

Spend all day watching short films at festival

PROVIDENCE — The art of succinct visual storytelling will be on screen at the Cable Car Cinema Saturday, Nov. 24, when the Short Short Story Film Festival makes its third visit to Providence with two separate film programs.

Toni Pennacchia, creative director of MergingArts Productions, which programs the festival, says the concept is to “see how short a film can be and still successfully tell a story. In spite of their brevity, our films have narratives as meaningful as those in shorts running into the 20-minute range. The films often contain classic story elements like buildup of conflict and resolution, but the length may leave certain details more implied than explicit. Their success as films is driven more by their depth than their

length. Sometimes less really is more.”

With three dozen films in two programs, the festival mixes live action and animated films from 20 countries on six continents (Antarctica has no movie theaters). In its two previous visits to the Cable Car, there have been sellouts.

The Heartstrings program presents films of a more emotional nature, from inspiring documentaries to bittersweet romances to unexpected tragedies.

The Headtrip program features visits to strange worlds, offbeat satires and unhinged animations.

Pennacchia said, “Each program is about the length of a typical feature film. It’s a challenge to present 18 films with a wide variety of themes

while maintaining the appropriate overall mood.”

Some films that Pennacchia considers standouts from the Heartstrings program include: “Taboulé,” a sentimental yet humorous look at two Spanish men debating which secrets to keep and which to share, and “Olgastrasse 18,” from Germany, portraying a lifetime’s worth of moments using household objects and stop-motion animation. Australia’s “The Applicant,” in which a job interviewee provides a series of increasingly bizarre answers to mundane questions, and “Rewind,” a Belgian tale of an inventor’s attempt to travel through time to correct mistakes of his recent past, screen during the Headtrip program.

The Headtrip program

screens at noon, 4 and 8 p.m. The Heartstrings program screens at 2 and 6 p.m. Pennacchia and festival co-organizer Paul Elsnau will be on hand to discuss the films.

Audiences at each screening are given ballots to select their favorite three films, which are then combined with votes from other festival screenings to determine overall winners. The festival also awards

prizes from a jury panel of alumni of “Spoiler Alert Radio,” MergingArts’ nationally syndicated filmmaker interview show. MergingArts Productions is dedicated to cultural programming encompassing film, music, visual arts, technology and media.

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“Taboulé,” one of the films to be screened as part of the Heartstrings program, is a sentimental look at two Spanish men debating which secrets to keep and which to share.