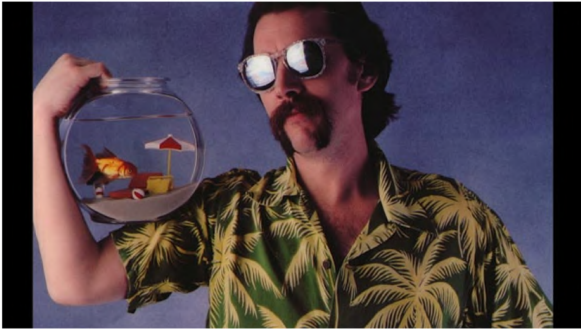


Joey Skaggs: Fish Condos screens at the Spring 2022 New Jersey Film Festival on February 11

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By Justin Almodovar

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Joey Skaggs: Fish Condos is a short documentary film directed by Judy Drosd and Joey Skaggs and will be showing at the [New Jersey Film Festival](#) on Friday, February 11, 2022. *Fish Condos* is the fifth film in an ongoing series titled *Joey Skaggs: Satire and Art Activism, 1960s to the Present and Beyond*. The series, which documents the art and life of Mr. Skaggs, seems to be a series of instructional videos for budding artists to learn how to master the art of creation.

Skaggs is a satirist, performance artist, and activist and is no stranger to media attention. In fact, he forces media outlets to pay attention to his art and, once you see his work, you'll realize that he has every right to do so. In *Bad Guys Talent Agency*, one of the previous documentaries in the series, Skaggs talks about how he once tricked the whole world into believing he ran a lucrative talent management agency. In *Fish Condos*, he plays the role of a condo-maker who just happens to work on a smaller-than-average scale.

In the film, Skaggs says "I wanted a better home for fish, so I made a better home for fish," which sounds super heroic. It is when Skaggs explains the reason why he began making the fish condos to the viewer that we realize he actually is our artistic hero. He says that he wanted to comment on the rapid gentrification that he was witnessing in his neighborhood at the time, and the unfortunate pollution that was effecting marine life. These are massive debate topics today, and the way that Joey Skaggs represented them in his art should be admired.

It's interesting to see marine organisms living in replicas of the spaces that we inhabit; all of the things we find to be necessary parts of our lives are useless to a fish that is just going to spend its life swimming around them. Skaggs used dollhouse furniture in his fish condos, which means that he took objects that are traditionally representative of one aspect of our lives [childhood play] and incorporated them into a space that represents something entirely different for each individual [a fish tank could represent hobby, companionship, décor, art, etc.]. This sort of blending of different aspects of our lives can come off as unsettling.

With one component of his exhibition consisting of actual living beings experiencing their own life cycles, and the other aspect being representations of tools that we believe should help an individual navigate their life cycle, Skaggs was playing a very particular role as curator. His only job was to keep the subjects of his exhibit alive by providing them with an optimal environment. That's exactly what he set out to do; as stated before, he "wanted to provide better homes for fish." Though, if that's the case, we must ask ourselves: was Skaggs not playing his own version of the role of God?

Sure, but that behavior comes as no surprise. Throughout the film, he casually drops sentences like "I went to Atlanta to learn how to fly with my cousin" and expects the audience to recognize that as a casual experience. What's interesting is that he says it with such a calm confidence that we actually do believe that, in the life of Joey Skaggs, nothing less should be the case.

more in film

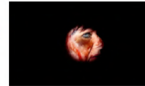
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[An Evening of Love Songs with Ms. Lisa Fischer](#)

Thursday, February 10, 2022 @ 7:30pm
South Orange Performing Arts Center (SOPAC)
One Sopac Way, South Orange, NJ 07079
category: music

[Click here for full description](#)

[An Evening with Chris Botti](#)

Thursday, February 10, 2022 @ 7:30pm
Mayo Performing Arts Center (MPAC)
100 South Street, Morristown, NJ 07960
category: music

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What I like about Joey Skaggs is that he's constantly challenging himself to question new concepts via art and is not necessarily concerned with how it's going to be received. In the case of his *Fish Condos*, one can spend a good amount of time unpacking all the things they represent. What we see in the documentary is that the world, in its' vanity, began to lust after Skaggs' art, rather than see it for its' metaphorical value. However, our perspectives are still evolving & Skaggs' last show [where he displayed some new condos] was in 2020. He updated his *Fish Condos* to include current political satire and was not shy about incorporating the controversial Donald Trump in his pieces. Joey Skaggs cannot be stopped because his art is alive on it's own, so go watch *Joey Skaggs: Fish Condos* and see what you can learn.

Joey Skaggs: Fish Condos screens at the Spring 2022 New Jersey Film Festival on February 11!

To buy tickets click [here](#).

The New Jersey Film Festival Spring 2022 will be taking place on select Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays through February 20, 2022. As a result of COVID our Festival will be a virtual one again this Spring. All the films will be available virtually via Video on Demand for 24 hours on their show date. More info is available here:

<https://newjerseyfilmfestivalspring2022.eventive.org/welcome>

300 Pompton Rd, Wayne, NJ 07470
category: music

[Click here](#) for full description

Dreaming Zenzile

Thursday, February 10, 2022 @ 7:30pm
McCarter Theatre Center
91 University Place, Princeton, NJ 08540
category: theatre

[Click here](#) for full description

We May be Right A Tribute to the Music of Billy Joel

Friday, February 11, 2022 @ 8:00pm
Brook Arts Center
10 Hamilton Street, Bound Brook, NJ 08805
category: music

[Click here](#) for full description

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