



UPDATE: Stony Brook Film Festival
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<https://stonybrookfilmfestival.com/press/index.php>

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Chuskit Wins GRAND PRIZE at 24th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival
Presented by Island Federal

July 28, 2019, Stony Brook, NY – ***Chuskit***, directed by Priya Ramasubban, won the Grand Prize at the 24th annual [Stony Brook Film Festival](#) presented by Island Federal at the [Staller Center for the Arts](#), Stony Brook University. “When the jury and the audience rank the same film the highest then it receives a Grand Prize,” says Alan Inkles, Festival Director. This is the second year in a row and the ninth time in the Festival’s 24-year-run that a film has received a Grand Prize. “This festival was one of the most competitive yet,” says Inkles, “nearly 3,000 films were submitted, and only 36 were selected for the Festival, so ***Chuskit*** was really a very special film – it’s a must-see.”

Chuskit is a thoroughly charming, family-friendly treat from a part of the world seldom seen on screen. The entirety of the film was recorded in the Himalayas, and tells the story of a paraplegic girl who harbors hopes of going to school. ***Chuskit*** is being considered for purchase by various US distributors. [Priya Ramasubban](#), Director of ***Chuskit***, attended the Festival and participated in a Q&A with the audience.

[In God I Trust](#) received the Jury Award for Best Feature, and [The Silent Revolution](#) received the Audience Choice for Best Feature. It was the East Coast Premiere of ***In God I Trust***, directed by Maja Zdanowski, and the film is continuing with the festival circuit and looking for US distribution. Maja Zdanowski and lead actor Marc Senior attended the Festival and participated in a [Q&A with the audience](#), and Maja was a participant in the Festival’s [Filmmaker Panel](#). ***The Silent Revolution*** has already been picked up by *DistribFilms*, and is slated for a festival and art house rollout later this summer and fall.

2019 STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL AWARDS

2019 Grand Prize

Chuskit

New York Premiere - India - 90 min

Written and Directed by Priya Ramasubban.

With Jigmet Dewa Lhamo and Morup Namgyal.

Chuskit's dream of going to school is cut short when she is rendered a paraplegic after an accident. Confined to life indoors, she continues to dream of going to school, but her

tradition-bound grandfather feels that the school in their remote Himalayan village can't handle her special needs. Caught in the middle of this struggle are her parents and brother, who respect grandfather's old-world views, but also want to keep Chuskit's spirit alive.

In Ladakhi with subtitles.

Produced by Priya Ramasubban. Edited by Jabeen Merchant. Director of Photography: Arvind Kannabiran. A Kaavya Films production.

Chuskit trailer

2019 Jury Award for Best Feature

In God I Trust

East Coast Premiere - Canada - 97 min

Directed by Maja Zdanowski. Written by Paul St. Amand and Maja Zdanowski.

With Marc Senior, John Cassini (Se7en) , Steven Roberts, Bilal Oliver, and Melissa Roxburgh (Star Trek Beyond).

A suspenseful, sharp-eyed study on the unpredictable realities of race and religion in America. Inspired by true events, this film follows three separate story lines that converge during a random encounter at a diner in a small Northern Idaho town. The audience may find their own assumptions questioned as these complicated, true-to-life portrayals keep one guessing until the final credits. Featuring nuanced performances, Grammy nominated singer-songwriter Bilal Oliver, and an amazing landscape, this is the unique vision of a talented and truly independent filmmaker.

Produced by Paul St. Amand, Maja Zdanowski and Jesse Norsworthy. Edited by Maja Zdanowski. Director of Photography: Corey MacGregor. An IGIT Film production.

In God I Trust trailer

2019 Audience Choice for Best Feature

The Silent Revolution

East Coast Premiere – Germany – 111 min

Written and Directed by Lars Kraume. From the book by Dietrich Garstka.

With Leonard Scheicher, Tom Gramenz, Ronald Zehrfeld (Sweethearts), and Florian Lukas (The Invisibles)

When a class of Seniors in the Communist-controlled GDR discovers what is really happening during the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, they decide to remain silent for one minute to show solidarity with the victims. After this draws more attention than expected, the students find themselves accused of a counterrevolutionary act. A true story of courage in the face of an unforgiving, authoritarian regime.

In German and Russian with subtitles

Produced by Miriam Düssel, Susanne Freyer, Kalle Friz, Isabel Hund and Thomas Kufus. Edited by Barbara Gies. Director of Photography: Jens Harant. An Akzente Film- und Fernsehproduktion, Studiocanal Film, Zero One Film and Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF) production. From DistribFilms US.

The Silent Revolution trailer

2019 Jury Award Best Short

Toke is Cheap

Canada - 23 minutes

A film by Kerry van der Griend

A teenage boy who sells marijuana is met with an unusual request from his Father.

See *Toke is Cheap* trailer

2019 Audience Award Best Short

The Portraitist

New York Premiere - Luxembourg - 15 min

In French with subtitles

A film by Cyrus Neshvad

An old man's suicide attempt is interrupted when he learns that his granddaughter is ill.

The *Portraitist* trailer

FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE

Dozens of filmmakers, directors, cast, and crew attended the 24th annual Festival. With support from presenting sponsor Island Federal and other corporate and private donors, the Stony Brook Film Festival was able to welcome and host guests from all over the world including, Spain, Austria, Israel, the United Kingdom, Canada, and India. Benedict Campbell, Director of ***The High Bridge*** said, “the Stony Brook Film Festival has been one of my favorite experiences, and Alan and his team give equal representation and individual attention to every filmmaker.” Priya Ramasubban, Director of ***Chuskit*** delighted over the Festival saying “it is a very unique and warm festival, and I'll remember it for a long time to come.” Jonathan Bloch, Director of ***Waiting Game*** said “this experience has been one of the few times where I have felt truly embraced as a filmmaker and artist.” Jake Katofsky, Director of ***Asia A*** sent a note saying, “I am still riding the high from last night, and it is by far the best run festival I have had the pleasure of attending.” The opening night film, ***Balloon***, from Germany, was SOLD OUT as were many of the other screenings in Staller Center’s 1,000-seat theater.

The Closing Night Awards reception held in the Staller Center’s Paul W. Zuccaire Gallery was sponsored by HBO. Catering for the reception was provided by The Meadow Club, The Curry Club, and Bagel Express. Additional sponsors of the Stony Brook Film Festival presented by Island Federal Credit include Campolo, Middleton & McCormick, LLP; HBO; Altice Media Solutions, Suffolk County; and WLIW21. Staller Center Media Sponsors include WSHU Public Radio, Times Beacon Record Newspapers, WALK 97.5, and JVC Broadcasting. Entries for the 25th Annual Stony Brook Film Festival will start on December 01, 2019.

MORE ABOUT THE STONY BROOK FILM FESTIVAL

<https://stonybrookfilmfestival.com/about/index.php>

MORE ABOUT THE STALLER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

<https://www.stallercenter.com/>



2019 Stony Brook Film Festival Grand Prize Winner Priya Ramasubban, Director, *Chuskit* with Stony Brook Film Festival and Staller Center for the Arts Director, Alan Inkles. (photo: Nick Koridis)