

From *Film Threat* comes this bizarre, only-in-Hollywood tidbit: I swear we're not making this up.

On June 10, 1998, the Dances With Films: Festival Of The Unknowns received a letter from Orion Pictures basically telling them that they had to change their name. A copy of the letter obtained by Film Threat reads:

Orion Pictures Corporation ("Orion") owns the distribution rights in and to the motion picture "DANCES WITH WOLVES" in the United States and Canada. It has come to our attention that you intend to hold a film festival entitled "Dances With Films" on July 28-30, 1998. Your use of the title "Dances With Films" will be confusing to the public and constitutes and actionable interference with our title and film. This will constitute formal notice that your unauthorized use of the title violates Orion's rights, in that such use constitutes, among other things, copyright infringement, unfair competition, an infringement of Orion's goodwill and an attempt to pass off your film festival as associated with the motion picture.

Accordingly, Orion hereby demands that you immediately cease and desist from any further use of the "Dances with Films" title and advertisement thereof, and that you refrain from any further effort to exploit the motion picture, the artwork or any of Orion's other rights.

Your disregard of this notice and demand may result in your being subject to an assessment of punitive damages in addition to all other damages Orion may suffer.

According to Film Threat, Festival director Michael Trent sees no confusion on the part of the public and neither do we. Now, it's only an opinion **so don't sue us**, but if we ran a company that released a piece of unwatchable garbage like "8 Heads in a Duffel Bag," we'd be spending our days looking for coherent scripts, not bullying innocent people. Perhaps the dimwits at Orion may "confuse" the title with the Kevin Costner film, but 99.99999% of all other people will think it's a clever and cute play on words. That's just a conservative estimate though, and of course, we could be wrong.

Forgive us for stating the OBVIOUS, but if "Dances With Wolves" isn't listed in the program, it's probably not playing at the film festival. If the film festival people are using artwork similar to the one-sheet, then they just need to switch it. No need to change the title of the festival. Now, we can ask Judge Judy to rule on this, but she'd just start yelling and annoy the hell out of everyone. Our take on it is that the suit has "no merit" whatsoever (again, an opinion, please no lawsuits.) Isn't there a frivolous lawsuit statute in California? If so, it may well come back to haunt Orion.

Show your support for our comrade at "Dances With Fi..." oooops , almost said it. OK. Let's say it this way: Dances With. One, Two, Three, Four. New Sentence. Films. There, I think we made it through that legal minefield. Geez, the things you gotta do to keep "the man" off your back. I guess we better not call ourselves Dances with Stinkers!

Write Michael Trent today and show your support:

Alternate titles Orion might approve of:

- To Kill a Film Fest
- No Way To Treat A Film Fest
- Four Weddings and a Film Fest
- Gone With The Film Fest
- The Lost in Film Fest
- Krippendorf's Film Fest
- The Lethal Film Fest
- Film Fest 1: The Wrath of Orion
- The Lost World of Film Fest
- The Sequels That Should Never Have Been Made Film Fest
- The Flops of Billy Crystal and Whoopi Goldberg Film Fest
- Kevin Costner's Not Coming To This Film Fest
- Bad Live-Action Disney Film Fest
- The Bruce Willis and Demi Moore Seperate Entrance Film Fest
- Proof That Joel Schumacher Should Never Direct Again Film Fest

