

SCREEN SHOTS

The big five film festivals offer an entertainment spectacle for everyone, from fervent cinephiles to occasional movie-goers alike.

by Codie Steensma

Francois Durand/Getty Images, Connie Tiang

Cannes Film Festival



TORONTO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

CANADA

Since its founding in 1976, the audience-focused, open-to-the-public screenings of the Toronto festival have brought all the cards to the table. The awards season does not fully kick off until news from Toronto arrives in early September. An eager, passionate, and discerning audience with a local vibe keeps the tradition of heckling the ads at the beginning of a film. Toronto showcases work from more than 80 countries across genres and has developed helpful programs, like Midnight Madness, Contemporary World Cinema, and the Discovery program to guide viewers' choices.

NEXT SHOWING: September 6–16, 2018; tiff.net

Notable Premieres

Juno; *I, Tonya*; *Molly's Game*; *Silver Linings Playbook*

The Scene

There's something for everyone, and all are allowed.

Extracurriculars

Stroll through Festival Street (a promenade filled with free programming, activations, and screenings), spend the day among High Park's 400 manicured acres, or go shopping along Ossington Avenue or in the Kensington Market and Yorkville neighborhoods. Boutiques such as **Want Apothecary** (wantapothecary.com) and **Jonathan+Olivia** (jonathanandolivia.com) sell interesting Canadian brands alongside major contemporary labels like Acne, Isabel Marant, and Maison Margiela. Dining hot spots include producer Ivan Reitman-owned **Montecito Restaurant** (montecitorestaurant.ca), **Cactus Club Cafe** (cactusclubcafe.com) for casual fine dining, Canadian gastropub **Marben Restaurant** (marbenrestaurant.com), and **Fring's** (fringsrestaurant.com) for upscale comfort food. For a warm, romantic evening, **Café Cancan** (cafecancon.com) serves French fare and **Bar Isabel** (barisabel.com) has become an institution with its trendy Spanish food and prime people-watching. On the newer side, both **La Banane** (labanane.ca) for contemporary French food and California cool **La Palma Toronto** (lapalma.ca) are standouts. When it comes to cocktails, go for Grey Gardens (greygardens.ca). >

CANNES FILM FESTIVAL

FRANCE

Since its inception in 1946, Cannes has reigned as king of the international film circuit. The invitation-only event welcomes industry professionals who may have waited their entire lives to queue for the potential winner of the Palme d'Or—the festival's most prestigious prize. Cannes winners rarely go on to win at the Oscars, but the films are no less worthy. Entries have expanded to include virtual reality projects, such as last year's award-winning Alejandro G. Iñárritu installation *Carne y Arena*, chronicling immigrants crossing the Mexico-US border. This year the festival has appointed Cate Blanchett as the President of the Jury. The actress notably attended in 2015 for her role in *Carol*, directed by Todd Haynes, which did go on to receive six Academy Award nominations.

NEXT SHOWING: May 8–19, 2018; festival-cannes.com

Notable Premieres

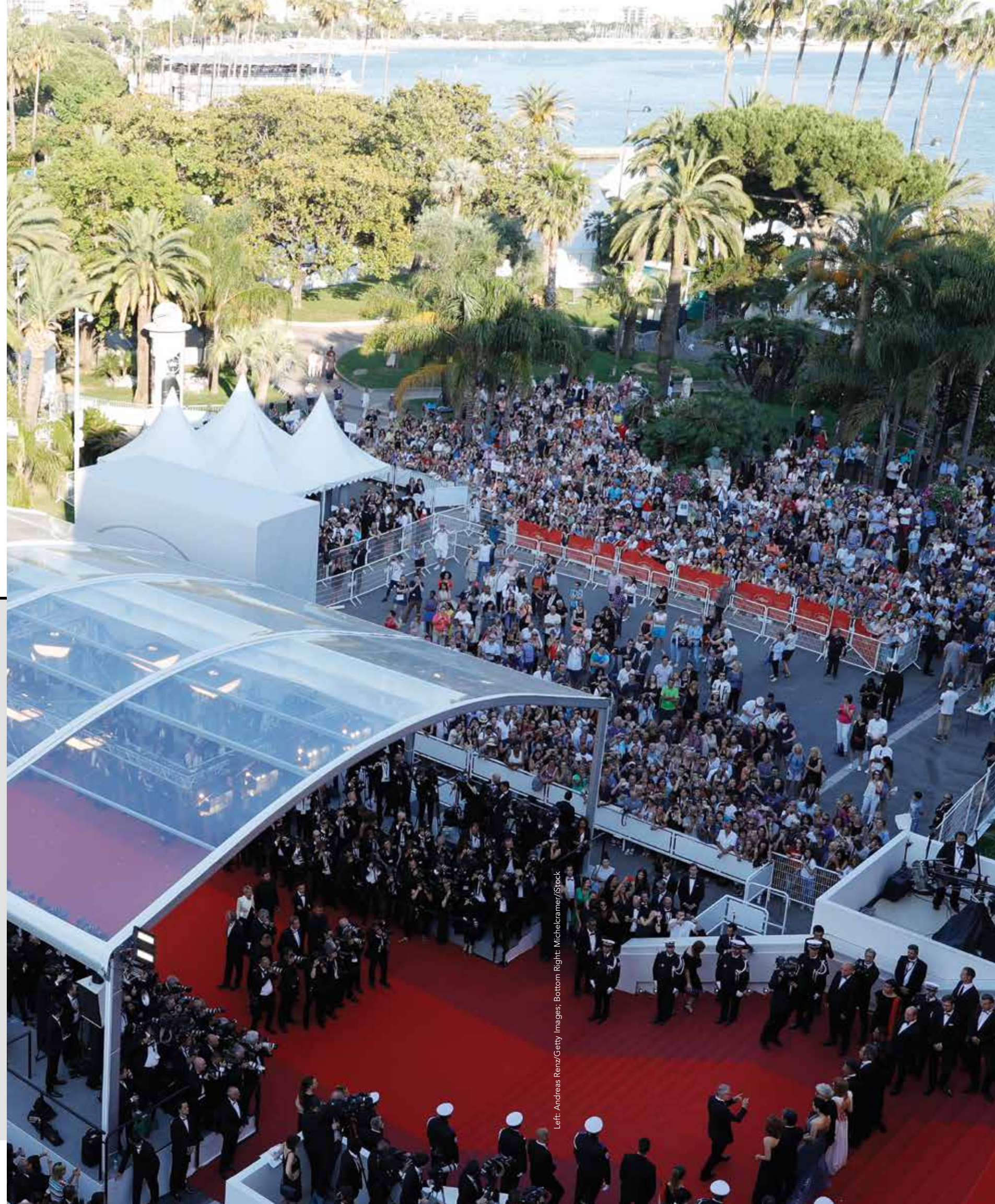
Blue Is the Warmest Color; *The Tree of Life*; *The Pianist*; *Apocalypse Now*

The Scene

A-list stars, baby-wonder directors, and the international youth elite flaunting Chanel gowns, megayachts, and Lamborghinis

Extracurriculars

Overnight at the seaside **Hotel Le Majestic** (hotelsbarriere.com). Stroll the Promenade de la Croisette and shop in boutiques along the Rue d'Antibes before a late-night showing at the Cinéma de la Plage, the festival's public, outdoor cinema. Always pack a pair of K. Jacques Tropezienne sandals, a wardrobe staple for chic Parisiennes. **Restaurant La Môme** (lamomecannes.com), a romantic setting to enjoy quality burrata and octopus, is key for spotting actresses after a night of screenings. If you like surprises, visit **La Table du Chef** (tableduchef.fr) for a four-course meal decided by the chef's daily market finds. Art space La Malmaison has rotating exhibitions of artists like Henri Matisse and Marc Chagall who, looking to get away from the bustle of Paris in the 20th century, would travel down to Nice and Antibes. Traces of their artistic influence can still be seen along the Riviera. For a worthy day trip, spend an afternoon at **Four Seasons Grand-Hotel du Cap-Ferrat** (fourseasons.com), hire an **UberCopter** (uber.com) to fly to Monaco for a day of gambling, or take a 15-minute ferry to the Lérins Islands. ▸



Left: Andreas Renz/Getty Images; Bottom Right: Michel Granger/Stock



Clockwise from center: The red carpet; Four Seasons Grand-Hotel du Cap-Ferrat; UberCopter flights.



VENICE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

ITALY

On the island Lido in the Venice Lagoon, the oldest of film festivals began in 1932. More recently Venice has been a lucky charm for Americans, premiering Oscar contender after Oscar contender. The question at hand: Does the Academy more closely align with the festival's choices, or has the festival's powers of discernment surpassed Cannes? The event screens a range of genres out of competition as well as experimental films and, like Cannes, has introduced virtual reality. While the lines can be long and crowded, they are not as impossible as the masses at Cannes.

NEXT SHOWING: August 29–September 8, 2018;
labiennale.org

Notable Premieres

Birdman; *Gravity*; *La La Land*; *The Shape of Water*; *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

The Scene

High-art aficionados, fashionistas, and wine lovers at large

Extracurriculars

The most important restaurants on Lido are **Trattoria Favorita** (+39.041.526.1626) and **Trattoria Andri** (+39.041.526.5482), both serving excellent fish and white wines. Before dinner enjoy an Aperol spritz at **Lion's Bar** (*Lungomare Marconi 31*), which has a terrace overlooking the red carpet. Should you want to haunt Hemingway, visit his favorite Bar Longhi at the renovated **Gritti Palace, a Luxury Collection Hotel** (thegrittipalace.com). The beach is never far so rent a *capanno* or *lettino* across from festival headquarters the Palazzo del Cinema and sleep off the drinks. For contemporary art, stop by **Palazzo Fortuny** (fortuny.visitmuve.it) and appreciate Old World masterpieces at the churches Chiesa di San Sebastiano and I Gesuiti. To rub elbows with actors, try **Harry's Bar** (cipriani.com), with its famous guestbook entries from the likes of Charlie Chaplin. **Hotel Bauer Venezia's B Bar Lounge** (bauervenezia.com) hosts live music throughout the festival. ▸



Top Left: ANDREA AVEZZI/Bottom Right: Alessandro Borghi; Top Right: Piero Bonbon/Alamy Stock Photo



Clockwise from top left: Festival headquarters; Palazzo Fortuny; Venice Film Festival Director Alberto Barbera; Gritti Palace on the Grand Canal.



Clockwise from right: The red carpet; La Banca Bar at Hotel De Rome; the city's cultural center, Berlin Kulturforum.



BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

GERMANY

Dubbed the Berlinale, the festival kicked off in 1951 with Alfred Hitchcock's *Rebecca* and a founding motto that all film festivals should contribute to better understanding between nations and support development of the art of film and the film industry. The event has grown to be the world's largest film festival for the public: The 2017 iteration saw more than 21,000 professionals from 127 countries and sold approximately 334,000 tickets. Drawing Hollywood stars alongside art, business, and fashion personalities, audiences are avid, lively, and eclectic. For the first time in the festival's history, the 2018 Berlinale opened with an animated film—Wes Anderson's *Isle of Dogs*. The event prides itself as a major marketplace for the international film industry and, with the help of the European Film Market, it provides space for new encounters and collaborations. Beyond the Berlinale, this city of cineastes hosts film competitions and festivals all year long, including the Berlin Fashion Film Festival in July, the Short Film Festival June 28–July 1, and Down Under Berlin in September.

NEXT SHOWING: February 2019; berlinale.de

Notable Premieres

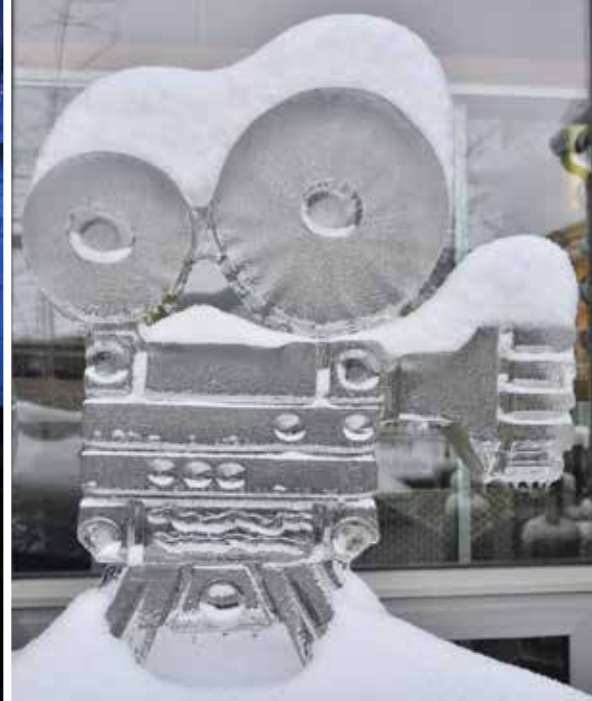
Rebecca; Rain Man; The Grand Budapest Hotel; Logan

The Scene

Gallery-goers, legendary nightclub enthusiasts, and organic coffee gurus

Extracurriculars

Berlin has some of the greatest museums in the world, and many are located near the festival venue. Walk over to the **Berlin Kulturforum** (kulturforum-berlin.info), a collection of modernist buildings housing museums, concert halls, and libraries. The city has its own Museum Island nestled in the Spree river in the central Mitte district. Explore its five museums and then walk along Unter den Linden boulevard, which runs from City Palace to Brandenburg Gate. Actors, actresses, and VIPs frequent Vox restaurant inside the **Grand Hyatt Berlin** (berlin.grand.hyatt.com) and the two-Michelin-star restaurant **Facil** (facil.de). There's an excellent street food market during the festival, offering everything from Korean soul food to noodles from the Swabia region in southern Germany. Other foodie highlights include Peruvian eatery **Chicha Berlin** (chicha-berlin.de), the indulgent brunch at **The Store Kitchen** (thestores.com), the hummus plate at **Kanaan** (kanaan-berlin.de), and the local favorite for ice cream, **Jones** (jonesicecream.com). **Berliner Prater Garten** (pratergarten.de) is the city's oldest biergarten, with capacity for 600 people. A quieter evening can be had at **Hotel De Rome's La Banca Bar** (roccoportehotels.com) or **Neue Odessa Bar** (neueodessabar.de). ▸



SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

PARK CITY, UTAH

Hosting both dramatic and documentary competitions for American and international independent filmmakers, the festival has been notorious for taking risks since its inception in 1985 and has grown to be the largest independent film festival in the United States. Sundance Institute, a nonprofit organization supporting film, theater, and new media, was founded in 1981 by Robert Redford. The festival attracts edgy, indie sensations and 2018 was no exception. Taking a top Grand Jury Prize this year was *The Miseducation of Cameron Post*, a coming-of-age story featuring Chloë Grace Moretz as a young girl forced into a gay conversion therapy center. Sundance has long supported female-directed work, and this year's lineup saw many films by and about women, including Toni Collette starring in *Hereditary*, Laura Dern in *The Tale*, and Maggie Gyllenhaal in *The Kindergarten Teacher*.

NEXT SHOWING: January 24–February 4, 2019; sundance.org

Notable Premieres

Whiplash; *Reservoir Dogs*; *Fruitvale Station*; *Manchester by the Sea*

The Scene

Indie veterans, ski enthusiasts, and an all-around friendly crowd

Extracurriculars

Sundance is known as one of the best weeks for skiing local mountains because the slopes are empty while everyone is mingling and watching movies. Find some of the best snow in the United States at **Deer Valley Resort** (deervalley.com); **Park City Mountain Resort** (parkcitymountain.com) is the largest ski resort in North America. On Main Street, built like the rest of downtown during a 19th-century silver mining boom, stop in **Wahso** (wahso.com) for its 1930s Shanghai-inspired interiors and French and Asian classics. Then walk a couple of blocks over to the **High West Distillery** (highwest.com) to taste local whiskeys.



Clockwise from top left: Screening films; movie camera ice sculpture; one of numerous discussion panels; a fireworks display.



SMALL BUT MIGHTY

Three more intimate fests worth noting

THE NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL Manhattan

Highlighting the year's best in world cinema as well as new talent since it opened at Lincoln Center in 1963, this festival is for anyone unable to make it to Cannes, Venice, Berlin, and the others. For spectators, New York remains the surest way to view many of the year's most important films. Last year's program included *Call Me by Your Name*, *Lady Bird*, and *Mudbound*. A large number of Cannes-debuted films are screened here, including 2017's *Wonderstruck* and *The Square*. It's important to give items a standing ovation, and almost everyone stays for the Q&A sessions after screenings.

NEXT SHOWING: September 28–October 14, 2018; filmlinc.org

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST

Austin, Texas

Continually growing in size and scale, SXSW aims to bring together film, interactive media, advertising, and music. Mixing major motion pictures with small indies and attendees looking to network with others hoping to learn, the festival maintains a charmingly casual feel. The 25th edition will open with Emily Blunt's and John Krasinski's horror film *A Quiet Place*. Last year opened with the director Terrence Malick's love story *Song to Song*. While the festival is highly explorative, showcasing technological advances by prominent startups in the tech sector, the film selections remain the most rewarding.

NEXT SHOWING: March 9–18, 2018; sxsw.com

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL

Colorado

Held over Labor Day weekend since 1973 against a backdrop of formidable mountains and abundant stars, the laid-back festival is a film geek's best-kept secret and a favorite of American film critics. It keeps to an informal tradition that eligible films must be shown for the first time in North America. Impressive past premieres include *Brokeback Mountain*, *The Imitation Game*, and *Moonlight*. Some may deem them kooky, but the festival and its opinionated critics have discovered some of the best avant-garde works of our time.

NEXT SHOWING: August 31–September 3, 2018; telluridefilmfestival.org ♦



From top: A conversation with Kate Winslet at The New York Film Festival; a South by Southwest marquee; outdoor screening at Telluride Film Festival.

