

Manhattan Short Film Festival comes to Central Mass



By Magda Dakin

Calling all armchair movie critics! Do you watch those movie award shows and say to yourself, “Who voted for that?” Thanks to the hard work of Harry Albert of Preservation Worcester, Central Mass will now be part of a worldwide movie experience called Manhattan Short Film Festival. Now in its 20th year, this film festival invites you, the viewers, to vote on the best film as well as the best actor.

With more than 300 venues screening around the world on six continents, the Manhattan Short film festival will debut in Worcester on Thursday, September 28, 2017, with a gala opening at The Preservation Worcester Park View Room at 6:30 p.m. in the preserved and restored Fire and Telegraph Building at 230 Park Ave., Worcester. With Cornerstone Bank as the main tenant in the

building, the screening room for the film series will be held in the recently remodeled lower level.

The series continues for the next 10 evenings with a local guest celebrity hosting each evening from Friday, September 29, at 7:30 p.m. until Sunday, October 8, at 7:30 pm. Tickets for the Gala (\$60) as well as the public showings (\$15) are available at Eventbrite.com.

Some of the guest hosts for each evening will be Lisa Condit of the Hanover Theatre; Julia King, film producer and director; **Mike Covino, president, Niche Hospitality Group**; **John Riccio, theater and entertainment aficionado** and Ed Augustus, Worcester city manager. The website has a complete listing of when each host will appear. Go to <http://www.preservationworcester.org>

The 10 short films being presented this year were chosen from more 1615 entries from 75 different countries, with the winning films produced in Italy, Georgia, Spain, Latvia, New Zealand, Switzerland, Syria, the UK and the USA, and are Oscar-eligible.

Each of the ten films featured is thought provoking, stay with you after you’ve seen it and could easily stand on its own. Gripping drama, bazaar horror in true Twilight Zone form, amusing and vacuous humor, a 7.43-minute dialogue-free, benign event that is amazingly similar to many interactions we see today, and wishful thinking at its best, describe the first five features in the series. Three of the second set of films describe the expansion of the limits we put on ourselves, then a visual treat of color, and in the final eight minutes the mind begins to churn with what-ifs.

Bring a friend to see the films and you’ll have much to think and talk about. A deeper review here into each film would perhaps prevent you from exploring the depths of your own experience. These are small nuggets with many facets to explore. One world, one week, one festival. The 20th Annual Manhattan Short Film Festival, for the first time ever in Central Mass.