

Tricia Bradley: Serious Fun Productions

Entertainment Entrepreneur, Talent Manager, Television Producer/Director and Former Advertising Art Director

Someone was telling me about a bundle of energy that swept into his office. She had a television show already to go and asked for what she needed: online her episodic 23-minute show and ship it out in time to air. Oh yes, there is only about 20 hours of prep time to "ready to air" each show every two weeks.

She sounded like an Entertainment Entrepreneur to me and I wanted to find out about her. With the help of her staff, I did.

In 1997, Tricia Bradley started Serious Fun Productions (SFP) in the basement of her home. Since then, SFP has experienced remarkable growth. Based just outside of Boston, the company began by packaging an on-camera talent and producing short format programming. Serious Fun grew so that its programming appeared on networks including, FOX Sports, OLN, and Resort Sports Network. For the past ten years SFP had a regular series on the NBC Today Show. Further, SFP created, developed and produced a 13-show, half-hour series for Discovery Home Channel, called "House Lift" and produced programming for CNN Headline News as well. For several years "House Lift" was the most popular tier offering on Discovery Home. Serious Fun's hallmark is entertaining while educating.

Currently, Serious Fun Productions' sports medicine series, "Athlete 360" with Dr. Mark Adickes is being distributed nationally starting April 2010 on FOX Sports. There is a backstory. As most of us know you don't just one day start a production company in your basement and create Bradley-like results.

Tricia Bradley spent 11 years as a Senior Art Director and Partner at Young & Rubicam, New York where she worked on MetLife, The US Postal Service Olympic Campaign and many other high profile Y&R accounts. She was part of the team that launched Advil that at the time, was considered the most successful product launch in advertising history. The team of Tricia and her copywriter, John Bollinger was named "The Team to Watch" by Backstage Magazine. She won the John Caples Award-the preeminent direct marketing award, Y&R's Ad of the Month and an Andy.

When her husband Paul Hochman accepted a one-year teaching position at his alma-mater, Phillips Academy, Tricia took a leave of absence from Y&R.

What Tricia is most proud of now is her ability to take a person with an expertise, wrap them in media opportunities that highlight their ability, and build them as a brand. But for the eleven years that immediately followed college, all she knew professionally was being a member of the Y&R creative department.

A self described workaholic Tricia was adrift when she first arrived at Andover. For the first time in her adult life, she didn't have a full time job. Leaving the ad business, forced Ms. Bradley to try new things. Luckily for Tricia, projects found her.



First, Phillips Academy asked her to take over an important PR effort. In spite of her lack of public relations experience, Tricia was challenged with getting the word out that the school's glass ceiling was about to be shattered, Barbara Landis Chase was being named Head-of School and the news was meant to travel around the world.

By the time Paul's one-year appointment ended, the family now included their first child, Lily. Deciding not to return to New York and her job at Y&R, they moved into their tiny vacation home in Colorado focused on writing for SKI Magazine, and Tricia took on the role of PR Director for the Telluride Film Festival. After a year in Colorado the family of three moved back to the East Coast to be near family.

After he son Carter was born, Serious Fun Productions was launched. Tricia loved motherhood but missed working. So, at their

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Mark Adickes had a 9 year NFL career that included winning a Super Bowl in 1992 with the Washington Redskins, then he went to Harvard Medical School and became a sports medicine specialist now hosting "Athlete 360" produced by Serious Fun Productions. Photo courtesy of SFP

Tricia Bradley is helping Cindy Stumpo build her brand around her show "Tough as Nails" pictured here with Jason Nunes, a decorator from Cabot House Furniture. Bradley has packaged Stumpo is a glamorous female general contractor with brass ovaries combined with the business acumen of Donald Trump. Photo courtesy of SFP.

"Athlete 360" Director Ken Yagoda, Serious Fun Production Founder & CEO Tricia Bradley, and Engine Room's Online Editor Andy Crosby. The show will air on Fox Sports premiering in April. Photo courtesy of SFP.

The Serious Fun Production crew while on location in Houston shooting the Stacy Lewis episode of "Athlete 360." In the photo from left: Joe Hancock, Dr. Brock, Stacy Lewis, Tricia Bradley, Ken Yagoda, Dr. Adickes, Bert Montanari, and Joe Duncan. Photo by Basia Goszczynska.

Lexington Massachusetts kitchen table, Serious Fun's new strategy was formed. Bradley determined that if she could help make Paul famous, his writing would be worth more. Her inspiration was George Plimpton, a great writer who put himself in harm's way with professional football players in a game on TV, then wrote about it in "Paper Lion."

Why not try something similar for her husband Paul? Tricia saw him as funny, smart, a great writer, and completely comfortable in front of an audience. It worked in an English class at Andover. How different could being in front of a camera be?

He needed experience, so Trish reached out to Mish Michaels. She hosted weekly Ski Reports on local Channel 7 News. Tricia packaged Paul as America's Ski Expert, and Mish took a chance and invited Paul to co-host these segments all winter.

In 1998, a call came in from Kevin Erdman, Executive Producer of Skiing Magazine on TV, pledging to air up five-minute segments on anything that Paul had to say. And then Serious Fun Productions really took off. Secretly, Tricia called her company Nap Time Productions because she worked only when Lily was at pre-school and her son Carter was napping.

After failing to get Paul named as one of the hosts of the Winter X-Games, Tricia heard that NBC was starting up a competing event, the Gravity Games. This time Tricia found success and Paul was named co-host with Volleyball Star, and international beauty, Gabby Reece.

In February of 2000, she successfully pitched a ski segment to the NBC Today Show – Serious Fun had a ski mountain built in the plaza outside the Today Show Studios in NYC where Paul Hochman presented the new trends in the ski industry – the shaped skis and ski helmets. Expanding on the success of the ski segment, a seven-minute segment with Matt Lauer started a stint for Paul as the Gear Expert. He later became the Gear and Technology expert. To this day, Mr. Hochman is a contributor to the Today Show.

Over the years, Serious Fun produced several hundred short format videos featuring Mr. Hochman. In 1997, Serious Fun Productions sold their first half hour show to OLN (now Versus) called, "Sheer Will." It featured the American and Austrian men's ski team's last training camp before the Winter Games.

In 2004, a thirteen show series called "House Lift" was sold to Discovery Home. It was a show about Tricia and Paul's own home renovation. Boston Magazine covered the series, as did the Today Show, and countless newspapers and radio shows across the country. The series also ran in the friendly skies on United Airlines.

The unofficial motto of the mom & pop shop was "Divorce Never. Murder, Maybe." It turned out to be untrue. The couple divorced in 2007, and Paul moved on to form his own production company soon after the divorce was finalized. Both parties are still alive and kicking.

So, Tricia was left with a company that had a track record, but no product to sell. Paul Hochman had been the one and only talent that media was built around.

Convinced it's what you know and who you know; Bradley shot a talent reel for Dr. Mark Adickes in an operating room, which started with "Hi, I'm Mark Adickes. I'm an Orthopedic Surgeon, and I used to play a little football!" She then wrote a treatment for a sports medicine show, "Athlete 360," as a showcase for Mark.

Tricia met Mark thirteen years earlier, when his daughter and her daughter were at pre-school together. Mark was attending Harvard Medical School at the time. Mark Adickes wasn't your run-of-the-mill 20 something-year-old med student. He was a 35-year-old father of two who had a 9-year NFL career that included winning a Super Bowl in 1992 with the Washington Redskins. Ms. Bradley asked Mark to consider becoming an on-air Sports Medicine expert when he was done with his medical training. Little did he know that Tricia has a great memory for good ideas- even 13-year-old ideas.

"Athlete 360" began production in June of 2009, with Dr. Mark Adickes as the show's host. The nine episodes included Mark Schlereth (3 time Super Bowl champion), Kevin Everett (NFL), Stacy Lewis (an up and coming LPGA star), Steven Sparks (10 year MLB knuckleball pitcher), Tommy Kendall (TransAm Race Car Driver, who won 11 consecutive titles), Chad Fleischer (Downhill Ski Racer, two time Olympian), Toby Dawson (Freestyle Skier, 2006 Bronze Medalist) and Michael Moore (Professional bull rider).

The show was shot in and around Houston. But Bradley, who gets her strength from her team, brought as many of her Boston-based team as she could afford into the project. Lexington's Basia Goszczynska and Bert Mon-

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Rhode Island Film Events Calendar is Full

The Ocean State of Rhode Island is keeping its Film related events calendar full to the brim. We've selected three extremely special happenings here, but do suggest you keep your ears to the ground as there is a lot going on.

Early next month the Rhode Island Film & TV Office and Sony Pictures have announced that the movie *HACHI (HACHIKO: A DOG'S STORY)* – see *IMAGINE* cover story March 2008) starring Richard Gere and Joan Allen, will be showcased at a free screening to be held at the historical Stadium Theatre in the City of Woonsocket at 7:30 PM on Thursday, March 4th prior to its worldwide DVD release on March 10th.

"HACHI" is based on the true story of a college professor and his adoption of an abandoned dog who becomes his best friend. Their relationship changes both of their lives as they form an unbreakable bond. Photographed primarily in Woonsocket, Bristol, Providence and on the Kingston URI campus, "HACHI" also stars Jason Alexander. Academy Award nominee Lasse Hallstrom (*CIDER HOUSE RULES*, *CHOCOLAT*) directed the family drama.

Steven Feinberg, Executive Director of the RI Film & TV Office said, "We are very excited to share this heart-warming movie with the local crew, cast and community members whose talent and hard work contributed tremendously to this beautiful film. The theme of loyalty resonates throughout, and it's fitting that our dedicated citizens are given a preview of this wonderfully photographed production and its inviting locations."

Due to the size of the venue, a limited number of seats are available; email your ticket request to rifilm@arts.ri.gov. No phone calls, please.

This month the first annual Providence Children's Film Festival will present the New England premiere of *THE SECRET OF KELLS*, nominated for a 2010 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film at the Festival Kick-off Reception on Friday, February 12th at

the Cable Car Cinema. It's four days of award winning, innovative movies and workshops in the Creative Capital over the President's Day Holiday Weekend that families will not want to miss.

THE SECRET OF KELLS is the highly anticipated animated masterpiece from the producers of *KIRIKOU AND THE SORCERESS*, and *THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE* brings together magic, fantasy and Celtic mythology in a riot of color and detail that dazzle the eyes in this sweeping story about the power of imagination and faith to carry humanity through dark times.

Providence Children's Film Festival is dedicated solely to bringing high quality independent and international children's films and film-related programming to Rhode Island. Its inaugural event will be a four-day festival that will introduce Rhode Island children, youth and their families to the great variety of high quality independent films from the United States and around the world made specifically for young audiences.

The festival will feature a delightful collection of animated, live-action, and documentary films, including recent award winners and favorites from major North American children's film festivals, including the New York, Chicago, and Toronto International Children's Film Festivals. Feature-length films include *TAHAAN* from the award winning director Santosh Sivan (*THE TERRORIST, BEFORE THE RAINS*), a stunningly shot, fable-like story set in scenic but strife-ridden Kashmir where the conflict serves as backdrop for the story of an eight old boy, Tahaan, who tries to gain back his beloved pet donkey that has been sold along with his family's possessions to pay the family debt. Among other features are: *SEVEN DAYS IN SLOW MOTION* set in middle-class India, this movie deftly balances humor with life lessons to tell an important story through a boy's comical journey to make a film in seven days; *AUTOMORPHOSIS*, a USA documentary film that looks into the minds and hearts of a delightful collection of eccentrics, visionaries, and just

plain folks who have transformed their autos into artworks; the gorgeous and mesmerizing French film, *AZUR & ASMAR*, a story of magic and adventure with a humanitarian message that follows the lives of two boys, raised as brothers, but cruelly separated, who in young adulthood set off on a dangerous quest to find and free the beautiful Djinn Fairy; and *WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?* is a witty and provocative documentary about kids and food politics. Over the course of one year, the film follows two eleven-year-old New York City kids as they explore their place in the food chain.

The festival also features three acclaimed collections of short films. A partnership with the International Young Audience Film Festival *Ale Kino!*, one of the oldest and largest European Children's Film Festivals (Poznan, Poland), brings a program of award-winning Polish children's animated shorts from 1958 to the present. *Kid Flix 2009* is a collection of favorite short animations for children from the world-renowned New York International Children's Film Festival. *Your Shorts Are Showin'*, an exciting mix of short films, both live action and animated, from the U.S., will kick off the free festival programming at the RISD Museum on Friday, Feb. 12, at 3:30 p.m. For all the details visit www.providencechildrensfilmfestival.org.

Last month Evangelos and George Giovanis hosted a small, creative awareness event for their upcoming feature film *BEREAVEMENT* that will be starring Olympia Dukakis, Louis Zorich, Sam Coppola, Amen Garo, Paul Moreno and others. The brother filmmakers are the CEOs of Vago Productions who have been making award winning independent films since 2004 and now plan to be shoot *BEREAVEMENT* in Rhode Island this year. Other artists attended to make it a fun and special occasion. Among them were poet Franco D'Alessandro who read poetry, flamenco dancer Inma Herdia who danced, painter Ron Hutt exhibited his artwork, and the Lemanis Ensemble played live Greek music.

Notable guests were in attendance and enjoyed clips from the Giovanis Bros. 2008 award

that it would distribute the series nationally starting April 2010.

Serious Fun Productions and Dr. Adickes are putting together a wish list of athletes for Season 2, including Jack Nicklaus, John Lynch, Troy Aikman and Wayne Gretzky among others.

But wait, there's more. Last summer, right before taking off for her shoot in Houston, Tricia got a call from Cindy Stumpo, a general contractor unlike any other. She was about to start shooting a show for HGTV called "Tough as Nails", created by Ed Limos of Production Values in Watertown, MA. The show was being produced by one of the biggest and most celebrated reality production companies in the country: Original Media.

At first, Tricia couldn't figure out what she could do for Cindy. Cindy had a show; she had an agent (which Tricia is not), a fabulous production company in place, and a network. But

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tanari were the show's Production Coordinator and Time Lapse Photographer, respectively. Melrose's Dado Ramani was the show's 3-D animator. And Eric Pula who off-lined the series was originally from Boston, MA. Rob D'Amico of Ayer mixed the series.

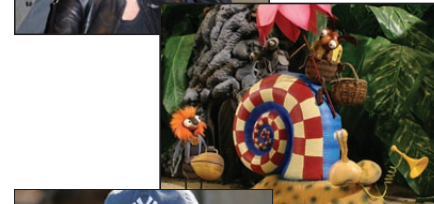
Bradley then on-lined the show here in Boston at Engine Room. Partners Don Packer and Scott Knowlton took on the show and Engine Room became an integral part of the polish of the series. The last person who worked on each episode was Engine Room's Andy Crosby who tackled each job with efficiency compiling, editing, color correcting and making changes. His last responsibility was getting it to FedEx to arrive in within 24 hours for broadcast.

Bradley feels the finishing process is where you can make the show 2% better. If you and your team are focused on the show and make it 2% better every chance you get, it can add up to something special.

This team always made the show better and better. Nobody ever gave up; the team always gave it their all.

That started locally, with Fox Sports Houston, but very quickly, FOX Sports SW picked up the series. A new show rolled out every two weeks, running from September through December 2009. Jeff Hallas of Fox Sports Houston was so pleased with the series that he put in a call to FOX Sports National and received positive feedback on the first 5 shows. However, the national program director had a few notes of his own. These notes changed the format of the series starting at the Dikembe Mutombo Show (show 6)

In spite of their love for the show. Athlete360 was not part of Fox Houston's business model, whose bread and butter are built around the Rockets, the Actors, and the Texans. Hallas turned back to National, and Fox Sports National agreed that the show tipped sports medicine programming on its ear and agreed



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George and Evangelos Giovanis with Academy Award winning Olympia Dukakis at their special event to create awareness for *BEREAVEMENT*, a film the Giovanis Bros. plan to make in Rhode Island this year starring Dukakis. Photo by Jimmy James, Total Photographic Imagery.

Scenes from the short film compilation of the best of the New York International Children's Film Festival. Photos courtesy of the PCFF.

Richard Gere, a producer and star of *HACHIKO: A DOG'S STORY* holds one of the set of 3 Hachiko puppies provided by Boone Narr. Photo by Claire Folger.

winning film *RUN IT*. Enjoying the festivities were: Oscar Winner Olympia Dukakis, Steven Feinberg the executive director of the RI Film & TV Office, Winnie Brownell the Dean of Arts & Sciences at URI, and Heather Gersten of the Jones & Heather Show on Lite Rock 105. The event was deemed a huge success as through this event and its proceeds, the Giovanis Bros. along with Dean Brownell, have agreed to create the Giovanis Bros. Scholarship for Film Studies at the University of Rhode Island.

BEREAVEMENT if the story of fatally ill Garvey who thinks he has figured out how to die. But he gets a new outlook on life when his beloved wife Evelyn mysteriously goes missing on their anniversary. Wishing to rescue her; he wills himself to live just a bit more, and discovers all that life, love and bereavement have to offer.

For more information visit www.vagoproductions.com.

after many calls, it seemed that Ms. Bradley could take a page from her experience with Paul Hochman, and manage Cindy – help build her as a brand.

Cindy Stumpo is a glamorous general contractor who has brass ovaries. Combine that with the business acumen of Donald Trump, a mouth most grandmothers would want to wash out with soap, with a heart of gold and you get great television.

Serious Fun Productions has a new unofficial motto: Onward and Upward.