

NEW ORLEANS FILM FESTIVAL 2007

FILMS WITH LOUISIANA CONNECTION...

ABOVE THE LINE: Saving Willie Mae's Scotch House

USA, 2006. 56 min. Documentary: In Competition

In 2005, Willie Mae Seaton won a James Beard Award, the culinary equivalent of the Oscar, but her soul food restaurant still remained unknown to most New Orleanians.

Three weeks after Katrina hit, a New Orleans police woman found Willie Mae, then 89 years old, sitting alone on the sidewalk outside her ruined restaurant. She had sneaked away from her family in Houston and flown herself back home to reopen her place.

This is the story of Willie Mae and a determined group of volunteers who worked long and hard to get her cooking again. The rebuilding effort was led by John Currence, a native New Orleanian who is chef of his own restaurant in Oxford, Mississippi (himself a nominee for a James Beard award). Currence commuted for months, working as Willie Mae's construction chief during the week, and running his own kitchen on weekends. This is an inspiring story of tenacity and generosity, set against a backdrop of devastated New Orleans.

DIR/PROD/ED: Joe York CO-PROD: Andy Harper, John T. Edge. CAM: Micah Ginn, Matthew Graves, Joe York. MUSIC: Slade Lewis.

Screens with Standing on Common Ground

Friday, October 12

7:00PM

Prytania Theatre

THE ALLEN TOUSSAINT TOUCH

UK, 2006, 59 min. Documentary: In Competition. Category Award Winner

If this was a fine wine, it might be described as "overwhelming yet delicate." The "Touch" profiles Allen Toussaint: musician, songwriter, composer, pianist, and producer. Jill Nicholls, who created this piece for the BBC, effectively gives us a compact history of New Orleans rhythm and blues by tracing the career of this self-effacing genius.

Toussaint wrote and produced many of songs New Orleanians lived by. Think It's Raining, Mother In Law, Fortune Teller, Java, Ride Your Pony. We guarantee that no one will watch this film without saying at least once, "Wow, I didn't know he wrote that too!" Ms. Nichols has a host of top-shelf musicians telling us why Toussaint means so much to them. What is really rare and special, however, is that she has somehow gotten this quiet man himself to talk about his life and the city he loves.

In Attendance: Allen Toussaint

DIR/PROD: Jill Nicholls. EXEC.PROD: Mark Cooper. ED: Allen Charlton. CAC

Saturday, October 13 - 7:00PM Prytania Theatre Thursday, October 18 - 7:00PM

ANIMATION: A TRIBUTE TO HELEN HILL

20min. Animation, directed by Helen Hill The World's Smallest Fair (1995. 4 min.

CalArts) Helen had always dreamed of owning a cotton candy machine from Cromers Peanut Store in her hometown. Using an Interschool Grant specifically to bring artists together, she purchased a cotton candy machine and created this film about artists using cotton candy as their medium. Tunnel of Love (1996. 4 min) Meant to give good advice about falling in love, this “romance activist” film depicts Helen’s theory that love at first sight is not a strong basis for a lasting relationship. The film illustrates the song “Accidental Romance” noting that the best romance is between best friends. Set in the carnival atmosphere of the South Carolina State Fair, Tunnel of Love features many friends including her good friend and future husband Paul Gailiunas. Scratch and Crow (1995. 4 min. CalArts) Helen remembers her chicken friends from Cousin Annie’s farm in Fairview, North Carolina with gentle and poetic words, a rich color palette, and imaginative tropes. Cats hatch eggs; watermelons fall from the sky; chickens become angels; coiled springs symbolize inner workings. This film was produced for Helen’s MFA degree under the mentorship of Maureen Selwood. Madame Winger Makes A Film: A Survival Guide for the 21st Century (2001.10 min) Working with the concept that the idea behind a film is more important than the technology used, Madame Winger describes inexpensive ways to create films that include hand-processing and drawing directly onto the film. Helen wrote “ It’s fun to handle film as a celluloid canvas rather than as a fragile carrier of images. You can experiment and create the most beautiful images ever.” A companion volume to Madame Winger is her filmmaking how-to compilation Recipes for Disaster: a Handcrafted Film Cookbooklet. Sunday, October 14 8:30PM CAC

BEEN DOWN THAT MUDDY ROAD: The Legend of Joe Barry

USA, 2006. 70 min. Documentary: In Competition Stabbings, gunfights, # 1 hits, Dick Clark’s American Bandstand, a lying cheating manager, the mafia, heroin addiction, and pimping. If anybody ever said that the music business was a rough racket, Joe Barry’s life proves it. Born poor as a church mouse in Cut Off, Louisiana, Joe Barry (nee Barrios) made his first guitar at age five, started playing in clubs when he was thirteen, had a national #1 hit with "I’m a Fool to Care" and became a teen idol. And that’s just the beginning of a totally incredible story; among other things, Joe was once a mercenary in Nicaragua. Also featuring Mac Rebennack, a.k.a. Dr. John.

DIR/WRITER: Carol Carimi Acutt. PROD: Aaron Fuchs, Robin Acutt.

COPROD/WRITER: Rebekah Fry. CAM: Carol Carimi Acutt, Robin Acutt, Sean Finnegan. Thursday October 18 5:30PM Prytania Theatre

DON’T EAT THE BABY

USA, 2006. 90 min. Documentary: In Competition

New Orleans celebrated Mardi Gras 2006, its first after Katrina, despite doubts and

debates about whether it could or even should go on. Todd Berger is not a native, but he examines the city's premier celebration without drifting into cliché. Several of the usual suspects – Blaine Kern, Henri Schindler, Arthur Hardy, Mr. "King Cake" Gambino — tell us "what Carnival's for." Others explain that differences in that year's Carnival illustrated how the City was still affected by Katrina; for example, there were few high school bands because most of the schools were still closed. Inspired camerawork captures the feel of floats and flambeaux, and an original soundtrack by Mr. Quintron provides an other-worldly effect that is eerily appropriate.

DIR/WRITER/ED: Todd Berger. PROD: David Moss. CAM: Helena Wei.

Thursday, October 18 9:00PM CAC

FAUBOURG TREME; THE UNTOLD STORY OF BLACK NEW ORLEANS

USA. 2007. 68 min. Documentary: SNEAK PREVIEW

Think you know New Orleans history? Well, think again. Faubourg Treme, The Untold Story of Black New Orleans takes a fascinating look at one of our city's most mysterious neighborhoods with writer and Treme resident Lolis Eric Elie. Long ago, this place was home to the most prosperous and politically active black community in America. Here black and white, free and enslaved, rich and poor cohabitated, collaborated, and clashed to create much of what defines our city today. Drawing on footage shot before and after Hurricane Katrina, and much never-before-seen archival footage, Faubourg Treme, The Untold Story of Black New Orleans uncovers Treme's forgotten past in a riveting tale of hope, heartbreak, and endurance. www.tremedoc.com

DIR: Dawn Logsdon WRITER: Lolis Eric Elie EXEC PRODS: Wynton Marsalis, Stanley Nelson PRODS: Lucie Faulknor, Lolis Eric Elie, Dawn Logsdon MUSIC: Derrick Hodge NARRATOR: JoNell Kennedy CAM: Diego Velasco, Keith Smith, Bobby Shepard

EDS: Dawn Logsdon, Sam Green, Aljernon Tunsil.

In Attendance: Lolis Eric Elie, Dawn Logsdon, Lucie Faulknor

Sunday October 14 5:00PM Canal Place Cinema Sunday October 14 7:00PM

FLAKES

USA, 2004, 84 min. Comedy

Shot in pre-K-ville New Orleans, Flakes is a...flakey comedy about disaffected "yutes" who somewhat improbably like to hang at an eating establishment (the eponymous Flakes) that somewhat improbably specializes in dishing up bowls of obscure and long-discontinued cereals. Neal Downs (Aaron Stanford) has Big Dreams of a career in the music biz but appears content, for now, slinging cornflakes - which doesn't sit well at all with girlfriend Pussy Katz (Zoey Deschanel), herself a would-be artiste. When Neal and his boss (Christopher Lloyd) pooh-pooh offers to franchise Flakes, the more goal-

oriented Pussy gets her dander up and joins forces with a sleazy (pardon the redundancy) yuppie entrepreneur to open a cereal bar across the street. Michael Lehmann, perhaps best remembered for Heathers--- unquestionably one of the funniest of the eighties ur-teen comedies--- directed. The screenplay was penned by a couple of Louisiana boys, Chris Poche and Karey Kirkpatrick.

IFC FILMS www.ifcfilms.com

In Attendance: Chris Poche

DIR: Michael Lehmann PROD: Mark Ross, Gary Winick, Jake Abraham, Karey Kirkpatrick WRITER: Chris Poche, Karey Kirkpatrick CAM: Nancy Schreiber ED: Nicholas C. Smith MUSIC: Jason Derlatka, Jon Erlich
Sunday, October 14 3:00PM Canal Place Cinema

I ALWAYS DO MY COLLARS FIRST

USA, 2006, 25 min. Documentary: In Competition. Louisiana Filmmaker Award Winner This documentary delivers an artful and unexpectedly entertaining look at what is often ignored as a mundane chore. It's a film about ironing, but it also a meaningful meditation on so much more. The story follows four dynamic Cajun women in French Louisiana as they go about their daily lives demonstrating how the simple ritual of ironing weaves its way throughout the fabric of family life and their sense of identity. Ironing, we learn from them, is a nurturing, emotional, and learned process, transmitted from mothers to daughters. Through first-person narration, the women share with us a rare look at the rich interior life lived by wives and mothers in a traditional culture. By the films end, we see that for them, and for their mothers, ironing has been as necessary to self respect as cooking is to eating.

DIR/PROD/ED: Conni Castille, Allison Bohl. WRITER: Connie Castille. CAM: Allison Bohl. SEN.PROD: Charles Richard, John Laudun.

In Attendance: Charles Richard

Screens with The Ladies and Reconstructing Creole
Friday, October 12 9:00PM Prytania Theatre

LEFT BEHIND: THE STORY OF THE NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

USA, 2007, 90 min. Documentary

Left Behind: the Story of the New Orleans Public Schools, follows three high school seniors through the 2004 and 2005 school years in the worst public school system in America. It was shot before, during and after Hurricane Katrina. Denied access and lied to by school officials, filmmakers Vince Morelli and Jason Berry, with the help of students, smuggled cameras inside several different schools to unveil horrendous conditions - from non-functional bathrooms to chaotic classroom antics by students and teachers alike. Morelli says viewers will be shocked by what they see. "We couldn't

believe what we saw. It was pretty obvious why the administration didn't want us there." Detailed interviews with school board members, superintendents, teachers, principals, and community activists, paint a picture of greed, politics, and despair that challenge the students at every turn. Actor/ Rapper Ice T, Professor Noam Chomsky, and author Michael Eric Dyson accent the film's biting commentary.

www.leftbehindneworleans.com

In Attendance: Vince Morelli

DIR/CAM: Vince Morelli, Jason Berry PROD/ED: Vince Morelli MUSIC: Rolfe Kent
Saturday, October 13 1:00PM Canal Place Cinema

LINDY BOGGS: STEEL & VELVET

USA. 2006. 60 min. Documentary: In Competition

Every so often there are women who show the world that they can demand respect from men and women alike. Lindy Boggs made her name as a shrewd Congresswoman and an Ambassador to the Vatican with the soft touch of a true southern belle. Lindy Boggs pushed for women's equal rights, and became the founding mother for the Women's Caucus in the US House of Representatives. She took her husband's seat at Congress, and stayed there for eight years before retiring to be by the side of her ailing daughter. Her imprint in American politics shows that ladies and good manners can help direct the course of a nation.

DIR/PROD: Bess Carrick. ED: Dawn Logsdon. MUSIC: Mike Esneault.

In Attendance: Bess Carrick

Screens with Weeding By Example

Tuesday, October 16 7:00PM CAC (Louisiana Showcase)

LOW AND BEHOLD

USA. 2007. 89 min. Narrative Feature: In Competition. Category Award Winner
Turner Stull (Barlow Jacobs), an uninspired young man, trying to figure out what he wants to do with his life, arrives in hurricane-ravaged New Orleans to work as an insurance claims adjuster. Greeted by his Uncle Stully (Robert Longstreet) a seasoned claim adjuster, and an ambitious group of adjusters, he is quickly immersed into the routine: move fast, don't get emotionally involved, and make a lot of money. But Turner, not prepared to deal with people who have lost everything, is totally overwhelmed. Turner's lack of experience and uncertainty only makes things worse. In a moment of crisis, Turner agrees to help Nixon (Eddie Rouse), a local man, find his lost dog. In exchange for Turner helping look for the lost dog, Nixon lends a hand with Turner's insurance claims. Turner and Nixon begin to navigate their way through the storm-ravaged city, a journey that will change Turner's life.

DIR: Zack Godshall PROD: Barlow Jacobs, Colby Johnson. WRITER: Zack Godshall, Barlow Jacobs.

In Attendance: Zack Godshall, Barlow Jacobs

Saturday, October 13 7:00PM Prytania Theatre (Best of the Fest)

Tuesday, October 16 9:00PM Contemporary Arts Center (Louisiana Showcase)

MADE WITH LOVE

USA, 2006, 51 min. Documentary: In Competition

It's hard to believe that refugee camps could exist in the United States, but that is what happened in St. Bernard Parish after Hurricane Katrina. People who had always been self-sufficient and productive were suddenly without food, clothing, and social structures. Enter a group of young people, very different in background and appearance from the folks in the Parish, who set up an emergency kitchen that fed thousands of struggling people and also gave them a place to gather, share information, and just be together. The people of St.

Bernard and their unlikely benefactors are the shining stars of Made With Love.

DIR/PROD/CAM: Madison Tift, Raad Fadaak. ED: Gretta Wing Miller.

Screens with Mr Gettridge

Saturday, October 13 1:00PM Prytania Theatre

MR. GETTRIDGE

USA, 2006, 17 min. Documentary: In Competition. Herbert Gettridge did not want to be a media star. He is simply an 83 year old man who was so determined to rebuild his ruined home in the Lower Ninth Ward that he came back alone and worked every day until the place he had built with his own hands and where he raised his family was once again livable enough for his wife to come back from her extended evacuation and rejoin him. Mr. Gettridge could not help it that he was so modest, charming, funny - and old - that Anderson Cooper and Billy Crystal and all the other news spinners wanted to show him to the world. Now you can have your own 17 minute audience with Mr. Gettridge. (If you miss this showing, you can go across the Industrial Canal and find Mr. Gettridge at home. He is still there: his home is rebuilt; his wife is back with him.)

DIR/CAM/ED: Joe Sanford. PROD: Bess Carrick. MUSIC: Ray Ganucheau.

In Attendance: Bess Carrick

Screens with Made With Love

Saturday, October 13 1:00PM Prytania Theatre

OSWALD'S GHOST

USA, 2006, 90 min. Documentary

A decade after JFK's assassination, America's political culture was changed almost beyond recognition. With Oswald's Ghost, acclaimed director Robert Stone offers an

unprecedented deconstruction of the mythologies and controversy surrounding what is perhaps the most tangled and far-reaching murder mystery of all time. Featuring interviews with Norman Mailer, Gary Hart, Tom Hayden, Mark Lane and others, the film probes the deep psychic wounds inflicted by the Kennedy assassination on American politics and culture, the scars of which remain evident to this day. Using a wealth of archival material, much of it never before seen or heard, Oswald's Ghost chronicles America's 40-year obsession with the single most pivotal event of the boomer generation.

In Attendance: Robert Stone & Mark Samels

DIR/CO-PROD/WRITER/CO-ED: Robert Stone CO-PROD: Hazel Gurland

EXECPROD:Mark Samels CAM:Howard Shack CO-ED:Don Kleszy MUSIC:Gary

Lionelli **In attendance: Robert Stone & Mark Samels**

Monday, October 15 7:00PM

Prytania Theatre

RANDOM LUNACY

USA. 2007. 60 min. Documentary: In Competition

Papa Neutrino could have been a "captain of industry"; instead he chose a life of voluntary homelessness for himself and his family. Using footage that the family itself took over the course of a decade, we see the Neutrino children grow up before our eyes, experiencing the ultimate in home-schooling, while constantly traveling, sometimes part of a Mexican circus, sometimes a family orchestra on the streets of New Orleans. Our own Ingrid Lucia, one of his daughters, offers proof positive that there was a method in Papa Neutrino's apparent madness. "This guy makes Jack Kerouac look like he lived at home with his mother and went out on the road on weekends." Alec Wilkinson, The New Yorker.

DIR: Victor Zimet, Stephanie Silber PROD: David Pearlman, Stephanie Silber, Victor Zimet. CAM: David Pearlman. MUSIC: Ingrid Lucia, Nenad Bach.

Sunday October 14

7:00PM Prytania Theatre

RECONSTRUCTING CREOLE

USA. 2006. 55 min. Documentary: In Competition

Reconstructing Creole offers an unflinching view of culture, race and history on one Louisiana plantation. In August 2004, an electrical fire burned away the Victorian additions to Laura Plantation in Vacherie, Louisiana, leaving the original Creole house. In this film, a young team of builders reverse-engineers the unusual structure, a blend of African, French, and Native American building techniques. As restoration begins, the memoir of 19th century plantation mistress Laura Locoul Gore opens up a world of slavery and society balls, of race mixing and family bonds, of cruelty, love, and joie de vivre. The film weaves past and present with music by 19th century Creole composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk, as well as original works from Louisiana musicians Bruce "Sunpie" Barnes, Mitch Caponetto, and Adam Kennedy. In the memoir of a Creole matriarch, and the restoration of her old plantation home, a Louisiana legacy comes to life.

DIR/PROD: Jennifer John Block. CAM: Jake Springfield.
Screens with The Ladies and I Always Do My Collars First
Friday October 12 9:00PM Prytania Theatre

STANDING ON COMMON GROUND

USA. 2006 30 min. Documentary: In Competition

When a young black man decided to take his spring break in New Orleans, someone loaned him a camera and asked him to bring back a few stories. The result is a piercing 30 minute documentary that offers an outsider's "inside" view of post-Katrina devastation and recovery. Evan Allen-Gessesse worked for Common Ground, a grass roots group that helped people in the hardest hit parts of New Orleans. He faces tough questions of how people can become refugees in their own hometown, and presents a new understanding of what really matters.

DIR/PROD: Evan Allen-Gessesse, Barbara Allen.

Screens with Above the Line: Saving Willie Mae's Scotch House
Friday, October 12 7:00PM Prytania Theatre

TOOTIE'S LAST SUIT

USA. 2007. 107 min. Documentary.

Tootie Montana was considered chief among chiefs of the Mardi Gras Indians, a tradition unique to New Orleans but having roots in traditional African culture. This film offers an extended, inside look at a proud man who wants nothing more than to be "prettiest" Big Chief of all. Lisa Katzman's film examines the tensions between New Orleans' black and white Carnival celebrations, between competing Indian tribes, and even between Tootie and the son who would succeed him. And, yes, the new suit is stunning.

DIR/PROD: Lisa Katzman. EXECPROD: Randy Feshel, Alexa Georges. ED: Felix Andrew. DP: Robert Perrin.

In Attendance: Lisa Katzman, Alexa Georges

Wednesday, October 17 7:00PM Canal Place Cinema

WEEDING BY EXAMPLE

USA, 2007. 12 min. Documentary: In Competition: (Louisiana Showcase)

Anybody who would voluntarily push lawnmowers around in the blazing heat of a New Orleans summer day might qualify as either stupid or crazy or both.

Actually, they are more accurately described as "The Mow-rons."; people who loved our City Park, one of America's largest and best urban parks, and refused to stand by and let the weeds of nature reclaim it. These "Mow-rons" gassed up their engines and commenced to "weed by example."

DIR/PROD: Kathleen Ledet, Sarah McKnight. DIR/ED: Jen Suran Screens with Lindy Boggs: Steel & Velvet Tuesday, October 16 7:00PM CAC

Tickets for all screenings will go on sale on September 29th. All details are available on the New Orleans Film Society's website, www.neworleansfilmfest.com.

The 2007 New Orleans Film Festival is presented by Cox Communications, IFC and AMC, with additional support from the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, the Louisiana Division of the Arts, and Louisiana Office of Entertainment Industry Development the City of New Orleans.

The New Orleans Film Society engages, entertains, enriches and educates all audiences and celebrates the art of film through year-round presentations of the moving image.

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