

Gabriel Doss ('17)

Education

- Wesleyan University, Middletown CT
- May 2017
- Bachelor of Arts Candidate,
- Major: Film Studies Current GPA: 3.86/4.00

Film Production Skill Set:

- Computer: Final Cut Pro 7, Final Cut Pro X, CeltX, Final Draft 8
- Production: Screenwriting, producing, pre-production, cinematography, directing, assistant directing, sound, editing.
- Other: Quick learner, detail-oriented, meets deadlines, experienced with pushing projects to completion.

Relevant Experience

Wesleyan Film Project, Wesleyan University May 2014 - Present

Director of Production

- Initiated a 7-person student group with the stated goal of providing film production experiences for all interested students on campus.
- Accrued \$9,500 in funding from the Student Budget Committee, used to purchase a full set of film production equipment.
- Spearheaded the group's film production procedure through producing a short film and music video last semester.
- Organized 3 film projects for the current semester, while currently producing roughly 14 projects.
- Managed the storage of the film equipment and kept track of who is checking out equipment when.
- Scheduled gear reservations, so that different projects did not conflict and all screenplay applicants could be accommodated.

"This is Why" Campaign Promotional Video, Wesleyan University Jan. 2014

Editor and Cinematographer

- Constructed an interview with the New York Executive of Peer Health Exchange, Wesleyan alum.
- Compiled B roll and made artistic decisions regarding the flow of the images and interview dialogue.
- Assisted with cinematography during an interview with a student entrepreneur.
- Ran the camera, responsible for framing and lighting decisions.

CIEE Leadership Academy, Accra, Ghana

Summer 2013

Student

- Lived with a homestay family for one month near the University of Ghana in West Africa.

- Volunteered for 60 hours at Future Leaders, an educational center for children in Accra, and tutored fifteen students in English.
- Took courses at the university on the local dialect, the African slave trade leadership, and cultural immersion skills.

Film Consideration Club, Portland High School October 2012 – May 2013

Vice President

- Met with three faculty members in order to revive a long dormant film-viewing club.
- Held bi-weekly film screenings followed by critical group discussions.
- Led a critical discussion on the 1976 dark comedy Network, prepared questions to encourage enthusiastic conversation.

New England Film Academy, South Portland Summers 2010 and 2011

Student

- Participated in screenwriting, directing, cinematography, and editing at a two-week film production intensive in Maine.
- Screenwriting for four days, shooting for three days and editing for three days during each session.
- All films were screened at a local university as part of the culminating event.

Selected Projects

Head Space (2014) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKssr-YMW5k>

- Wrote, produced, directed, starred in, and edited a dark, ten-minute, psychological thriller.
- Shot with black-and-white cinematography, incorporating expressive compositions through lighting and contrast.

Ribbon (2012) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkZHAJ27KDs>

- Wrote, produced, and directed a surreal, five-minute thriller for college applications.
- Led to acceptance to New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and Wesleyan University.

The Evolution of Man (2012)

- Wrote a feature-length screenplay in the summer of 2012. A romantic comedy drama with an unconventional ending.

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Project Proposal

1. Provide a brief overview of the organization for which you will intern or program/project you are developing.

Jacob Sussman and I are planning to produce a 10-15 minute documentary about Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi, a Bolivian organization founded in 1992 with the goal of providing top-quality care for Bolivian wildlife affected by illegal animal trafficking and educating the public on the preservation of wildlife through programming and volunteer work. To produce this film, I will spend six weeks on site at Parque Ambue Ari, a 2000-acre facility near Trinidad, Bolivia that cares for over twenty species of animals, including howler monkeys, tortoises, pumas and jaguars. Jacob discovered this organization through a high school friend of his who has spent two sessions at Parque Ambue Ari. You can learn more about Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi on their website: <http://www.intiwarayassi.org/index.php?id=25>.

My film will explore the work of Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi by interweaving footage of the park's diverse wildlife and staff with interviews conducted with Ambue Ari's staff of forty volunteers. The volunteer staff is largely international, and I will explore the varying motivations and ideologies that have drawn people to the park from across the world. The final product will be submitted to multiple film festivals as well as distributed online in support of the organization's upcoming fundraising campaign.

2. Briefly provide details of the internship or experience, including responsibilities and tasks.

I will be spending six days out of every week working as a volunteer, interacting intimately with various monkeys and felines, facilitating exercise and feeding. I will also be assisting on construction projects that enrich the functionality of the park. More information about volunteer work at the park can be found on their website: <http://www.intiwarayassi.org/index.php?id=61>.

As far as the composition of the documentary goes, I will be shooting footage on a daily basis, collecting hours of nature-oriented B-roll and interview footage with park staff members, volunteers, and Bolivian natives. In total, I intend to collect over 100 hours of footage. Jacob and I will be operating with two DSLR cameras, tripods, a Steadicam, and a full set of sound recording equipment. Upon my return home, I will immediately commence a four-week intensive editing schedule. I intend to accomplish at least 200 hours of editing between July 5th and August 1st. Combined with the six weeks spent on site, this summer experience will take up ten weeks. This will give me enough time

to complete editing a rough cut of my final product. Final touches and submissions to film festivals will take place during the following winter break. During our collaboration on the 'This is Why' video campaign, Jacob and I established an editing workflow that will allow us to collaborate between our respective homes in Boston and Portland, Maine, as the Final Cut Pro X editing software makes this remarkably simple to do over the internet. We also expect to meet in person on several occasions, as the distance between our homes is only a two-hour drive.

Jacob and I understand that our separate Summer Experience Grant applications may lead to one of us getting funded, but not the other. In this case, we are both prepared to take on this project independently as we both own film production gear, but collaboration is more likely to result in a stronger finished piece.

3. How have you communicated with the employer and determined mutual interest?

We had an extensive Skype interview with the Secretary of International Relations for Inti Wara Yassi, Jon Cassidy. Jon demonstrated great encouragement with regard to our project. He provided us with a comprehensive summary of the logistical details we would need to be aware of in organizing this trip, and has enthusiastically offered to be our sponsor. Inti Wara Yassi funds its wildlife preserves primarily through money from volunteers, and is thus always excited to take new people on, especially people who would be able to raise awareness for the park's mission through documentary filmmaking. My last obstacle to this project is attaining funding through the Summer Experience Grant.

4. How will this experience enhance or broaden your career goals?

Documentary films portray the compelling narratives and characters that populate the real world, and can motivate audiences toward social change. Statistics and conventional education rarely move people to action, but an engaging film with an emotional appeal can move mountains. My life has been profoundly affected by works like *Restrepo* and *The Act of Killing*, films that illuminate the injustices rife in the forgotten parts of the world. Documentaries tell us that the issues of the world do not exist merely in some abstract, intellectual sense. The Summer Experience Grant will allow me to create a piece of filmmaking that will confront my viewer with the human realities of animal rehabilitation in Bolivia, focusing on the mire of illegal trafficking. I want to experience the tangible feeling that my craft is having a directly positive impact on the lives of fellow humans and animals, as well as open up the doors of my career to future social impact-oriented documentary

projects.

I decided to devote my life to filmmaking because of cinema's power to foster an emotional response in its audience. In middle school, I would take advantage of free time during the summer to watch at least three films every day. I quickly discovered the directors that I loved, and started spearheading independent projects at every opportunity. I was a student at a summer filmmaking intensive in high school for two years and for my college applications I shot a short film that led to my acceptance to NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and Wesleyan University. I chose to pursue a degree in Film Studies at Wesleyan because I deeply value its rigorous focus on film theory. The five courses I have taken thus far have changed the way I think about and view films, as well as given me numerous ideas for my own career.

The one aspect of the Film Studies department that is lacking is the production experience component. To help fill this chasm, Jacob Sussman and I started an organization last semester called the Wesleyan Film Project, which has received \$9,500 in funding from the Student Budget Committee, all of which has gone toward purchasing multiple sets of film production gear and funding any and all projects that interested students submit to us. I was responsible for trailblazing our production procedure and in our first year, we have gone into production on roughly twenty projects. By supplementing our Film Studies education with the Film Project and independently produced films, we've been able to find opportunities to flex our production muscles, but never on the scale of professional work. The excursion to Bolivia will change that.

My production work over winter break made me realize I want to professionally pursue documentary filmmaking. I shot a short video for my closest friend about his Jamaican ancestry and experiences as a mixed-race American. In compiling B-roll footage and editing the video, I found myself making constant critical decisions regarding the linearity and flow of dialogue, as well as the sequence of images and videos I was presenting my audience with. It opened my eyes to the artistic potential involved in doing justice to the integrity of one's subject. In my work with Jacob on Wesleyan's 'This Is Why' video campaign, I learned the benefits of collaboration. We were able to develop a mutually beneficial workflow, and ensure the formation of the most effective possible product. I know collaborative work will play a pivotal role in my career and want to accumulate as many experiences working with other talented artists as possible. The skills I gain from these types of experiences will follow me through my filmmaking career, whether I go into screenwriting, directing, editing, or continue to travel abroad making documentaries.

The kind of altruism Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi facilitates will provide continuity with efforts that have followed me through my life. During the

summer before college I spent a month in Accra, Ghana and volunteered at an alternative education program called Future Leaders. I spent several hours every day teaching English and Math to 6-10 year old children and felt firsthand the rewards of working for social change. In college, I've spent time working with the United Student Labor Action Coalition, fighting for the rights of custodial workers on campus. I want to explore the effects of Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi's altruism in Bolivia, as well as depict the kind of people who strive to enact this sort of change. I will investigate how the staff members and volunteers at Parque Ambue Ari got there and why they do what they do, a process that will no doubt force me to examine my own aspirations. Most importantly, this film will raise awareness for the noble efforts of Comunidad Inti Wara Yassi, helping to grow their protective influence in South America and ensure the efficacy of their work. Because they are changing the world, I will be able to change the world, and the finished product will enable me to keep doing this kind of work long into my career. It is critical that I expand my filmmaking horizons to international environments at this stage in my career so that I can leave the protective bubble of campus life in order to document worlds my audience has not yet seen. I am planning to spend my next semester of college abroad in New Delhi, India, where I will study the structure of Bollywood filmmaking in an effort to deepen my understanding of international cinema. The Parque Ambue Ari project will no doubt be a crucial stepping-stone to that experience, helping me to become a more competent world citizen. The finished product I will create at the park will surpass in professionalism every other project I have produced thus far and make me a legitimate competitor in the professional documentary arena.

Spending six weeks in a Bolivian wildlife preserve will also broaden my sociological and ecological knowledge bases, allowing me to go forward in my career as an intelligent and informed filmmaker. In particular, my love of the natural world draws me to Parque Ambue Ari. I want to follow in the footsteps of Terrence Malick, one of my favorite directors, in depicting the impossible beauty of nature. Even he would be jealous of my close contact with sub-Amazonian flora and its inhabiting critters. I can't wait to share this experience with my peers and the world through my artistic medium.