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Life is a One-Way Ticket: Herman Leonard's Eightieth Birthday Celebration

George Ingmire
University of New Orleans

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“LIFE IS A ONE-WAY TICKET”:
HERMAN LEONARD’S
EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
The Department of Drama and Communications

by

George Allen Ingmire III

B.A. University of New Orleans, 2000

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Abstract

Life is a One-Way Ticket is a twenty-three minute documentary about jazz photographer Herman Leonard's 80th birthday party. The event took place at Rosy's Jazz Hall, a club in the uptown section of New Orleans where musicians including Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie and Stevie Wonder once performed.

Within the documentary, I show the celebration as an analogy for the life of Herman Leonard. In short but moving passages, Herman Leonard reflects upon the nature of his longevity, the world today, and the “luck” he has had with photography. In addition to the voice of Herman Leonard, interviews with Herman Leonard’s friends and family show him as both a world-class photographer and the down-to-earth human being. Upon completion of the documentary, the final cut will be authored onto a DVD. This will allow for extra features, including an extended interview with Herman Leonard.

Introduction

On March 6th, 2003, Herman Leonard celebrated his 80th birthday in grand style. Rosy's Jazz Hall, a historic club in the uptown section of New Orleans, played host to Herman Leonard and his friends, both old and new. Throughout the night, the audience was entertained with performances ranging in flavor from the jazz sounds of Astral Project to the exotic rhythms playing behind the belly dance troupe, Devyani. On the second floor in a room overlooking the indoor courtyard, a tabla and cello soothed listeners in a mock opium den. Martinis flowed, people danced, and Herman Leonard reunited with a multitude of friends. *Life is a One-Way Ticket* is a documentary about that night at Rosy's and is also a brief glimpse into the life of a talented individual.

As part of my thesis project for a Master of Fine Arts in Film Production, I completed a 23 minute documentary about Herman Leonard's 80th birthday party at Rosy's Jazz Hall, a club in the uptown section of New Orleans where on nights years ago Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie and Stevie Wonder performed. On this evening in the spring of 2003, a party celebrating the 80th Birthday of Herman Leonard filled the whole jazz hall with a similar joy.

Much of Herman Leonard's legacy resides in his photography of jazz greats. Lesser known but nonetheless remarkable are his photographs from abroad.

Upon spending a few minutes with Herman Leonard, one discovers that he's a great storyteller. During an interview with Herman that evening, he told of riding a donkey 'across the sands of the desert' to school. Following up that story with another story that occurred years later, he recalled photographing prostitutes in Paris for Hugh Hefner. Herman Leonard's humor and candor remained captivating throughout the evening.

A great deal of visual territory was covered over the course of the evening, including the filming of live performances on the main stage by the jazz band Astral Project, belly dance troupe Devyani, and the magician/comic Harry Anderson. On the second floor, a tabla and cello group played in the 'Opium Den' for guests who were in search of a quieter atmosphere. Throughout the night, the camera crew followed Herman Leonard as he met with friends, both old and new. The crew also led hand-held interviews with partygoers who had a word or two to say about Herman. I conducted a number of sit-down interviews in a separate apartment. Many of the interviews led to meaningful recollections about Herman.

The filmmaker's intention with the raw materials of this evening's affairs was to render a small but thoughtful portrait of a complex man. The documentary moves from his work in the musical realm to his excursions abroad. The interviews conducted that evening covered much ground. From recollections by his daughter about growing up overseas with her father to responses by musicians to his work, *Life is a One-Way Ticket* is a glimpse at both a singular man's work and his life among others.

In order to adequately contain the events of March 6th, 2003, the completed project will be authored on DVD. The DVD medium allows for the inclusion of conflicting materials. Because the documentary has a light-hearted and celebratory tone, the DVD is useful in that it allows for the inclusion of additional materials that would otherwise conflict with the mood and storyline of the documentary.

Pre-production

The preproduction phase of the documentary lasted two weeks. In mid-February 2003, I received a call from the office of Herman Leonard. They were looking for someone to document Herman's 80th birthday party. One of Herman Leonard's assistants was familiar with my previous documentary work and recommended me for the job. I arranged a meeting with Herman and his assistant, Jenny Bagert, in order to show some of my previous work and to discuss what they were looking for in terms of coverage and subject matter. We talked over coffee at Herman's house on topics ranging from the impending war in Iraq to our travels abroad. We barely got around to discussing the task at hand of filming the birthday party. As it turns out, Herman hired me on the spot based on what his assistants referred to as a 'gut feeling' that I was the one for the job.

Considering the size of the party, I decided three camera people would be necessary to cover the events throughout the evening. I brought on Aaron Walker, Amy Sanderson, and Justin Thomason for the filming. All three owned 3CCD video cameras – Aaron Walker operated a Sony TRV-900; Amy Sanderson used a Sony VX-2000; Justin Thomason shot with a Canon XL1. In addition, I borrowed sound equipment from a fellow documentary filmmaker – a Tascam DA-P1 and a pair of Sennheiser MKE-2s. The sound equipment was used for interviews. Everything else that was filmed used on-camera sound.

As the party grew closer, I had another meeting with Jenny Bagert to discuss whom I should interview. We did a brief walkthrough of Rosy's Jazz Hall. Unfortunately, our walkthrough was during the day that failed to take account of the lighting (or lack thereof) that would be used for the party. During the planning of this documentary, I envisioned the story moving between live music and intimate interviews. I drew some of my inspiration from the rock classic by Martin Scorsese, *The Last Waltz*. Both my project and *The Last Waltz* concerned a single night; and they both marked a significant transition in time.

My meetings with the camera operators consisted of generalized instructions. I trusted their instincts and skills as operators. In retrospect, I wish I had spent more time with them planning their camera work. This issue will return in the following chapter on production. I came out of this recognizing that planning is by far the most important phase of any production venture.

On the day of the event, I walk around the jazz hall with Jenny Bagert. She led me through various rooms, telling me what to expect and look for at the party. One of the complications I saw ahead of time concerned finding a quiet location to conduct brief interviews. This dilemma wasn't solved until we arrived to shoot. Steve Zweibaum, Rosy's executive chef, reluctantly agreed to let me use his apartment, which was on the second floor of the jazz club, for interviews.

In addition to finding a crew and meeting with Herman Leonard and Jenny Bagert, I did some research on Herman Leonard. His office gave me a copy of documentary

that was produced by Louisiana Public Broadcasting, *Frame after Frame*. Previewing this documentary was useful, in that I saw material about Herman Leonard that was worth expanding upon and also material that I didn't need to repeat. It was at this stage that I decided to focus more on his photography and life abroad. While time preparation time for this production was limited, I was able to develop a workable plan that focused on successfully capturing all the elements of the party, the people and the place.

Production

On March 6th, 2003, I met with my three camera operators, Aaron Walker, Amy Sanderson and Justin Thomason, outside Rosy's Jazz Hall. As everyone gathered equipment from their cars, I went inside to meet with the management of the club to check on the status of preparations. Herman Leonard's assistants were still hanging prints on the walls. I asked Amy to film last preparations in the kitchen. I then asked Justin to film the finishing touches being put together by Herman Leonard's staff. Aaron and I, with the help of Rosy's manager Steve Zweibaum, went to secure a quiet, well-lit location for interviews.

Filming on location preceding the actual party allowed for coverage of some of the behind the scenes preparations that went into making the party. Amy interviewed the chef as he prepared a sushi appetizer. Other coverage included bottles of wine being opened, glassed being polished, and candles being lit. These are everyday occasions in the life of celebratory New Orleans. They are nonetheless important aspects as they display the ritual components of preparing for a party.

Our search for a quiet well-lit location to film was a challenge. Any place on the main floor where live entertainment and a bulk of the partygoers would be was out of the question. The mock opium den was initially an option as it would be less noisy.

However, we needed to light the interviews and anyone who knows about opium dens knows that they are never well-lit. Lighting for interviews would be intrusive to the party, especially an opium den. One of my primary concerns with documenting this event was for the documentary crew to remain as transparent and unobtrusive as possible. As it turned out later in the evening, the opium den became filled with mock opium addicts and would have been too noisy.

The one space in the whole building that was perfect for interviews was Steve Zweibaum apartment. His apartment was adjacent to the opium den. At first, Steve was understandably reluctant to offer us the space. He wasn't comfortable with the idea of complete strangers walking around in his apartment. After explaining to him the importance of conducting interviews in a quiet well-lit location he eventually agreed to allow us access.

As we continued our initial preparations, people were starting to arrive. I had a list of potential interviewees with me, most of whom I had never met. I asked Jenny Bagert to introduce me to these individuals whenever possible. She was already juggling a number of other responsibilities at this point. Nonetheless, she managed with the help of others to establish contact between the many of the potential interviewees and me.

I choose my initial interviews with individuals who appeared the most outgoing and friendly. As the night progressed and the festive spirit entered everyone, the

interviews became easier. For a handful of interviews, I prepared questions in days leading up to the event. I did this by doing online research, otherwise known as Googling. Admittedly, this proved only so useful for a couple of reasons. First, online information gives only a vague rendition of any individual's life story. Second, my questions centered on Herman Leonard and his relationship with the individual, so doing background research on my interviewees was only indirectly helpful.

Some of the questions were general enough to ask everyone: *Where and when did you meet Herman Leonard? What's the secret to his youthful glow and vigor? What comes to mind when you think of his photography?* I often closed with a question that would hopefully reaped useful and interesting answers: *Do you have any dirt on Herman or amusing story about Him that you'd like to share?* At the end of the interview, I asked the individual if they were up to singing 'Happy Birthday' for Herman on camera. I also asked each of them to look straight into the camera and directly address Herman with a more personal message.

Getting into the flow of conducting interviews took some work as I was admittedly intimidated by the role of impromptu interviewer. Aaron Walker helped me with the technical components involved in conducting interviews: lighting, camera positioning and microphone placement. We choose to interview with high-key lighting. This provided a contrast with the low-key lighting of the party. The positioning between Aaron on camera, the interviewee and me interviewing was such that the interviewee wasn't looking too far off camera while at the same time they weren't looking into the camera until I requested for them to do so. Aaron set up a lavalier microphone on each

subject. We also had a cardioid microphone in place just in case we had to interview multiple subjects. I monitored the recording levels by occasionally glancing at LED meter on DAT recorder.

Recording onto a DAT recorder provided a much richer sound than we would have ended up with using either the on-board video camera microphone or going direct with a feed from out-board microphone to camera. The on-board microphone would have also picked up too much of the room ambience. A direct feed from microphone to camera would have made levels more difficult to manage. This approach also would have created unnecessary distraction for Aaron as he ran the camera. Despite major advances in videography, double-system recording (meaning camera and sound are captured separately) remains the best choice in most situations.

As we were getting into the flow of interviewing, Aaron suggested that I start each interview with the question: *What did you have for breakfast?* This seemed odd at first but it proved to be a great icebreaker. Most people had vivid recollections of their breakfasts and were happy to share with me the details of what they ate that morning. Opening with this question helped break down any initial resistance between the interviewee and me. I approached each interview by paying special attention to (or trying to discover) the relationship between the interviewee and Herman Leonard. While interviewing John Hasse, a curator at the Smithsonian, I initially focused on Herman's place in the history of photography. As the interview progressed, I discovered that John Hasse and Herman Leonard had become close friends over time, so I added impromptu questions concerning their friendship.

As I questioned musicians, I asked about how they felt being documented. I also wanted to know about how they felt once they saw the photographs. Coco Robicheaux, a local blues musician, reminisced on how he and Herman walked around the French Quarter getting to know each other. They went together into a bookstore on St. Peters Street where Herman picked up a copy of his book, *Jazz Memories*, for Coco. Two doors down, Coco picked up copies of his musical CDs for Herman. Coco spoke about a photograph that Herman shot of him playing at a Faubourg-Marigny bar, Check Point Charlies. Coco remembers Herman telling him “You could never afford one of these, so I’m gonna have to give you one.”

When interviewing Shana Leonard, Herman’s daughter, I asked what was it like growing up with her father. She spoke about him as both a regular father who would chop down the Christmas tree and also as an adventurous figure who brought her along to places ranging from the island of Ibiza to Paris “with the models and the hippies.” Towards the end of the interview, I asked her to tell me something that her father didn’t know, some secret she was willing to share on his 80th birthday. She told me how she and her brother would play with some of his photographic negatives, sometimes cutting them up to entertain themselves as they had few toys. This secret found its way onto the final cut of the documentary.

Over the course of the evening, I conducted roughly eighteen interviews. These interviews provided me with ample material to show Herman as a professional photographer, a dear friend and father, and entertaining storyteller. My interview with

Herman came towards the end of the evening; he was clearly full of joy at the success of his party. With that said, our interview took on a serious tone at one point, touching upon the war in Iraq, the ignorance on the part of many Americans about the world, and how people are growing blind to the most important things in life. Even as these issues were addressed, Herman maintained a charming presence with all of us in the room. In the chapter on post-production, I will address how I handled the interview material that had a more serious tone.

At the beginning of the evening, I instructed all the camera crew to be on the look out for Herman, to keep their eye, so to speak, on him as he interacted with his friends. I wanted to document his interactions as a way of showing his warm-hearted approach to people. I also asked the crew to get on-camera, single system interviews with people throughout the night. This proved to be problematic as the party was considerably loud. Sometimes the crew would approach me with interviewees who then do a sit down interview.

I also asked the crew to be aware of what the other crewmembers were doing in terms of coverage, camera angles, and focus. Sometimes, the live events on stage required all three cameras at once. My task was to run between the three camera operators and occasionally get them into a new position. At other times, I sent one of the crew off to record particular elements within the jazz hall. I sent Amy Sanderson to film food. She ended up in the kitchen, asking questions about the food

preparations. For the most part, the crew operated with a remarkable instinct for the most important elements happening moment by moment.

Half the battle in a filmic situation like Herman Leonard's 80th birthday is based upon this moment-by-moment sensitivity and intuition. Aaron Walker brought his experience as an editor for documentary veteran Julie Gustafson to this occasion. His shots oftentimes took into consideration the editor's work ahead. He held shots long enough so as to allow for more flexibility in the post-production phase. During interviews, he would often pay attention to the mannerisms and gestures of the interviewees.

While I was satisfied for the most part with the camera work, at times I came across problems with their work. Some of the footage was unusable due to a reliance on auto focus. Using auto-focus often caused the subject being filmed to go in and out of focus. It was as much my fault for not instructing the crew not to rely on this feature. In addition to focus problems, some of the audio was distorted due to the gain on the camera being set to high. Alternatively, using an automatic setting for the audio led to volume "pumping" which made the audio sound unnatural. Admittedly, expecting the crew to balance their attention on all of these aspects was a lot to ask. As I explain in the chapter on post-production, editing was dictated as much by working around troublesome camera work as it was by the story I had in mind.

Many of Herman Leonard's prints hung on walls throughout the jazz hall. The prints provided a nice backdrop for the party. In retrospect, I would have called the

crew in earlier that day and sent them around to film the prints as if they were going to end in the documentary alá Ken Burns style, in other words, camera pans and zooms that give a still photograph a sense of motion. This coverage would have provided me with more chances for cutaways. Lack of planning and preparation aside, the prints still play a large role as a backdrop for a whole of party. For example, the footage of the mock opium den contains shots of world photographs, ranging in landscape from Afghanistan to Nepal to India. The art direction of the party provided a virtual time encapsulation of Herman Leonard's life. On the wall behind the stage, a well-known shot of Duke Ellington at the piano in the spotlight provided a compelling visual counterpoint while the local band Astral Project played more contemporary strains of jazz.

Filming in the mock opium den was a challenge. The lighting was deliberately lower than anywhere else. Aaron Walker often used low light settings that blurred motion. This effect oftentimes was useful due to the coverage being filmed. The blurriness of the footage was appropriate in the "Opium Den" considering the dreamy nature of the setting. With a duet of tabla and cello playing Middle and Far-Eastern melodies, the saturated blurry look of the footage was appropriate. At other times, Aaron would turn off the low light setting and opt for pushing the video gain that led to a grainier (pixilated) image. Throughout the evening, lighting was a challenge. The question of how to balance low light while still photographing a usable image stayed at the front of everyone's mind.

Post-production

Post-production began within days of our shoot. The first step involved logging roughly twelve hours of MiniDV tapes and 3 hours of DAT tapes. The story began to take shape during the logging process. I decided that the flow of the actual party would dictate the overall storyline of the documentary. Loggings notes covered many elements: shot movements (pans, tilts, zooms, etc.); subject matter (for example: Herman hugs woman, Astral Project song #1, couple dancing); sound quality (clear, distorted, usable). For the shots with the strongest visual and/or audio material, I added check marks alongside the time code and shot descriptions.

Following the logging process, I began capturing the material that was check marked using Final Cut Pro software. I organized the media according to the event. Performances by Astral Project, Devyani, and Harry Anderson all had their own bins. General crowd shots, potential transition points, and interviews were also given their own bins. Because of the DAT audio recordings for the interviews, the interview bin was more complicated. I had to sync up audio and video. I then created sub-clips from the strongest material within the individual interviews. After capturing the best footage from all aspects of the party and gathering ample material from the interviews, I began to assemble a rough cut.

Early on in the post-production process, I decided to open up with a montage that would provide the video equivalent of a musical overture. I chose Louis Armstrong

and Ella Fitzgerald performing the Cole Porter composition “Cheek to Cheek” for the background music. This decision came about while I was looking at potential clips to include in the opening montage. One of the shots that caught my eye was an over the shoulder shot of a couple looking at a photograph of Ella Fitzgerald performing on her birthday with Duke Ellington and Benny Goodman in the audience. Being an avid lover of jazz music, the Armstrong/Fitzgerald duet came to mind. I thought it appropriate to use a song that combined both the visual element of Ella Fitzgerald with the New Orleans legend Louis Armstrong.

This choice of using “Cheek to Cheek” as background music was now the basis for editing a montage. The song became a springboard for many of the editing decisions that followed. The rhythm of the music and the verbal references to dancing influenced my shot selection and editing choices. There is an inherent rhythm in editing footage. When an editor decides to cut to the next shot he creates another beat, so to speak. The pace of the editing creates a tempo. Holding shots on screen for an extended time slows the tempo and draws the viewer into more of the details within the frame. Quick editing, an approach predominating music videos, draws more on the contrast between the images.

In addition to the pace of the edits, I sought out shots from the raw footage that had lyrical, hand-held movements for the opening montage. I wanted to emphasize the movement of partygoers, in dance and play, to visually set up the joyful interaction that permeated the party. I emphasized to the camera crew the importance of capturing

Herman Leonard on film as much as possible. In addition, I asked them to capture as many aspects of the party as possible.

The first person to speak on screen at any length is Herman Leonard. From the main stage, he refers both to his age and the happiness he feels living in New Orleans, all the while Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald sing in the background, serenading a world-class photographer. Shortly after Herman's appearance on screen, I edited in part of an interview with John Hasse, a curator from the Smithsonian, who spoke at length about his relationship with Herman. His interview material overlapped with what he had also said on the stage. This allowed me to cut between the sit-down interview and Hasse's stage appearance. I used the same device with Roufa, moving from sit-down interview to stage. This device enabled me to move between the intimacy of an interview and the communal feel of the stage.

I concluded the opening montage with a sequence of the birthday cake. The opening of the sequence was a tight shot of the cake with the title of the documentary superimposed.

The section following the opening montage is concerned with Herman Leonard welcoming everyone to the party. The audio in this section is in camera. Interviews are interspersed throughout this as well. My intention with this section was to shed some light on Herman by way of the thoughts and reflections on those who have worked with him. Herman Leonard's relationship with the city is also touched upon here. The section ends with Herman introducing the live acts that are to follow.

The “Music” section follows with New Orleans jazz band Astral Project playing on stage and an interview with New Orleans street musicians, Dave and Roselyn. Roselyn reflects upon the sensation of being photographed “in the moment.” This section was shaped to view Herman Leonard’s work through the eyes of the musician. Maxine Gordon, widow of jazz saxophonist Dexter Gordon, recognizes Herman’s contribution as a photographer to the American legacy of jazz. During the interview, she also provides a useful segue to the following section concerning Herman Leonard’s world travels and photography. The music section ends as Astral Project concludes one of their songs.

The “World Travels” section of the documentary is a departure from what is normally recognized as the work and life of Herman Leonard. Herman spent over thirty years living abroad. In addition, he lived as a child in Palestine prior to its partition in 1947. This section of the documentary is at the middle of the overall storyline. I placed it there with the intent of giving emphasis to this component of his life. Herman Leonard speaks of riding a donkey to school as a child. His daughter remembers growing up and living abroad with her father. Her interview segues to the following section (Happy Birthday) where she leads the party in singing Happy Birthday.

In addition to interviews, the World section uses elements of the “exotic” that went on during the party. The section opens with Herman Leonard’s yoga teacher addressing the camera/Herman with a birthday greeting. This moment is followed by a

visual visit to the mock opium den. The donkey story told by Herman is accompanied by tabla rhythms that sound like a gallop. The tabla and cello duet performed by Andrew Maclean and Helen Gills in the mock opium den create an auditory glimpse into one of the worlds visited by Herman Leonard. That night, the walls of the den were adorned with Herman's photographs from his travels to Afghanistan, India, and Burma.

Following the interview with Herman Leonard in this section, the opium den footage cross-dissolves into a lyrical shot of Devyani, a belly-dancing troupe. Herman was clearly moved by these dancers who brought him to the stage at the close of their performance. As the belly dancing scene closes, so does the section on world travel.

While brief in time, the Happy Birthday section is nonetheless moving. The camera operator follows Herman Leonard's assistants as they wheel the birthday cake to the stage. This moving shot has a cinema verité feel to it. The viewer is given a glimpse into the joy felt by his staff as they present Herman with a birthday cake that borders on a work of art. The moment has a verité look in the sense that the hand held movements are at times rough but contain the essence of what was happening that night. With the help of his staff, Herman blows out the 80 candles after giving an emotionally moving speech that touches at the heart of what the documentary represents.

This joyous moment is followed by what I consider to be a contrasting element in the portrayal of Herman Leonard – his worldview. Herman speaks of being born

before radar, the electric typewriter, McDonalds, and “a million other things that we take for granted.” His criticism of how corrupt the mindset of Americans have become is touched upon before I dissolve into a more pleasant Herman Leonard quoting Dr. John's lyrics - "Life is a one way ticket, There's no second time around, get all you can out of life before your six feet underground." During these interview moments, I deliberately withheld the background sounds of the party in order to place more emphasis on the words being spoken.

The following section is the closing. This section includes magician/comedian Harry Anderson who spends more time picking on Herman Leonard than performing any tricks. After throwing a deck of cards in the air, Harry Anderson exclaims " We're not here to waste Herman's time, how much of it does he got left anyway?" This comment brings about a roar of laughter from the audience and the loudest one in the crowd is Herman himself. As the laughter subsides, the voice of Herman Leonard rises and reflects upon the success of the party. He recognizes the hard work of his assistant and fellow photographer Jenny Bagert. The documentary ends with a grateful kiss.

I decided to save the more personal footage for the credits. Interspersed throughout the credits are personal addresses by musician Coco Robicheaux, gallery owner Joshua Mann Pailet, and Herman Leonard's daughter, Shana Leonard. These are moments when the so-called “fourth wall” is broken; when the subject on screen looks into the camera and addresses Herman Leonard personally. I choose to group these messages together and save them for the end so as not to disrupt the flow of the

documentary. The film ends on a humorous note when Shana Leonard confesses to cutting up some of her father's photographic negatives when she was a child without many toys.

After completing the documentary, I decided to author a DVD, so as to include additional features such as an extended interview and an additional slide show. The DVD medium allows the viewer an interactive, multidimensional relationship with the audio-visual material. Instead of being limited by the linear nature of the VHS tapes, DVDs offer the viewer additional features that have a similar interactive nature to the World Wide Web. By navigating through pages with menu items, DVD users can manipulate and make choices about their viewing material. For instance, a viewer can move ahead to a specific part in a feature film without having to wait for the videotape to forward or guess if they have reached the desired part. The viewer can also decide whether or not they want to view sub-titles or hear certain sound elements (background music, commentary).

In addition, on many DVDs, the viewer is offered a chance to see material such as deleted scenes, "behind the scenes" extras, and multiple angles. On one level, these features can be understood as mere "bells and whistles", attributes that are used primarily to impress the would be buyer with flashy gimmicks. These features also allow for greater flexibility on the part of the media designer in that the DVD medium allows for the inclusion of additional material as it relates to the main feature. The extra materials are separate in the sense that it does not necessarily belong within the

main feature yet it is part of the larger collective that represents a single issue or phenomena, in this case the story of world renowned photographer celebrating his 80th birthday.

With this in mind, I choose to publish my documentary on DVD. This allowed me to include extra features, including a (hidden) extended interview with Herman Leonard and a slide show of Herman Leonard's photography from his travels abroad. I also created a navigation menu that reflected the overall structure of the documentary.

Considering the celebratory nature of the event I documented, the tone of the finished piece was light-hearted. I wanted to show the joy and love that surrounded Herman Leonard during the course of the evening. Through thoughtful editing, I believe I accomplished this task. During my interview with Herman Leonard, the subject of current politics and the loss of civil liberties came up. Herman also told a rather humorous joke with a punch line that rendered President Bush as a combination of a "horse's ass and a cowboy hat." Sharing a similar political philosophy, I had trouble cutting this remarkable material during editing. Since I knew that including political material in the finished documentary would cause the it to stray from its celebratory tone, I grudgingly decided not to include these parts of the interview in the main work.

Fortunately, I was able to make use of what was “laying on the cutting room floor” via the DVD medium. The inclusion of outtakes and deleted scenes is commonplace

on DVDs. With these extra features, viewers are given an opportunity to go 'behind the scenes.' The viewer can have a glimpse of what didn't quite fit into the overall finished piece. I included this extended interview with Herman Leonard as extra feature in the form of an "Easter egg." A DVD Easter egg, much like the ones children look for during the springtime celebration, is a feature that is hidden from the viewer. The feature is discovered by way of using a certain control key combination. In fact, there are a handful of websites dedicated to discovering and revealing the exact locations of Easter eggs on many popular DVDs.

“Life is a One-Way Ticket” is about Herman Leonard's 80th birthday party. It is a documentary that uses a chorus of voices to tell a story about how this man (and his work) has impacted their lives. It is not first and foremost about his photographs, even though his work as a photographer is recognized in the interviews throughout the documentary. I was more interested in telling a personal story about a significant man who represents, on screen and in real life, a mixture of vitality, wit, wisdom and candor. His pictures were on all the walls of the jazz hall so the viewer is indirectly given a glimpse of a much larger collection that spans over half a century. With that said, after completing the documentary, I decided to put together a slide show that would show some of Herman Leonard's photography from this travels abroad.

The reason I focused on his travel photography was two-fold. There has been a great deal of attention paid to his jazz photographs is with great reason. His jazz portraits are both aesthetically beautiful and historically significant with regard to American figures. With that said, his travel photography is equally compelling but

lesser known. I also wanted to show selections from this body of work since it related to one of the complaints Herman Leonard made about the ignorance most Americans with regard to the world beyond the borders of the United States.

Shortly after Herman Leonard's birthday, I documented another event in which he gave a slide presentation of his photographs from abroad to an audience at the Longvue House and Gardens. He spoke at length on some photographs in Afghanistan and the Far East. His stories were fascinating glimpses into his years as an expatriate. After recording these stories on DAT tape, I approached his office about using some digital files of his photographs. My plan was then to marry the some of the stories from his talk at Longvue to the images themselves. This technique of still image and spoken word has been put to great use by many media artists, including documentarian Ken Burns and many photo-journalists for the *New York Times*.

Upon completion of the audio-visual slide show, the finished piece found its way into and onto the DVD medium, once again as a medium that is both separate and inclusive. My intention with the DVD as a singular document was to show a number of sides of Herman Leonard, Herman the beloved friend, father, and mentor; Herman the critical, former expatriate; and Herman, the world photographer. The finished work will be premiering its entirety on April 28th, 2004 at the Gold Mine Saloon in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana.

Budget Breakdown				
Item		Cash	In Kind	Total
Camera Operators	3 @ \$200/night		\$600	\$600
Producer	\$500/night		\$500	\$500
Salaries			\$1100	\$1100
Food	Allow		\$100	\$100
Transportation	Allow		\$50	\$150
Food/Travel			\$150	\$150
Mini-DV	20hours@ \$5/hour	\$100		\$100
DAT	10hours@\$5/hour	\$50		\$50
Tape Stock		\$150		\$150
Mini-DV Camera	Included w/ Salary			See above
DAT Recorder	\$75/day		\$75	\$75
Mics/cables	\$50/day		\$50	\$50
Equipment			\$125	\$125
VHS copies	Allow	\$50		\$50
Editing Suite	3 Weeks (Allow)		\$1500	\$1500
DVD authoring	Allow		\$250	\$250
Post Production		\$50	\$1750	\$1800
Sub Total		\$200	\$3125	\$3325
Contingencies (8%)		\$16	\$250	\$266
		\$216	\$3375	\$3591

Budget Descriptions

The **Salaries** section: this is provided for sake of illustrating a possible payment situation for such an endeavor. Everyone in the crew was compensated with a print from Herman Leonard.

The **Food/Travel** section: The crew and I were fed by saddling up to the buffet spread.

The **Tape Stock** section: 20 hours mini-DV and 10 hours DAT tape allowed 3 camera people to film throughout the entire course of the evening.

The **Equipment** section: the camera crew all possessed their own 3CCD video cameras. The DAT recorder was made available on loan. I used my own mics and cables.

The **Post Production** section: The editing of the documentary will be done at home with equipment I already own. The DVD authoring cost includes blank DVDs.

EDIT LOG

Title	Herman Leonard 50 th B-Day	Date	3-06-2003	Tape Name	ACW ①
Director				Page of	1 6

Time Code	Shot Description	
0:00:00 - 0:00:16	Pan R across front of stage. Tail end with Shava Leonard's Husband self conscious.	I
00:46 - 01:15	Aaron and Amy talk crap about director. Aaron makes me seasick trying to get a decent shot of drummer.	CP
0:01:15 - 00:01:32	Shot of Drummer	
0:01:35 - 0:02:31	Shot of Drummer, solo ← sound ✓	
0:02:31 - 0:03:53	Back into melody, Sax player, zoom in, tilt up on sax player, zoom out and end song on drummer	sound ✓
03:53 - 04:17	waitress serves food	CP
00:04:17 - 05:15	Crowd scene, camera weaves in/out	4:45
05:15 - 06:10	Bar tenders, across bars, customers	
06:13 - 06:16	Push w/ camera	
06:16 - 07:06	Bar tender, across bar	
07:06 - 07:21	Belly Dancers	

EDIT LOG

Title	Herman Leonard 80th B-Day	Date	3-06-2005	Tape Name	ACM/①
Director				Page of	2 of 6

Time Code	Shot Description	
07:21-07:30	candle in Foreground Crowd	✓
07:30-07:50	Joshua P.	
07:50-08:48	Crowd, Bank in Background, Zoom on Bank	
09:48-09:25	Track Left across Crowd, Ent on Zoom in of photograph	
09:25-10:30	HL w/ former assistant, Zoom on HL interacting, zoom out, zoom in	✓
10:50-11:20	Joshua P. (Oru shot)	
11:20-11:50	Holly Anderson, HL	
11:51-12:29	HL w/ woman, Bank in Background	
12:29-13:30	Ravi, JP smiles	
13:30-13:59	Crowd shots, Ravi	
14:00-14:46	Food	
14:46-16:33	shot of overhang, tilt down, rove, Bartenders in window room, Bird's eye on Bar	✓

EDIT LOG

Title Herman Leonard 80 th B-Day	Date 3-06-2003	Tape Name ACW (1)
Director		Page of 3 6

Time Code	Shot Description		
16:33 - 16:50	MS LS Crowd, Rufa, Garnette	CP	✓
16:50 - 16:50 17:10	MS pan Left across stage area	CP	
17:11 - 21:10	<u>Sasha P</u> interview	CP	
19:30	Captured the scene		
19:10	the Artist, The man fits perfectly		
19:45	Thank you Herman		
20:25	smoking Marijuana		
20:55	Closing message		
21:10 - 21:50	Tabla/Cello in Opium Dw	CP	
21:50 - 24:10	Shama w/ Card Reader	CP	← Cop
(23:15 ✓)			
(23:40 ✓)			
24:10 - 24:30	Reading	CP	
24:30 - 25:21	MS Card Reader ✓	CP	← Cop
25:21 - 28:30	Tabla, Cello, Sound OK ✓, plays w/ frame rate Blur, Ozv shot	CP	← Cop
28:30 - 29:50	Scene, camera move	CP	← Cop

EDIT LOG

Title	Helman Leonard 90 th B-Day	Date	3-06-2003	Tape Name	ACW (1)
Director				Page of	4 of 6

Time Code	Shot Description	
29:50-30:23	Bar in Opium, music (Tasley, Cello)	30:42
30:23-31:30	Birds eye window room, Pan Left from 2nd floor Balcony to open area below	I 31:04
31:30-32:10	Bird eye w/ dit. Frame rate	
32:10-33:12	Shot through rails to crowd on Balcony, Joshua D	
33:12-33:32	Artistic descent stairs	
33:32-34:30	Opium bar sign, Nico, pan to crowd Opium sign	I 33:40 34:30
34:30-35:10	Roving, crowd in music area	
35:10-35:30	Stacey Roving	
35:30-45:30	Mark in interview	I
37:45	Passover Seder	
45:30-46:06	Belly Dancers, Behind stage	
46:06-46:29	"It doesn't get any better now." HL	←
46:29-47:20	MC Favorite thing to tell disputing folks...	
47:20-47:30	MC HL watching stage	

Cap

EDIT LOG

Title	Herman Leonards 80 th B-Day	Date	03-06-2003	Tape Name	ACW ①
Director				Page of	5 6

Time Code	Shot Description	
47:30- 47:55	Pan LH to Shava L waiting stage	
47:55- 48:15 ⁵³	HL waiting stage	48:08
48:15 49:01		
48:55		
49:19- 49:50	Open of Harry Anderson, Back of stage shot He Floyd Sacosy in III, ill	
① 49:50- 50:19	Zoom in on HL laughing, looking up at stage, Billy Holiday print on Back wall	
50:19- 51:00	Herman Leopard	
51:00- 51:25	HL laughs	
51:25- 51:50	Shot from Backstage, "Chemotherapy"	
51:50- 52:15	Zoom on HL, HL waves woman onto stage	
52:15- 53:10	crowd watches	
53:10- 53:45	"Not here to waste Herman's time" pan right to HL laughing, HL	
⁴⁵ 53:56- 54:15	H-Bday by Giovanni, shot on HL	
② 54:17- 54:30	Harry get #	

EDIT LOG

Title	HL ^{90%} B-Day	Date	3-06-2003	Tape Name	ACW (✓)
Director				Page	6 of 6

Time Code	Shot Description	
54:30-54:49	"Hi Giovanni, I'll be right back" H. Anderson	CP
54:49-55:55	H. Anderson messes with HL, HL with torn 5 dollar bill	
55:55-56:46	Mary Flance, HL face flashes	
56:40-58:00	TILT UP PAN RIGHT To Harry + Giovanni, John Hesses in Hesse	
58:00-59:33	Giovanni kisses HL, zoom on HL watching, "War on Terrorism", " Colin Powell " "Colin Powell", HL w/ JP	
59:33- END	TILT UP to Harry explaining Magre, Tight shot of Harry with Handcuffs, HL watches, zoom OUT to reveal Harry with pants down Telle about Harry Dog	UP

VITA

George Allen Ingmire III earned a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology from the University of New Orleans in 2000. While pursuing his undergraduate degree, George formed Mi Abuelo Productions, a multimedia entity that focuses on the cultural life of Louisiana. His musical productions include three compact discs by Reverend Goat Carson, a shaman of Cherokee heritage: *Simmerin'*; *Lovers, Lovesongs, Hymns and Blues* and *My Life is My Sundance: The Prison Writings of Leonard Peltier*. He has also produced a compact disc of operatic arias entitled "Il sogno d'il Mio Pappa" by Mario Taravella.

As a filmmaker, he has directed and produced features on a number of subjects including Herman Leonard's world photography, Haitian Vodou, and New Orleans musical artistry. Since 2003, George Ingmire has volunteered as a radio programmer for WWOZ.