

DIRECTOR JASON STRICKLAND SPEARHEADS SIMI VALLEY'S 'HOLLYWOOD 2.0' WITH HEARTFELT DRAMA 'THE FRIENDLY' — NOW STREAMING

SIMI VALLEY, CA, UNITED STATES, November 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Filmmaker and mental health advocate Jason Strickland is redefining Southern California's filmmaking landscape with his bold vision of "[Simi Valley](#) Hollywood 2.0," and his latest film "The Friendly" is the flagship project in this movement.

Inspired by true events, military medic Curtis gets injured in battle and was saved by a stray dog. Curtis, suffering from a severe case of PTSD, and Friendly try to adjust to civilian life in this heartfelt drama directed by Strickland.

Mayor Dee Dee Cavanaugh remarked: "Director Jason Strickland, a proud Simi Valley native, exemplifies the spirit of Hollywood 2.0 right here in our community. From starring in iconic TV shows like "The Secret World of Alex Mack", "Step by Step", and "Reba", to founding "[In The Light Productions](#)" over 20 years ago, Jason has built an impressive career in film and television. He has worked with Hollywood legends such as Keanu Reeves, James Cameron, Mark Wahlberg, Zoe Saldana, Margot Robbie, and Halle Berry—all while directing and producing projects right here in Simi Valley.

In the past year alone, Jason, under his "In The Light Productions" banner has brought over 22 productions to our city, including Ryan Murphy's Monster Season 3, Amazon Studio's Countdown, and a Capital One commercial with Jennifer Coolidge. Now, with his latest film, "The Friendly" shot entirely in Simi Valley and streaming on Prime Video, he's proving that our community is a vibrant hub for purpose-driven storytelling. We're proud to support Jason's journey as he elevates Simi Valley onto the national stage—showing the world that Hollywood 2.0 is alive, thriving, and rooted in our community."



Poster "THE FRIENDLY" In The Light Productions

Now streaming on Prime Video, the emotionally powerful drama shines a spotlight on mental health, family trauma, and resilience—shot entirely in the scenic vistas of Simi Valley, California.

"The Friendly" marks a milestone in studio-backed, location-optimized production. The project leverages the district's cutting-edge facilities and streamlined permitting to deliver an intimate, purpose-driven drama with authentic sense of place.

Strickland, a former '90s TV actor turned visionary director, is spearheading a new wave of filmmaking that leverages Simi Valley's unique landscape and streamlined permitting process to create authentic, impactful stories with greater agility and purpose. With "The Friendly", he combines his personal journey with cinematic artistry, aiming to establish Simi Valley as a fertile ground for the next generation of Hollywood storytelling—free from red tape, rich in community support, and rooted in emotional truth.

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"Hollywood is evolving, and Simi Valley is at the forefront. This is where big stories can happen—easily, affordably, and with real heart. That's the essence of 'Simi Valley's Hollywood 2.0.'"

Director Jason Strickland

woven into the visual storytelling.

As the first of seven "message films" in development, Strickland's movement promises to reshape Hollywood's future—one heartfelt story at a time.



Lead Actor Casey Deidrick, *The Friendly* & Director Jason Strickland on set in Simi Valley, California

"Hollywood is evolving, and Simi Valley is at the forefront," says Strickland. "This is where big stories can happen—easily, affordably, and with real heart. That's the essence of 'Simi Valley's Hollywood 2.0.'"

Featuring a stellar cast including Casey Deidrick, Jesse Borrego, Elpidia Carrillo, Daniela Nieves, and Joe Mantegna, "The Friendly" is a testament to Strickland's mission to produce films that inspire healing and meaningful conversation. Shot at iconic locations like Corriganville Park, the film pays homage to cinematic legends like Quentin Tarantino, whose influence is subtly

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Actor Casey Deidrick, Director Jason Strickland & Actor Joe Mantegna on set in Simi Valley, California

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