

AFF hands out awards to Darabont, Roth and Carter

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American-Statesman Staff

"Shawshank Redemption" director Frank Darabont accepted the Extraordinary Contribution to Filmmaking Award from the Austin Film Festival on Saturday and swore that the typewriter-like trophy wouldn't be going in his bathroom or on some shelf.

"It's going on my desk, right next to that (expletive) computer," he said. "This will remind me of the encouragement that this gives me," he told the annual awards luncheon at the Austin Club downtown.

Darabont joined screenwriter Eric Roth and television writer Chris Carter in accepting awards from the festival, which continues through Thursday.

Darabont good-naturedly pointed out that Roth, who received the Distinguished Screenwriter Award, "kicked my (rear end) at the Oscars," when both Darabont's "The Shawshank Redemption" and Roth's "Forrest Gump" went head to head in the adapted screenplay category.

Darabont's 1994 movie was nominated in seven categories but went home empty-handed at the Academy Awards ceremony in early 1995, while "Forrest Gump" won six, including one for Roth's adapted screenplay.

The soft-spoken Roth, who received the Distinguished Screenwriter Award, reminisced about growing up in New York and learning about the magic of movies, while Carter, who received the Outstanding Television Writer Award, marveled that he was given the freedom to work with many other talented writers to come up with the wild scripts for "The X-Files."

Several other awards were presented Saturday. "Informant," the story of Austin-area activist turned FBI informant Brandon Darby, won documentary feature for director Jamie Meltzer of Stanford University. Meltzer did not attend the event because his wife recently gave birth.

The narrative feature award went to Noah Buschel for "Sparrows Dance." Buschel was in the bathroom when his award was announced, but he showed up later and said he'd be willing to meet the other directors in a nearby alley if they wanted to contest his victory.

Other awards:

Young Filmmakers: Director Nicco Vasquez and writer Keith Limon for "Crumbs."

Documentary Short: Chelsea Hernandez and Erik Mauck for "See the Dirt."

Animated Short: Writer-director Timothy Reckart for "Head Over Heels."

Narrative Student Short: Christoph Kuschnig and Karl Goldball for "Hatch."

Narrative Short: Bryan Buckley for "Asad."

Sitcom Spec (for television): Abi and Phil Wurdeman for "Modern Family: Earthquake Party."

One-Hour Spec: David Radcliff for "Dexter: The Second Coming."

Sitcom Pilot: Leila Cohan-Miccio for "Katie and Becca Grow Up."

One-Hour Pilot: B.D. Flory for "Horizon."

Comedy Screenplay: Daniel Shea for "The P.A.N.D.A. War"

Drama Screenplay: Jack Davidson for "Clouds of Sorrow."

Enderby Entertainment Award: Adeline Colangelo for "The Break-Up Nurse."

Dark Hero Studios Sci-Fi Award: Michael Raymond for "The Domain."