

A Del-uge of Donovan

New pilot puts "post-camp" spin on family sitcom

When Sissyboy founder Mark "Zebra" Thomas teamed up with co-writer John Camacho and director Devan McGrath for a TV sitcom pilot, all three knew it was going to be something altogether different. Their creation, *Delusional Donovan*, will screen at Mississippi Studios Saturday, November 12.

Delusional Donovan follows the daily life of 8-year-old Donovan Summers (Dylan Hill), witness to a traumatic event that has left his reality a swirl of colorful visions. Starring Lee Kyle as Donovan's drag queen mom, Splendor, and former Portland resident-turned-Mattachine matriarch Amber Martin as her partner, the show challenges conventional, family-oriented sitcoms.

Thomas hopes to sell the project to a content-hungry network, and says he feels network TV is ready to take on the more adventurous programming of the Internet.

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Thomas and Camacho prefer to dub the project "post-camp"—a concept they mulled over during the show's development.

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—MARK "ZEBRA" THOMAS,
CO-CREATOR, DELUSIONAL DONOVAN

"We're still working with those classic camp ideas such as drag queens as mothers, or lesbians with mullets, but we are adding another layer to these often two-dimensional and offensive characters," said Thomas. "*Delusional Donovan* gives heart and complex emotions to characters that in the past mostly made potty jokes."

For more information, search "*Delusional Donovan*" on Facebook. The pilot screening takes place Sat., Nov. 12 at Mississippi Studios (3939 N. Mississippi Ave.). A red carpet reception begins at 6 p.m., with screenings at 7 and 9 p.m. Admission is on a \$5-\$10 sliding scale.

Southern Exposure

Heart Breaks Open hits Stumptown as part of Northwest Filmmakers' Fest

In the Billie Rain-directed, Basil Shadid-produced indie flick *Heart Breaks Open*, Jesus (Maximillian Davis) is a suicide counselor and queer activist who learns he's contracted HIV



Sister Alysa Trailer (Brian Peters) in *Heart Breaks Open*

following an infidelity. Tortured by the prospect of coming clean to his longtime partner Johnny (Samonte Cruz), Jesus hits the bottle and the pills until his self-destruction is curbed by Sister Alysa Trailer (Brian Peters), a member of Seattle's Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

Heart Breaks Open, filmed on location in the Emerald City, uses improvisation and non-actors to create a documentary-like feel. But whereas some features dealing with HIV-positive characters focus on the frequent message of prevention, *Heart* looks at a more unique struggle.

"We wanted to explore the complex realities around an individual who tests positive

through decisions that don't align with their own values," explained Shadid. "This is just one story of one person who contracts HIV. What's universal about the film, however, is the story of someone who wrestles with their own shadow side." □

Heart Breaks Open screens with *Austin Unbound* at 8:45 p.m. Tues., Nov. 15 at the Portland Art Museum (1219 SW Park), as part of the 38th Annual Northwest Filmmakers' Festival. Tickets are \$9, \$8 for students/seniors/museum members. Visit festivals.nwfilm.org/nwfest38, and for more information on *Heart Breaks Open*, visit heartbreaksopen.com.

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