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| |  | | --- | | Still from *Mascarpone,*winner of the Audience Award for Best Feature Film at the 35th Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival. | |

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| |  | | --- | | Still from *Finlandia*, winner of the Jury Award for Best Feature Film at the 35th Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival. | |

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| |  | | --- | | **June 27, 2022/Hartford, CT... Out Film CT** recently wrapped the **35th Connecticut LGBTQ Film Festival,**a hybrid festival of feature films and short films presented via in-person screenings at the historic Cinestudio on the campus of Trinity College in Hartford, the CT Science Center, Apple Cinemas, as well as via virtual streaming. Already narrowed down from over 650 submissions, audiences and the jury had the opportunity to view and vote on over 100 full-length films and shorts.  As in previous years, audience members were asked to rate their enjoyment of the films they watched, with the **Audience Award** results coming from a combination of paper voting at the cinema and electronic balloting online. This year’s **Jury** was made up of members of the festival screening committee. Festival Co-Director **Jaime Ortega** states, "We had an incredibly diverse collection of films this year from over 25 different countries spanning 6 continents, and the awards reflect how the audience and jury really embraced that diversity, with winners from Italy, Mexico, India, Canada, and right here in the United States. We are thrilled with the audience response and are delighted to share the results of their voting as well as the festival jury's selections as the best of the festival."  Out Film CT now proudly announces the films honored with **2022** **Audience and Jury Awards**. Filmmakers will share $3,500 in prize money. Festival Co-Director **Shane Engstrom**states, "The prize money we award is meant to assist filmmakers with the funding of their future projects. This year's honorees showcased the rich diversity of our community, and we hope to assist them with continuing to tell the important stories of our diverse lives that rarely make it to the local cineplex."  **Audience Award - Best Feature: *Mascarpone***  Antonio has a perfect life and dotes lovingly, almost obsessively, on his perfect husband. Then one day, hubby dumps him, and Antonio is forced to find a place to live, a job, and a new purpose in life. (Italy)  Best Feature Runner-Up: *The Divide*  **Audience Award - Best Documentary: *Invisible***  Growing up gay and Southern is hard enough, but being a lesbian in country music is nearly impossible. Yet this group of lesbian artists has persevered and made an indelible impact. (USA)  Best Documentary Runner Up: *Mama Bears*  **Audience Award - Best Short Film: *Bonhomme***  19-year-old rugby player Anthony is on a night out with friends. In a game of dares, they challenge him to kiss the bar’s handsome new waiter. Sometimes one kiss changes everything. (France)  Runner-Up Short Film: *Static Space*  Honorable Mention Short Film: *Gay Spirit Radio: Not Afraid To Be Different – The Keith Brown Story*  Out Film CT's panel of jurors, having seen all of the films presented, selected the following films for the**2022 Jury Awards:**  **Jury Award – Feature Film: *Finlandia***  The jury selected *Finlandia* for its gorgeous visuals and its powerful and unflinching portrait of an often-overlooked population, the Muxes of Mexico. (Mexico)  **Jury Special Mention – Feature Film: *Great Freedom***  The jury recognized *Great Freedom* for the excellence of its acting and its creative and unconventional storytelling format. (Austria/Germany)  **Jury Award – Documentary: *Prognosis – Notes on Living***  The jury selected *Prognosis – Notes on Living* for its brave and masterful storytelling and its incredible emotional impact. (USA)  **Jury Special Mention – Documentary: *Gemmel & Tim***  The jury recognized *Gemmel & Tim* for shining a light on an important and shocking story that needed to be told in more depth than the sensationalized headlines of a newspaper, which is one of the prime purposes and obligations of documentary filmmaking. (USA)  **Jury Award – Short Film: *My Mother’s Girlfriend***  The jury selected *My Mother’s Girlfriend* for the power and beauty of its story about the love between two older women and their desire to live their lives honestly and with integrity. (India)  Jury Runner-Up – Short Film: *Warsha*  Jury Special Mention – Short Film: *Overthinker (Pensadero)*  **Rising Star Award: Silvia Brunelli (*Blessed Boys*)**  The Rising Star Award, in memory of festival volunteer and supporter Pam Connelly, highlights and rewards new talent in the independent film industry. Silvia Brunelli is recognized as this year's Rising Star Award winner due to the exceptional job she did in writing and directing her first feature film *Blessed Boys* within the span of 11 months, creating an original and compelling story of family, friendship and self-discovery. (Italy)  **Director's Award: Bretten Hannam (*Wildhood*)**  In a time when representation is so important, Bretten Hannam created a nuanced and touching film about the journey of self-discovery and reconnecting with one's roots - making a profound impact on our audience and standing out as one of the most original films in this year's festival.  For more information about Out Film CT's 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.  ### | |