

Kidsfest 2008 Spring Programs

Press Release

CICFF Shines CineStudy Spotlight on Schools!

Chicago, IL - February 4, 2008

This spring, the Chicago International Children's Film Festival will launch *CineStudy Spotlight*, a selection of its most popular programs including screenings, in-school and after-school residencies, and interactive parent-teacher seminars. Eight media literacy programs will be available with curriculum for students from preschool to high school. "Launching the *CineStudy Spotlight* is an important step--it alerts schools and parents that Chicago now has a year-round resource for media literacy programs," says CICFF Operations Manager Kathleen Beckman.



The acclaimed *Reel Poetry* program will be offered as part of the *CineStudy Spotlight* to school groups through June. Available for screening in schools, at Facets Multi-Media in Chicago, and at the Wilmette Theater, *Reel Poetry* is intended for grades 6-8. Students perform poetry by Walt Whitman, William Blake, and others, then watch short films based on the poems just read. The films are enriched by facilitated discussions with a trained media educator, as well as creative composition exercises. "*Reel Poetry* uses film to teach and celebrate the art of poetry," says Festival Executive Director Nicole Dreiske. "It's one of the most effective programs we've ever developed for teaching literacy skills."



Teachers can also inspire students and enhance by bringing children to *CineStudy Spotlight* screenings. Facets Cinematheque specializes in multi-cultural films which encourage young people to explore world cultures, history, language studies and more. Select films can be screened for student groups on weekdays between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. at Facets Multi-Media.

Imaginative students ages 11-14 can take their love of poetry one step further during the Festival's *Dream Screen* poetry animation workshop. This eight-week after-school workshop focuses on the study, performance and animation of poetry. *Dream Screen* culminates in an all-school screening of the students' original short film, based on a classic poem of their choosing. "Kids' creativity comes alive when they are challenged to translate written imagery into the visual imagery of film," says CICFF Workshop Leader Jenny Gribble.

For younger audiences, the CICFF is proud to offer its "Best of the Fest" assembly. Intended for grades K-3, this in-school program features a one-of-a-kind collection of films from around the world, followed by discussions and activities led by a Festival media educator. "Best of the Fest" includes free curriculum for teachers and a copy of the films, complete with public performance rights. "After the assembly, teachers can host a film festival in their very own classroom!" says CICFF Media Educator Kerensa Peterson.



Parents and teachers will receive the tools to help children thrive in a media-saturated society with a variety of lively workshops led by Festival Executive Director Nicole Dreiske. "Taming TV" focuses on creating a safe, positive media environment for children ages 2-5. For teachers of grades 2-8, "Literacy Through Media" shows simple techniques to improve students' core literacy competencies. The highly regarded "Media: Improving Tests, Skills and Scores" teaches media-based exercises and activities to stimulate children's critical thinking, writing and testing abilities.



CineStudy Spotlight programs run through mid-June. For more information please contact Lauren Whalen at kidsfest@facets.org or at 773.281.9075.

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