

Production Notes

Journals and notes from the production staff of E:60.



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THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2010

Corrective Rape

E:60's piece on ['corrective rape'](#) in South Africa wasn't going to be like any other piece - producer Beein Gim and shooters Bill Roach, Joel Edwards and Jesse Edwards knew it from the start.

Corrective rape is rape of lesbian women by heterosexual men with the intent of changing their sexual orientation. Its occurrence - believed to be on the rise - in South Africa's black townships is under scrutiny because of the 2008 rape/murder of Eudy Simelane, a lesbian member of the South African national soccer team.

Gim's crew wanted a look to suit the story.

"They said 'we have a unique story and unique location - let's do this differently,'" Gim said.

Encouraged by executive producer Andy Tennant, Roach went after a 'Slumdog Millionaire' look. He opted to shoot in digital cinema - with a Panasonic P2 2700 and Canon 7D.

The piece is built around chilling interviews with two rape victims. E:60's usual production calls for three cameras and movement for an interview. Shots of the correspondent, crew, cameras and monitors vie for attention. Not this time.

Correspondent Jeremy Schaap interviewed the two victims, Tumi Mkhuma and Mvuleni Fana, as well as the mother and friend of Eudy Simelane. Little of Schaap was seen in the interviews of Mkhuma and Fana.

"This was about the victims - the survivors," Gim said. "We put the camera right in their face - got them staring right into the camera. So they were directly telling you their story - instead of the correspondent. The idea was to keep the feel of a first-hand account as much as possible."

The piece begins with the caveat: "The following segment contains images that may be disturbing to some viewers." But the candid accounts of Mkhuma and Fana were more "disturbing" than any images in the piece.

"That was the most surprising thing to me," Gim said. "One

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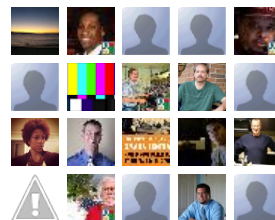
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thing we did was stop them from saying too much during the pre-shoot. We wanted it to be fresh.”

Since no images of the actual rapes existed, Gim resorted to images of the locations where the rapes occurred, and abstract imagery - children, flowers, water dripping from a faucet, laundry, men in the streets, men and boys lifting weights.

“The little girls and kids were images to contrast with a dark story,” Gim said. “They represented beauty and purity and domesticity.”

“The guys lifting weights were men being as masculine as possible - guys being guys. The little kids lifting weights showed kids mimicking what grownups do.”

To establish the homophobic attitude of men in South Africa’s black townships, Gim’s crew approached them on their turf. They rewarded her with unguarded expressions of prejudice.

“It was surprising to find guys who said those things,” Gim said. “In the U.S. people are careful about man-on-the-street stuff. It was like they didn’t have a filter.

“Maybe they hate lesbians so much they couldn’t hold back.”

Posted by Steve Marantz, May 13, 2010

Posted by [E:60](#) at [8:17 AM](#)

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