

Schlocktoberfest

Festival of cheese filmmaking presents student films to A&M

BY HEATHER BRONDY
The Battalion

For a little pre-*Rocky Horror* Halloween weekend fun, MSC's Cephid Variable will offer students a film festival with some monster-mash flavor. Oct. 29 kicks off the third annual "Schlocktoberfest", a weekend celebration of "schlock," or rather, those obnoxious horror films everyone loves to hate. Students are asked to turn in their own amateur schlock films for a contest and a chance to win the Carl of Chthulu Award, created by Cephid Variable.

Marvin Miller, director of the event and a senior journalism major, said the weekend is dedicated to student and other notorious schlock footage.

"At 7 p.m. on Friday night in Hall-bouty 101, we're going to be showing last year's and the previous year's entries, as well as an historical [documentary] on schlock movies," Miller said. "Then on Saturday morning at 11 a.m., we're going to show schlock movies until about three or four in the afternoon."

"Later that night, at 7 p.m., we're going to have entries for this year viewed and judged for prizes."

Dave Salmon, adviser for MSC Town Hall and Cephid Variable, said

he defines schlock as anything so poor it is an accidental gem.

"The whole idea behind schlock is that there are some movies that are so bad, they're good," Miller said. "Movies like *Attack of the Killer Tomatoes*, *Evil Dead*, basically all those cheesy low-budget movies that are so pathetic they're entertaining."

Student entries from the past have tended to lean strongly toward ridiculous humor, rather than guts and gore. Nathan Weston, a senior english major, said that his film led to some embarrassing moments.

"We did a thing called *This Movie Socks*," Weston said. "What we did was take a home video camera, some sock puppets, a couple of super soakers and my high school letter jacket and, well, I ended up in a black burlap sack pretending I was the giant leader of evil socks. It was actually pretty embarrassing, now that I think back on it."

Salmon said his favorite entry also incorporated stockings.

"Honestly, they're all pretty humorous," Salmon said. "But there was this one with these two sock puppets in a make-shift toy car, and the guys who put it together used the sound track from *Fear and Loathing In Las Vegas*. They had these two sock puppets going

on the road, and if you've ever seen *Fear and Loathing* then it was just hilarious."

Miller said his favorites did not revolve around sock puppets.

"I really liked *The Hunt For Red October vs. Titanic*," Miller said. "That was a real good one. They had Red October fight Titanic and sink it. And of course, I like my film, called *Star Story*. It's a trilogy using toys and stop story animation. In this year's film we find out why Darth Vader turned evil."

If it does not sound like all the plots are horror stories, it is because they do not all have to be. Salmon said the film genre includes all ranges of schlock, like science fiction and fantasy.

"They'd [Cephid Variable] like the movies to cover all areas, mainly horror, science fiction, and fantasy," Salmon said. "Usually they're pretty open to whatever's brought in, though of course some rules do apply. We reserve the right to screen the films and decide what's appropriate for viewing and what's not."

The annual schlock fest was established three years ago by Eric Liga. Miller said the goal was to inspire students to use their home video cameras and have some fun mocking cheesy films.

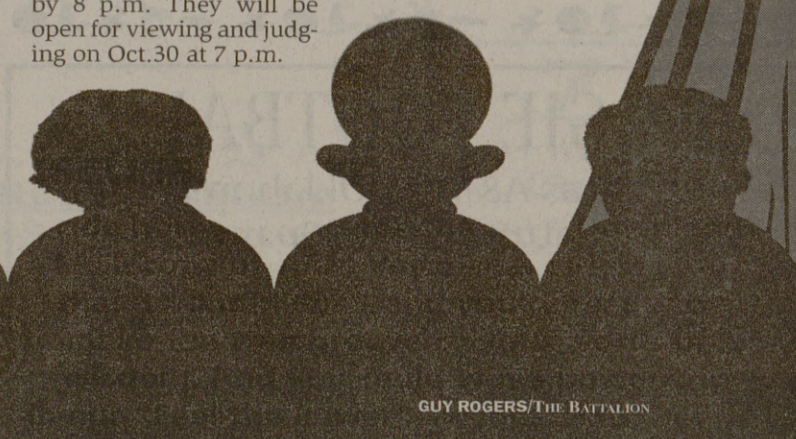
"We wanted to give students the opportunity to make and show movies" Miller said. "Schlock films seemed like the [most fun] type to do."

Jarid Teslow, an annual participant and senior chemistry major, said the schlock genre is meant to make people laugh.

"These d-grade horror films are movies we all watch to get a good laugh rather than a good scare," Teslow said. "And Schlocktoberfest is a survey of this type of bad film making, or rather, a cross section of the best of the worst."

"They're bad films with bad effects but have a few redeeming qualities we have to recognize; otherwise, they wouldn't still be around today. There's almost a cult aspect to the whole genre."

For students who would like to try and receive the annual award, videos must be turned into the Cephid Variable cube in the Student Programs Office Wednesday, Oct. 27 by 8 p.m. They will be open for viewing and judging on Oct. 30 at 7 p.m.



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