

**PRESS RELEASE
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Three Kidsfest Films Garner Academy Award Nominations!

Live-action short films ***Toyland*** and ***New Boy***, both shown at the 2008 Chicago International Children's Film Festival (CICFF), and the animated film ***Lavatory Lovestory***, shown at the CICFF in 2007 and 1st Prize winner at the MediaBridge Youth Fest in 2007, have been nominated for an Oscar in the 81st Academy Awards



Toyland (Germany, 2007)

Toyland (Germany, 2007), tells the story of a young boy's friendship with a Jewish playmate in Nazi occupied Germany. After his mother protects him saying their neighbors are going to a place called "Toyland". After her son goes missing, she must face the consequences of her lies.

Jochen Alexander Freydank, Director, Producer & Writer of ***Toyland***, attended the CICFF in 2008. A full house of children from Reilly & Prescott Elementary Schools attended the shorts screening, which included *Toyland*, at Facets, October 27.

Taking several years to produce, with little money and many favors from friends in the film industry, Jochen spoke to the audience about the film's historic realism, set in WWII Germany, and about his career in TV production. He also spoke about the story of the film; that he intended the story's major plot points to be a surprise to the audience.

Love can bloom in the unlikeliest of places, as a washroom attendant discovers, in animator Konstantin Bronzit's delightful ***Lavatory Lovestory*** (Russian Federation, 2007). *Lavatory Lovestory*, which played as part of the 2007 CICFF & MediaBridge Youth Festivals, took the 1st Prize for Animated Short Film from the MediaBridge Youth Jury. Mr. Bronzit as won first prize from the CICFF Children's Jury in 1999 for his film *At the Ends of the Earth*.



Lavatory Lovestory (Russian Federation, 2007)



New Boy (Ireland, 2007)

New Boy (Ireland, 2007), based on a short story by Roddy Doyle, is a poignant and comedic short film which deftly captures the experience of Joseph, a nine-year-old African boy, new to his Irish classroom. *New Boy* film showed at the 2008 CICFF in the short film program "Proud to Be Me: Stories of African and African-American Children".

Cheer on the nominees Sunday, February 22, 2009 as the Academy Awards are presented Live on ABC, starting at 7pm (CST).

The 26th annual Chicago International Children's Film Festival (CICFF), taking place October 22-November 1, 2009, is the largest festival of films for children in North America and features over 200 animated and live action films from 40 countries. Programming the best children's media for over 30 years, the Festival welcomes over 25,000 Chicago area children, adults, and educators to the screenings, and over 130 filmmakers, media professionals & celebrities attend the Festival to lead interactive workshops with kids. ***The CICFF is also the ONLY children's film festival designated as an Academy® Qualifying Festival!***

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