

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE

Celtic Frost

With 1349, Sagh and Burn In Every Step
Thursday, September 28 at 8pm
Starlite Room
\$29.50 Advance at unionevents.com,
Ticketmaster, Megatunes, Blackbyrd and FS

Returning after a nearly 17-year hiatus, innovative European black-metal gods Celtic Frost hit the Starlite Room as part of their reunion tour. According to Celtic mythology, the number 17 is sacred, as 17 generations represents the longevity of their ancestral memory—which asks the question: will the band remember their roots and play such descriptively titled, sacred classics as “Phallic Tantrum?”

Shout Out Out Out Out

With Holy Fuck and Land of Talk
Friday, September 29 at 8pm
Dinwoodie Lounge

Shout Out Out Out Out is playing the University again again again again. They're also touring with a band called Holy Fuck, a group of intellectuals whose name quite obviously reflects the noble tradition of getting divine consent from the King of Kings in order to fornicate.



Blue October

With Test Your Reflex and Oslo
Saturday, 30 September at 5pm
Starlite Room
\$19.50 at Ticketmaster and Blackbyrd

To cap off a great September we have Blue October, a Houston rock quartet whose name reminds us of the unfortunate month of mid-terms ahead. As if we needed any more reminders of the following month of hell and emotional torment about to be smacked down on the unsuspecting University populace still full of Orientation week beer and nachos. On a lighter note, Blue October is touring to promote their new album, *Foiled*.

Red Ram

With Lovertine
Saturday, 30 September at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$7 at the door

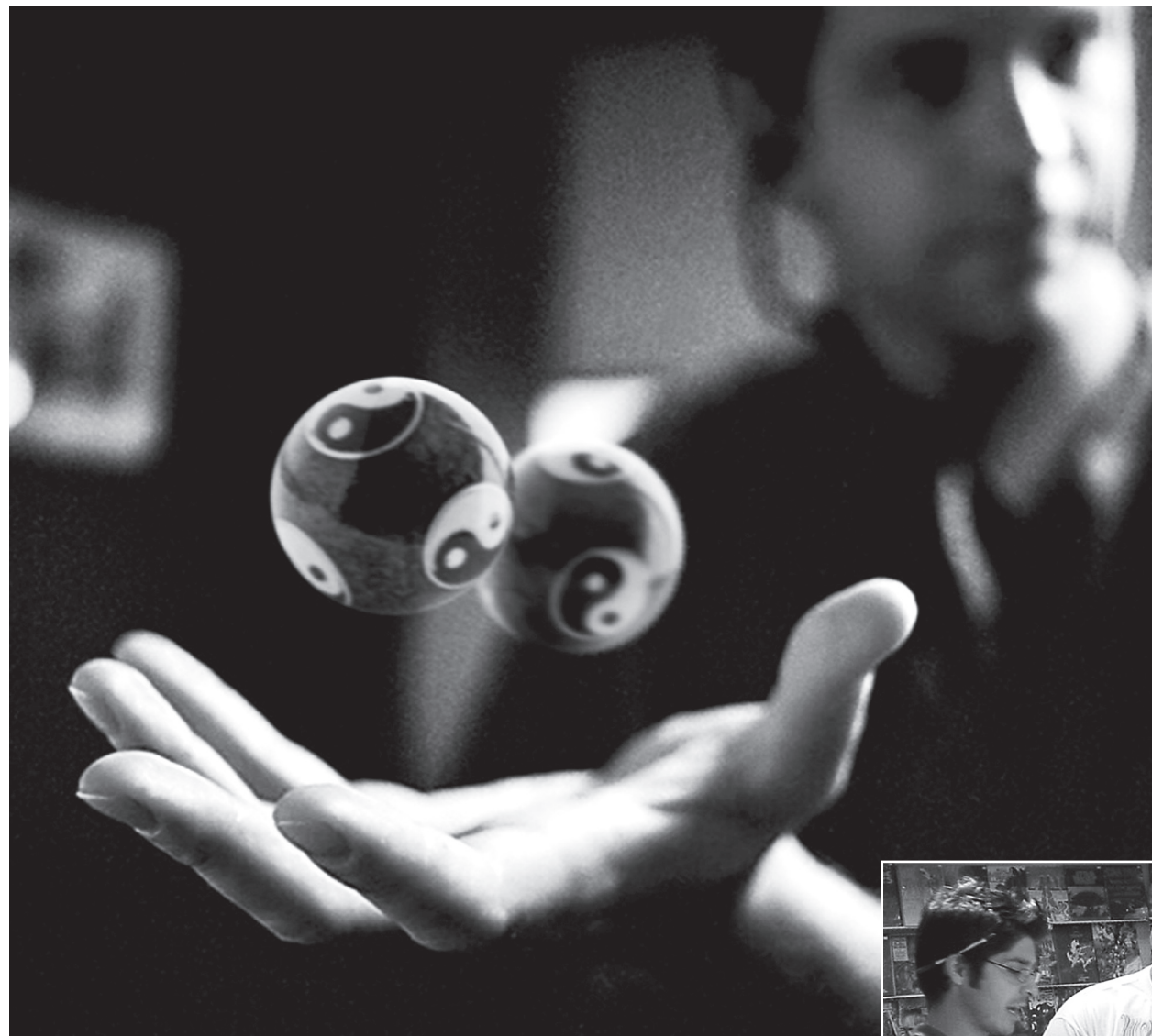
Red Ram hits the Sidetrack this Saturday to promote the eminent release of their debut CD. Unfortunately, their name's one vowel off of a reference to *The Shining*, but it still makes me wonder if the band doesn't secretly believe in ... murder? Just throwing it out there. In unrelated Red Ram news, our A&E editor mentioned that the lead singer—whom she spoke with in person—“smelled sexy.” This could potentially translate into a certain onstage “sexiness”; unfortunately, I can neither confirm nor deny this claim.

Junior Boys

With Nik7
Tuesday, 3 October at 9pm
Sidetrack Café
\$12 advance

When people say, “What cool bands have come from Hamilton, Ontario?” there's usually a long awkward silence. Luckily, this silence can be avoided by going to the Junior Boys concert, where you can finally state with confidence, “Why, the Junior Boys, an electronic pop group who just released their groundbreaking new album *So This Is Goodbye*, that's who!” To that question you could also reply, “The drummer from Rush,” but it's unknown whether or not that counts.

JOHN KMECH
Bringing back sexy back hair



The Edmonton International Film Festival is kicking off another year of cinematic genius. Mike Larocque gets the low-down from Michael Sparaga, director of *Sidekick*, who's gesticulating in the photo to the right



Edmonton's reel deal

Preview: Edmonton International Film Festival

Runs 29 September to 7 October
www.edmontonfilmfest.com

MIKE LAROCQUE
Arts & Entertainment Staff

From the Metro to the Garneau to the Princess Theatre, independent films have always found a home in Edmonton, even if the number of venues dedicated to the genre is limited. Over the next week, however, the sweat-stained reels of do-it-yourself filmmakers will be hooked up across Edmonton as an array of independent flicks light up screens for the Edmonton International Film Festival.

Now in its 20th year, the EIFF has grown into a nine-day festival, showcasing some of the best productions not only in Canadian independent filmmaking, but also many unique and exciting selections from the international community. This Saturday's opening night gala will pop the cork on nine days of films from Edmonton and around the world.

Among the many members of the film industry attending will be Toronto's Michael Sparaga, writer and producer of the superhero inspired *Sidekick*. While this will be Sparaga's first visit to Edmonton and his first submission to the EIFF, his previous experience with *Sidekick* has taught him that festivals like this one are lifelines for independent filmmakers searching for an audience.

“[Festivals] are the most important thing,” Sparaga affirms. “They give you a chance to have your film reviewed. They give you a chance to see your film on screen with an audience. You get to gauge their responses, and in a way, the

festivals validate everything you've done.

“There are festivals like Cannes and Sundance, but they often have agendas and will choose themes, so you could have a fantastic movie and not get in,” Sparaga continues. “A zillion people don't get into Sundance, but there are a zillion other festivals out there. We applied to a lot of film festivals, and I haven't been flown to France yet, but I've been to Idaho and San Francisco and some cool places. It's been a year since we've screened it for just family and friends, and I've barely been home. I've been all over Canada and parts of the States—it's been the most incredible year of my life.”

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MICHAEL SPARAGA

Sparaga's film tells the story of Norman Neale, an awkward, comic-book-loving office worker who tries to harness the slight telekinetic ability of a co-worker, Victor. Realizing his trainee may be more of a super-jerk than a superhero,

Norman is forced to re-evaluate his attempts to become Victor's sidekick.

Made on a shoestring budget provided largely by Sparaga's credit cards, *Sidekick* proves to be a perfect example of the independent filmmaking to be showcased at the EIFF. Using friends in the business both as actors and as the crew, Sparaga's film shows how much can be done with a little determination and a quality script. The screenplay for *Sidekick* managed to attract actor Danny Baldwin (*Homicide: Life on the Street*)—the only Baldwin free of a Razzie award—to join the project as Norman's friend and comic store owner Chuck.

“It was a fluke,” Sparaga admits. “My director Blake Van de Graaf and I were university roommates, and the show we loved beyond love was *Homicide*. I had written the role of Chuck for a ‘name’ actor—someone that people could latch onto. About three weeks into shooting, we heard Daniel Baldwin was in town and it turned out someone working on [*Sidekick*] had a friend who was his personal assistant, and he was able to get Daniel the script, and he loved it. You can get to almost anybody, and if you are able to offer them something, they're not regularly being offered—Daniel said himself that he's been playing a cop and a killer in 50 movies straight.”

Daniel Baldwin, along with Sparaga and cast members of *Sidekick*, will be appearing at the EIFF along with dozens of other directors, producers and actors with entries in the event. While avid film enthusiasts likely already have their passes primed for the coming week, the EIFF is also a welcome haven for those first venturing outside of the big-budget studio films. If nothing else, you're bound to be rubbing shoulders with a few stars.