

**2011 Colorado Film Festival Announces Award  
Winners**

*Sermiyan Midyat's "Ay Lav Yu" lands Grand Jury Prize  
and Sean Armstrong's "The Country of Strangers" wins  
First Place Screenplay*



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**M**arking a tremendous year for the Colorado Film Festival, 2011's film and screenplay competition winners boast promising talent. This year's spotlight is shared by many first-time filmmakers along with award-winning directors and inspired screenwriters who demonstrate a strong command for their work. Colorado Film Festival congratulates its award-winning filmmakers and screenwriters of 2011.

Jury prizes were awarded to an array of exceptional films - from a searing portrait of a lesbian Marine's personal struggles, to a poignant documentary following elite cyclists during an arduous 100-mile bike race through mountain terrain, to a comic tale of one man's quest to remedy his "naturally small situation."

Other top film winners include remarkable narratives on discovering the meaning of life, resolving inner conflicts, and protecting life's valuables. Meanwhile, CFF's award-winning documentaries offer new perspectives on controversial issues and honor the art of great dance.

Additionally, Colorado Film Festival's Screenplay Competition is proud to have attracted the attention of powerful screenwriters like Sean Armstrong, John Bengel, Carl McLaughlin, Leslie Flannery, and Michael Pomphrey. Their superlative work guides readers through the heart breaking and the light-hearted, through comforting and disturbing times, and through affections both endearing and tumultuous; every penned word, a gripping one.

Colorado Film Festival is happy to announce and share the outstanding projects of our 2011 competition winners and finalists:

**Grand Jury Prize** is awarded to Sermiyan Midyat's *Ay Lav Yu* (Turkey). When Yusuf's 30-year old son Ibrahim returns to his homeland after finishing his military service, he wants to introduce his love Jessica, an American girl he fell in love with, to his family. After Jessica manages to take her family to Tinne to meet Ibrahim's parents, different cultures and philosophies become part of the same comedy.

**Special Jury Prize** is awarded to Regine Richards' *Some Things are Worse than Being Gay* (USA). Leah, a Jewish young woman has decided to come out to her parents and while she expects the worst after telling them the news, her parents and specially her mother overreacts when she learns that her daughter's girlfriend isn't Jewish.

**Jury Prize** is awarded to Joe Arias's *The Fallen Angel* (USA). Set in 654 B.C., follows Lucifer's ascent from the fiery depths of hell to take the life of the young Buddha. God, Lucifer's older brother, sends Sorna, his most trusted angel to stop him from succeeding. The fate of the universe will be decided in the final stand.

**Colorado Film Award - Platinum** is awarded to *The Winking Boy* (Australia) directed by Marcus Dineen. Communicating only by winking, Martin enjoys a lifestyle of pampering at Calm Springs Rest and Recuperation Center, where he has everyone fooled into believing he is completely paralyzed. However everything changes when a mysterious new nurse starts working at the center.

**Colorado Film Award - Gold** is awarded to *Return* (USA) directed by Cyd Chartier Cohn. Dr. Sondermann, a Jew and a political science professor at Colorado College, with his wife and three children traveled to Germany for four months. And though the trip is ostensibly professional in purpose, Sondermann is affected most deeply by the return to his childhood hometown, Horn.

**Colorado Film Award - Silver** is awarded to *Mother's House* (USA) directed by Davis Hall. While emptying his late mother's rural home, Thomas and his wife, Catherine, discover increasingly disturbing secrets until the conflict between memory and truth threatens to destroy them both.

**Colorado Film Award - Bronze** is awarded to *Animal Control* (Canada) directed by Kire Papatuts. Larry works for Animal Services. His job is picking up road kill along the highway; his hobby is taxidermy. Socially isolated, his home is his sanctuary and his only companions are the animals he has stuffed.

**Best Actor** is awarded to *The Ballad of Sandeep* (UK) directed by Derek Frey (Actor: Deep Roy). Where the dirt meets the pavement, where the sub-continent meets the Delaware Valley, one song rings out clearly: The Ballad of Sandeep, anthem of clowns, slaves, and heroes.

**Best Actress** is awarded to *Snatch 'N' Grab* (USA) directed by James Christopher (Actress: Christen Mays). Four women face losing their identities and sense of worth as they are consumed by the day to day. In an attempt to get control of their lives, they reach a drastic solution: live like guys.

**Best Animation** is awarded to *DreamGiver* (USA) directed by Tyler Carter. A regular night of dream delivering turns into a literal nightmare when an orphan's book of Ancient Aztec Mythology comes alive. The Dreamgiver must save the orphan from his own nightmare!

**Best Documentary Feature** is awarded to *Freedom Fighter* (Pakistan) directed by Chris Atkins. Freedom Fighter looks at persecution around the world, while following the story of Majed El Shafie, an Egyptian man tortured and sentenced to death in Egypt for his faith. Now he fights for the those who are suffering under severe persecution, even risking his life to save a little girl named Neha.

**Best Documentary Directing** is awarded to *Last Stand At Nymboida* (Australia) directed by Jeff Bird. Hidden beneath the remote Nymboida Valley on the east coast of Australia, a tough band of local men labored in the dark and dangerous tunnels of the nation's most dangerous coal mine. Faced with the loss of their jobs in 1975, these men staged a daring worker rebellion. Forged in solidarity and mateship, it was a rebellion that would be tested by doubt and disaster.

**Best Documentary Film Editing** is awarded to *Never Happen Here: The Whitehorse 9/11 Story* (Canada) directed by Max Frase. Until 9/11, the people of Whitehorse thought that kind of thing could 'never happen here.' Almost ten years later, questions are still asked about why a hostile Korean airliner was diverted to Canada and not land in Alaska. This documentary reveals new information about the mysterious flight of KAL 085, a strange but true story. A northern point of view documentary with national and international dimensions.

**Best Dramatic Directing** is awarded to *The Roe Effect* (USA) directed by Kiel Scott. In a world frighteningly similar to our own, Dawn and her girlfriend Sam are madly in love. But unbeknownst to Sam, Dawn is hiding a terrible secret, one powerful enough to destroy all Dawn holds dear. In this heart-wrenching tale of love and loss, Dawn must choose between exposing a painful truth and losing the girl she loves.

**Best Environmental Film** is awarded to *The Last Wild Race* (Chile) directed by Brian J. Leitten. 56 adventurers from across the globe converge on Chilean Patagonia for the 9th edition of the Wenger Patagonian Expedition Race. For 10 days, 14 teams will test themselves in an unforgiving wilderness of fierce winds, icy rivers and impenetrable forests.

**Best Feature Film** is awarded to *Der Sandmann* (Switzerland) directed by Peter Luisi. The Sandman tells the surreal story of Benno, who works in a stamp store and loves classical music. He lives in the old town of Zurich above a small Coffee shop run by Sandra. Every night after work Sandra practices her One-Woman-Orchestra act by singing and trumpeting with a loop device. This irritates Benno, who in return misses no chance to tell Sandra how untalented she is.

**Best Short Form Directing** is awarded to *14085* (USA) directed by Olli Koivula. 14,085 is the number of people killed by guns each year in the US. This film raises the question of an individual's responsibility to act against criminal behavior and its consequences. In this film, we meet several seemingly unconnected characters who are, however, actually interconnected via a gun that travels in a cycle between these various people and creates dangerous situations.

**Cinematography Award** is awarded to *The Curse of Micah Rood* (USA) directed by Alec Asten. Based on an old legend from Norwich, Connecticut, Micah Rood cherishes his privacy and his precious apple orchard. When a wily peddler stays the night, Rood accuses him of stealing his apples, and commits a violent deed that soon taints the fruit of his orchard with the blood of guilt.

**Film Editing Award** is awarded to *Lucky* (USA) directed by Michael McCallum. Lucky seems to be a straightforward, simple story about relationships. However, it provides new fodder for the ongoing men-women, Mars-Venus discussion

**First-Time Directing Award** is awarded to *Air* (United Kingdom) directed by Keir Burrows. Air is a fast-paced action adventure about falling in love at the end of the world. When all the air on the planet becomes breathless with one stroke, two unlikely heroes find each other as they struggle to survive.

**Music Video Award** is awarded to *The Bedroom Philosopher - Northcote (So Hungover)* (Australia) directed by Craig Melville. A comedic music video that pokes fun at the Melbourne Hipster scene.

**Screenwriting Award – Feature** is awarded to *Joyride* (USA) directed by Katherine Randolph & Alex Petrovitch. A down on their luck couple from South Georgia go on the run to get the money to repay a gambling debt, and decide to film their escapade, in hopes of selling their 'reality movie' to Hollywood for a quick buck. However, the danger becomes very real when their misguided foray into drug dealing does not go as planned, and they quickly find out they are in over their heads.

**Screenwriting Award – Short** is awarded to *Not Worth A Bullet* (Germany) directed by Markus F. Adrian. With the wisdom and patience of an aged man Walter faces the prejudice and sets a trap for a perpetrator.

**Short Film Award** is awarded to *Bathing & The Single Girl* (USA) directed by Christine Elise McCarthy. A raw and irreverent look at the horrors of dating and bathing with younger men.

### **Feature and Short Screenplay Competitions**

**1st Place Screenplay:** *"A Country of Strangers"* written by Sean Armstrong. Based on true events, 'A Country of Strangers' follows Inspector Geoff Harper during his forty year search for the Beaumont Children, three siblings taken from an Australian beach in January of 1966.

**2nd Place Screenplay:** *"The Voyeur"* written by John Bengel. An ethicist/college dean with an obsession for voyeurism sees something that creates the ultimate ethical dilemma.

**3rd Place Screenplay:** *"The Great Divide"* written by Carl McLaughlin. While planning to retire from Los Angeles to his beloved Colorado Rocky Mountains, a man in his late sixties tries to rekindle a broken relationship with his adult son as best he can. Hiding his nameless and growing illness, Mac Malone reconnects with his son through hell raising, drinking, and rampaging through the city of Los Angeles until his illness catches up with him and forces him to come to terms with his life and the mistakes he has made as a father and husband.

**4th Place Screenplay:** *"Ted"* written by Leslie Flannery. When a disgruntled Marine turned airline mechanic is finally pushed to the breaking point, he steals a jet and takes to the skies, skewering an entire industry as he goes.

**5th Place Screenplay:** *"Ludlow"* written by Michael Pomphrey. Based on the true events of the 1914 Ludlow Massacre, this is the story of one man's destiny to sacrifice everything in order to raise up a Colorado community of miners in protest against unfair working conditions, unequal compensation and violation of child labor laws.

**Colorado Screenplay Award – Platinum:** is awarded to *"On My Way"* written by Drew Repp. With a child on the way and money running out, a wayward young man sets out to collect an inheritance from his estranged father, but to get there he must ride the rails east and survive the characters they carry.

**Colorado Screenplay Award – Gold:** is awarded to *"Sunset Fire"* written by Rick Brandelli & A. Wayne Carter. In Hollywood it's not just the fires that are hot!

**Colorado Screenplay Award – Silver:** is awarded to *"Halfway Home"* written by David Schroeder. Gabriel Matthews, a twenty-year old athlete/scholar recovering from a paralyzing injury, reluctantly takes a summer job as a live-in supervisor in a halfway house for the mentally disabled. Through their series of comic and tragic adventures, they find emotional and spiritual healing as individuals and a family.

**Colorado Screenplay Award – Bronze:** is awarded to *"Chances"* written by Jeff Trently & Anthony Stitt. Imagine if you go to bed at night and whatever you dream comes true the next day. That's what happens to a little boy named Chance Elliot. He's 11 years old, a troubled kid, his mom is dead; his family shattered. But Chance has a secret: Whatever he dreams at night comes true for 24 hours.

### **Screenplay Official Finalists**

"Best Before" written by Romi Moondi  
"Black Rock" written by Daniel Kay  
"Cypress Gardens" written by Donna Musil  
"Fin Chaser" written by Maria Cozzi  
"Follow the Leader" written by Sean Armstrong  
"High Sierra" written by Brian Bose  
"Northamptonshire" written by Colleen Baird  
"Snow Advisory" written by Lisa Beuk  
"The Enlightenment of Swaroop Jones" written by Drew Freeman  
"The Gambler" written by Ignacio Quijada

### **Screenplay Honorable Mentions**

"Ceduna" written by Mathew Wilkinson  
"Chasing Bugs" written by Debbra Jansen  
"Devotion" written by Matteo Galante  
"How I Graduated From Berkeley In Two Years" written by Angelica Kalika  
"Lessons from Violet" written by Allen Wolf  
"Nirvana Road" written by Michael Hilow  
"Nocturnal Creatures" written by James Zorn  
"Pot Shop" written by Judah Ray Neiditch  
"Red Smoke Rising" written by Rick Anthony  
"Responsibility" written by Kameron Joshua Copeland  
"Shadowboxing the Mob" written by Lou Buttino  
"The Journal" written by Braide Keyland  
"The Legend of McCoy Mountain & The Gold 45 Revolver" written by Elliot McGucken  
"The Last Day of Rain" written by Noel Qualter  
"The Way the Ball Bounces" written by Gregory Heitmann

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