



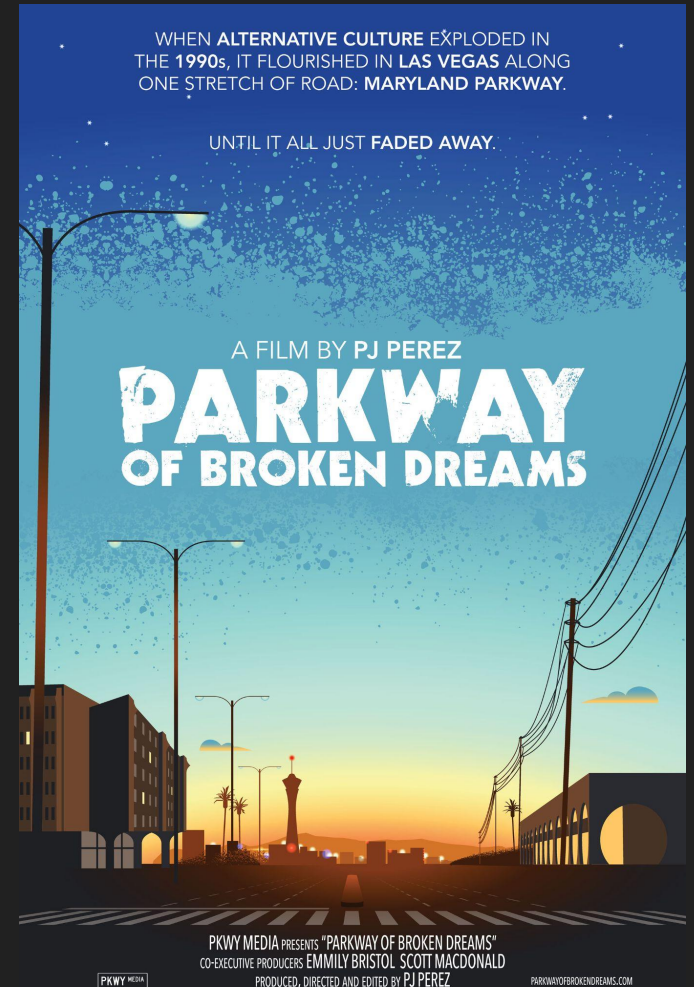
A FILM BY PJ PEREZ

PARKWAY OF BROKEN DREAMS

BEYOND THE STRIP. BEHIND THE NEON.
A LAS VEGAS STORY LIKE NO OTHER.

PARKWAY OF BROKEN DREAMS

- Genre: Documentary (History/Culture)
- Runtime: 80 minutes
- Director: Pj Perez
- Production Company: PKWY Media
- Completion Date: Spring 2021
- World Premiere: October 13, 2021
- Production Budget: ~\$25,000 USD
- Country of Origin: United States
- Language: English
- Shooting Format: Digital, Color
- Aspect Ratio: 16:9

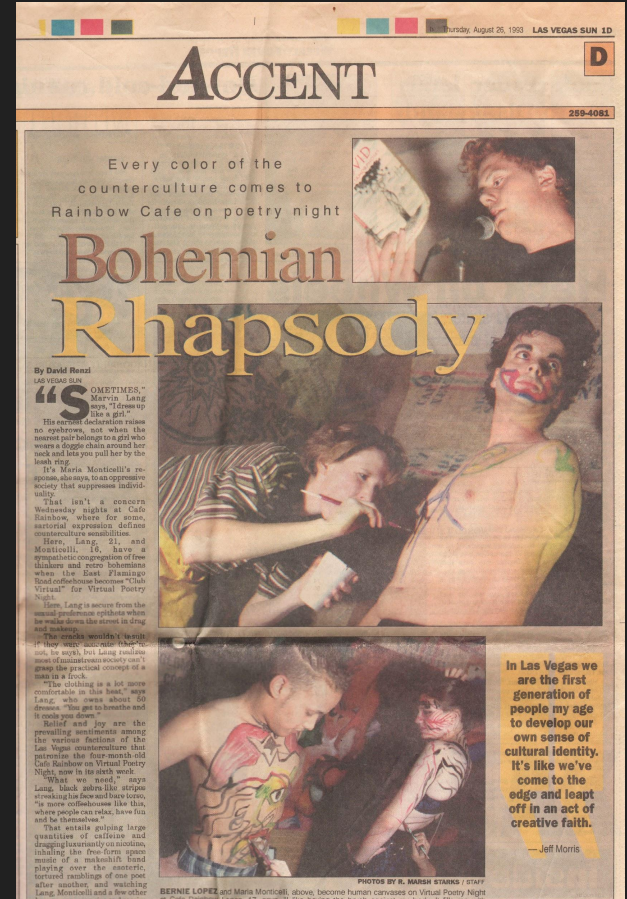


LOGLINE

In the cultural wasteland of 1990s Las Vegas, a scrappy group of artists, poets, musicians, DJs, and entrepreneurs builds an organic, thriving, and highly influential arts scene along one stretch of road, only to see it fade away by the turn of the 21st century.

TAGLINE

Beyond the Strip. Behind the Neon. A Las Vegas Story Like No Other.



THE STORY

When alternative culture explodes in the 1990s, it finds a home in Las Vegas along one stretch of road: university-adjacent Maryland Parkway. Located in the shadow of the Strip during a boom in resort construction and population growth, Maryland Parkway becomes a cultural center, where college students and the creative class of Las Vegas gathers to study, socialize, dine and shop.



THE STORY, cont'd

Independently owned coffee shops fill up with academics and intellectuals. Both corporate and mom-and-pop record stores become destinations for local musicologists. Bars and clubs buzz with live music, flowing taps and warm bodies. College radio station KUNV provides the soundtrack and connective tissue for the whole scene, through its innovative and award-winning “Rock Avenue” programming. At night, people casually walk from retail stores and head shops to cafes and bars, making the Parkway a culturally aware alternative to the tourist-trapping Strip.



THE STORY, cont'd

Despite its strength and influence, by the dawn of the new millennium, the scene falls apart, stunted by the gutting of KUNV, the rise of the Internet, and the birth of an art scene miles away in Downtown Las Vegas.

Decades later, nearly every last vestige of that scene has been wiped away: the cafes, the record stores, the music venues—even the actual buildings themselves.

But the legacy lives on through the lives of the DJs, musicians, artists, writers, comedians, poets, and journalists whose careers found their start on Maryland Parkway.



IT TAKES A (CROWDFUNDED) VILLAGE

Using the film funding website [Seed&Spark](#), *Parkway of Broken Dreams* raised \$13,000+ toward production from 166 backers in less than 30 days, all while building an engaged, dedicated audience.

The screenshot shows the Seed&Spark website interface. At the top, the navigation bar includes 'SEED & SPARK', 'Mission', 'Fund a project', 'Community events', 'For creators', and 'Enterprise'. A search icon and a user profile for 'Pj P.' are on the right. The main heading is 'Parkway of Broken Dreams' by Pj Perez. Below this is a video player with a large title 'PARKWAY OF BROKEN DREAMS' and subtitle 'A DOCUMENTARY FILM BY PJ PEREZ'. The video player shows a progress bar at 01:51 and a Vimeo logo. To the right of the video player is a 'Green Light' badge indicating the project has raised \$13,609 for production. Below the badge are buttons for 'Following' and a share icon, along with statistics: '166 supporters' and '336 followers'. At the bottom right, it says 'Participating In' with a 'Hometown Heroes' badge. Below the video player, there is a description: 'In recent years, Las Vegas has become known for giant music festivals, trendsetting nightclubs and massive redevelopment efforts. But little known is the story of the organically grown counterculture scene in the University District that set the stage for everything to come more than 25 years ago.'



**PARKWAY
OF BROKEN
DREAMS**

OFFICIAL TRAILER

CREDITS

Produced, Directed and Edited by:

Pj Perez

Co-Executive Producers:

Emmily Bristol

Scott MacDonald

Additional Cameras:

Michael Willoughby

Shahab Zargari

Key Art:

Hernan Valencia

FEATURING

Meagan Angus

Ronn Benway

Anthony Bondi

Geoff Carter

Gregory Crosby

Lenadams Dorris

John Emmons

Harry Fagel

Jason Feinberg

Dayvid Figler

Penina Finger

Kelly Greene

Keith Haubrich

Adriann Helton

Doug Jablin

Sharim Johnson

Sean C. Jones

Brian Kirsch

Ralph Mathieu

Charles Morgan

Dena Rash Guzman

James P. Reza

Chad Simmons

Mike Upchurch

Dirk Vermin

Brian Weiss

FESTIVALS + ACCOLADES

- Winner, Audience Award for Best Documentary, Silver State Film Festival 2021
- Winner, 10° Hotter Award - Documentary Feature, The Valley Film Fest 2021
- Official Selection, Las Vegas International Film & Screenwriting Festival

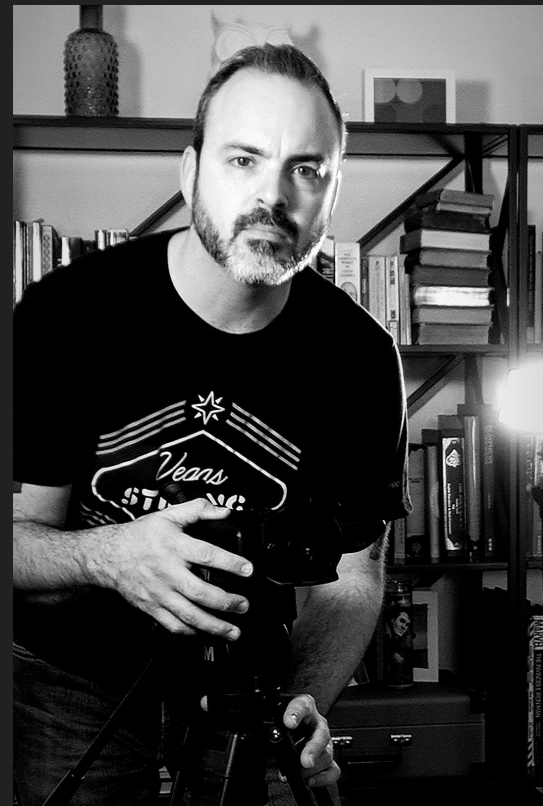


PJ PEREZ | PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

For 25 years, journalist-turned-filmmaker [Pj Perez](#) was an active participant in Las Vegas' music, art and poetry scenes, as a performer, publisher and promoter, as well as a reporter and documentarian.

Perez has two original TV series in development: BEING (a Round 2 finalist in the 2018 ATX Pitch Competition), and THE FOUNDATION (a finalist in the 2018 TV Writer People's Pilot competition). He also co-wrote and co-directed the dramatic short SUGARHOOK, created the reality micro-pilot LAS VEGAS RULES, and edited the comedy short NAMASTE.

Most recently, in addition to completing work on PARKWAY OF BROKEN DREAMS (his first feature), Perez premiered a pilot for a reality/talk show called [NOTEPADS & BAR TABS](#), co-created with screenwriter Matt Sorvillo, and is currently developing another feature documentary, about the 1998 murder of two anti-racist activists in the desert outside Las Vegas.



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

In recent years, Las Vegas has become known for giant music festivals, trendsetting nightclubs and massive redevelopment efforts. But little known is the story of an organically grown counterculture scene that sprung up along UNLV-adjacent Maryland Parkway more than 25 years ago.

For many, the scene that rose up along Maryland Parkway in the late '80s and early '90s was not just a high point in Vegas' cultural history, but the "big bang" for almost everything that came after. Nightlife pioneers got their start putting on after-hours events in tiny cafes and bars. KUNV DJs became music industry powerhouses. An Emmy-award winning TV writer honed his skills over cheap cups of coffee. Everyone from future *Saturday Night Live* stars to members of The Killers owe at least part of their creative lives to the opportunities afforded them from the inclusive, come-as-you-are nature of the Maryland Parkway cultural scene.

It's also the scene where, as a young man, I developed the skills and connections that would lead to my own career successes. It's at Cafe Rainbow where I first performed original music in front of a live audience. It's at the two-story kinko's where I learned desktop publishing and copied band fliers late into the night. It's at the Benway Bop record store where I first sold my self-published poetry chapbooks. And it's the lifetime friendships that have supported me throughout all of my endeavors, from magazine editing and music criticism to comic book publishing and filmmaking.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT, cont'd

In 2006—just as UNLV was unveiling its “Midtown UNLV” plan, an effort to revitalize and redevelop the University District—I wrote a [sprawling oral history of this period](#) as a cover story for the *Las Vegas Weekly*. Interviewing about a dozen influential participants in the scene—from business owners and artists to DJs and journalists—the article explored the origins, blossoming, and eventual decline of counterculture along Maryland Parkway, and asked whether UNLV's plan to force change could ever reproduce or surpass what came before it, organically. Fifteen years later, the jury is still out.

And when I tell this story to folks who know nothing about Las Vegas, period—outside of the gambling and nightlife for which the world knows the city best—they're absolutely fascinated. Unlike the grunge scene in Seattle, the punk scene in New York City, the hard rock scene in L.A., the Manchester rave scene, or the flower-power scene in San Francisco, no one has told the story of the Maryland Parkway scene in Las Vegas, which was somehow like all of the above, combined into one brief, beautiful—and sometimes tragic—flash of culture, community and diversity that could only exist at that time, in that place.

So, now, almost 30 years after its heyday, I've made *Parkway of Broken Dreams* to tell that story, using that oral history as a template for an even more expansive survey of the period, relayed through both new interviews with more than two dozen of the people who made it all possible and copious archival footage that captures the visual expression of the scene—as well as where Maryland Parkway currently stands, and where it may be going.

STILLS



Las Vegas musician and reality TV personality Rob Ruckus sorts through local band records from the 1980s and 1990s.



Maryland Parkway is the second-busiest thoroughfare in the state of Nevada and home to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

STILLS



Maryland Parkway in 2020, facing south toward new and recent UNLV construction projects.



Sharim Johnson sings during a performance by his shoegaze band, Someone, at Cafe Espresso Roma on Maryland Parkway circa 1996.

STILLS



Campus Village, formerly known as the Promenade, was once the hub of activity on Maryland Parkway. It sat shuttered for months before being demolished in 2019.



“I don’t think I would have known that I could be a creative person who could not only be heard, but could help others be heard,” says poet Dena Rash Guzman of her exposure to the Maryland Parkway scene at a young age.

BEHIND-THE-SCENES

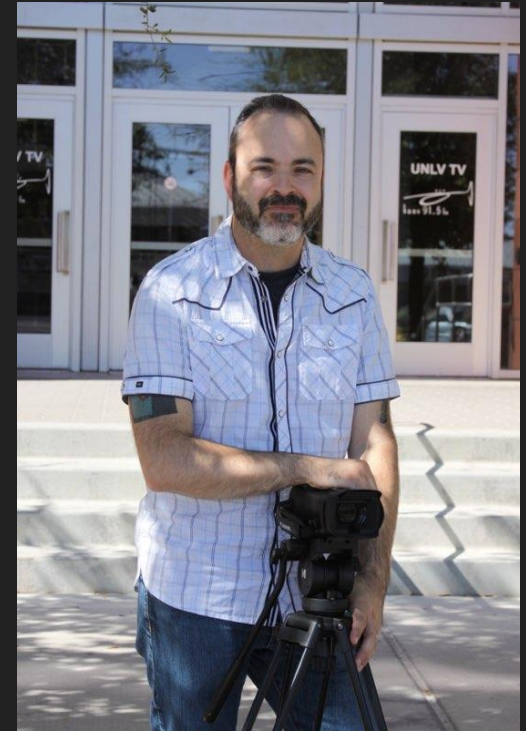


BEHIND-THE-SCENES



SELECTED PRESS

- “For documentary filmmaker, it's lights, camera, Maryland Parkway” - [KNPR's State of Nevada](#), Oct. 25, 2021
- “‘It shouldn't have ended’: New doc captures the '90s heyday of Maryland Parkway” - [Las Vegas Review-Journal](#), Oct. 8, 2021
- “Bohemian Eulogy” - [Fifth Street: The Desert Companion Newsletter](#), Oct. 7, 2021
- “The Least Vegas Neighborhood in Vegas” - [The New York Times](#), Feb. 15, 2019
- “Creative Passions Become Reality for UNLV Alumnus” - [UNLV News Center](#), Oct. 24, 2018
- “Parkway of Broken Dreams: An Interview with Filmmaker PJ Perez” - [Rise Up Daily](#), Oct. 8, 2018
- “Fundraiser of the Week: A Parkway to Vegas' Soul” - [Las Vegas Weekly](#), Sept. 20, 2018



SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL PRESENCE

- Film Website: <https://www.parkwayofbrokendreams.com>
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/parkwaydoc/>
- Instagram profile: <http://instagram.com/parkwayofbrokendreams>
- PKWY Media YouTube channel (clips, trailers, etc):
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDY_cOFVCHX7A64Be4P7xsw
- Director Pj Perez on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/pjperez>
- Director Pj Perez on Instagram:
<https://www.instagram.com/sequentialmadness/>
- Director Pj Perez on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/pjperez>

CONTACTS

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