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Filmmaker Michael Manese goes raw, edgy in adult flick 'Maxine'

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A passionate affair flames out in 'Maxine.'

Up-and-coming filmmaker Michael Manese's short film, "[Maxine](#)," is having a series of theatrical runs in New York and New Jersey.

"Maxine" is a mature, adult-themed, experimental film about a man reminiscing about an old flame as he prepares to leave behind his beloved New York City when he loses his job.

The film is experimental in every way, from the use of scenes within scenes techniques, voice over dialogues, and a nonlinear narrative. Writer-director Manese said his movie is a statement on how people process memories and past moments.

"Narratively, it's the story of two lovers who meet, have a passionate affair then eventually, slowly start finding out their combined lifestyles aren't sustainable together," he said. Portraying the conflicted lovers are Mara Lee Gilbert and Oliver Burns.

Michael said he is influenced in his narrative style by mainstream, Hollywood movies.



Michael at the 2013 Golden Door Film Festival in Jersey City

"My goal is to make movies that are thought-provoking, daring, and experimental that can also reach a wide audience," he said in his website. "Movies such as 'Pulp Fiction,' 'Annie Hall,'" and 'Last Tango in Paris' are, to me, just a few examples of this formula."

Born in the Philippines and raised in Passaic, New Jersey, Michael studied filmmaking at Rutgers University. His screenplay "Talk Show" was staged at the Nuyorican Poets Cafe's Fifth Night Scriptreading series in March 1996. This led to a series of scriptreading jobs for companies such as Apostle Pictures, Foxboro and New Line Cinema.

"I've been making short films, on and off, for the last 20 years. It's not only until my last two projects that I

think I'm finally getting it all together," he told The FilAm in an email interview.

He created "Maxine" as a mature-themed film because he wanted to do something raw and edgy in terms of subject matter. "I want something that will get people's attention, shake them up a bit and take them to places where they wouldn't normally go, like a couple's bedroom, or being an observer of a fight between a couple," he said.

"Maxine" is a follow-up to his earlier short "When bart6874 met lulu5547" about senior citizens doing online dating. This film was shown in 13 film festivals and venues throughout Europe and North America, including the Golden Door Film Festival in Jersey City and the New York City International Film Festival.

"Maxine" will have following screenings:

Sunday September 21: Official Selection of the Golden Door Film Festival by Tommy Hilfiger.

Noon
Panepinto Gallery
372 Warren Street
Jersey City

Friday October 3: Official Selection Fall Film Fest

6:30 p.m.
Caffe Artisti
73 Wave Street
Staten Island

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