

VA FF VIRGINIA FILM FESTIVAL
A PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

2026 PROFILE

Mikey Madison. *Photo by Ézé Amos*

ABOUT US

Now in its 39th year, the Virginia Film Festival is widely recognized as one of the leading film festivals in the Mid-Atlantic. A program of the University of Virginia, VAFF presents more than 100 films to 23,600+ attendees during a five-day festival each Fall.

In venues across downtown Charlottesville and at UVA, VAFF's program combines previews of the hottest titles of the festival season with documentaries, new voices on the independent film scene, top international cinema, and more.

The Festival also features compelling conversations, panels, and special events that bring together some of today's leading film artists and cultural figures with subject area experts from the University and beyond to explore some of the most important issues of our time.



VAFF Executive Director Jody Kielbasa. *Photo by Ézé Amos*

Past notable guests: Nicholas Britell, Matthew Broderick, Sandra Bullock, Nicolas Cage, Ava DuVernay, Colin Firth, Will Forte, Morgan Freeman, Nikki Giovanni, Ethan Hawke, Werner Herzog, Anthony Hopkins, Ashley Judd, Spike Lee, Mikey Madison, Shirley MacLaine, Danny McBride, Matthew Modine, Stanley Nelson, Dawn Porter, Vanessa Redgrave, Gena Rowlands, Meg Ryan, Abderrahmane Sissako, Christoph Waltz, Liv Ullmann, and Sigourney Weaver.









Left: Ethan Hawke. *Photo by Jack Looney*
Center: Ben Mankiewicz. *Photo by Coe Sweet* (top) Nikki Giovanni. *Photo by Ézé Amos* (bottom)
Right: Spike Lee. *Photo by Tasos Katopodis/Getty Images*

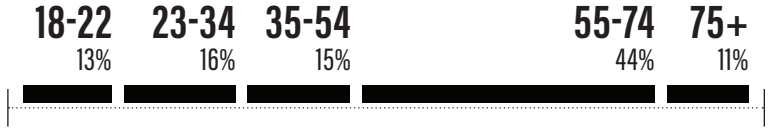
FESTIVAL DEMOGRAPHICS*

23,600+
ATTENDANCES

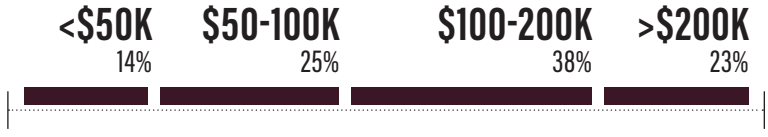
160+
FILMS, PANELS, AND EVENTS

100+
INDUSTRY GUESTS

ATTENDEES BY AGE



INCOME LEVEL



EDUCATION LEVEL



HIGH SCHOOL OR LESS · 3%



SOME COLLEGE · 13%



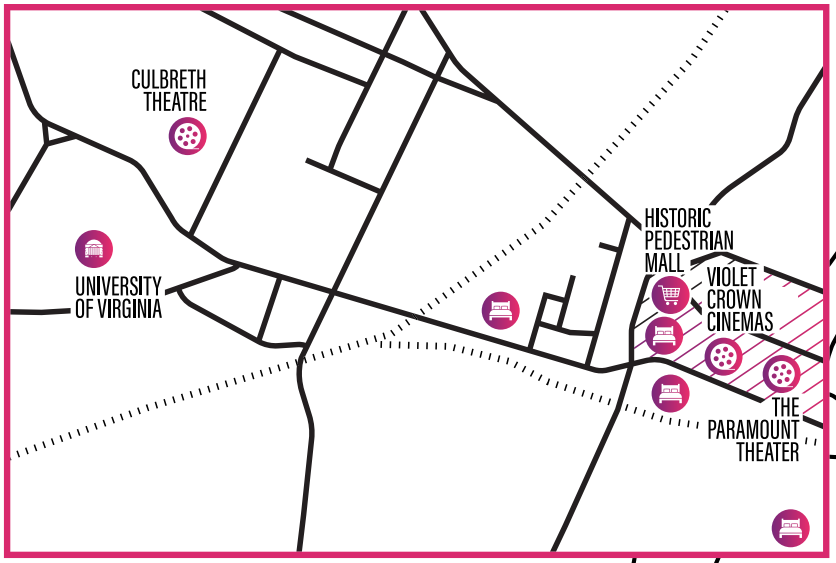
BACHELOR'S DEGREE · 30%



MASTER'S DEGREE OR HIGHER · 53%

**Data drawn from the 2025 Festival*

DOWNTOWN CHARLOTTESVILLE



CENTRAL FESTIVAL HOTELS

MULTIPLE HOTELS WITHIN 5 MIN WALK OF SCREENING VENUES

NEARBY LUXURY RESORTS

10-15 MIN DRIVE TO BOAR'S HEAD AND KESWICK HALL

MONTICELLO

15 MIN DRIVE

AIRPORT
DULLES
2 HR DRIVE

DC

AIRPORT
REAGAN NAT'L
2 HR DRIVE

AIRPORT
CHARLOTTESVILLE -ALBEMARLE
15 MIN DRIVE TO DOWNTOWN
1 HR FLIGHT TO NYC

AIRPORT
RICHMOND
1HR 15 MIN DRIVE

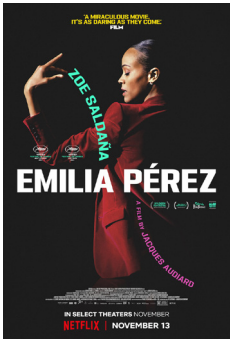
OSCAR NOMINEES 2025



Anora
6 Nominations including:
Best Picture, Director, and Actress



A Real Pain
Supporting Actor
and Original Screenplay



Emilia Pérez
13 nominations, including:
Best Picture, Actress, and Director



Flow
International Feature
and Animated Feature



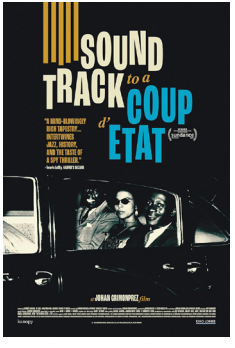
I'm Still Here
Best Picture, International Feature,
and Actress



Memoir of a Snail
Animated Feature



The Seed of the Sacred Fig
International Feature



Soundtrack to a Coup d'etat
Documentary Feature

**Selected Highlights*

OSCAR NOMINEES 2026



Frankenstein
9 Nominations, including:
Best Picture, Supporting Actor and Adapted Screenplay



Hamnet
8 Nominations, including:
Best Picture, Directing, and Actress



It Was Just An Accident
Original Screenplay and International Feature



The Secret Agent
Best Picture, Actor, Casting, and International Feature



Sentimental Value
9 nominations, including:
Best Picture, Directing, and Actress



Sinners
16 nominations, including:
Best Picture, Directing, and Actor



Sirāt
International Feature and Sound



Train Dreams
Best Picture, Adapted Screenplay, Original Song, and Cinematography

**Selected Highlights*

AWARDS & GUESTS



HIKARI. *Photo by Ézé Amos*

VAFF AWARDS

Audience Awards awarded to:
Narrative Feature, Documentary Feature, Narrative Short, Documentary Short

Achievement in Acting
Creativity and dedication behind an exceptional performance

Breakthrough Director
Directorial achievement for debut or second film

Changemaker
Changemaker on-screen and beyond

Chronicler
Documentary filmmaker honor

Craft
Artisan and craft achievement

Directorial Achievement
An exceptionally creative and compelling director

Governor Gerald L. Baliles Founder's Award
Excellence in Virginia filmmaking

Music Achievement
Musician's vision and talent

Screenwriting Achievement
Talented and compelling screenwriter

Impresario
Honoring a groundbreaking film distributor (person or company)

Virtuoso
Noteworthy acting performance

Visionary
Career honor

**Other awards may be presented based on year*



Ava DuVernay. *Photo by Koury Angelo*

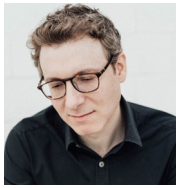
PAST AWARD RECIPIENTS



Dustin Lance Black
Changemaker



Ava DuVernay
Visionary



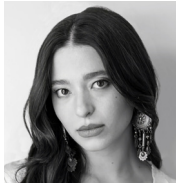
Nicholas Britell
Film Composition



Kazu Hiro
Craft Award



Cord Jefferson
Breakthrough Director



Mikey Madison
Achievement in Acting



Lamorne Morris
Virtuoso



Chloé Zhao
Outstanding Achievement in Cinema

OTHER NOTABLE GUESTS

- JON BATISTE
- ASHLEY JUDD
- RILEY KEOUGH
- SPIKE LEE
- MATTHEW MODINE
- LESLIE ODOM, JR.

SERIES & THEMES

- After Hours
- Black Excellence
- From Page to Screen
- Indigenous Cinema of the Americas
- International Oscar Contenders
- Jewish
- Korean
- Latinidades
- LGBTQIA+
- Middle Eastern & South Asian
- Music on Film
- Nature & Environment
- Virginia Filmmaking
- Voices of the Formerly Incarcerated



Jay Duplass and Michael Strassner. *Photo by Ézé Amos*



Nicholas Britell and Scott Feinberg. *Photo by Tristan Williams*

SPONSOR HIGHLIGHTS

In the fourth year of partnership, the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC) was the presenting sponsor of the 2024 Nature & Environment series.

VAFF offers unique branding opportunities including sponsorship of Gala Screenings at The Paramount Theater, underwriting an education program like Connection Point, supporting our Volunteer Program, or presenting our annual Audience Favorite Award, to name a few.



Photo by Ézé Amos



Photo by Coe Sweet



Photo by Tristan Williams

MEDIA COVERAGE & REACH

RECENT NATIONAL MEDIA ATTENDEES

Tyler Coates
Filmmaker Magazine

Scott Feinberg
The Hollywood Reporter

Ann Hornaday
The Washington Post

Roxana Hadadi
Vulture

Marcus Jones
IndieWire

Lisa Kennedy
The New York Times, Variety, The Denver Post

Nathan Lee
Film Comment

David Phillips
The Contending

Bilal Qureshi
Bloomberg, NPR, The Washington Post

Brian Truitt
USA Today

IndieWire

The Hollywood Reporter

THE CONTENDING

DEADLINE

USA TODAY

VULTURE

The Washington Post

cville

COLLIDER

TCM
TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES

21,700+
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

23,000+
E-NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

676,800+
ANNUAL WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

1.5 MILLION
MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

UVA IMPACT

3,100+
FREE STUDENT TICKETS



Photo by Anna Kariel

400+
STUDENTS INVOLVED IN MENTORSHIP AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

70
UVA-AFFILIATED VOLUNTEERS

42
UVA FACULTY, STAFF, & ALUMNI PARTICIPATED IN INTRODUCTIONS & DISCUSSIONS

11
UVA DEPARTMENT & PROGRAM PARTNERS



UVA Arts on the Hill performance with Jon Batiste. *Photo by Ézé Amos*

2025 PRESENTING SPONSOR

THE JOSEPH AND ROBERT CORNELL MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

2025 PREMIERE SPONSORS

the AV company
professional audio-visual technical solutions

SELC SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

BANK OF AMERICA

VIRGINIA IS FOR FILM LOVERS™
VIRGINIA FILM OFFICE

arts
UNIVERSITY of VIRGINIA

HARVEST MOON CATERING

THE Doyle HOTEL

VIOLET CROWN

THE Hollywood REPORTER

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Catherine Haena Kim
Actor

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Writer, Director

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