

MarbleJam Sponsors Screening of *Buried Under Years of Dust* at Teaneck International Film Festival



HACKENSACK, NJ — October 2026 — MarbleJam is excited to announce its sponsorship of *Buried Under Years of Dust*, an independent documentary film that explores one woman’s extraordinary journey from years of being unable to communicate to finding her voice through a groundbreaking communication breakthrough.

The film will screen **Saturday, November 7 at 5:35 p.m.** at **The Puffin Cultural Forum, 20 Puffin Way, Teaneck, NJ 07666**, as part of the **2026 Teaneck International Film Festival**. A talkback with the filmmakers will follow the screening.

Tickets are available through the Teaneck International Film Festival: [Get Tickets](#)

Based on the memoir *I Have Been Buried Under Years of Dust: A Memoir of Autism and Hope* by Valerie Gilpeer and Emily Grodin, the 29-minute film follows Emily, who spent the first 25 years of her life unable to communicate through traditional speech. Using an assisted-typing technique, Emily experienced a breakthrough that allowed her to communicate her thoughts, feelings, observations and intelligence. One of her first statements were the powerful words that became the title of both the memoir and the film: “I have been buried under years of dust.”

Supporting this film is a natural extension of MarbleJam’s mission to empower neurodivergent individuals to express themselves, explore their abilities and participate fully in their communities.

The sponsorship also connects directly with **VisionArts**, MarbleJam’s growing film and media department. Through VisionArts, MarbleJam provides opportunities for participants to explore professional filmmaking and career opportunities in cinematography, editing, photography and storytelling.

Director Sophie Sartain writes that after reading Emily and her mother’s memoir and viewing home movie footage of Emily’s life, she knew there was a film to be made. Guided by the disability maxim “nothing about us without us,” the filmmakers worked to ensure

that Emily's voice drives the narrative. Emily narrates her own story using the computer generated voice she prefers and appears on screen in key portions of the film.

The post-screening talkback and Q&A will feature MarbleJam representatives **Anna Villa Bager and Maria Trice Jenkins, a member of MarbleJam's Advisory Board**, who will join the conversation following the film. Their participation reflects MarbleJam's commitment to amplifying the voices and experiences of neurodivergent individuals and fostering greater understanding within the community.

The director describes her hope for the project simply: **"Her astonishing voice has already touched readers around the world. Our aim is to amplify her voice even more and spotlight the lives of non-speaking and minimally speaking individuals with autism through the powerful medium of film."**

MarbleJam is proud to help bring this important story to a local audience and encourages members of the community, families, artists and supporters of neurodivergent individuals to attend the screening and participate in the conversation that follows.

Screening Details

Film: *Buried Under Years of Dust*

Date: Saturday, November 7, 2026

Time: 5:35 p.m., followed by a talkback

Location: The Puffin Cultural Forum

20 Puffin Way

Teaneck, NJ 07666

Tickets: [2026 Teaneck International Film Festival Tickets](#)

About MarbleJam

MarbleJam Center is a New Jersey-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization transforming the lives of neurodivergent individuals and those with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism, and mental health challenges through the power of creativity, community, and opportunity. Our innovative arts, wellness, vocational, and life-enrichment programs empower children, teens, and adults to build confidence, develop meaningful relationships, strengthen employment and independent living skills, and discover their unique talents. More than a place to receive services, MarbleJam is a vibrant community where every individual is recognized for their abilities, encouraged to pursue

their aspirations, and supported in creating a purposeful life. As the need for inclusive programming continues to grow, MarbleJam is expanding its reach to develop new centers where people of all abilities can learn, create, connect, and thrive. Every investment in MarbleJam is an investment in dignity, opportunity, belonging, and a future where inclusion is not an exception—it is the expectation.