

The Newport Daily News

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50 cents

NewportDailyNews.com

Thursday

June 5, 2008

NEWPORT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Opposites attract

Unlikely duo pairs up in 'Sherman's Way'

By James J. Gillis
Daily News Staff

NEWPORT — “Sherman’s Way” is a lighthearted road movie about two vastly opposite guys who never travel very far, at least in terms of miles.

But director Craig Saavedra and lead actor Michael Shulman are glad their road headed to Newport, where they screened their film at the Opera House on Wednesday night.

Saavedra spent chunks of his childhood summers visiting Newport. And New Yorker Shulman spends the Christmas season here, staying with his girlfriend at the La Farge Perry House.

“Anyone who actually lives here is very lucky,” the 26-year-old actor said. “It’s just so beautiful.”

“Sherman’s Way” tells the tale of an anal-retentive Yale student of privilege named Sherman who unexpectedly meets up with a former Olympic athlete and

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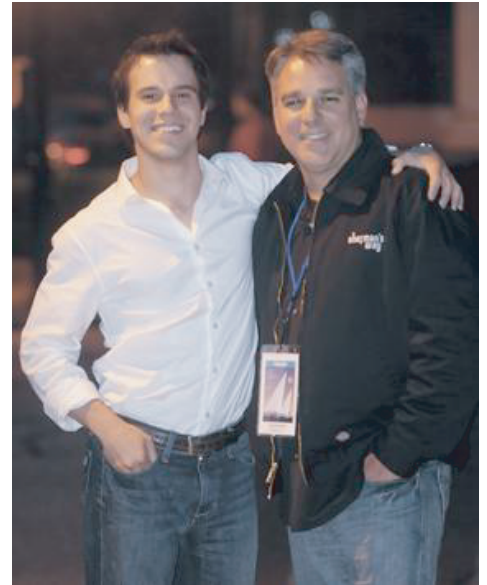
current ne’er-do-well named Palmer (James LeGros), who encounter a few bumps and oddballs along the way.

“They’re two guys who really don’t like each other,” Saavedra said. “But things kind of work out.”

The movie was well received Wednesday night from a crowd of about 60. The Newport International Film Festival is the third festival for “Sherman’s Way.”

Shulman and Saavedra were visiting the Newport festival for the first time. “But one of the things that really appealed to me about showing it at this festival is the chance to visit Newport again,” Shulman said.

The director and actor (who co-produced the film) met about 10 years ago, when Saavedra directed Shulman in an



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Actor Michael Shulman, left, and director Craig Saavedra attended Wednesday’s screening of ‘Sherman’s Way’ at the Opera House in Newport.

HBO movie called “Someone Had to Be Benny.” Shulman, who played Artie Baum for a season on “Party of Five,”

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took a break from acting to earn a degree in art history from Yale and “Sherman’s Way” is their reunion.

“It’s an independent film that’s loosely based on our own friendship,” Saavedra said.

The festival solicits local residents to house filmmakers and Saavedra and Shulman are staying with James and Sue Klau of Newport.

“It’s the first film festival I’ve been to where they have you stay with a local family,” Shulman said. “That’s a nice touch.”

Shulman planned to return to New York today but will be back when “Sherman’s Way” screens again Saturday at 2:45 p.m. at Opera House 3.

“It’s fun to get a sense of the audience’s reaction,” he said. “That makes it exciting. It’s great just to be part of this event.”

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