

Holly Whitstock Seeger

GRAPHIC DESIGN, ANIMATION, VIDEO

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Director's Statement

My television career began when I stepped out of the elevator into the red plaid-carpeted lobby of Hal Seeger Studios, its big sign lit up by vintage Klieg Lights. Although it was only mid-morning, what I can only describe as "waves of exhaustion" washed over me. Fifteen minutes later, much to my dismay, I landed my first job as an animator.

I say "much to my dismay" because now that I had just graduated from art school, my intentions had been to head directly to Hollywood to work for Disney. However, just to appease my mother, who was not keen on the idea of me moving so far away, I had agreed to go to just one place in NYC to look for a job.

Just prior my exit from the elevator, I had been a few blocks away standing in the center of Times Square. Opening up to the Animation section my just-purchased latest edition of Backstage Magazine, I said out loud, "Ok, just one place." While staring up at the neon sign directly across from me, I let my finger drop randomly to a line on the page and then looked down. "45 West 45th Street, 15th floor." I recall a voice in my head saying, "Three 5's. That's the heart. That seems right." I have no idea why this thought made any sense to me but, turning left, I trudged off to my first interview.

After being offered the job, with my dreams of Disney fading from view, memories of "waves of exhaustion" came back to me. "Wait a minute," I said to Hal Seeger. "Aren't you the creator of Milton the Monster?"

It had suddenly dawned on me. I saw myself, 11 years-old, down in the basement folding the family laundry while watching Saturday morning episodes of "Milton the Monster." I had loved that show but it had been years since I had even thought about it. TV was a strictly rationed special treat when we were kids, but as long as I was actually doing the job, it was ok for me to watch it at 11 AM. My sister Ivy would take advantage of the opportunity, as well, although she was always the one sitting on the couch. I remember that as the show open came up and the graphics card with the vintage klieg lights and the words, 'Hal Seeger Productions' appeared, I would always feel extremely tired

for a moment. Then the episode would begin and the feeling would disappear, only to return again at the end of the show when that same graphic came up. Once or twice I had asked my sister, "Ivy, did a wave of exhaustion come over you just now?" Always agreeable, she had replied, "Yes. I think so . . ." but I was never quite sure I believed her.

All this is a long way of saying that this prescient incident from my childhood was just one of many that have taken place in my life ever since I can remember. I have always held a great belief in my intuition or that small voice in my head. Thirty-seven years later, David Seeger, Hal's son, and I have been working together in our film and video business. We have 4 children, two grandchildren and it has certainly been an amazing adventure, albeit replete with waves of exhaustion.

My areas of special interest have generally revolved around topics of the paranormal, the Afterlife and other unexplained phenomena. An avid reader, I have amassed a huge collection of books, audio files and videos. In 2010, Barbara Hand Clow and Gregg Braden both had speaking engagements at the A.R.E. on the same weekend. As my library includes many of their books, I felt I must attend. The opening Friday night, I wandered alone into the auditorium and found myself seated next to Stephanie Pope, a book editor for the A.R.E. Publishing Division. During our conversation, I had mentioned that I had always wanted to make a show about the Afterlife. Stephanie, who had been working with the author, Josie Varga, thought Josie's first two books, Visits From Heaven and Visits To Heaven might provide me with some good material and she offered to make an introduction.

Once I read Josie's book, Visits From Heaven, I knew immediately that it held potential for a great show, one which so many would benefit from. My goal is not to make something scary, ominous and creepy, but rather to visually record the accounts of actual occurrences, to hear what experts have to say about these events and to provide a program that people could watch and say, "I had an experience like that. I can relate to that!" I also want to give people a place where they might share their stories, via email, video or even an online forum. There are literally thousands of anecdotes in Josie Varga's books. As she often says, every time the subject of Afterlife Communication enters a conversation, everyone has a story.
