

LIFESTYLES > FOOD & DRINK

Flatirons Food Film Festival kicks off Thursday with several firsts, including #MeToo lecture series

Seventh annual event packs in celebrity chefs, quality films and related fare



A pastrami sandwich from Wexler's Deli is pictured in the film, "The Migrant Kitchen," which will screen at the Flatiron Food Film Festival. (Courtesy photo)

By **CLAY FONG** |

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Julia Joun, the festival's executive director and founder, said there are some new features for this year's event.

"It's the first time the festival will be offering overlapping programs," Joun said. "Another first is having eTown Hall as a venue, which will be the site of a shorts screening."

There's also a new lecture series featuring, among other topics, a presentation on the #MeToo movement in the restaurant industry. Another festival first is a cinematic art show, featuring pieces by local artists inspired by some of the festival's feature films. These pieces will be on display at the festival, as well as at R Gallery, 2027 Broadway, through October 20th.

What's unchanged are the accompanying tastings, post-film panel discussions, after parties and the festival's global perspective.

"It's a really international festival this year," Joun said, citing cinematic entries from Morocco and Zimbabwe.

Referring to "Cook Off!" which tells the humorous story of a single mom from Zimbabwe thrust into a televised cooking competition, Joun asked, "When's the last time you saw an African romantic comedy?"

Other intriguing features and events include "The Migrant Kitchen," a series of documentaries spotlighting up-and-coming Los Angeles chefs crafting immigrant-inspired fare. There will also be post-film after parties at Jax Fish House and Bramble and Hare, which will also host a closing night farm dinner.

One screening that traces its origins back to the inaugural 2013 festival is "Somm 3." The first "Somm" film was part of the inaugural festival's lineup, and the second entry in the series screened in 2017. This series of films focuses on the world of wine, and the first detailed the highly competitive process of becoming a master sommelier.

This year, Dustin Wilson, who has had a prominent role in all three of these films, will be in attendance for the Friday night screening of "Somm 3." Wilson is a master sommelier, and among other accomplishments, ran the wine program at New York's famed Eleven Madison Park. His latest endeavor is Verve Wine, which he co-founded, and this retail operation currently has locations in San Francisco and New York, as well as an online presence. A third location will soon open in Chicago and much of the latest film takes place in Wilson's establishment. He explained, "The business was new, and I asked if we can film stuff at the wine shop."



Dustin Wilson, who appears in the film "Somm 3," said he credits Frasca's co-owner and master sommelier Bobby Stuckey for his rise in the wine world. Wilson will be at the Flatirons Film Food Fest in Boulder for the screening of "Somm 3." (Courtesy photo)

What Wilson had in mind for the film was a tasting, and this case, it was inspired by the legendary Judgement of Paris, which took place in 1976. While this tasting was a seminal event it that it demonstrated that American wines could hold their own against French vintages, Wilson downplayed the competitive aspect of the film's tasting of Pinot Noirs.

"We're not trying to prove America wins, rather we want to tell the story around Pinot Noir from California, Argentina, and Australia, These are interesting wines that showcase how global quality has improved," Wilson said.

It's also a sort of homecoming for Wilson.

"Colorado's my favorite place on the planet," he said.

The Centennial State also played a key role in his rise in the world of wine, and he credits Frasca Food and Wine's co-owner and master sommelier Bobby Stuckey for his rise in the wine world.

"I feel blessed to have walked into his restaurant," Wilson said. He wound up both working at and learning about wine at Frasca. "I wouldn't be here today without Bobby's mentorship."

Stuckey and Wilson, along with fellow Master Sommelier Sabato Sagaria, President of bartaco, will participate in post-film discussion following the screening of "Somm 3."

A fresh and diverse perspective comes courtesy of another special guest, chef Claudette Zepeda. Raised in both Tijuana and San Diego, Zepeda's initial knowledge of Mexican cuisine came via her family, including an aunt who owned a restaurant. A James Beard Award semifinalist, "Top Chef" alum, and until recently, executive chef at San Diego's El Jardin, Zepeda will headline the festival's Saturday tribute to culinary icon Diana Kennedy. This homage will include a screening of a documentary on Kennedy, "Nothing Fancy."



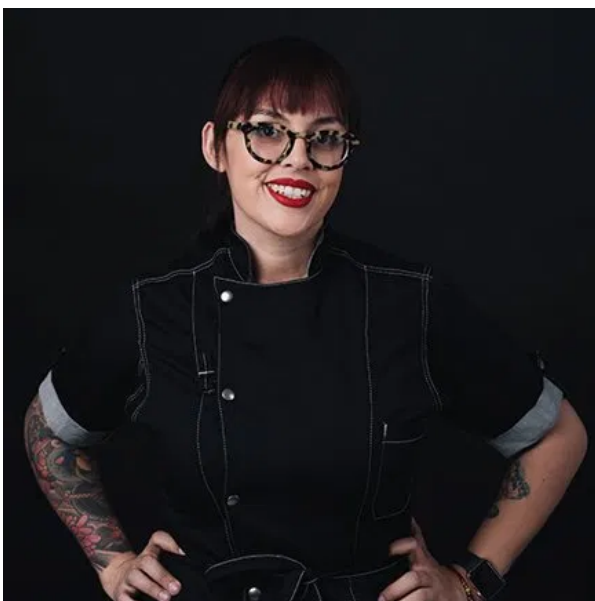
Culinary icon Diana Kennedy appears in the documentary “Nothing Fancy,” which will screen at the Flatiron Food Film Festival. (Courtesy photo)

The nonagenarian Kennedy has written nine volumes on Mexican cooking, with her best known being 1972’s “The Cuisines of Mexico.” Kennedy is also known for her environmental work and describes herself as an “ethno-gastronomer.”

Zepeda, known for her prowess in Mexican cuisine, explains Kennedy “did what Julia Child did for France for Mexico.” While Zepeda has yet to personally meet Kennedy, the visiting chef nevertheless has a keen sense of the author’s voice through her writing.

“She’s got gumption,” Zepeda said. “She’s incredibly herself.”

Kennedy’s resonance with Zepeda perhaps comes as no surprise when the chef cites those who have had an impact on her own work, Zepeda answers, “My influences are powerful women. There’s a thread of various strong women in my family, mom and cousins.”



Top Chef Mexico alum Claudette Zepeda will headline the festival’s Saturday tribute to culinary icon Diana Kennedy. (Courtesy photo)

Like Kennedy, Zepeda takes a big-picture approach, and doesn't subscribe to the view that cuisines operate in isolation, a topic she will discuss at the festival. For example, she points out that cooking techniques and tools in both Syria and Mexico may be similar in some instances.

"There's such thing as a Mexican cuisine, it's a global cuisine that has evolved," Zepeda said. "Mexico is incredibly creative; the rest of the world hasn't seen that. It's not just Tex Mex."

If you go

What: Flatirons Food Film Festival

When: Oct. 10 – Oct. 13

Where: Films screen at the Canyon Theater at the main branch of the Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Muenzinger Auditorium, 1905 Colorado Ave. on the CU Boulder campus and eTown Hall, 1535 Spruce St.

Tickets: Most film prices are \$13 general admission. Purchase tickets, register for events, and read descriptions of the films at www.flatironsfoodfilmfest.org

Full schedule

Thursday

6:30-7:30 p.m. Art exhibition inspired by Omotenashi and The Jewish Deli, films from "The Migrant Kitchen" series

7:30 p.m. "The Migrant Kitchen" screening

Canyon Theater, Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, \$13

Friday, Oct. 11

6:30-7:30 p.m. Colorado wine sampling reception

7:30 p.m. "Somm 3" screening

Canyon Theater, Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, \$13

10-11:30 p.m. "Somm 3" after party, [registration required](#)

Jax Fish House, 928 Pearl St., Boulder, free

Saturday, Oct. 12

10:30 a.m.-noon Free children's program with a screening of short food films made by kids, and a filmmaking workshop, [registration required](#)

Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, free

11 a.m.-noon Lecture on the #MeToo movement in the restaurant industry, [registration required](#).

Boulder Creek Room, Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, free

noon-1 p.m. A exhibition of art created by four local artists inspired by the film "Tazzeka"

Boulder Public Library, 1001 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, free

12:30-2:30 p.m. Small Bites: Short Films for Food People: A program with the top three Colorado Student Film contest winners, and other short food films

eTown Hall, 1535 Spruce St., Boulder, \$7

1 p.m. “Tazzeka” screening

Canyon Theater, Boulder Public Library, \$13

3-4 p.m. Lecture on The Global Connections of Mexican Food Cultures with Chef Claudia Zepeda, [registration required](#)

Boulder Creek Room, Boulder Public Library, free

3:30-6 p.m. “Cook Off!” screening

Canyon Theater, Boulder Public Library, \$13

6-7 p.m. Mexican Cuisine Reception for “Nothing Fancy”

7-9:45 p.m. “Nothing Fancy” screening

Canyon Theater, Boulder Public Library, \$25

10-11:30 p.m. “Nothing Fancy” after party, [registration required](#)

Bramble and Hare, 1970 13th St., Boulder, free

Sunday, Oct. 13

11 a.m.-noon How to Attract Pollinators to Your Garden or Farm: Talk with Tim Brod of Highland Honey

Muenzinger Auditorium, 1905 Colorado Ave., Boulder, \$7

noon-1 p.m. Pollinators Fair

Muenzinger Auditorium, 1905 Colorado Ave., Boulder, free

1 p.m. “The Pollinators” screening

Muenzinger Auditorium, 1905 Colorado Ave., Boulder, \$13

3 p.m. “The Biggest Little Farm” screening

Muenzinger Auditorium, 1905 Colorado Ave., Boulder, \$13

7 p.m. “The Biggest Little Farm” dinner with Eric and Jill Skokan of Black Cat Farms

Bramble and Hare, 1970 13th St., Boulder, \$59

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 Elizabeth Sammuri, beverage director at Flagstaff House, said the grape is the parent to Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Carmenere, all varietals used in Bordeaux blends. Sammuri spoke with savvy about how the vines withstand frigid winters, and how she might suggest to diners beguiled by grapes like Pinot Noir, or by Italian wines in general, that they give Cab Franc a shot.

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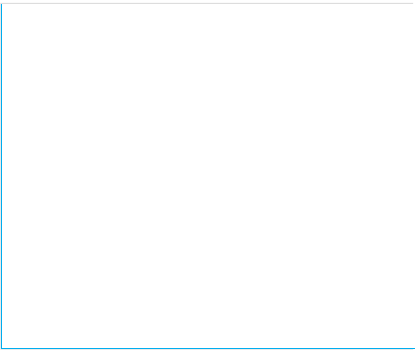
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