

Creep show

The following film fest preview has been approved for horror-loving audiences

By Kennita Hickman

Posted: Oct. 19, 2006

Ever wonder what makes a great horror movie? According to Wayne Clingman, the answer is simple.

"It's the idea that you don't know what's out there," said Clingman, executive director of It Came from Lake Michigan!, a new film festival for horror buffs. "You come home, and something doesn't feel right. You look in the bedroom, and you're like, 'What's in the bedroom?' Sometimes, it's just the cat doing whatever cats do. And sometimes, it's an alien from outer space. But it's what is it that we don't know."

Thanks to Clingman, horror fans can check out a collection of scary independent films Oct. 20-22 in Racine.

So what can film fans and amateur filmmakers expect?

Movies, movies, movies It is a film festival, so expect wall-to-wall screenings all three days. Some will be classics, such as "The Toxic Avenger." Others will be new flicks with local connections, such as "Julia Wept" and "October Moon," both directed by Jason Paul Collum, a Racine film director.

And of course, plenty of gore and offbeat chills from the likes of "The Morning After," which Clingman explains this way: "We've all heard the story. 'I went out with this girl who was so ugly I wanted to chew my arm off.' In this movie, the guy is so ugly, the woman literally chews her arm off to get away."

Famous guests Lloyd Kaufman, director of "The Toxic Avenger," and actor-local celeb Mark Metcalf are scheduled to attend, as well as a bevy of scream idols including Debbie Rochon, Brinke Stevens and Suzi Lorraine.

Invite grandma There are horror movies for everyone, such as the family-friendly "Teenage Bikini Vampire." "A teenage vampire falls in love with a surfer boy, and the movie is about how they solve their differences," Clingman says.

Other genres It Came from Lake Michigan! doesn't cater only to horror flicks. It's also a celebration of the best in science fiction and fantasy movies. Clingman calls the three genres "the most disrespected genres in the film community."

Learning the ins and outs of scary Clingman also believed it was necessary to include classes for budding filmmakers. "There will be people who just want to watch films, and that's great. But there are filmmakers who also want to talk to professionals about making films." Pros will teach would-be Wes Cravens everything from basic camera handling and film financing to a class called "How to Make a Zombie," about makeup techniques.

a scary sampler

On the festival's schedule:

"Hellraiser: The Prophecy" It's a fan-filmmaker's dream come true as director Jonathan S. Kui takes two film franchises - "The Prophecy" and "Hellraiser" - and mashes them up into a short film about Lucifer tricking a human into summoning the demonic Cenobites into joining the Second Angelic War.

"Ryker Mortis, Zombie Hunter" Director-producer William H. Edwards shares scenes of his work in progress, which is an homage to 1930s and '40s serials. The cast and crew will be on hand to answer questions about the film, which was shot in Madison.

"Something to Scream About" Racine director Jason Collum screens his documentary that looks at the lives and careers of 10 women who've worked on horror films.

"Beer Drinkers in Space" This campy sci-fi comedy was filmed 23 years ago by Disney employees. It also screens with "Keep Drinking, Men!" a documentary about the making of the film.