



HYBRID DIGITAL AND IN-PERSON FILMOCRACY III RETURNS TO BEVERLY HILLS JULY 14-17; BOUTIQUE FILM FESTIVAL ADDS FILM MARKET, IMPACT EXPO

Description

Posted by Larry Gleeson



Filmocracy, LA's hybrid boutique festival, returns for its third edition with in-person screenings July 14-17 at [Lumiere Cinema](#) at the Music Hall in Beverly Hills, with its full complement of twenty-six films available online to stream nationwide via the [Filmocracy](#) digital platform.



Jon Fitzgerald

Filmocracy Fest got its start during the pandemic, when former AFI Fest programmer and Slamdance co-founder Jon Fitzgerald was working with Filmocracy, then a 3-D digital film festival engine and nascent streamer. “I had been doing some work with Filmocracy, supporting their various divisions, including their virtual festival initiative,” Fitzgerald recalls. “Paul Jun the Filmocracy CEO and I talked about creating our own Festival, as a showcase for the innovative programs the team had continued to develop.”

After Filmocracy Fest II this past December, Fest co-founder Fitzgerald and his partners opted to move the film exhibition portion of the Festival into summer. The Festival incorporates an Impact Expo, networking, and the second iteration of its digital Film Market, with filmmakers vying to get their projects in front of 45 acquisitions executives from Disney+, Myriad Pictures, and XYZ Films, among others. They will keep their Film Festival Summit in December, which will incorporate a new Film Festival Awards Program.

The Festival will screen eight narrative and documentary titles in person. There will also be two in-person short programs of five films each. However, Filmocracy is committed to the hybrid model. Fitzgerald believes “filmmakers will always want to see their movies on the big screen, engage with audiences, and participate in Q&As, but they cannot always make it to every festival. We’ve seen ticket sales double by allowing audiences who can’t make it to Sundance or Los Angeles, for example, the opportunity to see and appreciate these emerging talents in their home theaters.” He predicts “hybrid is going to be the way of most fests, with a few exceptions from traditionalists. It will be up to filmmakers to know their goals, understand what each fest can do for them, and carve out the path that works for them and their project.”

Filmocracy Fest continues to focus on socially relevant storytellers, which comprise most movies selected for the 2022 slate. “One of our four key pillars is discovery,” Fitzgerald says. “We really like to support emerging artists, particularly those with visual style. The narrative filmmakers all take chances, and we have a number of social impact stories—shorts and features, narratives and documentaries—covering topics from police brutality to diabetes diagnosis, all with subjects that celebrate the human spirit.” As with the 2021 edition, these films will be connected to related causes via the Impact Expo, providing in-person and virtual audiences with the opportunity to learn more about the issues and take action.

Filmocracy’s parent company [Liquid Media Group](#) returns as the festival’s presenting sponsor, joined by founding sponsor iGEMS and partners Digital Cinema United, [INDIEFLIX](#), and Projektor.

“Last year’s film MY DEAD DAD, which sold to HBOMax on the heels of its sold-out Filmocracy Fest premiere, is a great example of what can happen when filmmakers are met with the support to get their stories in front of audiences,” concludes Liquid Media Group’s Chairman Josh Jackson, who delivered closing remarks to kick off the awards program during the December Festival. “Liquid is proud to stand alongside Filmocracy Fest in support of solving the current and future needs of filmmakers.”

Feature Narrative selections include:

ALCHEMY OF THE SPIRIT directed by Steve Balderson. Midway through its festival journey, veteran director Steve Balderson (FIRECRACKER, BECOMING ED) deftly and beautifully blurs the lines between character study, magical realism, and horror. In the film, renowned artist Oliver Black (Xander Berkeley: *The Walking Dead*, TERMINATOR 2, AIR FORCE ONE) wakes to discover his wife Evelyn (Sarah Clarke: 24, TWILIGHT) has died in their bed overnight. Disoriented and grief-stricken, Oliver tells no one and attempts to preserve her body. Meanwhile, Oliver's agent (Mink Stole: SERIAL MOM, HAIRSPRAY) calls with a big commission – a new sculpture for a leading museum. Oliver passionately and poetically creates the sculpture as a replica of Evelyn's face—a death mask. As he works, Evelyn's senses wake up one after the other until she appears fully present. But is it really her? Or is Oliver hallucinating? Balderson is also world-premiering tantric sex short from YouTuber Davey Wavey at Outfest right after Filmocracy.



Xander Berkeley in *Alchemy of the Spirit* credit Dikenga Films

BUCK ALAMO directed by Ben Epstein. Unloading its existential chamber like a Texas folk song, this Austin and Calgary Film Festival veteran is a dreamlike portrait of a modern-day musical outlaw as he duels with Death. The film stars Sonny Carl Davis, Lorelei Linklater, Chase Joliet, Kriston Woodreaux, Lee Eddy, C.K. McFarland, James Epstein, George Ensle, and Bruce Dern.

DEATH OF A LADIES' MAN directed by Matthew Bissonnette. This film, starring Gabriel Byrne (THE USUAL SUSPECTS, MILLER'S CROSSING, HEREDITARY), follows a carousing college professor's life as it takes a series of unimaginable turns. All the old stories are given a new twist when he begins to have surreal hallucinations and learns he may not be long for this world.



Gabriel Byrne, credit *Death of a Ladies Man*.

1-800-HOT-NITE directed by Nick Richey. This sophomore feature from award-winning writer/director Nick Richey (LOW, LOW) stars Dallas Young (*Cobra Kai*, *THE ROYAL*, *Mixed-ish*), Gerrison Machado (*The Power*), Mylen Bradford (*Abbott Elementary*), and Ali Richey (LOW, LOW). From the moment the police break down Tommy's (Young) door and arrest his father, his world is turned upside down. Faced with a parentless future, Tommy escapes child protective services' custody with his best friends Steve (Bradford) and O'Neill (Machado) into LA's streets—packed with men trying to rob them, cops chasing them, a python, a fist fight, a first kiss, and phone sex. Throughout it all, Tommy keeps calling an 800 number, as he feels the woman on the line (Ali Richey) is the only adult he can confide in. By the end of the night, the boys' brotherhood breaks down as they cross the threshold into adulthood. Quiver Distribution snatched the film up after playing at Dances with Films last month, and will release the film on November 8.



I-r Mylen Bradford, Gerrison Machado, and Dallas Young 1800 hot nite. (Photo credit Halfway Crook)

Documentary selections include:

THE HUMAN TRIAL directed by **Lisa Hepner**. In 2011, Lisa Hepner and her husband Guy Mossman heard about a radical stem cell treatment for diabetes, a disease that shockingly kills more than five million people each year. Driven by a desire to cure Lisa of her own type 1 diabetes (T1D), the filmmakers were given unprecedented, real-time access to a clinical trial—only the sixth-ever embryonic stem cell trial in the world. What follows is an intimate journey with the patients and scientists who put themselves on the line to be first.



Doctors working. (Photo credit The Human Trial)

KAEPERNICK & AMERICA directed by Tommy Walker and Ross Hockrow. Ever since he started to oppose police brutality, civil rights activist and former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick's actions have reverberated worldwide, as shown in this documentary. *The Hollywood Reporter* reviewed the film out of Tribeca, saying "If we take a step back, we can see the faint outlines of another, more urgent, narrative thread in *Kaepernick & America*—one that encourages an all too rare kind of integrity and commitment to creating a more just world."

ART & ART KRIMES BY KRIMES directed by Alysa Nahmias. While locked up for six years in federal prison, artist Jesse Krimes secretly creates monumental works of art—including an astonishing 30-foot mural made with prison bed sheets, hair gel, and newspaper. He smuggles out each panel piece-by-piece with the help of fellow artists, only seeing the mural in totality upon coming home. As Jesse's work captures the art world's attention, he struggles to adjust to life outside, living with the threat that any misstep will trigger a life sentence.



Artist Jesse Krimes in front of his mural. Photo credit Art & Art Crimes by Krimes

ONE PINT AT A TIME directed by Aaron Hose. Craft beer generates tens of billions of dollars annually for the US economy. Despite beer's Egyptian and African heritage, these traditions have been mostly forgotten and are rarely found in American brewing culture. Today, Black-owned breweries make up less than 1% of the nearly 9,000 breweries in operation in the United States. Eager to shift the historical perception of who makes and drinks beer, Black brewers, brand owners, and influencers across the country are reshaping the craft beer industry and the future of America's favorite adult beverage. *Thrillist* said, *ONE PINT AT A TIME* was "...an invaluable and visually captivating spotlight on the adversities of Black Americans realizing their dreams to own a brewery."



Huston Lett Bastet Brewing. (Photo credit One Pint at a Time)

Fitzgerald is wistful as he looks back at history and ahead to the future of Filmocracy. "It has been bittersweet, in that the creativity of the Filmocracy team continues to develop exciting new elements that can be integrated into the virtual piece, anchored by the "Filmocracyland" virtual map," the 3-D map of festivals Filmocracy builds for online festivalgoers to navigate. "Yet, one of the key components of a successful film fest is creating in-person experiences for audiences, filmmakers, and industry professionals. This, of course, was not possible during Covid. We went from virtual to hybrid, and 2022 will be more of a boutique hybrid we're looking forward to sharing with Los Angeles and the world."

Visit [Filmocracy Fest](#) to learn more about each film featured and to [purchase tickets](#).

Category

1. television

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