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CINEQUEST FILM & CREATIVITY FESTIVAL LINEUP VANGUARD CINEMA & INNOVATION LUMINATE

SILICON VALLEY — [The Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival](#) (occurring March 11-23 in the Silicon Valley and March 24-31 Virtually) presents a stunning lineup of Film Premieres, AI Creativity and Thought Leadership, Maverick Events, and Celebrations under the theme *Luminate*.

Cinequest opens with Paul Walter Hauser, Walton Goggins, and David Strathairn starring in the absolutely enthralling *The Luckiest Man in America* and closes with Naomi Watts, Bill Murray, and Constance Wu starring in the superb new film *The Friend*. In between Cinequest's commitment to showcasing the latest and greatest film artists continues as Cinequest unveils 238 films (110 World & US Premieres) from 45 countries— chock-full of comedies, inspiring artistry, and diversity of culture and thought. Cinequest's renowned tech meets creativity position shines with AI Filmmaking. And Cinequest's Maverick Spirit events culminate the lineup.

OPENING & CLOSING CELEBRATIONS

Opening Night: On Tuesday, March 11th, Cinequest opens at the palatial California Theatre in San Jose with a star-studded red carpet and *The Luckiest Man in America*. An all-star cast including Paul Walter Hauser (*Black Bird*), Walton Goggins (*Justified*), Shamier Anderson (*John Wick*), David Strathairn (*Good Night, and Good Luck*), Maisie Williams (*Game of Thrones*), and Patti Harrison (*Together Together*) tell the true story of the man who stepped on to the stage of 'Press Your Luck' harboring a secret: the key to endless money. Pre-screening AI & Film presentation. Post-screening celebration at Glass House.

Closing Night: Cinequest in person concludes with the spectacular new film *The Friend*, starring Naomi Watts (*King Kong*), Bill Murray (*Lost in*

Translation), Constance Wu (*Crazy Rich Asians*) Ann Dowd (*Garden State*), Noma Dumezweni (*Presumed Innocent*), Sarah Pidgeon (*Tiny Beautiful Things*), Owen Teague (*Bloodline*), and Carla Gugino (*Watchmen*). It is a wise and insightful story of love, friendship, and healing in which a writer adopts a Great Dane that belonged to a late friend and mentor. Based on the acclaimed novel by Sigrid Nunez. Pre-screening Jury & Audience Awards announcement. Post-screening celebration at Blanco & Farmer's Union.

AI FILMMAKING AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Renowned for decades as the bastion to discover the technologies that evolve film making and distribution, Cinequest has been nicknamed *The Future of Film*. From the revolutions of digital, mobile, and internet to experimental 3-screen cinema and the worlds of Virtual and Augmented Realities, you had to be at Silicon Valley's Cinequest to be the first to discover what's new and exciting in technology as it meets creativity. It is fitting that Cinequest, in ground-zero for AI, has embraced the potential and powers of AI Film and Creativity while keeping an eye on the issues all disruptive innovations bring.

Presenting the Best-of The MIT AI Filmmaking Challenge: Prior to the Opening Night Screening, Cinequest will present the winners of the hottest film challenge around. MIT's renowned AI Filmmaking Hackathon challenges global artists to the theme of Dance in Life. AI short films and a conversation with their artists will kick-off Cinequest with bravado. Conversation will unveil how AI empowered (or challenged) film makers to create their visions.

MAVERICK EVENTS

The Spirit of the Maverick has been at the heart of Cinequest's founding and evolution, speaking to the bold, innovative, original creativity of both technologists and the world's most impactful artists.

Maverick Spirit Award Event- Artistry: Cinequest's highest honor, the Maverick Spirit Award, reflects the best of the worlds of innovation and artistry. It has been received by J.J. Abrams, Tatiana Maslany, Nicolas Cage, Sir Ian McKellen, Rosario Dawson, Harrison Ford, Michael Keaton, Sir Ben Kingsley, Spike Lee, Elle Fanning, Gemma Arterton, and Jim Gaffigan.

Cinequest proudly announces Gillian Anderson as the distinguished recipient of the 2025 Maverick Spirit Award. Renowned for her roles in *The X-Files*,

The Crown, Sex Education, The Fall, Bleak House, and so many others, Ms. Anderson will receive the award during a moderated conversation following the United States Premiere of her latest film, *The Salt Path*. Anderson, along with the magnificent Jason Isaacs (*Harry Potter, The OA*), star in the real-life story of a couple who, after losing their home and livelihood, impulsively set out on a 630-mile walk along the southwest English coast, a walk complicated to no small degree by the recent diagnosis of a terminal neurodegenerative disease. This inspiring event will occur March 22, 5:45pm at the beautiful California Theatre.

Silent Cinema at Cinequest: There is no Cinema more Maverick than Silent Cinema. Although Cinequest normally looks to the future, annually we turn back to the roots of film language and storytelling where the technologies were sprocket celluloid, carbon arc burning dual projectors, and organists. On March 21 at 7pm, step into the glamorous era of the 1920s and enjoy F.W. Murnau's thrilling *Nosferatu*. You might very well see that the original masterpiece overshadows all the great remakes. Taking the experience to the ethers, virtuosic organist, Dennis James provides the soundtrack and the emotions via his accompaniment.

[Cinequest - SILENT CINEMA: NOSFERATU](#)

LUMINATE THEME

2025 is a beacon year for Cinequest, where our forward-thinking programs, services, and experiences illuminate the path for artists, innovators, audiences, and youth worldwide. At Cinequest festivals—both physical and digital—we gather to celebrate the enlightening power of art, innovation, and community, uplifting our minds, stories, and experiences in ways that resonate deeply and brilliantly.

CINEQUEST VIRTUAL

Cinequest fans can enjoy a bounty of films and events from the comfort of their homes immediately following the in-person festival on Cinequest's virtual platform, [CINEJOY](#) from March 24-31 globally. Cinejoy continues to evolve beyond a film festival that streams movies into an experience that translates the fun, excitement, artist meets audience interactions, and power of live film events to global audiences online. In addition to online screenings available to stream 24/7 during the event, Cinejoy will include live spotlight events, interactive passports, group share, and meetup experiences.

NOTABLE CINEQUEST FILMS

Cinequest's discovery lineup will showcase 238 films (110 World & US Premieres) from 45 countries along with hundreds of presenting artists from over 45 countries including 120 women directors. Lineup highlights include:

A Little Fellow: The Legacy of A.P. Giannini | Documentary, Inspirational | Before banks in the U.S. had a branch on every corner, they were an exclusive service for the wealthy. A.P. Giannini had a dream: to serve "the little fellow" and breed prosperity within his immigrant community. But, by building trust and giving loans on a simple handshake, he created one of the largest banks in the country – Bank of America. *United States Premiere*
[Cinequest - A LITTLE FELLOW: THE LEGACY OF A.P. GIANNINI](#)

Aguadilla | Drama, Romance, Thriller | A captivating and spectacular, modern noir starring Lou Diamond Phillips (*La Bamba*, *Stand and Deliver*), Rene Moran (*Shameless*), and Alina Robert (*The Roar of the Butterflies*, *Sabado Gigante*). As passions surge and secrets unravel, a lethal triangle emerges in this labyrinth of power and intimacy. *World Premiere*
[Cinequest - AGUADILLA](#)

American Agitators | Documentary | Influential labor organizer Fred Ross (1910-1992), who trained many activists of note including Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez. Cesar Chavez is one of San Jose's most beloved historical leaders. *World Premiere* [Cinequest - AMERICAN AGITATORS](#)

BAR | Documentary | The fun and inspirational story of five people from around the U.S. who descend on the Culinary Institute of America in NYC, along with seventy other students, to participate in the world's premiere educational program on distilled spirits and mixology. While the competition is intense, the folks in this community strive to lift each other up and inspire the next generation. *World Premiere* [Cinequest - BAR](#)

Cotton Candy Bubble Gum | Comedy | One of the funniest movies you'll see this year at Cinequest, and famed comedian Morgan Jay is scheduled to join the audience for fun at the March 19th screening at the California Theatre!!! After his mom gets engaged, Carter, a 21-year-old mama's boy still living at home, must secure a paying job or find a new place to live. However, landing that gig may be an impossible task. If Carter can conquer this wildly chaotic day, he might be ready for the real world after all. | *Bay Area Premiere* [Cinequest - COTTON CANDY BUBBLE GUM](#)

The Dog | Thriller | An exciting crime thriller set in Kenya: MZ works the frantic streets of Mombasa. He's hired to drive a young escort to and from assignments, with the instruction to not, under any circumstances, get involved with her. But he falls in love the minute he lays eyes on her. What else can go wrong? | *United States Premiere* [Cinequest - THE DOG](#)

The Dreamers and I | Documentary, Inspirational | Directed by celebrated Bay Area cinematographer Kenji Yamamoto and produced by Nancy Kelly (*Thousand Pieces of Gold*). An emotionally complex story about dreams grappling with reality, following several global entrepreneurs who come to Silicon Valley to make their high-tech dreams a reality—with the help of one man and his vision: running Startup Embassy, a special “hacker house” that offers an affordable, welcoming community to migrants. *World Premiere* [Cinequest - THE DREAMERS AND I](#)

Freaky Tales | Comedy, Thriller | Starring Pedro Pascal, Tom Hanks, Ben Mendelsohn, and directed by Anna Boden and Ryan Fleck, a spectacular action comedy following four interconnected stories set in Oakland that tell about the love of music, movies, people, places, and memories beyond our knowable universe. Inspired by rapper Too Short's song of the same name (he also narrates the movie), it's a brilliant mash-up of genres from sci-fi to classic kung fu movies. | *Bay Area Premiere* [Cinequest - FREAKY TALES](#)

I'm Not An Actor | Drama | From India and starring Nawazuddin Siddiqui (*The Lunchbox*) and Chitrangada Satarupa (*Mariam*), the story of two people, one audition, and their profound connection that leads to a lasting bond that unravels their pasts, their fears, their pains, their joys, and leaves each of them forever changed *World Premiere* [Cinequest - I'M NOT AN ACTOR](#)

La Gloria | Drama | David Morse (*The Green Mile*, *12 Monkeys*, *St. Elsewhere*) in an absolutely enthralling story about a border rancher who mistakenly shoots a migrant woman and must decide whether or not to help her and risk discovery by his son, a Border Patrol agent. | *Bay Area Premiere* [Cinequest - LA GLORIA](#)

Lilly | Drama, Inspirational | When a hard-working Alabama factory supervisor discovers her company has been paying her half of what her male counterparts received for 20 years, she begins a historic fight towards justice. Academy Award nominee Patricia Clarkson fiercely portrays the remarkable life of fair pay activist Lilly Ledbetter. | *Bay Area Premiere* [Cinequest - LILLY](#)

Moonlight Warrior | Drama | From China: Dou falls in love with a pretty nurse, Jiahui. Unfortunately, Jiahui belongs to a ruthless mobster, Gang,

who is brutal to her. Dou becomes Jiahui's protector, her Moonlight Warrior, but before he comes to harm, Jiahui and Gang leave for Japan. Years pass and Jiahui returns, escaping Gang. But when Gang pursues his wife, a youthful romance becomes a deadly contest. *United States Premiere*

[Cinequest - MOONLIGHT WARRIOR](#)

Saigon Saigon | Drama | A shy, young man and a mysterious girl spend a night together in the city of Saigon. Their mutual attraction develops, and in the morning, they must decide whether their connection is worth pursuing, or if they will go their separate ways. Based on Dostoevsky's short story "White Nights." *World Premiere* [Cinequest - SAIGON SAIGON](#)

The Summer Book | Drama | Glenn Close (*Fatal Attraction, Dangerous Liaisons, The Big Chill*) stars in the beautiful story of a nine-year-old girl who is growing up fast, and her grandmother, who is nearing the end of her life. Their summer together will change them both in dramatic ways. Based on Tove Jansson's beloved novel, | *Bay Area Premiere*

[Cinequest - THE SUMMER BOOK](#)

Tiger Mom | Comedy, Family | Starring Jingchu Zhang (*Protégé*), Ken Jeong (*Crazy Rich Asians*), Michelle Krusiec (*The Invitation*), and Nathalie Boltt (*Riverdale*), a special Sneak Preview of a glorious family comedy about a first-generation Chinese-American mother who, unable to control her teenage children, enrolls them in a prestigious disciplinary school called Tiger Academy, which is capable of whipping them into Ivy League shape. *Sneak Preview Screening* [Cinequest - TIGER MOM](#)

For a comprehensive overview of our line-up and World and U.S. Premiere films, please go to www.cinequest.org.

TOP STARS & LUMINARIES IN CINEQUEST FILMS

FEATURE FILMS

Aguadilla -- Lou Diamond Phillips (*La Bamba, Stand and Deliver, Courage Under Fire*), Alina Robert (*The Roar of the Butterflies, Sábado gigante*), Rene Moran (*Stuber, Shameless*) [Cinequest - AGUADILLA](#)

American Agitators -- Fred Ross Sr. (Community Leader), Fred Ross Jr. (Community Leader), Luis Valdez (*Zoot Suit, La Bamba*) [Cinequest - AMERICAN AGITATORS](#)

Birdsong -- Chloë Levine (*The OA, Trinkets*), Rebecca Knox (*Orange is the New Black*) [Cinequest - BIRDSONG](#)

Boutique: To Preserve and Collect – Celebrated filmmakers Lizzie Borden, Joe Rubin, David Gregory, Samm Deighan, John Huckert, Lesleh Donaldson, Frank Jaffe, Carolyn Mauricette, Chris Alexander, Tori Potenza, and many, many more. [Cinequest - BOUTIQUE: TO PRESERVE AND COLLECT](#)

Burt -- Produced by David Gordon Green (*Halloween, Nutcrackers, Pineapple Express*) [Cinequest - BURT](#)

Cotton Candy Bubble Gum -- R. Marcus Taylor (*Straight Outta Compton, Baby Driver, Luke Cage*), Morgan Jay (comedian, musician, actor) [Cinequest - COTTON CANDY BUBBLE GUM](#)

Freaky Tales -- Pedro Pascal (*The Last of Us, Game of Thrones, The Mandalorian*), Tom Hanks (*Forrest Gump, Big, Bridge of Spies*), Ben Mendelsohn (*Rogue One, Captain Marvel, Slow West*) [Cinequest - FREAKY TALES](#)

The Friend – Naomi Watts (*Mulholland Drive, King Kong, The Impossible*), Bill Murray (*Lost in Translation, Rushmore, Groundhog Day*), Constance Wu (*Crazy Rich Asians, Fresh Off the Boat*), Ann Dowd (*Garden State, Hereditary*), Noma Dumezweni (*Presumed Innocent, The Little Mermaid*), Sarah Pidgeon (*Tiny Beautiful Things, The Wilds*), Owen Teague (*It, Bloodline*), Carla Gugino (*The Fall of the House of Usher, Gerald's Game, Watchmen*) [Cinequest - CLOSING NIGHT: THE FRIEND](#)

I See the Demon -- Jon Heder (*Napoleon Dynamite, Blades of Glory*) [Cinequest - I SEE THE DEMON](#)

I'm Not An Actor -- Nawazuddin Siddiqui (*The Lunchbox*), Chitrangada Satarupa (*Mariam*) [Cinequest - I'M NOT AN ACTOR](#)

La Gloria -- David Morse (*The Green Mile, 12 Monkeys, St. Elsewhere*) [Cinequest - LA GLORIA](#)

Lilly -- Patricia Clarkson (*The Station Agent, Far From Heaven, Sharp Objects*), John Benjamin Hickey (*The Walking Dead*), Thomas Sadoski (*The Newsroom, Life in Pieces, John Wick*) [Cinequest - LILLY](#)

Nora -- Lesley Ann Warren (*Victor/Victoria, Clue, In Plain Sight*) [Cinequest - NORA](#)

The Luckiest Man In America -- Paul Walter Hauser (*BlackKkKlansman*, *Black Bird*, *Cobra Kai*), Walton Goggins (*Justified*, *The Hateful Eight*, *Fallout*), Shamier Anderson (*John Wick: Chapter 4*, *Invasion*), David Strathairn (*Good Night*, and *Good Luck*, *L.A. Confidential*), Maisie Williams (*Game of Thrones*, *The New Mutants*), Patti Harrison (*Together Together*, *The Lost City*), Brian Geraghty (*Big Sky*, *Chicago*, *P.D.*), Haley Bennett (*Borderlands*, *Till*), Lilli Kay (*Yellowstone*, *Rustin*) [Cinequest - OPENING NIGHT: THE LUCKIEST MAN IN AMERICA](#)

The Salt Path -- Gillian Anderson (*The X-Files*, *The Crown*, *Sex Education*), Jason Isaacs (*Harry Potter*, *The White Lotus*, *The OA*) [Cinequest - THE SALT PATH](#)

The Summer Book -- Glenn Close (*Fatal Attraction*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Wife*) [Cinequest - THE SUMMER BOOK](#)

A Thousand Cuts -- David Hewlett (*The Shape of Water*, *Stargate: Atlantis*, *Nightmare Alley*), Jonas Chernick (*The End of Sex*, *Rabbit Hole*)
[Cinequest - A THOUSAND CUTS](#)

Tiger Mom -- Jingchu Zhang (*Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation*, *Seven Swords*), Ken Jeong (*Crazy Rich Asians*, *The Hangover*, *The Masked Singer*)
[Cinequest - TIGER MOM](#)

Time Travel Is Dangerous! -- Stephen Fry (*Godford Park*, *V for Vendetta*, *Traasure*), Jane Horrocks (*Life is Sweet*, *Little Voice*, *Absolutely Fabulous*)
[Cinequest - TIME TRAVEL IS DANGEROUS](#)

SHORTS FILMS / MUSIC VIDEOS / EPISODIC

Bulldozer -- Mary Steenburgen (*Back to the Future III*, *Time After Time*, *Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist*), Nat Faxon (*Bad Teacher*, *The Way Way Back*), Allen Leech (*Downton Abbey*, *The Imitation Game*), Harvey Guillén (*What We Do in the Shadows*, *Werewolves Within*),

Chappell Roan - "Casual" -- Chappell Roan (music artist)

The Clock -- CCH Pounder (*The Shield*, *Avatar*, *NCIS: New Orleans*), Wallace Shawn (*The Princess Bride*, *My Dinner with Andre*, *Evil*)

Come And Save Me -- Fred Armisen (*Saturday Night Live*, *Portlandia*)

Debaters -- Kenneth Lonergan (*Manchester by the Sea*, *Ripley*)

Dragfox -- Ian McKellen (*Lord of the Rings*, *Gods and Monsters*, *Richard III*)

The Girl -- Amy Acker (*Angel, Person of Interest, Alias*)

The Grievance -- Rosie O'Donnell (*A League of Their Own, Sleepless in Seattle*), Kevin Pollak (*The Usual Suspects, Better Things, The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*)

Hearts of Stone -- Noomi Rapace (*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, Prometheus*), Jessica Barden (*The Lobster, Hanna*)

Invasion '53 -- Jeffrey Combs (*Re-Animator, The Frighteners*)

Kairos -- Diedrich Bader (*Better Things, Office Space*)

Malka -- Tovah Feldshuh (*Nobody Wants This, Armageddon Time, The Walking Dead*)

Out for Delivery -- Martin Starr (*Spider-Man: Homecoming, This Is the End, Silicon Valley*)

Sleater-Kinney "Say It Like You Mean It" -- Carrie Brownstein (music artist and actor in *Portlandia*)

The Soul Trader -- Shane West (*Nikita, ER, Salem*), Donna Mills (*Knots Landing, General Hospital, Nope*)

Spit It Out -- Eric Roberts (*The Dark Knight, Runaway Train, Inherent Vice*)

Steady -- Tate Donovan (*Argo, Manchester by the Sea, Shooter*), Michael Paré (*Streets of Fire, Eddie and the Cruisers*)

Sublime Love -- Diedrich Bader (*Better Things, Office Space*)

The Ugly Chickens -- Felicia Day (*Supernatural, The Guild*)

We Should Eat -- Tovah Feldshuh (*Nobody Wants This, Armageddon Time, The Walking*)

For complete premieres lineup and available media screeners:
[**publicity@cinequest.org.**](mailto:publicity@cinequest.org)

Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival Tickets are available at
[**www.cinequest.org.**](http://www.cinequest.org)

“What differentiates Cinequest is that its founding team was a dynamic combination of artists, technologists, and leaders. You’ll find this reflected today in our Leadership Council which includes legendary innovators Steve Wozniak (co-founder Apple Inc.) and Marty Cooper (father of the cell phone), as well as producers, writers, educators, and entrepreneurs. The commonality is creativity and a commitment to open access and opportunity to all people.” – Halfdan Hussey, Co-Founder & CEO

Cinequest-Cinejoy Partners: Jay Paul Company, Adobe Foundation (ADBE), City of San Jose, James Boyce Trust & Kris Otis, Applied Materials (NASDAQ: AMAT), The Wolff Family, Kaiser Permanente, Campbell Foundation, Brandenburg Family Foundation, Bank of America (BAC), Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority - VTA, California Arts Council, Urban Community, Westbank, Metro Silicon Valley, NBC Bay Area, Telemundo 48, Capital Group, Cast & Crew, Hayes Mansion Curio Collection by Hilton, The FAY, The Continental Bar Lounge & Patio, Casino M8trix, Agile Ticketing Solutions, iHeartMedia, San Francisco Chronicle | SFGATE, Backstage, El Observador, San Mateo Journal, Content Magazine, YELP, 3Below Theaters & Café, The Morrison & Foerster Foundation, Highland Park Whisky, The Glasshouse, J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines, Drake's Brewing Company, and Redwood City Arts Commission. (This is a partial list.)

About Cinequest: Cinequest fuses innovation with the arts to empower great creations and to connect audiences, youth, artists, and innovators with these creations and with each other—forging community, joy, and our future. Set in Silicon Valley, Cinequest's uniqueness, impact, and legacy result from applying this powerful integration of creativity and technology to democratize opportunity and to transform lives. Cinequest does this through the Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival, Cinejoy Virtual Festival, and Picture The Possibilities global youth programs.

About Creatics: Creatics Enterprises is a Cinequest partner, providing the online platform for the Cinejoy Virtual Festival.

Please watch [The Story of Cinequest](#).
Please watch [Cinejoy Highlights](#).

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