



www.athensfest.org
P.O. Box 388 Athens, OH 45701
Athensohiofilmfest@gmail.com
Phone: (740) 593-1330

For Immediate Release

Athens International Film + Video Festival begins its 44th edition on April 3rd

AIFVF Announces Its Special Events for 2017

Athens International Film + Video Festival officially begins its 44th edition on April 3rd. Like previous years, the festival features a variety of special events that include movie screenings at the Athena Cinema and interviews with visiting filmmakers. Receptions or after-parties providing a unique opportunity for diverse cultural interaction follow many of the events.

This year's festival features eight special events that include screenings followed by interviews and talks with the prestigious artists in attendance, such as film and video artist Martha Rosler, Ohio University Eminent Scholar and renowned filmmaker Rajko Grlić, activist filmmaker Sabaah Folayan, filmmaker and curator Margaret Rorison, as well as performance artists Dani Leventhal and Sheilah Wilson (festival jurors) and writers Lisa Donato & Fawzia Mirza fresh from the SXSW premiere of their new film *Signature Move*. The special event for Barbara Kopple's 1976 feature film *Harlan County U.S.A.* will be followed by a discussion with local filmmaker Jack Wright and artist/activist Jerry Johnson a former coal miner and producer on the film.

The festival additionally features a special screening of Michael Radford's *1984* (an adaptation of George Orwell's novel of the same name). This event is a part of a collective effort by approximately 90 art house movie theatres across the country and is co-sponsored by the Athena Cinema.

Founded in 1974, the Athens International Film + Video Festival has been presenting the best in international film for 43 years. Known globally as a festival that supports cinema from underground and marginalized populations, the AIFVF represents the values that we share as a community. It is a champion of justice and provides a voice for underrepresented artists and viewpoints on a global level. For over four decades, the AIFVF has embraced experimental, narrative, short-form, feature length, and documentary films from every corner of the globe, offering filmmakers a stellar platform for public exposure and an environment that values artistry above marquee names and industry relationships. **The Athens International Film + Video Festival is administered by The Athens Center for Film and Video, a project of the College of Fine Arts at Ohio University.**

This year's festival takes place **April 3rd – 9th, 2017** at the historic **Athena Cinema**.

For more information and photos see: www.athensfest.org/press

Media Contact: David Colagiovanni - athensohiofilmfest@gmail.com - 740-593-1330

Social Media: *Instagram:* @aifvf - *Facebook:* [facebook.com/aifvf](https://www.facebook.com/aifvf) - *Twitter:* @athensfilmfest



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2017 Special Events

Martha Rosler - In Person: Monday, April 3, 6:00 PM *FREE

Rosler's screening will be followed with an interview conducted by Laura Larson.

Since the early 1970s, Martha Rosler has used video, photography, performance, and writing as vehicles for incisive social and political analyses of contemporary culture. Rosler's video works, often articulated with deadpan wit, investigate how socioeconomic realities and political ideologies play out in everyday life. She has periodically addressed, in performance, writing, and video, the role of cooking in women's lives, from family life to fast-food joints to immigrant household workers. Other works, in video and various media, look at questions of housing and neighborhood life. A significant group of works deals with the news and its relation to questions of surveillance and political identity, as well as other features of the national security state in the US and its effects abroad.

This event is presented in association with The School of Art + Design at Ohio University.

Sabaah Folayan - In Person: Tuesday, April 4, 7:00 PM

Presenting:

Whose Streets?

Directors: Sabaah Folayan/Damon Davis, Documentary, 90 min, USA

The activists and leaders who live and breathe this movement for justice bring you *Whose Streets?* – a documentary about the Ferguson uprising. When unarmed teenager Michael Brown is killed by police and then left lying in the street for hours, it marks a breaking point for the residents of St. Louis County.

1984 - Tuesday, April 4, 9:15 PM

Director: Michael Radford
Narrative, 117 min, UK

On April 4, 2017, almost 90 art house movie theaters across the country in 79 cities and in 34 states, plus one location in Canada, will be participating collectively in a NATIONAL EVENT DAY screening of the 80's movie 1984 starring John Hurt, who sadly died last month. This date was chosen because it's the day George Orwell's protagonist Winston Smith begins rebelling against his oppressive government by keeping a forbidden diary.

This event is presented in association with the Athena Cinema.

Margaret Rorison - In Person: Wednesday, April 5, 5:00 PM *FREE

Margaret Rorison is a filmmaker and curator from Baltimore, Maryland. Her work often comes from solitary walks through rural and urban landscapes, using in-camera editing techniques and field recordings to create form and find structure. She is interested in the visceral nature of memory and its dialogue within space and experience. In 2012, Rorison co-founded the experimental film and workshop series, *Sight Unseen* and has been an active curator of the series since then.

Dani Leventhal and Sheilah Wilson - In Person: Thursday, April 6, 5:30 PM *FREE

Dani Leventhal was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio and is currently Assistant Professor of Art at Ohio State. In 2003 she received an MFA in studio arts from the University of Illinois at Chicago and in 2009 an MFA in film/video from Bard College.

Sheilah Wilson was born and raised in Caribou River, Nova Scotia and is currently Associate Professor Photography at Denison University. She has BFA from NSCAD University and MFA from Goldsmiths College. Most recently she has been working on projects analyzing the traces between history, story and the land.



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2017 Special Events

Lisa Donato & Fawzia Mirza - In Person: Friday, April 7, 7:15 PM

Signature Move
Director: Jennifer Reeder
Writers: Lisa Donato & Fawzia Mirza
Narrative, 80 min, USA

A secret new romance with Alma forces Zaynab to confront her complicated relationship with her recently widowed mother. In this coming-of-age Muslim melodrama, Zaynab copes by taking up Lucha-style wrestling.

Harlan County U.S.A (1976) - Introduction and post screening discussion with Jack Wright and Jerry Johnson: Saturday, April 8, 5:15 PM

Director: Barbara Kopple
Documentary, 103 min, USA

Barbara Kopple's Academy Award-winning *Harlan County U.S.A.* unflinchingly documents a grueling coal miners' strike in a small Kentucky town. With unprecedented access, Kopple and her crew captured the miners' sometimes-violent struggles with strikebreakers, local police, and company thugs. Featuring a haunting soundtrack—with legendary country and bluegrass artists Hazel Dickens, Merle Travis, Sarah Gunning, and Florence Reece—the film is a heartbreaking record of the thirteen-month struggle between a community fighting to survive and a corporation dedicated to the bottom line.

Jerry Johnson is a coal miner who was on strike with his fellow miners in Kentucky when Barbara Kopple began filming *Harlan County U.S.A.* Johnson played a very active role in helping organize the strike and also plays a prominent role in the film. Now a landscaper, he manages black lung disease and lives in Casey County, Kentucky.

Jack Wright is no coal miner's daughter, but the grandson of a coal miner and a nephew of coal miners. In 2007 he released *Music of Coal*, a book and CD anthology celebrating the Appalachian coal-fields and culture. Wright taught at OU's Film School for 22 years retiring in 2011. He continues performing music, being involved in filmmaking, and living in Athens, Ohio with his wife Sharon, and their dog, Princess Fiona Barker.

Rajko Grlić - In Person: Sunday, April 9, 5 :00 PM

Every Good Story is a Love Story
Directors: Rajko Grlić and Matjaž Ivanišin
Documentary, 71 min, Slovenia, Croatia

Every Good Story is a Love Story is a film about the theatrical play "Boris, Milena, Radko" and the four publicly well-known people who produced it—the writer-director Dušan Jovanović, actress Milena Zupančič and two actors Radko Polić and Boris Cavazza. It is a story about a love triangle and in many respects, without any hiding, about the public artistic and private lives of these performers. Following a four-month-long process from the first rehearsal to opening night as well as the intimate lives of artists at the same time, the film tells a universal story of the relationship between the real and the imagined, a story of the relationship between the intimate and the public aspects of art.

Rajko Grlić was born in 1947 in Zagreb, Croatia. As director and scriptwriter he has worked on twelve feature films, which have been shown in cinemas across all five continents. He is Ohio Eminent Scholar in Film at Ohio University.