

2023 Santa Barbara International Film Festival Wrap

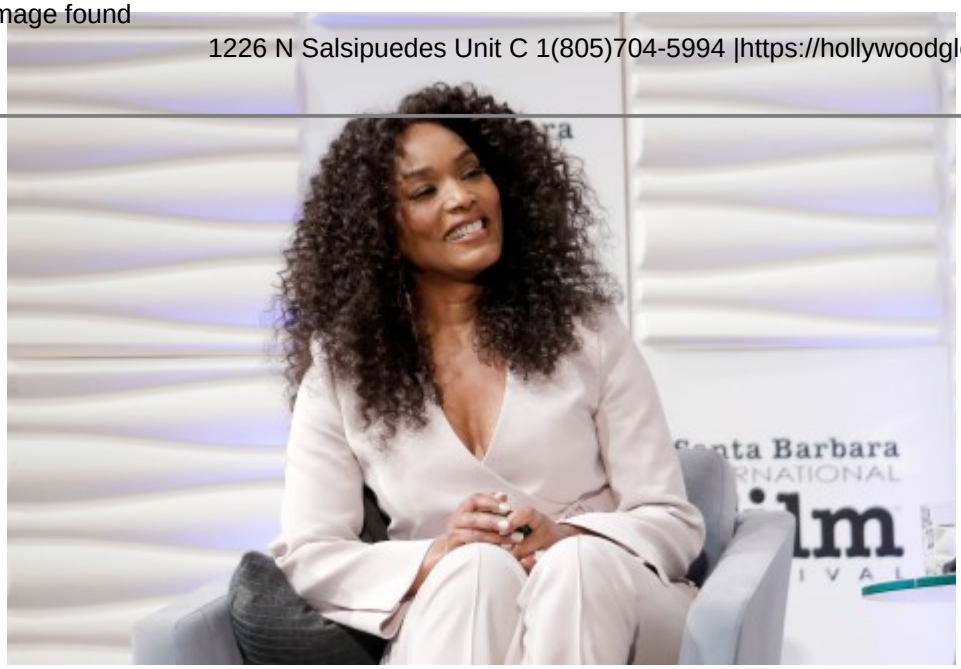
Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson

The 38th Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) has closed after another successful run from February 8th to February 18th, 2023. In all, SBIFF showcased 52 world premiere films as well as 78 US premieres! Official events included screenings, filmmaker Q&As, industry panels, and celebrity tributes, held throughout the city, including at the historic Arlington Theatre.



The Opening Night Film, Wednesday, February 8, featured the WORLD Premiere of MIRANDAâ??S VICTIM, a biographical crime drama, directed by Michelle Danner and starring Abigail Breslin, Ryan Phillippe, Luke Wilson, Donald Sutherland, Mireille Enos and Andy Garcia.



SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 09: Angela Bassett speaks onstage at the Montecito Award Ceremony during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at The Arlington Theatre on February 09, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Tibrina Hobson/Getty Images for SBIFF)

Without missing a beat,the following evening SBIFF feted Angela Bassett, who incidentally is nominated for Best Supporting Oscar for this yearâ??s performance in Marvel Studiosâ?? BLACK PANTHER: WAKANDA FOREVER directed by Ryan Coogler from Disney Studios. Bassett received the festivalâ??s Montecito Award. The Montecito Award is named after one of the most beautiful and stylish areas in Santa Barbara. Past recipients include PenÃ©lope Cruz, Amanda Seyfried, Lupita Nyongâ??o, Melissa McCarthy, Saoirse Ronan, Isabelle Huppert, Sylvester Stallone, Jennifer Aniston, Oprah Winfrey, Daniel Day-Lewis, Geoffrey Rush, Julianne Moore, Kate Winslet, Naomi Watts and Javier Bardem.



SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 10: Honoree Cate Blanchett poses with the Outstanding Performer of the Year Award during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at the Arlington Theatre on February 10, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Rebecca Sapp/Getty Images for SBIFF)

On Friday, February 10th, the SBIFF Filmmaker Seminars kicked off with a timely topic of Overcoming Adversity/Fight the Power: Documentary Activism at Work at 11:00 am at Tamsen Gallery at 911 1/2 State Street across from the Fiesta 5 Theatre. The new and improved free film format (daily) screened **TÃ•R**, directed by Todd Field and starring Cate Blanchett, at 2:00 pm at the Arlington Theatre. Blanchettâ??s performance in **TAR** has a strong chance of landing the actress her third Academy Award. Consequently, SBIFF honored Blanchett with its **OUTSTANDING PERFORMER OF THE YEAR AWARD.**

The morning of Saturday, February 11th, brought out the Writers Panel featuring The Daniels **(Everything Everywhere All at Once),** Todd Field **(TÃ¡r),** Kazuo Ishiguro **(Living),** Rian Johnson **(Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery),** Tony Kushner **(The Fabelmans),** Martin McDonagh **(The Banshees of Inisherin),** Ruben Ã?stlund **(Triangle of Sadness),** Lesley Paterson **(All Quiet on the Western Front),** Sarah Polley **(Women Talking)**.

The afternoon brought the Womenâ??s Panel with Anne Alvergue â?? Director **(The Martha Mitchell Effect)**, Ruth E. Carter â?? Costume Designer (**Black Panther: Wakanda Forever)**, Hannah Minghella â?? Producer **(The Boy, The Mole, The Fox and The Horse)**, Domee Shi â?? Director **(Turning Red)** , Gwendolyn Yates Whittle â?? Sound Editor **(Avatar: The Way of Water)**, Mary Zophres â?? Costume Designer **(Babylon).**



SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 11: Jamie Lee Curtis speaks at the Maltin Modern Master Award ceremony during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at Arlington Theatre on February 11, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Tibrina Hobson/Getty Images for SBIFF)

In the evening, SBIFF hosted the Maltin Modern Master Award honoring Jamie Lee Curtis. The Modern Master Award was established in 1995 and is the highest accolade presented by SBIFF. Created to honor an individual who has enriched our culture through accomplishments in the motion picture industry, it was re-named the Maltin Modern Master Award in 2015 in honor of long-time SBIFF moderator and renowned film critic Leonard Maltin. Past recipients include Nicole Kidman, Javier Bardem, Bill Murray, Brad Pitt, Glenn Close, Denzel Washington, Michael Keaton, Bruce Dern, Ben Affleck, Christopher Plummer, Christopher Nolan, James Cameron, Clint Eastwood, Cate Blanchett, Will Smith, George Clooney and Peter Jackson.

Sunday morning, February 12th, brought out the Producers Panel, 11:00am at the Arlington Theatre featuring Gail Berman **(Elvis)**, Jerry Bruckheimer **(Top Gun: Maverick)**, Todd Field **(TÃ¡r)**, Dede Gardner **(Women Talking)**, Malte Grunert **(All Quiet on the Western Front)**, Erik Hemmendorff **(Triangle of Sadness)**, Kristie Macosko Krieger **(The Fabelmans)**, Jon Landau **(Avatar: The Way of Water)**, Jonathan Wang **(Everything Everywhere All at Once).**

Sunday afternoon highlighted the International Directors Panel, 2:00pm at the Arlington Theatre with Colm BairÃ©ad **(The Quiet Girl)**, Edward Berger **(All Quiet on the Western Front)**, Lukas Dhont **(Close)**, Santiago Mitre **(Argentina, 1985)**, Jerzy Skolimowski **(Eo)**.

On Monday February 13th, the Filmmaker Seminar â??Say it Loud: How Under-Represented Voices Get Heard,â?• featured **Maureen Bharoocha**, Director (The Prank) **Alison Millar**, Director (Lyra) **Caylee So**, Director (The Harvest) **Victor Nunez**, Director (Rachel Hendrix) **Angie Wang**, Juror (Director, MDMA (2017)).

The Daily Free Film featured **David Crosby: Remember My Name â??** 2:00pm @ Arlington Theatre. The screening was followed by a Q&A with Director A.J. Eaton.

In the evening the **Variety Artisans Award,** took place at the Arlington Theatre, recognizing **M. M. Keeravaani** â?? Songwriter (RRR), **Son Lux** â?? Composer (Everything Everywhere All at Once), **Catherine Martin â??** Costume Designer (Elvis), **Florencia Martin â??** Production Designer (Baby **Adrien Morot** â?? Hairst Everywhere All at Once), **Eric Sainc** n the Western Front).



SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 14: Brendan Fraser receives the American Riviera Awardonstage at the American Riviera Award Ceremony during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at the Arlington Theatre on February 14, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Tibrina Hobson/Getty Images for SBIFF)

On Tuesday, Brendan Fraser was honored with the American Riviera Award and an in-person conversation about his career, leading up to this yearâ??s performance as Charlie in the A24 film THE WHALE, a story from Darren Aranofsky, of a reclusive English teacher living with severe obesity who attempts to reconnect with his estranged teenage daughter for one last chance at redemption.

The American Riviera Award was established to recognize actors who have made a significant contribution to American Cinema. Previous recipients include Kristen Stewart, Delroy Lindo, RenÃ©e Zellweger, Viggo Mortenson, Sam Rockwell, Jeff Bridges, Michael Keaton, Rachel McAdams, Mark Ruffalo, Patricia Arquette, Ethan Hawke, Robert Redford, Quentin Tarantino, Martin Scorsese, Annette Bening, Sandra Bullock, Mickey Rourke, Tommy Lee Jones, Forrest Whitaker, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Kevin Bacon and Diane Lane.



Wednesday brought The Virtuosos, moderated by Deadlineâ??s Dave Karger, and featured **AUSTIN BUTLER** (ELVIS), **KERRY CONDON** (THE BANSHEES OF INISHERIN), **DANIELLE DEADWYLER** (TILL), **NINA HOSS** (TÃ•R), **STEPHANIE HSU** (EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE), **JEREMY POPE** (THE INSPECTION), **KE HUY QUAN** (EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE), **JEREMY STRONG** (ARMAGEDDON TIME). The Virtuosos Award is an honor created to recognize a select group of talent whose noteworthy performances in film have elevated them into the national cinematic dialogue.

Thursday, Colin Farrell & Brendan Gleeson, received the Cinema Vanguard Award, presented by Director Martin McDonagh. The **Cinema Vanguard Award** recognizes actors who have forged their own path, taking artistic risks and making a significant and unique contribution to film.



Colin Farrell has had a distinguished career of nearly twenty-plus years in film and television. He can be seen in Warner Bros.â?? The Batman for director Matt Reeves; in the MGM film Thirteen Lives for director Ron Howard; in the BBC / AMC drama â??The North Waterâ?•; and After Yang which premiered at the 2021 Cannes Film Festival and also made its North American debut at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival. Farrell was most recently seen in Tim Burtonâ??s 2019 live action film Dumbo and Foxâ??s 2018 ensemble feature Widows, directed by Steve McQueen and co-starring Viola Davis. In 2017, Farrell made his second film with Yorgos Lanthimos, The Killing of the Sacred Deer opposite Nicole Kidman for A24. The film premiered at the Cannes Film Festival along with Sofia Coppolaâ??s The Beguiled in which he also starred with Nicole Kidman, Elle Fanning, and Kirsten Dunst. That same year, Israel, Esq., written and direct



SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 16: Honorees Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson pose with their Cinema Vanguard Awards during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at the Arlington Theatre on February 16, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Rebecca Sapp/Getty Images for SBIFF)

A former teacher, Dublin-born **Brendan Gleeson** left the profession to pursue a career in his first love â?? acting. He joined the Irish theater company Passion Machine and has since starred on the stage, in films, and on television, winning fans and awards worldwide. Other recent films include: The Coen Brothersâ?? The Ballad of Buster Scruggs for Netflix; Hampstead, opposite Diane Keaton; Paddington 2 also starring Hugh Grant, Sally Hawkins, and Julie Walters; Trespass Against Us opposite Michael Fassbender; Vincent Perezâ??s Alone in Berlin opposite Emma Thompson; Assassinâ??s Creed once again with Michael Fassbender; the Warner Bros. Ben Affleck Live By Night; Ron Howardâ??s In the Heart of the Sea; and Suffragette opposite Carey Mulligan and Meryl Streep, once again winning the BIFA Award for Best Supporting Actor.

The next evening, Martin McDonagh (*The Banshees Of Inisherin*) and Todd Field (*TÃ¡r*) were honored as the Best Directors of the Year. Scott Feinberg, Executive Editor of Awards at the Hollywood Reporter hosted the evening.



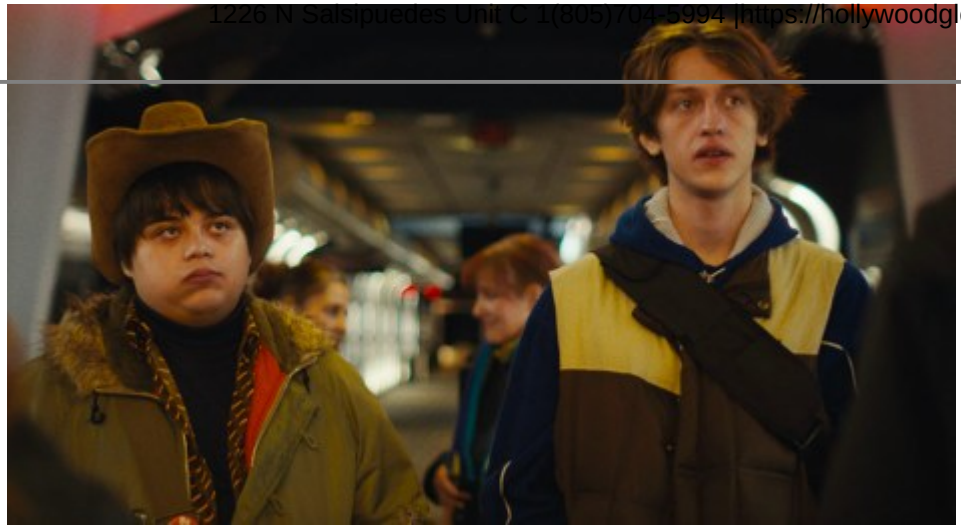
SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 17: (L-R) Todd Field, Martin McDonagh and Scott Feinberg speak onstage at the Outstanding Directors of the Year Award Ceremony during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at the Arlington Theatre on February 17, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Tibrina Hobson/Getty Images for SBIFF)

After a clip from *The Banshees of Inisherin*, director Martin McDonagh stated that although he started out with plays, McDonagh noted that he always wouldâ??ve preferred to do movies, as those were his great love. In fact, McDonagh never had a great fondness for theater, finding that plays could be somewhat dull. So, when he started writing plays, he tried to take them as far from dullness as he could, attempting to infuse as much cinematic character as possible. When McDonagh made the jump to film, his biggest fear was making films that could be seen as playlike, being overly wordy or limited in scope.

Field, on the other hand, talked about his original interest in music, after a clip from *Tar,* and how working at a movie theater caused him to fall in love with the medium. Even so, he originally intended to pursue music in school, though he followed a girl into theater. Field stated that he had the character of Lydia TÃ¡r running around his head for years.

After ten days, the 38th Santa Barbara International Film Festival came to a close with the U.S Premiere of **â??I LIKE MOVIES.â?•**



I Like Movies

In closing, while last year, SBIFF had its triumphant return to in-person screenings, panels, and events with 48 world premier and 95 U.S. premieres, this yearâ??s SBIFF expanded its free screenings and its run back to its more recent fare of ten days of film with 52 world premieres and 78 U.S. premieres. In addition, with the American Film Instituteâ??s Hollywood AFI FEST and AFI DOCS combining into a very truncated five days of film, SBIFF was able to attract pre-eminnent filmmakers such as Barbara Kopple (an AFI DOCS Board member). Furthermore, with the world famous Sundance Film Festival being laser-focused on first-time filmmakers (over 50% of its 2023 programming was devoted to first-time f ttract film wizardry from Gabri *Grab,* featuring investigative report orting.



SBIFF Q&A with

Director Gabriela Cowperthwaite (center) and Investigative Reporter Mathan Halverson (left) following the screening of The Grab, a geopolitical documentary on â??the money, influence, and alarming rationale behind covert efforts to control the most vital resource on

the planet.â?• (Photo cr. Larry Gleeson/HollywoodGlee)

SBIFFâ??s Programming Director **Claudia Puig** summed it up by saying, â??This 38th edition of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival drew filmmakers from as far as Turkey, India, Israel, and Sierra Leone, half of whom were women. We were delighted with the enthusiastic reception to our diverse program of 200 films from 43 countries. Cinema is one of the most powerful vehicles for empathy, providing a window of understanding to all who seek to look through it. We thank the filmmakers in attendance and our avid Santa Barbara audience for so heartily embracing the festival experience. Several films prompted standing ovations and packed theaters, marking 2023 a full-throttled return to celebrating cinema from around the globe.â?•

An eclectic jury composed of Angie Wang, Antonio Marziale, Christina Birro, Elizabeth Marighetto, Gwen Deglise, Jean Oppenheimer, Jeff Arch, Lela Meadow Conner, Leslie Ekker, Margy Rochlin, Nicole Noren, Perry Lang, Robert Abele, Steven Raphael, Tim Cogshell, and Tim Matheson, deemed the following films award worthy:

Audience Choice Award sponsored by The Santa Barbara Independent: **26.2 TO LIFE** Directed by Christine Yoo

Panavision Spirit Award for Independent Cinema: **I LIKE MOVIES** Directed by Chandler Levack

Jeffrey C. Barbakow Award â?? Best International Feature Film: **A MAN (ARU OTOKO)** Directed by Kei Ishikawa

Best Documentary Award: **A BUNCH OF AMATEURS** Directed by Kim Hopkins

Nueva Vision Award for Spain/Latin America Cinema: **MANUELA** Directed by Clara Cullen

Best Middle Eastern/Israeli Film Award: **THE TASTE OF APPLES IS RED (TAâ??AM AL TUFAH, AHMAR)** Directed by Ehab Tarabieh

Best Nordic Film Award: **SUMMERLIGHT AND THEN COMES THE NIGHT (SUMARLJÃ?S OG SVO KEMUR NÃ?TTIN)** Directed by Elfar AÃ°alsteins

Social Justice Award for Documentary Film: **BLACK MAMBAS** Directed by Lena Karbe

ADL Stand Up Award, sponsored by ADL Santa Barbara/Tri-Counties, the Skinner Social Impact Fund, and Steve & Cindy Lyons: **THE QUIET GIRL (AN CAILÃ•N CIÃ?IN)** Directed by Colm BairÃ©ad

Best Documentary Short Film Award: **NOWHERE TO GO BUT EVERYWHERE (è¡?ã••æ¢ã•¾ã??ã•®ã??ã•?ã•?å•´)** Directed by Masako Tsumura, Erik Shirai

Bruce Corwin Award â?? Best Live-Action Short Film: **THE MOISTURE (RUTUBET)** Directed by Turan Haste

*Now eligible for the 2024 Academy Awards

Bruce Corwin Award â?? Best Animated Short Film: **EPICENTER (ì??ë¬¸ì•? ì§?ì?•ì§?)** Directed by Heeyoon Hahm

*Now eligible for the 2024 Academy Awards

This years films (and Mikeâ??s Field Trip to the Movies), in my opinion, were the crux of what makes the Sa ent that it is. Santa Barbara has histor silent film era. And, Roger Durlin estival for two decades now, has b the festival more accessible to Santa year, Iâ??ll see you at the movie



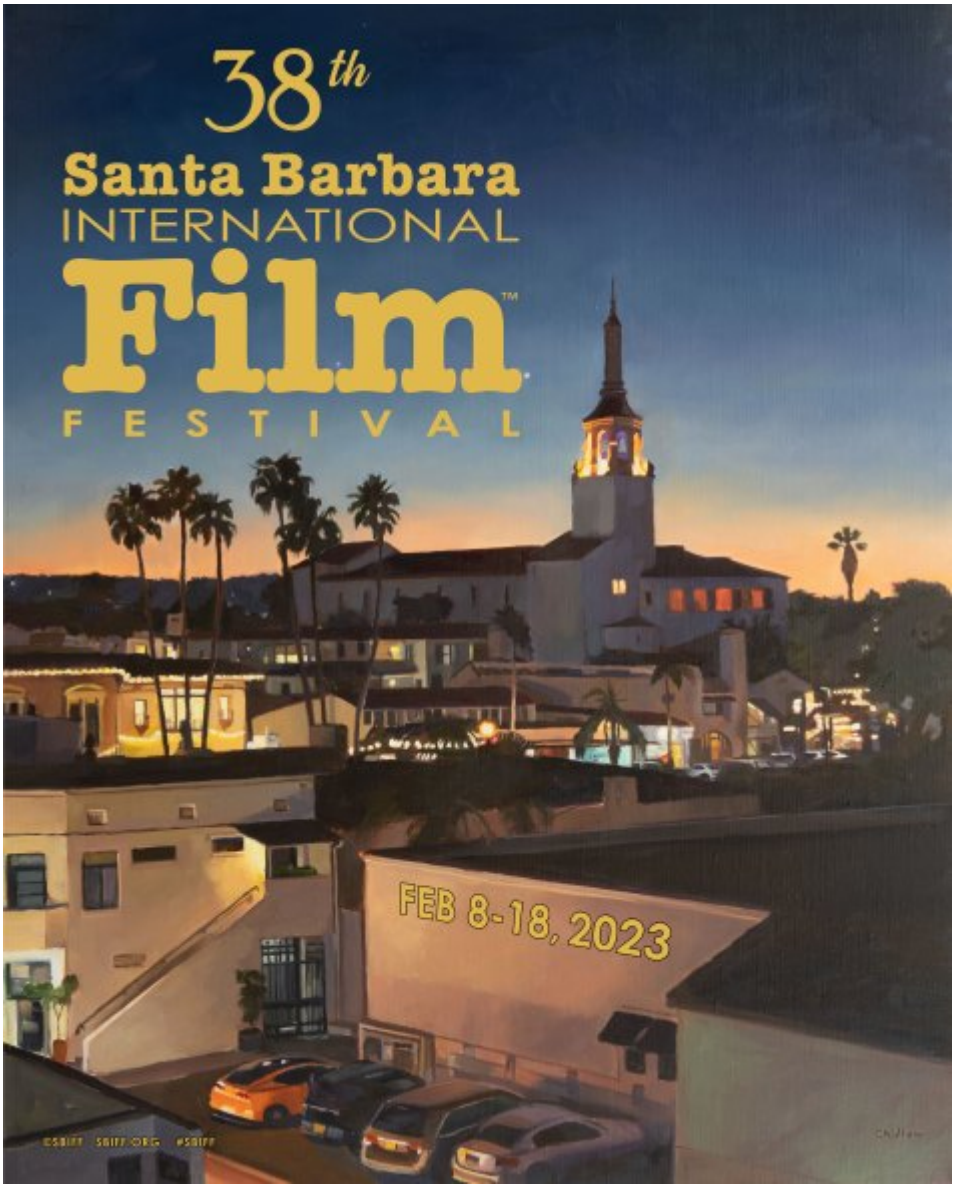
SANTA BARBARA,

CALIFORNIA â?? FEBRUARY 18: SBIFF Executive Director Roger Durling speaks at the Awards Breakfast during the 38th Annual Santa Barbara International Film Festival at El Encanto on February 18, 2023 in Santa Barbara, California. (Photo by Rebecca Sapp/Getty Images for SBIFF)

About the Santa Barbara International Film Festival

The Santa Barbara International Film Festival (SBIFF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts and educational organization dedicated to discovering and showcasing the best in independent and international cinema. Over the past 37 years, SBIFF has become one of the leading film festivals in the United States â?? attracting 100,000 attendees and offering 11 days of 200+ films, tributes and symposiums, fulfilling their mission to engage, enrich, and inspire the Santa Barbara community through film.

SBIFF continues its commitment to education and the community throughout many free educational programs and events. In 2016, SBIFF entered a new era with the acquisition of the historic and beloved Riviera Theatre. After a capital campaign and renovation, the theatre is now SBIFFâ??s new state-of-the-art, year-round home, showing new international and independent films every day. In 2019, SBIFF opened its own Education Center in downtown Santa Barbara on State Street to serve as a home for its many educational programs and a place for creativity and learning.



Category

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