



Annual Report

The Durango Film Institute

A Message from the Executive Director

FESTIVAL FACTS

- DIFF welcomed 532 filmgoers to Free Movie Night
- 5,217 seats were filled during the festival, slightly down from 2008. However, pass & ticket sales were up 7.5%
- 53 filmmakers and their guests attended this year's festival
- 14 countries were represented by films and/or filmmakers
- The board, volunteer staff and festival week volunteers donated 15,276 hours
- 160 room nights were booked for filmmakers, jurors and their guests
- 21 flights came through La Plata County Airport
- 20 new local sponsors signed on to support us

Eagerly looking forward to the 5th anniversary of our signature program, the Durango Independent Film Festival, we remember that dedicated volunteers set DIFF on its feet in 2005, partnering with local business leaders, donors, and grantors. In four years we have shared with you free programs in Durango and Ignacio schools each year, invigorating interaction between filmmakers and our friends in the audience, and three years of fascinating panel discussions and workshops.

The film festival has brought a total of 119 attending filmmakers, shown 5 Oscar-winners and 7 nominees, and offered movies of all genres from 38 foreign countries.



We have a passion for independent film and an army of like-minded volunteers, sponsors, donors, and grantors who make possible our mission to connect filmmakers and their art to the community, in a venue where their work can be seen by large audiences in an intimate group setting – a theater. The Durango Film Institute was formed under IRS rules as a literary and educational public charity. We think that watching a good independent movie is as satisfying as reading a good book, whether

fiction or nonfiction, animation or live-action, packed with information about different cultures or political ideas, or a tour-de-force exhibition of cutting-edge art.

We want you to be a part of the DIFF family. Please take a look at these articles about our 2009 programs and accomplishments. As we look to the future, we aspire to:

- *Present exceptional programs as forums for independent film that expand its audience while inspiring and educating;
- *Be a year-round educational resource for the art of filmmaking for adults and youth;
- *Maintain our unique, inviting, and intimate festival atmosphere; and
- *Be a major attraction that brings new visitors to the Durango area.

I invite you to join us!

The Public Schools Program



Students learn to formulate their own opinions about global, socio-economic and environmental issues. The program links films to student learning in the Visual Arts, Literacy, and Theatre Colorado State Standards. In 2009, 481 students and 35 teachers from Ignacio High School, Durango High School, and several Durango Elementary Schools participated. Filmmakers were on hand to answer questions.

Media literacy is an important aspect of education for the twenty-first century, and we are dedicated to helping schools and teachers provide real-world experience. Students learn to evaluate media information “critically and competently” as described in the Information Literacy components of the State Standards.

Each year DIFF purchases films and books for the libraries of participating schools.

According to the Colorado Council on the Arts, students involved in the arts are four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement, three times more likely to be elected to class office, have more self-esteem and an increased sense of responsibility, and perform more community service.

Annual Report 2008-09

Panels and Workshops



The volunteer Panel and Workshop Coordinator is a local independent filmmaker. The panels and workshops were provided free of charge in an effort to educate and enlighten interested community members, and local and visiting filmmakers.

DIFF presented two panels: one on how to present a film at film festivals, and one on methods of distributing a film.

Workshops offered tips on acting and short story writing for those who want to learn those trades.

“Good information from experienced professionals.”

“[I learned] a tremendous amount regarding distribution, legalities, and the post end of the film business.”

“Great information and links.”

MANY THANKS TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL OF THE EL POMAR FOUNDATION, WHO AWARDED A \$10,000 GRANT TO OUR SCHOOL PROGRAM, WHICH BRINGS INDEPENDENT FILM TO PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING FESTIVAL WEEK.

Economic Impact Study

The overall estimated economic impact of the film festival is \$352,994.

The study estimated there were 870 individual attendees, who each spent an average of \$158 (not counting admission).

Spending at the film festival was .017% of La Plata County’s total combined personal income, a surprisingly high number when compared to other events of its type.

The age of attendees ranged from 17 to 78 (children under 17 were not counted, but 18 children 12 and under were observed during the interviews). The average age of a DIFF festiviarian is 43.

36% of attendees had not been to a film festival in Durango before.

28% of attendees reside outside of La Plata County. Besides the Four Corners area,

attendees came from Aurora, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Grand Junction, Gunnison, Louisville, Littleton, and Telluride.

Twelve other states were represented: Alaska, Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and New York.

We had survey respondents from Canada and Germany.

“I just love all the great choices and the whole weekend of getting so much stimulation on so many levels.”

Attendee

DON'T FORGET THE 2010 FESTIVAL!

Save the date for the 5th Annual Durango Independent Film Festival, March 3rd through March 7th, 2010.

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 ☆ *“This festival is a true gem ... A place* ☆
 ☆ *where the artistic and independent spirit of* ☆
 ☆ *cinema is kept alive by an attentive team of* ☆
 ☆ *true enthusiasts. Filmmakers of the world* ☆
 ☆ *take notice, DIFF is going places.”* ☆
 ☆ *2009 Filmmaker* ☆
 ☆ ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Equity Fiscal Year 2008-09*



The ED and volunteer staff

ASSETS

Checking Accounts	\$ 37,315
Capital Fund	\$ 558
Endowment Fund	\$ 2,313

TOTAL ASSETS \$40,186

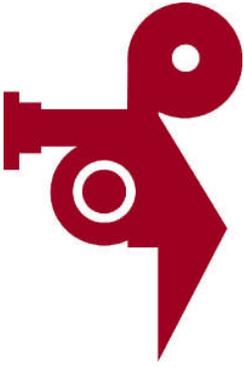
*Unaudited numbers.

LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

Current Liabilities	\$ 0
Equity	
Retained Earnings	\$ 22,174
Net Income	\$ 18,012

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY \$40,186

We received \$146,512 in in-kind support from our national and local sponsors.



The Durango Film
Institute dba Durango
Independent Film
Festival (DIFF)

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DIFF NEWSLETTER
BY SENDING YOUR
EMAIL ADDRESS to
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Phone: 970-375-7779
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Visit us
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DIFF Staff

Joanie Fraughton,
Executive Director
(right), and
Kaiya White, Admin
Coordinator

Photographs by David Halterman,
Benjamin Martinez, and Robb
Brantley

Provide a welcoming, intimate and unique film viewing environment.

"This festival is what I think a film festival should be: laid back, social, and centered around film. I had a great time." *Attendee*

"I felt incredibly lucky to be a part of the festival. I hope that as (even more) success finds DIFF and it continues to grow...it will not lose the charm and spirit it has right now. The friendly attitude and attention to each filmmaker is what makes it incredible!" *Filmmaker*

"We just love being a part of the community and helping to bring the events to town that make life here so special." *Sponsor*

Screen global, innovative and diverse films. When asked if they felt the festival presented a diverse look at different cultures, ideas and lifestyles, 92% of attendees surveyed said "Yes!"

"This festival provided opportunity to travel to places I likely will never see, and never see in such intimate ways." *Attendee*

"The filmmakers told diverse stories from around the world, and as close to home as Durango!" *Attendee*

Connect independent filmmakers their artistic process and their vision to the community. 58 % of attendees surveyed said they interacted with a filmmaker.

"I enjoyed the Q & As at several of the films I viewed. It makes the festival a unique experience to have them here and discussing their own films." *Attendee*

"The events proved to be a great opportunity to discuss the filmmakers' work with the audience." *Filmmaker*

"While the selection of films was extremely impressive, what I liked BEST was the people I met and interacted with -- fellow filmmakers, producers, festival staff, attendees ... a great little community to spend a few days with." *Filmmaker*

Contribute to improving the film literacy of the Four Corners Community.

84% said they learned something; 48% said a film changed their opinion; 49% said they learned something about how films communicate.

"[I saw] many awesome documentaries and attended two panels for filmmakers! Very informative." *Attendee*

"Every film I watched had some content that was new to me, and usually thought-provoking." *Attendee*

"I tended to give every film a 5 because of their subject and their creativeness. I see some flaws way after my judging is done. I understood some other flaws after discussing movie(s) with friends." *Attendee*

2008-09 GRANTORS: The Ballantine Family Fund, the City of Durango in partnership with Durango Arts Center, City Market Cares Fundraising Program, the Durango Business Improvement District, the Durango Friends of the Arts, the El Pomar Foundation, Google, Inc., La Plata County, the La Plata Electric Education Fund, and the Region 9 Economic Development District.

2008-09 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair: Mary Jo Rakowski
Vice-Chair: Greg Weiss
Secretary: Barry Spear
Treasurer: Julie Cooley

Members: John Cohen, Margy Dudley, Carla Finlay, Chris Warren, Wally White, Debbie Wright

