

**For Immediate Release:**

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## **Ridgefield Independent Film Festival Presents First Annual Kids Film Fest Saturday, April 27**

*Festival showcases award-winning films from around the world  
including the internationally acclaimed South African film LIYANA  
And the East Coast premiere of the feel-good Canadian documentary BAND GEEKS*

Tickets on sale now at [RIFFct.org](http://RIFFct.org)



**RIDGEFIELD, CT - APRIL 2, 2019** - The Ridgefield Independent Film Festival, (RIFF), now in its fourth year, will launch its first ever Kids Film Fest on Saturday, April 27, 2019. An impressive lineup tailored for children, tweens, teens, and families showcases imaginative animation, live action, and documentary films from around the world.

Two programs are presented in partnership with the New York Children's Film Festival Kid Flicks Tour and include a collection of audience favorites and internationally acclaimed award-winning films, with a compelling range of styles and themes.

“We had such positive feedback from our RIFF family oriented film programming last season, that we thought, ‘Why wait until October?’ So this spring, we’re launching a one-day film festival geared to children and families,” says RIFF executive director Geoffrey Morris.

In addition to film compilations, the festival will present two East Coast premieres. First, *Band Geeks*, directed by Canada's Morgan Elliot, a fun and uplifting documentary about a high school youth marching band preparing for their appearance at the Rose Parade in Pasadena. Next, a narrative short *To Remember Me By*, by up and coming Mumbai filmmaker, Rahoul Daswani. The film tells the story of family, memory, and buried secrets discovered inside an 8mm camera. Both films screens on Saturday, April 27, at 3:30 pm at Ridgefield Theater Barn. (Appropriate for ages 8 through adult)

*Liyana* directed by Aaron Kopp and Amanda Kopp, will be the evening Spotlight Family Feature. This internationally acclaimed South African film is a genre-defying documentary that tells the story of five orphans in the Kingdom of eSwanti (formerly known as Swaziland). The children turn past trauma into an original fable about a girl named Liyana who embarks on a perilous quest to save her young twin brothers. The film weaves her animated journey together with poetic documentary scenes to create an inspiring tale of perseverance and hope.

Executive produced by Emmy-winner Thandie Newton, and produced by Oscar-winner Daniel Junge, *Liyana* features innovative animated artwork by Shofela Coker and an original score by Philip Miller. Critically acclaimed as “*exquisite*,” a “*staggering feature debut*,” and “*one of the year's very best*,” *Liyana* has played at festivals around the world, including the British Film Institute's London Film Festival and MoMA's Doc Fortnight, and to date, has won 28 jury and audience awards. London's *The Sunday Times* describes the film as “*Part documentary, part animation, and pure magic*.” *Liyana* screens on Saturday, April 27 at 7:00 pm at Ridgefield Theater Barn. (Appropriate for ages 10 through adult)

Festival Director Megan Smith-Harris says, “Exposing children to inventive, age-appropriate films from around the world is integral to engaging them in the arts. I'm particularly excited this year to include *RIFF Redux*, two short films created by Ridgefield students in grades four to six that screened at RIFF in the fall. These live action films—*The Misadventures of Goldilocks and the Three Boys* and *Let's Not Forget About Little Red Riding Hood*—feature numerous Ridgefield locations, including the Ridgefield Library, Planet Pizza, Deborah Ann's Sweet Shop, and even a local graveyard. There are also several cameos by familiar faces to people in town.”

Former Nickelodeon producers and area residents Dave Goldberg and David Herman oversaw every stage of the two film projects from inception to completion. Herman will participate in a post-screening audience Q&A. *RIFF ReRun* screens Saturday, April 27 at 1 pm at Ridgefield Theater Barn and will include other family favorite shorts from the RIFF archives. (Appropriate for ages 7-12)

Additional programming for tweens and teens will be added in the coming weeks. Tickets are on sale now at [RIFFct.org](http://RIFFct.org)

## **5 Different RIFF Kids Film Fest Programs for All Ages**

### **PROGRAM #1 - NY Kids Fest Shorts from Around the World**

**WHERE:** Ridgefield Library (472 Main Street, Ridgefield, CT)

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 27, 10:30 am – 11:30

**WHAT:** Animation and Live Action - Ages 3 - 7

#### **I WANT TO LIVE IN THE ZOO** □

**Russia, Animation** □

**Evgenia Golubeva, 2017, 6 min** □

At home you must clean up your room, clear your plate, and finish up homework. Wouldn't it be much more fun to relax and hang with some buddies at the zoo?

#### **THE HOUSE** □

**Czech Republic, Animation** □

**Veronika Zacharova, 2016, 6 min** □

Moving on is never easy. Sometimes you've got to roll with the changes. Other times you have to chase your dreams, as the House and its inhabitants hilariously find out.

#### **TIGER, TIGER** □

**USA, Animation** □

**Rhea Dadoo, 2017, 4 min** □

A family takes a wrong turn in the jungle and must summon all their calm to get out—but might that be a Bengali tiger in the shadows?

#### **DARK, DARK WOODS** □

**Denmark, Animation** □

**Emile Gignoux & Mik Lovenbalch Kirchheiner, 2017, 6 min** □

Royal life's not always so magnificent and can be tiring for a little one, so Maria trades in a tiara for a wilder kind of fun.

#### **SHERBERT ROSENCRANTZ, YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL** □

**Australia, Live Action** □

**Natalie van den Dungen, 2017, 11 min** □

Ten-year-old Milly is quite content in the company of her carrot-colored guinea pig, Sherbert. She wonders why others can't understand that in this sweet sherbet-hued ode to the 1980s and finding your own path.

**IF YOU FALL** □

**Canada, Animation** □

**Tisha Deb Pillai, 2017, 6 min** □

Eight-year-old Lila takes on the daunting task of learning how to cycle, while she and her beloved Baba must also balance Mom's work, his art, and everyone learning to grow and let go.

**HENRIYETI: SOCK IT TO ME, YETI!**

**USA, Animation** □

**Greg Walter, 2017, 2 min**

Henriyeti—a little bit girl and a little bit Yeti—demonstrates that great matches go beyond appearances. It's just about teaming up and putting one fearless foot in front of the other.

**PARTY MOUTH**

**USA, Animation** □

**Hunter Gatherer, 2017, 2 min** □

We guarantee this catchy dubstep tune will stay in your head while you take your grooming game to a whole other level!

**JAZZOO** □

**Sweden, Animation** □

**Adam Marko Nord, 2017, 9 min**

□ Koalas, hippos, elephants, and fish find their own groove in this melodic menagerie of a film, set to jazz sounds from the award-winning Oddjob quintet.

**PROGRAM #2 - RIFF Young Filmmaker's Screening (Ages 7 - 12)**

**FREE COMMUNITY EVENT**

**WHERE:** Ridgefield Theater Barn (32 Halpin Lane, Ridgefield, CT)

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 27th, 12:30 am – 1:30 pm

**WHAT:** Short Films by student filmmakers + behind the scenes mini-doc + Q&A

Two nine-minute films written by Ridgefield area students (grades 4, 5, and 6) and shot in and around Ridgefield. A post-screening Q&A with the youth filmmakers and executive producers from Nickelodeon, Dave Goldenberg and Dave Herman. Behind-the-scenes short on the process of making the films plus some RIFF short film favorites from the archives.

**THE MISADVENTURES OF GOLDDILOCKS AND THE THREE BOYS**

**USA, Live Action**

**Dave Goldenberg and David Herman, 2018, 9 min**

**LET'S NOT FORGET ABOUT LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD**

**USA, Live Action**

**Dave Goldenberg and David Herman, 2018, 9 min**

**PROGRAM #3 - Kid Flicks Tour - Shorts from Around the World**

**(Ages 8 to adult )**

**WHERE: Ridgefield Theater Barn (32 Halpin Lane, Ridgefield, CT)**

**WHEN: Saturday, April 27th, 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**WHAT: Acclaimed International Shorts, some foreign language**

**CAT DAYS** □

**Germany/Japan, Animation** □

**Jon Frickey, 2018, 11 min** □ **(Japanese with English subtitles)**

Jiro feels sick. When his father takes him to the doctor, tests confirm it's nothing serious... and yet reveal surprising news about Jiro. But who says you can't challenge the results?

**SUPERPERSON** □

**Australia, Animation** □

**Philip Watts, 2017, 2 min** □

A citizen needs rescuing. Luckily, there's a superhero on hand who just needs somewhere to get into costume...

**THE THEORY OF SUNSET** □

**Russia, Animation** □

**Roman Sokolov, 2017, 9 min** □

Deep at night, a dedicated cyclist traverses the wintry forest. The challenge: make sure this new day gets off to a fresh and timely start.

**GOKURŌSAMA** □

**France, Animation** □

**Clémentine Frère, Aurore Gal, Yukiko Meignien, Anna Mertz, Robin Migliorelli & Romain Salvini, 2016, 7 min** □

From escalators to robotic vacuums, automation helps this slightly surreal Japanese megamall hum along. But sometimes a little human touch goes a long way...

**POLES APART** □

**UK, Animation** □

**Paloma Baeza, 2017, 12 min** □

Nanuk, a tough-talking polar bear, meets Aklak, an enthusiastic grizzly, when he encroaches on her own dwindling turf. She's understandably a little less than patient with his clueless cheer.

**UNDISCOVERED** □

**USA, Animation** □

**Sara Litzenberger, 2017, 3 min** □

Sasquatch. Bigfoot. Call him what you will, if you can catch him on camera, that is, in this surprising look behind his elusive nature.

**GAME**

**USA, Live Action** □

**Jeannie Donohoe, 2017, 15 min** □

A.J. Green, a new kid in town, shows up at boys' basketball tryouts and instantly makes an impression. Can it be sustained?

**PIÑATA LOVE**

**USA, Live Action** □

**Joel Ramirez, 2017, 6 min** □

Mexican country craft meets-cute with NYC urban grit in this tale of a near-perfect mâche.

**HELLO SALAAM**

**Netherlands, Documentary** □

**Kim Brand, 2017, 15 min** □

**(In Dutch and Arabic with English subtitles)**

Two boys from Holland are headed on a big journey, traveling to a refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos where their mothers volunteer. How will the boys bridge such big differences in language, culture, and experiences to make friends and build meaningful bonds?

**PROGRAM #4 - RIFF CT Premiere Feature Documentary (ages 8 to adult)**

**WHERE:** Ridgefield Theater Barn (32 Halpin Lane, Ridgefield, CT)  
**WHEN:** Saturday, April 27th, 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm  
**WHAT:** Uplifting Documentary about high school “band geeks”  
+ poignant short from Mumbai

**TO REMEMBER ME BY**

**Mumbai, Maharashtra, Narrative Short**

**Rahoul Daswani, 2018, 15 min**

Caught in a maze of unspoken memories, young Ahand Sehgal sets on a journey to salvage the truth which is jammed in a newly discovered 8mm camera.

**BAND GEEKS**

**Canada, Documentary**

**Morgan Elliott, 2018, 44 min**

*BAND GEEKS* is an uplifting documentary that follows the Burlington Teen Tour Band on their journey to the Rose Parade in Pasadena, CA. With less than five months to go and 60 brand new band members, the race is on to whip the 220-member band into shape. There’s a six-mile parade route with one million onlookers and 28+ million more watching the event unfold on live TV. The stakes are high and these self-described “band geeks” have only one chance to get it right.

**PROGRAM #5 - RIFF CT Premiere International Feature (Ages 10 to adult)**

**WHERE:** Ridgefield Theater Barn (32 Halpin Lane, Ridgefield, CT)  
**WHEN:** Saturday, April 27th, 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm  
**WHAT:** Acclaimed International Mixed-Media Portrait of Courage

**LIYANA**

**South Africa, Documentary/Animation/Fantasy**

**Aaron Kopp and Amanda Kopp, 2018**

*Liyana* tells the story of five orphans in the Kingdom of eSwanti (formerly known as Swaziland) who turn past trauma into an original fable about a girl named Liyana who embarks on a perilous quest to save her young twin brothers. The film weaves her animated journey together with poetic documentary scenes to create an inspiring tale of perseverance and hope. (Note: while sensitively handled, the film deals with challenging family histories and lingering impact of HIV/AIDS epidemic in Africa.)

### **About the Ridgefield Independent Film Festival**

RIFF was established in Ridgefield, CT in 2016. In 2018 the festival was re-imagined by Executive Director Geoffrey Morris, Festival Director Megan Smith-Harris, and General Manager Bill Harris. RIFF received nearly 600 submissions from 49 different countries and programmed over 100 films, including narrative fiction, documentary, animation, comedy, sci-fi, horror, student, and experimental cinema at various venues throughout Ridgefield. Last year RIFF also hosted numerous filmmaker events throughout the year (documentaries *Jane* and *Elvis Presley: The Searcher*), launched “RIFFing With...” (inaugural guest Allison Williams from “Girls” and *Get Out*), a young filmmakers program run by former Nickelodeon producers Dave Goldberg and Dave Herman, Paul Dano’s directorial debut, *Wildlife* (Jake Gyllenhaal and Carey Mulligan) as well as numerous other community events, and parties.

**RIFF major Underwriters** include Edward and Catherine Romer; the Connecticut Office of Film, Television, and Digital Media; and TownVibe Media.

**Lead Sponsors** include Atria Senior Living, HamletHub, Nicholson Events, Ridgefield Thrift Shop, Rodier Flowers, Sacred Heart University, Some Things Fishy Catering, and University Archives.

**Venue Partners** include Ridgefield Playhouse, Ridgefield Library, Ridgefield Theater Barn, Lounsbury House, and Keeler Tavern Museum.

RIFF is an independent, non-profit subsidiary of TownVibe Fund, a 501(c)(3) entity supporting cultural arts.

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#RIFFkidsFilmFest

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