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## **Disability Film Festival Celebrates 20 years in Austin**

AUSTIN, Texas (September 11, 2023) — This fall, the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) holds its 20<sup>th</sup> annual Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival (CTDFF). The top cinematic celebration of disability in Texas, CTDFF features the work of independent filmmakers from around the world, from documentaries to animated shorts to the avant-garde.

The Festival began in 2004, with an idea. CTD staffer William Greer wondered: “What if we created a film festival to counter negative stereotypes about people with disabilities and to celebrate positive portrayals of disability culture?” A cine-phile himself, Greer saw film as an effective medium to reach and engage a large and diverse audience. That fall, CTD launched the Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival, the first in Texas with an explicit focus on cross-disability films.

Since then, CTDFF has become the longest running and most successful disability film festival in the state, bringing short and feature films, television series, and web series to the big screen. Featured guest filmmakers and wraparound events like local music, poetry, and dance complement each year’s selection of films. Past notable guests include: interdisciplinary artist and dancer Bill Shannon (2022), actor and activist RJ Mitte (2019), activist and YouTuber Lizzie Velasquez (2015), all filmmakers with disabilities.

In 2023, CTDFF takes place Friday and Saturday, October 20 and 21, at the Rollins Theater in Austin. Offerings include: screenings of winners and runners up of this year’s international short film competition, with entries from as far away as Iran and Australia; live music and dance; the inaugural Gene Rodgers Creative Advocacy Award; a champagne toast to 20 years of the Festival; and more.

Cinema Touching Disability is open to the public. The \$10 ticket fee will be reimbursed at the door. Details and tickets at [www.ctdfilmfest.org](http://www.ctdfilmfest.org).

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*The Cinema Touching Disability Film Festival and Short Film Competition is a project of the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD), Texas’ oldest and largest cross-disability advocacy organization. CTD is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with Federal Tax ID #74-2071160.*

Cinema Touching Disability is made possible with major sponsor support from United Healthcare, Superior HealthPlan, Amerigroup, Genentech—a member of the Roche Group, and Molina Healthcare.

Cinema Touching Disability is a program of the **Coalition of Texans with Disabilities**, **whose mission is** to ensure that all of Texans with disabilities may work, live, learn, play and participate fully in the communities of their choice.

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