

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Michigan Film Festival announces films and workshops lineup

*Opening-night party and film screening, movies from all over Michigan and a Live! Production Workshop highlight the free Nov. 12-14 event in downtown Grand Rapids*

**GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Nov. 2, 2010** – **Michigan Film Festival (MFF)** released today the schedule for its second annual festival – a weekend-long event celebrating films harvested right here in Michigan. (Download the full schedule here: <http://michiganfilmfest.org/schedule.php>.) The Nov. 12-14 downtown Grand Rapids event is free and open to the public.

Films include *The Frontier Boys* by John Grooters, *High School* by John Stalberg, Jr, *Art House* by Victor Fanucchi, *Fitful* by Rich Brauer, *Fairview St.* by Michael McCallum and *Small Change* by Chris Penney.

All told, there are eight full-length-feature films, 22 short films, five documentaries and 13 workshops and panels at downtown Grand Rapids partnering venues Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM), Urban Institute for the Contemporary Arts (UICA) and Grand Valley State University's Pew Campus Loosemore Auditorium.

“The second annual Michigan Film Festival has grown to offer something for everyone,” Co-Founder/Director Jen Pider said. “We’ve compiled a mix of Michigan-made films of all genres – comedies, dramas, documentaries – some referred by other Michigan film festivals, some from Michigan universities and some by invitation – and all are impressive. At any time, you could be watching a film, learning about a certain aspect of filmmaking or even creating a film.”

*The Frontier Boys* – appearing at the festival as an exclusive pre-release screening – is about a basketball season shattered by the tragic drive-by shooting of the team’s biggest star.

“Racism, loyalty, friendship and faith are at the heart of a story that reveals how young men struggle to discover what really matters in this life and beyond,” Writer/Director/Producer John

Grooters said. His Holland-based production company shot the film entirely in the Michigan towns and cities of Charlevoix, Holland, Mancelona and East Jordan. (View the official trailer and see movie stills here: <http://www.frontierboys.com/trailer/>. Register to attend the free film screening here: <http://frontierboismff.eventbrite.com/> (registration isn't required but is encouraged to guarantee seating).

The Opening Night Celebration at UICA includes a screening of *Bilal's Stand* (<http://www.bilalsstand.com/index.html>) based on a true story and filmed on location in Detroit. The party is hosted by Stephanie Webb of WZZM-TV13's *Take Five* and *Grand Rapids Press* Entertainment Reporter John Serba.

Beginning opening night and continuing throughout the weekend is *Live! Production Workshop* – an opportunity to get involved in making an actual film. From crafting a three-minute script to shooting the film to editing, the aspects of filmmaking will be covered over three days. The resulting short film will screen Sunday at GVSU's Loosemore Auditorium (MEDIA: a separate news release on the Production Workshop will be forthcoming).

Also screening at Loosemore on Sunday will be Michigan Film Festival Competition submissions. Ten-minute shorts were submitted by students and amateur filmmakers earlier this fall and judged by a panel of local film-industry leaders. The winners will be announced and honored after the screenings.

Free sample headshots by professional photographer Al Cooley will be available on a first-come, first-served basis on Saturday, Nov. 12, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at UICA.

Additional workshops and presentations woven throughout the weekend include topics ranging from *The Business of Acting* to the *Anatomy of a Short Film* to *The Impact of Incentives on Retaining Michigan's Workforce*.

“We want to answer questions while offering networking opportunities,” Pider said.

A Music Supervisors' Showcase for invited guests will demo the works of Michigan composers and musicians. Guests will hear live performances featuring displays of their work in film and video projects.

The films screening at the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Michigan Film Festival include submissions from Saugatuck's Waterfront Film Festival, the Traverse City Film Festival, the East Lansing Film Festival, the Detroit Independent Film Festival, the Ann Arbor Film Festival, the Arab Film Festival, ThrillerChiller! and others.

“We’re a film festival’s festival,” Pider said. “By screening Michigan-made films referred by other Michigan film festivals, we support the work and the growing industry created right here in our state. Our festival is unique in that we’re showcasing the best filmmaking talent that Michigan has to offer in a spirit of support and collaboration.”

A closing party at the JW Marriott Mixology Lounge on Sunday, Nov. 14, wraps up the free weekend-long festival.

For those who are coming in from out of town – or for West Michiganders who want to make a weekend of the event – the Michigan Film Festival has worked out arrangements with partnering hotels for lodging discounts.

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**About the Michigan Film Festival**

The mission of the Michigan Film Festival is to promote the Michigan perspective in film along with the Michigan filmmaking community by sustaining an event that includes educational workshops, panel discussions and lectures; exhibition venues displaying recently crafted Michigan-made works; and partnerships between local entities involved in supporting the Michigan film industry.

**Michigan Film Festival is organized by Pider Enterprises in partnership with GRAM, UICA, GVSU, ACTIVESITE and WMFVA.**

**MFF Co-Founders:** Jen Pider, Kerri VanderHoff, Chuck Peterson, Josh Depenbrok, Phil Meade, Matt Fulk and Justin Godley

**Collaborators:** GRNow, IntentPR, MP Talent, Clark Hill, Citizen Shirt, Gorilla Pictures, Film Farm, Compass Film Academy, Spam Bully, Spearia, Emily Guy Studio, iamjef

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