



NYC Doctor Produces Documentary on Children Affected with AIDS

by Tyrone D Murphy

Dr. Brian Mehling is a successful orthopedic surgeon practicing in New York and New Jersey who has dedicated himself to making a difference in the world through his groundbreaking work in the application of stem cell therapy as well as his work to help children worldwide, including those affected by AIDS and war. As well as being on call for surgery, his endeavors range from developing new advances in stem cell therapy, producing documentary films, travelling worldwide for medical and charity work, to attending special events with world leaders and organizations, including the United Nations and amfAR.

Universal Film Magazine caught up with Brian during the Cannes Film Festival amfAR event.

UFM: Tell us what brings you to Cannes this year.

BM: I wanted to have dinner with Paris Hilton, and the fact that she liked my shoes made my night. Just kidding. I'm here to promote the sequel to my original documentary, "Tiny Tears," which was shown at Cannes in 2008. The sequel, "A Smile For Bow," will follow one of the children from the original film who is an orphan born with AIDS and facial deformation; we brought her to the U.S. to receive life-transforming treatments.

UFM: As a doctor from New

York City, you spend much of your time working in other countries across the globe. Can you tell us about your efforts internationally?

BM: I have created The Blue Horizon Hospital Project, which plans on developing 22 hospitals worldwide. Each hospital will provide expert nursing, patient education, preventive medicine, followup care and community outreach programs to meet the needs of the underserved. We have dedicated 5 percent of the hospital beds to charity care, with a special focus on meeting the health care needs of children orphaned by disease and war. There will also be a special emphasis placed on training the local doctors in the most advanced techniques, including stem cell therapy, as they work alongside the experts from the United States.

UFM: What is the Blue Horizon Foundation?

BM: The foundation was created to raise money for providing medical care to children affected by disease and war around the world. In addition, it specializes in the development of film documentaries to increase awareness of the key issues, and that's what brings me to Cannes.

UFM: How important was the need to bring awareness to the causes that you are involved with?

"Tiny Tears" www.bluehorizonhospital.com

BM: Extremely important, because many of the problems children face in the world are not well known. I felt the best way to address this problem was to produce documentary films for an international audience. We formed the production company, Industrial Motion Pictures, and our first project was "Tiny Tears," directed by Robert Corna and narrated by Danny Glover.

UFM: Please tell us about the films.

BM: "Tiny Tears" does not simply focus on children dying from this disease, but also on children living with it. It does not pass over their culture, but examines how each of the contexts into which they were born has played a decisive role in shaping the quality of their lives. The documentary does not ignore the help they have received, but shows how their lives are made possible by the kindness of those who have nurtured them.

The sequel, "A Smile For Bow," is in postproduction and will be ready for Cannes next year. One child from each orphanage we visited was flown to the United States to participate in Camp Dreamcatcher. After camp we follow Bow, the little girl from Thailand, as she undergoes a difficult and dangerous surgery to reconstruct her face. Bow was born with major facial deformations due to fetal alcohol syndrome. Doctors in Thailand refuse to operate on her because of her HIV status. They think she's not worth it. We thought

otherwise.
UFM: How did you and Robert Corna get together?

BM: Robert and I met at the Winter Olympics in Italy in 2006. We both missed the ski jump and began talking about his expertise, and I wanted to work on a film project to promote our projects. We started brainstorming and "Tiny Tears" was born.

UFM: What was it like to work with him?

BM: Robert is amazing and really committed himself to the project in a very personal way, and that made the film. Not to mention, he has worked alongside the likes of Mel Gibson, Martin Scorsese, and Spike Lee on films such as, "Gangs of New York," "The Passion Of The Christ" and HBO's "Rome." He has directed three documentaries: "Tsunami: The Renewal," focusing on volunteers in Thailand, "Mine," focusing on landmine victims, and of course, "Tiny Tears."

UFM: It was great meeting you and we wish you the best of luck on all your endeavors.

BM: Thank you and I look forward to seeing you here next year.

To find out more, visit
www.bluehorizonhospital.com.

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