



[www.legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org](http://www.legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org)  
[info@legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org](mailto:info@legacyfilmfestivalonaging.org)  
Sheila Malkind, Executive Director  
415/515-2708

## Master Plan for Aging

I am the director of the unique Legacy Film Festival on Aging, a nonprofit organization, as designated under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

We are now entering our 10<sup>th</sup> year, and will present a three-day weekend of documentary, narrative, and animated films October 1-3, 2020 in San Francisco.

### **Our Master Plan for Aging is simple:**

#### **Goal 1:**

To bring a one-day, 2- 2.5 hour film festival to State-sponsored centers for seniors and people with disabilities. This will include a 30-45 minute Q&A with the audience facilitated by a film maker, or key expert related to the films' subjects;

**Goal 2:** To educate, entertain, and inspire intergenerational audiences about the issues of Aging.

**Goal 3:** Film fest programs will be posted online and also posters and publicity materials distributed through centers serving seniors and persons with disability.

**Goal 4:** To bolster relationships with schools/teachers so that students of particular ages will be invited to attend screenings and participate in Q&A's.

**Goal 5:** To ensure that each audience member is equipped with the proper devices – hearing, sight, ability to manipulate computer – for optimal enjoyment and ability to communicate with the viewers and facilitators.

**Goal 6:** For film festival presenters to receive payment for services from the state and/or business community sponsors.

### **Our rationale behind our concentration on films on Aging for the Master Plan for Aging:**

In America, and other countries with thriving economies, people are living longer and are reinventing both work and retirement activities. Yet especially in Hollywood movies, there is not strong recognition of this reality. Older people are often still portrayed as irrelevant, sometimes absurd, or they are stereotypical wise elders with limited face time, who give sage advice to the younger, more active characters.

Most American films do not attempt to portray the richness and variety -- nor the triumphs and challenges -- of older people.

A 2014 study from the Yale School of Public Health shows that elders from 61 to 99 years old (average age, 81) who are subliminally exposed to positive stereotypes about aging can demonstrate improved physical functioning that persists for several weeks.<sup>1</sup>

In one experiment, some subjects were shown positive messages on a computer screen, which flashed images of words such as “creative” and “spry” quite rapidly, to undercut conscious awareness. As researcher and Associate Professor Becca R. Levy explained: “The challenge we had ... was to enable the participants to overcome the negative age stereotypes that they acquire from society, as in everyday conversations, and television comedies.

Again: Our mission is to educate, entertain, and inspire intergenerational audiences about Aging – the challenges and triumphs – so that we have a more dynamic society, Films can show older and younger people the rich variety of experiences or the sensitive aging issues that people confront as they grow older. Once shown these poignant and often celebratory, and yes! comic portrayals, there is more positivity among all ages, and less ageism, and hopefully, a more vibrant and inclusive society.

From Sept 20-22, 2019, at the New People Cinema, in San Francisco’s Japantown, we presented eight two-hour programs with short and full-length films from the U.S. and countries such as: Belgium, Mexico, Switzerland, and Australia. The subjects included: Overcoming loneliness; Post-widowhood sexuality; Grief; Caregiving; Cross-dressing; Lesbian friendships; Familial Love; Ageism; Resilience in the face of cancer or dementia; Musical themes of American blues; Italian opera; Australian dance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Psychological Science, December 2014, (<http://goo.gl/mBVNh8>)

The films ranged from 75-minutes to two hours, followed by a 30-min Q&A between audience and filmmaker or audience and 'expert' on the film's subject.

People paid \$10+ service fee online for each program, or \$12 at the box office.

*Post-program written evaluations of 2019* were routinely positive:

*Wonderful; The best year yet; Helps me fight my own ageism.*

*In years past:* *Made me want to live until 90; A privilege to watch; Can't wait until next year; Touching portrayals of difficult issues.*