

Shine on, O moon of summer. Shine to the leaves of grass, catalpa and oak, All silver under your rain to-night. - Carl Sandburg

VINEYARD

Island of Martha's Vineyard, seven miles off southeast coast of Massachusetts. Winter population, 15,007; in summer, 105,624. Twenty miles from city of New Bedford, 80 miles from Boston and 150 miles from New York.



GAZETTE

Devoted to the interest of the six towns on the Island of Martha's Vineyard, viz.: Edgartown, Oak Bluffs, Tisbury (Vineyard Haven), West Tisbury, Chilmark and Aquinnah. These, with Gosnold, constitute Dukes County.

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83° F. PARTLY SUNNY ON MARTHA'S VINEYARD

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SUMMER FILM FESTIVALS ARE BLOCKBUSTERS OF TALENT, NEVER MIND THE BOTTOM LINE

By NINA TARNAWSKY

Did the Green Lantern, last week's supposed Hollywood blockbuster, fail to light up your life? Don't despair, there are others here on the Island who also hunger for something more fulfilling on screen. Indeed, the Vineyard in summer is a movie lover's paradise with numerous festivals bringing narratives and documentaries from around the world just a stone's throw from your front porch.



photo by El Dagostino

Film lovers of all ages find community in the dark.

The Martha's Vineyard Film Festival, now in its 11th year, begins its season on Wednesday, June 29 at 8 p.m. at the Chilmark Community Center. The first film is the documentary Buck about Buck Brannaman, the original Horse Whisperer on whom the Robert Redford film was based.

Though he's known as the Horse Whisperer, Mr. Brannaman might also be called the people whisperer. In the film's opening minutes, he notes, "People bring a lot of baggage to the table when they come to these [clinics]. Sometimes they're here for a different reason."

Brian Ditchfield, the managing director of the festival, first saw Buck at the Sundance Film Festival this past winter. During the year, Mr. Ditchfield stays lean by running to festivals all over the world, sampling the current offerings of independent cinema and treating Island audiences to the best he has seen.

"When I saw it [Buck] at Sundance I immediately knew it should be our opening night film of the summer," Mr. Ditchfield said.

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Other films on the slate include *Mission Blue*, about Dr. Sylvia Earl, an oceanographer, explorer, author, and lecturer dubbed “Her Deepness” by *The New Yorker* due to her unflagging commitment to bring attention to the world’s ocean crisis; *Cairo 678*, a narrative drama tracing the fight for women’s rights in Egypt and eerily foreshadowing the recent democracy movements and massive protests throughout the Arab world; and *Page One: Inside The New York Times*, a documentary about the place and importance of print journalism in the age of digital media. *Page One* features a rare glimpse into the day-to-day workings of *The New York Times*. The director Andrew Rossi and *New York Times* media columnist David Carr, a major figure in the documentary, will be on hand to field questions. The summer lineup also features a return engagement of *Charlotte*, (shown first at the festival this winter), a documentary about Vineyard wooden boat builders, Nat Benjamin and Ross Gannon. The film was directed by Jeffrey Kusama-Hinte, a Vineyard summer resident and producer of last summer’s hit *The Kids Are All Right*. Mr. Kusama-Hinte, the cinematographer Brian Dowley, and many of the film’s subjects will be in attendance to answer questions after the show.



Cinema Circus looks to engage and entertain kids.

The films begin at 6 p.m. They are a selection of shorts chosen for their breadth of subject matter and tone to satisfy toddlers to adolescents.

Lindsey Scott, the director of children’s programs, doesn’t just look to entertain, though, when curating the festival. “We really seek out those films that are high quality and encourage kids to do critical thinking and use their own imagination,” she said. She emphasized the diversity of the films and also stressed that the Cinema Circus would be both play-oriented and a participatory event. “We’re trying to break down the barrier between audience and performer.”

The Martha’s Vineyard Film Society (yes, the names are quite similar, yet the offerings are completely different) is currently finishing up their June series at the Katharine Cornell Theatre in Vineyard Haven but will begin screening films again on July 12 at the Union Chapel in Oak Bluffs. The new series will open with *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, Werner Herzog’s documentary about the Chauvet Cave in the south of France, canvas to some of the world’s earliest painters. Other films include: *Le Quattro Volte*, an Italian film centered around the cycles of life; *Cape Spin*, a documentary about Cape Wind and the competing interests and controversies surrounding the push toward wind power; and *Troubadours*, a documentary about the Los Angeles music club, *The Troubadour*, where many 70’s rockers, including James Taylor, first gained fame.

In collaboration with the Martha’s Vineyard Museum, the film society is also curating several Civil-War-themed films at the Katharine Cornell Theatre in

Vineyard Haven. Each film works in concert with the exhibit currently running at the museum commemorating the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Glory opens the series on Monday, June 27 at 8 p.m. Sheldon Hackney, the former president of the University of Pennsylvania and former chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities, will host each evening and lead a discussion after the movie. The other two films are *The Red Badge of Courage* and *Shenandoah*.

Also showing in Vineyard Haven, the Summer Institute films at the Hebrew Center tend to be more international with features from Germany, Argentina, Mexico and Israel. Already under way, the festival shows movies on Sundays at 7:30 p.m. Next up, on June 26, is the German film, *Saviors in the Night* (*Unter Bauern*).

In the past, the Summer Institute, now in its 11th year, has opted to curate its festival with the same lineup of films from the Boston Jewish Film Festival. This year, however, they have selected their own films.

“We decided to sort of go our own way because we wanted to have a broader group of films from which to choose,” said Geraldine Alpert, the chairman of the Summer Institute. Films were selected in consultation with Richard Paradise from film festivals all over the world. Though the film series isn’t any larger this year, the net cast was much wider.

For a complete listing and schedule for the above mentioned film festivals visit: tmvff.org, mvfilmsociety.com, mvsummerinstitute.com.

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