

NewFilmmakers LA Celebrates Achievements Of Emerging Filmmakers At 5th Annual Best Of NFMLA Awards Show

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Throngs of nominees and film aficionados poured into Downtown Los Angeles' South Park Center last week for the 5th Annual Best of NFMLA Awards Show, presented by NewFilmmakers Los Angeles.

The annual awards show celebrates the achievements of emerging filmmakers from around the world in over a dozen categories, highlighting superior works in feature, short

film, animation, new media and documentary formats. With 115 nominees this year, narrowing in on just 12 became quite the challenge, but the organization's jury, comprised of more than 20 industry heavy hitters including film journalists from Variety, The Wrap and the Hollywood Foreign Press Association; and high profile producers, agents and executives helped whittle down the list to hand select the finest of the batch.

During the ceremony, hosted by **Allen Maldonado** (Black-ish), each nominee had snippets of their work screened in front of a packed theater. Winners were then brought up on stage to accept their beautiful awards in front of an audience of their peers and NFMLA's co-founders Executive Director **Larry Laboe** and Artistic Director **Susie Kim**. Other presenters during the evening's festivities included James Kyson (AMC's Preacher), Camille Guaty (Daytime Divas), Jazz Raycole (Jericho), Carmit Bachar (The Pussycat Dolls) and more. There were also special musical performances from Vezt stars, a partner of the event, including hip-hop performer Julian Xtra and electronic dance artist Leila Pari. Vezt is an innovative new blockchain music platform. Many of the nominees included filmmakers from NFMLA's InFocus diversity initiative, a monthly diversity program that screens works from filmmakers representing various underrepresented communities, including LGBTQ+, Women, Latinx and Hispanic, African-American, Asian, and others, all of which help make up the filmmaking community as a whole. NewFilmmakers LA's 5th Annual Best Of Awards program honored the following 12 awardees:

Best Feature Film - Where Florence Sleeps / Directed by Katsuto Kobayashi and Kenji Kobayashi / Produced by Hayato Mitsuishi

Best Documentary Feature Film - Bobby Sands: 66 Days / Directed by Brendan Byrne / Produced by Trevor Birney

Best Short Film, Comedy - Don't Mess with Julie Whitfield / Directed by Amy Barham / Produced by Priyanka Mattoo

Best Short Film, Drama - GAME / Directed by Jeannie Donohoe / Produced by Joey Horvitz

Best Short Film, Documentary - Charlie / Directed by Kadri Koop / Produced by Kadri Koop

Best Short Foreign Film, Drama - Cocoon / Directed by Liying Mei / Produced by Xu Zhang

Best Short Foreign Film, Comedy - The Nation Holds Its Breath / Directed by Kev Cahill / Produced by Joey Horvitz

Best Short Film, Animated - Finishing Touches / Directed by and Produced by Sarah Weaver and Jennifer Pham

Best Screenplay - La Madre Buena (the Good Mother) / Written by Sarah Clift

Best New Media - Kinesthesia / Directed by Jesse Atlas / Produced by Jon Arpino

Best Performance, Comedy - The Sixth Lead / Performer: Rick Glassman

Best Performance, Drama - Delinquent / Performer: Alex Shaffer

The award for Best New Filmmaker was presented by HBO to writer/director Jesse Atlas. Additionally, a bevy of distribution and development prizes were presented by HBO, Freestyle Media, **Adam Sandler's** Happy Madison Productions, Gravitas Ventures, EFILM - A Deluxe Company and Samaco Films. To bookend the evening, guests were then invited into the after-party, which featured drinks from the night's sponsor, Tito's Vodka. They also got to explore a special pop up art capsule, entitled 'How Do You Dream?' Past | Future | Now, which was curated in three parts. NFMLA partnered with Lynn Park Charveriat of The Untitled Art Gallery to present this unique experience.

The pop up art capsule paid tribute to the legacy of the film and TV industry within Los Angeles, as the creative capital of the world. Curators included **Jason Little** of The Hollywood Foreign Press Association for PAST, a nostalgic journey of the Golden Globes and the work of the HFPA Foundation; NFMLA's Kim for NOW, highlighting behind-the-scenes photography from Film LA, Deluxe with The American Society of Cinematographers, Canon, and The Camera Division, as well as artwork from Julia Silverhoof and Lena Moross. Lastly, Charveriat curated the FUTURE portion, with works from contributors including Juan **Carlos Rivera**, Christopher Charveriat, Eric Leiser, Igor Gusev, **John Tracy** and Lynn, herself.

The 2018 Best of NFMLA Awards show is made possible by sponsors, which include: Venue Sponsor South Park Center; Executive Circle Sponsors HBO and Film L.A. Inc.; **Producers Circle** Sponsor SAG-AFTRA; Angel Level Sponsor UCLA Extension; Official Airline Partner Norwegian Airlines; and many more. Food and drinks were provided by Pink's Hot Dogs, Tito's Vodka and Karl Strauss Brewing Company. For more information on NewFilmmakers Los Angeles (NFMLA), visit www.NFMLA.org.