

impact report 2021



jewish film institute



jewish film institute

The Jewish Film Institute is the premier curatorial voice for Jewish film and media around the world. Founded in 1980 as the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF), the world’s first and most revered event for independent, Jewish-themed storytelling, JFI’s programs illuminate the full diversity of Jewish experiences.

our mission The Jewish Film Institute champions bold films and filmmakers that expand and evolve the Jewish story for audiences everywhere.

our vision We envision a more informed and empathetic world where vital Jewish-content films are made, watched, shared, and treasured.

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dear friends

It is our pleasure to present the Jewish Film Institute’s (JFI) Annual Impact Report covering our activities in 2021. With the support of our dedicated Board, staff, members, sponsors, and artists, JFI continues to champion bold films and filmmakers that expand and evolve the Jewish story for audiences everywhere. As you will see in the pages that follow, we are bringing our mission to life every day by supporting innovative, independent films that illuminate the joy and complexity of Jewish experiences around the world.

The filmmakers that JFI uplifts through its exhibitions, educational, and funding programs are asking vital questions of ourselves, of each other, and of the world around us. In 2021, JFI grew its material support for filmmakers and launched vital Jewish-content films to a global audience. We awarded \$100,000 in critical finishing funds to six films in the second year of JFI Completion Grants and accelerated the production of eight exceptional projects by our Filmmakers in Residence. Through it all, JFI’s community of artists reminded us that film has a singular power to surprise, educate, and transform our world.

For 42 years, we have cultivated community in the Bay Area and beyond. This year, we presented works by more than 70 filmmakers from 30 countries at the 41st San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, WinterFest, and year-round events; increased global accessibility to Jewish films through our Monthly Online Shorts, JFI On Demand, and virtual screenings; and empowered our Teen Social Justice Film Fellows to catalyze conversations with their peers about critical issues in today’s social justice landscape. Rooted in our legacy as the world’s first Jewish film festival, JFI’s curatorial excellence continues to set the bar for the presentation of Jewish-themed film and media.

We are grateful to you, our family of supporters, whose generosity has enabled this beloved organization to transform itself and best serve storytellers to find their strongest voice and actualize their vision. Our understanding of Jewish life, culture, and identity is constantly evolving. and JFI’s work to bring those ideas to the screen has never been more important. We look forward to what’s possible in the year ahead and hope you will continue to stand with us.

With gratitude,

Lexi Leban
Executive Director

Ralph Guggenheim
Board Chair



11 supported projects

\$175,000 in finishing funds
awarded since 2020

5 projects completed
and premiered to date

The Wild One (Tessa Louise Salomé, 2021)
traces the life of Jack Garfein—Holocaust
survivor, theater and film director, and key
figure in the formation of the Actors Studio



Gary Gilbert interviews Krzysztof Bosak, a
right wing Member of the Polish Parliament,
for the documentary *The Liegnitz Plot*
(Dan Sturman, 2021).



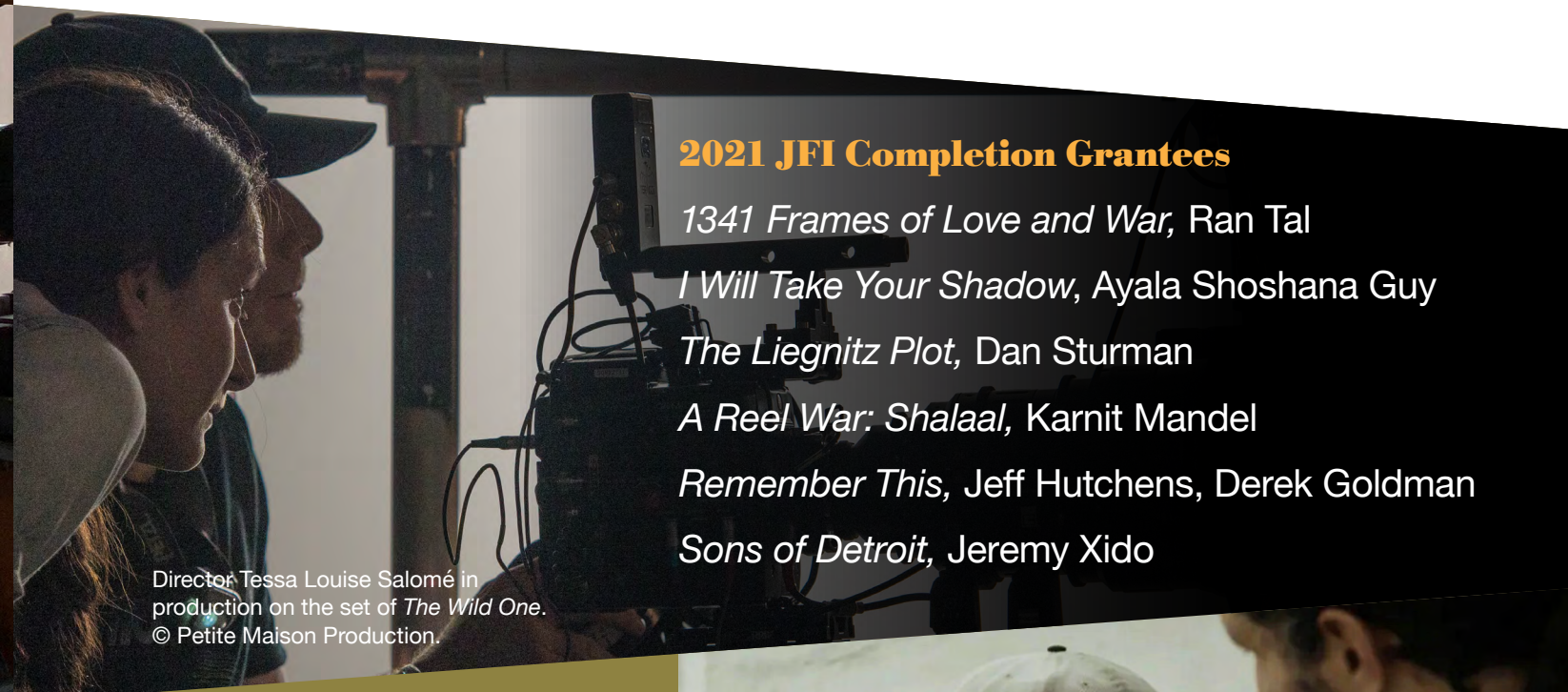
Zelda, by 2021 Filmmaker in Residence
Lauren Greenhall, introduces us to the world
of an Orthodox Jewish hairdresser in Crown
Heights, Brooklyn.

powering storytellers

Funding the Future of Jewish Filmmaking

Informed by our commitment to artistic freedom of expression, experimentation, and innovation, JFI deepened its support for emerging and established filmmakers in 2021.

The **JFI Completion Grants Program**, the first and only U.S.-based source of finishing funds for Jewish-content films of all genres, awarded \$100,000 to six original projects in its second year. Since the program's launch in 2020, nearly half of JFI's grantees have completed their films. Many have premiered at leading international film festivals to awards recognition and critical acclaim.



2021 JFI Completion Grantees

1341 Frames of Love and War, Ran Tal

I Will Take Your Shadow, Ayala Shoshana Guy

The Liegnitz Plot, Dan Sturman

A Reel War: Shalaal, Karnit Mandel

Remember This, Jeff Hutchens, Derek Goldman

Sons of Detroit, Jeremy Xido

Director Tessa Louise Salomé in
production on the set of *The Wild One*.
© Petite Maison Production.

“We felt urgency to get
this film out...it was so
timely and relevant that
JFI’s grant helped us
move it forward”

– Nancy Buirski, *A Crime on the Bayou*



In *Sons of Detroit*, filmmaker and performer Jeremy Xido (right)
returns to his Detroit neighborhood for the first time in 20 years
to find out what happened to his childhood best friend.

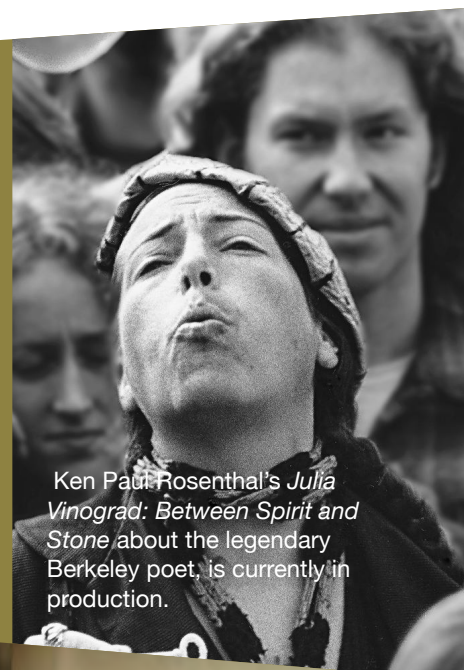
powering storytellers

Incubating Adventurous New Films

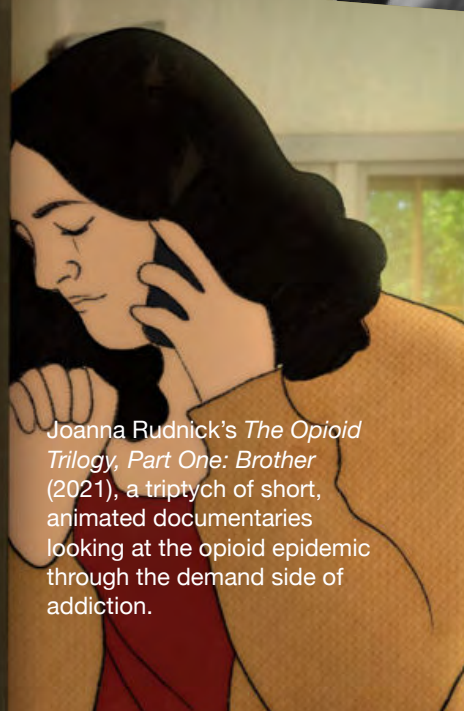
JFI Filmmakers in Residence are invited from a competitive applicant pool to participate in the only U.S.-based filmmaker residency for Jewish-content films in all stages of production. Launched in 2012, the yearlong Residency offers filmmakers throughout the U.S. and beyond the space and support needed to hone their creative visions and narratives through workshops, trainings, and peer-to-peer mentorship. In December 2021, JFI inaugurated its annual **Pitch & Kvell** pitch forum, where Residents presented their projects to industry veterans and community members for feedback and advice.

“In a time of isolation and darkness, the Residency gave me inspiration, hope, and a wonderful cohort of passionate storytellers and friends who I remain in close contact with today.”

— Andrew Garbus, 2021 Filmmaker in Residence



Ken Paul Rosenthal's *Julia Vinograd: Between Spirit and Stone* about the legendary Berkeley poet, is currently in production.



Joanna Rudnick's *The Opioid Trilogy, Part One: Brother* (2021), a triptych of short, animated documentaries looking at the opioid epidemic through the demand side of addiction.

JFI-Supported Filmmakers' Accomplishments

A Crime on the Bayou (Nancy Buirski, 2020 Completion Grantee) premiered at DOCNYC and was nominated for a Critics' Choice Documentary Award. It is streaming on Starz and has a 100% Rotten Tomatoes score.

The Wild One (Tessa Louise-Salomé, 2020 Completion Grantee) will make its World Premiere at the 2022 Tribeca Film Festival.

'Til Kingdom Come (Maya Zinshtein, 2020 Completion Grantee) screened at DOCNYC, DocAviv Film Festival, and the New Zealand International Film Festival.

The Binding of Itzik (Anika Benkov, 2020 Completion Grantee), won the Film Movement Best Narrative Short Award at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, Best Short Film at the Berlin Underground Film Festival, and the Jury Award at the International Women's Film Festival.

1341 Frames of Love and War (Ran Tal, 2021 Completion Grantee, winner of the Albert and Judith Godlberg Award), premiered at the Berlin International Film Festival.

My Name is Andrea (Pratibha Parmar, JFI/JSP Momentum Awardee) will make its World Premiere at the 2022 Tribeca Film Festival.

The Opioid Trilogy (Joanna Rudnick, 2021 Filmmaker in Residence) is streaming soon on PBS' POV Digital.



Ashley Judd stars as one of several cinematic evocations of the feminist scholar Andrea Dworkin in the hybrid documentary *My Name is Andrea* (2022), directed by Pratibha Parmar. Courtesy of Kali Films.



inspiring audiences

Through its robust calendar of festivals, screenings, events, performances, and conversations, JFI sparks moments of joy and wonder that only come from watching films together. The 41st San Francisco Jewish Film Festival showcased more than fifty films from twenty countries for a worldwide audience and presented a record number of conversations and Q&As with filmmakers. Throughout the year, events like **WinterFest**—including sold-out screenings at the Fort Mason Flix Drive-In—and **HanukkahFest** offered important moments of levity and connection as the pandemic surged.

JFI returned to the **2021 Sundance Film Festival** in January for its third consecutive year as an Official Partner, JFI's 2020 Completion Grantees discussed their films on the panel **"How to Complete a Film During a Pandemic"** while **"Engines of Truth"** hosted a conversation with women filmmakers about the role of Jewish values, identity, culture, and feminism as drivers and subjects for their films.

Exhibitions & Programs

San Francisco Jewish Film Festival:
27,250 households attended*

WinterFest: 6,494 households
attended*

HanukkahFest

Year-Round Screenings

Sundance Film Festival

JFI On Demand

Monthly Online Shorts

**includes live and online attendance*

Watch the SFJFF41 Closing Night
Awards Ceremony

Hear from JFI's Completion Grantees about
their films at the Sundance Film Festival

Meet five women filmmakers infusing
their work with feminist Jewish values

Discover more original videos and
recordings at youtube.com/sfjewishfilm

Guests embrace at the
41st San Francisco
Jewish film Festival.



The filmmakers of *A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff* at SFJFF41.

Kate Stille Steiner, co-director of Local Spotlight film *Prognosis: Notes on Living*, onstage at SFJFF41.

A sold out Drive-In screening at the Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture during the eighth annual WinterFest.



Teen Social Justice Film Fellows and JFI staff.

Teen Social Justice Film Fellows Catalyze Conversations through Film Curation

Launched in January 2021, the inaugural cohort of **Teen Social Justice Film Fellows** presented programs for their Bay Area peers throughout the year that addressed pressing questions of identity, belonging, and human rights. Highlights included a moving screening of the documentary ***Not Going Quietly*** and Q&A with director Ady Barkan at SFJFF41 and a screening of the short film ***Her Dance***, featuring a Q&A with director Bar Cohen at WinterFest 2022.



The Fellows lead a Q&A with Israeli director Bar Cohen about her short film *Her Dance* at the ninth annual WinterFest.

Teens + Parents Kvell over the Social Justice Film Fellowship

“I have really enjoyed getting to learn more about film, particularly film curating, and meeting activists and people working in the film industry has been amazing.”

cultivating community

Through outreach, co-curations, and partnerships, JFI fosters dialogue among Jewish and non-Jewish communities alike through the universal language of film. From boundary-pushing programs for **Next Wave** members to the celebrated **Mitzvah Series**, presented in Bay Area senior living facilities and at San Quentin State Prison, JFI offered innovative new ways to experience Jewish cinema.

Our Home in San Francisco

Along with the **Center for Asian American Media** and **Frameline**, JFI continues to build a lasting, sustainable home for film and media arts organizations in San Francisco as co-owners of the **Ninth Street Independent Film Center**. In 2021 the **Bay Area Video Coalition** (BAVC) moved its

headquarters to Ninth Street and are renovating public spaces for enhanced broadcasting and production capabilities. Further improvements to the building are planned in the coming years.

“The films that have been provided by JFI make me laugh and cry. So much emotion goes in and out of my veins, I am proud to be Jewish and supportive of this program!”

– Shirley D., Mitzvah Series attendee, Rhoda Goldman Plaza



Zoe's Dumpling Crisis (2020) by Ellen Rodnianski, September's Monthly Online Short.

JFI serves:

Audiences in all Bay Area counties and **65** countries

30% of audiences that do not identify as Jewish

31K newsletter subscribers

12K+ social media followers combined

3M viewers online

2021

Revenue

Earned	158,065
Contributed	1,553,240

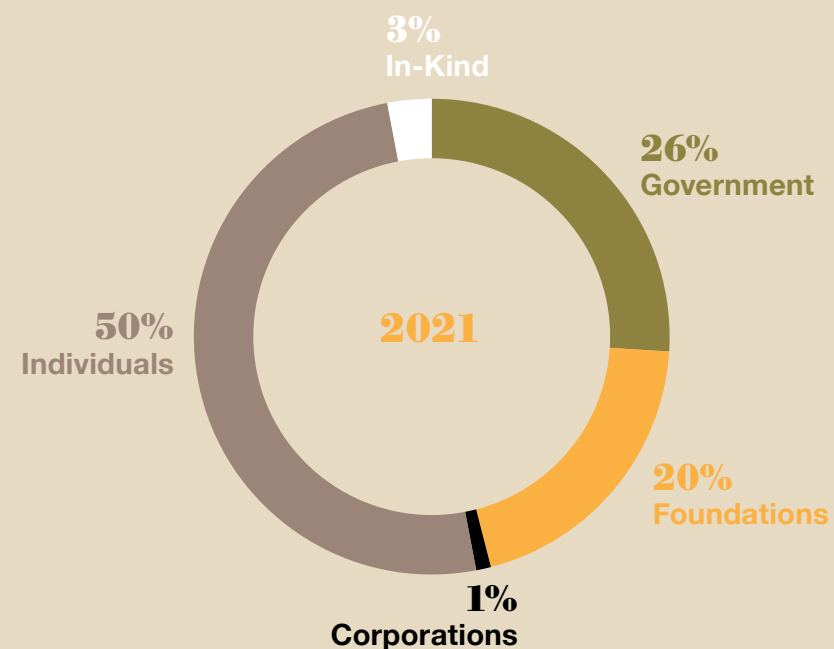
Total Income1,711,306

Expenses

Exhibition	492,860
Filmmaker Services	347,818
Administrative	217,234
Development	293,737

Total Expenses1,351,649

Total Contributed Income: \$1.55 MM



our supporters

JFI appreciates the tremendous generosity of its donors who make its work possible. Listed below are all donors whose recent gifts of \$600 or more have laid an essential foundation for our impact in 2021. We are grateful to all of our supporters at every level. To see a full list of JFI’s community of supporters, please visit jfi.org/support.

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We sincerely regret any errors or omissions. Please contact us at membership@jfi.org with any concerns.

“I am so grateful for all the support JFI has given me over the years and for building such an incredible community. I honestly can’t imagine being a filmmaker in San Francisco without JFI.”

– Sari Gilman, filmmaker

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2021

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Rebecca Pierce,
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JEWISH
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FESTIVAL 41
july 22–
august 1
sfjff.org



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