



News Release

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Sydney Pollack Film Festival Premieres July 1 to Celebrate Bicentennial Festival Commemorates Lafayette Native's Legacy and Academy Award-winning Career!

LAFAYETTE, INDIANA – June 24, 2025 – Film lovers are invited to honor one of Hollywood's most acclaimed filmmakers at the Sydney Pollack Film Festival, premiering July 1 in celebration of Pollack's birthday and legacy. As part of Lafayette's Bicentennial Celebration, the festival opens with a special screening of *Out of Africa*, marking the 40th anniversary of the Oscar-winning classic's release.

Hosted at The Long Center for the Performing Arts, this three-part film event will showcase some of Pollack's most beloved works, recognizing his extraordinary contribution to cinema as a director, producer, and actor.

Festival Schedule:

Tuesday, July 1 – 7:00 PM

Out of Africa

Celebrate the 40th anniversary of this sweeping romantic epic, which earned seven Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Director for Pollack.



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Friday, July 11 – 7:00 PM

The Way We Were

Relive the unforgettable chemistry between Barbra Streisand and Robert Redford in this timeless romantic drama.

Saturday, July 12 – Film Marathon and Panel Discussion

- **2:00 PM – Amazing Grace: A Biography of Aretha Franklin**
A soulful tribute to the Queen of Soul, directed by Pollack, capturing her historic 1972 gospel performance.
- **4:00 PM – Panel Discussion**
Join a conversation with local film scholars and critics as they explore Pollack’s Oscar-winning career, artistic influence, and cultural impact.
- **5:30 PM – Tootsie**
Wrap up the festival with this sharp, gender-bending comedy starring Dustin Hoffman, hailed as one of the greatest American comedies of all time.

About Sydney Pollack:

Sydney Pollack (July 1, 1934 – May 26, 2008) was an American film director, producer, and actor, known for his work on both critically acclaimed and commercially successful films. His career spanned over four decades and included major contributions to American cinema.

Early Life

- Born: July 1, 1934, Lafayette, Indiana
- Parents: David Pollack (pharmacist) and Rebecca Pollack (professional pianist)
- Background: While his parents were in Lafayette visiting family, Sydney was born at Home Hospital. After his birth, his family moved to South Bend, Indiana
- After high school, he moved to New York City to study acting at the Neighborhood Playhouse School of the Theatre under Sanford Meisner, with whom he later worked as an acting teacher.

Career Highlights

Directing

Sydney Pollack began his directing career in television in the early 1960s, working on shows like *The Fugitive* and *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. He transitioned into feature films in the mid-1960s and gained fame for directing emotionally complex dramas often centered on moral dilemmas and personal conflict.

Notable Films:

- *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* (1969) – Nominated for 9 Academy Awards
- *Jeremiah Johnson* (1972)
- *The Way We Were* (1973)
- *Three Days of the Condor* (1975)
- *Tootsie* (1982) – Starring Dustin Hoffman; widely regarded as one of the best comedies of all time
- *Out of Africa* (1985) – Won 7 Academy Awards including Best Picture and Best Director
- *The Firm* (1993)



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- *Sabrina* (1995)
- *The Interpreter* (2005)

Producing

Pollack was also a prolific producer, especially later in his career. He co-founded Mirage Enterprises, producing films such as:

- *Sense and Sensibility* (1995)
- *The Talented Mr. Ripley* (1999)
- *Cold Mountain* (2003)
- *Michael Clayton* (2007) – Also acted in this film

Acting

Though best known as a director, Pollack had a notable presence as an actor, often playing supporting roles in both his own and others' projects:

- *Eyes Wide Shut* (1999)
- *Michael Clayton* (2007)
- *Husbands and Wives* (1992)
- TV appearances on *Will & Grace* and *The Sopranos*

Personal Life

- Spouse: Claire Griswold (married in 1958, until his death)
- Children: Three (his son Steven Pollack died in 1993)
- Known for his thoughtful and collaborative directing style, Pollack was highly respected in Hollywood.

Death

Sydney Pollack died on May 26, 2008, at the age of 73 in Pacific Palisades, California, from cancer.

Legacy

Pollack left behind a legacy as one of Hollywood's most versatile and respected filmmakers. His films often combined mainstream appeal with intelligent storytelling and strong performances. His work continues to be studied and celebrated for its narrative clarity, emotional depth, and craftsmanship.

Tickets & Venue:

Tickets are \$5.00 for each movie and available online by going to www.longpac.org. Tickets can also be purchased before each movie at The Long Center.

Don't miss this opportunity to experience the films that defined an era and to reflect on the remarkable career of Sydney Pollack, whose films continue to resonate across generations.

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