

Philadelphia International Film Festival 2007

Movies in, about, starring, or made by Philadelphia(ns)



The Curse of William Penn

World Premiere

Friday, April 6 • 9:30 • Prince Music Theater

Sunday, April 8 • 4:30 • International House

US 2007, 65 min

Directors: Rob Marcolina, Mikaelyn Austin, Dan Borkson **Cast:** Steven A. Smith, Pat Croce, Michael Bacon, Ray Didinger, Harry Kalas, Phil Martinelli **Screenwriters:** Rob Marcolina, Mikaelyn Austin, Dan Borkson **Producer:** Rob Marcolina, Mikaelyn Austin, Dan Borkson **Cinematographers:** Mikaelyn Austin, Rob Marcolina, Dan Borkson **Editors:** Mikaelyn Austin, Rob Marcolina **Print Source:** Phrustrated Phan Films

This feel-good documentary about the city's feel-bad sports franchises takes a look at their recent hard-luck history and the frustrated fans who have suffered through it.

Philly has not had very good luck recently when it comes to its sports team winning championships. Why? This featurette dares to discuss the possible reasons: Bad teams? Bad management? Bad luck? Every potential explanation is examined, yet whispers of a curse remain. The origin of the legendary "curse" is simple: a gentlemen's agreement that no structures should exceed the height of William Penn's hat atop City Hall was broken with the completion of One Liberty Place in 1987. And now... The Curse allows a slew of Philly sports journalists, celebrities, radio hosts and fans to give their opinion and unleash their righteous rage for the camera. Is there a chance that the curse is real? Leaving no stone unturned, the filmmakers offer a few solutions to beat the curse, and this singular film will doubtlessly inspire plenty of discussion among fans and critics. The fun of this light-hearted documentary is that it captures perfectly the mind-numbing frustration of Philadelphia fandom but manages to find the humor in the absurdity of it all. —Scott Johnston

Website: www.phrustratedphan.com

The Curse of William Penn is Rob Marcolina, Mikaelyn Austin, Dan Borkson's debut.

Program includes the short: **Chasing Buckner** (US, 2006, 25 min, Christoph Gelfand) In Boston, a city that has (or had) its own famous curse, a filmmaker recounts his own losses in relationship to his home team's failure to win a championship.

Soft Pretzels, Cheese-Steaks and Other Acts of God!

Saturday, April 14 • 7:00 • International House

Shorts Program • Our city — where we eat, drink and smoke ourselves to death for liberty!

The Borough (US, 2006, 55 min, Steve Condon, Tommy Germanovich) What happens when two disillusioned filmmakers return to their hometown and wind up making a documentary about Darby? This loving look at the good and the bad of this volatile district intended to capture some of the town's "reinvigorating projects," but these two friends get in way over their heads when they find themselves in a flood. Or two.

Ed Roache (US, 2006, 9 min, David Romberg, Nick Lerman) An institution, it's time for this legendary musician to be recognized for his contribution to the international music community...particularly in Philadelphia, his home!

Eraserhead Revisited (US, 2006, 3 min, Sean Kilroy) Revisiting the neighborhood that inspired David Lynch to create his masterpiece, Eraserhead.

Finger Bangin' (US, 2006, 7 min, Ted Passon) Director Passon gives a hand to local legends-in-the-making, Sweatheart, with this eye-popping music video.

The Franklin 'Pleaser' (US, 2007, 4 min, SecretPants) An ode to Ben Franklin, a naughty man known to enjoy his vices.

The Drunken Spelling Bee (US, 2006, 7 min, Jena Serbu) Originally made as part of the National Film Challenge, this mock-documentary dares to expose the dangers of mixing booze with cunning linguists.

No More Butts (US, 2006, 13 min, Valerie Keller, Gretjen Clausing, Elizabeth Fiend) The dynamic ladies of Philly's only anarchist, vegetarian guerrilla-filmmaking squad, Big Tea Party, unleash their cameras on the uninformed: the hippies, the yipees and, of course, Eagles fans!

A Taste of Nate (US, 2007, 5 min, Jim McGorman) This masterful, almost too-short bit of heaven features the band that has delighted audiences for decades at local institution Bob and Barbara's Lounge: Nate Wiley and the Crowd Pleasers.



Consequences

Philadelphia Premiere



Saturday, April 7 • 9:45 • Ritz East Theater 1
Monday, April 9 • 5:00 • Prince Music Theater

US 2006, 86 min

Director: Stephen M. Stahl **Cast:** Chris Cannon, Nicholas Joseph Kattar, Paul Marron, Adam Ratcliffe, Michael Tranzilli, Gina Maria Destra, Evy Lutzky, Effie Hortis, Nicole Nocintino **Screenwriter:** Anthony C. Hipple **Producers:** Timothy G. McMurtry, Pina Hipple **Cinematographer:** Tom Agnello **Editor:** Timothy G. McMurtry **Print Source:** Fin Pictures

In this extremely offbeat buddy film, five old friends, now in their middle ages, reunite in Philadelphia for their annual football weekend getaway, but one last “boy’s night out” in Philly’s shadowy, sex-crazed underworld goes terribly wrong...

Perhaps no other locally-made film this year exemplifies uncompromising vision more than this low-budget epic. Cleverly employing a wealth of city locations, audiences will be impressed by the sheer ambition of this production. The impressive casting is another high point, including the director himself in the role of a villain. Shifting between the present and the men’s shared boyhood past, their youth of football, keg parties and girls is familiar enough. But it is their reunion for an Eagles’ home game that takes them in another direction entirely. To reveal anymore would ruin the fun, but suffice it to say that this cautionary tale will give the audience something to think about the next time they or their boyfriends or husbands feel the urge to seek a raucous night out in the City of Brotherly Love. If strong images of a sex and violence offend you, please see this film. It will validate all of your fears. —Scott Johnston

Website:

www.finpictures.com/consequences_the%20movie.html

Consequences is Stephen M. Stahl’s debut.

30



Friday, April 13 • 9:30 • Nat’l Constitution Center

US 2007, 105 min

Director: Curtis Pollock **Cast:** Aja Shevelew, Louis Mustillo, Sam Schreiber, Rori Cannon, Aileen Quinn **Screenwriter:** Curtis Pollock, Chris Halleron **Producer:** Curtis Pollock, Aja Shevelew **Cinematographer:** Stephen Cannella **Editor:** Curtis Pollock **Print Source:** Nebali Productions

Making its world debut as a work-in-progress, Curtis Pollock’s 30 carries on the literary and cinematic tradition of the road trip as a man turning 30 goes on a cross-country journey of self-discovery on Route 30.

A down-on-his-luck recent bachelor, Hal, takes an impromptu drive to Atlantic City to celebrate his thirtieth birthday alone and anonymous. Things start out badly when his girlfriend moves out (taking with her everything but the mattress and bed linens) in the unexpectedly funny time-lapse opening credits. After a fluke keno win at one local dive bar, gruff, grisly and cynical Hal heads west on Route 30 for a change of scenery and an extended break from his mundane life as a New York City bartender. Starting with a quick pass through Philadelphia and the Main Line (and following a few knowing jabs at central Pennsylvania culture), he embarks on a series of enlightening episodes that include conversations with chatty strangers across the country, overlooked treasures on the national landscape and insights into his own life during a much-belated rite of passage. Featuring a slick funk-jazz soundtrack by Second Movement and a brief appearance by Yardley native Aileen Quinn (in her first post-Annie grown-up film role), 30 is an offhand, Clerks-inspired, fish-out-of-water comedy that enlivens the road trip tradition of candid chance encounters to reveal astute observations about love, masculinity, cultural assumptions and all of the challenges that accompany turning “thirty.” —Jared Earley

Website: www.30themovie.com

30 is Curtis Pollock’s debut.

2 Minutes Later

World Premiere



Friday, April 13 • 7:15 • Prince Music Theater
Sunday, April 15 • 2:30 • Prince Music Theater

US 2007, 78 min

Director: Robert Gaston **Cast:** Michael Molina, Jessica Graham, Peter Stickles, J. Matthew Miller, Jennifer Layne Park, Mei-Yann Hwang, Joe Almanza, Grant Barker, Houston Bernard, Liz Douglas, Scott Spragg, Kim Blackman, Adam R. Deremer, Ben Sander, Greg Ratz, Brooke Lewis, Ben Green, Michelle Pollino, Sean Simms, Joseph Healy, Kevin Gallagher, Greg Pronko, Kevin Momenee, Dan Van Wert, Chaney Tullios, Nick Smith, Patrick Bradley, Amanda Williamson, Joseph Stumm, Gary Kramer, Jessica Anasti, Louis DeVaughn Nelson, Kelly Burkhardt, Matthew Harmon, Danielle Ochroch, Freddy Garland **Screenwriter:** Robert Gaston **Producer:** Megan Mascena Gaspar, Robert Gaston, Farrel Lever **Cinematographer:** Jeff Schirmer **Editor:** Farrel Lever

When a Philadelphia photographer with a talent for rubbing people the wrong way goes missing, it is up to his twin brother and a lesbian gumshoe to track down his whereabouts or possible killer among a bevy of possible suspects.

This World Premiere screening of Robert Gaston's Philadelphia-made *2 Minutes Later* is a thrilling, sexy and often sharply funny noir-ish thriller. It begins literally with a bang as handsome photographer Michael (Michael Molina) is being chased through dark rural woods by a determined, gun-toting stranger. One of the bullets hits its mark and...flash forward two weeks later as Kyle, Michael's twin brother, arrives in town to get to the bottom of his brother's recent disappearance. And he quickly finds, when mistaken for his brother, that his brother was a far from liked figure. Enter Abigail (Jessica Graham), a private investigator who already knows a thing or two about Michael: he's a jerk. And may have been murdered. As the pair investigate Michael's recent goings-on and rather lurid, Mapplethorpe-ian work — "I need a shower," Abigail quips after sifting through his portfolio — it's clear that motive is in no short supply. Many local men have been humiliated, disgraced and angered during Michael's abusive photo sessions and many personal relations. But when that determined stranger with the gun believes "Michael" is alive and well, he sets his sights on Abigail and Kyle. Director Gaston adds decidedly modern twists to the hard-boiled film noir template — openly queer protagonists, tartly contemporary dialogue, full-frontal nudity and intense eroticism — while delivering taut action and memorable performances. Think a queer *The Thin Man* as the witty repartee flies between the sassy and sultry Graham and the hunky Molina. All that's missing are a few stiff drinks — that's on you. —Lawrence Ferber

Website: www.2minuteslater.com

Robert Gaston's Filmography: *Open Cam* (2005)

The Memory Thief

World Premiere

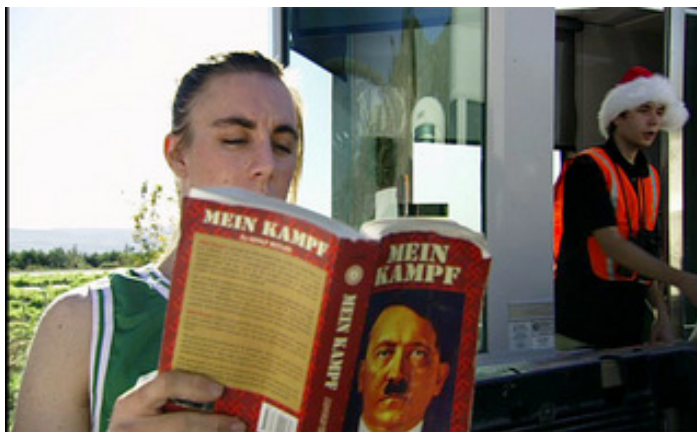
Saturday, April 14 • 9:30 • Prince Music Theater
Sunday, April 15 • 12:15 • Prince Music Theater

US 2006, 94 min

Director: Gil Kofman **Cast:** Mark Webber, Rachel Miner, Jerry Adler, Patrick Bauchau **Screenwriter:** Gil Kofman **Producers:** Gil Kofman, Marika Van Adelsburg, Amy Ziering Kofman **Cinematographer:** Richard Rutkowski **Editor:** Curtiss Clayton **Print Source:** Jane Doe Films

Festival honoree Mark Webber delivers a powerful performance in this fascinating and unsettling film about a young toll booth worker whose search for meaning leads to an obsession with the Holocaust.

This remarkable first feature from director Gil Kofman tells the tale of an aimless young man whose search for identity and meaning leads him to an obsession with survivors of the Holocaust. Mark Webber delivers a powerful and intense portrayal of Lukas, a hapless toll booth operator who spends his free time voyeuristically spying on the traffic at the toll plaza. He is in stasis, awaiting his destiny when one day, a passenger carelessly tosses him a copy of "Mein Kampf." He begins to devour it, but his course is suddenly altered when, the very next day, a Holocaust survivor sees the book and berates him. He instantly recognizes that the man's suffering has defined him, and he embarks on an increasingly bizarre and troubling quest to recreate himself in the image of a survivor. Along the way, he befriends a young Jewish woman, Mira (Rachel Miner), whose father (Jerry Adler) is himself a survivor. Adler offers up a fantastic performance as Mr. Zweig, a man who has buried his past and is vociferously opposed to reopening it. Kofman unwinds this unsettling narrative with an adept hand, dotting the film with refreshing wisps of humor in the midst of his lead character's gradual descent into psychosis. —Eric Moore Website: www.memorythiefmovie.com *The Memory Thief* is Gil Kofman's debut.



Complete program and other information available on-line at the Festival's web site: www.phillyfests.com/

Scribe Video Center's Precious Places Community History Project



Sunday, April 15 • 5:00 • International House

Shorts Program • 100 min This spring Mayoral candidates will traverse Philadelphia's neighborhoods to attend countless public forums, discussing their visions of what it will take to improve our city. This collection of new videos co-produced by Scribe Video Center and local community organizations offers fresh viewpoints guaranteed to add and inspire contributions to this conversation. Residents share stories in their own voices of urban life, hidden histories and community transformation. —Gretjen Clausing

Eve's Garden (US, 9 min, Heart of Camden) Waterfront South is a green refuge in Camden's most polluted neighborhood.

I Come From a Place (US, 9 min, Asian Arts Initiative) A vital arts organization is forced to vacate their home in the Gilbert Building, now that it has been slated for demolition as part of the Convention Center expansion.

Palmer Cemetery: The Heart and History of Fishtown (US, 12 min, Fishtown Neighbors Association) Since most Fishtowners know or are related to someone buried in Palmer Cemetery, it has become the neighborhood place where everyone goes to never leave, as this humorous film explains.

Petty's Island: A Sacred Part of America's Story (US, 14 min, Camden City's African American Commission) Located in the shadow of the Ben Franklin Bridge, a former depot for enslaved Africans is now targeted by developers to become a gated community.

Southwark: 30 Years and Growing (US, 9 min, Neighborhood Garden's Association and Southwark/Queen's Village Community Garden) The origins of one of Philadelphia's oldest gardens.

St. Augustine Church: Immigration and Filipino Transformation (US, 9 min, Filipino American National Historical Society, PA Chapter) Filipino immigrants bring new life, faith and culture to this Old City church.

Strawberry Mansion: Neighborhood by the Park (US, 8 min, East Park Revitalization Alliance) Residents reflect on growing up in this neighborhood bordering Fairmount Park.

UnHushed! (US, 11 min, Still Standing Project) The history of slavery in Pomona Hall, an 18th-century plantation owned by the Cooper family, the founders of Camden.

Villa Africana Cólolo (US, 11 min, Grupo Motivos) A look inside Norris Square's first African garden, where community members gather and celebrate the influence of African culture in Puerto Rico and America through art, dance, music and agriculture.

Yorktown: You Are Here! (US, 11 min, Yorktown Community Organization) A North Philadelphia residential community built by African American civic and church groups in 1961 struggles to maintain its character in the shadow of Temple University's expansion.

Saluting Siegmund Lubin Wednesday, April 11 • 7:00 • International House

Experience a recreation of cinema-going ninety years ago with this nickelodeon program in tribute to Philadelphia movie luminary Siegmund Lubin.

The importance of film pioneer Siegmund Lubin to the American film industry would be hard to overestimate. He was America's first movie mogul, opening theaters, building projectors and fighting Edison in an endless stream of patent litigation. By 1910 he had built one of the world's largest studio complexes, "Lubinville," located in Northern Philadelphia. By 1919 he was bankrupt. In recognition of Lubin's work, the Philadelphia Film Festival is proud to participate in an evening screening of some of his best surviving films, on a day that also will see the unveiling of a Pennsylvania State Historical Marker at the site of his former home at 1608 N. 15th St. Curated by film scholar Joseph Eckhardt, the Lubin film program will recreate the unique experience of a nickelodeon circa 1915 — with live music, songs, narration, slides and sound effects. The films themselves, which will include comedies, melodramas and westerns, will offer a glimpse of Oliver Hardy in his earliest surviving movie role and a cameo appearance by Siegmund Lubin himself. Live musical accompaniment will be provided by Don Kinnier with vintage songs and sound effects by Judy Townsend. In addition, film technology expert Lou DiCrescenzo will demonstrate the way that movies were originally shown by hand-cranking one through a vintage Edison 1897 Kinetoscope. —George Stewart



The Philadelphia Story Presented by Camille Paglia



Tuesday, April 10 • 6:45 • Ritz Five

US 1940, 112 min

Director: George Cukor **Cast:** Cary Grant, Katharine Hepburn, James Stewart, Ruth Hussey, John Howard, Roland Young, John Halliday, Mary Nash, Virginia Weidler, Henry Daniell, Lionel Pape, Rex Evans **Screenwriter:** Donald Ogden Stewart (based on the play by Philip Barry) **Producer:** Joseph L. Mankiewicz **Cinematographer:** Joseph Ruttenberg **Editor:** Frank Sullivan **Print Source:** Warner Classics

An essential classic frequently cited as one of the greatest screwball comedies ever made, The Philadelphia Story also serves as a comical snapshot of the foibles and privilege of the Main Line's heyday.

Katherine Hepburn stars alongside Cary Grant and James Stewart as a feisty Main Line socialite entangled in a delightfully contrived romantic quadrangle only days before she is set to walk down the aisle (again). Reluctantly agreeing to allow a newspaper reporter (Stewart) to cover her private wedding in exchange for avoiding public embarrassment over her father's philandering, she unwittingly exposes her vulnerable side (her heart) to her still love-struck ex-husband (Grant) — all while desperately clinging to her own misguided romantic ideals! Charged with spirited zingers, biting one-liners and infectious glee, few comedies tickle with such an unerring sense of fun as George Cukor's charming and resonant romantic comedy original. Camille Paglia, respected author, critic and Professor of Humanities and Media Studies at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, will lead the audience in a conversation after the screening about this film that's one of her all-time favorites — a triumph of its day that remains just as delightful today. —Jared Earley

The Burglar Presented by Irv Slifkin Friday, April 13 • 7:00 • Ritz Five

US 1957, 90 min

Director: Paul Wendkos **Cast:** Dan Duryea, Jayne Mansfield, Martha Vickers, Peter Capell, Mickey Shaughnessy, Wendell K. Phillips, Phoebe Mackay, Stewart Bradley, John Facenda **Screenwriter:** David Goodis (based on his novel) **Producer:** Louis W. Kellman **Cinematographer:** Don Malkames **Editor:** Herta Horn, Paul Wendkos **Print Source:** Sony Pictures Repertory

Rarely seen since its initial 1957 release, this action-packed thriller returns to its native Philadelphia on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

This classic example of a "B noir" was shot in and around Philadelphia and Atlantic City. Dan Duryea stars as the leader of a group of thieves (which includes Bryn Mawr native Jayne Mansfield) who steals a coveted necklace from a spiritualist living in a Main Line mansion. As tensions start to run high among the thieves, a couple of less-than-honorable cops appear on the scene leading to a chase along the Steel Pier. Adapted from his own story by David Goodis (writer of Truffaut's *Shoot the Piano Player* and Jacques Tourneur's *Nightfall*), this offbeat crime yarn was produced by Louis W. Kellman ("Diver Dan") and stylishly directed by Paul Wendkos (*The Mephisto Waltz*) in a flamboyant cinematic style reminiscent of Orson Welles at his most extravagant. Other highlights include appearances by local news legend John Facenda and the diving horse at the Steel Pier. We are proud to reintroduce this film in a pristine new 35mm print. Local author "Movie" Irv Slifkin will talk about the film and sign copies of his latest book "Filmadelphia: A Celebration of a City's Movies" (Middle Atlantic Press), which features *The Burglar* and over 100 other films made in and around our area. —George Stewart



The 48 Hour Film Project

The 48 Hour Film Project

Sunday, April 8 • 9:15 • International House

Back for a fifth year, Philadelphia kicks off a world tour of this international cinematic race against time with highlights from this year's contest.

While there are many timed filmmaking challenges, only one has been so wellreceived that it has grown into an international screening series hosted in over 40 cities world-wide: the 48 Hour Film Project. This year, Philadelphia was chosen to launch its 2007 tour. In March, 48 teams competed against each other (and themselves) to finish a film in less than two days. Everything — including scripts, location-scouting, scores and credits — had to be completed within the two days of the competition. To prevent any advance preparation, four components are given to entrants at the start of the weekend: a genre, a character, a line of dialogue and a key prop. When filmmakers only have 48 hours, every second counts, and while many will say they could do it, these teams did! So come out and see exactly why Philadelphia isn't just the best city in the United States to film in, it's also the fastest to film in! —Scott Johnston *The 48 Hour Film Project* is 's debut.

The Greater Philadelphia Student Film Festival

At the second annual GPSFF Award Ceremony, held in March, The Greater Philadelphia Student Film Festival selected five winning films submitted from more than seven different college and university campuses, featuring some of the brightest up-and-coming student talent in Philadelphia filmmaking. GPSFF seeks to unite the region's student film community while celebrating the City of Philadelphia as a common thread running across the diverse array of competing films. For more information, visit www.gpsff.com. The Philadelphia Film Festival is proud to present the 1st Place Winner from the five GPSFF categories of competition, each of which will screen separately before a select feature program feature (as indicated). Titles of 1st Place Winners were not available in time to print. Pre-feature screening schedule and categories are as follows:

Drama (screens before *You Are Here*, page 114)

Comedy (screens before *Big Dreams Little Tokyo*, page 106)

Documentary (screens before *The King of Kong*, page 131)

Graduate Experimental (screens before *The Lost World of Tibet*, page 132)

Undergraduate Experimental (screens before *638 Ways to Kill Castro*, page 134)