

## AROUNDTOWN



### **KEEP YOUR DISTANCE** Award-winning thriller premieres at Cinema Center Tech Louisville-based Filmmaker Stu Pollard hosts screenings and Q & A sessions

**Michael Summers**  
Fort Wayne Reader

No one can say Stu Pollard isn't persistent.

When the Louisville-based independent filmmaker's first feature, *Nice Guys Sleep Alone*, was released, Pollard realized that the biggest challenge wasn't necessarily raising money, shooting the film, or post-production work; it was getting the thing seen.

So, like a rock band promoting its latest CD, he took the film on the road. He visited openings in all types of markets, went to film festivals, did anything he could to get himself, and his movie, in front of as many audiences as possible (it showed to a sold out house at Cinema Center).

Then, when *Nice Guys Sleep Alone* came out on video and DVD in 2001, he kept going. "I got a list of stores from Hollywood Video, the chain that had picked us up, and got in my car and started driving," Pollard says. "I hit about 400 stores in a six month period." He would hang out in the comedy section and chat to the customers about his movie. He also found a valuable distribution resource in the store's employees, mostly young film-buffs interested in the film-making process, who would recommend *Nice Guys Sleep Alone* to friends and clients. "As soon as I got all the copies on the shelves rented, I'd go to the next store."

For his latest feature, *Keep Your Distance*, Pollard is in the midst of another "barnstorming" tour that brings him to Fort Wayne's Cinema Center Tech on Friday, October 7th (there's also a special student-only screening on Thursday, October 6th) for a couple screenings and Q & A sessions. Filmed and produced entirely in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, *Keep Your Distance* is a thriller starring Gil Bellows (*Ally McBeal*), Kim Ravers (*24*), and Elizabeth Pena (*Lone Star*). Recently, it won two Audience Awards for Best Feature at the 25th annual Breckenridge Festival of Film and the Rhode Island Film Festival.

The Fort Wayne stop is part of a larger promotional campaign that will take Pollard and *Keep Your Distance* to quite a few major cities, college campuses, and film festivals. "We were offered a theatrical release deal, but it just didn't make sense," Pollard says. "It made more sense for this film to break our rights into pieces, than try to swing for the fences too hard in terms of opening up in New York and LA. We'd end up spending as much on that as we did in making the film, ensuring that I might get another job, but my investors would never see a dime back, and I have a very fierce loyalty to the people who back me financially."

Pollard says he really enjoys doing the Q & A sessions after the film's premier, and passing on what he's learned as an independent film-

maker. "When you make films independently, the end of the process is not when you lock picture, or do your final sound mix," he says. "It's when you have exhausted every possible outlet to get your film seen. We live in a world that now has internet and DVD and 8 billion TV stations, so chances are, if you're persistent, you can get it in front of people and be seen. A lot of people take that for granted."

"Every year, there's a film that gets picked up at Sundance or Toronto and it's big news, and everybody dreams about that happening," he adds. "But for many of us, even the majority of films that get into those big festivals, we're left with having to chart our own course as far as getting our film out there."

**Keep Your Distance**  
Friday, October 7th  
7 and 9 pm  
Cinema Center Tech  
1600 East Washington Blvd  
(Indiana Tech Campus)  
Pollard also hosts a special Student Screening on Thursday October 6.

