

Coming of age; coming to terms



Written by Rick Hellman, Editor

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Marc Meyers

Three generations of an American family with Italian-Jewish heritage come together for one last summer with their beloved patriarch in the new feature film “Harvest,” which screens here next Sunday as part of the Kansas International Film Festival.

Writer/Director/Co-Producer Marc Meyers will be here for a Q&A session after the film screens.

Meyers says that while “Harvest” is not a direct allegory, there is a bit of his own life story on screen.

“Yeah, I’m a pizza bagel,” he said, referring to the Italian-Jewish heritage of his own family and that of his wife and co-producer of the film, Jody Girgenti.

That said, “Harvest” explores universal themes of coming of age and coming to terms with the impending death of a loved one.

Working on just his second narrative feature film, and an independent one at that, Meyers said, he was “still thrilled” to have attracted a cast headed by Academy Award and Emmy nominees Robert Loggia and Barbara Barrie.

“The main two characters are played by Robert Loggia and Barbara Barrie,” Meyers said. “Loggia is Italian, clearly, and Barrie is Jewish. That combination is in there, inherently, in the script, so I’m glad we actually found the right actors who could fit it in with their schedules and who were interested in the script. We didn’t have to compromise on our original intentions for their characters because they were a perfect fit.”

Meyers, who got into filmmaking after writing several plays, said he thinks anyone with a good enough script can hope to attract top actors today.

“A lot of first-time directors, if they are well organized and go through the right channels, can share their script with almost anyone,” Meyers said, “and if the script appeals to the actor, they almost have to do that role because there is something in it that appeals to them, that they have to explore.”

Mature issues

Meyers, who said he is now “over 35,” wrote the material that became the source for “Harvest” while in his 20s. He kept a diary of his visits to his own aging grandfather.

In the filmic version, Loggia plays a World War II veteran who, Meyers said, “has raised a family; his three children have done well for themselves and are now in their mid-50s, and it’s how they are dealing with the fear of loss on the horizon ... and dealing with the fact that their mom has Alzheimer’s disease and is around the house, so they have to deal with both parents.”

The grandson character is at first reluctant to spend his summer in such company, but ultimately realizes its



Actors Jack Carpenter and Barbara Barrie in a scene from the film ‘Harvest.’

value and his role in the family.

“It addresses mature issues, and that is a nice thing for your mature, art-house-going, independent-film-going person to look into,” Meyers said.

“Harvest” has been making the film-festival circuit this year, and Meyers hopes for a regular theatrical run to follow.

While on the road, Meyers said, one of the best compliments he got came from “a viewer who recently told me he felt like he just spent an hour and half with his own family.”

And while he wants always to emphasize character development, Meyers said his planned next film would be nothing like “Harvest.”

Titled “How He Fell in Love,” it is “not a family-relationship drama; it’s more of a romantic, sexy New York tale,” he said.

‘Harvest’ in KIFF Oct. 3

“Harvest” will be shown at the upcoming 10th annual Kansas International Film Festival. It screens at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 3, at the Glenwood Arts theater, 9575 Metcalf Ave. Writer/Director Marc Meyers will be in attendance for a Q&A following the screening. For tickets, or more information about the festival, visit kansasfilm.com. For more about the film and Marc Meyers, visit raisingharvest.com.

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