

6 Reasons You Can't Miss the 2014 Chicago Critics Film Festival

Submitted by [NickHC](#) [1] on May 5, 2014 - 7:13pm

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CHICAGO – The Chicago Critics Film Festival (CCFF) is a match made in Chicago heaven for those who treasure film 365 days a year. The Music Box Theater famously claims to be a year-round festival. By no coincidence, many of these Chicago critic guest hosts are such rampant moviegoers it's like they're trapped in their own perennial festival.

This diehard dedication to film's quality – as shared by this institution and these disciples of Roger Ebert (who are all members of the Chicago Critics Film Association) – has now fused for the second-annual Chicago Critics Film Festival, which kicks off on Friday, May 9, 2014.

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Opening night includes the Chicago premiere of the new film "They Came Together" from David Wain ("Wet Hot American Summer," "Role Models"), which stars Amy Poehler, Paul Rudd, Bill Hader, Cobie Smulders, Christopher Meloni, Max Greenfield, Ellie Kemper, Melanie Lynskey and Ed Helms. On top of that, Wain will be in the house for a Q&A after the film. And that's just the first showing.

This year's CCFF features 22 other Chicago premieres and 14 shorts along with numerous special guests. The names of filmmakers and performers whose work will be featured in the festival include "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind's" Michel Gondry ("Mood Indigo"), Brendan Gleeson's Sundance favorite "Calvary", the star vehicle debut of "Parks & Recreation's" Jenny Slate ("Obvious Child"), Mike Cahill (of "Another Earth") with his new sci-fi film "I Origins", Mike Myers' directorial debut "Supermensch: The Legend of Shep Gordon," Mark Duplass & Elizabeth Moss' "The One I Love," and many, many more. The CCFF runs from May 9-15, with tickets ranging from \$12-15.

[See the full schedule of the 2014 Chicago Critics Film Festival.](#) [19]

Here are just six reasons why you can't miss out on this year's Chicago Critics Film Festival.

1. Filmmakers Will Emerge From Behind the Camera; Answer Your Questions

Remember in 2012 when Paul Thomas Anderson came to the Music Box to present "The Master"? The CCFF is re-creating that volume of magic again. For one, Wain not only directed "Wet Hot American Summer," but he helped create its Criterion-worthy fart-filled DVD commentary track. Also set to appear is Bobcat Goldthwait, who has written & directed profoundly bleak comedies like "World's Greatest Dad" and "God Bless America," and now arrives with his Bigfoot horror flick "Willow Creek". For those who caught last year's indie favorite "Kings of Summer," that film's director Jordan Vogt-Roberts will be at CCFF to present "American Ham," a new taping of Nick Offerman's ("Parks & Recreation") one-man show. And speaking of local pride, director Colin Schiffli will be participating in a Q&A about his movie "Animals," which was shot at the Lincoln Park Zoo, and will close the festival.

Buy tickets for "[They Came Together](#) [20]," "[Willow Creek](#) [21]," "[Nick Offerman: American Ham](#) [22]" and "[Animals](#) [23]".

2. The Best Short Films in Town

The secret of every film festival is its collection of shorts, offering a multitude of robust stories all packaged to the running time of a single film. The CCFF has two shorts programs running this year, featuring award-winning titles that were praised at SXSW and Sundance, including

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"Seawolf" and "Yearbook." Check out this trailer for the CCFF's two shorts programs:

3. It's at the Music Box

Providing a change of pace from the city's differently wonderful multiplexes, the Music Box also offers the important little things that make for a pure film viewing experience, including dedicated projectionists, classic decor, and a true marquee that stands as a beacon of light for all film lovers to follow. Located in a great neighborhood (off the Southport Brown Line CTA stop or a fifteen minute walk from Addison Red Line), the Music Box Theater stands as Chicago's cinema paradiso.

4. Find Out Who Dick Miller Is

As with any week-long rodeo of new movies and characters to be discovered, there are many mysteries that will be solved in the course of CCFF. Aside from, "Which bar will become the unofficial after-party hot spot?" or "Which critic is going to eat the most popcorn?", a more specific question involves one of CCFF's docs, "That Guy Dick Miller." Dost the name the name Dick Miller ring thy bell? Not for me, at least, but ever since hearing about this guy's doc I have abstained from his IMDb page, until this movie tell's me what's a "Dick Miller." On top of resolving this mystery, Miller will also be here in person to prove that he is real, and will be presenting a copy of Roger Corman's "Bucket of Blood, which he apparently was featured in!

[Buy tickets for the CCFF double screening of "That Guy Dick Miller" and "A Bucket of Blood".](#) [24]

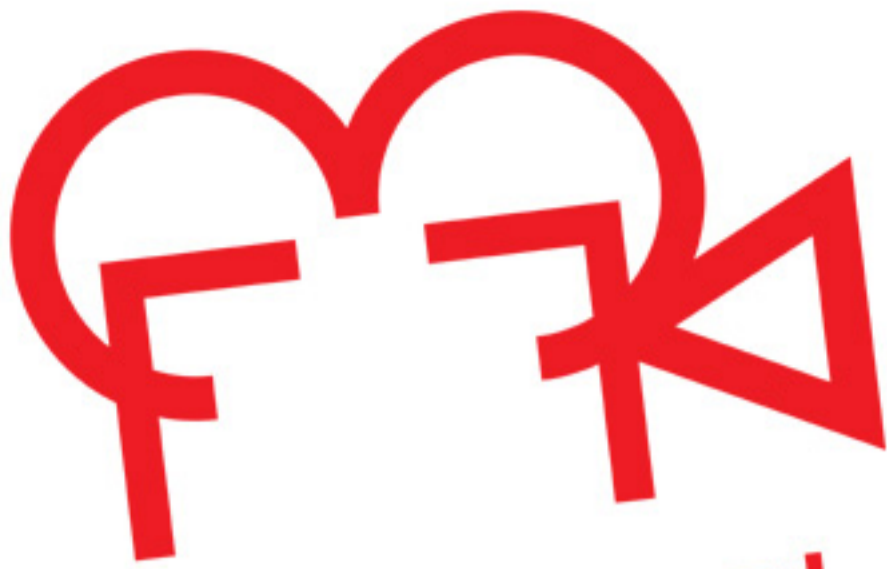
5. Those Good Ol' Nazi Zombies Return to the Music Box

In 2009, the incredibly gory horror film demonstrated to Music Box audiences the rope-like capabilities with human intestines. Now, a sequel for that tale of Nazi zombies returns to the theater, this time with leads Martin Starr & Jocelyn DeBoer scheduled to attend to field any inquiries about this sequel's understanding of bloody biology.

[Buy tickets for the CCFF special screening of "Dead Snow: Red vs. Dead".](#) [25]

6. It's the Only Film Festival Curated by Critics

The world is jam packed with great film writers, but the darkroom men and women of Chicago are the first to organize a film-showing soiree based on their embattled taste. Feeding on the integrity that has defined numerous Chicago critics past and present, these writers are bringing festivals like Sundance and SXSW to Chicago, allocating their favorite films from those gatherings which have yet to be shown in the Windy City. These are people who similarly know firsthand from years of battle the waste of time that makes for a bad movie. Here is a festival that isn't just going to clue in viewers as to what's arriving in the future, but what movies are *great* as well. With this lineup, the selections are thoroughly guaranteed fresh and with personal approval.



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Chicago Critics Film Festival 2014

"Finally, a festival run by the biggest, most passionate and articulate champions of film. I loved every second!"
—James Ponsoldt, director of *The Spectacular Now* and *Smashed*



Featuring more than 20 Chicago premieres of acclaimed films from festivals around the world.

May 9-15

Music Box Theatre
3733 North Southport

www.chicagocriticsfilmfestival.com
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