

LAKESHORTS *Passports*

Local film festival delivers international cinema to Humber Bay Shores.

by Max Baru



[LEFT-RIGHT] Lakeshore Arts' Kathleen Burke, Chris Szarka, festival producer and Michelle Nolden, festival director. Photo by Arnold Caylakyan.

On May 7, 2011, the Lakeshorts International Short Film Festival was hosted at the Assembly Hall in South Etobicoke.

The event, initiated by Canadian actress Michelle Nolden and film and television producer Chris

Szarka, highlighted indie actors and filmmakers from Canada, the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom. This was the inaugural year for the festival, which has its origins from the Lakeshore Arts initiative, "My Neighbour Is An Artist" where Nolden, as a member of the programming committee, was able to put

on a small showing of short films from filmmakers in the area.

Nolden and Szarka are both Mimico residents and have long been supporters of local initiatives by Lakeshore Arts.

"It was a success and people seemed to really respond. My husband came on-board as the producer of the Festival, we teamed



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up again with Lakeshore Arts, and it just blossomed from there,” said Nolden.

The evening was hosted by renowned film critic Richard Crouse and included \$15,000 in prizes. Four Canadian films made their debut at the festival, including the film *Two Men, Two Cows, Two Guns* by Nova Scotia filmmaker Pardis

Parker which won for Best Comedy.

Organizers from Lakeshorts commented in the Lakeshorts Press Release, “We live in a community that is filled with amazing artistic talent of all disciplines. We feel a responsibility to bring our passion for film to our neighbours while making the world aware of our rich artistic life here in South Etobicoke.”

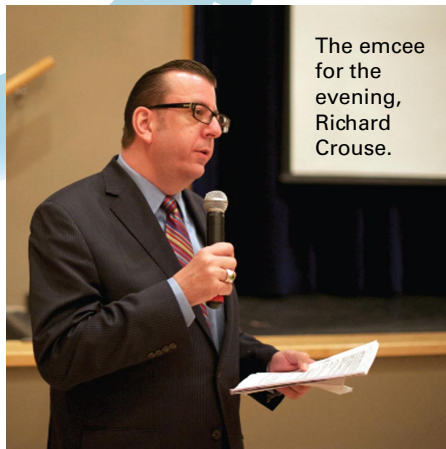
Lakeshore Arts, a community arts organization known for its community-enrichment projects such as “1000 Acts of Art” and the Youth Arts Movement, once again provided its indispensable financial support to the film festival.

“I am proud that Lakeshorts is able to give an alternative venue for filmmakers to showcase their work,” Nolden said, speaking of the social impact of the festival. “Specifically with short films, the availability is very small and they are such gems that really should be seen.”

Nolden highlighted the need for continued support for local arts and culture as



Two of the volunteers from the Lakeshorts Film Festival, Veronica and Max. Photo by Laura Makaltses.



The emcee for the evening, Richard Crouse.

well as the community at large. “It is just as important to have art lovers and patrons of the arts as it is to have artists. We need them as much as they need us!”

The festival was produced by Fifth-ground Entertainment in association with Lakeshore Arts, and received more than one hundred short films, thirteen of which were selected for screening by a distinguished jury. The films were noted to be all different and thought provoking by guests.

A list of this year’s screenings can be found at www.lakeshorts.ca. HH



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