



# 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 22<sup>nd</sup> Voyage March 13-16** **Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn Unveils Official Poster & Banner February 13**

**Education Outreach Program “Read the Book, See the Movie” 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea**  
**Opening Night Happy Hour + SOLAHA Premiere at Dalmatian American Club**  
**Stories of L.A. Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (SOLAHA The Movie)**  
**Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute On The Town Aboard Battleship IOWA**  
**Closing Day DocSunday™ Patrice: The Movie POLA Premiere at Harbor Area YWCA**

**February 13, 2025 - San Pedro (SP), California - Port of Los Angeles (POLA)** - Programming and sponsors were announced, and official poster and street banner unveiled, for the 22<sup>nd</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, door prize raffle, and received media packet program information and a party favor as they exited.

LAHIFF takes place March 13-16 at four different locations since the Warner Grant Theatre (WGT), in historic downtown SP, the traditional venue where festival was held past two decades has closed for renovations. The WGT is expected to reopen end of 2026.

Festival Director Stephanie Mardesich welcomed guests before announcing programming. “We are delighted to return to Port Town Brewing Company to announce programming as we did in 2024. With its landmark location, and support of proprietor James Brown since the inception of the film festival, it is the perfect setting for our guests to convene and later enjoy dining at one of our ‘Epicurean Sponsor’ venues after the event.” Mardesich lamented the closing of the WGT as “a huge loss to the downtown business and cultural community, and anchor for the LAHIFF and so many organizations, and significant events. We are grateful that sponsors have come forward to host programs in four alternate venues that has been a great challenge to choreograph.”

After introductions, sponsors acknowledged, and programs announced the official poster and street banner “*Liberty On The Cinematic Bridge*” were unveiled by Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4 who stepped in to “pinch hit” for Los Angeles City Councilman Tim McOsker, District 15 (aka the “One-5”) who was to unveil official poster, however had to exit early for another official duty. She has been staunch advocate and support for LAHIFF since its inception and poised to offer praise and admiration.

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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 beginning with Tom Phillips, continuing with 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 the education outreach program. Art direction again by Alison Robertson of Wellington Signs, MJM Graphics festival printer, Alchemy poster printing sponsor, and framing by Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery.

“The LAHIFF is grateful for our long and loyal group of sponsors and supporters, especially our Contributing & Education Sponsor Supervisor Hahn who as Los Angeles City Council member for District 15 advocated for the film festival since it was founded in 2003. She has been as staunch supporter through her tenure as Congresswoman in the USA House of Representatives, and currently as she continues working vigorously for District 4 and all constituents of the County.”

LAHIFF begins Thursday March 13 with education outreach Program A “Read the Book, See the Movie” (RBSM) culmination program, featuring the classic novel 20,000 Leagues Under The Sea by Jules Verne, and 1954 Academy Award® nominated film that boasts a star quality cast. RBSM is by invitation only, sponsored in part and takes place at the Cabrillo Marine Aquarium (CAM) John Olguin Auditorium. The free education outreach program of enrichment promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film; and the most successful motivating aspect of the LAHIFF. Over 21,000 books have been distributed to students and community members since 2004. Participants this year include: Van Deene Steam Academy elementary school, Dr. Richard A. Vladovic Harbor Teacher Preparation Academy, San Pedro and Mary Star of the Sea (MSOTSHS) High Schools.

Students read and discuss the book prior to the event. They 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 participate in lively “Conversation and Q&A.” Over the years many filmmakers, actors and crew have participated. RBSM sponsors include: Supervisor Hahn, in-kind sponsor Signet Classics/Penguin Random House, The Popcorn Man, MSOTSHS, 7-Eleven and Arlene (Dickey) and Myron Lockrem.

Opening Night Program B, Friday March 15, from 5-7 pm “Happy Hour +” features the oral history project *Stories of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (SOLAHA The Movie Vol. VI)* at the Dalmatian American Club (DAC) main bar. “No host” bar service, appetizers and popcorn courtesy of the DAC. Welcome and remarks at 5:45 pm the (@30 min.) composite film, that includes one story from each of Volume VI participants. No entrance charge, however reservations requested (see p. 5).

“The Dalmatian-American Club of San Pedro is proud to once again sponsor the opening night evening, especially since our club hosted the location for filming SOLAHA Vol. VI (in 2024),” stated the Honorable Rudy Svorinich, Jr. club president and former President Pro Tempore of the Los Angeles City Council and Harbor District 15 Councilman. “It’s our continuing commitment to San Pedro’s community spirit and preserving local history as we begin to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our club in May 1926.”

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Saturday March 15 Program C HNT takes place aboard Battleship IOWA, fantail-aft deck, at 4 pm (board ship from 3:15 pm) screening of the MGM *On The Town*, delightful musical film about WWII Navy plebes on 24 hour “liberty” in New York City, preceded by two short videos about other LAHIFF sponsors SA Recycling and YWCA Harbor Area. It’s another “dream come true” for Mardesich following the MGM classic film *Anchors Aweigh* HNT presentation on the ship in 2024, “that was magical with the sounds and sights of the harbor as the audience viewed a classic movie about WWII aboard an authentic battleship of the era,” Mardesich observed. Concessions (popcorn, candy, beer, wine) will be sold at Vicky’s Doghouse Café located port side of the ship will have a special menu featuring their gourmet hot dogs for the event. HNT is long standing tradition that has brought countless movies stars to walk the “Red Carpet” and continues to honor the best of Hollywood’s classic movies.

The “community event” is free for the public with attendance limited to 200. Reservations requested at “Event Brite” (see p. 5). Donations of non-perishable food items and new clothing are appreciated in lieu of purchasing tickets to be distributed to and benefit non-profit organizations including the YWCA Harbor Area, Toberman Neighborhood Center and Harbor Interfaith Services 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 16 Program D, known as “DocSunday”, begins at 2 pm. at the YWCA Harbor Area “Julia Morgan Auditorium.” The historic edifice that opened in c. 1917 is among several designed by renowned architect Julia Morgan (Hearst Castle). DocSunday is always devoted to non-fiction film. This year features the POLA premiere of *Patrice: The Movie* that Mardesich viewed when she was a press delegate for the 68<sup>th</sup> BFI London Film Festival in October 2024. “The movie touches on so many issues that reflect the YWCA mission including social justice, equity, and civil rights; evoking a mood of humanity and an element of romance in the unique story,” commented Mardesich. “The film impressed me immensely with its style and excellent cinematic values. After confirming with our advisors I believe it’s great choice programming the film at the YWCA whose mission includes advocacy through local programming creating real change for women, families, eliminate racism and empower women; and eliminating racism.”

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: Employees Community Fund of Boeing, 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). Website sponsor is Clear Steps.

Other In-Kind Sponsors include: Los Angeles Maritime Museum (LAMM), San Pedro Bay Historical Society (SPBHS), and Grand Vision Foundation (GVF). Volunteer support by San Pedro Recovery Alliance (Catalina Hinojosa,

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director). Other LAHIFF board are community liaison Andrea (Rukavina) Hegybeli, businesswoman Nancy (McCutchan) Nottingham, and Northern California rep Carla Contestable, R.N. Festival advisor 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, Rafaello’s Ristorante, Wienerschnitzel, Omelet & Waffle Shop, The Sandwich Saloon, Think Prime, and Vicky’s Doghouse Café. New this year are Compagnon Wine Bistro and Whale & Ale Gastropub.

“Being a sponsor of the LAHIFF demonstrates community awareness and appreciation of our mission,” proffered Mardesich, “and 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.

As Supervisor Hahn eloquently states: “For the past 21 years, the LA Harbor International Film Festival has brought the magic of cinema to the heart of San Pedro and the region. Its diverse programs bring Hollywood classics alive, promote literacy through “Read the Book, See the Movie”, present documentaries exploring pivotal issues, and share local stories. While we await the reopening of our beloved Warner Grand Theatre, we cherish this opportunity to nonetheless celebrate another LAHIFF, which itself has become a revered cultural event. I am proud to support this film festival from its debut and into the future.”

Reservations requested for Programs B, C, and D. 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. # # #

**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: Eventbrite <https://LAHIFF22.eventbrite.com>**

**Program D. DocSunday** venue YWCA Harbor Area, 437 W. 9<sup>th</sup> St., SP 90731 (street parking no \$ required on Sun.)

**Reservations: Eventbrite**

**<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lahiff-patrice-the-movie-tickets-1234812470339?aff=oddtcreator>**

**More about:**

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

Dalmatian American Club <https://www.dalmatianamericanclub.com/>

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium: <https://cma.recreation.parks.lacity.gov>

YWCA Harbor Area <https://ywcaharbor.org/>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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**Complete LAHIFF 2025 Sponsor List**

**Contributing & Education Sponsor** ~ Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4  
**Associate Sponsors** ~ Employees Community Fund of Boeing ~ 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 ~ Joseph & Lee (Sher) Mardesich Family Trust  
**Education Outreach Program "Read the Book, See the Movie"™**  
The Popcorn Man ~ Mary Star of the Sea High School ~ 7-Eleven ~ Arlene (Dickey) & Myron Lockrem  
~ Signet Classics Penguin-Random House  
**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**  
Cabrillo Marine Aquarium ~ Los Angeles Maritime Museum ~ City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs  
San Pedro Art Association ~ Grand Vision Foundation  
**Volunteer Service** ~ SP Recovery Alliance (Catalina Hinojosa, director)  
**Website Sponsor** ~ ClearSteps (Alyssa Marks, Designer/Manager)

**Epicurean Sponsors (websites 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* <https://sacredgrounds.us/>  
*Big Nick's* <https://bignickspizza.com/>  
*Omelet & Waffle Shop* <https://omelette-waffle-shop.res-menu.com/>  
*Rafaello's Ristorante* <https://www.raffaelloristorante.com/>  
*The Sandwich Saloon* <https://www.sandwichsaloon.com/>  
*Think Café* <https://www.thinkcafesandpedro.com/>  
*J. Trani's Ristorante* <https://www.sacredgrounds.coffee/>  
*Think Prime* <https://thinkprime-steakhouse.com/>  
*Vicky's Doghouse Café*: <https://pacificbattleship.com/doghouse/>  
*Compagnon Wine Bistro* <https://compagnonbistro.com>  
*Whale & Ale Gastropub* <https://thewhaleandale.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/)