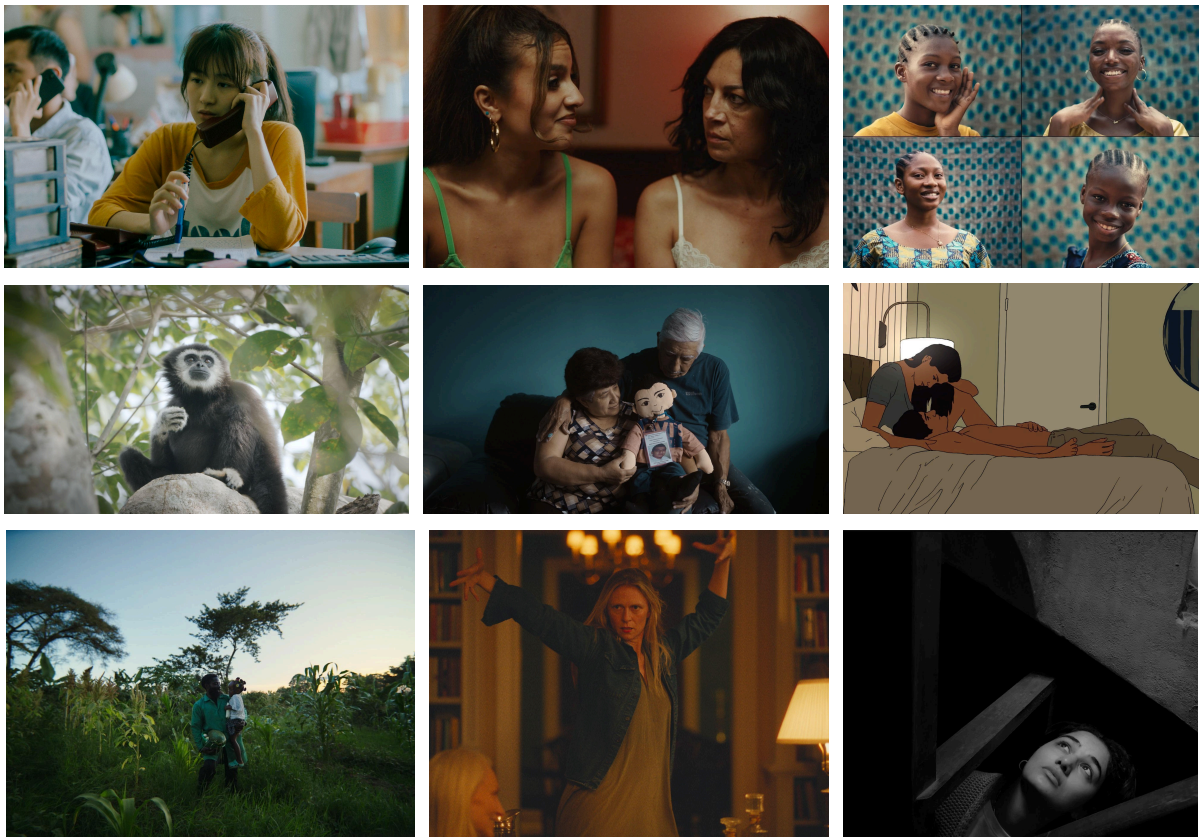


Sony Future Filmmaker Awards 2024 Announces Shortlist of 30 International Filmmakers



PRESS RELEASE – APRIL 23, 2024 — Creo is delighted to announce the shortlist for the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards 2024. The shortlist of 30 filmmakers across six categories are awarded the unique experience of attending a week of special events at the Sony Pictures Studios lot in Los Angeles, including a workshop program providing unparalleled access behind-the-scenes of the industry and culminating in the Awards ceremony on **May 30, 2024** where the six category winners, chosen by a selection of expert judges, are announced.

Established by Creo and sponsored by Sony, the sophomore edition of the major annual awards program for short films provides a gateway for the development of exceptional cinematic talent and sets out to elevate voices with an original perspective on storytelling. This year's shortlist was chosen from over 8,400 films by more than 5,000 filmmakers across 148 countries and territories submitted across six categories: **Fiction, Non-Fiction, Environment, Animation, Student, and Future Format.**

The shortlisted stories range from a poignant documentary about two Holocaust survivors miraculously reunited after 80 years, a filmmaker's search for the last remaining gibbon in Kuala Lumpur, a homeless ballet dancer undertaking a life-changing audition, a spontaneous romance between two strangers thrown together by grounded flights, and much more. Representing a truly global perspective on filmmaking, the shortlist includes films from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Germany, Ghana, Hong Kong, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, South Africa, Thailand, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and the United States.

Working from a longlist of commended submissions, the 30 shortlisted filmmakers were chosen by Emmy-award winning cinematographer **Robert Primes ASC** and celebrated Australian filmmaker **Unjoo Moon**. At the second stage of the judging process, judges **Michael Barker** and **Tom Bernard**, Co-Founders and Co-Presidents of Sony Pictures Classics (*Call Me By Your Name*, *The Father*, *Whiplash*); **Rob Hardy ASC, BSC**, BAFTA award-winning cinematographer (*Mission: Impossible – Fallout*, *Ex-Machina*, *Civil War*) ; **Kate Reid BSC**, acclaimed British cinematographer (*Game of Thrones*, *Great Expectations*, *Silo*) will choose this year's category winners, awarding creative excellence and original approaches to narrative. Both stages of the judging process are chaired by award-winning director **Justin Chadwick** (*Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Tulip Fever*).

The 30 shortlisted filmmakers will be flown to Los Angeles to attend a comprehensive four-day workshop program at the Sony Pictures Studios lot in Culver City from May 28 - 31, 2024, culminating in a black-tie Awards ceremony on **May 30, 2024**. Held at the Cary Grant Theater and hosted by Entertainment Tonight's Denny Directo, during the ceremony the six category winners will be announced, receiving a range of cash prizes and equipment. This immersive experience provides filmmakers with a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect with fellow filmmakers and leaders in the field of cinema, and to gain exclusive access behind-the-scenes of the industry, with workshops led by Sony Pictures executives, and covering a range of topics from keynotes by major cinematographers, screenings and Q&A sessions, to insights into working with talent agencies and using cutting-edge technologies, to film scoring and music rights.

Justin Chadwick, award-winning theater, television and film director and Chair of the Jury, says: *"The level of submission and the international scope of new voices shortlisted for the Awards is thrilling. Across the 30 chosen filmmakers the perspectives told are manifold and captivating, charged with a passion and authenticity. I am delighted to once again lead this selection of filmmaking; a vision of storytelling and cinematic ingenuity and an aperture into the filmmakers who shall make up the future of our industry."*

Scott Gray, Founder and CEO, Creo, says: *"With a staggering 8,400 films submitted this year, the caliber of entries received for this second edition of the Sony Future Filmmaker Awards and the shortlist of filmmakers selected express the exceptional, global stories set to be showcased at this year's event. We are grateful to Sony for providing this incredible opportunity for emerging filmmakers, and we extend our gratitude to our esteemed panel of judges for their invaluable expertise and insight in selecting the shortlist to join us in Los Angeles this May."*

The films and filmmakers comprising this year's shortlist are:

FICTION

The **Fiction** category rewards narrative-led submissions that convey an original fictional story or event.

- **Katie Blair** (USA), [*Imogene*](#) – Imogene is a single, free-spirited New Yorker in her 40s, whose traditional family is plotting to get her pregnant by inviting a donor for dinner;
- **Tan Ce Ding** (Malaysia), [*Please Hold the Line*](#) – A young scam call operator finds herself in a moral dilemma as she navigates a life-changing situation;
- **Elliott Gonzo & Elliot Warren** (UK), [*Hard Times*](#) – In east London, Danny, a man juggling fatherhood and addiction, is unexpectedly left to look after his daughter for the night, making a risky decision to involve her in a dangerous job for a much-needed paycheck;
- **Jason Hogan** (UK), [*Twenty*](#) – Emily, a homeless ballet dancer, undertakes a potentially life-changing audition;
- **Margareth Villers** (Estonia), [*What's Up With Numbats?*](#) – In a small town library, meticulous Eve embarks on an absurd quest to find a missing book, determined to prove her colleague wrong after a minor disagreement.

NON-FICTION

The **Non-Fiction** category awards short films that are predominantly factual in content. These can include archive footage, documentary footage, reenactments and animation.

- **Jean Chapiro** (Mexico), [*Hasta Encontrarlos \(Till We Find Them\)*](#) – After her daughter disappears in Mexico, a determined mother forms a collective of grieving families, navigating the harrowing landscape of disappearances as they search for loved ones, finding solace in healing dolls representing their missing children;
- **Olawunmi Hassan & Adaobi Samson** (Nigeria), [*Ìrún Dídì*](#) – From traditional Yoruba techniques to modern interpretations, the film traces the evolution of the timeless art of hair plaiting, as it becomes a sacred ritual of self-care and empowerment;
- **Jordan Matthew Horowitz** (USA), [*Jack and Sam*](#) – A poignant documentary about two Holocaust survivors miraculously reunited after 80 years;
- **Florian Nick** (Germany), [*Beyond Hope*](#) – Following highly trained volunteers dedicated to rescuing people in danger, the film portrays the heroic work of the Icelandic Association for Search & Rescue, exploring the physical and emotional challenges upon its members;
- **Kayla Robinson** (USA), [*Quilted Education*](#) – Historian and skilled quilter Karen Hinton Robinson uses her talents to create beautiful artworks to educate and inform on Black history.

ENVIRONMENT

The **Environment** category champions films that communicate a positive future for the planet and is part of *Creators for the Planet*, a global year-round program set up to spotlight and amplify creators' stories promoting prosperity and peace for people and the planet. A collaboration with Sony Pictures, the United Nations Foundation and Creo, *Creators for the Planet* aims to mobilize and inspire people to act now through photography and film.

- **Curtis Essel** (Ghana), [*The Permaculturist*](#) – Vegan chef, permaculture enthusiast, and content creator Gaz Oakley meets permaculture expert Bemeri Duse, a Congolese refugee who has been living in a settlement in Uganda for the last 16 years;
- **Solmund MacPherson** (Canada), [*Wildmen of the Greater Toronto Area*](#) – A group of Toronto citizens fed up with the rising cost of living renounce their personhood en masse to legally become animals;
- **Palmer Morse** (USA), [*Usugilix Awakun*](#) – Shayla, a passionate Unangax̂ scientist, delves into vital research concerning toxic shellfish;
- **Annie Roth** (USA), [*Hellbent*](#) – In a small rural town in Pennsylvania, the refuge of a rare salamander and the only source of clean drinking water for 700 people is threatened by the installation of a fracking waste injection well;
- **Myles Storey** (Malaysia), [*Finding Solo*](#) – Amongst the hustle and bustle of Kuala Lumpur lies an isolated forest which is home to Solo, the forest's last remaining gibbon.

ANIMATION

New to this year's program, the **Animation** category embraces filmmakers using stop-motion, motion graphics, computer animation, drawn-on-film, rotoscoping, experimental animation, and additional available techniques.

- **Eva Louise Hall** (USA), [*Mira*](#) – A struggling accordionist busker gets more than she bargained for when her desire to get noticed attracts the attention of a mysterious and enticing competitor;
- **Radheya Jegatheva** (Australia), [*Bird Drone*](#) – A lonely seagull looking for love struggles to accept that its newfound object of affection is a human-operated drone with a limited battery life;
- **Lisa Kenney** (UK), [*Mum's Spaghetti*](#) – MC mastermind Poppy and her beatboxing border terrier Snoop are the new kids in town – and they're ready to make their reputation known;
- **Kyle Novak** (Czech Republic), [*Ángulos de la Hora \(Hour Angle\)*](#) – After their flight is grounded, two strangers agree to an anonymous tryst as their new travel plans are arranged;
- **Paul Robinson** (USA), [*Resource:Full*](#) – Set in a desiccated landscape, an anthropomorphic machine extracts the energy from a solitary tree bud in an attempt to depart the depleted planet.

STUDENT

The **Student** category rewards filmmakers studying a film course at a registered institution at a diploma or degree level worldwide.

- **Natalia Bermúdez** (Mexico), Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica (CCC), Mexico, [*Apnea*](#) – Renata, a young and talented swimmer, has a secret and fraught relationship with her swimming coach Liliana;
- **Katniss Tung Cheng** (Hong Kong) & **Salvador Alejandro Gutiérrez** (Mexico), IADT - Dun Laoghaire Institute Of Art Design + Technology, Ireland, [*Below the Window*](#) – A new mother's descent into darkness is triggered by the arrival of a mysterious wayfarer;

- **Farah Jabir** (USA), New York University, USA, [*Kasbi*](#) – A middle-aged Pakistani housewife, in search of herself, hires a young, self-assured sex worker to keep her company for the night;
- **Raheem Razak** (South Africa), AFDA, South Africa, [*Anguish*](#) – In what seems to be a zombie-infested world, devoted son Sam must tend to his zombie mother while surviving the apocalypse himself;
- **Muangthai Sarupkarn** (Thailand), King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, Thailand, [*Stigma*](#) – A look back at one of the most brutal family homicides in Thailand's history, perpetrated a decade ago in the Bangkok metropolis and described as a 'cold-blooded' and racially motivated act.

FUTURE FORMAT

The **Future Format** category champions a new generation of aspiring filmmakers, welcoming 2 to 5-minute-long films shot exclusively on a smartphone.

- **Muzamil Bhat** (India), [*Polite Waters*](#) – Following the challenges faced by fishermen in the Wular Lake region, the story highlights the impact of man-made pollution and climate change on their work and livelihood;
- **Cristian Daniel** (Uruguay), [*PARASOMNIA*](#) – A young man attempts to discover the unsettling presence in a dark corridor, with no knowledge of what may lie ahead;
- **Rana Ramy** (Egypt), [*ABOVE/ZERO*](#) – A journey through the relationship between light, space, and subject, in an attempt to configure one's existence within the light;
- **Bruno Sena** (Brazil), [*Collapse*](#) – Through a powerful visual narrative, viewers witness the devastating consequences of human negligence as a fish tank becomes a metaphor for our planet's deteriorating ecosystems;
- **Montgomery Taylor** (UK), [*In The Bag*](#) – For the first time, witness a bank robbery from an angle you've never seen before.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 30 SHORTLISTED FILMMAKERS PLEASE VISIT

[SONYFUTUREFILMMAKERAWARDS.COM](https://sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com)

2024 SHORTLIST

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Hard Times

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What's Up With Numbats?

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Hasta Encontrarlos (Till We Find Them)

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Samson, Nigeria
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Jack and Sam

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Cinematográfica (CCC), Mexico
Apnea

Katniss Tung Cheng, Hong Kong
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IADT - Dun Laoghaire Institute Of Art
Design + Technology, Ireland
Below the Window

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New York University, USA
Kasbi

Raheem Razak, South Africa
AFDA, South Africa
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FILM PRESS KITS AVAILABLE ON [PRESS.CREOARTS.COM](https://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 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 Studios 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 six categories: Fiction, Non-Fiction, Environment, Student, Animation 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 organizes 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 and Photo London. 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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