



PRESS ROOM

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE . . .

The St. Louis Youth Film Festival (STLYFF) Returns in April 2026 with a Slate of Films, Presentations and Discussions that Entertain and Inspire

ST. LOUIS, MO. — [The St. Louis Youth Film Festival \(STLYFF\)](#) will take place on **Saturday, April 25, 2026**, from 12:00 PM-4:00 PM at the [St. Louis Public Library, Central Location](#), 1301 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO 63103, which is a co-sponsor of this event. This year's theme is **FREE TO BE . . .** emphasizing the significance of staying authentic to yourself, your stories, and your art. We are accepting [submissions](#), and the deadline is **April 15, 2026**. There are no submission fees and the STLYFF event is *free and open to the public*.

Founded in 2024 by retired educator, filmmaker, and activist [Thomasina Clarke](#), STLYFF officially launched in 2025 to highlight original works by young people in St. Louis that engage, entertain, and inspire through creativity and innovation. Unlike other festivals, STLYFF emphasizes content over specific themes, offering young filmmakers the opportunity to freely and unrestrictedly share their stories through film. Consequently, STLYFF does not award prizes to winners; rather, it selects a group of filmmakers to showcase and celebrate their stories before a live audience, often for the very first time.

Clarke's vision for STLYFF is to create a lively and diverse event featuring various activities that celebrate and support filmmaking as an art form and has refined some of its events. For example, STLYFF has been moved from January to April to avoid weather-related issues for filmmakers and audiences traveling to the Library. She also reduced the minimum age for participants from thirteen, after finding that eight-year-olds have a strong interest in storytelling through filmmaking. The festival now includes three age categories: 8-13; 14-18; and 19-24.

Says Clarke, "Attendees—including college and high school students eager to discover new films—enjoyed our meet-and-greet sessions, merchandise, festival swag, and opportunities to hear filmmakers discuss their work at 2025 STLYFF, and we will be doing more of the same at 2026 STLYFF. I also plan to announce additional festival events soon, such as special screenings and guest speakers." Clarke has simplified the [submission process](#), which now involves an [online application](#) and requires entrants to provide a YouTube link to their video. STLYFF is quickly becoming a vital platform for young filmmakers to premiere their work, gain recognition, and connect with the St. Louis community, audiences and industry professionals alike.

2026 STLYFF will once again be held at the [St. Louis Public Library](#). The Central Library offers a welcoming space equipped with modern facilities that support STLYFF's various events and provide a safe, comfortable environment for everyone, including children and young adults. Although STLYFF is not a competitive festival in the traditional sense, there is a judging process to select films for showcasing and celebration. An impartial panel uses a standardized evaluation rubric to ensure fairness. "I want STLYFF to be open, fair, and enjoyable for everyone," says Clarke.

Subscribe to STLYFF's newsletter to receive updates about the festival being held on **Saturday, April 25, 2026**. If you'd like to help or have questions about submitting, please contact me at info@stlouisyouthfilmfestival.org.

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ST. LOUIS YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL (STLYFF)
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