

17 ANNUAL ROUTE 66
FILM FESTIVAL

INDEPENDENT FILMS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

2018 CATEGORIES

ANIMATION
COMEDY
DEBUT
DEMOCRACY
DRAMA

November 2-3, 2018

Capital City Bar & Grill Theater

3149 South Dirksen Parkway • Springfield, IL

4 Sessions

\$10 Each – OR – 4 for \$35 by October 31



Tickets Available at route66filmfestival.net

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Route 66 Film Festival Schedule

Films are listed By session, alphabetically; final screening order may be different.
For film synopsis and director biography, see the page number after the film title.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2 – Session 1, 7 PM

Welcome by Festival Director Siobhan Johnson, 7 PM
Complementary hors d'oeuvres available throughout the session –
or order from the full menu at the Capital City Bar & Grill.

Father K (p. 10)

34:00; Directed by Judd Ehrlich; USA; Documentary, Democracy

It Followed Me Here (p. 13)

15:00; Directed by Matthew Godbey; USA; Drama, Thriller

Lone Rider (p. 17)

4:15; Directed by Luca Cipolla; USA; Student Showcase

Marie's Crisis (p. 18)

12:05; Directed by Michael Vecchio; USA; Documentary, Debut Film

Occam's Razor (p. 21)

18:28; Directed by Makan Talayeh; USA; Experimental

The Perception (p. 24)

1:25:00; Directed by Jensen Noen; USA; Drama

Step One (p. 29)

6:27; Directed by Sean Patrick Leonard; USA; Drama, Made in Illinois

After Party until 1 AM



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 – Session 2, 11 AM

93 Miles (p. 8)

16:58; Directed by Noah Canavan; USA; Drama, Foreign Language

Between Us (p. 8)

11:00; Directed by Hyojin Park; USA; Drama, Debut Film

Dillon (p. 10)

15:00; Directed by Michael Camp; USA; Drama

A Landscape for Life (p. 15)

30:55; Directed by Kirby Pringle; USA.; Documentary, Made in Illinois

Leia's Army (p. 15)

14:29; Directed by Oriana Oppice; USA; Drama, Democracy, Made in Illinois

Silent Composition (p. 27)

3:58; Directed by Dane Brinkmeier; USA; Drama, Debut Film, Made in Illinois

This Is Love (p. 29)

1:23:16; Directed by John Alexander; USA; Documentary, Democracy

Too Much Rain (p. 32)

8:10; Directed by John Cernak; USA; Drama, Animation

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 – Session 3, 3 PM

Icons (p. 12)

5:10; Written & Directed by Ronnie Cramer; USA ; Experimental, Animation

Lies (p. 16)

11:04; Directed by Ian Wirth; USA; Made in Illinois

My Amish World (p. 21)

1:19:25; Written & Directed by Samuel Wickey; USA; Drama

Power to Heal:

Medicare and the Civil Rights Revolution (p. 26)

56:00; Directed by Charles Burnett & Daniel Loewenthal; USA;
Documentary, Democracy

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3 – Session 4, 6:30 PM

Complementary hors d'oeuvres available throughout the session – or order from the full menu at the Capital City Bar & Grill.

Forgive Me (p. 11)

15:01; Directed by Besim Ugzmajli; Spain; Drama, Foreign Language

Georgia O'Keefe and Me (p. 11)

5:58; Directed by Robert Belinoff; USA; Experimental

L'Obsession (p. 13)

10:30; Directed by CMack (Charles A. Mack III); USA; Student Showcase, Made in Illinois

The Little Dictator (p. 16)

28:18; Directed by Nurith Cohn; Israel; Comedy, Drama, Debut Film

Lost in Aroncore (p. 18)

13:52; Directed by Ryan Wagner; USA ; Drama, Student Showcase

Opus of an Angel (p. 23)

1:28:00; Directed by Ali Zamani; USA; Drama

Spaceman (p. 27)

18:43; Written & Directed by Christopher Oliva; USA; Comedy, Drama, Made in Illinois

This Modern Man is Beat (p. 31)

17:06; Directed by Alex Merkin; USA ; Drama, Thriller

Uninvited (p. 32)

9:36; Directed by Ryan Wagner; USA ; Drama, Thriller

Awards Ceremony - 10:00 PM

List the award winners on page 35!

After Party - until 1:00 AM

Snack and quaff delicious beverages with filmmakers and other audience members.



About the Route 66 Film Festival:

The festival began as a project of the Reel to Real Film Club at LincolnLand Community College. Inspired by Roger Ebert's film festival in Champaign, the club used a \$10,000 grant from LincolnLand to hold the film festival in 2002 at the old Esquire Theater, and workshops for students at LincolnLand.

The first festival was held on two weekends, in conjunction with the Route 66 Mother Road Festival from which it took its name. Bruce Campbell, star of *Evil Dead* movies and TV's *Burn Notice*, was a special guest, as was Martin Milner and the Corvette from his TV show *Route 66*.

LincolnLand did not continue to sponsor the festival, but founder Linda McElroy (with volunteers) hosted festivals in 2003 and 2004 at the Hilton Hotel, soliciting films from schools across the country. Filmmakers attended from across Illinois, and from New York and California.

Festival entries increased with the advent of internet solicitation and submission. From 2005-2011 the festival was a three-day event at the Hoogland Center for the Arts, with films submitted from all continents except Antarctica. Linda McElroy stepped down as director and a 6-member board has organized the now 2-day festival since 2012, when it was held at the Legacy Theater. Since 2013, the Festival has called the theater adjoining the Capital City Bar & Grill its home. Tom Szyrka was Festival Director from 2012-13, Siobhan Johnson has served since 2014.

The Route 66 Film Festival is proud to introduce Springfield audiences to films from throughout the world and to provide an audience to new and veteran filmmakers. Those interested in becoming board members and volunteers may contact route66filmfestival@gmail.com. We welcome online reviewers/evaluators, festival staffers, sponsors and donors.



Welcome from Siobhan Johnson, Festival Director

Welcome to the 17th Route 66 Film Festival. Each year we try to select films to provoke thought, elicit laughter and tears, bring a different point of view to global issues, and simply entertain.

As Festival Director since 2014, I remain impressed by the high quality films submitted for consideration. This year some films address the topic Democracy. A few films will be easy to watch; some won't.

We hope you enjoy this year's festival. We remain committed to bringing independent films from the US and around the world to Springfield.

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Film Descriptions & Filmmaker Biographies

93 Miles (Session 2)

**Directed by Noah Canavan, USA,
Drama, Foreign Language, 16:58**



The night after defecting from Cuba, a baseball player and his girlfriend are holed up in a Mexican hotel room. Tension rises as the two become claustrophobic in their stressful situation.

IMDb, FB, www.93milesmovie.com/

Noah Canavan is an award-winning filmmaker, currently based in Boston. From Quincy, Illinois, Noah went to the East Coast in 2014 to enter the world of independent cinema. He is enrolled in



Emerson College's Film & Media Art (MFA) program. Noah has a Bachelor's degree in graphic design and photography, with a minor in film production. His experience is in all areas of film production, on over 20 films, shown in many festivals. His work has been named Best of Festival, and Best Student Short Film. His work in graphic design attained two Addy Awards. His photography has made the covers of international magazines, and exhibited in galleries and cafes. IMDb

Between Us (Session 2)

**Directed by Hyojin Park, South Korea, USA,
Drama, Debut Film, 11:00**

When a soon-to-be-married Korean woman reconnects with her former beau a charming Afro-Caribbean man to show him around Seoul, the romantic feelings that drew them together and the unresolved tensions that pulled them apart resurface causing her to reassess her engagement and her life's choices. IMDb



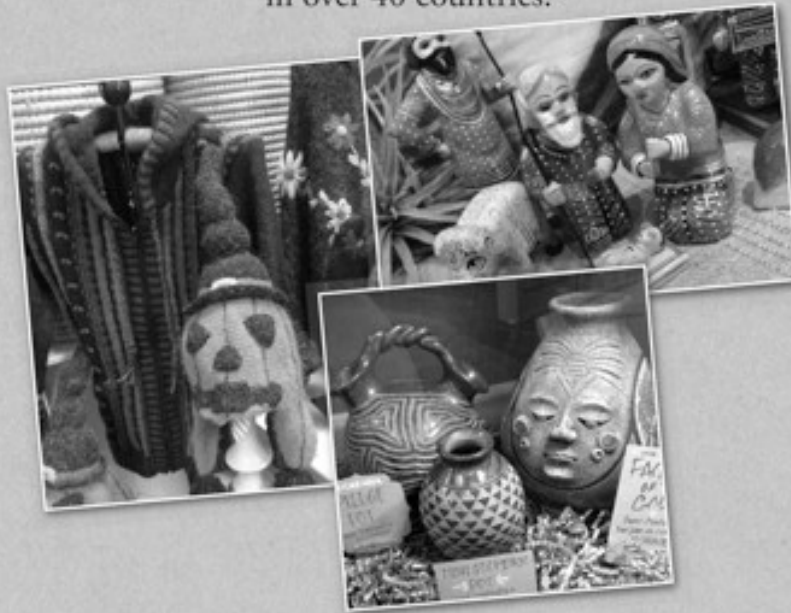
Hyojin Park was born and raised in South Korea. Her theatrical career began with Kimkapsoo's *The World of Actors* on Korean Broadway. Credits include *My Mom*, *The Curtain Call for Her*, *White Wind*, *Seoul Terror*, *Heaven Gosiwon*, *Almost Maine*. Upon her move to New York City, her film career includes the Cannes 2017 premiere of *Kim Queen's 3,000* and other notable works, like *Homework*, *Two Faces*, *My First Love*, *Egg*, *Sunny's Stage*. She is a 2019 MFA candidate in Acting at The New School of Drama. IMDb

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Dillon (Session 2)

Directed by Michael Camp, USA, Drama, 15:00

A story that tells the heartache of a family losing their son and how they move on with their lives from the incident. IMDb



Michael Camp is an actor and director, known for *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018), *Dillon* (2018) and *The Islands* (2018).

I never knew the depth of my father's pain until I started writing this screenplay. I was very young when my brother died,

and couldn't comprehend how painful and emotional the toll was on my parents. Still, 27 years later, they can barely talk about him without a heavy heart. I wrote *Dillon* for them. As a first time writer and director, I am honored to share this project. IMDb



Father K (Session 1)

Directed by Judd Ehrlich, USA, Documentary, Democracy, 34:00

When Palestinian Lutheran Pastor Khader El-Yateem decides to run to become NYC's first Arab American elected official in his conservative Brooklyn neighborhood, he does what no one thinks possible, igniting his marginalized community's hopes and dreams. In the election's aftermath, an unforeseeable blow threatens the foundation of the movement they started, and the community finds their newfound optimism tested to its limit. Father K must face the realities of what it takes to build lasting power in a divided America, but through it all, his voice emerges as funny, bold, and defiantly hopeful - a bridge-builder in a polarized time. IMDb



Judd Ehrlich is a Grand Clio, Cannes Lion and Emmy Award-winning director who “clearly knows his craft” (New York Times) and “has



mastered the art of exposing compelling and honest stories” (AOL). He is a native of New York City. Three of his films premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival; *Run for Your Life*, *Keepers of the Game* (2016), and *We Could Be King* (2014). He also produced *We Could Be King*, *Keepers of the Game* and *Magic Camp* (2012). IMDb

Forgive Me (Session 4)

Written & Directed by Besim Ugzmajli, Spain, Drama, Foreign Language, 15:01



Bujar, a youngster, is manipulated by a Kosovar Imam in joining terrorist groups fighting in Syria. He secretly joins the war and then asks his older brother Agron to send Bujar's wife Mimoza to Syria too. Agron horrified by his brother's actions confronts Bujar and asks him to return to Kosovo. Agron tries to prevent Mimoza from going to Syria hoping to convince his brother to return. Bujar threatens Mimoza by marrying a war widow should she not join him in Syria. IMDb

Besim Ugzmajli was born in 1986 in the Ferizaj, Republic of Kosovo. He studied Arts – Film and TV Directing at the University of Prishtina. He has worked as a writer, director, cinematographer and editor in the biggest film company in Kosovo, and in recent years in his own company, Figurina Films. He also worked as a Theatre Director in Prishtina and Ferizaj, where he made 5 plays and 1 performance. His awarded films include: *Obsession, Era, the Eaters, Woman in Black, Beyond the Gates, Marihuana Republic*. IMDb, FB



Georgia O'Keefe and Me (Session 4)

Written & Directed by Robert Belinoff, USA, Experimental, 5:58

Love and art in the age of Trump.

Chaos and order compete as a married man falls for an artist ingénue. Art prevails.

Bob Belinoff has made films for most of his professional life: documentaries, TV commercials, nonfiction essays. His award winning documentaries have addressed



social and human rights issues for the U.S Justice Department, literacy for the American Library Association and health for a number of U.S. state health departments. This is his second venture into fiction and narrative film. His Award Winning 2016 Film *Seventy* was his first foray into film as a graphic and language art.

www.digitalwkshop.com, FB



Icons (Session 3)

**Written & Directed by Ronnie Cramer, USA,
Experimental, Animated, 5:10**

Five hundred years of world art in five minutes, featuring three dozen iconic works rendered with nylon-tip pen and animated old school style. Each painting is onscreen for three seconds; the transitions between them also last three seconds each. Made up of 2,500 individual drawings, with a musical soundtrack created by the artist.



Artist/Musician/Filmmaker **Ronnie Cramer**

has been active in the arts community for over thirty years. His paintings have been exhibited in galleries and other venues across the country, his music has been played on over 150 radio stations nationwide, and his critically-acclaimed films have been screened at festivals around the world. He has also been a guest lecturer on art and media at numerous museums and universities. Cramer's work has been exhibited in all fifty states and in forty other countries. Ronnie Cramer was born in 1957 in Bismarck, North Dakota, USA. He is a director and editor, known for *Highway Amazon* (2001), *September Sketch Book* (2014) and *Mugs* (2008). IMDb, FB

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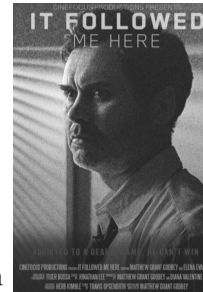
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It Followed Me Here (Session 1)

**Directed by Matthew Godbey, USA,
Drama, Thriller, Debut Film, 15:00**

Daniel H. Harmon came from nothing, but through hard work and sheer determination he became a highly successful businessman with a loving family and the world at his fingertips. In the housing crash of 2008 it all came tumbling down as the fat cats of Wall Street robbed our country blind. Daniel's life spiraled out of control. He lost everything. Now he's hunted in a deadly game, as he fights for his life in an attempt to win and turn his life around. IMDb



Matthew Grant Godbey is a first time director, a co-writer and the star of the 15 minute short film *It Followed Me Here*. With a dedicated and enthusiastic cast and crew he produced this drama/horror/thriller over the course of one weekend on a shoe-string budget. Matthew is a multi-talented artist who spent many years in the entertainment industry as an actor and filmmaker. Matthew is also an accomplished painter who has shown in galleries throughout LA (Bergamot Station's Track 16, The Brewery, etc.), and also at the Amsterdam Whitney Gallery in NY (Chelsea) in December 2005 and January 2006. His showings received rave reviews, and he has been compared to Pablo Picasso. IMDb

L'Obsession (Session 4)

**Directed by CMack (Charles A. Mack, III), USA,
Student Showcase, Made in Illinois 10:30**



Three artists, a musician, a painter and a photographer become obsessively in love with their muse, a Prima Ballerina whose only love is dance. Their psychotic obsession becomes a self-destructive end of their own creativity.

CMack (Charles A Mack III) has been a Columbia College Cinema Arts & Television Major since 2015 (and on the Dean's

List all that time). CMack has been a radio and TV personality, and a choreographer for Asian MTV Music Awards. Since 2017 CMack has been CEO & Founder of Living Om Love Production. He authored *The Best of Mack Daddy's Divine Kitchen: Cooking to Sell*.



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A Landscape for Life (Session 2)

**Directed by Kirby Pringle, USA,
Documentary, Made in Illinois, 30:55**

Filmmakers and monarch butterfly conservationists Cindy and Kirby Pringle examine why recreating and restoring native tallgrass prairie habitat, especially flowers, is crucial for the continued survival of the monarch butterfly, other pollinators like the rusty patched bumblebee, and grassland birds like the greater prairie chicken. The couple tells the story in interviews with scientists, park managers, state highway departments and farmers in this educational and entertaining short film. www.dogtownartworks.com, IMDb

Kirby Pringle is an award-winning journalist and photographer, who was raised in small-town Illinois. He is a graduate of Eastern Illinois University and was a feature writer for The News-Gazette in Champaign-Urbana, Illinois for 23 years.

Leia's Army (Session 2)

**Directed by Oriana Oppice, USA,
Drama, Democracy, Made in Illinois, 14:29**



A family is torn apart when a teenage girl attends the Women's March in DC without telling her born-again Christian mom. FB

Born in Sicily and raised in Chicago, **Oriana Oppice** is an independent film and commercial director, writer, producer, and actor. After completing *Leia's Army* and *Spit It Out*, she is in pre-production for a feature to be shot half in Chicago and half in Sicily. Recent award-winning films include *Lobster fra Diavolo*, *Camp Belvidere* and *Lost and Found*. Her work brings to life the complexities of everyday life in both drama and comedy. She is committed to elevating the visibility of women in front of and behind the camera. Oriana holds a B.A. from McGill University in International Relations and an M.A. from the University of Chicago in International Law. She is the Director of Programming for Women in Film Chicago. IMDb



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Lies (Session 3)

**Directed by Ian Wirth, USA,
Made in Illinois, 11:04**

A young man in a late-night laundromat gets drawn in to a bizarre conversation with a conspiracy nut. *Lies* is a darkly comic take on conspiracy, trust, and the uncertain and exploitable times America finds itself in today.

Ian Wirth is a native Chicagoan, who derives great pleasure from finally submitting a short film to a local festival like Route 66.

The Little Dictator (Session 4)

**Directed by Nurith Cohn, Israel,
Comedy, Drama, Debut Film, 28:18**

Yossi Kleinmann is a non-charismatic history professor lecturing on political leaders in totalitarian regimes. Neither his students nor his domineering wife Sarah show him any respect. In order to celebrate the 90th birthday of Sarah's grandmother Oma Gerda, a Berlin-born Holocaust survivor, the family is spending the Sabbath at a hotel. Due to an unfortunate shaving mishap, Yossi gets stuck with a Hitler-moustache. IMDb, FB



Nurith Cohn was born and raised in Basel, Switzerland. After high school, she spent several years in New York, where she earned a degree in vocal performance at the Mannes College of Music. After moving to Israel, she worked as a choir conductor and theatre director, before beginning her film studies at the Maaleh Film School in 2010. In 2011, Nurith directed the theatre play *The Dreamer*, which played to full houses in Israel and the UK. Her widely acclaimed debut film *The Little Dictator*, which has won several international prizes for best live action short, is the result of Nurith's collaboration with her brother Emanuel who wrote the script and plays the lead role. Nurith is a director, composer and film music supervisor living in Jerusalem, Israel. IMDb

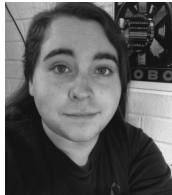
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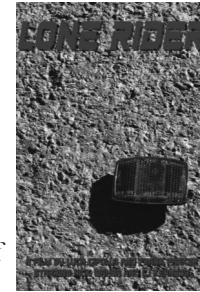
Lone Rider (Session 1)

Written & Directed by Luca Cipolla, USA, Student Showcase, 4:15

Voted Best Short Narrative, Motorcycle Film Festival, 2016. An August 2014 collision with a car in oncoming traffic, gave director **Luca Cipolla** a broken femur and wrist, a dislocated hand, two collapsed lungs, nine days in the surgical trauma ward, a month in a hospital bed at home, and about a year of recovery after that. Both before and after



the accident, he spent time at a local motorcycle repair shop chatting about bikes, as machines and as a culture. Everyone knows someone who's gone, yet, they still ride. Why? If you ride, you know. The film was inspired by the opening sequence of the film *Le Mans* (1971) – solemn and simple, but vividly depicts the crash that the protagonist survived, but another racing driver didn't. Lone Rider was completed with less than \$1000 budget and due to extraneous circumstances, had to be shot in a single day. FB



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Lost in Aroncore (Session 4)

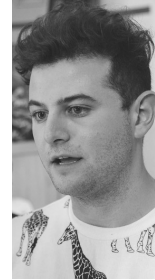


**Directed by Ryan Wagner, USA,
Drama, Student Showcase, 13:52**

After Audrey's failed suicide attempt, her 9 year-old sister Lucy must attempt to reconnect through their shared love of fantasy stories. IMDb

Ryan Wagner is a recent graduate of the USC School of Cinematic Arts with a major in Film/TV Production and a minor in Screenwriting. Originally from Chicago,

Ryan moved to LA to pursue filmmaking. Now he works as a freelance music video and short film director. He is known for his work on *Gebby Go Bath Man!* (2016), *Uninvited* (2018) and *Janny Jelly* (2017).



Marie's Crisis (Session 1)

**Directed by Michael Vecchio, USA,
Documentary, Debut Film, 12:05**

In 1967, a sing-along piano bar opened in the basement of a building with a storied history in New York's West Village. The film explores this unique, theater-driven New York institution, its meaningfulness to its patrons and staff, and its importance as one of New York's earliest openly Gay bars -- predating even Stonewall. We also delve into the history of the building, including the site's



Landmark status for being the location where American (and French) Revolutionary figure, Thomas Paine, died, and explore why Marie's Crisis has and continues to be a home for misfits, musical theatre lovers and tourists alike.

Michael Vecchio is a director and writer, known for *Marie's Crisis* (2018).



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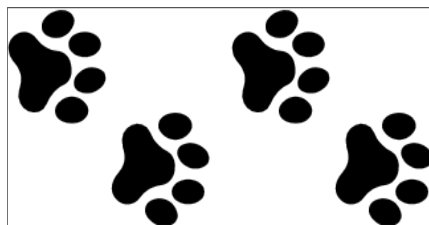
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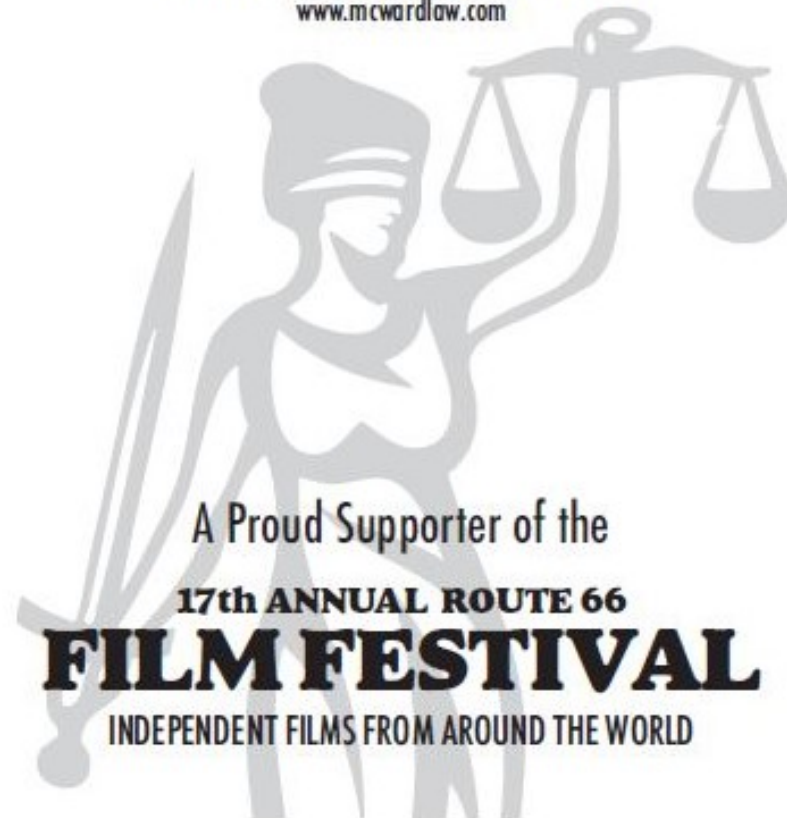
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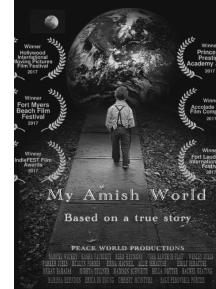


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My Amish World (Session 3)

**Written & Directed by Samuel Wickey, USA,
Drama, 1:19:25**

Based on the director's life, the mother and father in the film are overwhelmed with emotion when their children are severely bullied in a public school, and the father wants his family to leave the Amish. This family struggles to raise a boy with an enigmatic mental disorder, gripped by fear, astonishment, and concern when they see that he has unusual artistic abilities. Their strict Amish religion forbids any form of artistic expression. The boy and his siblings have a mother who cannot embrace them, praise them, or express love, and can only pray that God heals them. Although these parents are forbidden to express love for their children, the father breaks the chains of fear and oppression to admit hope, express love and find freedom by leaving the Amish. IMDb



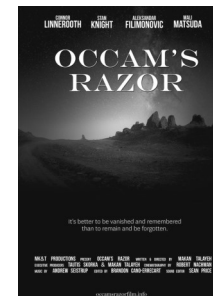
Samuel Wickey was raised in an Amish community. And developed many strategies to cope with it. Discovering an ability to sculpt clay changed his life. Eventually, he was commissioned by the NFL and NBA to create bronze sculptures for the homes of some of the greatest athletes. The NBA presented his sculptures on national television to the athletes, as an award, during their halftime show retirement ceremonies. He also created the bronze angel sculptures shown at the end of the film. IMDb

Occam's Razor (Session 1)

**Written & Directed by Makan Talayeh, USA,
Experimental, 18:28**

On a winter night in 1986, three travelers are plagued by mysterious events at an isolated motel in Death Valley.

Makan Talayeh also directed another short film, *Wandering Eyes*.



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Opus of an Angel (Session 4)

**Directed by Ali Zamani, USA,
Drama, 1:28:00**

Stephen was a successful cardiologist, faithful husband, and loving father, until a tragic event cost him everything he held dear. Exactly one year from the tragedy Stephen creates a sentimental tour of the City of Angels, as a tribute to those he lost. His final stop on the tour will be back at his home, where he plans to take his own life. During his journey, he encounters a blind girl, Maria, who has gotten lost in the city. Unable to find her guardians he reluctantly brings her with him. Along the way she begins opening his eyes to the boundless beauty of the world and the value that his life still has. They experience many obstacles. As they near their final destination, Stephen's frozen heart is thawed by Maria's warm charisma. Her positive perspective forces him to confront his inner demons and the decision to end his life. He must ask whether their encounter was mere coincidence, or divine intervention. <http://www.opusofanangel.com>, IMDb, FB



Ali Zamani is an Iranian-American film director. He lived in Sweden working at his father's video store, where his interest in cinema and visual story telling grew into a passion. By fourteen, Ali cast his friends in short movies; his mother was the cinematographer. He pursued his love for film at Bournemouth University earning a Higher National Diploma in Video Production, then a Bachelor of Arts degree in Film, Video, Media and Society from Northbrook College, UK. While at Northbrook Institute, Ali directed several short films; one screened at the Duke of York's Cinema in Brighton. After this success, he earned a Masters in Mass Communication at California State University Northridge. In 2006, he and his brother Zeus established AZ Films, a Los Angeles production company; Ali directed over 300 music videos and commercials. In 2012 a commercial and music video of his won silver Davey Awards in the Film/Video/TV and Music Video categories.



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www.centralillinoisfilmcommission.com

The Perception (Session 1)

Directed by Jensen Noen, USA,
Drama. 1:25:00



Richard, an uninspired novelist suffering from paranoid delusions, suspects his young and beautiful wife, Haley, of having an affair. He hires Matt to confirm his suspicions but the plan goes terribly wrong. As the twisting plot unfolds, the line between reality and dream begins to blur; only Nick, Richard's old friend and agent, is there to hold him back from the brink of insanity. IMDb

Born April 20, 1987 in Poltava, Ukrainian SSR, USSR (now Ukraine), **Jensen Noen** is a Los Angeles film director and cinematographer known for his films *The Perception*, *Gambit*, *Observer* (2015), *Blesscode* (2013), *Oceans Within Us* (2010), and for working with artists including Jay Z, Bryson Tiller, Khalid, Normani, Maxwell, Duke Dumont, Asking Alexandria, and others. Jensen started his directing career in Europe as a music video and commercial director. Success in the European market caused Jensen to move to the US to work with American artists and brands. With broad, versatile experience as a director, Jensen transitioned into film and television. He currently lives in Hollywood, California. <http://jensennoen.com/>, IMDb



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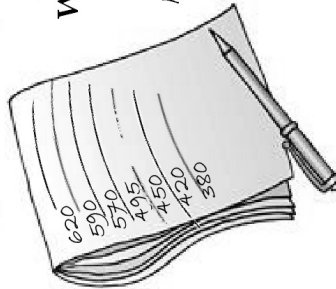
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Power to Heal: Medicare and the Civil Rights Revolution (Session 3)

**Directed by Charles Burnett & Daniel Loewenthal, USA,
Documentary, Democracy, 56:00**

The story of an historic yet little known struggle to secure equal and adequate access to health care for all Americans, the film reveals how the federal government, with crucial support from medical professionals and civil rights activists, leveraged Medicare funding to bring down the Jim Crow hospital system. Narrated by Danny Glover, it chronicles black doctors' efforts to end racial discrimination in conflict with federally funded postwar expansion of segregated hospitals. By the early 1960s, the height of the Civil Rights Movement, African American doctors and dentists mounted legal and legislative challenges to hospital segregation and organized a Medical Civil Rights Movement that demands that the federal government take action. When Medicare passed just a year after the Civil Rights Act, it presented a golden opportunity. With just a few months to desegregate the hospitals, the federal government recruited an army of hospital inspectors. Chased by the Ku Klux Klan, followed by local police, and working closely with civil rights activists, the inspectors fanned out across the nation in a race against time for health and human rights. <http://blbfilmproductions.com>, IMDb



Born in Vicksburg, Mississippi on April 13, 1944, **Charles Burnett** moved to the Watts area of Los Angeles at an early age, then earned his Masters of Fine Arts in Filmmaking at UCLA. His influences include Jean Renoir, Satyajit Ray, and Sidney Lumet. Burnett received the 1988 John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship (the "genius grant"). Burnett produced *To Sleep With Anger*, featuring Danny Glover in perhaps his most critically acclaimed role, winning the 1991 Independent Spirit Awards for Best Director and Best Screenplay (Burnett) and Best Actor (Glover). The Library of Congress inducted *Killer of Sheep* and *To Sleep With Anger* into the National Film Registry. The National Society of Film Critics honored *To Sleep With Anger* as best screenplay, Burnett being the first African-American to win this honor in the group's 25 year history. The film also received a Special Jury Recognition Award at the 1990 Sundance Film Festival and a Special Award from the Los Angeles Film Critics Association. Both Burnett and Glover were nominated for New York Film Critics Circle Awards. In 1997, the Film Society of Lincoln Center and the Human Rights Watch honored Burnett with a retrospective. In 2017, Charles Burnett received an Academy Award for his life's work. IMDb

Daniel Loewenthal is known for his work on *Friday the 13th: The Final Chapter* (1984), *Missing in Action* (1984) and *Murphy's Law* (1986). IMDb

Silent Composition (Session 2)

**Directed by Dane Brinkmeier, USA,
Drama, Debut Film, Made in Illinois 3:58**

Love inspires art. The desire for love inspires a girl to create the piano composition she's been trying to create. IMDb

Dane Brinkmeier wrote, directed, produced this film, and was also the camera operator.

Spaceman (Session 4)

**Written & Directed by Christopher Oliva, USA,
Comedy, Drama, Made in Illinois, 18:43**

A young man with big aspirations sets out on a very curious and unique path to realize his dream of becoming an astronaut. Unemployed and living with his single mother, Rupert Madurski must find a nice balance in a world without spacemen. IMDb

Christopher Oliva is an award winning filmmaker from Chicago. He's a producer, director, writer and freelance editor - and a teacher at the College of DuPage, influencing collegiate minds to be excited about cinema. Christopher received his MFA from DePaul University. He is also known for *A Shocking Accident* (2010) and *Circle of Obsession* (2010). IMDb



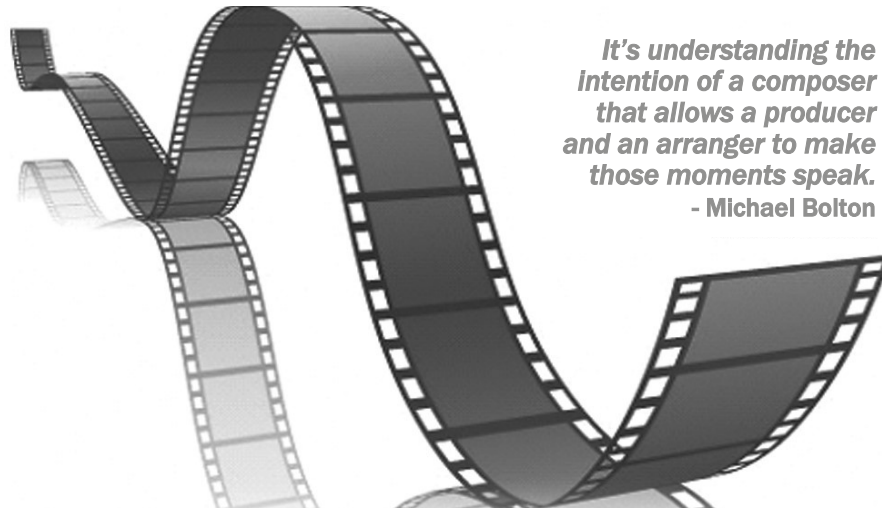
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Step One (Session 1)

Directed by Sean Patrick Leonard, USA, Drama, Made in Illinois, 6:27

Stuck at a train crossing on the way to his first AA meeting, Jeff finds that getting the words out is harder than he thought. IMDb



Born and bred in Chicago, **Sean Patrick Leonard** has been a professional actor for more than 20 years. Former Artistic Director of Speaking Ring Theatre Company, Sean is proud of his theatre roots and was honored to be in the Jeff Award winning *Incident on Run 1217* with Factory Theatre. He was recently featured on an episode of *Chicago Justice*. You may have also seen him in *Machine Gun Preacher*

with Gerard Butler and on another popular Dick Wolf TV series, *Chicago Fire*. He has been in commercials, both regionally and nationally. He has acted in features and short films, including the award winning *The Life and Death of an Unhappily Married Man*. Sean enjoys the success of his award winning short film *Rockabye* which he both wrote and starred in. IMDb



This is Love (Session 2)

Directed by John Alexander, USA, Documentary, Democracy, 1:23:16

You may not know Rudy Love's name, but you will almost certainly know his voice. Mick Fleetwood, Sinbad, and George Clinton unveil an unsung hero of soul in this investigation of a singer who turned down fame to make music with his family. IMDb

John Alexander is a filmmaker from Los Angeles and *This is Love* is his first feature documentary. After graduating from Harvard University in 2011, where he was awarded the McCord Arts Prize, Alexander edited *Running Wild* with Alden Ehrenreich and oversaw post-production of *Shut Up and Drive* (Tribeca 2015). His feature directorial debut *Bender* won the Outstanding Ensemble Cast award at the 2016 Tallgrass Film Festival and he is currently developing another feature narrative. IMDb



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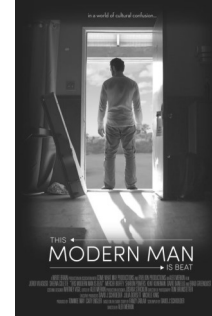
This Modern Man is Beat (Session 4)

**Directed by Alex Merkin, USA,
Drama, Thriller, 17:06**

In the post 9/11 world of cultural confusion and erroneous judgment, Habib bin Habib al Fulan tries to pawn his last possession (his guitar) and reconcile with his American wife. IMDb



Alex Merkin is an American film director, screenwriter, producer, and editor. A New York native, he attended the Boston University College of Communication. Merkin directed the 2006 film *Across the Hall*, which won fifteen festival awards. He developed a feature length version of *Across the Hall* in 2009, well received by critics for modern film techniques in the noir fiction genre and *Gorezone Magazine's* (London) Best Thriller of 2010; the film is available on Blu-Ray and DVD. For Queen Latifah's production company, Flavor Unit, Merkin directed the debut features, *Percentage* and *House of Bodies*. Merkin has worked for HBO, PUMA, SONY, First Look Studios, Toyota, Bad Boy, Epic Records, Atlantic Records, Samsung, Ruff Ryder, Harlem World and Frank151. A film enthusiast and preservationist, he developed a television and film department at the Lee Strasberg Theater and Film Institute at New York University. Merkin works in both film and commissioned still art. IMDb



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Too Much Rain (Session 2)

**Directed by John Cernak, USA,
Drama, Animation, 8:10**

Into every life a little rain must fall, and can even be enjoyed-- but when the excess of nature comes flooding in, a little girl, her pet, and her world are swept away. *Too Much Rain* is a tribute to those who suffered from devastating hurricanes & floods, featuring artwork by New Orleans artist, Mark Bercier, featuring his "Café Baby" character.



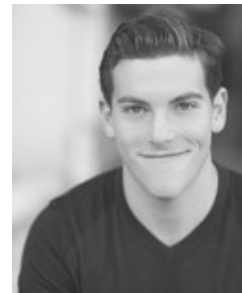
John Cernak was born in Yonkers, NY. He studied art and design at Plattsburgh State University. Before trying digital animation, he was an award-winning graphic artist, photographer and illustrator. These traditional art skills were the foundation of his animation career. In 1985 he opened a studio in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, providing artistic services for a variety of national and international companies. In January 2000, he restructured the company into Out of Our Minds Animation Studios, Inc., to combine digital and traditional arts into a single art form. The studio's short animations have screened at 550 film festivals worldwide, winning 130 awards. The studio's work has been compared to Pixar and Disney Animation Studios. The studio's films *Dear, Sweet Emma* (2005), and *Joyride* have both won prestigious awards. IMDb

Uninvited (Session 4)

**Directed by Ryan Wagner, USA,
Drama, Thriller, 9:36**

A couple finds themselves fighting for their lives after an uninvited guest arrives. Chris Ryder, a well-groomed and peculiar young man, dresses to have dinner with his girlfriend, Hilary Valdez, at her parents' vacation home. Only, she isn't his girlfriend. And she didn't invite him over. IMDb

In May of 2017, **Ryan Wagner** graduated from the USC School of Cinematic Arts with a major in Film/TV Production and a minor in Screenwriting. Originally from Chicago, Ryan moved to Los Angeles to pursue filmmaking. Now he works as a music video director and a bad caterer. IMDb



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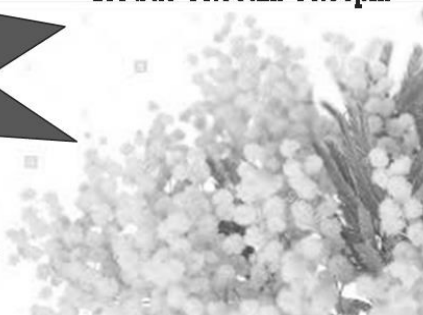
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