



Back to Projections: 30 new films for LIFT's 30th birthday

Projections: 30 new films for LIFT's 30th birthday

January 12, 2012

JASON ANDERSON

LIFT'S BIRTHDAY BASH: Founded in 1981 with the help of such soon-to-be local luminaries as Bruce McDonald and Peter Mettler, the [Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto](#) was one of the biggest reasons for the indie movie boom that launched fellow talents like Atom Egoyan and Patricia Rozema and became known as the Toronto New Wave. In the three decades since its inception, LIFT has enabled countless artists achieve their visions by providing access to equipment, courses, workshops, exhibition opportunities and other professional resources.

LIFT has been especially vital at fostering the activities of experimental filmmakers. To help celebrate its birthday, LIFT commissioned [30 new films](#) from veteran artists as well as many emerging talents. Each of the films either originated on Super 8 or was made with the well-loved film format in mind.



A still from Prashant Miranda's "In Memory Of The Northern Red Oak," one of the 30 films commissioned for LIFT's anniversary.

Dubbed "30 x 30," the resulting bounty of grainy goodness includes contributions by R. Bruce Elder, Mike Hoolboom, Larissa Fan, John Porter and other stalwarts of the fringe-film community. Standout shorts include a rumination on ancient pyramids and painterly perspectives (Chris Kennedy's *Towards a Vanishing Point*), an eerie tale of interplanetary invasion (Christina Battle's *when the smog-filled wind began to howl*) and a swoony melodrama comprised largely of found footage, including a few raunchy stag loops (Midi Onodera's *The Grand Design*).

The whole program plays over three nights starting Thursday, Jan. 19 at 8 p.m. at AGO's Jackman Hall.

SILENT SUNDAYS RETURN: What with the French hit *The Artist* attracting major Oscar buzz — and, one can only hope, a nomination for Uggie the dog — it's high time for another opportunity to savour the enduring pleasures of silent cinema. On Sunday at 4 p.m. at the [Revue](#) (400 Roncesvalles Ave.), Silent Sundays returns with a screening of *La Boheme*, a smash hit in 1926 for MGM, director King Vidor and star Lillian Gish. Pianist William O'Meara provides accompaniment to the first screen adaptation of Puccini's opera about free-living proto-hipsters in Paris's Latin Quarter.

A SPECIAL NIGHT FOR ANIME FANS: One of the most popular Japanese anime series gets a rare big-screen showcase this week at [six local Cineplex theatres](#). *Fullmetal Alchemist: The Sacred Star of Milos* is the second feature-film spinoff of Hiromu Arakawa's steampunk-influenced manga about cyborg brothers determined to restore their human bodies by alchemical means. FUNimation's new English-language dub of Kazuya Murata's film screens Sunday at 12:45 p.m. with an encore presentation on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. Participating venues include the Scotiabank Theatre and Silver City Richmond Hill.

TWO NIGHTS FOR HORROR FANS: A Friday the 13th without a horror movie is like a St. Patrick's Day without a pint of green beer. To mark this most superstitious of days, the Projection Booth and *Fangoria* magazine present a double bill of new horror films by Toronto's Ryan M. Andrews, a prolific young purveyor of low-budget genre fare. Along with the world premiere of his short *The Devil Walks Among Us*, the east-end theatre also screens Andrews' 2010 feature *Black Eve*, the grisly story of a Halloween party that ends in a massacre — Andrews and members of his cast and crew will be on hand for Q&As after the 9 p.m. screening. Then next Thursday at 9:30 p.m., Rue Morgue's monthly Cinemacabre series returns to the Toronto Underground Cinema with the local premiere of *The Dead*, a zombie road movie that gives the legions of the undead a new place to ravage: West Africa.

JULIETTE LEWIS SPEAKS: "What was it like working with Garry Marshall on *The Other Sister*?" That's just one of the questions you might (or might not) hear when Juliette Lewis visits TIFF Bell Lightbox for an onstage discussion of the American thespian and rocker's oeuvre. Having worked with everyone from Martin Scorsese to Oliver Stone to Woody Allen, she should have some stories to tell as she takes a break from her current gig on the new TV legal drama *The Firm*. She's at [Lightbox](#) on Monday at 6:30 p.m.

GARY HUSTWIT'S DESIGN TRILOGY: TIFF Bell Lightbox's new winter season continues with a series on American director Gary Hustwit's trio of stimulating docs on aspects of contemporary design. Screening Friday at 6:30 p.m., *Urbanized* is Hustwit's new primer on the present and possible future of our cities. Three more screenings of the director's latest follow on Sunday and Tuesday, along with a Saturday afternoon double feature of its predecessors *Helvetica* (about the history of the world's most ubiquitous typeface) and *Objectified* (which explores the secret lives of everyday things). Hustwit will be on hand for Q&As at the screenings on Friday and Saturday.

EARLY MONTHLY SEGMENTS: A local series dedicated to presenting revered but seldom screened avant-garde works, Early Monthly Segments continues this week with *Print Generation* (1974). This "structural gem" by American artist and academic J.J. Murphy consists of

60 one-second-long shots that have been duplicated 50 times — the gradual process of degradation has a strangely beautiful effect on the original images. It can be yours to behold on Monday at 6 p.m. at the [Gladstone Hotel Ballroom](#) (1214 Queen St. W.).