

MISSISSIPPI DELTA – 2 WEEK DOCUMENTARY WORKSHOP

DATES: February 13th - February 26th, 2011
LOCATION: **Clarksdale, Mississippi**
ROOM & BOARD: Included
TRAVEL: Additional Cost. Must be organized by student.
TUITION: \$2,799.00
Barefoot Alumni
DEPOSIT: \$500.00
Deposit is non-refundable. Deposit must be in by November 1st, 2010. Balance due – December 1st, 2010.
INSTRUCTOR(S): Chandler Griffin
Teddy Symes
CONTACT: info@barefootworkshops.org

"My life was changed and I learned such a love of this medium and so much info that my head is busting."

*Karen Kohlhaas,
Delta 08 student*



HISTORY

The Mississippi Delta is rich in oral history and holds old and new stories waiting to be discovered and shared with the rest of the world. Explore new ideas at the birthplace of blues artists like Robert Johnson, B.B. King, Sonny Boy Williamson, Howlin' Wolf, and Muddy Waters. Walk the fields and film where cotton was king and interview the people who lived and breathed the civil rights movement. Visit endless catfish farms spread across vast cotton fields. Tell stories about factories closing and the importance of preserving local economy. Experience a historical place and meet people waiting to share their personal stories of hardships, inspiration and triumph.

CONTENT

This 2-week delta workshop is designed for new documentary filmmakers who want to launch their careers in film and television documentaries or for those with experience in some aspects of filmmaking that are looking to expand their skill, understanding and mastery of the whole process. Producers, cinematographers, editors and writers with narrative experience who are considering working in non-fiction filmmaking are also encouraged to enroll. This workshop is ideal for working professionals who want to develop important skills, which will allow them to work with other filmmakers.

The workshop is unique because it explores every aspect of documentary filmmaking. Led by filmmaker and founder of Barefoot Workshops, Chandler Griffin along with other instructors will help you develop an understanding for the visual structure, style, and production requirements of a wide variety of documentaries along with storytelling and the art of writing and directing. This will include laying a visual foundation by spending many hours exploring how light, composition, and the decisive moment make up the image. Many different lighting techniques and styles will be covered using Lowel and Lite Panel lighting kits. Editing demos

use Final Cut Pro. Using case studies along with student's ideas, the goal of the course is to provide an intense overview of the art of documentary productions. Every student will learn how to evaluate non-fiction ideas, create their own ideas and develop an understanding of documentary film aesthetics and the storytelling process.

PHILOSOPHY

You can read books and take workshops just about anywhere to learn story and technical in media. Just Google "Documentary Workshops" and you'll have plenty of choices. If that is all you want, then Barefoot might not be the right place for you. At Barefoot Workshops, students learn that making documentaries is more than what comes out of a book.

We have a philosophy/lifestyle that we teach that goes beyond media and documentary filmmaking. We joke and say, "It's not about film". What we mean is that just learning how to make a documentary is not enough. Making media doesn't matter if you don't understand the bigger picture. The power of a story... how light, composition and the decisive moment can shift a person's perspective and make them feel a different way.

Students learn that the filmmaker/artist becomes "the keeper" of a person's story. Your subject will entrust you with their story and it becomes your responsibility to honestly tell that story. Every person in a Barefoot workshop at some point has this realization and it's a bit overwhelming.

The idea that you can change "people" in a positive way through a 10 minute video seems ridiculous. And when we say people it's important to clarify who these people are and then it won't seem quite so ridiculous.

1. Obviously #1 is your audience. You want to move them and give them some kind of realization. You have the power to do this with your film and sitting in the final screening with Barefoot Workshops, you quickly realize this. People in small-town Clarksdale, Mississippi town are completely moved by the stories of their own community. Many people say afterwards that they had forgotten that their town IS wonderful. The films remind locals that their stories, good or bad, ARE important and should be celebrated. Your film becomes a time capsule for the community. As a filmmaker, I can't think of a greater gift.

2. Consider yourself and how the film can change you. For many, the workshop becomes a journey. Making a documentary with Barefoot has been a life-changing experience for so many people. It is a seemingly impossible task to make a 10 minute documentary in twelve days. On Monday of week one, many people are completely baffled by how they are supposed to have a completed documentary by the following Friday night. They quickly realize that it's not an exercise in making documentaries. It's the real deal and there is a ton of pressure. The following week, close to one hundred people will be sitting in an audience waiting to see the films. The stakes are high and every person in the workshop has to step up or it simply won't work. Since our 1st workshop in 2005, we've never had a film not screen on Friday night. It might be exporting while the other films are screening, but every film screens. Saturday morning of week two, students are a bit confused by what has just happened. It's wonderful.

3. Your film has the ability to impact the subject. We've seen this over and over with Barefoot. The subject sits in the crowd and watches a film about them. When the film ends, people don't just applaud the filmmakers, they also applaud the people whose stories were told. We always have the filmmakers and subjects stand up so that they can all be acknowledged. It's a beautiful thing to witness. This is when it clicks for a lot of people and they realize that their film is much bigger than they are. It's empowering.

Those of us who teach with Barefoot have seen all of these things.. It's what brings us back every year to repeat the impossible process of making a documentary in twelve days.

When we stand in cotton fields and listen to stories about the difficult life of sharecroppers, when we sit on the banks of the Mississippi River, when we sit in a juke joint and hear sounds that have defined American music... we know how important the stories are to all of us.

THE PROGRAM

The workshop meets formally 6 days each week. There will be lectures, screenings, presentations, technical demos, a review and critique of dailies, supervised editing sessions, discussion of documentaries, and individual meetings with the Chandler and the other instructors. The workshop combines lectures and presentations with supervised and formal instruction in production laboratories (camera, lighting, sound, editing), shooting on location, transcribing, screening and discussion of current and classic documentaries.

PRODUCTION

The workshop will break into groups of at least two with each group producing a completed 7 to 10 minute piece shot on HDV and edited with Final Cut Pro. Students will break into groups based on stories they have chosen. Barefoot does not choose the story for the students. We have tons of ideas but it is up to the individuals to decide what films should be made. By day two every person in the workshop will have a few ideas for stories. Those ideas will be pitched in a group session. Stories are chosen based on the obvious and what is realistic. The faster groups form, the faster the films start. Once students let the subject(s) know and they are open to the idea of being filmed, students must start to schedule interviews and when scenes will be filmed. Groups will then write outlines to guide their production. From there they will conduct interviews, film B-roll and coverage for a sequence, record sound and take their material into post-production.

Students are walked through the process of creating first an edit on paper using the note card method. All interviews will be transcribed, which simplifies the writing process. Once the story has been written, they then move on the computer, where after assembly into a final edit, they will color correct, mix sound and add titles to the finished documentary. The projects will encompass the diversity of documentary styles and allow the individual the chance to problem-solve by learning to work as a team. Collaboration is an important part of the process and all films are made by at least two individuals.

PRESENTATION

On the last night of the workshop the documentaries will be screened for the community to enjoy. The filmmakers are encouraged to invite family and friends. Because of the full support of The Mississippi Film Commission, documentaries produced with Barefoot Workshops are automatically accepted for a special screening at the Crossroads International Film & Video Festival in Jackson, Mississippi, and students are encouraged to submit to other festivals around the world.

VISITING ARTISTS

Barefoot Workshops invites visiting artists to attend this workshop. Artists working in all mediums are encouraged to apply. The duration of stay varies with each individual. In the past photographers, filmmakers and musicians have visited the program.

Barefoot Workshops will be accepting filmmakers for enrollment in upcoming Delta workshops. These filmmakers will bring their documentary work in progress to the workshop and spend two weeks writing and editing the film. Read what one of 2006's visiting filmmakers had to say.

"When Jason and I went to Clarksdale, Miss. to be Visiting Artists at Barefoot, we had over 60 hours of footage and were looking for support and guidance in writing the film. The two and half weeks we spent at Barefoot was an incredibly focused, challenging and inspiring experience... During our time in Clarksdale we completed a trailer that we will use to raise production funds and wrote 60 pages of our rough draft. As a first time filmmaker, I felt really grateful to be able to work with such dedicated and

knowledgeable people like Chandler and Jack, as every stage of making your first film is challenging and new territory."

Monika Navarro
Director, "Animas Perdidas"
2010 PBS National Broadcast - Independent Lens

QUOTES FROM ALUMNI

"It was very well drilled that it's about learning and trying to understand the true story of a place or a person and connect with them. Also about the responsibility you have telling one's story. Barefoot Workshops was an eye opening, heart enlarging and taste developing experience. You learn so much you can feel the growth."

Gabriella Willenz, Israel
Delta 2010 – September

"It changed my life... It is about the story, about people, about moving others."

Yara Hannema, Holland
Delta 2010 – September

"Barefoot is beyond your expectations and brings your documentary dreams to reality!"

Nina Shah, India
Delta 2010 – February

"Overall something has shifted inside of me in a positive way – which if you could put that in context – is huge. But as I am still processing – having just got home last night -it has changed me in ways that are still intangible. I have a fire in the belly that hasn't burnt in five years. So that's quite something... If you want to learn to create films spend three years at film school, if you actually want to make films spent two to four weeks at a Barefoot Workshop, It's quite a ride, but worth it."

Edwina Mason, Australia
Delta 2010 – February

"Making a film about a subject you have not yet decided, with someone you have never met before, and who obviously has a different approach and point of view than you, in a town and state you have never been before, learning all the process from basic camera operating to lighting and interview techniques, ending up in editing in FCP, all in less than 2 weeks, is quite of a challenge I believe. And this is the interesting part of it. It is real. You have to make a film, a real film, about 10 minutes long, and you have no choice, but it has to be a good film and it better looks good, because you are showing it to over 50 people at the end of the course. The structure of the program, its flexibility, its friendliness, the informal and unique aspect of the location, the sharing between students, and the learning from the teachers who are all talented professional, makes this workshop unique and fully worth it. I have validated a lot of my previous technical skills during the workshop, and we have concluded it with an 8 minutes film which I liked a lot, sorry but I am just sincere here. It is the result of a combined effort with my partner student, where we fully dedicated our efforts to reflect a small side of someone's life into this short film, and we succeeded. I am extremely motivated in continuing further in this direction, and making this a new starting point in my career. "

Jean-Hugues Houdin, France
Delta 2010 – February

"I think that beyond the actual final product, a film, the Barefoot Workshops instills the sense that the documentary workshop experience is about honoring the creative process, collaboration, and being a conduit for the sharing of people's voices. I think the name "Barefoot" implies walking in this world with a sensitivity and respect for different cultures and people. I think "It's not about the film" to imply that it is not just about the external manifestation of a story told through film, but rather the transformation of self in relationship to others through the act of listening. Thanks to the Barefoot Workshops, I successfully got my feet wet in learning the basics of documentary filmmaking. I walked away with a short, ten minute, documentary that has impacted my life, profoundly connected me to a place (Clarksdale, Mississippi) and hopefully inspired those who told their stories. Thank you for providing me the opportunity to discover the power of listening and storytelling"

Hilary Cline, USA
Delta 2010 – February

At the risk of sounding hyperbolic, I want to tell everyone that this workshop inspired a confidence and freedom to create I haven't felt in years. I came to Mississippi hoping to complete something from start to finish—to have a finished product. I left feeling simultaneously more capably human and artist than I have in years. Worlds have opened up for me I didn't know existed, and now I see the potential for documenting Stories everywhere.

Susan Fritz, USA
Delta 2010 – February

"Exceptional quality and value for those interested in expanding their knowledge and ability in documentary story telling."

John Buffaloe, USA
Delta 2010 – February

"It's about the experience of learning the craft, engaging with your surroundings, and collaborating with your peers. It's commendable to create an award-winning doc but the experiences listed above far outweigh awards and nominations. Chandler, his selection of top-notch instructors, and phenomenal support staff create the most worthwhile environment and experience for learning documentary filmmaking. These educators are infinitely passionate about not only creativity and craft, but also the latest technology. Most important, Barefoot Workshops creates a comfortable environment where collaboration, communication, learning, and progress come naturally because of the instructors' ability to instill passion in creatives of all ages and ethnicities."

David Wright, USA
Delta 2010, February

"I asked virtually no questions ahead of time; just went on a very strong gut feeling and instinct that this would be something very, very special. To say it and you came through is the understatement of the century. As I've said many times, words just can't possibly do it justice. Floyd in the cotton field. Lighting lessons at midnight. Dinosaur tails and spectacular sunsets and soul-rocking music and the 24-hour pure passion and dedication of four fantastic instructors. Total immersion, an instant family, friends for life – it was the spirit as much as all the phenomenal technical knowledge that made this so extraordinary. What makes this workshop rise so far, far above is how fully all of the instructors give of themselves – they give not just what they know, but also who and what they are. It's one of those impossibly wonderful experiences that really does have to be experienced to be understood."

Paula Froke, USA
Delta 2009, September

"It has made me realize that the responsibility of telling a truthful story supercedes all obstructions, distractions, and doubts. The world today is so prone to skip the most valuable aspects of humanity, and we are compelled to capture and illustrate those very moments on film. If you want to tell a story that matters, a story that changes the world, come to Barefoot and let your voice be heard."

Stephen Moody, USA
Delta 2009, September

Delta '09 was an amazing experience. Not only did I learn an incredible amount in a condensed period of time, but I grew to know and understand a new place and people, I developed relationships with folks from all over the world and I was able to get away from life's busyness and follow my heart for two weeks.

Vince Caperelli, Jr., USA
Delta 2009, February

Barefoot in Clarksdale is a workshop experience you will find nowhere else in the world. There is no way to re-create Clarksdale - the most interesting people and their incredible stories run rampant. And the land is as much a part of the experience as the people. But the end result, a short documentary, is only part of the experience. The intense learning from the instructor's expertise (many times one-on-one), the close working relationships with strangers turned classmates turned friends, and the voice of the Mississippi Delta and the characters that live there all combine to create a very intense, surreal experience.

Wade Grayson, USA
Delta 2009, February

It's about what you learn about yourself and the connections you learn to make with other people as you tell stories... A Barefoot workshop is THE place to learn about all aspects of documentary filmmaking and about the creative process. Every single aspect, from location to instruction to equipment, is top notch and it is the best deal going. It is life changing.

Karen Kohlhaas, USA
Delta 2009, February

I came to this workshop from a still photography point of view, hoping to find a way to supplement the creativity of my Nikons with video for my project. I left with a new respect for the unique powers of video to convey the essence of a subject. I suspect the vision of students of Barefoot Workshops will create some paradigm shifts in the public awareness of both global and intimate challenges that exist today and their documentaries may become an impetus to desperately needed solutions.

Alison Jones, USA
Delta 2008, February

It's about connection; Telling peoples' stories and sharing their universal truths of what it means to be human. Chandler is a fountain of wisdom, both technical and artistic. He is passionate about his work and that passion overflows into the classroom. Chandler meets each student where they are, from seasoned pro to newbie, patiently catering to every question. And Planet Mississippi is a place I look to which I look forward to returning.

Rachael Hamilton, USA
Delta 2008, February