

ARTS

People come from miles around to see and participate in Real-to-Reel film fest

REBECCA PISCOPO

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Fans from Greensboro, South Carolina, and counties surrounding Cleveland lined-up outside Kings Mountain's bright-lit Joy Theatre Wednesday, July 23 through Saturday, July 26 watching what career potter and Cleveland County Arts Council artist member Ron Philbeck deemed were, "quality films."

"(These films are) something the community would never have the opportunity to see in the big movie theatre," Philbeck stated.

Those behind the film, directors and producers, put more into the process besides feeding lines to actors.

Dan Urness who produced "The Flyboys"- which won "Best Professional Feature"- said, "It's taken four years to make this movie. Four years of love. When you don't have any money you have to do a lot of things yourself."

The film that also won Saturday night's "Audience Choice Award" had two preteen boys who snuck onto a plane, owned by a mob leader, and became stow-aways.

Through the Screen Actor's Guild, with 98,000 members, according to Urness, the casting team pulled well-known supporting actors Thomas Sizemore and Steve Baldwin on board.

"A lot of them (members of the 'Guild') read the script. We had 25,000 applications for the film because they loved the story so much," Urness said.

"Best Professional Documentary" winner, "The

Borinqueneers," took nine years of writer and director Noemi Figueroa Soulet's life. The content matter addresses the "untold story" of the segregated, Puerto Rican 65th Infantry Regiment. Soulet said that they are the only Hispanic-separate unit in American army history.

"I did that because I really felt it was a story that needed to be told. They participated in WWI and WWII, but as a segregated unit they were not trusted in combat like the African-American units. But in the Korean War they were finally given the chance to prove themselves," Soulet said.

The director, who claims that she had tried having children, but never could, said that this documentary is her "baby." "Borinqueneers" is already airing nationally on PBS, but she hopes that it will reach a wider audience. She said, to guests at the Joy Theatre, in her award speech, "I'd like to thank this community for embracing my little film, and for the interest being so sincere."

The highly anticipated film "Crazy" about the 1940s and '50s studio guitarist Hank Garland, battling between his love of music and jealous wife won "Best of Show." The "Hank Garland Tribute Band" honored his legacy by playing at the after-film party Saturday night.

"Lots of people came from South Carolina because of Hank Garland," said Arts Council Director Shearra Miller.

Larger numbers of film fans, more than last year according to Miller, saw all the awards Saturday night. Other accolades were given for: "Best Amateur Documentary" - "Song of a

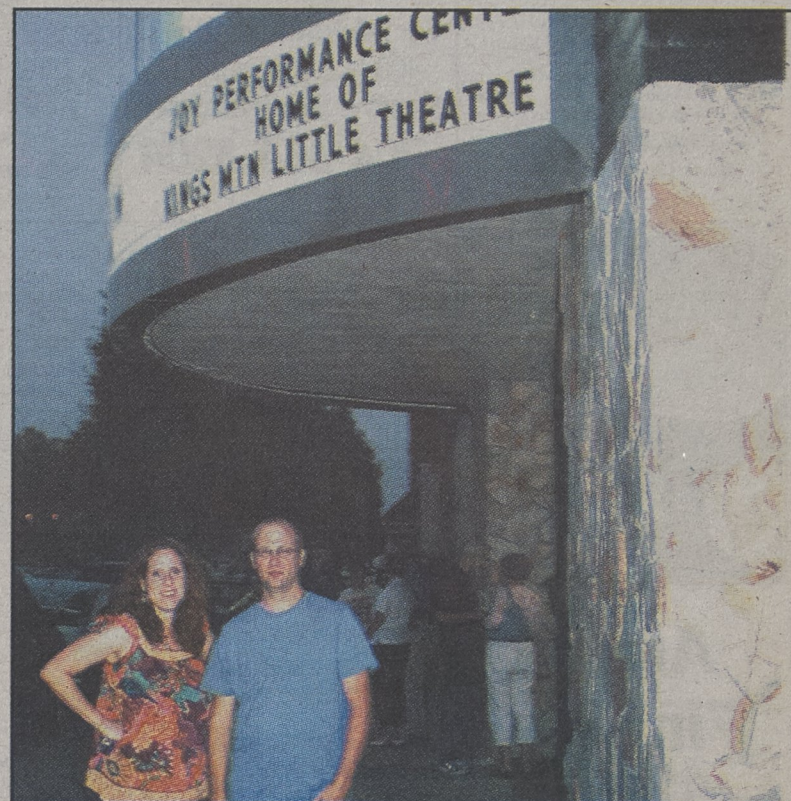
Sperm Donor" directed, written, and produced by Emmanuel Dayan of France; "Best Amateur Short" - "Rabia" directed and produced by Muhammad Ali Hasan; and "Best Amateur Feature" - "Speedland" written, directed, and produced by Leora Chai.

The other professional awards presented were "Best Professional Short"- "Epicac" written and directed by Will Tully and "Best Professional Animation"- "The Whole Truth" written and animated by Gerald Guthrie.

As for the place of viewing, itself, Philbeck said, "The Joy Theatre is an affiliate of the Arts Council. They've been really generous to open the film festival to us." And although he thinks that it will take a while for the festival to grow larger, the renovations "look great."

"I don't think there's anywhere else like this that can do this around here," Philbeck stated.

"I think it's a great thing for KM to have it here and to have these independent films come for people to see something different," said fellow potter and



REBECCA PISCOPO/HERALD

Jen Mecca (left) and Ron Philbeck stand outside of the Joy Theatre during a break in the Real-to-Reel Film Fest.

York, SC, native Jennifer Mecca. CCAC will be back next summer to switch on the bright lights once again.

WEATHER REPORT

By Kenneth Kitzmiller

	July 22-28	Year Ago
Total precipitation	1.74	1.17
Maximum 1 day	1.29 (28th)	0.92 (27th)
Month to date	4.12	2.30
Year to date	23.48	22.22
Low temperature	64 (24th)	64 (22nd)
High temperature	97 (22nd)	92 (26th, 27th)
Avg. temperature	79.1	72.6

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