

## Workshops offer insight to writing, film production

BY KYLE WHITACRE  
The Battalion

The Texas Film Festival will offer six workshops discussing topics in film and film production Wednesday through Saturday.

Carol Jackson, director of the festival and junior English major, said there have been changes and improvements made from last year's workshops.

"This year we've had more than we've ever had before," Jackson said. "We've got two directors doing workshops, which is special, because in the past, we usually only had professors speaking on different topics."

The two directors speaking are Gary Ellenberg, director of *Ted*, and Tim McCannlies, director of *Dancer, Tx. Pop. 81*. Jeremy Valdez, a senior journalism and chemical engineering major, will speak on how engineers are depicted in films.

The workshops this year were primarily organized by Mikel Parent, a sophomore English major and member of the MSC Film Society.

Helped by Jackson and other Film Society members, Parent said he contacted speakers and created the topics for this year.

"I organized them along with the rest of the film festival team as well as other members of Film Society," Parent said. "Their input was very helpful. The most basic goal was to make the film festival a fun thing to go to, and ... an intellectual exercise as well. Hopefully, attendance will be high again this year."

The two directors will be having their workshops Saturday.

Gary Ellenberg will be talking about filmmaking at noon in Library Annex 417B. Tim McCannlies will be holding a screenwriters workshop at 2 p.m. in Rudder Tower 701.

Three Texas A&M professors will be holding workshops this year. Dr. Marian Wade will be discussing film remakes at 2 p.m. Thursday in Library Annex 417C.

Dr. Paul Christensen will lecture on how poetry and film interact, including poetry and film media and a discussion of basic semantics. This lecture will be at 4 p.m. Thursday in Library Annex 417C.

Dr. Terence Hoagwood will lecture on films that directly or indirectly comment on either their own production or film production in general within the text of the film at 2 p.m. Friday in Rudder 701.

Parent also discussed how topics were chosen for this year's festival workshops.

"The way we chose topics was that we, the Film Society members, didn't really choose," Parent said. "We went to the faculty and filmmakers with the notion of the lecture/workshop series, and it just went from there."

"Of course, we had input on what was going to go down, but really, it is a joint effort between the faculty and filmmakers and the Film Society."

"We've got a great relationship with the faculty here; they are really good to us. And of course the filmmakers are wonderful to talk to and learn from every year."



Valerie Red-Horse talks to one of her sisters in the Native-American-inspired movie *Naturally Native*. PHOTO COURTESY OF MSC FILM SOCIETY

### *Naturally Native*

Starring Valerie Red-Horse and Irene Bedard  
Directed by Valerie Red-Horse and Jennifer W. Farmer

What if Mary Kay were Native American? This is the idea behind *Naturally Native*, playing at the Texas Film Festival Thursday at 7 p.m. at Hollywood 16.

A complex tale attempting to balance the lives of three Native-American sisters raised by a white woman, trying to break cycles of alcoholism while maintaining tribal heritage.

The movie also deals with some non-tribal issues such as Internet dating, growing older and wider and attempting to maintain a sense of sensuality.

The highlight of the film is the autuer de femme Valerie Red-Horse, who pulls triple duty as writer, co-director and actor.

The film's juggling act reflects true family life, but the characters' identities get lost in the melee.

Occasionally, the trio of sisters seems like an episode of "Designing Women," complete with Red-Horse's character coming off as Dixie Carter's Julia, but it is always good for a hoot.

— Aaron Meier

### *Your Friends and Neighbors*

Starring Jason Patric and Ben Stiller  
Directed by Neil LaBute

LaBute's first film, *In the Company of Men*, set the indie world ablaze and garnered euphoric critical reviews.

With his brutally honest touch, he has established himself as a harsher and more sardonic Woody Allen.

*Neighbors* follows six "sad sacks" with non-descript names — Mary, Barry, Terri, Cheri, Cari and Jerry — as they hop from bed to bed in a game of sexual roundelay and generally mess up their lives.

In fact, one of Jerry's (Stiller) quotes from the film pretty much sums up the plot: "What do these characters all have in common? They all want to ... f—k! It's always about f—king!"

All of the characters are shooting blanks sexually, using sex to look for love, but they are too selfish for their own good.

Because LaBute adapted the film from his own play, "Lepers," *Neighbors* has a definite stage-quality feel.

LaBute's minimalistic direction forces the audience to concentrate on his words, as scathing as they may be, and his characters, as immoral as they may be.

— Jeff Schmidt

### *Floating* Starring Norman Reedus and Chad Lowe Directed by William Roth

*Floating* is the story of Van (Reedus) figuratively floating through life, exploring the challenging world of sleeveless T-shirts, smoking weed and breaking into people's houses.

Van is one of those hard-luck cases that movies love to promote: Dad gets his legs clipped in a car accident; Mom takes all the money and leaves home, and Van is left to care for his crippled father.

Meanwhile, a rich family moves across the lake from Van, and he meets Doug (Lowe), a fellow swimmer.

Doug and Van become fast friends and frequently swim against each other. Doug is on the swim team at State where his overbearing father is the coach. Pretty soon, Doug's dad offers Van a scholarship to swim.

This is Van's way out of his dreary life, what was once "the white picket-fence life."

But for some reason Van turns it down, and he and Doug have one more misadventure that leads to catastrophe, one of those cinematic catastrophes that changes everything within the span of hours.

— Jeff Schmidt

### *The Intervention* Starring Jamie Harris and Alison Eastwood Directed by Glen Freyer

*The Intervention*, playing at the Texas Film Festival Thursday at 9:30 p.m. at Hollywood 16, is the typical formula Hollywood film.

But only if formula films were *Throw Momma from the Train* meets the writings of Sylvia Plath.

Written and directed by Glen Freyer, *The Intervention* is a conglomeration of

the internal ramblings of a struggling screen writer and the neuroses that surround his L.A. life and family.

The screen writer, played with proper Hugh Grantian self deprecation by Jamie Harris, contemplates his own suicide all under the guise of research for a new film he is writing about a man named "Eye."

Making way for the inevitable remark, "Eye [I] want to commit suicide."

The inevitable crisis intervention is something out of a "Seinfeld" episode, except without Kramer.

Freyer brings one of the funniest moments of the festival to life with a refreshing take on phone conversations and an even more unusual look into phone sex.

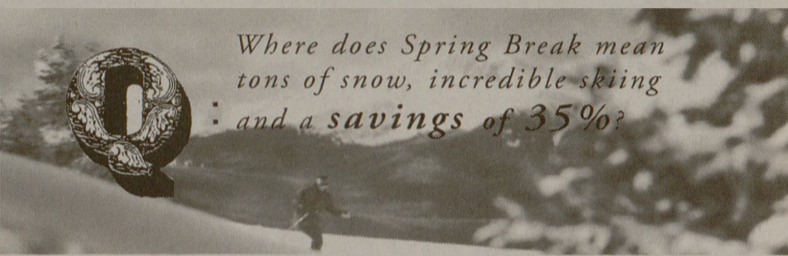
— Aaron Meier



Alison Eastwood stars in *The Intervention* featured at festival. PHOTO COURTESY OF MSC FILM SOCIETY

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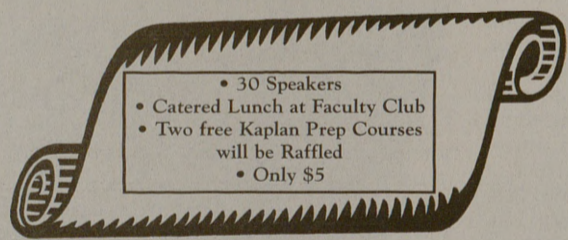
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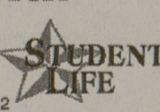
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C&W I	SUN	5:30-7:15	BRAZOS CENTER
C&W I	SUN	7:45-9:30	BRAZOS CENTER
JITTERBUG I	SUN	8-9:30	GRW 266
C&W II	WED	8-9:30	GRW 255
ADV. JITTERBUG	THUR	6:30-8	GRW 255

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JITTERBUG I CLASSES WILL MEET MARCH 7, 28 & APRIL 11, 18  
C&W I CLASSES WILL MEET MARCH 28 & APRIL 11, 18  
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## MSC Hospitality's Second Annual Southern Regional Conference on Student Community Service

Extends a special thanks for a successful venture and would like to thank the following individuals for their support.

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