COUNTY COURIER
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COUNTY COURIER 75¢
The Weekly Journal for Northwestern Vermont

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COUNTY ARTS

The world for a film pass

A look at the Montreal Film Festival

By Patricia Braine

In a far, far different land - not too far away - is Montreal. If country life is getting a little too peaceful, you don't want to deal with high winds from Katrina or are worrying about a new high in gas prices, maybe you need a weekend escape. There's a multicultural experience right on your doorstep.

Yup! Six Montreal movie theaters successfully opened their doors on Friday, Aug. 26 for the Montreal Film Festival, and they will stay open through Monday, Sept. 5.

In a well organized fashion, against many odds, World Film Festival Director Serge Losique has proven himself a winner by regaining the competitive film festival status for loyal cinephiles, distributors, film critiques and fans alike.

"A vote of confidence from all international film professionals," assures the 29th year of the Montreal Film Festival, and its future have a fighting chance. Okay... cut. It's a long story. And you can find details about the festival's recent troubles on its web site. Suffice it to say: local film fanatics who dream of world travel are free to do so, in short order, at low cost to pocket book, and in a city roughly an hour away.

Just book it across the border to where you can visit Sweden, Norway, Finland, Russia, China, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Iran, Turkey, Germany, London - name it. In three days, I journeyed to them all.

You'll be greeted along the way by many friendly Canadian hosts who can also guide you along the highway. And once in Montreal, Festival Directories are everywhere. Select from 300 plus films - some old, many premiere features, student films, shorts, documentaries.

Naturally enough, opinions vary among the many talented critics spoken with between screenings: Flick Chick Susan Green from Seven Days, Cinema Studies professor Ana Maria Pavela, free lance journalist and radio producer Ron Stang from Windsor, Ontario, film maker James Wallace, a variety of cinephile from Greece, Sweden, NYC and Boston, and a smiling couple of film distributors from Korea.

My very favorite of the festival is David Tamagi's feature dictorial debut, the outstanding "Paper Moon Affair," which had its world premiere at the 2005 Montreal Film Festival. Extraordinary acting by leads Misa Shimizu and Brendan Fletcher carried the film faithfully to a very plausible and interesting ending. We could easily see "Paper Moon Affair" gain world recognition, very soon. Beautifully written, directed, and edited. Not a frame wasted. In 2000, this artistically exquisite, Japanese influenced movie was conceived by Executive Producer Thomas Fung. Three years ago, Writer/Producer Michael Parker brought together a fabulous team of collaborators - true players - and later filmed in British Columbia. There's great use of location throughout - with crashing seascape, moon viewing, and animals integrated into the story, giving richness and genuine balance to the developing emotions and growth of the lead characters.

This is the best film I've seen in a very long time. Finally, a film that doesn't hit you over the head but instead carries and delights you with each turn and each surprise. After three days of film watching - morning till night - I can easily say "Paper Moon Affair" won my "Hart."

Other recommendations include:

- "He Ni Zai Yi Qi/Le Virtuose" (China, French subtitles) Incredible acting & violin playing.
- "Mighty Celt" (Ireland) Star studded, boy and dog, romance. Brought tears. Loved it.
- "A World Without Thieves" (China) Humorous Hollywood hit with touches of Tibet.
- "Bride of Silence" (Vietnam) French film influences. Worth viewing, but needs editing.
- "The Bow" (Korea) Colorful. Content challenging. Beautiful to watch.
- "Tell Me I'm Pretty" (France) In a flat in Paris. Terrific acting. Enjoyable and charming.
- "Red Mercury" (London) Great cast: Stockard Channing and Juliet Stevenson. Timely topic.
- "Krama Mig/Love & Happiness" (Sweden) Good coming-of-age story.
- "Krev Zmizeleho/Bonds of Blood" (Czech Republic) Historical saga. Long but solid.

One final note: All outside, huge screen venues are free with seating at the Coffee Depot. Plus, there are plenty of student films to check out.

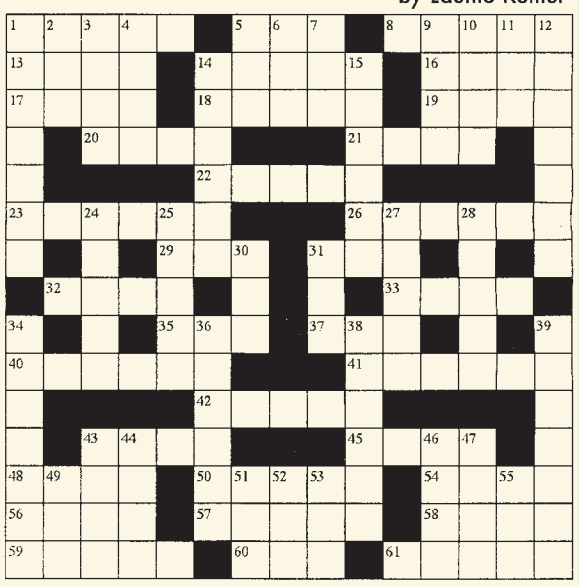
Patricia Braine is a photojournalist and an Executive Producer at Umpteen Productions of Burlington.

Last week's sanswers

Look! It's our own crossword puzzle with local clues! Thanks to the local sponsors below who are giving their support to this great addition to the Courier.

Courier Crossword Capers for the Clueless

by Launie Kettler



ACROSS

1 _____ Muse Yarns is on Main St. in Johnson
5 This is the name of a river in Russia which flows into the Sea of Azov, and another in Scotland which flows into the North Sea at Aberdeen
8 You can have _____ wide delivery through Teleflora at 15 down
13 Its capital is Muscat
14 Indian film Massey_____
16 For this bird males & females look the same
17 Petty criminal
18 Run away with a lover
19 Sturdy wool fiber
20 Sharp-sighted
21 Abound
22 4th month of the Jewish calendar
23 Characteristic quality of a sound
26 Active culture
29 7th letter of the Greek alphabet
31 Doctrine
32 This planet is going to be 20% larger to the naked eye than it was at the beginning of August, and it will only get brighter.
33 80s catch phrase "Where's the ____?"
35 Frozen water
37 Edith Wharton novel "Age of ____"
40 Gambling house
41 Ring of color
42 Pertaining to a particular place
43 Memorandum
45 Arabic term for miracle
48 What is the unfertilized female gamete produced by the ovaries
50 Resurgent
54 Woman who killed Sisera
56 Identical
57 Grammy nominated jazz musician John _____
58 French for 'angel'
59 To follow as a consequence
60 Type of soap
61 Passion

DOWN

1 The ____ Nebula is a flower emission nebula
2 Mischievous child
3 Location of a Colorado film festival
4 Covetousness
5 Indian dish
6 Exclamation of surprise
7 Pinch
9 Barbarous person
10 Quantity of paper
11 Fall behind
12 Pico della Mirandola committed "heresy" by penning "The ___ of Man"
14 Group of six
15 St. Albans is the home of _____ Flower Basket
24 Castle water pits
25 Gum
27 Spanish card game for three
28 A stage of rust
30 Consumed
31 Godfather Three actress Bernardini
34 Tulips are ___ flowers
36 If you would like to make a sweater of fall _____ ,you can find the materials at 1 across
38 Immense star system
39 A gossip is a ___
43 _____ of many colors can be found at 15 down
44 Large Australian bird
46 Partly open
47 Cherry Tree Hill _____ painted yarns are available at 1 across
49 'Moondance' singer ___Morrison
51 N. California river
52 Not wet
53 Greek mythology museum in Britian
55 Self-esteem

Betty's Flower Basket
teleflora.
Fall Mums & Scarecrows
524-5703
46 No. Main St., St. Albans

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Johnson, VT
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