

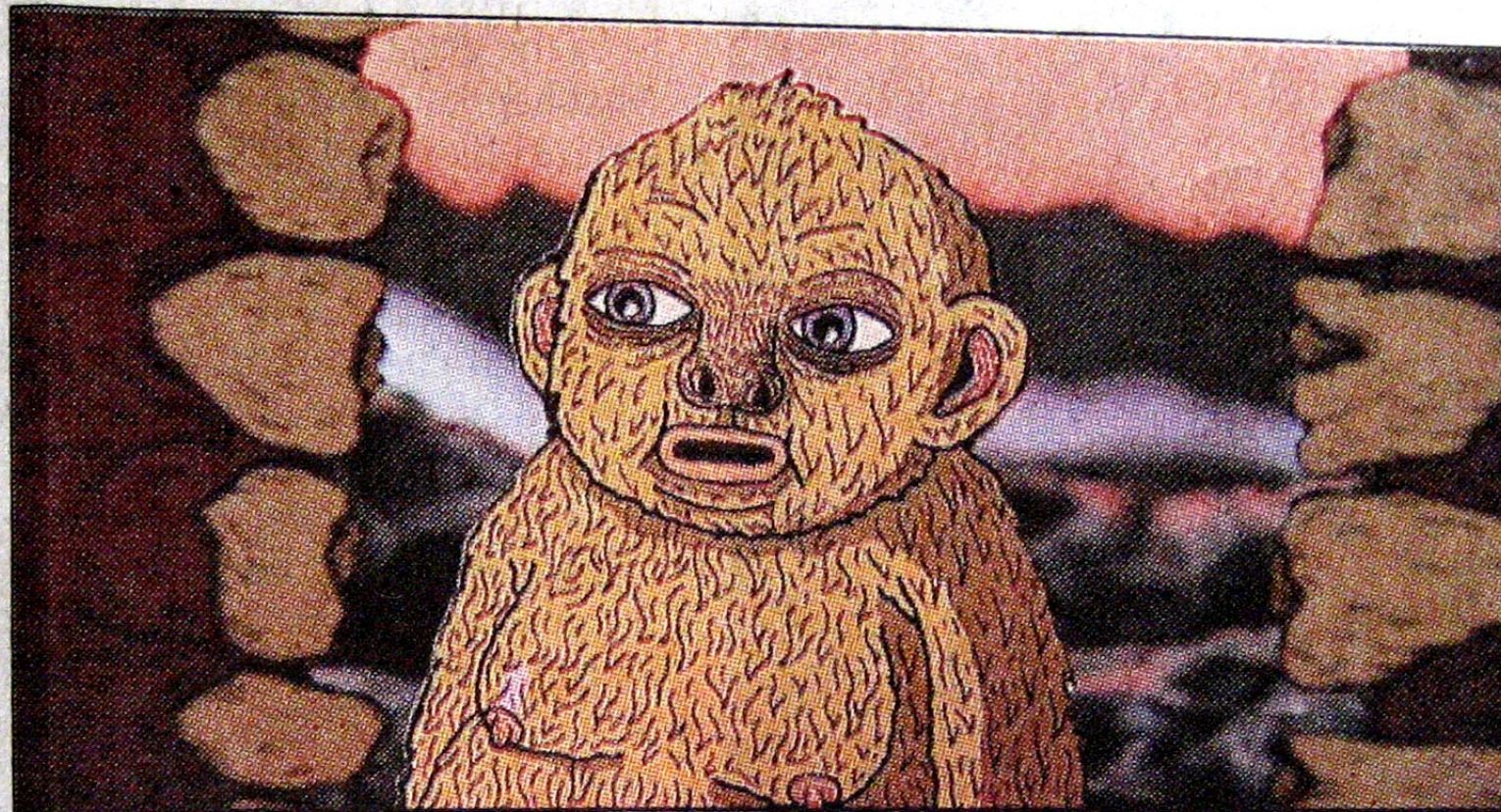
Short films reign at Strange Beauty fest

BY GLENN McDONALD
Correspondent

On a recent bitterly cold night in Durham, 100 or so fans of experimental film and music braved the elements to pack into a vacated, hastily repurposed retail space downtown.

As Greensboro's visiting musical collective Invisible set up a menagerie of equipment, local film curators Jim Haverkamp and Joyce Ventimiglia powered up the projector for the night's opening feature – a special sneak preview of this year's Strange Beauty Film Festival.

A three-day exhibition of short films featuring “the strangely beautiful and the beautifully strange,” the festival is returning for its third season at Durham's Manbites Dog Theater tonight through Saturday. Festival organizers will screen 48 short films in four programming blocks – at 8:15 each evening, and a matinee



“Day of the Hominid” is one of several experimental shorts that will be screened at the Strange Beauty Film Festival in Durham.

COURTESY OF STRANGE BEAUTY FILM FESTIVAL 2012

screening Saturday afternoon.

The preview event provided an intriguing sampling of this year's lineup, and the downtown art crowd responded with enthusiasm. As one onlooker observed, in an era when everyone has his own portable digital screen, it's nice to attend a communal cinema

event that doesn't involve \$9.75 popcorn buckets.

Haverkamp and Ventimiglia screened 10 shorts, mixing experimental animation with more traditional documentary-style shorts. Among the highlights was the haunting “Aviarium,” an experimental German short with dreamlike im-

ages of birds, landscapes and heavy industry.

Also screened was the disturbing “Bloodsucker,” from California, which details an unexpected side effect of the foreclosure crisis – the thousands of abandoned residential

DETAILS

What: Strange Beauty Film Festival 2012

When: Today through Saturday

Where: Manbites Dog Theater, 703 Foster St., Durham

Cost: Individual tickets, \$12

Info: www.manbitesdogtheater.org or 682-3343. Also <http://strangebeauty.org/>

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