GREENWICH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

# ANNUAL REPORT

AUGUST 1, 2019 TO JULY 31, 2020

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# INTRODUCTION



Wendy Stapleton, Colleen deVeer and Ginger Stickel at the Greenwich International Film Festival Host Committee Meeting. Photo courtesy of Fairfield County LOOK

As we began planning for the 2020 Festival last Fall, we could never have imagined the challenges the year would bring. We are fortunate to have a strong team and supportive community, which helped us to persevere and achieve our programmatic goals. Our theme, Knowledge Is Power, was reflected in our films, panels and special events held throughout the year.

We are proud to share that the first-ever Virtual Greenwich International Film Festival was a resounding success! Despite much adversity caused by the public health crisis, including a tight timeline of six weeks to cancel 60 physical events and start something new, our team rallied to build a virtual platform that provided a secure environment for filmmakers to showcase their work, with an easy-to-use format for our audience. We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from filmmakers because GIFF was one of the few film festivals in the world not to cancel or postpone our events. We also continued to offer cash prizes, which was meaningful given current economic conditions. Audience members were happy to have flexibility to view films around their own schedule and commented they were able to see more films than they would have during our traditional Festival.

It's hard to believe what we, as a regional Festival, were able to accomplish, when so many iconic Festivals with bigger budgets canceled or postponed their events. It goes to show what a small team of passionate people and a supportive Board and audience can achieve even during the most challenging times. Thank you!

Colleen deVeer Founder, Director of Programming

Wendy Stapleton

Founder, Chairwoman

Ginger Stickel



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### VIRTUAL FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

GIFF 2020 featured 29 films from 8 countries: United States, Spain, Argentina, Netherlands, Japan, Brazil, Hungary, Ethiopia.

10,710 viewers attended the Festival from the USA and around the world (i.e. Australia, Europe, South America).



The Virtual Festival featured over 50 "events" including an exciting line up of documentary and narrative shorts and features as well as Q&A panel discussions on platforms like Zoom



The program brought to light important issues including: PTSD, bullying, selfempowerment, criminal injustice, music therapy, substance abuse, and healing



Festival proceeds helped to support the Greenwich Hospital Coronavirus Fund

## **SPECIAL EVENTS**



#### Spotlight On Matthew Heineman Moderated by Sandy Kenyon, WABC-TV

Included a one-on-one interview with award-winning filmmaker Matthew Heineman who discussed career highlights and upcoming projects



### Tribute to the 2020 Award Winning Films Event MAY 15

Featured screenings of GIFF's three awardwinning films and a Virtual Awards Ceremony



### What's Next In Entertainment: Conquering the Challenges of a Shifting Landscape

JUNE 22

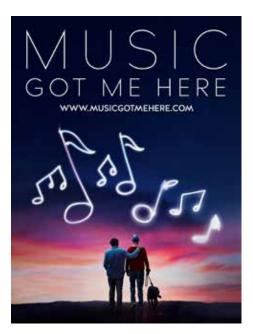
Sponsored by the Connecticut Office of Film, Television & Digital Media

### Moderator: George Norfleet, Connecticut Office of Film, Television & Digital Media

Panelists: Thalia Mavros, CEO, The FRONT, Andrew Karpen, CEO Bleecker Street, Darnell Strom, Head of the Culture & Leadership Division of UTA, Brent Montgomery, CEO, Wheelhouse Entertainment, Adam Neuhaus, Director of Development, ESPN

# **AWARD-WINNING FILMS**

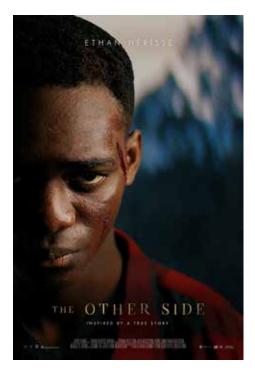
GIFF provides much-needed support to filmmakers through film awards and cash prizes. New this year, GIFF introduced the JP Morgan Chase Audience Award, giving our audience the power to vote for their favorite film. The 2020 award-winning films helped educate and inspire everyone who watched them.



### **Best Social Impact Film Award**

\*Presented by the Bill & Ann Bresnan Foundation MUSIC GOT ME HERE Directed by Susan Koch

"Wow! This is incredible. Thank you so much. What a great honor. It was such a pleasure to be part of your festival and so gratifying to see the response. You and your team put together a first-class festival under very tough circumstances. I know the others (Rae, Tom, Forrest...) will be as thrilled as I am to hear about the award," Susan Koch, Director, MUSIC GOT ME HERE



### **Best Connecticut Short Film Award**

\*Presented by the Connecticut Office of Film, Television

### & Digital Media THE OTHER SIDE Directed by Josh Leong

"We are absolutely honored to have been chosen. GIFF was wonderful and thank you for continuing with this event. We are greatly indebted and I hope the festival stays strong for years to come. We deeply appreciate this award," Josh Leong, Director, THE OTHER SIDE





### JPMorgan Chase Audience Award



### A PELOTON OF ONE Directed by Steven E. Mallorca and John Bernardo

"Thank you! Our partnership, followed by this announcement, will surely help amplify the voices of the dozens of child sex abuse Survivors who took part in this film, who represent the thousands upon thousands of Survivors in this country and across the globe. And as we all can certainly empathize with coming from the world of independent film, Survivors being heard, validated, and believed is one of the first major steps in their long road to recovery.

Finally, we'll say it again now and we can't wait to say it again in person, we could not have found a better partner than you all at GIFF. Your values, your social consciousness, your understanding that Knowledge is Power, align with our core beliefs so well. Noting such, we are truly honored to be the very first recipient of The Greenwich International Film Festival's JP Morgan Chase Audience Award. Thank you and welcome, welcome, in every possible definition of the word, welcome to our Peloton of One!" John Bernardo, Co-Director & Co-Producer, A PELOTON OF ONE

### YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING

GIFF offered a variety of film screenings throughout the year that engaged audiences both in-theater and at home.



MARCH 10, 2020 **FROM THE VINE** Bedford Playhouse

Featuring a Wine Tasting and Q&A with Actor Joe Pantoliano



DECEMBER 15, 2019 SPIES IN DISGUISE Sponsored by Blue Sky Studios

Featuring a Q&A with Directors Troy Quane and Nick Bruno

#### OCTOBER 26, 2019

#### DANGER CLOSE

In partnership with Saboteur Media and with proceeds going directly to the charity Honor Bound FEBRUARY 10, 2020

#### THE ASSISTANT

In partnership with Bleecker Street and Avon Theatre FEBRUARY 26, 2020

#### ORDINARY LOVE

Sponsored by Richards benefiting the Breast Cancer Alliance featuring a Cocktail Reception at Richards MAY 22- 24, 2020

#### MILITARY WIVES

Virtual Screening in partnership with Bleecker Street

### GIFF HONOREES

The Changemaker Award is GIFF's highest honor and is presented to a humanitarian who has positively impacted the lives of people around the world. This year, GIFF was proud to name journalist, author and empowerment advocate Gretchen Carlson a GIFF Changemaker. GIFF also named Will Reeve as the recipient of the 2020 #MakeAnImpact Award for his work with the Christopher Reeve Foundation.



Changemaker Award

As a journalist, author, and empowerment advocate, Gretchen Carlson has paved the way for the #MeToo movement, with her historic 2016 sexual harassment complaint against the chairman of Fox News, Roger Ailes. Named one of Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People in the World," Carlson is one of America's most successful news anchors, as well as a globally recognized advocate for female empowerment, with her TED Talk on the subject garnering almost 2 million views. She is also the celebrated author of the New York Times bestseller "Be Fierce."

In December 2019, Carlson founded the organization "Lift Our Voices" with former Fox News colleagues Julie Roginsky and Diana Falzone. Its mission is to end the practice of Non-Disclosure Agreements, confidentiality provisions and forced arbitration clauses that have prevented employees from publicly discussing and disclosing toxic workplace conditions, including sexual harassment and assault. Carlson previously hosted "The Real Story" on Fox News and co-hosted the number-one rated cable morning news show, "Fox and Friends," for more than seven years. Carlson most recently returned to television, as host and executive producer of A+E and Lifetime Network documentaries "Breaking The Silence," "Beyond The Headlines: NXIVM Cult" and "Beyond The Headlines: The College Admissions Scandal." Her return is a beacon of hope for other brave women demoted, fired or blacklisted from their chosen careers after reporting sexual harassment. Carlson will next produce an interview series with Blumhouse Television. The forthcoming series will see the return of Carlson to the interviewer's chair, and feature special guests to discuss topical, provocative subject matter, including #MeToo and the movement's evolution.

In 2016, Carlson became the face of workplace harassment survivors, gracing the covers of Time and Good Housekeeping magazines. Carlson's book "Be Fierce" debuted in October 2017 and immediately became a New York Times bestseller. Her memoir "Getting Real," published in 2015 was also a best-seller. Profits from "Be Fierce" go to Carlson's Gift of Courage Fund, which supports organizations empowering women and young girls. This year the fund is providing free workshops to low-income women facing gender-based discrimination and violence through the Gretchen Carlson Leadership Initiative and supporting the March of Dimes' Gretchen Carlson Advocacy Fellows.

Since her harassment complaint became public, Carlson has worked fearlessly to change laws that protect predators. In December 2017, she joined a bipartisan coalition of legislators to introduce the "Ending Forced Arbitration of Sexual Harassment Act," which voids forced arbitration agreements that prevent sexual harassment survivors from getting their day in court. The bill was reintroduced in the House in February 2019 and Carlson testified before the House Judiciary Committee in May.

An honors graduate of Stanford University, Carlson was valedictorian of her high school class and studied at Oxford University in England. A violin prodigy, she performed as a soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra at age 13, and in 1989 became the first classical violinist to win the Miss America crown.

# GIFF HONOREES



Will Reeve is an actor and journalist, as well as a philanthropist who is committed to furthering his parents work to cure paralysis. Reeve is currently a correspondent at ABC News where he appears on all platforms and shows, including Good Morning America, World News Tonight with David Muir, and Nightline. Prior to joining ABC, Will was a correspondent at ESPN and hosted the MSG Hockey Show. Reeve is also an actor who is known for In the Gloaming (1997), The Brooke Ellison Story (2004) and Everyone's Hero (2006).

Reeve has served on the Board of Directors for the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation since 2013. The Foundation is dedicated to curing spinal cord injury by advancing innovative research and improving quality of life for individuals and families impacted by paralysis. Christopher Reeve put a human face on spinal cord injury and had an unrelenting drive to pursue the best research in the world. It was his vision, his passion, and his brilliance that attracted young scientists to take on the cause and advance the field of spinal cord research. And while Dana was universally known as the model for caregiving, her real legacy is the creation of the Paralysis Resource Center that has reached so many of those living with paralysis and their families with life- changing resources. The organization's mission can be summed up into four words, "Today's Care. Tomorrow's Cure." which reflects the dual purpose set forth by Christopher and Dana to provide a continuum of hope for individuals living with paralysis worldwide.

A long time Greenwich resident and member of the Brunswick School Class of 2010, Reeve graduated from Middlebury College where he received a Bachelor of Arts. He currently resides in New York City.

### GIFF BUZZ

GIFF made headlines around the world for launching its firstever virtual Festival, generating **22 billion positive media impressions** with coverage in the New York Times, Variety, Deadline, Vogue, ABC-TV, Yahoo, and more.

# VOGUE

ARTS & LIFESTYLE

### Is The Future Of The Film Festival A Digital Experience?

BY RADHIKA SETH

Streaming premieres, Zoom Q&As and online marketplaces, film festivals are going virtual in response to the coronavirus pandemic. And once the global health crisis is over, some might not return to their traditional formats.

International Film Festival Goes Digital

Coronavirus News: Greenwich

Among Covid-19 Pandemic





THE ESSENCE OF JOYFUL LIVING





*The Inspiring Women Who Brought Hollywood Glamor to Greenwich* 

Greenwich International Film Festival To Hold Inaugural Virtual Festival

*This lockdown, watch select festival films from the comfort of your own home* 

## AUDIENCE OVERVIEW



100% of attendees would attend GIFF again

99% of attendees would

recommend GIFF to a friend

### INCOME

37% Up to \$200,000
17% \$201,000 - \$300,000
10% \$301,000 - \$400,000
36% \$401,000 and above

### EDUCATION

GIFF's audience is highly educated. **96%** of our audience has a college degree, and **49%** has a graduate or post-graduate degree.

### RESIDENCE

33% Greenwich, CT
25% Greater Connecticut
15% New York
25% Another State in the U.S.
1% Another Country

### ENGAGEMENT

**58%** of our audience is more likely to use the products and services of a GIFF sponsor because they attended the Festival.

### WHAT GIFF AUDIENCE MEMBERS HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE VIRTUAL FESTIVAL

I am completely indebted to you for bringing me a film so precisely consistent with my Foundation's mission. I've watched it three times and been brought to tears every single viewing. The feedback I've gotten has got to be shared, how this moved people all over the world to care about film and about holocaust history, and reminding people especially now to celebrate life every day. *Rebecca Colin, Simon & Eve Colin Foundation*  Glad you didn't cancel the festival and made it work virtually! Bravo! User friendly! Good choice of topics.

Considering the pandemic and the fact that everyone was quarantined, **it was great to be able to access uniquely interesting narratives, documentaries, and shorts on television from our comfortable family room.** The films were easy to stream and the directions from the GIFF team were simple to understand. The virtual festival provided a weekend of awesome entertainment in a time of uncertainty and stress.

The decision to move forward was brave. The dedication and execution of the vision was flawless.

I felt like I escaped the quarantine for a few days!

It was so easy to navigate and I was able to watch on my own time. **Honestly it** was a little easier to take part than if it was an in-person event, especially with my busy schedule!

It was my first film festival and the experience was awesome! The entire GIFF team did a fantastic job. I enjoyed the Q & As with the filmmakers.

I enjoyed the variety of films, ease of using website, overall organization, discount for first responders and healthcare workers, and encore film offerings.

### FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Despite the unexpected mid-year change to our Festival plans due to the pandemic, GIFF was able to adapt its budget and operate with sound fiscal management. Total revenue for the year was **\$413,905.29.** Total operating expenses were **\$407,804.62.** 

### EARNED REVENUE

Ticket & Pass Sales \$2	.67,293.09	64.6%
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### **Contributed Revenue**

Sponsorships         \$83,666.00         20.2%           Grants & Donations         \$62,946.20         15.2%	TOTAL	\$413,905.29	100%
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### **PROGRAM EXPENSES**

Festival Development & Program	\$229,333.06	56.2%
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### **Other Expenses**

Office & Administrative	\$122,322.82	30.0%
Marketing, Communications & Tech	\$56,148.74	13.8%

### TOTAL

\$407,804.62 100%

<b>NOTE:</b> This is an unaudited financial
report. For a copy of GIFF's audited
financial statements, please contact
Ginger Stickel at 203-717-1800.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### FESTIVAL TEAM

#### Founders

Carina Crain Colleen deVeer Wendy Stapleton

#### **Executive Team**

Wendy Stapleton, Chairman of the Board, Founder Colleen deVeer, Director of Programming, Founder Ginger Stickel, Executive Director, COO

#### Virtual Festival Staff

Samantha Ryan, Office Manager Shari Angel, Programmer Bears Rebecca Fonte, Programming Consultant Antoine Bancharel, Print Traffic Coordinator Lauren Clayton, Graphic Designer Shamika Pandit, Social Media Coordinator Amanda DiCicco, Development Coordinator Lauren Stannard, VIP Concierge Laura Schroeder, Volunteer Coordinator Matt Stellwagen, Website Developer Elaine Ubina, Photographer and

Editor in Chief, Fairfield County Look Erica Abrams, Falco Ink Team Janice Roland, Falco Ink Team Shannon Treusch, Falco Ink Team PKF O'Connor Davies, Accounting Firm Danielle Allen, Bookkeeper

#### **Marketing Interns**

Elizabeth Buckley Alyssa Sirani Christina Vittas

#### **Programming Interns**

Sarah Foster Julia Reeder

#### **Pre-Screeners**

Lottie Abrahams Oona Carroll Jermaine Charles Chris Gala Jenn Giardinia Kyja Kutnick Varyk Kutnick Abigail MacLaren Anne St. Hilaire Lauren Stannard

#### Board of Directors

Ashley Bekton Alison Davis Colleen deVeer Pamela Ford Andrew Karpen Joni Kimberlin Steele James Matthews Clay Pecorin Wendy Stapleton Christian Simonds Kevin Sneddon Mark Teixeira

#### **Executive Board**

**Richard Brener** Jenna Bush-Hager Jim Cabrera Kate Clark Kimberly Clarke Gabriela Dias David Duchovny Doug Ellin Susan Smith Ellis Julie Fareri Zielinski Bobby Friedman Craig Gering Kathie Lee Gifford Jared Ian Goldman Kim Habul Beth Hall Colin Hanks Peter Hedges Michael Imperioli Laura Kutnick Ann Lamont David Levien Mark Lindsay Linda Munger Clea Newman Deborah Royce Hannah Storm Darnell Strom **Emily Wachtel** 

#### Jurors

Ann Bresnan Young Susan Bevan Emily Garnet Gorman Bechard Valerie Jensen Ed Ruggiero

#### Host Committee

Stacy Messina, Chair Jill Schecter, Chair

**Kim Barnes Courtney Belhumeur** Sue Bodson Marisa Brown Ginge Cabrera Courtenay Carella Kate Clark Jacqueline Cohen Alison Davis Caitlin Davis Ashley DeSimone Gabriela Dias Graci Diuranovic Ilona Eken Avla Farnos Kristina Gabelli Kim Habul Claire Haft Ren Harman Melissa Hawks Susan Hinrichs Elizabeth Hopley Samantha Knapp April Larken Eliza Niblock Romona Norton Nancy Ozizmir Hadley Palmer Bina Park Marjorie Pastel Serena Perlman Sarah Pribyl Jordan Rhodes Mary Jo Riddle Abby Ritman Jennifer Roach Danielle Robinson Kim Salib Annette Schuster Kristyna Sipko Riann Smith Marissa Swann Nikol Thompson Laura Tobias Victoria Triplett Robyn Wasserman Rebecca Anikstein Jen Danzi Jen Giordina Natalie Kilts Brooke Labriola Nicola Steiner Jen Weinstein

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### **TRIBUTE TO OUR 2020 TOP DONORS**

### SUSTAINERS (\$25,000+)

Kate & Jim Clark Kenny & Kim Habul Elizabeth and Gene Hall Dale & Laura Kutnick Foundation, Inc. Craig & Debbie Stapleton Wendy Stapleton Mark & Leigh Teixeira

#### CINEPHILE SUPPORTERS (\$10,000 - \$24,999)

Sue Moretti Bodson & Mike Bodson - Emboss, LLC Ann Bresnan Young Julie & Clarke Futch Joni Steele Kimberlin Jim & Jenny Matthews Charles & Deborah Royce Nancy Seaman Victoria Ershova Triplett

### PREMIER SUPPORTERS (\$2,500-\$9,999)

T.J. & Courtenay Carella Alison D. Davis Robert & Elissa Friedman Bungalow Media + Entertainment Darrell & Robin Harvey Andrew & Pam Karpen Megan Kearney Cricket & Jim Lockhart Sue Mandel Andrew & Stacy Messina Linda Zwack Munger Brad & Hadley Palmer Clay & Eva Pecorin Mary Jo Riddle Michael & Krystal Sachs Matt & Jill Schecter Jane & Paul Shang Michael Smith Riann Smith Kevin & DeAnne Sneddon Dr. Tom Wilson & Elisa Gabelli Wilson

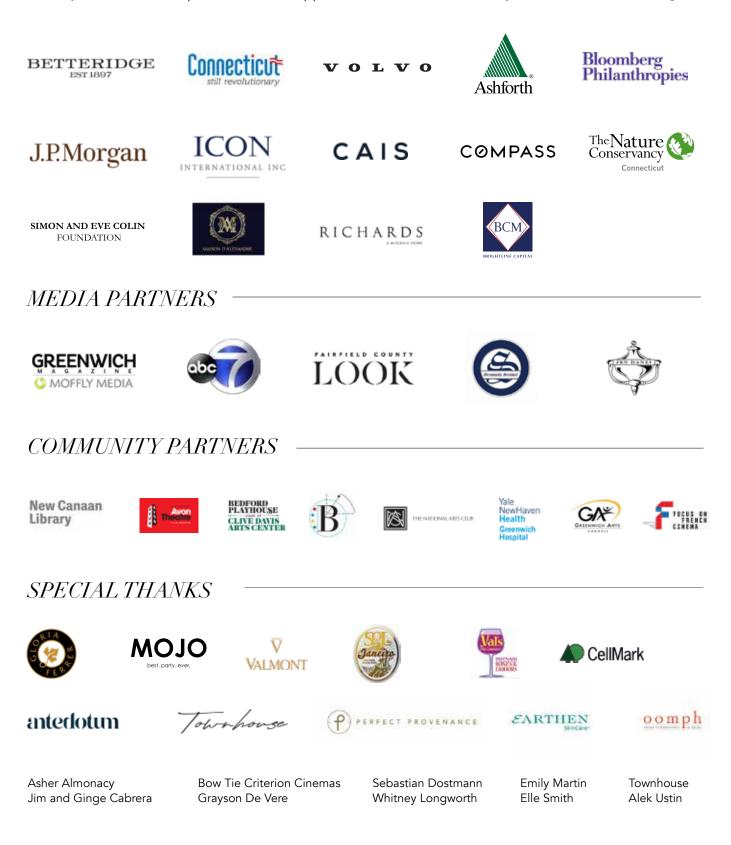
### GREENWICH SUPPORTERS (\$1,500-\$2,499)

Ilona & Onur Eken Jonathan & Meg Hock David Ko Beverly Johnson Ann Lamont Howard Levy

Mark and Donna Lindsay Betsy Oreilly Mark & Emma Pennington Cristine Russell Susan Smith-Ellis Nikol Thompson

### **2020 SPONSORS**

Thank you to our 2020 Sponsors whose support has been invaluable in a year of tremendous change!







www.greenwichfilm.org