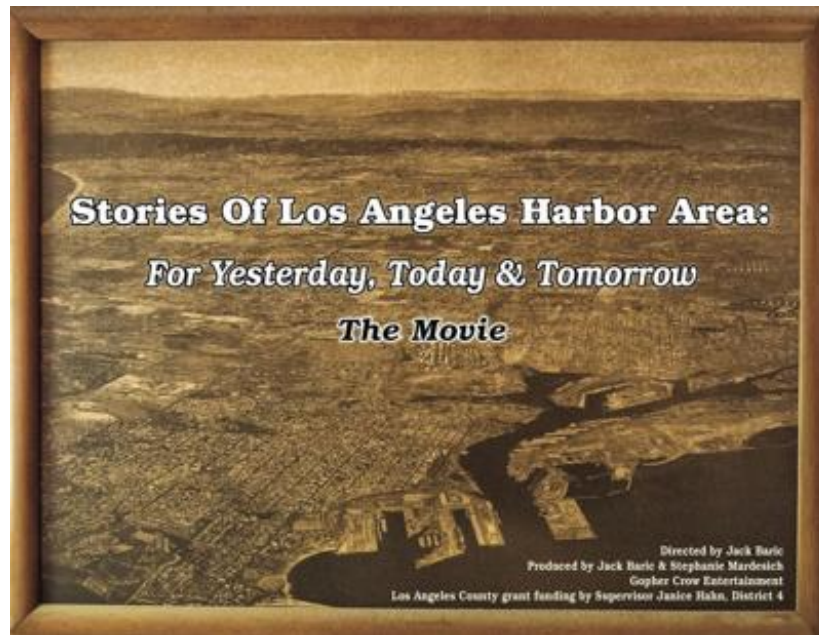


# 16th annual LA Harbor International Film Festival opens March 14 in San Pedro

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Michael Hixon

March 12, 2019



From films focusing on Japanese internment during World War II to an oral history of the Los Angeles Harbor area, the 16th annual LA Harbor International Film Festival takes place March 14 to 17 at the historic Warner Grand Theatre in San Pedro.

The classic 1984 film "Sixteen Candles," presented in 35 mm, will open the festival Friday, March 15. The iconic "Gentlemen Prefer Blonds," with Marilyn Monroe and Jane Russell, is featured in the "Hollywood Nostalgic Tribute" night on Saturday, March 16. The 1953 film will also screen in 35 mm, according to festival founder Stephanie Mardesich, a San Pedro native.

"There are only a few venues in all of L.A. to see movies as they're meant to be viewed, and Warner Grand Theatre in San Pedro has that distinction," Mardesich said.

"DocSunday" on March 17 includes two feature documentaries, including "Stories of Los Angeles Harbor," which is produced by Mardesich and Jack Baric, who also directs. The film was funded by a Los Angeles County grant by Supervisor Janice Hahn. A question-and answer session will follow both films.

"'DocSunday' is especially meaningful with the social justice theme of 'Rebel With A Cause: The Story of Aiko Herzig Yoshinaga,' who helped restore finances and dignity to Japanese Americans compromised in WW II, and the original oral history project 'Stories Of Los Angeles Harbor Area: For Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow - The Movie' that speaks to local population with wonderful memories and stories to inspire all to preserve their own history for posterity," Mardesich said.

The festival begins on Thursday, March 14, beginning at 10:30 a.m., with the free education outreach program, "Read the book, See the Movie" Culmination Program. The program promotes literacy. More than 15,000 books have been distributed to students and community members since 2004. This year's selection is "Black Beauty" by Anna Sewell.

The NewFilmmakers LA "On Location Program" Showcase of Short Films takes place Saturday at noon. The 26 films were made by finalists of the annual community engagement program.

The art deco Warner Grand Theatre, which opened in January 1931 as the first sound-equipped theater in the South Bay and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is located at 478 W. 6th Street in San Pedro.

For more information about schedule and tickets, visit [laharborfilmfest.com](http://laharborfilmfest.com).