

LOS ANGELES DIVERSITY FILM FESTIVAL

INSPIRE • EMBRACE • EMPOWER



AUG 4th - 30th

STREAMING AT
LADFF.COM



PRESENTED WITH THE SUPPORT OF AN ARTS GRANT FROM THE CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD





INSPIRE • EMBRACE • EMPOWER

LADFF provides filmmakers, actors, and stories of diverse backgrounds with a place to showcase their voice without judgment or insincere reflection; free of stereotypes and degradation. Our goal is to establish a true multicultural experience represented by the world's independent film community.

Thank you for joining us!



**THIS PROGRAM IS PRESENTED WITH
THE SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF WEST
HOLLYWOOD'S ARTS DIVISION**

KNOW JOKE



Flawd.

Written & Directed by Jay Snow (USA) After their first hook up triggers a severe crisis, an LA comic must reveal his chronic illness to his new girlfriend.



A\$\$ Level

Directed by Alison Becker, Written by Santana Muha & Alison Becker (USA) A comedic music video that celebrates being a differently abled person, who lives her life at ass level.



Blocked

Written and Directed by Kevin Yee (USA) Comedian Kevin Yee attempts to make a follow up to his first short film, but the fear of putting out "mediocre" material causes a severe case of writer's block.



Do You Have A...?

Written & Directed by Michelle Gritzer (USA) When timid Amy unexpectedly gets her period at her new job, she must learn to let go of her past and stand up for herself in order to obtain a tampon before her life (and her pants) are ruined.



Ride in Progress

Directed by April Moreau, Written by Emily Hanley (USA) When Sarah's long-term relationship abruptly ends, she and her friend embark on the post-breakup Uber trip of a lifetime.



Sixteen Thousand Dollars

Directed by Symone Baptiste, Written by Ellington Wells & Brodie Reed (USA) A struggling black college grad wakes up to find that reparations have finally been paid to descendants of slaves in America.

HERSTORY



Make Me The Tennessee

Written & Directed by Sasha Pasternak (USA) In 1983, when the vengeful Kathy Morris attempts to poison the Tennessee cop who aided and abetted in the death of her sister, she gets cold feet. After all, the cop is her husband.



1, 2, 3, All Eyes On Me

Written & Directed by Emil Gallardo (USA) Ms. Leena, a passionate teacher doing her best to manage her challenging class, suddenly finds herself trapped in a crisis that engulfs her elementary school campus, threatening the children in her care.



Tomorrow Island

Directed by Gwenn Joyaux, Written by Ana Falcon (Estonia) In the dawn of the Cold War, a young Soviet telegraphist makes a desperate attempt to save her American lover from being stranded in the Russian side of the Bering Strait.



Alina

Written by Nora Mariana
Directed by Rami Kodeih (USA) As Nazis separate children from their parents in the Warsaw Ghetto, a gang of women risk everything to smuggle their friend's three-month-old baby to safety. Inspired by true events.

HOME



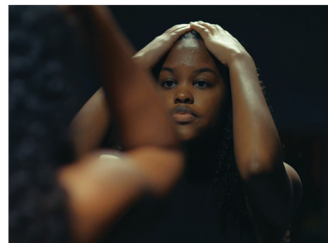
Waves

Written & Directed by Jane Hae Kim (USA) Coming home for the holidays, a hesitant Korean American woman seeks refuge from the emotional storm that occurs when she spends time with her family.



Do Turtles Swim in Maple Syrup?

Written & Directed by Paul-Daniel Torres (CAN) When robbed, Latin-Canadian teen Tony Tenorio is sent on his own hero's journey through Toronto, where he'll have to decide between succumbing to racial stereotypes or fighting for a better life.



Godspeed

Written & Directed by Sade Abiodun" (USA) Poetry, music, and visuals converge to lead us through the life of a Black girl as she becomes a Black woman.



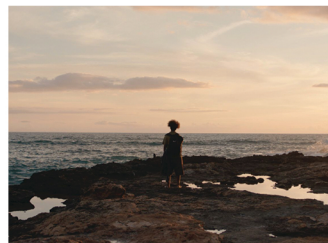
Alienación

Written & Directed by Alex Fischman (Peru) After being rejected by the girl of his dreams because of the color of his skin, Roberto Lopez will transform himself from a brown-skinned Peruvian into a blonde American.



Our Home Here

Directed by Angela Chen Written by Yumiko Fujiwara & Angela Chen (USA) Parallel stories of broken relationships between parents and their children striving for the American Dream, all revolving around one explosive night.



Kama'āina

Written & Directed by Kimi Howl Lee (USA) A queer sixteen-year-old girl, Mahina, must navigate life on the streets in Oahu. Homeless and penniless, Mahina struggles to find a place to call home.

ALLIANCE OF WOMEN DIRECTORS



The Friggin Best

Written & Directed by Mary Gulino (USA) A misanthropic 13-year old girl tags along to her step-brother's bachelor party and stands off against the host in an attempt to usurp the title of Best Man.



Team Marilyn

Written & Directed by LaToya Morgan (USA) On the eve of a game-changing campaign event, a politician must decide what to do when a secret scandal erupts a few days out from a historic presidential election.



A Short Story

Written & Directed by Lucia Senesi (USA) Julia and her writing professor Annie discuss their commitment to the #MeToo movement but things get complicated when Annie asks Julia to make some changes in her short story.



Blood and Glory

Written & Directed by Satinder Kaur (USA) The friendship of two homeless veterans is tested when they confront adversity, discrimination, and even mother nature itself in their attempt to find work and survive the day.



Dispel

Written & Directed by Kylie Eatoni (USA) Using the wisdom of her TV hero, young Lizzie must battle the monster who has possessed her mother- before it's too late.



ANGELS AND DEMONS



In Limbo

Directed by Sylvia Ray & Antoine Perry, Written by Antoine Perry & Mark Elias (USA) A trust fund partier and a ruthless social climber are sentenced to Purgatory and challenged to face their inner demons together to avoid hell and reach heaven.



Heather Would Never

Written & Directed by Emelie Claxton (USA) A tired young woman invents a sexy persona called "Heather" to tease her tactless boyfriend - until Heather starts acting out.



Muy Gay Too Mexicano

Directed by Lorena Lourenco, Written by Jorge Molina (USA) As he prepares for a date, J.D. seeks advice from two opposing people who try to make him feel comfortable with his identities.



You Look Great

Written & Directed by Justin Andrew Davis (USA) After secretly struggling with his weight for years, Peter's body shame forces him to go further than ever before in pursuit of complete control.

BURN THE WALL



Jalogün

Written & Directed by Enrique Unzueta (MEX) On Halloween, a young Mexican mother struggles to take her son across the border to compete in a costume contest and reunite with his father.



Life is More

Directed by Nikoleta Slezaoa (UK) Following years of economic strife, Venezuelans are fleeing their country. In Brazil, refugee camps have been set up, but people need more than just food and shelter. Enter: Clowns Without Borders.



Mia Cara Madre

Written & Directed by Alessandro Scippa (Italy) In 1925, thousands of Neapolitans immigrated to the United States. 2019, thousands are migrating to Naples, Italy. Nostalgic letters and beautiful words bridge these two stories.



Cargo

Written & Directed by Christina Tournatzés (GER) As a smuggler convoy transports 71 people through Hungary, the people packed in his truck plead for him to open the doors so they can breathe.



The Hidden Ones

Written & Directed by Christina Tournatzés (USA) After the US government cancels her protected status, a young Syrian refugee becomes fearful that she may be deported and embarks on a quest to escape into a hidden world inspired by the mythology of her homeland.



The Flame You Keep

Written & Directed by Andres Useche (USA) The Flame You Keep chronicles the plight of refugees across the globe, including the story of Yusra Mardini who fled from Syria to become an Olympian swimmer and a Good Will Ambassador for UNHCR.

GROWING UP



Louise

Directed by Natalie Camou, Written by Jamison Karon & Natalie Camou (USA) In 1912 California, a young girl's relationship with her mother is falling apart. At their families Christmas party, she discovers a secret that helps her understand the devastating cause for their estrangement.



We Were Kids

Written & Directed by Matias M.R. (USA) Celeste, a Latina teenager, loses her childhood innocence and comes to terms with her status as a person of color after an adult pulls his gun on her best friend.



The Piñata

Written & Directed by Stevie Lynn Cavalier (USA) It's Mia's birthday and her family is preparing presents, cake, and most importantly, a hand-made piñata. When Mia's friends don't think the piñata is cool, Mia finds herself stuck between pleasing her friends or her parents.



Kama'āina

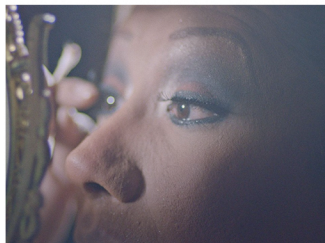
Written & Directed by Kimi Howl Lee (USA) A queer sixteen-year-old girl, Mahina, must navigate life on the streets in Oahu. Homeless and penniless, Mahina struggles to find a place to call home.



Short Shorts

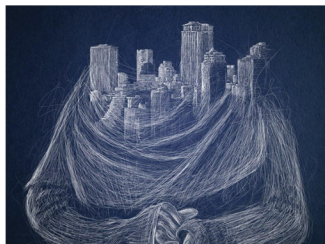
Written & Directed by Karina Dandashi (USA) An American Muslim teenager tries to maintain both her family's approval and that of her friends. A coming of age about the little ways we divert from our up-bringsings with the choices we make.

MOTHER NATURE



La Flaca (The Bony Lady)

Written & Directed by Thiago Zanato & Adriana Barbosa (MEX) Arelly Vazquez is a transgender woman and leader of the Santa Muerte Cult in Queens, NY. During her yearly celebration to La Flaca, Arelly faces challenges in order to fulfill a promise she made ten years ago.



Hoda's House

Written & Directed by Hamed Ghasemi (Iran) Hoda is a surrogate mother who rents out her womb to pay for her mother's surgery. When other members of her family find out and disapprove, Hoda must decide whether to go through with the pregnancy.



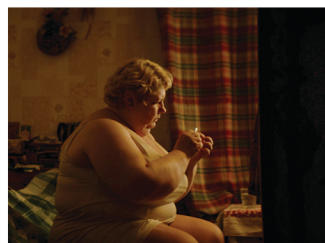
Leaving to Live

Directed by David Rodrigues, Written by Lucie Guillerot & David Rodrigues (FRA) On Dec. 24 in the middle of the afternoon, Alexandra makes an important decision that will change her life, leaving her marital home with her 7-year-old daughter Léa.



My Daughter Yoshiko

Written & Directed by Brian Blum (USA) A Japanese American mother struggles to come to terms with her daughter's autism diagnosis.



Anna

Written & Directed Dekel Berenson (UK) Living in war-torn Eastern Ukraine, Anna is an aging single mother who is desperate for a change. Lured by a radio advertisement, she goes to party with a group of American men who are touring the country, searching for love.

FORBIDDEN LOVE



Halwa

Written & Directed by Gayatri Bajpai & Nirav Bhakta (USA) When Sujata, an empty-nester, gets an unexpected piece of news about her secret childhood sweetheart, she begins to rekindle the spark, but her husband takes notice.



Antes que seja Tarde

Written & Directed by Leandro Goddinho (Brazil) Brazil has a new president whose message is fanaticism, prejudice, and violence. Locked in a hotel room, two teenagers decide to change the course of their lives. Before it's too late.



Pool

Written & Directed by Leandro Goddinho (Brazil) On a quest to understand her grandmother's past, Claudia meets Marlene, a woman who's created an homage to her memories inside an empty pool.

WE ARE NOT DROWNING



WANTOKS: Dance of Resistance

Directed by Lara Lee (U.S., SB) Featuring striking footage from the So. Pac islands, this film profiles the artists and activists who are defending their homes against the rising sea.



View of Perú

Directed by Benjamin Michel (USA/PER) An exploration of Perú through cinematography and poetry.



Sadika's Garden

Directed by Julia Iriarte & Chad Galloway, Written by Justin Beddal & Chad Galloway (CAN) A Syrian family must overcome a series of impossible obstacles to start their new life in Canada.

FACE THE MUSIC



Wheels of Madness

Directed by Hanna Mathis (Austria) Gal tours his favorite music festival Sziget in Hungary as we learn about his passion for life and the power of music.



Foundation

Directed by James Elinski, Written by McKenna Thurber (USA) A young drag queen attempts to win the attention of a seasoned drag mother but in the process, realizes that what she really wants is closer than she thinks.



Where My Girls

Directed by Mads Engel (USA) Three queer women reflect on the creativity, community, and hustle required to make it in a culture that has left them to their own devices.



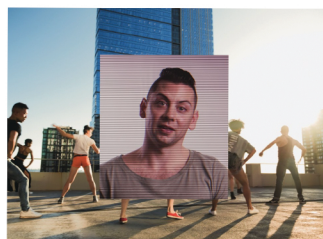
Eat the Rainbow

Written & Directed by Brian Benson (USA) A musical fable about Bayani who moves into a conservative suburban neighborhood and disrupts the otherwise comfortable sameness.



Chick Flicks

Directed by Tatiana Jorio (USA) Chick Flicks explores the experience of women-identifying film students as they navigate a very white male dominated industry, and a film school that perpetuates industry standard sexism, racism and ignorance.



The Millennial Experience

Directed by Alex Crozier (USA) The Millennial Experience is one part dance film and one part documentary that explores cultural appropriation vs appreciation, LGBTQIA+ culture, and feminism and how these impact the Millennial generation.

FEATURE FILMS



Where is Nancy?

Directed by Thiago DaDalt (USA)

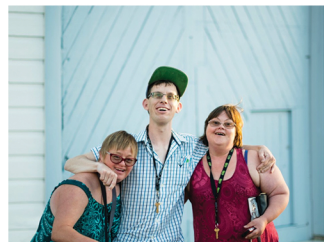
The heartache begins when Nancy Paulikas, 55, diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's disease, wanders away on a family trip to an L.A. museum. The constant search for her uncovers the gaps in the USA's social and health systems. Is Nancy still alive? If so, Where is Nancy?



You decide.

Directed by Taiki Sugioka (Japan)

Months away from starting to look for her first job, Kaede Hatashima discards her masculine form and begins her long journey as a working transgender woman.



House of Champions

Directed by Kirsty Griffin & Vivienne Kernick (AUS) The quest for Special Olympic Glory takes three roommates on the journey of their lives.



Omar and Us

Directed by Maryna Er Gorbach and Mehmet Bahadır Er, Written by Mehmet Bahadır Er (Turkey)

Ismet is a Turkish soldier, who was on duty at the border as a Commander of the Coast Guard and recently retired. Now as a civilian, he struggles to communicate with his family and the people surrounding him.

WEBSERIES



HighBread - C'est La Weed

Directed by Jayesh Jaidka, Written by Daniel Blanda (USA) A collegiate comedy that highlights the lives of a baker, a burnout and an international student on the brink of breakdown as they collectively break bread and cultural stereotypes in a Boston-based marijuana-bakery.



LADFF & Flathead Films Present We Create Because We Need To

Various directors (USA) LADFF invited filmmakers to participate in a series of 1 minute film "missions" during the pandemic to explore their isolation worlds, their perspectives on their current reality and to nurture creativity.



Oh Joy! BC and AC

Written by Nicholas Paul Ybarra & Seth Almberg, Directed by Nicholas Paul Ybarra (USA) Zoom dates, online yoga and copious amounts of weed aren't enough to get Joy through her mentally debilitating Covid-19 lockdown. In order to survive, she must face her biggest challenge - herself!

FILM FORWARD



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The official podcast of the Los Angeles Diversity Film Festival, Film Forward is for cinephiles, by cinephiles. Through our events and podcast, LADFF establishes a true multicultural experience represented by the world's independent film community.



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- Director: Sonja Mereu
- Programmer: Nicholas Paul Ybarra
- Founder: Hollis McLachlan
- Art Director: Erin Stone
- Film Forward Podcast Producer: Anslem Kennedy
- Trailers by Eric Seo
- Technical Director: Darren Bui
- Social Media Manager: Marisa Hopwood

Special thanks to:
Our judges & Award Jury

Extra special thanks to all the first
responders and essential workers.

Festival Partners

- Seth Almberg
- Steve Mereu
- Nanci Mereu
- Ivon Millan
- Kristina Kondrath
- Leanne Smith

Poster illustration by
Elizabeth Rodriguez (@pyretta)



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