



42<sup>ND</sup>  
YOUNG ARTIST  
ACADEMY AWARDS

**SAMMY VOIT Interview**

**Project: *The Bus Stop***

Director: Sammy Voit

**How would you describe the plot of this project?**

*The Bus Stop* is a documentary meant to share the beauty of individuals who are homeless as well as the struggles. The underlying current of this project is that the real difference between those who are homeless and those who have homes is a support network. I want to help people build up their support networks.

**What was your fondest memory from working on the project?**

I met Jane outside my acting coach's studio on the corner of North Crescent Heights Boulevard and Sunset Boulevard in Los Angeles. She was a "put together", clean woman with a handkerchief around her neck. Even her fingernails were clean. This is something I started to notice more and more about homeless people. I asked Jane if I could interview her because I wanted to make a documentary about homelessness from a kid's perspective. She was happy to talk. In fact, she talked for an hour and a half. **"I'm a DJ, I sing, I do all kinds of things but unfortunately I'm homeless."** I asked her what home means to her. She said **"Home is somewhere you go to feel relieved, to feel good. You have everything you need. It's safe and no-one bothers you."**

I have never been homeless and aside from the many people I have met throughout the past year while making this documentary, I never knew anyone personally that was homeless. I used to be someone who would walk down the street and avoid eye contact with the woman sitting with her sign or I would cross the street to avoid the homeless man on the corner asking for food. Sometimes I would check my car door to make sure it was locked if someone was in the middle of the street asking for food while we drove by. And I never ever looked a homeless person in the eyes. This all changed for me last year.

**Were there any cool locations or sets that were fun/different/strange?**

It was important to me to film in their environments. The street was not fun or strange. I did want to interview people who appeared to have homes so I went to Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills and set up my

camera. There was a strange juxtaposition standing across from high-end stores and asking people who were shopping about their views of homelessness. I asked questions like:

Do you look a homeless person in the eyes?

How long do you think about a homeless person when you walk past?

What does home mean to you?

What are your dreams?

I then asked the same questions to people who were living on the streets and in shelters. The answers were so similar. It was really interesting.

### **Do you recall any particular memories with castmates or crew that were impactful?**

It was just me but there was a very clear difference between the kids and the adults I interviewed. Kids lacked a sense of judgement significantly more than the adults and the kids were proud to share their ideas about how they could help a homeless person. The adults were consistently more reserved and seemed to have less hope in their ability to make a difference. Why was this? Why were they so skeptical?

### **Did the project inspire you to see the world differently?**

For sure. I see the world totally different now. One incorrect assumption I made before I started to make this documentary on homelessness is that homeless people lack education and intelligence. This is another fact I am embarrassed to admit. I was so wrong. The people I met who live on the street were smart, really smart. They have dreams just like I do. It is my goal to share what I have learned with the world in my documentary called ***The Bus Stop***. It is a goal of my film to break down the barriers that are erected between and within communities and to help people realize that we can all make a difference to help each other by creating support networks. I have been continuing to interview individuals and raise awareness. My documentary was released in late 2020.

I have been given a gift I never set out to find. Jane, Ed and Jim, some of my homeless friends, have enlightened me; they have opened my eyes to how closed-minded I was and how much I have to give. It is one of my dreams to help them back.

Here are two of my favorite quotes that apply to this documentary.

***“Heroes didn't leap tall buildings or stop bullets with an outstretched hand; they didn't wear boots and capes. They bled, and they bruised, and their superpowers were as simple as listening, or loving. Heroes were ordinary people who knew that even if their own lives were impossibly knotted, they could untangle someone else's. And maybe that one act could lead someone to rescue you right back.”***

— Jodi Picoult, *Second Glance*

***“What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured.”***

*— Kurt Vonnegut, Palm Sunday: An Autobiographical Collage*

**What do you love most about the Entertainment Industry? What do you wish could be better?**

I love the ability to tell a story and to move and inspire people. I love auditioning. Every audition is an opportunity to transform myself.

I wish that there was more feedback given to kids and teens in the industry. We are growing and learning. Sometimes, after spending hours practicing and recording a tape or doing an audition, it ends so abruptly with little feedback. I want to learn and grow and value any feedback I can get.

