

PUTTING ON A FILM SERIES

Because they happen during the evening hours, film series can encourage people to shift their perceptions about whether the park is safe at night by filling it with a fun, family-friendly activity. Below are some examples of different groups who have put on film series, and the different approaches they have taken. They range from very simple events that cost only a few hundred dollars to elaborate, professional-level extravaganzas.

Narrows Botanical Garden, Brooklyn

This group holds a series of three films over the summer—one per month on Thursday nights. The films begin at sunset. The group purchased a screen for \$1,000 a few years ago; for each film they rent a projector and DVD (\$500 per film) from a local supplier. The series is advertised in their newsletter and on flyers in the park.

Carroll Park, Brooklyn

The group purchased a video projection camera for \$4,000 and projects the films onto a sheet on the parkhouse wall. The local video store donates the films for free, along with popcorn, for public acknowledgment. The evenings always start with a cartoon, then a PG feature—they try to do a theme, like airplanes or jungles. Films are every Friday night at 8:30 all summer; the group advertises them on a banner that hangs on the park fence throughout the season. The group also prints a calendar which they post on the park bulletin board and distribute.

Seward Park, Manhattan

The Friends of Seward Park includes a film historian who knows a projectionist. The projectionist owns outdoor projection equipment including a screen. The Friends pay him between \$150 and \$450 per film (depending on how much the film costs) and rent films from Swank Motion Pictures for between \$125 and \$350 per film. The group has a rain date the day after the planned date. (Groups without a connection to a projectionist can also hire one and rent all the projection equipment from Motion Picture Enterprises, for a cost of \$1500 per film, not including the cost of the film.)

Socrates Sculpture Park, Queens

This is a professional-quality film series which was launched in 1999. Films are shown every Wednesday for 8 weeks starting in July, and each evening features films from a different culture represented in the Astoria neighborhood. Local food vendors from serve food in the same theme—e.g., Brazilian food on Brazilian movie night, etc. The group partners with the Museum of the Moving Image for the curation of the series and other local companies for sponsorship.

The group received startup grants to launch the series, which they used to purchase a 14' x 19' screen for \$3,200, plus \$600 in equipment so that the screen could be mounted on a Parks Wenger Wagon; high quality sound equipment for \$6,000; and \$400 for scaffolding designed for the film projection. Additional yearly costs are film rental, projector rental and projectionist, outreach and publicity materials, which vary. The group produces a calendar for the film series which they send to their mailing list. The series has also been featured in *The New York Times*, *TimeOut*, *New York Magazine*, and other local papers.