



Film festival begins, rolls out the red carpet

By: NICOLE SACK - Staff Writer

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TEMECULA -- One by one, a parade of antique cars began ferrying guests of the Temecula Valley International Film & Music Festival to the red-carpet reception Wednesday evening.

The entry to The Movie Experience at Tower Plaza took on a Hollywood atmosphere as filmmakers and actors made their way to the five-day festival's opening night film, "Greetings from the Shore."

The movie's lead actress, Kim Shaw, who has already been cast in the upcoming "Sex in the City" movie, was awaiting her walk down the red carpet.

"This is actually my first film festival and my first walk down a red carpet. I'm really happy to be down here (in Temecula)," said Shaw, 23. "I'm excited to see how people react to the film."

Eve Craig, a longtime Temecula cultural leader and festival honoree, made her entrance into the theater clutching a red rose between fingers sporting multicolored nails.

"I was here when there was only a film council and the festival had not yet gone international, but look at how it has grown," she said. "Am I excited about being an honoree this year? Oh, I should say so."

Jo Moulton, the festival's founder and director, said she anticipates 15,000 people will attend the festival that runs through Sunday, culminating with the closing Black Tie Awards Gala at Pechanga Resort & Casino. Award recipients including singer and music producer Smokey Robinson; Robert Rosen, the dean of UCLA's film and television school; and actors Kay Panabaker and Michael Madsen.

Aside from the more than 150 films that will be screened during the festival, there will also be two nights of musical performances at Tower Plaza, at Rancho California and Ynez roads.

The "music festival extravaganza" on Friday and Saturday costs \$15 each night. A Static Lullaby will perform Saturday at 10:25 p.m.

Jordan Doverspike, a Temecula native, is the guitarist for the band Jupiter, which will perform Saturday at 9:50 p.m. He was among the opening night guests Wednesday.

"It's important to be a part of everything big in your community, especially in your hometown," Doverspike said. "It gives the kids something to look forward to. But we're looking forward to it, too. We're going to be filming our red carpet entry."

Temecula Mayor Chuck Washington and his wife, Kathy, were also treated like stars as they made their way to the event.

"Each year, we come away with a new experience or a new relationship that makes the festival special and more homey," Washington said. "I can't tell if the film festival means that Temecula has 'arrived' in the way that other festival cities have, but it is growing and is bringing other positive things to the community."

Jimmy Chunga, an actor in the feature film "Herber Holiday," said the showings Friday and Saturday will mark that film's screening premiere.

"Temecula is definitely part of the circuit. It's on every independent filmmaker's radar screen," Chunga said. "We're thrilled to be here debuting our film."

Since 1995, the festival has screened more than 700 films from more than 20 countries.

Tickets can be bought at the box office of the theater or by calling (951) 699-5514. For more information visit the festival's Web site at www.tviff.com.

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