

Podtalk: Liza Mandelup on Her New Documentary 'Jawline,' at 2019 CineYouth Festival

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 27, 2019 - 1:14pm

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CHICAGO – The 2019 CineYouth Festival launched on Friday, April 26th, and the kickoff featured a Sundance Film Fest award winner, “Jawline.” The documentary, directed by Liza Mandelup, is a ripped-from-the-now overview on the impact of teenage life through the creation of social connections online rather than in reality. The 15th edition of the CineYouth Fest will feature 64 films from 18 different countries, all produced by filmmakers who are 22 years old or younger. All the screenings, workshops and other happenings are FREE and open to the public. For more information, [click here](#). [22] The CineYouth Festival runs through Sunday, April 28th.



Austyn Tester in 'Jawline,' Directed by Liza Mandelup
Photo credit: Cinema/Chicago

The recent winner of the “Breakthrough Filmmaker” award at the Sundance Film Festival in January, “Jawline” is the story of Austyn Tester, a 16-year-old rural Tennessee newcomer to the live-broadcast ecosystem, where teen girls all over the world tune into “boy broadcasts” like Tester’s, in a 21st-century version of Tiger Beat. These broadcasts also offer a minute or two of interaction ... or more for the right price. The film features all the characters that surround and exploit Austyn, including his family, his teen girl fans, and an 18-year-old agent named Michael.

Tester's earnestness sets him apart, peering wide-eyed into his laptop camera and professing unconditional love and support to his female fans for hours on end, in essence selling male validation. In return, he asks for fame and a better life for his family. Will Tester's open heart give him celebrity status and a chance to escape from his dead-end town, or is this new ecosystem built for failure? HollywoodChicago.com talked to Liza Mandelup on CineYouth Opening Night, in a Podtalk below.



Created in 2005, the 15th edition of Cinema/Chicago's CineYouth Film Festival is designed to encourage youth filmmakers in their creative endeavors. CineYouth provides opportunities for young filmmakers to articulate themselves artistically, and have their voices heard. The three-day festival celebrates and fosters the creativity of emerging filmmakers – 22 years old and younger – by screening officially selected work and encouraging their creative endeavors by presenting a filmmaking workshop, discussions and panels. Screenings take place at the historic Music Box Theatre in Chicago.

In Part One of the following Podtalk with Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, Filmmaker Liza Mandelup talks the themes of "Jawline," the empathy she felt for the teen girls and the story of an 18-year-old agent hustle.

In Part Two, Mandelup observes the age of online society/anxiety, and how it affects the teenagers that interact within it.

Cinema/Chicago Presents the CineYouth Festival in Chicago from April 26th through April 28th, 2019. Screenings take place at the Music Box Theatre, 3733 North Southport Avenue. For more information about Filmmaker Liza Mandelup, [click here](#). [23]



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