

Wednesday, June 3–Saturday, June 6, 2020 / 7:00 PM

**ALLEN GINSBERG FESTIVAL**

**Original Films and Highlights of Readings, Performances, and Music Celebrating Ginsberg's Birthday**



Photo Beth Bagley

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Original Films and Highlights of Readings, Performances, and Music Celebrating Ginsberg's Birthday

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Every year on June 3rd, Howl celebrates Allen Ginsberg's birthday, inspired by the late poet-philosopher—a lifelong spokesperson for peace, social justice, freedom of expression, and love. An annual event since Howl! Happening's founding in 2015, Howl Arts presents a marathon event (June 3rd–6th) that honors Ginsberg and the poets, musicians, bookstores, publishers, and other significant individuals whose voice and energy transformed the U.S. forever. Tune in at 7:00 PM for 4-days of monumental poetry and performances on Howl TV.

Bringing together many of the originators of the Beat movement with artists who follow in their lineage and contemporary cultural commentators, the programming includes readings, personal reminiscences, music, and testimony from contemporary writers who give voice to the tectonic shifts in the arts and politics resulting from this important period in American history—showcasing the many threads and lineages that continue through the art of today.

Among the highlights featured on Howl TV are readings by **Michael McClure, Anne Waldman, Margaret Randall, Steve Cannon, Len Chandler, David Henderson, Ed Sanders, Hettie Jones, John Giorno, Bob Holman, and Helixx C. Armageddon**, among others. The group reading of Ginsberg's epic poem *Howl*, an annual event since the Howl Festival began way back in 2003, is also included.

Also on view will be films that remember our namesake's life and times, as well as shorts and remarkable deathbed footage of Ginsberg shot by underground cinema icon Jonas Mekas:

**Wednesday, June 3rd | 7PM**

**Fried Shoes Cooked Diamonds, 1979 / Directed by Costanzo Allione / Narrated by Allen Ginsberg**

After World War II, a group of young writers, outsiders, and friends who were disillusioned by the pursuit of the American dream met in New York City. Associated through mutual friendships, these cultural dissidents looked for new ways and means to express themselves. Soon their writings found an audience and the American media took notice, dubbing them the Beat Generation. Members of this group included writers Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac, and William Burroughs, a trinity that would ultimately influence the works of others during that era, including the hippie movement of the 60s. In this 55-minute video, members of the Beat Generation—including Burroughs, Anne Waldman, Peter Orlovsky, Amiri Baraka, Diane di Prima, and Timothy Leary—are reunited at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, during the late 1970s to share their works and influence a new generation of young American bohemians.

**Plus:**

**Video of Howl 2016 Celebration**

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**Thursday, June 4th | 7PM**

**West Coast Beat and Beyond, 1984 / Directed by Christopher Felver**

Filmed on location in San Francisco's North Beach neighborhood, and at Naropa Institute in Boulder Colorado, this film is a tribute to the ongoing vision of America's renegade minds, as well as a salute to the visionary power of Jack Kerouac. Narrated by Kerouac's biographer Gerald Nicosia with magnetic poetic performances filled with hip humor and existential dissent, *West Coast: Beat & Beyond* is essential to understanding the works and personalities surrounding the mythos of the Beat Generation. Rare appearances by Kerouac's daughter, writer Jan Kerouac, poets Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Gregory Corso, Allen Ginsberg, Jack Micheline,

Joanne Kyger, Bob Kaufman, and Philip Lamantia, as well as novelist Ken Kesey illuminate the imagination and inspire a torrential indictment against American mediocrity.

**Plus:**

**History of the Airplane / Directed by Christopher Felver**

**Video of Howl 2017 Celebration**

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**Friday, June 5th | 7PM**

**Ferlinghetti: A Rebirth of Wonder, 2013 / Directed by Christopher Felver**

In this definitive documentary, director Christopher Felver crafts an incisive, sharply wrought portrait that reveals Ferlinghetti's true role as catalyst for numerous literary careers and for the Beat movement itself. Felver's one-on-one interviews with Ferlinghetti, made over the course of a decade, touch upon a rich mélange of characters and events that began to unfold in postwar America. These events include the publication of Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*, William S. Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, as well as the divisive events of the Vietnam war, the sexual revolution, and this country's perilous march towards intellectual and political bankruptcy.

**Plus:**

**Hum Bom! / Directed by Christopher Felver**

**Video of Howl 2018 Celebration**

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**Saturday, June 6th | 7PM**

**No More to Say and Nothing to Weep For: An Elegy for Allen Ginsberg, 2006 / Directed by Colin Still**

Witness the last days of the Beat poet whose works would capture the very essence of the 1960s countercultural movement, in an informative documentary featuring Allen Ginsberg's final television interview as well as remarkable deathbed footage shot by underground cinema icon Jonas Mekas. In addition to candid discussions about everything from Ginsberg's personal life to his literary career, home-movie footage of the *Howl* author as a child as well as archival

footage allow contemporary fans to witness such landmark moments as his 1965 reading at Royal Albert Hall and his chanting at the 1968 Democratic Convention. Previously unreleased footage of Ginsberg performing with Paul McCartney is also included, as are interviews with Dick Cavett and William Buckley, and the heartfelt memorial service in which Patti Smith bid her old friend a particularly poignant farewell. In the final sequence, Ginsberg invites filmmaker Mekas to his New York loft, lying on his deathbed and preparing to embark on the ultimate adventure.

**Plus:**

**Sonic Youth – Making the Nature Scene / Directed by Christopher Felver  
Video of Howl 2019 Celebration**

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The Beats changed everything. Literature, art, music, and social justice—they led the way questioning tradition; giving voice to the “other” in U.S. culture; and bringing to light the hypocrisy, conservatism, and dark side of post-World War II America. They instigated changes that mark the beginning of the counterculture—the intersection of freedoms we now see as essential through lines of contemporary life in this country. Free expression; the sexual revolution; notions of identity and multiculturalism; hippies and drugs; the introduction of Eastern culture and Buddhism; and the political movements of today were all catalyzed by the Beat Generation.

Now more than ever, we honor Allen and those who are not afraid to speak up and make their voices heard.

*Let the voices of dead poets  
Ring louder in your ears  
Than the screechings mouthed  
In mildewed editorials.  
Listen to the music of centuries,  
Rising above the mushroom time.*  
—Excerpt from *Believe, Believe* by Bob Kaufman