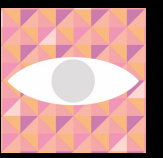


HYBRID OR VIRTUAL?

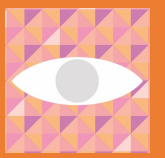
Edition 14

Film Festivals evolve and change the
cinema landscape.



Visibility and exposure

Film festivals provide an opportunity for filmmakers to showcase their work to a wide audience, including industry professionals, critics, and other filmmakers. This can help to increase the visibility and exposure of the film, and can lead to distribution deals, funding opportunities, and other career opportunities. Their relevance has shifted over the last few years.

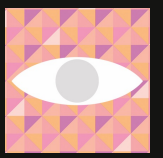


All kinds of events have faced upheaval amidst the pandemic—concerts, conventions, awards shows, Broadway productions. But for film festivals, the industry ecosystem they're a part of was going through a massive shift even before the coronavirus hit. It used to be that a film festival would screen dozens of independent films and studios would show up, buy the best ones, and then release them into the world.

Now that the movies being showcased at festivals might end up spending their opening weekend screening on your iPhone anyway, does it matter if the festivals that launched them happened on a bunch of laptops?

Yes, and no. Yes, the audience's relationship to film is changing—people are now fairly comfortable using multiplexes and home theaters interchangeably. But so, too, are filmmakers' relationships with the people who consume their work. Directors like Denis Villeneuve and Christopher Nolan can, justifiably, insist vociferously that their movies get seen in theaters, but these filmmakers are a far cry from indie directors who just want their films to get seen by *anyone*. Festivals provide a way for them to do that, but what they lose when that festival is online is the opportunity to see people's reaction in real time—to feel the room.

So what, then, does the film festival of the future look like? In the short term, it needs to be agile and encompass some form of digital and in-person involvement. Right now, each fest seems to be reacting to the evolving situation it's in—Last year, Omicron made Sundance in Park City, Utah untenable. But even if Covid is, one day, a thing of the past, another virus could take its place. And film festivals have always struggled with accessibility issues that can be mitigated by allowing people to attend from home. So perhaps hybrid festivals are the future even in the best of times. Cinema culture exists on multiple planes; it's time film festivals did too. – *Angela Watercutter, Wired*



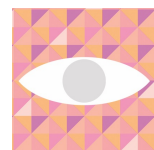
Film festivals are important to filmmakers for a number of reasons

Networking: Film festivals are often attended by industry professionals, including producers, agents, and distribution executives. This provides an opportunity for filmmakers to meet and connect with these individuals, which can be crucial for their careers.

Feedback: Film festivals can provide valuable feedback on a filmmaker's work, both from the audience and from industry professionals. This can be helpful for filmmakers to gauge the effectiveness of their work and to identify areas for improvement.

Prestige: Winning or being selected for a film festival can be a prestigious honor that can help to elevate a filmmaker's reputation and career.

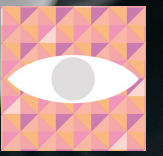
Audience engagement: Film festivals provide an opportunity for filmmakers to engage with their audience in a more intimate setting, and to discuss their work and vision with them. This can be a rewarding experience for filmmakers and can help to foster a deeper connection with their audience.



Access

Post-Pandemic, some festivals have moved to hybrid festivals, partially in-person and partially virtual. This has expanded their reach and engagement. Recently, the Silicon International Film Festival celebrated their 7th annual fest, which was completely virtual, hosted on Filmocracy. For Filmmakers, this has reduced the cost of travel, if they want to play the circuit and enabled more one-on-one conversations with distributors and agents, now that everyone is used to Zooming.

"Filmmakers don't realize that film festivals want to discover the next Steven Spielberg, Christopher Nolan and Martin Scorsese. Even though you've been rejected by a film festival in the past, don't give up. Having run for 7 going on 8 years, I love it when a filmmaker, whose film wasn't accepted in the past, comes back with a polished and fantastic film years later. The best way for a filmmaker to increase their chances of getting accepted into the festival they have their sights set upon is to attend the festival as an audience member and study why the films that were accepted, were accepted." – Christina July Kim, Founder, Silicon Valley International Film Festival.



Finally, marketing through the film festival circuit can help to create a sense of community around the film, and can help to bring together fans and supporters who are interested in the film and its message. This can be especially important for independent films, which may not have the same level of support from mainstream audiences. We believe the future is hybrid and Film Festivals will increase their reach and relevance.



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