

Signal **ARTS**

# Movies for Jesus

Filmmakers Andre Dantzler and Tim Searfoss use the Internet to attract a global audience to their message-driven short films

By **CARI GERVIN**  
COMMUNITY NEWS WRITER

**S**ignal Mountain might be the next Hollywood if filmmakers Andre Dantzler and Tim Searfoss have anything to do with it.

OK, maybe not the next Hollywood. Hollywood is probably a little too sinful for the duo behind Project God.

Like its name implies, Project God is an undertaking born from Mr. Dantzler and Mr. Searfoss's deeply religious world view. Unlike a lot of Christian media, Project God's films are not exactly evangelical.

Project God is a Web site (www.projectgod.com) with 15 short films, as of now — really short films. Ranging from a little over a minute to almost 10 minutes, the films tackle such weighty issues as evolution, suicide and pornography.

But if you're expecting a preachy, boring, bombastic lecture of a movie, you won't find it here. Instead, you'll find quirky little films that make you think, whether or not you agree with the message.

Take the site's most popular film, "XXX." A man sits in his office, surfing the Internet. All of a sudden, he accidentally stumbles across a pornographic Web site. Instead of clos-

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— Andre Dantzler

ing his Web browser, the man jumps up from his desk and begins hitting his computer with a golf club.

As he kicks it across the room and demolishes it, a co-worker walks up with a cup of coffee. "Porn?" the man asks. "Porn," the first man replies. The moral? Matthew 5:29 - "If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away."

Now Mr. Dantzler and Mr. Searfoss are hardly advocating that you should smash your computer every time you get accidentally redirected to a XXX Web site. They just want to present their beliefs in a

non-intimidating, hip way.

Mr. Dantzler, the producer of Project God films, said just as Jesus used narrative stories to teach his lessons, so are they.

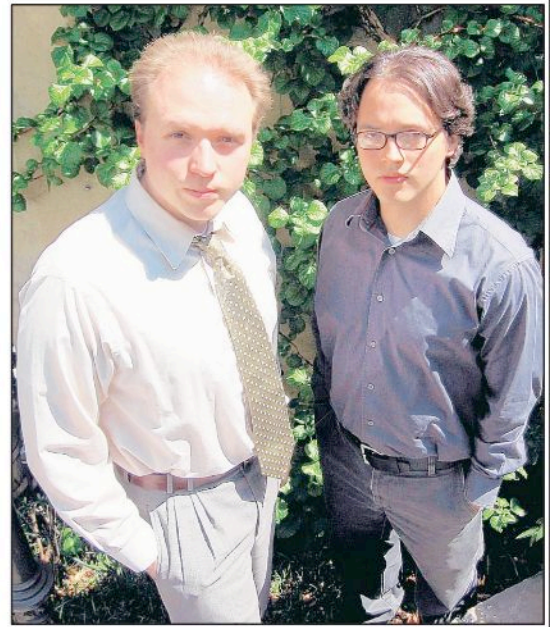
"The power of narrative is a tremendous tool," he said.

Mr. Searfoss, who is the director and writer for all the movies, said he considers the entertainment value first and the message secondary.

"We've all wanted to bash our computers at some point," Mr. Searfoss laughed. He said his overactive imagination leads to many of the stranger moments in the films, like in the movie "The Blender."

In that film, a wife tells her husband that God has told her to get rid of their brand new blender. The husband tells her she is being ridiculous and refuses to do so. As she makes him a smoothie, he sees on the news that the blender has been recalled for electrical problems. He runs into the kitchen just as his obedient wife is electrocuted.

Mr. Dantzler said a number of Christians are surprised to find that the movies are di-



Andre Dantzler, left, and Tim Searfoss are the brains behind Project God. Their quirky Christian films have attracted huge audiences on the Internet and in churches.

PHOTO BY CARI GERVIN

rected at them as well as non-believers.

"We believe Christians are not flawless," Mr. Dantzler said. "We always need to re-examine our beliefs."

The films have attracted large Internet viewings from more than 80 countries. They have also been used in thousands of churches and shown on television in India. Mr. Dantzler said a number of ministers use the short films as a

way of setting up the point of their sermons.

Mr. Searfoss said the group has begun filming in high definition. He said he hopes that someday soon there will be funding for a feature-length film; until then, they'll keep making short films on new, controversial topics.

"Short films are very powerful on the Internet," he said.

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