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UPDATE: BCTC's 'COVID Monologues' wins Cannes World Film Festival award

By Bobbi McSwine - July 27, 2021



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Before winning the June award, the film was chosen as an official selection, semi-finalist, finalist and nominee by the Cannes panel.

Additionally, the film was named an official selection at the Toronto International Women Film Festival, semifinalist/official selection of the Flicker's Rhode Island International Film Festival.

"I'm so proud of our film and theatre students, faculty, BCTC alumni and volunteers for their work on this project," said Stephanie Fitch, BCTC Film Studies program coordinator. "It not only represents their talent and skill, it represents their determination to overcome and share the struggles the pandemic brought us all."

"Our faculty and staff have worked hard to serve and engage students during the pandemic. 'The Covid Monologues' is a great example of a creative pivot in instruction and student outreach," said BCTC President Koffi Akakpo. "Our students, too, displayed great determination to carry on, develop their talents and artistically thrive. I'm thrilled that all who were involved in this project are receiving the recognition they deserve."

ORIGINAL STORY POSTED MAY 27, 2021 AT 5:59 P.M.

LEXINGTON, Ky. (WTVQ) – A little less than a year ago, Bluegrass Community and Technical College's theatre department released the 'COVID Monologues,' a production from students and staff who talked through the struggles they were facing early on in the pandemic.

Now, it's been filmed again. This time, for the big screen.

"I think this will be a piece that will live on because it affected the world," BCTC's Film Coordinator Stephanie Fitch said.

That's why even though the world seems to be slowly moving past the pandemic, she wanted to make the piece into a movie.

"We literally got people's raw emotion and how they were affected by it," Fitch said.

The production was created in August 2020 and the performers all filmed one-by-one in a classroom.

The monologues weren't all about the pandemic – some talked about police brutality and even evictions.

"I don't think it was easy," Theatre Coordinator Tim Davis said. "I think kinda digging deep and bearing that part of your personality and your own experiences is not easy."

That's definitely something graduating seniors Mary Leveridge and Caden Healander can relate to.

"Being yourself on stage is so much harder than being someone else," Healander said.

They had to relive those vulnerable moments again when the production was filmed for the movie.

"It was like all of the emotions that I had felt over the summer just came back, and then filming it I was able to – I used the crew as my audience and I put that out to them," Leveridge said.

"It had been a couple months and I read back and I was like, 'well, I'm a little more mature now. I'm a little distant from my piece. It doesn't feel like it's stabbing me anymore,'" Healander said.

It's a shift Davis said he noticed right away and welcomed.

He said he's proud of the hard work his crew has done. They were even being selected as one of ten productions the Kennedy Center chose to stream earlier this year.

"I always preach in theatre it's about truth and it's about honesty and if you believe it, the audience will believe it," Davis said. "It's just a piece that we're really, really proud of."

The movie premieres Thursday night, but the public will have to wait until next summer to see it. That's because BCTC is submitting it to festivals, which require the producers wait before showing it to the public.