

ARTS ENTERTAINMENT AND MINISTRY

FOR TODAY'S CHRISTIAN

JANUARY  
2019

# creative motion

## RHOADS TO SUCCESS

Carnegie Hall Singer and  
Film Actor Tom Rhoads

## ZACH IS BACK

Zach Drew's IGBY International Ministry  
and Return to TV with Andrew Bellers

## FIRST LADY

Nancy Stafford and Corbin Bernsen  
Motion Picture in Post-Production

## MEL NOVAK

Tough-Guy Actor and Minister of the Gospel

Brian Godawa on Horror Genre  
Lia K Catallo's Debut CD Released  
Devon Burroughs' Spiritual X Warfare

# ramblings

CREATIVE MOTION MAGAZINE NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Creative Motion Magazine / January 2019 #3 Issue / Kevin Scott Collier, Publisher, Kristen L. Collier, Editor / Phone: (616) 846-1155 Website: michristiantalent.weebly.com

## Young Man is Standing Tall on Tim Allen Sitcom



Jet Jurgensmeyer stands in front of a Last Man Standing poster.

After being axed by ABC last year, Tim Allen's sitcom *Last Man Standing* made its debut on the Fox entertainment network on September 28. "I am having the time of my life on *Last Man Standing*!" Jet Jurgensmeyer, who plays Boyd Baxter, told *Creative Motion*. "It's so much fun to come to work every day."

The program's return episode scored over 8 million viewers, and subsequently, risen to nearly 11 million. While critics in the media assaulted the show, observing it skipped over to Fox, which is welcoming to conservative and faith-based models, *Last Man Standing* is standing taller than it did on ABC. Cynical writers noted the show dipped to 6 million viewers at one time, but failed to mention that the number was still higher than the programs' average viewership on the previous network. The program continues its popularity for a seventh season.

"The cast is amazingly talented," Jurgensmeyer said. "I learn so much from them. The show is really all about family and each episode has a great message."

### NYC and Mich. Christmas Connections

It took a NYC Christmas party for Detroit area natives Daniel Knudsen and Tom Rhoads, who now resides in the Big Apple and who is the feature story of this *Creative Mo-*

tion issue, to meet for the first time. Knudsen, owner of Crystal Creek Media, which has produced several movies and a mini-series, flew to the Big Apple December 6, for a private Mastermedia Christmas Party. Rhoads, who had his Carnegie Hall debut November 30, and his feature film debut December 8, attended the party together.

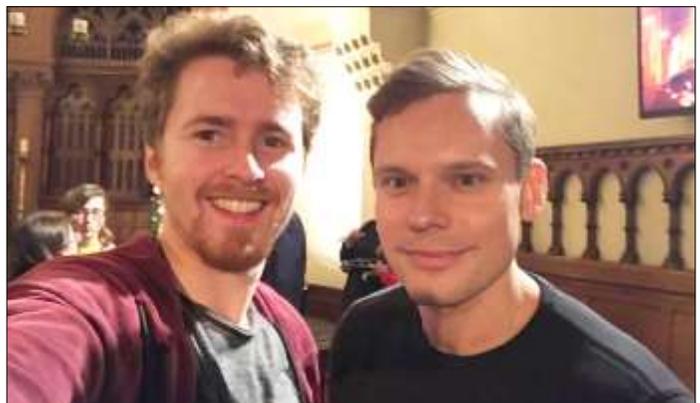
"Celebrating Christmas in New York with like-minded artists and entertainers was a gift in, and of, itself," Knudsen, an award-winning director and actor, told *Creative Motion*. "Tom Rhoads and I had a chance to share stories and fellowship at the event."

Rhoads is a graduate of one of the top acting schools in the world, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. He said, "We had a wonderful time at the party and met a lot of great people."

Rhoads also said there were exciting things in the works for him career-wise in NYC, but that if an opportunity presented itself, he could "always come back to Michigan for a couple of months to do a movie and sublet my room here in NYC when away," adding, "I know the winters in Michigan can be pretty brutal, and that I don't miss."

Knudsen said Mastermedia's east coast Vice President, Jonathan Graham, hosted the private Christmas party in New York City for entertainers involved with the organization. "Mastermedia has been a great encouragement in my own faith," Knudsen added, and, "I appreciate the fact that they reach out to young media professionals."

Regarding singing at the renowned Carnegie Hall, Rhoads said, "That night was so magical and one I will



Daniel Knudsen and Tom Rhoads attend Christmas party in the Big Apple.



Above, left: Lakshmi Peter, Raina Sunil, Sheeba Jacob, Nicholas Jacob. Right: Craig Bruss with actor/pastor, Mel Novak.

never forget,” and he expressed his thankfulness and gratitude to all those praying for him. “God is so good, and I could feel his total anointing.”

## Jacob Receives Christian Media Award

On Sunday, December, 9, 2018, actress and producer Sheeba Jacob, who is also an Associate Producer of the Michigan produced feature, *Faith Under Fire*, received a surprise from the World Malayalee (Indian) Council, Houston Province when she was awarded for her contributions to faith-based media.

“I never expected this,” said the producer, who gives “all glory and honor to God.”

Jacob was escorted to the awards by son, Nicholas, who came home from college to honor his mother’s award. The award-recipient expressed much “love and thanks to the World Malayalee Council and Women Forum of Houston Province, for presenting me this wonderful opportunity to be awarded for dedication to community and social welfare, through faith-based media.”

Jacob, a versatile actress, producer, model, radio host and women’s empowerment mentor, connected to several movies in production around the country, said, “God was working behind the scenes,” in regards to this great blessing. “It is an honor and privilege to receive this prestigious award. I pray that God continues to guide me accordingly, as per His will.”

Lakshmi Peter, WMC Women’s Forum President for the Houston Province and founder of the Miss Malayalee USA Pageant, said, “I love creating such venues for women, and it’s a cause I believe in, and try to adhere to, all the time, whether it’s beauty pageants, talent shows, or fundraising for education of young girls.”

The World Malayalee Council is a community-based organization that gives many awards, including some to women from different walks of life.

## Bruss’ Film Mixes God and Gangsters

Craig Bruss has his hands full in a gangster movie currently in production, *The Match-Stick Flame*, a gangster

movie with Christian overtones about faith, hope, love, sacrifice, revenge, and forgiveness.

“*The Match-Stick Flame* is the first film I have written, produced, and also am starring in,” Bruss, a native of Muskego, Wisconsin, told CM. “I grew up with mid-western Christian family values of working hard, and having faith that good things will come to those who pray.”

The action-packed thriller tells the tale of two police detectives who come from shattered families and yearn for a traditional family. One officer is a war veteran suffering from PTSD.

The film stars veteran actor Mel Novak, who is featured in this issue, and a Christian pastor in real life best known for his role as Stick, in Bruce Lee’s *Game of Death*.

Novak plays an evil mob boss named Match-Stick who gets out of prison and starts creating havoc. His son, Dalton, played by Craig Bruss, is a dedicated crime-fighting detective who wants to take down the mob all by himself, after his father kidnaps his fiancé.

The film also features Richard Tyson, Yan Birch, Katherine Norland, Matthew Ewald, Alexandra Kovacs and Ray La Rochelle, among others.

Craig Bruss began his acting career in Chicago in 2001, however, his interest in the industry dated back further.

“I became interested in acting when I was a young child,” Bruss said. “I wrote on the family home basement wall that I was going to be a movie star. I have been pursuing film in Los Angeles since 2010.”

A talented and ambitious gentleman, Bruss enrolled in many acting classes to refine his skill. Among his credits, Bruss was the lead actor in a karate commercial, and a supporting actor in films such as *The Toy Soldiers* and *Samurai Cop 2*. He also obtained “stunt experience” in the Bollywood film *Lie*.

“I would love the opportunity to show the world my full potential,” Bruss said. “I am hopeful for the chance to fulfill my childhood dreams.”

The project maintains a GoFundMe page, with all funds raised used for the film’s production expenses. A movie trailer is available to see on the page.

“We can't make this movie without your help,” Bruss explained. “We would be eternally grateful if you could please make a donation. Whatever you can afford to give will mean a lot to us.”

[gofundme.com/the-matchstick-flame](http://gofundme.com/the-matchstick-flame)

## Faith Under Fire Trailer Released

Generation Courage, a Michigan production company donating all net proceeds to charity, just released their debut trailer for Faith Under Fire. This is the first movie for the fledgling company owned by Melissa Kerley, a school principal and red carpet/fashion correspondent for CM, and corresponding fashion magazine recently announced. This is also the first time Kevin Sorbo and Dean Cain appear in the same film since God's Not Dead.

“The trailer for Faith Under Fire is a reflection of all the hard-work, dedication, talent, and level of professionalism of the cast and crew,” said Kerley.

Because she is donating all of her company's net proceeds to charity, in this instance The Melanoma Research Foundation, Kerley has also has launched an Indiegogo campaign to raise an additional \$20,000 to professionally finish Faith Under Fire.

“We need a real Kingdom Effort to bring this to as wide an audience as possible, and professionally finish it, so as to give it the best chance for a theatrical release,” Kerley said. “We believe that this movie, when finished correctly, could easily turn that \$20,000 into more than \$1 million. She added, “This film has the potential to reach a certain level of success far beyond what I imagined. The trailer is just a teaser to what is to come of the final project. Thank you for your help and prayers.”

## 'Hedgehog' Actress Does the Talking

Pre-teen Michigan actress, Karina Martinez, age 11, starred in Joel Paul Reisig's Andy the Talking Hedgehog, opposite Dean Cain and Tara Reid.

Martinez told CM, “I was so excited to star in Andy the Talking Hedgehog, it was a dream come true! I was so happy, I made cupcakes for everyone!”

Martinez, who was born with a rare medical condition called MCADD, in which those afflicted with it cannot burn fat for energy, has become an advocate for the illness. “It's ok to have MCADD!” she said on a CDC blog at age five, “You can do whatever you want!”

What Martinez wants is to encourage and inspire others to follow their dreams. Her dream is to be on TV, so CM is praying this cute Hedgehog movie opens that door. “I was really excited that Dean Cain ate the lemon cupcake I made. I made sure I got that picture!” she told CM. The former Superman actor, called “a unicorn” (meaning lacking in Hollywood pretense) in the fall CM, by another young Michigan co-star, Tenley Kellogg (bottom, left) in their upcoming Faith Under Fire.

The Hedgehog star said she enjoyed working with Cain. “He was a lot of fun to be around! And he made me laugh a lot!” She added, “Everyone was so fun to work with, I had the best cast and crew, and director, Joel Reisig.” The eleven year old Martinez also said, “Tara Reid was really nice, we practiced our lines together and it was fun! I just love filming, it's my dream.”

Martinez is currently auditioning for future roles. “She enjoys her auditions as much as receiving the role,” said mother, Tara Vicenico, who manages her daughter's social media and acting career. “It's the best feeling in the world,” the young actress said, “I love what I do!”

## Cross Lights New Digs

Bill McKendry, founder of HAVEN | a creative hub, in Grand Haven, MI, is not only in the Advertising Hall of Achievement, one of the most successful non-profit ad executives in the world, but also co-founder of Compass College of Cinematic Arts, a Christian film college in Grand Rapids.

McKendry shared a photo after Thanksgiving, showing a large, lighted cross atop his business.

“We are blessed to work in a beautiful space here at HAVEN | a creative hub (second floor of this stunning building).” McKendry and his team have only been in their new digs for a few months, celebrating their Grand



Left: Faith Under Fire leads, Tenley Kellogg and Nick Vlassopoulos. Middle: cross on Haven | a creative hub. Right: Karina Martinez with Dean Cain.

Opening, May 15, 2018. “We’re also very blessed to have a landlord who is unafraid to share His light with the world around us,” McKendry posted.

Known for creating successful campaigns for organizations like Ark Encounter, World Vision, and American Express, for groundbreaking work and “world-changing initiatives,” their social media manager posted last summer, “We’re in one of those moments now and we know HAVEN was made for this.”

## Christian Fashion Mag. Announced

Creative Motion volunteers, in conjunction with red carpet and fashion correspondent, Melissa Kerley, owner of Generation Courage, and NYC beauty product specialist, Denise Loffredo, founder of Time To Shine, have just announced a new Christian magazine in the works loosely based on Vogue, “Sans the silly haute couture,” and sponsored by Xian Wear apparel (owned by the founders of Creative Motion magazine and TV, Kevin and Kristen Collier, who formerly did social media marketing for a women’s apparel company).

“I look forward to meeting everyone and seeing what the Lord does with us...and being part of your amazing team in any way that I can,” said Loffredo, an administrator for a critically-acclaimed Christian author, and also a distributor of the top skincare line in North America, Rodan + Fields, created by the makers of Proactiv.

Kerley, who will attend the Vogue conference in 2019, and several Christian media conferences, will do red carpet interviews for the upcoming magazine, with a tentative release date of spring, 2019.

This picture-heavy periodical will serve a dual purpose: eliminate the stereotype of Christians as being weird, and serve as a teaching tool to help improve the visuals in Christian movies and TV. Kristen Collier will be publisher and editor, and husband, Kevin Collier, the designer.

For more information visit: [xianwear.com/magazine](http://xianwear.com/magazine)



Social Media expert, Kim Reynolds, with the ladies in her family, Thanksgiving.

## Top Social Media Advice

“Probably the most important tip that I can give producers is to start early with their social media marketing,” social media expert Kim Reynolds told CM. Reynolds helped Cloud Ten Pictures founder and CEO, Paul Lalonde, take the Left Behind Facebook page from 2,000 to over 1.4 million fans. “Kim is a pleasure to work with and truly one of the leading experts in social media,” said Lalonde (*source: kim-reynolds.com*).

Reynolds, a marketing manager at Social Media Examiner, accomplished a similar feat with Corbin Bernsen’s Christian Mingle movie, and administers Kevin Sorbo’s Facebook page, among others. She also told CM, “It’s much easier to secure P&A [Prints and Advertising] if your movie already has a social presence.”

## Online Film Academy Opens in 2019

Creative Motion TV host, Tricia Harmon, is in talks with top industry professionals to create a platform that will be a boon to Christian movies.

“The Noble Pearls Online Film Academy will offer a whole new paradigm shift in acting education,” the award-winning Grand Rapids actress/producer said.

The NPOFA will tailor classes to suit non-traditional students, and include some of top acting coaches and professionals in the world.

“Its sole purpose is to raise the standard of excellence within faith-based, family-friendly media productions,” Harmon said, by offering concise, hands-on practical instruction in the specific areas of interest. The pilot program in Michigan begins in the spring, and will be “taught by reputable, award-winning instructors.” She added that participants in the invitation-only program will “create festival worthy projects...that will be critiqued and considered for award accreditation.”

Visit online at [facebook.com/TriciaHarmontimeline](http://facebook.com/TriciaHarmontimeline).



Tricia Harmon.



Left: Emily Buckner, Melissa Kerley. Right: Denise Loffredo, Debbie Noble.

# GG JJ quotables

## Actor Richard Karn Thankful

**November 22, 2018:** Home Improvement's Richard Karn, right, with wife, Tudi Roche, posted: "Thanks to the Carrothers-Flowers family for a wonderful Thanksgiving feast."

**December 9, 2018:** Karn posted, "This was 4 years ago!!!...time flies," in regards to Roche once again starring in Shear Madness, a murder mystery comedy that opened December 5, 2018, at the New Theatre & Restaurant in Overland Park, KS.

## Actor Daniel Jeffries and Family



God bless the growing Jeffries family.

**November 22, 2018:** Michigan actor, Daniel Jeffries, posted: "Warriors! It is with the **UTMOST GRATITUDE AND THANKFULNESS** that I announce to the world the forthcoming **ARRIVAL** of the **NEWEST ADDITION** to The Warrior Clan!!! Blessings to you all!!! **HAPPY THANKSGIVING** from The Warrior Family!!!"

**December 10, 2018:** Jeffries told Creative Motion, "Breana is doing well. Trying to get a handle on the pregnancy."

And, regarding acting: "I was lead in a police comedy web series in production, Agents, lead in an action short coming out 2019, Without Grace, where I did all my own stunts, as well. And co-starred on a TV ONE series, For My Man, season five, set to release in 2019. Just shot a commercial for Ohio Lottery as a principle. And I have a Total Healthcare Commercial coming out top of 2019. Also, I am the official Rip It Energy Spokesman for the Dollar Energy Club."

## Singer and Performer Charlie Green

**November 6, 2018:** Britain's Got Talent singer, Charlie Green posted, "Some backstage photos from the Andy Williams Ozark Mountain Christmas Show," in Branson, Missouri.

**December 11, 2018:** Charlie Green, told CM:

I'd just like to say how much of an honor it is to be a part of not only a great Christmas show, but a show that celebrates the legacy of Andy Williams, he was such a musical inspiration for me growing up, and it's amazing to be standing on the stage he built, holding the same microphone he used, and performing to the people that have come to see him for many years. What an honor it is also to be sharing the stage with my friends Voices of Glory, who starred on America's Got Talent back, in 2009, and have some of the most amazing Gospel voices I've ever heard, the brilliant Moon River Band, the awesome Ice Angels, and the legendary Lennon Sisters, who have such a history with Andy, it's amazing to hear their stories of working together with 'The Boss.'

We're so thrilled that the reception for the show this year has been so great. This year's special addition of the world-class skating of the Ice Angels has proved to be a big hit, as well as the normal Christmas traditions of Jingle Bells and Happy Holidays. As always, we know the reason for all of this, to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, and this year we've made sure that Christ is the big feature of our show. We feel a responsibility to produce the best show we can possibly do, as that's what Andy would have expected from us, we hope we've done him proud."



From left: Tudi Roche, Richard Karn, Richard Carrothers.



Newest Cross Section comic.

## Artist David Miller

**December 7, 2018:** Cross Section Comics founder, David D. Miller, of Lansing, told CM:

"Here's the cover of our fourth title, Rise, slated for a spring, 2019, release. It will be the first issue of a six issue mini-series, just like we have planned for our first two previous titles, Christian Flagg and Alabaster. After the release of the first four titles, we will be releasing a 52 page graphic novel, with the characters joining forces under the name Legion of Light. Besides hitting the Midwest Comic Con Circuit for 2019."

**December 9, 2018:** Newlywed Miller posted: "...the most important person, and biggest influence in the creating, and publishing, of these titles, is my beautiful wife and Co-founder of Cross Section Comics, Colleen Miller."

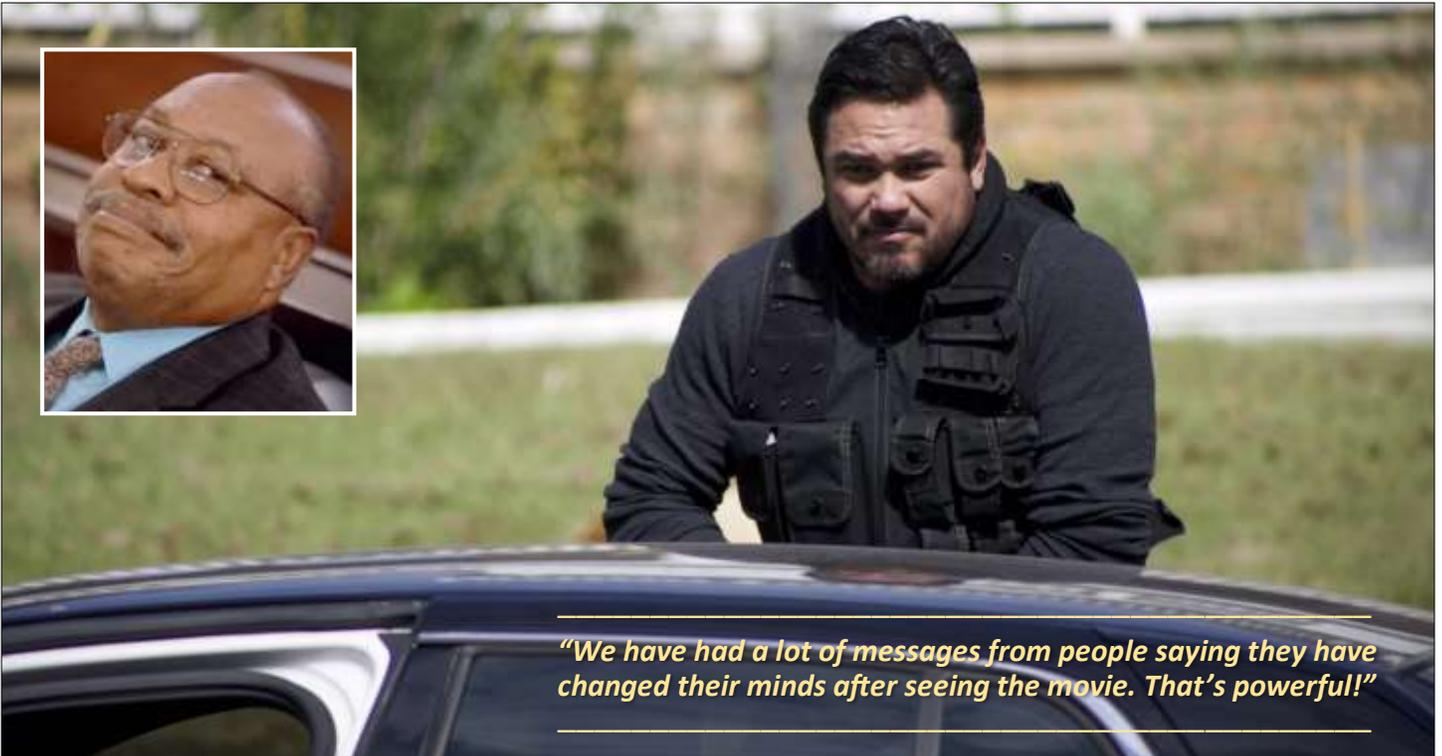


From left: Ana Bernhardt, Nadia Cole, Charlie Green, Jenna Bernhardt, Avery Cole.

# christian impact

CHRISTIAN MEDIA INFLUENCING THE CULTURE

## Theaters Dump ‘Gosnell’ to Stop Pro-Life Wave



*“We have had a lot of messages from people saying they have changed their minds after seeing the movie. That’s powerful!”*

Dean Cain stars in Gosnell: The Trial of America’s Biggest Serial Killer. Inset photo: Earl Billings as Dr. Kermit Gosnell.

Since its successful box office opening on October 12, 2018, theaters across America have been dropping and blocking ticket sales to the motion picture Gosnell: The Trial of America’s Biggest Serial Killer.

The movie grossed \$1,235,800 over its opening weekend, earning the best performance of a new film, and ranking 12th in the list of top grossing films.

Even with some theaters reporting that the film was placing sixth at their establishment, regarding ticket sales, the movie was cancelled from their playlist.

Gosnell broke into the Top Ten grossing films during its second week, but the number of theaters projecting it dropped from 668 to 480. Fifteen top multiplex theaters were among those who dumped the movie.

The disconnect isn’t due to the lack of change in the cash register; it is the change that is taking place in people’s minds concerning abortion. Thus, politics have entered the realm of the thought police.

Creative Motion contacted Ann McElhinney, a producer of the motion picture, asking if the response to the film has been changing the minds of those who are pro-abortion.

“Yes,” McElhinney said. “We have had a lot of messages from people saying they have changed their minds after seeing the movie. It’s that powerful.”

She provided many screenshots of posts on social media sites confirming the miraculous conversion.

“I drove 102 miles roundtrip to watch a movie that changed my life,” a person named Klara posted.

“My son just saw Gosnell,” someone called MissWendy posted. “Afterward, he spoke with a woman there with her two grown children. Her son said the film changed his thinking about abortion. Y’all, the media and theaters will not promote the film for this very reason.”

“Today I am pro-life,” posted a KathyZ. “After watching Gosnell and doing in-depth research, I finally understand the loopholes in late-term abortions. Please go watch Gosnell.”

“As a pro-choice promoter for the majority of my life, this movie opened my eyes,” an EricW posted. “I have had to reevaluate my position.”

The movie, produced by McElhinney, Phelim McAleer, Magdalena Segieda, John Sullivan, and Geno Taylor, is directed by Nick Searcy.

# MOVIES ON THE MOVE

INSIDE CINEMA AT THE STARTING BLOCK

## Casting a Passionate Vote for a New ‘First Lady’

By Kristen Collier

*Creative Motion Editor*

The First Lady is a movie in production by writer/director Nina May, of Renaissance Women Productions, and features Corbin Bernsen, Nancy Stafford, Benjamin Dane, Holly Vagley, and others. Stacey Dash and Jenn Gotzon Chandler play assistants to the First Lady, and Burgess Jenkins plays a political nemesis, along with his wife, Mallory, played by Tonya Christiansen. Sandra Belforte plays Department of Homeland Security under-secretary, Cameron Cooper, and Dane’s love interest. Dr. Alveda King has a cameo, and famed photographer, Barry Morgenstein, who has photographed real presidents, Trump (pre-presidency) and Netanyahu, plays The White House photographer, and was on set for some behind-the-scenes footage.

Primary production began with Texas resident, Dane, at an Oval Office replica shoot in Texas, September, 14, 2018, then moved to D.C., wrapping in early October.

Creative Motion connected with Morgenstein, Dane, Vagley, and May to find out more (May’s exclusive behind-the-scenes comments on this and her post-apocalyptic series, Daily Bread, are in the next issue).

Dane (Friday Night Lights) said his character, a widower, is the “not ready for prime time” Vice President Taylor Brooks, who must assume the presidency after an unexpected event. Brooks is in urgent need of a first lady to make the job official and win the peoples approval. But the first lady, played by Stafford, of Matlock fame, has other plans, unbeknownst to Brooks.

This isn’t your typical political fare. “It is a dramatically different comedy from writer/director Nina May,” Dane said, adding that in the hotly contested political climate the movie depicted a refreshing and lighter side of the White House.

Holly Vagley (The Sixth Sense), has been friends with director Nina May for years and plays a TV show host. “I play Tori Martinson, a close friend of the first lady—realized perfectly by Nancy Stafford, by the way,” Vagley, a Christian recording artist as well as actress, said. “My second day on set, Nina wanted to flesh out Tori a little more and decided to make Tori a TV journalist, as well.” This led to an extra day on set and



Actress Holly Vagley. Photo courtesy of Barry Morgenstein.

Vagley's favorite scene, in which she interviewed the first lady on her morning show.

Dane called co-star Stafford, "gracious, beautiful, and outstanding," saying, "I had the extreme pleasure of working with both Nancy and Corbin. Nancy is a dynamic professional and it is a joy to see her work," he said of this "captivating" onscreen actress who "had a grueling schedule." Stafford, as the lead character, Katherine Morales, is forced to overcome difficult situations, but does it "with elegance and moral fortitude."

As the first lady, Stafford had few scenes where she wasn't working, Dane said. "Yet she was so gracious behind scenes and on-set. We worked together a lot and she was always kind and encouraging. But I saw intense emotion and casual comedy. Nina picked the perfect actress to tackle this very complex lady."

Best known for playing a beautiful, classy, intelligent defense attorney on *Matlock*, Stafford is quite experienced in her role as a confident leading woman.

Dane called *First Lady* a "dramatically different comedy," saying, "I think women will love this story, because it is about a strong woman who makes a difference in the lives she comes in contact with."

Stafford's character, Morales is "not perfect," but "in an age where we are disappointed by our political figures, this *First Lady* gives us hope and an outcome we can cheer for," he told CM. "I think people will be surprised by" this comedy with "a lot of heart and endear-

ing characters."

Vagley gave high marks to the entire cast and crew. "Can't praise Nina highly enough," she said. "The creatives, crew, all the actors—Benjamin Dane, Tonya Christensen, Burgess Jenkins, and especially Corbin Bernsen—giving, a pleasure to work with."

Bernsen plays the mysterious Max, a bodyguard traveling with a foreign princess. He was a "refreshingly honest guy and my new hero!" said Dane, adding that, as an actor, he learned much on each new project, but that he especially learned a lot from the former *Psych* star. "I had the opportunity to talk to [Corbin] about his projects," Dane said. "He is not only an actor, but a writer/director and producer, so he is constantly working. He is a machine! I was curious at what drives him and why he wants to be a filmmaker. He just wants to tell real stories. Sometimes they are stories of faith, and sometimes not, but I think his faith always plays a part."

Morgenstein, on-set for part of the Virginia shoot and who did the behind-the-scenes photos, got to drive Bernsen back to his hotel, since they were staying at the same one. "It was a bit surreal," he said, having watched the actor so long ago, in his L.A. Law days.

The famed NYC headshot photographer has taken pictures of Paul McCartney, Michael Jackson, Sammy Davis, Jr., and just about every on-air host on Fox News. He said director May was "one of the nicest people he'd ever met," and that he always seemed to somehow appear

## Michael J. Patterson's Not-So-Secret Service

SAG actor Michael J. Patterson, who knows the Chinese martial art, Wushu, and Korean martial arts, Tang Soo Do Moo Duk Kwan and Tae Kwon Do, played an agent assigned a very special detail in *The First Lady*. "I play the role of Secret Service Agent Michael, detailed to the First Lady only," he said. Patterson, who starred opposite Jenn Gotzon Chandler in 2016's *Love Different*, said, "I think Nina cast me due to my athletic and martial arts background," the actor said, laughing. Patterson is also in May's post-apocalyptic show, *Daily Bread* (2017).

Regarding the highly praised writer/director, May, Patterson said, "She's an amazing second mom, basically, and I'm thankful to be a part



Michael J. Patterson

of her quest in the extremely difficult business of filmmaking."

This rugged, hard-working, D.C. native, a track and field sprinter and hurdler of many years, is used to overcoming any hurdle life puts in

front of him, and encourages others to keep running their race (Hebrews 12:1-3). "Pursue your dreams," he said, "no matter the adversity, because God birthed in you a destiny that is both pleasing to Him, and yourself." Patterson knows what he's talking about, having had several chances to compete in Olympic trials, spanning from 1996 to 2004. But injuries forestalled his Olympic goals as a sprinter and hurdler, though he still trains.

Patterson gives thanks to God for the many close friends and family that support his mission in the challenging entertainment industry.

"Trust in Christ," Patterson, who has John 3:16 under his email signature, said. "He loves you more than you'd ever know!"



Some First Lady cast and crew. From left: Alissa Dellork, Parke May, Tom Schiller, Colby May, Cheryl Felicia Rhoads, Michael J. Patterson, Sherlene Bradbury, Stacey Dash, Benjamin Dane, Nina May, Nancy Stafford, Mark Arnoldi, Melissa temme, Dick Sculze, Nancy Schulze, Clayton Spade, Holly Vagley, Alveda King, Gabriela Kostadinova, Lilliana Korenczuk Shulgach, James E. Whitley III, Bellina Lambdin, Karn Ford. Photo by Barry Morgenstein.

on-camera when doing her behind-the-scenes shoots, but that he was going to stick with his wheelhouse, photography. Morgenstein totes a gun in *Daily Bread*, which is on Upliftv Network, Sundays at 8 PM, and channel 379 on Direct TV (Check local listings for other times. You can also stream and download it at [RWPvideo.org](http://RWPvideo.org).)

Regarding the highly praised May, Vagley said, “I’m a great admirer of her talent, spirit, and persistence...and lovingly call her: La Force, because she is a force of nature. I’m an actor first and foremost, but also a writer, and was interested in working behind the camera. Nina gave me the chance to expand as a First and Second AD on some smaller projects for her, and I loved it.”

Vagley said May gave her an early draft of *First Lady* years ago. “I was immediately taken with it,” she said. “Absolutely charming, funny, and timely.”

Vagley added that May received feedback over two summers and told her last summer they were going to commence production. Due to prior commitments, Vagley was unavailable during the time of the shoot. “Nina, being who she is—wonderful—offered me another role that dove-tailed perfectly,” Vagley said. “I flew in from overseas at 5:45 A.M. on a Friday, and was on set Saturday morning.”

Dane got involved with the movie after co-hosting the Global Media Summit in Dallas this past May, where Stafford was a keynote speaker. “My producer partner, writer/director Andrew Librizzi, had spoken to Nancy Stafford as she endorsed our film, *Beyond The Farthest Star*,” he said, regarding his “powerful” new film released several months ago, after a 30-city theatrical last year.

The Texas based actor was approached by May, a conference attendee, and Stafford, who asked if he’d be interested in a role. “Nina described the story and I was immediately hooked!” Dane said, adding that “Nancy was also

set to play the title role.” Then tragedy struck. “That same day, my manager was rushed to the hospital, because of a heart attack,” Dane said. “She went into surgery the following week and never woke up during recovery. So, it was a devastating few weeks after the summit and the film wasn’t on the front burner.”

But the determined May held her course. “Nina sent me the script and kept after me,” Dane said. “She also found an Oval Office replica set in East Texas and planned to shoot several of my scenes with my aides in Texas. Nina needed actors to represent the president’s aides, so four of the Texas actors from a group my deceased manager had formed were utilized.” They shot for two days in Texas, then in D.C. with the rest of the cast.

Dane said he met Dr. Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the Values Voter Summit when he screened his movie, *Beyond The Farthest Star*. He said, “She is a presence! So, I was thrilled when Nina men-



Photo by Barry Morgenstein.

From left: Nancy Stafford, Corbin Bernsen, Gabriela Kostadinova.

tioned she would be working on the film.” Describing Dr. King’s time on set, Dane said, “We had a vigorous shoot one day, with a lot of extras and a demanding schedule. [Dr. King] was a trouper and still maintained her character wit. I love this woman. She has done so much for our nation and people.”

About Stacey Dash, Dane said, “Stacey is just as beautiful in person as she is on screen. I only worked with her occasionally on the film, but I had to tell her how much I appreciated her stand for her beliefs. She bravely stood when others criticized her for doing so.”

When asked if First Lady was overtly Christian, or dealt with Christian values, Dane said it was a clean family comedy made by people of faith who felt a need for more family-oriented fare. “It is just a lot of fun that includes some dramatic and tender moments, as well,” and that,

“It’s a great story, with a twist on what you’d expect.”

Dane, who says, “I am an actor of faith,” has been in several faith-based films, including Mike Norris’ I Am Gabriel (EchoLight), featuring Dean Cain and John Schneider. “[It’s] the faith film where I first met and worked with [First Lady co-star] Jenn Gotzon Chandler.” He also worked on the faith thriller, Echoes of Innocence, and Andrew Librizzi’s first film, Holding On.

CM thought First Lady had all the makings of a Hallmark movie, but Dane said, “Hallmark is great, but [First Lady] is a little more dimensional, with a large, strong cast and clever story...with both funny and intense situations. There is also romance for several folks in the film!” He said that since the film just wrapped it will be in post-production for several months, awaiting distribution.

[www.facebook.com/AnAdultFairytale](http://www.facebook.com/AnAdultFairytale)



Top, left: Stacey Dash, Corbin Bernsen. Bottom, left: Barry Morgenstein, Nina May. Above, right: Nina May, Dr. Alveda King, Nancy Stafford, Stacey Dash. Photos courtesy of Barry Morgenstein.

# *in tune with*

CHRISTIAN ENTERTAINERS MAKING MUSIC UPDATE

## Singer Lia K Catallo Releases 'I Am Home' EP

Michigan singer and songwriter Lia K Catallo has already been compared to Joni Mitchell at the ripe old age of 16. A regular on TV and live venues, this world-class chanteuse had her acting debut in her first TV commercial this past summer. And she just released her first EP.

What will 17 hold for Lia? Creative Motion magazine has been dying to get an interview with this busy, multi-talented young believer, so we are incredibly thankful for her mother, Jennifer Kincer, a college professor and voice coach, who lined this up for us.

Keep your eye on Lia. She is one superstar in the making. Here is a short interview with this busy, up-and-comer:

### **Lia, how did you get your start in music?**

I started singing when I was around five, singing around the house, and pretending to play the guitar! At seven years old, my mom put me in her voice studio's singing group and I started performing quite a bit. I loved entertaining and seeing people's smiles when we sang. From there, I started songwriting, first on the piano, then on the guitar, and my mom and vocal coach felt I had a gift for songwriting, and had me do solo gigs. She said, "Next year I am putting you on a mini-tour," and then, next thing I knew, at 11 I was performing on bigger stages, and at many events. It's been a whirlwind ever since!

### **What can you tell us about your Haiti mission trip this past summer?**

It was an unbelievable experience, beyond words. Even with everything that happened in the end, being stranded there for a few extra days, since flights were all cancelled due to the political unrest, I will never ever forget how life-changing the trip was. It made me realize how blessed I am to have what I do have, my family, food, water, health, God. I fell in love with the people of Haiti and I can hardly wait to return.

### **What can you tell us about singing at the Rock Hall of Fame in Cleveland, where I'm (Kristen) from!?**

How cool that you're from Cleveland! I had so much fun playing at the iconic Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. I was nervous at first, as there was so much talent playing at this event.

AND, doing anything with LIVENATION is a big deal. I was intimidated to say the least.



Part of Life Photography

### **LIA K CATALLO / I AM HOME**

**Track selections:** Searching / I Am Home / Stronger (365 Days, 365 Ways) / Needle & a Thread / Superhero.

#### **Available from:**

Amazon, CDBaby, Spotify, iTunes and more.

I was playing solo, so I didn't think I had a chance next to all of the great bands, but I fared well, considering. I also enjoyed walking around the museum with my family and friends. I even had a group of girls stop me for an autograph, and a photo. It made me laugh and I was flattered.

### **What can you tell us about your new EP?**

My EP, I Am Home, is out on Spotify, iTunes, and hundreds of streaming music sites all over the world. It has a mix of faith-based, modern, and soulful pop songs. I recorded at The Sound Shop in Clinton Township. The recording process took over three years, simply because we wanted the combination of songs to be just right, as well as hone in on my style of music. My mom, Jennifer Kincer, who oversees all aspects of my career, did all of the artwork, submissions, and downloads of the EP for worldwide distribution. It was super exciting to see it when it arrived in the mail! It's been a great learning experience and I get to share my heart with the world.

### **What do you have in the works over the next few months?**

I am going to be focusing on performing at various events in the Metro Detroit Area over the fall and winter months. I am continuing to write alone and with a co-writer. We hope to record a new song for my second EP by December.

# Lifetime Achievement

FOCUS ON VETERAN ACTOR MEL NOVAK

## Film Bad Guy Carries the Light of Jesus to Work

Actor Mel Novak has been in the film industry for nearly 50 years. His first role of merit was playing a German SS officer in the 1970 Jerry Lewis comedy, *Which Way to the Front?* He's worked alongside greats like Steve McQueen, Bruce Lee, Chuck Norris, Christopher Lee, Mel Gibson and Yul Brynner. Mr. Novak, who brings his faith to the workplace, remains busy working in the motion picture industry and television. One project, *Abeyance*, was shot in Creative Motion's home state, Michigan.

**What can you tell us about your Michigan connections? How did you come to be part of the Michigan made movie *Abeyance*?**

I was offered this role by Michigan-based, multi award-winning filmmaker Harley Wallen, and I've been wanting to work with him for a while, because I really like his work. It was a great script with compelling characters, and as an added bonus, my brother and some cousins live in Michigan, so I got to visit them as well. Another thing that attracted to this project was the incredible ensemble cast consisting of Scout Taylor-Compton, Richard Tyson, Billy Wirth, Yan Birch and up-and-coming actress, Vida Ghaffari, who I've worked with before.

**When was it shot? And where?**

It was shot this past July in Pontiac, Michigan.

**Who are some of the stars you've worked with, who are known to the general public, and were quite committed to their religious faith?**

Steve McQueen, who I acted with in *Tom Horn*, towards the end of his life had a strong relationship with the Lord. Gloria Hendry, who was the first African-American Bond girl in *Live and Let Die*, who I starred with in Warner Brothers classic action film, *Black Belt Jones*,

Movie and TV star  
Mel Novak

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*"We live in a fallen world and evil lurks everywhere, and I'm able to portray that darkness, but when they meet me, they see the light of Jesus in me."*

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Mel Novak strikes a pose for *The Match-Stick Flame*, an upcoming movie directed by Richard Tyson, written by Craig Robert Bruss. Novak plays Match Stick, an evil mob boss, who gets out of prison and stirs up a heap of havoc.

is also a strong Christian. Tim Conway, who I worked with on Garry Marshall's *Dear God*, was also a strong believer. Mike Connors, who I guest starred with on his popular CBS show *Mannix*, was also a believer.

**How has your experience with martial arts influenced your faith?**

Martial arts brought discipline in my life, that I can now reach out to broken people and read and study the word of God with them, which certainly takes discipline.

**What are your personal favorite movie roles you have played?**

Stick the Assassin in Bruce Lee's *Game of Death* is one of my favorites and also a fan favorite. I also really enjoyed playing Tony Montoya in *An Eye for an Eye* opposite Chuck Norris and Christopher Lee as well as Lippert, the world's great tracker in *The Ultimate Warrior*, opposite Yul Brynner and Max von Sydow. I also really liked playing The Reverend in the film *Check Point* with William Forsythe, Bill Goldberg, Kenny Johnson and Fred "The Hammer" Williamson.

**You usually play a villain. How does seeing the dark side of things dramatically affect the way you are able to minister hope to people?**

It works great in prisons and skid row as usually in



Left to right: Mel Novak, Hugh O'Brian and Dean Jagger in Bruce Lee's *Game of Death*, 1972. Photo courtesy of Alamy/Golden Harvest Group.

their eyes, I'm one of them, because even though they see my movies, they think I'm tough and cool, and they want to be like me. We live in a fallen world and evil lurks everywhere and I'm able to portray that darkness, but when they meet me, they see the light of Jesus in me.

**Do you think Hollywood is becoming more receptive to Christian films?**

Yes, I do. I think Hollywood is seeing that there is a huge marketplace for Christian and faith-based films and they want to tap into it. In fact, Greg Laurie's faith based documentary *Steve McQueen: American Icon*, where I was featured in, along with Mel Gibson, was #3 at the box office its' opening night. It came behind big studio movies like *Kingsman: The Golden Circle*, and Stephen King's *IT*, as reported by Box Office Mojo.

**What is the best advice an actor gave you?**

Steve McQueen gave me such great advice. He told me to "Don't worry about getting all the lines, just get the important ones."



Mel Novak on the red carpet of the *Steve McQueen: American Icon* premiere. Photo courtesy of Dan Kennedy.



From left: Dennis Haskins (Mr. Belding in *Saved by the Bell*), Michigan-based, multi award-winning actor and filmmaker, Harley Wallen, and Mel Novak, at Wallen's *Betrayed* premiere at the TCL Chinese Theatre.

# *ministry media*

FOCUS ON CHRISTIAN MINISTRY PROGRAMMING

## A Familiar Face Launches Multi-Media Ministry



**ZACH  
IS  
BACK**

By Kevin Collier  
Creative Motion Publisher

Zach Drew is a familiar face in the world of religious broadcasting. His presence on The Jim Bakker Show, originating from Morningside, in Missouri, spanned seven-and-a-half years, co-hosting the program for a period before his departure. This year Drew, age 28, began his own television program and ministry.

Unlike religious media dynasties such as the Roberts, or Schullers, where the program platform is passed on to a son, Drew offers a rare opportunity to witness a Christian broadcast ministry begin at ground level. But it isn't a step to the back of the line for the young minister, it's an enormous leap for God.

"It feels like prophetic words unfolding!" Drew said. "The Lord impressed

*"I would like to see a centralized and protected place for Christian media to be shared."*

Pastor Zach Drew on the set of his show.



Left, Revelation in the News program, 2015. Left to right: Sasha Volz, Zach Drew, Andrew Bellers. Right: the late Chuck Missler, Zach Drew, Jim Bakker.



on my heart several years ago that the third place I would be ministering would be at my own ministry.”

Zach Drew was only 18 when he was first called to Christian media in 2008.

“A prophet spoke things to me that 100% confirmed what was already in my heart, and that was to revolutionize Christian media for this generation!” Drew explained. “And like many of us who are ambitious, when the Lord confirmed this to me, I thought it would all come to fruition within six months!”

It didn’t happen. God knew Zach wasn’t ready.

“But we operate on God’s timetable, and He knew my character as a young man needed to be developed, and He also knew I had a great deal to learn about TV ministry and how it operates,” Drew said.

A decade later, Drew founded I Go Before You International Ministries (IGBY), and on August 10, 2018, the first edition of The Zach Drew Show was shot and broadcast in a studio outside Decatur Illinois, where he grew up. The set is nothing fancy. Only one camera, a wall, and a desk.

“I’ve worked in multimillion dollar studios these last ten years, and I jokingly tell people that at our current beginning stages, we aren’t Saul with all of his beautiful armor, but rather we are simply David with a rock and a sling,” he said. “Don’t forget that David killed that giant though, don’t start when you feel ready! Start when God says to, because if we started when we felt ready then no one would ever start anything!”

Drew keeps in mind something Jim Bakker once told him. “He used to always tell me, ‘start small, but start right away,’ and that is what we are doing.”

Joining him on the set of The Zach Drew Show is Andrew Bellers, a dear friend and associate.

Bellers joined Jim Bakker’s Christian Master’s Commission in 2014. The discipleship program was established for students to learn various skills associated with media production.

“At that time, Zach Drew was working primarily as Pastor Jim’s co-host for his television program, The Jim Bakker Show,” Bellers explained. “In the two years that I was

there, God placed me in the research department working under Zach.”

Regarding that time, Drew conveyed, “Let me just say that it took me no time at all to realize he was brilliant! He’s a really smart guy with a deep love for the Lord.”

Drew added that Bellers offers the ability to see things from a different perspective than his, an asset which is greatly appreciated. “I was so impressed with him that I asked him to serve as co-host on my own show in Missouri, called Revelation in the News,” Drew said.

The show also included co-host Sasha Volz, another former student who worked for the ministry. Bellers said, “It was a show that was very spiritual and very political, and in a way it was kind of a spiritual predecessor to the show we’re doing now.” The program was highly popular on Bakker’s PTL Television network, but short-lived, as soon after, Drew departed the television ministry. Bellers left shortly thereafter.

But the two reconnected in the summer of 2018 when Drew prepared to launch his own ministry program.

“Two months before the first show aired on August 10th, [Bellers] contacted me and said that he and his wife would like to move to Illinois and help with the new ministry!” Drew said. “It was a total God-thing, because he didn’t know that, three days earlier, I had been speaking to someone that ‘one day’ it would be fantastic if Andrew Bellers would be my co-host, again.”



Zach Drew with minister and former Arkansas governor, Mike Huckabee.

Bellers, 26, and wife, Melissa, made the move. He made his debut in the seventh episode of the weekly program, on September 21.

While the set is small, the vision for the ministry is as large as Heaven.

“The vision is huge. Like, really huge,” Drew stated. “Right now we are a single show; we want to one day be an entire internet network, with the ultimate goal of creating an entire OTT platform for Christians to use.”

The concept is welcomed due to the fact that OTT platforms like YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and others, are beginning to flag, and deem some Christian content as unacceptable, in a social media world where liberal agenda platforms are routinely propagated.

“These social media platforms are increasingly targeting Christian and conservative material for removal,” Bellers explained. “I think social media can be seen as a huge harvesting field for today’s youth, and there needs to be a platform on which they can be reached. In one of my first conversations with Zach, I was excited when he told me that one of the dreams of his ministry is to create a social platform where Christians can have a free, and safe, outlet to express their views.”

The objective is paramount in an unfolding, long-term spiritual game plan.

“I would like to see a centralized and protected place for Christian media to be shared,” Drew said. “As the pressure grows, it will become more and more obvious to Christians that currently don’t understand the times that we are living in, to want to get behind a movement like this, for the body of Christ, in the last days.”

The Zach Drew Show, the new kid on the block in the world of Christian television, is developing an identity with each production. The uncertainty of it all in the natural can be inspirational.

“I have to say The Zach Drew Show is still in its infancy and it has yet to fully take the shape of whatever it is going to become, and that’s pretty exciting,” Bellers said. “I know Zach’s heart is to prayerfully construct each episode based on God’s leading, and that does create a kind of exciting uncertainty, because we don’t fully know where God is going to take us from week to week.”

While Drew and Bellers will have to wait and see what God has in store for the IGBY International Ministries team, viewers can clearly see the direction of the show, regarding content. The Zach Drew Show is quickly emerging as a leading voice, addressing current news events from a biblical perspective, with a commitment to keep Christians informed.

“The Lord doesn’t want us to be unaware. We need to understand the times that we are living in,” Drew said. “One of my favorite Bible teachers used to say, ‘We’re being plunged into a period of time about which the Holy Bible says more than any other period—including the time



Andrew Bellers and Zach Drew on The Zach Drew Show.

when Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee!’ He would then proceed to say how that may sound crazy until one, you find out what the Bible has to say about the times that we are living, and two, find out what is really going on in the world, which you won’t find on the 10 o’clock news!”

Bellers agrees.

“I believe it is necessary that we live with our eyes open to the events of these times, and open to the prophetic revelation of God’s word, so that we can more easily discern between the works of God and the works of Satan,” he said. “God has given us a map to the end of the age, but a map isn’t any good if your eyes are closed.”

Roughly half of The Zach Drew Show examines current events of the day, and overall social and political trends, nationally and globally.

“With Scripture we try to discern between the spiritual forces that are possibly behind those trends and events,” Bellers added. “We truly are in the midst of a great war between good and evil, but if we don’t know what’s happening in the world, it’s akin to stepping onto a battlefield and not knowing which side to shoot at.”

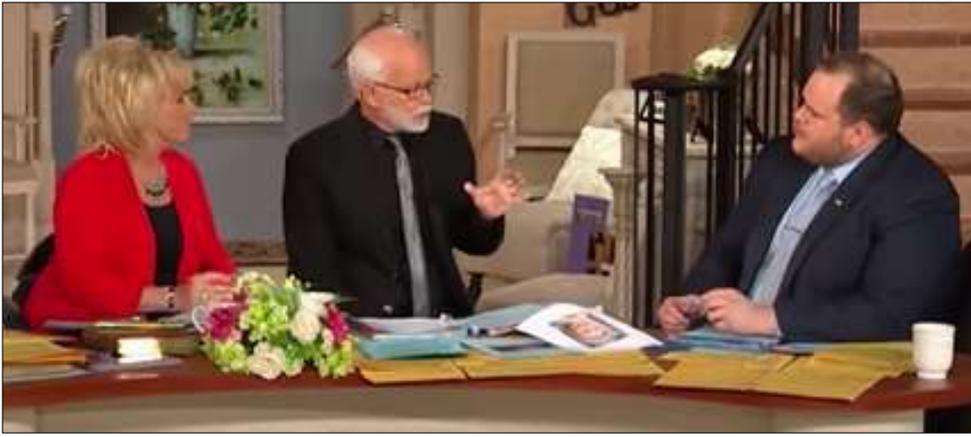
But stepping onto the battlefield means you are going to encounter gunfire as well.

Drew explained, “If you’re a threat to Satan’s kingdom, then expect attacks. The Scripture says that ‘no weapon formed against you will prosper,’ it is key to understand that it didn’t say that weapons won’t form against you, only that they won’t prosper! If we are living in accordance to the word, then we live in the special protection of the Lord, and we can have confidence that whatever happens is all under the care of the Lord, and will ultimately work out to His own Glory.”

While Bellers said he’s experienced less as a target of Satan, he knows the battle is engaged.

“If we truly know the word and rely on it, I believe we can overcome any attack, temptation, or evil thought,” he said. “It’s necessary to abide in God’s word, and this is increasingly a lesson God is teaching me.”

As a believer in the blood of Jesus, Drew suggests to



Left: Zach Drew with Lori and Jim Bakker. Right: Drew with renowned Christian author, Steve Quayle.

plead the blood of Jesus over your family, your home, cars, and anything else the devil can invade. And you don't have to have the devil come knocking.

"Just two weeks ago our home was broken into, in broad daylight, while we were at church," Drew said. "But the Holy Spirit, and His boldness, lives within us and we have no reason to fear, because we know who is on our

side, and that's Jesus!"

Drew also knows that which is most vulnerable is always a prime target of the enemy.

"The enemy knows that the easiest time to kill anything is at birth, or in its infant stages, this is why he loves abortion, but this also applies to any new thing that the Lord is doing," Drew said. "I know that Satan hates this new min-

## Co-host Andrew Bellers' Artistic and Creative Backstory



Zach Drew's co-host, Andrew Bellers, has a creative side not exhibited on The Zach Drew Show. Bellers is a versatile talent whose interest in the performing and fine arts developed early in life. He calls it "a passion" he's had for as long as he can remember.

"For a very long time it was an unquestionable fact that I would grow up to be an artist," Bellers said. "In truth, my passion and expression of art is rooted in the inherent gift that God gave me to create."

Bellers' variety of artistic interests puts multi-tasking to the test.

"Throughout my life, that underlying gift has been divided among an unmanageable number of outlets: music, writing, drawing, sculpting, and anything else that consumes my attention for any given season."

While Beller's artistry isn't on display on The Zach Drew Show, he sees a connection between it and partnering with Drew.

"I think this creative drive is why God has called me to be a part of this ministry," he said. "I believe creativity is important to our God, precisely because he is The Creator. I don't think it's arbitrary that Scripture would use the metaphor of God shaping us like a potter

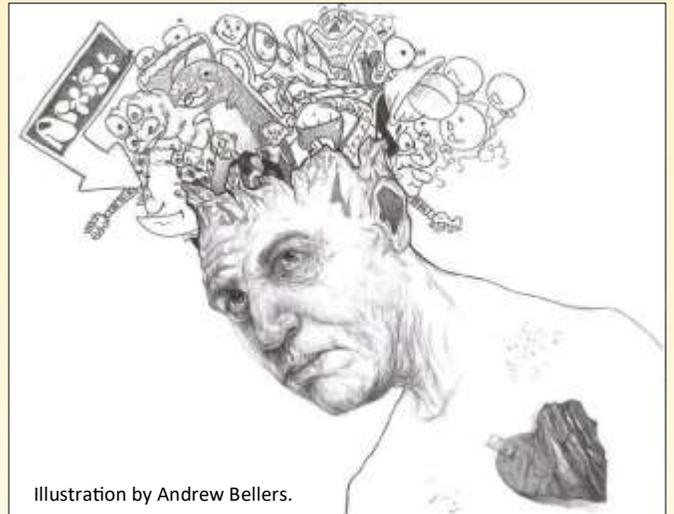


Illustration by Andrew Bellers.

shapes clay. It's noteworthy that Psalm 3:33 issues a command to not just 'play,' but to 'play skillfully.' Our expression of art and creativity ultimately glorifies our God, because it displays just one of the ways we were made in his image, but that's not the only reason."

Bellers recognizes that paintings, music, plays, and books all have a narrative; they are all entertaining methods of communicating varied messages.

"As Christians, we have the most important message to tell, and that's why I'm excited that one of Zach's visions with IGBY is to branch into every conceivable form of media," Bellers explained. "I believe the more creative and diverse our way of expressing the gospel is, the more people we can reach for Christ."

istry that the Lord is going to work powerfully through!”

Satan is also an equal opportunity disrupter.

“Every person, for months, that was connected to this new ministry, was all under attack in the craziest ways, in ways that it would take pages just to write all out,” Drew said.

While most Christians express concern that not enough is being done to cultivate youth involvement in the church, Drew acknowledges this, but raises a broader issue. “I feel it’s the church in America as a whole,” he said. “The only thing that is going to save the church in America is a complete reformation in our preaching, and in our study of the word of God, or a fierce, and horrifying, persecution.”

Bellers believes young people in America today are incredibly idealistic, and that this has created a falling away from the church and faith.

“I believe there are two main reasons for that: the rise of the standard of living in our country has made material wealth relatively common in historical terms, and the attempt to kill God in our country has left a philosophical void in our moral, social structure,” Bellers said.

He added, “Young people have learned that material success does not bring fulfillment to their lives, and since many are taught not to believe in God, many young people have found their fulfillment in the form of activism, community service, and a set of moral ideals fabricated predominantly by our schools and our media.”

The political and cultural division in America also appears to be growing.

Bellers said, “Yes, the country is growing more divided with each generation, but Jesus said in Revelation that it is better to be hot or cold. I know a few young people that were ideologically radical opponents of Christianity and conservatism, and when they were saved they drastically changed their worldviews. Those are the Christians that I have found to be the strongest and most outspoken, regarding their faith.”

Bellers stated this is why he believes the IGBY ministry is necessary, to combat the growing trend of filtered information in social media, which serves as a news source for most youths.

The fellowship of Zach Drew and Andrew Bellers provides a spiritual chemistry between the two, with each offering ingredients for a compelling Christian recipe. Viewers of the show have expressed their take on the dynamic duo.

“I’ve been told Zach is very good at taking complex, or abstract topics, and boiling them down into understandable terms,” Bellers said. “He’s good at looking at the ‘beast’ of an issue and pulling out the heart of it, and presenting that to an audience.”

“Conversely,” co-host Bellers added, “I’ve been told that I sometimes help flesh out the simplified message



Zach and wife, Alyssa.

that he presents, which gives people a little bit more to chew on. In this way I would think we have a good balance.”

At the core of IGBY’s mission is equipping ministries to spread the Gospel, expand the kingdom of God, and open the eyes of believers as to what the Lord is doing in these last days. Drew has made a commitment to this opportunity and his viewers are beginning to commit financially to show their support.

“I am in this for the long haul,” Drew explained. “But none of it is possible without God’s people getting behind us now; even in the infant stages of this new ministry.”

But infants grow up fast and the Kingdom of God is gigantic. “I think one of the reasons God chose Zach for this ministry is because he really has big dreams,” Bellers said, “and God wants to do something as big as we can possibly imagine.”

### BECOME A VIEWER

The show is also available on the PTL Television Network, Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire, YouTube, and The Zach Drew website. New programs appear every Friday. The program also airs on their Facebook page.

### BECOME A PARTNER

A donation button is on the homepage of the website: [www.ZachDrewShow.com](http://www.ZachDrewShow.com)



IGBY International Ministries



# out of the box

FOCUS ON THE UNUSUAL AND UNCONVENTIONAL

## Does Horror Genre Accomplish Biblical Goals?

By Kevin Collier

Creative Motion Publisher

Most movie-going Christians wouldn't consider the frightening genre of horror to have biblical value association. But, according to award-winning Hollywood screenwriter and internationally-known teacher of faith, Brian Godawa, it does.

"Horror as a genre has the ability to accomplish several biblical goals that glorify God," Godawa told Creative Motion. "First, it can communicate the doctrine of mankind's sinful nature. Vampires, werewolves, and other hybrid human monsters are metaphors for the dark side of our nature that expresses sin."

Godawa explains that in a postmodern world which denies an evil nature in favor of the "basic goodness of humanity," the horror genre shows we cannot ignore our true evil nature.

"Horror also shows how our sin will find us out (Numbers 23:23). Ghost stories are the classic fiction here," Godawa said. "They are virtually all about the blood of some unjust death crying from the ground like Abel's blood, demanding justice. They are not satisfied until justice is accomplished."

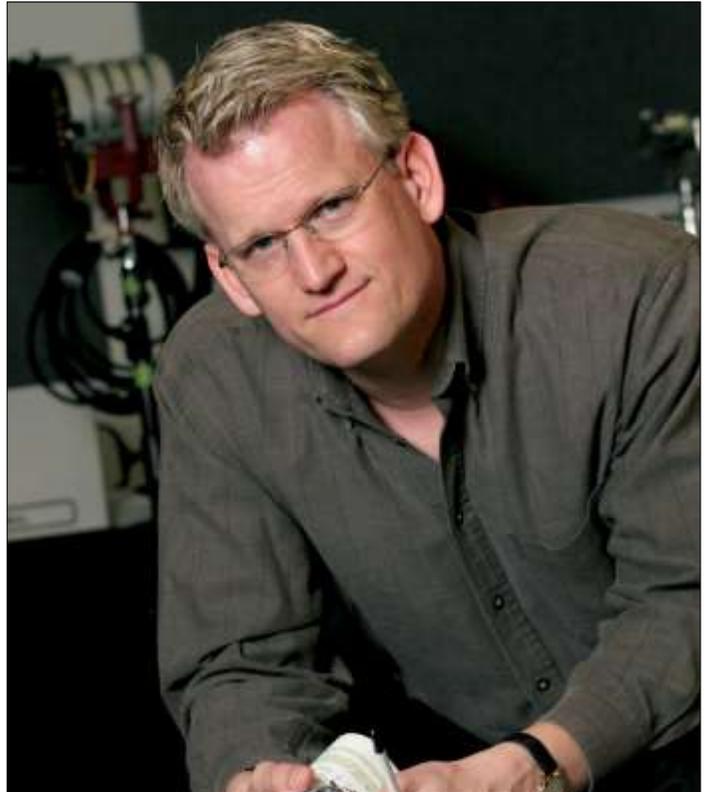
Godawa conveys that another beneficial aspect of horror is its portrayal of man's hubris and where it can lead.

"Science is the usual culprit here," he said. "When man thinks he is a god, he gets chastised and reminded that he is human, all too human."

Godawa pointed to *Frankenstein*, *Jurassic Park*, and *The Exorcist* as examples of how the "scientific man" is foolish in rejecting the supernatural.

There is also the aspect of horror functioning as social commentary. "Horror shows us the hidden evil in our culture by birthing the 'monsters' that result from bad cultural values," Godawa said. "Zombie movies are classic expressions of this. *Zombie* stories like *The Walking Dead*, or *28 Weeks Later*, usually illustrate that if we follow the evolutionary ethic of survival, we degenerate into selfish, self-destruction. But if we follow the Christian ethic of self-sacrifice, we not only promote human dignity, we actually do survive."

Horror also has a built-in acceptance of the supernatu-



Hollywood screenwriter and Christian speaker, Brian Godawa.

ral, linking it to the authentic biblical supernatural.

"Since we live in a post-Enlightened, scientific culture that is materialistic and naturalistic, the supernatural horror stories show us how we will fail to stop real supernatural evil, without an adequate belief and understanding of it. You cannot defeat your enemy if you do not know your enemy."

Godawa explains he has been able to witness because of the horror genre, which has opened up opportunities to discuss what people think of various productions, whether it be *Paranormal Activity* or *The Exorcist*.

"It raises the topic of the supernatural in an acceptable context of entertainment that can easily lead to reality," he said. "Horror movies are already critiques of modern society's rejection of the supernatural, so talking about the theme of such a movie directly leads to personal beliefs about demons and evil, which leads to the discussion that, if there is ultimate supernatural evil, then how could there not be ultimate supernatural good?"

Author Jonathan Schkade addresses "the most terrible



Left to right: Greg Batiansila, Jonathan Schkade, Sherryl Despres, Jamie Hope.

decisions and obsessions of ‘villains’ in the Bible,” in his *Not-So-Nice Bible Stories* book series.

“They were not unwanted by our Father. Some turned back to God,” Schkade said. “Some were even heroes of the faith, before, and after. And all of them were loved by a God who was eager to welcome them into His family.”

Biblically, even monsters can be rehabilitated.

“The Bible is filled with stories of people who clung to the horrors of the darkness,” he said. “People who are drawn to the darkness today need our help. More than that, they need God’s help. God’s greatest work is reaching out to those entrenched in darkness, and pulling them to safety, in the light of His love. He does this for us, too.”

Schkade said, “The terrifying causes of our fear become an obsession, and the only way they see to regain a sense of control is to embrace the horrors.” He also added, “Basically, they think if they become allies of the darkness, they won’t need to fear it. This is understandable, but it’s also wrong.”

Writer, director, and producer Greg Batiansila, who has gained prominence during his 20 year stretch in the corporate filmmaking world, sees the horror depicted in *I Can Only Imagine* as essential.

“I am glad they left at least some of the abusiveness in that film. How would that story have been improved by removing it?” Batiansila explained. “I think the opposite is true: if the film suffered, it suffered because we weren’t able to see the continuous pattern of abuse Bart’s dad inflicted on him.”

Batiansila believes exposing the dark reveals the light.

“I do think that that because we neglect darkness, our critics determine we’re telling cotton candy tales of fake redemption,” he said. “To me, the shadow proves the sunshine.”

Michigan actress, Sherryl Despres explained, “I don’t shy away from roles and stories just because they are not me. It wouldn’t be acting if I only played roles like me.”

Depres, who has played the on-screen love interest for fan favorites Dean Cain and Kevin Sorbo, said, “I don’t think that by associating with people to whom those gen-

res appeal to will rub evil on me, any more than shaking hands with a gay person, or a person with AIDS, is going to rub off on me.” She added, “By completely avoiding them you are not welcoming even the possibility of witnessing to them.”

Depres also noted that Jesus didn’t shun the monstrous-looking lepers, or the fallen.

Author Jamie Hope, also a Michigan native and fan of *The Walking Dead*, says that show has merit in that it shows humanity in all its unglossed glory. “A lot of ‘real Christians’ might have a problem with it,” she said, “but it is a post-apocalyptic world, where ultimately the ‘walkers’ take a back seat to human nature, and how people respond during the most desperate times in their lives.”

She added, “I imagine it is what would really happen...and we do know there is a time such as man has never seen—a real tribulation—coming. If you are prepared for it, physically and spiritually, then you won’t be surprised when it happens.”

Hope also said the show taught her some great survival tools apart from what she’d already learned from her husband. But she is not afraid. “The supernatural stuff generally doesn’t scare me, because they have no authority over us. They may be more powerful, but we have more authority.” But what about when horror reaches the real world? “Those in the flesh threats, again, what can I do? I pray. God is in control. Pray, then act.”

With news articles about horrific things that happened on the set of *Poltergeist*, *The Exorcist*, *Amityville*, etc., should Christian producers expect to open themselves to attack if they make movies that deal with this genre?

“I won’t go into details,” Hope said, “but just like any movie that is made that could bring real healing to people struggling with the death of a loved one, or whatever gives hope in a situation, I can imagine the enemy will have plans to stop that.”

Not that they can, she acknowledges. “I am sure even many Christians will read this and think it a little over the top—but read the Bible and think nothing of it, as if the two are different worlds.”

# creative cover story

FOCUS ON RISING CHRISTIAN PERFORMERS

*"Probably the single most difficult thing I find about a career in this business is the waiting, and all of the rejection actors have to go through, in looking for work. The way I look at it is, if I don't get a job, God is closing that door so a better one can open for me."*

## RHOADS TO SUCCESS

Michigan native Tom Rhoads is living the dream, and he gives God all the praise. He just debuted in a movie with close friend and mentor, Angela Lansbury, as well as Dick Van Dyke, Jane Seymour, Ioan Gruffudd, and others. Next year he'll be in a Scorsese film with De Niro and Pacino. Rhoads studied Communications and Theatre at the University of Michigan, then was invited to train at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, one of the top acting schools in the world. CM asked him about his exciting career and how God has impacted his life.

**Tom, who are some of the actors you've befriended and who have become an inspiration for you?**

Not long after I arrived in New York, God gave me a job working as an assistant to Angela Lansbury and we eventually became close friends. After graduation from RADA, I went to visit Angie at her home in Ireland and what a wonderful time we had. It was God guiding my journey. Her nearly unparalleled, 75-plus year career has provided incredible inspiration not only to me, but to countless other actors and theatre artists of all ages. It's been a true gift to have her as a close friend and mentor, and I thank God every day for bringing our paths together.

Tom Rhoads  
outside of  
Carnegie Hall,  
New York.



Left to right: Tom Rhoads, Angela Lansbury, Dick Van Dyke.

**What was it like to work with “Angie” (whom the rest of us call Dame Angela Lansbury, Dame being the equivalent of knighthood for women)?**

It was an answer to prayer to do my first principal role in a movie [Buttons] with my mentor, Angela Lansbury, and having all these incredible actors in the film, was just icing on the cake, and I’m beyond grateful to God for allowing this to happen. He is an on-time God, and what he has for me, is for me. I can’t wait to see what doors he opens next. God has been good to me. I give Him all the

praise.

**What made you go to one of the top acting schools in the world, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, in London, instead of straight to Hollywood, like so many actors do?**

Of course, I was drawn to Hollywood and New York, but like many young actors, I had heard about RADA, never imagining it would be possible for me to study there. It came onto my screen again when I visited London in 2014, but again it seemed like an impossible dream until 2016, when I was taking a master class, Singing for the Stage, here in New York, with Jane Streeton, who was the Head of Voice at RADA. I was completely caught off-guard one day when she asked me if I would be interested in studying at RADA in London, and the rest is history. I’m pretty certain that RADA offers the most rigorous and intensive acting and musical theatre course that’s available anywhere. It was a life—and career—changing experience for me.

**What can you tell us about how difficult your acting journey was, and how God helped you along the way?**

Probably the single most difficult thing I find about a career in this business is the waiting, and all the rejection actors have to go through, in looking for work. The way I always look at it is, if I don’t get a job, God is closing that door so a better one can open for me.

**What kind of support did you get from family, friends, and church as you pursued acting?**

I was very fortunate to have parents who encouraged

## Joanne Rhoads: A Mother’s Love and Support

It is such a joy to be Tom’s Mom. He has loved music all his life. That is a common bond we have had together. Can you imagine how that makes me feel that my son still loves to sing with his Mom??!!

He sang his first solo when he was six years old. It was our Easter pageant and probably in front of 1000 people. I knew then he had a gift, and God had a plan and purpose for his life.

Was it hard to encourage Tom to move to NYC?? I never wanted to control our kids’ lives. I’m a praying Mother and always wanted God’s best for all of them. So, because of God’s grace and peace I was able to trust that God would take care of our son.

You know, it’s wonderful when you can put your trust in God alone, and rest upon His word, and know that everything is possible with God. So, I was able to come to NYC, to be with him his first week.

When I got in a taxicab to leave Tom, all by himself....  
...That was one of the hardest things I’ve ever done.  
All I can say is God’s grace is sufficient.



Tom Rhoads and his mother, Joanne.

## Dear Friend Angela Lansbury



Tom Rhoads and actress, Angela Lansbury.

First, and foremost, I want to say that for my own part, I think of Tom as a dear friend with the voice of an Angel. I was delighted when it turned out—quite by chance—that both Tom and I had the pleasure of working in the movie *Buttons*, which was written and directed by Tim Janis. I know it was especially exciting for Tom, because it also happened to be his first principal role in a film. I know with a voice like his, coupled with his talent as an actor, he's got a wonderful career ahead.

- Angela Lansbury

me at every step along the way to pursue my acting and singing career. They told me that, "God gave me a voice and I was supposed to use it." My church in Michigan was Flint Central Church of the Nazarene, and they were very supportive and knew God had big plans for my life. It was hard to leave my family and church in Michigan, since I was very involved, and even lead worship on the praise team and sang in the church choir. I really loved singing duets with my mom, and we were known as the mother and son duo. We even traveled around Michigan and did

concerts together, and felt the presence of God every time. We still sing together every chance that we get.

### **What would cause you to turn down a role?**

As Will Rogers once said, "I never met a man I didn't like." So far, I've never been offered a role I didn't like and wouldn't play. Of course, Rogers didn't meet everyone, and I haven't been offered every role, so can you ask me this question again in ten years.

### **Do you find with the greater success you achieve, the greater the forces of evil rise against you?**

In my work, I have found that as long as I pray, do my devotions, and stay focused on the work in front of me, I can keep the negative side of things out of my life.

### **What is your mission and biggest goal as an actor?**

I would love to have a long and rewarding career. I would love to do movies, television, Broadway, and do concerts and record music. I want to honor the gifts God has given me—I hope that I can inspire, and entertain, and enrich people's lives by my work.

### **Do you get a sense that today's entertainment environment is more receptive to Christian material today?**

This is a hard questions to answer, but I do feel that given the wonderful diversity in the world, we could all truly benefit from a greater spiritual message of love.

### **Can you define some examples where God has opened a door of opportunity for you?**

Certainly introducing me to Angela Lansbury and Jane Streeton are two incredible examples of God opening a door that have provided wonderful opportunities for me. And on this subject, my parents are responsible for opening perhaps the biggest and most challenging door of them all, when, after I won the Michigan Idol contest, they sat me down and said something like, "Son, God gave you a great gift, and after you graduate from the university, you're never going to be happy unless you go to New York and pursue your passion." I was young and terrified at the thought of moving to a big city where I didn't know anyone, but I did, and so far, it's one of the best decisions I ever made.



Jane Streeton

## Rhoads' RADA Lead Singing Tutor Jane Streeton

Tom Rhoads came to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) in London on our Musical Theatre Course in 2016. He is an extremely talented singer and actor. He has an exceptional instinct for the stage, and uses his voice with sensitivity and imagination, in both speech and song.

I've also had the great pleasure of coaching Tom privately in NYC, and I'm so proud he has a role in this movie. We look forward to welcoming Tom back to London soon.

- Jane Streeton, Lead Singing Tutor, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, London, U.K.

**What have been your favorite roles in films so far?**

Probably the most fun was the small role I had in the forthcoming film, *The Irishman*, where I got to chase down a corridor ranting and shouting at Robert De Niro and Al Pacino. After it was over, Pacino said to me, “You

were sure having a good time yelling at me...good job!”

**Any projects you’re working on that you’d like to share?**

At the moment, I am rehearsing for a Christmas concert at Carnegie Hall, and after that, the next thing on the agenda is the production of *Monet*, a new musical that



*“However, one very important thing I’ve come to know is that we need to find our bliss—to sing our songs. If I don’t sing the songs I was meant to sing, they will never be sung.”*



Top left: Tom Rhoads (center) sings on stage at Carnegie Hall. Top right: sign on Carnegie Hall. Above: Rhoads, in front, fourth from right, receives audience applause.

will be presented at the York Theatre here in New York, in March, 2019. Just finished, but not yet released, are two exciting movie projects, one which has Angela Lansbury, Dick Van Dyke, Jane Seymour, and Ioan Gruffudd, and narrated by Robert Redford and Kate Winslet, with music by Sir Paul McCartney. I can't wait to see what else God has in store for me and am enjoying the journey.

There are other doors that could be opening, but am not yet allowed to say what they are. I am just trusting God to open the right ones and know he is in control. Next, is Martin Scorsese's new film, *The Irishman*, starring Robert De Niro and Al Pacino, which will be released by Netflix in 2019.

*(CM asked for a quick follow-up after Rhoads' Carnegie Hall debut, October, 30.)*

I was thrilled by the reaction when I sang at Carnegie Hall, and with Scorsese's new film, there is that to look forward to as well—and hopefully lots more coming down the pike. It's a part of the life of a performer, always looking for the next gig and waiting, waiting. However, one very important thing I've come to know is that we need to find our bliss—to *sing our songs*. If I don't sing the songs I was meant to sing, they will never be sung. We are unique, *God* created each of us—we live a life that no one else will live—nobody is ever going to come along and say, "Well, I think I'm going to live Tom's life for him, I can do it better." Maybe they could, but they aren't going to do it.

So, I can only say, be sure to find what it is you are meant to do, and *do it...*sing *your* songs!

## RHOADS TO SUCCESS

### Early Paths...



***"He sang his first solo when he was six years old. It was our Easter pageant and probably in front of 1000 people. I knew then he had a gift..."***



# godly gamesters

FOCUS ON FAITH-BASED VIDEO GAMES AND CREATORS

## Engaging the Enemy with Spiritual X Warfare

The multi-faceted Michigan native, Devon Burroughs, is arguably one of the most talented creatives out there. Not only is he an internationally known, Dove nominated songwriter for Grammy winner, Lecrae, he is also the director of a Christian video game in development, *Spiritual X Warfare*. CM asked this insanely talented, up-and-coming director how he got started in two very different, yet interconnected, creative industries.

**Devon, can you tell us a bit about yourself and your gaming background?**

I grew up going to church and playing games ever since elementary school. My first game console was a Nintendo Entertainment System. I remember playing a lot of “old school” games. The thing that really stood out to me about video games was the interac-

tions that I experienced with friends and family. This helped me become closer to my loved ones. I moved on to Super Nintendo (SNES), then Nintendo 64, and loved playing co-op games. The teamwork aspect of these games has never left me. So, at an early age I started dreaming of making my own video game. *Final Fight*, *Rival Turf*, and *Super Bomberman* were some of the funnest SNES co-op games to me. Over the years, my gaming experience has taught me what a quality game looks like. With that knowledge, it is my hope to make a game that can be enjoyed for many years to come!

I am known internationally for music and created a hit instrumental for two time Grammy artist, Lecrae Moore, called “Don’t Waste Your Life.” With over 14,005,899 views and 81,000 likes on YouTube. A lot of lives were

*Spiritual X Warfare*  
characters created  
by Devon Burroughs.



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*“My game concept at first was a cartoon, but that stressed me out because I was making the cartoon all by myself. God eventually told me to change the medium, but I kept the core concept, and that’s when the video game I am working on now came about. I love spiritual warfare as well, did a lot of Bible studies, sermons, and research on each subject matter.”*

---

changed positively for Christ, I am trying to duplicate this anointing through video games.

**What can you tell readers about the hit song you wrote for Lecrae? How in the world did that come about?!?! WOW....**

My brother and I made music for a long time before we met Lecrae. Nobody really knew of him, or us, at the time. Lecrae was an underground, up-and-coming music artist.

One day, my brother and I decided we were going to go see Lecrae, and give him a demo of our music in Michigan, because he was doing a youth event in Kalamazoo. So we went there and soon realized it was just a whole bunch of little children there, and we were some of the oldest people there. He preached a sermon and I don’t think the children could grasp what he was saying. But it spoke to me and my brother, he was talking about how we compare to sheep and we need the shepherd.

Well, to make a long story short, we did not even hear him perform “After The Music Stops,” but before we left, we met him and gave him a CD of our music instrumentals. He called us back soon after, because he liked our music, and that’s how it all began. One day, he called my brother and said he need a crazy beat, something better than his “Jesus Muzik” track, my brother gave him my instrumental we collaborated on, and that’s how “Don’t Waste Your Life” started.

**With lives were changed positively via that song, how do you plan on duplicating this in a video game?**

I really studied “DWYL” and its impact on the culture. It was a phenomenon that not only helped rejuvenate a close to dying genre, but it encouraged Christians, and turned some of the world to Christ. What was interesting about this song is that people who listened to it could feel the anointing of God in the song. It brought some to tears, others stopped drinking, smoking, etc., when they heard it. I even heard stories of police handing out the CD to kids on the streets. Children overseas even re-enacted the song in music competitions.

I dedicated that instrumental to God before Lecrae even got the song. I remember praising God with the song playing in my room, by myself, meditating about God and his goodness. I want to duplicate that same anointing and presence of God in my game.



Dove nominated, internationally known musician, Devon Burroughs, creator of the upcoming Spiritual X Warfare video game.

**At what stage of development are you for Spiritual X Warfare? What team members do you have on board?**

Spiritual X Warfare is in the beginning stages of development. I have spent about five months working on it. I have currently launched a Kickstarter to help fund the rest of the project, because that is the only hold up.

My team is comprised of two programmers who are experts in Unity 3D. I have a 3D landscape modeler on staff that uses Blender to create stunning, low poly game backdrops. I have a digital artist who draws my characters and has brought new life to my original designs.

I also have a pixel artist who creates each piece of pixel work with passion and consistency. I manage the team while creating the story, characters, and music. My team is comprised of people from the United States, Russia, Germany, and Indonesia.

**How did the song come to you? Had you been in an intense time of prayer and fasting?**



Model images of Spiritual X Warfare characters. Left to right, Uri, Autumn and Levon.

When I started making music, my focus was just duplicating worldly music that had good sounding beats. I was really good at it. But my desire to create original, anointed music became stronger. I started to dedicate my music to God, and I prayed that my music would be rapped on by someone who loved God as much as me.

Then one day, Lecrae got a hold of my music, and my brother thought the instrumental that I made sounded like a video game. A lot of rap beats in that time always sounded trapped, like the instrumentals were always cut short, so I wanted to make a more free sounding beat that used electronic dance music as the basis.

I have been nominated for a Dove and a Stellar Award at only the age of 22 years old. It was just my season for the seed that I planted over many years to grow. Everything did not just happen overnight though, I made hundreds of beats before that one beat got to Lecrae.

**And for Spiritual X Warfare, I (Kristen) love that**

**name! What is your tech background? Other than playing and loving video games, how did you get involved with the development of them?**

I have a bachelor's degree in Media, Art and Animation, and an associate's in Graphic Design. So I basically do anything pertaining to computer graphics and digital media. I have an eye and ear for excellence. As for the game development side, I know a little bit of every aspect of making a game, but I just don't know how to program. So I started off looking for a programmer and a pixel artist. I focused on the story, characters, music, and mechanics of how the game operates. My game concept at first was a cartoon, but that stressed me out because I was making the cartoon all by myself. God eventually told me to change the medium, but keep my core concept, and that's when the video game I'm working on now came about. I love spiritual warfare as well, did a lot of Bible studies, sermons, and research on each subject matter.



Spiritual X Warfare character Uri, in a snapshot image of game's future potential.

# Tech in motion

TECHNOLOGY IN CHRISTIAN ENTERTAINMENT TODAY

## Conference Highlights Christian Video Games



Turning Tides characters: Napallah, Tai, Eeroo and Kern.

By Stephen Weese

*Creative Motion Tech and Animation Columnist*

Though video games are a less visible Christian industry, there are still many believers out there in the ranks of video game development, art, writing, and creation. Every year the Christian Game Developers Conference, [cgdc.org](http://cgdc.org), occurs in Portland, Oregon, where believers who have Christ and gaming in common gather together.

Tim Emmerich, the founder and director of CGDC, creates interactive parables used in churches and schools. Charlie Mauck, who with his wife, Heather, has *fourteen* children, has been a driving force for this conference since its creation; five of his kids volunteered for the last

one. Along with Michael Herrera, they create a family-friendly Christian video and tabletop game gathering for all who wish to come.

The conference is not only about Christian-themed video games, but for all believers who work in the industry. Many developers and designers that work for major game companies are found here, as well as independent companies making small, to large-scale, games.

Pixelight Games, [pixelightgames.com](http://pixelightgames.com), is a growing company based out of Hawaii that is working on a sequel to their previous mobile game, *Echo Dawn: Shattered Visions*. Learning from their medium-scale game, Pixelight is now working on a large-scale, mainstream PC and console game, *Echo Dawn: Turning Tides*. Set in a fantasy

world based on Hawaiian and Polynesian influences, it tells the story of the hero, Tai, who discovers an ancient kingdom hidden for centuries, and who must battle unusual monsters to discover its secrets.

It features voices by Christian actors Katie Leigh, [katieleigh.com](http://katieleigh.com), Dave DeAndrea, [davedeandrea.com](http://davedeandrea.com), and Ashley Seal, [ashleyseal.com](http://ashleyseal.com), and was voice directed by me, Stephen Weese, [rmgcommand.wixsite.com/steve](http://rmgcommand.wixsite.com/steve). Their development team includes Henry Olson, Connor McFarlane, Ray Wade, Magdalena Marinova, and Neil Sauvageau.

Neil had this to say about working on the game:

“Being a Christian influences our game in the way the story is told. It is a Polynesian fantasy RPG, with a biblical, worldview-based story focused on identity, false justice, and undeserved freedom. It is a game made by Christian Game Designers, for anyone who loves RPGs, especially those with high heroics and deep personal struggles thrown together. We want to bring positive, values-based stories into gaming pop culture.”

At the conference you’ll hear people speaking on various industry and faith-filled topics, including balancing spiritual and work life. You might hear from Ryan and Amy Green, the authors of the dramatic game *That Dragon, Cancer*, [thatdragoncancer.com](http://thatdragoncancer.com), based on their real-life son’s struggle with the disease. Or you might hear a

## Tech Columnist Stephen Weese



Stephen Weese

**Stephen Weese** is a voiceover producer and director, as well as a voice and film actor. He produced, wrote, and starred in the live action sci-fi feature, *Altered Spirits*, which is available on Amazon. He recently was the voice of Dietrich in the Shadowverse video game. Stephen has also been in Christian ministry for fifteen years, and is the author of the book, *God Loves the Freaks*. He also teaches at a film college and is a nutrition coach, IT expert, swordfighter, and general, all-around nerd. His company, Marvelous Spiral Theater, produces voiceover for games and animation: [marvelousspiraltheater.com](http://marvelousspiraltheater.com).

talk on the latest in VR from Rich Tanner, Digital Entertainment professor at Abilene Christian University: [acu.edu](http://acu.edu).

Some other folks you’d want to meet are Phil Conrod and Kris Murray, from BibleByte: [biblebytebooks.com](http://biblebytebooks.com). Phil has worked for years creating books and digital content for Kidware Software, an amazing company that teaches kids Computer Science: [kidwaresoftware.com](http://kidwaresoftware.com). If you’ve ever wanted a fun way to teach kids how to code, you should check out their library.

Lately, Kris and Phil have an even more ambitious project: *The Exodus Adventure*: [biblebytebooks.com](http://biblebytebooks.com).

This is a game where the player starts out as a young, curious Egyptian, during the time of the enslavement of the Hebrews. The player spies on Moses to find out what he is up to, and with his friends, solves puzzles and learns about the struggle of God’s people. That’s great already in itself, but BibleByte goes one step further, and releases the full game resources to the buyer, so kids can code the game for themselves. *The Exodus Adventure* is a learning



KidsWare books and The Exodus Adventure.



Screenshot of Dragons of Yahira.

tool by example: kids play the game, then learn to create it. I voiced the lead character in it, Yalu, and fellow believer and film actor, Andy McPhee, was the voice of Moses: [andymcphee.info](http://andymcphee.info).

Laurene Wells was there with her company, TinyZoo, [tinyzoo.com](http://tinyzoo.com), demonstrating several games either finished, or in progress. One of the most notable and adorable is The Dragons of Yahira, which lets you start off as a baby dragon: [dragonsofyahira.com](http://dragonsofyahira.com). They're also working on an MMO, Visions, based in historical Rome, where you start off as a slave of a recently converted Christian, earning your freedom and exploring the world of early Christianity: [visionsgame.com](http://visionsgame.com).

If you ask believers at CGDC about the state of Christians and the video game industry, many of them will tell you we need *more believers* in the industry. Just as believers represent Christ in other occupations and daily walks of life, the video game field is another area where we can bring light. The industry has a need for writers, artists, developers, thinkers, and dreamers. There is a need for Christian games and creators, as well as Christian professionals representing our faith, working on secular titles.

There are Christians out there making games and working in the field, as we have seen here, but there is much more potential for the future.

## Developer's Outlook: Game Industry Growing

**Michael Herrera is a game designer at Clopas, [facebook.com/ClopasLLC](https://www.facebook.com/ClopasLLC), a family-friendly game development company in Wisconsin. Herrera is also on the board of the Christian Game Developers Conference, [cgdc.org](http://cgdc.org), an annual gathering that encourages game developers to be a light for Christ in their industry. Creative Motion asked Michael about the state of the Christian gaming industry as a whole:**

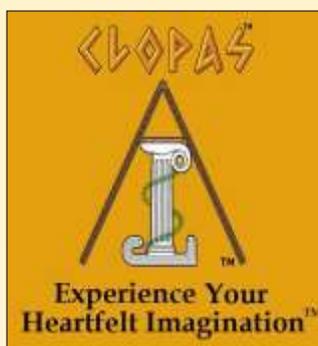
Well, that's a big question. I'll try and provide an answer with a bit of scope.

On the positive side, the community of Christian game developers is growing, more games of every type are being produced, and collaboration within the community is high (both online and in person). We can also say that games exist, or are being developed, on every platform, whether it be: PC, console, mobile, home assistants (e.g. Alexa), AR/VR, even tabletop (board and card) games.

### **In terms of growth:**

Participation at our annual gathering, the Christian Game Developers Conference, has increased steadily over the last four years. We had about 175 attendees in 2018. Our Facebook group has over 1,400 members: [facebook.com/groups/ChristianGameDevelopers](https://www.facebook.com/groups/ChristianGameDevelopers). And we have 10 local groups, with Seattle and Houston being the most active.

And when I say more types of games, I don't just mean different genres (e.g. adventure games, quiz games, MMOs [massively multiplayer online game]), I mean games for different audiences. Not all Christian games are overtly Christian. Nor are all Christian games intended to teach Bible verses, although those certainly exist. Some games contain Christian principles, but are intended for secular audiences—and not even necessarily to evangelize, but sometimes just to provide wholesome entertainment. Not all Christian games are aimed



Clopas game developer, Michael Herrera.

at children; increasingly more games are being designed specifically for adults. And finally, not all Christian games are meant to be serious, we have a few that are quite lighthearted.

On the downside, as a style of games, the Christian game market is not well-known, the developers making them are often individuals, or startups, there is a need for business expertise, and while the need for Christian games is high, demand isn't.

To expand on that last point, by "need" I mean usefulness. It would be great to have video games that actually dealt with real world problems from a Christian perspective.

For instance, I'd love to see a video game from one of our devs that deals with fatherhood, that focuses less on espousing macho violence, and more on teaching responsibility and sacrifice. There are plenty of other subjects that deserve a similar treatment, and I'm sure there are plenty of ministries and organizations that could use that kind of entertainment. And to be clear, that's not to say that such games don't exist. One recent example that touched on the subject of grace during times of turmoil was *That Dragon, Cancer*, by Numinous Games. It's both heart-wrenching and inspiring. We're really proud of what Ryan and Amy Green created.

# Hollywood prayers

Compiled by Kristen Collier

MI Chapter Director of The Hollywood Prayer Network

## Prayer for Nancy Stafford, leading actress in The First Lady, by co-star, Benjamin Dane:



Lord, I lift up to you Nancy Stafford. I pray her joy and light continues to shine for you. I pray that you increase her abilities and strengthen her talent in every form. From acting, to speaking, to writing, to producing.... May she have a tremendous impact on

women and families as she builds your Kingdom. Continue to multiply your calling on her life so that she hears clearly from you. Open up new opportunities, partnerships, creative alignments for her. I pray she feels your presence every time she steps on stage, writes, ministers to others, or embraces a role.

Lord Jesus, bring to her the right team that will lift her up, embrace her values, fight for her, and have her back—trusted individuals with supernatural contacts and connections that are constantly expanding, and who easily navigate through the industry. I pray this team will not only have interests in acting, but in producing, writing, and new outlets not previously considered. Also, that she grows with this new partnership, so that she begins to see the materialization of what you promised her years ago.

I pray your restore her strength and vitality. She will mount up on wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint! This is a new season of blessing, with a new anointing and brilliant, creative opportunity. Give her your favor. You said your favor is all we need. Lord bless her with tremendous favor, so she can do your work and be extremely blessed from all sides. I thank you that your promises are her armor. Protect her from the enemy and let her path be straight.

We believe The First Lady will showcase her amazing talent, get into new venues, find favor with distributors, and be widely released. Thank you for what you are doing in her life, the blessing she has been to me, and the blessing she will continue to be to many.

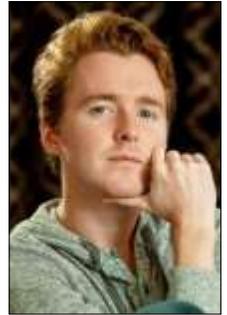
...In Jesus' name. Amen.

## What People Are Saying About:

### Aesthetics:

As to the answer to the question, yes. Everything about the physical universe operates on intricate mathematical principles that are a physical presentation of the law of God. All aesthetic judgment is an outflow of either the embracing, or rejection, of God's law.

—Daniel Knudsen, *Crystal Creek Media*



### African-American Beauty:



Society focuses so much on the outward appearance that they don't the truth about how a lot of the pictures of celebrities are Photoshop to make them look smaller in size and lighter in skin color, especially for African Americans. Some African American celebrities have resorted to

bleaching their skin to appear more "white" and it's sad that they let the pressures and ways of the world lower their self esteem to the point that they get so many surgeries that they are barely recognizable but the media these important pieces of information out of the story! The "meek and quiet spirit" of a person that The Lord loves, the world hates, yet this is what the media, especially the Christian media, needs to put forth."

- Tamika Willis, actress

### Christian Movies:

Watching movies gives me a reprieve from the hustle and bustle of life. It's a little self-care retreat for a few hours to make me feel like I can take on the world. As I've grown in both my professional and personal endeavors, the movies that appeal to me most are those with moral values that reflect my own. Those that reinforce the values I hold important, such as love, kindness, justice, and perseverance. Extra credit if the movie can make me laugh and/or cry. Faith-based films are wonderful in my opinion. Films that are based on Bible characters, or events, are some I especially enjoy. I tend to find myself picking them apart if they are not Scripturally sound, and my whole experience is somewhat jaded. Creative and artistic license is great, but it should not take precedence to God's word."

- Quantrilla Ard, writer at *The PhD Mamma*



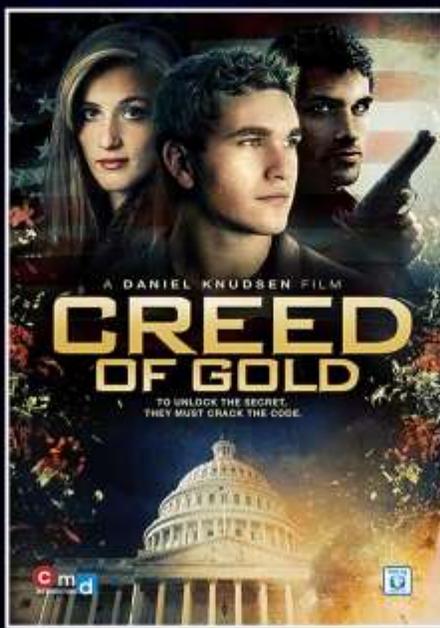
**Closing faith tidbit from Richard Carn:** Be nice and try to understand both sides of a problem.

Because our GENERATION is crying out  
for something authentic.



# Crystal Creek

M E D I A



Creating films with redemptive messages has become a passion for many, including those of us here at Crystal Creek Media.

[CrystalCreekMedia.com](http://CrystalCreekMedia.com)