



LOCAL FILMMAKER, writer and producer Patrick Delin will be producing his own film this winter, inspired by past personal experiences and relationships. It will be filmed in his hometown of Sioux City, Iowa. DANIEL LUDERT/DN

Local film director casts his first reel

By **W.T. McCoy**
Staff Reporter

Nebraska, a land nestled hundreds of miles from both of the country's cultural epicenters, Los Angeles and New York, is effectively smack in the middle of nowhere.

It is a sparsely populated place where college football is the biggest game in town, and getting loaded on weekend nights and waking up next to your beer is a commonplace Sunday occurrence.

For some, however, there is more to life than a No. 1 ranking in the Associated Press poll and Saturday afternoons of bedlam and chaos in a sea of red.

For some of these people, there is film.

Patrick Delin, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln history major, has been hard at work producing his own independent film, which he hopes to shoot in his hometown of Sioux City, Iowa, by late December.

Tentatively titled "Common Threads," the film portrays a group of young people home for winter break. When they learn the main character's parents are traveling to Paris for a three-week vacation, the group decides to celebrate too — and throws an equally long party in the parents' home.

The movie focuses on the lives of the five friends and their relationships with each other as the party and drama unfold. The film is intended as an exploration of friendship, love and the effects of time on people.

With native actors like Marlon

Brando, Henry Fonda, Johnny Carson, Dick Cavett and Alexander Payne having left their impressions on the world and their faces ingrained in Americans' collective pop-culture psyche, Nebraska has a good track record of breeding bankable Hollywood talent.

In recent years, a few independent films have been made in Nebraska, but few have caught the public's attention.

Delin is hoping that his first project, which should be completed by late spring, will be recognized at regional and national film festivals, thus earning respect for the talent, creativity and the people of the Midwest.

Trying to make the plunge in a frustrating regional film scene, Delin has encountered many difficulties and many blessings in trying to launch a completely Midwestern film, comprised of completely local talent and dedicated friends.

DN: What made you decide to shoot your own movie?

PD: Basically after a relationship that I had a lot of emotion invested in took a turn for the worst, the script just kind of poured out.

While the script was being molded, I got back into contact with a high school friend that I hadn't really spoken to during the last year or so. I talked to her a bit about the entertainment business and began playing around with the idea of making a film, which I say with a little sarcasm because we never planned on doing anything for real.

I posted some ideas to the Usenet newsgroups on the Internet. That is

basically where I began to run into people, names and great advice. I was introduced to the film underground in Lincoln along with a few actors from Hollywood (like some minors from James Cameron's "Titanic" set) and some major music labels, (like Mannheim Steamroller and Tonic).

The frightening thing is how closely connected we really are to people. It only takes a few phone calls to see how far those six degrees really stretch.

DN: How did you get funding?

PD: I sat around in my room racking up the phone bill calling every business, sponsor and friend that I had within 300 miles. It came down to a lot of hometown support.

DN: What is the movie about?

PD: It's about that time between high school and college where we try and find an identity. It's always a struggle to try and find that path we are supposed to follow and it inspired me to do the movie about the struggle in real life, because so many things during that time are so surreal and seem like a Hollywood film.

DN: Have there been any major hassles in getting your own film off the ground?

PD: Definitely. Last time I checked, my stress level was so high that I could almost feel the hypertension coursing through my body. My biggest problem has been trying to secure equipment and cameramen. Other than that, trying to find people to invest is always difficult, and when you're learning everything as you go it is very easy to make mistakes and blunders. I am already working on my second feature script.

“*It's about that time between high school and college where we try and find an identity. It's always a struggle to try and find that path we are supposed to follow*”

PATRICK DELIN
independent filmmaker

DN: What kind of budget do you expect to end up with?

PD: I hope, with every extremity of my body crossed, to end up with \$50,000. We won't know the exact dollar amount coming from our sponsor until the first week of December: That's only two weeks before filming begins. Fortunately I have my own resources to fall back on that is guaranteed funding.

DN: What has been the most fun about your experience thus far? Have you been able to lure any actresses onto the casting couch with the promise of future employment?

PD: Actually the fringe benefits of being a director seem to come in free doughnuts.

DN: Much of your productions communications rely heavily on Internet business traffic. Have you had any power lunches or connection calls?

PD: I have had a couple. The funniest thing I have noticed about talking to people in the film business is the way you get connected. It is nearly impossible to get a hold of them, even harder to get a meeting with

them, but then once you are sitting somewhere talking with them, they end up hanging out for six or seven hours telling you their deepest and darkest secrets. It's truly bizarre.

DN: What are some movies that have influenced you, or role models?

PD: Oh God. Now you are going to laugh. I am a big '80's fan, so that kind of rubbed off on me. The top-three list would have to be "Career Opportunities," "Labyrinth" and "Pump Up the Volume."

As role models go, I would have to give that award to Kevin Smith for making it happen the way he did. Without a doubt, his tenacity is unmatched when it comes to getting it done. I have seen pictures on the set of "Clerks" where he even ended up occasionally sleeping on the set.

DN: Any hints as to what your next script is about?

PD: It's going to be another dramatic comedy with a very strong feminist message. I want to say something serious, but again with a humorous twist on it, hence the title,

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