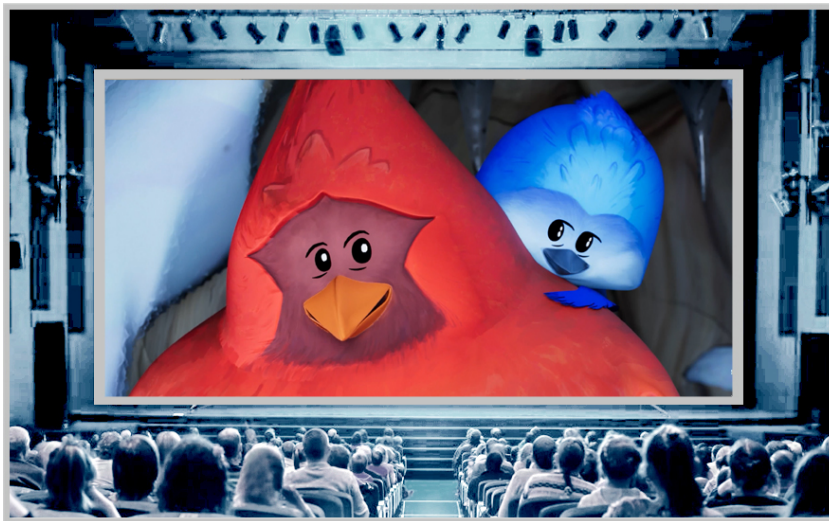


Enter Our Sister Competitions!



THIS SEASON'S WINNERS BEST OF SHOW

Dominic Carola – *My Neighbor*



Dominic Carola (USA), *My Neighbor*, Animation – Award-winning director and Disney animation veteran **Carola** (*Lilo & Stitch*, *The Lion King*, *Mulan*, *Brother Bear*) delivers a simple and emotionally resonant short that highlights the impact of kindness – told without dialogue and through the perspective of birds in a frozen backyard. Carl, the territorial cardinal, gets his feathers ruffled when he meets Misty, a cheerful bluebird with three little chicks. Carl's solitary life gets interrupted by his own reluctant act of kindness sparking an unexpected bond as Carl discovers the joy of caring for others, transforming his life forever. It takes extraordinary skill to communicate deep emotion through the quiet simplicity of *My Neighbor*. Carola's direction is a masterclass in restraint—eschewing grand spectacle for something more: honesty, subtlety, and emotional precision. Utilizing minimalistic characters expertly drawn to elicit emotion and everyday yet captivating scenes, each carefully crafted movement becomes meaningful. These delicate choices draw us in, revealing whole worlds of feeling without a single word. Storytelling in its purest form and a much needed message during these changing times. *My Neighbor* is brought to life by a talented team of industry pros. Animation: **Justin Farris** (*Brave*, *Incredibles 2*), Art Director **Ryan Feltman** (*Retelling the Good Story*), Editor **Lauren Stevens** (*Super Team Canada*), Visual Effects **Cameron Banker**. **Premise Entertainment**

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

Mohammad Hossein Abbasi – *Umbrella (Chatr)*



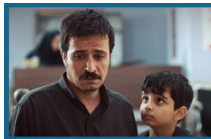


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Mohammad Hossein Abbasi (Iran), *Umbrella (Chatr)*, Film Short – *Umbrella (Chatr)* is a dramatic, gut-wrenching, and deeply heartfelt short that chronicles one life-altering night for a family grappling with crisis. Set against the backdrop of their daughter's wedding, the story follows patriarch Faramarz as he confronts his son's spiraling addiction—fighting to preserve not only his family's dignity, but its very soul. What unfolds is a tightly wound, emotionally raw narrative filled with tension and moments of quiet devastation. The decisions made—and the methods employed—are both shocking and deeply human, raising difficult questions about morality, sacrifice, and love in its most desperate form. Abbasi delivers this powerful drama with precision and compassion. At the center is a commanding performance by cinema veteran and Iran Cinema Celebration winner **Bijan Emkanian** (*Crossroads*, *Crazy Rook*, *Reign of Love*), whose portrayal of Faramarz anchors the film in aching authenticity. Supporting performances by **Nasrin Nakisa** (*The Glass Agency*, *Wander About Me*, *Yousef-e Payambar*) and **Amin Miri** (*When the Moon Was Full*, *Recruitment*, *The Asphalt Jungle*) add further depth and emotional resonance, each bringing heartbreak and humanity to their roles. Produced by **Hamed Yaminpoor** for the **Soureh Film Club**, *Umbrella (Chatr)* is a short film that lingers long after the credits roll—a haunting and unforgettable portrait of family, shame, and sacrifice.

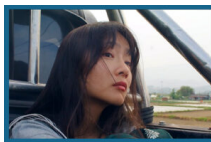
AWARD OF EXCELLENCE SPECIAL MENTION



Hossein Soleimani, Serna Amini (Iran), 47:10:00", Film Short – With 47 hours to save his wife through a costly heart transplant, a father is forced to consider selling his son to a wealthy, childless couple who could offer the boy a better life—torn between sacrifice and survival. **Soleimani** delivers a gut-wrenching performance in this haunting, morally charged short.



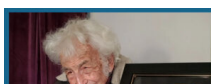
Patrick John Donnelly (USA), *Cause Celebre*, TV Pilot – **Emmy-winner Donnelly** delivers a gripping pilot where a teen queen fights to shed her wholesome image with a daring shoot by an edgy NYC photographer. Secret plans and high stakes blur lines of trust and ambition in this dark tale. Stars **SAG winner Jacob Ware** (*Boardwalk Empire*), **Piper Verbrick** (*Gothic Slayers*), **Megan Owen Parker** (*The Void*).



Luyao Xue (China), *Reciprocal Causation*, Film Short – At the Burma–China border, a man and his sister lure migrant girls into sex work. When a mute girl arrives, he shelters her briefly. Lush cinematography frames this gripping tale of survival and karma, set against the quiet pull of Buddhist ideals. Raw and devastatingly real. Deft direction and aching authentic performances by **Yingnan Dongmen** and **Ruici Zhang**.



Kazuyuki Ishihara (Japan), *BRIDGE - My Little Friends*, Children Program – Jin the talking cat sets off on a heartfelt quest to ease Mugi's grief over her dog's death. With help from cheeky squirrels, clever birds, and a quirky scientist, he creates a magical "Rainbow Bridge" from a hose. This vibrant, sweet, and gently poignant animation is full of charm and perfect for families. Studio Goonies.

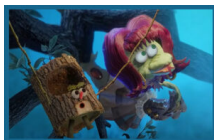


Tamar Springer (USA), *More Than Santa Baby*, Doc Short – Filmmaker Tamar Springer honors her father, Philip Springer, composer of "Santa



timeless melodies and hope.

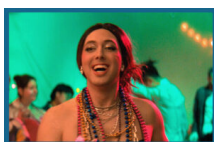
Baby,” showcasing his vast musical legacy from Tin Pan Alley to viral success in his 90s. This heartfelt journey through 20th-century music celebrates perseverance, resilience, and creativity, revealing a life dedicated to



Jiayao Yu (China), *Little Hoo Hoo and The Snake*, Animation – A wild blend of 3D, stop-motion, and live-action creates a rich visual tapestry for this playful tale of self-acceptance. Through chaotic mishaps and vibrant transformation, it's as entertaining and poignant as it is artistically striking—the unique style and deep message echo well beyond the final frame.



Tong Nian (China), *Love in Yanbian*, Music Video – A musical love letter, blending stunning visuals with deep emotion. This film transcends history and legend, painting Yanbian's landscapes as living art. With epic on-location shoots and rich cultural textures, it weaves timeless emotions and myth into a poetic celebration of nature, culture, and human connection.



Jared Fassbender and Easton Tabin (USA), *New Horizons*, Film Short – A unique sci-fi drama mixing romance and humor. Johnny undergoes unconventional couples therapy alone after his wife no-shows. Immersed in virtual reality, he lives as his wife, gaining a fresh, novel perspective on their relationship. This inventive concept challenges audiences to rethink empathy and understanding. Davyd Markovich and Mason Kokodynski.

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Adam Cushman (USA), *Written for Walken*, Film Short

Alan Williams (USA), *Space: The New Frontier*, Original Score

Celeste Luccitti (USA), *The Zip-Up Man*, Children / Family Programming, Film Short, Narration / Voiceover Talent (**David W. Rice**), Women Filmmakers, Ensemble Cast

Damian Antochewicz (Malaysia), *Descent*, Cinematography (**Will Foster-Grundy**)

Dax Phelan (USA), *BREAK THE SILENCE*, Public Service Programming / PSA, Direction

Graeme Wolverton (USA), *In Due Time*, Cinematography

Jiayao Yu (China), *Reply*, Animation

Kazuyuki Ishihara (Japan), *BRIDGE -My Little Friends*, Animation



Lauren Tyree (USA), *Remember Me – One Year Later*, Young Filmmaker – 17 and younger

Luyao Xue (China), *Reciprocal Causation*, Actor: Leading (**Yingnan Dongmen** as The Guy), Script / Writer

Lynn H. Elliott (USA), *Be prepared for what? Episode 2 – THE BOY WHO EARNED HIS MAGIC*, Script / Writer

Marcus CB Soori (USA), *Chaton – From the Future*, Animation, Music Video

Mohamad Hosein Hoseini (Iran), *Stateless*, Film Short

Mohammad Paidar (Iran), *The Narrator*, Film Short

Nafen Wu (USA), *Confessions*, Cinematography

Patrick J. Donnelly (USA), *Julius Caesar*, Arts / Cultural / Performance / Plays

Paul Schwartz (USA), *CONFESSION*, Actor: Leading (**Nelson Avidon** as The Therapist), Film Short, Direction