

ROL- LING ON THE FLO- OR LA UGHING

**PRODUCER
MICHAEL PRALL**

**WRITER/DIRECTOR
RUSSELL HARBAUGH**

PROJECT PROPOSAL 8.1.10

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Dear Potential Supporter,

It's been four years since I entered Columbia University's MFA Film program. In that time, Columbia's alums have established a track record of producing outstanding independent film. In recent years, Kathryn Bigelow's *HURT LOCKER* took home the Best Picture and Best Director Oscars, while James Mangold (*KNIGHT AND DAY*), Nicole Holofcener (*PLEASE GIVE*), Lisa Cholodenko (*THE KIDS ARE ALL RIGHT*), Greg Mottola (*ADVENTURELAND*), Adam Salky (*DARE*), and Courtney Hunt (*FROZEN RIVER*) have all seen their films released, to wide acclaim, in theaters. Florin Serban, a recent graduate, just won the prestigious Silver Bear at last spring's Berlin Film Festival for his first feature, *IF I WANT TO WHISTLE, I WHISTLE*. Thesis shorts from the program have played every film festival in the world, including Sundance, Cannes, New Directors/New Films, Berlin, Rotterdam, and South by Southwest. I've seen many of my colleagues and classmates attain the beginnings of lasting careers through the films they've carried with them out of the program and around the world. And now it's my turn.

I've excelled in my course work at Columbia, earning honors distinction in both Screenwriting and Directing, while enjoying a fairly rigorous apprenticeship under Writer/Director Eric Mendelsohn. The film we collaborated on, *3 BACKYARDS*, won the directing prize at this year's Sundance Film Festival, the first time they've ever awarded the prize twice to the same director (Eric won in '99 for his film *JUDY BERLIN*). It's been a startling education, and has shown me the kind of personal and profound art that can be created when a group of interested friends and family and friends of friends and friends of family decide that they want to help.

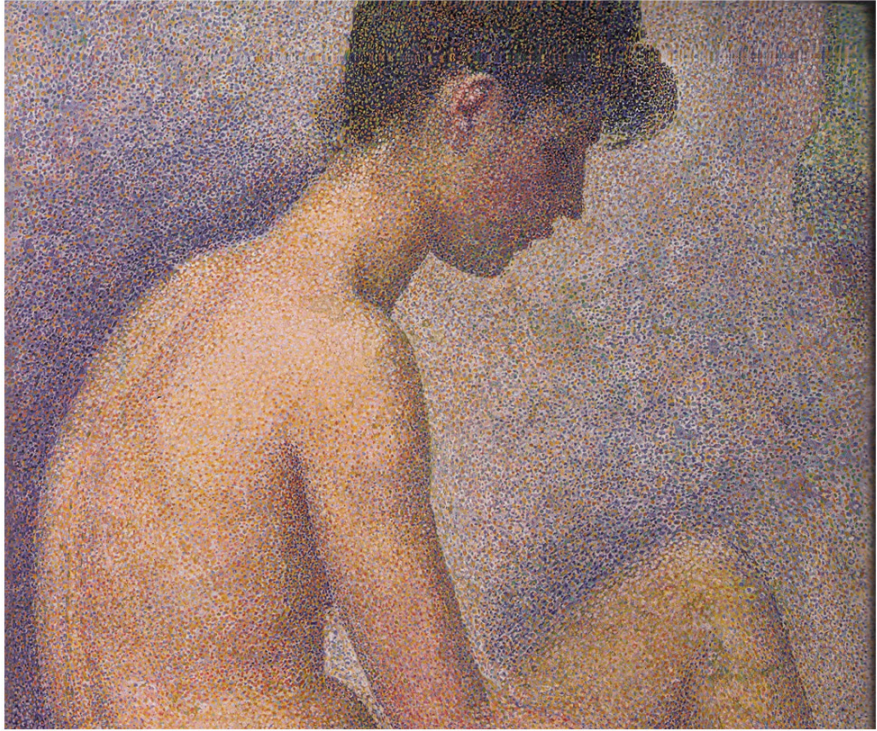
I'm currently in pre-production of my own project, *ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING*, a half-hour film entering production this October. We're shooting in Indiana, in the home where I grew up, from a script that began merely as conversation between a loving mother (mine) and her curious, needling son (me). It's a project inspired by films with modern, revisionist instincts toward autobiography—films like Maurice Pialat's *WE WILL NOT GROW OLD TOGETHER*—films that wrestle with reality while abiding the strictures of fiction.

Like most films by first time directors, the need for financing is tremendous. With a budget upwards of \$35,000, our only recourse is to ask for help, to invite the willing and interested to share in the exhilarating task of raising this project to its feet. The truth is that, especially in New York, films are only realized at the pace of financial support that a select army of financiers contributes in exchange for access, screen credit, and, above all else, gratitude that will extend through the life of my career.

It is with the hope of your involvement that I offer this packet and ask for your contribution.

My Best,

Russell Harbaugh



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

"You confuse love with morality. You think because you love someone, it means you wish them well, but sometimes it's about wanting them to yourself."

-*EMERGENCY KISSES*, 1989

Written and Directed by Phillipe Garrel

ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING is the story of a love-triangle between a middle-aged widow, a new lover in from out of town, and the woman's grown sons with whom she shares a candid, sometimes unsettling intimacy. The story takes place over the course of a birthday weekend, the night before and the day of a party.

It's in anticipation of these competing relationships (Mother and Lover, Mother and Sons) occupying the same physical space, colliding, revealing themselves publically that will provide the structural progression of the movie, but it's really a film about the body, about loyalty, about coveting that which you may soon lose. The film investigates a mother who, thrilled by the prospect of new sexual attention after the death of her husband, is forced to test this new identity within sight of her boys. Boys who are, in turn, confronted with the slippery curiosity produced by the dawning realization that their mother is a woman and, when caught by desire, capable of pursuing sex with the gleeful abandon of adolescence.

The visual approach to the film will be mostly formal and restrained: wide, roaming sequence shots; long takes; frames crammed with people. It will refer to the films of Maurice Pialat, Marcel Pagnol, Louis Malle, and Jean Renoir.

The hope is to create an environment that is tender and funny before it is threatening and dangerous—the jovial feeling of homecoming; a packed house spilling into a back garden. I want the movie to portray a very particular, nearly barbaric feeling of loyalty in the wake of grief.

ROFL is a necessary and provocative film, a way of capturing personal experience and distilling it to its core drama. I'm excited by its potential.

-Russell Harbaugh
August 2010

A NOTE ON GIVING

The \$35,000 production budget of ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING is being raised entirely through contributions of family and friends. The project has acquired fiscal sponsorship through FRACTURED ATLAS, a 501(c)3 institution based in New York which allows **all donations to be tax exempt**. Some corporations even have matching contribution policies for employees who make charitable donations and, of course, we would be thrilled if you might investigate if yours is one of them.

It's important to understand that ROFL is not an investment opportunity and in fact, declaring it so would disqualify its affiliation with FRACTURED ATLAS (to say nothing of general dishonesty; shorts rarely make money). You should consider your donation as charitable; an investment in my artistic ambitions and indeed an essential collaborator in this admittedly romantic, idealistic pursuit.

You'll find attached a budget top-sheet that outlines departmental expenditures, but really what it comes down to is this: for ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING to happen, a group of 15-20 people have to be hired, transported, fed, housed, and equipped for six days of principal photography. \$500 will buy food for a day, \$1000 rents a dolly or a lens package for a week, \$5,000 is the difference in shooting on 16mm—something I think is essential—rather than HD video, while \$10,000 would cover travel and housing.

Enclosed, we've included a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a contribution form.

There are two ways in which to donate:

- 1.) If donating by check, please make it **payable to FRACTURED ATLAS with "Russell Harbaugh" in the Memo Line**.
- 2.) Credit Card donations are accepted on the Fractured Atlas website. You can donate to our project here:

<https://www.fracturedatlas.org/site/fiscal/profile?id=3636>



FILM PRODUCTION COSTS SUMMARY

FIXED BID

ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING		Job #:	
Digital Video Production Budget			
Production Contact:		Client/Product:	
Director:	Russ Harbaugh	Producer:	Tel:
Dir of Photography:		Art Dir:	Tel:
Producer:	Michael Prall	Writer:	Tel:
Editor:		Bus. Mgr:	Tel:
No. Pre-pro days:		Commercial Titles/Code/Length:	
No. pre-light days:		1.	
No. build-strike days:		2.	
No. studio shoot days:		3.	
No. location days:		4.	
Location sites:		5.	

		• Estimated \$	Actual \$
1.	Pre-production and wrap costs (Totals A & C)	3,375	
2.	Shooting crew labor (Total B)	5,200	
3.	Location and travel expenses (Total D)	10,265	
4.	Props, wardrobe and animals (Total E)	600	
5.	Studio & set construction costs (Totals F/G/H)	500	
6.	Equipment costs (Total I)	4,550	
7.	Film stock develop and print (Total J)	654	
8.	Miscellaneous (Total K)	150	
9.	SUB-TOTAL A thru K	25,294	
10.	Director/creative fees (Total L)		
11.	Insurance		
12.	SUB-TOTAL Direct Costs	25,294	
13.	Production Fee		
14.	Talent costs and expenses (Totals M & N)	4,300	
15.	Editorial and finishing (Totals O & P)	5,300	
16.			
17.	GRAND TOTAL (Incl Director's Fee)	34,894	
18.	Contingency / Weather Day		

BIOS

MICHAEL PRALL - PRODUCER

Michael Prall worked as a production manager on the award-winning *Children of Invention*, an official selection at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival, and since has been a part of several more successful Sundance features. He was the assistant director on the upcoming features *Cargo*, and *Happy New Year*, a topical drama about a returning Iraq war veteran.

RUSSELL HARBAUGH - WRITER/DIRECTOR

Russell Harbaugh is currently pursuing an MFA in film from Columbia University. Outside of the program, Russ worked closely with Eric Mendelsohn on his award-winning *3 Backyards*. *Rolling on the Floor Laughing* is his thesis film.



ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGHING

CONTRIBUTOR INFORMATION (Your personal information is kept confidential)

Last Name: _____, First Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State ____ Zip _____

Telephone Numbers: Home (_____) _____ Work:(_____) _____

E-mail
Address: _____



I would prefer that this contribution and/or my name be kept confidential. Thanks!

DONATIONS

A ONE-TIME DONATION, IN THE AMOUNT OF:

\$10,000 \$5,000 \$2,500 \$1,000 \$ 500 Other: \$ _____

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Does your employer match donations? YES / NO

Please enclose a signed Matching Donation Form from your employer if applicable

METHOD OF PAYMENT



Check enclosed. **Please make checks payable to FRACTURED ATLAS.**



I have contributed via credit card on <https://www.fracturedatlas.org/site/fiscal/profile?id=3636>

NOTES

- Contributions to ROLLING ON THE FLOOR LAUGH, through FRACTURED ATLAS, are deemed charitable under section 501(a) of the internal revenue code as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3). Please consult your accountant for any clarifications.
- Payments must be received before **SEPTEMBER 15th, 2010**
- There is no minimum contribution amount.
- For more information please call 812.306.1784 or email Russ at russharbaugh@gmail.com

Please forward completed form and payment in the enclosed SASE to:

Russell Harbaugh
115 W 74th St. Apt 4A
New York, NY 10023

FRACTURED ATLAS MAJOR GIFT LETTER
REQUIRED FOR ALL DONATIONS of \$1000 OR OVER

Alexandra Gray
Director of Development
Fractured Atlas
248 West 35th St, 10th Floor
New York, NY 10001

Dear Alexandra,

Please accept my contribution to Fractured Atlas in the amount of \$_____. It is my wish that this contribution be used in support of _____, a sponsored project under the oversight of Fractured Atlas.

Sincerely,

Date: _____

Donor Name: _____

Address: _____

"We have passed from an unconsciously rooted mistrust of reality, an illusory and equivocal evasion, to an unlimited trust in things, facts, and people. Such a position requires us, in effect, to excavate reality, to give it a power, a communication, a series of reflexes that until recently we had never thought it had. It requires, too, a true and real interest in what is happening, a search for the most deeply hidden human values, which is why we feel that the cinema must recruit not only intelligent people but, above all, 'living' souls, the morally richest people."

-Cesare Zavattini
Screenwriter of BICYCLE THIVES
and UMBERTO D.