



InsideToronto.com

Students from St. Basil-The-Great College School got a taste of the big time when their original cinematic masterpieces premiered to the public at Silver City Cinema at Yorkdale Mall Wednesday, April 21.

The grades 11 and 12 communications technology students have been preparing short films, commercials, animations and graphic design projects over the last several months for Digital 2010, the third incarnation of the annual event. Teacher, Anthony Perrotta, used it to motivate students who know they are not just being marked by their teacher, but are putting their skills on showcase for anyone who buys a ticket.

Thirty minutes before showtime Perrotta was found working out a few final kinks in the projection booth.

"Instead of learning solely being about the marks, it becomes about something more attainable and tangible. It becomes about the lived experience of sharing their creative works. In terms of an educational setting, that really transcends into a really great opportunity for students to succeed. Sometimes working just for marks can become an empty experience and this is really an experience that they make their own," said Perrotta.

At 29 years old, he has transformed the communications technology department since his arrival three years ago. Perrotta's natural charisma keeps his students engaged and his success as a professional in the film industry encourages his students to set their goals high.

A graduate of Humber College, Perrotta produced his first internationally screened documentary when he was 22 years old and continued to work on documentaries and on Hollywood film sets. He launched his own film company and still works on producing documentaries.

Speaking about his own accomplishments sparingly, Perrotta directed attention back to his students, only to say, "the night is all about them."

While he made sure everything was in place on the technical side of things, students were busy selling \$5 tickets for the show and talking to people about the movie posters and digital artwork on display in the lobby of the theatre, at Hwy. 401 and Dufferin Street.

Grade 12 student Mathea Labrovic credits Perrotta with giving her a whole new perspective on what she could accomplish with communications technology skills.

"The course itself has broadened my view of what filmmaking is all about," said Labrovic. "I can't look at a film in a regular way anymore because every time I watch a film, I'm constantly thinking about editing, how they got the shot, how they got the emotion in the scene and how it is all set up. For me, tonight is really important because next year I plan to go and study media studies (at a post secondary institution). I love media because it influences people's opinions, thoughts, actions and the way they view the world. Through our work we are interpreting certain messages and I love doing that with my artwork. I'm just really happy that I took this course."

The enthusiasm of the St. Basil students is evident as they lined up to enter their theatre, which was rented for the evening at a discounted rate.

The showcase was the students' own creation and for the most part, Perrotta made a point to stay out of sight.

"My philosophy of teaching is to be a facilitator of their experience, not to take part in it with them," he said. "It gives them a sense of place and pride. They are very proud to be here and to be sharing their work with the community."