



NEWS

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Film Showcases Diverse Talents of El Camino College Compton Center's Fine Arts Division

El Camino College Compton Center got its place in the spotlight recently, serving as the backdrop of an independent film created by students and staff.

"Snow Without Name" is a 32-minute short film shot on campus in Compton Center's dance studio during Spring 2006. The film was screened in Los Angeles on September 16, 2006, as part of the New York Independent Film Festival. It will appear in other independent film festivals this coming spring.

Written and produced by former Compton consultant John Phelan, the film is a true Compton Center collaborative effort. It features choreography by dance instructor Carol Sandvik, set design by Tim Stewart, and filming by students in the Telecommunications Department.

"Compton is a place where creative arts and expression can take place," said Phelan. "This film is proof."

A Fine Arts Division faculty member, Sandvik said that the film's name was inspired by the many different names for snow that exist in cold-weather cultures like Greenland. The film's premise is that there are as many different types of love as there are types of snow. The film questions society's conventional notions of love. According to Phelan, "The film represents a new romantic era."

Sandvik's job was to translate that new romantic era into a single Flamenco-style dance for the female character, played by actress Michelle Marino. Trained in modern dance in New York where she studied with Merce Cunningham, Sandvik joined the Compton faculty in 2001. Before becoming a dance instructor, she toured with the Anna Halprine Company of San Francisco. She divides her time between Los Angeles and New York, where her three grown children live.

Stewart, who heads the Theater Department, transformed the studio for each of the film's key scenes, with the help of student Patricia Suttan. Together, they created a loft-style apartment to depict the male character's home, a café where the two lead characters meet, and a backdrop for the female character's expressive dance.

The project also provided hands-on experience for students interested in pursuing careers in the film industry. A team of students from Compton Center's Telecommunications Department, headed by Sal Martino, helped with lighting, filming, and editing.

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