

Paper Mache for 9-26-25 by David Read

My first adventures in filmmaking were many years ago in Los Angeles. Theater friends and I got together and made a couple of short films just for fun. For example, "The Scrabble Game" was a short film depicting a couple playing Scrabble. Things heat up as more wine is consumed while playing and the words on the game board somehow become increasingly provocative until, well you can imagine the final word. Fade to black! Then we made a pseudo-documentary titled "The Sand Dune Jumping Contest." It was a simple premise; a group of contestants would climb to the top of the tallest sand dune in Death Valley and then roll downhill. Points were awarded for style as well as order to the finish line. Silly commentary by the announcer added to the fun. Our group's magnum opus was titled "Mondo Fausto," a brief retelling of the Faust legend. Our Faustian character was a down and out jazz musician who had pawned his horn for food money. He would wander around Santa Monica and mime playing trombone. A chance encounter with a seemingly humble corner newspaper seller changes his fate as he quickly learns that the news man is none other than Mephistopheles come to make him an offer he couldn't refuse. A deal is struck, and a beautiful trombone appears in exchange for the someday-to-be-collected musician's soul.

A few years back, we learned about a filmmaking contest called an *instant* or *flash film festival*. It appears that the first such event occurred in Washington, DC in 2001. It was called simply the 48 Hour Film Project. Teams were given a randomly assigned genre, a character, a prop, and a line of dialogue. They had 48 hours to write, shoot, and edit a short film. The concept grew in popularity and exploded worldwide and today it takes place in over 100 communities globally including Yuba-Sutter! We thought it was a great idea, so we adopted it. Yuba Sutter Arts & Culture announced its third Yuba-Sutter 48-Hour Short Film Festival earlier this year. Over the weekend of Saturday, September 12th, thirteen local filmmakers completed their four-to-six-minute films based on their randomly selected genres. The results are nothing short of miraculous with creativity pouring out of every frame or whatever is considered the digital equivalent. We have some repeat participants including Nathan Schemel, the Mass Communications Professor at Yuba College, and his current crop of enthusiastic young filmmakers, Shon Harris and his chief collaborator (and daughter) Bethany, Marti Brown and Sonja Skvarla along with a whole group of newcomers to the challenge including students from Yuba City High School, Marysville Charter Academy for the Arts, Jake Livingood, Samuel Bishop and several others. We are very thankful to these local filmmakers who have once again risen to the challenge of making a short film in just 48 hours. Now it's time to get everyone together and see on the big screen what the teams created!

Films are judged based on engaging and interesting stories, camera technique, understandable audio, thoughtful lighting and editing transitions and use of music to create mood. Cash prizes are \$500 for first place, \$300 second place and \$200 for third place. Come out and support our local filmmaking community! If past festivals are any indication, it promises to be a very entertaining afternoon of artistic output. The *Flash Film Festival* screening event and award ceremony will be held at the Sutter Theater Center for the Arts, 754 Plumas Street in Yuba City on Saturday, September 27th starting at 4pm. Doors will open at 3pm. Tickets are \$15 in advance and are available at yubasutterarts.org or in the theater box office weekdays from 10am to 4pm. Tickets at the door, if available, will be \$20.