
A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA



As confetti was being swept from Times Square on the dawn of January 1, 2000, Americans slept peacefully, forgetting about Y2K and the millennium altogether. They were already moving on to the next big thing. However, a mere twenty-four hours earlier, on the morning of December 31, 1999, you would have found an entirely different country. A country saturated with fear, curiosity and uncertainty about the unknown, which lay before them.

A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA, a feature documentary, filmed entirely on December 31, 1999, offers a savvy critique of the hype and hysteria making the millennium an anticlimax. Set against the cacophony of the unrelenting media circus, four American's stories take the audience into the heart of the millennial zeitgeist. *A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA* offers a shrewd commentary on the ability of corporate media to turn America into a culture of fear.

Meticulously weaving interviews and news footage with the stories of a new age survivalist, a fake street preacher, a funk musician and a Lakota Chief, *A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA* brings to light some of the extreme lengths Americans were willing to take in order to make sense of the approaching midnight.

In the dusty expanse of Southern Arizona, Jacque Zaleski, the eccentric leader of a community of Wicca survivalists, is putting the finishing touches on her eco-friendly ranch in preparation for Y2K.

On the rainy streets of New York City, the notorious performance artist Reverend Billy, dressed in his signature white tuxedo, is lambasting the corporate highjacking of the millennium, to the delight of left wing activists who follow his every step. "Children, one of the wonderful things about the millennium, is the promise that Times Square will be destroyed."

In the heart of the Bible belt, funk musician Lawrence Harvey is lazily passing from barbershops to radio stations in New Orleans, promoting and preparing for his millennium performance with the funk group – Iris May Tango.

Meanwhile, on the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, the millennium is the last thing on Albert White Hat Sr.'s mind. "To us one hundred years ago is just like yesterday." Instead, the Lakota chief is focusing his energy on leading his community in a 40-year tradition – the New Years Eve Pow-Wow.

A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA reveals the ongoing tension between the real experiences of the American populace and the regurgitated stories of mass media. Through the strength of these four emotionally charged stories, the film brings a glimmer of hope: in the face of a monolithic consumer culture Americans can still find meaning in their own communities and their own stories.



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THE CAST

NEW YORK CITY - Bill Talen, aka: The Reverend Billy

Bill Talen is a performance artist living in New York City. His character, Reverend Billy, is an eccentric street preacher whose sermons focus on corporate encroachment and consumerist mentality. He can often be found preaching in front of the Disney store in Times Square yelling "Stop Shopping!" His actions have been highly publicized in The New York Times, The Village Voice, Mother Jones Magazine and Adbusters. He was recently featured on National Public Radio. On December 31st Bill Talen gave three performances as Reverend Billy throughout New York City.

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA – Lawrence "Keng" Harvey

Lawrence Harvey is best known in New Orleans as Keng, the dread-headed singer for the funk band Iris May Tango. Keng joined the group in 1997 after being invited as a guest singer on one of their albums and has since established himself as a key member of the band. On New Years Eve, Keng performed a solo show as Sir Funk A Lot and then joined Iris May Tango for a huge Millennium performance at the Dream Palace on Frenchman Street.

DOUGLAS, ARIZONA - Jacque Omi Zaleski

Jacque Zaleski is the founder and manager of the Windtree Ranch, which was created in 1997 as a space where individuals could learn and practice environmental conservation and spiritual freedom. Located on 40 acres of land, the ranch is made up of straw and mud houses. In addition to windmills, solar panels and generators the community stored a year's worth of food and ten years of seeds in preparation for an Y2K disaster.

ST. FRANCIS, SOUTH DAKOTA - Albert White Hat Sr.,

Albert White Hat Sr. is a Native American from the Lakota-Sioux nation living on the Rosebud Reservation in St. Francis, South Dakota. Albert is a professor at the Sinte Galeska Universtiy and a well respected elder in his community. Every year on New Years Eve, the reservation holds a Pow Wow - a community event where people of all ages come to dance and play music in traditional styles.



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Producer/Director/Editor – Brian Quist

Brian Quist is a filmmaker and educator from Seattle, Washington. The founder of Global Griot Productions, *A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA* is Quist's feature debut. Originally conceived in 1998 the film was born when 25 crewmembers spread across the country on December 31st to capture the evolution of the millennium. Completed in 2002, *A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA* won "Best Documentary" at its World Premiere during the Rhode Island International Film Festival.

Quist was recently selected as one of ten directors to participate in the 2003 Seattle International Film Festival's Fly Films Challenge. The challenge gave each director 10 days to shoot and edit a short film. The results were premiered at the festival in June. Quist's film, *WHAT WOULD JESUS PLAY?* an audience favorite has since gone on to play six other festivals.

Quist's previous film *WE ARE REFUGEES*, profiles the plight of two Tibetan refugees who fled Tibet in 1998 defying the occupying Chinese edict and resettling in India.

Quist, who has lived abroad for much of his life, also teaches filmmaking to underserved communities with the Seattle-based non-profit Arts Corps.

Producer/Director/Editor – T.J. Martin

T.J. Martin is a musician and filmmaker from Seattle, Washington. He has been studying and producing films since he was eighteen years old. Martin joined Global Griot in 1999 as co-producer and co-director of *A DAY IN THE HYPE OF AMERICA*. Since then he has continued to produce and edit a number of films *WHAT WOULD JESUS PLAY?*, *LEARNING ACROSS BORDERS* and *BLACK COMMODIFICATION*. Martin has also been involved in producing promotional and educational videos.

In addition to film production, Martin is active promoter in many arenas. He organized events ranging from live musical performances to educational workshops to fundraisers for national NGO's. He also produced promotional and educational materials for non-profit agencies including Northwest AIDS Alliance, El Centro De La Raza and the World Affairs Council.

Currently, Martin is involved with a multi-faceted production company 'Project 2050.' Their mission is to promote embracing diversity through multiple of forms of communication, such as music, film, dance and literature.



CREW BIOS

Segment Directors:

NEW YORK CITY - Brian Palmer

Brian Palmer has directed, produced and created numerous projects under the banner of the company he co-founded, Surround Inc. Using a combination of motion graphics, animation and live action, Surround Inc. has produced for broadcast networks, media brands, feature films, music video's and video installations. Most recently, his production included a five series image campaign for *Music for Silent Film* for MTV2. His other clients include Showtime, MTV Networks, VH-1, and Kodak Off Air Creative. An artist-in-residence at Manhattan's Tribeca Lab, Palmer produced the 1998 feature film comedy, *Life in Bed*.

NEW ORLEANS - David Messick

Dave Messick is the founder and creative director of Unscene Productions in Ocean City, Maryland. Unscene focused much of its early efforts documenting the local skate scene in Maryland. In 1999, Messick produced and directed *The Ocean Bowl Story*, about the nations' oldest municipal skate park. He is currently producing film and video spots for local sport fishing companies.

DOUGLAS, ARIZONA - T.J. Martin (See above)

ST. FRANCIS, SOUTH DAKOTA - Riley Morton

Riley Morton grew up skiing and climbing throughout the Cascade Mountains in his native Washington State. Morton has since turned his love for the mountains into a career as a documentary filmmaker focusing on alpine subjects and subcultures. *Found On Everest* is his 3rd feature film – following *Detours* and *Locals Only*. His work has been seen on NBC, CNN and the Discovery Channel.



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CREDITS

Associate Producer

BRIAN PALMER
JEREMY SAMUELSON

Assistant Director

MORGAN ZVANUT

Assistant Editors

T.J. MARTIN
KURT FELDHUN

Production Supervisor

DAVE DONAHUE

Motion Graphics & Design

SURROUND INC.

Music Supervisor

T.J. MARTIN

Music Consultant

NASIR RASHEED

Sound Consultant

TOMMY MARTIN

Sound Design

SKY TUCKER

Post Production Sound
Editor

BRETT BECKER

LOCATION CREDITS

Douglas, Arizona:

Segment Director

T.J. MARTIN

First Camera

DAVE DONAHUE

Second Camera

DERRICK AVITT

Sound

JOE LANEY

Additional Footage

T.J. MARTIN
BRIAN QUIST

Research Assistance

JOURNEY TO ONE



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Rosebud, South Dakota

Segment Director/First Camera	RILEY MORTON
Second Camera	ANNA FORD
Third Camera	CHRIS SANCHEZ
Sound	SHIKOTA SANCHEZ
Still Photography	ANNA FORD
Additional Footage	BRIAN QUIST
Research Assistance	JACK SWANEY

New York City

Segment Director/First Camera	BRIAN PALMER
Second Camera	BRADLEY PALMER
Third Camera	JULLIANNE
Still Photography	MICHAEL RUBTOTTOM
Additional Footage	JEREMY SAMUELSON BRIAN QUIST
NY Time Lapse Photography	SURROUND, INC.

New Orleans

Segment Director/First Camera	DAVE MESSICK
Second Camera	MICHAEL TYLER
Sound	RICKY BARRETTO
Additional Footage	T.J. MARTIN KIRSTEN STOFFA
Still Photography	AIMEE TOLEDANO
Research Assistance	ALISON GOODWIN NIC KATSAO



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