

For: Ballston Spa Film Festival
Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association
<http://bspafilm.com>

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SMALL TOWN, BIG HOLLYWOOD APPEAL

The Capital District has long been a landing spot for Hollywood filmmakers (*Salt*, *Seabiscuit*, *Scent of a Woman*, *Taking Woodstock*, *The Other Guys*, *The Horse Whisperer*, *Ironweed*, *The Time Machine* – to name just a few!). And with the added help of the Capital-Saratoga Film Commission, it's even easier for Hollywood to settle in. And why not? With an area rich in varied landscapes and stunning historical settings, not to mention numerous resources and local talent, it's an ideal area for the arts enthusiast.

Ballston Spa may be one of the smaller towns in the area, but the picturesque village is very much on the map when it comes to the film world. The 1973 Oscar winning movie, *The Way We Were*, starring Barbara Streisand and Robert Redford, was partially filmed right in downtown Ballston Spa. Olympic bobsled coach, Pat Brown, a native of Ballston Spa, was portrayed by John Candy in the 1994 movie, *Cool Runnings*, about the historic 1988 Olympic Jamaican bobsled team. And recently, Daniel DeFabio decided to keep up the tradition of film in the area by starting the Ballston Spa Film Festival (BSFF).

What appears as a small town, local event is anything but. In only 3 years, the festival has become a world-wide affair and is already the biggest film festival this side of Lake Placid and the Massachusetts border. With over 30 films in this year's lineup, participants will be treated with talented entries from Spain, Hollywood, Ireland, Turkey, England, Canada, Australia, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, New Guinea, Indonesia, the United States, and from right here in the Capital District. Several films are world premieres and feature big name talent including Serguei Kouchnerov (*Shrek 2*, *The Lion King*, *Madagascar*, *Bee Movie*), Alexa Davalos (*Defiance*, *Clash*

More

of the Titans), and Charlie Hofheimer (*Numb3rs, Medium, House, Cold Case*).

The judges are all Hollywood names, including Daniel Pyne (*Doc Hollywood, Any Given Sunday, Manchurian Candidate*), Daniel Fried (*O, Illusion*), Aaron Lipstadt (*City Limits, Medium, Law & Order*), Julia Gibson (*True Lies, RoboCop3, The Abyss*), Larry Jackson (*Mystic Pizza, Silence of the Lambs*), and Nick Sagan (*Star Trek: The Next Generation, Star Trek: Voyager*).

Last year's winner for Best Animated Short, *French Roast* by Fabrice Joubert, won several international awards before garnering an Oscar nomination for the last year's Academy Awards. Anticipation is high for the entrants in this year's festival. As Vince Gallagher said, the BSFF is "small town, not small time!"

The festival is open to the public, running August 6-7 and offers **free** admission. All of the films will be screened in two locations right in town. Along with various live entertainment (including fire dancers) and food choices (Stewarts Ice Cream Truck will be available for all to enjoy, as well as all the wonderful restaurants in the area), other festival highlights include:

- Hands on Editor's workshop in Final Cut Pro with producers from YNN
- Rockin' after parties at The Brickyard and Brookside Museum with live music from battle of the bands winner Vesper (8/6) and The Broken (8/7)
- Video art interaction in the Electric Heliotrope Theater (<http://www.noirflux.com/>)
- Live broadcast Friday night from Jeff from WEQX's morning show
- Live web simulcast at <http://escapetheseries.com>

The BSFF is put on by the Ballston Spa Business and Professional Association, a non-profit community organization committed to making the Village of Ballston Spa a better place to live and work, and to bringing quality arts and entertainment events for all ages to the community. Funded in part by the Saratoga Program for Arts Funding, Saratoga Gaming & Raceway Foundation, and by area businesses, all proceeds go toward future festivals and other community events presented by the Ballston Spa Business & Professional Association. For more information on the films, talents, events, or sponsorship, go to <http://bspafilm.com>.

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