

PRESS RELEASE

## 2026 JURY ANNOUNCED

**NOVEMBER 20, 2025** — The Sony Future Filmmaker Awards unveil today the industry-leading jury panel for the 2026 edition, returning to Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City from **June 8—11, 2026**.

Now entering their fourth year, the Awards continue to spotlight emerging talent and to provide them with the creative momentum to push forward their careers. Established by Creo in partnership with Sony, this annual program for short films celebrates the bold new voices reshaping cinema and gives them the opportunity to forge connections across the international filmmaking community. Shortlisted creators are flown to Los Angeles to attend an exclusive industry program of engaging and interactive sessions and masterclasses, where they are given backstage access through a carefully curated program of screenings and workshops. This unique convergence of insight, craft, and community provides emerging storytellers with the tools to propel their careers forward on a global stage. Free for all to enter, the competition is open for submissions until **December 16, 2025**.

Leading the selection of this year's winners is a jury of trailblazers from across the industry: Golden Globe-nominated director and producer **Will Gluck** (*Anyone But You*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Easy A*), acclaimed producer and President of Film and Television at Pascal Pictures **Rachel O'Connor** (*Challengers*, *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, *Little Women*), animation co-director **Adam Rosette** (*The Wild Robot*, *Orion and the Dark*, upcoming *GOAT*), and award-winning director **Justin Chadwick** (*Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, upcoming *Brothers Under Fire*), who returns as jury chair for the fourth consecutive year.

**Justin Chadwick, award-winning theater, television and film director and Chair of the Jury** said: *"The shortlist last year brought together 30 exceptional filmmakers whose distinctive voices and compelling narratives earned them a place at the beating heart of Los Angeles' creative community, giving them unprecedented access to how cinema is evolving in real time. We have a remarkable jury line-up this year, and I speak for us all when I say that we're searching for films that challenge conventions, spark genuine emotion, and transform how audiences perceive the world around them. As we head into the 2026 edition, we're eager to discover that kernel of originality and vision that elevates good filmmaking into something extraordinary."*

This year's shortlisted filmmakers will be announced on **April 30, 2026**, and flown to Los Angeles for the four-day program at Sony Pictures Studios in Culver City from **June 8—11, 2026**. Led by Sony Pictures executives, these sessions invite the filmmakers to learn more about essential aspects of the industry; from production, to navigating talent deals, and the studio's film acquisition process, through to working with publicists, animation techniques, and the art of soundtracking a story, as well as cutting-edge technology demonstrations. The program is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to connect with industry leaders and fellow creators from around the world, becoming part of a dynamic network of international filmmakers. The event culminates in a gala ceremony on **June 11, 2026**, where the category winners will be unveiled and awarded a range of cash prizes and Sony Digital Imaging equipment.

For the 2026 competition, filmmakers can submit short films across five categories: **Fiction**, **Non-Fiction**, **Animation**, **Student**, and **Future Format** – challenging filmmakers to respond to a

technical brief that explores the creative possibilities of bold and innovative storytelling. This year Future Format invites entrants to submit shorts created specifically for vertical viewing (9:16 aspect ratio). Also returning to this year's Awards is the **Sustainability Prize**, set up by Creo and Sony to spotlight a short film that creatively communicates how themes of environment, accessibility, diversity, equality and inclusion can encourage us to act together to ensure a positive future for the planet.

For more information on the Awards please visit [sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com](http://sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com).

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

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Established by Creo and sponsored by Sony, the **Sony Future Filmmaker Awards** are a major annual awards program for short films devoted to supporting and elevating independent filmmakers and creators from across the globe. Set apart by an 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 five categories: Fiction, Non-Fiction, 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 provide a gateway for the development of creative excellence. [sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com](http://sonyfuturefilmmakerawards.com)

**Creo** initiates and organizes events and programming across three key strands: photography, film and contemporary art. Since 2007 Creo's mission has been to develop meaningful opportunities for creatives and to expand the reach of its cultural activities. Its flagship projects include the Sony World Photography Awards, Sony Future Filmmaker Awards, PHOTOFAIRS and Photo London. Working in partnership with Angus Montgomery Arts (AMA), 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. [creoarts.com](http://creoarts.com)

**Sony Corporation** is a wholly owned subsidiary of Sony Group Corporation and is responsible for the Entertainment, Technology & Services (ET&S) business. With the mission to "create the future of entertainment through the power of technology together with creators," we aim to continue to deliver Kando\* to people around the world. For more information, visit: [www.sony.net](http://www.sony.net).

*\*Kando is a Japanese word that roughly translates to the sense of awe and emotion you feel when experiencing something beautiful and amazing for the first time.*

**Sony Pictures Entertainment (SPE)** is a subsidiary of Tokyo-based Sony Group Corporation. SPE's global operations encompass motion picture production, acquisition, and distribution; television production acquisition, and distribution; television networks; digital content creation and distribution; operation of studio facilities; and development of new entertainment products, services and technologies. Sony Pictures Television operates dozens of wholly-owned or joint-venture production companies around the world. SPE's Motion Picture Group production organizations include Columbia Pictures, Screen Gems, TriStar Pictures, 3000 Pictures, Sony Pictures Animation, Stage 6 Films, AFFIRM Films, Sony Pictures

International Productions, and Sony Pictures Classics. For more information, visit [www.sonypictures.com/corp/divisions](http://www.sonypictures.com/corp/divisions).

## 2026 JUDGES

**Justin Chadwick** is an award-winning British theater, television and film director. He is best known for critically acclaimed films including the Academy Award®, BAFTA and Golden Globe-nominated *Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom* (2013), the AFI and IFTA nominated *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008); *Tulip Fever* (2017) and *The First Grader* (2010). His films have won numerous awards including the Audience Award at Durban International Film Festival, the Audience Prize for Best Film at Doha Tribeca Film Festival, both Best Director's Choice and Audience Choice Awards at the Sedona Film Festival, and Best Feature Film at the Palm Beach Film Festival 2010. His award-winning short films include *Boy* (2011), *Shakespeare Shorts* (1996) and *Family Style* (1993). His recent credits include the Disney+ series *Shardlake* (2024), Amazon's *Fear* (2025), and the upcoming film *Brothers Under Fire* starring Kiefer Sutherland, currently in post-production.

**Will Gluck** is a writer, director, and producer known for *Easy A* (2010), *Friends with Benefits* (2011), *Annie* (2014), *Peter Rabbit* (2018), *Peter Rabbit 2* (2021) and a number of TV shows including *ENCORE!*, *Chicago Party Aunt*, *Sneakerheads*, *Woke*, *The Michael J. Fox Show* and more. Most recently, Will directed the smash-hit romcom *Anyone But You* (2023) for Sony starring Sydney Sweeney and Glenn Powell. Will is currently directing the original comedy *One Night Only* for Universal starring Monica Barbaro and Callum Turner. Will is also set to produce and direct the action-comedy *End of the World* for Sony which he co-wrote with Chris Bremner. His production company, Olive Bridge Entertainment, includes multiple series in development at multiple streamers, as well as features at Columbia, Disney, Universal, Tristar and Sony Pictures Animation. Born in New York City, he now resides in Los Angeles with his family.

**Rachel O'Connor** is the President of Film and Television at Pascal Pictures, a production company based at Amazon Studios. O'Connor is a Producer on the upcoming *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, directed by Destin Daniel Cretton and starring Tom Holland, and *Project Hail Mary*, directed by Phil Lord and Christopher Miller and starring Ryan Gosling. Most recently, she was a Producer on Luca Guadagnino's *Challengers*, an Executive Producer on *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, *Spider-Man: Far From Home*, and a Co-Producer on *Spider-Man: Homecoming*. Previously, O'Connor was a Co-Producer on Steven Spielberg's Academy Award-nominated *The Post* and was an Executive Producer of Greta Gerwig's Academy Award-nominated *Little Women*. Before making the move to Pascal Pictures, O'Connor worked as an executive for Sony for over 15 years and currently sits on the Board of the Idiots Foundation. O'Connor was raised in Los Angeles where she currently resides with her husband and son.

**Adam Rosette** is a co-director at Sony Pictures Animation, currently working alongside director Tyree Dillihay on the upcoming original animated sports comedy *GOAT*, in partnership with producer Stephen Curry's Unanimous Media. In 2023, Rosette joined Sony Pictures Animation as the head of story on *GOAT*, before being promoted to co-director. Previously, Rosette spent 9 years at DreamWorks Animation, serving as the head of story on *Orion and the Dark*, and as a storyboard artist on *The Wild Robot*, *Dog Man*, *The Croods: A New Age*, *The Bad Guys*, and more. Rosette was born in New Jersey and spent his childhood bouncing between there and New York City. He eventually landed at the School of Visual Arts in NYC, where he earned his BFA in Animation.