

ANNUAL EVENT

Quincy filmmakers get to show off at the Big Dam Film Festival

By **RODNEY HART**
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

If they didn't love it, Travis Yates and Chris Kelley wouldn't make movies.

Both Quincy residents have films featured in this week's Big Dam Film Festival in Quincy. Kelley's film "Hampshire" will be screened tonight at Quincy University's MacHugh Theater, while Yates debuts his documentary about Woodland Cemetery Friday night at the State Room in Quincy.

Being an independent film maker isn't easy.

"I do it for the art. I'm not making any money off of it," says Yates, 34, who works at Quincy University as a communications instructor. "I do it because I enjoy it and for the love of the art."

Kelley, 32, owns his own production company with wife Victoria called Table 16 Productions. He does a lot of freelance and commercial video jobs, but making movies is his passion.

"It's telling stories, creating a world within what you are doing and producing," Kelley says. "I love

being creative and I love taking the camera and trying different things."

Yates and Kelley both started dabbling in film while in college. Yates says a lot of work goes into making a film, even though his documentary is only about 20 minutes. It chronicles a group of Quincy University students going to Woodland Cemetery in Quincy and the strange things they experience.

"Events like this make it worth it, to have an audience for the film," Yates said of Friday's screening. "All I want to do is entertain. We want them to see the film and spark something inside of them they didn't know before or feel before."

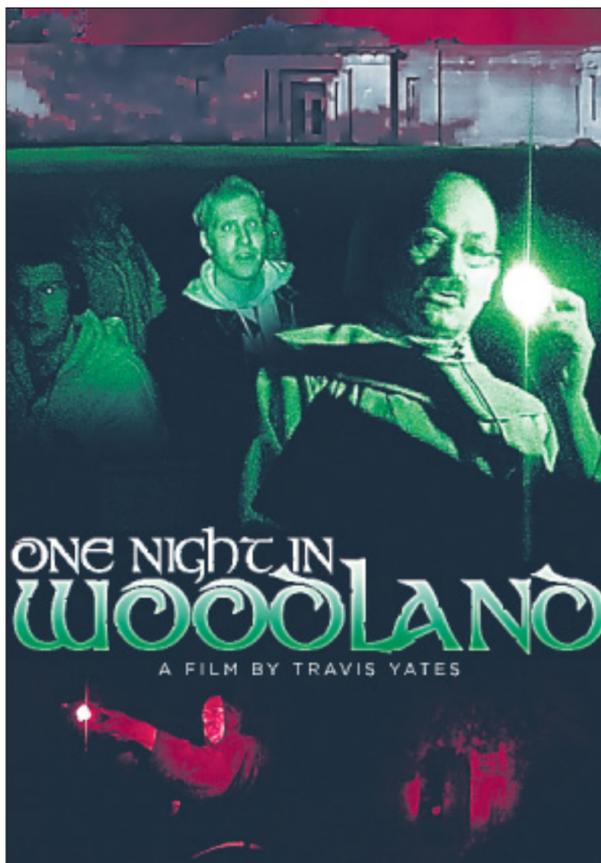
Like Kelley, Yates hopes his film gets noticed when it gets entered in film festival contests. Kelley's "Hampshire" was filmed mainly inside an old building in the 600 block of Hampshire and is about characters reacting inside a haunted building.

The crew and local actors shot much of the film on Sundays when the restaurant was closed. On one particular night, Kelley says they filmed while the restaurant was still

EVENT INFO

WHEN AND WHERE: Today, Quincy University's MacHugh Theater; Friday, State Room.

TICKETS: <http://webs.extension.uiuc.edu/registration/?RegistrationID=4562>, or call (217) 223-8380.



open and he was afraid the screaming on the set would be heard by customers.

"When they said they couldn't hear it, I thought, great. Now we can scream louder," he said.

"Hampshire" has already done well at several film festivals, and Kelley financed it and is self-distributing it. There's a ton of work that goes into making a movie, from getting actors and locations arranged to

editing the film after it's been shot.

The beauty of being an independent film maker is getting to use your own style and not be trapped by traditional film-making barriers, both men say.

"People around here are so new to it, if you have your own style, they aren't saying that this is the way to do it," Kelley said.

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60 SECONDS

NEW YORK
Billboard ranks Clarkson most successful 'Idol'

Carrie Underwood may have sold more albums than Kelly Clarkson, but the original "American Idol" winner is still the most successful, according to Billboard.

Clarkson has sold 10.6 million albums, 15.9 million tracks and has had 4.2 million radio plays, according to Billboard.com, ranking her the top graduate from "Idol."

Underwood has 11.5 million and 13.9 million for album and single sales, respectively. The country singer's also had 2.4 million radio plays since she won "Idol" in 2005.

The third most successful "Idol" never won the crown and wasn't even a runner up: It's Chris Daughtry, who fronts his own band, Daughtry; they have sold 5.7 million albums.

MILAN
Tarantino to head Venice film festival jury

The Venice Film Festival says Quentin Tarantino will head the jury that will award the coveted Golden Lion at this year's festival.

The festival called the director "one of the major creative figures in contemporary cinema" in an announcement of his appointment today. It runs from Sept. 1-10.

The festival cited Tarantino's highly original filmmaking style, work as a character actor in such moves as "Sukiyaki Western Django," films that have launched and relaunched acting careers and his dedication to young filmmakers in his work as a producer.

Tarantino has directed such films as "Inglourious Basterds," "Pulp Fiction" and "Kill Bill."

The festival says Tarantino is "perhaps the only American auteur to be adored world wide like a rock star."

— The Associated Press



Robert Downey Jr. is show in a scene from the Paramount Pictures film "Iron Man 2," which will be in theaters Friday. (AP Photo)

FILM REVIEW

'Iron Man 2' doesn't soar quite as high

By **CHRISTY LEMIRE**
AP Movie Critic

Lots of things get blown up and torn apart in "Iron Man 2," as you would expect from any self-respecting blockbuster kicking off the summer movie season. The magnitude of destruction far exceeds that of its predecessor — from rows of cars to armies of drones to Tony Stark's cliff-top Shangri-La — and includes repeated instances of characters walking away from a massive fireball without looking back. 'Cause looking back is for wimps.

But that's not all that gets obliterated here. The substance of the original "Iron Man," the brain and the soul that set it apart from the seasonal fare and made it one of the best films of 2008, also have been blown to bits.

Tony Stark had purpose back then, and despite the outlandish fantasy of his Marvel Comics-inspired story, as a person he had a believable arc. Crafting the high-tech suit and transforming himself into a superhero gave this industrialist and playboy a sense of drive, a reason for being beyond just his whims and indulgences.

Here, he's purely arrogant once more, with some glimmers of mortality and daddy issues. And Robert Downey Jr., so irresistibly verbal and quick on his feet in the first film,

seems to be on autopilot. Sure, he's got a way with a one-liner, and his timing is indisputable, but he's done this before and seems bored with it.

Then again the character — and the sequel itself — are less defined this time. Narratively, "Iron Man 2" is a mess. Director Jon Favreau, working from a script by Justin Theroux, throws in too many subplots and characters — and what a waste of that cast, actors who can really act like Mickey Rourke, Sam Rockwell, Don Cheadle and Samuel L. Jackson in an eye patch as Nick Fury.

As we recall from the last line of the first film, the whole world knows that Stark is indeed Iron Man. Now the government (led by Garry Shandling as a sniveling senator) wants him to turn over the suit for the military's benefit, and his best friend, Lt. Col. James "Rhodey" Rhodes (Cheadle in place of Terrence Howard) can only do so much to protect him.

Meantime, there's a new foe in the form of Russian bad guy Ivan Vanko, who's built a suit of his own in his Siberian abode; sadly, he and fellow acting heavyweight Downey spend most of their screen time apart. In no time, Stark's rival, Justin Hammer snaps up Vanko and asks him to build an army of Iron Men for himself.

Then there's the battle Stark is waging internally, as he reflects on

his own weakening body and the memories of a scientist father (John Slattery, glimpsed in old movies) who didn't love him enough. And speaking of love, "Iron Man 2" also tries to find time for the blossoming relationship between Stark and his right-hand woman, Pepper Potts (Gwyneth Paltrow), while dangling the possibility of a dalliance with a mysterious new assistant (Scarlett Johansson).

So yeah, there's a lot going on here. The enemy remains murky, making you realize about halfway through that it's unclear exactly what "Iron Man 2" is supposed to be about.

Favreau seemed to handle all the expensive toys effortlessly the first time, but the strain shows now in a lack of momentum and a reliance on generic action sequences.

The cinematography from Matthew Libatique is, once again, an engaging mix of bright, crisp exteriors and tangibly gritty intimate moments. But the big, shiny action sequences — the reason audiences get giddy for movies like "Iron Man 2," ostensibly — too often look cartoony. That's especially true of the initial showdown between Stark and Vanko at the Grand Prix of Monaco, with its cars tumbling end-over-end before — you guessed it — bursting into flames, just as it seems the "Iron Man" franchise itself is doing.

LIVE EVENTS
Nugget (Cake tribute band)

WHEN: Friday
WHERE: The Cafe, Macomb, Ill.
INFO: www.cheeksmcgee.com

Hillstock Festival

BANDS: Ryanhood, Scratch Track, Persona Crown, Cohesion and Cheeks McGee
WHEN: 3 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Culver-Stockton College, Canton, Mo.
INFO: Contact Tegan Viggers at (573) 288-6571 or e-mail tviggers@culver.edu.

Predawn Hour (rock)

WHEN: 8 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Chaser's Tap, 229 N. Liberty, Rushville, Ill.
INFO: myspace.com/predawn-hour

Logan Kammerer of Fielder (acoustic)

WHEN: 9 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Kutters Bar & Grill, Quincy
HOW MUCH: No cover.
INFO: www.myspace.com/fielder-music

Raised On Radio (classic rock/blues)

WHEN: 9 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Ike's Riverfront Bar, Dallas City, Ill.

TNT (classic rock)

WHEN: 9 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Rookies Sportsbar, Hannibal, Mo.
INFO: www.myspace.com/tntclassicrock

The Balance (classic rock)

WHEN: 8:30 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: RT & Honeys, Augusta, Ill.

Hearsay (classic rock)

WHEN: 9 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Shanity Shack Bar and Grill, Macomb, Ill.
INFO: myspace.com/hearsay-band2009

SevenD2 (rock)

WHEN: 8 p.m. Saturday
WHERE: Club 24, Summum, Ill.
INFO: www.myspace.com/sevend2

Ketan Shah (easy listening)

WHEN: 2 p.m. Sunday
WHERE: Spirit Knob Winery, Ursa, Ill.
HOW MUCH: Free to enter and a complimentary glass of wine for moms.

IN THEATERS
'The Nature of Existence'

People who have influenced humanity are interviewed to talk about their beliefs.

'The Lightkeepers'

Two women affect a grumpy sailor and his anti-female views.

'Mother and Child'

Adoption has a profound effect on the lives of three different women.

'The Oath'

Two men's encounter in 1996 leads them to Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden, and the Supreme Court.

'Badmaash Company'

Four friends embark on a business venture in 1990s Mumbai, India.

'Babies'

This visually stunning new movie simultaneously follows four babies around the world - from first breath to first steps.

'Casino Jack and the United States of Money'

An investigation reveals the corruption surrounding D.C. superlobbyist Jack Abramoff.

— All Movie Guide