

A red theater chair with black armrests and legs is positioned in the center of a paved path. The path is flanked by tall, mature trees with thick, gnarled trunks, creating a canopy effect. The ground is covered with green grass and some dry leaves. In the distance, a building is visible through the trees.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL⁴⁸

OCT. 2-12²⁰²³

MVFF.COM

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT The California Film Institute and Mill Valley Film Festival are located in Marin County, California, on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary homelands of the Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples. This includes the Southern Pomo and Graton Rancheria Tribes. These tribes were removed or displaced from their lands. We recognize this history and the harm to present-day Coast Miwok, Pomo, and Wappo peoples and to their ancestors. The California Film Institute commits to moving forward from a place of authenticity and working with present-day tribes to elevate their stories, history, and present-day legacy through film.

ACCESSIBILITY At Mill Valley Film Festival, we're dedicated to using physical venues that are accessible to all our attendees and invited guests.

Do you have any accessibility requests for a screening or event? You can let us know what you need through the checkout form as you're purchasing your tickets or you can always email accessibility@cafilm.org directly. There may be limitations, including events that don't have closed captioning or audio description available, but we'll do our best to accommodate any and all requests.

CONSENT TO BE PHOTOGRAPHED California Film Institute (CAFILM) and its authorized representatives may photograph, film, and/or otherwise record attendees at any festival event. By attending, you consent to such photography, filming, and/or recording and to the unrestricted right to use such recordings—including your image, voice, and name—in any and all media, now known or hereafter devised, throughout the universe, in perpetuity, without compensation. Such use may include, but is not limited to, promotional, advertising, or other purposes deemed appropriate by CAFILM and its affiliates.

FROM THE DIRECTOR	4	MVFF48 AT-A-GLANCE (THE GRID)	192
DONOR CIRCLE.....	6	SECTIONS	198
SPONSORS	8	INITIATIVES	199
TICKETS + NAVIGATION	14	ACTIVE CINEMA.....	200
OPENING NIGHT	16	¡VIVA EL CINE!	201
SPOTLIGHT: JESSIE BUCKLEY	18	MVFF48 EDUCATION	202
SPOTLIGHT: EVA VICTOR.....	20	FAMILY FILMS	203
SPOTLIGHT: ZOEY DEUTCH.....	22	STRANDS	204
TRIBUTE: JAFAR PAHANI	24	BEHIND THE SCREENS	206
SPOTLIGHT: JOEL EDGERTON	26	MIND THE GAP	208
SPOTLIGHT: TONATIUH	28	CAFILM MEMBERSHIP	212
CENTERPIECE: METALLICA SAVED MY LIFE	30	SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER DONORS.....	214
SPOTLIGHT: ROSE BYRNE	32	SEQUOIA DONORS.....	216
TRIBUTE: SPIKE LEE	34	EVENT PARTNERS	218
CLOSING NIGHT: RENTAL FAMILY	36	MVFF48 STAFF	220
FILM NOTES	38	CAFILM BOARD OF DIRECTORS	222

The Mill Valley Film Festival is presented by the California Film Institute, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that also owns and operates the Smith Rafael Film Center and Sequoia Cinema, presents DocLands Documentary Film Festival, and offers CAFILM Education programs throughout the year.

I've been thinking a lot lately about how resilient and supportive the filmmaking community, and our community in general, has been.

Even after a global pandemic, crippling strikes, and major cuts in arts funding, the magic of moviemaking endures and remains as vitally important as ever.

That's proven throughout this year's diverse lineup, and it's certainly reflected in our opening night feature, *Hamnet* from Chloé Zhao (*Nomadland*, MVFF43). The Oscar® winner's adaptation of Maggie O'Farrell's stirring novel stars the incredible Jessie Buckley—whom we are pleased to honor

with a Spotlight and MVFF Award the afternoon after opening night with an encore screening of the film and onstage conversation. Zhao's drama is one of the most emotional films I've experienced in years, and it's an ideal selection to kick off our annual 11-day celebration of film and talent.

I'm equally thrilled to introduce you to the work of remarkable up-and-coming filmmakers, such as Shih-Ching Tsou, co-writer and director of *Left-Handed Girl*, co-written by Sean Baker (*Anora*, MVFF47; *Red Rocket*, MVFF44), and actors, like the sensational Tonatiuh, breakout star of *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. We'll continue to showcase the exciting work of accomplished directors, like

Luca Guadagnino's (*Queer*, MVFF47; *Call Me By Your Name*, MVFF40) conversation starter *After the Hunt* and Clint Bentley's soulful *Train Dreams*, and unforgettable performances from beloved actors, like *The Bear*'s Jeremy Allen White as Bruce Springsteen in *Springsteen: Deliver Me From Nowhere* and Colin Farrell as a down-on-his-luck gambler in Macau in *Ballad of a Small Player*.

Expect to "rock out" not just over those offerings but also at our Centerpiece screening when members of Metallica join us for Jonas Åkerlund's rousing fan-focused documentary *Metallica Saved My Life*.

Indeed, indie filmmaking still rocks and continues to help all of us roll right through the tough times—together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Fishkin', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Fishkin
Executive Director | Founder
California Film Institute

Our donors bring the stories to life - connecting artists and audiences, inspiring the next generation, and sustaining the spaces where film and community thrive. With gratitude, we honor our Donor Circle supporters for championing independent voices and bold stories.

LEADERSHIP

CHRISTOPHER and JEANNIE SMITH

VICKIE SOULIER

JENNIFER COSLETT MacCREADY

NANCY P. and RICHARD K. ROBBINS FAMILY FOUNDATION

DANIEL KENYON and MICHELLE MARCHETTA KENYON

INVESTOR

JIM BOYCE TRUST and KRIS OTIS

RESONANCE PHILANTHROPIES

DESTINO FUND

GRUBER FAMILY FOUNDATION

MAYS FAMILY CHARITABLE FUND

MOBLEY FAMILY FUND

GORDON RADLEY

CHRISTINE A. SCHANTZ

MICHAEL and SUSAN SCHWARTZ FUND

PLATINUM

KAMALA GEROUX-BERRY and DAVID BERRY

KEN and JACKIE BROAD FAMILY FUND

BLAIRE and BENNO DORER FOUNDATION

JANICE LINK and JESSICA LINK

KHR MCNEELY FAMILY FOUNDATION

JAMES MOCHIZUKI of FRIENDS PRODUCTIONS

CATHY and ROBERT NOURAFSHAN

CONSTANCE OCLASSEN

MAGGIE O'DONNELL and JOSH FLOUM

JONATHAN and DEBORAH PARKER

PATRICIA TANOURY

SILVER

NANCY ABODEELY
BAKER SISTERS FAMILY FUND
JEAN BOLTE and CARL FREDERICK
VIRGINIA BRIA
ALICE CORNING
SUZETTE DEVOGELAERE
STEPHANIE DIMARCO
and JAMES HARLEEN
SUZANNE FELSON
GRISWOLD FAMILY FUND,
BOB and ALEX GRISWOLD
MARGARET E. HAAS FAMILY FUND
TOM and BARBARA HARRISON
RICHARD J. IDELL
and SUSAN KORNBLATT IDELL
ANDREE and JOHN JANSHESKI
WILLA JEFFERSON-STOKES
HOLLY KANE
and WILLIAM GALLAGHER
ELIZABETH KING
LETTY LEDBETTER
JACQUI LOPEZ
CATHERINE and TED MCKOWN
KENNETH and VERA MEISLIN
HARRISON MILLER
and CLARE MCCAMY
ALEXANDER NOURAFSHAN
DEBORAH and PAUL SAGUES
SUSAN and JOEL SKLAR
ELLIOTT and SHAYNA STEIN
MONA STEINBERG
HENRY O. TIMNICK
DAYNA WEST

BRONZE

ANONYMOUS
ANN PECKENPAUGH BECKER
and DAVID BECKER
SUSAN and WILLIAM BEECH
JULIA BENELLO
SUSAN BOLLE
CHINA and BRUCE BOTSFORD
WELLINGTON BOWLER
ROCCO and ATHENA CAPOBIANCO
JOE and SUE CARLOMAGNO
LESLIE CHATHAM
PHILIP CHENETTE
KEVIN and CHRISTINE CHESSEN
JOY CHIK and TOM LARSON
JOANIE CIARDELLI
TOM COHEN
and KRISTI DENTON COHEN
PEGGY and WAYNE COLEMAN
CHRISTINA COOK
STEFANIE COYOTE
BECKY DRAPER
JOANNE DUNN
DICK ENERSEN
BRONYA FELDMANN
DENNIS P. FISCO
and PAMELA POLITE FISCO
CATHERINE and PETER FLAXMAN
JEFFREY FRAENKEL
BARBARA GALYEN
ELISABETH and HOWARD JAFFE
KATIE JARMAN
RAY and CARLA KALISKI
PEGGY and JOE KEON
AMY KEROES and JEFF FISHER
THOMAS KOEGEL
and ANNE LAFOLLETTE
SANDRA KURTZIG
KC and STEVE LAUCK
LORRIANA LEARD
and MICHAEL MAUZY
GISELLA MACKAY
CINDY and JOHN McCAULEY
MARIE McGLASHAN
CAROL and EZRA MERSEY
ALICE MULLER
JEAN NORELLI
ROBERTA O'NEALE
JASON and CHERITY PAYNE
MARK RAPPAPORT
and JEAN HORIHATA
STEVE RIFFKIN
JODIE SILBERMAN
and DONNA ISRAISKY FUND
MICHAEL TRAINA
HELEN WERDEGAR
MEL and PATRICIA ZIEGLER
PAUL ZAENTZ

MAJOR FOUNDATION SUPPORT

GRUBER FAMILY FOUNDATION



HELLMAN FOUNDATION

SIGNATURE



RAYMOND JAMES

**BELLAM
SELF STORAGE**
A CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS

MAJOR

 **DELTA**
OFFICIAL AIRLINE OF CAFILM

FRANCIS FORD
COPPOLA
WINERY
OFFICIAL WINERY
OF CAFILM

WAREHAM
DEVELOPMENT

LUCASFILM
Ltd

SILVER CIRCLE

 **Dolby**


SAN RAFAEL
OFFICIAL HOTEL
of CAFILM

NETFLIX

 Perception Grid

PREMIER MEDIA

San Francisco Chronicle

FESTIVAL CIRCLE



VAN and LYDIA
MAROEVICH



COMMUNITY CIRCLE



ETHAN AND NADINE
— EXCEPTIONAL REPRESENTATION —



MAJOR MEDIA



KQED



MARIN
MAGAZINE

Local
getaways[™]

Marin Independent Journal

HAUTE LIVING
SAN FRANCISCO



SanFrancisco
magazine

SF/ARTS

HOTELS



THE LODGE AT
TIBURON



WATERS EDGE
hotel • tiburon



ACQUA HOTEL
MILL VALLEY

Marin
suites hotel

CREATIVE PARTNERS



SPECIAL SUPPORT



OFFICIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS



Marin Airporter

PROMOTIONAL PARTNERS

PacificSun



BOHEMIAN



Spritz



BAY TIMES
LGBTQ News & Calendar for the Bay Area



GUIDELINES + RULES

Outside food and beverage is not allowed in any of our venues—but we do sell concessions! BAMPFA has a zero food and beverage policy.

Please turn off phones and all other electronic or noise-making devices while attending screenings and events.

The use of cameras and recording devices is strictly prohibited during all screenings and events and may result in removal from the venue.

Oversized bags, with the exception of medical equipment and childcare bags, are not allowed inside any of our venues. Bags 12" x 12" x 6" and smaller are permitted.

Please DO NOT sit in a reserved seat unless it has been pre-arranged for you. Reserved seats are limited to specific donor levels (usually by name or badge type) or for special circumstances, including accessibility requests.

Please also don't stand next to reserved seats in the hopes of them being released. For venue safety and its fire code, all aisles must be clear unless actively walking to or from your seat. Standing in the back of theater spaces or sitting in aisleways or stairs is prohibited.

BOX OFFICES

PRE-FESTIVAL

MARK FISHKIN ROOM at Smith Rafael Film Center
Through Oct 1
1112 Fourth St. San Rafael
11am–5pm Daily (closed Fridays)

SEQUOIA CINEMA:
Sept 18–Oct 1
M–Th 4–7pm; Sa–Su 1–5pm

DURING FESTIVAL

OUTDOOR ART CLUB
Oct 2–12
12–8pm Daily
or one hour before first screening of the day

SEQUOIA CINEMA
12 – 8pm daily
or one hour before first screening of the day

SUPPORT

Box Offices will open 1 hour before the first screening of the day and close 15 minutes after the last. For help while visiting the Sequoia Cinema, visit the main Box Office Hub in the Outdoor Art Club. We'll also have in-person support available at the Lark Theater and BAMPFA.

In an effort to remain as accessible as possible, remote Box Office support will be available from Sept 8 through the end of the festival. You can get help by emailing boxoffice@cafilm.org or by starting a chat on our website.

Reach the Box Office team at 877.874.6833. In the lead up to the festival, phone lines will be open M–F from 10am–7pm and Sa–Su from 12–5pm. During the festival, call any day 10am–7pm.

BADGE PICKUP

If you have a Festival Badge waiting for you, we encourage you to pick it up before the festival starts.

PRE-FESTIVAL

MARK FISHKIN ROOM at Smith Rafael Film Center
Sun Sept 28 through Wed Oct 1, 12–8pm

DURING FESTIVAL

OUTDOOR ART CLUB
Oct 2–12
Standard box office hours (see above)

FESTIVAL LOUNGES

MARK FISHKIN ROOM at Smith Rafael Film Center
1112 Fourth St, San Rafael, CA
OUTDOOR ART CLUB
1 W Blithedale Ave, Mill Valley, CA

FESTIVAL LOUNGE HOURS

Friday, Oct 4–Saturday, Oct 12 - 12–8pm
Happy Hour 4–6pm

LOUNGE ACCESS

MVFF48 Badges, Tickets, or Day Passes with an **L** printed on them can access both lounges.

MVFF.COM | 877.874.6833 | BOXOFFICE@CAFILM.ORG

VENUES

SEQUOIA CINEMA 25 Throckmorton Avenue, Mill Valley
SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER 1118 Fourth Street, San Rafael
OUTDOOR ART CLUB 1 W Blithedale Avenue, Mill Valley
LARK THEATER 549 Magnolia Avenue, Larkspur
BAMPFA 2155 Center Street, Berkeley

TICKETS

ON-SALE DATES

Tickets available at 12pm on the following days for selected audience types and membership levels:

- SEPT 10: Bronze, Silver, and Donor Circle
- SEPT 12: Cinema Benefactor, Premier Patron, Sponsor, and above
- SEPT 14: Directors Circle and above
- SEPT 15: All CAFILM Members
- SEPT 18: General Public

TICKET PRICES

Standard..... \$20
CAFILM Members..... \$16
Students (with ID) + Seniors \$18
Youth (12 & under) + Shorts Programs ... \$12

PLEASE NOTE: Ticket prices vary for Opening & Closing Nights, Tributes, Centerpiece, Spotlights, and Special Screenings and Events. Please check event pages for pricing details, including options for receptions, parties, and dinners where available.

GROUP SALES:

- Group Tickets: \$16 per ticket for groups of 10 or more
- Student, Senior, & Youth Groups: \$10/ticket for groups of 10+

Discounted tickets are available for groups of 10 or more from schools, corporations, nonprofits, film clubs, and community organizations.

- Groups must book at least 10 days in advance of the desired screening.
- Full payment is required at the time of booking.
- Tickets are: • Non-refundable • Reserved for specific screenings
- Distributed electronically • Accessibility accommodations should be requested at the time of booking.
- Availability is limited and subject to Festival Terms & Conditions. Please contact boxoffice@cafilm.org.

TICKET AVAILABILITY + STANDBY

During the festival, visit MVFF.org/available for a list of films with tickets still available. Tickets are released daily at 12pm throughout the festival.

If a screening shows as “Standby,” it’s probably because we hold some tickets for special guests and partners. But don’t worry—Standby Tickets may still be available! Standby Tickets are released 15 minutes before showtime on a first-come, first-served basis. They’re only available in person at the venue and cannot be purchased online or with vouchers.

AUDIENCE AWARD VOTING

After each screening, you can rate films 1–5 stars from your mobile device or Agile Ticketing account. These awards can have a huge impact for filmmakers and their work, so every vote counts in celebrating the films you love!

REFUND POLICY

All ticket sales are final: we can’t provide refunds, exchanges, substitutions, or reprints. MVFF is not responsible for lost, stolen, forgotten, or damaged tickets. Please contact boxoffice@cafilm.org if you believe you have extraordinary circumstances and would like to request a refund.

ATTENDING A SCREENING

Please arrive early and get in line at least 30 minutes before the start of your scheduled screening. Lines open one hour before scheduled start time. We cannot allow saving seats, so please have everyone in your party arrive together. All events, except those at BAMPFA, have lines that follow a priority seating order:

LINE ♦ **A:** Investor, Leadership, Platinum, Select, Silver, and Bronze Pass Levels

LINE ● **B:** CAFILM Member, Filmmaker, Guest, Industry, Press, Publicist, Staff, and Sponsor Levels

LINE ■ **C:** General Admission (you just need a valid ticket, no badge required)

STANDBY: see above.

BAMPFA events are General Admission only.

MVFF48 badges provide details on access and benefits for each badge type. A valid ticket is required to join all lines unless your badge has a QR code that allows Ticketless Admission.



OPENING NIGHT
HAMNET

When a young woman with a mystical, spiritual connection with nature—a healer—meets a young man who’s a Latin scholar and son of a glovemaker, the powerful bond of love is ignited in ways that are fated to resonate through history. There is a living authenticity to Chloé Zhao (*Nomadland*, MVFF43) and her exceptional cast’s imagining and rendering of this 16th-century story: Rooted in a deep sense of humanity and human experience, it speaks across time and does great justice to Maggie O’Farrell’s brilliant novel of the same title. Jessie Buckley (*Women Talking*, MVFF45) embodies Agnes with a powerful, elemental heart and humanity, a perfect foil to Paul Mescal (*The Lost Daughter*, MVFF44) as that scholar who was destined to write plays like, indeed, *Hamlet* (a spelling interchangeable with his son’s name, *Hamnet*.) Exquisitely filmed in rural England, this story of love and loss, parents and children, inspiration and creativity is profoundly moving. —Zoë Elton

- FILM + PARTY: \$145 CAFILM Member | \$155 General
- FILM ONLY: \$70 CAFILM Member | \$75 General
- SIMULCAST + PARTY: \$120 CAFILM Member | \$130 General
- SIMULCAST ONLY: \$45 CAFILM Member | \$50 General
- PARTY LOCATION: Marin Country Mart | 10:30-12:00pm

Thursday, October 2 · 7:15 pm · Sequoia
Thursday, October 2 · 7:30 pm · Rafael

DIRECTOR
Chloé Zhao
UK 2025 125 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

Sponsored by
RAYMOND JAMES

Gala Sponsored by





SPOTLIGHT:

JESSIE BUCKLEY

It has been less than 10 years since Irish actor Jessie Buckley achieved her breakthrough movie role as a young woman determined to make it to the stage of the Grand Ole Opry in *Wild Rose* (2018), for which she was nominated for BAFTA and British Independent Film Awards. She was a Gotham Award nominee for her role in *I'm Thinking of Ending Things* (2020) and received a Best Supporting Actress Oscar® nomination for *The Lost Daughter* (2021). She won the 2022 Best Actress in a Musical Oliver Award for her role as Sally Bowles in *Cabaret*.

HAMNET

Love, loss, and the creation of one of the world's most enduring pieces of literature are at the heart of Chloé Zhao's moving rendering of the bestselling novel, *Hamnet*.

\$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General

Friday, October 3 • 3 pm • Rafael



SPOTLIGHT + MIND THE GAP AWARD EVA VICTOR

Eva Victor's extraordinary feature debut, *Sorry, Baby*, may just be one of those films that inspires/changes the way we see and think about storytelling changes how we see and think tell stories in cinema. It's a film that engages with life via the heart—even when there's tough material in ways that are full-spectrum. In this program, Victor will give an artist's-eye-view of how this remarkable film was developed and came into being: what their choices were, how they pitched their ideas, how the film was shot and created—and, as writer/director/actor, how those different roles were balanced. They will show clips from selected scenes and unpack the process and experiences of making the film. They will be joined by iconic producer Adele Romanski (*Moonlight*, MVFF39; *Aftersun*, 2022). For filmmakers and audiences alike, this inside look into the creative process is a must!

This program is an onstage conversation with film clips, and presentation of the Mind the Gap Award for filmmaking to Eva Victor.

Film only: \$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$85 General

Sunday, October 5 • 2:30pm • Rafael



SPOTLIGHT: ZOHEY DEUTCH NOUVELLE VAGUE

Richard Linklater turns his eye to France in *Nouvelle Vague*, a luminous black-and-white homage to the birth of the French New Wave. With uncanny precision and playful spirit, the film whisks us back to Paris in 1959, where Jean-Luc Godard prepares to shoot *Breathless*. Guillaume Marbeck channels Godard with remarkable wit, while Zoey Deutch delivers a radiant turn as Jean Seberg. Together, they capture the restlessness and youthful passion of a movement that forever changed cinema. Linklater's film is both an affectionate tribute and a slyly comic re-creation, balancing sharp dialogue, exquisite period detail, and the joy of artists on the brink of invention. What emerges is an elegant love letter to the art of filmmaking—romantic, witty, and timeless. A stylish gem for cinephiles and newcomers alike, this is a film that will delight you from first frame to last. *In French and English with English subtitles* —João Federici

After making her television debut at 15 in 2010 in *The Suite Life on Deck*, Zoey Deutch made her first big screen appearance, starring alongside her mother Lea Thompson and sister Madlyn Deutch in *Mayor Cupcake* (2010). Since then, she has moved between television, film, and theater with major film roles, including *Beautiful Creatures* (2013), *Vampire Academy* (2014), *Everybody Wants Some!!* (2016), *Rebel in the Rye* (2017), *The Disaster Artist* (2017), *Set It Up* (2018), *The Outfit* (2022), and *Juror #2* (2024). She made her Broadway debut in 2024 in a revival of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*.

Film only: \$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$85 General

Sunday, October 5 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Monday, October 6 • 4:00pm • Rafael (Regularly-priced screening)

DIRECTOR

Richard Linklater
FRANCE 2025 106 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by



OFFICIAL WINERY
OF CAFILM

Support
provided by

CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO

Reception
Sponsored by





TRIBUTE: JAFAR PANAHİ IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT

One of the world's great filmmakers, writer-director Jafar Panahi has twice been imprisoned by the Iranian government. He has also been the Golden Lion winner at Venice (*The Circle*) and the Golden Bear winner at Berlin (*Taxi*). He now adds Cannes' Palme d'Or to his honors for this revenge thriller infused with moral complexity, dark humor, and unmistakable rage that begins with a mechanic kidnapping a visitor to his shop. Vahid (Vahid Mobasseri) is convinced that Eghbal (Ebrahim Aziz) is the security officer who tortured him years earlier after authorities blindfolded and detained him. When Eghbal insists Vahid has the wrong man, Vahid invites several friends victimized by the same man to verify his identity. Panahi, informed by his own experience, melds the personal with the political to craft a gripping and powerful genre piece that is both deeply critical of Iran's repressive regime and biting funny. *In Persian with English subtitles* —Tim Grierson

Since making his debut in 1995 with *The White Balloon*, the winner of that year's Cannes' Golden Camera, Jafar Panahi has become one of Iran's most acclaimed directors as well as one who has often found himself in his government's crosshairs. Among his films are *The Mirror* (1997), for which he won Locarno's Golden Leopard; *The Circle* (2000), the winner of five awards at the Venice Film Festival, including the Golden Lion; *Offside* (2006), the winner of the Berlin Silver Bear; *Taxi* (2015), which garnered the Berlin Golden Bear; *3 Faces* (2018), winner of Cannes' Best Screenplay prize; and *No Bears* (2022), winner of Venice Film Festival Special Jury Prize.

\$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General

Monday, October 6 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Saturday, October 11 • 2:00pm • BAMPFA (Regularly-priced screening)

DIRECTOR
Jafar Panahi
IRAN, FRANCE,
LUXEMBOURG
2025 101 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

MARIN
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Support Provided by

Villa
Albertine 



SPOTLIGHT: JOEL EDGERTON TRAIN DREAMS

A master at inhabiting the hearts and souls of the characters he plays, Joel Edgerton (*Boy Erased*, MVFF41; *Loving*, MVFF39; *The Plague*, MVFF48) delivers another exquisite turn in Clint Bentley's (*Jockey*) resonant adaptation of Denis Johnson's novella. Robert Grainier (Edgerton) grows up and old along with the 20th century, his life unfolding alongside decades of momentous change leading to the Space Age. A railroad worker and logger, Robert's own existence may not be so monumental, yet there is a sweep to the days of this shy, taciturn man as he experiences joy and sorrow, and bears witness to the epiphanies of everyday life. An excellent supporting cast—many in cameo roles—includes Felicity Jones, William H. Macy, John Diehl, Clifton Collins Jr., and the Bay Area's own Sean San Jose. Gorgeously shot in rural Washington and powered by Edgerton's performance, *Train Dreams* is a profound depiction of one man's march through history. —Pam Grady

Actor-director-writer-producer Joel Edgerton has captured our attention on screens, big and small, since 1995 in a range of diverse projects (*Star Wars Episodes II and III*, *Warrior*, *Zero Dark Thirty*, *Kinky Boots*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Animal Kingdom*, *Black Mass*, *Midnight Special*) building to leading man status in recent projects *Loving* (MVFF39); *Boy Erased* (MVFF41 Spotlight), his second feature as a director; *The Green Knight* (2022); and *The Boys in the Boat* (2023). He received a Directors Guild of America nomination for Outstanding Directing for his directorial debut *The Gift* (2015). He adds another textured portrait to his gallery of characters as an Everyman in extraordinary times in *Train Dreams*.

Film only: \$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$90 General

Tuesday, October 7 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Wednesday, October 8 • 3:00pm • Sequoia (Regularly-priced screening)

DIRECTOR

Clint Bentley

US 2024 100 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

Sponsored by



Reception
Sponsored by





SPOTLIGHT: TONATIUH KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

Writer/director Bill Condon (*Gods and Monsters*, MVFF21) confidently employs the stylized trappings of classic Hollywood musicals and lurid pulp melodrama to present the mesmerizing tale of political prisoners in 1983 Argentina. Obsessed with screen queen Ingrid Luna (Jennifer Lopez), queer window dresser Luis (Tonatiuh) affectionately relates his favorite of her films to his Marxist cellmate Valentin (Diego Luna). A movie-within-a-movie unfolds with femme fatale Ingrid spinning her glamorous web around Luis and Valentin. The storytelling is not merely diversion: Its embrace of compassion and dignity allows a deeper intimacy to develop between these two disparate victims of fascist oppression. Condon adapts Manuel Puig's novel and Kander and Ebb's Tony winner into a shimmering showcase for its three enchanting leads, complete with lavish musical numbers giving nods to Vincente Minnelli and Bob Fosse. Beyond the lush production design and enchanting choreography, *Kiss of the Spider Woman* demonstrates how activism and strength can emerge in the most unlikely of settings. —Sterling Hedgpeth

Tonatiuh is an actor and screenwriter whose latest role is that of Molina in Bill Condon's adaptation of Manuel Puig's *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*. When the film debuted at the 2025 Sundance Film Festival, Tonatiuh's performance earned widespread acclaim. Most recently, Tonatiuh starred in the Netflix thriller *Carry-On* (2024) and also appeared in the feature film *Drunk Bus* (2020). A native Angeleno, Tonatiuh honed his craft at the University of Southern California's School of Dramatic Arts and School of Cinematic Arts. He's appeared on television in *Vida*, *Promised Land*, *Hidden Canyons*, and the miniseries *Angelyne*. He is also an accomplished stage actor.

Film only: \$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$90 General

Wednesday, October 8 • 7:00pm • Sequoia

Thursday, October 9 • 2:30pm • Sequoia (Regularly-priced screening)

DIRECTOR

Bill Condon

US 2025 128 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

Sponsored by

VICKIE SOULIER



CENTERPIECE **METALLICA SAVED MY LIFE**

Despite Metallica's decades-long status as an essential part of the Bay Area musical landscape, revelations about the iconic heavy metal band abound in this vibrant documentary. Jonas Åkerlund's film covers the bases, from the band's formation in 1981 to its induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, but this is less a story of the group than of the community that has grown around it. Phenomenally diverse and accepting, it developed organically, arising out of the band's tours and online culture. In one testimonial after another, the fans act as ambassadors, describing how this kinship changed the lives of people sometimes dispossessed, stigmatized, or isolated. The most touching tributes come from some of the most unlikely sources, as one devotee after another shares the tectonic, life-affirming impact of Metallica. The documentary is not only a must-see for fans but also provides ample evidence to the uninitiated that Metallica is so much more than a band. —Sterling Hedgpeth

Film only: \$40 CAFILM Member | \$50 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$90 General

Thursday, October 9 · 6:00pm · Sequoia

Friday, October 10 · 3:00pm · Rafael (Regularly-priced screening)

DIRECTOR
Jonas Åkerlund
UK 2025 99 min

SECTION
DOCS

Sponsored by





SPOTLIGHT + MIND THE GAP AWARD
ROSE BYRNE
IF I HAD LEGS I'D KICK YOU

This is not what motherhood is supposed to be like, or so Linda (Rose Byrne) is desperately trying to convince herself. The Montauk mom’s precarious world begins to literally fall apart after a massive hole appears in her apartment’s ceiling, displacing her family. Her life becomes an increasingly chaotic balancing act, as she tends to her daughter’s mysterious illness, while servicing the mounting needs of her psychotherapy patients. Her unraveling further exacerbated by an absent husband, Linda relies on the support of her reluctant therapist (played dazzlingly against type by Conan O’Brien), and misguided side-quests with a charming motel super (A\$AP Rocky) to keep her afloat before descending further into crisis. Produced by *Uncut Gems* co-director Josh Safdie, Mary Bronstein’s wholly original comedy drama shares some of that film’s anxious energy. It is also a mesmerizing showcase of MVFF Spotlight honoree (Berlinale Best Leading Performance Silver Bear winner) Rose Byrne’s brilliant ability to go to dark and uncomfortable places. —Jordan Klein

Rose Byrne made her feature film debut at 15 in her native Australia with *Devil Doll* (1994). Among her films are *The Goddess of 1967* (2000), for which she won the Venice Film Festival’s Volpi Cup; *Marie Antoinette* (2006); *Sunshine* (2007); *28 Weeks Later* (2007); *Bridesmaids* (2011), a Screen Actors Guild Awards nominee for its ensemble cast; *Instant Family* (2018); and *Tow* (2025). On television, she received two Emmy nominations for her work on *Damages* (2007-2012), played Gloria Steinem on *Mrs. America* (2020), and most recently starred on *Platonic* (2023-2025). She received a 2020 Drama Desk nomination for Best Actress in a play for BAM’s *Medea*.

Film only: \$35 CAFILM Member | \$40 General
Film + Reception: \$80 CAFILM Member | \$90 General

Friday, October 10 · 7:00pm · Rafael

DIRECTOR
Mary Bronstein
US 2025 113 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

Sponsored by

MAYS FAMILY
CHARITABLE FUND



TRIBUTE: SPIKE LEE

The Mill Valley Film Festival is thrilled to present clips and conversation with the inimitable Spike Lee. For more than 45 years, Spike Lee has been carving out an indelible place in cinema with a tireless and endlessly curious work aesthetic that includes documentaries, narratives, episodics, music videos, short films, and more. His debut feature *She's Gotta Have It* (1986) brought a shot of adrenaline into the American indie scene while his latest *Highest and Lowest* (2025) cements his place as a poet of New York City and a storyteller of immense range and style. His production company, 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks, nurtures and mentors aspiring actors and craftspeople in all realms of filmmaking. His work transcends genres and tidy categories, it is bold and funny and challenging and unclassifiable. Be prepared for an unforgettable event with a true master of cinema.

\$40 CAFILM Member | \$50 General

Saturday, October 11 · 7:30pm · Rafael

BAMBOOZLED

Saturday, October 11 · 9:30pm · Rafael

Separate admission · Regularly priced screening

Sponsored by

DANIEL KENYON
and MICHELLE
MARCHETTA
KENYON



CLOSING NIGHT
RENTAL FAMILY

Brendan Fraser's (*The Whale*, MVFF45) enormous talent for playing empathetic characters is put to brilliant use in this crowd-pleasing comedy drama. An actor who has lived in Tokyo for seven years where parts for Americans are few, Philip (Fraser) is grateful when he gets a gig to play a mourner at an actual funeral. The job is his introduction to a unique Japanese industry where people lacking family or friends or colleagues can hire surrogates to fill those roles. Philip signs on full-time, but his compassion for his clients coupled with his own deep loneliness creates chaos at their homes and his hiring agency when he begins crossing boundaries. With her second feature, writer-director Hikari (37 *Seconds*, MVFF42) achieves a tricky perfect balance between laughs and poignancy in a film that celebrates the power of human connection. And Fraser is simply phenomenal as a man who rediscovers his own need for kinship through this unusual work opportunity. *In English and Japanese with English subtitles* —Pam Grady

FILM + PARTY: \$145 CAFILM Member | \$155 General
FILM ONLY: \$70 CAFILM Member | \$75 General
SIMULCAST + PARTY: \$120 CAFILM Member | \$130 General
SIMULCAST ONLY: \$45 CAFILM Member | \$50 General
PARTY LOCATION: Elk Lodge, San Rafael | 7:00-10:00pm

Sunday, October 12 • 5:00pm • Rafael • Sequoia

DIRECTOR
Hikari
JAPAN, US 2024 103 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

Sponsored by



S - DIVIDED
CREATURES

FREE

AUTONOMY
AUTO=SELF
NOMOS=LAW



AFTER THE HUNT

The pretensions of academia have rarely been skewered more mercilessly than in Luca Guadagnino’s (*Queer*, MVFF47; *Call Me By Your Name*, MVFF40) new drama led by a powerhouse Julia Roberts. She plays Alma Olsson, a philosophy professor at Yale counting on tenure, fluent in the language of her profession and in sly takedowns of middling students. Running competitively alongside her is close colleague Henrik Gibson (Andrew Garfield), until Black PhD candidate Maggie Price (Ayo Edebiri) accuses him of sexual assault. Written by actor Nora Garrett, *After the Hunt* is a simmering potpourri of issues including sexuality and race, #Me Too and power dynamics, and generational privilege. As matters become increasingly fraught, with both Alma and Henrik’s careers on the line, the film rises to a boil, boosted by Trent Reznor’s forceful score and key supporting turns by Chloë Sevigny and Michael Stuhlbarg. Fizzy with snappy dialogue and exploding with post-screening topics for discussion, this is button-pushing cinema at its best. —Rod Armstrong

DIRECTOR
Luca Guadagnino
US 2025 139 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

Sponsored by
KURT MOBLEY

Saturday, October 4 · 12:00pm · Lark
Sunday, October 5 · 7:00pm · Lark



AKIKO, THE FLYING MONKEY

“How do you do and welcome to the zoo! My name’s Akiko let me share my point of view.” Young Akiko is tired of zookeepers making a monkey out of him, even though he is, zoologically speaking, a monkey. He also has a hunch that there’s “more to life than lunch.” With the strong support of his simian family, he plans an escape to the wild forest, embarking on an adventurous and joyful journey out of the cage and over the walls. Along the way, there’s some unexpected assistance from an eagle, a raccoon, a ferret, and a chameleon. Together, they will help him achieve his goal: to reunite with his family and help free all of the city’s animals. Veit Helmer (*Baikonur*, MVFF35)’s delightfully funny and musical mix of real live animals, silly humans, and playful puppetry is anchored by a deeper theme: dignity and freedom for all creatures. Dubbed in English —K.D. Davis

DIRECTOR
Veit Helmer
GERMANY 2024 70 min

SECTION
FAMILY

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

NORTH AMERICAN
PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 · 1:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 5 · 11:00am · Rafael



THE ALABAMA SOLUTION

The invite seems innocuous: Come cover the annual BBQ for incarcerated men at an Alabama state prison. But what filmmakers Andrew Jarecki (*Capturing the Friedmans*, *The Jinx*) and Charlotte Kaufman discover during that public relations event leads them down a serpentine investigative path. The pair unearth decades of horrific abuse; deplorable, inhumane conditions; shocking injustices; and numerous deaths within penitentiary walls where media cameras are not allowed. Through the use of contraband cell-phones and interviews with men on the inside and relatives and others on the outside demanding elusive answers, this powerful documentary graphically details a system that is not only corrupt and ineffective but binds these men into a modern form of slavery. Edited seamlessly by Page Marsella, *The Alabama Solution* is a damning and disturbing indictment that looks at every facet of a broken institution, while also serving as a shout for accountability and justice. —Randy Myers

DIRECTORS
Andrew Jarecki
Charlotte Kaufman
US 2025 114 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

Friday, October 3 · 4:00pm · BAMPFA
Saturday, October 4 · 11:45am · Rafael



ANDRÉ IS AN IDIOT

Artist and advertising whiz André Ricciardi judges himself harshly for a reason that is simple, if dramatic: Asked by his best friend to endure their first colonoscopies together, he declined, his general philosophy being “No cops, no doctors.” Unfortunately, a year later Ricciardi faces the shock of a Stage 4 colon cancer diagnosis. Partly to deal with “my impending mortality,” the San Franciscan produced this imaginative documentary, which is both a biography and a farewell of sorts. Its antic approach to an angsty subject encompasses input from his wife and daughters, strange detours (including instruction on a recommended “death yell”), stop-motion animation, guest star Tommy Chong, and an appearance on *The Newlywed Game*. Little about this man’s life has been conventional—he shrugs off past “complex relationships with drugs and alcohol” as “nothing more serious than meth and heroin.” Will his departure from it be equally idiosyncratic? You bet. Tony Benna’s feature won the Audience Award for Best US Documentary at Sundance this year. —Dennis Harvey

DIRECTOR
Tony Benna
US 2025 88 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
LAUGH

BAY AREA PREMIERE

Monday, October 6 · 8:00pm · Sequoia
Thursday, October 9 · 3:00pm · Rafael



ANIMAL FARM

"We all dreamed that one day, animals would be free and run the farm, all of us working together. There was just one thing that stood in the way of our dream: Man." In Andy Serkis' deliciously funny, family friendly update of George Orwell, small farms are foreclosed, overconsumption runs rampant at big-box stores, and Cybertrucks cavort with surveillance drones across the land and sky. When a semi-truck arrives at Farmer Jones' place, the animals rejoice at the promise of a trip to the "laughterhouse." But when the letter "S" is revealed in front of "laughterhouse," their journey from ignorance toward independence begins. With a dream voiceover cast including Seth Rogen as Napoleon ("Notorious P.I.G."), Laverne Cox, Kieran Culkin, Woody Harrelson, Kathleen Turner, Steve Buscemi, Glenn Close, and Jim Parsons (as "All the Sheep"), this updated and accessible fable for our time is a four-legs-up must-see for the family. —K.D. Davis

DIRECTOR

Andy Serkis

UK, CANADA, US

2025 96 min

SECTION

FAMILY

STRAND

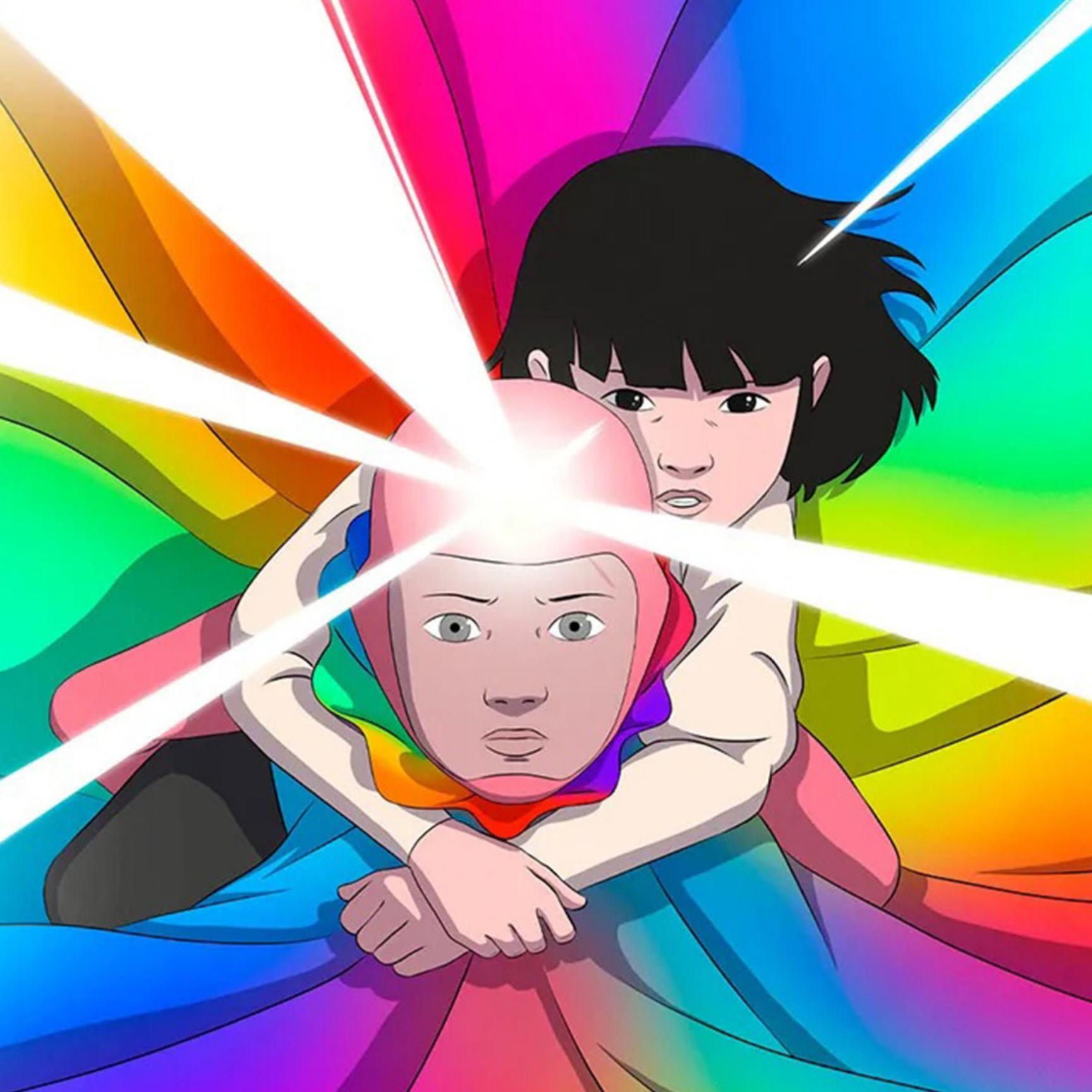
LAUGH

Sponsored by

CHRISTINE A.
SCHANTZ

Saturday, October 4 • 11:30am • Rafael

Friday, October 10 • 1:00pm • Lark



ARCO

In the year 2932, young Arco lives in an idyllic Garden of Eden in the clouds above Earth. He speaks the languages of the birds and can't wait to soar through time and space like his parents and sister, but he's too young to fly. Sneaking out of the house one day, he dons a flight suit and leaps into space, leaving rainbow trails in his wake. Transported back in time to 2075, Arco encounters a world of food shortages and wildfires. There, he meets Iris, a lonely girl living with her baby brother and gentle "Nannybot" caregiver, Mikki. The two children share a deep bond, discovering universal secrets—and love. Produced by actor Natalie Portman, director Ugo Bienvenu's visionary film, suitable for ages 8-118, evokes the best of Studio Ghibli and features Arnaud Toulon's gorgeous orchestral score. Following its Cannes premiere, *Arco* won the top prize at Annecy. Magically unforgettable! *Dubbed in English* —K.D. Davis

DIRECTOR

Ugo Bienvenu

FRANCE 2025 82 min

SECTION

FAMILY

STRAND

HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 • 3:30pm • Lark
Saturday, October 11 • 11:00am • Rafael

Sponsored by

BELLAM
SELF STORAGE
A CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS



ARREST THE MIDWIFE

When an infant dies during birth at an Upstate New York hospital, prosecutors file 95 felony charges against the attending midwife but none against the doctor who performed the delivery. That 2021 case is at the heart of Elaine Epstein’s latest documentary, an impassioned plea advocating for the essential work of midwives. Liz Catlin primarily provided care to New York’s underserved Mennonite community, attending hundreds of home births without incident until complications led her to bring a laboring mother to the hospital. So outraged are her patients at Catlin’s predicament that the normally cloistered women break with their religious beliefs to speak out on her behalf. In a country where maternal deaths from childbirth outstrips that of any other industrialized nation and where rural Americans have few healthcare options, midwifery is often the last best choice for a safe birth. Epstein’s compelling film argues that the state and its doctors would do better to work with midwives rather than against them. —Shari Kirzirian

DIRECTOR
Elaine Epstein
US 2025 78 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

Saturday, October 4 · 3:45pm · Sequoia
Monday, October 6 · 2:00pm · Sequoia



BALLAD OF A SMALL PLAYER

Shifting the setting from the dim chambers of the Vatican in last year's *Conclave* (MVFF47) to the shimmering decadence of Macau's four-star casinos, director Edward Berger once again displays his singular ability to represent the grand sweep of human aspiration, avarice, and desire on screen. Colin Farrell gives an incendiary performance as Lord Doyle, a high-rolling lowlife addicted to high-stakes baccarat. Upwardly mobile but down on his luck, all he needs is that "one big win". And he'll risk everything—and everyone—on that next bet. Enter "Betty" (get it?) Grayson, a slightly dowdy private investigator (Tilda Swinton, hilariously divine!) and Doyle's jig is up. Or is it? With a strong supporting cast (Fala Chen, Deanie Ip, and Alex Jennings), Berger is firing on all cylinders in this breathless adaptation of Lawrence Osborne's best-selling novel. And be sure not to miss the closing credit surprise—it's a big winner! —K.D. Davis

DIRECTOR

Edward Berger
GERMANY, UK
2025 101 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

Sponsored by

GRUBER FAMILY
FOUNDATION

Sunday, October 12 • 11:00am • Lark



BAMBOOZLED

Our celebration of Spike Lee's amazing career continues with this special screening, chosen by the director. *Bamboozled* satirizes popular culture and adds dance legend Savion Glover's muscular tapping to the mix to create an indelible film that has only grown in power in the 25 years since its release. Tommy Davidson and Glover star as Womack and Manray, a pair of buskers recruited to star in a modern-day minstrel show in Spike Lee's scabrous tragicomedy. Unhappy television writer Pierre Delacroix (Damon Wayans) is desperate to get away from his boss Dunwitty (Michael Rapaport) and the man's many micro and macro aggressions. Pierre can't quit without breaking his contract, so he seeks to get fired by mounting a flamboyantly racist TV series so offensive it's bound to fail. When the opposite happens and the show becomes not just a hit but a cultural phenomenon, Womack, Manray, and even Delacroix initially enjoy their success but the reprehensible material and the laughter it engenders begins to eat at their souls. A rare big screen opportunity! —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR

Spike Lee

US

2000 135 min

Saturday, October 11 • 9:30pm • Rafael



BLUE MOON

With his best friend Richard Rodgers (Andrew Scott), Lorenz Hart (Ethan Hawke) wrote classic American musicals and songs that have become canon like “My Funny Valentine” and “Blue Moon.” But by 1943, “Larry” is an alcoholic wreck, and Rodgers has just scored his greatest triumph with new partner Oscar Hammerstein II as *Oklahoma!* debuts on Broadway. Larry is the odd man out at the opening night party at Sardi’s, but that doesn’t stop him from holding forth to anyone who will listen, hiding his disappointment in Rodgers’ defection behind nonstop chatter. This ninth collaboration between Hawke and director Richard Linklater (*Before Sunrise*, *Boyhood*) is a finely honed portrait of an artist in emotional freefall. Nearly unrecognizable, playing the balding songwriter who was almost a foot shorter, Hawke convinces as a garrulous genius and drunk both fighting against and surrendering to his own worst impulses. It is an astonishing performance. —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR
Richard Linklater
US, IRELAND 2025 100 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

Sponsored by

JIM BOYCE TRUST
and KRIS OTIS

Tuesday, October 7 · 7:00pm · Sequoia
Wednesday, October 8 · 1:00pm · Rafael



BROTHER VERSES BROTHER

The twin sons of late, great SF novelist Herbert Gold, filmmaker Ari and musician Ethan collaborate on this “live cinema” musical drama, “featuring The Brothers Gold and the People of San Francisco.” Executive produced by Francis Ford Coppola, it begins with one extroverted brother running late to join his introverted counterpart for an audition of sorts at Vesuvio’s, across Jack Kerouac Alley from City Lights Bookstore. Soon accompanied by a third singer (Lara Louise), these quarrelsome siblings move on to a couple of equally famed local watering holes. They clomp up Telegraph Hill, engage in minor social intrigue, then finally visit Dad on Russian Hill. This charming experiment, in which nearly everyone plays “versions of themselves,” may recall the likes of *Before Sunrise* or *Medicine for Melancholy*. But with a couple big differences: *Brother Verses Brother* was shot in a single improvisational take, and is filled with performances of Ethan’s endearingly catchy original indie pop tunes. —Dennis Harvey

DIRECTOR
Ari Gold
US, 2025 91 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

STRAND
CREATE

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Sponsored by

San Francisco Chronicle

Sunday, October 5 · 8:00pm · Sequoia
Tuesday, October 7 · 3:00pm · Sequoia



BUGONIA

Conspiracy-obsessed survivalist cousins Teddy (Jesse Plemons in a true tour de force) and Donny Gatz (astonishing newcomer Aidan Delbis) are on a mission to save their beloved backyard beehives—and humanity—from Colony Collapse Disorder. Waging a two-man war against allegedly alien-controlled forces of biotech and modernity, the cousins take extreme measures to “clear their psychic cache” before staging what may be cinema’s klutziest—and funniest—raid at the office of Big Pharma CEO Michelle Fuller (Emma Stone, perfectly stone-cold). Their demand: to be beamed up to Fuller’s astral mothership and reason with the extraterrestrials they believe responsible for our earthly mess. Out-of-this-world performances by Plemons, Stone, and Delbis anchor Yorgos Lanthimos’ (*Poor Things*, MVFF46; *The Favourite*, MVFF41) blisteringly funny and frighteningly close-to-the-bone tale that begs the question: Wouldn’t the bees, and the planet, be better off if we all just buzzed off? —K.D. Davis

DIRECTOR

Yorgos Lanthimos
IRELAND, SOUTH KOREA,
CANADA, US
2025 120 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

Sunday, October 5 • 7:00pm • Sequoia
Saturday, October 11 • 3:00pm • Rafael

Sponsored by





CALLE MÁLAGA

From Moroccan filmmaker Maryam Touzani (*The Blue Caftan*, MVFF45), *Calle Málaga* is a luminous, heart-warming delight set against the vibrant streets of Tangier. At 74, María Ángeles (the irresistible Carmen Maura) is the beating heart of her neighborhood, fiercely attached to the home she's cherished for over 40 years. But when her financially strapped daughter Clara returns from Madrid with a firm resolve to sell the apartment, María Ángeles quietly makes her own plans to reclaim the life, community, and memories she refuses to give up. Back in her sun-drenched world, she finds herself swept up in an unexpected romance where joy, desire, and freedom aren't bound by age. Co-written with Nabil Ayouch (*Everybody Loves Touda*, MVFF47), Touzani's warm, funny, and deeply touching film celebrates the right to happiness at any age, the unbreakable bonds of place and memory, and the courage to live on one's own terms. *In Spanish with English subtitles* —João Federici

De la cineasta marroquí Maryam Touzani (*The Blue Caftan*, MVFF45), *Calle Málaga* es un deleite luminoso y conmovedor ambientado en las vibrantes calles de Tánger. A sus 74 años, María Ángeles (la irresistible Carmen Maura) es el corazón latente de su vecindario, profundamente apegada al hogar que ha cuidado durante más de 40 años. Pero cuando su hija Clara, con problemas económicos, regresa de Madrid con la firme decisión de vender el departamento, María Ángeles silenciosamente hace sus propios planes para reclamar su vida, la comunidad y los recuerdos que se niega a abandonar. De vuelta en su mundo bañado por el sol, se ve envuelta en un romance inesperado donde la alegría, el deseo y la libertad no tienen edad. Coescrito con Nabil Ayouch (*Everybody Loves Touda*, MVFF47), la cálida, divertida y profundamente emotiva película de Touzani celebra el derecho a la felicidad a cualquier edad, los vínculos inquebrantables con el lugar y la memoria, y el coraje de vivir como uno elija. —João Federici

DIRECTOR

Maryam Touzani
MOROCCO, FRANCE,
SPAIN, GERMANY,
BELGIUM
2025 116 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP
¡VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND

TRAILBLAZER

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Support
provided by

CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO

Wednesday, October 8 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Thursday, October 9 • 7:00pm • BAMPFA



CASE 137 (DOSSIER 137)

Who polices the police? Dominik Moll’s character-driven thriller introduces us to Stéphanie (Léa Drucker), a dedicated member of the IGPN—France’s internal affairs unit—who will stop at nothing to find the cops who severely injured an innocent young man during a peaceful protest in Paris. Premiering in Cannes’ prestigious Competition slate, *Case 137* unfolds like a crack procedural as Stéphanie meticulously tracks down the flics in question, but this is no simple whodunit. Instead, Moll employs the genre to explore a stalwart officer’s gradual realization of the limitations of her job. Accused of being a traitor by her fellow cops and verbally abused by the victim’s family, who are impatient for justice, Stéphanie must navigate an emotional minefield, and Drucker’s subtle, reserved performance captures the character’s resilience and growing doubt. *Case 137* is refreshingly human, measuring the toll on those devoted few trying to make a difference *In French with English subtitles* —Tim Grierson

DIRECTOR
Dominik Moll
FRANCE 2025 115 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

US PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 · 7:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 12 · 7:00pm · BAMPFA

Support
provided by
CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO



CHARLIEBIRD

Libby Ewing’s moving directorial feature debut centers on the evolution of an intensifying relationship between emotionally malnourished musical therapist Al (Samantha Smart, who also wrote the eloquent screenplay) and mercurial Charlie (Gabriela Ochoa Perez, in a breakout performance), a blunt, perceptive, and creative 17-year-old patient restlessly confined to a bed at a Texas hospital. Ewing’s film explores how this unexpected bond, one built around trust, goofiness, and candor, ushers in memories of a childhood trauma for Al while making her realize that she, too, needs comfort and healing. Framed in an oblong aspect ratio by ace cinematographer Luca del Puppo that evokes a cell-phone-like rawness and intimacy, Ewing’s award-winning *Charliebird* resonates with truth. It is a compassionate drama, one so confident that it feels like the work not of a first-time director but of a veteran filmmaker sent to remind us about the fragility of life. Smart and Perez’s soulful performances are unforgettable. —Randy Myers

DIRECTOR
Libby Ewing
US 2025 98 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

RESONANCE
PHILANTHROPIES

Saturday, October 4 · 4:00pm · Rafael
Monday, October 6 · 6:00pm · Rafael



CHILDREN IN THE FIRE

Ten years after the release of his Academy Award®-nominated feature, *Winter on Fire*, and three years after *Freedom on Fire: Ukraine's Fight for Freedom* (MVFF45 Power of Cinema Award), director Evgeny Afineevsky returns to Ukraine to chronicle the lives of children wounded during Russia's ongoing invasion. A searing documentary that blends live-action footage with animated recreations and diary entries, *Children in the Fire* not only centers on the stories of the next generation of Ukrainians but truly thrusts viewers into the perspectives of its young subjects. From kids who survived abduction and mental abuse to those living with life-altering physical injuries, the documentary's participants and their stories push viewers to engage with the harrowing, lesser-discussed truths about the years-long war. Above all else, Afineevsky's use of animation and unflinching vision uniquely capture the experiences, both real and imagined, of resilient Ukrainian children who boldly pursue their futures despite coming of age during war-time. *In Ukrainian with English subtitles* —Kate Bove

DIRECTOR
Evgeny Afineevsky
US 2025 108 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
GROW

NORTH AMERICAN
PREMIERE

Saturday, October 11 · 4:00pm · Lark



THE CHORAL

Alan Bennett is 91 years old and *The Choral* is his first original screenplay since 1984's *A Private Function*. This fourth collaboration with director Nicholas Hytner (*The History Boys*) finds Bennett at the height of his powers as he enters his 10th decade. Ralph Fiennes (*Conclave*, MVFF47) stars as Dr. Henry Guthrie, new chorus master to Ramsden, Yorkshire's Choral Society. With the Great War raging across the English Channel, the locals are suspicious of this imperious newcomer who has spent most of his career in Germany, while he faces the challenge of finding substitutes among the mill town's depleted population for all the choir members off to battle. Guthrie further stirs controversy by updating Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*—to the composer's horror—to suit the times for the annual choral. The ensemble cast in this spectacular drama is huge, as Bennett examines wartime's effects on those left back home while celebrating the power of music. —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR

Nicholas Hytner
UK 2025 113 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

JENNIFER COSLETT
MacCREADY

Saturday, October 4 • 3:30pm • Rafael
Friday, October 10 • 3:00pm • Sequoia



CONFIDANTE (CONFIDENTE)

When your actions carry far-reaching consequences, every word matters. 40-year-old Sabiha calls herself Arzu when she is on the line at the Ankara erotic call center where she works. On the evening after the devastating 1999 Istanbul earthquake, a teenager trapped beneath rubble calls, pleading for help. Moved, Arzu makes a decision that quietly entangles her in a web of political consequences. Directed by Çağla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovanetti, and featuring a striking performance by Saadet Işıl Aksoy, this tense drama premiered in Berlinale's Panorama section to strong acclaim. Intimate and emotionally charged, the film uses silence, stillness, and Aksoy's expressive face to examine fear, hypocrisy, and the weight of connection. *Confidante* invites us to question the borders of empathy, power, and choice when one voice reaches through the darkness, and another chooses to answer. A haunting, human film that stays with you. *In Turkish with English subtitles* —João Federici

DIRECTORS

Çağla Zencirci
Guillaume Giovanetti
TURKEY, FRANCE,
LUXEMBOURG
2025 76 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

STRAND

TRAILBLAZER

US PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 · 5:00pm · Rafael

Saturday, October 4 · 8:30pm · Rafael



DIAMOND DIPLOMACY

Long considered America’s official pastime, ever since baseball was introduced to Japan in the late 19th century, the sport has become a mutual obsession between the two nations. A key factor in bridging the cultural gap between East and West, baseball has also been used as a way to combat anti-Japanese prejudices in the US from WWII to the present day. Documentarian Yuriko Gamo Romer (*Mrs. Judo: Be Strong, Be Gentle, Be Beautiful*) traces the long, shared history behind our mutual love of the old ballgame, from Japan’s embrace of Black players in the 1930s to Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, and their fellow all-stars playing exhibition games overseas to the era of contemporary MLB heavy hitters like Ichiro Suzuki, Hideo Nomo, and (of course) Shohei Ohtani. *Diamond Diplomacy* is a fascinating and definitive look at how nine innings changed the way two countries communicate across a great divide. Play ball! —David Fear

DIRECTOR
Yuriko Gamo Romer
US 2024 86 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 • 3:30pm • Sequoia
Sunday, October 5 • 12:30pm • Sequoia

Sponsored by





EVERYONE IS LYING TO YOU FOR MONEY

Actor-turned-filmmaker Ben McKenzie (author of the 2023 book *Easy Money*) makes a remarkably self-assured directorial debut with this brisk, absorbing documentary exploring the hype and hazards of cryptocurrency. What begins as a lockdown-era curiosity for McKenzie soon evolves into a seriocomic quest in the spirit of *Roger & Me*, with the director securing face time with industry power players like FTX’s Sam Bankman-Fried and Celsius’ Alex Mashinsky for some remarkably candid conversations. Threaded through all of this, however, are human stories of everyday people left holding the bag after their dreams of crypto fortunes collapse—such as a Texas contractor who sheds tears upon losing his life savings. Guiding the audience on this journey, McKenzie’s tone remains skeptical without ever tipping into cynicism. Instead, he delivers a film that’s clear-eyed and timely while also serving as a captivating primer for anyone still trying to wrap their heads around what crypto actually is. *In English and Spanish with English subtitles* — Zaki Hasan

DIRECTOR
Ben McKenzie
US 2025 89 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
LAUGH

US PREMIERE

Sponsored by

Marin Independent Journal

Sunday, October 5 · 3:00pm · Sequoia
Saturday, October 11 · 4:00pm · Sequoia



**EVERYWHERE MAN:
THE LIVES AND TIMES OF PETER ASHER**

Peter Asher began his career as a child actor at home in England, making his screen debut in 1952 as Claudette Colbert’s son in *Outpost in Malaysia*. A dozen years later, as one half of Peter and Gordon, he scored a #1 hit in the UK and US with the pop duo’s very first single, “A World Without Love,” written by his sister Jane’s boyfriend Paul McCartney. Transatlantic pop stardom was just the first peak Asher scaled; as the ’60s gave way to the ’70s he segued smoothly to LA record producer and artist manager, conducting James Taylor and Linda Ronstadt to superstardom. San Francisco filmmakers Dan Geller and Dayna Goldfine (*Hallelujah: Leonard Cohen, a Journey, a Song*) expand and elevate Asher’s late-career stories-and-songs stage show into an effervescent and moving memoir of a creative life well-lived. Eric Idle and Steve Martin join Ronstadt and Taylor in this music-filled recollection of a show business good guy. —Michael Fox

DIRECTORS
Dan Geller
Dayna Goldfine
US 2025 117 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
CREATE

Sponsored by

DESTINO FUND

Saturday, October 4 · 7:00pm · Sequoia
Tuesday, October 7 · 4:00pm · Sequoia

FOREVER YOUNG

How long will we live? Is aging a disease? Do we want to reach 150 years old? These are just a few of the big questions at the center of David Donnelly’s captivating, future-fueled documentary. Scientists, philosophers, and artists weigh in on how technology and science are changing how we age, and the effect of those advances on our lives. The film glides between describing cutting-edge therapies and technologies that include smart drugs, human growth hormone, and genetic fixes, and examining the practical and political considerations of extended longevity. All options are on the table: Can robots, red wine, and/or relationships increase our life spans, and generate a more meaningful existence? Captivating, educational, and occasionally unsettling, Forever Young asks big questions about the biology, ethics, and impact of extending human existence into the “fourth act” of life. —Brendan Peterson

DIRECTOR
David Donnelly
US 2025 90 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
GROW

Saturday, October 11 · 7:30pm · Lark
Sunday, October 12 · 11:00am · Sequoia



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Two delighted eight-year-olds wake up in the middle of the night to excitedly prepare for a birthday party. They might be sisters, or best friends, or cousins. The drama brilliantly demurs in giving us clarity, until the film’s focus settles on Toha (a phenomenal Doha Ramadan), already a maid at such a young age. What unfolds are her poignant experiences as she navigates the dramatic class differences between her own family and that of her employers and their world of privilege. Set in contemporary Cairo, the incomparable Ramadan conveys the force of a little girl’s will to resist the small injustices she does not fully comprehend. Writer-director Sarah Goher’s surprising and heartbreaking film, a beautifully written and photographed story of resilience, will leave you contemplating what it means to grow up too fast when circumstance is the cruelest master of all. —Topiary Landberg

DIRECTOR
Sarah Goher
EGYPT 2025 91 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 · 12:30pm · Sequoia
Wednesday, October 8 · 5:00pm · Rafael



THE HI DE HO SHOW

The ever-popular, only at MVFF *Hi De Ho Show* is back! Light years before tastemakers touted their tastes, eons before influencers infiltrated our imaginations, there was John Goddard, whose Village Music record store in Mill Valley was the go-to place for musicians (think Elvis C.), filmmakers (think George L.), and lovers of all things revolving at 45, 33¹/₃, and maybe even 78 rpm. Yet even Goddard missed some cool and iconic tracks on their first appearance—only to discover them years, sometimes decades, later. They'd show up on a movie or commercial soundtrack. Or maybe via his wife, Michael Blair, a dedicated follower of Queen. Veejaying clips from his personal archive, Goddard explores those ones-that-got-away—A-ha! moments and musical revelations that add up to a forever soundtrack. With gems from the '70s onwards, prepare to rock this town—and listen up for the likes of C. McVie, J. Hiatt, B. Raitt, B. Gees, and much, much more. —Z. Elton

HOST

John Goddard

Total program 150 min

Saturday, October 11 • 8:30pm • Sequoia



HOLA FRIDA

Frida is a free-spirited girl whose exuberant presence makes the sun shine a bit brighter wherever she goes in her native Coyoacán, Mexico—from the market stalls to the classroom to the streets where she cavorts with her canine companion, a goofy and good-natured street pup named Chiquita. Frida dreams of becoming a doctor. But when a polio diagnosis forces her out of school, she faces a long, lonely recovery at home. With loving guidance from her mother and unconditional support from her father, Frida finds solace in her imagination. Creativity flows from her fingers onto everything she touches. Surrounding herself with fabrics, flowers, and paints, she emerges from illness into her new life as an artist. Produced under the auspices of the Frida Kahlo Museum, this beautifully animated portrait of the artist in her youth is a testament to the powers of imagination and resilience. —K.D. Davis

Frida es una niña de espíritu libre cuya presencia exuberante hace que el sol brille un poco más allá donde vaya en su natal Coyoacán, México: desde los puestos del mercado hasta el aula, pasando por las calles donde corretea con su fiel perrita Chiquita, torpe pero de buen corazón. Frida sueña con convertirse en doctora. Pero cuando un diagnóstico de polio la obliga a dejar la escuela, se enfrenta a una larga y solitaria recuperación en casa. Con la guía amorosa de su madre y el apoyo incondicional de su padre, Frida encuentra consuelo en su imaginación. La creatividad fluye de sus dedos sobre todo lo que toca. Rodeada de telas, flores y pinturas, se recupera de la enfermedad y renace en su nueva vida como artista. Producido bajo los auspicios del Museo Frida Kahlo, este bellamente animado retrato de la artista en su juventud es un testimonio del poder de la imaginación y la resiliencia. —K.D. Davis

Wednesday, October 8 • 4:30pm • Sequoia
Sunday, October 12 • 11:00am • Rafael

DIRECTORS

Andre Kadi
Karine Vezina
FRANCE, CANADA
2025 82 min

SECTION FAMILY

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP
¡VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND CREATE

Sponsored by

**Kiddo**

ETHAN AND NADINE

— EXCEPTIONAL REPRESENTATION —



HONEYJOON

Though both live in the US now, middle-aged Lela (Amira Casar) and her adult daughter June (Ayden Mayeri) could hardly be less alike. The mother is a British-accented emigre who fled the Iranian Revolution decades ago and remains bitterly attuned to her homeland’s ongoing political travails. West Coaster June is a glam sensualist who doesn’t want to dwell on such negatives. Together they’re visiting the Azores, Portugal’s island archipelago, a place beloved by their late husband and father as a way to commemorate him. But amidst the distractions of spectacular views and honeymooning couples in this Atlantic “paradise”—not to mention one first-class hunk of a tour guide (Jose Condesa)—emotions other than grief arise. Writer-director Lilian T. Mehrel’s lovely seriocomic debut feature offers a gently insightful view of complicated family bonds. And its scenic charms just might give you a new destination-vacation goal. —Dennis Harvey

DIRECTOR
Lillian T. Mehrel
US 2025 75 min

SECTION
US

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
LAUGH

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Saturday, October 11 · 2:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 12 · 1:30pm · Rafael



IS THIS THING ON?

Two years after he graced MVFF's closing night with his epic Leonard Bernstein biopic *Maestro*, writer/director Bradley Cooper returns to the festival with this portrait of a couple facing the new realities of their lives. One of Cooper's co-writers (along with Mark Chappell), Will Arnett, plays Alex, facing middle age and his unraveling marriage—so he contends with that double whammy by seeking new purpose in New York's comedy scene. Meanwhile, his soon-to-be ex-wife Tess (Laura Dern, *Marriage Story*, MVFF42) is left to confront the sacrifices she made for their family—forcing the battling couple to navigate co-parenting, identity, and whether love can take a new form. Cooper, Andra Day, Amy Sedaris, Sean Hayes, Christine Ebersole, Ciarán Hinds, and Scott Icenogle co-star in this comedy-drama exploring what comes next when a relationship ends.

DIRECTOR

Bradley Cooper
US 2025 119 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

BAY AREA PREMIERE

Sponsored by

MARIN
MAGAZINE

Saturday, October 11 • 7:00pm • Sequoia



JOHN CANDY: I LIKE ME

John Candy blazed brightly but briefly, his brilliant career as an actor and comedian cut short by his early death. Oh, but what a life it was, as Colin Hanks vividly demonstrates in this insightful documentary. In a way, it is a gathering of Candy's tribes: his family; childhood friends; castmates from his early days at Toronto's Second City and later SCTV, among them Bill Murray, Eugene Levy, Catherine O'Hara, Martin Short, and Dave Thomas; and movie costars, including Steve Martin, Don Lake, Macauley Culkin (with some of the most moving observations in the film), and Tom Hanks. Candy himself is part of the tapestry, discussing his life in interviews throughout the years. Embroidered throughout are clips from Candy's work, hilarious testaments to his enormous talent. What emerges is the portrait of a complex man, successful in his job and even more so in life: This is a man who was deeply loved. —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR

Colin Hanks

US 2025 113 min

SECTION

DOCS

STRAND

LAUGH

Sponsored by



Saturday, October 11 • 5:30pm • Sequoia

Sunday, October 12 • 12:30pm • Rafael



LA GRAZIA

Oscar®-winning auteur Paolo Sorrentino (*The Left Hand of God*, MVFF44; *Youth*, MVFF38) once again finds his perfect collaborator in Toni Servillo, who brings depth and a nuanced performance to the role of Mariano de Santis, the President of the Italian Republic. Shot between Turin and Rome with Sorrentino's signature visual finesse, and opening the 2025 Venice Film Festival, *La Grazia* unfolds like a philosophical drama—elegant, intense, and resonant with grace. In his final days of office, the widowed president navigates both official duties and a deeply personal longing for his late wife, while facing two moral dilemmas that challenge his sense of justice and humanity. As Mariano balances the weight of law, memory, and desire, Sorrentino crafts a story of love, loss, and the fleeting nature of time, infused with moments of humor, tenderness, and profound reflection. The film is Sorrentino at his best, a compelling exploration of life's intimate and public intricacies. *In Italian with English subtitles* —João Federici

DIRECTOR

Paolo Sorrentino
ITALY 2025 133 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Support
provided by

ITALIAN CULTURAL
INSTITUTE
of SAN FRANCISCO

Thursday, October 9 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Friday, October 10 • 1:00pm • Sequoia



LEFT-HANDED GIRL

With a knock-out performance by incomparably charming child actress Nina Ye, *Left-Handed Girl* is a colorful, fast-paced dramatic comedy about a single mother and her daughters' struggles to vanquish the power of outdated ideas after relocating to working-class Taipei. World-weary Shu-Fen (Janet Tsai) opens a food stall while trying to keep track of her girls—I-Ann (Shih-Yua Ma) a sassy, resentful, young woman navigating the seedy underworld, and inquisitive I-Jing (Ye) who discovers the magic and temptations of the night market where her mother sells her wares. As the trio confronts how to keep the family business afloat, twists of fate and heartfelt pathos unfold. This suspenseful, madcap romp is director Shih-Ching Tsou's solo debut feature—a sure-footed, well-crafted film that builds from the picturesque to the operatic—hallmark features of its editor and co-writer, Tsou's longtime creative partner Sean Baker (*Anora*, MVFF47; *The Florida Project*, MVFF40). *In Mandarin with English subtitles* —Topiary Landberg

DIRECTOR

Shih-Ching Tsou
TAIWAN 2025 108 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

STRAND

LAUGH

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

WAREHAM
DEVELOPMENT

Friday, October 3 • 7:00pm • Rafael
Saturday, October 4 • 1:30pm • Sequoia



LIVING THE LAND (SHENG ZI ZHI DI)

An epic portrait of rural life in China's Henan province, *Living the Land* immerses us in the lives of four generations of a wheat harvesting family, paying closest attention to 10-year-old Chuang. Set in 1991, it might as well be 1891 as the old ways still hold fast in this remote village even as politics, technology, and industrialization slowly march in. Through Chuang's eyes, we observe the quotidian rhythms of bucolic customs in scenes both momentous and routine as well as the dynamics within the family centered on its matriarch, his beloved great-grandmother. Even in a place where time seems to stand still, change does come, and we watch its slow creep unfold through vivid cinematography and an impressive visual style. Featuring a tapestry of characters and with the land as a focal element, Meng Huo's drama resonates with its masterful depiction of the everyday. *In Chinese with English subtitles*

DIRECTOR

Huo Meng

CHINA 2025 132 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

GROW

US PREMIERE

Thursday, October 9 • 1:30pm • Rafael

Sunday, October 12 • 4:00pm • BAMPFA



LOVE + WAR

"As hard as woodpecker lips." That's how a US Army colonel in Afghanistan describes Lynsey Addario, the fearless and celebrated American photojournalist, someone who craves getting into the thick of battles in order to show the world the truth. The Pulitzer Prize winner's incredible 20-year-plus career, along with her family life, come into sharp focus in Oscar®-winning filmmakers Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi's (*Free Solo* MVFF41; *Nyad*, MVFF 46) latest illuminating portrait of a tenacious individual committed to pursuing greatness even if it means putting themselves into harm's way. *Love + War* adroitly shifts from following the intrepid Addario at work in dangerous war zones (Ukraine, Iraq, Afghanistan, and others) and humanitarian trouble spots to her home turf with her two sons and husband. This compelling documentary ponders the complexities of juggling both and addresses how Addario stared down sexism in a male-dominated profession. —Randy Myers

DIRECTORS

E. Chai Vasarhelyi
Jimmy Chin
US 2025 95 min

SECTION DOCS

INITIATIVE MIND THE GAP

STRAND HEART

Sponsored by

JIM BOYCE TRUST
and KRIS OTIS

Sunday, October 4 • 7:00pm • Rafael

Tuesday, October 7 • 8:00pm • Sequoia



THE LOVE THAT REMAINS (ÁSTIN SEM EFTIR E)

A disintegrating marriage takes center stage in this quirky, heartbreaking, and tenderly human tragicomedy. Icelandic director Hlynur Pálmason (*Godland*) creates an atmosphere that echoes an eavesdropping documentary, capturing each member of the family—dissatisfied artist mom Anna, emotionally isolated dad Magnus, world-weary teen daughter, rambunctious pair of young brothers, and marvelously charismatic dog—as they navigate a year of change in and around their remote home. The Icelandic landscape is stunning, the ocean unrelenting, and emotions kept carefully in check as the parents grapple with unequal post-separation desires and the kids seek outlets for their energy and frustration. Monty Python—esque humor, artful interspersed sequences, wild fantasy visions, and a dreamy piano score wrap around the narrative, keeping everything a bit off balance—just the way it might feel for anyone grappling with love, loss, an occasional vicious rooster, and one’s place in the unique world of their own family. *In Icelandic, English, Swedish, French with English subtitles* —Deanna Quinones

DIRECTOR

Hlynur Pálmason
ICELAND, DENMARK,
SWEDEN, FRANCE
2025 109 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

HEART

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Thursday, October 9 • 4:30pm • Rafael
Sunday, October 12 • 8:15pm • Sequoia



LUCKY LU

In Lloyd Lee Choi’s gripping debut film, we see how quickly the American dream can descend into a nightmare. After five years of setbacks, Chinese immigrant Lu (Chang Chen) is on the verge of achieving his goal of reuniting his family in NYC where he has settled. He has a new good-paying job as a delivery driver and he’s found the perfect apartment. But when his bike is stolen, his life quickly spirals out of control. Without the bike, Lu cannot work and without a job, he can’t make the final payment due on his new place. Cheng masterfully engenders sympathy for his sometimes-antagonistic character as he portrays Lu’s desperation to find his bike on a seemingly hopeless trek around the city while hiding how dire the situation is from his family. At a time when immigration is headline news across the US, *Lucky Lu* highlights the hardships immigrants endure to capture their slice of the American pie. —Bri’anna Moore

DIRECTOR
Lloyd Lee Choi
CANADA, US 2025 103 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

STRAND
SPIRIT

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Friday, October 10 · 8:00pm · Lark
Sunday, October 12 · 2:00pm · Sequoia



THE LUMINOUS LIFE (A VIDA LUMINOSA)

The Luminous Life is a wistful, romantic adventure through the winding streets of Lisbon, where 30-something Nicolau floats between past loves, uncertain futures, and the beautiful mess of in-between. After a breakup and still chasing a band that never quite made it, he moves through the city like a dreamer out of time—reconnecting with people, possibilities, and paths not taken. João Rosas crafts a tender, quietly radiant portrait of modern adulthood—full of humor, heart, and chance encounters that might just change everything. Lisbon pulses with life and memory, becoming both backdrop and companion in this gentle ode to hesitation, reinvention, and the soft courage of starting again. With its breezy rhythms and introspective charm, it echoes the spirit of French New Wave wanderers—intelligent, searching, and irresistibly human. *In Portuguese with English subtitles* —João Federici

A Luminous Life (La Vida Luminosa) es una aventura romántica y nostálgica por las serpenteantes calles de Lisboa, donde Nicolau, de unos treinta años, flota entre amores pasados, futuros inciertos y el hermoso caos de lo intermedio. Tras una ruptura y aún persiguiendo a una banda que nunca llegó a despegar, se mueve por la ciudad como un soñador perdido en el tiempo, reconectando con personas, posibilidades y caminos no tomados. João Rosas crea un retrato tierno y silenciosamente radiante de la edad adulta moderna, lleno de humor, corazón y encuentros fortuitos que podrían cambiarlo todo. Lisboa late con vida y memoria, convirtiéndose tanto en escenario como en compañera en esta dulce oda a la duda, la reinención y el delicado coraje de comenzar de nuevo. Con sus ritmos ligeros y encanto introspectivo, evoca el espíritu de los vagabundos de la Nouvelle Vague francesa: inteligentes, buscadores e irresistiblemente humanos. —João Federici

DIRECTOR

João Rosas

PORTUGAL 2025 106 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND

LAUGH

NORTH AMERICAN
PREMIERE

Tuesday, October 7 · 6:00pm · Rafael

Sunday, October 12 · 8:00pm · Rafael



MAMA

After many years as a live-in housekeeper in Israel, Mila is forced to leave the elegant seaside home she’s cared for—and the serene life she’s built there—to return to her family in a remote Polish village. The long-awaited reunion isn’t what she imagined: Faces have changed; distance has grown. And Mila, portrayed with breathtaking restraint by Evgenia Dodina, must confront what’s been lost—and who she’s become. Inspired by the real lives of migrant women, Or Sinai’s first narrative feature brings nuanced attention to the unseen. Mila is complex, full of longing, strength, humor, and contradiction. Shot with intimacy and grace, *Mama* explores belonging, memory, and the quiet ache of dislocation. It’s a story that is both grounded and gently political, with moments that speak volumes without a word. It’s a quiet but powerful film that lingers with you long after it’s ended. Sinai is a strong new voice in Israeli cinema. *In Polish and Hebrew with English subtitles* —João Federici

DIRECTOR
Or Sinai
POLAND, ITALY, ISRAEL
2025 91 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

US PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 · 5:00pm · Sequoia
Sunday, October 5 · 4:00pm · Lark



THE MASTERMIND

Josh O'Connor (*Mothering Sunday*, MVFF44) charms as bumbling scammer JB Mooney. You can't help but root for the out-of-work architect when he has an epiphany at an art museum—why doesn't he just steal some paintings and sell them? It's a bit audacious but he is sure that with the right help, he can pull it off. He does, but nothing goes according to plan. An accomplice drops out, the new one can't keep his mouth shut, the FBI is onto him, the Mob has caught wind of his scheme, and worst of all, his wife is mad at him. Bolstered by a jazzy score and a cast of recognizable faces, Kelly Reichardt's (*Certain Woman*, MVFF39) deconstruction of the heist film will have you constantly wondering who JB lies to more: the people in his life or himself. —Bri'anna Moore

DIRECTOR
Kelly Reichardt
UK, US 2025 110 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
LAUGH

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

CHRISTINE A.
SCHANTZ

Monday, October 6 • 7:00pm • Sequoia
Friday, October 10 • 7:00pm • BAMPFA



THE MESSAGE (EL MENSAJE)

When an ordinary road trip becomes a moving meditation on innocence, belief, and survival, that's when *The Message* quietly asserts its magic. We follow nine-year-old Anika as she and her guardians, Myriam and Roger, drift through Argentina in a camper van, offering Anika's services as an animal medium to anyone who asks. Shot in elegant black and white, the film unfolds with simplicity and sincerity, each silent landscape and subtle gesture brimming with emotional truth. As the young psychic, Anika Bootz—radiant and grounded—anchors the story as she depicts Anika's bond to dogs, cats, and even hedgehogs, suggesting something otherworldly and wholly believable. Critics celebrated the film at the 75th Berlinale, where it won the Silver Bear Jury Prize, placing Iván Fund among South America's most distinctive voices. With its poetic stillness and playful charm, *The Message* is a rare, moving gem. *In Spanish with English subtitles* —João Federici

Cuando un viaje común por carretera se transforma en una meditación conmovedora sobre la inocencia, la fe y la supervivencia, ahí es cuando *El Mensaje* despliega silenciosamente su magia. Seguimos a Anika, una niña de nueve años, mientras ella y sus tutores, Myriam y Roger, recorren Argentina en una furgoneta habilitada como casa, ofreciendo los servicios de Anika como médium de animales a quien lo necesite. Filmada en elegante blanco y negro, la película se desarrolla con simplicidad y sinceridad, cada silencioso paisaje y sutil gesto rebosando de verdad emocional. Como joven psíquica, Anika Bootz —radiante y con los pies en la tierra— sostiene la historia, mostrando el vínculo de Anika con perros, gatos e incluso erizos, sugiriendo algo sobrenatural y totalmente creíble. La crítica celebró la película en la 75ª Berlinale, donde ganó el Oso de Plata del Jurado, consolidando a Iván Fund como una de las voces más distintivas de Sudamérica. Con su tranquilidad poética y su encanto juguetón, *El Mensaje* es una joya rara y profundamente conmovedora. —João Federici

DIRECTOR

Ivan Fund
ARGENTINA, SPAIN,
URUGUAY
2025 91 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND

SPIRIT

US PREMIERE

Sunday, October 5 · 8:00pm · Rafael

Saturday, October 11 · 7:30pm · BAMPFA



MY FATHER'S SHADOW

To Aki and Remi, their father Folarin cuts an imposing mysterious figure, working as he does in faraway Lagos. In one of his rare visits home, Folarin does something he's never done before—he asks the pair to come to the city with him. During their journey and many hours spent wandering around Lagos, Folarin gradually ceases being godlike. Instead, the boys begin to see him as the imperfect human he is. Meanwhile, around them the country erupts as Nigeria's military leadership annuls its presidential election. The first Nigerian film to premiere at Cannes, director Akinola Davies Jr.'s indelible inaugural feature won a Golden Camera Special Mention. Equally impressive in their own debuts in this resonant drama are real-life brothers Godwin and Chibuike Marvellous Egbo who play Aki and Remi. —Bri'anna Moore

DIRECTOR

Akinola Davies, Jr.
NIGERIA, UK, IRELAND
2025 94 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

SPIRIT

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

GORDON RADLEY

Saturday, October 11 • 5:00pm • Rafael

Sunday, October 12 • 1:30pm • Lark



THE MYSTERIOUS GAZE OF THE FLAMINGO (LA MISTERIOSA MIRADA DEL FLAMENCO)

A Western and desert fable unlike any other, *The Mysterious Gaze of the Flamingo* takes us to a small, isolated mining town in 1982 Chile, where a mysterious illness is said to spread through the looks exchanged between lovers at the town's defiantly queer cabaret bar. As fear and superstition take hold, Lidia—a curious pre-teen growing up among trans women and the bar's beloved regulars—sets out in search of the truth. Winner of the Un Certain Regard Jury Prize at Cannes, Diego Céspedes's luminous debut blends melodrama, magical realism, and coming-of-age tenderness with striking humor, heart-felt performances, and the stunning beauty of the desert landscape. Through silence, gesture, and deep affection, it captures both the fragility and fierce strength of chosen family under threat. Flamingo is bold, deeply moving, and wildly original—a tribute to love, memory, and the courage to face the future with resilience and without fear. *In Spanish with English subtitles* —João Federici

Un western y una fábula del desierto como ninguna otra, *La mirada misteriosa del flamenco* nos lleva a un pequeño y aislado pueblo minero del norte de Chile en 1982, donde se dice que una enfermedad misteriosa se transmite a través de las miradas que se cruzan entre amantes en el cabaret del pueblo —un espacio abiertamente queer que desafía las normas. A medida que el miedo y la superstición se apoderan de la comunidad, Lidia —una niña preadolescente curiosa que crece entre mujeres trans y los entrañables asiduos del bar— emprende la búsqueda de la verdad. Ganadora del Premio del Jurado Un Certain Regard en Cannes, la luminosa ópera prima de Diego Céspedes combina melodrama, realismo mágico y ternura del despertar adolescente con un humor sorprendente, actuaciones conmovedoras y la belleza deslumbrante del paisaje desértico. A través del silencio, los gestos y un profundo afecto, retrata tanto la fragilidad como la fuerza feroz de una familia elegida bajo amenaza. *Flamenco* es audaz, profundamente emotiva y totalmente original: un homenaje al amor, la memoria y el coraje para enfrentar el futuro con resiliencia y sin miedo. —João Federici

DIRECTOR
Diego Céspedes
CHILE 2025 104 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND
SPIRIT

US PREMIERE

Support
provided by
CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO

Thursday, October 8 • 7:30pm • Rafael
Saturday, October 11 • 8:00pm • Rafael



NO OTHER CHOICE

A withering corporate satire forms the backbone of Park Chan-wook's new film which is replete with the bravura set pieces for which he's known. Man-soo (Korean superstar Lee Byung-hun) has it all—great job, wife, two kids, two dogs—until the paper corporation he works for lays him off. When a new job doesn't manifest after several months and his fantastic life begins to crumble, he arrives at a radical solution to beat the competition. Cue the elegantly devised macabre sequences that Park is known for in films like *Oldboy* (2003) and *Decision to Leave* (2002). The difference here is comedic: Unlike some of the filmmaker's other protagonists, Man-soo is no natural-born killer, just an ambitious businessman willing to do whatever it takes—no matter how extreme—to reclaim his comfortable life. Adapted from Donald E. Westlake's *The Ax*, *No Other Choice* builds to a conclusion that is chillingly of the present moment. *In Korean with English subtitles* —Rod Armstrong

DIRECTOR

Park Chan-wook
SOUTH KOREA
2025 139 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

CREATE

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 • 2:30pm • Sequoia

Saturday, October 4 • 7:00pm • BAMPFA



NOSEEUMS

When college student Ember (Aleigha Burt) road-trips for a weekend in the country with three peers, the lake house they stay at stirs discomfiting memories...that aren't her own. Is she somehow connected to its violent history, in which racists seized land from the rightful African American owners? Her more shallow, privileged friends imagine they have nothing to do with that past—even as they sometimes lapse into treating Ember as a servant. Director/cowriter Raven Deshay Carter's first feature probes the topics of institutionalized property theft and inherited trauma, while also shading eventually into fantastical narrative terrain. Suffice it to say, you don't want to be caught on the wrong side of justice when the titular insects (also known as sand flies or biting midges) in this Florida-shot thriller begin to swarm. They just might deliver a supernatural vengeance no garden-variety bug repellent can protect the guilty from. —Dennis Harvey

DIRECTOR
Raven DeShay Carter
US 2025 85 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP



ONCE UPON A TIME IN GAZA

In 2007, Yahya is working at his friend Osama's falafel shop in Gaza, which doubles as a front for drug dealing. His entanglement in the operation leads him to witness a terrible crime. A couple of years later, Gaza's Ministry of Culture randomly chooses Yahya to star in a TV series that highlights martyrs and heroes of the resistance. As conflict simmers in the background, Yahya unexpectedly receives real weapons, heightening the stakes as the show provides him with an opportunity to confront the person responsible for the offense that changed his life. This third feature from twin Palestinian directors Tarzan and Arab Nasser delivers dark comedy, political satire, and a piercing critique of the ongoing violence affecting Gaza, both interpersonal and political. The film earned the Nassers the *Un Certain Regard* Prize for Best Director at Cannes. *In Arabic with English subtitles* —Zaha Cheema

DIRECTOR

Tarzan Nasser
Arab Nasser
PALESTINE, FRANCE,
PORTUGAL 2025 87 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

US PREMIERE

Sunday, October 5 • 6:00pm • Rafael
Wednesday, October 8 • 12:00pm • Rafael

Support Provided by

Villa
Albertine 



ORPHAN (ÁRVA)

In 1957 Budapest, just a year after the failed uprising, young Andor grows up believing he is the son of a Jewish man who died in the Holocaust—until a brutal stranger claiming to be his real father appears, upending everything he knows. Set in a city marked by silence, surveillance, and suspicion, *Orphan* is a gripping coming-of-age tale shaped by postwar trauma and political fear. Andor clings to the myth of his Jewish father with stubborn grace, refusing to accept the violent Communist butcher his mother now presents as truth. Oscar® winner László Nemes (*Son of Saul*, MVFF38) draws from personal family history to craft a quietly intense story of identity, memory, and moral awakening, shot with stark, haunting precision by cinematographer Mátyás Erdély. *Orphan* invites us into the world of a boy whose hope becomes a form of resistance—and whose heartbreak echoes far beyond history. *In Hungarian with English subtitles* —João Federici

DIRECTOR

László Nemes
HUNGARY, FRANCE,
UK, GERMANY
2025 132 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

STRAND

SPIRIT

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Wednesday, October 9 • 7:30pm • Sequoia

Saturday, October 11 • 12:00pm • Lark

NOT TRESPASSING



THE PERFECT NEIGHBOR

In the wide-open spaces between the low-rise rental homes in a Marion County, Florida, neighborhood, a fleet of kids routinely play, whoop, and holler. A middle-aged single woman routinely objects to their “trespassing” and periodically calls 911. Is it reasonable to be annoyed by loud children? Is it relevant that she is white and the kids are Black? One night, claiming to fear for her life, she fires a gun through her closed and locked front door, striking the mother of some of the children. Did she feel justified by Florida’s Stand Your Ground law? Geeta Gandbhir explores these questions in this remarkable documentary. The director confines her film to police recordings—body-camera footage and in-custody investigative interviews—that provide privileged access and professional distance, while inviting us to make our own judgments and recognize our personal assumptions and biases. Gandbhir received the Sundance Film Festival US Documentary Directing Award for her unique saga of a true-crime tragedy. —Michael Fox

DIRECTOR
Geeta Gandbhir
US 2025 96 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

BAY AREA PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 · 7:30pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 5 · 12:00pm · Lark



PERPETUAL ADOLESCENT (LA ETERNA ADOLESCENTE)

An unexpected family reunion brings warmth to an unusually chilly Christmas in Guadalajara when three long-separated siblings come together in the wake of a family crisis. Cristina, the eldest, is their mother's caretaker and parent to a frustrating young adult daughter. Sony is a free-spirited television psychic. Brunito, the youngest, is a sweet-natured man searching for connection and true love. Missing is sister Monica, a specter that haunts their memories but who left behind a rich legacy of home movies that spool out visions of the family's past, reminding them of their close bond and sparking a reckoning with the traumas that have shaped them all. Writer-director Eduardo Esquivel (*Muchachxs Salvajes*) subtly contrasts themes of heat and cold, both literal and emotional, to explore long-held secrets and finally re-ignite the flame of love that binds this family together. *In Spanish with English subtitles* —Deanna Quinones

Una inesperada reunión familiar trae calidez a una Navidad inusualmente fría en Guadalajara, cuando tres hermanos, separados durante mucho tiempo, se reúnen tras una crisis familiar. Cristina, la mayor, cuida de su madre y es madre de una frustrante joven adulta. Sony es una psíquica televisiva de espíritu libre. Brunito, el menor, es un hombre de buen corazón que busca conexión y amor verdadero. La hermana ausente es Mónica, un espectro que ronda sus recuerdos, pero que dejó un rico legado de videos caseros que revelan el pasado familiar, recordándoles su estrecho vínculo y provocando un enfrentamiento con los traumas que los han marcado a todos. El guionista y director Eduardo Esquivel (*Muchachxs Salvajes*) contrapone sutilmente los temas del calor y el frío, tanto literal como emocional, para explorar secretos largamente guardados y reavivar finalmente la llama del amor que une a esta familia. —Deanna Quinones

DIRECTOR
Eduardo Esquivel
MEXICO, FRANCE
2025 104 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND
SPIRIT

US PREMIERE

Thursday, October 9 • 7:30pm • Rafael
Sunday, October 12 • 8:00pm • Rafael



PETER HUJAR'S DAY

Ira Sachs’ latest film delivers a perfectly imagined time capsule of a memorable 1974 interview between friends. Rebecca Hall embodies writer Linda Rosencranz, as she embarks on a project in which she asks fellow artists to note their activities—both significant and mundane—during a particular time period, followed by a conversation about those tasks. On this December day, Rosencranz records gay photographer Peter Hujar (Ben Whishaw) as he discusses calls from “Sontag,” a shoot with “Ginsberg,” delivering photos of Lauren Hutton, and more. Sachs pays precise cinematic detail to shadows and light as time passes, as well as the playful camaraderie between subject and interviewer. Whishaw, working from a book-length transcription of the encounter, channels Hujar’s New Jersey accent and his oscillation between confidence and insecurity while Hall, with warm eyes and active listening, elicits plangent details from a day that may seem “wasted” to Hujar, but is actually rather momentous. —Rod Armstrong

DIRECTOR
Ira Sachs
US 2024 76 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

STRAND
CREATE

Friday, October 10 · 8:00pm · Rafael
Saturday, October 11 · 5:00pm · BAMPFA



THE PLAGUE

A *Lord of the Flies*-like atmosphere settles over a boys' water polo camp in writer-director Charlie Polinger's arresting first feature, in which a kid's mysterious skin affliction gives his teammates license to bully. That's the situation that greets Ben (Everett Blunck, *Griffin in Summer*, MVFF47) as he joins the camp. The insecure tween is desperate to win the approval of the cool clique but more than water polo, the true sport these young athletes enjoy is picking on Eli (Kenny Rasmussen), a misfit with a vibrant rash his teammates claim is contagious. Ben can join in the abuse or defend Eli—at the risk of becoming the bullies' next target. The young cast is simply extraordinary, joined by Joel Edgerton as the camp's checked-out coach, in a drama that builds its unease from our childhood fears of not fitting in, throwing us into the deep end alongside Ben. —Tim Grierson

DIRECTOR
Charlie Polinger
AUSTRALIA, US
2025 95 min

SECTION
US CINEMA

Tuesday, October 7 · 8:00pm · Rafael

Wednesday, October 8 · 6:00pm · Rafael



THE PRESIDENT'S CAKE

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein liked to celebrate his birthday, even demanding that school children nationwide bake him cakes—despite daunting food shortages in the waning years of his regime. Nine-year-old Lamia, who lives with her grandmother in a remote marshland, has the dubious luck to be “picked” as the student to produce the cake for the Supreme Leader’s fete. This near-impossible task forces them (plus Lamia’s pet rooster Hindi) to travel to the city for scarce basic ingredients. There, Lamia ditches Granny and joins her best friend Saeed in search of the elusive supplies, the day evolving into a sometimes-fraught adventure. Writer/director Hasan Hadi uses his own youth as the springboard for his first feature, a remarkable story of friendship, discovery, and understanding, as well as perseverance and loss, as seen through a child’s eyes. The first Iraqi feature to play at Cannes, this big-hearted drama won the festival’s Camera D’Or. *In Arabic with English subtitles* —Dennis Harvey

DIRECTOR

Hasan Hadi
IRAQ, QATAR, US
2025 102 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

US PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 • 7:00pm • Lark

Sunday, October 5 • 6:30pm • BAMPFA



A PRIVATE LIFE (VIE PRIVEE)

In her third French-language role, two-time Academy Award® winner Jodie Foster (*Nyad*, MVFF46) captivates as Lilian Steiner, a psychiatrist who moonlights as an amateur sleuth following the death of one of her long-time patients, Paula (Virginie Efira). Convinced that Paula's supposed death by suicide is actually an unsolved murder, Lilian pursues her nagging suspicions. But Rebecca Zlotowski's latest isn't a straightforward caper. Instead, the writer-director blends genres in a disarmingly delightful way. Lilian, a devout skeptic, begins to unravel: Her guarded demeanor slips after she seeks the guidance of a hypnotist, glimpses her supposed past life, and reconnects with her ex-husband (an equally enchanting Daniel Auteuil). Always magnetic, Foster balances the beguiling twists of a mystery-drama with *A Private Life's* sometimes zany (but undeniably charming) black comic turns, making it easy to see why this 2025 Cannes Film Festival entry received a 10-minute standing ovation. *In French with English subtitles* —Kate Bove

DIRECTOR

Rebecca Zlotowski

FRANCE 2025 100 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Support
provided by

CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO

Saturday, October 4 • 8:00pm • Sequoia

Friday, October 10 • 5:00pm • Sequoia



PROMISED SKY (PROMIS LE CIEL)

A rich and potent examination of immigration issues within Africa, Erige Sehiri's moving drama portrays three female Ivorians trying to make a life for themselves in Tunisia. Roommates in the capital metropolis of Tunis, the women have also recently taken in an infant rescued from one of the many boats trying to reach Europe. With the country cracking down on residents who aren't Tunisian citizens, and providing shelter to a child that isn't theirs, staying one step ahead of local authorities is an omnipresent challenge for the trio. Jolie, the youngest, is a student and the only one with papers, Naney makes ends meet via various schemes, and Marie runs a clandestine Christian fellowship. Director Sehiri, whose documentary background serves her observational style well, poignantly distinguishes each of her characters' respective challenges while also presenting their support of one another in a country that rarely makes them feel at home. —Rod Armstrong

DIRECTOR

Erige Sehiri
TUNISIA, FRANCE,
NETHERLANDS, QATAR
2025 92 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

STRAND

SPIRIT

NORTH AMERICAN
PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 • 7:15pm • BAMPFA

Saturday, October 4 • 12:00pm • Sequoia



THE RAMBA EFFECT

A majestic Asian elephant takes her first steps toward freedom in this immersive, purpose-driven documentary. Meet Ramba, who endured 50 years of isolation in a Chilean circus, as she embarks on an extraordinary 2,550-mile journey to her new home at Elephant Sanctuary Brazil, guided by compassionate experts and a devoted team of volunteers. The film puts us front and center in the rescue effort, giving us a rare chance to become acquainted with the liberated pachyderm and witness the incredible dedication of the people who are fighting to give her a fresh start. The bigger picture is the critical need to end animal captivity in zoos and circuses. But the intimate story will grab your heart as you witness Ramba's fraught and brave journey, then rejoice at the sight of this sensitive, emotional being—relaxed, befriended, and finally free, in the joyful last part of her life. —Deanna Quinones

Una majestuosa elefanta asiática da sus primeros pasos hacia la libertad en este documental inmersivo y lleno de propósito. Conozcan a Ramba, quien soportó 50 años de aislamiento en un circo chileno, mientras emprende un extraordinario viaje de 4,100 kilómetros hacia su nuevo hogar en Elephant Sanctuary Brasil, acompañada por expertos compasivos y un dedicado equipo de voluntarios. La película nos sitúa en primera fila del rescate, ofreciéndonos la rara oportunidad de conocer a este paquidermo liberado y de presenciar la increíble dedicación de quienes luchan por darle un nuevo comienzo. En última instancia, la cuestión central es la urgente necesidad de poner fin a la cautividad de los animales en zoológicos y circos. Pero esta íntima historia atraparé tu corazón mientras sigues el arriesgado y valiente viaje de Ramba, y luego te llenará de alegría al verla relajada, acompañada de cariño y finalmente libre, disfrutando de la última etapa de su vida. —Deanna Quinones

DIRECTOR
Claire Sandberg
US 2024 87 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!
MIND THE GAP
ACTIVE CINEMA

STRAND
GROW

Friday, October 10 · 5:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 12 · 2:00pm · Rafael



ROADS OF FIRE

Cue the images of desperate folks fleeing personal cataclysms or humanitarian disasters. The arduous journey made by millions from the Southern Hemisphere to the wealthier First World is framed as a global crisis. But while some of that is rooted in fact, the reality is more complicated, with global migration estimated to have a considerable positive economic impact of \$35 billion annually. Nathaniel Lezra's involving, immersive documentary offers a wide-lens view of this economic dimension along with an intense chronicle of the personal stakes involved. Embedded along the migratory route, the filmmaker bears witness to the complex realities facing those traveling north from South America. At the Panama/Colombia border, a human smuggler moves migrants through the harrowing, cartel-controlled, 67-mile Darién Gap. Meanwhile, a woman fleeing domestic abuse seeks asylum in the US and, in New York City, aid workers meet a fraught moment with courage and dignity. *Roads of Fire* connects these narratives while highlighting the urgency of the situation. *In English and Spanish with English subtitles* —Wilfred Okiche

DIRECTOR
Nathaniel Lezra
JAPAN, US 2024 118 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
¡VIVA EL CINE!

Friday, October 10 · 12:00pm · Sequoia
Saturday, October 11 · 4:00pm · Rafael



RUNA SIMI

Filmmaker Augusto Zegarra makes a powerful debut with this engrossing documentary about fatherhood, identity, and the soul of a language. The film follows Fernando, a single father and radio host in Cusco, Peru, who shares a modest yet endearing hobby with his son: dubbing classic animated clips into Quechua, an Indigenous language spoken by a relatively small number of people. When one of their dubs unexpectedly goes viral, a private passion transforms into something far more ambitious and meaningful. What began as a playful bonding activity becomes a remarkable act of cultural preservation—and a compelling journey in its own right. With a deft and subtle touch, Zegarra allows the emotions to unfold naturally, avoiding grandstanding or dramatic speeches. The winner of the Albert Maysles Award at the Tribeca Film Festival, *Runa Simi* is a quiet story that speaks volumes, reminding us that language is more than a tool for communication; it is a vessel for memory and identity. *In Quechua and Spanish with English subtitles* —Zaki Hasan

DIRECTOR
Augusto Andrés Zegarra
Pineda-Arce
PERU 2024 81 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND
CREATE

BAY AREA PREMIERE

Monday, October 6 · 5:00pm · Sequoia
Wednesday, October 8 · 2:00pm · Rafael



THE SCOUT

Working in film production sounds glamorous but often isn't, a truth Paula González-Nasser explores in her absorbing directorial debut. This incisive, grounded feature follows Sofia (Mimi Davila), an exhausted and underappreciated location scout working in New York City. Inundated by voicemails, parking tickets, and demands from producers, Sofia struggles to find artistic validation in the monotony of her below-the-line role. Although *The Scout* is tinged with an everyday sort of melancholy, it's also a striking character study. Each location Sofia visits throughout the day is a vignette that opens a window into the life of the film's protagonist as well as those of the people she meets. Rooted in González-Nasser's own experiences working on shows like *Difficult People* and *Mrs. Fletcher*, *The Scout* boasts gorgeous cinematography and an impressively lived-in feel that makes this nuanced, observational debut a perfect ode to filmmaking—both the lonely and beautiful parts. —Kate Bove

Trabajar en producción cinematográfica suena glamoroso, pero a menudo no lo es, una verdad que Paula González-Nasser explora en su absorbente debut como directora. Este incisivo y realista largometraje sigue a Sofía (Mimi Dávila), una scout de locaciones agotada y poco valorada que trabaja en la ciudad de Nueva York. Inundada de mensajes de voz, multas de estacionamiento y exigencias de los productores, Sofía lucha por encontrar una validación artística en la monotonía de su rol detrás de las cámaras. Aunque *The Scout* está impregnada de una melancolía cotidiana, también es un llamativo estudio de personaje. Cada locación que Sofía visita a lo largo del día se convierte en una viñeta que abre una ventana tanto a la vida de la protagonista como a la de las personas con las que se cruza. Arraigada en las propias experiencias de González-Nasser trabajando en series como *Difficult People* y *Mrs. Fletcher*, *The Scout* ofrece una fotografía espléndida y una autenticidad impresionante que hacen de este debut rico en matices y observacional una perfecta oda al cine —tanto en sus momentos de soledad como en su belleza. —Kate Bove

DIRECTOR
Paula Gonzalez-Nasser
US 2024 89 min

SECTION
US

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
CREATE

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Sunday, October 5 · 5:00pm · Rafael
Monday, October 6 · 2:30pm · Rafael



THE SECRET AGENT (O AGENTE SECRETO)

Few directors tell stories with as much atmosphere, precision, and purpose as Kleber Mendonça Filho. In Recife in 1977, Marcelo—played with quiet magnetism by Wagner Moura—returns to the city in the middle of the chaos of Carnival to reunite with his son and plot a dangerous escape under the watchful eyes of Brazil’s repressive military regime. Mendonça Filho’s deep love for cinema pulses through every frame of this film that blends political drama, slow-burn suspense, deadpan humor, and surreal flourishes into something uniquely his own. The visual texture is rich and evocative, and the film’s quiet tension lingers long after it ends. Honored at Cannes with Best Director, Best Actor, FIPRESCI, and the AFCAE Award, it confirms Mendonça Filho as one of the most daring and original voices in world cinema today. *The Secret Agent* is unforgettable, a film we’ll be talking about for a long time to come. *In Portuguese with English subtitles* —João Federici

Pocos directores cuentan historias con tanta atmósfera, precisión y sentido como Kleber Mendonça Filho. En Recife, en 1977, Marcelo—interpretado con un magnetismo discreto por Wagner Moura—regresa a la ciudad en pleno caos de Carnaval para reunirse con su hijo y planear una peligrosa huida bajo la atenta mirada del régimen militar represivo de Brasil. El profundo amor de Mendonça Filho por el cine palpita en cada plano de esta película que mezcla drama político, suspense de combustión lenta, humor seco y destellos surrealistas en algo completamente propio. La textura visual es rica y evocadora, y la tensión silenciosa de la película permanece mucho después de que termina. Galardonado en Cannes con Mejor Dirección, Mejor Actor, el premio FIPRESCI y el premio AFCAE, Mendonça Filho es ya una de las voces más audaces y originales del cine mundial de hoy. *El Agente Secreto* es inolvidable —una película de la que seguiremos hablando por mucho tiempo. —João Federici

Friday, October 3 • 6:00pm • Sequoia
Sunday, October 5 • 11:00am • Rafael

DIRECTOR
Kleber Mendonça Filho
BRAZIL, FRANCE
2024 158 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!

Sponsored by



COLDWELL BANKER

With Support
from

CONSULATE GENERAL
of BRAZIL



SENTIMENTAL VALUE (AFFEKSJONSVERDI)

Four years after his Oscar®-nominated gem *The Worst Person in the World*, filmmaker Joachim Trier reunites with his breakout star Renate Reinsve for a penetrating study of a dysfunctional artistic family. Winning the Grand Prix at Cannes, *Sentimental Value* tells the story of Nora (Reinsve), an acclaimed actress who has long been estranged from her father Gustav (Stellan Skarsgård), a once-renowned director who walked out of her life when she was a child—but now wants her to star in his new film, a painfully autobiographical family drama. Trier's astute ensemble piece also features Inga lbsdatter Lilleaas as Nora's kid sister Agnes, who chose a more contented, stable life away from the arts, and Elle Fanning, who plays a rising star interested in the role in Gustav's film that he wrote for Nora. This tearjerking, often witty, exploration of depression and generational conflict pinpoints the challenges of transforming personal pain into creative expression, resulting in another Trier triumph. *In Norwegian and English with English subtitles* —Tim Grierson

DIRECTOR

Joachim Trier
NORWAY, FRANCE,
GERMANY, DENMARK,
UK, SWEDEN
2024 133 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

JIM BOYCE TRUST
and KRIS OTIS

Friday, October 10 • 7:00pm • Sequoia
Saturday, October 11 • 12:00pm • Sequoia



MOON

SHORTS: ANIMATION NATION
A FAMILY FILM COLLEGE SHOWCASE

MVFF proudly partners with UCLA and CSU Long Beach for this family friendly program of animated films, showcasing the talents of students (and a few professors, too)! This cartoon cornucopia includes comedies, fairy tales, family stories, and insightful observations about growing up. **THE SUN AND THE WIND** (Soyeon Kim, 2025, 3 min), **SOLAR ECLIPSE** (Zsofia Katana, 2023, 4 min), **RadioCATive** (Damaris Alvarez, 2024, 5 min), **NIDO DE MI VIDA** (Ivy Gonzalez, 2023, 4 min), **HOUSE MAGIC AND A TEAPOT** (Yanzhang Song, 2025, 6 min), **CREATURES OF CHAOS** (Asavari Kumar, 2025, 6 min), **GIR-EOGI APPA** (Soyoun Rebecca Jeon, 2021, 3 min), **TENT CITY** (Camille Romero, 2023, 3 min), **BARFANI JOOTE/SNOW BOOTS** (Zoha Jamshaid, 2022, 3 min), **CHRYSTALLIS DAY** (Abigail Alonso, 2025, 7 min), **MOON** (Genesis Sosa, 2020, 3 min), **FANDOM FEUD** (Van Hofmaister, 2024, 4 min), **PUSH** (Trilina Mai, 2019 4 min), **MY FRIEND THE DANDELION** (Athena Greenleaf, 2025, 6 min), **HOMECOMING** (Yuxin Cindy Cheng, 2024, 2 min). – K.D. Davis

DIRECTORS

Soyeon Kim
Zsofia Katana
Damaris Alvarez
Ivy Gonzalez
Yanzhang Song
Asavari Kumar
Soyoun Rebecca Jeon
Camille Romero
Zoha Jamshaid
Abigail Alonso
Genesis Sosa
Van Hofmaister
Trilina Mai
Athena Greenleaf
Yuxin Cindy Cheng

Total program 63 min

Friday, October 10 · 5:00pm · Lark
Saturday, October 11 · 11:30am · Rafael



MILQUETOAST

SHORTS
THE DARK END OF THE STREET

"Hiding in shadows where we don't belong living in darkness to hide." Sometimes people who need help, support, or affirmation go to unlikely sources in these short films, which range from the playful to the intense. A melancholic teen finds a fellow adolescent who she thinks is a kindred spirit in Jaehee Jeong's **WANNA DIE WANNA KILL** (South Korea 2024, 22m). A harsh breakup is an opportune time for a woman to collect her friends in Eliza Huberth's **MILQUETOAST** (US 2024, 9m). In Shokoufeh Ahmad's **REMOVE BEFORE USE** (Iran 2025, 8m), a grieving husband finds an unexpected solution to his trauma. A groundskeeper on an estate finds an unusual person with whom to share his troubles in Nick Dugan's **FOXHOLE** (US 2025, 13m). And a drag performer has an epiphany while memorializing his late mother in Atakan Yilmaz's **HI MOM, IT'S ME, LOU LOU** (Turkey 2024, 20m). Don't miss this incredibly vivid, memorable collection of stories. —Sterling Hedgpeth

DIRECTORS
Jaehee Jeong
Eliza Huberth
Shokoufeh Ahmad
Nick Dugan
Atakan Yilmaz

Total program 72 min

STRAND
HEART

Tuesday, October 7 · 3:00pm · Rafael
Friday, October 10 · 9:00pm · Rafael



ROOFTOP LEMPICKA

SHORTS
THE GRASS IS BLUE

“How much can a heart and a troubled mind take? Where is that fine line before it all breaks?” In these exciting Mind the Gap shorts, unexpected encounters and revelations challenge characters, and change them in indelible ways. In Hang Luong Nguyen’s contemplative **ROOFTOP LEMPICKA** (Vietnam 2025, 20 min), a young girl comes of age as she forms an unlikely friendship with an undisclosed sex worker. A birdwatcher and a nature writer question their future together after spending a day watching birds in Brooklyn in Heather von Rohr’s tender **A BIRD CAME DOWN** (US 2025, 13 min). Linda Mai Green explores the paranormal and the absurd when a sound artist has an otherworldly encounter in her captivating **MONDEGREEN** (US 2025, 21 min). In Abbesi Akhemi’s stylish and comedic **THE INCREDIBLE SENSATIONAL FIANCÉE OF SÈYÍ ÀJÀYÍ** (US/Nigeria 2025, 16 min), a renowned scholar’s public breakup sends her on a quest for revenge. —Osinachi Ibe

DIRECTORS
Hang Luong Nguyen
Heather von Rohr
Linda Mai Green
Abbesi Akhemi

Total program 70 min

STRAND
HEART



BUKRA

SHORTS
HERE YOU COME AGAIN

"All you have to do is smile that smile and there go all my defenses." When it comes to relationships (husband/wife, parent/child, former or future lovers), the stories cover a gamut of emotion in these shorts. A husband and wife have an unusual birthday celebration in Hyejim You's **DINNER** (South Korea 2025, 22m). Director Terry Blade offers an anthem to inner strength in his music video **WON'T BE AROUND** (US 2024, 2m). In Hannes Rall's animated **DOBRINA**, a troubadour pursues his object of affection (Germany 2025, 5m). A bride prepares for her nuptials in Samantha Hisenbolm's **SOMETHING BLUE** (US 2024, 10m). Andy Clay Huey's charming stop-motion animation is the crux of a relationship reverie in **& YET HERE WE ARE...** (US 2024, 14m). A little girl in Syria must find a way to collect her contest prize of a soccer ball in Alex Aljouni's **BUKRA** (US 2024, 14m). And finally, a son must come to terms with his mother's dementia in Vitória Fallavena and Thassilo Weber's moving **I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL HAVE TO SAY EVERYTHING AGAIN** (Brazil 2024, 14m). It's a roller coaster ride of the heart in this vibrant collection of stories. —Sterling Hedgpeth

DIRECTORS

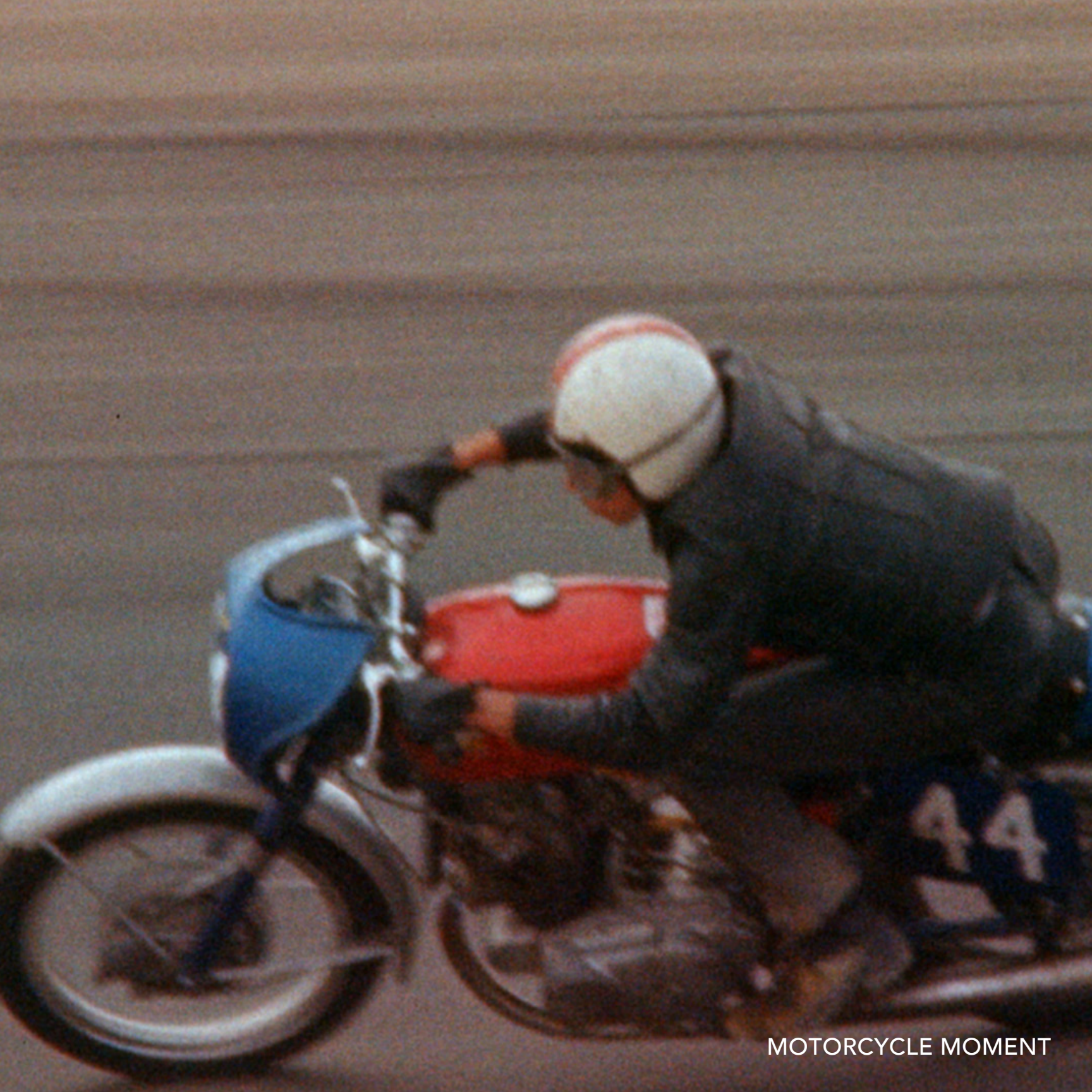
Hyejim You
Terry Blade
Hannes Rall
Samantha Hisenbolm
Andy Clay Huey
Alex Aljouni
Vitória Fallavena
Thassilo Weber

Total program 81 min

STRAND
HEART

Tuesday, October 7 · 9:00pm · Rafael
Wednesday, October 8 · 3:00pm · Rafael

With Support
from
CONSULATE GENERAL
of BRAZIL



MOTORCYCLE MOMENT

SHORTS

LIFE'S LIKE POETRY

"Life's like poetry, but in my poem until now, there's always been a missing line." In this shorts program, we present a collection of true-life tales about extraordinary individuals from around the world. In Maureen Gosling and Maxine Downs' **BAMAKO CHIC: THREADS OF POWER, COLOR AND CULTURE** (US 2023, 27 min) self-empowered Malian women spark a revolution with hand-dying cloth creativity. In **SALVATION MOUNTAIN - LEONARD KNIGHT** (US 2025, 20 min), Harrod Blank shares the life of a visionary who created a sacred monument in the Southern California desert. In **PRIDE OF THE GOBI** (2024, 7 min) Marin filmmaker Will Parrinello pays tribute to 81 year old Mongolian activist Batmunkh Luvsandash. With their delightful **TRIPAWDS** (2024, 9 min), Bay Area filmmakers Jay Rosenblatt and Stephanie Rapp capture an annual San Francisco gathering of three-legged dogs. Former Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez seeks to heal his community by returning to traditional food and farming practices in Louie Psihoyos' **NAVAJO NATION: RECLAIMING THE PLATE** (2024, 10 min). With the nostalgic **MOTORCYCLE MOMENT** (2025, 6 min), Harrod Blank finishes a short about a cross-country motorcycle journey that his legendary father Les Blank began 61 years ago. —Kelly Clement

DIRECTORS

Maureen Gosling
Maxine Downs
Harrod Blank
Will Parrinello
Jay Rosenblatt
Stephanie Rapp
Louie Psihoyos

Total program 79 min

Wednesday, October 8 • 8:30pm • Rafael

Thursday, October 9 • 3:00pm • Sequoia



WORK FROM HOME

SHORTS NINE TO FIVE

"What a way to make a livin'. Barely gettin' by, it's all takin' and no givin'." Be sure to check out these shorts about the highs and lows of people working at their jobs. In Mickey Galvin's **WORK FROM HOME**, a young woman's office job turns surreal when she is forced into COVID isolation (US 2025, 11m). A single mother resolves to find a better job to improve her situation in Kagura N. Kabue's **IRON FIST** (Kenya, 2024, 15m). An actor on the phone with his agent finds an unlikely interruption in Kevin Staaake's **RED VELVET** (US 2024, 12m). Office culture is the target when a birthday does not go as planned in Caro Ribeiro's **CAKE** (US 2025, 6m). Two colleagues on opposite coasts forge an unexpected alliance when they discover they report to the same boss in Jen Sall's **YOUR NIGHT IS MY DAY** (US 2025, 10m). And Angourie Rick (*The Nice Guys*) stars as a frozen yogurt shop employee who has an unforgettable day in Colleen McGuinness's **LOSER** (US 2024, 11m). So, take a break from your daily grind by immersing yourself in these terrific workplace tales. —Sterling Hedgpeth

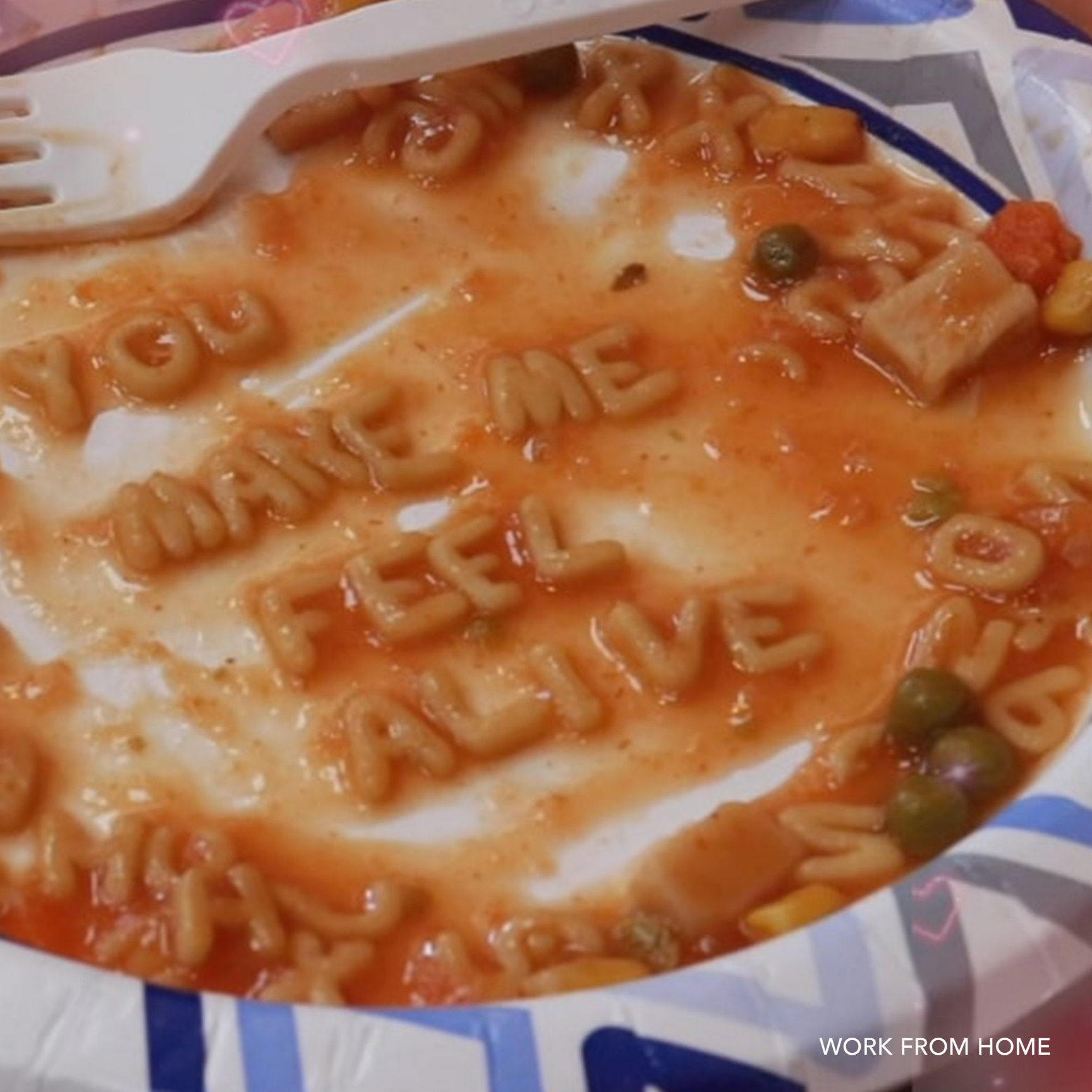
DIRECTORS

Mickey Galvin
Kagura N. Kabue
Kevin Staaake
Caro Ribeiro
Jen Sall
Colleen McGuinness

Total program 79 min

Thursday, October 9 • 9:00pm • Rafael

Friday, October 10 • 3:00pm • Rafael



WORK FROM HOME

YOUTH SHORTS

TOMORROW IS FOREVER

"Take my hand and run with me out of the past called yesterday, And walk with me into the future of tomorrow." From scheming teens and high school daydreams to magical VHS tapes and acts of courage, this youth-produced shorts program celebrates inventive storytelling and imaginative worlds. These shorts explore the humor and heart of their characters, capturing moments both whimsical and profound. **THE BUTTERCUP MAFIA** (Noam Rignault Clement, US, 12 min), **EGGS BENEDICT** (Johnny White, US, 3 min), **HYPNOS: THE MORPHING** (Yilian Ma, China, 4 min), **404: AN INTERNET ARCHIVE DOCUMENTARY** (Jacob Stoelting, US, 7 min), **LUISA** (Kiyomi DallasKidd, US, 2 min), **HOW IT SHOULD BE** (Natalie Yerelekian, US, 13 min), **SELF PORTRAIT II** (Paula Benu, Romania, 1 min), **SHRIMP WIGGLE** (Mason Barnhardt, Jade Kelly, US, 9 min), **I REMEMBER, I FEEL, I SEE, I AM SEEN** (Collective Work, Romania, 4 min), **WHITE CROW** (Ruslan Khromin, US, 2 min), **DANCING IN THE STARS** (Lazar Jovanović, Serbia, 15 min), **FIND ME IN THE VOID** (Denver Humphrey, US, 7 min), **The Scene** (Ramina Rezaie, Iran, 14 min). —Diana Sánchez Maciel

DIRECTORS

Noam Rignault Clement
Johnny White
Yilian Ma
Jacob Stoelting
Kiyomi DallasKidd
Natalie Yerelekian
Paula Benu
Mason Barnhardt
Jade Kelly
Ruslan Khromin
Lazar Jovanović
Ramina Rezaie

Total program 93 min

Sunday, October 12 • 1:00pm • Sequoia



PINE CONES IN DIVISADERO

SHORTS
WILDFLOWERS

“When a flower grows wild, it can always survive. Wildflowers don't care where they grow.” Backyards, farmlands, and coastlines meet in this documentary shorts program, where territory and daily life reveal both the healing bonds of community and the realities we must tend to outside our homes. In Kara Miller’s **MY NEIGHBOR'S YARD** (US 2025, 9 min), neighbors in a Pennsylvania town turn their lawns into a 2024 election battlefield, exposing the intimacies of living side by side. Land is at stake in Michael Fearon’s **LEAVING THE POINT** (US 2025, 19 min), as ranchers in Point Reyes National Seashore face the uncertain future of a way of life passed down through generations. Adnelly Marichal’s **LAS JÍBARAS** (US 2025, 19 min) follows Puerto Rican women reclaiming farming practices and cultivating resilience and community. In the city, Sylvie Lee’s **PINE CONES IN DIVISADERO** (US 2025, 4 min) returns to San Francisco where a playful mystery becomes a meditation on belonging. **THE LONG LABOR** (US, 2025, 20 min) by Brenda Ávila-Hanna and Consuelo Alba follows a Watsonville midwife whose personal loss inspires her to restore ancestral traditions in birth care for indigenous farmworker families. —Diana Sánchez Maciel

DIRECTORS

Kara Miller
Michael Fearon
Adnelly Marichal
Sylvie Lee
Brenda Ávila-Hanna
Consuelo Alba

Total program 71 min

STRAND
HEART

Saturday, October 4 · 5:00pm · Rafael
Monday, October 6 · 3:00pm · Rafael



SIRÂT

In Islamic tradition, Sirât is a mystical bridge that separates Heaven and Hell. Similarly, Oliver Laxe's stunning fourth feature sends its characters on a mythical journey across southern Morocco, where both the transcendent and the nightmarish await them. Sergi López plays Luis, a concerned father searching for his daughter, who never returned from a desert rave. Accompanied by his young son Esteban (Brúno Nuñezas), this desperate hunt soon evolves into an existential quest as the characters grapple with life and death through a surreal, unforgiving landscape. Laxe (*Fire Will Come*) deservedly took home the Jury Prize from this year's Cannes Film Festival: Few recent films are as hypnotic, the movie's transporting electronic music highlighting the story's wonder and terror. Shot in the gorgeous Sahara Desert, *Sirât* demands to be seen on the biggest screen possible as it invites the viewer to get as lost as these luckless souls on their path toward the inexplicable. *In Spanish, French, Arabic, and English with English subtitles* —Tim Grierson

En la tradición islámica, Sirât es un puente místico que separa el cielo del infierno. Del mismo modo, el impresionante cuarto largometraje de Oliver Laxe envía a sus personajes en un viaje mítico por el sur de Marruecos, donde lo trascendental y lo aterrador los aguardan. Sergi López interpreta a Luis, un padre angustiado que busca a su hija, quien nunca regresó de una rave en el desierto. Acompañado por su hijo Esteban (Brúno Nuñezas), la búsqueda desesperada pronto se convierte en una travesía existencial, mientras los personajes se enfrentan a la vida y la muerte a través de un paisaje surreal e implacable. Laxe (*O que arde*) se llevó merecidamente el Premio del Jurado en el Festival de Cannes de este año: pocas películas recientes son tan hipnóticas, y la música electrónica que envuelve la película potencia tanto el asombro como el terror de la historia. Filmada en el deslumbrante desierto del Sahara, *Sirât* debe verse en la pantalla más grande posible, pues invita al espectador a perderse tanto como estas almas desdichadas en su camino hacia lo inexplicable. —Tim Grierson

Sunday, October 5 • 3:30pm • Rafael
Tuesday, October 7 • 4:30pm • Rafael

DIRECTOR
Oliver Laxe
SPAIN, FRANCE
2025 115 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
!VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND
GROW

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Support Provided by

Villa
Albertine 



SOUND OF FALLING (IN DIE SONNE SCHAUEN)

Taking home the Jury Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, German director Mascha Schilinski's extraordinary second feature chronicles four women who live in the same house at different periods over the last century. As it weaves back and forth through time, the present and the distant past speaking to each other in unexpected ways, *Sound of Falling* introduces us to characters ranging from Erika (Lea Drinda), a teen living with a cruel father during World War II, to Lenka (Laeni Geiseler), a seemingly happier young woman in modern Germany, yet who is also touched by sadness. With remarkable fluidity, Schilinski creates invisible connections between eras that suggest how women constantly battle repression and misogyny—and also find pockets of grace and beauty amidst those societal restraints. Shockingly intimate and tender, while also juggling a medley of tones from bleak drama to resplendent reverie, this towering feminist landmark possesses the elegance of a poem and the emotional heft of a great novel. —Tim Grierson

DIRECTOR

Mascha Schilinski

GERMANY 2025 149 min

SECTION

WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

STRAND

CREATE

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Saturday, October 11 • 2:00pm • Sequoia

Sunday, October 12 • 4:30pm • Lark



SPRINGSTEEN: DELIVER ME FROM NOWHERE

The Bear's Jeremy Allen White establishes that he is, indeed, The Boss in the opening moments of this enthralling biopic as The E-Street Band burns through "Born to Run" on the final night of their 1981 tour. That's the public Bruce Springsteen. Offstage, we meet the private man at a pivotal moment in his life as he works on the songs that will become his album *Nebraska* and wrestles with the lingering trauma of his chaotic childhood. His record label is not happy when Bruce delivers an acoustic solo record, but his friend and manager Jon Landau (Jeremy Strong) insists this is what has to be. Writer/director Scott Cooper's (*Crazy Heart*) slice of a rock icon's life is part musical biography, part buddy movie, part romance, part dysfunctional family drama, and all reflective of Springsteen's "hungry heart." Cooper cast his film well. In a multifaceted performance that refracts the many shades of a complex personality, White mesmerizes. —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR

Scott Cooper

US 2025 112 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

Sponsored by

WAREHAM
DEVELOPMENT

Friday, October 10 · 8:00pm · Sequoia

Saturday, October 11 · 12:00pm · Rafael



STATE OF FIRSTS

In a groundbreaking victory, Sarah McBride became the first transgender person elected to Congress—in the same year Donald Trump returned to power on a campaign that featured a chilling anti-trans platform. This provocative and powerful doc brings us directly into McBride’s experience, following closely as she knocks on doors across Delaware, sharpens her message (and her elbows) to keep the focus on the issues that matter most to her constituents, shares a bittersweet election-night call with Joe Biden, and steps into her first year in office with Republicans banning her from using restrooms in the Capitol before she even arrives. Battling tirelessly on all fronts despite shocking mistreatment, McBride hangs on to her equilibrium as she demonstrates the power of choosing hope, taking action, and making the most of the opportunities for which she will fight like hell, for herself and all who will follow in her fearless footsteps. —Deanna Quinones

DIRECTOR
Chase Joynt
US 2024 93 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Tuesday, October 7 · 3:30pm · Rafael
Friday, October 10 · 4:30pm · BAMPFA



STEAL THIS STORY, PLEASE!

Longtime activist and journalist Amy Goodman and a host of her colleagues tell her story in this intimate profile that doubles as a snapshot of the intertwining of politics and the US news media, along with the antagonism that has grown between the two. This involving documentary traces Goodman’s formative experiences and frontline confrontations worldwide, from the harrowing (including her early career covering militarized genocide in East Timor and Chevron’s brutal oil exploitation in Nigeria) to the celebratory (the release of a wrongfully incarcerated Black American prisoner). Described variously as principled, provocative, combative, and radical, Goodman cuts a commanding figure, inspiring countless others to pursue social justice. As *Steal this Story, Please!* demonstrates, she has become a cultural icon whose work provides an alternative to mainstream media with its blackouts, censorship, and market-driven coverage. The film’s astute observation of a consummate shaper of public information provides a rare and valuable perspective in our era of fast-changing news cycles. —Brian Karl

DIRECTORS

Tia Lessin
Carl Deal
US 2025 100 min

SECTION DOCS

INITIATIVE MIND THE GAP

STRAND TRAILBLAZER

Sponsored by

KQED

Sunday, October 5 · 3:30pm · BAMPFA
Monday, October 6 · 5:30pm · Rafael



STEVE SCHAPIRO: BEING EVERYWHERE

With extraordinary access to larger-than-life figures and a gimlet eye highly attuned to key moments, photographer Steven Schapiro did more than passively observe. He actively bore witness to history and kept alive ongoing human concerns through a cavalcade of breathtaking images. In this documentary portrait, many of Schapiro’s photos—in striking black and white and some in living color—are given space and time for contemplation, narrated by Schapiro’s wry, thoughtful insights. He spent sustained periods with celebrated cultural icons like Warhol, Streisand, Bowie, and Brando, as well as towering figures of the Civil Rights Movement, including James Baldwin, Muhammed Ali, John Lewis, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Just as crucial as the many pivotal events he framed with his camera are the human experiences of his subjects revealed in this finely wrought account. —Brian Karl

Shown with **BIG ROCK BURNING** (David Goldblum, US 29min)

This intimate documentary explores the resilient spirit of Malibu’s Big Rock community as they rebuild after the devastating Palisades Fire.

DIRECTOR
Maura Smith
US 2025 71 min

SECTION
DOCS

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

Friday, October 10 · 6:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 12 · 8:15pm · Rafael



SUMMER BEATS

What begins as a sunlit escape from Paris, blossoms into something rich and deeply human—it feels like stepping into the messy, joyful honesty of real youth. When Shaï and Djeneba, friends from the same neighborhood, take jobs as camp counselors for the summer, what unfolds over the season is a beautiful, playful, and at times quietly profound story of friendship, identity, and growth. Directors Lise Akoka and Romane Gueret bring a striking sense of realism, blending humor and emotion with a light, confident touch. The young cast is simply radiant—natural, funny, and moving in a film that effortlessly dances between genres, refusing to fit in a box. There’s class, queerness, cultural tension, and resilience here, all explored with sensitivity and heart. And the music! A soundtrack brushed with feeling carries the rhythm of belonging. *Summer Beats* is bright, spirited, and full of hope. It will leave you smiling, moved—and feeling joyfully connected. *In French with English subtitles* —João Federici

DIRECTORS
Lise Akoka
Romane Gueret
FRANCE 2025 112 min

SECTION
WORLD CINEMA

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
SPIRIT

US PREMIERE

Support
provided by
CONSULATE GENERAL
of FRANCE
in SAN FRANCISCO

Sunday, October 5 · 4:30pm · Sequoia
Monday, October 6 · 3:00pm · Sequoia



SUN-RA: DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

Jazz pianist, early synthesizer adopter, bandleader, record-label president, interplanetary ambassador: Sun Ra was all of these things and more. Born Herman Blount in Birmingham, Alabama—and reborn on Saturn as a pioneer of Afro-futurism who returned to Earth with a mission to liberate Black people from their psychic shackles—the musical genius and his ever-evolving “Arkestra” ensemble made some of the boldest, most exciting experimental jazz of the mid-20th century and beyond. Using testimonials from critics and longtime collaborators, filmmaker Christine Turner chronicles how Sun Ra turned his truly out-of-this-world persona into something bigger than an alter ego, and put forth a philosophy that “space is the place” to make people rethink everything they knew about race, class, social norms, and music as a medium to blow minds. It’s a portrait of an artist as a cultural astronaut, boldly going where no one has gone before or since. —David Fear

DIRECTOR
Christine Turner
US 2025 84 min

SECTION
DOC

INITIATIVE
MIND THE GAP

STRAND
TRAILBLAZER

BAY AREA PREMIERE

Saturday, October 4 · 4:00pm · BAMPFA
Saturday, October 11 · 11:00am · Sequoia



UNDERLAND

For centuries, what lies below—and out of sight—has fascinated humans. Many of our oldest and most beloved stories are about descents into unseeable underworlds. In *Underland*, an adaptation of Robert Macfarlane’s bestselling book of the same name, director Robert Petit examines why subterranean spaces hold such a timeless allure. Split into chapters, the documentary spotlights an archaeologist’s attempts to map a sacred Mayan cave; an urban explorer’s efforts to preserve present-day tunnel-dwellers’ stories; and a scientist’s search for dark matter in a sterile lab hidden kilometers below Earth’s surface. Narrated by two-time Oscar® nominee Sandra Hüller (*Anatomy of a Fall*, MVFF46) and produced by Golden Lion-winning filmmaker Darren Aronofsky (*The Whale*, MVFF45), this beautifully lensed, brilliantly scored, and grippingly philosophical documentary suggests that the key to humanity’s future exists in the many layers of history preserved in the darkness of abandoned subway systems and in the hallowed bellies of caves. —Kate Bove

DIRECTOR
Robert Petit
UK/US 2025 79 min

SECTION
DOCS

STRAND
GROW

CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

Friday, October 10 · 2:00pm · Rafael
Sunday, October 12 · 11:30am · Rafael



VALENTINA

In this singular debut, director Tatti Ribeiro leverages the best of hybrid filmmaking to create a comedy-meets-documentary that feels both urgent and slice-of-life all at once. Set against the backdrop of the busiest US-Mexico border crossing, *Valentina* is, at its core, a coming-of-age story. The titular character, played by the ever-magnetic Keyla Monterroso Mejia (*One of Them Days*, *The Studio*), navigates parking tickets, odd jobs, and a perpetually precarious checking account balance. In one moment, Valentina cracks jokes about wanting a cosmetic procedure; in the next, she's pointing out just how much time gig workers like herself waste dealing with bureaucracy. By blending real-life news clips and political interviews with a cinema vérité-style approach to capturing Valentina's often-humorous day-to-day circumstances, this wholly original film not only deftly highlights the very real trials of growing up in an American border town, but marks Ribeiro as a talent to watch. *In English and Spanish with English subtitles* —Kate Bove

En este singular debut, la directora Tatti Ribeiro aprovecha lo mejor del cine híbrido para crear una mezcla de comedia y documental que se siente a la vez urgente y cotidiana. Ambientada en el cruce fronterizo más transitado entre Estados Unidos y México, *Valentina* es, en esencia, una historia sobre el paso a la madurez. El personaje titular, interpretado por la siempre magnética Keyla Monterroso Mejía (*One of Them Days*, *The Studio*), lidia con multas de estacionamiento, trabajos ocasionales y un saldo bancario perpetuamente precario. En un momento, Valentina bromea sobre querer someterse a un procedimiento estético; al siguiente, señala cuánto tiempo pierden los trabajadores temporales como ella al lidiar con la burocracia. Al entrelazar clips de noticias reales y entrevistas políticas con un enfoque de *cinéma vérité* para retratar las a menudo humorísticas circunstancias cotidianas de Valentina, esta película absolutamente original no solo ilumina con destreza los retos de crecer en una ciudad fronteriza estadounidense, sino que también consagra a Ribeiro como un talento a seguir. —Kate Bove

DIRECTOR

Tatti Ribeiro

US 2025 78 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

INITIATIVE

MIND THE GAP

¡VIVA EL CINE!

STRAND

SPIRIT

WORLD PREMIERE

Friday, October 3 • 7:00pm • Sequoia

Monday, October 6 • 8:30pm • Rafael



WAKE UP DEAD MAN: A KNIVES OUT MYSTERY

Benoit Blanc (Daniel Craig), the charming private eye with the delicious Southern accent and brilliant knack for deduction that allows him to untangle the thorniest of crimes, is back in the third of writer/director Rian Johnson's beguiling murder mysteries. On the heels of *Knives Out* (MVFF42) and *Glass Onion* (MVFF45), arrives a fresh case set in the environs of a small New England town and its fading Catholic church. Called to the scene by the stumped local police chief (Mila Kunis), Benoit delights in this latest puzzle—as he should. Johnson has engineered a complex crime worthy of Rube Goldberg for all its moving parts, giving the wily detective ample clues to which he can apply his superior reasoning. He also has plenty of suspects among an all-star cast that includes Josh O'Connor, Glenn Close, Andrew Scott, Josh Brolin, Kerry Washington, Jeremy Renner, and Thomas Haden Church as he seeks to uncover whodunit this time. —Pam Grady

DIRECTOR

Rian Johnson

US 2025 140 min

SECTION

US CINEMA

Sponsored by

GRUBER FAMILY
FOUNDATION

Wednesday, October 8 • 7:45pm • Sequoia

Thursday, October 9 • 11:30am • Rafael



YANUNI

Produced by Leonardo Di Caprio, this tense, captivating documentary dives deep into the dangerous politics of the Amazon rainforest. Indigenous chief and climate justice leader Juma Xipaia has survived six assassination attempts. Now, she and her husband, Brazilian environmental protection agency official Hugo Loss, are expecting a child. Together this power couple devote their lives to defending the people and rainforests of their homeland, while raising a family. Their opposition is powerful—and dangerous: cash-fueled government drilling crews, operating out of illegal mining camps as they search for gold and other riches deep underground. Filmmaker Richard Ladkani masterfully weaves a complicated story crafting breathtaking shots of stunning landscapes with intense handheld footage of the life-and-death struggles facing a small, mighty resistance. Combining electrifying jungle action with intense personal drama, the film follows this passionate, committed couple as they battle gold miners and big business to create a healthy, hopeful future for their children, and for all of us. —Brendan Peterson

Wednesday, October 8 • 3:45pm • Rafael
Thursday, October 9 • 5:00pm • Rafael

DIRECTOR

Richard Ladkani
AUSTRIA, BRAZIL, US
CANADA, GERMANY
2025 112 min

SECTION DOCS

STRAND GROW

INITIATIVE ¡VIVA EL CINE!

WEST COAST PREMIERE

Sponsored by

WAREHAM
DEVELOPMENT

With Support
from

CONSULATE GENERAL
of BRAZIL

THURSDAY • **OPENING NIGHT** • OCTOBER 2
HAMNET

SEQUOIA • 7:15 + RAFAEL • 7:30

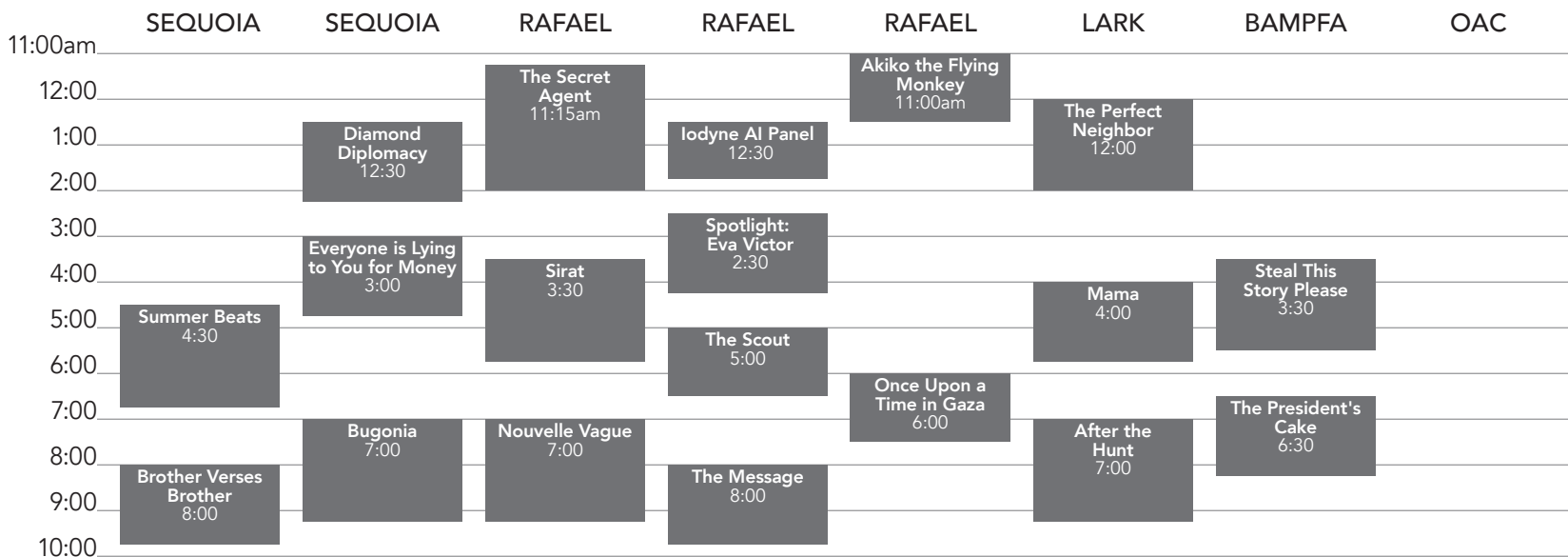
FRIDAY OCTOBER 3

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								
12:00								
1:00	Happy Birthday 12:30							
2:00								
3:00		No Other Choice 2:30	Spotlight: Jessie Buckley					
4:00	Diamond Diplomacy 3:30		Hamnet 3:00				The Alabama Solution 4:00	
5:00				Confidante 5:00				
6:00		The Secret Agent 6:00						
7:00	Valentina 7:00		Left Handed Girl 7:00					
8:00				The Perfect Neighbor 7:30			Promised Sky 7:15	
9:00					Shorts: The Grass is Blue 8:30			
10:00								VIVA EL CINE! Celebration 9:00 - 11:00 Free with Secret Agent ticket

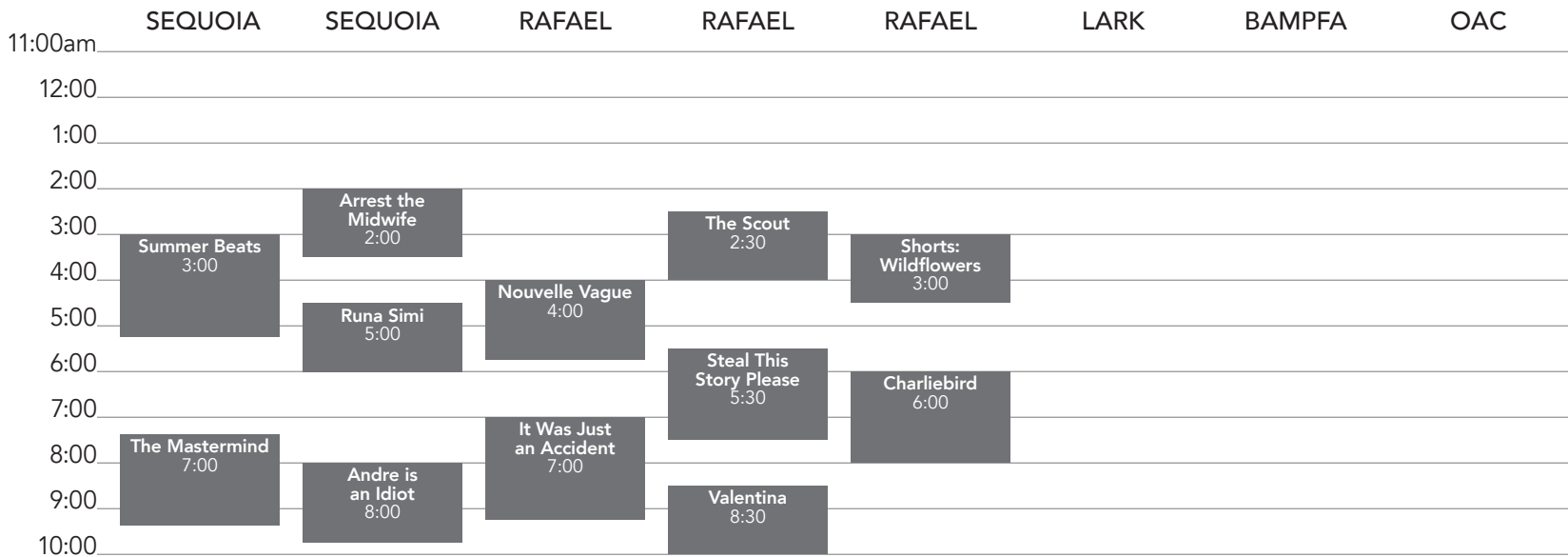
SATURDAY OCTOBER 4

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								Mind the Gap Summit 9:00am - 12:30pm
12:00			Animal Farm 11:30am	The Alabama Solution 11:45am		After the Hunt 12:00		
1:00		Promised Sky 12:00			Akiko, the Flying Monkey 1:00			
2:00	Left Handed Girl 1:30		John Chu Masterclass 1:45					
3:00			The Choral 3:30					
4:00		Arrest the Midwife 3:45		Charliebird 4:00		Arco 3:30	Sun Ra: Do the Impossible 4:00	
5:00	Mama 5:00				Shorts: Wildflowers 5:00			
6:00								
7:00		Everywhere Man 7:00	Love + War 7:00			The President's Cake 7:00	No Other Choice 7:00	
8:00	A Private Life 8:00			Case 137 7:30				
9:00					Confidante 8:30			
10:00								

SUNDAY OCTOBER 5



MONDAY OCTOBER 6



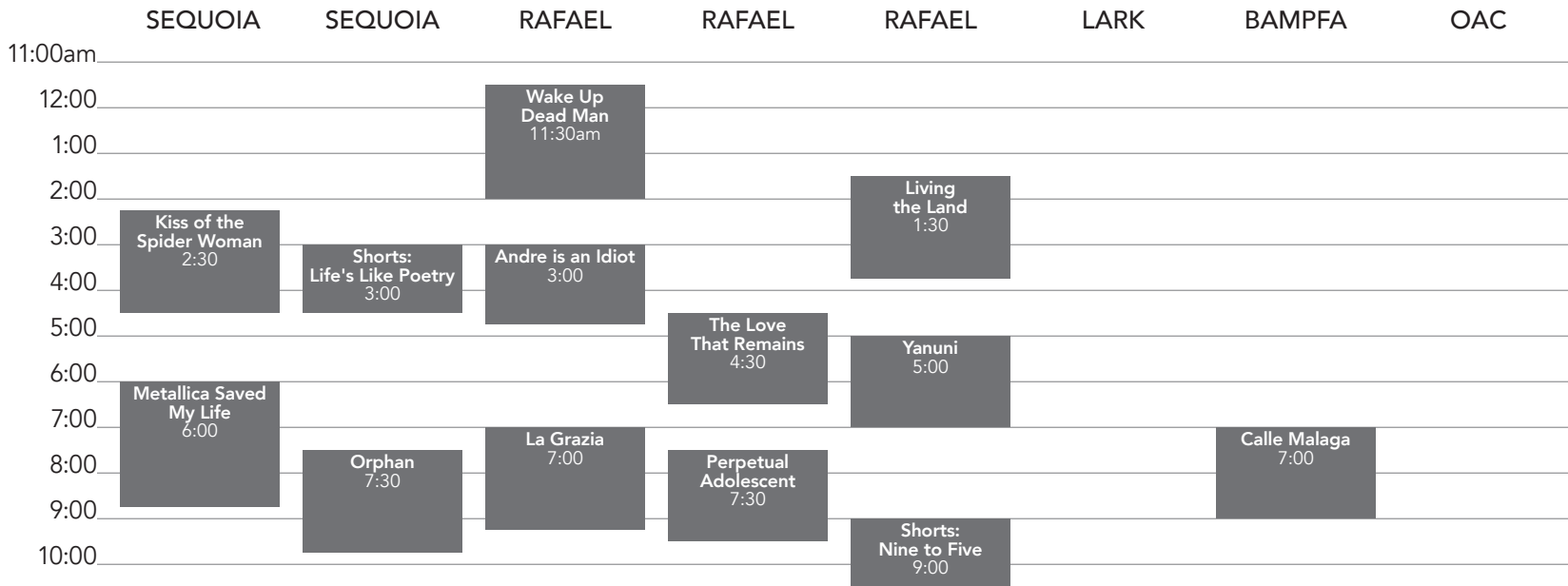
TUESDAY OCTOBER 7

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								
12:00								
1:00								
2:00								
3:00								
4:00	Brother Verses Brother 3:00		State of Firsts 3:30		Shorts: Dark End of the Street 3:00			
5:00		Everywhere Man 4:00		Sirat 4:30				
6:00								
7:00					The Luminous Life 6:00			
8:00	Blue Moon 7:00		Train Dreams 7:00					
9:00		Love + War 8:00		The Plague 8:00				
10:00					Shorts: Here You Come Again 9:00			

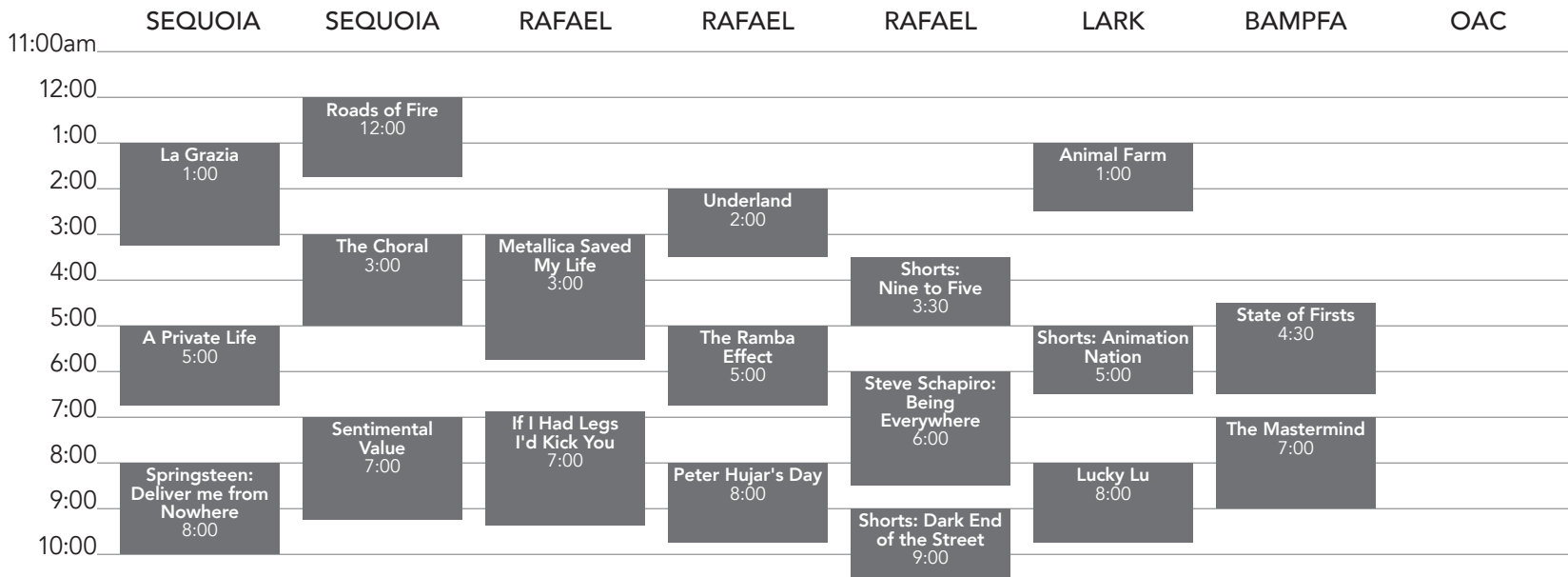
WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 8

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								
12:00								
1:00					Once Upon a Time in Gaza 12:00			
2:00			Blue Moon 1:00					
3:00	Train Dreams 3:00			Runa Simi 2:00				
4:00					Shorts: Here You Come Again 3:00			
5:00		Hola Frida 4:30	Yanuni 3:45					
6:00				Happy Birthday 5:00				
7:00					The Plague 6:00			
8:00	Kiss of the Spider Woman 7:00		Calle Malaga 7:00	The Mysterious Gaze of the Flamingo 7:30				
9:00		Wake Up Dead Man 7:45			Shorts: Life's Like Poetry 8:30			
10:00								

THURSDAY OCTOBER 9



FRIDAY OCTOBER 10



SATURDAY OCTOBER 11

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								
12:00		Sun Ra: Do the Impossible 11:00am		Arco 11:00am	Shorts: Animation Nation 11:30am			
1:00	Sentimental Value 12:00		Springsteen: Deliver me from Nowhere 12:00			Orphan 12:00		
2:00								
3:00		Sound of Falling 2:00		HoneyJoon 2:00			It Was Just an Accident 2:00	
4:00			Bugonia 3:00					
5:00	Everyone is Lying to You for Money 4:00				Roads of Fire 4:00	Children in the Fire 4:00		
6:00		John Candy: I Like Me 5:30		My Father's Shadow 5:00			Peter Hujar's Day 5:00	
7:00								
8:00	Is This Thing On? 7:00		Tribute: Spike Lee 7:30			Forever Young 7:30	The Message 7:30	
9:00		The Hi De Ho Show 8:30		The Mysterious Gaze of the Flamingo 8:00				
10:00			Bamboozled 9:30		Noseeums 9:00			

SUNDAY OCTOBER 12

	SEQUOIA	SEQUOIA	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	RAFAEL	LARK	BAMPFA	OAC
11:00am								
12:00		Forever Young 11:00am		Underland 11:30am	Hola Frida 11:00am	Ballad of a Small Player 11:00am		Industry Panel 11:30am
1:00			John Candy: I Like Me 12:30					
2:00	Shorts: Tomorrow is Forever 1:00				HoneyJoon 1:30	My Father's Shadow 1:30		Litquake Panel 1:15
3:00		Lucky Lu 2:00		The Ramba Effect 2:00				
4:00								
5:00							Living the Land 4:00	
6:00						Sound of Falling 4:30		
7:00								
8:00							Case 137 7:00	
9:00	Is This Thing On? 8:00	The Love That Remains 8:15	Steve Schapiro: Being Everywhere 8:15	Perpetual Adolescent 8:00	The Luminous Life 8:00			
10:00								

#MVFF48



@millvalleyfilmfest



@MillValleyFilmFestival



californiafilminstitute

PLEASE NOTE:

Times, dates, and venues subject to change or adjustments.
Consult mvff.com for up-to-the-minute information.

WORLD CINEMA

Stories from six continents that foster a new understanding of our global neighbors and ourselves

Sponsored by JIM BOYCE TRUST and KRIS OTIS

US CINEMA

A showcase of new films by master and emerging American film-makers who share a talent for independent storytelling

Sponsored by **WAREHAM** + NANCY P. and RICHARD K. ROBBINS FAMILY FOUNDATION
DEVELOPMENT

DOCS

The latest in non-fiction filmmaking, from heartfelt stories of activism to historical profiles, current events, and more

Sponsored by **WAREHAM** + NANCY P. and RICHARD K. ROBBINS FAMILY FOUNDATION
DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY FILMS

A sampling of stories, cultures, and adventures for new generations and old that inspire and nurture a love of film

Sponsored by **BELLAM**
SELF STORAGE
A CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS

SHORTS

Collections of short cinematic gems from every genre including narratives, documentaries, animation, family films, and youth works



Film has the power to inspire and activate. MVFF Initiatives are a call to action through screenings, panels, partnerships, masterclasses, and mentorship opportunities.

MIND THE GAP

A platform for inclusion and equity, committed to helping marginalized filmmakers break through the gatekeeping that has long made the industry exclusionary and help undo a harmful history of defaults

Sponsored by CHRISTINE A. SCHANTZ



!VIVA EL CINE!

A showcase of Latin American, Latinx, and Spanish-language stories, connecting audiences with a diversity of cultures, identities, and histories explored through the magic of cinema

Support provided by CONSULATE GENERAL OF BRAZIL

Sponsored by CANAL ALLIANCE

and HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MARIN

ACTIVE CINEMA

A forum for films united in their commitment to explore the world and its issues, engage audiences, and transform ideas into action



A forum for films united in their commitment to explore the world and its issues (both local and global), engage audiences, and transform ideas into action for positive change. Join us for screenings throughout the Festival, support the grassroots activism of the filmmakers, and engage with the admirable work of special guests, co-presenters, and partners.

Features

ARREST THE MIDWIFE

FOREVER YOUNG

THE PERFECT NEIGHBOR

THE RAMBA EFFECT

ROADS OF FIRE

YANUNI

ACTIVE CINEMA HIKE: NETWORKING IN NATURE

Saturday Oct 11, 10am | Free

Come and enjoy some fresh air and fresh ideas with filmmakers, friends, festival staff and cinephiles during this hour-long hike to the ocean through beautiful terrain. Exchange ideas on filmmaking, filmmaker resources, activism, and strategies for engagement. Bring water and sunblock, and wear good hiking shoes. All welcome! Meet at Tennessee Valley Trailhead parking lot.



!VIVA EL CINE! celebrates the richness of cinema in Spanish and Portuguese from around the world. Our initiative curates films that deeply resonate with these communities, showcasing the best international and independent works. Through cinema, we build a space where history, culture, and identity come alive.

!VIVA EL CINE! celebra la riqueza del cine en español y portugués de todo el mundo. Nuestra iniciativa selecciona películas que resuenan profundamente en estas comunidades, mostrando lo mejor del cine internacional e independiente. A través del cine, construimos un espacio donde la historia, la cultura y la identidad cobran vida.

Features

CALLE MÁLAGA - Morocco / Spain
 HOLA FRIDA - France / Canada
 KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN - US
 THE LUMINOUS LIFE - Portugal / France
 THE MESSAGE - Argentina / Spain / Uruguay
 THE MYSTERIOUS GAZE OF THE FLAMINGO - Chile
 PERPETUAL ADOLESCENT - Mexico / France
 THE RAMBA EFFECT - US
 ROADS OF FIRE - US
 RUNA SIMI - Peru
 THE SECRET AGENT - Brazil / France
 SIRÂT - Spain / France

VALENTINA - US

YANUNI - Austria / Brazil / US / Canada / Germany

Shorts

I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL HAVE TO SAY
 EVERYTHING AGAIN - Brazil

FOXHOLE - US

LAS JIBARAS - US

LEAVING THE POINT - US

THE LONG LABOR - US

MOON - US

Nido De Mi Vida - US

Sponsored by



CAFILM Education has offered free education programs to Bay Area schools for more than 30 years, welcoming thousands of students to participate in the Festival each year by viewing new films and meeting filmmakers from around the world. We continue this tradition with two free programs available exclusively to K-12 schools in the Bay Area and across the country.

SCHOOL SCREENINGS

A selection of narrative features, documentaries, and shorts programs is carefully curated from the general Festival program and offered for free to all participating schools as weekday matinees in the theater and throughout the Festival online. Screenings are followed by Q&As with filmmakers and subject experts, and supplemented by free curriculum resources including film-analysis toolkits, lesson plans, and discussion guides to help teachers incorporate the films into their class curriculum.

FILMMAKERS GO TO SCHOOL

For those schools and students unable to travel to the theater, we offer an additional interactive experience through our Filmmakers Go to School program. Throughout the Festival (and often beyond), CAFILM Education staff brings filmmaker guests into the community to meet with students in their classrooms and school auditoriums, or at nearby venues, for in-depth discussions about the art and craft of filmmaking.

Learn more about CAFILM Education programs or how to get your school involved at cafilmedu.org.



Photo: Tommy Lau

MVFF48 Education Support provided by
 Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation
 Fenwick Foundation | Hellman Foundation
 Marin Charitable | Destino Fund



BELLAM
SELF STORAGE
 A CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS

MVFF Family Films are for kids and folks of all ages who enjoy a great story and often a good laugh. Our selection this year has something for everyone!

AKIKO, THE FLYING MONKEY

ANIMAL FARM

ARCO

HOLA FRIDA

SHORTS: ANIMATION NATION

YOUTH SHORTS: TOMORROW IS FOREVER

MVFF Family Films are for kids and folks of all ages who enjoy a great story and often a good laugh. Our selection this year has something for everyone!

CHILDREN IN THE FIRE

DIAMOND DIPLOMACY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

JOHN CANDY: I LIKE ME

THE MESSAGE

THE RAMBA EFFECT

RUNA SIMI

SUMMER BEATS

UNDERLAND



CALLING ALL KIDS (AND KIDS AT HEART)!

THE HOOPLA!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

11:00am Smith Rafael Film Center

AND!

1:00–3:00pm Marin Country Mart

Kick off your Sunday with the adventurous *Akiko, the Flying Monkey*—director Veit Helmer in person, then hop over to the MVFF48 Hoopla at Marin Country Mart for pony rides, a petting zoo, balloon sculptures, face painting, and treats from Shake Shack.

All included with your Akiko movie ticket!

Follow Akiko's daring escape from the zoo as he teams up with an eagle, a raccoon, and a chameleon in a playful, city-spanning adventure. Discover a magical parallel world hidden all around us, where animals cleverly use everyday objects, making the city feel alive in new and surprising ways.

A morning of movie magic + an afternoon of hands-on fun—the perfect combo for families to explore, laugh, and celebrate together!

Venue Sponsor

Marin
COUNTRY MART

Family Films Sponsored by

BELLAM
SELF STORAGE
A CERTIFIED GREEN BUSINESS

CREATE

Art. Dance. Music.
Theater. Creative minds.



BROTHER VERSES BROTHER
EVERYWHERE MAN:
THE LIVES AND TIMES OF PETER ASHER
HOLY FRIDA
NO OTHER CHOICE
PETER HUJAR'S DAY
RUNA SIMI
THE SCOUT
SOUND OF FALLING

GROW

Ecology. Geography. Environment.
The human relationship with
the natural world



CHILDREN IN THE FIRE
FOREVER YOUNG
LIVING THE LAND
THE RAMBA EFFECT
SIRÂT
UNDERLAND
YANUNI

HEART

Love. Like. Lust.
Passion. Romance.



The Grateful Dog
Doggy PlayCare &
Wellness Center
MARIN

ARCO
CHARLIEBIRD
DIAMOND DIPLOMACY
HAPPY BIRTHDAY
LA GRAZIA
LOVE + WAR
LOVE THAT REMAINS, THE
SHORTS: THE GRASS IS BLUE
SHORTS: HERE YOU COME AGAIN
SHORTS: THE DARK END OF THE STREET
SHORTS: WILDFLOWERS

LAUGH

Humor. Wit. Satire. Irony.
Comedy. From LOL to WTF.

ACQUA HOTEL
MILL VALLEY



MILL VALLEY INN

WATERS EDGE
HOTEL • TIBURON

ANDRE IS AN IDIOT
ANIMAL FARM
EVERYONE IS LYING
TO YOU FOR MONEY
HONEYJOON
JOHN CANDY: I LIKE ME
LEFT-HANDED GIRL
THE LUMINOUS LIFE
THE MASTERMIND
ONCE UPON A TIME IN GAZA



THE SCOUT



DIAMOND DIPLOMACY

SPIRIT

Body. Soul.
The wholeness of being human.



LUCKY LU
THE MESSAGE
MY FATHER'S SHADOW
THE MYSTERIOUS GAZE OF THE FLAMINGO
ORPHAN
PERPETUAL ADOLESCENT
PROMISED SKY
SUMMER BEATS
VALENTINA

TRAILBLAZERS

Portraits of courage, vision,
talent, and guts.



AKIKO, THE FLYING MONKEY
ARREST THE MIDWIFE
CALLE MALAGA
CASE 137
CONFIDANTE
MAMA
STATE OF FIRSTS
STEAL THIS STORY, PLEASE!
SUN RA: DO THE IMPOSSIBLE



THE MESSAGE



STATE OF FIRSTS

MASTERCLASS WITH JOHN CHU

Saturday, October 4, 1:45

Smith Rafael | \$16 members | \$20 general

\$18 student/senior

Destined to be a classic for the ages, Jon M. Chu's *Wicked* became a global cultural phenomenon, shattering box office records and earning 10 Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture. Now, as anticipation for this November's epic conclusion, *Wicked: For Good*, rises, join us for a rare chance to look behind the curtain at the creative process—from performances to production design, costumes to cinematography—that Chu and his extraordinary fellow artists used to reimagine the land of Oz. We are thrilled to welcome director Jon M. Chu to MVFF for this masterclass conversation about the making of his *Wicked* films, where he will share clips onscreen, insights onstage, and unpack some of the magic behind the scenes.

SCENES FROM A REVOLUTION**AI AND THE FUTURE OF FILMMAKING**

Sunday, October 5, 12:30

Smith Rafael | Ticketed: Free

Join us to explore how emerging AI technologies are helping to transform the way artists tell their stories across cinematic experiences. This panel will discuss the diverse ways filmmakers are using AI technologies to aid in creating and shaping new narrative experiences, and give a real behind-the-scenes look at how filmmakers using AI combine technology with creative vision on major projects.

Invited Guests:

Barbara Ford Grant

Zason Zada

Mike Shapiro

Daniel Kenyon

Larry Cutler

Moderator: Martin Christien

Presented in
association with
iodyne
PRO DATA

Sponsored by
 **Perception Grid**

STATE OF THE INDUSTRY

Sunday, October 12, 11:30am

Outdoor Art Club | Ticketed: Free

As film festivals around the world rebound, there is renewed cause for optimism. Yet in the realm of theatrical exhibition—particularly within art-house cinema—many questions remain.

The health of the industry, with both its opportunities and its challenges, is vital to examine as we shape the future we envision. How can first-time and emerging filmmakers succeed in creating feature films and sustaining theatrical exhibition? If the barriers remain too high, we risk losing the diverse voices we want—and critically need—to hear.

Which production and development companies are actively nurturing new talent? What obstacles do they face in bringing these films to the big screen?

Encouragingly, universities such as Florida State University have developed innovative programs that empower students to create their own feature films—such as Noseeum, screening at the 48th Mill Valley Film Festival.

If we are to succeed in fostering art that nourishes our souls, inspires empathy, and brings joy, we must continue to support the next generation of filmmakers. Join us for a timely and thought-provoking conversation with first-time directors, as well as veteran producers and distributors who champion their work.

Introductory remarks by California Film Institute
Executive Director **Mark Fishkin**

Ron Yerxa: Moderator. formed Bona Fide Productions with Albert Berger in 1992. Their producing credits include *King of the Hill*, *Election*, *Cold Mountain*, *Little Children*, and Best Picture Academy Award® nominees *Little Miss Sunshine* and *Nebraska*. More recently they produced *The Peanut Butter Falcon*, *Blow the Man Down*, *The Last Shift*, and *Somewhere in Queens*. They have also executive produced documentaries on Wilco and Levon Helm. On the HBO series *The Leftovers*, they were co-executive producers. Yerxa is also a founding member of Producer's United

Invited guests:

Julie Benello is a film producer and co-founder of Chicken & Egg Films, the preeminent documentary development and production company. More recently, she founded Secret Sauce Media to invest in projects directed or co-directed by women directors. Films include Academy Award®, *Gotham*, and Independent Spirit-winning feature documentary *American Factory*; Emmy® Award-winner *Athlete A*, and 2025 Sundance Award-winning feature documentary *Cutting Through Rocks*.

Paul Cohen is the executive producer of *Noseeums* and a motion picture executive who, for more than four decades, created several successful distribution and production companies. Currently, he serves at Florida State University's College of Motion Picture Arts as a faculty member and as the director of Torchlight Studios & Cinematheque.

Raven Carter is a bold and unconventional storyteller from Texas. Her debut feature film, *Noseeums*, premiered at the highly esteemed Frightfest in London this year. Her stories often dissect elements of family, race, and womanhood. Before getting a Master of Fine Arts in film production at Florida State University's College for Motion Picture Arts, she attended Huston-Tillotson in Austin, an HBCU.

Rose Kuo is a film producer, curator, and awards strategist, and founder of consulting firm, Festworks. She served as a CEO/Artistic Director for Beijing's Wanda Group, Executive Director of Film Society of Lincoln Center, and AFI FEST's Artistic Director. Her produced films have premiered at Cannes and Venice Film Festivals..

Lilian T. Mehrel is an award-winning writer and director with a visionary sense of feeling and humor. Her debut feature, *Honeyjoon* (2025), premiered at Tribeca, and won the Tribeca AT&T Untold Stories Award. Other honors include the 2025 SFFILM Rainin Grant, Torino FilmLab ComedyLab, Cine Qua Non Storylines Lab, Warner Media TFI Co/Lab, and a Sony Pictures Classics/Marcie Bloom Fellowship.

SPOTTING OPPORTUNITIES

CO-PRESENTED WITH LITQUAKE

Sunday, October 12, 1:15pm

Outdoor Art Club | Ticketed: Free

Where does inspiration come from and how can it be turned into a compelling, fundable film? Author Kevin Smokler (*Break the Frame: Conversations with Women Filmmakers*, Oxford University Press, 2025) will moderate this discussion with women filmmakers about how they recognize opportunities and transform them into worthwhile endeavors. Panelists will delve into how they nurture creative collaborations, identify partnerships and funding sources, and stay alert to future possibilities.

Invited Guests:

Alice Wu

Tiffany Schlain

Lilian T. Mehrel, *Honeyjoon* (MVFF48)

Dayna Goldfine, *Everywhere Man: The Lives and Times of Peter Asher* (MVFF48)

EXPANDING THE FRAME

For this 10th anniversary of Mill Valley Film Festival's gender equity initiative, we celebrate the bold work that female and nonbinary filmmakers. Despite the current political headwinds, their work exemplifies how our resolve for equity and human rights cannot be dampened. The audacious and compelling films in this year's festival empower us to expand the frame of inclusion as we fight our way forward. This year, our program highlights exceptional established artists and a wave of emerging talent whose work promises to shape the future of film and our collective imagination. We hope our screenings and conversations inspire you, and we look forward to seeing you at the festival.

MIND THE GAP DAY + SUMMIT

Saturday, October 4, All Day
Outdoor Art Club, Sequoia Cinema, Smith Rafael
Immerse yourself in a diverse lineup of films, conversations, and activities centering on female and nonbinary voices in the industry. The day's festivities of curated events include a summit and networking lunch, film screenings, access to the filmmaker lounge, and a happy hour. This event is a space for the local and film communities to come together, engage with Mind the Gap and the Mill Valley Film Festival, and forge meaningful relationships to advance our mission of gender equity in the industry.

- Summit morning: Free with ticket
- Summit + Lunch: \$25 member / \$30 non-member
- MTG Day Pass (\$60 member / \$65 non-member) includes: Summit + Lunch. 2 screenings of MTG films (vouchers for tickets to MTG screening on Sat, Oct 4)
- MTG Day Pass (\$90 member / \$95 non-member) includes: Summit + Lunch. 1 screening of MTG film (voucher for ticket to MTG screening on Sat, Oct 4)
- Happy Hour
- All ticket levels include access to Happy Hour.

MTG SUMMIT

Saturday, October 4, 9:00am–12:30pm

Outdoor Art Club | Ticketed: Free

The Mind the Gap Summit is a half-day intensive session featuring panel discussions, talks, and presentations by an extraordinary lineup of creatives and thought leaders. Following the summit, attendees are invited to a networking luncheon on site providing an opportunity to connect with each other, share insights, and celebrate the power of community. The Summit & Networking Lunch are a highlight of Mind the Gap Day.

FILMMAKING AND THE CREATIVE LIFE IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

10th Anniversary introductory remarks
by Zoë Elton

Join us for a conversation between **Ellie Foubi**, director of *Our Father, the Devil* (MVFF46 and 2022 Mind the Gap Creation Prize winner), and **Osinachi Ibe**, writer, director, and Mind the Gap Programmer. They will discuss their new film projects, making art and building community in times of uncertainty, and navigating a transforming industry.

PERSISTENCE AND VISION

This year's festival showcases a powerful lineup of documentaries about radical trailblazers—individuals whose bold actions and unwavering commitment have left lasting marks on the world. Yet, telling their stories on screen also requires great persistence and vision by the filmmakers behind these films. In this panel, we'll explore the creative, ethical, and political challenges of documenting lives defined by resistance and transformation. What does it take to capture these stories with depth, nuance, and integrity? How can the documentary function both as an archive of radical histories and a catalyst for future change?

Invited Guests:

Elaine Epstein, *Arrest the Midwife*

Tia Lessin & Carl Deal, *Steal this Story, Please!*

Christine Turner, *Sun Ra: Do the Impossible*
Moderator: Topiary Landberg, Mind the Gap Manager

ADAPTING A BELOVED STORY AND SHIFTING THE FOCUS WITH WICKED FOR GOOD

Few stories have endured for as many generations as *The Wizard of Oz*, and its most recent iteration onscreen as *Wicked* continues to charm and inspire audiences. This insider's look at the process behind bringing the film to life will be in conversation with cinematographer **Alice Brooks**, exploring how, in re-centering the story from Dorothy to the characters of Elphaba and Glinda, the notions of inclusion, female empowerment—and what is good or bad—is explored in their work on *Wicked* and the upcoming *Wicked—For Good*.

Invited Guests:

Alice Brooks, cinematographer

Moderator: **Bri'anna Moore**, MVFF US Indies
Programmer

DIRECTORS FORUM: FRAMING A VISION

The choices a filmmaker makes in the way that they frame their images provide the conduit to revelations and realizations about their stories. Seen through their eyes and sensibilities, the choices they make can open our eyes and minds to new ways of seeing the world, of experiencing characters. This international group of directors will unpack some of their choices in creating and framing their films.

Invited Guests:

Tsou Shih-Ching, *Left-Handed Girl*

Or Sinai, *Mama*

Çağla Zencirci & Guillaume Giovanetti, *Confidante*

Moderator: **Zoë Elton**, MVFF + Mind the Gap Director
of Programming

KEYNOTE TALK WITH AMY GOODMAN, HOST OF DEMOCRACY NOW!

Trailblazing journalist and subject of the documentary *Steal This Story, Please!* (MVFF48) will close this year's Summit in a special keynote address.

NETWORKING LUNCH

Outdoor Art Club, 12:30pm

\$30 or free w/ MTG Day Pass

Following the summit, attendees are invited to a networking luncheon providing an opportunity to connect with each other, share insights, and celebrate the power of community.

MIND THE GAP DAY HAPPY HOUR

Outdoor Art Club, Redwood Grove, 4:00–6:00pm

Ticketed: Free with cash bar for Summit attendees
w/o badge; Free w/ badge or MTG Day Pass

Mind the Gap Day participants will settle in for drinks, appetizers, and good conversation with fellow participants, filmmakers, and other guests attending the festival.

MIND THE GAP DAY SCREENINGS

THE ALABAMA SOLUTION

(dirs. Charlotte Kaufman, Andrew Jarecki)

11:45am | Smith Rafael Film Center

PROMISED SKY

(dir. Erige Sehiri)

12:00pm | Sequoia Cinema

LEFT-HANDED GIRL

(dir. Tsou Shih-Ching)

1:30pm | Sequoia Cinema

ARREST THE MIDWIFE

(dir. Elaine Epstein)

3:45pm | Sequoia Cinema

CHARLIEBIRD

(dir. Libby Ewing)

4:00pm | Smith Rafael Film Center

SUN RA: DO THE IMPOSSIBLE

(dir. Christine Turner)

4:00pm | BAMPFA, Berkeley

MAMA

(dir. Or Sinai)

5:00pm | Sequoia Cinema

**EVERYWHERE MAN: THE LIVES AND TIMES
OF PETER ASHER**

(dir. Dayna Goldfine)

7:00pm | Smith Rafael Film Center

A PRIVATE LIFE / VIE PRIVÉE

(dir. Rebecca Zlotowski)

8:00pm | Smith Rafael Film Center

CONFIDANTE

(dir. Çağla Zencirci & Guillaume Giovanetti)

8:30pm | Smith Rafael Film Center

MTG THROUGH THE REST OF THE FEST...**SPOTLIGHT & MIND THE GAP AWARD: EVA VICTOR**

Sunday, October 5, 2:30–4:00pm | Rafael

\$16 mem/\$20 non-mem

Eva Victor's directorial debut. Join writer/director and star of *Sorry, Baby* (2025), Eva Victor, Adele Romanski, producer (*Sorry, Baby; Never Rarely Sometimes Always; If Beale Street Could Talk* (MVFF41), and moderator | Zoë Elton

MIND THE GAP CREATION PRIZE HAPPY HOUR

Monday October 6, 4:30 -5:30 | OAC | Ticketed: free

Immigration and the United States go hand and hand but the former is currently under attack. At its heart, this year's Creation Prize winner *Valentina* is an immigrant story.

Join director Tatti Riberio for an in- depth conversation on crafting her dazzling hybrid film and the state of immigration in today's America.

Panelists: Tatti Riberio, other guest TBD

SPOTTING OPPORTUNITIES:**CO-PRESENTED WITH LITQUAKE**

Sunday, 12 October, 1:15

Outdoor Art Club | Ticketed: Free

Where does inspiration come from and how can it be turned into a compelling, fundable film? Author Kevin Smokler (*Break the Frame: Conversations with Women Filmmakers*, Oxford University Press, 2025) will moderate this discussion with women filmmakers about how they recognize opportunities and transform them into worthwhile endeavors. Panelists will delve into how they nurture creative collaborations, identify partnerships and funding sources, and stay alert to future possibilities.

Invited Guests:

Alice Wu

Tiffany Schlain

Lilian T. Mehrel, *Honeyjoon* (MVFF48)

Dayna Goldfine, *Everywhere Man: The Lives and Times of Peter Asher* (MVFF48)

MIND THE GAP AWARDS

The Mind the Gap Award honors those whose work has helped close the gender gap in the film industry and in our lives through their art and advocacy. With it, we celebrate groundbreaking achievements and the recipients' importance as role models.

This year, filmmakers **Eva Victor**, *Sorry, Baby*; and actor **Rose Byrne** will receive the Mind the Gap Award.

MIND THE GAP CREATION PRIZE

The Mind the Gap Creation Prize is given to a feature-length narrative or documentary film directed by a first-

or second-time female or nonbinary filmmaker. The award recognizes exciting new voices in cinema that demonstrate creativity of vision and exceptional use of the film medium. The Creation Prize recipient is selected by a jury made up of key Mind the Gap supporters and film industry members. The director of the winning film receives a \$10,000 grant that can be used at their discretion.

2025 Winner:

Tatti Ribeiro, *Valentina*

2025 Honorable Mentions:

Elaine Epstein, *Arrest the Midwife*

Lilian T. Mehrel, *Honeyjoon*

Mind the Gap sponsored by

CHRISTINE A. SCHANTZ

BLAIRE and BENNO DORER FOUNDATION

NETFLIX

EXPERIECE THE MAGIC

CAFILM MEMBERSHIP

CAFILM Members are champions of independent film. historic nonprofit art house theaters, world-class festivals, arts education and community storytelling.

Become a member and celebrate the best of cinema while enjoying exclusive events and early access to tickets.

JOIN TODAY: cafilm.org/membership

CAFILM

CALIFORNIA FILM INSTITUTE
A 501(c)(3) Nonprofit Arts Organization

The following donors supported the capital campaign to renovate the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center to become a state-of-the-art, three-screen theater that showcases diverse and thought-provoking, independent US and world cinema, foreign-language films, documentaries, youth education programs, and special community events with filmmaker guests. Thank you to our Smith Rafael Film Center Capital Campaign supporters!

DIRECTORS CHAIR

CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH
JENNIFER COSLETT MACCREADY
HENRY TIMNICK

DISTINGUISHED BENEFACTOR

MARIN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
SAN RAFAEL REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BENEFACTOR

MARCIA LUCAS
LUCASFILM LTD
PACIFIC THEATRES CORPORATION

PATRON

MARGARET E. HAAS
HENSEL PHELPS CONSTRUCTION CO
KATZ FAMILY FOUNDATION

CONTRIBUTOR

BELLEBYRON FOUNDATION
ED and SUSAN LOWE
THE BERNARD OSHER FOUNDATION
MEL and LOIS TUKMAN
DOLBY LABORATORIES

SUPPORTER

BANK of MARIN

THE FRED GELLERT
FAMILY FOUNDATION

GRUBER FAMILY FOUNDATION

DON and DONNA KELLEHER

MARIN COUNTY BOARD
of SUPERVISORS

MICHAEL and
SUSAN SCHWARTZ

KEN and JACKIE BROAD
FAMILY FUND

FRIEND

AUTODESK, INC

BANK of AMERICA
FOUNDATION

BLOCKBUSTER, INC

DOUG CARLSTON and
TOMI PIERCE

MARK CAZENAVE II

TOM and DIANE DURST

SUNITA DUTT
CHINOOK RESTAURANT

LEONARD and ROBIN EBER

DOUG and JANE FERGUSON

HAMBRECHT and QUIST

THE HAYDON FAMILY
IL DAVIDE RESTAURANT

DAN HELLER

GERALD G. HOYTT

NANCY K. HUDSON

J. PATRICK and IRENE M. HUNT

MICHAEL and ROXANNE KLEIN

ELLEN JANE KUTTEN

KATHRYN E. JOHNSON
and PETER CULVER

K.C. and STEVE LAUCK

BARBARA BROWN LEIBERT

LUTHER BURBANK SAVINGS

MARIN AIRPORTER

NORTHERN TRUST

PACIFIC TELESIS

JOSEPH and EDA PELL

PINEWOOD FOUNDATION

THE EGAN FAMILY RAFAEL
CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL

PHILIP A. SCHAEFER

JIN and LINDA ZIDELL

SUSAN and RICHARD IDELL

JOHN and BETH ALLEN

ANDREW and
KATHLEEN VARLOW

NANCY and RICH ROBBINS

MACQUARIE GROUP
FOUNDATION

CARLA EMIL and
RICH SILVERSTEIN

PETER and
CATHERINE FLAXMAN

ERIC A. SCHWARTZ

BILL and MARY POLAND

FRIENDS

JACLYN J. and KENNETH F. BROAD
JOSH and STEPHANIE FELSER
JANE and DOUGLAS FERGUSON
RICHARD and SUSAN IDELL
KATZ FAMILY FOUNDATION
JENNIFER COSLETT MacCREADY
NANCY and RICH ROBBINS
DANIEL L. SCHER
SCOTT/FERGUSON TRUST
CHRISTOPHER B. and JEANNIE MEG SMITH

DONORS

KEN BROAD
LYNN HALE
RICHARD and SUSAN IDELL
DANIEL and MICHELLE KENYON
AMY KEROES and JEFF FISHER
MAIDA LYNN
JENNIFER COSLETT MacCREADY
KURT and TAMRA MOBLEY
JANN MOORHEAD
CATHY and ROB NOURAFSHAN
MAGGIE O'DONNELL and JOSH FLOUM
JONATHAN and DEBORAH PARKER
RICH ROBBINS
SUSAN and MICHAEL SCHWARTZ
DR. JOEL SKLAR and SUSAN SKLAR
STEVE and SUE WEINSWIG

DOC LANDS

documentary film festival

30 APRIL • 3 MAY, 2026

EVENT PARTNERS





A FORK FULL OF EARTH
BARTENDERS UNLIMITED

BELLY DELI

NIKKI BLAKK

BORDENAVE'S BAKERY

CASABLANCA MOROCCAN and
MEDITERRANEAN FOOD TRUCK

CASA MANANA

COPPERFIELD'S BOOKS

EL HUARACHE LOCO

FAIRYTALE BROWNIES

GARAGE GAL

GOOD EARTH
NATURAL FOODS

ILLUMINATE EVENTS

HOUSE OF BAGELS

JAM BARS

LAOS KITCHEN

LITTLE LOUIE'S
CAFE & CATERING

LOS MOLES

MAGICAL LIGHTING

MAKE IT HOME

MARIN EVENT LIGHTING

MARIN KOMBUCHA
MILL VALLEY REFUSE SERVICE

MOLLIE STONE'S

OLLIE'S PIZZA TRUCK

THE POET & THE BENCH

ROYAL GROUND COFFEE

ST HILDIE'S SPIKED SELTZER

SOUVLA

TRADER JOE'S

WEST END NURSERY

WHOLE FOODS

EXECUTIVE

MARK FISHKIN
MVFF Founder + Director
CAFILM Executive Director + Founder

DANE CALLIHAN
Deputy Executive Director

JULIE RAMOS
Executive Assistant

DEVELOPMENT

LIANA BENDER
Chief Development Officer

BEAU BLANCHARD
Associate Director of Institutional Giving

MAUREEN GALLIANI
Major Donor Stewardship Manager

CHRISTINE FUJIKI
Development Operations
and Communications Manager

DERRICK DOVER
Development Relationship Manager

CHRISTINE HARVEY
Development Database Manager

ALIX ASKER
Patron Support Associate

JAMES FAHEY
Development and Sponsorship Associate

LIZ SCHOENFELD
Sponsorship Coordinator

FINANCE

CARMEN CROCKETT
Finance Manager

**SMITH RAFAEL FILM CENTER
+ SEQUOIA CINEMA**

DAN ZASTROW
General Manager

NORMAN MELLO
IT Manager

GRIFFIN COUILLARD
Assistant Manager

ADELIZA BACKUS-PACE
Projectionist

STEVE YAMANE
Projectionist

FRANCISCO RAWLINSON
ASCHWANDEN
Projectionist

PETER METHENY-SCHUSTER
Projectionist

SEAN BREVIK
Projectionist

PROGRAMMING

ZOË ELTON
Director of Programming

STERLING HEDGPETH
Programming Manager + Shorts Programmer

JOÃO FEDERICI
Senior Programmer: World Cinema
+ iViva el cine! Manager

BRI'ANNA MOORE
Programmer + Programming Associate

KELLY CLEMENT
Senior Programmer, Documentaries

KAREN DAVIS
Emeritus Senior Programmer, Family Films

MARIBEL GUEVARA
Active Cinema Manager

OSINACHI IBE
Programmer, Mind the Gap

TOPIARY LANDBERG
Mind The Gap Manager

ZAHA CHEEMA
Programming and Panels Coordinator

SASCHA NIKOLAI
Programming intern

MARCUS PUN
Clips Editor

CAFILM EDUCATION

ANGELA COLABELLA
Director of Education

DIANA SÁNCHEZ MACIEL
Education Program Manager

JEANNE MAGGI
Curriculum Developer

DIEGO BORBA
Curriculum Writer

ANN LEDO-LANE
Education Coordinator

MARIA JANELLI
Ed Tech Consultant

OPERATIONS

JULIET POKORNY
General Manager, MVFF Operations

RINA Z. NEIMAN
Guest Services Manager

CLAUDIA FINKLE
Guest Services Coordinator

MACKENZIE WARDLOW
Guest Services Coordinator

KARYN BARNETT
Theater Operations Manager

JACQUELINE CARLSON
Theater Operations Assistant Manager

JILLIAN HOLSTAD
Volunteer & Badge Coordinator

JOHANNA WONG
Assistant Box Office Manager

NORMAN MELLO
IT Manager

MITCH VAUGHN
Box Office

GEOFF ALLEN
Badge Coordinator

JACQUELINE CARLSON
Theater Operations Coordinator

CURTIS DUNN
Box Office Manager

AMELIE BLUESTONE
Box Office Rep

KELLAND LI
Box Office Rep

SAMANTHA WHITTY
Box Office Rep

SONIA TORRES
Box Office Rep

TATIANA BOOKBINDER
Box Office Rep

TIFFANY COLLINS
Box Office Rep

KIM MORAN
Box Office Rep

ANIE DEE
Box Office Rep

HAYLEY DIEMAR
Box Office Rep

DAVID DUNHAM
Box Office Rep

BRITT COUNDIFF
Box Office Rep
JASON STRYKOWSKI
Box Office Rep
BRITTNY ECKERT
Box Office Rep
CASSIE CONKLIN
Box Office Rep/Donors
CHRISTINA FAHEY
Box Office Rep (BAMPFA)
JACOB J. RODRIGUEZ
Volunteer Manager
DAN ZASTROW
Technical Director
KARYN BARNETT
Theater Operations Manager
JESSE DUBUS
Exhibition Media Manager
PAUL HEGARTY
Production Manager
RAINIER DELA CRUZ
Production Assistant
ALYSSA TINOCO
House Manager
ANTONIA (TONI) EDELMAN
Production Assistant
CASEY HERMANN
Line Manager
CATY ZICK
House Manager
COLA ENGEL
House Manager
COREY SEAVER
Line Manager
DARWIN SAQUILAYAN
Line Manager
JON OLSEN
House Manager
KARL HERRERA
House Manager
KRISTIN BAKER
Line Manager
LENA SCHORKOPF
Line Manager
MAIA PEAY
Line Manager

MICHAEL KIRBY
House Manager
NATALIA BENESZ
House Manager
NATALIA MARIA GUECHEVA
House Manager
OWEN PETERSON
Line Manager
RYAN COLEGROVE
Line Manager

EVENTS

YVONNE FOX
Senior Event Producer
MIMI CUNNINGHAM
Opening + Closing Night Manager
DAMIAN BURFORD
Festival Hub Manager
DANTE HAY
Mill Valley Lounge Coordinator
ROMY DALMACIO
Mill Valley Festival Hub/Lounge Associate
SARA HECKADON
San Rafael Lounge Manager
JENNIFER CERIO
San Rafael Lounge Coordinator
BLAKE TUCKER
Event Associate
RACHEL GOLD
Event Associate
MARIELL RAHMANI
Event Manager
CHRISTA GATEWOOD
Event Manager
ELISE DUFOUR
Events Manager

MARKETING + PUBLICITY

SHELLEY SPICER
Director, Marketing + Publicity
+ Studio Relations
SHAYNA YASUHARA
Marketing + Audience Engagement Manager
BETTY B.
Design + Brand Manager
GÖZDA EFE
Creative Production Assistant

BRIAN LEHMAN
Publications
KATIE WOODRUFF
Community Outreach + Promotions Manager
PAM GRADY
Publications Managing Editor

WRITERS

ROD ARMSTRONG
KATE BOVE
ZAHA CHEEMA
KELLY CLEMENT
K.D. DAVIS
ZOE ELTON
DAVID FEAR
JOÃO FEDERICI
ISABEL FONDEVILA
MICHAEL FOX
PAM GRADY
TIM GRIERSON
OSINACHI IBE
DENNIS HARVEY
ZAKI HASAN
STERLING HEDGPETH
BRIAN KARL
SHARI KIZIRIAN
JORDAN KLEIN
TOPIARY LANDBERG
BRI'ANNA MOORE
RANDY MYERS
WILFRED OKICHE
BRENDAN PETERSON
DEANNA QUINONES
DIANA SÁNCHEZ MACIEL

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MARK FISHKIN

2023 BOARD

WELLINGTON BOWLER

CHRISTINA COOK – Treasurer

BLAIRE DORER

RICHARD J. IDELL – Secretary

DANIEL KENYON

AMY KEROES

JACQUI LOPEZ

JENNIFER COSLETT MacCREADY – Board Chair

KURT MOBLEY

CATHY NOURAFSHAN

MAGGIE O’DONNELL – President

JONATHAN PARKER – Co-Vice President

CHRISTINE A. SCHANTZ

SUSAN SCHWARTZ

DR. JOEL SKLAR– Co-Vice President

EMERITUS BOARD

ANN BREBNER (1923-2017)

RITA CAHILL

SID GANIS

BRUCE KATZ (1947-2022)

GARY MEYER

GORDON RADLEY

CHRISTOPHER B. SMITH

HENRY TIMNICK

FOUNDING BOARD

RITA CAHILL

MARK FISHKIN

LOIS KOHL SHORE

HONORARY ADVISORY BOARD

HONORABLE BARBARA BOXER

STEWART BOXER

DRUSIE DAVIS

JEFF FISHER

PETER FLAXMAN

ROBERT GREBER

LINDA GRUBER

PEGGY HAAS

MICHAEL KLEIN

ROXANNE KLEIN

KC LAUCK

ANDREW McGUIRE

MARY POLAND

ERIC SCHWARTZ

MICHAEL SCHWARTZ

SKIP WHITNEY

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a flight suit, is shown from the chest up, looking out of a cockpit window. The background is a blurred view of a city at night with warm lights. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

THANKS TO THE
MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL

FOR INSPIRING
A NEW GENERATION
OF FILMMAKING HEROES

FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT

LUCASFILM
Ltd