



WRIF has joined forces with CATV to form JAM.
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The White River Indie Film Festival's 2024 Lineup Hits Close To Home
For immediate release: January 3, 2024

White River Junction, VT – From February 15 to 18, 2024, WRIF (White River Indie Films) will return to JAM – Junction Arts & Media and the Briggs Opera House with an invigorating and diverse curation of 2023's best global indie cinema, including unreleased features from Cannes, New York, and Berlin Film Festivals, and top-tier work by local filmmakers. There will be late-night parties and brunches for mingling with filmmakers and film lovers alike. For the first time ever, WRIF will offer a curated "Vermont Midnight" selection of subversive, not-so-late-night features and cult classics starting after 8:00 PM. WRIF aims to bring the Upper Valley movies that hit close to home – literally.

Thursday night kicks off the festival with "Pitchfest," a live audience event in which aspiring Upper Valley filmmakers and media artists can pitch their projects for prizes. Winners receive funding, equipment, and support from JAM's staff to make their films. This marks the second year of JAM's support for local filmmaking; following this year's Pitch Fest, 2023 winner Loren Howard will premiere his debut feature film, *Custodian*, at WRIF. Based in Claremont, NH, Howard shot *Custodian* with \$1,000 prize money from JAM, support from friends, and pure New England grit.

Other notable NH and VT films include the insightful documentary *Join or Die* (dir. Pete Davis, 2023), which explores America's civic unraveling through the life's work of social scientist Robert Putnam (author of *Bowling Alone*), who makes the case for joining a club to save democracy. *Joonom*, by Film Independent Spirit award nominee, Sierra Urich chronicles the Vermont filmmaker's quest to make sense of her fractured Iranian identity. Selected shorts by WRIF Emerging Filmmakers from VT, NH, Maine, and Quebec will precede feature films throughout the festival. The Vermont Midnight offerings will include local folk horror short, "The Thaw" (dirs. Sarah Wisner and Sean Temple).

WRIF 2024 will screen highly anticipated new independent and international features selected by WRIF volunteers and JAM programming staff for their topicality, artistic value, and flair. Program director Travis Weedon says, "we're casting a wide net of exceptional cinema this year, from celebrated Oscar nominees to underground gems. Since we're kicking things off Valentine's weekend, our overarching theme is love. Whether that's romantic, sweetly platonic, love for one's community or family, or, especially, radical acts of self-love, this year we hope to bring people together and leave their hearts full." Friday's official opening night brings France's sumptuously extravagant and deeply romantic Oscar submission *The Taste of Things* to the screen following an opening-night gala at the Briggs Opera House. Over the weekend, WRIF will present more international Oscar contenders, including Wim Wenders' sublime *Perfect Days* and the formally daring, emotionally gripping documentary *Four Daughters*. Other sensational offerings include a heartfelt animated story about the friendship between a dog and his

automatron companion, *Robot Dreams*, and *Orlando: My Political Biography*, a genre-flexible documentary that uses Virginia Woolf's 1928 century-spanning, gender-bending novel as a template for the modern trans experience. The festival will conclude Sunday night with *The Sweat East*, a buoyant picaresque through the subcultures and political fringe of the American East Coast, starring Talia Ryder, Ayo Edibiri, Jacob Elordi, and Simon Rex. Film and media maker workshops, parties, and gatherings will provide ample opportunity throughout the festival weekend to mingle with fellow film lovers and makers.

Bonus: Warming up for the festival on Valentine's Day, WRIF and JAM will bring on the love with a reprise of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, featuring "The Creature Feature Club" shadow cast with their interactive, live performance.

Visit uvjam.org/wrif-2024 for more information or email cedar@uvjam.org.

CALENDAR LISTING:

WRIF White River Indie Film Festival 2024

Dates: February 15-18, 2024

Location: The Briggs Opera House & JAM – Junction Arts & Media
5 S. Main St.

White River Junction, VT 05001

Public Contact: Cedar O'Dowd, Festival Coordinator, cedar@uvjam.org

Sponsor Contact: Samantha Davidson-Green, Executive Director, samantha@uvjam.org

Tickets, Passes & Information: <https://wrif2024.eventive.org/welcome>

uvjam.org/wrif

JAM – Junction Arts & Media (formerly CATV) is now located at:

5 South Main Street, 1st Floor, White River Junction, VT 05001

Mailing address: P.O. Box 141, White River Junction, VT 05001

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