

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL⁴⁸

OCT. 2-12
2025

MEDIA ALERT

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MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL UNVEILS MVFF48 POSTER
“IT ALL STARTS WITH ONE SEAT”: A TRIBUTE TO THE POWER OF IN-PERSON CINEMA
FESTIVAL DATES THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2 – SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2025



July 24, 2025 (San Rafael, CA)— The California Film Institute (CAFILM) is pleased to share the official poster design for the 48th Mill Valley Film Festival (MVFF48), once again created by Marin County–based agency Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners (BSSP). This year’s campaign embraces the idea of *community* through a simple, striking image: a single red movie theater seat set in iconic Bay Area locations – a quiet reminder that every cinema experience starts with one seat—and is best shared together.

Centering on a message that couldn’t be more timely or resonant: There is no better way to experience film than in person at a theater.

At a time when gathering feels more meaningful than ever, the concept celebrates the unique power of seeing films in person. That one seat is more than a place to watch—it’s the starting point of a shared journey. In the theater, surrounded by others, we laugh, respond, and feel in sync. The theater, a room full of strangers, becomes a space where people can connect with one another.

“MVFF has the influence of an urban festival and the atmosphere of a destination film festival—the best of both worlds for any film lover. Each year, our festival design reflects something vital about the current moment, and this year’s poster does just that. It’s a reminder that everything starts with showing up: one seat, one audience, one shared experience. In a time of digital everything, gathering to watch a film remains meaningful, personal, and irreplaceable,” said Mark Fishkin, MVFF Founder/Director.

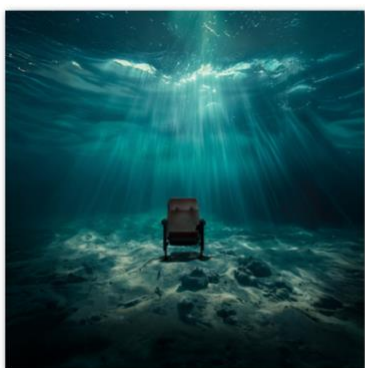
The MVFF48 poster reminds us that cinema doesn’t just take us somewhere else – it brings us closer to one another. Whether nestled at the edge of the Bay or silhouetted against Mount Tam, the seat connects our sense of place to the stories we experience on screen. A few additional visuals extend the concept even further, placing the chair in surprising settings like underwater or the desert, hinting at film’s power to take us anywhere.

“Our long-standing partnership with the Mill Valley Film Festival reflects a shared belief in the power of film to inspire, connect, and strengthen communities. We’re honored once again to help them craft the identity and social amplification for the landmark 48th festival,” said John Butler, Creative Chairman, BSSP

About the Design

The MVFF48 visual campaign was developed by longtime creative partners Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners (BSSP), with design led by Dennis Resming, BSSP Design Director, and photography by Luis Peña. Their striking imagery grounds this year’s look in the natural beauty and spirit of the Bay Area, reinforcing MVFF’s strong connection to both place and the big-screen experience.

MVFF48 takes place from October 2 - 12, 2025, with screenings and events held at venues in Marin County and Berkeley.



Stay connected:

X (formerly Twitter): [@MVFFilmFestival](https://twitter.com/MVFFilmFestival)

Facebook: [@MillValleyFilmFestival](https://facebook.com/MillValleyFilmFestival)

Instagram: [@millvalleyfilmfest](https://instagram.com/millvalleyfilmfest)

YouTube: [@CaliforniaFilmInstitute](https://youtube.com/CaliforniaFilmInstitute)

Letterboxd: [@CAFILM](https://letterboxd.com/CAFILM)

For more information: mvff.com

About Mill Valley Film Festival

Presented by the California Film Institute (CAFILM), the 47th Mill Valley Film Festival runs October 3-13, 2024. 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 Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners

Butler, Shine, Stern & Partners (BSSP) is an independent creative company located in Sausalito, California. Through its distinctive philosophy and approach to brand building, BSSP has achieved remarkable outcomes for clients such as Blue Shield of California, ESPN, Constellation Brands, Rao's Homemade, and Noosa Yoghurt.

About the California Film Institute

The California Film Institute (CAFILM) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing film and media arts through acclaimed programs, including the Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival. CAFILM Education offers students of all ages opportunities to explore the world through the art of film and filmmaking. Our premier independent theater, the Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, engages over 275,000 guests annually with compelling cinema and storytelling on pressing social, environmental, and cultural issues. Additionally, CAFILM now owns and operates the Sequoia Cinema, reinforcing our commitment to preserving cinematic heritage and access to fine films locally. The organization relies on the generosity of its community; the invaluable support from our sponsors, foundations, donors, and members ensures our ability to continue expanding and sustaining our vital programs. Join us in celebrating, exploring, and championing the art of film. For more information, visit cafilm.org.

Supporters | Mill Valley Film Festival

The California Film Institute is once again proud to recognize the leadership support of the Christopher B. and Jeannie Meg Smith, Vickie Soulier, Jennifer Coslett MacCready, Nancy P. and Richard K. Robbins Family Foundation, Daniel Kenyon and Michelle Marchetta Kenyon, along with the continued major support from The Bernard Osher Foundation and The Gruber Family Foundation. We are also grateful for the contributions from the following sponsors of the Mill Valley Film Festival: Raymond James, Delta Air Lines, Jackson Square Partners, Lucasfilm, Ltd., Wareham Development, and Bellam Self Storage and Boxes.