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New York awards the Gallarate-made video, “Non-conformist”

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Even they couldn't believe it! Such an important and prestigious prize, for class work, done during the cinema workshop, it just wasn't expected. And yet, the good news came last week, and now, in Viale dei Tigli, in Gallarate, the race against bureaucracy, to send Giulia Peruzzotti and her teacher Chiara Brivio to New York, has begun.

On Friday, 18 December, in New York, the student and her teacher will be called to the stage of the “Plural + Video Festival” to collect 2 awards, the Plural + SIMN Award and the Plural + Paley Center Media Education Award, which the jury gave to their short film “La diversità colora il mondo,” which was made last February, by about thirty students in the Gallarate high schools that take part in the workshop coordinated by Ms. Brivio and given by teacher and film director Alessandro Leone.

“That short film, which was presented last April,” the head teacher of the high schools, Luisella Macchi explained, “had already received some local awards. In my opinion, this was already an important result. It was the students themselves that decided to try their hand in New York, and I can't tell you what a surprise it was. Of course, the film is very well done and contains a very deep message. But who would have expected such an important international acknowledgement ...”

The basic idea came from Giulia Colella, who coordinate the work, which was done with great care by the whole group, who wrote the screenplay, filmed the scenes, and carried out the editing and post production work.

The three-minute short film shows the faces of men and women covered with masks and forced to move like automatons, slowly and uniformly, like prisoners of conformism, of fear and prejudices. They are anonymous faces, expressionless. Until one boy finds the courage, amid so much colourlessness, to remove his mask and say “I am different.” And little by little the masks fall away and life takes up its course again, after a long winter of imagination and heart.

Those who took part in the competition in New York were young people aged between nine and twenty-five, from 39 countries, with a total of 152 projects.

The “Plural + Video Festival” is a contest that selects works that deal with social themes, like intercultural dialogue, the enhancement of diversity, and respect for civil rights, and then shows them in different countries as part of an international education scheme.

The prizes will be awarded on Friday, 18 December, in New York's Paley Center For Media.

After the awards in New York, this short film will be screened, in 2010, in different countries around the world, from Brazil to India, and broadcast by many national

television networks.

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