



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### CHEF SUSAN FENIGER TO BE FETED WITH THE SONOMA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL CULINARY EXCELLENCE AWARD ALONGSIDE THE BAY AREA PREMIERE OF LIZ LACHAN'S "SUSAN FENIGER. FORKED"

Sonoma, CA February 16, 2024—James Beard Award-winning American chef, restaurateur, cookbook author, and media personality Susan Feniger will add her global flavor to the upcoming Sonoma International Film Festival (March 20-24, 2024) with a special awards dinner and the Bay Area Premiere screening of *SUSAN FENIGER. FORKED*, directed by her partner, filmmaker Liz Lachman, on Thursday, March 21 at 5 pm at Hanna Center in Sonoma.

"Susan and I look forward to being at the Sonoma International Film Festival where we will be screening my documentary feature, *SUSAN FENIGER. FORKED*, a culinary disaster film," said Lachman. "I know Susan is excited to have you taste some of the special treats inspired by her travels, and we're both thrilled to be included in this wonderful festival!"

"As a festival known for bringing global cinema to our Bay Area audiences, we are pleased to celebrate the apostle of global food—Chef Susan Feniger with the Bay Area premiere of Liz Lachman's *Susan Feniger. Forked*," said SIFF Artistic Director Carl Spence. "This special culinary awards dinner is paired with a fantastic, mouth-watering film that takes you behind the scenes like never before to show a brilliant impresario at work against all odds."

*SUSAN FENIGER. FORKED* is a vibrant, vérité documentary film following the engaging and hilarious Feniger as she attempts to launch her first solo Los Angeles restaurant, Street. Through her passionate struggle and quest to bring global street food under one roof, the documentary is about starting over, and about not *If* one fails...but *How*. Shot in Vietnam, Shanghai, and Los Angeles, the film also features chefs Bobby Flay, Wolfgang Puck, and Mary Sue Milliken.

Liz Lachman is an American filmmaker, Emmy award-winning musician, Golden Reel award-winning music editor, and screenwriter. Past films include the award-winning psychological thriller short film, *PIN-UP*, starring Angela Sarafyan ("*Westworld*") and Christina Chang ("*The Good Doctor*") which is currently in development to expand to feature-length; and the award-winning gay romantic comedy short film, *GETTING TO KNOW YOU*, starring Dana Delaney ("*Tombstone*", "*China Beach*").

In a career spanning 40 years, Feniger has traveled the world to bring food from different cultures to the American palate. She is the co-chef/owner, along with chef Mary Sue Milliken, of the Border Grill restaurants, trucks, and catering, Socalo (Santa Monica), BBQ Mexicana and Pacha Mamas (Las Vegas), and Alice B. (Palm Springs). Later this year, the entrepreneurial duo will open their first drive-through BBQ Mexicana (Las Vegas).

Together, Feniger and Milliken brought their innovative approaches to The Food Network with nearly 400 episodes of the "Too Hot Tamales" and "Tamales World Tour" series. In 2018, Feniger and Milliken were the recipients of the Gold Award from the *Los Angeles Times* for culinary excellence and innovation in Southern California. That same year they were honored with the 4th Annual Julia Child Award from The Julia Child Foundation for Gastronomy and the Culinary Arts, making them the first women to achieve this distinction. Feniger has also co-authored six cookbooks.

This SIFF culinary showcase event includes the documentary screening, followed by the presentation of the SIFF 2024 Culinary Excellence Award, a unique Chihuly art piece created exclusively for the Sonoma International Film Festival event; a live Q&A with both Feniger and Lachman, followed by a Feniger-curated multi-course dinner, paired with Sonoma Valley wines. Limited availability tickets for the event are on sale now at [SIFF2024 | Susan Feniger. Forked Culinary Special Event](#).

The 27th Annual Sonoma International Film Festival is March 20-24, 2024. The full festival film lineup, schedule, parties, special events, and tribute guests will be announced on March 1. For festival passes and more information, visit [sonomafilmfest.org](http://sonomafilmfest.org).

#### **SIFF2024 | Susan Feniger. Forked EPK Collaterals:**

[https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1wRjVYHtY4gw\\_xkKcC9e2gwkEcVno9MP](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1wRjVYHtY4gw_xkKcC9e2gwkEcVno9MP)

#### **About Sonoma International Film Festival**

The Sonoma International Film Festival is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to promoting the best in independent film and filmmakers from around the world, inspiring savvy film lovers, and introducing the power of film to student filmmakers. Blending a program of international film, food, wine, and fun, SIFF hosts its annual festival each March, as well as year-round events and special screenings. Ginny Krieger is the Executive Director, Carl Spence is the Artistic Director, and Dr. Kevin W. McNeely is the Director Emeritus.

SIFF's signature initiative--the Media Arts Program started at Sonoma Valley High School in 2002--introduces students to film by providing ongoing support so they may explore their creative pursuits. SIFF has given more than \$800,000 in resources to the program since its inception, with hundreds of students to date graduating through the program, in addition to providing college scholarships annually to deserving students.

The Sonoma International Film Festival is supported year-round by Sustaining Sponsor KHR Family Fund, and Official Airline, Delta Air Lines. SIFF2024 Festival Premiere Sponsors include Chihuly Studio, Cogir Senior Living, Dolby, Gloria Ferrer, Jak W, Northern California Public Media, the San Francisco Chronicle, and Sebastiani Vineyards & Winery.

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