

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE PRESENTS
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2020 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS ANNOUNCED

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

Top Prizes Go To *Minari*, *Boys State*, *Epicentro*, and *Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness*

***Minari*, *Crip Camp*, *The Reason I Jump*, and *Identifying Features (Sin Señas Particulares)* Win Audience Awards**

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE) Park City, UT ?? After 10 days and 128 feature films, the 2020 Sundance Film Festival's Awards Ceremony took place tonight, with jurors presenting 28 prizes for feature filmmaking. Honorees, named in total below, represent new achievements in global independent storytelling. Bold, intimate, and humanizing stories prevailed across categories, with Grand Jury Prizes awarded to *Minari* (U.S. Dramatic), *Boys State* (U.S. Documentary), *Epicentro* (World Cinema Documentary) and *Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness* (World Cinema Dramatic)..



Kerry Putnam

“At Sundance, we believe art can break through noise and polarization. In volatile times like these, democracy and storytelling aren’t separate – they’re inextricably linked,” said Keri Putnam, Sundance Institute’s Executive Director. “Congratulations to each and every one of tonight’s winners, and to all the extraordinary artists who joined us at the Festival.

“As my final Festival as director comes to a close, it has been the honor of a lifetime to stand with these artists, and to see their work meet audiences for the first time,” said **John Cooper**, Sundance Film Festival Director.

Putnam also announced Tabitha Jackson as the incoming Director during the ceremony; that news release is available [here](#).

The awards ceremony marked the culmination of the 2020 Festival, where 128 feature-length and 74 short films – selected from more than 15,100 submissions – were showcased in Park City, Salt Lake City and Sundance, Utah, alongside work in the Indie Episodic category, panels, music, and New Frontier.

This year’s jurors, invited in recognition of their accomplishments in the arts, technical craft and visionary storytelling, deliberated extensively before presenting awards from the stage; this year’s jurors were **Rodrigo Garcia, Ethan Hawke, Dee Rees, Isabella Rossellini, Wash Westmoreland, Kimberly Reed, Rachel Rosen, Courtney Sexton, E. Chai Vasarhelyi, Noland Walker, Haifaa Al**

Mansour, Wagner Moura, Alba Rohrwacher, Eric Hynes, Rima Mismar, and Nanfu Wang. Gregg Araki was the sole NEXT juror.

Feature film award winners in previous years include: *Clemency, One Child Nation, Honeyland, The Souvenir, The Miseducation of Cameron Post, I don't feel at home in this world anymore., Weiner, Whiplash, Fruitvale Station, Beasts of the Southern Wild, Twenty Feet from Stardom, Searching for Sugarman, The Square, Me and Earl and the Dying Girl, Cartel Land, The Wolf Pack, The Diary of a Teenage Girl, Dope, Dear White People, The Cove* and *Man on Wire*.

Of the 28 prizes awarded tonight to 25 films — comprising the work of 29 filmmakers — 12 (48%) were directed by one or more women; 10 (40%) were directed by one or more people of color; and 2 (8%) were directed by a person who identifies as LGBTQ+.

2020 SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL FEATURE FILM AWARDS

The **U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Documentary** was presented to: Jesse Moss and Amanda McBaine, for ***Boys State*** / U.S.A. (Directors: Jesse Moss, Amanda McBaine, Producers: Amanda McBaine, Jesse Moss) — In an unusual experiment, a thousand 17-year-old boys from Texas join together to build a representative government from the ground up.

The **U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic** was presented to: Lee Isaac Chung, for ***Minari*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Lee Isaac Chung, Producers: Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner, Christina Oh) — David, a 7-year-old Korean-American boy, gets his life turned upside down when his father decides to move their family to rural Arkansas and start a farm in the mid-1980s, in this charming and unexpected take on the American Dream. *Cast: Steven Yeun, Han Yeri, Youn Yuh Jung, Will Patton, Alan Kim, Noel Kate Cho.*

The **World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Documentary** was presented to: Hubert Sauper, for ***Epicentro*** / Austria, France, U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Hubert Sauper, Producers: Martin Marquet, Daniel Marquet, Gabriele Kranzelbinder, Paolo Calamita) — Cuba is well known as a so-called time capsule. The place where the New World was discovered has become both a romantic vision and a warning. With ongoing global cultural and financial upheavals, large parts of the world could face a similar kind of existence.

The **World Cinema Grand Jury Prize: Dramatic** was presented to: Massoud Bakhshi, for ***Yalda, a Night for Forgiveness*** / Iran, France, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg (Director and screenwriter: Massoud Bakhshi, Producers: Jacques Bidou, Marianne Dumoulin) — Maryam accidentally killed her husband Nasser and is sentenced to death. The only person who can save her is Mona, Nasser's daughter. All Mona has to do is appear on a TV show and forgive Maryam. But forgiveness proves difficult when they are forced to relive the past. *Cast: Sadaf Asgari, Behnaz Jafari, Babak Karimi, Fereshteh Sadr Orafaee, Forough Ghajebeglou, Fereshteh Hosseini.*



Crip Camp received the Audience Award: U.S. Documentary, Presented by Acura, at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival's Awards Ceremony, February 1st, 2019. (photo courtesy of Sundance Press)

The **Audience Award: U.S. Documentary**, Presented by Acura was presented to: Nicole Newnham and Jim LeBrecht, for [*Crip Camp*](#) / U.S.A. (Directors: Nicole Newnham, Jim LeBrecht, Producers: Sara Bolder, Jim LeBrecht, Nicole Newnham) â?? Down the road from Woodstock in the early 1970s, a revolution blossomed in a ramshackle summer camp for disabled teenagers, transforming their young lives and igniting a landmark movement.

The **Audience Award: U.S. Dramatic**, Presented by Acura was presented to: Lee Isaac Chung, for *Minari* / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Lee Isaac Chung, Producers: Dede Gardner, Jeremy Kleiner, Christina Oh) â?? David, a 7-year-old Korean-American boy, gets his life turned upside down when his father decides to move their family to rural Arkansas and start a farm in the mid-1980s, in this charming and unexpected take on the American Dream. *Cast: Steven Yeun, Han Yeri, Youn Yuh Jung, Will Patton, Alan Kim, Noel Kate Cho.*

The **Audience Award: World Cinema Documentary** was presented to: Jerry Rothwell, for *The Reason I Jump* / United Kingdom (Director: Jerry Rothwell, Producers: Jeremy Dear, Stevie Lee, Al Morrow) â?? Based on the book by Naoki Higashida this immersive film explores the experiences of nonspeaking autistic people around the world.

The **Audience Award: World Cinema Dramatic** was presented to: Fernanda Valadez, for *Identifying Features (Sin Señas Particulares)* / Mexico, Spain (Director: Fernanda Valadez, Screenwriters: Fernanda Valadez, Astrid Rondero, Producers: Astrid Rondero, Fernanda Valadez, Jack Zagha, Yossy Zagha) â?? Magdalena makes a journey to find her son, gone missing on his way to the Mexican border with the US. Her odyssey takes her to meet Miguel, a man recently deported from the U.S. They travel together, Magdalena looking for her son, and Miguel hoping to see his mother again. *Cast: Mercedes Hernández, David Illescas, Juan Jes s Varela, Ana Laura Rodr guez, Laura Elena Ibarra, Xicot ncatl Ulloa.*

The **Audience Award: NEXT**, Presented by Adobe was presented to: Heidi Ewing, for *I Carry You With Me* / U.S.A., Mexico (Director: Heidi Ewing, Screenwriters: Heidi Ewing, Alan Page Arriaga, Producers: Mynette Louie, Heidi Ewing) â?? An epic love story spanning decades is sparked by a

chance encounter between two men in provincial Mexico. Based on a true story, ambition and societal pressure propel an aspiring chef to leave his soulmate and make the treacherous journey to New York, where life will never be the same. *Cast: Armando Espitia, Christian Vázquez, Michelle Rodríguez, Ángeles Cruz, Arcelia Ramírez, Michelle González.*

The **Directing Award: U.S. Documentary** was presented to: Garrett Bradley, for ***Time*** / U.S.A. (Director: Garrett Bradley, Producers: Lauren Domino, Kellen Quinn, Garrett Bradley) Fox Rich, indomitable matriarch and modern-day abolitionist, strives to keep her family together while fighting for the release of her incarcerated husband. An intimate, epic, and unconventional love story, filmed over two decades.

The **Directing Award: U.S. Dramatic** was presented to: Radha Blank, for ***The 40-Year-Old Version*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Radha Blank, Producers: Lena Waithe, Jordan Fudge, Radha Blank, Inuka Bacote-Capiga, Jennifer Semler, Rishi Rajani) A down-on-her-luck New York playwright decides to reinvent herself and salvage her artistic voice the only way she knows how: by becoming a rapper at age 40. *Cast: Radha Blank, Peter Y. Kim, Oswin Benjamin, Reed Birney, Imani Lewis, TJ Atoms.*

The **Directing Award: World Cinema Documentary** was presented to: Iryna Tsilyk, for ***The Earth Is Blue as an Orange*** / Ukraine, Lithuania (Director: Iryna Tsilyk, Producers: Anna Kapustina, Giedrė Ažickytė) To cope with the daily trauma of living in a war zone, Anna and her children make a film together about their life among surreal surroundings.

The **Directing Award: World Cinema Dramatic** was presented to: Maïmouna Doucouré, for ***Cuties*** / France (Director and screenwriter: Maïmouna Doucouré, Producer: Zangro) Amy, 11 years old, meets a group of dancers called Cuties. Fascinated, she initiates herself to a sensual dance, hoping to join their band and escape family dysfunction. *Cast: Fathia Youssouf, Mădina El Aidi-Azouni, Esther Gohourou, Ilanah Cami-Goursolas, Myriam Hamma, Maïmouna Gueye.*

The **Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award: U.S. Dramatic** was presented to: Edson Oda, for ***Nine Days*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Edson Oda, Producers: Jason Michael Berman, Mette Marie Kongsved, Matthew Lindner, Laura Tunstall, Datari Turner) In a house distant from the reality we know, a reclusive man interviews prospective candidates' personifications of human souls for the privilege that he once had: to be born. *Cast: Winston Duke, Zazie Beetz, Benedict Wong, Bill Skarsgård, Tony Hale, David Rysdahl.* **Dolby Institute Fellowship**

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Ensemble Cast** was presented to: the cast of *Charm City Kings*, for ***Charm City Kings*** / U.S.A. (Director: Angel Manuel Soto, Screenwriters: Sherman Payne, Chris Boyd & Kirk Sullivan, Barry Jenkins, Producers: Caleeb Pinkett, Clarence Hammond, Marc Bienstock) Mouse desperately wants to join The Midnight Clique, the infamous Baltimore dirt bike riders who rule the summertime streets. When Midnight's leader, Blax, takes 14-year-old Mouse under his wing, Mouse soon finds himself torn between the straight-and-narrow and a road filled with fast money and violence. *Cast: Jahi Di'Allo Winston, Meek Mill, Will Catlett, Teyonah Parris, Donielle Tremaine Hansley, Kezii Curtis.*

A **U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award: Auteur Filmmaking** was presented to: Josephine Decker, for ***Shirley*** / U.S.A. (Director: Josephine Decker, Screenwriter: Sarah Gubbins, Producers: Christine Vachon, David Hinojosa, Sue Naegle, Sarah Gubbins, Jeffrey Soros, Simon Horsman) A young

couple moves in with the famed author, Shirley Jackson, and her Bennington College professor husband, Stanley Hyman, in the hope of starting a new life but instead find themselves fodder for a psycho-drama that inspires Shirley's next novel. *Cast: Elisabeth Moss, Michael Stuhlbarg, Odessa Young, Logan Lerman.*

A U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award: Neo-Realism was presented to: Eliza Hittman, for ***Never Rarely Sometimes Always*** / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Eliza Hittman, Producers: Adele Romanski, Sara Murphy) — An intimate portrayal of two teenage girls in rural Pennsylvania. Faced with an unintended pregnancy and a lack of local support, Autumn and her cousin Skylar embark on a brave, fraught journey across state lines to New York City. *Cast: Sidney Flanigan, Talia Ryder, Th  odore Pellerin, Ryan Eggold, Sharon Van Etten.*

A U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Editing was presented to: Tyler H. Walk, for ***Welcome to Chechnya*** / U.S.A. (Director: David France, Producers: Alice Henty, David France, Askold Kurov, Joy A. Tomchin) — This searing investigative work shadows a group of activists risking unimaginable peril to confront the ongoing anti-LGBTQ pogrom raging in the repressive and closed Russian republic. Unfettered access and a remarkable approach to protecting anonymity expose this under-reported atrocity—and an extraordinary group of people confronting evil.

A U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Innovation in Non-fiction Storytelling was presented to: Kirsten Johnson, for ***Dick Johnson Is Dead*** / U.S.A. (Director: Kirsten Johnson, Screenwriters: Nels Bangerter, Kirsten Johnson, Producers: Katy Chevigny, Marilyn Ness) — With this inventive portrait, a cameraperson seeks a way to keep her 86-year-old father alive forever. Utilizing moviemaking magic and her family's dark humor, she celebrates Dr. Dick Johnson's last years by staging fantasies of death and beyond. Together, dad and daughter confront the great inevitability awaiting us all.

A U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Emerging Filmmaker was presented to: Arthur Jones, for ***Feels Good Man*** / U.S.A. (Director: Arthur Jones, Producers: Giorgio Angelini, Caryn Capotosto, Aaron Wickenden) — When indie comic character Pepe the Frog becomes an unwitting icon of hate, his creator, artist Matt Furie, fights to bring Pepe back from the darkness and navigate America's cultural divide.

A U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking was presented to: Elyse Steinberg, Josh Kriegman, and Eli Despres, for ***The Fight*** / U.S.A. (Directors: Elyse Steinberg, Josh Kriegman, Eli Despres, Producers: Elyse Steinberg, Josh Kriegman, Eli Despres, Maya Seidler, Peggy Drexler, Kerry Washington) — Inside the ACLU, a team of scrappy lawyers battles Trump's historic assault on civil liberties. As the president separates families, blocks abortion access, expels transgender soldiers, and rolls back voting rights, these gutsy attorneys struggle to stop an unpredictable adversary with unlimited resources.

A World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Acting was presented to: Ben Whishaw, for ***Surge*** / United Kingdom (Director: Aneil Karia, Screenwriters: Rupert Jones, Rita Kalnejais, Producers: Julia Godzinskaya, Sophie Vickers) — A man goes on a bold and reckless journey of self-liberation through London. After he robs a bank he releases a wilder version of himself, ultimately experiencing what it feels like to be alive. *Cast: Ben Whishaw, Ellie Haddington, Ian Gelder, Jasmine Jobson.*

A World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Visionary Filmmaking was presented to: Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese, for ***This Is Not A Burial, It's A Resurrection*** / Lesotho, South Africa,

Italy (Director and screenwriter: Lemohang Jeremiah Mosese, Producers: Cait Pansegrouw, Elias Ribeiro) â?? When her village is threatened with forced resettlement due to reservoir construction, an 80-year-old widow finds a new will to live and ignites the spirit of resilience within her community. In the final dramatic moments of her life, Mantooaâ??s legend is forged and made eternal. *Cast: Mary Twala Mhlongo, Jerry Mofokeng Wa Makheta, Makhoala Ndebele, Tseko Monaheng, Siphiwe Nzima.*

A World Cinema Dramatic Special Jury Award for Best Screenplay was presented to: Fernanda Valadez and Astrid Rondero, for ***Identifying Features (Sin Señas Particulares)*** / Mexico, Spain (Director: Fernanda Valadez, Screenwriters: Fernanda Valadez, Astrid Rondero, Producers: Astrid Rondero, Fernanda Valadez, Jack Zagha, Yossy Zagha) â?? Magdalena makes a journey to find her son, gone missing on his way to the Mexican border with the US. Her odyssey takes her to meet Miguel, a man recently deported from the U.S. They travel together, Magdalena looking for her son, and Miguel hoping to see his mother again. *Cast: Mercedes Hernández, David Illescas, Juan Jesús Varela, Ana Laura Rodríguez, Laura Elena Ibarra, Xicoténcatl Ulloa.*

A World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Creative Storytelling was presented to: Benjamin Ree, for ***The Painter and the Thief*** / Norway (Director: Benjamin Ree, Producer: Ingvil Giske) â?? An artist befriends the drug addict and thief who stole her paintings. She becomes his closest ally when he is severely hurt in a car crash and needs full-time care, even if her paintings are not found. But then the tables turn.

A World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Cinematography was presented to: Mircea Topoleanu and Radu Ciorniciuc, for ***Acasa, My Home*** / Romania, Germany, Finland (Director: Radu Ciorniciuc, Screenwriters: Lina Vdovii, Radu Ciorniciuc, Producer: Monica Lazurean-Gorgan) â?? In the wilderness of the Bucharest Delta, nine children and their parents lived in perfect harmony with nature for 20 yearsâ??until they are chased out and forced to adapt to life in the big city.

A World Cinema Documentary Special Jury Award for Editing was presented to: Mila Aung-Thwin, Sam Soko, and Ryan Mullins, for ***Softie*** / Kenya (Director and screenwriter: Sam Soko, Producers: Toni Kamau, Sam Soko) â?? Boniface Mwangi is daring and audacious and recognized as Kenyaâ??s most provocative photojournalist. But as a father of three young children, these qualities create tremendous turmoil between him and his wife Njeri. When he wants to run for political office, he is forced to choose: country or family?

The **NEXT Innovator Prize** was presented to: Heidi Ewing, for ***I Carry You With Me*** / U.S.A., Mexico (Director: Heidi Ewing, Screenwriters: Heidi Ewing, Alan Page Arriaga, Producers: Mynette Louie, Heidi Ewing) â?? An epic love story spanning decades is sparked by a chance encounter between two men in provincial Mexico. Based on a true story, ambition and societal pressure propel an aspiring chef to leave his soulmate and make the treacherous journey to New York, where life will never be the same. *Cast: Armando Espitia, Christian Vázquez, Michelle Rodríguez, Ángeles Cruz, Arcelia Ramírez, Michelle González.*

The following awards were presented at separate ceremonies at the Festival:

SHORT FILM AWARDS Presented by Southwest Airlines®

Jury prizes in short filmmaking were awarded at an earlier ceremony in Park City on January 28. The Short Film Grand Jury Prize was awarded to ***So What If The Goats Die*** / France, Morocco (Director and screenwriter: Sofia Alaoui). The Short Film Jury Award: U.S. Fiction was awarded to ***-Ship: A***

Visual Poem / U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Terrance Daye). The Short Film Jury Award: International Fiction was awarded to **The Devil's Harmony** / United Kingdom (Director: Dylan Holmes Williams, Screenwriters: Dylan Holmes Williams, Jess O'Kane). The Short Film Jury Award: Nonfiction was awarded to **John Was Trying to Contact Aliens** / U.S.A. (Director: Matthew Killip). The Short Film Jury Award: Animation was presented to **Daughter** / Czech Republic (Director and screenwriter: Daria Kashcheeva). A Short Film Special Jury Award for Acting was presented to **Exam** / Iran (Director: Sonia K. Hadad, Screenwriters: Sonia K. Hadad, Farnoosh Samadi). A Short Film Special Jury Award for Directing was presented to **Valerio's Day Out** / Colombia, U.S.A. (Director and screenwriter: Michael Arcos).

SUNDANCE INSTITUTE | ALFRED P. SLOAN FEATURE FILM PRIZE

The 2020 Alfred P. Sloan Feature Film Prize, presented to an outstanding feature film about science or technology, was presented to **Tesla**. The filmmakers received a \$20,000 cash award from Sundance Institute with support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.

The **Sundance Institute | Amazon Studios Producers Award for Documentary Features** went to Diane Becker and Melanie Miller of Fishbowl Films, for *Whirlybird*.

The **Sundance Institute | Amazon Studios Producers Award for Narrative Features** went to Huriyyah Muhammad for *Farewell Amor*.

The **Sundance Institute | Adobe Mentorship Award for Editing Documentary** went to Carla Gutierrez and the **Sundance Institute | Adobe Mentorship Award for Editing Narrative** went to Affonso Gonçalves.

The **Sundance Institute | NHK Award** went to Kirsten Tan, from Singapore, for her film *Higher*.

The Sundance Film Festival®

The Sundance Film Festival has introduced global audiences to some of the most groundbreaking films of the past three decades, including *Sorry to Bother You*, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?*, *Eighth Grade*, *Get Out*, *The Big Sick*, *Mudbound*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *Whiplash*, *Brooklyn*, *Precious*, *The Cove*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, *Napoleon Dynamite*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Reservoir Dogs*, and *sex, lies, and videotape*. The Festival is a program of the non-profit Sundance Institute®. 2020 Festival sponsors include: Presenting Sponsors â?? Acura, SundanceTV, Chase Sapphire, AT&T; Leadership Sponsors â?? Adobe, Amazon Studios, DIRECTV, Dropbox, Netflix, Omnicom Group, Southwest Airlines®, Stella Artois®, WarnerMedia; Sustaining Sponsors â?? Audible, Canada Goose, Canon U.S.A., Inc., Dell Technologies, Fire TV, GEICO, High West Distillery, Hulu, IMDbPro, Lyft, Unity Technologies, University of Utah Health; Media Sponsors â?? The Atlantic, IndieWire, Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, Variety, The Wall Street Journal. Sundance Institute recognizes critical support from the State of Utah as Festival Host State. The support of these organizations helps offset the Festival's costs and sustain the Institute's year-round programs for independent artists. Look for the Official Partner seal at their venues at the Festival. sundance.org/festival

Sundance Institute

Founded in 1981 by Robert Redford, Sundance Institute is a nonprofit organization that provides and preserves the space for artists in film, theatre, and media to create and thrive. The Institute's signature Labs, granting, and mentorship programs, dedicated to developing new work, take place

throughout the year in the U.S. and internationally. [Sundance Co//ab](#), a digital community platform, brings artists together to learn from each other and Sundance Advisors and connect in a creative space, developing and sharing works in progress. The Sundance Film Festival and other public programs connect audiences and artists to ignite new ideas, discovering original voices, and build a community dedicated to independent storytelling. Sundance Institute has supported such projects as *The Farewell*, *Late Night*, *The Souvenir*, *The Infiltrators*, *Sorry to Bother You*, *Eighth Grade*, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?*, *Hereditary*, *RBG*, *Call Me By Your Name*, *Get Out*, *The Big Sick*, *Top of the Lake*, *Winter's Bone*, *Dear White People*, *Little Miss Sunshine*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*, *Fruitvale Station*, *State of the Union*, *Indecent*, *Spring Awakening*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* and *Fun Home*. Join [Sundance Institute](#) on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).

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