

UC San Diego

# UC San Diego News Center

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By Erika Johnson

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## Adam D. Kamil Gallery Named in Memory of Visual Arts Student

*Kamil family endows \$150,000 towards undergraduate media awards program*



*Adam Kamil*

Intrigued by the stories of others, Adam Kamil had a special way of getting people to share their life on film. A visual arts student at UC San Diego, Adam would traverse the sandy avenues of Ocean Beach with his video camera, approaching varied groups of people to capture their narrative. Since his passing in 2009, the Kamil family has established the Adam

Douglas Kamil (ADK) Media Awards, and this year endowed the program with a \$150,000 gift. In memory of Adam and in recognition of their generous gift, the Mandeville Center Gallery Annex has been named the Adam D. Kamil Gallery.

“We established the Adam Douglas Kamil Student Media Award in our son’s memory, especially as a tribute to his creativity and to his belief in the power of the media to connect people,” explained Elaine Kamil. “We are thrilled to know that Adam’s creative spirit will live on through the Adam D. Kamil Gallery, where students can showcase their talents, share inspiration and connect with one another.”

Learning to play guitar at a young age, Adam always resonated with the arts. Entering UC San Diego as a transfer student in economics, he soon followed his passion for visual arts and pursued filmmaking and media production. Relishing the chance to see how his classmates interpreted the world around them, Adam would transform class critiques into a movie premiere event, complete with Red Vines.

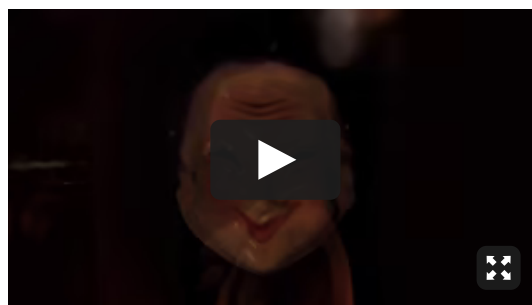
His desire to explore the lives of others inspired the ADK Media Award theme—“So What’s Your Story?” Open to all UC San Diego students with an interest in filmmaking, more than 30 films were premiered at the May 8 reception in the Adam D. Kamil Gallery. Although grounded by a singular theme, each film evoked a unique sentiment with a distinct visual style.

“Drawing more students each year, the Kamil Awards drive creativity and build confidence among UC San Diego students,” said Jordan Crandall, UC San Diego visual arts professor and department chair. “We are grateful for the support of the Kamil Family, which allows us to foster and showcase the talents of our visual arts students.”

The stories told—about mothers, brothers, strangers and those whose voice is not heard—ranged from lighthearted and nostalgic to probing and raw. Blending Chinese folk art dance with a fairy tale motif,



*Adam D. Kamil Gallery. Image by Erika Johnson/University Communications*



Yu Chen's film "Grandma" was chosen as this year's top entry. Characters in Chinese and Mayan masks interact in a series of surreal scenes, contrasting good and evil and seeking freedom from imposed identities.

Using film to explore cultural life and communicate with society, family and friends, Chen captures what strikes her as beautiful and extraordinary.

"The Kamil Award inspires me to pursue my passions as a filmmaker artist and capture beauty from a different perspective," said Chen, a senior majoring in visual arts. "I appreciate the Kamil Family for helping artists like me gain exposure. It makes me happy to know that people enjoy my work."

Launched four years ago, the award program strives to foster creativity and polish media production skills among students. A panel of visual arts faculty and graduate students judge the films and present one \$2,000 grand prize and two \$1,000 finalist awards. In addition to Chen, Ren Ebel's "Riley" and Rhiann Suen's "What Do You See" were chosen as this year's finalist films.



*Yu Chen, creator of this year's winning video, "Grandma".  
Image by Erika Johnson/University Communications*

"I'm happy that the awards have captured the imagination of students—the films are always diverse," said Elaine. "We hope that through the creative process students develop their talents and grow as sympathetic individuals."

Located on the lower level of the Mandeville Center, the Adam D. Kamil Gallery is a flexible space where undergraduate visual arts students can exhibit their artwork, organize a performance or curate a group exhibition. The ADK Media Awards exhibition is just one of numerous shows that take place each year. To learn more about the UC San Diego Visual Arts program, visit [visarts.ucsd.edu](http://visarts.ucsd.edu).