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HOT

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BIFF kicks off Friday

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer
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Beloit International Film Festival Executive Director Greg Gerard chats about a program booklet with Nancy Clark-Mather on Wednesday. The festival kicks off on Friday.

Hillary Gavan/Beloit Daily News

BELOIT — With temperatures predicted to be in the 20s and above over the weekend, Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) Executive Director Greg Gerard hopes movie fans will dress warmly and pull in for a drive-in movie or watch an online film after picking up food from downtown businesses.

The 16th Annual Beloit International Film Festival (BIFF) kicks off Friday and runs through Feb. 28.

“Confidence is high we will have a good weekend. People are going to be anxious and intrigued in the festival and wanting to see what it’s all about. Our job is to keep it interesting and smooth in the first weekend so they will want to continue the festival for 10 days,” Gerard said.



Most of the 100 or so films featured this year will be shown online while six films will be shown in a drive-in fashion in a parking lot off Third Street in the Ironworks campus. All of the drive-in movies will be free, and they all will start at 6:30 p.m. The first BIFF drive-in movie will be shown Friday and it is the stop-action animated film *Isle of Dogs*.

“It will be plenty warm inside your car, and BIFF will be providing a port-a-potty,” Gerard added.

Dates and times for all events have been updated on the BIFF website beloitfilmfest.org so people can make their plans. There are lots of films as well as Q and A sessions with filmmakers and workshops.

Program books are distributed to usual spots throughout the region, including at the Beloit and Janesville public libraries, a variety of downtown businesses and at BIFF at IronTek, 635 Third St.

One of Gerard’s personal favorite films available this year is “*Materna*,” a character study of four women experiencing trauma and uncertainty which culminates in a unique and powerful way.

“If you like a good drama with a lot of talented actors and superb film making, I recommend it,” he said.

Gerard also recommended the film “*Kiss the Ground*” about soil management, ecology and the environment as well as “*More than Miyagi*” about the life of Pat Morita, who played Mr. Miyagi in “*Karate Kid*.”

Noting there is a great array of short films, Gerard encouraged people to see “Rent Do” a comical short film about three roommates who run into some problems.

“We have our first ever short slot of music videos. It’s a real mixed bag of music videos, something that will please any taste,” Gerard added.

The first drive-in movie will be a stop-motion animation film titled “Isle of Dogs,” which will be shown Feb. 19. On Feb. 20, the BIFF Sing-A-Long film, “Wizard of Oz;” Feb. 21, “Benny and Joon;” on Feb. 26, the Silent Film Showcase movie, Charlie Chaplin’s classic “Modern Times;” Feb. 27, “Sixteen Candles;” and Feb. 28, family film “Kubo and the Two Strings.”

“We are hoping people will stop at downtown locations, pick up food and snacks and bring into the drive-in sites. Some businesses will have specials and it’s worth a look,” Gerard said. “Snappy will be popping up during the drive in’s.”

The films can be viewed on demand, so people can view their selected films at noon or 3 a.m. or whenever their schedule allows. All online film tickets will cost \$10.

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