

ENTERTAINMENT: From TIFF to Nineteen on the Park

# Small Town Murder Songs brings director to Stouffville

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Stouffville residents will have the chance to see a film Thursday that is drawing big attention to small town life.

Ed Gass-Donnelly, the director of *Small Town Murder Songs*, will be at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park to introduce the film and answer questions after its screening.

This film has helped garner Mr. Gass-Donnelly the notice of *Variety* magazine, which named him one of the Ten Directors to Watch for 2011.

The film was shot in Listowel, Ont., and the Mennonite community plays a role in the film. Mr. Gass-Donnelly contacted Mennonite churches in small towns to see if they were interested in bringing the film to their town. Some members of Community Mennonite Church of Stouffville decided to organize a screening because the film sparked good conversation about redemption and faith.

"It shows a seamy side of life, which

some people might not like," Pastor Cameron Kaufman-Frey said, "but that's an honest depiction of life. This is one of the most honest depictions that I've seen in film of the struggle we all have when we try to change the impulses that diminish our lives."

A modern gothic tale of crime and redemption, the movie stars Swedish actor Peter Stormare (*Fargo*, *Armageddon*, *Prison Break*, *Seinfeld*) as Walter, an aging police officer from a small Ontario Mennonite town who hides a violent past until a local murder upsets the calm of his newly reformed life.

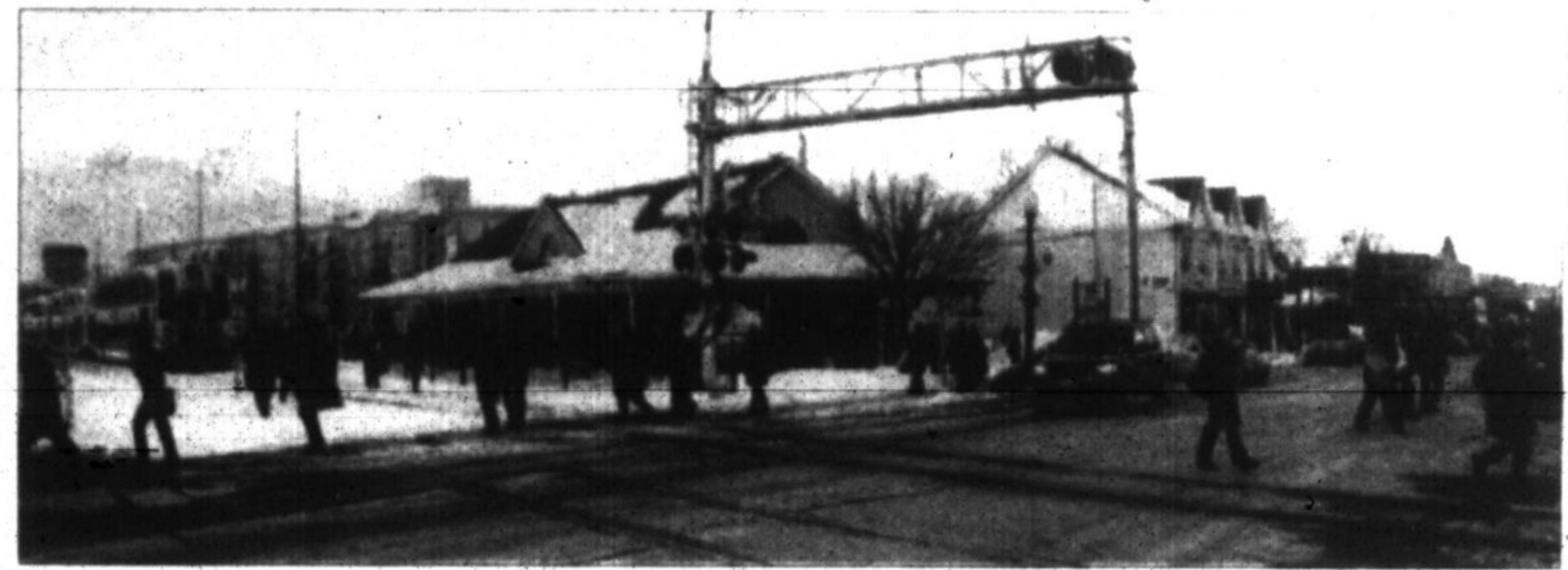
The film co-stars Aaron Poole (*This Beautiful City*), Jill Hennessey (*Crossing Jordan*, *Law and Order*) and Martha Plimpton (*The Goonies*, *Running On Empty*, *1 Shot Andy Warhol*).

Tickets are available at the Nineteen on the Park box office, including the hour before show time, as well as at For The Love of Jo Coffee House on Main Street. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. The screening begins at 7.



KINOSMITH PHOTO

Ed Gass-Donnelly, the director of *Small Town Murder Songs*, works with lead actor Peter Stormare (*Fargo*, *Armageddon*, *Prison Break*, *Seinfeld*). Mr. Gass-Donnelly will be at Nineteen on the Park to introduce the film and answer questions after its screening Thursday. Members of Community Mennonite Church organized the screening.



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Commuters cross Main Street after exiting a GO train at the Stouffville Station Thursday.

## 'Just waiting for someone to get hit'

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No public meetings have been scheduled because the project still requires council approval.

There are lights five blocks to the west of the station at Main Street and Ninth Line and three blocks to the east at Main and Market/Mill streets. Because of their distances away from the station, people jaywalk.

"It's just really dangerous. It's just waiting for someone to get hit," Ms Griffiths said.

The curb extensions will reduce the crossing distance and provide improved visibility for the pedestrian and motorist, according to a Jan. 18 report to council by Paul Whitehouse, director of public works for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Signal lights were discounted by the downtown sub-committee because they cause too much of a visual distraction around the train tracks, Ms Hilton said.

"It should also be noted that the instal-

lation of the crosswalk may necessitate the removal of curbside parking stalls to ensure adequate site lines and separation distances," Mr. Whitehouse wrote.

A signaled pedestrian crossing could also impact traffic flow on Blake Street, which runs next to the train tracks across from the station.

"In order for the rail crossing gates and the crosswalk to be safely activated, vehicular turn movements from Blake Street and Main Street will have to be curtailed. The implications would be to make Blake Street a one-way street southbound," Mr. Whitehouse wrote.

Last June, a petition from the Beryl Avenue Association in favour of a pedestrian crosswalk on Main Street near the station was presented to council. It had about 100 names on it.

Beryl Avenue is located just southwest of the station.

"It just shows there's concern from the local residents as well," Ms Griffiths said. "It's not just the GO train riders."

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