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Why This Miami Tutor Loves Getting Schooled By Classic Movies

By [CHRISTINE DIMATTEI \(/PEOPLE/CHRISTINE-DIMATTEI\)](#) • 23 HOURS AGO

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Alexander Sorondo (right) during his interview with WLRN's Christine DiMattei



With so many on-demand options available to film lovers (Netflix and Amazon Prime, to name a few), why do so many people still go to movie theaters?

Alexander Sorondo might have part of the answer.



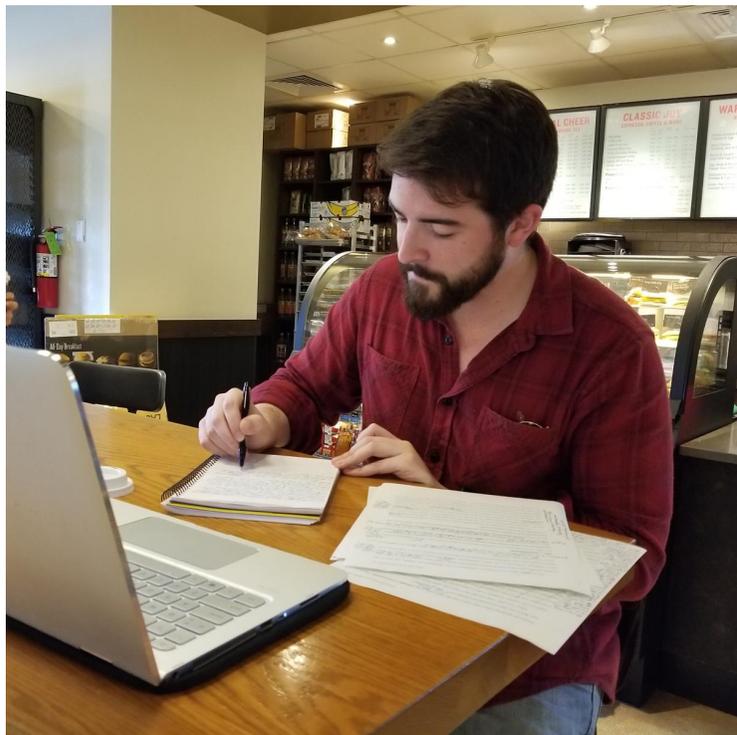
A few days before Hurricane Irma was due to hit Florida, 26-year-old Sorondo hosted a screening of the 1990 TV version of Stephen King's horror classic "It" at a South Miami café. He recollects being surprised by the audience reaction.

"They were laughing a little harder than I think they genuinely would," says Sorondo. "They were having a more dramatic reaction to the movie – a more *communal* reaction than they normally would. And I think it's because of the stress of what they were going through, preparing for the hurricane."

Sorondo, a tutor in the English department of Miami Dade College, says it taught him a thing or two about what the experience of movie-going does for people. But in his case, the experience of movie-*watching* ignited a literary effort.

WLRN's Christine DiMattei interview Alexander Sorondo, creator of *The Thousand Movie Project*

In the summer of 2016, Sorondo was feeling restless (and a bit remorseful) after a night of heavy drinking and excessive spending. He bought Steven Jay Schneider's book, "1,001 Movies You Must See Before You Die," and embarked on a mission to watch every movie on the list and write about them.



(http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wlrn/files/styles/x_large/public/201801/20180109_113455.jpg)

Alexander Sorondo is the creator of The Thousand Movie Project.

CREDIT A. SORONDO

The essays on Sorondo's website **The Thousand Movie Project**

(<https://thousandmovieproject.com/>), are not exactly film reviews. Sorondo prefers to call them "response pieces."

"The goal of the project is to work as sort of a shoehorn into history," says Sorondo. "There's an effort to understand the era in which the movie was made, the culture in which the movie was made. And also, I use them as a springboard to talk about personal stuff."

Last year, Sorondo launched free monthly screenings of the films at **Tea & Poets** (<http://teaandpoets.com/>), a cafe in The Shops at Sunset Place. He says he finds it interesting to watch how audiences respond to the films on Schneider's list.

For example, the Marx Brothers' 1935 classic "A Night at the Opera" got a great reaction; 1931's "Little Caesar," a gangster film starring Edward G. Robinson ... not so much.

"Did NOT strike the chord I was hoping for!" exclaims Sorondo with a laugh. "People were not really thrilled with that one."

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