



Nevada Film Office

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PRESS RELEASE

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NFO Winning Screenwriters Receive Cash Awards from Brenden Theatres through Women in Film

LAS VEGAS, Nv. B Winning scriptwriters who competed in the most recent Nevada Film Office annual screenplay competition received additional awards this month in the form of cash prizes from Johnny Brenden and the Brenden Theatres presented through the Las Vegas chapter of the international Women in Film organization.

The Brenden Theatres first place award of \$1250 went to Jennifer Lewey of Buffalo Grove, Illinois, for her romantic “dramedy” *Before Midnight*, which takes place in Las Vegas between Christmas and New Year's Eve, when a charming rogue who plans to break the house meets a hapless casino hostess for high rollers trying to overcome her anxiety and professional woes.

Second Place received \$750 and was awarded to *Uninvited T.R.O.U.B.L.E.*, a comedy that shows what happens when a bride decides at the last minute to invite her wedding guest stand-by list. The "out-of-touch" friends realize they're just a second-string afterthought and concoct a plan to sabotage the bride's Las Vegas bachelorette party, which ultimately spills over into wedding day trouble. This award also went to Jennifer Lewey, who has the unique distinction of being the only writer in the NFO's 18-year-history of this competition to have won two of the top three screenplay honors.

“Although it has never happened before, it has always been possible that a skilled writer could take more than one prize, as every script is judged ‘blind,’” said Charles Geocarís, Director of the Nevada Film Office. “Scripts have all identification other than title removed before being sent on to judges. Multiple scripts received from one writer are separated and sent to different judges, so that the writer benefits from varied critiques and judging evaluation.”

The Brenden Theatres award for Third Place in the amount of \$500.00, was given jointly to Clinton and Jim Braly, brothers from Salt Lake City, Utah, for their family drama *Zero Handicap*, about an adopted teenager. He leaves home after a firearms accident severely cripples him for life. Sixty years after the shooting, after years of struggle and self-discovery, he reconnects with the family he abandoned, and helps a twelve-year-old great-nephew survive a similar crippling injury and overcome its accompanying demons.

Several Hollywood production companies have already requested copies of these winning scripts from the Nevada Film Office for review and consideration. The NFO provides those copies at their expense to an average of a dozen or more such companies throughout the year as one of the prizes for the top three winning scripts. “Access to real producers and production companies is the best prize of all,” says Geocarís, “as writers struggle for recognition and reading of their scripts throughout their careers.”

The 2005 NFO screenplay competition awards from Johnny Brenden are his first involvement with the Nevada Film Office's annual contest, although he has consistently shown support for filming in Nevada. Brenden was a sponsor of the Association of Film Commissioners International “Cineposium” event held in Las Vegas in 2004. That was the first Cineposium held in Nevada in the organization's 25 year history, and included hundreds of film commissioners from around the world.

"I believe it is very important to contribute to the community and to society in general," says Brenden. "My grandfather, Ted Mann, had a philanthropic spirit, creating the Ted Mann Foundation which contributed to a variety of charities. I support as many groups as I can." Through the efforts of his family's foundation and his company, the Brenden Theatre Corporation, Johnny Brenden has supported numerous charitable organizations primarily in the communities where his theatres are located in Northern California and Southern Nevada. Brenden is also a strong supporter of independent film making as well as the arts and annually hosts the CineVegas Film Festival in Las Vegas, and has provided in-kind support for many aspiring filmmakers.

The NFO Screenplay Competition is the oldest state-sponsored event of its kind in the United States, and is open to unsold and unoptioned screenwriters from around the world. Entries have been received from Germany, Japan, the Philippines, Canada, Spain and many other countries, as well as from most states nationwide. Interested producers and production companies may contact the NFO for copies of the top 3 scripts without cost or obligation, by calling toll-free: 1-877-638-3456..

For additional information, copies of materials, questions or comments, please contact Jeanne Corcoran, at the Nevada Film Office at (702) 486-2711.

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