



March 19-28, 2026

## 2026 Festival Media Kit

### **Theme: *Against the Current***

DCEFF 2026 will be a showcase for bold storytellers, visionary leaders, and grassroots changemakers who are confronting urgent environmental crises and inspiring action in the face of powerful headwinds.

Tickets are on sale now at [dceff.org](https://dceff.org). Prices range from \$5-25, with many programs being offered free and open to the public.

### **Quick Stats:**

- 10 Days (March 19-28)
- 70 + Films
- 30+ Premieres
- 50+ Programs
- 20 Venues

### **Quick Links:**

- Festival Schedule - [link](#)
- Film Guide - [link](#)
- Awards Announcement - [link](#)

### **Assets:**

- Select Film Stills (make additional requests to [jacob@dceff.org](mailto:jacob@dceff.org)) - [link](#)
- Festival Trailer - [link](#)
- DCEFF Logos & Promo - [link](#)

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## Award Winners

### **Closing Night: *Yanuni***

Shared Earth Foundation Award | Saturday, March 28, 6:30pm | US Navy Memorial | \$25

Indigenous chief Juma Xipaia fights to protect tribal lands despite assassination attempts. Her struggle intensifies after learning she's pregnant, while her husband, Special Forces ranger Hugo Loss, stands by her side. *Directed by Richard Ladkani.*

[Trailer](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### ***Nuisance Bear***

William W. Warner Award | DC Premiere | Friday, March 27, 6:30pm | US Navy Memorial

A polar bear is forced to navigate a human world of tourists, wildlife officers, and hunters as its ancient migration collides with modern life. When a sacred predator is branded a nuisance, it becomes unclear who truly belongs in this shared landscape. WINNER of the Sundance Grand Jury Prize for Documentary. *Directed by Jack Weisman & Gabriela Osio Vanden.*

[Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### ***Observer***

Flo Stone & Roger D Stone Award | Saturday, March 21, 2pm | National Academy of Sciences

Filmmaker Ian Cheney embarks on an experiment in which he brings a series of keen-eyed observers — scientists, artists, a hunter — to a range of locations around the world, often without telling them where they are going, and asks them simply to describe what they see. What unfolds is a deep exploration and celebration of the power of observation: what happens when you find new ways to sense and perceive the world around you?

[Trailer](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### ***Sallie's Ashes***

Eric Moe Award | DC Premiere | Saturday, March 27, 4pm | US Navy Memorial

Faced with terminal lung cancer, 80-year-old Sallie Smith rallies an unlikely team of fellow Alabama grandmas to fight for the removal of a toxic coal ash pit that threatens the waters of their beloved Mobile Bay. *Directed by Brennan Robideaux.*

[Teaser](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

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## **Additional Festival Highlights**

### **Opening Night: *A Life Illuminated***

DC Premiere | Thursday, March 19, 7pm | US Navy Memorial | \$20

Follows trailblazing marine biologist Dr. Edie Widder — one of the first women in her field and one of the first humans to explore the ocean's twilight zone — as she descends 3,300 feet into the ocean's darkest depths. From capturing the first-ever footage of the elusive giant squid to unveiling the glowing mysteries of deep-sea bioluminescence, Edie embarks on her most daring quest yet. *Directed by Tasha Van Zandt.*

[Film Clip](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### **Centerpiece Selection: *The (Conserv)atives***

World Premiere | Monday, March 23, 7pm | Miracle Theatre | \$15

When conservative climate activists cross party lines to push for the Inflation Reduction Act and face renewed hostility with Trump's return, the film becomes a case study in how fragile progress is when tied to one party. This is a rare inside look at Republican climate advocacy at a moment of national retraction. *Directed by Dominic Gill & Nadia Gill.*

[Trailer](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### ***Unless Something Goes Terribly Wrong***

DC Premiere | Thursday, March 26, 3pm | Reservoir Center for Water Solutions | Free

As America's aging wastewater systems begin to fail, one plant does all it can to stay afloat. Plant manager Dustin Price, together with his motley crew of unlikely heroes, battle aging infrastructure, forever chemicals and the misconceptions of an odor averse public to keep Portland, Maine clean and healthy. *Directed by Kaitlyn Schwalje & Alex Wolf Lewis.*

[Trailer](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Registration Page](#)

### ***The Last Whale Singer***

DC Premiere | Family Program | Saturday, March 21, 1pm | Miracle Theatre | \$10

When a monstrous creature escapes from a melting iceberg, a self-doubting teenage humpback whale must face his greatest fears and dive into the darkest depths with his friends to discover the mystical song that can save the oceans from destruction.

[Trailer](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

### ***Climate in Therapy***

DC Premiere | Friday, March 20, 7pm | US Navy Memorial | \$15

Seven climate scientists meet in a godforsaken meeting room to engage in circle therapy about their shared climate anxiety. Can emotional honesty be part of the solution? Open a bottle of climate anxiety. Pour the contents into a hot pot under high pressure. Then add a teaspoon of horror, a tablespoon of anger and three drops of deep disappointment in humanity.

[Teaser](#) | [Film Still](#) | [Ticketing Page](#)

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### **More Notable Programs:**

Hayao Miyazaki Titles at the AFI Silver with the Japanese Information & Cultural Center

- [Ponyo](#)
- [Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind](#)

Shorts: Eco Horror! - [Ticketing page](#)

*Apollo 1* with the National Archives Foundation - [Registration page](#)

National Geographic's *Secrets of the Bees* - [Ticketing page](#)

*Agatha's Almanac* with the National Museum of Women in the Arts - [Registration page](#)