



Staff photo by E.J. Harris

Local filmmakers Gabriel Campbell, left, Nick Jennings, Kenny Steward and Anthony Williams won "Best Domestic Short Film" in March at the first James Bond III Film Festival Web & New Media Edition in Springfield, Kentucky, for their short film "The Interrogation."

# Pendleton filmmakers get first amateur award

By PHIL WRIGHT  
*East Oregonian*

Amateur filmmakers from Pendleton have their first award winning short movie, and they have cameras rolling this weekend on the next project.

Nicholas Jennings, Anthony Williams, Gabriel Campbell, Kenny Steward and Dave Hippe's "The Interrogation" in March came away with the title for "Best Domestic Short Film" at the first James Bond III Film Festival Web & New Media Edition. The movie, including credits and an out-take at the end, runs 2 minutes, 21 seconds, relies on sparse dialogue, close-ups of tough guy mugs and a fun twist.

Jennings, 22, graduated in 2018 from the University of Oregon with a bachelor's degree in film studies. His uncle is Christopher Jennings, founder of the Eastern Oregon Film Festival, La Grande. Williams and Campbell are school bus drivers. Campbell also recently discharged from the Oregon National Guard, while Steward and Hippe in recent weeks have been at National Guard training. They all are from Pendleton and dig movies.

Jennings said he came home after college to late-season Pendleton Farmers Markets and ran into Steward, his high school friend.

Steward, Campbell, Hippe and Williams have their own YouTube channel, YourMove Studios, and had their eye on making a short movie. Jennings, too, has a YouTube channel under Spirit Man Studios, where he reviews movies and shows and comments on film issues. Steward asked Jennings if he wanted to team up.

"At the time I had no other projects going on and I didn't have a job," Jennings said, so he was in.

Williams, 31, heads up YourMove. He described himself as an actor but not a talented person. Rather, he said, he knows talented people and enjoys getting them onboard. He said YourMove's focus is on family-friendly entertainment.

"Basically, my philosophy is," he said, "if I'm not going to let my kids watch it, we're not going to film it." He also said YourMove's mission is to "cultivate a creative community." Jennings said his aim is to bring about individual and independent story ideas. Williams said that's probably why the two studios work well together.

But an early effort didn't pan out. Jennings, Williams and the rest created a 3.5-hourlong podcast discussing the 2018 blockbuster "Avengers" Infinity War." Campbell said he forgot one thing — to turn on the sound.

Still, the partnership led to "The Interrogation." Williams came up with the idea, he, Jennings and Steward wrote the script, and Jennings directed. They shot the

movie in little more than a day in late December in a cramped basement room in the Faith Center on the north end of Pendleton's Main Street. Williams is the custodian there.

"That's why all I had to do was wait and ask," he said. The location was key. Williams said they wanted to capture the look of a police scene with a single light build hanging overhead.

"Like a classic noir thing," Jennings added. Williams plays the heavy, Campbell and Hippe are the henchmen and Steward the poor slob at the heart of the interrogation, which involved throwing water in his face on that chilly winter day.

"We did about five takes on that right there," Williams said. "Just splashing him in the face."

Jennings said the production cost all of \$35 — most of that for food. He edited the movie with free online software and added free online music. They entered "The Interrogation" into a YouTube channel's film contest.

"And we lost," Williams said.

Jennings took another crack at editing the movie and entered it into the James Bond III contest. Soon after, he received an email letting him know the festival accepted the short.

James Bond III has nothing to do with the fictional super spy. He's an actor and independent producer who in 2018 started his festival series in Springfield, Kentucky, to give recognition to independent films. Jennings said his grandfather covered the tab to send him to the festival. He was there in person when "The Interrogation" won.

That felt great, Jennings said, but attending the fest came with other boons. He said he met longtime industry insiders as well as up-and-comers. He said he met James Bond III, who shook his hand and gushed over Jennings making the trip from Oregon.

"It was fun," he said. "It was accepting." The achievement is fueling the crew to continue. Campbell said they invested in better equipment, so the video they are working on now "will be significantly better" than their winning entry. As long as they finish it in time.

They started shooting Thursday for the Eugene Film Society's 72-Hour Music Video Competition. Like it says, participants have three days to produce a music video from start to finish.

Williams, Jennings and Campbell were confident they would. Even if their song they chose runs more than twice as long as they first movie.

You can catch "The Interrogation" here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVzwhRYVaos>



INSET "The Interrogation" from a group of Pendleton amateur filmmakers won "Best Domestic Short Film" in March at the first James Bond III Film Festival Web & New Media Edition in Springfield, Kentucky.

TOP Kenny Steward, of Pendleton, endures a cold splash of water in the award-winning short film "The Interrogation."

BOTTOM Nick Jennings, of Pendleton, shows the award he brought home in March for the short film "The Interrogation," which he helped make with local friends.

Contributed photos

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Anthony Williams