



Media Contacts:
Nick Harkin/Carly Leviton
Carol Fox and Associates
773.969.5033/773.969.5034
nickh@carolfoxassociates.com
carlyl@carolfoxassociates.com

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CINEMA/CHICAGO'S CINEYOUTH FESTIVAL SHOWCASES THE WORK OF YOUNG FILMMAKERS, AGES 6 – 22, AT MUSIC BOX THEATRE, APRIL 20-22

Festival Opens with Bing Liu's "Minding the Gap"
Award-Winning Documentary from Kartemquin Films

Festival Program Features 62 Short Films from 15 Countries; All Films and Events Free to Attend

CHICAGO - Cinema/Chicago today announced the full lineup of films and events for the 14th annual [CineYouth Festival](#), a three-day film festival showcasing short films by directors ages 6 - 22 from around the world. The festival will be held Friday, April 20--Sunday, April 22 at Chicago's historic Music Box Theatre (3733 N. Southport Ave.). CineYouth will open with a special presentation of **Bing Liu's "Minding The Gap."** Produced by Chicago's Kartemquin Films. "Minding the Gap" is a critically acclaimed documentary hailed by *Indiewire* as "the 'Boyhood' of skate videos" and recognized with the Jury Award for Breakthrough Filmmaking at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival. CineYouth will also feature 11 programs, each comprised of four-eight thematically grouped short films, including narrative, animated, documentary and experimental films as well as music videos. Tickets to all events are *free* and available at www.chicagofilmfestival.com/cineyouth.

CineYouth is sponsored by Allstate Insurance Company, Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood, and Bloomberg Philanthropies.

"Films chosen for the 2018 CineYouth program were carefully selected from a record-breaking 482 submissions from North America, Europe and Asia," said Cinema/Chicago's Education Program Manager **Lauren Ponto**. "I'm extremely proud of this year's program as it truly showcases the immense talent of the next generation of voices in film and how their creativity can be used to change how we see the world."

Opening Night

The Opening Night feature presentation, "Minding The Gap," is a coming-of-age documentary saga of three skateboarding friends growing up in their Rust Belt hometown hit hard by decades of recession. The film draws extensively on archival footage shot while Liu and his friends were teenagers. In his quest to understand why he and his friends all left home when they were younger, Bing follows 23-year-old Zack as he becomes a father and 17-year-old Keire as he gets his first job. As the film unfolds, Bing is thrust into the middle of Zack's tumultuous relationship with his girlfriend and Keire's inner struggles with his racial identity and his deceased father. While navigating a complex relationship between his camera and his friends, Bing explores the gap

between fathers and sons, between discipline and domestic abuse, and ultimately that precarious chasm between childhood and becoming an adult.

Festival Programming

On Saturday, April 21, five programs will be screened. These include: “Youthful Vibes” (1:30 p.m.), a selection of films that highlight the lives of young adults from all around the world; “Point of View” (2:30 p.m.), showcasing five documentaries featuring different perspectives on history, gender conformity, societal norms and more; “Reel Women” (3:30 p.m.), presenting exceptional work from young female directors; “Something about Love” (4:30 p.m.), a collection of shorts that depicts all kinds of love, whether romantic, love of a family member or simply for a very good friend; and “Cinema of Chicago” (5:30 p.m.), a series of short films from talented Chicago-based directors.

On Sunday, April 22, six programs will light up the screen. These include: “Animated Array” (11 a.m.), a program of eight creative animated films; “Innovative Visions” (12 p.m.), featuring unique experimental films and mesmerizing music videos; “World View,” (1 p.m.), showcasing the work of international filmmakers from Russia, Belgium, England and Ireland; “Looking Outwards” (2 p.m.), a selection of four films that focus on powerful young voices in the LGBTQ community; “Dramatics” (3 p.m.), a program offering perspectives on the gritty realities young people face; and “Midwest's Best” (4:30 p.m.), featuring the work of Midwest-based filmmakers. Sunday’s programming culminates with the **CineYouth Awards Ceremony** at 5:45 p.m. where eleven awards will be given out to the ‘Best of the Fest’ in the following categories: Comedy, Foreign, Drama, Experimental, Documentary, Animation, Reel Women, Out-Look, Chicago Filmmakers, Emerging Talent, and Best Overall. These award-winning films will be screened at the 54th Chicago International Film Festival in October. Scholarships will be awarded by Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood for their Presidential Scholarship valued at \$2,500 and by the Digital Media Arts Summer Camp valued at \$1,950, and Prodigy Film Camp for their week-long summer intensive film camp valued at \$1,500. WTTW will present one CineYouth documentary filmmaker with a summer 2018 production internship.

Highlights of this year’s festival include:

- “Ringside, Chicago,” directed by Henri Adams, is a documentary about Chicagoan Antoine Cobb as he fights to honor the legacy of his deceased cousin while traveling from Chicago to Louisiana for his national boxing debut.
- “Prom Mom,” directed by 18-year-old Chicago filmmaker Keyonne Barns, is a comedy that follows a teenage girl as she ditches prom night and discovers a complicated web of secrets among her family and friends.
- “Silvia in the waves,” directed by Montreal filmmaker Giovana Olmos, tells the story of a 40-year-old trans woman and her family through waves of memory, rebirth, death and survival.
- “Wild Beasts,” from Norwegian filmmaker Sverre Kvamme, follows a young boy and his friends as they come across an abandoned house in snow-covered Norway and the boy’s attraction to his best friend as the day progresses.
- “I Love My Robot Boyfriend!,” from Provo, Utah resident Sariah May, is a farce about a teen queen extraordinaire as she creates for herself the “perfect” robot boyfriend.
- “Degüello,” from Chicago filmmakers Luis Trevino and Jaime Herrera, Jr., follows three soldiers as they share a fleeting moment of peace in war-torn Germany, 1945.
- “Unforgotten,” from Irish filmmaker Alexander Wilson-Flynn, tells the story of an elderly man in a nursing home, whose door to the past is reopened by the arrival of a new occupant.

As part of this year's program, long-time festival partner WTTW-TV will present the WTTW Award, recognizing Chicago achievements in documentary filmmaking. The award winner will receive a production internship at WTTW studios. Additional festival partners include Prodigy Camp, a summer home in Seattle, WA. where talented teen filmmakers from around the world hone their craft and develop relationships with other artists.

"Arts education is woefully lacking across our education system, yet it's so critical to the development of young minds," said Allstate's Senior Vice President of Corporate Responsibility **Vicky Dinges**. "CineYouth bridges that knowledge gap by providing young people a forum to express themselves, and, just as importantly, the program builds their confidence, teaches them leadership skills and teamwork -- life skills they can carry forward their entire lives. That's why Allstate is so proud to support this effort. We are committed to empowering youth to step up as leaders in their communities and realize their full potential."

"We are proud to support the next generation of filmmakers around the world. The CineYouth Festival is an amazing venue to showcase rising talent and dynamic storytelling," said **Katherine Oliver** of Bloomberg Philanthropies. Oliver served as New York City Media & Entertainment Commissioner from 2002-2013.

CineYouth Film Challenge, Acting for the Camera Workshop

In anticipation of this year's festival, CineYouth held the inaugural **Acting for the Camera Workshop** on March 31, 2018 at Loyola University's School of Communications. Thirty Chicago area students, ages 13 - 18, were lead through the process of memorizing, rehearsing and filming two-person scenes in front of a camera under the guidance of professional acting coaches. The finished scenes will be evaluated by the panel of acting coaches and three winners will be selected and announced at the CineYouth Awards Ceremony.

CineYouth will also hold **The Film Challenge** on April 15, 2018. Fifty Chicago-area students ages 13 - 18 will work together in teams to create short films in one day. The Film Challenge is sponsored by Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood. The completed scenes and films from both workshops will be screened at the CineYouth Awards Ceremony on April 22.

The festival will feature a "Film Pitch" on April 22 where rising filmmakers will present their works-in-progress to industry professionals who will provide feedback. The winner of the Film Pitch will receive a \$250 cash prize toward the completion of their film.

For more information on the CineYouth Festival, visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com/cineyouth. Free tickets to screenings and events will be available April 2, 2018.

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About Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood

[Flashpoint Chicago, A Campus of Columbia College Hollywood](#) is a non-profit, WSCUC accredited institution located in the bustling heart of Chicago specializing in digital media arts. Founded by industry professionals,

we offer a unique model of higher education designed for artistic minds to excel. Our highly personalized, immersive curriculum places students directly into the industry via a learn-by-doing course format. Stay connected by following us for exciting projects in the making, behind the scenes, event coverage, and more. You never know what might inspire you. [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Snapchat](#), and [YouTube](#).

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies works in over 120 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's charitable activities, including his foundation and his personal giving. In 2017, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$702 million. For more information, please visit www.bloomberg.org or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Twitter](#).

About CineYouth Festival

[CineYouth Festival](#), created in 2005 and presented by Cinema/Chicago, is a free three-day international film festival for filmmakers 22-years-old and younger. Held annually in the spring, the festival showcases films created by youth, providing a public platform to highlight the next generation of filmmakers. Select filmmakers are awarded hands-on scholarship and internship opportunities in the field in order to advance their careers in film. CineYouth also presents free filmmaking workshops, discussions, panels and other hands-on development opportunities to inspire creativity in youth. CineYouth will celebrate its 14th edition April 20-22, 2018 at Chicago's iconic Music Box Theatre. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#), and [Twitter](#).

About Cinema/Chicago

[Cinema/Chicago](#), the presenting organization of the Chicago International Film Festival, is a year-round nonprofit arts and education organization dedicated to fostering better communication between people of diverse cultures through the art of film and the moving image. In addition to the CineYouth Festival, Cinema/Chicago's programs include the Chicago International Film Festival, International Screenings Program, Chicago International Television Festival, and year-round Education Program. Celebrating its 54th edition October 10-21, 2018, the Chicago International Film Festival is North America's longest-running competitive film festival. For more information, please visit www.chicagofilmfestival.com or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Vimeo](#), and [Twitter](#).