

MEDIA KIT

62nd Ann Arbor Film Festival

March 26–31, 2024

(Online through April 7)



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Who We Are

Founded in 1963, the Ann Arbor Film Festival is the oldest independent and experimental film festival in North America and is internationally recognized as a premier forum for film as an art form.

Our Mission

To promote bold, visionary filmmakers through the advancement of film and new media art, and to engage communities with remarkable cinematic experiences.

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Find us online

aafilmfest.org | [Passes & Tickets](#)
[Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#), [Twitter](#) | [Vimeo](#) | [YouTube](#)



Contact us Scott Boberg | scott@aaiffest.org

What's in here?

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The More You Know

A few helpful facts and figures about the festival

- For the fourth year in a row, the Ann Arbor Film Festival will continue to pay filmmakers to show their films in competition.
- 2,971 films from 92 countries were submitted for consideration this year.
- Films in Competition: 110 | Features: 10 | Shorts: 10 | Juror programs: 3 | Performances: 10+ | Special Programs: 12
- Renowned for introducing the world to pioneering work, including the early films of Kenneth Anger, Brian DePalma, Devo, Barbara Hammer, George Lucas, Yoko Ono, Gus Van Sant, Agnes Varda, and Andy Warhol.
- One of few Academy Award–qualifying festivals in the United States. Short films that win the Ken Burns Best of the Festival Award, the Chris Frayne Award for Best Animated Film, or the Lawrence Kasdan Award for Best Narrative Film become eligible for Oscar nomination.
- The festival has received funding in the past from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Andy Warhol Foundation and the Michigan Film and Digital Media Office. This year it has received support from the National Endowment for the Art, the Michigan Arts and Culture Council, The Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan, and CultureSource.
- Directly supports independent filmmakers by giving awards for films that might not find commercial distribution. For the 62nd AAFF, approximately \$24,000 in cash and in-kind awards.



How to Fest

FAQs and their answers to help festival-goers experience the 62nd AAFF

How do I experience the festival?

The 62nd Ann Arbor Film Festival will be a hybrid event, with online and in-person options for attendees. The online portion of the festival will allow the AAFF community to experience the festival in the safety of their home, whether in southeast Michigan or abroad! Online passes will allow access to most in-competition films and juror programs as well as an online film forum and filmmaker interviews. **The 62nd AAFF will take place in person March 26-31, 2024 (online March 26 - April 7).**

For those who would like to attend the festival in person, a Full Festival Pass includes access to all programs **in-person and online** during the 62nd AAFF. A Weekend Festival Pass includes in-person admission to the full festival from Friday 3/29 - Sunday 3/31. The Online Only Pass includes online access to most in-competition feature films, most competition short film programs, as well as juror and other programs. The In Person and Online Combo Pass gives access to all in person programs and all online programs.

What if I'm having technical difficulties?

In the case that you are experiencing technical difficulties, make sure you're logged into your account on the [Agile](#) page. In the event you still need help, reach out to support@aafilmfest.org for help.

How do I get my tickets and passes and how much do they cost?

Festival-goers can get their tickets by visiting the [Ann Arbor Film Festival website](#) where the [link to buy](#) is now available. Options for Online Only, Full Festival, and Weekend Festival are available with prices ranging from \$65-\$200. Tickets for individual programs will be available March 1st on the Agile Website. [Get your tickets and passes!](#)



When is the full schedule announced? Where will it be posted?

The schedule will be announced on March 1 and will appear on [our website](#).

Are all the films in competition?

The 100 short films included in the Films in Competition programs and the 10 Features in Competition are eligible for the approximately \$23,000 in awards. The remaining films are presented out of competition.

Are the films appropriate for all ages?

The films are not rated and some material may be more appropriate for adult audiences unless otherwise noted. Our **Films in Competition 9: Almost All Ages (6+)** program is best suited for a wide variety of viewers. The Almost All Ages Program will be Saturday, March 30th at 1:30pm, all tickets will be \$7.

What is the festival's history?

The AAFF started in 1963 by George Manupelli and is now the oldest avant-garde and experimental film festival in North America. It started as a critical venue for alternative filmmakers and artists to share their work. The AAFF has always focused on film art, serving as one of the country's premier forums for bold, visionary, experimental and avant-garde filmmakers. Learn more about the festival by checking out the [History and Mission](#), our [Statement of Integrity](#), and [Our Pledge: Standing in Solidarity with Black Filmmakers](#).

How else can people support the festival?

There are many ways festival-goers can help support the festival. [Become a member](#), [donate](#), and check out our [work and volunteer with us page](#) often for open **internship**, **volunteer** and **job** opportunities. Learn more about sponsorship and community partnerships [here](#).

[Memberships start at \\$30 for students](#) and include festival tickets, discounts, and invitations to members only events. Starting at the 16mm level, festival passes are included in your membership. [Become a member](#) and help sustain the AAFF for another 62 years!

Our volunteers help make the Ann Arbor Film Festival possible. In exchange for your time and talent, volunteers earn AAFF tickets & passes!

- Sign up for general volunteer work - use [this form](#)
- Sign up to offer **housing** for visiting filmmakers - use [this form](#)



What health and safety precautions is the AAFF taking?

The in-person festival will adhere to Michigan Theater and U-M covid protocols, which are currently face masks optional in the Michigan Theater and the State Theatre.

For more information:

[COVID Safety at the Michigan and State University of Michigan COVID-19 Response](#)

What do the program titles mean?

Films in Competition

Short film programs built from films submitted to our festival this year. Short films are all less than 60 minutes (usually less than 20 minutes), and each program will have anywhere from 6-14 films.

Features in Competition

Programs that either consist of a single feature film (60 minutes or longer), or a feature and a short film that were submitted to the festival this year (if a program includes a paired feature and short, the films may relate to each other, but have not been submitted together by the same filmmaker).

Special Programs

Specially curated programs of films that have *not* been submitted for award consideration this year, but instead were curated around a thematic idea by friends and artists of the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

Off The Screen (OTS)

New media, video, live performance, and art installations that are either ongoing during festival week or happen at a specific time. Including our **Speaker Series** which features panel discussions, workshops, and presentations by friends and artists of the Ann Arbor Film Festival.



Screening Schedule

All Films in Competitions will be screened in the Michigan Theater Main Auditorium, the State Theatre 1 and 2, University of Michigan SKB 2500, and the University of Michigan Museum of Art Helmut Stern Auditorium.

All ticket prices are \$14 for the general public, \$9 members/seniors, and \$8 students unless otherwise noted (tickets for the in-person **Almost All Ages program**, for example, are \$7 for everyone).

TUE 3/26

Opening Night Party

6:30–8pm | Michigan Theater Grand Foyer

Celebrate the first night of the festival with drinks and food generously provided by Ann Arbor area businesses including Ann Arbor Distilling Company, Bigalora, Bløm Meadworks, Café Zola, Jerusalem Garden, Mothfire Brewing Co., Mediterraneo, Sava's, Side Biscuit, TeaHaus, Vinology, Zingerman's Creamery, and more. DJ set by Alvin Hill. A ticket to Films in Competition 1 is included in the price of admission.

Films in Competition 1

8:15pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

The 62nd Festival begins with this screening of experimental, documentary, and animated films, featuring a calibration test film; two abstract, cosmic energies; two Texas sisters in the metaverse; a provocative story of longing and connection; the horrors and absurdities of life during Putin's war on Ukraine; a familiar world within a world; and an explosion.



WED 3/27

Juror Presentation

Deanna Morse: *Move Click Move*

1pm | State Theatre 1 | free

Move Click Move is a diverse program of 18 animated and experimental films by Deanna Morse. From *Sesame Street* to the *Odessa Steps* to the *Everglades* and the computer lab, Morse has created at least one film poem each year since college. This work explores materials and techniques, shifting time and space by considering what is between the frames as we celebrate seasons, people, change, and nature.

Collaborating with children, musicians, and puppeteers using pioneering computer animation techniques, timelapse, kinestasis, or simple cut outs, her visual poems are like postcards. A postcard message that says, “Wish you were here,” often sharing common surroundings. Move, click, move.

Special Program

Visions from Colorado

5pm | State Theatre 1

The intensity and quality of light in Colorado led visionary artist Stan Brakhage to experiment over several decades with film, editing, and evocation of place, from high in the mountains down to the plains. In turn, other Colorado-linked filmmakers—friends, colleagues, mentees, admirers, examiners—entered the same conversation with light and vision. Ten films, all touching the Rocky Mountain backbone, talk to one another across the stones and meltwater, as they track the ripples across layers of time.

Curated by Erin Espelie and Jennifer Peterson.

Feature in Competition

Mum

5:30pm | State Theatre 2

After seven years, Donata finally returns to her daughter Anna’s cabin house, but the reunion turns sour when her daughter Iza is distant. Donata’s already fragile state is pushed to the brink when she experiences blackouts and panic attacks, only for Iza to vanish into thin air. As the search for Iza intensifies, Anna accuses Donata of being responsible, triggering a chain of events that will uncover a web of hidden family secrets. Directed by Joesef Ouarrak.



Special Program

What Are Words For?

7pm | State Theatre 1

What Are Words For? considers ways in which an array of artists, most of whom identify in some way as disabled and/or D/deaf, redefine the tropes of accessible media accommodations. By activating unexpected usages of open captions and audio description, these works transcend notions of disability access as an afterthought by building worlds beyond the scope of translation. Curated by Darrin Martin.

Special Program

Expanded Cinema Performances

7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Three performances that employ live manipulation of the moving image, creating a dynamic audience experience: *Music in the Air* by Scott Stark, *Lass That Has Gone* by Laura Conway with Fragrant Blossom, and *Kino Lau: Many Bodies* by Rachel Makana Aloha O Kauikeolani Nakawatase, Ryan Betschart, and Melissa Ferarri.

Feature in Competition

Anqa

9pm | State Theatre 1

Anqa is an intimate portrait of three women who decide to stand up and speak out, who declare that they exist despite the threat of death. It is an exploration of a woman's inner life and, in its most extreme, of the painful traces memory carries when the outer world is at an impasse. Although the film places emphasis on the inner conflicts of the women, the socio-political climate of the era they live in is also tangible. Directed by Helin Çelik.

Films in Competition 2

9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *I'm Outside* by Nina Alexandraki and Eleftherios Panagiotou, this program of mixed-media films features the labyrinth of life and existence; history and darkness; the ambivalent power of invisible phenomena; pulsing flashbacks; the introspection of artist Bettina Szabo; dualism and illusions about truth; and a textural macrocollage of a rust belt landscape.



THU 3/28

Juror Presentation

Su Friedrich: *She, Her, Hers*

1pm | State Theatre 1 | free

This program comprises one film by Su Friedrich and four others by women who have informed her filmmaking, though not necessarily directly. These films deal with aesthetic and technical concerns which are somewhat or sometimes different than her own. But each shares a fierce spirit that inspired Friedrich when she first saw them, and the inspiration continues to today. Whether using analog video to create otherworldly worlds, putting a little girl through some strange paces, “rewriting” a video game, or sharing playful moments with some young women, these films are admired by Friedrich because they are made from the hearts, minds, eyes, and bodies of some very observant, thoughtful, clever, and playful women.

Penny Stamps Speaker Series

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *BIO_DOT_BOT*

5:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium | free

Lynn Hershman Leeson’s work cannot be contained by any one medium. Her practice is voracious, consuming both traditional artistic media (installation, painting, and video) as well as interactive laser discs and synthetic DNA. This special program of her short film and video works highlights her long-standing fascination with reality, selfhood, and technological reproduction, prompting us to question whether it is at all possible to disambiguate ourselves from our tech-saturated worlds. Curated by Julia Yezbick, who will follow the screening with an on-stage conversation with the filmmaker.

Special Program

Black Infinitude

7pm | State Theatre 1

Black Infinitude is a retrospective of and an homage to Aldo Tambellini (29 April 1930–12 November 2020), an Italian-American painter, sculptor, poet, and filmmaker who pioneered electronic intermedia. Tambellini did not enter filmmaking through the camera—he approached the medium as a sculptural object, with which he could introduce the element of time into his exploration of negative and positive cosmic space. Curated by M. Woods.



Films in Competition 3: Out Night

7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

The 23rd celebration of queer cinema at AAFF spotlights contemporary experimental films with LGBTQ+ themes and features a non-binary visual artist's relationship with darkness; a collection of non-phallic dildos and forbidden love; learning two languages; the morality police; horrifying reminiscences transforming into music; and a journey along the paths of memory and desire.

Feature in Competition

Playland

9pm | State Theatre 1

A raucous work of queer fantasy and history, *Playland* is a boundary-pushing, transdisciplinary, hybrid film centered around the raucous activity of a time-bending night in Boston's oldest and most notorious gay bar, the Playland Café. Directed by Georden West.

Films in Competition 4

9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Madwomen: to be a sparrow not a canary* by Johannes Löhmus and Sten Haljak, these experimental, narrative, and documentary films involve a housewife confronting situations to which no sane response exists; the catalog; transformation and connecting with nature; ideas of precarity and collapse; borders shifting as arctic ice melts; images shot through architectural glass; and a 550-million-year-old oceanic species.

FRI 3/29

Feature in Competition

A Stranger Quest

1pm | State Theatre 1

After spending the last thirty years amassing one of the biggest map collections in the world (which he secretly calls his poem), David Rumsey, who is about to turn eighty, is confronted with the ghosts of his life as the end inches closer. Directed by Andrea Gatopoulos.



Feature in Competition

Domus de Janas

3pm | State Theatre 1

A village in the Sardinian hinterland. While the drought is in full swing, old legends emerge from the territory, summoning characters and places suspended between two worlds. A painter goes to work, young people practice traditional songs, a shepherd fights against the fire...Only the storm will calm the flames. Directed by Myriam Raccah.

Films in Competition 5: Music Videos

5pm | University of Michigan Museum of Art Helmut Stern Auditorium | free

These experimental music videos feature a meditation on how art can be both ephemeral and immortal; fleeting thoughts and loosely grasped memories; the surreal and toxic world of Adam and Eve; a maelstrom of internet memories; a devious man in a hat; a trip through thoughts; the universe of the language and the language of the universe; a continuum in which all beings have equal value; a transformative encounter; and a journey of provocative storytelling.

Films in Competition 6: 35mm and 16mm

5:30pm | University of Michigan SKB 2500

A program of 35mm and 16mm experimental, animated, and documentary films, featuring Argentinian filmmaker Pablo Mazzolo's second film focusing on the border region of Windsor-Detroit; a live sound accompaniment by first time AAFF filmmaker Gabriel Bellone; and eleven minutes filled with tens of thousands of individual retinal photographs, animated.

Special Program

A Horse is Not a Metaphor and

Relict: A Phantasmagoria

7pm | State Theatre 1

"[In Barbara Hammer's] autobiographical experimental film *A Horse Is Not A Metaphor*, the artist reflects on her personal fight against stage 3 ovarian cancer, transforming illness into recovery. Describing herself as a cancer 'thrivor' rather than a 'survivor,' Hammer rides on horseback through the red hills of Georgia O'Keeffe's Ghost Ranch in New Mexico, the grassy foothills of the Big Horn in Wyoming, and leafy paths in Woodstock, New York." –Electronic Arts Intermix



Melissa Ferrari's *Relict: A Phantasmagoria* is an experimental documentary performed with antique magic lanterns and hand-drawn animation. Invoking the history of magic lantern phantasmagoria as an exercise in belief and perception, *Relict* considers the zeitgeist of pseudoscience, fake news, religion, and documentary ethics in cryptozoology.

Films in Competition 7

7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

A program of recent experimental and documentary films featuring the limits of what we cannot pin down and understand; a raven who dreams of nature; the poetics of grief and precarity; lines of loss and failure of memory; and an associative work of polycultural sentiments.

Special Program

Playing Footsi: Ann Arbor Filmmakers of the 1960s–1980s

9pm | State Theatre 1

George Manupelli launched the Ann Arbor Film Festival in part as a way to screen his own work, but it soon inspired other locals to take up cameras. Many were members of student film societies like Cinema Guild, Cinema II, and the Ann Arbor Film Cooperative. During this pre-digital era many films made here by locals, or elsewhere by recent expatriates, were shown at the festival, won prizes, and went on tour. This program includes films by or featuring people who are remembered today through AAFF awards: Tom Berman, Chris Frayne, Peter Wilde, and Manupelli himself. Curated by Frank Uhle.

Films in Competition 8: Animation

9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

This program of recent animated films from near and far includes two unique symbiotic visual universes; an abandoned house in Detroit; a ceaseless wave of dissolution; Winnie the Pooh giving birth to a descendant; uncovering logic; a woman's visual diaries; a mark on the bodies of the three De Nooijers; and disembodied meaty legs.

Special Feature Film

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Teknolust!*

11pm | State Theatre 1

In *Teknolust!* (2002), biogeneticist Rosetta Stone downloads her own DNA into an experimental AI program, creating a trio of cyborgian clones. The clones' survival



depends on injections of male Y chroma, only found in sperm. Ruby, one of the clones, ventures out and seduces men to secure the cyborgs' survival.

SAT 3/30

Juror Program

Wenhua Shi: *On Time*

1pm | University of Michigan SKB 2500 | free

On Time is a selection of Wenhua Shi's moving image work from the recent decade. "Over the past ten years, we have been faced with the unexpected. The demands from all sides became monumentally heavy. Looking through the viewfinder is my way of being in the moment. Editing becomes a new way of rediscovering/investigating the experiences and measurement of time." –Wenhua Shi

Films in Competition 9: Almost All Ages (6+)

1:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium | \$7

Family-friendly films featuring mirror divination and a clever spirit; a celebration of happiness; neckties; a healing journey exploring emotion and space; an abstract journey exploring connection; a handmade tattoo film; an ominous forest; a girl, in the depths of her dreams; Bella, a North American luna moth; a love letter to motherhood; and an alien beach.

Feature in Competition

Mechanisms Common to Disparate Phenomena; #59

3pm | State Theatre 1

An abstract science-fiction film in which humans, aliens, and electronic devices vacillate between the human fever dream of planetary control on the one hand, and lively machinic chaos on the other. Directed by Joost Rekveld.

Films in Competition 10

3:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Humoresque* by Shinya Isobe, these narrative and animated films include an improvised science-fiction-like world, a little girl who playfully chases a bird, kaleidoscopic sensations of touch and elemental change, and two women attempting to escape what they can't help but live.



Feature in Competition

Light Falls Vertical

5pm | State Theatre 1

When I left the island where I was born, it wasn't a departure, it was an escape. Years later, I arrive on another island, a barren place that feels strangely familiar. I have come here for an encounter with a man. He says he is willing to expose the violence that he carries within. But when I venture to get closer to the harmful, desperate man, I realize that he also holds the key to my deepest fears, echoing in the violence of my own past. Now his story will never be separated from mine. Directed by Efthymia Zymvragaki.

Feature in Competition

Esther Newton Made Me Gay

5:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

The feature documentary *Esther Newton Made Me Gay* explores the life and times of pathbreaking cultural anthropologist Esther Newton. Throughout her career, Esther was a pioneer—questioning and challenging status quo assumptions on gender, sexuality, and anthropological methods. Her work inspired generations of scholars to pursue research in what would eventually become the field of LGBTQ+ and gender studies. Directed by Jean Carlomusto.

Special Program

An Animal Is Not a Metaphor

7pm | State Theatre 1

Since the early days of avant-garde cinema, some iconic experimental films have abundantly featured animals, usually presented not as mere props or companions, but as central characters both closely interlinked with and independent of humans. In response to the animal crisis and the current developments of the Anthropocene, this

program will demonstrate how artist-made films bring in the animal viewpoint so that animals become not just a subject or a metaphor, but a real object of the film, and how they provide clues to reexamining and transforming species co-existence. Curated by Kornelia Boczkowska.



Films in Competition 11

7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Quiet As It's Kept* by Ja'Tovia Gary, this program of experimental, documentary, and animated films includes visions of the within and of the beyond; a magical 3D illusion; a two-way mirror with the lights switched off; fourteen women and their male allies; stripes of colors in motion; and a glimpse into a carefree time of adventure and freedom.

Special Feature Film Program

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Conceiving Ada*

9pm | State Theatre 1

Tilda Swinton embodies Lady Ada Lovelace, the mathematics genius who developed what became the world's first computer language 100 years before computers were invented (and also the daughter of Romantic poet Lord Byron). Lovelace's story is channeled through Emmy, a computer scientist researching artificial life.

Films in Competition 12

9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *No More Room in Hell* by Rebecca Shapass, this program of mixed-media films features zombiehood in relation to industry, techno-capitalism, and apocalyptic realities; a narrative that subverts expectations; the iconic poppy scene from *The Wizard of Oz*; an AI dominatrix brought to life; a world where touch is forbidden; the ancestral fire; and a stream of consciousness inspired by the poem "Advice" by Langston Hughes.

SUN 3/31

Special Program

Amy Halpern Retrospective

12pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Amy Halpern (1953–2022) was one of Los Angeles's leading experimental/independent filmmakers. Committed to encouraging a wider awareness of absolute film, Halpern co-founded the New York Collective for Living Cinema and the Los Angeles Independent Film Oasis. She taught at several universities, including the University of



Southern California. Halpern was a member of the classic West Coast light show Single Wing Turquoise Bird, performing on liquids and transparencies. Curated by David Lebrun.

Feature in Competition

Brief Space of a Time

12:30pm | State Theatre 1

The daily life of the filmmaker's aunt and uncle, Mireya and Emaro, an indigenous Mapuche couple living in their ancestral land, the Wallmapu. Providing an intimate observation of the everyday, *Brief Space of a Time* highlights the Mapuche's poetic and peaceful rhythms of life. Directed by Fernando Saldivia Yáñez.

Feature in Competition

Giant's Kettle

2pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

In a rational utopia somewhere up north there is a man longing for connection and a woman who has everything figured out for her, without her. They do their best to fit in and fulfill their roles but struggle to connect with the world, themselves, and others. *Giant's Kettle* is a journey into the unconscious, a love story without love, an epic tragicomedy of the mundane, and a mystery in a world emptied of mystery. Directed by Markku Hakala and Mari Käki.

Special Feature Film

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Strange Culture*

3pm | State Theatre 1

Strange Culture (2007) is a feature film that examines the case of artist and professor Steve Kurtz, a member of the Critical Art Ensemble (CAE). The work of Kurtz and other CAE members dealt with genetically modified food and other issues of science and public policy. After his wife Hope died of heart failure, paramedics arrived and became suspicious when they noticed petri dishes and other scientific equipment related to Kurtz's art in his home. The FBI detained Kurtz on suspicion of bioterrorism.

Festival Award Celebration

Closing night of the festival offers two programs of select award-winning films, as chosen by this year's panel of three distinguished AAFF jurors.



Awards 1

5pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Come for the live announcement of the 62nd AAFF awards and a screening of select awarded films.

Awards 2

7pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Stay for a second screening to see more award-winning films from the 62nd AAFF.

Feature Films in Competition

- **Mum** by Joeseef Ouarrak
 - Wednesday, March 27 | 5:30pm | State Theatre 2
- **Anqa** by Helin Çelik
 - Wednesday, March 27 | 9pm | State Theatre 1
- **Playland** by Georden West
 - Thursday, March 27 | 9pm | State Theatre 1
- **A Stranger Quest** by Andrea Gatopoulos
 - Friday, March 29 | 1pm | State Theatre 1
- **Domus de Janas** by Myriam Raccah
 - Friday, March 29 | 3pm | State Theatre 1
- **Mechanisms Common to Disparate Phenomena; #59** by Joost Rekveld
 - Saturday, March 30 | 3pm | State Theatre 1
- **Light Falls Vertical** by Efthymia Zymvragaki
 - Saturday, March 30 | 5pm | State Theatre 1
- **Esther Newton Made Me Gay** by Jean Carlomusto
 - Saturday, March 30 | 5:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium
- **Brief Space of a Time** by Fernando Saldivia Yáñez
 - Sunday, March 31 | 12:30pm | State Theatre 1
- **Giant's Kettle** by Markku Hakala and Mari Käki
 - Sunday, March 31 | 2pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium



Short Films in Competition (FIC) Highlights

Films in Competition 1

TUE 3/26 | 8:15pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

The 62nd Festival begins with this screening of experimental, documentary, and animated films, featuring a calibration test film; two abstract, cosmic energies; two Texas sisters in the metaverse; a provocative story of longing and connection; the horrors and absurdities of life during Putin's war on Ukraine; a familiar world within a world; and an explosion.

Films in Competition 2

WED 3/27 | 9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *I'm Outside* by Nina Alexandraki and Eleftherios Panagiotou, this program of mixed-media films features the labyrinth of life and existence; history and darkness; the ambivalent power of invisible phenomena; pulsing flashbacks; the introspection of artist Bettina Szabo; dualism and illusions about truth; and a textural macrocollage of a rust belt landscape.

Films in Competition 3: Out Night

THU 3/28 | 7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

The 23rd celebration of queer cinema at AAFF spotlights contemporary experimental films with LGBTQ+ themes and features a non-binary visual artist's relationship with darkness; a collection of non-phallic dildos and forbidden love; learning two languages; the morality police; horrifying reminiscences transforming into music; and a journey along the paths of memory and desire.

Films in Competition 4

THU 3/28 | 9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Madwomen: to be a sparrow not a canary* by Johannes Löhmus and Sten Haljak, these experimental, narrative, and documentary films involve a housewife confronting situations to which no sane response exists; the catalog; transformation and connecting with nature; ideas of precarity and collapse; borders shifting as arctic ice melts; images shot through architectural glass; and a 550-million-year-old oceanic species.



Films in Competition 5: Music Videos

FRI 3/29 | 5pm | University of Michigan Museum of Art Helmut Stern Auditorium | free

These experimental music videos feature a meditation on how art can be both ephemeral and immortal; fleeting thoughts and loosely grasped memories; the surreal and toxic world of Adam and Eve; a maelstrom of internet memories; a devious man in a hat; a trip through thoughts; the universe of the language and the language of the universe; a continuum in which all beings have equal value; a transformative encounter; and a journey of provocative storytelling.

Films in Competition 6: 35mm and 16mm

FRI 3/29 | 5:30pm | University of Michigan SKB 2500

A program of 35mm and 16mm experimental, animated, and documentary films, featuring Argentinian filmmaker Pablo Mazzolo's second film focusing on the border region of Windsor-Detroit; a live sound accompaniment by first time AAFF filmmaker Gabriel Bellone; and eleven minutes filled with tens of thousands of individual retinal photographs, animated.

Films in Competition 7

FRI 3/29 | 7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

A program of recent experimental and documentary films featuring the limits of what we cannot pin down and understand; a raven who dreams of nature; the poetics of grief and precarity; lines of loss and failure of memory; and an associative work of polycultural sentiments.

Films in Competition 8: Animation

FRI 3/29 | 9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

This program of recent animated films from near and far includes two unique symbiotic visual universes; an abandoned house in Detroit; a ceaseless wave of dissolution; Winnie the Pooh giving birth to a descendant; uncovering logic; a woman's visual diaries; a mark on the bodies of the three De Nooijers; and disembodied meaty legs.



Films in Competition 9: Almost All Ages (6+)

SAT 3/30 | 1:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium | \$7

Family-friendly films featuring mirror divination and a clever spirit; a celebration of happiness; neckties; a healing journey exploring emotion and space; an abstract

journey exploring connection; a handmade tattoo film; an ominous forest; a girl, in the depths of her dreams; Bella, a North American luna moth; a love letter to motherhood; and an alien beach.

Films in Competition 10

SAT 3/30 | 3:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Humoresque* by Shinya Isobe, these narrative and animated films include an improvised science-fiction-like world, a little girl who playfully chases a bird, kaleidoscopic sensations of touch and elemental change, and two women attempting to escape what they can't help but live.

Films in Competition 11

SAT 3/30 | 7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *Quiet As It's Kept* by Ja'Tovia Gary, this program of experimental, documentary, and animated films includes visions of the within and of the beyond; a magical 3D illusion; a two-way mirror with the lights switched off; fourteen women and their male allies; stripes of colors in motion; and a glimpse into a carefree time of adventure and freedom.

Films in Competition 12

9:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Featuring *No More Room in Hell* by Rebecca Shapass, this program of mixed-media films features zombiehood in relation to industry, techno-capitalism, and apocalyptic realities; a narrative that subverts expectations; the iconic poppy scene from *The Wizard of Oz*; an AI dominatrix brought to life; a world where touch is forbidden; the ancestral fire; and a stream of consciousness inspired by the poem "Advice" by Langston Hughes.



Off The Screen

New media, video, live performance, and art installations that are either ongoing during festival week or happen at a specific time. *Off The Screen* also includes panel discussions, workshops, and presentations by friends and artists of the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

TUE 3/26

Reception

4-6pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435
New Voices and *Grafica Harmolodica*

Grafica Harmolodica

4:30pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435
Performance by David Olson

WED 3/27

New Voices Coffee, Bagels, and Film Jam

10am-12pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435

Student Lunch Mixer

12pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435
Provided by the Michigan State University Film Studies Program
RSVP@aafilmfest.org required

Screening Groups Roundtable

3-4:30pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435
Moderated by Sean Donovan

Expanded Cinema Performances

7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium | ticket required
Scott Stark; Laura Conway; Rachel Makana Aloha O Kauikeolani Nakawatase,
Ryan Betschart, and Melissa Ferarri

THU 3/28

Coffee & Bagels: Meet the artists of Dope Women in Media and Detroit Narrative Agency



10–11:30am | U-M North Quad Space 2435

Exhibition Reception

3–5pm | Ann Arbor Art Center

Dope Women in Media: Honoring the Women of Film in Metro Detroit

Curated by Laura D. Gibson

FRI 3/29

The 8 Fest, Coffee, & Bagels: Remembering Ann Arbor's Other Film Festival

10am–12pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435

Curated by Frank Uhle

The Last Forever

3pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435

Live cinema performance by Kamila Kuc and Scott Stark

Relict: A Phantasmagoria

7pm | State Theatre | ticket required

Magic lantern performance by Melissa Ferrari

SAT 3/30

The Joy of LOOPing

9am–12pm | U-M North Quad Space 2435

Workshop by Pickle Fort Film Collective

SUN 3/31

Bagels and Coffee Social Hour

10–11:30am | U-M North Quad Space 2435



Off The Screen Installations

Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Ann Arbor Art Center | *Dope Women in Media: Honoring the Women of Film in Metro Detroit*

Michigan Theater Lobby | Peter Sparling, Noel Stupek
Amanda Krugliak performances (various times throughout the festival)

State Theatre | Aldo Tambellini, M. Woods

U-M North Quad 2435 | David Olson, New Voices

The Complete Schedule of Off the Screen Performances is forthcoming.



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

In addition to exhibiting over one hundred new films in juried competition programs each year, the AAFF presents filmmaker retrospectives, historic and thematic surveys, and contemporary artist programs. Find the lineup for the 62nd special programs below.

Visions from Colorado

WED 3/27 | 5pm | State Theatre 1

The intensity and quality of light in Colorado led visionary artist Stan Brakhage to experiment over several decades with film, editing, and evocation of place, from high in the mountains down to the plains. In turn, other Colorado-linked filmmakers—friends, colleagues, mentees, admirers, examiners—entered the same conversation with light and vision. Ten films, all touching the Rocky Mountain backbone, talk to one another across the stones and meltwater, as they track the ripples across layers of time. Curated by Erin Espelie and Jennifer Peterson.

What Are Words For?

WED 3/27 | 7pm | State Theatre 1

What Are Words For? considers ways in which an array of artists, most of whom identify in some way as disabled and/or D/deaf, redefine the tropes of accessible media accommodations. By activating unexpected usages of open captions and audio description, these works transcend notions of disability access as an afterthought by building worlds beyond the scope of translation. Curated by Darrin Martin.

Expanded Cinema Performances

WED 3/27 | 7:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Three performances that employ live manipulation of the moving image, creating a dynamic audience experience: *Music in the Air* by Scott Stark, *Lass That Has Gone* by Laura Conway with Fragrant Blossom, and *Kino Lau: Many Bodies* by Rachel Makana Aloha O Kauikeolani Nakawatase, Ryan Betschart, and Melissa Ferarri.



Penny Stamps Speaker Series

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *BIO_DOT_BOT*

THU 3/28 | 5:30pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium | free

Lynn Hershman Leeson’s work cannot be contained by any one medium. Her practice is voracious, consuming both traditional artistic media (installation, painting, and video) as well as interactive laser discs and synthetic DNA. This special program of her short film and video works highlights her long-standing fascination with reality, selfhood, and technological reproduction, prompting us to question whether it is at all possible to disambiguate ourselves from our tech-saturated worlds. Curated by Julia Yezbick, who will follow the screening with an on-stage conversation with the filmmaker.

Black Infinitude

THU 3/28 | 7pm | State Theatre 1

Black Infinitude is a retrospective of and an homage to Aldo Tambellini (29 April 1930–12 November 2020), an Italian-American painter, sculptor, poet, and filmmaker who pioneered electronic intermedia. Tambellini did not enter filmmaking through the camera—he approached the medium as a sculptural object, with which he could introduce the element of time into his exploration of negative and positive cosmic space. Curated by M. Woods.

A Horse is Not a Metaphor and

Relict: A Phantasmagoria

FRI 3/29 | 7pm | State Theatre 1

“[In Barbara Hammer’s] autobiographical experimental film *A Horse Is Not A Metaphor*, the artist reflects on her personal fight against stage 3 ovarian cancer, transforming illness into recovery. Describing herself as a cancer ‘thrivor’ rather than a ‘survivor,’ Hammer rides on horseback through the red hills of Georgia O’Keeffe’s Ghost Ranch in New Mexico, the grassy foothills of the Big Horn in Wyoming, and leafy paths in Woodstock, New York.” –Electronic Arts Intermix

Melissa Ferrari’s *Relict: A Phantasmagoria* is an experimental documentary performed with antique magic lanterns and hand-drawn animation. Invoking the history of magic lantern phantasmagoria as an exercise in belief and perception, *Relict* considers the zeitgeist of pseudoscience, fake news, religion, and documentary ethics in cryptozoology.

Playing Footsi: Ann Arbor Filmmakers of the 1960s–1980s

FRI 3/29 | 9pm | State Theatre 1



George Manupelli launched the Ann Arbor Film Festival in part as a way to screen his own work, but it soon inspired other locals to take up cameras. Many were members of student film societies like Cinema Guild, Cinema II, and the Ann Arbor Film Cooperative. During this pre-digital era many films made here by locals, or elsewhere by recent expatriates, were shown at the festival, won prizes, and went on tour. This program includes films by or featuring people who are remembered today through AAFF awards: Tom Berman, Chris Frayne, Peter Wilde, and Manupelli himself. Curated by Frank Uhle.

Special Feature Film

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Teknolust!*

FRI 3/29 | 11pm | State Theatre 1

In *Teknolust!* (2002), biogeneticist Rosetta Stone downloads her own DNA into an experimental AI program, creating a trio of cyborgian clones. The clones' survival depends on injections of male Y chroma, only found in sperm. Ruby, one of the clones, ventures out and seduces men to secure the cyborgs' survival.

Special Program

An Animal Is Not a Metaphor

SAT 3/30 | 7pm | State Theatre 1

Since the early days of avant-garde cinema, some iconic experimental films have abundantly featured animals, usually presented not as mere props or companions, but as central characters both closely interlinked with and independent of humans. In response to the animal crisis and the current developments of the Anthropocene, this program will demonstrate how artist-made films bring in the animal viewpoint so that animals become not just a subject or a metaphor, but a real object of the film, and how they provide clues to reexamining and transforming species co-existence. Curated by Kornelia Boczkowska.

Special Feature Film Program

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Conceiving Ada*

SAT 3/30 | 9pm | State Theatre 1

Tilda Swinton embodies Lady Ada Lovelace, the mathematics genius who developed what became the world's first computer language 100 years before computers were invented (and also the daughter of Romantic poet Lord Byron). Lovelace's story is channeled through Emmy, a computer scientist researching artificial life.



Special Program

Amy Halpern Retrospective

SUN 3/31 | 12pm | Michigan Theater Main Auditorium

Amy Halpern (1953–2022) was one of Los Angeles’s leading experimental/independent filmmakers. Committed to encouraging a wider awareness of absolute film, Halpern co-founded the New York Collective for Living Cinema and the Los Angeles Independent Film Oasis. She taught at several universities, including the University of Southern California. Halpern was a member of the classic West Coast light show Single Wing Turquoise Bird, performing on liquids and transparencies. Curated by David Lebrun.

Special Feature Film

Lynn Hershman Leeson: *Strange Culture*

SUN 3/31 | 3pm | State Theatre 1

Strange Culture (2007) is a feature film that examines the case of artist and professor Steve Kurtz, a member of the Critical Art Ensemble (CAE). The work of Kurtz and other CAE members dealt with genetically modified food and other issues of science and

public policy. After his wife Hope died of heart failure, paramedics arrived and became suspicious when they noticed petri dishes and other scientific equipment related to Kurtz’s art in his home. They summoned the FBI, who detained Kurtz within hours on suspicion of bioterrorism.

62nd AAFF Jurors

Every year the AAFF invites three distinguished artists to jury and confer awards to deserving films and filmmakers. This year, the jury consists of accomplished filmmakers, educators, and arts leaders **Su Friedrich**, **Deanna Morse**, and **Wenhua Shi**.



Su Friedrich



Deanna Morse



Wenhua Shi

The three will attend the six-day festival, viewing 110 films in competition and awarding approximately \$23,000 in cash and in-kind awards. In addition, each juror will present a specially curated program of work during the festival, free to attend in-person.

Since 1978, juror **Su Friedrich** has directed twenty-five films and videos that have been widely screened, extensively written about, and featured in retrospectives at major museums and film festivals including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, International Film Festival Rotterdam, the Buenos Aires Festival of Independent Cinema, and the National Film Theater in London. Her work is the subject of two recent books: *Su Friedrich: Interviews*, edited by Sonia Misra and Rox Samer (University of Mississippi Press, 2022) and *Su Friedrich* by Barbara Mennel (University of Illinois Press, 2023). Her films have won numerous awards, including Grand Prix at the Melbourne Film Festival, Outstanding Documentary Award at Outfest, and Best Narrative Film Award at the Athens International Film Festival.

Juror **Deanna Morse** is an artist, educator, and a leader in international organizations that support animators and independent film and video artists. She is the current President of ASIFA International (*Association Internationale du Film d'Animation*), the oldest international organization of animators. Morse has judged dozens of festivals and



was recently invited to join the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. A prolific animator, she has made a film each year since the early 1970's and has film and video work in permanent collections at institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Her current work considers our relationships to landscapes, exploring ideas of place, time, and seasonal change. An Emeritus Professor of Grand Valley State University in Michigan, she lives in Oregon on a lane with goats, chickens, native plants, and family.

Juror **Wenhua Shi** is Associate Professor in Art and Art History at the University of Massachusetts Boston, and the founder and a curator of RPM Festival. After shifting out of the medical field in his hometown of Wuhan, China, Shi went on to study experimental film in the US. Since earning his BA, BFA, and MFA, Shi explores sound, film, video, installation, and sculpture, pursuing a poetic approach to the making of moving images and investigating conceptual depth in various mediums. Shi's work has been presented globally, including the International Film Festival Rotterdam, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Athens Film and Video Festival, and West Bund 2013: a Biennale of Architecture and Contemporary Art. He has received numerous awards from the New York Foundation for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, and grants from the LEF Foundation.

Juror Programs

All Juror Programs, free and open to the public.

***Move Click Move* | Deanna Morse**
WED 3/27 | 1pm | State Theatre 1

Move Click Move is a diverse program of 18 animated and experimental films by Deanna Morse. From *Sesame Street* to the *Odessa Steps* to the *Everglades* and the *computer lab*, Morse has created at least one film poem each year since college. This work explores materials and techniques, shifting time and space by considering what is between the frames as we celebrate seasons, people, change, and nature. Collaborating with children, musicians, and puppeteers using pioneering computer animation techniques, timelapse, kinestasis, or simple cut outs, her visual poems are like postcards. A postcard message that says, "Wish you were here," often sharing common surroundings. Move, click, move.



***She, Her, Hers* | Su Friedrich**
THU 3/28 | 1pm | State Theatre 1

This program comprises one film by Su Friedrich and four others by women who have informed her filmmaking, though not necessarily directly. These films deal with aesthetic and technical concerns which are somewhat or sometimes different than her own. But each shares a fierce spirit that inspired Friedrich when she first saw them, and the inspiration continues to today. Whether using analog video to create otherworldly worlds, putting a little girl through some strange paces, “rewriting” a video game, or sharing playful moments with some young women, these films are admired by Friedrich because they are made from the hearts, minds, eyes, and bodies of some very observant, thoughtful, clever, and playful women.

***On Time* | Wenhua Shi**
SAT 3/30 | 1pm | University of Michigan SKB 2500

On Time is a selection of Wenhua Shi’s moving image work from the recent decade. “Over the past ten years, we have been faced with the unexpected. The demands from all sides became monumentally heavy. Looking through the viewfinder is my way of being in the moment. Editing becomes a new way of rediscovering/investigating the experiences and measurement of time.” –Wenhua Shi