

# MIDDLEBURY NEW FILMMAKERS FESTIVAL

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## Press Release

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### **Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival Announces the AICEF Prize for Cross Cultural Filmmaking and New Partnership with the Bali International Film Festival**

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival is truly pleased to announce the creation of the AICEF Prize for Cross Cultural Filmmaking and an exciting new partnership with Indonesia's highly regarded Bali International Film Festival. The AICEF Prize will be presented to a pair of first or second time feature filmmakers whose work robustly embraces cross-cultural themes either in the narrative or documentary genre. One filmmaker will be selected by the Bali International Film Festival to present their work at the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival [MNFF] in late August 2020 and one will be selected by MNFF to present their work at the Bali International Film Festival [Balinale] in early September 2020. All the funding for this exchange of filmmakers will be provided through a generous grant from the American-Indonesian Cultural & Educational Foundation [AICEF].

The feature films selected by each festival to receive the AICEF Prize will tackle a subject that crosses cultural lines and advances our understanding of the issues, challenges and realities that people face in living in countries or communities that are unfamiliar to them. The film could embrace a dramatic or comedic story of individuals or families confronting the challenges they face in sorting out their cultural differences or a documentary that examines the clash or marriage of cultures not indigenous to the filmmaker. Whether the story takes place in a distant land or a neighborhood just a few miles away, the medium of film is uniquely suited to illuminating both the beauty and the struggle of achieving cultural co-existence.

AICEF is a New York City based 501c3 not-for-profit corporation founded in 1971. The Foundation is devoted to fostering closer cultural and educational ties between the people of the United States and the Republic of Indonesia. As part of its mission to bridging this cultural gap, AICEF supports film screenings, music performances, art exhibitions and symposiums by organizations of distinction whose programs benefit and appeal to a wide range of audiences.

“AICEF is pleased to be working with two film festivals, separated by a great distance, that share common values of inclusion, innovation, and sustainability,” said Wayne Forrest, the Foundation’s Chairman. “Each has the scale and cultural sensitivity to make this collaboration successful.”

The Bali International Film Festival [Balinale] is well known in the Indonesian film community for its specialized knowledge and its importance in supporting and promoting filmmakers and independent cinema. The Festival is also recognized globally for the diversity of its programming, comprised of Indonesian, Pan-Asian and broadly international independent and award-winning narrative and documentary features and short films.

“The Bali International Film Festival has a proud history of supporting important cultural programs that benefit thousands of aspiring Indonesians by fostering the relationships between Indonesia and the rest of the world with its creative outlet of cultural sharing through film,” noted Deborah Gabinetti, Executive Director of Balinale. “Our goal is to further strengthen our ties with the global community and this new filmmaker exchange program with the Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival does exactly that. We really look forward to having an MNFF-selected American filmmaker with us in Bali this coming September.”

The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival was formed to support, promote and exhibit the dynamic and imaginative efforts of new filmmakers. MNFF is solely dedicated to the work of first and second time filmmakers and its ongoing commitment is to offer a level playing field to the new and emerging voices in independent filmmaking, to give its audiences an opportunity to discover fresh and engaging talent and to provide filmmakers a chance to be discovered in a setting that is all about their work, from start to finish.

“The Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival is incredibly grateful to be part of this terrific filmmaker exchange program that AICEF has made possible,” remarked Lloyd Komesar, MNFF Producer. “Deborah Gabinetti and her team at Balinale have been producing outstanding festivals for the past thirteen years and we greatly anticipate welcoming a talented new Indonesian filmmaker to Middlebury in August for our 6th Annual event.”

The 6th Annual Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival will take place August 27-30, 2020 in Middlebury, Vermont. Information about the Festival will be available in the coming months at <https://midfilmfest.org/>. MNFF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The 14th Annual Bali International Film Festival will take place September 8-13, 2020 and information will be available later this year at <https://www.balinale.com/>. The American-Indonesian Cultural & Educational Foundation provides overseas research grants in addition to its cultural grants. More information about the organization can be found at <http://www.aicef.org/>.

