

# CINEQUEST™

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## Silicon Valley Hosts More Than a Hundred World and US Premieres at the Cinequest Film & VR Festival

Renowned for the exceptional quality and diversity of its program, the Cinequest Film & VR Festival 2018 (CQ2018) will be the venue for 74 World and 55 US film and virtual reality premieres, during its 28<sup>th</sup> season, February 27 – March 11<sup>th</sup>. From gripping documentaries to modern-day musicals, unconventional comedies to inspiring dramas, unforgettable love stories to visceral thrillers, these dynamic films and experiences represent works from 45 countries. Coupling the 258 film and VR experiences with daily special events, programs and parties, Cinequest offers 510 screenings, events, parties and experiences at this year's festival.

Over the 13-day program, Silicon Valley becomes the epicenter of tech and entertainment as global filmmakers, futurists, writers, technologists, actors and converge to celebrate their work in the world's leading innovation community and one of the most diverse metros in the world.

*Highlights of CQ2018 World and US Feature Film Premieres*

### FEATURE FILMS: WORLD PREMIERES

#### **Adios Amor: The Search for Maria Moreno**

*Director: Laurie Coyles; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

Over 50 years ago, before Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez, there was Maria Moreno. This remarkable story about the migrant workers who put food on all our tables explores enduring questions about whose lives we remember, record, and recognize.

#### **Arun**

*Director: Sarah Hanks; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

Living on the outskirts of Bangkok, Thailand three childhood friends are forced to grow up fast when one of them goes missing, sending the other two into the dangers of the big city and its seedy sex industry to get her back.

#### **The Ashram**

*Director: Ben Rekhi; Country: India; Genre: Thriller*

The World Premiere of a spiritual-fantasy thriller set in a mystical world, starring the Academy Award-winning Melissa Leo (*The Fighter*) and Kal Penn (*Harold and Kumar Go to White Castle*).

#### **The Best People**

*Director: Dan Levy Dagerman; Country: United States; Genre: Comedy*

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Just as she is recovering from a breakdown, Anna's world is rocked when her younger sister gets engaged. She teams up with the alcoholic best man to break up the engagement; convinced they are trying to save their friends from a lifetime of misery.

## **Brothers In Arms**

*Director: Paul Sanchez; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

Cinequest 2018 culminates with the World Premiere of the radically entertaining *Brothers in Arms*— a compelling and highly entertaining documentary about the making of the Academy Award-winning *Platoon*, the grueling boot camp of filmmaking, and how a bond of brotherhood was forged.

## **Burden of Genius**

*Director: Tjardus Greidanus; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

In 1967, Dr. Thomas Starzl stunned the world with the first successful liver transplantation. Critics accused him of recklessness, even murder. Others declared it the beginning of a medical revolution. This is the story of an innovator as complex and elusive as the biological secrets he unlocked.

## **Cooke Concrete**

*Director: Ian Martin; Country: United States; Genre: Comedy*

After a subpar first year at college, Vince Ford returns home and starts searching for a former classmate who has gone missing.

## **Crown and Anchor**

*Director: Andrew Rowe; Country: Canada; Genre: Drama*

A raw look at the effects of childhood trauma through the eyes of two estranged cousins.

## **Don't Open Your Eyes**

*Director: Dmitry Yun; Country: United States; Genre: Horror*

When a home-care nurse takes a job, it proves to be his toughest yet, when he is inadvertently pulled into something dark and sinister.

## **Enthusiastic Sinners**

*Director: Mark Lewis; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

Screwing up goes ballistic in this superb comedy of two hustlers who join forces to get money. But will they end up in jail or each other's arms?

## **Eyes & Prize**

*Director: Oliver Cane; Country: UK; Genre: Drama, Thriller*

Expect the unexpected. Four eager actors, a mysterious reality show, and results that are far stranger than fiction.

## **Flin Flon: A Hockey Town**

*Director: Dustin Cohen; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

A fascinating exploration of a small mining town's eccentric obsession with its legendary junior hockey team, The Flin Flon Bombers and how the team and the community thrive off one another.

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## **The Go-Getters**

*Director: Jeremy LaLonde; Country: Canada; Genre: Comedy*

Screwing up goes ballistic in this superb comedy of two hustlers who join forces to get money. But will they end up in jail or each other's arms?

## **Hunting Lands**

*Director: Zack Wilcox; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

A veteran turned recluse witnesses the aftermath of a heinous crime on his property. He circumvents the untrustworthy local police and takes justice into his own hands.

## **It's a Party**

*Director: Weldon Wong Powers; Country: United States; Genre: Comedy*

Coke, molly, acid, you name it, they do it. What could possibly go wrong? *It's a Party* pulls you right into the epicenter of what might be the most popping party of all time.

## **Jack of All Trades**

*Director: Harv Glazer, Stu Stone; Country: Canada; Genre: Documentary*

Searching for answers on what went wrong in the world of baseball cards, Stu Stone finds more than his old trading card collection. He finds his estranged father Jack, who disappeared over 20 years ago when the market crashed.

## **Knuckleball**

*Director: Michael Peterson; Country: Canada; Genre: Thriller*

Alone, and targeted on an isolated farm, 12 year old Henry finds himself at the center of a maelstrom of terror, and a dark family legacy, when his secretive grandfather dies suddenly in the night.

## **Locating Silver Lake**

*Director: Eric Bilitch and Deborah Del Prete; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

Upon graduating college, a brokenhearted aspiring writer, without a dime or connections, packs his bags and heads to Los Angeles in the hopes of finding a new beginning. Will he realize who he is and where he belongs?

## **Luba**

*Director: Caley Wilson; Country: Canada; Genre: Drama*

A young woman trapped in an impossible situation, Luba strives to turn her life around while juggling a floundering love-life, odd jobs, and custody with a recovering addict.

## **My Tourette's**

*Director: Alessandro Molatore; Countries: Bulgaria, Ireland, Mexico, United States; Genre: Documentary*

Five brave individuals with severe Tourette's Syndrome take part in an experimental case study that transforms their lives and raises profound questions about our perception of the neurological disorder.

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*Director: Bernard Friedman; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

An electronic parts salesman in Toronto with no medical training conceives an idea that could revolutionize medicine. A young woman living in the American South faced with an incurable disease takes him up on it, and the two set out on an international odyssey to realize the possibility of a cure.

## **Odds Are...**

*Director: Peter Markle; Country: United States; Genre: Thriller*

What starts as an innocent game quickly skyrockets to terror when a dare goes horribly wrong.

## **Omphalos**

*Director: Gabriel Judet-Weinshel; Country: United States; Genre: Sci-Fi, Thriller*

A quiet detective, a juggler, and a time-travel experiment gone wickedly wrong in this unparalleled 'sci-fi-thriller' full of suspenseful twists, an intriguing romance, and ravishing visuals.

## **Poor Jane**

*Director: Katie Orr; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

A housewife's comfortable life unravels when she suddenly stops loving her husband.

## **Purdah**

*Director: Jeremy Guy; Country: India; Genre: Documentary*

Two years ago, Kaikasha was allowed to remove her burka for the first time in order to become a competitive athlete. Now battling the harsh judgment of her religious community and even her family, she strives to become one of the only Muslims ever selected for the Mumbai Senior Women's Cricket Team.

## **Risking Light**

*Director: Dawn Mikkelson; Countries: United States, Australia, Cambodia; Genre: Documentary*

From the streets of Minneapolis, the aboriginal lands of Australia, and the killing fields of Cambodia come the powerful stories of three people who had the courage to step out of the haunting, tragic darkness of the past, risking everything to reach the light of their own compassion.

## **Saviors**

*Director: Christopher Greenslate; Country: United States; Genre: Thriller*

Blaze, a young woman embeds herself in a white power group in order to find her adoptive African-American mother, but one night after the group returns from a rally, they test her allegiance.

## **Seeds**

*Director: Owen Long; Country: United States; Genre: Drama, Horror*

Trevor Long (Ozark) stars in this psychosexual thriller about temptation and monsters, our darkest fears, and deep desires.

## **Skull**

*Director: Yusron Fuadi; Country: Indonesia; Genre: Sci-Fi*

If a one-mile long humanoid skeleton is discovered in the middle of the jungle would we like to know more?

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## **Snapshots**

*Director: Melanie Mayron; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

Can the love of three generations be enough to accept decades of deceit? Starring three- time Academy Award-nominee and acting legend Piper Laurie (*Carrie, Twin Peaks*), Brooke Adams (*Gas, Food, Lodging, Thirty Something*) and Emily Goss (*The House on Pine Street, Castle*).

## **Tell Me Your Name**

*Director: Jason Devan; Country: United States; Genre: Thriller, Horror*

After a troubled childhood, Ashley (Sydney Sweeney, *The Handmaid's Tale*) searches for a connection, and unknowingly invites in a demonic force, which leaves her loved ones fighting for her soul.

## **Threesomething**

*Director: James Morosini; Country: United States; Genre: Comedy*

Two is company, three is a crowd...or is it? This unconventional comedy includes an emotional finale that invites you to think about the essence of sex, love, and friendship.

## **Tommy Battles the Silver Sea Dragon**

*Director: Luke Shirock; Country: United States; Genre: Musical, Drama*

A twisted love story and courtroom madness are a few key ingredients in this thrilling musical escapade.

## **Virginia Minnesota**

*Director: Daniel Stine; Country: United States; Genre: Drama, Comedy*

A biting comedy where two young women unexpectedly reunite and embark on an illuminating 24-hour journey, where they unlock memories of long forgotten innocence and what it means to truly believe.

## **You Can't Say No**

*Director: Paul Kramer; Country: United States; Genre: Drama, Comedy*

Starring the legendary Peter Fonda (*Easy Rider*), Marguerite Moreau (*Wet Hot American Summer*), and Hamish Linklater (*Fargo*), a glowing romantic comedy about how it takes divorce to understand the person you married.

## **You & Me**

*Director: Alexander Baack; Country: United States; Genre: Romantic Comedy*

A young deaf woman meets a recently blinded man. What follows is a funny and moving love story about life's universal challenges and joys.

## **FEATURE FILMS: US PREMIERES**

### **All the Reasons to Forget**

*Director: Pedro Coutinho; Country: Brazil; Genre: Comedy*

After having a long-term relationship breaks up, Antônio has no doubts he will quickly get over Sofia, his ex-girlfriend, but nothing is as simple as it seems, actually, it never is...

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## **Amateur**

*Director: Sebastian Perillo; Country: Argentina; Genre: Thriller*

With a murderer on the loose and the bodies stacking up, a man is about to learn the innocent are just as capable of evil as the damned.

## **Barefoot**

*Director: Jan Svěrák; Country: Czech Republic; Genre: Drama*

Oscar-winning director and Cinequest alumni Jan Svěrák presents a powerful story of Eda, a boy living through WWI in the cosmopolitan city of Prague, until his family is evicted with no options but to move to his father's childhood village home.

## **Berlin Falling**

*Director: Ken Duken; Country: Germany; Genre: Thriller*

Tom Wlaschiha (*Game of Thrones*) stars in a fully original, and smart thriller wherein two men find themselves in an intense cat and mouse game on their ride to Berlin.

## **Bikini Moon**

*Director: Milcho Manchevski; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

Starring Condola Rashad (*Smash*), and from the Academy Award-nominated director of *Before the Rain*, the haunting story of a mentally ill vet who captures the attention of a film crew in this magically, surreal urban fantasy.

## **Birth of a Family**

*Director: Tasha Hubbard; Country: Canada; Genre: Documentary*

Siblings Betty Ann, Rosalie, Ben and Esther were taken from their indigenous mother and deprived of the opportunity to grow up together. Reunited in their 50s, they spend one precious week together.

## **Cygnus**

*Director: Hugo Félix Mercado; Country: Mexico; Genre: Sci-fi*

In the vein of a classic *Twilight Zone*, a wonderfully entertaining sci-fi about an astronomer, a mysterious signal, and a secret that was better left unknown.

## **Demon Box**

*Director: Patrik Syversen; Country: Norway; Genre: Drama*

Siblings Amalie and Emil go through a batch of old letters which reveal secrets that are better kept from the eyes of their mother. As they review the letters one by one, innocuous conversations and profound discussions occupy their days, that is, until an intrusive stranger ends up at their door.

## **End of Summer**

*Director: Zhou Quan; Country: China; Genre: Drama*

It is a summer of adventure, exploration, and growing pain for three men from three generations.

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## **Facades**

*Director: Kaat Beels, Nathalie Basteyns; Country: Belgium; Genre: Drama*

When Alex pays a surprise visit to her parents, the secret that father and daughter have kept safe for over 30 years now threatens to turn Alex's own marriage upside down.

## **From Baghdad to the Bay**

*Director: Erin Palmquist; Country: United States; Genre: Documentary*

A translator for the U.S. forces in Iraq, Ghazwan Alshari was accused of being a double agent by the same people he was aiding. With his life and the safety of his family in jeopardy, Ghazwan fled Iraq and settled in San Francisco to begin anew and reveal yet another secret – he is gay.

## **From the Balcony**

*Director: Ole Gjaever; Country: Norway; Genre: Drama, Comedy*

The beautiful and funny history of a man who just wants to know how he got to where he is and how he fits in the jigsaw puzzle of the universe.

## **Haunted (Hjemsøkt)**

*Director: Carl Christian Raabe; Country: Norway; Genre: Horror*

After extricating herself from a strained relationship, the beautiful and fashionable Cathrine returns to sell off her abandoned family estate after her father's death. But is she alone in the old house?

## **Heaven Without People**

*Director: Lucien Bourjeily; Country: Lebanon; Genre: Drama*

At an Easter Sunday lunch with family, Josephine finds \$12,000 missing from her purse. As the eldest son leads an investigation to figure out the culprit, deeply restrained feelings and malicious intentions are suddenly unveiled and passions are ignited.

## **Help Me Make It Through the Night (Ayudame A Pasar La Noche)**

*Director: José Ramón Chávez; Country: Mexico; Genre: Drama*

Can a family unite when the stakes are life and death? For a family in shambles, when a doctor announces that one of them may not make it through the night, they all must reconsider their choices.

## **Hermanos**

*Director: Laura Plancarte; Country: Mexico, United Kingdom; Genre: Documentary*

A former pageant queen, who has lost her house, believes the path to American salvation runs through Donald Trump while two brothers attempt to return to the U.S. after being deported.

## **I Hate You**

*Director: Brad Kageno; Country: United States; Genre: Romantic Comedy*

Kelly has to continue living with her ex and his new girlfriend until the lease runs out. Enter Chi, a *Call of Duty* playing, *Star Wars* quoting, *Wrestlemania* loving nerd who still lives with his mother. They're an unlikely pair, but can they make it work?

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## **It's Hard to be Human**

*Director: Valeria Buhagiar; Country: Canada; Genre: Drama*

Dreamlike, visceral, and at times surreal, *It's Hard to Be Human* elegantly poses the age-old questions of what it means to be human and how to have a connection with the Divine in a fallibly human world.

## **The Kiss Addict**

*Director: Li Yanning; Country: China; Genre: Fantasy*

One night after a performance, a young, talented violinist named Wen Feng receives a kiss from a mysterious woman. Infatuated, Wen sets out to find her by the only means he has: kissing her again.

## **Little Women**

*Director: Clare Niederpruem; Country: United States; Genre: Drama*

A modern and dynamic retelling of the Louisa May Alcott classic that takes the four March sisters from childhood to adult. Starring Lea Thompson (*Back to the Future*) and Lucas Grabeel (*High School Musical*) as Marmee and Mr. March.

## **Luna's Revenge**

*Director: Khaled Kaissar; Country: Germany; Genre: Thriller*

Luna is a smart, confident teenager living a typical teenager's life. An idyllic holiday in the woods soon changes all that as her life is thrown into utter chaos. On the run, Luna discovers the shocking truth about her father and his secret life.

## **Many Heavens (Vele Hemels Boven de Zevende)**

*Director: Jan Matthys; Country: Belgium; Genre: Drama*

While trying to single-handedly stabilize everyone's out-of-control lives, Eva's silent pain might unhinge her own.

## **Marisa in the Woods (Marisa en los Bosques)**

*Director: Antonio Morales; Country: Spain; Genre: Drama*

Marisa feels like the supporting actress in her own life, always there for other people. With the weight of others already on her shoulders, she is ready to disappear into the surreal unreality of the woods

## **Mother, I'm Joseph**

*Director: Mohammad Reza Fartousi; Countries: Iran, Iraq, Kuwait; Genre: Drama*

Is it worth living even if everyone believes you are dead? Based on true events, Joseph decides to hide in a hole for 21 years to avoid fighting in the Iraq and Iran wars.

## **The Ones That Stay**

*Director: Loïc Paillard; Country: France; Genre: Romance*

Alex finds himself recovering from a recent breakup just as his terminally-ill father decides to stop his cancer treatment. In this French romance, the characters honestly expose themselves to each other and are able to analyze their own decisions, resulting in a superb film about love, loss, and renewal.

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## **Peaches (Melocotones)**

*Director: Hector Valdez; Country: Dominican Republic; Genre: Sci-Fi*

When Diego's girlfriend decides to leave him after a disastrous anniversary getaway, he will find any means possible to amend or fix what happened. Even if it means competing with different versions of himself when traveling through time.

## **The Poet and the Boy**

*Director: Kim Yang-Hee; Country: South Korea; Genre: Drama*

A troubled teen turns a poet's life upside down. The film's dynamic ride exposes an emotional space that defies labels while exploring marriage, family roots, and social taboos.

## **Speechless**

*Director: Hilde Van Mieghem; Country: Belgium; Genre: Drama*

Jan is a 55-year-old successful novelist at the peak of his career. When his 85-year-old mother, Josée, suffers a massive stroke, he is faced with both her care and a fast approaching deadline for his novel.

## **Status Pending**

*Director: Ben Zolno; Country: New Zealand; Genre: Comedy*

Lizzie Conley is a social-media obsessed baker living in New Zealand who has spent the past six months dating her Tinder match, Ryan. While Ryan wants more from the relationship, Lizzie wants to keep her options open.

## **Venus**

*Director: Eisha Marjara; Country: Canada; Genre: Drama*

Can a transgender woman have it all? When Ralph skates into Sid's life claiming to be his biological son, life has already thrown a curve ball at Sid, a woman trapped inside a man's body. Starring Debargo Sunyal (*Everybody's Fine*).

## **Voevoda**

*Director: Zornitsa Sophia Popgantcheva; Country: Bulgaria, Croatia; Genre: Drama*

Based on true events that occurred in 19th century Bulgaria, Roumena has beaten overwhelming odds and made heart-wrenching sacrifices to become the leader of a group of rebels who vow to fight for their people.

More than 105,000 attendees will experience the work of internationally renowned and emerging artists and technologists, representing a spectrum of genres, genders, ethnicities, orientations, and viewpoints. Honoring the careers of icons, legends and risk takers in film, Cinequest will present its coveted Maverick Spirit Award to **Nicolas Cage** (*Leaving Las Vegas, Raising Arizona*), **Andie MacDowell** (*Sex, Lies & Videotape, Four Weddings and a Funeral*), **Tatiana Maslany** (*Orphan Black, Stronger*) and **Tom Cullen** (*Downtown Abbey, Black Mirror*). Director, producer, tech entrepreneur **Travis Cloyd** will be honored with this year's VR Visionary Award, recognizing his work in immersive entertainment. Additionally, this year's

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Media Legacy Award will be presented to **Ben Mankiewicz**, Primetime Host Turner Classic Movies (TCM) celebrating his incredible life and impact on the industry, as a writer, journalist and co-founder of *The Young Turks*.

This year's program includes 74 World and 55 U.S. premiering films, starring award winning actors including past Maverick Spirit Award winners William H. Macy, Rosario Dawson and Peter Fonda, as well as Kal Penn, Michelle Pfeiffer, James McAvoy, Hilary Swank and Stanley Tucci.

To learn more about the full festival lineup, and to purchase festival passes, tickets to screenings and special events, visit [www.cinequest.org](http://www.cinequest.org).

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## **About Cinequest**

A vanguard organization set in the Silicon Valley, Cinequest's uniqueness and impact result from being ahead of the curve in the powerful integration of creativity and technology. Cinequest fuses the world of the filmed arts with that of Silicon Valley's innovation to empower youth, artists, and innovators to create and connect – driving transformations and a better tomorrow. Cinequest does this through Cinequest Film & VR Festival, Picture The Possibilities, and its sister company Cinequest Mavericks Studio. (Voted **Best Film Festival** by *USA Today* Readers.)

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