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Out Film CT** recently wrapped the **33rd Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival** with a record-breaking run of nearly 120 features, documentaries and short films. Though the festival was primarily presented via a virtual platform, three films were presented in-person at the Manchester Parkade Cinemas Drive-In. Without the restrictions of physical venues, the organizers of the festival were able to nearly double the number of films offered to their loyal audience. In addition, new audience members were reached because of the mostly online format drawing film lovers from neighboring states.  As in previous years, audience members were asked to rate their enjoyment of the films they watched, but this year the **Audience Award** results come from a combination of paper ballots at the drive-ins and electronic ballots online. Also, this is the first year that audiences were asked to rate short films.  Out Film CT now proudly announces the films honored with **2020** **Audience and Jury Awards**. This year's honorees showcased the rich diversity of our community.  **Audience Award - Best Feature**   * **Winner: *Breaking Fast* (USA)** * Runner Up: *Summerland* (UK)   *Breaking Fast*is a gay rom-com about a devout Muslim who meets an attractive, All-American kind of guy who offers to break the fast with him during the holy month of Ramadan. *Summerland* is a heart-warming story about a reclusive and cantankerous writer in rural England whose life is changed when she is forced to take in a young boy who has fled war-torn London.  **Audience Award - Best Documentary Feature**   * **Winner: *Ahead of the Curve*(USA)** * Runner Up: *Welcome to Chechnya*(USA)   *Ahead of the Curve*charts the fascinating herstory of the pivotal lesbian magazine, *Curve*, from the time it launched in 1990 as *Deneuve*, through its heady years in the late 90s and early 2000s, to its reimagining for the digital age once print magazines went out of vogue. *Welcome to Chechnya* is a powerful and disturbing look at the dangers and hardships LGBTQ people endure in the Russian republic of Chechnya.  **Audience Award - Best Short**   * **Winner: *After That Party* (Brazil)** * Runner Up: *The One You Never Forget* (USA) * Special Mention: *On the Ride*(USA)   *After That Party*is a sweet and hilarious story about a young gay man who witnesses his father kissing a man at a party, and then struggles to find the right way to tell Dad he knows his secret. *The One You Never Forget* is a heartwarming film about a dad who wants to snap a photo of his 14-year-old son leaving for the school dance, then discovers the boy’s date is another boy. *On the Ride* is an intense story of heartbreak, healing and hope as a widower summons the courage to meet the young man who received his dead husband’s heart.  Out Film CT's panel of jurors, having seen all of the films presented, selected the following films for the 2020 **Jury Awards:**  **Jury Award - Best Feature**   * **Winner: *Cicada* (USA)** * Special Mention: *Two of Us* (France)   *Cicada* is the story of two emotionally damaged young men who “meet cute” and then stumble through a romantic relationship while trying to cope with past traumatic events that are overtaking each of their lives. The jury selected this powerful story of survival, redemption and self-acceptance for its beautiful storytelling, its sensitive approach to sexual abuse and gun violence, and the exceptional performances of its two leading actors.  *Two of Us (Deux),*a French film about two older women who appear to their families to be neighbors and close friends, but are secretly lovers, received a special mention for its dramatic twists and turns, its beautiful depiction of love and devotion, and the overall high quality of the filmmaking.  **Jury Award - Best Documentary**   * **Winner: *For They Know Not What They Do*(USA)** * Special Mention: *Ahead of the Curve* (USA)   *For They Know Not What They Do* is a thought-provoking and powerful exploration of religion, sexual orientation and gender identity in America that examines the frequently fraught and complicated relationship between LGBTQ people of faith and their families and faith leaders. The jury selected it for its astonishing emotional impact and for the splendid way it wove together multiple story lines.  The jury recognized *Ahead of the Curve* for its quality storytelling and for its celebration of a lesbian cultural icon of utmost significance to LGBT history.  **Jury Award - Best Short**   * **Winner: *Wonder* (USA)** * Runner Up: *Acuitzeramo*(USA/Mexico) * Special Mention (Tie): *Revolvo* (Germany) *& The Passing*(UK)   *Wonder* is a story about a young boy who desperately wants to dress up as Wonder Woman for Halloween, but his macho father has something else in mind. The Jury selected *Wonder* for its layered story lines and the beautiful way it depicts a father’s unconditional love for his child.  In the tender *Acuitzeramo,* an older gay man in rural Mexico bonds with his dead lover’s son. In the hilarious and madcap *Revolvo*, two lesbians kidnap a right-wing politician. In *The Passing,* a mortician is shocked when her latest client turns out to be her high school girl crush.  Festival Director Shane Engstrom named *Cicada*co-directors **Matthew Fifer** &**Kieran Mulcare**as the winners of this year's **Director’s Award**. Engstrom cited the importance of the subject matter and the emotional impact of the story, as well as Fifer’s and Kieran’s insightful and thoughtful responses during the post-screening virtual Q&A that left a lasting impression on the audience.  With this year’s festival wrapped up, Out Film CT hopes to return to its more traditional spring timeframe for a sensational 34th season, **June 4 - 12, 2021.**For more information about monthly screenings and next year's festival, visit [**OutFilmCT.org**](http://www.outfilmct.org/)**.**  **About Out Film CT**  Out Film CT’s mission is to entertain, educate and promote community through the exhibition of LGBTQ film. A volunteer, nonprofit cultural organization, Out Film CT is dedicated to presenting outstanding LGBTQ cinema and other theatrical events throughout the year, culminating in the nine-day Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival. Connecticut’s largest LGBTQ cultural event holds a special place in our state’s cultural landscape, bringing the community together to introduce, celebrate and rediscover the ideas and values that make the LGBTQ community unique. Out Film CT also presents the monthly Queer Thursdays film series in partnership with Cinestudio, usually shown on the second Thursday of each month.  ### | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | BuzzEngine | 109 Talcott Road | (860) 953-0444| [Buzz-Engine.com](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001wlJYrd_Y-gfxwtem785UU84sFy0H2bDHn-5CVPW-DrrV66MqmT1Nffa4a-I4rrHS0fDimtee7iYRCQS52NS_USNSFRPZSEqOxhB1fve8rVEABslYZPsQ44hpdlk10ZFDvbMB48ULaRyKweU07ON7ZQ==&c=81SCRt3LhzhOGIhjRzRYn8eExpO9C5TPdQf6RqUWNRURIRLicJkfpw==&ch=jY93xEfdBwydGgu6wvIENWy2z0QgtAXJW2yALSBoTkeCW8fjZqNncg==) | | | | |