

Golden Reel International Film Festival (GRIFF) Officially Launches

A Global Celebration of the Truth, Beauty, and Power of Film

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The world of independent cinema is gaining a bold new platform with the official launch of the Golden Reel International Film Festival (GRIFF) — a quarterly online celebration of cinematic storytelling that unites [filmmakers](#) and audiences from across the globe.

Rooted in the belief that film is one of the most powerful tools for connection, reflection, and transformation, GRIFF spotlights stories that reveal truth, embrace beauty, and ignite cultural and emotional resonance. The festival honors artistry in all its forms, from deeply personal short films to innovative experimental features.

“Film is one of the most universal languages we have,” says John Franklin Stevens, internationally recognized acting coach and GRIFF judge. “Through GRIFF, we want to honor not just technical excellence, but also the voices and visions that move us.”

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I hope to inspire filmmakers to trust their vision, and to see their stories celebrated in a community that values creativity and authenticity.”

Oswald Hunter



Oswald Hunter, Golden Reel International Film Festival

Submissions Now Open

Filmmakers of all levels are now invited to submit their work via [FilmFreeway](#) for consideration in Season 1 of the Golden Reel International Film Festival. GRIFF welcomes projects of any length, genre, or category, and is committed to fairness and inclusivity in its judging process.

The festival's official website went live on October 6, 2025, marking the start of a new platform for discovery,

recognition, and community among global filmmakers.

An International Jury with Global Vision

GRIFF's judging panel features respected filmmakers, producers, and [industry](#) leaders from around the world, each bringing their unique expertise and passion for nurturing new voices in cinema.

Oswald Hunter (Italy) – An acclaimed actor and director with over a decade of experience in European cinema and theatre, Hunter has starred in award-winning independent films and directed projects screened across international festivals. Known for his visual storytelling and emotional depth, he brings a rare dual perspective as both performer and filmmaker.

"I hope to inspire filmmakers to trust their vision, and to see their stories celebrated in a community that values creativity and authenticity." – Oswald Hunter

John Franklin Stevens (USA / Canada) – One of the most sought-after acting coaches worldwide, Stevens is the Founder & CEO of Act With Purpose International, where he trains actors who have appeared in *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Resident Evil*, and *See* with Jason Momoa. His students recently landed roles in *The Road to Derry*, the highly anticipated *IT* prequel, and also include Miku Martineau, breakout star of *Kate* on Netflix. John is also an accomplished producer, director and writer.



Paul Kershaw (South Africa)



Victor Nikamo (Sweden)

A proud member of AACE and founding board member of the Act-On Ability Foundation, Stevens is also a champion for inclusion, providing comprehensive classes for actors with disabilities. With a background in choreography, performance, and education, he has collaborated with icons like Ashanti and Wyclef Jean while leading workshops worldwide.

“My goal is to help emerging talent find their true voice and feel supported as they share stories that matter with the world.” – John Franklin Stevens

Paul Kershaw (South Africa) – A driving force in global entertainment, Paul Kershaw is the co-owner of Gold Talent International, where he mentors developing artists across the world with expert guidance in branding, networking, and career growth. An accomplished performing arts and talent showcase producer, global model scout, and certified coach, Kershaw is known for his ability to empower performers with clarity, confidence, and direction. His experience in dance and modeling gives him a deep understanding of the discipline and mindset required to thrive in the spotlight.

“I want to guide filmmakers in turning ambition into craft, and to celebrate their work in a space that champions growth and collaboration.” – Paul Kershaw

Nico Kershaw (South Africa) – A performer, producer, and mentor, Nico Kershaw's career spans music, modeling, and performance. Based in Boksburg, South Africa, he leads a successful vocal studio where artists refine their voices with precision and purpose. His expertise extends to songwriting, music production, and life coaching, helping creatives bridge the gap between artistry and strategy. Known for his work guiding performers across film, TV, and theatre, Nico inspires talent to move from potential to professional with authenticity and confidence.



Layla Ahmed



Nico Kershaw (South Africa)

“GRIFF is about encouraging confidence and passion, and sharing these films with a community that lifts each other up.” – Nico Kershaw

Victor Nikamo (Sweden) – An award-winning Director of Photography and founder of Nikamo Productions, Victor Nikamo is celebrated for his distinctive visual storytelling and technical precision. His work — spanning features, short films, and commercials — has been recognized at major international festivals. Nikamo is passionate about empowering the next generation of filmmakers, combining artistry with mentorship to help creators bring their visions to life through the lens.

“I hope to mentor filmmakers to push boundaries, while celebrating their work in a supportive, inspiring global community.” – Victor Nikamo

Layla Ahmed (Canada) – Director of Marketing and Digital Strategy for Act With Purpose International, Layla Ahmed is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree at the University of Toronto. Alongside her studies, she entered the acting world in 2022 and recently signed with a Toronto-based agency. Through her marketing and outreach work, she strives to make the entertainment industry a more inclusive, empowering space for creatives at every level.

“I’m excited to help young filmmakers connect with audiences and experience the joy of sharing their stories in a welcoming, inclusive environment.” – Layla Ahmed

Awards & Recognition

The Golden Reel International Film Festival is committed to celebrating excellence and supporting filmmakers long after the festival concludes.

Winners will receive:

An official Golden Reel International Film Festival Certificate

A Physical Award in the form of a high quality plaque

Optional IMDb credit for verified recognition

Promotion across GRIFF’s digital platforms

Introductions to industry professionals for collaboration and exposure

Permanent visibility in the GRIFF Legacy Archive on the official website

“At GRIFF, recognition isn’t just about a trophy,” notes Oswald Hunter. “It’s about opening doors, creating opportunities, and helping powerful stories reach new audiences.”

About the Golden Reel International Film Festival (GRIFF)

The Golden Reel International Film Festival is a quarterly online festival celebrating truth, beauty, and the power of film. With a commitment to accessibility and fairness, GRIFF champions filmmakers from all backgrounds and stages of their creative journey.

Through its curated judging process, transparent entry system, and growing global community, GRIFF provides a space where creativity and integrity are honored, stories are elevated, and filmmakers are inspired to continue their craft.

Submissions & Information:

□ Submit now on FilmFreeway: <https://www.filmfreeway.com/goldenreeliff>

□ Visit the Official Website: <https://www.goldenreeliff.com>

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