

THE ANDREW J. KUEHN JR.

**AJK**

FOUNDATION



NEWSLETTER 2017

# THE AJK FOUNDATION — 2017 REVIEW AND NEWSLETTER

Fourteen years after the death of Andrew J. Kuehn, the foundation that bears his name and extends his philanthropy finds its beneficiaries and their several missions under political, cultural and financial attack. The independence and the resilience of Science, the Humanities, creative communication, journalism – indeed democracy itself-- are threatened by a demented demagogue and a cynical faction exploiting the fear, frustration and resentment of a beguiled minority. Andy Kuehn believed in rule by the people; our current administration dreams of feudalism; he expanded opportunity; it limits access; he venerated knowledge, ideas, evidence; it wallows in prejudice, ideology and lies; he inquired, questioned and considered; it tweets, distorts and dictates; he created and imagined; it destroys and indoctrinates. The Foundation has had a year to observe the passionate intensity of this wrecking crew who, however incompetent and ignorant, achieve consistently appalling results. We imagine how Andy would respond.

It's worth remembering that Andy excelled at persuasion, using appeals based on emotion, sensation, spectacle and hyperbole to re-invent

movie marketing and generate the fortune that we have the honor to distribute. He was, by his own admission, working in the world of propaganda. But such rhetorical tools are double edged, uncannily effective in the hands of unscrupulous leaders and the enablers who frighten, deceive and mobilize a disaffected, mis-informed and irrational audience to reject personal and communal self-interest in favor of self-lacerating resentment. Today, those of us who possess the skills of representation and communication must apply them to a greater cause than salary, career and position.

In the recurring grants that AJK makes to crucial and effective institutions of education, artistic expression, civil rights advocacy and historical inquiry, we nourish and celebrate visions of community and transformative culture. Such visions deserve to spread, to endure and to triumph over the barren promises of vengeful nihilism. This is our struggle, this epochal defense of decency and democracy. We sense an opening and an opportunity to imagine a different world, a healthy political dynamic and vibrant public sphere. We ask you to join us in this critical endeavor that the foundation supports every day with every gift.

*Anders, Debbie, Alan & Will*

THANK YOU FOR READING!

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

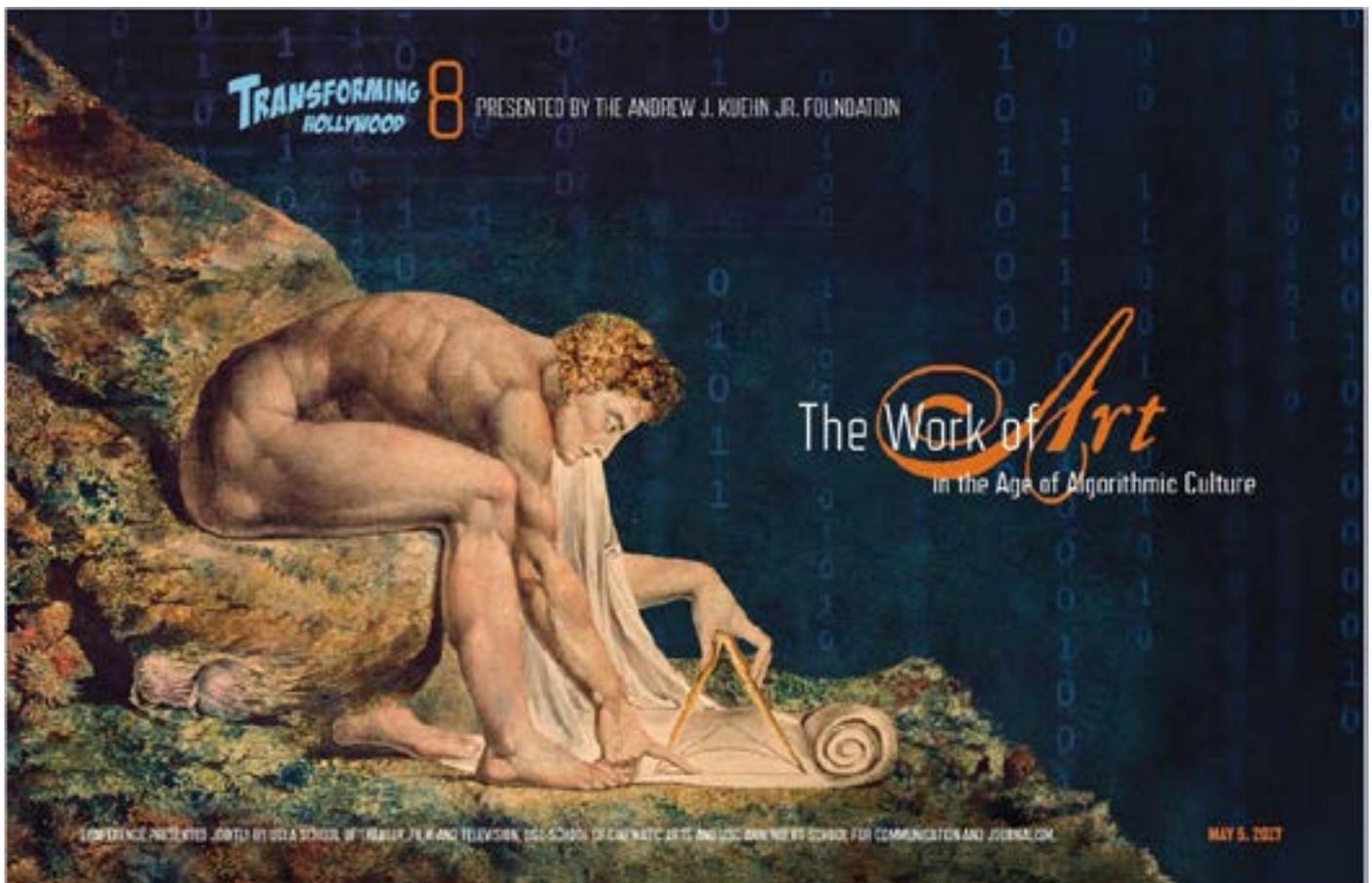
LOS ANGELES, DEPARTMENT OF THEATER, FILM & TELEVISION (TFT)

The world-renowned UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television is an interdisciplinary professional school that develops outstanding storytellers, industry leaders and scholars whose voices enlighten, engage and inspire the world. For its diverse mix of undergraduate and graduate students, TFT offers courses in acting, directing, writing, producing, animation, cinematography, digital arts, lighting design, set design, costume design, sound design and moving image archive studies.

The school confers BA, MA and PhD degrees in Theater and Performance Studies as well as in Cinema & Media Studies, educating gifted, creative and ambitious students in their pursuit of careers in theater, motion picture arts and digital media.

## TRANSFORMING HOLLYWOOD 8: DIVERSIFYING ENTERTAINMENT

For an eighth year, the Andrew J. Kuehn, Jr. Foundation was the Sustaining Sponsor of *Transforming Hollywood 8: The Work of Art in the Age of Algorithmic Culture*, on the campus of UCLA. Our most high profile event, this one-day symposium explores the radical changes in technology, politics and culture occurring in the American entertainment industries. During the day, media creators, producers and executives engage with leading researchers and scholars of film, media & culture. *Transforming Hollywood*, a collaboration between the foremost film schools in the world, is co-produced by Professor Denise Mann, head of the UCLA Producers Program and principal investigator of the UCLA TFT Digital Incubator and Think Tank, and Henry Jenkins, the Provost's Professor of Communication, Journalism, Cinematic Arts and Education at the University of Southern California.



[The Official Transforming Hollywood 8 Poster & Key Art]

# TRANSFORMING HOLLYWOOD 8: THE WORK OF ART IN THE AGE OF ALGORITHMIC CULTURE

This year, attendees examined the power of the "big four" tech platforms—Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon-- whose digital ecosystems of media content are paid for by viewer "datavveillance." Millennial-facing platforms disrupt not only TV, movie, music and sports content distribution, but legacy journalism itself, with fake news, propaganda and mis-information campaigns among the most troubling results. Will human experts or data-driven algorithms ultimately control the production, delivery and reception of cultural knowledge? Keynote speaker, Ted Striphas, Professor at the University of Colorado Boulder, examined "Algorithmic Culture," from its etymology to its application to contemporary cultural trends, to find some answers.



[Denise Mann, Director of the UCLA Producer's Program; Henry Jenkins, Provost Professor of Communications, USC]

## PANEL ONE

*Playing With Snackable Content in Virtual Marketplaces*, moderated by Denise Mann, scrutinized the short, sharable, addictive kinds of content brands use to reach millennials and Gen-Z, whose facility with mobile screen multitasking predisposes them for images, short videos and emojis rather than lengthy (con)textual exchanges. A massive shift is underway as the "social media logic" of 21st century culture displaces the "mass

media logic" of the 20th century. Tech companies are engineering new user experiences (UX) and interfaces (UI), like touch, *liveness* and VR/AR, to keep users "glued" to platforms, busily clicking, liking, sharing and commenting. Panelists included Larry Fitzgibbon, CEO, Tastemade; Thomas Jorion, Head of Strategy and Innovation at Havas 18; and Rob Kramer, Founder/CEO of Purpose Labs.



— [Conference Co-Host Denise Mann with fellow participants on Panel 1]

## PANEL 2

*Fake News and Struggles Over Circulation*, moderated by **Henry Jenkins**, considered "fake news" as an epistemological problem and a rhetorical tactic. Like its precursor, "yellow journalism," fake news vies for circulation and eyeballs, outcompeting journalism in shock and outrage, while insidiously confirming biases. Panelists described what we know about fake news and those who produce and consume it. They asked what it means for journalism in the era of algorithmic culture and social media. They questioned the efforts of social media companies to take responsibility for and propose a solution to the spread of misinformation. Lastly, they considered how "fake news" is shaping our current political realities and what can we do to resist?

Panelists included Mark Andrejevic, Professor of Media Studies, Pomona College; Brooke Borel, Journalist and Author of *The Chicago Guide to Fact-Checking*; Hannah Cranston, Host and Executive Producer, *ThinkTank*, and Guest Host, *The Young Turks*; Jon Passantino, Deputy News Director, BuzzFeed News; Ramesh Srinivasan, Associate Professor, Information Studies and Design/Media Arts, UCLA; and Laura Sydell, Correspondent, Arts Desk, NPR.



— [Co-Producer & Event Host, Henry Jenkins, center, with Panel 2 guests]

### PANEL 3

*Music Streaming & The Splinternets: The New, Competing, Cultural Curators.* Moderated by Gigi Johnson, Executive Director of the Center for Music Innovation at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music, the panel examined the endless supply of content on dominant player/platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, Pandora and Google Play Music as curatorial and competitive challenges.

One promising response is the emergence of “an elite class of veteran music nerds” (musicians, industry pros, playlist makers) to guide and assist overwhelmed audiences using curation and technology redesign. Panelists included Matthew Adell, CEO and Founder, MetaPop; Shanna Jade, Director of Community, Stem; and Alex White, Head of Next Big Sound at Pandora.



— [Gigi Johnson, left, in conversation with session 3 panelists]

### PANEL 4

Creating Binge-worthy “Streaming Web TV” was moderated by Neil Landau, associate director of TV screenwriting at UCLA TFT, author of *TV Outside the Box* and *The Showrunner's Roadmap*. Today's streaming platforms compete with the networks and studios for fragmented audiences demanding high quality moving pictures when and where they want to view them. Netflix, which launched the “web TV” revolution and changed the way we watch and access programming, now competes with agile, well-financed peers. The good news is an increase

of opportunity and quality content; the bad news is there's no time to watch it all. For the moment, audiences are subscribing, and great shows are being made. Can it be sustained? Panelists included Jesse Kahnweiler, Creator, *The Skinny* (Hulu); Zander Lehmann, Creator, *Casual* (Hulu); Dawn Prestwich, Co-executive Producer, *Z: The Beginning of Everything* (Amazon); and Nicole Yorkin, Co-executive Producer, *Z: The Beginning of Everything* (Amazon).



— [Neil Landau, center in blue, sharing a group hug with session 4 panelists]

For more information, please visit <http://www.transforminghollywood.tft.ucla.edu/>

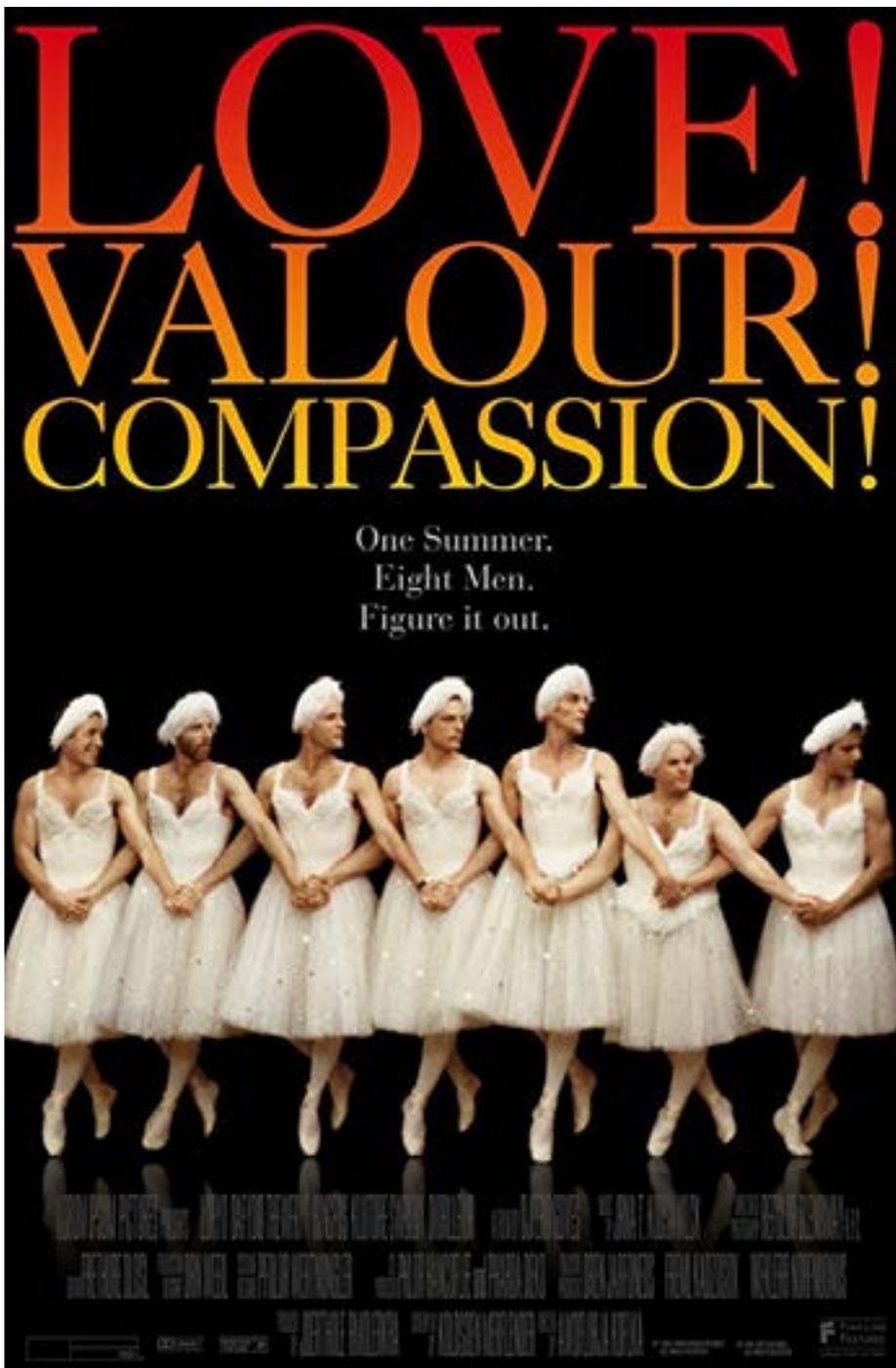
# THE LEGACY PROJECT SCREENING SERIES

UCLA/OUTFEST

The Legacy Project Screening Series used a grant from the Andrew J. Kuehn Jr. Foundation to present special guests at events throughout the year and to screen exceptionally rare prints of LGBTQ classics, such as a 35mm print of Rainer Werner Fassbinder's final film, *Querelle* (1982). *Querelle* was paired with Nguyen Tan Hoang's short film *Pirated* (2000), which draws on imagery from Fassbinder's film. Hoang's avant-garde exploration of his identity as a gay man who fled Vietnam as a youth, highlights the vital role classic LGBTQ works play in informing and inspiring new work.

In April 2017 the Archive screened director Sean Mathias' *Bent* (1997), a searing depiction of the treatment of gays and lesbians in Nazi Germany. Providing context and inviting conversation, Abdullah Hall of #ResistMarch introduced the film which was followed by a discussion between Holocaust historian Michael Berenbaum and Archive director Jan-Christopher Horak.

The Screening Series ended on a lighter note with a 20th Anniversary presentation of director Joe Mantello and screenwriter Terrence McNally's adaptation of McNally's landmark play *Love! Valour! Compassion!* (1997).



— [Terrence McNally's 1997 film declares what we all needed more of 20 years later.]

# OCSA

*Founded in 1987, the Orange County School of the Arts (OCSA) provides a creative, challenging and nurturing environment for bright and talented students as well as an unparalleled preparation for higher education and professional attainment in the arts. OCSA consistently ranks among the top schools in the State of California.*

*The only specialized arts program of its kind in the region, OCSA offers tuition-free academic and arts*

*instruction to students from Orange, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. A non-profit, OCSA relies on private and corporate donations to finance its many arts conservatories.*

*Serving 2,000 students in grades 7-12 from over 100 cities across Southern California, OCSA places personal growth and educational achievement first. Excellence, innovation, professionalism and integrity are expected of every student.*

## OCSA FTV

The OCSA Film & Television conservatory (FTV) has been an AJK grant recipient since 2007, with gifts used for equipment, construction, training, technology and educational enrichment. The

Foundation is proud to support the conservatory and its mission of training superb filmmakers while educating and inspiring engaged, energized & committed global citizens.

## SPRING 2017: DOCUMENTARY MAKING IN GUATEMALA

In April, FTV, Creative Writing and Spanish Honors students took an 8-day trip to Guatemala. Students immersed themselves in the processions and artistry of Antigua's "Semana Santa" before visiting the Mayan city of Santiago Atitlan.

FTV members shot a promotional film for a local school, using production equipment courtesy of AJK. Indigenous food and culture were consumed, a volcano was hiked and a Mayan mass celebrated.

View the short film they produced here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhJGJJcpzFY>

[L-R: FTV Students at Semana Santa processions in Antigua, Guatemala]



[OCSA Students teaching English & Creative Writing in Santiago Atitlan]

## SUMMER 2017 COSTA RICA/NICARAGUA DOCUMENTARY TRIP

In July, FTV students completed a 10-day filmmaking and service odyssey through Costa Rica and Nicaragua. From the slums of San Jose, home to many Nicaraguan migrants, students crossed the jungles of Alajuela to the town of La Carpio, where they cleaned a school and documented the lives of a local farm family. Next up were Guanacaste Province and the animal refuge Las Pumas, where students made a film about wildlife and big cat preservation. Watch it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtUMtfonFuo>

Crossing into Nicaragua, the Masaya Volcano and the Mission of Club Cristiano Esperanza —serving the children of the La Chureca slum— provided subjects for two more documentaries made with AJK funded equipment. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl7Vr-gKyHU>). Humanitarian service involved classroom refurbishment and photography lessons for the local children. A field guide and nature photographer accompanied the students who both learned and applied new skills.



[The Mission of Club Cristiano Esperanza, La Chureca, Nicaragua]

[FTV Students & friends in the Favela of La Chureca, Nicaragua]

## FTV SENIOR FILM SHOWCASE

Fall 2017 inaugurated a new tradition: the Senior Film Showcase for college admissions professionals. At OCSA's College Fair, reps from national film schools met seniors and viewed their work. Students swapped business cards and practiced introductions and pitching. Matriculation results testify to the event's success, alongside acclaim from admissions personnel for the projects, made with AJK funded equipment. Watch the showcase films here:

"Days of the Weak"

*A young girl must get up every day.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UKm5ygduQ2w>

"The Kill Jar"

*Two unusual youths learn the value of friendship.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-HHsSAr8-h4>

[At OSCA's College Fair Senior Showcase Screening]



## FTV AND AJK IN 2017-2018

With its 2017 grant, FTV bought lens kits and sound equipment and completed construction of the much-anticipated Foley stage and sound mixing room. Professional quality audio facilities are rare at the high school level and this one is destined to be a hub of post-production activity.



In 2018, FTV will produce over 100 student projects including PSAs, narrative shorts, TV pieces, documentaries and a new web series, "The Clue Crew," with projects to be presented at the Winter Cineplex and Spring Cineplex at Chapman University. FTV's annual showcase appears once again at the Newport Beach Film Festival in April. Next summer's humanitarian & filmmaking trip is slated for Vietnam and Cambodia.



# OUTFEST

*In 1982, UCLA Students founded Outfest as a driver of [LGBTQ](#) equality. Through the creation, distribution and preservation of moving images, Outfest nourishes the LGBTQ community by presenting filmed and videotaped stories from the lives of diverse populations. It preserves the past, celebrates the present and nurtures the future by enabling artistic expression of gender, sexuality, LGBTQ culture and its transformative social impact on the world. While inspiring visual storytellers, Outfest uses the power of movies to promote acceptance and equality for all LGBTQ people.*

*Over the past three decades, Outfest has showcased thousands of films from around the world, educated and mentored hundreds of emerging filmmakers, archived more than 38,000 LGBTQ films and videos and painstakingly restored 25 seminal films. Key programs include the annual [Los Angeles LGBTQ Film Festival](#), the largest such event in the world; [Outfest Fusion](#), a yearly festival of films by and about LGBTQ People of Color; [Outfest Forward](#), dedicated to educating and mentoring the next generation of film artists; and the UCLA [Legacy Project](#), the only program on earth dedicated to preserving and providing access to LGBTQ films for future generations.*

Thanks to generous funding from the Andrew J. Kuehn Foundation, the Outfest/UCLA Legacy Project continued its essential work in 2017. Notably, a 4K restoration of Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* (1986) was completed courtesy of a digital collaboration among Criterion Collection, Janus Films, and the UCLA Film & Television Archive in conjunction with the Sundance Institute and the Legacy Project. The restored film premiered at Sundance in February and later at film festivals nationwide.



[Post-screening Q & A with Donna Deitch, director of *Desert Hearts* (1986)]



[Director Donna Deitch talking about her 1986 classic, *Desert Hearts*]

Much of 2017 was devoted to expanding access to and education about the collection and advocating for the importance of LGBTQ cinema. Outfest hosted a preservation workshop at the Fusion Festival, encouraging filmmakers to properly preserve their materials using tools from USC's Hugh M. Hefner Moving Image Archive. Legacy Project Manager, Taylor Morales produced a FAIR ACT Symposium at UCLA and taught a class on Queer Archives at the 2017 Models of Pride Conference. In the LGBTQ Studies department at UCLA, the Outfest UCLA Legacy Project was the topic for a course taught by Advisory Council Member, Alice Royer, to a new generation of scholars, historians and filmmakers.



[Taylor Morales teaches a master class on Queer Archives at the Models of Pride conference]

In 2018, the Legacy Project plans a restoration of *Gay USA* (1978), Directed by Arthur Bressan, in partnership with Frameline. We are in the final stages of budgeting this project prior to beginning work on this important documentary.

# STORIES: THE AIDS MONUMENT

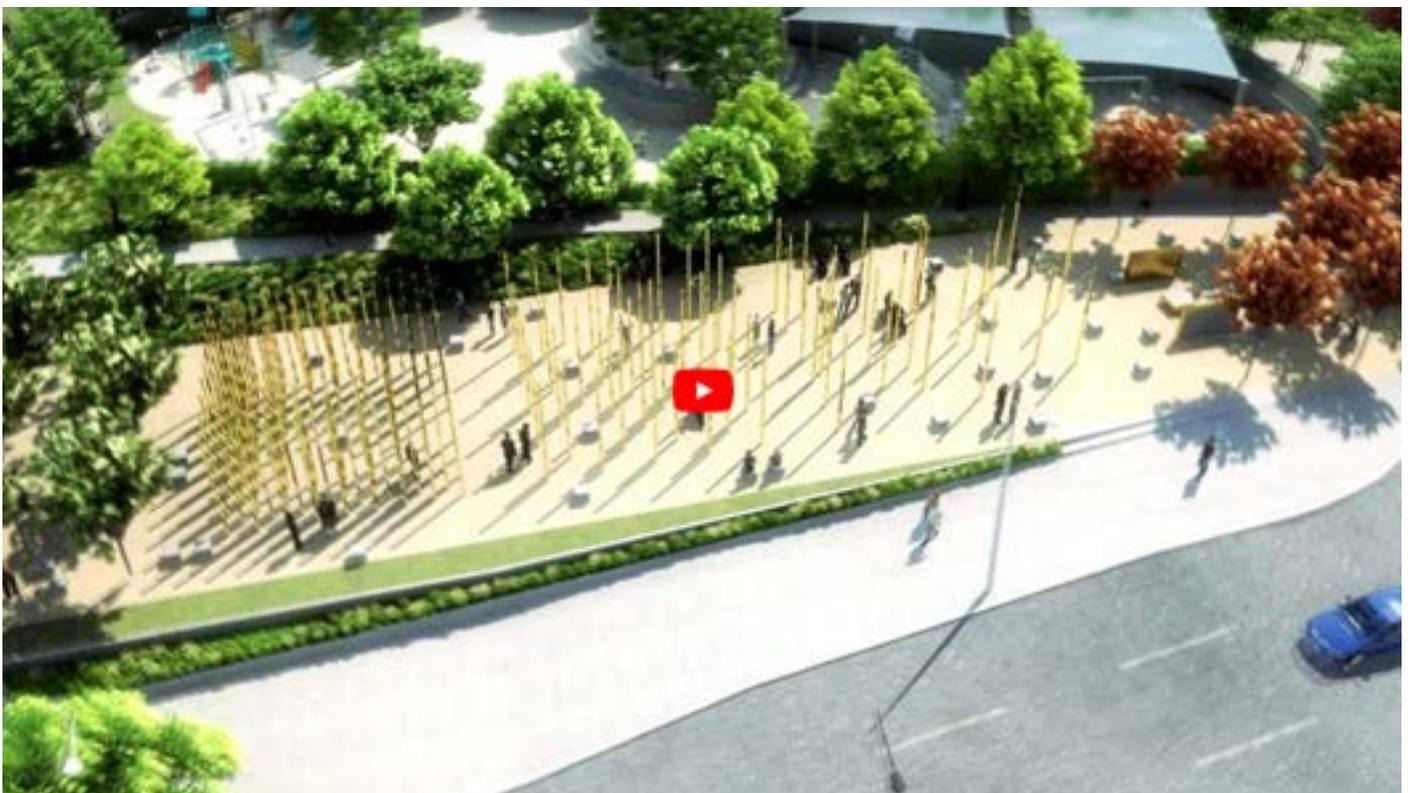
In stories and sculpture, the AIDS Monument seeks to memorialize the AIDS Crisis and honor the courage of activists, caregivers and community leaders. Nearly 650,000 Americans have died since 1981, and while the losses have slowed, the epidemic endures.

In recalling and retelling the stories of those who fought and those who died, the Aids Monument continues the work of raising awareness and money for research and treatment of persons living with AIDS/HIV.

**Remembrance:** a digital analogue to the physical Monument allows visitors to upload personal memorials, including stories, video and images of loved ones.

**Honor:** the Monument honors the caregivers, activists and community leaders who fought then and now for an end to HIV/AIDS.

**Inform:** the Monument provides HIV/AIDS prevention information while raising awareness of the history and current state of the disease. Knowledge is key to reducing infection, removing the stigma and minimizing politicization of the next health crisis.



In 2016, The AJK Foundation signed a four year commitment to the planning, development and construction of the [AIDS Monument](#), one of several memorials consecrated nationwide to the lives and communities devastated by the epidemic.

Support from the AJK Foundation underwrites both the campaign to build the AIDS Monument and to install it along San Vicente Blvd in West Hollywood.

The City of West Hollywood is donating the land and spearheading an initiative to record and index the history of HIV/AIDS in Los Angeles. The City's pledge of \$500,000 is a promise the Monument will be built and maintained for the millions expected to visit.