

MEDIA RELEASE

Mill Valley Film Festival
Showcasing the Best in Independent and World Cinema
Thursday, October 5-15, 2023

46TH MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES FULL LINEUP

Highlights include – THE BOY AND THE HERON, THE ZONE OF INTEREST, PRISCILLA, MAY DECEMBER, NYAD, RUSTIN, 9 LIVES OF BARBARA DANE, THE BIKERIDERS, FANCY DANCE, AMERICAN FICTION, ADRIFT, ANATOMY OF A FALL, FALLEN LEAVES, THE HOLDOVERS, PERFECT DAYS, THE PIGEON TUNNEL, THE TASTE OF THINGS

OPENING NIGHT – DAY OF THE FIGHT

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5 – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023



San Rafael, CA (September 7, 2023) – Mark Fishkin, Founder/Director of the Mill Valley Film Festival, and Zoë Elton, MVFF Director of Programming, are thrilled to announce the complete lineup for the 46th edition of the Mill Valley Film Festival (MVFF), presented annually by the California Film Institute (CAFILM). With a diverse lineup of acclaimed films, MVFF will feature screenings and events throughout the Bay Area, including 11 days at the **CinéArts Sequoia** in Mill Valley and **Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center** in San Rafael, October 5 - 15, 2023, with a diverse lineup of potential award-winning films, special guests, tributes and spotlights, and special events. The Festival also returns to the Sweetwater Music Hall in downtown Mill Valley for two special MVFF Music programs, and with a limited number of screenings, to the Lark Theater in Larkspur, the Berkeley Art Museum/Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) in Berkeley, and The Roxie Theater in San Francisco.

The Festival will screen **148** films representing **41** countries, including **56** premieres, **86** features, and **62** shorts; **45%** of all films across the 2023 Festival are directed by women.

"We are thrilled to be back for our 46th year, a testament to the enduring power of cinema and community. We have something for everyone this year, from our incredibly moving opening night film *Day of the Fight*, Jack Huston's directorial debut, and we'll wrap up with a film that's generating major Oscar® buzz. We put together a program that is sure to spark your interest and make you feel as if you've traveled the world. At MVFF, we continue to believe in the magic of the theatrical experience, where empathy flourishes, bridges are built, and voices are amplified," said MVFF Founder/Director Mark Fishkin. "As we begin a new chapter in this increasingly challenging world, I extend my gratitude to our loyal community for your unrivaled support. MVFF46 is our way of saying thank you to our entire community and to celebrate another year of cinematic excellence, connection, and discovery."

“As we launch the 46th Mill Valley Film Festival, what has been really evident this year is the creative spirit that is at the root of why we do this work – its boldness and fearlessness, its commitment to an exploration of why we're all here. It's often elevating, sometimes messy, frequently surprising. As the film industry continues to shift and change and evolve, so do we as a film festival, and we're thrilled to again showcase exceptional films that reflect the resilience of artists and storytelling itself,” said Zoë Elton, MVFF Director of Programming.

Opening Night, Thursday, October 5, MVFF returns to its roots as a heavyweight champion of independent filmmaking with the North American premiere of renowned actor **Jack Huston's** (*Kill Your Darlings*, *American Hustle*) extraordinary writing/directing debut ***Day of the Fight*** featuring an all-star cast including Michael Pitt, Ron Perlman, Joe Pesci, and Nicolette Robinson, with Huston in attendance. Extraordinary in-person conversations will continue throughout the festival, featuring such luminaries as writer/director **Cord Jefferson**, whose smart comedy ***American Fiction*** will shine as an MVFF Centerpiece Spotlight Presentation on Wednesday, October 11. Alongside, Director **Sofia Coppola** brings the highly anticipated ***Priscilla***, based on Priscilla Presley's best-selling memoir. Jefferson will be honored with the MVFF Award for Breakthrough Directing, while Coppola will receive the MVFF Award for filmmaking. The World Premiere screening of Australian director Phillip Noyce's thrilling new film "Fast Charlie," starring Pierce Brosnan and featuring the late James Caan in his final film role. And for a truly special cinematic experience, catch the screening of Jonathan Glazer's 2023 Cannes Grand Prix Winner, "The Zone of Interest," with an electrifying onstage conversation featuring lead actor Christian Friedel. Get ready for an unforgettable celebration of film and talent!

The note-worthy conversations will continue with MVFF Directors Night on Friday, October 13, with writer/director **Erica Tremblay** with her moving narrative debut ***Fancy Dance***, set on the Seneca-Cayuga reservation in Oklahoma and starring Lily Gladstone (*The Unknown Country*, MVFF45); and acclaimed Academy Award-winning documentary filmmaking duo **Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi** and Jimmy Chin (*The Rescue*, MVFF 2021) will be returning to MVFF with their narrative directorial debut, the inspirational ***Nyad*** starring Jodie Foster and Annette Bening.

MVFF46 will present several **Spotlights** and **Tributes** throughout the Festival. This year's Spotlight programs include five-time Tony award-winning director and DGA award recipient **George C. Wolfe**, presenting the powerful *Rustin*; acclaimed writer and director **Jeff Nichols** for *The Bikeriders*; Wolfe and Nichols will be honored with the MVFF Award for Directing; and Academy Award-winning filmmaker **Emerald Fennell** (*Promising Young Woman*, MVFF43) receiving the Mind the Gap Award for Filmmaker of the Year with the beautifully wicked *Saltburn*. This year's Tribute programs include Academy-Award nominated writer-director **Todd Haynes** and powerhouse producer **Christine Vachon** who will receive the MVFF Award: Lifetime Achievements for Collaboration in celebration of their decades-long partnership in conjunction with a screening of their newest work, *May December*; and the Bay Area's own **Lynn Hershman Leeson** who will receive the Mind the Gap Lifetime Achievements -Visionary Artist Award to Bay Area director and artist **Lynn Herman Leeson** prior to a screening of four short films under the collective title *Cyborgian Rhapsody*.

Many local films and filmmakers are being celebrated during MVFF46, including the World Premiere of **Maureen Gosling's** lively portrait of singer **Barbara Dane** in *The 9 Lives of Barbara Dane*; the West Coast premiere of *Avenue of the Giants* by **Finn Taylor**, which dramatizes the true story of Auschwitz survivor **Herbert Heller**; The World Premiere of *Water for Life*, chronicling the efforts of environmental defenders in Latin America fighting for clean water by Bay Area documentarian **Will Parrinello**; the World Premiere of *A Double Life* by **Catherine Masud**, which unravels the life of Civil Rights activist and fugitive **Stephen Bingham** and his alleged involvement with the 1971 San Quentin Prison Riots; the US Premiere of Bay Area Filmmaker **Denise Zmekhol's** personal journey, *Skin of Glass*, which delicately interweaves the personal and political in a poetic and cinematic meditation on displacement, inequality, and loss; and a portrait of local legend **Carol Doda** in *Carol Doda Topless at the Condor*, by **Jonathan Parker** and **Marlo McKenzie**.

MVFF Music

MVFF Music returns with two live music shows at downtown Mill Valley's historic Sweetwater Music Hall. On October 10, **Performances In Honor Of An American Hero**, following the world premiere of Maureen Gosling's documentary, a special one-of-a-kind tribute concert honoring the legendary Barbara Dane including guest artists Holly Near, Willie Chambers (Chambers Brothers) and many more; and following the California premiere of *Feast Your Ears: The Story of WHFS 102.3* on October 13, the party will

continue with **A Celebration Of East And West Coast Renegade Radio**, with performances by Jesse Colin Young, Taj Mahal, members of the Firesign Theater, and a reunion of former DJs from both KSAN and WHFS radio.

Active Cinema

The Festival's **Active Cinema** initiative is a forum for films united in their commitment to explore the world and its issues, engage audiences, and transform ideas into action. Highlights this year include *Adrift*, Rory Kennedy's intervention into the ongoing global refugee crisis; the world premiere of *Farming While Black* by local filmmaker Mark Decena; *Common Ground*, focusing on the power of regenerative agriculture; *Patrol*, following the Rama-Kriol peoples in Nicaragua as they fight to save one of the most biodiverse regions in Central America before it's too late; and *The Right to Read*, an inspiring documentary executive produced by Levar Burton on efforts to reverse the trend of plummeting literacy.

Mind the Gap

Both a celebration and call to action, **Mind the Gap** is MVFF's platform for inclusion and equity, amplifying and championing filmmaking by women, non-binary people, and other marginalized groups through a vibrant collection of films, Q&As, Panels, and Conversations. The 2023 Mind the Gap program will feature the return of the Mind the Gap Summit where members of the public, the local film community, and all festival attendees can gather together to experience a curated day of Mind the Gap-centered programming celebrating the incredible work of female filmmakers from around the world. The Mind the Gap Summit Keynote Speech will be given by Dr. Jimmeka Anderson, founder of Black Girls Film Camp, and the very first recipient of the Mind the Gap Award for Vision in Film Education.

¡Viva el cine!

MVFF's **¡Viva el cine!** Initiative is 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. This year will include films from Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Spain, Uruguay, and the US. Highlights include the World Premiere of Katina Medina Mora's *Heartbeat*; the West Coast Premiere of Felipe Gálvez Haberle's *The Settlers*, Chile's official submission for the Academy Award for Best International Feature Film; the animated documentary *They Shot the Piano Player* (narrated by Jeff Goldblum) by Fernando Treuba and Javier Mariscal; *Musical!*, the latest documentary from popular Bay Area filmmakers Rob Epstein and Jeffrey Friedman; Christopher Zalla's *Radical*, winner of the 2023 Sundance Festival Favorite Award; ¡Vive el cine infantil! a festive collection of kid-centric animated and narrative short films; and the North American Premiere of Sergio Machado's sensual *River of Desire*.

MVFF Education

CAFILM Education has been offering 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 theatre and throughout the Festival online; and **Filmmakers Go to School**, a more interactive festival experience connects Festival filmmakers with students in their classrooms (both in-person and virtually) for live discussions about their films and the art and craft of filmmaking. MVFF Education programs are supplemented by free curriculum resources, including film-analysis toolkits, lesson plans, and discussion guides to help teachers incorporate the films into their class curriculum.

Behind the Screens

MVFF will present another strong slate of Panels, Master Classes, and Workshops to supplement the outstanding film programming and to continue the discussion for Festival attendees, including the annual State of the Industry, where independent filmmakers and producers weigh in on the "Barbenheimer" phenomenon, the historic labor strikes, and the pressing issues currently facing the film industry today; a Masterclass focused on writing and directing animation with legendary animator, screenwriter, director, and producer John Musker (*Aladdin*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Moana*); ; and Artificial Intelligence, "buzzworthy" term of the year, is discussed in **AI: Perils, Possibilities, Promises**, a moderated conversation with members of the film community as they consider the risks and rewards of AI within the context of our industry and our lives.

Complete press materials are available here:

[MVFF46 Press Kit](#)

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For more information: [mvff.com](#)

About the Awards:

The **Mind the Gap Award** honors creatives, leaders, and craftswomen whose work has helped close the gender gap in the film industry and in our lives. Recognizing talents above and below the line, the Award celebrates their groundbreaking achievements and acknowledges their importance as role models. Previous Mind the Gap Award recipients include Chinonye Chukwu, Danielle Deadwyler, Nina Yang Bongiovi, Jane Campion, Viola Davis, Dawn Porter, Céline Sciamma, Maggie Gyllenhaal, and Carrie Mulligan, to name a few.

The **MVFF Tribute** program honors and celebrates lifetime achievements in the career of a significant film artist. Over the years, MVFF has honored such extraordinary talents as Brendan Fraser, Kenneth Branagh, Dame Judi Dench, Sir Anthony Hopkins, Sophia Loren, Kate Winslet, Michael Apte, Alfre Woodard, Pawel Pawliskowski, Glenn Close, Kristin Scott Thomas, Sean Penn, Holly Hunter, Todd Haynes, Julie Dash, Catherine Hardwicke, Sir Ian McKellen, Laura Dern, Ben Stiller, Mira Nair, and Nicole Kidman, to name a few.

The **MVFF Spotlight** program honors and celebrates exceptional work by film artists in their most current work. Honorees may be in early, mid, or late career. Over the years, MVFF has spotlighted such extraordinary talents as Nikyatu Jusu, Paolo Sorrentino, Denis Villeneuve, Regina King, Delroy Lindo, Robert Pattinson, Richard E. Grant, Karyn Kusama, Joel Edgerton, Amandla Stenberg, Dee Rees, Alejandro González Iñárritu, Eddie Redmayne, Ewan McGregor, Brie Larson, Steve McQueen, Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michelle Yeoh, Elle Fanning and Jared Leto, to name a few.

About the MVFF Award

Inaugurated in 2007, the Mill Valley Film Festival Award is a specially designed bronze sculpture created by Mill Valley artist Alice Corning, each one individually cast for the recipient and a numbered, limited edition. The MVFF Award is presented to the recipients of Tributes and Spotlights, MVFF's special programs honoring and celebrating the work of distinguished artists and innovators in the filmmaking community. Corning says of her artwork, "The purpose is to show the power and dignity of a human being...as it is with great work in film."

About Mind the Gap

Films represent one of our greatest opportunities to impact society. Films break through language barriers and highlight common values and shared experiences. Movies change the way we think and operate in society. Which is why it's so important for films to reflect the totality of the world. Every race, every age, every religion, every sexual orientation. And every gender. We have a long way to go on all counts, but the Mill Valley Film Festival (MVFF) is focusing on where we can have the greatest immediate impact: Gender. After decades of supporting the work of women filmmakers, CFI formally launched Mind the Gap in 2015, an initiative dedicated to achieving gender equity in the film industry.

About Mill Valley Film Festival

Presented by the California Film Institute (CAFILM), the 46th Mill Valley Film Festival runs October 5-15, 2023. MVFF is a significant cultural cinema event in the San Francisco Bay Area. It has gained international recognition for its commitment to showcasing exceptional films, supporting emerging talent, and fostering creative dialogue. Over the years, it has hosted renowned filmmakers, actors, and industry professionals, further establishing its reputation as the West Coast launch pad for many Academy Award®-winning films and a hub for cinematic excellence.

About California Film Institute

The California Film Institute (CAFILM) is a non-profit organization that celebrates and promotes film and media arts through its renowned programs, which include the Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival. CAFILM fosters the next generation of filmmakers and film lovers through CAFILM Education, offering a wide range of activities, including screenings, Q&A sessions, seminars, and a rich program of classes and hands-on workshops led by international & local filmmakers and industry professionals. The Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, one of the leading non-profit independent theaters in the country, serves as a year-round hub for cinema-centric programming. CAFILM utilizes the power of storytelling through film to entertain and address social, environmental, and cultural issues, reaching 275,000 guests annually. Additionally, CAFILM is the majority owner of the Sequoia Theater in downtown Mill Valley. The organization relies on the generosity of its community; the invaluable support from our sponsors, foundations, individual donors, and members ensures our ability to sustain these vital programs. For more information, visit [cafilm.org](#).

The California Film Institute and Mill Valley Film Festival are 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.

Supporters

The California Film Institute is once again proud to acknowledge the leadership support of the Christopher B. Smith Family, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, and Vickie Soulier, and the continued major support of Marin Community Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, and The Gruber Family Foundation. We are also fortunate to have the contributions of the following Signature and Major Sponsors of the Mill Valley Film Festival: Jackson Square Partners, Lucasfilm, Ltd., Wareham Development, and Bellam Self Storage and Boxes.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

[46th Mill Valley Film Festival](#)

Celebrating the best of independent and world cinema alongside high-profile and prestigious award contenders.

[Thursday, October 5 to Sunday, October 15, 2023](#)

Ticket On-Sale Dates

Advance Ticket Packages and Passes on sale Monday, August 7, 2023

General Public Single Tickets on sale Tuesday, September 12, 2023

CFI members can purchase single tickets in advance of the public beginning Friday, September 8, 2023

MVFF46 Bay Area Screening Venues:

San Rafael: Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center – October 5 – 15, 2023

Mill Valley: CinéArts Sequoia – October 5 – 15, 2023

Larkspur: Lark Theater – October 13 -15, 2023

Berkeley: Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive – October 6, 7, & 8 and October 13 & 14, 2023

San Francisco: The Roxie Theater – October 9 & 10, 2023