



GOING
VIRTUAL

AV FILM FESTIVAL

THE 6TH ANNUAL

ALEXANDER VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 23-27, 2020

#AVFF2020: JUSTICE

Welcome to the 2020 Alexander Valley Film Festival!



Well, gosh. Here we are. No one would have believed a year ago that we would be separated from one another due to a global pandemic. Or that we would deal with fire disaster this early in the season... or that we would need to sequester inside from 119-degree heat and hellscape-like smoke environs.

There is a lot to process. Our world has changed. Social, economic, environmental, and mental and spiritual unrest are at crisis levels. Mind you, thoughtful processing is near impossible whilst in the middle of ongoing trauma. But that is exactly where art - namely movies - come into play.

When we focus on a visual story, our brains get a break from grief, worry, and anxiety.

Even a documentary about an issue we are passionate about - or a subject we are learning for the first time - has the power to lift us out of our current state and transport us to a more relaxed or proactive one. Film has the power and might to simply and profoundly shift our state of mind.

So with that, we invite you to come... shift. Retreat with us into a five day weekend of films, food & wine, and thrilling conversations. This year's lineup features epic tales of heroism, fraught family dynamics, bravery, humility, and determination. Our eclectic panelists and assembled filmmakers have risked so much to be able to share their experiences and stories with us. The gift of film is one that gives over and over again, like a ripple unseen and unending.

If there is one thing I've learned in the last six months (actually, make that four years), it is that we - as a people and a community - are R-E-S-I-L-I-E-N-T. That does not mean we are made of stone, either. It means that we are built to withstand tragedy. And for Sonoma County, it means we continue lifting one another up while doing so.

This is our gift to you. We believe in the transformative power of film more than ever. So much so that the Alexander Valley Film Society Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers refused to accept that we might skip a year.

Here we are. With love, admiration, and a promise to keep you company in good times and in bad.

Please enjoy #AVFF2020: JUSTICE!

Kathryn Hecht
Executive Director



We're tempted to say that everything has changed. Nothing about this feels familiar or comfortable. It just may be because so much has changed that it's especially rewarding to have the constant of the annual Alexander Valley Film Festival back on our calendars. For the sixth year in a row, our community is celebrating films, filmmakers, and their stories at our annual festival - in a new way.

In the past months, we've learned new ways to work, travel, party, teach, and learn. Now we can add a new way to take part in a film festival. I think you're going to like it. You won't get to cram your schedules with hectic dashes between Raven and Clover screenings, or have to choose which route will get you there in time. But you'll always be in the right line at the right time and have plenty of breaks as needed. You'll be at home! You'll have front-row access to the films and discussions and your favorite

snacks will be a few steps away. Whether you watch solo or in your social bubble, you'll be with us for the marvelous experience of film. I personally recommend dimming the lights and donning cozy socks as much as feasibly possible. You get to fest your way!

Thank you for your support, for standing with us, and for sharing your screens with meaningful and memorable stories at the 6th annual Alexander Valley Film Festival.

Claire O'Neill
AVFS Board of Directors, Chair



#AVFF2020 FILMS - FEATURES



Includes a panel or Q&A



Access with Student Pass



A PLACE TO BREATHE (USA, 2020, 87 minutes)



Directed by Michelle Grace Steinberg

The film explores the universality of trauma and resilience through the eyes of immigrant and refugee healthcare practitioners and patients. Combining cinema vérité and animation, the film highlights the creative strategies by which immigrant communities in the U.S. survive and thrive. **ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



AGGIE (USA, 2020, 92 min) Directed by Catherine Gund



An exploration of the nexus of art, race and justice through the story of art collector Agnes Gund who sold Roy Lichtenstein's painting "Masterpiece" in 2017 for \$165 million to start the Art for Justice Fund to end mass incarceration.



CRITICAL THINKING (USA, 2020, 117 min)



Directed by John Leguizamo

The true story of the Miami Jackson High School chess team which was the first inner city team to win the U.S. National Chess Championship.



EPICENTRO (Austria, France, 2020, 108 min) Directed by Hubert Sauper

A film about the butterfly effect on geopolitics, the paradox of time, the (almost) end of the world, the cinematograph, sex, and sugar. **ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



FRUIT FLY (USA, 2010, 96 min) Directed by H.P. Mendoza



A musical comedy about Bethesda, a Filipina performance artist finding home in the unlikeliest places. She moves into an artist commune in an attempt to workshop her latest piece which deals with finding her biological mother. In the process, she finds an artistic family, clues of her mother's whereabouts, and the startling possibility that she just might be a fag-hag.



IDENTIFYING FEATURES (Mexico, Spain, 2019, 95 min)

Directed by Fernanda Valadez

A mother travels across Mexico in search for her son who authorities say died while trying to cross the boarder into the United States. - **ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



#AVFF2020 FILMS - FEATURES



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Access with Student Pass



JAZZ ON A SUMMER'S DAY (USA, 1959, 85 min) Directed by Bert Stern



The highlights of the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival.



MADE IN BANGLADESH (France, Bangladesh, Denmark, Portugal, 2020, 95 min)

Directed by Rubaiyat Hossain



Shimu fled her village as a child when her stepmother threatened to marry her off to a middle-aged man. Now 23 and living in the capital, she works grueling hours for paltry sums at a textile factory while her husband searches for work. **ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



REPRESENT (USA, 2020, 93 min) Directed by Hillary Bachelder



In the heart of the American Midwest, three women take on entrenched political systems in their fight to reshape local politics on their own terms.



RIFIFI (France, 1955, 118 min) Directed by Jules Dassin



Four men plan a technically perfect crime, but the human element intervenes... **ENGLISH SUBTITLES**



THE ARTIST'S WIFE (USA, 2020, 94 min) Directed by Tom Dolby

Claire Smythson, wife of the renowned abstract artist Richard Smythson, is plunged into a late-life crisis when her husband is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease and is in danger of not completing the paintings for his final show.



TOTALLY F*ED UP (USA, 1993, 78 min) Directed by Gregg Araki**



Six queer teenagers struggle to get along with each other and with life in the face of varying obstacles.



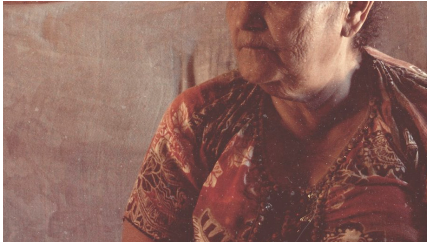
#AVFF2020 FILMS - SHORTS



Includes a panel or Q&A



Access with Student Pass

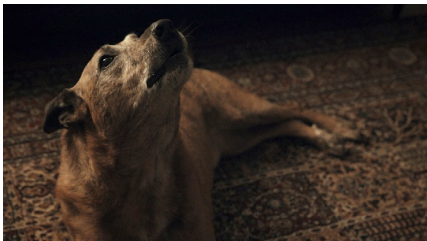


ABUELOS (USA/Mexico, 2020, 9 minutes)



Directed by Rodrigo Reyes

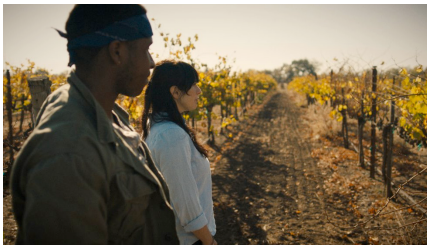
Directed by Rodrigo Reyes and lensed by award-winning Cinematographer Alejandro Mejía, AMC, "Abuelos" is a moving portrait of the pain of migration and the immense efforts of families to stay connected across time and space. ENGLISH SUBTITLES



BITTEN (USA, 2018, 11 minutes) Directed by Sarah K. Reimers



Under a full-moon, lives are forever altered when a mysterious and violent encounter sends a dog on a night of adventure and possibility. Meanwhile, his lonesome owner goes out on the hunt, only to find her prey unexpectedly closer to home. A supernatural, genre-defying tale.



CORKED (USA, 2020, 12 minutes) Directed by Lori Shockley



Set in 1971 Sonoma Valley wine country Corked is inspired by the true story of one woman's struggle in the male dominated wine industry.



DIEORAMA (USA, 2020, 10 minutes) Directed by Kevin Staake



By day, she visits morgues, observes autopsies, and studies picture of crime scenes. By night, she turns nightmarish imaginings into precise, red-splattered miniatures.



FIVE FOOT 280 (USA, 2019, 5 minutes)



Directed by Joshua Harding & Matt Klug

This documentary short that puts you in the head of professional drag racer Jasmine Salinas—a quiet, introvert who comes from a family of badass racers. She takes us through her adrenaline-filled world of driving a 3,500 horsepower car while describing the challenges of being a female in a male-dominated sport.



I'M HAPPY, I PROMISE (USA, 2019, 6 minutes) Directed by Mimi Cave



Through a series of phone calls, we learn about Parker's depression.



#AVFF2020 FILMS - SHORTS



Includes a panel or Q&A



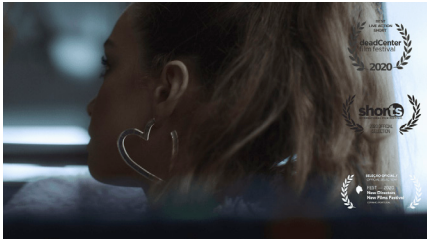
Access with Student Pass



STICKER (Macedonia, 2020, 19 minutes) Directed by Georgi M. Unkovski



After an unsuccessful attempt to renew his car registration, Dejan falls in a bureaucratic trap that tests his determination to be a responsible father.
ENGLISH SUBTITLES



THE MUSIC VIDEO (Canada, 2020, 14 minutes)



Directed by Camille Poirier

In order to be in her older brother's music video, Clara, a 13-year-old tomboy, agrees to undergo a radical change of style. She soon notices that this transformation changes her brother's friend's behaviour towards her.
ENGLISH SUBTITLES



THE WEB OPERA, Episode 3 (USA, 2019, 14 minutes)



Directed by Kate Jopson

THE WEB OPERA invites the viewer to violate the privacy of the characters themselves as they are violating the privacy of their friends and classmates - a double edged sword as the viewer seems to become more and more complicit.



26.2 TO LIFE: THE SAN QUENTIN PRISON MARATHON (USA, In Progress)

Directed by Christine Yoo



Set both within and outside California's oldest prison, 26.2 TO LIFE chronicles a year in the life of San Quentin's 1000 Mile Club, a prison running group whose incarcerated members train with volunteer coaches as they serve time for violent crimes.

PLUS 18 STUDENT WORKS FROM SPRING & SUMMER 2020!





#AVFF2020 FILMS - PANELS



Includes a panel or Q&A

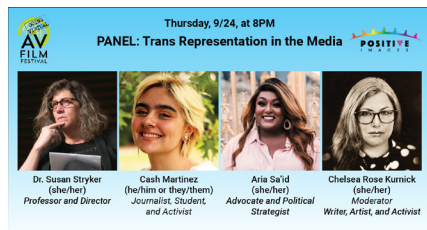


Access with Student Pass



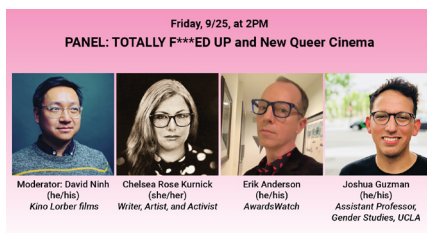
Opening Night! RIFIFI with Jil Hales & Kathryn Hecht Wednesday, 9/23 @ 8PM

We open the Festival with remarks from our Board Chair, Claire O'Neill. Then we join Executive Director Kathryn Hecht and Barndiva co-owner and film critic Jil Hales for a deep discussion of RIFIFI, Jules Dassin's quintessential caper.



Trans Representation in the Media Thursday, 9/24 @ 8PM

Join writer/activist Chelsea Rose, Dr. Susan Stryker, Sonoma County activist Cash Martinez, and political strategist Aria Sa'id to discuss media representation of the transgender community. Panelists will reference films DEATH AND LIFE OF MARSHA P. JOHNSON (Netflix) + DISCLOSURE (Netflix) + HAPPY BIRTHDAY MARSHA (Amazon).



TOTALLY F***ED UP and New Queer Cinema Friday, 9/25 @ 2PM

Moderator David Ninh and panelists Chelsea Rose Kurnick, Erik Anderson, and Joshua Guzman discuss Greg Araki's TOTALLY F***ED UP (1993) and explore new queer cinema, how it intersects with social justice, and the effects on contemporary filmmaking.



A PLACE TO BREATHE and Equity in Healthcare Friday, 9/25 @ 8PM



Director Michelle Grace Steinberg, Healthcare Foundation's Kim Bender and other panelists (TBA), dive into a conversation on healthcare challenges for the most vulnerable members of our community.



26.2 TO LIFE: THE SAN QUENTIN PRISON MARATHON - A Film in Progress Saturday, 9/26 @ 2PM



Join Director Christine Yoo, Coaches Frank Ruona & Diana Fitzpatrick, and film subject Markelle Taylor as they discuss where they are in the filmmaking journey and what is next in the process.



Saturday Night Love with Short Film Filmmakers! Saturday, 9/26 @ 8PM



Writer/Actor/Director Rick Gomez chats with our short film filmmakers about their work, the world we're living in, and the role of artists in our future.



#AVFF2020 FILMS - PANELS



Meet the Student Filmmakers! Sunday, 9/27 @ 2PM

Come meet the student filmmakers from 2020!



Closing Night! Social Justice Storytelling + Filmmaking Awards ★ Sunday, 9/27 @ 8PM

Executive Director Kathryn Hecht chats with filmmakers Hillary Bachelder (REPRESENT), Jessica Congdon (JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE, and H.P. Mendoza (FRUIT FLY) on making movies in a modern age. Then stick around for awards with Board Chair Claire O'Neill!

HERE'S A CURRENT LIST OF Q&As

Q&A: FRUIT FLY - 10th Anniversary! *Thursday, 9/24 @ 2PM*

Q&A: MADE IN BANGLADESH *Friday, 9/25 @ 4:30PM*

Q&A: REPRESENT - *Sunday, 9/27 @ 4PM*



#AVFF2020 PANELS/EVENTS CALENDAR

** Included with All-Access Pass*

Wednesday
Sep 23

BARNDIVA PICK UP PARTY
6PM/6:30PM

Q&A: Opening Night! RIFIFI*
8:00 PM
45 minutes

Thursday
Sep 24

Q&A FRUIT FLY: 10th Anniversary!*
2:00 PM
45 minutes

LOBBY TALK: Community discussion space to talk all things film fest*
6:00 PM
60 minutes

PANEL: Trans life in the media*
8:00 PM
60 minutes

Friday
Sep 25

PANEL: TOTALLY F**CKED UP and New Queer Cinema*
2:00 PM
60 minutes

Q&A: MADE IN BANGLADESH*
4:30 PM
30 minutes

YOUNG & YONDER PICK UP PARTY
5:30PM/6PM

PANEL: A PLACE TO BREATHE and Equity in Healthcare*
8:00 PM
60 minutes

Saturday
Sep 26

PANEL: 26.2 TO LIFE: THE SAN QUENTIN PRISON MARATHON - A Film in Progress*
2:00 PM
60 minutes

NETWORKING: Professional filmmakers
4:00 PM
60 minutes



#AVFF2020 PANELS/EVENTS CALENDAR (cont'd)

** Included with All-Access Pass*

**Saturday
Sep 26
(cont'd)**

LOBBY TALK: Community discussion space to talk all things film fest*

6:00 PM

60 minutes

PANEL: Saturday Night Love with Short Film Filmmakers!*

8:00 PM

60 minutes

**Sunday
Sep 27**

PANEL: Meet the Student Filmmakers!*

2:00 PM

60 minutes

NETWORKING: Students + Professional filmmakers*

3:00 PM

60 minutes

Q&A: REPRESENT*

4:00 PM

30 minutes

TRADING POST PICK UP PARTY

6PM/6:30PM

PANEL: Closing Night! Social Justice Storytelling + Filmmaking Awards*

8:00 PM

60 minutes