



'Arrival' is Clarion pick for best film of 2016

By Michael Heiskell
Opinion Editor

2016 has been a hot mess of a year. Socially, politically, and even mentally. One would think the perennial wet blanket of a year would have sullenly draped itself over the film industry as well. However, 2016 has been a fun and eventful year in the film industry that has produced a lot of memorable and exciting features. I've watched a lot of movies this year, and there is one in particular that I think represents the best of 2016.

When using blanket words like 'best,' one has to consider a lot. What exactly defines best? Isn't the movie going experience supposed to be fun and subjective? Well, in my opinion, one just has to look a little back on the history of film to see why my choice can be called the best.

The Lumière Brothers kicked the film industry off by startling audiences with a train barreling towards the camera. Films originally were meant to be a spectacle. It wasn't long before they transitioned into an entertainment and moneymaking powerhouse. Films of the early Hollywood era were all about making money and making people happy. It was the birth of the arthouse cinema scene in Russia and France that truly convinced people that film could be a conduit into the human condition. Films really

could have something to say and people were starting to realize it. They could move us, inspire us, and even change our ideologies. Famous film critic Roger Ebert once referred to films as a great empathy machine. Giving us insight into a world and people we didn't understand, but maybe now we could. Films can help us connect and understand each other.

A film that can be categorized as the best in any given year has to embody all of these traits. In my opinion, the film "Arrival" has all of these unique qualities that make a film stand out. It is a spectacle film that truly moved and amazed me. It had some of the best writing of the year and a truly outstanding message.

Film became an art as a byproduct of people starting to understand acting and film direction. "Arrival" was a powerhouse in both categories. It's an exciting, smart, and powerful film that doesn't remove itself from its audience. It helps that it's incredibly entertaining and fun as well.

I highly suggest that people go and see this movie because it could not have been more timely. We live in a world where people have prejudices and are suspicious of each other. This is a movie that shows the power of language and how it connects people. The beautiful message is only helped by powerful film making and stirring performances.

14 years in, Annual WLEE cookie party still a hit

By Jessica Wiegandt
Arts & Life Editor

Each year, WLEE professor Robert Dye hosts the annual department cookie party, inviting students, friends and alumni to spread some holiday spirit. This year was no different as about 50 people gathered at Dye's house on Sunday, Dec. 11, 2016.

Dye has been hosting the cookie party for 14 years now, with the exception of last December, when he was in Hong Kong for the International Sea Kayak Educators Symposium. Each year, those invited are encouraged to make, bake or take favorite holiday cookies. Usually at the end of the evening, a competition is held to determine the best cookie of the night, however there wasn't one this year due to the crowd.

"It's so great to see everyone again," sophomore Kate Stephens said. "A lot of these people have been on Immersion or I just haven't seen this semester. It's a super fun way to catch up."

Dye had the Immersion team for next semester, Spring 2017, come half an hour early to the party to meet up and give updates for the start of the semester. The team next semester will be led by Dye and has nine students. "We've had a few changes," Dye said to the group, "We're going to push back our departure date for the 21-day excursion so we can attend BANFF Film Festival."

Originally, the group was going to leave the Friday before BANFF Film Festival, which is a popular outdoor film tour that Brevard hosts each spring. Dye chose to depart after the festival was over, meaning the group will return on April 9.

The party was well attended with the current Immersion team represented, as well as many previous WLEE students from 101 classes and skills classes, such as rock climbing and white-water kayaking. "It's a great way to get people to mix," freshman Sam Munson said, "As a freshman I get to meet a lot of the upperclassmen students and alumni. Plus there's cookies and who doesn't like cookies?"

This tradition for eating cookies and building the community within the WLEE Department seems to be a popular one. "It's my pleasure to host this," Dye said. "We have a lot of fun here and it's always great to see everyone connect, professors, students, friends and alumni."