Best Documentary Director Award – Short Movies
FICIMAD 2026 Anna Grigorian – ԹԵԻԱՎՈՐ ԼԱՐԵՐ (FIBERS)

“With remarkable artistic sensitivity and documentary vision, Anna Grigorian creates a deeply moving exploration of memory, resilience, and survival in times of conflict. Blending testimony, performative imagery, and poetic visual language, FIBERS transforms personal experience into a universal reflection on endurance, community, and hope.

The film centers on the memories of women affected by the war in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh), weaving together intimate voiceover accounts with evocative imagery and the ritual preparation of zhengyalov bread. Through this unique essayistic approach, FIBERS captures both the fragility and strength of everyday life under extraordinary circumstances.

We would also like to recognize Anna Grigorian’s distinctive contribution to contemporary documentary cinema. An Armenian artist and filmmaker working between Armenia and Canada, her work combines elements of theater, early cinema, and surreal visual environments to examine social, political, and economic realities through a highly original artistic lens.

As reflected in her director’s statement, FIBERS emerged from interviews with women whose lives were profoundly affected by the Artsakh conflict. Rather than focusing solely on war itself, the film highlights courage, collective resilience, and the often-unseen acts of care and solidarity that sustain communities through their darkest moments. It stands as a powerful tribute to the women whose stories inspired its creation.”

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-ԹԵԻԱՎՈՐ ԼԱՐԵՐ *(FIBERS) Anna Grigorian*

Anna Grigorian cooks a stunning documentary without using archival footage or fictional reenactments, relying solely on the meticulous narration of the experiences of victims and witnesses, and a painstaking preparation of Zhengyalov bread. These words compel the viewer to engage in an exercise of imagination regarding the pain, horror, and human degradation that occurred during the war in Shushi (Artsakh/Nagorno-Karabakh). Reflection and memory take center stage, focusing on the relentless obsession with survival, the value of food and shelter—memories etched in stone yet recalled as ethereal as curtains fluttering in a window—symbols of contemporary European history, a giant with feet of clay that remains silent in the face of certain tragedies and has learned all too well when to look the other way. The script uses the testimonies of Lida Mkrtchyan and Silva Khnkanosyan, extracting a resilient collective memory based on the recollections of its protagonists, making it necessary to see the forest by looking at the trees.

June 19
FICIMAD 06
Excerpt from the screening catalogue