



Felder festival of short films long on terrific film making

By Bill Thompson
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Provided

In a cold Nantucket winter, a man falls victim to his own apprehensions in the movie short winner 'Fear A Following,' by local moviemaker Barret B. Burlage, featured at the Fifth Annual Felder Film Festival from 7 to 9 p.m., Wednesday and on June 5 in the Ballroom of Charleston on the Beach Holiday Inn, Folly Beach.

Fanfare for a fandango, please.

Taking the (film) short path to hearts and minds is the 5th-annual Felder Film Festival, a consistently engaging celebration of short films mounted by Moving Images Group, the digital cinema division of Actor's Theatre of South Carolina.

A Piccolo Spoleto event, the festival will be held Wednesday and Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. in the ballroom of the Charleston on the Beach Holiday Inn at Folly Beach.

Created by gifted stage and screen actor Clarence Felder, director and cinematographer Michael Givens and writer-director Nick Smith of Nick Smith Films, the festival is designed "to promote and develop new filmmakers and education of new visual technologies in the Charleston area."

The playbill showcases the work of filmmakers local, national and international, with a maximum 12-minute run time.

This year's industry pro guest is Todd Tinkham of Tinkhamtown Productions in North Carolina, who will conduct a free seminar on Navigating the Festival Circuit on Thursday at 5:30 p.m., preceding that night's screenings. Tinkham's 18 award-winning short movies have been screened at more than 200 festivals. Among his latest is "Alexa," both in the Felder Fest competition and earmarked for the Slamdance Film Festival in January 2009.

Once again, organizers are presenting a companion event in the Felder Family Film Fest, which unspools for free Sunday at 2 p.m. at Physicians Auditorium on the campus of the College of Charleston. Created by theater and film actress Lisa Morelli, shorts are chosen by judges strictly for family appeal. Included is a free workshop for young moviemakers and their families from 3 to 4 p.m.

For more information, e-mail ccfelder@aol.com, call 843- 588-9636 or go online at www.actorstheatreofsc.org.



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Ethel Snipe Coakley, a basketmaker from the Four Mile Community in Mount Pleasant, is seen here in the documentary 'Bin Yah.'

"Bin Yah" reprise

The affecting and pointed documentary "Bin Yah: There's No Place Like Home," directed by Justin Nathanson, will screen June 3 at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Mother Emanuel AME Church downtown. This Piccolo Spoleto event will be followed by a broadcast June 12 at 10 p.m. on SCETV's "Southern Lens."

In direct, poignant and often disturbing terms, the film explores the impact of suburban sprawl and political inaction on historically black communities in Mount Pleasant. Yet unlike so many documentaries these days, it is not driven solely by ideology.

Both screenings are free, and will be followed by a panel discussion with the director and participants from the film.

Produced by Nancy Cregg and Cara White, and narrated by Ron Daise, "Bin Yah" (Gullah for "been here") employs the testimonies of residents to reveal the culture and history of these threatened communities, to make palpable the importance of land and the concept of home, and to give a voice to those who don't always have a chance to be heard. Those interviewed include residents from the Four Mile, Six Mile, Hamlin/Seven Mile, Phil-lips, Remley's Point/Scanlonville, Snowden and John's Island communities, locales established by freed slaves and home to generations of their families.

Many such residents are skilled artisans and craftspeople, practicing traditional skills which likewise are at risk of disappearing.

Music for the film is by Darryl E. Horne. The director of photography is Jesse Berger.

Busting stereotypes

As if the silly caricatures of the Charlie Chan detective flicks weren't bad enough (inevitably starring an American actor "disguised" as an Oriental), Hollywood of the '40s compounded its jingoistic wartime depictions of sadistic

Asian soldiers and spies with '50s fare dominated by "inscrutable" plotters and soul-less commies.

Not that those in power in Mao's China and ultra-insular North Korea did not provide ample fodder for exaggeration.

Exploring Occidental images of Orientals in English-language films is the point of Turner Classic Movies' "Race and Hollywood: Asian Images in Film," a series running Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning at 8 p.m. throughout June.

Joining TCM's redoubtable host and guide will be Dr. Peter X Feng, editor of Screening Asian-Americans and author of "Identities in Motion: Asian-American Film and Video."

Each night's movie selection will focus on a particular theme, such as an exploration of how films have depicted interracial and intercultural relationships and a look at the career of Anna May Wong, the actress whose roles during the 1930s and 1940s ranged from victims to temptresses.

Noting the work of Asian filmmakers has never been more popular in the West than today, TCM will provide an updated chronicle of the enduring careers of contemporary Asian stars like Gong Li and Jackie Chan.

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