



Movie debut to be fraught with bittersweet excitement

By Michael Eastin
valleynews.com

The feature film "Sherman's Way," created by three San Fernando Valley residents, will get its Los Angeles premiere Saturday at the Hollywood Film Festival.

In the midst of the excitement, there will be a sense of loss.

When the project was an untitled screenplay, director Craig Saavedra of Northridge and writer Tom Nance of Calabasas had been trying to come up with a suitable name for the

movie.

With filming just weeks away, Saavedra was feeling the pressure to deliver a title that accurately reflected the story of an uptight New Yorker on a road trip of self-discovery.

Sitting at a stoplight at the corner of Sherman Way and Balboa Boulevard, Saavedra got an idea and phoned Nance, a longtime friend and collaborator.

"I asked Tom what he thought of changing our lead character's name from Sheldon to Sherman," Saavedra said.

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"And he said, 'Like the street?'" It was just a matter of seconds before Nance suggested what was already on Saavedra's mind, and their film finally had a title: "Sherman's Way."

"That was the way Tom and I worked. Always in sync," Saavedra said. "Even when we were

high school kids making little films, we'd finish each other's thoughts."

The pair, along with New Yorker Michael Shulman, produced the picture. Shulman also stars as the film's title character.

"All through the process, we were looking forward to some-

day having our Hollywood premiere," Shulman said.

But Nance will not be among those in attendance.

On Sept. 5, he was struck and killed on his motorcycle in Hollywood as he was returning to the Valley from an audition.

"Tom was pursuing an acting career," Saavedra said. "He was an immensely talented writer, but his desire was to be in front of the camera."

Festivalgoers will get to see Nance on the big screen, as Saavedra had cast him in a small, but pivotal role.

"It's bittersweet that his first professional role was also his last," said cinematographer and friend Joaquin Sedillo of Northridge. "His contributions to the entire project were enormous."

"Sherman's Way" will screen at 9 p.m. Saturday at the ArcLight Cinemas in Hollywood. Tickets are available online at www.arclightcinemas.com.