

May 15, 2012 | By Christine Clark

Fresh Filmmakers Showcase Cinema at UC San Diego Student Film Festival



“Blue Forest Ashes,” directed by senior Ei Toshinari, tells the story of a young man and his mother who travel in Japan to obtain the ashes of his recently deceased grandmother.

Rising stars of cinema at the University of California, San Diego will be celebrated at the 5th annual Up and Coming Student Film Festival at 8 p.m., May 17 in The Loft. According to Rebecca Webb, ArtPower! film curator at UC San Diego, the fest has become increasingly competitive over the years and will feature darkly humorous, poignant, insightful and beautiful film selections from the campus’s emerging talent. The event is free and open to the public.

The format of the 2012 festival will be slightly different than previous years, according Webb. “The style of the event will be more ‘Oscar’ like,” she said. “We’ll be screening 12 films, of which five are nominated for awards. After the screening, we’ll announce who the awards go to.”

Thursday’s screening event will showcase student films selected by a panel of industry professionals that include Webb; Beth Accomando, UC San Diego alumna and KPBS film critic; Kalman Chodewicz, co-founder and chief content officer at the Pixel Initiative; Michael Trigillio, award-winning multimedia artist and UC San Diego visual arts professor; Leanna Bonamici, creator, producer and film curator at Shorts Showcase; Tara Knight, award-winning animator and UC San Diego professor of theatre and dance; and Zach Schamberg, former Up and Coming best film winner and NYU Tisch School of the Arts graduate student.

Five films will be recognized with awards in categories such as best film, best director and best screenwriting or story concept.

Many of this year’s selected films deal with relationships, such as “Blue Forest Ashes.” Directed by senior Ei Toshinari, the film tells the story of young man and his mother who travel in Japan to obtain the ashes of his recently deceased grandmother.

Another highlight of the festival is, “Academic Artist’s Manifesto,” a satire directed by seniors Emily Corkery, Monika Lang and Lauren Egge that attempts to expose the

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overbearing expectations of the academic art world through the use of text and sound.

An exciting new component of this year's festival will be the screening of short films that are the product of a new Sixth College practicum course—a collaboration between Sixth, ArtPower! and High Tech High, a public charter school in Chula Vista. The class teamed High Tech High media arts students with student mentors from UC San Diego.



“Education and community outreach have increasingly become a driving force behind the ArtPower! film program at UC San Diego,” Webb said.

As part of the practicum course, Webb works with ArtPower! program and audience development manager Elizabeth Yang-Hellewell and Up and Coming jurist Michael Trigillio to teach UC San Diego undergraduates how to work with and mentor high school students to make films.

“We’re really using film as a medium to engage students who are gaining leadership and technical skills through the process,” Webb added. “We’ve really seen a positive impact. Film is a very effective tool to empower communities. Film and video are essentially the most accessible medium both for the maker and the viewer. Through the use of social media, film has become the chief medium in which we express and share the everyday aspects of our lives.”

The ten films made by the Sixth College and High Tech high students will be screened at 8 p.m., followed by the Up and Coming film screenings at 8:45 p.m.

Following the screenings there will be an after party where the student filmmakers and jurors will celebrate with food and music by Malta.

“On a very basic level filmmaking is a really enjoyable process to utilize digital technologies to tell stories,” Webb said. “It is in our DNA to tell stories.”

For more information on the UC San Diego ArtPower! film program, go to <http://www.artpwr.com/categories/film>.

UC San Diego’s [Studio Ten 300](#) offers radio and television connections for media interviews with our faculty, which can be coordinated via studio@ucsd.edu. To connect with a UC San Diego faculty expert on relevant issues and trending news stories, visit <https://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/media-resources/faculty-experts>.