

APRIL 24
- MAY 4

film
fest
dc

WASHINGTON, DC
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL

FILMFESTDC.ORG

20
25

Filmfest DC

April 24 – May 4, 2025

Welcome to the 39th Annual Washington, DC International Film Festival

63 films • 36 countries • 11 days • 1 amazing festival



A heartfelt thank you to the incredible team whose dedication makes this festival possible. Now, we invite you to discover the stories that await and experience firsthand the transformative power of film as it takes us on unforgettable journeys.

Tony Gittens

Founder and Director
Washington, DC International Film Festival

Photo: Chad Evans Watt
Tony Gittens, Festival Director, and Shirin Ghareeb, Deputy Director



In Loving Memory of Ted Pedas

This year's Filmfest DC is dedicated to the memory of Ted Pedas, a cherished long-time board member and a steadfast friend and patron of the festival. Ted's unwavering support and passion for the arts played an instrumental role in shaping the festival into what it is today. Thanks to his dedication, Filmfest DC found a welcoming home at Circle Theaters for many years. From the festival's inception to the present day, Ted's contributions were invaluable, and his commitment to fostering the arts will always be remembered. He will be sorely missed by the entire Filmfest DC community.

Opening Film

The Marching Band

Emmanuel Courcol

France, 2024, 103 minutes

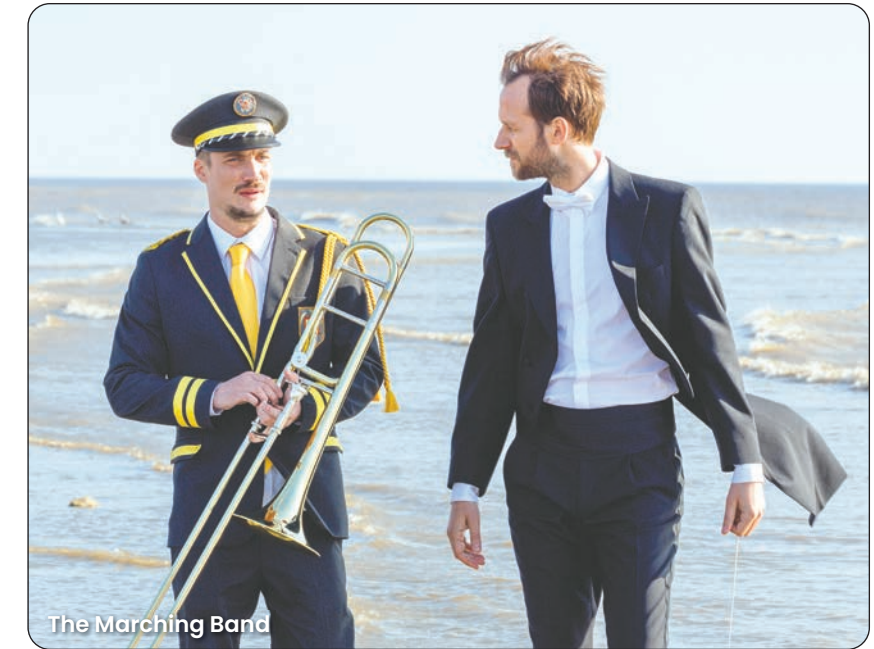
Winner of the Audience Award at the San Sebastián International Film Festival, *The Marching Band* is an irresistibly heartwarming dramedy that follows the crossed paths of two protagonists: Thibaut (Benjamin Lavernhe), a world-renowned conductor living a seemingly charmed life, and Jimmy (Pierre Lottin), an ordinary factory worker who plays the trombone in a local marching band.

When Thibaut learns of his potentially life-threatening illness, a blood compatibility test opens up unexpected horizons. He sets out to find his long-lost biological brother Jimmy, whom destiny has prevented from becoming a professional musician. Their lives may be worlds apart—Thibaut was raised in a posh Parisian suburb and has a seemingly charmed life, while Jimmy lives in a small working-class town and slings hash in a cafeteria. Their relationship starts off on shaky footing, until they discover their shared love of music. When the band's conductor quits, Jimmy signs up to start leading the group and enlists his brother to turn them into a well-tuned, prize-winning ensemble. Actors Benjamin Lavernhe and Pierre Lottin bring the characters to life with all of their longings, resentments, and complexes intact. French filmmaker Emmanuel Courcol premiered his crowd-pleasing fraternal, musical journey at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival.

—Various sources

In French with English subtitles

Thursday, April 24, 7:00 PM, Embassy of France, \$45
Followed by a reception



The Marching Band

Sponsored by:

Villa Albertine

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
AUX ÉTATS-UNIS
Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

For security reasons, film tickets must be purchased in advance. A government-issued ID that matches the name on the reservation will be required to enter the Embassy.

Ticket Information

General admission is \$14 unless otherwise noted.

Advance Sales

Visit filmfestdc.org to select the films you would like to see and make your purchase. Please note that ticket sales online will end at noon on the day of the show.

Day-of-Sales

Same-day tickets can be purchased at the theater. The box office opens one hour before the venue's first screening of the day.

Director's Pass

A ten-ticket Director's Pass for \$100.00 (\$140.00 value) is available through advance sales only and applies to \$14 screenings only. (Opening & Closing events are excluded)

Under 25 Discount Ticket

\$10 tickets for movie lovers ages 16 to 25 available for sale at the theater. Bring your ID. (Opening Night and Closing Night events are excluded)

Theater Locations

Main Location

Regal Gallery Place

701 7th St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

Parking Information: Three hours of complimentary parking in Gallery Place Garage with validation.

Closest Metro station: Gallery Place-Chinatown or Metro Center

Other Locations

Embassy of France

4101 Reservoir Rd. NW, Washington, DC 20007

Parking Information: Street parking available

Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library Auditorium

901 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

Closest Metro station: Gallery Place or Metro Center

National Gallery of Art

East Building Auditorium

4th & Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20565

Closest Metro station: National Archives/Navy Memorial

The Wharf

960 Wharf St. SW, Washington, DC 20024

Parking Information: Limited paid parking is available

Closest Metro station: L'Enfant Plaza or Waterfront



Grand Finale

Sponsored by:

events DC



Closing Film

Grand Finale

Sigurjón Kjartansson

Iceland, 2024, 95 minutes

In this witty comedy, a beleaguered classical chamber orchestra (actually a string sextet using the more impressive-sounding title "orchestra" to lure customers) has been playing to smaller and less-enthusiastic audiences when it learns that the city's Culture Committee plans to withdraw its funding. The group is already dealing with interpersonal issues (is the violin player cheating on the violist with the bass player?) when news breaks that world-renowned star cellist Klemens (Hilmir Snær Guðnason) is returning to his Icelandic homeland. After a day spent fruitlessly pleading for a reprieve from disaster and dealing with a frantic stage manager about the deteriorating condition of the theater, band leader Sigríður (Helga Braga Jónsdóttir) impulsively calls the accomplished Klemens to help. Surprisingly, he agrees to come to a rehearsal. Of course, this means regular cellist Svenni (Halldór Gylfason) is out. A comedy of manners and music ensues as Klemens ingratiates himself with the rest of the musicians in ways not exactly wanted or virtuous. The seemingly perfect resolution for the group's future is now fraught with even more internal drama as Klemens' behavior throws everyone out of tune. After a shocking turn, the phrase "the show must go on" becomes both command and curse as the musicians must play their most perfect concert for a sold-out VIP crowd and give a musically, physically, and personally challenging performance.—Dave Nuttycombe

In Icelandic with English subtitles

Sunday, May 4, 4:00 PM
Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library Auditorium, \$25
Followed by a reception

Information

filmfestdc.org | 202-234-FILM

@filmfestDC on



SCAN ME

Highlights



Four Mothers

THE LIGHTER SIDE

International comedies

- Babies Don't Come With Instructions (Spain)
- Grand Finale (Iceland)
- Four Mothers (Ireland)
- Lion's Heart (Argentina)
- Rodrigue in Love (France)

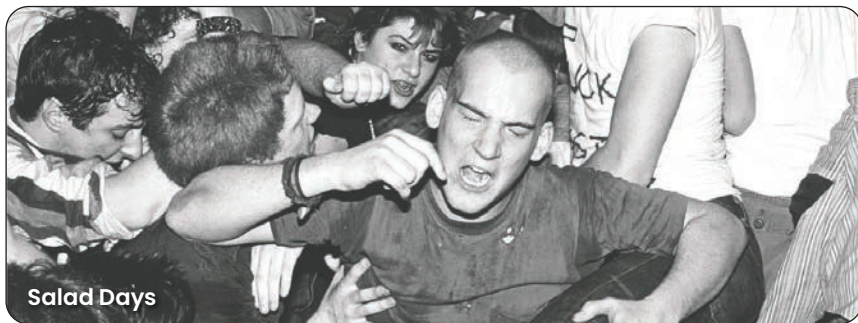


Confidante

TRUST NO ONE

Espionage, Crime, and Thrillers

- Confidante (Turkey)
- Stranger Eyes (Singapore)
- Frieda's Case (Switzerland)
- Visiting Hours (France)



Salad Days

GLOBAL RHYTHMS

Films about international music

- Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me (USA)
- Monsieur Aznavour (France)
- Billy Preston: That's the Way God Planned It (USA)
- The Musicians (France)
- The Marching Band (France)
- Salad Days (USA)



Visiting Hours

VOILÀ CINEMA!

The newest films from France

- Last Breath
- Rodrigue in Love
- Monsieur Aznavour
- Souleymane's Story
- The Musicians
- Visiting Hours



Disorder

ARABIAN SIGHTS

The newest films about the Arab world

- Aicha (Tunisia)
- Happy Holidays (Palestine)
- Disorder (Lebanon)
- Yalla Parkour (Palestine)
- Fez Summer 55 (Morocco)



The Dalai Lama's Gift

DC4REEL

Films from the creative community of filmmakers in DC

- Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me (USA)
- The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World (USA)
- The Dalai Lama's Gift (USA)
- Salad Days (USA)
- Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals (USA)



BORDERLAND | The Line Within

JUSTICE MATTERS

A competitive section that celebrates activism and creative efforts to make the world a better place, the Justice Matters section features stories of people coming together to defend democracy, empower communities, and to stand up and fight for their rights and the rights of others. We thank the CrossCurrents Foundation for their support of this series.

- BORDERLAND | The Line Within (USA)
- Homegrown (USA)
- The Last Republican (USA)
- The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World (USA)
- The People's Way (USA)

THE AWARD JURY CONSISTS OF:

- Nan Aron** – Founding President of Alliance of Justice
- Judy Hallet** – Award-winning Filmmaker and Producer
- Conrad Martin** – Executive Director, Stewart R. Mott Foundation and Executive Director of the Fund for Constitutional Government



Impact Project

As a part of Filmfest DC's commitment to encourage civic dialogue, the Impact Project facilitates connections between festival films, filmmakers, and the broader DC community, especially those constituents who may not be the usual audience for a film festival. We collaborate with producers of relevant festival films, providing access to community organizations and groups and partnering with Teaching for Change to take films and filmmakers to DC school classes. Impact Project is directed by Linda Blackaby, Filmfest DC senior programmer and supported by a grant from the Wyncote Foundation.



Wyncote Foundation

Be A Part of The Movie Buzz



Go to dcfilmsociety.org for more information

Ted Pedas Award

The Ted Pedas Award is a juried competition of selected films that deserve increased recognition. This award is named in honor of Ted and Jim Pedas, founders of Washington's Circle Theatres, which set the standard for innovative quality film programming in Washington, DC.

- Aicha (Tunisia)
- Diamanti (Italy)
- The Musicians (France)
- Seven Days (Germany)
- Souleymane's Story (France)
- Stranger Eyes (Singapore)

THE AWARD JURY CONSISTS OF:

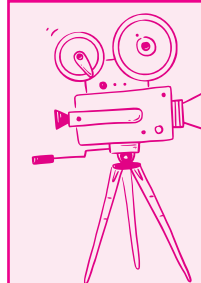
- Felix Angel** – Former Curator, Inter-American Development Bank
- Peggy Parsons** – Film curator emerita
- Karen Thomas** – Producer/Director, Film Odyssey

Filmfest DC Audience Award

Filmfest DC will present two audience awards: one to the feature film and one to the documentary voted the most popular by our audience. Ballots will be available after each screening. All award winners will be announced on Closing Night.



Catalog cover and banner designed by Alexis Thornlow



Filmfest DC Trailers

This year's Filmfest DC trailers were created by three very talented film students at George Mason University: **Emma Davenport**, **Khubab Hassan**, and **Aryaman Kantawala**. Our trailers will be shown prior to festival screenings.



US Premiere
Arabian Sights

Aicha

Mehdi M. Barsaoui
Tunisia/France/Italy/Saudi Arabia/Qatar, 2024, 123 minutes

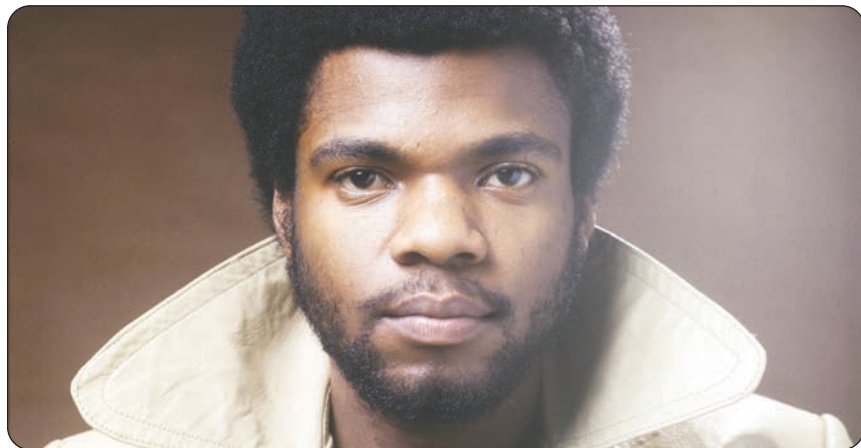
In parched southern Tunisia, Aya (Fatma Sfar) still lives with her parents, whose debts she is forced to pay with a dead-end hotel job. Then a miracle happens: she dies. That is, she is assumed to have died in a fiery crash that kills her coworkers. Aya seizes the chance to escape to Tunis and a fresh start with a new identity. But freedom, and ultimately identity, prove elusive. Even in a city where young people can go clubbing into the night, where women hold the highest offices—judge, police chief—misogyny and corruption go hand in hand. After a fracas at a nightclub, Aya becomes a pawn in a police coverup. Director Mehdi M. Barsaoui, speaking for “Tunisian youth whose dreams are too often denied,” has presented us with “a paradox where true freedom for the protagonist can only be attained through her death.”—Judy Bloch

In Arabic with English subtitles

Co-presented with:



Thursday, May 1, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Friday, May 2, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Global Rhythms

Billy Preston: That's The Way God Planned It

Paris Barclay
USA, 2024, 104 minutes

Mega-talented keyboardist and songwriter Billy Preston was often referred to as “the best musician in the room.” In this mesmerizing, music-rich documentary, Paris Barclay examines the late musician’s extraordinary career and life. Raised in the Black church, Preston was a child prodigy who played organ on tour with Mahalia Jackson at 10. As a solo artist, he scored number one hits and did collaborations with Aretha Franklin, the Rolling Stones, Elton John, The Beatles, and more. He did all of this as a soul divided—by his deep roots in the church, in constant conflict with his identity as a gay Black man, and searching for a family of his own that would accept him for who he was. With archival interviews, testimony from famous friends, and scads of incandescent performance footage demonstrating Preston’s charisma and monumental talent, the film pays soulful homage to a musical genius. —Various sources

Saturday, April 26, 8:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Sunday, April 27, 4:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



North American Premiere
The Lighter Side

Babies Don't Come With Instructions

Marina Sereskesy
Spain, 2024, 99 minutes

Aday is a carefree womanizer living a hedonistic and self-centered life in a small coastal town in the Canary Islands. His world is turned upside down when a woman from a brief, casual affair shows up, drops off their daughter, and leaves, making him responsible for the girl. At first, Aday intends to return her to her mother, but his attempts fail. Forced to raise his daughter, little by little, he learns how to be a father and his values and priorities shift in unexpected ways. Years pass, filled with happiness, until the mother reappears and intends to reclaim her daughter. *Babies Don't Come With Instructions* features acclaimed actor and comedian Paco León, joined by the promising young Maia Zaitegi and the talented Silvia Alonso. Set against the breathtaking volcanic landscapes of the Canary Island of Lanzarote, this fable will both move and entertain the whole family.—Various sources

In Spanish with English subtitles

Sunday, April 27, 7:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, May 3, 6:20 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Black Tea

Abderrahmane Sissako
France/Taiwan/Luxembourg/Mauritania, 2024, 110 minutes

This exquisite tale of friendship and forbidden love unfolds in Chocolate City—the nickname for the part of Guangzhou, China where exiled Africans gather, live, and connect. At its center is Aya, a young woman who, after astonishing everyone by saying “No” on her wedding day, leaves the Ivory Coast for a new life in China. There she finds a job in a tea boutique owned by Cai, a Chinese man, who initiates Aya into the Chinese tea ceremony. As he teaches her this ancient art, their relationship slowly grows into one of tender love. But for their burgeoning passion to be supported by trust, both must let go of their burdens and face up to their pasts. *Black Tea*, the first film in a decade from veteran Mauritanian auteur Abderrahmane Sissako, is a remarkable, observational, and sensual work that premiered at Berlinale earlier this year.—Various sources

In Mandarin, French, English, and Portuguese with English subtitles

Saturday, April 26, 8:35 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 6:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Justice Matters

BORDERLAND | The Line Within

Pamela Yates
USA, 2024, 110 minutes

There is no actual line at the border, as most of us realize. But in Pamela Yates’ new documentary we see there is no border because ICE is everywhere: the border lives within each individual who is subject to its control. Yates follows two journeys to this border: that of Guatemalan human rights worker Kaxh, who escapes local assassins only to become incarcerated in the United States, and Gabriela, a Texas mother whose DACA status is revoked due to her activism on behalf of migrants. Yates also introduces us to a new breed of scholar-activists called digital humanists, whose work documents the carceral web that is the “border-industrial complex.” Yates’ previous trilogy on indigenous people’s environmental resistance in Guatemala won awards at past Filmfest DCs. Once again, she spurs, shocks, and educates us into caring about a struggle for justice, this one closer to home.—Judy Bloch

In English and Spanish with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 7:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Sunday, April 27, 1:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



US Premiere
Trust No One

Confidante

Çağla Zencirci and Guillaume Giovanetti
Turkey/France/Luxembourg, 2025, 76 minutes

Following on the success of *Anora*, *Confidante* focuses on another woman struggling in a high-pressure, male-dominated environment. In 1999 Turkey, Arzu (Saadet Aksoy, in a mesmerizing performance) works at a busy sex hotline where multiple phone lines are labeled with callers’ particular kinks. After Arzu endures many calls, each more explicit than the last, an enormous earthquake hits a distant part of the country and she finds herself trying to rescue over the phone a young boy trapped in rubble. That he previously prank-called her is now beside the point. At the same time, a regular customer might have revealed himself as part of a secret government operation and now agents are closing in on him. Arzu is also struggling through a bitter divorce, and if the nature of her job were known, she could lose custody of her son. With each ring of a phone, Arzu must decide whether to keep the lines open or hang up.—Dave Nuttycombe

In Turkish with English subtitles

Saturday, April 26, 6:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 8:35 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Bushido

Kazuya Shiraishi
Japan, 2024, 129 minutes

The many cherry blossoms crowding the screen at the start of this period drama add a wistful quality to the tale of a dishonored samurai living in exile, but the story soon turns tense. Yanagida is behind on rent, although the former warrior spends his days quietly playing the ancient board game Go while his daughter, Kino, scrambles to keep the household going. When Yanagida allows the powerful but less-skilled pawnshop owner Genbei to win a game, a cautious alliance forms. But as word comes that Yanagida’s reputation may be restored, he is again accused of a crime and stakes for everyone grow higher. The tenets of the Bushido code, by which samurais lived—loyalty, respect, self-discipline, courage, etc.—are exemplified in the film not by wild fights, but through games of Go, as Yanagida works to reclaim his honor (although there is some brutal swordsmanship).—Dave Nuttycombe

In Japanese with English subtitles

Saturday, April 26, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Thursday, May 1, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Counted Out

Vicki Abeles
USA, 2024, 90 minutes

Most of us appreciate that literacy is a door to civic and social engagement, one we expect to be open for all. But...math? Vicki Abeles’s spirited film offers a compelling argument for math literacy as the key to understanding contemporary issues, from inequality to political polarization to climate change. In a world where data can determine our healthcare, our dating habits, our political options, and the jobs we get, the person who does the math is the person with power. Yet so many children are shut off from math’s potential, and their own. Abeles offers a mosaic of voices, from educators to civil and human rights leaders, all passionate advocates for math literacy as the gateway to democracy. Most inspiring are the young students who, given a nurturing environment, grow before our eyes from kids cowed by numbers into “math people.” They have the power to change the equation.—Judy Bloch

Saturday, April 26, 1:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place

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DC4Reel

The Dalai Lama's Gift

Ed Bastian
USA, 2024, 77 minutes

In 1981, a historic event in the heart of Wisconsin became a transformative moment in American spirituality: His Holiness the Dalai Lama initiated over a thousand young Americans into the ancient Kalachakra Tantra, the Wheel of Time, at Deer Park Monastery. The incredible footage was tucked away in the Smithsonian vaults for over 40 years, until now. This documentary immerses viewers in the energy of a generation drawn to Tibetan Buddhism's mysteries and wisdom. With intimate interviews capturing the Dalai Lama's humor, compassion, and vision, we witness his efforts to preserve Tibetan culture and his devotion to peace—a dedication that would later earn him the Nobel Prize. Alongside stories from the young Americans who organized and transformed their town's skepticism into enthusiasm, we see the fierce determination to create something lasting.—*Various sources*

Sunday, April 27, 2:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



North American Premiere
Arabian Sights

Disorder

Lucien Bourjeily, Bane Fakh, Wissam Charaf, Areej Mahmoud
Lebanon, 2024, 91 minutes

Executive produced by renowned Lebanese director and actress Nadine Labaki, *Disorder* is a powerful anthology film featuring four darkly comedic stories exploring Lebanon's modern-day struggles following the 2019 economic crisis and resulting political strife that continued after the enormous Beirut port explosion of 2020. "The Group" focuses on a meeting of would-be protesters discovering that their cantankerous planning sessions are being recorded by the government, "Motherland" finds a mother and three daughters arguing over almost everything as each tries to find a way to adapt to the current reality, "Don't Panic" portrays a suicidal life coach who encounters a former patient who wants to help his old coach, and "A Piece of Heaven" follows a depressed standup comic who wakes up after a show to discover that his bleak joke about the end of the world might actually come true—and everyone starts blaming him.—*Dave Nuttycombe*

In Arabic with English subtitles

Thursday, May 1, 8:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Friday, May 2, 8:35 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Diamanti

Ferzan Özpetek
Italy, 2024, 135 minutes

Diamanti begins with a dinner party where a director (the actual director, Ferzan Özpetek) has gathered his favorite actresses to read the script for his next movie, which will celebrate women. We are then whisked into that film, set in 1970s Rome. An Oscar®-winning costume designer (Vanessa Scalera) has hired a high-profile shop to create dozens of elaborate dresses for an 18th century epic. The business is run by two sisters, the steely and demanding Alberta (Luisa Ranieri), and Gabriella (Jasmine Trinca), who quietly battles her own demons. So begins a countdown in which getting the correct shade of Mountbatten Pink can cause terror and take forever. Each of the seamstresses has her own stories to tell, and this close-knit community truly celebrates the sparkling glory of women working and living together. *Diamanti* is a feast of fashion, fabric, fittings, and food to be savored.—*Dave Nuttycombe*

In Italian with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 8:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Sunday, April 27, 2:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



East Coast Premiere
Arabian Sights

Fez Summer 55

Director: Abdelhai Laraki; Producer: Caroline Locardi (A2L)
Morocco, 2024, 114 minutes

In the summer of 1955, just months before Morocco's independence, 11-year-old Kamal lives in the vibrant Medina of Fez. Together with his older friend Aïcha and her fellow students from Qaraouiyyine University, he becomes drawn toward the fierce fight for freedom. This is Kamal's coming-of-age story, but it's also a passionate account of the rebirth of a nation. Set against the backdrop of Morocco's struggle against colonialism, *Fez Summer 55* is a vivid portrayal of a country reclaiming its identity and culture. Inspired by the memories of Moroccan resistance fighters, director Abdelhai Laraki brings to life extraordinary acts of patriotism, the quest for women's rights, and the pursuit for independence. Through Kamal's eyes, we witness transformative moments that not only shape a young boy's growth but also the future of a nation.—*Various sources*

In Arabic and French with English subtitles

Sunday, April 27, 7:05 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place



The Lighter Side

Four Mothers

Darren Thornton
Ireland/UK, 2024, 89 minutes

Winner of the Audience Award at the 2024 London Film Festival, this Irish twist on the Italian hit *Mid-August Lunch* follows Edward, a shy, commitment-phobic gay novelist who cares for his elderly mother. Seemingly out of the blue, his novel starts to become popular with young readers in the United States, causing Edward to feel torn between his love and care for his mother and his desire to embark on this new and exciting phase of his life as a writer. When his three closest friends, desperate to feel young and carefree again, go off on an impromptu Pride holiday, they leave their aging mothers in Edward's care. With four stubborn individuals to look after and increasing pressure from his upcoming book tour, Edward must find a way to reconcile all four mothers and follow his passion in this delightfully heartwarming dramedy.—*Various sources*

Saturday, April 26, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Friday, May 2, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Georgia O'Keeffe: The Brightness of Light

Paul Wagner
USA, 2025, 120 minutes

In Person: Post-screening discussion with filmmakers Ellen and Paul Wagner and Sarah Greenough, National Gallery of Art, and Barbara Buhler Lynes, preeminent Georgia O'Keeffe scholar

Georgia O'Keeffe is widely revered as the mother of American modernism and one of the greatest female artists of the 20th century. O'Keeffe became famous in the 1920s for her paintings of flowers, bones, and the beauty of nature, but she denied the widespread belief that her paintings depicted sexual imagery. In the 1970s, living in her beloved New Mexico, she emerged as an iconic role model and powerful advocate of women's rights. This documentary stars Claire Danes as the voice of Georgia O'Keeffe with narration by Hugh Dancy.—*Various sources*

Part of the ongoing Art Films and Special Screenings series
Programmed in partnership with Filmfest DC 2025

Saturday, May 3, 2:00 PM, National Gallery of Art,
East Building Auditorium, FREE



US Premiere
Trust No One

Frieda's Case

Maria Brendle
Switzerland, 2025, 107 minutes

Frieda's Case is a historical drama by Academy Award® nominee Maria Brendle that exposes the deep injustices of a patriarchal society. In 1904, young seamstress Frieda Keller becomes the central figure of a high-profile legal battle after being accused of killing her child, who was born out of wedlock. But is that really true? And how much of a victim is the alleged perpetrator? The case attracts lawyers, press, and civil society arguing over how many rights a woman is even entitled to and it forces male prosecutors to confront personal and professional dilemmas that challenge their views on morality and gender equality. Based on true events, the film is a fascinating drama about society, equality, and justice that lead to reforms in the justice system.—*Various sources*

In Swiss German and German with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 6:05 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 6:05 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Co-presented with:
Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra
Embassy of Switzerland
in the United States of America



Arabian Sights

Happy Holidays

Scandar Copti
Palestine/Germany/France/Italy/Qatar, 2024, 123 minutes

This intricate family drama set in Haifa centers on the secrets young people keep from their parents and each other. Rami and his sister, Fifi, each have relationships and indiscretions best kept from their long-suffering but canny mother (the wonderful Wafaa Aoun). But as the secrets spiral out in wide-reaching ways, so does the drama. A look at contemporary life for a well-off family of Arab Christians in Israel, with a sidelong glance at the larger society in which they live, the ironically titled *Happy Holidays* reveals how even the most modern relationships are in the grip of ancient assumptions that hold women and men back from their futures. Oscar®-nominated Palestinian director Scandar Copti (*Ajami*) has created a narrative structure in the manner of an arabesque, with intertwining story threads that both explain and add to the plot's mounting mysteries.—*Judy Bloch*

In Arabic and Hebrew with English subtitles

Wednesday, April 30, 6:10 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, May 3, 3:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Co-presented with:
The Jerusalem Fund
For Education & Community Development
مركز القدس للتعليم والتنمية الاجتماعية

An Advertising Supplement to The Washington Post

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Filmfest DC 2025 Schedule

All screenings at Regal Gallery Place unless otherwise noted

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

Opening Night



The Marching Band

Embassy of France

Film at 7 PM

Followed by a reception

FRIDAY, APRIL 25

- 5:45 PM MetroShorts 1
- 6:00 PM The Musicians
- 6:05 PM Frieda's Case
- 6:15 PM Long Good Thursday
- 7:45 PM BORDERLAND | The Line Within
- 8:00 PM Diamanti
- 8:10 PM Stranger Eyes
- 8:15 PM Yalla Parkour



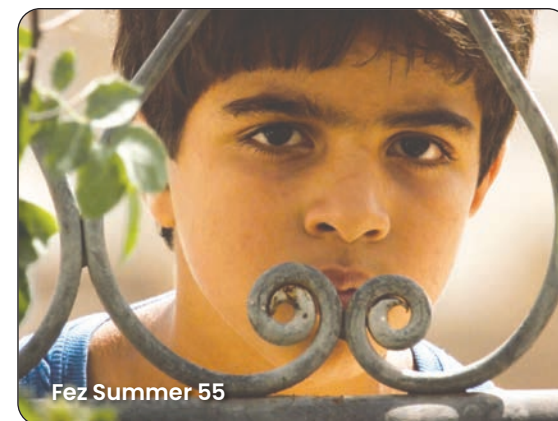
SATURDAY, APRIL 26

- 1:00 PM Short Stories 1
- 1:30 PM Counted Out
- 4:00 PM Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals
- 4:15 PM Yalla Parkour
- 6:00 PM Bushido
- 6:00 PM Souleymane's Story
- 6:15 PM Confidante
- 6:30 PM Rodrigue in Love
- 8:00 PM Billy Preston: That's The Way God Planned It
- 8:00 PM Stranger Eyes
- 8:30 PM Four Mothers
- 8:35 PM Black Tea



SUNDAY, APRIL 27

- 1:00 PM BORDERLAND | The Line Within
- 2:00 PM Diamanti
- 2:00 PM Monsieur Aznavour
- 2:15 PM The Dalai Lama's Gift
- 4:00 PM Billy Preston: That's The Way God Planned It
- 4:00 PM Homegrown
- 4:30 PM Seven Days
- 5:00 PM Last Breath
- 7:00 PM Rodrigue in Love
- 7:05 PM Fez Summer 55
- 7:15 PM Visiting Hours
- 7:30 PM Babies Don't Come With Instructions



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

- 6:00 PM Short Stories 2
- 6:05 PM Frieda's Case
- 6:10 PM Happy Holidays
- 6:15 PM Black Tea
- 8:15 PM Seven Days
- 8:20 PM Souleymane's Story
- 8:30 PM Fez Summer 55
- 8:35 PM Confidante



THURSDAY, MAY 1

- 6:00 PM Aicha
- 6:00 PM Bushido
- 6:10 PM The People's Way
- 6:15 PM The Musicians
- 8:15 PM Visiting Hours
- 8:30 PM The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World
- 8:35 PM Odd Fish
- 8:45 PM Disorder

FRIDAY, MAY 2

- 6:00 PM Aicha
- 6:00 PM Four Mothers
- 6:05 PM Mistura
- 6:15 PM The Last Republican
- 8:00 PM Reading Lolita in Tehran
- 8:35 PM Disorder
- 8:40 PM Long Good Thursday
- 8:45 PM Last Breath



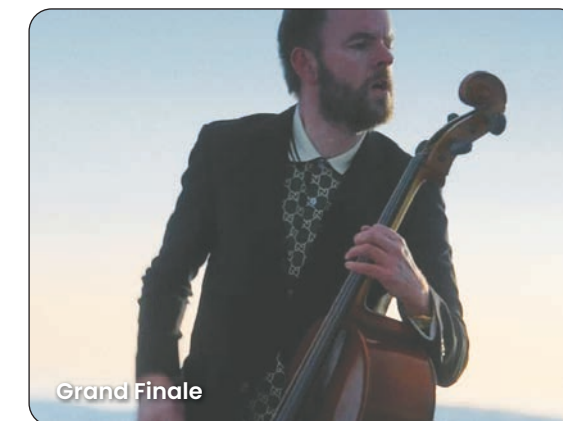
SATURDAY, MAY 3

- 1:00 PM MetroShorts 2
- 1:15 PM Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me
- 1:15 PM The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World
- 2:00 PM Georgia O'Keeffe: The Brightness of Light (National Gallery of Art)
- 3:30 PM The Last Republican
- 3:45 PM Happy Holidays
- 4:30 PM The People's Way
- 6:00 PM Reading Lolita in Tehran
- 6:20 PM Babies Don't Come with Instructions
- 7:30 PM Lion's Heart (The Wharf)
- 8:30 PM Mistura
- 8:30 PM Odd Fish
- 8:30 PM Salad Days
- 8:45 PM Monsieur Aznavour



SUNDAY, MAY 4

Closing Night



Grand Finale

Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Library Auditorium

Film at 4 PM

Followed by a reception





Justice Matters

Homegrown

Michael Premo

USA, 2024, 109 minutes

In the months leading up to the 2020 election, well before January 6, 2021, filmmaker Michael Premo had the foresight and courage to embed with the Proud Boys for this intimate exploration of the far-right pro-Trump movement through three of its acolytes. Premo lets his subjects speak for themselves, and he does not judge. We meet a thoughtful Hispanic vet interested in the Proud Boys' possible links with Black Lives Matter concerns, a father and insurrectionist-to-be building a nursery and a gun room, and an organizer searching for "Antifa" and "communists" he hasn't yet found. "Proud of ya, boy" is the Proud Boy greeting, and it's a rather heartbreaking tell. In these portraits you might see left-behind Americans excited to now belong or dangerous streetfighters on a mission; earnest "western chauvinists," or purveyors of disinformation. Or, perhaps, all of the above.—*Various sources*

Sunday, April 27, 4:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Justice Matters

The Last Republican

Steve Pink

USA, 2025, 88 minutes

The Last Republican begins and ends with a progressive filmmaker and his conservative subject ribbing each other; obviously, no political differences were harmed during the making of this film. Adam Kinzinger was a dyed-in-the-wool Republican; as a child, he had a pretend campaign headquarters in his bedroom. Then came the January 6, 2021, insurrection against the peaceful transfer of power that the Illinois Representative, almost alone among his party, remained clear-eyed about. As one of two Republicans on the House Select Committee to investigate the attack, Kinzinger became a media idol for the left and a target for dangerous elements on the right. But if he wanted to be a hero—after 9/11, he did join the Air National Guard—this was not what he had in mind. In a wide-ranging conversation, he shares bitter insights into how, when, and why his party failed democracy.—*Judy Bloch*

Friday, May 2, 6:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Saturday, May 3, 3:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place



US Premiere
Voilà Cinema

Last Breath

Costa-Gavras

France, 2024, 100 minutes

Costa-Gavras, the famed director of *Z*, *State of Siege*, and *Missing*, would seem to be the definition of a filmmaker with nothing left to prove. But at age 91, he is conquering "a new continent," namely looking at death clear-eyed, in *Last Breath*. Acclaimed actor and theater director Denis Podalydès stars as Fabrice Toussaint, a widely known French intellectual who develops a philosophical interest in end-of-life palliative care and follows the extraordinary doctor Augustin Masset (Kad Merad) on his rounds. A man of intense compassion, Masset conducts deeply explorative conversations with his patients. Some are in denial, but all seek a kind of truth; for example, a surprisingly erudite elder who knows the myths of many cultures still wonders what awaits her. In their presence, Toussaint's own humanity is touched. Perhaps as a stand-in for Costa-Gavras, Toussaint is taking notes in preparation for the inevitable.—*Judy Bloch*

In French with English subtitles

Sunday, April 27, 5:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Friday, May 2, 8:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Long Good Thursday

Mika Kaurismäki

Finland, 2024, 97 minutes

We first meet Mielenäpö when his two feckless sons are trying to get him to move into a retirement home that lists "watching television" as its main feature. He storms out and ends his day, as usual, eating alone in the kitchen in front of a photo of his late wife. To say Mielenäpö is set in his ways is an understatement. "House, car, missus" has been his philosophy for decades, until he meets artist/photographer Saimi in the grocery store. She tries to get Mielenäpö to relax. "I haven't taken it easy since I was 9," is his shocked response. Saimi makes him risotto, a startling new dish for him. He fixes her furnace, and she takes photos of him as they begin exploring the gorgeous north Finnish countryside together. But can a relationship blossom when each person has their feet so firmly planted in different soil? —*Dave Nuttycombe*

In Finnish with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 6:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Friday, May 2, 8:40 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Mistura

Ricardo de Montreuil

Peru, 2024, 97 minutes

In 1960s Peru, the glamorous life of Norma, a privileged Franco-Peruvian trophy wife, unravels after her husband leaves her for another woman and she is ostracized from elite society. Facing financial ruin, Norma's chauffeur, Oscar, a man whose own talents have been constricted by race and class, suggests she revive a long-dormant dream to open an upscale restaurant. After a lukewarm response, Norma embarks on a transformative culinary journey that challenges societal norms with the help of her newfound allies from the communities she was raised to disregard. Writer-director Ricardo de Montreuil's astute drama blends the sensory joys of a Peruvian foodie movie with the psychological lift of seeing characters join forces to cast off limitations they thought were their lot in life.—*Various sources*

In Spanish with English subtitles

Friday, May 2, 6:05 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Saturday, May 3, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place



East Coast Premiere
DC4Reel, Justice Matters

The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World Las Muertes Más Bellas del Mundo

Quique Avilés, Ellie Walton

USA, 2024, 70 minutes

Beginning in 1980, the brutal 12-year, U.S.-backed war in El Salvador brought tens of thousands of refugees to Washington, D.C. This mass migration leant vibrancy to the city's culture and made the corner of 15th and Irving Streets in NW D.C. the epicenter of an artistic movement that continues to inspire succeeding generations of "Wachintonian" artists. Famed Flamenco performer Edwin Aparicio, photographer and multi-media artist Muriel Hasbun, Afro-Caribbean musician Ivan Navas, and punk rocker Alirio "Lilito" Gonzalez (Machetres) use their craft to explore truths their Salvadoran families lived, including the traumas that made exiles out of the lucky ones. In the beautiful title poem, poet/performer Quique Avilés narrates his desire to reclaim his dead, a quest that takes him back to Salvador's jungle villages. This film offers a fascinating angle on D.C., on a vibrant diasporic culture, and on the particular joy of making art out of sorrow.—*Judy Bloch*

In English and Spanish with English subtitles

Thursday, May 1, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Saturday, May 3, 1:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Global Rhythms, Voilà Cinema

Monsieur Aznavour

Mehdi Idir and Grand Corps Malade

France, 2024, 134 minutes

Monsieur Aznavour is a rise-to-stardom biography of a man who became one of France's best-loved entertainers and personified French culture to the rest of the world. Born into poverty, Charles Aznavour is heavily influenced by his parent's love for music. Ridiculed for his short stature and raspy tenor voice, his early attempts at a showbiz career falter. His material often finds success in the hands of others, including his friend Pierre and the imperious Edith Piaf, who becomes a highly influential mentor and supporter. Through hard work, perseverance, and sheer willpower, Aznavour finally realizes his own ambitions; his empathetic *chansons* about the heartbreaks, confusions, and passions of the common man catapult him to global attention. Led by Golden Globe-nominated actor Tahar Rahim's astonishing performance and stunning vocal prowess, the film is a true tour de force that serves as a triumphant reminder of the power and impact of music.—*Various sources*

In French with English subtitles

Sunday, April 27, 2:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Saturday, May 3, 8:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place



US Premiere
Global Rhythms, Voilà Cinema

The Musicians

Grégory Magne

France, 2025, 102 minutes

Astrid Thompson finally succeeds in fulfilling her father's dream: to bring together four Stradivarius for a unique concert, eagerly expected by music lovers around the world. But Lise, George, Peter, and Apolline, the four virtuosos recruited for the occasion, are incapable of playing together. The rehearsals are one ego crisis after another. With no solution in sight, Astrid decides to find the only person who, in her eyes, can still save the event: Charlie Beaumont, the composer of the score. "*Musicians* is first and foremost a comedy," says director Grégory Magne. "The actors of the quartet; they are real musicians, so I couldn't possibly have asked them to say or play anything they didn't agree with musically." —*Istanbul Film Festival*

In French with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Thursday, May 1, 6:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Odd Fish
Snævar Sölvason
 Iceland/Finland/Czech Republic, 2024, 104 minutes

On the cold northwest coast of Iceland, Hjalti runs a maritime museum and a faltering seasonal fish restaurant. Although days are filled with hard physical labor, the seafaring community is a tight-knit group despite Hjalti's often dour attitude. Both the fishermen and the restaurant employees pull together to make things work. This is especially true of the chef, and Hjalti's oldest friend, Björn. Just as an opportunity for year-round business at the restaurant appears, Björn comes out as Birna, a trans woman, and surprises almost everyone, especially Hjalti. As Birna embraces her nascent identity, the townsfolk rally to adjust to this new reality. Hjalti, however, must make many choices, some prompted by the fact that his wife and family have been living far away in Reykjavik. *Odd Fish* is both an of-the-moment comedy of manners and a deep examination of the human condition.

—Dave Nuttycombe
 In Icelandic and English with English subtitles
Thursday, May 1, 8:35 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, May 3, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Reading Lolita in Tehran
Eran Riklis
 Italy/Israel, 2024, 108 minutes

In a much-anticipated adaptation of Azar Nafisi's best-selling memoir, *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, Golshifteh Farahani (*About Elly*) shines as a professor of American classics in post-revolutionary Iran who must resort to teaching her female students clandestinely at home. In the warm light of her living room, they shed their hijabs and explore the power and nuance of literature, while outside, fundamentalists suppress and even attack women both publicly and privately. To give them the strength they need, their teacher brooks no simplistic readings, either of the novels or the regime they all struggle under. Israeli director Eran Riklis (*Lemon Tree*), with an expert cast of Iranian actors, created a Tehran so real, so beloved, and yet so frightening you would never know he shot the film in Rome. With the "Woman, Life, Freedom" movement not yet in the rearview mirror, this impressive story wants our active attention.

—Judy Bloch
 In English and Farsi with English subtitles
Friday, May 2, 8:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, May 3, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



The People's Way
Ashley Tyner and William Tyner
 USA, 2024, 87 minutes

The larger Black community around Minneapolis's East 38th Street and Chicago Avenue, the intersection where George Floyd was murdered in May 2020, were no strangers to violence at the hands of the police. Rather, monumentalizing the historic corner was a way of saying, "This is our reality." This film follows three women activists who mine that moment of cultural upheaval, and their own hearts, for a positive route to Black liberation and real community. Jeanelle Austin spearheads a project to preserve the many art projects that were left at the memorial and create an art-focused community center. Robin Wonsley runs for city council on a controversial platform of replacing police with safety officers. And Toshira Garraway movingly turns the unending grief of losing her own loved one into a campaign for acknowledgment and accountability for police killings. Somebody say, "Amen."

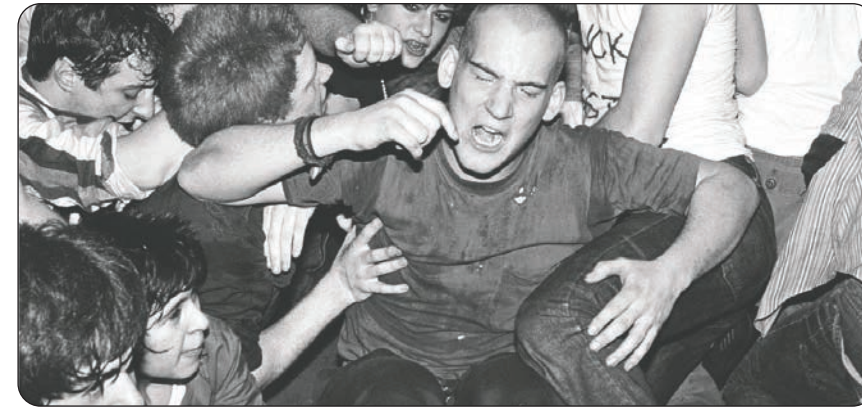
—Judy Bloch
Thursday, May 1, 6:10 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, May 3, 4:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Rodrigue in Love
Johann Dionnet
 France, 2025, 100 minutes

To make ends meet, struggling actor Stéphane reluctantly agrees to join his former troupe for one final performance in a popular comedy at the Avignon Theatre Festival, a vibrant stage where all genres of theatre exist side by side. At the festival, Stéphane crosses paths with Fanny, a former intern and colleague who is now starring in a Victor Hugo classic. Determined to impress her, he impulsively claims he is playing the prestigious lead role of Rodrigue in Corneille's *Le Cid*, her favorite play. What begins as a small white lie spirals into a tangled web of deceit, awkward encounters, and absurd improvisations. With the help of his troupe members, Stéphane tries to come clean, but his infatuation with Fanny clouds his judgment. How long can he maintain the charade before it all falls apart? This delightful comedy won the Grand Jury Prize at the prestigious Alpe d'Huez Festival.

—Various sources
 In French with English subtitles
Saturday, April 26, 6:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Sunday, April 27, 7:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Salad Days: A Decade of Punk in Washington, DC (1980-90)
Scott Crawford
 USA, 2024, 98 minutes

Salad Days is a documentary that examines the early DIY punk scene in the Nation's Capital. For LA and New York, punk was a fashion but in Washington, D.C., it was a lifeline. The tiny not-quite-state produced some of the most furious bands in the nation: Teen Idles, Bad Brains, Minor Threat, Dag Nasty, Government Issue, and Fugazi. Former fanzine creator and lifelong obsessive Scott Crawford compiles the definitive document of the scene, not only showcasing the raw clout of the music but also the story of influential DIY label Dischord, the politics, the straight-edge movement, and the birth of emo. Contextually, it was a cultural watershed that predated the alternative music explosion of the 1990s (and the industry's subsequent implosion). Thirty years later, D.C.'s original DIY punk spirit serves as a reminder of the hopefulness of youth, the power of community, and the strength of conviction.

—Various sources
Saturday, May 3, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place, FREE



Souleymane's Story
Boris Lojkine
 France, 2024, 92 minutes

Winner of the Un Certain Regard Jury Prize and the Performance Prize at Cannes, this film is a topical and emotionally immersive portrait of a young man whose story is simultaneously singular yet shared by the many undocumented laborers whom urban centers rely on yet constantly seek to restrict. Souleymane is a Guinean immigrant in Paris whose every waking second is spent fighting against the clock; working as a delivery driver to make his quota, getting back in time to secure a bed at the shelter, filling out paperwork on a deadline as he tries desperately to get asylum. Over the span of two days, Souleymane struggles to stay afloat while preparing for his crucial immigration asylum interview. First-time actor Abou Sangare gives a commanding performance, radiant in its vulnerability and empathy and culminating in the emotionally raw scene of the interview that will ultimately decide Souleymane's fate.

—Various sources
 In French with English subtitles
Saturday, April 26, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 8:20 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Seven Days
Ali Samadi Ahadi
 Germany/Georgia/Iran, 2024, 110 minutes

In his newest film, Ali Samadi Ahadi (*The Green Wave*, FFDC 2011) delves into the personal sacrifices that are made in the fight for human rights. After six years in prison, Iranian human rights activist Maryam is granted seven days of medical leave. In secret, her husband and brother plan a risky escape over snow-capped mountains to reunite her with her family in Germany. But along the way, Maryam is forced to choose between a life of safety with her loved ones or returning to her prison cell and continuing her uphill battle for equality and democracy. A gripping portrayal of resistance, sacrifice, and the power of family ties that bind us, *Seven Days* is a testament to the enduring spirit of those brave individuals who fight for a better future, even at the expense of their own freedom.

—Various sources
 In Farsi with English subtitles
Sunday, April 27, 4:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Wednesday, April 30, 8:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Stranger Eyes
Yeo Siew Hua
 Singapore/Taiwan/France/USA, 2024, 125 minutes

Director Yeo Siew Hua's film presses a lot of hot buttons. At first, it seems to be a story about a young couple whose child has disappeared; then *Stranger Eyes* becomes a tense examination of the modern surveillance state. We meet grieving young parents—husband Junyang and wife Peiyong—poring through home movies of happier times and looking for clues about how their daughter went missing. Soon after little Bo vanishes in a park while Junyang was distracted, DVDs appear at her parents' doorstep with video footage of the pair going about their days, some old, some frighteningly recent. When the police finally catch the man who is delivering the discs (thanks to public cameras), the case is still not resolved. And when we spend time with the apparent stalker, the mystery only deepens. Many scenes are shot at intrusive angles from security cameras, perfectly accenting Hua's theme.

—Dave Nuttycombe
 In Mandarin with English subtitles
Friday, April 25, 8:10 PM, Regal Gallery Place
Saturday, April 26, 8:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

An Advertising Supplement to The Washington Post

An Advertising Supplement to The Washington Post



Trust No One, Voilà Cinema

Visiting Hours

Patricia Mazuy

France, 2024, 108 minutes

Visiting Hours is a gripping drama that explores the unexpected bond between two women from vastly different social backgrounds. Alma (Oscar®-nominated and César winner Isabelle Huppert), from the bourgeois class, and Mina (César winner Hafsia Herzi), a young mother from the working class, first meet in the waiting room of a prison where their husbands are incarcerated. Alma's husband, a renowned neurosurgeon, is imprisoned for a fatal drunk-driving accident, while Mina's husband is jailed for a jewelry heist. But the other prisoners here are the women themselves. Their lives revolve around visiting the prison, and the burden of social responsibility for their husbands' crimes falls on them. They are also captives of their respective social classes. Out of loneliness and curiosity, Alma invites Mina and her children to live in her mansion. This marks the beginning of a friendship that reveals class divides, power dynamics, and emotional complexities.—Various sources

In French with English subtitles

Sunday, April 27, 7:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Thursday, May 1, 8:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Arabian Sights

Yalla Parkour

Areeb Zuaiter

Sweden/Palestine/Qatar/Saudi Arabia, 2024, 89 minutes

When filmmaker Areeb Zuaiter lost her Palestinian mother, she lost her connection to Gaza. In pursuit of a memory that reinforces her sense of belonging, Areeb sees a video of a parkour team that uses the ruins of Gaza's bombed buildings as obstacle courses, laughing for joy against a background of explosions. Longing to reconnect with her past, Areeb contacts the team and befriends teenager Ahmed Matar, who believes that parkour will be his route out of the prison their shared homeland has become. Together, they navigate what is left of Gaza. Ahmed's desire to escape triggers conflicting feelings in Areeb, who understands the emotional void that such a departure can bring. At this time when Gaza and its people are being devastated every day, Yalla Parkour (winner of the Grand Jury Prize at DOC NYC) is a portrait of a tormented city and the perseverance of its people.—Various sources

In Arabic and Swedish with English subtitles

Friday, April 25, 8:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Saturday, April 26, 4:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Co-presented with:



The Jerusalem Fund
For Education & Community Development
مندوق القدس للتقافة والتنمية الاجتماعية



THE WHARF

Enjoy a special outdoor film screening.

Assorted pastries provided by the Embassy of Argentina prior to the screening.

Lion's Heart

Marcos Carnevale

Argentina/Brazil, 2013, 101 minutes

Lion's Heart is one of the most successful Argentinian comedies of all time. Ivana Cornejo is finally starting to embrace the single life after her divorce. But when she gets an exasperating call from her ex-husband, she does what any rational person would do: she throws her cell phone away. Enter León Godoy, a prominent and charming architect. He finds the phone and calls her to return it. They hit it off instantly, chatting like old friends. They set up a date; when León finally shows up, he's everything she imagined except for one unexpected and startling detail...he's 4'5" tall. The film is a lovely and funny portrayal of an offbeat romance.

—Various sources

In Spanish with English subtitles

Saturday, May 3, 7:30 PM
The Wharf, \$10



DC4Reel



Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me

Robert Clem | USA, 2024, 88 minutes

Known as the original singer of "Hound Dog", Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton was inducted into the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame in October 2024.

Saturday, May 3, 1:15 PM,
Regal Gallery Place, FREE



The Dalai Lama's Gift

Ed Bastian | USA, 2024, 77 minutes

In 1981, a historic event in Wisconsin became a transformative moment in American spirituality: His Holiness the Dalai Lama initiated over a thousand young Americans into the ancient Kalachakra Tantra, the Wheel of Time, at Deer Park Monastery. The incredible footage was tucked away in the Smithsonian vaults for over 40 years, until now.

Sunday, April 27, 2:15 PM,
Regal Gallery Place, \$14



Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals

Samuel George | USA, 2025, 61 minutes

Access to the minerals that power the batteries in our cellphones and other devices has emerged as a vital geopolitical, economic, and social concern. Where does the lithium, the nickel, and the cobalt come from? And who controls their supply?

Saturday, April 26, 4:00 PM,
Regal Gallery Place, FREE



The Most Beautiful Deaths in the World

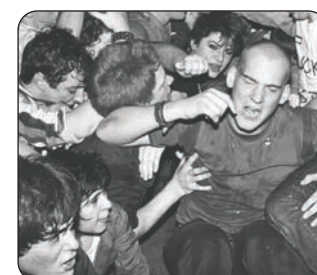
Quique Aviles, Ellie Walton

USA, 2024, 70 minutes

Beginning in 1980, the 12-year, U.S.-backed war in El Salvador brought thousands of refugees to Washington, D.C. This mass migration leant vibrancy to the city's culture and made the corner of 15th & Irving Streets the epicenter of an artistic movement that continues to inspire generations of "Wachintonian" artists.

In English and Spanish with English subtitles

Thursday, May 1, 8:30 PM, Regal Gallery Place,
Saturday, May 3, 1:15 PM, Regal Gallery Place, \$14



Salad Days: A Decade of Punk in Washington, DC (1980-90)

Scott Crawford | USA, 2024, 98 minutes

Former fanzine creator and lifelong obsessive Scott Crawford compiles the definitive document of the punk scene, not only showcasing the raw clout of the music but also the story of influential DIY label Dischord, the politics, the straight-edge movement, and the birth of emo.

Saturday, May 3, 8:30 PM,
Regal Gallery Place, FREE

MetroShorts 1

This is the eighth edition of our popular program of films from the vibrant, creative community of filmmakers in D.C. and the immediate metro area. Filmmakers expected at the screening are listed on filmfestdc.org

Total running time: 63 minutes

Friday, April 25, 5:45 PM, Regal Gallery Place



Black Printmakers of Washington DC

Susan J. Goldman/USA, 2024, 26 minutes, documentary

Percy Martin and Michael Platt founded their respective printmaking workshops in the '70s and '80s, embracing a steady flow of emerging and established Black artists who had been denied access to the city's galleries, museums and universities. Percy and Michael offered places where Black artists created community, shared ideas, exhibited their work, and made prints. This documentary reflects on their critical contribution to Washington, D.C.'s vibrant art scene over a 50-year period.



Small Steps

World Premiere

Christopher McGuinness/USA, 2024, 20 minutes, documentary

After a stroke leaves the left half of his body paralyzed, a concert pianist sets a goal to play the Diabelli Variations, one of the most challenging works from Beethoven.



Anacostia Portraits

East Coast Premiere

Yev K'banchik, Elena Volkovwa/USA, 2024, 17 minutes, documentary

Reviving the 19th-century tintype, photographer Elena Volkova creates a unique participatory community arts project celebrating the people who make up the Anacostia region of the District of Columbia.

Members of filmmaking teams from all the films are expected in person.

Short Stories

Short Stories 1

Total running time: 90 minutes
Saturday, April 26, 1:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

A Summer's End Poem
Lam Can-zhao/China/Switzerland/Malaysia, 2024, 15 minutes, narrative, in Min Nan Chinese with English subtitles

Shortly before the end of the summer holidays, a country boy spends his savings on his dream of a big-city hairstyle—with surprising results.

The Sentry
Jack Wachtel/Cambodia/US/Denmark, 2024, 17 minutes, narrative, in Central Khmer and English with English subtitles
On assignment in Cambodia, a suave superspy has a haunting encounter.

Today I Will Only Come Home Tomorrow
U.S. Premiere

Diego Lacerda/Brazil, 2024, 8 minutes, animation, in Portuguese with English subtitles

Amidst the historic splendor of Olinda, Marina seeks the ecstasy of Carnival. Her journey is seen through the eyes of 10 different characters, and for each of them a different director lends their artistic view.

Gold Status
Charles Haine/USA, 2024, 14 minutes, narrative, in English and Spanish with English and Spanish subtitles

World Premiere
A deliverista (Latin American food delivery worker) in New York city navigates the dinner rush driven by the ghost boss, an app called DineTime.

Moon Crab
Leah Clare Michaels/USA, 2024, 10 minutes, documentary

The horseshoe crab, one of Earth's oldest living species, is now struggling with extreme population decline. In describing his lifetime of research, physiologist Abner Lall captures a timeless story of resilience and fragility that urges us to reconsider our connection to the natural world.



Becoming Air

Becoming Air
Alisi Telengut, Diego Galafassi/Canada, 2024, 6 minutes, experimental

Take a deep breath. As you exhale, imagine that in about 3 years, anywhere you go on the planet you will find molecules that were inside you at this moment.

Forward Is a Pace
Team Milk Productions/USA, 2025, 20 minutes, documentary

As five runners from across the United States prepare for the first ever Every Woman's Marathon, they share what drives them to run for their health, their families, and their rights.

A kaleidoscopic lens on our world today.

Filmmakers expected at the screening are listed on filmfestdc.org.

Short Stories 2

Total running time: 90 minutes
Wednesday, April 30, 6:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Public Freakout
Julia Bales/USA, 2024, 10 minutes, narrative

A trip to the gas station leads to mayhem.

Butterfly Kiss
Zohar Dvir/Germany, 2024, 11 minutes, animation, in Hebrew with English subtitles

Carol panics when her girlfriend Ray transforms into a butterfly.

Heaven Doesn't Know My Name

Carol AÓ/Brazil, 2024, 20 minutes, documentary, in Portuguese with English subtitles

A granddaughter gives new meaning to her grandma's death through her visual exploration of unspoken memories.

Don't Forget to Say Goodbye
Alexander Zimmer and Jeremy Handrup/USA, 2024, 17 minutes, narrative
World Premiere

As Scotty travels to visit his ailing father, the road trip from N.Y. to Chicago becomes an invitation to reflect on grief and growth.

Tsuru
Pedro Anias/Brazil, 2024, 6 minutes, animation, no dialogue

After being awakened by the flapping wings of a paper crane, a sleeping piece of paper begins a challenging journey in search of transformation.

Rediscovering Home

Jay Gearing/UK, 2024, 15 minutes, documentary

North American Premiere

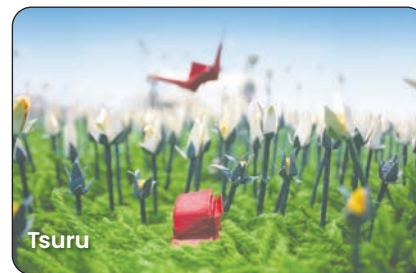
African refugee friends Marie-Lyse and Mirabel and Ukrainian refugee Olga and her host Francis explore the concept of home.



sansedai

sansedai
Kayli Kimura/USA, 2024, 11 minutes, documentary

Filmmaker Kayli Kimura reflects on themes of identity and belonging as she documents her 92-year-old grandmother's account of growing up in wartime Japan, emigrating to a country that was once deemed an enemy, and what it means to be Japanese-American.



Tsuru

Foxhole

East Coast Premiere
Nick Dugan/USA, 2024, 8 minutes, documentary

A meditative groundskeeper finds tranquility among the idyllic Virginian countryside by tending a bucolic inn, until his past catches up to him.

Mainspring Harbor: the Oyster Farmers of Block Island Sound
Jesse F. Pearlmutter/USA, 2024, 8 minutes, documentary

Oyster farming and sustainable aquaculture are showcased against the backdrop of Rhode Island's beautiful Block Island Sound in this contemplative nonverbal documentary.

Cherry-Colored Funk
Chelsie Pennello/USA, 2025, 17 minutes, narrative

A scheming hustler faces a relentless reckoning at the grand opening of his Italian ice shop.

Members of filmmaking teams from all the films are expected in person.

Thank You

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INDEX

Aicha	6
Babies Don't Come With Instructions...6	
Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me.....	17
Billy Preston: That's The Way God Planned It.....	6
Black Tea	6
BORDERLAND The Line Within	7
Bushido	7
Confidante.....	7
Counted Out.....	7
Dalai Lama's Gift, The.....	8
Diamanti.....	8
Disorder.....	8
Fez Summer 55.....	8
Four Mothers.....	9
Frieda's Case	9
Georgia O'Keeffe: The Brightness of Light	9
Grand Finale	3
Happy Holidays.....	9
Homegrown.....	12
Last Breath	12
Last Republican, The.....	12
Lion's Heart	16
Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals	17
Long Good Thursday.....	12
Marching Band, The.....	3
MetroShorts 1	17
MetroShorts 2	18
Mistura.....	13
Monsieur Aznavour.....	13
Most Beautiful Deaths in the World, The.....	13
Musicians, The.....	13
Odd Fish	14
People's Way, The.....	14
Reading Lolita in Tehran	14
Rodrigue in Love.....	14
Salad Days.....	15
Seven Days	15
Short Stories 1	18
Short Stories 2	18
Souleymane's story	15
Stranger Eyes.....	15
Visiting Hours	16
Yalla Parkour	16

MetroShorts 2

Total running time: 83 minutes
Saturday, May 3, 1:00 PM, Regal Gallery Place

Back to the Sky
Amin El Siwi/USA, 2024, 13 minutes, documentary
Driven by her passion for raptors, a licensed falconer transforms her home and yard into a sanctuary for injured and displaced birds of prey. She discovers that offering them a second chance at survival simultaneously reshapes her own life.

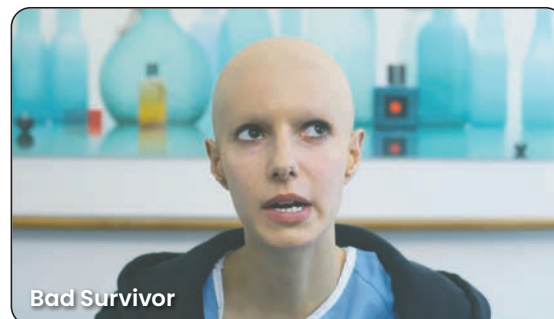
Door of No Return
Sylvia Solf, Suzanne Smith/USA, 2024, 16 minutes, performance

Full-body artist Gregory Maqoma navigates his own identity through a deeply personal narrative performed at House of Slaves on Goree Island, Senegal, a landmark of one of humanity's most horrific journeys.

Rain
Vasilios Papaioannu/USA/Greece/Italy, 2024, 6 minutes, experimental, in Greek with English subtitles

Rain is the fabric of this collage of 16mm footage, digital video, and archival footage documenting a verbal interaction between two people.

Bad Survivor
Alex Dvorak, Katie North/USA, 2024, 12 minutes, narrative, in English, Spanish, and Czech with English subtitles
After being "broken up with" by her oncologists, a sarcastic young cancer patient struggles to adjust to life at home with her multicultural family during her first day in remission.



Bad Survivor

Mainspring Harbor: the Oyster Farmers of Block Island Sound
Jesse F. Pearlmutter/USA, 2024, 8 minutes, documentary
Oyster farming and sustainable aquaculture are showcased against the backdrop of Rhode Island's beautiful Block Island Sound in this contemplative nonverbal documentary.

Cherry-Colored Funk
Chelsie Pennello/USA, 2025, 17 minutes, narrative
A scheming hustler faces a relentless reckoning at the grand opening of his Italian ice shop.

Foxhole
East Coast Premiere
Nick Dugan/USA, 2024, 8 minutes, documentary
A meditative groundskeeper finds tranquility among the idyllic Virginian countryside by tending a bucolic inn, until his past catches up to him.

Members of filmmaking teams from all the films are expected in person.

Filmfest DC on TV

The festival is partnering with Washington's popular Public Television stations. Tune in to WETA and WHUT for exciting films by some of our city's talented local filmmakers.

WETA IS THE OFFICIAL TELEVISION STATION OF FILMFEST DC. It is the leading public broadcasting station in the nation's capital. WETA Metro will screen the 2024 selection of MetroShorts films that will entertain as well as inform you.



weta.org

This program airs on WETA Metro on Saturday, April 26 at 8:00 PM.

WHUT is the public television station of Howard University. It provides quality programming that is relevant and informative. WHUT will screen three of the 2025 DC4Reel films: **Big Mama Thornton: I Can't Be Anyone But Me** and **Joy Dancer**. Please refer to WHUT's official schedule for date and time information.



whut.org

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