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Written by Joe Dirosa



Laurence Kaldour

Redirecting Eddie is your 1st feature film as a director . Ironically it is about a director which is having quite a bit of trouble getting his first film made.. They say life imitates art .. Can you tell me about the process and some of the troubles you had getting Redirecting Eddie made?

You name it, we saw it. I could probably fill up an entire book, with just the production problems alone. We had problems while filming, right up through the present during post-production. Or, I could make a movie about it and have Eddie explain it to you.

A few of my favorite nightmare moments: Five days before the beginning of principal photography, my lead actress got stage-fright and backed out of the project. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise because we ended up with Deirdre Imus--who is a serendipitous angel--but at the time, you can imagine our panic. We scrambled. We scoured the screen-test tapes for back-up actresses--all of whom were now off on other gigs. Luckily, Jon Moore, the male lead in the movie, was able to get Deirdre at the last minute--two days before we were slated to roll cameras.

The funny thing is, which I think most filmmakers--especially producers--will relate to, is that the majority of the production problems on "Eddie" happen on ALL productions. Actors have to reschedule, props are missing. And, we even lost one whole day of shooting because our main camera broke.

But on the other hand, I definitely think "Eddie" had quite a few extra bumps on the road. There's a fight scene between the two brothers. And in the script, all of the props should be breakable, since Warren trashes his younger brother's set. This means the art department should have duplicates or triplicates of the props, as backups, right? Not only did my art department not have backups, but most of the



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props were totally indestructible. Many were rented while the rest were simply unbreakable plastics or metallic. I remember sending my awesome new prop masters Chris Gavagan and Jennifer De Los Santos--former Art Department PA's who were promoted on the spot--on a quick run to get me a stack of cheap dishes and cups. And when you watch the scene, Warren is moving all the larger props around, but he only smashes cups and plates.

Talk about a guerilla shoot...the night we decided to steal the shots of Lincoln Center, we knew it would be dicey, because it wasn't permitted. But what we didn't know was that the building lights we were using for our backdrop would go off at midnight. There we are, shooting, a skeleton crew in the freezing cold--and NYPD and Lincoln Centre security guards are racing up to us from all directions, telling us to pack it up. And to emphasize the point, in the background, the fountain turns off, and the whole place goes dark. Again, talk about making it happen no matter what...my lead actor Nathaniel Eaton held it together. And that shot, moments before the lights went out, became my movie poster.

We did have a great crew. And that's pretty much what gets you through the production. Every production has its challenges and day-to-day mishaps, don't get me wrong. But, not many have a terrorist attack take out two buildings that serve as backdrop for approximately fifteen percent of the film. On September 13, two days after 9/11, co-sponsor Subway called and said they were pulling out. They told me no one was going to want to see a film with the Trade Center in it, and that no one was going to be able to laugh at New York or New Yorkers for a long time. I think enough time has passed...And people, especially New Yorkers, are ready to laugh again.

Not only was production riddled with problems, but we had countless mishaps straight through post as well. Right up until this past summer, Fed Ex misplaced one of Eddie's five reels when shipping the reels from New York to California for finishing. Somehow, the reel became separated from the rest of the shipment, and instead of making it LA--it went to St. Louis. A few ulcers, a heart attack, and a week later, after much yelling and brow-beating, we were able to track it down and get it to LA to do the final picture finish.

This Redirecting Eddie has been 10 years in the making.. Literally over 7 years since you started principal photography.. Did you think you would ever get a finished product?

No one is more aware of how long this process has been than me--and actually it has been even longer than seven years. I conceived of the concept, which is partially based on a true story, and committed to writing the original script over 9 years ago, in the fall of 1998. A funny thing about my personality: I always knew I would finish. There was never any doubt. Whenever I set my mind to something--and all the people who know me can vouch for this--come hell or high water...I will finish. There is a line in the film where Eddie says "I will complete this film." For the past seven years, I have quoted him to myself, at least, a dozen times a day.

Also, over the years, as the project evolved and went through various ups and downs, I wasn't always certain I would have a good project, or a funny project, or a great film. But, I never doubted for a second that eventually I would complete it. And, the best thing is that, today, we actually have a film that I extremely proud of--simply because it is my first effort, my brain child, and my baby, and because I was able to finish it.

Where did the idea for redirecting eddie come from since you couldn't have had the same life experience as the movie while you were writing it?

Well, a lot of the ideas behind the film came from my previous years of experience on the set of indie films. Also, as an actor--mainly an extra--or as a Production Assistant, I was able to work on numerous high profile television shows and studio pictures. I always thought the combination of the pitfalls of indie filmmaking, contrasted with those of big budget filmmaking, would be an interesting exploration for me, as an indie guy--to create a sort of fish-out-of-water story.



However, all that being said, "Eddie" is not so much about the filmmaking, as it is about the characters. The story is very loosely based on a true story. For starters, my sister is a filmmaker. And we have had our differences and rivalries in the past, of which I take full responsibility for, being the younger sibling who grew up in his older sister's shadow. However, she is far from being a big, fat, evil B-movie filmmaker. She's a very talented artist in her own right, whom I have learned a lot from. I was simply tapping into some of our darker days of competition, when I imagined her to be a much darker figure than she truly is. I had the help of Avery O Williams, a gifted writer, who reshaped the character of the older sibling and helped give the appropriate depth and humanity needed to sell the relationship.

Also, the b-story--the buddy-pic side of the movie--is based on facets of my personality. Eddie is my more creative and practical side, while Oliver is my more comedic, Woody Allen / Neil Simon-influenced side. Oliver is crass, sarcastic and just out there having fun.

Of course, I have to share ALL story credit with Avery. I promised he would always get billing over me, because after seven years and uncounted drafts of my original story, I have no idea where the original story started and our communal version ends. And the one true fact is...I couldn't have done it without him.

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What does finally being finished compare too?

My initial reaction is...words cannot express the feeling of being finished, after all this time. Finally being completed...having the finished product...it has been such a long road. I guess the words that come to mind are thankful, grateful--to so many people and for the opportunity itself--relieved, thrilled, elated, and definitely euphoric.

What do you think it takes to be a successful director and or producer in independent films now in 2007?

In my heart of hearts, I truly believe the answer has been the same since the beginning of literature and theater. If you are an artist, and you have a story to tell, and it is compelling, it will come out. You will express it. And if you don't, shame on you for not sharing it with the rest of the universe. I think it takes two qualities to be successful in any industry: persistence and talent. If you have the drive, and you ignore time-tables and limitations, you will be successful. And, it also depends on your definition of success. If making millions of dollars defines your success...I think there are other industries like banking to become involved with. But if success is waking up every day and doing what you love, and simply making a living at it...then by simply sticking to it, if you have even a modicum of talent, you will find success.

How was working with Jaid Barrymore... I heard you had a bit of a run in that's not usually associated with playboy bunnies..?

Jaid is an absolute character. I love Jaid, so very much. She brought such a fun and lively energy to set everyday, and I'm thrilled to have had the opportunity to work with her. One of my funniest memories of working with her, and I think it was one of the funniest moments on set, which we all needed, was when we were shooting up near Columbia University, on a bluff overlooking Spanish Harlem. Jaid was running late, and these



were Jaid is an absolute character. I love Jaid, so very much. She brought such a fun and lively energy to set everyday, and I'm thrilled to have had the the earlier days of cell phones in New York. Back in the late 90's, reception in certain neighborhoods was shoddy, to say the least. So, Jaid is late and we can't get her on the phone. And while we're shooting some preliminary shots, cutaways and what not, there is a police chopper circling our set and the area. They were obviously looking for someone. Then, from the bluff, the entire cast and crew could see this police chase, which started by car and moved to a foot-chase, across and around Spanish Harlem. Just then, we get a call from Jaid, whose cab driver was lost, and she's calling us directly from the middle of this Wild West gun fight/car chase. I mean, Jaid, this petite woman, being driven right through this battle...and we're all standing there watching. If the cameras weren't already set and rigged for an elaborate rain scene, I would have loved to have caught it on film.

The good news is, Jaid eventually arrived, unscathed, though frazzled. And we actually made our day, and it was one of our smoother days.

Now, relating to one of your earlier questions about problems encountered on set, well...apparently one of the perpetrators was never caught during the chase, so the helicopter stayed with us all day and into the night. You can only imagine the sound quality that day. Needless-to-say, we got through it, but it was a high adrenaline day.

What other projects do you have in the works that we can look for on the horizon?

I always have several projects in various stages of development. Right now, I am actively working on a script with Bob Urdaneta, starring Sally Kirkland and Bo Gentry, which will be an homage to Wenders' "Wings of Desire," with a very special and heart-warming twist. Being a huge fan of Wenders, I am working diligently and methodically to ensure the highest level of integrity and quality. I also have two horror scripts being shopped around. One, surprisingly enough, is in conjunction with Jaid Barrymore's Phaze 3 Films, out of New York. Both of those films promise to be very exciting, and are close to rolling into production as early as Winter '08.

I have so many projects that I am passionate about, and several solid ones in my slate that I would love to start work on. For the past seven years while finishing "Eddie," I have been making my bones and garnering experience, working on others' material. This has been extremely rewarding. However, now that "Eddie" is on its way out to the public, I cannot express my excitement to get back into the development side, and begin work on my own original projects.

I read hundreds of scripts every year, and I am constantly looking for new material. Of the projects in my company Kaliber Films' slate, at least half have been acquired from other people. Of those, I have the rights to a phenomenal book about the first queen of the American roller derby in the 1950's. I have another great one about a family of three generations of Italian-American women who all get romanced by the same opera singer in a small town in Italy.

I have several other stories and projects that are several years off. And even though it's premature to even begin to discuss them, I am very excited and passionate about all of them. I only wish I could be working on all of them simultaneously. I have a wonderful, untold, true story that takes place during the Holocaust. I have an epic, based on the best historical fiction I've ever read. And I am constantly being offered fabulous new stories all the time.

Is there a project or story that you think that Hollywood should really make?

I'm a film-file. So, I pretty much attempt to see every movie out there. There are no bad movies, in my opinion--just movies for different days of the week and different moods. I love the action and adventure genres, just as much as thriller or drama. I love screwball comedies, animation, slasher films, b-movie dramedies, as well as the art-house, ultra low-budget indie flicks. I love them all. Every aspect of the basic story structure has been done to death. I only hope that filmmakers keep pushing the envelope, focusing on characters, continuing to explore special effects, and telling wondrous stories. Is there "one" story that needs to be told? Well...every story in my slate, eventually, needs to be told. And the potential academy award nominee stories, like the holocaust picture I just mentioned, are just as important as Jaid's horror film, in my opinion. As an artist, and as a member of the general public, I want to see them all.

As an independent film producer and director what sort of conflicting struggles did you have by occupying the two very different positions??

This is an ongoing struggle on every project I work on--especially so on "Redirecting Eddie." I think the trick is to surround yourself with good people and a solid crew. If you have a solid support staff, you can endure. The two positions are constantly at odds. I think the benefit of having an indie background is that I understand that the entertainment business is just that: entertainment and business. I am constantly balancing both elements all the time. I direct and write with an eye for producing. I'm always producing. And I bring that to the table on jobs where I am solely the producer, as well on jobs where I am solely the director. I am always aware of crew needs, time schedules, actors' overtime, as well as the costs of all the elements. I find that many people who have a background in one or the other find themselves constantly at odds with making their days or even surviving production. When I get to wear both hats, I typically don't experience a conflict. I have learned to accept and balance the two positions. However, I am always reminded that they are at odds.



You have original music for the movie from Cher.. How did that come about?

Wow. Actually in the cut we have right now, we have a license for Cher's song "When Love Calls Your Name," which was recorded in the early 90's. And let me tell you, acquiring those rights were no easy task. It took me and my manager at the time John Martino almost two years to track Cher down and to finally get her to agree. The funny thing is we would send a request with a box of chocolates to her house in Malibu, and she'd be in London. Or we'd send flowers to her home in London, and she'd be in Beverly Hills. I can't reveal the trick my manager ultimately used to get her to say yes, because frankly I may need to use it again someday, and don't want to give away all my secrets! All I can say is we wowed her and won her over. And, she graciously watched the film and agreed to give us the song.

As far as original music, we have the rights to do a modern version of the song, as well as interest from several famous DJ's to remix it. The original theatrical release of the film may or may not feature the remix. It may be reserved for the DVD or for syndicated release. But as great as Cher's original sleeper hit version of the song is, the remix will be even hotter.

Who were your influences that made you want to make films?

As a kid, when I saw "Star Wars" for the first time, I was blown away. I went back to the theater to see it literally over 20 times. And, I remember while everyone else wanted to be a Jedi or Han Solo, all I wanted to do was figure out how they accomplished it, and how I could accomplish something like it. Then only a year or so later, "Superman" came out and I was blown away again--especially since I grew up on the 50's George Reeve's version, where Superman flies, flat on a glass table. So, my earliest influences were Donner and Lucas. As for my sense of humor, well, I'm a New York Jew. I was pretty much raised by Neil Simon and Woody Allen. I relate to them. They basically make movies about my family and everyone's family I knew growing up. There are definite elements in "Redirecting Eddie," especially in Oliver's character, that are directly related to my love of Allen and Simon.

Then, of course, as I became a study of film, I became endeared of all the masters. Stanley Kubrick is at the top of my list. I also love Kurosawa, Spielberg, Hitchcock, De Sica, Renoir, Coppola, Kapra, Eisenstein, Wells, Ray, Bunuel, Ford, Houston, and Wilder, to name a few. I have been and continue to be a consummate study of the art, and am humble enough to admit that my craft is still in its infancy. I love the process, and I am always learning, always studying, and always growing.



Do you have any actors which you would love to work with?

Oh my goodness, my wish list is a mile long. There are seasoned actors whom I would be honored to work with, as well as some younger actors whom I think are quite gifted. I hesitate to begin mentioning names for fear of leaving out some of my favorites, so please understand that

this list is absolutely open-ended. At the top of my list, would definitely be Johnny Depp, whom I think is one of, if not, simply the best living actor in the business. No one brings more to every role. Close seconds would be Phillip Seymour Hoffman and Natalie Portman. I would love the opportunity to direct Bill Cosby or Steve Martin because I know I could learn so much from comedians who have also directed.

Favorite movie of 2007?

"Lars and the Real Girl" is my top choice, although "American Gangster" is a close second. I still feel Ryan Gosling deserves an Oscar nod, even though it's difficult to beat Denzel when he is at the top of his game. I don't think "Lars" is necessarily the best film of the year, but it is a personal favorite thus far. Ryan's performance simply blew me away.

Last and finally what is on your ipod?

Well, I have extremely eclectic taste in music, as well. And since my iPod holds thousands of songs, I have my entire mp3 library on it. Dance music for working out makes up about 1/3 of it. And the rest of the songs are an equal mix of every genre: pop, jazz, classic rock, smooth R&B, southern rock, country & western, hip-hop, classical, top 40, Motown, alternative rock, heavy metal, grunge...And actually, there are so many categories today for music, I'm sure I have blends of almost every kind of music out there.

Redirecting Eddie is scheduled to be released in 2008 but you can see the trailer and more information at www.redirectingeddie.com