



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact: Justin Solar | JSPR
Email: justin@justinsolarpr.com

MORRIS PLAINS FILMMAKER SELECTED FOR GARDEN STATE FILM FESTIVAL



Asbury Park, N.J. – January 30, 2026 -- The internationally recognized Garden State Film Festival (GSFF), New Jersey's Premier Independent Film Festival returns for its 24th anniversary, showcasing 205 carefully curated films from over 19 countries across 9 venues in Asbury Park, Monmouth County, and Cranford, Union County, March 26–29, 2026.

"In four days, attendees can experience 205 films and film-centered events from filmmakers worldwide, along with parties, professional panels, celebrity appearances, networking opportunities, special honors, and more," says Lauren Concar Sheehy, the festival's Executive Director. Festivalgoers can explore feature and short-length films, documentaries, comedies, children's films, thrillers, pilots, student films, and "Home-Grown" productions shot in New Jersey.

Spotlight on Local Talent

This year's program proudly includes **Housewife** from filmmaker **Dalton Ames Snider-Smith** resident of Morris Plains. Their film, **Housewife** tells the story of Lorelai, a desperately lonely housewife, tries to befriend the neighbors.

Screening Details:

Housewife

3/28/26 | 6:00pm-7:45pm
Berkeley Hotel, Crystal Ballroom | Asbury Park

Dalton Ames Snider-Smith represents exactly what GSFF was built to champion—bold, original storytelling from accomplished New Jersey filmmakers," says Concar Sheehy. "We're extremely proud to present this work and hope audiences will come out to celebrate the talent and dedication behind these productions."

The filmmaker is available for interviews at daltonamesfilm@gmail.com

Economic and Cultural Impact

"Asbury Park's seaside charm and Cranford's bustling downtown create the perfect backdrop—and our local hotels, restaurants, and small businesses definitely feel the love," said Concar Sheehy. "We're proud to uplift arts education and fuel meaningful growth in the communities we serve."

The festival's success reflects New Jersey's thriving film industry. "New Jersey's film-friendly environment is resulting in record numbers of productions, thanks in no small part to the efforts of the NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission and Governor Murphy's competitive financial incentives," explains Concar Sheehy.

Festival Highlights

The four-day event runs primarily in Asbury Park and includes a full day of screenings on Saturday, March 29, at The Cranford Theater. The festival offers accessibility features including

subtitled films and the returning "Cinema for the Ears" series for attendees with no or low vision.

Key Events:

- **Statewide Field Trip: Exploring Cinema Careers**
Special Effects Makeup workshop with award-winning artist Joe Cola at Brookdale Community College
- **Thursday, March 26 | 1:30 PM – 3:15 PM**
NEW THIS YEAR: Matinee of delightful films at Asbury Lanes
- **Meet the Filmmaker | Festival Preview Event**
Connect with filmmakers before the festival begins
- **Friday, March 27 | Gala Reception:** Red carpet, light fare, industry professionals, photos and screening of the feature drama *The Legend of Juan Jose Mundo*
- **Saturday, March 28 | Breakfast & Panel** discussion with industry leaders
- **Sunday, March 29 | Table Reading:** Live reading of winning Feature Length Screenplay "BEDBUGGERS" by New Jersey native **Tom Cavanaugh**
- **Sunday, March 29 | Awards Dinner**
Evening celebration at Ocean Place Resort in Long Branch honoring Honorary Chair Jason Fisher, Educator of the Year Tim Byrne, Legends Beyond the Lens Award recipients, and other distinguished honorees

Why Attend?

Whether you're an emerging filmmaker, established industry professional, or passionate film lover, GSFF offers an unparalleled opportunity to:

- Connect with fellow filmmakers and industry professionals
- Gain valuable insights into the film industry
- Network in an intimate, collaborative setting
- Fuel your creativity with compelling content and meaningful conversations
- Engage with the stories and people shaping the future of independent cinema

"The action-packed GSFF has something for everyone," adds festival founder Diane Raver. "Come one, come all—it only happens once a year and we don't want you to miss it."

Tickets and Information

GSFF offers a variety of ticket packages to fit every schedule and budget:

- **Single Screening Block:** Starting at \$21.98
- **Parkway Pass:** \$109.96 (inclusive of fees) – includes Meet the Filmmakers event, Gala Reception, and unlimited screenings of all films
- **Sunday Awards Dinner:** Separately ticketed event

For complete ticket details and pricing, visit gsff.org.

About the Garden State Film Festival:

The Garden State Film Festival (GSFF), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is New Jersey's premier independent film festival and a globally recognized celebration of cinematic excellence. Now in its 24th year, GSFF honors New Jersey's rich legacy as the birthplace of film while serving as a vital platform for filmmakers, industry professionals, and cinephiles worldwide. The four-day festival offers an unparalleled cinematic experience filled with screenings, panel discussions, networking opportunities, and exclusive events.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

-  Instagram: @GardenStateFilmFestival
-  Facebook: @GardenStateFilmFestival
-  X: @GardenStateFilm
-  YouTube: GardenStateFilmFestival

The 24th Annual Garden State Film Festival is made possible through the generous support of the following sponsors:



###