



#LAFilmFest set for June 1-9, 2016 @ArcLightCinemas

## Description

The 22nd edition of the LA Film Festival will take place June 1 – June 9, 2016 at ArcLight Cinemas. The LA Film Festival’s mission is to showcase diversity, innovation and uniqueness of vision in independent American and international cinema.

“We are thrilled to open with *Lowriders*, a culturally vibrant film that explores familial relationships within a second-generation Mexican family in East LA. Made by filmmakers of color, *Lowriders* embodies our mission of shining the light on unique voices,” said Festival Director Stephanie Allain. “Spirit Award winner Ryan Coogler honors us as Guest Director – we had *Fruitvale Station* at the Festival in 2013 and are so happy to have him back this year as our Guest Director.”

“We can’t imagine a more fitting recipient of the Spirit of Independence Award than Ava DuVernay and her distribution company Array Releasing,” said Film Independent President Josh Welsh. “In addition to being a brilliant filmmaker, Ava is a passionate, forward-thinking distributor, helping unique and diverse voices find their audiences. Array bought Takeshi Fukunaga’s *Out of My Hand* at last year’s Festival, a film that we celebrated at this year’s Film Independent Spirit Awards.”



*Lowriders (Photo credit: Justin Lubin)*

Set against the vibrant backdrop of East LA's near-spiritual car culture, *Lowriders* follows the story of Danny, a talented young street artist caught between the lowrider world inhabited by his old-school father and ex-con brother, and the adrenaline-fueled outlet that defines his self-expression.

“It is such an honor that the LA Film Festival has chosen *Lowriders* to open this year’s Festival,” said producer Brian Grazer. “From their humble beginnings to their modern-day status as works of extraordinary art, these aren’t simply cars—they hold the imagination of the people and culture that create them. Danny’s coming-of-age story is one of a son, a brother and a visionary, and we cannot wait to share Ricardo’s film with the world.”

“We are always looking to partner with filmmakers who are incredibly passionate about their projects,” said producer Jason Blum. “When Brian brought the idea for *Lowriders* to Blumhouse, we got excited by the opportunity to work with Imagine and Ricardo on this powerful story, which is a unique look at two generations at a crossroads. The LA Film Festival is a wonderful event, and we look forward to being a part of this year’s unique lineup.”



Pictured left to right: Ava DuVernay (Photo courtesy of GlamourUK); Ryan Coogler (Photo courtesy of LA Film Festival)

Guest Director Ryan Coogler (*Fruitvale Station*, *Creed*) will attend the 15th annual Filmmaker Retreat. A signature program of the Festival, the Filmmaker Retreat brings together all the feature directors in this year's Festival along with seasoned filmmakers and Film Independent Board Members who attend as honored artists. The Filmmaker Retreat is an opportunity to build community among the Festival's filmmakers before the Festival kicks off on June 1. Past Guest Directors of the Festival include Rodrigo Garc a, Lisa Cholodenko, David O. Russell, Mira Nair, Kathryn Bigelow, George Lucas, William Friedkin, Sydney Pollack, Guillermo Del Toro and Alfonso Cuar n.

Writer/director/producer/distributor Ava DuVernay (*Middle of Nowhere*, *Selma*) and her colleagues at Array Releasing will be awarded the Spirit of Independence Award. The Spirit of Independence Award is given to individuals who advance the cause of independent film, champion creative freedom or make a significant contribution to the preservation and proliferation of independent voices. Array Releasing is an LA-based film collective dedicated to the amplification of images by people of color and women. The collective's film releases to date include: 2015 LA Film Festival winners *Out of my Hand* and *Ayanda*, *Ashes and Embers*, *Mississippi Damned*, *Middle of Nowhere*, *Kinyarwanda*, *Restless City*, *Vanishing Pearls*, *Big Words*, *Better Mus  Come* and *I Will Follow*.

In 2013 we launched a series of LA Film Festival posters designed to celebrate LA artists. Native Angelena Carolyn Casta o joins the ranks of acclaimed artists Ed Ruscha and the late Noah Davis as the 2016 poster artist," said Mary Sweeney, Film Independent Board Chair. "Casta o's work reflects and celebrates her deep roots and experiences in the powerful Latina culture of Los Angeles. Film Independent and the LA Film Festival support and celebrate the diversity of unique artistic voices."

Carolyn Casta o's work in painting, drawing, video and mixed-media installations has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, most recently at the 56th International La Biennale di

Venezia, LACMA's Fútbol: The Beautiful Game, the Pasadena Museum of California Art and at the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Rufino Tamayo in Mexico City. Her site-specific installation at the Los Angeles International Airport will be unveiled in June 2016. Castano earned a BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute and her MFA from UCLA.

Festival passes are on sale to Film Independent Members starting today, April 5. Passes go on sale to the general public on Tuesday, April 12. The full line-up will be announced on Tuesday, April 26. Individual tickets go on sale to Members on Tuesday, May 5 and to the general public on Tuesday, May 10. Please visit [lafilmfestival.com](http://lafilmfestival.com) for more information.

(Source: Press release courtesy of LA Film Festival)

### Category

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