

## Movie Review

# The Hero

By Jessica Dearborn

*The Hero*, written by Nancy Dodd Cates, is a short film inspired by a "Universal need for our father's acceptance." Unfortunately, many people have climbed through these battle fields and crawled away bruised and bleeding. A talented cast and crew were brought together to share and create a unified vision of overcoming fears and obstacles that haunt us all.

The film begins with three soldiers scrambling over the rocks. Fragments of war surround them as they move through the region to safety. The visions of the director, Shawn Fornari, and the director of photography, Steven Fraasa are masterfully conjoined to inspire the viewer with brilliant scenes of the setting sun, the shadows running over the mountains, and the tension that persists within the soldiers. The music defines the voices and the scenery as a blanket of dialogue is wrapped around you, building a grinding anticipation to view the next.

The relationship of the characters Slick and Preach are much like that of an agitated relationship between a father and son. Preach, a foster child struggles with his identity while Slick struggles with God, and to find a value in life. Both having problems that society deems as disadvantages, they must find a way in each other to break through and continue moving forward.

The small team of crew and cast members challenged themselves with a limited budget and only three and a half days to shoot. To add to their list of hurdles, they used a 24P Digital Video Camera that had only been on the market less than a month prior to their filming. Steven Fraasa took on the task of learning its proper usage in half a day. The terrain and high contrast rocks made it even more difficult, minimizing their moves in the limited daylight.

In addition, the acting was truthful and unforced. The two leads are Kevin Sizemore and Anthony Griffith. Kevin Sizemore (Slick), also sharing Producer credit with Roy Cummins, has a list of television credits appearing on *Will & Grace*, *CSI: Miami*, and *Resurrection Blvd*. Anthony Griffith (Preach) has been a regular on *The Tonight Show* for thirteen years, and won an Emmy award for the television drama *Our Father*. The rest of the cast, Benjamin Roy, Dave Craig, and Laurie Shiers all share strong talents as well.

The writer, Nancy Dodd Cates, is a well-scoped writer, and received her Masters in Professional Writing from USC. Other work includes a one-act play, *Disposable*, which is now in pre-production as a short film, and has received awards for her fiction and short stories. Her play, *Pitter Patter*, is also in pre-production. Through this project, she has been exposed to new people and ideas and looking forward to the further development of this film and her career.

With the feature-length of *The Hero* now completed, all are looking forward to expanding their visions. Currently they are preparing to send the short to film festivals, gaining recognition in all their efforts.