

Inaugural Year Report

By A. Naglich
Pueblo Film Fest LTD. 501(c)(3)
131 Spring St, Pueblo, CO 81003
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Overview

At Pueblo Film Fest, our mission is to ignite a passion for storytelling through the art of cinema. We celebrate the diverse voices of filmmakers from around the world, from budding talents to seasoned auteurs. Our festival serves as a vibrant platform, connecting artists with audiences and fostering a sense of community. Through thought-provoking narratives, captivating documentaries, and innovative experimental works, we aim to inspire, entertain, and provoke meaningful conversations. Pueblo Film Fest is committed to nurturing the cinematic arts, promoting cultural exchange, and shining a spotlight on the vibrant film culture of Pueblo, Colorado.

2024 was the inaugural year for the Pueblo Film Fest and the result of two years of research and planning by the executive team and board of directors. The following report will outline the intended goals for the inaugural year as well as the resulting benchmarks and milestones that were achieved. This report will also outline shortfalls and areas of improvement for future years.

2024 Goals & Results

- ☑ Create an international film festival with over 50 short film entries from multiple nations. Over 124 films were submitted from 8 nations. 62 Films were accepted into the festival for screening.
- ☑ Generate at least 20 Nights of lodging to local area hotels. **Over 56 Nights** were booked at the Courtyard Marriott alone.
- ☑ Build community and awareness around the power of film for positive transformational change. **See Milestones I, III, IV, VI**
- Attract more than 100 people to the opening reception on Friday night and at least 300-500 festival attendees each day on Saturday and Sunday for film viewings. Of those numbers, we estimate that at least 100 individuals will travel more than 90 miles to attend at least 1-day of the festival offerings.

 See Milestone V
- ☑ Generate at a minimum the purchase of more than 300 additional meals at local Pueblo restaurants and vendors per day of the festival (beyond normal weekend activity for that time of year). See Event Summary & Milestone V
- ☑ The Pueblo Film Fest will encourage local and regional student submissions and attendance at the festival from CSU-Pueblo, PCC, the Youth Documentary Academy, local city and county high schools, and other educational institutions in the region, as well as students from film schools more broadly, through a special submission and award category earmarked for students as well reduced submission and ticket fees for students. See Milestones III & VII.
- ☑ Receive at least five student film submissions and thirty student attendees to the festival. **See Milestones II & VII.**
- ☑ Highlight youth filmmakers and the Youth Documentary Academy students from Pueblo, CO as they continue their careers and vision to work in the film industry. **See Milestone VII**

Event Summary

The event took place April 26th-28th in Pueblo, CO. Click Here to view the digital program.

FRIDAY, APRIL 26TH, 2024-- The Inaugural Launch Party was hosted at the Blo Back Gallery at 7pm for all our guests, filmmakers, and volunteers! This event included 4 local food trucks and one commissioned bar truck. The Pueblo Film Fest was granted a special event liquor license so we could also use the 'free to the public' event as a fundraiser without limiting accessibility to participants. It highlighted a live performance by Spyderland, film screenings by the Youth Documentary Academy, and served as a warm and exciting welcome for the creators of the 62 films selected for screening.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27th, 2024 -- Beginning at 10am - the Sangre De Cristo Arts Center was filled with over 400 guests throughout the day who enjoyed multiple 2-hr blocks of short film screenings; in addition to exhibitors, vendors, and local culinary food trucks like Peppers & Co Pizza, Papa Mario's, & Chente's Cosina. We faced unfortunate rain and weather that reduced some of our out of town guests primarily from the north where there was a large winter storm preventing those driving in from out of town. This portion was ticketed for passholders only.

At 7pm we launched the first ever **STEELY AWARDS SHOW** and invited the whole Southern Colorado art & film community for free to join us on the red carpet at the Arts Center to celebrate the amazing films submitted and discover the winners of the festival. The show featured our talented host & son of Pueblo, Sonny Gonzales (President of Colorado SAG-AFTRA) as well as performances live by Jeremy Kitchen & local Underground Improv! We again were able to make this event accessible and free to the community thanks to our title sponsor T-Fiber. This event engaged over 30 individual presenters from the Pueblo Community representing all areas and walks of life featured on stage.

SUNDAY, APRIL 28TH, 2024 -- At 10am we returned to the Sangre De Cristo Arts Center where passholders were able to screen Pueblo's own *Mirasol: Looking at the Sun*, a documentary short by the Palmer Land Conservancy featuring our Pueblo Chile Grower families. We also screened the FESTIVAL WINNERS and a never-before-seen TV Pilot from film & TV Stars Dennis Leoni(Resurrection Blvd & Daniel Zacapa(The Sandlot)who spoke in-person after the pilot with all of our guests. We hosted several workshops from locals featuring Digital Distribution: How to get on Streaming Platforms led by local digital film distribution firm *The Collaborative Curators Co.* & a workshop on Pitching Your Story taught by Director Shahrzad Dadgar, MFA and Professor at CSU-P's Student Media & Entertainment department.

Milestones

I. International Participation

Filmmakers from 8 Nations participated in the Pueblo Film Fest including Poland, Russia, Georgia, Philippines, United Kingdom, Netherlands and Italy. We had acceptance speeches sent from as far away as Warsaw, Poland for the US premiere of the film noir *Hiatus* that won the Women In Film Award presented by Women in Film & Media Colorado. We had 5 judges volunteer their time to watch over 40 hours, a total of 124 film submissions.

II. Award Worthy Independent Film Screenings

From over 124 submissions 62 films made the cut to be screened in the festival. The winners were screened twice both on Saturday and Sunday. This was over 15 hours of unique independent films screened live in Pueblo. We had 15 never-before seen films or Festival Premieres and we hosted 17 films that were already award winners in other festivals. Many films made a powerful impact on viewers like *Mirasol: Looking at the Sun* which has already been recognized at festivals like Big Sky in Montana, featuring our very own Pueblo Chile growers!

III. Industry Org Collaboration

SAGAFTRA Colorado President - Sonny Gonzales hosted the first ever Steely Awards Show on Saturday night and was joined by over 16 other local presenters who each make their own mark in our community as they celebrated the impactful cinematography on screen. In addition to SAG AFTRA-CO we were joined by the Peak Film Forum, Women in Film & Media-Colorado, and many other important industry organizations. We were also host to powerful nonprofits like the Lockwood Foundation who are making meaningful impacts in Southern Colorado and beyond through film storytelling to platform their cause for ADA accessibility.

Colorado State University Pueblo participated through two of their Master of Fine Arts professors Aaron Alexander and Shahrzad Dadgar who both contributed their expertise heavily to make the event possible. Prof. Alexander arranged judging of films and Prof. Dadgar arranged the educational sections of the production. This enriched the educational aspects of our programming tremendously. Both are participants in the 2025 schedule along with all of the CSU-P Media & Entertainment department.

IV. Industry Pro Collaboration

Moviestar Daniel Zacapa, of The Sandlot, *NYPD Blue, Se7en,* and the longest running Latino cast drama ever to air in the US - *Resurrection Blvd* arrived Thursday, and planned to stay for 3 days. After seeing our city and meeting so many young Pueblo artists creating film - he instead stayed for 8 days in total speaking city-wide at the festival, CSU-P, local public schools, and more. Mr. Zacapa both volunteered his time and paid for his own travel to join us. His hotel was underwritten by El Movimiento Sigue and the Pueblo Film Commission.

Director and Writer of *Resurrection Blvd***, Dennis Leoni** joined us for 4 days and gave powerful insight to all the filmmakers into how to hone your writing skills for scripts and how to break glass ceilings no matter what the obstacles. Mr. Leoni volunteered his time to join us and the Latino Chamber of Commerce was the underwriter for his travel and lodging.

Providing marketing support and backup star power for us was Emmy award winning writer & actor Sarah Silverman and award nominated actor Mauricio Mendoza. Both volunteered their time in support of the festival. These connections were made through our hard working board members Kennedy Pugh and Shawn Bidwell.

V. Ticket Sales & Guests Hosted in Pueblo

We blocked 51 nights (17 rooms) in the Courtyard Marriott downtown and ended up over **booked at over 56 Nights** with guests of the Pueblo Film Fest.

36 of the 62 Films selected sent over 72 representatives in person to the festival.

We hosted **127 ticketed guests** in addition to the **72 film representatives** totalling 199 guests of the festival to Pueblo, CO from the surrounding area and **over 38 required plane tickets** to get here.

VI Local Enrichment & Tourism

In addition to our filmmakers and ticketed guests we also had over 15 volunteers work over 80 different shift stations throughout the 3-day festival. This is in addition to a working board of 12 dedicated members who were there actively leading teams and areas throughout the weekend. We employed 5 different food trucks and utilized 3 different restaurants for after-party events and 12 unique vendors for our concessions inside the venue.

VII. Youth Impact

We received 11 Student Only discounted submissions and 9 were selected for screening. The PFF also hosted the Youth Documentary Academy which is a summer youth enrichment program based out of Colorado Springs, CO. We screened two short films both entered by students who went through this program under the guidance of filmmaker and director Tom Shepherd. These films highlighted the documentary experiences these young people had growing up in Pueblo and consuming media that didn't resemble their life experience setting unrealistic expectations for them. Attendees cited this portion of the program as a moving and powerful mission for the event and as a result it's become a central pillar of the 2025 event with even more engagement from local students in our area high schools along with the media, tech, and theatrical departments.

VIII. Media & Marketing

This was an area of weakness in the 2024 plan that we seek to improve for future seasons. A failure to price out larger print and news media ad buys far enough in advance to fundraise enough to accommodate them led to lower than desired coverage. We also failed to network sufficiently with Rev89 at CSU-P and KOAA at PCC to get proper radio coverage. We have a plan in place to remedy this and are seeking more funding for advertising for 2025.

SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT:

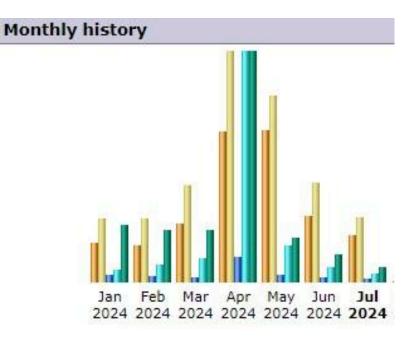
Post Reach Average: 1500 People (*During the 90 days surrounding the festival dates.*) **Average Engagement Per Post in April:** 200

Over 26,820 Views and 100 Organic (unpaid/non-boosted) Shares on <u>Mauricio</u> <u>Mendoza's Promo video</u> with over 24K post impressions.

Over 17,795 Views and 68 Organic Shares on <u>Sarah Silverman's Promo Video</u> with over 17K impressions.

Over 2,348 views with 29 organic shares on The Collaborative Curators <u>local</u> <u>filmmaker promo video</u> sponsored by T-Fiber.

WEBSITE ENGAGEMENT: 4/24 - 4/30 we had 510 NEW users go through the Pueblo Film Fest Website. In April we had 2,098 Unique visitors to the website and totaled 270K hits to the page -- several generated by the filmmakers in Russia and Poland who won Steely awards for the best Women in Film and the best Cinematography. This was a truly international film festival.



Month	Unique visitors	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth		
Jan 2024	544	893	8,660	14,783	1,09 GB		
Feb 2024	502	881	7,241	19,682	1000.37 MB		
Mar 2024	819	1,359	5,314	27,901	1002.98 MB		
Apr 2024	2,098	3,226	28,723	270,596	4.38 GB		
May 2024	2,125	2,611	8,473	42,859	851.13 MB		
Jun 2024	916	1,385	5,908	17,354	524.90 MB		
Jul 2024	663	911	4,156	9,165	284.68 MB		
Aug 2024	0	0	0	0	0		
Sep 2024	0	0	0	0	0		
Oct 2024	0	0	0	0	0		
Nov 2024	0	0	0	0	0		
Dec 2024	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	7,667	11,266	68,475	402,340	9.05 GB		

PRINT ENGAGEMENT	LOCAL NEWS MEDIA				
	Fox News Live Broadcast - 4/26/2024 Loving Living Local - 4/26/2024				

SHORTFALLS

While all of the primary goals of the festival were met, vital takeaways were also cataloged by the entire execution team for the sake of improvement in future years. Key takeaways for improvement where the fest fell short in 2024 are as follows:

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

In the post event feedback received from ticketed passholders a repeated concern was a lack of pre-event communication of the scheduled screening times. This was due to a judging schedule that produced results close to the festival start date and as a result the 2025 season judging schedule has been moved forward by 50 days in order to give the marketing and communications team more time to produce the screening schedules and distribute them to the filmmakers and ticketed guests.

SPONSOR EXPECTATIONS & COORDINATION

Sponsors of the event provided feedback concerning the advanced communication of expectations for the exhibition of their sponsorship as well as where and how logos and sponsorship plugs should be integrated into screening programming. The programming team is actively absorbing this feedback and working it into the 2025 program & schedule.

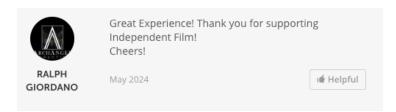
VENUE SELECTION & CAPACITY

The 2024 venue lacked A/V capabilities needed to provide theatrical film screenings. Venue staffing challenges presented in the final days before the festival which created serious conflicts of interest as well as a failure to honor the scheduled tech rehearsal. We were also limited in our ability to sell tickets for the full venue capacity due to the awards show setup. We've remedied this for 2025 by shifting to the Pueblo Convention Center in partnership with Memorial Hall to ensure we can maximize ticket sales for financial sustainability of the event and increase the capacity of our free events open to the entire community at no cost.

RESULTS & REVIEWS

Thanks to the platforms engaged in the process we were able to capture real time reviews and social media from many attendees. Over 226 people experienced the Pueblo Film Fest for our inaugural year as event volunteers, filmmakers, and guests. Here is a sampling of the reviews received on FilmFreeway - the premiere film festival hosting and networking platform for independent filmmakers.

Ralph Giordano is the Owner/Operator of ArchAngel Productions, LLC. Ralph writes, produces, and directs video productions ranging from commercials, training, and marketing videos to short independent films/videos. Recent short films include: "By the Way, Bob" (Co-Producer), "The Silence" (Writer, Co-Producer, Director), The Telly Award winning short, "Weighing the Days" (Producer/Director), and "Ten Past Two" (Director of Photography), "Dink" (Producer), "Stalemate" (Co-Producer), Peccadillo (Co-Producer), and the award-winning short, Knockout (Producer/Director).



<u>Elizabeth Milhelich</u> is on the board of Women In Film & Media Colorado. She both submitted a film and was an award nominee and presenter at the Steely Awards Show.



Elizabeth Mihelich The first year of the Pueblo Film Festival was very exciting. A well run festival, held in a beautiful venue! I can't wait to see what the next few years bring! Submit now and become a part of this exciting new fest!

<u>Jim Hall</u> was the director of a film submission accepted to the festival and is an award winning filmmaker who flew to Pueblo to participate in the full weekend of events.



Jim Hall

WOW! Highly recommend this festival. Absolutely blown away by the hospitality and vitality of Pueblo. Well thought out event with opportunities to connect with iconic film industry members in attendance. When they roll out the Red Carpet at the Pueblo Film Fest, they really ROLL iT OUT! Inaugural year presented like a 10th anniversary edition with attention to every detail that makes filmmakers feel at home. Support this festival with all your ART & HEART and SOUL!

<u>Mason Flint</u> was an award winning student film submission who flew into Pueblo, CO along with his parents to see his film and participate in all the events of the weekend.



Mason Flint

A young, charming, and exciting festival. Staff were friendly and very responsive. Thank you PFF for having me, and I'm looking forward to watching this operation grow over the coming years.

Michael Cohen is a journalist and documentarian who's film Access Denied won the Steely

Award for best documentary.



I had the opportunity to be showcased at the inaugural Pueblo film festival and I must say they did an excellent job! The staff was very polite and responsive. They helped me plan out how to make the event wheelchair accessible for my wife and guests who needed it. The layout and format of the films was great. I got a chance to network with passionate independent filmmakers. I have to say overall, coming from Denver in a snowstorm.. it was completely worth it in every way. Great jobs folks!

<u>Eddie Portoghese</u> began his stunt career by attending the United Stunt Academy in Santa Ana, California. He then moved to Chicago Illinois where he received his SAG card and worked with Mid-West Stunts for a few years in the nineties. In 2000, he moved to Denver, Colorado where now resides and works.



Eddie Portoghese

In its inaugural year the Pueblo Film Fest had many highlights. The hospitality of the people of Pueblo was outstanding, the venue was large enough to have two screens and more space for networking and dining areas. The multi-day event began with a Friday night mixer followed by a full Saturday of screenings, an award show in the evening and a Sunday networking day with screenings of award winning films. The communication prior the fest was excellent and the awards of some of the nicest I have seen. Definitely a festival to keep an eye on!

John Dawson .. lives just outside of Boulder, Colorado and is the son of Colorado watercolor artist Milly Dawson. His artworks have been shown and sold in Galleries in Colorado and online as well. He worked on and off for a small commercial animation studio in Denver for seven years in the late 70's and early 80's. His films have screened and won awards all over the world.



A very nice film festival to have your work shown in. They did a great job putting on a quality event and I plan to enter next year.

John Dawson May 2024

<u>Breanne Nicole Wilson</u> was a producer for *Iridium Springs* which was a short film presented as a pilot in it's premiere at The Pueblo Film Fest. She attended along with film crew, writers, and more from the project as a group.



Breanne Nicole Wilson

This is a great event! Lots of networking opportunities, workshops, and excellent screenings. The facility is very nice, and the awards show was a blast, too! Thank you so much for selecting "Iridium Springs", Pueblo Film Festival! Our team will definitely submit to you guys again!

<u>Paul L. Carr</u> is a Chicago-based Director, Producer, Writer & Actor and the owner of Busted City Productions, LLC. His feature films are as follows: Busted City, portraying the intense racial politics surrounding the election of Chicago's first Black Mayor, Harold Washington. American Barbarian, a dark comedy/psychological horror film dealing with the aftermath of Donald Trump's election. Empire, a sci-fi fantasy dealing with ecological Armageddon. Casual Criminals, a zany slapstick comedy in the style of Mel Brooks.



Paul L. Carr

Very cordial and welcoming event with helpful staff and nice facility for screening. I appreciate my film being screened there and I met a lot of great people!

May 2024



CONCLUSION

The team at Pueblo Film thanks the incredible sponsors for the 2024 festival - Visit Pueblo, The Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, T-Fiber Internet, and over 55 individual private donors who gave anywhere from \$50-\$1000 each to the event to make it possible. Without the support of our community the inaugural year would not have been possible. We hope the results and reviews of this festival speak for themselves concerning the impact your contribution made to this event.

Thank you also to all the crew who contributed over \$50K in professional services and work to make the event possible with filming, audio engineering, connecting us with industry professionals from their past crew jobs and more. Pueblo is full of outstanding film crew pros and we are forever indebted to them for the spirit and heart they invested to make this possible. These volunteers are keeping the spirit of art and film alive and well across the globe with their talent, time, and contributions of energy to festivals like PFF.

WHAT'S NFXT

SEASON 2 of the Pueblo Film Fest is already well underway with the open call set to include not only short films but also full-length motion pictures! 2025 has a focused festival direction moving towards how entertainment creates social transformation and community impact. The team is engaging an advisory board to increase networking and connections with neighboring renowned regional festivals like Mountain Film, Denver Film and more.

As innovators in local collaboration movements we have partnered with CSU-P's Media & Entertainment department as well as with the Steel City Music Showcase to present a city wide promotional initiative called *Primavera - Pueblo's Spring Entertainment Month*. Please consider supporting us in 2025 with a contribution towards either the <u>Primavera Initiative which will support both the Steel City Music Showcase</u> & <u>Pueblo Film Festival or join us as festival sponsors & producers for Pueblo Film 2025</u>. (Click either link for more.)

EXHIBIT A: Certificate of Good Standing with Sec. of State of Colorado

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE STATE OF COLORADO

CERTIFICATE OF FACT OF GOOD STANDING

I, Jena Griswold, as the Secretary of State of the State of Colorado, hereby certify that, according to the records of this office,

Pueblo Film Fest Ltd.

is a

Nonprofit Corporation

formed or registered on 01/20/2023 under the law of Colorado, has complied with all applicable requirements of this office, and is in good standing with this office. This entity has been assigned entity identification number 20231069135.

This certificate reflects facts established or disclosed by documents delivered to this office on paper through 06/26/2024 that have been posted, and by documents delivered to this office electronically through 06/28/2024 @ 13:03:49.

I have affixed hereto the Great Seal of the State of Colorado and duly generated, executed, and issued this official certificate at Denver, Colorado on 06/28/2024 @ 13:03:49 in accordance with applicable law. This certificate is assigned Confirmation Number 16166905



Secretary of State of the State of Colorado

Notice: A certificate issued electronically from the Colorado Secretary of State's website is fully and immediately valid and effective. However, as an option, the issuance and validity of a certificate obtained electronically may be established by visiting the Validate a Certificate page of the Secretary of State's website, https://www.coloradosos.gov/biz/CertificateSearchCriteria.do entering the certificate's confirmation number displayed on the certificate, and following the instructions displayed. Confirming the issuance of a certificate is merely optional and is not necessary to the valid and effective issuance of a certificate. For more information, visit our website, https://www.coloradosos.gov click "Businesses, trademarks, trade names" and select "Frequently Asked Questions."

Pueblo Film Fest Ltd. Statement of Financial Position

As of June 30, 2024

	Total			
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Bank Accounts				
Free Business C (9069) - 1		6,268.75		
Total Bank Accounts	\$	6,268.75		
Other Current Assets				
Inventory Asset (MERCH)		3,039.87		
Total Other Current Assets	\$	3,039.87		
Total Current Assets	\$	9,308.62		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$	9,308.62		
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Other Current Liabilities				
Accrued Payable		300.00		
Accrued Taxes Payable		256.74		
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$	556.74		
Total Current Liabilities	\$	556.74		
Total Liabilities	\$	556.74		
Net Assets				
Without Donor Restrictions		8,751.88		
Total Net Assets	\$	8,751.88		
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$	9,308.62		

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ACTUAL BUDGET AT THE END OF 2024 INAUGURAL SEASON

Pueblo Film Fest Ltd. Statement of Activity

July 2023 - June 2024

Net Assets Starting		\$0.00		\$0.00		\$0.00	
	Unrestricted		Restricted		Total		
Revenue							
Film Submission Fees Revenue		1,485.53		0.00		1,485.53	
Non-Profit Revenue (Individual Donations)		15,666.75		0.00		15,666.75	
Sales of Product Revenue							
Liquor Sales		660.00		0.00		660.00	
MERCH Sales		2,954.95		0.00		2,954.95	
Ticket Sales Revenue	_	3,784.71	_	0.00	_	3,784.71	
Total Sales of Product Revenue	\$	7,399.66	\$	0.00	\$	7,399.66	
Total Revenue	\$	24,551.94	\$	0.00	\$	24,551.94	
Cost of Goods Sold							
Cost of Goods Sold		375.17		0.00	_	375.17	
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$	375.17	\$	0.00	\$	375.17	
Gross Profit	\$	24,176.77	\$	0.00	\$	24,176.77	
Expenditures							
Advertising & Marketing		2,130.84		0.00		2,130.84	
Ask My Accountant		350.00		0.00		350.00	
Bank Charges & Fees		203.88		0.00		203.88	
Contractors(Media)		8,070.00		0.00		8,070.00	
Job Supplies		63.48		0.00		63.48	
Legal & Professional Services		225.00		0.00		225.00	
Meals & Entertainment		1,174.61		0.00		1,174.61	
Office Supplies & Software		228.68		0.00		228.68	
Other Business Expenses		198.00		0.00		198.00	
Purchases		655.00		0.00		655.00	
Reimbursable Expenses		65.00		0.00		65.00	

984.00		0.00		984.00
55.78		0.00		55.78
532.74		0.00		532.74
 487.88	_	0.00	_	487.88
\$ 15,424.89	\$	0.00	\$	15,424.89
\$ 8,751.88	\$	0.00	\$	8,751.88
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