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Sony Future Filmmaker Awards 2023

Shortlist for the inaugural edition announced

Creo is delighted to announce the shortlist for the first edition of the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards. Established by Creo and sponsored by Sony as a major new annual awards program for short films, the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards set out to elevate original voices from around the globe with a fresh perspective on storytelling.

The inaugural competition ran from July 26 through December 13, 2022, drawing a huge response: over 4,000 films by more than 3,000 filmmakers in 140 countries. From this diversity of submissions, 30 films have been shortlisted in six categories: Filmmaker Fiction; Filmmaker Non-Fiction; Filmmaker Environment; Student Filmmaker Fiction; Student Filmmaker Non-Fiction; and Future Format. The shortlisted stories range from the moving personal account of a survivor of the brutal Pinochet regime, to an Afro-futuristic fairytale of love, from an indigenous Mexican town threatened by criminal groups, to an indigenous community in the threatened rainforest of British Columbia, from the magical realism of a student whose new eraser rubs out the lines that divide his country to the horror-fantasy of a young boy trapped inside the body of a zombie. Representing a truly global perspective on filmmaking, the shortlist includes films from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Spain, Taiwan, UK, Uganda, USA, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

The 30 shortlisted filmmakers were chosen by a panel of leading industry experts chaired by award-winning British theater, television and film director **Justin Chadwick** (*Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Tulip Fever*). In addition to Chadwick, this year's jury comprised leading and celebrated figures from the film industry including: **Nicole Brown**, President of TriStar Pictures (*The Woman King*, *Whitney Houston: I Wanna Dance with Somebody*, *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*); **Jeremy Barber**, Partner, Motion Picture Literary and Talent, United Talent Agency; and **Sir Roger A. Deakins**, Academy award-winning cinematographer (*Blade Runner 2049*, *Skyfall*, *1917*).

The six winners will be announced on February 22, 2023 during a black-tie awards ceremony at the Cary Grant Theatre on the historic Sony Pictures Studio lot in Culver City, California, followed by an exclusive three-day industry immersion experience led by Sony Pictures executives for all the winning and shortlisted filmmakers. The six winners will also be rewarded with cash prizes and a range of Sony's Digital Imaging equipment.

Justin Chadwick, award-winning theater, television and film director and Chair of the Jury, says: *"The global response has been truly exhilarating. New voices from all over the world have sent in films in all categories in huge numbers. Films that are original, diverse and fresh, filled with passion and originality. It's been a brilliant and inspiring honor to be a part of this and a totally enjoyable experience and one that gives me great hope for the industry. The films chosen are a wonderful window into the future of film making and storytelling and the discovery of a rich seam of talent."*

Scott Gray, Founder and CEO of Creo, says: *“We are truly delighted by the quality of the submissions to the inaugural Sony Future Filmmaker Awards and the final shortlist which represents a group of exceptional talents from across the world. We are looking forward to welcoming the 30 filmmakers to L.A. in February where they will be able to take full advantage of the workshops and programming to help push their careers to the next level. We are honored to be working with Sony and partnering with them to create this fantastic opportunity for the next generation of filmmakers, and are grateful to our wonderful panel of judges for lending their expertise and insight.”*

FILMMAKER

The Filmmaker competition elevates original voices that bring a fresh perspective to storytelling.

In the **Fiction** category, the shortlist includes:

- **Saul Abraham** (UK), [ENJOY](#) – A touching, offbeat exploration of the ways in which depression manifests in men across different generations;
- **Dumas Haddad** (UK), [Flowers](#) – An Afro-futuristic fairytale of love following a ceremony of a mother giving away her son;
- **Dan Thorburn** (UK), [Salt Water Town](#) – With the threat of closure looming over a failing caravan park, the owner and his son clash over their future with tragic consequences;
- **Joy Webster** (Canada), [Menace](#) – A drama about a woman seeking revenge against her ex-boyfriend, a well-known TV presenter;
- **Ka Ki Wong** (Hong Kong), [Fire Room](#) – In a staggered time and space, an unusual relationship unfolds between a pair of siblings – one an arsonist, the other a firefighter.

The **Non-Fiction** category shortlist is composed of:

- **Alfie Barker** (UK), [Hanging On](#) – A docudrama about the struggles of a housing community faced with eviction;
- **Horacio Cabilla** (Spain), [This Is My Reason](#) – The stories of three cyclists using the sport to overcome personal losses and setbacks;
- **Juan Vicente Manrique Gomez** (Venezuela), [No Te Agüites \(Don't Worry\)](#) – In an indigenous town threatened by criminal groups, firearms have become part of everyday life for the local children who are forced to help watch over their community.
- **Julianna Jimreivat** (USA), [Letting Go of the Grade](#) – As four women travel to Mexico for a climbing expedition, they explore their relationship to the practice and open up about their personal challenges;
- **Daniela Lucato** (Italy), [The Things You Don't Know About Me, Mom](#) – A survivor of the Pinochet regime in Chile imagines telling her mother all of the things that she didn't want to know;

The **Environment** category is run in association with Sony Pictures Television's "Picture This" initiative, which champions creativity that communicates a positive future for the planet. The shortlist comprises:

- **Pedro Furtado** (Brazil), [The Good Dolphins](#) – Fishermen in Brazil fight to save a pod of dolphins who have helped them catch fish across generations;
- **Austin Smock** (USA), [The Beauty Between](#) – A wildlife photographer raises awareness about the threats facing the ten million birds living on the Great Salt Lake in Utah;
- **Alexander Sworik** (Canada), [Seawolf](#) – Two indigenous men look to preserve their heritage and save the Great Bear Rainforest in British Columbia;
- **Joaquín Ezequiel Tucci** (Argentina), [Despertólogo Ambiental](#) – A documentary following Gastón Caminata, a climate activist who reminds us about the impact of humans on the planet and that change that depends on us;
- **Thanh Tran** (Vietnam), [The Voice of the Wind](#) – As humanity is losing touch with nature, the wind is talking to us... Is anyone listening?

STUDENT FILMMAKER

The Student Filmmaker competition rewards the talent soon set to shape the industry.

The **Fiction** category shortlist includes:

- **Theo-Ziny Joel** (Nigeria), National Film Institute, Nigeria, [Read My Body](#) – A father preparing for war warns his son, who wants to be a warrior like him, about the impact of war and teaches him to seek peace instead;
- **Alisha Mehra** (Australia), Swinburne University of Technology, Australia, [Match Point](#) – Two first-generation Australians compete at an annual badminton competition – one for his mother’s approval, the other for the prize money to help pay his mother’s medical bills;
- **Juan Pablo Daranas Molina** (Cuba), New York University Tisch School of the Arts, USA, [The Confirmation](#) – A biologist opposes her daughter’s attempt to cure her disease through spiritual healing;
- **Mateo Salas** (Colombia, Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia), [The Sun of the River](#) – A family’s journey takes a troubling turn when they are stopped by a group of paramilitaries;
- **Pietro Venier** (Italy, University of West London, UK), [The Hook](#) – An Italian teenager is faced with a dilemma: should he stay in his hometown with his best friend and family, or accept a job on a distant island fated to disappear under rising sea levels.

The **Non-Fiction** category shortlist is composed of:

- **Catalina Fonseca Arango** (Colombia), Corporación Universitaria Taller 5, Colombia, [Stories of a Dancing Mind](#) – A documentary about a dancer charting her thoughts, experiences and deepest reflections;
- **Shiao-ya (Maggie) Huang** (Taiwan), Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, [Farewell Chang Chun](#) – In a building in Taipei due to be demolished, the family who made it their home say goodbye through the sharing of stories, memories and emotions;
- **Seonghoon Eric Park** (Republic of Korea), Boston University, USA, [In Cod We Trust](#) – A film probing the endangered fishing trade in the New England town of Gloucester, home to one of the oldest and largest fishing communities in the USA;
- **Lubeera Saphina** (Uganda), Kampala University, Uganda, [Ghetto Fist](#) – Faced with challenges and following a sexual assault, a female boxer trains and finds inspiration in her sport;
- **Ishan Vaidya** (India), The University of Salford, UK, [Puffin Island](#) – Every spring and summer the island of Skokholm in the Celtic Sea is witness to one of the greatest wildlife gatherings in Britain with the return of a huge flock of puffins.

FUTURE FORMAT

The Future Format competition challenges filmmakers to respond to a new technical brief each year. This year, submissions were to be exclusively shot on a smartphone. The shortlist is comprised of:

- **Jose Jacob** (India), [My India](#) – A bike ride on the border of India juxtaposed with a phone conversation about identity and nationalism between two friends;
- **Ria Nalavade** (India), [Magic Eraser](#) – A schoolchild with a new eraser discovers that it rubs out all the lines that divide the country of India;
- **Ginna Parra** (Colombia), [Filtros \(Filters\)](#) – A ten-year-old boy trapped inside the body of a zombie feels ostracized, but through social media discovers a less superficial world
- **Jacob Redman** (UK), [Subversive](#) – An American artist living in a disused winery in the South of France leads the viewer through his studio and his creative process;
- **Pan Tianhong** (China Mainland), [Homework for Winter Vacation](#) – A child making sweet dumplings in preparation for the Chinese New Year completes his task in a very creative manner.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 30 SHORTLISTED FILMMAKERS PLEASE VISIT
[SONYFUTUREFILMMAKERAWARDS.COM](https://www.sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com)

2023 SHORTLIST

FILMMAKER - FICTION

Saul Abraham, UK
ENJOY

Dumas Haddad, UK
Flowers

Dan Thorburn, UK
Salt Water Town

Joy Webster, Canada
Menace

Ka Ki Wong, Hong Kong
Fire Room

FILMMAKER - NON-FICTION

Alfie Barker, UK
Hanging On

Horacio Cabilla, Spain
This Is My Reason

Julianna Jimreivat, USA
Letting Go of the Grade

Daniela Lucato, Italy
The Things You Don't Know About Me, Mom

Juan Vicente Manrique Gomez, Venezuela
No Te Agüites (Don't Worry)

FILMMAKER - ENVIRONMENT

Pedro Furtado, Brazil
The Good Dolphins

Austin Smock, USA
The Beauty Between

Alexander Sworik, Canada
Seawolf

Joaquín Ezequiel Tucci, Argentina
Despertólogo ambiental

Thanh Tran, Vietnam
The Voice of the Wind

STUDENT FILMMAKER - FICTION

Juan Pablo Daranas Molina, Cuba
New York University Tisch School of
the Arts, USA
The Confirmation

Theo-Ziny Joel, Nigeria
National Film Institute, Nigeria
Read My Body

Alisha Mehra, Australia
Swinburne University of Technology,
Australia
Match Point

Mateo Salas, Colombia
Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia
The Sun of the River

Pietro Venier, Italy
University of West London, UK
The Hook

STUDENT FILMMAKER - NON-FICTION

Catalina Fonseca Arango, Colombia
Corporación Universitaria Taller 5,
Colombia
Stories of a Dancing Mind

Shiao-ya (Maggie) Huang, Taiwan
Nanyang Technological University,
Singapore
Farewell Chang Chun

Seonghoon Eric Park, Republic of Korea
Boston University, USA
In Cod We Trust

Lubeera Saphina, Uganda
Kampala University, Uganda
Ghetto Fist

Ishan Vaidya, India
The University of Salford, UK
Puffin Island

FUTURE FORMAT

Jose Jacob, India
My India

Ria Nalavade, India
Magic Eraser

Ginna Parra, Colombia
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Jacob Redman, UK
Subversive

Pan Tianhong, China Mainland
Homework for Winter Vacation

FILM PRESS KITS AVAILABLE AT [PRESS.CREOARTS.COM](https://www.press.creoarts.com)

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Sony Future Filmmaker Awards

Established by Creo and sponsored by Sony, the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards is a major new annual awards program for short films devoted to supporting and elevating independent filmmakers and creators from across the globe. Set apart by its exceptional prize, the Awards provide successful filmmakers with invaluable opportunities in the form of a trip to Los Angeles and to the historic Sony Pictures Studio in Culver City, California, where they gain exclusive access to experts and unparalleled insight into the inner workings of the industry. Winners additionally receive cash prizes and a range of Sony Digital Imaging equipment. Free to enter, the Awards comprise three competitions: Filmmaker, Student Filmmaker and Future Format, and are judged by a panel of leading figures. By supporting talents in film, video and storytelling, the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards provides a gateway for the development of creative excellence. www.sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com

Creo initiates and organises events and programming across three key strands: photography, film and contemporary art. Established in 2007 as World Photography Organisation, Creo has since grown in scope, furthering its mission of developing meaningful opportunities for creatives and expanding the reach of its cultural activities. Today, its flagship projects include the Sony World Photography Awards, Sony Future Filmmaker Awards, PHOTOFAIRS Shanghai, Photo London and the forthcoming PHOTOFAIRS New York (Sep 2023). Working in partnership with Angus Montgomery Arts, Creo helps deliver the group's ventures, comprising some of the world's leading art fairs. Taking its name from the Latin for 'I create', it is in this spirit that Creo sets out to empower and give agency to creative voices. www.creoarts.com

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* Both Japanese words, Kando means emotion and Anshin has various meanings such as peace of mind, reassurance, reliability and trust.

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