

# AN EARLY *Harvest*

By Meredith Crawford  
Living Editor

Area residents have long recognized Madison's abundant charms, but soon the whole world will share a piece of its bounty as *Harvest*, the up-and-coming independent film shot in the idyllic town two years ago, comes to the big screen. You won't want to miss your chance to catch it first; Madison Art Cinemas is offering a special advance engagement featuring screenings and discussions with *Harvest* writer/director/producer Marc Meyers on Aug. 20, 21, and 22 (see details below).

"In *Harvest*, three generations of a family come together one summer around the eventual passing of the patriarch of the family, a World War II veteran," Meyers and co-producer Jody Girgenti explain. "Gathered at the family home and in and around their beautiful shoreline town, years of resentment and betrayal within the family surface and the grandson, a college student, does his part to hold them all together, growing up in the process."

The film's ensemble cast includes Academy Award-nominee Robert Loggia (you might remember him as Feech La Manna from *The Sopranos* or from any of his countless other roles), Jack Carpenter, Arye Gross, Tony Winner Victoria Clark, and Academy Award-nominee Barbara Barrie (*Breaking Away*). *Harvest* also features Peter Friedman, Adriana Sevan, Kel O'Neill, Christine Evangelista, and Daniel Eric Gold.

For Meyers, filming the multi-generational, coming-of-age drama in Madison was a homecoming of sorts.

"Generations of my family are from Madison," he says. "I spent many summers there because my grandparents are from the area...and my great-grandfather actually immigrated to Madison" when he came to the U.S.

Though both Meyers and the many projects he works on with Girgenti are based in New York City, he says it felt natural to embrace the idea of coming to Madison to film *Harvest*.

"The original story is set in Madison, as are the characters it in...It's loosely based on things I know and family circumstances. It made the most sense to [film] in the town that inspired the script. Aesthetically, it's beautiful. You have the



Robert Loggia, as Siv, rides his bike down Madison's Island Avenue in *Harvest*.

shoreline, the water, the beautiful homes, and the main street. It felt pretty dramatic to me...It felt really comfortable," says Meyers.

Girgenti concurs.

"There's an intimacy to the town that made sense for the intimacy of the story...It's this lovely town and people know each other," she says.

One example of that feeling of community captured in *Harvest*? The annual Fourth of July parade. Area residents are sure to delight, too, in the many other landmarks featured: main street, the Madison Wine Shop, the Town Campus, the Madison Coffee Shop, Island Avenue, the War Memorial on the Town Green, both the Madison and Guilford train stations, and many private residences.

"Madison businesses and residents and the different organizations were really helpful to us," says Girgenti. "We're so thankful for the hospitality of the community [we received] while filming."

Girgenti and Meyers hope to pay back some of that hospitality by bringing *Harvest* to the Madison Art Cinemas (MAC) this weekend.

"The town was so gracious to us we knew we wanted to share [the film] with people here," says Girgenti of the film that has already made quite an impression at several film festivals, but which will see its first theater release at MAC.

Meyers says he takes pride in the way he portrayed Madison in *Harvest* and is eager to share it with locals, as well as the world.

Jack T. Carpenter as Josh and Christine Evangelista as Tina in *Harvest*. Still images property of Ibid Filmworks

"We hope the people who live in Madison will see the town portrayed beautifully," he says. "Even more so for people in this area...this film has an emotional effect on people without taking them to a distant land or a niche community. That might hopefully be refreshing for people who like independent films," which are now so often set in far-off locations.

It's a commitment to realism that's paying off. "What we're hearing from audiences thus far," adds Girgenti, "is how authentic the emotion of the story is and how much people respond to the film and have a real, pure experience with it."

Madison Art Cinemas (MAC) at 761 Boston Post Road presents a special advance engagement of *Harvest* on Aug. 20 through 22. Screenings will be held at 4:15 p.m. each day, followed by question-and-answer sessions with the filmmakers. AARP discounts are offered. For more information and to purchase tickets, call the MAC box office at 203-245-3456 or visit [www.madisonartcinemas.com/harvest.html](http://www.madisonartcinemas.com/harvest.html). For more information about *Harvest*, visit [www.raisingharvest.com](http://www.raisingharvest.com).