

EAST BAY PICTURES

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Dear Reader,

This packet is an introduction to a brand new media production company, East Bay Pictures International. Based in Berkeley, California, EBPI is comprised of long-time friends whose areas of expertise range from film production and theory, to video game journalism, to linguistics, design and political science. Together, we have decided to put our ideas, energy, and talents into making media that matters. EBPI promises a diverse slate of exciting projects, focused on exploring the complexities of our era. Already in development are a feature-length documentary based on a controversial and influential book about reframing the climate crisis as economic opportunity, a short-form documentary exploring the urban farm movement, a psychological horror film about the stresses of the modern world, and a comedic web series about a group of twenty-something future-wizards, set in the year 2050. The common thread: a commitment to social consciousness, ideological nuance, and rethinking the familiar.

Sincerely,

East Bay Pictures International

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EBPI Business Plan

This business plan is for information only. It is not an offering for sale of any securities of the company.

Mission

Our culture is in desperate need of images and ideas that will help us see ourselves in new ways: how we truly are, and how we wish to be. It is the responsibility of artists to articulate these collective dreams. East Bay Pictures International is committed to making motion pictures that inspire reflection, compassion, and imagination; to create visions that help us face our fears, so that we can understand clearly the circumstances of our time, and see beyond, to possibility.

Overview

East Bay Pictures International (EBPI) is a startup production company based in Berkeley, California. EBPI's primary goal is to create media that is engaging, thoughtful, and inspiring. Already in development and slated for production are two feature length films, several shorts, and a web show—with a range of budgets, fundraising strategies, and distribution models. A dynamic team pioneering a dynamic new paradigm.

The Industry

The industry of media-making is at a crossroads. Hollywood's commodification of cinema has led to a constant barrage of sequels, remakes, and retreads—leaving many viewers deeply dissatisfied. Much of what is now marketed as independent film is simply an aesthetic, co-opted by studios and branded as “indie.” But, the digital revolution has created the potential for a golden age of truly independent moviemaking. For the first time, available and affordable technology makes it possible to rival the look and feel of studio films with only a laptop and a hi-def camcorder. What independent filmmakers do with these new tools, and how the existing system will adapt to the changing landscape, remains to be seen.

The traditional model still exists: make an independently financed film, enter it in festivals, and hope that the film is well-received, then picked up by a major studio or distribution company. There are more film festivals than ever before—and more films competing to be screened, bought, and distributed. Meanwhile, online channels show incredible potential for a more democratic distribution model. Although YouTube and similar sites have yet to mature into either legitimate or profitable options for the serious independent filmmaker, the opportunity to find an audience and funding online is growing as more viewers log on to

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the internet for information and entertainment. With its fan-based, viral viewership, the Internet is the proving ground for what sinks or swims with today's audiences. More and more, financiers are realizing this and turning to the web for both talent and content.

Today, a successful independent media company must be able to navigate the traditional model of studios, distributors, and film markets, as well as find a niche in the increasingly important online world.

Competitive Advantages

We at EBPI are uniquely positioned for success. We come from diverse academic, professional, and creative backgrounds, bringing together a wide range of talents and experience. Each of our members is versed in multiple disciplines, capable of performing a variety of roles on a given project. Our sound recordists are also audio editors and musicians, our musicians are also writers, our writers are also directors, producers, actors, and designers. This versatility, combined with our extensive experience on productions of all sizes and budgets, has taught us insight into how to streamline the creative process. In short, we can do with a crew of ten what other companies do with twenty-five. We have been making films for 15 years, and we have the talent and vision necessary to stay on the cutting edge for the next 15 and beyond.

Our in-house gear includes multiple high-definition cameras and professional audio, lighting and editing equipment, as well as a complete music and sound recording studio. This translates to extremely low overhead—no equipment rental, and because we're completely digital, no costs associated with film, processing, or even tape stock. We own the means of production, allowing us to create professional-quality media at a very low cost.

The Bay Area represents an untapped resource—rich in both creativity and capital, it is the ideal place to find patrons of the arts and sympathetic investors. Many of these potential patrons are young, progressive entrepreneurs in the high-tech industry. EBPI will be making the types of movies they want to see and offering them the unique opportunity to take part in the process.

Financing

The demands of business, specifically the emphasis on marketable “products,” have a tendency to interfere with the process of making art. For this reason, EBPI has chosen to operate outside the traditional film financing model as much as possible, while still maintaining a flexible working relationship with the studio system. Practically, this means that we'll be seeking the majority of our financing locally, from small and medium-sized investors and donors who have an interest in supporting the arts and funding films that they themselves want to watch.

The project-specific fundraiser is a tried-and-true method for financing independent films. We will host many different kinds of events—from intimate dinner parties, to screenings, to entertainment-filled evenings—soliciting investments both large and small in a fun, casual setting. There are also the added benefits of generating excitement for our projects, and expanding our support network and core audience with each successful event.

In addition to fundraisers, we will be conducting one-on-one meetings with individuals and businesses who we believe will be interested in a given project. We are also exploring the possibility of accepting tax-deductible donations through either fiscal sponsorship or the creation of our own non-profit organization.

Only once a project is complete or near completion will we approach studios and established film financiers for finishing funds and distribution.

Distribution

There's no denying that the field of film and television distribution is dominated by large companies. Though the internet is rapidly changing distribution models, the widest audiences and the greatest returns are still best sought through traditional channels. EBPI will use its contacts in New York and Los Angeles to secure finishing funds and distribution for feature-length and series content, and we will submit to film festivals and other film markets when appropriate.

At the same time, we will explore digital distribution techniques—releasing some of our content for free on high-traffic sites while pioneering methods of for-profit downloads. The technology for lucrative internet distribution may not be there quite yet, but the day is not far off, and when it comes, we will have already staked our claim. With that in mind, EBPI pledges to retain internet distribution rights for all its projects, because in the next decade, they might be the only rights that matter. In the meantime, with the help of contacts at high-profile websites like YouTube, CollegeHumor, and Vice, we will establish a strong internet presence, and, hopefully, a loyal fanbase.

The Projects

All EBPI projects, though varying in tone, content, and scope, will be produced in accord with our core principles. We are in the process of acquiring the film rights to the 2007 book *Break Through: From the Death of Environmentalism to the Politics of Possibility* by Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus, which will be adapted into a feature-length documentary. Also on the docket are *Everything is Scary*, a feature-length “neurotic thriller,” a short documentary about urban farms, and *Future Magic*, a web series about young people living in a tech-infused future. In addition to these projects, we are also working on a number of exciting ideas for web, film, and television that are still in the early stages of development.

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Break Through

Feature-length documentary slated for Fall 2008 production

We all know the inconvenient truth, but what now? What do we do? The realities of climate change demand candid discussion and pragmatic solutions, not just for the average citizen, but for captains of industry, and for entire nations. What we need right now is a courageous, critical, and engaging look at the way things are, and a thoughtful, thorough and bold investigation of what has to happen next. What we need is a paradigm shift—a break through.

In 2004, environmental strategists Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus published “The Death of Environmentalism,” an essay that sparked a firestorm of controversy within the environmental movement and mainstream media alike. Criticizing traditional environmentalism, it called for an end to interest-group politics, and redefined climate change as an economic issue. Eschewing conservationism and limits on progress, the essay argued that the key to meeting the challenges represented by climate change is the development of new energy technologies that will allow sustainable economic growth—growth that is essential to the well-being of developing nations, sustainability that is essential to the well-being of everyone on the planet. In other words, progress is not the problem, but rather the solution.

Shellenberger and Nordhaus re-entered the debate in 2007 with their book *Break Through*, published by Houghton Mifflin. The book expanded on the ideas presented in the essay, delving deeper into the history of the environmental lobby, and exploring some of the philosophical and cognitive underpinnings that have led to failures in the battle against climate change.

Break Through, the movie, promises to go even further—offering not only an investigation of outdated myths that still dominate our perspective, but providing alternative frames that will reshape our understanding of the world we live in. Most importantly it will present, in broad strokes, a plan, global in scale, for preventing and preparing for climate change. Where other documentaries have emphasized isolated technologies and small-scale solutions, or have lost their way in shallow rhetoric and unfocused arguments, *Break Through* will arm audiences with the big picture—the knowledge of what can and must be done, the confidence and inspiration to do it.

Of EBPI’s three launch projects, *Break Through* is perhaps the most important and the most high profile. Global warming is an urgent issue that requires an immediate and appropriate response. The currently favored solutions—pollution limits, emissions trading, everyday lifestyle changes like driving a hybrid or switching to compact fluorescent bulbs—are not enough. And quite frankly, asking Americans to pay more for their energy is going to be a tough sell. Asking the Chinese to slow their growth, despite the fact that their burgeoning industrial economy is pulling millions out of poverty, is going to be even tougher.

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We've estimated the budget of the film at approximately \$1 million. This includes research and development, production, and editing. EBPI expects to receive a full half of this budget from a New York-based production company that finances socially responsible documentaries. With the help of The Break Through Institute, we will raise the rest through tax-deductible donations. The whole process will take the better part of a year, but we needn't raise the entirety of our budget up front. In fact, development has already begun.

Co-written by the authors of the book, *Break Through* will deftly navigate the complexities inherent in a problem involving so many social institutions. Because, unlike all the other global warming documentaries out there, *Break Through* is not about the environment at all—it's a story about globalization, economics, and the human psyche. And if enough people see it, if we can get politicians, journalists, and entrepreneurs to start talking about the radical, yet entirely practical ideas it puts forward, *Break Through* could have a profound effect on the future of our country, and our world. Though climate change may be the single greatest challenge that civilization has ever faced, it may also be our greatest opportunity.

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Everything is Scary

A feature film, slated for Fall 2008 production.

Everything is Scary is an existential terror film inspired by the works of Ingmar Bergman, Woody Allen, and David Lynch. It is equal parts social satire and surreal horror; a film that explores the pressures, anxieties, and absurdities of post-modern life, finding humor in frightening places and terror in familiar settings.

Zoe and Ben, twenty-somethings searching for direction, met in New York City and were swept up in a passionate romance. Their relationship was cut short when Ben got a job in California and Zoe's mother fell ill in New York. They stayed in touch—Ben climbing the corporate ladder at his marketing job, while Zoe took care of her mentally unstable mother. But when Zoe's mom commits a shocking suicide, Zoe makes an impulsive move across the country to live with Ben in Berkeley.

Ben is busy living the frustrated writer's life—working a job he loathes by day, then retreating to his isolated cabin in the hills to write a novel by night. He believes that Zoe's arrival will bring him not only love and companionship, but inspiration. Zoe is fighting her own existential battles, and hopes that Ben's strength will help her find a way out of the darkness that her mother's death has lead her into. They both soon realize that living together is not what they'd expected. Zoe is alone most of the day while Ben is at work, left to fixate on memories she'd rather forget and obsess over the injustices she sees everywhere but can do nothing about. Ben, who has made his peace with the ills of modern society, comes home every day to find Zoe a little further gone. Despite their best efforts, they cannot relate to each other's crises, and their relationship begins to fall apart.

Soon, Zoe's soul-searching crosses the fine line between seeking truth and tempting madness. She finds herself drawn to those who live on the margins, the eccentrics who surround her: the mysterious neighbors and their disturbed teenage son, a dying woman who seems to always be watching her, a homeless man who believes he's a prophet. Zoe begins to have jarring visions, haunted by terrifying apparitions wherever she goes. Her efforts to embrace uncertainty lead her closer to the answers she seeks, but farther and farther from reality.

Everything is Scary will be shot in the Fall of 2008. The picture will cost approximately \$150,000 to complete, but only \$60,000 needs to be secured in advance of shooting—the rest of the budget, mostly salaries, can be raised after the fact, via screenings of our rough work. This is a very dynamic model, in that it allows us to begin production with a very modest budget, and then let the work speak for itself.

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Urban Farms

A short form documentary currently in production.

Urban farming and gardening is a growing movement. People from all walks of life are turning backyards, empty lots, and rooftops into viable places to grow food. Community gardens and farmer's markets are making locally grown food more accessible and less expensive. These farms and gardens are organized in different ways and on different scales, but all share similar purposes—at the heart of the movement is a desire to make healthy food available for those who can't otherwise afford it, to reduce carbon footprints by cutting down on food shipment, and to reconnect with an aspect of our lives that has been rendered abstract by industrialized agriculture.

Home to dozens of urban farming organizations and programs, the Bay Area represents an excellent point of entry for an exploration of this world. The documentary will visit community outreach farms, school gardens, and individual homes, and feature interviews with local experts like Michael Pollan, Alice Waters, and Bill Fujimoto of Monterey Market. We'll get a sense of the movement and personalities involved, and the benefits, large and small, of these endeavors. Principal photography will take place over the summer of 2008.

Future Magic

A series of web shorts currently in production that will air on the EBPI website, as well as on internet channels such as YouTube, MySpace, and Vimeo.

Episodic, surreal, contemplative, and comically absurd, the show centers on the existential explorations of a group of twenty-somethings in the year 2050. Set in bare, almost indistinct locations—forests, fields, empty streets, spartan rooms—the world they exist in is “post,” but not quite apocalyptic. Our view of the future is limited to the casual, even banal social gatherings of this band of friends, all of whom possess strange powers, some kind of *Future Magic*. Time travel, matter manifestation, telepathy and transformation are as commonplace as air travel, internet browsing and text messaging are today. Just what to do with these awesome powers, however, can be quite perplexing. These future kids, our children’s children, are looking for familiar answers to age old questions—love, loss, connection, meaning—but with a set of tools that’s very different from our own. We like to think of the show as a post-millennial Peanuts, sometimes silly and surreal, sometimes thoughtful and poignant, and ultimately, quintessentially human.

This show is very inexpensive to produce. The locations are free, the effects simple, the cast and crew minimal. The writing and performances are what will make it shine, the tone and sense of humor are what will make it unique. One of the key components of our business is building a core audience online. Short, comedic webisodes have the potential to draw many viewers through YouTube and other online channels. Once our online audience sees what we’re doing in the short form, they’ll also find out, via our website, what we’re doing with our larger-scale projects. A fan base on the internet can grow exponentially, and pay big dividends for our more commercial projects.

Team EBPI

Russell Arteaga found his calling in electronic music in the late '80s, and has since produced, composed, and performed a variety of genres. In 2003 he began a career in audio post-production, recording, and editing, working on everything from production-library music to national ads.

Drew Beck is a designer and photographer whose interest in critical theory and progressive politics has informed much of his work. Always keeping a keen eye to what lies outside the norm, and inside his heart, Drew brings his enormous compassion and incessant honesty to EBPI.

Adam Goldstein made his first film at age 16. A graduate of Northwestern University's Radio/TV/Film department, Adam has studied film theory and production, as well as directing and acting for stage and screen. His professional experience includes camera operator for several television shows on HGTV and The History Channel, as well as production coordination and teaching. Adam recently completed his first feature-length film, *The Snake*, which he co-wrote, co-produced, co-directed, and starred in.

Andrew Hasse made his first video when he was 12 years old, an epic book-report on Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring*. In high school he made many more short videos, and two feature-length films. He attended film school at New York University, where he won grants from the George Heinemann Foundation and Warner Brothers to produce his thesis film. After graduating, Andrew helped develop a series which can be seen on the Cartoon Network, and co-founded Brooklyn-based production company Waverly Films with several of his NYU associates.

John Johnson defected from electric engineering to pursue his passion for film, sound, and music at EBPI. A musician since the age of four, he has studied and composed music for over two decades. As co-director of the sound division, John is responsible for both production and post-production audio. He has spent the last year working on short and feature-length films.

Brandon Sheffield is senior editor of Game Developer magazine and senior contributing editor to Gamasutra.com, a website devoted to the art and science of game development. He also writes scripts for video games, and advises foreign game companies on the US market. Brandon graduated from the University of Southern California with a double major in Cinema-Television: Critical Studies, and Japanese Language and Culture. His careful eye will assist in editing, writing, and continuity on EBPI projects.

Bret Turner is a man of many talents. He's put his linguistics degree from Pomona College to good use, studying in Russia and Central America. He has also worked as an administrator at an international school, and has run several study abroad programs for high schoolers. A writer and musician, Bret brings his unique levity to all of his endeavors.

Christopher Woodard has worked on numerous film projects in various roles including writer, director, editor, sound engineer, and, when absolutely necessary, actor. He studied film and literature at Bard College in New York.

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