



FOURTH ANNUAL

act.  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
FILM FESTIVAL

APRIL 5-13, 2019



COMMUNICATION STUDIES  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

## Greetings,

Welcome to the fourth ACT Human Rights Film Festival. We are so glad you have joined us.

In 2019 we bring you films from 16 different countries and five continents. Twelve of them are making their Colorado premiere and 15 guests from around the globe will join us for post-film Q&As. The stories of the people and social justice featured in the films drive the festival.

Your participation makes this festival extraordinary. Your vulnerability to the stories told on screen tethers the films to our community's experiences. Your desire to engage in powerful conversations humbles us. And, your continued support demonstrates your investment in the festival's success. Thank you.

We rely on invaluable partners: The Lyric hosts three days of original programming and four days of encore screenings; the City of Fort Collins Fort Fund helps promote this and other innovative cultural programming; and, Odell Brewing Co. crafted an exclusive pale ale available at opening and

closing night receptions and at the Lyric. We couldn't produce the festival without the support of the College of Liberal Arts and many of its departments. The festival embodies the college's mission to create a more humane, livable, and sustainable world. All sponsors are listed on pages 26 and 27. Please join us in thanking them.

Our hope is that the films, the guests, and the conversations and connections fostered by ACT will help all of us build a more caring, more committed, and more compassionate community.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Greg Dickinson', with a stylized, flowing script.

Greg Dickinson  
Chair, Dept. of Communication Studies  
Producer, ACT Human Rights Film Festival

## Land Acknowledgement

Colorado State University acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations and peoples. This was also a site of trade, gathering, and healing for numerous other Native tribes. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. As these words of acknowledgment are spoken and heard, the ties Nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed.

CSU is founded as a land grant institution, and we accept that our mission must encompass access to education and inclusion. And, significantly, that our founding came at a dire cost to Native Nations and peoples whose land this university was built upon. This acknowledgment is the education and inclusion we must practice in recognizing our institutional history, responsibility, and commitment.

## Call to ACT



The ACT Human Rights Film Festival is committed to connecting audiences to opportunities for making a difference in the world through education, service, and philanthropy. We call this initiative Call to ACT.

Many ACT films have been paired with one or more local nonprofit organization whose mission reflects or responds to the issues presented. Volunteers and staff with these organizations will be on site to offer festival-goers information and opportunities for organizational involvement.

Please join us in recognizing the following organizations for their work improving the lives of others, creating a more empowered community, and fighting for systemic change. Unfortunately, due to our printing deadline, some partners may not be listed. Please see our website for the most up-to-date list: [www.actfilmfest.org](http://www.actfilmfest.org).

Colorado Water Center at CSU

Child Trauma and Resilience Assessment Center at CSU

Free Our Girls

League of Women Voters of Larimer County

Native American Cultural Center at CSU

Partners for Peace

Plymouth Congregational Immigration Ministry Team

Wall of Flowers



The 2019 Call to ACT initiative is presented by Bohemian Foundation through the Community Event Fund.

## ACT Year-Round

In 2019, the ACT Human Rights Film Festival launched the ACT Year-Round initiative to showcase must-see human rights films throughout the year.

ACT Year-Round screenings are hosted at a variety of locations throughout Fort Collins and include opportunities to discuss the films and their topics with community members, local experts, and special guests.

ACT Year-Round strives to make human rights film events accessible to all members of the Fort Collins community. Therefore, when possible, screenings will be free to the public.

Please consider supporting ACT Year-Round with an online donation through our annual "Ramfunder" crowd-sourcing campaign, which has secured a 1:1 match per donation up to \$2,000. Make your donation go twice as far with a gift today through <https://giving.colostate.edu/ACT19>.

### Upcoming ACT Year-Round screenings

#### Ian

Director: Abel Goldfarb | Argentina | 2018 | 10 min

#### Western Collections

Director: Aaron Burns | USA | 2017 | 10 min

Thursday, April 25, 5 p.m

Gregory Allicar Museum of Art

Free to the public

This free screening includes two of our favorite short films from the 2019 festival, and a gallery walk to explore the intersection of film and exhibit themes. RSVP requested through [www.actfilmfest.org](http://www.actfilmfest.org).

Save the Date

June 6 at The Lyric

Screening details will be posted at [www.actfilmfest.org](http://www.actfilmfest.org) and [www.lyriccinema.com](http://www.lyriccinema.com)

ACT Year-Round is a partnership with





## Film Selection and Guests

ACT Human Rights Film Festival is entirely curated. Leading this charges are Director of Programming David Scott Diffrient and Managing Director Beth Seymour who collectively watched more than 100 films over the last year. By late fall they narrowed the field considerably before bringing a smaller set of films to our volunteer program committee for critical feedback. Final film selection is never an easy task. We hope this year's group of films awakens, connects, and transforms us all.

ACT Human Rights Film Festival values having filmmakers and film subjects at the festival to offer audiences the opportunity to connect and gain a deeper understanding of the films' production processes, topics, and the films' effects. Filmmakers from every feature film screened at ACT this year were invited to attend. While some filmmakers were unable to attend, we are thrilled to have such a talented and impressive group of guests join us this year.

## Film Summaries

A film scholar in the Department of Communication Studies at Colorado State University, Diffrient writes an original summary for every film we screen. These summaries provide a level of history and context – to the issue, genre, or the director's own filmography – that helps expand our understanding of why each film matters. We only have room in this program for a shortened version of each summary. We encourage you to read them in their entirety, as they are meant to be read, on every film's unique webpage at [www.actfilmfest.org](http://www.actfilmfest.org).

## Festival Themes

### **Animating the Lives of Others**

Films that demonstrate the effectiveness of animation as an artistic medium that expressively conveys otherwise inexpressible ideas on the screen; films that provide visual, metaphorical access to otherwise inaccessible places or past experiences.

### **Distinguished Documentarians**

Films directed by legendary, award-winning auteurs who, for decades, have earned a reputation for breaking ground artistically in the world of nonfiction cinema and whose commitment to various social justice issues in their home countries and throughout the world has never diminished.

### **The Holocaust: A Wound That Never Heals**

Films that focus on the lies and lives of former Nazi party members who are finally being held accountable for their inglorious pasts; films that remind audiences of the horrors of the Holocaust and acknowledge the recent resurgence of anti-Semitism.

### **Medical Teams Race to the Scene**

Films that follow groups of young emergency responders who, packed inside cramped ambulances lacking many of the medical supplies needed to treat patients, frequently put the lives and needs of other people before their own.

### **Multiple Perspectives on Communities in Crisis**

Films that offer many, potentially contradictory, viewpoints on past and present social injustices or economic disparities, providing a series of snapshots of a citizenry whose collective voices are amplified by virtue of their commonalities as well as differences.

### **Poetry Breaks Things: Writers and Revolutions**

Films that highlight the important role that writers play in generating widespread awareness of and support for social movements and political revolutions, and that move the work of these writers from the periphery to the center of contemporary debates about human rights and civil rights.

### **Trapped No Longer**

Films that foreground the perseverance needed to survive inside figurative and literal prisons (including labor camps, internment camps, and the homes of human traffickers) before gaining one's freedom; films that reveal how communication with the outside world is still possible.

### **The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Kid**

Films that show the day-to-day experiences of children and adolescents grappling emotionally with war in their home countries; films that show "kids being kids," discovering the world through play, intercultural bonding, and active imaginations.

## Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements

Director: Irene Taylor Brodsky

USA | 90 min

Colorado premiere

**Friday, April 5**  
**Lory Student Center Theatre**  
**7:30 p.m.**

*Director Irene Taylor Brodsky and producer Tahria Sheather will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Liz Parks.*

**Encore Screening**  
**Tuesday, April 6**  
**The Lyric**  
**6:30 p.m.**

*This screening will be fully accessible for Deaf and hard of hearing community members.*

Festival Themes:

**Animating the Lives of Others**  
**The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Kid**



A deeply personal family portrait, Irene Taylor Brodsky's *Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements* is what the director has referred to as a "spiritual sequel" to her Peabody Award-winning *Hear and Now*. This cinematic memoir explores the ways that "disability" is more of a socially constructed phenomenon than a biologically or perceptually defined category of personhood. Moreover, it looks at how deafness has been a source of intergenerational bonding in Brodsky's family. As a toddler, her son Jonas was diagnosed with a severe hearing impairment, and like his grandparents, he had surgery to reverse the effects. However, as a young musician struggling to learn Beethoven's notoriously difficult Piano Sonata #14, Jonas sometimes removes the listening aids from his ears, preferring the freedom that comes with silently playing that musical piece. *Moonlight Sonata* is a heartfelt ode to the human spirit and to the director's familial devotion.

## ¡Las Sandinistas!

Director: Jenny Murray

USA | Nicaragua | 2018 | 96 min

**Saturday, April 6**

**The Lyric**

**11 a.m.**

*This screening will begin with the 10-minute film Western Collections. See page 21 for film summary.*

*Director Aaron Burns, cinematographer Aaron Koehler, colorist Matt Baxter, and film subject Jude Gassaway of Western Collections will all be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A.*

Festival Theme:

**Poetry Breaks Things: Writers and Revolutions**



Directed by Jenny Murray, this documentary remedies the myopia that characterizes most U.S. cultural productions about the Sandinista National Liberation Front and its role in bringing down the military regime of Nicaraguan President Somoza. But it also brings to light the contributions women made to that armed revolutionary struggle. A profoundly feminist film, *¡Las Sandinistas!* deftly blends archival video footage and contemporary interviews with key players in the movement, including Dora María Téllez and Daisy Zamora, who were essentially waging a war on two fronts. These and other less-famous icons not only sought to oust Somoza from power, they fought to gain a foothold in sectors of society that had been off-limits to women. Upon becoming radicalized by the revolutionary fervor sweeping through their country and brandishing masks that would only partially hide their identities, these women became inspirations to anyone who is willing to fight for social and political change today.

## Filmmaker Panel

### Private Lives, Public Spaces: Intimacy and Community at Human Rights Film Festivals

Saturday, April 6

The Lyric

2:30 p.m.

Moderated by Dr. David Scott Diffrient

#### Panelists:

Irene Taylor Brodsky, director of  
*Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements*

Aaron Burns, director of *Western Collections*

Aaron Koehler, cinematographer of  
*Western Collections*

Andrew McConnell, director of *Gaza*

Tahria Sheather, producer of *Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements*

Matthew Shoychet,  
director of *The Accountant of Auschwitz*



As part of the ACT Human Rights Film Festival's commitment to practice-based educational initiatives, this year's special panel gives local audiences the opportunity to meet visiting filmmakers and to reflect on the ethical dilemmas that arise whenever individuals are asked to live out the most intimate details of their day-to-day existence in front of a movie camera, putting themselves on view for strangers. How do documentarians put their subjects at ease and develop their own personal connection or sense of closeness to them? How much decision-making agency are those onscreen individuals given as part of the filmmaking process (in terms of any recorded footage that is or is not included in the finished documentary)? How is the completed documentary similar to yet different from a "home movie"? Is it more difficult to film the private lives of family members than it is with non-family members? And does the filmmaking process alter or strain familial relationships in any way? These and other questions will animate this public forum.

## The Accountant of Auschwitz

Director: Matthew Shoychet  
Canada | Germany | 2018 | 78 min

Saturday, April 6

The Lyric

4:30 p.m.

*This screening will begin with the 7-minute film  
Three Boys Manzanar. See page 21 for film summary.*

*Director Matthew Shoychet will be in attendance for  
a post-screening Q&A moderated by Carolin Aronis.*

Festival Theme:

**The Holocaust: A Wound That Never Heals  
Trapped No Longer**



Ostensibly focusing on Oskar Gröning, a 94-year-old former member of Hitler's Schutzstaffel (SS) who was finally brought to trial in 2015, Matthew Shoychet's *The Accountant of Auschwitz* mounts an incisive critique of the German justice system's many failings. Through a skillful blending of archival documents, footage from past and present court proceedings, and contemporary interviews with constitutional scholars, this briskly paced yet deeply ruminative documentary reveals how the titular defendant — a glorified bookkeeper for the SS who rooted through the personal belongings of Jewish internees in the Nazi concentration camp in German-occupied Poland — lacks remorse. Ultimately, though, this moving testament to the perseverance needed to pursue justice at all costs is mainly concerned with the survivors, rather than the perpetrators, of genocidal acts. Their sometimes-heartbreaking reactions to Gröning, ranging from justified outrage to satisfaction in the court's ruling to one woman's inexplicable willingness to forgive him, is what distinguishes this film from countless other cinematic exposés of the Third Reich's killing machine.

## Gaza

Directors: Garry Keane and Andrew McConnell  
Ireland | Palestine | 2019 | 92 min  
Colorado premiere

**Saturday, April 6**

**The Lyric**

**7:30 p.m.**

*Director Andrew McConnell will be in attendance  
for a post-screening Q&A.*

**Encore Screening**

**Wednesday, April 10**

**The Lyric**

**6:30 p.m.**

*With short film Our Song to War (15 min)*

**Festival Themes:**

**Multiple Perspectives on Communities in Crisis**  
**The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Kid**



With a title as simple as the political situation is complex, Garry Keane and Andrew McConnell's recent Sundance hit *Gaza* paints a panoramic view of the people who live in that densely populated Palestinian territory, allowing us to dwell in the quotidian moments of their largely quiet lives. Simple pleasures, such as catching a fish, playing the cello, or surfing the choppy waters along the world's most politically volatile coastal strip, are on ample view throughout the film's first half. A very different tone characterizes its second half, which shows the flipside of life in a rubble-filled war zone, or what some inhabitants have described as an "open-air prison." Indeed, like a virtual jail cell, the place that 2 million Palestinians call home has bred feelings of desperation and hopelessness. *Gaza* is a much-needed reminder that both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict must come together in the shared acknowledgment of the other's humanity before any real change occurs.

## Angels are Made of Light

Director: James Longley  
USA | Afghanistan | 2018 | 117 min

Sunday, April 7

The Lyric

12 p.m.

*Please see our website for post-screening  
Q&A details.*

Encore Screening

Monday, April 8

The Lyric

6:30 p.m.

Festival Themes:

**Multiple Perspectives on Communities in Crisis**  
**The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Kid**



Following up his Oscar-nominated masterpiece *Iraq in Fragments* (2006), James Longley turns his camera toward Afghanistan to chronicle the day-to-day lives of those who have grown accustomed to the cruel circumstances that have put them in the crosshairs of both American soldiers and members of a resurgent Taliban. Beautifully lensed by the director himself and bearing a title that communicates a message of hope, *Angels Are Made of Light* is nevertheless grounded in the gloomy realities of contemporary Afghanistan. Despite the looming threat of war and the daily reminders of recent traumatic events, people go about their business and pursue hard-won educational opportunities in hopes of restoring their beleaguered nation. At once sprawling and narrowly focused as an intimate portrait of students, teachers, and parents coping with hardships, *Angels Are Made of Light* might be the director's crowning achievement, unlikely to be surpassed as an artistic statement about the human costs of war.

## Festival Schedule

### Friday, April 5

#### **Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements**

6:00 p.m. | Reception in LSC Theatre lobby

7:30 p.m. | Film in LSC Theatre

Guests: Irene Taylor Brodsky, director and Tahria Sheather, producer. Following screening: After-party at The Magic Rat in The Elizabeth Hotel

### Saturday, April 6

#### **¡Las Sandinistas! with Western Collections**

11:00 a.m. | The Lyric

Guests: director Aaron Burns, cinematographer Aaron Koehler, colorist Matt Baxter, and film subject Jude Gassaway

#### **Private Lives, Public Spaces: Intimacy and Community at Human Rights Film Festivals**

2:30 p.m. | The Lyric

Panel discussion with Irene Taylor Brodsky, Aaron Burns, Aaron Koehler, Andrew McConnell, Tahria Sheather, and Matthew Shoychet

#### **The Accountant of Auschwitz**

4:30 p.m. | The Lyric

Guest: Matthew Shoychet, director

#### **Gaza**

7:30 p.m. | The Lyric

Guest: Andrew McConnell, director

### Sunday, April 7

#### **Angels Are Made of Light**

12:00 p.m. | The Lyric

Guest: TBA

#### **A Woman Captured**

3:30 p.m. | The Lyric

Guest: Bernadett Tuza-Ritter

#### **Midnight Family**

6:30 p.m. | The Lyric

Guest: Luke Lorentzen, director, via Skype

## Festival Schedule

### Monday, April 8

#### **Angels Are Made of Light**

6:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Encore Screening

### Tuesday, April 9

#### **Moonlight Sonata: Deafness in Three Movements & Edgcombe**

6:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Encore Screening  
*Deaf and hard of hearing accessible screening*

### Wednesday, April 10

#### **Gaza & Our Song to War**

6:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Encore Screening

### Thursday, April 11

#### **Midnight Family & Trapped in the City of a Thousand Mountains**

6:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Encore Screening

### Friday, April 12

#### **Eldorado**

4:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Guest: TBA

#### **Letter from Masanjia**

7:30 p.m. | The Lyric  
Guest: Leon Lee, director

### Saturday, April 13

#### **ACT Selected Short Films**

10:30 a.m. | LSC Theatre  
Guests: Colorado Water Center,  
Partners for Peace, Wall of Flowers

#### **The Waldheim Waltz**

1:30 p.m. | LSC Theatre  
Guest: Dieter Pichler, editor

#### **New Homeland**

4:30 p.m. | LSC Theatre  
Guest: Mike Sladden, film subject

#### **Words from a Bear**

7:30 p.m. | LSC Theatre  
Guests: N. Scott Momady and Jill Momady, film subjects

## A Woman Captured

Director: Bernadett Tuza-Ritter  
Hungary | 2017 | 89 min

Sunday, April 7

The Lyric

3:30 p.m.

*Director Bernadett Tuza-Ritter will be joining a post-screening Q&A.*

Festival Theme:

**Trapped No Longer**



The unconventional subject of *A Woman Captured* — 53 year-old Marish — has spent the past ten years of her life in Hungary serving the needs of her offscreen captor, Eta. As revelations about the titular victim accrue over this film's three-month shooting period, director Bernadett Tuza-Ritter makes several bold stylistic choices, opting to focus her handheld camera on the wizened features and bandaged broken arm of Marish while leaving Eta's face, if not her threatening voice, out of the picture. Repeatedly subjected to physical and verbal abuse by the unseen woman, Marish is trapped inside a living nightmare. However, lest viewers think that all is darkness and despair, a sunnier side to Marish's story begins to emerge. Unlike many other directors of human trafficking films, Tuza-Ritter is not a bystander passively recording the abuses heaped on her subject, but instead humanely intervenes to help Marish — big-hearted, good-humored, and surprisingly hopeful despite her dire circumstances and low self-esteem — make a life-changing decision.

## Midnight Family

Director: Luke Lorentzen  
USA | Mexico | 2019 | 120 min  
Colorado premiere

**Sunday, April 7**

**The Lyric**  
**6:30 p.m.**

*Director Luke Lorentzen will be joining a post-screening Q&A session via Skype.*

**Encore Screening**

**Thursday, April 11**  
**The Lyric**  
**6:30 p.m.**

**Festival Theme:**

**Medical Teams Race to the Scene**



Focusing on members of the immensely likeable Ochoa family (patriarch Fernando and his sons Juan, Manuel, and Josue), this high-octane documentary reveals how their for-profit ambulance company is caught in an ethical bind whenever patients are unable to pay for their services. Tagging along with the Ochoas as they barrel down Mexico City's streets at breakneck speed, director Luke Lorentzen brings an electrifying jolt to the screen each time a call for help comes in. The family races against time as well as other emergency responders, and the filmmaker's initially humorous presentation of cutthroat competition begins to denote the systemic problems plaguing Mexico's health-care system, wherein questionable financial transactions (including police bribes) are now part of the equation. *Midnight Family* spells out the fact that fewer than 50 publicly-funded ambulances serve a population of approximately nine million. Thus, the readiness of some people to relieve their government of its care-giving responsibilities can be interpreted as their willingness to make money from the ailments, misfortunes, and vulnerabilities of others — a truly unsettling proposition that will sound eerily familiar to some stateside audiences.

## Eldorado

Director: Markus Imhoof  
Switzerland | Italy | Austria | 2018 | 91 min  
Colorado premiere

Friday, April 12

The Lyric

4:30 p.m.

*Please see our website for  
post-screening Q&A details.*

Festival Theme:

**Distinguished Documentarians**



Taking its title from the mythical place where untold riches are thought to await the bravest of explorers, Markus Imhoof's *Eldorado* reveals the sad truth behind superficially uplifting stories of benevolent protection on the part of various EU nations. The Swiss director, a pioneering figure in the history of nonfiction cinema, distinguishes his work from other refugee films by incorporating his own childhood reminiscences. As a young boy during the Second World War, Imhoof witnessed his family take in an eight-year-old girl from Italy, transported to Zurich by the Red Cross. Named Giovanna, she became a touchstone in the filmmaker's haunted memory of war and familial separation, sparking his present-day efforts to extend the same generosity of spirit to current political refugees and economic migrants whose inalienable right to protection is being ignored by many of the world's governments.

## Letter from Masanjia

Director: Leon Lee  
Canada | China | 2018 | 115 min

Friday, April 12

The Lyric

7:30 p.m.

*Director Leon Lee will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Hye Seung Chung.*

Festival Themes:

**Animating the Lives of Others**

**Trapped No Longer**



Leon Lee's extraordinary documentary uncovers the often-neglected connections between political persecution in authoritarian countries and the international division of labor that has sustained Western consumer culture. The film begins in Oregon, where Julie Keith, a mother of three young children, explains how she found an SOS note in a Halloween decoration purchased at K-Mart. The letter, she soon learned, was written by a Chinese prisoner at the Masanjia Labor Camp and urges its receiver to contact human rights organizations to report the acts of torture. Moved by this desperate plea, Julie attempts to bring the unknown prisoner's plight to the world's attention and achieves that goal when her story goes viral. The emotional impact of what follows — an eye-opening look at what the author of that note, Sun Yi, experienced at Masanjia — cannot be adequately expressed in writing, and must be experienced as the director of this film intended: through Sun Yi's own spoken testimonies as well as the evocative black-and-white animation that Lee employs to fill in the gaps of his protagonist's shocking story.

## 2019 Selected Short Films Block

Saturday, April 13, Lory Student Center Theatre at 10:30 a.m.

### Edgecombe

Crystal Kayiza | USA | 2018 | 15 min | Colorado premiere

Crystal Kayiza's poetic group portrait of the titular North Carolina county goes deeper than a standard journalistic account of racialized poverty to show an African American population thriving in their rural surroundings and mutual support for one another.

### Los Comandos

Josh Bennett and Juliana Schatz Preston | USA | El Salvador | 2017 | 28 min | Colorado premiere

Joshua Bennett and Juliana Schatz-Preston's film takes its title from the name of a volunteer team of first responders in El Salvador. Comprised of teenagers and young adults, the team embodies the kind of everyday heroism that is taken for granted in most societies.

### Scenes from a Dry City

Francois Verster and Simon Wood | USA | South Africa | 2018 | 12 min | Colorado premiere

Set in Cape Town and cross-cutting between police crackdowns on illegal car washes and mass protests

against the government's unfair policies, this film shows how the water crisis is affecting different communities and dredging up the racial inequalities of South Africa's past.

### Our Song to War

Juanita Onzaga | Belgium | Colombia | 2018 | 15 min

Juanita Onzaga's hauntingly beautiful film evokes that traumatic past of Colombia's Bojayá Massacre (which took place on May 2, 2002) through the eyes of children, who share their stories of familial loss and communal healing.

### Trapped in the City of a Thousand Mountains

David Verbeek | Netherlands | China | 2018 | 23 min | North American premiere

Although surveillance cameras make it difficult for residents — especially young, heavily tattooed rap artists — to engage in what the Chinese government calls "morally suspect" behavior, the underground club scene in Chongqing, China, provides an avenue for the city's subculture to flourish.

## ACT Human Rights Film Festival Short Films

The following short films have each been paired with a feature length film throughout the festival and will not screen during the selected short films block occurring on Saturday, April 13.

### lan

Director: Abel Goldfarb | Argentina | 2018 | 9 min  
Colorado premiere

The eponymous main character in this CGI-animated film is a young boy born with cerebral palsy, whose commitment to making friends on a school playground is tested by ostracism and teasing. Running a scant nine minutes, *lan* has the emotional impact of a film ten times its length.

Screening before *New Homeland*  
Saturday, April 13  
Lory Student Center Theatre  
4:30 p.m.

### Three Boys Manzanar

Director: Preeti Deb | USA | 2018 | 7 min  
Colorado premiere

Now in his seventies, Mas Ooka is reunited with the two other Japanese American men (Bob Takamoto and Bruce Sansui) who, years ago, were photographed standing together behind barbed-wire fencing at the Manzanar internment camp.

Screening before *The Accountant of Auschwitz*  
Saturday, April 6  
The Lyric  
4:30 p.m.

### Western Collections

Director: Aaron Burns | USA | 2017 | 10 min

An intimate conversation with retired geologist Jude Gassaway, whose collection of objects representing the American West is just one facet of her endlessly fascinating, unexpectedly revealing story.

Screening before *¡Las Sandinstas!*  
Saturday, April 6  
The Lyric  
11:00 a.m.

## The Waldheim Waltz

Director: Ruth Beckermann  
Austria | 2018 | 93 min

Saturday, April 13

Lory Student Center Theatre  
1:30 p.m.

*Film editor Dieter Pichler will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A moderated by Scott Diffrient.*

Festival Themes:

**Distinguished Documentarians**

**The Holocaust: A Wound That Never Heals**



As the daughter of Jewish survivors of the Holocaust, Austrian activist-filmmaker Ruth Beckermann was understandably nervous when, in the mid-1980s, former U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim threw his hat into the ring in the lead-up to her country's presidential elections. The outwardly genial politician, whose ties to the Nazi party during the Second World War had long been a topic of public debate, was revealed to have been more directly involved with murderous anti-partisan activities against the Jews than he had earlier claimed. Although Waldheim maintained that he was the target of a slanderous smear campaign, journalists dug up shocking aspects of his Nazi past that only strengthened the devotion of his most ardent supporters. *The Waldheim Waltz* stitches together Beckermann's own handheld video recordings of the man giving speeches to an easily swayed electorate that — engulfed in a rise tide of anti-Semitism and nationalism — seems to be suffering from collective historical amnesia. This expertly edited documentary bristles with the urgency of a work made yesterday and serves as a timely reminder that the fervor of reactionary politics is perhaps as strong today as it was during the Nazis' initial rise to power.

## New Homeland

Director: Barbara Kopple  
USA | Canada | 2018 | 93 min  
Colorado premiere

**Saturday, April 13**

**Lory Student Center Theatre**  
**4:30 p.m.**

*This screening will begin with the 10-minute film Ian.  
See page 21 for film summary.*

*Film subject Mike Sladden will be in attendance  
for a post-screening Q&A.*

**Festival Themes:**

**Distinguished Documentarians**

**The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Kid**



This latest film directed by two-time Academy Award-winner Barbara Kopple focuses on the children of Syrian and Iraqi immigrants who have found a new home in Canada. Five boys in particular — Mohammad Darewish from Aleppo, brothers Mohammad and Kasem Zin from Amuda, and brothers Hameed and Omer Majeed from Baghdad — are the subjects of this captivating documentary, which puts a human face on the current refugee crisis and shows the lengths to which Mike Sladden (director of *Camp Pathfinder* in Algonquin Park, Ontario) will go in order to make these kids' first foray into the great outdoors as enriching as possible. Scenes of the precocious youngsters canoeing, hiking, and swimming are sure to bring a smile of recognition to any viewer who has ever suffered a bad case of tick bites or poison ivy rashes. Buoyant and emotionally uplifting, but as deep and wide as the lake that our adolescent heroes cross in their metaphorical journey toward adulthood, Kopple's career-topping film promises laughter and tears in equal amounts.

## Words from a Bear

Director: Jeffrey Palmer  
USA | 2019 | 85 min  
Colorado premiere

**Saturday, April 13**

**Lory Student Center Theatre**

**7: 30 p.m.**

**Reception immediately following**

*Film subjects Dr. N. Scott Momaday and his daughter Jill Momaday will be in attendance for a post-screening Q&A with Ty Smith, director of Colorado State University's Native American Cultural Center.*

**Festival Theme:**

**Poetry Breaks Things: Writers and Revolutions**



Director Jeffrey Palmer gives us an affectionate tribute to Navarre Scott Momaday, the widely admired author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *House Made of Dawn* (1968) and several other important publications. Born during the Great Depression to Kiowa and Cherokee parents, Momaday nurtured his abilities as a writer from an early age and learned the value of developing a personal, respectful connection to the land and its finite resources. Fittingly, the filmmaker peppers *Words from a Bear* with panoramic landscapes, which are visual extensions of Momaday's writings, passages of which are read by the author in a distinctive timbre that is truly transporting. In addition to mesmerizing shots of the Great Plains, a mixture of elements — black-and-white photographs of Momaday as a child, recordings of him participating in the Civil Rights movement, animated sequences inspired by his paintings, and interviews with Jeff Bridges and Robert Redford — are brought to bear on a bear-like man who, though physically restricted to a wheelchair, stands tall among America's most respected literary giants.

## Harry Belafonte Resistance Through Art Award Awardee N. Scott Momaday

Each year, the ACT Human Rights Film Festival honors the work of someone who has demonstrated the important role that artistic and cultural productions play in challenging discriminatory attitudes or repressive systems of thought and action. Named after the internationally recognized American actor, singer, and social activist Harry Belafonte, this award will be given to an individual who harnesses the power of literature, music, painting, theatre, and other types of expressive communication to bring about political change locally, nationally, and/or globally.

This year's Harry Belafonte Resistance Through Art Award goes to Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist, scholar and poet, N. Scott Momaday. Hailed as "the dean of American Indian writers" by *The New York Times*, Momaday crafts in language and imagery majestic landscapes of a sacred culture.



The first Native American to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his novel, *House Made of Dawn*, Momaday was named a UNESCO Artist for Peace and Oklahoma's poet laureate, and a recipient of the 2007 National Medal of Arts for "introducing millions worldwide to the essence of Native American culture."

Momaday is the founder of The Buffalo Trust, dedicated to the preservation of Native American culture and heritage. He has held tenured teaching posts at UC Berkeley, Stanford University and the University of Arizona and received an honorary Doctor of Human Letters from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

**Thank You For Your Support**



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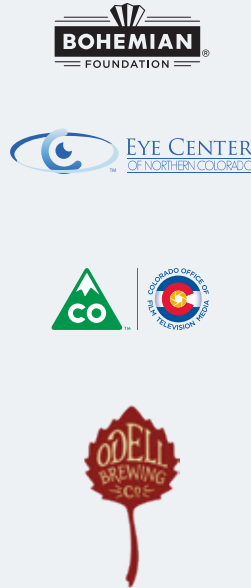
**ANTHROPOLOGY | ECONOMICS | SOCIOLOGY**

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ACT Human Rights Film Festival is produced by the Department of Communication Studies in the College of Liberal Arts at Colorado State University. We are deeply grateful to our college and university sponsors for their generous support of the 2019 festival.

## Thank You For Your Support

The 2019 ACT Human Rights Film Festival has been made possible thanks to the generous support of the following business, community, and media sponsors.



## From the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

“...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world...”

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December, 10 1948  
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