



For immediate release

2021 Elgin Short Film Festival

Elgin, IL – The 2021 Elgin Short Film Festival (ESFF) is returning to The Hemmens Cultural Center in Elgin, IL on Saturday, September 18. The ESFF has drawn film entries from around the world making this an impressive event that has entertained film lovers since 2009.

The fabulous and always witty Mike Toomey, a regular performer on the WGN Morning News, will again bring his comedic talents as Master of Ceremonies to present this year's finalists.

Winners will be selected by a panel of celebrity judges, and audience members will cast their votes for their favorite film. The audience vote has had an impact on who has won in previous years. In other words, your vote does count! Awards and monetary prizes will be presented to the top three films.

Festival Highlights:

- *The Top Six Films* (20 minutes or less) will be shown in the intimate 1,200-seat theater of The Hemmens Cultural Center. The evening kicks off at 6pm with the filmmakers and judges walking the red carpet and giving interviews before entering The Hemmens. The film screening starts at 7:00pm
- *Chamber Music on the Fox* returns to the ESFF to present a live chamber performance that will accompany the screening of the 1910 film "Wilful Peggy."
- *Next In Finalists* – ESFF is excited to be part of the Elgin Fringe Festival again this year as audiences select the Next-In Finalists. Each film category (Live Action and Animation) will have five potential finalists. The top two, as voted on by the selection committee, will make the finals. The next three films in each category will compete to make the finals on *September 9th and 10th* as part of the **Elgin Fringe Festival**. (elginfringefestival.com) The film in each category receiving the most Fringe Festival audience votes will be included for ESFF presentation. In past Festivals, films voted on by the Fringe Festival audience have gone on to win prizes.
- A special People's Choice award will be presented based solely on in-person audience votes.

The Red Carpet Reception starts at 6:00pm; Film Screening starts at 7:00pm.

Tickets to the Elgin Short Film Festival (including the Chamber performance and Red Carpet Reception) are \$10 reserved seating and may be purchased at The Hemmens Box Office, online at www.hemmens.org or by phone at 847-931-5900. Attendees may watch the Festival from home this year! Virtual Experience tickets will be available online at www.hemmens.org.

Please follow regular updates on Facebook at facebook.com/elginshortfilm or go to our website at www.hemmens.org/annualfilmfestival.

The Hemmens Cultural Center, located at the corner of Symphony Way and North Grove Avenue in Elgin, IL, is easily accessible from I-90. Parking is free.

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