

PRESS RELEASE APRIL 2008
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“It’s a Shore Thing”

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30 Minutes With Doug Olear and Jackie Julio

In part 4 of our coverage of the Garden State Film Festival we will examine Doug Olear, the 2006 winner of the Robert Pastorelli Rising Star Award. We will also speak with writer, director and producer Jackie Julio who stars in *Hold On* with Olear.

The pairs first collaboration is the short film [Hold On](#) which will be screened *Saturday April 5, 2008, at 6:30 pm in the Fifth Avenue Pavillion at the Garden State Film Festival in Asbury Park, New Jersey*

Hold On, a quirky comedy starring Jackie Julio, who plays as Rose, a spirited, quadriplegic, physicist who goes to extreme measures in her quest for romance. This engaging, short film - part romance, part magic realism - is sprinkled with absurdity and symbolism, adding a touch of spice for the consummate film lover. Also starring are Doug Olear (“The Wire,” “Something the Lord Made”) and Dominic West (“The Wire” “300,” “Chicago”), featuring music by Bruce Springsteen, yes you heard it, that Bruce Springsteen, read on...

Jersey’s Native Son

Olear was born in Passaic NJ. When he was six his family moved to Fairlawn. Olear jokingly described it as, “Going from the engine room of a cruise ship, up onto the deck.” Little did he know that his experience as a young boy would benefit him in his acting years later. I turns out that great diversity he was exposed to on a daily basis lent depth to his interpretation of FBI Special Agent, Terry “Fitz” Fitzhugh, in *The Wire*. Early on he followed a passion for boxing taking him to Arizona, there he became a Golden Gloves Boxing Champion signed by Emanuel Steward and a stable mate of World Champion Thomas “Hitman” Hearns and Michael Moorer while on Steward’s famed Kronk Boxing team, Olear traded a professional boxing career to pursue his love of acting. Graduating

from The Stella Adler Conservatory of Acting in NYC he then studied at The Shakespeare Theater in Washington DC. His roles have been as diverse as the patrons of the uncle's bar in Garfield, NJ. With *The Wire* finished a successful 4 season run on HBO, Olear has now been freed up to work full time in California.

The Garden State Film Festival Circa 2006

Thanks to winning the Robert Pastorelli Award in 2006 Olear said, "One of the biggest things it did was it got me out to Los Angeles." After meeting Kurtwood Smith ("that 70's Show" and "Dead Poets Society") who also won an award, he was introduced to an agent and in turn moved to the west coast. Jackie Julio who already lived there, formed the production company, Do Not Panic Productions, with him. While Olear loves NYC he fully admits that for the film actor there are just more productions happening on the West Coast on a yearly basis.

Olear's Shore Connection

Olear's family used to rent a house in Lavallette, or sometimes Seaside Heights when he was growing up. When I asked if he had a favorite shore memory, "Oh there are so many" Olear laughed as if my question had reawakened happy memories from a time long passed. Recalling a time when he and some friends ended up at his sister's summer rental, he says, "It was one of the best times I ever had" and "I have so many pictures of that weekend ...it was a great time in my life." When asked if he still has the urge to come back to the Jersey Shore, Olear said, "Absolutely, I try to as much as I can." freely admitting the still having "the sand between his toes." As one can imagine, living on the west coast doesn't make that the easiest thing to make happen. As it turns out his family still vacations in the Wildwoods.

Dreams Can Happen

Jackie Julio, a native of Baltimore MD, was born with a rare neurological disorder that produces spinal muscular atrophy, known as Kugelberg-Welander disease, her parents were told she might not live longer than three years. While in a wheelchair she has, at this point, thumbed her nose at the odds and looks at her disability as she puts it, "An inconvenience." To her credit she has studied music theory for ten years and co-wrote three songs which have been cut by a new artist. After becoming a licensed Florida attorney, she gave up law to pursue a career in film. Julio entered the screen writing track of the Motion Picture Department at the University of Miami where she wrote and directed a short.

Hold On

This year at the 6th Garden State Film Festival the film *HOLD ON*, a twenty minute, quirky comedy which Jackie co-wrote, co-directed, co-produced and starred in with Doug Olear, her partner in Do Not Panic Productions, will be entered into the competition. (*Ed Note: The website for www.donotpanicproductions.com is currently being redone, so check it out later this month*) This their first project together, has already been nominated for Best Short at the Lake Arrowhead Film Festival in California. They both consider the venture a great experience and in Julio's own words, "It was so much fun, ... exciting and exhausting." neither of them realized "...how much was involved", wearing so many hats as the production team. This surely is what takes many independent film makers out of the game early. Julio says, "for two years it's been full steam ahead on the project." giving you an idea of the efforts put forth by Olear and Julio.

The Well Earned Buzz

When Tommy Adler the Director of The Stella Adler Studio in NYC (Alumni includes Marlon Brando, Robert De Niro) saw *Hold On* , he said, "I loved the film. I found it poignant, funny and beautifully made, really, really good. It's hard to believe Jackie Julio never acted before. Her performance was nuanced and sensitive. I was blown away by Doug Olear's performance, beautiful character work."

Amy Ryan,(2008 Oscar nominee for best supporting actress for "Gone Baby Gone") had this to say... "Fantastic!, This film is incredibly done and so wonderfully original. Jacki Julio, Doug Olear, and Dominic West give exceptional performances. I was truly impressed!"

Also Doug Mckay (executive, Creative at Phoenix Pictures, *The Thin Red Line*, *The People vs. Larry Flynt*) was quoted as saying," I thoroughly enjoyed it. It's both funny and heartfelt and a genuine combination of the two is extremely rare.

The most incredible part of this story is that Olear and Julio managed to get none other than the ultimate Jersey Shore icon, [Bruce Springsteen](#) to allow the use of two of his songs, *Eyes on the Prize* and *This Little Light of Mine* from [The Seeger Sessions](#) which was recently released. Olear talked about how when they tried to get the music rights for the songs in the film, they were told by their person at NBC that Bruce rarely allows his music in films and not to expect to get the rights. Julio and Olear truly felt the song *Eyes on the Prize* truly embodies the spirit of the film. After their agent at NBC saw a rough cut of the film, a copy of the film was sent to Springsteen's Agent and Producer and a week later they said Bruce gave us the green light.

Driving Forces

It should be no surprise that a former champion boxer would find inspiration in non other than [Robert De Niro](#). Olear cites a quote by [Jake LaMotta](#) who said (of De Niro in *Raging Bull*), “He was so good at his craft he could have been a contender and I (Olear) was a fighter who wanted to become an actor.” Olear’s love of literature explains his admiration of [Sir Anthony Hopkins](#) and [Sir Laurence Olivier](#).

In *Hold On*, Julio’s character finds inspiration from such diverse female icons as: Josephine Baker, Golda Meir, Rosa Parks, and Mother Theresa. When asked if these were her personal heroes Julio says, “... my Mom is my biggest (hero) and Thelma who is like a sister to me, who has been with me since I was a kid helping me out, ...they really have been the ones who have pushed me, and showed me I can do anything I want to do.”

Sound Advice

While not an autobiographical story *Hold On* is certainly symbolic. There are few things that could slow Julio or Olear down at this point. Both have a tremendous future ahead of them with their new venture and are still planning for new rolls and projects. So for the aspiring filmmaker this summer to consider as you imagine your first project, take some sound advice from a pair of professionals in the thick of the action, living the dream. Julio points out, “You will come up against a lot of obstacles but if it’s something you really, deeply want, **it can happen**. This is cliché but dreams come true” Olear chimed in with a great point that every independent or student film maker should consider. “I’ve been in the business long enough to know people talk about doing things... a small amount of people actually do it. Get from start to finish, don’t worry so much about the end product, because it’s all an experience anyway. Just Do It”

[By: Drew King](#)

