For Immediate Release

Douglas Education Center announces hiring of filmmaker Robert Tinnell

Tinnell to head Digital Film Production Program

Monessen, PA—Douglas Education Center (DEC), a creative career school located just 30 miles south of Pittsburgh, is excited to announce the hiring of Robert Tinnell as the Director of Tom Savini’s Digital Film Production Program.

Tinnell, a 25-year plus veteran of the movie industry, will oversee the film program and bring all DEC creative programs together to collaborate on film projects. He also has a true passion for the classroom and in addition to his director duties, will be teaching, as well.

Some of the opportunities for DEC collaborations include: illustration students storyboarding and designing sets; graphic design students creating graphics and computer effects; cosmetology students doing hair, make-up and costuming; special make-up effects students providing detailed make-up work, sculptures, and animatronics; and finally the film students bringing their stories to life. This unique “team effort” will give students the chance to gain hands-on training in their specific fields, while working on various types of productions.

“The opportunity to be involved with educating a new generation of filmmakers is something I've long wanted to try and do while still actively working in the industry,” said Tinnell. “As such, the Savini program represents a dream come true. I strongly believe that interaction with the students will benefit me as much as them as both a filmmaker and a person. The fact that we get to work together in a state-of-the-art production facility makes it all the better.”

Tinnell’s accomplishments include writing and directing four motion pictures, writing and marketing ten graphic novels/comics (including “Feast of the Seven Fishes,” which is currently in pre-production as a feature film), producer and production manager on a range of feature films and music videos (including Paula Abdul’s “Straight Up”), and lecturing for organizations such as West Virginia State University, Queens College, Chicago International Children’s Film Festival and Wizard Comic-Con Philadelphia.

“Robert Tinnell’s impressive background and broad knowledge of the film industry make him an excellent addition to our growing program,” said Jeff Imbrescia, President of DEC. “We are already fortunate enough to have Tom Savini, who will be working with students on their original material, as well as professional scripts, and will be guest lecturing in class on his amazing life experiences. Not to mention, industry professionals like Andrew W. Zehner, an accomplished writer and director, with numerous film and television credits to his name, who has been an instructor in the graphic design program at DEC since 1999. He received “The Grand Jury” award, as well as a best feature comedy award at the New York and Miami international film festivals, for his feature film, “Speilburgh.”

Each student entering the 16-month film program receive a video camera and a laptop computer, fully equipped with editing software for all of his or her filmmaking needs. As part of the curriculum, they will work on real productions, utilizing high definition cameras, professional lighting equipment and a newly constructed soundstage. Planned projects include music videos, trailers to present to the American Film
Market, feature films, and even pilots for reality television shows. Savini, schedule permitting, will produce and/or direct students final fourth semester projects.

Facilities replicate a working film studio with a soundstage, two green screens, infinity wall, shop farm (with rooms for make-up, wardrobe and props), dressing rooms, administrative offices, lounges, a recording studio, editing suites and a 50 + seat theater for film classes and student film showcases.

Tinnell resides in Morgantown, WV with his wife, Shannon. For more information on DEC, or to apply to the program, visit www.dec.edu.

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