



**spyhop**  
productions

empowering youth through multimedia

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

John Boyack  
P: (801) 532-7500  
E: john@spyhop.org  
www.spyhop.org

**Spy Hop Productions Presents :: REEL Stories Premiere**  
*10 Short non-fiction films by Salt Lake City high school students*

**Salt Lake City, UT** – Spy Hop Productions is pleased to announce the premiere of ten short non-fiction films created as part of Spy Hop's **REEL Stories Documentary Arts Program** supported by Sundance Institute. The premiere will be held **Tuesday, August 4th at 7 PM** at Salt Lake Film Society's Tower Theatre (876 East 900 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84105). This is a free, all ages event open to the public.

Taught by documentary arts instructor, Frank Feldman, and assistant instructor, Mary Catrow, REEL Stories is a free, intensive four-month workshop in which students first learn the ins and outs of basic, non-fiction film making, then individually produce a five-minute short on topics of their choosing. This year, ten high school students completed the program, choosing a curiously wide and impressive range of subject material to film about:

1. **Anna Berbett** (Alta High School) - World's largest marble collection
2. **Jordan Brockman** (AMES Academy) - Mother with 12 adopted children, plus 5 of her own, tragically diagnosed with terminal cancer
3. **Samantha Highsmith** (Judge Memorial) - Young love and young parenthood
4. **Adriana Martinez** (Cottonwood) - Elementary-aged actors performing in children's theater
5. **Renzo Miera** (Highland) - Renzo has a medical condition doctors cannot diagnose
6. **Mackenzie Nelson** (Cottonwood) - The economic recession through the eyes of a teenager
7. **George Pedroza** (AMES Academy) - 17 year-old son of Mexican immigrants ponders his dad's life growing up in Mexico
8. **Bryce Riley** (Cottonwood) - Lady's man? NOT! Bryce explores what it will take for him to become a lady's man
9. **Brooke Runyan** (Taylorsville) - Spend a few days-in-the-life of a local, gay teen
10. **Russell Williams** (Lone Peak) - Cheerleader with MS overcomes obstacles on the squad

This premiere gives each of the student filmmakers a chance to share their stories—ranging from serious and contemplative to funny and humorous—with the local community via the big screen. Films from past workshops have gone on to screen on HBO Family, the MNN Youth Channel National Series and PBS' online youth media initiative "Listen Up!", as well as at

numerous film festivals including the Museum of Television and Radio Docu-Jam, the MNN Youth Channel National Series and the IFP Los Angeles Film Festival.

In early April, Sundance Film Festival Senior Programmer Trevor Groth and 10 shorts filmmakers, including former Spy Hop assistant instructor, Jesse E. Epstein (*Wet Dreams And False Images*), Andrew Okpeaha MacLean (2008 Sundance Film Festival Shorts Jury Winner), and Destin Cretton (2009 Sundance Film Festival Shorts Jury Winner), held a workshop at Spy Hop Productions and spoke to a majority of this year's students, listened to their story pitches, and helped them continue to mold their film concepts.

### **About REEL Stories**

REEL Stories is an intensive Documentary Arts Program at Spy Hop Productions that gives Utah high school students the opportunity to work with some of the country's best non-fiction filmmakers. Each participant comes out of the program having created a 5-minute, non-fiction short on the subject of their choosing. Past pieces have explored issues such as a male body image, mental illness, the meaning of femininity, and the process of coming of age in different cultures. All the REEL Stories shorts premiere free to the public upon completion. The REEL Stories Premiere provides a wonderful opportunity to see the talent and creativity alive in our local youth community. All films are produced in the LS Peery Studio at Spy Hop Productions.

REEL Stories is made possible thanks to the generous financial support from Zoo, Arts & Parks of Salt Lake County, Anonymous, Adobe Youth Voices, National Endowment for the Arts, George and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation, Hot Topic Foundation, Salt Lake County Substance Abuse Prevention Services, Hemingway Foundation, B.W. Bastian Foundation, and US Bancorps Foundation. In-kind support provided by Salt Lake Film Society and Sundance Institute.

For more information, please call Frank Feldman at (801) 532-7500 or [frank@spyhop.org](mailto:frank@spyhop.org).

### **About Spy Hop Productions**

Spy Hop Productions is a not-for-profit youth media arts and education center whose purpose is to empower youth to express their voice and with it create positive change in their lives, their community, and the world. Our mission is to encourage free expression, self-discovery, critical and inventive thinking, and skilled participation via the big screen, the airwaves, and the world-wide-web. Spy Hop is committed to the following organizational objectives:

- Providing safe after-school and summer time mentoring programs for diverse youth (K-12) in emerging digital technologies and the media arts
- Developing 21st century skills in youth: community and global awareness, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, and media literacy
- Promoting positive youth development thru individuality, leadership, creativity and intellectual curiosity
- Increasing higher education and/or vocational opportunities

For more information, please call John Boyack at (801) 532-7500 or [john@spyhop.org](mailto:john@spyhop.org).

###

**Spy Hop Productions :: Empowering Youth Through Multimedia**

511 West 200 South, Suite 100

Salt Lake City, UT 84101

p: (801) 532-7500 • f: (801) 532-7505

[www.spyhop.org](http://www.spyhop.org)