

Filmmakers in the Making; Education: Members of San Fernando High's digital moviema present their works to judges at I-Can Film Festival tonight.

[Valley Edition]

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SEE CORRECTION APPENDED

Rookie actor Ernesto Hernandez realized he was working in a near vacuum during the filming of "Price of Glory," which feature School senior opposite Jimmy Smits.

Though the film was about a Mexican American boxer trying to extend his glory vicariously through his three Mexican American Carlos Avila were the only Mexican Americans on the set. Not a single gaffer, camera operator or actor represented the ethnic Ernesto said.

So he approached San Fernando High's technology coach Marco Torres, and the two of them developed an after-school digital present its works at 6 tonight at the high school during the I-Can Film Festival. The Educational Technology team has producec minutes in length on topics ranging from documentaries on their families immigrating to the United States to a comedy on doing tells you to do.

The team has done more than put brown faces in front of and behind the camera. One of its first projects included making vider perform computer-related tasks, such as scanning a photo into a digital image. The how-to video is featured on Apple Compute company's line of digital- video products.

In the eight months since the students started producing their own films, a number of compelling visual storytellers has emerge students, Torres said.

"We had 10th-graders talking to grandparents and great uncles about their families' journeys from Mexico, Central America or t Fernando," Torres said. "For teenagers, this kind of dialogue doesn't usually happen."

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A film produced by senior Cesar Larios to accompany an essay for his government class depicts violence shown on network te and out in the foreground. "Children spend more time watching TV than talking to their parents," the text reads.

Cesar became known in the tech center as something of a philosopher after he was interviewed for an Apple commercial. Aske medium over presenting an oral report, Cesar said, "I don't feel my mouth does my brain justice."

Student filmmaker Humberto Cuentas said students who normally attend school only because they have to found themselves c on Saturdays to watch the filmmakers at work on rainbow-colored iMacs in the tech center, dubbed the Million-Dollar Room.

"Sometimes they're here as late as 9:30 at night," Humberto, a senior, said. "We just get them hyped with the tech vibe, so they It's just like what I do to hype a party, except it's school."

On Wednesday, Humberto previewed a portion of his film, "Different Art Forms," in a common area at the high school. He starte combining beats on two turntables. With a little help from Torres, he replaced the wheels of steel with two laptop computers and

"This is the kind of stuff that's going to put San Fernando High on the map," said Humberto, who will work as an intern this sum

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Torres agreed the program is as much about getting students excited about school as it is about learning to use the latest techn

"Only 10 years ago, I was in high school," Torres said. "I know students don't just want to sit back and receive learning. They w

ways to incorporate social studies, math and history into one multimedia--how can we jazz it up?"

Those methods are working for technology team member and senior Sandra Leal.

"When Mr. Torres said, 'You guys are going to start editing videos,' I said, 'Oh my gosh, I can't do this,' " said Sandra, one of the film, "Alvin's Movie."

A staffer from Quentin Tarantino's Rolling Thunder production company and a Miramax executive will be among the judges at the event. Martinez, a spokeswoman for Miramax.

"It's so amazing to see Marco Torres do this work with the students at a school where just a while ago, there was no computer lab." "This was born out of a real need for more technology at the school and more people from that area needed in the film business."

Credit: TIMES STAFF WRITER

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