UNAFF2026 Passion for Change International Documentary Film Festival
29th UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL
October 15-25, 2026 • Palo Alto • East Palo Alto • San Francisco • Stanford University
unaff.org

29th UNAFF Honors Filmmakers and Visionaries Across ‘Passion for Change’ Theme



PALO ALTO, Calif. (Oct. 31, 2026) — The 29th United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF), one of the oldest documentary film festivals in the United States, concluded its 29th edition on Sunday, Oct. 25, with its annual awards ceremony. Seven award winners across five categories were announced, along with the previously revealed Visionary Award for Jeff Bridges.

UNAFF Founder and Executive Director Jasmina Bojic said:

> “It is no secret that the world is in a particularly precarious state, with peace, democracy and human rights under threat in many places. But this should not discourage us. Through UNAFF, we contribute to the efforts of those working to defend these values by equipping people with knowledge, compassion and empathy.”

This year’s festival featured 60 documentary features and shorts. Sixty percent were directed or co-directed by women, and fifty-six percent were directed or co-

directed by filmmakers of color. The program also included six world premieres — *Absence*, *The Fixer*, *hSl ASMA: It All Comes Back*, *Heathens*, *Last Christian in Bethlehem*, and *A Weaver's Gaze*.

Screenings and events took place throughout the Bay Area, including Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, San Francisco and Stanford University, from Oct. 15–25, 2026. Over the years, UNAFF has built a strong community following and established a festival tradition. This year, it welcomed its largest audiences yet. Attendees actively participated in Q&A sessions and gave three standing ovations. The festival also offered panels and discussions, as well as musical performances, poetry and dance by people featured in the films.

Save the date: The milestone 30th anniversary of the United Nations Association Film Festival will be held Oct. 21–31, 2027.

Award Winners

UNAFF recognizes filmmakers and films for their achievements in the following categories:



"Hollywood Does Abortion" co-director and co-producer Janet Goldwater.

GRAND JURY AWARD FOR BEST DOCUMENTARY

HOLLYWOOD DOES ABORTION

> "Winning the grand jury award for best documentary from this important and discerning festival is such a meaningful affirmation for the entire creative team of *Hollywood Does Abortion.* This award not only elevates the film but, more importantly, elevates the issue of how abortion is portrayed onscreen and how that influences public policy."
>
> *— Janet Goldwater, co-director and co-producer*



From left: *"Bamako Chic: Threads of Power, Color and Culture" co-directors Maureen Gosling and Maxine Downs.*

GRAND JURY AWARD FOR BEST SHORT DOCUMENTARY

BAMAKO CHIC: THREADS OF POWER, COLOR AND CULTURE

> “During this time of war and political upheaval, the arts, particularly documentaries, serve to educate, bring people together and help us recognize our shared humanity around the world.”
>
> *— Maxine Downs & Maureen Gosling, co-directors*



From left: *"Adapted"* director and producer Paul Bilkis, executive producer and subject Josh Hancock, and UNAFF Director Jasmina Bojic.

AWARD FOR BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

Kjell Redal

ADAPTED

AWARD FOR BEST EDITING

Banker White

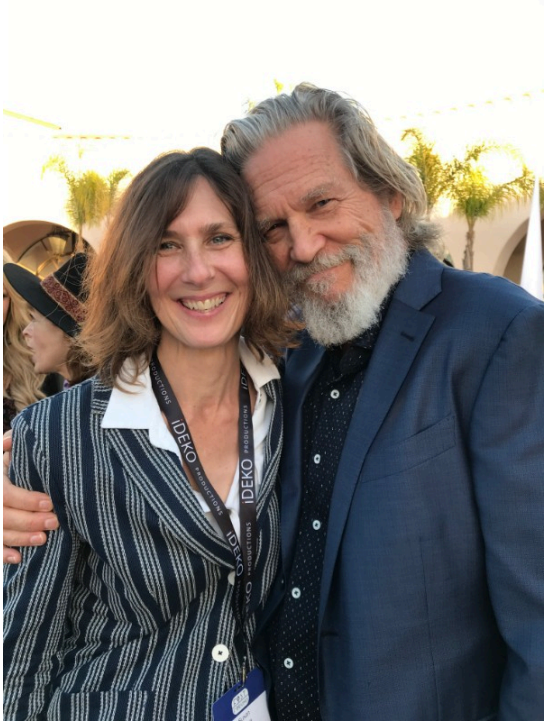
YO (LOVE IS A REBELLIOUS BIRD)

YOUTH VISION AWARD

ONE IN A MILLION

Visionary Award

As previously announced, Jeff Bridges received the UNAFF Visionary Award.



Director Susan Kucera and Jeff Bridges

"Thank you so much for this wonderful honor. I'm deeply touched to receive the 2026 UNAFF Visionary Award. *In the Company of Wolves: An American Journey* means a great deal to me. I've had the pleasure of working with Susan Kucera before on *Living in the Future's Past*, and I've always admired the way she uses film to help us look more closely at our relationship with the natural world—and with each other. This new film asks us to consider our relationship with wolves and, beyond that, with all the wild creatures with whom we share this planet. That relationship feels especially important to me. We're not separate from nature. We're part of it. We really are all in this together.

[I am] particularly touched to receive an award that has been given to so many people whose work I admire."

— Jeff Bridges

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For more information, visit http://www.unaff.org/

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UNAFF MISSION

About UNAFF

Founded in 1998 by Jasmina Bojic, a longtime Stanford University educator and film critic, the United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) is an international documentary film festival focused on human rights. It has screened some of the most acclaimed and talked-about documentaries in the industry, including eight that went on to win Academy Awards and 39 that were nominated. UNAFF promotes education and social change through film. Visit unaff.org.

About the 29th UNAFF

The 29th UNAFF ran Oct. 15–25, 2026, with the theme *Passion for Change*. The festival features films on human rights issues like the environment, women's rights, racism, and peace, engaging a diverse Bay Area audience.

