

ANIMAL LIBERATION FILM FESTIVAL

5-6
DEC
2025
CINEMA
NOVA

FILMS FOR EVERYONE | FEATURE FILMS | DOCUMENTARIES
SHORT FILMS | ANIMATION | EXPERIMENTAL



ALFF.ORG.AU

& SPECIAL GUEST
TALK BY
PETER SINGER

Welcome Wominjeka

The Animal Liberation Film Festival (ALFF) is Melbourne’s newest event dedicated to showcasing films that explore the ethical, cultural, and political dimensions of human-animal relations – and you’re all invited to come watch.

ALFF spent considerable time reviewing, selecting and deliberating over the final line-up – and we are pleased to say that there is something for everyone. In curating this year’s inaugural festival, ALFF has chosen original films for their creativity, artistry, and compassion.

We hope this festival motivates emerging and established filmmakers to create transformative screen experiences. The world needs ‘animal liberation cinema’, particularly more narrative films and insightful documentaries that tell meaningful stories – to educate and entertain us, and offer a sense of hope.

ALFF was founded on the belief that through the power of film, we can help build a society in which animals are liberated from human oppression and exploitation. To this end, we are proud to present this program – the beginning of what we hope will be many festivals to come.



Dr. Gonzalo Villanueva
Co-Founder and President,
The Animal Liberation Film Festival

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The Animal Liberation Film Festival acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands on which we work and live. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

Your Guide to ALFF

**Cinema Nova
5-6 December**

Tickets are strictly limited. Book ahead to make sure you don't miss out.

Tickets

Online ticket sales: alff.org.au



Friday with special guest

Peter Singer:

General Admission: \$30

Concession: \$25

Saturday

single session:

General Admission: \$26

Concession: \$22





Venue Details

Cinema Nova is located at 380 Lygon Street, Carlton VIC 3053.

It's situated in the Lygon Court shopping centre (Level 1) in Carlton.

Key transport & parking details:

- Tram routes 1 & 6 stop at Stop 112 (corner Elgin & Lygon Street) – about a 100 m walk south along Lygon Street.
- Tram routes 3/3a, 5, 16, 64, 67, 72 stop at Stop #1 (Melbourne University) – about 300 m walk east to Lygon Street.
- Free 2-hour parking in the Lygon Court Shopping Centre Car Park (access via Drummond Street between Faraday & Elgin Streets)



ALFF ADVICE & CLASSIFICATIONS

The Animal Liberation Film Festival (ALFF) provides Viewer Advice and a Rating for all films to help audiences make informed viewing choices.

Our in-house 'traffic light' rating system indicates the extent to which a film depicts animal cruelty – ranging from Green (cruelty is implied but not visually shown. It may appear in animated shorts), Amber (brief or contextual scenes of cruelty, suffering, death are shown) to Red (sustained scenes of animal cruelty or death is visually shown).

Where possible, we include additional context to help audiences understand the nature and duration of these scenes. A film may receive a Red rating even if scenes depicting cruelty are brief or limited in scope.

We also acknowledge that sensitivity to animal cruelty varies between individuals. Some viewers may find even implied or alluded cruelty distressing, while others may not. Our aim is to provide clear, compassionate guidance rather than definitive judgment.

Where applicable, Viewer Advice and Cruelty Ratings will be prominently displayed in each film's listing on the ALFF website and program guide. We encourage audiences to review this information before booking tickets.

ALFF's classifications are issued independently of the Australian Classification Board and are designed to reflect our commitment to transparency, compassion, and audience care. Unless otherwise indicated, our sessions are open to audiences aged 16 and over, and some films may contain graphic or confronting themes related to animal exploitation.

For more information about our Cruelty Rating system, visit alff.org.au/classifications

ALFF RATINGS



No Cruelty:

Cruelty, suffering or death are referenced, implied, or discussed but not visually depicted. Cruelty references may be animated.



Moderate Cruelty:

Brief or contextual scenes of dead animals, animal body parts, and 'meat' are shown. There may be brief scenes of animal suffering.



Graphic Cruelty:

Extended video - such as undercover investigation clips - of cruelty, suffering, or death are shown.

FRIDAY NIGHT

with PETER SINGER

6:30pm–8:30pm

We are honoured to announce that Peter Singer, one of the world's most influential philosophers and author of *Animal Liberation* (1975), will officially open ALFF at Cinema Nova.

Singer's groundbreaking work redefined how the world thinks about animals, sparking the modern animal movement and inspiring generations of activists, scholars, and ordinary people to seriously consider the suffering of sentient beings and take action.

Singer will offer his reflections on the state of animal liberation, 50 years after he first published his book.



Peter Singer's special address will then be followed by a feature documentary: *The Dying Trade* (2025), and a short film *Planted* (2025).



Photographs (bottom left) by Andrew Davies and (top right) Petrina Hicks

Ticket sales to this special event are limited, so please book ahead.



FRIDAY NIGHT

6:30pm–8:30pm



The Dying Trade (2025)

UK

Dir. Jack Hancock-Fairs

62 mins

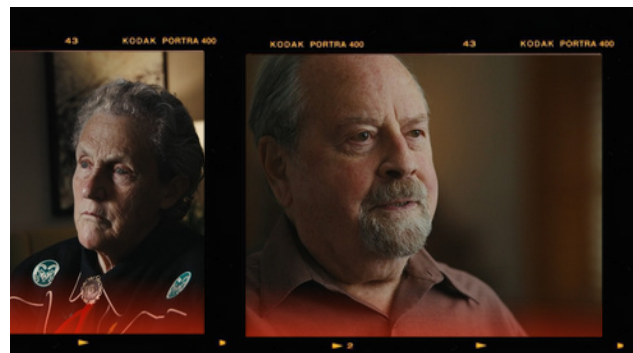
Jack is a vegan activist. His father is a slaughterhouse worker. After years of avoiding the subject, Jack sets out to confront the unspoken tension between them. This intimate and contemplative documentary follows a son's attempt to understand his father –and the industry that stands between them.



Based in London, Jack Hancock-Fairs (known as "Humane Hancock" on YouTube) is a filmmaker and animal advocate content creator.

The Dying Trade is an attempt to understand my father. It's been the most meaningful project I've ever undertaken, but also the most emotionally complex. Making this film has at times put real strain on our relationship. But it's also helped me see him, and the world he works in, with a deeper level of empathy.

This film explores the psychological strategies we use to manage moral discomfort, especially when it comes to animals. I wanted to humanise slaughterhouse workers, not vilify them. I hope THE DYING TRADE challenges audiences to reflect on the systems we are part of, and to imagine a more compassionate relationship with other animals.



This documentary contains scenes from undercover investigations and slaughterhouses. These scenes appear infrequently but can be distressing. Viewer discretion is advised.

FRIDAY NIGHT

6:30pm-8:30pm

Planted (2025)



Dir. Francesco Bori

CAN, UK

Donald Watson died 20 years ago. This touching short animation, exclusively for the first time in history, exposes for the screen the fascinating story of the Englishman who started the vegan movement.

13 mins



ALFF2026

Submissions for the 2026
Animal Liberation
Film Festival are now open.

Submit your film, and be
part of the animal liberation
cinema movement

Submit at:

FilmFreeway

SATURDAY #1

1:00pm–3:00pm



25 Cats From Qatar (2025)

USA

Dir. Mye Hoang

95 mins

The nation of Qatar has a street cat population equal to the population of the entire country. Disease is rampant, and local adoption is rare. A Midwestern cafe owner decides to bring 25 cats to Wisconsin.

25 Cats from Qatar (2025) asks searching questions about the role of public and private players in animal welfare, all within a ticking-clock narrative about the nuts and bolts of a rescue mission. From the filmmakers behind the award winning CAT DADDIES, the documentary is both an urgent wake-up call and a heartwarming portrayal of strangers overcoming international barriers to reach a common goal.



+ Animated Short

Not a Rookie Sandpiper (2025)

Dirs. Jens Møller,
Lei Zhang

DNK
CHN

15 mins



SATURDAY #2

3:00pm-5:00pm



The Snake and The Whale (2025)

USA

Dir. John Carlos Frey

90 mins

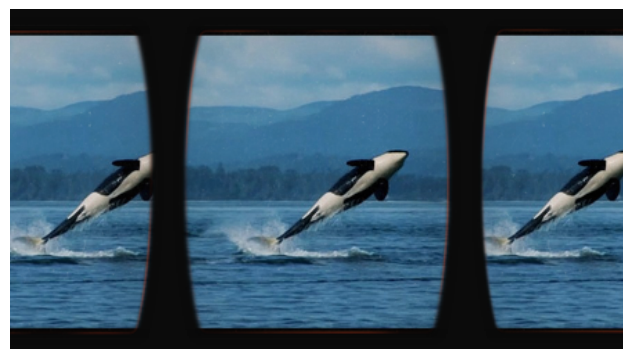
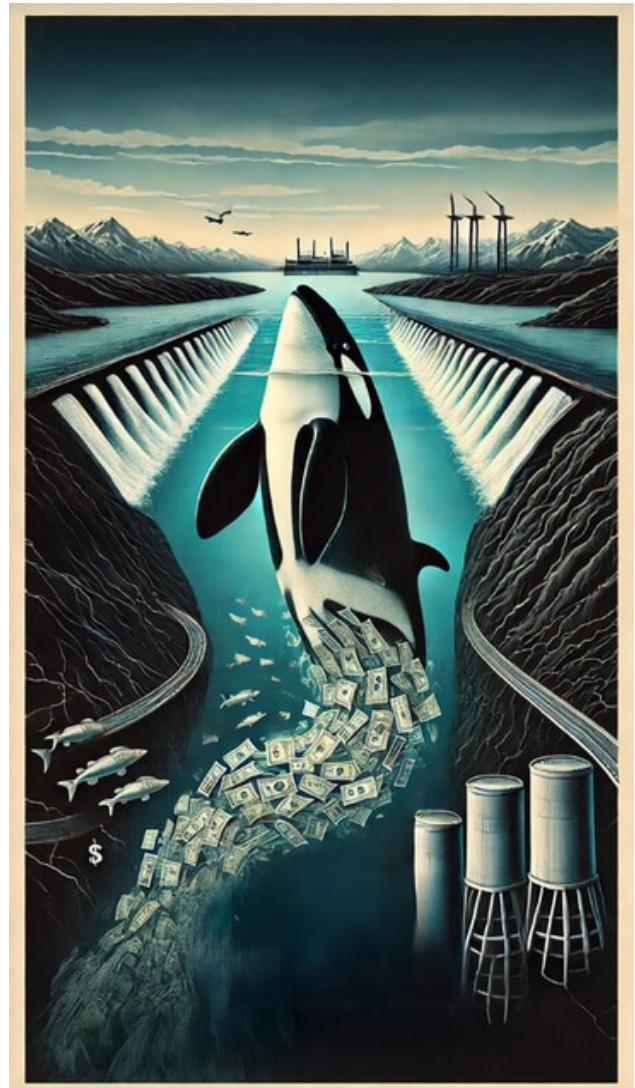
This award-winning investigative documentary explores the ongoing fight to remove four dams on the Snake River. At stake are Salmon and Steelhead runs, once among the greatest runs in the world, and the salmon-eating Southern Resident Orcas facing imminent extinction.



John Carlos Frey is a six-time Emmy Award winning documentary filmmaker, investigative journalist and author.

Over the course of my career, I have always chosen stories that help to give a voice to the voiceless and hold those in positions of power to account. The Snake and the Whale was an opportunity to give a voice to threatened and endangered fish and a group of Orcas that are on the endangered species list. By selecting experts to tell the majority of the story, it becomes evident that an ecological disaster has been overlooked, whitewashed and supported by a handful of corrupt and powerful government officials. I was determined to let nature speak and expose politicians and bureaucracy responsible for an ongoing ecological crisis.

This documentary contains scenes of whale and fish deaths. Viewer discretion is advised.



SATURDAY #2

3:00pm-5:00pm

+ Experimentation

Living Lessons in the Museum of Order (2023)

Dir. Malic Amalya

USA

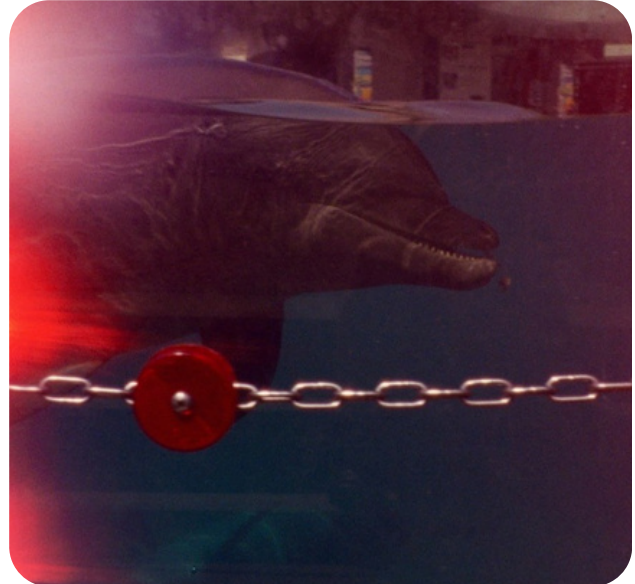
20 mins

Living Lessons in the Museum of Order is a short experimental film that examines the carceral logics of the Orca Encounter at SeaWorld San Diego and the “Doing Time” tour of the former Alcatraz prison in the San Francisco Bay.

Alcatraz is part of a larger industry of prison tourism that treats prisons and jails as real-life haunted houses. Through an immersive audio tour with stories from prisoners and guards, “Doing Time” reinforces racist beliefs that police and prisons “keep us safe.” Gently challenging this narrative, Alcatraz has recently hosted art and educational exhibitions that question the prison industrial complex. Likewise, Alcatraz’s buildings are permanently marked with evidence of Indigenous resistance to settler colonialism during the Occupation of Alcatraz from 1969 to 1971.



Malic’s films are situated between formal avant-garde traditions, the anti-assimilation subculture of queercore, and an intersectional feminist framework based in prison abolition, decolonization, anti-racism, gender self-determination, disability justice, anti-capitalism, and climate justice.



In contrast to the empty prison cells and crumbling buildings at Alcatraz, SeaWorld is full of marine life in above ground tanks with see-through walls. Under pressure from activists and exposés on the cruelty of their practices, SeaWorld’s marketing focuses on their habitat conservation and animal rescue efforts, as well as hyperbole about how their scientific research and education materials help marine animals – both captive and wild.

Juxtaposing original 16mm footage, promotional VHS and 16mm footage, and analog video feedback, Living Lessons in the Museum of Order explores the tensions between public fantasies and exploitative practices, as well as between rhetorical and cultural changes, within the two California entertainment empires.



This film contains scenes of dolphin and orca captivity. Viewer discretion is advised.

SATURDAY SHORTS #3

5:00pm-7:00pm

Kindness Town (2025)



Dir. Jess McKay

USA

Kindness Town follows a group of puppets who discover they are decorated with real feathers and decide to replace them with cruelty-free materials. This musical short film explores themes of compassion, ethical decision-making, and the impact of our choices on the world around us.



I Feel Like a Piece of Meat (2024)



Dir. Yalın Çağdaş Eşsiz

TUR

"I Feel Like A Piece of Meat" narrates the feelings and thoughts of a woman who was raped, by taking into hand the culture of eating and consuming animals' bodies from a feminist vegan point of view. It explains the commodification and consuming of cow and woman's bodies by patriarchy in an experimental way.



How We Hamsters Die (2025)



Dirs. Phoebe Burdick,
Mio Gribskov

USA

A comedic 2D animated short film that tells the absurdly tragic stories of hamsters from the after-life. The film aims to entertain and educate. Prepare to laugh, cry, and gasp in shock as this mixed-media, documentary-style film takes a look into how and why this colorful cast of pet hamsters died.



SATURDAY SHORTS #3

5:00pm-7:00pm

Vermin (2025)



Dir. Jonah Howell

AUS

When a freak accident grievously injures her housemate, a guilt-ridden pacifist must protect them both from a mysterious and threatening creature that roams their apartment after dark.



Runt (2025)



Dir. Isabella Holgate

AUS

7-year-old Molly is eager to lend a hand on her family's farm, but when she witnesses the death of an animal at the hands of her father, he insists his actions were merciful. Matured by the event, Molly attempts to apply her newfound sense of morality.



The Heart Whisperer (2025)



Dir. Shaun Monson

USA

A childhood discovery inspires a woman to push the boundaries of our compassion in this true story. The esteemed Earthlings creator, Shaun Monson, weaves together archived news clips, never seen before arrest footage, and current interviews to tell this tale that crosses countries and decades. Cameo appearances by Joaquin Phoenix and other famous animal advocates.



SATURDAY SHORTS #3

5:00pm–7:00pm

A Promise of Paradise (2025)



Dir. Thomas Machowicz USA

Dan Peterson—a Vietnam veteran and retired construction business owner—took up cattle ranching as a retirement project, not fully prepared for the emotional weight it would carry. A powerful encounter with the matriarch of his herd changed everything. This is a story of rescue, responsibility, and the quiet power of choosing kindness over tradition.



Foundation (2025)



Dir. Jack Hinz AUS

After experiencing the confronting realities of cow farming as a child, Anthony Walscott abandoned his life as a lawyer to purchase a pristine 120-acre block on Queensland's Mary River—a place which is now home to Australia's largest cow sanctuary.



I'm Trying (2025)



Dir. Raymond Cruzzola CAN

I'm Trying is a powerful portrait of Regan Russell – an animal rights activist killed in 2020 during a peaceful protest outside a slaughterhouse – and the ongoing fight for justice she inspired. At its core, I'm Trying is about grief, love, and the enduring power of one person's will to make the world more just – and how we can all keep trying.



SATURDAY #4

7:00pm-9:00pm



Dogs and War in Ukraine (2025)

JPN

Dir. Akane Yamada

109 mins

When Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, Japanese director Akane Yamada travelled to the war zone to document an often-overlooked story – the fate of animals and the people who refuse to abandon them. Known for her work in disaster zones since Fukushima, Yamada witnessed animal welfare groups mobilising at the Polish border to help refugees and their pets, and followed Ukrainians who continued to adopt shelter animals amid the chaos. In Borodianka, near Kyiv, she uncovered the tragic deaths of shelter dogs left behind during occupation. Her three-year investigation led her deep into Ukraine's frontline regions, from flooded Kherson after the Kakhovka Dam's destruction to a children's hospital in Kyiv struck by a missile. Through the stories of people who refuse to abandon animals even amid the devastation of war, this documentary portrays the resilience and dignity of those who refuse to surrender to violence.



Since the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, I have been covering animal life in disasters and crises. In 2015, I created Dogs Without Names, a film about the animals left behind in the restricted zone within 20 km of the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant. Even times of war, there are people who risk their lives to save animals. And I believe such acts of compassion can also contribute to ending conflicts. This is why I made this film.



SATURDAY #5

9:00pm–11:00pm

A44 (2025) - AUSTRALIAN THEATRICAL PREMIERE

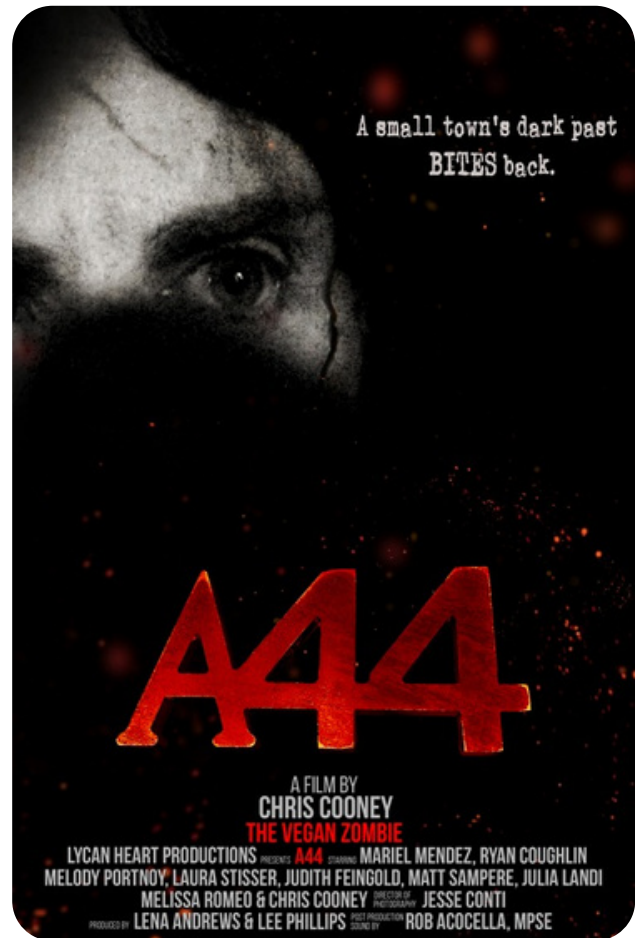
USA

Dir. Chris Cooney

109 mins

When a mysterious infection transforms a small town into a horde of flesh-craving zombies, a college student becomes Amherst's unlikely last hope. With time running out and his mother missing, Harley and his loyal German shepherd, Indy, team up with a group of friends and embark on a desperate quest for a cure. Their only lead: a defunded scientist with a fragile prototype antidote. Facing impossible choices in a town consumed by madness, Harley must confront his deepest fears to save everything he holds dear.

**It's the first
feature film of
its kind –
a pro-vegan
story that isn't a
documentary.**



Chris Cooney (known as “The Vegan Zombie” on YouTube) writes, directs, and stars in this fresh twist on the classic zombie horror genre.



Bringing A44 to life has been an incredible journey of perseverance and passion. Since we began this project in April 2009, we've faced numerous hurdles that at times made us question whether we'd ever see this film completed. Yet, it's precisely these challenges that have shaped A44 into what it is today—a story that not only entertains but also carries a message close to my heart. At its core, A44 is a tale of compassion, told through the unexpected lens of a zombie narrative.

ACCESSIBILITY

ALFF and Cinema Nova aim to provide an accessible environment for all our patrons.

Cinema Nova is a wheelchair accessible venue. Cinemas 1 and 10, the Candy Bar and Nova Bar are on Level 1. Unfortunately the Nova Bar is not wheelchair accessible. Level 1 is accessible through the rear door located opposite the Banco offices near the stairs. Press the green buzzer upon arrival and the Cinema Nova team will allow you entry.

- CAR PARK: There are two lifts in the Lygon Court car park, accessible via Drummond St.
- LOWER GROUND FLOOR: There is a lift located outside Woolworths (accessible from Drummond St) opposite the travellator.
- GROUND FLOOR: There is a lift located opposite the pharmacy (accessible from Lygon St) adjacent to the travellator.

ALFF 2025 CREDITS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Andrew Davies
Petrina Hicks



DONATE TODAY



The Animal Liberation Film Festival (ALFF) is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) and is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) under Australian law.

Every donation of \$2 or more is fully tax-deductible in Australia.

Every dollar goes directly toward creating a world-class festival that inspires compassion, sparks conversation, and imagines a more just future for animals.

ABN 60 904 661 873



Photograph by Jo-Anne McArthur / We Animals