

In the Spotlight

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The CANFather: New film debates age-old question of bottle vs. can

By Caroline Roosevelt
Contributing Writer

There's a new film about to be shown for the first time that will tackle warring factions, decades-long family rancor, the struggle to overcome one's own personal demons and entrenched thinking and to connect with the world at large and find meaning in life.

The synopsis is this: Tragedy and triumph as the Bottle and Can fight for container supremacy in the mafia corrupted town of Brewington. Can these two exist...or will there be beer shed in the streets?

Entitled *The CANFather*, the film is the brainchild of Film Brothers co-owner and West Grove resident Gordon DelGiorno and his high school friend and beer and history aficionado Matt DelPizzo. This genre-less film will play to a sold-out Wilmington Brew Works audience on March 1 and March 8, and showcases not only a complex theme that encapsulates the current state of the world, but also a decades-long friendship, paired with the collaboration of actors, editors, an animator, an illustrator, and James Nichols, an award-winning sound designer who worked on Spike Lee's *Malcom X*.

I recently had the opportunity to learn a little bit more about the history behind this enigmatic film and its creators, who also happen to play the starring rival roles of The Bottle and The Can.

Caroline Roosevelt: Tell me about your production company, Film Brothers.

Gordon DelGiorno (The Bottle): Film Brothers is my brother and me, originally. Since then, he's branched off building sets for Netflix, but we kept Film Brothers going, and people have heard of us in Delaware and the surrounding area, so we keep the name. The people that

come with us and have been on the journey have become our honorary brothers and sisters. We've built quite a network.

What inspired you to get into film?

In 1999, we saw the film *Clerks*, at a time when a lot of independent movies were starting to come out. We looked at it and we were like, "What? We don't get it. We can do better than this." We were so naive, so we probably spent \$40,000 of our own money, got a camera and learned how to operate it. We made our first movie, *Franks and Wieners*, and showed it to two sold-out audiences of more than 1,100 at what is now Main Street Movies in Newark. In the past several years, I have also been a video producer, and I have worked with several clients like Goodwill, The United Way and several non-profit organizations.

Now tell me about *The CANFather*. I was trying to figure out what the vibe was - I don't even know the genre!

Matt came up to me about five years ago at BrewHaha in Greenville. He told me, "I want to talk to you about making a film about my beer can collection. I want to do a documentary." He told me that the beer-in-the-can concept is making a solid comeback in the craft brewing industry. I told him, "Okay, we can make a talking heads film, but it'll be kind of boring." So then he said, "Well, you look like a bottle - you're kind of tall and long, and I'll be the can, I'm short and stumpy," so we began developing the film, and created the characters in the film who are known as The Bottle and The Can.

I then spoke separately with co-creator DelPizzo (The Can) to learn more about his contribution to the film, the historical element attached to it, and the reason for the beer



Courtesy images

Matt DelPizzo co-wrote the script and stars as The Can.

theme. Fittingly, he was in the middle of attending the Blue and Grey Show in Washington, D.C., a *breweriana* (beer memorabilia) collectors' event which also includes, of course, actual beer.

So Matt, tell me about how you first became involved in making this story.

Matt DelPizzo: Gordon's the movie maker and I'm the beer and history nut. I started collecting cans when I was 11-12 years old. I had 5,000 cans. When I sold them, I met all these eclectic people, and that's about the time we started working on *Beer Can: A Love Story*. It was around the time when the COVID-19 pandemic began that Gordon and I began writing the screenplay for what would become *The CANFather*. At first, I wrote the original concept and dialogue long-hand in a black composition book and then gave it to Gordon to convert into a script.

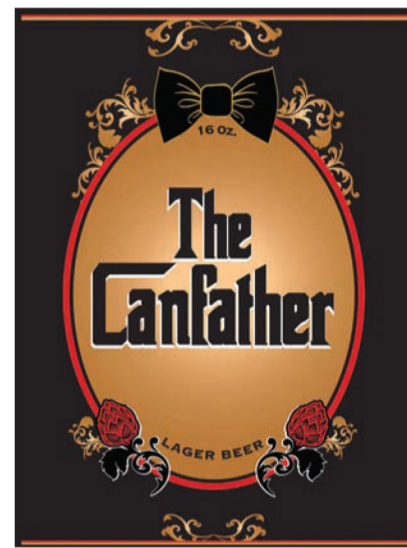
How did you start collecting beer cans at 11-12 years old? That seems like a really esoteric hobby for a kid.

I think I was always attracted to the labels and the colors. We would visit old lovers' lanes and dumps on our bikes and dig them up.

It's like finding a hidden



The struggle for beer container supremacy forms the story behind *The CANFather*, a new film that will be shown at Wilmington Brew Works for two sold-out screenings on March 1 and March 8.



As part of the film's promotion, the filmmakers are partnering with Wilmington Brew Works on a new beer called *The CANFather: A Beer You Can't Refuse*.



Gordon DelGiorno is a West Grove-based filmmaker and the co-founder of Film Brothers.

treasure.

Yeah, it was! Those beer cans became my "Linus blanket." One day my wife asked me if I was going to keep hauling the cans around wherever we moved for the rest of my life, so I sold them all. I gave up my cans.

Oh, so this film is a goodbye tribute.

Yeah. There's some kind of fable in here.

DelGiorno assured me that *The CANFather's* upcoming premiere was merely the official launch of a new product that will satisfy the tastes of those in several more cities – and

assist a non-profit agency or two.

***The CANFather* is playing at Wilmington Brew Works on March 1 and March 8 for two sold-out screenings. What are your next plans for the film?**

DelGiorno: We're making a beer with Wilmington Brew Works called "The CANFather: A Beer You Can't Refuse" and we're releasing the movie with the beer, and there's also a QR code on the can so people can watch it at home. We are going on tour in eight cities to do a beer release with the film release: Philadelphia, Baltimore,

Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Boston. While we're not sure where we are showing yet, we have two more investors coming on to help with marketing.

I want to tie in to non-profit organizations in Philadelphia and add a fundraiser to the event. A non-profit angle would be great because we'll both get exposure, and they'll receive the proceeds. Eventually we want a top 20 brewer to brew the beer and screen the film.

*For more information about *The CANFather*, and to see the trailer, visit www.canfather.com.*