

A GUIDE

HOW TO HOST A
SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

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What is a Short Film Festival?



Film is everywhere. In all the world's major cultures people watch films. One of the reasons for the popularity of this medium is that it elicits reactions—powerfully evoking thoughts, feelings and longings. It engages both our minds and our hearts.

A Short Film Festival is an outreach that leverages the power of film to provide a fun, relational and non-confrontational way to enter into meaningful conversations with people.

Preparation 01

1

CHOOSE A TIME AND PLACE

- Choose a venue that will work well for this type of event.
- Consider choosing a place that feels “neutral” like a coffee shop or classroom rather than a church. The more convenient the location, the better.
- The venue should be able to accommodate the necessary AV equipment, and be generally suitable for viewing films (able to get dark enough, etc.).
- The venue should also be conducive to small-group discussion (small tables rather than bench seating and with good acoustics).

2

GATHER THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT

- A projector and a large screen if necessary
- A computer, the short film files, and the necessary cords/adapters
- Enough seating
- Snacks and drinks, if serving
- Something to block out light if necessary
- Visually appealing content on each table that lists the short films

Preparation 02

3

PROMOTE YOUR EVENT

- Let people know about the event! Do this in a way that is appropriate to your context, whether by having people post on social media or by personal invitation.
- Suggested promotional text*: “We are showcasing six handcrafted (American) short films. The selection of films addresses a range of topics centered around humanity. We will provide an opportunity for discussion between each film. We hope to see you for this fun and exciting night of cinema!”

PLEASE NOTE:

Any content that is included in this digital resource is the intellectual property of Jesus Film Project®.

You may use the images included only for the purpose of promoting your film-showing event.

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4

PREPARE YOUR VOLUNTEERS

- Prepare volunteers to facilitate discussion groups. Ideally, it is best to have one staff or Christian volunteer facilitating each discussion group. They should be familiar with the films, and be briefed on what they should and should NOT say in their discussion groups.
- Your goal in asking these questions is to create a conversation that pinpoints deeper needs and helps us identify those who are interested in spiritual matters. It is usually not appropriate to share the full gospel at the film festival; rather, it is a time to build a bridge to spiritual topics that you can explore with them at a later time. Altering or manipulating the Images beyond standard cropping and resizing requires permission from Jesus Film Project.

Themes

LA LIBERTE

freedom, isolation, trapped, light, rescue, multiplication, color, evangelism, black and white, unaware, no choices, boredom, loneliness, realization, awareness, dirty, captive, purposeless

DOLL FACE

vanity, identity, beauty, self worth, media, expectations, striving, comparison, brokenness, disappointment, sadness, cultural pressure

INVISIBLE

lonely, unknown, compassion, mercy, thankfulness, intentional, outreach, least of these, unlikely hero

MAREA

awareness, sacrifice, survival, hope, gospel, RII, selflessness, father/son, hero, helplessness, struggle, drowning, eternal perspective, need of saving

PORTIONS

abundance, biases, playful, sheltered, blind, unknown, oblivion, searching, seeking, exploring, newness, curiosity, flavor, awakened

PAPER HATS

change, awareness, light, playful, depression, freedom, responsibility

VINYL

parable, value, God's reckless love, pursuit, obsession, passion, rejoice, lost & found, faithfulness captive, purposeless

FALLING PLATES

gospel, brokenness, wholeness, redemption

JANGLED

shame, acceptance, burden, chains, bondage, guilt

VENIA

forgiveness, redemption, life change, anger, HURT, acknowledgment, listening, guilt, shame, family, father/son relationship

DELIGHT

pure, upbeat, design, using your gifts, perfectionism, passion, gift, devotion, care, delight, pride, love, father/child, unworthy, grace

UNINVITED GUESTS

cheating, mistake, guilt, shame, loss, unfulfillment, pain, hurt, past, avoidance, wealth, success, stealing, image, control, stuffing, rippling, perpetual sin

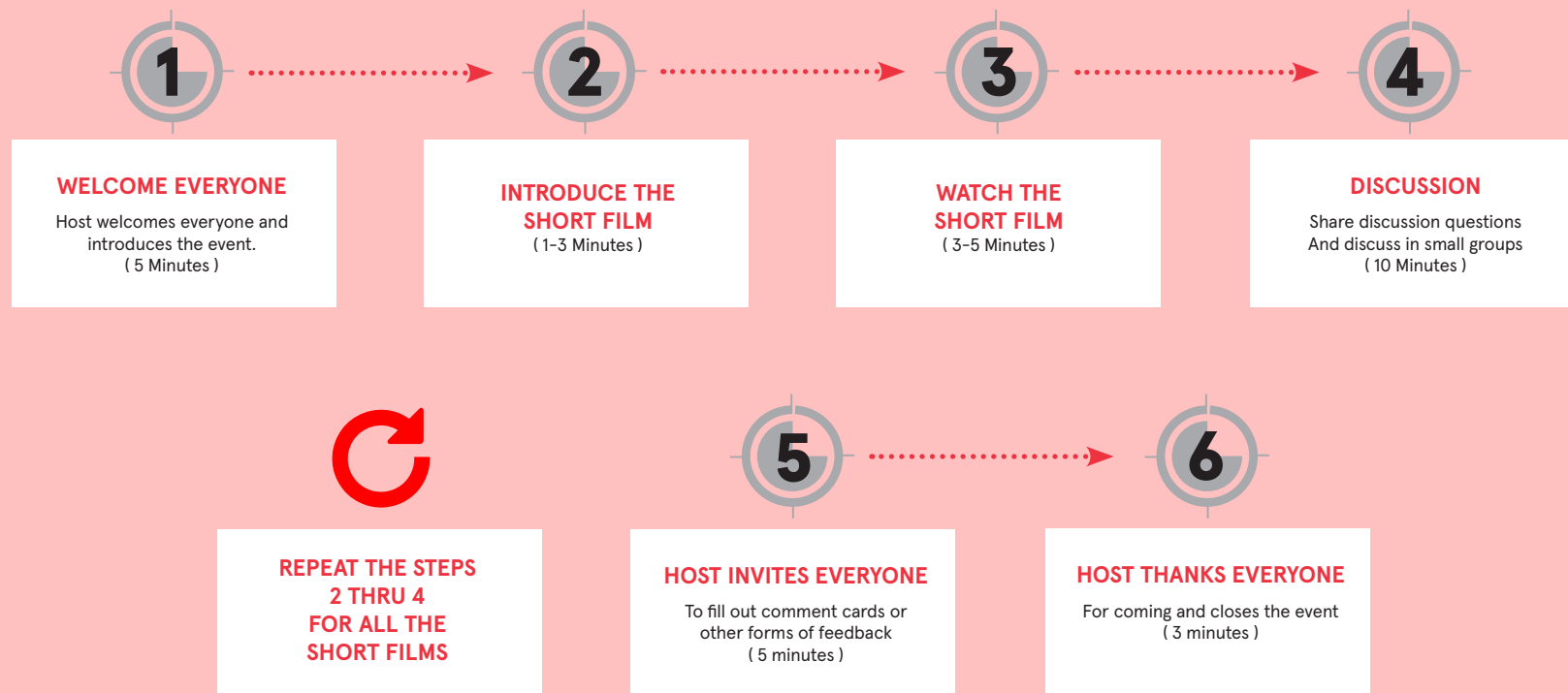
FREDERICK PENNYHOUSE

loneliness, community, connection, isolation, solitude, creativity, freedom, anti-social, depression, outdoors, reality v. fantasy, introversion

CABERNET

sacrifice, anxiety, guilt, hard working, compassion, taking chances, insecurity, confidence, putting others first

Event Program



At The Event

Plan 20-30 minutes for socializing and snacks. Give a two-minute warning before you start.

► **I. Introduce yourself/group** How much or what you share is up to you. In evangelistic outreaches, explain that you work with a film company that makes short films to inspire cross-cultural and spiritual conversations. Explain that the more people you talk to, the more you see common themes in all of our lives—that the more people share and communicate these commonalities, the more we can connect globally, personally, and culturally. Cast vision for wanting feedback on the films and on how they make people feel or react.

► **II. Give a brief overview of your time.** Explain that you are going to show six to eight short films and discuss them in small groups in between each showing.

► **III. Show the first film** after the film ends, raise the lights and transition to your discussion time. You can do the discussion in two ways. After viewing the film altogether:*

1. From up front, the host asks two or three open-ended questions of everyone as they sit in their groups.

The host should ask the first question and give participants two to three minutes to discuss it in their groups. The host should come back up after a few minutes to ask the second question for the groups to discuss, then repeat for the third question. This keeps the groups on track, eliminates the tendency to rush through all of the questions, and minimizes the chance of the facilitator talking too much. If appropriate, the host can ask the whole group if anything stood out or if they heard something significant, or they can just move on to the next film.

[This approach is great in a campus, church or community setting. It enables the table facilitators to reconnect personally with anyone in their group that wants to continue the discussion or get together at a later date.]

OR **2. The host will have a staff person or pastor up front with them and will ask that person the questions about the film in front of the whole group.**

After the two discuss the question together in front of everyone, then the host asks the audience for their opinions or thoughts, calling on members of the audience to respond. The host can ask one or two more questions like that of the pastor again, then transition to the next film.

[This approach is more of a presentation, and it works if your goal is to have one leader follow up with people himself, or if you think your audience will not share in small groups.]

► **IV. Transition to the next film** by simply introducing it with the film's name and running time.

► **V. Close out the festival** and get contact information. Thank the participants for coming. Now, be social! Make sure there are enough snacks and beverages for this time—it is the best time to get contact information from those you connect with, or want to follow up with. It is best to set up a time to get together again while you are still together. Or, if you have comment cards, you can remind them to fill them out and then socialize for a while.

**See the Sample Questions document for some great questions or use the Jesus Film Project® app to see all of our short films with questions included.*

Sample Questions for a Short Film Festival

All of the films listed below can be found at Jesusfilm.org, on the Jesus Film Project® app, or on globalshortfilmnetwork.com. All films on the app include questions that can be used as part of a film festival outreach.



DELIGHT

- What part of the film stands out to you (or surprises)? Why?
- How did the film make you feel? Why?
- Which character do you most relate to? Why?

VENIA

- What do you think the filmmaker wanted to communicate through this film?
- What did you think of the quote at the end?
- What does “Enlarge the Future” mean?
- Why do you think the son waited to write the last card?
- Is it common in your culture to ask for forgiveness, or to say I forgive you? Why or why not?

DOLLFACE

- What do you think this film is about?
- How do you relate to this film?
- Where do people look to find fulfillment in your culture?

THE CAMERA (Global Short Film Network)

- How did this film make you feel? Why?
- What do you think the film maker was trying to communicate through this film?
- What do you think the camera represents?
- What do you think happens to the girl at the end? Why?

JAIKU LEIBA

- The filmmaker is trying to tell a story. When do you think the story turned around?
- Do you agree with the note “Nothing is broken forever”? Why or why not?
- How do people in your culture/city deal with “brokenness”?
- How about in your family?

CONTROL-Z

- What did you like about the film? Why?
- Can you relate to the moment the keyboard was being repaired? How?
- What motivates us to want to redo things in our lives?
- How do people in your culture handle regret? (talking, escapism, religion, etc.)



Sample Questions for a Short Film Festival

cont.



LA LIBERTE

- Where did the man's freedom come from?
- How did the man respond at first to what he was discovering? Why do you think his response changed as the film went on?
- Do you think your generation is more free than your parents' generation (not just politically, but emotionally, personally, spiritually, etc)?

BLACK HOLE (Global Short Film Network)

- What did you think would happen at the end?
- What would you have used the black hole for?
- From where do people in your culture get their sense of right and wrong?

FLOW

- What do you think the water from the faucet represents? What about from the toilet?
- Why does the man use the toilet water rather than the sink water?
- Metaphorically, have you seen people drink "toilet water"? What do you think motivates them to do this?
- How do you get a friend to see they are drinking bad water (doing something that isn't good for them) when something better is available?

HEARTSTRINGS (Global Short Film Network)

- What emotions did you feel watching the film?
- What do you think the story is about? Why?
- Why did their strings eventually break?
- How do emotions or broken relationships get "fixed" in your culture?

ARCTIC CIRCLE (Global Short Film Network)

- What do you think the box represents?
- Why was the man intrigued by it?
- Why does he turn into the box? What do you think that means?

Comment Cards

We're glad you came!



What stood out to you during the Film Festival? What did you like?

If anything, what would you change about the Film Festival?

I would like to talk more with someone about what was discussed in our discussion group...

☐ Yes ☐ Not interested ☐ Maybe

Name:

Cell:

Email:



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