

SENE Celebrates its Seventh Year

Want a film screening, live music and art every night of the week? The SENE Film Music and Arts Festival seeks to provide just that. During the week of April 20th through the 25th, filmmakers and film enthusiasts will gather at the seventh annual festival.

Co-founders Phil Capobres and Don Farias are the nice guys of the film festival circuit; that might be why Cherry Arnold chose to have the world premiere of her new film *Bluebirds Fly, Love and Hope on the Autism Spectrum* at SENE. Cherry, who had a hit on her hands a few years ago with the doc *Buddy*, turned her lens from corrupt ex-mayors toward autism and how it affects the lives of several families.

“The hardest part of running a festival is saying no to filmmakers. We wish we could show them all,” said Capobres, co-founder and artistic director of the festival. Receiving thousands of submissions, the selections are brought down to 120 films, ranging from comedy, horror, sci-fi, animation and documentary. The nice guys of the festival circuit reach out across the world for films. They come from Kazakstan, Spain and Iran, as well as all across the country, but the festival has not turned its back on local film. There are 27 films from local filmmakers that include a zombie musical short featuring music by Providence musicians The Denver Boot, as well as horror of the most relatable kind. In *The Creed*, a woman finds herself unable to get rid of tickets to a concert from the titular band. Terrifying.

The festival also celebrates local artists who left home and made good, like the Giovanis brothers, who have brought their film *Bereave* back home to their native Rhode Island. The brothers, originally from Coventry, have been working in Hollywood for years and their new feature has received excellent reviews and accolades. The film stars Malcolm McDowell, Jane Seymour and Keith Carradine. McDowell is a suicidal husband who gets a new lease on life when his wife disappears.

What sets this festival apart is its focus on not just film, but all art and how it interacts with film. “We get a lot of films submitted about art and music,” said Capobres. Further highlighting the deep connection between film and music, there will be a film scoring panel on Saturday at noon at The Columbus Theatre. Mauro Colangelo, who has scored everything from Ferrari and Reebok commercials to feature films, will be there explaining the process along with Eric Barao, Dean Cascione and Rich Kelly.

The festival starts Monday at The Columbus Theatre with a program of feature films (*see review of the festival opening film: Wildlike*), horror shorts and a series of films commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Horror buffs should be sure to check out the film *Tuck Me In*, which delivers a potent shock in its incredibly tight one-minute running time. “I showed it to a co-worker who said after watching it she would not sleep that night,” said Capobres.

Tuesday kicks off the music with a performance by the Whiskey Treaty Roadshow and a screening of a film about the band followed by a program of music videos. The live performance will take place at the Brooklyn Coffee & Tea House, a favorite venue of local filmmakers. The owner of the Brooklyn, Tony Demmings, will receive an award at the Limelight party on Thursday night. Other award winners include *Motif* Publisher Mike Ryan and Jon & Betty Jane Berberian of the Columbus Theatre. The Limelight party held at the Warwick Art Museum features music and art by URI seniors as well as live music, food, beer and more.

Friday the SENE fest travels around the world and back again with a series of international films followed by a screening of local shorts. The international feature *Hunting the Phantom* features Kristanna Lokken (of *Bloodrayne* fame) and Armand Assante in a science-fiction conspiracy thriller.

Saturday brings a day full of films including documentaries, short films, an LGBTQ short series, animation and more. The animation screening includes films ranging from family-friendly to not-so-family-friendly fare. "We give families a warning before the R-rated animation starts," assures Capobres.

The week culminates in a party with a live performance by New Jersey-based indie songwriter Zak Smith, 2013 Jersey Acoustic Music Award Winner for Best Vocalist.

The mission of SENE is bringing people together through film, music and art, and the festival has always succeeded in doing just that. You may come for the films, but you stay for the music, art or the community. SENE continues to grow every year with more and more submissions; however, the festival's founders seek to grow while keeping their mission intact. According to Capobres, "We don't want to get too big. We want the festival to feel intimate."

The SENE Film Music and Arts Festival runs from Apr 20 - 25. For information on schedule and venues or to purchase all-access passes, go to senefest.com.