

VareseNews

Filmstudio 90, thirty years of cinema, going against the tide

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In its one-hundred-seat room, it has projected films from all over the world, great classics, Japanese cartoons, national premiers and much more. Its red armchairs have hosted directors, meetings, theme evenings.

On 5 December, Filmstudio 90 is celebrating its 30th anniversary, and today, it is still a reference point for the town. Founded during the years that saw the explosion of *home video* and homemade popcorn, the association has always gone against the tide, standing out in the cultural panorama with its proposals that might be less *pop*, but are nonetheless top quality.

Filmstudio 90 was founded by a group of young film lovers. “At the end of the 1980s, there were seven cinemas in Varese, but only the Mignon screened avant-garde films. When the Mignon closed, we decided to continue this activity,” said Giulio Rossini, the backbone and chairman of the association. “We wanted to respond to a need we felt and **to promote cinema as a cultural product**. In Milan, there was the *Obraz*, which was an example for us to follow.”

Since then, this goal has always been pursued, and Filmstudio 90 can claim to have formed the film culture of several generations. “This doesn’t mean showing boring films, **but rather allowing the audience to live the experience that only one movie theatre can give you**,” Rossini continued.

From the first screening at the Giardini Estensi, the young enthusiasts then found **the hall in Via De Cristoforis, which, today, is still the heart of the association**. In 2006, they also took over the management of the Cinema Teatro Nuovo, in Viale dei Mille, where they also organise concerts and theatrical performances for the public.

“We’ve always pampered our audience, creating a targeted offering. In addition, we’ve always collaborated with local organisations and associations, forming real connections, and also organising exhibitions that deal with social and current issues (*‘Un posto nel mondo’*, *‘Di terra e di cielo’*, ed.),” Rossini went on. The hall can be seen as a place for meeting and sharing. “We’ve remained an association, precisely because it’s **democratic and allows participation**, which otherwise would not be possible.”

The 30th anniversary celebration would have been the occasion to celebrate the important milestone and to get to know the young volunteers in the association, those who, over the years and during the *lockdown*, have organised activities and initiatives. “The pandemic doesn’t allow us to see each other, but we haven’t abandoned our public, and we ask them not to abandon us.”

Indeed, it is now that the association is facing a new major challenge. After having survived the arrival of on-demand TV and streaming, **it is now asking for help to face this very difficult period, and in the next few days, it will be starting a fundraising campaign**.

“There are a lot of expenses, and this spring, we also carried out some important restoration work,” explained Gabriele Ciglia, one of the newcomers to the cinema.

“The health emergency is damaging us and we hope that, once this period is over, our audience won’t have lost the habit of going to the cinema,” Rossini went on.

In the meantime, they have not lost the desire to do something. The celebrations will be virtual, with surprises on the Facebook page and the launch of a photography competition. In addition, a book on the two “indie” rooms in Varese is being published soon, and Alessandro Leone is making a documentary that retraces its history.

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