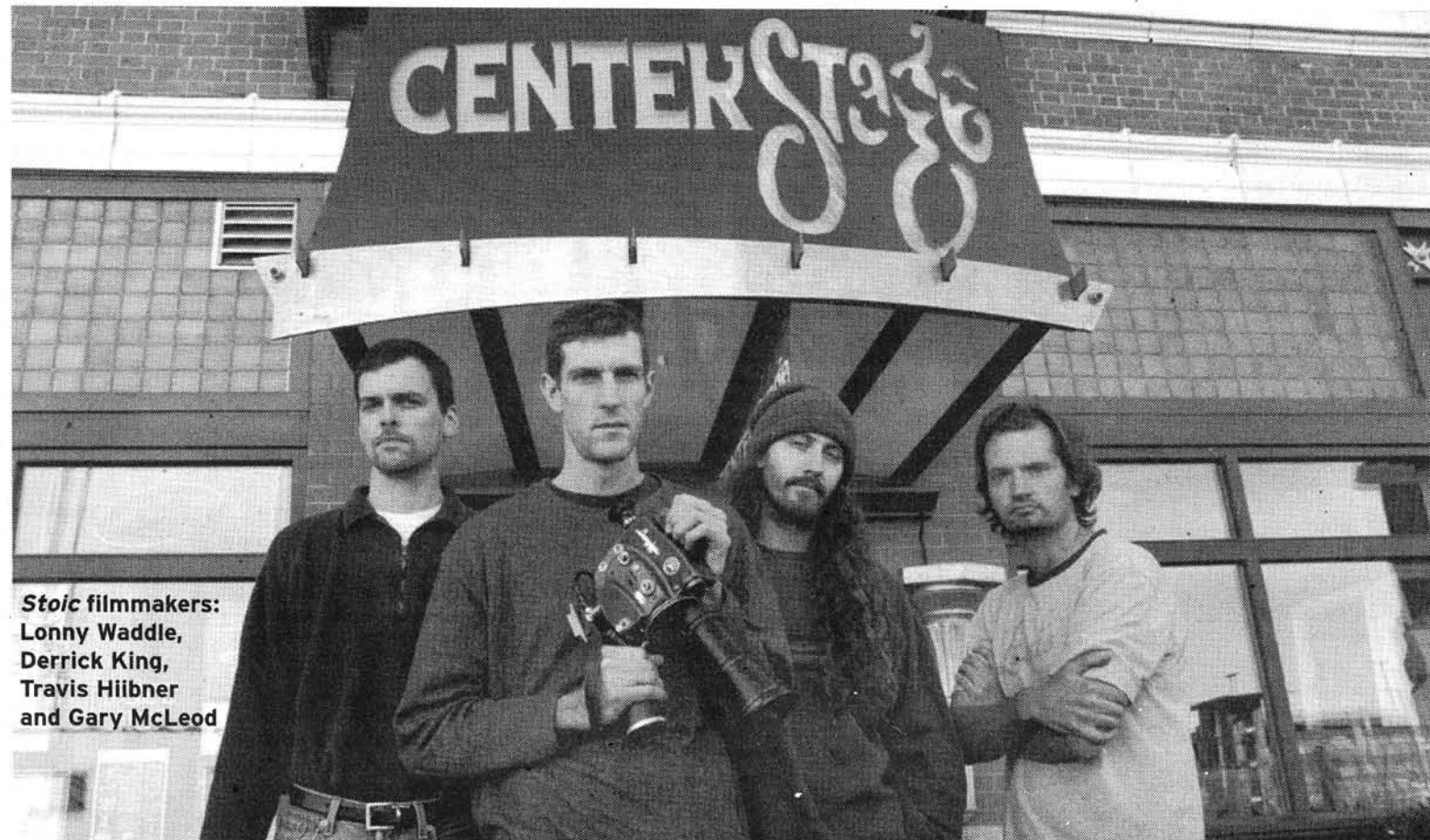


ARTS & CULTURE

BOOKS ■ THEATER ■ FILM ■ FOOD ■ MUSIC

Old-School Cinema



Stoic filmmakers:
Lonny Waddle,
Derrick King,
Travis Hiibner
and Gary McLeod

FILM Spokane's first Flicker Film Festival – featuring the Spokane-produced horror short *Stoic* – evolves from a passion for DIY, indie and outsider filmmaking **SHERI BOGGS**

Anyone who grew up in the pre-camcorder era already knows all about the joy of Super 8. Those little blue-and-white plastic discs, the low hum of the projector, the element of mystery involving thoughts like “What’s on this reel?” and “Did I have enough light for that shot?” all imbue the old-school method of filmmaking with a magic that videotape and digital cinematography can’t touch.

Of course it’s easier to make a film with modern technology, but easy isn’t really the point. In much the same way that people seek out old typewriters because they miss the thunderous clacking, the slightly irregular type and the personality of an aqua blue Remington, many filmmakers crave the transparent, tensile pleasures of celluloid. And not just for the nostalgia. There’s a reason essentially all major motion pictures are shot on film. Film looks better. It has depth. It sees the world as our eyes do. We can’t resist the allure of the flickering image.

“It’s a luminous medium,” explains Lonny Waddle, one of four local filmmakers behind both this Sunday’s Flicker Film Festival, and one of the films, *Stoic*, that will debut there. “With film, whether it’s Super 8 or 16-millimeter, you have light shining through and that’s something you can’t really duplicate.”

So strong is the magnetism of good old-fashioned film, explain

**Flicker Film Festival,
featuring *Stoic*, takes place on
Sunday, Oct. 12, at 5 pm at
CenterStage, 1017 W. First.
Tickets: \$6. Call: 747-8243.
www.flickerspokane.com**

Waddle and his cohorts Derrick King, Travis Hiibner and Gary McLeod, that there are Flicker Film Festivals in 11 other cities (including Austin, New York and Prague). Spokane’s Flicker is the first such event in the Pacific Northwest, and in addition to Flicker L.A., one of the first west of the Mississippi. In addition to the quietly unfolding horror of *Stoic*, Flicker Spokane embraces films from all over the United States,

including the three-minute comedy *In the Red*, *Fallen Sky*, comprised of abstract, Super 8 shots from the morning of Sept. 11 *Armor of God* and the hilarious, quasi-documentary *Have You Seen Axl Rose?* Because the event is taking place at CenterStage, expect an atmosphere of conviviality and better intermission eats than you’d find at your area cineplex.

“All the Flickers are about that same thing, that sense of an event rather than just passively watching a movie,” says Travis Hiibner. “That’s something we’re really missing in Spokane, a place where you can see a movie *and* have a drink or something to eat and have it be as much about the experience as it is about seeing a film.”

Stoic was shot just a wall or two away from CenterStage, on the third floor of the old Music City Building. The film benefits from the eeriness of its locale; while much of its narrative involves a nurse, a hospital bed and a patient, the fact that the setting isn’t obviously a

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"OLD SCHOOL CINEMA," CONT...

hospital ward adds a subtle uneasiness to the more blatantly disturbing elements of the film. Without giving too much away, let's just say that *Stoic* links the unhappy fates of a mysterious naked woman and a man hospitalized against his will.

"We all knew we wanted to do a project that was strange," explains Gary McLeod, who the group credits with coming up with the initial image, one that is perhaps the most enduring of the whole film. "I saw the guy in the bed, and we just took it from there, tossing out ideas. That's how it worked the whole time — we just kind of feed off each other's ideas as we go."

This is horror in the most surreal sense of the genre, and the filmmakers have maximized everything from the look of their actors to items found in the building. Mike Corrigan (yep, *our* Mike Corrigan) captures an ageless, half-creepy, half-sympathetic vulnerability in his scenes as the man-in-the-bed, while Tasha Lasz is a vampy natural in her role as "The Nurse." The discovery of

a broken piano in the building contributed to the "plinking on a raw nerve" sound punctuating the events onscreen.

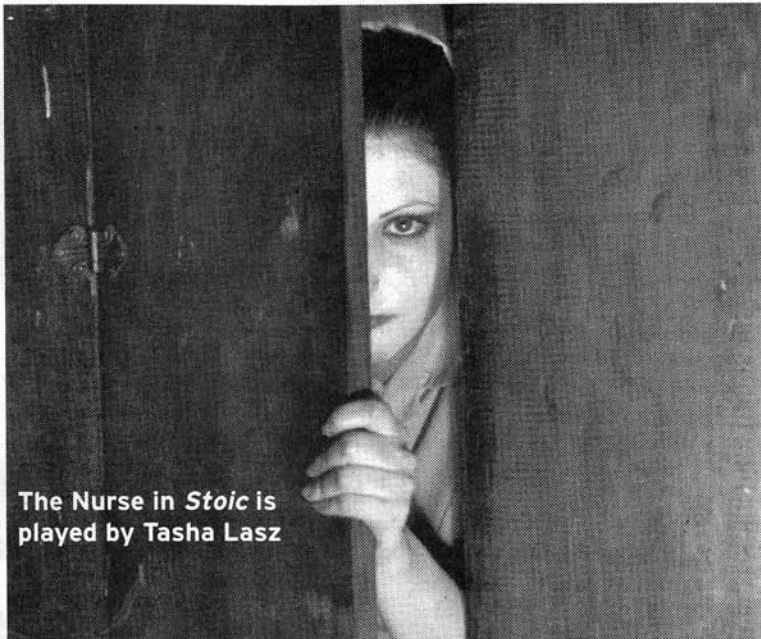
"There were a lot of instances where adapting what we wanted to what we had came to our advantage," says Waddle. "Certain camera shots, that location... it all turned out to be perfect for what we wanted."

While some of *Stoic's* horror comes from subtleties like grainy film stock, chiaroscuro lighting and music so organic you hardly notice it, the rest of it comes from your basic horror staples: restraints, sharp objects, blood and, of course, maggots.

"That was a little interesting, working with the maggots," says Hiibner. "When you dump them out of their container, they spread out."

"They're really fast, a lot faster than we expected," interjects McLeod.

"At first we were scooping them up and trying to keep them under control, but by the end of the day we didn't care where they were," Hiibner continues. "We were petting them. They're kind of cute, even. It was very educa-



The Nurse in *Stoic* is played by Tasha Lasz

tional in that respect."

Even if oogly larvae and *Un Chien Andalou*-esque horror stylings aren't your cup of tea, if you have any interest in independent film at all you owe it to yourself to check out the Flicker Film Festival. *Stoic's* co-star Mike Corrigan has his own whimsical stop-motion short entitled *I Love You, Onion*, and *Have You Seen Axl Rose?* is a good comedic foil for some of the festival's more somber offerings. Perhaps most importantly, interest in such film festivals has literally saved the medium — Kodak had planned to quit making Super 8

film until turnout at several Flicker Fests proved that their product did indeed have a viable and loyal market.

"The ultimate payoff for doing something like this would be someone being inspired by Flicker Fest and coming back with their own film next year," says Waddle. "It would be great to get *Stoic* into some of the other film festivals, and we're going to shoot for that. But I think most of all we'd like to see other people out there doing a project of their own and bringing it back when we do Flicker Fest next year." ■