

Slideshow: Happy 50th Anniversary to the Chicago International Film Festival & Founder Michael Kutza

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on November 4, 2015 - 9:14am

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'I'm still loving this and it's great.'

Happy 50th, Michael Kutza.

CHICAGO – 50 years ago today – Thursday, November 4th, 1965 – a 22-year old filmmaker named Michael Kutza realized his dream of bringing the cinema world to Chicago, with the opening night of the first Chicago International Film Festival. 50 years later, founder Kutza just finished overseeing the 51st festival.

The dream began in 1964 with the backing of former silent-era movie comedienne Colleen Moore Hargrave, who opened the doors of contact for Kutza in the film and Chicago community. Michael Kutza then founded Cinema/Chicago, the organization that presents the Chicago International Film Festival each year, and remains so to this day. The first opening night took place at the old Carnegie Theatre in Chicago, at the corner of Rush and Oak Streets.

On the Red Carpet of the 51st Chicago International Film Festival, HollywoodChicago.com asked Michael Kutza what he thought he had in common now with the 22-year old gentleman that started the fest on November 4th, 1965. "I'm certainly not him," he said, "except maybe mentally. It is the films that keep me going, and the team that I work with that keep it on track. Can you imagine 50 years? I'm still loving this and it's great. It's crazy and exciting."

Click "Next" and "Previous" to scan through the slideshow or jump directly to individual photos with the captioned links below. Photos 2 and 3 courtesy of the Chicago International Film Festival. Photos 1 and 4 © Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com.

- [2. 50CIFF2](#) [18]: Young Michael Kutza at the Carnegie Theatre, where it all began in 1965.
[3. 50CIFF3](#) [15]: The first poster of the Chicago International Film Festival, 1965.
[4. 50CIFF4](#) [19]: 'I'm still loving this and it's great.' Happy 50th, Michael Kutza.

The Chicago International Film Festival is presented by Cinema/Chicago, a year round advocate for local and international film. Check out all the 2015 Festival highlights by [clicking here](#). [20]



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Source URL (retrieved on Apr 23 2024 - 9:12am):

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