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2024 Slamdance Film Festival Introduction

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2024 Slamdance Film Festival Introduction

Abstract
This is the introduction to our coverage of the 2024 Slamdance Film Festival.

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Author Notes
William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film, and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He is also the editor of the Continuum Companion to Religion and Film (2009).
This was the 30\textsuperscript{th} Anniversary of the Slamdance Film Festival. It was held in person in Park City, Utah, in the middle of the beautiful Wasatch Mountains, as well as in Salt Lake City, and available online on the Slamdance Film Channel. Our reviewers included John Lyden, William L. Blizek, Monica Blizek, and Brady DeSanti of the University of Nebraska at Omaha; Rubina Ramji, of Cape Breton University; and Rachel Wagner of Ithaca College.

This year Slamdance returned to its original home in Park City, the Yarrow Hotel, at the corner of Park Avenue and Kearns Boulevard (now called the Double Tree by Hilton Park City – The Yarrow). As Festival President and co-founder, Peter Baxter, explained. “The Yarrow has always been a great space for independent filmmakers and serves as a pivotal part of Slamdance’s history as the Festival’s first home in Park City, a foothold which helped launch the Festival into what it is today…. Since then, we’ve grown beyond imagination in the discovery of new and emerging talent and we’re excited to recognize and celebrate this legacy by returning to our roots at Park City’s epicenter for Slamdance 2024.”
Slamdance has always followed the motto: “By Filmmakers, For Filmmakers.” This year’s Festival included thirty-two feature length films and seventy-five short films—By Filmmakers, For Filmmakers. The Journal of Religion & Film was able to cover the festival in person as well as online, due to the incredible support and assistance of Rahul Barkley of the Slamdance Press Office. Thank you, Rahul!

Several of the films we reviewed won awards. Demon Mineral won an Audience Award; Petro won the Documentary Feature Grand Jury Prize, Honorable Mention; Makayla’s Voice won the Unstoppable Grand Jury Prize, Honorable Mention; Light of Light won the Experimental Short Grand Jury Prize; Radha Mehta won The George Sparks Spirit of Slamdance Award for her film, Dosh; and John Lawson won the Outstanding Acting Award for his performance in Daruma.

(FYI: The Yarrow has the best huevos rancheros ever.)