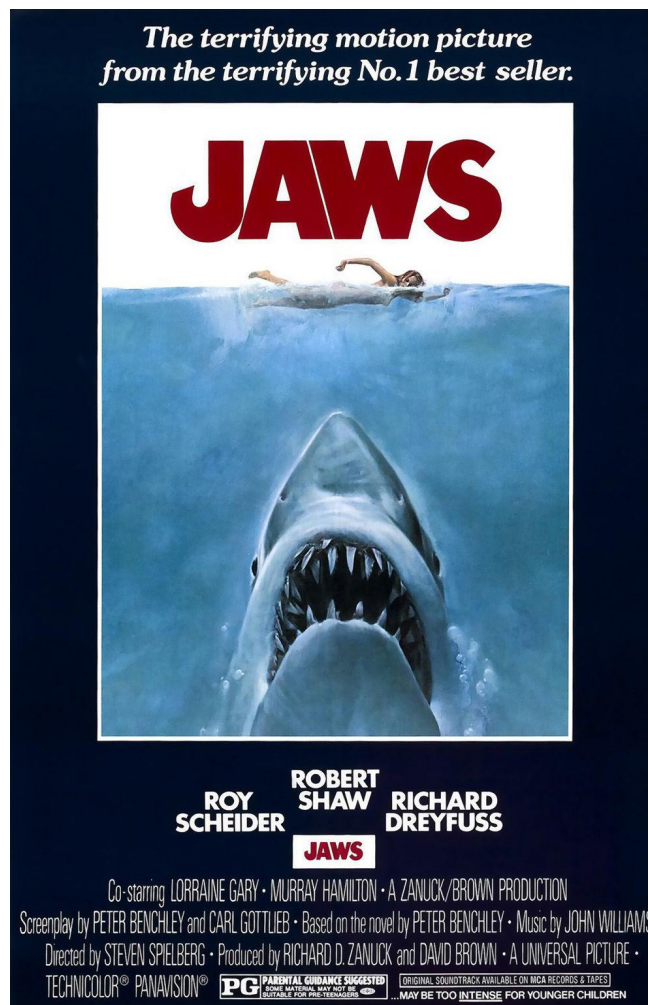


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'Jaws' just one of the cinematic sizzlers on screens this summer in local theaters

BY SUE STRACHAN | Staff writer JUN 25, 2019 - 7:00 AM



"Jaws" debuted June 1, 1975, becoming a summer blockbuster that continues to scare viewers.
Photo from IMDB

With popcorn and soda in hand, moviegoers have been swarming to see summer blockbusters such as “Avengers: Endgame,”

“John Wick: Chapter 3 – Parabellum” and “Aladdin.” But to be honest, nothing beats a nostalgic, big-screen classic summer movie. With that in mind, local theaters and film organizations are featuring crowd-pleasing movies that will evoke fright, tears, laughs, cross-dressing, and quite possibly a reconsideration about going into the ocean again. Just as summer movies are supposed to do.

Prytania Classics

For several years, the Prytania Theatre has been showing classic movies chosen by the late proprietor, Rene Brunet Jr. After he passed away in 2017, Brunet's son, Robert Brunet, had kept the series going year-round. This summer, Rene Brunet's Classic Movies Series, named in his honor, will feature the summer blockbuster of all summer blockbusters: “Jaws.” Originally opening June 1, 1975, this movie forever changed people's relationship with swimming in the ocean – as this tale unfolded about a killer shark just looking for food but making bad choices – humans – during the summer holidays. It will be shown June 30 and July 3.

“Jaws” also jump-started the career of its director, Steven Spielberg, who went on to direct, “E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial,” a tale of a lost and cute alien and the children he (or she) became friends with. (The movie also introduced actress Drew Barrymore and Reese’s Pieces to pop culture.) E.T. will be at the Prytania, July 5 and 6, as part of its Summer Kids’ Movie Series. Also part of the kids’ series are “Labyrinth,” starring David Bowie (June 28 and 29), “The Lion King” (July 19 and 20), “The Goonies” (July 26 and 27), “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” (Aug. 2 and 3) – thankfully not the Johnny Depp version – and “Space Jam” (Aug. 9 and 10).

The “Wizard of Oz” does double duty in Prytania's classic and kid’s series (July 12, 13, 14, 17), and other classic movies this season include the original “Oceans 11” with the famed “Rat Pack” members Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr., Peter Lawford, and Joey Bishop (July 7 and 10), and the out-of-season, but who doesn’t need a bit of Christmas in July, “It’s a Wonderful Life” starring Jimmy Stewart (July 21 and 24).

And, if by chance you are by the Prytania at midnight on Fridays and Saturday nights, you might see several people dressed as a “sweet transvestite from Transsexual, Transylvania.” And for good reason: the “Rocky Horror Picture Show,” a cult classic that tells the tale of two lost lovers, Brad and Janet, and how they met Dr. Frank N. Furter, Riff Raff, Magenta, Columbia, and of course, Rocky. Since the movie came out in 1975, audiences throughout the U.S. have been going to midnight shows dressing up as characters, thereby creating their own theatrical experience that’s now an integral part of watching it. No doubt, there will be few grandmothers in the audience teaching their grandchildren how to do the Time Warp.

New Orleans Film Society Summer Film Series

New Orleans swamps, music, and food -- and the less traditional zip-line across Bourbon Street -- are celebrated in the movies in the New Orleans Film Society Summer Film Series at the Orpheum Theater. This free series includes: “Chasing Dreams: A Leah Chase Story” and “Ella Brennan: Commanding the Table” (June 27); “Bayou Maharajah,” about James Booker, “the Piano Prince of New Orleans,” (July

10); “Girls Trip” (July 25) – by the way, the zip-line across Bourbon Street was just for the movie; and “Down by Law” (Aug. 8).

"This series celebrates New Orleans as a cinematic muse," said Clint Bowie, New Orleans Film Society artistic director.

LGBT Film Fest

The first annual Louisiana LGBT Film Festival, June 28, will feature films, short films, documentaries and music videos from around the world that were created with the LGBTQIA community and allies as a focus. Hosted by Amanda Golog of "Welcome to Queer Mountain," the festival will also showcase intermission entertainment from Flashmob New Orleans, the troupe best known for its Michael Jackson Thriller flashmob at New Orleans City Hall.

Zeitgeist

Zeitgeist Theatre always has a creative cinematic line up for adults and children. Opening June 28, “Echo in the Canyon” is a documentary about the music scene that flourished 1965 to 1967 in Laurel Canyon, Los Angeles, bringing together musicians who

helped define what is called the "California sound." Featured performers include Michelle Phillips (Mommas & the Papas), Brian Wilson (The Beach Boys), David Crosby (The Byrds), Graham Nash (The Hollies), Stephen Stills and Neil Young (Buffalo Springfield) – the last four musicians to later form Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young.

Court 13

Court 13 Arts, a local film and multi-disciplinary arts organization known for the movie “Beasts of the Southern Wild,” kicks off the season in July with its People Present film series at the Broad Theater. The line-up has not yet been announced, but selections will be curated by “We Cast a Shadow” author Maurice Carlos Ruffin, Rev. Shawn Anglim of First Grace United Methodist Church; Jose Cotto, Tulane School of Architecture Small Center; and attorney Sophie Woodruff and graphic designer Bryce Larkins.

“By shifting the concept of curator or film selector to an egalitarian, democratic focus, we aim to create a film-going experience that is accessible and celebratory,” said Court 13 Arts Executive Director Casey Coleman.

No matter what's your preferred film genre, it's time to butter that popcorn, sit back and have a cinematic summer!

Reel Love

Movies listed shown are complete as of press time; changes may occur. Please contact theater to reconfirm time and admission, if not listed.

Louisiana LGBT Film Festival, June 28, 2727 S. Broad Ave., 7 p.m. louisianalgbtfilmfestival.com

Prytania Theatre, 5339 Prytania St., theprytania.com

Orpheum Theater (NOFS Summer Film Series), 129 Roosevelt Way., 6:30 p.m., neworleansfilmsociety.org

Zeitgeist Theatre & Lounge, 6621 St. Claude Ave., Arabi, zeitgeistnola.org

Be on the lookout for:

Court 13 Arts, “The People Present Series,”
scheduled for the Broad Theater (636 N. Broad
St.), court13arts.org

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