



LA Harbor International Film Festival

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

Telephone: (310) 519-0756 ~ 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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It's A Wrap!

**LA Harbor International Film Festival Concludes 22nd Voyage
Education Outreach Program "Read the Book, See the Movie" *20,000 Leagues Under The Sea***

**Opening Night Happy Hour + at Dalmatian American Club - Premiere
*Stories of L.A. Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow (The Movie-Volume VI)***

Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute *On The Town Aboard Battleship IOWA*

Closing Day DocSunday™ POLA Premiere *Patrice: The Movie* DocSunday At YWCA Harbor Area

23rd LAHIFF On Course For March 12-15, 2026 Date & Venues To Be Confirmed

March 17, 2025 - San Pedro (SP), CA - the Port of Los Angeles (POLA) The 22nd annual LA Harbor International Film Festival (LAHIFF) held March 13-16 concluded on DocSunday March 16 at the historic national registry historic YWCA Harbor Area "Julia Morgan Auditorium" with Port of Los Angeles (POLA) premiere *Patrice: The Movie*. The four-day event was held in four different venues since the art deco movie palace Warner Grand Theatre (WGT) closed for renovation in December 2024. WGT has been the anchor for LAHIFF for 20 years and the festival hopes take place there again when it reopens c. 2027. All LAHIFF programs this year were "free" of charge with reservations requested for programs.

Opening day March 13 began with the free education outreach "Read the Book, See the Movie" (RBSM) Culmination Program (by invitation) *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, by Jules Verne. Hosted by and held at the Cabrillo Marie Aquarium (CMA) RBSM promotes literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film. Over 21K complimentary books have been distributed to readers in past two decades. This year over 300 students participated from Mary Star of the Sea High School (MSOTSHS), Rudicinda Dodson Middle School, Dr. Richard Vladovic Harbor Preparatory Academy and Van Deene Steam Academy elementary school. San Pedro High School John & Muriel Olguin Magnate was not able to attend in person and viewed film in parallel time with snacks provided.

The excited students arrived at the CMA greeted by a traditional bagpiper (Glen Thompson) then entered John Olguin Auditorium, after receiving fun healthy fun snacks, to view the 1954 Disney film adaptation of the great novel. Festival Director/Founder Stephanie Mardesich welcomed all: "We are grateful that CMA has offered their hospitality and is the ideal venue for the story that takes place in and around the sea. She introduced Caroline Brady, **Director** Friends of CMA, joined by executive director Chrislyn McKerron, who enlightened the audience about exhibits, current improvements, plans for the future; reminding that the aquarium is facility of City of L.A. Parks and Recreation, admission is free and to return with their families and friends.

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After the screening the readers participated in “Conversation and Q&A” about the book and film. Consensus preferred movie to the film. RBSM is a program of enrichment expanding upon erudition and instilling the joy of reading for a lifetime. As Mardesich proffers: “When you have a book in hand you can go anywhere in the world without leaving home and you have a friend for life.”

RBSM refreshments sponsored by MSOTSHS 7-Eleven (19th St. & Pacific Ave., SP store), Arlene (Dickey) and Myron Lockrem. LAHIFF Contributing & Education Sponsor is Los Angeles County Supervisor Janice Hahn, District 4.

Opening night March 14 “Happy Hour +” at the Dalmation American Club (DAC), was premiere of the *Stories of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* (SOLAHA) *The Movie*, composite film of SOLAHA Vol. VI, with one story from each of the six participants. The mission of SOLAHA is to preserve local history for posterity. “If we don’t save our history today it’s gone tomorrow,” commented Mardesich. “The DAC generously supports LAHIFF providing the venue and complimentary appetizers. It’s also where SOLAHA Vol. VI was filmed. With its significant historic presence DCA was the appropriate space to host the evening since it is approaching the 100th anniversary of the club’s founding in 1926.” SOLAHA Vol. VI will be released in weekly segments via internet then at website later in the month or early April.

Elected officials or representatives attending included Sean Kearns deputy for Congresswoman Nanette Barragan, District 44, and Supervisor Hahn, and Erika Velazquez, harbor director for Councilman Tim McOsker, District 15 “One-Five”. Supervisor Hahn and Ms. Velazquez presented DAC President Honorable Rudy Svorinich with a special LAC scroll and City of L.A. commendation certificate commemorating the DAC hosting LAHIFF opening night.

Saturday March 15 the Hollywood Nostalgia Tribute (HNT) took place aboard Battleship IOWA with Academy Award® nominated *On The Town* (USA, MGM, 1949) starring Gene Kelly, Frank Sinatra, Betty Garret, and stellar cast “It was magical being in the ‘movie theatre on the water’ watching a WWII romantic musical film about three sailors on liberty in New York City, aboard an authentic WWII battleship. “It was especially charming that several guests dressed in vintage attire adding to the festive mood,” commented Mardesich. “The ‘Love Boat’ departed with the memorable theme tune, tugboats were cruising, and a container ship fully loaded heading out to sea, was ‘living theatre’ of the waterfront.” Preceding the film were two videos that revealed the exciting and import work of Associate Sponsor SA Recycling located in Terminal Island, and the IOWA and Museum of the Surface Navy

Though the HNT was a free community event, with attendees who came from as far as Port Richmond and Hunting Beach, all were encouraged to bring a donation of non-perishable food items and gently used or new clothing in spirit of benevolence to be distributed to three local organizations that help families in challenging circumstances: YWCA Harbor Area, Toberman Neighborhood Center and Harbor Interfaith Services (HIS). Concessions (beer, wine, popcorn and snacks) were available at Vicky’s Doghouse Café located port side of the ship. Attendees of LAHIFF programs are always encouraged to dine before or after the screening at LAHIFF Epicurean Sponsor establishments (listed at end of release).

Since the first HNT in 2004 many true “movie stars” have graced “Red Carpet” receptions preceding film screenings, in the Arcade Building and WGT, including Betty Garret (*Neptune’s Daughter*), Mitzi Gaynor, (late) John Kerr, France Nuyen (*South Pacific*), George Chakiris and Russ Tamblyn (*West Side Story*), Nancy Kwan (*Flower Drum Song*), (late) Stella Stevens and Carol Linley (*The Poseidon Adventure*), Pat Boone (*April Love*) to name a few. In addition to HNT many other “stars” attended LAHIFF

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programs including “golden age” Hollywood star (late) Marsha Hunt, who passed away in 2022 at age 104; (late) James MacArthur (RBSM *Swiss Family Robison* and *Kidnapped*); and Joe Mantegna (*Uncle Nino*) all duly honored with scrolls and certificates.

LAHIFF closing day program was well attended and the audience gave ovation to with the award winning documentary feature. *Patrice: The Movie* (directed by Ted Passon, All Ages Productions, 2024, 102 min.) is unique story of dynamic Patrice Jetter, a school crossing guard, and her beau Garry Wickman, who reside in New Jersey each in their own home, leading productive lives, have a flair for artistic hobbies, a coterie of eclectic loyal friends; and a truly loving relationship. They would like to be married, however if they wed, or even live together, the benefits they are entitled to, and need to survive, would be cut off. Despite the scrutiny they endure they decide to have a commitment ceremony that could risk their economic security. Mardesich “found” the movie when she was press delegate for the 68th BFI London Film Festival in October 2024. “The story and intriguing style of the film were impressive appealing to the theme of social justice recurring in DocSunday programming and reflecting the YWCA mission.,” commented Mardesich. “After pre-screening with LAHIFF advisors we contacted the director/producer and the film was invited to be programmed; and was perfect choice for the venue and Sunday afternoon garnering great audience appeal and response..”

The LAHIFF is known for its outstanding poster artwork this year inspired by the RBSM and HNT programs entitled “*Liberty On The Cinematic Bridge*.” Photo for key art for the iconic 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 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. Art direction by Alison Robertson of Wellington Signs, MJM Graphics festival printer, Alchemy (L.A.) poster printing sponsor since 2004. Poster framing by Distinctive Edge Framing & Gallery, Rancho Palos Verdes.

LAHIFF is non-juried, non-competitive celebrating the cinematic arts that aims to entertain, enlighten and educate the audience by showcasing film and video that reflects the harbor and all it embraces: Shipping and commerce, fishing, sailing, water sports, sea life and the area’s rich ethnic and cultural influences; and to promote literacy and a more thoughtful way to view a film through the education program RRBSM - *to create a cinematic bridge between the people of the region and the people of the world*. LAHIFF promotes the inherent merits of the WGT and has made its own effort toward continuing restoration. In addition to Miller LAHIF board members are Carla Contestable, R.N.; Andrea (Rukavina) Hegybeli, retired court reporter ; businesswoman Nancy (McCutchan) Nottingham; Festival advisor emerita is Betsy A. McLane, Ph.D. A 501c3 non-profit organization founded in 2003, with no paid employees, LAHIFF is made possible through fiscal and in-kind sponsorship. Volunteer assistance during the festival provided by San Pedro Recovery Alliance (SPRA). Complete list of sponsors at end of release.

“The many sponsors who came forward to host programs in alternate venues is exceptional. It’s been a great challenge to choreograph the four days of programs in new and stimulating environments for our peripatetic presentation,” states Mardesich. “Being a sponsor of the LAHIFF demonstrates community awareness and appreciation of the LAHIFF Mission. The commitment to support culture and education is vita with partnerships between business and individuals fundamental to perpetuate the humanity, creativity, and traits valued by constituents and its significance can never be underestimated.”

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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. Checks or m.o. to P.O. Box 5202, San Pedro, CA 90733 USA

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.”

The 23rd LAHIFF will take place March 12-15, 2025. Programming and venues to be announced end of year or early 2026.

Media relations, information, and “Sponsorship Opportunities” contact: Stephanie Mardesich, Festival Director at stephaniemardesich@yahoo.com or telephone (310) 519-0756.

The 2025 souvenir program available at view at website, also archives/photos: www.laharborfilmfest.com;

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The Movies – how to view

Patrice: The Movie website: <https://www.patricethemovie.com/>

(Available to View on Hulu)

On The Town – IBDB link https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0041716/?ref=fn_all_ttl_1

20,000 Leagues Under The Sea – IMDB link https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0046672/?ref=fn_all_ttl_1

Complete LAHIFF 2025 Sponsors

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”™

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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 ~ San Pedro Recovery Alliance (SPRA)

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

Epicurean Sponsors (websites for “indoor/outdoor dining/ordering to go/curbside pick up”)

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Epicurean Sponsors (websites for “indoor/outdoor dining/ordering to go/curbside pick up”) cont’d.

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More about:

Peter Read Miller, photographer: www.peterreadmiller.com
SOLAHA oral history project: 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
Bagpiper Glen Thompson: <https://www.piperdigitalusa.com/about>
ClearSteps: www.clearsteps.com
NewFilmmakers LA: www.newfilmmakersla.com
Grand Vision Foundation (GVF): www.grandvision.org
Wellington Signs: www.wellingtonsigns.com