



The **Future** of the **Pioneertown International Film Festival**

By Lisa Lynn Morgan

In an interview with festival founder, Julian Pinder, he shared about the success of the three-day event and hopes for the future.

“The programming, curation... even the amount of fun people had, was spectacular and far beyond our expectations. Sons of the Pioneers didn’t leave a dry eye in the house when they performed as part of our closing ceremonies. It was a meaningful event for those of us living here, as we gathered to celebrate the very thing on which our town was uniquely built on.”

Longtime residents agreed. “The Film Festival was a lot of fun. I learned so much about Western movies. I thought they were all alike but, boy, was I wrong. Everyone was super nice, and everyone was hanging out with each other, no matter if they were just attending or a major participant. Well put together. Looking forward to the next one.” - Gay Smith, Pioneertown resident since the 60s.

“A festival as intimate as our little Pioneertown. I’ve

been in, about, and around the business for over 50 years and completely enjoyed the no-B.S. camaraderie I shared during these too-few days. What a rare and enriching experience not only screening so many “hidden” classic and new experimental Westerns but to also meet the principles and discuss their work in depth. I am, today, very confident this uniquely American Western expression is safe and even set for a beautiful, updating renaissance. I will be back next year for sure.”-DS Miller, longtime Pioneertown resident

Pinder applauded another strong cast of characters at the film festival – his team. “Bonnie Brooks did the amazing physical and production design for the festival. Stephanie Blank was our passionate coordinator without whom we couldn’t have done this. Anthony saved us in more ways than we can put into words. Todd Luoto is our illustrious programmer who curated a phenomenal program. Keely King did all the festival artwork and graphics, and she really brought a level of sophistication to the festival brand.”

Asked if there would be another event next year, Pinder exuberantly replied, “1000%! We didn’t work on this for 5 years to have one weekend. I think we’ve proven our commitment and our ability to create a legacy event that this town can be proud of for many years to come. We hope this event will become an important part of this unique cultural landscape.”

Improvements and growth are already being discussed. “Next year will be even better and run even more smoothly. We plan on reinvesting in it year after year.”

Expect horse and carriage shuttles, opera, and more theatrical events to become a part of this festival experience. Sights will once again be set on the Memorial Day weekend in order for the festival to cross-pollinate events with the annual Grubstake Days celebrations.

* Photo by Victoria Smith.
All other PIFF photos by Sandra Goodin