

Inspiring Bay Area Youth: SFFS Education Program



The Film Society's year-round Education Program introduces students ages 8–18 to the wonder and joy of the best in world cinema. An instructive and inspirational forum for understanding and awareness, the Education Program enhances foreign language aptitude, develops skills for critical analysis and lays the ground for a lifelong appreciation of cinema.

Engaging and Inspiring Bay Area Youth

Since 1957, the San Francisco Film Society has been enriching the lives of Bay Area residents of all ages through the presentation of the best films from around the world, notably via the acclaimed San Francisco International Film Festival.

The Film Society's contributions to the cultural life of the SF Bay Area over this past half-century are inestimable. Nowhere, however, are they more valuable than in the SFFS Education Program.

Since its inception in 1991 the Education Program has touched the lives of more than 30,000 children, 2,500 teachers and community leaders and 500 different educational institutions through screenings, talks, school visits and other special events.

The need for programs that use film as a teaching tool has never been greater. Government funding for arts education is sorely lacking. Moreover, young people today grow up in a globalized, media-saturated world and thus urgently need a sense of visual literacy and cross-cultural open-mindedness.

SFFS Education Program fills yawning gaps in media education and international understanding for Bay Area schoolchildren and is helping create a new generation of sharp, outward-looking and visually literate youngsters.

Year-Round Education Program Initiatives

SFFS Education Program has been greeted with great appreciation and acclaim by civic and community leaders, educators, children, parents, filmmakers and our many partner organizations.

In October 2005, we expanded our Education Program to present monthly screenings for youth in schools and at local theaters. In the expanded program's first 15 months (October 2005–December 2006), SFFS presented 53 screenings and events to 102 schools and overall reached more than 7,200 children.

In January 2007, thanks to a multiyear grant from the Hearst Foundation, SFFS further expanded school screenings and filmmaker visits and added bimonthly teacher-training sessions and extensive curriculum support.

As an integral part of our Into the Future fundraising drive, which launched as we approached the landmark 50th anniversary of the San Francisco International Film Festival, the Film Society is actively seeking to expand its Education Program still further.

All funds will directly underwrite Film Society efforts to enable Bay Area youth to learn from and exchange life experiences with the world's brightest and most creative storytellers.

Education Program

1991–2007

Total Teachers and Students Served **37,397**
Educational Institutions Served **608**

Schools at the Festival 2007

Screenings **17**
Filmmaker School Visits **23**
Youth Served **4,160**

Total Served 2007

Students and Teachers **7,397**
Educational Institutions **92**

Projects Seeking Support

SFFS School Screenings and Filmmaker Visits

SFFS ongoing educational screenings and filmmaker visits provide crucial critical thinking and peer-teaching skills for students, as well as much-needed professional development for Bay Area educators and community leaders. SFFS screenings and in-school visits introduce young people to visions of a wider cultural life, and also to the careers and challenges within the filmmaking arts. As in all our educational activities, outreach to diverse, at-risk and underrepresented communities is of great significance to SFFS.

SFIFF Schools at the Festival

Each year since 1991 during the annual San Francisco International Film Festival, students attend more than a dozen theatrical film screenings, including challenging shorts programs, documentaries and narrative features from around the world. More than 3,200 students from 66 different educational institutions from across the Bay Area participated in programs at SFIFF venues in 2006; while, in addition, SFFS arranged 16 classroom visits by 14 film directors and three producers for more than 1,000 students at 14 different Bay Area educational institutions.

San Francisco International Youth Media Festival and Conference

SFFS is planning the launch of the annual San Francisco International Youth Media Festival and Conference, the country's first major international showcase of the finest in digital media by students ages 8–18 from around the world. Organized in partnership with San Francisco–based media education leader Just Think Foundation, the event offers panel discussions, youth and adult keynote speakers, and hands-on workshops for youth, teachers and community leaders. Live video conference feeds will connect international youth and professional audiences to the discussions.

SFFS Teacher Training and Curriculum Support Programs

An invaluable complement to SFFS school screenings, SFFS Teacher Training Programs help create and implement relevant and innovative curricula for Bay Area teachers. These intensive weekend courses give teachers crucial skills for critical analysis and media literacy. In addition, since media education materials are lacking in many schools, SFFS provides curriculum support in various forms, ranging from online materials to on-site assistance.

Youth Media Educators Summer Camp

The Youth Media Educators Summer Camp, organized with Just Think Foundation, is a paid peer-training intensive for students in underrepresented communities. Youth are paid a stipend to attend a six-week training course in which critical thinking skills, hands-on media tools and the skills to peer-teach are taught and tested. Students completing the six-week program are paid for their peer teaching in after-school environments. This program supports youth development goals and ensures that under-resourced communities are fully included in SFFS educational opportunities.

SFFS InSchool Cinema Partnerships

Working with the Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development and the San Francisco Unified School District, SFFS is planning the installation of digital projectors and the implementation of full-service screenings, teacher training and lesson plan support at the three designated Bay Area Media Academy Schools: Lincoln, Galileo and Balboa. SFFS plans to expand to more schools after successful completion of the pilot phase.

SFFS Youth Media Intensives

These initiatives, organized with Just Think Foundation and Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC), include *Filmmaking Intensives* for middle and high school students, teaching basic and intermediate digital film production skills; *Youth Media Round Tables*, involving both students and educators in dialogues on contemporary issues; *Youth Media Career Seminars*, in which youth media makers meet with Bay Area film industry professionals for informative and inspiring insights into the art and business of filmmaking.