

**TORONTO STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES WINNERS**

**First Ever Festival Celebrates Filmmaking Achievements of High School Students**

TORONTO- Organizers announced the winners of the top six awards for the inaugural **TORONTO STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL**, held April 6 & 7, at the new state-of-the-art 350 seat theatre in the Centre for Creative Learning, Crescent School. This first-ever event celebrates short films (under 10 minutes) created by secondary school students. Scores of films were submitted, and the first night of the festival featured a "Nominee Showcase" of the top 25 films. Judges included Eileen Arandiga (Canadian Film Center/Worldwide Short Film Festival), George Kaltsounakis (Cinematique/TIFF), Denise Hastings (Outreach - citizenship - NFB), Colin Cunningham (Gemini award-winning animator), and Bonita Seigel (YTV Programmer/Corus).

**WINNERS are:**

**BEST OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT:** "The World According to Clay," a comedic yet educational claymation pondering environmental issues created. Created, Directed and Produced by Claire Seaborn. Cast: Kelly Tyson. (School: Bishop Strachan School)

**2<sup>nd</sup> PLACE- OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT:** "Gun, with a Shot of Espresso," a futuristic drama set in 2030 where a private investigator pursues the mystery of a beautiful woman. Created by Ross McAuley, Produced by Daniel Kim, Sound by Michael Kolberg, Script written by Ross McAuley, Cinematographer Daniel Kim, Editors Ross McAuley and Daniel Kim. Cast: Sooling Lee and Michael Kolberg. (School: Western Technical Commercial School)

**3<sup>rd</sup> PLACE- OVERALL ACHIEVEMENT:** "Economia Global," a visual documentary portraying the struggles as the underprivileged cope with the challenges of a crumbling society. Created, Directed and Produced by Milton de La Cruz. Cast: Milagros Rodriguez le Monilla. (School: Bergenfield High School, New Jersey, USA)

**DIRECTOR'S AWARD FOR FILM EXCELLENCE:** "The Grey Lady," an intriguing "mockumentary" about the ghost haunting Pickering College. Created by the Pickering College Film Club. Directed by Jaime Gianopoulos and Adrian Borlestean, Produced by Faculty Advisor Tim Beers, Cinematographer Jamie Gianopoulos and Mathieu Hubbard, Editors Adrian Borlestean and Jamie Gianopoulos, Sound Sam Atkinson and Chris Haug. Cast: Lindsay Saunders, Gareth Stirrup, and Sam Atkinson (School: Pickering College)

**BEST SCREENPLAY:** "The Test," Created and Script written by Joseph Douros and Kaye DelaCuesta, Produced by the drama Department, Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts, Directed by Joseph Douros, Cinematographer Kaye DelaCuesta, Editor Scott Brown, Sound Scott Brown. Cast: featuring actress Priscilla Fecceria. (School: Cardinal Carter Academy for the Arts)

**EDITOR'S CHOICE AWARD FOR FILM EXCELLENCE:** "I Also Shot Andy Warhol," a visual documentary playing homage to Andy Warhol and the popular culture he created. Created, Directed and Produced by Arman Draginov. (School: Crescent School)

The **TORONTO STUDENT FILM FESTIVAL (TSFF)** was guest hosted by Gemini-award winner actress **Meredith Henderson** ("The Adventures of Shirley Holmes," "Shania: A Life in Eight Albums," "Song Spinner," and out later in 2006: "The Assassination of Jesse James starring Brad Pitt and Casey Affleck).

The festival also featured:

- a special screening of "**choke**," programmer's pick at the Palm Springs International Film Festival.
- the world premiere of "**Pretty Dresses**," a striking docu-drama created by Acholi youths from the slums of Kampala which tells the story of youth abducted and used as sex slave and child soldiers during the devastating Ugandan war.
- "**The Forgotten Ones**," a sci-fi thriller scripted and acted by students of the Summit School for Children with emotional and intellectual disabilities (in Montreal) and professionally shot and edited by Quietus Films.
- "**Pigeon**," a short drama about a stunning act of charity starring Academy Award nominee Michael Lerner
- "**Waiting**," a silent narrative film that develops the theme of time and loss in an experimental fashion, by created and produced by festival founders Gordie Steiner, Zack Russell, and David Whyte.

"We are thrilled with the response to this inaugural festival," commented Executive Producer Pat Macdonald. "Not only did we receive far more films than we anticipated in such a short period of time, but we experienced virtual sell-outs on both evenings. This demonstrates the tremendous interest and passion of young people to express their ideas visually and dramatically, and our goal was to recognize these fine accomplishments."

Jamie MacRae, Faculty Advisor to the festival and Head of Media and Visual Arts at Crescent School, further explained the explosion in media studies, "Now young filmmakers have an opportunity to screen their work and interact with industry professionals, which is so important to their learning and development. Media studies have become immensely popular in high school, as young people are increasingly exploring their world through the lens of a camera. This festival validates and celebrates their hard work.",

Further Details: [www.tsff.ca](http://www.tsff.ca)

**INFO:** PAT MACDONALD, TSFF EXECUTIVE PRODUCER 416-481-0918 [patmacdonald@rogers.com](mailto:patmacdonald@rogers.com)