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SPEED FILMMAKERS DEALT RANDOM 'FAMILY BUSINESS'-THEMED BIBLE VERSES  
FOR 7TH ANNUAL COMPETITIVE 168 FILM PROJECT

*Screenwriters From Over 80 Entries Across Globe, Including U.K., Philippines & China,  
Have Approx. 1 Week to Craft Script for Short Film Based on Assigned Scripture  
Before Teams Given 168 Hours to Shoot, Edit and Deliver Finished Product*

BURBANK, Calif. (Feb. 10, 2009) -- A variety of biblical passages from both the Old and New Testaments dealing with familial matters, such as the beloved story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 and more intense fare like the account in Genesis of Cain killing his brother Abel, were handed out tonight to eager teams of producers, writers and directors taking part in the 2009 speed filmmaking contest 168 Film Project, which culminates in the 168 Film Festival Apr. 3-4 in Glendale.

Filmmakers received their luck-of-the-draw writing assignments by plucking polished stones arranged in the shape of a cross and which bore poignant verses befitting this year's "Family Business" theme from two dozen books of the Bible such as Proverbs, Psalms, the four gospels and some epistles on their undersides. In this first phase of the 168, now enjoying its seventh edition, screenwriters from 83 registered filmmaking teams worldwide have just over one week to complete their scripts before cameras roll and the clock officially starts counting down the signature seven days, or 168 hours, of production.

For some producers, like recently engaged Kathy O'Brien who will be illustrating God's plan for marriage outlined in Gen. 2:23-24, the verse is a perfect fit -- if not prescient. "My fiancé and I had just set the date," she explained. "And I was nervous that the verse was going to say something about slowing down. Instead, it was confirmation for me that we're doing it the right way and it is God's timing."

For other crews, like that of veteran 168 actor-producer Doug Folsom (2008 168 Best Film nominee "Unbound"), producer Chris Roberts (finalist in Doritos' 2009 Crash the Super Bowl ad contest for writer-director Chris Armstrong's "The Chase"), executive producer Jeff Bartsch (2008 168 Best Film "Stained") and two-time 168 Best Film director Wes Llewellyn ("Cross Walk," "A Good Day"), story's subject matter is of a decidedly mature nature. Their team will be basing its film on the off-putting instructions to Hosea to commit himself to his adulterous wife as described in Hosea 3:1.

168 founder John David Ware said this year's theme "just felt right. It was broad enough to encompass any kind of relationship -- good/bad, easy/difficult -- and all those shades of grey that make up life. The artistic interpretation is left up to the filmmakers."

With 20 percent of a finished film's evaluation dependent on the scriptural integration of its verse, Ware knows the pressure is on screenwriters. "We've heard rumors of many comedies sprouting out of this year's crop of films, which is always a breath of fresh air," he said. "But the filmmakers have been warned. With a theme like Family Business we better not get fifty Mafia movies, or people are going to be sleeping with the fishes."

(MORE)

Come Fri. Feb. 20, pressure will shift during the crucial second phase of the competition to directors, producers, actors, cinematographers, composers and editors as they begin to bring the texts to life over the course of one final week in the form of a short film up to the 168's standard-requirement 11 minutes or less in length.

Lion's share of entered teams -- 42 -- hails from Southern California, with another 23 operating elsewhere in the state. A dozen more are from other states in the U.S. and eight productions are international, claiming Canada (two teams), the United Kingdom (four), the Philippines and China (one each) as home.

While some verses on their face, such as from Proverbs 31 about finding an excellent wife, might appear to lend themselves to easy filmic interpretations, seemingly difficult verses to depict on screen, such as God's punishing of David with a curse on his descendants in 2 Sam. 12:9-10, could prove the easier -- and vice versa.

"We're not looking for ad nauseum book reports on the verses or period pieces set in 33 B.C.," noted 168 project director Paul E. Luebbers. "We're looking to see biblical truths presented as quality entertainment. Our filmmakers have a history of satisfying our audience with great stories, while celebrating God's timeless Word."

Others of this year's most-anticipated entries include:

- Dueling cross-cultural interpretations of the call in Prov. 1:8-10 to heed one's parents' advice by teams in 1) China, led by Burbank-based international director Tim Lowry, and 2) Los Angeles from Crenshaw Arts/Tech Charter High (CATCH) with its crew of 13 teenage film charges under the leadership of founder/executive director Pat Smith and co-producer/teacher/actress Paige Cooper
- filmmaker Theo Love's fifth turn as 168 filmmaker -- writing, directing and producing the love story of Sol. 4:10 as his (and 168's) first-ever musical after having directed last year's comedy "Dumping Darlene"
- returning 168 producers Rebekah Score (2008's "Like Those Who Dream") and Sara Messer (2007's "No Looking Back") on Matt. 19:29's highlighting of the price -- and reward -- of salvation
- actress-turned-producer Alexandra Smothers' corralling of top 168 talent, including producer Patrick G. Ingram (2008 Audience Award winner "Learning to Fly") who directs this year and 2008 Best Cinematography nominee Paolo Cascio ("Unbound"), for 2 Sam. 12:9-10 described above
- veteran stuntman-turned-producer/director Ian Eyre's telling of the story of Joseph's jealous siblings described in Gen. 37:3-4, albeit with a dozen New Millennium toddlers (one of whom, his daughter Kiran, hand-picked the verse); and
- first-time filmmaker Richelle Sanchez's spin on Rom. 8:14-15 and its warning against giving in to fear -- which has become the de facto rallying cry of all entrants since the 168's inception.

Sponsors for this year's 168 Film Project include Tubemogul, Regent University, EIKI, Resurrection Pictures, AJA, Out of Frame, Kino Flo, Video Symphony, Sony and Arri.

For more information, a complete list of Scripture verses comprising this year's event, and/or to schedule an interview with 168 founder/executive director John David Ware, please contact Scotty Dugan at Dugan & Story PR at 435-901-1483, [scotty@duganstory.com](mailto:scotty@duganstory.com); 168 Film Project at 818-557-8507, [info@168project.com](mailto:info@168project.com) or visit [www.168project.com](http://www.168project.com).

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