

Where to see film festivals around New England all summerlong

By [Gitana Savage](#) and [Annie Sarlin](#) Globe Correspondent, Updated May 1, 2026, 6:00 a.m.



Cambridge's Community Art Center hosts its annual national youth film festival. COMMUNITY ART CENTER

Summer is right around the corner, and the season offers an abundance of film festivals across New England. From documentaries to films by new directors to nature-focused

narratives, there's a festival for everyone. As you plan your summer vacations around the region, here's a roundup of what you can see and where.

Roxbury International Film Festival

Dates: In-person June 18-26, online June 26-July 2

Location: Roxbury

What to expect: Films by and about people of color

The annual Roxbury International Film Festival celebrates films made by and about people of color. According to artistic/executive director Lisa Simmons, attendees can expect to see “all types of stories,” from documentaries on historical figures to “narrative shorts and features on love and loss ... and uplifting joyful stories that celebrate people of color around the world.”

Attendees can expect an opening night screening of “Transforming the Beautiful Game: The Clyde Best Story,” a documentary about one of the first Black soccer players in England’s Football League First Edition. The rest of the film lineup will be announced in the coming weeks. Each screening will be followed by a Q&A. Additional events include filmmaker hangouts, an acting workshop, and a panel discussion about Alzheimer’s disease in communities of color.

Do It Your Damn Self!! National Youth Film Festival

Dates: June 5-6

Location: Cambridge

What to expect: A spotlight on young filmmakers

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Started by Cambridge youth in 1996, this national festival draws filmmakers ages 13-20, who submit short films with a focus on social justice, youth perspectives, and experimental projects. This year, the festival's teen curators chose 11 films to be screened from more than 330 submissions.

“The selected films range from animation to documentary, with love emerging as an organic theme throughout the program,” said Lionel Blaise Jr, the teen media program manager of Community Art Center, which organizes the festival.

Provincetown International Film Festival

Dates: June 10-14

Location: Provincetown

What to expect: International and independent films

The Provincetown Film Society (PFS) hosts the 28th annual festival. The lineup, which will be released later this month, includes documentaries, international features, comedies, dramas, and seven programs of short films. “These are all brand new films that haven’t screened in theaters yet, so we encourage people to come see them in Provincetown first,” said festival artistic director Lisa Viola. PFS will also present the annual Filmmaker on the Edge award, with an artist receiving what Viola described as “the highest honor at the festival each year,” always presented by writer and director John Waters.



John Waters presents the Filmmaker on the Edge award to Andrew Haigh at the 2024 Provincetown International Film Festival. HANDOUT

Woods Hole Film Festival

Dates: July 25-Aug. 1

Location: Woods Hole

What to expect: Independent films and a beachy backdrop

Woods Hole Film Festival celebrates 35 years. This year's festival will feature around 120 independent narrative, documentary, and short films from around the world, according to Judith Laster, executive director and founder. Selections include "Under the Lights," a coming of age story about a teenage boy with epilepsy starring Pearce Joza, Randall Park, and Nick Offerman, and "Los Lobos: Native Sons," a documentary following the career of

the Latin rock group. In addition to screenings, the festival will include Q&As with filmmakers, workshops, classes with industry professionals, and live music.



A still from the "Los Lobos: Native Sons" documentary, which will be screened at this year's Woods Hole Film Festival. HANDOUT

Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival

Dates: Aug. 7-15

Location: Martha's Vineyard

What to expect: Films by and about people of color

The Martha's Vineyard African American Film Festival celebrates documentary, short,

and feature films created by and starring people of color. [Prior festivals](#) have drawn

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celebrity guests including Michelle Obama, Spike Lee, and Jennifer Hudson. The 2026 film lineup will be announced in June.

Filmusic Festival

Dates: June 25-28

Location: Martha's Vineyard

What to expect: Live music, movies about music

The Martha's Vineyard Film Society hosts a festival focusing on the intersection of music and film, with programming featuring both performances and screenings. This year's lineup includes a showing of the 2025 PBS documentary "We Want The Funk!," which follows the history of the soulful genre, from artists like James Brown and George Clinton to its lasting impact on hip-hop. Director Stanley Nelson will also make an appearance at the event.

"We try to make it an experience where people coming to watch the film are ... getting a deeper dive on a particular band, a particular musician," said Richard Paradise, executive director of the Martha's Vineyard Film Society.

MV Environmental Film Festival

Dates: May 21-24

Location: Martha's Vineyard

What to expect: Documentaries and educational films about the environment

In collaboration with the Vineyard Conservation Society, the Martha's Vineyard Film

Society hosts a weekend of nature and environmental films. According to Paradise, “The goal is to educate and enlighten people about current issues relating to the environment.”

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The lineup includes the documentaries “Ghost Elephants,” which follows National Geographic explorer Steven Boyes in his search for the elusive African species; “Wild North Sea,” which documents diver and cameraman Peter van Rodijnen through his deep ocean journey; and “The Keeper,” which tells the story of Captain John Lipscomb and his 25-year career working on the Hudson River. Both Lipscomb and the film’s director, Jon Bowermaster, will appear after the screening.

Rhode Island International Film Festival

Dates: Aug. 4-9

Location: Providence

What to expect: Potential future Oscar nominees, filmmakers from around the world

The Rhode Island International Film Festival celebrates 30 years. This year’s event will feature about 300 films from over 60 countries, screened at venues throughout Providence and Westerly, R.I. “We’re a festival of discovery, so we’re always just trying to highlight new voices in independent film,” said festival Executive Director Shawn Quirk. This year, Quirk says they have seen an uptick in science fiction submissions. The festival is particularly known for its short films, and winners of the best live action short, best documentary short, and best animated short categories are eligible for Oscar nominations.

Rhode Island International Film Festival hosts its opening night screening in 2025. HANDOUT

Martha’s Vineyard International Film Festival

Dates: Sept. 8-13

Location: Martha's Vineyard

What to expect: Food and drink offerings, all international films

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This year, the Martha's Vineyard International Film Festival, which is curated by Paradise and the Martha's Vineyard Film Society, celebrates 21 years. Though this year's lineup has yet to be announced, all the films have a central theme of "Other Places, Other People."

"Our small, specially selected slate of 20-plus films have one central theme, each serving as a portal to other lands, inspiring audiences to engage and discover the stories, events, and cultures of the world around us," said Paradise.

A man blows bubbles at the Martha's Vineyard International Film Festival. COURTESY MARTHA'S VINEYARD FILM SOCIETY

Nantucket Film Festival

Dates: June 17-22

Location: Nantucket

What to expect: A star-studded lineup, films across genres

The Nantucket Film Festival returns for its 31st edition with a star-studded lineup. Paul Feig, Rashida Jones, Will McCormack, and Chloë Sevigny will all receive awards at the festival honoring their contributions to the entertainment industry.

"As we celebrate our 31st edition, we are honored to recognize storytellers who continue to push the boundaries of their craft," said Mystelle Brabbée, executive director of

Nantucket Film Festival.

Over six days, the festival will screen over 50 films across narrative and documentary genres.

Zoey Deutch, John Slattery, Ken Marino, Miles Gutierrez-Riley and Ben Wang appear in "Gail Daughtry and the Celebrity Sex Pass," which will screen at the Berkshire International Film Festival. COURTESY OF SUNDANCE INSTITUTE

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Berkshire International Film Festival

Dates: May 28-31

Location: Great Barrington

What to expect: Free animated shorts screenings for kids

The [Berkshire International Film Festival](#) celebrates its 20th anniversary this spring. BIFF spotlights independent feature, documentary, and short films from across the globe. This year, the festival will feature a tribute to “Raiders of the Lost Ark” star (and [longtime Berkshires resident](#)) Karen Allen and several post-screening talkbacks with directors like investigative journalist Amy Goodman (“Steal This Story, Please!”) and documentary filmmaker Barbara Kopple (“Harlan County, U.S.A.”).

Several of this year’s films spotlight Berkshire residents, including “Admission Possible,” “Born That Way,” and “Unfinished Song.” In addition to screenings, attendees can enjoy panel talks and other special events throughout the festival.

“This year’s program reflects the strength of global filmmaking and the continued growth of BIFF, bringing audiences an engaging mix of screenings, events, and filmmaker conversations — underscoring that independent film is thriving in the Berkshires,” said festival founder and artistic director Kelley Vickery.

Amy Goodman, the subject of the documentary “Steal This Story, Please!,” which screens at the Berkshire International Film Festival, reporting at Standing Rock. COURTESY BERKSHIRE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Maine International Film Festival

Dates: July 10-19

Location: Waterville, Maine

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What to expect: International films with a spotlight on New England filmmakers

Hosted at the Maine Film Center and the Waterville Opera House, the Maine International Film Festival returns for its 29th year this summer, boasting a lineup of more than 100 films from 40 countries. “We’re fond of saying that we bring the world to Waterville, Maine,” said director of communications Chris Melville. In addition to the festival’s expansive global lineup, it is also screening over two dozen Maine-made productions.

Vacationland Film Festival

Dates: Aug. 21-23

Location: Biddeford, Maine

What to expect: Historic theater setting spotlighting Maine filmmakers

Set inside the restored City Theater, the Vacationland Film Festival returns to Biddeford this August for a weekend celebration of independent film. While this year’s lineup is still under wraps, the festival is currently reviewing submissions and will announce its full program later this spring.

Maine Outdoor Film Festival

Dates: July 21-26

Location: Portland, Maine

What to expect: Outdoor screenings celebrating the natural world through film

The Maine Outdoor Film Festival screens a series of films that honor all things nature. With outdoor screenings and films across genres, celebrate Mother Nature this July at the MOFF.

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“What we’re doing with our nightly outdoor screenings on the Eastern Prom is a little different than other film festivals,” said festival founder and director Nick Callanan. “Both our fans and the filmmaking community love the summer Maine air, the grass underfoot, and the backdrop of Casco Bay as a setting for new and independent films.”

People attend the 2025 Maine Outdoor Film Festival. MADELINE HARRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Lighthouse Lens Film Festival

Dates: June 4-7

Location: New Haven

What to expect: Local focus, student selections

This relatively new festival is back for its second season to lift up filmmakers from New England and beyond. Lighthouse Lens Film Festival screens films from across the globe, but its focus is on filmmakers from the Northeast. Founded after New Haven’s last commercial movie theater closed in 2023, the festival hopes to bring together cinephiles and filmmakers alike. Though this year’s lineup has yet to be announced, last year’s

featured student and professional films across a range of genres.

Middlebury New Filmmakers Film Festival

Dates: Aug. 26-30

Location: Middlebury, Vt.

What to expect: First- or second-time directors

Hosted in Middlebury, Vt., the Middlebury New Filmmakers Film Festival celebrates first- and second-time directors across five days of programming. “We have a rollicking good time at Middlebury New Filmmakers Festival,” said Lloyd Komesar, festival

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producer. “Filmmakers and audiences cross paths constantly, have spontaneous conversations, and mingle at the many parties that punctuate the event.” Expect 100 films across five different venues.

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