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Cannes Film Festival Features Bloomfield Native's Short Film

The week Jenna Leung graduated from Montclair State University she didn't just have her cap, gown and diploma on her mind.

She also had the Cannes film festival to think about.

The Bloomfield native's senior thesis, a 10-minute film titled *Folded Hope*, debuted at the 66th celebration of the prestigious film festival in May in its Short Film Corner.

Folded Hope, tells the story of a terminally ill girl and her mother who struggle with her illness by folding 1,000 paper cranes, in accordance with a legend that holds that a person who folds that number of origami birds will be granted a wish.

The story was drawn in part from Hiroshima bombing victim Sadako Sasaki who died from Leukemia after folding 644 cranes. The girl in *Folded Hope* suffers from Huntington disease, but Leung hopes that the story of hope can be universal.

"I wanted to show that children are resilient and believe in magic," Leung said.

Ten-year-old Chloe Elaine Scharf, a native of Jefferson, N.J., stars and effectively conveys the journey undertaken by the character.

"I'm really interested in art therapy," Leung said. "I believe that art making can help a person. I really wanted to tell a story of a tangible hope can be created through art. With origami, you can feel and touch and see and it become something."

Filmmaking professors Tony Pemberton and Roberta Friedman oversaw Leung's senior thesis class and advised her through its production. Professors Susan Skoog and Karl Nussbaum also helped Leung with the film. She raised money through a Kickstarter campaign to supplement her own investment in the film. She credited her classmate and director of photography, Steven Mastorelli, with making the film aesthetically beautiful.

Also, she credited Bloomfield High School English teachers Mr. and Mrs. Iansito for their guidance and support.

Both Leung and Mastorelli received 2013 BFA Filmmaking Awards from Montclair's College of the Arts' School of Communication and Media prior to graduation.

While Leung has no firm plans for the future, but said she would love to pursue jobs in sound design in film as well as working with nonprofits that advocate for people with auto-immune diseases.

"I love playing with sounds and designing the way it would fit into movies," she said.

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