



YOUR BEST SOURCE OF LOCAL INFORMATION FOR  
 Marina del Rey • Playa del Rey • Del Rey  
 Venice • Santa Monica • Westchester  
 PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY



News / Features

Community Calendar

Columns

Entertainment

Real Estate

Classifieds

Home

Archives

Place Ad  
(Classified)

Subscribe

About Us  
& Contact Us

Visitors Guide

Media Kit

## TOP STORIES

### Other Venice Film Festival features independent film maverick Corman

BY RAHNE PISTOR

The Other Venice Film Festival was started three years ago with the idea in mind to spotlight local maverick independent filmmakers who embodied the creative spirit of Venice. With about 458 film and television credits to his name, producer/director Roger Corman is the archetype of often-sought, rarely-achieved success in independent film.

"Corman has trained more up-and-coming filmmakers right here in Venice than any film school in town," says Other Venice Film Festival cofounder Gary Ellenberg.

Corman will receive the "Local Maverick Spotlight Abbot Award," presented by local documentary filmmaker and skateboard legend Stacy Peralta at this year's Other Venice Film Festival and will make remarks to the crowd.

The festival has screenings and special events starting at 7 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 9:30 a.m. Saturday; and 10 a.m. Sunday, March 16th to 19th, at both the Electric Lodge, 1416 Electric Ave., Venice, and Switch Studios, 316 Venice Blvd., Venice. A free "Abbot Awards" ceremony honoring filmmakers who "embody the spirit, energy and diversity of Venice" will conclude festivities at 7 p.m. Sunday, March 12th.

Tickets to the festival are \$15 for the Thursday night Local Maverick Spotlight featuring Roger Corman; \$10 for individual film screenings throughout the weekend; or \$60 for an all-access festival pass.

ROGER CORMAN — Corman is largely looked at as one of the foremost progenitors of independent filmmaking.

Known for his thrift, artistry, kitschy showmanship and lightning speed in filmmaking, Corman forged the business and production model that was to be swiped by legions of aspiring independent filmmakers that have sprouted up in the decades since the 1950s.

Corman's name reverberates through Hollywood, as his studio has been like an alma mater for many actors and filmmakers who were to go on to become big stars, including Jack Nicholson, Dennis Hopper, James Cameron, Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, Sylvester Stallone, Sandra Bullock and Robert DeNiro.

Corman found early success with the film Little Shop of Horrors in 1960, starring a young Jack Nicholson as a masochistic dental patient.

He then went on to corner the market on films with themes and subject matter that major studios wouldn't touch or were not quick enough to discover. His films centered on biker culture (The Wild Angels), hippies, social turmoil, horror, science fiction and fantasy.

He directed a series of films putting a number of classic Edgar Allen Poe tales, including The Fall of the House of Usher, The Pit and the Pendulum and The Masque of the Red Death to film, most starring legendary horror film actor Vincent Price.

March 9, 2006

**Advertise** in 125 community newspapers in California with a 3.75"x2" display ad (\$1,500). Reach over 3 million Californians! Call this local participating newspaper and ask about the Statewide Display Advertising Program or visit [www.cal-scan.com](http://www.cal-scan.com)

Corman's efficiency, creativity and savviness for finding selling points enabled him to compete and find success in an industry dominated by big-budget studios.

"Edgar Allen Poe's name was incredibly well-known," says Corman. "I consider him the greatest writer in the genre."

Using the famous literary masterpieces of Poe and hyping Poe's name became Corman's substitute to hiring an expensive cast of well-known actors to sell his films on their popularity.

Corman also catered to youth subcultures and young people's interest in the bizarre at a time when few others did, with titles like *Attack of the Crab Monsters*.

In the late 1970s, Corman purchased what was the old Hammond lumber yard on Main Street in Venice and converted it into the studio for his Concorde-New Horizons motion picture company.

"There were two practical reasons we moved to Venice. One was that there was an artists movement and a countercultural movement," says Corman. "Lots of people we might want to hire lived in the area. We also wanted to buy in a lower rent area that looked like it was going to be gentrified so that we could eventually sell the studio for more money."

Corman says that young filmmakers can learn lots from his business practices and filmmaking techniques, but he also points out that it's a changing world and a changing market.

"When I began, pretty much every film got a theatrical release," says Corman. "Now, it's the exception for a low budget film to get a theatrical release. That's one less revenue stream."

"Now, the money is made from a DVD release or from cable. It takes part of the thrill out of it for me," Corman laments.

In a profession of trying to guess what people's tastes will dictate, Corman's aim was overwhelmingly accurate.

"Making any film is risk, but I made sure to take calculated risks," says Corman, who continues to forge away in the film business at age 79. "Early on, in my first five years, I was 100 percent right. Now I'm right 75 percent of the time."

**OTHER VENICE** — Other highlights of the festival will include a youth filmmaker series of screenings on Saturday, March 18th; a political film series featuring short films and documentaries, including *A School of Their Own*, shot on location in Nepal and directed by Venice-based filmmaker and journalist Debra Kaufman.

A short film series of screenings will feature a world premiere screening of *Jolly Good Fellow* produced by and starring Ben Parrillo, and a screening of *I Hate You*, produced by and starring Shannyn Sossamon.

A Women Director Short Series will take place at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 12th, and will feature nine films by female directors. Screenings include the world premieres of *Confessions of a Late Bloomer* directed by Jen McGowan and *Welcome to My Life* by Carissa Tedesco, and the Los Angeles premiere of *Blind* by Saskia Jell. A panel discussion follows, and the Abbot Award Ceremonies close out the event at 7 p.m.

Information, (310) 823-0710.

 [printable version](#)  [e-mail this story](#)