

Dream the Future at the Children's Film Festival Seattle 2018

Tuesday, April 3 2018, 10:16 AM

OUT + ABOUT/INDOOR PLAY

Dream the Future at the Children's Film Festival Seattle 2018

Amaze your family with inspiring, heartwarming international films for kids

BY GEMMA ALEXANDER

PUBLISHED ON: JANUARY 16, 2018





PHOTO: Photo: From On High

If you haven't been to the [Children's Film Festival Seattle](#), you've been missing out. While the Seattle International Film Festival is more well-known, it's the Northwest Film Forum-hosted Children's Film Festival Seattle that should be on every family's calendar.

From Jan. 25–Feb. 10, the fest screens 168 films from 55 nations — all of them aimed at children ages 2–14. **If Disney princesses and Marvel superheroes have dominated your family's movie selections, get ready to explode your kids' idea of what a movie can be with inspiring films from around the globe.**

“We look for films that show young people overcoming great odds, making a difference, charting their own courses. The films are meant to encourage our audience members to think of themselves, too, as agents of change,” says festival director Elizabeth Shepherd.



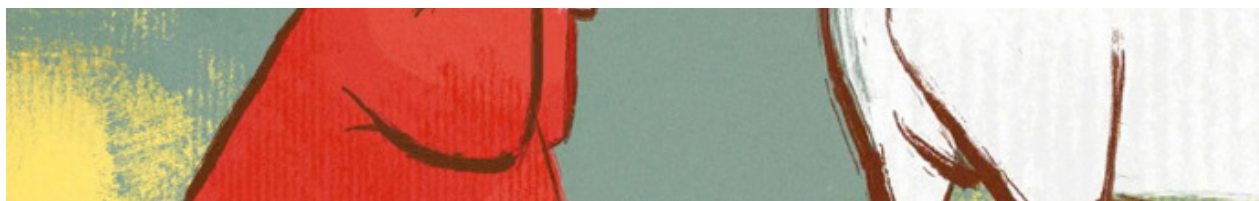


Photo: *The Unicorn*

The [festival](#) includes both feature-length films and collections of shorts, and the shorts collections include both live action and animation. Filmmakers sometimes attend the screenings in person. There are also filmmaking [workshops for kids and teens](#) — including some free events, and [special events](#) such as the Pancake Breakfast and Opening Night Gala at [the Egyptian](#), which includes a screening of Hayao Miyazaki's 1986 classic, "[Castle in the Sky](#)," (dubbed in English) and a Miyazaki costume contest.





Photo: We're Going On a Bear Hunt

What to see

The feature films represent a diverse group of filmmakers and stick tightly to the theme of young people taking an active role in the world — like the documentary "[Not Without Us](#)," which shows the lives of 16 children around the world, or "[Fanny's Journey](#)," based on the true story of a 13-year-old Jewish girl who led a group of children out of Italy to escape the Nazis. But the richest trove of the festival is its collections of shorts, most of which can't be seen anywhere else. Each short film program runs between an hour and 90 minutes, and adheres to a theme of language (such as the Spanish-language "[Caleidoscopio de Sueños](#)"), topic (such as the environmental collection "[Planet Wise](#)"), or visual style (such as "[Out of This World](#)," which plays with the laws of nature).

Except for the all-ages "[High Flyers](#)" and a handful of documentary and issues-focused narrative film programs aimed at older tween and teens (such as "[No Walls](#)," about kids who refuse to accept limitations), the shorts programs are all recommended for elementary school-aged kids.

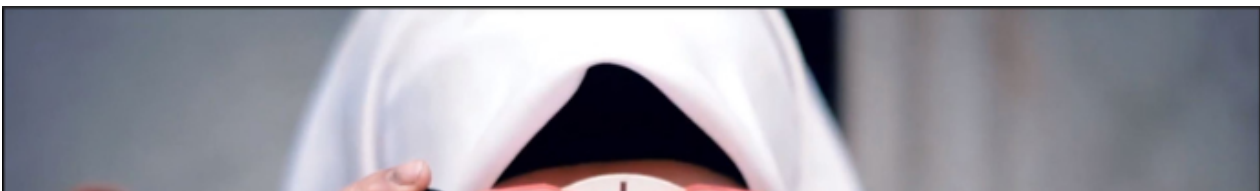




Photo: Refugee

Every program in the festival is described online with the information parents need to decide if the film is appropriate for their family. Descriptions include an age recommendation and run-time, as well as information about whether the film is live action or animated, what language it is in (and if there are subtitles) and a description of the factors that informed the age recommendations. These last are particularly useful, since the creepy music or scary images that terrify one child may go unnoticed by another the same age.

A word on subtitles

English is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world, but in an international film festival, there will inevitably be subtitles. Even many adults dread subtitled movies, but the reason that so many of the films at this festival are recommended for ages 8 and up is that an 8-year-old reading at grade level can handle the subtitles in all but the most dialogue-heavy films (which they wouldn't want to watch in any language).



Photo: My Body, My Life

In a theater full of families, parents can read critical lines quietly under their breath to younger children without distracting their neighbors. But even very little kids can often make sense of the story just through the visuals, since many of the short films are nonverbal or have very little dialogue. In fact, one of the most profound films I saw last year was an animated short at the Children's Film Festival that had no dialogue at all; the characters learned to solve their very real differences entirely through music.

If you've tried subtitled movies before and know they are a problem, many of the shorts programs include only 10–20 minutes of subtitled film scattered throughout more than an hour of shorts. Pick one of these and even the person who doesn't "do" subtitles can

relax and, as Shepherd says, “enjoy the music of another language” for a few minutes until the next film starts.

If you go...

When: Jan. 25–Feb. 10; see the [comprehensive schedule online](#) and pick a shorts program or feature that suits your family.

Where: Except for some special events such as the [Opening Night Gala](#) and [Pancake Breakfast with Short Film Smorgasbord](#), festival films show at the [Northwest Film Forum, 1515 12th Ave, Seattle](#).

Tickets: Tickets are \$9 for children ages 12 and under (and seniors) and \$12 for general admission. Special events pricing varies. Full festival passes are available. Buy tickets online by selecting a program from the [schedule](#) or at the door.

Parking: Consider public transportation as parking on Capitol Hill is challenging and expensive. The [Film Forum website](#) maintains a list of parking options.

Festival trailer: [Watch here](#).

Field trips: The festival welcomes field trip groups; check [here](#) for details.

READ NEXT



Racebending and 'A Wrinkle in Time'



5 Classic Movies That Can Trigger...



'Black Panther' Is Great But Consider This

RELATED TOPICS

[FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT](#)

[FESTIVALS AND FAIRS](#)

[FILMS/MOVIES](#)

[MULTICULTURAL](#)

Share this article with your friends!





ABOUT AUTHOR



BY GEMMA ALEXANDER

Gemma Alexander is a Seattle-based freelance writer with two daughters. When she is not writing for ParentMap, she [blogs about books and travel](#) and spends too much time on Twitter

and spends too much time on Twitter.

ParentMap 2018 Superhero Melba Ayco: The Dancer

ParentMap 2018 Superhero Kristin Ebeling: The...

OTHER ARTICLES BY THIS AUTHOR

LEAVE A COMMENT

HIDE COMMENTS



SIGN UP

Get the latest adventures, tips, tools, getaways and giveaways delivered to your inbox.

CHOOSE YOUR REGION

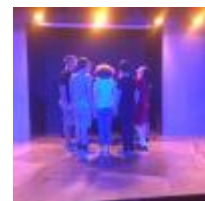
- Seattle Area
- Eastside
- South Sound
- North Sound
- National

LATEST + GREATEST

1 Three Studies Expectant and New Parents Need to Know About



2 The Summer Camp You've Never Heard Of



3 Kid Lit in an Era of #MeToo





4 I-5 Play Stops: 24 Fun Breaks Between Portland, Seattle and Bellingham



5 Never Never Never Again



HAPPENING

APR 3 **Indoor Playspace at Ballard Church**

APR 3 **Detective Cookie's Youth Chess Club**

APR 3 **Math Buddies**



APR 4 **Spring Break Superstars**

APR 4 **Toddler Tales & Trails**

[VIEW FULL CALENDAR](#)