



November 6, 2008

Windsor festival offers hard-to-catch flicks for serious film fans

Director Guy Maddin to appear Saturday

BY JOHN MONAGHAN

FREE PRESS SPECIAL WRITER

When the Windsor Film Festival began four years ago, it offered movie fans in Windsor and Detroit the chance to catch titles they wouldn't otherwise see. Many came from the Toronto Film Festival, held earlier in the fall.

This year's festival, starting Friday and running through Nov. 16, screens more than 20 films in four venues, including Caesars Windsor (377 Riverside Drive E.) and the L'Essor secondary school (13605 St. Gregory) in nearby Tecumseh. Other screenings are at the Art Gallery of Windsor (401 Riverside Drive W.) and Palace Cinemas (300 Oullette E.).

One objective of the festival, says executive director Debi Croucher, is to "promote a regional audience and afford that audience greater accessibility to screenings."

Titles this year include "Ballast" (1:15 p.m. Saturday), a film about a young Mississippi drifter that won the best director award at Sundance; "Heaven on Earth" (5 p.m. Nov. 16), the latest from Indian filmmaker Deepa Mehta, about a bride who lands in Toronto to meet her new husband; and "Sukiyaki Django" (9 p.m. Nov. 15), a Japanese-made Western that programmer Otto Buj describes as full of "samurai sword lust, kung-fu bar brawls and John Woo-style operatic gunplay."

A highlight of the festival will be an appearance by cult filmmaker Guy Maddin at 5 p.m. Saturday, between 3:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. screenings of his latest film, "My Winnipeg," a recent audience favorite at the Detroit Film Theatre.

Individual tickets are \$10. 519-252-6579, 888-387-9181 or www.windsorfilmfestival.ca.