

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Articles prior to December 5, 2018

Tromadance Reviews ? Final Thoughts

Written by David on September, 27 2009

The following reviews do not express the opinion of the Strand Theatre.

Submitted by: Terrance Aldridge

(Editor's Note: Mr. Aldridge has offered to volunteer for the Strand by writing thoughts on the performances.)

An often heard lament in this town, which I myself frequently quote, is that there is nothing here to do or that nothing culturally exciting occurs.

Ironically, this past weekend's B-Movie festival, especially in its incarnation at the Strand Theatre, has and will make me re-evaluate and eat my sarcastic jibs.

From Friday to Sunday I watched 38 movies in roughly 35 hours at the Strand, three of which were and are exceptional ventures into cinema that I greatly enjoyed viewing.

Simultaneously, across the town audiences could and probably did enjoy 28 B-Movies at Studio 10, as well as several workshops by film-makers. Further out, on the edge of town, the Skyline Drive presented 11 concerts and four B- movie classics. Meanwhile, in neighboring Franklin patrons and aficionados could watch six classics and attend a national B-Movie Awards ceremony. All told, local Hoosiers were exposed to 70 films on this the first weekend of fall.

It was at the Strand, however, where independent cinema really shined forth like a never before seen beacon in Shelby County and the leading lights of this show were three films, two by native Hoosiers.

In no particular order these films are "Half way to Hell," written and directed by Greenwood-born Lola Wallace. This micro-budget masterpiece-in-the-making was produced on a budget of around \$2000, she said.

Columbus-native Adam Cooley's "Can't or Won't Not" was entirely produced, conceived and executed as a visual, computer-generated and modified experiment by the 23-year-old self-taught director. It was, perhaps the most artistically challenging and provocative film shown during TromaDance.

Finally, the multi-part feast "The Italian Zombie Movie," will perhaps spawn new conspiracy theories about independent films. One such ironic confluence is that this brash and entertainingly disturbing movie was produced, filmed and acted out by an entirely volunteer cast. Strange then, indeed, that it received its first national showing in a historic, local performing arts center, equally staffed, run and directed by a voluntary crew.

Cinema, like all arts, is a mental invasion which allows one to perceive and see the world and existence in new and different ways. This is exactly what Shelbyville had to offer this weekend. Perhaps if we work at it, this festival of independent films and B-movies will return, grow and continue to feature and nurture local visionaries as it entertains Hoosiers. After all, who ever heard of the tiny town called Sundance 31 years ago.

Images on this post:

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