



CIFF

FILMSLAM 2019

**43RD CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
STUDY GUIDE**

FilmSlam

FILMSLAM IS PRESENTED BY

Bruening Foundation
The Char and Chuck Fowler Family Foundation
Cuyahoga Community College
Kiwanis Foundation of Cleveland
Louise H. and David S. Ingalls Foundation
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Ohio Arts Council
Rakuten OverDrive
Tom Piraino and Barbara McWilliams
Third Federal Foundation

FRENCH SHORTS PROGRAM

FIND HARBOUR FOR A DAY

France, 2018, 25 minutes
Paul Marques Duarte

RAMDAM

France, 2018, 26 minutes
Zangro

HEARTH

Canada, 2018, 11 minutes
Sophie B Jacques

CURRICULUM LINKS

French Language, Social Studies, Global Studies, English Language Arts, Art, Media Studies

CURRICULUM GOALS

- Improve media literacy
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Engage in interdisciplinary learning
- Hone oral and written communication skills
- Foster global awareness and social justice

FILMSLAM VIEWING GUIDE

The Art of Filmmaking

Filmmakers of both narrative and documentary films (of either short or feature length) make numerous artistic decisions throughout the filmmaking process, beginning with the conception of the film, through filming, and finally during distribution and marketing. Understanding film terms and the production process helps viewers to identify and interpret these artistic choices.

Crew: The people who are involved with the production of a film and who do not appear in the film. The following are a few of the numerous people that make up a film crew:

- **Producer:** The person who oversees the entire filmmaking process. The producer finds the script, hires a director, finds financing to make and distribute the film, and markets the film.
- **Director:** The person who supervises the creative aspects of a film and instructs the actors and crew.
- **Screenwriter:** The person who creates the story, action, and dialogue.
- **Cinematographer:** The person who is responsible for the camerawork and lighting.
- **Editor:** The person who selects what he/she considers are the best shots and pieces them together to produce scenes, then larger sequences, and ultimately the film.

Development/Pre-Production: The process of preparing the film concept, assembling the crew, and determining a budget and shooting schedule. The following are terms often associated with this phase of the filmmaking process:

- **Synopsis:** A short description of the film.
- **Screenplay:** A detailed written account of the dialogue and action of a film, often including basic camera directions.
- **Literary Elements:** Films share numerous elements with literature, including plot, characters, setting, point of view, mood, and theme.
- **Genre:** A type or classification of films with identifiable similarities. Comedies, westerns, musicals, horror films, and science fiction films are popular genres.
- **Storyboard:** A series of drawings showing the scenes, shot by shot, and transitions for a film. The storyboard gives a director a clear idea of how the film will look.

Photography: The process of capturing visual images with a camera. The director and cinematographer make artistic choices about the following aspects:

- **Frame:** A single photograph of the larger film strip.
- **Shot:** A unit of film or series of frames over which the camera does not stop filming.
- **Take:** The length (in terms of time) of a single shot.
- **Focus:** The variable degree (from **hard** to **soft**) to which the image is clear and sharp.
- **Camera Angle:** The placement of the camera relative to the subject. When a camera is placed above (looking down upon) the subject, the camera is at a **high angle**. When the camera is placed below (looking upwards at) the subject, the camera is at a **low angle**.
- **Range:** The apparent distance between the camera and the subject, differentiated as **close-up shots** (framing the head from the neck up), **medium shots** (framing the body from the waist up), and **long shots** (framing the entire body).
- **Composition:** The organization of subjects or objects within the frame of the film.
- **Lighting:** The use of natural or artificial illumination and shadows for the purpose of visual clarity and/or mood.
- **Camera Movement:** There are number of common types of camera movements, including **panning** (in which the camera pivots from right to left, or vice versa), **tilting** (in which the

camera pivots upwards or downwards), and **tracking** (in which the entire camera moves forwards, backwards, or sideways).

Sound Design: The process, completed during or after filming, of capturing, creating, and interweaving dialogue, sound effects, and music. The following are terms associated with this process:

- **Soundtrack:** The recorded sound of a film, including dialogue, sound effects, and music.
- **Voiceover:** A voice of a narrator, generally not seen but heard on the soundtrack of a film.

Post-Production/Editing: The process, typically after filming has concluded, of combining shots, scenes, and sequences with the soundtrack. The following are terms associated with this phase:

- **Cut:** The distinct, abrupt transition from one frame to another.
- **Fade Out/Fade In:** A technique in which a shot gradually darkens until a new one emerges from the darkness.
- **Dissolve:** A technique in which one image gradually transitions into another image in such a way that the viewer can temporarily see both images at the same time.
- **Flashback:** A sequence of a film that shows events that happened prior to those already shown.
- **Title Sequence:** Written material at the beginning of a film, usually including the names of the people involved in the production of the film (the director, producer, screenwriter, cinematographer, featured actors, etc.) and sometimes called the opening credits or titles.
- **Intertitles:** Text displayed on the screen in between photographed shots or superimposed over a photographed image.

Distribution/Marketing: The process of selling and supplying films to exhibitors, including mainstream theaters, art house theaters, film festivals, television networks, and websites.

A Short History of Filmmaking: Short Films

The earliest films, usually consisting of a single shot, were undoubtedly short, rarely lasting more than a minute. While films gradually increased in length at the turn of the twentieth century, only “prestige” films—including biblical epics and films showcasing boxing matches—exceeded an hour. In the 1910s, the feature-length film grew in popularity, but short films of multiple genres (comedy, melodrama, educational, animation, etc.) remained part of mainstream exhibition programs for several decades. Screened before feature films, short films offered major Hollywood producers an arena to evaluate new talent, try out new technologies, and attract diverse audiences. During the 1950s, the screening of short films in mainstream theaters rapidly declined, but the concurrent rise of international film festivals and the popularization of television provided new exhibition venues. According to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences®—who annually recognize the Best Documentary Short, Best Live Action Short, and Best Animated Short—a short film does not exceed 40 minutes. Today, the Internet has facilitated the resurgence of short films, and young and established filmmakers continue to refine their craft through abbreviated fare.

Sources and Suggestions for Further Reading: Kristin Thompson and David Bordwell, *Film History: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010); David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *Film Art: An Introduction*, 9th ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010); Donald Crafton, *The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926-1931* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Harper Cossar, “Bobby Jones, Warner Bros., and the Short Instructional Film,” in *Convergence Media History*, edited by Janet Staiger and Sabine Hake (New York: Routledge, 2009); Peter Lev, *The Fifties: Transforming the Screen, 1950-1959* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006); Barbara Klinger, *Beyond the Multiplex: Cinema, New Technologies, and the Home* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006).

PRE-SCREENING ACTIVITY

Assess the students' experiences viewing short films. Which short films, if any, have the students seen? Discuss, for example, SNL Digital Shorts, Comedy Central Short Form, or other shorts they may have watched on YouTube, Vimeo, or Facebook. Watch one short film as a class. Identify the various artistic choices the filmmaker made. Encourage students to consider how these choices affect their interpretation of the film and its message.

MAKING THE MOST OF POST-SCREENING Q&As

FilmSlam offers a unique opportunity for teachers and students to interact with filmmakers and/or local experts on the subject of the films screened. While teachers and students should feel comfortable asking any question inspired by their viewing of the films, the following questions (and many others) may help viewers understand the production process, how the subject of the film is important to their local community, and/or how they can get involved in local organizations.

What inspired the filmmaker to make a film on this subject?

What does the filmmaker hope audiences will take away from the film? (After the Q&A, consider if the filmmaker's answer aligns with or differs from your reaction to the film.)

How did the filmmaker get funding for the film?

How did the filmmaker assemble the production team? How big was the production team?

How long did the film take to produce?

Where else has or will this film be screened?

How or why is the subject of this film important to the students' local community?

How can students get involved?

POST-SCREENING ACTIVITIES/PROMPTS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION*

Find Harbour for a Day (Paul Marques Duarte, 2018)

Write an internal monologue from Nassim's perspective through the course of the film. Address the following questions: What circumstances compelled him to join the school group? What motivates his actions in the rest of the film? How does he respond to the actions of the other characters? Why does Nassim barely speak in the film? How has he changed by the end of the film?

At the beginning of the film Adèle says, "Even the good students get on my nerves." What do you think is bothering her? Why?

Why does Adèle give Nassim her hat?

Discuss the significance of the film's title.

How does the relationship between Adèle and Eliott evolve during the film?

What do you think the future holds for the characters in the film?

Recall the numerous **long shots** in the film. What do framing, **range**, and **composition** in these scenes suggest about Adèle's internal and external struggles?

Ramdam (Zangro, 2018)

Research the recent history of the Muslim community in France. Consider reading, for example, the *Time* magazine article, "[Why There's Tension Between France and Its Muslim Population](#)." Based on your research, write a news article describing the incident at Amine's mosque within this larger cultural context.

How does the filmmaker introduce Amine? How does this first scene set the stage for Amine's struggles in the rest of the film?

Discuss Amine's statement "the Quran is no substitute for education." Why does Amine's wife respond, "the Quran is no substitute for medals either"?

What is the significance of Amine's eye pain?

Why do you think Amine chose to be an imam instead of a doctor? Do you think he is happy in his current role? Why or why not?

Why are the people at the mosque so preoccupied with the child's drawing? What do they fear it implies?

Consider how the film portrays the tensions between religious traditions and contemporary culture. Cite specific scenes to support your points.

Discuss the pacing of the film. Describe how the filmmaker's artistic choices create a sense of chaos in Amine's world.

Hearth (Sophie B Jacques, 2018)

In a journal entry, reflect on your use of caution when engaging with social media or other applications. How much trust should society put in these new technologies?

When did you begin to suspect the couple had evil intentions? What made you suspicious?

What do you think motivates the couple?

Do you think the homeowner, Emilie, is safe? Why or why not?

What message does the film convey about the use of "sharing economy" services, like "Airbnb," and technology at large?

How does the filmmaker use **editing** and **sound design** to create suspense and horror?

*Definitions for terms in **bold** can be found in the FilmSlam Viewing Guide.



FRENCH LANGUAGE SHORT PROGRAM

80 minutes

Some films selected to screen in FilmSlam may contain strong language, unusual humor, and/or challenging topics and themes.

Slurp

Directed by Florent Hill

2018, FRANCE

4 min

Slurp is a film about aging, about how we do our best to live in harmony with each other. It is about how we grow up, how we are faced with responsibilities and how to find solutions to deal with them. It tells a story about a grandson who tries to solve an annoying eating habit of his grandmother. It is about the responsibility of a child with a problem within his family and how he is dealing with it.

Bumper

Directed by Ralantoaritsimba Nirina

2018, FRANCE

18 min

For many years, Max, a young man full of ambition, has been dreaming of being accepted in a prestigious school of political sciences. The day before the interview, he plans to spend the night at his grandmother's house which is near where the oral exam will be taking place the next morning, thus hoping to be in the best mindset to succeed. But once he gets there, Max finds out his Grandma has decided to take her driver's license again...

Find Harbour for a Day

Directed by Paul Marques Duarte

2018, FRANCE

25 minutes

When, on the spur of the moment, Adèle, an English teacher, allows a fifteen-year-old migrant to quietly join in with her group of high school students as they board the ferry to the United Kingdom, she could not have imagined the significance of her act and the effect it would have on their journey across the Channel.

Ramdani

Directed by Zangro

2018, FRANCE

26 minute

In a small mosque located in the south-west of France, a child's drawing representing a masked character is controversial: super hero or jihadist? Amine the Imam will have to manage the unmanageable...

Hearth

Directed by Sophie B Jacques

2018, CANADA

11 minute

When Emillie returns home after renting her house to strangers, we witness what actually happened during her absence.