



FLICKER FEST

The Flicker Festivals – held in places like Bordeaux, Chapel Hill, L.A. and now entering its fifth year in Spokane – have always been film-friendly events. Built around the idea that movies are better on celluloid, most Flickers restrict entries to shorts filmed on 8-mm, 16-mm and 35-mm film stocks. Spokane narrows this further, allowing only Super 8 and 16-mm. With the popularization of digital video and its ease of delivery (youtube.com and its myriad imitators), film needs all the help it can get.

That's perhaps why curators of the Spokane event have gone on the offensive. For example, "50 Feet That Shook the World" is a five-minute, tongue-in-cheek piece of anti-video propaganda. Taking the form of a silent film about the totalitarian evil of VHS, it plays off fascism (concentration-looking camps) and communism (the title

cards are in Russian) to tell the story of downtrodden Super 8 and 16-mm cameras who throw off the shackles of video oppression ("___" reads one card), in order to form an artistic utopia where all film is treated equally. It's daffy and wishful and totally in keeping with the festival's roots.

Also notable are "The Touch," a three-minute meditation on the Anne Sexton poem of the same name, and "Foxy Lady in Winterland," in which a bohemian Berliner offers tips on how to stay sane through an unending winter. (Hint: run around without panties.)

This year's festival, happening on Oct. 14 at 7 pm, is using a real theater – the Garland – for the first time in its history, though organizer Derrick King promises the return of previous years' amenities (namely, beer and pizza).

– LUKE BAUMGARTEN