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Lamorinda to Become Grinch-Free - Mr. Christmas Is Comin' to Town

By Laurie Snyder



Bruce Mertz, aka "Mr. Christmas," enjoys his display of lights. Photo provided

- decked out in what Palmer describes as "full Mr. Christmas mode." As they talked, Mertz talked about how the meaning of Christmas for him changed following the death of his beloved wife in the early '90s - and about how he found renewed purpose in life by bringing joy to others.

Palmer directed, edited and produced the documentary in collaboration with Amanda Treyz, the film's cinematographer. He began making movies in fourth grade, first as a lark with his friends - and then by turning those friends into his cast and crew as he grew into a budding screenwriter and director. Stints at Diablo Valley College and then at UCLA as an English major were followed by training at the AFI Conservatory's prestigious directing program.

While teaching Lego Robotics at his day job, his big break suddenly happened. Palmer and his writing partner sold a script to Warner Brothers. Now, they're developing additional projects for that film giant as well as for Universal, including a possible remake of *The Bodyguard*.

But deep inside, there is still that wide-eyed fourth grader - still wondering how reindeer run - and what makes humans tick. "No matter how big the movie, it's really important to find the small story," says Palmer.

For more information on this 2012 Aspen Shortsfest Special Jury Award winner, visit www.MrChristmasMovie.com, or follow Nick on Twitter at: @HouseOfPalmer. And be sure to catch Mr. Christmas and Nick Palmer in person at the film's screening at 3:15 p.m. November 11 at the Orinda Theatre.

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