

THROUGH THE LENS

Film is the literature
of this generation...

October 11, 2017 marked the beginning of the 19th season for The Foundation. For those of you who might be into numerology, 19 is considered an auspicious number associated with success, honor, joy and happiness.

We have experienced all of this during the last 19 years. MSHFF has become a known entity in Westchester's educational community. Many students begin their journey with The Evening Film Club in ninth grade and stay with us for four years. The annual Future Filmmaker's Film Festival held at The Picture House in Pelham, NY on the last Sunday in April, has become a 'must-see' event for aspiring film-makers and aficionados alike. The scholarships we award to seniors are presented to them at their graduating ceremonies which provide a public forum for the community to witness their passion.

There have been some exciting changes since the publication of our last newsletter. Our classroom at The Picture House's Satellite Lab has been outfitted with updated technology and equipment making it easier for our students to access the resources of the web as well as edit and share their work in the cloud. Our annual field trips now include a visit to the Emmy award-winning Alchemy Post Sound, an independent foley studio in Peekskill, NY. In addition, we have a new Teaching Artist, Betty Garcia (see featured article inside). Buoyed by her years of being a producer and director in TV and film, Betty has brought an innovative and fresh approach to the Club.

Your continued support honors Matthew's dream and has brought joy and happiness to the general MSHFF community and our family. Together we remain committed to our mission: **to provide high school students with the resources, information, creative inspiration and financial support to learn about the film industry.**

On behalf of Jamie, Gerilyn and myself, I send you our deepest gratitude.

Dale



PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A GIFT TO THE FOUNDATION AS PART OF YOUR PERSONAL YEAR-END GIVING EFFORTS

Each year, we need to raise a minimum of \$25,000 to keep The Foundation strong and viable. All of your donations are applied to the programming that keeps our programs and services free of charge to our students (miscellaneous operating costs are underwritten by the Family).



GET INVOLVED WITH US - BE PART OF MSHFF -

Are you an industry professional who would like to present to our students? Have access to media equipment that can be donated? Looking for a motivated intern to work within your media/film related company?

Send us an e-mail at mshff12@gmail.com

WILL SAVARESE - SENIOR STUDENT FEATURE



I have been a part of The Evening Film Club for three years. I can say, without a doubt, that this class and the Matthew S. Hisiger Film Foundation has changed my life. When I started as a sophomore, my love of making silly videos with my friends was the reason why I joined the class. I didn't know what to expect, but by the end of the first session, I was hooked! I will never forget the thrill of listening to kids my age introduce themselves by sharing what they love about filmmaking. I had never met so many people that were just as passionate about film as I was.

It was also around that time that I realized that not only did I love making films, but I also loved being in them. I loved creating the stories and characters for me to play. I fell in love with acting and through The Evening Film Club I was given so many opportunities to grow and experience my passion; from meeting and speaking with the guest industry professionals that visited the class to taking field trips to places like the set of the TV show "Gotham". One speaker I will never forget is an actress who came in my first and second year. She was the first professional actress I ever had the chance to speak with about acting and she gave me invaluable advice. When I asked her about how to go about getting auditions and roles without an agent she recommended an online service called "Backstage". Little did I know then that "Backstage" would give me the opportunity of being cast as the lead in my first movie!

I also received an acting role through a fellow student in The Evening Film Club. He offered me a role in the short film he was making. This was the first time I was able to participate in a film I hadn't made myself. I will forever be thankful for that opportunity because it affirmed my belief that this was something I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I would never have met him if it weren't for this class.

My sophomore self would not believe the things that present day me has been able to accomplish; I have made films independently, started an acting career and won two awards for acting and filmmaking at the 2017 Future Filmmakers Film Festival for a short film I wrote and acted in. I owe so much to The Evening Film Club and the Matthew S. Hisiger Film Foundation and for that I am eternally grateful.

THE EVENING FILM

THE HEART



INDUSTRY GUEST SPEAKERS



EFC students enjoyed an evening with **Conor Byrne**, a NYC based filmmaker who has attracted attention through his coming of age comedy short **FOUREYES** which won a 2014 Cannes Lion Young Director Award. His advertising work, including campaigns for Chex Cereal, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and Elon Musk's newly-launched Solar City, has gained widespread international praise.

Here's what Conor had to say about working with EFC students:

"It was my pleasure! I had such a fun time and the kids were all so thoughtful, smart and engaged. What a treat. Thanks so much for having me!"



Students were delighted with their evening with **Andrew Wilk**, Emmy award-winning Executive Producer at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, who gave them a perspective on the challenges and excitement of producing live entertainment.



Robert Manning, Jr. also visited the Evening Film Club this season. Robert has 20 years of experience as a writer, director and owner of his own production company, Alpha & Omega Films. Robert gave the students an intensive workshop on acting and directing.

CLUB OF OUR PROGRAMMING

Throughout the years, an exciting part of the evolution of the EFC have been the ongoing participation of the students. Their unwavering dedication to the program is a product of the comfort they feel, the professionalism of our Teaching Artist, the relevancy of our curriculum and their need to have for a constructive outlet for their creativity. It is thrilling to witness their growth and their unwavering dedication to the program.

NOAH HELLUM - A PATH TO FOLLOW

Noah holds the distinction of being the only eighth grader we've allowed into The Evening Film Club. When we met him back in 2014, we recognized something extraordinary about this 13 year old and his journey proved our intuition was on the mark. Noah dived into the program and during his three years with us he became one of our most prolific creators as well as student intern for the class productions. He was one our featured students in the 2016 newsletter. Noah's passion and know-how enabled him to graduate a year early from high school and at age 16 enter University of Southern California's Resident Honors Program. Noah received a scholarship from MSHFF in June 2017. Here's what he wrote to us:

...thank you so much for the Matthew S. Hisiger Film Scholarship. It is incredibly generous and very touching to receive as a culmination of my high school career. MSHFF has been so supportive over the years; whether letting me in a year early for The Evening Film Club, backing films that allowed me to learn the craft of camera assisting or putting me in contact with industry professionals. With your support, I have learned so much about film, leadership and teamwork.



FROM OUR TEACHING ARTIST...



We are so excited to welcome Betty Garcia who has joined us as our new Teaching Artist. She's been a TV and Film creative producer and director since 2004 producing short and long format video content, film and animation for clients including Nickelodeon, The Ford Foundation and Duracell Powermat.

At the same time, Betty has continually followed her passion for writing and directing. Her short film Firecracker, aired on the cable network SiTV for its "Not So Foreign Filmmakers Showcase" series. Her latest film Lola, received a cinematography award from the International Cinematographers Guild, was selected to screen at the New Latin Cinema International Film Festival in Havana and other film festivals, generating considerable interest and acclaim.

Betty is a past honoree of IFP's Project Involve, a fellowship awarded to filmmakers of color, and served as the diversity chair for the New York Chapter of NALIP (National Association of Latino Independent Producers) in 2008 and 2009. She holds a Masters in Film and Media Studies from the New School. She has experience teaching high school students through a Bravo/NBC program: *Bravo on the Set*.

"I am very honored to join the Evening Film Club as their Teaching Artist. Its legacy, of providing a safe and nurturing space for high school students to explore their interest and passion for filmmaking, is truly inspiring. Also, we have an amazing group of students, it is fun and a privilege to teach and learn from them, because of their dedication, passion and great attitude. I look forward to the rest of this year's program, where students will continue to learn about film, get knowledge and inspiration from field visits and industry guest speakers; while also getting hands-on experience through filmmaking exercises, and by collaborating with their peers in the making of a short film."

THE 2017 FUTURE FILMMAKER'S FILM FESTIVAL



Eight creative and ambitious students were awarded top rankings at this year's Future Filmmaker's Film Festival on April 23 at The Picture House. 73 high school students from 13 Westchester Films submitted 39 short films. Students must write, direct, produce and act in their films without any professional support.

The "Chester," Westchester's take on the Oscar, was awarded in eight categories. All filmmakers receive a signed certificate from The Westchester County Executive.

And the Chester goes to...

FIRST PLACE

Leah Roffman, Mamaroneck

Unaware

Visual Poetry

Narrative of how we are often so absorbed in our daily routine that we are unaware of those around us.

SECOND PLACE

Hannah Brown, Dobbs Ferry

Fight

Drama

Exposing the truths behind modern sexism experienced by women each day

THIRD PLACE

Will Savarese, New Rochelle*

My Mistake

Drama

One small mistake changed a boy's life.

*Will was awarded **Best Actor** for this film.

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY

**Emily Pack, Technical
Center of Yorktown**

The Gift

Story of an aspiring young dancer

BEST COMEDY

**Olivia Banc & Henry Ross,
Briarcliff**

Your Call is Important To Us

A satire on customer service phone representatives

BEST DOCUMENTARY

**Savannah Sondheim,
New Rochelle**

Five Questions for

Hamilton, the Musical

An interview with Jason Bassett,
Production Supervisor for the
Tony award winning show

BEST EXPERIMENTAL

**Vedin Kymal,
Scarsdale**

Self Portrait

A day in the life of
a young filmmaker

