

Oscar shorts showings become hot ticket here



Written by Steven Rosen, Enquirer contributor

Not that long ago, when the Academy Award ceremonies got to the Best Short Films categories, people at home took a bathroom break. After all, who ever saw shorts?

But when this year's Oscars get to that point during the March 2 telecast, a good number of people in Cincinnati will be paying close attention. That's because the annual Oscar Nominated Short Films screenings here have become a hot ticket.

They offer chances to see all the nominees in three separate Oscar-shorts categories – Documentaries, Live Action and Animation. (The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences considers a short film to be 40 minutes or less – each category has five nominees.)

Cincinnati World Cinema has been presenting Oscar Nominated Short Films since 2002. On Saturday, February 22 at The Carnegie, it brings in the Short Documentaries nominees, plus two locally made films, in two separate Oscar Shorts & More programs each running about 100 minutes.

And on March 15 and 16, it shows Live Action and Animated shorts in two separate programs that mix nominees from each category. Each program will have two screenings. In the past the Live Action and Animated screenings have sold out the 350-seat theater.

"Initially, our audience was the people who came to our films regularly and trusted our recommendations," said CWC's Tim Swallow. "Then it became more main stream in appeal and is now our most popular event."

Saturday's "Program A" of Short Documentaries begins at noon and contains three Oscar-nominated films by U.S. directors: Jeffrey Karoff's 39-minute "Cave Digger" looks at environmental artist Ra Paulette, who spends years creating unusual cathedral-like caves in New Mexico; Jason Cohen's 23-minute "Facing Fear" is about a former L.A. skinhead seeking forgiveness from the gay man he once beat; and Edgar Baren's 40-minute "Prison Terminal: The Last Days of Private Jack Hall" observes the caring treatment received by a dying murderer at a prison hospice where other inmates serve as staff.

The 3 p.m. "Program B" offers the remaining two nominees – 26-minute "Karema Has No Walls," by Yemeni/Scottish director Sara Ishaq about the Arab Spring protests in Yemen; and the 23-minute "The Lady in #6: Music Saved My Life," in which Canadian director Malcolm Clark observes a now-110-year-old Holocaust survivor who is the world's oldest pianist.

Additionally, CWC has added premieres of two documentaries by Cincinnati filmmakers to Program B: Andrea Torrice's 18-minute "Art as Action, about women artists in post-World War II New York," and Melissa Godoy's 14-minute "The Art Carvers of Music Hall," about the 108 women artisans who worked on the local landmark in 1878. Torrice and Godoy will host a 2 p.m. reception and then lead a post-Program B discussion. ■

How to get tickets

Advance tickets for each program of Saturday's Oscar Nominated Short Documentaries are \$10 through Cincinnati World Cinema at www.cincyworldcinema.org or by phone at 859-957-3456. Tickets are \$12 at the door. Advance combo tickets for both programs are \$16 available only at the website or by phone. Combo tickets at the door are \$20.

For the March 15 and 16 Oscar Nominated Animated and Live Action shorts, separate programs are at 4 and 7 p.m. each day. \$11 per screening in advance; \$13 at door. Combo price is \$18 in advance. No combo tickets at door. The Carnegie is at 1028 Scott Blvd. in Covington.