

Interviews: Advertising Community Shorts at Midwest Independent Film Festival on Nov. 15, 2016

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CHICAGO – The world of advertising, which is rapidly evolving in the post technology age, contains the remnants of many creative souls. Occasionally, these creators express themselves outside the business in formats like music video and short film. Directors Bradley Bischoff and Eric McCoy are two such participants in the Midwest Independent Film Festival's Advertising Community Shorts night, Tuesday, November 15th, 2016.

The Midwest Independent Film Festival is a year-round movie event in Chicago that takes place the first Tuesday of every month (delayed this month because of the Cubs World Series run and the presidential election), at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema. The festival has been recognized by *Chicago Magazine* in their "Best of Chicago" issue, and has become one of the top places for local filmmakers, producers and actors to network in the Windy City. For more details on Advertising Community Shorts night and to purchase tickets, [click here](#). [18]



First Tuesdays with the Midwest Advertising Community Shorts Showcase

Photo credit: [MidwestFilm.org](#)

Two directors, Bradley Bischoff of mcgarrybowen and Eric McCoy of McCoy|Meyer are showing off their nimble film work at the shorts showcase, and sat down with HollywoodChicago.com to talk about what to expect.



Bradley Bischoff, Director of "Lady of the House"

Director Bradley Bischoff is one of the rising stars in the Chicago film scene, with many short films playing major festivals, including the Chicago International, Cannes and Montecatini. He recently was named to *New City* Newspaper's FILM 50 for 2016, and will soon be starting production on his first feature film, "The Grasshopper."



'Lady of the House,' Directed by Bradley Bischoff

Photo credit: Bradley Bischoff

"Lady of the House" is a poignant exploration of the decisions that are made when children are to be raised, complicating a career in the arts. It features Bischoff's sister-in-law, singer Karina Villarreal, and is making its World Premiere at the showcase.

HollywoodChicago.com: What was the inspiration for this short film, beside the fact that your sister-in-law is an actual opera singer?

Bradley Bischoff: I was inspired to make this film after my partner Mirella and I had a child last year, and began struggling with traditional patriarchal roles. There a song by Kate Bush, 'This Woman's Work.' And there is a line of lyrics which go, 'I know you have a little life in you yet, I know have a lot of strength left.'

That is a song about a woman becoming a mother – a rite of passage that I feel is so often overlooked by our society – it is expected of women. We see the happy photos on Facebook, and the smiles at family parties. But we do not see the countless hours of endless days that go into the role. Yes, it is fulfilling, but I believe there a song inside that remains unsung...at least for the moment. As a parent, you must learn to become selfless, and that is a very trying path to walk that isn't talked about much.

HollywoodChicago.com: The characters in your short films always seem to be find themselves in circumstances where they clearly don't fit. What fascinates you about this theme and why do you think it keeps coming up?

Bischoff: My belief is that people are obsessed with their shadows. We often live one way, but long for another. This thread weaves throughout the majority of my films, as I tend to focus on character-driven content, as the ordinary becomes extraordinary... usually over the course of one day.

HollywoodChicago.com: You are on the precipice of shooting your first feature film, 'The Grasshopper.' How much more preparation is necessary in developing a feature over a short? And beyond financing, at what point in the process have you been running into the situations that you know the least about?

Bischoff: If it were easy, everyone would do it. And if the films were good, everyone would see them. Making movies has become more obtainable with the available technology, but that doesn't mean the stories are being told with watchful eyes. To oversee the arc of a story over an hour and a half is one of the most difficult ventures I've worked on. Part of you has to let yourself become available to the intangibles – there is so much you can prepare your baby for the world. Eventually, you have to let go of the bike and let them ride. We all learn by falling down a bit and that's okay.

HollywoodChicago.com: When you need 'cinema therapy,' which director do you turn to for inspiration, and why do you think their work in effective in soothing a creative block or some other problem?

Bischoff: Francis Ford Coppola and Leos Carax. Try putting those two in a blender and drinking that cocktail. That's the drunk I want to achieve. With a dusting on the rim of the glass with Sidney Lumet.

**Eric McCoy, Director of “My Day”**

Eric McCoy is a Los Angeles director/producer – originally from Chicago – who founded the commercial agency McCoy|Meyer, with Justus Meyer. As a filmmaker, he has done many notable film shorts and music videos, including “Carpe Millennium,” “My Best Friend’s Death,” and the team has just completed their first video assignment for Atlantic Records.



‘My Day,’ Directed by Eric McCoy

Photo credit: McCoy|Meyer

“My Day” is a McCoy-directed music video for musician Devin Kirtz, whose 84 year old grandmother performed in as the lead character.

HollywoodChicago.com: What about the personality of Devin Kirtz’s grandmother made her perfect to perform the hip senior so effectively?

Eric McCoy: Sylvia is such a natural, I’m frankly surprised it took her 84 years to have her breakout role. We’d originally thought about having her do one bit in a larger montage about people living their day to the fullest. But after meeting her, it became clear we needed to re-think our story and make the entire video about her. This is a woman who literally jumped out of a plane to celebrate her birthday this year.

HollywoodChicago.com: How did the video play out in the world?

McCoy: ‘Foxy Grammy’ became an overnight sensation even before the video came out – a behind-the-scenes photo of Sylvia drinking champagne in the kiddie pool went viral, to the tune of about 35 million views. Foxy Grammy seemed to capture the national mood at the time, that you’re never too old to seize the day and start new. The momentum ended up landing us a premiere on MTV.com, where it debuted at Number One.

HollywoodChicago.com: You’ve done a number of music videos. Since the heyday of the art form was close to over 30 years ago, what creatively can be done to stand out these days?

McCoy: While the medium has changed, the art form is still strong. I think about examples like OK Go’s videos, which were born out of not having a traditional budget. They had to get creative, and ended up with something that – I think even they would argue – was cooler than anything a million bucks could have bought them. I also think that as we begin to take YouTube stats more seriously, you’ll start to see the budget pendulum swing back. We’re already seeing the digital ad space begin to grow, and I think music videos will follow suit.

HollywoodChicago.com: McCoy|Meyer is now four years old. What pieces of video or film work can you point towards, that evolved you forward?

McCoy: Each year feels like it brings something new and exciting for us. We won an American Advertising Award for our Hot Wheels series last year, the year before we did a 15-festival tour with our short film, “My Best Friend’s Death.”

Our very first project together was a low-budget music video. We had to find all sorts of creative ways to make it for no money. We scouted every diner in a sixty mile radius of LA, went to rehearsal studios to recruit dancers, and put together thirteen locations over the course of two weeks. The project ended up receiving a Letter of Recognition from the US Congress, and is still one of the most rewarding films we’ve ever made.

HollywoodChicago.com: How about your commercial work?

McCoy: Justus [Meyer] and I have been taking our brand of comedy to the commercial world pretty hard. We just delivered our 85th video, and things don't look to be slowing anytime soon. We also landed European representation this year – as a result of “My Day” – and shot our first commercial in London for Listerine. It documents the morning routine of a stuntwoman and a professional breakdancer.

HollywoodChicago.com: You are a Chicagoan through and through, having grown up here. As a transplant to L.A., how do you keep the Chicago in you strong?

McCoy: First of all, I think if the World Series proved anything, it's that we're all Chicagoans now. I generally have a lot of folks on my crew from Chicago, not necessarily by design, they just happen to be the most easygoing and dedicated people I know. There are so many ways that being a ‘Chicago Guy’ affects my daily life in L.A. There can be a lot of big personalities in the industry, and growing up in Chicago taught me how to get along with people from all different walks of life. This comes in handy when we've all got to come together to make something awesome.

HollywoodChicago.com: What is upcoming for McCoy|Meyer, and how far ahead do you plan beyond projects that are already in the house?

McCoy: We just shot our first video for Atlantic Records, which will be premiering later this year. It features a 1960's biplane and one badass 11 year-old girl. We've got a few more ads coming out for OxiClean and Galderma. And finally, we're writing our first feature script together, so there is certainly more to come.

For a 2016 interview of Bradley Bischoff by Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, [CLICK HERE](#). [19]

For a 2015 interview of Eric McCoy by Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, [CLICK HERE](#). [20]

The Midwest Independent Film Festival Presents the Advertising Community Shorts Showcase on Tuesday, November 15th, 2016, at the Landmark Century Centre Cinema, 2828 North Clark Street, Chicago. The Midwest Independent Film Festival screens on the First Tuesday every month until November, followed by their “Best of the Midwest” Awards in December. [Click here](#). [21] for details about the festival. For more information about McCoy|Meyer, [click here](#). [22]



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