



9999 Hamilton Blvd. Suite 230
Breinigsville, PA 18031
www.haydenfilmsinstitute.org

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For more information, contact:

Jessica Novak

201-919-4070

jnovak@haydenfilmsintitute.org

Haydenfilms Announces Top 55 Finalists for 5.0 Online Film Festival

Breinigsville, Pennsylvania (August 30, 2023) – The top 55 finalists in the Haydenfilms 5.0 Film Festival have been announced and will contend to win a \$25,000 grand prize. Films will compete in an online film festival between August 30 and October 30 where audiences around the world will view and vote on their favorites. The top four finalists will be invited to UCLA (University of California) in Los Angeles in January 2024 where winners will be announced.

To view and vote on the top 55 films, visit haydenfilmsinstitute.org beginning on August 30.

The 5.0 Film Festival will be powered by Cemboo, a new engine for managing, distributing and monetizing video content. For more on Cemboo, visit cemboo.com.

“We’re so proud to continue the tradition of this festival,” says founder Hayden Craddolph. “We have believed in independent filmmakers for decades and are happy to keep proving it.”

Submissions came from around the world including France, South Africa, Belgium, Israel, Serbia and more, emphasizing the global benefits of an online film festival.

“I was inspired to submit to the Haydenfilms 5.0 Online Film Festival because I want my story and my work to reach as many people as possible,” says Shadow LaValley, a finalist in the

competition. “I hope I can inspire others who may be dealing with issues like addition, suicide, and depression. *The Can* is dedicated to a really great work friend of mine who lost his battle with addition in 2021. I want to let people who are struggling know that they can make it out of their battles and that there is always someone rooting for them.”

Other finalists include impressive teams like that of the film, *Laboratory Conditions*, featuring directors Joe Russell and Jocelyn Stamat with writer Terry Rossio, who has worked on major movies including *Godzilla VS. Kong*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*, *Aladdin* and *Shrek*.

“Short films are an excellent arena for filmmakers to experiment and hone their craft,” Stamat says. “Festivals are the main distribution arm for short films. It’s where a filmmaker discovers whether their story is effective and how well their creative choices play for an audience.”

Though Rossio has worked on major pictures, he emphasizes the need for independent filmmaking comes down to what the filmmaker is trying to communicate. “It’s always the story,” he says. “Some stories demand to be told.”

In addition to announcing the winners, the January 11-14 in-person event will include panels, livestreaming events and a feature films competition where films ranging from 60-180 minutes will compete for a \$10,000 prize through the audience choice award.

“With every version of the festival, we try to make it bigger, better and more rewarding for our filmmakers,” says Craddolph. “We can’t wait for the world to see what they’ve created.”

Past Haydenfilms Online Film Festival winners:

- 1.0 Quinn Saunders "Fortunate Son"
- 2.0 John Burgess "The Powder Puff Principle"
- 3.0 Reda Mustafa "The Boot of War"
- 4.0 Johnny Ray Gill "My Turtle's Name is Dudley"

Past Haydenfilms Screenwriting Competition winners:

- 1.0 Quinton Buxton “The Revolving Door”

For full details on awards, prizes and eligibility requirements, please visit:

<https://filmfreeway.com/Haydenfilms>

Since 2001, Haydenfilms has been empowering filmmakers, writers, actors and producers through programs and competitions. In 2004, Haydenfilms hosted the world’s first online film festival and has been known since as a champion of independent filmmakers. Haydenfilms also functions as an institute, bringing educational opportunities to communities near and far. HFI announce details for the 2.0 Screenwriting Competition in January 2024.
