


September 2009

[Alumni Matters Home](#)  
[Update your information](#)  
[Alumni Perks](#)  
[Alumni Web site](#)  
[Search Alumni Matters](#)

## Grad Q&A: fresh faced, Festival-worthy

### Grad Q&A

 [SHARE](#)

 (No Ratings Yet)

*Just two years after graduating, film grad Dusty Mancinelli (BFA '07) has made it into the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). How did he do it?*

Before leaving York, Dusty already had two short films, *Death to Charlie!* and *P.U.R.E.*, screen at festivals. But the acceptance of his latest short, *SOAP*, into this year's TIFF is something many experienced filmmakers only dream of.

#### **Q: How did you go from York to being a writer/director?**

A: I wanted to be a filmmaker ever since I was a kid. I would steal my dad's VHS camcorder and would make my own little films, editing them using two VCR players. In high school there weren't any courses on filmmaking so I ended up writing and directing plays. This gave me a good foundation. A student senior to me recommended that I apply to York for film and said it was a great program. I applied and thankfully I got in. Four grueling years later I graduated and got a job with a Canadian production company. In my second year at York, a friend and I started our own production company with the goal of making one short film a year. *SOAP* is my first film outside of York.

#### **Q: What was your big break?**

A: I'm still waiting for it! I guess my biggest break so far was getting an internship with Canadian director, Deepa Mehta. I've been working with her ever since. I spent eight weeks in India last year working on her latest film.



On set with writer/director Dusty Mancinelli (BFA '07). Photo credit: Andrew Khalil

#### **Q: Who are your inspirations?**

A: A lot of people inspire me. At York, I found three professors to be very encouraging. They had completely different approaches, but all three pushed me to achieve more. They were Philip Hoffman, Laurence Green and Teresa Barta. During my third year, Teresa threw my script across her office and said it was garbage. The truth is, it was garbage and she helped me realize that. I always admired her for her unflinching honesty. Other filmmakers who inspire

me are PT Anderson, Wes Anderson, Jane Campion, the Coen Brothers and Quentin Tarantino, to name a few.

**Q: What's your favourite memory of York?**

A: What I loved most about York's film program was the amazing sense of community. Our class sizes were often very small and we would spend countless hours cutting our films in 7 ft by 7 ft cylinder block rooms without any natural light. We had intense deadlines and would often have to work around the clock just to complete the assignments.

**Q: What is the process for getting a film into TIFF?**

A: The application process is very simple. You fill out a form and mail in a DVD of your film. The real work comes when your film is selected. You need to have promotional materials ready, including a press kit, stills and caption sheet and broadcast clip tape.



Even as a child, Dusty Mancinelli (BFA '07) was infatuated with cameras

**Q: We hear SOAP is about a person slipping on a bar of soap. Any chance this is based on a personal experience?**

A: Fortunately, no, although I always worry about slipping in the shower. About a year ago I was with my friend Darby (who edited the film and also went to York) and we were pitching story ideas to one another. Darby pitched the one-liner: a woman's lover slips on a bar of soap and dies in her bathroom. I was really drawn to the idea, so I told him I wanted to develop it into a script. Darby still

teases me because I tend to "borrow" a lot of his ideas.

**Q: What's your favourite Toronto hangout?**

A: My favourite place for a while was The Lakeview Lunch at Dundas and Ossington. It's an all-day breakfast place that's open 24/7, which came in handy after a night out at the bar or a late night editing session.

**Q: What is your all-time favourite movie?**

A: *Back to the Future*. I love films from the 80s and it has a certain childhood nostalgia that I like to reminisce about sometimes.

**Q: A lot of filmmakers move to Los Angeles. Is it on your horizon?**

A: Not at the moment, but maybe in the future. Right now I want to focus on making films in Canada.

**Q: Would you give us a sneak-peek at your next project?**

A: Right now, my friend/producing partner, Harry Cherniak, and I are developing two scripts that we plan to make in the coming year. One tells the story of a young boy who, while walking through a forest on his way home from school, stumbles across an unconscious man with a gun and a mysterious briefcase. The other is about a man who is on the verge of dying from a broken heart.

Check out Dusty's Web site, [Inflo Films](#)

*We want to hear about grads doing wacky and wonderful things in the world.*