



Marc Meyers talks about *Harvest*, which has an added screening at The Cleveland Intl. Film Festival

By Film Festivals Examiner, Eric Shlapack
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Jack Carpenter as Josh Winters and Robert Loggia as Siv Monopoli together at a parade in *Harvest*: Photo Courtesy Marc Meyers

Scheduling films to see at a film festival inevitably creates a situation where you cannot see everything you hope to. But sometimes, a film does really well and

additional screenings are added, allowing those who may have missed it the first time and really were hoping to catch it do just that. At [The 34th Cleveland International Film Festival](#), attendees will be able to catch *Harvest* again on Friday March 26th at 11:35 AM, and at this point tickets are still available, but keep in mind that the film could very well go on stand by, so getting your tickets as soon as possible is certainly advisable. In preparation for this added screening, I was able to secure some time to talk with the writer and director of *Harvest*, Marc Meyers. This morning, we spoke together in an intelligent and informative phone interview. Here is a recap of the bulk of what was discussed. Also, instead of rewriting a full synopsis of the film, check the links at the bottom of the article to both the *Harvest* website and the CIFF's website for this information.

One of the first things we discussed was the genesis of the project and why he felt compelled to tell this story. He said that the film's emotions were somewhat autobiographical, but the events were dramatized. In this case, Meyers tells the story through the eyes of a college student, putting the character in the midst of his coming of age while trying to deal with the loss of his grandfather. In Meyers' life, his grandfather had become ill, eventually

passing away, but until that time, Meyers would head out of New York to visit him as much as he could, keeping journals about the experience, his emotions, his observations, eventually using this as the seed for *Harvest* and its story.



Jack Carpenter as Josh Winters and Barbara Barrie as Yetta Monopoli in *Harvest*: Photo Courtesy Marc Meyers

Trying to get a sense of Meyers' background and how he got here, it was really great to see someone very organically get to this point of making feature films. He said that he didn't really enter or exit college thinking he wanted to be a filmmaker, as he got his degree in English and he began working in advertising, writing ads and the like. At some point, he felt that this type of work was not providing the breadth of expression he was looking for. He moved into writing plays, and

while working as a playwright, he decided that this was a great opportunity to take the plays that were being done of his work and make short films of some of the one act pieces, often using the same actors from the production, making things go a little more smoothly. Also at this time, he began to work with the Independent Feature Project, a program that tries to help independent filmmakers get their vision on screen, selling sponsorships and advertising and meeting a lot of people in the film industry. He later would work for *Variety* in a similar capacity, building his tree of connections to a point that usually leads to a film project just like Meyers did.

He first did a documentary feature called *Witnessing*, which he co-directed with several other filmmakers including the film's producer and editor Aileen Ghee. The film documented the events at a gathering place in the shadow of the former home of the World Trade Center towers where eyewitness photos were put together in a gallery that served as a place of reflection and a place to rediscover one's own humanity in the face of the tragic events of that fateful day. His next project was *Approaching Union Square*, which after a successful festival run, has since found a home on the Sundance channel where you can catch the film every so often for another year or so according to Meyers.

Links at the end of the article can provide you with more information on these projects.



Robert Loggia as Siv Monopoli riding his bike in Harvest: Photo Courtesy Marc Meyers

This brings us to **Harvest** which screened twice last week at the CIFF and Meyers' was there to do Q & A's after the film, which those in attendance should be very proud to have been a part of. He talked about how happy he was to do this part of the filmmaking process and that it was especially rewarding because he felt that those at the screenings showed a passion for film, a knowledge of cinema, and truly took from the film all that he had hoped for, giving him as much as he gave them. As a filmmaker as well, I can attest to this idea because until you put the film out there and audiences engage with the film, it can be difficult to have a true sense of how the film has turned out. He was so excited to see

everyone stick around after the film despite the fact that it was not introduced beforehand that this would be going on after. He was also pleased to see people enjoying all the layers of the film, especially some of the humor and lighter moments that were not jokes or slapstick-like, but instead much more subtle, trying to reveal the humanity of the characters and not take away from the drama of the film. This humor just added another element and layer to it like all great independent films do. He noted, correctly, that this can be risky, keeping things on a more realistic, human level, and that he feels very happy that the attendants of the screenings truly appreciated what he was trying to achieve. As a native of Northeastern Ohio, it really felt good to hear such complementary things about the film loving community here in Cleveland.

Don't miss out on being part of the experience that will happen tomorrow, Friday March 26th at 11:35 AM, with an added special preview screening of **Harvest**. Unfortunately, Meyers is not in attendance any longer, but by reading this, hopefully you can get a sense of the kind of filmmaker and quality person he is. It is always great to be able to share these things with you and kind of let you behind the curtain so to speak so that you may connect with a film and its creators on a deeper level. Check the CIFF



website linked below and the screening page on there for **Harvest** for more information on tickets and if the film goes on stand by. If you are interested in following along with the coverage of the CIFF or film festivals in the future, you can receive these articles directly as they are published by clicking on the “Subscribe” button at the top of this piece. You can also follow me on Twitter by searching for ericshlapack or by clicking the link below.

For more info:

[The 34th Cleveland International Film Festival](#)

[Screening information page for Harvest on the CIFF website](#)

[Harvest's website Raising Harvest Witnessing information](#)

[Approaching Union Square website](#)

[IbidFilmworks website \(Marc Meyers and Harvest Producer Jody Girgenti's production company\)](#)

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