



8th Annual SF Urban Film Fest: Urban Futures
March 9th-13th 2022, plus a special event on March 25, 2022
Press Materials available [here](#).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***SFUUFF Suggests That an Equitable and Vibrant Urban Future Starts
with the Present***



SAN FRANCISCO, CA (February 23, 2022):

The SF Urban Film Fest (SFUFF), along with long-time partner Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA), is proud to present its 8th annual film festival, ***Urban Futures***. The program will take place virtually and in person across various venues throughout San Francisco, including YBCA, from **March 9-13, 2022, plus a special event on March 25, 2022.**

With each festival, [SFUFF](#) aims to center creative storytelling, collective resistance, and the ongoing struggle for more equitable cities. This year's *Urban Futures* poses an exceptionally timely question: where exactly does a "just" future begin? Is the starting line somewhere in a far-off distant space, or is it right here in the spaces between us? The 2022 festival urges its audiences to bridge the gap between imaginative speculation and tangible, immediate action. Films and public programs implore us to collectively resist the separation and complacency spurred by digital media, and to instead gather and rebuild our fractured communities. This premise is not only provocative to participants, but also presents a refreshing challenge to the festival's filmmakers and panelists: to create narratives that can transcend time and distance in order to incite concrete change in the here and now. SFUFF brings together artists, urban planners, educators, community activists, and industry leaders in a collaborative effort to transform existing conceptions of urban planning and design.

"*Urban Futures* is about right now, in the place where you are," says SFUFF's Founder and Executive Director Fay Darmawi. "Our collective experience of the pandemic showed us we can change the course of our future in an instant—we stopped the world for a few weeks and look how quickly communities came together to support each other! We know exactly what to do. We can share resources. We can create a culture of care. The question is how do we sustain it into the future?"

In the two years since the global outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, we have been forced to slow down and reconsider the way we look at the world. We have reestablished connections and relearned how to relate to and empathize with one another. Now, after an admittedly long and tough slog, we can move forward in one of two different ways: either return to the status quo, or use our new understandings to begin reshaping our society from the ground up.

The week-long festival consists of film screenings and panel discussions that explore the impacts of urban planning on community cultures, traditions, and intergenerational dynamics. By promoting meaningful discussions centered around inclusivity, collectivism, and resilience, each program continues to pave the way towards a more equitable future.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE:

Information regarding tickets and registration is available on the [SFUFF website](#).

Day 1: Wednesday, March 9

Kicking off the five-day festival, **Tell It Like It Is: Conversations Between the Global North and South on Design and Community Life in Human Settlements** initiates the conversation by carrying us from an open-air market in Ethiopia, to an organized squatting system in Venezuela, and finally to various community-rebuilding efforts throughout Africa. The program consists of creative works by documentarian [Sosena Solomon](#), and two architecture firms [Urban Think Tank](#), and [MASS Design](#), followed by a panel of urban planners and activists led by USF Professor of Architecture and Urban Studies [Tanu Sankalia](#). Presented together, these works provide an alternative understanding of urban

planning as a means to achieve justice and peace through intentional, community-based architecture.

Day 2: Thursday, March 10

The films featured in **Here, Now and Beyond: Cities of the Afrofuture** boast such notable names as [Afatasi the Artist](#), [Annetta Laufer](#), [Amber Love](#), and [Wanuri Kahiu](#). They weave together cultural elements of the past and technologies of the future to create fantastical narratives that explore the issues of environmental racism, gentrification, and displacement of Black communities. The panel considers how artists are bridging the gap between Afrofuturism as entertainment and Afrofuturism as a practice and way of life, and includes [Derick Brown](#), [Niema Jordan](#), Afatasi the Artist, and will be moderated by filmmaker [Celia C Peters](#) who also curated the program.

Day 3: Friday, March 11

Through the Lens: Realizing Identity & Needs Through Filmmaking highlights the growing importance of video and film as tools of community-building and artistic activism. The program showcases films by local talents [Jules Retzlaff](#), [Mike Evans Jr.](#), and [Alba Roland Mejia](#), followed by a panel discussion among the artists as well as a special guest, poet [Donté Clarke](#).

Day 4: Saturday, March 12*

Culture Aid is a celebratory evening showcasing San Francisco's vibrant, diverse, and deeply rooted communities through the eyes of our own local artists. It includes films produced by [James Q. Chan](#) and [Citizen Film](#), and live performances by artists [Landa Lakes](#), [Leticia Hernández-Linares](#), Paloma Flores, and [Parangal Dance Company](#), among others. Afterwards, the featured artists, cultural district representatives, and audience members will participate in an interactive exercise to discuss the question: how can arts and culture be integrated into the urban planning and development process—and vice versa?

**This event is part of SFUFF's residency program at YBCA, which has granted the SFUFF the space, time, and opportunity to experiment with and produce new works.*

Day 5: Sunday, March 13 ****By invitation only—not open to the public**

Six cultural districts and community arts institutions representing San Francisco's diverse neighborhoods will participate in a two-part **Storytelling Workshop** led by local filmmakers—including Keith Battle, Shantré Pinkney, John Moody, Nix Guirre, Ken Fisher, and Avni Shah. The focus of this year's workshop is to create narratives advocating for permanent community-based cultural spaces which are vital for communities, and the City of San Francisco as a whole, to thrive.

Two weeks after the initial rollout, SFUFF and YBCA* will team up again on Friday, March 25 for the festival's final program: **Where Generations Come Home**, an in person film screening and panel discussion that will take place in the courtyard of the Dr. George W. Davis Senior Center. The bi-coastal conversation between Bahama Village in Key West, Florida and the Bayview & Hunters Point neighborhoods in San Francisco will highlight resilience through intergenerational,

culturally-rich programs and institutions. The program features films by Susie Smith, Damali Phipps, [Shaver family](#), and team [Kris Bowers](#) and [Ben Proudfoot](#). and a conversation between the artists and facilitators, [William Rhodes](#) of the Bayview Senior Services, and Kawana Staffney-Ashe from Bahama Village.

**This program serves as part of the culmination of the work SFUFF has been doing as Artists-In-Residence at YBCA.*

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Hashtag: #SFUrbanFilmFest #UrbanFutures

Instagram: @sfurbanfilmfest

Twitter: @sfurbanfilmfest

Facebook: facebook.com/sfurbanfilmfest/

About SFUFF

The SF Urban Film Fest gathers a diverse, engaged audience and uses the power of storytelling to spark discussion and civic engagement around urban issues. We ask what it means to live together and create just and equitable cities. We are an interdisciplinary storytelling organization that produces an annual film festival, year-round film-based discussion events, and long-term community storytelling projects to make our cities more healthy, inclusive, and culturally abundant.

About YBCA

YBCA centers artists as essential agents in catalyzing social and cultural movement. Our programs position and propel artists as critical drivers of health and well-being in their communities. We are focused first on our city and our Bay Area region and are committed to racial, economic, health, and climate justice. We leverage our national leadership and are committed to serving the urgent needs of today.

CREDITS

In recognition of their impact on empowering communities using storytelling and film, the SFUFF are Artists-in-Residence at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. This partnership offers both organizations the opportunity to harness the power of creativity through film and inspire the public to engage with their city with a critical and communal lens.
