

NEW YORK

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TRIBECA SQUARED EIGHTEEN BUCKS FOR A MOVIE? WHY, YES. AND HERE ARE SOME WELL WORTH THE DOUGH.



Spider-Man 3, free for a few at Tribeca; *Planet B-Boy*.

Rooting for the Tribeca Film Festival can be a bit like cheering for the Knicks: They've got gobs of money and tons of potential, and you want to support the home team, but you can't help but be hypercritical about it. This year, we're wondering, why are there still so many bad celebrity vehicles? Why is such a purportedly populist film festival opening with an event (Al Gore's environmental shorts) that is closed to the public? And why on earth has Tribeca hiked ticket prices from \$12 to \$18? (Tickets are just \$15 at Sundance, where there are far better odds that you'll see the next *Little Miss Sunshine*.) But on to the good news: Tribeca's cut down on the Hollywood publicity blitzes and is offering free public tickets to premieres of *Spider-Man 3* (whereas last year's *M:i:III*-a-thon was, absurdly, VIP-only). And, most important, after watching just 50-some of the 150-plus features (many haven't screened yet), we've already found a dozen movies that justify the elevated price of admission. And we'll remain on the lookout. For daily coverage and the best short films of the festival, see nymag.com/tribeca.

LOGAN HILL

The Business of Being Born

PREMIERES APRIL 29.

Yes, it's a tad one-sided, but it's also very hard not to watch. Abby Epstein's documentary, exec-produced by Ricki Lake, exposes the risks of hospital births and explores age-old practices that are frequently overlooked in this schedule-my-C-section era. Among the more arresting segments: Lake's giving birth herself, the old-fashioned way. SARA CARDACE

Hellfighters

PREMIERES APRIL 27.

Not the kind of inspiring sports doc we're used to, Jon Frankel's absorbing and insightful film documents Harlem's only high-school football team, under the guidance of former Dallas Cowboy Duke Ferguson, as they fight for respect in a city that offers them very little support. BILGE EBIRI

The King of Kong

PREMIERES APRIL 26.

Seth Gordon's doc ennobles the surprisingly epic face-off between conniving Donkey Kong world-record holder (and hot-sauce salesman) Billy Mitchell and unlucky underdog Steve Weibe, a family man whose tearful struggle is downright Oprah-iffic. LOGAN HILL

Passio

PREMIERES APRIL 27.

Paolo Cherchi Usai's experimental work pairs a live orchestral and choral performance of Arvo Pärt's interpretation of the *St. John Passion* with an unsettling montage of found film. It's not for the squeamish (think eyeball surgery), but the live performances, at St. John the Divine and Trinity Church, are bound to leave you speechless, either for better or for worse. S.C.

Planet B-Boy

PREMIERES APRIL 26.

In the wake of *Spellbound*, we've all seen too many competition documentaries, but you

4/24
Local literate-rock
heroes Fountains
of Wayne play
at Webster Hall.

IT HAPPENS THIS WEEK

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

4/28
Menudo
auditions at
Queens
Center Mall.

4/25
Tribeca Film
Festival begins; big
premieres include
Lucky You with
Drew Barrymore,
Albert Maysles's film
about *The Gates*,
and *Spider-Man 3*.

4/28
Coffee and Tea
Festival at
Metropolitan
Pavilion.

4/28
Happy 54th
birthday,
Kim Gordon!

4/26
Democratic
presidential
candidates
debate in South
Carolina.



Intelligencer

Can Mayor Mike Become Anti-Gun Prez?

Dems' skittishness leaves opportunity for Bloomberg.

THE BIG POLITICAL takeaway from last week's shooting at Virginia Tech is that the current crop of Democratic candidates have all become soft on gun control, according to City Councilman **David Yassky**. He's an expert on gun control, having helped author and pass the Brady Bill and assault-weapons ban during his days as a congressional aide to **Chuck Schumer**. "It's disappointing," Yassky says, that **Hillary Clinton**, **Barack Obama**, **John Edwards**, and other Democrats appear "skittish" and "demoralized" on gun control. In 2000, Yassky points



out, both **Al Gore** and **Bill Bradley** ran on a platform that called for mandatory federal licensing for gun owners. Now nobody is. Except maybe **Dennis Kucinich**. And maybe a self-financed, get-results gun-control crusader running as an independent? "These candidates are going to leave a big opening for **Mayor Bloomberg** on the gun issue," Yassky says. But despite Bloomberg's lobbying group's announcing a national anti-gun advertising rollout April 22, the official line is still the same: Bloomberg isn't running.

—Geoffrey Gray

Talk-Show Host Gives Birth

On camera! In a tub!

Ricki Lake's documentary, *The Business of Being Born*, features her most revealing role yet: naked in the bathtub of her West Village apartment, delivering



her second child, **Owen**. She wants to call attention to what she sees as the shortcomings of giving birth in hospitals, which she believes push for a Cesarean too readily: Some New York hospitals' Cesarean-section rate tops 40 percent. Lake wasn't always the **Al Gore** of natural births—only after the drug-assisted delivery of her son **Milo** at St. Luke's-Roosevelt did she look into alternative practices, which led to the tub birth that gave her "an indescribable high." But being filmed doing it? "It's not flattering in any way," admits Lake, 38, whose movie will premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival. For the event, "My publicist said I needed to be in the best shape possible, so

I just lost 24 pounds. I'd look pretty good naked in a tub now." Still, "to this day," says Lake, "my assistant talks about how she had to clean up my bathtub afterward." —Faye Penn

Passenger 57 Takes the A Train

Undercover underground.

FEDERAL AIR marshals are getting MetroCards. Last year, the Transportation Security Administration, which oversees the secretive Federal Air Marshal Service, partnered with Amtrak to have marshals ride the rails. The program had a few successful field runs, and now the TSA is ramping up operations to include ferries, trains, buses, and, yes, the subways. This bit of news came out of a briefing last week at the FAMS field office in Queens. The purpose of it was to open up lines of communication with media outlets with the goal of avoiding misinformed reporting by TV news—for example, if a local affiliate hears of an arrest on a flight,