



# LA Harbor International Film Festival

P.O. Box 5202 - San Pedro, CA 90733

Telephone: (310) 519-0756 ~ [www.laharborfilmfest.com](http://www.laharborfilmfest.com)

*To create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world*



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LA Harbor International Film Festival™ Sets Sail On 21<sup>st</sup> Voyage March 14-17 San Pedro Honorary Mayor Manny Jimenez Unveils Official Poster & Banner February 15

Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie” *Journey To The Center Of The Earth*  
Opening Night Happy Hour + Premiere at Dalmatian American Club  
*Stories of L.A. Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (The Movie)*

Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute *Anchors Aweigh Aboard Battleship IOWA*  
Closing Day DocSunday™ World Premieres At Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

**February 15, 2024 - San Pedro (SP), California - Port of Los Angeles (POLA)** - Programming and sponsors were announced, and official poster/banner unveiled, for the 21<sup>st</sup> annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF), at the Seafarin’ Reception & Press Launch, held at Port Town Brewing Company, historic downtown San Pedro, hosted by proprietor James Brown. Guests for the invitation only event included media, LAHIFF sponsors, civic and business leaders, and other supporters who enjoyed light refreshments, participated in door prize raffle, were given media packet program information and a party favor as they exited.

LAHIFF takes place March 14-17 at four different locations, since the Warner Grant Theatre (WGT), traditional venue where the festival was held past two decades in historic downtown SP, closed January 1 for renovations. The WGT is expected to reopen in 2026.

Festival Director Stephanie Mardesich welcomed guests before announcing programming. “We are delighted to be in Port Town Brewing Company with its historic significance and thank proprietor James Brown for his on-going support over the years for the film festival and so many worthy organizations.” She lamented the closing of the WGT as “a huge loss to the downtown business and cultural community. We are grateful that sponsors have come forward to host programs in alternate venues, that has been a great challenge to choreograph yet will be new and stimulating environments.”

After sponsors were acknowledged and program announced the official festival poster “*Anchors Aweigh On The Cinematic Bridge*”, and street banner, were unveiled by San Pedro Honorary Mayor Manny Jimenez founder of Black Knight Patrol private security company. Photo for key art for the iconic “*Cinematic Bridge*” image by eminent photographer, and LAHIFF board member, Peter Read Miller (Sports Illustrated, NFL, Associated Press, Canon spokesman), was introduced in 2009 and each year is the “palette” for the new poster. The first five years of the LAHIFF paintings were commissioned by

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prominent local artists Tom Phillips, Muriel Olguin, Violet Parkhurst, and Tony Podue to create their own version of the “*Cinematic Bridge*” originated by Phillips that became the LAHIFF brand re-imagined each year. This year’s theme is inspired by the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute (HNT) feature and Battleship IOWA. Art direction by Alison Robertson of Wellington Signs, MJM Graphics festival printer, Alchemy poster printing sponsor. Framing by Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery.

“The LAHIFF is grateful for a loyal group of sponsors and supporters, especially our Contributing Sponsor Los Angeles County Supervisor Hahn, District 4 who as Los Angeles City Council member for District 15 advocated for the film festival since it was founded in 2003; and has continued as staunch supporter through her tenure in the harbor area including representative in U.S.A. Congress, and currently as she continues working vigorously for District 4 and all constituents of the LAC.”

LAHIFF begins Thursday March 14 with Program A free “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) Culmination Program, free education outreach program, featuring the classic novel Journey To The Center Of The Earth by Jules Verne, and 1959 Academy Award® nominated film that boasts a star quality cast. RBSM is by invitation only and will take place and hosted by Mary Star Of The Sea High School (MSOTSHS) campus. RBSM is a program of enrichment that promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film; and the most successful motivating aspect of the LAHIFF. Over 20,000 free books have been distributed to students and community members since 2004. Invited schools participating include: Crestwood Avenue, Leland Street, Van Deene Steam Academy Elementary Schools, Dodson Middle School, and MSOTSHS.

Students read and discuss the book prior to the program and arrive enthused and excited welcomed by an authentic bagpiper, a tradition that began in 2009, inspired by another classic book offering, Kidnapped by Robert Louis Stevenson. The readers enjoy complimentary snacks and after the movie there is lively “Conversation and Q&A.” RBSM sponsors include: Supervisor Hahn, MSOTSHS, 7-Eleven and Arlene (Dickey) and Myron Lockrem.

Opening Night Program B at 7 pm, Friday March 15, “Happy Hour + ”(no host bar service) will take place at the Dalmatian American Club (DAC) main bar featuring the oral history project *Stories of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (SOLAHA The Movie)*. The composite film includes one story from each of Volume V participants (@30 min.). “It’s so appropriate to have the latest SOLAHA composite film premiere in the DAC that’s approaching its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club’s founding in 1926, that represents so much valued history and also relevant to the DocSunday film premiers.” Prior to the SOLAHA movie will be a brief video presentation by Julie Anderson showcasing her late photographer father’s extraordinary collection of photos of true “movie stars” from 1940s through c. 2000 in the coffee table book she published The Golden Age of Hollywood: Through the Lens of Joe Ackerman.. Books will be available for purchase and to sign. Bar opens at 5 pm, film at 6 pm, event concludes by 7 pm.

Saturday, March 16 the HNT takes place aboard Battleship IOWA at 5 pm (board ship from 4:15 pm) is a “dream come true” for Mardesich, with Academy Award® nominated *Anchors Aweigh* featuring the famous sequence when film’s star Gene Kelly dances with animated Jerry the mouse

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Concessions (beer, wine and snacks) will be sold and Vicky's Doghouse Café located port side of the ship will have a special menu for the event. Attendees are also encouraged to dine before or after the screening at LAHIFF Epicurean Sponsor establishments.

The "community event" is free for the public with attendance limited to 200. Reservations requested at "Event Brite." Donations appreciated of non-perishable food items and new clothing are encouraged to benefit YWCA Harbor Area, Toberman House and Harbor Interfaith Services all non-profit organizations who have similar missions to empower and aid their participants who have financial and housing challenges, need childcare aid and job assistance.

Closing day March 17, known as "DocSunday", always devoted to non-fiction film, takes place at Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (CMA) beginning at 3:15 pm with world premieres: *Longline*, short documentary about fishing in Croatia, Isle of Vis, where many San Pedrans hail from. Followed by world premiere of *The Smell Of Money*, short documentary about the local fishing and canning industry, directed by native son Jack Baric. Produced by POLA film, film is a tribute to the historic fishing and canning industries well remembered and preserved for posterity in the Los Angeles Maritime Museum permanent exhibit "Caught, Canned and Eaten: The History of San Pedro's Tuna & Canning Industry" that opened in 2007. Preceding the film screening there will be a special appearance by Croatian Vocal Ensemble "Izvor" from 2:45-3:15 pm singing native folk songs.

The LAHIFF offers stimulating and entertaining programming that inspires the audience and respects the integrity of the silver screen. Mardesich, an alumna of the University of Southern California film school, founded the LAHIFF in 2003 (with Jack Baric) and observes "the film festival is a way to offer a collective experience augmenting the cultural landscape and promoting all San Pedro and surrounding areas have to offer residents, visitors, and tourists."

Additional LAHIFF sponsors and supporters include Associate Sponsors Marathon Petroleum, Cal Marine Fish Company, SA Recycling, Rancho LPG Holdings. Sustaining Sponsors: City of Los Angeles District 15 (the One-Five), ILWU Foremen's Local #94, Joseph & Lee (Sher) Mardesich Family Trust; Elite Sponsor Spirit Cruises; Media Sponsors Random Lengths News, San Pedro Today Magazine, PalosVerdesPulse.com (online magazine), and NewFilmmakers LA (social media).

Additional In-Kind Sponsors include: Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM), Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (CMA), Grand Vision Foundation (GVF), San Pedro Bay Historical Society (SPBHS), fINDings Art Center & Gallery. Website sponsor is Clear Steps. Volunteer support from San Pedro Recovery Alliance. Other LAHIFF board members include community liaison Andrea (Rukavina) Hegybeli; businesswoman Nancy (McCutchan) Nottingham, and Northern California rep Carla Contestable, R.N. Festival advisor is Dr. Betsy McLane, Ph.D.

LAHIFF always promotes dining in Epicurean Sponsor venues including Niko's Pizzeria, San Pedro Brewing Company, Big Nick's, Sacred Grounds, J. Trani's Ristorante, Think Café, Raffaello's Ristorante, Wienerschnitzel, Omelet & Waffle Shop, The Sandwich Saloon and Think Prime. New addition this year is Vicky's Doghouse Café.

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“Being a sponsor of the LAHIFF demonstrates community awareness and appreciation of our mission,” proffered Mardesich. “The commitment to support culture and education is vital as partnerships between business and individuals is fundamental to perpetuate the humanity, creativity, and traits we value as citizens; and its significance can never be underestimated. We also thank community collaborators for helping us to promote the program schedule.”

LAHIFF is 501(c)3 non-profit organizations with no paid employees. Over the past 21 years LAHIFF has continued to grow and gain support. In 2013 the Coastal SP Neighborhood Council presented LAHIFF with a special Proclamation for ten years of outstanding contribution to culture and education leadership. Volunteer hours can also be accrued for school or community service. Donations to the LAHIFF are welcome. Sponsorship opportunities are available at various benefit levels. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent the law allows.

“The LA Harbor International Film Festival is a local tradition we have enjoyed for over two decades,” said Supervisor Hahn. “With the historic Warner Grand Theatre closed for renovation this year’s festival is going to feel different though I am glad there this opportunity to enjoy movies in other venues in town and showcase San Pedro and the harbor. As always, the lineup has something for everyone and I hope there is a great turn out.”

Reservations requested for Programs C, D, and E. See line up at end of release.

**Media relations, information, and “Sponsorship Opportunities”** contact: Stephanie Mardesich,

Festival Director at [stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com](mailto:stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com) or telephone (310) 519-0756. See [www.laharborfilmfest.com](http://www.laharborfilmfest.com) for updates on programming.

(2/2024)

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**List of program venues and times:** Free – Reservations requested

**Program B** Opening Night - venue DAC 5 pm, 1639 S. Palos Verdes St., SP 90731; **Reservations tel. 310/831-9821**

**Program C** Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute (HNT) - venue Battleship IOWA, 205 S. Harbor Blvd. SP 90731;

**Reservations:** <https://anchorsaweigh.eventbrite.com>

**Program D** DocSunday - venue CAM, 3710 Stephen White Dr., SP 90731

**Reservations:** <https://laharborfilmfestivalclosingday.eventbrite.com>

**More about:**

SOLAHA oral history project: [www.storieslaharborarea.com](http://www.storieslaharborarea.com)

ClearSteps: [www.clearsteps.com](http://www.clearsteps.com)

Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM): [www.lamaritimemuseum.org](http://www.lamaritimemuseum.org)

Grand Vision Foundation (GVF): [www.grandvision.org](http://www.grandvision.org)

NewFilmmakers LA: [www.newfilmmakersla.com](http://www.newfilmmakersla.com)

The Golden Age of Hollywood: Through The Lens of Joe Ackerman: <https://www.palosverdespulse.com/blog/2022/9/30/joe-ackermans-journey-through-the-golden-age-of-hollywood-by-julie-ackerman-anderson>

Peter Read Miller, photographer: [www.peterreadmiller.com](http://www.peterreadmiller.com)

Wellington Signs: [www.wellingtonsigns.com](http://www.wellingtonsigns.com)

**Complete LAHIFF 2024 Sponsor List**

**Contributing Sponsor** ~ Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4

**Associate Sponsors** ~ Marathon Petroleum Corporation Los Angeles Refinery ~ Cal Marine Fish Company ~ SA Recycling ~ Rancho LPG Holdings

**Sustaining Sponsors** City of L.A. Council District 15 ~ ILWU Foremen’s Union Local #94 ~ BNSF Railway ~ Joseph & Lee (Sher) Mardesich Family Trust

**Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie”™**

Mary Star of the Sea High School ~ 7-Eleven ~ Arlene (Dickey) & Myron Lockrem ~ Penguin-Random House Young Readers

**Elite Sponsor** ~ Spirit Cruises

**Media Sponsors** ~ Random Lengths News ~ San Pedro Today ~ PalosVerdesPulse.com ~ NewFilmmakers LA (social media)

**Print & Art Sponsors** ~ Wellington Signs ~ Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery ~ MJM Graphics ~ Alchemy

**Promotion & In-Kind Sponsors & Volunteers**

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium ~ Port of Los Angeles ~ Los Angeles Maritime Museum ~ City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

SP Art Association ~ Grand Vision Foundation ~ fIndings Art Center & Gallery ~ SP Recovery Alliance

**Website Sponsor** ~ ClearSteps (Alyssa Marks, Designer/Manager)

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**Epicurean Sponsors (websites /contact tel. listed for “indoor/outdoor dining/ordering to go/curbside pick up”)**

Niko's Pizzeria [www.nikospizzeria.com](http://www.nikospizzeria.com)

San Pedro Brewing Company <https://sanpedrobrewing.com/>

Sacred Grounds (telephone) (310)514-0800

Big Nick's <https://bignickspizza.com/>

J. Trani's Ristorante <https://www.sacredgrounds.coffee/>

Rafaello's Ristorante <https://www.raffaelloristorante.com/>

The Sandwich Saloon <https://www.sandwichsaloon.com/>

Think Café <https://www.thinkcafesandpedro.com/>

Wienerschnitzel [www.wienerschnitzel.com/location/59-north-gaffey-west-sepulveda-san-pedro-230-north-gaffey-san-pedro-ca-90731/](http://www.wienerschnitzel.com/location/59-north-gaffey-west-sepulveda-san-pedro-230-north-gaffey-san-pedro-ca-90731/)

Omelet & Waffle Shop (telephone) (310) 831-3277

Think Prime (telephone) (310) 221-0415

Vicky's Doghouse Café: <https://pacificbattleship.com/doghouse/>