



Leo the Raptor (2024) team wins their 3rd Festival Award...and the season is still early



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(Brian Smith’s Leo the Raptor (2024) wins it’s 3rd Festival Award, at the Best Shorts Competition, March 2026.

(La Jolla, California. March 16, 2026) – (Brian Smith’s Leo the Raptor (2024), has won a prestigious Award of Recognition from the Best Shorts Competition for Contemporary Issues/ Awareness Raising. Leo the Raptor (2024) won a second award, an exceptional

Award of Recognition given to Danielle Alexander, Julie Chapin, Kenneth J. McGregor, Amanda Schoonover, Ada Simbo, Barbara Tutolo, Ryan Wilson for Ensemble/Cast.

“Being recognized and awarded for our achievement as an ensemble means more to us than **Best Shorts Competition** could ever imagine. During the Pandemic, we went on a journey to create a piece of art that both entertained and brought awareness to the extremes of severe mental illness and isolation that one can endure, after traumatic events. This award validates that our efforts were well received” ~Ada Simbo, Actor & Producer, **Leo the Raptor (2024)**.

The Best Shorts Competition recognizes film, television, cinematography, and new media professionals who demonstrate exceptional achievement in craft and creativity, and those who produce standout entertainment or contribute to profound social change. Entries are judged by highly qualified professionals in the film and television industry. Information about the Best Shorts Competition and a list of recent winners can be found at

 [Award of Recognition March 2026](#) .

In winning two Best Shorts Competition Awards, **Leo the Raptor (2024)** joins the ranks of other high-profile winners of this internationally respected award including **Mr Hublot (Laurent Witz)**, An exquisitely crafted animation that won both a Best Shorts Award and an Academy Award. Some other accomplished shorts that won both the Short Competition Awards include **Feeling Through (Doug Roland)**: A 2021 Academy Award-nominated short film, **Bug Therapy (Michael Jann, Michele Jourdan)**: An animated film featuring high-profile voices including Grammy-winner Meghan Trainor and Emmy-winners Sterling K. Brown and Jay Leno, and **The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar (Wes Anderson/Netflix)**: Winner of the Best Short Oscar at the 96th Academy Awards, featuring Benedict Cumberbatch.

The Best Shorts Competition helps set the standard for craft and creativity. The judges were pleased with the exceptional high quality of entries. The goal of the Competition is to help winners achieve the recognition they deserve.”

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