



WYO FILM FEST

WYOFF Film Selections & Synopsis

People vs. Politics

Date & Time	Thursday, October 1 at 7:00 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Main Stage
Total Runtime	1 hour, 37 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

- **People vs. Politics || Feature Film/Documentary**

Ever more partisan and divisive, democracy is imperiled throughout our nation. But have these Americans found a fix to what ails us?

PEOPLE vs. POLITICS profiles grassroots leaders around the country dedicated to reforming the uniquely partisan and polarizing nature of U.S. elections

Varying in personal background and political orientation, these reformers face similar challenges in placing citizen initiatives on the 2024 ballots in Nevada, Idaho, Colorado, Montana, Alaska & Washington, D.C. They also share a common goal: enhancing people's power through opening primaries and creating ranked-choice (or instant-runoff) general elections, where winners must earn a true majority.

From DC street fairs to Native Alaskan festivals, at house parties, town halls and debates, the film captures the enthusiasm behind these initiatives and the blowback from those in power.

That's People vs. Politics.

Native & Indigenous Voices: Short Film Block

Date & Time	Friday, October 2 at 3:00 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Black Box
Total Runtime	1 hour, 1 minute
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

- **Johnny Crow || Short Film/Experimental (7:15)**

A poetic and transformative journey of a young man's physical, mental, and spiritual struggle to return to his son through the criminal justice system and the layers of colonization it represents. Created by animating

spray-painted murals frame-by-frame, Cree artist Jesse Gouchey painted each frame on large outdoor surfaces over a period of seven years in numerous locations across Alberta and BC.

- **Land of Abundance || Short Film/Documentary (12:04)**

This film highlights the Native American lifeways in the area around Encampment, Wyoming.

- **Listen || Short Film/Documentary (16:00)**

Listen is a story of language. It is about resilience and instilling hope in future generations to learn their language, specifically on the Navajo Nation. Currently, there are fewer fluent speakers of Dine Bizaad (the Navajo Language) on the reservation. Despite this, there is hope thanks to a local radio station that broadcasts entirely in Dine Bizaad to thousands of listeners all the time. Notably, the director's journey in the film highlights the resilience of the language, as it encounters revitalization efforts on the Navajo Nation—an inspiration to protect the language of your people and express your identity through it.

- **MiLakóta Yeló – Short Film/Documentary (18:00)**

Milakóta Yeló is a short, Lakota-led documentary that follows a traditional Lakota grandmother on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. Rooted in language, land, and lived experience, the film becomes a quiet reflection on identity, memory, and the enduring presence of Lakota life and matriarchal power.

- **Speaking UTE – Short Film/Documentary (7:44)**

This short doc was made by Southern Ute high school kids as they were taught professional filmmaking techniques, and then talked to a wide variety of members of their community as they learn more about their original Ute language that is disappearing more and more every day.

A Life Illuminated with Short Film “House of Light”

Date & Time	Friday, October 2 at 7:00 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Main Stage
Total Runtime	1 hour, 31 minutes
Additional Info	

- **A Life Illuminated || Feature Film/Documentary (TK mins)**

A Life Illuminated directed by Tasha Van Zandt follows pioneering marine biologist Dr. Edith Widder's lifelong quest to use the language of light to communicate with the most mysterious creatures in the deep sea. Now, she heads off on her greatest journey yet into the deepest depths of our ocean world to understand our biggest questions about bioluminescence and what it can tell us about the future of life on Earth.

- **House of Light || Short Film/Documentary (13:33)**

As the last lighthouse keeper in America approaches retirement, Dr. Sally Snowman reflects on how to say goodbye to her spiritual and emotional connection to Boston Light, the oldest light station in the country. Sally's deep bond with her tiny island crosses time and space. This immersive portrait of Sally's last days at Boston Light may be the last document of the art of light keeping.

After Dark Feature Film: "Recluse"

Date & Time	Friday, October 2 at 9:00 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Black Box
Total Runtime	1 hour, 38 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

- **Recluse – Feature Film/Narrative/Horror (1 hour, 38 minutes)**

Follows Joan, an audio engineer who lives a solitary life, struggling to determine whether the horrors she encounters are real and caused by past actions of her father, or if they are manifestations of her own troubled mind.

Saturday Morning Cartoons: Family-Friendly Animated Shorts

Date & Time	Saturday, October 3 at 9:00 AM
Location	WYO Theater – Main Stage
Total Runtime	40 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

Start Saturday morning with a colorful collection of animated shorts made for kids and kids at heart. Featuring a mix of animation styles, this family-friendly block is an easy way to introduce younger audiences to the festival. We'll have a cereal bar and breakfast treats, plus coffee for the grown-ups. Pajamas are encouraged.

- **A Game of Chance (4:25)**

A young mouse, lonely for a friend, takes up a board game with the wind.

- **Bridge—My Little Friends (9:30)**

"I'll bring Shiro to you. I promise!" Jin, the cat, made this promise to Mugi, who is deeply sad about losing her beloved dog, Shiro.

Jin loves Mugi very much and, after hearing the story of the "Rainbow Bridge" from his owner Aki, he decides to take Mugi to meet Shiro at the Rainbow Bridge! Can Jin heal Mugi's sadness? With the help of nearby pigeons and squirrels, Jin's great plan is now underway!

- **Every Dog Has Its Day (6:56)**

This little story is based on actual experience where the girl is so taken in by the spectacular birds that they are welcomed with open arms. Her Staffy is forbidden from doing what obviously needs to be done and the Peacock population grows dramatically. With time the girl eventually changes her position to that of the Staffy who knew all along that the garden should be out of bounds to peacocks.

- **First Winter (4:27)**

Ángel is a newly arrived immigrant who is experiencing his first winter in Chicago. The film follows his realization of what it may mean to be away from home for a very long time.

- **Jam and Wood (5:13)**

The cold winter is hard on Lena and her animals. Firewood is expensive - and Lena only has turnip jam left to sell. But help sometimes comes from where you least expect it.

- **Yonder Tree (2:58)**

An American folk song featuring a bird, a cat, a dog, a duck, a cow... and a giraffe?

Wyoming and the West: Short Film Block

Date & Time	Saturday, October 3 at 10:30 AM
Location	WYO Theater – Black Box
Total Runtime	1 hour, 21 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

A celebration of stories rooted in Wyoming and the greater American West. This collection brings together films made in Wyoming, created by Wyoming filmmakers, or inspired by the landscapes, people, history, and character of the American West.

- **Apostol || Short Film/Narrative (3:58)**

In the Old West, a weary cowboy faces a mysterious duelist, only to find the showdown forces him to confront the ghost of who he once was and the man he's become.

- **Before the Wire: The Legacy of the Pony Express || Short Film/Documentary/Wyoming (25:34)**

Before text messaging, before email, before the telephone, before the telegraph — there was the Pony Express. This legendary chapter of American history has captured hearts and imaginations around the world. Every June, hundreds of riders retrace the historic route in a nonstop ten-day relay, carrying mail nearly 2,000 miles from Missouri to California. Before the Wire follows the adventure through the Wyoming high country, bringing to life the enduring spirit and remarkable history of the Pony Express.

- **Horses and High Water: Restoring Tincup Creek || Short Film/Documentary/Wyoming (10:32)**

Horses and Highwater is about the Western way of life: community, conservation, and collaboration. TU's ongoing restoration efforts at Tincup Creek exemplify all of these traits, as we worked closely with Caribou-Targhee National Forest — by hand, foot, hoof, and helicopter — to bring these restoration projects to life in the Salt River watershed.

- **Restoring the Headwaters || Short Film/Documentary (15:00)**

Restoring the Headwaters follows the story of wildlife biologists and stream ecologists as they take on the urgent challenge of repairing a stream headcut in the fragile sage-steppe ecosystem of the Big Hole Valley in Montana. What begins as an eroding scar in the landscape becomes a threat to drain wetlands, degrade

critical sage-grouse habitat and disrupt water flowing downstream. Through collaboration, grit, and innovative restoration, this short documentary reveals how working lands and wildlife can thrive together and why protecting water at its source is essential for the resilience of rivers, communities, and all ecosystems downstream.

- **Something to Hold || Short Film/Documentary (26:20)**

In the wilds of Montana, a mountaineering artist embarks on the last summer of a decade-long project to draw all the named glaciers in the state. He reminisces about past seasons spent in the wilderness making art and bearing witness to his awe-inspiring subjects. With a highly anticipated gallery show looming, he also ponders if he will truly be able to finish the project.

Film Rodeo Round-Up: Mixed Short Film Block

Date & Time	Saturday, October 3 at 2:30 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Black Box
Total Runtime	1 hour, 34 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

Saddle up for a little bit of everything. The Film Rodeo Round-up is a vibrant collection of short films that spans genres, styles, and perspectives. From heartfelt dramas and unexpected comedies to powerful documentaries, this block is all about variety—offering something for everyone. It's a cinematic grab bag that showcases the creativity and diversity of voices in independent filmmaking.

- **A Good Day Will Come || Short Film/Narrative (25:00)**

Arash is a professional wrestler with dreams of representing his country and winning gold medals. The country is in turmoil and its people are suffering. Arash must decide between using his platform to stand up to tyranny, or put his head down and remain silent.

- **I Wanted to Hear Your Voice || Short Film/Documentary (12:00)**

After eight years of caring for his mother with severe dementia, a son struggles through their daily care routine. Recorded voicemails serve to show the progression of the disease, underscoring the frustration, isolation and burnout that comes with intensive caregiving.

- **My Kind of People || Short Film/Narrative (19:59)**

After a DNA test uncovers his father's adoption, a proud Italian American from Providence, Rhode Island grapples with the revelation that he's not actually Italian, and never has been. With the foundation of his identity destroyed, and his familial bonds broken, he begins to spiral.

- **The Baker's Hotline || Short Film/Documentary (12:00)**

In this heartwarming short documentary, The Baker's Hotline, a dedicated team of passionate bakers work the King Arthur Flour call center, offering expert advice and answering perplexing baking questions from an eclectic array of callers, revealing the transformative power of baking and the unexpected long lasting connections it fosters.

- **The Grandfather Puzzle || Short Film/Documentary (25:00)**

My 100-year-old Hungarian grandfather, a Holocaust survivor, never wants to do anything except jigsaw puzzles. Seeking to bridge the silence that has defined our relationship, I journey to Hungary to photograph locations from his past and transform them into puzzles we can solve together. When I arrive at my grandfather's childhood home—a castle now repurposed as a boarding school—I'm unprepared for how the locals receive me: "Has the baroness come to reclaim the castle?" What began as a simple quest to connect with my grandfather transforms into a complex exploration of identity, belonging, and the stubborn untidiness of historical memory.

"The River" with short film "Death of a Glacier"

Date & Time	Saturday, October 3 at 7:00 PM
Location	WYO Theater – Main Stage
Total Runtime	1 hour, 44 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

- **The River || Feature Film/Documentary (1 hour, 28 minutes)**

After 5 million years of existence, the Colorado River now fights to survive. This once thriving life source to millions of people and wildlife, is now on the brink of collapse, as human consumption, booming industry, and climate change threaten to dry up its already depleted reservoirs forever. In a moment of reckoning, an unlikely ensemble of people dependent on the River must defend their way of life against modern pressures and unjust laws, all while coming to terms with the choices we've made that have led to this disaster and the uncertain future ahead. But this ancient river has always had a life of its own, and there are still some who will stand up and give it a voice. For if the river can regenerate, maybe so can we.

- **Death of a Glacier || Short Film/Documentary (16:46)**

In the Bolivian Andes, the glaciers are vanishing — and with them, the water that sustains the communities below. Death of a Glacier follows a team of climate scientists and the residents of the Zongo Valley as they confront the retreat of ice that has crowned these mountains for millennia.

WYOFF After Dark: Short Film Block

Date & Time	Saturday, October 3 at 10:00 PM
Location	Carraige House Theater
Total Runtime	1 hour, 18 minutes
Additional Info	Filmmaker Q&A to follow

When the sun goes down, things get a little stranger. WYOFF After Dark brings together a collection of horror, dark comedy, thriller, and wonderfully weird short films for a late-night screening at the historic Carriage House Theater.

With its old walls, intimate setting, and just the right amount of atmosphere, the Carriage House provides the perfect backdrop for a lineup that gets more unexpected as the night goes on.

- **Dead Serious: Just a Nibble (11:46)**

When a zombie outbreak descends upon a sleepy Midwestern town, a naïve high school nerd must trek across the haunted rural wasteland in order to save his cheerleader crush from joining the undead.

- **Hide (14:50)**

From the Academy Award winning team behind "Curfew." Still reeling from an incredible loss, a father (Shakey Graves) and daughter cling to a bedtime routine keeping them safe in a town where an unfathomable horror visits its inhabitants night after night.

- **Munchies – (11:10)**

Munchies is a fun, fast-paced crime comedy that follows an estranged high school clique as they reunite for a summer girl's night where Lennon, Tessa, Ronnie, and Mack get high together like old times. Their sleepover takes a hilariously dark turn when junk food cravings land them in the middle of a botched convenience store robbery. Despite becoming hostages, the girls are still stoned as f*ck. They must squash their giggles and outsmart the robber to escape alive.

- **Night Feeds (15:56)**

An Arab-American mother drowns in postpartum as a night nurse unsettles her and war floods her screens. Her private paranoia bleeds into the violence beyond her walls- blurring nightmare and reality... But is the madness in her mind or the world around her?

- **Speech (9:45)**

At his wedding reception, the anxious groom can no longer ignore the growing lump in his throat. Buckling under family pressure and the high expectations of his bride, he must dig deep and find the courage to give the speech of his life.

- **The Dark Wyoming (9:00)**

A darkly comedic thriller following a master mixologist and popular YouTube personality whose polished public persona hides a dangerous secret. Starring Leandro DiMonriva, creator and host of one of the world's largest bartending YouTube channels (The Educated Bartender), alongside Nicole Kang (You, Batwoman, Orange Is the New Black), Christopher Cass (As the World Turns, ER), and Carlos Moreno Jr. (Coco, Transformers, 9-1-1).

- **The Worms (5:58)**

THE WORMS is a siren-song warning viewers against the consumption of horrific space worms from the internet, while simultaneously luring them into their splashy and saturate fever-dream advertisement.

***PENDING WYOFF Audience Choice Awards Screening (Sunday, October 4 – 2:00pm, Location TBD)**

Close out the festival with an encore screening of the films audiences loved most. We'll bring back the winners of the WYO Film Festival Audience Choice Awards for both Best Short Film and Best Feature Film, giving you one more chance to catch two standout films from the weekend. If you missed everything else—or just want to see what rose to the top—this is the screening to make. Films will be announced the morning of Sunday, October 4.