

HOT DOCS FILM FESTIVAL

Sex, bugs and rock 'n' roll

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MOVIE CRITIC

A rockumentary about veteran Toronto heavy metal band Anvil, and a series of very short films about the sex lives of insects and various creatures entitled *Green Porn*, will open this year's Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival, on from April 17 to 27.

The festival's executive director, Chris McDonald, announced the lineup yesterday, saying 173 films from 36 countries – including 37 Canadian documentaries – will be shown at the festival.

"All of these figures are record breakers for Hot Docs," he said.

McDonald described Sacha Gervasi's documentary, *Anvil! The Story of Anvil*, as a "true story of three Canadian demigods, now in their 50s," and introduced Steve "Lips" Kudlow, vocalist for the band.

"The band's been around for a good 35 years, and actually Robb (drummer Reiner) and I have been friends since we were kids, and we spent virtually our entire lives trying to rock 'n' roll and we're still doing it, and that became the theme of the movie that got made of us," said a black leather jacket-clad Kudlow at the Hot Docs launch news conference.

Sean Farnel, the festival's director of programming, said, "This is a festival that flirts with the mainstream but embraces the margins. If there is one thing that is political, it is the exploration of the margins that is seen across the festival program."

Certainly many of the announced documentaries have political themes, such as *Air India 182*, a look at the 1985 Air India bombing; *The Black List*, a documentary featuring comedian Chris Rock, author Toni Morrison and basketball player Kareem Abdul-Jabbar talking about life in black America; and *The Forgotten Woman*, an investigation of the plight of millions of widows, shot by photojournalist Dilip Mehta in his native India.

Other documentaries examine the creative process itself, in spectacular and often quirky forms. *All Together Now* documents the creation of the live show *Love* by Cirque du Soleil, based on the music of the Beatles; *The Rise and Fall of the Grumpy Burger: One Man's Search for the Half-Truth* is the story of a low-budget filmmaker in Windsor who tries to make a "serious" film about his grandfather, the alleged inventor of fast food.

Tickets are available at the Hot Docs box office, 87 Avenue Rd., hotdocs.ca or by calling 416-637-5150.

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