

SCREEN ARTS & CULTURES

WINTER 2011

WE'VE MOVED!
COME CHECK OUT
OUR NEW DIGS!



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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

I love old buildings. In fact, when I first started working at University of Michigan in the 1990s, I lived in a stunning Victorian mansion in Marshall. It was like living in the *Magnificent Ambersons*' house. The only downside was the commute, so when I had evening events and morning classes, I often pulled out a sleeping bag and pad from behind a bookshelf and camped out in my office in the Frieze Building.

Because I am charmed by old architecture, I had a soft spot for the Frieze Building. There was a lot to appreciate. I still smile when I think of the jury-rigged projection booths built out of plywood. There were those double-wide hallways—big enough to hold an entire high school population between classes—and especially the lockers. I always wanted one, even though I had my own office. Then there were the spooky bowels-of-the-earth production studios with their garage sale furniture. I also loved the 20-foot high ceilings and the incredible windows they enabled—although my first office was a small, windowless box so it was actually more vertical than horizontal.

Talk of tearing down the Frieze was already flitting around the building back then. I was a detractor, asking why anyone would want to give up those glorious tall windows and wood floors (at least the sections that hadn't been covered by ugly old Formica).

Indeed, my fondest Frieze memories are from my days—or rather, nights—as an assistant professor. Because of my long commute to Marshall, I pulled many an all-nighter, writing up my research and preparing for classes. I could hear other offices clearing out, feet tapping down the

halls and into the stairwells, until I was the only professor left in the entire building. At some point, even the cleaning staff was gone and I'd be all by my lonesome—wide awake thanks to caffeinated coffee spiked with the specter of tenure review.

When I needed a break, I would set down my pen or put my computer to sleep, crank the music (at the time it was a lot of Big Head Todd, Nirvana, and Eminem), and stretch for those tall ceilings. And then I would reach behind that bookshelf, behind the sleeping bag, and take out my secret toy. Remember the Frieze's crumbling Formica? Those long, long hallways? And the ramps that made pushing TV carts terrifying? Well, they all added up to the perfect skateboarding park. When my body screamed to leave its chair, I cruised through the Frieze on my skateboard and cleared my head for another go at the computer. (Please don't tell the Dean!)

"After all those years of North Quad committee meetings, I can honestly say that it is Home...Everyone walks the halls with big smiles. It has transformed the department, giving us the sense of a new era."

Those days are over, and it was with some sadness that I watched those large machines tear down the Frieze, room by room, until only the Carnegie Library façade was left standing.

At that point, no one knew what we were in for. The staff and professors were involved in every step of the design, from what kinds of classrooms and studios we needed to where to put the outlets. Each department got to choose its own furniture, from design to fabrics. We went for more *Mad Men* than *Glee* (we had so much fun with the university



Chair Markus Nornes (center) at the Traverse City Film Festival with Hugh Cohen and Michael Moore
Photographer: Todd Church

designer!). It's a custom building from top to bottom. And after all those years of North Quad committee meetings, I can honestly say that it is Home. The place is amazing. Everyone walks the halls with big smiles. It has transformed the department, giving us the sense of a new era.

I have just one regret.

The North Quad Building has carpeted hallways; I didn't have the guts to ask for linoleum tiles. I don't know what Assistant Professors Sheila, Dan, Colin and Candace are up to at 4:00 in the morning—but now that I'm chair of the department, it's best not to ask.

Next time you are in Ann Arbor, please poke your head in my office on the sixth floor. Although it looks out on the dorms, so the view is far too close to *Rear Window*, we did get to choose the furniture (and all the other chairs are jealous). But do come by, and I'll give you a tour!

See you soon,
Markus Nornes

IN MEMORIAM Mrs. Melba Winer



Mrs. Melba Winer in 2005 with (left to right) SAC alumni Sean Stewart, Chris Ervine (Lead Designer at *The Onion*), and Brandon Hall (staff at the Director's Guild of America).

"The Winer family's generosity demonstrates to young SAC Film & TV hopefuls that people's willingness to help is a virtue in which we can believe; that we know real generosity exists makes our pursuit all the more bearable. And someday when we have the good fortune to help others, we can follow in the Winer family's example. I know I will."
— Mitchell Akselrad, SAC Alumnus

It is with sadness that we mark the passing of a great friend to Screen Arts & Cultures, Melba Winer. Over the years, her unwavering spirit has positively affected the professional lives of over 40 Screen Arts student recipients of the Sidney J. Winer Scholarship Award. The award was endowed in 1993 and named after her beloved husband, a University of Michigan alumnus, and was created to give a SAC student real professional perspective in the very complicated and demanding film & TV industry. Each summer, SAC students gain valuable internship experience at top entertainment companies. Our heartfelt condolences and gratitude go out to the Winer family.



Mr. Sidney J. Winer

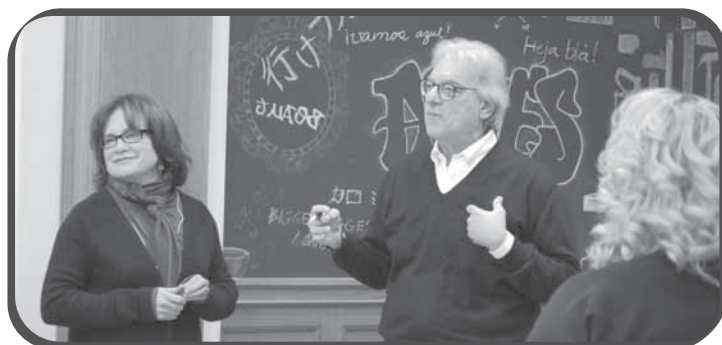
THE BENEDEK FAMILY MEDIA GATEWAY DEDICATION CEREMONY

December 10, 2010— Dean Terrence McDonald and the Department of Screen Arts & Cultures honored Peter and Barbara Benedek for their generous support in making the Michigan Difference. The Benedeks have a long history as benefactors of the SAC Screenwriting Program, LS&A Scholarships, and many other areas at the University of Michigan. The dedication of the Benedek Family Media Gateway marks a larger commitment by Peter and Barbara Benedek to the future of LS&A and especially Screen Arts & Cultures, where the Benedeks fund an Artist-in-Residence for SAC's Screenwriting Program and two \$2,500 writing awards for screenwriting and TV writing.

The two-story Benedek Family Media Gateway supports collaboration and small gatherings in an informal, lounge-style setting with multiple digital TV screens mounted on all walls. Located on the first and second floor of North Quad, the Benedek Family Media Gateway contains lounge spaces and two alcoves on the second floor, featuring chalkboard walls. On any given day, you will find many students connecting with each other or just reading and studying in the Gateway.



Barbara Benedek signing a Media Gateway chalkboard, which will remain a permanent fixture at North Quad.



Barbara and Peter Benedek addressing ceremony guests.



SAC advanced screenwriting students.



Peter Benedek conversing with SAC students Joey Bergren, Stephen Wettstein, and Bhanu Chundu.



The Media Gateway chalkboards are a forum for discussion that allow students to express themselves on the chalkboard paint.



The two-story Media Gateway, with its numerous amenities and quiet atmosphere, is a prime spot for students.

NORTH QUAD FROM ALL ANGLES

Welcome to North Quad! With its soaring towers and appealing central plaza, North Quad is a welcome addition to the campus community. The North Quad Complex consists of an academic tower and a residential hall, both connected by beautifully arched walkways. You can enjoy its many seating areas, meet with friends or colleagues in the cafeteria, or bask in the sun in the meticulous upper and lower courtyards. Come and visit!

"It's a beautifully constructed, state-of-the-art building that perfectly showcases the class and tradition of the University of Michigan."

— Nathan Scherrer, newly declared SAC student



However, don't think the Frieze Building is long forgotten!

The North Quad architect immortalized Frieze architecture on the new building façades.



SCREEN ARTS & CULTURES

Welcome to our home away from home on the sixth floor of the North Quad Academic Tower. Here, students, faculty, and staff enjoy comfortable seating arrangements and a friendly, relaxing environment. The recent move of the academic offices, the Donald Hall Collection, and the upcoming move of the TV and production studios unites our wonderful resources under one roof.

**SAC Lounge
& Main Office**

"I enjoy studying here because it's a comfortable environment. You get a lot of students congregating here and we all are studying the same things and have similar interests, so it's a nice, communal environment where we can all engage and bounce ideas off of one another. You have the Donald Hall Collection, which is a great resource, the professors are around, and it's a good place to work."

— Noah Stahl, SAC Honors student

**Meeting &
Sitting
Areas**

"The Grad Lounge provides us with a comfortable, quiet, and communal working environment. It's the best place to study on campus with one of the best views in town."

— Nathan Koob, SAC Ph.D. student

**Grad
Lounge**

"It's great to see students meeting and working in the various alcoves of the building and to share a laugh over lunch with colleagues in the lounge. I'm proud to show the building to alums, visitors, prospective students, and their parents. In the Donald Hall Library, the amazing collection of DVDs and screenplays Philip Hallman (the DHC Librarian) has pulled together (along with Philip's color and design choices of the space!) make it a focal point and 'hub' for activity in the offices. With the studios moving to North Quad this summer, I'm looking forward to the excitement and energy they'll bring to the building."

—Terri Sarris, SAC Faculty

HONORS CONCENTRATORS 2010-2011



JACOB MENDEL's Honors project, *Trains of Shadows*, is a 3-D film with a non-linear narrative centered on a train's journey through a landscape of a character's lost memories. Mendel explores a set of themes dealing with temporality, which are theoretically, dramatically, and formally inflected: the virtuality of memory, loss and renewal, the constitution of subjectivity in time, and the narrative imperatives of that subjectivity.

CONNIE HUANG's Honors project is entitled *When It's All Been Done Before* (A Con Artist Musical) and the working title of the film is *Art & Angst*. In the film, artist and filmmaker Haley, struggles with the feeling of being stuck creatively. She enters her own mind as she visualizes her fears and neuroses about the creative process. Haley enters different rooms and surreal settings that express her anxieties. This eventually builds to a climactic musical number where she confronts them.



NOAH STAHL's Honors project has two working titles: *It's In The Handwriting* or *It's Not Just You Bobby*. His project is a Woody Allen-inspired comedy about a college student coping with his doubts about romance in the wake of being dumped by his girlfriend. It is highly subjective, with many a wacky psychological projection impeding on the narrative.

JOSHUA BAYER's Honors project, *Self-Help*, deals with Clifford, a pot-smoking, stuck-in-the-sixties, 29-year-old experimental filmmaker who revels in "sticking it to the man." One fateful morning, a Bluetooth-sporting female business executive named Deus supernaturally materializes in his one-room apartment, challenging his bohemian existence. When Clifford is unreceptive, Deus subjects him to a nightmarish "self-help" program, teleporting him through a series of cliché Hollywood scenarios in which he must "become the hero" by accomplishing death-defying feats—unfortunately for Clifford, this particular rehabilitation program seems to be rigged against him.



LIANN KAYE's Honors project, *Slash Fiction*, is the story of a young librarian who is left feeling alone and out of place in her cookie-cutter world. By taking on the personalities of others, Penelope eventually finds her voice in what may seem to be an unexpected venue.

EVELYN SHERBENOU's project is entitled *Battlestar Galactica: Creating a Franchise Through Fans and Paratexts*, in which she argues that to identify oneself as a fan is to reveal an aspect of one's identity, to share it with others, and to be judged for it. Fandom activities differ from the activities of a casual viewer; fans develop a deeper connection to the text than most casual viewers. She states that an investigation into the *Battlestar Galactica* franchise, which has had a dedicated fan base since 1978, supports her argument that a franchise could not be successful without the support of its fans.



ELLEN FLAHERTY's Honors thesis aims to determine the place of the musical genre in contemporary, convergent media. She is researching the history of the film musical, its connection to the recent birth and popularity of the television musical (*American Idol*, *Glee*), and the various forms both film and television musicals take when their content is recycled and put on the Internet. This recycling can be done by fans looking to merely engage with the musical material, or by corporations hoping to use the musical form in order to advertise/promote a commodity. Ultimately she is interested in determining whether all this convergence is positive for the genre, or if it is causing a loss of integrity.

PRESENTING OUR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Michael Arnold's research interests circulate around cinema in Japan and the histories and theories of animation, pornography, and documentary film in that region. He is completing his dissertation project on Pink Film. He is in a dual-department Student Initiated

Degree Program between the Department of Asian Languages and Cultures and the Department of Screen Arts & Cultures.

Peter Alilunas is a former co-editor-in-chief of flowtv.org and is co-editor of the *Michigan Feminist Studies Journal*. His work appears in *Men & Masculinities*, *Camera Obscura*, *Mediascape*, *Screening the Past*, and *Media Fields*. He is

currently working on a dissertation that tracks the sociocultural transition of the adult film industry as it moved from celluloid to videotape in the late 1970s.

Erin Hanna's work focuses on the relationship between media industries and fans, with particular attention to the way in which power relations manifest themselves in the discourses and material practices of these groups. Her current research focuses on Comic-

Con as both an historical and contemporary space that points to the complexities and contradictions in the relationships between media producers and consumers.

Feroz Hassan is interested in the theorizations of art cinema, and especially in studying the work of French art cinema leading up to and after May '68 in relation to the political avant-garde film.

Nathan Koob is interested in popular films and production contexts that produce effects often attributed to the avant-garde cinema such as ideological subversion, changes in directorial authority, and radical reflexivity. In this vein, he has approached the relations between sexuality, authorship, and genre through working with the films of John Waters, Brian DePalma, Robert Rodriguez, and others.

Simonetta Menossi is a third-year Ph.D. student. Her research interests include the intertextuality among theater, opera, cinema, and stardom (soprano Geraldine Farrar and tenor Enrico Caruso) in the late 1910s. She is also interested in pedagogy, in the development and

application of academic strategies and material practices in undergraduate introductory film classes.

Dimitrios Pavlounis' primary research interests include digital media, cinematic representations of technology, and the relationship between technology, identity, and criminality. Over the summer, he will be working on a historical project that looks at the

appropriation of cinematic techniques in video games.

Kristy Rawson is in her final year as a Ph.D. candidate, completing her dissertation on the Mexican Hollywood Actress and international stage star, Lupe Vélez (1909-1944). Kristy's project, entitled *Trans-American Dreaming: Lupe Vélez and the*

Performance of Transculturation, analyzes Vélez's performative personae as documentation of a foreclosure on screened U.S./Mexico transculturation. Vélez's Hollywood practice illustrates, ironically (the irony operating both within Vélez's performances and as a function of her texts), that the transnational Mexican-American woman eludes representation in 20th-century U.S. popular culture. In collaboration with Dr. Johannes von Moltke, Kristy is co-editing an anthology, forthcoming from University of California Press, entitled, *Affinities: Siegfried Kracauer's American Writings, 1941-1966*.

Courtney Ritter is a second-year Ph.D. student. In addition to her current research on the relationship between broadcast communication and governance in Italy during the early Cold War Era, she is also interested in issues surrounding global media and America's cultural influence abroad. She has also done research on postwar foreign-language broadcasting in the U.S.

Richard Wilson/Robert Altman Collection

The U-M Hatcher Graduate Library's Special Collections Library recently acquired a very extensive archival collection from the estate of filmmaker Robert Altman. This will be a wonderful academic resource for faculty, students, and the public.

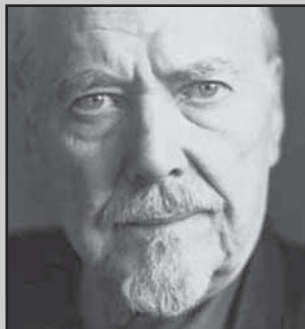


Photo courtesy of
© Wyatts Counts/Corbis



Mrs. Kathryn Altman with Altman biographer
Mitchell Zuckoff and SAC Chair Markus Nornes

MICHIGAN CREATIVE FILM ALLIANCE

The Michigan Creative Film Alliance (MCFA) is an exciting, joint venture between three top research universities: Michigan State University, University of Michigan, and Wayne State University. These universities proposed a historic, innovative, and collaborative alliance to drive talent and resources toward the creation and sustainment of an indigenous film community across the state. This collaboration begins with a one-semester class for select students of the three universities.



Appleville actors Andrew Sandoval (Donny) and Myles Mershman (Frank).

Modeled after SAC's 423: *Practicum for the Screenwriter*, MCFA students have the opportunity to create a short film, utilizing their own talents and skills, while being mentored by top instructors in the field. *Appleville* is the first production by the MCFA. Written by Erin Whittemore, a 2010 SAC alumna, and

directed by SAC senior Bhanu Chundu, the film looks like the world's easiest score when the two lead characters, Donny and Frank, try to rob a group of senior citizens on a bus outing to the new Appleville Mall. What follows is a funny, bittersweet and action-packed ride as this unlikely crew must band together against the pursuing police before their options run out. It's a chase caught on the road between life and death.

On March 30, 2011, *Appleville* premiered at the Detroit Institute of Arts' Detroit Film Theatre to an enthusiastic full house.



Director Bhanu Chundu speaks to *Appleville* actor David Glover.

MCFA is the brainchild of Emery King,

Chair of the Michigan Film Advisory Council, who is joined by MI Film Advisory Co-Chair and SAC Screenwriting Coordinator Jim Burnstein. Other university faculty include: U-M SAC Faculty Robert Rayher, Wayne State's Juanita Anderson and

Karen McDevitt, and Michigan State's Charles Steinfield, Bob Albers, and Troy Hale.



Taylor Stanton (center), second assistant cameraman, works the slate on the *Appleville* bus.

TRAVERSE CITY FILM FESTIVAL

SAC 423 films have a special place in the Traverse City Film Festival (TCFF). This collaborative interdisciplinary course that brings together SAC, Theatre & Drama, Business School, Performance Arts Technology, and Art & Design students has found a committed home in the TCFF to screen its films. Two films, *Camp Chapel* and *Margaret and Izzey*, were presented in the City Opera House to an enthusiastic audience on July 30, 2010.



Camp Chapel actors Kris Reilly and Joey Richter, both U-M Theater and Drama students.

Camp Chapel, screenplay by Michael Burke, SAC and Business School major, and directed by SAC Major Bhanu Chundu, tells the story of Alex who was just your standard teenage ladies' man, ready for an epic Spring Break in Mexico, until a mix up lands him in his worst nightmare: church camp. Now he's out to win the heart of a beautiful camper and redeem himself. Or maybe just survive.

Margaret and Izzey, screenplay by SAC major Erin Whittemore and directed by SAC major Ben Ellmann, brought to life Margaret Annenbeg, a pill-popping workaholic who grudgingly visits home and reunites with Izzey, the long-lost friend she thought had disappeared. Though Margaret fears he's totally crazy, Izzey just might be the best hope to turn her life around.



Robert Rayher (right) introduces Pamela Rack-Guest, a U-M alumna, actress, and casting director, who is the SAC 423 master acting coach.

In summer 2010, TCFF participation extended to SAC Faculty and Staff: Markus Nornes, Hugh Cohen, and Sheila Murphy were panelist/moderators; V. Prasad and Colin Gunckel judged the full length films; and Terri Sarris and Mary Lou Chlipala judged the short films in competition. Film workshop instructors at the TCFF included Jim Burnstein (screenwriting), Robert Rayher (production), and Pamela Rack-Guest (acting).



Jim Burnstein(right) with SAC 423 students.

Special Thanks go to the Miller Canfield Law firm for their hotel accommodation sponsorship for the SAC department participants.

You can view *Camp Chapel* and *Margaret and Izzey* on Vimeo.

HOLLYWOOD ON CAMPUS

By Andrew Lapin

Enrolling in film school in the Great Lakes states over programs based in Los Angeles or New York may seem counterintuitive. Not only are these students finding success in the University [of Michigan]'s Screen Arts & Cultures program, many of them are also plotting out their careers within the state.



Wes Craven and SAC student Alex Punch on the set of *Scream 4*. Punch began as an intern and moved into a speaking role, earning him his SAG card. Wes Craven also attended Mark Kligerman's class on the horror film. Photo courtesy of Alex Punch.

The recent success of SAC students and graduates was seen as indicative of two promising new trends. One is the rising stature of the University's SAC program—which is one of the most intensive and well-respected programs outside of the coasts and has just moved to hi-tech new digs in North Quad. The other was the statewide movement to increase Michigan's presence in the film community by growing and

nurturing local cinematic talent. "Rather than all my students moving to L.A., the idea is they stay home and get to work on films here, make contacts, get training and eventually generate the budgets that become Michigan-made movies," Jim Burnstein, SAC Screenwriting Coordinator and Vice-Chair of the Michigan Film Advisory Council said.

A big thank you goes to Lee Doyle, Chief-of-Staff and Director at the U-M Film Office, and the entire office staff for doing everything they could to facilitate the filming experience at U-M.

Feature films made on campus include: *I Des of March*, *The Double*, *Salvation Boulevard*, *Jinn*, *MOOZ-lum*, *Trust*, *Naked Angel*, *Answer This*, *Conviction* and episodes of the new TV Series, *Detroit 1-8-7*.



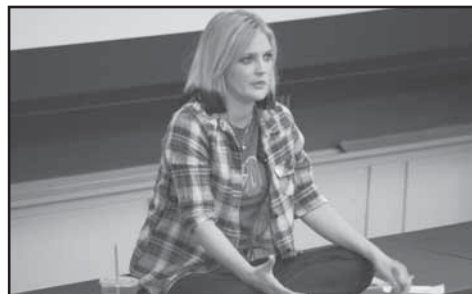
Director David Schwimmer on the set of his film, *Trust*. Courtesy of the U-M Film Office.

This article is a short excerpt from an article written for the *Michigan Daily* by Andrew Lapin.

SEEN @ SAC



A packed house cheered and greeted filmmaker Michael Moore at a 20th anniversary celebration screening of his '89 award-winning documentary, *Roger and Me*, followed by a Q&A session.



Drew Barrymore charmed SAC students after a preview screening of *Whip It*, which was filmed around southeastern Michigan.



Arnie Hammer, Jesse Eisenberg, and Academy Award winner Aaron Sorkin at a panel discussion after an exclusive screening of *The Social Network* for SAC students at the State Theater.



Will Ferrell and *Funny or Die* staff chat with SAC students via Skype during a workshop on original and user-generated video content for the web. The workshop was led by Mike Farah, President of Production at *Funny or Die*.

FILMS MADE IN MICHIGAN: SAC STUDENTS/ALUMNI GAIN JOBS & INTERNSHIPS

Answer This!

(formerly *Trivial Pursuits*)
Director/Screenwriter: Chris Farah
Katie Magill
David Chudnow
Steve Katz
Geoff George
Alex Tompkins
Albert Chen
Samara Rosenbaum
Alexander Tompkins
Megan Gilliam
Brian Flynn
Michael LaFond
Aaron Lebovic
Katie Magill
Taylor Stanton
Liam White
Julia Young

Conviction

Director: Tony Goldwyn
Stars: Hillary Swank, Sam Rockwell
Paige Miller
Brian Flynn

Game Of Death

Director: Giorgio Serafini
Stars: Wesley Snipes, Zoe Bell
Aaron Lebovic
Katie Magill
David Chudnow

Harold and Kumar 3

Director: Todd Strauss-Schulson
Stars: Neal Patrick Harris, Danny Trejo
Lisa Chau
Chris Knauer
Angela Gonzales
Greg Hollander
Josh Amir
Kelly Dudzik

I Des of March

Director: George Clooney
Stars: Marisa Tomei, George Clooney
Chelsea Leonowicz
Benji Dell
Angela Gonzales
Danny Mooney
Chelsea Rebecca
Marc Zakalik

Jinn

Director: Ajmal Zaheer Ahmad
Stars: Serrinda Swan, Ray Park
Meche Holguin
Greg Hollander
Aaron Lebovic
Emily Milton
Chris Miller
Joey Ostrander
Danny Mooney
Eddie Rubin
Lauren Robbins
Joshua Bayer
Amy Julia Cheyfitz

LOL

Director: Lisa Azuelos
Stars: Miley Cyrus, Demi Moore
Marc Zakalik
Alex Tompkins
Brendt Rioux

Meet Monica Velour (formerly Miss January)

Director: Keith Bearden
Stars: Kim Cattrall, Brian Dennehy
Aaron Lebovic
Tony Visintainer
Marty Stano
Chris Miller
Katie Barkel
Ryan Tamaroff

MOOZ-lum

Director: Oasim Basir
Stars: Danny Glover, Nia Long
Danny Mooney
Eddie Rubin

Sultan Sharief
Geoffrey George
Josh Amir
Oren Glodenberg
Jacquelyn Ryan
Tony Visintainer
Chris Miller

Real Steel

Director: Shawn Levy
Stars: Hugh Jackman, Kevin Durand
Brian Flynn

Scream 4

Director: Wes Craven
Stars: Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox
Emma Stensaas
Benji Dell
Sarah Scrivener
Natalie Williams

The Double

Director: Michael Brandt
Stars: Richard Gere, Martin Sheen
Matthew Stinson
Geoffrey Gilbert
Jacob Mendel

Red Dawn

Director: Dan Bradley
Stars: Chris Hemsworth, Isabel Lucas
Marc Zakalik

Salvation Boulevard

Director: George Ratiff
Stars: Jennifer Connelly, Pierce Bronson
Brian Flynn
Kelly Dudzik
Greg Hollander
Meche Holguin

Stone

Director: John Curran
Stars: Robert DeNiro, Edward Norton
Paige Miller
Brendt Rioux
Natalie Williams
Brian Flynn

SWAT: Fire Fight

Director: Benny Boon
Stars: Gabriel Macht, Kristanna Loken
Marc Zakalik

Things Fall Apart

Director: Mario Van Peebles
Stars: Ray Liotta, 50 Cents
Aaron Lebovic
Geoffrey George

Transformers 3

Director: Michael Bay
Stars: Shia LaBeouf, Tyrese Gibson
Brian Flynn

Trust

Director: David Schwimmer
Stars: Clive Owen, Catherine Keener
Brian Flynn
Michael LaFond

Youth In Revolt

Director: Miquel Arteta
Stars: Michael Cere, Portia Doubleday
Maria Vermeulen
Marc Zakalik

Man vs. Food

(TV Series)
Mark Sandoval
Ali McKenna

Detroit 1-8-7, Season 1

(TV Series)
Aaron Lebovic
Katie Magill
David Chudnow
Chris Miller
Joshua Ficken

The SAC Screenwriting Program's James Gindin Visiting Artist Series hosts the best film and TV professionals.



Tom McCarthy*
Director/Screenwriter/Actor:
The Visitor, The Station Agent



John Patrick Shanley



Pamela Gray*
Screenwriter:
Conviction, Music of the Heart



Danielle Sanchez-Witzel
Screenwriter: *My Name is Earl*,
George Lopez

"My favorite sight is watching SAC students writing their screenplays or television scripts in the new North Quad. Who needs coffee shops when you have one of the coolest places on campus, the Benedek Family Media Gateway?"
— Jim Burnstein



Andy Bellin
Screenwriter: *Trust*



Dan Pipski
Producer, Andrew Lauren Productions:
The Squid and the Whale



The Parents' Panel:
U-M Moms & Dads Discuss the Film and TV Industry
(l to r) Debbie Klein, Co-Head TV Literature Dept, Paradigm;
Robert Schwartz, Co-founder of Slamdance Media Group;
Howard Kurtzman, Executive VP 20th Century Fox TV;
Orly Adelson, President of dick clark productions;
Jim Burnstein, screenwriter and SAC faculty



Chip Diggins
Producer, Route One Films

* Funding for Tom McCarthy and Pamela Gray was made possible by the Efroymson Fund.

Seed funding for the James Gindin Visiting Artist Series was established by Robert Shaye and the Four Friends Foundation.

THE BIG CHILL— SCREENWRITING AND HOCKEY, CENTER STAGE IN SAC AND AT THE U-M!



Barbara Benedek and Lawrence Kasdan

Saturday, December 11, 2010—
Screenwriter Barbara Benedek (*The Big Chill* and *Men Don't Leave*) and filmmaker/screenwriter Lawrence Kasdan (*The Big Chill*; *Empire Strikes Back*; *Grand Canyon*) conducted a screenwriting workshop with advanced screenwriters. Later that day, they dropped the puck at "The Big Chill"—the raucous U-M Wolverines vs. MSU Spartans hockey game, in front of 113,000 fans at The Big House.



Photographer: Eric Bronson
Courtesy of U-M Photo Services

TEACHING TV: NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

Recently, television has taken on a new prominence in Screen Arts and Cultures. New faculty, new courses, the construction of three new studios in North Quad, and visits from renowned alumnus and television director Mark Cendrowski (*The Big Bang Theory*) have re-energized television in the department.



At the heart of these developments is the arrival of two new faculty members, television scholars Yeidy Rivero and Candace Moore. Yeidy Rivero's work on Latin American and Caribbean television is groundbreaking in its attention to the emergence of television forms in both national contexts; her current book-in-progress on Cuban television and its transnational dimensions exemplifies this. In addition to core courses, Professor Rivero teaches classes on U.S.-Latin American television, such as her current offering, "Before Betty Was Ugly." Television historian

and media theorist Candace Moore also came to SAC in 2009 and regularly teaches courses on television history, theory, and feminist theory. Moore's scholarship on queer television, as evidenced in her work on Showtime's *The L Word* and *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, greatly enhances department offerings on both television and gender theory.



Cendrowski, directing a multi-camera TV workshop in 2010.

In addition to these television scholars, other faculty projects also center around television as a technology and force in media cultures. Dan Herbert's book in progress examines the history—both the rise and decline of—video stores (see page 12 "Faculty Profile."). Sheila Murphy's new book *How Television Invented New Media* connects television history with the rise of computer and gaming culture through an examination of how TV sets and TV itself are central to how we use and

engage emerging media forms. And graduate student Courtney Ritter's research on the history of television in Italy is a deep archival project on how television developed in the postwar Italian context.

For the past two years, Mark Cendrowski has visited the TV production courses headed by SAC faculty Terri Sarris and TV writing courses taught by regional Emmy winner and SAC alumnus Oliver Thornton. Cendrowski is known for his work as a television director of over 70 episodes of *The Big Bang Theory*; *Yes, Dear*; and *According to Jim*. Cendrowski lead multi-camera studio workshops, which were intense, small sessions with SAC production students that also incorporate Theatre Department actors. These workshops have been very informative and a big hit with students, and will be all the more impressive next fall in the new North Quad studios!



Winter 2011

HOPWOOD AND RELATED WRITING AWARDS TO SCREEN ARTS & CULTURES STUDENTS



2009 Winners

Left to Right:
Brendt Rioux,
Amanda Adelson,
Jim Burnstein,
Kimberly Jacobson,
and Paul Haapaniemi

Hopwood Screenplay— Undergraduate:

Brendt Rioux
Drive thru Zoo

\$7,500

Amanda Adelson
Everything Goes

\$7,000

Kimberly Jacobson
Good Humor

\$4,500

Paul Haapaniemi
Chasers

\$4,500

The Naomi Saferstein Literary Award

Brendt Rioux
Drive thru Zoo

\$1,100

Kasdan Scholarship in
Creative Writing
Paul Haapaniemi

Chasers (screenplay)

\$7,400

The Leonard and Eileen
Newman Writing Prize

Eric Harburn
Apocalyptic Lite
(screenplay)

\$1,000

Peter and Barbara Benedek Award for Best Screenplay

Michael Butler
Sam's Voices

\$2,500

Peter and Barbara
Benedek Prize for Best
TV Script

Julia Young
30 Rock, "Creepy Friday"

\$2,500



2010 Winners

Left to right:
Jim Burnstein, Lisa
Chau, Matthew Stinson,
Christopher Dancy, Erin
Whitemore, Hopwood
Keynote Speaker and
Playwright/Screenwriter
John Patrick Shanley,
and Perry Janes

Hopwood Screenplay— Undergraduate:

Erin Whitemore
Margaret & Izze

\$9,000

Matthew Stinson
The Wastelander

\$4,500

Christopher Dancy
The Undertaker's Son

\$3,500

Hopwood Undergraduate Poetry Award

Perry Janes, "Small
Phenomena" (Poetry)

\$10,500

The Naomi Saferstein Literary Award

Erin Whitemore
Margaret & Izze

\$1,200

Kasdan Scholarship in
Creative Writing
Lisa Chau

Chang Bang (screenplay)

\$6,500

The Leonard and Eileen
Newman Writing Prize

Kyle Marcum
My Ten Favorite Songs
(screenplay)

\$1,000

Frank and Gail Beaver Script Writing Prize

David Sparks
Passing Through
(script for a short)

\$500

Peter and Barbara
Benedek Award for Best
Screenplay

Christopher Koslowski
Fluffers

\$2,500

Peter and Barbara
Benedek Prize for Best
TV Script

James Graessle
Mad Men, "Two-Seater"

\$2,500

NEW FACULTY

Alexis Bravos



Alexis Bravos joined SAC in September 2009. From 2008-09, she was a visiting Professor at the University of Hartford. In 2008, she received her MFA in Film/Video from the University of Iowa. Her most recent film, *Hepworth*, is a portrait of the British sculptor and gardener

Dame Barbara Hepworth. The film had its world premiere at the 49th Ann Arbor Film Festival, and will also be shown as part of a large group art show at the Chapel Hill Museum in Chapel Hill, NC called Local Histories: The Ground We Walk On. Her previous films have been screened at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, Big Muddy Film Festival, Other Cinema, San Francisco Cinematheque, and the Anthology Film Archives among other venues. Canyon Cinema currently distributes her 16mm work. Her newest project is a study of J.B. and Louisa Rhine, the "parents" of parapsychology at Duke University.

Colin Gunckel



Professor Colin Gunckel joined SAC in 2009. Before coming to U-M, Gunckel completed his Ph.D. at UCLA. His essay "'We Were Drawing and Drawn into Each Other': Asco's Collaboration through *Regeneración*," will appear in the catalog for the upcoming exhibition *Asco: Elite of the*

Obscure, opening at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art in September 2011.

He is co-curating an ongoing film series entitled "*Crossing Borders*" at the Autry National Museum in Los Angeles. The series examines the cinematic exchanges between Mexico and Hollywood from the 1930s to the present.

Also, as Associate Editor of the *A Ver: Revisioning Art History* series of monographs on Chicano/Latino artists, Colin moderated a panel on the series at the Latino Art Now! The New Wave/La Nueva Ola conference in Los Angeles on November 11, 2010.

Candace Moore



Assistant Professor Candace Moore joined SAC in fall 2009. Moore specializes in feminist and queer media studies with an emphasis in television and experimental film. Moore's book project, *L Words: TV's New Queer Lexicon*, uses the cable television show *The L Word* (2004-2009) to trace how premium cable networks

attempt to profit from and incorporate queerness. Moore holds a Ph.D. from UCLA's Cinema and Media Studies program, an MFA in Creative Writing from San Francisco State University, and a BA in Literature from UC Santa Cruz. This year, Moore's article "Appropriating and Compositing: *The D Word's Parody and The L Word's Pastiche*" will appear in the anthology *Loving 'The L Word'* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2011) presented "Fetish on (and of) Film: Producing and Directing from the Bottom" at the 2011 Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in New Orleans.

Yeidy Rivero



Professor Yeidy M. Rivero joined SAC in Fall 2009. Before coming to U-M, she spent nine years at Indiana University-Bloomington. She has also served as a Visiting Resident Scholar at the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg School for Communication. This past academic year Professor

Rivero was elected to the Society for Cinema and Media Studies (SCMS) Executive Council and presented a paper at the organization's 2010 conference. In addition, she was invited to present her work at the University of Miami's The Hemispheric Studies Interdisciplinary Research Group, the University of Pennsylvania's Festival Latino, and in February 2011, at the University of Texas- Austin's Department of Radio-TV-Film. She is currently at work on a book that explores modernity, politics, and technology in the first decade of Cuban television.

FACULTY NEWS

Richard Abel received fellowship grants for 2011-2012 from the National Endowment for the Humanities. He gave a lecture on "Fantomas, the Mutable Phantom" at the Centenary Celebration of *Fantomas* at Yale University, February 2011. He presented "Edna Vercoe's 'Romance with the Movies'" at the Women and Silent Screen Conference in Bologna, Italy, June 2010 and "A Trip to the Moon as an 'American' Phenomenon" at the Eleventh Annual Domitor Conference in Toronto, June 2010. He published an article "Charge and Countercharge: 'Documentary' War

Pictures in the USA, 1914-1916," *Film History* (2010), a book review of Giorgio Bertellini's "Italy in Early American Cinema: Race, Landscape, and the Picturesque," *Film History* (2010), and catalogue entries in *Le miracle des loups* (1924), "The Canon Revisited," *Le Giornate del cinema muto* (2010). He has contributed DVD audio commentary for *Treasures V: Visions of the West* (2011).

Frank Beaver, Arthur F. Thurnau Professor Emeritus, continues to author the column

"Talking About Movies" for *UM-TODAY*. He also serves as General Editor for Peter Lang Publishing's "Framing Film" book series. The most recent publication *Visual Difference: Postcolonial Studies and International Cinema* (2011) was authored by Elizabeth Heffelfinger and Laura Wright. Beaver was Faculty Forum Speaker for Camp Michigan in Summer 2010. He continues his "Viet-Kieu Film" research project, underwritten by a grant from the University of Michigan Provost Office.

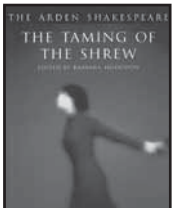
FACULTY NEWS

Giorgio Bertellini was the *Tiro a Segno* Professor in Italian-American Studies in the Department of Italian Studies at New York University in the fall of 2010. While in New York, he presented papers on Italian-American film culture at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute, the Tiro a Segno Club, and the Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò/Department of Italian Studies (NYU). Earlier in the year, at the annual SCMS meeting, he chaired a panel on early cinema in Latin America, the subject of a future project, and presented a paper on the Argentinian classic *Noblezza Gaucha* (1915). His essays on George Beban, *Santa Lucia Luntana* (1932), Valentino, and Italian-American cinema have appeared or will appear in the following 2011 anthologies: *Mediated Ethnicity: The New Italian-American Cinema*; *Intimacy and Italian Migration: Gender and Domestic Lives in a Mobile World*; *Star Decades: the 1910s; Neapolitan Postcards: The Canzone Napoletana as Transnational Subject*; and *Intorno a Rodolfo Valentino: Cinema, Cultura, Società, tra Italia e USA negli anni Venti*. His monograph, *Italy in Early American Cinema: Race, Landscape, and the Picturesque* (Indiana UP, 2009), won the American Association of Italian Studies Book Award (2010), received a Short List Mention from the Modernist Studies Association for the 2010 Book Award and a Honorable Mention from the American Studies Association committee of the 2010 Lora Romero Prize/First Book Award. A revised and expanded edition of his 1996 monograph *Emir Kusturica* is forthcoming in the spring from Editrice Il Castoro (Milan). He is currently at work on the anthology *Silent Italian Cinema: A Reader* (John Libbey/Indiana UP) and doing research on a monograph tentatively entitled *Hearts of the World: The Divo, the Duce, and Transnational Stardom in 1920s America*.



Jim Burnstein and writing partner Garrett Schiff are gearing up for production this summer of their original screenplay, *AWOL*, with producer Chip Diggins. Burnstein and Schiff will serve as producers on the film as well. Other projects in the works include *Helicopter Parents* being written for Route One Films, *Alone Time* for Broken Road Production and *Basketball Dad* for Two Lefts Don't Make a Right Productions. Burnstein continues to serve as the Vice Chairman of the Michigan Film Office Advisory Council.

Hugh Cohen has published an article, "Red River and The Searchers: Deception in the Modern Western" in *Film Criticism* (2010).



Barbara Hodgdon has published the Arden 3 edition of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*, London: Methuen Drama, 2010 and "(You)Tube Travel: The 9:59 to Dover Beach, Stopping at

Fair Verona and Elsinore," *Shakespeare Bulletin* (Fall 2010).

Mark Kligerman presented a paper at the 2011 SCMS conference in New Orleans that examines prime time network television's updating of the returning veteran narrative in response to the Iraq War and explores how its dramas transform Iraq into an allegory about Vietnam to overcome the so-called "Vietnam syndrome." The essay also demonstrates how both *Medium* and *Lost* insert their Iraq War veterans into what contemporary gothic theory has termed the "imperialist infrastructure" of the supernatural world, a reactionary form that contributes to the clouding of the material details surrounding America's second war in the Gulf. Mark also hosted Wes Craven in his Contemporary Horror Film class in the Summer of 2010, where Craven fielded student questions regarding the transformation of the genre from the age of the living room war in the late sixties to the era of "torture porn" and the revival of 3-D technologies.

Stashu Kybartas received a CRLT Lecturer Development grant to work on the post production of "Uncle Jesse"—a video portrait of Detroit Blues pianist Jesse White. He has been accepted into the Leighton Artist Residency program at the Banff Centre for the Arts in Alberta Canada. He is working with Xiaobing Max Tang of the Center for Chinese Studies on a multi-media program which will open in July 2011 and will accompany the exhibition of Contemporary Chinese Printmakers at the University of Michigan Museum of Art. Kybartas has recently begun his new appointment as Associate Chair of SAC. He is now a member of the Executive Committee and his responsibilities include acting as director of undergraduate advising and curriculum. Since September 2009, he has chaired the Curriculum Revision Committee, which assesses and updates the undergraduate curriculum. He continues to teach himself the banjo.

Chris McNamara presented his live project "Chris McNamara Presents nospectacle - LIVE" for the closing night of MUTEK - International Festival of Digital Creativity and Electronic Music in Montréal in June 2010. A review of his recent work and activities was also featured on the Mutek site: <http://www.mutek.org/blog/155-muxing-it-up>. In February 2011, he premiered "Flowers for those Lost at Sea" - a new audio/visual composition with the Noiseborder ensemble at the University of Windsor.

Sheila Murphy has attended the Society for Cinema and Media Studies conference in New Orleans in March 2011 to present her work on "The Geek and 'Teh' Cute" and participate in a workshop on Video Game Pedagogy. In May 2011, Rutgers University Press will publish her book *How Television Invented New Media*. She also has essays forthcoming in *Before the Crash: An Anthology of Early Video Game History* and *The Encyclopedia of Video Games*. During the 2009-10 academic year, she presented work at the Berkeley Center for New Media, the UC-Irvine Visual Studies Graduate Student

Conference (where she was the keynote speaker), and SCMS 2010, Los Angeles. During summer 2011 she will begin to work on her new book project, *All the World's a Screen: The Emergence of Internet Visuality*, which traces the coalescence of moving image, graphic design, and computational discourses that happened with the launch of the World Wide Web.



Markus Nornes stepped into the chairship after spending a year at Harvard University as the Edwin O. Reischauer Visiting Professor of Japanese Studies. His latest book, *A Research Guide to Japanese Film Studies*, which he wrote with Aaron Gerow (Yale University), was published in 2009. In the fall of 2010, he served as a juror at the Taiwan International Documentary Film Festival. Markus has recently been invited to present lectures at Duke University, Princeton University, Honolulu, UC-Santa Cruz, University of Montreal, and UC-Davis. He is currently working on a Chinese independent documentary and is planning on publishing an electronic book on calligraphy in East Asian cinema.

Terri Sarris attended the Sundance Film Festival in January 2010 where the feature film she co-produced (*Bilal's Stand*, written and directed by former student and UM alum Sultan Sharief and work-shopped in the UM EFEX Project class in Community Filmmaking) was one of only 8 films chosen for the <NEXT> category (for low and no budget films) at Sundance. In October, the film was awarded a Crystal Heart Award at the Heartland Film Festival in Indianapolis. The film continues to screen at festivals, colleges, and high schools around the country. Terri's documentary film, *The Radiant Sun: Designer Ruth Adler Schnee*, was screened at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, the Ringling College of Art and Design, and at the UMMA in Ann Arbor. Several of her short films shot on a Fisher Price PXL2000 camera screened at the "PXL This" festival in California. Her feature screenplay, *Sanctuary*, was a quarter-finalist in the Cynosure Screenwriting competition. She was awarded an "Excellence in Education Award" by the College of LSA in 2010. With the musical trio "Little Bang Theory," which plays film scores and original compositions on toys, Terri performed a live score to the 1934 animation classic *The Mascot* and to Ozu's masterpiece, *I Was Born But...* as part of the Department's Projectorhead series.

Johannes von Moltke spent the past Fall semester on a Humboldt fellowship in Berlin, where he worked on a series of publications relating to the work of film theorist and critic Siegfried Kracauer. Together with Gerd Gemünden, he edited an anthology of articles about Kracauer's work, forthcoming under the title *Culture in the Anteroom: The Legacies of*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

FACULTY NEWS

Siegfried Kracauer (University of Michigan Press), whose executive board Johannes recently joined. Together with Kristy Rawson (PhD candidate in SAC), he has prepared a collection of essays by Kracauer entitled *Affinities: Siegfried Kracauer's American Writings* (University of California Press). He is also working on a monograph, entitled *Manhattan Transfer*, about Kracauer, the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, and the New York Intellectuals during the 1940s and

1950s. He will be presenting parts of this study at SCMS in New Orleans as well as at the University of Pittsburgh later this spring. Johannes has also continued to publish work on German cinema, including contributions to recent anthologies on the representation of war (*Screening War: Perspectives on German Suffering*), on cinematic spectatorship (*Film - Cinema - Spectatorship: Film Reception*), on contemporary German cinema (*The Collapse of the Conventional: German Film and its Politics*

at the Turn of the 21st Century), and a special issue on the filmmaker Alexander Kluge.

While he is happy to devote his attention to these projects, he is also looking forward to returning to teaching, including a newly designed lecture on Fascist Cinemas that he will be co-teaching with Markus Nornes and Giorgio Bertellini in the Fall.

FACULTY PROFILE: *ON THE ROAD WITH DAN HERBERT*

For the last two years, I have been doing research for a book about the history and practices of video rental in America. Part of my research has required me to visit stores in major cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, and Portland. But I have also looked at many stores in small towns and, in fact, I am finding my fieldwork into the small town stores to be most exciting. I am fascinated by the ways in which the glamour of “Hollywood” exists side-by-side with the more mundane aspects of small town life. As a former video clerk myself, who by luck and happenstance attained a Ph.D., I am deeply gratified to interact with people who have brought movies—and happiness—into many people’s lives.

Most recently, I took a weekend to examine stores in western and central Pennsylvania. As always, I was thrilled to see the variety of stores and



Knox, PA

to talk to the workers who have devoted their time and energy to movie culture. Two features of the Pennsylvania stores differentiated them, to a degree, from stores in other parts of the country. First, the majority of them had been in business since the beginnings of the video rental industry; opening between 1984 and 1986, these stores were the first in their communities. This is helpful for my research, as these owners were able to speak about the changes in the video industry over a long period of time. It is also important to note that their knowledge is deeply subjective, as these businesses have been the location of so much of their time, energy, dreams, and fears. Video stores are not just commercial spaces; they are also the homes to people’s emotional lives.

As the video rental industry is presently in decline, much of my fieldwork has a somewhat panicked feeling; I fear my object of study is disappearing right in front of me. And indeed, the second notable feature of the



Pennsylvania stores was that several of them were closing at the end of the month. (One woman told me she had made the final decision to close shop *that morning*; she and I both found it an amazing coincidence that I should visit, unannounced, that day). This is somewhat distressing, and more than one of these owners spoke of being sad and even got tears in their eyes. They did not seem bitter, but rather they recognized that a large, defining aspect of their lives was coming to a close.

Yet this is what also made these interview subjects supremely valuable. In the process of deciding to close their stores, they had already been reflecting upon the “meaning” of it all. More than one owner discussed the fact that they have customers who came in when they were children, but who are now grown up and bring in their own children. (There has been little “generation loss” at these video stores, it seems.) The owners discussed how the stores have impacted their lives and, seemingly for the first time, assessed how their stores may have affected the lives of their customers. If part of my book argues that video workers have had a very important role in cultivating and disseminating media culture, a fact that I believe has been overlooked for too long, then it is just as significant to note that this importance has even been overlooked by video workers themselves.

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The DHC is a unique archive of its kind in the country, boasting 18,000 DVDs and 3,000 screenplays and counting. It is also a highly valuable resource for our students, which must be kept current in order to meet their needs. The DHC also accepts screenplays, press kits, videos, and DVDs. If you wish to donate any items, please e-mail DHC Librarian Phillip Hallman at phallman@umich.edu. *An annual gift of any amount, or a \$200,000 endowment, will provide the funds necessary to purchase new materials (35mm and 16mm films, DVDs, and scripts) and maintain the quality of the Collection.**

TECHNOLOGY/EQUIPMENT FOR PRODUCTION COURSEWORK

State-of-the-art equipment is essential if SAC students are to be proficient in the use of advanced technology. Purchasing and maintaining the technology is expensive, but central to the quality of the education that Screen Arts & Cultures provides. We are particularly hopeful to raise money to support the continued pedagogy in 16mm filmmaking, something our peer institutions are increasingly giving up.

**If your gift is designated for endowment, distributions from the Fund shall be made in accordance with the University's then existing endowment distribution policy. If interested in donating to one of the new funding areas, please call the SAC Chair's Office at (734) 763-4087.*

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Each year, the Department brings distinguished professional screenwriters, producers, and directors to campus to give students access to the best in the field. During their one- to three-day visits, these working artists teach classes, critique student work, present screenings and lead discussions of their own work. The goal is to sponsor eight to ten visits per year. Gifts of \$3,000 to \$10,000 will fund a single visit by a working artist.

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