

C-47 Houston

La Voyage Dans
La Luna
And, our Editorial
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HOUSTON'S TELEVISION, VIDEO AND FILM MAGAZINE

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DIRECTOR, PRODUCER and FILMMAKER: **Mr. Stacy Davidson**

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Interview

Documentary Filmmakers

Lauren Parsekian and Molly Stroud

By: John Lorenzo

C-47Houston magazine first became aware of these filmmakers on Facebook. They had put out a call for women who were willing to talk about their struggles with an issue that seems to be prevalent within the gender and they were coming to Houston. We contacted them and decided to catch them as they swung this way. They are making a documentary film with the working title of "Finding Kind". A film and campaign designed to bring awareness to the issue of girl-on-girl crime. Their movement the "Kind Campaign" is gaining momentum as they cross the country. And, as they stop, they talk and speak with women who have experienced the sadness and sometime cruelty of women and the way they deal with each other, often with violence both emotionally and physically. These filmmakers are capturing the emotional stories of these women and documenting their experiences. C-47 Houston magazine is please to introduce Filmmaker and Director Ms. Lauren Parsekian from California (pictured above right) and Texas Filmmaker and Producer from Dallas, Texas Ms. Molly Stroud (pictured above left).

C-47: Thank you both for taking some time to speak with us today. I understand that Houston is one of many stops you have on a cross-country trip. Why are you making this trip?

Ms. Parsekian: *Well, we are actually on a documentary road trip that will take us around the country and which started in California. We have been compiling interviews and talking to women all over the country about the issue of girl against girl crime, as we call it.*

Ms. Stroud: *We are basically working on a documentary film called "Finding Kind". This is the working title.*

C-47: Have you conducted some of those interviews here in Houston area?

Ms. Parsekian: *Yes, we have! We got in just last night and have done a couple of interviews last night, and one earlier today and we will be interviewing several other women later today and going to several schools and talking with some of the students about this issue.*

C-47: Where are you guys from?

Ms. Parsekian: *I am from Orange County, California.*

Ms. Stroud: *I am from Dallas, Texas. I met Lauren at Pepperdine University.*

C-47: How did you get into the filmmaking business?

Ms. Stroud: *Both Lauren and I have just graduated from Pepperdine University with a Television and Production degree. While I was there I kind of developed a deep love for filmmaking.*

Ms. Parsekian: *For me, film has always been a part of my life. I grew up doing small films at home and playing around with a camera. And, my par-*

ents were really into it as they both were actors. I kind of grew up with the arts and film in particular. I was struggling trying to figure out if I wanted to get into non-profit work or social work or pursuing an acting or production career. Documentary film seemed to be the perfect medium for me. It was a way to take an issue and speak on it through the art of film.

C-47: How did you get involved with this issue of girl against girl crimes?

Ms. Parsekian: *This has been an issue that has been on my heart since I was 12 or 13 years old and in Middle School where I was actually experiencing this exact issue. I had a really traumatic experience with my so-called friends in school and every since that experience its been something that I have wanted to talk about and an issue that I wanted to push in some sort of way. Initially, I wasn't really sure how I was going to deal with it, but I fell into documentary films. The idea of doing a documentary film about the issue just came pretty naturally.*

Ms. Stroud: *Unlike Lauren, my experiences in middle school were much*

Kind Campaign

MOVEMENT. DOCUMENTARY

WE'VE ALL BEEN THE VICTIM. UNFORTUNATELY WE'RE ALSO THE CAUSE. HELP US CHANGE.

different, I didn't experience things until later.

C-47: When you speak about girl against girl crimes, you are not necessarily referencing gang crime but the interaction of a lot of women that are establishing some sort of "pecking order" and thus you can be friends with these women and the violence is more metal and emotional in its effect?

Ms. Parsekian: *In a way! I tend to see it as the psychology of women and the way that women treat each other. I know that what we are trying to tackle here is kind of broad in scope but, many times, within that there is physical violence.*

Ms. Stroud: *Just for an example, we were at Impact Houston last night, it's a inner city ministry, and the girls there were talking about the types of violence that they see happens between the females there and it was more gang related, but I think it depends on where you are and, yes, it falls within a larger category, but it's always senseless.*

Ms. Parsekian: *We are not targeting gang violence among women, specifically, but it's more about the issue of females, in general, of all ages and...*

...different economic backgrounds from all different types of communities and the way we treat each other. We actually found that depending on where you are in the country and depending on your environment, women will pit against each other based on different things. While, at one part of the country, women are talking about gang violence, I grew up in Orange County, California and the violence was about the kind of car you were driving or what shoes you were wearing. The attack was more the manipulative and superficial kind of plotted sort of thing.

Ms. Stroud: We even went to Gordon, Nebraska talking with some girls who were taking about how they fight over "cattle" and "horses" and "who

Cinematographer Chris Hamilton



knows how to rope one the best", so it depends on where you are in the country. But, we definitely found that violence with females is a universal thing.

C-47: How long have has it been since you founded this organization?

Ms. Parsekian: It's been about a year now. We established it on February of 2008. We believe in Kind-

ness and we basically seek to bring awareness and healing to the negative and lasting effects of abuse within, what we call the "Girl World".

C-47: Regarding this documentary film, "Finding Kind", are you planning on making a short, feature or will this be an on-going documentary project?

Ms. Stroud: Well, we would definitely like to make a full feature documentary. Also we would like to enter this film into some of the film festivals. But, more importantly we are planning to present this film to schools as one of the programs that will enlighten women to this particular issue. For that program, we may have to cut it a little and cater to the students a bit.

Ms. Parsekian: We have so we have so much footage, the turn-out has been outstanding, that we hope to expand and use the footage with other formats including the internet and our online magazine.

C-47: Is there a particular festival that you hope this documentary will be screened?

Ms. Parsekian: Actually, yes! I am hoping this film will be accepted at the Mountain Film Festival in Telluride, Colorado. This festival has some significance to the whole project because this is where I got the idea of doing this documentary. I initially traveled there with a director I was working with, at the time, and over the week I was there, I was hit by inspiration and decided that I was going to do a documentary film. At the time, I thought, there is nothing else that can be more perfect.

C-47: Aside from this particular documentary do you have plans to do other films?

Ms. Parsekian: I have a lot of idea and things that I would like to put to film. For me, I know that I just want to get through this project and then I can focus on other projects. I am definitely passionate about filmmaking and I think it is something that I would like to continue doing over time.

C-47: You guys are from California and making a cross-country trip, how exciting has it been thus far?

Ms. Parsekian: It has been absolutely amazing! It's been a whirlwind tour. Touring America has been absolutely beautiful!

Ms. Stroud: We are driving across America in a mini-van donated by Toyota.



C-47: How are you able to fund this venture?

Ms. Stroud: We have utilized a number of recourses as far as funding is concerned. We have held several fundraisers and have ended up with some funds. Our primary funds are coming from Director Tom Shadyac.

Ms. Parsekian: I had interned with Tom on his first documentary and this is where I picked up a camera and was shooting for him. I fell in love with the whole process of documentary film and the ability to tell "real" stories. Tom had taught some classes at Pepperdine and both Molly and I took some of his classes and through our relationship with him we have been able to

venture out and make our own documentary.

C-47: What do you hope people will get out of your film, "Finding Kind"?

Ms. Parsekian: Well, we have a number of messages that we are trying to send out. The big one is that we have all been the victim but we, unfortunately, are also the cause but, at the same time, we are the only ones that can change it. Basically, we are saying that we all have been on both sides of the issue and if you are the victim, we would like to make it clear that you are not alone, but we also want to give them a different perspective and see things standing in their shoes. We want to instill hope in women.



C-47: You are crossing the country with this issue, when do you hope to have this documentary "in the can"?

Ms. Parsekian: Good question! LoL!

Ms. Stroud: We have scheduled a press premiere at Pepperdine University at the end of March 2010, so we will need to have at least the rough cut done by then. But, the Mountain Festival's deadline is coming up at the end of February and there is a new Malibu Film Festival coming up with a deadline



in January. So, we are pushing ourselves to get something done in various lengths to accommodate the festivals we want to enter. We will be hitting editing pretty hard.

C-47: Who is going to be your editor?

Ms. Parsekian: We are still working on finding an editor. We are still shopping

around. We have one more week on this road trip.

C-47: I think that is all the time we have Lauren and Molly, one last question; you are on a mission to expose an issue plaguing women of all ages and economic status through a documentary, I guess the question is how can you stop this issue and bring about a "kindness" among women as they treat each other?

Ms. Parsekian: I think it is important for people who look into this campaign and see this film to understand that we are not all going to be best friends and it's just a part of life to have differences. We are kind of fighting human nature here, I think. The competitive mentality has been embedded into us, if you will, but with that we can be mindful of the things we do to other women. Keep in mind that there are lines that should not be crossed. We tell girls the old adage of if you don't have anything nice to say to someone, don't say it. It's just a simple thing to do.

Ms. Stroud: Being "kind" is something that, I think, sounds kind of corny but it's important to remind yourself on a daily basis to be good to yourself and be good to people, in general. Not just with females but to just to people. We see that there is often a lack of respect among human beings, nowadays and it is apparent in the way that we deal with each other or the lack thereof. Your action and your words really do have consequences. That is evident in the stories that we have been collecting on this road trip.

It was such a pleasure to meet both Lauren and Molly as they trekked their way across the country in a mini-van. Their stories will undoubtedly make an emotional statement to women, and to men. Their documentary film will reveal an issue that seems to be prevalent amongst women, even in the simplest form and it can manifest itself in physical and emotion violence. For more information about this film visit: www.KindCampaign.com