

## Women in film: The making of 'Pip & Zastrow'

Published March 13, 2008

*Locked arm in arm they cross the  
way,*

*The black boy and the white,*

*The Golden Splendor of the day,*

*The sable pride of the night.*

*From lowered blinds the dark folk stare,*

*And here the fair folk talk,*

*Indignant that these two should dare*

*In unison to walk.*

*Oblivious to look and word*

*They pass, and see no wonder*

*That lightning brilliant as a sword*

*Should blaze the path of thunder.*

- "Tableau" by Countee Cullen

They walked through the old Ward 4 of Annapolis, a community rich with a glorious history from ship building to brick making, the center of enterprise for both blacks and Jews, a self reliant community, powerful in its numbers, and always influencing city and county politics.

From the old Ward 4, a trip to City Hall, the State House or the United States Naval

Academy is just a brisk walk away. Through the civil rights movement, the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., forced integration, and urban renewal, the face of this community like communities all across America changed forever.

As the history of this city is lifted, so has much of the old Ward 4 history as well. Its civil rights history surrounds the events following the assassination of the Rev. King, particularly the story of the mayor of Annapolis and his friend who is incarcerated at the time of this national tragedy.

From around 2003 until 2005, talks about telling the story evolved into finding a sponsor. A board was established, and later two filmmakers who found this story so intriguing decided to sign on and make it happen. These two filmmakers are Victoria Bruce and Karin Hayes. No strangers to filmmaking, they took on this project and all that went along with it: Funding obstacles, cultural barriers, insults and intimidation. If they could handle the filming of "The Kidnapping of Ingrid Betancourt" on the streets and back roads of Colombia, filming in the City of Annapolis would be a charm. So they thought!

The funding hurdle was what was to be expected because of the risk of not completing the film. However, the community finally stepped in. From private donations, to a fundraiser and commitments from Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis, the film began to take shape. What was not expected was the inability to obtain film footage in many of the local communities.

Victoria and Karin found that getting the community to shake loose those pictures was a bit of work as well, but it happened. Because of their commitment, excitement and enthusiasm in telling this story, the community once again stepped in. And the music, that's right, the community said why not?

From the Oyster Boys, Del Ray, Flawless, Rob Levit to musicians on the West Coast, Victoria Bruce and Karin Hayes have brought together a community that believed that the Pip and Zastrow Annapolis story needed to be told.

"Pip and Zastrow" is a story about us, told by us - the community of Annapolis which remembers the dark days after April 4, 1968. There are numerous individuals in this community who gave their time, pictures, memories and money to support the making of this film. For most of us when Victoria and Karin ask for your help the answer is usually yes! They are young, energetic, professional and fearless.

Since the summer of 2006, I have been on board as one of the film's associate producers and have had the opportunity to work with two of the greatest women I know. Over the last two years we have learned from each other and we are pleased with what our friendship and collaboration have accomplished. Their favorite word is awesome and that's what they are. Let me be the first to say congratulations to the LSM!

Where were you on April 4, 1968 when you heard that the Rev. King had been shot and killed? Do you remember the voice of Sen. Robert Kennedy who announced to a crowd that the Rev. King was dead, hearing the screams from the audience. Mr. Kennedy, one of America's favorite sons, who was also assassinated just two months later?

During these perilous times there were many leaders in this community who realized that April 4, 1968 was like no other event in modern history and that rioting was not only possible but a reality unless the anger of the youth in the city was quelled. This wonderful story about Roger "Pip" Moyer and Joseph "Zastrow" Simms does not begin or end with April 4, 1968. The documentary "Pip and Zastrow" examines a life-long relationship between two men from Annapolis from childhood. It captures the feelings of the members of this community, Pip and Zastrow's families, race relations, Parkinson's disease, politics, urban renewal (removal), betrayal, corruption, friendship and love.

Where will you be this Saturday? Hopefully you will be with us for the special preview screening. Please join us at 7 p.m. at Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts for the screening of "Pip and Zastrow: an American Friendship."

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The columnist is a native of Annapolis and a recipient of R.E.S.P.E.C.T, Inc., Co-Chairpersons Award for "Outstanding Community Leadership and significant contributions to community development, coalition building and organizational unity."

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- No Jumps-

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