

The CineVegas Film Festival is a platform for artists and art lovers who are drawn to the edge. Held amidst the unique, unpredictable and intoxicating environment that is Las Vegas, the CineVegas Film Festival pushes the boundaries of cinema. The Festival annually presents work by innovative, uninhibited, and renegade artists to an audience of local and national film lovers, journalists, and film industry representatives.



## A Brief Yet Storied History...

Launched in 1998 by an enthusiastic group of movie/art lovers, independent filmmakers and film industry veterans, the CineVegas Film Festival has evolved into an annual celebration of cinematic excellence and artistic risk-taking. The Festival has come a long way from its humble, grassroots beginnings to the vibrant, star-studded, fun-filled event that takes place every year in June. Among the creative forces nurturing this growth are Trevor Groth, the Festival's artistic director, the Palms Casino Resort, one of the hottest properties in Las Vegas and Dennis Hopper, chair of the CineVegas creative advisory board.

With financial backing from Las Vegas Events, local businesses and individuals, the showroom and convention spaces at Bally's originally served as screening rooms for CineVegas (today, films are screened at Brenden Theatres at the Palms Casino Resort). The first CineVegas in 1998 featured "The Best of the Fests," showcasing independent films that had previously earned awards and acclaim at other worldwide festivals.

In 2000 CineVegas moved to Bally's new sister hotel, Paris Hotel and Casino. For two years, the Paris showroom and convention spaces were transformed to accommodate not only "The Best of the Fests," but U.S. and world premieres of high-profile films. In 2001, the Festival presented Tony Curtis with the first Marquee Award for lifetime achievement. CineVegas also coined the Half-Life Award given to stars midway through their careers.

In 2002, CineVegas joined forces with The Entertainment Development Corporation, a non-profit agency with a mission to bring entertainment-based business to the Southern Nevada area. While moving permanently to the Brenden Theatres at the Palms Casino Resort, CineVegas also appointed a director of programming with the hiring of Trevor Groth, a 14-year senior programming veteran of the iconic Sundance Film Festival.

Under Groth's guidance, the quality of original programming and new filmmakers that participated in the Festival took off. In 2003 Dennis Hopper received the Marquee Award and was

so enamored with the Festival that he became, and still serves as, the chair of its creative advisory board.

CineVegas has grown leaps and bounds over its ten-year history, and the Festival clearly owes a part of its success to its Las Vegas location. Along with its permanent residency at the Palms Casino Resort, the excitement of the Festival extends into the city with now-legendary parties, at venues like shark reefs, bowling alleys, rooftops and all the gaming, entertainment and other action that has conferred a special reputation upon Las Vegas. "It's a unique location for a film festival that creates a vibrant atmosphere," says Groth. "Also, filmmakers and projects that may not normally get recognized by a festival have a platform in Las Vegas."

Groth himself has long been a fearless proponent of controversial yet high-quality films. Most recently he gave a home to John Cameron Mitchell's film *Shortbus* after it couldn't find a venue in Las Vegas due to its explicit adult content. Groth rented out space at the Brenden Theatres and showed the short film as a limited-engagement private screening. Las Vegas theatres do not have a policy for showing adult-only films, and under-18 crashers became a concern. Under those guidelines CineVegas operated the theatre for private screenings as opposed to the regular theatre staff. "If we didn't show it, this film wouldn't make it to Vegas or pretty much anywhere else," says Groth. In this light, the Festival continues to emulate the liberating freedoms of Sin City itself...

### LA PRÓXIMA OLA

In 2007, CineVegas introduced La Próxima Ola, a new section of the Festival highlighting the next wave of Mexican films and directors. With the recent success of established Mexican filmmakers on the international stage, there is a groundswell of a cinematic movement happening in the country. As the auteurs continue to flourish, they pave the way for the "next wave" of filmmakers to follow in their footsteps while expressing their own voices. La Próxima Ola showcases first and second time filmmakers who resound with talent and represent the future of Mexican film.

In its first year, the section was co-hosted by Mexico's Minister of Tourism, Rodolfo Elizondo Torres, and famed Mexican writer Guillermo Arriaga, and included the U.S. premiere of *BAD HABITS (MALOS HÁBITOS)*. A cinematic examination of family, faith and religion, *BAD HABITS* marked the feature directing debut of commercial director Simón Bross and was selected to receive the La Próxima Ola Jury Prize by a special jury featuring Sundance Film Festival Director Geoffrey Gilmore, actor Clifton Collins, Jr. and filmmaker Justin Lin.

Other films featured in La Próxima Ola in 2007 include: *CHÁVEZ*, a feature documentary about Mexican boxer Julio César Chávez, marking the feature directing debut of Diego Luna; *DRAMA/MEX*, an ensemble piece helmed by Gerardo Naranjo and executive produced by Diego Luna; *NEVER ON A SUNDAY (MORIRSE EN DOMINGO)* a dark comedy from director Daniel Gruener; and the U.S. premiere of *ONCE UPON A TIME MARÍA (EROS UNA VEZ MARÍA)*, an emotional journey and odyssey of erotic adventures under director Jesús Magaña Vázquez.

## Honors

### PAST MARQUEE AWARD RECIPIENTS

- Anthony Hopkins
- Helen Mirren
- Christopher Walken
- Jack Nicholson
- Dennis Hopper
- Dustin Hoffman
- Tony Curtis

### PAST HONOREES

- Sir Ben Kingsley
- Jerry Weintraub
- Mike Newell
- Charlize Theron
- Laurence Fishburne
- Christina Ricci
- Taylor Hackford
- Sylvester Stallone
- Nicolas Cage
- Samantha Morton
- George A. Romero
- Wim Wenders
- Sean Penn
- Holly Hunter
- David Lynch
- Julian Schnabel
- Robin Wright Penn
- Dean Stockwell
- Bruce Conner
- Ann-Margret

### NOT ON OUR WATCH/DARFUR

The 2007 CineVegas Film Festival kicked off with the Las Vegas premiere of *OCEAN'S THIRTEEN*, which was attended by the all-star cast including George Clooney, Brad Pitt, Matt Damon, Don Cheadle, Ellen Barkin and Andy Garcia. The event also raised over \$1 million for The International Rescue Committee for Not On Our Watch, an organization whose initial campaign is to support existing Darfur humanitarian relief efforts and to ensure the protection of civilians in that region.

## BY THE NUMBERS...

- CineVegas, started by an enthusiastic group of film and art lovers, independent filmmakers, and movie industry veterans, first took place at Bally's Hotel and Casino in 1998
- The following year the festival moved to the Paris Hotel and Casino and stayed there for two years
- In 2002, CineVegas moved to the Palms Casino Resort and Brenden Theatres after Trevor Groth, a senior programmer with the Sundance Film Festival, was brought on as Director of Programming
- Dennis Hopper became the Chairman of the Board after receiving the festival's Marquee Award in 2003 and continues to help guide the festival
- In the last three years, attendance of the festival has grown over 50%, with over 20,000 people attending a part of the 2006 festival
- 54% of Festival attendees are male and 46% are female
- 55% of attendees are from out of state, primarily from California, Texas, Arizona, Connecticut and New York. 45% of people attending are from the Las Vegas Valley
- 87.7% come to Las Vegas specifically for CineVegas
- 55% of Festival attendees are between the ages of 25 and 54
- 51.3% stay in Las Vegas during CineVegas for 4-8 days
- 42% are college graduates
- 40% have an annual household income between \$45,000-90,000
- 95.9% of CineVegas attendees would attend again because of their experience

**2002** World Premieres: *Bubba Ho-Tep*, *Happy Here and Now*, *Spun*  
Other Highlights: *Sunshine State*, *Run Ronnie Run*, *Visitor Q*, *Back Against the Wall*, *Rough cut of The Weather Underground*

**2003** World Premieres: *Breakfast with Hunter*, *Dallas 362 (AKA Dallas and Rusty)*, *This Girl's Life*  
Other Highlights: *Animal Charm* live show, *Daddy Cool*, *4th and Life*, *The Revolution Will Not Be Televised*, *Retro screening of The Last Movie (1971)*

## FILM HIGHLIGHTS

**2004** World Premieres: *Hillside Strangler (AKA Rampage: The Hillside Strangler)*, *Mitchellville*, *The Talent Given Us*  
Other Highlights: *Gozu (with Takashi Miike attending)*, *A League of Ordinary Gentlemen*, *The Time We Killed*, *The Nest*, *Windy City Heat*

**2005** World Premieres: *Land of the Dead*, *In Memory of My Father*, *Little Athens*, *The Devil's Rejects*  
Other Highlights: *The Aristocrats*, *Last Days*, *Murderball*, *Red Doors*

**2006** World Premieres: *Artie Lane's Beer League*, *Danika*, *G.I. Jesus*, *Running Stumbled*, *Wet Dreams*  
Other Highlights: *13 Tzemeti*, *The Puffy Chair*, *The Road to Guantanamo*, *Mary*, *Lucacy*

**2007** World Premieres: *Look, All God's Children Can Dance*, *The Living Wake*, *Mr. Untouchable*, work-in-progress of *My Name Is Bruce*  
Other Highlights: *Bad Habits (Malos Habititos)*, *You Kill Me*, *Penelope*, *On the Road with Judas*, *Great World of Sound*, *Frownland*

## DENNIS HOPPER Chair of the Creative Advisory Board

Dennis Hopper assumed the position of Chair of the CineVegas Creative Advisory Board in 2004 after receiving the festival's prestigious Marquee Award in 2003. He has honored friends Bruce Conner, Holly Hunter, David Lynch, Jack Nicholson, Sean & Robin Wright Penn, Julian Schnabel and Dean Stockwell, and looks forward to presenting additional colleagues with CineVegas honors in the future.

Hopper was awarded with the Marquee award for the amazing cinematic career he has led, spanning more than fifty years. His first big break was playing the role of "Goon" with James Dean and Natalie Wood in REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE in 1955. He then went on to write, direct and star in EASY RIDER in 1969, which garnered Academy Award nominations for Best Screenplay and Best Supporting Actor for Jack Nicholson. The film, which was made at a cost of \$340,000, grossed in excess of \$50 million and earned Hopper the Best New Director honor at the Cannes Film Festival.

After acting in and directing numerous other films throughout the 1970's and early 1980's, Hopper re-emerged as a leading actor in 1985 starring in the David Lynch film BLUE VELVET and the David Anspaugh film HOOSIERS, for which he received an Academy Award nomination as Best Supporting Actor. In 1988, Hopper directed the highly acclaimed and successful film COLORS starring Sean Penn and Robert Duvall and in 1994, he also starred in the box-office hit SPEED with Sandra Bullock and Keanu Reeves. Most recently, he co-starred opposite Benjamin Bratt in the NBC series E-RING and has made guest appearances on numerous other hit TV shows, including Las Vegas with James Caan and 24 with Kiefer Sutherland. Throughout his expansive career, Hopper has been nominated for several other Emmy and Ace Awards.

In addition to acting and directing, Hopper is a noted photographer and painter, with many exhibitions of his work having been mounted in the United States, Europe and Japan. His pieces have also been featured in many prominent museum exhibitions, including the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the MAK in Vienna and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. He has also published several photographic books including Abstract Reality in 1998 and 1712 North Crescent Heights in 2001. Hopper resides in Los Angeles with his wife Victoria Duffy and has four children: daughters Marin, Ruthanna and Galen and son Henry.

## ROBIN GREENSPUN President

Harnessing a diverse professional background in the fields of television production, advertising, public relations and cultural arts, Robin Greenspun currently serves as president of the CineVegas Film Festival and also serves as a partner in Stone Village Pictures. Her production shingle Stone Village Pictures has produced such projects as EMPIRE FALLS, which garnered 10 Emmy nominations and a Golden Globe, and PENELOPE, starring Christina Ricci, James McAvoy, Catherine O'Hara, Peter Dinklage and Reese Witherspoon. Future projects include the eagerly anticipated film adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' "Love in the Time of Cholera" and an adaptation of Nicholas Sparks' "True Believer," produced by Scott Steindorff and Greenspun.

Greenspun began her career in the entertainment world in the 1970s and early 1980s while serving as an assistant director for Trans American Video and other production companies. She later ran her own advertising and public relations firm.

Since the 1980s, Greenspun has concentrated on her volunteer efforts, primarily with cultural and youth organizations. She was appointed by the Governor of Nevada to the Nevada Arts Council and served as Chair for three years. She was the founding president of the Lied Discovery Children's Museum, and was appointed in 1995 by President Clinton to the Kennedy Center President's Advisory Council on the Arts. Currently, Greenspun is the co-chair of the UJC/Jewish Leadership Forum and was recently appointed to the board of CLAL- The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership. She also serves on the board of the Las Vegas Art Museum.

Greenspun attended San Diego State University where she was an art major and has a degree in communication studies from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She currently resides in Las Vegas with her husband Danny and has two children, James and Moira.

## TREVOR GROTH Artistic Director

Trevor Groth serves as Artistic Director for the CineVegas Film Festival, providing strategic direction and the artistic vision of the festival. Under his guidance since 2002, CineVegas has emerged as one of the hottest film festivals in the United States. Groth is responsible for selecting and programming films and events and for developing relationships with studios, filmmakers, distributors, agents and other film festivals around the world.

Groth's first job in the film festival world was in college interning for the Sundance Institute in Utah. He is now a Senior Programmer for the Sundance Film Festival, where he programs narrative and documentary features and heads the short film section of the festival. In addition, he conceived of and helped produce the Sundance Online Film Festival, which is now in its fifth year.

Groth graduated from the University of Utah with a Bachelor of Telecommunications and Film. He has been a guest curator, panelist and juror for numerous international festivals, as well as a consultant for a number of film productions, Artisan Entertainment and IFILM.com.

## MIKE PLANTE Associate Director of Programming

As Associate Director of Programming for the CineVegas Film Festival, Mike Plante plays a primary role in viewing and selecting the films that play in the festival each year. He is also responsible for the general organization and art design of the festival, the festival's outreach to the film industry, and hospitality during the festival.

Plante graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Fine Arts, and began his film career as a projectionist and programmer for the Arizona Film Festival in 1993. Prior to joining CineVegas in 2002, Plante was involved in various film festivals throughout the country, including Telluride and Sundance, as well as the HBO Comedy Arts Festival.

In 1998, Plante launched Cinemad, a film magazine covering avant-garde and underground filmmaking. He was in charge of designing the publication, writing mostly the interviews, and distributing it worldwide through independent bookstores and Tower Records locations. Plante put out six print issues of the magazine, and currently publishes it on the Internet. He is also a contributor to Filmmaker Magazine, Razorcake and other publications.

# Media Quotes

“On its way toward hitting the jackpot.”

– Minju Pak, *The Hollywood Reporter*

(CineVegas) is one of the few U.S. fests that mixes pure pleasure with a mighty serious ambition for discovery. Held entirely inside the trendy (and cool) Palms Hotel in June, this smart confab – greatly benefiting from the direction of Trevor Groth, a top Sundance programmer – displays young cinema at its best, from pop faves to boldly experimental films that straighter fests habitually ignore.” – Robert Koehler, *Variety*

“In its early days, the CineVegas Film Festival mainly drew independent films that had screened previously at other more-established competitions in what organizers called the “Best of the Fest” programming. Today, CineVegas is steadily on its way toward hitting the jackpot, even in this teeming world of film festivals.” – Minju Pak, *The Hollywood Reporter*

“Now in its eighth year, CineVegas bills itself as ‘The World’s Most Dangerous Film Festival.’ The motto refers in part to the festival’s well-known antics...But it also reflects the preference of the program director, Trevor Groth, and his colleague Mike Plante – longtime Sundance Film Festival programmers who moonlight at CineVegas – who like to gamble on films that might not find a place elsewhere.” – Paul Cullum, *New York Times*

“Now in its eighth year, Las Vegas’ film festival rolls the dice with edgy entries and more often than not comes up a winner... CineVegas enters its eighth year with an increasing reputation for cool parties as places such as the Bellagio and the Hard Rock Hotel along with an eclectic mix of mainstream and independent films.” – Kevin Crust, *Los Angeles Times*

“When you think about it, Las Vegas makes a great home for a film festival: endless hotel rooms and great nightlife for the attendees; relatively close to the Hollywood hub of the industry; predictable blue skies; and an inbuilt audience of locals and tourists. So it’s no surprise that the annual CineVegas Film Festival, which highlights both up-and-coming filmmakers and masters of the craft, is thriving.” – Paul Rogers, *LA Weekly*

“CineVegas brings the stars – and some 20,000 fans – to Sin City for nine days of provocative films and mind-blowing parties.” – *San Francisco Magazine*

“In recent years, the annual CineVegas Film Festival...has really taken off as a major happening...Each year CineVegas has grown...The event has settled into the small list of annual happenings that both excite locals and draw out-of-towners. CineVegas has buzz.” – Richard Abowitz, *latimes.com*

“If you dug *Swingers*, you’ll probably groove to the CineVegas Film Festival, a place where gambling and independent film meet. With Vegas enjoying a retro-hip revival among young Hollywood players, what better and more convenient place for a festival?” – Liam Lacey, *The Globe and Mail*

“CineVegas brings the stars – and some 20,000 fans – to Sin City for nine days of provocative films and mind-blowing parties.” – *San Francisco Magazine*

“With ample support from the Vegas tourism infrastructure and solid programming that has endeared it to Hollywood and indie filmmakers, CineVegas is poised to celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2008 in...what else... Style!” – *Variety*

“Panels, parties, celebrity attendees...These are all wonderful aspects of a quality festival, but film festivals should be defined by the films they show. To judge the 2007 CineVegas just by those standards of film quality is to judge it as one of the best programmed festivals of 2007.” – Mark Bell, *Film Threat*

“The idea of Las Vegas does not normally scream culture. Not in any conventional sense, anyway, apart from a twisted, funhouse-mirror distortion of American notions on class, status, beauty and good state. Taking the tagline ‘World’s Most Dangerous Film Festival’ as its official slogan for the first time...the CineVegas’ programming did what it could to live up to the title, and pushed the boundaries of what a film festival in Las Vegas can and should be about...Regardless of the strength of the festival’s programming and events, it perhaps goes without saying that one of the biggest draws to CineVegas is the city of Las Vegas itself. In many ways, CineVegas is something of a West Coast analogue to SXSW, in that it shows taste and individual identity in its programming and finds smart ways to integrate itself into the fabric of its home city.” – Mark Olsen, *indieWIRE.com*

“CineVegas has buzz.”

– Richard Abowitz, *latimes.com*