

Sent: Mon, 20 Jun 2016 16:48:34 -0400
From: "Moore, Jesse D. EOP/WHO" <jesse_d_moore@who.eop.gov>
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Kobe
[PRESIDENTOBAMA_MUSE\[1\].pdf](#)

P6/b(6)

From: Yudelson, Alex R. EOP/WHO
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 4:47 PM
To: Moore, Jesse D. EOP/WHO <Jesse_D_Moore@who.eop.gov>
Subject: FW: Muse

Thoughts?

From: Kobe Bryant [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, June 20, 2016 1:47 PM
To: Yudelson, Alex R. EOP/WHO <Alex_R_Yudelson@who.eop.gov>
Subject: Muse

If you could please review and let me know if this document moved you.
If it didn't, where do you think it fell flat and how could I make it better.
I want to make sure that this reads to its full potential.

Thank you

MUSE

OVERVIEW — ACCESS & SECURITY — PURPOSE — TEAM

Prepared 6.20.16

OVERVIEW

MUSE is envisioned to be an anthology of feature-length documentary films that appreciate, deconstruct, and understand an eclectic range of the world's top performers. From awe-inspiring artists, musicians, and athletes to visionary entrepreneurs, scholars, and politicians, we aim to highlight individuals who possess one thing in common: their respective stories stand to inspire all of us to dream more, learn more, do more, and ultimately become the people who we know we can be.

With these ideals in mind, we respectfully propose to make an unexpected kind of documentary film about President Barack Obama's transition to his post-White House years. It is a film that would be less concerned with Barack Obama the President of the United States than it is with Barack Obama the human being. Internal emotions and personal sentiments would take precedence over external voices and public debates. The future would be more relevant than the past. And it would be much more interested in the practice of relinquishing authority than it is with the process of securing power. Barack Obama's presidency is ending. We would be both humbled and honored to work with him to document his upcoming journey.

We imagine this film to differ in tone, structure, and execution from *Kobe Bryant's Muse*, a movie that our company previously produced for Showtime Networks. We propose a style of documentary filmmaking that does not employ "talking head" interviews of any sort. Instead, the film would consist entirely of footage captured in an observational, unobtrusive, "fly-on-the-wall" manner as President Obama goes about his daily life and process. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to elaborate on our process for the proposed film in the following sections of this document.

OUR APPROACH TO FILMMAKING

Our team of filmmakers recently embedded with the 2015-2016 Los Angeles Lakers in order to tell a "fly-on-the-wall" story about Kobe Bryant's 20th and final season in the NBA. Shooting over 1,500 hours of footage, our small production crew was woven into the day-to-day fabric of the team. From early-morning practices and strategy sessions to late-night press conferences and plane rides, we were present for some of the team's most private and intimate moments throughout the season. We were infinitely more interested in capturing the everyday rigors and rhythms of an NBA locker room than we were in reading the next morning's sports headlines. After all, we believed that much could be gleaned from simply watching a collection of the world's most talented and dedicated basketball players as they practiced their craft behind closed doors and away from the eyes of the general public. At no point did we ask interview questions. And we tried our best not to disrupt the actions of those around us. Our goal was to quietly observe.

We believe that this observational approach to filmmaking ultimately affords us the opportunity to invite audiences into the worlds of others. In this sense, we strive to make films in the tradition of a small yet profound group of American filmmakers who pioneered a sub-genre of documentary called *cinéma vérité* or *direct cinema*. The art form was born in the early 1960s and made possible by the invention of lightweight, portable cameras that could shoot without being affixed to a tripod, allowing filmmakers to document the world around them in ways that permitted environments to be presented naturally.

Direct cinema has always exhibited a knack for being present at unsuspecting times in our nation's history. Watching *Primary*, the viewer is introduced to a young man who wishes to be President locked in a tough primary in Wisconsin. That man was John F. Kennedy. A few years later in 1964, Albert and David

Maysles would roll their cameras as Pan Am Yankee Clipper Flight 101 from London Heathrow arrived at New York's Kennedy Airport. A group of four exuberant, shaggy-haired musicians exited the plane, "Beatlemania" commenced, and the innocence of the moment was forever preserved in the opening scenes of *The Beatles: First U.S. Visit*. And in the final year of the decade, that same team produced *Gimme Shelter*, which immortalized the chaos of The Rolling Stones' concert at Altamont Speedway. In capturing the fatal stabbing of Meredith Hunter, a young African American concertgoer, the Maysles brothers managed to capture the figurative death of 1960s counterculture in one single frame of film. Since its inception, direct cinema has strived to point an unobtrusive lens at fleeting moments in time with an insistent confidence that it can preserve the collective tenor of entire generations.

We live in an age that is relentlessly presentist. We need not look beyond the current state of film and television to recognize the sharp dissociation between today's culture and its historical roots — consider the philosophical chasm between *cinéma vérité* and its familiar mainstream successor, Reality TV. But a knowledge of history, and how it works, is and always has been vital to the American project. And as documentarians, when we focus our lenses on new landscapes and new people, we do so with a strong appreciation of the past. We invoke our own collection of muses to steer and direct the filmmaking process, often looking to the words of Albert Maysles himself:

As a documentarian, I happily place my fate and faith in reality. It is my caretaker, the provider of subjects, themes, and experiences — all endowed with the power of truth and the romance of discovery ... After all, the knowledge of the real world is exactly what we need to better understand — and therefore possibly to love — one another. It's my way of making the world a better place.

Indeed, these values are becoming more elusive with time. So when we make films we hope to keep them alive. We hold fast to the belief that cameras serve as tools for reflection. That they bear witness to the otherwise invisible moments that communicate our inner lives — melancholy gazes broken by reassuring smiles, anxious hands strapped around cell phones, cracking voices on the edge of catharsis, visions of joy and wonder. Cameras see these emotions and, neither understanding them nor knowing their past, record them without prejudice or misconception. In this way, our process of documentary filmmaking — and of the film that we propose — is an empathic act that ultimately leads to a deeper understanding of the people and events at the center of history. It is an understanding shared among filmmakers, subjects, and audiences alike.

We would be honored beyond measure to share in this process with President Obama. Such a collaboration promises to yield a transformational story grounded at once in lessons from an historic Presidency, excitement of the future, and authenticity of personal reflection. The union of these things — of inner and outer life, of introspection and action — has the power to connect and inspire for generations to come, and to serve as an enduring record of the legacy of one of the most brilliant leaders of our time.

ACCESS & SECURITY

We do not presume to understand the complexities of filming in the White House, but hope it goes without saying that we are prepared to do whatever would be necessary to work within security requirements. We propose to start filming with President Obama in November 2016, near the start of his final 60 days in office.

Our best filmmaking would involve two or more cameras in order to document the President's experience from multiple perspectives. Key to this proposal, however, is that the President should have control over every aspect of that process, both in the near and long term. There are a few legal and logistical arrangements that would help to secure that control from our point of view:

- 1) **Appearance Rights** — The President and his team would have complete control over their right to appear in any resulting film.
- 2) **Media Workflow** — At all times, President Obama maintains control of the filmmakers' access to the footage they shoot.
- 3) **Media Ownership** — The President would own 100% of the footage generated during the making of the film. Kobe Studios would pay for all of it and retain exclusive rights to the resulting film (but no other derivatives).

We only suggest these arrangements as a starting point and basis for further conversation, and can adapt the process to the needs of the President and the White House. The same applies to the remainder of the production — our timeline for completion can work to complement President Obama's priorities post-Presidency.

PURPOSE

If granted the opportunity to make this film, we believe in its power to engender empathy and understanding among an audience not normally engaged in the political process. We can create an historical touchstone for future generations so that they understand not just what happened, but how. And as we move into the twenty-first century, we have the chance to redefine what it means to document history for a new generation.

Thirty years from now, we imagine MUSE to be a multimedia anthology spanning many volumes and communicating across different technologies. To that end, when we make films now we try to do so with an eye on the future. In fact, our most recent production employed an array of new immersive sound techniques never before used in documentary — or scripted — film. We are simultaneously committed to developing long-term infrastructure that will protect the timelessness of the films we make, today, in an effort to create a solid foundation for the audiences of tomorrow.

CORE CREATIVE TEAM

TONY HARDMON

Director of Photography

Tony Hardmon is an Oscar-winning documentary Cinematographer. He is the co-director of the Oscar-shortlisted and Emmy-nominated documentary, *Semper Fi: Always Faithful*, and the Cinematographer behind Oscar-winning doc short, *Crisis Hotline*. His other credits include *Boys of Baraka*, *Detropia*, Stacey Peralta's *Made in America*, and Liz Garbus' *The Execution of Wanda Jean*.

He is the recipient of the 2012 Ridenhour Documentary Prize and a Sundance Institute Documentary Fellow.

JIM HESSION
Editorial Director

Filmmaker Jim Hession is the editor of *Rich Hill*, winner of the U.S. Grand Jury Prize: Documentary at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. His editing credits include *Marina Abramovic: The Artist is Present* in 2012, which earned a Peabody and for which he earned an Emmy nomination in editing. Jim wrote and edited *Lovers and the Despot*, which premiered at Sundance 2016 and was recently acquired by Magnolia Pictures. He was also an editor on *Kobe Bryant's MUSE*.

In 2013, Hession was presented with the 3rd Annual Karen Schmeer Film Editing Fellowship Award at the South by Southwest Film Festival. He's also a Sundance Institute Story Lab Fellow.

MARK MANGINI
Head of Sound

Mark Mangini is an Oscar-winning (*Mad Max Fury Road*) and four time nominated Sound Designer known for films such as *Black Mass*, *Star Trek (Abrams 2009)*, *The Fifth Element*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. He has spent his entire 40 year career in Hollywood imagining and composing altered sonic realities for motion pictures. He is a frequent lecturer, an outspoken proponent for sound as art and a guitarist/songwriter with compositions in *Star Trek IV*, among others. He is a sitting governor of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences as well as a member of S.A.G, SMPTE, and ASCAP.

PATRICIA SEELY
Head of Production Operations

Patricia Seely is a Los Angeles based Producer and Line Producer. She recently Produced the narrative feature film *Liza, Liza, Skies are Grey*, a story written and directed by the two-time Academy Award winning filmmaker Terry Sanders. Her past credits include the Emmy-nominated National Geographic series *Hard Time*, Discovery Channel's *US Marshals: Operation Falcon*, the web series *WASP*.

Prior to producing, Patricia spent 6 years working on jet engines for Pratt & Whitney. She holds a BSE in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Michigan and an MBA in eCommerce from Carnegie Mellon University.

JAKE BLOCH
Head of Production

Jake Bloch is a multidisciplinary producer and filmmaker from Santa Monica, CA. Beginning in June 2015, Jake took on the role of Executive Director for Kobe Studios, where he focuses on developing new film and multi-media projects and building a studio model for the future. Some of his past film producing credits include ESPN's 30 for 30 title, *The Little Master* and *Kobe Bryant's MUSE*.

Jake has also produced and performed around the world as a musician. In 2007, he toured Japan as a jazz drummer with the Austin Peralta Trio, then signed to Sony Records. He would go on to play on international recordings as recent as Ravi Iyer's *Bends (Mumbai)* from 2012 and Amon Tobin, *ISAM* (2012, Ninja Tune Records).

We hope this is a proposal you will consider, as it would be our honor to document this historic transformation in an effort to teach future generations what it takes to lead a nation, inspire the world and move an agenda into the future.

We look forward to speaking with you soon.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kobe Bryant", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kobe Bryant
CEO, Kobe Inc.

