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THINGS TO DO

Healdsburg Short Film Festival adds star power with Ed Begley Jr.



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(L-R) Hayden Carson Begley, Rachelle Carson, Ed Begley Jr., and Amanda Begley attend the EMA Awards Gala sponsored by Beyond Meat, H&M Foundation, Montage International, and Toyota on October 16, 2021 in Van Nuys, California. (Photo by Jesse Grant/Getty Images for Environmental Media Association)



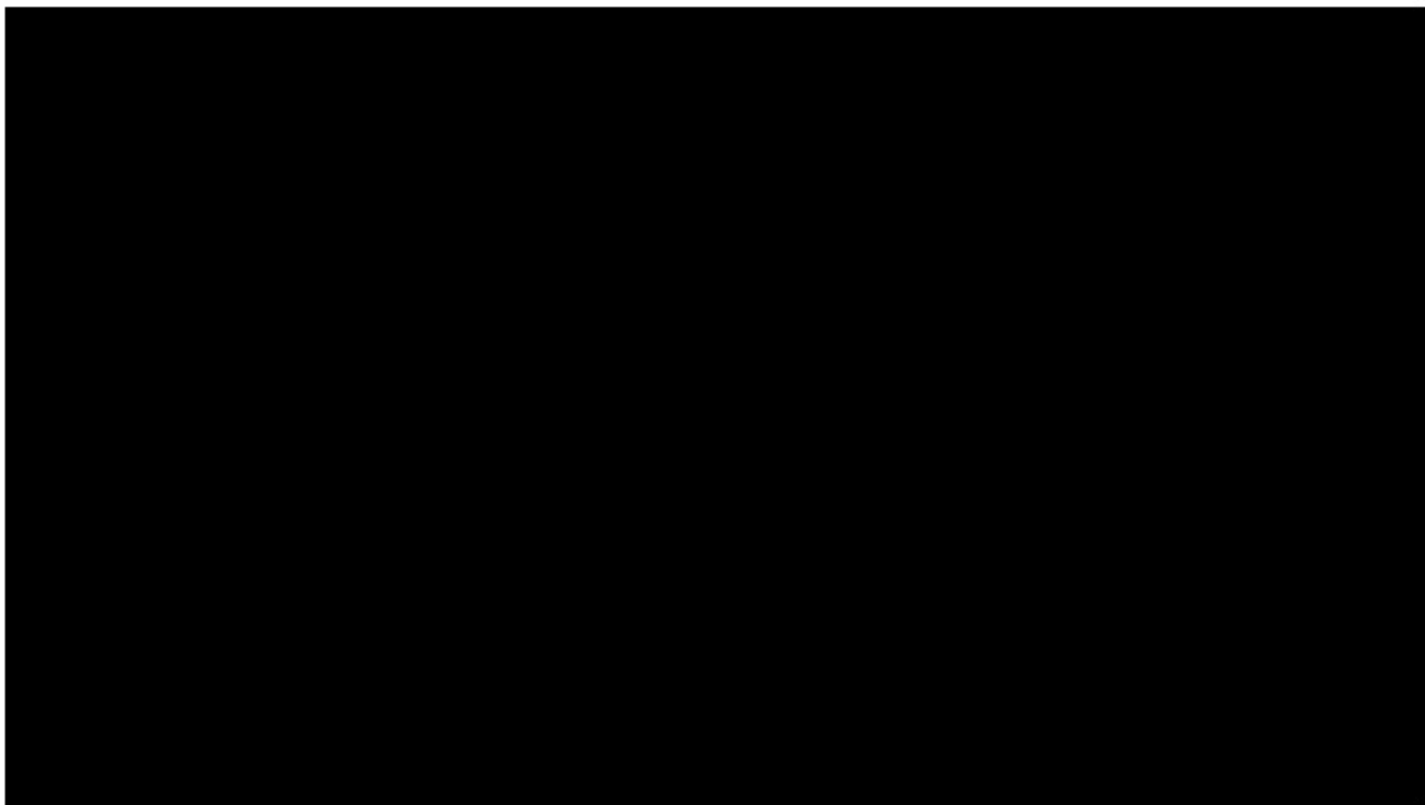
By **DAN TAYLOR** | dan.taylor@pressdemocrat.com | The Press Democrat
UPDATED: September 17, 2025 at 11:34 AM PDT

Actor [Ed Begley Jr.](#), a fixture in Hollywood for over five decades, will attend the Healdsburg International Short Film Festival in person this year, marking his first appearance at the event since becoming a juror four years ago.

Begley, who has judged the festival remotely each year, says he’s looking forward to experiencing the event in person.

“I am happy I’ll be there in the flesh,” the actor said from his home in Studio City. “It’s much better to be there in person.”

The festival, which runs from Sept. 26-28 in Healdsburg, will also feature a free book signing by Begley for his 2023 memoir “To the Temple of Tranquility...And Step On It!” at 6 p.m. Sept. 27 at the Raven Performing Arts Theater.





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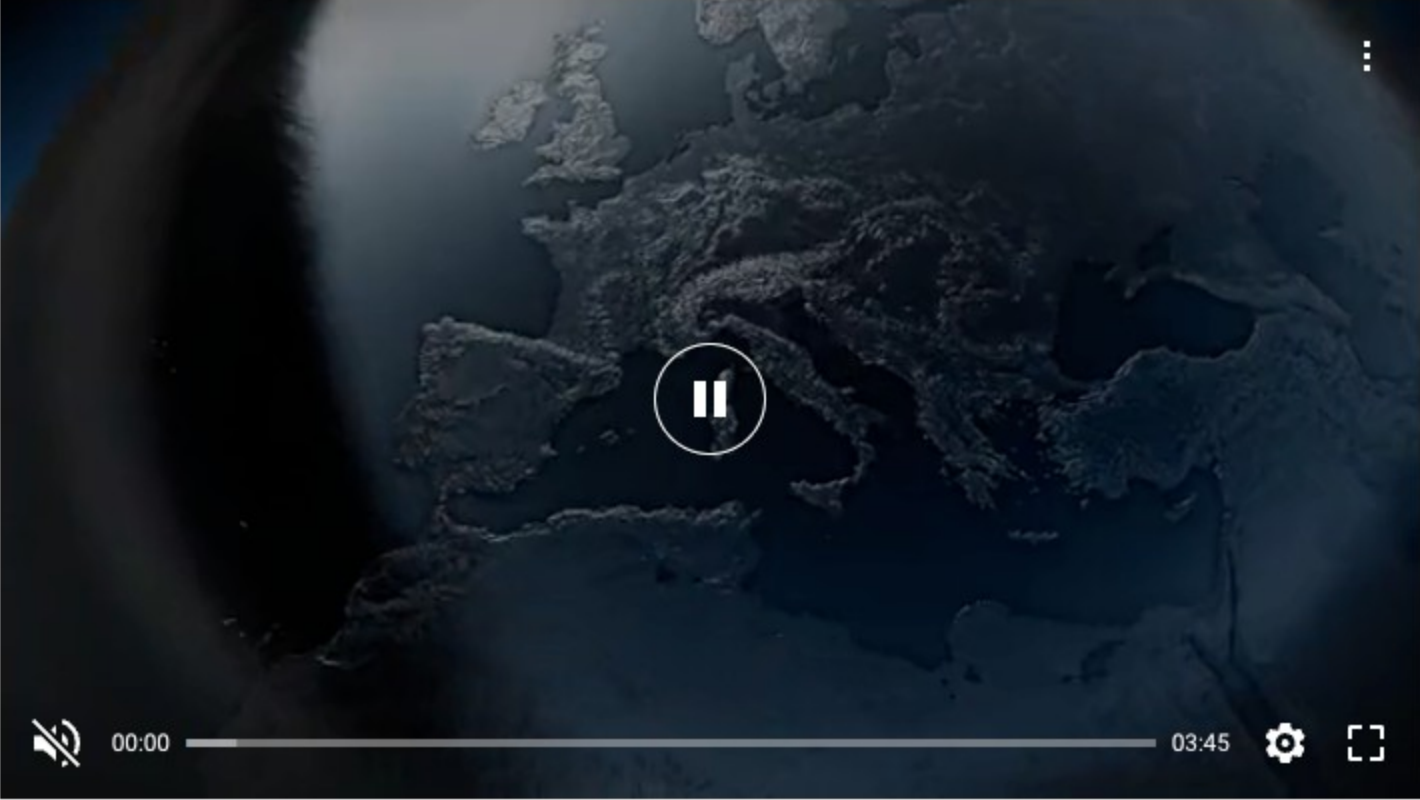
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"I like films of any length, but there is something special about short films," Begley said. "They're like little bite-sized confections that are so delicious."

This year's festival will present 61 films – nearly all under 20 minutes – selected from 308 submissions, 208 of which came from outside the United States.

"Don't like one? No worries, a new one starts in minutes," said [Pamela Demorest](#), who co-founded the festival with her husband [Kirk Demorest](#), both industry veterans.

"Ed is a long-time personal friend of mine, and this is his fourth year on our jury. He loves our curation," she added.



Begley will join a panel of jurors that includes singer-songwriter Tom Waits – a longtime Sonoma County resident – and others.



Begley, 75, is perhaps best known for his role as Dr. Victor Ehrlich on the television drama "St. Elsewhere," which aired from 1982 to 1988 and earned him six consecutive Primetime Emmy Award nominations and a Golden Globe Award nomination.

Fans of comedy "mockumentaries" may also recognize Begley from Rob Reiner's "This Is Spinal Tap" (1984), as well as several films by Christopher Guest and Eugene Levy, including "Best in Show" (2000), "A Mighty Wind" (2003), "For Your Consideration" (2006) and "Mascots" (2016).

"I love those films," he said.

His recent screen appearances include David O. Russell's 2022 mystery comedy thriller "Amsterdam" and the dark comedy "Don't Tell Larry," released this year.

"I'm very lucky to still be working," he said. "They find me somehow."



(L-R) Rachelle Carson-Begley and Ed Begley Jr. attend the 2022 Governors Awards at The Ray Dolby Ballroom at Hollywood & Highland Center on March 25, 2022 in Hollywood, California. (Photo by Mike Coppola/Getty Images)

Begley’s father, Ed Begley Sr., won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his role in “Sweet Bird of Youth” in 1962. His career also included “12 Angry Men” (1957) and “The Unsinkable Molly Brown” (1964).

“He gave me great advice,” Begley said of his father. “He made me do it on my own.” His father, he added, never made a phone call on his behalf.

While several jurors are expected to attend the festival in person, not all will be able to attend.

“Tom Waits and his wife (and songwriting collaborator), Kathleen Brennan, prefer to be in the



“Tom Waits and his wife (and songwriting collaborator), Kathleen Brennan, prefer to be in the background and participate minimally, although we are grateful to have them judge the films remotely for their fourth year,” Pamela Demorest said.

Other jurors include television writer and producer Cindy Caponera, Emmy-winning actor Jeff Kober, original “Saturday Night Live” cast member Laraine Newman, film editor and producer Kristina Motwani and “Criminal Minds” co-producer Kathia Sanchez-Aldana.

The short films will be screened in themed blocks, allowing visitors to experience a diverse range of works from both American and international filmmakers. Two standout selections this year, according to Pamela Demorest, are “Contours” — a visually striking romance performed entirely in ASL by deaf actors — and “My Dad and the Volcano,” an offbeat documentary by spirited Scottish filmmaker Gavin Reid. Reid will attend the festival in person, traveling “all the way from Glasgow” for his first-ever trip to the U.S.

If You Go

What: 2025 Healdsburg International Short Film Festival

When: Sept. 26-28, 2025

Where: All festival screening blocks will take place at the Raven Performing Arts Theater, located at 115 North St. in Healdsburg.

Tickets: Individual screening blocks are \$20 for general admission; \$10 for students. All-access passes are \$150 (includes all events during festival weekend). Festival passes are \$100 (includes all screenings). Saturday passes are \$50 (includes all events on Saturday, Sept. 27)

Information: The short films will be screened in themed blocks; find which films are screening when at healdsburgfilm.com/2025-tickets-schedule



2023 short film "Ick," directed by India Opzomer, will screen at the Healdsburg International Short Film Festival Sept. 26-28, 2025. (Jacob Gusentine)

Schedule of events:

Friday, Sept. 26, 2025

- 6:30 p.m.: Healdsburg International Short Film Festival Kickoff Soirée at Healdsburg Center for the Arts (\$75, includes Opening Night screening)
- 7:30 p.m.: Red carpet photos
- 8:15 p.m.: Opening Night screening (screening-only tickets available).

Saturday, Sept. 27, 2025

- 10 a.m.: Healdsburg International Short Film Festival booth opens, Festival of the Arts in the Healdsburg Plaza (Free)
- 11 a.m.: Student Screening Block (\$10, all seats)
- 1 p.m.: Mixed Genre Screening Block
- 4 p.m.: Documentary Screening Block
- 6 p.m.: Book signing event with Ed Begley, Jr. (Free)
- 7 p.m.: Filmmaker Mixer (All-Access Pass, Saturday Pass, or invitation only)
- 8:15 p.m.: Women In Film Screening Block

Sunday, Sept. 28, 2025

- 1 p.m.: Mixed Genre Screening Block
- 4 p.m.: Mixed Genre Screening Block
- 7 p.m.: Festival Finale Screening & Awards Presentation

Tickets are available at RavenTheater.org

More information is available on the Raven website or at healdsburgfilm.com and healdsburgfilm.com/2025-tickets-schedule/

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