Independent Cinemas Re-Open For Business During Lockdown

Monday 16 November, 2020

Cinemas temporarily closed by the government lockdown are re-opening to the public with the launch of a new “virtual cinema” called YourScreen https://watch.yourscreen.net/.

YourScreen is a partnership of local, independent exhibitors and was created to stream new films and films unavailable on other digital platforms into the homes of audiences around the country. These are films that might normally play in their local cinema.

Local cinemas promote YourScreen films on their web site and social media, directing audiences to YourScreen where they are able to purchase “virtual” tickets to watch award-winning international films. Revenue is shared between YourScreen and each local film exhibitor.

Films on YourScreen are available for up to 28 days which distinguishes it from a streaming platform like Netflix where films reside for many months and longer. Every two months, YourScreen uploads a new programme of films on to its platform. The first season which concludes on 20th December has a programme of eight films; from Canadian coming of age drama, Kuessipan, through to docu-comedy/drama, Lessons of Love, the tale of a Polish woman going her own way after 45 years of marriage to an abusive husband and the popular German film, System Crasher.

The genesis of YourScreen can be traced to Cheltenham International Film Festival (CIFF) which streamed its festival online in 2020 and inspired positive feedback from audiences who were locked down and often did not have the opportunity to visit independent cinemas or watch the latest films from around the world.

Commenting on YourScreen, one of the partnership’s founders, Leslie Montgomery Sheldon, also CIFF Director, said: “These are difficult times with cinemas in lockdown. But, film exhibitors must maintain their business. In the event they have decided to partner with YourScreen to stream new films, uninterrupted by lockdown, to their audiences.

But while YourScreen is a short-term solution it is also a long-term opportunity for exhibitors to grow their business. “YourScreen is in business for the long-term to turn independent cinemas into multi-screen cinemas”, said Sheldon, “allowing exhibitors to complement their in-venue screenings with an online programme; to attract new and different audiences, boost ticket sales and generate an extra revenue stream without the overheads”.

Note: The full programme for the first two-month season (26 October – 20 December)

• **The Best of Dorien B**.: Belgian comedy-drama.

• **Lillian**: Austrian, true-life drama of a young Russian woman who walks across American to find her way home to Russia.

• **System Crasher**: By popular demand, the third film to open our season is this acclaimed German film.

• **Beyond The Horizon**: French coming-of-age film with Clémence Poésy.

• **Kuessipan**: Award-winning Canadian film.

• **Lessons of Love**: Polish docu-comedy/drama which features a woman of 69 who is not too old to begin life again.

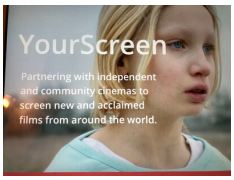
• **Northern Wind**: French film, explores the impact on two families in different countries linked by the same circumstances.

Further information:

leslie.sheldon@yourscreen.net

Patrick.yourscreen@gmail.com

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YourScreen Programme Website: https://watch.yourscreen.net/

Note: We wish to offer your readers a 25% discount off of the published price, to watch films. If you wish to present this offer please let us know and we will send you a code which is unique to you and the films.

Company Contact:

YourScreen.Ltd

T. 07772205515
E. Leslie.sheldon@yourscreen.net
W. https://watch.yourscreen.net/

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