

WISCONSIN FILM FESTIVAL

Wisconsin Film Festival attendance up in 2007

Kristian Knutsen on Wednesday 04/18/2007 03:04:26,

Organizers of the Wisconsin Film Festival announced Wednesday that attendance at the ninth annual event was 28,700. The count is based upon ticket stubs collected and passes counted at all theater entrances over the four-day event. It is also an increase of nearly 3,000 tickets over the 2006 edition of the festival, when official attendance was around 26,000.

Both numbers continue a trend of steadily increasing attendance at the festival since the beginning of the decade. "To look back at all past festivals, that's pretty much the curve," says director Meg Hamel. Pointing to the number of factors that affect attendance, including the number and locations of venues and seats, the programming, the number of films patrons decide to see, and other events held over the festival weekend, she is pleased by the regular growth.

"I think it was kind of astonishing that we've had such a generally steady increase," she says, "It's actually kind of spooky."

Hamel emphasizes that growth isn't an inherent goal of the festival as commissioned by the Wisconsin Arts Institute. Nevertheless, the numbers this year look good for the festival, and the level of interest there is in Madison for such an event.

"I'm a lot less concerned with the specific number than the fact that a lot of people made a decision to see some movies," Hamel says. "I hope they continue to do so in future years. It's very exciting."

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