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Five Questions with... creative director Charlie Sadoff of Mighty:Pictures

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Charlie Sadoff, president/creative director of creative boutique Mighty:Pictures steps up to answer Five Questions.

1. What are you working on today?

A spot for 'Ren & Stimpy: The Lost Episodes.' We cut the trailer for the release of the DVD and now we're doing TV with the cooperation of series creator John K which should make things fun. We're also working on the series Dreamriders which is an amazing story about an estranged father and son who decide to bike across the country together.

2. What have you found is the best tool or innovation that has come out in the last year?

The overall scalability and affordability of HD. Whether it's the P2 cameras or editing systems like Avid Xpress Pro HD, HD is no longer a pipe dream but a part of most conversations we have in regards to production and editorial.

3. The project (film, television, commercial or music video) that most impressed you in the last year? Why?

Project Runway. Totally addictive. It's amazing to me that everyone in our office from 22 year old guys to 37 year old women are hooked on this show. I actually believed I knew something about fashion design by the end of the series. BTW, Santino got robbed.

Our trailer for the documentary, 'War Dance,' which was nominated for a Golden Trailer Award. We worked with the producers from Shine Global before the film was finished being shot to create a trailer that could be used as a fundraising piece. The film tells the story of a group of former child soldiers from a war zone in Northern Uganda who compete in a national music and dance competition. It's an incredibly compelling story and the mission of Shine Global truly worthwhile, so it was an honor to be involved in the project. I believe the film will make a tremendous impact when it's released next year.

5. Name the top 4 artists on your iPod?

- Moby
- Chuck Brown
- The Chili Peppers
- U2

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Recent Project



Mighty:Pictures Helps Mag Rack Pioneer Video-On-Demands' Move Into The Reality Genre

Video-On-Demand (VOD) is the fastest growing emerging sector of the television industry. This interactive system, which allows viewers to select and access video content at any time, is projected to be the future of television – and VOD networks need to find resources for original quality programming that satisfies their diverse tastes.

Charlie Sadoff and Mary Matyas, co-owners of Mighty:Pictures, the New York-based creative boutique, have stepped up to the plate, positioning their company as a high-end full-service resource for the development, production, editing, visual effects, music and sound design of original VOD programming.

Mag Rack, a premier On Demand television network, is a forerunner of this genre. The first network to create original programming specifically for VOD TV, it has established itself as a major player in this evolving entertainment destination. The 24/7 network, a division of Rainbow-Media/NY, offers original programming designed to appeal to its diverse audience's eclectic mix of interests with shows that feature a broad range of expert on-air personalities who inspire viewers.

Recently, Mag Rack called upon Mighty:Pictures to help them bring today's ever-popular reality genre to VOD with "Mama Gena's Pleasure Emergency." The original realty TV series features Regena Thomashauer, a.k.a. Mama Gena, the founder of The School of Womanly Arts and Relationship Technologies, a sought-after speaker on the subject of pleasure and fun, and a regular guest on such TV shows as "The Today Show" and "Late Night With Conan O'Brien."

Mag Rack wanted a VOD series that capitalized on the popularity of reality TV. Mighty:Pictures ran with the idea, creating a compelling, fun format that allowed this personality to be spontaneous as she interacts with an unpredictable, diverse mix of people on a variety of captivating subjects. They structured an unscripted forum tailored to Mama Gena's unique approach to providing relationship advice. Sadoff, (President & Creative Director) and Matyas (COO & Executive Producer) conceived the concept for the provocative new VOD reality series, and then provided a full-service approach to the development, structuring, preproduction, production, editorial, finishing, music and sound design for this groundbreaking VOD reality series.

"As VOD sets no pre-determined program length, the medium is very liberating, but because there are no set boundaries it's also precarious," notes Sadoff. "While each show spotlights a particular aspect of pleasure, sexuality and self-empowerment, we had to meet the challenge of keeping it provocative for adults, while appropriate for children."

"Since we had that kind of latitude, our idea was to get Mama Gena out among 'real people' who would show Regena at her spontaneous best," adds Matyas. "We developed a format that sets up a real-life problem at the beginning of each show with a cry for help from a individual seeking guidance. Mama Gena, drawing upon her vast expertise, enthusiastically takes on the challenge of enlightening this person by showing them a path that leads to the resolution of their issue and helps them reach closure —with both serious and not so serious problems."

Mighty:Pictures teamed with Mama Gena, as well as Mag Rack's Cyndy Cecil, VP Programming and Michelle Adler, Senior Writer/Producer to develop 15 four to 15-



minute episodes from the 50-plus hours of footage their director, Stephanie Daniels, and DP, Mark Smith, shot throughout the Northeast.

"Mama Gena's expertise is teaching people how to approach and resolve real-life issues that are keeping them from blossoming, enjoying life and reaching their full potential," adds Matyas. "We had to figure out the best way to document this process, and create a series that was true to her personality and spirit."

Executive Producer Mary Matyas went the extra mile, enrolling herself in a class at Mama Gena's School of Womanly Arts, in order to get some firsthand insights. This education touched on a mix of subjects – such as the light-hearted art of flirting, how to make a positive impression on a date, and getting the spark back into a marriage – all of which became topics for the reality series' premiere season.

The creative boutique also cast a wide net to find 'real' people subjects for episodes revolving around a spa makeover, the thoughtful little things men can do to rock their wives' world, how women can learn to ask for what they want (otherwise known as Man Training 101), date coaching, and making a newly single woman feel good about herself and ready for the dating pool.

One episode, entitled "Voluptuous Eating," coaches women in the art of sensual eating, teaching them how even a mundane lunch can be a multi-sensory experience. Segments, such as a lightning round Q&A session with men and women randomly selected on the street, adds another element to series.

In order for Video-On-Demand to build a strong following of viewers, this emerging genre needs to acquire a substantial inventory of diverse programming: yet while clients' standards are high, their budgets are tight. However, Mighty:Pictures' experience in this market has given them the expertise to provide a full-service, cost-effective, efficient approach to each project – enabling them to meet this challenge, while creating programming that consistently exceeds their clients' expectations.

The ability to coordinate and integrate all of the production, editorial, visual effects, music, sound and finishing elements of a multifaceted VOD series like "Mama Gena," is critical. A strong background in TV business management has given Mighty:Pictures Executive Producer, Mary Matyas, the unique set of skills needed to efficiently guide each project from concept through completion.

For "Mama Gena," Mighty: Pictures' ability to find fee-free locations and keep the unpaid 'real people' talent motivated were just a few of the skills that allowed them to stay within budget, while maximizing the production value of the show.

Mighty:Pictures director, Stephanie Daniels, spent a dozen days in production, with DP Mark Smith generating four to five hours of material for each show. Then came critical task of selecting the best scenes to illustrate each episode's story arc. Each show needed to be freestanding and non-sequential, so that the episodes could be broadcast in any order.

Charlie Sadoff headed up the extensive postproduction phase of the series, which took place over a three-month period. Mighty:Pictures' editors Aaron Ekroth and Andrew Romero cut the shows on Avid. M:P's creative team also tapped Adobe After Effects for title treatments and graphics, which introduce the subjects, spotlight their "pleasure emergency," and offer customized tips throughout each show.

"Mighty:Pictures is committed to building a reputation as a pioneering resource for high-end VOD programming. We're developing strong working relationships with our VOD clients, so that we can fully understand their specific needs and tailor our services to meet them," remarks Sadoff. "Collaborating closely with our clients allows us to streamline productions, which makes them more cost-effective. We're usually able to fine-tune an episode with just our clients' feedback during the viewing of an initial cut, eliminating the need for a lot of time-consuming back and forth."

"Mag Rack was totally in sync with our creative approach: any compromises we had to make dealt with standard issues," notes Matyas. "It's great working on a VOD series with a client like Mag Rack. The entire production went without a hitch and they were very pleased with the final product. We enjoyed a very effective and positive relationship with them during this project; it was a great example of teamwork."

"'Pleasure Emergency' is reality television for On-Demand audiences," said Daniel Ronayne, executive vice president and general manager of Mag Rack. "Mighty:Pictures was able to capture Regena's natural charisma to provide a practical show for both men and women with a personal touch."

Mighty:Pictures had previously collaborated with Mag Rack on the VOD series "Auto Access," crafting host wraps and a show open featuring Crash Test Dummies spoofing the film, "Wedding Crashers." The company also partnered with Mag Rack on holiday

programming featuring The Rockettes, as well as on an integrated-marketing film.

Mighty:Pictures is a creative boutique, with an award-winning collaborative team of talent that has distinguished itself as a high-end resource for original programming, promos, documentary films and movie trailers. Their full-service approach allows them to take projects from concept, script, production and editing through music, sound design, audio post and finishing, creating deliverables in Standard or High Definition.

M:P has garnered numerous Promax, BDA and Golden Trailer accolades and awards for their diverse mix of work. Their clients include independent production companies, studio film distributors and networks such as Miramax, Castle Hill, Paramount, MTV, Spike TV, HBO, ABC, CBS, ESPN, NBC, Fox Sports, Nickelodeon, and Cablevision, to name a few.

CREDITS: Product: Mag Rack Video On Demand series; Title: "Mama Gena's Pleasure Emergency"; Release Date: August 15, '06; Client: Mag Rack, a division of Rainbow Media/NY: VP Programming: Cyndy Cecil, Sr. Writer/Producer: Michelle Adler, SVP/GM: Daniel Ronayne; Production Company: Mighty:Pictures, Inc./NY: Director: Stephanie Daniels, DP: Mark Smith, Producers: Mary Matyas, Charlie Sadoff; Editorial Company: Mighty:Pictures: Editors: Aaron Ekroth, Andrew Romero, Executive Producer: Mary Matyas; Sound Design: Mighty:Pictures: Aaron Ekroth, Andrew Romero. Audio Post Co.: Mixer: Brian Aumueller (Blue Room/NY); Stock Music Company: Extreme Music Library/Santa Monica.

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