

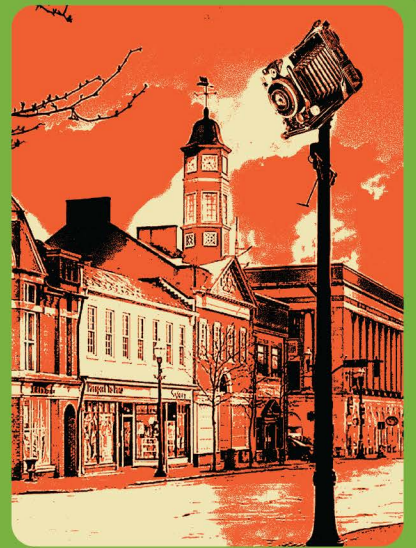
CHAGRIN DOCUMENTARY



FILM FESTIVAL



EVERYONE HAS A STORY



CHAGRINFILMFEST.ORG



**16TH ANNUAL
OCTOBER 7-12, 2025**

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Welcome to the 16th Annual Chagrin Documentary Film Festival!

Fevered Dreams Productions is pleased to present the 16th Annual Chagrin Documentary Film Festival. Originally founded as David Ponce's film production company, his legacy continues through Fevered Dreams Productions and the Film Festival.

It is an honor to take the helm of this special organization and continue to bring these powerful stories to you. As a Chagrin graduate and current resident, I am so grateful to have an opportunity to be a part of this special presentation. For 16 years, this festival has been a space where bold voices, diverse perspectives, and unforgettable stories come to life on screen—and this year is no exception.

From the very beginning, passion and community have driven the Chagrin Documentary Film Festival to showcase the very best in documentary film. These storytellers invite us to laugh, reflect, and see the world through film.

Whether you're a longtime supporter or a first-time attendee, you are part of a community that believes in the transformative power of storytelling. Thanks to our incredible filmmakers, dedicated volunteers, generous sponsors and members, and engaged audiences like you, Chagrin Documentary Film Festival continues to grow in both spirit and scope.

We're proud to present a program that spans genres, cultures, and conversations—each film a unique lens on the world we share. So dive in. Be curious. Let yourself be moved.

Thank you for being here. Let the stories begin!

In sincere appreciation,

Morgan Ricketts Crawford

Executive Director

Inspired by the filmmaking spirit of David Ponce

The Inspiration . . . "what the human spirit is capable of"

Filmmaker and Chagrin Falls High School alumnus David Ponce wrote this letter about his documentary "The Lost Sparrows of Roodepoort" even as he faced his own battle with leukemia. He succumbed six weeks later at the age of 20. It was David's drive to share with the world "just what the human spirit is capable of" that inspires us to bring this festival to his hometown.

**An excerpt from David's letter to the director
of Sparrow Village, Roodepoort, South Africa | July 27, 2006**



"Nothing is as important to me as producing a work that is true to Sparrow and showing those who have not visited, just what the human spirit is capable of when faced with something immensely dark and frightening. And to this, I forever owe gratitude and have sworn to myself to produce something substantial in propagating the idea of hope and joy in the face of something so ugly."

This Festival is dedicated to the unique spirit of the talented filmmakers who share their stories with us.

2025 FILM FESTIVAL SPONSORS

WE WISH TO THANK THE FOLLOWING:

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\$25,000



GOLD
\$10,000



SILVER
\$5,000



SPOTLIGHT
\$3,000



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EVERY HOME HAS A STORY... LET ME TELL YOURS



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Special Events

In addition to thought-provoking documentaries, don't miss these events around Chagrin Falls! Reservations required for all special events.

FILMS IN THE PARK

Sponsored by Chagrin Valley Jaycees

Triangle Park Screen

Bring your chair or blanket and enjoy a free selection of family-friendly short films and trailers.

16TH ANNUAL OPENING NIGHT

Sponsored by Carnegie Investment Counsel

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7

5:30 PM - VIP Reception

\$125 * individual tickets

7:00 PM - Film begins

\$15 * individual tickets (film only)

CFIS Theater

Let's celebrate 16 years of documentary excellence as VIPs walk the red carpet. Enjoy wine and hor d'oeuvres from Chagrin area restaurants.

Film: *John Candy: I Like Me* (pg. 18)

HISTORICAL FILMS & BAGELS

Sponsored by Chagrin History Center

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 9:00 AM
Chagrin History Center

Start your festival day right with bagels, coffee, and a historical feature film.

\$20 ** individual ticket

Films: *Just and Perfect* (pg. 34) and *Dear Mr. President* (pg. 18)

ARTISTIC FLARE AND SELFCARE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 12 PM
CDFF HQ

Enjoy a powerful short film *The Eye of Cleveland* that will spark reflection and awaken your inner artist.

Come for the self-care, stay for the inspiration - a soulful experience you won't want to miss.

Hosted by Sun & Spirit WellBeing

\$20 ** individual ticket



Film: *The Eye of Cleveland* (pg. 38)

AMERICAN CLOWN

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 5:15 PM
CFIS Theater

Address your fear of clowns and meet the Flower Clown for balloon twisting and fearless fun before and after the film!

\$15 * individual ticket

Film: *American Clown* (pg. 16)

LA BELLA VITA

Sponsored by Susan Metallo BHHS

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 5:30 PM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre - Film
Chagrin Township Hall - Reception

Billy Joel said it best, a bottle of white, a bottle of red, perhaps a pizza and film instead. We'll get a table near the street in our old familiar place, Township Hall turned Italian.

Generous support provided by Dattilo Wealth Management Group

\$15 * individual ticket (film only)

\$40 ** individual ticket (film and reception)

Film: *A Little Fellow: The Legacy of A.P. Giannini* (pg. 24)

YOU NEED...

BREAKFAST AND FILM

Sponsored by TPG Peppertree

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 10:00 AM
Federated Church

Enjoy an eye opening film with a light breakfast from The Sleepy Rooster.

\$20** individual ticket

Film: *You Need This* (pg. 32)

SALLY'S LUNCHEON

Separately ticketed event through the St. Joan of Arc Women's Guild

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 11:30 AM
St. Joan of Arc Church Hall

Don't miss this popular Festival event—the famous salad lunch paired with a showcase of 2025 Festival short films!

\$25**** individual ticket with reservations in advance through the St. Joan's Women's committee

Call: 440-247-6945 for reservations (seating is limited)

In loving memory of Sally Florkiewicz

THE SECRET SIP: EXCLUSIVE MEMBER EVENT

Sponsored by Merrymeeting Group

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 5:30 PM

An invitation-only experience at a location so exclusive, we can't even tell you where it is. Curated indulgences and conversations that matter—but only if you're part of the inner circle. ****

SPECIAL EVENTS

AMPLIFIED AFTER HOURS

Hosted by Greenville Inn

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 9:30 PM

Greenville Inn - 7150 Pine St.

Experience live performances of iconic songs from the legendary artists David Spero has managed throughout his career. Join David for a book signing and hear the stories behind the music that defined generations. Hear powerhouse vocals from **Apostle Jones!**

\$15* Door Cover

HIGHLAND TRADITIONS: PORRIDGE, PIPES & WHISKEY

Sponsored by DayGlo

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 5:45 PM

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre - Film

Chagrin Township Hall - Reception

Experience Scotland without leaving Ohio! Uniting three Highland treasures: championship porridge, toe tapping traditional music, and bold Scotch whiskey into one memorable evening.

\$15 * individual ticket (film only)

\$40 ** individual ticket (film and reception)

Film: *The Golden Spurtle* (pg. 21)

FESTIVAL AWARDS CEREMONY

Sponsored by Carnegie Investment Counsel

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

9:30 AM - Breakfast

10:00 AM - Awards

Enjoy a light breakfast with filmmakers and film lovers prior to the 16th annual awards ceremony. \$10,000 in prize money will be presented to winners.

Celebrity Hosts: Rick Jackson and Loree Vick

Free and open to the public

EGGS AND KEGS - CELEBRITY PICKLED EGG TASTING

Sponsored by Lyndall Insurance

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1:30 PM

Chagrin Falls Township Hall

British Pub Pickled eggs come to CDFF with the charming short film *How Fast Can You Eat a Pickled Egg?*



Local celebrities will compete for the coveted "Best CDFF Pickled Egg" award. Audience will sample and vote on the best pickled eggs!

Individual tickets: \$20 * includes film, eggs and local draft beer.

Master of Ceremonies: Craig Lyndall

Film: *How Fast Can You Eat a Pickled Egg* (pg. 33)

SOFT SEAT SCREENINGS

Sponsored by Naturepedic

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2:45 PM

Triangle Park Screen

Sink into the comfort of Naturepedic yoga pillows and be inspired by an afternoon of powerful, thought-provoking films that highlight local stories and voices.

Film: *Farm to Bed: The Families Behind Naturepedic's Organic Cotton* (Screens with Local Shorts films pg. 38)

Free and open to the public

VIP + FILMMAKERS TOAST

Sponsored by Carnegie Investment Counsel

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11,

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Chagrin Falls Township Hall

Join us for an exclusive Filmmaker VIP Bash! This is your chance to mingle with talented filmmakers, award winners and film enthusiasts. Includes wine and appetizers. Hosted by Carnegie Investment Counsel.

\$50* individual ticket

MEMBER ACCESS

* Included for all member

**Included for Igniter and above

***CDFF 100 & above

****Included for Visionary and Dreamers

HUNGARIAN HERITAGE: A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

In memory of Jeanette Grasselli Brown

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 7:45 PM

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

The annual gathering that salutes all things Hungarian! Experience this vibrant culture with delightful Hungarian music and a glass of wine.

\$20* individual ticket

Film: *Kaláka: from the Carpathians to the Caribbean* (pg. 23)

HORA DANCING

Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Israel Arts Connection

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1:00 PM

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

Honor this century-old folk tradition with a rousing Hora dance following the film.

Film: *Hora* (pg. 22)



Amal | Hope

FESTIVAL FINALE

Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Israel Arts Connection

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 5:30 PM

Federated Church Sanctuary

Israeli pianist Yaron Kohlberg delivers a powerful live performance celebrating hope, resilience, and the universal language of art as we close out the festival.

\$20 * individual ticket

Film: *Amal | Hope* (pg. 33)

NOTE: CDFF venues are cashless for tickets purchases. Credit/debit card only please.

PANEL EVENTS, DISCUSSIONS AROUND TOWN

Beyond the screenings, join us for special events happening throughout Chagrin Falls!

ILLUMINATE - INSPIRING SHORT FILMS AND PANEL

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8 AND
THURSDAY OCTOBER 9, 10:00 AM

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre
CDFF's popular and impactful
"Illuminate Student Film Experience"
comes back, now available to both
regional students and, for the first
time, our general fest audience. The
program includes carefully curated
short films followed by a panel
discussion with two Oscar winning
documentarians, Thomas Lennon
and Daniel Junge.

Films include: *Amal* (pg. 33)

Pastures and Panels (pg. 36)

Boda Boda (pg. 37)

THIS IS PIKE COUNTY

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 5:45 PM
Federated Church

Join Oscar-winning producer Tom
Lennon and Director Laura Paglin to
discuss this deeply Ohio film.

Film: *This is Pike County* (pg. 31)

I WAS BORN THIS WAY Q&A

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 7:30 PM
CFIS Theater

Q&A with subject Beatitude-Bishop
Jones and Oscar-winning Director
Daniel Jung following this much
buzzed about highlight from Tribeca.
Film: *I Was Born This Way* (pg. 22)

CLEVELAND ROCKS PANEL

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 7:30 PM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

Stick around after the film to hear
from music industry legend David
Spero and special guests to discuss
Northeast Ohio's rich history in rock
and roll.

Film: *The Heart of Rock and Roll: A
Cleveland Rocks Story* (pg. 22)



FILMMAKER PANELS

Check out these insightful moderated discussions
with our visiting filmmakers!

Thursday, Oct 9, 12:00 PM - Federated Church

Moderated by James Madio

Friday, October 10, 5:00 PM - Chagrin Falls Township Hall

Moderated by Mallory Martin

Saturday, October 11, 11:30 AM - Chagrin Falls Township Hall

Moderated by Tyler Davidson



Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals

POWERING OUR LIVES: EXPLORING CRITICAL MINERALS

Sponsored by Chagrin Valley
Chamber of Commerce

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 12:00 PM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 5:45 PM
CFIS Theater

Hear from this panel of experts to
discuss how critical minerals shape
our everyday lives.

Film: *Lithium Rising: The Race for
Critical Minerals* (pg. 24)

CHANGING THE FILM LANDSCAPE PANEL + STEDICAM DEMO

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 4:00 PM
Chagrin Falls Township Hall

What new technology is creating
change in the film world? A
demonstration of the next generation
steadicam with Andrew Stanton of
Liminal Space follows.

Film: *Changing the Film Landscape:
The Garrett Brown Story* (pg. 33)
Free and open to the public

PANEL EVENTS, DISCUSSIONS

FAST AND FURIEST

Sponsored by South Franklin Circle

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 5:30 PM
South Franklin Circle

See the film and then meet Ike, Chagrin Falls' own award-winning agility dog, the #3 Boston Terrier in the country and his person, Mary Modroo.

Film: *Hustle and Run* (pg. 33)

MEET AND GREET WITH PARK RANGER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2:00 PM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, River Room

Meet subject, Peter Christian, a National Park Service Ranger following the film for a chance to hear about his experience in the Alaskan wilderness.

Film: *Ranger of the North* (pg. 34)

TRAIL MIX: LOCAL HIKER Q&A

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 4:30 PM
CDFF HQ

Hear from two Chagrin Valley adventurers who have tackled sections of America's most legendary trail! Join us immediately following the *Trail Mix* screening as we sit down with Ian Koenig and Jack Zilly, experienced hikers who have explored portions of the iconic 2,190-mile Appalachian Trail.

Film: *Trail Mix* (pg. 31)

JOIN THE CLUB: BREAKOUT DISCUSSION

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 5:45 PM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

Come up to the CVLT River Room after the screening to meet medicinal marijuana experts and explore the health benefits of cannabinoids. Michael Merto from Cleveland Botanical Destination will join the film's director for a discussion.

Film: *Join the Club* (pg. 23)



MEET AN AWARD WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 7:30 PM
CFIS Theater

Stay after the screening to meet Amy Sancetta, NEO's own Pulitzer Prize winning photojournalist and get insight into her remarkable career and iconic photos.

Film: *Love + War* (pg. 26)

EXPOSING THE REHAB MACHINE

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1:00 PM
CFIS Theater

Join Director Ben Flaherty as he exposes how addiction treatment has become a billion-dollar machine that profits from keeping patients sick. Flaherty and panelists will discuss the deep-rooted corruption plaguing our rehabilitation system.

Film: *Shuffle* (pg. 30)

A NOTE FROM THE CHAGRIN DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL

The views expressed in the documentary films and by speakers are those of their filmmakers and subjects. They do not represent the views of CDFF, Fevered Dreams Productions, Festival sponsors or supporters. Accepted films are carefully selected by a diverse committee based upon the quality of the storytelling and relevance of the film. The process included multiple layers of consideration to present wide ranging and important topics. Documentary films, by nature, can be controversial.

At the Chagrin Documentary Film Festival, we strive to create a respectful and inclusive environment for all attendees. As a film festival committed to providing a diverse and thought-provoking experience, we present films that cover a wide range of topics and perspectives. Some of the films may contain robust language and challenging ideas.

By attending the Chagrin Film Festival, you acknowledge that personal discretion is necessary when choosing films to watch. We cannot guarantee that all films will be suitable for all attendees, and we disclaim any liability for any discomfort, offence, or dissatisfaction arising from the content of the films screened.

QUESTIONS? Online: chagrinfilmfest.org
Or call the Fest office: (440) 247-1591

Welcome

to the 2025 Chagrin Documentary Film Festival!
This overview includes times,
film locations and special events

Schedule is subject to change: Please check the festival website for changes and updates. Detailed film listing begins on page 16.

Tuesday October 7

**Chagrin Falls Intermediate
School Theater**

5:30 PM VIP Opening Event
7:00 PM Opening Film (113 mins)
John Candy: I Like Me (pg. 18)

Wednesday October 8

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

10:00 AM Illuminate Shorts (58 mins) (pg. 8)
Amal | Hope (18 mins)
Pastures + Panels (18 mins)
Boda Boda (22 mins)
12:00 PM Remaining Native (88 mins)
2:00 PM The Pantone Guy (80 mins)
3:50 PM Memory for Burial (61 mins)
5:30 PM A Little Fellow (82 mins)
7:30 PM Local Spotlight (70 mins) (pg. 38)

Chagrin Falls

Intermediate School Theater (CFIS)

5:15 PM American Clown (91 mins)
7:30 PM I Was Born This Way (100 mins)

Federated Church

12:00 PM Rising Phoenix (87 mins)
2:00 PM World Without Cows (85 mins)
4:00 PM International Stories (70 mins)(pg. 37)
5:45 PM This is Pike County (78 mins)
7:45 PM Speak (104 mins)

CDFF HQ

12:00 PM Artistic Flare / Eye of Cle. (60 mins)
1:45 pm Crisis in Ukraine (70 mins) (pg. 40)
5:30 PM People You Need (81 mins) (pg. 41)
7:30 PM Game On (78 mins)

Chagrin Falls History Center

9:00 AM Dear Mr. President (pg.18)
+ Just and Perfect (pg.34) (76 mins)

	Chagrin Valley Little Theatre	CFIS Theater	Federated Church	CDFF HQ
10 AM	Illuminate Shorts (pg. 8)			
11 AM	P			
12 PM	Remaining Native (pg. 28)		Rising Phoenix (pg.29)	Artistic Flare/ Eye of Cleveland (pg. 6, 38) S
1 PM				
2 PM	The Pantone Guy (pg. 28)		World Without Cows (pg. 32)	Crisis in Ukraine (pg. 40)
3 PM				
4 PM	Memory for Burial (pg. 27)		International Stories (pg. 37)	
5 PM				
6 PM	A Little Fellow (pg. 6, 24) S	American Clown (pg. 6, 16)	This is Pike County (pg. 31) P	People You Need to Meet (pg. 41)
7 PM				
8 PM	Local Spotlight (pg. 38) P	I Was Born This Way (pg. 22) P	Speak. (pg. 30)	Game On (pg. 20)
9 PM				



Special
Event



Panel
event



Violent or
mature content

Thursday October 9

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

10:00 AM Illuminate Shorts (58 mins)
Amal | Hope (18 mins) (pg.33)
Pastures + Panels (18 mins) (pg.36)
Boda Boda (22 mins) (pg.37)
12:15 PM Looking Up (72 mins)
2:00 PM Trail Mix (48 mins)
3:30 PM The Golden Spurtle (75 mins)
5:30 PM The Opener (73 mins)
7:30 PM The Heart of Rock and Roll (76 mins)

Chagrin Falls

Intermediate School Theater (CFIS)

5:30 PM Champions of the Golden Valley (81 mins)
7:20 PM Shadow Scholars (98 mins)

Federated Church

10:00 AM You Need This (84 mins)
12:00 PM Filmmaker Panel (60 mins)
1:30 PM Join the Club (88 mins)

CDFF HQ

11:00 AM Our Shared Planet (77 mins)
Pastures and Panels (18 mins)
Between Moon Tides (25 mins)
What the River Knows (34 mins)
12:40 PM People You Need to Meet (81 mins)
Grit (14 mins)
The Book of George (15 mins)
Breaking Plates (25 mins)
My Father Was A Butcher (27 mins)
2:40 PM Social Awareness (76 mins)
Breakaway (20 mins)
Projecting Protest (22 mins)
All the Empty Rooms (34 mins)
5:20 PM Along the River (62 mins)
7:00 PM Coroner to the Stars (84 mins)

St. Joan of Arc

11:30 AM Sally's Luncheon (60 mins) (pg. 6)
5:20 PM Remaining Native (88 mins) (pg. 28)
7:15 PM Dear Mr. President (pg.18)
+ Just and Perfect (76 mins) (pg. 34)

Triangle Park Screen

6:00 PM Festival Choice Shorts (60 mins)

Greenville Inn

9:30 PM Amplified After Hours (60 mins) (pg.7)

	Chagrin Valley Little Theatre	CFIS Theater	Federated Church	CDFF HQ
10 AM	Illuminate Shorts (pg. 8) P		You Need This (pg. 6, 32)	
11 AM			S	Our Shared Planet (pg. 36)
12 PM			Filmmaker Panel (pg. 8)	
1 PM	Looking Up (pg. 26)			People You Need to Meet (pg. 41)
2 PM	Trail Mix (pg. 31)		Join the Club (pg. 23)	
3 PM				Social Awareness (pg. 40)
4 PM	The Golden Spurtle (pg. 21)			
5 PM				
6 PM	The Opener (pg. 28)	Champions of the Golden Valley (pg. 17)		Along the River (pg. 16)
7 PM				
8 PM	The Heart of Rock and Roll (pg. 22) P	Shadow Scholars (pg. 29)		Coroner to the Stars (pg. 17)
9 PM				

THE SECRET SIP

Sponsored by Merrymeeting Group

5:30 PM Exclusive member event (pg.6)

Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres to be served at an exclusive venue. Secret venue revealed exclusively to Dreamers and Visionary members.

Friday October 10

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

10:00 AM This is Pike County (78 mins)
12:00 PM Lithium Rising (62 mins)
1:45 PM A Little Fellow (82 mins)
3:45 PM Rising Phoenix (87 mins)
5:45 PM Golden Spurtle (75 mins)
7:30 PM Love + War (95 mins)

Chagrin Falls

Intermediate School Theater

5:30 PM The Last Dive (88 mins)
7:30 PM Suburban Fury (118 mins)

Federated Church

11:00 AM Our Shared Planet (77 mins)
Pastures and Panels (18 mins)
Between Moon Tides (25 mins)
What the River Knows (34 mins)
1:00 PM International Stories (70 mins)
Forgotten Routes (14 mins)
They Call Me the Tattoo Witch (14 mins)
City of God Beneath the River (20 mins)
Boda Boda (22 mins)
3:00 PM Cracking the Code (98 mins)
5:15 PM You Need This (84 mins)

CDFF HQ

4:00 PM Social Awareness (76 mins)
Breakaway (20 mins)
Projecting Protest (22 mins)
All the Empty Rooms (34 mins)
5:40 PM Student Shorts (66 mins)
Under the Lights (10 mins)
By Name (14 mins)
Magda (20 mins)
Placed (22 mins)
7:30 PM Looking Up (72 mins)

Triangle Park Screen

12:00 PM Artistic Expression (33 mins) (pg 35)
Amy Sillman (9 mins)
Jerome Delepine (11 mins)
George V (13 mins)
6:00 PM Ranger of the North (29 mins) (pg.34)

South Franklin Circle

5:30 PM Hustle and Run (45 mins) (pg. 9, 33)
6:30 PM Speak. (104 mins) (pg. 30)

Chagrin Falls History Center

7:15 PM I Forgot to Tell You / Just and Perfect (52 mins) (pg. 34)

	Chagrin Valley Little Theatre	CFIS Theater	Federated Church	CDFF HQ
10 AM	This is Pike County (pg. 31)			
11 AM			Our Shared Planet (pg. 36)	
12 PM	Lithium Rising (pg. 24)			
1 PM			International Stories (pg. 37)	
2 PM	A Little Fellow (pg. 24)			
3 PM			Cracking the Code (pg. 17)	
4 PM	Rising Phoenix (pg. 29)			Social Awareness (pg. 40)
5 PM				
6 PM	Golden Spurtle (pg. 7, 21)	The Last Dive (pg. 24)	You Need This (pg. 32)	Student Shorts (pg. 39)
7 PM				
8 PM	Love + War (pg. 26)	Suburban Fury (pg. 30)		Looking Up (pg. 26)
9 PM				



Special Event



Panel event



Violent or mature content

Saturday October 11

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

9:30 AM Awards Breakfast
10:00 AM Festival Awards (80 mins)
12:00 PM Among Thieves (85 mins)
2:00 PM Ranger of the North | Freeland (82 mins)
4:00 PM The Heart of Rock and Roll (76 mins)
5:45 PM Join the Club (88 mins)
7:45 PM Kaláka: from the Carpathians (80 mins)

Chagrin Falls

Intermediate School Theater

10:15 AM Lost Wolves of Yellowstone (92 mins)
12:15 PM Student Shorts (66 mins)
Under the Lights (10 mins)
By Name (14 mins)
Magda (20 mins)
Placed (22 mins)
2:00 PM Champions of the Golden Valley (81 mins)
3:50 PM The Pantone Guy (80 mins)
5:45 PM Lithium Rising (62 mins)
7:30 PM Love + War (95 mins)

Federated Church

10:30 AM Shadow Scholars (98 mins)
12:50 PM Shuffle (83 mins)
3:00 PM Oceania: Journey to the Center (75 mins)
4:45 PM Coroner to the Stars (84 mins)
6:40 PM Voices (104 mins)

CDFF HQ

12:15 PM Crisis in Ukraine (70 mins)
The Survivors (30 mins)
Ukraine Under Fire (40 mins)
2:30 PM God as My Witness (82 mins)
4:30 PM Trail Mix (48 mins)
6:00 PM Skate Rat (24 mins)
7:15 PM Turtle Walker (75 mins)

Triangle Park Screen

1:30 PM Our Shared Planet (77 mins) (pg.36)
Pastures and Panels (18 mins)
Between Moon Tides (25 mins)
What the River Knows (34 mins)
2:45 PM Local Spotlight (70 mins) (pg.38)
Farm to Bed (11 mins)
The Eye of Cleveland (12 mins)
The Art of Filling Plates (15 mins)
Hiking through Grief (32 mins)
7:00 PM Hustle and Run (pg. 33) (19 mins)
+ Fest Choice (60 mins)

Chagrin Falls Township Hall

11:30 AM Filmmaker Panel (60 mins)
1:30 PM How Fast Can You Eat a Pickled Egg (13 mins) (pg. 7, 33)
5:00 PM VIP Event (60 mins) (pg.9)

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

CFIS Theater

Federated Church

CDFF HQ

10 AM	Festival Awards (pg. 7)	The Lost Wolves of Yellowstone (pg. 26)	Shadow Scholars (pg. 29)	
11 AM	S			
12 PM	Among Thieves (pg. 16)	Student Shorts (pg. 39)		Crisis in Ukraine (pg. 40)
1 PM			Shuffle (pg. 9, 30)	M
2 PM	Ranger (pg. 34) Freeland (pg. 9, 20)	Champions of the Golden Valley (pg. 17)		
3 PM			Oceania: Journey to the Center (pg. 27)	God as My Witness (pg. 20)
4 PM	The Heart of Rock and Roll (pg. 22)	The Pantone Guy (pg. 28)		M
5 PM			Corner to the Stars (pg. 17)	Trail Mix (pg.31)
6 PM	Join the Club (pg. 23)	Lithium Rising (pg. 24)		Skate Rat (pg.34)
7 PM	P M		Voices: The Danny Gans Story (pg. 32)	Turtle Walker (pg. 31)
8 PM	Kaláka: from the Carpathians to the Caribbean (pg. 7, 23)	Love + War (pg. 26)		
9 PM	S	P		

Valley Art Center

2:00 PM Artistic Expressions (33 mins) (pg. 35)
Amy Sillman (9 mins)
Jerome Delepine (11 mins)
George V (13 mins)

Sunday October 12

Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

11:30 AM Award Winning Shorts (TBA)
1:00 PM Hora (60 mins)
2:45 PM Suburban Fury (118 mins)

Chagrin Falls

Intermediate School Theater

11:00 AM Turtle Walker (75 mins)
1:00 PM Shuffle (83 mins)
3:15 PM The Last Dive (88 mins)

South Franklin Circle

12:00 PM Award Winner Showing (TBA)
Best of the Fest

Federated Church

5:30 PM Closing Event
Amal | Hope (18 mins) (pg. 7)

	Chagrin Valley Little Theatre	CFIS Theater
10 AM		
11 AM		
12 PM	Award Winning Shorts (TBA)	Turtle Walker (pg. 31)
1 PM	Hora (pg. 7, 22)	Shuffle (pg. 9, 30)
2 PM		P
3 PM	Suburban Fury (pg. 30)	
4 PM		The Last Dive (pg. 24)
5 PM		
6 PM		

Purchase passes and tickets for CDDFF On Demand and In Person Screenings!

Box Office 10/8-10/11 at Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

Online tickets, passes and membership packages:
chagrinfilmfest.org

Call the Fest office:
Starting September 3rd
440-247-1591

In-person film – individual ticket: \$15

CDDFF on Demand single film streaming: \$12

Special event tickets as listed (pg.6-9)

Doc Lover Pass:
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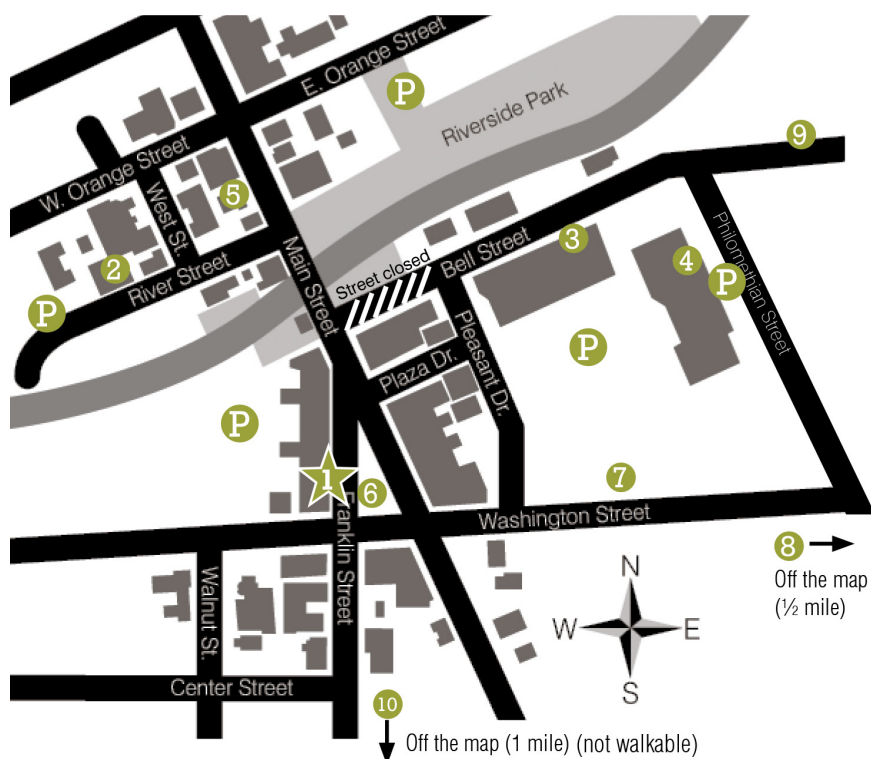
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Film Festival Venues




- 1 CDFF HQ**
3 N. Franklin St.
- 2 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre**
40 River St.
- 3 Federated Church**
76 Bell St.
- 4 CFIS Theater**
75 Philomethian St.
- 5 Chagrin Falls Township Hall**
83 N. Main St.
- 6 Triangle Park Screen**
11 North Franklin St.
- 7 Chagrin History Center**
87 E. Washington St.
- 8 St. Joan of Arc**
496 E. Washington St.
- 9 Valley Art Center**
155 Bell St.
- 10 South Franklin Circle**
16600 Warren Ct.





ILLUMINATE

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The Illuminate Student Film Experience returns - now open to both regional students and, for the first time, the general festival audience! Join us for carefully curated short films followed by a panel discussion with two Oscar winning documentarians, Thomas Lennon and Daniel Junge.

Wednesday, October 8 and Thursday, October 9, 10:00 AM
Chagrin Valley Little Theatre

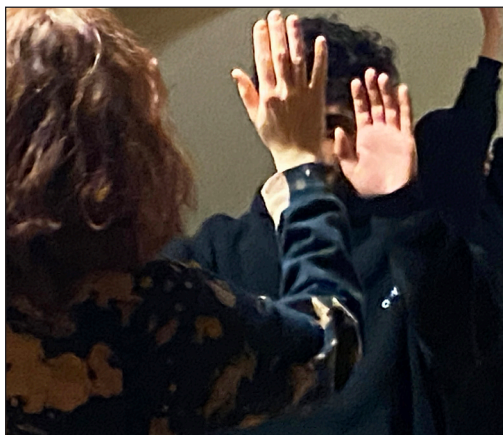
Films:
***Amal* (pg. 33), *Pastures and Panels* (pg. 36), *Boda Boda* (pg. 37)**

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2025 Films EVERYONE HAS A STORY

Check online schedule for on Demand availability. Some films are excluded from streaming.



Along The River

Along The River U.S. Premiere

Directed by Gerburg Rohde-Dahl

Germany, 62 minutes

Four months after the October 7th Hamas-led attack on Israel, which killed over 1,200 people and sparked a devastating war in Gaza, a group of Palestinians and Israelis gathered in Germany to confront their complex grief, anger, and shared humanity. Their honest dialogue and expression of emotions provides a much needed path for healing. *Along the River* offers an intimate glimpse into what happens when people dare to see the “other” not as an enemy, but as another human being in pain.

Thurs 10/9 CDFF HQ, 5:20 PM

Sponsored by Rotary Club of Chagrin Valley



American Clown

American Clown

Directed by Guilford Adams, Casey Pinkston

United States, 91 minutes

Between Stephen King novels and horror movies, clowns have developed a bad reputation over the years... yet clowns don't have to be scary! Learn about the rich history of the art of clowning and you may develop a new perspective on clowns. This fascinating documentary features some familiar names who got their start in entertainment by studying clowning. More than just clowning around, this is a lighthearted, thought-provoking film with heart. Have some fun and find your own inner clown.

Wed 10/8 CFIS Theater, 5:15 PM

Sponsored by Flower Clown Entertainment



Among Thieves

Among Thieves World Premiere

Directed by Trevor J. Wallace, Gino R. Caspari

China, Hong Kong, Switzerland, United States, 85 minutes

Intrepid Archeologist Dr. Gino Caspari embarks on a search for buried treasure in remote China, only to discover that tomb raiders beat him to it. Follow Caspari and his team of adventurers on a breathtaking journey through mountains, back alleys, clandestine meetings, police encounters, and of course, ancient tombs. Come along for the ride and immerse yourself in incredible intrigue and amazing cinematography in a real-life version of “Indiana Jones and the Tomb Raiders.”

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 12:00 PM

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Champions of the Golden Valley

Champions of the Golden Valley

Directed by Ben Sturgulewski

Afghanistan, Germany, United States, 81 minutes

Afghanistan and skiing seem an unlikely pairing. Yet for a young generation of shepherds residing in mountain regions of this war-weary country, skiing feels like freedom. Alishah Farhang, Afghanistan's first Olympic skier returns from exile to his homeland to discover this growing subculture. Viewers will not soon forget the sight of smiling Afghans schussing the snowy peaks of their native mountains, some on homemade wooden skis, in the region's first ever downhill competition. Explore what comes next for these incredible skiers!

Thurs 10/9 CFIS Theater, 5:30 PM

Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 2:00 PM

Sponsored by Geiger's Chagrin Falls

In memory of Shelly Arts



Coroner to the Stars

Coroner to the Stars

Directed by Ben Hethcoat, Keita Ideno

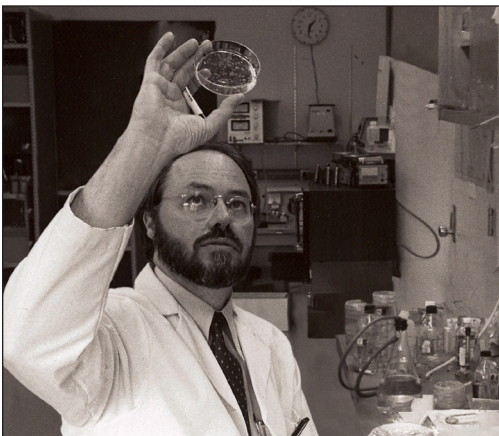
United States, 84 minutes

Meet the Hollywood coroner who became a celebrity in his own right. This intriguing film captures the legendary life and times of the "Coroner to the Stars" Dr. Thomas Noguchi. Although you may have never heard his name, his work involved some famous and even infamous cases, including Marilyn Monroe, Robert Kennedy, and the Manson murders. This film captures the colorful and complex Noguchi and explores his personal struggles as a Japanese immigrant, and his determination for truth telling in the face of political pressure.

Thurs 10/9 CDFF HQ, 7:00 PM

Sat 10/11 Federated Church, 4:45 PM

Sponsored by Joanne Zettl, The Agency Cleveland



Cracking the Code: Phil Sharp and the Biotech Revolution

Cracking the Code: Phil Sharp and the Biotech Revolution **Ohio Premiere**

Directed by Bill Haney

United States, 98 minutes

From a Kentucky farm to the cutting-edge of biology, Phil Sharp's remarkable journey of determination and vision led to the discovery of RNA splicing. This is the groundbreaking discovery that sparked the biotech revolution. Today his work underpins treatments for Alzheimer's, spinal muscular atrophy, and numerous cancers, impacting billions worldwide through his company's 13 FDA-approved drugs. Learn about an incredible man, and even more incredible technologies, in this informative and captivating documentary.

Fri 10/10 Federated Church, 3:00 PM

Sponsored by Dattilo Wealth Management Group

In memory of Greg Walden

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Dear Mr President: The Letters of Julia Sand

Dear Mr. President: The Letters of Julia Sand **Midwest Premiere**

Directed by Destry Edwards

United States, 47 minutes

This remarkable story unfolds around President James A. Garfield's assassination and Chester Arthur's subsequent presidency. In this fragile moment in our country's past, letters from an everyday citizen would change the course of American history. Julia Sand's correspondence with the president offered a powerful voice against corruption. This engaging film highlights the incredible power of the pen in the 19th century and its lasting legacy. **Screens with Just and Perfect (pg. 34)**

Wed 10/8 Chagrin History Center, 9:00 AM

Thurs 10/9 St. Joan of Arc, 7:15 PM

Sponsored by Chagrin History Center



John Candy: I Like Me

John Candy: I Like Me **US Premiere**

Directed by Colin Hanks

United States, 113 minutes

CDFF opens the 2025 Festival with an exclusive first look at this highlight film from Amazon Studios. The film will explore the life and legacy of the iconic funnyman John Candy, who died of a heart attack in 1994 at the age of 43. One of Candy's big breakout movies in the United States was 1984's *Splash* in which he co-starred with Director Colin Hanks' father, Tom Hanks.

Tues 10/7 CFIS Theatre, 7:00 PM

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Freeland ~ A Blackwater Story

Freeland ~ A Blackwater Story

Directed by Justin Harris

United States, 53 minutes

The Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia is home to the stunning Blackwater River, providing the perfect cinematic backdrop to share the story of the first kayaking pioneers to navigate this challenging river. This film brings us breathtaking footage and informative interviews which explore the history, thrills, and risks of this dynamic sport. Join the next generation of whitewater kayakers as they make this unique sport their own. This film is sure to take you for an exciting ride!

Screens with *Ranger of the North* (pg. 34)

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 2:00 PM

Sponsored by Samples Solutions LLC



Game On: Basketball in Rural China

Game On: Basketball in Rural China

Directed by David Hamlin

China, United States, 78 minutes

Would you expect that in the mountains of rural China basketball has become a way of life? The sport takes center stage in Guizhou province's thrilling annual tournament. Local village basketball teams compete for pride, honor, and hometown glory, cheered on by more than 20,000 passionate fans. Activities surrounding the event celebrate colorful traditions and community pride. Follow three top-rated teams as they train relentlessly and compete for championship glory. Be prepared to join the cheering from your seats!

Wed 10/8 CDFF HQ, 7:30 PM



God As My Witness

God As My Witness

Directed by Lindsay Q Pitre

United States, 82 minutes

After decades of sweeping child sexual abuse under the rug, the Archdiocese of New Orleans faces mounting calls for justice and accountability. The now adult survivors of some of these unspeakable assaults, together with attorneys and reporters, reveal the longstanding corruption that has overshadowed the New Orleans Church. Shedding light on emotional stories that have long been forced into the shadows, this important film provides a path to both healing and action.

Sat 10/11 CDFF HQ, 2:30 PM



FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



The Golden Spurtle

The Golden Spurtle

Directed by Constantine Costi

Scotland, 75 minutes

For 30 years, the charming village of Carrbridge, Scotland has proudly hosted The World Porridge Championships. Meet Charlie Miller and the deeply dedicated World Cup competitors in the weeks leading up to and during this grand championship to see who can make the best bowl of porridge. Join this charming cast of characters as they whip up culinary creations from oatmeal, water and salt. This is a warm, enticing, and genuinely funny Scottish film about finding meaning in the smallest things.

Thurs 10/9 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 3:30 PM

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 5:45 PM

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STREAMING INSTRUCTIONS at chagrinfilmfest.org

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



The Heart of Rock And Roll: A Cleveland Rocks Story

The Heart of Rock and Roll: A Cleveland Rocks Story

Directed by Patrick Donovan

United States, 76 minutes

If you haven't heard... *Cleveland rocks!* Cleveland music developer David Spero takes us on a tour of his lifelong music career and all the legends he's met along the way. Hear exclusive interviews from some of these great artists and enjoy an array of music videos and live performances from some of your favorites, including Michael Stanley and Joe Walsh. This film celebrates the history of our beloved Cleveland music scene.

Thurs 10/9 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 7:30 PM

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 4:00 PM

Sponsored by Fran & Jules Belkin



Hora

Hora

Directed by Avi Weissblei

Israel, 60 minutes

Travel back in time to discover the fascinating story of Hora, the Jewish folk dance. A defining symbol of Jewish culture and a celebratory ritual, Hora's roots run deep. 100 years following the creation of this impactful dance, we learn of the complex history, influences, and ethnic dances that help shape the celebratory Hora into what it is today. In the realities of today's fast-moving world, will this folk dance remain, or will it become merely a relic of a distant past?

Sun 10/12 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 1:00 PM

*In partnership with the Mandel JCC Cleveland Jewish FilmFest
Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Israel Arts Connection*



I Was Born This Way

I Was Born This Way

Directed by Sam Pollard, Daniel Junge

United States, 100 minutes

When Archbishop Carl Bean sang the world's first gay anthem "I Was Born This Way," he started a movement to change the world. This powerful documentary chronicles the life of Carl Bean, the founder of the Minority AIDS project and the world's first LGBTQ church for people of color. Using innovative rotoscope animation and featuring appearances by Lady Gaga, Questlove, Billy Porter, and Dionne Warwick, this film explores Bean's lasting legacy and his resounding message: "Love is for everyone."

Wed 10/8 CFIS Theater, 7:30 PM

With special thanks to Alyson Winick

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Join The Club

Join The Club



Directed by Kip Andersen, Chris O'Connell

United States, 88 minutes

Dennis Peron is San Francisco's biggest pot dealer. After discovering the many health benefits of THC during the AIDS epidemic, Peron started the "Buyer's Club" to distribute medicinal marijuana to anyone living with HIV or suffering from AIDs. His memorable story is told using archival footage and shares the stories of his landmark political initiatives, many of which led to the changes in pot culture we see today. Uncover the colorful history of marijuana legalization in America.

Thurs 10/9 Federated Church, 1:30 PM

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 5:45 PM

Sponsored by Cleveland Botanical Destination



Kaláka: from the Carpathians to the Caribbean

Kaláka: from the Carpathians to the Caribbean

Directed by Reká Pigniczky

Argentina, Colombia, Hungary, Romania, 80 minutes

The legendary Hungarian ensemble Kaláka has been sharing its music with audiences worldwide for more than 55 years. Renowned for setting unique poetry to music, the group has performed thousands of concerts across countless international cities. Now, these four gifted musicians embark on a new adventure: traveling to a city they've never played before. Will this be the start of a new chapter — or the grand finale of their remarkable journey?

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 7:45 PM

In Memory of Jeanette Grasselli Brown

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



The Last Dive

The Last Dive

Directed by Cody Sheehy

Mexico, United States, 88 minutes

Terry Kennedy's life would completely transform the day he met a giant manta ray, climbed on its back, and rode deep into the Sea of Cortez. What began as one joyous ride turned into 19 years of life-altering meet-ups and ocean adventures with this beautiful creature. The man and manta's bond grew in inexplicable ways over decades, even to the point of shared telepathy, forever altering Terry's perspective on life. Now at the age of 80, Terry sets out on a 10-day cruise to hopefully find his old friend for one last dive. An incredible must see.

Fri 10/10 CFIS Theater, 5:30 PM

Sun 10/12 CFIS Theater, 3:15 PM

Sponsored by TPG Peppertree



Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals

Lithium Rising: The Race for Critical Minerals

Directed by Samuel George

DR of the Congo, Bolivia, Indonesia, Georgia, 62 minutes

From the moment our smart phones awake us each morning, we rely on lithium batteries to power us through our days. Our increasingly tech-reliant lives depend on the critical minerals that create these essential batteries. Access to the minerals that provide this power is a vital geopolitical and social concern. Documenting the inescapable global impact on people and the environment, this film will "charge" you up as you discover the complexities of how critical minerals fuel our daily lives.

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 12:00 PM

Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 5:45 PM

Sponsored by Chagrin Valley Chamber of Commerce



A Little Fellow: The Legacy of A.P. Giannini

A Little Fellow: The Legacy of A.P. Giannini

Directed by David Fiore

United States, 82 minutes

Born to Italian immigrants, A.P. Giannini's goal was to serve "the little people." At the turn of the 20th century, Giannini revolutionized banking for the poor working immigrant class. Starting by giving loans with a simple handshake, his institution would transform into America's largest bank, now known as Bank of America. Chronicling the life story of an ordinary man doing extraordinary things, this film takes viewers through the history of Hollywood, the Great Depression, two World Wars, and A.P.'s incredible influence on all of the above.

Wed 10/8 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 5:30 PM

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 1:45 PM

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Looking Up

Looking Up

Directed by Elena Neuman

Israel, United States, 72 minutes

Eitan Armon began losing his sight while serving as a military sharpshooter. Blindness caused by retinitis pigmentosa, leaving him with five percent of his sight. Undeterred, Eitan chose adventure, not despair. He sets his sights on climbing Yosemite's most epic granite wall, El Capitan. Follow Eitan as he learns the ropes (literally) and ascends the 3,000-foot wall. With breathtaking cinematography, *Looking Up* is a powerful story of grit, gratitude, and endless possibilities for those who approach life with positivity.

Thurs 10/9 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 12:15 PM

Fri 10/10 CDFH HQ, 7:30 PM

Sponsored by Shaker Rocks



Lost Wolves of Yellowstone

Lost Wolves of Yellowstone

Directed by Thomas Winston

United States, 92 minutes

In 1995, wolves were re-introduced to Yellowstone National Park 50 years after they'd been hunted to near extinction. Returning wolves to their ancestral territory is a celebration of these majestic animals and an homage to their devoted champions. This is a fascinating and heartwarming tale of the pack's journey and of the people who made it all possible. One of the heroes we meet is Mollie Beattie, who personally carried the first wolf into Yellowstone. Through many ups and downs, see firsthand where these extraordinary efforts have led.

Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 10:15 AM

Sponsored by Andrew Brickman



Love+War

Love+War **National Geographic**

Directed by Chai Vasarhelyi, Jimmy Chin

United States, 95 minutes

Pulitzer Prize-winning war zone photographer Lynsey Addario admits to being obsessed with her work and her mission to show the world the realities of war. Lynsey dodges missiles and puts herself on the frontlines to document the experiences of innocent civilian survivors, and sharing the stories of those who don't make it out alive. This captivating film explores the painful duality of Addario's home life with family and the never-ending assignments that pull her to the next global hot spot.

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 7:30 PM

Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 7:30 PM

Sponsored by Think Media Studios

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Or call the Fest office: (440) 247-1591

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Memory for Burial

Memory for Burial

Directed by Charlotte Jarrix, Maud Guillaumin

France, Poland, 61 minutes

Just when you thought you've seen all the films and heard all the harrowing survivor stories from the Holocaust, a documentary comes along with a new compelling perspective. Narrated by Benjamin Orenstein, a 94-year-old concentration camp survivor, this documentary is deeply moving and masterfully crafted. Walk through Orenstein's memories of one of the darkest times in history as he vividly details his life in the work camps. Orenstein's soft spoken, philosophical descriptions will keep you hanging onto every word about his experience and his life's work.

Wed 10/8 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 3:50 PM



Oceania: Journey to the Center

Oceania: Journey to the Center

Directed by Natalie Zimmerman

Kiribati, United States, 75 minutes

Between the equator and the international dateline, lies Kiribati, a long-inhabited coral atoll rich in culture and history. While the people have lived off the land and the ocean for centuries, rising tides now threaten to wash away the only home they've ever known. The consequences of changing ocean levels put even the most remote communities not only at risk, but on the frontlines of climate change. This mesmerizing documentary highlights the grace of a culture that continues to embrace their way of life, even in the face of an uncertain future.

Sat 10/11 Federated Church, 3:00 PM

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



The Opener

The Opener

Directed by Jeff Toye

United States, 73 minutes

After sharing his music on TikTok during the pandemic, something incredible happened to Philip Labes. His videos found their way to Grammy-winner Jason Mraz, who offered the young musician the opportunity of a lifetime to open for him on his latest tour. Follow this fun and genuinely heartwarming adventure as Labes pursues his musical dreams. This amazing story, enhanced by Philip's original music and infectious personality, will leave you inspired, energized, and singing one of his catchy tunes.

Thurs 10/9 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 5:30 PM

Sponsored by Lyndall Insurance

In Memory of Mark "Sebelo" Simone



The Pantone Guy

The Pantone Guy Ohio Premiere

Directed by Patrick Creadon

United States, 80 minutes

A visionary with a creative spirit, Larry Herbert revolutionized how we perceive and use color today through the Pantone Matching System. This film captivates and inspires, sharing the life story and indomitable positive spirit of this 96-year-old gentleman. Learn about the madness behind his color method, and prepare to be captivated by the global impact of this incredible man. Whether you're choosing a color to paint your kitchen or paint your nails, you have Larry Herbert to thank!

Wed 10/8 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 2:00 PM

Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 3:50 PM

Sponsored by DayGlo



Remaining Native

Remaining Native Ohio Premiere

Directed by Paige Bethmann

United States, 88 minutes

With every step he takes, Ku Stevens carries the history of his Native American ancestors while pursuing his dream of becoming a collegiate distance runner. Reflecting on his past, Stevens recognizes that his story begins generations before him, with his great-grandfather, who at the age of eight ran more than 50 miles to escape from an Indian boarding school - a legacy that continues to shape Stevens today. Woven together, these two powerful journeys create a moving and emotional film that is sure to educate and inspire.

Wed 10/8 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 12:00 PM

Thurs 10/9 St. Joan of Arc, 5:20 PM

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Questions? Call the Fest office (440)247-1591
or online chagrinfilmfest.org

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Rising Phoenix: A New Revolution

Rising Phoenix: A New Revolution

Directed by Sheridan O'Donnell

United Kingdom, United States, 87 minutes

The Paralympic Games provide the opportunity to elevate conversations about disability and equality. Reimagining how the world sees people with disabilities, this film invites us to rethink how we define strength, talent and capability. These subjects bring a young and fresh perspective that help us understand essential social change and the dignity it brings. Skillfully filmed, it is noteworthy that half of this film crew have disabilities. This next generation of uniquely abled individuals will change our world!

Wed 10/8 Federated Church, 12:00 PM

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 3:45 PM

Sponsored by Sun & Spirit WellBeing



The Shadow Scholars

The Shadow Scholars

Directed by Eloise King

Kenya, 98 minutes

Did you know that there's a multi-billion-dollar global network operating at colleges all around the globe? This compelling film reveals the inner workings of the 'fake essay' world. The 'shadow scholars' are an estimated 40,000 highly educated, underemployed Kenyans making ends meet by writing academic papers for global students. Meet scholars like Mercy, a struggling single mother who writes thousands of words every night to help students in wealthy countries graduate. This eye-opening documentary leads us to ask: what is the real value of education?

Thurs 10/9 CFIS Theater, 7:20 PM

Sat 10/11 Federated Church, 10:30 AM

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Shuffle

Shuffle Ohio Premiere

Directed by Benjamin Flaherty

United States, 83 minutes

An eye-opening look at how our \$52 billion (that's with nine zeros) drug rehabilitation "industry" operates and why it is growing. Through the lens of his own recovery, filmmaker Benjamin Flaherty exposes the scams that plague addiction treatment. What begins as a street level investigation explodes into a powerful exposé uncovering conflicts of interest and collusion at the highest levels of government. This documentary will help you understand the complicated cycle of addiction and recovery, and is sure to keep you thinking long afterwards.

Sat 10/11 Federated Church, 12:50 PM

Sun 10/12 CFIS Theater, 1:00 PM

Sponsored by Jergens



Speak.

Speak.

Directed by Jennifer Tiexiera

United States, 104 minutes

Five top-ranked high school oratory students spend a year crafting spellbinding spoken word performances with the dream of winning one of the world's most intense public speaking competitions. *Speak.* takes us behind the scenes of the prestigious competition that's seen future celebrities such as Oprah, Josh Gad, and Brad Pitt compete. This is a riveting glimpse into the lives of competitors as they handle the immense pressure of striving for a championship title. Despite grappling with real-life problems, their passion and ambition offer hope for the next generation of leaders.

Wed 10/8 Federated Church, 7:45 PM

Fri 10/10 South Franklin Circle, 6:30 PM

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Suburban Fury

Suburban Fury

Directed by Robinson Devor

United States, 118 minutes

With the feel of a 1970's thriller, this riveting film answers a question you likely never asked: why did a 45-year-old suburban housewife try to assassinate President Gerald Ford in 1975? Mary Jane Moore, a conservative, middle-aged single mother from the San Francisco suburbs, became radicalized while working as an FBI informant. This gripping true-crime chronicle intertwines the political turmoil of the era with Moore's own story, resulting in an unforgettable contemporary portrait.

Fri 10/10 CFIS Theater, 7:30 PM

Sun 10/12 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 2:45 PM

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FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



This is Pike County

This is Pike County

Directed by Laura Paglin

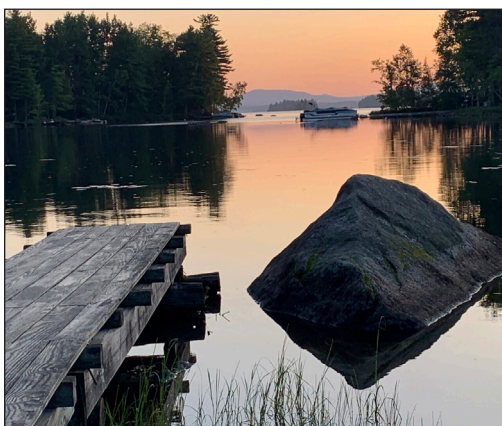
United States, 78 minutes

Follow this intimate and powerful story of poverty and addiction in a close-knit rural Ohio community. Woven into this deeply moving film is the backstory of a long-unsolved family murder, and the impact this loss has had on the people left behind. Compounding the daily struggles in Pike County looms the construction of a nuclear waste facility, an incredible burden that creates an uncertain future for all. This powerful, no-frills filmmaking will spark conversation, debate, and emotion that is sure to stay with you long after the film ends.

Wed 10/8 Federated Church, 5:45 PM

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 10:00 AM

Sponsored by Ohio Goes to The Movies



Trail Mix

Trail Mix Ohio Premiere

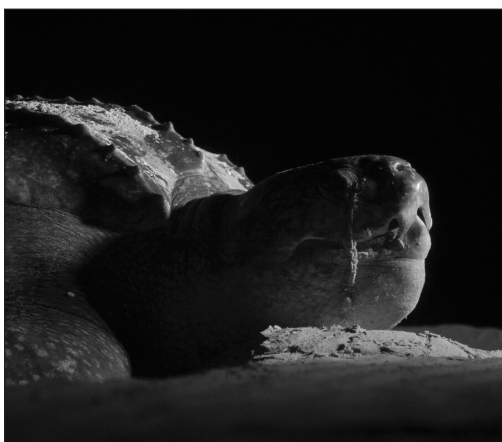
Directed by Glenn Robert Sweitzer

United States, 48 minutes

If you've ever wondered what it's like to hike the Appalachian Trail, this documentary is for you! Through-hikers of the Appalachian Trail have created a unique subculture all their own, filled with nicknames, inside jokes, and mythologies. Hear personal stories from hikers along the trail and experience their triumphs, hardships, and unforgettable stories. A monumental feat, this 2,000 mile journey provides the ultimate challenge and therapeutic healing to those that seek to make the trek. Will you be next?

Thurs 10/9 Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, 2:00 PM

Sat 10/11 CDFF HQ, 4:30 PM



Turtle Walker

Turtle Walker

Directed by Taira Malaney

India, 75 minutes

Climate change and habitat destruction threaten to wipe out one of our most beloved species: the sea turtle. Join Satish Bhaskar, a "turtle walker," on a magical journey as he devotes his life's work to saving these creatures from extinction. Set against the backdrop of India's stunning coastlines, the film combines breathtaking artistry and cinematography to create an unforgettable experience. Inspiring and powerful, it asks: how far would you go for the creatures you love?

Sat 10/11 CDFF HQ, 7:15 PM

Sun 10/12 CFIS Theater, 11:00 AM

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Or call the Fest office: (440) 247-1591

FEATURE DOCUMENTARIES



Voices: The Danny Gans Story

Voices: The Danny Gans Story

Directed by Andrew Davies Gans

United States, 104 minutes

Danny Gans, known as “The Man of Many Voices,” was a staple on the Las Vegas strip for more than a decade, captivating audiences with his remarkable singing impressions until his untimely death at the age of 52. Now, over fifteen years later, his son Andrew explores the life, legacy, and complexities of his father in this heartfelt debut documentary. Through this intimate portrait, viewers are invited to experience this legendary performer through a whole new lens.

Sat 10/11 Federated Church, 6:40 PM

Sponsored by R43



World Without Cows

World Without Cows **Midwest Premiere**

Directed by Michelle Michael, Brandon Whitworth

United States, 85 minutes

Have you ever imagined a world without cows? This thought-provoking documentary helps to answer that question, revealing how shockingly different life would be without them. An impactful conversation starter, the film uncovers hidden truths, cultural taboos, and the many perspectives people around the world hold about cows. Be prepared to challenge your perceptions of cattle and their role in our daily lives.

Wed 10/8 Federated Church, 2:00 PM

Sponsored by Home2Suites



You Need This

You Need This

Directed by Ryan Andrej Lough

Germany, United Kingdom, Netherlands, United States, 84 minutes

In the time it takes you to read this paragraph, millions of products are being purchased all around the world, most of which will be used just once and thrown away. Mass marketing is constantly bombarding us with messages to fill our shopping carts, to think less and want more while destroying our planet in the process. This illuminating and important film exposes how consumerism and hyper-capitalism shape our lives, society, and planet. Will we ever be able to escape this destructive trend?

Thurs 10/9 Federated Church, 10:00 AM

Fri 10/10 Federated Church, 5:15 PM

Sponsored by South Franklin Circle

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

Most shorts streaming on CDFF On Demand. Check online schedule.

SPOTLIGHT SHORTS

These must-see films are either programmed alongside a related feature or presented as a part of a curated showcase



Amal | Hope

Amal | Hope

Directed by Eros Zhao

Israel, Palestine, United States, 18 minutes

In the introspective and intimate documentary *Amal* (Arabic for 'hope'), two pianists - one Palestinian and one Israeli - share a journey that transcends borders and builds hope through music.

Wed 10/8 and Thurs 10/9 CVLT, 10 AM, Illuminate shorts (pg. 18)

**Sun 10/12 Federated Church, 5:30 PM
(Closing Event) (pg. 7)**

Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Israel Arts Connection



Changing the Film Landscape: The Garrett Brown Story

Changing the Film Landscape: The Garrett Brown Story **Midwest Premiere**

Directed by Andrew Blike
United States, 11 minutes

Explore the innovative genius of Garrett Brown, a serial inventor with over 120 patents ranging from the Oscar-winning Steadicam® camera stabilizer to the Zeen, an innovative walker and wheelchair device.

Fri 10/10 Chagrin Falls Township Hall, 4:00 PM (pg. 8)

Sponsored by R43



How Fast Can You Eat A Pickled Egg?

How Fast Can You Eat A Pickled Egg?

U.S. Premiere

Directed by Daniel England
United Kingdom, 13 minutes

In the heart of East London, one pub has gained popularity for posing a unique question to its patrons: How Fast Can You Eat a Pickled Egg?

Thurs 10/9 Triangle Park Screen, 6:00 PM

Sat 10/11 Chagrin Falls Township Hall, 1:30 PM (pg. 7)

Sponsored by Lyndall Insurance



Hustle and Run

Hustle and Run

Directed by Jonny Madderson, Jono Stevens
United Kingdom, 19 minutes

The British sport of Flyball has long been dominated by the focused and driven Border Collie breed. One intrepid group of women take a chance on Hustle – a tiny and unmotivated Whippet that helps propel the team to stardom.

**Fri 10/10 South Franklin Circle 5:30 PM
Sat 10/11 Triangle Park Screen, 7:00 PM**



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Event



Panel
event



Violent or
mature content

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES



*I Forgot to Tell You About...
The Story of The Cleveland
Buckeyes*

I Forgot to Tell You About... The Story of The Cleveland Buckeyes

**Directed by Evelyn Renee
Gregory**

United States, 24 minutes

I Forgot To Tell You About...
*The Story of The Cleveland
Buckeyes* chronicles the
team's overlooked 1945 Negro
League championship, a
triumph achieved while battling
segregation, injury, and financial
strain.

Screens with *Just and Perfect*

**Fri 10/10 Chagrin History
Center, 7:15 PM**

Sponsored by Chagrin History
Center



*Skate Rat Since '88: The Kristian
Svtlan Story*



Just and Perfect

Just and Perfect

World Premiere

**Directed by Immanuel
Mullen**

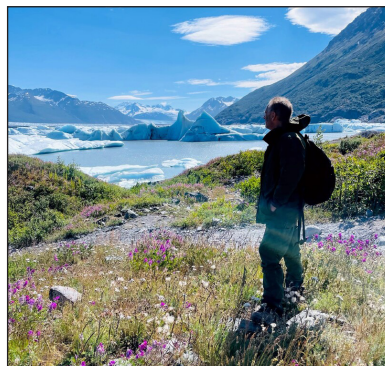
United States, 29 minutes

Combining scholarly insight with
powerful student interpretations,
Just and Perfect revisits
Frederick Douglass' 1854
speech at Western Reserve
College, where he forcefully
dismantled the falsehoods of
"scientific racism" before a
predominantly white audience.

**Wed 10/8 Chagrin History
Center, 9:00 AM** | Screens with
Dear Mr. President (pg. 18)

**Thurs 10/9 St. Joan of Arc,
7:15 PM** | Screens with *Dear Mr.
President* (pg. 18)

**Fri 10/10 Chagrin History
Center, 7:15 PM** | Screens with *I
Forgot to Tell You About...*



Ranger of the North

Ranger of the North

World Premiere

Directed by Bradley Bethel
United States, 29 minutes

After growing up in Chagrin
Falls, Peter Christian moved
to Alaska to become a ranger
with the National Park Service
in 1994. As he approaches
retirement, Peter must face the
reality that the wilderness and
wildlife he swore to protect are
suffering from a rapidly warming
climate.

**Fri 10/10 Triangle Park Screen,
6:00 PM**

**Sat 10/11 Chagrin Valley Little
Theatre, 2:00 PM**

Screens with *Freeland ~ A
Blackwater Story* (pg. 20)

Sponsored by Chagrin Valley
Jaycees

Skate Rat Since '88: The Kristian Svitak Story

Directed by Danny Mizicko

United States, 24 minutes

Follow Kristian Svitak's journey from his early days skating in
Cleveland to his rise in the professional skateboarding scene. With
a fearless style and immense dedication, Svitak has shaped Ohio's
skateboarding culture.

Sat 10/11 CDFH HQ, 6:00 PM
Free and Open to the Public

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS

Fri 10/10 Triangle Park Screen, 12:00 PM | Sat 10/11 Valley Arts Center, 2:00 PM

Sponsored by Valley Art Center



Amy Sillman: To Abstract

Amy Sillman: To Abstract

Directed by Ian Forester
United States, 9 minutes

Amy Sillman's work defies the label of "abstract," blending color, shape, and perspective into an imaginative, immersive experience that challenges and redefines how we see art.



George V

George V

Midwest Premiere

**Directed by Dennis Scholl,
Dia Kontaxis**
United States, 13 minutes

For much of his life, Ukrainian immigrant George Voronovsky remained unrecognized as an artist. Decades later, his art is brought to light and to acclaim thanks to a friend's careful preservation of his work.



Jérôme Delépine, A Vision of Humanity

Jérôme Delépine, A Vision of Humanity

U.S. Premiere

Directed by John Schaffer
France, 11 minutes

Born with severe glaucoma that left him blind in one eye, Jérôme Delépine has devoted his career as an artist to an unexpected pursuit: the study and expression of light and its qualities.

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SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

OUR SHARED PLANET

Thurs 10/9 CDFF HQ, 11:00 AM | Fri 10/10 Federated Church, 11:00 AM

Sat 10/11 Triangle Park Screen, 1:30 PM

Sponsored by Kurtz Bros Inc.



Between Moon Tides

Between Moon Tides

Directed by Jason Jaacks
United States, 25 minutes

As the Saltmarsh Sparrow nears extinction, a dedicated group of volunteer scientists works to save the species, one nest at a time. With phenomenal footage, viewers are taken through the salt marshes of New England.



Pastures and Panels

Pastures and Panels

Directed by Tucker Cragg
United States, 18 minutes

As independent family farms struggle across the United States, a new dual-purpose approach to land use, combining agriculture with renewable energy production, offering a glimmer of hope by boosting income and sustainability.

**Wed 10/8 and Thurs 10/9 CVLT,
10:00 AM Illuminate (pg. 18)**



What the River Knows

What the River Knows

Midwest Premiere

**Directed by Diego Riley,
Will Buckley**
United States, 34 minutes

As man-made lakes and reservoirs like Lake Powell begin to recede across the American West, hidden worlds of natural and historical beauty emerge, shaping a new future for rivers across the West.



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SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

INTERNATIONAL STORIES

Wed 10/8 Federated Church, 4:00 PM | Fri 10/10 Federated Church, 1:00 PM



Boda Boda

Boda Boda

Midwest Premiere

Directed by Marc Kusnetz
Uganda, 22 minutes

Boda Boda is an urgent, intimate look at Kampala's motorcycle taxi drivers, the lifeblood of the city, as they face perilous roads and entrenched stigma. Through a grassroots cooperative, they pool their savings and work toward a brighter future.

Wed 10/8 and Thurs 10/9 CVLT,
10:00 AM | Illuminate (pg. 18)



The City of God Beneath the River

The City of God Beneath the River

Ohio Premiere

Directed by JL Pomeroy, Tom Broecker
Ghana, 20 minutes

As urbanization accelerates in Ghana, slums spread across its cities and pollution engulfs sacred sites. The land is poisoned, creating a toxic environment for the nation's youngest generations.

Forgotten Routes

Directed by Varta Arutunian
Armenia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, 14 minutes

This is the intimate diary of a young Ukrainian woman grappling with her heritage, and a new life after escaping the war.

They Call Me the Tattoo Witch

Directed by Lindsay Nyman
Vietnam, United States, 14 minutes

Although tattoos have long carried a stigma in Vietnamese culture, one Hanoi-based artist has made it her mission to address her clients' deepest insecurities by transforming their scars into art.

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SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

LOCAL SPOTLIGHT

Wed 10/8 CVLT, 7:30 PM | Sat 10/11 Triangle Park Screen, 2:45 PM

Sponsored by Naturepedic



The Art of Filling Plates

The Art of Filling Plates

World Premiere

Directed by Julia Thorndike
United States, 15 minutes

For Kimberly McCune-Gibson, founder of Hungry Bee Gourmet Caterers, food is a way to connect a community. Alongside her husband Jimmy, Kimberly balances raising three daughters, and transforming a newly-closed movie theater into a large scale multi-faceted space.



The Eye of Cleveland

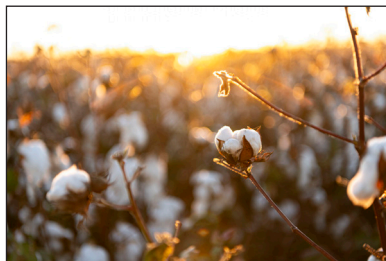
The Eye of Cleveland

U.S. Premiere

Directed by Jim Koenigsaecker
United States, 12 minutes

For over four decades, photographer Herb Ascherman has trained his lens on Cleveland, amassing more than 3,000 portraits that celebrate the city's distinctive spirit and reflect his profound bond with the place he calls home.

WED 10/8 CDFF HQ 12:00 PM



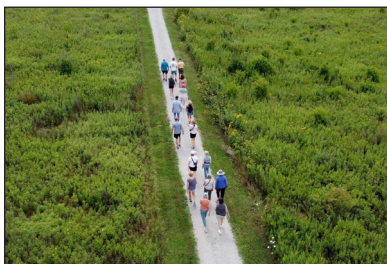
Farm to Bed: The Families Behind Naturepedic's Organic Cotton

Farm To Bed: The Families Behind Naturepedic's Organic Cotton

World Premiere

Directed by Kyle Loney
United States, 11 minutes

Across the fields in West Texas, certified organic cotton-producing farms are cultivating more than just cotton as they restore soil health, support local communities, and set a new standard for truly sustainable agriculture.



Hiking Through Grief

Hiking Through Grief

World Premiere

Directed by Stephen Burks
United States, 32 minutes

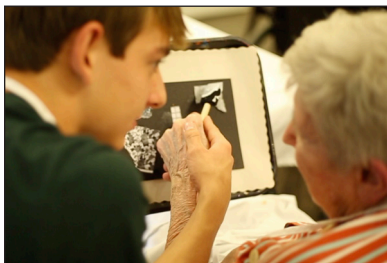
As a group of Northeast Ohio widows and widowers battle the loss of their partners, they come together through hiking - finding comfort in the quiet of the woods, strength in each other, and hope on the trail ahead.

In memory of Laura Nealy Burks

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

STUDENT SHORTS

Fri 10/10 CDFF HQ, 5:40 PM | Sat 10/11 CFIS Theater, 12:15 PM



By Name

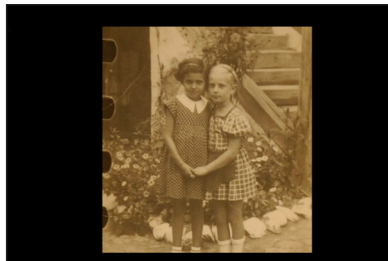
By Name

World Premiere

Directed by Aiden Black, Jeremiah Badu, Dillon Crane, Michael Drvenkar, Tyler Gedeon, Owen Hoelker, Conall McMahon, Nicholas Schraff

United States, 14 minutes

Through conversations and intimate interviews with residents at Ennis Court, an assisted living nursing care facility, seniors from St. Edward High School uncover the value of intergenerational relationships and what it truly means to be a friend.



Magda

Magda

World Premiere

Directed by Ben Hartong
United States, 20 minutes

Magda tells the story of Magdalena Mermelstein, who was sent from Czechoslovakia to Auschwitz at age 15. Through interviews with Magdalena and her family, the film follows her harrowing 31-month passage to the U.S. and the lasting impact it had on her life in Cleveland.



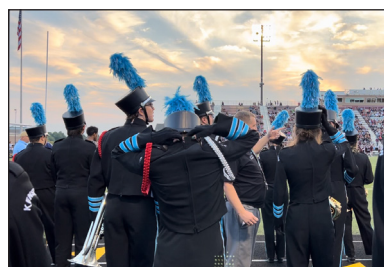
Placed: The Journey Through Foster Care

Placed: The Journey Through Foster Care

Directed by University of Dayton Media Production Students

United States, 22 minutes

With over 300,000 children in foster care at any given time, the system faces immense strain. Through interviews with foster parents, foster children, and social workers, this film offers a look into the daily realities of those navigating the process.



Under the Lights

Under the Lights

Midwest Premiere

Directed by Isabella Douville
United States, 10 minutes

Through hard work and plenty of fun, Kenston High School students find a 'home within a home' in the KHS Marching Band, where students from diverse backgrounds come together both in the classroom and on the field.

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Thurs 10/9 CDFH HQ, 2:40 PM | Fri 10/10 CDFH HQ, 4:00 PM

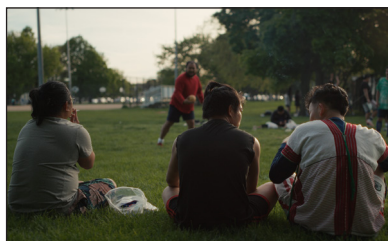


All The Empty Rooms

All The Empty Rooms

Directed by Joshua Seftel
United States, 34 minutes

For more than three decades, CBS correspondent Steve Hartman has been a self-proclaimed “feel-good, happy news kinda guy.” But in *All the Empty Rooms*, he takes a sobering turn, visiting the bedrooms of school shooting victims — intimate spaces that quietly tell the stories of lives cut short.



Breakaway: The Refugee World Cup

Breakaway: The Refugee World Cup

Directed by Jake Siam Solomon

Ohio Premiere

United States, 20 minutes

Amid political division and dehumanizing rhetoric, two refugees find connection and purpose through soccer, a game that bridges cultures and builds community, and to learn what it truly means to be a friend.



Projecting Protest

Projecting Protest

Directed by Thomas Clement

United States, 22 minutes

Projecting Protest examines the growing use of light projection by both progressive and extremist groups as a protest tactic, highlighting its disputed legal status and the debate over its protection under free speech.

CRISIS IN UKRAINE

Wed 10/8 CDFH HQ, 1:45 PM | Sat 10/11 CDFH HQ, 12:15 PM



The Survivors

The Survivors

U.S. Premiere

Directed by Tomasz Ślōmczynski, Piotr Szymanek
Poland, 30 minutes

Three Ukrainian survivors share their stories of captivity to shine a light on the realities of the brutal war with Russia. This powerful film reveals a ruthless and senseless pattern of systemic brutality, torture and humiliation.



Ukraine Under Fire

Ukraine Under Fire | A Film About War & Resilience

Midwest Premiere

Directed by Jordan Campbell

Ukraine, United States, 40 minutes

As war rages in Ukraine, American journalist Jordan Campbell travels the country, uncovering the devastating toll of the conflict and Ukraine's unwavering fight for freedom.

SHORT DOCUMENTARIES

PEOPLE YOU NEED TO MEET

Wed 10/8 CDFF HQ, 5:30 PM | Thurs 10/9 CDFF HQ, 12:40 PM

Sponsored by OddFellows



Breaking Plates

Breaking Plates

Midwest Premiere

Directed by Danny Schmidt

United States, 15 minutes

Breaking Plates challenges filmmaking conventions through playful rebellion, weaving together archival footage, choreography, and behind-the-scenes moments to examine societal expectations of women.



The Book of George

The Book of George

Directed by Karen Pearlman

Australia, France, 25 minutes

From the streets of Brooklyn to the wilds of Florida, George McKenzie Jr. has carved an unlikely path as a critically acclaimed wildlife photographer and one of the few Black voices in his field.

Grit

Midwest Premiere

Directed by Vanina Feldsztein

United States, 14 minutes

Through interviews with three Americans living distinctly unique lives, *Grit* explores the enduring question: What does it mean to grow old?

My Father Was A Butcher

Directed by Bastiaan van Schip

Netherlands, 27 minutes

A Dutch butcher faces the end of his career, torn between his passion and his health as the decline of artisanal trades threatens both his craft and the community to which he has dedicated his life.

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2025 AWARDS

The CDFF award winning films will be announced on Saturday, October 11 at 10:00 am during The Festival Awards Ceremony at the Chagrin Valley Little Theatre. The awards include \$10,000 in cash prizes.



The awards ceremony is free and open to the public. (pg 7)

David Ponce Best of the Festival	Best Environmental Film Award
Emerging Filmmaker Award	Best Short Documentary
Best U.S. Documentary Award	Best Local Documentary (Short)
John A. Hellman International Award	Best Student Documentary
Rotary of the Chagrin Valley "Service Above Self" Award	

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— **Kevin Foster**

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FILM SELECTION TEAM

Over 150 films reviewed:

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Homestay Program:

Heidi Sanford

Illuminate Student Film

Experience:
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Festival Video: R43 Limited,
Think Media Studios, John
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Program Cover/Poster Art:

Sam Torok

Film Synopsis:

William Allen, Tom Bonda,
Barbara Christian,
Laurie Dean, Sali McSherry,
Grace Sullivan

Program Design:

Manny Torres
Lindsey Lawrence

Award Ceremony Hosts:

Loree Vick and Rick Jackson

Awards Ceremony Video:

Think Media Studios

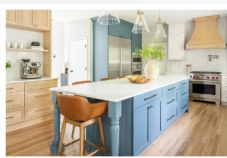
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selection team, award judges,
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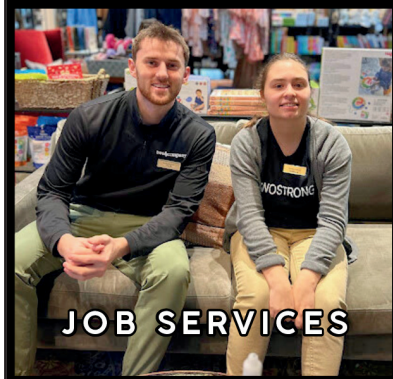
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This organization was inspired by Derek Hunter, the son of our Founder, Shari. Shari knew from the very beginning that her son was **born to change the world**—so she and her family committed to helping make that change possible.

Today, Two Foundation provides the structure and funding for Two & Company – which is a collection of people, places, and experiences, including the Café, Shops, and Services – that enables people of **every ability** to find happiness and success in the workplace and beyond.



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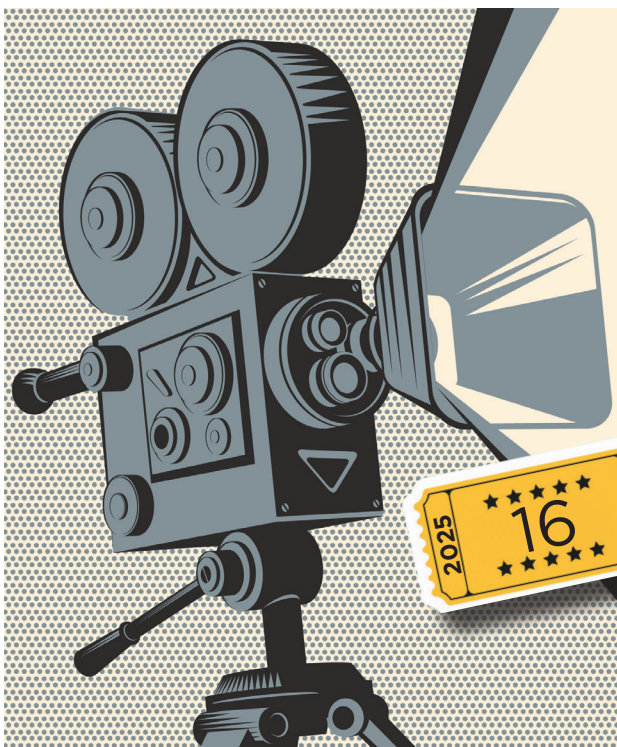
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"Thanks to you, this is more than just a place to see powerful films; it's a vibrant community with lasting connections. Your support makes possible this transformative movement that empowers, inspires and reshapes hearts and minds." ~ Trish Salahshour

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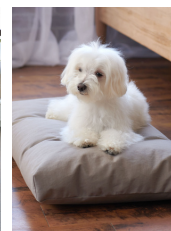
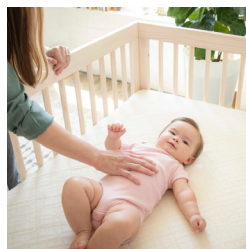
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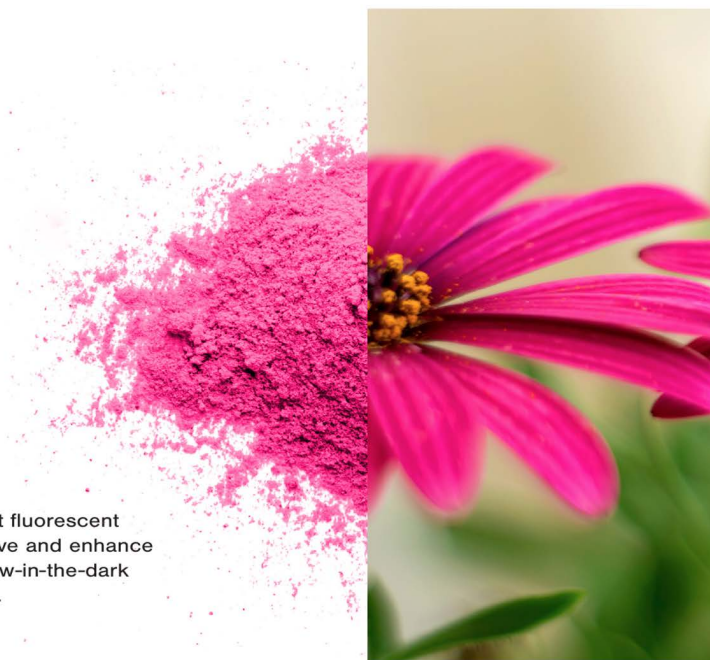
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