

And the finalists are....



The 2001 finalists in The Minnesota Independent Film Fund an investment in the creative talents of Minnesota filmmakers

The Minnesota Independent Film Fund

On **Monday, November 26** at the Walker Art Center, three Minnesota independent feature films will be awarded development funds of \$25,000 per project based on artistic vision and production feasibility. The Minnesota Independent Film Fund is the nation's first and only

development program for independent feature filmmakers. It was created by the Minnesota Film Board, and is operated in conjunction with the Independent Feature Project/North with major funds provided by Northwest Airlines and the McKnight Foundation. THE 2001 MIFF FINALISTS ARE....



MORTAL NUTS David Burton Morris, Deephaven, MN

Adapted from the novel by Minnesota author Pete Hautman, MORTAL NUTS is a comic thriller which follows a cast of characters at the 'Great Minnesota Get Together'. Burton Morris directed PURPLE HAZE (Grand Prize winner-1984 Sundance Film Festival) and PATTI ROCKS (Best Feature Film-Deauville Film Festival/ nominee of seven IFP Spirit Awards). He has won Cable ACE awards and been nominated for an Emmy. Producer Victoria Wozniak produced and wrote PURPLE HAZE. She is currently an executive producer and writer of a television film for MTV.



MONKEY POD Dane Pizzuti Krogman, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

It's 1939 and Deko Muntz, recent graduate of Crookston, Minnesota's Central High, is uncertain about the future. Under pressure from various characters in his life, he becomes even more confused. Writer Dane Krogman teaches at the University of North Carolina Film School. He has written award winning screenplays and had several optioned to studios over the years. Producer Betsy Pollock has been involved in the production of documentaries, commercials and feature films. She is currently on the faculty of the North Carolina School of the Arts.



SNOW IN APRIL Kimberly Elise, Los Angeles, CA

SNOW IN APRIL is a supernatural drama that follows the spiritual destruction and rebirth of a woman whose husband is murdered. She is guided on this journey of madness and healing by the spirit of her dead husband. Kimberly Elise is a writer/director whose films have appeared in many film festivals. She is an actress of stage and screen whose credits include BELOVED for which she won a Chicago Critics Award and a Satellite Award.



LOVE MINUS ZERO Tim McCusker, St. Paul, MN

LOVE MINUS ZERO is a romantic comedy with a courtroom backdrop, written by Sam Magavern and starring Mary Lucia, who has had radio shows on ZONE 105 and elsewhere. Also starring are singer/songwriter Matt Wilson and Semisonic's John Munson. LOVE MINUS ZERO will be imbued with the original music of Matt Wilson. McCusker has written, produced, and directed three short films in preparation for feature length work. He will be directing and producing through his newly-created Firelight Films, Inc. Shooting begins in May, 2002.



OUT OF TIME Lisa Fisher, Brooklyn, NY

OUT OF TIME tells the story of an emerging writer who takes a journey across the country, unraveling the truth about the mysterious disappearance of the grandmother she never knew. Lisa Fisher's career has included all aspects of work on fiction and documentary films. Her film THE HAIRCUT received a Gold Plaque Award at the Chicago International Film Festival, and has been seen on the Independent Film Channel.



DIRT Benno Nelson, Los Angeles, CA

Mary and Leah have a complex relationship: sisters, roommates, business partners. As house cleaners for celebrity clients in LA they make a decent but not extravagant living. To remedy that Leah starts selling some of their clients personal belongings. Benno Nelson relocated from Minneapolis to LA last year. He has recently directed a music video for The KGB and a documentary on the techno duo, The Crystal Method. DIRT marks his first creative collaboration with his father, Eric Nelson, an English professor at St. Olaf College.



STALKERS Jacqueline Garry, New York, NY

STALKERS is a sexy dark comedy about going after the right person at the wrong time - or the wrong person at the right time. The project marks Jackie Garry's third straight year as a MIFF finalist. She wrote, directed and edited THE CURSE, which will be released theatrically in December by Arrow Releasing. She is currently in post-production on her documentary about St. Paul's notorious medallion hunt which recently screened at the IFP Market.



LINCOLN TRIO Emily Stevens, Los Angeles, CA

LINCOLN TRIO is a quirky comedy about three brothers whose wives all leave them on the same day. Set against the backdrop of Hatchet Days — their small town's celebration of founding father Major Cornelius Dence and his untimely death by hatchet — the brothers race to unravel the mystery of their missing wives with the help of Major Dence's ghost. Producer Emily Stevens and writer/director Bix Skahill recently completed LIFE WITHOUT DICK for Columbia Pictures.



MAKE ME Julie Hartley/Matthew Everett, Minneapolis, MN

Seth is a photographer whose magic camera makes people fall in love with him. MAKE ME is the story of what happens when Seth turns the camera on his best friend Jared, just as Jared is about to propose to his girlfriend. Producer Julie Hartley has been a producer and production manager for 26 years. Writer Matthew Everett was named a Minnesota State Arts Board Fellow, and a finalist in the Outfest, Morrow and McKnight Screenwriting Competitions in 1999.



SIMON'S NIGHT Ali M. Selim, Minneapolis, MN

Simon Shea feels his memory is slipping and checks himself into a nursing home prematurely. Adapted from the novel by Jon Hassler, SIMON'S NIGHT is the story of the unforeseen consequences of this decision. Ali Selim is an award winning advertising commercial director as well as a director of documentaries and music videos. His work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in NYC. His film EMPEROR OF THE AIR has won awards at international festivals as well as the D.L.Mabery Award in Minnesota.

You are invited to attend the 7th annual
Minnesota Independent Film Fund
Awards Presentation

Robyne Robinson, host • UPN9

November 26, 2001 • 5-7pm

Walker Art Center Gallery 8 • Minneapolis • Admission free • For more information call 612.332.6493



THE JEROME SCREENWRITERS' MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

IN 1999 the Minnesota Film Board announced the first year of the Jerome Screenwriters' mentorship program which was devised by the Film Board as a complement to MIFF. This innovative program, funded by the **Jerome Foundation**, provides support and resources to winners of MIFF to ensure that the screenplay associated with their project is developed to its fullest potential. MIFF winners are paired with a screenwriter of national reputation to work with over the course of one year. The year consists of a series of one-on-one consultations between winner and mentor as well as a public reading of the script. Since its inception the program has matched winners with screenwriters of the highest quality. The following list of MIFF winners and their mentors demonstrates this commitment to excellence:

1999 MENTORS

Barry Morrow (RAIN MAN)
James Schamus
 (CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON)
Robert Benton (BONNIE & CLYDE)

1999 WINNERS

William Kruse (TWO HARBORS)
Sara Moore (SILENT SKILL)
JD Dunlop (SEED CORN SYMPHONY)

2000 MENTORS

Robert Caswell (A CRY IN THE DARK)
Patrick Sheane Duncan (MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS)

2000 WINNERS

Tanya Hamilton (STRINGBEAN AND MARCUS)
Shawn Otto (SHINING WHITE)

LATEST NEWS ON MIFF WINNING PROJECTS

1996 winner James Byrne's GREAT LAKES was shot over 20 days this summer using the latest digital technology. He is currently in post production with an expected completion date of December.

1999 winner William Kruse's TWO HARBORS has been optioned by Alan Blomquist, Executive Producer of CHOCOLAT and CIDER HOUSE RULES. Kruse shot a ten minute trailer in Northern Minnesota this spring. Post-production was completed in the summer.

2000 winner Shawn Otto's SHINING WHITE has been optioned by Digital Domain Films, the production arm of the visual effects house, to be its first live-action feature length film.

MIFF Program Sponsors



NORTHWEST AIRLINES, proud sponsor of independent film.

THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

The MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION seeks to strengthen community and community institutions, to enrich people's lives through the arts, to encourage preservation of the natural environment, and to support scientific knowledge that can improve people's lives.



THE MINNESOTA FILM AND TV BOARD is a non-profit professional service organization whose mission is to build and promote the commerce and art of the motion picture industry in Minnesota. Call 612.332.6493 or website: www.mnfilm.org.



INDEPENDENT FEATURE PROJECT/NORTH (IFP/NORTH) is a non-profit arts organization which supports the vision of Minnesota filmmakers. Call 612.338.0871.

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