

February 27, 2009

VARIETY

THE ALL-ADDICTION FILM FESTIVAL: BY WRITERS, FOR WRITERS



In what seems like an almost too-obvious connection, nonprofit organization [Writers In Treatment, or WIT](#), has announced that it will host the **Reel Recovery Film Series**, an (wait for it) addiction-themed film festival.

The eight films that will screen on Tuesdays in April and May at the **Silent Movie Theatre** in Los Angeles are **“Permanent Midnight”** (frustrated novelist writes for sitcom, becomes heroin addict), **“Lost Weekend”** (unsuccessful writer goes on four-day drinking binge), **“Leaving Las Vegas”** (alcoholic writer has final fling with prostitute while drinking himself to death), **“Sid and Nancy”** (rock star and codependent muse become heroin addicts), **“Days of Wine and Roses”** (alcoholic flack marries, introduces bride to Brandy Alexanders), **“Less Than Zero”** (preppy college student returns to LA to find that his friends have become addicts), **“Barfly”** (alcoholic writer falls in love with fellow barfly; his agent fights her for him, loses) and **“Ivans xtc”** (top Hollywood agent becomes addicted to everything, dies).

To be clear, WIT is dedicated to helping "writers addicted to alcohol and/or drugs get effective treatment for their disease." Membership is open to those over 18 who derive at least 25% of their income from writing, commit to residential treatment "and agree to participate in a relapse prevention program such as **Alcoholics Anonymous** or **Narcotics Anonymous**." A candidate must also submit an essay of up to "750 words describing their addiction, its consequences and any previous or current treatment history."

With that audience, this lineup might run the risk of being mistaken for documentaries. However, WIT co-founder **Leonard Lee Buschel** says, "This series isn't just for addicts or alcoholics. It's for anyone who has ever been impacted or just wants to learn more about the disease and its treatment in a less traditional and entertaining environment."

“Permanent Midnight” author **Jerry Stahl** and “Ivans xtc” director **Bernard Rose** are expected to attend, while additional invites are out to thespians including **Ben Stiller**, **Danny Huston** and **Robert Downey, Jr.** (Downey’s father, director **Robert Downey Sr.**, sits on WIT's board.)

Attendees will be treated to a live jazz preshow, a post-screening discussion, free popcorn and presumably, a variety of soft drinks.