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Mock rockers strike a chord in 'Air Guitar Nation'

By Mary Frances Hill
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Documentary captures spirit of rock-god fantasies

As the rockers of Finland know, you can't play the air guitar and hold a gun in your hand at the same time. Through air guitar lies the path to peace.



World air guitar champ David "C-Diddy" Jung (left), wearing his trademark Hello Kitty backpack up front, hams it up with top contender Dan "Björn Türoque" Crane.

The notion of mock musicianship as a method to global sanity so amused Alexandra Lipsitz, the director of Air Guitar Nation, that she devoted two years of her life to following passionate competitors from the upstart U.S. Air Guitar Championship to the 2003 Air Guitar World Championship in Oulu, Finland — where, apparently, they take their air guitar very seriously.

It's the characters that Lipsitz found, as much as the story she tells, that is carrying Air Guitar Nation into cult status mere weeks after its release in the U.S. and Toronto, and a year after its world premiere at the 2006 South by Southwest Festival in Austin, Texas, where it won the audience award. The documentary opens Friday in Vancouver.

"They were all such interesting and dynamic people," says Lipsitz, who, when not focusing on documentaries, produces the popular reality show Project Runway, a series created by Magical Elves, her sister's production company that puts out reality shows like Project Greenlight and Top Chef. "There are amazing characters who

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