

SPARK ANIMATION 2026 Announces Award Winners at 18th Annual Academy Awards-Qualifying Festival

Metafear (Directed by Shuhei Morita, Produced by YAMATOWORKS, Japan) Wins Best in Show

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA, September 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Spark Computer Graphics Society ([Spark CG](#)) announces the [SPARK ANIMATION](#) 2026 Short Film Programs Awards to be showcased at its 18th annual conference and festival. The highlight of this year's awards is the Lifetime Achievement Award to be presented to Canadian Keith P. Blackmore posthumously.



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SPARK ANIMATION, an Oscar®-accredited (Academy Awards) and Canadian Screen Awards-qualifying festival, recognizes and honours unordinary individuals, films, and studios that are amplifying real creativity in the art and industry of animation. The awards presentation ceremony is on Sunday, 20 September at SPARK CELEBRATION.

Keith P. Blackmore honoured with the 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award

This year's Lifetime Achievement Award goes, without hesitation, to Keith P. Blackmore in recognition posthumously of his extraordinary contribution to the animation community. Keith is beloved as a recognized Canadian animation educator, advocate and producer who has been a cornerstone of the Vancouver animation and visual effects community, particularly central to the operations and growth of the SPARK ANIMATION Festival and Conference. Keith worked for years as the Producer and Chair of the festival, driving efforts to connect local students and artists with global industry leaders. He passed away on 29 August 2026, leaving a massive impact on generations of animators worldwide. The global animation community remembers Keith as a passionate mentor and tireless cheerleader for the art form.

SPARK ANIMATION 2026 AWARD WINNERS

The 2026 celebration of animation excellence includes global and Canadian talent, showcasing diverse storytelling and innovative filmmaking. All awards will be presented at the festival on 20 September.

The SPARK ANIMATION Best in Show award, an Academy Awards®-Qualifying Prize, to Metafear from director Shuheï Morita (Japan) has now qualified for consideration in the Academy Award® Animated Short Film category. Produced by YAMATOWORK | Bandai Namco Filmworks for the Sunrise 50th Anniversary Anthology. Metafear is a fast-paced fantasy featuring a girl haunted by nightmares and the fears that take shape from them.

Distance, Best Canadian Short film from Ordinary Folk, has its world premiere at the SPARK ANIMATION Festival. The festival also applauds The Memory Clocksmith as the Best Student Short, directed by Jing Rickie Liu and Ellie Grace Colwill (U.S.)

The full list of winners follows:

Best in Show

Metafear, Shuheï Morita (Japan)

Runner-Up, Short Film

Meteoric, Paul Ó Muiris (Ireland)

Best Canadian Short

Distance, Ordinary Folk (Canada)

Director's Prize

Soul Catcher (Haboolm Ksinaalgat), Amanda Strong and Pamela Post (Canada)

Diversity Award

Whale 52: Suite for Man, Boy, and Whale, Daniel Neiden (U.S.)

Special Mention, Storytelling

Lake Messejana, Diego Maia (Brazil)

Special Mention, Social Message

The Legend of the Hummingbird (La Légende du colibri), Morgan Devos (France)

Best Student Short

The Memory Clocksmith, Jing Rickie Liu and Ellie Grace Colwill (U.S.)

Runner-Up, Student Short

The Panic Inside, Matthias Strasser (Germany/Switzerland)

Best Commissioned Work

The Hoop, Tom Prezman (Spain)

Runner-Up, Commissioned Work

The Storyteller, Paulo Garcia (France/Brazil)

Best Music Video

Vice 2 Ouf, Charlotte Lafossas (France)

About the Celebration of Life for Keith P. Blackmore

The Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented posthumously at the Celebration of Life for Keith P. Blackmore on Sunday September 20 at 5:30pm PT at SPARK ANIMATION (at The Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, 181 Roundhouse Mews, Vancouver, B.C.).

About Spark CG Society

Founded to promote and foster Vancouver's computer graphics community, Spark CG has organized the SPARK ANIMATION and SPARK FX (visual effects) conferences and festivals since 2008. Spark CG works to continually highlight leading artistic and technological advancements in animation and visual effects through conferences, film festivals, and related events. In its 18th year, SPARK ANIMATION is presented in partnership with Vancouver ACM SIGGRAPH.

Spark Animation 2026 Media Kit - <https://acesse.one/0tbifyh>

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Spark Computer Graphics Society

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