

## **Dailies: The PSA Project**

### **Project Mission Statement / Project Manifesto**

**Films Due Date: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007**

**1<sup>st</sup> Workshop: January 6<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Workshop: February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Workshop: March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Rough Cut Screening: March 20<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm**

**Public Screenings: April 6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 pm, April 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 pm**

**Point Producer: Linda Burns**

**Contact: lindawashere@mindspring.com**

**One liner:** Filmmakers work with a real organization to create, and then donate, a finished public service announcement that challenges the writer, director, editor, sound designer and composer to tell a story exactly 30 or 60 seconds long.

**One Paragraph:** Filmmakers are challenged to identify, cold call and work with an organization to develop a broadcastable PSA that encompasses the organizations mission, has a clever tag line and reaches its target audience. Filmmakers are further challenged to create original music, which coupled with the severe time limit, teaches the filmmaker how to convey a lot of information in a short amount of time, literally making every choice count.

### **WHY join the PSA Project?**

Part of the Dailies mission is to explore our craft through community. But as storytellers, do we exist only to serve our own filmmaking community? Or as artists and citizens, can our mission extend to other organizations and institutions that educate and motivate different communities through the visual medium.

As filmmakers, many of us are politically, environmentally and/or civically minded and we think of ourselves as advocates for a cause. To often, our activism comes passively in the form of a forwarded e-mail. Rarely do we have the commitment, resources or motivation to really make a difference in this world beyond our own front door.

The PSA Project allows us to move beyond the information superhighway and out into the real world by creating product that can be used to move the masses. The PSA project will generate content to inform and educate the public on awareness of a particular issue while training the filmmaker to convey a story proficiently within a severe time limit.

Many independent filmmakers, if they wish to work in the film industry full-time, can only make a living working on commercials, music videos and corporate industrials. Without creating material for the commercial market, the PSA Project challenges filmmakers to convey information in 30 or 60 seconds, which will strengthen their ability to do so in the commercial world. (And give them a finished piece for their commercial reel.)

For the short film director uninterested in the corporate marketplace, the trend at festivals and for broadcasters is to focus their attention on shorter as opposed to longer works of art. This exercise will help these artists learn to tell a story more efficiently and effectively, without sacrificing creativity or imagination.

Examples of artistically creative and effective PSA campaigns include the Crash Test Dummy, Keep America Beautiful, The United Negro College Fund, The Peace Corps, This is Your Brain on Drugs and Smokey the Bear. Many of the most popular PSA campaigns coupled images with clever slogans such as "Give a Hoot, Don't Pollute", "Loose Lips Sink Ships", "You can learn a lot from a dummy", "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk" "A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste", "The toughest job you'll ever love", "Just Say NO", and "Take a Bite out of Crime".

The PSA Project endeavors to effect positive change by educating, motivating, and mobilizing filmmakers to work with organizations of their choice to create short visual stories that will educate, motivate and mobilize the general public for years to come. Many of the above examples originated before most of the DAILIES filmmakers were born, yet they continue to convey their messages to the public as part of our popular culture.

Although most Americans can assuredly recite PSA slogans, PSAs are not just memorized. They mobilize. The results of the following campaigns testify to the power of PSA messages to make lasting and positive social change. Applications for Big Brothers Big Sisters mentors soared from 90,000 a year to 620,000 in nine months, a seven-fold increase in the number of inquiries to Big Brothers/Big Sisters agencies.

68% of Americans say that they have personally stopped someone who had been drinking from driving. The old saying "One more for the Road," has been replaced with "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk."

Safety belt usage rose from 14% to 79% since the Safety Belt campaign launched in 1985 - saving an estimated 85,000 lives, and \$3.2 billion in costs to society.

Since 1972, The United Negro College Fund campaign has helped raise more than \$2.2 billion to graduate 350,000 minority students from college with the help of the "A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste" slogan.

6,000 Children were paired with a mentor in just the first 18 months of the mentoring campaign.

Destruction of our forests by wildfires has been reduced from 22 million acres to less than 8.4 million acres per year, since our Forest Fire Prevention campaign began.

The amount of total waste recycled increased 24.4% from 1995 to 2000, and 385.4% from the 1980s after the launch of the Environmental Defense campaign.

\*\* Information provided by The Ad Council \*\*

Although the PSA Project encourages filmmakers to meet and work with organizations to craft a message, the filmmaker is not beholden to the creative ideas of these organizations, just as the organizations are not beholden to use the filmmakers' finished product. However, without properly understanding the mission and intent of an organization through some initial contact and follow-up meetings, the filmmaker will hinder his or her ability to effectively convey the institutions objective to it's target audience. Similarly, the filmmaker will overlook a valuable opportunity – learning to collaborate with a client and building a relationship for the future.

### **The challenge: This challenge is to have four main components.**

**The first part of this challenge** is to identify a cause, be it political, environmental, medical, social, etc. The cause you choose must stem from a real non-profit organization, which has an Atlanta based office. To ensure that this organization is real, it must be submitted and approved by the point producer by January 6th.

**The second part of this challenge** is to attempt to meet with the foundation or organization of your choice, so that you may begin building a working relationship and a better understanding of their mission and target audience. Before contact is made with your selection, a workshop will be offered covering topics such as cold calling, pitching and working with clients to achieve your goal. Your PSA cannot be sold to this organization, nor should you accept money from them. It must be an outright donation with no financial benefit to the filmmaker.

As incentive for the organization to participate, they will not only receive a PSA suitable for broadcast, but be asked to participate in a "fair" of sorts during opening weekend of the public screening. One member of each organization will be invited to hand out literature, sign up volunteers and discuss their organization with the audience in attendance. The incentive for the filmmaker is the challenge itself; the chance to grow and learn as an artist through workshops and have a completed PSA to add to their body of work.

**The third, and most important part of this challenge** is to tell a story effectively in 30 or 60 seconds, with a memorable tagline. Crafting a well-written PSA, making every choice count and creating a clever tag line is the focus of this challenge, regardless of your organizations interest in this project. This is a skill that all filmmakers can benefit from. Directors such as Spike Jonze, Tony Scott and Ridley Scott all started in short form narrative (i.e. commercials, music videos), and directly credit this early work as leading to their cross-over success. This proficiency is evident in their long form work as they get loads of information across in single shots or short screen times.

No PSA in this project will be screened unless it is exactly 30 or 60 seconds long. The use of graphics is allowed to help you accomplish this goal, but no credits, front or back will be included in the screening. Project credits, if you desire them, will be played at the end of all the work, en mass, at the public screening. In addition, you must shoot new footage as opposed to creating a graphics based or animated PSA, or using existing footage.

**The fourth optional, yet strongly recommended, component of this challenge** is to create original music for your PSA, if you choose to have music in your PSA. NO music may be used that is not original and you must have a signed deal memo that states the creator will let you use the music for the broadcastable PSA. You cannot use a David Bowie or Beatles song. You cannot sample. You must either fully sound design or have original music in your PSA.

I strongly encourage you to use actors, but it is not a requirement. In addition, the PSA must be broadcastable, although it might not be broadcast. For example, nudity, strong language, guns, alcohol/drug consumption and violence should be avoided. Internet PSA's are often more risqué, and if approved by your organization, exceptions may be discussed.

**Workshops** – all workshops are mandatory by a member of your team, unless waved by the point producer.

How to cold call, pitch and work with an organization to identify and convey a message.  
Hosted by Toybox Productions / John Petrini - [www.toyboxproductions.com](http://www.toyboxproductions.com)  
January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

How to write a 30-60 second PSA with a clever, effective and memorable tag line.  
Hosted by a working “creative” from an ad agency  
February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

Creating music for commercials and PSAs.  
Hosted by Curtis Bryant Music / Curtis Bryant - [www.curtisbryantmusic.com](http://www.curtisbryantmusic.com)  
March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm

PSA screenings as examples

This will either be shown to the group, or links will be sent to the group for required viewing and discussion.

**Discussions** – all on going via dinners, e-mails and the forum

Being a sounding board for script and music ideas

Assistance in casting (creating a file of headshots from interested actors)

Meet and greets – with actors and composers/musicians

## **Recruiting**

I plan to invite filmmakers as well as have an open call for filmmakers. There is no limit to the number of filmmakers who will be allowed to participate. Only one PSA per director will be screened, so that the focus is on quality, not quantity.

## **Project Start Date and Basic Schedule**

Dailies 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in December kicked off the signing up period for this project.

Due to the holidays, workshops will begin after the New Year. However, filmmakers should use the month of December to research and submit the organization(s) they are interested in working with to the Point Producer for approval. Filmmakers are welcome to submit up to 3 organizations in order of choice, although only 1 will be approved. Due to the possibility that more than one filmmaker will chose the same organization, it is recommended that more than one choice be considered. There will be at least 1 group dinner to discuss ideas in December, and at that meeting, filmmakers will work out their choice.

This project will take place over 4 months.

January will focus on work-shopping the cold call and making contact with the organization to begin a dialogue.

February will focus on work-shopping a 30-60 second script and working with the organization to create their message, as well as filming the PSA.

March will focus on editing, sound design and music composition, as well as the rough cut screening. PSA's that are completed early will be sent to the press for review. Throughout these 3 months, twice a month, group meetings will be set up for discussion and meet and greets that are relevant to that months focus.

The due date for this project is April 1<sup>st</sup>, with four public screenings scheduled in early April. The length of screenings will be determined by the amount of finished PSAs. A member of each filmmaking group is required to attend opening weekend and all filmmakers are encouraged to attend all four screenings for a talkback.

Prices for the workshops will be \$5-15, pay as you can. One member of each team will get in free.

## Marketing

The marketing potential for this project is enormous due to the social implications and tie in to actual organizations. I believe this could get press outside of the traditional organizations that pay attention to DAILIES screenings. Short film screenings are a dime a dozen, but broadcastable PSA's are a unique twist on the short film and could gain attention from organizations like moveon.org, boards magazine, and the AJC. The fact that a Dailies film will have been in Sundance doesn't hurt our chances. I will be milking this fact for attention.

If filmmakers have done their jobs properly, the organization has already approved their idea, seen the final cut and will invite members of their organization to attend the screening as a fun company event. In addition, organizations will be invited to speak to the audience to discuss what they do, hand out materials and recruit volunteers.

Prices for the screening will be \$5-15, pay as you can. Directors get in free.

## A partial list of Atlanta-based non-profit organizations...plenty more out there, so do your research.

Jerusalem House in Atlanta	March of Dimes- Georgia Chapter
Camp Caglewood	Atlanta Children's Shelter
Atlanta Persian and Siamese Rescue	Project Open Hand
Atlanta Workshop Players	AIDS Survival Project
Atlanta Community Food Bank	Georgia Appalachian Trail Club
Good Mews Animal Foundation	Hands on Atlanta
United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta	Heart to Heart for Kids
Captain Planet Foundation	G-CAPP
AID Atlanta	Rock Against Cancer
Bosom Buddies of GA, Inc.	The Eating Disorders Information Network
The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society	Moms, Dads, and Kids, Inc
Environment Georgia	Atlanta Community Food Bank, Inc.
Park Pride Atlanta, Inc.	Trees Atlanta, Inc.
Boys & Girls Clubs of America	Eyedrum, Inc
Southern Center for Human Rights	Housing Resource Center, Inc.
Grant Park Conservancy	Georgia Center for Children, Inc.
Aniz, Inc.	Project Destiny, Inc
Camp Horizon, Inc.	Eddie G. Robinson Foundation
Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.	Georgia Ovarian Cancer Alliance, Inc
Doctors for Global Health, Inc.	Changed Lives Residential Services
All Empowered, Inc.	Boybutante AIDS Foundation, Inc.
Momentemps Ltd	Kids Acquiring Real Life Education
Community Housing Resource Center, Inc	Georgia Alliance for Children, Inc.
St. Vincent De Paul Society, Inc.	Children's Restoration Network, Inc.
IndepenDANCE, Inc., Moving in the Spirit	Health Students Taking Action Together, Inc.
Lupus Foundation of America, Inc. Greater Atlanta Chapter	IMAGE Film & Video Center
Atlanta Humane Society	Center for Puppetry Arts
PushPush Theater	The Furniture Bank of Metro Atlanta
The Atlanta Photography Group	Atlanta Celebrates Photography
The Arts Alliance of Atlanta	Georgia Lawyers for the Arts
FurKids Animal Rescue	PAWS Atlanta
Georgia River Network	ECO-Action
The Environmental Fund for Georgia	A Friends House
Georgians for Choice	Sister Love