

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

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CU filmmakers garner Academy nominations

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While moviegoers worldwide will wait to see which films and actors win Academy Awards tonight, they will be joined by three Columbians who will be watching to see if their efforts will be judged to be the best in their field this year.

Two professors and one alumnus of the School of the Arts' film division have been nominated for the awards, which will be presented tonight in Hollywood, Calif.

Ron Nysader, a 1981 graduate of the School of the Arts, and the author of the screenplay for "Philadelphia," which starred Tom Hanks and explored issues of discrimination against AIDS victims, was nominated for Best Original Screenplay.

Additionally, Adjunct Professor Susan Seidelman's "The Dutch Master" was nominated for Best Live-Action Short, and Assistant Professor James Schamus' "The Wedding Banquet," a Taiwanese film, was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film.

According to Annette Insdorf, who chairs the film division, the Oscar nominations are only a part of Columbia's strong showing in

competitions and film festivals across the country this year.

Another Schamus film, "What Happened Was," won the Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, while five Columbia students had their films shown at the festival.

The five films shown at the festival included: Tomislav Novakovic's "Are They Still Shooting?" Amy Seplin's "Creatures of Instinct," H.A. Duong's "Heavy Blow," Stephen James's "The Make," and Darryl McCane's "Temptation." No other school had as many films shown.

School of the Arts film student John Daschbach's "If Only," a silent film about a homosexual high school student, will be shown at the New York Lesbian and Gay Film Festival.

Daschbach said although he encountered many delays while editing the film, he was pleased with the completed project.

"I actually shot the film at the end of last April," Daschbach said. "I had been planning on editing the film over the summer, but a group of students got together and we produced a commercial for Cinemax, so I didn't have much time."

Insdorf said she was surprised at the number of students from the film division who are able to complete their movies, because the division's financial resources are limited. The division is allotted only

\$30,000 dollars a year for film completion funds. Each year, a faculty committee chooses 10 films to be funded. This year's films ranged from six-minute shorts to actual feature films.

Insdorf said the student films cost an average of \$1000 per minute to produce.

"Five years ago, the money was enough," Insdorf said. "Back then, we only had about 20 student films [a year]. But last year we had 55 shorts."