
Local film premiers at the Orlando Film Festival

October 26, 2022



The family-friendly feature film, *A Small Town Nutcracker Story*, has been selected to screen at the Orlando Film Festival this month. Written and choreographed by Wild Rivers Dance owner, Sky-Marie MacDonald, directed by New York cinematographer, Robert Douthat, and produced by Wild Rivers Coast Foundation for Dance, the film has already taken awards for best first time director of a feature (New York Cinematography Awards), along with best cinematography and best feature film (Pure Magic International Film Festival).

Shot in some of the area's most scenic locations, from Pistol River to Stout Grove in the Redwoods, director of photography, Bryan Wolfinger, and sound engineer, Liam Fox O'Brien, help create a sense of magic with the local cast and the Wild Rivers Dance Company.

Sarai Ell plays the lead, Rosie, a young dancer who has been preparing for her first Nutcracker performance. Jack Sorenson plays her brother, a teen who is disillusioned by the reality of the pandemic.

Their parents, (Chris Ell and Annemarie Berg), are doing the best they can to hold things together. But when the annual Nutcracker performance is cancelled due to COVID, something unexpected occurs, leading the Nutcracker, (Korinne Luis) and Clara (Meriwether McDonald) on a journey where everyone must learn to navigate new territory.

Now in its 17th year showcasing the best in new independent cinema from around the globe, Orlando Film Festival has been named one of the Top-25 "Coolest Film Festivals in the World" by Moviemaker Magazine. This year, OFF will host an immersive eight-day experience that includes more than 350 films along with industry panels and workshops, all geared to the 300+ indie filmmakers.

With an expected audience of 12,000, the festival will culminate in an award ceremony, with prizes valued at more than \$1 million. A Small Town Nutcracker Story has been supported through grants by the Oregon Cultural Trust, the Curry County Cultural Coalition and Allcare Health. Major donors include Ione Trapp, Amanda McVey, the Ell Family, David Brock Smith and Sarah Racho.

Many thanks to Stephanie Gorman and Brenda and Cliff Dodson who helped house the film crew and to those who helped with filming on location—The Whaley Family, Coreen Smith/First Rise Bakery, Jessica Kuskie/Cosmic Grind Coffee, Summer Thompson/ Brookings Blooms, and Kyle Aubin/Tidewinds Sportfishing.