



# Hamptons Documentary Film Festival Returns with New Name & Five Days of Films

November 29, 2018

by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

Hamptons Take 2 Documentary Film Festival is ushering in its second decade with a new look, a new name and a full five days of films, all screening at Bay Street Theater in Sag Harbor. Opening on Thursday, November 29, 2018 and continuing through Monday, December 3, 2018, expect to find quality documentaries to watch, the chance to vote on your favorite, a gala and plenty of talk backs where the making of the films spring to life in a personal way by those who have a connection to them.

Under its new name—the Hamptons Doc Fest—it opens its 11th annual festival with a full slate of films and will honor Sheila Nevins with the Career Achievement Award.

“Entering our 11th year, now with an ‘all docs, all year’ mantra, we are proud to stake our claim to a new, more succinct name that reflects our passion for the non-fiction film genre,” executive director and founder Jacqui Lofaro stated in the festival announcement.

## SPOTLIGHT FILMS

Evenings are prime screening times with each night featuring a stellar film.

### **THURSDAY OPENING NIGHT FILM, Nov. 29, 8 p.m.**

Selected as Opening Night Film is **“Every Act of Life”** (93 min), directed by Jeff Kaufman, who pays loving tribute to Terrence McNally, the multiple award-winning playwright, librettist, screenwriter and ardent fighter for LGBTQ rights when that was not the norm.

Born in Texas, McNally graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Columbia University, traveled the world as tutor to John Steinbeck’s children, and went on to write dozens of groundbreaking plays and musicals. His four Tonys were awarded for “Kiss of the Spider Woman,” “Love! Valour! Compassion!,” “Ragtime,” and “Master Class.”

In 2018 he was inducted into the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters. Now 80, he is currently working on three new plays. Film-goers will be able to see him in person at Bay Street for the post-film Q&A. in conversation with actor Harris Yulin. Opening Night is sponsored by People’s United Bank.

### **FRIDAY NIGHT SPOTLIGHT, Nov. 30, 8 p.m.**

The Friday Night Spotlight film, **“Carmine Street Guitars”** (80 min), co-presented with the Sag Harbor Cinema Arts Center, features a cast of prominent musicians and artists and captures five days in the life of Carmine Street Guitars, a shop in Greenwich Village where custom guitar maker Rick Kelly (guitar maker for the likes of Bob Dylan and Lou Reed) and apprentice Cindy Hulej build hand-crafted guitars out of reclaimed wood.

A Q&A follows the screening, with Giulia D’Agnolo Vallan, artistic director of the Sag Harbor Cinema Arts Center, interviewing the film’s award-winning director Ron Mann and legendary guitarist G.E. Smith of Amagansett, formerly head of the SNL Band and guitarist for Pink Floyd’s recent worldwide tour.



Film still from “Carmine Street Guitars.” Courtesy of Hamptons Doc Fest.

### **SATURDAY NIGHT GALA, CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, Dec. 1, 7 p.m.**

Veteran producer and president of HBO Documentary Films for nearly 40 years (1979 to spring 2018), **Sheila Nevins** will be honored with the Lumiere Career Achievement Award at the festival’s Gala on Saturday, December 1, after a wine and buffet reception which begins at 7 p.m. Hamptons Doc Fest is proud to welcome Nevins as a producer and executive producer of more than 1,500 documentaries which have won a total of 33 Primetime Emmy® Awards, 36 News and Documentary Emmys, 42 George Foster Peabody Awards and 26 Academy Awards®. A

After the award presentation, Nevins will be interviewed by award-winning filmmaker Mark Levin, followed by two of her executive-produced films: “Triangle: Remembering the Fire” (40 min), about the Triangle Shirt Waist Factory fire in 1911, and “The Number on Great Grandpa’s Arm,” (19 min), about an Auschwitz survivor.

### **SUNDAY NIGHT SPOTLIGHT, Dec. 2, 8 p.m.**

Hamptons Doc Fest spotlights **“To a More Perfect Union: U.S. v Windsor”** (63 min) on Sunday night at 8 p.m., directed by Donna Zaccaro, Geraldine Ferraro’s daughter and founder/president of New York media production company, Dazzling Media. The film features octogenarian Edie Windsor’s fight, all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, to have the U.S. government recognize for estate tax purposes, her 40-year relationship with a female spouse. On hand for the Q&A will be Windsor’s spouse, Judith Kasen-Windsor.

### **MONDAY CLOSING NIGHT FILM, Dec. 3., 7:30 p.m.**

**“Free Solo”** (100 min), directed by Jimmy Chin and Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi, serves as the Closing Night Film, centering around free soloist climber Alex Honnold’s journey to achieve his lifelong dream of climbing the face of the 3,000-foot El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, without a rope. Director Chin is himself a professional climber, skier and mountaineer, has led expeditions to

all seven continents, and has documented many great explorers and adventurers of our time.

The film is presented at no charge, as part of Monday's free Douglas Elliman Community Day.

## FESTIVAL AWARDS

Hamptons Doc Fest also features four special awards, announced below. Plus, at festival's end, the Audience Award, sponsored by Long and Mattone, LLP, Attorneys at Law, will be announced.

The **Hector Leonardi Art & Inspiration Award** goes to director Matthew Kaplowitz for **"Nothing Changes: Art for Hank's Sake"** (80 min), screened on **Friday, November 30, 5:30 p.m.**, followed by a Q&A with the director and associate producer Andrea Levine. The film represents two years in the life of Hank Virgona, an 88-year old painter and Kaplowitz's great uncle, who travels four hours each day from his home in Woodhaven, Queens, to his studio in Union Square, Manhattan, in pursuit of his art.



A still from "Nothing Changes: Art for Hank's Sake." The documentary on artist Hank Virgona screens as part of the Hamptons Doc Fest. Photo courtesy of Hamptons Doc Fest.

The **Filmmakers' Choice Award**, this year sponsored by Bridgehampton documentary filmmaker Lana Jokel, honors an outstanding documentarian nominated by previous filmmakers. The 2018 award goes to director Samuel Pollard and his **"Sammy Davis, Jr.: I've Gotta Be Me"** (100 min), which will be shown on Saturday, December 1, at 2 p.m. The film is an insightful and entertaining portrait of the Rat Pack member who broke race barriers in film and television. Director Pollard himself will be on hand for the Q&A, in conversation with NYU arts professor/radio host Laurence Maslon, who wrote the film.

The **Sloane Shelton Human Rights Award** will be presented posthumously to the late Kirk Simon, who passed away in April 2018, for his Oscar-winning film **"Strangers No More"** (40 min), directed by Karen Goodman and Kirk Simon, about an exceptional school in Tel Aviv, where children from 48 countries and diverse backgrounds come together to learn.

On hand for the post-film discussion after the Saturday, December 1, 4:30 p.m. viewing will be a panel of local award-winning documentarians—Nigel Noble, Roger Sherman, and Kirk's brother Ron Simon, accepting the award.

The **Breakout Director Award**, given in recognition of an exceptional feature-length film selected by a distinguished jury goes to Tim Wardle for **"Three Identical Strangers"** (96 min), which will be screened on Sunday, December 2, at 1 p.m. Three strangers are reunited by astonishing coincidence after being born identical triplets on Long Island and adopted by three different

families. However, their fairy-tale reunion sets in motion a series of events that unearths an unimaginable secret.

Wardle will be at Bay Street for the award and post-film Q&A. Presenting the award will be members of the selection jury—Jason Weinberg, Shawn Sachs, Carter Burden and Roger Sherman.

## FULL SLATE OF FILMS

Returning as acclaimed emcee of the Hamptons Doc Fest Q&As is Andrew Botsford, arts writer, actor/drama director, president of the Hampton Theatre Company in Quogue, and visiting professor in the graduate arts programs at Stony Brook Southampton. He is also the Editor-at-Large for Hamptons Art Hub.

## SHORTS

**Short films get their due on Friday, November 30, 2018.** Starting at 10:30 a.m., screenings **“Song of Bethlehem”** (30 min), directed by Ken Goldstein, an investigative music documentary about the rebirth of a town; **“Unwelcome”** (15 min), directed by Ida Theresa Myklebost, which gives the microphone to a six-year-old refugee boy to tell the story of the Syrian war; **“Dr. Trash”** (25 min), directed by Ethiraj Gabriel Dattatreyan, about a man who salvages thousands of dollars of textbooks, technology and clothes when students move out of a large East Coast university’s dorms; **“30% Sun, 100% Fun”** (5 min), directed by Deirdre O’Connor, about children at Long Island’s Robert Moses Beach during the 2017 solar eclipse, trying to figure out how old they will be at the next eclipse in 2024; **“My Paintbrush Bites”** (16 min), directed by Joel Pincosy and Joe Egender, about how a man battling reclusion, and a racehorse on the brink of death, save each other in unexpected ways.

## ART & CULTURE FILMS

Saturday to Monday bring even more documentaries taking an inside look into the creative fields coupled with hard edge looks at cultural slices of life. For the full screening list, [click here](#).

### **Saturday, December 1**

**10:30 a.m. “The Hello Girls: The 100-Year-Old Story of America’s First Female Soldiers”** (56 min), directed by James William Theres. Told through 100-year-old letters, photos, rare archival footage and one piece of audio, it brings to life a story about the 223 American women sent to France as telephone operators in 1918 by the U.S. Army Signal Corps to help win the Great War. Returning in 1920, they had to fight for 60 years to gain recognition.

**12 noon. “Ballet Now”** (74 min), followed by Q&A with director Steve Cantor. Featuring New York City Ballet prima ballerina Tiler Peck and her groundbreaking vision of mashing together the worlds of tap, hip-hop and ballet to dance in, direct and produce a high-profile dance event for the famed BalletNOW program.



Film Still from Ballet Now. Photo by Matt Brown/Hulu. Courtesy Hamptons Doc Fest.

**2 p.m. “Sammy Davis Jr.: I’ve Gotta Be Me”** (100 min), followed by Q&A with director Sam Pollard, winner of the festival’s **Filmmakers’ Choice Award** (see full information above).

### **Sunday, December 2**

**11 a.m. “Making Montgomery Clift”** (88 min), followed by a Q&A with co-directors Robert Anderson Clift (Montgomery’s nephew) and Robert’s wife Hillary Demmon. Seeks to depict a true portrait of the gay actor who starred in films such as “The Misfits” and “A Place in the Sun” and was so often sensationally characterized as “tragically self-destructive” and “tormented.”

**1 p.m. “Three Identical Strangers”** (96 min), directed by Tim Wardle, winner of the **Breakout Director Award**, followed by a Q&A with the director (see full information above).

**3 p.m. “Jane Fonda in Five Acts”** (133 min), followed by a Q&A with director Susan Lacy, hosted by Jules Feiffer. Revealing a life transformed over time, this film follows the first four acts of actor Jane Fonda’s life, named after the four major men in her life (her father Henry Fonda, and her husbands French director Roger Vadim, political activist Tom Hayden, and media mogul Ted Turner), with the fifth act named after Jane Fonda herself, as she confronts her demons, reconnects with her family and resumes a successful career as both an actress and an activist, entirely on her own terms.

**6 p.m. “Moving Stories”** (85 min), directed by Rob Fruchtmann, followed by a Q&A with co-producers Mikael Sodersten and Cornelia Ravenal. Six dancers from an acclaimed New York dance company travel the world, working with youth who have experienced war, poverty, sexual exploitation, extreme prejudice and trauma to bring them to the point where they can work together to express themselves and choreograph and perform onstage.



A film still from “Moving Stories.” Courtesy of Hamptons Doc Fest.

## **LOCAL FOCUS**

Monday brings several films that are set in The Hamptons or on the East End. As an added bonus, admission is free as part of Douglass Elliman Community Day.

**4 p.m. “The Last Race”** (75 min), directed by photographer Michael Dweck. A cinematic portrait

of a Riverhead stock car race track, as its 87-year-old owners Barbara and Jim Cromarty struggle to maintain an American racing tradition in the face of a real estate development boom. Q&A follows with Jack Handley, a Riverhead race track champ.

**5:30 p.m. “Stand Up”** (58 min), followed by a Q&A with producers Jennifer DeSane, Thomas O’Donoghue and Paddlers for Humanity. Film depicts the journey taken by members of the nonprofit, all-volunteer East Hampton organization, Paddlers for Humanity, dedicated to bettering the lives of local children, as they prepare for the annual Block Island Challenge, an 18-mile open ocean paddle.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets are available online at [www.hamptondocfest.com](http://www.hamptondocfest.com) and [www.baystreet.org](http://www.baystreet.org) and at the Bay Street Box Office, 631-725-9500, Bay and Main Streets, Sag Harbor.

\$15 adults, \$13 senior citizens (no online sales). Friday & Sunday night Spotlight films, \$25. Saturday Night Gala, \$50. Four-day pass, including Gala, \$150. Monday’s Douglas Elliman Community Day films are free, but reservations are required, through [www.hamptondocfest.com](http://www.hamptondocfest.com)

---

Copyright 2018 Hamptons Art Hub LLC. All rights reserved.