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Waterfront Film Festival entry ‘T-Rex’ chosen for juried ArtPrize Top 5 shortlist

Expanded screening schedule in the works for ArtPrize OnScreen

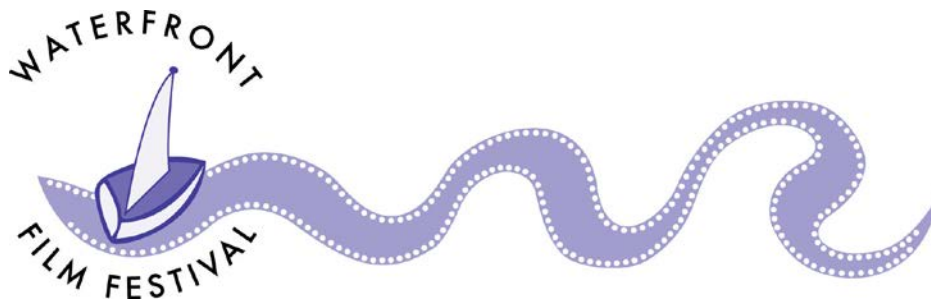
Grand Rapids, Mich., Sept. 29, 2015 – The tale of an Olympic boxer from Flint has captured the attention of the ArtPrize juror responsible for the category of Time-Based entries, making it eligible for the \$12,500 category prize and in contention for the \$200,000 grand prize.

ArtPrize OnScreen: Presented by Waterfront Film Festival screened the documentary twice, to students and a general audience, on Friday.

“T-Rex” is the story of 17-year-old boxer Claressa “T-Rex” Shields, a Michigan native and Olympic gold medalist, and was made by the Oakland, Calif.-based directorial team of Zackary Canepari and Drea Cooper, and New York City producer Sue Jaye Johnson.

“Being shortlisted for something as prestigious as ArtPrize is obviously very exciting for us, especially since ArtPrize is such a Michigan staple and Claressa’s story is such a Michigan story,” Co-Director Zackary Canepari said. “While we always wanted to reach a big, wide audience with ‘T-Rex’, we also really wanted the film to be well received inside of Michigan. So for obvious reasons, this is a true honor for our film.”

Shari Frilot, Curator of New Frontier at Sundance Film Festival, included the film among her Top 5 shortlist for the category, stating that she was taken by its portraiture in documentary and “density of form and layers”.



“This is a remarkable documentary about a teenage woman... who wanted to be a boxer,” said Frilot during a live announcement of the juried shortlist on Wood TV 8 news. “She was in an all-male gym and the coach saw champion potential. The film follows her from those beginnings to her bid for a spot on the U.S. Olympic Team.

“It’s just a beautifully told story,” she said. “Really wonderfully lensed.”

The film was co-sponsored at ArtPrize OnScreen by the West Michigan Film Office, Zonta Club of Grand Rapids, and Michigan Film & Digital Media Office. Shields also joined the audience via Skype for a Q&A with a packed audience following the screening of the film, an educational effort by Waterfront and the film’s co-sponsors, and in association with Mosaic Film Experience.

Last year’s ArtPrize winner in the Time-Based category was “Respirador”, an installed performance art piece at SiTE:LAB’s The Morton project. Others on the shortlist for ArtPrize Seven are “For the Toward” and “Higher Ground”, a pair of installed performance art pieces at SiTE:LAB’s Rumsey Street project, as well as “Whisper”, an installed interactive piece, and “That Was Then”, another film entry that creates a juxtaposition between visual and audio queues and provides perspective on the culture of war.

Three new ArtPrize jurors will tour the Top 20 and choose the award winner from each category; 2D, 3D, Time-Based and Best Venue. The judges are Brooklyn-based artist Wangechi Mutu, Chicago-based artist Michael Rakowitz and Dan Cameron, an independent curator and founder of Prospect New Orleans.

Details for future screenings of “T-Rex” within ArtPrize OnScreen: Presented by Waterfront Film Festival will be announced soon.

About WaterfrontFilm.Org

The non-profit Waterfront Film organization has been offering unique film experiences, education and opportunities for the past 17 years. Based in West Michigan, Waterfront Film organization founded and hosts one of the leading destination film festival in the Midwest, regularly hosting Midwest premieres of Academy Award-winning and nominated films. Recognized as a top five film festival by SAG Indie in the Screen Actors Guild magazine, WFF is a volunteer event committed to creating a “middle-coast” venue for independent filmmakers while further enhancing the cultural draw of West Michigan. For more information on Waterfront Film organization visit www.waterfrontfilm.org, “like” us on Facebook at [Facebook.com/WaterfrontFilm](https://www.facebook.com/WaterfrontFilm) and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/WaterfrontFilm](https://twitter.com/WaterfrontFilm)