

Young Filmmakers present their calling cards

By GEOFF HANSON
Times-Journal Correspondent

The Telluride Film Festival launched its Filmmakers of Tomorrow Program in 1993 with a group of shorts by young filmmakers.

The festival expanded the program last year to include two kinds of films: student films and films made outside of film schools that the festival tagged resume films.

"I never thought that so many people at Telluride would be interested in student films or short films," said festival Co-Director Bill Pence. "But in the last two years, every single showing has been full.

"People want to see what the next generation of filmmakers are doing now, and we're very happy with the strength of the films in the program."

Out of the close to 800 films submitted for consideration for this year's festival, Pence said, 650 were submitted by people unfamiliar to the Pences.

"We have picked out the very best, the very cream of the crop and those 12 filmmakers that comprise the Filmmakers of Tomorrow Program are going to be very important people in the American film industry in a few years," Pence said.

Indeed, every young filmmaker that the *Times-Journal* interviewed is shopping his or her own feature-length scripts around in hopes of making the leap into feature films.



Tony Bui's film *Yellow Lotus* follows a Vietnamese fisherman from his peasant village to Saigon.

• Kurt Kuenne's *Remembrances* is about a flood of memories that a father experiences after the family pet dies.

"The film is basically about the lack of communication between people you love," Kuenne said. "The story really moved me, and I knew it would translate well onto film."

Like many of the young filmmakers premiering their works, Kurt Kuenne's love affair with the movies started at a young age.

The San Jose, Calif., native wrote his first script when he was 7 and began making short videos at

about the same time. By high school, Kuenne was winning awards for his short videos.

He was accepted into the University of Southern California's School of Cinema, where he studied and received a bachelor of arts degree.

Kuenne made *Remembrances* while he was still a student at U.S.C., but because of politics, decided to make the film outside the school.

"Each semester, U.S.C. makes two films and two videos," said Kuenne, 21. "Of all the scripts at U.S.C., they selected mine to be made into a video, which is an honor.

"But I had already made so many videos, I wanted to make a film. So I turned them down, which is pretty rare, and I made the film on my own."