



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, Media Contacts:
Vashon Film Institute; vashonfilmfest@gmail.com
PMG: Henry Eshelman; heshelman@platformgrp.com 323.337.90942

Vashon Film Institute Hosts Inaugural VASHON ISLAND FILM FESTIVAL August 12-14, 2022

With a focus on “*putting the ‘independent’ back in ‘film festival,’*”
VIFF will showcase 10 feature films and 10 short films, all
independently-produced, as well as a series of supplementary events in
effort to raise funds for the iconic Vashon Theater

Vashon Island, WA (June 2, 2022) – The Vashon Film Institute (VFI), a new non-profit organization dedicated to fostering independent filmmaking in the Pacific Northwest, has announced it will host the inaugural Vashon Island Film Festival (VIFF) on August 12-14, 2022, where it will screen 10 feature films and 10 short films that have distinguished themselves recently on the festival circuit, and present a variety of other film-centric events for festival patrons to experience, including its Opening Night Gala and Saturday Night Soiree, as well as a few seminars and lectures delivered by notable guests working in the film industry. One hundred percent of all profits generated by VIFF will go to the Vashon Theater, the island’s iconic and only cinema house that was constructed in 1947 and is family-operated.

“Our goal is to create a unique festival experience for the island and its neighboring communities, showcasing preeminent independent film content, while also helping preserve a local site of significant cultural and historical import” says prolific film producer and VFI President Mark Mathias Sayre. “Independent theaters were hit particularly hard during the pandemic, and most now require the assistance of their community to keep their doors open. The Vashon Theater is an historic, seminal institution that is largely responsible for my decision to pursue a career in film, so I feel a strong calling to support it and I am confident that VIFF can be a part of that solution.”

The inaugural festival will feature films curated by Sayre and the VFI team. “Due to the expedited nature of organizing our first outing, we decided to program the festival ourselves,” says Sayre. “But it offers the advantage of quality control. We’ve been able to identify—and seek out—a handful of varied and exceptional films that have resonated with audiences on the festival circuit.

++more++

“However, moving forward, our plan is to institute a submission process with more formal qualifying parameters, where we’ll focus on films that have yet to secure distribution and weren’t backed by major studios during the production process. This will distinguish VIFF from many of its contemporaries and continue to provide its patrons with extraordinary programs. We don’t want this experience to be one-and-done, so we’re placing the bar as high as we can. We want VIFF to be the kind of festival where independent filmmakers seek to hold their world premieres. Hence our motto: *‘Putting the independent back in film festival.’*”

Although VFI intends to apply for grants and other funding opportunities available to non-profit organizations to cover operational expenditures, it also hopes to draw heavily on the support of local communities through charitable donations, sponsorships, and volunteerism. “It takes a village, and I’m over the moon that the village is Vashon,” adds Sayre. “Our little island in the Puget Sound holds a special place in my heart, and a big part of that is its residents’ ardent support for the arts. We’re very hopeful that the community will embrace the festival, and we’re actively seeking contributors and collaborators in a multitude of manners. Anyone interested in participating can find more information on the VIFF website or stop me in the aisle of Thriftway for a quick chat.”

VFI plans to announce VIFF’s formal line-up within the next several weeks, whereupon registration will open for festival badges. “We’ll make three different tiers of badges available for purchase,” says Sayre. “A 3-film, a 6-film, and a 10-film package for the most dutiful cinephiles. Patrons can purchase single day-of screening tickets if there aren’t enough badge holders to fill the theater to capacity.”

Other events to be held at VIFF include its Opening Night Gala, where badge holders can mingle with filmmakers, a Saturday Night Soiree, featuring live music, street food, and a beer garden, and a few seminars/lectures presented by industry professionals. “As we meet our goals at VIFF, we hope to expand the ancillary events offered during future festivals,” says Sayre. “In addition to celebrating independent cinema, we hope VIFF can also educate and empower. The best-case scenario is that our program helps motivate the creation of more art.”

About VFI

Founded by veteran independent film producer Mark Mathias Sayre, the Vashon Film Institute (VFI) is dedicated to fostering independent filmmaking in the Pacific Northwest, including the launch of two unique programs: the Vashon Island Film Festival and Vashon Scholars, a multi-week summer film intensive education program it plans to host for youth on the island starting in 2023. Its Board of Directors presently includes three individuals with island roots: Maura Little, Isaac Mann, and Peter Serko.

Web + Social!

www.vashonislandfilmfestival.com

@vashonfilmfest

www.facebook.com/vashonfilmfest

www.twitter.com/vashonfilmfest

www.instagram.com/vashonfilmfest