

WHOLPHIN

NO.
11

DVD MAGAZINE OF RARE AND UNSEEN SHORT FILMS

NO.
11.

WERNER
HERZOG

YOUNG LOVE

MELISSA AUF DER MAUR



HOW-TO:
ACQUIRE
A RUSSIAN
MILLIONAIRE
HUSBAND

AUSTRAL SUMMER
MEANS NAKED SCIENTISTS
RUNNING IN THE SNOW

A TIME-TRAVELING
VIKING ODYSSEY

LLAMAS

PLASTIC
BAGS



INSIDE:

DOCK
ELLIS &

THE LSD NO-NO:
JAMES BLAGDEN'S
ANIMATION SENSATION

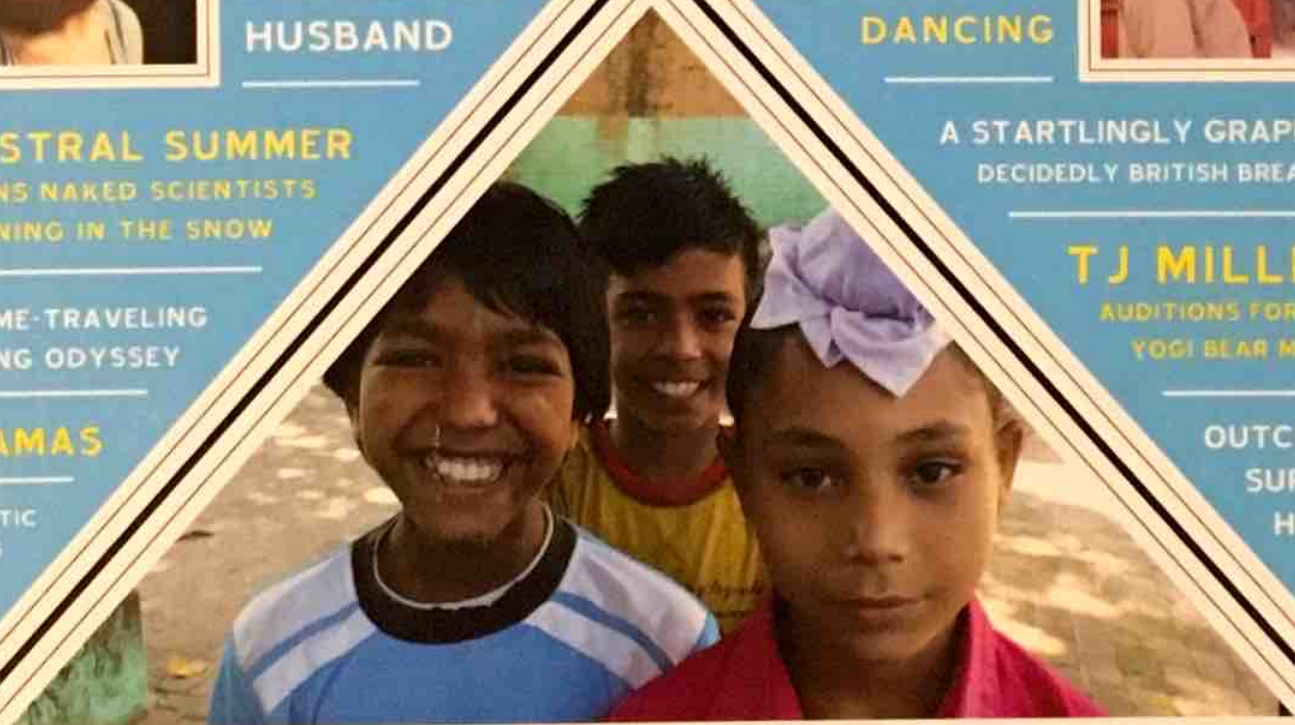
TWENTY
THOUSAND
PEOPLE OUT
IN THE ROAD,
DANCING



A STARTLINGLY GRAPHIC,
DECIDEDLY BRITISH BREAKUP

TJ MILLER
AUDITIONS FOR THE
YOGI BEAR MOVIE

OUTCAST
SUPER-
HERO





WHOLPHIN

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INTRODUCTION

Like a bunch of squawking sparrows, the lake crowd was rife with speculation. Did you hear? Sarindi and Saruni! Something had happened over the summer during their annual trip to the Kola Peninsula, something bizarre. Facts were scarce and theories all over the place. Haters smirked that Sarindi, the more sensitive of the two, had witnessed the internment of radioactive waste in Murmansk, become overwhelmed, and slipped into an unrecoverable depression. That was obviously absurd. A self-professed pragmatist coyly cited the lack of cloud cover above Mongolia. When pressed, he mused that during the long flight over, Saruni must have made the mistake of gazing down on the endless desolation of the Gobi Desert and suddenly realized that "true love" could never survive in such a lonely place and was therefore nothing more than a lie perpetuated through cheap fairy tales and Balanchine ballets to keep the gullible masses docile and trapped in unsatisfying, repetitive routines. Luckily, everyone agreed that his theory explained more about lonely pragmatists than young couples.

Cynics naturally whispered of a third party, and progressives giggled of multiple third parties. But who knows? No one knows the whole story. No one ever will. Like every couple, Sarindi and Saruni's story is ultimately theirs and theirs alone. Even if they could tell us everything, we would still know nothing. Relationships are like that. There are secrets beyond sharing. It is possible they themselves do not entirely understand the emotions underlying their sudden, improbable implosion.

Now, with new lovers in tow, Sarindi and Saruni are back at the Slimbridge Wetland Centre in Glasgow, one of only two Bewick's swan couples in recorded history to have ever separated and remated by choice. Until now, only the death of a partner was able to break the romantic bonds these birds share. Researchers remain flabbergasted by the mysterious "divorce," which is made even stranger by the fact that, inexplicably, the former pair have apparently decided it would be a good idea to spend the summer nesting with their new partners on the same lake, literally within a few feet of each other.

If it is true, as someone once said, that “the hardest thing in life is watching the one you love love someone else,” you would never know it from these swans. It is as if they have simply decided, by some mutual unspoken agreement, to pretend they’ve never met. Were it not for the careful observations of conservationists, no one would ever suspect a thing. Sarindi and Saruni float obliviously by each other, day after day, without so much as a honk of recognition, bending their necks to form cheesy Hallmark-card hearts with their new lovers, in full view of their exes and the whole world. Apparently Thoreau was right that the only cure for love is to love more. Life goes on.

Such a seemingly calm, effortless transition makes our own romantic entanglements seem insane by comparison. What would Sarindi and Saruni think if they were forced to watch the horrorshows depicted here in *Wholphin No. 11*? It is frightening to imagine how many of you will be able to relate, at least metaphorically, to the blood-soaked cutlery in Ariel Kleiman’s “Young Love,” and how many more will relive a horrible nightmare while watching the mixed-martial-arts breakup that is Jim Owen’s “Can We Talk?” It is all generally hilarious, but be forewarned, herein lies a treasure trove of human catastrophe.

Of course, it is only because we long so hard that we suffer so much, and, the films depicting this longing are heartbreaking. The young Russian women in “Bitch Academy” will make you weep for all humanity. In Ramin Bahrani’s “Plastic Bag,” the indomitable Werner Herzog embodies not just a plastic bag, but the source of all suffering.

In the end, it’s a relief to see that, halfway across the world, along the Indian Kashmir border, in Supriyo Sen’s “Wagah,” three joyful Pakistani boys can witness daily collective helplessness as thousands gather to express their passionate longing to break the political walls that separate two great countries, and come away as undaunted as swans. It is fortifying!

And, oh man, Dock Ellis must be heard!

To spring!

—Brent Hoff

CAN WE TALK?

Directed by Jim Owen

U.K., 2009

NOTES FROM THE FILMMAKER

If all my past breakup conversations were put into a giant glass vase (bear with me, here), and I held aloft that giant glass vase (and it would be giant; there have been lots), and then I dropped that vase onto a concrete floor and it smashed, then “Can We Talk?” is quite a few shards of that glass all taped together with Scotch tape to make a really shit mosaic.

Make perfect sense? That’s my best analogy. It’s all I’ve got.

“Can We Talk?” is that and it’s lots of other things as well. It’s bits of conversations other people have had in my company (which I’ve stolen), conversations people have had without knowing I was listening (which I’ve stolen), and then lots of other stuff, that, God forbid, I’ve actually bothered to make up myself.

This is absolutely no news whatsoever to any writer anywhere. I write this because people keep asking me the same question: Is the film based on reality? People say: That bloke in the film’s you, Jim. He speaks like you. The stuff he does with his face, it’s what you do.

Someone hosting a Q&A at Sundance had the cheek, the unmitigated gall, to ask me an extra question that nobody else was asked. “Ahem,” the chancer grunted. “Is this film autobiographical in any way?”

Cue a massive audience laughing straight at me. I don’t know, maybe it was laughing with me. Whatever, either way, it still haunts me in my dreams.

All right, I’ll admit it, it doesn’t haunt me in my dreams.

And much more importantly: No. It’s not. It’s made up. I made it up so I could make a film and become famous so girls would like me more. There you go. You want honesty? You’ve got it.

Two moments of inspiration combined to be the catalysts for “Can We Talk?”

The first was when Rachel (who plays Sophie in the film) told me a

really lovely, sweet story about how she once had to tell a man that his penis smelled. And not of roses.

The second was when a woman I used to work with (who was great) told the open office an outrageous story about her and her fiancé. In short, he'd rolled in drunk and absolutely, 100 percent, demanded oral sex. She told him where he could pop it. Evidently it was a riotous, tumultuous relationship. Can you see where I'm going with this? Or can you see where I've already gone and made a film with this?

"Happiness is an allegory," right, Leo? Leo? Leo? Oh, it doesn't matter. You're dead anyway. Happiness might be an allegory, but demanding oral sex is something to write about. Particularly if a character is demanding it straight after dumping someone. That's what I figured. I claim credit for that.

I wrote the first draft quickly, showed it to Rachel, she agreed to do it and told me an actor called Sam Pamphilon would be perfect to play the grim, shameless Vince. Very unfair on Sam, that, looking back on it. Let's just say Sam's turn is a great feat of skill. He's nothing like Vince. It should be said, too, that Rachel is nothing like Sophie. Apart from the fact that all her clothes are the same and they look similar.

So "Can We Talk?" was not inspired by one particular conversation I had with one particular person. It's there now, in black and white.

If there is one very small, completely inconsequential, underlying theme permeating the film that might, perhaps, mirror my life, then it's the idea that we people have been known to stubbornly stay in relationships that are no good for us, even though we know they're bound at some point to crash headlong into a giant lamppost marked CRAP BREAKUP.

And that's what Sophie's doing.

Obviously it's tempting sometimes to stay in those relationships. It sure trumps spending rainy Sundays trapped inside your flat with your housemate, watching endless reruns of *Brainiac: Science Abuse*, with that fluffy-haired moron Richard "The Hamster" Hammond, fantasizing about



what it would be like if you got to the point in your long-term relationship with Anne Hathaway that you could actually be bothered to ask her to marry you just so she'd, honestly, stop pestering you about it.

In the film, when Vince finally tips the scales of decency, Sophie decides it's time to give him what for and then get out.

Good for her. Someone buy that girl a massive glass vase.

—Jim Owen

PLASTIC BAG

Directed by Ramin Bahrani

A coproduction of Noruz Films and the Independent Television Service (ITVS), with funding provided by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting USA, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: *Where did you get the idea to tell a story from the perspective of a plastic bag?*

RAMIN BAHRANI: My friend Jenni Jenkins (coauthor of the story and also the film's sustainability consultant, who produced a documentary companion piece to the film) was telling me about

a book she was reading, *The World Without Us* by Alan Weisman, which imagines what would happen to our world if suddenly all human life vanished; how long before the planet takes over again? Jenkins, who knew I had been using reusable bags for several



years, had also told me about the Pacific Trash Vortex (a gyre of litter in the Pacific Ocean; it's estimated to be twice the size of Texas, which features in the film). Plastic was increasingly on my mind. Then, by chance, I screened *The Red Balloon* and *White Mane* again. Shortly after this, Jenkins and I came up with a basic story for a short film about a plastic bag in "a world without us."

Q: Had you ever made a film (or any work of art, for that matter) so specifically focused on a theme before? This is part of PBS's ITVS Futurestates series. Did they simply come to you and say, "The future. Go!" or was it more specific, like, "The environment in the future, with a focus on plastics, plus romance!"?

RB: ITVS contacted me several months after Jenkins and I thought about the story for "Plastic Bag." They asked if I had an idea for a short film that could take place in an imagined future America. "Plastic Bag" just naturally matched what they were seeking. During the writing of the script, I discovered the bag's voice, its ironic humor, and, most critically, its existential journey for its maker (God, spirituality, etc.). Thankfully, this allowed the film to expand beyond an environmental-agenda piece. The bag's romantic interlude (love) is another attempt in the search for purpose and meaning. The chain-link fence of bags that "preach" (society, friends, religion) and the garbage spinning endlessly in the "Vortex" (job, money, etc.) are others.

In essence, "Plastic Bag" leads up to, and was made for, the final line of the film. And then there is the coda. I wanted the film to include this final spiritual life for the bag and to leave the audience with courage. My hope is that viewers will care enough about this plastic bag to stop using it, even though the bag desperately wants to have this purpose. Thus, its immortal paradox.

Q: Did you plan on Herzog voicing the bag all along? How did you connect, and pitch him this idea?

RB: "Plastic Bag" was shot over four days in Wilmington, North Carolina, and two days in Brooklyn, New York. While driving back from shooting scenes on the Carolina coast, Michael Simmonds (the cinematographer of all my films) and I thought, who better than Werner Herzog? I have admired his cinema since I was a teenager in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The parallels between *Fitzcarraldo* and *Man Push Cart* [one of Bahrani's films] via "The Myth of Sisyphus" are obvious. Roger Ebert knew I was a big Herzog fan, so I asked Ebert if he would connect

us. Twenty-four hours later Herzog emailed me. I wrote to him the idea of the short and also sent him my previous films to screen (the cut of "Plastic Bag" wasn't ready yet). He was a real gentleman, gracious and generous with his knowledge and time. Herzog's life and films have been and remain an inspiration to me.

Q: When we see a plastic bag blowing down the street now, we imagine it with a German accent. If you were to cast an American as the bag, who would you cast?

RB: At one point I thought about casting Alejandro Polanco, the lead of *Chop Shop*, as the voice of the bag. But once we thought of Herzog, there was never anyone else in mind. His voice is perfect, and matched the ironic tone of the script. Also, the maturity of his voice added a weight to the bag's tireless search and dreaded immortality. Who else could it be? No, I just can't imagine anyone else's voice anymore. Well, Humphrey Bogart would be interesting, if he were alive. Al Gore? No... Post your ideas on the "Plastic Bag" Facebook fan page.

Q: How many plastic bags were employed by this film in total?

RB: Amazingly, we lost more bags in one hour of shooting in Brooklyn than in four days in Wilmington. You can extrapolate a lot about urban design from this fact. Of the seven bags we lost in Wilmington, three were lost getting one shot at a marsh. To make up for it, we collected a trash bag of litter from that location. To carry out this civic and moral duty in Brooklyn would have involved getting stabbed and bloodied by barbed wire and having a German Shepherd's jaw imprint on one of our legs.

Q: If you could make everyone in the world do one thing for the environment, what would it be?

RB: Die... Well, barring that, I would say to please curb/stop your use of plastic bags and bottles.

Q: How much of the script was written, and how much of it did Mr. Herzog improvise? Did he give you any other advice during the process?

RB: During picture editing, the structure of the bag's journey was clarified and expanded. Once I had a first cut of the film, I improvised the voiceover using the original script as a foundation. This was then reworked and edited. I sent Herzog the cut, hoping for suggestions. He liked the film and confessed to not knowing about the Pacific Trash Vortex. He asked if that could be clarified. I added a line where the bag describes the Vortex as a place in the Pacific Ocean "where 100 million tons of us [plastic] had gathered." A few weeks later, I arrived in LA to record Herzog's voice for the final film. There was one line I wasn't happy with, when the bag reaches the Vortex and has to describe it. Herzog suggested, "It covered the area of a small continent." I loved it, and he delivered it with perfection.

Herzog's use of music in his films has always impressed me. As I have wanted to utilize more music in my films, we spoke at length about this subject. During our voiceover session in LA, he was able to hear the first two rough tracks that Kjartan Sveinsson of Sigur Rós had composed and sent to me. He liked them very much, and suggested moving the starting point of one of the tracks by several seconds. Kjartan Sveinsson's score proved to be by turns lyrical, haunting, and ultimately defiantly resilient.

Q: *We loved Goodbye Solo, and are eagerly looking forward to your next project. Can you tell us a little bit about what it will be?*

RB: I am currently putting together a period Western set in 1849 that I wrote during 2009. It's pretty ambitious and crazy. We are casting and location-scouting now. In the meantime, I am writing two other scripts. One of them will be a comedy... I hope. Nothing harder to pull off than comedy. We can laugh if it fails.

Film provided courtesy of:



A PRIVATE CORPORATION FUNDED
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BITCH ACADEMY

Directed by Alina Rudnitskaya

Russia, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: How did you first hear about this class? Is it one of a kind, or are other schools like this springing up in Russia now? How long have they existed?

ALINA RUDNITSKAYA: In Russia it is very popular to be successful now: to have a good job, good money, good house, wife/husband, children...



If you are not successful, then you are a loser. And I have noticed that the image of a sexy, sly, strong woman who wants to influence men, manipulate them in order to get what she wants, is popularized in the mass media. Such women are called bitches. It's a kind of compliment. I got

interested and did some research on the Internet. I found out that there are lots of classes for women in Russia on sexuality, seduction, how to use their inner energy. But only the ones where the teacher was a man interested me. Those courses were called "Bitch Academy." I visited them and understood that I was lucky!

Vladimir Rakovsky is an intelligent, charismatic person and a good psychologist. He can keep an audience for twenty-four hours. He makes the show. Women are completely obsessed!

I think these classes are a phenomenon of our time. We live at the beginning of capitalism in Russia, where everything has its own price. What are you doing if you want your life to be changed? You have to change yourself first! These classes help you to change and find goals.

Q: How much do these classes cost?

AR: These classes consist of five levels. One level costs two hundred dollars. One level is two days' training. This is quite a high price for Russian

women! So only women who are desperate to change their lives attend these classes.

Q: This particular class was held in Saint Petersburg. Do you think that it is city-specific, or do you think this is taking place in rural areas as well?

AR: Vladimir Rakovsky travels with these classes around big cities in Russia and has many visitors! We shot in several cities—Kiev, Moscow, and Saint Petersburg. But the short documentary format made us to choose one city: Saint Petersburg. I had more time there and it helped me during shooting, because I had known these girls before shooting. The girls were relaxed, and accustomed to the camera.

I think such kinds of classes are specific for the cities. If there are any women in the villages who wanted to be successful bitches, they have already moved to the cities.

Q: We were shocked and infuriated by much of the instruction that was being given in these classes, and found ourselves shouting out loud at the TV. What was it like for you to be there in the classroom documenting this? Were you compelled at any point to speak out and challenge the advice that the teacher was giving these women?

AR: The first time I came to see those classes, I was laughing, I felt pity for those women. I thought that they are used. But then I understood the inner reasons that made those women attend this training. In the Soviet time, everybody lived equal and stable lives. The society was very conservative and sexuality was repressed. And now there are absolutely different values. Now it's very important who you are, how you look, how much you earn, who is your partner. We have a proverb: "If you are so clever, why are you so poor?" Women want to be modern, successful, and selfish because they have only one life! But it's very difficult for women to refuse stereotypes, and they continue to live according to some program given from the previous generation, from their parents. These classes help them relax and make themselves more attractive. I keep a distance when I shoot.

I just tried to shoot film and not to be involved in the training, because some of the moments touched me emotionally.

Q: *What advice would you have given them?*

AR: I don't know what advice I should give these girls. They taught me a lot of things: to be brave—don't be afraid to be silly and ridiculous—and to take a risk. I am living according to this rule: "Don't worry that your life is ending, worry that it never began."

Q: *Despite the 1977 Soviet Constitution declaring equal rights for men and women, there is still a huge gender divide, particularly with employment. Any ideas on how to fix it?*

AR: Yes, we still have a huge gender divide. But to tell the truth, many women never think about equal rights. Our country is very patriarchal, and according to our culture and psychology, it's normal that women are housekeepers and men earn money. People want to live stable lives. And they don't have energy to care about equal rights or human rights because all people work hard.

Women, despite the Constitution, do not fight for equal rights. Only the method of influence on the men by special women's instruments works here. These classes are needed to teach women how to get everything you want by some women's tricks. It is a kind of Russian feminism.

Q: *Do you know if the male teacher of this class is married? We wonder what his wife would think.*

AR: He was married five times. And now his wife is twice younger than him! They have a happy marriage. They both have common business—she trains strip dancing and sometimes she assists him on the classes.

Q: *What do you think about these classes in relation to agency-arranged marriages (or mail-order brides)? Do you know any women who have participated in either?*

AR: The thing is that life in the cities is so fast and prompt, and people

have few chances to meet partners and have families. So many people, nevermind men or women, use any possibility to know new people and make a couple—marriage agencies, social networks, the Internet, and so on. Many of my friends get marriage by Internet and are happy for several years.

Usually women older than forty-five or fifty apply to marriage agencies or to be mail-order brides. They don't care about men's quality.

Women from these classes know that the chance to find a good partner with the help of these agencies is very low. Men presented by these agency-arranged marriages are losers mostly. Face-to-face dates are still the most popular among young women.

Q: Growing up as a young girl in Russia, what kind of job did you think you would have as an adult? How did the education system encourage you versus the boys in your class?

AR: I studied in a special school with deep studying of English language. We had very strict rules—we could not wear short skirts, jewelry, or makeup, and of course we had to behave ourselves in a proper way. We were encouraged to continue our education and enter university after the school. Only with high education could we get a better level of life. And it was so for girls and boys. Everybody dreamed to be scientists, spacemen, doctors, teachers, and architects. Me, too.

I remember when I was a child, I bought notebooks and marked them with red pencil and pretended to be a teacher. When I was a teenager, I dreamed of being a traveler and flying the whole world in a balloon.

But by that time the computer era had started, and my father was very realistic and told me that I have to be a programming engineer, because I was good with math and it will be good for my future.

Q: You ended up studying at the Academy of Aerospace Engineering, and then, the University of Culture and Arts in Saint Petersburg. Can you tell us a little bit about your experience at both schools, and why you decided to switch from engineering to the arts?

AR: I entered the Academy of Aerospace Engineering, but I felt soon that it's not for me. I suffered three, five years. My close friend studied at the philological department, and I envied her. I left the world of figures for the world of books. My father was absolutely disappointed. He thought that it was very light-minded, and that I had broken my future. But I was so happy when I could just watch masterpieces of movies all day long. I was a traveler in movieland!

I met many fascinating people there, who interested me and helped me to find my future specialization. Thanks to those people, I choose the cinematographic department.

But of course, studying in the Academy of Aerospace Engineering helped me in my future work. Now I can make structures and formulas in shooting films, not only imagine them.

Q: *What projects are you working on now?*

AR: I have a lot of new projects now. I continue to make "Bitch Academy." I am interested in what has happened to those women during the last three years. I am working on a new film, "True Blood," about donors in Russia. And now I am finishing a short documentary, also about women, with the Saint Petersburg Documentary Film Studio.

OUT OF OUR MINDS

Directed by Tony Stone

Produced/concept by Melissa Auf der Maur

USA, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKERS

Q: *Not to start the interview with a controversial statement, but I think Vikings are cooler than vampires. What do you think?*

MELISSA AUF DER MAUR: Yes! Although I do love blood, and in "Out of Our Minds," blood is the connector between the three time periods and

the heart of the universe. But ancient expeditions to new worlds and high-end storytelling are far more appetizing to me than needing to kill for a glass of blood. Who needs to live forever?! Not Vikings; they make the most of one action-packed, adventurous short life!

TONY STONE: Yeah, and the afterlife is full of fun. Valhalla is pretty fucking cool. A place where all you do is fight, fuck, and party. And you only get there by being fearless and dying in battle or exploration. No pussies allowed. And they worshipped the right things—the earth, the stars, the weather—and looked to them for answers. Trusting the natural world allowed them to take great risks and “discover” America.

Q: This film is actually part of an even larger project that includes a concept album, a graphic novel, and web components as well. Can you tell us a little bit about the impetus for all that, and the choice to unfold it through a variety of multimedia facets?

MADM: Creative survivalism—when this project began, I was still signed to a standard record deal with Capitol Records, but overnight the whole company was fired and a massive amount of recording contracts were dropped. The dismantling of the music industry was the best thing that’s happened to me as an artist. It was the practical catalyst in my commitment to making a multimedia project. The creative reasoning behind “Out of Our Minds” was the desire to merge my musical, conceptual, and visual-art roots into one project. The twenty-first century has arrived, and not only am I planning on surviving the shifts in the landscape, but I plan to shift with it and challenge myself. This is a fantastic time to be making art and exploring all the technology and modes that you can. They are morphing into one, and humans are starting to digest them as one! It’s exciting.

To answer the question on a simple level: “Out of Our Minds” started as a song. The ease and clarity in which it was written made it clear that it was the heart of the album. We are antennas, and sometimes the signal is muddled and you need to labor away at it, carve it. “Out of Our Minds,”

the song, came in one fell swoop and told me what to do: make the film version, the comic version, the art version, the live version! So I found amazing collaborators, and I continue to explore the theme.

Q: The film takes place over three different time periods and uses the space to connect three different groups of people. Was this born out of a personal experience in any way? Do you feel connected to history through place? Anywhere in particular?

MADM: I feel a strong connection to certain time periods as though they were spaces, possibly times (spaces) I've lived in before in other lives.



When Tony and I met, we connected on a fixation on Vikings, for example. In terms of space—in the case of “Out of Our Minds,” it’s the woods, that’s the place that unifies all times; there’s always been woods and those woods have seen a lot. Tony grew up spending his summers in those exact woods

playing make-believe, so clearly it’s drawing from his personal experience there. The woods as the backdrop of the film also represents unchanging and unifying mother nature. Like all characters and objects in the film, we are using the language of archetypes and symbols to tell a story that even a child could understand—or *especially* a child could understand, I should say. Grownups tend to ask too many questions, which “Out of Our Minds” will not answer.

TS: I do feel connected to places that were rooted in nature. The Vikings with their exploration and carpenter skill sets, as well as farming, and the similarities to the Native Americans, fellow pagans, living off the land and worshipping the land. I’m pretty close to committing to living like that, either in a sod house or tepee. That doesn’t mean I’d like to literally exist back in that time, because I would be dead a few times over by now. It was definitely not an easy time to live in. But you’ve got to go to the middle of nowhere, get clarity, and get insane. I find it essential to find times to escape our enslaved existence to technology.

Q: *What are you most haunted by?*

MADM: Since the day I acknowledged the ominous ghost giving me the finger at the end of my bed, I've not been haunted. I have learned that as long as you don't deny the other side, it doesn't need to remind you it's there. It leaves you alone. The only monkey on my back these days is my secretarial, managerial stress, and the responsibilities of running my own film and music production and distribution company. That's not a romantic haunt, that's a yawn.

TS: Well, these days it's when I go into a tiny shithole gas station bathroom with no windows: I get the shudders imagining being locked in there for eternity. That'd be way worse than death.

Q: *If you could come back to life as something or someone else, what would it be?*

MADM: A cat! I've been too many humans already.

TS: Yeah, I'm with Melissa. Probably a lynx, far away from civilization in northern Canada.

Q: *How did the two of you come to work together?*

MADM: I saw a rough cut of "Severed Ways" three years ago, and halfway through the film, I thought: He's out of his mind, and he's the only filmmaker who could execute my abstract time-travel art-rock film. We began planning right away. Tony loves music. It has been interesting to collaborate so equally and thoroughly with a filmmaker, the way I would with a musician in a studio. I highly recommend it.

Q: *What was the hardest part of making this film?*

MADM: Time, cold, and swamps.

TS: The mayflies of Vermont when we returned to shoot the opening during the spring. It's usually a pretty idyllic way to make a movie, except when bugs are flying into your eyes. They got in a couple shots, but they're in focus so they look like small pterodactyls flying around the

sky. The cold and swamps I actually like. I find it a ton of fun trudging around in swamps in October. You're hanging outdoors in peak foliage, isolated from the drone of Man. There's no better place or time to be making a movie.

Q: *What's something you wish more people knew about Vikings?*

MADM: Those beastly men worshipped goddesses.

TS: I think if anyone wants to know how to survive on a post-apocalyptic planet, they should look at the Vikings methods, from primitive blacksmithing to sod houses to boat construction. It's basic and simple, but highly functional. I think their systems are the ultimate guide for any future primitive back-to-the-lander.

Q: *What are you each working on now? Are you planning to make more films?*

MADM: Releasing and touring "Out of Our Minds" for 2010. A few more visual/conceptual extensions of the project are yet to be made, but then I'm eager to let go and let the next theme find me.

TS: A film about John Brown.

THE SIX DOLLAR FIFTY MAN

Directed by Mark Albiston and Louis Sutherland
New Zealand, 2009

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FILMMAKERS

MARK ALBISTON: When I told my kids of the time I tried to escape from Raumati Beach Primary School, I knew we had the bones of a good story—they asked me to tell it a lot. The interesting thing is that Louis and I went to that same school back in the seventies, and when we were bouncing ideas to develop into a script, he remembered the event.

LOUIS SUTHERLAND: Our classrooms lined the rugby field of our primary

school. When this skinny little kid—that's Mark—sprinted past our windows with two bigger boys giving chase, everyone dropped their work and crowded around to watch. It sounds comical now, but from a kid's perspective it was a big deal.



MA: That's where "The Six Dollar Fifty Man" started. But another inspiration was my oldest son, Jude (five), who believes he is invincible. On any given day you'll find him climbing up something ridiculously high or leaping off the garage roof. He freaks me out, but he reminds me of the warped sense of reality that I had at the same age. I used to think that by hanging onto electric fences it would make me bionic (give me super strength). I would then try to lift heavy things, like my mum.

LS: We wanted to take an adult audience and suck them into a small boy's world to see the size and weight of something that as an adult we might overlook. It gives you a good heart or core to hang things on.

MA: We spent a really healthy amount of time working on the script and then hunting for our cast. We must have seen a couple of hundred eight-to-twelve-year-old boys before we found Andy (Oscar). The irony is that after scouring so many schools to find the right amount of grit, we discovered him right under our noses.

LS: Oscar was eight years old, but even then he could cut you down with a frown—he is that sharp. So when we auditioned him, it was really no surprise when Oscar delivered one of the most engaging improves we'd seen. We pretty much took him there and then and immediately started adjusting the script to accommodate for the strength of his natural character.

MA: We are firm believers in getting the right cast. And in fact in this film we changed our story to accommodate for Andy's girlfriend in the film, Celina (Mary). When we auditioned Celina together with Oscar,

she was the only one who managed to match Oscar's personality and who really felt like his friend.

LS: We filmed on the Kapiti Coast (where the story came from) and took over Te Horo Primary School, borrowing the children for school-yard extras.

MA: We like telling stories that are familiar to everyone but distinct from the rest of the world.

DOCK ELLIS & THE LSD NO-NO

Directed by James Blagden

USA, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: Is there a better story in the history of baseball? What is the second-best story, do you think?

JAMES BLAGDEN: I don't think so, but I am far from an authority on baseball history. I was born in 1982—missed a lot of good stuff. Too young to know what was going on during the wild days of the '86 Mets, and by the time I was a teenager, Ken Griffey Jr. was the biggest thing in baseball.

Second-best Dock Ellis story is pretty damn good, so I'll just go with it. May 1, 1974, Dock attempted to hit the entire starting lineup of the Cincinnati Reds, and succeeded in hitting three batters in a row before being removed from the game.

The Pirates were in the middle of a serious slump, and played particularly poorly against Cincinnati—Dock accused his teammates of being scared of them. So Dock decided he'd single-handedly establish some dominance by picking off each Cincinnati batter he faced. He hit Joe Morgan in the kidneys.

There's a great retelling of the whole thing in Dock's book with Donald Hall, *Dock Ellis in the Country of Baseball*. It's fantastic.

Q: Likewise, is there anyone in baseball history who can possibly rival Dock's combination of character and talent and joie de vivre all in one?

JB: Once again, I'm afraid my limited baseball knowledge prevents me from taking a proper crack. Too many guys I know too little about.

I do know that Dock was a dynamic individual, beyond baseball. He was an outspoken, unapologetic public figure, which made him controversial in his day. He was a righteous dude. Did a lot of charity work and was absolutely beloved by the black community. Back in the seventies, a lot of folks were likening him to Muhammad Ali.

Plus he wasn't afraid of mind-expanding drug use.

Q: How did you first hear about Dock Ellis? Why do so few people know his story? (Before your film, we mean.)

JB: Christopher Isenberg of *No Mas* asked me to illustrate an article about recreational drug use in professional sports history—this was in 2006—and the Dock story was a part of that. Isenberg is completely immersed in sports culture and lore. Unbeknownst to me, the LSD legend was actually quite a cult favorite. That's why, when we went to tell it our own way, it was there for us to use—the interview already existed. Donnell Alexander also cared a great deal for the story, and (thank you, God) he got Dock to tell it on tape.

Q: For all its humor, it is actually an incredible moment when Dock admits that his drug use was based largely around the fear of not lasting in the Major Leagues. When did he clean up, and was he still playing then?

JB: I imagine he was using amphetamines throughout his baseball career, but I don't know for sure. Dock was certainly no stranger to America's overwhelming drug culture. As he says in the film, drugs were quite literally a part of the game when he played. He was under a whole lot of pressure, professionally and personally.

Dock also struggled with alcohol abuse. He eventually died from cirrhosis of the liver. But he had actually been working for years as a drug

counselor in the California prison system, and in Pennsylvania before that. He was dedicated to helping young addicts.

Q: Who's writing the feature, and will it be (partially) animated?

JB: Donnell [Alexander] and Neille Illel are working on a treatment of their own—they produced the radio piece on which our film is based. We haven't discussed animation being a part of it. I don't know if that's something they have in mind or not.

Animation worked as its own thing, thankfully—but maybe there would be a more interesting way to interpret a psychedelic experience on film. Doesn't there seem to be too much reliance on animation in live-action movies, now that CGI is so accessible? Not enough trick photography and weirdo special effects. There is something so obvious about standard CGI—it impairs any magic.

Of course, hand-drawn animation is different—it's a lot more visceral. I do think it could be pretty amazing to do an entirely hand-drawn full-length telling of Dock's story. Or maybe do the whole thing animated except for the trip parts. Those could be done with puppets.

Q: In the history of baseball, there have been fewer than three hundred no-hitters. Do you have any idea if any others were thrown under the influence of drugs?

JB: I'm gonna go ahead and say yes, absolutely. Stimulants at the very least. Maybe Randy Johnson was on crack. Just kidding.

Q: What has been the reaction to the film? Heard from any Major Leaguers?

JB: Nope, no direct word from the Major Leagues—although we'd rather that than a cease-and-desist order. The reaction online has been overwhelmingly positive, though. A petition was even started asking MLB to release the game footage. We're not sure it even exists.

We have been in contact with Dock's widow, Hjordis Ellis. She loves the film, which is extremely satisfying. Dock's son Tre has also voiced his approval. Their support has definitely meant a whole lot to us.



Q: What is your favorite sport to watch? To play?

JB: Growing up, my father watched a lot of sports in the house. He'd be watching football and I'd be off playing with my sister or copying the covers of my comic books. I got into watching games with him as I got older—junior high and high school. We watched the Broncos religiously and went to lots of baseball games. But my interest was mostly based on my relationship with him. I skateboarded and obsessed over music. I wasn't so much interested in the competitive aspect of professional sport. I liked the human drama, the theatrics. My father and I watched WWF wrestling for years. I really loved it. The characters were so great and the stories were always so ridiculous.

These days I hardly watch any regular-season anything, although I do pay attention peripherally. As far as actually playing goes, it's been a whole lot of around-the-world basketball with my studio mates. We have a sweet mini-hoop. It can get pretty intense.

Q: *What are you working on next?*

JB: Right now I'm working with No Mas on animation for a documentary called *Straight Out of LA*, which Ice Cube is making for ESPN. It's about the Raiders' years in Los Angeles and the relationship between the team and the city, and how it sort of coincided with the genesis of N.W.A.

Beyond that, Isenberg and I are developing what we hope will become an animated television series. We're interested in telling more stories...

So that's the plan, Stan.

WOLF TICKET

Directed by Dugan Beach

USA, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: *How did you meet Dock? What did you know about him? Tell us the story.*

DUGAN BEACH: I first met Dock in July of 2000. I had read his biography by Donald Hall in college and thought that he would make a great subject for a documentary. Initially I had difficulty tracking him down, but I finally reached him through his mother. She was living alone in the home where he was raised, in a middle-class section of Los Angeles known as "The Neighborhood," nestled between Gardena, Long Beach, and Watts. I had a photograph of the house from the book and could see the address above the porch. I knocked and his mother answered and ultimately passed along a note that I had written to him. Three days later, Dock called from his home in Texas. He was really excited about doing some interviews and working on a documentary.

Q: *What was the most surprising thing you learned about him?*

DB: His generosity. The time and energy he spent helping other people was remarkable. To completely reinvent himself as a prison drug counselor and help countless people beat their addictions and regain their

lives is about as far from the glamour and decadence of his playing days as he could get.

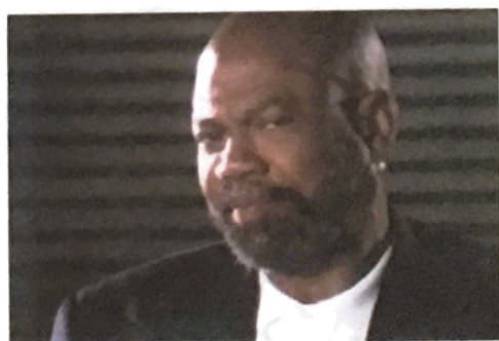
Q: Have you talked to Reggie or any other players about Dock?

DB: I've interviewed a lot of his former teammates. They all considered him to be a tremendous talent and competitor as well as a good friend. I interviewed Willie Stargell just before he died in 2001. He was adamant about Dock returning to baseball in some capacity, whether as a coach or a counselor. He really felt that Dock's skills were being underutilized—that the baseball establishment had more or less turned their back on him.

In 2001 Dock invited me to shoot in Las Vegas where Reggie was attending festivities related to the Super Bowl. He thought it would be a good opportunity to have a conversation with Reggie on camera. Dock tried to engage him—Reggie seemed uneasy and walked the other way.

Q: Do you think baseball has changed since the seventies?

DB: Definitely. Money has really changed the game. Back then I think there was much more of a warrior mentality among players; guys were just trying to survive. Today I think a lot more is done to protect the owners' investments in the players. Umpires are much more involved with preventing fights and dangerous play. For example, when Dock faced the Cincinnati Reds on May 1, 1974, he tied a Major League record by deliberately hitting the opening three batters of the game. He hit Pete Rose, Joe Morgan, and Dan Driessen. The fourth batter, Tony Pérez, dodged all four pitches and drew a walk; the fifth batter, Johnny Bench, avoided two pitches aimed at his head before Dock was finally removed from the game—but not by the umpire, by his own coach! I can't imagine something like that happening today. These days the pitcher would be ejected immediately.



Q: *So is this part of a trilogy or a feature? Are you working on it now?*

DB: Both, actually. It's part of a feature that I'm working on now and part two of a trilogy that I made several years ago. I originally created three short films covering the acid no-hitter, the beaming of Reggie Jackson ("Wolf Ticket"), and the incident with the Cincinnati Reds. (Only "Wolf Ticket" has been released.) But as we continued to get good stuff beyond that, it became obvious that a feature might be the way to go. I have quite a lot to put into it; I have the only extensive interview footage of Ellis that I'm aware of. For the feature, I'd like to combine several different elements, including animation, archival footage, and my own interviews with Ellis between 2000 and 2003.

Q: *Besides golf, could such rampant drug use happen in any other sport?*

DB: Yes.

Q: *What is your second favorite story about him?*

DB: Dock is such an amazing storyteller. There are so many that I've captured—his tales of being an actor in the early eighties are hilarious. Obviously the no-hitter is my favorite, but I also find his rivalry with Reggie Jackson extremely compelling. So much of his life in baseball pivots around Jackson and their encounter at the '71 All-Star Game...

WAGAH

Directed by Supriyo Sen
Germany/India, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: *How did you first decide to document this daily ceremony (the lowering of the flags) at the India–Pakistan border?*

SUPRIYO SEN: Berlinale Talent Campus invited short film projects for the "My Wall" series to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the fall

of the Berlin Wall. Out of two hundred ideas from all over the world, they commissioned five films, and “Wagah” was one of them. The rest is history.

The Wagah checkpoint between India and Pakistan is known as Asia’s Berlin Wall. Therefore, I wanted to explore what this particular place signifies for the Indians and Pakistanis who have been divided for the last sixty years.

Q: Has there ever been any conflict at this border checkpoint?

SS: After being divided into two nations from one single country in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought three full-fledged wars and indulged in many medium-range conflicts. Several times, both the armies violated the international border and invaded each other’s territory, but generally Wagah has remained quiet.

Q: The ceremony of lowering the flags is a very celebratory parade. Do you think this is an appropriate way to commemorate the nightly border closing? Can you think of a better way?

SS: Through the parade, both the countries and their border guards express hatred to each other in a very aesthetic way! It seems they can’t afford to have war every evening; that’s why they have a mock fight to vent their anger. But on the other hand, they rehearse together to have such a well-synchronized exercise! This parade obviously signifies the deep rift between two countries, but thousands of people actually come there to see the other side and the other people. And the people try to reach very close to the border to see each other and greet each other. This is quite fascinating... people still retain the bond even after six decades of separation. Therefore Wagah doesn’t signify the division only: it also reminds us about the connection between two separated souls.



Q: What is your opinion of border walls in general? Do you foresee this one ever being taken down? Or rather, the gates being left open?

SS: Borders and walls are things that confine free spirit, bar people from going beyond. Sometimes it's real, like a political border; sometimes it's psychological and a more complicated state of affairs.

It should [be taken down], because the connection between the people of India and Pakistan can surely reduce the possibility of conflict. They have so many things in common and so much to share... The states should at least learn to live as good neighbors.

Q: Do you think there are any advantages to physical borders?

SS: I am not sure. What I believe is people must have the freedom to travel and choose where they should settle down. Civilizations progressed that way. Some nation-states are less than two centuries old, but human beings have lived much longer on this planet! Also I find it an irony that on the one hand cyberspace has provided the possibility of a free virtual world, but on the other hand the powerful countries are having more rigid immigration policies to prevent people from moving!

Q: Did you buy a DVD from one of the little boys? If so, what was it?

SS: Yes, of course... They don't let you go without buying at least one! The kids are good salesmen! The DVD contains images of parades put together in a very amateurish way... but people like to preserve it as memorabilia.

Q: This film is part of a series of yours, all focusing on the partition between India and Pakistan. Can you tell us a little more about the other two films and how the three work together?

SS: I am coming from a refugee family that suffered immensely during the partition of India in 1947. Massacres, rapes, and abductions followed in the wake of partition, leading to the migration of fifteen million people. I could never accept borders that prevented me from going back

to my homeland, my roots. I wanted to give voice to the silent sufferings of the refugees. I wanted to talk about the ongoing conflicts that still bleed their hearts. My previous films are *Way Back Home* (2003), which searches for the lost land, and *Hope Dies Last in War* (2007), which deals with ongoing conflict. Now, "Wagah" (2009) tries to blur the border through cinema—the wildest dream I always cherished!

Q: What are you working on next?

SS: I want to explore the universe of the children more. This time I will explore the world of the Indian children participating in reality shows. You will discover a fast-changing Indian society, which is regarded as the next big thing of world economy.

YOUNG LOVE

Directed by Ariel Kleiman

Australia, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: It was a great call not to have any subtitles. That said, don't make us call in a translator! What did she say?! She seemed quite angry...

ARIEL KLEIMAN: She is very angry. The literal translation is so rude that I'm too embarrassed to repeat it. But to me it is all about the emotion of what she is saying rather than the words themselves.

Q: The obligatory autobiographical question: What was the worst fight you ever had with a girlfriend? Did it involve cutlery?

AK: I once made a girl cry over a game of Scrabble. That was pretty bad because I didn't even realize we were fighting. I thought we were just talking game smack.

Q: How did the llamas come into the story? Were they scripted in or was it a happy accident?

AK: I had to make this film for my university course, and the original concept I had fell through. My girlfriend sent me these great photos of alpaca faces to cheer me up. The rest is history.

Q: *How did you cast?*

AK: We had to put this film together in a hurry, so I opted to go with people I knew. The young man is a good friend of mine, Alexander J. Ford. He was in a dark place at the time and had grown a moustache as



a means of coping, so I exploited that. The young woman is a friend, classmate, and fellow filmmaker, Anna-Vera Dudas. Neither of them had really acted before.

Q: *I was nervous the llamas were about to bite the guy's foot. But apparently they don't have teeth on top, just a rubbery palate. How much*

did you know about llamas before throwing two actors into a field with a wild herd of them?

AK: Actually, I knew nothing about them. I like to throw my actors into the deep end and watch them drown.

Q: *They say that people who deny and repress their emotions are the happiest of all people. What do you do? Fight or repress? More importantly, what should we, at Wholphin, do?*

AK: I prefer not to feel anything at all. Numbness, that is my advice for the *Wholphin* team.

Q: *If there was ever a short that warranted a feature treatment, it is this... I can see it as a sort of Dear John meets Saw... What are you planning next?*

AK: Well, we just finished our most ambitious project yet—a short submarine epic, “Deeper than Yesterday.” And now my girlfriend and I have begun writing a feature-film script. As soon as that’s done, we plan to abandon it and pursue a lifelong marriage to fitness.

Q: *Llamas are camelids. Camelids are notorious spitters. Can you see where we're going with this?*

AK: What's a camelid?

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Directed by Christopher Sheehy

USA/Antarctica, 2010

THE AMUNDSEN-SCOTT SOUTH POLE STATION INDEX

Year Roald Amundsen reached the South Pole: 1911

Year Robert Scott did: 1912

Year the original station named for them was constructed: 1956

Number of years the station has been continuously occupied: 54

Average population of the station during the austral summer: 260

Average population during the winter: 65

Average distance of the station from the Geographic South Pole:
100 meters

Number of times the station has been rebuilt and relocated: 2

Number of generators providing power to the station: 3

Number of these generators that run on jet fuel: 3

Elevation of the station: 2,835 meters

Thickness of the ice sheet the station is built on: 2,850 meters

Number of greenhouses at the station: 1

Percentage of fresh fruits and vegetables consumed by the staff that the
greenhouse provides in winter: 100

Number of days the sun rises each year: 1

Number of days it sets: 1

Number of months of sunlight: 6

Number of months of darkness: 6

Daily hours of sunlight in January: 24

Year a woman first set foot on the South Pole: 1969

Number of women who worked at the station that year: 6
 Number of women at the base in 2009: 33
 Number of marriages between people who met at the station: 3
 Number of births that have occurred at the station: 0
 Number of deaths that have occurred at the station: 3
 Year the only doctor present discovered she had breast cancer: 1999
 Number of months during which she had to self-administer chemotherapy before she could be evacuated: 3.5
 Number of employees who had to be evacuated after a drunken brawl on Christmas Day, 2007: 2
 Number of years that temperature data has been collected: 32
 Lowest temperature recorded at the station, in degrees Fahrenheit: -117



Highest temperature recorded: 7.5° F
 Average daily temperature in January 2010: -18.76° F

Average daily temperature in August 2009: -76° F

Temperature, in degrees Fahrenheit, the station's sauna is kept at: 200

Temperature that the outside air must be to perform the official 300 Degree Club run: -100° F

Temperature drop experienced by the runners in the course of the run, in degrees Fahrenheit: 300

Maximum number of minutes aspiring Club members remain in the sauna: 20

Average distance, in meters, from the sauna to the ceremonial South Pole Marker: 90

Number of years since 1975 that the run has not been performed, owing to warm weather: 4

Number of verified times the Geographical South Pole marker has been stolen: 1

Year stolen: 1994

TJ MILLER AUDITIONS FOR YOGI BEAR

Directed by Jordan Vogt-Roberts

USA, 2009

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FILMMAKER

Q: So is this a real audition tape or what? What was the impetus for making this film?

JORDAN VOGT-ROBERTS: Basically, TJ was up for a role in the film and had been auditioning for it but hadn't quite secured the part. Warner Bros. was going into their final casting meeting and TJ wanted to try to do something to make himself stand out, so we started kicking around the idea of shooting a video with a real bear. We found a ranch that would rent us a bear dirt cheap, which is hilarious in itself, and went off to the desert to shoot TJ reading lines with the six-hundred-pound beast. For TJ and me, it almost didn't matter whether he got the part, because the act of shooting the video was so funny in itself. I think for us it was almost about not letting such a bizarre opportunity pass us by. It's just pretty crazy that it ended up getting him the part. He's been in New Zealand for four months shooting a talking-bear comedy. It's now a weird piece of Hollywood lore.

Q: Were you nervous being so close to a bear? Did you have insurance? Did you tell your mom?

JV-R: We didn't have insurance, and the whole video kind of served as a reminder to me of how you subtly lose perspective on just about everything in LA. If someone asks me, "Hey, do you want to shoot with a bear on Wednesday?" my response is going to be "Hell yes I want to shoot with a bear!" That response isn't exactly shared by all of my friends back in the Midwest who have nine-to-fives, mortgages, and children. Most of their responses, including my mother's, were either a) "What is wrong with you?" b) "Were you safe?" or c) "I'm glad you didn't tell me beforehand because I would have been worried!" I guess people just have dif-

ferent priorities. Somewhere in my skewed brain, I was checking “Shoot something with a bear” off of a random list of things to do in this life.

I wasn't really nervous around the bear, even though it could have devoured me. There were tigers, lions, monkeys, and a bunch of other animals around, too. It was pretty surreal (read: awesome). At first they were very strict about what we could do with the bear and how close we could be to it, but I think after a while of TJ and me doing our thing, the trainers just kind of said to themselves, “These guys are idiots,” and they let me give TJ much more specific direction about interacting with and touching the bear.

Q: How did you start working with TJ Miller?

JV-R: TJ and I met in Chicago through the stand-up-comedian community. I was making videos with a lot of comics out there, and it was only



a matter of time before our paths collided. As soon as we met, we realized we had a really similar work ethic and commitment to weird comedy, so we basically spent the next four or five months just shooting videos at odd hours and killing ourselves to make some funny content. I think my

roommate at the time thought I had lost my mind. I'd come home with TJ, holding a dead pig from the butcher's shop, and have to explain how we have a reaaaalllly funny idea for a sketch. TJ and I have been working and developing together ever since.

Q: We once hung out with a three-hundred-pound chimpanzee who loved Diet Coke (he was diabetic). The bear in your film seems to enjoy marshmallows. Do you find that strange? Marshmallows?

JV-R: I'll tell you the absolute most important thing I learned that day: in the bear-training world, “He'll crap white tonight” is an expression. The trainers basically had a utility belt that was full of marshmallows and Hostess treats—which obviously makes it far less useful but far more

delicious than Batman's utility belt. Anyway, what I found to be more strange was at one point the bear was roaring and generally being difficult to work with and I asked the trainers why that was. The trainers told me it was because the bear (named Bam Bam) was upset that the trainers weren't putting a little dab of honey on the marshmallows. I think it's great how discerning the bear's taste buds are, and that he threw a fit when he wasn't getting any honey.

Q: What do bears smell like?

JV-R: Bears smell like a six-hundred-pound animal that will end your life instantly. Ya know, that's a normal smell, right?

Q: Was the paper-chomping scripted or improv?

JV-R: We didn't script much beyond the basics. We knew what we wanted out of the video and we brainstormed a ton of potential bits, but we didn't have a clue what we were actually going to be able to do with the bear until we got there. Once the bear started warming up to TJ and it was clear that he was curious about the papers, I interrupted the current bit we were doing and told him to slowly lower the papers to see what would happen. It couldn't have worked out better.

Q: What was the hardest thing about this shoot? What was the easiest?

JV-R: The hardest part of the shoot was not stealing a tiger from the cages and taking it back to LA. The easiest part was stealing a hyena and taking it back to LA.

Q: What are you working on now?

JV-R: TJ and I just got back from Sundance with a twenty-five-minute short called "Successful Alcoholics" that we did together. He and I have a Comedy Central special we're shooting in April. In LA you always have to keep yourself busy somehow, or else you go a little batty.

CONTRIBUTORS

MARK ALBISTON and LOUIS SUTHERLAND grew up together in the small west-coast village of Raumati Beach, New Zealand. Louis went to drama school and Mark went to film school, developing their skills in production and performance. The two have now worked together in the industry for over fifteen years, creating a strong language through their many shared experiences, and breathing an authenticity into their films. "The Six Dollar Fifty Man" is the third short film that Mark and Louis have collaborated on, and they are currently writing their feature screenplay, *Shopping*.

MELISSA AUF DER MAUR was born and raised in Montreal, Canada, and has a Fine Arts education. From 1994 to 1999, she was a songwriter and bass player for the band Hole. In 2000, she joined the Smashing Pumpkins for their farewell world tour. In 2004, *Auf der Maur*, her first solo album, was released by Capitol Records/EMI Worldwide. She is currently wrapping up her new multimedia project, "Out of Our Minds," featuring her next album, a film, a comic book, and a web experience.

Born and raised in North Carolina in 1975, American filmmaker RAMIN BAHRANI'S first feature film, *Man Push Cart* (2005), premiered in Venice in 2005 and screened at Sundance in 2006. The film won more than ten international prizes, and was nominated for three Independent Spirit Awards (2007), including Best First Film. *Chop Shop* (2007), his next film, premiered at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival, and then screened in Toronto in 2007 and Berlin in 2008. Ramin was awarded the Acura "Someone to Watch" Independent Spirit Award (2008) for the film, which was also nominated for two Independent Spirit Awards in 2009, including Best Director. *Goodbye Solo* (2008), his third feature, premiered in Venice and won the FIPRESCI International Critics Prize for Best Film. In early 2009, Ramin was a recipient of the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship, and was also the subject of several international retrospectives, including ones at the MoMA in New York City, Harvard University, and the La Rochelle Film Festival in France. Ramin's latest film, "Plastic Bag" (2009), as the opening night film of Corto Cortissimo in the Venice Film Festival, where Ramin will be on the jury for Best First Films.

DUGAN BEACH is a VES Award-nominated visual-effects artist and filmmaker living in Los Angeles. He is currently working on a feature documentary about

Dock Ellis and a short narrative film about Jean Bugatti. He graduated from the University of California, Berkeley.

JAMES BLAGDEN was born to Ms. Marla Baer and Mr. Fred Blagden in Denver, Colorado, on March 29, 1982. He started his education at the Denver Arts Students League at the age of six or seven. He moved to New York in 2000 and studied for four years at the School of Visual Arts. After graduating, he worked for a few years as an illustrator. His drawings have been featured in the *New York Times*, *Esquire*, and *Interview* magazine, among others. "Dock Ellis & The LSD No-No" is his first animated film.

ARIEL KLEIMAN is an award-winning writer and director born in Melbourne, Australia. He attended the prestigious Victorian College of the Arts. In 2009 he completed his graduating film—the oceanic submarine tragedy, *Deeper Than Yesterday*.

JIM OWEN is a self-styled wunderkind who makes amazing films. He's a writer, director, editor, and sculptor. He sculpts films using his hands and actors. He's physically very fit (he works out loads), wears expensive designer clothes, and can help rescue dithering old people if they're getting mugged. He'll just step in selflessly. He's a right laugh as well, if he's not really annoyed about some sort of injustice that's just happened. Find him at twitter.com/jimowenlondon and jamesowen.tv.

In 2001 **ALINA RUDNITSKAYA** graduated from the St. Petersburg University for Arts and Culture, Department of Film Directing. She started her career as an Assistant Director at St. Petersburg Documentary Film Studio. Her first films, "Letter" and "Communal Residence," were well received both in Russia and abroad, and received awards at many domestic and international film festivals. "Communal Residence" was part of a larger project, "St. Petersburg 2003." After that project was completed, Alina was invited to work in Moscow on the documentary film series "Dating Service," about single people looking for their other halves. At the same time, she worked on a project called "Faces of the Epoch," directing the films "Vishnevskaya" and "Rostropovich," among others. In 2004 her project for one of the major Saint Petersburg TV stations—a film series on a Russian pop group TATU—won an award for Best Documentary Series. In 2003–2004, Alina continued making documentary films, such as "Amazons" and "Rural Lessons."

A journalist turned independent filmmaker, **SUPRIYO SEN** has produced and directed feature-length and short documentaries including *Wait Until Death*, "The Dream of Hanif," "The Nest," *Way Back Home*, *Hope Dies Last in War*, "Rupban—The Beautiful," and "Wagah." Supriyo has won more than twenty-five international awards for his films, including the Berlin Today Award at the Berlin Film Festival, and has also won three Indian awards, including the Swarna Kamal for the Best Documentary of the Year. He also received grants from the Sundance Documentary Fund, the Jan Vrijman Fund (IDFA), and the Asian Cinema Fund (Pusan International Film Festival).

CHRISTOPHER SHEEHY is a PhD student in the Department of Astronomy and Astrophysics at the University of Chicago. He is currently part of a team hunting for signs of cosmic inflation in the Cosmic Microwave Background using specially designed telescopes at the South Pole.

TONY STONE was born and raised in New York City. He graduated from Bard College, where he studied with filmmakers Adolfas Mekas, Peggy Ahwesh, and Peter Hutton. His first feature, *Severed Ways: The Norse Discovery of America*, premiered at the Los Angeles Film Festival and was released theatrically by Magnolia Pictures. His latest film, "Out of Our Minds," premiered at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival.

Hailing from the ruins of Detroit, **JORDAN VOGT-ROBERTS** started doing two things at a young age to prepare himself as a director: 1) dealing with the hassle of a hyphenated last name, and 2) making stop-motion movies in his basement with Lego and Batman toys. Since moving to LA, he has been making web content with comedians and he's had a short in Sundance, and he will soon branch into television with an hour-long special he conceived and will direct for Comedy Central. He also tries to spend his free time writing condensed bios of himself and playing with his ancient dachshund.

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DVD AUTHORIZING: Sean Hellfritsch

WHOLPHIN WEBSITE: www.wholphindvd.com

WHOLPHIN WEBMASTER: Lauren Andrews

THANKS: Hadrian Belove, CineVegas, Lucy Cleary, Dub Express, Trevor Groth, Kent Howie, Christopher Isenberg, Henning Kamm, Hiliary Kerby, Jon Korn, Jonathan Marlowe, Dan Nuxoll, Jason Orans, Palm Springs ShortFest, Mike Plante, Thom Powers, San Francisco Film Festival, Adam Spielberg, Sundance Film Festival, SXSW, Sean Uyehara, Juliette Veber, David Wilson, Rosie Wong, Michael Tully, Michael Atkinson, and Kim Yutani.

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WOLFPHIN

THE SIX DOLLAR FIFTY MAN

15:00. SHORT FILM. NEW ZEALAND

DIRECTED BY MARK ALBISTON AND LOUIS SUTHERLAND

BITCH ACADEMY

33:00. DOCUMENTARY. RUSSIA

DIRECTED BY ALINA RUDNITSKAYA

PLASTIC BAG

18:00. SHORT FILM. U.S.A.

DIRECTED BY RAMIN BAHRANI

CAN WE TALK?

11:00. SHORT FILM. U.K.

DIRECTED BY JIM OWEN

WAGAH

14:00. DOCUMENTARY. GERMANY

SUPRIYO SEN

DOCK ELLIS & THE LSD NO-NO

5:00. ANIMATED SHORT. U.S.A.

DIRECTED BY JAMES BLAGDEN

WOLF TICKET

8:30. DOCUMENTARY. U.S.A.

DIRECTED BY DUGAN BEACH

OUT OF OUR MINDS

18:00. SHORT FILM. U.S.A.

DIRECTED BY TONY STONE

YOUNG LOVE

7:00. SHORT FILM. AUSTRALIA

DIRECTED BY ARIEL KLEIMAN

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

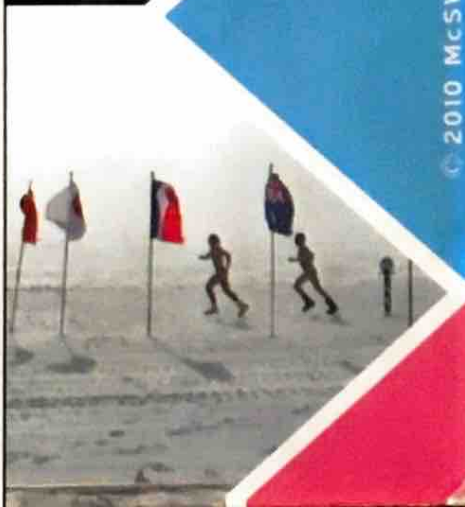
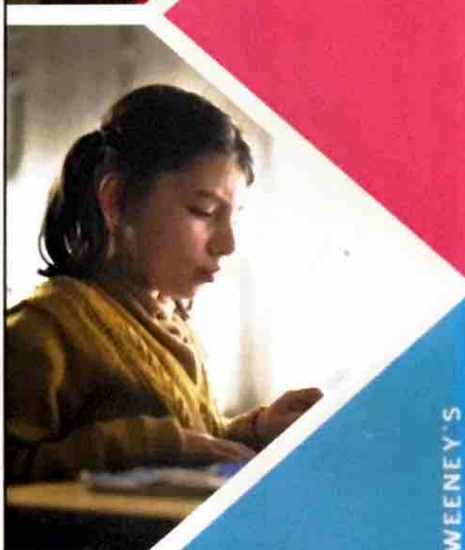
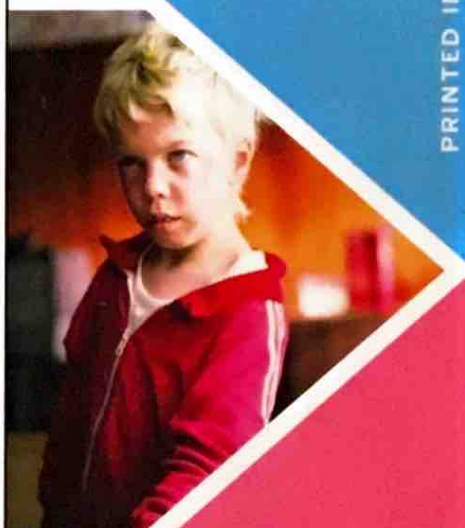
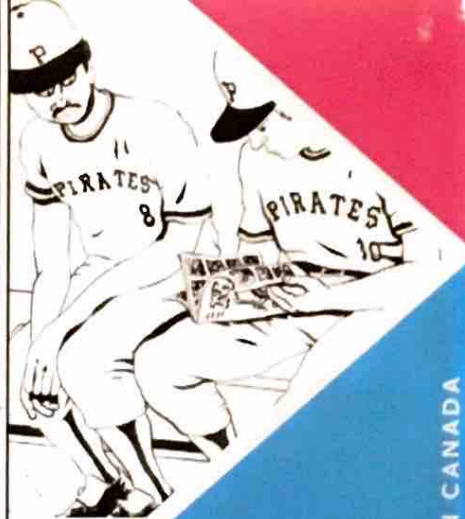
2:00. SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT. U.S.A/ANTARCTICA

DIRECTED BY CHRISTOPHER SHEEHY

TJ MILLER AUDITIONS FOR YOGI BEAR

4:00. SHORT FILM. U.S.A.

DIRECTED BY JORDAN VOGT-ROBERTS



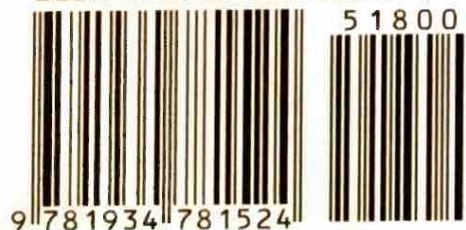
PRINTED IN CANADA

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\$19.95 US

ISBN 978-1-93478152-4

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