



PRESS RELEASE

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Third annual Johnstown Film & Wine Festival set for July 9-12

JOHNSTOWN, Pa. –The Johnstown Film Festival will be held July 9-12, showcasing the talent of filmmakers from across the region and around the world. Now in its third year, the festival is a film shorts competition.

The festival kicks off on Wednesday, July 9 with the screening of “Hatchet Jack,” a 45-minute film by Johnstown native L.B. Whittle, along with a few film shorts that were not part of the competition. Screenings of films entered into the festival competition will begin on Thursday, July 10 and Friday, July 11. These three evenings are at the Johnstown Flood Museum, and tickets are \$5 at the door.

On Saturday, July 12 the top entries and three winners will be screened in the Frank & Sylvia Pasquerilla Heritage Discovery Center courtyard (the event will be moved indoors in case of rain). The doors will open at 8:00 p.m., and screenings of the films will begin at dusk. Tickets for the Saturday event, which include two wine tastings, are \$15 and may be purchased online at www.johnstownfilmfest.org, at the gift shops of the Johnstown Flood Museum and Heritage Discovery Center, or at the door.

“The consensus among our judges was that the quality of the entries was even better this year,” said Lee Kring, one of the volunteer organizers. “We also got more entries from the Johnstown area than before, which is exciting.”

The festival was announced in late 2007, and the deadline for entries was March 30. Many of the participating filmmakers had some connection to Johnstown or western Pennsylvania, but there were entrants from across the nation and from Canada. A wide variety of genres was represented – documentaries, dramas, comedies and more. From these, volunteer judges scored the films, and the top 30 were accepted for screening. The will be shown on Friday night. The top-scoring films are shown on Saturday, closing with the three winners. (See enclosed schedule for a complete screening schedule).

The winners of this year's festival are:

First Place, sponsored by MTS Technologies – “Destroy Jonah Hill” by Brad Grimm of Moon Township. A new college graduate, Steven Simms, moves out to Hollywood with high hopes for fame, but his dreams of becoming a great success is shattered when he finds out that his dream has already been done by actor Jonah Hill. Now his goal is to destroy Jonah Hill. Filmmaker Brad Grimm is a recent graduate of Robert Morris University, and "Destroy Jonah Hill" is his senior film.

Second Place – “Oscar Wilde Can Keep His Quotes” by Jason Oppliger. Why do people wear neckties? Dylan Thomas, a Cincinnati schoolboy, goes on a quest to find the answer. But in his pursuit of discovery, he just might kill the necktie fad. Filmmaker Jason Oppliger lives in Cincinnati, Ohio and is a film student at the University of California, Long Beach. This film has been screened at several festivals, including the Festival de Cannes Short Corner, and won second place for best short film at The Indie Gathering.

Third Place and Johnstown Award – “Paper Tiger: Remember the Dojo” by Luke Harteis, Josh Stock, and Kevin Stock of Ebensburg is about a homeless paperboy's interest for adventure. What will he find in a world that is full of mystery? Filmmaker Kevin Stock has had several films screened at the Johnstown Film & Wine Festival, including the 2007 Viewer's Choice Award winner "The Donut Gun."

Youth Award Winner, sponsored by Dr. J. Jerome Petro – "When I Close My Eyes” directed by Max Fedore. If you were to close your eyes for the last time, can you say that you have lived a full life? A girl finds out that she has terminal cancer and has one month to live. Max Fedore is an eighth-grade student at Richland High School in Johnstown.

The film festival is the project of the Greater Johnstown/Cambria County Chamber of Commerce Community Leadership Initiative Class of 2006, which includes Mike Docherty, Matt Hughes, Lee Kring and Lynne Hood. The group is working with the Johnstown Area Heritage Association to produce the festival.

Each adult ticketholder will receive two wine tastings from a selection of wines. Wine will also be available for purchase by the glass. In addition, popcorn, beer, and other light refreshments will be available for purchase. Starbucks will also offer a complimentary selection of hot and cold beverages.

Any original short film of 30 minutes or less was eligible for the competition, which will include cash awards for first (\$300), second (\$200) and third place (\$100). Films of all genres were accepted, and there is a special category for filmmakers aged 18 and under with a cash prize of \$100. A “Johnstown Award” is new in 2008, for the highest-ranked film that is by a filmmaker who lives within 50 miles of Johnstown, filmed in Johnstown, or is about Johnstown.

The *Tribune-Democrat* is the major sponsor of the event. Several area organizations, in addition to JAHA, have been instrumental in supporting the planning of the festival, especially Clark Productions, a local video production company.

A complete screening schedule, including stills of the films, information on the filmmakers and more, is available at the festival's website, www.johnstownfilmfest.org. Tickets to the Saturday event may also be purchased online.

The Johnstown Area Heritage Association is a non-profit, membership-based organization dedicated to preserving and showcasing Johnstown's unique history to the nation through high-quality educational, cultural and recreational experiences. JAHA owns and operates the Johnstown Flood Museum and the Frank & Sylvia Pasquerilla Heritage Discovery Center, and produces the AmeriServ FolkFest, a 3-day free music festival held annually over Labor Day weekend; and a variety of additional cultural programming. The Wagner-Ritter House & Garden opened in 2006, and the Johnstown Children's Museum will open in 2008. For more information on JAHA programs, museums and events, visit www.jaha.org.

Wednesday, July 9

Johnstown Flood Museum theatre

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and films begin at 7:00

Tickets are \$5 at the door

- **Hatchet Jack** – (running time: 45:00) Directed by Eddie Mahalick, *Hatchet Jack* intertwines the fate of Pittsburgh city kids and deer hunters alike at the hands of a ruthless serial killer in rural West Virginia. Johnstown native L.B. Whittle served as director of photography and editor on this film.

Thursday, July 10

Johnstown Flood Museum theatre

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and films begin at 7:00

Tickets are \$5 at the door

- **The Mike Miller Story: Roller Dude or Fistful of Nectarines** -- (running time:10:00) directed by Kevin Stock, who takes third place in this year's festival with "Paper Tiger." "Roller Dude" tells the tale of a young homeless man who finds success and love at a roller disco.
- **Para la Comunidad, Desbe la Comunidad** -- (running time:14:00) a short documentary examining the work of a group of Bolivian-indigenous filmmakers who have used film and video as part of their struggle for representation. Filmmaker Mark Kendall is pursuing a master's degree in Latin American studies from Vanderbilt University.
- **What Is Life** -- (running time: 5:00) a music video by Johnstown native Tom Getty.
- **Werehomo** -- (running time: 29:00) by Grant Stetz of Johnstown. A modern, tongue-in-cheek interpretation of the werewolf mythology, where humans shapeshift into alternate states or creatures after being bitten.
- **Zombees** -- (running time: 5:20) by Fred Wilder of Fullerton, Calif. is about a worldwide plague that devastates the honeybee population on the planet. Man's love for science is now the honeybees' doom. Wilder's "Karl Bites" was screened on Thursday of the 2007 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.
- **Like Pink Milk** (running time: 8:23) by David Over of Kent, Washington. After being attacked on the street, a man finds refuge in a basement, but he soon discovers an on and off switch that controls his dreams.
- **Psychosomatic** -- (running time: 4:42) was created by director Jeremy Lutter as part of the 2008 Cinevic Film Slam competition, in which writers, actors and a

production team are assigned to each other to complete a short film from screenplay to finished film in 72 hours.

- **The Next Step Down** -- (running time: 4:00) by Dave Stock of Ebensburg. A murderer deals with his thoughts and emotions after the crime. Dave Stock's "The Double Date" was screened at the 2007 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.
- **Sour Sam** - (running time: 7:55) is looking for something sweet in his life. This bitterly depressed ice cream man looks for lust in all the wrong places. But he's up for an adventure as he competes for affections with the local TV cable guy. This short comedy was directed by Jeremy Lutter of Vancouver, Canada.
- **Ghost Stories from the Burgh: Episode #2-Ghost from Byers Hall** -- (running time: 21:00) directed by Chris Cameron of Northern Cambria and Bob Bender of Pittsburgh. This documentary explains the history of Byers Hall - including an accident that led to suicide. Episode #1 of "Ghost Stories from the Burgh" was screened on Thursday of the 2006 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.

Friday, July 11

Johnstown Flood Museum theatre

Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and films begin at 7:00

Tickets are \$5 at the door

- **Youth Award Winner, sponsored by Dr. J. Jerome Petro**
When I Close My Eyes -- (running time: 24:42). A girl finds out that she has terminal cancer and has one month to live. Director Max Fedore is an eighth-grade student at Richland High School in Johnstown.
- **Never Alone** -- (running time: 4:50) a music video. The gift of music leads a young girl to God, where she finds comfort in his presence.. Filmmaker Channing Frampton of New Bethlehem, Pa. is a freshman at Robert Morris University.
- **Children of Scum: A Retrospective**-- (running time: 13:00) "a retrospective about the ultimate bad movie, with the ultimate delusional cast." Filmmaker Danny Grossman is from South Pasadena, Calif., and his "Who's On First: The Movie" was screened at the 2007 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.
- **Heaven** -- (running time: 5:00) A music video by Johnstown native Tom Getty.
- **Speakeasy** -- (running time: 14:00) A janitor turned advertisement executive is mistaken for a famous jazz singer and wins the heart of young jazz singer Mae. But when George's secret is uncovered, will Mae still love him? Directed by Joey DiFranco of Chicago.

- **Last Skate for Couples** -- (running time: 15:00) A short film inspired by six abductees and their real-life stories. Director D. Alan Beck, a high school English teacher, made the film with his students with grant funding from Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts.
- **Coney Island Baby** -- (running time: 6:00) by Kevin Stock of Ebensburg. Finding love can be challenging - as a young Coney Island employee discovers, looking for love in all the wrong places.
- **Paris on the Stoney Creek** -- (running time: 29:30) a loopy comedy by Bill Eggert of Johnstown. A Paris couple takes a trip to Johnstown, where they are welcomed by a Johnstown retiree who is hunted by a demonic accordionist.

Saturday, July 11

Heritage Discovery Center courtyard

Doors open at 8:00 p.m.; films begin at dusk

Tickets are \$15 and are available in JAHA museums, online at www.johnstownfilmfest.org, and at the door

- **Smile** -- (running time: 2:00) an experimental documentary. This short film was created to explore individuals' attitudes and see what they would do in a given situation, and features music by Johnstown's Endless Mike & the Beagle Club. Filmmaker Kristy Puchko, a Johnstown native, now lives in Astoria, N.Y. Her film "Alice & the Devil" premiered at the 2006 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.
- **No More Sunday** -- (running time: 12:00) by Matthew J. Fridg of Pittsburgh. It tells the story of Malcolm, a medical student who has nearly completed his medical residency and is on his way home. But his trip becomes unpleasant and somber when he receives a phone call with tragic news.
- **Red Hot Delivery** - (running time: 5:00) A hapless pizza delivery guy races to save his job when a pregnant woman hijacks his car. This narrative comedy is by Canadian filmmaker Daniel Hogg.
- **Third Place Winner**
Paper Tiger: Dishonor the Dojo (running time: 12:00) -- by Luke Harteis, Josh Stock, and Kevin Stock is about a homeless paperboy's interest for adventure. What will he find in a world that is full of mystery? Filmmaker Kevin Stock has had several films screened at the Johnstown Film & Wine Festival, including the 2007 Viewer's Choice Award winner "The Donut Gun."
- **68 Degrees & Clear** -- (running time: 12:17) tells the story of an 11-year-old mugger who saves the life of a suicidal middle-age woman. It's just another day in Los Angeles, where it's always 68 degrees and clear. Los Angeles filmmaker Dawn

Westlake's films have won 35 international awards and played in hundreds of venues around the world. Her film "Dawn of Death" was screened at the 2007 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.

- ***Second Place Winner***

Oscar Wilde Can Keep His Quotes (running time: 15:00) Why do people wear neckties? Dylan Thomas, a Cincinnati schoolboy, goes on a quest to find the answer. Filmmaker Jason Oppliger lives in Cincinnati, Ohio and is a film student at the University of California, Long Beach.

- **Eugene and the Worm** (running time: 13:00) -- a comedic short by Josh Hope of Chicago. Two awkward teens are building a robot; but during the building process, they run out of money. So what do they do? They lace up their sneakers. The two teens battle two street bullies to a game of basketball in hopes of squirming their way to some cash.

- ***First Place Winner, sponsored by MTS Technologies***

Destroy Jonah Hill (running time: 28:03) – a new college graduate, Steven Simms, moves out to Hollywood with high hopes for fame, but his dreams of becoming a great success is shattered when he finds out that his dream has already been achieved by actor Jonah Hill. Now his goal is to destroy Jonah Hill. Filmmaker Brad Grimm of Moon Township is a recent graduate of Robert Morris University, and "Destroy Jonah Hill" is his senior film.

- **Fantasy Fragrance** -- (running time: 30 seconds) This commercial is for an imaginary fragrance. Filmmaker Lindsay Berkebile of Somerset, Pa. is currently a sophomore at the Rochester Institute of Technology, majoring in live action film production. Her film "Torn" was screened at the 2006 Johnstown Film & Wine Festival.

- **My Grandmother and the Boat: Nunna Mia e la Barca** -- (running time: 13:00) This film reveals the daily life of his Italian grandmother, who immigrated to the United States in 1956. Filmmaker Jacob Dodd lives in Richmond, Va. but is originally from Kittanning.

- **The Sheetz Run** -- (running time: 2:00) directed by Adam Buck. An optimistic homeless man is catapulted into his own living nightmare: a world without Sheetz convenience stores.

- **Ground of the Dead** -- (running time: 8:05) by Tom Getty of Johnstown tells the story of a group of young people who try to escape as their hometown is overtaken by members of the undead. Getty won the Youth Award at the Johnstown Film Festival in both 2006 ("The Movies") and 2007 ("The Jig"). Currently, Getty is working on a sci-fi film entitled "Nirvana."

