

39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

# FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

GUY HARVEY

NOVEMBER 8-17, 2024



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Feature and Full-Length Documentaries are listed in all CAPS. Shorts in upper & lower case.  
Scan the QR code included with each film for dates, times and location.

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**ON THE COVER:** The FLIFF39 Poster is created by world renowned marine wildlife artist, scientist, conservationist and explorer, Dr. Guy Harvey. His love and passion for the ocean and its living creatures inspires his artwork and marine conservation education and initiatives. Proceeds from Guy Harvey apparel and merchandise benefit the Guy Harvey Foundation, which collaborates with local and international organizations to conduct scientific research and host educational programs aimed at better understanding and conserving the ocean environment. Learn more at [GuyHarvey.com](http://GuyHarvey.com)



Funding for this program provided in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and the Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau. State of Florida funds were not provided.

# SCHEDULE

## FRIDAY, NOV 8

### HARD ROCK - SEMINOLE BALLROOM

7pm QUEEN OF THE RING . . . . . 8-9

### SAVOR CINEMA

5:30 MARQUEETOWN . . . . . 80

7:30 ECHOES OF DREAMS . . . . . 98

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm BEING MARIA. . . . . 13

3pm BOY WHO DREAMT. . . . . 22

5pm ONCE UPON A TIME . . . . . 51

7pm COMANDANTE . . . . . 29

9pm LIFE'S A BITCH. . . . . 44

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm WHISKEY MOUNTAIN . . . . . 101

1:30 EL CLUB DE PESCA . . . . . 37

3:30 ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE ANDES 51

5:30 BOOKS & DRINKS . . . . . 19

7pm AIRE: Just Breathe . . . . . 11

7:30 PARIS PARADIS . . . . . 52

## SATURDAY, NOV 9

### SAVOR CINEMA

10am FOOD ROOTS . . . . . 74

1pm BOB MACKIE: Naked Illusion 20-21

3pm ROMANO TWINS . . . . . 88-89

5pm HERE'S YIANNI! . . . . . 40-41

7pm BEYOND THE RUSH. . . . . 16-17

9pm THANK YOU, PLACES! . . . . . 60

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm TOGETHER 99 . . . . . 63

3pm DOWNTOWN . . . . . 32

5pm THREE STORIES IN . . . . . 62

7pm SHAPE OF THINGS . . . . . 92

9pm AIRE: Just Breathe . . . . . 11

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm BLIND AF. . . . . 70

1:30 THE MIDWAY POINT . . . . . 46

3pm EVERYTHING HAS LED TO THIS. 35

3:30 THE NITA & ZITA PROJECT. . . . . 81

5pm Land of Mermaids/  
Unlikely Mermaid . . . . . 79

5:30 BOY WHO DREAMT OF . . . . . 22

7pm TORN . . . . . 95

7:30 MY OTAKU GIRLFRIEND. . . . . 50

9pm IN THE FORM OF LOVE . . . . . 39

## SUNDAY, NOV 10

### SAVOR CINEMA

2pm BEING MARIA. . . . . 13

4:15 Camelot Studios UK Panel &  
Trailer (free admission)

5:15 THREE STORIES IN BOTTLES. . . . . 62

7:15 SHAPE OF THINGS . . . . . 92

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm SUPERNOVA. . . . . 94

3pm HERE'S YIANNI. . . . . 40-41

5pm STELLA STEVENS: Last Starlet . 93

7pm IN THE FORM OF LOVE . . . . . 39

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm MOST PRECIOUS OF CARGOES . 47

1:30 THE EDITORIAL OFFICE . . . . . 34

3pm FOR THE LIVING. . . . . 99

3:45 ULTIMATE CITIZENS . . . . . 97

5pm COMANDANTE . . . . . 29

5:30 CONCEIVABLE . . . . . 31

7:15pm BEYOND TRIATHLON . . . . . 69

7:30 DOWN TOWN . . . . . 32

## MONDAY, NOV 11 - VETERANS DAY

### SAVOR CINEMA

1PM JUNETEENTH: LEGACY OF SONG. 78

3PM UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE. . . . . 65

5PM BLACK DOG . . . . . 18

7PM FLOW . . . . . 38

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm ADDRESS ON THE WALL . . . . . 68

3pm MOST PRECIOUS CARGOES . . . 47

5pm BUTTERFLIES. . . . . 24

7pm BREAK-UP CLUB . . . . . 23

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm SECRETS OF RADHA . . . . . 55

1:30 TRANSFORMATION. . . . . 96

3pm RIVERBOOM . . . . . 86

3:30 JUNKS & DOLLS . . . . . 42

5pm LIFE'S A BITCH. . . . . 44

5:30 THE SHORT GAME . . . . . 57

7pm CHRISTMAS COUPLES RETREAT. . 2

7:30 PERIPHERIC LOVE. . . . . 53

## TUESDAY, NOV 12

### SAVOR CINEMA

5:30 PLAYING THE CHANGES . . . . . 83

7:15 BUTTERFLIES . . . . . 24

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

12:45pm EDITORIAL OFFICE . . . . . 34

3pm BELLE . . . . . 15

5pm RIVERBOOM . . . . . 86

7pm ROBOT T-O. . . . . 54

### GATEWAY CINEMA

12pm THE UMESH CHRONICALS . . . 64

1:30pm EDITORIAL OFFICE . . . . . 34

3pm CLAIRE FACING NORTH . . . . . 27

3:30 THE NITA & ZITA PROJECT. . . . 81

5pm SAFE SETS . . . . . 90

5:30 TRANSFORMATION. . . . . 96

7pm THE WILD CHILD. . . . . 66

7:30 THIRSTY. . . . . 61

## WEDNESDAY, NOV 13

### SAVOR CINEMA

5:30 STELLA STEVENS . . . . . 93  
7:30 NO ADDRESS . . . . . 48-49

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm JUNKS & DOLLS . . . . . 42  
3pm CLAIRE FACING NORTH . . . . . 27  
5pm LATIN FOR ALL . . . . . 43  
7pm BLACK DOG . . . . . 18

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm COLOR BOOK . . . . . 28  
1:30 HERE'S YIANNI! . . . . . 40-41  
3pm ECHOES OF DREAMS . . . . . 98  
3:30 TORN . . . . . 95  
5pm THE COMPATRIOTS . . . . . 30  
5:30 BELLE . . . . . 15  
7pm ANITA'S TRUTH . . . . . 12  
7:30 THE STRANGE DARK . . . . . 59

### LAUDERHILL PAC

5:30 CLASS OF HER OWN +  
The Pad Hustle . . . . . 72  
7pm COLOR BOOK . . . . . 28

## THURSDAY, NOV 14

### SAVOR CINEMA

5:30 EL CLUB DE PESCA . . . . . 37  
7:30 ROBOT T-O . . . . . 54

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm PLAYING THE CHANGES . . . . . 83  
2:30pm EVERYTHING'S FIFTY-FIFTY . 36  
5pm THIRSTY . . . . . 61  
7pm WINGWALKER . . . . . 67

### GATEWAY CINEMA

1pm TORN . . . . . 95  
1:30 BOB MACKIE: Naked Illusions . 20-21  
3pm THE WILD CHILD . . . . . 66  
3:30 ALOHA SPIRIT RISING . . . . . 98  
5pm FIELDING DREAMS . . . . . 73  
5:30 WOMEN OF THE WATERSHED/  
Seminole Path . . . . . 91  
7pm STAMPILA . . . . . 58  
7:30 CIGARETTE SURFBOARD . . . . . 71

### LAUDERHILL PAC

5:30pm SHEPHERD . . . . . 56  
7pm BOOKS & DRINKS . . . . . 19

## FRIDAY, NOV 15

### SAVOR CINEMA

5:30 GOOD MEN . . . . . 75  
7:30 THE BREAK-UP CLUB . . . . . 23

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE ANDES . 51  
3pm THE MIDWAY POINT . . . . . 46  
5pm THE STRANGE DARK . . . . . 59  
7pm ROBOT T-O . . . . . 54

## SATURDAY, NOV 16

### SAVOR CINEMA

11am COMPATRIOTS . . . . . 30  
1pm EVERYTHING'S FIFTY-FIFTY . . . 36  
3pm ADDICTION OF HOPE . . . . . 10  
5pm THE WINGWALKER . . . . . 67  
7:15pm LILLY . . . . . 45  
9pm CHOP BLOCK NEWS . . . . . 25

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

1pm JUNETEENTH: Legacy of Song . . 78  
3pm UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE . . . . . 65  
5pm PARIS PARADIS . . . . . 52  
7pm EL CLUB DE PESCA . . . . . 37

### SUPERYACHT VILLAGE

6:30 Drinks & hors d'oeuvres . . . . . 77  
7:15 GRANDER . . . . . 77  
9:30 Closing Party . . . . . 77

## SUNDAY, NOV 17

### SAVOR CINEMA

12pm THE UMESH CHRONICLES . . . . 64  
2:15 OCKLAWAHA . . . . . 82  
4pm LATIN FOR ALL . . . . . 43  
6:30 RED FEVER . . . . . 85

### CINEMA PARADISO HOLLYWOOD

12:30 DREAM! . . . . . 33  
3pm IN THE FORM OF LOVE . . . . . 39  
5:15pm ULTIMATE CITIZENS . . . . . 97  
7pm PORCELAIN WAR . . . . . 84

### DAVID POSNACK JCC

11am SUPERNOVA:  
The Music Festival Massacre . . . 94

# FLIFF PARTIES

## FRIDAY, NOV 8

Following the 7pm premiere screening of *QUEEN OF THE RING*, The Opening Night Party, presented by **VARIETY** and produced by **Seminole Hard Rock and sponsored by Truist Wealth**, will take place in the adjoining Ballroom. Live entertainment by The Jersey Girls, open bar, and Light Bites. Tickets \$100 FLIFF Members / \$125 Non-Members. Red Carpet & Executive Producer members complimentary.

## SATURDAY, NOV 9

Noon, **Savor Cinema** – A Mimosa with Waffle & Fruit Station Reception prior to the 1pm screening *BOB MACKIE: Naked Illusions*, will take place in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

2pm, **Savor Cinema** – A Twin Reception with the Romanos prior to the 3pm World Premiere screening *ROMANO TWINS*, will take place in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

4:30pm, **Cinema Paradiso** – prior to the 5pm U.S. Premiere of *THREE STORIES IN BOTTLES*, there will be an Italian Wine reception with the filmmakers for all ticket holders.

4:30pm, **Savor Cinema** – A Prosecco Reception with director & cast members prior to the 5pm screening *HERE'S YIANNI!*, will take place in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

7pm, **Villa de Palma** – WinterFLIFF presents Barbie's Las Olas Beach House Party sponsored by Steven Savor. Proceeds benefit Memorial Healthcare, Winterfest, and FLIFF. Tickets \$150, No Passes.

7pm, **Cinema Paradiso** – Following the 7pm East Coast Premiere of *THE SHAPE OF THINGS*, there will be a Beer & Chicken Wing reception with the filmmakers for all ticket holders.

## SUNDAY, NOV 10

4pm, **Savor Cinema** – Prior to the 5:15pm U.S. premiere screening of *THREE STORIES IN BOTTLES*, there will be an Italian Dinner in the John Mager Courtyard, featuring the three wines spotlighted in the film. Complimentary with your gala film ticket.

5pm, **Cinema Paradiso** – Following the 5pm Premiere of *STELLA STEVENS: The Last Starlet*, there will be a reception with the Andrew Stevens for all ticket holders.

8:15pm, **Savor Cinema** – Following the 7:15pm East Coast premiere screening of *THE SHAPE OF THINGS*, there will be a Surf Party in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

## MONDAY, NOV 11

4:30pm, **Savor Cinema** – Prior to the 5pm Southeast premiere screening of *BLACK DOG*, there will be a Chinese Xiaochi, complements of Christina Wan's in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

5pm, **Cinema Paradiso** – Following the U.S. Premiere of *BUTTERFLIES*, there will be a FINN reception with the Jenni Toivoniemi for all ticket holders.

Following the 7pm Florida premiere screening of *FLOW* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a PURRR Party in the John Mager Courtyard. All proceeds benefit PURR. Complimentary with your film ticket.

## TUESDAY, NOV 12

Following the 7:15pm U.S. premiere screening of *BUTTERFLIES* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a Finnish Party sponsored by Finn & Tonic. Complimentary with your film ticket.

## WEDNESDAY, NOV 13

Following the 5pm U.S. Premiere of *LATIN FOR ALL* at **Cinema Paradiso**, there will be a reception with Emilie Noblet for all ticket holders.

Prior to the 7pm screening at **Lauderhill Performing Arts Center** of *COLOR BOOK*, there will be a Free reception for all ticket holders.

Following the 7:30pm World Premiere screening of *NO ADDRESS* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be The Centerpiece Party sponsored by FLIFF. \$70 FLIFF Members / \$85 Non-Members. Proceeds benefit the Salvation Army of Broward.

## THURSDAY, NOV 14

Following the 5pm Premiere of *THIRSTY* and prior to the 7pm Premiere of *THE WINGWALKER* at **Cinema Paradiso**, there will be a reception with the directors, Emily Abt and Alonso Alvarez Barreda for ticket holders of both films.

Prior to the 7pm screening at **Lauderhill Performing Arts Center** of *BOOKS & DRINKS*, there will be a Free reception for all.

Prior to the 7:30pm World Premiere screening of *ROBOT T-0* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a French Party in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

## FRIDAY, NOV 15

Following the 5pm Premiere of *THE STRANGE DARK* and prior to the 7pm Premiere of *THE COMPATRIOTS* at **Cinema Paradiso**, there will be a reception with the directors, Chris Messineo and Spencer Cohen and Alonso Alvarez Barreda for ticket holders of both films.

Prior to the 7:30pm U.S. premiere screening of *THE BREAK-UP CLUB* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a Dutch Party in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

## SATURDAY, NOV 16

Prior to the 5pm screening of *THE WINGWALKER* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a Mexican Fiesta in the John Mager Courtyard. Complimentary with your film ticket.

Prior to the 7pm Premiere of *EL CLUB DE PESCA* at **Cinema Paradiso**, there will be a reception for Gastón Horacio Revol Molina for all ticket holders.

The schedule for *GRANDER* at **Superyacht Village**, 6:30 Red Carpet Arrivals; 7pm Film; 9pm Dining, Drinking & Dancing to The Landsharks, the Jimmy Buffet Tribute Band. Tickets \$100 FLIFF Members / \$125 Non-Members. Red Carpet & Executive Producer members complimentary.

## SUNDAY, NOV 17

Following the 2:15pm screening of *OCKLAWAHA* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a Florida Luncheon in the John Mager Courtyard sponsored by Florida Seminole Tourism. Gala tickets include the film and are \$30 for FLIFF Members and \$40 for Non-Members, and benefit The South Florida Symphony Orchestra.

Following the 4pm U.S. Premiere screening of *LATIN FOR ALL* at **Savor Cinema**, there will be a Wine & Brie Reception in the John Mager Courtyard. Free with your film ticket.

# WELCOME TO FLIFF39

Happy 39th FLIFF to All You Movie Lovers!

We have instituted a change! For the first time in our nearly 4-decade long life, FLIFF in the Fall will screen only full length features and docs. The shorts will have their own fest in February. This will eliminate having to decide between options, give the short filmmakers the spotlight, and create another great screening opportunity for members and the general public. If you purchase a FAST Pass for November, we will honor it again in February!

FLIFF is a feast this year! Take time to read this catalog and plot your course. If you are mainly a narrative feature dabbler, I urge you to dip your toe into the docs this year. You won't be disappointed. And pay attention to the number of different countries represented in the program, and you'll see why "International" is our middle name.

There is one more bittersweet change, this will be my thirty-sixth and last FLIFF. I have enjoyed the opportunities that have been provided to me. And though I spent an awful long time in the dark, I have learned so much about this planet and the people...and animals that call it home. FLIFF has a great future ahead of it, and it will reach even greater heights with continued community participation and inclusivity.

A special shout-out to Bonnie Adams, who for the past thirty years has been my producing partner of FLIFF and contributed in so many ways from programming, marketing and graphics, and social media. There are so many people that have helped me and by extension, FLIFF. This catalogue would need many more pages to do justice, so I'll just close with one. Thank you, Ginny Miller, for all you (and Tom) have done for FLIFF and me personally.

Wishing our filmmakers and audience, an amazing FLIFF. I will be there in spirit.

Gregory

PS: Most people don't realize how dedicated the FLIFF Staff is, and how hard they work. I do. And a special acknowledgement to the Family of FLIFF, the subscribers that literally camp out at the Festival, living on cheese cubes, watching everything and participating in the Q&As. All of you have been so great!



Gregory von Hausch  
President & CEO

## FLIFF Programming

Gregory von Hausch

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Hans On Beauty

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## Poster Design

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## Public Relations

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## Videographer

Brian Bayerl & Greendoor Eas

## Hard Rock Projection & Sound

Bob Deutsch, DTA Global

# HOW TO FEST

## On-Line

You can purchase all your tickets, memberships and parties at FLIFF.com  
**Your FLIFF Fast Pass \$250 Members/\$300 Non-Members provides admission to all films.**

## Special Events & Parties

Nov 8, Opening Night Film & Party **Seminole Hard Rock**  
\$100 Members / \$125 Non-Member

Nov 9, BOB MACKIE: Naked Illusion Film & Reception **Savor Cinema**  
\$30 Members / \$40 Non-Member

Nov 9, ROMANO TWINS **Savor Cinema**  
\$30 Members / \$40 Non-Member

Nov 9, WinterFLIFF Party **Villa de Palma**  
\$150 This film sponsored by Steven Savor is a joint fundraiser for Memorial Healthcare, WinterFest and FLIFF. No Passes

Nov 13, Centerpiece Film & Party **Savor Cinema**  
\$70 Members / \$85 Non-Members

Nov 16, Grandeur Closing Night Party **Superyacht Village**  
\$100 Members / \$125 Non-Member

Nov 17, Ocklawaha Closing Day Film & Reception **Savor Cinema**  
\$30 Members / \$40 Non-Member

## Taking Your Vacation From Ordinary Film:

If you know where you're going...and you know what film(s) you want to see - then go online [www.fliff.com](http://www.fliff.com) or call us at 525-FILM and order them in advance...don't have a credit card, we still take cash and you can buy them at the door. Then get yourself and your movie-going pals down to the theatre about 15 minutes before showtime, and voila! You are FLIFFing!

Member Tickets

## General Admission \$8/film

FLIFF members get into the Regular Receptions at no extra cost than their \$8 movie ticket

FAST Passes: \$250 Members includes all films November 8 - 17 + all Daily Receptions

Non-Member Tickets

General Admission \$13/film

FAST Passes: \$300 Non-Members includes all films November 8 - 17 + all Daily Receptions

## Let's Make A Deal!

Want to enjoy FLIFF with all the frills but for much less money? Become a member! Your benefits don't just go thru FLIFF's ten days, but are good year-round at Savor Cinema, Cinema Paradiso Hollywood and other venues and locations we use for special events. Plus save \$5/ticket during FLIFF.

## Fast Pass

If you're serious about movies...then you'll seriously want to consider the FLIFF Fast Pass, a photo ID card you wear around your neck...a ticket to ease. *Why is it so wonderful?* The FP is your perfect FLIFF companion as it allows you to access all film screenings without standing in the ticket line. No need to carry cash or to worry about special screenings. No need to stand in line to enter the cinema.

FAST Pass includes all screenings (**November 8 - 17**), FLIFF Members: \$250  
~ Non-Members: \$300

## Plastic

Visa, MasterCard, American Express and Discover.

## Dress

Opening, if you are attending the afterparty, men jackets, ladies in cocktail attire or slacks. Barbie Party dress beachy chic. Centerpiece is Business Casual. GRANDER Closing is sporty casual. For all other events or movies, dress up, dress down...whatever you like to do, just be comfortable and you'll feel fine.

## Venue Directions & Parking

**Cinema Paradiso-Hollywood, 2008 Hollywood Blvd, Hollywood 33020**  
2½ blocks west of Young Circle. From Ft Lauderdale on the east side, take US 1 south, turn right on to Hollywood Blvd and park wherever you want. CP-H is on the south side of Hwd Blvd. Parking on the street can be a challenge, but there are two large Parking Garages within walking distance at \$1/hr. Great for taking advantage of all the bistros. There are also two large public garages within 5 mins walk at just \$1/hour.

**David Posnack Jewish Community Center, 5850 S Pine Island Rd, Davie, FL 33328**

From the East take your favorite East/West Artery West to South Pine Island Road. The Center is just South of Stirling Road on the West side of Pine Island. Parking is free.

**Gateway Cinema, 1820 East Sunrise Blvd, Ft Lauderdale 33304**

On the south side of Sunrise Blvd, right where it separates from US 1. Plenty of Free Parking just behind the cinema. If you are going east on Sunrise, turn right at 18th Street.

**Lauderhill Performing Arts Center, 3800 NW 11 Pl, Lauderhill 33311**

From the East take Sunrise Blvd West. Cross State Road and turn left on 38th Avenue. Parking is free.

**Savor Cinema, 503 SE 6 Street, Ft Lauderdale 33301**

From the south...take US 1 north. Turn left at SE 7th Street (last light before tunnel). Turn right on SE 5th Avenue (second right you come to). Go to stop sign. Cinema Paradiso is across the street on your right. The Courthouse Parking Garage is across the street on your left. You can also park for free at any street meter surrounding SC all day on Sundays. Please know, the Meter Maids are ravenous. We suggest the garage which, to them, is like sunlight to a vampire.

**Seminole Hard Rock, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood 33019**

From the north or south, exit I-95 onto I-595 West; then exit 441 South. Hard Rock is ahead about 2 miles on your right. You can self-park for free in the Lucky Street Garage or the Winner's Way Garage. Valet Parking is also available by pulling up to the Guitar Hotel check-in.

**Superyacht Village, 2150 SE 17 St, Ft Lauderdale 33316**

Directly across 17th Street from the Pier 66 Tower. \$10 self parking.

**Villa de Palma, 600 Isle of Palms, Fort Lauderdale 33301**

On the south side of Las Olas, about a quarter mile west of the Las Olas Intracoastal bridge. There will be limited complimentary valet parking. We highly recommend you Uber or Limo to the event. It will be so much more convenient getting in and going home. If you have to valet, please carpool with others.

## Contact

Box-office 954-525-FILM (3456) [info@FLIFF.com](mailto:info@FLIFF.com) [www.FLIFF.com](http://www.FLIFF.com)

**Fort Lauderdale Int'l Film Festival (mailing only)**

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39th Annual

FORT LAUDERDALE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

# OPENING NIGHT

## Extravaganza

Join us for the Opening Night Film  
- QUEEN OF THE RING -  
Red Carpet 5:30pm,  
Screening 7:00 pm and  
After-Party.

Special guests including:  
Mena Suvari, Ray Romano,  
Bob Mackie, Cathy Moriarty, Gavin  
Casalegno, Francesca Eastwood,  
Emily Bett Rickards, Kevin Pollak  
and John Savage.

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**QUEEN OF THE RING** *Southeast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 120 min / English / Biographical Drama

Director: Ash Avildsen; Writer: Ash Avildsen from the book by Jeff Leen; Producer: Aimee Schoof, Isen Robbins, Ash Avildsen; Cinematography: Andrew Strahorn; Editor: Craig Hayes; Composer: Aaron Guilhuis; Art Director: John Travisano; Cast: Emily Betts Rickards, Josh Lucas, Francesca Eastwood, Walter Goggins, Gavin Casalegno, Cara Buono, Deborah Ann Wohl, Marie Avgeropolis, Adam Demos; Contact: aimee@intrinsicvaluefilms.com

"Queen of the Ring" is inspired by Jeff Leen's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, chronicling the true story of Mildred Burke, the first million-dollar female athlete in history. Millie, a young single mother defies societal norms by becoming a professional wrestler during a time when female wrestling was illegal in most of the U.S. Starting her career by competing against men at carnivals, she builds an impressive record and paves the way for women's wrestling to gain acceptance.

Despite her success, Millie's journey is marked by personal struggles, including raising her son on the road, the tragic death of her wrestling protege, and a tumultuous relationship with her manager and ex-husband, Billy Wolfe. Her story highlights her triumphs, such as headlining main events, bringing women of color into the sport, and participating in the first female "shoot match" for a title fight. "Queen of the Ring" captures the golden age of female pro wrestling and celebrates Millie's role in changing the culture and achieving unprecedented success.

**Special Guests:** Ash Avildsen, Emily Betts Rickards\*, Francesca Eastwood\*, Gavin Casalegno\*, Cara Buono, Aimee Schoof

\* Will receive the FLIFF Star On The Horizon Award.

**Friday, Nov 8, 7pm, Hard Rock-Seminole Ballroom**

Following the Q&A, the Opening Night Party will take place for all Gala Ticket Holders.

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The Jersey Girls performance sponsored by



**Director:** Ash grew up in a single parent household, never having met his father but knowing who he was and having his last name. He chose to pursue music first as an artist, touring in a band and teaching himself the business through a DIY lifestyle. Using all the knowledge he learned from the road, he started his own record label. Sumerian Records has now become one of the top independents in the world for rock and alternative music, with several Grammy nominations and record setting Billboard chart metrics for the hard rock genre. Sumerian recently celebrated a historic achievement with the first Grammy nomination in the history of the Recording Academy for a solo female artist in the "Best Metal Performance" category, featuring avant-garde singer Poppy.



Ash Avildsen's first feature film, "American Satan," won several awards on the festival circuit before being distributed by Miramax. The film had a theatrical release and was subsequently picked up by Showtime, where it developed a growing cult following. Ash expanded on this success by writing and directing the limited series spin-off, "Paradise City."

**Director's Statement:** Storytelling has always been my greatest passion, and "Queen of the Ring" represents a culmination of my journey both personally and professionally. At the age of 34, I finally met my father, acclaimed director John G. Avildsen, known for iconic films such as "Rocky" and "The Karate Kid." Building a beautiful bond with my father as an adult was life-changing, deeply influencing my approach to storytelling and imbuing my work with a profound sense of purpose and authenticity. Growing up without a father defined me in my youth, but becoming best friends with him later in life has been transformative.

## ★ SPECIAL GUESTS ★



### **GAVIN CASALEGNO**

GAVIN CASALEGNO launched his acting career in 2010 as a fourteen-year-old actor in CHASE, followed by LONE STAR in the same year. Four years later, now 18 years old, he takes a role in THE VAMPIRE DIARIES. Six years would pass till 2021, and an 8-episode run on WALKER. His big breakthrough came with the 2022-23 series THE SUMMER I TURNED PRETTY where he portrayed Jeremiah for 16 episodes. Among his big screen work is BUTTER (2011), NOAH, WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL, DEAD STILL (2014), NINE SECONDS (2017), THE UNHEALER (2020), and QUEEN OF THE RING (2024).



### **FRANCESCA EASTWOOD**

FRANCESCA EASTWOOD has a wealth of credits including OH, YOU PRETTY THINGS, PERCEPTION (2014), THE WRONG BOYFRIEND, MOTHER OF ALL LIES, GIRL MISSING, HEROES REBORN (2015), FARGO, TWIN PEAKS (2017), on the tube, and THE STARS FELL ON HENRIETTA (1995), TRUE CRIME (1999), JERSEY BOYS (2014), FINAL GIRL, KIDS VS MONSTERS (2015), OUTLAWS AND ANGELS, THREE DEATHS (2016), M.D.M.A., M.F.A. THE VAULT (2017), A VIOLENT SEPARATION, AWAKE (2019), OLD, ATTENTION ATTENTION (2021), HILL HIKERS (2022), CLAWFOOT (2023), RUNNING ON EMPTY, JUROR #2, and QUEEN OF THE RING (2024). Francesca is currently in pre-production for LIVE FST, DIE LAUGHING starring opposite Harvey Keitel.



### **EMILY BETTS RICKARDS**

EMILY BETTS RICKARDS began her career with ROMEO KILLER: The Chris Porco Story, followed by ARROW BLOOD RUSH (2013), PARANORMAL SOLUTIONS, COMEDY BANG! BANG! (2016), VIXEN (2015-16), SUPERGIRL (2017), THE FLASH (2014-17), D.C. LEGENDS OF TOMORROW (2016-17), ARROW (2012-20..155 episodes!). Then on the Big Screen RANDOM ACTS OF ROMANCE (2012), DAKOTA'S SUMMER (2014), BROOKLYN (2015), AXIS (2017), FUNNY STORY, THE CLINIC (2018), WE NEED TO TALK (2022), AUTUMN AND THE BLACK JAGUAR, CLAMITY JANE (as Calamity Jane), and QUEEN OF THE RING (2024).

**THE ADDICTION OF HOPE** *Florida Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 113 min / English / Drama

Director & Writer: Martin A. Gottlieb; Producers: Martin A. Gottlieb, Anne-Marie Johnson, David Marroquin; Cinematography: David Marroquin; Cast: Anne-Marie Johnson, Harley Jane Kozak, Alan Rosenberg, Clancy Brown, Shari Belafonte, Erika Alexander, Susan Ruttan, Alex Weed, Martin Grey, Matthew Moy, Nikko Austen Smith, Beth Holmes, Joe Hart, Mary Gillis, Anthony Carvello, Tom Dugan, Kyle Joachim, David Marroquin, Aaron McRaney; Contact: doilyboyproductions@gmail.com

Joanne is an aging actress forced to examine her choices in life and the importance of family versus fame when her sister, Lynn timer gets sick. This is a story about having the courage to change one's life.

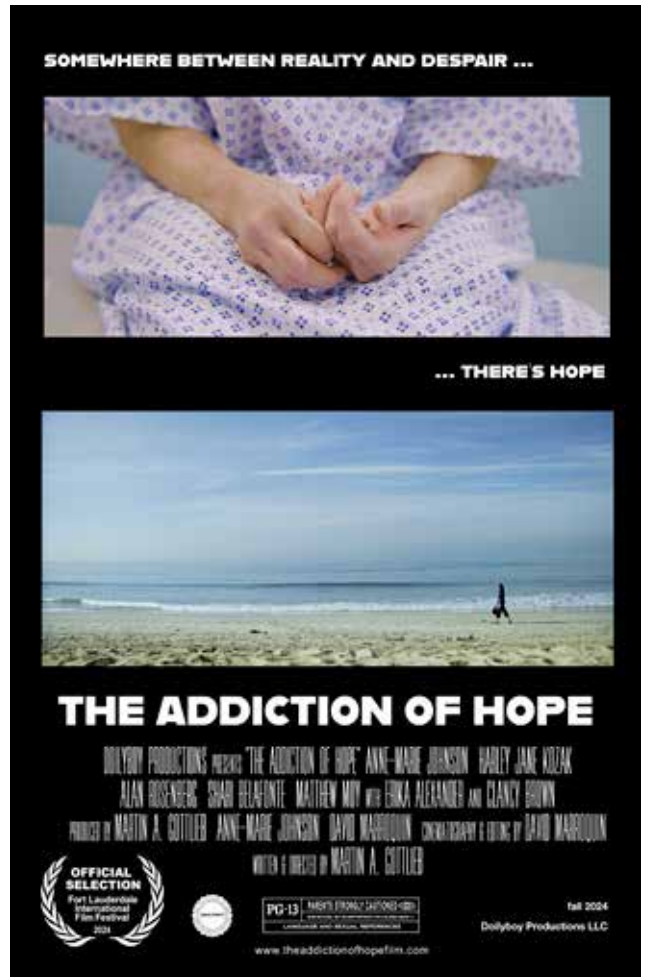
Martin A. Gottlieb returns after a thirteen-year hiatus to FLIFF. He was last here as co-writer and actor in the hilarious indie hit, ABOUT FIFTY. This time he comes in with his directorial debut in which he also has a significant role. Anne-Marie Johnson plays Joanne, a complicated person with lots in the rearview mirror that she doesn't appear to be pulling away from. Harley Jane Kozak plays Joanne's sister, Lynn timer, in a demanding role. There are some season vets in the cast as well. Johnson had roles in the TV series IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT, 118 episodes as Althea Tibbs (they called her Mrs. Tibbs, jk), and on JAG. Alan Rosenberg (LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST, LA Law, Cybill), Shari Belafonte (THE PLAYER, Hotel...and of course, Harry), Erika Alexander (GET OUT, AMERICAN FICTION and BLACK LIGHTNING) and Clancy Brown (THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION, NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET, COWBOYS & ALIENS), usually plays someone evil, gets a reprieve here as Riz the director auditioning Joanne.

Gottlieb, Johnson and the fine ensemble hit this very human story out of the park. FLIFF looks forward to presenting this film of introspection and the conversation it will create.

**Special Guest:** Martin A. Gottlieb, Anne-Marie Johnson

**Saturday, Nov 16, 3pm, Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by: Karen Donohue and Sunny Florida Productions**



**Director:** Marty Grey Gottlieb was born and raised in Brooklyn, NY before heading to Boulder, CO to play football and an inning or two of baseball for the Buffaloes. After graduating, he returned to Brooklyn and worked in a paper converting factory making paper lace doilies, hence the name of his production company, DOILYBOY. But it was a means to an end once Marty started working as an actor.



His first feature film was THE NATURAL and from there came regular work on television in mostly one hour dramas like NYPD BLUE, ER, JAG, THE X-FILES, COLD CASE, BONES, LIFE and many others. But there was always an itch to do more. The stage was a great place and Marty was honored with a Los Angeles Drama-Logue award for best actor in FRIENDS, but something was still missing. Like many actors, he started writing and eventually was able to direct a TV pilot, ON AND ON, from his own script. Some years later he co-wrote and co-starred in the award-winning feature film ABOUT FIFTY and now, THE ADDICTION OF HOPE marks his first feature film as a writer/director/producer/actor.

Marty's goal as a filmmaker is to tell stories honestly with grounded performances that move people.

**AIRE: Just Breathe** *U.S. Premiere*



Dominican Republic / 2024 / 91 min / Spanish with English subtitles / SciFi Suspense

Director: Leticia Tonos Paniagua; Writers: Leticia Tonos Paniagua, Junior Rosario, Rodolfo Baez; Producers: Leticia Tonos, Jalsen Santana; Cinematography: Luis Enrique Carrion; Editor: Gina Giudicelli; Composer: Pablo Mondragon; Production Designer: Cristobal Vallecillos; Cast: Paz Vega, Sophie Gomez, Jalsen Santana; Contact: Latido Films

It's the year 2147, men are sterile due to a virus, leaving humankind almost extinct. Tania, a biologist, is trying to inseminate herself to prevent this from happening with the help of an AI system called VIDA. Things take a turn when Azarias, one of the last men and a traveler with a dark past, suddenly appears.

Winner of The Fantastic Pavilion Award at Cannes 2023 and selected for the Big Screen competition in Rotterdam, this dystopian film coming from the Caribbean (a first from the region) is reminiscent of CHILDREN OF MEN and MOON but with a unique flavor of its own. Starring Mexican talent Sophie Gaëlle, renowned for her roles in the series ROSARIO TIJERAS and THE HOUSE OF FLOWERS, and Paz Vega (SEX AND LUCIA, RAMBO LAST BLOOD) in the role of VIDA.

**Friday, Nov 8, 7pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

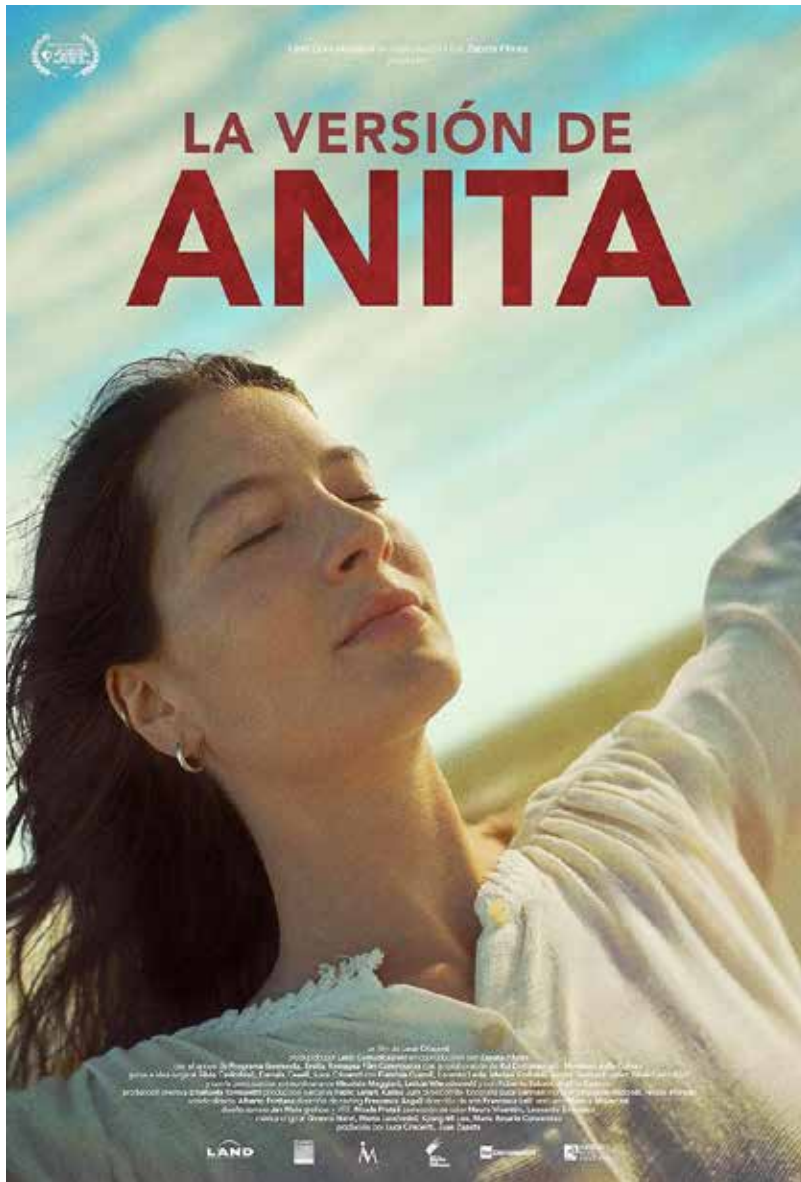
**Saturday, Nov 9, 9pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Leticia Tonos Paniagua is a Dominican director, producer and screenwriter born in Santo Domingo. She graduated in Advertising in 1992 from APEC University. She obtained a master's degree in Audiovisual Communications at the International University of Andalucía, Spain.



**ANITA'S TRUTH** *North American Premiere*



Brazil / 2023 / 85 min / Italian with English subtitles / Biography

Director: Luca Criscenti; Writers: Silvia Cavicchioli, Daniela Ceselli & Luca Criscenti; Producers: Luca Criscenti & Juan Zapata; Executive Producers: Karina Jury & Paolo Lanari / Cinematographer: Luca Gennari; Editors: Emanuele Redondi & Nicola Moruzzi; Cast: Flaminia Cuzzoli, Lorenzo Lavia & Marino Sinibaldi; Production Companies: Land Comunicazioni (Italy) & Zapata Filmes (Brazil); Contact: Douglas Limbach - nye2003@gmail.com

Born in Brazil in 1821. Anita Garibaldi, mother of four, died at the young age of 28 in Italy but led an adventurous life and fought crucial battles for the freedom of the Brazilian and Italian people. Yet for many she is known merely as the faithful wife of the hero of two worlds, Giuseppe Garibaldi. In the light of most recent research, careful analysis of her biography reveals an autonomous, independent woman capable of difficult and often uncomfortable choices. Anita's truth offers us a new narrative of historical events delivered from an unprecedented perspective with an extraordinary modern language. Anita is back. She is ready to tell us her story.

**Special Guest:** Juan Zapata, Douglas Limbach  
**Wednesday, Nov 13, 7pm, Gateway**



**Director:** A historian and documentary-maker. In 2000 he founded the production company Land Comunicazioni, where he works as a director and producer. He has directed many documentaries about Italy's historical and artistic heritage in cooperation with a number of important art historians and journalists. His most recent works include the TV series *Gli abissi di Tiepolo* (2020), *Velázquez. Lombra della vita* (2019), *Silenzi di Vermeer* (2018), *La vera natura di Caravaggio* (2016), *La libertà di Bernini* (2014) and the documentaries: *Le Stanze di Raffaello* (2016); *Pienza, città della luce* (2018), *La pittura più bella del mondo* (2018), *La Cappella Sistina* (2016).



**BEING MARIA** *Southeast Premiere*



France / 2024 / 100 min / French with English subtitles / Bio Pic

Director: Jessica Palud; Writers: Jessica Palud (adaptation) (dialogue) (screenplay), Laurette Polmanss (adaptation) (dialogue) (screenplay), Vanessa Schneider (novel: 'Tu t'appelais Maria Schneider'); Producer: Marielle Duigou; Cinematography: Sébastien Buchmann; Editor: Thomas Marchand; Composer: Benjamin Biolay; Cast: Anamaria Vartolomei, Matt Dillon, Giuseppe Maggio, Celeste Brunnquell, Yvan Attal, Marie Gillain, Jonathan Couzinie, Melissa Barbaud; Contact: mvolkin@kinolorber.com

The drama "Being Maria" reframes the short career and tragic life of "Last Tango in Paris" star Maria Schneider in a post-#MeToo light. "Happening" breakout Anamaria Vartolomei plays Schneider, while Matt Dillon takes on the role of her co-star Marlon Brando. The film in part tracks the controversial production and wrenching fallout of Bernardo Bertolucci's 1972 masterpiece -- a landmark that made Schneider an icon while locking her into a sexualized image she never could escape. Palud's sophomore feature also marks a fitting echo for the Gallic auteur, who kicked off her professional life on the set of Bertolucci's "The Dreamers."

**Friday, Nov 8, 1pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Sunday, Nov 10, 2pm,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Jessica Palud was born in Paris, and has worked as an assistant director on films such as Bernardo Bertolucci's *THE DREAMERS* and Sofia Coppola's *MARIE ANTOINETTE*. She has directed the shorts *DOLL* (2016) and *MARLON* (2017). The latter was selected at Toronto IFF. Her latest film *BACK HOME* (2019) was selected in the Orizzonti section of the 76th Venice International Film Festival.



**Director's Statement:** I started my career on film sets at 19 years old, as an assistant director for *The Dreamers*, a film by Bernardo Bertolucci. I learned about what happened on *Last Tango in Paris* and always wondered how something like that could have come about. It stayed with me for years. Then, when Vanessa Schneider's book came out, I was deeply moved by Maria's story.

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*Bob Mackie*

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**BELLE** *U.S. Premiere*

France / 2024 / 100 min / French with English subtitles / Mystery Suspense Thriller

Director: Benoit Jacquot; Writers: Benoit Jacquot & Julien Boivent, based on the book *Le Mort de Belle*, by George Simenon; Producer: Philippe Carcassonne & Marie-Jeanne Pascal, Madagascar Productions; Cinematography: Caroline Champetier; Editor: Julia Gregory; Composer: Bruno Coulais; Cast: Guillaume Canet, Charlotte Gainsbourg; Contact: [laura.rinker@francetv.fr](mailto:laura.rinker@francetv.fr)

Pierre and his wife Cléa lead a peaceful existence in a small provincial town. He is a teacher and she runs an optical shop. They are lodging Belle, the daughter of a friend.

What happens in this quaint French town, where everyone seems to know everyone...or do they?

Guillaume Canet (JOYEAUX NOEL) a fan favorite at FLIFF, brings a unique detachment to the lead role. As his wife Clea, played by Charlotte Gainsbourg (first introduced to FLIFF audiences in the 1993 CEMENT GARDEN, when she was 22) is brilliant as always. This film will get you thinking.

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 3pm, Cinema Paradiso**

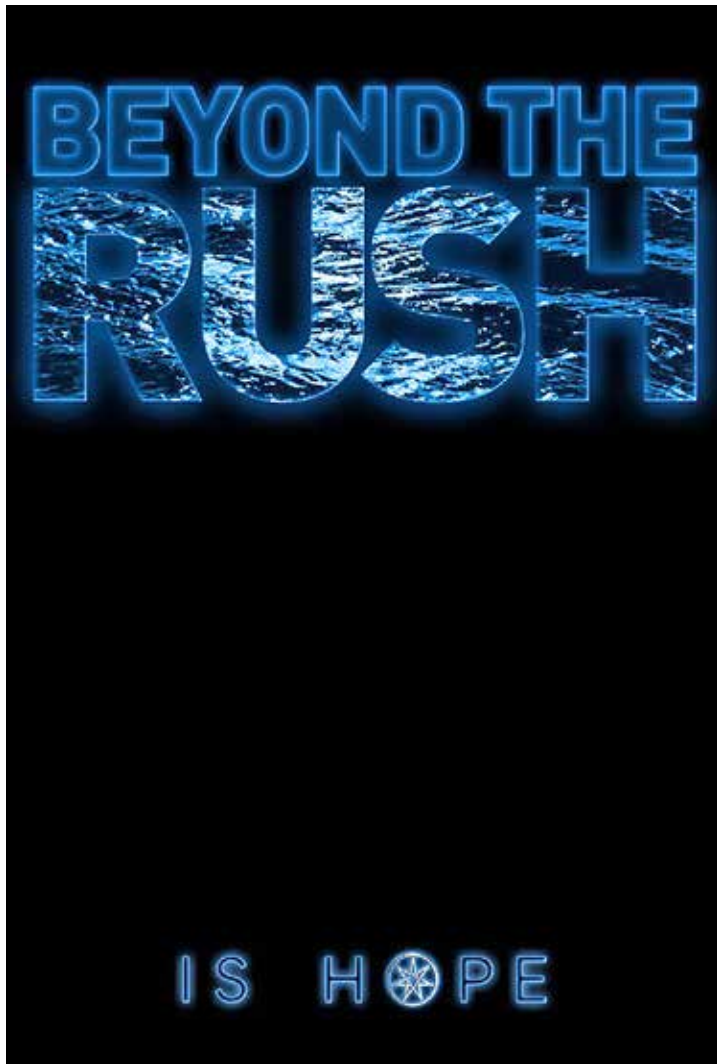
**Wednesday, Nov 13, 5:30pm, Gateway**



**Director:** Benoît Jacquot was born on 5 February 1947 in Paris, France. He is a director and writer, known for *Farewell, My Queen* (2012), *The School of Flesh* (1998) and *À Tout de Suite* (2004).

**Director's Statement:** Georges Simenon never ceased to explore the theme of "guilt versus innocence" and the world that surrounds it. This undoubtedly, at least partially, explains why so many of his novels have been adapted to the big screen, as if the power of cinema can facilitate the almost mechanical oscillation between the ordinary and extraordinary, the peculiar and the banal. I'm thinking in particular of Jean Renoir's *Night at the Crossroads*, based on a Simenon novel. Guilt is the driving force in many a movie, starting with the famous Hitchcock film *The Wrong Man*, along with most of his works; but when discussing this genre, my mind immediately goes to Fritz Lang's *Beyond a Reasonable Doubt*, with its series of twists that prevent the viewer from discerning the main character, from start to finish.



**BEYOND THE RUSH** *World Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 94 min / English / Thriller

Director & Writer: Robert John Sayegh; Executive Producer: Jayce Bartok; Producers: Robert John Sayegh, Candy Potts, Cathy Moriarty; Cinematography: Andres Karu; Production Designer: Brian Urbina; Cast: Bill Barrett, Mena Suvari, Eric Roberts, Cathy Moriarty, John Savage, Jayce Bartok, Frankie Faison, Eliza Roberts, Christopher Egan, Frankie G, Amanda Clayton, Kevin Interdonata, Michelle Santiago, Morgan Harvill, Magnus Diehl, Hunter Nance, Wyatt Solis, Holly Zuelle; Contact: rob@salmonskyent.com

Samuel Grievers – a rising investigative journalist now demoted to covering the gossip column – is a high-functioning addict who finds himself at a crossroads dealing with cascading mental health issues, childhood traumas, a failing career, and the pressures of starting a family.

When he receives a secret tip that a judge, from his damaged past, is suspected of deviant sexual acts within the juvenile court system, church, and community, Samuel goes undercover and rogue, returning to his old neighborhood.

**Special Guest:** Robert John Sayegh, Cathy Moriarty, Mena Suvari, John Savage, Bill Barrett, Jayce Bartok

**Saturday, Nov 9, 7pm,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Rob has been in the Film and TV business for 26 years and has many writing, casting, and production credits on films such as *The Devil Wears Prada* and *Across the Universe*, as well as *The VMAs*, *Fashionably Loud*, *Woodstock '99*, NBC's *The Marriage Ref*, E! Network's *Ice Loves Coco*, and James Beard's award-winning culinary show, *Food Trip with Todd English*.

Rob also authored *The Dividing Line*, published in 2005, which he has adapted into a feature screenplay.

Rob is also a serial entrepreneur who just maneuvered through the worst pandemic to hit the world since the flu of 1918, to keep his Manhattan restaurant alive and thriving.

**Director's Statement:** Making this film has spanned 32 years for me – basically a lifetime. From a short story written in 1992 during my senior year of high school, to a short film that won awards in 2017, to the screenplay that has evolved into casting for a feature film, this project has become much more than a tale of fiction, it has become my journey.

At 18 years old, who knew that I would come to understand this main character, Samuel Grievers, so much that he has basically morphed into a mouthpiece through which I speak? I fell in love with a heroin/opiate addict in 2016, lived through her brutal murder in early 2017, and then faced my own alcoholism that had spiraled so far down a rabbit hole I never thought I'd come out. *BEYOND THE RUSH* is now more than a screenplay title, it's the metaphor of my life.



## ★ SPECIAL GUESTS ★



### JAYCE BARTOK

JAYCE BARTOK has acted in numerous projects, most notably Richard Linklater's *SUBURBIA*, Sam Rami's *SPIDERMAN*, Tom McCarthy's *THE STATION AGENT*, and Ava Duvernay's award-winning *WHEN THEY SEE US*. Jayce's first screenplay, *THE CAKE EATERS*, became a critically acclaimed film directed by Mary Stuart Masterson, which he starred in alongside Kristen Stewart and Bruce Dern. Jayce wrote and directed *FALL TO RISE* starring Daphne Rubin-Vega and legendary dancers Desmond Richardson & Katherine Crockett; and produced the award-winning documentary, *LARGER THAN LIFE: THE KEVYN AUCCOIN STORY*. Most recently, he is producing a documentary about the burlesque performer, Dita Von Teese. Upcoming is, *THE FLORIST*, about the last days of Vivien Leigh.



### CATHY MORIARTY

CATHY MORIARTY's career spans five decades. Born and raised in New York City, she made her acting debut opposite Robert De Niro in Martin Scorsese's *RAGING BULL* (1980), for which she received nominations for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress, the Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actress, and the British Academy Film Award. Throughout her career, she has worked with a number of prolific directors including Martin Scorsese, Sidney Lumet, Ivan Reitman, Harold Ramis, and James Mangold. Her film appearances include *NEIGHBORS*, *WHITE OF THE EYE*, *KINDERGARTEN COP*, *SOAPDISH*, *MATINEE*, *CASPER*, *COP LAND*, *BUT I'M A CHEERLEADER*, *ANALYZE THAT*, *THE BOUNTY HUNTER*, *THE DOUBLE*, and *PATTI CAKE\$*. Moriarty has also starred in numerous television series including *TALES FROM THE CRYPT*, *HEY ARNOLD!*, *LAW & ORDER*, *LAW & ORDER: SVU*, *LAW & ORDER: CRIMINAL INTENT*, *I'M DYING UP HERE*, *THIS IS US*, *THE ASSASSINATION OF GIANNI VERSACE*, *CITY ON A HILL*, and *HOUSEBROKEN*. Moriarty works as an activist for the Autistic community and is the national spokesperson for *AUTISM UNITED*.



### JOHN SAVAGE

JOHN SAVAGE is an American actor. He first rose to prominence in the late 1970s for his portrayals of troubled-but-sensitive characters in films like *The Deer Hunter*, *The Onion Field* and *Hair*. His television roles include Donald Lydecker on *Dark Angel* and Hack Scudder on *Carnivàle*. Savage has appeared in more than 200 feature films, shorts, recurring roles in TV series and guest appearances in episodes of television series. One of Savage's first notable roles is as Claude Hooper Bukowski in the film *HAIR*. His first major film role was as Steven Pushkov in the multiple Oscar-winning film *THE DEER HUNTER*. He also had a lead role in *THE ONION FIELD*. In the late 1970s, he performed in the Broadway production of David Mame's play *AMERICAN BUFFALO*. He starred in Italian director Lucio Fulci's final film *DOOR TO SILENCE*, and had a brief role in *THE THIN RED LINE*, and portrayed Captain Ransom in "Equinox" of the series *STAR TREK: VOYAGER*. Savage appeared in unrelated roles in two of the series in the *LAW & ORDER* franchise: *LAW & ORDER: CRIMINAL INTENT* episode «Conscience» as a man who put his wife in a permanent coma, and the *LAW & ORDER: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT* episode «Quarry» as a child molester on death row for murdering one of his victims. He appeared in the horror film *TALES OF HALLOWEEN*, the film *IN DUBIOUS BATTLE*, and on the continuation of *TWIN PEAKS*.



### MENA SUVARI

After beginning her career as a model and guest-starring on television shows, MENA SUVARI made her film debut in the 1997 black comedy drama *NOWHERE*. She rose to international prominence with her appearances as Angela in the critically acclaimed comedy-drama *AMERICAN BEAUTY*, for which she received a BAFTA nomination for Best Supporting Actress, and Heather in three of the *AMERICAN PIE* films. Her other notable lead film roles include *SLUMS OF BEVERLY HILLS*, *LOSER*, *SUGAR & SPICE*, *THE MUSKETEER*, *SPUN*, *STUCK*, *DAY OF THE DEAD*, and *YOU MAY NOT KISS THE BRIDE*. In television, Suvari played main roles as Maria Abascal on the We TV supernatural horror series *SOUTH OF HELL* and Kathleen Callahan on the sitcom *AMERICAN WOMAN*. Suvari played recurring roles as Edie on the fourth season of the HBO drama series *SIX FEET UNDER*, for which she earned a Screen Actors Guild nomination, and Isabella on the second season of *CHICAGO FIRE*. She also portrayed Elizabeth Short in the anthology series *AMERICAN HORROR STORY: MURDER HOUSE*, and reprised the part in *AMERICAN HORROR STORY: APOCALYPSE*. Suvari has been a model for Lancôme cosmetics and print ads for Lancôme Paris Adaptive, as well as a long-time supporter and activist for the Starlight Children's Foundation and the African Medical and Research Foundation.

**BLACK DOG** *Southeast Premiere*

China / 2024 / 106 min / Mandarin with English subtitles / Dark Comedy

Director: Hu Guan; Writers: Rui Ge, Hu Guan; Producer: Jing Liang; Cinematographer: Weizhe Gao; Composer: Brenton Vivian; Cast: Eddie Peng, Jing Liang, Zhangke Kia, Liya Tong, Vision Wei, Hong Yuan, Yi Zhang, Yi Zhao; Contact: marksayre@theforge.biz

On the edge of the Gobi Desert in Northwest China, Lang returns to his hometown after being released from jail. While working for the local dog patrol team to clear the town of stray dogs before the Olympic Games, he strikes up an unlikely connection with a black dog. These two lonely souls now embark on a new journey together.

Winner of the 2024 Cannes Film Festival’s Un Certain Regard section (which most value higher than the Main Competition), BLACK DOG is a crowd pleaser. Don’t worry if you are wondering what’s going on, during the first 10 minutes or so, it will all fall into line with the subtleties the director injected. The humor, for the most part is dry, although some bits are spontaneous laugh-out-loud funny. There is also a great deal of pathos. And it goes without saying, if you like dogs, this will be a treat...perhaps bittersweet.

**Monday, Nov 11, 5pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 7pm,  
Cinema Paradiso Hollywood**



Sponsored by:



A pre-film reception with food compliments of Christina Wan's will take place at Savor Cinema beginning 6:30pm.



**Director:** A graduate of the class of 1991 of the Beijing Film Academy, Guan became the youngest director in the Beijing Film Studio. In the 1990s, Guan directed a handful of films making a name as an important voice of the sixth generation, most notably with his debut, 1994's *Dirt*. A portrayal of Beijing's rock music scene, *Dirt* was filmed on a shoestring budget and was funded primarily by lead actress, Kong Lin. *Dirt* is often compared with another major sixth generation film about the Beijing rock scene, Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards*. Unlike that film, Guan Hu paid nearly US\$2000 for state studio affiliation, allowing the film to be distributed in China and screened abroad with approval from state regulators.

**Director's Statement:** I've found that dogs share similarities with human beings. You can communicate with them. In the film, I see the black dog as not just an animal but as an individual like Erlang, fighting both loneliness and prejudice.



Cannes Film Fest Press Conference with his star, "Black Dog"

**BOOKS & DRINKS** *Southeast Premiere*



Dominican Republic / 2023 / 94 min / English / Romantic Comedy

Director: Geoffrey Cowper; Writer: Josep Ciutat; Producers: Josep Ciutat, Carol Dudley, Pablo Lozano, Andres Rodriguez, Martín Rosete, Cinematography: Jose Martín Rosete; Editors: Antonella Bosiak, Guillermo A. Chaia; Music: Andres Rodriguez; Cast: Jackson Rathbone, Clara Lago, Héctor Aníbal, Carol Halstead, Nashla Bogaert, David Maler, Ruairi Rhodes, Yasser Michelén, Paula Ferry, Andrés Curbelo, Katherine Montes, Luis José Germán; Contact: andresrz@veranerafilms.com

David’s bookstore in Brooklyn is going broke. His mother stops by to tell David that his father, Jesse, who he thought was long dead, has actually been living the highlife in the Dominican Republic. Unfortunately for David, he died of a heart-attack last week. Fortunately for David, he left him his Caribbean mansion. If David can sell the house, with the help of the charming real estate agent Maria, he can pay off his debts and turn the bookstore into the place of his dreams. His girlfriend Rachel is more skeptical. It should be simple: fly to the Dominican Republic, sell the house. As time stretches on and the house hasn’t sold, David discovers what drew his father to this tropical paradise and it’s warm, welcoming people; and how much they truly loved him. Will David sell and return to New York with Rachel, or will the realtor Maria, along with the island and its people, win his heart?

**Special Guest:** Geoffrey Cowper (LHPAC)

**Friday, Nov 8, 5:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 7pm, Lauderhill  
Performing Arts Center**

**Sponsored by**  [www.sunshine411.org](http://www.sunshine411.org)



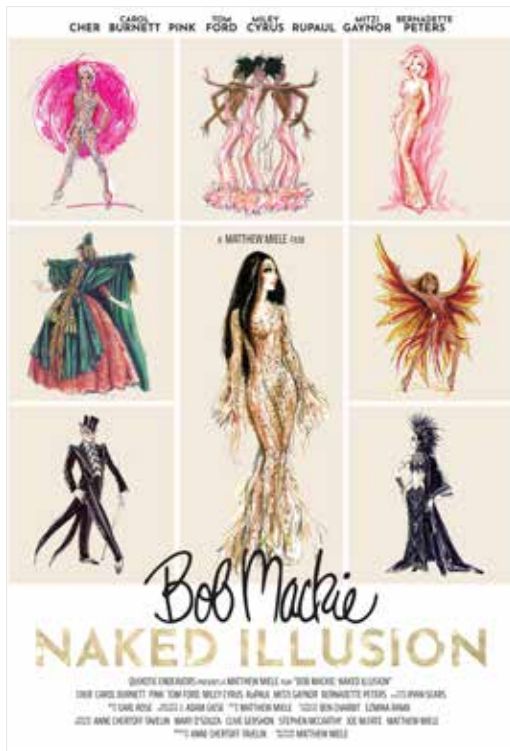
Thanks to the generosity of Sunshine411, tickets for the Nov 14th screening will be FREE. Get them at the door. A FREE Reception for all ticket holders prior to the LPAC screening.

**Director:** Geoffrey Cowper was born 1986 in Terrassa, Barcelona, to an Australian father and a Spanish mother. As far as he can remember Geoffrey always wanted to be a film director. In 2009 he graduated from Escuela Superior de Cine y Audiovisuales de Cataluña specializing in direction. *Cargols!* (Snails!), his graduation project, a romantic comedy featuring a giant snail, premiered in Sitges, and it was selected by more than 100 festivals around the globe. He co-wrote, co-produced and directed his feature film debut, *Tercer Grado* (Day Release), and was selected by more than 20 festivals and won over 15 awards. He then taught film for various years at university, while shooting many music videos for a diverse array of Spanish pop artists. In 2023 he directed an episode for NETFLIX of “Berlin”, the “Money Heist” spin off. Currently he combines teaching with the development of his next feature film project.



**Director's Statement:** I am a sucker for rom-coms so I wanted to direct *Books & Drinks* the moment I read Josep Ciutat’s script with its witty dialogue, captivating characters and humor. It’s a film with fast-paced dialogue and lots of heart, and shooting it in the Dominican Republic added a very special charm. As someone who knows both Spanish and English culture, I could identify with David’s being a fish-out-of-water and explore the comedic potential of those cultural differences. As a dreamer and a hopeless romantic myself I relate to David’s pursuit of his dreams and his determination to find the love of his life

**BOB MACKIE: Naked Illusion** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 105 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Matthew Miele; Producer: Anne Chertoff Tavelin; Executive Producers: Anne Chertoff Tavelin, Mary D’Souza, Stephen McCarthy, Joe McFate, Matthew Miele, Clive Gershon, Benjamin Charbit & Ezmina Tauran; Cinematographer: J. Adam Giese; Edited by Matthew Miele; Featuring: Bob Mackie, Cher, Carol Burnett, Pink, Tom Ford, Miley Cyrus, RuPaul, Mitzi Gaynor, Bernadette Peters, Zac Posen, Gregg Barnes, Michael Berresse, Jennelle Hamilton, Steven Kolb, Vicki Lawrence, Fern Mallis, Joe McFate, Booth Moore, Martin Nolan, Mel Ottenberg, Lulu Porter, Law Roach, Hal Rubenstein, George Schlatter, Jeffrey Seller, Jan Strimple, Flody Suarez; Contact: hello@quixoticendeavors.com

Showcases the six-decade career of award-winning costume designer, Bob Mackie. And like his costumes, Bob Mackie is wholly unique and unfiltered, which makes for a compelling and candid subject.

The film examines Bob's unique upbringing, those whom he has held dear within his inner circle, and the familial surprises in his life that have all contributed to the optimism and audacity present in his work.

Because the film is fully authorized, Quixotic Endeavors was given access to the full Bob Mackie archive, which has been meticulously kept and curated with many rare and unseen artifacts, including the outfits that didn't make the cut. We also capture the over-the-top costumes as they get sequined and beaded from sketch to stage. Specific highlights include some of the soon-to-be lost art methods by old-world

artisans that help make each outfit Mackie conjures something to behold and remember.

The documentary feature includes original interviews with Bob Mackie clients and collaborators, along with those he has inspired - designers, stylists, comedians and actors, as well as Bob's first-person account of some of his most iconic looks from The Carol Burnett Show's Scarlett O'Hara dress to Cher's 1986 Academy Awards look with feathered headdress and Tina Turner's iconic concert costumes. Bob Mackie is a truly peerless and timeless costume designer, with interviews from Cher to Pink, to Tom Ford and Miley Cyrus, to RuPaul and Carol Burnett a testament to that fact.

**Special Guest:** Bob Mackie will receive the FLIFF Lifetime Achievement Award

**Saturday, Nov 9, Savor Cinema**  
with Noon Mimosa & Fruit Waffle Reception / 1pm Film

**Thursday, Nov 14, 1:30pm, Gateway**

**Sponsored by: Estelle Fineberg & Estelle Fineberg Counseling Services**  
**Co-Sponsored by: Goodman Public Relations and Mountain Waffle Company**



**Director:** A storyteller above all else, Matthew Miele has drawn upon his various experiences in music composition, publishing, and screenwriting to become a successful producer and director of critically acclaimed, and internationally renowned, feature-length documentaries.

Past films include *Scatter My Ashes at Bergdorf's*, *Harry Benson: Shoot First, Always at The Carlyle* and *Alan Pakula: Going for Truth*.

Miele's *Bob Mackie: Naked Illusion*, chronicles the unprecedented six-decade career of award-winning costume designer Bob Mackie. The film further examines Bob's unique upbringing, those whom he has held dear within his inner circle, and the familial surprises in his life that have all contributed to the optimism and audacity present in his work.

Up next for Miele and currently in production are fully-authorized documentaries on the legendary lyricist Bernie Taupin, and an inside look at the renowned New York City comedy club, *Comedy Cellar*.



★ BOB MACKIE ★ 2024 LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT ★

**BOB MACKIE**

Costume and fashion designer Bob Mackie is a nine-time Emmy Award winner, Geoffrey Beene CFDA Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, and has three Oscar nominations. He received a 2019 Tony Award, Drama Desk Award, and Outer Critics Circle Award for his work on The Cher Show. His Broadway credits include Moon Over Buffalo and Putting It Together, starring Carol Burnett, Best Little Whorehouse Goes Public, Minnelli on Minnelli, Lorelei with Carol Channing, and On the Town with Bernadette Peters and Phyllis Newman. Broadway on television: "Once Upon a Mattress" starring Carol Burnett, "Gypsy" starring Bette Midler, "Carousel," "Brigadoon," "Of Thee I Sing," and "Kismet." Bob's inventive and memorable designs have helped raise entertainers like Tina Turner, Diana Ross, Cher, Elton John, Ann-Margret, Bernadette Peters, Miley Cyrus, Mitzi Gaynor, Carol Burnett, Bette Midler, Pink, Zendaya, and Cher to iconic status both onscreen and off.



Cher, Elton John & Diana Ross



Goldie Hawn



Carol Burnett



with Bette Midler, Elton John, Cher & Flip Wilson



with Bernadette Peters



Mitzi Gaynor



Anya Taylor-Joy



Miley Cyrus



Cher



Diana Ross



Zendaya



Ann-Margret



Barbra Eden



Cher



FRESNO with Gregory Harrison & Carol Burnett



GYPSY with Cynthia Gibb & Bette Midler



LADY SINGS THE BLUES with Diana Ross



PENNIES FROM HEAVEN with Bernadette Peters



FUNNY LADY with Barbra Streisand



Tina Turner



Pink



Bette Midler



THE CHER SHOW

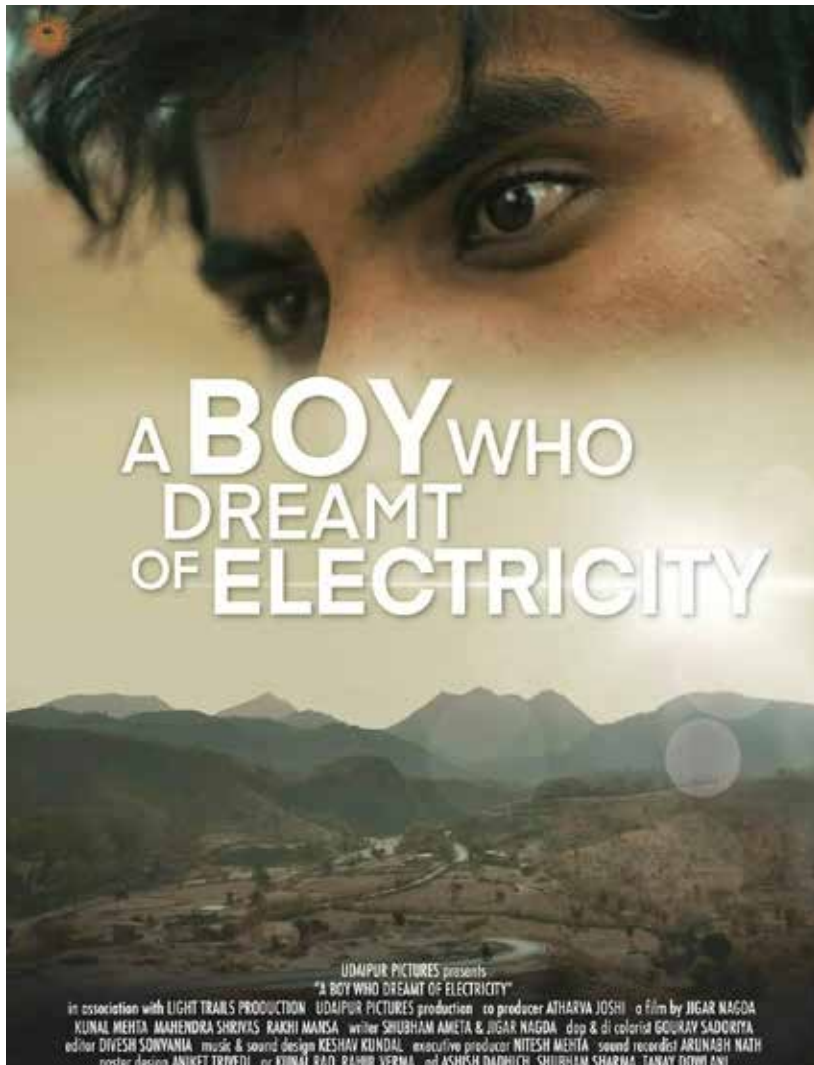


Carol Burnett



Elton John

**A BOY WHO DREAMT OF ELECTRICITY** *Florida Premiere*



India / 2023 / 72 min / Rajasthani with English subtitles / Drama

Director, Writer & Producer: Jigdal Madanial Nagda; Cinematography: Gourav Sadoriya; Editors: Vatsal Doshi, Divesh Sonvania; Composer: Keshav Kundal; Cast: Kunal Mehta, Mehender Sivas, Rakhi Mansa, Jigdal Madanial Mgada; Contact: udaipurpictures13@gmail.com

In a remote tribal region, young Bheru dreams of bringing electricity to his isolated hilltop home. Struggling with the lack of conventional power sources, he stumbles upon hope when he comes upon a miraculous invention.

One of my favorite films of FLIFF2024. The performances are amazing - illustrating the caste system and the villager's blind acceptance. I was especially fascinated by the body language exhibited. It is a very sweet film as well. Kunal Mehta's performance as Bheru, is especially moving. Kudos to Jigdal for putting it all together.

**Special Guest:** Jigdal Madanial Nagda

**Friday, Nov 8, 3pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Saturday, Nov 9, 5:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by the Association of Performing Arts of India**



**Director:** Jigdal Madanial Nagda is a postgraduate in Mass Communication from Mumbai University. At the age of 20, he attended an Asian film festival, which sparked his love and passion for filmmaking. For the past 9 years, he has been working in the film industry as an assistant and associate director, learning from some of the best talents including Anurag Kashyap, Onir, Manish Gupta, and Wilson Luis.



Jigar's passion for travel led him to embark on an India tour with just one rupee, an experience that had a profound impact on his life and way of thinking. Upon completing this journey, he decided to pursue his dream of making his own film. Anurag Kashyap, with whom he had worked as a director's assistant for Bombay Velvet, deeply influenced Jigar's perspective on filmmaking. Anurag's belief that if you don't find a producer, you should stand up for yourself and the world will support you, became Jigar's biggest motivation in making his film.

This belief turned out to be true as Jigar successfully completed his first film, "A Boy Who Dreamt of Electricity," and is now eagerly awaiting its release.



**THE BREAK-UP CLUB** *U.S. Premiere*



The Netherlands / 2024 / 102 min / Dutch with English subtitles / Romantic Comedy

Director: Jonathan Elbers; Writer: Gerben Hetebrij; Producer: Tom de Mol; Cinematographer: Hidde Boorsma; Editor: Joost van der Wetering; Composer: Roel Gommans, Jules Reivers; Cast: Juvat Westendorp, Holly Mae Brood, Sarah Banner; Contact: danielle@incrediblefilm.nl

What if you want to break up with your partner, but you either don't have the guts to do it, or you can't be bothered with the hassle? Dylan has the solution! This attractive guy with an equally attractive, carefree life and a smooth way with words, runs The Break-up Club. You can hire him and his best friend Mick to make a clean break for you. Everything is going great until Dylan is hired to dump control freak and journalist Zoë, who leaps at the chance of a story about The Break-Up Club.

FLIFF names THE BREAK-UP CLUB Our Date Night Film of the Fest.

**Monday, Nov 11, 7pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Friday, Nov 15, 7:30 pm, Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by Carl Berkelhammer and Kimberly Bloom**



**Director:** Jonathan Elbers graduated in 2012 from the Dutch Film Academy. His graduation movie 'The Club of the Ugly Children' was awarded on numerous international children film festivals. He's passionate about directing comedy stories with loveable characters and surprising the audience with worlds (realistic of fantasy), they have never seen before.

Upon graduating, he began directing short films and commercials. His commercial for the film academy (2013) and for LG (2014) both won a Cannes Young Director Award. Jonathan is now developing a screenplay for a dark comedy and a series about fairytales.



**BUTTERFLIES** *U.S. Premiere*



Finland / 2024 / 98 min / Finnish with English subtitles / Comedy

Director: Jenni Toivoniemi; Writer: Anna Brotkin; Producer: Mila Haavisto; Cinematographer: Arsen Sarkisians; Editor: Anitti Reiko; Composer: Matti Ahopelto; Cast: Aksa Korttila, Jani Volanen, Leea Klemola ; Contact: Yuan@picturetree-international.com

Siiri, a hardworking millennial, strives to be successful in her job as the advisor to the Minister of Economic Affairs. She craves a promotion. Siiri’s work takes her and her hard-to-handle minister, an unpredictable, eccentric woman, to a big tango festival in the small Finnish town, which just so happens to be Siiri’s hometown, that she escaped to get to the big city. This leads Siiri, a cynic of epic proportions, to a reunion of sorts with her relentlessly optimistic father, Petri. It should be known that Petri, a gentle, loving man, is also followed by a dark cloud of bad luck, leading some to think of him as a loser, lovable as he may be.

As Siiri grapples with maintaining her politician boss's sanity amidst marital strife, and Petri juggles his own facade of stability, they both confront the lies they've told themselves in a dance of self-discovery.

This is a sweet and hysterical comedy. In its Gala slot, we will feature a Finnish Party following the screening at Savor.

**Special Guest:** Jenni Toivoniemi

**Monday, Nov 11, 5pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 7:15pm, Savor Cinema**

Sponsored by



**Director:** Jenni Toivoniemi is an award-winning writer-director and playwright based in Helsinki, Finland. She is known for *Force of Habit* (2019), *The Date* (2012) and *Games People Play* (2020). She is married to Tuomas Klaavo.

**Director's Statement:** We wanted to make a modern summer comedy embracing Finnish weirdness and empathy towards its struggling main characters. To me fun and humor always co-exist with melancholy and sadness and you enjoy them most taken simultaneously. I got a dream cast of very skillful and talented actors and I was especially touched by Aksa Korttila's hilarious and heart-breaking performance as the overachieving main character Siiri.



AMERICAN INDIE

CHOP BLOCK NEWS



USA / 2024 / 78 min / English / Adult Animation

Directors: Ric Johnson, Sydney Isermann; Writers: Ric Johnson, Charlie Johnson; Producers: Ric Johnson, Sydney Isermann, Charlie Johnson, Courtney Fitzgerald, and Asst. Line: Zack Budgen; Animator: Ric Johnson, Charlie Johnson, Asst. Sydney Isermann / Editor: Ric Johnson, Charlie Johnson, Asst. Courtney Fitzgerald; Music: Earoin; Featuring voices of: Ric Johnson, Sydney Isermann, Charlie Johnson, Courtney Fitzgerald; Contact: qm@qmshows.com

An adult swim type animation series, of Saturday Night Live meets The Simpsons. This program consists of three 26 minute episodes

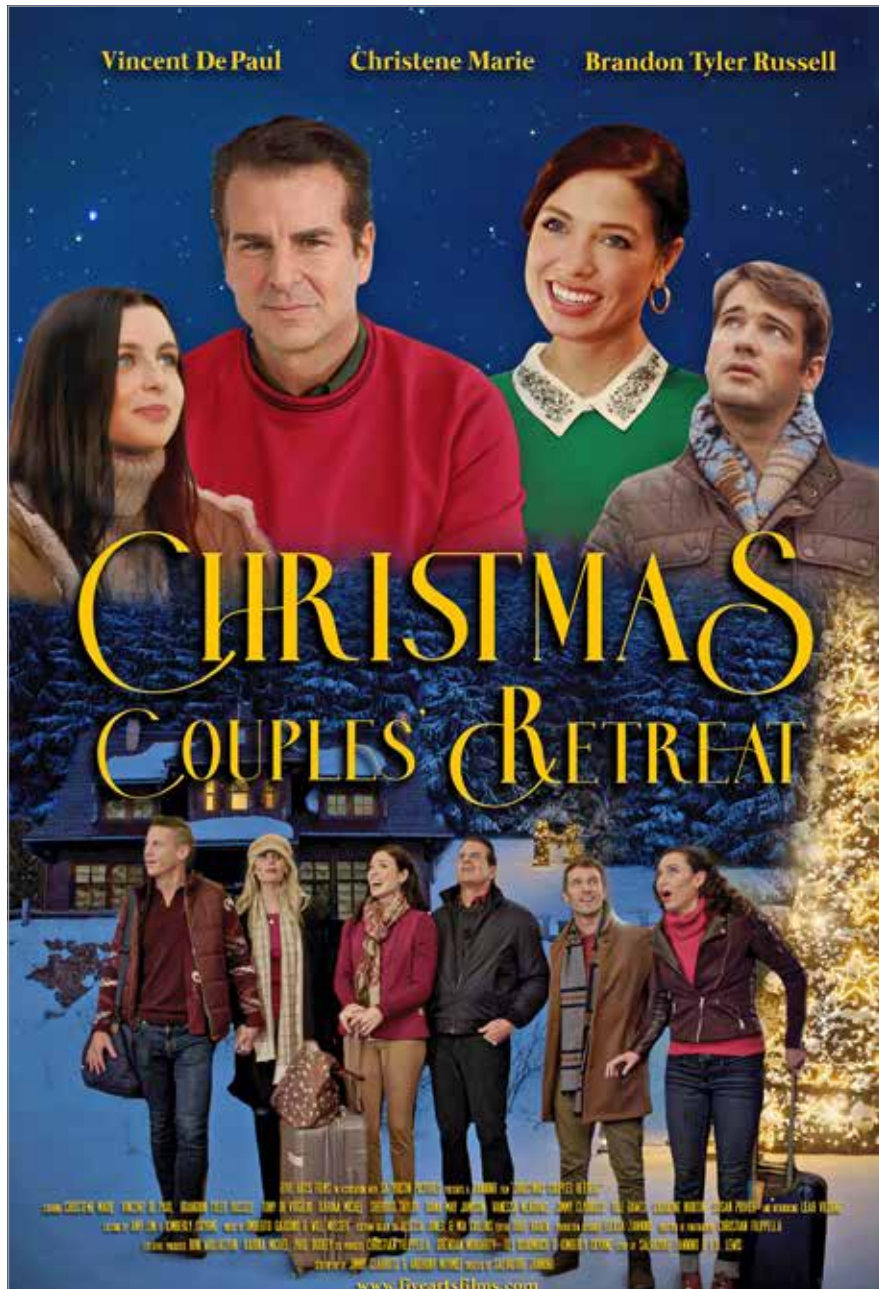
**Saturday, Nov 16, 9pm, Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Ric Johnson: Is an American filmmaker, Screenwriter, Musician, and Producer. His films are known for their dark satirical, comedy-adventure...Ric is best known for: Chop Block news-animation series, Cowboys and Aliens-animation/Cowboys and Aliens feature film consulting; American Inventor: 'Creator', and feature film: 'Dead by Friday'.



**CHRISTMAS COUPLES RETREAT** *Second Look Screening*



USA / 2023 / 76 min / English / Bittersweet Comedy

Director: Salvatore Zannino; Writers: Salvatore Zannino, F.D. Lewis, Jimmy Clabots, Anthony Mormile; Executive Producers: Paul Dudley, Karina Feld, Brock Pierce, Ron Wollaston, Salvatore Zannino; Producers: Ernesto Arambatzis, William Barela, Till Bloomrich, Dave Hagen, Christian Filippella, John Kim, Brendan Moriarty, Anthony Mormile, Matt Shapira, Kimberly Skyrme; Cinematography: Christian Filippella; Editor: Dave Hagen; Cast: Vincent De Paul, Christene Marie, Karina Michel, Tony DiVirgilio, Jr., Sherrod Taylor, Dana May Jamison, Jimmy Clabots, Vanessa Meadows, Brandon Tyler Russell, Leah Villone; Contact: fiveartsfilms@gmail.com

Three couples attend a retreat during the holidays to strengthen their respective relationships. New feelings emerge when one couple's son shows up to the retreat uninvited and falls for the manager.

**Special Guest:** Vincent De Paul, Karina Michel

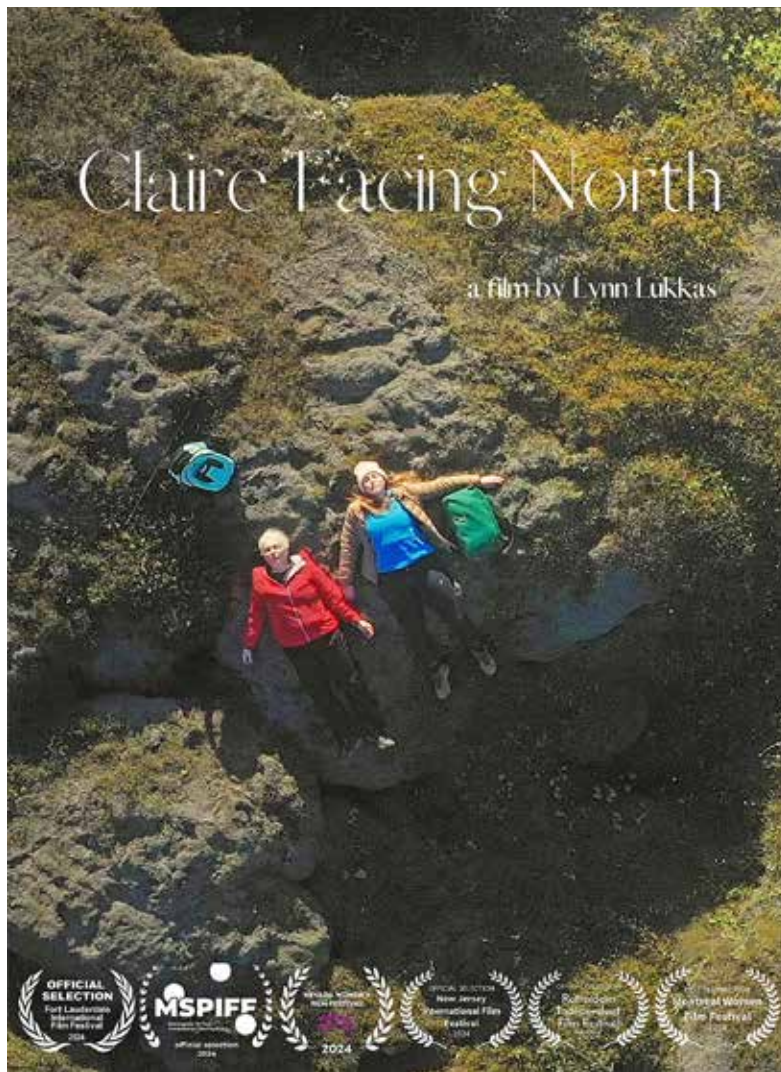
**Monday, Nov 11, 7pm, Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Two-time EMMY® award winner Salvatore "Vincent De Paul" Zannino is a director, producer, and actor. De Paul- Zannino's prolific career spans three decades starting with his first feature film "HAIRSPRAY" directed by John Waters. He has appeared on the hit TV shows BLACKLIST, MADAM SECRETARY, The Encounter, and has recurred on THE BAY the series for 9 years. Recently he starred in THE WELDER, LOVE ON THE ROCK, Secret Society 1 & 2. He appeared in IFC's Sundance film winner TESLA with Ethan Hawke. Films to be released this year include God's Not Dead 5: In God we Trust and The Ring of Ikeben. He is the founder of Five Arts Films and supports emerging filmmakers and artists.



**CLAIRE FACING NORTH** *Southeast Premiere*



Iceland / 2024 / 76 min / English / Going-of-Age Drama

Director/Writer: Lynn Tjernan Lukkas; Producers: Lynn Tjernan Lukkas, Peter George Frenz; Cinematography: Eric Schlicher and Lynn Lukkas; Composer: Phil Aaron; Production Designer: Lynn Tjernan Lukkas; Location Sound: Patrick Schaefer; Sound Designer: Jason Almendinger; Cast: Barbra Berlovitz, Annick Dall, Patrick Schaefer, Peter Frenz; Contact: lukkas@umn.edu

Claire returns to Iceland, a place she visited decades earlier, to tend to a difficult task. While on the road she meets Iris, a young aimless hitchhiker, and together they connect and collide as they struggle to come to terms with the realities of their lives.

It is wonderful to see a role this strong and independent for a woman entering her twilight years. Both actresses are terrific, but the tour de force performance by Barbra Anne Berlovitz is the glue. Lynn Lukkas gets so much out of her cast in this beautiful

**Special Guest:** Lynn Lukkas

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 3pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 3pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Lynn Lukkas’ debut feature film, *Claire Facing North* (2024), premiered at the 2024 Minneapolis/Saint Paul International Film Festival and has shown at the New Jersey Film Festival, the Nevada Women’s Film Festival, and at the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival. She is the recipient of a 2023 Fulbright Fellowship spending six months in the UK conducting research for two upcoming film projects. She has received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the McKnight Foundation, and the Jerome Foundation. She earned an MFA from the Rhode Island School of Design and is a Professor at the University of Minnesota.



**Director's Statement:** *Claire Facing North* is a film that hits to the core emotionally. In this story, Claire’s loss sets her on a trajectory that feels out of her control; she is alone in the world and struggling to survive emotionally. We all go through differing types of intense emotional experiences, the loss of loved ones, feeling cut adrift, and isolation as we age, but these are not the topics of mainstream film today. What gets left out are the emotional realities of life, which I am interested in as a filmmaker and artist.

**COLOR BOOK** *Florida Premiere*

# Color Book



USA / 2024 / 105 min / English / Drama

Director & Writer: David Fortune; Producers: Kiah Clingman, Kristen Uno, Autumn Bailey-Ford; Cinematography: Nikolaus Summerer; Editor: Oriana Soddu; Composer: Dabney Morris; Production Designer: Mily Moreno; Cast: William Catlett, Jeremiah Alexander Daniels, Teri J. Vaughn, Brandee Evans, Kia Shine, Njema Williams, Deja Dee, Rhonda Johnson Dents, Candy McKellan, Lynne Ashe; Contact: colorbookfilm@gmail.com

Throughout their day-long trip, they encounter Murphy's Law. From car breakdowns to missed trains, the duo faces a series of obstacles that test their relationship with each other. Despite the setbacks, they persevere, determined to reach the game. Together, Lucky and Mason learn that healing does not await them at the mountaintop, but can be found with every step along the path. "Color Book" provides an intimate portrait of a father and son while exploring the experiences of raising a child with Down syndrome, highlighting the strength and resilience that emerge from their bond.

This is one of my favorite films of FLIFF39. Of special note, this is the debut performance of Jeremiah Alexander Daniels, who portrays Mason. So honored to have COLOR BOOK in our Official Program.

**Special Guest:** David Fortune

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 7pm,  
Lauderhill Performing Arts Ctr**

**Sponsored by Philip & Jennifer Verde**



Thanks to the generosity of Sunshine411, tickets for the Nov 13th screening will be FREE. Get them at the door. A FREE pre-film reception for all ticket holders.

**Director:** A graduate of Morehouse College's CTEMS program and Loyola Marymount University's School of Film and Television, David Fortune, has been selected into numerous directing fellowships such as the Village Roadshow Emerging Talent Program, Indeed/Hillman Grad's Rising Voices Program, Netflix/Film Independent Amplifier Fellowship, and ViacomCBS - ViewFinders Directors Program where he shadow-directed two episodes of Netflix's 13 Reasons Why. In addition, David participated in the Netflix Content Creator's Program to direct his film, "Us" and premiered his short "Shoebox" at the Tribeca Film Festival. David was named the winner of the Tribeca - AT&T Untold Stories Program where he was awarded 1 million dollars to direct his first feature film, "Color Book". As a writer and director, David's creative vision centers on normalizing narratives of compassion and intimacy within inner-city environments. Through the art of visual storytelling and cinema, he aims to illuminate communities often overlooked and hidden in darkness.



**Director's Statement:** COLOR BOOK addresses numerous topics from Black masculinity to disabilities, but the essence of our story is about a father and his son. Ultimately, COLOR BOOK is a love letter to a community often overlooked and whose stories remain untold. Through our film, we aspire to capture the essence of their lives in a beautiful story that resonates with us all. This is why I create images.

**COMANDANTE** *Southeast Premiere*



Italy / 2024 / 120 min / Italian & Flemish with English subtitles / True Suspense Drama

Director: Edoardo de Angelis; Writers: Sandro Veronesi, Edoardo de Angelis; Producers: Edoardo De Angelis, Attilio De Razza, Nicola Giuliano, Pierpaolo Verga, Paolo Del Brocco, Francesca Cima, Carlotta Calori, Viola Prestieri; Cinematographer: Ferran Paredes Rubio; Editor: Lorenzon Peluso; Composer: Robert Del Naja; Cast: Pierfrancesco Favino, Massimiliano Rossi, Johan Heldenbergh, Silvia D’Amico, Arturo Muselli, Giuseppe Brunetti, Gianluca Di Gennaro, Johannes Wirix, Pietro Angelini, Mario Russo, Cecilia Bertozzi, Paolo Bonacelli; Contact: mike@darkstarpics.com

At the start of WWII, Salvatore Todaro commands the Italian Royal Navy submarine Cappellini. One dark night in October 1940, while navigating in the Atlantic, he comes upon an armed merchant ship sailing without lights. He shoots at the ship and sinks it. The Commander then makes a decision that was destined to go down in history.

It is most unusual to see films depicting the Italian Navy during World War II, even more so with a story surrounding a submarine crew (name another). Edoardo de Angelis captures the loneliness in a haunting ethereal fashion that is frightening. This true story stars Italy’s Pierfrancesco Favino, who over the past five years has appeared in more FLIFF films than any actor from any country.

**Friday, Nov 8, 7pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Sunday, Nov 10, 5pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Edoardo De Angelis was born on 31 August 1978 in Naples, Campania, Italy. He is a writer and director, known for *Indivisible* (2016), *The Vice of Hope* (2018) and *Perez*. (2014). He is married to Pina Turco. They have one child.

**Director's Statement:** I wanted to make a film about strength. I was irritated by the way in which strength is often portrayed in relation to oppression and violence. Todaro represents another idea of strength, of an individual holding out their hand to the defenseless.



There was also another theme related to the questions I’ve asking myself about what it means to be Italian.

We’re a nation made up of people of all different origins, but in recent years, an idea has emerged that being Italian is somehow a privilege and an identity that is not open to others. I don’t agree with this. A nation born as a melting pot should be welcoming to others.

## THE COMPATRIOTS *Southeast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 94 min / English / LGBTQ+ Comedy Romance

Director & Writer: Spencer Cohen; Producers: Jennifer Potts, Sara Robin, Victoria Hersey, Alberto Sayan; Cinematography: Ben Heald; Composer: Sergio Torres-Letelier; Cast: Rafael Silva, Denis Shepherd, Caroline Portu, Dakota Lustick, Alfredo Huereca; Contact: spencerc@thecompatriotsfilm.com

Javi, an undocumented immigrant facing imminent deportation, unexpectedly reunites with his long-lost best friend, Hunter, a vivacious bachelor seeking deeper connections. Together, they embark on a heartfelt journey to prevent Javi's expulsion from the only country he has ever called home.

A light-hearted comedy with two serious subplots. Really likable performances by the three leads, Denis Shepherd as Hunter, Rafael Silva as Javi and Caroline Portu as Tracy, win you over. Spencer Cohen puts together a fun romp with just enough obstacles to keep you hopping non-stop from laughs to suspense.

**Special Guest:** Spencer Cohen, Jennifer Potts

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 5pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 11am, Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Spencer Cohen, an award-winning Boston-based filmmaker, is renowned for amplifying unheard voices through his storytelling. His filmmaking journey began in high school, where he made endearingly awkward sketches using his father's old camcorder.

Spencer has held diverse roles in the film industry. He's been a cue card holder for actor Eric Roberts, worked in the art department as a gravedigger for a sci-fi zombie movie, and has significant experience as a film editor and producer.



**Director's Statement:** The film is born from the life of my best friend Alberto (Beto) and his experiences as an undocumented immigrant. Despite our longstanding friendship since middle school, I was unaware of Beto's undocumented status and the constant fear of deportation he lived with until high school. The introduction of DACA in 2012 offered Beto temporary relief from this fear, allowing him to work legally in the US.

However, in 2016, when DACA's existence was threatened, Beto and I half-jokingly considered marriage as a desperate solution. It was a stark reminder that Beto, as American as myself, faced the possibility of being sent back to a country he barely remembered. This period of uncertainty and anxiety led me to begin writing "The Compatriots," not only as a personal outlet but also to spark conversation about immigration issues.

Through learning about Dreamers – undocumented Americans brought here as children – I realized the depth of their predicament: trapped in a system offering no clear path to citizenship. This film became a personal mission to shed light on the struggles of approximately 3.6 million people in the US who, despite being integral parts of American society, live in constant fear of deportation.

Despite widespread support for granting Dreamers permanent status, political action remains elusive. This film questions whether the lack of progress is due to the issue's low priority in political agendas or a lack of personal connection among most Americans.

"The Compatriots" aims to bridge this gap. While the character of Javi, loosely based on Beto, differs in many aspects, he represents the everyday challenges faced by undocumented individuals. My hope is for the audience to see Javi as a friend, to empathize with his plight, and to be inspired to advocate for policy changes that provide security and permanence for the millions like him in this country.

Lastly, reflecting on my own heritage as a descendant of immigrants who fled antisemitism in the 1920s, I recognize the importance of America's identity as a nation of immigrants. "The Compatriots" is a tribute to this heritage and a call to support all who seek a better life on these shores.



**CONCEIVABLE** *Second Look Screening*

## conceivable



USA / 2024 / 114 min / English / Drama

Directors: Beth Caulfield, Jana Lee Hamblin; Writer: Beth Caulfield / Producers: Beth Caulfield, Jason Campbell; Cast: Jana Lee Hamblin, Eddie McClintock, Daniel Roebuck, Dean Cain, Barbara Ryan; Contact: rev.bethcaulfield1@gmail.com

A 45-year-old Christian minister finds herself in an unplanned pregnancy.

**Special Guest:** Barbara Ryan, Beth Caulfield, Jana Lee Hamblin

**Sunday, Nov 10, 5:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by Barbara Ryan**

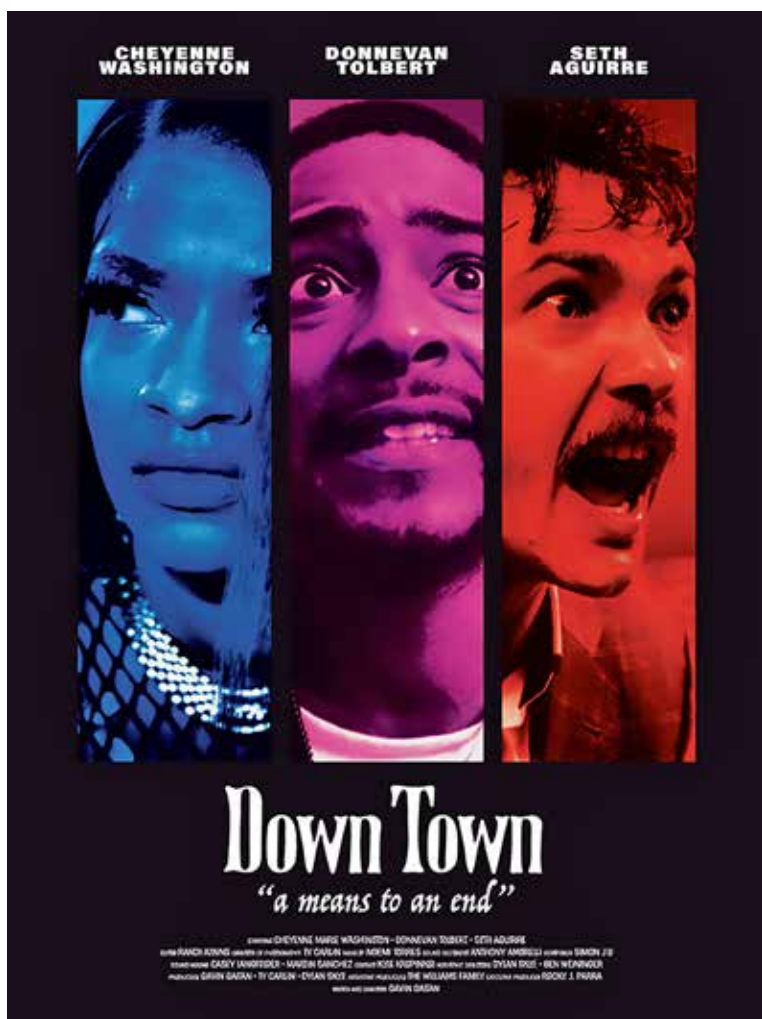


**Directors:** Rev. Beth Caulfield is an ordained Methodist minister, Beth has shared faith-based stories for over twenty-five years. Her BA from UPENN's Annenberg School of Communications, MDIV from Drew Theological School and Fortune 50 corporate background also inform her filmmaking. She follows God's call to creating faith-based films understanding that movies profoundly influence people and culture.

**Director's Statement:** I saw a need for more faith-based stories that are told by women about women and are more multicultural. I also saw a need for upgrading the quality of Christian movies, both with scripts that are more compelling and theologically challenging and for films with greater cinematic creativity and higher production value.



**DOWN TOWN** *World Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 85 min / English / Dark Action Comedy  
 Director & Writer: Gavin Jeffrey Gaitan; Producers: Gavin Jeffrey Gaitan, Ty Carlin, Dylan Skye, Benjamin Weininger; Cinematography: Ty Carlin; Editor: Randi Atkins; Composer: Simon J. Li; Production Designer: India Bey; Cast: Cheyenne Marie Washington, Donnevan Tolbert, Seth Aguirre, Arthur Roberts, George Finfera, Dylan Vox, Glamorous Monique, D.T. Carney, Ben Solenberger, Timothy Waldron, Mark Aaron, Blake Rosier; Contact: gavin.gaitan@gmail.com

"Down Town" is an action comedy that follows the stories of T-Mo - the hustler, Hunny - the prostitute, and Jerry - the junkie, over the course of 24 hours in the criminal underbelly of Downtown Los Angeles.

A clever fast-moving farce with suspense, thrills, and laughs. Emerging filmmaker, Gavin Jeffrey Gaitan, has created a cool calling card for his next feature, displaying oodles of talent and creativity.

**Special Guests:** Gavin Jeffrey Gaitan, Ty Carlin, Benjamin Weininger

**Saturday, Nov 9, 3pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Sunday, Nov 10, 7:30, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by Bill Mountjoy**

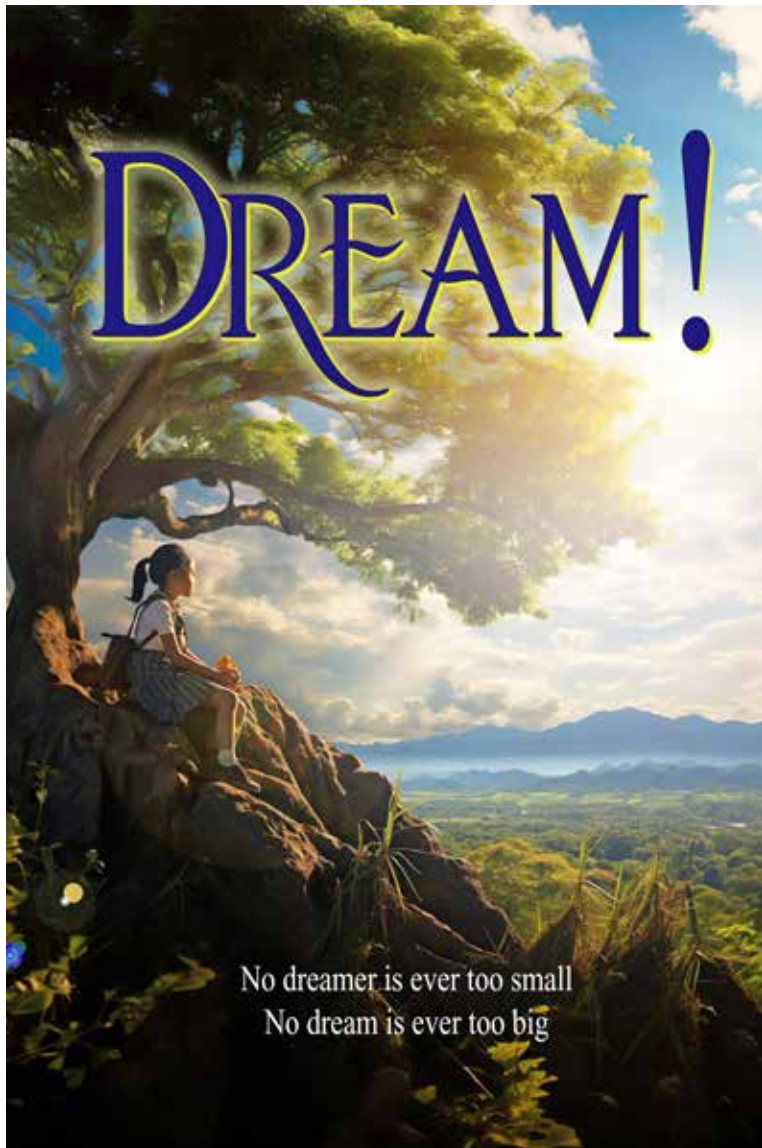


**Director:** Gavin is a Los Angeles-based indie feature film writer, producer, and director. Graduated Cal State Long Beach in 2019 with a major in Narrative Film Production - Directing, and a minor in Political Science. He has written, produced, and directed three self-financed indie features.

**Director's Statement:** I wanted explore the crazy characters, wild escapades, and borderline post-apocalyptic (and very real) cityscape of modern Downtown LA in our absurdist, hilarious, balls-to-the-wall action-comedy "Down Town."



**DREAM!** North American Premiere



Thailand / 2024 / 135 min / Mainly English + a very little bit of Siamese / a musical between ANNIE and OLIVER

Director: Paul Spurrier; Producers: David Allen Cluck, Jiriya Spurrier; Cinematographer: Paul Spurrier; Composer: Mickey Wongsathapornpat; Cast: Vithaya Pansringarm, Sahajak Boonthanakit, Manatsanun Phanlerdwongsakul, Pongsanart Vinsiri, Adam Kaokept, Chayaphan Chawachart, Marinlada Tansatcha, Victoria Woodman, Phathitsanut Kammaraphat, Chomphupak Poonpol, Ariyataj Tharnangraksat, Kathaya Chongprasith, Minnada Pornjaroenchaisilp; Contact: davidcluck@gmail.com

When a young girl from rural Thailand is tragically orphaned, she heads on an epic journey across the country in search of a new family. Featuring Thailand's top musical talent, this is an homage to the classical Hollywood musical.

FLIFF is proud to present this North American Premiere of this epic, sweet, lovable, thrilling film. Kids and adults will be fascinated by the young talent, the beauty of Thailand and the scope of this motion picture.

**Special Guest:** Paul Spurrier, David Allen Cluk

**Sunday, Nov 17, 12:30pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Sponsored by**



**Director:** Paul began his career in film as a child actor, working alongside Richard Burton, Richard Harris, Roger Moore, Sir John Mills and many others. He dropped out of USC film school, returning to London to take a more technical approach at the London Film School. After film school, he formed a company that made marketing videos for a number of brands including Pizza Hut, Blockbuster Video, Intel, and IBM. Paul directed his first film 'Underground' in 1998, which was selected as one of the contemporary British films as part of the controversial 'Sensations' exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. When a job for the BBC took Paul to Thailand, he fell in love with the country. In 2004, Paul fulfilled an ambition to become the first 'western' director of a Thai language film with 'P'. He spent an increasing amount of time in Thailand, and has been based in Bangkok full-time since 2005.



**THE EDITORIAL OFFICE** *North American Premiere*



Ukraine / 2024 / 127 min / Ukrainian with English subtitles / Dark Comedy

Director: Roman Bondarchuk; Writers: Roman Bondarchuk, Dar'ya Averchenko, Alla Tyutyunnik; Producers: Darya Bassel, Dar'ya Averchenko; Cinematographer: Nikon Romanchenko; Composer: Anton Baibakov; Featuring: Dmytro Bahnenko, Zhanna Ozirna, Rimma Zyubina, Andrii Kyrylchuk, Oleksandr Shmal, Vasiliy Kukharskiy, Maksym Kurochkin, Aleksandr Gannochenko, Serhii Ivanov; Contact: daryabassel@gmail.com

In the wild steppes of southern Ukraine, a young nature researcher named Yura Is looking for an endangered species of groundhog but instead witnesses a crime. Eager to expose the truth, Yura takes his photo evidence to the local newspaper's editorial office. However, he quickly realizes that nobody there cares about pursuing justice. While a big war is looming over the horizon, Yura's naive worldview is splintering in a storm of fake news, rigged political elections, and mysterious cult rituals. On his quest, the hero is about to find out who he really is—an endangered species of a good man or just a loser?

**Sunday, Nov 10, 1:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 12:45pm, Cinema Paradiso Hollywood**

Sponsored by **UKRAINIAN FILMS USA**



**Director:** A graduate of Kyiv National University of Theater, Cinema, and Television, Roman has directed short films, documentaries, music videos and the feature film *Volcano* (2018), which premiered at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, screened at more than 50 festivals worldwide (including FLIFF), and won 12 awards, including the Shevchenko National Prize, the highest state prize of Ukraine for works of culture and the arts.



Roman's feature-length documentary *Ukrainian Sheriffs* won the Special Jury Prize at International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam (IDFA) in 2015, Grand Prix of the IDFF Docs against Gravity, and was selected as the Ukrainian submission to the Academy Awards for Best Foreign Language Film. His second documentary, *Dixie Land* (2016), premiered at the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival in the USA and received a Golden Duke Award for Best Ukrainian Film at the Odesa International Film Festival.

Roman also works as an art director of the DocuDays UA International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival and has been a member of the selection committee for the Ukrainian submissions to the Academy Awards since 2019.

**Director's Statement:** For me, cinema is a way of exploring the world. I've always been fascinated by and drawn to the south of Ukraine, which is not so well-described in literature or film; it's a sort of no man's land between Crimea and mainland Ukraine.

I grew up there. I grew up in a family of journalists in the '90s. The reality was quite grotesque and I grew up with it, witnessing how news could be created, invented. I always wanted to make a film about this news cycle in the Ukrainian provinces.

*The Editorial Office* is a metaphor, full of modern myths and obscurities, but it also shows real things that happened to real people. The people who made it and acted in it have a connection to the place and the past of southern Ukraine. They were all affected by the chaos before the war.

Many of the places we filmed no longer exist. They were destroyed, flooded, or burned down. The fates of many people in the film are unknown. Some left the country with their families; some turned out to be collaborators and fled to Russia. But most chose to stay and resist the invaders.

**EVERYTHING HAS LED TO THIS** *Florida Premiere*

Miami-Dade / 2023 / 93 min / English & Spanish with English subtitles / Drama

Director & Writer: Manuel Delgado; Producers: Mabel Leyva, Daniel Lago, David Liz ; Cinematography & Editor: Daniel Lago; Cast: Amelia Gonzalez, Charlotte Delgado, Mabel Leyva, Kyran Wright, Sofia Salgado; Contact: mannydel1985@yahoo.com

Teenage years can be particularly harrowing. Kids from broken families have even more stress to negotiate. Katherine and Monica, two Cuban-American sisters living in 1990s Miami, deal with the trials and tribulations of growing up.



Manuel Delgado has written a script that is a significant slice of life, capturing the hopes, fears and insecurities of kids experiencing peer pressure, school, traumatic homelife and simply existing. Kudos to his young cast for bringing his words to life in such an honest, not always flattering fashion.

**Special Guests:** Manuel Delgado + Cast & Crew

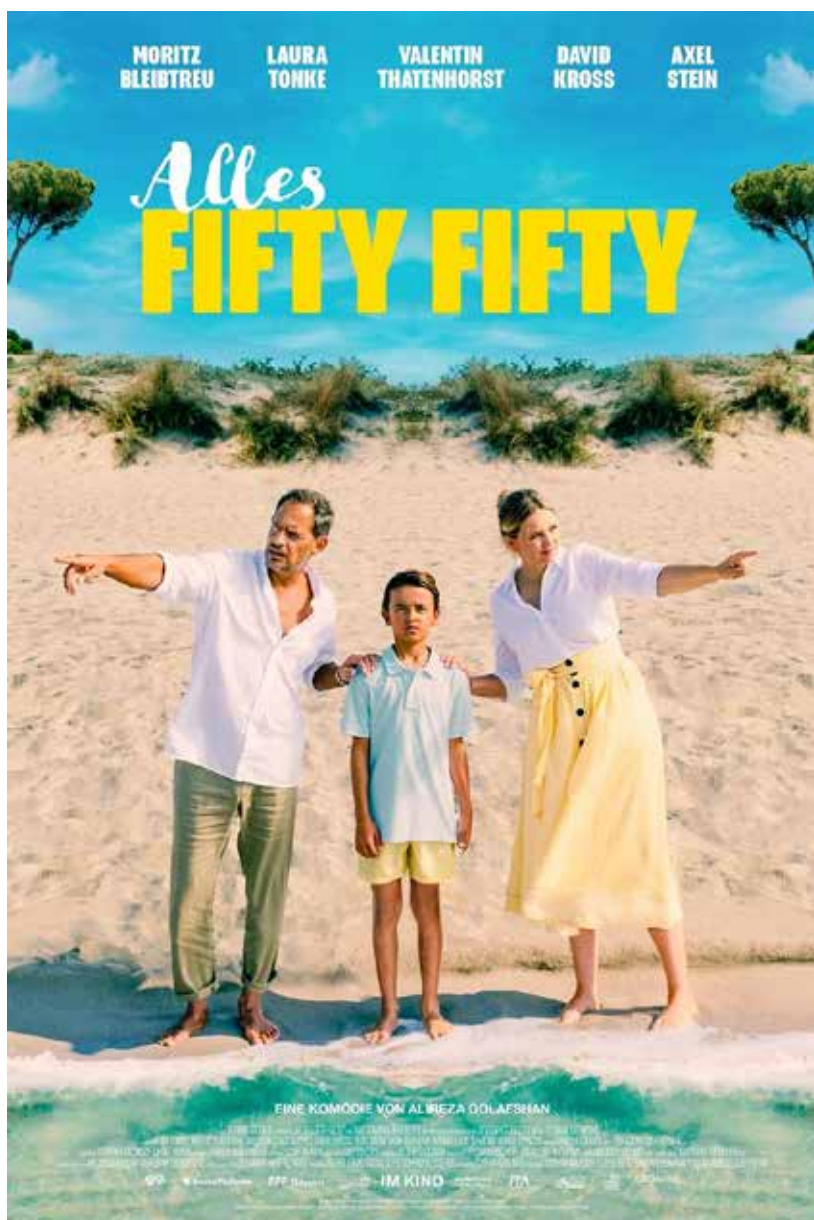
**Saturday, Nov 9, 3pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Manuel Delgado was born and raised in Miami, FL, the son of Cuban and Colombian immigrants. His previous credits include the feature film *The Welder* (which he co-wrote and produced) and the short film "Burden." His favorite films include *Ugetsu*, *Persona*, *Dazed and Confused*, and *Brighter Summer Day*.



**EVERYTHING'S FIFTY-FIFTY** *U.S. Premiere*



Germany / 2024 / 112 min / German with English subtitles / Comedy

Director: Alireza Golafshan; Writers: Moritz Binder, Alireza Golafshan; Producer: Quirin Berg, Justyna Müsch, Sofie Scherz-Fleischer, Max Wiedemann; Cinematographer: Matthias Fleischer; Production Designer: Josef Brandl; Cast: Moritz Bleibtreu, Laura Tonke, Valentin Thatenhorst, David Kross, Axel Stein; Contact: Yuan@picturetree-international.com

Marion and Andi are divorced but consider themselves to be exemplary parents. However, a joint vacation reveals some alarming cracks in their parenting. The uncompromising couple now has to work together to patch things up and become a family again.

*Don't take your love away from me  
Don't you leave my heart in misery  
If you go then I'll be blue  
'Cause breaking up is hard to do.*

**Thursday, Nov 14, 2:30pm,  
Cinema Paradiso Hollywood**

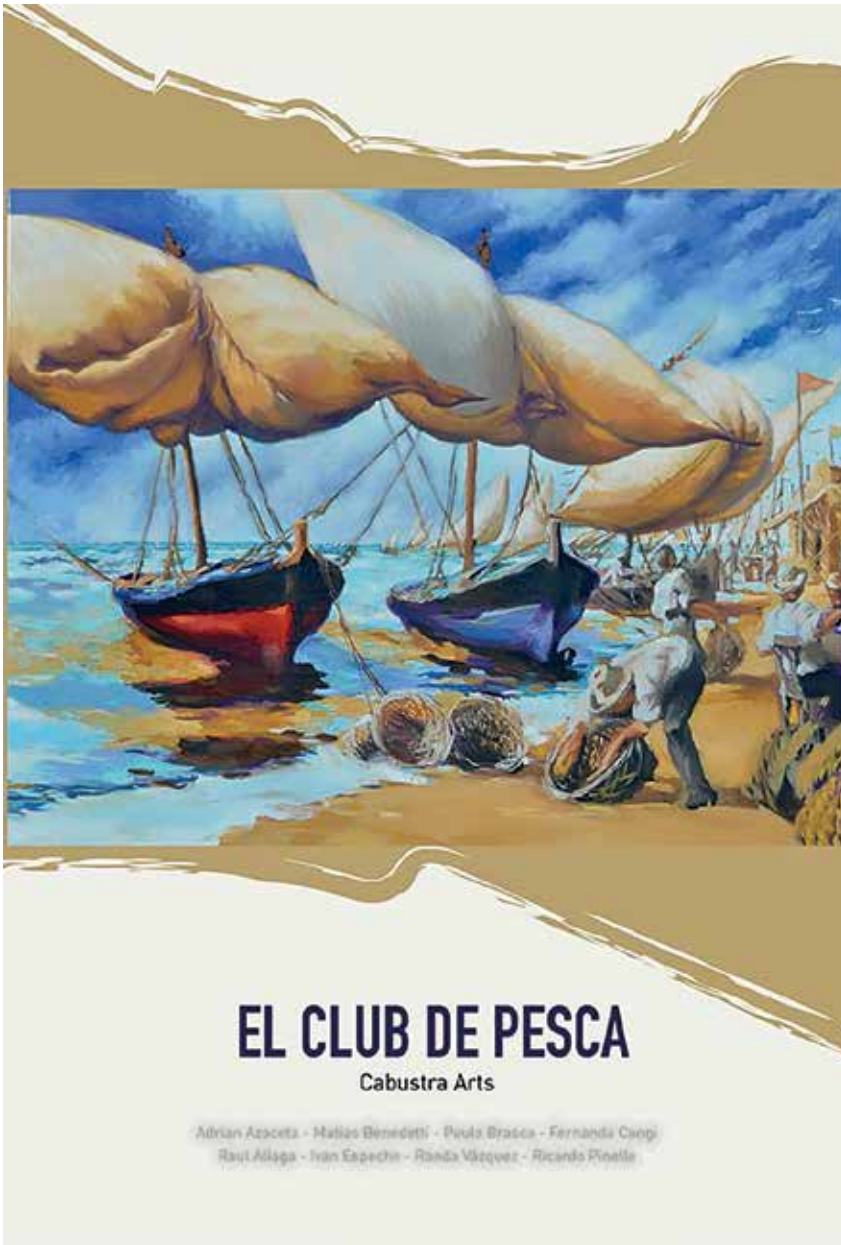
**Saturday, Nov 16, 1pm,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Alireza Golafshan was born in Tehran in 1986. He and his family immigrated to Germany in 1998. He studied philosophy and art history in Hamburg prior to enrolling at the University of Television and Film Munich (HFF). After making several short films, he directed his first feature film, *THE GOLDFISH*, in 2019, then his second film, *JGA: JASMIN. GINA. ANNA*, in 2022. *EVERYTHING'S FIFTY FIFTY* earned him the Bavarian Film Award in 2024.



## THE FISHING CLUB (El Club de Pesca) *U.S. Premiere*



Argentina / 2024 / 94 min / Spanish with English subtitles / Suspense Drama with Comedy

Director: Gastón Horacio Revol Molina;  
Producers: Julieta Sanchez Ananes;  
Cinematography: Marcos Navarro; Editor: Federico Carabajal Nunez, Paula Brasca, Matias Benedetti, Fernanda Cangí, Raul Aliaga, Ronda Vazquez, Ivan Especi Gil, Ricardo Pinelle, Andrea Charras; Cast: Adrian Azaceta; Contact: grevol@gmail.com

Rodrigo and Valentina are in a marriage crisis. The husband is in a severe economic crisis in the real estate company he inherited from his father. By chance, the wife becomes aware that the maid who works in their house has in her possession an old painting of Joaquín Sorolla, the Spanish artist. A painting of great economic value. Rodrigo and Valentina immerse themselves in an odyssey of deception and deceit in a quest to get that painting.

Molina has made a great flim flam film filled with laughs and surprises.

**Special Guest:** Gatón Horacio Revol Molina

**Friday, Nov 8, 1:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 5:30,  
Savor Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 7pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** *Gastón is a producer, writer, director and founder of Lupa Producciones and Cabustra Arts.*

*Since the year 2015 he has produced short and feature films with international trajectory.*

*EL CLUB DE PESCA is his first feature.*



**FLOW** Southeast Premiere



Latvia / 2023 / 84 min / No Dialogue / Animation  
Adventure Family

Director: Gints Zilbalodis; Writers: Gints Zilbalodis, Matiss Kaza; Producers: Gints Zilbalodis, Matiss Kaza, Ron Dyens, Gregory Zalcman; Cinematographer & Editor: Gints Zilbalodis; Composer: Gints Zilbalodis; Contact: caroline@sideshowpictures.com

The world seems to be coming to an end, teeming with the vestiges of a human presence. Cat is a solitary animal, but as its home is devastated by a great flood, he finds refuge on a boat populated by various species, and will have to team up with them despite their differences. In the lonesome boat sailing through mystical overflowed landscapes, they navigate the challenges and dangers of adapting to this new world.

**Awards & Nominations:** Cannes Un Certain Regard - Official Program

**Anecy International Animation Festival:** Won Best Feature Audience Award; Best Original Music; Best Feature Jury Award

**Guadalajara International Film Festival:** Won Best Animated Feature

**Melbourne International Film Festival:** Nominated Bright Horizon Award

**Ottawa International Film Festival:** Nominated Grand Prize.

**Monday, Nov 11, 7pm,  
Savor Cinema**

A reception for all ticket holders starts at 6pm in the John Mager Courtyard.

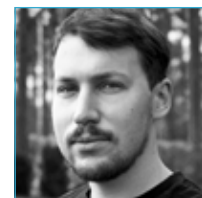
Ticket proceeds benefit PURRR

**Sponsored by Tanya Heller and**



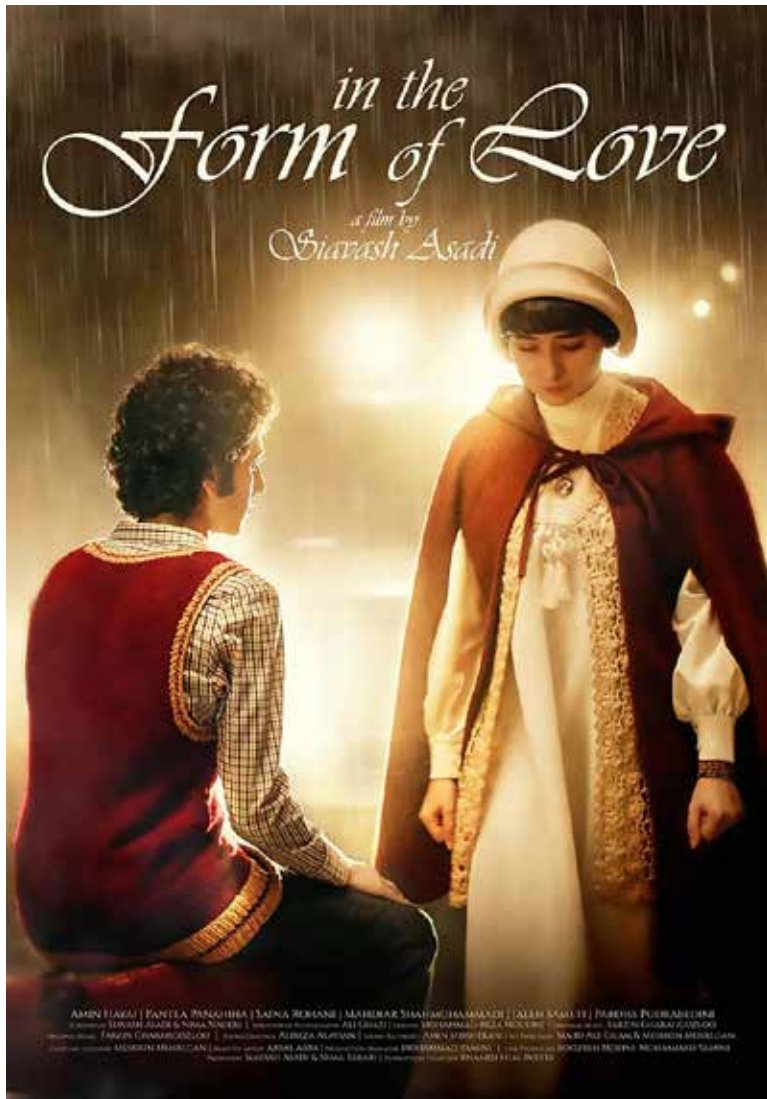
**Director:** Gints Zilbalodis is a Latvian filmmaker and animator best known for *Away* (2019) which won the Contrechamp Award at the Anecy Film Festival. He focuses on 3D animation with comprehensive camera movements and sprawling environments. His latest animated feature *Flow* (2024) has been selected for the Un Certain Regard section at the Cannes Film Festival and the Main Competition at Anecy Film Festival.

**Director's Statement:** Unlike most animated films we didn't use any storyboards. Instead, I would create a 3D environment and place the characters in them and explore them with the camera. This is necessary because in *Flow* there are many very long and complicated shots in which the camera moves through the space which would be impossible to draw in storyboards. In the animatic process I can explore many ideas. It's like a mix of cinematography, production design and editing. Everything is quite rough and unpolished, but still you can see if the film is working or not. This was the first time working with a team for me so I had to learn many new skills. Before, if I had an idea, I had to figure out how to make it myself, but now I had to articulate it to the team. This was challenging at times, but also very gratifying when ideas were evolving through collaboration. Most of our crew were quite young and passionate and eager to prove themselves.





**IN THE FORM OF LOVE** *East Coast Premiere*



Iran / 2024 / 120 min / Persian with English subtitles / Period Drama

Director: Siavash Asadi; Screenplay: Siavash Asadi, Nima Naderi; Producers: Siavash Asadi, Nima Tabari; Cinematography: Ali Ghazi; Editor: Mohammad-Reza Moeini; Composer: Farzin Gharahgozloo Sound Designer: Alireza Alavian; Sound Recordist - Amin Mirshekari; Production Design: Majid Ali-Eslam & Meshkin Mehregan; Costume Design: Meshkin Mehregan; Make-Up: Abbas Abbasi; Production Manager: Mohammad Yamini; Line Producers - Roozbeh Moeini, Mohammad Yamini; Cast: Amin Hayai, Pantea Panahiha, Saina Rohani, Mahdiar Shahmohammadi, Jaleh Sameti, Pardiss Pourabedini; Contact: [intheformoflove@gmail.com](mailto:intheformoflove@gmail.com)

On the heels of an unexpected trauma, Forough and her 16-year-old daughter, Atieh, go to seek sanctuary with Rassoul, an old friend of Atieh's dead father.

In the full throes of adolescent puberty and yearning for love, Kamran, Rassoul's 14-year-old son, is instinctively drawn to Atieh. Little does he know that his father has hatched a plan that will shatter their lives.

Siavash Asadi has created a beautiful story of love, long kept secrets and parenthood. Add to this his accomplished filmmaking with beautiful cinematography, art direction and music – and you have an exquisite motion picture.

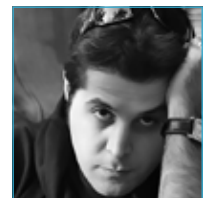
**Special Guest:** Siavash Asadi

**Saturday, Nov 9, 9pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 3pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Siavash is an Iranian director/writer and was born in 1983. Among his films are: *Darkhughah* (2016); *Pocket on South Street* (2010); *Around the Highway* (2008).



**HERE'S YIANNI!** *World Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 101 min / English / Bittersweet Dramey

Director & Screenwriter: Christina Eliopoulos; Producers: Valerie McCaffrey, Jason Jallet, Colleen Camp, Joe Cortese; Cinematography: Russell Swanson; Composer: Forrest Gray; Cast: Joe Cortese, Julia Ormond, Kevin Pollak, Rosanna Arquette, Eric Roberts, Sofia Vassilieva, Colleen Camp, Baylen Bielitz, Rebecca Mozo, Federico Parra, Gene Silvers, George Pappas, Alex Paez, Stephen Badalamenti; Contact: nancy@cinemacollet.com

Yianni and Plousia own a charming family diner by the beach, where Yianni is a convivial host. Lately, Plousia has noticed that her husband of 40 years is not quite himself and is often wistfully distracted.

The film is a wonderful combination of comedy, drama and reality setting in. The cast includes Joe Cortese (GREEN BOOK, AMERICAN HISTORY X), Julia Ormond (SABRINA, MY WEEK WITH MARILYN, THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON, SMILLA'S SENSE OF SNOW, FIRST KNIGHT), Kevin Pollak (THE USUAL SUSPECTS, A FEW GOOD MEN, THE WHOLE TEN YARDS), Rosanna Arquette (DESPERATELY SEEKING SUSAN, PULP FICTION, AFTER HOURS), Eric Roberts (POPE OF GREENWICH VILLAGE, STAR 80, RUNAWAY TRAIN), and Sofia Vassilieva (Medium, and last year's LISSA'S TRIP at FLIFF).

**Special Guests:** Christina Eliopoulos, Joe Cortese, Kevin Pollak, Sofia Vassilieva

**Saturday, Nov 9, 5pm, Savor Cinema**

**Wednesday, Nov. 13, 1:30pm, Gateway**

**Sponsored by:**



**Co-Sponsored by:**



**Director:** Christina Eliopoulos is a writer-director and first-generation Greek-American born in the fabled Asbury Park, New Jersey, exploring a mythic, fractured Americana in each project she creates.

Christina has directed and produced two documentary features, *Demon On Wheels* and *Greetings From Asbury Park*, and several documentary shorts, brand films, and commercials. She is the co-writer and co-creator of *Old Made Men* (in development) and the supernatural drama *The Schaduwen* (in development). Next on her slate is the narrative feature film *Motherland*, which Christina will direct from her own screenplay.



Christina was a finalist in the Academy Nicholl Screenwriting Competition for her script "King Of Florida," which also won 1st Place in the Family/Animated genre in the Final Draft Big Break Screenwriting Contest.

**Director's Statement:** *HERE'S YIANNI!* is inspired by the story of my Greek parents, two nearly penniless dreamers who immigrated from their homeland and fell in love on the boardwalk of Asbury Park, NJ.

One day, in the course of my father's battle with dementia, he imagined himself to be Johnny Carson. My Mom, his first love, was celebrated as a "special guest star" on the show that played in his mind. She happily played along in a chair beside him as he would interview her. Mom and I often wondered if the "show" was a kind of storehouse for his fading memories or if creating the show somehow soothed his fractured mind

## ★ SPECIAL GUESTS ★

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### **JOE CORTESE**

Joe Cortese is in the Oscar-winning *Green Book* opposite Viggo Mortensen. He played Roger Stone in the Roger Ailes mini-series, *The Loudest Voice* starring Russell Crowe, and also took on the role of Giorgio Armani in the true crime anthology, *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*.

Cortese first came on the scene in the 1976 cult classic *The Death Collector* costarring Joe Pesci. Over the next 4 decades Cortese has established himself as an actor/writer. Some of his films included starring roles in *Windows* with Talia Shire, *Monsignor* which he starred with Christopher Reeve, and *American History X* starring Edward Norton from Warner Brothers. Cortese also starred

in *Against The Ropes* with Meg Ryan and Kerry Washington, and *Ruby* with Danny Aiello.

Cortese starred in *Go Go Tales*, with Willem Dafoe and Bob Hoskins at The Cannes Film Festival (World Premiere) and later that year at the New York Film Festival (US Premiere). Cortese won The Best Actor Award from The New York Hip Hop Film Festival for his starring role as Spencer Spector in the comedy, *Shut Up And Shoot* and also starred in *You Got Nothin'* as Big Tommy.

Other performances include roles in *Malevolence* portraying a character based on James Earl Ray, *Lucky Town* with James Cann and Kirsten Dunst, and *The Shipment* with Matthew Modine and Elizabeth Berkley. He also received kudos for his role as Johnny Roselli in HBO's *The Rat Pack*. Also starred as Vito Lazio in *The Bronx Bull*



### **KEVIN POLLACK**

Kevin Elliot Pollak is an actor, comedian, impressionist and podcast host. He has appeared in over 90 films; his roles include Sam Weinberg in Rob Reiner's *A Few Good Men*, Jacob Goldman in *Grumpy Old Men* and its sequel *Grumpier Old Men*; Todd Hockney in *The Usual Suspects*, Phillip Green in Martin Scorsese's *Casino*, and Bobby Chicago in *End of Days*.

From 2016 to 2022, he played a recurring role in *Better Things*. From 2017 to 2023, Pollak was a regular cast member on *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*.

Other roles include *Ricochet*, *The Wedding Planner*. However, he has also played a wide variety of parts, such as a comical brownie in *Willow*, the philandering brother of Sarah Jessica Parker in *Miami Rhapsody*, a criminal in *The Usual Suspects*, a father in *She's All That*, and a gangster in *The Whole Nine Yards*. His most substantial role to date was in *Deterrence*, in which he played the main character, a vice president who must take over for a deceased President and deal with a nuclear crisis. The film was written and directed by Rod Lurie (*THE SENIOR*) and won FLIFF's Best American Indie Award. Pollak appeared in five episodes of the fourth season on Showtime's *Billions*, as Douglas Mason.



### **SOFIA VASSILIEVA**

Sofia Vassilieva can be seen starring opposite Denzel Washington, Jared Leto and Rami Malek in *THE LITTLE THINGS*. She was also a series regular in *LOOKING FOR ALASKA*.

Sofia also shot *SUPERGIRL* for Greg Berlanti; the indie feature *BAD STEPMOTHER*, based on the novel *WICKED STEPMOTHER* by Michael McDowell (*BEETLEJUICE*); *TRAINING DAY* for Jerry Bruckheimer, Antoine Fuqua; as well as *CRIMINAL MINDS: BEYOND BORDERS* opposite Gary Sinise. Last year, she starred as Lissa in *LISSA'S TRIP*, an award winner at FLIFF38.

Sofia received rave reviews for her performance in the gripping feature *MY SISTER'S KEEPER* opposite Cameron Diaz and Alec Baldwin for director Nick Cassavettes as well as in the acclaimed Lifetime feature *CALL ME CRAZY*

**JUNKS & DOLLS** *U.S. Premiere*



Iran / 2023 / 76 min / Persian with English subtitles / Drama

Director: Manijeh Hekmat; Writers: Manijeh Hekmat, Mehrave Ferdosi; Producers: Manijeh Hekmat, Mahshid Ahangarani Farahani; Cinematography: Mohammad Reza Janpanah; Editor: Mostafa Kherghepoosh, Sepehr Mahdavian; Production Designer: Morteza Farbod; Composer: Heydar Sajedi; Costume Design: Nazi Khatami; Cast: Behdokht Valian, Mohammad Valizadegan, Reza Koolagahni, Raja Jafari, Jahan Yaghoubi, Yamna Hosseinzadeh; Contact: kamyar@irimageco.com

A couple is destined to build up their life in the heart of a waste depot in the heart of Iranian north forests. They begin to do different things with the objects they find and to make friends with the other people... but what remains of the people who are determined to fight their nature?

Phenomenal film supported by brilliant performances from Behdokht Valian and Mohammad Valizadegan as wife & husband, setting out to start a new beginning. Despite their obstacles – they share a deep love and caring for each other – which makes for a very sweet film and one of my favorites.

**Monday, Nov 11, 3:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

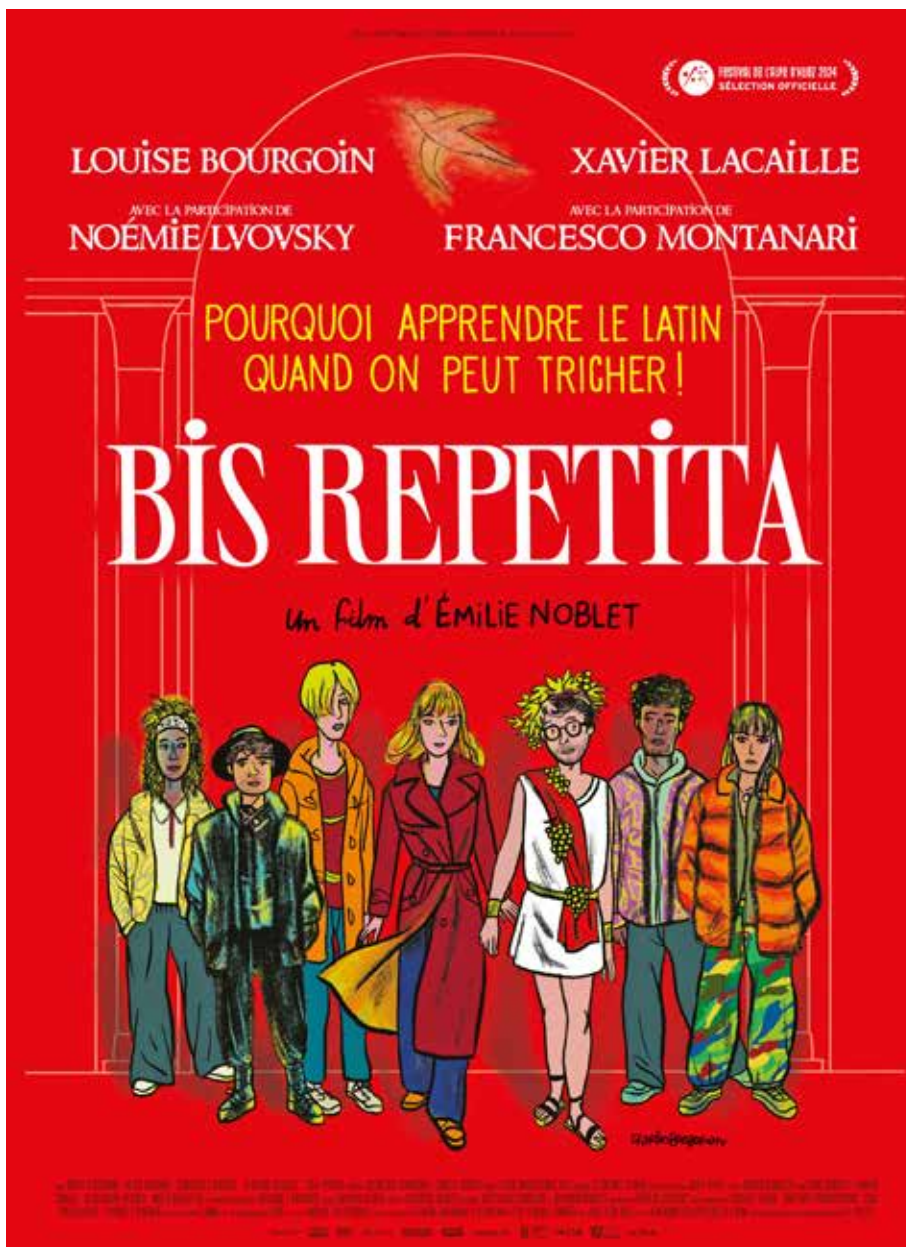
**Wednesday, Nov 13, 1pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Born in 1962, Manijeh Hekmat is one of the prominent figures in political cinema in Iran. In 1995, she started her film career as a producer. In 2002, based on her long studies and field-works, Hekmat directed her debut feature, *WOMEN’S PRISON*, on the situation of Iranian women prisoners. The film premiered in the Venice Film Festival and then entered the festival circuit. In 2007, her second film, *THREE WOMEN*, was shown in more than 80 international film festivals starting with Berlinale. She has also directed a number of documentaries – most notably *NGOS IN IRAN* (2003); *ME, MY ROOM AND MY FRIENDS* (2004); *HUNDRED YEARS PARLIAMENT IN IRAN* (2005); *WOMEN COME OUT OF THE HOUSE* (2006); and *THE LULLABY* (2016). In 2020, despite the festival cancellations, she made a spectacular comeback to the festival circuit with her 4th feature film, *BANDAR BAND*, participating in Toronto, Zurich, Mill Valley, Bosphorous, Hainan, etc. and winning the main award in Kolkata.



**LATIN FOR ALL** *U.S. Premiere*



France-Italy / 2024 / 90 min / French & Italian with English subtitles / Comedy

Director: Émilie Noblet; Writers: Clémence Dargent, Émilie Noblet; Producers: Pascal Caucheteux, Bastien Daret, Arthur Goisset, Mélissa Malinbaum, Robin Robles; Cinematography: Lucie Baudinaud; Music: Julie Roué; Cast: Louise Bourgoïn, Xavier Lacaille, Francesco Montanari, Noémie Lvovsky, Rosie Boccardi, Elias Donada, Alban Roche, Gabrielle Garcia; Contact: Le Pacte

Delphine teaches Latin in high school to a class of 5 lazy students. She made a deal with them at the start of the year: if they keep quiet, they'll all receive A grades without having to learn anything. But this situation is threatened when her class is selected to represent France at the Latin World Championships in Naples...because of their exceptional grades!

To make things worse, the principal's overzealous nephew is chosen to accompany her. To save the Latin section, and above all her comfortable situation, they have no other choice but to win the trophy.

But how can they win when they've never studied a word of Latin? Delphine sees only one solution: cheating!

**Special Guests:** *Emilie Noblet*

*A reception with the filmmakers follows the film.*

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 5pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

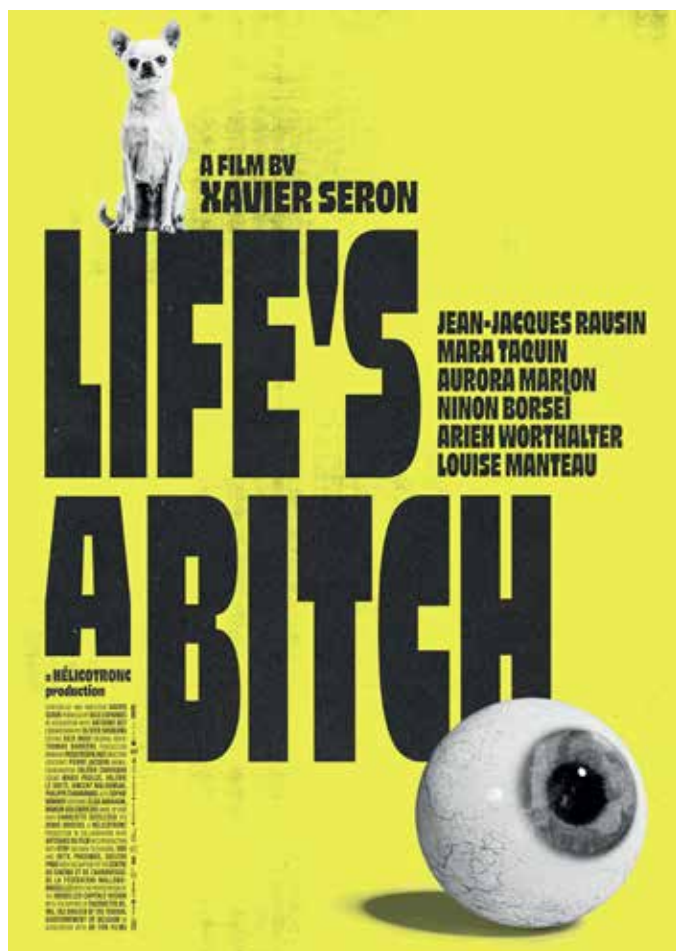
**Sunday, Nov 17, 4pm,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** *Émilie Noblet is known as a Director, Director of Photography, Screenplay, Dialogue, Writer, and Cinematography.*



## LIFE'S A BITCH *East Coast Premiere*



Belgium / 2023 / 91 min / French with English subtitles / Dark Comedy

Director & Writer: Xavier Seron; Producer: Julie Esparbes; Cinematography: Oliver Boonjing; Editor: Julie Naas; Cast: Jean-Jacques Rausin, Mara Taquin, Aurora Marion, Ninon Borsei, Arieh Worthalter, Louise Manteau; Contact: xseron@yahoo.fr Be For Films - Brussels

Man is a dog to man. The worst kind of dog.

LIFE'S A BITCH: 3 dog stories that humorously depict human beings, their loneliness and their search for love.

One of the funniest, perhaps most off the wall, at times sick humor, but hilarious films of the festival. Dog owners will have an extra connection. But warning, not a TV type comedy, be prepared!

**Friday, Nov 8, 9pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Monday, Nov 11, 5pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** After studying law, Xavier joined the Institut des Arts de Diffusion (IAD). Early on, he showed a predilection for dark humor and a certain propensity for shooting in black and white. In 2005, *Rien d'insoluble / Nothing Insoluble*, his graduation film, was selected for the Venice Film Festival. He then directed *Le crabe / The Crab* with Christophe Hermans and co-wrote *En compagnie de la poussière / With the Dust* by Jacques Molitor (Locarno Festival). In 2014, he directed *Dreamcatchers*, a documentary on Belgian wrestlers, with Cédric Bourgeois. From 2011, he worked with Méryl Fortunat-Rossi on several short films: *Mauvaise lune* (nominated for the Magritte du cinéma belge), *L'ours noir / The Black Bear* (250 selections, including Clermont-Ferrand, and some 40 awards, including the Magritte for best fiction short) and *Le plombier / The Plumber* (22 awards, including, once again, the Magritte for best fiction short). With Matthieu Donck, he directed *Les tubes / Worms*. He collaborated on the writing of shorts such as *Kapitalistis* by Pablo Munoz Gomes (nominated for a César and awarded at Locarno), *Tiger* (Alpe d'Huez) and *Vihta* (Jury Special Prize at Clermont-Ferrand) by François Bierry. In 2016, Xavier directed *Je me tue à le dire / Death by Death*, his first feature film. This dark comedy is selected at Karlovy Vary, the FNC in Montreal and Sitges. It won several awards, including the New Voices/New Visions Award at the Palm Springs Film Festival and the Magritte for Best Screenplay and Best Actor. In 2020, he directed a new short entitled *Sprötch/Squish* (nearly a hundred awards and 380 selections, including Clermont-Ferrand). Eligible for the Oscar, *Sprötch* won the Magritte for Best Fiction Short and the European Short Film Audience Award. Xavier has just completed post-production on his 2nd feature: *Chiennes de vies / Life's a Bitch*.



**Director's Statement:** This is not a film about dogs, but about human beings. The dog acts as a prism, revealing the negative side of our society, our relationship with our contemporaries and the world, our own animality (man is a wolf to man), our loneliness, our lack of love and reference points. He gives us a glimpse of the sometimes desolate, surreal, grotesque, delightful, tragic or cruel spectacle of the human comedy.

**LILLY** *Southeast Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 93 min / True Story  
/ English

Director & Writer: Rachel Feldman;  
Producers: Allyn Stewart, Kelly E.  
Ashton, Kerianne Flynn, Jyoti Sarda,  
Simone Pero, J. Todd Harris, Christine  
Schwarzman, Julie Kaufman, Rachel  
Feldman; Cinematographer: Noah  
Greenberg; Editors: Joan Sobel,  
Nancy Richardson; Cast: Patricia  
Clarkson, John Benjamin Hickey,  
Thomas Sadoski; Contact: Rachel\_  
feldman@me.com

LILLY is a poor, Alabama tire factory worker whose singular goal is to lift her family into the middle class. Toward that goal, she endures a dehumanizing work environment, plagued by pervasive harassment, for the sake of that paycheck. But as retirement approaches, Lilly makes a startling revelation; for twenty years the company has been paying her only half of what her male counterparts receive. Outraged, Lilly's fight for justice takes her all the way to the Supreme Court and the power corridors of Congress. With a heart-stirring love story at its center, LILLY follows the transformation of an ordinary citizen into the face of an issue, illuminating the personal cost of activism.



**Special Guest:** Rachel Feldman

**Saturday, Nov 16, 7:15pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by:**

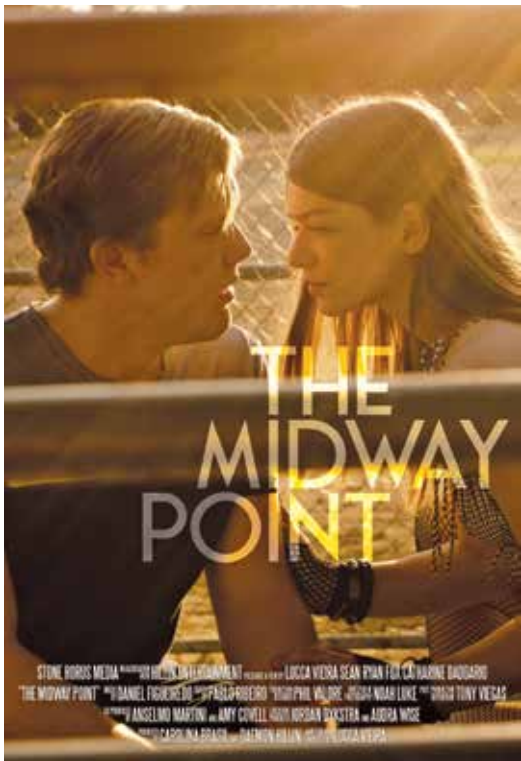


**Director:** Rachel Feldman is a veteran television director who has directed dramas for ABC, CBS, NBC, MGM, Amazon, Syfy and Lifetime, most recently the pilot and first season of the Netflix hit, "The Baxters," as well as multiple episodes of "Blue Bloods," "The Rookie" and "Criminal Minds." Devoted to mastering the tapestry of skills required to transform ideas into emotional experiences, Feldman knew at a very young age that she wanted to make movies and with the help of many extraordinary colleagues, she just achieved that goal. LILLY is her first feature film. Feldman is also an activist for gender equity in Hollywood. Google her TedX Talk and her articles. Feldman is former chair of the Directors Guild of American Women's Steering Committee. You can follow her @WomenCallAction.



**Director's Statement:** I first saw Lilly Ledbetter speak on television at the 2008 Democratic Convention and I was immediately gripped with the idea of transforming her story into a movie. Women all over the world are underestimated and discriminated against. Even in my own professional experience as a director in Hollywood, I've encountered shameful levels of exclusion. I was compelled to tell a personal story of an ordinary woman who takes extraordinary action - not just for herself but for others. In this moment, on our planet, we must be courageous to speak out for justice, to speak truth to power. I'm honored to tell Lilly's story and I hope we inspire people all over the world who will see themselves in her and muster the courage to do the right thing.

# THE MIDWAY POINT



Broward / 2024 / 87 min / English / Drama

Director & Writer: Lucca Vieira; Producers: Carolina Brasil, Daemon Hillin; Cinematography: Noah Luke; Editor: Pablo Ribeiro, Austin Nordell; Composer: Daniel Figueiredo; Post Production Supervisor: Tony Viegas; Sound Editor: Ricard Cutz; Cast: Sean Ryan Fox, Catharine Daddario, Thora Birch, Julie Benz, Wes Studi; Contact: luccagvieira@gmail.com

Jake, a high schooler on the autistic spectrum, feels disillusioned with the world around him. When he meets Alice, a brash and outgoing classmate, he begins to experience the world in other ways. Little does Jake know that, secretly, Alice may have more in common with him than he could ever imagine.

Phenomenal achievement by this young director who has already amassed some stunning accomplishments

**Special Guest:** Lucca Vieira

**Saturday, Nov 9, 1:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Friday, Nov 15, 3pm, Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Lucca is an award-winning 21-year-old Brazilian-born filmmaker based out of South Florida. He has been producing skits, animations and videos since the age of eight.



At 16, his debut short, 'Parkland: Stories from the Survivors', was screened at four film fests nationwide, and his latest horror short, "Silhouette," was selected at over eight film fests across the U.S. and Canada. Additionally, his awards include two National YoungArts Foundation Merit prizes, a Scholastic Art and Writing Award, and a Best Student Short award at the Miami Short Film Festival.

Now, at age 20, he has written and directed his first ever feature, starring, among others, Thora Birch ('American Beauty'), Wes Studi ('The Last of the Mohicans,' 'Heat'), and Julie Benz of 'Dexter' fame.

**Director's Statement:** High school was a battle for me; having been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at the age of 12, I was always surrounded with the notion that I was somehow "different." I could never deeply connect with my peers, afraid of being seen as awkward. I was seeing friends starting romantic relationships and hosting parties, while I was stuck in my bedroom making videos.

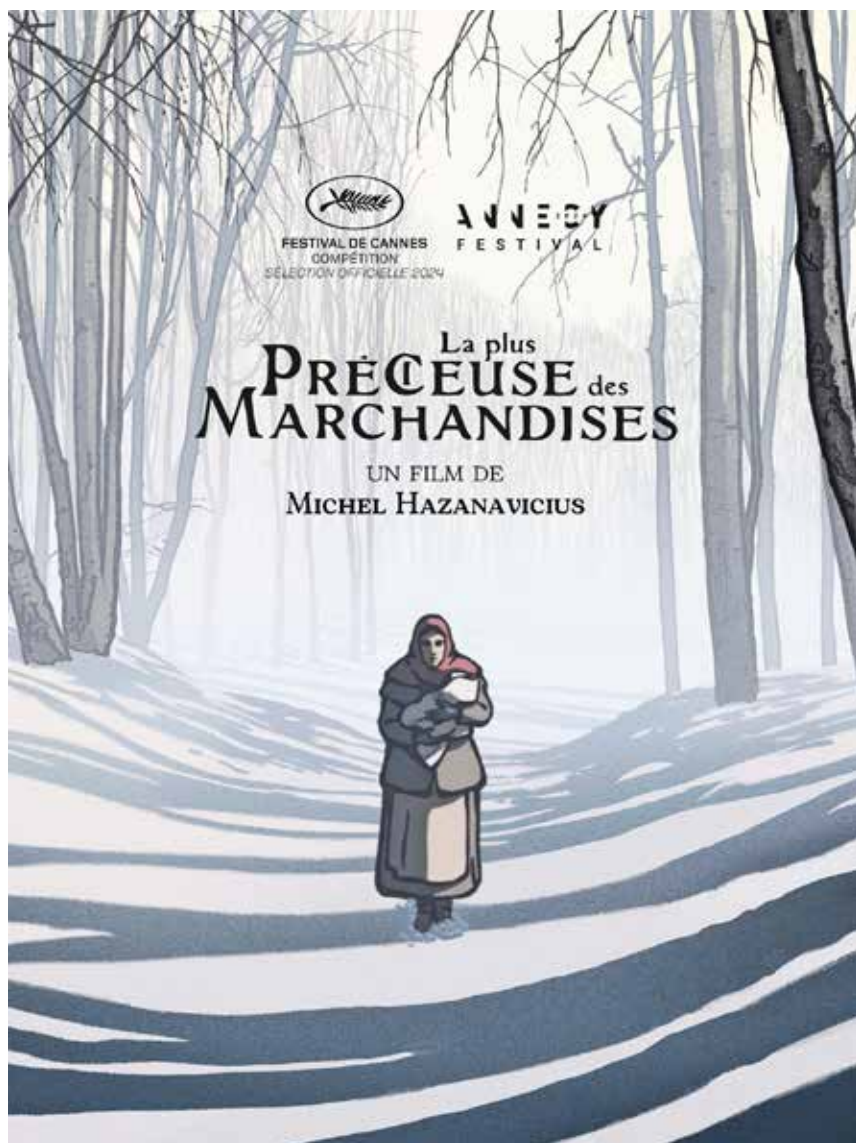
One morning, during my junior year of high school in Florida, I was riding to school in a depressive haze, earphones plugged, when I suddenly pictured a scene from a film with this exact concept. I instantly thought to myself: "I could make something really special out of this!" I was tired of seeing modern-day coming-of-age films made by much older directors with no knowledge of my current generation. I also knew it was possible to make a heartfelt coming-of-age drama with a low budget, which further compelled me in wanting to make the film as soon as possible.

I spent the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic writing the script, loosely based on experiences I'd had in high school. I then spent another year pitching it to everyone and anyone I could find with even the slightest connection to the film industry, with little to no success. Then, through complete coincidence, I bumped into a series of producers through mutual connections. Those connections eventually snowballed, and I suddenly found myself in the director's chair within less than a year.

In writing *The Midway Point*, I explored themes of loneliness and alienation, both being important themes within the digital age, and something which I felt was underrepresented in stories featuring Generation Z. So much of our generation is surrounded by a constant sea of noise, disruption, and mistrust of the world, that I felt compelled to make a story featuring characters who, despite all the odds, find a way out into a better world.



## THE MOST PRECIOUS OF CARGOES *U.S. Premiere*



France / 2024 / 81 min / English / Animated  
Tale of WWII

Director: Michel Hazanavicius; Writers: Jean-Claude Grumberg (original novel), Michel Hazanavicius; Producers: Florence Gastaud, Robert Guédiguian, Michel Hazanavicius, Riad Sattouf, Patrick Sobelman; Composer: Alexandre Desplat; Editor: Laurent Pelé-Piovani; Featuring: Jean-Louis Trintignant (narrator), Grégory Gadebois (woodcutter), Dominique Blanc (wife), Denis Podalydès (man with the broken face); Contact: The Festival Agency

Once upon a time, a poor woodcutter and his wife lived in a great forest. Cold, hunger, poverty and a war raging all around them meant their lives were very hard. One day, the woodcutter's wife rescues an orphaned baby. This baby, this "most precious of cargoes", will transform the lives of the poor woodcutter's wife and her husband, as well as those whose paths the child will cross - including the man gave her up. And some will try to protect her, whatever the cost. Their story will reveal the worst and the best in the hearts of men.

**Sunday, Nov 10, 1pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Monday, Nov 11, 3pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Michel Hazanavicius is a French film director, screenwriter, editor, and producer. He is best known for his 2011 film, *The Artist*, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture at the 84th Academy Awards. It also won him the Academy Award for Best Director.

**Director's Statement:** It all started five years and a half ago, with Jean-Claude Grumberg's eponymous book...although you could almost say it started when I was born, as Jean-Claude was my parents' best friend since they were 16. In any case, even before the book was published, Robert Guédiguian gave it to [producer] Patrick Sobelman. The latter and Studiocanal then approached me to see if I'd be interested in making it into an animation movie. I hesitated a bit for that very reason, because it's animation, and also because of it's a story related to the Holocaust, which seemed so daunting to me. But ultimately the story is immensely beautiful, and after speaking to Jean-Claude, I knew I had to come on board.



# World Theatrical Premiere

HOMELESSNESS COULD HAPPEN TO ANYONE



WILLIAM  
BALDWIN



BEVERLY  
D'ANGELO



XANDER  
BERKELEY



ASHANTI

ISABELLA  
FERREIRA

LUCAS JADE  
ZUMANN



A group of homeless people struggle to survive on the streets against a harassing gang, an unforgiving community, and the local authorities.

## no address

Wednesday, November 13th

Pre-Screen Dining 6:30pm • Screening 7:00pm

SAVOR CINEMA • 503 SE 6th Street • Fort Lauderdale

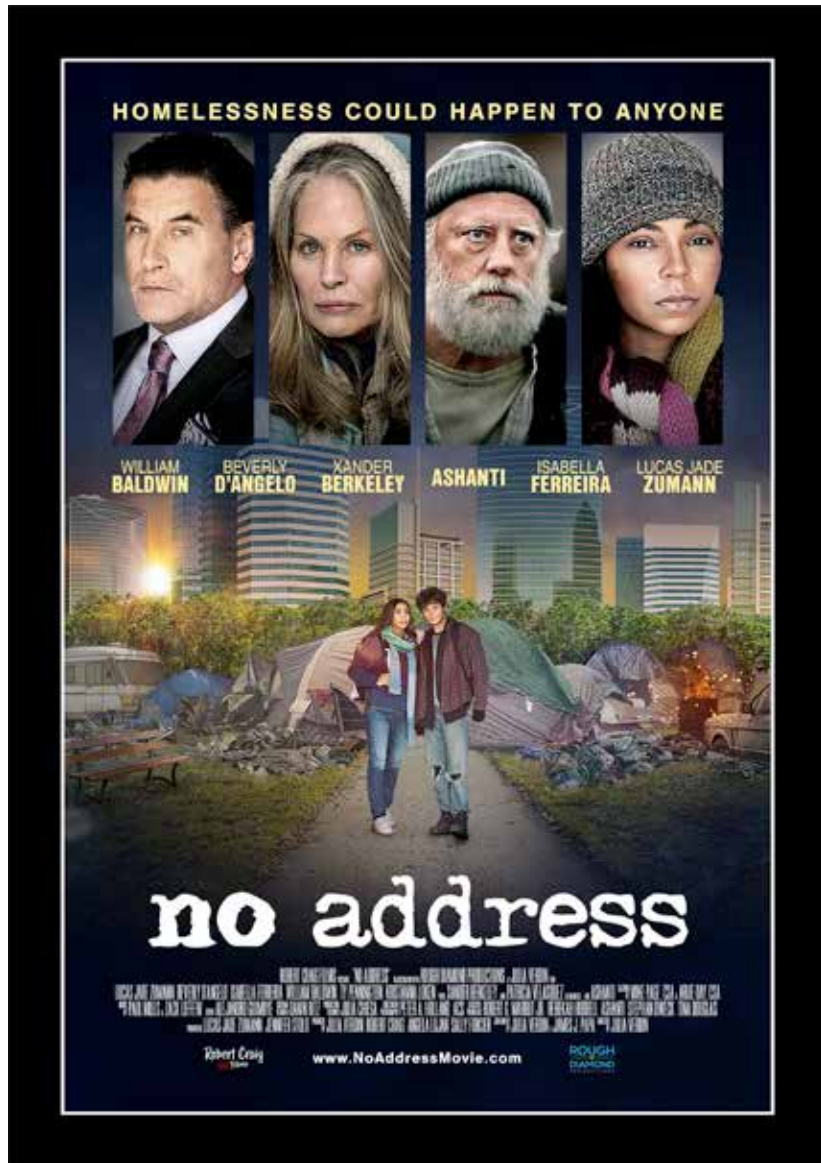
*Candlelight Party to follow*

FOR TICKET INFORMATION  
PLEASE VISIT [www.FLIFF.com](http://www.FLIFF.com)



All proceeds to  
benefit The Salvation Army

**NO ADDRESS** *World Premiere - Centerpiece Film*



USA / 2024 / 99 min / English / Drama

Director: Julia Verdin; Screenplay: Julia Verdin and James J. Papa; Screenwriter: David Hyde; Executive Producers: Robert G. Marbut Jr., Ashanti, John Lewis, Tina Douglas, Jet Lewis, Stephan Dweck; Producers: Jennifer Stolo, Lucas Jade Zumann, Sally Forcier, Julia Verdin, Robert Craig, and Angela Lujan; Cinematographer: Peter Holland, ACS; Editors: Alejandro Guimoye and Shaun Lupton; Cast: Lucas Jade Zumann, Beverly D'Angelo, Isabella Ferreira, William Baldwin, Ty Pennington, Kristanna Loken, Xander Berkeley, Patricia Velasquez, Ashanti; Contact: robert@robertcraig.com

Lauren's favorite pastime was capturing special moments with her loving mother on her Polaroid camera. Tragically, at the age of nine, Lauren then witnesses the unexpected death of her mother.

As many lonely years go by, Lauren finally graduates from high school. As she proudly walks home with her high school diploma, she finds her belongings from her foster care home stuffed into trash bags and left outside the front door. Unsure of where to go, Lauren falls asleep on the doorstep, awakening to the harsh reality that she has no address.

No Address is inspired by true events, this compelling drama captures the journey of a group of individuals experiencing homelessness. The film is a cinematic exploration of hope, humanity, and resilience as the characters navigate the stormy challenges of life with no physical address, showcasing the reality that homelessness can happen to anyone.

**Special Guest:** Julia Verdin, William Baldwin, Jennifer Stolo

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 7:30pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by:  
Steven Savor**



Gala admission includes a pre-film Dinner and post-film Desserts & Cocktails.

All proceeds of this screening will benefit The Salvation Army of Broward County

**Director:** Veteran filmmaker Julia Verdin is a multi-hyphenate - she is known as an accomplished producer, award-winning Director and has written a number of screenplays. Having been in the film business for 30 years, Julia has established herself as one of Hollywood's leading independent producers, with over 36 critically acclaimed feature films produced to date. She founded and has been running Rough Diamond Productions since 1995.



**MY OTAKU GIRLFRIEND** *U.S. Premiere*



Venezuela / 2024 / 89 min / Spanish with English subtitles / Romantic Comedy

Director & Writer: Edio Raven; Producer: Anderson Acosta; Cinematographer: Carlos Ledezma; Editor: Edio Raven; Illustrations: Leonardo Ferrer; Animator: Nicolas Urquiola, Simón Uzcategui and Oswaldo Santaella; Composer: Francisco Romero; Cast: Miguel Ángel Hidalgo, Karla Vieira, Frank Coello, Kelliens Subotic; Contact: despertarfilmscorp@gmail.com

Get ready for an unforgettable experience where love and the anime world intertwine in "My Otaku Girlfriend"! An anonymous mangaka is discovered by a beautiful otaku influencer, and he must choose between finishing his manga with her or leaving everything behind for graduate studies abroad.

**Special Guest:** Edio Raven

**Saturday, Nov 9, 7pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Edio Raven, a self-taught filmmaker from Venezuela, has been creating videos since his teenage years. With over ten years of experience, he excels in screenplay writing, directing, cinematography, and video editing, using programs like Adobe Premiere Pro and After Effects. Edio began studying law but shifted to filmmaking, moving to Caracas in 2017 to study Social Communications. His short film "First Love" won the DIRECTV FACIUNI BECAS, earning him a scholarship at USC. He returned to Venezuela to create impactful works like his short film "The Voyage". His feature film "My Otaku Girlfriend" is set to premiere at major festivals in 2024.



**Director's Statement:** "My Otaku Girlfriend" is my heartfelt tribute to anime, a genre I deeply love. This romantic story aims to convey a powerful message of self-acceptance. The film explores how we must embrace who we are, regardless of our flaws, and find someone who loves and accepts us as we are. Visually, I sought to create a vibrant, colorful world reminiscent of Makoto Shinkai's films, making the audience feel as if they are watching an anime.

Creating this film in Venezuela, particularly in Caracas, presented significant challenges due to the underdeveloped film industry. Personally, I resonate with the protagonist's insecurities and his journey towards self-acceptance and overcoming perfectionism, reflecting my own experiences. Through "My Otaku Girlfriend," I aim to inspire viewers to embrace their true selves and find genuine acceptance.

**ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE ANDES** *U.S. Premiere*



Peru / 2023 / 85 min / Quechua and Spanish with English subtitles / Historical Drama

Director & Writer: Romulo Sulca; Producers: Romulo Sulca, Jhon Pizarro; Cinematography: Sara Brusciano (Italy); Editor: Maricet Sancristóbal (Cuba) FAC; Sound: Marcela Navia (Bolivia); Data Manager: Paula Izaguirre (Paraguay); IT: Hernán Saavedra (Chile); Cast: Maribel Baldeon, Juan Cano; Contact: sulcaricra@gmail.com

In the Peruvian Andes, Margarita, an Andean shepherdess finds Lautaro, a dying Chilean soldier who has managed to flee from a battle. She decides to take him to her home and take care of him. When her father finds out, he decides to hide him, putting his family at risk, with the only condition that he leaves when he recovers. Over time and despite the linguistic differences, the shepherdess and the soldier begin to establish an intimate relationship.

The film utilizes the indigenous people living in the Andes. They are not, as you can tell, professional actors. But you can see their lives in their faces and their movements. That breathes a cultural charm into the storyline that speaks the truth. ONCE UPON A TIME IN THE ANDES is an amazing accomplishment by writer-director-producer, Romulo Sulca. I have included the countries represented by the crew to show what a multicultural effort this production was.

**Friday, Nov 8, 3:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Friday, Nov 15, 1pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



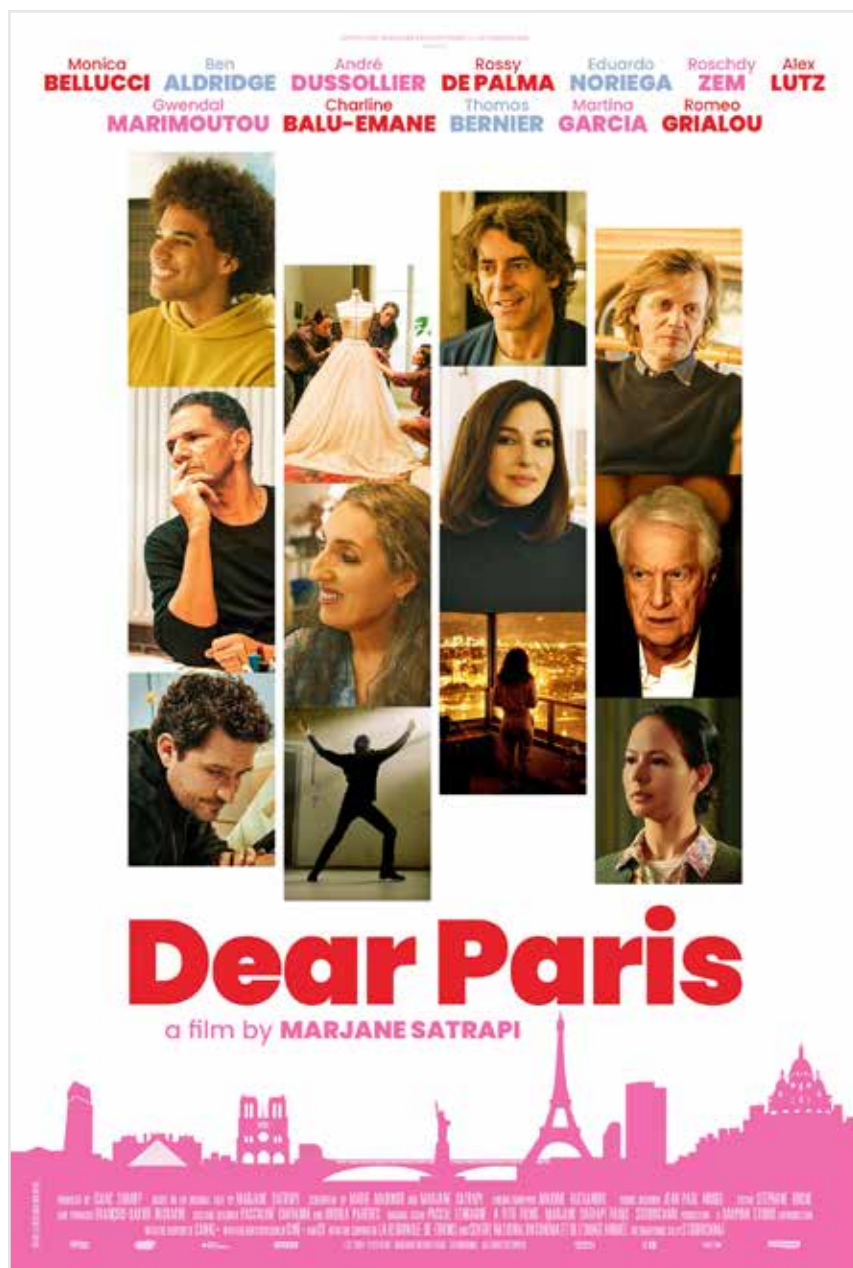
**Director:** Quechua filmmaker, develops his cinematographic activity in the central Andes of Peru. He holds a degree in Communication Sciences from the National University of Central Peru, with a master's degree in Creative Writing of Audiovisual Script at the International School of Film and Television of San Antonio de los Baños, Cuba (EICTV) Talent Campus Buenos Aires (2013). He directed the short films "Osmany" (2017), "Rimas de carreo" (2018) and "Sara" (2019) winners of the short film award by DAFO and selected in numerous international festivals. With the documentary "Teloneras" (2020) he won the 'Audience Award for Best Peruvian Film' at Transcinema International Film Festival. His fiction debut feature "Érase una vez en los Andes" (2023) was made with funding from DAFO and Ibermedia Program. He is currently developing his second feature fiction film "Ayahuanco"



**Director's Statement:** A film we made after graduating from EICTV - Cuba, with friends with whom I shared classrooms, the shooting took place in the central Andes of Peru, above 5500 MNSM and in an indigenous language such as Quechua. The film deserves to be seen and discussed.

¡Tupananchiskama! ("Let us wait to meet").

**PARIS PARADIS** *U.S. Premiere*



France / 2024 / 90 min / French with English subtitles / Dark Comedy

Director: Marjane Satrapi; Writers: Marjane Satrapi, Marie Madinier; Producer: Isaac Sharry; Cinematography: Maxime Alexandre; Composer: Pascal Lengagne; Production Designer: Florian Sanson; Cast: Monica Bellucci, Rossy De Palma, André Dussolier, Eduardo Noriega, Ben Aldridge, Roschdy Zem, Alex Lutz; Contact: The Festival Agency, Paris

What makes life worth living? In a set of interconnected stories, several Paris residents see their lives turned upside down when death knocks at their door: a narcissistic Italian opera singer (Monica Bellucci) wakes up at the morgue only to realize her own passing came unnoticed; a British stuntman (Ben Aldridge) finds himself questioning his own profession when his son suffers an accident; an eccentric elderly Colombian woman (Rossy de Palma) makes a pact with death itself... While each character strives to reconnect with what matters most, the city of light, love and endless possibility shines brighter than ever.

**Friday, Nov 8, 7:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 5pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Marjane Satrapi is a French-Iranian graphic novelist, cartoonist, illustrator, film director, and children's book author. Her best-known works include the graphic novel *Persepolis* and its film adaptation, the graphic novel *Chicken with Plums*, *Woman, Life, Freedom* and the Marie Curie biopic *Radioactive*.



**PERIPHERIC LOVE** *U.S. Premiere*



Switzerland / 2024 / 95 min / Italian with English subtitles / Drama

Director & Writer: Luc Walpoth; Producers: Sereina Gabathuler, Gianfilippo Pedote; Cinematography: Sara Purgatorio; Editor: Jean Reusser; Composer: Fabio Friedli; Cast: lazua Larios, Fabio Troiano, Christina Andrea Rosamilla, Alessio Lapice, Ursina Lardi, Bruno Todeschini; Contact: luc@turbulencefilms.ch

Maria is pregnant. Her husband Giorgio is sterile. Unable to communicate, they drift away from each other attracted by unlikely romances.

A simply beautiful film that audiences can relate to.

**Monday, Nov 11, 7:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Luc Walpoth is a Swiss filmmaker who works in both Europe and America.

His body of work, narrative films, documentaries, and commercials have been nominated and awarded at major festivals like Clermont-Ferrand, Palm Springs, Locarno, Fantasia, Sitges and many more. Over the years, Luc has developed projects supported by renowned institutions like Tribeca Institute, California Art Council, UCLA TFT school, Torino FilmLab, NisiMasa, Swissfilms and has enjoyed broadcasts all around the world.

In 2024, Luc just wrapped on *DEGENERATE*, a thriller set in the gambling world starring Emile Hirsch, Jackie Earl Haley, Rory Culkin and India Eisley

His first feature film, *BABY MONEY*, is a thriller starring Danny Garcia (*Fear of the Walking Dead*, *Prison Break*), Michael Drayer (*Mr. Robot*, *Sneaky Pete*) and Taja V. Simpson (*The Oval*, *Boo2*). *BABY MONEY* premiered in 2021 at Fantasia and was distributed worldwide by Blue Fox Entertainment.

Luc launched his career by directing the short film *REPLIKA*, a science-fiction drama set in the world of artificial intelligence. *REPLIKA* went on to win numerous awards. The feature version is currently in development.

**Director's Statement:** I lived in Turin for 5 years, and that's where this story came to me. I lived with my partner, who is now my wife, and the late shifts her job required made our relationship both passionate and complicated. Turin is a fascinating city full of contradictions. It is a royal city that was the capital of Italy, and of the House of Savoy. But it also has an industrial side that is very present. Then the Christian side - there are more than 100 churches in Turin and the shroud of Christ is on display there. It is a city of the Alps where people at first glance seem to be quite closed, but where there is also a massive influx of immigrants. And it was all these contradictions of this cold, but warm, spiritual and industrial city that fascinated me and I just had to shoot my first film there..., where I also fell in love.



**ROBOT T-0** *World Premiere, Gala Screening*



France / 2024 / 77 min / French with English subtitles / Sci-Fi Comedy

Director & Writer: Giulio Callegari; Producer: Alice Bloch, TS Productions, Marianne Productions; Cinematographer: Aurélien Marra; Editor: Baptiste Ribault; Production Designer: Anne-Sophie Delseries; Cast: Blanche Gardin, Xavier Lacaille, Edouard Suplice, Georgia Scalliet, Gavril Dartevelle, Laly Mercier; Contact: laura.rinker@francetv.fr

When a desperate mom and her daughter encounter an outdated robot, T-0, their reluctant alliance becomes their only hope in a world dominated by household robots.

In the near future, robots are in every household, at the service of humans, replacing them in their daily chores. 40 years old Max, unemployed, and her daughter Paula struggle to earn their living.



ROBOT T-0 is one of the cleverest and most hilarious films at this year's FLIFF. A French Party follows the screening at Savor Cinema.

**Special Guest:** Alice Bloch

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 7pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 7:30pm, Savor Cinema**

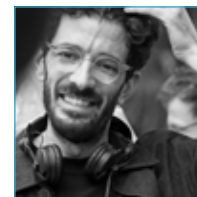
**Sponsored by: Simon Malak**

**Co-Sponsored: Kelley Stewart**

*A French Party follows the Savor screening.*



**Director:** Giulio Callegari is a French director and writer. He was a co-writer of the 2020 comedy *SELFIE*. He wrote and directed the 2022 comedy *ERRATUM*. In the pipeline, Giulio has written and directed *UN MONDE MERVEILLEUX*, scheduled for 2025.





**THE SECRETS OF RADHA** *Florida Premiere*



Nepal / 2022 / 95 min / Nepali with English subtitles / Drama

Director & Writer: Subarna Thapa; Producers: Subarna Thapa, Devaki Bist; Cinematography: Narendra Mainali, Rohan Maske; Editor: Nimesh Shrestha; Composer: Christophe Héral / Cast: Shristi Shrestha, Saugat Malla; Contact: amifilms977@gmail.com

Radha, a young pregnant woman from a village in Nepal, embarks on a journey to find her husband, a migrant worker in Doha, who's gone missing, but discovers instead an intriguing web of lies, deceit and fraud behind his disappearance and of many others.

**Special Guest:** Sunder Pandey

**Monday, Nov 11, 1pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



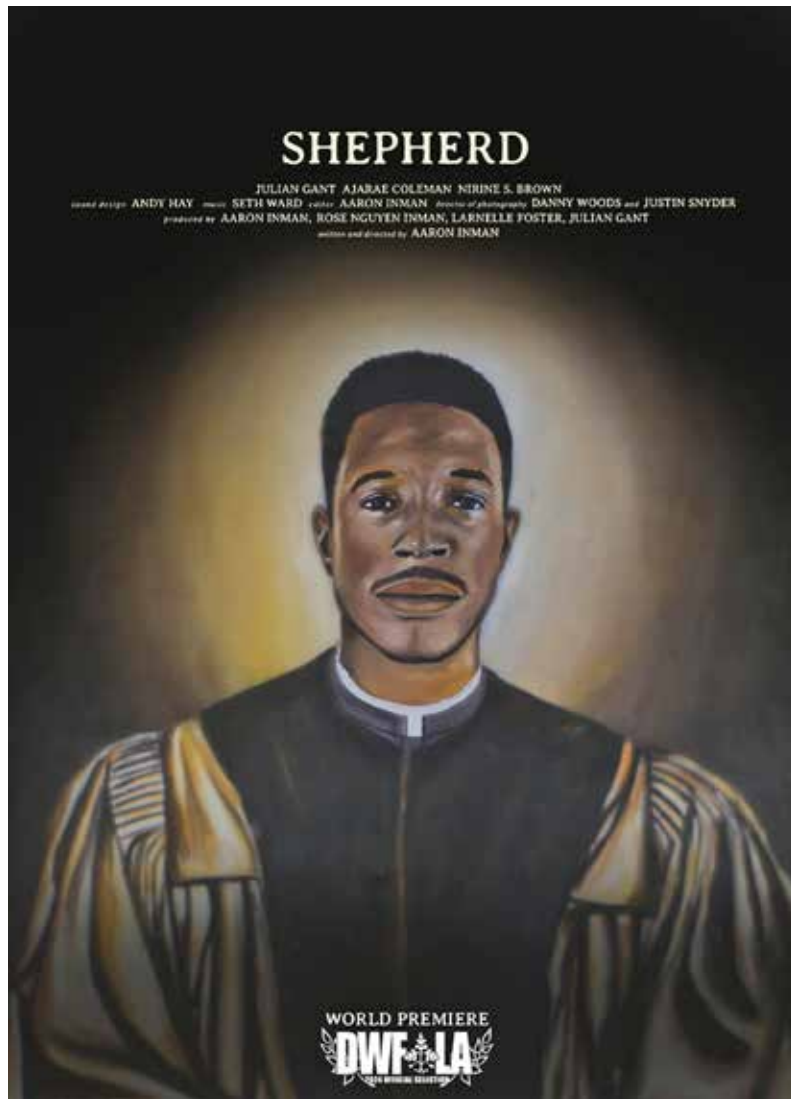
**Director:** I'm a Nepali origin filmmaker based in France for 17 years. I graduated in dramatic arts in Paris and took a film initiation course in La Femis in Paris. I was funded by CNC-France for my first short film, Malamee (Funeral) in 2008. SOONGAVA-dance of the orchids is my first feature length and the first film in the 60 years of Nepal's cinema history to tackle the theme of same-sex relationship.



**Director's Statement:** When I was 5 years old, I was going back home to my village with my parents in a local bus. At one stop, my father just disappeared. Now I'm a father of two children. Based in France, I often stay miles away from them due to my profession. Sometimes, I asked myself, " Am I following in my father' footsteps?". This film is addressed to the people of yesterday, today and tomorrow who have gone through similar personal, social and economic crises. I'm always interested in telling a story which is personal to me.

This project was supported by the Asian Cinema Fund for script development from BIFF. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world, we struggled to shoot this film between the lockdowns. It is an independent film where the actors and technicians came along as co-producers and gave their full support to make it happen. The entire film was shot in Nepal with local cast and crew, in the hills of midwestern Nepal and the capital city of Kathmandu.

**SHEPHERD** *East Coast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 85 min / English / Drama

Director & Writer: Aaron Inman; Producers: Aaron Inman, Rose Nyugen Inman, Julian Gant, Larnelle Foster; Cinematography: Danny Woods, Justin Snyder; Editor: Aaron Inman; Cast: Julian Gant, Ajarae Coleman, Nirine Brown, Phillip Wright, Wendell Kinney; Contact: aaronminman@gmail.com

When a young minister struggles with the death of his only son, he is forced to question his faith as he searches for meaning in a time of suffering.

A remarkable feature debut by Aaron Inman showing great promise with a true flair for storytelling.

**Special Guest:** Aaron Inman, Julian Gant

**Thursday, Nov 14, 5:30pm,  
Lauderhill Performing Arts Center**

Sponsored by  [www.sunshine411.org](http://www.sunshine411.org)

Thanks to the generosity of Sunshine411, tickets for the Nov 14th screening will be FREE. Get them at the door. There will be a Free reception for all ticket holders following the screening.



**Director:** Aaron Inman is a multifaceted filmmaker based out of Los Angeles and Florida. He has written and directed nine short films. *Shepherd* is his feature film debut. His work explores transcendental stories of faith and belief, bringing hope in humanity through pain and suffering.

**Director's Statement:** *Shepherd* is a film that took me 8 years to get made, and it is my feature film debut. Using my own savings account to finance the film, with a production budget close to \$20,000 and a crew of only 5 people...it is a true independent film. Wearing multiple hats, I was not only the writer/director, but editor, sound mixer, costume designer, locations manager and sometimes director of photography. In addition to an incredible cast, we placed real people from the area (first timers), and had them interact with the cast. This brought a realism to the world that could not be scripted, providing a unique glimpse into the African American faith community.

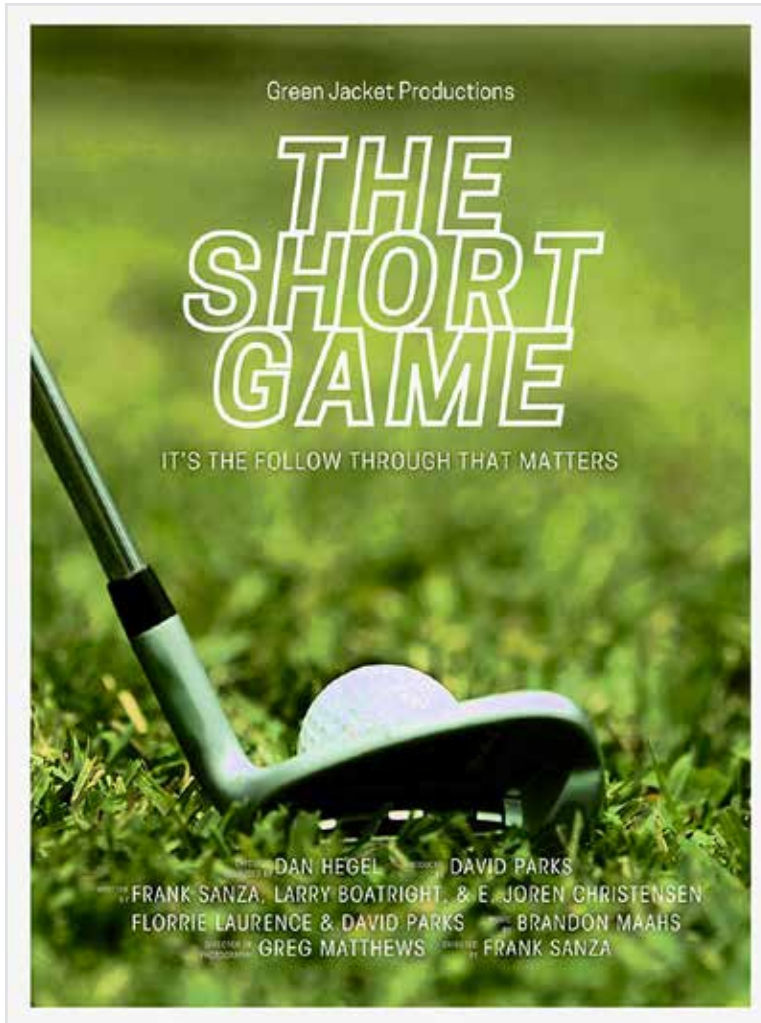


*Shepherd* peels back the mask and uncovers my greatest fear as a father: losing a child. To have an innocent soul ripped away with no explanation or answer is something that I grapple with every day. Unfortunately, this narrative of "gone too soon" is the life story of a few close friends of mine. Having experienced this kind of loss through their eyes, watching the grief tear their families apart created a swirl of emotions inside me: pain, fear and regret. Begging the question to be asked: "Why a child?"

This is something I still don't have an answer for.

This is why *Shepherd* was made.

**THE SHORT GAME** *U.S. Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 99 min / English / Drama

Director: Frank Sanza; Writers: Frank Sanza, Larry Boatright, E Joren Christensen, Florrie Laurence, David Parks; Producer: David Parks; Cinematographers: Greg Matthews; Editor: Kevin Ross; Composer: Brandon Maahs; Cast: Ben Krieger, Glenn Morshower, MacKenzie Astin, Katherine Cunningham, Owen Himfar; Contact: dpxusa@gmail.com

Jeremy Avery is vying for a college golf scholarship, but his preparation and game are affected by family pressures related to his younger autistic brother Ethan. Jeremy's path leads him on a journey of discovery both internal and of his brother's savant like gifts, that if embraced can create an unstoppable pair.

**Special Guests:** Frank Sanza, David Parks, Ben Krieger

**Monday, Nov 11, 5:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by**



Proceeds from this screening benefits  
The Ernie Els Foundation



**Director:** Frank Sanza is a former award-winning SF stage actor, who moved behind the camera with his acclaimed short film *Home*, a bold depiction of an unlikely man's love for the "unlovely." Frank has directed regional musical theater productions in California, Minnesota, and Texas, and has a degree in music conducting from Bethel University.

*The Short Game* mirrors Frank's own journey as a high school golfer and as the father of an autistic son. Despite his own battle with Parkinson's Disease, he keeps active with respectable rounds of golf. Frank lives in Sherman, TX with his wife and two children.



**STAMPILA** *U.S. Premiere*

Moldova / 2024 / 90 min / Romanian with English subtitles / Political Satire

Director, Writer: David Larson; Original Story by: I. Neil Irwin and Mariana Pasarenco; Producers: David Larson, I. Neil Irwin, Mariana Pasarenco; Cinematography: Sung Rae Cho; Editors: Andrei Iancu, Ecaterina Iaşchevici; Composer: Elias Tadeus; Cast: Irina Rusu, Sinchevici Lia, Cobileanschi Ana Maria, Tommy Dickie, Shawn Law, Roşca Galina, Caras Igor, Scutelnicu Dragoş, Andronachi Tudor, Terentii Serghei; Contact: lauren@thefilmfestivaldoctor.co.uk

A middle-aged woman decides to overthrow the powerful oligarch who controls her country. Armed with only her wit and a stolen government stamp, she must outsmart the oligarch's henchmen, evade the secret police, and trick her countrymen into sparking a revolution. Facing off against armed riot police, water cannons, and deep fakes, she must stop the oligarch from stealing the people's money and making her country the poorest in Europe. Along the way she'll need to face her past and uncover the secret weakness of the system that keeps oligarchs in power.

**Special Guest:** Neil Irwin

**Thursday, Nov 14, 7pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

Sample Moldavian Wine  
before the film.

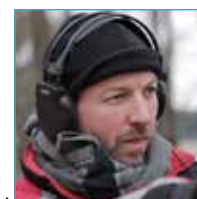


**Director:** David Larson is a first time writer/director who grew up in Malibu, California. He received business degrees from Berkeley and Wharton, and worked on Wall Street. Following the September 11th attacks, David changed course and joined the Peace Corps serving first in West Africa and later Central Asia. David's first film, "Stampila" (The Stamp), chronicles the fictional overthrow of a real Moldovan oligarch, filmed on location in Moldova while the real oligarch was still in power.

**Director's Statement:** Moldova is the poorest country in Europe. It was controlled for years by a powerful oligarch known as "The Puppet Master." In 2014, The Puppet Master and his associates looted over a billion dollars from the Moldovan treasury. This is the largest public theft in modern European history.

In 2018, The Puppet Master was at the height of his power. He controlled Moldova's executive branch, parliamentary majority, and most of the country's media. He even hired American political advisors to help him keep power. (One of his advisors went on to work for President Trump as Director of National Intelligence). The Puppet Master was both well-connected and above the law.

I personally believe that oligarchy (rule by a corrupt few) is the greatest threat to human freedom. I first experienced oligarchy 20 years ago when I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Kyrgyzstan (another ex-Soviet Republic controlled by an oligarch). I lived through the bloodless Kyrgyz "Tulip Revolution," and watched from my village as the people rose up and seized power from the oligarchs controlling their country. From that experience, I learned that oligarchs can only stay in power as long as people are afraid of them. Without fear, they will fall.



**THE STRANGE DARK** *East Coast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 84 min / English / A Sci-Fi Comedy Thriller

Director & Writer: Chris Messineo; Producers: Anthony Pettine, Chris Messineo; Cinematography: Teodoro Maniaci; Editor: Erica Freed Marker; Composer: Chris Hurn; Cast: Nili Bassman, Caleb Scott, Carmen Borla, Bates Wilder, John Beckwith, Carson Jean Holley, Athan Sporek; Contact: cmessineo@yahoo.com

Edgar believes he can see the future, but his wife thinks he's mad, his daughter thinks he's strange, and the agents from double star accounting will stop at nothing to get their data back.

Chris Messineo has put together a clever comedy that is story and character driven. With tight script and terrific cast, the film will surprise and delight.

**Special Guest:** Chris Messina

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 7:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Friday, Nov 15, 5pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Sponsored by  
Rob Plotka & Cityscape Capital**



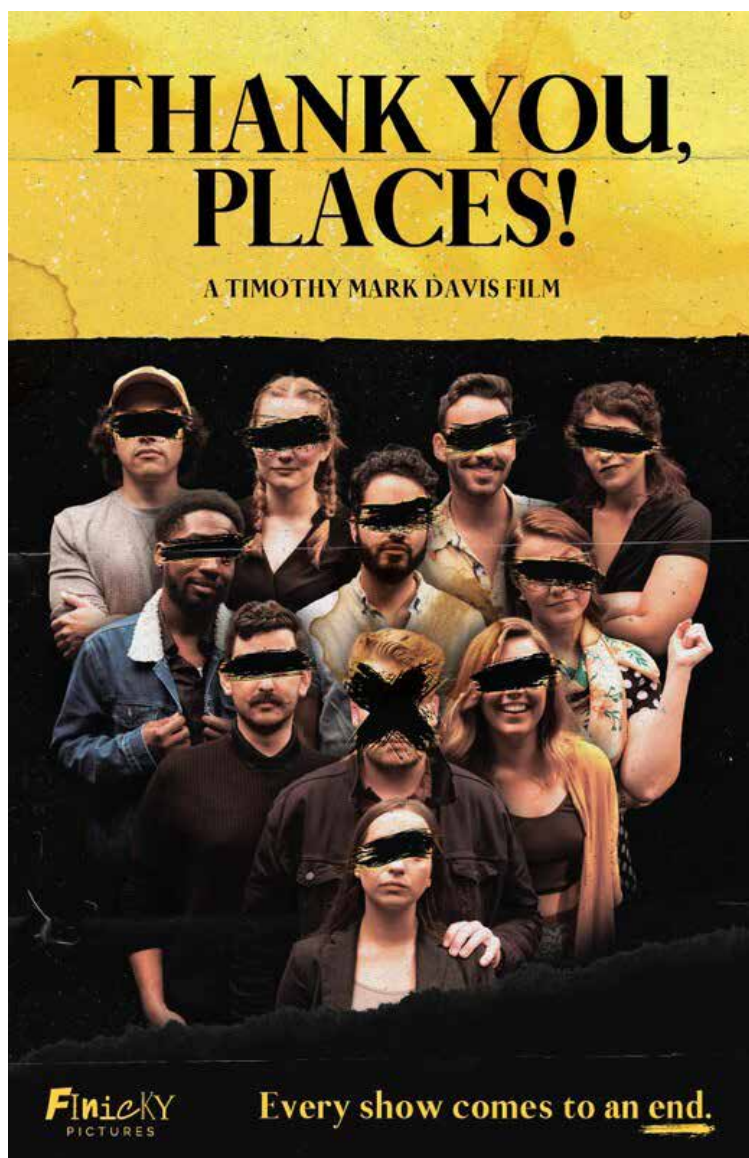
**Director:** Chris Messineo is an award-winning writer and director. As the owner and director of NJ Film School, he has taught the craft of independent filmmaking to hundreds of kids, teens, and adults - who have gone on to win their own awards for writing and directing. "The Strange Dark" is his first feature length film.

**Director's Statement:** The only statement I have about "The Strange Dark" is, I hope you enjoy it. I do, however, want to share two stories about the making of it that you might find interesting.

First, I believe that film is a collaborative art and all those who work on it deserve to share in the rewards. Towards that end, our amazing cast and crew all own a piece of our movie.

Second, I've spent the last 24 years teaching screenwriting and filmmaking. "The Strange Dark" is my dream project and we had to turn to crowd-funding to help pay for it. I'm honored to say that 90% of the donations came from my students. I hope I've made them as proud as they make me.



**THANK YOU, PLACES** *World Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 82 min / English / Comic-Drama

Director: Timothy Mark Davis; Writers: Timothy Mark Davis, Luis Roberto Herrera; Producer: Timothy Mark Davis; Cinematography: Chris Behnen; Editor: José Ordóñez Jr.; Production Designer: Ryan Maloney; Cast: Krystal Millie Valdes, Timothy Mark Davis, Alex Joyel, Luis Roberto Herrera, Casey Sacco, Elizabeth Price, Ernesto Gonzalez, Roderick Randle, Abby Nigro, Ilana Jael; Contact: tim@finickypictures.com

A group of friends try to make a "film" to save their theatre company from falling apart during a pandemic. But filmmaking ineptitude, old affairs, and new betrayals may be the virus that ends their company before any global pandemic does.

A brilliant first-time feature Filmed-ENTIRELY-in-Broward. The ensemble cast is spot on with the mercurial pulse of a non-profit theatre troupe, where everyone is equal, except not everyone knows it. The secrets, the secret passions, the tip-toe-poverty, the Hey Mickey & Judy Let's Do A Show spunk, just perfect. Timothy Mark Davis handles his dual role as director of the piece and a plot-propelling member of the ensemble. The single camerawork is a thing of beauty in this low budget but zenith-seeking romp.

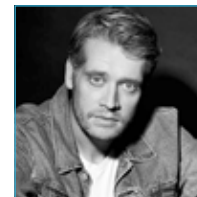
Kudos to Broward Cultural Division, Community Foundation of Broward and Film Lauderdale for investing in this proud-to-be-Broward feature.

**Special Guest:** Krystal Millie Valdes, Timothy Mark Davis, Alex Joyel, Luis Roberto Herrera, Casey Sacco, Elizabeth Price, Ernesto Gonzalez, Roderick Randle, Abby Nigro, Ilana Jael

**Saturday, Nov 8, 9pm,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Timothy is a film and theatre actor, director, producer, and writer. Most recently he produced the short films *Konpa*, which played in competition at the 2023 Tribeca Festival, and *La Vie* which premiered at the 2023 Miami Film Festival. In 2021 he wrote and directed the short film *The Leap* for the 48 Hour Film Project which garnered awards for Best Film, Best Director, and Best Actress. Previously he produced and co-starred in the feature film, *Pompano Boy*, which premiered at the Heartland Film Festival and received the Best in Broward Award at the Fort Lauderdale International Film Festival. He is also the Producing Artistic Director for New City Players, an award-winning, non-profit, professional theatre company in Broward where he has produced nearly 20 productions. He holds an M.A. in Theatre Studies, received the 2017 Silver Palm Award for Outstanding New Theatre Company, the 2019 Remy Service Award for service to the South Florida Theatre League, and the 2020 Carbonell Award for Best Actor for his performance in New City Players' production of *Falling*.



**THIRSTY** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 112 min / English / Political Drama

Director & Writer: Emily Abt; Producer: Jeffrey Allard; Cinematography: Michael Enos; Editor: Jeff Marcello; Composer: Hayes Bradley; Cast: Jamie Neumann, Sung Kang, Tyler LePley, Kyra Sedgwick, Thora Birch, Brandee Evans, Briana Venskus, Kim Jiang Dubaniewicz, E. Ambris DeColosio, Jonathan Lim, Josh Schell, Will Blagrove; Contact: emily@purelandpictures.com

A tenacious defense attorney (Audrey Allen) embarks on a high stakes campaign to beat the incumbent mayor of Oakland. As election day approaches, Audrey must reconcile the seduction of the political game with her own moral compass or risk losing it all.

This is a film about choices.

**Special Guest:** Emily Abt

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 7:30,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 5pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Sponsored by: Ken Evans and  
his marvelous minions!**



**Director:** One of Variety Magazine's 'Top 10 Directors to Watch', Emily has directed six feature films - two narratives and four documentaries. Known for her commitment to social issue filmmaking, she is able to take on delicate subject matter with skill and diplomacy. Emily is also a seasoned documentary cinematographer and branded content director who has created films for clients such as 23andMe, Microsoft, Janssen, Pfizer and Oracle.



Abt's first feature "Toe to Toe" was nominated for the Grand Jury Award at Sundance and released by Strand. "Thirsty" won the Athena Award for scripts featuring outstanding female protagonists and was filmed this past winter in Oakland.

Abt's first doc "Take It From Me" (PBS's POV series) was created when she was a 23 year-old caseworker in New York City. She then went on to receive her MFA in film directing from Columbia University and was awarded a Fulbright fellowship to make her thesis film. Abt's other feature docs include "All Of Us" (Showtime's 2008 World AIDs Day film) and "Daddy Don't Go". The film won eight "Best Doc" awards. In 2018 Abt was tapped by Showtime to direct the documentary "Beyond the Opposite Sex" about two transgender people living in rural America.

In 2020 Abt was hired by "Sorry to Bother You" producer George Rush to co-write the feature comedy "Unborn". From 2020-2021 Abt served as a Consulting Producer on the Amazon Studios and Emmy award-winning documentary "Wildcat" and is currently Executive Producing the forthcoming feature documentaries "Tribal Strands" and "Transcending". She is also currently developing a Berkeley based episodic series entitled "Pureland".

**Director's Statement:** Audrey Allen, is a woman who is deeply torn between career and family, as she strives to become the Mayor of Oakland. Our story is a deeply timely one given that America may soon have its first woman president in Kamala Harris. Many pundits are now saying that she will likely step up to replace Biden soon and then will go toe to toe with Trump for a tight but ultimately triumphant campaign. So THIRSTY has truly captured the zeitgeist of the moment when we are on the cusp of a potentially seismic shift and collectively fascinated with the women politicians who are making it happen. (written May 2024)

# THREE STORIES IN BOTTLES *U.S. Premiere – Gala Screening*



Italy / 2024 / 94 min / Italian with English subtitles / Comedy

Director, Writer, Producer: Giuseppe Gandini; Cinematography: Gianluca Braccieri; Editor: Davide Vizzini; Composer: Roberto Manuzzi; Cast: Massimo Olcese, Ignazio Oliva, Cristian Borromeo, Claudia Coli, Valentina Bruscoli, Gianantonio Martinoni, Matteo Bonuccelli, Marco Zannoni, Chiara Bono, Augusta Gori, Silvia Mazzotta, Paolo Romano, Luis Molteni, Federico Tocci, Elena Felloni, Aleandro Falciglia, Alisia Ferri, Vanni De Lucia, Mauro Silvestrini, Gaia Benassi, Francesca Fava, Roberto Attias, Emilia Gandini, Roberto Bruscoli, Luca Falocci, Nicola Falocci, Gianfranco Zampetti, Giuseppe Gandini; Contact: giugandini@hotmail.com

Three stories about wine intertwine to become a film. In the first, a photographer will have to photograph “the smell of wine”; in the second, a rich young man will be punished by going to the harvest; in the third, a somber wine merchant over sixty will fall in love like a teenager with a fifty-year-old biologist. Wine solves and is at the center of all stories. Each bottle contains a story.

Giuseppe Gandini is perhaps best known for his on-screen performances, however, he has had extensive writing experience and it shows in the fun, aromatic film. It captures the spirit and flavors of Italy wonderfully. Thanks to Giuseppe, the afterparty that features Italian food compliments of Gianni’s Restaurant, will also feature the three wines featured in the film.

**Special Guest:** Giuseppe Gandini, plus members of the cast

**Saturday, Nov 9, 5pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Sunday, Nov 10, 5:15pm, Savor Cinema**

An Italian Dinner begins at 4pm in The John Mager Courtyard, featuring the wines from the film.



Sponsored by: R.Lee Carson & Jose Caraballo



**Director:** Giuseppe graduated in Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Ferrara, he has lived and worked in Rome as a director, writer and actor. As director and author he made the Teen series entitled Radioteen. He then wrote the screenplay *On the Same Side of the Table*. He directed 7 shorts and one medium-length, winning the 1995 Silver Ribbon for the Best Italian Short of the with *The Myth of Reality*. In 2002 he directed *I Giovani d’Oggi*. In 1999 he directed *Una Cannna con Goldrake*, and won the Critics’ Prize at the Messina Film Festival. In 2006 he directed the pilot episode of the sit-com *Bar Sofi*. He has directed 12 plays, including classics of Beckett and Chekov. He also wrote 4 screenplays for cinema. The screenplay entitled *What not...* won the 2013 Award for Best Screenplay at the Busto Arsizio Festival. In his acting career he won a Silver Ribbon in 1999 as best supporting actor for Ettore Scola’s *The Dinner*. He has worked in theater, cinema and television with: Vittorio Gassmann, Fanny Ardant, Stefania Sandrelli, Giancarlo Giannini, Julia Roberts, Javier Bardem, Pierfrancesco Favino, Ryan Murphy, Ridley Scott and many others.



**Director’s Statement:** The philosophical concept of the film is that each bottle contains in itself its own narration, an ever-changing story that springs from the very nature of wine and the work that Man has poured into it for millennia.



**TOGETHER 99** *U.S. Premiere*

Sweden / 2023 / 103 min / Swedish with English subtitles / Comedy-Drama

Director: Karl Fredrik Lukas Moodysson  
 Producers: Anna Carlsten, Lars Jönsson, Annelie Cau Tomasdotter;  
 Cinematography: Ellinor Hallin; Editor: Vickis Munck, Andreas Nilsson;  
 Production Designer: Josefin Asberg;  
 Cast: David Dencik, Jonas Karlsson, Gustaf Hammarsten, Julia Heveus, Henrik Lundström, Shanti Roney, Olle Sarri, Cecilia Frode, Sten Ljunggren, Anja Lundqvist, Lisa Lindgren, Clara Christianson Drake, Lars Frode, Jessica Liedberg, Seb Carlsson; Contact: Swedish Film Institute

A group of very different individuals who in 1975 lived in a commune called "Together". Now it is 1999, and the collective has turned into the world's smallest. The commune consists of only two people - Göran and Klasse. Feeling a bit lonely, they discuss the idea of a reunion with their old friends.

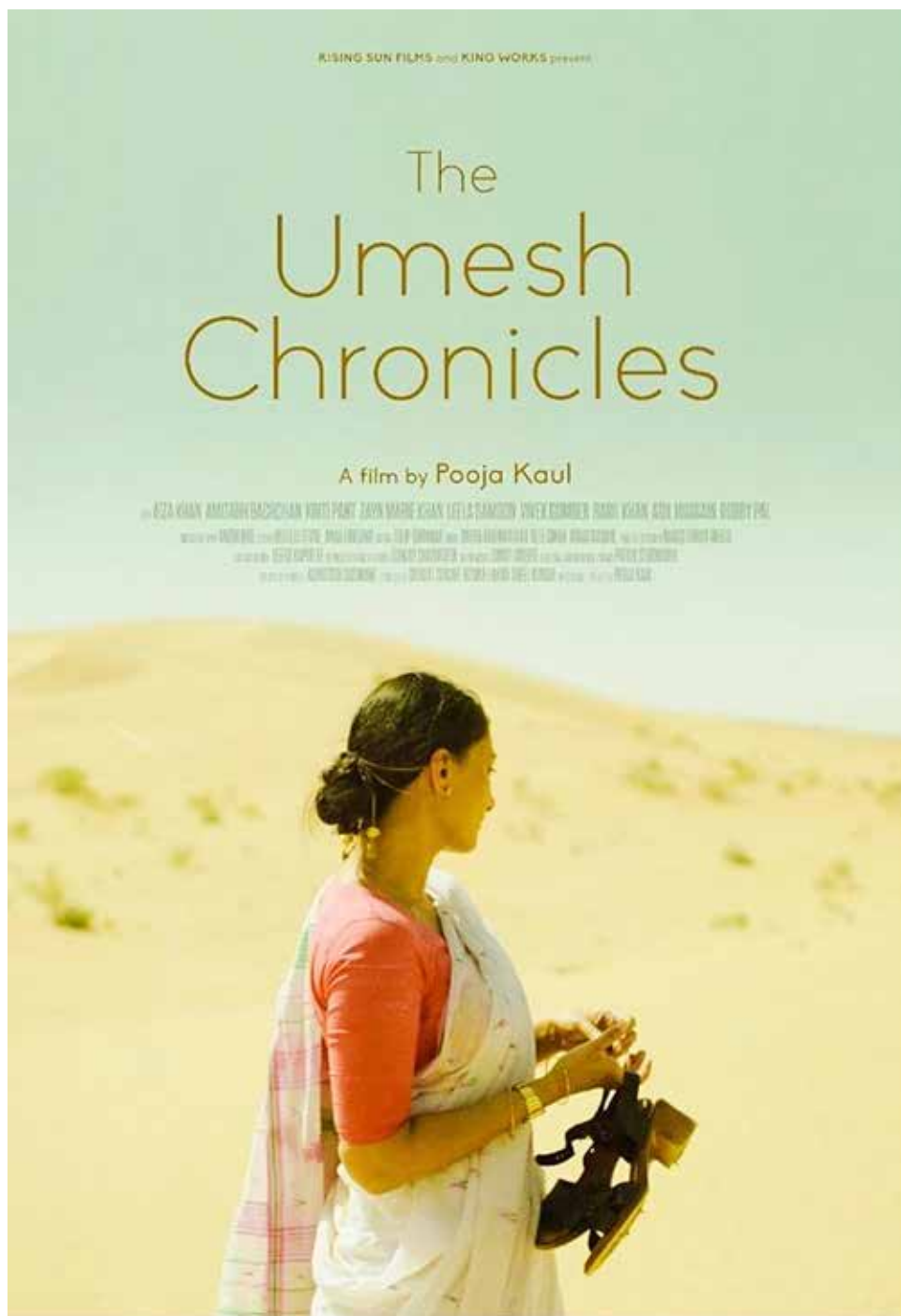
**Saturday, Nov 9, 1pm,  
 Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Karl Fredrik Lukas Moodysson is a Swedish filmmaker, novelist, and short story writer. First coming to prominence as an ambitious poet in the 1980s, he had his big domestic and international breakthrough directing the 1998 romantic film *Show Me Love*.



**THE UMESH CHRONICLES** *Florida Premiere*



India / 2024 / 124 min / English / Coming-of-Age Drama

Director & Writer: Pooja Kaul; Producers: Shoojit Sircar, Ronnie Lahiri; Cinematography: Jakob Ihre; Editor: Helle le Fevre; Cast: Aiza Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Kriti Pant, Vivek Gumber, Leela Samson, Babil Khan, Zayn Marie Khan, Adil Husain; Contact: pooja\_kaul@yahoo.com

Radha, 12, is surrounded by family, and an emphasis on education which shapes her every day. She has little contact with Sundar, a servant boy who helps her a life of privilege. Sundar runs away and when she meets him years later, Radha considers that he may be freer than she is. Now in her 30s, in modern India, served again-this time by Umesh, she thinks of Sundar and seeks him out.

The Umesh Chronicles is a map of the past and a sketch for the future.

One of the most beautiful films of FLIFF39.

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 1:30pm, Gateway**

**Sunday, Nov 17, Noon, Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by The Association of Performing Arts of India**



**Director:** Pooja Kaul is a writer and director whose work explores urban life. Her films *Rasikan Re* (O Lover of Life, 33 mins, Hindi and English) and *Winter Trail* (11 min) have been seen worldwide.

Her work examines contemporary Indian society in the light of its richly developed past, finding parallel textures and sensibilities, forging connections between past and the present.

**Director's Statement:** I made *The Umesh Chronicles* to tell the story of a woman, a country and the current zeitgeist. I wanted to make a film which functions as a map of the past and a blueprint for the future.



## UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE *The Official Florida Premiere*



# UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

QUINZAINÉ  
CANNES 2024

A Film by Matthew Rankin

Canada / 2024 / 89 min / Persian & French with English subtitles / Comedy

Director: Matthew Rankin; Writers: Ila Firouzabadi, Pirouz Nemati, Matthew Rankin; Producers: Sylvain Corbeil; Cinematography: Isabelle Stachtchenko; Editor: Xi Feng; Composers: Amir Amiri, Christophe Lamarche-Ledoux; Cast: Rojina Esmæili, Danielle Fichaud, Sobhan Javadi, Pirouz Nemati, Nima Pourtolami, Matthew Rankin, Mani Soleymanlou, Saba Vahedyousefi/ Contact: alexandra@oscilloscope.net

Somewhere between Tehran and Winnipeg. Negin and Nazgol find a sum of money frozen in the winter ice and try to get it out. Massoud leads a group of increasingly-confused tourists through the monuments and historic sites of Winnipeg. Matthew quits his job at the Québec government and embarks upon a mysterious journey to visit his mother. Space, time and personal identities crossfade, interweave and echo into a surreal comedy of disorientation.

Winner of the 2024 Cannes' Directors Fortnight Audience Award, UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE is a clever, dry yet, at times, screwball comedy that creeps up on you.

**Monday, Nov 11, 3pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 3pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Rankin is a Canadian experimental filmmaker. He is most noted for his feature debut, *The Twentieth Century*, which premiered in 2019 and was nominated for eight Canadian Screen Awards, winning three. He has also received accolades for his 2014 film *Mynarski Death Plummet*, shortlisted for Best Live Action Short Drama at the Canadian Screen Awards and a shortlisted nominee for Best Short at the Jutra Awards, and his 2017 film *The Tesla World Light*, which won the Best Animated Short at the Canadian Screen Awards and received an Honorable Mention at the Toronto Int'l Film Festival.

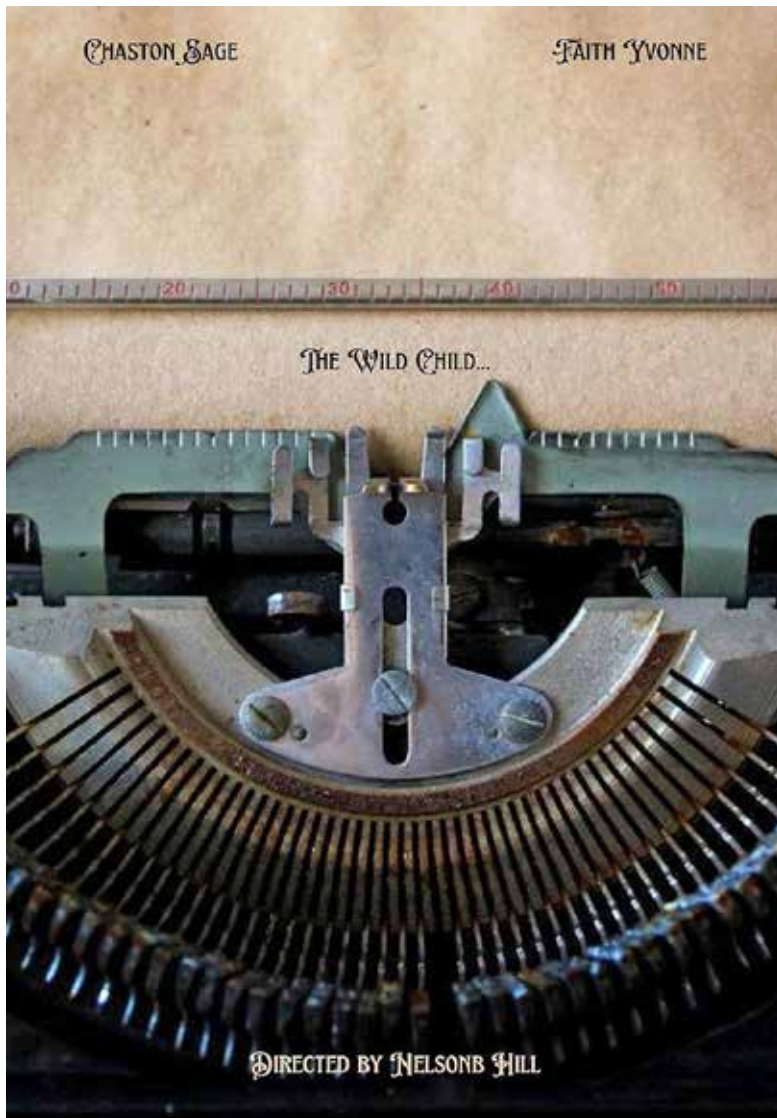


Originally from Winnipeg, Manitoba, he studied history at McGill University and Université Laval. He has also had occasional small acting roles in other directors' films, most recently the 2022 films *This House (Cette maison)* and *Before I Change My Mind*.

**Director's Statement:** When I was 21, I went to Iran. I was inspired by the great Iranian masters, and I had this very naive idea that I could go there and study cinema. I stayed for three months, and it didn't work out at all. There were a few film schools I tried to connect with. In some cases, I didn't connect at all, and in some cases, it was just not possible [for me to study there].

Something I really noticed when I went to Tehran was that the buildings there actually reminded me very much of the buildings that surrounded me when I was growing up in Winnipeg. There are a lot of beige structures. In Winnipeg, they're kind of special because they take the light in a really interesting way in the winter. It's a very bleak, wintery, snowy city, and the winter light hits these beige structures and they become these beautiful luminescent orbs. And one thing that I really love about a lot of the films that this film is referencing is the seeking of the divine within the banal. So, this was something we were after with the filming of these structures. How could we make these otherwise very bland, very ordinary buildings take on some poetry? We wanted to film these beige structures the way Terrence Malick films at sunset.

**THE WILD CHILD** *World Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 90 min / English / Comedy

Director, Writer & Producer: Nelson Hill;  
Cinematography: Nelson Hill; Editor: Nelson Hill;  
Cast: Jack Atkins, Hudson Garland, James Gregory,  
Nelson Hill, Masashi Ishizuka, Chaston Sage, Rafael  
Sigler, Alen Toric, Brendan Wentworth, Sibon Yan, Faith  
Yvonne; Contact: nelson103@icloud.com

A young man with aspirations of becoming a Hollywood  
Writer gets thrown into the business in a way he doesn't  
expect.

A fun, unique film showing great creativity. Was it  
autobiographical? Maybe.

Be part of this young filmmaker's launch!

**Special Guest:** Nelson Hill plus Cast & Crew

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 7pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 3:30pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by**



**Director:** Nelson Hill grew up in South West Florida playing football, basketball, and baseball. When Nelson was 7 years old, he found his first love... movies! At 15 years old he acted in his first play, *Shrek Jr. The Musical*, at the Florida Rep Theatre. Throughout his high school career, he also acted in several other plays including *Oliver Twist* and *Romeo & Juliet*. After graduating high school Nelson attended Liberty University, where he was studying film. But during his freshman year Nelson decided to drop out and move to Hollywood, never looking back. Since being in Los Angeles, Nelson has not only directed short films, but has also done *Behind The Scene* videos for multiple movies and TV shows. Nelson enjoys working out, playing guitar and watching movies. He dedicates his acting to his mom, dad and younger brother Luke, who support him and his dream.



**Director's Statement:** *It's hard to make a bad movie... it's even harder to make a good one.*

**WINGWALKER** *East Coast Premiere*



Mexico / 2024 / 117 min / English + Spanish with English subtitles / Thriller

Director: Alonso Alvarez-Barreda; Writers: Alonso Alvarez-Barreda, Max Arciniega; Producers: Alonso Alvarez-Barreda, Alejandro Monteverde, Francisco Cordero, Eduardo Monteverde, Ricard Coeto, Omar Chaparro, Max Arciniega; Cinematographer: Tom Campbell; Editor: Vanessa Ruane; Composer: Roberto Murgula; Cast: Omar Chaparro, Will Rothhaar, Hector Jimenez, Max Arciniega, Jesus Ochoa, Leslie Garza, Gustavo Sanchez Parra, Al Coronel, Ramses Jimenez, Cesar Ramos; Contact: aabfilms@gmail.com

A young widower is deported as his daughter is scheduled for a heart transplant; this will lead him to orchestrate the boldest border crossing plan in history.

One of FLIFF39's Best of Fest. Do not miss!

Hang on to your popcorn...it's going to be a bumpy night!

**Special Guests:** Alonso Alvarez-Barreda, Omar Chapparo

**Thursday, Nov 14, 7pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 5pm, Savor Cinema\***

\* Mexican Party follows the film in the John Mager Courtyard



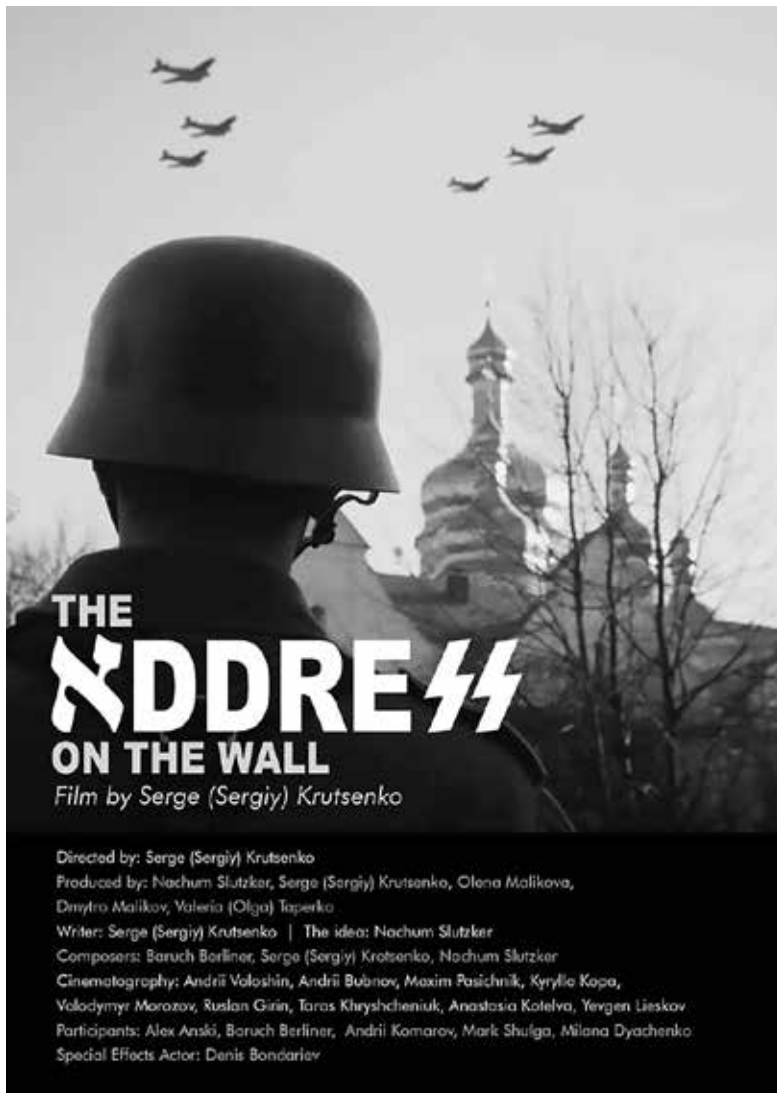
**Director:** Alonso Alvarez-Barreda was born in México city and raised in the small town of Tampico, on the eastern coast of Mexico. Despite his father's best efforts, he chose to forgo a career as a professional ping-pong player to pursue his passion for filmmaking.

Mentored by Alejandro Monteverde, Alvarez-Barreda directed his first short, *Historia de un Letrero*. The entire project was shot in Tampico on a \$50 budget using borrowed equipment and his friends as actors. In 2008, it won the Best Short Film Award at Cannes Film Festival.

Alvarez-Barreda's third short, *Crescendo*, is an 18th century period piece entirely in German and tells the story of the birth of Beethoven. The project was produced by Mexican business magnate Carlos Slim. It screened in over 30 international film festivals including Telluride and New York and was a finalist for the 2013 Oscars®. The short also landed him the Best Director award at the NBCUniversal Short Film Festival and nominations for Best Writing and Best Film.



**THE ADDRESS ON THE WALL** *U.S. Premiere*



Ukraine / 2022 / 60 min / English / Docu-Drama

Director & Writer: Serge Krutsenko; Producers: Nachum Slutzker, Serge Krutsenko, Olena Malikova, Dmytro Malikov, Olga Taperko; Cinematographers: Oleksii Liebiediev, Oleksandr Naumenko; Editor: Serge Krutsenko; Featuring: Alex Anski; Contact: asaf@costanza-films.com

They say that truth is stranger than fiction and the fate writes the script better than any author. "The Address on the Wall" was finalized only after being altered by Russia's recent invasion of Ukraine. This changed the lives of many European countries and radically destroyed the romantic imagination of what could happen to humanity in the beginning of the twenty-first century. Connecting the Babyn Yar massacre with the current tragedy, the film is a reflection on the past, and, at the same time, evidence of what is happening now.

**Monday, Nov 11, 1pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

Sponsored by  UKRAINIAN FILMS USA

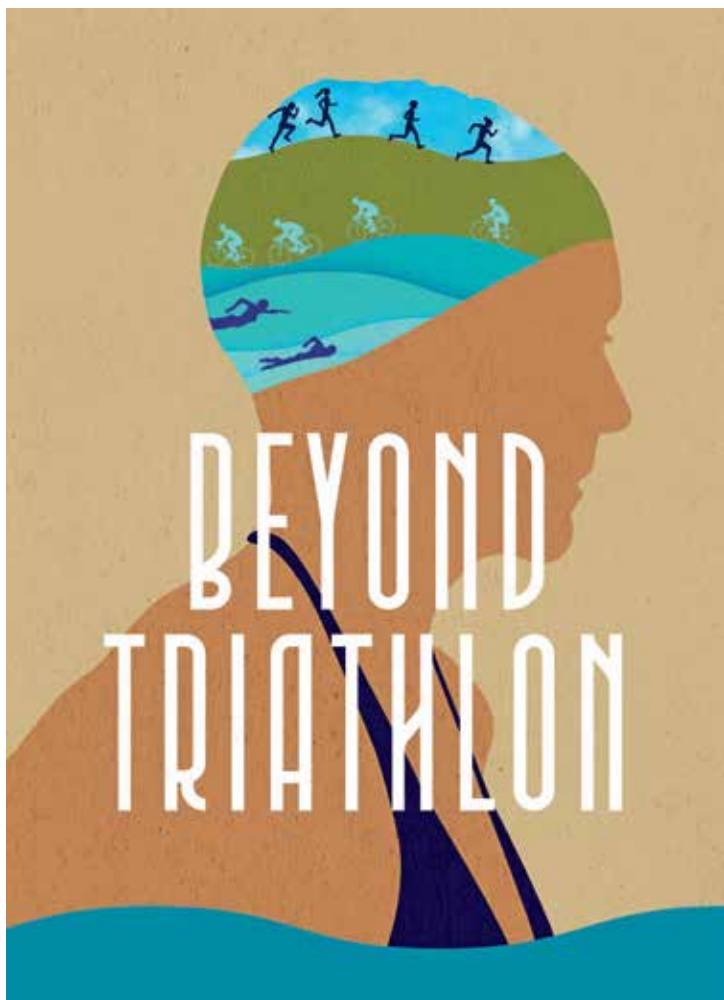


Directed by: Serge (Sergiy) Krutsenko  
 Produced by: Nachum Slutzker, Serge (Sergiy) Krutsenko, Olena Malikova, Dmytro Malikov, Valeria (Olga) Taperko  
 Writer: Serge (Sergiy) Krutsenko | The idea: Nachum Slutzker  
 Composers: Baruch Berliner, Serge (Sergiy) Krutsenko, Nachum Slutzker  
 Cinematography: Andrii Voloshin, Andrii Bubnov, Maxim Pasichnik, Kyrylo Kopa, Volodymyr Morozov, Ruslan Girin, Taras Kheyscheniuk, Anastasia Kotelva, Yevgen Lieskov  
 Participants: Alex Anski, Baruch Berliner, Andrii Komarov, Mark Shulga, Milana Dyachenko  
 Special Effects Actor: Denis Bondariev

**Director:** Serge (Serhiy) Krutsenko, who left this world on 7 January 2023, was a multi-instrumental performer, a composer, a music producer, a film producer, and a specialist in 3D (Stereo) shooting. He worked with almost all Ukrainian top music stars as a music producer, and he also had a large number of films as a composer. Serhiy debuted as a film director in 2021 in the film "The Address on The Wall". Being research in the phenomenon of the destruction of person by another person, the motion picture is a unique combination of his talents and inspiration. Worrying about his native Ukraine in these hard times, Serhiy Krutsenko suffered greatly and at the same time, he believed in the victory of love over hatred, so the film is a tribute to his memory.



**Director's Statement:** What is the civilization worth, along with the mechanisms of its security that cannot instantly stop murder, rape, and torture at the beginning of the 21st century in the center of Europe? This is what I have been asking myself these days. When I chose the theme of the Babyn Yar tragedy and began shooting this film, I believed that it would be a parable and thoughts on the past in the form of a staged motion picture perfectly narrated by the famous Israeli actor Alex Anski, as well as thoughts about the history against the background of a blooming and beautiful city - the modern and peaceful Kyiv. However, it wasn't to be. Fate in the truest sense of the meaning changed the form of the film. Because what seemed to be the past that had forever remained in the chronicles and that cannot be repeated in the conditions of the modern civilization has turned out to be relevant.

**BEYOND TRIATHLON** *World Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 80 min / English / Documentary

Directors & Producers: Brian Bayerl, Chuck Malkus;  
Producers: Mackenzie Drewe, Ambie Hay; Editor: Brian Bayerl; Executive Producer: Chuck Malkus; Featuring: Dottie Dorion, Celeste Callahan, Sika Henry; Contact: cmalkus@malkus.com

An inspirational story of two women triathletes, pioneers in the sport, during an era when competitions for women were frowned upon. The journeys of Dottie Dorion and Celeste Callahan are part of the movement that battles gender stereotypes and changes perceptions. Their stories shed light on events that became life-changing and progressive due to perseverance and community.

Their efforts resulted in the foundation of what Women's Leagues and changes in the sports world after experiencing personal resilience towards adversity. The evolution of women's sports in this documentary helps younger generations understand a sense of community and the value of giving back with "play it forward" efforts by women, including narrator Sika Henry, the first black woman professional triathlete.

**Special Guests:** Chuck Malkus & Brian Bayerl

**Sunday, Nov 10, 7:15pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by**



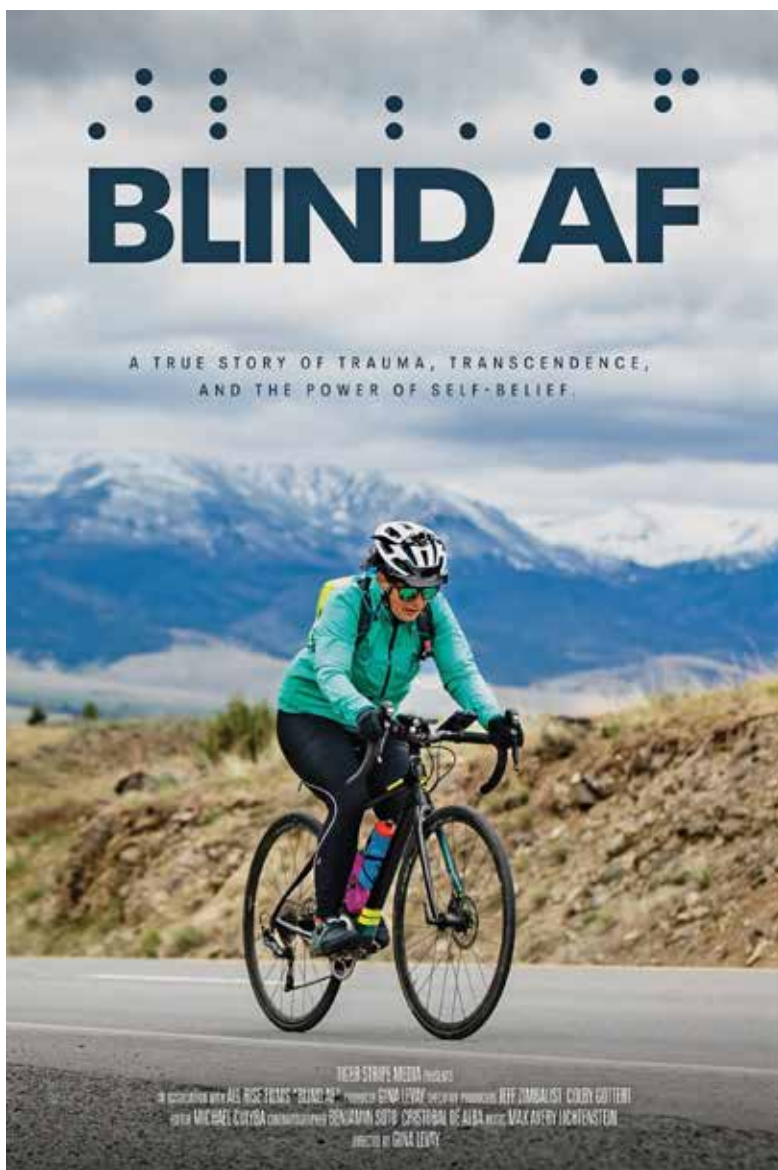
**Directors:** Brian is a multi-award-winning cinematographer, director and editor. His work includes *Ferrari Challenge*, *Swamp Wars*, *The Years of Living Dangerously*, and *Funny or Die*. His film credits include *8: The Mormon Proposition* and *For Once in My Life* with Grammy Nominated Mark Moormann winner of the Audience Award at SXSW. Bayerl's additional films include *Full Circle: Before They Were Famous* chronicling Andy Warhol and Robert Indiana's rise to international pop art fame; *Datuna: Portrait of America* (Winner, Raindance Film Festival, London), *Taylor & Ultra: On the 60s, The Factory and Being a Warhol Superstar* (Nominated Best Doc Short, Tribeca Film Festival, New York) and *Foster Shock*, an expose on the Foster Care System. Additional recognitions include a Focus on Florida Filmmaker by the Knight Foundation and a LA Cinematographers Award.



Chuck is an award-winning executive producer, director and author. His credits include the Netflix documentary series *Heist*, which was a Top 5 Most Watched across all streamers during summer, 2021. His book, *Full Circle: The Remarkable True Story*, is the basis for an Emmy-nominated ESPN documentary. Malkus' docs also include CNBC's *American Greed*; Investigation Discovery's *Guilty Rich* and Vice Network's *How to Rob a Bank*. His recognitions include a National Association of Broadcasters award for work on CBS' *Neighbors 4 Neighbors* and a National Association of Counties first place award for a Broward County tv series. *Shock*, an expose on the Foster Care System in Florida.



**Director's Statement:** In *Beyond Triathlon*, filmmakers share a unique perspective of pioneering women who helped make the sport what it is today ... rejecting the social conventions of an era, these women broke a mold and formed everlasting friendships.

**BLIND AF** *Florida Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 87 min / English / Documentary

Director & Producer: Gina LeVay; Executive Producers: Jeff Zimbalist, Colby Gottert; Animation: Padraic Driscoll, Andrew Lyndon; Editor: Michael Culyba; Cinematographer: Benjamin Soto, Cristobal del Alba; Music: Max Avery Lichtenstein; Featuring: Shawn Cheshire; Contact: gina@ginalevay.com

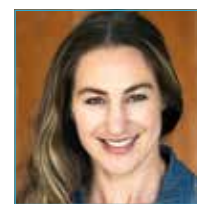
An unflinching, emotionally raw story of courage, transcendence and the healing power of self-belief, **BLIND AF** tells the journey of a blind female Paralympic champion and multiple world-record holder, Shawn Cheshire as she becomes the first blind person to ride a single, non-tandem bike across the United States—3600 miles in 60 straight days—while confronting painful truths about her past that she spent a lifetime trying to outrun. Driven as much by the determination to live independently as by the restlessness and vulnerability borne of her complex PTSD, Shawn forges a brave – and often dangerous – path through fear that stands as a powerful testament to the human spirit, and an encouragement for all of us to live our most authentic lives, whatever the risks.

**Special Guest:** Shawn Cheshire

**Saturday, Nov 9, 1pm,  
Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Gina works nationally and abroad for clients such as ESPN, Smithsonian, IGK/Sephora, Vanity Fair, TIME and Worldwide Wrestling Entertainment (WWE). Her award-winning documentary work about the legendary NYC miners, *The Sandhog Project*, premiered at New York's Grand Central Terminal and later was published as a book by powerHouse. LeVay's work is exhibited in the US and Europe, including Museum of Contemporary Photography, Museo d'art Contemporanea Roma (MACRO), American Museum of Natural History and Museum of the City of New York. LeVay received an MFA in Photography, Video and Related Media from The School of Visual Arts.



**Director's Statement:** Shawn's story explores topics of disability/inclusion, PTSD/mental health, domestic abuse and women's empowerment. Our vision is to cultivate impact campaigns at grassroot levels to ensure that Shawn's story is amplified and accessible to a diverse, expansive audience. Making the film accessible in audio description and closed captioning is an integral part of *Blind AF* and Shawn will be involved in the process. The accessibility features will be deliberate, meaningful, artistic and true to the film experience.



**THE CIGARETTE SURFBOARD** *Southeast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 93 min / English / Surf Documentary

Director, Cinematographer, Editor: Ben Judkins; Producers: Ben Judkins, Taylor Lane; Executive Producers: Marisla Foundation, Plastic Pollution Coalition, Suszi Sutherland, Friends Foundation International; Contributing Producers: Heffernan Foundation, Karen & Steve Skurnac; Featuring: Taylor Lane, Jack Johnson, Cliff Kapono, Easkey Britton, Fergal Smith, Mikey February, Hannah Bennett, Chris Himes, Tom Novotny ; Contact: benjudkins1@gmail.com

An impassioned surfer creates a functional surfboard with 10,000 littered cigarette butts collected from California beaches. The surfboard becomes a global platform to spark ocean stewardship and the symbol of a grassroots campaign to hold Big Tobacco accountable for their toxic, plastic waste.

**Special Guests:** Ben Judkins, Taylor Lane

**Thursday, Nov 14, 7:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

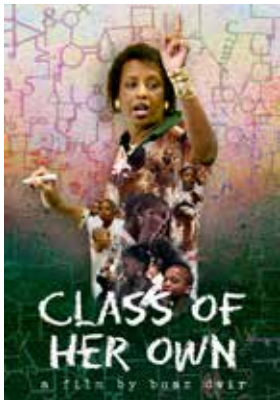
**Sponsored by**



**Director:** Ben Judkins is an award-winning filmmaker, having won "Best Locally-Produced Work" at the 2017 Santa Cruz Film Festival for his short film "Marshall". He also received the Dean's Award for "Marshall" from the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Film & Digital Media. He worked as a Water Cinematographer and Assistant Camera for the Emmy Award-Winning PBS series "The Mind of a Chef", and has created numerous surfing videos and documentary shorts for a wide range of clients including Adventure Sports Network, Men's Journal, Red Bull Media, Save the Waves Coalition, and Stab Magazine. "The Cigarette Surfboard" is his feature-length directorial debut.



**CLASS OF HER OWN** *Florida Premiere*



Florida / 2024 / 61 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Boaz Dvir; Producers: Boaz Dvir, Emil Pinnock, Matthew Einstein; Cinematographer: Zachary Bennett, Boaz Dvir, Andres Farfan, Jorge E. Senisse; Graphics: Adhyaksh Amarnath; Music: Boaz Dvir, Blake Blanchard, Matthew Tiramani; Cast: Tamara Tunie (narrator), Gloria Jean Merriex, Leanetta McNealy, Greg Taylor, Emily Bonner, Don Pemberton, Buffy Bondy, Thomasenia Adams

During her first 25 years at Duval Elementary (Gainesville, Fla.), Gloria Jean Merriex was a typical teacher. She adhered faithfully to her district’s rigid pacing guides. But after her school flunked its high-stakes state exam, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, she changed. Completely. As a result of failing the FCAT, Duval faced major consequences. They included a budget freeze and the threat of a shutdown. The state and district pressured Gloria and her colleagues to strictly follow the curriculum and guidelines.

Gloria fought back. In one year, she catapulted Duval to an A. She became a national model, giving us a blueprint for student success.

This is a film in FLIFF39 that will inspire and move you for than CLASS OF HER OWN. Boaz Dvir, a filmmaker you probably don’t know by name, but he has been to FLIFF before with extremely two accomplished films: A WING AND A PRAYER and JESSIE’S DAD. So proud to have him back with this exceptional film.

All tickets for this film are complimentary thanks to Sunshine411. A FREE reception for all ticket holders follows the film.

**Special Guest:** Boaz Dvir

**Wednesday, Nov 14, 5:30pm,  
Lauderhill Performing Arts Center**



**Director:** Boaz Dvir tells the stories of ordinary people who transform into trailblazers. They include a teacher who emerges as a disruptive innovator (*Class of Her Own*); a World War II flight engineer who leads a secret operation to prevent a second Holocaust (*A Wing and a Prayer*); an uneducated truck driver who becomes a highly effective child-protection activist (*Jessie’s Dad*); and a French business consultant who sets out to kill his father’s Nazi executioner (*Cojot*).



**FILMED IN BROWARD** *The following short film will precede the feature.*



**THE PAD HUSTLE** *FLORIDA PREMIERE*

Broward / 2024 / 6 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Kyla Holmes; Producers: Jimmeke Anderson, Sierra Davis, Regina Hoyles, Yha Mourhia Wright, Chassidy Jade; Camera: Dominic Easter; Editor: Lauren McGarret; Production Coach: Imane Lawrence Brooks; Cast: Rita Peraza, Marie Patrice Kebreau Pierre, Farrah Samara, Marcia Staple, Chadesia Young, Jaelin Holmes; Contact: kyla.r.holmes@gmail.com

THE PAD HUSTLE is a story about a headstrong highschooler who unexpectedly gets her period during class - (what girl hasn’t?!) - and as a result of the school having no resources, embarks on a side HUSTLE to help her classmates get the menstrual products they desperately need.

The Pad Hustle was created in partnership by The Black Girls Film Camp (Yay!...Keep it up BGFC!)

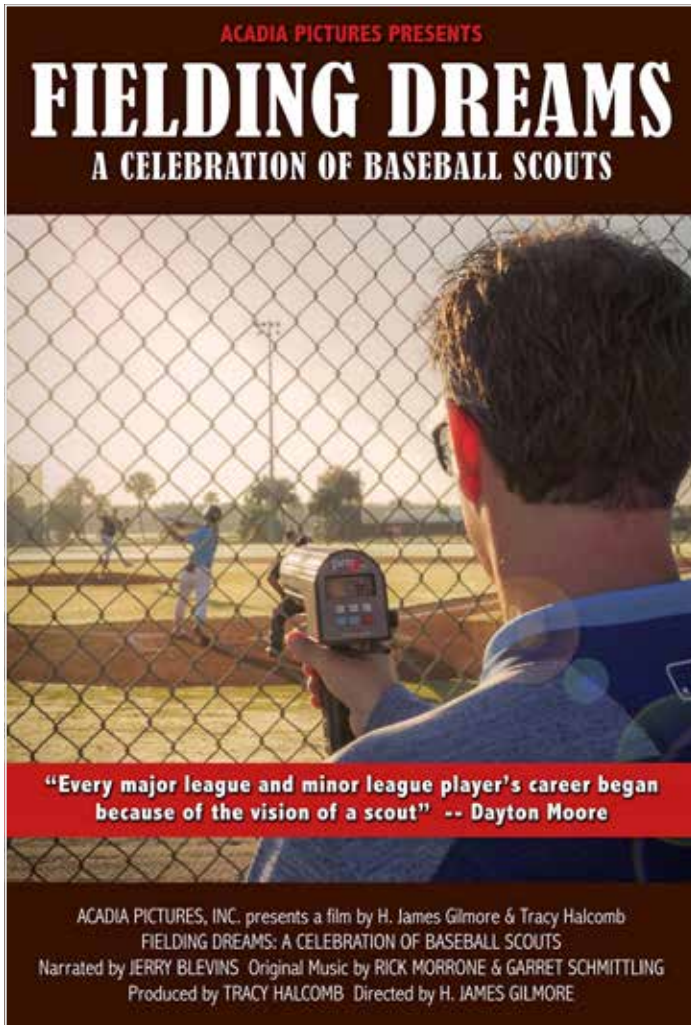
**Special Guests:** Kyla Holmes

Thanks to the generosity of Sunshine411, tickets for the screening will be FREE.

**Director:** Kyla Holmes is a visionary teen film director with a passion for storytelling and a talent for bringing unique perspectives to the screen. At just 17, Kyla Holmes has already made a name for herself in the film industry with her critically acclaimed short film, *The Pad Hustle*.



**FIELDING DREAMS: A Celebration of Baseball Scouts** *Second Look Screening*



USA / 2023 / 88 min / English / Documentary

Director: H. James Gilmore; Producers: Tracy Halcomb, PhD; Camera & Editor: ???; Composers: ???; Featuring: Jerry Blevins; Contact: hjames@acadiapictures.com

The film documents up close the men and women searching for the ballplayers of tomorrow. It goes beyond the "Moneyball mindset" and features dozens of interviews with some of the scouting legends of the game, including five who helped build the 2023 World Series Champion Texas Rangers.

Traveling from Michigan to Florida, Illinois to Texas, and Georgia to Puerto Rico, the filmmakers interviewed scouts over a four-year period against the backdrop of the Covid-19 pandemic. What follows is an intimate profile of a uniquely American profession - a profession now under threat from biometrics, analytics and the big business that rules the game.

Narrated by former MLB pitcher Jerry Blevins.

**Special Guests:** H. James Gilmore, Tracy Halcomb

**Thursday, Nov 14, 5pm,  
Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by Flagler College Cinematic Arts**



**Director:** H. James Gilmore is a documentary filmmaker who focuses on history and culture, including: the transformation of suburban America (*CHRONICLE OF AN AMERICAN SUBURB*, 2002); the economic collapse of Detroit (*MEN AT WORK: VOICES FROM DETROIT'S UNDERGROUND ECONOMY*, 2012); and the amazing women who broke through the glass ceiling of professional poker (*CRACKING ACES: A WOMAN'S PLACE AT THE TABLE*, 2018).

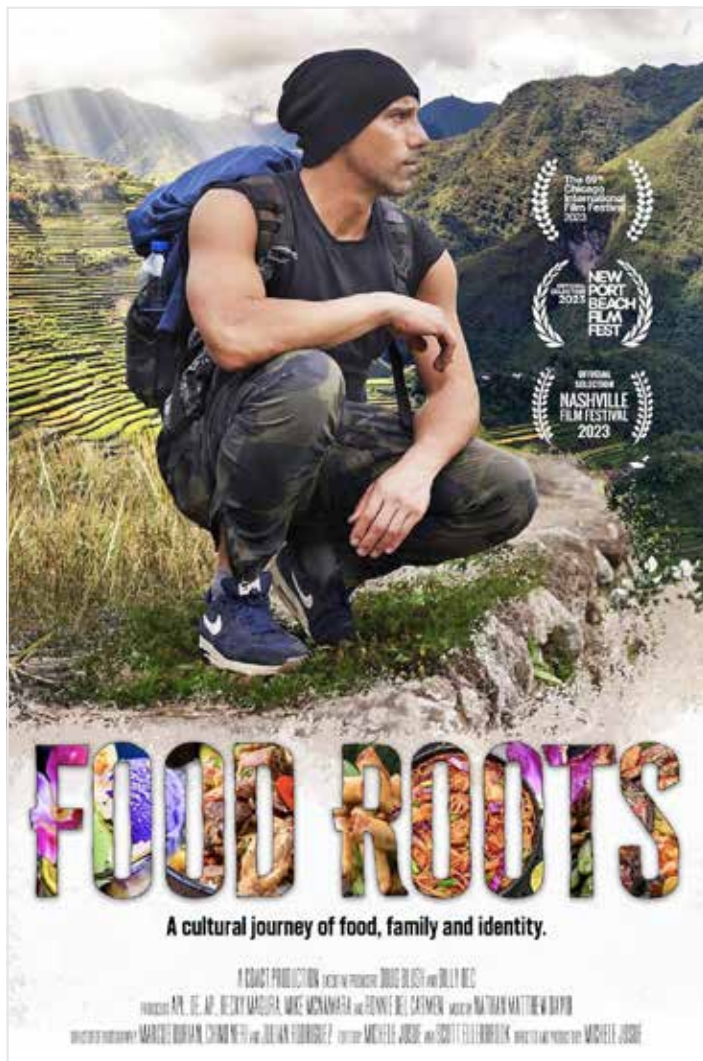


Gilmore has worked for a number of broadcast organizations, including *The Christian Science Monitor* and *New Hampshire Public Television*. He holds a MA in Broadcasting and Film from the University of Iowa and a BA in Theater and Political Science from Kalamazoo College. Since 1995 he has been the executive producer of *Acadia Pictures*, an independent documentary production company based in southwest Michigan. A retired Clinical Professor of Journalism and Screen Studies at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, Gilmore is currently the Visiting Filmmaker of Cinematic Arts at Flagler College in St. Augustine, Fla.

**Director's Statement:** My cousin Brian Williams is a scout for the Texas Rangers. During family gatherings he would regale us with amazing stories of his life in baseball, and he offered to introduce me to the world of scouting. And that's how *FIELDING DREAMS* was born. Little did my producing partner Tracy Halcomb and I know that COVID would turn the world of baseball upside down, and our one-year project would expand to four.

From Michigan to Florida, Illinois to Texas, Georgia to Puerto Rico we started interviewing scouts and documenting their life stories. In the process we learned so much-- and are proud to present a slice of this uniquely American profession.

**FOOD ROOTS** *Florida Premiere*



Florida / 2024 / 61 min / English / Documentary

Director: Michele Josue; Producers: Billy Dec, Michele Josue, Douglas Blush, Becky Magura, Ronnie Del Carmen, Apl. de.Ap; Featuring: Billy Dec, Leilani Castro, Celia Bumangalag Dec, Stacey Efstathiou, Michael Morales, Rosario Sta.Ana, Kael Demetrio, Roberto Bumangalag, Nora Bumangalag, Lisa Leofando, Pilar Sangalang, Oscar Bumangalag, Nora BumangalagCarasi, Apo Whang-Od, Robin Sta.Ana; Contact: dana@rockitranch.com

FOOD ROOTS follows longtime Chicago restaurateur and Emmy Award-winning TV personality Billy Dec, as he sets off on a journey to his mother's native Philippines, to find his last living elders, learn the recipes of his ancestors, and gain a deeper understanding of his cultural and culinary identity.

I am not a Foodie. I don't take pictures of my dishes at restaurants and post them for the world to see. And if there is one thing misleading about this film, it's the title. This is so much more than a movie about food. Food does play a starring role. But I got so much more from it than just that. Billy is a personable charmer and I mean that in the very best way. Immediately likeable and engaging. I know the FLIFF audience will appreciate this film.

**Saturday, Nov 9, 10am, Savor Cinema**

Sponsored by



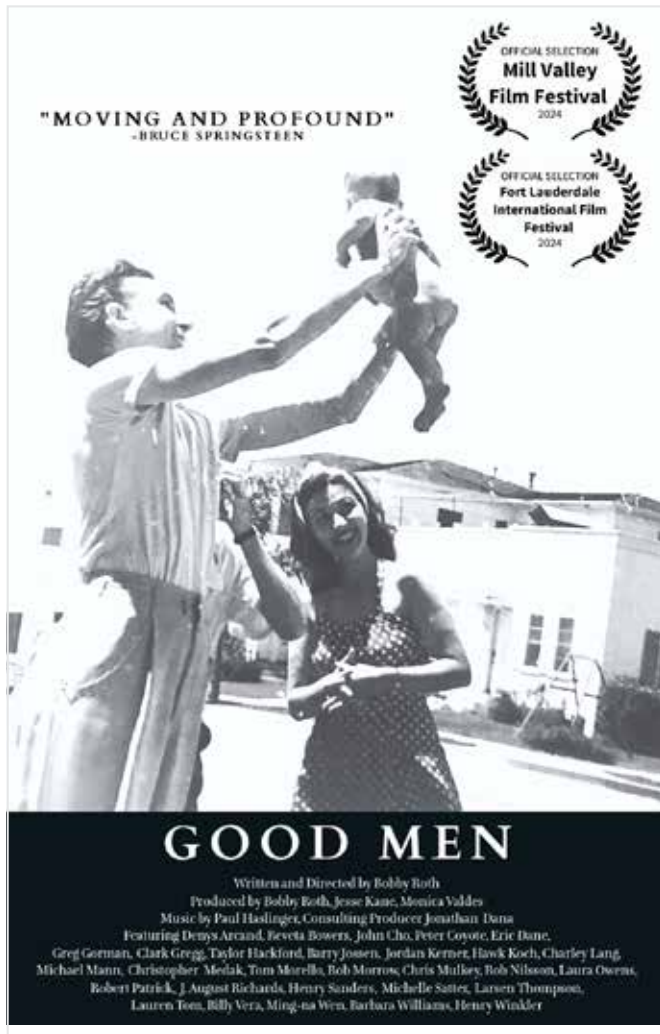
**Director:** Michele Josue is an Emmy award-winning Filipino-American documentary filmmaker based in Los Angeles. Her critically acclaimed feature debut *MATT SHEPARD IS A FRIEND OF MINE* about Matthew Shepard is the winner of 10 Best Documentary and Audience Awards from festivals worldwide and boasts a 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes. The film won the 2016 Daytime Emmy Award for "Outstanding Special Class Special." Michele is also the Executive Producer, Director, and Lead Editor of *HAPPY JAIL*, the Netflix Original documentary series about the Filipino jail that is home to the world-famous "Dancing Inmates." *HAPPY JAIL* is the winner of the 2021 Silver Telly Award for Series Documentary for Television.



Michele was selected for the prestigious International Documentary Film Festival Amsterdam's World Documentary Exchange filmmaker program in 2013 and has received The Reel Affirmations' Keith Clark & Barry Becker Filmmaker Award. She has served as a juror at several film festivals and participated as a speaker and guest on various film panels, radio, podcasts, and TV shows. Her essays have been featured in *Indiewire*, *The New York Times Upfront*, and *The Huffington Post*.

She is currently in post-production on a new feature documentary entitled *NURSE UNSEEN*, which explores the little-known history and humanity of the Filipino nurses risking their lives on the frontlines of a pandemic while facing a resurgence of anti-Asian hate in the streets. This personal documentary unearths the colonial ties between the Philippines and the United States that have led to Filipino-American nurses becoming the unsung backbone of the United States healthcare system. Most recently, Michele was selected as a 2021 Film Independent Fast Track Fellow with *NURSE UNSEEN*.

**GOOD MEN** *East Coast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 113 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Bobby Roth; Producers: Bobby Roth, Jesse Kane, Monica Valdes; Editor: Jesse Kane; Music: Paul Haslinger; Consulting Producer: Jonathan Dana; Cast: Denys Arcand, Reveta Bowers, John Cho, Peter Coyote, Eric Dane, Greg Gorman, Clark Gregg, Paul Haslinger, Taylor Hackford, Barry Jossen, Jordan Kerner, Hawk Koch, Charley Lang, Michael Mann, Christopher Medan, Tom Morello, Rob Morrow, Chris Mullen, Rob Nilsson, Rabbi Laura Owens, Robert Patrick, J. August Richards, Henry Gayle Sanders, Michelle Satter, Larsen Thompson, Lauren Tom, Billy Vera, Min-Na Wen, Barbara Williams & Henry Winkler; Contact: RothBobby@aol.com

After the birth of his grandson, Bobby Roth undertakes a cinematic investigation as to what constitutes being a "good man" in today's world. This voyage of discovery leads him to interview more than fifty of his friends, both men and women who he considers to be "good people," about their views on everything from how they were parented to their thoughts on feminism, change, and regrets they might have. Their answers both surprises and enlighten both the viewers and Bobby, himself.

**Special Guest:** Bobby Roth

**Friday, Nov 15, 5:30pm,  
Savor Cinema**

Bobby Roth will receive the FLIFF Lifetime Achievement Award prior to the film.



**Director:** Bobby was born and raised in Los Angeles. He studied philosophy and creative writing at Berkeley before graduating with a BA in Cinema from USC in 1972. He went on to film school at UCLA, where he received his MFA in Motion Picture Production in 1975. Since then he has directed more than one hundred episodes of television, twenty-five TV movies, and thirteen feature films. He was a founding member of the Independent Feature Project and the first Co-Chairman of the DGA's Independent Feature Committee. His films have won countless awards and have been exhibited in hundreds of international film festivals. He also teaches film seminars throughout the world. With more than four decades of Hollywood film experience few Directors have accumulated such an iconic list of directing credits including: *Miami Vice*, *Beverly Hills*, *Prison Break*, *Revenge*, *Grey's Anatomy*, *Marvels Agents of Shield*, *Scorpion*, *Hawaii 5-0*, *Player* and many more.



**Director's Statement:** Men, "why we are as we are," has been my focus as a filmmaker for fifty years. Along the way I was gifted with kindnesses from mentors such as Robert M. Young, Irvin Kershner, Sidney Poitier, and Constantin Costa-Gavras, who all gave me their thoughts and their attention. They believed in me, which gave me the courage to be an artist, after my parents had groomed me to be a floor-covering manufacturer. Last year, on my seventy-third birthday, my grandson was born. I looked at his purity and saw his inherent goodness and thought, "How will they treat a Jewish boy, born today?" More importantly I thought, "Who would he become?" My grandson's birth led me to question my own journey and the many factors that determined how I have acted and reacted to this life. I asked, "Why am I as I am? Making this movie fundamentally changed my opinion of human nature. I used to believe we were all the same. Today I believe we are all unique, like snowflakes.

Anthony Hsieh and Steven Savor present

# FLIFF'S GRANDER *Finale*

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16**

Anthony Hsieh is the American Dream. After his father and best friend die, and in his 60s, he decides it's time to hang up the suit and pursue his lifelong passion... one man's lifelong dream, not to be missed.



**RED CARPET 6:30PM**  
**SCREENING 7:00PM**  
**DINING • DANCING • DRINKING**  
**9PM**  
**MUSIC BY THE**  
**WORLD FAMOUS**



**VIP**  
**SUPERYACHT**  
**AFTER PARTIES**

**PIER SIXTY-SIX SOUTH**

2150 SE 17th Street, Fort Lauderdale

FOR TICKET INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT [www.FLIFF.com](http://www.FLIFF.com)

**GRANDER** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 111 min / English / Documentary

Director: Anthony Hsieh; Co-Producers: Tanner Matthews & David Lassley; Producer: Anthony Hsieh; Featuring: Anthony Hsieh, Steve Lassley; Contact: tanner@filmpacific.com

Anthony Hsieh is the American Dream. He immigrated with his family from China at the age of eight and founded multiple financial institutions to incredible success. After his father and best friend passed, he decided it was time to hang up the suit and pursue his lifelong passion of sport fishing. With eleven boats in all oceans, and full-time teams, he chases the one thing that money can't buy - a thousand-pound Marlin, known as a grander. This film documents the first year of the "World Tour" trying to find one of the biggest fish on planet Earth. Along the way, we show how it all began, fighting storms in Australia, tagging large females in Brazil for research and ultimately participating in the World Cup in Africa. It's a high-octane adrenaline rush, a push to raise awareness for our oceans, and one man's lifelong dream, not to be missed.

**Special Guests:** Anthony Hsieh, Tanner Matthews

**Saturday, Nov 16, Superyacht Village**

**6:30 Red Carpet Arrivals**

**7pm Film**

**9pm DINNER - DRINKS - DANCING**

*to the Landsharks, a Jimmy Buffet Tribute Band*

**Sponsored by Steven Savor and Anthony Hsieh**

**Co-Sponsored by: Pier 66**

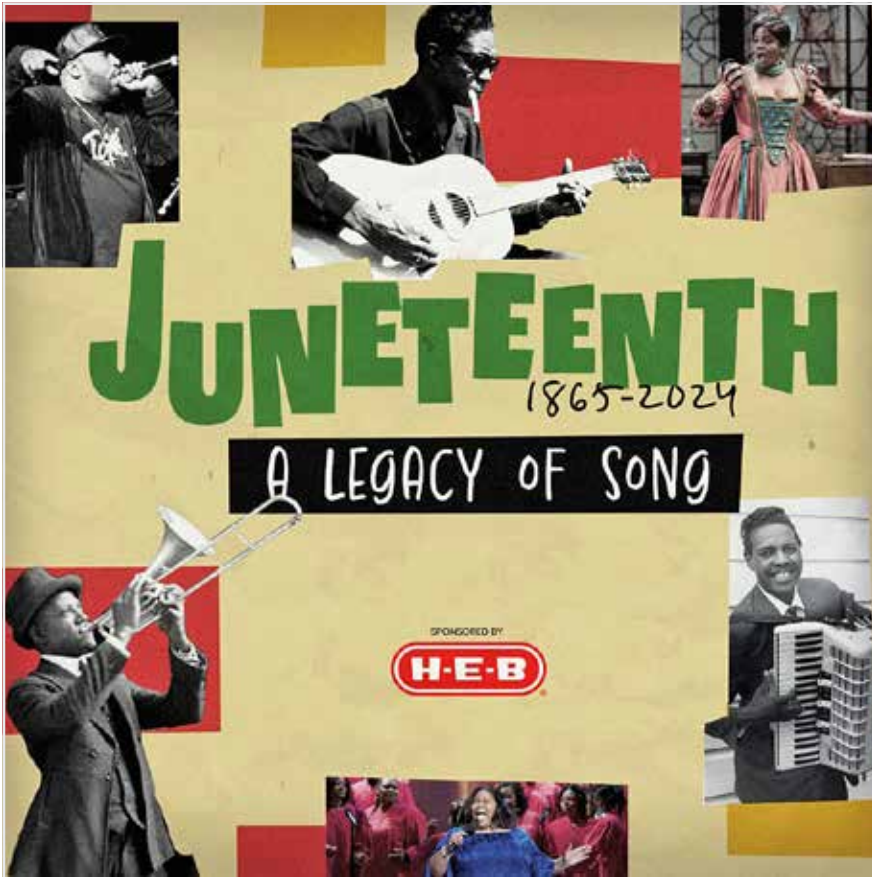


**Director:** Anthony Hsieh is the American Dream, he and his family immigrated to the United States around the age of seven. The fishing bug caught him early, buying his first boat at age 10 and as his business continued to grow and prosper, so did his fishing passion. Along with legendary Captain Steve Lassley, they began the 'BADCO WORLD TOUR' in June of 2022 to seek out the largest blue marlin in the world. In the first year, they fished in Europe, South America, Australia and Africa. The completion of the world tour will include circumnavigation of the world, the first sportfishing program to attempt this feat.



**Director's Statement:** This film is dedicated to everyone that loves fishing. We firmly believe we must leave fishing in a better place than we found it. We are grateful to document some of our travels and experiences with the world, it gives us joy to share the passion and to promote fishing to the world.

## JUNETEENTH 1865-2024: A Legacy Of Song *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 56 min / English /  
Documentary

Director: Mia Gradney; Writers: Mia Gradney, Len Cannon; Producers: Mia Gradney, Dale Lockett, Len Cannon, Nicole Jones, Kristyn Beecher, Pacifica Sauer; Cinematographer: Cris Luna; Editor: Pacifica Sauer; Photographers: Christian Lagera, Hai Le, Kevin Olmstead, Rob Grant, Alex Brouard; Featuring: Mia Gradney, Len Cannon; Contact: [dlockett@khou.com](mailto:dlockett@khou.com)

This is the fourth installment in KHOU 11's nationally acclaimed, award-winning Juneteenth documentary series. We explore the origins of African American music and how it has progressed into today's sounds and performances. You will hear familiar sounds of gospel, jazz, funk, and hip-hop and meet the talented people who have made a mark in Houston's music scene.

**Monday, Nov 11, 1pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Saturday, Nov 16, 1pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**



**Director:** Native Houstonian Mia Gradney is a multi-E Emmy Award-winning creator/talent and the 5, 6, and 10 p.m. anchor at KHOU 11 News in Houston, Texas.

For two decades, Mia has showcased her versatility, covering everything from historic hurricanes to major Hollywood red-carpet events, and national sports championships. Creating KHOU's nationally acclaimed Juneteenth documentary series is one of Mia's defining career accomplishments.

Mia is a proud alumna of Sam Houston State University with a degree in Radio/Television. In 2016, the university honored and inducted her into its Distinguished Alumni Society. She is also a past inductee into the school's Dan Rather Hall of Fame.

**Director's Statement:** On June 19th, 1865, the last enslaved African Americans learned of their freedom when Union Army General Gordon Granger arrived on Galveston Island, along with mostly black Union troops, to announce and enforce emancipation for all... freedom.

Juneteenth is a time of reflection but also a reminder of the struggles overcome and the progress that still needs to be made 159 years later. It's much more than a holiday; it's a call to truly embrace the values of freedom and independence while celebrating the enduring spirit of the African American community and its lasting contributions.

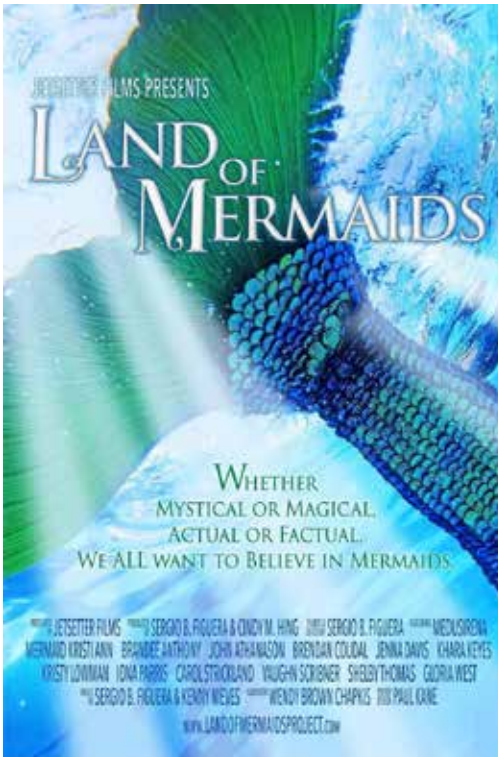
Black music is very much a historical timeline of African Americans constant pursuit of equality while embodying black culture and defining new musical genres.

From work songs the enslaved sang together on plantations, to the birth of gospel, jazz, blues, and the dynamic beats of hip-hop and R&B, music has remained a powerful tool of storytelling and cultural expression for the black community.





**LAND OF THE MERMAIDS** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 59 min / English / Documentary

Director, Writer, Cinematographer, Editor: Sergio Figuera; Historian: Vaughn Scribner; Featuring: Wendy Anderson (Marina: The Fire-Eating Mermaid, Ft Lauderdale), Kristiann Mills (Key West), Brandee Anthony (Vero Beach), Kahra Keyes (Miami), Gloria West (MerMade), Carol Strickland (Mermaid Vodka), Jenna Davis (Raw Love SunScreen), Brendan Coudal (Artist), Shelby Thomas (1000 Mermaids Conservation), Kristy Lowman (former Weeki Wachee Mermaid), Tya Lewis (Seashell Queen); Contact: info@sergiofiguera.com

Land of Mermaids explores the cultural and financial impact that mermaids have had on the state of Florida. With reports from throughout the Sunshine State, including Key West, Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, Lake Worth, Vero Beach, Nokomis, Riverview and, of course, WEEKI WACHEE Springs.

**Special Guest:** Sergio Figuera + Merpeople including Fort Lauderdale's own Marina, The Fire-eating Mermaid!

**Saturday, Nov 9, 5pm, Gateway Cinema**



The following short film will precede the feature.

**Director:** Emmy and Telly winner Sergio Figuera has been involved in the broadcasting industry in various capacities for over 30 years. Most recently as a videographer, editor and producer for South Florida PBS and his own company, Jetsetter Films. In addition to television, Sergio is a singer/songwriter and was signed to a deal with Warner Music Latin with his group "Latin Bangers" in 2003.



**UNLIKELY MERMAID**

USA / 2024 / 18 min / English / Documentary

Director: Lorraine Portman; Writers: Lorraine Portman, Jay Pennington; Editor: Jay Pennington; Featuring: Lorraine Portman, Margaret M. Nicholson; Contact: savingsophie@aol.com

An Unlikely Mermaid and her 79-year-old friend audition to be World Famous Weeki Wachee Mermaids.

**Special Guests:** Lorraine Portman, Margaret M. Nicholson

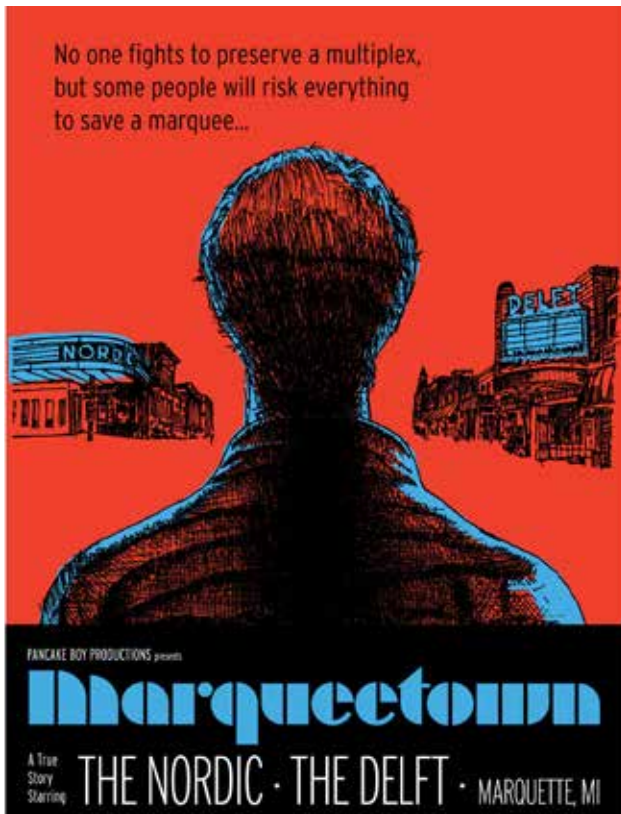
**Director:** Lorraine Portman has been swimming longer than she has been walking but did not dip her toe into documentary filmmaking until auditioning to be a Weeki Wachee mermaid with her friend Peggy, 79.

Portman has written and directed seven narrative short films and a feature. She taught Playwriting and Screenwriting for ten years at Flagler College in Saint Augustine, Florida. She studied Theater at Smith College and Film at Florida State University. Portman attended the National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Portman also directs theater productions.

Lorraine is a Screenplay Development Consultant for LA based Samaco Films.



**MARQUEETOWN** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 83 min / English / Documentary

Directors & Writers: Joseph Beyer & Jordan Anderson; Producers: Kathleen Glynn, Diana Milock, Kathleen Verduin, Ward & Mary Gillett, Yerry Lynn Carrithers, Joe & Katie Anderson, Christal Frost Anderson, Beth Milligan, Gary Gatzke, Erin Anderson Whiting, Ben Whiting; Featuring: Bernie Rosendahl, Anne White, Scott Anderson, Ed Wales, Marlene Glass Beaudry, Paul Rogers, Rusty Bowers, Lannie Lantto, Jim Koski, Peggy Frazier, Mona Lang, Tyler Tichelaar, Mark Dupont, Jeff O’Neill, William Streur, Tom Vear, Jack Deo; Contact: marquedoc@gmail.com

No one fights to preserve a multiplex, but some people will risk everything to save a marquee. Through booms and busts, Delft Theatres Inc. - and its innovative gem, The Nordic - endured in Marquette for almost 100 years, even as the world changed endlessly around them.

Local kid Bernie Rosendahl’s modern crusade to restore the historic arthouse to its former glory leads filmmakers to discover a hidden cinema empire in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Portraying the fascinating history of motion pictures through one iconic screen - "Marqueetown" is the true story of chasing your dreams, redefining failure and success, and reembracing the enduring magic of movies.

**Friday, Nov 8, 5:30,  
Savor Cinema**



**Director:** Joseph Beyer worked with the Sundance Institute for 14 years, last as Director of Digital Initiatives where he led strategy, creative development and operation of digital content, social media and special projects. He joined The Redford Center as Director of Marketing and Distribution advocating environmental and social impact.

He has been the Exec Director to the Traverse City Film Fest, Director of Audience Engagement and Strategy to MyNorth Media, Exec Director to Michigan Legacy Art Park, and Exec Director to Parallel 45 Theatre. He volunteered locally on the Traverse City Arts Commission Art Selection Panel, the Collection Committee of the Dennon Museum Center, and the Fresh Coast Film Festival Board of Directors. He is a regular contributor to Interlochen Public Radio, Northern Express, and The Boardman Review.

Jordan Anderson founded his Pancake Boy Productions, which produces multi-platform campaigns in video, audio and social media for companies around the northern Michigan region.

Jordan was Creative Director to Midwestern Production for seven years, designing and producing campaigns for clients and for the award-winning array of outlets. He is one of the region’s top DJ’s and Music Producer for live events, or as he calls it “Guest Movement Consultant.” His company Mr. Music continues rocking even today.

He served as a founding volunteer to Parallel 45 Theatre and produces content for local nonprofit orgs. He graduated from Central Michigan University where he studied Broadcast and Cinematic Arts. He sits on the Board of the Traverse City Historical Society.



**THE NITA & ZITA PROJECT** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 75 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Marci Darling Johnson; Producer: Sharon Gillen; Associate Producer: Alison Gordon; Editor: Eva K. Morgan; Featuring: Pleasant Gehman, Dita Von Teese; Contact: princessdelaluna@gmail.com

The story of legendary 1920's New Orleans dancers, two Jewish sisters and glittering globetrotters who fled antisemitism in Hungary in 1922 to blaze their own trail as contortionist acrobatic performers. They rose to international stardom and danced through every war before retiring to New Orleans, where they became recluses, painting their creole cottage top to bottom with magnificent polka dots. After they died, their neighbor found thousands of costumes in their home, which she then sold in a yard sale that last 5 years. Their story has inspired countless artists, who have created award-winning plays, dance tributes, paintings and poetry based on the extraordinary story of these sisters.

**Special Guest:** Marci Darling Johnson, Sharon Gillen

**Saturday, Nov 9, 3:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 1pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by:**



**Director:** Marci's literary prowess is evident through her five bestselling books and her published works in esteemed publications such as the *NYTimes*, *Boston Globe*, and *Oprah Magazine*. Her ability to captivate audiences with her writing has earned her recognition and respect within the industry.

Marci is an esteemed educator, currently serving as Adjunct Faculty at Endicott College. Her passion for integrating art into teaching strategies has led her to instruct and inspire educators on innovative approaches to education. Marci's dedication to learning is demonstrated by her Master's degree in Education from Harvard, a BA in Creative Writing from UCLA, and a Certificate in Writing from Stanford.

Marci's involvement in the film industry is extensive, having worked at the Sundance Film Institute and Film Festival, as well as serving on the Short Film Selection Committee for five years. Her expertise and discerning eye have also been utilized on the Short and Feature Film Selection Committees for the Big Apple Film Festival and Boston Film Festival.

**Director's Statement:** One winter night, I woke from a dream knowing what I must do: tell the story of Nita & Zita. Why? Two reasons: 1. The story was a wildfire in my soul, burning with the message that the story of the sisters must not be forgotten. 2. The story would be a love letter to my soulmate and dance partner Kim, who had died in 2018. Our "Nita Zita" years were our golden years together, and telling the story of these sisters was my way of reliving our Royal Palace days, days of wine and roses, poetry and cartwheels, wild parties, winking sequins, stage lights, and quiet nights together.

Very little was known about these Jewish Hungarian sisters, in fact, no one even knew if they were really sisters. What was known was the myths: they were glittering globetrotters who danced their way around the world before settling in New Orleans and becoming reclusive eccentrics. They died alone and are buried in the pauper's section of the Hebrew Rest Cemetery, the only attendees at their services was their neighbor and the Rabbi. Their story could have ended there, but it did not.



**Ocklawaha: Tales My Father Told** *Closing Day Film*

USA / 2024 / 28 min / English / Symphonic Poem

Director: Mark Emery; Writer: Steve Robitaille; Producer: Florida Defenders of the Environment, South Florida Symphony Orchestra; Composer: John Gottsch; Cinematography: Mark Emery; Editor: Dan Bramm; Cast: Dane Gottsch, Finn Workman, Dean Ward, Daniel Tommie, Shawnie Tommie; Contact: [steve@fladefenders.org](mailto:steve@fladefenders.org) and [jlorber@southfloridasymphony.org](mailto:jlorber@southfloridasymphony.org)

The film "Ocklawaha: Tales My Father Told" features the symphonic poem by John Gottsch as performed by the South Florida Symphony Orchestra. The "tales," based on the composer's childhood memories with his father on the mystical Ocklawaha River, are impressionistically filmed by Emmy winner Mark Emery, and narrated by Ken Burns stalwart, actor Peter Coyote. The film, which premiered on PBS WUFT on March 20th is written and produced by Emmy winner Steve Robitaille.

**Special Guests:** Stephen Robitaille, Jacqueline Lorber, John Gottsch, Maestra Sebrina María Alfonso, Finn Workman

**Sunday, Nov 17, 2:15pm, Savor Cinema**

Following the film there will be a Florida Reception in the Courtyard.

**Film Sponsor:**  SOUTH FLORIDA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
Sebrina María Alfonso, Music Director

**Reception Sponsor:**  FLORIDA SEMINOLE TOURISM

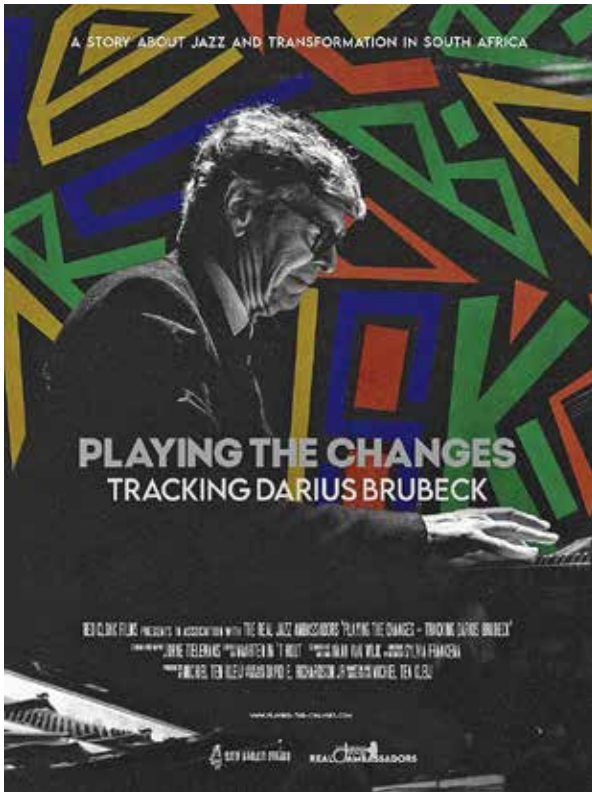


**Director:** Mark Emery is an award-winning filmmaker, musician, and photographer. He most recently shot footage for BBC's *Live Alaska*, *PBS Live*, *BBC Natural World - Florida: The Sunshine State*, and several sections of a 4-part series on North America for the Smithsonian Network.



Writer: Steve Robitaille was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he was first exposed to the lore of Herman Melville and the city's storied fishing and whaling tradition. He later moved to Miami and fished its waters before attending the University of Florida on a journalism scholarship. He earned his Masters from the University of Hartford and PhD from UF. He is a retired college English professor and Emmy Award-winning documentary producer.

## PLAYING THE CHANGES – Tracking Darius Brubeck *Florida Premiere*



Netherlands / 2024 / 61 min / English / Documentary

Director & Writer: Michiel ten Kleij; Producers: Michiel ten Kleij, David E. Richardson, Jr.; Cinematography: Jorne Tielemans; Editor: Maarten in 't Hout; Featuring: Darius Brubeck, Catherine Brubeck, among many others; Contact: info@michielttenkleij.nl

Playing the Changes shows the social impact of jazz music, by telling the story of jazz pianist Darius Brubeck (born in 1947), the eldest son of legendary jazz musician Dave Brubeck. People quite often see him as 'the son of' but he has used this distinction with idealism. This story examines why and how jazz had a transformative role in different types of societies such as Poland and South Africa and tracks Darius Brubeck's involvement in both. Not only by embracing it - but also carrying on his father legacy in his own social, educational and musical way.

The film is so much more than a biography of Darius. It has tremendous historical impact as it illustrates the post WWII environment, communism and the Iron Curtain. It shifts to South Africa and is eye opening detailing Darius and his wife Cathy's unique contribution to the anti-Apartheid effort.

The film is filled with wonderful archival footage and photographs, not only of the Brubeck family but society, here and abroad. Oh, and of course, music, confirming Dave Brubeck's genius and that the apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 5:30pm, Savor Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 1pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Sponsored by: Teri Pattullo**



**Director:** Michiel grew up in front of the television and developed a broad taste in film. He decided to make films for himself. It led him to the Utrecht School of the Arts where he experimented with different genres and narratives.

In his 3rd year he went to Costa Rica to film a jazz documentary called *Un Mecato* on the life of Robin J. Blakeman. Robin is an English jazz musician who moved to Costa Rica to develop his love for Latin Jazz.

Michiel later made a drama film called *Papier Hier*, about a character called Holle Bolle Gijs, a boy who is eternalized as a trash can in fairy tale-themed theme park. The film was a fairy parable to educate children with social skills. The film revolves around neglect, fat shaming and karma.

Michiel then made a film about his youth. He wrote and directed *Steven Caught a Star*. A 'broken home' movie about a boy who grows up with divorcing parents, inspired by his childhood experience. He then made another jazz doc focusing on the life of a Ukrainian jazz vibraphonist living and working in Russia.

**Director's Statement:** The first time I met Darius was in London in 2016. I was there to film a promo for a documentary that I wanted to make about the Jazz Ambassadors program. I was an admirer of Darius' father's music and when I shook his hand, I even thought: this is the son of the man who made *Take Five*, *Rondo a la Turk* and *Unsquare Dance*, among others. I also discovered that Darius was an impressive pianist when I listened to *Years Ago* on Spotify, but Darius' life story in South Africa was completely unknown to me. I was mesmerized by our conversations about his and Cathy's dedication to establish Jazz Studies at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (then University of Natal) during the apartheid- era, and realized how this resonates with the life of his father Dave.

To me it feels as if Darius wanted to make his mark by doing something different in the jazz world. When I interviewed jazz lovers in Poland, I realized that everyone spoke about Dave, but nobody spoke about Darius. Many films have been made about Dave, but the story of Darius has not yet been told. I want to change that with this documentary.



**PORCELAIN WAR** *Second Look Screening*



Ukraine / 2024 / 87 min / Ukrainian & Russian with English subtitles / Documentary

Directors: Brendan Bellomo & Slava Leontyev; Writers: Aniela Sidorska, Brendan Bellomo, Paula DuPre' Pesman; Producers: Aniela Sidorska, Camilla Mazzaferro, Olivia Ahnemann, Paula DuPre' Pesman; Editor: Brendan Bellomo; Featuring: Slavia Leontyev, Anya Stasenco, Andrey Stefanov; Contact: [aniela@imaginarylane.com](mailto:aniela@imaginarylane.com)

Under roaring fighter jets and missile strikes, Ukrainian artists Slava, Anya, and Andrey choose to stay behind and fight, contending with the soldiers they have become. Defiantly finding beauty amid destruction, they show that although it's easy to make people afraid, it's hard to destroy their passion for living.

Winner of the Sundance Film Festival's Grand Jury Prize.

**Sunday, Nov 17, 7pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

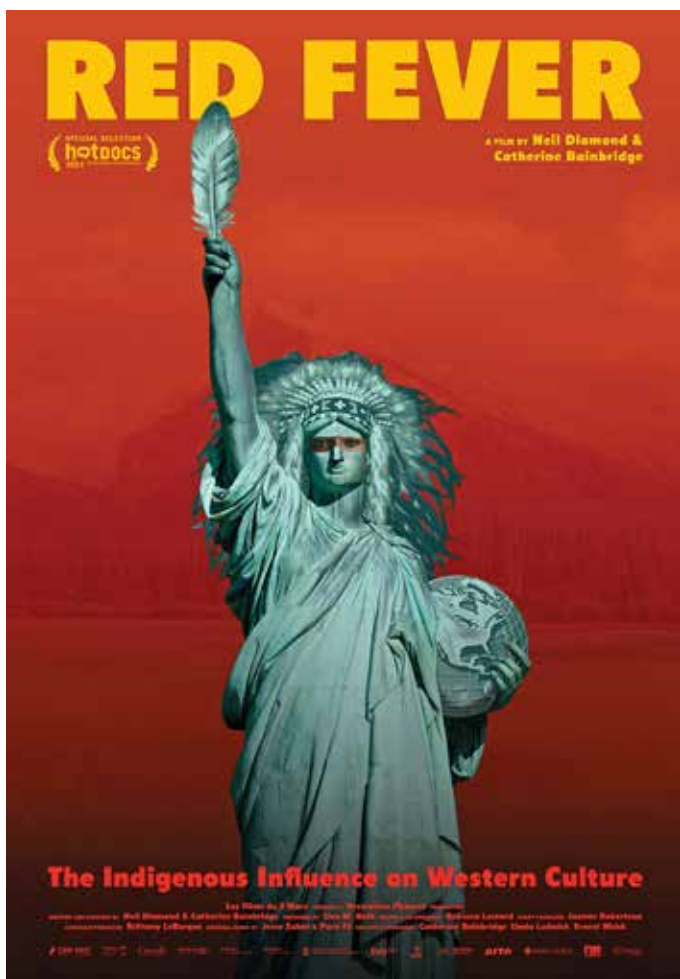
Sponsored by  UKRAINIAN FILMS USA



Directors: BRENDAN BELLOMO (Director, Writer, Editor) was the recipient of a 2009 Student Academy Award® for Live Action Narrative. Bellomo's passion for storytelling was first sparked when he was a child. Beginning his career in visual effects, he supervised the 2012 Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner and Oscar® nominee for Best Picture *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (Fox Searchlight). Most recently, Bellomo was the executive producer on the Netflix Original *Chupa*. Bellomo worked closely with Annie Leibovitz on the global exhibit "Women: New Portraits" and designed the curriculum for the first visual effects course at NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, which led him on the path to eventually pair with his directing partner, Slava Leontyev.



SLAVA LEONTYEV (Director, Film Subject) is a first-time director born into a family of biologists in Ukraine. Merging his love of nature and art, Leontyev has spent his life studying painting, photography, graphic design and art theory. Alongside his wife and longtime collaborator Anya Stasenko, Leontyev now creates the porcelain sculptures featured in this film. He is also a former soldier of the Ukrainian Special Forces and a highly regarded weapons instructor for civilians who are currently defending their country against Russian aggression.

**RED FEVER** *International Premiere - A Closing Day Film*

Canada / 2024 / 104 min / English / Documentary

Directors & Writers: Neil Diamond & Catherine Bainbridge; Producers: Rezolution Pictures - Lisa M. Roth (Producer), Rebecca Lessard (Co-Producer), Catherine Bainbridge, Linda Ludwick, Ernest Web (Executive Producers), Brittany LeBorgne (Associate Producer), Joanne Robertson (Story Producer); Composer;; Editor;; Contact: cvatrinet@f3m.ca

Cree filmmaker Neil Diamond and Catherine Bainbridge (Rumble: The Indians Who Rocked the World) team up again for the follow-up to their award-winning documentary Reel Injun. Diamond travels to the corners of Turtle Island and across the Atlantic to dig into the world's historical fascination with Indigenous Peoples. From fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi drawing inspiration from Nanook of the North to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School's impact on the NFL, Diamond assembles a compelling collage packed with pop-culture references. Examples of appropriation are revisited by Indigenous scholars, artists and community members, who are revitalizing their cultures and dispelling the myths and lack of understanding that have persisted for more than a century. Clothing, sports, systems of government and agricultural practices all have clear lines to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. As a new generation of Indigenous Peoples draws strength from their ancestors and reclaims their rights, there's hope for a future where credit is given where it's due.

**Special Guests:** Neil Diamond, Everett Osceola, moderator

**Sunday, Nov 17, 6:30pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Sponsor by:**  
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**Directors:** Neil Diamond is a Cree-Canadian filmmaker based in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, born and raised in Waskaganish, Quebec. Working with Rezolution Pictures, Diamond has directed the documentary films *Reel Injun*, *The Last Explorer*, *One More River*, *Heavy Metal: A Mining Disaster in Northern Quebec* and *Cree Spoken Here*, along with three seasons of *DAB IYIYUU*, a series for the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network about Cree elders.

In the 2008 docudrama *The Last Explorer*, Diamond explored the story of his great-uncle George Elson, a Cree guide who helped to map Labrador as part of an ill-fated 1903 expedition with Leonidas Hubbard and Dillon Wallace, and a return voyage in 1905 with Hubbard's widow Mina Hubbard.

As of April 2011, Diamond is developing a project with Inuit filmmaker Zacharias Kunuk about the 18th-century conflict between Cree and Inuit, which lasted almost a century.

Catherine Bainbridge is the co-founder, executive producer, and VP of business and creative development at Rezolution Pictures. She directed the Emmy-nominated, Sundance and CSA award-winning feature doc, *RUMBLE: The Indians Who Rocked the World*, and co-directed the Peabody and CSA award-winning feature doc, *Reel Injun*. Catherine is also an executive producer on the Crave Original series, *Little Bird*. Through her work at Rezolution, Catherine has been instrumental in changing the narrative when it comes to diversity and representation in the entertainment industry.



**RIVERBOOM** *Southeast Premiere*

Afghanistan-Switzerland / 2023 / 95 min / English & French with English subtitles / Documentary

Director & Writer: Claude Baechtold; Producers: Katia Monla, Luc Peter; Cinematography: Claude Baechtold; Editor: Kevin Schlosser; Production Manager: Aurélie Oliveira Pernet; Featuring: Serge Michel, Paolo Woods, Claude Baechtold; Contact: g.heron@bacfilms.fr

Three young reporters get into a car for a journey that will change their lives forever.

- Serge, a moralist and workaholic journalist,
- Paolo, a photographer as jovial as unconscious,
- and Claude, a coward Swiss typographer who improvises himself as a filmmaker.

In the year following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, young journalist Claude Baechtold finds himself in the war zone of Afghanistan. Not entirely voluntarily, the self-confessed anti-militarist from French-speaking Switzerland is dragged on a tour of the entire country by two fearless reporters. Equipped with a video camera he bought at a bazaar in Kabul, he follows them for two months on a daring journey. With impressive archive footage that was until recently thought lost, Baechtold captures in his humorous road movie doc how he inadvertently becomes a war reporter and is able thereby to deal with his own personal strokes of fate.

RIVERBOOM is amazing because of three main reasons: 1) It is a suspenseful no holds barred thriller; 2) Somehow, it's incredibly funny; and 3) It's all true. I don't want to say if there's only one film you can see at FLIFF39, it should be this, but...

**Monday, Nov 11, 3pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 5pm, Cinema Paradiso**



Sponsored by: **CJN CANDY & JIM NORTON**  
AT DOUGLAS ELLERMAN REAL ESTATE



*Director: Born in 1972 in Lausanne, Switzerland. He graduated in Visual Communication from École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL) in 1996. In 2002, he founded the RiverBoom collective while in Afghanistan and published offbeat travel books ever since. His innovative approach in photography makes him one of the lead figures of new reportage, awarded in 2006 by the Grand Prix Vevey Images and nominated for the Prix Elysée in 2018. He's now an investigative journalist and a filmmaker.*





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**ROMANO TWINS** *World Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 78 min / English /  
Documentary

Directors: Matt Romano & Greg Romano;  
Producers: Matt Romano, Greg Romano,  
Alex Johnson; Executive Producers:  
Mark Duplass, Mel Eslyn, Jay Duplass;  
Cinematographer: Alex Johnson, Matt  
Romano, Greg Romano; Co-Executive  
Producer: Shuli Harel; Editors: Matt Romano,  
Greg Romano; Composer: Lionel Cohen;  
Associate Producer: Jett Fink; Featuring:  
Matt Romano, Greg Romano, Ray Romano,  
Anna Romano, Allie Romano, Joe Romano /  
Contact: jett@duplassbrothers.com

Matt and Greg Romano (identical twin sons of Ray Romano) set out to make a documentary about the unique challenges of not only being a twin, but having a famous father, and along the way face their own fears and challenges of self-identity.

The self-directed pic follows the boys during daily routines, a forced separation and to the annual Twins Convention.

**Special Guests:** Greg & Matt Romano, Anna & Ray Romano

**Saturday, Nov 9, 3pm, Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by: Eileen Schneider, Edmund Kielty and Alexander Schneider**

**Co-Sponsored by**



There will be a pre-film reception in the Courtyard open to all ticket holders

Directors: Matt and Greg Romano are identical twin brothers who were born in Queens, New York on January 13, 1993. They moved to California at the age of four when their father (Comedian, Ray Romano) starred in his own television series (Everybody Loves Raymond), which filmed in Los Angeles where they were raised. Growing up around the industry they have always been interested in the entertainment business and both worked in TV production for many years. Matt was a production assistant at "Jimmy Kimmel Live!" while Greg worked at "The Late Late Show with James Corden." They decided to explore their experiences as identical twins through a documentary, which became ROMANO TWINS, their first feature film.



## ★ SPECIAL GUESTS ★

Raymond Albert Romano is an American stand-up comedian, and actor. He is best known for his role as Raymond "Ray" Barone on the CBS sitcom *Everybody Loves Raymond*, for which he won three Primetime Emmy Awards (one as an actor and two as producer). He is also known for being the primary voice of Manny in the *Ice Age* franchise (2002–2016). He has received several other distinctions including nominations for two Grammy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards.

He created and starred in the TNT comedy drama *Men of a Certain Age* (2009–2011). From 2012 to 2015 Romano had a recurring role as Hank Rizzoli, a love interest of Sarah Braverman in the NBC series *Parenthood*. He co-starred in the romantic comedy *The Big Sick* (2017) and portrayed mob lawyer Bill Bufalino in Martin Scorsese's epic crime film *The Irishman* (2019). From 2017 to 2019 Romano portrayed Rick Moreweather in the Epix comedy-drama series *Get Shorty*.

His early comedy career started when he competed in the Johnnie Walker Comedy Search in 1989, directed by *Saturday Night Live* short film producer Neal Marshad, and appeared on The Comedy Channel. His career included many outlets, such as Comedy Central, where he had been a recurring guest voice on the show *Dr. Katz, Professional Therapist*. He also was a contestant on *Star Search* in the stand-up comedy category. He was cast to play Joe (originally named Rick) on the American television sitcom *NewsRadio*, but was fired and replaced with Greg Lee in the pilot and then Joe Rogan for the rest of the show. He then appeared on *Late Show with David Letterman* doing his stand-up routine which formed his ties with CBS. Shortly thereafter, he became the star of his own show, *Everybody Loves Raymond* on CBS, that featured a cast and format more suitable to Romano's brand of humor. His work on the series earned him six Primetime Emmy Award nominations as Outstanding Lead Actor in a Comedy Series, a category he won in 2002. He also shared two Emmy Awards as an executive producer when his show won as Outstanding Comedy Series in 2003 and 2005.

We could go on & on, on Ray Romano, but he might tell you, his most important role, is being Dad, and that's what brings him to FLIFF, supporting his twin sons, Greg & Matt and their World Premiere directorial debut, ROMANO TWINS



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**Alex Schneider**  
awschneider@shb.com  
305.960.6981

**SAFE SETS - Dying to Work in the Film Industry** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 85 min / English / Documentary

Directors: Paul Heinzelmann & Jonathan Schwartz; Writers: Paul Heinzelmann & Richard Levien / Producers: Azadeh Nikzadeh, Kerri Coombs, Jonathan Schwartz, Richard Levien; Cinematographer: Zack Richards; Editor: Richard Levien; Featuring: Jon Hamm, John Malkovich, John Lindley, Liza Huget, Amy Green, Dutch Merrick, Theresa Tova, Mark Ulano, Adam Merims, Emma Barber, Maryann Brandon, Jeanette Moreno King, Isis Mussenden, Joyce Gilliard, Jameson Shea, Morris Flam, Lori Stewart, Sheryn Smith, Liisa Cohen, Douglas Freeman, Mike Martinez, Rob Bessette, Emilia Mendieta Córdova, Doreen Manuel, Prem Marimuthu, Paul Heinzelmann, Mark Bosia, Sheila Scott, Elizabeth Jones, Richard Jones, Mike Harnett, Tom Adair, Monona Rossol, Mona Shum; Contact: producer@safesetsmovie.org

A doctor investigates hazardous working conditions in Hollywood, and discovers untold stories of enormous personal sacrifice and life-threatening risks for those working in an industry that brings us the movies and TV shows we cherish.

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 5pm, Gateway**



**Directors:** Paul is a Primary Care doctor trained in public health was pulled into the world of film sets when tax incentives brought film work to Massachusetts. His observations as an outsider reveal a workplace in need of reform.

Jonathan is a Film Director/Producer focusing on climate change, global indigenous and human rights, public health and Green Tech. He has expertise in project management, music scoring, art direction and animation, investigative research. Jonathan is a Project

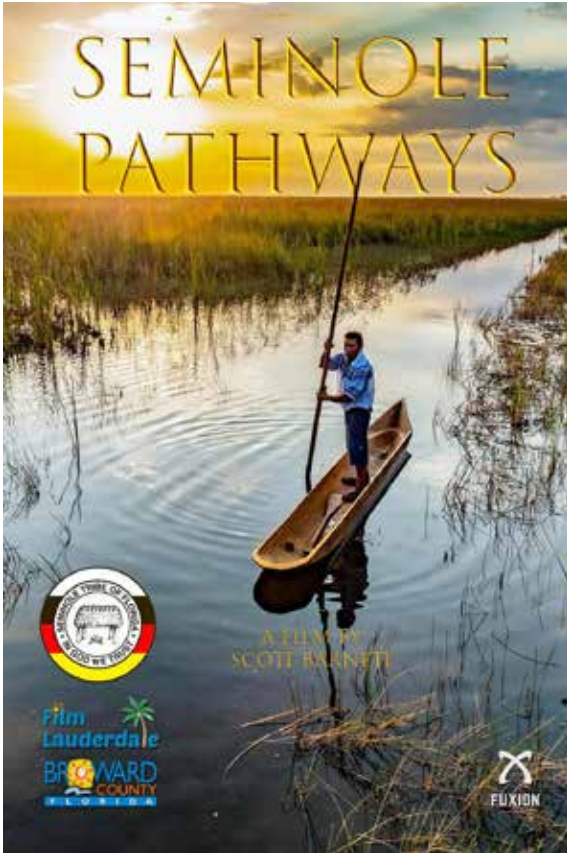
Grant recipient: Ford, MacArthur Endowment for the Humanities, Merck, IBM, Apple, Conservation International, Harvard School of Public Health, Kennedy School of Government, Boston Foundation and the Independent Television Service.

**Director's Statement:** In crafting "SAFE SETS," our team meticulously designed an investigative and immersive style that draws audiences into the very core of the industry's hazards. We aim to transport viewers, enabling them to witness the challenges faced by industry professionals firsthand. Through the potent tools of storytelling, expert interviews, and visually captivating imagery, we have fashioned an atmosphere that both intrigues and compels.

Our documentary strikes a delicate balance, reflecting our sincere concern for the well-being of those who toil behind the scenes while steadfastly addressing systemic issues that have long been veiled in silence. With our engaging narrative and thought-provoking approach, our ultimate aspiration is to captivate audiences, elevate awareness, and kindle the flames of change.

Through "SAFE SETS," we aim to amplify the voices of those working in the film industry, catalyze a broader conversation, and inspire meaningful reforms. It is my fervent belief that this documentary has the potential to spark the transformation that is so urgently needed.





## SEMINOLE PATHWAYS

Florida / 2024 / 26 min / English / Documentary

Director: Scott Barnett; Producer: Johanna Vega; Featuring: Daniel Tommie

A young woman journeys to the source of the Everglades headwaters to better understand the historic challenges of water management and pollution that now threaten this fragile ecosystem. Along the way she will meet a new generation of advocates who are redefining the balance of women in conservation.

## WOMEN OF THE WATERSHED

Florida / 2023 / 60 min / English / Documentary

**Director:** Scott Barnett; Producer: Johanna Vega; Featuring: Chloe Barnett; Contact: scott@fuxionmedia.com

A young woman journeys to the source of the Everglades headwaters to better understand the historic challenges of water management and pollution that now threaten this fragile ecosystem. Along the way she will meet a new generation of advocates who are redefining the balance of women in conservation.

**Director:** Scott is a producer and director with over thirty years of experience in documentary filmmaking and content creation. Recent productions include the 2-time Emmy winning *Crossing Overtown* and Telly award winning *State of Rodeo* both receiving distribution to over 75% of PBS affiliates. Scott was also the Showrunner and Director for the children's program *Kid Stew*, created by author James Patterson, winner of 8 Emmy Awards, with a total of three seasons now airing on PBS stations through APT. Previous work includes *Osceola's Journey*, a historical travelogue with the Seminole Tribe of Florida; *Himmarshee - A History of Fort Lauderdale's New River*; *Midnight Basketball League*, a youth sports league in Overtown and the *RISE* program with Miami-Dade, highlighting efforts to bring economic renewal to Miami's smallest businesses adversely affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic.



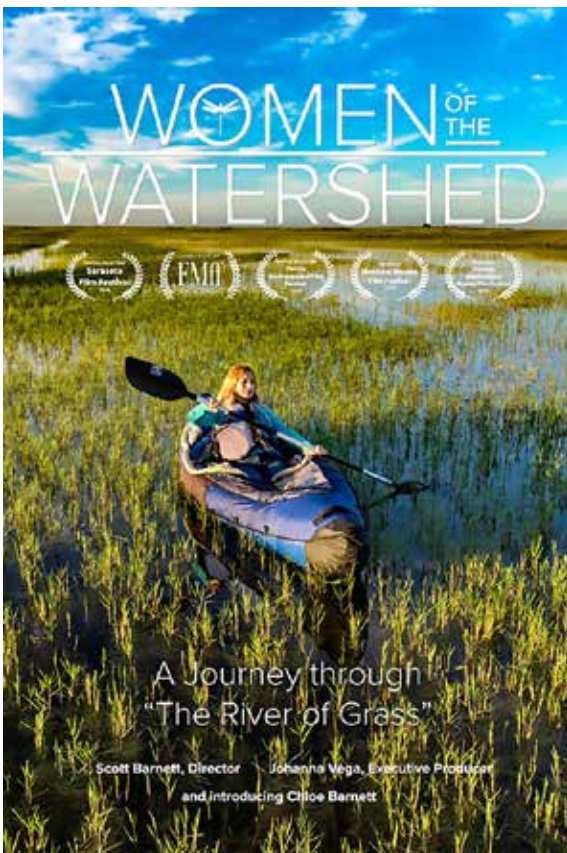
**Director's Statement:** *Women of the Watershed* highlights the role women have played in the conservation of the Florida Everglades. Chloe Barnett, the host of the program, grew up along the edge of this massive sheet of water that gently glides down the Florida peninsula into Florida Bay. Her passion for the water started with her early attempts to become a mermaid, only to realize those dreams through her passion for diving including participation in coral restoration activities in the Florida Keys as well as with the *Rescue a Reef* program. She was also an active member of the Everglades Foundation's High School Leadership Committee as well as interning with the Frost Science Museum through a program with the Smithsonian as an Ambassador representing the Museum of the American Latino in Washington, D.C.

Chloe seeks to engage with women who are actively involved in conservation activities throughout the watershed to better understand the water challenges we are now facing. Everglades National Park represents only a fraction of the entire Everglades system that also includes the various waterways that lead through the Kissimmee River Basin, Lake Okeechobee, the Southern Everglades and Florida Bay.

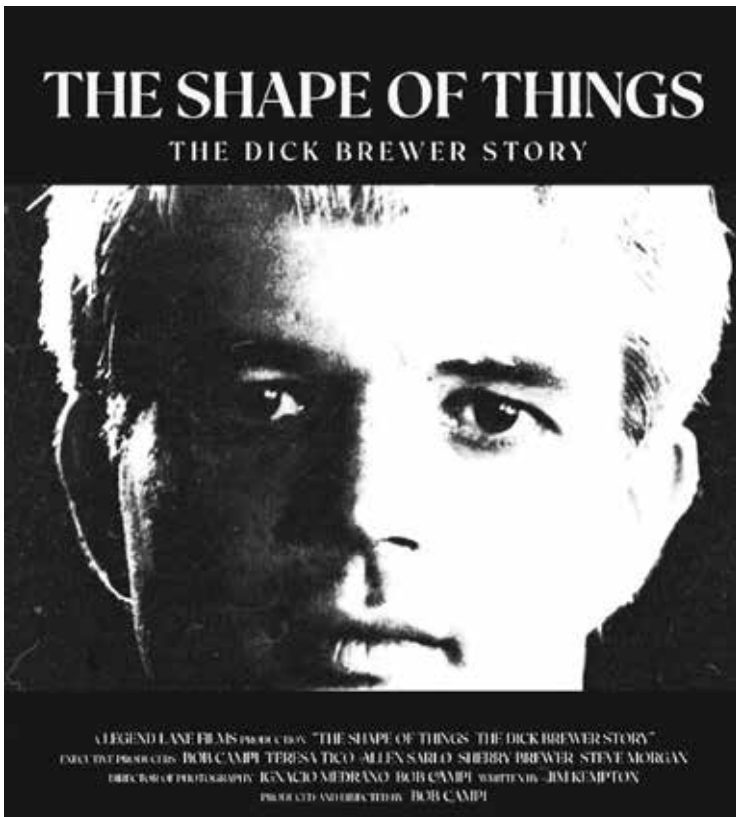
**Special Guests:** Scott Barnett, Johanna Vega, Chloe Barnett

**Thursday, Nov 14, 5:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsor by:**



**THE SHAPE OF THINGS: The Dick Brewer Story** *East Coast Premiere*



Following the Nov 9th screening there will be a reception in the CPH Lobby.

Following the Nov. 10 screening will be a Surf Party in the Courtyard for all ticket holders with complimentary pizza and Surf Tunes! So put on your jams, pack your best buds in the Woodie and cruise to the cinema.

USA / 2024 / 59 min / English / Surf Doc

Director: Bob Campi; Writer: Jim Kempton; Producers: Teresa Tico, Allen Sarlo, Steve Morgan; Featuring: Dick Brewer, Laird Hamilton, Kai Lenny, Garrett McNamara, Derrick Doerner, Jock Sutherland, Jericho Poppler, Sherry Brewer; Contact: haenagirl@gmail.com

The story of the colorful and controversial, legendary surfboard designer and builder, Dick Brewer.: The father of the modern-day surfboard

His designs have been interpreted, modified, and often copied through the gifted hands of shapers on every coast and in every decade since the 1960's. He has mentored, taught, at a minimum inspired, the top shapers in the world. Today, his rails, his rockers, and bottom are intrinsic in the surfboard you ride. He is the counter cultural shaper to the brave surfriders.

Dick Brewer as he was arguably the most influential shaper of surfboards in the world in the 1960's and 1970's. BrewerSurfboards.com

I imagine most of our audience has never caught a wave atop a Dick Brewer board. This is a biography of a visionary. An innate talent that was a trailblazer throughout his career. With phenomenal cinematography and archival footage coupled with a retro soundtrack, this film will take you back to a kinder, gentler time. This award-winning doc will set you free.

**Special Guests:** Bob Campi and Teri Tico  
**Saturday, Nov 9, 7pm, Cinema Paradiso**  
**Sunday, Nov 10, 7pm, Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by:**



Directors: Bob Campi is a Three-time Emmy award winning cinematographer, and the executive producer who produced, wrote, and directed "The Shape of Things." As an executive producer of several feature films and award-winning shorts, he's currently in pre-production producing the feature film Tough Sledding, a bio pic chronicling the 2002 Gold Medal triumph of United States Paralympic Sled Hockey Team. As a worldwide photojournalist for NBC News and currently Director of Photography for Entertainment Tonight for 32 years, Bob has traveled the world with his camera documenting some of history's most impactful events. He lives in Glendale, California, with his beautiful wife Kerry, daughter screenwriter Lauren and son, music producer Brian.



**STELLA STEVENS: The Last Starlet** *Southeast Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 99 min / English / Documentary

Director, Writer & Producer: Andrew Stevens;  
Cinematographer: Adam Biddle; Editor: Mike Luge;  
Featuring: Quentin Tarantino, Viveca A. Fox, Leonard Maltin,  
Courtney Joyner, Lindsay Kongsore; Contact: [astevens@astevensent.com](mailto:astevens@astevensent.com)

The life, career, and personal struggles of Stella Stevens, one of the last starlets under the male dominated and misogynistic old Hollywood studio system, are explored, as well as the evolution of the new Hollywood, which coincided with her advocacy for women's rights and human rights of all races and identities.

**Special Guest:** Andrew Stevens

**Sunday, Nov 10, 5pm,  
Cinema Paradiso**

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 5:30pm,  
Savor Cinema**

**Sponsored by: Marilyn Berry**

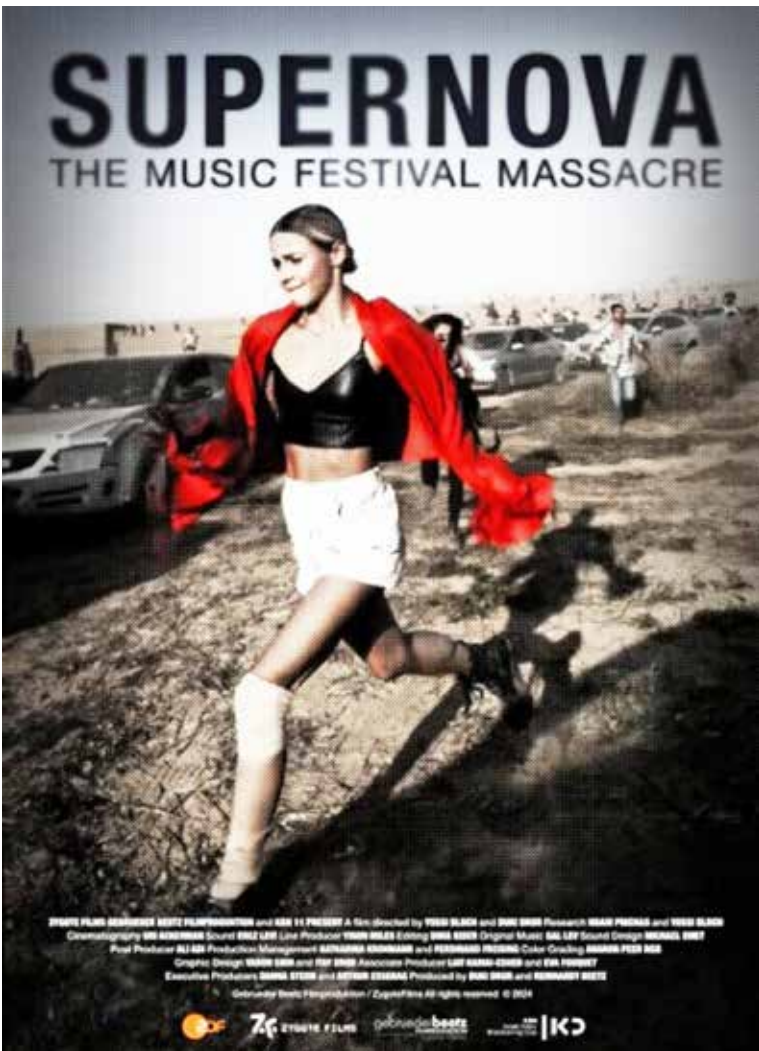


**Director:** Andrew Stevens, President/CEO of Stevens Entertainment Group and Andrew Stevens Entertainment, has produced and/or financed over 190 films through his various production and distribution companies. Named, "One of the most prolific producers in Hollywood", by the Hollywood Reporter, Stevens has functioned in almost every capacity in the entertainment business and is an accomplished screenwriter director, author, and was an award-winning actor for more than 20 years, garnering a Golden Globe nomination, an LA Drama Circle Critics Award and the Star of Tomorrow award from the National Association of Theatre Owners (NATO).



**DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:** My mother above all else, was a survivor. After her passing, I felt compelled to explore and document her extraordinary, but often under-rated career, from the perspectives of those who loved and admired her. The film also sheds light on her personal struggles, which shaped the very outspoken and complex woman who was Stella Stevens.

**SUPERNOVA: The Music Festival Massacre** *Special Screening*



Israel-Germany / 2023 / 52 min / Hebrew with English subtitles / Documentary

Directors: Yossi Bloch, Duki Dror; Producers: Reinhardt Beetz, Duki Dror, Eva Fouquet; Contact: IsraeliFilms

October 7, 2023, began like any ordinary day for concert goers at the Nova Music Festival, located in Re'im, Israel. There were over 3,500 attendees from different countries at that week's festivities, immersing themselves in days of bliss and endless dance parties. Out of nowhere, as the sun rose that early Shabbat morning, the world changed forever. What started out as missiles hitting Israel's Iron Dome turned into Hamas terrorists infiltrating the area, shooting everyone in sight. What started out as a dance party, a place of comfort and simha, transformed into a bloodbath.

time footage collated from multiple sources, "Supernova" provides a harrowing and detailed rundown of the massacre carried out by Hamas that took place at the Nova music festival a few kilometers from the Gaza Strip on the morning of October 7th, 2023. In this moving film, festival attendees and first responders take us through their harrowing stories of survival, the indescribable horrors they witnessed, and their struggle to find their way back to life. Captured in the almost immediate aftermath - their trauma and raw emotions are clearly visible.

**Special Guests:** Yossi Bloch & Duki Dror scheduled to appear at David Posnack JCC

**Sunday, Nov 10, 1pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**Sunday, Nov 17, 11am,  
David Posnack Jewish  
Community Center**



Sponsored by: **Hank Cairo & Rochelle Golub,**



**David Posnack Jewish Community Center,  
Jared Rosenstein and Shirley Sharon**

**Director:** Born in Tel Aviv and educated at UCLA and Columbia College in Chicago, Duki Dror Darwish is an internationally award-winning documentary filmmaker. His extensive body of work spreads over multiple topics and forms - character-driven journeys, experiment biographies, investigative docs, and historical epics, have won him international recognition and success. With acute sensitivity, innovative style, and engaging story-telling, Dror creates parables that convey human dilemmas and challenge the viewer's conventions.



Yossi Bloch is a globally renowned artist based in Tel Aviv, with a portfolio spanning international projects as well as local endeavors in Israel. His works include documentaries, such as Netflix's "The Devil Next Door," in addition to his impactful work within the Israeli artistic scene. His latest project involved creating a video artwork displayed in a Tel Aviv gallery, delving into the essence of a well-known military scandal involving Elor Azarya. Bloch's artistic focus lies in the exploration of social conflicts, skillfully depicting the most vulnerable aspects as central protagonists in his narratives.



**TORN** *Florida Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 80 min / English / Documentary

Director & Producer: Nim Shapira; Writers: Shay Mizrahy, Nim Shapira; Cinematographer: Eyal Bau-Cohen; Executive Producer: Nim Shapira, Elad Schanin, Yarin Cerf; Featuring (alphabetical order): Liam Zeitchik, Alana Zeitchik, Dede Banaid, Nitzan Mintz, Nina Mogilnik, Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, Julia Simon, Elisha Fine, Chen Levy, Aaron Terr; Contact: nimshap@gmail.com

"Torn" delves into the controversy surrounding the 'KIDNAPPED FROM ISRAEL' poster campaign, a grassroots effort to raise awareness about the 240 hostages taken by Hamas. These posters quickly became polarizing symbols, sparking intense clashes between pro-Israel and pro-Palestine activists and turning New York City's streets into battlegrounds of ideology and emotion. The film explores the motivations behind activists putting up and tearing down the posters, unraveling the complexities of this intense 'paper arm' proxy war, fought thousands of miles from the actual conflict.

What gripped me most about this film is the inability of some on each side to see the tragedy isn't exclusive to either. The obvious villain being Hamas. The filmmakers do a good job of presenting both Israeli and Palestinian perspectives.

**Saturday, Nov 9, 7:30pm, Gateway**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 1pm, Gateway**

**Sponsored by David Solomon**



**Director:** Nim Shapira is an award-winning filmmaker. His innovative works were featured at TED 2023, Tribeca Film Festival, SIGGRAPH, Slamdance, Cannes' Marche Du Film and more.

He was a 2021/2022 research fellow at the MIT Open Documentary Lab, a 2020 alumni of NEWINC (the first museum-led incubator by NEWMUSEUM) and a graduate of La Biennale Di Venezia's College Cinema for VR.



**TRANSFORMATION** *Florida Premiere*



Turkey / 2023 / 52 min / English + Arabic & Persian with English subtitles / Documentary

Director: Saeed Mayahy; Writer: Miriam Carlsen; Featuring: Malika Hamidi; Contact: saeed.mayahy1991@gmail.com

In the following months after the USA withdrew its troops from Afghanistan, a young Kabul couple found their way to the dark and dodgy Afghan neighborhood, Zeytinburnu in Istanbul. Malika - a transgender woman who together with Mohamed, the love of her life, have fled their families honor killing plan and Taliban's fatal punishments to be able to cultivate their forbidden love for each other, in the hope of achieving a new and better life in Turkey. One day they pass by the young and homeless "Ilham," who is sitting on the pavement with nowhere to go, and decide to bring an extra person into their self-made family. Together the three of them are facing poverty, fear of deportation, daily harassment, sexual violence and gender identity crisis. But their self-claimed support towards each other, keeps them fighting for their dreams, whatever it takes. On their tumultuous and challenging journey and transformation through registration for Turkish residency, seeking help in NGOs. As they obtain residency and move into their own place, their circumstances seem to improve from the outside. But unexpected and darker perspectives surface, revealing a surprising twist of perception, when Ilham runs away and claims they have prostituted him out to other men.

**Monday, Nov 11, 1:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 5:30pm, Gateway Cinema**



The Scott Bennett Fund at  
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**Directors:** Saeed Mayahy is an Iranian film director born in 1991 in Bushehr. He graduated from Bushehr Film School in 2013, where he debuted with the documentary "The Camera" in 2012. Since then 10 films have followed. "Don't worry, be happy" was bought by NRK TV station and others have been screened at many festivals such as Miami International Film Festival, Palm Springs Film Festival, Arpa film festival, Giffoni film festival, Canberra Short Film Festival, Linz International Short Film Festival, San Francisco Frozen Film Festival, Chicago International Movies and Music Festival, Festival Filministes, The International Outdoor Documentary Film Festival of China.



Miriam Carlsen grew up in a globetrotter family, with a dad specializing in sustainable energy solutions for Third World countries. Traveling and hosting people from all national and ethnically backgrounds, has shaped her passion for human narratives and their impact on cultural bridge building. She worked in Norway in the organization RAMP, an NGO for integrating team building and guidance for orphanage refugee minors from Iraq and Afghanistan. It led to an increased interest for a deeper understanding of human life in the MENA region and interest in the Afghan matter. Later she learned Arabic and lived in the Middle East.

**ULTIMATE CITIZENS** *Florida Premiere*

USA / 2024 / 52 min / English / Documentary

Director, Writer &amp; Producer: Francine Strickwerda; Featuring: Jamshid Khajavi; Contact: francine@flockthiswayfilms.com

In **ULTIMATE CITIZENS**, Jamshid is an Iranian who came to study in 1970's America, and due to the Revolution, never went "home." As a guidance counselor in Seattle Public Schools, Jamshid's best work takes place out of the building and on a playing field with "his kids," the children of refugees and immigrants. Their parents are in the grips of their own struggles to make a living and a home in a strange land. Mr. Jamshid is the charismatic, fiery, funny human with a Frisbee in hand, who is the first to show that "love wins" on the field, off the field, at home with family, or boldly forging a new community, in a new country - one kid, chicken, extreme mile and friend at a time.

This is the "ultimate" feel good film, providing a ray of hope for our kids, the leaders of tomorrow, and our most important industry, education.

**Sunday, Nov 10, 3:45pm, Gateway****Sunday, Nov 17, 5:15pm, Cinema Paradiso**

**FLIFF offers this film to everyone and provides free admission to anyone working in education, public or private.**



**Directors:** Francine's Strickwerda's award-winning independent feature documentaries, including "Oil & Water," and "Busting Out" have screened on Showtime, PBS, Netflix, Amazon and television channels all over the world. With stories ranging from one of the world's worst toxic disasters, to the politics of America's breast obsession, and now immigrant kids winning at Ultimate Frisbee, her films explore power, trauma and healing. Francine's work has been funded by MacArthur Foundation, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Chicken & Egg Pictures, and many others. As co-owner of Seattle creative video agency Hullabaloo, she directs, produces and writes strategic films for some of the world's most recognizable brands and non-profits. Francine grew up a teacher's kid and began her career in journalism, first as a newspaper reporter, and then as a producer at Seattle's KCTS Public Television. She has a 12-year-old son and is an avid Salish Sea open water swimmer.



**Director's Statement:** **ULTIMATE CITIZENS** is not a movie about Frisbee. The "flat ball" is one of many tools that Jamshid Khajavi, the film's protagonist, uses in his work as a primary school coach and counselor. A fiery, funny 65-year-old Iranian immigrant and ultra-athlete, Jamshid does some of his best work on the playing field with his students, the children of refugees and immigrants.

Underneath the "David vs. Goliath" tournament narrative that builds toward the film's climax, this documentary offers an antidote to "us versus them" political headlines with a heartwarming vision of a more welcoming America. You often hear Jamshid saying to people, "I'm so glad you're here," and he means it. For almost 40 years, Jamshid has taught children how to be "ultimate citizens" - to look out for themselves and each other, and to choose inclusion over exclusion. He and the kids show how to do the hardest work of all - to find their way forward, together.

## ECHOES OF DREAMS *East Coast Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 84 min / English / Bittersweet LGBTQ Comedy

Director, Writer, Producer: Christian Filappella; Contact: filappella@gmail.com

A struggling DJ in her 20's must pivot her career to survive in Silicon Valley, while dating women and living with her pushy mother.

**Friday, Nov 8, 7:30pm, Savor Cinema**

**Wednesday, Nov 13, 3pm, Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Vanessa is a multi-faceted creative artist who has a background in film, music and design. After receiving a BFA in Motion Pictures from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, she produced numerous shorts

and marketing videos. Renouncing Angelica (2009) and Habitual Aggression (2011) have gone through the film festival circuit, winning awards and showcasing at the Cannes Court Métrage. Taking a break from film she decided to exercise her passions in DJing and music producing under the moniker Mar1po5a. Growing up in the Silicon Valley, she was fascinated by technology and wanted to learn about coding and design which led to her career as a UX/UI designer. Her design job at Borrowlenses brought her back full circle into filmmaking with the realization of the LGBTQ+ focused stories she wants to tell and share with the world. The first short she directed, Bi-curious Sleepover (2019) won Best LGBT Short at the Play Short Int'l Film Awards and at the Asian Cinematography Awards. Vanessa's directorial debut Echoes of Dreams based on true events from her life story.



## ALOHA SPIRIT RISING (Cosmic Conciousness) *World Premiere*



USA / 2024 / 80 min / English / Documentary

Director, Writer, Producer, Cinematographer & Editor: Christian Filappelli

A spiritual journey through the lives of a free-spirited community living off-the-grid in the secluded Hawaiian jungle to achieve human liberation via the elevation of collective consciousness.

**Tuesday, Nov 12, 1:30pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Thursday, Nov 14, 3:30pm, Gateway Cinema**



**Director:** Christian began working as an independent filmmaker in Spain and Ireland. He was accepted to the directing program of the prestigious Centro

Sperimentale in Rome and was awarded his diploma in 2005 with his thesis film Thermae.

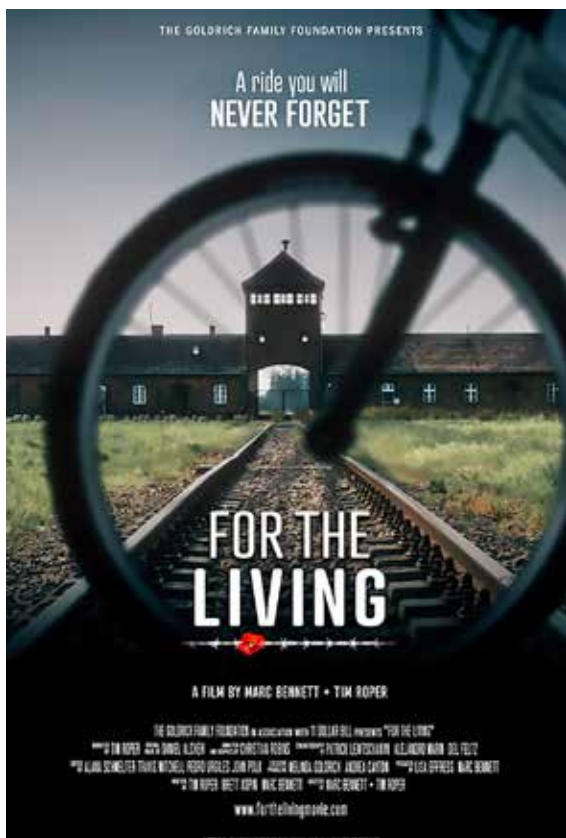
Subsequently, he was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and completed MFA studies at AFI in 2008. He holds then two masters in film directing. Christian won (twice) the Philip Morris Cinema Award, the Panavision Award, the Sergio Corbucci Prize in 2006 and has been sponsored by ARRI and Fuji.



His first feature was Silver Case. Since then, produced and shot several Nandor Fodor and The Talking Mongoose starring Minnie Driver, Christopher Lloyd and Simon Pegg; Hellfire with Harvey Keitel, This is Our Christmas; Christmas Couples Retreat; and Beverly Hills Christmas with Dean Cain and John Savage; Emmy winner The Bay; Sheperd the story of a Jewish dog; and The Genius of Gianni Versace.

**Director Statement:** After being in Hawaii several times, I was compelled to explore more and travel to the most remote part of all the islands, the off the grid jungle in east part of Big Island. This area, called Puna, has been severely hit multiple times by lava eruptions of the Kilauea volcano

FOR THE LIVING



USA / 2024 / 117 min / English / Documentary

Directors: Marc Bennett & Tim Roper; Writers: Tim Roper, Marc Bennett, Brett Kopin; Producers: Liza Effress, Marc Bennett; Executive Producers: Melinda Goodrich, Andrea Cayton; Cinematographers: Patrick Lewtschany, Alejandro Marin, Del Feltz; Editors: Alanna Schmelter, Pedro Urgilies, John Polk; Featuring: Martin Zielinski, Robert Desmond, Michael Berenbaum, Timothy Snyder, Benjamin Ferencz, Jonathan Ornstein, Jonathan Greenblatt, David Livingstone Smith, Jonathan Greenblatt, Steven Smith, Gugulethu Moyo, Neil deGrasse Tyson, Franz de Waal, Kimberly Schoenert-Reichel, Beth Kean, Bernard Offen; Contact: nancy@cinemacollet.com

In January 1945, after 2 years as a prisoner in a death camp, 10-year-old Holocaust survivor Marcel Zielinski embarked on a perilous 60-mile journey by foot from Auschwitz-Birkenau through an active war zone to Krakow, Poland. A child's desperate search for any surviving family members. A journey from Darkness to Light.

Decades later, 250 cyclists from 12 different countries traveled to Auschwitz and re-traced 84-year-old Marcel's liberation path as a collective act of empathy called Ride for the Living.

Marcel's dehumanizing Holocaust experience and the empathy demonstrated during Ride for the Living provide a parallel for Humankind's equally perilous journey between the two extremes of our nature: Dehumanization to Empathy. Darkness to Light.

Igniting the urgent conversation: When will we stop building monuments for the dead and get busy re-humanizing the living? When will we finally say NEVER AGAIN and truly mean it?

FLIFF39 is filled with remarkable films that should be seen by the broadest cross-section of the community. RIDE FOR THE LIVING is at the top of that list.

**Special Guests:** Marc Bennett, Tim Roper  
**Sunday, Nov 10, 3pm, Gateway Cinema**

**Sponsored by David Solomon**



*Directors: Marc Bennett has spent his adult life creating powerful imagery and stories in print and film. As an artist and photographer, his work has been shown in exhibitions throughout the United States and is a part of many public and private collections, including Yad Vashem, Holocaust Museum LA, the Museum of Tolerance, the California Afro-American Museum, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Foundation.*



*Tim Roper is an award-winning Writer-Director with a diverse mix of experience in both filmmaking and brand building. After graduating with a Film degree from The University of Texas at Austin, Tim began a 25-year career writing and directing short-form branded content and crafting screenplays. Tim is a former resident of Fort Lauderdale.*

**Director's Statement:** *In recent years, we've watched human empathy become an endangered resource. Rampant dehumanization has immersed our discourse in genocidal language like never before.*

*Our objective with this film has been to provide a mirror for humanity and to start a conversation: How can we re-humanize and break a centuries-long pattern of brutality? When will we finally say "NEVER AGAIN" and truly mean it?*

*Our planet has thousands of monuments that honor The Dead. This movie is an urgent cautionary tale to alert The Living.*



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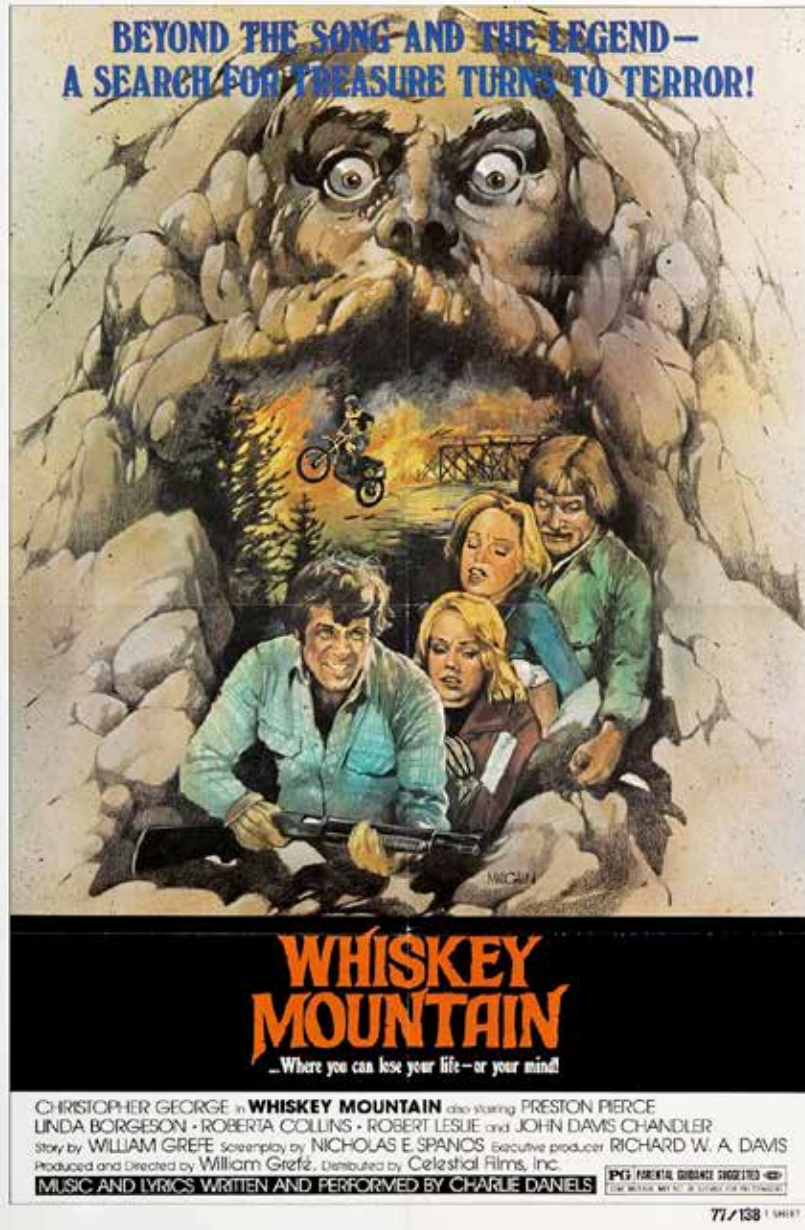
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## WHISKEY MOUNTAIN

USA / 2024 / 52 min / English / Documentary

Director: William Grefe; Writers: William Grefe & Nicholas E. Spanos; Cinematographer: Julio C. Chavez; Editors: Julio C. Chavez & Ronald Sinclair; Cast: Christopher George, Preston Pierce, Roberta Collins, Linda Borgeson, John Davis Chandler; Contact: FilmGrefe@gmail.com

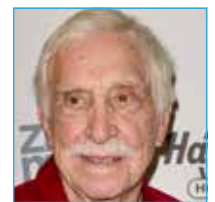
Four bikers travel into the rural mountains to search the region for a number of antique Civil War rifles which are believed to be concealed in a cave on Whiskey Mountain. While stopping at a general store nestled in the mountains, they are harassed by a group of backwoods locals; later, while camping, they are stalked and terrorized by the same fellas.

Fort Lauderdale's own Bill Grefe, nicknamed Mr. Florida Film, returns to FLIFF with one of his best, slasher/B Movie flicks, which Quentin Tarantino called one of his favorite films, ever!

**Friday, Nov 8, 1pm, Gateway**



**Directors:** William Grefé is an American writer and director of films, best known for his work in the exploitation field. For most of his career he has worked in Florida. He also worked for a number of years with Ivan Tors. In 2009 a documentary was released about his work called *From the Swamp: The Films of William Grefe*.



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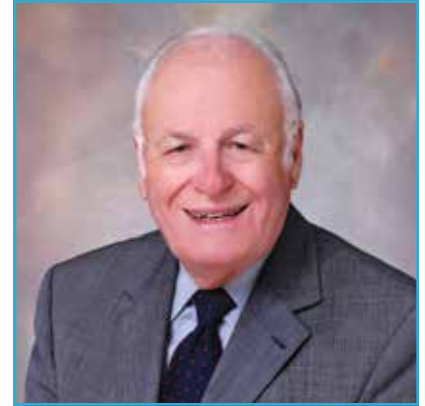
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The Marti Huizenga Humanitarian Award was created to celebrate Marti's spirit and selfless contributions throughout Broward County. Chad Moss and the Tate Family as championed by their patriarch; Stanley Tate embody that dedication to the community.



**STANLEY TATE**



**MARTI HUIZENGA**



Heal The Planet is a local 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to teaching the most vulnerable children in South Florida vital and transformational life skills. We believe that by empowering children with knowledge and valuable skills, we can best prepare them to create a better future for themselves, their communities, and our planet. You can support our programs by making a tax-deductible donation at [HealThePlanet.com](http://HealThePlanet.com) or by shopping at [HealThePlanetShop.com](http://HealThePlanetShop.com) where 100% of all profits from the shop are donated to support Heal The Planet's programs. Heal The Planet Shop was created to provide a place where you can shop for high-quality, sustainable products from conscious companies at low prices. We believe that everyone has the power to make a difference for our planet and that every Small Act creates Huge Impact!



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**MARK MOORMANN** is a South Florida-based filmmaker whose acclaimed documentaries have screened theatrically, at major film festivals (Sundance, Toronto, SXSW), and worldwide television.

His directorial credits include the Grammy-nominated 'Tom Dowd & the Language Of Music', the MTV Movie & TV Award-nominated 'The Day the Music Died', and the SXSW Audience Award-winner 'For Once In My Life'. He's worked as a cinematographer on noted documentaries including 'Studio 54', 'Sour Grapes', and 'Icahn: The Restless Billionaire'.

Moormann's collaborations with musical icons include Aerosmith, Michael Jackson, Ray Charles, and Amy Winehouse, and sports superstars Lionel Messi, Serena Williams, Mike Tyson, and Conor McGregor.



**PEZHMAN JATALA** grew up in Lima, Peru and started filmmaking in his early teens using his father's Betamax camera. He studied film at University of Oklahoma (BA) and later at Florida State University (MFA). After years of working in the film and TV industry in LA and Miami, he found his true path in teaching filmmaking at Miami Int'l University of Art and Design, the Art Institute of Ft Lauderdale, Miami Dade College, and at Broward College, where he launched the Film Production Technology program and currently serves as its program manager and lead professor. He has been the director of photography on features *Ti Laurent* (2014) and *Scooter* (2015), as well as directing, shooting, and editing numerous short films and short documentaries, including *Boda Negra* (2024).



**MARIAH REED** directs plays and teaches voice and acting classes at Broward College where she is a tenured theatre faculty member and the recipient of three Endowed Teaching Chair awards. Previously, she toured the continental United States as a lead actress with the National Shakespeare Company and afterwards appeared in a number of Off- and Off-off Broadway productions, touring theatre presentations, and independent films. One of Mariah's assignments brought her to Florida where she founded New River Repertory and The Drama Center. Mariah has also written several musicals and plays that have been produced in South Florida to much acclaim. In her free time, Mariah is a voice and dialect coach for actors, film and television projects, and professional theatre presentations as well as an Intimacy Director for live performance. A proud member of AEA, SAG/AFTRA, and The Dramatists Guild.



**TAS SALINI** is a producer, writer and director, who has directed over a hundred music videos that have aired on MTV, BET and hosts of TV channels worldwide. He has produced and directed seven docs Salini also produced, wrote and directed a romantic comedy feature 'Gringo Wedding' that premiered at FLIFF and won many awards at festivals and was released theatrically.

Tas teaches film courses at Broward College and leads an online film discussion every month for Nova Southeastern University and Broward Library system. Currently, he is writing a screenplay for a feature film that he intends to shoot in UK.



**WIL SHRINER'S** debut feature film "Hoot" brings his Florida background and twenty years of comedy and directing to a Newbury award winning book by Carl Hiaasen. Wil directed and wrote the screenplay, and the film, produced by Jimmy Buffett, opened on 3,000 screens across the nation and quickly became a Top Ten box-office draw. Hoot was inducted into the Museum of Modern Art's collection. It was recently named by the Smithsonian as one of the top five environmental films.

On the small screen, Shriner is proud to have won the Humanitas Award for an episode of NBC's "Frasier" entitled 'Something About Dr. Mary' dealing sensitively with the issue of racism. Shriner has directed episodes of "Everybody Loves Raymond", "Becker", "Ladies Man", "My Wife and Kids", "Norm", "Married to the Kelly's", "Two Guys and a Girl", "Luis", "Raising Dad" and the "Gilmore Girls".

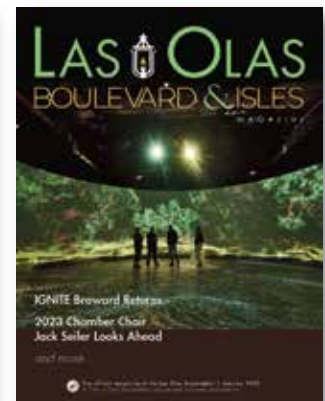
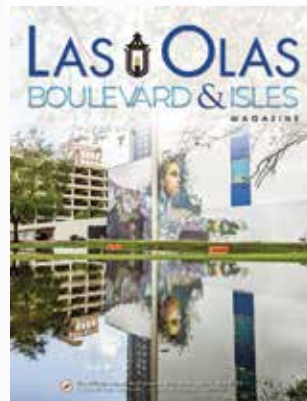
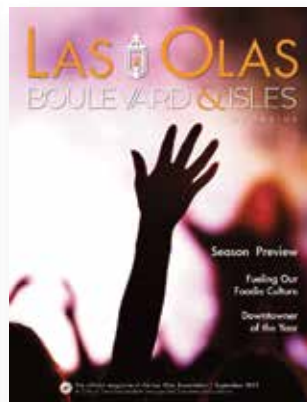
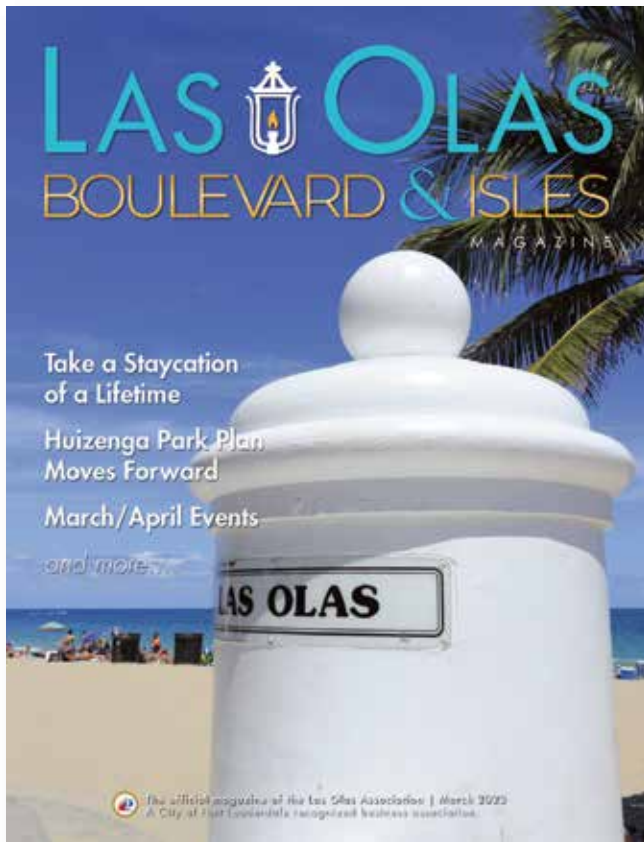


**THOMAS SWICK** grew up in Phillipsburg, NJ, and lives in Fort Lauderdale, FL, where he spent 19 years as the travel editor of the South Florida Sun-Sentinel. He is the author of four books, the most recent being *Falling into Place: A Story of Love, Poland, and the Making of a Travel Writer*. His work has appeared in national magazines, literary quarterlies, online publications, and various anthologies, including six editions of *The Best American Travel Writing*. In his spare time, he plays tennis, takes photographs, and draws cartoons. Some of his writing and cartoons can be found on his website: [thomasswick.com](http://thomasswick.com).

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# ★ 2024 FLIFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS ★

Dear Friends and Film Enthusiasts,

It is with great pleasure and excitement that we open the curtains on FLIFF's 39th Annual Film Festival.

Before we open the curtain on November 8, I feel it's important to reflect back on a year of giving and growth. FLIFF has hosted many special events throughout 2024 with proceeds donated to various charities in our community. We have helped those in need and will continue on the path of giving during the festival and through years to come. As we celebrate our 39th year and our growth as a festival, we are also thrilled to have earned the honor of being named as one of the top 10 film festivals by a USA Today poll and in the top 1% in the world by Film Freeway. We continue to gain respect and recognition from Hollywood and the film industry. This year Variety Magazine is to bring even more recognition to FLIFF. by being our opening night sponsor and media partner throughout the festival.

This year's film festival is more than just a gathering of films. Over the next 10 days, we invite you to immerse yourselves in a celebration of cinema with a diverse selection of films that showcase the artistry and creativity of filmmakers from around the world.

It is a platform for dialogue, discovery, and inspiration. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the filmmakers, sponsors, volunteers, and partners who have made this festival possible.

To our audience, thank you for joining us on this cinematic journey. Your presence enriches the festival, and we hope you enjoy every moment of this celebration of storytelling through film.

We wish you a memorable and enjoyable FLIFF39!

Warm regards,

Ilsa Grigorian

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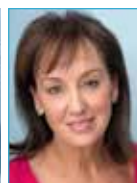
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**FESTIVAL BENEFITS**

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**RED CARPET CLUB: \$1900 / \$2850**

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FREE Opening Night Film and Parties  
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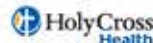
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