

Nellie Wong Magic of Movies Education Fund

# SCHOOLS AT THE FESTIVAL STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST

SAN FRANCISCO FILM SOCIETY



## CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The San Francisco Film Society announces the second annual Schools at the Festival Student Essay Contest at the 52nd San Francisco International Film Festival. Students attending select Schools at the Festival screenings at SFIFF52 are invited to submit an essay about their experience at the Festival and their responses to the films they viewed.

This contest is made possible by the generous support of the Nellie Wong Magic of Movies Education Fund, endowed by Tim Kochis and SFFS board member Penelope Wong to honor the memory of her mother, Nellie Wong (1917–2007), who was an avid filmgoer and cinephile. Developed to support the year-round outreach efforts of the SFFS Youth Education Program, the Fund aims to cultivate students' imaginations, enhance their critical thinking and creative writing skills and instill a greater appreciation for the magic of movies in young audiences of the Bay Area.

## ESSAY CONTENT & ELIGIBLE FILMS

Winning essays will be determined based on creativity, depth, enthusiasm, clarity, grammar and relevance to the essay questions. Essays must be written in response to the following questions about the selected Schools at the Festival screenings ONLY:

### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, Grades 2-5

**No Voice Too Small**, screening at 10:00 am, Friday, May 1 and 10:00 am, Monday, May 4

Q: Choose one film you saw in the program. What did you like about that film? How does the main character's life or experiences compare to your own? What lessons did you learn from their story? [Note: the character does not have to be human!]

### MIDDLE SCHOOL, Grades 6-8

(Students may choose one film program or submit separate essays for more than one program):

#### Pressure Cooker

screening at 10:00 am, Wednesday, May 6

Q: How did the film inspire you to either learn a new activity or skill or to become more committed to an activity or skill you already enjoy? Is there a teacher or mentor who has encouraged or supported you, like Wilma Stephenson did with her students in the film? Explain.

#### Speaking in Tongues

screening at 12:45 pm, Thursday, April 30

Q: Explain the benefits or disadvantages of bilingual education. How did the film support or change your beliefs and opinions about the issue?

#### Youth Bring the Truth

screening at 12:45 pm, Thursday, May 7

Q: Choose one film you saw in the program and explain how it inspired you to take action or change

your beliefs about a specific social or global issue, such as immigration, voting or media consolidation.

### HIGH SCHOOL, Grades 9-12

(Students may choose one film program or submit separate essays for more than one program):

#### Crude

screening at 12:45 pm, Wednesday, April 29

Q: How does the film portray the opposing sides of the lawsuit, and how does it generate sympathy for the environmentalists? What major issue—on either a local or global scale—would you tackle if you knew you could make a real difference? Why would you choose that issue and what would you want your impact to be? What steps would you take to begin?

#### New Muslim Cool

screening at 12:30 pm, Friday, May 1

Q: How did the film affect your views of Muslims, their lifestyle and their religion? Were there elements of the main character's story that resemble your own experiences? Have you ever been in a situation where people misunderstood you because of your race, religion, nationality or other factor? Explain.

#### Son of a Lion

screening at 10:00 am, Wednesday, April 29

Q: What did you learn about the lives of young people in the Middle East? What surprised you? How did Niaz's story affect your beliefs or opinions about war, the importance of education and family obligations?

## CONTEST RULES

### LENGTH OF ESSAYS

- Grades 2–5: 150–200 words
- Grades 6–8: 200–350 words
- Grades 9–12: 250–400 words

### DEADLINES

Essays must be postmarked by May 15, 2009. Submit all essays to:

San Francisco Film Society  
Attn: Nellie Wong Essay Contest  
39 Mesa Street, Suite 110  
The Presidio  
San Francisco CA 94129

Essays may also be submitted online at:

<https://sffs.wufoo.com/forms/schools-at-the-festival-student-essay-contest>

To be eligible for consideration, all essays must include the following information:

- Student name
- Grade
- School
- Teacher name
- Teacher phone number
- Teacher email address

### PRIZES

Contest winners will be announced June 5, 2009. Teachers will be notified directly if their students have won. The following prizes will be awarded:

#### Elementary School Grades 2–5

- **Grand Prize** (1): \$150 cash prize
- **Runner-up** (2): \$50 cash prize

#### Middle School Grades 6–8

- **Grand Prize** (1): \$300 cash prize
- **Runner-up** (2): \$100 cash prize

#### High School Grades 9–12

- **Grand Prize** (1): \$500 cash prize
- **Runner-up** (2): \$150 cash prize

All winning essays will be published on [www.sffs.org](http://www.sffs.org).

For questions about the contest, contact Keith Zwölfer at 415-561-5040 or [kzwolfer@sffs.org](mailto:kzwolfer@sffs.org). For more information or to donate to this fund, contact Kim Bender at 415-561-5049 or [kbender@sffs.org](mailto:kbender@sffs.org).