Advancing a uniquely inspired audio-visual culture at William and Mary

Filmmaking @ W&M: there is no such thing as “extra-curricular”

One of the most interesting developments here at Swem Media Center has been the enthusiastic embrace by the William & Mary community of the expansive possibilities now available to them at Swem. Swem Library has always been at the heart of the College, now the heart just beats faster and louder. This is evident in the explosion of media production (curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular) that we’ve seen in the past 2 years. This issue of groundfloor is devoted to highlighting some of this work over the last 2 semesters. Although William & Mary has no fully-realized film/media production program or major, there’s a burgeoning preoccupation among students and faculty from across disciplinary boundaries to use new media to understand, and ultimately, transform the world they live in. This preoccupation is at the heart of literacy and Swem Library is all over it. What we see from the success of these media ventures is that Swem Library continues to foster the idea that the library is a place where learning never stops, an environment that challenges, teaches and inspires our community. Here at Swem Media Center, the liberal arts experiment continues to develop and evolve.

Bring Back the Box

Although a crew from Swem Media Center entered the first National Insomnia Student Film Contest from Apple in 2007, this year they raised the bar. And the best part is, out of 1800 submissions, SMC (Swem Media Center) Productions came in 5th place! Although a crew from Swem Media Center entered the first National Insomnia Student Film Contest from Apple in 2007, this year they raised the bar. And the best part is, out of 1800 submissions, SMC (Swem Media Center) Productions came in 5th place!

The contest requires students to make a short film in a 24 hour period (much like our own homegrown 24 Speed Contest). Just minutes before they are to begin, they are given a set of elements that have to be incorporated into the film. Quirky, funny, and well shot and edited, Bring Back The Box showed the world that filmmaking is alive and well at William & Mary (and that you can wear a birdcage on your head!).

Right Hand Man

“The Royal Family of Denmark slain, Foreign Enemies Invading, One Man is Left Standing... And He's Got Some 'Splainin' to Do.” So goes Thomas Baumgardner’s (’09) introduction to Right Hand Man, a feature length movie adaptation of Hamlet from the perspective of Horatio. Thomas, a Media Center regular (you'll see him as an actor in just about every movie coming out the Media Center), turned his love of theatre, his love of movies and his love of humor into an independent study that culminated in a hilarious (and well done) movie.

The Hands That Feed Us

Ever wondered about the stories of the people behind the food counters at W&M? Syreeta Mack (’08) did and decided to make a documentary film, The Hands That Feed Us, which explores the personal stories of food service workers on campus. Spanning 2 semesters, Syreeta Mack and crew conducted many interviews and combined this with some beautifully photographed footage to tell this “untold” story.

Morning

It was a major experiment for Professor Martin Fusi (and for us). Offer a course (Theatre 460: Filmmaking from story to screen) in which students, most with little or no filmmaking experience, would make a short film. Based on the script written by W&M student Peter Andre, the making of Morning required that each student have some role to play as a way to introduce them to the collaborative (not to be confused with democratic!) nature of filmmaking. The students spent countless hours in the Media Center. The course also involved students and faculty from the departments of Art and Music. At the Kimball premiere, over 350 people showed up.

Statistical Snapshot

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Studio reservations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration of average reservation</td>
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<td>Busiest days of the week</td>
<td>Mondays and Wednesdays</td>
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<td>Busiest month</td>
<td>April with 976 reservations for studios</td>
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<td>Number of patrons using online reservation system</td>
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<td>Number of times videocameras checked out</td>
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<td>Total hard drive storage space required</td>
<td>7,500 Gigabytes</td>
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- Telling the Stories of Service and Research @ W&M

Swem Library’s Media Center is the place for integrated media production & post-production services on the campus of William & Mary. Located on the ground floor of Swem Library, the Media Center fosters meaningful teaching and learning experiences by advancing a passionately crafted, inter-disciplinary audio-visual culture within the library, throughout the curriculum and across the campus.

Stories of Service

When students from Drew Stelljes’ “U.S. Response to Katrina” service-learning class returned from New Orleans, we invited them to the Media Center to discuss the experience and we recorded it. The culture of service of the College is another important story that Swem Media Center is helping to tell.

http://www.wm.edu/civicengagement

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French Cinema
Professor: Maryse Fauvel
A persistent question: Can you learn more about French New Wave filmmakers by making a short film that imitates production and editing styles that characterize these important films? For the first time, Prof. Fauvel decided to have her students watch AND make films and came to the Media Center for help. Students came to us with their scripts and ideas and we were able to shepherd their projects through the semester. (and oh yeah, they were all in French).