



Voices in Film Youth Forum

Aspen Shortsfest 2025

March 31 - April 11

The *Voices in Film Youth Forum* at Aspen Shortsfest incorporates a wide variety of FREE youth-focused programming and events during the festival. The forum is an umbrella over key educational programs: Collaborative Work Experiences (Internships), Making Movies Matter, Filmmakers to the Classroom, Young Filmmaker Labs, Spotlight Sessions, Students to the Festival, and the Youth Jury.

Film Program + Youth Forum Kickoff Event

Monday, March 31 @ Basalt High School

Q+A to follow with filmmakers

To launch the *Voices in Film Youth Forum* at Aspen Shortsfest, the week kicks off with a special in-school event at the Basalt High School featuring a selection of festival films. The interactive program is hosted by students with a filmmaker Q+A.

Making Movies Matter

March 31 - April 11

Free for teacher use in the classroom

Aspen Film provides films and themed shorts packages (e.g. immigration, the environment, creative storytelling) to enrich curriculum in language, visual arts, history, world geography, LGBTQ+ issues, and the social sciences. Films are available online for educators to use in their classrooms at their convenience. Email aspenfilmeducates@gmail.com for access.

Filmmakers to the Classroom

March 31 - April 4

Free with advance scheduling

Filmmakers from around the globe visit schools from Aspen to Glenwood Springs to share their films, culture, and creative process in classroom and auditorium settings.

Gay Straight Alliance Screening

April 2 @ The Aspen District Theatre

Free for teachers and students | By invitation

Underwritten by: AspenOut

Aspen Film and AspenOut are partnering for a special screening of thoughtful, touching, and provocative LGBTQ+ films from this year's festival to raise awareness for the gay-straight alliance chapters in our local high schools*. This year's screening is hosted by the Aspen High School GSA, moderated by students with a filmmaker Q&A to follow.

Films: GIGI, ARE YOU SCARED TO BE YOURSELF BECAUSE YOU THINK THAT YOU MIGHT FAIL?, ZARI

Special Guests: Shruti Parekh, Director of ZARI

Moderators: Madison Nelson, Clare Williams

**A gay-straight alliance is intended to provide a safe and supportive environment for all LGBTQ+ individuals and youth as well as their cisgender heterosexual allies.*

Students to the Festival

March 31 - April 5 @ the Wheeler Opera House, Aspen

Free for teachers and students

Students and teachers receive free admission to public programs during the festival. Complimentary tickets for students are secured by showing a current student ID at the box office. Teachers with groups of students reserve tickets by emailing

aspenfilm.edu.co@gmail.com. Festival program guide at aspenfilm.org.

Spotlight Sessions – Crafting and Shooting an Interview

April 1 and 2

Festival Filmmaker Interns

Festival Film and Production Interns hone their storytelling skills in front of and behind the camera as they prepare for, execute, shoot, and edit a series of interviews with visiting filmmakers and industry guests. This year's intern cohort comes from partner institutions, the Isaacson School for Communication, Arts and Media at Colorado Mountain College, and the Aurora Community College Cinematic Arts Department.

Young Filmmaker Lab: *Creative Storytelling through Sound*

April 3 @ CMC Spring Valley Campus New Space Theater, Glenwood Springs

By invitation

Colorado Mountain College students from the Isaacson School for Communication, Arts and Media, festival interns, and visiting high school film students participate in a Young Filmmaker Lab that focuses on the role of sound design in filmmaking. George Lucas said that sound is 50% of the movie experience, but most young filmmakers don't have a deep understanding of how to use the art of sound design to give their stories impact and connect with audiences. In this presentation, Dolby Creator Lab Director, Glenn Kiser, shares examples of great sound design in movies, provides a practical breakdown of the components of film sound, and talks with one of Aspen Shortsfest's visiting film directors.

GLENN KISER BIO

Glenn Kiser is the Director of Dolby Creator Lab, Dolby's initiative to educate and inspire emerging filmmakers and artists about the creative use of sound and image in storytelling. He is the host of the Dolby Creator Talks podcast, which features in-depth conversations with artists working in film, episodic, music, gaming, and podcasting. He established the Dolby Creator Lab Grant, supporting exciting new films from directors including Sean Wang, the Daniels, Rebecca Hall, Alma Har'el, and Taika Waititi. Previously, Kiser ran Lucasfilm's Skywalker Sound, where he oversaw sound teams on numerous films including Avatar, The Incredibles, Wall-E, and the Star Wars prequels. Before joining Skywalker, Kiser was a post-production executive at Propaganda Films, where he worked with directors including David Fincher, Spike Jonze, and Jane Campion.

Presented by Glenn Kiser, Director of Dolby Creator Lab

Underwritten by: Colorado Mountain College

Young Filmmaker Lab: *[opening shot]* — *what it is and why it matters*

Student Work for Filmmaker Feedback

By invitation

Visiting and local film students are invited to share the first :60 of their film for feedback from industry professionals. This workshop offers students insight into story structure and filmmaking techniques. Student work is watched together on the big screen followed by time for input from festival programmers and peer discussion.

Shortsfest Industry Panels + Filmmaker Workshops

@ the Aspen Film Isis Theatre, Aspen

Free for teachers and students

Students and teachers are invited to attend panel discussion and workshops with filmmakers and industry guests during the festival.

Groups of 10+ need to reserve seating in advance. More information at aspenfilm.org.

WORKING WITH RISING TALENT

TUE APRIL 1 | 2:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

Join us in conversation with two industry stalwarts whose experience includes shorts, narrative features, and documentaries. Hear from two distinct yet complementary voices who know the film landscape inside and out and offer thoughts and advice on the next steps, next moves, and how best to leverage a successful short film. They will discuss the festival and distribution landscapes today, and best practices for seeking sales and representation.

PARTICIPANTS Marie Therese Guirgis – Play/Action Pictures, Sarah Lash – Condé Nast

WHAT ABOUT A FILM MAKES US TAKE NOTICE

WED APRIL 2 | 2:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

Our fantastic Shortsfest Programming Team gives perspectives on programming methods and strategies, sharing ideas about what it takes for films to stand out. They will provide insights into the programming process and the wider festival landscape for filmmakers close to home and further abroad.

PARTICIPANTS Jason Anderson, Liane Cunje, Lisa Haller, Lucy Lerner, Anita Tavakol

PLATFORMS + POSSIBILITIES

THUR APRIL 3 | 2:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

This session examines the different avenues short films may take on their way to reaching audiences, highlighting the role of online platforms and other options in today's marketplace. Panelists will address the diverse audiences their platforms reach, the objectives they serve, and how filmmakers are successfully using new platforms to get eyes on their work and generate interest in their projects.

PARTICIPANTS Celia Aniskovich – Switchboard, Meghan Oretsky – Vimeo

IN CONVERSATION WITH KEVIN ROWE, CO-FOUNDER OF 2AM

FRI APRIL 4 | 12:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

Kevin Rowe joins us in conversation from talent management and production company 2AM. We will talk about how his representation of filmmakers, writers, and actors dovetails into the production of some of today's hottest indie film and television. Using several recent debut film projects as case studies, Kevin goes deep into the process of

developing feature projects using the momentum created by exciting and innovative shortform content.

PARTICIPANT Kevin Rowe – 2AM

CREATIVE SOUND DESIGN FOR SHORT FILMS

FRI APRIL 4 | 2:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

Great sound design is not exclusive to big-budget studio films. It is something that can be utilized by filmmakers with any size budget. Learn the role sound design can play at the conceptual stage of your independent project and how sound can help you tell your story. Join filmmakers and sound designers from three films in our official selection who will present scenes from their films, discuss how sound design helped their narrative or even became part of the narrative, and share how sound connects with music as a creative element.

PARTICIPANTS Glenn Kiser – Dolby Creator Lab

PATHWAYS + PITFALLS

SAT APRIL 5 | 2:00 PM

ASPEN FILM ISIS THEATRE 406 E Hopkins Ave, Aspen

Our esteemed jury members share valuable lessons and insightful stories from their careers, highlighting successes and noting pitfalls to avoid in the film world. Hear industry anecdotes and pragmatic advice about which battles are worth fighting (or not).

PARTICIPANTS Phillip Domfeh, Coco Francini, Selin Sevinç

Shortsfest Youth Jury

The Aspen Shortsfest Youth Jury is a group of local students who share a passion for film and are interested in learning how to analyze short films, think critically, and discuss a selection of films that are in competition at Shortsfest. The Youth Jury presents the Youth Jury Award, a \$1,250 prize, to a winning film along with a statement highlighting the merits of the film and the jury's decision-making process. This is a coveted award from filmmakers who value the impressions, thoughts, and engagement from today's youth.

Special Thanks to the Aspen Film Ellen Fund and the Lindenfelser Family Charitable Fund

WHO WE ARE

Dedicated to independent voices in cinema, Aspen Film seeks to enlighten, enrich, educate, and entertain through film. For more than 25 years, art education and community involvement in youth development have been at the center of Aspen Film's FilmEducates programs. Aspen Film is a 501c3 and serves over 30,000 people each year (*3,500+ are students and teachers*), hosts more than 100 film artists and industry guests, and partners with over 40 organizations, schools, and businesses. To learn more or to get involved visit aspenfilm.org. Contact Regna Jones, Head of Education for more information: rjones@aspenfilm.org.

Special Thanks to our supporters! *Addy Foundation, Alpine Bank, Andy Zanca Youth Empowerment Program, AspenOut, Aspen Community Foundation, Aspen District Theatre, Aspen Fire Department, Aurora Community College Cinematic Arts Department, Basalt High School, Clark's Market, Colorado Creative Industries, Colorado Office of Film Television + Media, Isaacson School at Colorado Mountain College, the Ellen Fund, the Jeffrey and Nicole Goldberg Family Foundation, the Lindenfelser Family Charitable Fund, Thrift Shop of Aspen, Town of Basalt Public Arts Commission, the Wheeler Arts Grant, and our many generous donors.*