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POMEGRANATE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES WINNERS FOR THE POMEGRANATE STUDENT FILM FEST – MICRO-SHORTS 2011

Thirteen student filmmakers are being honored by The Pomegranate Student Film Fest – Microshorts 2011, for their outstanding short films, ranging from the associated themes of bullying and social out-casting to the Holocaust and Genocide.

The Grand Prize was awarded to “I’m the Person” by Jessa Cogbill, Keyshaun Crichlow and Michael Salas at Olive Peirce Middle School (OPMS) in Ramona, California. The award-winning video production class is spearheaded by teacher Sergio Estrada. The film also received the top votes for Best Technical Execution in a short film. OPMS truly took the trophies home with an additional win for Best PSA (Middle School) with “Stop the Bully” by Amanda Guerrero, Amanda Griswold, Caleb Jenkins, and Albert Lutz.

Celia Buckman, from Central School in Glencoe, Illinois, won “Best in Creativity” for her unique film “Something That Happened” This film featured a teenager’s stream-of-consciousness musings about genocide while doodling in a sketch book.

Best PSA (High School) was awarded to Michelle Zakarian from Taft High School for her film, “Save Someone: Make a Call.” The film highlighted the contrast between ‘upstanders’ and ‘bystanders.’ Teacher Jerrilyn Jacobs was on-hand at the award presentation. Jacobs emphasized her ongoing goal to keep students up-to-date on industry-standard film and video, and her classroom “wish list” of acquiring new editing software.

“It’s inspiring to see the work of these students,” said Scott Barker, President of Silver Screen Sizzles and Pomegranate Student Film Fest Judge. Barker awarded the special Jury Prize to Grant High School student, Ani Muradyan, for her film “Lost and Found.” Muradyan’s film was produced from the award-winning video production class led by veteran teacher Alex Hakobian.

“The entries are all wonderful! I’m heartened to see young people having the ability to articulate their ideas so well,” commented Neal Berg, Judge and Creative Director for IBM.

The Festival was started by the Pomegranate Foundation and Carla Garapedian, whose rockumentary “Screamers,” featuring the famed ethically supportive rock band, System of A Down, looked to raise awareness about the recurring problem of genocide. “I’m really impressed by the quality of films we received this year. The students all had a strong point of view that came through clearly,” said Pomegranate’s Executive Director, Carla Garapedian.

The Festival’s diverse and distinguished panel of judges included Neal Berg, Creative Director, IBM; Rocky Lang, Filmmaker and Writer; Marti Tippens Murphy, Los Angeles Director of Facing History and Ourselves; Professor Donald E. Miller, Firestone Professor of Religion at the University of Southern California and Executive Director of the Center for Religion and Civic Culture at USC; Rabbi Rachmiel Steinberg, Educational Director at Yeshivas Ohev Shalom and member of LA County’s Anti-Hate Crime Team; and Bill Yahraus, Senior Lecturer at USC School of Cinematic Arts and award-winning documentary filmmaker.

The Pomegranate Student Film Fest was endorsed by L.A. City Councilman Paul Krekorian, who contributed a PSA to the Festival <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BuVd1we1c5A>

The film festival took a unique approach to this year’s final showing with a web-based final event. Melissa Stonehill and Sean Brown, The Brownstone Media Group, created an online screening room on Facebook. “Pomegranate had films from all over the country and came to us for an idea for a final event. We decided to create an online screening room that would allow friends, teachers, families, and supporters to view the films, and vote on them. The turn out has been amazing. In the first ten days we had over 1,000 views and votes. A localized live event would not have had that kind of turn out.”

Festival voting is still ongoing for the “People’s Choice Award”
@ <http://www.facebook.com/pomegranatestudentfilmfest>
Deadline is July 4, 2011.

A screening event for the award-winning films will be announced this Summer.

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Find The Pomegranate Student Film Fest on Facebook
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