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NEVER FORGET: TURNING STRANGERS INTO FRIENDS

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Nearly 16 years have passed since the devastation of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, one of the greatest tragedies in American history. Director David Heinz's

"September 12th" takes a snapshot of the days that followed. What he found was a nation unified in grief, but even more so in compassion—as seen from the windshield of a folk singer's tour van.

"As divided as our country is, I wanted to tell a story that was really positive and unifying," Heinz says. "To remind people of what it felt like in the days after 9/11, when we were all connected and all looking out for one another. In that regard, it was a remarkable time and I, for one, think we as a country can get back there."

Heinz's fictional tale pairs two complete strangers on a journey across the country to share their music with an aching nation. The film enlisted folk singers Joe Purdy and Amber Rubarth in the leading roles. Both are new to the acting scene.

"I was so grateful for their willingness to jump into this world they've never known," says Heinz proudly. "It's a really brave thing they did, and I think they both did it quite well."

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the crew visited with his family down the road until their new friend had them up and running again. After a grateful goodbye, the no-longer-strangers parted ways. Thankfully the camera was rolling, and the scene made its way into the final cut of the film.

“Making a film on a modest budget is a challenge in and of itself,” says Heinz. “But when you add onto that a 3,500-mile road trip through 14 states in a 40+ year-old van that was prone to fires, it becomes a monumental task.

“Just like the characters in the movie, we ended up relying on the kindness of strangers to help us get to New York,” he continues. “In that way, the themes of the movie really mirrored our experience of making it.”

—Amy Brown



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