

CHLOTRUDIS MEWSINGS

Volume 3, Issue 1

June 2004

A Decade Under the Independent: *10th Annual Chlotrudis Awards Ceremony*

By Hilary Nieukirk

Sunday, March 28 was a gala opportunity for CSIF to celebrate ten years of Chlotrudis Awards. The Brattle Theatre was once again the location as we hosted our largest number of special guests and attendants yet. We rivaled another awards ceremony in length, clocking in at four hours, but I can honestly say that the participants and audience seemed to be enjoying every moment. One thing I love about CSIF and our Awards is the intimate tone of our events and the authentic feeling of delight that results. It was exceptionally gratifying to hear so many honorees say that they genuinely felt honored, unlike at many other awards ceremonies they had attended in the past. Other awards ceremony shall remain nameless, but likely would not be pleased to hear they have made honorees feel like, as one special guest put it, "corporate whores."

The evening kicked off with a musical tribute to the history of the organization, complete with choreography, and a cat silhouette projected onto the back wall of the stage. This shadowy feline, a tribute to the four-legged namesakes of CSIF, Chloe and Gertrudis, was met with applause and appreciative laughter. Philip Seymour Hoffman, inaugural inductee into the newly created Chlotrudis Hall of Fame, made special mention of it later in the evening, imploring us to make it a regular part of the festivities.

This year's honorees were largely an international group, the majority of them Canadian though including one Frenchwoman, cinematographer Agnès Godard who flew in from Paris for the event. Agnès, this year's recipient of the Visionary Award for contribution in cinematography, admitted she wasn't immediately familiar with CSIF when she received our invitation, but was doubly honored when she discovered



Agnès Godard accepts the award for Best Cinematography from *Boston Phoenix* film critic Peter Keough

that she was a past Chlotrudis Award winner for Best Cinematography. Agnès collected a total of three statuettes over the evening, including this earlier award from the Seventh Awards for her work on *Beau Travail*.

Wiebke von Carolsfeld, recipient of the Chlotrudis Someone to Watch Award, discussed the open, collaborative process inherent in making independent film. Wiebke was pleasantly surprised later in the evening to win CSIF's signature award, the Buried Treasure, for her first film, *Marion Bridge*.

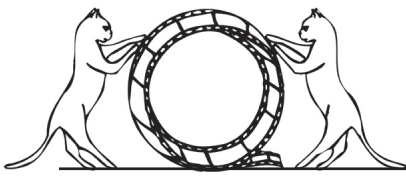
Bridge is based on a play written by her former roommate and fellow honoree, Canadian actor/director/playwright Daniel McIvor.

Accepting the Chlotrudis Award for a Body of Work, McIvor had the audience alternately in uproarious laughter and serious contemplation as he discussed the nature of the creative process. The audience was thoroughly entertained by McIvor, and pleased to find him far more relaxed than we saw him in a clip from the Canadian TV series *Twitch City*, which he starred on with perennial Chlotrudis favorites Don McKellar and Molly Parker.

Kerry Washington echoed von Carolsfeld's sentiments about the nature of independent film as she accepted the Chlotrudis Award for a Breakthrough Career (formerly the Gertrudis Award), and joked that having her first cinematic role be on an independent film spoiled her. Washington, star of past nominated film *Our Song*, will be seen in Spike Lee's upcoming feature *She Hate Me*. She also



Philip Seymour Hoffman accepts the award for Best Actor from the lovely Miss Chlotrudis, Jessica Estes, and presenter Sara Rubin, Executive Director of the Boston Jewish Film Festival and Chlotrudis member.



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is working on the other side of the cameras producing an independent film written and directed by actor David Moscow, who later presented the Best Actress award.

In addition to the honorees from the feature filmmaking arena, the winners of the Fourth Annual Chlotrudis Short Film Festival were on hand. Brookline native Jesse Epstein won the Audience Award for her short, *Wet Dreams and False Images*, an amusing and thoughtful piece on the depiction of women in print media and the distorted notions that arise from the extreme use of airbrushing. Director Katie Fleischer, along with lead actors John Dietz and Susan Blackwell, collected the Best Short award for *Bun-Bun*. A dark comedy, *Bun-Bun*, looks at the difficulties of parenting a demanding daughter enamored with a stuffed bunny she's reluctantly gifted to a friend.



Kerry Washington accepts the Chlotrudis Award for a Breakthrough Career

Larry Meistrich, CEO and Founder of the independent film distribution company Film Movement, was presented with the Maverick Award. Meistrich, late and breathless after having gotten stuck in traffic on his trip down, lauded CSIF for supporting and honoring independent film. Chlotrudis nominees *O.T.: Our Town* and *Marion Bridge* were released by Film Movement. Additionally, Meistrich produced past Chlotrudis Award winner *Sling*

Blade, which garnered three wins at the Third Awards.

The second half of the evening began with a special "Conversation with Philip Seymour Hoffman," marking his induction into the Chlotrudis Hall of Fame. The

"Conversation" was conducted by longtime Chlotrudis supporter and NBC film critic Sara Edwards. Phil and



Your hosts for the evening, Chlotrudis President Michael R. Colford and Board member Esmé Green

Sara quickly developed an excellent rapport and had the audience thoroughly engrossed and hoping for another twenty minutes at the end of their session.

Following a second musical number, this one paying tribute to the Best Actor nominees, Hoffman returned to the stage to accept for his leading role in *Owning Mahowny*. Statuettes steadily piled up on the stage in front of the honorees as they accepted their awards, some of them having

returned to the stage for a second time, like Hoffman and Agnès Godard who won Best Cinematography for *Friday Night (Vendredi Soir)*.

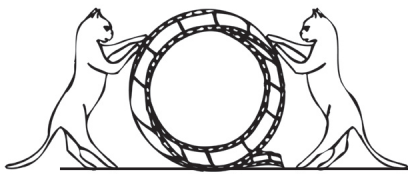
Canadian Director Thom Fitzgerald, recipient of this year's Chlotrudis Award given to a director whose creative vision and filmmaking skill consistently challenges and intrigues audiences, expressed his relief that we were not giving out actual cats. He admitted some initial hesitation in accepting CSIF's invitation to attend, wondering just what sort of people we were, presenting live animals at an awards ceremony.

The final award of the evening was a surprise to CSIF President and Awards Co-host Michael Colford. CSIF honored Michael with his own Chlotrudis Award, the Auteur Award for distinctive leadership and vision. Members, friends, and honored guests gave a standing ovation in recognition of all of Michael's hard work and dedication. He has seen the organization grow from a small annual party held in his apartment to the organization we know today. We thank Michael, the Board of Directors, all of our members and supporters for a great first decade and look forward to the future endeavors and growth of the Chlotrudis Society for Independent Film.

Chlotrudis Mewsings is a publication of the Chlotrudis Society for Independent Film

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Visit us on the web at: www.chlotrudis.org



Letter from the Editor

Celebration of the first decade of Chlotrudis began with a pair of exceptional evenings: the Fourth Annual Short Film Festival on February 16, and the Tenth Annual Chlotrudis Awards on March 28. We were thrilled to see so many members and friends at both, and are confident that attendance will continue to build at these events.

Our tenth year also brings a revamped name for the organization: Chlotrudis Society for Independent Film, or CSIF for short. This shift away from “Chlotrudis Awards” clarifies our mission and emphasizes our commitment to

supporting and educating audiences about independent film as a whole.

The Board of Directors is formulating a long-range plan for CSIF’s next ten years, with a focus on education. We are encouraged by the

success of the first two semesters of the Sunday Eye-Opener series and hope to create other similar opportunities. If you have any suggestions or ideas regarding the direction of CSIF, please contact a member of the Board. We value our members’ input and support.

Another of our first decade initiatives is our redesigned second-generation website (www.chlotrudis.org). Updates are being made and new features are added regularly. Of note for Boston-area members, Monday Night at the Movies information is now available on the website. Have you seen anything good recently? Wondering what CSIF members have seen and what they thought about some current releases? Check out the “Reviews” section of the site.

In this issue, details of the 10th Annual Chlotrudis Awards. Also inside are wrap-ups of the recent Independent Film Festival of Boston (IFFB) and Tribeca Film Festival, plus a preview of the upcoming Provincetown International Film Festival. The latest dispatch in our “Chlotrudis County” series is from Denver member Howard Semones. Did you know



Hilary Niekirk

10th Annual Chlotrudis Award Winners

Best Movie

Lost in Translation

(Other nominees: *28 Days Later*; *American Splendor*; *Lilja 4-Ever*; *Spellbound*; *The Station Agent*; *The Triplets of Belleville*)

Best Original Screenplay

Marion Bridge

(Other nominees: *Dracula: Pages from a Virgin's Diary*; *Love & Diane*; *Melvin Goes to Dinner*; *Ten*)

Best Director

Sofia Coppola - Lost in Translation

(Other nominees: Shari Springer Berman & Robert Pulcini - *American Splendor*; Danny Boyle - *28 Days Later*; Claire Denis - *Friday Night*; David Gordon Green - *All the Real Girls*; Lukas Moodysson - *Lilja 4-Ever*; Lynne Ramsay - *Morvern Callar*)

Best Actress

Sarah Polley - My Life Without Me

(Other nominees: Oksana Okinshina - *Lilja 4-Ever*; Keisha Castle-Hughes - *Whale Rider*; Zoëe Deschanel - *All the Real Girls*; Scarlett Johansson - *Lost in Translation*; Frances McDormand - *Laurel Canyon*; Samantha Morton - *Morvern Callar*; Charlotte Rampling - *Swimming Pool*)

Best Actor

Philip Seymour Hoffman - Owning Mahowny

(Other nominees: Javier Bardem - *The Dancer Upstairs*; Bruce Campbell - *Bubba Ho-Tep*; Peter Dinklage - *The Station Agent*; Paul Giamatti - *American Splendor*; Bill Murray - *Lost in Translation*; Campbell Scott - *Secret Lives of Dentists*)

Best Supporting Actress

Patricia Clarkson - The Station Agent

(Other nominees: Patricia Clarkson - *Pieces of April*; Hope Davis - *American Splendor*; Olympia Dukakis - *The Event*; Anna Kendrick - *Camp*; Miranda Richardson - *Spider*; Ludivine Sagnier - *Swimming Pool*; Paprika Steen - *Open Hearts*)

Best Supporting Actor

(tie) **Bobby Cannavale - The Station Agent and**

Jack Kehler - Love Liza

(Other nominees: Artyom Bogucharsky - *Lilja 4-Ever*; Ossie Davis - *Bubba Ho-Tep*; Seth Green - *Party Monster*; Mark Ruffalo - *My Life Without Me*; Peter Sarsgaard - *Shattered Glass*)

Best Original Screenplay

Sofia Coppola - Lost in Translation

(Other nominees: *28 Days Later*; *All the Real Girls*; *Love Liza*; *The Man Without a Past*; *The Station Agent*)

Best Adapted Screenplay

Shari Springer Berman & Robert Pulcini - American Splendor

(based on the comic book series by Harvey Pekar and Joyce Brabner)
(Other nominees: *Bubba Ho-Tep*; *Marion Bridge*; *Morvern Callar*; *Safety of Objects*; *Secret Lives of Dentists*; *Shattered Glass*; *Whale Rider*)

Best Cinematography

Agnès Godard - Friday Night

(Other nominees: *21 Grams*; *28 Days Later*; *All the Real Girls*; *Lost in Translation*; *Northfork*; *Russian Ark*; *Winged Migration*)

Best Cast

The Station Agent

(Other nominees: *The Event*; *Godzilla*, *Mothra*, *King Ghidorah*: *All-Out Monster Attack!*; *The Lawless Heart*; *Marion Bridge*; *Open Hearts*; *Take Care of My Cat*)

Best Documentary

Capturing the Friedmans

(Other nominees: *Lost in La Mancha*; *O.T. Our Town*; *Spellbound*; *Winged Migration*)

Best Short Film

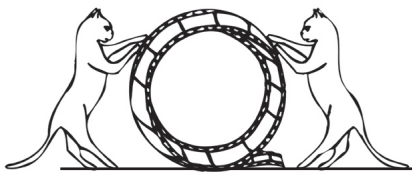
Chlotrudis Award: **Bun-Bun** by Katie Fleischer
Audience Award: **Wet Dreams and False Images** by Jesse Epstein

(Other nominees: *Beat Box Philly* by Warren Bass and Liz Goldberg; *Blue Snow* by Zion Rubin; *Career Suicide* by Dan Huber and Alex Kang; *Dental Farmer* by Ellen Brodsky and Dunya Alwan; *in sight* by Asitha Ameresekere; *Robot Rumpus* by Jason Dunn; *The Show* by Cruz Angeles; *Tomato Love* by Joey Kan; *Two by Two* by Emily Susanne Dodge; *Unearthed* by Christina Spangler; *Woman* by Signe Baumann)

CSIF has a dedicated Colorado membership base?

I wanted to take a moment to mention my favorite film from the IFFB, since it was not included in the wrap-up. Amanda Micheli’s documentary, *Double Dare*, looks at the careers of two professional stuntwomen, Jeannie Epper and Zoë Bell, as they navigate their careers in a male-dominated profession in equally male-dominated Hollywood. Micheli, Epper, and Bell were all on hand for a Q&A session following the closing-night show at the Somerville Theatre. I was particularly in awe of Epper, Lynda Carter’s double on the Wonder Woman TV series, who is in her 60s, has donated a kidney, and is still working. If this film is playing at a festival in your area, I absolutely recommend it.

-- Hilary Niekirk



Chlotrudis On The Cape!

By Michael Colford

The Chlotrudis Society for Independent Film is a big supporter of the Provincetown International Film Festival. Coming up on June 16-20, the sixth annual Provincetown International Film Festival, in Provincetown, MA, will screen more than 50 adventurous, original, independent films. Director and writer Jim Jarmusch is the 2004 Filmmaker on the Edge: his cinematic achievements span 3 decades, from *Stranger Than Paradise*, winner of the Camera d'Or at the 1984 Cannes Film Festival, to his upcoming release *Coffee and Cigarettes*. The Festival features sneak previews, intimate gatherings with industry luminaries, parties galore, a Night at the Drive-in, Sing-A-Long *Wizard of Oz*, Youth and Diversity Film Program, and film workshops. Several Chlotrudis members will be on hand for this uniquely exciting event so please do join in the fun! Discounted Festival passes and tickets, along with a list of films programmed are on sale now at www.ptownfilmfest.org or call (508) 487-FILM.

Some of the films scheduled to play at the Festival include award winners from international film festivals and Academy Award nominees. *Maria Full of Grace* won the Audience Award for Best Feature at the 2004 Sundance Film Festival, and *The Corporation* won the companion award for Best Documentary. The Italian film *The Best of Youth* was a winner at the 2003 Cannes Film Festival, and *The Story of Weeping Camel* was the Mongolian entry for Best Foreign Film at this year's Academy Awards. The Audience Award winner at the 2003 Toronto International Film Festival is Takeshi Kitano's *Zatoichi*. We are especially excited about *A Home at the End of the World*, an adaptation of the novel by Michael Cunningham, starring Colin Farrell and Robin Wright Penn.

The Provincetown International Film Festival enters its sixth year with the announcement of the 2004 recipient of the annual Filmmaker on the Edge award. This year the Festival honors director/writer Jim Jar-

musch, whose cinematic achievements over the past three decades include *Stranger Than Paradise* (1984), *Down By Law* (1986), *Mystery Train* (1989), *Dead Man* (1995), *Ghost Dog: The Way of the Samurai* (1999), and his upcoming release *Coffee and Cigarettes* (2004).

Appropriately, this year is the 20th anniversary of the release of Jarmusch's break-through underground classic *Stranger Than Paradise*, starring John Lurie, Eszter Balint, and Richard Edson. The story of three drifters who together take an infamous car trip from Manhattan to Ohio to Florida unfolds through a series of understated and often hilarious vignettes all shot in stark black-and-white. The film stands out as a pivotal achievement in the history of independent filmmaking, known for its groundbreaking innovation in storytelling and cinematic style. It won the coveted Camera d'Or Award for "Best First Film" at the 1984 Cannes Film Festival and significantly influenced the world of filmmaking and film distribution to come.

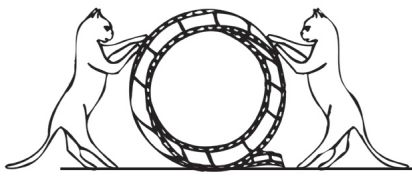
Previous recipients of the "Filmmaker on the Edge" award at the Provincetown International Film Festival are director Todd Haynes (2003), director Gus Van Sant (2002), producers Ted Hope and James Schamus (2001), producer Christine Vachon (2000), and filmmaker John Waters (1999). All have been invited to this year's Festival celebrations honoring Jarmusch.

The line-up of films, special events, ticket information, venues, and travel/accommodation suggestions is on the Festival website at www.ptownfilmfest.org. The

sixth annual Provincetown International Film Festival is made possible by the generous support of the Festival's Presenting Sponsors including American Airlines, Bacardi Limon, HBO, Premiere Magazine, The Advocate, The Boston Phoenix, The New Art Cinemas, The Provincetown Banner, and The Provincetown Visitor Services Bureau. Funding also comes from the National Endowment of the Arts, with additional growing support from numerous community-based businesses. For more information visit www.ptownfilmfest.org or call (508) 487-FILM.



Jim Jarmusch



Chlotrudis Country Denver, Colorado

By Howard Semones

Most still think of Denver, Colorado as a big, glorified cow town and while there are still the activities that are traditionally Denver, many have tried to bring a little more to the mix. One of those things was the recent moviehouse boom that more than doubled the number of screens in our poor cow town. The majority of the screens were for the multiplex, but a few others had a more noble aspiration - bringing the concept of the smaller, independent film to the residents here.

First, however, we have to step back and talk about three independents that are still here from before the boom. Those three theaters are now owned by one company, Landmark Theatres, and include two of the oldest theaters in Denver.

The most prestigious of the three is the Mayan Theater (110 Broadway). It was built in 1930 and nearly destroyed in the mid-80s at the lowest point in its history. A local group calling themselves "Friends of the Mayan" helped saved this beautiful theater at the last moment. In 1986, Landmark restored the theater to its past glory at the cost of \$2 million. It is now one of only three theaters in the Art Deco Mayan Revival style left in the country.

Currently, the Mayan has three screens. There is a larger auditorium downstairs and two smaller screens upstairs. It is located in a great "Old Town" section of Denver that adds to its appeal, plus on Saturday nights they show classic films at midnight. These midnight movies can range anywhere from the cheesiest cult classic, to highly acclaimed black-and-white classics. Plus the audience is always fun at that time of night.

Even older is the Esquire Theater (590 Downing Street). The Mayan's lesser-known sister theater was built in 1928 as the Hiawatha Theater, which included a full balcony. Over the years, the balcony was enclosed and made into a second screen. It used to be Denver's official *Rocky Horror Picture Show* weekly show as well. Today the interior has a 60s feel to it, but the sound system was updated a few years ago

making it a worthy companion to the Mayan. Landmark has been running it since 1980.

In 1992, Landmark took over a small theater in a more suburban area south of the city center and dubbed it Chez Artiste (2800 South Colorado Boulevard). Featuring three screens, Chez Artiste has a rare, very cozy "press screening theater" that sits only 40 - 50 people and truly makes you feel as if you are a member of the press.

During the beginning of the theater boom, an old brewing company called Tivoli Brewing (established in 1866), added on some theater screens as part of a small shopping mall. The original owners of those theaters left this cinema with no one to run them for several years. Later the Denver Film Society and the University of Colorado at Denver's College of Arts And Media, with the help of the Starz Encore Group, opened them back up in an attempt to give Denver some true cinematic experiences. Thus the Starz Filmcenter (900 Auraria Parkway) opened in 2002.

They gave the original Tivoli space a sprucing up and reopened its six theaters in order to show film that wasn't readily available on bigger screens. They also hold several film festivals during the year and cycle through 600 - 700 films a year -- the largest amount of films shown in any of Denver's theaters. The theaters themselves are smaller, but intimate, and are a nice place to experience art of moviemaking.

The last theater of note in Denver is also the most fancy. Madstone Theaters (7777 East Hampden Avenue) came to town around the same time Starz opened, but they had a gimmick. They opened a six-screen theater in suburbia that showed independent and Hollywood films, made the building as posh as possible and threw in a café to serve food and other higher quality theater snacks.

It seems that Denver has grown big enough to have specialized independent film centers; however, that growth has stopped for the moment due to the economy, but

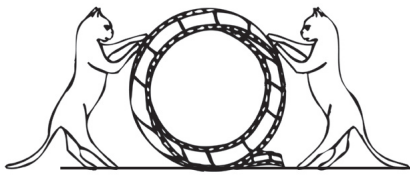
you can bet the next growth spurt in the country Denver will soon see additional independent film venues. Starz Filmcenter claims that over 200,000 Denver Film Society members and guests alone visit their theater every year. The demand is there, but are distributors listening?



Mayan Theater



Esquire Theater



Film Festival Wrap-up: Independent Film Festival of Boston

By Michael Colford & Boston-area CSIF members

The Independent Film Society of Boston (website: www.ifsbboston.org) held their second annual Independent Film Festival of Boston (IFFB) from April 29 - May 2 at the Brattle, Coolidge, and Somerville Theatres. The Festival was well received, drawing 15,000 viewers over the course of the weekend.

The programmers of the IFFB did a terrific job, scoring a number of high-profile films, including several noteworthy Sundance entries. Documentaries were particularly strong and continued last year's trend of the notable non-fiction. The IFFB teamed with the Toronto International Film Festival, much to my delight, featuring several Canadian films (which made up my viewing schedule.) As a festival, it certainly attracts the talent, and apparently, the distribution companies as well. Representatives from most of the big indie distributors were present at the festival, and the IFFB is well on its way to becoming an important Market Festival... something Boston could really use. It is my hope that next year Chlotrudis Society for Independent Film (CSIF) will be able to take a more active role in the festival as an organization, co-presenting a film or two, and really helping the IFFB to become one of the premiere festivals in the country. And I promise to make a lot more films and parties next year!

It's very frustrating that the first two years of what is

potentially one of the most important things to happen in this city with regard to film, have found me double-booked! Running the annual conference for the Massachusetts Library Association is a big undertaking, and the fact that it shares its last two days with the first two nights of the IFFB is the source of my frustration. The good news is that my situation changes next year, as the MLA Conference will be held later in May. The bad news is I only saw three films at the IFFB 2004.



That's not to say that I wasn't involved. The reason I didn't catch more films on Saturday was owed to the fact that I volunteered (as did many Chlotrudis members) for the IFFB, acting as "Theatre Manager" at the Brattle Theatre from 4:30 to midnight. There were several reasons I volunteered (rather than seeing films), and most importantly was the desire to support something that Boston desperately needs: a vital, invigorating, nationally (if not internationally) known and respected independent film festival. CSIF is all about education and promotion of independent film.

We are the perfect partners for the Independent Film Festival of Boston. There were other reasons, of course: repaying the favor of Jason Redmond, Executive Director of the Festival, and Scott Moomaw, Society Director (of the Independent Film Society of Boston), who presented at this year's Chlotrudis Awards ceremony; and a desire to be involved in a festival from the "other side." I have attended many film festivals and been one of the many people waiting in line. I thought this could be my opportunity to be one of those people cheering the confused and impatient moviegoers.

Organizationally, the IFFB is still testing its wings. It takes an incredible amount of planning and hard work to run a festival, and for a sophomore effort, the IFFB does a remarkably good job. Volunteers could have been better coordinated. Tasks weren't fully

IFFB con't on PAGE 7

Film Festival Wrap-up:

Third Time's The Charm For Tribeca

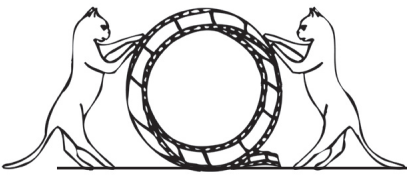
By Ivy Moylan

The 3rd Annual Tribeca Film Festival was a real improvement over my experience attending the first -- which is to be expected of course. The films I saw were better, my housing location was improved, the weather was better, etc.

First of all, I stayed with friends at the Embassy Suites which is in the same building as the multiplex that hosts the bulk of the screenings which was wonderful when stumbling out after the two midnight films I attended. They also had free breakfast that provided the works, not just an assortment of lame baked goods, so I was always starting the day well-fed. Also, because I knew that the festival holds a lot of seats for sponsors, pass holders, and guests I also knew that if I stood in line for a film I was likely to get in so I was able to see films that were sold out in advance.

I did have a couple of celebrity sightings: Jim Jarmusch, who must have been there for the screening of his newest film

TRIBECA con't on PAGE 11



IFFB con't from PAGE 6

fleshed out for people until they arrived for their first shift, and at that point, it was sometimes too hectic to properly explain. The Somerville Theatre, with its multiple screens, faced the largest volunteer challenge, and apparently, failed to master that challenge. Still, my volunteer experience, although understaffed, was a lot of fun, and given a year or two more of experience, the IFFB will have it down.

A Problem with Fear - Despite lukewarm reviews from Toronto, the five Chlotrudis members who caught this film loved it. Reminiscent of director Gary Burns' previous film, the Chlotrudis Buried Treasure co-winner for 2002 *waydowntown*, *Fear* utilizes the insular setting of Calgary's enormous shopping mall. With an absurdist tone, and hilarious dialogue, Burns examines the culture of fear in which we live. Burns and co-writer Donna Burnsdale take a sharp look at the way the media fans the flames of society's fear, a theme reminiscent of Michael Moore's *Bowling for Columbine*. The acting is stylized, but strong, particularly lead actor Paulo Costanzo, and his two supporting actors, Emily Hampshire as his wildly funny girlfriend Dot, and Willie Garson as his sister's coworker Erin. I don't know if this film will receive distribution in the States, but hopefully more Chlotrudis members get to see it. If you enjoyed *waydowntown*, *A Problem with Fear* will be right up your alley.

Flower & Garnet - The intriguing synopsis (and the fact that it was Canadian) caught my eye, but after IFFB Program Director Adam Roffman told me that this was his pick of the Canadian entries, and fellow Chlotrudis member Beth Curran expressed her admiration for the film, I figured I couldn't go wrong. Unfortunately, *Flower & Garnet* failed to live up to expectations. After Garnet's mother dies giving birth to him, and his father, so wrapped up in grief, would rather have the neighbors keep him under their watch, it's up to older sister Flower to take responsibility. Yet now Flower is an adolescent, with all the hormonally-driven behavior that implies, and being mother to

her quiet, introspective brother isn't high on her list of things-to-do. As Garnet spirals deeper into psychosis, I grew increasingly unsettled with the extremes in the script, and the shortcuts taken with behavior. Fortunately, the acting (led by *Last Night's* Callum Keith Rennie) is very strong, and the cinematography powerful, so it wasn't a total loss. Still, the fact that it won the Festival's Grand Jury Prize for a narrative seems rather far-fetched. To each their own.

Luck - Based as it is, on a hugely famous hockey game played in the 1970s between Canada and Russia, I suspect Canadians will have the jump on the

rest of the country when it comes to insider knowledge. Shane is in love with his best friend Margaret. Unfortunately, she's on the rebound from a lengthy relationship, and it is unclear (to him anyway) whether she is going to return to her former beau, or finally break free. When an argument between the two seemingly drives her into her ex's arms (and a trip to London) Shane naturally turns to gambling with his ne'er-do-well friends. This "comedy" never manages to rise above TV-movie of the week melodrama, with jokes falling flat, characterization being fairly random, and lessons being hammered into viewers' heads.

Not even the stellar Sarah Polley (as Margaret) can completely rise above this tiresome script. I mentioned to Scot after seeing *A Problem with Fear*, how excited I was to be seeing films by new, young Canadian directors, potentially adding them to my pantheon of the experienced Egoyans, Rozemas, Fitzgeralds, et. al. After seeing these latter two films, I'm glad the experienced are still hard at work.

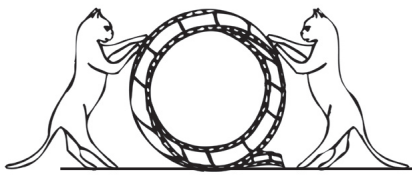
Diane Young:

I caught most of my IFFB screenings at the Somerville Theater, which drew audiences largely made up of twenty-somethings from the neighborhood. It's a great site for a festival, with the theater's four screens and plenty to do and eat during breaks from film

IFFB con't on PAGE 8



Paulo Costanzo and Emily Hampshire as Laurie and Dot in *A Problem with Fear*



IFFB con't from PAGE 7

watching. The timing coincided nicely with Somerville's Open Studio Days, with many artists' studios within walking distance of the theater. Highly recommended: *I Like Killing Flies*, Matt Mahurin's docu about caustic NYC restaurateur Kenny Shopsin, and *Gowanus, Brooklyn*, a fictional short about home and school life featuring a powerhouse perf by an inexperienced actress (Ryan Fleck, director). Watch for this as a feature someday. Films to avoid despite the lure of good casts or important issues: *The Baroness And The Pig*, *Saved!*, *Deadline*, *Goodnight Joseph Parker*. I disliked 6 of my 9 viewings, and most of the moviegoers I talked to were likewise unenthused. The advantage of a festival is that Q&A is worthwhile even if the film is not. Maybe especially...

Chris Kriofske:

I Like Killing Flies: You've probably already heard lots of praise about this simple, beautiful film, and get ready to hear a lot more over the next year. I can't remember another doc where I've laughed so hard and felt so moved. This follows Kenny Shopsin, a hilariously profane, unexpectedly gifted chef (his menu contains over 900 items) who ran a tiny, pre-gentrification Greenwich Village diner with his wife and five children for over 30 years. As he loses his lease and prepares to sublet a larger location down the street, viewers can practically glean a philosophy of the entire world in his single grain of sand. Kenny may be cranky, but as the film progresses, he eventually comes off as a honest and exceptionally humane son-of-a-bitch. 5 cats

Dig!: This frenzied documentary is worthy of the hype lavished upon it. A chronicle of seven years in the lives of two bands, The Dandy Warhols and The Brian Jonestown Massacre, who start out as friends and end up taking wildly divergent paths. Deeper and much more fun than your average rockumentary, with BJM leader Anton Newcombe emerging as a fascinating portrait of an eccentric, mad, tragic genius. 4 cats

Gowanus, Brooklyn: I wish our short film festival received more entries like this somber, subtle, soulful sketch about a 12-year-old girl and one of her teachers. Everything is delicately nuanced and left open; if the filmmakers succeed in expanding this into a feature, it could be another *Our Song* or *Raising Victor Vargas*. 4 cats

Big City Dick: Richard Peterson's First Movie: A Se-

attle fixture for decades, Richard Peterson is a mentally challenged, musically gifted savant obsessed with Johnny Mathis and orchestral cues from the '50s TV show *Sea Hunt*. Initially, I feared that the filmmakers were crudely exploiting Peterson in this documentary, but that feeling disintegrated over time. To the film's credit, watching it is akin to meeting Peterson; at first, you don't know what to make of him, but gradually, he becomes familiar and (dare I say) engaging. Although the film's a little slick and overlong, Peterson is unlike anyone you've ever met (the real life "Rain Man" comparisons don't do him justice). I think I'd much rather meet him onscreen than in person. 3.5 cats

Sexual Dependency: I had mixed feelings about this ambitious but flawed first feature from director Rodrigo Bellott. Beginning in Bolivia and ending up at a prototypical American university, it tracks a cast of young adults undergoing various sexual awakenings, experiences and epiphanies. It's entirely in split screen (except for one shot), which at times makes for some interesting comparisons/contrasts; at other times, it's merely superfluous and distracting. The cyclical script is a little uneven and cliched on occasion, but innovative in its construction, with a pretty surprising conclusion. 3 cats

Carolyn Ziering:

I didn't hang around much at the film festival so I don't have any sort of overview on the whole thing, but I did see *Luck* and *Dig!*

I really enjoyed both of them. *Luck* was a sort of hopeless story about gambling and addiction in general. The main character did waiver back and forth A LOT, but I thought the acting was good and it showed how difficult overcoming an addiction can be.

I really liked *Dig!*, the documentary about Brian Jonestown Massacre and the Dandy Warhols. I didn't know anything about BJM beforehand and the film seemed very real and honest. They weren't hiding anything.

Rob Stanhope:

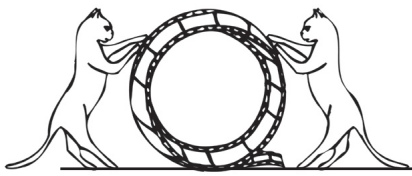
David Inniss and I spent two evenings attending films at the 2004 IFFB and saw five films at the Somerville Theater: *Saved!*, *Slasher*, *Seducing Doctor Lewis*, *Monster Road*, and *5 Sides of a Coin*. Overall we had a great time and felt most of the films were better than average.

I'm a big fan of documentaries, so I was really look-

IFFB con't on PAGE 9



Dig!



IFFB con't from PAGE 8

ing forward to *Slasher* by John Landis, which chronicled a flamboyant hyperactive freelance car salesman during a frenzied weekend sale-a-thon in Memphis. It was hilarious, disgusting and sad at the same time -- but in the end I actually came to respect the car salesman. I would highly recommend this film. 5 cats

The two other documentaries were not as wildly entertaining. I expected *Monster Road* (Brett Ingram, director) to be simply a geeky exploration into how claymation is done. It is much more. The film shows us Bruce Bickford, a solitary artist who has spent his life creating bizarrely beautiful clay animation (mostly known for his work with Frank Zappa in the 70s).

Bickford comes across as a genius-type, highly creative, but also a bit crazy. He's an eccentric, secluded man dealing with his own demons from his youth and caring for an elderly father in mental decline. The animation sequences are violent and grotesque but mesmerizing and seem to mirror Bickford's emotions when he talks about his past. It seems he spent most of his life making these strange clay animation films (a long, tedious

and solitary practice -- he made 10 seconds of film per day), I began to wonder if the nature of his artwork help to make him into such a strange man. *Monster Road* is more intriguing for its examination into Bickford's personality than his craft. 4 cats

5 Sides of a Coin is a documentary on the history of hip-hop music. I had no expectations going into this film and was entertained and informed, but I did not think it was spectacular. 3 cats

Saved! and *Seducing Doctor Lewis* were the only "narrative" films we saw. We must have been in the mood for humor because both films were highly comical. *Saved!* was definitely not as sophisticated and was even predictable, but I enjoyed the absurd story: a devout Baptist high school girl has sex with her gay boyfriend to make him straight (a vision from Jesus put that idea in her head!) This sets her up for some funny scenes with her ultra-religious Tammy Faye-wannabe

friends. This film is definitely not for everyone, but if you're queer or a recovering fundamentalist you might appreciate some of the humor. 3.5 cats

Seducing Doctor Lewis, on the other hand, was simply a funny tender film. It's basically the plot of *Northern Exposure* set in Quebec, but I enjoyed the wonderfully portrayed colorful characters, including the quaint little fishing village (love the coastal scenery). 4 cats

I think the shining star of my experience at the IFFB was the staff at the Somerville Theater. I was amazed at how smoothly the large crowds were handled. Everyone was helpful and pleasant, despite the large number of people and the possible confusion one would expect at such a big event. I would give the IFFB five cats!



Saved!

Beth Curran:

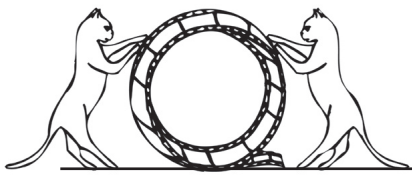
Rick, starring Bill Pullman. This was okay; really pretty interesting mood the script and director were going for: over-the-top broad silly dialogue and schtick along with some serious suspense and angst, not to mention outright tragedy. I can't say it was 100% successful, but I have to give the director kudos for going out on that limb. One great thing was Dylan Baker,

who was clearly having a ball in every one of his scenes. 2 ½ cats

The Puppeteer, a featurette about a local street performer in Harvard Square who I had seen many times while in grad school. He died a few years ago while the producers were working on a doc about his story: Russian puppeteer coming to the States to practice his art the way he wants to and becoming beloved local fixture. I was near tears a couple of times, hearing him speak (which he never did while performing) and seeing him do his thing again. However, I do wonder if this would be of interest to anybody not already familiar with the artist - much of the narration assumes a familiarity with Cambridge and the Square. 4 ½ cats if you're local, 3 ½ cats otherwise.

Dig!, documentary about the relationship/rivalry/history of the Dandy Warhols and the Brian Jonestown

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Massacre. Loved this one, definitely try to see it -- it's pretty much about the founders of each group, and how each fared with the whole balancing indie cred with career success. Or not, as the case may be. They gave the filmmaker amazing access, so it's a total insider's look at what these bands were like, warts and all. Present for Q&A after was Joel, ex of the BJM -- if you know BJM at all, he was the tambourine man -- and he's got some of the funniest riffs in the doc, so he was a hoot to chat up afterwards. Folks who like *Hard Core Logo* must see this film, I was cracking up at some of the similarities!

5 cats, wearing cool shades dude!

Deadline, another documentary was about the death penalty. Specifically, the Northwestern journalism class that managed to undercover enough evidence to get the sentences of several death row inmates overturned, and set off a chain of events that led to the Governor of Illinois commuting the sentences of all death row prisoners to life. Really interesting, very well balanced. Only problem, which made it ultimately come off more like Frontline-lite, was that its focus was too broad and scattered, as if they couldn't pick among related "death row topics" for the focus, so just threw a little of each in. So as a whole it didn't come together as a film. 3 cats

I went back and forth about seeing *Saved!*, but I was in the mood for goofy, and in that respect it delivered. It's a teen flick-like comedy about a good, devout born again Christian girl (Jena Malone) who starts to question things after the plan she thought Jesus had for her goes a little astray, and she finds herself on the bad side of her former friend, the most popular girl in their evangelical Christian school (Mandy Moore). I feel sorry for the film's marketing director - I suspect folks expecting a religious satire will be disappointed, and teens looking for a crass

teen flick will think it's too goody-goody. It's more like a *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* for the evangelical set - very curious to see how it will do when it's released. Funny, but also poignant...although they could have used a little bit of a lighter touch on the Big Message, still a good film. Loved the set design, too - and hey, Mandy Moore has a knack for comedic acting, who knew? 4 cats

Moonlight - I still can't decide if I liked it or not (can't decide if the things that jarred were my problem or the film's, it's one of those deals) but I will say that the girl starring in it was fabulous; incredibly expressive face. The story is hers, about what happens on the same day she first gets her period, when she finds an injured (shot by drug smugglers) foreign boy in her shed. It's something like a coming-of-age story, and a parable of some sort (after the umpteenth moving camera shot of woods, I think the "modern day fable" thing becomes compulsory). It fell off the rails a bit about 2/3 through, trying to do too much, but recouped in time at the end. 3 1/2 cats.

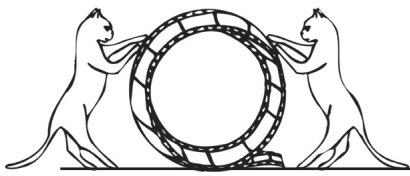
The Frank International Film Festival - this short was pretty funny. It was by Bob Odenkirk, and was a sort of loving spoof of all the film festivals he & his cast went to last year to support his feature, *Melvin Goes to Dinner* (which I saw at last year's IFFB and can only say, eh). An amusing cameo by Mike White made the piece.

The last film I saw was *Luck*, which was set in the 1970s around the time of the Canadian-Russian tourney (presumably the Olympics - they don't say). This guy thinks he's alternately lucky/unlucky based on his optimism/pessimism regarding his chances with his platonic gal-pal, the lovely Ms. Sarah Polley. Again, I say, eh. Started off okay, although it bugged me when

the script had them using modern day vernacular. The bad haircuts and clothing is really the only thing that was consistently 70s. The plot was too much, someone should have forced the writer/director to give up at least two twists. Way too much deus ex machina going on; one way in particular just pissed me off where the script has a major character completely contradict herself and her earlier actions for the sake of a "gotcha" moment. Arrrghh, I HATE that - particularly when it makes me dislike Sarah Polley...that's just wrong! 2 1/2 cats.



Moonlight



TRIBECA con't from PAGE 6

Coffee and Cigarettes, and Rosie Perez (recognized like so: that woman is so short, she looks a little like Rosie Perez, she IS Rose Perez...) I also ran into Boston filmmaker Ellie Lee who was floating on a cloud after winning a screenwriting award and pitching her film to investors all week.

Ned and I saw a lot of different films and here are the quick impressions of what I saw. There are some gems that probably won't get released but keep an eye out for them at local calendar screens, festivals, and eventually maybe on video.

Zatoichi - Miramax will release this film in the summer. It is the latest in the Blind Swordsman series starring Beat Takeshi. There are some wonderful elements to the film that are very unexpected, the story is pretty run-of-the-mill samurai stuff. A great crowd-pleaser with an amazing last scene!

Satan's Little Helper - The newest film by the B-movie director who made *Blue Sunshine* is a perfect midnight film. This one stars Steven Schneider's (co-programmer of The Brattle's Fantastic Film Fest) girlfriend alongside Amanda Plummer. There were some great ideas and the script wasn't half-bad, but the main kid who the story depended on was AWFUL. In the end I was just waiting impatiently for it to end. If it's on cable I would recommend checking it out if you like B-movies because there are a couple genius moments, but the bad acting was unforgivable for me...so sad.

Butterfly Lovers - A Taiwanese animated film about the doomed love affair between a girl who cross-dresses in order to be educated and then falls in love with one of her schoolmates. It was a great story but the film's style was aimed at 7-year-old kids and wasn't appealing.

Delamu - doc by the Chinese filmmaker who directed *The Blue Kite* - this is a meditative and personal film about the border between China and Tibet, the people who live there, and the Tea Horse Road, which travels through that region. I am hoping that we will be able to play this film at The Brattle. It is amazing,

masterfully done.

Crystal - a 60-minute doc directed by Mania Akbari, the woman who was the star of *Ten*. She was there, too; she's pretty inspirational! Shot with a hand-held video camera the filmmaking style is very rough but

the story is riveting. A Kurd woman who lives on the border between Iran and Iraq has developed a strange illness where all of the mucus membranes in her body have started creating carbon-based crystals. Yes, that means inside her eyelids, in her throat, her reproductive system and sometimes even from the palms of her hands and the soles of her feet. She moves in with the director as they take her to various doctors trying to get a diagnosis and hopefully some sort of cure. In the end it ends up being as much a story about this strange illness as it is a story of two women becoming

friends or one woman discovering strength in herself and well as discovering her femininity. I was gobsmacked!

A Tale Of Two Sisters - This Korean psychological horror movie about a family and their secrets is another candidate for a midnight screening. Very creepy, well-shot, well-written, and amazing set decoration!

Green Hat - This was the Jury Narrative film winner - a first film by the director. This is a surprising Chinese film because it deals with the struggle within relationships. It felt like it was affected by the work of Neil LaBute and Todd Solondz; very modern. The main focus of the film is the main characters (who I will admit were all men) are trying to figure out what love is while grappling with the knowledge that their lovers are being unfaithful. I don't know if this had distribution but I hope it gets it.

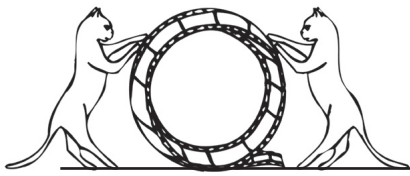
Toronto still has my heart, but when a festival is so easy to get to and I am already pumped from the success of the Independent Film Festival of Boston, it's nice to be able to get out of town, enjoy the sunshine (and shopping in Soho and Chinatown), have good meals, and also see some wonderful films!

Now on to the Provincetown International Film Festival in June! It's going to be festival-filled year!



Zatoichi





Upcoming At Local Theatres

Museum of Fine Arts

The June film schedule at the MFA begins with the area engagement of *Lost Boys Of Sudan*, the insightful documentary by Megan Mylan and Jon Shenk, June 2 through July 3. We will then present the area engagement of the Hungarian film *Hukkle*, June 17 through July 8. György Pálfi combines documentary techniques and sound collage to exquisite effect in his debut feature film which combines a detailed and beautifully photographed examination of pastoral life with an engrossing murder mystery. Also, our engagement of the intergenerational family drama *Since Otar Left* continues through July 8.

On June 3 we start our series of Boston Jewish Film Festival Encores with a two screenings of Ivy Meeropol's documentary *Heir To An Execution* on June 3 & 6. Ivy Meeropol will be present for the second screening on June 6. Encores continues through July 8 with 5 of the most warmly

received films from previous festivals representing Jewish communities from around the world. This series is co-presented by The Boston Jewish Film Festival.

June 18 & 19 we present the last film in spring installment of Cinema Tropical: *Un Oso Rojo*, from the critically acclaimed director of *Bolivia*. We also continue our Cinema India with: *The Lady Of The House* (June 3 & 5), *Anything Can Happen* (June 4 & 6), *I Have Found It* (June 10 & 12), and *Magbool* (June 11 & 13).

Once again, we will host a program of highlights from the Do It Your Damn Self!! Youth Video and Film Festival on Saturday, June 26 at 12:15 PM. This youth-curated festival features shorts made by teens across the country. As part of our New England Film Artists Present series, Laurel Greenberg's documentary *Trouble In Paradise*, preceded by the short film *Today I Vote For My Joey*, premieres on Sunday, June 27 at 12:15 PM. Laurel Greenberg will be present.



Hukkle

Harvard Film Archives

Peter Lorre: A Sinister Centennial June 1-June 13

One of the great character actors of Hollywood cinema, Hungarian-born Peter Lorre (born in June 1904 as Ladislav Loewenstein) left his family home at the age of 17 and traveled through Switzerland and Austria before settling in Germany, where he became a favorite of playwright Bertolt Brecht. Although he preferred working in comedy, Lorre made his film breakthrough portraying a child murderer in *M* (1931) and quickly became typecast as a screen villain. When Hitler ascended to power in 1933, Lorre, a Jew, fled first to Paris where

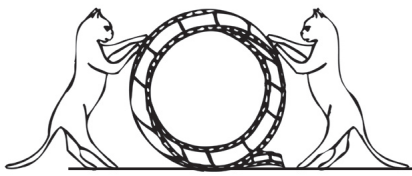
he worked with G.W. Pabst, then to London, where he appeared in his first English-language film, Hitchcock's

The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934). Upon his arrival in Hollywood, Lorre was cast in roles calling for varying degrees of madness, such as the love-obsessed surgeon in *Mad Love* (1935) and the existentialist killer in *Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment* (1935). Signed to a contract with Fox in 1936, Lorre asked for and received a chance to play a good guy for a change in the controversial Mr. Moto series. While under contract with Warner Brothers, Lorre played a



Casablanca

HFA con't on PAGE 13



HFA con't from PAGE 12

hapless foil to Humphrey Bogart in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941), *Casablanca* (1942), and *Passage to Marseille* (1944). Director Jean Negulesco fought bitterly with the studio brass for permission to cast Lorre as the sympathetic leading man in *The Mask of Dimitrios* (1944), in which he gave one of his finest and subtlest performances. In 1951, Lorre briefly returned to Germany, where he directed and starred in the postwar psychological drama *Der Verlorene* (*The Lost One*). Soon after, he returned to Hollywood to reteam with John Huston on *Beat the Devil* (1953), a burlesque of his own *Maltese Falcon*. Apart from a few minor sidekick roles, Lorre ended up working in horror films, most notably Roger Corman's *The Raven*. This program provides a small sampling of the diverse talents of this gifted actor.

This program is co-presented with the Goethe-Institut Boston. Special thanks to the Pacific Film Archive, the Austrian Film Museum, Kinemathek Hamburg and



M

24 Quincy St., Cambridge, MA.

www.harvardfilmarchive.org

Tickets: \$8 and \$6.

Warner Brothers.

Treasures From The Harvard Film Archive: A-z

June 26 - August 15

The Harvard Film Archive pays homage to the art-house programs of a bygone era by assembling a summer season of double-feature screenings drawn from its extensive collection of 9,000 prints. This year, we are taking a freeform approach to our alphabetical arrangement incorporating film directors (Jean Renoir, Ermanno Olmi) and film actors (Terence Stamp, Gerard Depardieu) as well as a variety of genres and other unconventional categories.

The Harvard Film Archive is located on the lower level of the Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts,

Coolidge Corner Theatre

The Coolidge Corner Theatre just came off of a gala month of screenings and events with our special guest Zhang Yimou. His film *Hero* was one of the highlights of the month, but I hear it's nothing compared to his newest Cannes entry *The House Of Flying Daggers*. Can't wait!

Still, things aren't exactly slowing down at the Coolidge, as we have a loaded schedule for the next couple of months. On the feature film front, join us for *The Story Of The Weeping Camel* (June 18), a delightful new docu-drama that will leave you cheering. Or try Richard Linklater's *Before Sunset* (July 2), a romantic reunion that will leave you weeping. Or maybe the documentary *Word Wars* (June 11), the true life of professional Scrabble players that will leave you, uh, wording.

And it looks like filmmakers are starting to fight the system (in pleasingly angry 60s style) in this summer's line-up of documentary films: *The Corporation* (July 16), a scathing (and scathingly funny) criticism of our increasingly unavoidable corporate world; the life of one of our most radical thinkers in *Howard*

Zinn: You Can't Be Neutral On A Moving Train (June 25) - with a special big screen show with the man in person on June 29; and a peek behind the right wing conspiracy theories in *The Hunting Of The President* (July 23). And we are of course keeping our eye on a certain Cannes award winner to see what's going to happen with that...

Takeshi Kitano's new film *Zatoichi* was scheduled to open at the Coolidge June 11, but Miramax pulled the release date (why is that not a surprise). It should now be hitting Boston in late July or early August, so keep an eye out.

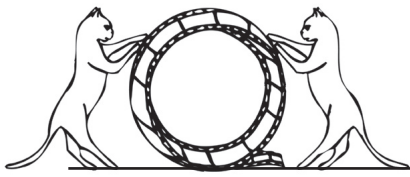
Lots of special events at the Coolidge as well. Mondays we have our yearly celebrations **Jazz In June** and **Summertime Blues**, an innovative music and film series in conjunction with our friends at WGBH that features greats like Jimmy Scott, Nina Simone, Al Green, Oscar Howlin' Wolf, to name a few.

COOLIDGE con't on PAGE 14



The Corporation

Aleman, John Zorn, and



COOLIDGE con't from PAGE 13

We've also got the Boston Jewish Film Festival back in da house with special screenings of favorites from this year's favorites: the hilarious Jewsploitation comedy *The Hebrew Hammer*, and the remarkably fun *Fiddler On The Roof Sing-a-long* - on Father's Day no less. Dad will be psyched!

And we have our special Director's Cut screenings: Michelle Nicholassen's *Girl At Risk*, the shocking new documentary *Hijacking Catastrophe: 9-11, Fear And The Selling Of An Empire*, and award-winning filmmaker Carma Hinton (*The Gate Of Heavenly Peace*) with her new film *Morning Sun*, an examination of China's in-

credibly bizarre Cultural Revolution.

Sandra Sullivan, the former programmer for the New England Film and Video Festival, is now helping to curate our Director's Cut programs, which also include two special midnight shows: *All Kindsa Girls* with the Real Kids playing live (June 11) and *Boston Beats And Rhymes* with live performance by rapper D-Tension and a second feature, the recent Independent Film Festival favorite *5 Sides Of A Coin*.

And of course much more than I can list here, from midnites with Quentin Tarantino to programs for new parents and teens. Check our website for more:

www.coolidge.org.

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