

2019 KENDAL MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL FILM AWARDS ANNOUNCED

The winners of the 2019 Kendal Mountain Festival International Film Competition were revealed tonight at a special awards ceremony. In keeping with the central theme of Openness, this year's award took place at the festival's community hub, Basecamp.

Attracting submissions from across the globe, a curated selection of 103 films were judged against eleven competitive categories, including prizes by genre and creative excellence.

Luminaries of the media and outdoor industry formed the judging panel chaired by broadcast journalist Keme Nzerem and including Film Programmer of the European Outdoor Film Tour, Paula Flach; Director of Salt Street Productions, Ed Birch; Adventurer, writer and filmmaker, Jenny Tough and Editor of Canadian climbing publication Grippid Magazine, David Smart.

Jury Chair, Keme Nzerem said: "The theme of this year's festival is "openness", and the films we were honoured to watch and judge encouraged us to expand our own preconceptions and ideas about what it does to the mind, body and soul to play in the outdoors. What would it feel like to have a mobility impairment and play on, and delight in the texture of a forest floor for the very first time? How can you find freedom and adventure if you live in occupied Palestine? How can getting out in nature help recovery from serious depression? How do experienced mountaineers at the top of their game manage and express conflicting approaches to risk when the sh*it hits the fan? Rock climbing - a potentially high stakes game where taking care not just of yourself but your partner is paramount. But what does control and responsibility mean if you lose your sense of sight? I've been chair of the Kendal Mountain Festival International Film competition since 2013 and the range of themes and ideas adventure filmmakers are taking on has never been wider or more thought-provoking. It has produced an amazing array of work that we hope will surprise and entertain experienced adventurers, first-timers, and everyone in between."

For the first time this year, a group of 10 young programmers from the Queen Elizabeth School in Kirkby Lonsdale were invited to select their choice of films.

Jemima Denney, a member of the Youth Programming team said: "The films in our programme have several themes which we thought were important to us as a group of young people. Freedom and the ability to do anything is a crucial aspect, presented alongside the serious political context covered in *Hurdle*. The simplistic enjoyment of nature and the pursuit of individuality also feature in the films we have selected. *Hurdle* will be our last film in the collection, to show an alternative perspective to freedom and what it means to be free. Some of the videos are individuals doing activities because they are free, however the characters of *Hurdle* use their

interest to feel an illusion of freedom. We wanted to ensure that our films were diverse and represented cultures from around the world, because with that comes new perspective. We also felt that environmental issues such as climate change and plastic pollution in the ocean are important to share to continue educating the next generation about what we are doing to our planet. Programming for Kendal Mountain Festival has been an excellent platform to put forward our ideas and viewpoints and create a session that illustrates these ideas.”

The award winners were presented with a trophy sculpted by artist Andy Parkin and cash prizes at what has colloquially become known as the Oscars of the Outdoors.

Attracting crowds of over 18,000 visitors to the town of Kendal in the Lake District UK each year, Kendal Mountain Festival plays host to some of the most fascinating and adventurous speakers, filmmakers and artists from mountain sports, art and culture.

2019 Kendal Mountain Festival Film Awards

Grand Prize Climbing Blind, Dir. Alastair Lee

Judges Special Prize Hurdle, Dir. Michael Rowley

Best Short Film Fear of the Unknown, Dir. Daniel Brereton

Best Environment Film Scenes From A Dry City, Dir. Francois Verster & Simon Wood

Best Mountain Film The Last Mountain, Dir. Dariusz Załuski

Best Adventure and Exploration Home, Dir Jen Randall

Changemaker Award Forest Floor, Dir Julie Cleves & Robbie Syngé

Community and Culture Award Little Miss Sumo, Dir. Matt Kay

Best Climbing The Big Bang, Dir. David Petts

Best Creative One Breath Around the World, Dir Guillaume Néry

Best Action Sport Dream Job, Dir. Katie Burrell, Colleen Gentemann

Honourable Mentions Counter Mapping, Dir Emmanuel Vaughan-Lee, Adam Loftén and Nowt But A Fleeting Thing Dir Dom Bush

The People’s Choice Award is still open for voting and the winner will be announced on Sunday evening. www.kendalmountainfestival.com/vote

Following the announcement earlier in the week of the winners and runners-up of the **Kendal Mountain Festival Photography Competition**, the Grand Prize was tonight revealed as Higher Lands, Iceland by Virgil Reglioni.

Images for the Photo comp can be downloaded [here](#), please ensure full accreditation.

Kendal Mountain Festival takes place annually each November:

For more information visit kendalmountainfestival.com

For all press releases and images visit kendalmountainfestival.com/press

All other media requests contact hetty@bandofbirds.co.uk, 07789074718.

Notes to Editors:

Kendal Mountain Festival is the UK's largest and longest-running gathering of the outdoor community. Sharing the latest stories of adventure, exploration, and achievement through a packed programme of film, literature, visual art and talks. The Basecamp Village, supported by our partners is the lively hub of our fringe festival, with free talks, top outdoor brands, and live music.