

FOCUS WALES 2026 FILM FESTIVAL

2026 Film Festival **PROGRAMME**



Cymru Greadigol
Creative Wales



Open to all FOCUS Wales
wristband holders,
subject to capacity

THURSDAY 7TH MAY, 2026

Grove Park Theatre

Official Short Film Competition

10:00 AM – 11:00 AM: DRAMA 1

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM: COMEDY 1

12:00 PM – 01:00 PM: DOCUMENTARY 1

01:00 PM – 02:00 PM: THRILLER

02:00 PM – 03:00 PM: TALENT TALK: We Made a £70,000 Welsh Short with Film4: "Flock"

03:00 PM – 04:00 PM: ANIMATION 1

04:00 PM – 05:00 PM: DRAMA 2

Odeon Wrexham

Official Feature Film Competition

05:00 PM - 06:00 PM - Red Carpet Reception.

06:00 PM - 08:30 PM - Madfabulous + Q&A

08:30 PM - 10:40 PM - Aisha Can't Fly Away

HWB @ Queen's Square

10:00 PM - 00:00 AM - Filmmaker Afterparty.

Nearby Venues

00:00 AM - 02:00 AM - Music Festival Continues.

DRAMA 1 BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

10am-11am - Grove Park Theatre

The best new DRAMA Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 15+ Strong language, mental health issues.

1. **I Wanna Fly** by Canwen Liu

A boy born with wings dreams of flying. As he grows older, his small, palm-sized wings remain unchanged and his dream of flying seems impossible.

"a tour de force of a film that doles out humour, bravery, conviction, persistence in the eyes of adversity while handing the viewer buckets of empathy for the protagonist!"

2. **An Excess Baggage** by Myriam Garcia Marienstras

Sophie hides her unease within the intense bond she shares with her daughter, Lila. When Lila leaves for summer camp, Sophie finds herself alone for the first time, overwhelmed by their separation.

3. **Finding Calm** by Chris Brake

Christmas is a time for family. But for first-time father Sam, it's also a time for adjustment as he tries and fails to connect with his newborn son, George.

"an amazing piece of work!"



COMEDY 1

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

11am-12pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new COMEDY Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 15+ Strong language.

1. Stroke of Genius by Karel Van Bellingen

A calm morning spent waiting for a letter, contrasts with the turmoil on a cosmic scale caused by the waiting man's existential ambivalence about his legacy and purpose.

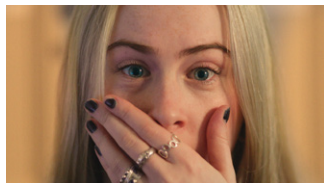
2. Deli Meat by BRICK

Two inept criminals, Cammy and Coops, are tasked with burying their first body in the woods but find themselves at loggerheads when they realise that they've only brought one spade.

"...it's paced just right as the dialogue keeps it sweetly darkly comedic."

3. Bowl by John Kelbie

Arthur is an elderly, quick-witted, gay man who has recently been diagnosed with arthritis. Upon finding out that his old foe and competitor Norma is playing in the upcoming lawn bowls charity match, Arthur seeks the chance to prove himself.



4. Full Tank by Jonathan Williams

A getaway driver must wait three minutes for a gang of burglars to return to his car before making their escape. There's just one problem... he's absolutely desperate for a piss.

DOCUMENTARY 1

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

12pm-1pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new DOCUMENTARY Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: PG

1. Hollow Mountain by Mark Griffiths

Hollow Mountain explores the effects of quarry blasting, silica dust, and the steady loss of green space surrounding the community of Glyncoch in South Wales.

It raises urgent questions about harmful decisions made by those in power, and the lasting consequences for both the fragile landscape and the people living in its shadow.

2. Deffro'r Bardd Cwsg by Gwion Aled Williams

A documentary about Ellis Wynne (March 7, 1671 – July 13, 1734) - a Welsh clergyman and author of one of the most important and influential pieces of Welsh language literature.

3. The Earth Beneath Margaret's Feet by Lisa Smith

Through the potato, Romani director Lisa Smith explores her grandmother's memories, uncovering a network of undocumented ancestral stopping places from her family's nomadic past.



THRILLER

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

1pm-2pm - Grove Park Theatre

This section goes immediately into our Panel with the creators of 'Flock'
The best new THRILLER Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 15+ Strong language, drug use, mental health issues.

1. Scope by Emma Moffat

A multilayered metaphor for OCD: With the help of her therapist, Antonia must find out why she has developed an extreme obsession with circles before it's too late.

2. Grandma is Thirsty

by Kris Carr

All George wants is to stop getting pushed around by the local bullies. So when a pair of weird twins offer to introduce him to their grandma — who can “make him big & strong” — he jumps at the chance. One problem: she's 600 years old and keeps herself young the unnatural way... by sucking the youth out of kids.

3. THE PEARL COMB by Ali Cook

In 1893, a fisherman's wife becomes the first person to cure someone of tuberculosis. A doctor, intent on proving a woman's place is in the home and not practising medicine, investigates - only to discover the source of her unearthly power.



"This was perfect cinema. No notes whatsoever. I wish it were a feature. 10/10. Stunning."

4. The Third Dream

by Mohammadhossein Nikzad

A dreamer resists interrogation by a relentless doctor determined to extract the truth about his dream by coercive use of psychoanalysis. As pressure deepens, memories are altered, erased, and rewritten at will. With no escape from the authority's reach, he realizes the truth was never his to protect, and confession was inevitable from the beginning.

TALENT TALK

2pm-3pm - Grove Park Theatre

WE MADE A £70,000 WELSH SHORT WITH FILM4: "FLOCK"

DIRECTOR, PRODUCER AND CO-PRODUCER WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

Hear directly from the team behind “Flock,” created as part of Film 4's Future Takes Fund. This event includes a special screening of the film which recently premiered at the BFI London Film Festival.

Mac Nixon - Writer/Director

Matt Ashwell - Producer

Scott Piggott - Co-producer

Moderated by Bablu Shikdar

FUTURE TAKES



ANIMATION 1

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

3pm-4pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new ANIMATION Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 18+ for 'Nono' which contains strong violence

Other films **12+** Mental health issues.

1. **Nono** ⁽²⁸⁾ by Aerin Wu

After his birthday party, Nono waves goodbye to his friends. He's left with a strange emptiness as things start to feel not quite right.

2. **Extinction** by Molly Allen

A dinner party for the rich and elite spirals into bloody chaos when their greed can no longer be satiated.

3. **Last Lines** by Greg McLeod

On the edge of the galaxy two friends meet for their morning coffee. Using the last lines of Shakespeare's plays, they share musings about life, love, loneliness, and conflict. They ask the burning question of what is an ending and what comes afterwards?

4. **Dobrina** by Hannes Rall

Lotte Reiniger meets Sergio Leone in this animated short, where desire burns as bright as the desert sun.

5. **Fawn** by Molly Mayhew

Following the sudden passing of her parents, Fawn is forced to return to a house she hasn't called home in a very long time. As painful memories begin to seep through, Fawn is thrown onto the difficult path of reconnecting with a past she thought she had left behind.

"...it pulls you into the story...the texture and feel of the animations gloriously dovetail with the rough ripples and dents of past memories and events that stay with us long into adulthood."

6. **Troll Story** by Oliver Smith

A speculative fiction animation about an internet troll who only trolls other trolls. A social commentary that deals with misinformation, polarisation and how cutting-edge technology is threatening a post-truth world. There are more than fifty styles of animation in this film, all of which have been made by a single artist, over four years.



7. **Brain Space** by Laura Tofarides

Propelled into her own mind, Rhi explores the thoughts, fears and impulses that shape our internal world. When her inner child is threatened by the shadows of her own trauma her fear turns to anger & she must fight back to regain control. From desperation to acceptance, she learns to choose life.

8. **Crybaby** by Eleri Edwards

Carys is moving out of her childhood home and finds out she is autistic through a phone call. Confronted by her past as to why no one noticed, her negative internal voice will be her greatest challenge.

9. **Denmark** by Robert Petrie

In Downtown LA Heat, worlds collide with an Epic heist gone wrong. Two ex-cons come face to face with an imperial reckoning.

DRAMA 2

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

4pm-5pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new DRAMA Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 18+ for 'Not That Bad' | Other films U.

1. Linda, Linda!

by Kiyani Agadjani

Former bank robber, Linda (82 years old), longs for her turbulent past. When one day her former partner-in-crime Tony (80 years old) reappears, she is faced with a choice: do one last job or to send him to hell.

2. Nativity Scene by Felipe Bibian

On Christmas Eve, Dejour, a former resistance fighter against the military dictatorship, gathers with his family in the backyard. A water gun gift leads Dejour to denounce the absurdity of giving a child a weapon.

3. Not That Bad ⁽¹⁸⁺⁾

by Yana Danilova

An intimate exploration of the moment a woman begins to see her past through a different lens, as ordinary memories quietly shift in meaning during everyday encounters.

"A beautifully directed film that makes its mark and delivers its message - very effective and very visceral!"



"Literally 10s across the board. Flawless. Beautifully paced with impactful messaging."

BAFTA-CYMRU QUALIFYING FEATURE FILM COMPETITION

Thursday 7th May, 2026. Odeon Wrexham

BAFTA-Cymru Qualifying Feature Film Competition at Odeon Wrexham.

Guidance Madfabulous rated 12A. Moderate sex references, upsetting scenes.

Aisha Can't Fly Away guidance: 18+.

Red Carpet Reception 5pm-6pm

A red carpet reception with complimentary drinks from Silver Circle Distillery + a special Madfabulous display.

Madfabulous ^(12A) + Q&A

6pm-8.30pm

Madfabulous - directed by Celyn Jones and starring Callum Scott Howells. North Wales Premiere.

DIRECTOR AND TALENT WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

Henry Paget - the 5th Marquess of Angelsey, squanders his inheritance in this spirited and vibrant cinematic romp. Also starring Ruby Stokes and Rupert Everett.

Rated 12A. 1 hour 48 minutes. The film begins at 6pm.

Please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Seat reservation or ticket required for attendance. A 'rush line' will be in operation for anyone without a reservation. Any empty seats will be given away 10 minutes before the film starts.

Aisha Can't Fly Away ⁽¹⁸⁺⁾

8.30pm-10.40pm

Aisha Can't Fly Away - Directed by Morad Mostafa and starring Buliana Simon. Wales Premiere.

This deeply engaging, cinematic portrait of a carer struggling to balance the demands of her life in Cairo premiered at the Cannes Film Festival.

Also starring Ziad Zaza, Mamdouh Saleh, Maya Mohamed.

Guidance 15+. 2 hours 11 minutes.

The film begins at 8.30pm. Please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Seat reservation or ticket required for attendance. A 'rush line' will be in operation for anyone without a reservation. Any empty seats will be given away 10 minutes before the film starts.



THURSDAY FILMMAKER AFTERPARTY

HWB @ Queen's Square

Filmmaker Afterparty

Join us for drinks, networking and dancing,
courtesy of Silver Circle Distillery.

Live Music Continues, various venues 0000-0200

The festival continues late into the night in various
venues across Wrexham City Centre.

SILVER
CIRCLE



FRIDAY 8TH MAY, 2026

Grove Park Theatre

Official Short Film Competition

10:00 AM – 10:45 AM: OPEN CATEGORY

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM: DRAMA 3

12:00 PM – 01:00 PM: COMEDY 2

01:00 PM – 02:00 PM: DOCUMENTARY 2

02:00 PM – 03:00 PM: TALENT TALK: We Made Docs with
Doc Society and The Uncertain Kingdom.

03:00 PM – 04:00 PM: EXPERIMENTAL

04:00 PM – 05:00 PM: ANIMATION 2

05:00 PM – 05:45 PM: MUSIC VIDEOS

Odeon Wrexham

Official Feature Film Competition

05:00 PM - 06:00 PM - Red Carpet Reception.

06:00 PM - 08:30 PM - Effi o Blaenau + Q&A

08:30 PM - 09:30 PM - Awards Ceremony

HWB @ Queen's Square

10:00 PM - 00:00 AM - Filmmaker Afterparty.

Nearby Venues

00:00 AM - 03:00 AM - Music Festival Continues.

OPEN CATEGORY BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

10am-10.45am - Grove Park Theatre

The best new OPEN CATEGORY Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance 15+

1. **Making Beauty** by Tammy Salzl

A young artist tries to beautify the world. But in the wake of loss and change, her pursuit of perfection takes a savage turn.

2. **Spoken Movement Family Honour** by Daniel Gurton

Dance & movement. In a British-Ghanaian household bound by tradition and religion, a young girl lives under the oppressive control of her abusive father. At the family dinner table, heated arguments reveal the deep rift between them as they confront the scars of their shared history.

3. **FANTASMA** by Mikey Slavich

Movement, fashion, music and landscape. Set in the fleeting twilight before its day. Inviting both legend and future generation. Within the silent desert...

4. **RING RING** by Adrian León

A grieving son buys an old phone from an antique shop in order to talk to his dead mother.



DRAMA 3

10.45am-12pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new DRAMA Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 18+ for 'If Bird's Believed in God' | Other films PG.

1. **If Birds Believed in God**⁽¹⁸⁾ by Samer Saifan

A Palestinian man strives to be a photographer in New York City, but experiences surreal psychological visions as he struggles with generational trauma.

2. **Finn** by Sullivan Tarrant

Two young boys, Indy and Finn, bond over imaginative filmmaking adventures in the forest of their childhood. As separation looms, their bond is tested, forcing them to confront the bittersweet truths of growing up and letting go.

"Understated and beautiful."

3. **Hariksee** by Eva Rini May Cragg

A couple spends their summer in the forest. He tries to catch a fish while she jollies around him full of love and life.

4. **Big Steps** by Junbo Qiu

Six-year-old Sammy was living a carefree life - until his mother gave him a gift that quietly prepared him for a world without her.

"A simple story brilliantly told. I needed tissues!"

COMEDY 2

12pm-1pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new COMEDY Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: PG

1. **Bulb** by Guy Taylor

This family only owns one lightbulb.

2. **The Man That I Wave At** by Ben S Hyland

A man has an existential crisis trying to work out who the mysterious man is that he waves at.

3. **The Quackening** by James Button

A grumpy Welshman reluctantly visits his grandmother, only to discover she has only gone and got herself cursed! So now he needs to bloody save her (and the world) from a demon duck...before midnight.



4. **Collage** by Marius Conrotto

A girl who works in a museum tries to convince another co-worker that two visitors are flirting. And how does she know? Scientific studies say that there are six signs that show one person's attraction to another.

5. **Van Kampen & The Mosquito** by Scott Hurren

A seasoned hitman is forced to mentor his boss's chaotic, selfie obsessed, nepo baby-turned assassin intern in a warehouse stakeout.

DOCUMENTARY 2

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

1pm-2pm - Grove Park Theatre

This section goes immediately into our Panel with the creators of 'Other Life' & Tŷ Unnos. The best new DOCUMENTARY Short Films from Wales and around the world. Guidance: PG

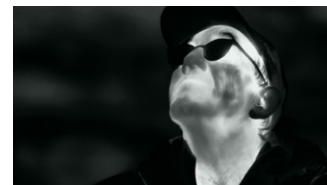
1. **On Beyond Fences** by Lara Jacqueline Hartzbusch, Tom Donohue, Jack Kudas, Wes Smith and Silvia Sonntag

A rare, intimate look inside Maine State Prison, where efforts to reform the historically brutal institution (the basis for Stephen King's novella and the feature film, "The Shawshank Redemption") have dramatically shifted the prison culture, the way "residents" do their time and, ultimately, how they return to their communities.

"...thought-provoking, positive and a testament to a correction facility and its staff members...which is the film's driving force."

2. **Shepherd Boy** by Joao Queiroga

Left to fend for himself on the outskirts of Doha, a dog named Shepherd Boy must navigate the harsh desert that has become his new home in a fight for survival.



3. **Other Life** by Tom Tennant and Theo Tennant

Mike and Emlyn, best friends and UFO investigators, cruise along the roads of South Wales in a multi-coloured van. They interview individuals who have encountered the unexplainable; from shimmering orbs, to huge spacecrafts, to cascading beams of light. Their mission is to document these sightings in an effort to investigate what they could mean and where these phenomena come from.

This section will be followed by a panel with Tom and Theo, to discuss making the film.

TALENT TALK

2pm-3pm - Grove Park Theatre

WE MADE DOCS WITH DOC SOCIETY AND THE UNCERTAIN KINGDOM

DIRECTORS WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

Hear directly from the team behind 'Other Life,' funded through the Uncertain Kingdom and 'Tŷ Unnos,' funded through BFI Doc Society. Filmmakers will share their experience and process of working with the funders and their teams to create the films.

Theo Tennant & Tom Tennant - Directors of Other Life

Lily Tiger - Co-Director of Tŷ Unnos & Assistant Producer of Other Life

Moderated by Bablu Shikdar



**THE
UNCERTAIN
KINGDOM**



EXPERIMENTAL BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

3pm-4pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new EXPERIMENTAL Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 15+ Drug use, adult themes.

1. **Blondi** by Jack Salvadori

Can a dog still be man's best friend if that man is the Führer? Blondi explores the bizarre bond between Hitler and his beloved German Shepherd. From eating the crumbs under the table at the Führer's birthday, to living in the confinement of the bunker.



2. **Eclisse** by Saul Sulway

A weathered man drifts through hallucination and memory as the ghost of his past haunts the darkness he can no longer escape.

3. **Water Into Wine** by Ruby Smith-Brown

Water Into Wine is a Welsh-language experimental film that explores addiction among young people. A young woman awakes in a dream world, in which her alcoholism surrounds her and as she is confronted by her addiction, she realises her connections to childhood, heritage and language may offer her an escape.

4. **Insaneness** by Tian Ding

Ding Yi, a graduate who was locked down, could only peek into the outside world through the window, and was accidentally attracted by Ji Yu, a nurse who lived opposite, and the peeping of Ji Yu made his spirit and feelings more and more crazy.

ANIMATION 2

BAFTA CYMRU-QUALIFYING SHORT FILM COMPETITION

4pm-5pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new ANIMATION Short Films from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: U. Suitable for all.

1. **Dad Said** by Livia May

Young Freya loves her dad, even though he doesn't always give the same amount of love back. By accepting herself for who she is, she learns how to break free from her father's opinion.

2. **On Saint Nicholas' Eve** by Emy Mirel Ivasca

After seeing a man lying in the snow, a boy recalls a Saint Nicholas night spent with his father years before. Playing with his father takes an unexpected turn, while his dream toy leaves a bitter aftertaste.

3. **Gibbous** by Ang Yi Benet

A mother gibbon tries to rescue her baby from a mysterious supernatural light that plagues the jungle during the night.

4. **Spooky** by Adeola Lawal

A young child feels disconnected from her parents and drawn into themselves and technology, until an unexpected house guest shakes up their routine.

5. **From Jazz to Jackboots** by Justin Stephenson

An experimental animated dance film exploring the Nazi regime's methodical restriction of jazz through their "10 Rules for Dance Bands."

6. **Clay Bird** by Kiran Bhakta Joshi

A poignant tale of Sichu, a nine-year-old girl and her dotting potter grandfather. The young adolescent Sichu's relationship with her grandfather is shaken when her more affluent classmates ridicule her potter grandfather.

MUSIC VIDEO

5pm-5.45pm - Grove Park Theatre

The best new MUSIC VIDEOS from Wales and around the world.

Guidance: 15+ Strong language, drug use, mental health issues.

1. **Please, Mr Preacher** by Tamudaishe Ngwaru, Kudakwashe Chinho and Thabiso Nyoni

A visual presentation of an original song entitled "Please, Mr Preacher" by Nyasha Munashe, a Zimbabwean hip-hop and spoken word artist who plied his trade in Cardiff for 5 years.

"It is shot wonderfully, paced well, and well directed."

2. **Tell 'Em** by Terry Blade

Down in a gorge where time bends, ancestors meet beneath ancient trees. Their shared rite rises like resistance, built from soil, voice, and bloodline, proof that life holds shape even when broken.

3. **Paint a Mirror** by Nicole Mesri

In a world dominated by greed, technology, and autonomous machines, humanity has slowly lost its voice and its freedom.



4. Smoldering-Smoldering

by Ilya Noyabrev

This song is about the faith of the Ukrainian people in victory and a bright future, and illustrates our present.

5. Chokin' by Kai Straw

A mysterious figure pulls time backward and a suicide is undone. What was broken is made whole, what was wounded is healed, and lives are restored. Having been pulled backward through time and made a witness to their own death along with all it caused, this person who gave up their life is forced to confront the hate they feel for themselves and the love they feel for their family.

6. I'm Back by Ilya Noyabrev

A heartfelt song about coming back home after a long absence. The singer reflects on the warmth and familiarity of her homeland, where every breath feels easier and every moment more meaningful.

7. Modern Man - MORN

by Benjamin Pritchard, Felix Lawson, Luca Lawson

Young Welsh post-punk outfit MORN play in a dark field amongst bursting fireworks and accompanying stop motion animation - an impressive black and white visualisation for the piledriving Modern Man.

8. Fleur De Lys - Fi

by Robin Abas

A music video shot in the Wellmans Working Mens club in Llangefni, Anglesey, taking some influence from Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights the video aims to celebrate the culture of the location and features the band playing multiple roles.

9. Leon Rosen: Wyld Canopies

by Victoria Livingstone

A retro-inspired narrative recounting the "Artist's Hero's Journey" of finding one's passion and then putting that passion to good purpose.

BAFTA-CYMRU QUALIFYING FEATURE FILM COMPETITION

Friday 8th May, 2026. Odeon Wrexham

Guidance: 15 Strong language, sex.

Red Carpet Reception

5pm-6pm

A red carpet reception with complimentary drinks from Silver Circle Distillery.

Effi o Blaenau + Q&A

6pm-8.30pm

Effi o Blaenau - Directed by Marc Evans and starring Leisa Gwenllian. Welsh Premiere.

DIRECTOR AND TALENT WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

A vibrant, coming of age story set in Blaenau Ffestiniog. The trajectory of Effi's life changes when she encounters former soldier Lee on a night out in a Llandudno nightclub.

Also starring Tom Rhys Harries, Owen Alun and Nel Rhys Lewis. Guidance 15+. 1 hour 30 minutes.

The film begins at 6pm.

Please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Seat reservation or ticket required for attendance. A 'rush line' will be in operation for anyone without a reservation. Any empty seats will be given away 10 minutes before the film starts.

Awards Ceremony

8.30pm-9.30pm

Join us for the 2026 Film Festival Awards Ceremony, where we will crown the winners of our feature film competition and main short film categories.

Please arrive early to avoid disappointment. Seat reservation or ticket required for attendance. A 'rush line' will be in operation for anyone without a reservation. Any empty seats will be given away 10 minutes before the ceremony starts.



FRIDAY FILMMAKER AFTERPARTY

Friday 8th May, 2026. HWB @ Queen's Square

Filmmaker Afterparty

10pm-12am.

Join us for drinks, networking and dancing
courtesy of Silver Circle Distillery.

Live Music Continues

various venues - 12am-3am

The festival continues late into the night in various
venues across Wrexham City Centre.

SILVER CIRCLE



SATURDAY 9TH MAY, 2026

Grove Park Theatre

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM: AWENYDD 1

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM: AWENYDD 2

2:00 PM – 3:00 PM: TALENT TALK: We Made a Wrexham Short Film
with Welsh TV Legends.

3:00 PM – 5:30 PM: AWENYDD 3

5:30 PM – 6:30 PM: AWENYDD AWARDS CEREMONY

AWENYDD

AWENYDD is a new strand of our BAFTA-Cymru Qualifying Short
Film Competition, highlighting bold and brilliant filmmaking:
locally, nationally and internationally.

AWENYDD 1 WELSH STORIES

10am-12pm - Grove Park Theatre

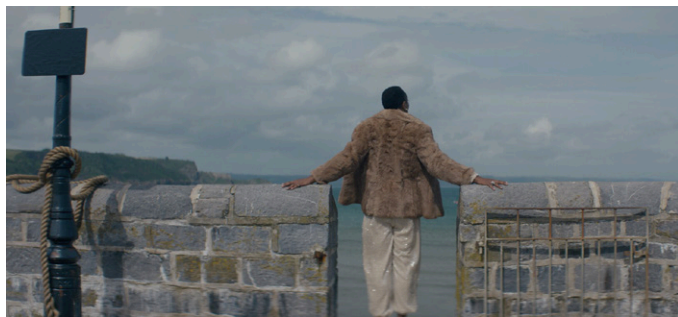
AWNENYDD is a new strand of our BAFTA-Cymru Qualifying Short Film Competition - highlighting bold and brilliant filmmaking.

Guidance: 15+ Strong language, sexual references, mental health issues.

1. Never Never Never by John Sheedy

Drama. In a quaint Welsh fishing village, aspiring drag queen Henrick secretly longs for Arwyn, a fisherman whose quietness masks a storm of emotions. As Henrick dazzles the local stage alongside his mother, Frida, their glittering acts ignite tension with his tradition-bound father, Clive.

"The look, feel and sheer spectacle of the performances tightly move this tale along with vigour and panache!"



2. Mari Lwyd by Charlie Grayson

Documentary. An ancient tradition from South Wales - told from the perspective of the very beings that arrive with the Mari Lwyd every winter solstice.

3. Xcursion by James Malcolm

Dark comedy. Deep in the woods, a camping trip between two friends begins to unravel as light frustrations expose darker truths. *"...the ending is a brilliant hammer blow...nice twist !"*

4. Birthday Boy by Rosa Brooke

Comedy. Rae struggles to survive a disastrous Birthday with their dysfunctional family.

5. Rick On The Roof by Isaac Atkin-Mayne

Documentary. In the mid-2000s, Rick Canty lost his mother and their home in Barry, Wales. Evicted, he climbed onto his roof in protest, remaining there for years. A bittersweet story of one man on a roof who inspired and united a working-class Welsh community. *"Brilliant in its simple portrayal!"*

6. FENCED by Richey Beckett

Comedy/drama. An eccentric couple hashes out the terms of an open relationship while hunting for psychedelic mushrooms in the Welsh hills.

"The dialogue is on point and well delivered by some neat performances by the lead roles."



7. Dreigiau Cymreig Patagonia by Niamh Wynne

Documentary. In their final year of high school, three Argentinean best friends prepare for their last Welsh 'Eisteddfod' competition - but are they ready to say goodbye?

8. PUNCHING BAG by Rob Ayling

Drama. An amateur boxer battles his demons as well as his opponent in what could prove to be the fight of his life.

"Really beautiful film. Handles themes of addiction, self-hatred, perseverance, and mental health really well."

AWENYDD 2: WREXHAM STORIES

12pm-1.30pm - Grove Park Theatre

Films made by local talent. AWNENYDD is a new strand of our BAFTA-Cymru Qualifying Short Film Competition - highlighting bold and brilliant filmmaking. **Guidance:** 15+ Strong language, sexual references, nudity, strong violence.

1. Time to Go

by **Thomas Elliott Griffiths**

Thriller from Wrexham director. A fed-up office worker hatches a meticulous plan to get rid of her corrupt, predatory boss once and for all.



2. Ball Hog by Nate Reeves

One-shot Comedy shot in Wrexham with local talent. A young high schooler recruits her older cousin to get back her stolen football.

3. Madam by Cheryl White

Drama starring Wrexham actor Mark Lewis Jones. Father Donaghy and Father Gill drink and play cards late into the night. As they gamble with their duties, each turn of the card reveals their hidden sins and desires.

*"A tale of saint and sinner...or is it?
...a delight to watch!"*

4. Undertone by Shaun Munro

Tense thriller shot in Wrexham. A sound recordist captures strange sonic phenomena underneath their house and things... escalate from there.

5. The Shape of Absence by Isaac Shieh

Thought provoking movement and music film starring local talent. An exploration of the quiet distances between body, mind, and perception. Through two intimate dance scenes, the film moves through the isolating interior landscapes of mental illness and deafness, while also examining how disability shapes and unsettles identity.

TALENT TALK

2pm-3pm - Grove Park Theatre

WE MADE A WREXHAM SHORT FILM WITH WELSH TV LEGENDS

DIRECTOR AND TALENT WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE.

Hear directly from the team behind 'Box of Frogs' about creating their new short film in Wrexham, starring Matthew Horne and Mark Lewis Jones.

This event will include a special screening of the film, plus a Q&A with the director and producers.

Ian Puleston-Davies - Director.

Dean Fagan and Ruby Snape - Producers.



AWENYDD 3: INTERNATIONAL STORIES

3pm-5.30pm - Grove Park Theatre

AWNENYDD is a new strand of our BAFTA-Cymru Qualifying Short Film Competition - highlighting bold and brilliant filmmaking.

Guidance: 18+ Strong language, mental health issues, sex, nudity.

1. Tulips by Rhys Prichard

Drama. Student filmmaker Sophie accompanies her parents to document her grandfather's last day in his home before being relocated due to dementia. As she films, she becomes confronted by the ethics of creating work that is too close to home.

2. How fast can you eat a pickled egg? by Daniel England

Quirky documentary. The Cock Tavern is no ordinary East London pub. Renowned for its real ales and larger-than-life regulars it also plays host to one of the capital's quirkiest underground traditions: the pickled egg eating competition.

3. The Final Whistle by Ivo Kraan

Moving documentary. As SC Cambuur prepares to leave its iconic home at the Cambuur Stadium for a new arena, The Final Whistle offers an intimate look at the final match played in the historic stadium. But this isn't a film about football—it's about the heart and soul of the supporters who call this place home.

"...beautifully woven together, it's melancholic and that's part of its overall charm...perfectly encapsulates a community..."

4. Out of Hours by Calvin Duffy

Drama. A British Latino bartender is starting his shift when he receives an unsettling visitor.

"...this brings awareness to a new generation and the subject matter is deftly handled."

4. The Anarchist and the Fridge by Yunchang Zhang

Thought-provoking documentary. The Anarchist and The Fridge tells the story of the anarchist who established New York's first free fridge in Bed-Stuy. Now, he sees replenishing the fridge as his duty, using free food to unite the community and challenge the system.

5. Teeth for Tango by Alexandra DEWEZ

Experimental. Walter is a depressed middle aged dentist, plagued by hallucinations and berated by all around him. His only joy is meeting up late at night with others of his ilk for duels to first blood.

6. Irish Son⁽¹⁸⁾ by Tolu Ogunware

Thriller. Deep in the Irish countryside, a lost runner stumbles upon a remote cafe where he meets a charismatic stranger.

7. Two Sinners by Samir Zaidi

Thriller. When Azhar's brother forces him to confront the man responsible for their sister's assault, he is thrust into an agonising choice. Does he follow his deep-rooted disdain for violence, or give in to the overwhelming desire for vengeance? Torn between morality and justice, Azhar's next move will change everything.

8. Gloria by Nikos Mpsouyioukas

Dance and movement. Experience life through the eyes of Gloria, a trans woman and sex worker navigating the streets of contemporary Athens.

9. Carrot Cake by Olive Pascha

Drama. In the Peak District, a birdwatcher's world shifts as she faces the first shadows of early dementia. With her daughter's arrival and a surprising friendship with a young girl, she begins to navigate the fragile terrain of memory and identity.



10. Jasmine. Home. Mother
by Ugnė Skonsmanaitė

On a surreal game show where stories are currency, a woman battles a system that censors her every word, fighting to reclaim the memory of her family, her homeland and the jasmine that once bloomed there.

"...beautiful in its delivery!"

11. Petrol Head
by Patrick Swain and
Jasper Frost

Action drama. Trapped again in his isolated hometown, Jake, struggling with anxiety and agoraphobia, must make a choice: the safety of a life he used to know, or the danger of a high stakes rally club with his friend Yas.

A STATEMENT FROM THE FILM FESTIVAL PROGRAMMER ON THIS YEAR'S SELECTION

This is the dream. It seems to spiral because it leads somewhere, like down a plughole or better yet, into expanses, skies and seas. It steals away. This more immediate and fantastic evolution is what captivates us in film. What makes waking life more 'realistic' is that its twists and turns are rendered more slowly. Recognising this reduction in speed enables a transcendental consciousness: the universe is the projector, there are no main characters, everyone has their own unique perspective on the editing process, everything is in the script.

The credits roll, the next film starts.

I feel blessed to play my role at FOCUS Wales. Congratulations to all of the filmmakers and here's to a successful festival.

- Scott Fitzgerald, Head Programmer
(the man that watches everything).

AWENYDD AWARDS CEREMONY

17:30 - 18:30 Grove Park Theatre

Join us for the 2026 AWENYDD Awards Ceremony, where we will crown the winners of this vibrant, new short film strand for FOCUS Wales.

