

AIFVF
Official Selection 2020
Athens International Film • Video Festival



LEWISTON

A film by Jacob Roberts and David Shayne



LOGLINE

A series of lyrical vignettes explores the cultural encounter between two radically different communities—one Somali, one white—that coexist in a precarious balance.

BACKGROUND

In the early 1990s, civil war in Somalia forced thousands of Somalis to seek asylum in the United States. These initial refugees settled in Minnesota and Georgia. In the early 2000s, a secondary migration of Somali-Americans took place as thousands relocated to Maine in search of better schools and cheaper housing. Lewiston, Maine, a small working-class city with a history of French Canadian immigration, proved especially appealing. Initially, white Mainers—from hate groups to the mayor of Lewiston himself—discouraged this relocation. In the wake of the financial crisis, however, white and Somali Lewistonians reached a sort of *détente* as Somali businesses revitalized Main Street. Recently, Lewiston has faced a resurgence of xenophobia.

SYNOPSIS

LEWISTON is an intimate portrait of an American experiment of living. A crowd of Muslim worshippers prays in an ice hockey rink. An aging Mainer reflects on his unlikely neighbors. Somali women in vibrant colors frisk and frolic at a wedding feast in a conference center. These scenes of cultural collision offer a glimpse of life in Lewiston today. Midway through the film, the audience learns that Donny Giusti has been killed during a drunken brawl between white and Somali Lewistonians. In the latter half, we see the radicalization of one of Giusti's close friends and a Somali family's struggle for normalcy as the city reckons with renewed racial tension.



THE FILMMAKERS

David Shayne is a filmmaker based in New York City, originally from Nashville. David recently wrapped up his editorial work on the feature documentary **SOME KIND OF HEAVEN**, a Sundance 2020 selection. As an undergraduate at Harvard College, he was awarded an Artist Development Fellowship and co-authored *Hasty Pudding Theatricals 169: Casino Evil* with Jacob Roberts. **LEWISTON** is his first non-fiction film.



Jacob Roberts is a comedy writer, actor, and filmmaker based in New York City. Jacob improvises and writes sketch comedy at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theater. He has acted on stages from New York City to London to Hamilton, Bermuda. **LEWISTON** is his first non-fiction project—and one of many collaborations with his good pal and roommate David Shayne.



Please send all inquiries to davidshayne615@gmail.com.

www.lewistonfilm.com



FULL CREDITS

Directors: Jacob Roberts & David Shayne
Producers: Jacob Roberts & David Shayne

Editors: Jacob Roberts & David Shayne
Editorial Advisors: Alfred Guzzetti, Mary Lampson, & Robb Moss

Cinematographer: David Shayne

Sound Recordists: Jacob Roberts & Austin Weber
Sound Mixer: Jim Keaney

Genre: Short Documentary
TRT: 15 min
Color | Digital | 1.78 | Stereo | 23.98 fps | English

SELECTED SCREENINGS

Camden International Film Festival 2019 (World Premiere)
New Hampshire Film Festival 2019
Brooklyn Film Festival 2020
Athens International Film and Video Festival 2020