

Music doc screened at Sosa Theater

Director Denny Tedesco takes questions after his documentary “The Wrecking Crew” was screened at the Rebeca Sosa Theater.

By Bill Daley/Assistant Editor
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If it’s music from the 1960s that you are into, then the Rebeca Sosa Theater at the Miami Springs Community Center was the place to be last week (April 21) when an exclusive South Florida screening of the award-winning documentary film “The Wrecking Crew” was shown.

The film told the story of the unsung musicians who provided the backbeat, the bottom and the swinging melody that drove many of the No. 1 hits of the 1960s. From the likes of Sonny and Cher, Frank Sinatra, The Monkees, The Byrds or The Beach Boys, this group of “behind-the-scenes” musicians were involved in providing their background music.



There was no charge for the event as it was actually a fundraiser. The only reason the film hasn’t been released to mainstream theaters is the large cost of licensing of the music — one of the biggest soundtracks ever for the 90-minute documentary is in the area of \$300,000. Suggested donation from attendees was \$20 and an impressive-looking souvenir/collectible display was set up in the lobby with all proceeds from those sales going to the fundraising cause as well.

If you ever sing along to such songs as “Good Vibrations” (Beach Boys), “Windy” (The Association), “Turn, Turn, Turn” (The Byrds), “Be My Baby” (The Ronettes) or the theme from “Mission Impossible,” among hundreds of other hits from the ’60s, the instrumentals being played in the background belong to this group.

The film’s director, Denny Tedesco, whose father Tommy was one of the guitarists and the main focus in this group of musicians, was there to meet-and-greet everyone before the show and conducted a Q&A session afterwards as well. It was when his father was diagnosed with cancer back in the mid-’90s that Denny got the idea to try to bring as many of the musicians together, including his father, to have a roundtable and bounce anecdotal stories off of each other. Even after his father passed, Denny would spend the next 10 years putting together tons of archived footage before eventually selecting an editor to sit down and start putting it all together, which he did in 2006.

Miami Springs City Manager Jim Borgmann is a self-professed expert and '60s music junkie and was the person primarily responsible for bringing the event to Miami Springs. Over a year ago, he took the time to write Tedesco, and asked him if South Florida could be on his list of places to host a screening.

"I got an e-mail from him about the first of this month and here we are, the exclusive South Florida screening right here in our own Miami Springs," said Borgmann. "I hope everyone who loves the music as much as I do enjoyed it tonight the way I did."

Evidently, as there were very few empty seats in the theater and the crowd, which laughed several times during the film, gave Tedesco a standing ovation when he approached the stage after the screening.

"Pop and rock music has always been a big part of my life," said Borgmann. "I wake up with a different song in my head every morning and it's not my clock radio. Human Resources director Loretta Boucher's son wrote an article about the drummer from this 'group' several years ago. I was able to make contact with him and shortly thereafter he told me about this film. To learn that most of my favorite groups from the '60s were actually backed by these guys in the studio was just fascinating to me."

"What the Funk Brothers did for Motown, the Wrecking Crew did, only bigger for the West Coast Sound," said Tedesco. "Six years in a row in the late '60s and early '70s the Grammy for Record of the Year went to Wrecking Crew member recordings."

Some of the interviews were classic.

"To be honest, I was too young and dumb to realize how good these guys were," said Cher. "I was 16 years old and just went in there to sing and didn't think much of it. Years later, you look back and really appreciate how talented they really were and how good they could make vocal recordists look."

"I remember showing up in the studio one day with my guitar and sat down and they all looked at me as if to say, 'What do you think you're doing?' " said former Monkee Peter Tork. "At the time, you're young and offended that they don't need your instruments but looking back on it now, I would've done it the exact same way."

According to Tedesco, he still has a ways to go to secure the necessary funding (\$240,000), but "The Wrecking Crew" is eligible for funding through the International Documentary Foundation, a California nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation. Anyone wishing to make a donation may visit www.wreckingcrewfilm.com.

Read more: <http://www.miamiherald.com/2011/05/01/2186002/music-doc-screened-at-sosa-theater.html#ixzz1LJ5xaZh3>