



FESTS 2011

COUNTING DOWN 20 CAN'T-MISS FESTIVALS

ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL

VARIOUS LOCATIONS; ADVENTUREFILM.ORG

Boulder, Asheville and Sydney are just a few of the worldwide outposts of this international fest, which encourages moviemakers to “make your own legends” with compelling stories of adventure and environmentalism.

ALL SPORTS LOS ANGELES FILM FESTIVAL

LOS ANGELES, CA; ALLSPORTSLAFILMFEST.COM

The passion of sportsmanship is universal. So when it comes to sports movies, this fest knows no genre boundaries: Dramas, comedies, horror films and documentaries have all found a place within the program.

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL

ANN ARBOR, MI; AAFILMFEST.ORG

You don't become the continent's longest-running independent and experimental film fest (50 years and counting) without garnering a little cool cred, as Kenneth Anger, Gus Van Sant, Agnès Varda and George Lucas—all of whom have screened their early works here—can attest.

ART BY CHANCE

WORLDWIDE; ARTBYCHANCE.ORG

Born out of a moment of contemplation in an Istanbul train station, ABC offers moviemakers looking for a truly global audience the chance to screen their ultra-short works in more than 200 cities worldwide—through partnerships with various transit systems, airports, shopping malls, art galleries, cafes and bars—as part of one of the world's largest public art events.

BAHAMAS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

NASSAU, BAHAMAS; BINTLFILMFEST.COM

Though it could easily rely on its location alone to attract an audience, BIFF has remained steadfastly dedicated to its mission of educating while it entertains, creating a unique series of masterclasses and workshops that tackle such topics as the art of collaboration. (A guest list that has included Johnny Depp, Roger Corman and Anna Faris doesn't hurt either.)

BARE BONES INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

MUSKOGEE, OK; BAREBONESFILMFESTIVALS.ORG

Bare Bones takes the “Independent” in its name seriously, rolling out the red carpet (literally) for actors, writers, directors, documentarians and film students working specifically in the low-budget, under \$1 million realm.

BENEATH THE EARTH FILM FESTIVAL

ONLINE; BENEATHEARTH.COM

A shiny trophy can add panache to your mantel, but an honest-to-goodness film review is a prize that all the world can see. BTEFF has a grand jury of film reviewers whose work collectively reaches over one million readers each month; the fest gives all winners the opportunity to have their films reviewed by the grand jury, increasing the potential word-of-mouth buzz.



THERE'S NEVER A DULL MOMENT AT THE ADVENTURE FILM FESTIVAL.

BIG ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL

KOHALA COAST, HI; BIGISLANDFILMFESTIVAL.COM

Passion is what drives moviemakers to make a film in the first place, so it's only appropriate that this “Talk Story” festival—which boasts two outdoor venues for movie-gazing under the stars—celebrates the emotional connection between moviemakers and their audience.

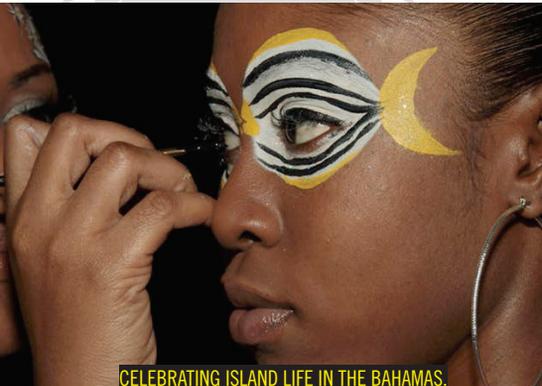
THE BLUE OCEAN FILM FESTIVAL

MONTEREY, CA; BLUEOCEANFILMFESTIVAL.ORG

Technology and cinema come together at this hybrid film festival/conversation summit that celebrates the



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CELEBRATING ISLAND LIFE IN THE BAHAMAS.

art of underwater moviemaking with awards in more than a dozen unique categories, including “Best Emerging Underwater Filmmaker” and “Best Marine Animal Behavior.”

[BRAINWASH MOVIE FESTIVAL](#)

OAKLAND, CA; [BRAINFILM.COM](#)

If being the only “drive-in, bike-in, walk-in movie” festival isn’t cool enough, this festival’s mix of independent, experimental and animated shorts—which this year included a post-global warming dystopia, a 1970s-set science-fiction period piece and a Japanese historical epic comedy—should have you hurrying over, whatever your mode of transport.

[CHASHAMA FILM FESTIVAL](#)

NEW YORK, NY; [CHAFILM.COM](#)

Cinema has long been a form of social expression, and this fest counts on the continuation of that trend, showcasing films that explore our changing society and moviemakers who dare to ask the question, “What’s next?”

[FANTASTIC FEST](#)

AUSTIN, TX; [FANTASTICFEST.COM](#)

Bill Murray, Paul Thomas Anderson, Kevin Smith, Darren Aronofsky, George Romero and Mike Judge are just a few of the big-name folks who’ve chosen to screen their films at the country’s largest genre festival. Need we say more? (Note: If you *do* need more convincing, read *MM*’s interview with Fantastic Fest founder Tim Leage on page 22.)

[LEBOWSKI FEST](#)

VARIOUS LOCATIONS; [LEBOWSKIFEST.COM](#)

Only true Dudes and Achievers need

attend this fest that celebrates the spirit—and cult following—of the Coen brothers’ cult classic, *The Big Lebowski*. Expect White Russians, rock-throwing and a closing night bowling extravaganza at this traveling fest, which originated in Louisville but has subsequently taken place in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Las Vegas, London and beyond.

[OXFORD FILM FESTIVAL](#)

OXFORD, MS; [OXFORDFILMFEST.COM](#)

Southern hospitality and engaging cinema collide at this small-town fest with a big-time track record of screening award season darlings, including Oscar-winning shorts like *The Accountant* and *Two Soldiers*. More than a moviegoing event, OFF hosts a number of networking events and panel discussions on need-to-know topics like how to cut a great trailer.

[PLUS CAMERIMAGE FILM FESTIVAL](#)

BYDGOSZCZ, POLAND; [PLUSCAMERIMAGE.PL](#)

William Fraker, Vilmos Zsigmond, Sven Nykvist and Vittorio Storaro may not be as well-known in some moviegoing circles as Charlize Theron, Ralph Fiennes, David Lynch and Oliver Stone. But the latter group has been on hand to honor such superstar cinematographers as those noted in the first group at this cinematography celebration that will soon celebrate its 20th birthday.

[SEBASTOPOL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL](#)

SEBASTOPOL, CA; [SEBASTOPOLFILMFESTIVAL.ORG](#)

Community is key at this doc fest, which serves as a catalyst for strengthening the local film community, developing an independent moviemaking program for nearby youth and eventually launching a year-round series of cinema screenings, salons and workshops.

[TELLURIDE HORROR SHOW](#)

TELLURIDE, CO; [TELLURIDEHORRORSHOW.COM](#)

Just before Halloween, the THS puts on a three-day program of more than 20 new and classic horror films from the likes of genre staples like Roger Corman, Tom Holland and Henry Selick and rising stars including Adam Green and Eli Craig. Unique special events

(like a pig roast at the 2011 event) are a reminder that genre events are not for everyone.

[THIN LINE FILM FEST](#)

DENTON, TX; [THINLINEFILMFEST.COM](#)

It may be the only documentary film festival in Texas, but even TLFF director Joshua Butler admits that they like to “blur the line between fact and fiction. Each year we try to program one or two docu-fictions [but] won’t explicitly state which film is ‘fake,’ leaving the audience to decide.”



IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY AT TRAIL DANCE.

[TRAIL DANCE FILM FESTIVAL](#)

DUNCAN, OK; [TRAILDANCEFILMFESTIVAL.COM](#)

Corporate America can co-opt the big guys. Trail Dance is a family fest—and damn proud of it. “Guests of Trail Dance are offered hospitality that you only get in a small town,” says executive director Anthony Foreman. “Filmmakers—no matter what their status or background—are treated with respect.”

[UNITED FILM FESTS](#)

VARIOUS LOCATIONS; [THEUNITEDFEST.COM](#)

If you’ve ever wondered why your film was rejected (or accepted) to a particular festival, here’s your chance to find out. The United Film Fest—which holds events in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Tulsa, Chicago, New York and London—lets moviemakers submit their films “With Feedback” for an additional fee, letting you become a moviemaking fly on the wall of the programming room. **MM**