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FRAMELINE47 PRESENTS LGBTQ+ FILMMAKERS WITH AWARDS AND ALMOST \$60K IN FUNDING ON CLOSING NIGHT

Spanning 11 days, the **2023 San Francisco International LGBTQ+ Film Festival (Frameline47)** marked the largest film festival in Northern California this year.

In addition to the Audience Awards, Frameline presented emerging and established queer and trans filmmakers with four juried awards, including the Outstanding First Feature Award.



From left: Lisa Hrdina (Actor), Merle Grimme (Director), and Andi Pek (Editor) of *Clashing Differences* celebrate at The New Parkway Theatre; Jewelle Gomez (Film Subject) and Madeleine Lim (Director/Producer) at an on-stage Q&A at the Castro Theatre following a screening of their film, *Jewelle: A Just Vision*; and Cloie Wyatt Taylor (Actor), Andy Vallentine (Director), Nico Tortorella (Actor), and Danny Vallentine (Screenwriter) enjoy the Filmmaker Pavilion ahead of a screening of their film, *The Mattachine Family*.

Photos courtesy Pat Mazzera (*Clashing Differences*) and Zach Franzen.

San Francisco, CA – June 29, 2023 – Frameline, the San Francisco International LGBTQ+ Film Festival – the world’s largest and longest-running LGBTQ+ film festival – concluded its 47th iteration on Saturday, June 24, with a screening of *Taylor Mac’s 24-Decade History of Popular Music*, directed by Oscar-winning duo **Rob Epstein** and **Jeffrey Friedman** (*The Celluloid Closet*). The documentary feature about the titular performer’s singular spectacle was preceded by the Festival’s annual **Award Ceremony**, which reaffirmed the dynamic future of queer cinema.

This year, the 11-day Festival ran from June 14–24, 2023, with events held in theaters across San Francisco, including the historic Castro Theatre, located in the heart of the city’s LGBTQ+ cultural district, and the Roxie Theater, Frameline’s longest-running partner theater. Frameline47 also returned to Oakland this year, featuring the Festival’s first-ever Oakland Opening Night (**Jac Cron’s *Chestnut***) and Centerpiece (**Hannah Pearl Utt’s *Cora Bora***) films, both of which screened at The New Parkway Theater. With a full slate of upwards of 90 in-person screenings and programs, Frameline47 featured essential queer films from Bay Area locals and international

filmmakers alike, and welcomed **55,000** moviegoers, including streaming. This is a 25% increase on Frameline46 in 2022.

“No matter the metric, Frameline47 was a resounding success,” says **James Woolley**, Executive Director of Frameline. “We are proud to be California’s largest film festival, and the achievement means all the more because we are a celebration of queer cinema. Despite the changing moviegoing landscape, Frameline embodies the resilience of the larger LGBTQ+ community. We’ve not only adapted, but *grown*. Seeing that realized in numerous sold-out Castro Theatre showings was truly remarkable.”

The highlights of Frameline47 were numerous, varying in both scope and content. With its deep San Francisco roots, the Opening Night film — **Andrew Durham’s *Fairyland*** — began the Festival on a note both celebratory and intimate. Bolstered by a lively Q&A, passionate audience, and the music of the Castro Theatre’s beloved organ, Opening Night proved filmgoers’ desire to return to in-person showings. “Moments like Opening Night illustrate our organization’s power in the queer community — the power to build empathy and mutual understanding, and to find moments of joy,” says **Nguyen Pham**, Frameline’s Director of Philanthropy. “Not only is Frameline an authority in this space, but we take our responsibility seriously. At this moment, sharing queer cinema is life-changing — and life-saving — work, and it’s something we undertake together.”

In myriad ways, the power of queer cinema was certainly felt by audiences throughout the Festival. The Juneteenth community screening block, Local Legends, featured an in-person appearance by the iconic **Jewelle Gomez**, the subject of **Madeline Lim’s *Jewelle: A Just Vision***, as well as the World Premiere of ***Belonging: Trans Indian Story***, **Amir Jaffer’s** documentary which centers Kinnar trans immigrant woman **Anjali Rimi**. Famous faces appeared throughout the program: drag stars **Alaska** and **Flame** both performed live, while **Rock Hudson** and the **Indigo Girls** appeared on screen as the subjects of **Stephen Kijak’s *Rock Hudson: All That Heaven Allowed*** and **Alexandria Bombach’s *It’s Only Life After All***, respectively. However, Frameline47 also spotlighted unsung heroes, from poet and activist **Nikki Giovanni (Joe Brewster and Michèle Stephenson’s *Going to Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project*)** to the **Shine Louise Houston**-hosted **Debi Sundahl Double Feature**, which centered the titular filmmaker and renowned sex educator.

Other unforgettable moments included a screening of **Andy Vallentine’s** queer ensemble film, ***The Mattachine Family***, which was attended by stars **Nico Tortorella** and **Cloie Wyatt Taylor**; the high-spirited late-night screening of **Sébastien Marnier’s** queer Hitchcockian thriller, ***The Origin of Evil***; and the sold-out, Queer Premiere of **Emma Seligman** and **Rachel Sennott’s *Bottoms*** — a teen sex comedy starring Sennott and **Ayo Edebiri** that filled the Castro Theatre with laughter for its whole 92-minute runtime. “We set out to share stories of queers thoughtfully critiquing our past, shaping our future, finding joy and sometimes behaving badly like all humans. We hoped the Festival slate would reflect this profound multiplicity — and it did,” says **Allegra Madsen**, Frameline’s Director of Programming. “It’s so gratifying to not only see these equally important strands of queer life and community presented together, but to know these stories resonated so deeply with our Frameline47 audience.”

Even though the in-person festivities have come to an end, Frameline47 is far from over. The Festival's **Streaming Encore** runs from June 24–July 2, 2023, and features roughly two-thirds of the in-person programming. While a return to live events has been thrilling in its own right, Frameline remains committed to accessibility and sharing queer cinema – and independent shorts and features – with audiences outside of the Bay Area, too. Streaming highlights include **Jason Karman's** coming-of-age feature debut ***Golden Delicious***; **Merle Grimme's** keen exploration of labor exploitation, colorism, and intersectionality in ***Clashing Differences***; and **Sav Rodgers' equally incisive and intimate documentary *Chasing Chasing Amy***.

Filmmaker Awards

This resolve can also be seen in Frameline47's dedication to supporting young filmmakers; the recently announced 2023 **Colin Higgins Youth Filmmaker Grants** have provided a staggering \$45,000 in funding to three talented filmmakers: **Daisy Friedman (*As You Are*)**, **Karina Dandashi (*Cousins*)**, and **Emilio Subía (*Ñaños*)**. These grants are generously underwritten by the Colin Higgins Foundation, which is named after the late Colin Higgins, the acclaimed screenwriter and director responsible for such classic films as *Harold and Maude*, *9 to 5*, and *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*.

Frameline is also committed to supporting queer and trans filmmakers at other stages of their careers. Presented during the Festival, the **Out in the Silence Award**, which provides \$5,000 to the selected filmmaker, honors an outstanding film project that highlights brave acts of visibility, especially in places where such acts are rare and unexpected. This year, Frameline honored **Babatunde Apalowo**, the director of the Nigerian gay romance ***All the Colours of the World Are Between Black and White***.

Frameline47 Juried Awards

Outstanding First Feature Award

For over 20 years, Frameline has presented the annual juried **Outstanding First Feature Award** to a notable narrative feature from an emerging voice in LGBTQ+ cinema. Since 2020, Frameline is proud to partner with the **San Francisco Bay Area Film Critics Circle** to jury this award. This year's winner is as follows:

Outstanding First Feature (\$2,500): **20,000 Species of Bees** directed by Estibaliz Urresola Solaguren

Honorable Mention for First Feature: **Big Boys**, directed by Corey Sherman

Additional Juried Awards

In addition to our annual juried award for **Outstanding Documentary Feature**, Frameline recently introduced two new juried awards for short films: **Outstanding Narrative Short** and **Outstanding Documentary Short**. This year's winners are as follows:

Outstanding Documentary Feature (\$2,500): ***Going to Mars: The Nikki Giovanni Project*** directed by Michèle Stephenson & Joe Brewster

Honorable Mention for Documentary Feature: ***Every Body*** directed by Julie Cohen

Outstanding Narrative Short (\$750): ***The Cutest and Funniest Animals in the World*** directed by Renato Sircilli

Outstanding Documentary Short (\$750): ***Ob Scene*** directed by Paloma Orlandini Castro

Frameline47 Audience Awards

Voted on by Frameline47 audience members, the **Audience Award** winners for 2023 are as follows:

Narrative Feature (\$1,500): ***The Origin of Evil*** directed by Sébastien Marnier

Documentary Feature (\$1,500): ***Who I Am Not*** directed by Tünde Skovrán

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For more information, visit frameline.org.

For official Frameline47 photos, please visit our [Flickr](https://www.flickr.com/photos/framelinefest/) (/framelinefest).

About Frameline

Frameline's mission is to change the world through the power of queer cinema. As a media arts nonprofit, Frameline's integrated programs connect filmmakers and audiences in San Francisco and around the globe. Frameline provides critical funding for emerging LGBTQ+ filmmakers, reaches hundreds of thousands with a collection of over 250 films distributed worldwide, inspires thousands of students in schools across the nation with free films and curricula through Youth in Motion, and creates an international stage for the world's best LGBTQ+ film through the San Francisco International LGBTQ+ Film Festival and additional year-round screenings and cinematic events.

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