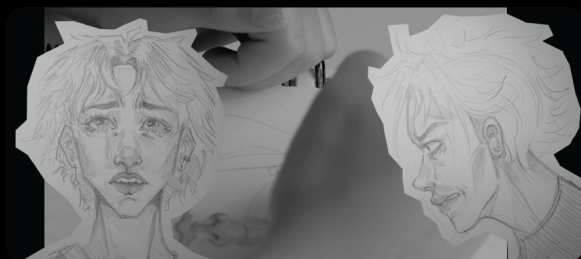


MVFF EDUCATION



SHORTS: LOVEHAPPY



CURRICULUM GUIDE
GRADES: 9-12

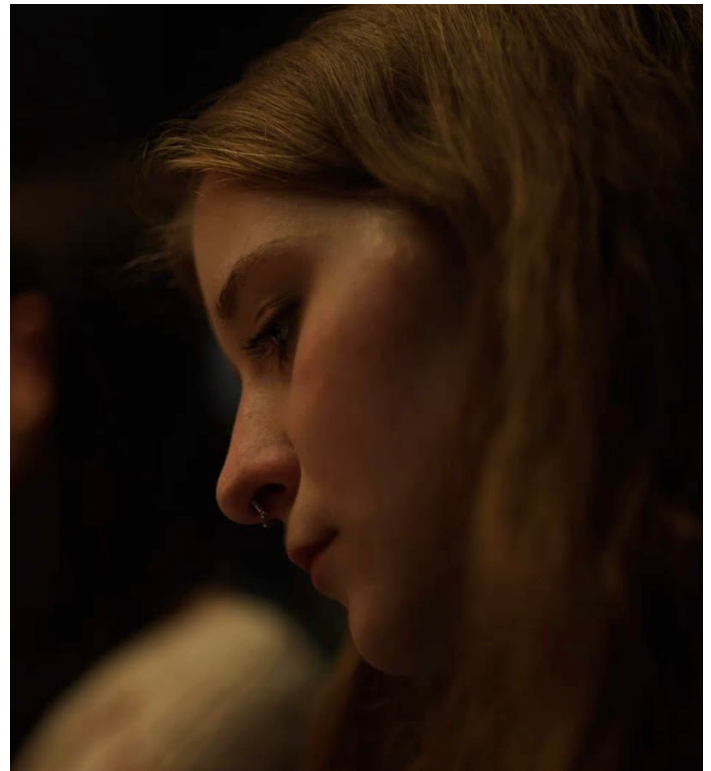
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Dear educators,

Thank you for attending the 47th Annual Mill Valley Film Festival's screening of Youth Works: Love Happy. We are excited to return in our 2024 fall season with a combination of both in-person screenings for local schools and online screenings for those of you joining us from afar

As media educators, we support film as the literature of the twenty-first century. This powerful medium sits in a critical part of human culture, at the intersection of art, industry, technology, and politics. It is a universal language that lets us tell stories about our collective hopes and fears and gives us the opportunity to make sense of the world around us and the people in it. This year, our film selections for school screenings continue to focus on increasingly relevant issues of global empathy and active citizenship, and we believe this film will be a powerful and engaging text to use in your classroom. These curricular materials are designed to get students to engage deeply with the film by the common-core aligned skills of developing an evidence-based interpretation of a text both orally and in writing.

The discussion prompts have been crafted to offer students the opportunity to grapple with questions of ethics and social justice through representations of culture on film. They offer a variety of options for fostering small-group or whole-class dialogue by addressing the film industry in general and this film in particular. If your students are already familiar with a process of writing evidence-based interpretive essays, consider using the suggested essay prompts for a short writing piece, or consider the film review format as an alternative. Additionally, student handouts for a variety of thinking routines are provided for before, during, and after viewing the film with a particular emphasis on social-emotional learning. Extension activities offer further creative opportunities for students to consider the cultural impact of the film as both an art form and a political platform. We have also included a handout that provides some context for the film festival experience, which may help to introduce your screening experience.

Thank you so much for your tireless work! Enjoy the film!

Sincerely,
The CAFILM Education Team

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. A film is a way to say something that can't be said any other way. Of the youth produced short films in this collection, which film had the most to say? About what?
2. Which film do you think was the most original, unique, memorable, or inspiring? How or why?
3. What do you think is important about youth produced short films? How do the films in this collection allow the viewers to experience a taste of something crucial for connecting with the youth experience?
4. What do you think contributes to a young filmmaker's choice of style to tell their story?
5. How did the films in this collection of youth produced works broaden your own horizons as a viewer? Which of the films exposed you to new worlds, situations, and themes? Or, put a unique spin on the world, a situation, or theme?
6. Film is a form of self-expression for young creatives working within the medium. How do these films communicate individuality and represent the unique identity of each of the filmmaker's visions?
7. How do the films in this collection demonstrate youth empowerment?
8. What is the significance of the program title, Love Happy? How are each of the films connected to love or happiness or a combination or critique of either?



DISCUSSION NOTECATCHER

Directions:

Use this notecatcher to record what you take away from discussing the questions above.

IDEAS I HEARD DURING DISCUSSION

MIND-POP IDEAS

Ideas that came to my mind during discussion.

ONE IMPORTANT THING I LEARNED DURING DISCUSSION

INTERPRETIVE ESSAY PROMPTS

1. Youth produced films continue to change the landscape of the industry as they inform, inspire, and motivate change by sharing vital information or creating an emotional connection to a subject in a unique or fresh way. Write an essay in which you show how one or more of the films featured in this collection exemplifies how a short film is a way to say something that can't be said any other way.
2. Youth produced films feature stories that allow filmmakers to connect with their audience on a deeper level by creating a meaningful and more immersive experience with the subject. Write an essay in which you show how one or more of the films featured in this collection offers the viewer a more resonant experience with a subject because of the story and style.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Into Film

<https://www.intofilm.org/films/filmmaking/youth-made-films>

Youth Made Films.

Indeed

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/why-filmmaking-is-important>

Why Filmmaking is Important

Canon

<https://www.canon-europe.com/pro/stories/future-filmmakers-what-matters/>

What Matters to Future Filmmakers?

Spectator

<https://seattlespectator.com/2023/10/11/does-hollywood-inhibit-the-creativity-of-young-filmmakers/>


Does Hollywood Inhibit the Creativity of Young Filmmakers?

ABOUT CAFILM

The nonprofit California Film Institute celebrates and promotes film as art and education through year-round programming at the independent Christopher B. Smith Rafael Film Center, presentation of the acclaimed Mill Valley Film Festival and DocLands Documentary Film Festival, as well as cultivation of the next generation of filmmakers and audiences through CAFILM Education programs.

Follow the California Film Institute on social media

 @cafilm

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 californiafilminstitute

STANDARDS

Common Core State Standards ELA-Literacy

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the texts says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2

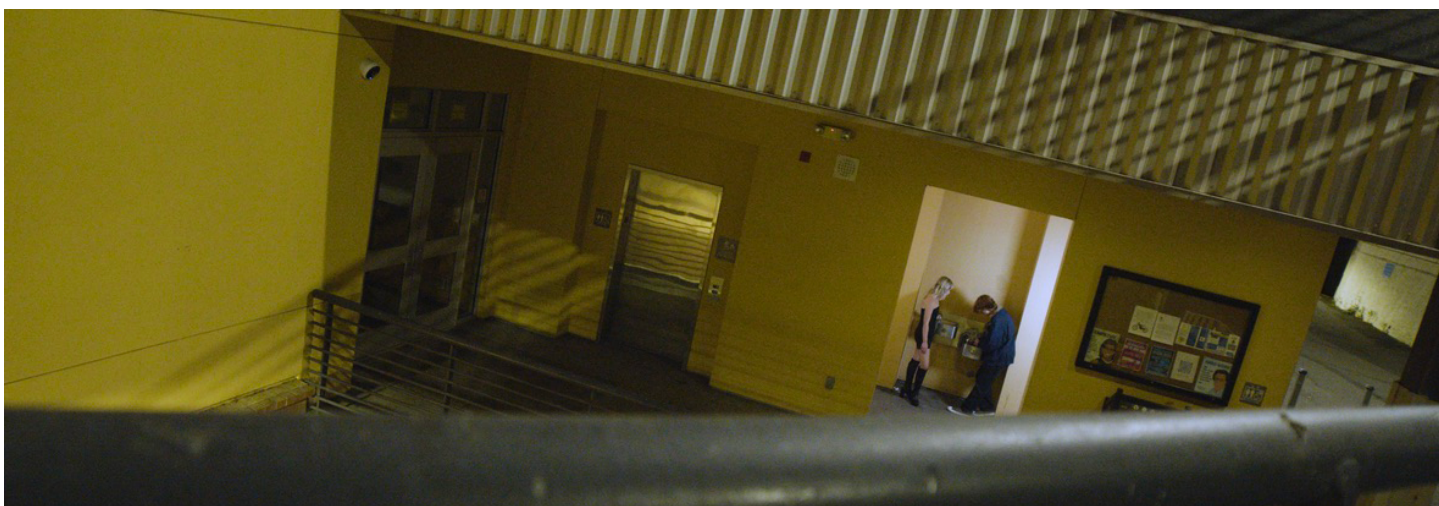
Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.



Name: _____



SHORTS: LOVEHAPPY

ABOUT THE FILMS

"The ups and downs are worth it. Long way to go, but we're workin'." This year's collection of peer-reviewed, youth-produced short films showcases storytellers who are redefining humor in comedies, personal stories in documentaries, and murder in thrillers. It's an inspiring display of emerging young talent.

KEY THEMES

FILMMAKING, MEDIA STUDIES, ANIMATION, DOCUMENTARY, MUSIC VIDEO

ABOUT THE FILMS

FILMS INCLUDE:

PRACTICAL RABBIT HUNTING STRATEGIES FOR THE MODERN MAN

Rishan Sathiyaa | US 2024 | 11 min

A boy hunts a rabbit on his 18th birthday in an attempt to understand what it means to grow up.

MINUS DAISY

Samuel Green | US 2024 | 5 min

How to navigate life without the comfort of a stuffed rabbit.

LIKE A STONE OR FLOWER

Kaiya Ming Jordan | US 2024 | 10 min

An exploration of how art opens a window to magical lands and satisfies those yearnings before the dream is over and the window closes again.

FOREVER MINE

Isabella DeWitt | US 2024 | 3 min

Reminiscing on the memory of a past friendship.

KILLER LOVE

Jace Skinnell | US 2024 | 8 min

Cupid with a knife.

BICKERING

Gabrielle Hanson Chong | US 2024 | 1 min

Best friends Harriet and Priscilla argue over a small misunderstanding.

THE LAST SUPPER

Trudy Flashford | Canada 2024 | 4 min

Chaos erupts when Betty's narcissistic grandmother and obnoxious older sister come home for a family dinner.

ABOUT THE FILMS

THE CHIHUAHUA SHAKE

Chase Olivera | US 2024 | 14 min

A musical comedy about a famous Parisian dachshund who is tasked with painting a portrait of a crazy chihuahua who just won't stop shaking.

THE ALIEN

Maxwell Warner | US 2024 | 10 min

Recounting a tale from New Year's Eve in a therapy session becomes an existential exploration of what it feels like to be an alien in your own world.

GUIDING LIGHT

India Anne Mitchell | US 2024 | 5 min

An inspired young filmmaker weaves together past and present as she looks back on the legacy of the Polly Klaas tragedy that rocked the nation.

APPA TALES: STORIES FROM MY GRANDFATHER

Noah Shin | US 2024 | 6 min

My grandfather recounts stories from his childhood when he was growing up during and after the Korean War.

SOLE SISTA

Emerie Elise Boone | Australia 2024 | 6 min

Chelsea navigates the feeling of being different as the only black girl in school.

DREAMKEEPING

Mimi Muhle | US 2024 | 5 min

A housekeeper at a hotel makes the tough decision to leave her job for a better future.



BEFORE VIEWING

REFLECT & RESPOND

Directions:

The films you are about to watch are peer-reviewed and youth-produced. They showcase storytellers who are redefining humor in comedies, personal stories in documentaries, and murder in thrillers. It's an inspiring display of emerging young talent. Before watching the film, reflect on and respond to the following questions.

1. What qualities do you think a young audience values most in a film? What qualities do other young people look for when assessing a short film for selection in a film festival?

2. What limitations do young filmmakers have compared to filmmakers in Hollywood and other professional productions? What advantages do young filmmakers have that big budget productions do not have?

DURING VIEWING

NOTECATCHER

Directions:

Use this notecatcher to keep track of the films you will see so you will be able to dig a little deeper later with some interpretive analysis work. After each film, write a one-sentence summary of the story in your own words. Then, use six words to record your personal review of the film.

FILM TITLE	DIRECTOR	ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY	SIX WORD REVIEW
PRACTICAL RABBIT HUNTING STRATEGIES FOR THE MODERN MAN	Rishan Sathiyaa		
MINUS DAISY	Samuel Green		
LIKE A STONE OR FLOWER	Kaiya Ming Jordan		
FOREVER MINE	Isabella DeWitt		
KILLER LOVE	Jace Skinnell		
BICKERING	Gabrielle Hanson Chong		

DURING VIEWING

NOTECATCHER

FILM TITLE	DIRECTOR	ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY	SIX WORD REVIEW
THE LAST SUPPER	Trudy Flashford		
THE CHIHUAHUA SHAKE	Chase Olivera		
THE ALIEN	Maxwell Warner		
GUIDING LIGHT	India Anne Mitchell		
APPA TALES: STORIES FROM MY GRANDFATHER	Noah Shin		
SOLE SISTA	Emerie Elise Boone		
DREAMKEEPING	Mimi Muhle		

DURING VIEWING

ELEMENTS OF MISE-EN-SCENE

How to Use This Thinking Routine:

The graphic organizer is designed to help students understand and observe choices in mise-en-scene in narrative film texts. Students can use this organizer during a film screening to record their observations.

In this collection of youth produced shorts, each filmmaker exemplifies unique and purposeful choices in mise-en-scene. Use the notecatcher to record the details you notice while viewing so you can interpret how form and structure create meaning on screen.

What is Mise-en-scene?

Mise-en-Scene refers to all the elements in a film that appear on screen, within the boundaries of the frame.

The elements of mise-en-scene can be thought of as the visual storytelling elements that overlap with theater and stage performance.

“Mise-en-scene” is a French term that translates to “staging” or “placing on stage,” and you will often also hear these terms in discussions of mise-en-scene.

There are five main aspects to consider when analyzing mise-en-scene: props, costumes/makeup, set/setting, physical performance, and lighting.

Props

The objects in the film that characters interact with. Props are often used to move a plot forward and sometimes they have symbolic significance.

Costume/Makeup

The clothes and accessories worn by characters. Costumes and makeup can reveal a character’s personality, background, and social status.

Set/Location

The places and spaces where the story occurs. The setting can reveal information about the world of the film, including time, place, and season.

Physical Performance

The visual elements of performance, such as movement and gesture. Physical movements can reveal a lot about a character’s inner state.

Lighting

The lighting in a film can be created by the sun or artificial lights. Use of shadows, colored lighting effects, can often influence tone and mood.

ELEMENTS OF MISE-EN-SCENE

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER/NOTE-CATCHER

Directions:

Record unique, meaningful, or interesting details you notice in each film's use of the elements of mise-en-scene used by the filmmakers in this collection of youth produced shorts. Be sure to include the title of the film and the specific details you notice that are worth noting.

Unique Use of Props	
Unique Costumes or Make-Up	
Unique Sets or Locations	
Unique Physical Performances	
Unique Lighting	

MISE-EN-SCENE ANALYSIS

GRAPHIC ORGANIZER/NOTECATCHER

Directions:

Use the details you recorded while viewing to analyze and evaluate the unique use of mise-en-scene. Respond to the prompts in each box.

What specific unique choices in mise-en-scene were most important in telling the story of one or more of the films in this collection of youth produced shorts?

What elements of mise-en-scene had a unique or fresh symbolic meaning in one or more of the films in this collection of youth produced shorts? In other words, what big ideas or themes did they represent or relate to?

A Thinking Routine Borrowed from Harvard Project Zero's Think Routine Toolbox:
<https://pz.harvard.edu/thinking-routines>

AFTER VIEWING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Directions:

Recall, reflect, and then respond to each question, referring to specific scenes, events, and dialogue from the film as evidence for your response.

1. Which film in this collection of youth works had the most compelling story with the broadest social, cultural, or political impact? Why?

2. Which of the stories in the films featured in this collection do you think will have the most influence on individuals? Which of the films will leave a lasting impression on audiences? Why?

3. Do any of the films in this collection of youth produced works inform, inspire, or motivate change by sharing vital information or creating an emotional connection to a subject? Which ones? How?

4. How do the stories featured in this collection allow filmmakers to connect with their audience on a deeper level by creating a meaningful and more immersive experience with the subject?

AFTER VIEWING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

5. Do any of the films in this collection demonstrate how young filmmakers are prioritizing ethics by focusing on collective or progressive movements? Which films? How or why?

6. How do the films in this collection of youth produced works allow for more diverse voices and perspectives to be heard?



AFTER VIEWING

LIFE LESSONS

How to Use this Thinking Routine:

The world looks different depending on who and where you are. Film has the power to transform human experience and reflect it back to us. In that reflection we can sometimes see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Film also offers views of worlds that are unfamiliar to us and has the power to provide us with insight into perspectives different from our own.

This collection of youth produced films showcases storytellers who are redefining humor in comedies, personal stories in documentaries, and murder in thrillers. Of the films in this collection, which one was the best mirror and which one was the best window? Use the chart below to record your response. Be sure to include specific details and examples from the films to support your response.

MIRROR

Of the films in this collection of youth produced shorts, which one was the best mirror: a story that reflected your own life, and gave you a way to see your own lived experience from a new perspective? What was relatable about the story? What was unique about the way the filmmaker chose to tell it?

WINDOW

Of the films in this collection of youth produced shorts, which one was the best window: a story with insight into a world, identity, or lived experience you were unfamiliar with? What was different about the story? What was unique about the way the filmmaker chose to tell it?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

FILM REVIEW

Directions:

After watching the selection of Youth Works: Love Happy, select one film to review in writing.

While a film review is an evaluation of a movie, it is not simply a viewer-response expressing the writer's feelings about the film. Instead, a film review attempts to do three things for the reader:

1. **Summarize** what the film is about (the story)
2. **Interpret** the film/filmmakers' intended meaning (the themes and claims)
3. **Evaluate** whether the film is successful in expressing the intended meaning (its effectiveness in conveying the themes and claims)

A review will support its perspective with evidence from the film, such as descriptions of important moments, characters, and scenes.

Suggested Structure

Introduction

- Introduce the film: title, director, and any relevant credentials (award wins for the film, other films by the director, origins for the film's story, etc.).
- Summarize what the film is about - briefly, and without any "spoilers" that give away plot twists and surprises.

Body

- Offer an interpretation of what the film/director is trying to say through this story. In other words, what is the film's theme, message, or primary claim?

Conclusion

- Evaluate whether the film is successful or not in conveying its intended message.
- Identify who the intended audience is and how effective the film is in meeting their needs. Is the film for a particular age group or social group?

Final Tip: Make sure to include some critical appraisal of the film in the first and last sentence, but try to weave it throughout the review as well.



From CAFILM Education Resources: Narrative Film Analysis Toolkit
<https://www.cafilmedu.org/curriculum-resources/>

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

FILM REVIEW

My Film Review

[illegible]

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

FILM REVIEW

Introduction:

Personal essay films are a great entry point to filmmaking because of the low barriers. You don't need a big crew. You don't need sets, props, or actors. All you need is a basic camera, simple editing software, and the courage to share your own story. And even the camera is not necessary if opting for a found-footage approach. With these few ingredients, the personal essay film becomes a powerful tool for communicating your unique perspective to the world.

In this extension activity, you will learn a basic production approach for creating a 3-minute personal essay film, combining scripted narration with symbolic video imagery to tell a story from your own life.

MY PLACE | MY STORY

Foundations of Filmmaking and The Personal Essay Film online course.

Enroll for Free:

<https://www.cafilmeducationonline.org/courses/foundations-personal-essay>

CAFILM Education's virtual course curriculum for making a personal essay film.



ABOUT FILM FESTIVALS



An opening night screening at the Mill Valley Film Festival.

What is a film festival?

A film festival is an event in which multiple movies are presented over the course of one or several days. Depending on the size of the festival, all of the screenings may take place in a single theater or may involve multiple venues throughout a city. Festivals also include special events like panel discussions with filmmakers and actors. Typically, filmmakers submit their works to a festival, where a team of curators selects the best entries for inclusion in the festival. For independent and international filmmakers, festivals are often an important way to raise awareness of a film, generate an audience, and/or attract a studio to purchase the rights to distribute a film in a wider release. Acceptance into a major festival can add significant prestige to a film, with some festival awards (such as the Cannes Film Festival's Palme d'Or) considered among the highest honors a film can receive.

There are many film festivals through-

out the world, with some focusing on particular themes, such as highlighting LGBTQ films/filmmakers, specific cultural groups, or particular genres. While some of the more famous festivals may be in distant locations, there are hundreds of small festivals spread through every corner of the world and, increasingly, festivals are using streaming access to make it easier for the public to view their curated programs.

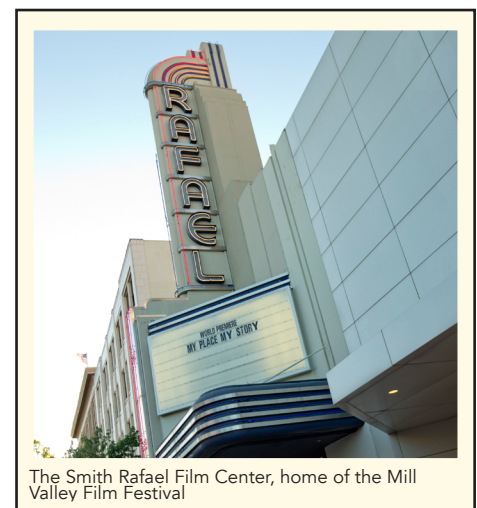
History of the Mill Valley Film Festival

Since founding the Mill Valley Film Festival in 1977, Executive Director Mark Fishkin has shepherded this once small, three-day showcase into an eleven-day, internationally acclaimed cinema event presenting a wide variety of new films from around the world in an engaged, community setting.

The festival has an impressive track record of launching new films and new filmmakers, and has earned a reputation as a filmmakers' festival

by celebrating the best in American independent and foreign films, alongside high-profile and prestigious award contenders. The relaxed and non-competitive atmosphere surrounding MVFF, gives filmmakers and audiences alike the opportunity to share their work and experiences in a collaborative and convivial setting.

Each year the festival welcomes more than 200 filmmakers, representing more than 50 countries. Screening sections include world cinema, US cinema, documentaries, family films, and shorts programs. Annual festival initiatives include Active Cinema, a forum for films that aim to engage audiences and transform ideas into action; Mind the Gap, a platform for inclusion and equity; and ¡Viva el Cine!, a showcase of Latin American and Spanish-language films.. Festival guests also enjoy an exciting selection of Tributes, Spotlights and Galas throughout the program.



Questions to Consider:

1. What is the purpose of a film festival? What are the benefits for filmmakers? For the audience? For the community?
2. How might the films at a festival differ from the films available to watch at your local movie theater?
3. What qualities do you think festival curators might look for in a film? If you are watching a festival film with a class/school group, what aspects of the film do you think made it appealing to the curators?

Get Involved!

Many film festivals, including the Mill Valley Film Festival, have student film categories. If you are a filmmaker, explore FilmFreeway (www.filmfreeway.com) for a database of worldwide film festivals where you can submit your film. The call for entries for MVFF opens in late February and closes in June. Youth filmmakers do not have to pay an entry fee. MVFF also offers many opportunities for volunteering. Find out more at <https://www.cafilm.org/volunteer/>.