



## 28th Annual Heartland International Film Festival announces Filmmaker Award winners

### Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

**Bora Kim's HOUSE OF THE HUMMINGBIRD  
wins \$15,000 Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature**

**Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts' FOR SAMA wins twice,  
taking \$15,000 Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature and the  
Richard D. Propes Social Impact Documentary Award with an additional \$2000**

**The Richard D. Propes Social Impact Narrative Feature Award (and \$2000), which went to Flavio  
Alves' THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND.**

**Brett Fallentine's FIRE ON THE HILL receives the Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award and \$5000  
and Matt Ratner doubles up with the Humor and Humanity Award and  
FIPRESCI's Best Directorial Debut for USA Narrative Film**

**Audience Choice Awards were led by Destin Daniel Cretton's JUST MERCY,  
winning both Special Presentation and Overall**



**Heartland International Film Festival 2019 award winners: Abo Anthony, John Rotondo (THE  
GARDEN LEFT BEHIND), Matt Ratner (STANDNG UP, FALLING DOWN), Flavio Alves (THE**

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**GARDEN LEFT BEHIND), Gordon Strain (THE MISEDUCATION OF BINDU), Ashton Gleckman (WE SHALL NOT DIE NOW), Brett Fallentine (FIRE ON THE HILL), Edward Watts (FOR SAMA), Seung Yun-Lee (HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD), Calvin Gray, William Bias, Ghuan Featherstone (FIRE ON THE HILL), Julie Sokolow (BAREFOOT: THE MARK BAUMER STORY) (Photo by Whitney Walker)**

**Indianapolis, IN (October 21, 2019)** – The Heartland International Film Festival announced the filmmaker award winners for the film festival’s 28th edition during an Awards Brunch held at The Montage (8580 Allison Pointe Blvd.) on Saturday, October 19. The Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature (and a cash prize of \$15,000) went to Bora Kim’s HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD, with one of the film’s stars, Seung-Yun Lee on hand to accept the award, with Waad al-Kateab and Edward Watts’ FOR SAMA taking home two awards, including the \$15,000 Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature, as well as the Richard D. Propes Social Impact Documentary Award and the \$2000 that came with that award. Watts accepted the awards on behalf of the film. In addition to the Social Impact Documentary Award, Indiana film critic Richard D. Propes was on hand to also present the other award in his name, the Richard D. Propes Social Impact Narrative Feature Award (and \$2000), which went to Flavio Alves’ THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND. Each of the finalists in the Narrative and Documentary



ash prize.

**Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award winners, left to right:**

**FIRE ON THE HILLS’ William Bias (Subject), Brett Fallentine (DIR), Calvin Gray (Subject), Ghuan Featherstone (Subject) (Photo by Whitney Walker)**

Among the other awards, Brett Fallentine’s documentary about the horse riding community in South Central L.A., FIRE ON THE HILL received the film festival’s Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award and \$5000. Three of the film’s subjects attended the ceremony with Fallentine, and as they accepted the award, one of the subjects, Ghuan Featherstone, said, “This film is about perceptions and changing those perceptions. Here we are in the Midwest and our lives relate to you.”

Matt Ratner was the festival’s other two-time winner, as his film, STANDING UP, FALLING DOWN received the festival’s Humor and Humanity Award and \$1000, and he received the FIPRESCI nod for Best Directorial Debut for USA Narrative Film. As he accepted his second award, Ratner, said, “Places like Heartland are so meaningful. There is a space in a crowded marketplace for films about people struggling with their humanity.”

“From South Central LA cowboys to South Korea, our award winners truly demonstrated the international scope of Heartland,” said Craig Prater, Heartland Film President, following the awards presentation.



**HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD star Seung-Yun Lee (Photo**

**by Whitney Walker)**

“This was a banner year for us programming-wise, as we were able to screen so many of our top choices from the film festival circuit, films that are in major consideration for the Oscars® and top critics awards right now,” Greg Sorvig, Heartland Film Artistic Director, added. “Audiences are filling our theaters because they have realized that the Heartland International Film Festival is quickly becoming a true awards tastemaker film festival. With that combined enthusiasm we enjoyed from both our film fans and our filmmakers, it’s great to then cap it by rewarding the wonderful films and filmmakers that won this year. They really deserved it.”

Earlier this year Heartland Film signed the 5050x2020 Parity Pledge guaranteeing that at least half of its festival programming will be directed by women by its 2020 Indy Shorts and HIFF events. In total, 43% of this year’s official selection lineup was directed or co-directed by women and 63% of the overall \$60,000 prize purse (\$38,000) went to titles directed or co-directed by female filmmakers, led by Kim’s HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD and al-Kateab and Watts’ FOR SAMA.



**Best Premiere Documentary Award winner Julie**

**Sokolow (BAREFOOT:  
THE MARK BAUMER STORY) (Photo by Whitney Walker)**

HIFF's Best Premiere Awards (along with the corresponding cash prizes of \$2000) were presented to Julie Sokolow's BAREFOOT: THE MARK BAUMER STORY (Best Premiere Documentary) and Nora Fingscheidt's SYSTEMSPRENGER (SYSTEM CRASHER) (Best Premiere Narrative). The film festival's Best International Feature Film Oscar® Contender (which came with a \$2000 cash prize) was THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND (Dolor y gloria).



**THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND team (cast member Abo**

**Anthony, director Flavio Alves, and Screenwriter John Rotondo, with Richard D. Propes (Photo by Whitney Walker)**

In addition to the Social Impact Documentary Award, Indiana film critic Richard D. Propes was on hand to also present the other award in his name, the Richard D. Propes Social Impact Narrative Feature Award (and \$2000), which went to Flavio Alves' THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND. The Indiana Spotlight Award (and \$2000) went to Prarthana Mohan's THE MISEDUCATION OF BINDU, with the Indiana Spotlight Audience Choice Award (and \$1000) going to Ashton Gleckman's WE SHALL NOT DIENOW.

Destin Daniel Cretton's JUST MERCY received two Audience Choice Awards for both Special Feature and Narrative Feature. Michael Herbig's FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES received the nod in the Best International Feature category, and Jacob Hamilton's JUMP SHOT received the nod in the Best Narrative Feature category. 19-year-old Ashton Gleckman's debut WE SHALL NOT DIE NOW received the Audience Choice Award (and \$1000) in the Indiana Spotlight category.



**Ashton Gleckman (Director, WE SHALL NOT DIE NOW)**

**(Photo by Whitney Walker)**

Alex Holmes' MAIDEN was the Audience Choice in the Awards Season Spotlight category, and Greece's Official Academy Award entry, WHEN TOMATOES MET WAGNER, directed by Marianna Economou got the nod in the Best International Feature Film OSCAR? Contenders section. Michael Herbig's BALLOON won the Audience Choice Award for HIFF's Cultural Journey: Germany sidebar.

The 28<sup>th</sup> edition of the Heartland International Film Festival, which wrapped up on October 20 with Cretton's JUST MERCY and other screenings, was marked by buzz-worthy titles that the film festival's fans filled theater after theater to see. Gala titles like Marielle Heller's A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, Noah Baumbach's MARRIAGE STORY, and Fernando Meirelles' THE TWO POPES, along with screenings of hot ticket films like Bong Joon Ho's PARASITE, Nadav Lapid's

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SYNONYMS, Trey Edwards Shults' WAVES, Chinonye Chukwu's CLEMENCY, and Taika Waititi's JOJO RABBIT, among others, took HIFF to another level this year.

Among other highlights, Brendan Fraser returned to Indianapolis to receive not one, but two standing ovations both prior to, and after, a special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary screening of his box office smash hit, THE MUMMY. Life Achievement Award honoree Michael Apted received a warm reception at a screening of his latest, 63 UP, and Dennis Christopher was welcomed enthusiastically at a 40th Anniversary screening of Peter Yates' beloved Indiana-based classic, BREAKING AWAY

### **The 2019 Heartland International Film Festival Award Winners:**

#### **Grand Prize for Best Narrative Feature – \$15,000**

HOUSE OF THE HUMMINGBIRD

Director: Bora Kim

#### **Grand Prize for Best Documentary Feature – \$15,000**

FOR SAMA

Directors: Waad al-Kateab, Edward Watts

#### **Richard D. Propes Social Impact Award Narrative Feature – \$2000**

THE GARDEN LEFT BEHIND

Director: Flavio Alves

#### **Richard D. Propes Social Impact Award Documentary Feature – \$2000**

FOR SAMA

Directors: Waad al-Kateab, Edward Watts

#### **The Jimmy Stewart Legacy Award Winner – \$5000**

FIRE ON THE HILL

Director: Brett Fallentine

#### **Indiana Spotlight Award – \$2000**

THE MISEDUCATION OF BINDU

Director: Prarthana Mohan

#### **Humor and Humanity Award – \$1000**

STANDING UP, FALLING DOWN

Director: Matt Ratner

#### **Best Premiere Award Documentary – \$2000**

BAREFOOT: THE MARK BAUMER STORY

Director: Julie Sokolow

#### **Best Premiere Award Narrative – \$2000**

SYSTEMSPRENGER (SYSTEM CRASHER)

Director: Nora Fingscheidt

#### **Best International Feature Film Oscar® Contender – \$2000**

PAIN AND GLORY (Dolor y Gloria)

Director: Pedro Almodóvar

**FIPRESCI Best Directorial Debut for USA Narrative Film (no cash prize)**

STANDING UP, FALLING DOWN

Director: Matt Ratner

**Overall Audience Choice Award Winner**

JUST MERCY

Director: Destin Daniel Cretton

**Audience Choice – Special Presentation**

JUST MERCY

Director: Destin Daniel Cretton

**Audience Choice – Narrative Feature (\$1000 cash prize)**

FEAST OF THE SEVEN FISHES

Director: Robert Tinnell

**Audience Choice – Documentary Feature (\$1000 cash prize)**

JUMP SHOT

Director: Jacob Hamilton

**Audience Choice – Indiana Spotlight (\$1000 cash prize)**

WE SHALL NOT DIE NOW

Director: Ashton Gleckman

**Audience Choice – Awards Season Spotlight**

MAIDEN

Director: Alex Holmes

**Audience Choice – Best International Feature Film OSCAR? Contenders**

WHEN TOMATOES MET WAGNER

Country: Greece

Director: Marianna Economou

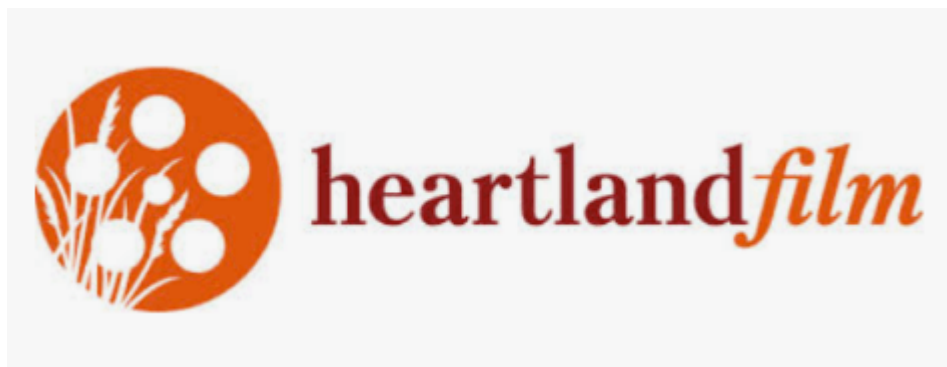
**Audience Choice – Cultural Journey: Germany**

BALLOON

Director: Michael Herbig

**About Heartland Film, Inc.**

Heartland Film is a nonprofit arts organization founded in 1991 with the mission to inspire filmmakers and audiences through the transformative power of film. Heartland Film presents the annual Heartland International Film Festival, Academy Award®-qualifying Indy Shorts International Film Festival, the Heartland Film Roadshow, and bestows the Truly Moving Picture Award industry honor to major film releases throughout the year. For more information, visit [heartlandfilm.org](http://heartlandfilm.org).



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