

Filmmaker James Myers wins award for Druid-themed film

Heather Greene — November 5, 2017 — 6 Comments

SAN FRANCISCO — Filmmaker James Myers was presented with the “Excellence Narrative Film Award” at this year’s [San Francisco International New Concept Film Festival](#) for his film *Awen*. The film is described as an inspirational short that “follows the Celtic goddess Brigit as she spreads inspiration to others.”



Myers, who is a Druid and member of [Ár nDraíocht Féin: A Druid Fellowship \(ADF\)](#), began his film career after spending four years in the Navy. He attended the the University of Southern Mississippi, where he majored in film and minored in theater. When he graduated, Myers went to work in the television industry.

“I’ve worked for major networks like CNN, Good Morning America, ESPN, the Outdoor Channel, and Al Jazeera. I have also spent a great deal of time in local news markets as a photojournalist,” Myers told *The Wild Hunt* in an interview.

Myers spent 20 years working in that industry. He eventually opened his own full-service production company, [Buccaneer Pictures](#), through which he works mostly on projects for corporate clients and municipalities, including various cities in California.

However, Myers says that his heart is in storytelling. “I try to do as much narrative work as I can.”

Each year, he participates in the [48 Hour Film Project](#), and some of those productions can be viewed on the [Buccaneer website](#).

“They are a lot of fun. They are challenging and keep your skills sharp and pushes you to stretch and reach past what you thought you were able to do. Its an amazing journey,” Myers says.

His newest film, *Awen*, which runs about 10 minutes, was produced outside of that particular challenge. “I originally started working on writing *Awen* with my son Caleb in January of 2016,” he explains.

“Our inspiration for *Awen* was based on the concept of *Awen* itself. The breath of inspiration. We desired to inspire our audience and to give hope to those who are frustrated and need the winds of *Awen* to rain down upon them.”

Myers has been a practicing Druid for over 10 years, and is an active member of ADF. He says, “It is where I feel most attuned to the universe, the cosmos and at home.”

Those beliefs and his worldview come across vibrantly in the award-winning short film. In his own words: “I want to inspire others. I want to bring home a reconnecting of our ancient paths back to humanity.”

Myers goes on to say: “We tend to lose our way as humans and I want to help illuminate the path back ‘home’ to humanity.”



From J. Myer's "Awen."

Awen follows the goddess Brigit as she walks through modern life, inspiring humans to find their strength and their passion, and to live up to their potential. While doing that, she also encounters other gods, which presents the narrative with a brief but poignant opportunity to touch on the role of religion in the modern day.

“There are a few jabs at Christianity, in good fun of course, because it is where I began, and have since moved away from,” Myers says.

“I am not seeking to insult Christians at all, but merely to playfully poke them and maybe let them also see a glimpse of some universal truths. Everyone needs hope and inspiration.”

The idea of various gods from the world’s diverse religions walking among humans and interacting with each other is a concept that was explored in Neil Gaiman’s popular book *American Gods*, which was the basis for the recent television series of the same name.

When asked if he had known about Gaiman’s work prior to making *Awen*, Myers said he had not. “I have not read the book, but i did watch the TV series and I very much enjoyed it.”

“I find it fascinating that these concepts are coming fourth in various places. I think its an awakening of sorts. Its a very positive message. We need a shift like that in the world today.”

Awen was entered into the San Francisco International New Concept Film Festival in the narrative film category, along with ten other films. “The mission of the festival [is] to inspire and encourage new filmmakers to stretch and be bold. I found it very in line with what *Awen* is all about,” says Myers.

He was awarded the “Excellent Narrative Film Award” at the San Francisco Herbst Theater Oct. 29.



J. Myers on the set of “*Awen*” [courtesy].

When asked about general feedback, he said that his fellow filmmakers praised the film for being “balanced” and for having a “strong message without being preachy.”

As for negative feedback, Myers says that it has only come from his father. “He is a very stout Christian,” Myers explains.

“He didn’t like that his god can and does make mistakes. As Brigit says in the film, ‘No one is perfect, neither human nor god. We all must strive for excellence and perfection the best that we can.’ ”

Myers adds, “That line, ‘Strive for excellence,’ is specifically worded to reflect my Druidic background. One of our trademark phrases is, ‘Why not excellence?’ We strive for excellence in everything we do, and so I wanted that line in the film to reinforce that concept.”

That Druidic feel and overall spiritual message is further enhanced by a song that appears at the end of the film. The song, titled “*Awen Reins Down*,” was written in 2009 by ADF bard/Laureate Melissa (Burchfield) Ashton, who happens to be a close friend of Myers.

He recalls, “I didn’t hear [the song] until I was talking to her about possible music for the film. She let me hear it and I knew right away that this was the spirit of the message we were trying to convey.”

Myers adds that copies of Ashton’s song may be available soon as a single through ADF. “I highly encourage everyone to get a copy of her song. I had it playing through the entire editing process of the film, and it helped to keep the inspiration flowing.”

This recent festival accolades were not the first time that Myers has won an award for his film work. He earned a first place screenwriters award at a Louisiana film festival for his short *Neptune’s Daughter: the Mermaid of Avalon*.