

ARENA THEATER PRESENTS OUR 3RD ANNUAL



# SHORT FILM FESTIVAL

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 7**

**7PM CLOSE TO HOME**

**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 8**

**2PM SHORTS FROM AFAR**

**4PM ANIMATED SHORTS**

**7PM ADVENTURE FILMS**

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 9**

**11AM STUDENT FILMS**

**1PM FOOD SHORTS**



[WWW.ARENATHEATER.ORG](http://WWW.ARENATHEATER.ORG)  
214 MAIN STREET, POINT ARENA, CA  
707-882-3272

**We're delighted to welcome you to the 3rd annual Arena Theater Short Film Festival—a celebration of storytelling, creativity, and community spirit.**

The ATSFF committee is proud to present another vibrant and thought-provoking lineup of short films from local, regional, and international filmmakers. With more than 20 filmmakers joining us in person over the course of the weekend and Q&As after every program, we're excited to provide more opportunities than ever to engage directly with the creative minds behind the films.

What began as a grassroots idea is growing into a beloved annual tradition. We are deeply grateful to our incredible filmmakers, generous sponsors, dedicated volunteers, and—most of all—you, our audience. Your continued support not only makes events like this possible but also sustains Arena Theater as a cornerstone of cultural life on our coast.

Please settle in and enjoy a cinematic journey that celebrates both the power of film and the joy of coming together. From global perspectives to local stories, this year's festival is a testament to the enduring magic of our nearly century-old theater and the community that keeps it thriving.

Enjoy the festival!

Shauna Boyd, Festival Director  
and ATSFF Committee

Dagmar Moseley - publicity coordinator  
Annelise Jeske - media coordinator & graphic design  
Lisa Joakimides - Arena Theater Board President  
Paul Andersen  
Laura Bidner  
Susan Crutcher  
Sophie Earll  
Gary Levenson-Palmer  
Steve McLaughlin  
John Osborne

## FRIDAY 7PM • CLOSE TO HOME • LOCAL SHORTS



Curated by Shauna Boyd, Gary Levenson-Palmer, Gillian Nye

An eclectic collection from local and regional filmmakers, celebrating our unique stories and perspectives.

### REZFAMOUS MVMNT POINT ARENA • 8 MIN • DIRECTOR: DUELLE GORE

Captures RezFamous MVMNT's Point Arena camp, where Native youth built confidence, creativity, and cultural pride through basketball, music, art, and the resilience of tradition. Gore, a professional basketball player, coach, and community leader, founded RezFamous MVMNT to empower Native youth through sports, culture, and mentorship. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### BIRD RESCUE CENTER • 13 MIN • DIRECTOR: DEREK KNOWLES

A cinematic window into the world of this Santa Rosa bird rescue sanctuary and the people who give wildlife a second chance. Knowles specializes in creative nonfiction. His work has been published in *The New Yorker* and PBS, supported by the Tribeca Film Institute and the Berkeley Film Foundation, and featured as multiple Vimeo Staff Picks. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### SHELF LIFE • 9 MIN • DIRECTOR: GREG DEROCHIE

A solitary woman fights her demons in the form of a creature born from leftovers. Derochie is an award-winning filmmaker and VFX artist in Sonoma whose credits include *Obi-Wan Kenobi*, *Black Panther*, and *Guardians of the Galaxy 2*.

### THE FIRE POPPY • 11 MIN • DIRECTOR: SASHWA BURROUS

The film follows NorCal firefighter Sasha Berleman as she transforms her view of fire from a feared threat into a vital tool for healing and protecting ecosystems. Production company Coldwater Collective produces solution-oriented stories about our changing planet and social responsibility. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### YOU ARE YOU • 3 MIN • DIRECTOR: BLAKE MORE

What began as a paper poem with its universal message comes to life through video, where imagery deepens and expands the power of words.

More, Poet Laureate of Point Arena, is a multidisciplinary artist and longtime poetry teacher who hosts radio shows on KZYX&Z and KGUA. She is the author of *Dystopia Unplugged: Please Talk Back*.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### POOPSY • 13 MIN • DIRECTOR: BRIAN ANTONSON

A darkly humorous true story where a mishap with their dog, Poopsy, puts Rachel and Jason's relationship to the test. Antonson, Program Coordinator for Film & Media Arts at Santa Rosa Junior College, is dedicated to mentoring local filmmakers and creating community-rooted work.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### THE GIRL IN THE KELP • 5 MIN • DIRECTOR: ZACK MCCUNE

A ghostly Mendocino folk tale where love, loss, and coastal myth intertwine—set to an original vintage synth score by Larisa McCune. McCune is a Sausalito-based filmmaker who blends Super 8 film, animation, and design to reimagine folk tales and archival stories, often scored by his wife, Larisa.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### LESTER • 11 MIN • DIRECTOR: PAUL COLLINS

83-year-old local artist Lester DeGradi shares his wisdom on cherishing life's essentials. Point Arena-based filmmaker and photographer Collins captures authentic stories of human experience.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### ASTRO CLOWN-TAURUS • 3 MIN •

### DIRECTORS: JAMES PELICAN AND JASON ELON GOODMAN

A solitary clown's quiet cabin life is disrupted by a visitor urging him to explore the world beyond. Pelican is a Sonoma County-based clown, actor, and theater director. Goodman is a Maine-based photographer, filmmaker, and sound engineer documenting artists across genres.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### ON HOMESTEADING • 13 MIN • DIRECTOR: NATHAN KEOWEN

After decades of building a life in rural Annapolis, two longtime homesteaders reflect on their past, navigate new physical challenges, and consider the next chapter of their journey. Keowen is a writer and documentary filmmaker whose collaborations with producer Carson Bennett highlight distinctive characters with humor and humanity. **Filmmaker in attendance**

## SATURDAY 2PM • SHORTS FROM AFAR • INTERNATIONAL



Curated by Laura Bidner, Sophie Earll, John Osborne

A vibrant tapestry of captivating work from Spain, Bolivia, France, Costa Rica, the UK, and North America.

### THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT THAT STARTED THE FIRE • 9 MIN •

**DIRECTOR: LOPE SERRANO (SPAIN)**

A young director faces a creative crisis while filming a car accident scene, questioning her narrative choices and confidence. Serrano, co-founder of production company CANADA, is an award-winning director of music videos, commercials, and short films, recognized with Cannes Lions and D&D Pencils for his innovative storytelling.

### IMILLA SKATE: THE CHOLITA SKATERS OF BOLIVIA • 10 MIN •

**DIRECTORS: REBECCA BASAURE, MARIANO CARRANZA (BOLIVIA)**

In the mountains of Bolivia, Indigenous women challenge gender stereotypes through skateboarding, demonstrating resilience, empowerment, and community-building for the next generation of girls. Basaure is a Bolivian-American award-winning director and cinematographer known for *Refugio* and Netflix's *Street Food*. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### LITTLE MONSTERS • 14 MIN •

**DIRECTOR: PABLO LÉRIDON (FRANCE)**

On his way to confess his love, visually impaired teen Erwan clashes with David, a scheming classmate in his transport van, sparking an unexpected battle. Léridon studied literature and cinema and has co-written several shorts. *Little Monsters* marks his first short as director.

### ADDRESSES/DIRECCIONES • 14 MIN •

**DIRECTORS: MARIA LUISA SANTOS & CARLO NASISSE (COSTA RICA)**

In Costa Rica, a woman investigates landmark-based directions and

discovers a deeper story about memory and place. Costa Rican-Cuban filmmaker Santos explores themes of landscape, loss, and family, with work featured at SXSW, Slamdance, and others. Nasisse focuses on culture, ecology, and human-landscape relations, with films presented at major festivals and international art museums. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### I'M LATE • 11 MIN •

**DIRECTOR: SAWAKO KABUKI (FRANCE)**

A candid animated exploration of experiences with missed or late periods. Sawako Kabuki, born in Tokyo, is an award-winning animated filmmaker known for slightly erotic works featured in over 20 countries' festivals.

### TWO MINUTES • 6 MIN •

**DIRECTOR: JAMIE BENYON (UNITED KINGDOM)**

Two brothers plan to rob the local shop—but their Nan unexpectedly gets in the way. Benyon is an award-winning writer and director blending tension, heart, and comedy, including the festival-acclaimed short *Two Minutes* and the crime-comedy *The Wheelman*.

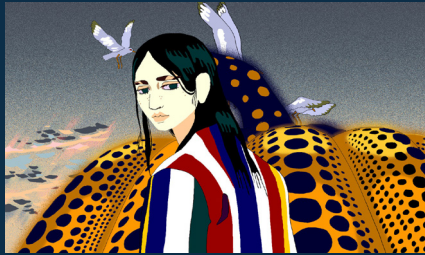
### WE WERE THE SCENERY • 15 MIN •

**DIRECTOR: CHRISTOPHER RADCLIFF (CANADA/USA)**

After fleeing the Vietnam War by boat in 1975, Hoa Thi Le and Hue Nguyen Che end up as background extras in *Apocalypse Now*. Radcliff is an award-winning filmmaker whose work has screened worldwide, including online via Criterion and Short of the Week. *We Were the Scenery* won the Short Film Jury Award for Nonfiction at Sundance 2025.



## SATURDAY 4PM • DIRECT FROM IMAGINATION • ANIMATION



Curated by Shauna Boyd, Sophie Earll, Steve McLaughlin

Quirky surrealism, creative documentary, thoughtful introspection, and moments of cinematic beauty. Best appreciated by mature viewers.

### ALARM • 2 MIN • DIRECTOR: JESSE VICKERY

A stop-motion armature embarks on a mysterious journey, following a stolen parcel that may reveal its next step. Bay Area native Vickery, now living in Melbourne, transitioned from VFX studios to independent animation in 2020, focusing on personal storytelling.

### OVARY-ACTING • 13 MIN • DIRECTOR: IDA MELUM

A woman in her thirties, trapped at her sister's baby shower, must confront her feelings about motherhood after literally giving birth to her own reproductive organs. Melum is a BAFTA- and BIFA-nominated, RTS- and Annie-award-winning animation director based in Sweden.

### FOLLOW THE DOGS • 6 MIN • DIRECTOR: ISABEL GARRETT

The partly animated documentary explores an older person's relationship with healthcare and creativity, through the lens of cancer patient Warren as he recovers from major surgery. Welsh animation director Garrett creates tactile, surreal stop-motion films with a dark sense of humor.

### PAPILLON • 15 MIN • DIRECTOR: FLORENCE MIALHE

A man's final swim carries him through a lifetime of memories—from childhood pools to Olympic glory, from trauma to triumph. Acclaimed animator Mialhe is celebrated for her hand-painted pastel and sand techniques.

### COLD FEET • 3 MIN • DIRECTOR: ADRIÀ VILUMARA

Outside, a storm rages. Inside, by the warmth of the hearth, a couple is unaware that tonight will be unlike any of the last forty years... Vilumara made his debut with his first short film *El Crit Sord Dels Arbres* in 2023 and continues to experiment with stop-motion animation.

### A KIND OF TESTAMENT • 16 MIN • DIRECTOR: STEPHEN VUILLEMIN

A young woman's private selfies are turned into online animations, and an identity thief with her name emerges—until tragedy halts her search for answers. Vuillemin is an animation director, comics author, and illustrator, known for the web-comic *Lycéennes*.

### COO-RAGE • 2 MIN • DIRECTOR: ALINA MILKINA

Unwanted pigeons take the mayor's promise of housing literally—and set out to claim a home of their own. Milkina, a Ukrainian Netherlands-based animator explores themes of belonging, courage, and the poetry of everyday life.

### EUREKA! • 10 MIN • DIRECTOR: KRIS BORGHS

An interstellar mission of peace and enlightenment meets hostile stupidity. Kris Borghs, Belgian animator and director, made his award-winning debut with *No Offense* (50+ festivals) and developed *Eureka!* with Fabrique Fantastique.

### HARDWOOD FALLS EPI • 2 MIN • DIRECTOR: GARRETT KILBARGER

In *Hardwood Falls*, Kid, Worm, and friends navigate misadventures in their quirky town. A skateboarder, artist, and musician from Southern California now living in Gualala, Kilbarger is entirely self-taught and has overcome a life-threatening neck injury.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### HOW A RIVER IS BORN • 9 MIN • DIRECTOR: LUMA FLÔRES

In a lush mountain landscape, Ayla's journey of exploration and diving becomes a path to self-discovery. Brazilian animator Flôres, known for experimental 2D work on films like *Jussara* and *Ana, En Passant*, makes her directorial debut with *How a River Is Born*.

### RETIREMENT PLAN • 7 MIN • DIRECTOR: JOHN KELLY

In his energy-starved midlife, Ray escapes into vivid fantasies of retirement, where endless possibilities await once time is finally his own. Kelly, a Dublin-based animator trained at London's Royal College of Art, won both the Grand Jury and Audience Awards at SXSW 2025 for *Retirement Plan*.

## SATURDAY 7PM • EXPLORING THE EDGE • ADVENTURE



Curated by Paul Andersen, Annelise Jeske, Sophie Earll

An adrenaline-filled collection pushing the limits of water, gravity, and grit.

### WATER III • 6 MIN • DIRECTOR: MORGAN MAASSEN

A short film exploring Maassen's deep affinity for the ocean—its mystery, its power, and the connection it inspires. Maassen, born and raised in Santa Barbara, California, is inspired by art, music, fashion, travel, and cloudscares.

### GANGA GIRLS • 10 MIN • DIRECTOR: PRASHANT BHATT

A professional kayaker empowers girls in India through her program, leading to a transformative journey down the Ganga River. Bhatt is an award-winning Indian filmmaker whose work highlights resilience, culture, and empowerment.

### PRIVATE FREEFALL • 11 MIN • DIRECTOR: ROBERTO COLOMBO

A ragtag team of friends plan and rig a daring mega freefall at South Africa's 550m Slanghoek amphitheatre, and after days of preparation, all that's left is to jump. South African filmmaker Colombo began documenting friends and outdoor pursuits before expanding into commercial and fashion work. He now aims to focus on short films and storytelling.

### THE GRANNY GROMMETS • 9 MIN • DIRECTOR: LEAH RUSTOMJEE

The Granny Grommets, a group of older women surfers, defy stereotypes and celebrate the joy and community of surfing together. Rustomjee creates films that bridge cultural and generational divides, while inspiring curiosity and empathy.

### MADMAN TRAILS OF BHUTAN • 4 MIN • DIRECTOR: SCOTT SECCO

A crew of world-class riders teams up with Bhutan's Tandin "Junior" Wang for an unforgettable journey across the country's trails, from yak-lined passes to the iconic Tiger's Nest. Secco is a Squamish-based outdoor filmmaker whose award-winning mountain bike films have earned 20 Vimeo Staff Picks and screened worldwide.

### OBIBINI • 4 MIN • DIRECTOR: BEN LALANDE

In Ghana, the Obibini Surf Club is breaking cultural barriers by empowering women and girls to take to the waves. Quebec City-born Lalande is a California-based filmmaker known for his elegant style and high-energy storytelling.

### IAN • 8 MIN • DIRECTOR: MATT RAIMONDO

The film celebrates 72-year-old Australian climber Ian Elliott who began climbing in his fifties and achieved his hardest climb just before 70, defying age limits. Raimondo is an award-winning director with a passion for rock climbing.

### SPELLBOUND • 11 MIN • DIRECTOR: RICHARD SIDNEY

A look beyond the adrenaline of wingsuit BASE jumping, offering a meditative journey through breathtaking landscapes and the profound connection between air, earth, and flight. Sidey is an award-winning conservation, adventure and wildlife filmmaker based in the South Island of New Zealand. Environmental themes and a strong connection to nature are clear in his work.

### I LOVE YOU II • 3 MIN • DIRECTOR: ZOË MCDUGALL

A vibrant female surf film featuring Zoë McDougall, Caity Simmers (2025 world champion), and Coco Ho, surfing in Hawaii, Tahiti, and Western Australia. Edited by Cory Gehr, it's the sequel to last year's *I Love You*, which premiered at Arena Theater. **Filmmaker in attendance**

AFTERPARTY AT THE RECORD FOR FILMMAKERS, SPONSORS (SCREENWRITER LEVEL + ABOVE)  
& THOSE WITH FESTIVAL + AFTERPARTY PASSES

## SUNDAY 11AM • FIRST CUTS • STUDENT FILMS



Curated by Shauna Boyd, Paul Vincent Carter

A showcase of original short films crafted by emerging student talent from Mendocino, Lake and Sonoma counties.

### TODAY'S ELEMENTARY • 4 MIN • DIRECTOR: PAUL VINCENT CARTER

A humorous parody inspired by Huell Howser's *California's Gold*, this film follows the second-grade class at Arena Elementary as they display a surprising array of talents well beyond their years.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### THE GREAT NATE BAKER • 3 MIN • DIRECTOR: ANTHONY CABRERA

A blind musician starts to lose his mind after trying to find new creative inspiration. HS senior Cabrera, best known for his musical projects, also explores film and writing—while dabbling in cooking—and cites David Lynch as his greatest directorial inspiration.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### A PIC WITH GRANDMA • 7 MIN • DIRECTOR: DOUG CEMPELLIN & STUDENTS FROM UPPER LAKE HIGH SCHOOL

A high school counselor and a student share a tender moment when sad news from home disrupts the day. Film and acting professor Cembellin (*Cyberbullied*) is also a member of the Visual and Performing Arts program at Upper Lake High School.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### MEANDERING NONSENSE • 13 MIN • DIRECTOR: BECKETT RASMUSSEN

A young man learns that life may feel like a game, and that games, strangely, can feel like life. Sometimes called the “Banksy of Bad Art,” Rasmussen has created a new style of filmmaking: “Consequence Noir”—black comedy told from a meta perspective.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### PAPERMEN • 2 MIN • DIRECTOR: FREJ BARTY

At his monotonous job shredding paper, a man discovers a paperman living on a sheet of A4. Torn between compassion and authority, he must decide the paperman's fate. Barty is a Stanford undergraduate, aspiring filmmaker, and analog enthusiast whose work spans film, poetry, and advocacy.

### SECOND CHANCE • 9 MIN • DIRECTOR: INDIA ANN MITCHELL

An inspired young filmmaker explores the juvenile justice system through the story of a teenage offender, his parents, and the voices of judges, attorneys, and probation officers. At just 14, filmmaker Mitchell has already created four award-winning student films. Her work, including *Guiding Light* (2024), which screened at more than 250 festivals worldwide, reflects a passion for storytelling that began in middle school. She now debuts her latest film, *Second Chance*. **Filmmaker in attendance**

### AIN'T NO CATWALK • 1 MIN • DIRECTOR: ANTHONY CABRERA

Hotshot Jairo finds himself out of luck when he crosses paths with a gang of droogs led by the sadistic, cat-masked Big Bobby.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### LOVE BATS • 5 MIN • DIRECTOR: JASON BELLEZA

Timid vampire Luna ventures into the dazzling city for the annual Blood Moon Festival, where she discovers that sometimes the brightest lights shine when you step out of the shadows. Belleza is an animation director, character designer, and co-founder of Pending Animation Studios, where he creates fantastical stories inspired by slice-of-life hijinks and love.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### DON'T DO IT • 1 MIN • DIRECTOR: BECKETT RASMUSSEN

A stolen soda spirals into dire consequences as a man questions his D-list celebrity friends in a high-stakes crime drama.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

### FOR THE MOMENT • 9 MIN • DIRECTOR: NAOMI-LOVE POE

An old dog turns 14 and sets out to try new things, seeking excitement before it's too late. Poe is an artist and writer. Her debut film, *For the Moment*, features memorable voice sessions with her grandma and challenges coordinating with her dog, Mugly.

## SUNDAY IPM • CINEMA TO SAVOR • FOOD SHORTS



Curated by Laura Bidner, John Osborne

A series of films that explore the creative, restorative, connecting, and inspiring aspects of food.

**TRUFAS • 8 MIN •**

**DIRECTOR: FELIPE SANGUINETTI**

In Piedmont, Italy, Felipe Sanguinetti explores the patience and tradition that carries the truffle from earth to plate. Buenos Aires-born and Paris/London-based Sanguinetti is known internationally as an inventive documentary film maker; his oeuvre spans the creative worlds of art, dance, fashion, music and publishing.

**SEEDS OF CHANGE: BREAKING FREE FROM THE PRISON FOOD SYSTEM • 27 MIN • DIRECTOR: MAXIMILIAN ARMSTRONG**

An organic farmer in Maine sets out to transform the prison food system using organic agriculture and in turn changes the course of people's lives. Armstrong is an adventure-driven filmmaker whose journeys include hitchhiking across America, motor biking through Vietnam, hiking the Appalachian Trail, and wintering in the Alaskan Arctic.

**SPREAD THE LOVE OF KIMCHI • 5 MIN •**

**DIRECTOR: LINUS MANCHESTER**

Founded by Patrice Scrofano during the pandemic as a tribute to her mom and her Korean heritage, Tae-Gu Kimchi has grown from a single DC farmers' market stand to having over a dozen locations and shipping nationwide. Manchester is a documentary filmmaker with a passion for stories about people changing real-world problems, with topics ranging from environmental protection to social justice.

**Filmmaker in attendance**

**FORWARD • 3 MIN •**

**DIRECTOR: BENNY CHARLES GATTEGNO**

Chloe Smith is a multidisciplinary artist of Chinese and Papua New Guinean heritage, known for darkly humorous soft sculptures that explore food narratives. Her work has been exhibited in Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Sydney-based Gattegno started making videos at a ripe age and has since been producing & directing films for global companies in over 35 countries.

**DI SARNO: THE STORY OF EMILIO'S BALLATO • 3 MIN •**

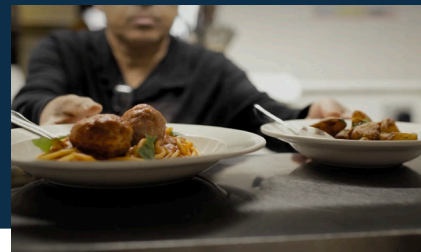
**DIRECTORS: JOHANNES KROEMER & LOU CARVELL**

On Houston Street, Emilio's unassuming restaurant channels his Southern Italian roots and family passion, making it a uniquely New York dining experience. German-born Kroemer co-founded Ninetynine Films with his wife, producing doc-style marketing content. Lou Carvell, a onetime guitarist and antique shop owner, built a career as a creative director at major New York ad agencies. *Di Sarno* is their first documentary.

**THE BEST CHEF IN THE WORLD • 21 MIN •**

**DIRECTOR: BEN PROUDFOOT**

Before Thomas Keller made The French Laundry world-famous, founder Sally Schmitt quietly pioneered California cuisine. In her final interview, she reflects on a life defined not by accolades but by balance and purpose. A two-time Academy Award®-winning documentary director and entrepreneur, Proudfoot's films have played at festivals including Tribeca, Sundance and Telluride. **Johnny Schmitt — Sally Schmitt's son and chef-owner of the Boonville Hotel — in attendance.**



**Thank You To Our Sponsors:**

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The Arena Theater Short Film Festival committee would like to thank: All filmmakers who submitted films and participated in Q&As; All our generous festival sponsors; Annelise Jeske for all things media (fantastic poster, program, t-shirt, and media wall design) and media coordination for the shorts programs; Blake More for logo design; Anne-Mary Schaefer and Lisa Joakimides for above-and-beyond ad creation and coordination; Volunteer program curators Paul Vincent Carter and Gillian Nye; Amazing food and drink vendors for our receptions: Aaron Peters and Patrick Cordrey, The Record, Pelican Bread, Little Green Bean, North Coast Brewing Company, Mariah Vineyards, Nature's Tune, Oz Farm, Diana's Homemade Goods, and Arena Market; Lodging providers for our filmmakers: Coast Guard House, Oz Farm, Lena Bullamore and Jeff Gyving; Schmidty and Phil for house managing and film projection; Vickie for holding it down in the snack bar, and Shelita and Carol for box office cashiering; Event volunteers, including: Barbara Pratt (photography), Tracy Du Pont, Ling-Yen Jones and Jon Handel.

And all of you for attending the festival!  
We couldn't have done it without you!



# B. Bryan Preserve

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## Point Arena, CA

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its majestic redwood forest  
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Coho Salmon & Steelhead © Joseph Tomelleri/Red Legged Frog © Chuck Todd Spotted Owl © Rena Elmquist-Gualala River © Barbara Rich



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 Memorial Day Weekend thru Labor Day

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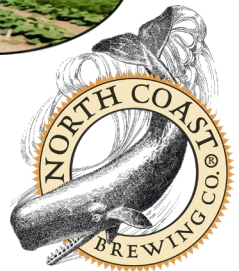
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