

CINEQUEST™

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cinequest Publicity
Tel: (408) 995-5033
E-mail: publicity@cinequest.org

CINEQUEST NAMED USA TODAY BEST FILM FESTIVAL CINEQUEST 2015 AWARD WINNERS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Cinequest Film Festival has been voted the Best Film Festival by USA TODAY Readers. This follows the wrap of Cinequest Film Festival (CQFF) 2015; Award Winners and Highlights included:

***FUTURE OF FILM* debut:** Cinequest, Silicon Valley's creativity and film institute, keenly focuses on the exciting possibilities the future holds. Cinequest's unique nature and aggregate impact result from a powerful fusion of creativity, filmmaking and technological innovation—transforming our future in thrilling and provocative ways. Continuing this legacy, *Future Of Film* 1.0 brought a new way of making and watching films to artists and audiences and showcased the impressive work of high school and college students.

- Barco Escape movies and experience: Cinequest audiences and artists experienced an exciting new three screen cinematic experience. Artists used the screens in profoundly different ways. Film highlights included comedy (*The 9th Hole*), immersive drama (*Withdrawal*), documentary (*Burning Man*) and live event (Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett in concert).
- Cinequest's new High School Film Competition and expanded College Film Competition brought a deepening commitment to the filmmakers of tomorrow.

Maverick Spirit Award Recipients: Cinequest's most prestigious accolade, the Maverick Spirit Award recognizes bold, visionary, and creative forces—the finest in the worlds of Silicon Valley innovation and the film arts. This year's recipients:

- John Boorman
- Rosario Dawson
- Dennis Lehane
- Mike Medavoy
- Lawrence Kasdan

Past Maverick Spirit guest recipients include Harrison Ford, Neil Gaiman, J.J. Abrams, Kevin Spacey, William H. Macy, Gus Van Sant, Spike Lee, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Sir Ian McKellen, Edward James Olmos, Alec Baldwin and Sir Ben Kingsley. For clips of previous Award winners' comments, please visit [Cinequest's Maverick Voices video](#).

"I think the most important thing about Cinequest is it's definitely the first time I've ever come to a festival where my immediate reaction is, 'What do I have to do to be invited back?' and that's not normally my reaction. It's a perfect film festival in a glorious place." - Neil Gaiman, Maverick Spirit Award Winner

Media Legacy Award Recipients: Spotlighting writers who discover and follow cinematic art and innovation, Cinequest's Media Legacy Award recognizes the pivotal role journalists play in connecting audiences to films and technologies, providing insight into artists, technologists, and the collaborative nature of both disciplines. This year's recipients:

- Anne Thompson
- Richard von Busack

Previous Media Legacy Award recipients include: Eric Kohn of *Indiewire*, Harry Knowles, founder of *Ain't It Cool News*, and Kenneth Turan of *The Los Angeles Times*. Please watch [Cinequest's Media Legacy video](#).

Film Premieres and Cinequest Award Winners: Ninety-one (91) World, North American and U.S. Premieres from 50 countries unveiled in the palatial California Theatre and state-of-the-art festival venues including opening night sensation *Batkid Begins* and closing night enchanter *5 to 7* starring Anton Yelchin (*Star Trek*). The following films won Jury and Audience awards:

- Best Feature Narrative, Drama: **CORN ISLAND** Director: George Ovashvili
- Best Feature Narrative, Comedy: **THE ANNIVERSARY** Director: Valerie Buhagiar
- Best Documentary Feature Film: **ASPIE SEEKS LOVE** Director: Julie Sokolow
- Audience Award, Narrative Feature: **TRACES OF SANDALWOOD** Director: Maria Ripoll
- Audience Award, Documentary Feature: **BATKID BEGINS: THE WISH HEARD AROUND THE WORLD** Director: Dana Nachman
- Kaiser Thrive Award: **CRESCENDO! THE POWER OF MUSIC** Director: Jamie Bernstein
- New Vision Award: **ASTRAEA** Director: Kristjan Thor
- Global Vision Award: **APPLES FROM THE DESERT** Directors: Arik Lubetzky and Matti Harari
- Best Narrative Short Film: **SLAP** Director: Nick Rowland
- Best Animated Short Film: **GERMAN SHEPHERD** Director: Nils Bergendal
- Best Documentary Short Film: **LUCHADORA** Director: River Finlay
- Best College Short Film: **RATTLEFLY** Director: Min Ding
- Best High School Short Film: **GUMBALL** Directors: Kris Theorin and Kurtis Theorin

Cinequest Screenplay Competition Award Winners:

FEATURES

- *Sainte Chloe* by Stacie Shellner (1st Place)
- *Hooked* by Allen Wolf (2nd)
- *Art Brut* by Michael Immerman and *Benjamin The Great* by Scott Ruane (Tied 3rd)

SHORTS

- *The Yard* by Eugenie Carabatsos (1st Place)
- *Rocketship* by Alfred Thomas Catalfo (2nd)
- *Storm Fear* by Eli Edelson (3rd)

TELEPLAYS

- *Awareness* by Sean Corrigan (1st Place)
- *Corner King* by Mono Ghose (2nd)
- *Frat Lines* by Jay Gormley (3rd)

Cinequest Film Festival 2016 occurs February 23 – March 6 in the Silicon Valley.

CQFF Partners: Applied Materials (NYSE: AMAT), City of San Jose, Barco, Kaiser Permanente, Knight Foundation, Harmonic (NYSE: HLIT), Synaptics (NYSE: SYNA), Quantum (NYSE: QUAN), National Association of Broadcasters of America, Canon (CAJ), Yellow Pages, Panasonic, Hint Water, NBC Bay Area, Metro, KGO 810, KFOG 97.7, Cisco (NYSE: CSCO), Dolby (NYSE: DLB), Stella Artois (NYSE: AHBIF), Tito's Handmade Vodka, Adobe (NYSE: ADBE), eBay Foundation (NYSE: EBAY), Macy's (NYSE: M), The Fairmont San Jose (NYSE: FHR), Seagate (NYSE: STX), VTA, and Agile Ticketing Solutions. Picture The Possibilities Partners: Kaiser Permanente, The Hearst Foundations, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The David & Lucile Packard Foundation, Morrison & Foerster Foundation, Capital Group, Hewlett Packard Workstations (NYSE: HPQ), Brett Company, Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV), Liquid Agency, Seagate (NYSE: STX), Litepanels, Cisco (NYSE: CSCO), AudioTechnica, Media Center, Adobe (NYSE: ADBE), Eddie Lira, GlideCam, CreaTV, Rhino Camera Gear, Manfrotto, Red Giant (NYSE: REDG)

###

CINEQUEST is a vanguard organization that fuses creativity with technological innovation to empower, improve, and transform the lives of people and communities worldwide, through Picture the Possibilities, Cinequest Film Festival and Cinequest Mavericks Studio.

- **Picture The Possibilities by Cinequest** empowers global youth with the tools, confidence and inspiration to form and create their dreams from art to science--regardless of their situation and challenges. Picture It. Create It.
- **Cinequest Film Festival** showcases premier films, renowned and emerging artists, and breakthrough technology-empowering global connectivity between creators, innovators and audiences.
- **Cinequest Mavericks Studio** creates innovative and transformative motion pictures, television and distribution paradigms.

Cinequest Film Festival 26 occurs Feb. 23– Mar. 6, 2016.

www.cinequest.org