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# A Film Fest, and Beyond

By ANITA GATES

There are movies about music in the [Connecticut Film Festival](#) in Danbury this year, like “[The Wrecking Crew](#),” focusing on studio musicians who backed up famous performers including [Frank Sinatra](#) and the [Beach Boys](#). And there are movies about illness, from the deadly serious “[Still Here](#),” about a man living with H.I.V. for 30 years, to the quirky “[Collecting Things](#),” the story of a woman with a borderline hoarding disorder. But as far as I can tell, only one film on the festival schedule (May 4 to May 9) deals with the biggest issue of the decade: the economy. That is Matt Judge’s “[I Work in Public](#),” about a laid-off administrative assistant who takes an unusual approach to entrepreneurship.

Behind the scenes, though, the economy has been a major factor in the planning and the execution of the festival, right down to the ticket prices.

“We charge \$7 for a matinee, \$8 for the evening,” said Tom Carruthers, the festival’s founder and executive director. “We were going to try and raise them, but the economy was tanking. We really have to do everybody a favor and keep prices down.”

Danbury officials did not commit to hosting the festival as early as it had in previous years, possibly because of economic issues. So Mr. Carruthers and his team had only 90 days to put the six-day event together.

Other festival films include [Marc Meyers’s drama “Harvest,” starring Robert Loggia](#); [Martin West’s “Years in the Making,” a documentary about working artists 70 and older](#); the festival’s 2009 Audience Favorite Award winner, “[The Baker](#),” with [Damian Lewis](#) and [Michael Gambon](#); and [Barry Levinson’s “PoliWood,” a documentary about the 2008 Democratic and Republican national conventions.](#)

Since last year, the film offerings have been joined by music and digital media events, Mr. Carruthers said, partly because of tax credits. Scheduled musical performers include [Laura Ganci](#), [Seth Lefferts](#), [Mike James](#), [Milton](#), [St. Bernadette](#), [the Selkies](#), [Awkward Ending](#), and [Joe Roberto](#) and [Poverty Hash](#). But it is the focus of the festival’s educational offerings that seems to best capture the moment.

A number of workshops are geared to artists on a budget, like “Making 3-D Movies Using Free Software” and “Video Production Using Free Software Tools.” And there is a wide range of new-media events for career changers, including “WebTV and Digital Films: Turning Video Into Gold,” “Narrative Web Production,” “Flash and Beyond: Interactive Media Tools,” “Intro to Media Sharing” and, for people who do not know a tweet from a domain name, “Introduction to the Web: Why Does It Matter?” **ANITA GATES**

*The Connecticut Film Festival, May 4 to May 9. City Center Box Office, 186 Main Street, Danbury.  
Information: [ctfilmfest.com](http://ctfilmfest.com).*