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# The Desert Sun

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## NOW SHOWING



The Palm Springs Cultural Center will reopen its movie theaters Friday. Plexiglass is installed at ticketing booths and concession stands, and staff will be wearing masks. Spray cleanups will take place between screenings. VICKIE CONNOR/THE DESERT SUN

### Camelot Theatres reopens indoor screenings today

Kristin Scharkey and Colin Atagi | Palm Springs Desert Sun | USA TODAY NETWORK

The Palm Springs Cultural Center's "9,528-hour intermission is over," as the movie theater so coyly wrote on its marquee.

The center reopens indoor screenings at Camelot Theatres with a slate of films — some local, some critically acclaimed — this weekend. And yes, popcorn and beverages will be available for purchase at the full concessions and bar.

"Don't forget, we're not quite out of this yet," spokesperson Tim Rains said in a press release. "Masks are required and please respect the posted social distancing rules."

Plans to reopen began to develop last month when Riverside County took a step forward in the state's four-tiered system for reopening businesses. The center's officials were set to reopen this weekend when the county moved to the less-restrictive orange tier, which paved the way for

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#### If you go

**What:** Camelot Theatres

**Where:** Palm Springs Cultural Center, 2100 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs

**When:** Showtimes vary

**Tickets:** \$7 students, \$8 seniors, \$9 adult matinee, \$12 adult

#### Information:

(760) 325-2582 or [psculturalcenter.org](http://psculturalcenter.org)

### Palm Springs film festival planned for January 2022

Passes on sale Aug. 1 after pandemic hiatus

James B. Cutchin

Palm Springs Desert Sun  
USA TODAY NETWORK

After a yearlong hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Palm Springs International Film Festival has set dates for its return next year.

The festival will run Jan. 6-17, 2022 — a hopeful comeback to its normally prime position on the festival circuit calendar. The Palm Springs event can offer clues as to potential Oscar candidates early in the year.

The festival will open with its star-studded Film Awards Gala in Palm Springs and conclude with the "Best of Fest" awards 11 days later.

Festival passes and seats for the Film Awards Gala go up for sale Aug. 1.

This year's festival and gala were canceled last November amid the global surge in COVID-19 cases. The Palm Springs International Film Society announced this year's film award honorees virtually in February, including Viola Davis, Anthony Hopkins, Andra Day and more. The honors were doled out a month later than the festival is usually held, a move by Palm Springs organizers that came after the Oscars extended its eligibility window to the end of February.

The Palm Springs event is typically held the first week in January to precede the Golden Globe Awards and the Oscar nominations voting deadline.

California plans to lift most COVID-19 restrictions June 15, which would mean the festival could be operating under markedly different conditions than events of the last year. The new rules, which remove capacity limits on most in-person events, could mean that the festival's 2,500-attend-

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### La Quinta council approves stay on permits for short-term rentals

Sherry Barkas

Palm Springs Desert Sun  
USA TODAY NETWORK

La Quinta will impose an indefinite stay on new permits for short-term vacation rentals, except in specially zoned areas. The stay is set to go into effect on

May 20, and will replace a moratorium on new permits that's set to expire on June 2.

The City Council approved the stay in 4-1 vote that came after about two-and-a-half hours of discussion and input

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La Quinta resident Don Shoffstall speaks out about short-term rentals in his PGA West neighborhood during a press conference at La Quinta City Hall in January. JAY CALDERON/THE DESERT SUN

MORE INSIDE PAGE 13A



### Jenner may run in recall

It's suddenly feeling a bit like 2003 all over again. If Arnold Schwarzenegger could win a recall election to become governor of California then, could Caitlyn Jenner follow the same path nearly two decades later? TNS

USA TODAY

### Biden actions address gun violence 'epidemic,' president calls on Congress

President Joe Biden, in his first gun control measures since taking office, announced a half-dozen executive actions Thursday aimed at addressing a proliferation of gun violence across the nation that he called an "epidemic and an international embarrassment." "The idea that we have so many people dying every single day from gun violence in America is a blemish on our character as a nation," Biden said during remarks at the White House. 9A

### Flying Doctors returns to Mecca

The Flying Doctors program will host an event to provide free medical care in Mecca on Saturday. But because of the pandemic, it will only offer dental services instead of the typical care from general physicians, optometrists and hearing specialists. Services will be provided at the North Shore Beach & Yacht Club, located at 99155 Sea View Drive, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. 3A

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# Movies

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even more people to attend screenings.

Each theater will operate at 50% capacity. The largest theater allows up to 250 attendees and smaller ones fit about 45.

“We’re escorting people in and out of the theaters so that we can maintain and manage where people are sitting,” said Executive Director Michael Green.

Plexiglass is installed at ticketing booths and concession stands, and staff will be wearing masks.

Spray cleanups will take place between screenings.

Green acknowledged that the pandemic is far from over and said this weekend’s screenings are just one early step toward recovery.

“We got to take a temperature, if you will, to see how people are feeling,” he said. “Anxious and hopeful are the two best words I’d use to describe it.”

The center took a financial hit over the past year due to closures, though Green wouldn’t specify how much. In the meantime, the center launched a streaming service and drive-in theater, which are expected to continue indefinitely.

“We don’t think we’re at a point we should abandon any of the options we have,” Green said.

Here are the screening options Friday, Saturday and Sunday:



William Shatner, left, is trying to get his life, and his car, back in “Senior Moment.” COURTESY SCREEN MEDIA

## ‘Senior Moment’

Tickets are available this weekend for the 92-minute “Senior Moment,” a romantic comedy-drama follows a retired NASA test pilot named Victor Martin (William Shatner) who loses his driver’s license after drag racing with a man named Pablo (Carlos Miranda). Victor has a renewed joy for life when he meets Cuckoo Cafe owner Caroline (Jean Smart) while battling the DMV to get his license back.

In the beginning of the film, Shatner drives his vintage silver Porsche through Palm Springs. Coachella Valley viewers will have no trouble recognizing other local spots throughout the movie. Scenes also were filmed at the Mizell Center, Palm Springs Air Museum, Des-

ert Art Center and Jensen’s Finest Foods on East Palm Canyon Drive.

Showings for “Senior Moment” are at 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m., and 7 p.m.

## ‘Sinatra in Palm Springs’

You can also grab a seat at “Sinatra in Palm Springs,” a documentary that takes a deep dive into Frank Sinatra’s life in the desert. Rancho Mirage resident Leo Zahn directed the 92-minute film, which was the result of two years of interviews, filming, editing and clip approvals. It explores Sinatra’s deep attachment to the Coachella Valley, which is where he lived for almost 50 years.

The film features more than 65 clips from movies and television appearances and includes interviews with

some of Sinatra’s desert friends, family and people who knew him including comedian Tom Dreesen; entertainer Trini Lopez; former Desert Sun reporter Bruce Fessier; Sinatra’s wife, Barbara; and restaurateur Mel Haber. Both Barbara Sinatra and Haber died after the interviews.

Showings for “Sinatra in Palm Springs” are at 1:15 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

## ‘Minari’

Or, you can settle in for 115-minute “Minari,” a comedy-drama film that follows a Korean-American Jacob (Steven Yeun), his wife Monica (Han Ye-ri) and their children. The family moves from California to rural Arkansas where they plan to grow and sell produce to vendors in Dallas, Texas. They enlist the help of Jacob’s mother Soon-ja (Yuh-Jung Youn), who flies in from Korea to help with the children.

Korean actress Youn received the Spotlight Award, Actress from the Palm Springs International Film Festival earlier this year for her performance in the film.

“Minari” was nominated for six Academy Awards, including best picture. Even in a normal year, the film USA TODAY’s film critic Brian Truitt called “funny, deep and well-acted.”

Showings for “Minari” are at 3:15 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Desert Sun editor Kristin Scharkey and reporter Colin Atagi contributed to this report. Previous reporting by Desert Sun reporter Brian Blueskye was included.

# Festival

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ee event will be held in-person.

The appetite for in-person events has been mixed among the world’s major film festivals.

Sundance, which managed to hold its 2020 iteration just before the pandemic took hold, went virtual this year. The Cannes Film Festival, which was canceled last year due to COVID-19 safety concerns, is currently planned for an in-person event July 6-17. The Venice International Film Festival — one of the only major film festivals that didn’t cancel amid the pandemic — is scheduled to run Sept. 1-11.

California’s summer reopening timeline is contingent on a steady supply of vaccine doses and declining coronavirus metrics, such as COVID-related hospitalizations. If these criteria are not met, there is a chance the timeline could change, although state officials have indicated that they don’t anticipate this happening.



Harold Matzner speaks on stage during the 31st Annual Palm Springs International Film Festival Film Awards Gala at Palm Springs Convention Center in 2020.

VIVIEN KILLILEA/GETTY IMAGES FOR PALM SPRINGS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Some of the California desert’s largest events, such as the Coachella and Stagecoach music festivals, are excluded

from the reopening plan for the time being. The Palm Springs film festival may be one of the first large events to

occur in the Coachella Valley since the pandemic began last year.

A top Palm Springs hospitality official described the festival’s return as a significant economic boon for the region. “It brings millions of dollars in business and publicity every year,” said Aftab Dada, chair of the PS Resorts hospitality group in Palm Springs and vice president of the Hilton Palm Springs.

“The festival has become one of the signature events of the year for Palm Springs,” Dada added. “The celebrities that it attracts is mind-boggling.”

By comparison, Coachella and Stagecoach are estimated to bring roughly \$700 million into the local economy each year, according to the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership. New dates have yet to be announced for either music festival.

The Palm Springs short film festival ShortFest is still scheduled for June 22-28.

Additional details have yet to be announced.

James B. Cutchin covers business in the Coachella Valley. Reach him at james.cutchin@desertsun.com.



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