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### **[PRESS RELEASE]: WINNERS - 28th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival**

July 29, 2023, Stony Brook, NY - The Stony Brook Film Festival, presented by Island Federal, announces the winners of its [28th Annual](#)

### **Festival awards.**

With hundreds of artists creating 36 films from 26 countries, the Stony Brook Film Festival at the Staller Center for the Arts became a hub for some of the best filmmakers working today, a meeting ground for favorite actors and rising stars, and a showcase of new masterpieces.

Of those 36 films, 11 received awards.



YES REPEAT NO, a challenging and engaging meta masterpiece, won the Jury Award for Best Feature. Director Michael Moshe Dahan was in attendance for both the screening and to receive his Award.

"Thank you to all of the people who believe in human rights and democracy all over the world ... and to all the people who want to make difficult material all over the world because finding the questions to ask is sometimes harder than getting the answers," Dahan said in his acceptance speech.

Two Feature films won the audience's hearts, resulting in two winners for this year's Audience Choice Award for Best Feature. THE GRANDSON, a charged thriller that boasts "revenge is a dish best served

old," and *FIRST SNOW OF SUMMER*, a masterfully shot and magical romance in a whimsical setting, came out on top.

Director Kristof Deak could not be at the Festival to accept his Award but remarked: "I couldn't be happier that *The Grandson* won the audience award at this year's Stony Brook Film Festival. I feel a special connection to US audiences since my short film "Sing" won the Academy Award in 2017. That film's festival journey also began with audience awards, and for a filmmaker like me who makes his films for audiences, first and foremost, it remains the most important praise. Because it may lead to discussions about how we treat the elderly in our society, I hope this film is a testament to how we should never "write them off" as useless. I want to thank my wonderful cast, crew, co-writer, and wife for making this film with me."

*FIRST SNOW OF SUMMER*, in its North American Premiere, was another beautiful and poignant film from German Sales Team, *Picture Tree International*. Festival Founder and Director, Alan Inkles has been working with Founder/Co-Managing Director of Picture Tree, Andreas Rothbauer for several years and this is the second consecutive year one of their films has won the Audience Choice Award, with last year's biting dark comedy, *CONTRA*, taking home the same prize. "You can feel the warmth and genuineness of this new German film, and the audience in our full house screening of *FIRST SNOW OF SUMMER* obviously agreed ... the film has a 'fantasy-like *AMELIE*' feel to it, and is ripe for a US Theatrical run," says Inkles. "One of our goals with the Festival is to get these Independent films in front of distributors to help reach larger audiences throughout America," Inkles says, and he plans to continue working with Andreas to make that happen.

The Spirit of Independent Filmmaking is awarded to filmmakers that utilize a uniquely indie lens to bring their incredible stories to life. A first in the Festival's history, this category was awarded to two different Features. *FRIENDS FROM HOME*, a quietly hilarious cross-country odyssey by New York filmmakers, and *WHERE THE ROAD LEADS*, a Serbian film about a sleepy village brought to life with subtle humor and masterfully directed, both brought home Spirit of Independent Filmmaking Awards. "If you told us we would be watching our film on a 40-foot-screen, we wouldn't have believed you, and this was awesome," said Mike Koslov of *FRIENDS FROM HOME*, "We just tried to make a film as honest and close to the heart as we could," said Joe Blank, co-writer and Director of *FRIENDS FROM HOME*.

The filmmakers of *FRIENDS FROM HOME*, Joe Blank and Mike Koslov, flew in from LA for their screening and the Awards Ceremony. And Director Nina Ognjanovic traveled from Serbia to be here in person for her screening of *WHERE THE ROAD LEADS* and for the Awards Ceremony. Nina was also extremely gracious and praised the film festival at the ceremony for showing her film to over 400 attendees and for recognizing her work.

Other awards include the Jury Award for Best Short for *CHIPPER*, the Audience Award for Best Short went to *STUCK*, and the Opening and Closing Night Feature and Short Awards. Shoval Chiprut and Daniel Brushin from *STUCK* flew in from Israel and were present for both their screening and the awards ceremony. Director and lead Actor of *CHIPPER*, Shaun MacLean, and Jayson Warner Smith, respectively, were both in attendance at the Awards Ceremony as well, with Shaun attending earlier during the Festival for his screening and to lead a lively Q&A.

All awards and details are listed below.

## [2023 FESTIVAL WINNERS](#)

[YES REPEAT NO](#)

2023 JURY AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE

[THE GRANDSON](#)

2023 AUDIENCE AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE

[FIRST SNOW OF SUMMER](#)

2023 AUDIENCE AWARD FOR BEST FEATURE

[WHERE THE ROAD LEADS](#)

2023 SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING

[FRIENDS FROM HOME](#)

2023 SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENT FILMMAKING

[CHIPPER](#)

2023 JURY AWARD FOR BEST SHORT

[STUCK](#)

2023 AUDIENCE AWARD FOR BEST SHORT

[SEA OF TIME](#)

2023 OPENING NIGHT FEATURE

[DIVERTIMENTO](#)

2023 CLOSING NIGHT FEATURE

[THE RED SUITCASE](#)

2023 OPENING NIGHT SHORT

[THE BASICS OF LOVE](#)

2023 CLOSING NIGHT SHORT

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