



**FILM FESTIVAL DATES: November 6-7-8-9, 2008**

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## **Ojai's Ninth Annual Film Fest**

**2008 SLATE OF FILMS ANNOUNCED ALONG WITH CELEBRITIES**

**Ninth Annual Ojai Film Festival** spools out its programs **November 6 – 9** with 57 independent films, lifetime achievement honor ceremonies, and a seminar to fill in the four-day event. Hosting sponsor and headquarters for the festival is the premiere AAA five-diamond award-winning resort, the **Ojai Valley Inn & Spa**. Ojai has become a viable path for filmmakers and their work to get noticed. Hollywood producer, Peter Guber said of the Ojai FF at the podium of the Toronto Film Festival last year, "Ojai is the next Telluride!" That festival is like Ojai, a four-day event focused on films one would not otherwise see in the mainstream but of a very high caliber. Artistic Director, **Steve Grumette**, who was one of the founders of the festival in 2000 said, "There are so many more films being made since the advent of digital technology, and in the past eight years, the festival has sent over a dozen films on to win the highest honors in the industry, including Academy Award nominations and Oscars."

The dazzling *Lifetime Achievement Awards Honorees* already in place - America's sci-fi author, **Ray Bradbury** and the highly acclaimed directing/producing team of **Lauren Shuler Donner** and **Richard Donner** get feted on Saturday, followed by the *Filmmaker Awards* and the *Closing Night Party*. Hosts of the evening will be **Malcolm McDowell** and writer **Peter Bellwood**. Video presentations for Bradbury have come in from **Tom Hanks**, **Steven Spielberg** and **Roy Disney** adding to the already stellar line up of those coming in person to fete the entertainment giants. Names at press time included: **Edward James Olmos**, Academy Award winning actress, **Diane Ladd**, and COPS producer **John Langley**. The Donners have asked to screen *Ladyhawke* and Bradbury asked to screen *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit*, the latter having a limited theatrical release. The special screenings will take place at 12:30 & 3 p.m. respectively on Saturday at the Matilija Jr. HS auditorium. Donners will have a 30-minute Q&A following and there is a video interview to be screened with Ray Bradbury. Special opportunity for fans with tickets to the Lifetime Achievement Awards is to get one of these rare books signed by Bradbury between 6 pm and 7 pm only in the lobby of the Hacienda Ballroom on the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa property. You must present your ticket to the event to participate.

Hottest addition to this year's festival is the *Ojai Film Festival Celebrity Golf Classic* headed up by local Ojai resident and well-known actor, **Malcolm McDowell**. Additional celebrities signed up to play include: **Tim Matheson, Bruce McGill, Mickey Dolenz, Bobby Herbeck, Robert Hays** and **Joanna Pakula** with more names to come.

Opening this year's festival with the traditional free community screening, Grumette has chosen **Charlie Chaplin's *City Lights*** to be screened under the stars on the recreation field at the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa. Grumette chose the film to open the festival because of the huge positive response when Chaplin's *Modern Times* was screened with live orchestral accompaniment earlier this year at the Ojai Music Festival. "The film has a new digitally recorded soundtrack performed by the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra that will knock your socks off," said Grumette. "Plus, *City Lights* was recently declared one of the top ten greatest love stories of all time by the American Film Institute. And I'm betting most people have never seen this film on the big screen, and almost surely not with this incredible music. It will be a triumphant opening night under the stars."

Executive Director, **Maureen "Mo" McFadden** said, "Although the population of Ojai is just a little shy of 9,000 - those residents and businesses have supported the festival and films heartily and have given the festival it's base for these nine years. That baseline of support along with Grumette's ability to really pick the good ones has made Ojai Film Festival a contender in the film festival circuit and it's really exciting." (List of films are on the website now). Additionally, this year's edition is taking an expanded focus as a regional festival serving all of Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties as well as a destination festival for travelers worldwide.

Jury members this year are: Narrative Shorts and Features: **Catherine Ann Jones, Geraldine Kennon** and **Mark Solomon**. Documentary Shorts and Features: **Rex Weiner, James Becket, Robert Wise**. Animated films: **Cathy Karol-Crowther**.

This film festival has begun to really prove itself and is one you should not miss. It's also an affordable film festival with all access VIP Passes going for just \$300 and close in proximity to drive from L.A., Santa Barbara, Camarillo and Thousand Oaks. VIP Packages that include Ojai Film Festival Passes with stays at the hotels in Ojai and Ventura are on sale now at- [www.ojaifilmfestival.com](http://www.ojaifilmfestival.com). Follow this link to the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, <https://reservations.synxis.com/LBE/rez.aspx?Hotel=11703&Chain=5402&group=OFF08> or this link to the Crowne Plaza, <http://cpventura.com/packages.html> or the Marriott in Ventura by going to [www.MarriottVenturaBeach.com](http://www.MarriottVenturaBeach.com) and click on dates to reserve put in promo code: FVJ. All three hotels have created money-saving packages for the weekend. Please log on to the website [www.ojaifilmfestival.com](http://www.ojaifilmfestival.com) to get all the latest information or call (805) 640-1947.

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