

**OPINIONATED JUDGE**  
BY DARLEEN ORTEGA



# Socially Conscious Films Round-Out Fest

I spent five days last week at the Seattle International Film Festival, sampling an array of what was on offer for Seattle's three-and-a-half week festival. A few of these films will get a theatrical release, and many others will appear in an online platform. I reviewed six films last week; here is the balance of what I saw.

In "The King," documentary director Eugene Jarecki sets out to examine the life of Elvis Presley as a way of ruminating on the current state--or, he would say, decline--of the American experiment. Prone to expansive, well-researched premises (like the rise of the drug war and mass incarceration in "The House I Live In"), Jarecki sets this film in a series of journeys to places significant to the King, largely filmed inside Presley's Rolls Royce. Jarecki is accompanied by a series of passengers-- friends who knew Presley, musicians whom he influenced or who take a critical stance on his influential cultural appropriation



"Silas" is a documentary that follows the determined Liberian activist Silas Siakor as he fights corruption and environmental degradation in his country. It's one of the many socially conscious documentaries and fiction films that were screened this year at the Seattle International Film Festival.

of African American music, and self-appointed social commentators like Ethan Hawke. The aim here is to understand the King's life and significance, but also to mine that topic for what it has to teach about America itself. Although a bit overstuffed at times, the film is mostly a compelling rumination, accompanied by an excellent soundtrack

"Silas" is a portrait of a truth teller, Silas Siakor, whose energy, intelligence, and determination to fight corruption and environmental degradation in Liberia seems limitless. Liberia is so rich in resources that it might well be compared to Wakanda, yet it has been plagued by a 25-year civil war and unceasing corruption. This documentary follows Siakor's activism during a five-year period in which a new president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, had swept into office riding high hopes--including Siakor's--that she would clean up the Liberian government. Siakor's relentless commitment to exposing the truth, even with the truth is disappointing, is quite inspiring, as is his

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# CALENDAR June 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
11 <i>E.T. Movie Premiered In 1982</i> <i>Robert Munsch born, 1945</i>	12 <i>Anne Frank born, 1929</i> Magic Day	13 ● <i>Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen born, 1986</i>	14 <i>Eid al-Fitr, Muslim National Flag Day (U.S.)</i> 'Pop Goes the Weasel' Day	15 Fly a Kite Day Power of a Smile Day	16 National Fudge Day	17 Father's Day World Juggler's Day Eat Your Vegetables Day
18 <i>Chris Van Allsburg born, 1949</i> International Picnic Day	19 ☾ <b>Juneteenth</b> <i>Tasmanian Devil Debuted in 1954</i>	20 ☾ American Eagle Day Ice Cream Soda Day	21 ☾ First Day of Summer	22 ☾ <i>US Department of Justice Established in 1870</i>	23 ☾ <i>Theodore Taylor born, 1922</i> Typewriter Patented In 1868	24 ☾ U.F.O. Day; <i>First documented UFO sighting on this day</i>
25 LEON Day - LEON is NOEL spelled backwards	26 ☾ <i>Bicycle Patented In 1819</i> <i>Toothbrush Invented In 1498</i>	27 ☾ <i>Helen Keller Born in 1880</i> <i>Melody for Happy Birthday Song Written in 1859</i>	28 ○ Paul Bunyan Day	29 ○ <i>First iPhone released, 2007</i> Camera Day	30 ○ Meteor Day <i>National Organization of Women Founded In 1966</i>	