



**MYSTIC FILM FESTIVAL CELEBRATES AWARD WINNERS,  
HONORS SUSAN SEIDELMAN FOR LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT**

**STONINGTON, CT- October 26, 2021** – Native American writer Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel won the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Mystic Film Festival's screenwriting competition for her script, *Flying Bird's Diary*, while four new films garnered Grand Jury awards for superior work - *Any Given Day*, documentary feature;



*Accidental Luxuriance of the Translucent Watery Rebus*, narrative feature; *Alice: At Home With Alice Parker*, documentary short; and *Sproutland*, narrative short.

The fourth annual festival topped Sunday's awards ceremony at the Mystic Luxury Cinema by recognizing filmmaker Susan Seidelman, 68, with a lifetime achievement award, celebrating her nearly 40 years as a director, writer, and producer. Inspired by human behavior, Seidelman's films, such as the 1985 romantic comedy *Desperately Seeking Susan*, focus on female protagonists,

society's outsiders, and gender roles. Seidelman's other films include *She-Devil*, *Cookie*, *Boynton Beach Club*, *Musical Chairs*, and *The Hot Flashes*. Her television program credits include directing the *Sex and the City* television pilot and the Emmy-nominated *A Cooler Climate* for Showtime. Seidelman is an adjunct professor at New York University overseeing students' thesis films.

"It is an honor to pay tribute to Susan Seidelman's pioneering work and longevity as an artist in what often is a very tough business," said Shareen Anderson, festival founder and executive director. "We see her as example for all filmmakers to break with convention and portray those often ignored or forgotten."

Screenwriting competition winner Tantaquidgeon Zobel, 61, a Mohegan author, historian, and storyteller who serves as the medicine woman and tribal historian for the Mohegan Tribe, won a table read of her new script, which will be scheduled in early 2022; a 12-month International Screenwriters' Association *Connect* membership; and a one-hour consultation with literary agent Charlie Northcote, owner of Core Literary Inc.

## 2021 FESTIVAL AWARDS

- Lifetime Achievement Award – Susan Seidelman
- Grand Jury Prize – Documentary Feature – Any Given Day, directed by Margaret Byrne
- Grand Jury Prize – Narrative Feature – Accidental Luxuriance of the Translucent Watery Rebus, directed by Dalibor Barić
- Grand Jury Prize – Documentary Short – Alice: At Home With Alice Parker, directed by Eduardo Montes-Bradley

- Grand Jury Prize – Narrative Short – [\*Sproutland\*](#), directed by Cynthia Wade
- Grand Jury Prize – Screenplay Competition – *Flying Bird's Diary* by [Melissa Tantaquidgeon Zobel](#)
- Best Documentary Feature – [\*Those People\*](#), directed by Peter Huoppi
- Best Narrative Feature – [\*The Daphne Project\*](#), directed by Zora Iman Crews and Alec Tibaldi
- Best Documentary Short – [\*The Secret Gift\*](#), directed by Sheila Conlin
- Best Narrative Short – [\*Fort Trumbell\*](#), directed by Stephanie Jean Lane
- Best International Film – [\*The News\*](#), directed by Loren Terezi (Albania and Spain)
- Human Rights Award – [\*Missing in Brooks County\*](#), directed by Lisa Molomot and Jeff Bemiss
- Best New Director – Kiki Tsakalakis, directed [\*Silent Notes\*](#)
- Best New England Film – [\*Keepers of the Land\*](#), directed by Matthew Andrew
- Best Connecticut Film – [\*Crosscourt Cultures: The Joseph Oyebo Story\*](#), directed by Emily Deluca
- Best Conservation Film – [\*Dead In The Water\*](#), directed by David Wittkower
- Best Documentary Film Cinematography – [\*Vinyl Nation\*](#), Sherri Kauk, director of photography
- Best Narrative Film Cinematography – [\*A Beautiful Curse\*](#), Philippe Kress, director of photography
- Best Documentary Film Editing – [\*Ronnie's\*](#), Paul Trewartha, editor
- Best Narrative Film Editing – [\*Dr. Mania\*](#), Andrew Varenhorst, editor
- Best Screenplay Narrative Feature – [\*The Catch\*](#), Matthew Ys-Hsiung Balzer, writer
- Best Screenplay Narrative Short – [\*Forty Years From Now\*](#), John Manna, writer and director

- [Best Ensemble Cast](#) – [The Della Morte Sisters](#), directed by Bill Sorvino
- Best Art Direction – [Blu Cosette](#), co-directed by Andrew Le Pera and Ise White
- Best Student Film – [The Color of You](#), directed by Jacob Rodier
- Best Director Student Film – Lily Weisberg, [Studio 210](#)
- Best Screenplay Student Film – [Citizen](#), directed by Marcus Parker-Wood
- Audience Choice Award Documentary – [The Rescue](#), directed by E. Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin
- Audience Choice Award Narrative – [Woman Of The House](#), directed by Michelle Salcedo
- Audience Choice Award Student Film – [Firebird](#), directed by Carley Byers
- Screenplay Competition Finalists:
  - First Runner Up – *Treasured* by Bryce R. Breen
  - Second Runner Up – *The Great Perhaps* by Christine Vartoughian
  - Third Runner Up – *She Don't Fade* by Peter Easton Johns
  - Fourth Runner Up – *A Native Land* by Caitlin McCarthy

The [Grand Jury](#) was comprised of veteran filmmakers: Sherese White, Malcolm MacDonald, Clint Slowik, Eric Mofford, Victor Ho, and Jeanne Sigel.

### **SPONSORS and PARTNERS**

The festival's fiscal sponsor Filmmakers Collaborative of Melrose, Mass. allows the Mystic Film Festival to accept tax-deductible donations from corporations and individuals. Many donors and volunteers supported the 2021 festival. Its sponsors and partners were the Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce; Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce; Women in Film and Video – New England; Alliance of Women Directors; Nutmeg Institute; Wilkidoos Productions; Garde Arts Center; Roadmap Writers; Connecticut Office of Film, Television, Digital Media; Jonathan Edwards Winery; International Screenwriters' Association (ISA);

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**Caption:** Filmmaker Susan Seidelman comments on receiving a lifetime achievement award during the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Mystic Film Festival Oct. 24, 2021 at the Mystic Luxury Cinema.



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