



Filmmakers take on 24-hour dare

Movie makers wrap up their day-long scramble

By Alyssa Urish, Camera Staff Writer
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For 24 hours this weekend, filmmakers scattered across downtown Boulder, huddling around random landmarks or moving briskly through the weekend crowds, cameras and tripods slung over their shoulders.

Their goal: Make a seven-minute masterpiece in a single day, including in-camera editing.

Their theme: Global warming, incorporating at least five items from a list of 11 props, phrases and locations.

The task started Friday night, with a New Year's Eve-like countdown to 9 p.m.

More than 100 zealous filmmakers, and some curious onlookers, waited outside the Boulder County Courthouse for the list. It included sustainability references such as a compact fluorescent bulb and clothes hanging on a clothesline. But a more subtle inclusion was "throwing dice," symbolizing taking a risk in saving the environment, according to Executive Director Michael Conti.

Fast-forward 12 hours to Saturday morning and most groups were sweeping the streets, low on sleep but well-caffeinated and ready for action.

At 10:30 a.m., a group of seven men had a mini-studio set up in the Macy's plaza at Twenty Ninth Street Mall, tactfully including an EcoArts computer display — one of the listed inclusions — in the background of the shot.

Even after eight months of preparation, they are still encountering unforeseen dilemmas: the drone of passing buses, for one.

"Working with the environment and the fact that you can't edit just make it much more difficult," said Michael Lawless, a producer, screenwriter and director of his group. "The other thing, of course, is equipment—we don't have high-end equipment."

They did have one advantage — a redhead on the team, allowing them to easily mark off one item in the scavenger hunt.

At Hour 14, a team of four had just shot its first scene in front of the bank clock on Pearl Street Mall.

Producer Mimi Mather said the mandatory locations have been challenging since their movie, "The Tomato," is a silent, black-and-white film set in the 1920s.

"Things like the fluorescent light bulbs and 'No Motor Vehicles' (sign), we couldn't even work with," she said.

Parker Cagle-Smith, the cinematographer of his six-man group, said the hardest part was the time crunch. It's been all about improvising, he said, after their man-made camera track didn't turn out.

"If all had gone well it would have glided on this track," he says of their tripod-on-wheels. "But unfortunately we painted it with black paint so it would be less observant, and the paint made it really sticky and it didn't work right."

Tyler Isaacson, a second-year participant, admitted that the Shoot Out challenge is more than meets the eye.

"You think a seven-minute movie is so short, but it's really so long."

THE LIST

Filmmaking teams had to incorporate at least five of the following items into their films:

"No Motor Vehicles" sign across from the Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse

Someone with red hair

Clothes drying on a clothesline

A tile mosaic wall along

the 28th Street walkway

near Boulder Creek

An EcoArts display of stacked computers at Twenty Ninth Street

A compact fluorescent light bulb

A picnic table behind

1425 Pearl St.

Throwing dice

Bank clock on Pearl Street Mall

Park benches at 11th

and Spruce streets

The phrase "How 'bout