



# FESTIVAL PROGRAM

APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup> – APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

CORTLAND, NEW YORK

MUCH LOVE TO OUR SPONSORS

# SUNY Cortland

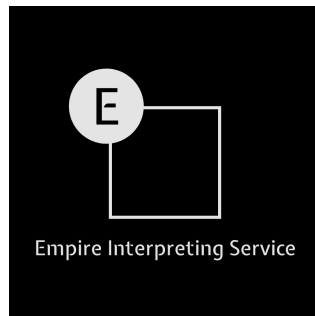
*Experience*  
**C O R T L A N D**  
COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



SUNY CORTLAND  
**AUXILIARY SERVICES**



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*Hollywood*  
BAR &  
GRILL

Cortland Standard



Welcome to Blackbird!

This season of the festival marks the 9<sup>th</sup> year for us, and we are incredibly grateful for you and your support! Whether you've been following Blackbird since the beginning or if this is your first-time checking things out, know that you are very welcome, and it is our greatest hope that you discover something wonderful!

Over the years, I've been amazed by the connections that have formed in this very space – people meeting people and moving across the country after a conversation; film students connecting with professional mentors who help them find their path ahead; screenwriters and cinematographers coming together to make something beautiful and unique; audience members connecting deeply with a character on screen and making a life change; humble directors going on to qualify for the Academy Awards; and so on... The question becomes, what will this year bring? Who will meet who, or be moved by what, and how will these interactions create a ripple effect that alters the path ahead for someone?

With that in mind, we know the world of filmmaking and festival culture is shifting. With new streaming platforms launching every day alongside A.I. generated content and the onslaught of user-created micro-media for Tiktok (and the like) that breaks all the "rules" and seems to relish in its clumsiness – we are left feeling a bit out of place as we contemplate what purpose a small regional film festival serves in a digital world overflowing with new material at a rate we couldn't possibly absorb...

The truth is, I don't know what the future holds for filmmaking, festival culture, or Blackbird? Perhaps events like this will soon become one of the few sacred spaces left for curated expression, removed from affiliate links, and branded content desperate for clicks – hard to know? But for the time being, please enjoy all that Blackbird has to offer and THANK YOU for your support – your interest and attendance gives us hope for the future and the path ahead!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Avery', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Sam Avery, Executive Director  
Blackbird Film Festival

# 2023 SELECTION STATISTICS

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Total Film Submissions: 992

Films Accepted: 97

Acceptance Rate: 9.8%

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## FEATURING:

54 Films by Women Writers/Directors

25 Films by BIPOC Writers/Directors

18 Films by LGBTQ+ Writers/Directors

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Learn More About Blackbird at

[www.Blackbirdfilmfest.com](http://www.Blackbirdfilmfest.com)



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup> – APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2023

CORTLAND, NEW YORK

# FRIDAY, APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>

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## SHORTS BLOCK:

### THE CARE WE GIVE

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 3pm

This wonderful collection of short films focuses on those who give everything they must support other people - their community, their partner, the planet and more.

## SHORTS BLOCK:

### LOVE AND WAR

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 4pm

This powerful and moving collection of films focuses on protagonists torn apart by war, in search of love, meaning and survival.

## SHORTS BLOCK:

### FRIDAY NIGHT FEELS

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 6pm

You might consider bringing a tissue as this lineup of short films is sure to pull on your heartstrings and get you in your feels.

## VIP ONLY EVENT:

### RED CARPET RECEPTION

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 8pm

Semi-Formal Reception for Filmmakers and VIP Guests to kick off the 2023 Blackbird Film Festival with style! Passed Appetizers and a cash bar.

**SHORTS BLOCK:**

## **WINNERS AND LOSERS**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 9:30pm

Let's face it, everyone has their bad days and for many of the protagonists in this collection of short films the day is just getting worse...

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**NOTES:**

# SATURDAY, APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup>

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## SPECIAL EVENT:

### CAFE MEET UP

BRU 64 ► 8am – 9am

Start your morning off right with some fresh coffee from BRU64 - Cortland's very best cafe - and get to know the visiting filmmakers!

## VIP ONLY EVENT:

### FILMMAKER ADVENTURE

Leave from BRU64 ► 9am – 11:30am

Filmmakers and VIP guests are invited on a Cortland adventure tour, exploring some of central New York and visiting local artists! The vans depart from BRU 64 promptly at 9am – van seats are first come, first serve.

## SPECIAL EVENT:

### FILM TRIVIA LUNCHEON

Hollywood Restaurant ► 11:30am – 1pm

Whether you're a movie buff or just like lunch, join Blackbird for some Film Trivia at the Hollywood Restaurant! Full lunch menu and bar available for purchase.

## SHORTS BLOCK:

### LIFE, ANIMATED

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 1:30pm

A beautiful mix of films combining live action and animation that unravel the complicated lives of many wonderful people.

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VISIT [WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.COM](http://WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION.



**SHORTS BLOCK:**

**MY BODY, MY CHOICE**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 3:30pm

A powerful collection of films addressing important issues around abortion and the right to choose what happens to your own body.

**SHORTS BLOCK:**

**LOVE ME FOR ME!**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 5:30pm

This fun and funky collection of films proves that despite our flaws we all deserve to be loved for who we are - even if it comes from within.

**VIP ONLY EVENT:**

**BLACKBIRD PAINT + SIP**

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 7pm

Filmmakers and VIP guests are invited to join Blackbird for a guided painting class and along with some late-night food while creating a unique film themed piece of art!

**SHORTS BLOCK:**

**STRANGER DANGER**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 9:30pm

Unfortunately, it seems many of the protagonists in this collection of twisty films missed that lesson in school about never trusting strangers... Whoops!

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**INSTAGRAM** ► [blackbirdfilmfest](#)

**FACEBOOK** ► [facebook.com/blackbirdfilmfest](#)

**ONLINE** ► [blackbirdfilmfest.com](#)

[#blackbirdfilmfest](#)

# SUNDAY, APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>

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## VIP ONLY EVENT:

### SUNRISE BREAKFAST

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 8am – 9am

Filmmakers and VIP Guests are invited to a buffet style breakfast to start the day and get to know one another!

## VIP ONLY EVENT:

### CINEMATOGRAPHY PRESENTATION

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 9am – 10am

Jonathan Chekroune, master cinematographer for Vogue, Dolce Vita, Hill House, will host a presentation for directors interested in learning more about cinematography.

## SHORTS BLOCK:

### RISING STARS

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 10:30am

This interesting mix of short films focuses on new voices entering the world of filmmaking as students studying the craft!

## SHORTS BLOCK:

### MUSIC OF LIFE

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 12:30pm

This incredibly beautiful collection of films includes music videos, documentaries, and animations that explore the many ways music influences and impacts our lives.

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**VIP ONLY EVENT:**

## **TACO TIMEOUT FOR ACCESSIBLE FILMMAKING**

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 2pm – 3pm

Enjoy a "make your own" taco buffet while Carl Hansen, filmmaker and disability advocate, discusses the many ways to make our films more accessible and inclusive.

**SHORTS BLOCK:**

## **TIME TO ESCAPE**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 3pm

Whether trapped, held captive, or left behind - all the characters in this collection of short films better find a way to escape before it's too late!

**SHORTS BLOCK:**

## **TIL' DEATH DO US PART**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 5pm

This interesting collection of drama/comedy short follows characters who find themselves struggling with the realities of married life.

**VIP ONLY EVENT:**

## **FAREWELL RECEPTION**

Old Main 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 220 ► 6:30pm – 7:30pm

Filmmakers and VIP Guests are invited to a farewell reception with Passed Appetizers and a Cash Bar!

**SPECIAL EVENT:**

## **AWARD CEREMONY**

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 7:30pm – 8pm

The 2023 Audience Choice and Festival Awards will be announced!

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**THE PARTY CONTINUES AT [WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.ONLINE](http://WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.ONLINE) FROM MAY 1<sup>ST</sup> – MAY 6<sup>TH</sup>.**

# 2023 FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS

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## **SAM AVERY**

Executive / Artistic Director

## **JULIE FICARRA**

Director of Special Events

## **MITCHELL ENSMAN**

Director of Event Operations

## **CLOE KING**

Assistant Director

## **ALEX LOCKE-WRIGHT**

Assistant Director

## **EMILY SEIP**

Assistant Director

## **EVENT COORDINATORS**

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Arden Scales

Haile Helper

Michaela Thompson

Benjamin Cerio

Ian Durso

Noah White

Branden Riley

Leah Putkowski

Regan Goger

Emily Lanzante

Marissa Metcalf

Richard Sencion

Emma Gutowski

Matt Davis-Howard

Samantha Bunn

Erin Maguire

Megan Haaland

## **ALL-STARS**

Shannon Delaney

Andrew Fauvelle

Amanda Lerch

Madison Napoli

Alyssa Marley

Nolan Harpp

## **FILM SUBMISSION JUDGES**

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Benjamin Cerio

Emma Gutowski

Megan Haaland

Briana Dillon

Haile Helper

Michaela Thompson

Camryn DeGorter

Hector Baez

Phoenix Hawthorne

Dayeli Aquino

Ian Durso

Regan Goger

Dylan Salch

Jake Starke

Samantha Bunn

Emily Lanzante

Matt Davis-Howard

Taylor Scotto

Emily Seip

Matthew McGrade

Thomas Culmone

## **TOP 7 PROJUDGES**

Even Hughes

Alex Locke-Wright

Karl Richter

Yasmin Mistry

Jonathan Chekroune

Owen Parseghian

Bradley Silvius

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

Nowshin Chowdhury

Michelle Enright

Meghan Vandeuon

Maryalice Griffin

Kyle Cannon

Mavis Lefever

Christopher Tucker

Brian Bosch

John Zelson

Kelly Gregory

Ashlee Landers

Erik Bitterbaum

Paul Kozlowski

Tim Fox

Carol Fitzgerald

Bruce Mattingly

Ty Marshal

Caroline Kaltefleiter

Candace Rozansky

Michael Rothbart

Chris Merkley

Paul van der Veur

Theresa Slater

Brian Lee

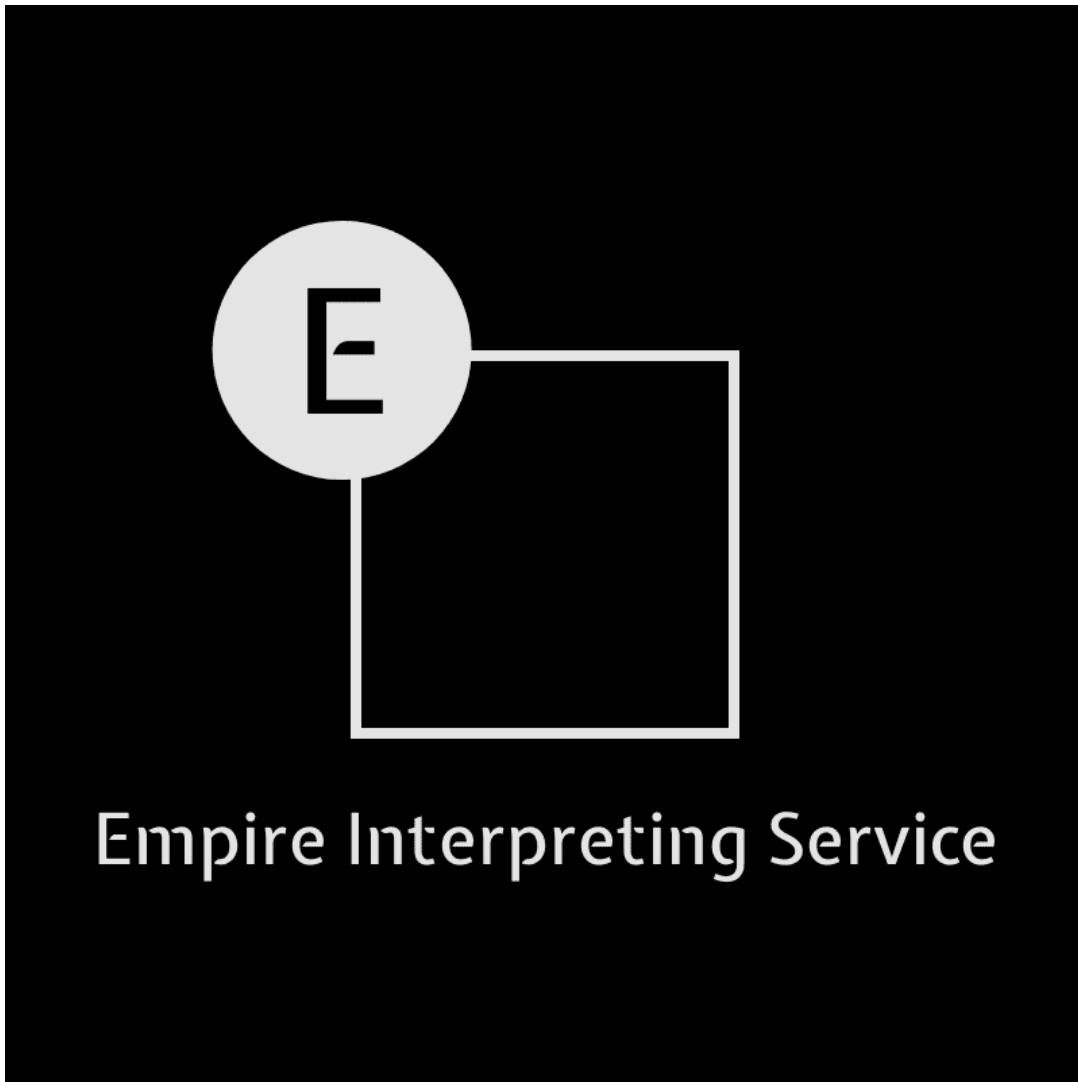
Zachary Eridani

Carl Hansen

Shelia Cohen

Jane Henion Avery

And a **HUGE THANK YOU** to all the community members who continue to show their love and support for Blackbird year after year!



## Empire Interpreting Service

**Empire Interpreting Service** is a language service provider headquartered in New York State. We have been providing professional Sign Language, Spoken Language and document Translation services throughout the Northeast and abroad for over 20 years. The venues we work within include, but are not limited to legal, education, medical, mental health and platform. EIS is recognized for the professionalism and skill set their Interpreters and Translators bring to our customers.

For more information, visit [www.empireinterpreting.com](http://www.empireinterpreting.com) or call 844.620.8594.

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On behalf of Empire Interpreting Services:

**"We are proud to support the 2023 Blackbird Film Festival and wish all the filmmakers and attendees a wonderful event."**

## **Across**

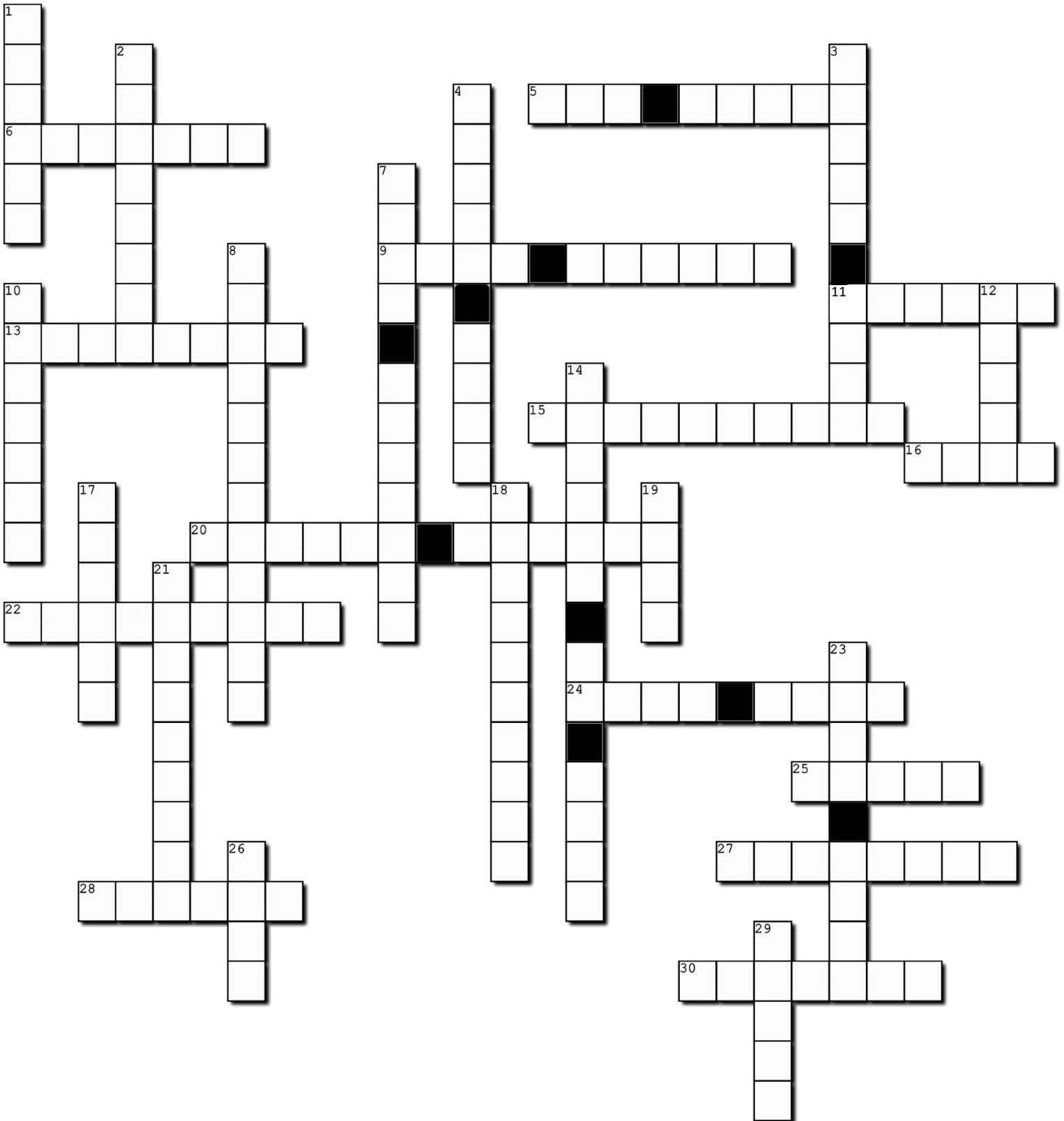
5. Jill Hartle shares her heartbreaking story
6. Watch out for those estranged brothers...
9. A young woman is freezing
11. Patrice \_\_\_\_\_ explores an unjust world
13. All female crew, gender fluid musical
15. Nicole knows music videos!
16. Both Frank and contemporary
20. Grainy Super 8 meets MURDER!
22. this photographer is starting to lose it!
24. Swing into a little murder!
25. Maren and Matt have done it again!
27. Not the snake :-)
28. Don't \_\_\_\_\_ Dan Hoover
30. a mother's primal instinct kicks in!

## **Down**

1. Let's be \_\_\_\_\_, subway breakups are hard.
2. What is that nun holding?
3. Dating is going poorly for Reyzi
4. Nathan misses his wife :-)
7. This scientist may need to restart...
8. Lisa Stephen Friday
10. Tessa is having some heart issues!
12. ...with two As
14. A late-in-life meet cute!
17. Stephanie Ruiz hopes you feel \_\_\_\_\_
18. ...a not so quiet bus ride
19. This old, young \_\_\_\_\_ reveals memories
21. ...well, that interview turned dark!
23. Ary and Imani bring the drama in this short film
26. Perhaps a little small for two
29. Elephants and \_\_\_\_\_ never forget

# BLACKBIRD FILM SCRAMBLE

To solve the puzzle, you'll need to use the clues, watch the films, and chat with directors!



**SCAN FOR  
2023 FILM GUIDE**



Visit Our Website for More Information

**[WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.COM](http://WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.COM)**