

arts shorts

LOCAL HERO(INE)

Eugene native Martin Curland's independent film **Zerophilia** makes its way to the Bijou this weekend. Shot in and around Eugene, the coming-of-age film crossbreeds the themes and tones of John Hughes and John Waters in the story of a young man who discovers that he has a rare (and fictional) genetic disorder called zerophilia: Under certain circumstances, he can change back and forth from male to female – a disconcerting notion at the best of times, but all the more so when the change takes place against Luke's (Taylor Handley) will when he gets turned on by Michelle (Rebecca Mozo).



Writer/director Curland's original, thoughtful and sometimes very funny film uses the idea of gender fluidity to consider ideas about growing up and growing into yourself; his director's statement says "I wanted a way to focus on and externalize a young man's internal struggle with his masculinity and sexual identity." Luke also struggles with the reactions of his friends and with a doctor (Gina Bellman) whose help comes with a catch. *Zerophilia* is a strange and enjoyable trip, all the more so for Eugeneans who'll recognize the view from Skinner's Butte, the UO campus and more. "[Zerophilia is] a micro-budget film and would not have been possible without the generous support of people in the Eugene area who worked on the film as extras, on the crew or contributed in other ways," says Curland, who will host an "informal gathering" at McMenum's North Bank following Saturday's matinee screening. *Zerophilia* shows at 11:25 pm Feb. 9 and 11 and 3:25 pm Feb. 10 at the Bijou. – Molly Templeton

DATE WITH THE DEAD



"There are a lot of people in and out of relationships that have zombie-like characteristics either from not appreciating what they have, wanting what they can't have or just not being satisfied with themselves." So says 26-year-old nursing student Christopher Anglin, founder of Eugene's **St. Valentine's Day Zombie Walk**.

Although Zombie Walk flesh mobs occur around the world on various dates (see www.zombiewalk.com), Anglin thinks Valentine's Day is the perfect "Hallmark Holiday" to infect with humorous necropsy.

"I actually met my fiancée at a previous zombie walk so it works great as a dating tool. Zombies are HOT," Anglin says. "There will be couples and singles and they will all be wonderfully bloody. I'm personally not looking to make any deep statements about relationships with this event. I just wanna have some fun."

Anglin says the Zombie Walk isn't a political statement or a reason to misbehave. "Anyone that wants an excuse to riot or get drunk and harass people is not at all welcome."

At last year's inaugural Zombie Walk, Anglin and his mob of decrepit faux-flesh-eating souls gathered at the Pioneer Memorial Cemetery, startling unsuspecting citizens. "Every now and then a couple would stroll through holding hands," he says. "We would see them coming and all hide in different directions, then as they passed by, they would have some 20 zombies creeping out of nowhere towards them. Funny stuff." The unsightly mob then shambled into town, occupied various bars, then visited the Sacred Heart ER, much to the delight of the ER staff. He advises participants not to bite anyone for real, especially the police.

Anglin, who admits he has an unnatural obsession for zombie films, says he was inspired to create a Eugene Zombie Walk after reading *The Zombie Survival Guide* by Max Brooks. "I'm pretty sure the idea came to be after few beers also."

"Why Valentine's Day? Being single at the time and having a lot of friends that were either single or disinterested in the chocolate and flowers celebration, it seemed appropriate. It's fun to give people a shock. To see people forcing a nervous smile or laugh when they see the living dead approaching them. You know there has to be that one short moment when they're questioning whether or not this is the real thing. This really does scare some people. There was an incident in Vancouver, B.C., I believe, where a motorist tried to run some zombies down in his car."

Anglin says costumes and masks are unnecessary. "Zombies are just the average Joe that has become undead." The emphasis is on appearing like you've been dead for a while, and lots of blood. "If you have any extra body parts to carry around and chew on, even better." The second annual St. Valentine's Day Zombie Walk begins at 8 pm Wednesday, Feb. 14 at Pioneer Cemetery (18th & University). – John Dooley

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