EQUUS Aiken



Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit Mustang Symposium

November 6 – 9, 2025 Aiken, South Carolina



- Mustang Trainers All Day Demos
- **9** 6 Mustangers From Across the US
- Thursday evening VIP Party
- EQUUS Saturday Evening Film Event
- Pequine Art & Literary Fest Friday Sunday
- 6 Yearling Mustangs available for adoption
- Over 15 Invited Local and Visiting Clinicians
- Panels with Veterans and Equine Healing Programs
- Equine Vendors
- Food Trucks



Tickets:









HORSES FOR MENTAL HEALTH















EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit is partnering with Halfway to Heaven Mustang Rescue to bring an exciting and fun, fundraising event to Aiken, South Carolina, November 6 -9, 2025







Mustang Rescue

https://www.halfwaytoheavenrescue.com/

Halfway to Heaven Mustang Rescue is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit organization whose mission is to care for, train, and provide a healthy, enriched environment for Mustangs in need. We prepare our horses for adoption into permanent loving homes and to be ambassadors for the great American horses of the West - the Mustangs! We strive to find permanent homes for Mustangs, whether adopted directly from us or another way.

At our rescue, we provide each horse with the care, training, and social interaction it needs to thrive. Our horses live in a natural herd environment, creating vital bonds that are essential to a horse's overall well-being. They participate in regular Positive Reinforcement training sessions, intending to create trusting, well-rounded horses that can excel in a variety of environments and disciplines. Because we are a small rescue, we can take our time with each horse to ensure they are adequately prepared to find their forever home. Select horses are made available as they complete our program. Halfway to Heaven Rescue also has Mustangs that may need special care, whether physically or emotionally, and will have sanctuary here with us for the entirety of their lives.

Many of our Mustangs come to us with baggage – Wild horses with fear and distrust of humans, trauma from being removed from the range, anxiety from being moved from home to home, and a total upheaval of everything they have ever known. We work very hard to form trusting bonds with these Mustangs and to return their inherent joy for living.

In addition to our role as a Mustang rescue with IRS 501(c)(3) status, we have a passion for educating the public about the rich history and status of the American Mustang.







Nestled in the heart of South Carolina, Aiken is a captivating city where history, charm, and modern vitality converge in an intimately Southern experience. With roots dating back to the early 19th century, Aiken boasts a rich history steeped in equestrian heritage, cultural diversity, and a strong sense of community. From our legendary training tracks that have nurtured world-renowned thoroughbreds to our intriguing arts scene that celebrates creativity in all forms, Aiken is a vibrant city woven from threads of tradition and innovation.

Aiken's history sparkles with stories of historic railroad connecting Aiken to the rest of the country, ushering in new eras of growth and development for the town. The town's significance further deepened as the Winter Colonists — Gilded Age glitterati who traveled south seeking respite from the cold winters of the Northeast — brought with them a legacy for gracious living and a fondness for equestrian pursuits, both of which continue to shape our city today.

Today, we pride ourselves on offering a range of experiences that invite every traveler to pursue their passion. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast seeking picturesque trails and serene parks, a shopaholic exploring charming boutiques, a culinary connoisseur craving new and exciting flavors, or a history buff uncovering stories of the past, Aiken invites you to immerse yourself in our historic streets and enjoy your time in the beating heart of SC's Thoroughbred Country.

Visit <u>www.visitaiken.com</u> for more information about spending time in the City of Aiken.

About the EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit

The EQUUS Film & Arts Fest takes place as an In-Person Event! It is the first event of its kind to offer a home to the storytellers of the horse world, with films, documentaries, videos, commercials, and shorts from around the world and cultural elements of fine equestrian art and literature. In 2025 EQUUS will host 20+ events from the Yukon to the UK!

The Mustang Summit has been added to the program as an educational platform to raise awareness and understanding about the American Mustangs in holding pens and available for adoption. A horse who has a safe and quiet start can be trainable and become a good partner. It is our mission to bring awareness to American Mustangs who need homes. Focusing on and highlighting the work taking place in the healing and equine assisted learning fields with Mustangs. Providing resources for all who want to learn about the Off-Range Mustang horse.

Founded in 2013 by Lisa Diersen, Director/Organizer, an equestrian, who has spent her life in the company of horses. Lisa's mission is to show the world how horses can bring everyone together regardless of race, age, gender, abilities or disabilities. She presently raises, trains and loves Lusitano horses in Saint Charles, Illinois with her Jack Russell, Amore.

Julianne Neal, with JA Media Productions, joined the team in 2016. As the EQUUS Film and Arts Fest Director of Production and Education.

Every horse has a story, it's our mission at the EQUUS Film & Arts Fest to share those stories, through film, art and literature.

The EQUUS Film Fest <u>Channel You-Tube</u>, streaming to all your devices. Visit our website at: http://www.equusfilmfestival.net/ and our FaceBook page.

PR AND/OR SPONSOR CONTACT:

Lisa Diersen <u>lisa@equusfilmfestival.net</u> +1-630-272-3077

Additional Info: Julianne Neal <u>julianneneal@me.com</u> +1-803-351-0223

Assistant to the Director: Julie Martin

SOCIAL MEDIA

FaceBook: https://www.facebook.com/EquusFilmFestival

You-Tube - https://www.youtube.com/@equusfilmfestival772/featured







Partnership Opportunities **EQUUS Film Fest | The Mustang Summit**

Title, Presenting and Custom Partnership Packages **Available Upon Request** We can create your custom Partnership Package!

Platinum Partnership Package \$7,000

- Exclusive Social Media blast
- •Listed as a preferred partner on EquusFilmFestival.net
- •2–10-minute introduction at VIP party (Their choice on timeframe)
- •Presentation slide with company information & logo running on Lobby Loop and Reels
- •4' x 2' Banner at The Mustang Summit Location
- •Branded logo on banners
- •VIP Passes for 10 Guest

Diamond Partnership Package \$5000

- Exclusive Social Media blast
- •Listed as a preferred partner on EquusFilmFestival.net
- •2–10-minute introduction at VIP party (Their choice on timeframe)
- •Presentation slide with company information & logo running on Lobby Loop and Reels
- •4' x 2' Banner at The Mustang Summit Location
- •Branded logo on banners
- •VIP Passes for 8 Guest

Gold Partnership Package \$3000

- •Social Media blast with all sponsors
- •Listed as a preferred partner on EquusFilmFestival.net
- •2-minute introduction at VIP party
- •4' x 2' Banner at The Mustang Summit Location
- •Presentation slide with company information & logo running on Lobby Loop and Reels
- •VIP Passes for 4 Guest

Silver Partnership Package \$1500

- •Social Media blast with all sponsors
- •Shout out for being a sponsor at live event
- •4' x 2' Banner at The Mustang Summit Location
- •Presentation slide with company information & logo running on Lobby Loop and Reels
- •VIP Passes for 2 Guest

Pony Partnership Package \$500

- •Shout out for being a sponsor at live event
- •Presentation slide with company information & logo running on Lobby Loop and Reels

Benefits of a Partnership with the EQUUS Film & Arts Fest and The Mustang Summit

- ➤ Partnering with an established Internationally acclaimed Equine Film, Art & Literary Fest
- ➤ Celebrating the 12th season in 2025
- ➤ Attended by International guests, artists, and filmmakers and those from across the country and around the world.
- ➤ Annual visitors in New York City 800 1000 film & art fest guests attending over the weekend hosted in NYC for the artists and authors. In 2019 we moved to the expansive Kentucky Horse Park artist and author attendance doubled.
- ➤ Partnering in 20 + Nationwide events annually
- ➤ Marketing and exposure on all EQUUS Social Media outlets
- ➤ In 2025, Maryland will host our annual Winnie Awards event, inviting filmmakers, artists, authors, and other participants in November. The location is beautiful!
- ➤ Partnering with the EQUUS Art & Fest and The Mustang Summit with invited local equestrian artists as well as selected award-winning EQUUS artists, creating a great holiday shopping opportunity and exposure for marketing of products and services

The New York Times

Laurel Graeber of the NEW YORK TIMES wrote:

"EQUUS, however, has the heft and breadth of a Clydesdale, screening more than 80 films Friday through Sunday in Brooklyn. It also comprises equine art and book showcases, director panels and jury awards (the Winnies).... EQUUS has just instituted an on-demand streaming service for its films, which "aren't made in somebody's little back room on a laptop," said Lisa Diersen, an equestrian and former engineer who founded the festival in 2013, "These are PBS-quality documentaries." (Equus also shows a few fictional films.)"

Hundreds of films have gained recognition, found international distribution and reached global audiences We believe that film holds the power to experience a story in the most compelling way.

We empower storytellers to share their unique equine stories.

By placing the EQUUS Film Fest in the unique locations around the world, people from all walks of life can enjoy these inspiring stories.

We look forward to welcoming you to the EQUUS Film & Arts Fest, and The Mustang Summit where you can enjoy the impressive line-up of films, amazing artists and interesting authors, along with a full line up of Mustang Clinicians.



Founder | Lisa Diersen

EQUUS Film & Arts Fest The Mustang Summit

Standard Program Schedule (Subject to change per Venue)

EQUUS Film & Arts Fest will be galloping into town with The Mustang Summit! Presenting a full weekend of programming including the EQUUS Film Festival, an Art & Literary Event, Equestrian/Mustang Demos, Lectures, and other exciting events.

Schedule of Events:

Thursday – Opening Evening VIP Event – 4 pm – 8 pm

Friday – Mustang Summit Demo Programs – 9 am – 3 pm

Friday – Panels & Vendors – 9 am - 3 pm

Friday – EQUUS Films – 6 pm - 9:30 pm

Saturday – Mustang Summit Demo Programs – 9 am – 3 pm

Saturday – Panels & Vendors – 9 am – 3 pm

Saturday – EQUUS Films - 6 pm – 9:30 pm

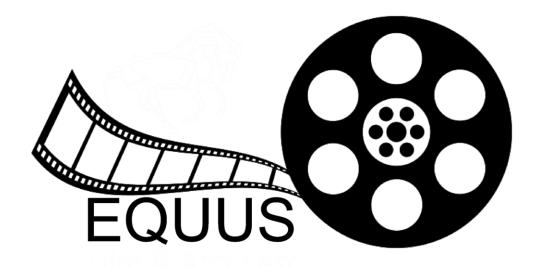
Sunday – Cowboy Church with Randy Helm – 8 am

Sunday - Mustang Summit Demo Programs – 9 am – 3 pm

Sunday – Panels & Vendors – 9 am - 3 pm

Sunday – Silent Auction Close – 2 pm

Sunday—Yearling Mustang Adoption — 3:30 pm



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Our Mustang Partners







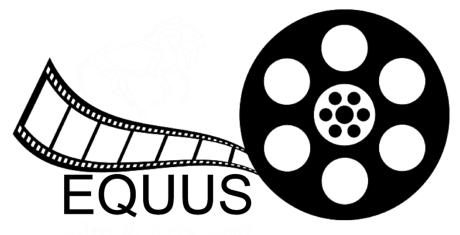












presents

Our Industry Partners



HORSES FOR MENTAL HEALTI













Rocky Mountain HORSE EXPO















Equine Fundraising Support



Lisa Diersen

EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit Founder / Director

Lisa Diersen is an equestrian; riding since she could sit in a saddle, Diersen has a great appreciation for all types of equestrian disciplines. She is the Founder and Director of the EQUUS Film Festival, now in its 12th season. The EFF empowers storytellers to show horses' rich history and diverse tapestry in human culture through equestrian content, film, art, and literature. The EQUUS Film Festival is the first film festival oriented around equestrian-themed content from all over the world that also travels the world. Screening feature films, documentaries, shorts, music videos, commercials, training educational materials, art, and literature, covering all equestrian disciplines, creating a home for the storytellers of the horse world.

Created for Horse Lovers... by Horse Lovers!

Her mission is to show the world how horses can bring everyone together regardless of race, age, gender, abilities, or disabilities. Lisa is passionate about the education and enlightenment of others to the wonderful world of horses and everything they can do to enrich our lives.

Producer and writer credits on the DOWN Syndrome equine documentary "A Pony And His Boy: The Story Of Berry & Josh" for the EQUUS Film Festival in New York City and the National DOWN Syndrome Congress 2019 with SPOTLIGHT Rescue Series partner and film director Julianne Neal. Working on additional SRS documentaries to add to the series she and Neal started in 2017. The Mustang Discovery Ride Project is now in production. Adding "The Mustang Summit" to the EQUUS programming in 2022. With a focus on educating the general public about the American Mustang Horse and its importance in the world today.

She is a published equine author with many articles to her credit. Diersen spent the early part of her career with General Motors in engineering, then moving into the subdivision development and home/barn building market, winning an Illinois Home Builder Award, before returning to her first love...... working with horses! She spends her time, when not promoting equestrian film, having fun promoting Classical Dressage, Lusitano, and Mustang horses, and spending time with her faithful Jack Russell Terrier, Amore, and her Lusitano, Urano.

www.equusfilmfestival.net lisa@equusfilmfestival.net +1-630-272-3077







Lisa Mallory & Bill Finger

Halfway to Heaven Mustang Rescue Aiken, South Carolina TEAM



Lisa grew up with horses in her life. She jokes that she loved horses before she was born. When she was young, she worked with Thoroughbred racehorses and showed Palomino Quarter horses. Lisa's first introduction to science-based horse training began in the 1990's when she attended an equine clicker training clinic with Alexandra Kurland. Lisa began studying the science of animal behavior and attending conferences and seminars with legendary animal trainers such as Bob Bailey and Karen Pryor. For many years Lisa worked as a professionally licensed dog trainer who helped owners train their dogs to be wonderful, well-behaved household companions. She also trained Scent Detection dogs and their handlers for competition and was a licensed AKC Scent Work Judge. Bill has always been devoted to the welfare of animals and has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Ecology, with a Master's in Natural Resource Policy. As an attorney Bill has a law firm, Finger, Nelson & Maguire, PLLC, who specialize in Environmental Law. When their first horse came to live with them, Bill was a natural, quickly earning the nickname "Cowboy Bill" – for his use of "Cowboy Patter" (softly, continuously talking to horses) in his training and handling. Lisa and Bill share a love and devotion for the care and welfare of all horses, with a deep passion for our National Heritage Horses – The American Mustangs.

https://www.halfwaytoheavenrescue.com/ Lisa@halfwaytoheavenrescue.com

https://issuu.com/aikenhorseproductions/docs/june-july_2024





Julianne Neal

JA Media Productions South Carolina

Podcast Producer/Editor/Host Documentary Filmmaker EQUUS Film and Arts Fest Director of Production and Education

WEBSITES: www.jamediaconnections.com

www.naturesview.us www.amustangstory.com https://themarleyproject.org

Julianne is the owner of JA Media Connections, LLC and the Producer/Director of A Mustang Story, the documentary/docuseries covering The Mustang Discovery Ride and other Mustang-related stories. She works in partnership with Bruce Anderson to provide Equine Assisted Services through Nature's View, Inc. and The Marley Project, Inc, a non-profit 501(c)(3) providing equine education and public service. The Marley Project is a member of the EQUUS Foundation Equine Welfare Network and has been a charity partner with Horses for Mental Health since 2023. The organization works to connect horses with individuals, educational groups, law enforcement officers and management training professionals. The recent work involving Mustangs led to a K-12 curriculum and arts integration component in the non-profit's Wellness Through Mustangs® program. Julianne is a designated professional with Arenas for Change, holding a dual certification in Education and Horses.

Julianne retired in 2022 after a 35-year career in Arts Education and K-12 Administration. A life-long horse lover, she owns and operates Thornfield LLC, a boarding and training facility in South Carolina. She combines her love of all things equine, educational experience and arts focus to bring clients and projects together through the boutique creative production company, JA Media Connections. Julianne completed the Director's Program through the Manhattan Film Institute in 2016 and began working with film production through a partnership with The Art of Storytelling (AOS), an international agency specializing in transformational stories. Their first collaborative project, "THE EDGE: Bruce Anderson - Natural HumanshipTM" is an award-winning documentary providing insight into Anderson's work

JA Media Connections LLC produces a catalogue of podcasts. The initial podcast, "Whinny Tales: Horse Stories, Pony Legends and Unicorn Yarns" has featured such organizations as the EQUUS Film and Arts Fest, Equitana USA, Horses and Humans Research Foundation and Creative Spirits UnLeashed. As a member of the EQUUS Film and Arts Fest Team, she serves as Director of Production and Education, producing and directing the Spotlight Rescue Series and the documentary film, A Pony and His Boy, as well as hosting the festival podcast. Other shows in the JA Media catalogue include a bi-weekly podcast for Brooke USA: On The Road, Tiny Horse Talk and the Mustang Discovery Ride. JA Media produces LIVESTREAM content during festival events, with programming for the panel discussions, training demos and on the scene interviews. The podcast catalogue and links to other content may be found on the JA Media website.

In her spare time, Julianne loves to ride her Warmblood/Shire cross, Winston, as well as her "wildies," Willie and Mustang Congaree.











Deborah Maffettone

Halfway to Heaven Mustang Rescue Aiken, South Carolina TEAM



Deborah has always had a heart for animals. With over 25 years of experience in dog rescue, she has rescued, rehabilitated, and rehomed hundreds of dogs in NYC and Long Island. Her compassion extended to volunteering at an Equine Rescue and Rehabilitation center, where she made treats for the horses, visited them weekly, and participated in Equus Coaching programs.

Deborah's deep love for horses brought her to Aiken, South Carolina, where she quickly became an integral part of the community. Shortly after her arrival, she adopted her first horse, Ollie—a rescue, of course. Just a few months later, she welcomed Spanky, a rescued donkey, into her growing farm family. This marked the beginning of a life-changing experience, bringing Deborah closer to the majestic animals she had dreamed of as a child. Her love for horses began with rides every weekend, starting at age seven and fond memories of watching John Wayne movies with her grandfather.

In her quest to make a difference in the local community, Deborah connected with Lisa Mallory and Bill Finger of Halfway to Heaven Mustang Rescue. They introduced her to their Mustangs, sparking her passion for these remarkable horses. At the 2024 Mustang Summit, Deborah fell in love with Tally, a stunning sorrel yearling filly, and bypassed the auction to bring her home. Since then, she has been working twice a week with her Mustang trainer, Brian Smith, to build a strong bond she already has with Tally. Her dedication to Tally, Ollie, and Spanky is truly inspiring.

Deborah's professional background is equally impressive. With extensive experience in the design community, she has collaborated with architects and interior designers to create custom window treatments and assist homeowners in designing their dream homes. Her expertise extends to helping clients navigate the complexities of construction and design.

As a local Realtor, Deborah is passionate about helping individuals and families in Aiken, as well as those relocating to South Carolina, find their ideal home, farm, or land. Having made the move herself, she understands the unique challenges of relocating and offers invaluable support, including organization and guidance on where to start when preparing to move or sell a home.

When she's not tending to her animals, assisting clients, or closing deals, Deborah can often be found enjoying downtown Aiken's vibrant restaurant scene, attending charitable events, or cheering on the players at a Polo match. Her active involvement in the community reflects her love for Aiken and its people.

Deborah's journey is a testament to the power of pursuing one's dreams and making a difference. Through her work with Tally and her dedication to her farm full of rescues, she is not only fulfilling her childhood aspirations but also creating a lasting impact in the lives of animals in need. Deborah reminds us all of the incredible influence one person can have on the world.

https://www.halfwaytoheavenrescue.com/ https://citylifestyle.com/articles/mustang-rescue?







Dates and Locations 2025

- January EQUUS SGPL Film Event Sugar Grove, Illinois January 8, 2025
 - o Film Event
- April EQUUS Equine Affaire Ohio Columbus, Ohio April 10 13 (Mustang Pavillion in Progress)
 - o Promo EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit Booth and Demos
- April EQUUS Mustang Matinee Farmington, New Mexico April 19
 - o Film Event with Mustang Panels and Youth Mustang Filmmakers Challenge
- May EQUUS SGPL Film Event Sugar Grove, Illinois May 14
 - o Film Event
- June EQUUS Sacramento Western States Horse Expo (working on the event in progress) June 6 8
 - The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event Panels
- June Mustang Symposium Colorado BLM Partner Event -Grand Junction Colorado June 26 28
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- July Mustang Challenge 2025 South Point Arena, Las Vegas, NV July 10 12
- July BreyerFest Kentucky Horse Park Lexington Kentucky July 10 12
 - o Films & Filmmaker Event
- July Barrington Film Event Barrington, IL July 26
 - o Film & Author Event
- August EQUUS Albuquerque Albuquerque, New Mexico August 1 4
 - Mustang Summit Event 6 Mustangs Adoption Event Panels
- August Roaring Fork Valley Horse Council Snowmass CO August 2
 - o Film Event
- August EQUUS SGPL Film Event Sugar Grove, Illinois August 13
 - o Film Event
- August ERAHC Virginia Classic Virginia Horse Center Lexington, VA August 20 24
 - Adding Mustangs to the event and Panels and Demos
- August Maryland Mustang Mission Harford County Equestrian Center Bel Air, MD August 28 31
 - o The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- September Mustang Classic KHP Lexington, Kentucky September 4 6
 - Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest Working on adding The Mustang Summit to event. That would include 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- September GHS Devil's Garden Mustang Challenge Huntingdon, Pennsylvania September 26 28
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event

- October EQUUS Yukon Yukon Canada (date to be determined)
 - Film Event
- October Liberty Festival Kentucky Horse Park October 9 12
 - EQUUS Film & Arts Fest Film Screenings and Panels
- October Ibericon World Equestrian Center Ocala, Florida October 17 19
 - o Small Event Films and Panels (No Yearlings)
- October EQUUS BC Anvil Center New West Minister, BB Canada October (Date TBD)
 - Small Event Films
- November EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit Aiken SC November 6 9
 - Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 8 Mustangs Adoption Event
- November EQUUS Film & Arts Fest Maryland Horse Library & Education Center November 14 16
 - Full Film & Arts Fest Year End Winnie Awards
- November EQUUS UK Ryedale Bridleways Group Helmsley, York UK November 15
 - o Film Event





Dates and Locations we participated at in 2024

38 Mustangs in 2024

Based on information from the BLM Website:

It costs BLM about \$27,500, on average, to provide lifetime care for a wild horse not placed into private care.

- o March Rocky Mountain Horse Expo Denver Colorado March 15 17, 2024
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- June Gateway Mustang Summit Potomac, Illinois June 7 9, 2024
 - Small Event 4 Mustangs & Films 4 Mustangs Adoption Event
- o July BreyerFest Lexington, Kentucky July 12 14, 2024
 - Small Event Films Rescued Hearts (No Yearlings)
- o July The Leanor Aztec, New Mexico July 26 28, 2024
 - Small Event Films & Art & Panels Mustangs & Rescues (No Yearlings)
- o July August Adams County Fair Brighton, Colorado July 31 August 4, 2024
 - The Mustang Summit Mustangers Event 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- o August 25 Mustang Symposium Soulful Prairies Woodstock, Illinois
 - o 1 Day Mustang Symposium (No Yearlings)
- September Mustang Classic KHP Lexington, Kentucky September 13-15, 2024
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest (No Yearlings)
- o September EQUUS Aiken Aiken Equine Rescue Aiken, South Carolina September 19-22, 2024
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event
- October Liberty Festival Kentucky Horse Park October 11-12, 2024
 - EQUUS Film & Arts Fest Rescued Hearts | Freedom Reigns Film Screening (No Yearlings)
- October Ibericon World Equestrian Center Ocala, Florida October 17-20, 2024
 - Small Event Films – (No Yearlings)
- October EQUUS BC Anvil Center New West Minister, BB Canada October 26, 2024
 - Small Event Films – (No Yearlings)
- November EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit Main Event Albuquerque, New Mexico November 14 – 17, 2024
 - o Full Fest EQUUS Film & Arts Fest | The Mustang Summit 6 Mustangs Adoption Event



EQUUS

Film & Arts Fest
The Mustang Summit









