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**Tallgrass Film Festival
Press Release
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Tallgrass Film Festival Announces Ad Astra Award Recipient

Wichita, KAN.—Wichita Association for the Motion Picture Arts today announced that the 2009 Tallgrass Film Festival Ad Astra Award recipient will be legendary independent film actor [Seymour Cassel](#).



Well-known as a contemporary and fellow traveler of John Cassavetes, Cassel was nominated for the 1968 Academy Award® for Best Supporting Actor for his role in Cassavetes' "Faces," for which he also participated as one of seven crew members. Spanning more than 40 years and over one hundred films, Cassel's career also includes notable roles in "The Killers," "Dick Tracy," "Honeymoon in Vegas," myriad films by Cassavetes, (including "Shadows," in which he made his film debut), and, more recently, a number of Wes Anderson films including "Rushmore," "The Royal Tenenbaums," and "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou."

The Ad Astra Award presentation is scheduled to take place starting at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 24 at the Scottish Rite Temple. Tickets to the event are \$15 and include a hosted Q&A with Cassel where attendees can hear about the veteran actor's experiences in the world of independent filmmaking, and a screening of "Reach for Me," starring Cassel, Alfre Woodard, and Lacey Chabert and directed by LaVar Burton. Attendees are invited to join other festival goers at an after party.

The Ad Astra Award, named for the Kansas state motto Ad Astra Per Aspera, ("to the stars through difficulties"), is presented to an individual who has dedicated his or her life and made significant contributions to the art and process of moviemaking. Previous recipients include Oscar® winning actress Cloris Leachman; Tallgrass founder the late Timothy Gruver; independent filmmaker Laura Lee Bahr; "King of the Movie Trailers" Don LaFontaine; and President and CEO of the Motion Picture Association of America Dan Glickman.

Tickets for this event and all events at the 2009 Tallgrass Film Festival go on sale Oct. 1. Visit tallgrassfilmfest.com for ticket prices and stay tuned for ticketing locations. Tallgrass Film Festival is scheduled to take place Oct. 23-25, 2009 at venues in and around downtown Wichita, Kan., and features parties and screenings of 100 independent short and feature films, including narratives, documentaries, animation, and experimental

subject matter from around the world.

2009 festival sponsors include [Integrated Media Group](#), Emily Bonavia Trust, [Clear Channel Radio/Wichita](#), [Wichita Downtown Development Corporation](#), [City of Wichita](#), [Stella Artois](#), House of Schwan, [Glazer's](#), [Go Wichita!](#), [KMUW](#), [KPTS](#), [ProductionHUB.com](#), [Kansas Arts Commission](#), [National Endowment for the Arts](#), [Ulrich Museum of Art](#), The Gruver Family, [The Orpheum](#), The Garvey Center, [Naked City](#) and [Greteman Group](#).

Founded in 2003 by the late Timothy Gruver, the Tallgrass Film Festival is a program of the Wichita Association for the Motion Picture Arts (WAMPA), a non-profit 501©3 arts organization dedicated to educating, entertaining and enlightening audiences from America's Heartland. Through the annual film festival, the summertime Cinema Al Fresco Series, WAMPA Filmmaker Academy, and Special Screenings, WAMPA spotlights the city's venues, cultural attractions and artistic communities. WAMPA strives to foster the ever-growing, local filmmaking community, sparking a dialogue among filmmakers and enhancing artistic expression.

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