

PRESS KIT: FEELING WANTED



FEELING WANTED SYNOPSIS

LOGLINE

With her father incarcerated for murder, her mother on drugs and a childhood in foster care, Charell knew it was time to break the cycle.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

Charell, age 6, woke up to find herself alone. She made breakfast, dropped her baby sister off with a neighbor, and walked to school. With her father incarcerated for murder, a mother on drugs and a childhood in foster care, Charell knew it was time to break the cycle.

LONG SYNOPSIS

When her great-grandmother becomes ill, Charell, a young African-American girl, is taken to the home of strangers. She does not remember their names or where she lived, but she recalls the abuse and loneliness. She recalls watching her belongings being thrown into trash bags and the lies she has to tell other kids because she does not want to admit she is a foster child. She does not want to admit that her mother struggles with substance abuse, her father is drug dealer imprisoned for murder and that she does not have a permanent place to be.

School becomes the only place where Charell feels safe, where she feels rewarded. Despite bouncing around from school to school, never starting and finishing a year at the same place, Charell finds solace in learning and decides she wants to be more than the sum of the parts that brought her to this place in life.

TECH SPECS

14 minutes, 16:9, Stereo Sound Mix
Filmed on the Red Epic Dragon & Sony EX-1
No MPAA Rating

SOCIAL MEDIA:

<http://fostercarefilm.com/feelingwanted/>
<http://facebook.com/fostercarefilm>
<http://twitter.com/fostercarefilm>
<http://vimeo.com/fostercarefilm>
<https://www.youtube.com/user/FosterCareFilm>

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TRAILER:

<http://fostercarefilm.com/feelingwanted/>

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DIRECTOR CONTACT:

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PRESS CONTACT:

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FEELING WANTED FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DOES THIS FILM FIT INTO THE LARGER SCOPE OF YOUR WORK WITH KIDS IN FOSTER CARE?

The initial concept was to create an animated documentary short, but once we started going through our footage we realized we had way more material than could possibly fit into one film. We selected a particular story to focus on for the animated documentary but realized the other stories we collected were too important to end up on the cutting room floor.

As a result, we are now making a series of live action short films about foster care as well as the animated documentary. We are using these live action films to promote education and awareness about foster care, and we have developed a program around it called the Foster Care Film and Community Engagement Program (FCFCEP). “Feeling Wanted” is the first film in this series.

WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR THIS FILM?

After three years working with a developmentally-delayed child, I picked up my phone to hear a little voice saying, “Mama.” This was Ana’s first word and her foster mother had called me, her Court Appointed Special Advocate, to share the experience. As a CASA volunteer, I’ve spent years working with children, their families and the court system to help find kids a permanent home, good educational opportunities and needed medical and social services. As I heard Ana find her voice, I wondered how, and whether, other foster youth ever truly found theirs. So I decided to answer this question using the tools I knew best, animation and film, to give foster youth a chance to be heard.

HOW DO YOU FIND YOUR SUBJECTS/INTERVIEWEES?

I reached out to foster youth via social media and received an overwhelming response. It became even more apparent to me that foster youth wanted to be heard. After a few months, I had collected far more stories than I could possibly fit into a single film. So, as interest grew, the project grew with it.

HOW ARE FOSTER YOUTH PARTICIPATING IN THIS FILM AND THE PROJECT AS A WHOLE?

We’re not just helping youths’ voices be heard through film. We’re giving foster youth the opportunity to work behind the scenes as camera operators, production assistants, writers and more. We’re also giving foster youth an opportunity to speak to social workers, lawyers, judges and other change-makers in the foster care community by having them be key participants in our community screenings and presentations.

WHAT TYPE OF IMPACT DO YOU HOPE TO HAVE WITH THIS FILM?

Our goal is for Feeling Wanted to inspire audiences to take action within their communities. We hope to educate general audiences about foster care and inspire prospective foster parents, mentors or advocates to take the next step. Last November, in honor of National Adoption Month, we released preview clips of our interviews on social media. A particular clip, in which Charell talks about her belongings repeatedly getting thrown in trash bags, was so powerful that several people asked where they could donate luggage for kids in care. In response, we partnered with Together We Rise to raise funds to purchase duffel bags for kids in foster care, more-than doubling our initial goal of raising \$1,000 through crowdfunding.

FEELING WANTED SOUNDBITES

"It's not an easy move if the choice is never yours."

- Charell Star Charleston

"No matter how bad your family may have been, or is, you are your own person, and you get to determine who you are going to be from this point forward and hopefully you want to be someone more than the sum of the parts that brought you to this place in life."

- Charell Star Charleston

"I'm definitely trying to forgive my father for not being there and not being able to be supportive in my life, but it's a day-by-day process.... I'm hoping one day to have that forgiveness towards him the way I do to the rest of my family."

- Charell Star Charleston

"You know the whole process of going through foster care, and bouncing around, and going to boarding school - it made me who I am, it gave me a sense of independence, worldliness.... It gave me a different perspective on life, and knowing things are going to work out as long as I work for them to work out."

- Charell Star Charleston

"It's a really lonely feeling. It's a really lonely way of growing up.... When you are a foster kid, it's something you don't want to admit to."

- Charell Star Charleston

"When you're moving, you don't know it's happening. It's usually a surprise. I remember waking up that morning and my things were in a trash bag."

- Charell Star Charleston

"It's a **powerful film** that would help foster parents understand the lasting impacts of the experiences of the children they care for."

- Kim Phagan-Hansel
Fostering Families Magazine (Jan. 2015)

"It's **amazing**... Super powerful...
the cinematography was so **beautiful**"

- Elizabeth Northcutt, LMSW
Social Worker & Child Advocate

"**honest**, thorough and hopeful"

- Addison Cooper
Adoption At The Movies

FEELING WANTED ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

YASMIN MISTRY, *Director/Producer*

Yasmin Mistry is an Emmy-nominated animator and filmmaker. Her work has been displayed worldwide including recent showings at the White House, United Nations and the Louvre, as well as at film festivals such as Cannes, SXSW, Tribeca and Clermont-Ferrand. She is the recipient of the Puffin Foundation's 2013 film grant, the Brooklyn Arts Council's 2014 and 2015 film grants, and a finalist for the Real Ideas Studio Micro-grant. When not working as an artist, Yasmin dedicates her time to the foster youth of New York City. As a Court Appointed Special Advocate, she received the 2012 Advocate of The Year Award for her dedication to obtaining services for foster care children with special needs. Yasmin was inspired to create this film when she realized the voices of the children she worked with were not being heard and their stories never told.

LIVIA CHEIBUB, *Editor*

Livia splits her time between NYC and Rio de Janeiro, working as both an editor and director. She is best known for her documentary short film, *My Island*, and *City Body*, an interactive multimedia experience. Her work has been funded by FUNARTE (National Foundation for the Arts) of the Brazilian Ministry of Culture and has been broadcast throughout the United States and Brazil.

AMANDA DE JESUS, *Social Work Consultant*

Amanda is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW-R) and psychotherapist. She received a Masters of Social Work from Hunter College with additional training from The Ackerman Institute for the Family and from The Metropolitan Institute for Training in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. Amanda is currently a doctoral candidate at Fordham University.

JOHN TISSAVARY, *Colourist*

John has worked for companies such as Sony Imageworks, Digital Domain and Smoke & Mirrors. He has color graded, produced, directed, and created visual effects for a wide variety of projects including *The Matrix*, *Ocean's 11*, *Scorpion King* and *Stealth*.

DAN WANG, *Primary Director of Photography*

Dan is an experienced cinematographer who specializes in shooting on digital formats such as RED and Arri ALEXA. He is known for his work on *Fish in the Sky*, *Erro* and *Battle of the Sects: The Innocence of Christians*.

RHETT DUPONT, *Secondary Director of Photography*

Rhett is best known for his work on the television show *The Outs* as well as *Genderf*kation*, a feature length documentary which explores gender and sexual identity. When not behind the camera Rhett leads the Manhattan chapter of FilmShop, an independent filmmaker collaborative.

LAURA FONG, *Assistant Editor*

Laura is a research and production assistant. Her work on CNN's episodic series "Inside Man" helped garner CNN a 2013 IDA award for Best Limited Series and a 2014 IDA nomination for Best Episodic series.

JETON MURTISHI; *Composer*

Jeton is an award winning multi-instrumentalist and classically trained composer who has performed worldwide with the Albanian State Ensemble. He has composed original musical scores for several award-winning independent films that have been screened at festivals worldwide.

ERICH RETTERMAYER; *Sound Mixer*

Erich is a sound designer and mixer with extensive television experience. His work can be heard on A&E, BBC, Discovery, ESPN, FX, FOX and Lifetime.

**FEELING WANTED
PRODUCTION PHOTOS**



images of Charell Star Charleston

FEELING WANTED BEHIND THE SCENES



Cinematographer Dan Wag filming b-roll (left), DP Rhett duPont filming Charell's interview (top right), Dan Wang filming with the RED Epic Dragon (bottom right)

FEELING WANTED

CREDITS

DIRECTED & PRODUCED BY:

Yasmin Mistry

EDITED BY:

Livia Cheibub

DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY:

Dan Wang
Rhett duPont

FEATURING:

Charell Star Charleston

ASSISTANT EDITOR:

Laura Fong

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS:

Octavia Vaughn
Allan Bourne

ADDITIONAL FOOTAGE BY:

Beachfront B-roll
Octavia Vaughn

COLOURIST:

John Tissivary

ANIMATION:

Yasmin Mistry

ORIGINAL COMPOSITION:

Jeton Murtishi

SOUND MIX:

Erich Rettermayer

SOUND EFFECTS:

FreeSFX.CO.UK

SPECIAL THANKS:

April Tarrell Soden
Canoe Media Services
Andrew Haner
Amanda De Jesus
Joseph Keller
Ky'Lin Forde
James "Rusty" Haner
Bat Haus
Hostelling International - NY

MUSIC:

"Beautiful"
by Isreal Nash Gripka
isrealnash.com

"Colorado"
by Podington Bear
podingtonbear.com

"Désormais"
By Podington Bear
Podingtonbear.com

"Fragile Do Not Drop"
By Podington Bear
Podingtonbear.com

"Jupiter The Blue"
By Gillicuddy
Gillicuddy.com

"Homesick"
By Kizzylotus
Soundcloud.com/kizzy-lotus

"Light Touch"
By Podington Bear
Podingtonbear.com

"Window #3"
By Two Bicycles
Freemusicarchive.org/music/two_Bicycles