Celebration do intro

THE ANDREW J. KUEHN JR.

F O U N D A T I O N



AJK NEWSLETTER 2024

DEAR FRIENDS ANDY



Andy on set making & marketing movies

In the 20 years since his death in January of 2004, Andy Kuehn's conviction that the "the arc of history bends toward justice" has been sorely tested by domestic and international realities. We've thought to ourselves, he must be rolling in his grave with respect to the latest political or cultural insanity. We have speculated that had he lived, such and such outrage would break his heart and be the death of him. But we do no honor to our partner, uncle, friend and benefactor to project upon him our doubt, despair and bewilderment. Andy would insist on an historical perspective and chide us for our faithlessness and our lack of courage. If you don't like the state of the world, engage with it and fight for justice, freedom, civil rights, representation, opportunity and the future.

Over the past decades, donation by donation, we have taken Voltaire's advice to tend our garden, and so with more than 3 million dollars in unrestricted grants, the AJK Foundation has seeded and nurtured cultural and educational institutions in Southern California and beyond. In these newsletters, we have described and applauded the work of individuals and communities as they pursue worthy missions through schools, archives, programs, festivals, theater, memorials and the moving images, urging our readership to learn about the work of AJK's beneficiaries and to embrace their engagement with their worlds.

In this letter, we call upon the friends and admirers of Andy's life and life's work to find inspiration and then to take action. To say we live in interesting times is an understatement.

We live in parlous times and passive spectation is no longer possible, if it ever was. After all, "the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men [and women and fluid and intersex and none of the above folks] to do nothing.*"

*Edmund Burke.

In 2024, let's roll!

Courage— Will, Deb & Alan

OCSA FTV

Founded in 1987, the Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) provides a creative, challenging and nurturing environment for bright and talented students as well as an unparalleled preparation for higher education and professional attainment in the arts. OCSA ranks among the top schools in the State of California.

The only specialized arts program of its kind in the region, OCSA offers tuition-free academic and arts instruction to students from Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. A non-profit, OCSA relies on private and corporate donations to finance its many arts conservatories.

Serving 2,000 students in grades 7-12 from over 100 cities across Southern California, OCSA places personal growth and educational achievement first. Excellence, innovation, professionalism and integrity are expected of every student.



OCSA FTV

For students in the Film Theater & Video Conservatory at Orange County School of the Arts, 2023 was replete with learning, travel, practical application and creative achievement. As in past decades, it was a year of media education and production experience, capped by the completion of film projects and tv programs. Equipment purchased through AJK Jr. Foundation grants, enabled active learning, training on the job and skills mastery. Below, we are proud to share highlights from an important year in the lives of these student filmmakers



FILM & TELEVISION CONSERVATORY GOES TO NEW ZELAND!



In April, FTV students visited both the North and South Islands of New Zealand on a documentary filmmaking trip. Learning on the go, they filmed stories from the **Te Puia Māori Cultural Center** and **2011 Christchurch Earthquake** and **Cathedral restoration.** While touring, students soaked up the culture and history of these extraordinary Islands, meeting locals, visiting National Parks (Aoraki-Mt. Cook and Tongariro) and checking in on the local film industry (WETA, Hobbiton). Student filmmakers used Blackmagic 6K Cameras purchased with AJK Jr. grants to capture footage for their documentaries.

Watch the film they mad about *Te Puia* here!





"OCSA UNLEASHED!" —OCSA's FIRST LIVE COMEDY SKETCH SHOW



In the Spring, the Junior TV Production III class broadcast its first-ever live comedy sketch show, OCSA Unleashed. The show, a collaboration with the Acting, Creative Writing, and Production & Design Conservatories, featured 2 hours of comedy content, shot on Sony Cameras from an earlier grant. Students plan a reprise of the program in 2024.

2023 STUDENT FILM SAMPLER

Last year, FTV students completed several narrative and documentary projects, many of which were screened in national film festivals.



OVARYACTING

A young man must make an embarrassing purchase at a local store, watch <u>here.</u>



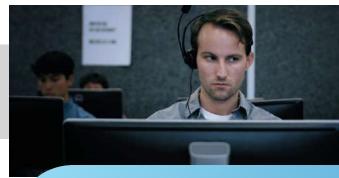
BIKELIFE WITH TOTO

A young man shares his life and experiences as the member of a street bicycle crew! watch **here.**



EVERGREEN

A woman runs a care home for Korean grandmothers, watch <u>here.</u>



SCAM: THE SERIES

An anthology series about con artists who each get an unexpected comeuppance: Episode 1 "Bar"

Episode 2 "Dark Web" Episode 3 "Call Center"

STUDENT&ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT

This past year, FTV students and alumni won filmmaking awards and honors and screened at film festivals across the country. Some highlights include:

David Du's ('24) "Life of a Mayfly" screened at the following festivals:

- <u>Best Shorts</u>- Award of Excellence, Special Mention
- National Film Festival for Talented Youth
- Scholastic Gold Key Regional Award
- Newport Beach Film Festival Young Filmmakers Showcase

Jordan Held's ('23) short comedy "Ovaryacting" screened at these important festivals:

- Worldfest Houston's Intl Film Festival- Silver Remi Award winner
- New Optics Film Festival (Notre Dame High School) Semi-finalist
- 1 World Student Film Festival
- Sun Valley Film Fest Junior Division-3rd Place
- Newport Beach Film Festival Young Filmmakers Showcase Best Youth Film
- Austin Film Festival Best Youth Film Jordan was interviewed for NewFilmmakers Los Angeles (NFMLA) <u>here.</u>



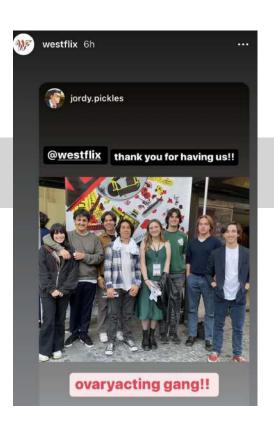
Luke Stark ('24) was a <u>National History Day</u>
<u>County Finalist</u> and Winner of a Judge's Choice
Award for Topic Choice and Boldness in Visuals in a
Documentary Film for his film "A Rebel With a Cause:
How Dolores O'Riordan of The Cranberries Broke
Political Frontiers Through Music."

The following students were nominated for high school <u>OC Artist</u> <u>of the Year in Film and Media Arts.</u> (This contest is sponsored by the OC Register, Chapman University and the Laguna College of Art and Design).

- David Du ('24) (Media Arts: Animation) Finalist
- Jordan Held ('23) (Film: Directing) Semi-finalist
- Evan Padilla ('23) (Film: Promo/Commercials) Semi-finalist
- Zen Thai ('23) (Film: Cinematography) Semi-finalist

Lex Carney ('25) and **Diego Garcia ('25)** won 1st Place and \$1,000 for their video submission to the **Ninth Circuit Civics Contest** for high school students in the Central District of California. They filmed a video about the US Constitution, giving a brief history of how amendments are passed and possible ideas for constitutional revision.

Jonah Ranz ('25), David Du ('24) and **Jordan Held ('23)** screened work at the **2023 OCArts4All** Video/Film/Animation Student Contest, sponsored by the Orange County Department of Education.



The following FTV films screened at Pacifica Christian's **SCREEN Film Festival:**

- <u>Jordan Held</u> "Ovaryacting" Best Screenplay
- <u>Ella Lindner</u> "Beneath the Blade"
- <u>David Du</u> "Life of a Mayfly"
- Youning Jiang ('22), Justin Shin('22)
 "Behind the Lens" Best Cinematography



And these FTV films screened at Westflix Film Festival

Harvard Westlake hosted the <u>Westflix Film</u> <u>Festival</u>—a screening of CA student films in March at the Million Dollar Theatre in Downtown LA. The following FTV students screened films and won awards:

- <u>Jordan Held ('23)</u> "Ovaryacting" Best Screenplay, Acting, and Directing
- <u>Samuele Caturegli ('24), Sean</u> <u>Goedecke ('24), Brian Resendiz ('24)</u> -

"The Harvest" - Best Cinematography

The following students and alums screened their work at the <u>All American</u> <u>High School Film Fest</u> in NYC:

- David Du ('24) "Life of a Mayfly" (Best Score nominee)
- Dominic Gonzalez ('23) "Rabbits" "Forbidden"
- Ramone Hamilton ('24) "Stefon's Salvation"
- Jordan Held ('23) "Ovaryacting" (Best Comedy nominee)
- Carrington Holritz ('22) "tu:li:"
- Ella Lindner ('24) "Beneath The Blade"
- Elise Park ('24) "Evergreen"
- Maddie Tran ('25), Zachary Willis ('25), Ella Jerrier ('25) "Hide and Seek"
- Ella Jerrier ('25), Maddie Tran ('25) "Crush"
- Alex Wolff ('24) "Chasing Shadows" (Best Cinematography nominee)

UCLA/OUTFEST LEGACY PROJECT SCREENING SERIES



UCLA FILM & TELEVISION ARCHIVE



The UCLA Film & Television Archive is the second largest moving image archive in the United States and the world's largest university-owned repository of media materials. An unparalleled resource for UCLA's department of Theater, Film & TV, the Archive, located at the magnificent Packard Institute for the Humanities in Santa Clarita is a destination for visual storytellers, film historians, students of media and working professionals. Combining gifts and acquisitions from all the major studios and television networks, leading producers and legendary figures from the history of broadcasting, the Archive prioritizes preservation and restoration. As the collection grows, iconic materials are continually returned to public view and made available for scholarly research.

Screenings of rare and important art-house and historical works at the Archive's **Billy Wilder Theater** make this superb, Westwood venue a global destination for film lovers.

Outfest* and the UCLA Film & Television Archive partnered in 2005 to create the Outfest/UCLA Legacy Project, the only program in the world exclusively focused on preserving lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and other moving images at risk of loss due to deterioration and/or neglect. Together, these two institutions have established the largest publicly accessible collection of LGBTQIA+ moving images anywhere in the world. Holdings include features and shorts, activist and experimental works, television programs, public service announcements, commercials, music videos, electronic press kits and Outfest Film Festival entries, materials which provide an incomparable view of issues concerning LGBTQIA+ identities and experience.

*Sadly, for the Los Angeles GLBTQIA+ media community, Outfest paused its activity in 2023, citing administrative and budgetary challenges. For the first time in over a decade, it was not the recipient of an AJK Grant. However, the Outfest/ UCLA Legacy Project, which it co-founded and continues to partner in producing, continues to receive AJK support. AJK looks forward to Outfest's return to its role as a key player in the cultural life of metropolitan Los Angeles.



FOR the grant period, July '22 through August 2023, the Outfest UCLA Legacy Project Screening Series opened with a groundbreaking five-day program, "Masc: Trans Men, Butch Dykes and Gender-nonconforming Heroes in Cinema," co-curated by Jenni Olson and Caden Marc Gardner. Surveying six decades of cinema history, MASC spotlighted rarely screened works, including: No Ordinary Man (2020), Chavela (2017), Maggots and Men (2009), Pariah (2011), The Aggressives (2005), Lifetime



Guarantee: Phranc's Adventures in Plastic (2001), Shinjuku Boys (1995), as well as a shorts program of nine films. For each film presentation, filmmakers, their guests and LGBTQ+ community partners testified to the importance of the films, offering anecdotes and answering questions. Guests included: Chase Joynt, Amos Mac, Cary Cronenwett, Shari Frilot, Moira Morel, Bret Parker, Pete Barma, Max Valerio, Phranc and Lisa Udelson.

A live musical performance by Phranc - an icon in the LA queer community —preceded the closing night program. The series has since traveled to Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) and Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley (BAM PFA). Check out this Q Voice News feature on The Masc series from August of '23 here.

A highlight of the 2023 calendar: "Masc: Trans Men, Butch Dykes and Gender-nonconforming Heroes in Cinema." Director Karim Aïnouz and UCLA Assistant Professor Alex Ungprateeb Flynn talked about Aïnouz' film Madame Satã (2002).



Next on the Legacy Series Calendar were two films from French writer-director Yann Gonzalez, the feature You and the Night (Les rencontres d'après minuit, 2013) and the short film Islands (Les îles, 2017) which opened the screening.

Last Fall, Brazilian writer-director Karim Aïnouz's introduced his groundbreaking, 35 mm version of Madame Satã (2002) in person and joined UCLA Assistant Professor Alex Ungprateeb Flynn for a Q & A with attendees. Community partners, including the UCLA LGBTQ Campus Resource Center, the UCLA Latin American Institute and the Center for Brazilian Studies, were on hand for the presentation and the Q & A.

Emerson College Associate Professor Maria San Filippo and Appropriate Behavior (2014) director

In Winter 2023, American director Desiree Akhavan's Sundance hit Appropriate Behavior (2014) was shown, spurred by the publication of Appropriate Behavior, the latest volume in the Queer Film Classics series from McGill-Queen's University Press written by Maria San Filippo, an Associate Professor at Emerson College. San Filippo and Akhavan treated the audience to a post-screening conversation. The UCLA LGBTQ Campus Resource Center co-hosted



The Archive's "Pioneers of Queer Cinema" program launched in Spring 2022 (made possible with support from AJK, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Indie Collect) continued its tour of North American venues including the Gene Siskel Film Center in Chicago, The Cinematheque in Vancouver, Canada, the Metrograph in New York, the Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley, CA, and the Wexner Center of the Arts in Columbus, OH. Featuring 32 films, the series and tour highlight Archive restorations such as A Comedy in Six Unnatural Acts (1975), Blackstar: Autobiography of a Close Friend (1977), and Choosing Children (1985), alongside classic queer works such as Kenneth Anger's Fireworks (1947), Gus Van Zant's Mala Noche (1986), Barbara Hammer's Nitrate Kisses



(1992), Gregg Araki's The Living End (1992), and Cheryl Dunye's The Watermelon Woman (1996). The series catalogue was made possible by a grant from The Andrew J. Kuehn Jr. Foundation and can be viewed here.

UCLA DEPARTMENT THEATER FILM & TELEVISION

The world renowned UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television is an interdisciplinary professional program that develops outstanding storytellers, industry leaders and scholars whose voices and vision enlighten, engage and inspire the world. For its diverse mix of undergraduate and graduate students, TFT offers courses in acting, directing, writing, producing, animation, cinematography, digital arts, lighting design, set design, costume design, sound design and Moving Image Archive Studies. The school confers BA, MA and Ph.D degrees in Theater and Performance Studies as well as in Cinema & Media Studies, educating creative and ambitious students in their pursuit of careers in theater, motion pictures, arts and digital media.

For over a decade, AJK has been the presenting (now sustaining) sponsor of one of the most urgent and important conferences occurring anywhere in the world about the current practice and likely future of entertainment. Now known as Transformations (after starting life as Transmedia), this joint undertaking of USC and UCLA Film & Media Studies Departments, gathers leading scholars and industry decision makers, thinkers, theorists and technologists for a one day event. We've abbreviated the opening remarks and panel descriptions to give you a taste of the discussions and some notion of the intellectual and cultural ambitions of this remarkable event.

TRANSFORMING HOLLYWOOD 11



Opening remarks:

".... Comprising a partnership between the USC School of Cinematic Arts and the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, sponsored by the Andrew J. Kuehn Foundation, in collaboration with the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), this year's Transforming Hollywood conference focuses on various dimensions of the relationship between technology and storytelling in the age of digital distribution ecosystems given the reliance on data, algorithmic recommendation systems, virtual production technologies and generative artificial intelligence. The recent strikes in Hollywood have brought some of these issues surrounding the transformation in creative processes to the fore. We will discuss the scope of these upheavals with ...industry experts at the heart of these changes and with internationally recognized scholars working on these issues."

— Denise Mann, Co-Founding Director of Transforming Hollywood and a UCLA TFT Professor and Michael Renov, Vice-Dean, Academic Affairs at USC.



PANEL 1

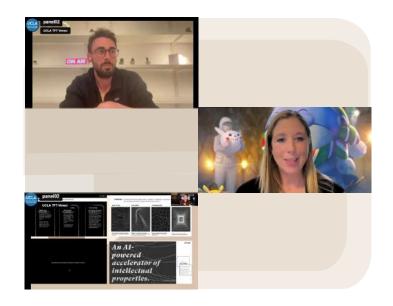
- Innovation in Content Strategy examined the data and computational tools used to help decide which stories to tell, which talents to hire, which genres to favor, which financing and distribution channels to prefer, as well as how to price projects and talent. Panelists discussed the implications of algorithmic models in decision making processes prior to production, asking what should be the place of technology vs. intuition, taste, aesthetic judgment and talent relations in discerning "good" producers or creative executives? And, how does the use of digital and algorithmic tools shape content choices and strategies? When can technology enhance creativity and help quality work come to life? And how does one balance data-driven decision-making with the protection of artistry and creative labor? This panel was moderated by Violaine Roussel (University of Paris) and featured Liesl Copland, EVP of Content Strategy at Participant, J.D. Connor, the Alfred & Alma Hitchcock Professor of American Cinema at USC, John S. Couch founder of Galvanize Studios and Todd Hoffman, founder of Storied Media Group.



PANEL 2

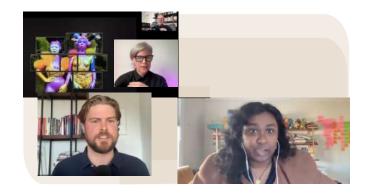
- Virtual, Augmented & Artificial Creativity

The second panel examined four digital technologies and their impact on entrepreneurs and creators, asking whether such tools are a boon or a threat to creative livelihoods. Opening the conversation with moderator Denise Mann, panelist Allessandro Botteon, founder of Milan-based tech startup Impssbl, described generative AI as a way for brand marketers and independent production companies to enhance creativity by streamlining production workflows. Next, panelists examined virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and extended reality (XR) as tools to enhance rather than supplant human-made forms of artistry and engagement. Kim Adams from Niantic's Pokémon GO one of the world's most popular, community-building mobile games, proposed that AR technology encourages players to get moving, make friends and engage with historic sites, artistic works and local retailers. In the third segment of the panel, Web3 or the Metaverse—3D virtual worlds that enable online social interaction—was the topic. Thibault Matthieu of Wilkens Avenue AR described how his company produces artistically-satisfying, highly-embedded, collaborative, online shopping experiences for major fashion and beauty brands such as Lancôme, L'Oréal, Hermès and Tissot. Lastly, Professor Mann spoke with ARwall founder and in-camera effects pioneer Rene Amador about on-set virtual production technologies that deliver high-production values and visual effects for projects like Disney+'s Mandalorian.

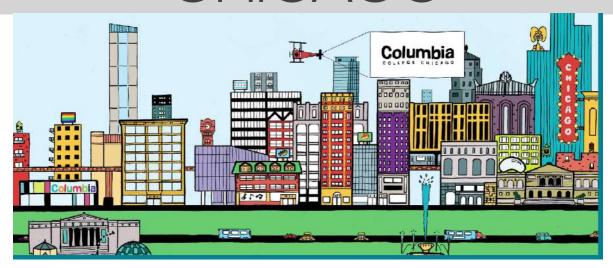


PANEL₃

- Other Visions / Other Realities, gathered artists, curators, theorists and entrepreneurs to discuss emerging developments in the field of generative Al. Countering prevailing discourse in which this new technology heralds the end of human agency, control and creativity, panelists placed image synthesis technologies in a historical, critical and creative context. Engaging issues of ethics and industrial impact, panelists explored the boundaries between human and other intelligences, reality and post-reality, as well as the implications for cinematic arts of AI technologies. They asked what kinds of image culture(s) might emerge as a result of a reconceived relationship between human and machine intelligences. Might generative Al produce new ways of envisioning the world and of seeing it? What forms of collaboration and creativity become possible as the boundaries between human and technological image-making blur or erode? The panelists concluded by offering practical as well as philosophical strategies for further investigation. Steve Anderson, Professor at UCLA TFT, moderated, and was joined by panelists Jesse Damiani, Senior Curator at NXT Museum, Rachel Joy Victor, Founder of FBRC.AI, Mashinka Firunts Hakopian, a Professor at ArtCenter College of Design and Holly Willis, Co-Director of the USC Center for Generative Al and Culture.



COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO



Located along Chicago's Cultural Mile, Columbia College Chicago is a private, nonprofit institution offering a rigorous curriculum blending creative and media arts, liberal arts and business education for nearly 7000 students across more than 60 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The Cinema and Television Arts Department is one of the school's largest, most visible and highly ranked. In CTVA, aspiring creatives learn to communicate and tell stories on screens both large and small, developing practical and portable production skills for careers in film, television, and emerging media. Columbia offers a comprehensive digital cinematography training that emphasizes the development of the trans-media fluency and versatility needed for a successful career in an

evolving industry. At Columbia, students learn by doing, working and studying collaboratively in one of the country's largest media markets, benefiting from a robust internship program, extensive alumni network and exceptional Semester in LA opportunity. Columbia provides the latest industry-standard equipment, state-of-the-art production facilities, world-renowned locations and a deep pool of talented actors and film production collaborators. Film & Televisions majors choose among eight concentrations, with students working across disciplines to crowdsource expertise, workshop solutions and co-create. The diversity of motivated team-mates ensures growth in perspective along with filmmaking skill.







In last year's report, we announced the inclusion of Columbia College among our grant recipients. Leah Tolliver, was one of a goodly number of Columbia Cinema & Televisions Arts students who received a Persistence Scholarship, hers funded by AJK in 2023. Now a senior, Leah paused college twice, first following a physically and financially debilitating car accident and then the birth of her daughter, who she is raising as a single mother. "[It] was always my goal to get this degree, but life happened and I had other priorities; I had to put school to the side," Tolliver recalls. Six years after a ending her first college class, Tolliver perseveres: "[This scholarship] gave so much relief on what's been a long and bumpy road."

Tolliver was among 92 Persistence Scholars last year, benefiting from a student designed and executed fundraising campaign and gala. AJK's contribution made a life-changing difference for Leah, one of all too many students at risk of leaving their studies before completion.





STORIES: THE AIDS MONUMENT





In stories and sculpture, the AIDS Monument seeks to memorialize the AIDS/HIV Crisis and honor the courage of activists, caregivers and community leaders. Nearly 1,000,000 Americans have died since 1981 and while the losses have slowed, the threat continues. In recalling and retelling the stories of those who fought, those who died and those who endured, the AIDS Monument advances the work of raising awareness and money for research and treatment of persons living with AIDS/HIV

Now at the end of a four year funding commitment, AJK is thrilled to see the resulting progress in 2023. FAM began soliciting bids for fabrication of the Traces, 15-foot bronze pillars that are the main components of the Monument. A fabricator was in place by end of the year with a general contractor expected to come aboard in January of this year, with the City of West Hollywood supervising the bidding and hiring process. Meanwhile, FAM continues to collect stories about HIV/AIDS for inclusion in the HEAR Our STORIES collection of audio recordings by and about those lost to AIDS as well as from survivors, activists, community leaders, caregivers and stakeholder organizations. One hundred audio testimonials have been archived to date!



More FAM STORIES

Circle events were hosted throughout the Los Angeles area during 2023, allowing residents of all neighborhoods and populations to share their HIV/AIDS memories in intimate gatherings alongside other storytellers. In 2023, Fam produced STORIES Circle events for younger people (18-35 years old) and for the Trans/non-binary community, with another devoted exclusively to women's HIV/AIDS stories.













On World AIDS Day, December 1st 2023, FAM hosted a drinks and dinner reception with APLA Health, followed by a short candlelight vigil and a screening of the documentary film "Commitment to Life," which examines AIDS activism in Los Angeles. As the physical monument awaits construction, the work of memory and imagination at the heart of the project proceeds.



PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAM LANGLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA



Established in 1995 from the merger of Langley Central & Langley Prairie schools, Langley Fundamental Middle and Secondary School is a school of 700 students in grades 6-12. At LFMSS, the focus is on educational fundamentals as well as civic values. LFMSS provides a wide array of learning opportunities to students and enjoys town support with respect to achieving the LFMSS mission: to provide students with the education they deserve and the community they need. At LFMSS, Educators, parents, staff and volunteers work together to support students' intellectual, creative, physical, social and personal development through an emphasis on basic skills, personal responsibility, work ethics and mutual respect for all within a safe, structured environment inspired by Fundamental Philosophy.

Beginning in 2016, the AJK Foundation made its first small grant to LFMSS to help defray the cost of producing student musical theater. In 2018 and 2020, similar grants were provided. With the end of Covid, we have once again directed a grant toward theatrical presentation. In 2023, the ever popular FROZEN was produced.



AMERICAN **CINEMATHE**QUE



MISSION

The American Cinematheque understands cinema as a communal experience that entertains, enlightens and inspires. It endeavors to build a diverse and engaged film community through curation, conversation and presentation. Connecting filmmakers to audiences and film history to its future are twin goals

In 1984, after a visit to the Cinémathèque Française, Filmmaker Sydney Pollack joined with Gary Abrahams & Gary Essert, organizers of Filmex (The Los Angeles International Film Exposition) to develop a year-round film program for Los Angeles where cinephiles and filmmakers could discover, study and engage the seventh art. Since it began screening films for the public in 1985, the American Cinematheque has shown thousands of significant films and hosted informed conversation with a similar number of filmmakers and luminaries. Faithful to the vision of Pollack, the American Cinematheque is a place where the public and members of the film industry meet as a community speaking the common language of film. The American Cinematheque enjoys exhibition privileges at the following well loved and historic movie palaces: The Egyptian, The Aero & the Los Feliz 3. Click here to learn more.



AJK made its first unrestricted grant to the American Cinematheque in 2023. We look forward to sharing how it deployed those funds for the benefit of metro Los Angeles residents in next year's newsletter.