

Outstanding Event: College of Arts and Letters Film Series

Website (includes 2011 film schedule): <http://nau.edu/filmseries>

Arizona Daily Sun Columns:

http://azdailysun.com/entertainment/movies/nau-film-series-sidney-lumet-an-actor-s-director/article_9ee43207-8296-5fea-b2c8-4660d2caa55e.html

http://azdailysun.com/entertainment/movies/nau-film-series-come-play-with-us/article_34535e64-9434-58f7-a1c3-d24d2f6cadf0.html

This letter is for the purpose of nominating the College of Arts and Letters Film Series, and co-coordinators Paul Helford and Paul Donnelly for the Outstanding Event Award.

The College of Arts and Letters Film Series was established in 2003 and is celebrating its 9th year of providing quality classic and contemporary films to the NAU and Flagstaff community. The films are offered every Tuesday during the academic year, at 7 p.m. at the Cline Library Assembly Hall. Admission is free.

The Film Series admitted 7,000 patrons during its 2010-2011 series, the greatest attendance ever. The fall semester patronage increased by 21% from averages of 243 patrons in Fall 2009 to 294 patrons in Fall 2010.

The Film Series serves both the NAU and Flagstaff communities, and is a true example of Town and Gown community-building through the arts. Audience members are a mix of generations, ranging from NAU students to retirees. For the Spring 2011 semester, the audience consisted of 29% students, 24% community members, and 5% faculty and staff. (42% were not identified.)

Many audience members remain after the film to participate in the post-screening discussion. In addition, film buffs and experts throughout the community (for example, people from FlagLive, FALA, and Arizona Daily Sun) are routinely tapped to contribute background information before the film, enhancing the viewing experience. These discussions often engage the audience members in a critical thinking process that contributes to a deeper understanding of the film genre.

Paul Helford and Paul Donnelly spend hours compiling informative weekly articles for each film throughout the season. These columns appear in the Arizona Daily Sun's "Sneak Peaks" section and represent local film commentary in a section filled with AP editorials. These articles also represent the presenters' dedication to increased knowledge and engagement with classic films for community members.

In its efforts to promote other arts in Flagstaff, the Film Series works with the Sedona International Film Festival, the Mountain Film Festival, the College of Arts and Letters Theatre, and the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra in advertising

their events and encouraging attendance. The series is a direct result of partnership between the Cline Library, School of Communication and College of Arts and Letters, bringing three distinct departments into play. The series also promotes Lowell Observatory, the Museum of Northern Arizona, SCF Arizona, and local businesses such as Bikram Yoga and TCBY. Helford and Donnelly are truly connected to the community.

In 2010, NAU film students conducted a focus group with 9 community patrons of the Film Series. The patrons said “They love the atmosphere and the social aspect of the films. The group believes the entire thing is “done right.” The mix of ages, culture, dress, enthusiasm is intriguing.”

the series is a model for town-gown educational programs. The cross-generational audience, the mix of experts and laypersons, the comments by film makers and viewers allows for much lively exchange. In addition and depending on the film, diversity groups, area studies programs, community advocacy groups partner with the series

I believe that the College of Arts and Letters Film Series is indeed an event that is “done right.” It’s a service to the community that has breadth and depth, exemplified by its reach to over 7,000 patrons in 2010-2011 alone and its consistency of service every Tuesday night for the past 8 years. It has provided a model for film throughout the town, and has encouraged and engendered other series, such as the NAU International Film Series, the Orpheum Film Series, and the Sedona International Film Series.

The College of Arts and Letters Film Series is truly an outstanding event in Flagstaff. The best thing is that it happens every week!