

Spotlight on... Christiaan & Connor Van Vuuren

I first met Christiaan van Vuuren, the outdoor media sales rep, in an isolation room at Sydney Hospital in June 2010. He had been in isolation for 5 months at the time after being diagnosed with Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis. Trapped and isolated, completely removed from his independence and freedom, Christiaan began communicating with the outside world, escaping his confines through social media. His younger brother Connor, an actor and stunt man, donned a mask and gloves for brief visits in isolation, helping Christiaan write and produce his comedy rap videos. All the while a massive online fan base began to assemble. The brothers began skilling themselves up on a range of different cameras and editing tools, and set up a YouTube channel to broadcast their work with Facebook and Twitter to promote it.

Isolation had been the Petri dish for *The Fully Sick Rapper*.



YouTube asked Christiaan to be a part of their historic global experiment, *Life in a Day*, by requesting that he capture a day in his life confined to his quarantined hospital room. The clip, which has been widely viewed online, was used to drive involvement by other home content creators around the world. This was to be the world's largest user generated feature film, shot in a single day but individuals around the world. YouTube said at the time, "*the most compelling and distinctive footage will be edited into an experimental documentary film, executive produced by Ridley Scott and directed by Kevin Macdonald.*"

Finally after 6 months in Hospital, Christiaan was released to go home and he and Connor began their post-production work on *Fully Sick & The Side Effect Project*, which they filmed frantically in the last weeks of Christiaan's time in hospital. A brotherly creative collaboration which continues to see them being engaged by agencies and brands to create unique content and navigate YouTube and social media keeping their audience engaged.

Christiaan and Connor began broadcasting their first web series while exploring further outlets. During this time, the Optus One80 Project crossed their desks. This is a national competition to inspire and motivate film and TV producers to create and write a treatment for an hour long drama feature pilot and to produce and enter a 180 second promo. Christiaan and Connor produced *Sick* in only a few days and wearily submitted their entry after a three day creation-bender. In Sydney last night, *Sick* was announced as the Winner of the Judges Choice Award.

Armed with a production budget of \$180,000 and the guidance of One80 Project partners MTV, Christiaan said today that the win was a nice surprise.

"It is just awesome that we are now going to be able to create something with a budget behind us, and be able to bring something to life that we have been working hard on for so long. All of the videos that we have made online have been on our own laptops with a budget of nothing, and now we will be in a position to employ the help of professionals, and go through the whole creative and production process knowing that we are making something for the purposes of national broadcast.

“The Sick pilot is going to introduce new characters to our story, as it shines light on some of the amazing people around the world whose lives have intersected with ours since The Fully Sick Rapper first smashed the Hospital-rap charts to help escape the harsh reality of the medical situation that I was going through.”

It’s a story set in two worlds, the real world, and a world of fantasy that is limited only by imagination. *Sick* is tale of brotherly love and rivalry, about twisted people with clipped wings and big dreams, whose destinies intertwine through the World Wide Web.

“Connor has been working in the business of acting and stunt performance, so he can’t wait to start going through other people’s resumes and CVs and calling in people for auditions, just so that he can turn them away again. Since I just wing everything (and still don’t know what I’m even doing in the ‘Entertainment Industry’) I look forward to being able to learn something about how things should be done properly, and be involved in that process from start to finish.”

But the boys certainly haven’t been sitting around and waiting for victory.

“We weren’t expecting to win the One80Project, so we have been working with pens, pads and stack hats (cause they look cool), developing other radio and television concepts in partnership with Lauren & Josh at HMMG.”

Everyone at HMMG is thrilled for Christiaan and Connor’s win overnight. Our ongoing collaboration will continue to develop them as a creative and comedic duo across all media and join forces to create and sell the vehicles in which they appear.

For any enquiries regarding Christiaan and Connor contact me on lauren@harrymiller.com or call 02 8353 2444.

Regards,
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