SUNY PACC Prize Winners

Eleven students in Lenny Crook’s annual Dogme Class collaborated to write and produce an episodic narrative. Dogme 95 was a filmmaking movement started in 1995 by a group of Danish filmmakers as an attempt to “take back power as storytellers and artists.” These students stuck to the strict rules of Dogme 95, each bringing a fictional character to the group. Each student then developed a story and wrote a screenplay that included a character they wrote as well as two other characters written by their classmates.

“One of the biggest parts of writing would be hearing a classmate say, ‘Well I don’t know if my character would do that,’ and you’d be like, ‘Oh, ok.’ They have full authority over the character so they know if my character would do that,’ and then you’d ask why and they’d tell you, ‘Well I don’t know if my character would do that,’ and you’d be like, ‘Oh, ok.’ They have full authority over the character so they know if my character would do that,’ and then you’d ask why and they’d tell you,” Lenny Crook said.

“A script is a living breathing thing. It’s not to be put on a pedestal and worshipped. It’s a blueprint.”

Conor Demmett and Zhuoga Renqing presented the project on behalf of the group to the SUNY PACC Prize for Performing Arts, Creation, and Curation—and they won! The SUNY PACC Prize prompts the design of arts and curatorial projects and supports the creation of major art projects by SUNY students with competitively awarded funds. Performing, Curatorial, and Arts projects will help to fund the project.

“Conor and I had one idea for each of the eight pages in one day. The fact that any of us even finished it, it just shows the testament and strength of Lenny’s development of the class,” Conor said.

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“Once we finished the presentation, it felt like we won because we finished it, but I was hoping we would get some type of acknowledgement. [Winning the SUNY PACC Prize] was a reward for all of the effort the group put into it. It was unexpected,” Conor said. “The fact we got this far with it a year later and that’s how it turned out, that’s beyond what I ever thought was possible.”

“[The Dogme Class] was an invaluable learning experience of thinking on your feet and shooting in real life. We only had one day for each shoot. The most time consuming was editing the story and shots into it. It was unexpected,” Conor said.

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