

## Film News: 2022 Sundance Film Festival Final Award Notes

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on February 2, 2022 - 10:45am

- [2022](#) [2]
- [Awards](#) [3]
- [Documentary](#) [4]
- [Dramatic](#) [5]
- [Film News](#) [6]
- [Filmmakers](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [Nanny](#) [9]
- [Navalny](#) [10]
- [Online](#) [11]
- [Out of Competition](#) [12]
- [Park City](#) [13]
- [Passes](#) [14]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [15]
- [Robert Redford](#) [16]
- [Sundance Film Festival](#) [17]
- [The Exiles](#) [18]
- [Tickets](#) [19]
- [Utah](#) [20]
- [Utama](#) [21]
- [Virtual](#) [22]

CHICAGO – The 2022 Sundance Film Festival concluded on January 30th, and had a full weekend of award screenings. The festival is wrapping up as virtual/online for the second year in a row, meaning that again anyone/anywhere with a ticket or a pass got to indulge in the film offerings and events throughout the festival.

One of the highlight offerings is free to anyone, with no need for extra tickets or credentials. Beyond Film programming offers something for everyone ... with filmmaker chats, meet-ups and a daily talk show with Festival Director Tabitha Jackson. Festivals stars and directors participating include Emma Thompson, Dakota Johnson, Amy Poehler and Eva Longoria Bastón. Click on [BEYOND FILM](#) [23] for the archive. And click [AWARD WINNERS](#) [24] for list of Sundance Film Festival honorees.



'Nanny'

*Photo credit: Sundance Film Festival*

The Sundance Film Festival is an annual event organized by the Sundance Institute – an organization founded by actor Robert Redford in 1980 – and dedicated to the growth of independent artists. It usually takes place each January in Park City, Utah, and other locations, and is the largest independent film festival in the United States. It includes competitive categories in documentary and dramatic films, both feature

length and short works, as well as out-of-competition categories for showcasing new films.



## FILMS OF SUNDANCE: Capsule Reviews

“**Nanny**” – A multi-layered and engrossing story about a nanny in New York City named Aisha (Anna Diop), who works for an upscale couple caring for their child. She is originally from the African country of Senegal, and had to leave her young son behind to establish a new life in America. Full of unexpected twists, centered by a supernatural element that has roots in Aisha’s culture, the narrative goes into directions that are unexpected – including the wealthy couple who might not seem to be who they are. Written and directed by Nikyatu Jusu, this film won the U.S. Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at the Festival for its incisive view of class structures and immigrant experiences in America, and the ramifications of decisions that are calculated into a survival instinct.

“**Utama**” – Honored with the World Cinema Grand Jury Prize, “Utama” is a beautiful looking film – set in Bolivia – about a humble and aging married couple who are Alpaca farmers named Virginio and Sisa. When a drought sets in, their grandson Clever shows up to convince them to retire to the nearby city. When Virginio refuses to even listen, it begins a tug of war to determine what is best for all involved. These themes have been explored many times in storytelling and cinema, but this film is unique for its approach to the intergenerational relationship between grandfather and grandson, who refuse to back down from their positions. Their stand off, with grandmother Sisa in the middle, explains as much about machismo culture as it does family ... the “winner” of the conflict has nothing to gain.

“**The Exiles**” – Created by Violet Columbus and Ben Klein, this astounding documentary was honored with the U.S. Grand Jury Prize, and was a look back (of sorts) at the 1989 Chinese Tiananmen Square massacre during the pro-Democracy protests . The title refers to the escapees from that situation, who had to leave China due to their participation. When they toured America in 1989, a filmmaker named Christine Choy ... who can best be described as a Chinese Fran Lebowitz ... documented their journey, but the film project laid unfinished for 30 years. The story is the combination of Choy reviving her dormant footage and catching up to the refugees who were forced to live their lives outside the homeland. With themes of politics, 1980s New York City, and what China has become (including censorship and the whitewashing of their history), this story becomes something bigger when paired with the brash and outsized personality of Christine Choy, and rises above an overview of history to become something much more important in context.

“**Navalny**” – The story of Alexei Navalny, the highest profile anti-Putin activist in Russia, has been familiar in current events, especially a mysterious poisoning which led to his exile. But the reasons for his actions are ardently revealed in the documentary “Navalny,” the U.S. Audience Award honoree at Sundance. Navalny ran for President against Putin, was the the founder of the Anti Corruption Foundation in Mother Russia and has been a constant thorn in Vladimir’s side ... so much so that Putin never refers to him by name. The main story in the doc is the amazing online support that Navalny receives, including organizations that helped him uncover (quite remarkably) the circumstances of his poisoning. The real-life intrigue – which includes Navalny’s return to Russia after his recovery – is miles above and more outrageous than any fiction, mostly because the implications of his status is the lubricant that could loosen the iron grid that Putin has on his country and the rest of the world. A must see.



## 10 BEST Films of Sundance

The 10 Best are based on excellence, the connection to them and the experience of them. Descriptions are in links or are above. The films are, in ascending order, [LUCY AND DESI](#) [25] (a surprisingly in-depth career dive into the marriage and business partnership of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, [2ND CHANCE](#) [25] (a never-know-where-it’s-going documentary on the inventor of the bullet proof vest), [GIRL PICTURE](#) [26] (highly realistic portray of sex and love through two young adult female co-workers in Finland), **NANNY** (see above), [EMERGENCY](#) [27] (a clear-eyed serio-comedy emphasizing college youth and “driving white black”), [PALM TREES AND POWER LINES](#) [28] (more female coming-of-age, tragic but likely), [HATCHING](#) [28] (a magnificent multi-layered, multi textured horror film from ... Finland!), [HAPPENING](#) [25] (a young woman seeks an illegal abortion in 1963 France, and the graphic nature of her journey is an empathetic portrait), **NAVALNY** (see above) and **THE EXILES** (see above).

As a traditional closer, here’s a clip of Sundance Institute/Film Festival Founder Robert Redford, reflecting on what he created ...

*The 2022 Sundance Film Festival ended on January 30th. For a festival “rewind,” including free access to the Talks & Events, click [Festival.Sundance.org](https://www.festival.sundance.org) [29]*



[30]

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [31]  
Editor, Film Writer  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[pat@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com) [30]

© 2022 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on **Mar 28 2024 - 4:21pm**):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36326/film-news-2022-sundance-film-festival-final-award-notes>

### Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/2022>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/awards>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/documentary>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dramatic>

- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/film-news>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/filmmakers>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/nanny>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/naalny>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/online>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/out-of-competition>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/park-city>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/passes>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/robert-redford>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/sundance-film-festival>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-exiles>
- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tickets>
- [20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/utah>
- [21] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/utama>
- [22] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/virtual>
- [23] <https://festival.sundance.org/program/#film/btf/catalog>
- [24] <https://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36323/film-news-nanny-is-top-us-film-at-2022-sundance-film-festival>
- [25] <https://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36312/film-news-2022-sundance-film-festival-living-is-easy>
- [26] <https://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36318/film-news-2022-sundance-film-festival-in-the-home-stretch>
- [27] <https://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36307/film-news-2022-sundance-film-festival-starts-its-engines>
- [28] <https://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/36314/film-news-2022-sundance-film-festival-fills-the-bill>
- [29] <https://festival.sundance.org/>
- [30] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [31] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>