

MORGAN HILL TIMES

Red carpet rolled out for Poppy Jasper

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By Angela Ruggiero (aruggiero@morganhilltimes.com)

It may not be Oscar season yet, but it sure is Poppy Jasper season.

Film critics and buffs alike come together for some cinematic excellence this weekend for Morgan Hill's very own Poppy Jasper Short Film Festival.

The festival began Thursday night and will continue through Sunday. This is Poppy Jasper's eighth year in a row with 46 competing films, three invited films as well as workshops and guest speakers.

Started in 2004, as what co-founder Jay Jaso describes as "this wild, crazy, kind of dumb idea that's now a wild, crazy not so dumb idea," Poppy Jasper prides itself in bringing together the filmmakers with not only the local community, but rubbing elbows with the top guns who have won golden awards themselves and know the business well.

"These filmmakers that come get chance to rub shoulders with them and ask even over a cup of coffee: 'How did you do this? What did you think of my film?' That's the type of thing that you can't get at a larger festival," said Jaso.

Among the honored guests this year are Vance Piper who's worked as a cinematographer and on visual effects on "Forrest Gump," "Mrs. Doubtfire," and "The Terminator," to name a few. Also appearing in a "Movie Secrets" chat on Friday night will be Emmy award-winner Victor Miller, a writer for the original "Friday the 13th" film and soap operas such as "All My Children" and "One Life to Live." Patricia Cardoso, the director best known for "Real Women Have Curves" will have her film showing "Deep Blue Breath."

Jaso said it's that intimate environment that drives the synergy behind the festival.

"The filmmakers are the rock stars, we're having the festival because of them. We want to treat them like the artist and treasure that they are and interact with guest speakers who have blockbusters under their belt," said Jaso.

The festival is also a chance for filmmakers to test out their story ideas with an audience and see their reactions.

"This is how you test out your stories, see how things works. It's easier to put out a short film and try some ideas and effects," said Jaso.

Also special this year will be the student films that will be shown throughout the festival screenings.

In partnership with the Adobe Systems' Adobe Youth Voices and the Sobrato Arts Foundation, judges will pick five student films and a winner of a software package. They will also pick a winner of "The Woz Youth Award," as in Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple.

"He's interested in what we're doing and of getting kids involved with technology, computers, organizing creativity,"



A collage of 10 movies being shown at the 2011 Poppy Jasper Short Film Festival this weekend at CineLux Theaters. TOP ROW: "Dilli", "Time Freak", and "The Aerial Girl". SECOND ROW: "My Friend Peter". THIRD ROW: "Scene at Sea (Gu Yeo-Rum-Eui Ba-Da)". "Deep Blue Breath" and Keenan at Sea". BOTTOM ROW: "June Gloom", "The Room at the Top of the Stairs" and "Last Kind Word".

said Jaso of Wozniak.

Each screening will contain up to seven short films, all playing at CineLux Theaters at 750 Tennant Station Way in Morgan Hill. To purchase passes and view this weekend's schedule, visit www.poppyjasperfilmfest.org.

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