

Friday, October 16, 2009

Cinema Studies presents a four week independent film workshop

By **Katie Land**, news editor

The new Cinema Studies program debuts its first Hollywood-style workshop event with successful independent filmmaker and producer Michael Manasseri. Manasseri will present a screening of his latest horror film, "Babysitter Wanted," and lead a four week workshop featuring members of his film crew.

A special screening of "Babysitter Wanted" will be presented to the university community at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 22, in 202B O'Dowd Hall, and features a question and answer session with the director.

The next three weeks of independent filmmaking workshops are dedicated to the entire process from pre production and production to editing and distribution. Each session will be led by interactive dialogue through a video conference with personnel from Los Angeles.

"While we would love for this event to be well-attended, the workshop will truly be successful if it helps even a few OU students gain a sophisticated understanding of the world of independent cinema, along with knowledge of the broad array of exciting career paths within the film industry," said Kyle Edwards, director of Oakland's Cinema Studies Program.

The first session takes place from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 29 in 202B O'Dowd Hall and will feature Jonas Barnes, screenwriter and Kimberly Kates, CEO and producer of Big Screen Entertainment.

The lead actress, Sarah Thompson, joins the second session, set for 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 5, in 202B O'Dowd Hall, along with Ivy Isenberg, casting director, and Alex Vender, director of photography.

The final session will take center stage in the annual Grizzdance Film Festival and is set for 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11 in the Oakland Center Gold Room B. It will feature special guests Russell Jaeger, production designer, Stephan Eckleberry, editor, Kurt Oldman, composer, and Kimberly Kates, producer.

This event is the first in what will hopefully become a rich tradition of university and community centered film events to promote and complement the newly created Cinema Studies program.

"Since cinema studies received its official approval by the Board of Trustees, we have seen a lot of interest in the program and the major enrollment levels have already exceeded our first year projections," Edwards said. "Another initial goal of Cinema Studies was to promote OU and enhance campus culture through film and film-related events. We hope that this event is the first step in doing just that."

Although he is originally from the east coast and currently in Los Angeles, Mr. Manasseri has siblings that have attended OU and his parents live in the area. After the Michigan film industry tax incentives were unveiled, he opened a branch of his company, Big Screen Entertainment, and plans to begin working on a Michigan based feature late in 2009 or early in 2010, according to Edwards.

Manasseri has performed in several Broadway and off-Broadway productions over the years and has appeared in more than 40 national commercials. He played lead roles in four television series and had the starring role on "Weird Science" from 1994-98.

This workshop was sponsored by OU's Cinema Studies Program, Student Video Productions and the Grizzdance Film Festival. **View the flyer** for more information about the workshop. For more information about Oakland's new major in cinema studies, visit oakland.edu/cinemastudies.

SUMMARY

Cinema Studies debuts its first Hollywood-style workshop event with independent filmmaker Michael Manasseri, who will screen his new film and offer insight on the filmmaking process.

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