

# THE CINEMA FILES



## Top 5 Arizona short films from Phoenix Comicon 2015

Before we dive into the films, let me clear up a little misunderstanding regarding last years must-see movies. Some of the films I suggested were really rough, and in pretty bad shape. Some moviegoers felt as though they had been deliberately led astray like hapless tourists on a Florida vacation, duped into a bargain basement excursion and forced to look at condos in the Everglades. I admit that a couple of these films needed a lot of work, but my intention was not to steer ticket holders in the direction of viewing some 'unique fixer-uppers.' I looked at these films more as my lovable little mutts. I believe every indie film can find a good home, especially after a flea bath and worming. I'm sure the film programmers at Comicon feel the same way, otherwise some of these films might not get an opportunity to be screened for such a large audience. Going over the list of short films screening at Phoenix Comicon this year, there are a few that continue to screen at almost every festival they enter, and others that may be getting their only shot at the movie screen for quite some time.

### Flight Fright – Jim Politano

After this 2014 IFP Breakout Challenge film premiered at the Phoenix Art Museum, there was deep concern that the film wouldn't get the accolades and recognition it deserved because the projection didn't look quite right and the sound was kind-of wonky. Filmmakers, rest assured; I've been attending the IFP screenings at the Phoenix Art Museum for about five years now. The projection has always been whack and the sound is consistently wonky. No worries. A terrified passenger on a jet plane is sure there is a cigar chomping suburbanite (not a monster) on the wing of the plane doing some very weird and often mundane things at 30 thousand feet. Clever and funny spoof film with great performances and some special guest appearances. This short flick is already picking up a lot of steam and making a splash on the film festival circuit, so grab your boarding pass, opt for the isle seat and catch Flight Fright now before it really takes off.

### Focus – Matt Chesin

Even film critics miss the boat every once in a while. Look how many times Ebert got it wrong in his career (Blue Velvet, Taxi Driver, etc). 'Focus' had a lot of pre-production hype that I followed intently, but the premiere of 'Focus' at the ASU Spring 2014 Capstone screenings left me mostly underwhelmed and disappointed. Now that this film has been accepted into just about every film festival it enters, I've had the opportunity to view it several more times, with several different demographics, and with an updated

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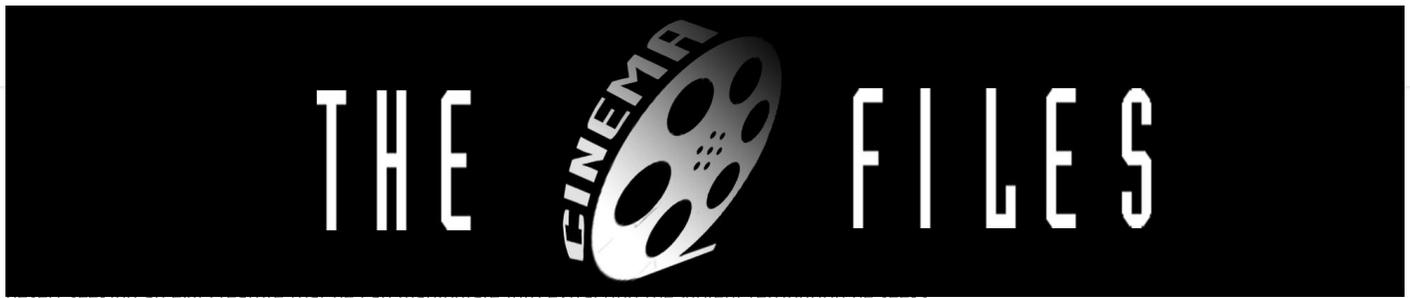
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desert seeking an evil creature that he can manipulate into extracting the violent retribution he seeks.

Negotiations are tense and trippy, with both parties squabbling to see who really has the power to make the most hellish deal of them all. This film is wicked good and relentlessly intense; scarred and scary, suffocating and liberating. A fast paced, dark and freakishly fun flick that will make you jump out of your seat.

**Deflated – Susan K. Brigham**

Deflated has had a very limited number of local showings since it first screened at Filmbar in June of 2014. And the very unapologetic, adult content of the film probably explains why, so I'll try to make this synopsis as vague and nondescript as I can to avoid possibly offending anyone. A couple in their 50's get it on AZ indie style (clothes on) when hubby experiences a sudden external (or internal too, I guess) malfunction. Wifey pleads with him too seek help for his canned salmon (you know, boneless) as he runs to the restroom. She then overhears her daughter bragging to a friend about performing a flawless halfnob on the Johnson, knowing she isn't even on the swim team! Mom has a Messengil moment with the teen, pleading with her hurry up and get like a Rose Bowl float after the parade. She leaves her a stack of sure fire instruction manuals and gets ready for a Snoop Dog concert. Meanwhile, Pops commiserates with his biker bro's at a biker bar. They too suffer the same dysfunction and their reasons are all pretty much the standard fare today: medications, global warming and Obama. Hubby scores some blue performance enhancement from his friend and mistakenly gobbles it down at the bar. Racing home on his hog, he passes the hardware store and picks up a serious load of lumber. Wifey spies the naughty pine and wastes no time jamming it into the machine that makes wood into little chips (editors said NO to "woodchipper." Sorry). As he pounds nails in the garage, the abstinence-shnabstinence teens aren't faring too well upstairs, struggling to align the Probe just right before trying to park it in the garage. 'Deflated' holds nothing back except nudity; delivering a very high speed and hilarious sex comedy that is rakish, ribald and oh-so raunchy. The humor is all about the awkwardness couples experience in their relationships, before and after 50. If you don't catch 'Deflated' at Comicon, you'll be hard on yourself.

**Wild Wild Breast – Ryan Nelson**

Give it up for the film programmers at Phoenix Comicon. Seriously. If you remember Phoenix Comicon 2014 then you will remember that Wild Wild Breast screened back then also. Well, that is it tried to screen, until the overheated, abused and battered DVD player went into full vaporlock and refused to screen more than 1 minute of the promising comedy western. An army of top IT technicians took turns beating on the device but to no avail, robbing director Nelson and his hardworking team of their opportunity for a Comicon screening. Every good film deserves a do-over and "Wild Wild Breast" is certainly that film. In a dusty 1800's Arizona town, the Sheriff is a chicken and the outlaws are a couple of turkeys. This film is stoopid in the best way, as an outrageous comedy western that seems to (respectfully) spoof the very history and tradition of the Arizona western film. Terrific writing, superb acting and great photography make this film a lot of fun and one you will want to see again, long after Comicon rides off into the sunset.

By Bill Pierce | May 19th, 2015 | Independent Film, Movie Reviews, Reviews | 0 Comments

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Bill has been covering independent film since 2010. A frequent guest at film festivals, Bill also judges several film competitions. Bill also provides a weekly radio segment "Piercing Reviews" on Independent Artists Radio

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