

# In-house Hollywood

JIS's first film festival seeks to shine a light on the top films and film-makers on campus.

BY DANIEL ZHOU

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Every year the world looks on as the Oscars and the Golden Globes take place, celebrating the best of the best in film; this year, JIS will celebrate its own best.

On Feb. 17, for the first time in the school's history, a film festival will take place in the Fine Arts Theater.

For years, other arts have been represented in events such as the Cultural Convention or the art auction, but it was film's turn now. Dr. Geoffrey Carpenter, a member of the English and Social Studies departments, and a committee of students are running the event.

Dr. Carpenter, in his first year of teaching at JIS, has had extensive experience running and supervising this type of event; coming from the Taipei American School, he oversaw the hosting of five film festivals.

The JIS film

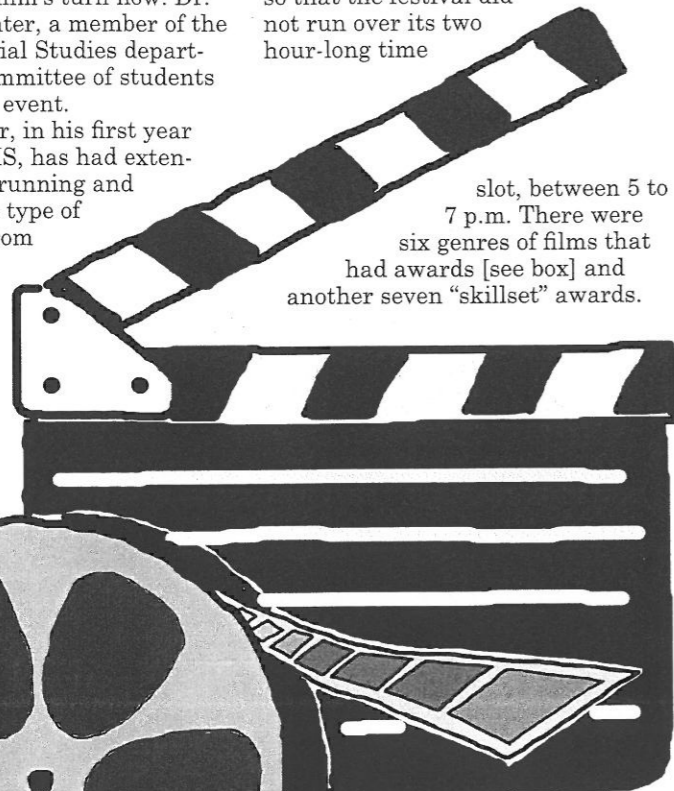


Photo/DZ  
Geoffrey Carpenter

festival came about when the administration approached Dr. Carpenter about overseeing it; after polling some students to gauge interest, it became a reality.

The festival was open to all students.

To enter, one only needed to go to the event's website on JISNet and submit an entry to the competition by Feb. 5. Films had to be an original production and could be of any time as long as they were below the seven-minute mark so that the festival did not run over its two hour-long time



slot, between 5 to 7 p.m. There were six genres of films that had awards [see box] and another seven "skillset" awards.

Films were judged by a wide variety of judges from both the JIS community and the "independent film industry," according to the festival's website, to ensure a fair, accurate and unbiased look at the films students produced and submitted.

## Fun facts

### Genre award categories of the Film Festival

- Public Service Announcements, a way to bring news to light.
- Music Videos, for the musically inclined.
- Informative Video, teaching through a film medium.
- Documentary, an academic view on important issues.
- Narrative, story-telling through the big screen.
- Animation, any sort of non-live action film.

### Individual award categories

- Best Editing, to recognize the efforts of those behind the screen.
- Best Cinematography, the director of the camera.
- Best Performance (Actor or Actress), to celebrate the best of JIS's talent.
- Best Directing, the creative vision that oversees all of the film.

### Show awards

- People's Choice, the crowd favorite.
- Best of Show, cream of the crop.
- Best of Genre, masters of their art.

Dr. Carpenter also stated that the event's focus was supposed to be on "fun." The festival was not meant to be an ultra-competitive environment but rather a celebration of the best of what the JIS film community has to offer.

Going with the theme of fun, the event aimed to mimic the Oscars in style and class. The festival was a "red-carpet event" with presenters dressed in elegant formal apparel, not unlike how many students dress for JIS's annual Prom. The glamour and feeling of fame that the Oscars or Golden Globes evoke is something that the festival was trying to recreate here at JIS.

The festival featured original music from Alan Sung Ho Huh, who has previously performed at the JIS Winter Festival. [B]

# From page to stage

Visiting poets bring stories to life through spoken word.

BY KAYLA HONOSUTOMO

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Gatherings in the Fine Arts Theater often consist of students whispering above the speaker onstage and wondering how long they have until lunch.

However, on Jan. 15, the FAT was silent as students listened in awe to the spoken word poems of Sarah Kay and Phil Kaye. Award-winning poets, the duo have collectively amassed more than 9 million views on their performances online and toured in several countries.

Having appeared on stages from TED talks to Carnegie Hall in New York City, Sarah and Phil spent two weeks at JIS, teaching workshops to Middle and High School students and teachers.

The performers made their way to JIS as part of Project VOICE (Vocal Outreach Into Creative Expression), an organization that says it utilizes spoken-word poetry as a form of empowerment. Project VOICE, where Sarah and Phil are co-directors, runs performances and workshops in schools and communities around the world to encourage people to become involved in creative self-expression.

"I'm familiar with their work, so to have them here and see them live was really cool," senior Sultana Qureshi said. "It was also very interesting because I'm really into spoken word. Just to see them perform was really inspiring."

Sarah and Phil presented poems both individually and together. They told stories of their childhoods, families and the expectations and realities of falling in love. Additionally, Phil and Sarah conducted workshops in several English classes that were simultaneously learning about poetry.

"Every day we saw work from students that made us go, 'Wow!' Phil and Sarah said in an email interview. "Students were willing to take risks and try things out and created some really impressive work."

Activities Coordinator Lauren Pool described the thinking behind the visit.

"We always want to bring as many guests on campus as possible from many sorts of arenas," Ms. Pool said. "It was nice that we could get some poets in. We read a lot of poetry in English classes, but I don't

and different careers," Ms. Pool said.

Moreover, Phil and Sarah also aim to get students more involved in the world of poetry, and find different ways to express themselves.

"We hope that the workshops give students tools to create poems throughout their lives, not just the one poem we worked on that day," Phil and Sarah said. "Or, even if they don't want to write poetry, we hope that elements of the workshop will be useful in their own writing and presentation practice. We also hope that students get to see that writing poetry isn't as scary or as difficult as it might seem from afar. It is actually a great way to get to know yourself and share yourself with the world around you."

Not only did Phil and Sarah



Will Woodruff

**Projecting voice:** Sarah Kay and Phil Kaye of Project VOICE hold a workshop for teachers. The poets also visited students in several English 10 classes.

know if we've all watched it live and spoken word, so we all thought it would be a unique opportunity for students. We wanted many ways we could get students to see them. So, they had their performance and worked with English classes as well."

Furthermore, Ms. Pool hopes that visitors like Phil and Sarah will leave an impact on students.

"We've had visiting artists, like dancers, so this was another opportunity to get exposure to students

share with students an awareness of poetry beyond what is learned in the classroom, but the student body also left a lasting impression on them.

"JIS has something very special going on – there is a palpable energy to the school. The faculty, staff and students have created a community that genuinely cares for one another and wants each person to grow into the fullest expression of themselves," Phil and Sarah said. "We were grateful to be a part of that, even if just for a few weeks. We miss JIS!" [B]