

Erie Times-News

September 08, 2004

First, the Dems. Then, the GOP. Next week: The indies will take over at the Roadhouse.

By Dave Richards, Staff writer

Democrats had their convention. So did the Republicans. Next week, the independents take over — as in independent movies.

The **Great Lakes Independent Film Festival** will return Sept. 16-19 at the Roadhouse Theatre with more than 70 works in assorted genres, including animation, experimental, documentaries, and narrative shorts and features.

Per usual, the event will also include an after-hours party with live music at Docksider. This one, on Sept. 17, will feature fast-rising band **Odiorne**, which was recently cited by VH1 as one of its top 10 bands to watch.

The group includes Jimmy Chambers, the former drummer for Mercury Rev, and mixes classic and acid-rock influences into something cool and exciting. **Canadian Friday, Fantazim, and 5 Empty Chambers** will also play. It'll be the last show for Greg Ropp's 5 Empty Chambers; the group is breaking up.

The festival has already disclosed its 2004 nominees and award winners, perhaps to help steer audiences towards films worth catching. So opening night will feature "Yard Sale," the winner for **Best Director** (Bobby Logan) and for **Founder's Vision**. Opening night also includes nine different shorts, including "North of Providence," the **Best of the Fest** winner, based on Edward Allen Baker's off-Broadway drama.

Several films feature name actors, including narrative feature "Fogbound" with Luke Perry; the horror thriller "Tales from Beyond" with Adam "Batman" West; and the documentary "Barbecue: A Texas Love Story;" with Dan Rather, Ann Richards, Kinky Friedman, and Everclear's Art Alexakis.

Those seeking something topical and political will find at least two documentaries: "There's Something about W," which has snippets from Molly Ivins, Michael Moore, Bill Maher, Al Franken, and Arianna Huffington; and Robert Greenwald's "Uncovered: The Whole Truth About the Iraq War."

Music fans shouldn't miss "Living the Blues," which visits nine senior blues artists. Then there's "Upper Crust: Let Them Eat Rock," a documentary that profiles a Boston band that dresses like 18th-century European noblemen. They had their first gig with Conan

O'Brien booked, and nice profiles in Vanity Fair and the New Yorker when the FBI suddenly thought them suspicious and investigated them. That sounds intriguing.

Also cool: A midnight showing of the original "**Night of the Living Dead**" on Sept. 18 at midnight, which will include some guest zombies from the film.

This is only the tip of what's on tap, though. Some special guests may arrive. Look for lots more in next week's Showcase. If you're planning ahead, though, tickets will be \$6 for opening night. After that, it's \$3 for each block of films. An all-access pass for everything festival-related is \$25. Closing day will be a Best of the Fest day.

Also, of note: The Great Lakes Independent Film Association plans a follow-up **horror film festival** in October. That'll include guests Mark Borchert ("American Movie") and Conrad Brooks, who starred in Ed Wood's "Plan 9 from Outer Space."