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**THE 30TH ANNUAL NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL**

**AUDIENCE AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

**New Orleans, La. (October 30, 2019) ––** The New Orleans Film Society (NOFS) announced the Audience Award winners of the 30th annual New Orleans Film Festival attended by **more than 30,000 film lovers** October 16-23, 2019. **Audience Awards** went to ***Just Mercy*** for the Spotlight Films Category; ***Mossville: When Great Trees Fall*** for the Best Louisiana Feature; ***Straight Up*** for the Best Narrative Feature; ***Gay Chorus Deep South***for the Best Documentary Feature; and ***Date Movie*** for the Best Louisiana Short. See the full list of all 13 #NOFF2019 Audience Awards winners below and at <http://bit.ly/aawards_noff2019>

The festival ended last Wednesday, October 23rd with the Closing Night Film, ***Harriet***, where New Orleans native, 6-time Grammy winner and Academy Award®–nominated composer **Terence Blanchard** received a **Career Achievement Award**. Blanchard composed the music for Harriet and executive produced the documentary ***Up From the Streets*** which had its World Premiere at the New Orleans Film Festival last Tuesday, October 22nd.

**NOFS WILL FUND SOUTHERN ARTISTS WITH OVER $200,000 IN GRANT FUNDS**

On the Closing Night Ceremony, NOFS Executive Director Fallon Young announced for the first time on the stage that NOFS has received **a major grant of $265,000** from the **Just Films |** **Ford Foundation**. Young said, “With major support in the form of a first-time grant from the Just Films | Ford Foundation and other sponsors, we're taking these investments in southern storytelling even further. **NOFS will put over $200,000 in grant funds into the projects of Southern artists over the next two years.** We look forward to sharing these films with our growing audiences here in New Orleans, and leveraging our connections in pursuit of their success on the national stage. This is the largest investment a Louisiana non-profit has ever been able to make in Southern cinema, and we are grateful for the confidence of our funders to shepherd this support for talented Southern storytellers.”

**JURY AWARD WINNERS**

#NOFF2019 Jury Award Winners were announced on Sunday, October 19th at a ceremony held in the New Orleans Jazz Market. The **New Orleans Film Festival is Oscar**®**-qualifying in all three Academy-accredited categories**: **Narrative Shorts, Documentary Shorts, and Animated Shorts**. Jury Award-winning films in these categories automatically qualify for consideration for the Annual Academy Awards® without the standard theatrical run, provided the film otherwise complies with the Academy rules. See all Jury Award winners at <http://bit.ly/2Wj2goK>

The 30th New Orleans Film Festival received a record number of over **6,500 submissions** from 104 countries and the festival’s seasoned team of programmers carefully curated a slate of **232 visionary, thought-provoking films** that represent a wealth of perspectives. Overall, the directors of selected films represent **39 different nationalities**. This year, films made in the **American South represented 50%**, and **Louisiana-made films represented 26%** of the lineup. Films directed by **women and gender non-conforming directors accounted for 54%** of the lineup, and films helmed by **directors of color made up 56% of the lineup**.

Submissions for the **31st New Orleans Film Festival (October 14-21, 2020)** will be open in late November, 2019.

**FULL LIST OF AUDIENCE AWARD WINNERS**

|  |  |  |
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| **Category** | **Film** | **Director** |
| Spotlight Film | Just Mercy | Destin Daniel Cretton |
| Narrative Feature | Straight Up | James Sweeney |
| Documentary Feature | Gay Chorus Deep South | David Charles Rodrigues |
| Louisiana Feature | Mossville | Alex Glustrum |
| Narrative Short - tie | Balloon | Jeremy Merrifield |
| Narrative Short - tie | T | Keisha Rae Witherspoon |
| Documentary Short - tie | Tutwiler | Elaine McMillion Sheldon |
| Documentary Short - tie | Bodies Like Oceans | Kat Cory |
| Animated Short | Guaxuma | Nara Normande |
| Music Video | Due West | Cara Stricker and Mindy Le Brock |
| Louisiana Short | Date Movie | Sasha Solodukhina and Emily MacKenzie |
| Experimental Short | Mudanza Contemporanea | Teo Guillem |
| Original Series | King Ester | Dui Jarrod |

**SUPPORT FOR THE 30TH NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL COMES FROM…**

The 30th New Orleans Film Festival’s **Marquee sponsors** are **City of New Orleans**, **HBO**, **New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation**, and **Second Line Stages**.

**The New Orleans Advocate - Times Picayune** is the festival’s **Signature Media Sponsor**. The **Contemporary Art Center New Orleans** is the **Festival HUB Sponsor**. [**The Chloe Wine Collection**](https://www.chloewinecollection.com/) is the festival’s **Official Wine Sponsor**.

Producing, Premiere and Premiere Trade sponsors include **Cox Communications, The Helis Foundation, RESTORE The Mississippi River Delta, Louisiana Entertainment, PRG, The Ranch Studios, Blue Orleans, New Orleans Business Alliance**, **Tubi**, **XRM Media, ABS Production Services, Creative Film Connections**, **Element**, **Hilton New Orleans Riverside**, **Kyotocolor**, **Leuchtturm**, **Panavision**, **Reel Security, SGPS Showrig**, **Solomon Group**, **Light Iron**, and **Brechtel Hospitality.**

Grantors include the National Endowment for the Arts, Bloomberg Philanthropies, City of New Orleans, The Helis Foundation, Greater New Orleans Foundation, Louisiana Division of the Arts, Jazz & Heritage Foundation, Cinereach, the LGBT Fund at the Greater New Orleans Foundation, and Foundation for Louisiana.

**ABOUT THE NEW ORLEANS FILM SOCIETY**The New Orleans Film Society discovers, cultivates, and amplifies diverse voices of filmmakers who tell the stories of our time. Founded in 1989, NOFS produces the Oscar®-qualifying New Orleans Film Festival annually and invests year-round in building a vibrant film culture in the South to share transformative cinematic experiences with audiences, and connect dynamic filmmakers to career-advancing resources. Year-round programming includes free and low-cost screenings for members and the broader community of cinephiles in New Orleans, a 20-year running French Film Festival featuring contemporary and classic French cinema, and filmmaker professional development programs created to nurture diverse voices in filmmaking in the American South. NOFS is a 501(c)(3) organization.