



MICHIGAN
CREATIVE
FILM ALLIANCE

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Creative Film Alliance students launch Kickstarter fundraising campaign for “Downriver” movie project

DETROIT, Mich – July 18, 2012 – The students of the Michigan Creative Film Alliance (MiCFA) have launched their first major fundraising campaign on Kickstarter. Their goal is to raise at least \$12,500 by July 29th to fund location production costs associated with their 2012 production “Downriver.” Donations can be made at <http://kck.st/M1hGRB>.

Downriver is the third project of the MiCFA. Each summer, the MiCFA brings together top students and recent graduates from the film-related programs at Wayne State University, Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. These students share their expertise as members of a production team dedicated to making a high-quality film, employing real-world professional standards and practices. Their first two projects, *Appleville* and *Beauty Queen*, premiered at the Detroit Film Theatre to large and enthusiastic crowds of film supporters. Michigan Film Office Director Carrie Jones called *Beauty Queen* “one of the best films I’ve seen this year.”

“We’re determined to make our 2012 project *Downriver* our best production yet,” says producer Tinisha Brugnone, a senior Media Arts and Studies production major at Wayne State University. “Our three universities have made substantial investments in our training and preparation, now it’s up to us to prove that we can be the professionals we intend to be.”

Downriver is a 30-minute narrative film, based upon an original screenplay by Brandon M. Verdi, a recipient of the 2012 Hopwood Award in Screenwriting from the University of Michigan. In *Downriver*, a socially awkward 15-year-old, Alex, is forced from his posh suburban lifestyle into life with his estranged older sister in working-class America, following their father’s untimely death. “It’s a comedy,” notes Verdi, “but it’s also a story about loss, anger, grief and family.”

“Our Kickstarter campaign is a way for individuals and businesses in our communities to support emerging Michigan filmmakers,” says Matt Wrobel, a 2012 graduate of Michigan State University’s film program and an assistant director on *Downriver*. “It’s an all or nothing concept. We either reach our goal, or we get nothing. And failure is not an option.”

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Donations to the MiCFA's Kickstarter campaign will cover:

- Rental of camera mounts, waterproof housing, dollies and crane
- Rental of a generator to provide electricity for outdoor lighting requirements
- Location fees
- Location travel for cast and crew during the 14 days on location
- Costumes, makeup and scenic materials
- On-set meals for cast and crew during our long production days

“The community’s support will enable the us to complete a movie in which passionate students gain real-world hands-on experience,” says *Downriver* director Billy Jackson, a senior Screen Arts and Culture major at U of M.

Contributions to *Downriver* will be administered by Techtown, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and fiscal sponsor for the Michigan Creative Film Alliance. The *Downriver* Kickstarter campaign ends on July 29, 2012, to donate please visit, <http://kck.st/M1hGRB>

Video from the Kickstarter campaign is available at <http://vimeo.com/44134339>

About the Michigan Creative Film Alliance

The Michigan Creative Film Alliance is the first creative arts collaboration among Michigan's three top public research universities—Michigan State University, University of Michigan, and Wayne State University. In 2010, these universities launched this historic, innovative collaboration in support of an indigenous film community across the state. The MiCFA provides a unique professional platform for student filmmakers to develop, create and distribute high quality films. For more information about the Michigan Creative Film Alliance, visit <http://mi-cfa.com>

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