in North Lecture Room (North Quad)

10:30-11:30 FESTIVAL FORMULA

Speaker: Mark Bernnan (Festival Formula and Festival Director for Exit 6)

I've made my Film. Now what? How to increase your chances of Festival Success

Mark will talk through the festival process and potential red flags to look out for.

14:00-17:00 GREENLIT

Speaker: Grace O'Keefe (Greenlit - Head of Community and Theatre)

Greenlit is a British based crowdfunding platform created by and for creatives whose mission is to empower creatives to find and connect with their audience. As part of the festival, the Greenlit team will be running programmes on crowdfunding and how to find your audience.

14:00-15:00 - Crowdfunding for Success

Learn how to crowdfund your next project from Greenlit, a British-based crowdfunding platform designed specifically for creatives. In this introductory session, Greenlit will guide you through the key concepts behind running a successful crowdfunding campaign.

15:00-16:00 - Pitch Your Story, Find Your Audience

Learn how to pitch your next project from Greenlit, a British-based crowdfunding platform designed specifically for creatives. In the session, Greenlit will take you through the process of pitching your project, creating your page, and using crowdfunding to expand and mobilize your existing network.

16:00-17:00 - 5 Minute Speed Pitching

Pitch your latest idea to the team at Greenlit, who will give you feedback on the pitch and next steps to make your project a reality.

ONLINE FESTIVAL

23rd September, 15:00 (Online) THE FILM FESTIVAL DOCTOR

Speaker: Rebekah Louisa Smith (The Film Festival Doctor)

The Film Festival Doctor's Guide to Navigating The Festival Circuit

Run by award winning film festival strategist Dr. Rebekah Louisa Smith, The Film Festival Doctor helps filmmakers create a film festival strategy so their films are seen by audiences around the world. In this presentation, Rebekah guides you through how to get organised so you can start submitting your film to festivals. She also shares with you some essential tips with regards to how to adapt the right type of mindset as you enter the world of film festivals



About The Festival

Oxford Shorts (formerly known before this year as the Oxford International Short Film Festival or OXISFF) celebrates the diversity and creativity of short films. We believe shorts films are an art form in themselves, ideally one which should be experienced together. We look for great stories with strong characters, unique voices, or evocative worlds that are designed to stir emotions.

Our inaugural festival ran on Saturday 23rd March 2019 at St John's College, Oxford.

Tickets to the event sold out extremely quickly. The day attracted over 200 audience members across three onsite venues, with over 90 films being played. Our line-up included the 2019 BAFTA-award winning animation *Roughhouse* by Jonathan Hodgson and a special interview with Academy Award-winning visual effects supervisor Paul J. Franklin (Oscar wins for *Inception* and *Interstellar*).

The pandemic forced the festival online for 2020. We played 135 entries over eleven weeks from 8 May to 23 July.

Every week, we held live Q&A chats with filmmakers, and ran a number of talks and masterclasses with our friends and sponsors at the SAE Institute and The Film Festival Doctor.

For 2021, we build upon both of these very different festival experiences by hosting both online and in-person screenings whilst still having to maintain social distancing.

This year we return back with over 100 short film entries, talks and workshops – playing both live and online.



The Judges

OLIVIA CHAPPELL (Head of Judging)

Olivia Chappell is an actor and voice artist who occasionally strays behind the scenes too. Working across film, television, theatre, commercials, musicals, comedy and more, she has built a varied career and is one of the founders of Oxford Shorts.

Recent acting credits include: Liaison for Apple TV; the feature film, Sorority; and The Mousetrap on stage in Vienna. She is also a comedy improviser with the Oxford Imps.

Olivia has produced a number of music videos, is developing directing projects, and produced the BAFTA long-listed short film, Driftwood.

A highly skilled voice artist, Olivia voiced numerous characters in this summer's highly anticipated game release, Baldur's Gate 3. She has also voiced campaigns and animations for brands such as British Airways, Volkswagen, Pearl Vision, BBC Ideas, and Nickelodeon.

LORENZO LEVRINI

Lorenzo Levrini is a Director of Photography based in London.

He recently shot 'Amanda' for director Carolina Cavalli, which premiered at Venice Film Festival & Toronto International Film Festival in 2022 to rave reviews.

Lorenzo shot James Webber's BIFA-longlisted feature 'Sorority' starring Kate Dickie and Sophie Kennedy Clark. His other credits include the drama portions of BAFTA-winning documentary, 'Gun No. 6', as well as feature films 'Redcon-1', 'An Enemy Within' and 'Forever Now'.

LUCY MITCHELL

Lucy has worked in the post production industry for almost 10 years and has a vast amount experience and skills spanning many areas of post-production for TV, Film, Animation and Computer Games. Lucy is a writer for renowned audio industry website Pro Tools Expert, has both chaired and been part of panel discussions at BVE and The Media Production Show, and is a guest lecturer and workshop leader at multiple Universities and 6th Form Colleges. She started her career at Envy Post Production as a runner, learnt on the job and worked her way up the ladder old-school style; moving through the machine room as an audio assistant, head of machine room, tracklayer, voice over recordist and junior mixer.

She went freelance in 2015 and has spread her wings venturing into different genres for a multitude of clients both in the UK and overseas. Her credits include Eastenders, Death in Paradise, Top Gear, David Attenborough's Rise of the Vertebrates and Derry Girls amongst many others. She has a purpose built fully sound-proofed studio in her garden from which she runs her company LJ Studios - a full service audio post production facility offering everything you need for your projects in one place herself and her various freelancers. This includes voice over and ADR recording, dialogue and effects editing, music composition and arranging, foley recording, sound design and final mixing.

LAURA COQUEREAU

Award winning producer and director, Laura Coquereau has worked in television production for 10 years. Currently, she is working as Story Producer on a high-profile series for Falwell 73 Productions. Fluent in four languages, she spends her time between documentaries (both observational and retrospective) and current affairs, for TV broadcasters as well as streaming services. Laura specialises in content that requires working with sensitive contributors, being embedded within institutions and/or gaining access to high profile figures.

Recent documentaries include: 'The Boys from Brazil: Rise of the Bolsonaros' for BBC Two; 'Julia Bradbury: Breast Cancer and Me' for ITV; and the Current Affairs BAFTA Winner 2022 'Fearless: The Women Fighting Putin' for ITV.Can I Help?



2023 Award Nominees

Best Film

- A Few Steps Further
- Fireworks
- In Too Deep
- Leave To Remain
- Mask

Best Documentary

- Brotherness
- Friday Night Blind
- Hazelwood Alive
- Interviewing Dad
- The Storm Chaser

Best Director

- Ahmad Alyaseer (Our Males and Females)
- Brian Fairbairn, Karl Eccleston (Tommies)
- Mac Nixon (Jackdaw)
- Margaret Kane-Rowe (Mask)
- Yilmaz Özdil (The Banishment)

Best Actor

- Bamshad Abedi-Amin (Leave To Remain)
- Graham Earley (Mask)
- Keyhan Maleki (A Few Steps Further)
- Michael Socha (Edicius)
- Saman Mustefa (The Banishment)

Best Actress

- Charlotte Riley (Fireworks)
- Janice Connolly (Linda)
- Rachel Shenton (In Too Deep)
- Sarah Winter (Tommies)
- Teresa Del Olmo (Sola)

Best Young Performer

- Bonga Sizwe Nhlongo (Father's Day)
- Fatima Haghparast (Za Ra)
- Joseph Davison (Wuss)
- Lily Brooks O'Briant (Sharing The Floor)
- Tom Mulheron (Brotherly Love)



2023 Award Nominees

Best Early Career Filmmaker

- Adam Thomas Wright (The End Of A British Summer)
- Clàudia Orriols (Sola)
- Connor Maclaren (Brotherly Love)
- Lily Brooks O'Briant (Sharing The Floor)
- Vanessa Stachel (A Bloody Graveyard Story)

Best Editing

- Brian Fairbairn, Karl Eccleston (Tommies)
- John Smith ACE (Edicius)
- Julia Elger (Brotherness)
- Mike Brown, Nicholas Jon Beaubien (Get In)
- Pani Scott (Fireworks)

Best Cinematography

- Andy Toovey (Jackdaw)
- BLOK (A Dishonourable Death)
- Dilsat Canan (The Banishment)
- Khoroldorj 'Hogo' Choijooanchig (Morin Khuur)
- Will Billany (The Storm Chaser)

Best Music/Soundtrack

- Earthside (All We Knew and Ever Loved)
- Kurt Rosenberg (Moon Followed Me To Falmouth)
- Olaf Taranczewski (Morin Khuur)
- Sandy Lavallart (King of Sea)
- Tommy Evans (Wake Up)

Best Sound

- A Dishonourable Death
- Get In
- Jackdaw
- Our Males and Females
- The Storm Chaser

Best Production Design

- A Dishonourable Death
- Edicius
- i THINK about KILLING you
- Jackdaw
- Tommies



2023 Award Nominees

Best Animation

- A Bloody Graveyard Story
- All We Knew And Ever Loved: Earthside
- King of Sea
- The Moon Followed Me To Falmouth
- The Well

Best Comedy

- A Dishonourable Death
- Bingo
- Bleep
- Get In
- Linda

Best Experimental Film

- ...And Again The Bombs Fall
- Belly
- I Spy With My Little Eye
- i THINK about KILLING you
- Næadra

Best Horror, Science Fiction or Thriller

- Can I Help?
- Edicius
- Momento Mori
- Takbir
- The Well

Best Local Film

- A Mosaic of All Possible Greens
- Echo
- Her Castle
- How To Cope With Oliver Pope
- The End of a British Summer



The Festival Team

Below are some of the key hard working people who make it all happen! We are a friendly bunch – so feel free to get in touch with us at info@oxfordshort.co.uk if you have any questions!



Andrew Carslaw

Festival Director



Laura Jones

Children's Festival Director
Business Manager



Zainab Mirmalek

Festival Coordinator



Olivia Chappell

Director of Awards
Head Judge



Emma Faraone

Live Event Coordinator



Stanley Mackrell

Co-Founder
Media Content Producer



Maria Murad

PR and Content Production



Danny Mac-Gregor

Festival Media Editor
Festival Selection Panelist

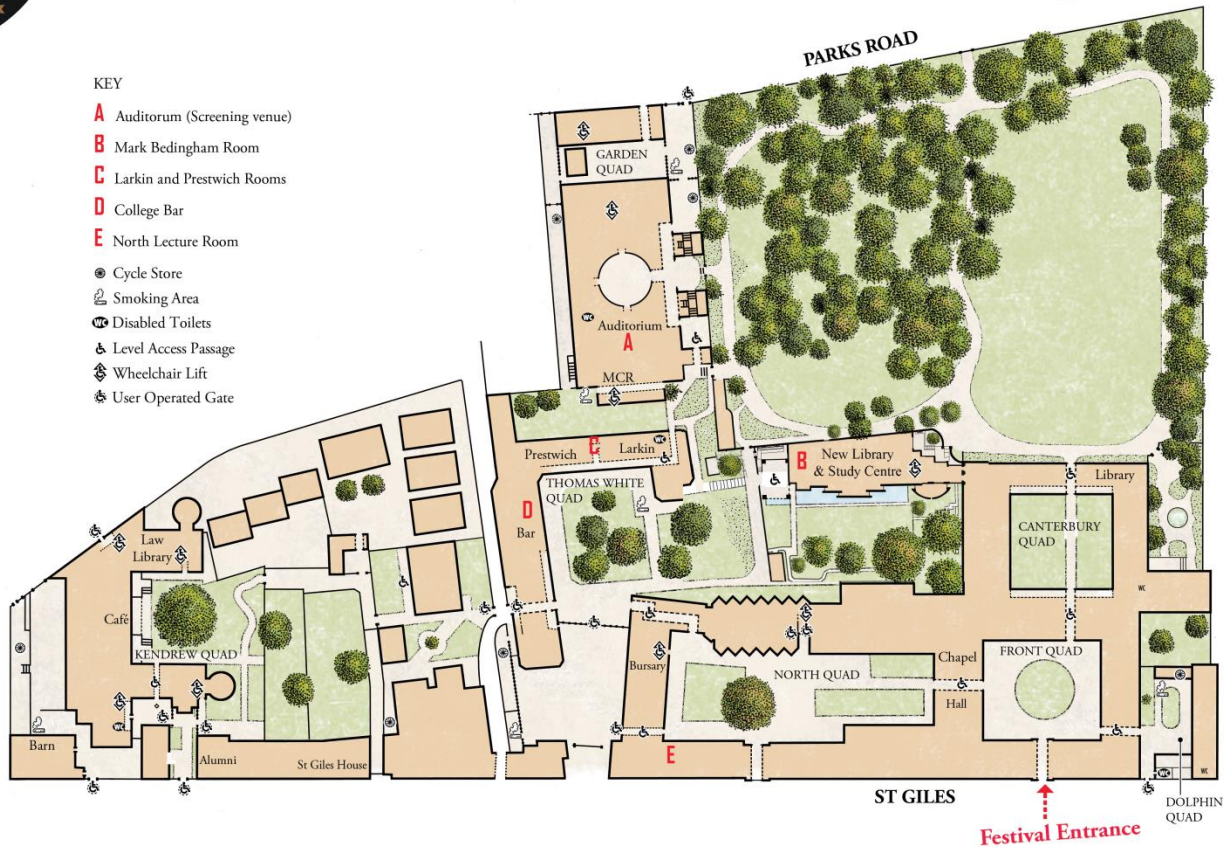
MAP OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE

Please enter the venue via the FRONT LODGE on St Giles Street (post code: OX1 3JP)

For additional information please visit the following page: <https://www.sjc.ox.ac.uk/discover/visit-us>



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
OXFORD



The festival registration desk is on the Auditorium entrance. It will be open at 08:40 each day. Please make sure you collect your wrist band before you enter the screening venue. If anyone has mobility considerations please let us know in advance so we can advise/help.

No food or drink can be taken into the screening venues

For more information, please visit our website at: <https://www.oxfordshorts.co.uk>



SHORTS

www.oxfordshorts.co.uk

FILM PROGRAMME 2023