In the article titled *The Film Festival Circuit*, Iordanova disseminates the function of film festivals, forming an argument around film festivals not only as platforms which facilitate distribution through its gathering of industry professionals, but also makes an argument for film festivals themselves being a mode of exhibition. She argues that while initially festival sprung up to keep theatres afloat during the recession by proving incentive for more content to be made, they have become temporal institutions which flow and overlap across the globe and now (ironically) rely heavily on unpaid labour to maintain their presence.

In other words, where as film festivals were often viewed as a gathering ground for distributors to access a pool of content to then further distribute across various networks of viewership, the film festival circuit can now be observed as the final means for viewership of content. One that will live and be seen in a limited timespan of few or several festivals. The film festival circuit seen as a endgame, not a platform for further distribution.

Iordanova poses film festivals as “sites that strive to commit to a set of connections while at the same time seeking to abstain from that commitment.” She points to the temporality of the event that unlike models of distribution, only exist within a short span of time. However, the film festival offers a commitment to return to the site within a specific regularity, annually for the most part, such as a fair or market. Thus she emphasizes the nature of flow as the main function the film festival facilitates but also positions directors and content makers in a position where they must hold on to relationships with specific festivals to maintain their position to not be swept by the current of new talent looking to get a foot in the door. This means that a content creator’s options for further distribution and exhibition at competing festivals would be seen as a “disruption” or compromise their loyalty, but also significantly restricts further viewership. Value is then set by exclusivity. If a film festival can secure quality content to ensure it maintains its prestige by promising star studded performances by A-list directors, they wont have to compete for content and are able to maintain their position. This both defines and further positions large festivals against each other, where they are required to compete for content and for calendar space and geography. The major festivals now occupy fixed time slots in the calendar.
Alternative film festivals that do not define themselves by competition to each other, do not take that into consideration.

**SUPER SUMMARY:**

Films are exhibited at film festivals. Film festivals need films. Films need funding. Funding can be gathered through distribution. Funding can be gathered through networking. Festivals offer films viewership. Films offer festivals content. The value of the content is affected by exhibition. The means by which film festivals determine their position both affects the films that are made through curation, exclusivity and the festival’s mandate. Some film festivals seek operate outside the realm of commercial concerns and function as a celebration of cinematic art. Ones who compete economically over content compete on two levels: when does the film festival take place, where the film festival takes place.

**Questions:**

- How does the film festival circuit effect the value of the content? In what ways can be values or devalued through exhibition?

- Who defines that value if value is determined relationally? or in other words can art operate outside of its modes of exhibition or is it intrinsically bound and defined by them?

- Can you think of ways in which recent economic shifts can effect film production and film festivals at large in the future?