



Evelyn Reyes, 9, of Canyon Country gets to fly like Superman for video trickery during Mad Science's morning show Thursday at the Ventura County Fair.

Show about movie magic is a hit at the Youth Expo

Some kids star, but all are given a science lesson

By John Mitchell

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Youth will be served, and they certainly were in the Youth Expo building at the Ventura County Fair Thursday as around a dozen of them got to "act in a movie."

The Youth Expo features the traditional displays of arts and crafts, a collection of more than 150 homemade wooden toys for kids to play with, and an extensive, colorful and imaginative table-setting competition.

There was plenty of interest in all that and more at the Youth Expo, but the showpiece, as attested to by parents and kids alike, is a flashy production of educational entertainment that makes the audience part of the movie-making process.

It's called "The Science Behind Movies" and is produced by Mad Science, a Montreal company that specializes in creating entertainment that teaches elementary science.

More than 70 parents and children attended the morning show Thursday, which began with a pulsing rendition of Henry Mancini's "Pink Panther Theme." A large onstage screen and a smaller TV monitor flashed images of the Pink Panther and a couple of emcees who bounced about the stage and bounded into the audience to corral young volunteer actors.

The story line was to search for the Pink Panther and recover a script, "The Best Movie Ever," that he had stolen. Through "green-screen technology" the costumed volunteer actors, as seen on the viewing screens, were in outer space, in a farmyard and in water up to their necks as they looked for the Panther.

During the "shooting," the children were introduced to a machine that makes artificial snow, wind machines, a boom micro-



Emily Calkins, 2, looks a little bit uncertain about who's looking back from the mirror at the Paint Your Face table.

"My biggest fear is that my children might be taken away. It could happen anywhere, even at the fair. This information will help the police locate my children."

Cynthia Harmonson, of Ventura, who has two children

phone, movie cameras, and how the sounds of rain, thunder and the crackle of fire are made.

Parents in the audience thoroughly enjoyed watching their children emote, especially when some mixed in a bit of ham.

Tami Hill of Valencia went into near hysterics as she

watched her son, Kyle, 12, play a secret agent. He stood in front of the green screen and "snow-boarded" down a hill in pursuit of the panther. Kyle put a lot of gyrations into his effort, which his mother found hilarious.