

Fifth-Annual Lake County Film Festival Announces Jury Winners

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CHICAGO – The fifth-annual [Lake County Film Festival](#) [14] (LCFF), which ran from Feb. 28 to March 3, 2008, on Sunday evening announced its jury winners.

The annual suburban Chicago festival began as a two-film event in 2004 and has grown in 2008 to include 17 feature-length documentaries, 17 narrative features and more than 100 short films. The Lake County Film Festival is mostly known for showing smaller independent films, high-profile documentaries and a large number of short films. The jury awards follow.



Chicago filmmaker Ben Byer in "Indestructible".
Photo credit: Ben Byer

Best Documentary:

["Indestructible"](#) [15]

Best Narrative:

["L'estate d'Inverno"](#) [16] ("The Summer in Winter")

Best Documentary Short:

["A Map With Gaps"](#) [17]

Honorable Mention Short:

["McLaren's Negatives"](#) [18]

Best Short Comedy: ["Speechless"](#) [19]

Best Student Short: ["Pop Foul"](#) [20]

Best Cinematography: ["Sunlit Shadows"](#) [21]

Best Local Short: ["Untied Strangers"](#) [22]

Best Short Drama: ["Now You See Me, Now You Don't"](#) [23]

Best Foreign Short: ["Der Aufreißer"](#) [24] ("The Pick-Up Artist")



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Winning Film Plotlines

(descriptions from the Lake County Film Festival)

“Indestructible”

Diagnosed with ALS (a fatal, neurodegenerative disease also known as Lou Gehrig's Disease), filmmaker Ben Byer starts documenting his life on camera. What begins as a series of video diaries grows into an epic journey spanning three years and six countries as he scours the globe looking for answers and a cure. A cinematic adventure filled with extraordinary characters, breathtaking landscapes and abundant humor, “Indestructible” is beautifully shot by Academy Award nominee Roko Belic (“Genghis Blues”). In his first feature film, Byer takes us on a visually stunning global quest to survive as he begins to understand the power of the human condition.

“L'estate d'Inverno” (“The Summer in Winter”)

Deep in the night in a motel room of a Copenhagen suburb, a young man has sex with an older prostitute. When the woman is ready to leave, the young man holds her and asks her to stay one hour more just to talk with him. At the beginning she refuses, but soon she agrees to stay longer. From that moment, the two characters start talking with their demons and their regrets coming out.

“A Map With Gaps”

In 1972, the director's father set off for Soviet Russia in “Supervan”: a souped-up Ford Anglia. This is the account of the following 26 strange days, 14 countries and 12,000 miles. It's a catalogue of minor disasters where fact is much stranger than fiction.

“McLaren's Negatives”

Discover the trade secrets of legendary animator Norman McLaren and absorb his personal view of filmmaking. This visual essay is an intimate look at cinematographic creation.

“Speechless”

Disillusioned with just about everything around him, D takes solace in gangsta rap... and texting.

“Pop Foul”

A boy sees his father take a beating from a local thug on the way home from a Little League game and agrees to help hide the incident from his mother. But he soon finds himself tangled in his parent's confusing power plays of deceit, pride, punishment and betrayal all of which culminate in a shocking act of destruction.

“Sunlit Shadows”

A visual mix tape highlighting the simultaneous holding onto and letting go of lost love. “Sunlit Shadows” is part two of the “Girls & Boys Trilogy”. Part one screened at the Lake County Film Festival in 2007. “Sunlit Shadows” is an official selection of the 2008 Sundance Film Festival.

“Untied Strangers”

Nathan Adloff takes a darkly humorous look at co-habiting and conversing in hopes of copulating in his directorial debut of “Untied Strangers”. Wes (Joe Swanberg) is a struggling artist whose artistic process is tied up in processed food. His roommate, Dale (Noah Blair), has a better handle on his Wii than women. In hopes of a hookup, both meet up with the ever-hopeful Amy (Mary Sohn) and her introverted sister, June (Emmi Chen), who are also roommates. The online-initiated blind date proves an awkward outing for the four until Dale suggests they each share a story from their lives. The increasingly sardonic exercise mocks the lengths to which some strangers will go in hopes of becoming intertwined. Filmed in two days with a budget under \$300 and many of the actors found through MySpace, this largely improvised short proves the point that life is funniest when it's happening to someone else.

“Now You See Me, Now You Don't”

What would you do if your child became invisible? It seemed like an ordinary day. Dad is experimenting in the lab and mom is at home boiling water while their 6-year-old son, Alex, is playing around her. But this day is different. On this day, dad brings something home from the lab. The next morning, Alex becomes invisible.

“Der Aufreißer” (“The Pick-Up Artist”)

Olli only wanted to have non-committal, anonymous sex. While sneaking out the morning after, the daughter of his “pick-up” crosses his way. Six-year-old Yvonne is not happy with the unlucky love life of her mother and decides to find a real boyfriend for mom and a new dad for herself.

Disclosure: HollywoodChicago.com publisher Adam Fendelman served on the documentary features and documentary shorts jury for the 2008 Lake County Film Festival on a volunteer basis.



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By [ADAM FENDELMAN](#) [26]

Editor-in-Chief

HollywoodChicago.com

adam@hollywoodchicago.com [25]

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