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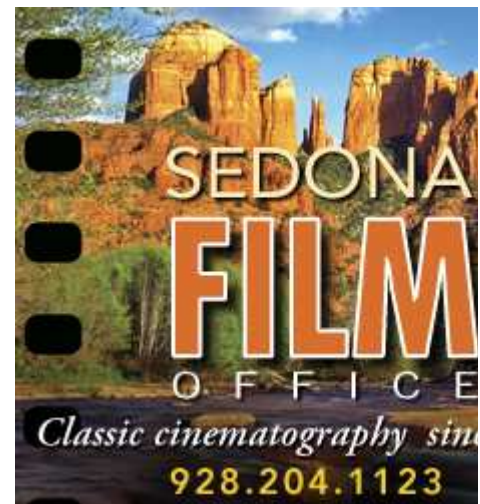
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Seattle International Film Festival

By Kenya McCullum

(May 2007)

"Sometimes we'll do theatrical runs of films, and we'll bring back films from the festival that did well and are sort of languishing distributors," says Carl Spence, SIFF's artistic director. "It's really a great opportunity for us to continue to expand our audience what we do so well in 25 days and extend that out to the rest of the year."

Newly appointed programmer Anita Monga was headhunted to hold down the responsibility for extending the SIFF experience calendar, and she has begun by choosing films that reflect the spirit of the festival itself. Monga's programming profession began at the Roxy Cinema in San Francisco and progressed to the city's Castro Theatre, North America's most prominent single house. In addition, Monga founded the Film Noir Foundation, and has programmed for a number of festivals including the SF Film Arts Festival of Independent Cinema and the Palm Springs International Festival of Short Films.

But is the process of selecting films for a movie theatre the same as selecting films for a festival? Monga says her philosophy of programming is the same in both cases.

"I look at a lot of films and what's happening in the culture. I just like to put together things that I think people need to see, and interesting way so that they'll want to see them," says Monga. "It's really important for me to be really clear about the choices the cinema. Everything is not going to be everyone's taste, but it has to be a level of quality that people understand. We're not plugging in holes; we're really trying to do something that will always be interesting and will be a revelation to them."

SIFF Cinema opened this year with the revealing and highly-regarded Janus series - a collection of films that honor the 50th anniversary of the legendary foreign film distribution company which released features during the '50s and '60s. Among the films being shown in this series are Jean Cocteau's classic fantasy *Beauty & the Beast*, Ingmar Bergman's *Fanny & Alexander*, Alfred Hitchcock's *Lady Vanishes* and Roman Polanski's *Knife in the Water*.

Another program Monga is planning is the New Crown Hope Series, which will pay homage to the 200th anniversary of Mozart.

Although a lot of effort is involved in programming the SIFF Cinema, attendees of the actual festival will still view the same vaunted quality films they have seen for the last three decades. This year, SIFF plans to show provocative films such as *Sex and Deceit*, *Days in Paris* and *Molière*. In addition, the festival will debut its Planet Cinema feature - a collection of films that address the state of the planet and the environment - as well as pay tribute to Sir Anthony Hopkins's lifetime of achievements.

For more information, log on to <http://www.seattlefilm.org/>.

The Seattle International Film Festival - the largest film festival in North America - is now giving moviegoers the opportunity to enjoy an eclectic selection of films all year around. The SIFF Cinema opened in March and promises audiences the same high-quality films they have come to expect each year during the monthlong festival.