

SPY HOP  
PRODUCTIONS



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **TWO-DAY SCREENING SHOWCASES SIX LOCAL STUDENT FILMMAKERS**

**Salt Lake City, UT** – Spy Hop Productions, a local, non-profit organization providing multimedia education to underserved youth, announces its first annual PITCHNIC Screening. Pitchnic is an intensive year-long workshop that provides experienced student filmmakers with the opportunity to produce a professional-caliber film. The Pitchnic Screening will be held November 11-12 at the Broadway Centre Cinemas (111 E. 300 S.) at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 and will be available at the door. All proceeds will be going toward Spy Hop's Pitchnic program for 2004.

This year's six participants are: Katie Bird from Juan Diego High School; Will Cutting and Eli Joe Sasich from Judge Memorial; Eric Ulbrich from West High School; Jamie Amann from Highland High School; and Allie Johnstone who now attends the University of Utah. All six participants were selected from an application and interview process. For the past eight months nearly 150 students, 200 actors, 50 professional mentors and countless vendors have collaborated to bring these films to life.

The five films to be shown address a variety of issues: feminist ideologies, a photographer of the Vietnam War still haunted by his experience, a Grecian mask that transforms the life of a lonely museum worker, a professional hit man that finds himself with an unlikely victim, as well as a struggling standup comic who sells his soul to the devil with the hopes of being famous. Because Pitchnic was formed to give students complete freedom over their films, Spy Hop Productions has not censored any of the content. Although none of the films have been rated, audience members should expect the five films to be at a PG-13 screening level.

The proceeds from the screening will go toward next year's Pitchnic program. The Pitchnic program is a cutting-edge workshop at Spy Hop Productions that introduces students to the entire filmmaking process. This process includes formulating realistic budgets, searching for actors, scouting locations, collecting props, designing costumes, building sets and planning marketing schemes for each film. Students enter the program with simple plot and story concepts and spend the first four months turning their ideas into a short screenplay.

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Along with the script, students prepare and create a production booklet used to entice potential executive producers at Spy Hop's annual Pitchnic event. Last year, Pitchnic participants received an average budget of \$6925 to make their films and involved over 350 students, actors, artists and vendors.

"Utah has a wonderful grassroots film community that is beginning to take root in a younger generation," explained Chris Paulos, Director of Film and Video, Spy Hop Productions, which oversees the Pitchnic program. "This screening is the culmination of the filmmaking process for these students. As filmmakers, this event allows them to see the fruit of their labor on the big screen."

Founded in 1999, Spy Hop Productions is a unique not-for-profit center committed to cultivating the visions and voices of an emerging generation via the big screen, the airwaves, and the world-wide-web. Dedicated to providing hands-on experience in video production, digital photography, music production, and web-based mediums, Spy Hop offers training in the technical and creative aspects of multimedia production. These experiences enhance self-confidence and foster valuable career and social skills. Spy Hop Productions promotes critical thinking and medial literacy, helping youth to critically evaluate the barrage that defines our information age. Such experience provides youth with an enhanced awareness of media so that they are empowered rather than manipulated. Spy Hop has been successful in founding and producing the LocoMotion International Film Festival in conjunction with the Kennedy Center of Imagination Celebration, producing Loud and Clear, Utah's only youth radio show on KRCL, filming the Dalai Lama's historic visit to Salt Lake City, and hosting a youth multimedia exhibition during the 2002 Winter Olympics.

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