

# SUPERFEST DISABILITY FILM FESTIVAL



@SUPERFESTFILM  
SUPERFESTFILM.ORG



#SUPERFEST2023  
OCTOBER 19-22



**PRODUCED BY LONGMORE INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY**



Still from Fire Through Dry Grass



## DIRECTORS' NOTE, SUPERFEST 2023

Superfest has always been a place where disabled people's experiences do not have to be censored for nondisabled audiences, and this year's lineup particularly illustrates the power in disability-forward storytelling. The 2023 films couldn't be more unique. When we look at the 2023 line-up, the films couldn't be more unique, whether it's a man epically attempting to swat a mosquito or a groovy dance party at a social services office. Yet they all share a common theme – they explore intimate and vulnerable situations that disabled people must navigate in daily living. Mainstream media continues to oversimplify disability experiences, thinking audiences can't handle anything more. But Superfest's audience is proof that there is a market hungry for content that goes beneath surface-level themes. And we find these stories by centering the perspectives of the disabled community that are by the disabled community. 100% of our jury identify as disabled people. In addition, we are grateful that this year marks the return of a disabled person to the directorship (Shaina Ghuraya), who first connected with our festival in 2020 as a filmmaker and understands the impact Superfest has. Shaina was drawn to Superfest because it is a place where disabled experiences are expanded upon to show all our intersectional intricacies.

With the ongoing writers' and actors' strikes in Hollywood, the industry's shortcomings are being re-examined, and

greater push to tear down the gatekeepers that keep stories like these out. This year's Superfest is a testament to the creativity that is ripe in our community. These films are bold, quirky, and unapologetic, but above all else, these are stories people have never seen on screen before. We can't wait to share them with you and learn what you think!

**In solidarity,  
Shaina Ghuraya and  
Emily Beitiks  
Superfest Co-Directors**



## FESTIVAL ACCESS

### **Access updates at Superfest:**

Each year we work to ensure high-quality audio descriptions for blind and low-vision Superfest attendees. We recognize that open audio description creates barriers for others with sensory-processing disabilities, while closed audio description can be frustrating for users navigating new platforms and apps. Following last year's successful collaboration with DiCapta Foundation to use their All4Access app for in-person screenings, we will continue utilizing their platform this year. For our virtual participants, audio descriptions can be toggled on with the click of a button for all films.

For other details and access information for Saturday, [click here](#).  
For other details and access information for Sunday, [click here](#).

### **Accessing our online platform:**

If you experience tech difficulties, try these things first:

1. Make sure your internet connection is secure, and ideally, use a wired connection.
2. Try launching Eventive from a different browser.
3. For troubleshooting tech problems on Eventive, visit their [help page](#). They also have a live chat support function at the bottom of the page.
4. For non-Eventive related questions or if the live chat isn't working for you, reach out to us at [pklinst@sfsu.edu](mailto:pklinst@sfsu.edu).

### **Join the Conversation!**

Please use **#Superfest2023** hashtag.



# ABOUT SUPERFEST'S HOME

## THE PAUL K. LONGMORE INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY

at San Francisco State University envisions a society where everyone believes the world is better because of disabled people. We study and showcase disabled people's experiences to revolutionize social views. Through public education, scholarships, and cultural events, the Longmore Institute shares disability history and theory, promotes critical thinking and builds a broader community. As access consultants and trainers, we call upon the best disability stories to educate communities and advocate for access that goes beyond compliance. 2023 marks the eleventh year that the Longmore Institute has produced Superfest Disability Film Festival.



**Follow us on Social Media!**

[Twitter @longmoreinst](https://twitter.com/longmoreinst)

[Instagram @longmoreinst](https://www.instagram.com/longmoreinst)

[facebook.com/sfsudisability](https://www.facebook.com/sfsudisability)

EMAIL: [pklinst@sfsu.edu](mailto:pklinst@sfsu.edu)

Saturday, October 21,  
**Freight and Salvage**  
2020 Addison St, Berkeley, CA

Sunday, October 22,  
**The Asian Art Museum**  
200 Larkin St, San Francisco, CA

# SUPERFEST AT-A-GLANCE

## SATURDAY SCHEDULED FILMS 12-2 pm PST

(Un)fit to Work

Me If I Were A Woman

Whose Voice Is It Anyway

Invisible World

Chronic

Culicidae

As You Are

## SUNDAY SCHEDULED FILMS 1-3:30 pm PST

Take Me Home

We Make Film

The Beauty of Being Deaf

## ONLINE ONLY

Fire Through Dry Grass

Abi Palmer Invents the Weather (Light)

We Care

Of Kisses and Capes

Uonted!

All films can be watched online  
by unlocking the "Saturday  
Screening" or "Sunday Screening"  
options with your digital pass.





# SATURDAY



## **(Un)fit to Work**

UK, 2022  
(Experimental Short, 5 min.)`

A disabled mechanic takes us on a musical journey of 80s disco & ballroom after his local job center denies him access to work.



## **Me If I Were A Woman**

France, 2022  
(Dramatic Short, 27 min.)

Juliette, a 19-year-old with Down syndrome, is experiencing her first love, but her romance is quickly upended when Juliette is pressured by her mother and doctors to undergo sterilization surgery because of her disability. She has only a short time to make a decision and make her voice heard.



## **Whose Voice Is It Anyway** **Jury's Choice Award**

UK, 2022  
(Mockumentary Short, 5 min.)

A darkly funny mockumentary about two identically disabled forty-year-old women, Lottie and Charlie, who have athetoid cerebral palsy. Both celebrate their 40th birthday with family and friends—one is given the choice and the ability to communicate, and the other is not.

# SATURDAY



## Invisible World

USA, 2023  
(Experimental Short, 5 min.)

To apply for a disabled parking placard, a doctor within the state must approve the application. As part of the application, there are six medical conditions which qualify a person for a placard. Many people with disabilities are included in these categories, and many are not. This film is a record of the filmmaker's introduction to healthcare in the state of Utah. Her processing of the appointment and consequential aftermath as a video object serves as a reclamation and assertion for understanding disability and the physical world otherwise.



## Chronic

Canada, 2022  
(Dramatic Short, 9 min.)

Following a traumatic brain injury, a young woman's recovery is interrupted when her friends insist she come out for a birthday party. After reinjuring herself, she takes the first step in her new life by joining a chronic pain support group.



## Culicidae

### Innovation in Craft Award

Australia, 2022  
(Dramatic Short, 6 min.)

A mosquito's late night intrusion leads to a life and death struggle.





## **As You Are** **Best of Festival Award**

USA, 2023  
(Dramatic Short, 15 min.)

When an interabled queer couple spends the night together for the first time, they must confront their complex relationships with desire, sexuality, bodily autonomy, and what it means truly to love another person.



## **Take Me Home**

USA, 2022  
(Dramatic Short, 16 min.)

After their mother's death, a woman with a cognitive disability and her estranged sister must learn to communicate to move forward?



## **We Make Film** **Advocacy Award**

India, 2021  
(Documentary Feature, 80 min.)

Across three cities in India, We Make Film presents the intersection of four filmmakers' experiences in a documentary that rethinks accessibility, allyship, and collaboration in filmmaking today, and dreams of an inclusive, creative future for all of us.



## **The Beauty of Being Deaf**

USA, 2023  
(Experimental Short, 3 min.)

Artist, director, and author Chella Man presents a meditation on Deaf identity and language—underwater.

## **Chella Man in conversation with Superfest co-director Shaina Ghuraya**

Join us after Sunday's Superfest screenings at the Asian Art Museum for a panel and Q&A with filmmaker, actor, artist, and activist Chella Man, moderated by Superfest Co-Director Shaina Ghuraya.

Chella Man is a New York-based artist, director, and author whose work features the continuums of disability, race, gender, and sexuality, informed by his Deaf, trans, Jewish, and Chinese identities. Chella made his acting debut in the second season of DC's "Titans" as Jericho, a crime-fighter that uses sign language to communicate. Chella is also the filmmaker of Superfest 2023's "The Beauty of Being Deaf," an experimental short film that meditates on Deaf identity and language underwater.

Sunday's program is co-presented with  
the Center For Asian American Media



# CAAM

CENTER FOR ASIAN AMERICAN MEDIA



# EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE SCREENING



## **Fire Through Dry Grass** **Director's Choice Award**

USA, 2022 (Feature, 86 min.)

This film uncovers in real-time, and with singular access, the devastation experienced by residents of a New York City nursing home during the coronavirus pandemic. Co-directors Alexis Neophytides and Andres "Jay" Molina take viewers inside Coler, on Roosevelt Island, where Jay lives with his fellow Reality Poets, a creative group of mostly gun violence survivors. *Fire Through Dry Grass* shows these disabled Black and brown artists refusing to be abused, confined, or erased.



## **Abi Palmer Invents the Weather (Light)**

UK, 2023  
(Documentary/Experimental Short, 10 min.)

A literal and abstract take on the spring season, Abi Palmer documents translating spring into a cat-accessible format for her indoor cats. The film's voiceover, written and narrated by Palmer, serves as a love letter to Palmer's cats and the climate, culminating in a playful meditation on disability, climate, and life that can't talk back. "Light" is the third film in the series "Abi Palmer invents the Weather," chronicling Palmer's year-long process of performing the outside world for her indoor cats.



## **We Care**

UK, 2022  
(Dramatic Short, 16 min.)

Annie is surprised to find that her new carer happens to be a man, a manly man, a very manly man. This beautiful and funny piece takes a dark turn with devastating consequences when Annie is let down by the system that is meant to take care of her.



# EXCLUSIVELY ONLINE SCREENING



## Of Kisses and Capes

Germany, 2023  
(Dramatic Short, 27 min.)

Isi and Finn are planning their first time. This proves to be a difficult endeavor when their insecurities and lack of communication almost jeopardize their relationship.



## Uonted!

Italy, 2018  
(Dramatic Short, 13 min.)

Excitement is brewing in a social co-op for a group of disabled people as they debate the destination for their next trip. Tiziano, however, does not want to hear about democratic votes: he wants to go to Cinecittà World, a movie themed amusement park, to visit the old west. What will he invent when he discovers that the attraction is different from how he imagined it?

## Virtual Synchronous Program

**Superfest Community Conversation**  
Saturday, Oct. 21st, 5-7 pm PT / 8-10 pm ET

Once you've watched some of the films from Superfest 2023, join us to chat with some of the filmmakers and other Superfest attendees to share your reactions with the Superfest community, moderated by our Cafe Crip leader, Bianca Laureano. What did you love? Which film gave you that moment of joy, seeing your story told without stereotypes or pity? What was your best laugh? What film went over your head? ASL and live captioning are provided. Some filmmakers will be present!

Register here: [tinyurl.com/CCSuperfest](https://tinyurl.com/CCSuperfest)  
[Join Zoom Meeting](#)  
Meeting ID: 834 1066 5016  
Passcode: superfest



# JUDGING

## MEET OUR 2023 JURY



### Thank you to our jury for Superfest 2023:

Phase 1: Nathan Burns, Kristen Campos, Laelah Jackson, The Lightning System, Bayley Van  
Phase 2: (Pictured Above) Matthew Alaniz, Nathan Burns, Shaina Ghuraya, Cheryl Green, Catherine Kudlick, Monica Lucas, Ajani Murray, Raphael Raphael, Thomas Reid

## What makes a film stand out to Superfest judges?

Telling a complex, unusual story from the perspective of people with disabilities.

Highlighting intersections with BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and other identities that shape human existence.

Going beyond showing a lone disabled person overcoming their disability.

Showing stories that celebrate disability as a creative and generative force in cinema.

**People with disabilities call the shots on both sides of the camera!**

**Because Superfest is all about celebrating disability expertise and a "Nothing About Us Without Us" philosophy, 100% of our jurors proudly identify as people with disabilities.**



## ABOUT THE AWARDS

### DISABILITY JUSTICE AWARD

#### ME IF I WERE A WOMAN

A film that explores intersectional topics and best conveys the relationship between disability and the unequal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges in society.

### BEST OF FESTIVAL

#### AS YOU ARE

The most outstanding film entered in the festival.

### P.K. WALKER INNOVATION IN CRAFT AWARD

#### CULICIDAE

The film with the most innovative use of filmmaking techniques to encourage exploration of the experiences of people with disabilities. This award honors Pamela K. Walker's contribution to Superfest.

### DIRECTOR'S CHOICE AWARD

#### FIRE THROUGH DRY GRASS

An exceptional film that showcases experiences that have never been documented before, awarded by Superfest Co-Directors.

### ADVOCACY AWARD

#### WE MAKE FILM

A film that best explores issues of concern to disability communities.

### LIANE YASUMOTO JURY'S CHOICE AWARD

#### WHOSE VOICE IS IT ANYWAY

For a singularly outstanding film not recognized in other award category (named for the former festival director).



# TOGETHER WE BUILD THIS COMMUNITY

Superfest is made possible by the generosity of foundations, corporations, and individuals who believe in the power of disabled people telling their own stories through the unparalleled medium of film. Promote the arts and disability rights. Elevate your brand recognition and responsibility. Sponsor Superfest!

Your contribution advances the work of disabled artists by providing a platform where they can share their stories and receive recognition for their creative achievements.

As one human being, you can help give underrepresented filmmakers a platform to screen cutting-edge cinema that shares their perspective and truth.

Your sponsorship of Superfest Disability Film Festival will benefit a broad network of people, amplifying your individual generosity to many tens of thousands through press and social media outreach.

Visit [superfestfilm.org/support](https://superfestfilm.org/support) and sponsor disability community today!





## **SUPERFEST YEAR-ROUND**

Share the thought-provoking and entertaining films of Superfest with your community! We hold Superfest showcases at libraries, film venues, non-profits, schools and corporations throughout the region and beyond. We will work with you to select the best films for your audience and facilitate a discussion with your community.

If you want to bring Superfest to your community in person or virtually, email Emily Beitiks at:

**[beitiks@sfsu.edu](mailto:beitiks@sfsu.edu)**

“It was probably one of the most captivating and meaningful assemblies to me personally. It made me emotional and happy when I got to see all the effort into making those films, and hearing from the director himself was incredible.”

— Student and Attendee of Jewish Community High School of the Bay Showcase





# Thank you to our Superfest 2023 sponsors and foundations:

## Sponsors:

### LEAD SPONSOR

Sally Vitello

### GOLD



### FOUNDATION SUPPORT



### In-kind support from:

The Asian Art Museum

The College of Liberal and Creative Arts at  
San Francisco State University

The DiCapta Foundation

The Disability Programs and Resource Center  
at San Francisco State University &  
Social Audio Description

In addition to our jurors, Superfest would like to express our gratitude for a few individuals who continue to advocate for Superfest and worked to help make this festival possible:

Alex Locust, Allison Wykoff, Andrea Hirsig, Angie Petty, Bayley Van, Bird Sellergren, Cheryl Green, Dagny Brown, Indra Mungal, Januario Rosa, Jim LeBrecht and Sara Bolder, Karen Nakamura, Nate Tilton, our interpreter and captioner event team, Regan Brashear, Roberto Santiago, Sally Vitello, Sandy Ho, The Berkeley Disability Lab, The Longmore Institute Advisory Council, & The University Corporation team.

Program designed by Bird Sellergren,  
Longmore Student Fellow