

Follow-Up to the 2010 Imago Film Festival



For our 6th annual film festival, we kicked off events with a chapel service featuring Judson University's artist-in-residence, Darren Wilson. Writer, director, and producer of the documentary *Finger of God*, Wilson spoke about the transformational experience that led him to make a film about miracles. Later, Wilson served as our creative keynote speaker on the opening night of the festival. With funny and poignant stories of his most

recent filmmaking experience, Wilson encouraged the crowd to look outside the ordinary to find God. We presented Wilson's most recent film, *Furious Love*, and followed it with a discussion.

Again, we were proud of the films we presented at this year's festival (with full programs of short films shown on second and fourth nights). The number of submissions that we received this year nearly overwhelmed our selection committee and international submissions comprised roughly a third of the overall submissions. This year's films represented a wide range of genres and had exemplary production values. On these nights, we presented six filmmakers who discussed their short film work with the crowd. And for the first time, we had special showcases for young filmmakers and Judson University filmmakers.



On the third night of the festival, we featured a special presentation of the Reel Conversation film series. (Reel Conversations takes place monthly throughout the regular school year at Judson University; the series shows feature-length films to Judson students and follows them with a discussion usually led by a Judson faculty member.) On this night, we showed *Purple State of Mind*, a documentary showcasing conversations

between Craig Detweiler and John Marks, two men trying to find common ground between a believer and non-believer. The discussion that followed featured a panel of

speakers representing theological, missionary, and filmmaking perspectives (and the crowd didn't want them to leave).

On the fifth and final day of the film festival, we returned to Judson's chapel with Augusta State University professor, Gaye Williams Ortiz. Author of the book *Theology and Film: Challenging the Sacred/Secular Divide*, Ortiz examined the "three faces of Eve," encouraging the crowd to look beyond Hollywood stereotypes for women.

Later, the ceremonies for the closing night began with a red carpet gala, complete with paparazzi, lots of food, and guests dressed elegantly and outlandishly. Musical entertainment was provided by Ben and Josh Calhoun.



Ortiz served as the critical keynote speaker, presenting a series of classic and recent films made outside the United States. With the help of theology from Miroslav Volf, Ortiz suggested world cinema provided us with one of the strongest means to think outside our own framework and embrace the "other." And thereafter, we were happy to present films that the festival jury deemed the best and most spiritually significant of our finalists;

in the awards ceremony, award winners were announced and the winning films were screened. The honor of best-of-show was given to "Jitensha." In a way that has become typical on closing nights, the audience lingered to talk with each other and discuss the films.

Thanks to our staff, judges, and speakers; thanks to those who submitted films; thanks to our financial supporters, particularly the Judson Student Organization; thanks to those who attended the festival; thanks especially to those who helped with the simple belief that they were contributing to something special; and of course, thanks to God, the creator of all good things. We look forward to seeing you next year.

www.imagofilmfestival.com