News
Hollywood Reporter Honor

“The Hollywood Reporter” named DePaul’s School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) one of 2020's Top American Film Schools. The respected listing acknowledges film students and schools have had to adapt to the challenges of education during a pandemic.

“But no matter how they are handling the pandemic, all of The Hollywood Reporter’s top film programs are committed to ensuring their graduates will be ready for a career in Hollywood, whatever it may look like,” says SCA Director Gary Novak. “Being acknowledged as a top film school speaks to the passion and commitment of the school’s faculty and staff as well as our students’ creative talent and the quality of their work.” Read more in DePaul’s Newsline.

Studio CDM Documents Remote Initiatives

When DePaul University quickly shifted to a remote learning model last spring due to the COVID-19 pandemic, College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM) students and faculty rose to the challenges of learning, serving and thriving remotely. Studio CDM, headed by the college’s Manager of Production Operations and School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) adjunct faculty Benjamin Kumming, has been highlighting some of these inspiring efforts—from making PPE for Illinois health care workers to hosting virtual chats with renowned cinematographers—in short videos. View the videos here, and look for more to be posted later.

“Tom of Your Life” Film Release

“Tom of Your Life,” a film written, directed, edited and scored by Jer Sklar (CDM MFA ’19), was acquired by Gravitas Ventures and released September 1 through video-on-demand providers. Conceived as a humorous, music-driven fable exploring the meaning of life, the film follows a child, who ages four years every hour, and a nurse who takes him on the road to let him experience the world on the one day he'll have to live in it. The film was shot at locations in Wisconsin and Illinois, including St. Vincent de Paul Church on DePaul’s Lincoln Park Campus.

Animation Jam Goes Virtual

On May 1-3, SCA’s annual animation jam, Mayday, went virtual. More than 130 students RSVP’d to the event, with 90 attending the kickoff on Friday night. There were a number of events over the course of the weekend, including panels with animation program alumni, trivia, and figure drawing sessions. Students produced more than 30 minutes of animation content on this year’s theme, “kink.” Watch the compilation here.

D.E.F. Showcase 2020

The DePaul Experimental Film Showcase screened online on June 6. The 80-minute screening block features 41 DePaul student films that span many forms of the experimental filmmaking medium. This is an annual collaboration with the DePaul Art Museum, and the showcase will also screen there once the museum reopens.
Alumna Michelle Lega’s “Homing” game simulates a messenger pigeon’s flight.

Cybersecurity Champion

School of Computing student Alina Kuzmenkova was a member of the regional team that won first place in the 2020 US Cyber Challenge National Championship in early October. Kuzmenkova, a member of the DePaul chapter of Women in CyberSecurity and DePaul’s women’s tennis program, was also named to the 2019-20 BIG EAST Conference All-Academic Team. US Cyber Challenge is a private-public partnership program dedicated to identifying, attracting and recruiting the next generation of cybersecurity professionals.

Alumnus Commemorates St. Vincent de Paul

Cole Andersen (CDM ’19), who studied at the School of Design, presented his artwork commemorating St. Vincent de Paul to the university last January. The portrait is displayed in the third-floor hallway of the Lincoln Park Student Center. It was inspired by the mural above the Cacciatore Stadium, the bronze statue of the late Monsignor John Joseph Egan near the Student Center, and the Chicago skyline.

“To me, the statue, mural and city skyline represent the idea of merging the old and the modern days into how St. Vincent’s values feed into today,” says Andersen.

Alumni Games at PixelPop

Two video games designed by DePaul alumni were showcased at PixelPop Festival, an annual St. Louis-based indie game conference and expo that was held online September 12-13. “Homing,” in which the player navigates a messenger pigeon through a city to deliver letters, was created by Michelle Lega (CDM MFA ’20), who has worked as a narrative designer at Chicago’s Fear of Corn video game studio. “Cold Calling,” created by Thom Cote (CDM ’19), Austin Frick (CDM ’19), Cole Funck (CDM ’19) and Brett Prank (CDM ’19) for another indie Chicago video game studio, Can’t Get Enough Games, is an alternate-history comedy adventure in which a White House switchboard operator must facilitate negotiations among world leaders during the Cold War.

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