

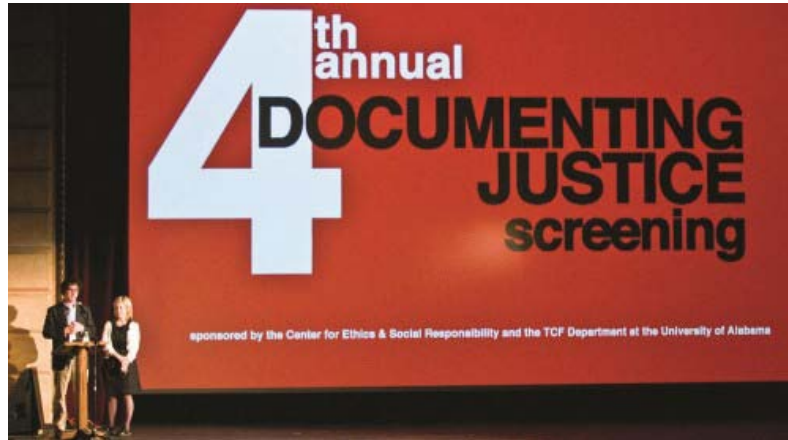
The Crimson White

Documenting Justice packs Bama Theatre

By Jordan Staggs
April 28, 2010

A full house gathered under the starry skies in the Bama Theatre Tuesday night for the fourth annual Documenting Justice film screening.

The show was presented by the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility and the Department of Telecommunication and Film at the University of Alabama.



Andrew Grace, director of Documenting Justice, and Rachel Morgan, lead programmer of the Sidewalk Moving Picture Festival, speak to the audience before the 4th Annual Documenting Justice screening on Tuesday night.

CW | Drew Hoover

The event featured five short films directed and shot by students of Documenting Justice, a yearlong class at the University. The goal of the class is to teach students of any major or background to create films and learn to tell a story through exploring different social and ethical issues in Alabama.

“It’s remarkable what these students have done,” said Andy Grace, co-teacher of the class. “Telecommunications at UA is changing in a lot of ways. I would recommend any student interested in film to come to TCF—you will be wowed.”

This was the first time there has been a screening of Documenting Justice using new equipment. The class’ popularity has continued to grow over the past four years since the project began.

The Bama Theatre has recently gotten a new projector, which made the experience better, according to Rachel Morgan, Grace’s co-teacher for the class.

Morgan said she believed Tuesday’s screening went wonderfully. The theatre was packed with UA students and professors, family members of the filmmakers, Tuscaloosa residents and even some of those depicted in the films.

“The films looked better than they ever have,” Morgan said. “It’s great to see so many people from the community come out and support them.”

She said it is rewarding each year to know that the films will have a life outside the classroom and after the first screening. Several films in past years have gone on to festivals and even won awards.

As for this year's Documenting Justice class, the students and faculty are relieved to have crossed the finish line.

"I just want to sleep," said Henry Busby, a sophomore majoring in telecommunications and film and American studies. Busby worked on the film "In Brilliant" with his partner Bruce Henry, a third year MFA student.

"I think the screening went well," Busby said. "The audience seemed engaged when they were supposed to be engaged, surprised when they were supposed to be surprised and shocked when they were supposed to be shocked."

Clayton Collins, a sophomore majoring in telecommunications and film, attended the screening and said he enjoyed it thoroughly.

"I think all of the filmmakers did a really great job," Collins said. "From a technical standpoint, the films were very well done. I would like to take this class, but measuring up to this year would be hard work."

According to Morgan, plans for next year's class are already underway. There is never a dull moment for the staff of Documenting Justice.

"We've already done interviews for next year, so we've got a pretty good idea of how the class is going to be," Morgan said.

She said it is difficult to start over year after year with a new group of student filmmakers.

"When a new class takes shape it's like a baby," she said. "You're still attached to your other children, last year's class. You just have to give the new class time to develop and grow its own personality."