



FESTIVAL PROGRAM

APRIL 11TH – APRIL 14TH, 2024

Cortland, New York

MUCH LOVE TO OUR SPONSORS

SUNY Cortland

Experience
CORTLAND
COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU



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Welcome to Blackbird!

Believe it or not, this is the 10th year for the Blackbird Film Festival, and what a surprisingly wondrous and beautiful journey it has been!

From a crazy idea to screen some films at a summer camp in 2015 that just so happened to align perfectly with the arrival of Filmfreeway – an online, user-friendly, submission platform that arrived in 2014 and would go on to revolutionize the way filmmakers access film festivals – to a series of student-run festival weekends in Cortland, New York from 2016 to 2019 that far surpassed our wildest expectations, doubling submission and attendance numbers each season, and eventually gaining Blackbird the #3 spot on Filmfreeway's highly competitive "Top 100 Best Reviewed Festivals" list of over 10,000 events! However, all good things must end...

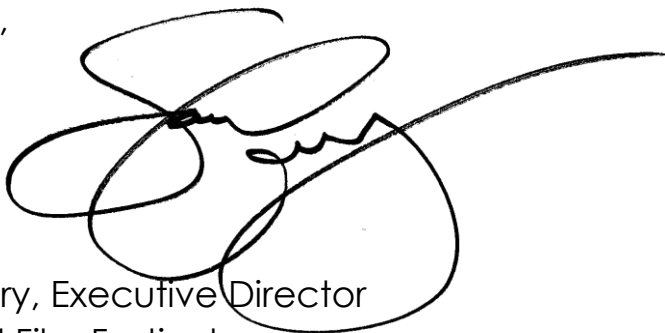
As we all know too well, there was a global pandemic and Blackbird was forced to adapt into a drive-in experience in late 2020 and reinvent itself again as a "socially distanced" outdoor summer film + arts festival in 2021... During this time, our tried and true "festival roadmap" flew out the window and we were left questioning the purpose and future of film festivals in the mid-pandemic world of virtual-living alongside infinite couch-access to endless streaming content... After 2021, there was a very serious discussion around "closing up shop" and putting the bird to rest.

Nevertheless, we returned to SUNY Cortland in 2022, bruised, battered, and unsure if the event could survive another year... However, to our delight, filmmakers from around the world made the journey, showing their love and support, which carried the festival into 2023 where Blackbird finally found its *perch* once again!

Now, a decade later, Blackbird is back in 2024 with a full weekend of film screenings, social events, artist talks, and more! Since 2015, we have reviewed a total of 12,419 submissions and **screened 1,017 films from over a thousand unbelievably talented filmmakers based around the world**. And you know what? That's pretty darn great.

As always, **THANK YOU VERY MUCH**. Whether you're a filmmaker, a film enthusiast, or just a curious person with some free time today – your interest, attendance, and engagement is what makes Blackbird a special place and **YOU** are most welcome and appreciated.

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

2024 SELECTION STATISTICS

Total Film Submissions: 714

Films Accepted: 103

Acceptance Rate: 14.4%

FEATURING:

59 Films by Women Writers/Directors

32 Films by BIPOC Writers/Directors

31 Films by LGBTQIA+ Writers/Directors

Learn More About Blackbird at

www.Blackbirdfilmfest.com



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

APRIL 11TH – APRIL 14TH, 2024

Cortland, New York

THURSDAY, APRIL 11th

FILM SCREENING:

RISING STARS

Brown Auditorium Theater ▶ 6pm

This creative mix of films was made by students studying Media Production at SUNY Cortland who are destined for greatness!

SPECIAL EVENT:

KICKOFF PARTY

BRU64 ▶ 8pm

Join Blackbird at BRU64 for our 2024 KickOff Party and get pumped for a weekend full of new films and experiences!

THOUGHTS ON LIFE ▼

WHAT KIND OF
MOVIE
ARE YOU?



favorable results are compliments of the
Blackbird Film Festival

FRIDAY, APRIL 12th

SPECIAL EVENT:

CAFE MEET UP

BRU64 ► 9am – 10am

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 ► 10am – 12pm

Filmmakers and VIP guests are invited on a Cortland adventure tour, exploring some of central New York and a special visit to AKE Gallery! The vans depart from BRU64 promptly at 10am – van seats are first come, first serve.

SPECIAL EVENT:

FILMMAKING IN CNY

AKE Gallery ► 11am – 12pm

Alex Korman, the Deputy Director of CNY Arts, visits AKE Gallery to discuss all the benefits and incentive programs to support filmmakers in central New York! *Please know - this event is already part of the Filmmaker Adventure Tour :-)*

SPECIAL EVENT:

FILM TRIVIA LUNCHEON

Hollywood Restaurant ► 12pm – 1:30pm

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.

FILM SCREENING:

NO BOYS ALLOWED

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 2pm

Women have taken over the world in this exciting feminist collection of dystopian-adventure films!

FILM SCREENING:

MAKIN' MOVIES

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 4pm

The characters in this block of films have a passion for movie making and can't help themselves despite the many challenges...

FILM SCREENING:

FRIDAY NIGHT FEELS

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 6pm

Time to sit back, relax and enjoy a wonderful evening of films that will make you feel all the feels on this Friday night!

SPECIAL EVENT:

RED CARPET RECEPTION

Old Main Entrance ► 8pm

Celebrate the start of the 2024 Blackbird Film Festival in style with a Red-Carpet Reception including appetizers and a cash bar!

FILM SCREENING:

CRIME + PUNISHMENT

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 9:30pm

There's the crime, those who try to intervene, and the punishment for everything in between in this funky mix of films!

SATURDAY, APRIL 13th

SPECIAL EVENT:

SUNRISE MEDITATION

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 8am – 9am

Join wellness coach **Lauren Scagnelli** for a guided meditation session to help you start the day and find inner peace.

VIP ONLY EVENT:

SATURDAY MORNING CARTOONS + CEREAL BUFFET

Old Main 2nd Floor, Room 220 ► 9am

Enjoy a cereal breakfast buffet while animator **Alex Salsberg** presents on ways to incorporate animation into your films!

FILM SCREENING:

WORD POWER

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 10:30am

Poems, journals, lyrics... Words in all forms are powerful tools used to communicate, express, and bond in these inspirational films.

FILM SCREENING:

LAST WISHES

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 12pm

How will the ones we love carry out our last wishes after we're gone? Characters in this block of films are struggling to figure that out...

Share Your Photos by tagging **@BlackbirdFilmFest** on Instagram!

ARTIST TALK:

WRITING FOR CAMERA

Old Main 2nd Floor, Room 220 ► 2pm

Join Blackbird for a discussion with Blumhouse Fellow **Chelsea Gonzalez** on the art of screenwriting and the complex journey of financing your script.

FILM SCREENING:

FAMILY DYNAMICS

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 3:30pm

Our parents are our parents, and our siblings are our siblings and the characters in this heartfelt mix of films must come to terms...

FILM SCREENING:

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 5:30pm

The characters in these films want to (or need to) talk about sex in this important collection of stories about the need for consent.

VIP ONLY EVENT:

BLACKBIRD PAINT + SIP

Old Main 2nd Floor, Room 220 ► 7pm

Filmmakers and VIP guests are invited to get colorful during our annual "Paint + Sip" challenge to see who's the most artistically "gifted" while enjoying a pizza, wings, and salad buffet alongside a cash bar! No artistic talented required :-)

FILM SCREENING:

LIVING WITH THE MONSTER*

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 9:30pm

For the characters in these films, every day is a nightmare as they struggle to break free from the monsters living under the same roof.

**CONTENT WARNING: Films in this block include scenes of domestic violence.*

SUNDAY, APRIL 14th

VIP ONLY EVENT:

SUNRISE BREAKFAST & FESTIVAL WORKSHOP

Old Main 2nd Floor, Room 220 ► 8:30am – 10am

Filmmakers and VIP guests are invited to a buffet style breakfast while several Film Festival Directors unlock the mystery behind submitting to festivals!

FILM SCREENING:

HUMAN. NATURE.

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 10:30am

Humans are strange. Nature is powerful. Humans in nature, mind blown! This diverse mix of films will take you on a wild ride!

FILM SCREENING:

UNDOCUMENTED

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 12pm

Aliens, Immigrants, Refugees... All just people trying to do the best for their family in this emotional block of films.

VIP ONLY EVENT:

TACO TIMEOUT FOR ACCESSIBLE FILMMAKING

Old Main 2nd Floor, Room 220 ► 2pm – 3pm

Enjoy a "make your own" taco buffet while filmmaker and disability activist **Carl Hansen** discusses the many ways to make films more accessible.

Visit www.Blackbirdfilmfest.com for more information!

FILM SCREENING:

ANXIETY OVERLOAD

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 3:30pm

Anxiety. Stress. Fear. Nonstop pressure from all directions at all times!!! For characters in these films, it's all become a bit too much...

FILM SCREENING:

HAUNTED HEARTS

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 5:30pm

They may be dead, but they are far from gone in this collection of shorts in which deceased loved ones stick around a while longer.

SPECIAL EVENT:

FAREWELL RECEPTION

Old Main Entrance ► 7pm – 8pm

Say goodbye to new friends and celebrate the bittersweet end of the 2024 Blackbird Film Festival with appetizers and a cash bar!

SPECIAL EVENT:

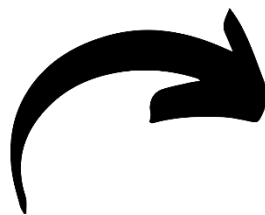
AWARD CEREMONY

Brown Auditorium Theater ► 8pm – 8:30pm

The 2024 Audience Choice and Festival Awards will be announced!

PLEASE REVIEW + SHARE

If you're having a good time, please scan the QR code and leave a Google Review for Blackbird as positive feedback helps us keep the party going!



2024 FESTIVAL ORGANIZERS

SAM AVERY

Executive Director

MITCHELL ENSMAN

Director of Event Operations

JULIE FICARRA

Director of Special Events

ALEX LOCKE-WRIGHT

Social Director

MATT DAVIS-HOWARD

Assistant Director

BRANDEN RILEY

Assistant Director

EVENT COORDINATORS

Benjamin Cerio

Holden Gumb

Catherine O'Hara

Anna Corbo

Cecile Lessard

Branden Riley

Mckinley Corey

Connor Maher

Sydney Sullivan

Matt Davis-Howard

Leah Masi

David Garcia

Miles McCabe

ALL-STARS

Andrew Fauvelle

Amanda Lerch

Madison Napoli

Alyssa Marley

Shannon Delaney

Emily Seip

Megan Haaland

Michaela Thompson

Haile Helper

Emily Lanzante

Vin Geiss

Andrew Magee

FILM SUBMISSION JUDGES

Amanda Roberts

Devin Snow

Matt Davis-Howard

Branden Riley

Holden Gumb

Rebekah Daniels

Cecile Lessard

Jenna Saltsman

Timothy Beresford

Connor Maher

Korryn Paddleford

David Garcia

Leah Masi

Special Thanks to:

Michelle Enright

Anthony Richichi

Kelly Gregory

Tony Caruso

Kyle Cannon

Mavis Lefever

Ashlee Landers

Brian Bosch

John Zelson

Lily Byrne

Christopher Tucker

Erik Bitterbaum

Paul Kozlowski

Tim Fox

Lauren Scagnelli

Bruce Mattingly

Alex Korman

Sharon Steadman

Michael Rothbart

Jeremy Stoller

Chris Ortega

Alex Salsberg

Chelsea Gonzalez

Carl Hansen

Kyle B. Thompson

Debra Markowitz

Mark Datuin

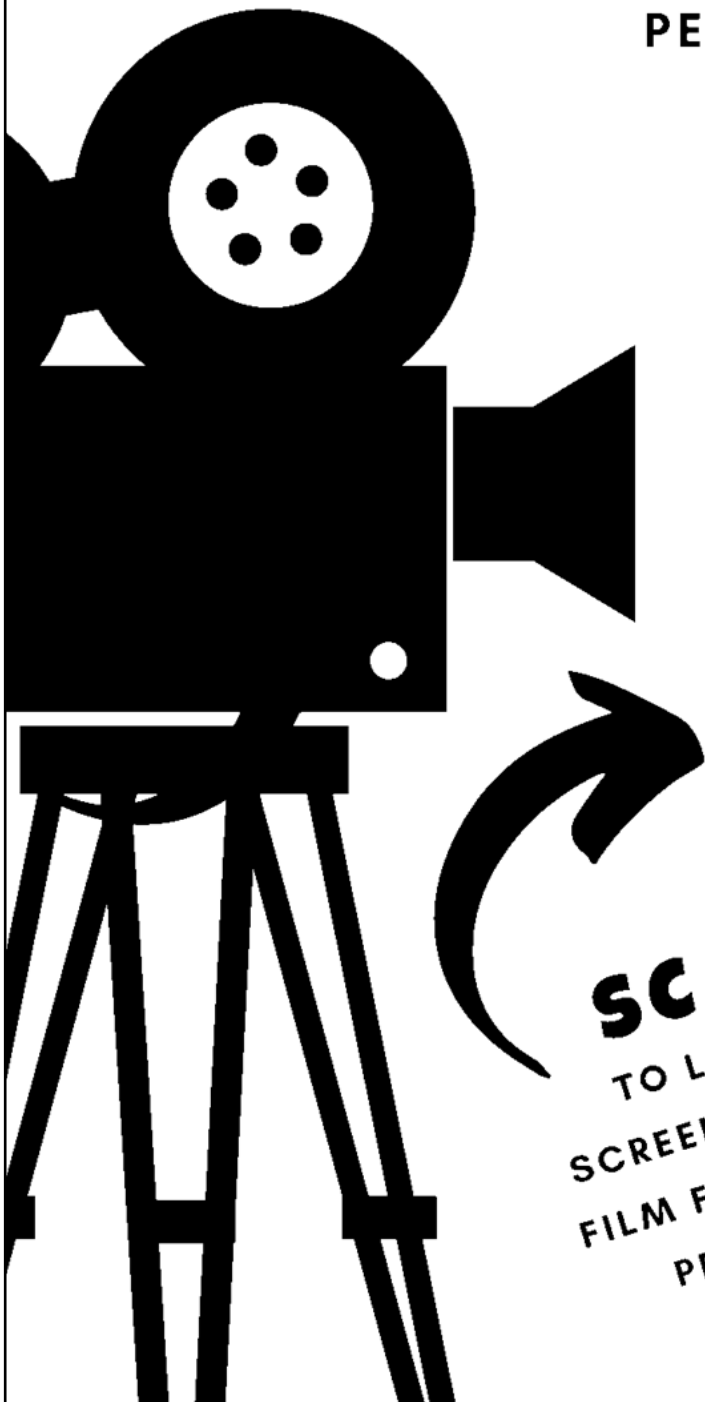
Jane Henion Avery

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

THE BLACKBIRD FILM FEST PRESENTS

MOVIE MATCH

PERSONALITY QUIZ



SCAN HERE
TO LEARN WHICH MOVIE
SCREENING AT THE BLACKBIRD
FILM FESTIVAL MATCHES YOUR
PERSONALITY THE BEST!

SCAN FOR 2024 FILM GUIDE



Visit Our Website for More Information

WWW.BLACKBIRDFILMFEST.COM