27th Annual James River Film Festival RVA

ART OF CINEMA SINCE 1994

MARCH 18-22 2020

jamesriverfilm.org
JAMES RIVER FILM FESTIVAL GUESTS 1994–2019

1994 • William Wegman • Slobodan Pesis • Elizabeth Cox • David Williams • 1995 • Scott MacDonald • Arthur Knight • Irby Brown • Dan Neman • F. T. Rea • Ululating Mummies • 1996 • Stan Brakhage • Linda Simensky • 1997 • John Columbus • Rob Tregenza • John Dilworth • Ululating Mummies • 1998 • Albert Maysles • Yvette Kaplan • John O’Brien • Raynor Scheine • Ululating Mummies • 1999 • Charles Burnett • Bill Plympton • Paul Arthur • David Williams • 2000 • Tom Verlaine • Karen Aqua • Alan Berliner • 2001 • Les Blank • Richard Myers • Corky Quakenbush • Gunnar Hansen • Elizabeth Barrett • Herb E. Smith • 2002 • Jonas Mekas • Ed Sanders • Joanna Priestley • Charlene Gilbert • Jim Stramel • Megan Holley • 2003 • Stephen and Timothy Quay • Gary Lucas • Jeff Krulik • Gordon Ball • Kevin Herschberger • Frank Christopher • Kenneth Greenberg • 2004 • Mel Stuart • Skip Elsheimer • David Williams • Bob Paris • John O’Brien • Ms. Films • NRG Krysys • 2005 • Pere Ubu • Nathaniel Dorsky • Diane Bonder • David Durston • Lynn Lowery • Duane Byrge • Dan Neman • 2006 • Ray Harryhausen • Gary Lucas • Martha Colburn • David Williams • Hotel X • 2007 • Chuck Statler • John Porter • Jeff Krulik • David Williams • Laura Browder • Douglas Newman • 2008 • Richard Kelly • Ken and Flo Jacobs • Azazel Jacobs • Rob Tregenza • Dee Dee Halleck • Emily Doe/Wholphin • Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra • David Williams • 2009 • Bruce Bickford • Ellen Spiro • Christopher Holmes • Coby Batty • Jonny Hott • Brett Ingram • Kevin McNeer • Richard Robinson • Chris Strompolos • Ron Thomas Smith • Mary Beth Reed • Peter Schilling, Jr. • 2010 • Jem Cohen • Jordan Brady • Cindy Lou Adkins • Celia Maysles • Ashley Maynor • Hotel X • Rick Alverson • Sean Kotz • Chris Valluzo • Peter Schilling, Jr. • Barr Weissman • 2011 • Peggy Ahwesh • Jonathan Rosenbaum • R. Alverson • Meghan Eckman • Tammy Kinsey • Jeff Krulik • Gary Lucas • Peter Schilling, Jr. • Richard Knox Robinson • 2012 • Ross McElwee • Scott MacDonald • Jodie Mack • Rick Alverson • Mary Beth Reed • Clay McLeod • Chapman Almitra • Corey Hale Lytle • 2013 • Tom De Haven • David Gatten • Gwar/Slave Pit Productions • Kevin McNeer • Kendall Messick • Richard Myers • Stanislav Sokolov • David Williams • 2014 • Michael Almereyda • Tom Davenport • Michael Gibrall • Michael Maglaras • Caroline Martel • Richard Knox Robinson • Terri Templeton • Coby Batty • 2015 • Ralph Bakshi • Kevin Jerome Everson • Jonathan Hancock • Michael Pope • Stephen Ulrich & Big Lazy • David Williams • 2016 • Betsy Cox • John Heyn • Christopher Homes • J.J. McMoon • Jalyn Graham Owens • Jennifer Reeves • Marc Ribot • Kevin Willmott • 2017 • Guy Maddin • Angela Faye Martin • Stefan Osders • Michele Poulos • Herb E. Smith • Alan Webber • Jim Thomson • Richmond Avant Improvisational Collective (RAIC) • Recluse Raccoon • 2018 • Rene Balcer • Almitra Corey • Gary Lucas • Kelly Reichardt • Caroline Scruggs • David Williams • Zgomot • 2019 • Betzy Bromberg • Tim Clarke • Mark Robinson

Experimental, Independent, Avant-Garde, Foreign, Cult, Classic … Defying labels since 1994!

Cover Design: Coleman Jennings, Program Design by Steven Warrick
TRUE UNCUT TALES FROM ANDY WARHOL’S SILVER FACTORY:
How Andy Invented a Superstar & How Andy Discovered Lou Reed, the Velvet Underground and Nico (dir: Patrick Nagle & Catherine O’Sullivan Shorr, 2018, approx 105 min.)
When Andy opened the doors to the Factory in the mid-’60s an inspiring muse appeared, Edie Sedgwick, who would become his most glamorous superstar. An unflinching portrait of the tragic “It” girl, and Andy’s stable of unconventional superstars. Plus, the history of Andy’s collaborations with the Velvets, dating back to their earliest performances, and how Nico completed the picture. Directors Nagle and Shorr keep the stories moving with uncensored interviews of the participants and rare archival footage.

HUMAN HIGHWAY W/ DJ AFTERPARTY
(dir: Neil Young/Bernard Shakey & Dean Stockwell, ’82, 88 min., music: Young & Devo, with Young, Stockwell, Tamblyn, Hopper, Devo & Booji Boy!)
Beyond quirky, Human Highway is a bizarre/sci-fi/black comedy mixing atomic disaster, small town surrealism and futuristic totalitarianism--and a cousin to the equally weird, Repo Man. Young asked Devo to write their roles and threw the score into Mothersbaugh’s lap--his first. Veteran actors Russ Tamblyn (Twin Peaks, who choreographed), Dean Stockwell (Paris TX) and Dennis Hopper (Blue Velvet) contributed to the weirdness; plus Devo videos (shot by 2007 JRFF guest Chuck Statler).

THE FLIMS OF CHICK STRAND AND PHIL SOLOMAN
Filmmaker, co-founder of SF’s Canyon Cinema, Chick Strand’s films explore feminist /anthropological topics using documentary and found footage techniques; critic Gene Youngblood called Strand “a great poet”. The late Phil Solomon’s films are visionary and multi-layered, a product of his fascination with the optical printer and the deterioration of the film’s surface. Solomon taught for many years at Univ. Colo.--Boulder, and was a colleague of Stan Brakhage; he died in Spring of 2019. All prints on 16 mm; Solomon’s prints courtesy of Mary Beth Reed. (a tribute to Solomon will be held at GSTh, March 26, led by Melinda Barlow, visiting artist VCU Photo and Film Dept. 7 is open to public) The films: Cartoon Le Mousse (Strand, ’79, b & w, sound, 15 min.); Waterfall (Strand, ’67, color, sound, 3 min.); Fake Fruit Factory (Strand, ’86, color, sound, 22 min.); Secret Garden (Solomon,’88, color/silent, 17 min.); Twilight Psalm II:Walking Distance (Solomon,’99, color/optical, 23 min.) TRT: 80 min
9 PM
LIQUID SKY
(dir: Slava Tsukerman, 1983, 110 min.)
A film out of nowhere by an unknown Soviet director that anticipated the underground club scene of '80s--'90s NY and launched the indie film movement that touting Beth and Scott B., Jarmusch, and Spike. Punk, sci-fi and some very twisted dark comedy made the film and actress/model Anne Carlisle (who plays dual androgynous roles) cult-famous and was the highest grossing indie film of the year (budget: $500,00). Carlisle plays a fashion model obsessed with fame whose sexual partners seem to be dying at an alarming rate, there's lots of clubbing, and then the aliens come to NY looking for heroin...Vincent Canby said it best: “Liquid Sky is a celebration of virtually every anti-social attitude one can think of”. Had a six week run at the Biograph in '84.

4 PM
ONE MAN DIES A MILLION TIMES
(dir: Jessica Oreck, 2019, 92 min.)
Time is out-of-joint in this beautifully made feature debut by American director Oreck, a mix of history and sci-fi, a “true story set in the future”. Ostensibly the love story of two botanists who meet while establishing a vital seed bank to ensure survival during the German siege of Stalingrad in WWII, the film is a tapestry of time and topics--about seeds and diversity, about love and war, about hunger of all kinds. And what it means to be human when your humanity has been stripped away. Somewhat reminiscent of Marker’s La Jetee and Resnais’ Night and Fog. A Richmond premiere!

7 PM
BANG! THE BERT BERNS STORY
(dir: Britt Berns, Bob Sarles, 2017, 94 min.)
with co-director/editor, Bob Sarles!
Bert Berns may not be a household name but once you’ve seen Bang!...(named after his record label) and all the many pop songs he produced/wrote/recorded in the '60s you'll remember it-- songs like “Twist and Shout”, “I Want Candy”, and “Piece of my Heart”, memorably recorded by Janis Joplin. Dubbed the “white soul brother”, and a “genius” by Van Morrison, Berns lived fast and deeply, and was dead at 38. The filmmakers (Berns’ son, Britt, and Sarles) capture his zest for living on the edge, and the crazy turns of his life (including dealings with the Mob) in this greatest untold story in rock-n-roll. Keith Richards, Paul McCartney, Van Morrison & more. Narrated by Stevie Van Zandt. Director Bob Sarles will be present for an intro and Q & A post-screening!

Co-sponsored by Plan 9 Records
9 PM
OTHER MUSIC
Co-sponsored by Steady Sounds
(dir: Puloma Basu, Rob Hatch-Miller, 2019, 92 min.)
with Nicole Lang, ex-staff, Other Music
In 2016, in the heart of NY’s East Village, a long-time popular indie record store, Other Music, closed. More than just a record store, it was a scene, a hang out, a place to meet and bond, where bands were formed, record labels founded, careers launched. Filmmakers Basu and Hatch-Miller met there too, and married. When the store closed, they’d been producing music videos, but decided to try to capture the essence of what had been—“we think it’s important to celebrate what spaces like this have meant to people in the past”. Featuring many famous customers and musicians--Animal Collective, Yeah Yeah Yeah, Interpol & more. Former Other Music staffer, Nicole Lang, now of Richmond, will be available for a Q & A post-screening!

GRACE ST. THEATER
Admission: $8

MIDNIGHT ROCKERS
Co-sponsored by Deep Groove Records
Rockers (dir: Theodoros Bafaloukos, ’78/’80, 100 min.)
w/ Leroy “Horsemouth” Wallace, Burning Spear, Big Youth ...
Maybe the greatest reggae movie and one of the best movie soundtracks ever together in this reworking of Vittorio DeSica’s The Bicycle Thief. Originally conceived as a documentary, it blossomed into a narrative revolving around Horsemouth’s character’s plan to make extra bread by buying and distributing records, and he’s flying high until his scooter is stolen. Some doc aspects exist though: location shooting (in Wallace’s kitchen w/own kids) and Harry J’s famed recording studio. Had Richmond premiere at the Biograph Theatre in 1980. Deep Groove record giveaways too!

BYRD THEATRE
Admission: $8

Liquid Sky
BlackKKKlansman
Bang! The Bert Berns Story
Comic Book Confidential
SUNDAY

1:30 PM
BLACKKKLANSMAN
(dir: Spike Lee, 2018, 135 min.)
with KEVIN WILLMOTT, Academy Award Winner co-screenplay
introduction by Free Egunfemi, historian, founder Untold Stories RVA
True story of African-American Colorado cop Ron Stallworth (John David Washington) who manages to infiltrate a local Klan chapter via a white surrogate fellow cop played by Adam Driver. But it doesn’t stop there, as Driver’s character eventually rubs elbows with the big robes and Stallworth discovers violent fanatics plotting in neighborhoods like yours. An unflinching, on-the-money look at race in America in the 70s and now--the final minutes of the film are frightening and indelible. Right up there with Lee’s Do the Right Thing and Malcolm X. BlackkKlansman won Best Screenplay Oscar in 2019, and co-writer Kevin Willmott will host a Q & A after the film!

4:30 PM
CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA
(dir/scr: Kevin Willmott, 2004, 89 min.)
with KEVIN WILLMOTT, director/screenwriter
introduction by Ted Salins, Randolph-Macon College, John Tyler CC
A scathing satire, both ludicrous and sobering, that poses a big what if? What if the South had won the war? In the guise of a mockumentary, a British film crew re-constructs and examines the history of the CSA from victory in 1865--today, a history that includes Lincoln fleeing to Canada, Grant surrendering, the torching of NY and Boston, a constitution guaranteeing the right to own slaves, and of course, in WWII, the CSA was an ally of Nazi Germany! Never has it felt so right to screen this film! Director Kevin Willmott will host a Q & A after the film!

BYRD THEATER
Admission: $10

7 PM
CARMINE ST. GUITARS
(dir: Ron Mann, 2019, 80 min.)
with RON MANN, filmmaker!
Five days in the life of renowned luthier Rick Kelly’s fabled Greenwich Village guitar shop--where guitar bodies are fashioned from the salvaged lumber of historic demolished buildings, which Kelly refers to as the “Bones of Old New York”. Customer appearances by Jim Jarmusch, Bill Frizzell, Eszter Balint, Marc Ribot (two-time guest of the JRFF), Lenny Kaye, Nels Cline, Dallas and Travis Good, who did the score.
Ron Mann, fresh from screening at SXSW, will host a Q & A after the film! Co-sponsored by VCU Arts--Department of Photography and Film, and Department of Art History!

GRACE STREET THEATER
Admission: $5

9 PM
GALLERY 5
Donations Requested
SILENT MUSIC REVIVAL:
VIGO’S “A PROPOS DE NICE”
WITH DAVE WATKINS LIVE
Jean (Zero for Conduct, L’ Atalante)
Vigo’s 1929 film is a lyrical, subversive social polemic of contrasting strata between the upper leisure class and the workers in the old town of Nice. Also screening: Rescued from an Eagle’s Nest (’08), a surreal-adventure short by Edwin Porter; TRT approx. 40 min. Projected on 16 mm to the live music of Dave Watkins. Donations requested!

BYRD THEATER
Admission: $10

GALLERY 5
Ron Mann is one of Canada’s best-known documentarians, a country with a strong non-fiction film tradition. Based in Toronto, where he distributes films through his company, Films We Like, Mann’s films tend to focus on American and Canadian pop culture. His film, Comic Book Confidential (’88) won a Genie award for Best Feature Length Documentary, and will be screened on Saturday, March 21 at the Byrd Theatre. His latest, Carmine St. Guitars, will screen Sunday, March 22 at VCU’s Grace St. Theater, with Mr. Mann in attendance, fresh from SXSW.

Bob Sarles is an Emmy nominated film and TV editor/director/producer based in LA and San Francisco, who first began shooting on Super 8 as a youth in Buffalo. His TV credits include Moon Shot, Story of Fathers and Sons for ABC, and MTV’s first seasons of Real World, as well as projects for NBC, Showtime, HBO, Discovery, A & E, and Oxygen. His current project, on Ozzy Osbourne, will be screening at SXSW. Mr. Sarles will be present at the screening of his rock-doc, Bang! The Bert Berns Story on Saturday, March 21, at VCU’s Grace Street Theater.

Kevin Willmott is writer/director/actor and a two-time festival guest having screened his spoof, Destination Planet Negro in 2016. Based in Lawrence, where he is a Professor of Film studies at Univ. of Kansas, Mr. Willmott received an Academy Award for co-writing the screenplay of Spike Lee’s BlackkKlansman (2018), and will be in attendance for a screening of the film at the Byrd Theatre on Sunday, March 22, followed by a screening of his satirical mockumentary, Confederate States of America. He also collaborated with Mr. Lee on Chi-raq (2015) and the upcoming series, Da 5 Bloods.

For a list of festival guests since 1994 see inside cover!
FESTIVAL COMMITTEE
Dakotah Coates, Coleman Jennings, Michael Jones, Teddy Leinbach, Jameson Price, Steven Warrick & the festival volunteers

SPECIAL THANKS
Richmond Public Library, VCU’s Departments of Photography & Film and Art History, Plan 9, Chop Suey Books, Vinyl Conflict, Deep Groove, Steady Sounds, Stephanie Saavedra & Byrd Theatre staff, Gallery 5, Trent Nicholas & VMFA staff, WRIR, VPM, Style Weekly, Linden Row Inn, Heidi Rechin & Le Lew at Grace St. Theater, Dr. Thomas Inge, Mary Beth Reed, Ted Salins, Nicole Lang, Free Engufemi, Kevin Downs, Andrew Blossom, Richmond Free Press, Sasha Waters-Freyer, John Venable, Uptown Color, Zoom Printing, Don Harrison, Alan Webber, Ken Hopson, Adventures in T-shirt Land, VA Film Office, VA Tourism Office, Canyon Cinema, Joan Strommer (festival co-founder), our advertisers, our donors, our guests, & Todd Schall-Vess for making the Byrd a community theatre & our home-base for the past 26 years!!

To donate via PayPal go to admin@jamesriverfilm.org

LOCATIONS
Byrd Theatre, 2908 W. Cary St.
Gallery 5, 200 W. Marshall St.
Grace Street Theater (VCU), 934 W. Grace St.
Richmond Public Library Main Branch, 101 E. Franklin St.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, 200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd

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27TH JRFF
“FILMS THAT SPEAK 2 U”
T-SHIRTS $12
ON SALE AT EVENTS

IN MEMORIAM PAST GUESTS
Stan Brakhage, Les Blank, Paul Arthur, Karen Aqua, Diane Bonder, Mel Stuart, David Durston, Ray Harryhausen, Ron Smith, Albert Maysles, Gunnar Hansen, Jonas Mekas, and Irby Brown & Bob Ellis, past JRFF members
From our first festival in 1994, music on film, the music-doc, was present in our programming, screening Weber's *Let's Get Lost* about jazz trumpeter Chet Baker, and *The Band that Would Be King* on 1/2 Japanese, and two years later with guest Albert Maysles talking to a devoted audience at 2 am in the Byrd who'd just seen *Gimme Shelter*. The same year, we screened Jarmusch's *Year of the Horse*, at midnight at the Byrd. Les Blank was here in 2001 with his films of music, like *Blues Accordin' to Lightnin' Hopkins*, and *Hot Pepper* on Clifton Chenier. Also in 2001/2017 Herb E. Smith from Appelshop with *The Ralph Stanley Story*, and in 2004, Mel Stuart was here to screen *Wattstax*, and along the way we played *Say Amen, Somebody* (on gospel music), *Let's Rock Again* (on Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros), *Patti Smith: Dream of Life*, *Heart of a Dog* (on Laurie Anderson). In 2009 Ron Smith screened *My Blue Star* (on Hasil Adkins) at the Byrd. In 2010 Jem Cohen guested and we screened *Fugazi: Instrument* and *Benjamin Smoke*; both Jeff Krulik and John Heyn were here to screen *Heavy Metal Parking Lot* and just last year in 2019, Mark Robinson screened his film *Amateur on Plastic* on DC-legend Butch Willis, all at the Byrd. And we’ll screen plenty of music related films this year as well--check it out!

In 1995 we began a long collaboration with musicians, both local and international, to screen silent film with live music--the first show was the Ululating Mummies doing their score to Buster Keaton’s *Seven Chances* to a sold-out house at the old Biograph, then the Grace St. Cinema. They followed up with *SHERLOCK JR.* in 1996, *The General* at the Byrd in 1997, and Warhol’s *Chelsea Girls* on multi-screens at 1708 Gallery in 1998. In 2000, Tom Verlaine (Television) and Jimmy Rip performed live at the Byrd with a program of avant-garde shorts; Ed Sanders of the Fugs with Coby Batty at the old Fulton school studio in 2002 w/ some Beat movies; and in 2005 Pere Ubu packed the Byrd as they over-scored *Man with the X-Ray Eyes*. Other local talents include Jonny Hott, NRG Krysys, and the Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra who performed twice to *Nanook of the North*. Gary Lucas (Captain Beefheart) has visited the festival four times, performing with *Der Golem, Dracula* (Spanish-version) and jamming with Hotel X to a selection of *Surreal Shorts* at the Canal Club in 2006. And don’t forget Marc Ribot playing to Chaplin’s *The Kid* at the Byrd in 2014 and in 2016 at VCU’s Grace St. Theater to Jennifer Reeves’ *Shadows Choose Their Horrors*, plus, Silent Music Revival, under Jameson Price’s nurturing, continues to pair musicians to arty silent films at Gallery 5, including on Sunday, March 22, with Dave Watkins & Jean Vigo’s *A Propos de Nice*.

(for complete JRFF music/film history see our website)
Rick’s Custom Frame + Gallery

Rick Michaels
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