

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Look 2025, Museum of the Moving Image's festival of new and innovative international cinema, announces lineup

The festival's 14th edition opens with Durga Chew-Bose's *Bonjour Tristesse* and closes with Giovanni Tortorici's *Diciannove*, framing a lineup of 38 premieres, including 20 features, representing 21 countries

March 12–16, 2025

Tickets are now on sale: movingimage.org/firstlook2025

Astoria, New York, February 10, 2025 — Museum of the Moving Image is pleased to announce the complete lineup for the 14th edition of First Look, the Museum's festival of new and innovative international cinema, which will take place in person March 12–16, 2025. Each year, First Look offers a diverse slate of major New York premieres, work-in-progress screenings and sessions, and fresh perspectives on the art and process of filmmaking.



The 2025 lineup will present 38 films, of which 20 are features, including 4 world premieres and 23 U.S. or North American premieres, from 21 countries. Each day will be anchored by a Showcase screening. The festival will open and close with the U.S. premieres of two scintillating debut features from the 2024 Toronto and Venice Film Festivals, Durga Chew-Bose's lush, heart-wrenching *Bonjour Tristesse* and Giovanni Tortorici's deft, dashing *Diciannove*. These screenings bracket the festival's centerpiece showcase presentations: the U.S. premiere of *Israel Palestine on Swedish TV 1958–1989*, the latest, must-see epic from archival composer Göran Hugo Olsson (*The Black Power Mixtape*); the U.S. premiere of *When the Phone Rang*, an incantatory, war-torn autofiction from Serbian filmmaker Iva Radivojević; and the NY premiere of the provocative and incisive *Zodiac Killer Project*, First Look alumnus Charlie Shackleton's recent winner of the NEXT Innovator Award at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival, on March 15.

"In so many ways, First Look serves as the centerpiece of MoMI's film programming calendar. Over the course of five days in March we bring in select filmmakers from around the world to premiere their latest films in New York, share with our audience and

one another their working methods and future plans, and either establish or build upon relationships with our programming team and wider community. We'll welcome debut filmmakers, veterans making their first trip to MoMI, and First Look veterans with exciting new work. I'm excited about this year's lineup, proud of its wide spectrum of forms and practices, and eager to bring more attention to these amazing artists," said Eric Hynes, MoMI Senior Curator of Film and First Look Artistic Director.

Other international award-winners at the festival include ***Chronicles of the Absurd*** (IDFA 2024 Envision Competition, Best Picture), ***A Frown Gone Mad*** (IDFA 2024, Outstanding Artistic Contribution), ***Desert of Namibia*** (Cannes 2024, FIPRESCI Prize), ***Park*** (Taiwan International Documentary Festival, Grand Prize), ***Tata*** (2024 Astra Film Festival, Best Director), ***The Fifth Shot of La Jetée*** (Dok Leipzig 2024, Golden Dove).

In addition to Shackleton's *Zodiac Killer Project*, the festival also presents the returns of further First Look veterans, including the U.S. premieres of ***Elementary***, the latest from documentary master Claire Simon; ***Measures for a Funeral***, Sofia Bohdanowicz's engrossing gothic fever dream; as well as new avant-garde works by Ben Balcom, James Edmonds, Kevin Jerome Everson, Eva Giolo, Ewelina Rosinska, and more.

As part of the Museum's Science on Screen initiative, Brigid McCaffrey's ***Sanctuary Station*** and Gerard Ortín Castellví's ***Bliss Point*** will make their New York debuts, and the 2024 winners of the Sloan Student Prizes, Brittany Wang (USC) and Yoel Gebremariam (University of Michigan), will participate in staged readings of their winning screenplays followed by a celebratory reception.

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Concurrent with First Look, Working on It runs March 12–14 and offers a laboratory for works in progress and dialogues about process, bringing together festival guests, filmmakers, students, writers, and the general public. Last year new work was shared by Anna Zamecka, Angelo Madsen Minax, Robert Kolodny, Bill and Turner Ross, Mary Lampson, Zhang Mengqi, Khary Jones, and many others. The Museum's publication *Reverse Shot* will welcome a new cohort for its Emerging Critics Workshop, with writers attending throughout the festival.

First Look again partners with Polish documentary festival Millennium Docs Against Gravity, welcoming Artistic Director Karol Piekarczyk; and will again present student work from the Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism at the Missouri School of Journalism.

First Look 2025 was programmed by Eric Hynes, MoMI Curator of Film & First Look Artistic Director; Edo Choi, First Look Senior Programmer; and Sonia Epstein, Curator of Science and Technology; Sarah Luciano, Associate Director of Special Programs; and

Eynar Pineda, First Look Producer. First Look's avant-garde films were programmed by Edo Choi and David Schwartz.

First Look 2025 Presenting Sponsors are Lismore Road and MUBI. Additional support is provided by the Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism at the Missouri School of Journalism.

First Look is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support was provided by the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Preview screeners and interviews with select filmmakers are available. Please inquire with Sylvia Savadjian, First Look festival publicist (Sylvia.Savadjian@gmail.com).

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FIRST LOOK 2025 FEATURES:

OPENING NIGHT

Bonjour Tristesse

Dir. Durga Chew-Bose. 2024, 110 min. Canada/France. Durga Chew-Bose's modern adaptation of Françoise Sagan's classic 1954 novel features Lily McInerney as 18-year-old Cécile, spending her summer holiday on the French Riviera with her widowed father Raymond (Claes Bang). The carefree, sun-soaked days are interrupted by the arrival of steely fashion designer Anne (Chloë Sevigny). A major new film director, Chew-Bose has created a heart-wrenching, keenly observed coming-of-age tale. **U.S. premiere**

CLOSING NIGHT

Diciannove

Dir. Giovanni Tortorici. 2024, 108 mins. Italy. Outstanding newcomer Manfredi Marini plays Leonardo, who leaves his home in Palermo to attend business school in London, starting a journey that takes him to Siena and Torino, where he becomes increasingly intolerant of the larger world and others' points of view. Tortorici's debut is reminiscent of early Arnaud Desplechin as it zigzags temporally and tonally along with Leonardo's impulsive, potentially toxic behavior. **U.S. premiere**

SHOWCASE SCREENING

Israel Palestine on Swedish TV 1958–1989

Dir. Göran Hugo Olsson. 2024, 200 mins. Sweden/Finland. Working from thousands of hours of footage catalogued in the vaults of Sweden's national television service SVT, archival chronicler Olsson unspools a rigorously cool and steely account of the Israeli Palestinian conflict, as witnessed and represented by Swedish journalists over the course of the Cold War era. **North American premiere**

SHOWCASE SCREENING

Zodiac Killer Project

Dir. Charlie Shackleton. 2024, 91 min. U.K. When his plans for a true crime documentary hit a wall, Shackleton set about reconstituting what might have been, while deconstructing what we've come to expect from an oversaturated genre—using Bay Area landscapes, archival material, reenactments, film and TV clips, and his own wry and nimble voice-over. **New York premiere**

SHOWCASE SCREENING

When the Phone Rang

Dir. Iva Radivojević. 2024, 75 mins. Serbia/U.S. On a Friday morning in 1992, eleven-year-old Lana (Ilincic) receives a phone call about a death in the family, a life-changing event in sync with the fracturing of Yugoslavian history and identity. Inspired by her own childhood memories, filmmaker Radivojevic loops back to that fateful moment as a conjuring and incantation. **U.S. premiere**

100,000,000,000 (Cent Mille Billiards)

Dir. Virgil Vernier. 2024, 77 mins. France. Drifting through an ethereal Monaco during the eerie, emptied-out limbo of the Christmas holidays, a diffident young sex worker gradually forms a strange, tentative bond with a preadolescent whose parents, Chinese real estate developers, have left her in the charge of her Serbian babysitter. **North American premiere**

Chronicles of the Absurd

Dir. Miguel Coyula. 2024, 77 mins. Cuba. Coyula and actor Lynn Cruz were subjected to various forms of control and intimidation while making their dystopian feature *Corazón azul* in Cuba in 2011. This defiant and entertaining work playfully uses headshots and avatars to visualize clandestine audio recordings documenting years of Kafkaesque impositions, threats, and vital dissident art. **U.S premiere**

Desert of Namibia

Dir. Yōko Yamanaka. 2024, 137 min. Japan. Yamanaka's second feature follows mercurial 21-year-old Kana, who vacillates among suitors, priorities, and moods. Does she want security or stimulation, adulthood or regression; is she just unpredictable or unwell? Yuumi Kawai embodies Kana with a fierce volatility that evokes the hot-blooded, without-a-net cinema of Cassavetes and Rowlands. **New York premiere**

Elementary

Dir. Claire Simon. 2024, 105 min. France. The latest immersive work from documentary master Claire Simon takes us into Makarenko, a public elementary school in the Parisian suburb Ivry-sur-Seine, over the course of a school year, staying attentive to the glorious unpredictability of human interaction and the revelations of learning. **U.S. premiere**

The Fifth Shot of La Jetée

Dir. Dominique Cabrera. 2024, 104 min. France. Filmmaker Cabrera belatedly discovers in her latest feature that Chris Marker's 1962 sci-fi photomontage *La Jetée*, made the same year that Algeria gained independence from French colonial rule, might also be an inadvertent historical document of her own family. This detective story uncovers evidence about her family, French colonialism, Marker, and film itself. **U.S. premiere**

A Frown Gone Mad

Dir. Omar Mismar. 2024, 71 mins. Lebanon. In a beauty salon in Beirut, one client after another sits in Bouba's chair seeking cosmetic treatment. Omar Mismar's uniquely mesmerizing film consists entirely of close-ups fixed on clients' faces. A work of real-life body horror that's also a tender portrait of communal defiance. **North American premiere**

Measures for a Funeral

Dir. Sofia Bohdanowicz. 2024, 142 min. Canada. PhD candidate Audrey (Deragh Campbell) journeys from Toronto to London to Oslo to research the life of forgotten Canadian violinist Kathleen Parlow while fever-dream calls from her dying mother (herself a failed violinist) go to voicemail. The latest from singular artist Bohdanowicz richly blends family history with archival research and gothic storytelling. **U.S. premiere**

Park

Dir. So Yo-Hen. 2024, 101 min. Taiwan. In this intricately improvised whatsit, Indonesian immigrants Asri and Hasan convene every day at twilight hour, in the heart of Taiwan's oldest city, to share the day's news and experiences, spinning second-hand tales of migrant struggle into rhapsodically spontaneous verse. **New York premiere**

The Periphery of the Base

Dir. Zhou Tao. 2024, 54 mins. China. Mixed media artist Zhou constructs mutating digital landscapes that confound classical notions of scale, composition, and visual realism. His latest sets us adrift in the desolate expanse of the Gobi Desert, where an amorphous infrastructure project of massive proportions is underway. **North American premiere**

Sanctuary Station

Dir. Brigid McCaffrey. 2024, 69 mins. U.S. Shot on high-contrast black-and-white 16mm film and Super 16, this incandescent work weaves a rough, hallucinatory patchwork of encounters with women, old and young, solitary and collective, who live or work among the wildlife of the redwood forests and remote terrains of northwestern California. Part of Science on Screen. **New York Premiere**

The Shipwrecked Triptych

Dir. Deniz Eroglu. 2025, 90 mins. Germany. Displaying remarkable formal sophistication with a dazzling composite of film stocks, formats, and digital VFX, visual artist Eroglu's

provocative narrative triad forms a surreal, at times comic, and always fascinating treatise on contemporary Germany, its meaning, its history, and its libidinal unconscious. **North American premiere**

Songs of Slow Burning Earth

Dir. Olha Zhurba. 2024, 95 mins. Ukraine/France/Sweden/Denmark. Filmed over two years in Ukraine, Zhurba's epic depiction of her society under siege by Russia moves ineluctably from one grandly scaled, finely detailed scene of calamity to another, each designated by its degree of proximity to the front. **East Coast premiere**

Tata

Dir. Lina Vdovii, Radu Ciorniciuc. 2024, 82 min. Moldova/Romania. Moldovan journalist Lina receives a video message from her estranged father, a migrant worker in Italy, seeking help from his abusive employer. Equipping him with a hidden camera, Lina finds herself on a parallel journey of justice—uncovering a pattern of domestic violence that has plagued her family for generations. **U.S. premiere**

A Want in Her

Dir. Myrid Carten. 2024, 81 min. Ireland. When her troubled mother goes missing, Irish filmmaker Myrid Carten returns home to find her—at the risk of losing herself. Drawing upon previously captured footage, new interventions, and extraordinarily evocative visual experiments within their living spaces, Carten reinvents the “home movie” as an aching, active processing. **New York premiere**

Windless

Dir. Pavel G. Vesnakov. Bulgaria/Italy. 93 mins. After years working abroad in Spain, a taciturn young man returns to his village in rural Bulgaria to clean out his late father's flat. As he reconnects with old friends and relatives, he hears tales of his father, by all accounts, a fiercely deeply loving man whom he does not recognize from his own memories. 2024 European Film Awards Selection. **New York premiere**

FIRST LOOK 2025 SHORTS:

Aotearoa

Dir. Maximilien Luc Proctor. 2024, 6 mins. Germany. 16mm. The snow of Weissensee, a home in Tāmaki Makaurau, the beach in Matapouri. Edited in camera, using double-perforated film. **North American premiere**

Being Blue

Dir. Luke Fowler. 2024, 18 mins. U.K. DCP. Filmed during a residency at Prospect Cottage, Dungeness, former home of artist, filmmaker and gay rights activist Derek Jarman, *Being Blue* touches impressionistically on themes of sexuality, queer British life, art making, and nature. **North American premiere**

Bliss Point

Dir. Gerard Ortín Castellví. 2023, 26 mins. Italy/U.K./Spain. Artificial intelligence manages a warehouse, identical rows of burgers are flipped, and robots glide through factories. Filmed with elegance and technological precision, *Bliss Point* portrays the automation of food production. Part of Science on Screen. **North American premiere**

Common Pear

Dir. Gregor Bozic. 2025, 15 mins. Slovenia. In a not-too-distant future ravaged by climate disasters, a team of scientists develops new technology that transmits true emotions from humans on screens to those that watch them. **North American premiere**

Chelsea Drive

Dirs. Kevin Jerome Everson, Claudrena N. Harold. 2025, 4 mins. U.S. Digital projection. *Chelsea Drive* displays three decades of Black student style, fashion and dance at the University of Virginia. **North American premiere**

Full Out

Dir. Sarah Ballard. 2025, 14 mins. U.S. DCP. In French with English subtitles. In 19th-century Paris at the Salpêtrière Hospital, patients were hypnotized onstage to reproduce the symptoms of hysteria for public audiences. Over a century later, high school cheerleaders are fainting en masse. **World premiere**

how to make magic

Dir. Blanca Garcia. 2024, 5 mins. Spain/U.K. Super 8mm. Filmed in the New Forest, the largest remaining unenclosed common land in England, where the entanglement of non-human and human activity hides a joyous spell. **New York premiere**

Memory Is an Animal, It Barks with Many Mouths

Dir. Eva Giolo. 2025, 24 mins. DCP. Belgium/Italy. In the valleys surrounding the Dolomite Mountains, children reimagine ancient Ladin legends while they examine bodies of water, holes, caves, and passages looking for something lost or forgotten. **North American premiere**

The Phalanx

Dir. Ben Balcom. 2025, 13 mins. U.S. DCP. Letters from the Ceresco community trace the fragility of harmony, the dream of life in association. Members of the phalanx drift apart, lingering in private corners, suspended in speculative time. **World premiere**

Songs Overheard in the Shadows

Dir. James Edmonds. 2025, 22 mins. Germany. 16mm. Balanced on the edge of what is visible, everything comes from nothingness and returns to nothingness. **World premiere**

Suspicious About the Hidden Realities of Air

Dir. Sam Drake. 2025, 9 mins. U.S. DCP. Fragmented records reveal a concealed history of Cold War-era human radiation experiments—a miasma of elite deviance. Desert dust settles into teeth. A search that dissolves into a cipher. **North American premiere**

A Thousand Waves Away

Dir. Helena Wittmann. 2025, 10 mins. Germany. DCP. The people are in turmoil. The ground from which their enchanted garden grows, is trembling. **North American premiere**

Unstable Rocks

Dir. Ewelina Rosinska, in collaboration with Nuno Barroso. 2024, 25 min. Germany/Portugal. Geology, animals, and the human path flow together in this subjective portrait of Portuguese landscapes. **North American premiere**

The Vanguard Tapes

Dir. Bill Morrison. 2025, 29 mins. U.S. In 1995, Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Bill Morrison (*Incident*) was a dishwasher at the Village Vanguard, the legendary jazz club in New York City's Greenwich Village. Morrison's poignant and deliciously candid film, with footage captured during his breaks, features conversations with and monologues by legends Cecil Taylor, Dr. Lonnie Smith, Harold Mabern, Jamil Nasser, and others. **U.S. premiere**

First Sight: 2025 Award-Winning Shorts from the Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism:

For the eighth consecutive year, First Look presents Jury award-winning graduate and undergraduate student films from the Jonathan B. Murray Center for Documentary Journalism at the Missouri School of Journalism. All were originally presented at the Stronger Than Fiction Film Festival in Columbia, Missouri. This year's jurors were Isabel Castro, Chloe Gbai, and Eric Hynes. **New York premieres**

Cowboy Strike

Dir. Matt Pehl. 2024, 22 mins. U.S. In 1883, cowboys in the Texas Panhandle responded to the rise of the first mega-ranches in dramatic fashion: they launched a strike. In investigating the story of this long-forgotten historical anecdote, a songwriter seeks to pay tribute to the cowboys' search for economic justice. Winner, Stacy Woelfel Award for Innovative Journalism.

I Will Take the Blame

Dir. Elena Fu. 2024, 15 mins. U.S. A young Chinese woman endeavors to mend her parents' fractured marriage, only to encounter the painful realization of her own limitations. Winner, Best Film.

Satan's Greatest Lies

Dir. Michael Coleman. 2024, 35 mins. U.S. George Russell, a maverick environmental activist with a God complex, mourns the unexpected loss of his youngest daughter, causing him to question his lifelong crusade to preserve the piney woods of East Texas. Winner, Best Director.

Victim

Dir. Tess Jagger-Wells. 2024, 13 mins. U.S. In 1950, Janett Christman was murdered while babysitting in Columbia, Missouri. Almost 75 years later, a filmmaker investigates the unsolved case and its surprising connection to pop culture while she confronts her obsession with true crime. Winner, Special Jury Award for Editing.

About Museum of the Moving Image

Founded in 1985, MoMI celebrates the history, art, technology, and future of the moving image in all of its forms. Located in Astoria, New York, the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, and creative leaders; and education programs. It houses the nation's most comprehensive collection of moving image artifacts and screens over 500 films annually. Its exhibitions—including the core exhibition *Behind the Screen* and *The Jim Henson Exhibition*—are noted for their integration of material objects, interactive experiences, and audiovisual presentations. For more information about MoMI, visit movingimage.org.

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[Press images are available here.](#)

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