

EVENT

Show to teach movie science by putting kids in the 'Action!'

By Amy Robinson
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YOU ought to be in pictures. Next week, you just might.

On Wednesday, children and parents alike can get a taste of Hollywood with "Mad Science presents Movie Magic: The Science Behind the Movies," the final performance of the Clay Center's 2004-05 season.

"Each year, we try to have at least one educational program that connects art and science. This particular show was chosen not only because of its educational value, but also because of the dynamic way it teaches adults and children about science," said Clay Center Director Sue Sergi.

The show teaches children the technology of movie-making by putting them in the action. During the hourlong production, about 15 to 20 audience members will have the chance to get on stage and take on film roles, including director, producer, actor, camera operator, special-effects operator and Foley artist — that's the sound-effects person. They will be aided by Professor Pruvitt and Crash, the main characters in Mad Science's productions.

"They're a left brain, right brain combo," Mad Science managing partner Leonard Lipes said of the pair. "Crash is a very intelligent but zany character, and Professor Pruvitt keeps Crash in line."

Though there will be demonstrations throughout, the show does have a plot. It involves the theft of Pruvitt and Crash's masterpiece "The Best Movie Ever." The duo enlists the help of audience members to travel with them to Movieland to catch the culprit

IF YOU GO

"Mad Science presents Movie Magic: The Science Behind the Movies," 7 p.m. Wednesday. Maier Hall, Clay Center. Adults \$20, children \$10. Call 561-3570 or visit www.theclaycenter.org.

At the end of the show, the audience will get to watch its own eight-minute movie compiled from the demonstrations. And those audience members selected to be onstage won't be the only ones featured — there will be plenty of audience shots as well.

Lipes said Mad Science, a Montreal-based company, chose to create a show based on movie technology (others have featured Mars, the weather and Newton's laws) because of a new partnership with MGM.

"There's lots of cool science involved in making movies nowadays as opposed to 50 to 60 years ago," he said. Plus, the shows can pull in characters and plotlines from MGM properties and movies kids know well, such as the "Legally Blond," "Agent Cody Banks" and "Pink Panther" franchises.

One of the coolest pieces of movie technology the show will introduce to children is the green screen. "You can put a kid anywhere with green-screen technology. You can have them fly in space or chase bulls," Lipes said.

Fun things like that help children learn without them realizing it, he said. "We sneak [the educational material] in the back door. Our shows are fun and interactive, and kids learn because they are having fun."

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Photo courtesy of MAD SCIENCE PRODUCTIONS

During Wednesday's "Mad Science presents Movie Magic: The Science Behind the Movies," children in the Clay Center audience will be chosen to go onstage and fill jobs found on movie sets, including special-effects oper-