

# Students join a film alliance



By **Theresa Velazquez**  
Copy Editor

The Dallas Filmmakers Alliance met Jan. 8 for its first Flash Film Kickoff of the year at Dallas Makerspace in Carrollton. People from all backgrounds met in hopes of making a short film together within eight weeks.

This year, three North Lake Campus students worked together to help writer and director Jim Alexander with his production *Ghost with a Blonde Wig*.

The short movie is a comedy thriller about a couple, Derek and Sophie who share stories about their past supernatural encounters only to find out that a ghost is living amongst them. The ghost with a blonde wig was sent by the Derek's guardian angel to advise Derek about his deteriorating health.

Chad Pursley, president of the Dallas Filmmakers Alliance, said their purpose is to "create a community of filmmakers."

"There are so many great ideas just floating around. It would be great to bring a

bunch of creative people together and let's just see what they come up with," Pursley said.

The event began with a table read. Filmmakers then voted for the movie script they wanted to help create.

Three scripts were selected to be made. The people separated into groups to decide their roles and schedule the production dates.

"It just blew me away that about a lower half of the people voted for me," Alexander said.

Alexander has written several full-length scripts, and a couple of shorts. He wanted to take the next step and direct a film.

Charnisa Goodson, former North Lake student, said her most useful quality was as a camera operator because she was able to bring her own equipment.

"And with Dan right beside me, we made it happen," Goodson said.

Dan Lord, who completed the video technology program at North Lake, was chosen to be the director of photography for the project.

"I got a camera op and I have got a gaffer or a lighting

person that I am in charge of, and we all work together as a team to help the director get the look that they want," Lord said.

Then he invited North Lake student Jake Binion to volunteer as a gaffer, a chief lighting technician, during production.

"It has really been great to have the North Lake folks involved in it and helping out because they have really, y'all have really, been knocking it out of the park as far as skills," Alexander said.

Goodson said it was interesting working with crew from the DFA.

"Everyone was creative in their own particular way, everybody was intelligent in their own way, and everyone served as an asset in their own way," Goodson said.

The Flash Film hosted by the DFA is a different type of networking and learning event. Alexander travels from Fort Worth to Carrollton for that reason. "Particularly beginners that are learning and are willing to volunteer, I don't think there is that kind of network in Fort Worth," Alexander said.

Pursley sees value in typical networking events when you are trying to find funding for a project, but it is different when you are trying to find a team of filmmakers.

"Do you want to know the information that is on that business card? I do not think so," said Pursley. "I think you want to learn, what is this person going to be like when we are two hours over on our shoot, and it is 11:30 at night."

Goodson said she was very lucky to get in a group where no matter the long hours everybody agreed that they wanted to be there.

This short movie project allowed students to develop their networking skills and test their skill sets.

"You kind of get an idea of their personalities ... if you want to work together in the future on something else maybe you can get their contact info and give them a ring and say, come on aboard," Lord said.

*Ghost with a Blonde Wig* premiered on March 4 at the Dallas Makerspace film showcase.

The DFA is planning on hosting many more filmmaking and learning events.

News-Register | Theresa Velazquez  
Director Jim Alexander reviewing a shot for the second scene alongside Camera Operator Charnisa Goodson.

# Connecting the past with art

By **Roberto Aguilar**  
Staff Writer

The North Lake Campus has featured a new exhibition "Past is Present" since the start of the Spring 2023 semester at the Art Gallery.

Fort Worth artist Michelle Cortez Gonzales work is based on the connections she has made through memory, domestic materials and actions of labor that have connected to her culture.

The exhibit is an accumulation of work that she has done over the years.

"In this exhibition Past is Present I was really thinking about how even through changes we are still able to filter our past through our present," Gonzales said.

Gonzales said the best part of working on a piece is the connections she makes with the materials and memories of her family.

"That's the most beautiful part of making the work, but I think it's also the hardest part of doing it," Gonzales said.

Gonzales said that while making all the work it is very personal and there are a lot of emotions that rise up while working. While these emotions such as fear, can be negative, she uses them to create her art.

Gonzales uses many materials like lace, fabric and domestic materials for her pieces.

"One of the first materials that I did use was lace," Gonzales said. "I was really trying to figure out how I wanted to incorporate objects and materials in my work."

Gonzales realized lace has many uses throughout the world. Lace can be used to decorate but it can also be used to disguise.

One of her pieces that uses lace is also her most sentimental piece called "Confluence".

"Confluence means to join together so the lace in this piece acts as a joining but also a division from two generations," Gonzales said.

This piece features her grandmother surrounded by flowers on the left side of the piece which is split in half by the lace. The other side has a dark figure with an ambiguous face surrounded by darkness and water.

"The lace is hanging in between it also covers the figures face on the side and I think that really speaks to covering or uncovering of identity," Gonzales said.

The piece also highlights her grandmother's hands which is meant to represent

how her grandmother took care and worked for her family.

One of the biggest inspirations of her work is her grandmother since she raised her and she is the hub of her family and cultural knowledge. Gonzales said it makes her think about how things will stay with you even if they are not physically here.

Another piece featured in the reception is "Presence through Absence" which is in the middle of the exhibit.

The piece shows a dress laying down on the floor which represents two meanings. The dress can represent someone who has fallen but can also be seen as someone who is rooted to the ground.

Gonzales quoted poet Dinros Christianopoulos during the reception and said, "They tried to bury us, but they didn't know we were seeds." The quote inspired the piece to help her show how if there is an intention to get rid of someone there is a positive that comes out of it.

The reception is also complimented with a video showing Gonzales hanging sheets. Gonzales wanted to embody her grandmother in the video.

Gonzales said she does a lot of research on Mexican-American and Texas history which has inspired her art.

"I think it's so important for me to relay that information," Gonzales said. "You know back in the twenty's and so it wasn't legal to speak Spanish in public schools and I didn't know that growing up."

Gonzales said that it is important for her and the viewer to connect and engage while they are viewing a different perspective.

"I'm trying to get the viewer to look at specific pieces or different colors to ignite different memories in their own mind of their family life and their presence and their history" Gonzales said.

Gonzales thinks it is important for students at Dallas College to see this exhibit to be able to see different perspectives for students at the North Lake Campus to be able to resonate.

Gonzales went to UTA undergraduate and master's University of Dallas.

Gonzales said over time her process continues to change as she learns more about her family. She said that with the more she learns about her culture there are other things like resentment that changes her.

Gonzales' material work has also changed as she wants to do more and explore more of her work.

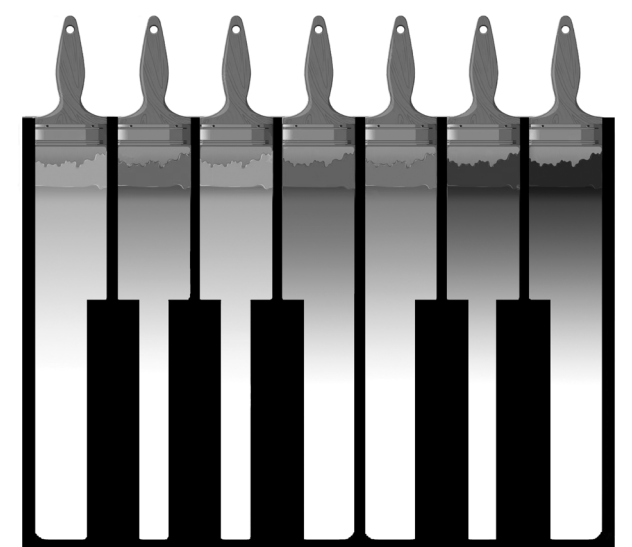


News-Register | Joanna Mikolajczak  
Artist Michelle Cortez Gonzales spoke about herself and art during the art reception on March 2.



News-Register | Joanna Mikolajczak  
(Center Right) Artist Michelle Cortez Gonzales with Dallas College School of Creative Arts, Entertainment and Design, faculty and staff during the reception.

## North Lake Campus ART & MUSIC FESTIVAL



April 3<sup>rd</sup> through April 6<sup>th</sup>

- Musical Performances
- Artist Demonstrations
- Art Participant Events
- Art Movie Screening
- Sidewalk Chalk Event
- Gallery Exhibition