



**THE BLACK HOLLYWOOD EDUCATION
AND RESOURCE CENTER**

1875 Century Park East, Suite 6th floor
Los Angeles, CA 90067-2199
Phone: 310.284.3170 / Fax: 310.284.3169
www.bherc.org / bherc@bherc.com

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818.749.9695

Media Contact: Lynne Conner /

**THE BLACK HOLLYWOOD EDUCATION & RESOURCE CENTER
FIGHTS BACK WITH FILM MEDIA PROJECT**

*"Dilemma"...Gang Violence, Intervention and Its Impact on the Community
From the Voices of Those Who Have Been There, Done That!*

(Los Angeles, CA) The Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center ("BHERC") proudly presents: **FIGHTS BACK WITH FILM MEDIA PROJECT**, introducing the World Premiere of **DILEMMA** written and directed by **Alex Munoz** a poignant drama about gang violence on **May 12, 2006** at Raleigh Studios, Chaplin Theatre at 7:00 p.m. For more information about the screenings please contact the BHERC office at 323.284.3170.

Additionally, on **Sunday, Mother's Day, May 14th from 2:00 until 6:00 p.m.**, the BHERC will host its 2nd Annual Mother's Day Brunch feeding approximately 100 women who have lost children to gang violence at Consolidated Realty, 3725 Don Felipe Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90008.

In November 2003, the Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center Fights Back with Film Media Project was launched because of Sandra Evers-Manly's intense desire to use film to address issues of gang violence and intervention in our community. In 2004, the BHERC staged a competition wherein five filmmakers were commissioned and granted \$20,000 each to create new film projects dealing with the impact of gang violence in the form of a short or documentary.

S. Pearl Sharp, Supervising Producer for the BHERC Fights Back with Film Project designed and implemented the competition for the grant and volunteers on each of the 5 projects. The BHERC is the Community Sponsor of her documentary **THE HEALING PASSAGE / Voices From The Water**, which premiered at the BHERC in 2004. The BHERC Fights Back With Film idea was Sandra Ever-Manley's, coming out of her concern and her passion to use the tools and talents of the BHERC's film community to effect a change in this gang violence situation. And she wanted to do this with a sense of urgency after meeting with a group of mothers who had lost their children to gang violence.

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The SHOWCASE film **DILEMMA** written and directed by Alex Munoz will be the first winning film to be screened by the BHERC. **DILEMMA** focused on the night before his release from a Los Angeles youth probation camp, sixteen year old Jemal, finds himself in a **DILEMMA** when the killer of his sister checks into camp.

Alex Munoz received his MFA from USC's graduate school of Cinema and Television. His directorial work includes the **MTV Rock the Vote** spot starring **John Leguizamo**, a MCI spot featuring **Dennis Miller**, and an award-winning anti -gang PSA spot scored by **Muggs** of **Cypress Hill**. His award-winning short film, "**Por Vida**," premiered at the **Sundance Film Festival**. He directed **Showtime's "Riot"** which premiered at the **Telluride Film Festival**, won the **Jury Prize** at the **Geneva Film Festival** and won **Best Made for TV Movie** from the **NY Daily News**. Munoz's first feature film "**Living The Life**" starring Jay Hernandez was awarded Best Domestic Feature Film at the NY Latino Film Festival. Munoz's foundation **FYI: Films by Youth Inside** is dedicated to teaching filmmaking to incarcerated youth. Munoz says "*BHERC's anti-gang initiative media fund is proving to be an effective tool for exposing gang hegemony in our communities, and showing the devastation that gang violence inflicts on individual lives. In the same way, I hope Dilemma holds a mirror up to gang members themselves, so that they can see how the cycle of violence and revenge plays out in one young man's life. It is a cycle with much larger implications in our dangerous world.*" **DILEMMA** was funded by the BHERC and stars three youth he worked with at Probation Camp David Gonzales. His short film **The Return of our Elder Hurao** premiered at the Honolulu Arts Academy and will premiere at the VC Film Festival in May 2006. Munoz was just named as the recipient for the CBS Minority Directors Initiative award.

"It has been an emotional journey to both read the scripts and view the films on this subject matter. They are quite telling, said Sandra Evers-Manly, President of the BHERC and Executive Producer of the Fights Back With Film Project. It is our goal that these films will make an impact."

The BHERC was founded in 1993 to remove the veil of invisibility that shrouds African Americans and other minority groups from the main stage, and to spotlight diversity and the stellar contributions of black film and television artists who brought dignity and professionalism to even the most menial of roles. The Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center, a nonprofit, public benefit organization, is designed to advocate, educate, research, develop, and preserve the history, and the future, of blacks in the film and television industries.

For additional information, **call the BHERC at 310.284.3170 or visit the website at www.bherc.org**. The screenings are free but reservations are mandatory. There will be a Question & Answer discussion after each film with the filmmakers and cast and producers of the BHERC.

DILEMMA (35 min. Documentary)

Written and directed by Alex Munoz

On the night before his release from a Los Angeles youth probation camp, sixteen year old Jemal, finds himself in a DILEMMA when the killer of his sister checks into camp.



ALEX MUNOZ (Writer & Director) received his MFA from USC's graduate school of Cinema and Television and began directing national commercials while still a student. Among his stand out spots are the MTV **Rock the Vote** spot he directed starring **John Leguizamo** , an entertaining MCI spot featuring **Dennis Miller**, and a powerful anti -gang PSA spot targeting minority youth. The spot was scored by **Muggs of Cypress Hill** and won numerous awards. His first short film, "**Por Vida**," won several awards and premiered at the **Sundance Film Festival**. He went on to direct "**Riot**," a film about the LA Riots of 1992, for **Showtime**. "**Riot**" premiered at the **Telluride Film Festival**, won the **Jury Prize** at the **Geneva Film Festival** and won **Best Made for TV Movie** from the **NY Daily News**. Munoz's first feature film "**Living The Life**" starring Jay Hernandez was recently released in March 2004. It was awarded Best Domestic Feature Film at the NY Latino Film Festival. In 2002 he received a grant to teach film making to incarcerated youth at the California Youth Authority (CYA). Three years later Munoz created his own foundation called **FYI: Films by Youth Inside** dedicated to teaching film making to incarcerated youth. Munoz is putting finishing touches on his

autobiographical screenplay **Bicycles and Bridges** which was selected for development at the **Sundance Writers Lab**. **DILEMMA** was funded by the BHERC and stars three youth he worked with at Probation Camp David Gonzales. His short film *The Return of our Elder Hurao* premiered at the Honolulu Arts Academy recent film festival and will premiere at the upcoming VC Film Festival in May 2006. Munoz was just named as the recipient for the CBS Minority Directors Initiative award. He is focusing now on developing a feature film project which he hopes to shoot on Guam in 2007.

BHERC's anti-gang initiative media fund is proving to be an effective tool for exposing gang hegemony in our communities and showing the devastation that gang violence inflicts on individual lives. In the same way, I hope Dilemma holds a mirror up to gang members themselves, so that they can see how the cycle of violence and revenge plays out in one young man's life. It is a cycle with much larger implications in our dangerous world.

I am especially thankful for the energy and dedication that BHERC and Sandra Evers Manly bring to issues involving youth of color – an overlooked, ignored, underserved, and (unjustly so) an often-feared group of people. They understand the power of the media to change perception. They understand that storytelling inspires empathy, and empathy, in turn, empowers people. I am honored to contribute to Sandra Evers Manly's challenge to filmmakers to fight back with film. To use film in a way that will move people towards change... a cha

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DILEMMA ~ CREDITS

Written and Directed by
Alex Munoz

Produced by
Maura McCoy
Alex Munoz

Executive Producer
Sandra Evers-Manly

Supervising Producer **S.**
Pearl Sharp

Head of Production
John M. Forbes

BHERC Fights Back With Film Project Director
S. Pearl Sharp

Director of Photography
Brenda Zuniga

Art Director
Juliane Crump

Edited by **Chris**
Worland

Co-Producer
Meta Valentic

Casting by
Belinda Gardea

Original Music Composed by
Aaron Symonds

Original Music by
Luis Perez
P.C. Munoz

Sound Mix & Design
Luis Rosario

BHERC Title Animation
Wiggins Design