MIOB In Shorts Award 2026
FilmFestival Cottbus – Awards Ceremony
€1,000 – powered by **MIOB: Moving Images – Open Borders**
BEYOND SILENCE
Marnie Blok
Netherlands, 2025, 17 min
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BEYOND SILENCE WINS THE MIOB IN SHORTS AWARD 2026

European audiences honour Marnie Blok's Dutch short film addressing sexual abuse, institutional silence and the struggle to be heard

The Dutch short film *BEYOND SILENCE*, directed by Marnie Blok, has won the MIOB In Shorts Award 2026, presented by the European film festival network MIOB: Moving Images – Open Borders.

The award, worth €1,000, recognises outstanding European short filmmaking and is distinguished by its audience-driven format: the winning film is chosen entirely by public vote.

The winner was announced at the awards ceremony of the 36th FilmFestival Cottbus in Germany, following an online competition featuring twelve short films nominated by the six MIOB member festivals. Audiences worldwide watched and voted for their favourites on the *This Is Short* streaming platform between September 1 and October 15, 2026.

Addressing sexual abuse, institutional power and the difficulties of speaking out, *BEYOND SILENCE* received the most votes in a closely contested competition. The award follows the film's success at the Tribeca Festival and Palm Springs International ShortFest in 2025.

Director Marnie Blok's statement on the occasion of the MIOB In Shorts Award

Silence may feel safe at first. But in choosing it, we rob ourselves of something fundamental, our voice, and with that, a very basic human right: to be heard and to participate. BEYOND SILENCE holds space for those who've been silenced. By championing our film, you've expanded that space. You are amplifying voices that need to be heard.

About the winning film

In *BEYOND SILENCE*, deaf PhD student Eva and her sister and interpreter Anna meet programme director Sandrien to report a professor's sexual abuse. When Sandrien refers Eva to a male counsellor, she refuses. Confronted with institutional defensiveness and resistance, Eva finds the strength to persist and demand that her voice be heard.

With *BEYOND SILENCE*, Marnie Blok makes her directorial debut. The film won Best Narrative Short at the 2025 Tribeca Festival and Best International Short at the 2025 Palm Springs International ShortFest, where it also received a special mention for Best Acting.

About Marnie Blok

Marnie Blok is a Dutch filmmaker, award-winning screenwriter and former actress whose work spans cinema and television. After concluding her acting career with *Frailer* (TIFF 2014), she established herself as a screenwriter with acclaimed films including *Jackie* (TIFF 2012), *Simon and the Oaks*, which received the Montblanc Scenario Prize, and *Open Water*, which earned nine nominations for the Netherlands Film Festival's Golden Calf Awards, including Best Feature Screenplay.

Her acclaimed television work includes *Line 32*, *Ramses* and *Childhood Dreams*, earning recognition at major international festivals and awards, including Prix Europa, the International Emmys and the New York Festivals.

Statement by Merlin Bodenstedt, Head of Programme Coordination, FilmFestival Cottbus

With the MIOB In Shorts Award, we want to contribute to one of our network's goals and give a platform to recent European cinema by bringing together various cinematic voices, perspectives and stories, offering a glimpse into the diversity of European filmmaking. What makes MIOB in Shorts exciting is that short films allow us to showcase a wide range not only of these perspectives, but also of different styles, from more classic approaches to experimental forms, with short films often pushing the boundaries of storytelling. By letting the audience vote for the winning film, we try not only to bring together the films and stories, but also to connect audiences across borders.

With BEYOND SILENCE, the audience has chosen, albeit by a narrow margin, an outstanding film. It impresses with its narrative and cinematic compression and its emotional force, tackling big themes: sexual abuse, tensions between two generations, shared trauma, and different ways of dealing with it. A bold film by Marnie Blok, and a sensational acting debut by Henrianne Jansen, bringing into focus the power structures of academia, the pain they cause, and the courage to break the silence.

About the MIOB In Shorts Award 2026

Established in 2021, the MIOB In Shorts Award aims to increase the visibility of European short cinema and connect filmmakers and audiences across borders. Each of the six MIOB member festivals nominates two films for the annual competition.

The 2026 edition featured twelve short films from eleven countries, spanning fiction, documentary and experimental cinema.

Following the online competition, all twelve nominated films were presented at FilmFestival Cottbus in two curated screening programmes, bringing the selection from the streaming platform to the cinema screen.

About the MIOB Network

Founded in 2017, **Moving Images – Open Borders (MIOB)** is a European network of six film festivals dedicated to promoting European cinema in all its diversity, fostering cross-border dialogue and supporting emerging filmmakers. Its members are Crossing Europe Film Festival Linz (Austria), FilmFestival Cottbus (Germany), European Film Festival Palić (Serbia), Les Arcs Film Festival (France), European Film Forum Scanorama (Lithuania) and Trieste Film Festival (Italy).

The network presents two annual awards: the **MIOB In Shorts Award**, worth €1,000, and the **MIOB New Vision Award**, worth €3,000, which recognises outstanding European arthouse feature films and documentaries. The 2026 New Vision Award was presented to WIND, TALK TO ME, directed by Serbian filmmaker Stefan Đorđević.

Additional Press Materials

Film stills: https://www.swisstransfer.com/dl/01a18708-47b8-7163-948e-d5d66543fae3