



NEW HAMPSHIRE FILM FESTIVAL

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

The MUSIC HALL



MISSION

Featuring a curated selection of independent films, panels, and networking opportunities, the **New Hampshire Film Festival (NHFF)**, is an Academy Award qualifying festival for the Short Film Awards and an internationally recognized showcase and platform for with filmmakers, screenwriters, and film industry experts, providing exposure, networking, and educational opportunities. **The festival's mission is to inspire audiences with thought-provoking cinematic stories, provide a platform for emerging artists to advance their craft, and connect filmmakers with the community and industry leaders.**

One of the largest performing arts organizations in the state of New Hampshire, The Music Hall (TMH) is an economic catalyst, generating \$15 million annually in economic impact (of the \$70 million generated by arts and cultural organizations in the Seacoast NH region). Founded as a nonprofit in 1987, TMH offers 52 weeks of programming in our 900-seat 1878 Historic Theater and 115-person Lounge, annually serving over 120,000 people from all 50 states and beyond. Offerings include live performances featuring musicians, authors, comedians, dancers, and thought leaders as well as film screenings and the New Hampshire Film Festival.

NHFF was founded in 2001 by the New Hampshire Film Expo, and officially transferred to The Music Hall in 2024.

2024 FESTIVAL

IN REVIEW



Special Guests



Alan Ruck



Eliza Coupe



Jared Sandler



John Michael Higgins

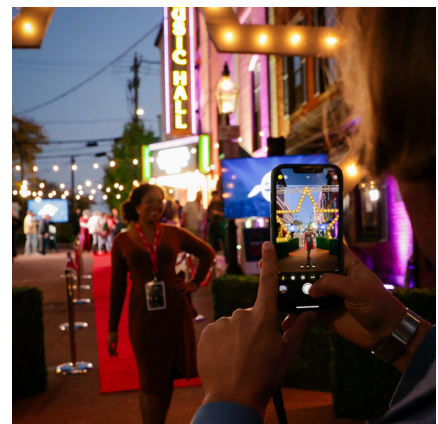


Adam Pally



Judge Reinhold

**The 22nd Annual
New Hampshire Film
Festival took place
October 17-20, 2024**



Attendance

NHFF 2024 welcomed 2,116 patrons who recorded a total of 7,251 total scans to attend films and events. This represents a 30% increase in attendance over last year.

Attendees

Patrons included 241 artists and film industry professionals as well as 16 aspiring filmmakers who attended the annual Young Filmmakers Workshop.

The festival also welcomed many first-time attendees, as well as sponsors, from within New Hampshire and beyond.

FILMS



Vanessa Baletic



Dan Habib

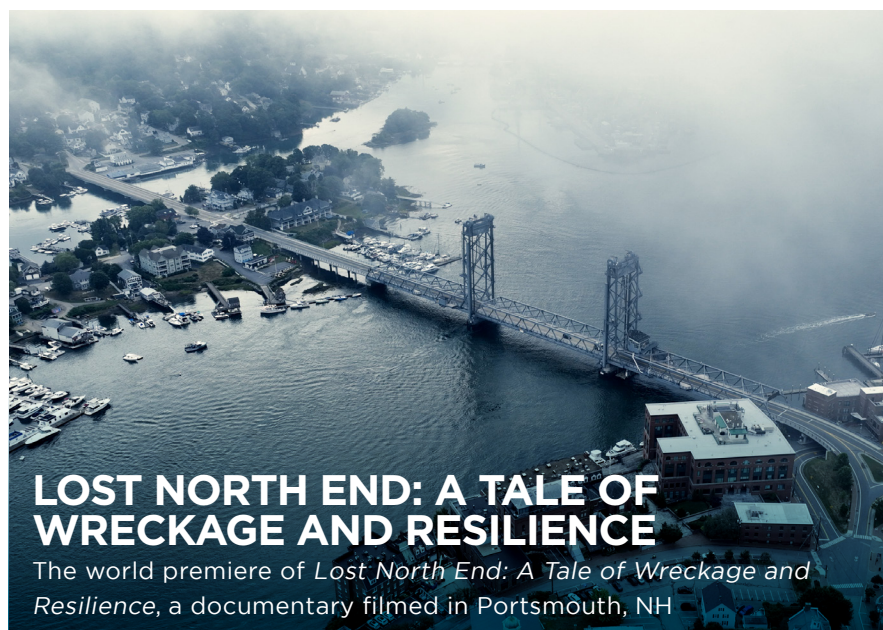


Jeremy Workman



NHFF 2024 screened 119 films, which were culled from 1,680 film submissions.

More than 50% of NHFF 2024's features were **directed by women**. The festival featured **33 returning filmmakers**, including familiar names such as Vanessa Baletic, Dan Habib, and Jeremy Workman. **39 films had New Hampshire connections**, a testament to the thriving creative community right here in our state, while others came from as far away as Argentina, Austria, and Nigeria.



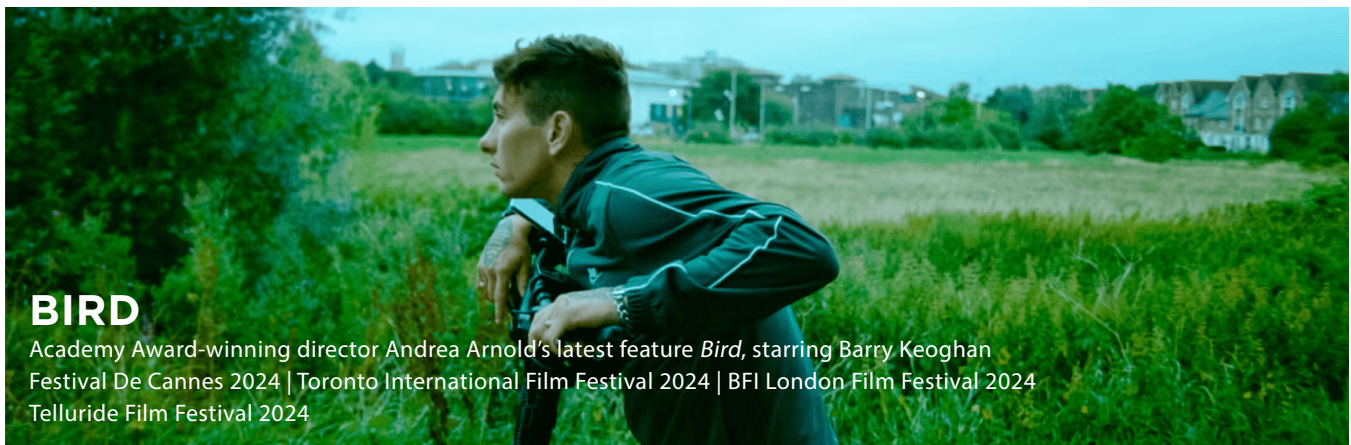
Notable Screenings

NHFF screenings go on to be award-winning & nominated films all over the globe.



EEPHUS

Nashua native Carson Lund's feature directorial debut *Eephus*, fresh from its rave reviews at Cannes Quinzaine Fortnight Cannes 2024 | New York Film Festival 62 2024



BIRD

Academy Award-winning director Andrea Arnold's latest feature *Bird*, starring Barry Keoghan Festival De Cannes 2024 | Toronto International Film Festival 2024 | BFI London Film Festival 2024 Telluride Film Festival 2024



BOB TREVINO LIKES IT

Since winning Best Narrative Feature and the Audience Choice Award at the 2024 New Hampshire Film Festival, *Bob Trevino Likes It* has gone on to rack up multiple Audience Awards at festivals including Calgary, Denver, Mill Valley, Nashville, Tallgrass, Valladolid, and Virginia. SXSW Film Festival

AWARDS

Honoring Excellence

The NHFF 2024 team bestowed 21 awards on films, filmmakers, screenwriters, and actors.

Five of these awards came with a financial component, in alignment with The Music Hall's commitment to supporting artists pursuing careers in the film industry.

New this year, two of these awards qualified the recipients to compete for Oscars.

The Best Feature Documentary award went to *Porcelain War*, a stunning tribute to the resilience of the human spirit. This gripping film embodies the passion and fight that only artists can bring back into the world when it's crumbling around them. With extraordinary footage from a war-torn country, filmed by ordinary civilians, *Porcelain War* tells a story that transcends Ukraine, speaking to all of us.

Bob Trevino Likes It captured both the Best Narrative Feature award and the Audience Choice Award, Narrative. The film's ability to win over both the jury and festival attendees highlights its universal appeal and storytelling strength.

Another standout was *Safe Sets - Dying to Work in the Film Industry*, which won the Audience Choice Award, Documentary. This investigative film explores the hazardous working conditions in Hollywood, revealing untold stories of enormous personal sacrifice and life-threatening risks for those working in an industry that brings us the movies and TV shows we cherish.

Additional awards honoring excellence in filmmaking and screenwriting awarded in 2024 include:



BEST SCREENPLAY

Unconquered: The John Hollins Story (written by Phillip Hollins)



BEST STUDENT FILM

Works of Mercy (directed by Alex Yarber)



BEST SHORT COMEDY

Airbag (directed by Timothy Leong)



BEST SHORT DRAMA

Loser (directed by Colleen McGuinness)



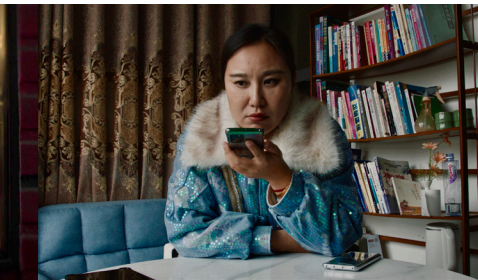
AUDIENCE CHOICE, DOCUMENTARY:

Safe Sets — Dying to Work in the Film Industry (directed by Paul Heinzelmann & Jonathan Schwartz)



AUDIENCE CHOICE, NARRATIVE:

Bob Trevino Likes It (directed by Tracie Laymon)



GRAND JURY AWARD, DOCUMENTARY:

Mistress Dispeller (directed by Elizabeth Lo)



GRAND JURY, NARRATIVE:

We Strangers (directed by Anu Valia)



SHORTS JURY AWARD, DOCUMENTARY:

Cycles (directed by Pisie Hochheim & Tony Oswald)



SHORTS JURY AWARD, ANIMATION (ACADEMY-QUALIFYING):

Tennis, Oranges (directed by Sean Pecknold)



SHORTS JURY AWARD, LIVE ACTION (ACADEMY-QUALIFYING):

Bruno & Elena (directed by Javier Hirschler)



BEST DOCUMENTARY FEATURE:

Porcelain War (directed by Brendan Bellomo & Slava Leontyev)



BEST NARRATIVE FEATURE:

Bob Trevino Likes It (directed by Tracie Laymon)

The New Hampshire Awards for 2024 included:



BEST NH PERFORMANCE:
Live Catch (Elle Shaheen)



BEST NH SHORT DOCUMENTARY:
The Power of Water (directed by Matthew Myer Boulton)



BEST NH SHORT NARRATIVE:
Keepers (directed by Paul Emile)



NH FILMMAKER OF THE YEAR:
Ian Scura (*A Handmade Life* and *Liquid, Fragile, Perishable*)



BEST NH FEATURE DOCUMENTARY:
The Ride Ahead (directed by Dan Habib and Samuel Habib)



BEST NH FEATURE NARRATIVE:
Eephus (directed by Carson Lund)



**NH SHORT FILM OF THE YEAR
(JURY AWARD):**
109 Below (directed by Nick Martini)



Van McLeod Award

This year's Van McLeod Award, named for the former Commissioner of the NH Department of Cultural Resources and recognizing New Hampshire natives and residents who have made significant contributions in film and television, was awarded to film and television star and Plymouth native Eliza Coupe.

JURY

2024 NH Jury

Wendy Battles - Writer, Producer
Rebecca Lavoie - Podcast Host/Producer
Deborah Scranton - Documentary Filmmaker

2024 Narrative Grand Jury

Michael Almereyda - Writer, Director
Ed Gonzalez - Film Critic, Co-Founder/Editor, *Slant Magazine*
Alicia Witt - Actress, Singer-Songwriter

2024 Documentary Grand Jury

Sarah Archambault - Documentary Filmmaker, Program Director
Karen Konicek - Documentary Producer
Alex Ross Perry - Writer, Director

2024 Narrative Shorts Jury

Mike Bowes - Producer
Elisabeth Holm - Writer, Producer
Kathleen McInnis - Producer, Publicist

2024 Documentary Shorts Jury

Cynthia Fenneman - Producer, President Emeritus, *American Public Television*
Paul Moakley - Documentary Filmmaker, Executive Producer, *The New Yorker*
Nathan Truesdell - Documentary Filmmaker



I NOTEWORTHY IN 2024

Strategic Merger

In 2024, the festival moved its operations to The Music Hall, a long-time partner. The Music Hall's Historic Theater, with a seating capacity of nearly 900, has served as a festival screening location since 2004. In 2023, having invested 20 years of sweat equity into this cultural and economic engine, the NHFF team determined that the all-volunteer format was no longer sustainable. TMH is working toward a strategic plan to preserve the festival with a goal to maintain and grow its status as a cultural asset, point of NH pride, and tool for building community and careers in the film industry and on the Seacoast.

Academy Award Qualifying Status

Also in 2024 the New Hampshire Film Festival was named an **Academy Award® qualifying festival** for the **Short Film Awards** in a third category, making NHFF a qualifying festival for: **Live Action Shorts, Animation Shorts, and Documentary Shorts**. This distinction solidifies NHFF's status as a premier platform for short filmmakers worldwide, providing a direct pathway to Oscar® eligibility. Short films that receive NHFF's prestigious Live Action Shorts Jury Award, Animation Shorts Jury Award, or Documentary Shorts Jury Award will be qualified to enter the Short Films competition for the concurrent Oscar® season. Recipients will be eligible for Academy Awards® consideration without the standard theatrical run, provided they comply with the Academy's rules.

NHFF joins an elite roster of international festivals, such as Cannes, Sundance, and Toronto, that carry Academy Award® qualifying status in multiple categories. With this honor, NHFF continues to amplify the creative voice of northern New England while championing independent filmmakers from across the globe. It is the only film festival in New England with eligibility in all three Shorts categories.

NEWSWORTHY

IMPACT

Judge Reinhold



Alan Ruck



ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION

Panels

Working on Productions in New England
Producing for Public Television
Morning Chats with Filmmakers
Industry Insiders: Getting Films to an Audience
Rolling with the Punches: Welcoming you in the World of Stunts
Growing the Film Industry in New Hampshire
Comedy Panel, Hosted by Eliza Coupe

Featured Speaker Event

NHFF 2024 introduced a new element, a special featured speaker event. Veteran actor Alan Ruck served as the featured speaker; his storied career in television and film provided invaluable insights to the hundreds of attendees at the event.

Judge Reinhold offered another special treat for NHFF audiences, leading a moderated discussion and audience Q&A session prior to a celebratory 40th anniversary screening of the classic *Beverly Hills Cop*. He also held a meet and greet with all attendees of the 2024 Young Filmmaker class.

Filmmakers Lounge

This space dedicated to filmmakers was designed to inspire and support industry networking and connections.

Digital Presence

NHFF's digital presence saw significant growth in 2024, reflecting increased audience engagement and broader visibility. Social media impressions more than doubled, reaching over 870,000 (a 141.7% increase from 2023), while engagements grew by 152.6%, totaling over 26,000 interactions. Website traffic also surged, with over 46,500 users visiting NHFF's site during the festival season. Email subscribers reached 60,506, continuing to serve as a core communications channel. In addition to digital gains, industry attendance rose from 193 in 2023 to 247 in 2024, underscoring NHFF's growing reputation as a must-attend event for filmmakers, distributors, and industry professionals.

Best of the Fest: Shorts

Best of the Fest — Shorts is a new year-round event to bring standout short films from the previous New Hampshire Film Festival to wider audiences. Curated and hosted by the festival's Cinema Curator, Mark Pruett, this ongoing series showcases a diverse selection of award-winning and audience-favorite shorts—including Jury and Festival Award recipients—across live action, documentary, and animation. Featuring exceptional work produced in New Hampshire, across the U.S., and around the globe, Best of the Fest – Shorts offers film lovers the chance to revisit the festival's most celebrated titles on the big screen at The Music Hall's Historic Theater and other venues across the region.

Media Coverage

The 2024 New Hampshire Film Festival earned robust coverage across TV, radio, and print. WMUR featured multiple stories, including live shots from The Music Hall, while NHPR, WBZ NewsRadio, and iHeart stations such as The Pulse of NH and Greg & The Morning Buzz aired interviews with festival leaders and filmmakers. Print outlets including the Boston Globe, Union Leader, Concord Monitor, Portsmouth Herald/Fosters Daily Democrat, NH Business Review, and Manchester Ink Link ran in-depth

Amy Greene



Amy Greene leads the World of Stunts panel.



stories, interviews, and festival announcements. This wide media reach spotlighted special guests, panels, film premieres, and award winners, connecting NHFF to audiences across New Hampshire and greater New England.

Oscar Nominees

Two films featured at the 2024 New Hampshire Film Festival have since received Oscar® nominations, highlighting the festival's growing influence in the industry. *Porcelain War*, a Documentary Feature Film nominee, and *The Girl with the Needle*, an International Feature Film nominee, both captivated audiences and critics during NHFF 2024.



Young Filmmakers Workshop

Aimed at educating and nurturing the next generation of artists, the Young Filmmakers Workshop has been a signature of the NHFF since its inception over 20 years ago. Part film school, part film race, the Workshop welcomes 12 to 20 high school students annually for an immersive experience in how to create a short piece of film. Communications media specialist and local filmmaker John Herman is the instructor and mastermind for the workshop. Lessons include: writing a screenplay, identifying suitable film locations, film techniques, understanding audio quality, working with actors, and the editing process. Over the course of NHFF 2024, 16 aspiring filmmakers teamed up and worked together under the guidance of industry professionals to produce three original short works. These works were then screened for the public during NHFF's closing ceremony, providing these budding filmmakers with the ultimate experience of seeing their work on the big screen.

FESTIVAL TEAM

LEADERSHIP TEAM

President & CEO

Tina Sawtelle

Founding Executive Director

Nicole Gregg

Operations Director

Ashleigh Tucker

PROGRAMMING

Co-Founder/Industry & Education Curator

Dan Hannon

Lead Programmer

Ian McCarthy

Cinema Curator

Mark Pruett

Youth Education Programmer

James Paone

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Mary Beth Johnson

Assistant Director of Development

Emma Calabrese

Corporate & Foundation Relations Manager

Sara Turner

In-Kind Sponsorship Coordinator

Ilysse Sirmaian

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Patron Services Manager

Wesley Lovell

Assistant Manager of Concierge Services

Bill Stouges

Patron Services Assistant Manager

Cat Burns

Patron Services Coordinator

Niki Leinweber

Patron Services Coordinator

Kyleigh McGoon

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Ryan Klink

Digital Media Coordinator

Emily McNair

Graphic Design Coordinator

Andrew DeLorenzo

Marketing Associate

Madeleine Nossiff

Group Sales & Relationships Coordinator

Lynn Smith

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CrossCurrent Communications

Barbara MacLeod

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Ashley Auen

Art Director

Emily Collins

Graphic Designer

Anna Hudson

FINANCE

Chief Financial & Operations Officer

Joe Gleason

Accounting Manager

Hannah Sullivan

Financial Services & Data Analyst

Jill Cook

PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS

Director of Facilities & Production

Michael Tucker

Production Manager & Historian

Zhana Morris

Technical Director

Jason Martin

Assistant Technical Director

Ian Martin

House Technician

Drew Fabrizio

Festival Coordinator

Gabrielle Fugere

Events Coordinator

Januelle Rzepa

Technical Lead

Nick Edgar

Technology & Audio Visual Technician

Christian Arnold

Stage Manager/Production Technician

Aidan Kellerman

Production Technician

Liz Hobbs

Projectionists

Elizabeth Antalek
Victoria Leonard
Mark Marshall
Kevin Mahaney
Tim Haggerty

Facilities Coordinator

Alonzo Rollins

Facilities Services

Jeff DeGrenier
David Cole
Ben Hagerty

FRONT OF HOUSE**General Manager of Front of House**

Jeff Kamensky

**Assistant General Manager
of Front of House**

Kevin Walsh

**Front of House &
Volunteer Coordinator**

Keith Wasserman

HOUSE MANAGERS

Heather Cathcart
Sarah Brewster
Corey Gimlin
Scott Johnson
Sam Lovett
Rebecca Lucy
Janice Pfeiffer

BARTENDERS

Taylor Andrews
Bryan Knowles
Melissa Hanley
Jaden Janski-Johnson
Nicole Johnson
Anna Scheifele
Ernie Scully
Alec Sorbello
Rebecca Spencer
Steve Stellmach
Aimee Crispo
Nell Mendlinger
Kendra White
Whitney Roy
Dan Burke
Maddie Nelson
Connor Waite
Zack Steinhauer
Ben Hanley

**Young Filmmakers
Workshop Instructor**

John Herman

**SCREENPLAY COMPETITION
COMMITTEE****Screenplay Competition Director**

Angie Lane

Committee

Alex Brown
Sean Desautelle
Josh Hardy
Ian Hart
Pauline Hawkins
Rebecca Howland
Laura Harper Lake
Dylan Marsh
Curt McDermott
Seana McDuffie
Katie Mosher
Austin Noto-Moniz
Naomi Raices
Jim White

FILM SCREENING COMMITTEE

Clara Becker
Johanna Evans
Suzy Ierardi
Maya McKinnon
Veronica Pruett
Lorenzo Vigil
Keith Wasserman

**APPLICATION DESIGN
& DEVELOPMENT****InHouse Digital**

Kat Antonioli

**PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY
Coordinator**

Miles Woodworth

Volunteers

Jason Corkum
David Lozeau
Luke Bednarek
Devin LaBrie
Jason Hutapea
Jake Doucette
Shane Marrama
Luke Boutin
Travis Rummo
Chris Liquori
Brian Bergeron
Jared Mancuso

NHFF VOLUNTEERS

David Afflick
Ceal Anderson
Keira Andruskevich
Nicole Bates
Sherri Becker
Fran Berman
Elaine Boucas
Martha Boyd
Peter Boyd

Allison Burrige
Derec Clark
Kathleen Costello
Karine Dhangar
Mary Downes
Lauren Duke
Priscilla Eddy
Shannon Fairchild
Susan Frost
Donna Fuller
Ella Gallagher
Elyse Gallo
Joan Gonser
Marguerite Humphrey
Merle Jacobs
Bill Kane
Hanieh Karimi
Christine Kayne
Paul Kayne
Wendy Kessler
Julian Klimanek
John Lacasse
Yesenia Lopez
Ashley Madden
Elaine Manning
Lisa Maronski
Lissa Mascio
Leslie McCarthy
Cathleen McGrail
Cindy McKenna
Dan McQueen
Hannah Miller
Judy Miller
Scott Millette
Sophie Pels
Dane Peters
Jen Pexton
Evan Pollock
Brooke Sardella
Donna Schuster
Anne Schwartzman
Christine Schwidder
Kathleen Shannon
Emma Shaughnessy
Neil Snow
Lori Soloway
Kallie Tabor
Amanda Telford
Sierra Tourville
John Vatistas
Nancy Vatistas
Shelley Wieler
Marjorie Wolfson



Partner Organizations

The screening and panel rooms of NHFF 2024 are all prominent landmarks in the Portsmouth community and make NHFF a unique festival that would not be possible anywhere but Portsmouth. In addition to The Music Hall's Historic Theater and Lounge, 2024 venues included 3S Artspace, the historic Moffatt-Ladd House, The Press Room, and Thaxter Hall at St. John's Episcopal Church.

PREMIER SPONSOR:



PRESENTING
SPONSOR:



MARQUEE SPONSORS & UNDERWRITERS:



PRODUCER & DIRECTOR SPONSORS:



ACTOR SPONSORS:



TMH & NHFF ARE
PROUDLY
SUPPORTED BY:





2025 SAVE THE DATE

The 23rd Annual New Hampshire Film Festival will take place October 16-19, 2025, in the historic seacoast city of Portsmouth, New Hampshire.
www.nhfilmfestival.com.



The
MUSIC HALL