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By [Jeremy Meyer](#) | Published 03/10/2006 | [Movies](#)  [Email to Friend](#)  [Print Article](#)

'Other' film fest promises forum for directors of all walks in Venice

By Jeremy Meyer
Special to the Daily Press

Seventy-five filmmakers from the area and abroad — including Australia, England and Germany — will be arriving in Venice this week for the third annual independent film festival known as "The Other Venice Film Festival."

The festival is a community event that was developed to give filmmakers young and old an opportunity to get their films screened in their full-length, short and animated versions.

The Other Venice Film Festival, held from March 16 through March 19, will take over two locations in Venice this year — The Electric Lodge and the Switch Studios.

"We're extremely excited about the third annual Other Venice Film Festival," said A.J. Peralta, the festival's co-founder. "Following on the success of our first two sell-out seasons, we've added an additional screening night, and for the first time will be awarding a grant to a local filmmaker from a portion of festival ticket sales."

This season will include special films featuring everything from women director shorts; multicultural filmmakers; political films; music videos; experimental; youth filmmakers; documentaries; feature and short film premier events; a benefit screening for the Cheshire Project (a summer camp for the mentally disabled); and a grant which will be awarded to a local filmmaker to help complete his or her project.

This year, the Other Venice Film Festival also will kick off a very special Local Maverick Spotlight Screening in which Roger Corman will be awarded.

Corman, who has 458 feature films and television credits to his name, many of which were developed at his Venice-based studio. Corman's classic film "The Masque of the Red Death," starring Vincent Price, will be shown. The director will participate in a question and answer session with the audience before being presented with the special award by the 2005 recipient, Stacy Peralta. The doors for the event will open at 7 p.m. on March 16 and will start with a happy hour, with food provided by celebrated chef Hans Rockenwagner's new Venice eatery, 3 Square.

Over at Switch Studios there will be a special benefit screening of "The Return of the

Muskrats," a pirate movie that defies all norms, directed by Andrew Mudge and starring a cast of mentally disabled actors with a cameo appearance by Peter Bergman of "The Young and the Restless." All proceeds from the screening will go to the Cheshire Project summer camp for the mentally disabled.

The festival will conclude with the award ceremony for the Abbot Award, named after Venice founding father Abbot Kinney. The event, free to the public, will conclude with a closing party. Cellist Shaun Darius, who has played with k.d. Lang, will perform at 6:30 p.m.

Audience Choice and Most Excellent Abbot awards will be given to the most popular and best films from the 2006 festival, and an honorary Abbot will be awarded to Vidiots Video Store of Santa Monica in recognition of its contributions as an excellent community resource for local filmmakers and film fans for more than 20 years.

"It feels good to be able to give back to the community that has shown so much support for our growing event," said Ruby De La Casas, a festival co-founder. "We hope everyone will come out and enjoy all that The Other Venice Film Festival has to offer — from thought-provoking and fun films to live music, art and more — it's a great way to connect with and foster the creative spirit of our city by the sea as Venice embarks on its second century."

Tickets are available online at www.othervenicefilmfest.com. Previous festival events have sold out, so advance tickets sales are recommended. Ticket prices are: \$15 for Thursday, March 16; \$20 for Friday, March 17, with after-party; \$10 for individual screening events; and \$60 for an all-access festival pass.

The Abbot Awards Ceremony at the Electric Lodge is free and open to the public. Call (310) 823-0710, ext. 1, for directions.

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