

SOLANGE

FILM FESTIVAL®



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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we enter into our second year as a film festival, I continue to be amazed at the power of film to inspire us and highlight the commonalities we have as people. More than entertainment, they can be a spark for real and meaningful change in a world where the stream of information that is easiest to find often fosters division, fear, and uncertainty. This year we have chosen films that help us see each other in a unifying light with topics such as the power of laughter, people seeking community, and resilience in the face of tough times.

I am proud to announce that for the first time we engaged high school students in an educational program where they learned to share their story through film. In the Solange Young Filmmakers Program, a group of high school students was able to learn about film theory, equipment, and production as they came together to create a short film for this year's festival. Their film allows us to see how the world of artistic expression is influenced by AI through the eyes of the next generation. It is incredibly important to hear their voice as they will be integral in shaping our collective future.

As you watch our films this year, I encourage you to consider the messaging and see what impact these stories can have in your own life and community. Then go do something. The smallest acts can make the biggest differences.



Steve Michalik, President



OUR STORY

Young people have powerful stories to tell, but too often they lack access to the tools and platform to share them. The Solange Young Filmmakers Program was created to give local high school students the opportunity to share their voices and perspective.

Over the course of three Saturdays, five local students came together to learn and create, with many of them stepping into filmmaking for the first time. Mentored by professional filmmakers, they worked through every stage of the process, from shaping their idea to overcoming some unique challenges on set. Each Saturday the students focused on a specific skill including the theory of storytelling, shooting and directing, and post-production. Together they worked to create an original short film, *Island in the Sky*, that gives the audience something to consider about AI and its impact on human creativity. *Island in the Sky* will be shown on Saturday, May 16th, in the *Finding Hope* short block.

This year was just the beginning of what we hope will be an ongoing investment in the next generation of storytellers. When we invest in young people, giving them the power to use their voices, we invest in our communities and our future.



THURSDAY ★ MAY 14

★ SPECIAL EVENT ★



THE STRIP SHOW

Directed by Rick Sebak

On most Saturday mornings, the Strip is one of the best places on earth, full of hungry people, crunchy fruits, snappy vegetables, world-class street food, cool characters, and tasty surprises of all sorts. This 1996 documentary is a tour of the Strip, including big breakfasts, shopping along Penn Avenue and Smallman Street, warehouses, churches, and nightclubs, along with some amazing history.

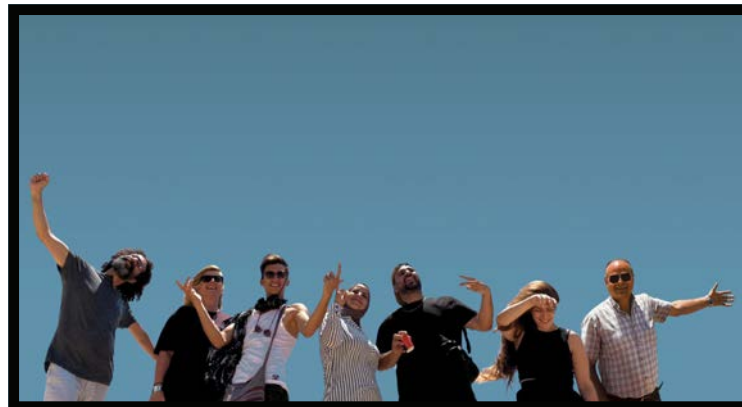
Preceded by the short film *Little Italy Daze* directed by Max Cianci.

7:00PM (Thursday, May 14)

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FRIDAY ★ MAY 15

★ OPENING NIGHT ★



PALESTINE COMEDY CLUB

Directed by Alaa AliAbdallah

Palestinian comedians forge a path through laughter, using stand-up to express their resilience and spirit amid rising conflict. Their jokes become powerful statements of dignity and existence in the face of devastating circumstances.

7:00PM (Friday, May 15)

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SATURDAY ★ MAY 16

TAKE CARE

This block of short films explores how we care for our communities, our loved ones, and ourselves. Through compassion, resilience, and curiosity, the way we show up for others can make a difference.

12:00PM (Saturday, May 16)



DOC ALBANY

Directed by Ben Proudfoot



BLACK TIDE

Directed by Kim Yip Tong



IN THE JUNGLE

Directed by Ky Dickens



CARETAKER **LOCAL**

Directed by Rachel Walker



OSTRICH

Directed by Marie Kenov



ASK ME ANYTHING

Directed by Wyneke van Nieuwenhuyzen



THE DYING BUSINESS **LOCAL**

Directed by Joe Duca

SATURDAY ★ MAY 16



COLOR BOOK

Directed by David Fortune

Following his wife's recent passing, single father Lucky finds himself navigating the challenges of raising his son Mason, who has Down syndrome. Seeking solace, Lucky and Mason embark on a journey across Metro Atlanta to attend their first baseball game together. From car breakdowns to missed trains, the duo faces a series of obstacles that test their relationship with each other. Together, Lucky and Mason learn that healing does not await them at the mountaintop, but can be found with every step along the path.

2:30PM (Saturday, May 16)

SATURDAY ★ MAY 16

FINDING HOPE

This block of short films explores purpose, connection, and the resilience of the human spirit. Even in the face of challenges and uncertainty, there is always something to hold onto.

5:00PM (Saturday, May 16)



ISLAND IN THE SKY LOCAL

Directed by Hannah Grooms, Garrett Patterson, Sam Haas, Grace Zhou, Owen Hargett



MADELEINE

Directed by Raquel Sancinetti



FREEMAN VINES

Directed by André Robert Lee, Tim Kirkman



SNOW BEAR

Directed by Aaron Blaise



AL FRESCO

Directed by Ignacio Rodó



OH YEAH!

Directed by Nick Canfield



THE LORD OF ALL FUTURE SPACE AND TIME LOCAL

Directed by Chris Paul Russell



SATURDAY ★ MAY 16



EMPIRE SKATE

Directed by Josh Swade

Empire Skate chronicles the rise and enduring influence of New York skateboarding culture in the 1990's, through the global phenomenon of Supreme and intimate portraits of the skaters who breathed life into that world. From the highs of breakout success and the creation of a movement, to the lows of fractured families and the loss of close friends, *Empire Skate* is a style-and-substance trip through a unique moment when multiple trends converged on one city to create something timeless.

7:30PM (Saturday, May 16)

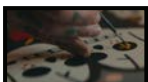


SUNDAY ★ MAY 17

RIISING TO THE OCCASION

This block of short films explores how challenges and adversity encourage resilience and transformation. Growth often comes in the moments when we rise in the face of life's uncertainties.

1:00PM (Sunday, May 17)



DEATH: THE LIFE OF MIKE EGAN

Directed by Doug Helmick



ZODIAC

Directed by Hans Buysse



BORDER DWELLER LOVE

Directed by Laura Asherman, Anna Flores



BAA-BAA

Directed by Teresa Juksaar



AWAITING THE LIGHTENING BOLT

Directed by Marco Russo



ACROSS THE WATERS

Directed by Viv Li



RISE

Directed by Jessica J. Rowlands

SUNDAY ★ MAY 17

LEGACY

This block of short films explores the lasting impact we leave behind—through art, relationships, and the stories we choose to tell. Even the smallest moments can leave a lasting impact.

3:30PM (Sunday, May 17)



CAMP WIDOW

Directed by Laura Green, Anna Moot-Levin



FIRST WAVES BEAVER COUNTY

Directed by Rishi Sethi



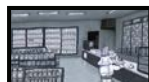
ĀYÍ

Directed by Jiayi Li



THE QUINTA'S GHOST

Directed by James A. Castillo



A NIGHT AT THE REST AREA

Directed by Saki Muramoto



WE WERE THE SCENERY

Directed by Christopher Radcliff



NEIL ARMSTRONG AND THE LANGHOMITES

Directed by Duncan Cowles

SUNDAY ★ MAY 17



REGGAE GIRLZ

Directed by Trish Dalton & Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy

In a David vs. Goliath saga, the Jamaican women's football team, affectionately known as the "Reggae Girlz," rise from obscurity to challenge global giants France and Brazil in the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup, defying all odds and capturing the world's imagination with their unyielding spirit. As the first Caribbean team to qualify for two consecutive World Cups, the team is determined to prove that, even with everything against them, their talent and resilience are unstoppable.

6:00PM (Sunday, May 17)

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