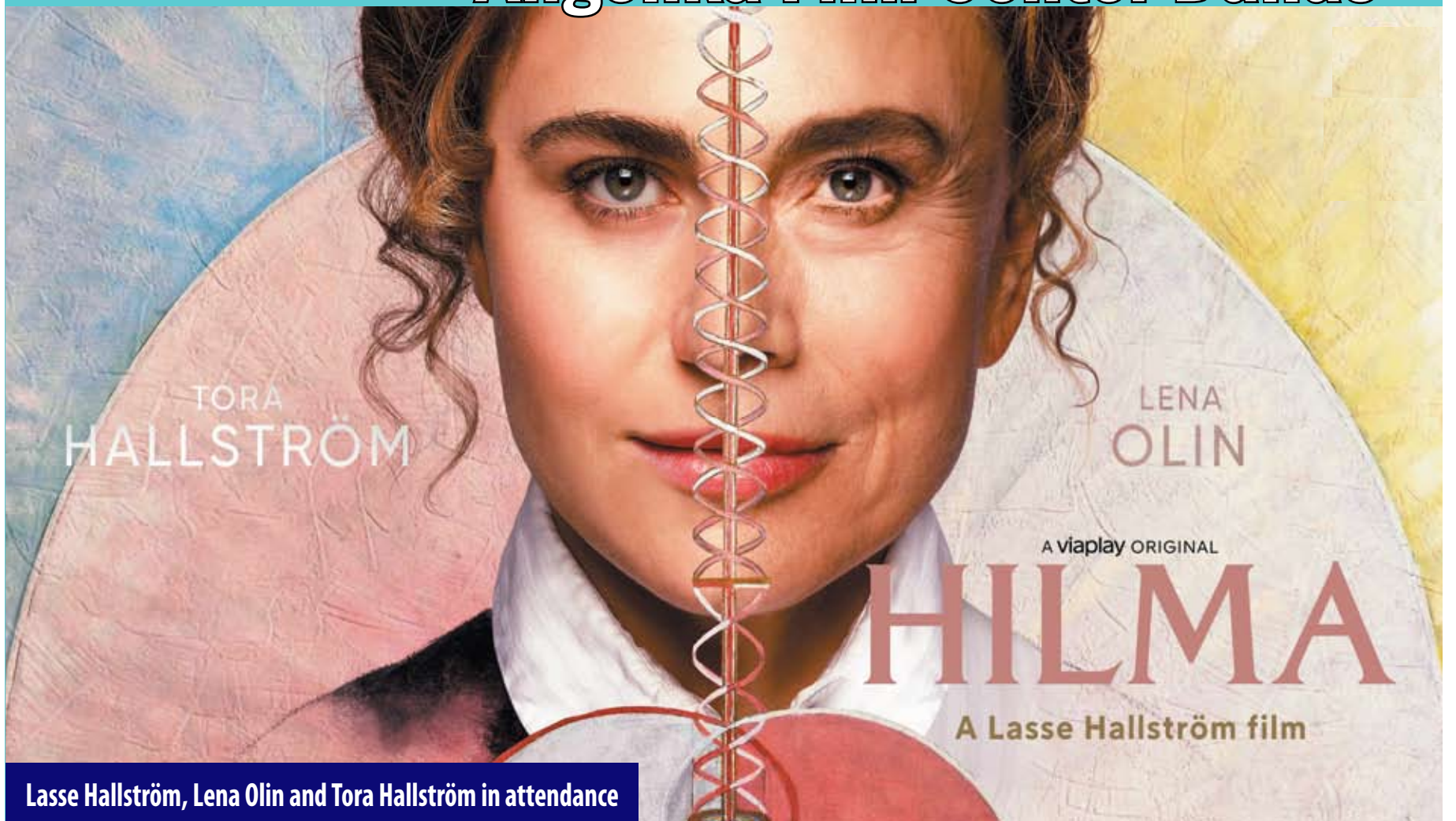


# 53rd Annual USA Film Festival April 19-23, 2023 Angelika Film Center Dallas



**Tickets are FREE - DALLAS ARTS MONTH!**



PHOTO CREDITS: *Hilma* - Courtesy of Juno Films; *Ellis* - Courtesy of Sascha Just; *Chevalier* - Courtesy of Searchlight Pictures; *Judy Blume Forever* - Courtesy of Prime Video; *Little Richard: I Am Everything* - Courtesy of Magnolia Pictures; *Gold Run* - Courtesy of Juno Films; *Carmen* - Courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics; *Reykjavik* - Courtesy of Lizzy Kimball; *The Pod Generation* - Courtesy of Roadside Attractions.

# USAFF53

## WELCOME

### Welcome to USAFF53

We hope that you will enjoy this year's program line-up showcasing films based on true stories, films that make us laugh, films that provoke thought and discussion, and films that celebrate the **power of art** and the human spirit. We believe that a great city should have quality arts programs accessible to the entire community. Once again, thanks to our wonderful Sponsors, all USAFF53 programs are FREE admission.



### Dallas Arts Month - 10th Anniversary!

USAFF53 is pleased to be a part of **Dallas Arts Month**, an annual celebration designed to build awareness and appreciation for the work of Dallas artists and organizations and foster creative learning and activity throughout the city. We encourage you to participate in the many events and programs offered by art and cultural institutions representing all disciplines. For more information, please visit [www.dallasartsmoonth.com](http://www.dallasartsmoonth.com)

### Dallas Jazz Appreciation Month

USAFF53 is proud to once again partner with the **Sammons Center for the Arts** and **Sammons Jazz** to present screenings celebrating the rich history of Jazz. Dallas Jazz Appreciation Month (D'JAM) is a special month-long celebration of all things jazz, including the amazing jazz artists, past and present, legends and rising stars, who call North Texas home. Held each April as part of the national program called Jazz Appreciation Month (JAM), D'JAM presents a variety of events highlighting and showcasing jazz in the greater Dallas area. The local initiative is coordinated by a volunteer collective of jazz presenters, jazz educators, and jazz supporters that includes nonprofit arts groups, universities, festivals, high schools, cultural centers, jazz clubs, and museums.

## SHORT FILM COMPETITION JURORS & GUESTS



Photo credits: Karen Allen - Michele Eve Sandberg; Jim Beaver - Michael Helms; Rosson Crow - Rose Eichenbaum; Chris Roe - Bart Mastronardi.

Huge thanks to our wonderful Hosts and Jurors for the USAFF's long running International Short Film Competition --

**Karen Allen** - actress, director

**Jim Beaver** - actor, writer, producer

**Diane Baker** - actress, director, documentarian, producer, educator

**Rosson Crow** - artist, director, writer

**Bill Haller** - animator, director

**Chris Roe** - manager, writer, director, producer

**Stephen Tobolowsky** - actor, writer, director

**Sophie Barthes** - writer, director

**Foster Hirsch** - author, film historian, Professor at Brooklyn College



*All of our programs are held in fully-accessible facilities.*

# USA FILM FESTIVAL 2023

## OPENING NIGHT - WEDNESDAY, April 19



Courtesy of Sony Pictures Classics

### CARMEN

Wednesday, April 19 7:00pm

Benjamin Millepied's *Carmen* follows a young and fiercely independent woman who is forced to flee her home in the Mexican desert following the brutal murder of her mother, another strong and mysterious woman. Carmen (Melissa Barrera) survives a terrifying and dangerous illegal border crossing into the US, only to be confronted by a lawless volunteer border guard who cold-bloodedly murders two other immigrants in her group. When the border guard and his patrol partner, Aidan (Paul Mescal) -- a Marine with PTSD -- become embroiled in a deadly standoff, Carmen and Aidan are forced to escape together. They make their way north toward Los Angeles in search of Carmen's mother's best friend, the mercurial Masilda (Rosy de Palma), owner of La Sombra nightclub - a sanctuary of music and dance. Carmen and Aidan find both solace and their unwavering love for each other in the safety of Masilda's magical refuge, but time is running out as the police hunt closes in. The film is written by Alexander Dinelaris, Loïc Barrère and Millepied with a majestic, original score by Nicholas Britell. 116 mins. The film will be released by Sony Pictures Classics on May 5th.



### JUDY BLUME FOREVER

Wednesday, April 19 7:00pm

Generations of readers have found themselves in a Judy Blume book. Her name alone launches a flood of memories for anyone who's gripped one of her many paperbacks. For decades, Blume's radical honesty has comforted and captivated readers and landed her at the center of controversy for her frankness about puberty and sex. Now the beloved American author candidly shares her own coming-of-age story. Emmy-winning filmmakers Davina Pardo and Leah Wolchok trace Blume's journey from fearful, imaginative child to storytelling pioneer who elevated the physical and emotional lives of kids and teens to banned writer who continues to fight back against censorship today. Playful and poignant animations celebrate the magic and awkwardness of being young while intimate conversations with acclaimed authors and artists reveal Blume's profound impact on readers. Long-standing fans share open-hearted letters they wrote to Blume over decades. With humor, sensitivity, and a healthy dose of adolescent cringe, *Judy Blume Forever* tells the story of the woman whose trail-blazing books changed the way millions of readers understand themselves, their sexuality, and what it means to grow up. 97mins. The film will be released by Prime Video on April 21st. *Special thanks to our guests from 3 Stars Jewish Cinema.*



### CHEVALIER

Wednesday, April 19 7:30pm

Stephen Williams' *Chevalier* is inspired by the incredible true story of composer Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges. The illegitimate son of an African slave and a French plantation owner, Bologne (Kelvin Harrison Jr. in a tour de force performance) rises to improbable heights in French society as a celebrated violinist-composer and fencer, complete with an ill-fated love affair and a falling out with Marie Antoinette (Lucy Boynton) and her court. Written by Stefani Robinson, the film also stars Samara Weaving and Minnie Driver. 107mins. The film will be released by Searchlight Pictures on April 21st.

## OPENING NIGHT RECEPTION

Patron and Sponsor Members and Corporate Sponsors of the USA Film Festival are invited to join us for a **pre-screening reception at 6:30pm** on Opening Night. *Details provided when you call in to reserve your film tickets.*

**JOIN US!** -- Membership starts at \$150/year (tickets for 2) and includes FREE screenings every month. Visit our website at [www.usafilmfestival.com](http://www.usafilmfestival.com) to view a list of recent Member Preview Screenings. **For information on Festival membership**, or to join before the event, please email us at [usafilmfest@aol.com](mailto:usafilmfest@aol.com).

## DEDICATION

Sadly, this past year we lost many talented artists and wonderful people who were part of our USAFF alumni family including Olivia Newton-John, Owen Roizman, Ed Pressman, Stella Stevens and Leslie Jordan. We dedicate this year's program in their memory.



# USA FILM FESTIVAL 2023

## THURSDAY, April 20



### FLAMIN' HOT

Thursday, April 20 7:00pm

Eva Longoria's feature debut is the inspiring true story of Richard Montañez, the Frito Lay janitor who channeled his Mexican American heritage and upbringing to turn the iconic Flamin' Hot Cheetos into a snack that disrupted the food industry and became a global pop culture phenomenon. *Flamin' Hot* stars Jesse Garcia, Annie Gonzalez, Dennis Haysbert, Emilio Rivera, Tony Shalhoub, Matt Walsh, Pepe Serna, Bobby Soto, Jimmy Gonzales, Eric Marq, Fabian Alomar and Hunter Jones. The charismatic film is written by Lewis Colick and Linda Yvette Chávez, based on the book "A Boy, A Burrito and A Cookie: from Janitor to Executive" by Richard Montañez and the life stories of Richard Montañez and Judy Montañez. 99mins. The film will be released by Searchlight Pictures on June 9th.



Little Richard in *Little Richard: I Am Everything*, a Magnolia Pictures release. Photo courtesy of Magnolia Pictures

### LITTLE RICHARD: I AM EVERYTHING

Thursday, April 20 7:00pm

Lisa Cortés' exhilarating documentary tells the story of the Black queer origins of rock n' roll, exploding the whitewashed canon of American pop music to reveal the innovator -- the originator -- Richard Penniman. Through a wealth of archive and performance that brings us into Richard's complicated inner world, the film unspools the icon's life story with all its switchbacks and contradictions. In interviews with family, musicians, and cutting-edge Black and queer scholars, the film reveals how Richard created an art form for ultimate self-expression, yet what he gave to the world he was never able to give to himself. Throughout his life, Richard careened like a shiny cracked pinball between God, sex and rock n' roll. The world tried to put him in a box, but Richard was an omni being who contained multitudes -- he was unabashedly everything. Produced by Bungalow Media + Entertainment for CNN Films and HBO Max, in association with Rolling Stone Films, the film is produced by Robert Friedman, Lisa Cortés, Liz Yale Marsh and Caryn Capotosto and executively produced by Dee Rees. 98mins. The film will be released by Magnolia Pictures on April 21st. Special thanks to our guests from Denton Black Film Festival.



### RÓISE & FRANK

Thursday, April 20 7:00pm

Róise is still grieving the loss of her husband, Frank, when a mysterious dog shows up at her door. Mildly annoyed by the canine attempting to disrupt her mourning, she attempts to ignore him. But before long, a series of coincidences convince her that somehow this shaggy dog is her husband, Frank, reincarnated. Soon the dog will win over others in their small town as well as become the unlikely coach to a shy, hurling-loving local boy before mysteriously disappearing. Part drama and part comedy, Rachael Moriarty and Peter Murphy's charming Irish film is sure to deliver smiles, tears, and laughs to film lovers of all ages. Starring Bríd Ní Neachtain, Cillian O'Gairbhi, Lorcan Cranitch, Ruadhán de Faoite, Claire O'Connor and Michelle Beamish. 90mins. The film will be released by Juno Films on March 31st in NYC and April 7th in LA, the Bay area and many other cities.



### NARRATIVE SHORT FILMS

Thursday, April 20 8:45pm

(Shorts in Competition) This collection of dramatic short films portray people navigating unfamiliar situations. In Kelly Campbell's AN ENCOUNTER two improbable friends ditch school and wander freely through Dublin until an encounter with a stranger leaves one of them utterly changed; in Vee Shi's JIA a grieving Chinese mother arrives in Australia to embark on a road trip with a young man to remember her late son; in Katie Lambert's EAT IT a young woman tries to fill a void when she experiences a break-up; in Julia Bui's F\*UCKING BLUE CARROTS a teenager bewildered by the sudden discovery of blue carrots sets out on a journey; in Yasmine Asha's I DO NOT! an overwhelmed bride runs away from her mother-pleasing groom at their wedding causing the couple's secrets to unfold; in Sohale Dezfoli's MAIN CHARACTER ENERGY an actor goes into an open call but misses an important detail in the character description; and in John Gray's THE THIRD DEFECTOR a simple assignment for a spy becomes a complicated game of cat and mouse; in Jean-Michel Tari's DARK CELL two convicts and two guards in an orbital prison must decide who will use the escape pod when a zombie outbreak occurs. 124mins.



### BLACK MOON

Thursday, April 20 9:00pm

*Black Moon* is the story of three siblings and a small Mexican community's rebellion to defend a river. A magical connection between a grandfather and his grandson, landscapes of exuberant nature and a threat to the town will accompany a moon that illuminates the path of those who must continue the journey of life. What flows like a river can be as appeasing as it is implacable. This river will witness social events interwoven with magical realism, the reed beds, the valleys, inexplicable dreams, and love. This story is about folklore, courage, and heroism of a community, and the river serves as the dignity of its inhabitants as unexpected news and unforeseen circumstances will cause them to make decisions that will change their destinies forever. Written and directed by Tonatihu García, the entrancing drama stars Joel Núñez, Eileen Yáñez, Raúl Brionesk, Jorge Guerrero, Isabel Luna, and Leidi Gutiérrez. 99mins.



### STUDENT SHORT FILMS

Thursday, April 20 8:45pm

(Shorts in Competition) Join us for a program of new U.S. and international student works. In Steven Chen's ALONE a Chinese national living with her grandson in the United States encounters a problem while trying to pay the phone bill; in Eugen Merher's THE BOY WHO COULDN'T FEEL PAIN a small-town street fighter is incapable of feeling pain; in Kayla Sun's THE CODE OF FAMILY an Asian grandmother decides to learn computer science to fulfill her late husband's last wish; in Kailang Wang's HALF OF A FAIRY TALE a deeply traumatized 10-year-old girl finds a special family within her foster home; in Michelle Sastraatmadja's INSTANT NOODLE an Indonesian woman goes on a grocery run to buy an instant noodle, a dish her recently deceased mom would often prepare; in Camille Hamadé's SHOVEL a routine kidnapping job goes wrong when a hired criminal and his inexperienced protégé realize they have the wrong target; and in Robin Wang's WEI-LAI an 11-year-old Chinese-American boy decides to show up at his best friend's family's house and offer himself up for their adoption. 116mins. **Filmmakers in attendance.**

Note: Films and guests are confirmed at press time; additional guests and works may appear in the line-up.

# USA FILM FESTIVAL 2023

## FRIDAY, April 21



### SHOWCASE SHORTS

Friday, April 21 7:00pm

Join us for a program of dark, comedic, and wildly creative films featuring unexpected outcomes. Zoel Aeschbacher's *FAIRPLAY* follows three characters as they navigate different competitions – a teenager in search of recognition, a worker ready to do anything to hit the jackpot, and a senior executive at the end of his career; in Sam Upton's *HAN G MAN* a professor of psychiatry (Annabeth Gish) who specializes in the study of violent individuals and her colleague document their first day in Huntsville, Texas where they meet Bobby (Peter Stormare); in Samantha Lavin's *VAL(-E-REE)* a first responder suffering from agoraphobia after a sexual assault must walk through the flames of a past trauma to step into a new life; in Sarah Baskin's *LES CÂLINS CHEAPS (CHEAP HUGS)* two strangers reeling from the loss of their mutual friend find themselves in an unexpected moment of connection on the streets of Montreal; in Daniel Rashid's *HIT FRIENDS* a man starts to doubt his closeness with his best friend when he discovers she went to Six Flags without him; in Finnegan Haid's *LINEAGE* two brothers meet for their annual hunting trip after their father's death and things do not go as planned; and in Tim Warren's *NASH* a 9-year-old boy is determined to find the monster that killed his mother. 116mins. **Filmmakers in attendance.**



### MASTER GARDENER

Friday, April 21 9:15pm

Narvel Roth (Joel Edgerton) is the meticulous horticulturist of Gracewood Gardens. He is as much devoted to tending the grounds of this beautiful and historic estate as he is to pandering to his employer, the wealthy dowager Mrs. Haverhill (Sigourney Weaver). However, chaos enters Narvel's spartan existence when Mrs. Haverhill demands that he take on her wayward and troubled great-niece Maya (Quintessa Swindell) as a new apprentice, unlocking dark secrets from a buried violent past that threaten them all. The thrilling film is written/directed by Paul Schrader. 107mins.

The film will be released by Magnolia Pictures on May 19th.



### THE POD GENERATION

Friday, April 21 7:00pm

A New York couple, Rachel (Emilia Clarke) and Alvy (Chiwetel Ejiofor) live in a not-so-distant future where technology provides ever-more convenient living. Rachel, a rising tech company executive, lands a coveted spot at the Womb Center which offers couples a convenient (and shareable) maternity by way of detachable artificial wombs, or pods. But Alvy, a botanist with an affection for nature, prefers a natural pregnancy. And yet, as Rachel's AI therapist puts it, why is the traditional way "natural"? So begins the tech-paved path to parenthood. Written and directed by Sophie Barthes, the film's cast also includes Rosalie Craig, Vinette Robinson and Jean-Marc Barr. 111mins.

Roadside Attractions and Vertical will release the film in July 2023.

**In attendance: writer/director Sophie Barthes.**



### BONNIE BLUE: JAMES COTTON'S LIFE IN THE BLUES

Friday, April 21 9:30pm

Born in 1935 on Bonnie Blue plantation in Tunica, Mississippi, apprenticing with Sonny Boy Williamson II and Howlin' Wolf, and schooled by Muddy Waters, James 'Super Harp' Cotton became a mentor to harp players around the globe as he brought the delta blues into mainstream rock 'n roll, performing on the international stage until his death at age 81. Orphaned at age 9, Cotton's journey tracks America's history and his story is one of empowerment during a time when the weight of racial inequity made the journey seem impossible. *Bonnie Blue: James Cotton's Life in the Blues* is a unique portrait of an era and its impact today. Cotton's music made history; his musical voice was unique, and the blues were never the same. Directed/produced by Bestor Cram -- and executive produced by Judy Laster, James Montgomery and Sam Pollard -- the emotionally evocative documentary features interviews with many of today's most prominent musicians including Buddy Guy, Billy Branch, Bobby Rush, Steve Miller, Jimmie Vaughan and Keb' Mo' combined with unique live performances and archival footage to create an authentic rendering of Cotton's harmonica power and his enduring musical influence. 86mins.



### GOLD RUN

Friday, April 21 7:00pm

On April 9th, 1940 the Nazis invaded Norway. Based on true events, *Gold Run* tells the remarkable story of how a brigade of ragtag Norwegians, including a bank secretary, a famous poet and a female veteran of the Spanish Civil War, smuggled 40 tons of gold bullion out of the national bank vault in Oslo to safety with the Allies. Directed by Hallvard Bræin and written by Jørgen Storm Rosenberg and Thomas Moldestad, the film stars Jon Øigarden, Ida Elise Broch, Eivind Sander, Sven Nordin, Axel Bøyum, Anatole Taubman, and Thorbjørn Harr. 117mins. The film will be released by Juno Films.



### A SUMMER WITH JOE, LIZ & RICHARD

Friday, April 21 9:15pm

It was August 1967 when an all-star production – starring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton, directed by Joseph Losey, screenplay by Tennessee Williams, music by John Barry, and playwright Noël Coward among the actors – set up camp in a pristine corner of Sardinia, near the town of Alghero to begin filming *Boom!*. So why did a film with a huge budget for the time, distributed by Universal Pictures, and which had all the makings of an international success turn out to be a historic box office flop? Fans of the notorious bomb (including John Waters who presented *Boom!* at USAFF some years ago and who is interviewed in this film) have always been fascinated by the saga. Filmmaker Sergio Naitza seeks answers in a host of small and large little-known details that emerge from the intriguing return to that set on the cliffs of Capo Caccia as he picks up the pieces of a complex and surprising puzzle: the recollections and anecdotes of the surviving protagonists interwoven with the memories of the locals who were involved in the making of the film; the powerful charm of a wild and unique location where a stunning villa overlooking the sea was built and then taken down – which for three months hosted the most acclaimed celebrity couple on the planet; the tale of a unique artistic encounter and the unruly, creative atmosphere of the 1960s. 86mins.

# USA FILM FESTIVAL 2023

## SATURDAY, April 22



### ELLIS

Saturday, April 22 4:00pm

The Marsalis family has been a cultural force since Wynton and Branford reached sudden stardom in New York, but far less is known about the patriarch, pianist Ellis Marsalis, who paved their way. Told through the words and music of Ellis Marsalis, *Ellis* chronicles the life of this exceptional New Orleans performer, composer and educator and the profound influence that the city had on him -- and that he had on New Orleans jazz. It is also a story of how one man transcended racial injustices he faced from his childhood during segregation to his death. Interlaced with interviews with his colleagues and his sons Wynton, Branford, Delfeayo, Ellis III and Jason Marsalis, archival footage takes us from segregated New Orleans to his final concert at Jazz at Lincoln Center in NYC and a solo concert performed exclusively for the film. Sascha Just's documentary places Ellis within key threads of American cultural history as someone who was both deeply affected by the political shifts of his time and who helped to shape them. 96mins. **In attendance: director Sascha Just, jazz trombonist Delfeayo Marsalis, and Mboya Marsalis. Co-presented with Sammons Jazz and the Sammons Center for the Arts.**



### HILMA GREAT DIRECTOR TRIBUTE TO LASSE HALLSTRÖM

Saturday, April 22 7:00pm

Lasse Hallström's *Hilma* brings to life the story of a woman who posthumously revolutionized the art world as one of the first abstract artists. In this immersive biopic starring Tora Hallström as the young Hilma, and Lena Olin as the mature Hilma, we follow the artist from her early life through her rising artistic career and spiritual awakening after the loss of her beloved younger sister Hermina. *Hilma* explores art history, her unconventional love life, and the impetus behind her work -- from the writings of Rudolph Steiner to the strong influence of the Theosophic Movement and her belief in its mystical philosophy -- in a portrait of a woman well ahead of her time. Having remained unknown and unrecognized as the woman who invented abstract painting after her death in 1944, a 2019 Guggenheim Museum exhibition devoted to Hilma of Klint's work became her first major solo exhibition in the U.S., revolutionizing the art world and art history while displacing Kandinsky, Malevich and Mondrian as the fathers of Modernism. 115mins. The film will be released by Juno Films on April 14th in NYC and LA. **In attendance: writer/director Lasse Hallström, actress Lena Olin and actress Tora Hallström. Post-film discussion will be moderated by film historian Foster Hirsch.**



### SILENT LIFE: THE STORY OF THE LADY IN BLACK CELEBRATING TERRY MOORE

Saturday, April 22 4:15pm

A woman in her 90s dressed in a black dress with her face covered by a veil comes to the Hollywood Forever Cemetery to visit silent movie star Rudolph Valentino's tomb during the Memorial Service commemorated to the first Hollywood sex symbol. She is the mysterious Lady in Black (Terry Moore) who has been coming with a single red rose to Valentino's grave for over 70 years. A documentary film crew is curious and asks this old woman to reveal her secret: "Was she really the last love of the Great Lover?" *Lady in Black* sits down by Valentino's tomb and tells her story -- which begins in August 1926 when she was a young nursing aid working at the New York Polyclinic Hospital where Valentino had a surgery and spent an entire week fighting for his life. While telling her story, the voice of Valentino's spirit intervenes and starts sharing his story which differs from what *Lady in Black* is saying. But, both of them have one thing in common -- they both were unhappy in love and tried to grasp the true meaning and significance of their life which was only made clear in the end. Directed by Vladislav Alex Kozlov, and written by Kozlov, Ksenia Jarova, and Natalia Dar, Moore stars in the film alongside Isabella Rossellini, Franco Nero, Sherilyn Fenn, Paul Rodriguez and Monte Markham. 96mins. **Expected guests in attendance: actress Terry Moore and co-writer/director Vladislav Kozlov. Post-film discussion will be moderated by film historian Foster Hirsch.**



### REYKJAVÍK

Saturday, April 22 7:30pm

Steve Yockey's "Reykjavík" is a dark supernatural thriller/comedy set in the land of the northern lights. Six interconnected stories propel us into a mysterious world where the lines between reality and illusion become blurred. As the pieces of "Reykjavík" come together, we see an exploration of the human condition through stories of love, death, and 13 clairvoyant ravens. Director Ann Hearn Tobolowsky's filmed play captures a live stage performance with six actors portraying different characters on their unsettling and occasionally miraculous journeys. 92mins. **In attendance: director Ann Hearn Tobolowsky.**



### MUNCH

Saturday, April 22 4:30pm

Henrik M. Dahlsbakken's *Munch* brings to the big screen the life story of one of the world's most significant modern painters, Edvard Munch. Misunderstood by his peers, rejected by the art establishment, wracked with grief over the loss of his younger sister and tortured by addiction, the film portrays Munch's life, painting an intimate and nuanced picture of the artist and his work across four chapters. Munch is portrayed by four actors -- Alfred Ekker Strande, Mattis Herman Nyquist, Ola G. Furuseth and Anne Krigsvoll ("Lilyhammer") -- at age 21, 30, 45, and 80 respectively. *Munch* is written by four writers -- each of who took on a chapter to accentuate the changing periods in Munch's life. Three of the chapters are set in Norway, and the remaining chapter takes place in modern-day Berlin bringing a contemporary edge to the story of an artist who remains relevant and revered worldwide. 104mins. The film will be released by Juno Films on May 7th in NYC and LA.



### BRUCE AND ALVIN

Saturday, April 22 8:00pm

Josh Seftel's fascinating short documentary explores the history and future of Alvin, one of the world's only remaining publicly-funded manned submersibles, as told through the eyes of long-time Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution pilot Bruce Strickrott. Learn about the inspiration for this unlikely hero of the sea whose capacity to help people see the deepest parts of the world's oceans in person has led to discoveries that were once considered to be impossible. As a pilot and program manager, Bruce views his job as one which allows him to change lives by taking scientists to the ocean depths. As one of a handful of people on earth who operates this vehicle, Bruce is aware of the importance of what he does and of the need to pass on this knowledge to future generations to support science and discovery. This film is a co-production of Smartypants Brooklyn and the Woods Hole Film Festival Film & Science Initiative. 24mins. *Special thanks to our guests from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. In attendance: lead mechanical engineer for the Alvin Group Francis Elder.*

# USA FILM FESTIVAL 2023

## SUNDAY, April 23

### TEXAS FILMMAKERS SHOWCASE



#### HIGH SCHOOL SHORT FILMS

Sunday, April 23 3:00pm

Join us for a collection of short films from Garland High School's International Baccalaureate (IB) film program's students. The Reel Owl Cinema four-year program teaches students the art of filmmaking with an emphasis on narrative storytelling. 60mins  
Visit [www.reelowlcinema.com](http://www.reelowlcinema.com) for enrollment information.



Photo by Phil Hum - ©Bully High LLC

#### BULLY HIGH

Sunday, April 23 4:30pm

Toplined by an exciting young cast of Hollywood newcomers -- including Indian-American actress Aneesha Madhok, Cedric Begley, Taylor Jabara, Joseph Baena and Monet Weir -- *Bully High* is a coming-of-age drama that tackles some of today's more prevalent and controversial issues, including religious prejudices, sexual orientation, and bullying. The film centers around Maryam Ali (Madhok), a Muslim exchange student who is bullied by school officials and students for wearing her Hijab. Meanwhile, Maryam's new friend, a Christian lesbian named Nicole White (Caroline Stella), fights to strip away stereotypes and stand up for her right to live in peace. The film is written/directed by Bill McAdams, Jr. 94mins. **In attendance: writer/director Bill McAdams, Jr., producers Therese Moncrief and Henry Penzi, producer/actor Caroline Stella, actors Taylor Jabara, Brent Anderson and other cast/crew.**



#### WILLIAM GREAVES: REMEMBERING AN AMERICAN FILMMAKER

Sunday, April 23 3:00pm

Walid Khaldi's fascinating documentary is based on interviews conducted with filmmaker William Greaves, a producer of more than 200 documentary films who has received more than seventy international film festival awards. The film sheds light on Greaves' life and works -- including his television program "Black Journal" -- and takes an inspirational look at Mr. Greaves' films, their subject matter, and his unique life throughout seven decades. 60mins.

**In attendance: director Walid Khaldi**



#### TONIC

Sunday, April 23 7:00pm

Sebastian Poe (Billy Blair), a washed up piano player, spends his days and nights performing low paying gigs in Jazz Clubs and dive bars. Sebastian is also in debt to a corrupt police detective Terry (Jason Coviello), who he owes eight-thousand dollars. When Terry asks for his debt to be paid and Sebastian can't come up with the cash, he tasks Sebastian with killing someone that needs to be taken out. He gives him the rest of the night to complete the job. Over the course of the night, Sebastian's plight plunges him into the dark streets of Deep Ellum where he comes across an odd assortment of characters all while battling with his conscience and his desire to just f-ing play the piano. Written and directed by Derek Presley, the film is produced by Lola Lott and Jason Starne, and executively produced by Alex Blackmon. The film's cast also includes Lori Petty, Richard Riehle, Ed Westwick and Vernon Davis. 104mins. **In attendance: writer/director Derek Presley, editor/producer Jason Starne, producer Lola Lott and other cast/crew.**



#### TEXAS SHORT FILMS (In Competition)

Sunday, April 23 7:00pm

Join us for a program of dramatic and comedic shorts by Texas filmmakers. In Chantelle James' *A THOUSAND TIMES A DAY* a woman struggles to forgive her brother after the tragic loss of her 4-year-old son; in Sarah Adam's *BLENDER* gossiping housewives Jess and Meg discuss the joy of smoothies, the hidden dangers of the PTA, and the sweet taste of revenge; in Oscar Perez-Chairez's *HIJO* a teenage Mexican immigrant struggles with his identity as he slowly assimilates into American culture; and in Stephen Robinson & Eric Pham's *HOME* two Vietnamese sibling refugees must navigate their new lives in Houston, Texas following the Vietnam war. 69mins. **Filmmakers in attendance.**



#### POSEY'S PLAYHOUSE

Sunday, April 23 5:00pm

Dallas native Matthew Posey is an enigmatic creative force of nature and a philosopher of life and art. *Posey's Playhouse* chronicles the formation of his life's work, the Ochre House Theater, the players it cultivates and an untimely event that could destroy it all. Directed by Roger Peters, the film is produced by Jessica Cramer, Justin Locklear, Carla Parker, Tisha Taylor and Matthew Taylor. 60mins. **In attendance: director Roger Peters and film subject Matthew Posey + friends.**



#### UNDER THE INFLUENCER

Sunday, April 23 7:00pm

Alex Haughey's *Under The Influencer* is a darkly comedic tale, tracking the misadventures of a successful Youtuber aging out of the platform in her mid-20's. The story centers around Tori (Taylor Joree Scorse), who rose to prominence in the influencer age. Now her popularity is waning, and she finds herself desperately clinging to her place in the social pecking order. Tori is forced to resort to the juvenile content of yesteryear -- content she was once known for but has long since outgrown. But when her strategy backfires, she must come face-to-face with the realization that her time in the limelight might be expiring. 91mins. **In attendance: writer/director Alex Haughey and actress Taylor Joree Scorse.**

# SCHEDULE & TICKET INFO.

## ANGELIKA FILM CENTER

WEDNESDAY APRIL 19	THURSDAY APRIL 20	FRIDAY APRIL 21	SATURDAY APRIL 22	SUNDAY APRIL 23
				3:00pm High School Shorts
	7:00pm Róise & Frank	7:00pm Showcase Shorts	4:00pm Ellis	3:00pm William Greaves
	7:00pm Little Richard	7:00pm The Pod Generation	4:15pm Silent Life Celebrating Terry Moore	4:30pm Bully High
	7:00pm Flamin' Hot	7:00pm Gold Run	4:30pm Munch	5:00pm Posey's Playhouse
7:00pm Carmen	8:45pm Narrative Short Films	9:15pm Master Gardener	7:00pm Hilma Great Director Tribute Lasse Hallström	7:00pm Tonic
7:00pm Judy Blume Forever	8:45pm Student Short Films	9:15pm A Summer with Joe, Liz & Richard	7:30pm Reykjavik	7:00pm Under the Influencer
7:30pm Chevalier	9:00pm Black Moon	9:30pm Bonnie Blue	8:00pm Bruce and Alvin	7:00pm Texas Short Films

**EDUCATION  
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**USA FILM FESTIVAL**

## Ticket Info

Tickets for all programs are

**FREE**

*(quantities are limited)*

**TICKET REQUEST LINE \***

**214-821-6300**

Phone lines open **10:30am to 5:00pm**  
Monday - Friday beginning on dates below.

**\* USAFF Members**

May **CALL to RESERVE Tickets**  
beginning **APRIL 7th**

**\* General Public**

May **CALL to RESERVE Tickets**  
beginning **APRIL 13th**

**DAY-OF SHOW** tickets will also be available  
at the Angelika Film Center upstairs sales desk  
**beginning ONE HOUR prior to EACH showtime.**

## Theater Location

All programs will take place at the  
**Angelika Film Center / Dallas**

5321 E. Mockingbird Lane at Central Expressway

**Parking in garage is free.**

## Festival Information

- Schedule is subject to change. (It's a Festival!) Guests and titles listed are confirmed at press time. Additional guests and changes anticipated.
- Programs times listed are for actual film running times and do not include discussions with Festival Guests in attendance.

## Membership

**JOIN US -- We need your support -- and we make it fun!**  
To become a Member of the Festival and receive **FREE screenings every month**, send us an email request for a membership brochure at [usafilmfest@aol.com](mailto:usafilmfest@aol.com)

**USA FILM FESTIVAL**

214-821-FILM [www.usafilmfestival.com](http://www.usafilmfestival.com)

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The USA Film Festival is supported, in part, by the [City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture](http://www.cityofdallas.gov).  
The USA Film Festival is supported, in part, by the [Texas Commission on the Arts](http://www.texascommissiononthearts.org).  
This project is supported in part by an award from the [National Endowment for the Arts](http://www.arts.gov).

