

Press Release - for immediate release

Winners of 21st Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival Awards Announced

Out Film CT is pleased to announce the award winners of the 21st Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival:

Best Feature - Audience Award

- 1st Place - *XXY* (Dir: Lucía Puenzo)
- 2nd Place – *Were the World Mine* (Dir: Tom Gustafson)
- 3rd Place – *The World Unseen* (Dir: Shamim Sarif)

Best Documentary - Audience Award

- 1st Place – *She’s a Boy I Knew* (Dir: Gwen Haworth)
- 2nd Place – *Marriage Makes a Word of Difference* (Dir: Fran Rzeznik)
- 3rd Place – *Call Me Troy* (Dir: Scott Bloom)

Best Short - Jury Award

- 1st Place – *Mano-A-Mano* (Dir: Todd Strauss-Schulson)
- 2nd Place – *Getting Lucky* (Dir: Christian Lloyd)
- 3rd Place - *Gay Zombie* (Dir: Michael Simon)

Director’s Award

Tom Gustafson (*Were the World Mine*)

Thanks to enthusiastic audiences, the 21st Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival was a great success. Over 2,500 attendees from all over Connecticut and beyond enjoyed nine days of exceptional feature films, shorts and documentaries at Cinestudio, located on the beautiful campus of Trinity College in Hartford.

This year’s festival was also host to a record-breaking number of special guests from as far as Los Angeles, Austin and Toronto. According to festival Director Shane Engstrom, “This year our audiences had the opportunity to hear firsthand about the filmmaking process from over 20 filmmakers, actors and other cast and crew members involved in eight of the films. With our great collection of films and events, the Connecticut Gay & Lesbian Film Festival is quickly becoming a hot destination on the festival circuit.” It was an impressive occasion of film, culture, community and lots of fun for everyone who attended.

The festival was also honored to host the world premiere of David Oliveras’ new film *Watercolors*. The Cinestudio audience had the unique opportunity to see the curtain rise on a film premiere and ask questions of the director, producers, actors and other crew members - Hollywood truly visited Hartford that night. With its poignant story of young, troubled love and supporting acting roles from the likes of Greg Louganis and Karen Black, *Watercolors* is expected to be a major sensation at film festivals around the world in the coming months.

This year’s award winners are a clear reflection of our audience’s diverse interests:

- *XXY*, winner of the Audience Award for Best Feature, and Argentina’s 2007 submission for the foreign-language Academy Award, is the powerful film about growing up intersex.
- The Audience Award for Best Documentary went to *She’s A Boy I Knew*, described by the filmmaker as “the most compelling do-it-yourself, gender-bending, feel good film directed by a transsexual lesbian you’ve seen all year!”

- The Jury Award for Best Short Film was awarded to *Mano-A-Mano*, a head-spinning 5-minute short about two guys competing for a coveted position in an unconventional call center.

In addition, this year Out Film CT announces a new ‘Director’s Award’ to reward one filmmaker’s outstanding contribution to film. Engstrom states, “We created this award to highlight the achievements of a Director whose film vision really captured the spirit of the festival, and we are thrilled to award the first Director’s Award to Tom Gustafson of *Were the World Mine*.” Gustafson succeeded in creating a film that was a visually and musically heart-stopping combination of Shakespearean classic and Broadway musical.

In November 2008, Out Film CT continues its collaboration with the Trinity College gay-straight student organization, EROS (Encouraging Respect of all Sexualities), in presenting the 10th EROS Film Festival. This event, held every fall, brings more queer films to Hartford with an emphasis on youth, history and classic films.

Out Film CT is a nonprofit cultural organization whose primary mission is to plan, organize and sponsor the annual Connecticut Gay and Lesbian Film Festival. The film festival presents U.S. and international films by gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) filmmakers, about the GLBT community, or of interest to the GLBT community. The members of Out Film CT value diversity, multiculturalism, variety, entertainment, acceptance, respect, tolerance, aesthetics, progressiveness and humor, and express and celebrate these values through the selection and presentation of films shown at the festival.

Out Film CT

Presenting Outstanding Queer Cinema since 1988

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