



## **LAURA HARPER**

### **Writer / Producer**

### **Biography**

Laura Harper began her career in the entertainment business at the age of three, when she was recruited to be on the television show "Real People" as a kid in the Edison Shopping Mall in Fort Myers, Florida while visiting with Santa Claus. When she was asked on camera what she wanted for Christmas, she said boldly "Pots and Pans", an answer she now denies. When her Dad decided he wanted to take his family away from the pressures of the big city and move to the middle of the country, she began to call Howey-in-the-Hills, Florida home, population 650, where she grew up on a dirt road. Needless to say, it wasn't the most progressive cultural atmosphere. Luckily, she had a TV and VCR and credits the Beatles, Seinfeld, and Woody Allen for saving her youth and showing her there were people in the world who appreciate irony.

In 1997 she moved to Miami and began her official career in film at the age of eighteen, where the first thing she ever did on a music video set was to sweep up the poop of the director's new puppy, who obviously was as excited as she to be on the set, as he took a giant crap in the middle of the it. On her second job she dislocated her pinky finger trying to stop a soccer ball the director kicked at her, which she says to this day still looks "a little out of whack." Luckily, the hand of fate intervened and Laura soon began working full-time with highly regarded Director and Production Designer Cristobal Valecillos on a variety of music videos and commercials. She credits him as the man who changed her life and taught her that when an AD asks you how long something will take you always say ten minutes, even if that really means two hours. For over three years she worked as a set decorator and art director in Miami and fell in love with the idea that you can dream up an image and then get paid for creating it.

In 2000, her career took another turn when she was hired as the art director on the Larry Clark film, "Bully." The movie was based on the true story of a high school bully's brutal murder in the Fort Lauderdale area by his classmates and friends. Or, as Laura would say, "just your average afternoon in south Florida". The majority of the crew was flown in from Los Angeles and it was her first opportunity to work with a Hollywood crew. The movie was a life-changing moment, where she fell in love with the experience of making movies. She was tested to deliver an art department with little budget and time, but also had the reward of starting an exciting collaboration with a bunch of fellow workaholic perfectionists. After that experience, she decided to leave Florida humidity behind. In 2001 she moved herself to Los Angeles to take the next step forward in her career.

From 2001 on, Laura worked with a variety of people on many different projects as an art director and set decorator. Laura describes her art-directing career as a wild adventure, peppered with crazy situations and the challenge of making tough customers happy. From it she learned how to handle pressure well, as well as the ability that when something has to get done to get it done no matter what the obstacle. Her favorite moments include telling Madonna "you better hold on now" when she was about to operate the controls of the turntable M was standing on, teetering in giant stiletto heeled leather boots of course. Madonna responded gratefully in turn by shooting her what Laura describes as, "a withering glance." Other career highlights include spending two months filming at the Magic Castle in Hollywood. She also had the pleasure of working with a fellow lover of minimalist design Gordon Ramsay on the Fox show "Kitchen Nightmares", whom she remembers fondly as one of the most lovely, polite, well-mannered man she has ever met. Laura had the honor of being accepted into the IATSE 800 Local, also known as the Art Directors Guild, as an art director at the age of 27.

In 2008, after ten years of being in the business of art, Laura decided to pursue the next chapter in her career, producing and writing her own projects. She has become involved with the Upright Citizens Brigade and Second City, where she fell in love with live comedy and the craft of writing comedy. Laura believes in the "Sullivan's Travels" mindset on life, that entertaining others and making people laugh in the midst of their problems is one of the best gifts one can give to humanity. Laura remains committed to bringing projects such as that to life from 2009 on, as soon as she can figure out what font she wants everything to be in.

Laura's other hopes for 2009 include that her home state of Florida will finally do the right thing and vote Obama into office. Also, she hopes to continue to refuse to ever wear a "hands-free" headset no matter how many shows she is producing and what the man threatens to do to her. Laura currently resides in Los Angeles.