

Local Filmmaker Leaves His Mark Pre- and Post-Katrina

BY GARY MICHAEL SMITH
GUEST COLUMNIST

Writer, producer, and documentary storyteller Jeremy Campbell is one of New Orleans' foremost filmmakers. His interest in media arts spans nearly a decade when, at 21, he served as host and executive producer of "The Lori & Jeremy Show," a syndicated television program on which he conducted on-camera interviews with Cyndi Lauper, Liz Phair, The Flaming Lips, Andy Dick, fitness guru Susan Powter, Vanilla Ice and others. Consequently, he was named "Best On-Air Personality" by the Opelika-Auburn News in 1999 for his work on the program.

Mr. Campbell has shared his talents with the local markets, working as a producer at ABC26 in New Orleans, and also with OffBeat Magazine.

Moreover, he founded New Orleans' Flicker Film Festival where he has showcased over 100 short films by aspiring filmmakers and awarded national film tours to talented media artists.

In 2003 his company, ten18films, was honored as one of the "Best Signs of Life for Independent Cinema" in the annual Best of New Orleans Awards. His projects about New Orleans culture earned him placement on Gambit Weekly's "Forty Under Forty" and New Orleans Magazine's "People to Watch" lists. Other credits include "Second Line Sunday," "New Orleans' Jazz Funeral," "Sorry Mom, I'm a Drunk;" and "You & Me." His acclaimed documentary, "Don't Worry Honey, I Live Here," features New Orleans musicians explaining Mardi Gras from locals' points of view.

Upon returning from his evacuation following Katrina, Mr. Campbell's filmmaking resumed with his most recent project, "Hexing a Hurricane," which has made its mark lately among many, if not all, New Orleanians.

In this feature, he deftly spotlights the spirit of New Orleanians during Hurricane Katrina by featuring stories and commentary from such notable talents as "Night Court's" Harry Anderson, Big 870 AM's Garland Robinette, Channel 4 anchor Angela Hill, Times-Picayune columnist Chris Rose, New Orleans Cultural Ambassador Irvin Mayfield, Voodoo Priestess Sally Ann Glassman and others.

When asked what motivated him to pursue such a sensitive subject, Mr. Campbell explains, "As a New Orleans documentary filmmaker, I felt

it was my responsibility to tell the story of our city from a local's point of view."

Producing "Hurricane" ignited a desire in Mr. Campbell to tell the stories of Louisiana residents every day. He used footage from the film to land a full-time reporting position at CBS affiliate KLFY TV10 in Lafayette. But while his primary focus is now on reporting, this doesn't mean his filmwork is on hold. On the contrary, he's signed distribution deals for "Hurricane" and "Don't Worry Honey, I Live Here" with the National Film Network. These films also are available for purchase from his website at www.ten18films.com. ■

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