Your film goes here

Local Focus Film Festival will screen 40 locally made independent movies at free weeklong event

From left to right, images from: *Downside Up*, *When Life Sucks Get a Helmet,* and *Mona and Theo,* all movies that will be screened at the Local Focus Film Festival, starting March 15.

By Colin Hunter, Record staff

If Toronto can be known as Hollywood North, it seems Waterloo Region can rightly claim the title of Hollywood North-and-a-Bit-West.

Judging by the sheer volume of movies entered in — and even rejected by — the second annual Local Focus Film Festival, this area is bristling with movie magic.

Nearly 40 independent, locally made movies from every conceivable genre will be screened during the free, weeklong film fest, which starts March 15.

"That's 662 minutes of film in total," says Azam Fouk Aladeh, founder of the Multicultural Cinema Club and curator of the festival.

Fouk Aladeh has watched every one of those 662 minutes, and was "very surprised by the quality of the film-making happening in this community," he says.

"We have many artists and filmmakers here who are telling beautiful and powerful stories through film."

Among such stories are:

- *Mona and Theo*, a 13-minute romantic tragedy that puts a new twist on a Shakespearean theme.
- *Inside,* a grisly crime flick about an ex-con whose long-lost love, an ailing prostitute, is trapped in the clutches of her pimp.
- *When Life Sucks Get a Helmet*, about four young dudes engaged in a game of cat-and-mouse with a toy store security guard.
- *Downside Up*, a full-length documentary directed by Fouk Aladeh, which explores the causes and effects of youth homelessness in Kitchener.
- *The Ticket*, a 10-minute paranormal thriller by local director C. Edward Stewart, about the strange goings-on at an all-night rave.

"They're a very diverse group of films," says Fouk Aladeh.

Diversity, whether ethnic or cinematic, is part of the mandate of the Multicultural Cinema Club. Fouk Aladeh says the vast range of topics and styles in the film festival reflects the multi-faceted nature of Canadian culture.

"There is such a broad range in this festival, with short films, action films, meditative films and political films."

This year marks the first time that filmmakers will receive a small artist's fee for their contributions to the festival, and audience members will be invited to vote for a Public Choice Award.

Screenings will be held at 7 p.m. at the Kitchener City Hall council chambers every night between March 16 and March 22.

The festival will kick off on March 15 with a reception at the Walper Terrace Hotel and conclude with another reception at the Walper on March 22.

"Just come, enjoy, support your local filmmakers and vote," says Fouk Aladeh.

"You will be impressed."

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The kids will be bopping

The Doodlebops: Together Forever Tour hits Centre in the Square on March 16

By Victoria Ahearn

TORONTO — Montreal multimedia maestro Daniel Angers has created some dazzling technical effects over his 30-year career, projecting giant videos and images onto the ice at NHL games and onto the facades of buildings.

But when asked to mount a similar presentation for a trio of pink, orange and blue rockers and their preschooler fans, he was nearly stumped.

"To a certain extent, it's more difficult because you're not a two-year-old," said Angers, who has created a giant three-screen panoramic video for *The Doodlebops: Together Forever Tour*. The tour hits Kitchener's Centre in the Square on Monday, March 16.

"In my case, I'm a 51-year-old, so it's trying to put yourself in the shoes of a two-year-old and trying to blow them away and trying to show them stuff that are going to keep them amazed."

Angers, owner of multimedia presentation company Dangers, was asked by Koba Entertainment last fall to add his technical prowess to the Doodlebops tour that will hit 52 cities across the country, with colourful rock-star siblings Deedee, Rooney and Moe Doodle from the hit Canadian kids' TV show.

He'd never done a kids' show before but accepted the job so that his two-year-old daughter would finally get a sense of "what daddy does."

Little Sofia was his main creative consultant, he said.

"What she does when she wants 'again, again,' she kind of hits her palms together and on a couple of songs she kept, 'again, again' — she wanted to see it again — so I know we've hit the target," said Angers, one of just a handful of people working in what he calls the "niche market" of giant projections in North America.

"I don't want to take away from the actors — it's a whole show — but I know that the visuals on those screens, the kids are definitely going to be attracted to them. There's no two ways about it."

STUART RAMSON, FOR THE DOODLEBOPS

The Canadian children's rock band The Doodlebops includes (from left) Rooney Doodle, Deedee Doodle and Moe Doodle.

Angers uses massive projectors controlled by media servers to beam the video onto three massive split screens. He created the presentation using the graphic designs of his longtime collaborator, Luc Lavergne, a multimedia guru with Cirque du Soleil.

The video presentation, which will screen beside the stage while the Doodlebops are playing, offers "state-of-the-art technology," said Angers.

"Kids' shows usually — I don't know if it's budgets, I'm new with kids' show — but I think in the past people would (think): 'Oh, it's a kids' show, we don't have to put a lot of money on something, or it doesn't have to be great,' " said Angers, who has done similar large-scale projections at the Juno Awards, the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament and various corporate gigs.

"Whereas now it's more: 'Yeah, let's make it great.'

"The fact that it's a kids' show or it's not a kids' show, the technology's there — let's use it, let's have fun with it, let's blow 'em away.'"

Adults will also be struck by the show, said Koba Entertainment artistic director Patti Caplette.

"The show is non-stop rock and non-stop dance so the kids will be bopping but . . . jeepers, mom and dad are really going to appreciate the physicality and the tricks and all that just like you'd see on *So You Think You Can Dance* or things like that," she said.

"It's not pandered down."

The Canadian Press

TV's preschooler rock stars

The Doodlebops: Together Forever Tour

Centre in the Square, Kitchener
Monday, March 16
7 p.m.

Springsteen exhibit will open April 1 at rock 'n' roll hall of fame

By M.R. Kropko

CLEVELAND — Seeking something fresh and exciting to complement its upcoming induction ceremony, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's fondest wish has come true — 1999 inductee Bruce Springsteen will help create a new exhibit solely dedicated to the Boss.

The hall yesterday announced plans to open *From Asbury Park to the Promised Land: The Life and Music of Bruce Springsteen* on April 1, three days before the hall holds its induction ceremonies in Cleveland.

Featuring various memorabilia from Springsteen, the exhibit is expected to run through the spring of 2010.

"He's someone we've always wanted to do a big exhibit on," said Jim Henke, the rock hall's curator. "So it's one of those things that I'd bring up with his manager from time to time. Last summer they said, 'Yes, it makes sense now.' "

It's perfect timing for a year that has been pretty Springsteen packed already. He performed during festivities surrounding the inauguration of U.S. President Barack Obama, released his latest album, *Working on a Dream*, in January, then was the halftime entertainment at the Super Bowl last month.

He's planning a major tour to kick off April 1 in San Jose, Calif., and will even make an appearance at the Bonnaroo Music & Arts Festival in June.

Henke says the Springsteen exhibit may be the most extensive exhibit on a rock star ever done at the hall. Previous exhibits have focused on the lives and careers of John Lennon, Bob Dylan and Ray Charles.

Springsteen has provided various guitars, including the one he holds on the cover of *Born to Run*, the album that helped rocket his popularity. The exhibit also will have scrapbooks and notebooks in which Springsteen wrote many song lyrics.

"Once (Bruce) knew this was real, that it would really happen, he wanted it to have as much depth as it could possibly have," said Jon Landau, Springsteen's manager and board member of the hall. "He is fully behind this exhibition and the effort the museum has made to really get things right."

Landau said he's sure that the Boss eventually will visit the exhibit.

The Associated Press