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Coming Attractions

Department of Film and Media Studies

School of the Arts
Annual Student Recognition Ceremony and Tensie Awards
Thursday, May 5, 2016
(last day of classes)
6:30 p.m.
Liberty Hall, downtown Lawrence
Watch your email for details
Tensie awards for best film in several categories, scholarships and awards are announced, and seniors are recognized.

The School of the Arts
Convocation Ceremony
Friday, May 13, 2016
6:30 p.m.
Crafton-Preyer Theatre, Murphy Hall
Submit your RSVP or email amccoy@ku.edu no later than May 10 at 5:00 p.m.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Distinction/Highest Distinction and Master's Hooding Ceremony
Saturday, May 14, 2016
10:30 a.m.
Lied Center
Registration is required (deadline April 14)
http://clas.ku.edu/coga/graduation/ceremonies

University of Kansas
144th Commencement
Sunday, May 15, 2016
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
Procession: "Walk down the Hill"
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Program and conferral of degrees by Chancellor Bernadette Gray-Little.
Memorial Stadium
Commencement Ceremony Info: commencement.ku.edu

Graduate Studies
Doctoral Hooding Ceremony
Saturday, May 14, 2016
7:30 p.m.
Lied Center
Contact 864-8040 or graduate@ku.edu
Coming Attractions

THE CHANGING FACE OF EAST ASIA IN HOLLYWOOD
A Film Festival on Perspective, Representation and Discrimination
April 16–17

Saturday, April 16
1:00pm | Black Box Theater
Introduction to and follow-up discussion by Patrick Terry, KU Department of Film & Media

Shanghai Express (1932) (82 minutes) Starring Anna May Wong and Marlene Dietrich. Directed by Josef von Sternberg.

Saturday, April 16
7:00pm | Ellis & Buttr Theater
The Manchurian Candidate (1962) (76 minutes) Starring Angela Lansbury, Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, and John Ireland. Directed by John Frankenheimer.

Saturday, April 16
3:30pm | Black Box Theater

Sunday, April 17
2:00pm | Black Box Theater
Introduction to and PowerPoint and follow-up discussion by Patrick Terry, KU Department of Film & Media

Enter the Dragon (1973) (110 minutes) Starring Bruce Lee.

Sunday, April 17
3:00pm | McKeage

Sunday, April 17
6:00pm | Black Box Theater
Recognitions and Accomplishments

School of the Arts awards interdisciplinary research grants

The KU School of the Arts recently awarded more than $11,000 in interdisciplinary research grants. The grants are faculty-mentored and will fund research and creative projects exploring a range of topics.

“This year’s pool of applicants was exceptionally strong,” said Henry Bial, Director of the School of the Arts. “It’s exciting to see so many students recognize the potential of an arts-based research project to transform their undergraduate experience.”

Congratulations to Savannah Rodgers, one of six SOTA students to receive the School of the Arts Student Interdisciplinary Research Grant this year for her project “Be Brave,” mentored by Tamara Falicov and Matt Jacobson.

Students submit a research proposal focusing on one of the themes of Bold Aspirations, two supporting and recommendation letters from faculty members, and a budget. Applications are evaluated by the School of the Arts Student Advisory Board on the merit of the applicant's proposal, the applicant's academic record and a recommendation letter from the faculty mentor.

As part of the project, students must include a public component, such as a performance, exhibition, screening or presentation appropriate to each project’s discipline.

Copied from: http://news.ku.edu/school-arts-awards-interdisciplinary-research-grants

“Save the Date!” for the 2016 Annual Student Recognition Ceremony and Tensie Awards which will be held on May 5, 2016. Watch for more information in the coming weeks!

Save the date for Free State Festival 2016! This year's festival runs from June 20th through the 25th and features headliners such as stand-up comedian and television star Maria Bamford and Radiolab founder and co-host, not to mention McArthur Genius Award winner, Jad Abumrad. More announcements to come! Go to www.freestatefestival.org to see updates and buy VIP and movie passes now.
**Out & About**

*Die Körper des Kinos,* (The Cinema’s Body) Stroemfeld Verlag, Frankfurt, Germany, 2016

Professor **Cathy Joritz** was invited to illustrate the cover and contribute three digital collages to this 347-page book. *Die Körper des Kinos* is a tribute to film scholar, experimental film archivist and writer, Dr. Annette Brauerhoch. It is a collection of film essays and imagery from 38 primarily female German writers, film critics and experimental filmmakers. Many of its contributors, such as Ulrike Ottinger, Monika Funke-Stern and Christine Noll Brinckmann are internationally established German filmmakers and film scholars. Joritz's collaged mini-series caricature Dr. Brauerhoch as a filmic super-film-scholar-heroine and are full of visual references to women’s experimental films and filmmakers.

FMS students and faculty attended the True/False Film Festival in Columbia, MO the weekend of March 4-6. Professors **Robert Hurst** and **Germaine Halegoua** and 9 undergraduate students attended six documentaries followed by discussion panels with directors and industry professionals. They also got to lunch with filmmaker Andy Brodie, writer, filmmaker, and co-founder of the Film Scene Theater in Iowa City and Des Moines Film; and Lawrence film critic Cynthia Haines. It was a busy, immersive weekend in the world of documentary films – one that students found fascinating and highly educational. For more information: [http://truefalse.org/](http://truefalse.org/)

Ph.D. student **Joshua Wille** will be presenting some of his fan edit research at the Fan Studies Network conference, which will be held in June 2016 at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, UK. The keynote speaker will be Henry Jenkins, whom Wille first met at the 2012 KU Film and Media Studies Graduate Symposium.

Wille has also been invited by editors Eduardo Navas, Owen Gallagher, and xtine burrough to write a chapter on the relationship between remix and fan culture for the book *Keywords in Remix Studies*, to be published by Routledge in 2017.

For more information: [https://fanstudies.org/2015/12/09/fsn2016/](https://fanstudies.org/2015/12/09/fsn2016/)
KU filmmaker to debut documentary on Lawrence crisis center

A listener can make all the difference in the world.

At Headquarters Counseling Center, volunteers speak on the phone daily, even hourly, with callers considering suicide or with those who have already hurt themselves, said former volunteer Kristine Chapman. But before volunteers are allowed on the phone in what is often a life-or-death situation, they must learn to listen.

"It's such a fundamental thing that's overlooked, being able to really listen to people regardless of what they're talking about," Chapman said. "It's so simple it's complicated."

Chapman said she began volunteering at Headquarters in 2008, and from 2009 through 2013 she was director of volunteers.

In the fall of 2013, filmmaker Bob Hurst was there to capture one of Chapman's training classes, following just more than a dozen men and women as they completed 100-plus hours of training in an 11-week period.

On Tuesday, Hurst, who teaches in University of Kansas' department of film and media studies, will premiere his new documentary, "The Listeners," at Liberty Hall.

"The premiere will also serve as a fundraiser for Headquarters," Hurst said.

Each year, Headquarters fields approximately 25,000 calls seeking help from around the country. Not every caller is suicidal; drug use, depression and infidelity are also common topics.

The organization also operates a children's line, offering kids a safe way to speak to adults, Chapman said.

"The documentary's title pays homage to the volunteers on the phone working to help a perfect stranger through what is often the most difficult day of his or her life," Hurst said.

With more than 150 hours of footage, Hurst said he only recently put the final touches on the film.

"I've been picking at things for the last couple of weeks," he said.

"A successful Kickstarter campaign last spring raised nearly $20,000 to help fund the editing process and commission a score for the documentary," Hurst said.

In all, however, Hurst estimates the documentary cost far more than that.

"I mean, if you include in-kind hours, there's probably $200,000 of time and investment," he said. "Basically I've been working for free on this thing for years. But I teach at KU and I'm fortunate that basically part of my job description is to make films and not to worry about getting paid."

Hurst said he missed the deadline to show his documentary at several of the bigger film festivals. All the same, the next few months will be focused on finding an audience for his work.

"The festivals are nice, but that's not your only audience," he said. "The big audience for this film is going to be counseling centers, clinics, high schools and universities."

With the documentary's debut, Hurst said he hopes his work can make a difference and inform viewers about the current state of mental health issues in America.

Read the full story here:

University professor will turn doodles into animated short film thanks to fellowship from Hall Center

It wasn’t until Cathy Joritz, University assistant professor, started doodling a Santa character while in a faculty meeting that she found the starting point for her newest animated short film, “Film Feast.”

That same doodle is what also led her to receive the Creative Work Fellowship from The Hall Center for the Humanities.

Anywhere between three and eight people apply for the fellowship, with projects ranging from writing a novel to jewelry creations, said Victor Bailey, director of the Hall Center for Humanities. The fellowship frees Joritz of teaching responsibilities for one semester and allows her to focus on making her film. It also awards her $1,000 to spend on the production and supplies.

Joritz’s original Santa doodle evolved into a woman with over-exaggerated fat rolls and was later given the name “Frau Dunkt.” Drawing on her life experiences, "Film Feast" addresses several issues, but the focus is the exploding obsession with computers and phones, said Joritz.

“After I drew Frau Dunkt I started to think about how much time I sit at a computer and how it has affected my life, and how much I miss going out into nature and miss going out and seeing real life things,” Joritz said.

Joritz’s office door is covered with postcards of blue sheep or skeleton Jayhawks that she designed. Inside is a wall of shelves covered with books and famous animated characters such as Spongebob Squarepants that portray the child-like enthusiasm Joritz has for drawing.

“My first memories of drawing were when I was 6 years old,” Joritz said. “That’s when I can remember little kids standing in line at my desk waiting for me to draw a picture of a horse. They would tell me what kind of horse they wanted, and I would draw it. “

Years later, Joritz went from drawing horses to an Oscar nomination for her 1991 “Give AIDS the Freeze.” Another animation, 1985’s “Negative Man,” was exhibited in the prestigious Museum of Fine Arts Bern in Switzerland.

“Being able to draw is like being born with a magic wand,” Joritz said.

Joritz sees a problem with cell phone use throughout society: people driving while on their phones, being bored and on their phones at airports and even being on their phones when gathering with other people. Joritz plans to address this problem in a creative and animated way.

“Cell phone towers have this sort of tree-like form,” she said. “So where you first see pine trees in Frau Dunkt’s background you’ll see cellphone towers springing and popping up around her.”

Joritz said she hopes her film will not only address the problem of cell phone and Internet overuse but also the dangers to human health and the ill effects on wildlife caused by electromagnetic radiation and frequencies.

The end of the film hasn’t been worked out yet, but Joritz said she’s excited to commit real time to drawing instead of drawing during “stolen” moments, like she did during that faculty meeting.

Out & About

Face-to-Facebook

Researchers find neighbors long to connect, just not necessarily online

When Bonnie Johnson tried to reverse the trend of dwindling participation in her once-thriving Lawrence neighborhood association, she first turned to that old standby of community building, the ice cream social. Only 10 people came, in a neighborhood with 550 households. Neighborhood meetings drew even fewer people, despite attracting 75 attendees in years past. “Myself and other members of the steering committee were at our wit’s end, wondering what could we do,” says Johnson, c’90, g’92, PhD’07. “We can’t even get people to come for homemade ice cream and the balloon man? A lot were ready to call it quits.”

Instead, the associate professor of urban planning at KU turned to the academic literature in her field for ideas. Urban planners and city managers often use social media to solicit citizen input, and studies on the topic were encouraging. The neighborhood association launched a Facebook page, a Twitter account and an email listserv. They delivered doorhangers to every home advertising the new communication options, then awaited the response.

“It was crickets, basically,” Johnson says with a laugh. “We got five Facebook likes, three Twitter follows and two new email addresses. Out of 550 households!” Wondering why social media was no more effective than ice cream socials, Johnson turned to colleague Germaine Halegoua, assistant professor of film & media studies. An expert on digital media, she could also point to studies in her field that suggested social media jump-starts community engagement. “In that respect, it was surprising that there wasn’t more activity,” Halegoua says, “because if you take the studies at face value social media seems like a universal thing that is beneficial more often than not.”

They decided to survey the neighborhood to find out how people preferred to communicate—if at all. What they found was surprising. “When we asked how they prefer to communicate with neighbors, they said face-to-face,” Johnson says. Many felt that Facebook is for staying in touch with friends and felt uncomfortable with the idea that neighbors would be able to see their Facebook page. “They said, ‘It’s only for my friends, and if my neighbor isn’t my friend I’m not gonna get on Facebook with them.’”

So while social media did not turn out to be a panacea, as many studies have suggested it can be, the researchers say their findings show that it does have a place in bringing neighbors together, especially when used in concert with a strong human touch. It’s not a replacement for active leadership and face-to-face contact, as Johnson discovered when her neighbors banded together to deal with problems caused by road construction that detoured traffic through their neighborhood.

Social media and door-to-door visits helped them make their voices heard at city hall. And they were encouraged to find that the rise of online communities in no way signals the demise of neighborhood social networks.

“One of the things that was striking was just how much neighbors still wanted to communicate and still wanted to know who was living next door,” Halegoua says. “But even more striking was the huge drive toward sharing and helping: ‘I want to know if you need my help, and I want you to know I’m here to help you.’”

Adds Johnson, “We heard so many people saying, ‘I found out later his wife had cancer and they were having trouble, and if only I had known I’d have taken a casserole over.’ There is still a real longing for that.”

From the Kansas Alumni magazine, ISSUE 2, 2016
Out & About

Book takes readers around world to explore different adoptions of technologies

Aboriginal Australians’ use of smartphones, the Turkish government’s online censorship and Jordanian Queen Rania’s social media presence are all examples of cultures around the world embracing digital media in unique ways.

In “Locating Emerging Media,” scholars take readers to South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, East Asia and the Pacific Islands to better understand why people in certain locations have accepted and then adapted new technologies in ways that are particular to that place.

“We wanted to talk about emerging media not as an industry buzzword that describes the next high-tech innovation but as media that is new to a certain location and used in ways that change, are embedded in and are adapted to the cultures around it,” said Germaine Halegoua, assistant professor of film and media studies at the University of Kansas.

Halegoua co-edited “Locating Emerging Media” with Ben Aslinger, associate professor of English and media studies at Bentley University. In the book, Halegoua authored a chapter that examines South Korea’s creation of smart cities, which are being built from scratch and offer ubiquitous digital infrastructure and activities.

“We are writing about locations that are typically underrepresented in scholarly literature on digital media and about places you don’t often think of in terms of digital innovation or emerging technology,” Halegoua said.

In each of the 12 chapters, university scholars, artists and activists focus on a different place. One chapter is a critique of Queen Rania’s use of social media and her promotion of maternal feminism. Another looks at the use of social media during the 2010 Chilean mining accident and in the construction of national identities.

“Once we start looking at digital media in terms of place, we start realizing and being able to observe all of these interesting and complex relationships to identity and community engagement,” Halegoua said.

Copied from: https://news.ku.edu/2016/02/22/book-takes-readers-around-world-explore-different-adoptions-new-technologies

Filmmaker Spotlight: Kevin Willmott

Independent writer and filmmaker, Kevin Willmott is focused on the concept of “Living History” and how history shapes our lives today. Willmott says the following about his films

“My movies are intended to challenge you – to make you feel a little uncomfortable and to expose our ‘Living History.’ It’s about the way history makes us feel, not the history that we know.”

Read the full interview here: http://www.millermeiers.com/kevinwillmott/#articles
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

I learned that KU has a great number of alumni working in the LA area, which in turn made me a lot more comfortable with the idea of moving to LA. I also learned that the KU grads living and working there are eager to help out their fellow KU grads.

– Tressa Lee

The experience of taking part in the FMS Career Week exceeded my expectations. It was a non-stop, frenzied barrage of information and insight that I am still in the process of mentally sorting through. The opportunity to see and speak with such a varied group of previous Kansas students who followed their dreams to Los Angeles and fought to make them a reality was truly inspiring.

– James Russell

Much of what impressed me about the trip was the fact that the Department was able to pick up connections from not only alumni who have media careers in Los Angeles but also from non-KU professionals, such as David Armstrong, who was the DP on the Saw film series. Talking to this professional who had participated in a highly successful film franchise really meant a lot.

– Jordan Wright
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

Every industry professional we talked to in Los Angeles stressed the same things: move out here as soon as you can, and always be part of the film making process. Even if you have to do a production assistant job on a bad movie for no pay, you do it. Because you need that experience and you need to make contacts. Contacts are what get you jobs, raw talent and hard work are rarely enough. And going out to LA for a week, we began to make contacts. We met with a lot of great KU alums who showed us a diverse range of aspects of the industry.
– Nick Baker

CBS and Disney were awesome this morning - got to go inside a writer’s room at one point #KUFMSinLA

Some high points from the trip included attending a camera rehearsal for The Big Bang Theory, seeing the writer’s room for Disney’s Best Friends Whenever, and visiting the Warner Bros. and Sony studio lots.
– Savannah Rodgers

Scott Thomas, a KU alum, speaking in his office. He is the executive producer and creator of Best Friends Whenever on the Disney Channel.

Great meeting w/ Scott Thomas @LACenterStudios.

We also got to explore LA Center Studios where they do the writing and some filming for Disney Channel shows. Being able to learn about the writing process of the Disney show Best Friends Whenever was intriguing because I learned a bit more on how writers rooms work and the process they endure.
– Adalberto Arroyo

Thank you to @KUFMS and alumni for this amazing spring break trip. I am so grateful for being involved in this trip. #KUFMSinLA

On the Central Perk set of Friends
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

Seeing the camera rehearsal for The Big Bang Theory was one of the coolest experiences ever. – Adalberto Arroyo

Set of #BigBangTheory. Thank you to Maria Ferrari and @agilbert for making this happen!!! #KUFMSinLA

I think my favorite part of the trip was being able to walk onto The Big Bang Theory set and talk with Maria Ferrari about comedy writing. She had great things to say for someone starting to get into writing. I’m used to people usually raising an eyebrow and asking, “what’s your plan B if you don’t do writing?” But she validated my goal and encouraged me to write. – Lauren Fitzgerald

Going to The Big Bang Theory set was life-changing. Big application: listen to what production teachers say. – Jordan Wright

Getting to go to the set of The Big Bang Theory and see the whole crew work together to efficiently produce something that tens of millions of people derive happiness from every week is intoxicating. Because even as a spectator I felt like a small part of the process (even though I really shouldn’t, I didn’t even like get someone a doughnut, an underrated virtue). I can’t even begin to imagine the feeling of accomplishment one must attain from actually working on a piece of entertainment so pervasive in the national culture. – Nick Baker

I am so grateful for being able to experience this trip and hope that many other students get to experience it as well. Also a shout out to Anne Gilbert and all of the KU alumni who helped put this together. – Adalberto Arroyo
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

My favorite part of the trip was being able to tour the Warner Bros. lot and being able to see the soundstage where a lot of my favorite shows were filmed.
– Adalberto Arroyo

We spoke with professionals in nearly every field of film and television, and I gained a much clearer picture of what areas truly interest me, as well as an idea of which environments best suit my own goals and personality.
– James Russell

I would also say that the time spent at all of the studios we went to (CBS, WB, Disney Studios at the LA Center Studios, Sony) were tremendously valuable, considering that it was verification in front of my own eyes that everything that Professor Matt Jacobson has said about film production and Professor Cathy Joritz about knowledge of Digital Content was correct! – Jordan Wright
Approaching graduation at the end of this semester, it has been more than slightly terrifying to imagine what it is I will do next. This experience has calmed many of those fears and given me direction. For anyone that is interested in pursuing film and television, I cannot recommend Career Week enough. Even if Los Angeles is not your end goal, the insight that you will gain into the industry itself is invaluable. – James Russell
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

Went to Sony and met with tons of great people. And saw an exhibit from the Albuquerque museum of crimes!

#KUFMSinLA

In our time at KU the 8 of us have been honing our own craft in hopes of landing jobs like those we met with. This trip was largely beneficial for us because it allowed us a glance into the real world work place and gave us the opportunity to ask questions about working in this particular job market.

– Tressa Lee

Best part of today was probably hanging out at @SonyPictures - REALLY helpful for gaining me new perspective on post-production

#KUFMSinLA

As for my favorite specific activity we did as a group, I would have to say the tour of Sony's lot and post production facilities.

– Tressa Lee

Tony Palermo, co-producer on Madam Secretary, and Rebecca Moon, director of television, toured the students through Deluxe’s post-production, restoration, and preservation facilities on the Sony lot.

Awesome time at Sony today! #KUFMSinLA

I would recommend this trip to everyone in the film department. I was tremendously lucky to be selected. Work hard so that you may earn a spot on this experience that I consider to be necessary if you wish to work in the TV and Film Industry in LA!

– Jordan Wright

Tony Palermo

With KU alum Joshua Nathan

You would be surprised how many Jayhawks there are in LA, but the even more surprising part is how much they want to help young aspiring filmmakers rise to their potential.

– Becca Huerter

The Sony lot

The Fox Studios Lot
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

Omg I just went to the place where I could see myself working 😊😊 @KUFMS #KUFMSinLA

Hollywood Walk of Fame

Is there an Oscar in your future?

A foley artist at the Sony lot, showing how she creates sounds in post production.

Touring the film restoration and post-production facilities at MTI Film

College can give you all the technical skills needed for succeeding in the industry but having the opportunity to gain insight about the things we didn’t cover in the class room has made a world of difference in how prepared we are to work in this particular job market. – Becca Hueter

FMS Career Week was an invaluable experience that I am so thankful to have been a part of. Not only did we meet fantastically talented alumni, but they imparted much of their wisdom onto us. If you have the opportunity to apply for this trip in the future, don’t waste the chance. – Savannah Rodgers

Met w/ the great people at MTI.

FMS Career Week was an invaluable experience that I am so thankful to have been a part of. Not only did we meet fantastically talented alumni, but they imparted much of their wisdom onto us. If you have the opportunity to apply for this trip in the future, don’t waste the chance. – Savannah Rodgers

Onto @CoSAVFX next- this is quite the exciting afternoon #KUFMSinLA

Getting to go to CoSA VFX and test out new virtual reality equipment with KU alum Chris Martin was a real highlight. Experiencing a new technology is fascinating because your mind immediately gets drawn to the untapped potential. You think about the future of filmmaking and entertainment. You imagine yourself being involved in that future. And that was my ultimate takeaway from our trip to Los Angeles: there is going to be an exciting and evolving future in the film and television industry, and now, more than ever, I desperately want to be a part of it. – Nick Baker
2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles

My favorite part of the trip was getting to meet all the KU alumni working in LA. – Tressa Lee

The idea of transplanting oneself into a place where it seems everyone is trying to do what you are is a frightening thought, for me at least, but knowing that a combination of perseverance and patience has been a proven recipe for success in the lives of so many people that once sat in the same Oldfather classrooms that I currently do, was revelatory for me. – James Russell

This past spring break a group of film students and myself were lucking enough to travel to the land of movie magic: Los Angeles, California, for the annual KU FMS Career week. During our week in LA we were fortunate enough to meet with people working in every sect of the filmmaking medium from film restoration to reality TV to independent filmmaking. – Becca Huerter

Winner of the Ben Krout Grip Awareness Award at the @KUFMS #tensies last year and finally got to meet the award’s namesake today! #KUFMSinLA – Tressa Lee

Getting brunch with KU Alumni Josh Nathan @IsReneDreaming at El Cid #KUFMSinLA #CareerWeek #KUFilm #RockChalk

Going to LA during Spring Break was probably one of the best experiences I have had provided to me by the Film department during my time here at KU. – Jordan Wright

Thank you to Sarah Sahin for all of her hard work (I can’t even imagine how many hours went into organizing the amount of things we did while there); to Annie Gilbert for her knowledge of L.A. and her patience while driving us all over the place; to the amazing alumni we met that were happy to take time out of their days to show a group of green, soon-to-be graduates the ins and outs of the business; and to my fellow adventurers on the trip – I truly hope we all get to meet and work with one another in Hollywood someday!

– James Russell

Thank you to the Hollywood Hawks! We really appreciate all you do! – KU FMS
I learned a lot more of the specific steps one must take in order to get into the industry. – Tressa Lee

As soon as you get to Los Angeles you understand why it’s the mecca for filmmakers everywhere. It’s a place meant to be captured visually. Just about everyone who’s there wants to be there. There’s the jaded celebrity side of the city, and the spectacle tourist side. And then there’s the side that reminds us why we’re there: because we want to make something. – Nick Baker

Can’t believe it’s already our last day in LA. 😞
#KUFMSinLA @KUFMS

Today was amazing. All I can say is to make sure that you listen to Professor Jacobson and do as much as possible with film #KUFMSinLA

Meeting so many people at this alumni dinner @KUFMS #KUFMSinLA

Currently navigating through the legendary LA traffic. Gotta get the full LA experience! #KUFMSinLA @KUFMS

2016 Spring Break Career Week in Los Angeles
Alumni in the News

A conversation with the creators of 'Red Bird,' a new kind of Western

The first two episodes of "Red Bird," the new web series created and co-written by Lawrence husband-and-wife filmmaking duo Jeremy Osbern and Misti Boland, were recently released. The gritty Western follows 1860s frontier woman Kitty Mae (Alexandra Goodman), a Lawrence mother mourning her 12-year-old son, who was gunned down by Missouri ruffians in a massacre not unlike the real-life violence of the Bleeding Kansas era. The boy's death sends Kitty Mae on a bloody quest for revenge, and she won't stop until every last man involved with the murder is dead.

A week before the series' debut, the Journal-World spoke with "Red Bird" director Misti Boland and cinematographer Jeremy Osbern about the project's local ties (it was filmed mostly in northeast Kansas), breaking genre conventions and the wild women of the Wild West.

**Journal-World:** The series kicks off with a tragedy that bears a pretty striking resemblance to Quantrill’s raid, right down to the time period, the setting and the violence that occurs. Was that event an inspiration for this story?

**MB:** Quantrill’s raid was a jumping-off point. Our series is fictional, but it’s based on a similar event. I personally have always wanted to develop a Western story of some kind, and to add something to the mix, I decided to throw in a female character.

**JO:** I had grown up in Lawrence and I’ve been here my whole life, so I’ve always been steeped in the history of Lawrence during the time period and the raids on Lawrence and the border war between Kansas and Missouri. I always wanted to do something on that.

Misti moved here for college and had not grown up with it, so she started doing a lot of research. We came across all sorts of interesting things — not just Lawrence-related. Misti also came across stories of women who were just as brutal as men, fighting in the streets and tearing out hair and biting off ears.

**Journal-World:** You’ve described the series on social media as “a reflection on the fine lines that tear apart countrymen and the endless cycle of violence and death that is caused by small differences and the need for revenge.” It sounds a bit like that old “brother against brother” adage you always hear about the Civil War.

**MB:** We’re definitely inspired by Bleeding Kansas and the border wars. It’s interesting, too, because during that conflict, you do have the soldiers, but then you have also have everyone else that’s going for it, too. Lines get blurred, and in the end, people get hurt and they lose the people they love. It doesn’t quite make sense at the end of the day.

**JO:** The series starts off with the audience definitely rooting for the Kansas side of the border and then hopefully by the end, audiences will be a little more torn because you start seeing the cracks in Kitty Mae’s quest for revenge and how that affects the families of the people she’s killing. Hopefully it will create a little more introspection about both sides of the conflict. It’s not just pro-Kansas or pro-Missouri — it’s showing how the violence split everyone apart and hurt everyone.

Alumni News

Rodney Hill (Ph.D., 2006) recently published an interview with Francis Ford Coppola in Cineaste (www.cineaste.com), a national magazine on the art and politics of the cinema. In the interview, Mr. Coppola discusses how he has recently reinvented his career with a series of independent film projects and explains his revolutionary new idea of “live cinema.” Dr. Hill teaches film studies in the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University.

Academic Calendar
Monday, April 18—Last day to withdraw from a class
Thursday, May 5—Last day of classes
Friday, May 6—Stop Day
Monday, May 9—First day of Finals
Friday, May 13—Last day of Finals

Equipment Check-in: 10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday
Equipment Check-out: 1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Sign-up to check-out equipment in the binder on the table near the equipment room.

Sign-up for editing rooms by signing the edit room schedule posted on the editing room doors.
The computer lab is available for use during the following times:
Monday from 2:30—5:00 p.m., Tuesday from 12:00—4:00 p.m.,
Thursdays from 8:30—5:00 p.m., and Friday: 8:30—5:00 p.m.

Are you a Film & Media Studies (or Theatre & Film) alum? We’d love to hear from you. Go to https://film.ku.edu/alumni-submissions to update your information with us, so we can add you to the impressive ranks of our alumni.

Film Festivals, Contests, Local Film Jobs, Call-for-Papers
Announcements of film festivals, contests, local jobs, call-for-papers, etc. are kept in a binder in the reception area at Oldfather Studios (room 204). Check it out!

Sydney Stone
Advising Specialist
Office Hours in FMS:
Thursdays and Fridays
215 Oldfather Studios
sydneystone@ku.edu
785-864-3500

Follow us

Department of Film and Media Studies
Oldfather Studios
1621 W. 9th Street
Lawrence, KS 66044-2488
Phone: 785-864-1340
Fax: 785-331-2671
E-mail: film@ku.edu
Send your news items and updates to Karla Conrad, kmconrad@ku.edu.
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