

# ADVENTURES OF POWER

# POSTCARDS FROM THE SET

Ari Gold Films .com

**These Postcards were written to my friends during the making and distributing of "Adventures of Power". I'm sharing them because I always wanted to have mentors but never did, save for a fantastic director's commentary on "The Harder They Come"; I'm hoping some of you'll find it helpful or entertaining to know what one person had to do to make a dream happen, even a dream as off-the-wall as this one.**

**People have asked me why I spent years risking life and limb to make a movie about air-drumming. There are two reasons: one, I think air-drumming looks funny. The other is that I think it's a great symbol for the human spirit trying to communicate, by any means necessary. I hope that the spiritual and political side of the story works for you too.**

**The character of Power came from some version of how I felt as a kid, and from my time living in a copper town with my aunt in New Mexico. At some point I realized a drumless drummer could be funny and serious at the same time. Power's struggle to make something of nothing has mirrored the making and distributing of the movie, and these cards are a way to share with you all some of that madness.**

**Ari**  
**arigoldfilms.com**

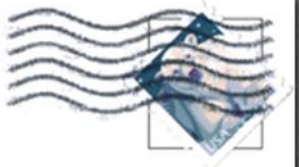




## POSTCARD 1

Last night, my brother Ethan and his friend Dan Crane invited me to the Air Guitar competition in Hollywood. I went as Power, who's been haunting me since New Mexico; my brother was his trainer, Control. I was robbed and everyone knew it. Nearly perfect score and somehow I didn't win. One of the judges confessed to me afterwards that he had been commanded by one of the Air Guitar authorities that Power was not allowed to win. Power was playing air drums, not guitar. I quickly checked the rules and found that they refer to "air instrument", they never once say you have to play guitar. There is no justice in Hollywood or the world, but the crowd is my real judge, and a lot of meaty dudes surrounded me after the show and told me they wanted to see more. Here are the videos, courtesy of Elvis Perkins who was holding the camera.

Afterwards, my brother took me to a



night party at the L.A. County Museum of Art, and girls seemed to like my shorts, which was surprising. In high school everyone thought I needed a tan. "You look sickly," was one of my favorite disses. I'm hoping that now that we're in a multicultural society, even people lacking basic pigment will be allowed to wear shorts.

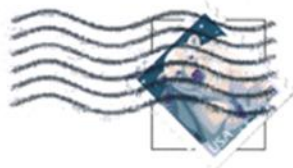
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## GREETINGS FROM NJ

Back in NYC, I've been inspired by a fan in France who saw a bootleg of my Power performance online and emailed me begging for more. We've taken to filming Power's appearances around town--one in Chinatown at a karaoke night, two at various open-mics, and then a few movies with the songs "Pump Up the Jam" and "Kyrie," which we shot all over the wilds of New Jersey. We almost did "Wheel in the Sky" but in the van on the way out, I thought Kyrie would fit the landscape better. The thing seems to be an addiction for all of us (Aleksandar Sepi, Noah Harlan, and Liz Bull), and I feel more and more that Power's background in Hurley, New Mexico could be perfect. The larger factories in Jersey are mostly closed, but I know people at the mines in New Mexico, and think a labor-strike-story could be great if that's too much of an anachronism. Liz and I are going to go out west and take pictures of the town where I lived in my Aunt Lucy's basement



after my mom died, and got drunk at the weird local bar.

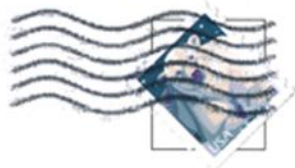
I want you all to see the new videos. This is a far cry from "Helicopter," but somehow this story seems to make me unable to sleep, I need to follow this through. After all that time trying to make a serious drama, something's got a hold on me. (That's a song reference, by the way.)

**Ari**



## New Mexico

Liz and I flew out to New Mexico to look at the old town, and some strange stuff has gone down. I had a list of towns to visit in the copper belt but didn't know if "striking workers" was an anachronism, and the day we arrived, for the first time in many years, the Asarco workers went on strike. We took a lot of pictures in New Mexico (Silver City, where my aunt no longer lives, where the old bar El Piejo no longer stands—where will I find that lost jukebox song "No Hay Amor"?—and Hurley, where the smelter is going to get torn down soon), then sped over to Arizona. Clifton, Lowell, Bisbee, Globe, Miami, Hayden, Winkleman. We loved the name Winkleman, but as we drove through at dusk in our rented PT Cruiser (dubbed Harlan Wong), we felt the thick tension of the strike. Talked with workers and overheard heavy conversations in the crappy little steakhouse. Families camped in the street, holding signs. We wondered if Harlan Wong was the only car to drive through town that day.



We looked through the gates at the vast, dizziness-inducing moonscapes of the open-pit mines, now hostile territory. The trucks with tires 15 feet high look like toys. Hayden, Arizona revealed to us the depth of the tragedy of some of these poisoned towns (look at the swimming pool). The strikers gave us some of the hope in humanity. Somehow the air-drummer is coming from here.

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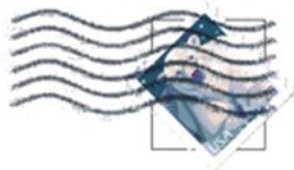




## Copper Mines

I have more to say about what some of the copper companies are doing to people and places I love down here. For now I'd rather let these snapshots tell the story; I hope I can laugh about it when I make the movie.

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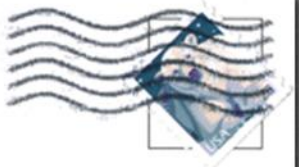




## Adirondacks

Holed up in the Adirondacks with nothing but a laptop and some house-ghosts to keep me company. The woods are terrifyingly silent at night. I miss my mom and grandparents whenever I come here, and know that the ghosts pre-date them by decades--it's not my family keeping me company. The ghosts probably think I'm insane, laughing to myself as I write. I had an idea about Power getting hit in the face with a piece of paper that had me a in giggle-fit for about twenty minutes. This is the result of no live human contact. Things are going well, though--all my memories of living with Aunt Lucy in New Mexico, combining with my air-drum passion and the recent trip to the copper belt, are synthesizing on the page. My pact is to not read anything I've written until I get to the last page. I want it to come out like a dream.

My grandmother left, among other things, an old Rod Stewart record, and blasting "Never Give Up On A Dream" is a



great way to chase away ghosts, and feels thematically relevant for Power. I have no idea how I will make this movie. Music rights (Rush, anyone?), cross-country travel, crowd scenes, stunts, animals, and shooting inside a working copper mine... these are not the things you're supposed to plan for an indie film. I am nuts. Never give up on a dream, indeed. I will be making this movie by fall if it kills me.

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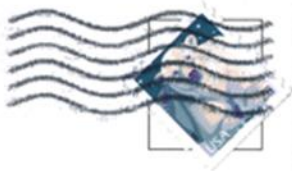


## 8th Rewrite

Somehow I need to finish the script fast, find money, get the rights to all these songs, and find a factory on planet earth that will let me shoot. "Lean, mean & low to the ground" is the motto here, otherwise someone in Hollywood's going to rip me off.

Money. I've officially contacted everybody on earth whose number is still in my laptop. "Know anyone rich and crazy enough to invest in a movie?" I've bicycled to dozens of midtown restaurants and been treated to giant steak dinners with creamed spinach. I can't promise my hosts that they'll meet movie stars. I show them my student Oscar. Sometimes, the next day, I get a check, and a new partner. More often I just have indigestion.

Music. I'm trying to figure out who wrote what song and who owns the rights. I've put calls in and started sending letters to management companies. I'm not so stupid as to shoot an air-drum movie without

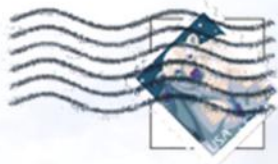


clearing the music first. I hope there are some bands out there who get it. Then there's the crazy Chinese song my friends gave me in Serbia. That's going to be a tough one—I listen to it every day but don't even know what it's called!

I've been performing as Power and revising the script in a class with Adrienne Weiss. Buddhism helps. Everyone thinks my movie is insane and wants to see it. So do I. I'm not sure what religion defined Power's journey. All of them? Eighth rewrite and I'm starting to really like the thing. But the movie looks impossible to make.

**Ari**





## The Harder They Come

It's been a whirlwind summer. Adrian agreed to do the movie but his management still hasn't come around. Then, I had a series of horrible setbacks: Word got up to some of the higher authorities at Phelps-Dodge that we have a union issue in our movie. They've pulled some excuse about "North Country" having interfered with operations when that big movie shot in the mines, and so even though we're a tiny production that's shooting outside the gates, they don't want us pointing cameras at their property. Several local plant managers have admitted that it's an issue of "not wanting our employees to be disturbed by scenes of striking workers." According to another one, "Our relationship with our workforce is very positive." In other words, their employees aren't unionized (PD broke the union years ago) and they'd like to keep it that way.

So an air-drumming movie has been thrown out of town for political reasons and since PD, it turns out, also controls even the dynamite plant I visited, we were fucked. After all that uniting, after taking hundreds of photographs in all these towns to create my perfect "Lode," I find that the most important element, the factory, is out—my top four choices, all out. Peter at the film office and several other friendly people in other parts of Arizona scrambled to find a university library or something with industrial-looking pipes that we could shoot in, to no avail.

But something lucky happened then: one of my backup states, Utah, where I did a bunch of scouting last year, came through with a coal plant in a cool little town called Helper (that hadn't been my first choice because of the color of the earth there), but which really looks epic, like a castle. If I get the production design and costumes to skew orange, I can suggest the New Mexico thing even though the terrain is paler.



But in Utah the winter comes much sooner, so I had to get this ball rolling instantly or my "New Mexico" desert would be covered in snow.

I put out offers to a bunch of ast, and have friends putting an open call to tribal leaders all over the country trying to find my Sid. I need a kid who feels real. Child actors are tough; the rest of the cast doesn't exist either yet. After my maybe-producers quit over my insistence on trying to shoot this guerilla-style on location. Andrea Sperling has decided to produce the movie, even with my nationwide shooting plan, so hopefully the engine will move forward even though we only enough money to shoot the beginning of Power's journey. Though I took pictures all over the Los Angeles basin in case of emergency, I think I'll be making this like "The Harder They Come" – in the real world, and piece by piece.

Ari



Tomorrow I drive from Andrea's in LA, to Utah with the production designer for 3 weeks of prep for the Utah part of our film, and I'm excited and terrified. We still haven't cast the essential role of my dad, and are waiting on an actor who has the script. It's a common and nerve wracking thing for an indie film to wait and wait on somebody big, often until days away from shooting. We're not allowed to make offers to any other actors (of any caliber) as long as we have an offer out, so we just have to bide our time, careen towards production, and hope something works out--and that if he says no, we'll have time to catch somebody else.

We've held casting sessions for dozens of roles (some great, some horrendous), meanwhile, and struggling to find the right Sid--this call should have gone out six months ago! Been back and forth to LA and on the phone with a bunch of people in New Mexico and Arizona trying to find a Native kid who can do this tough part.

But I feel good to have a team of great people around me--DP, production designer, costume designer, assistants, and

so on--selected over a grueling period of months where I had so many reels and resumes on the couch by my bed that they sometimes seemed like they'd fall and crush me.

My friends at the Utah Film Commission told me some bad news that some Disney movie was "awarded" all the rebate money for the state, so I no longer have a financial incentive to shoot there. I also don't have a choice. After looking at industrial facilities from Pennsylvania to Nevada, I'm not going to sneeze at my all-access pass here.

Earlier this week I had lunch with Jane Lynch, who's playing my aunt, and was very sweet. I was relieved that she seems to think that I'm an okay person. She checked my astrological chart and apparently I'm not an axe murderer! I thank my lucky stars I finally have somebody on board (besides the guy playing Power, who is always available, and the singer Mike Sophia who my brother met at an open mic years ago, and who we tracked down working at a supermarket), and that she's so good.

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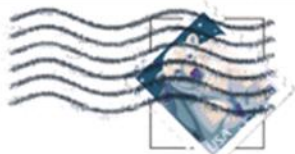




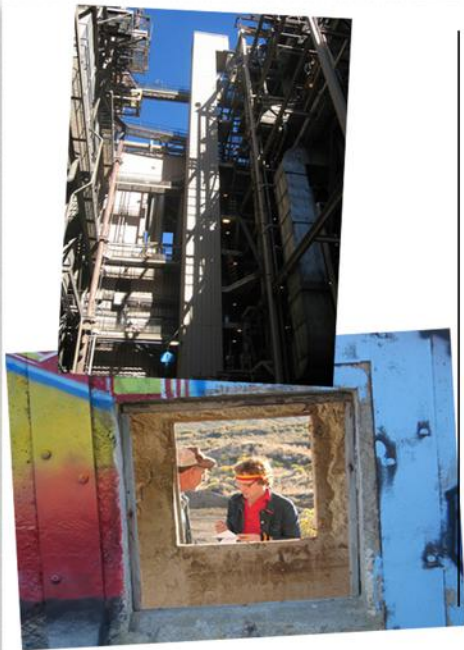
## Murphy's Law

Hi Everybody,

The last few weeks have been an incredible rollercoaster ride of excitement, panic attacks and depression. Until two days ago most of the main parts of my Utah shoot had not been cast and I was shaking at 5 in the morning in my bed in Salt Lake, but suddenly Michael McKean (the lead singer of Spinal Tap) signed on to play my dad, and I found a great 11-year-old kid to play my only friend, after having searched the country from Florida to Alaska. Now we're two days from d-day, and there are dozens of people hired and working on this thing. A few of them have become real friends; most are incredible creative people; a few are incompetent jerks. I think this is standard. I'm glad there are people I really like, and try to work with the people I don't. My girlfriend Liz has become 2nd unit director and will be directing the second camera on the edge of the action. This week would have been impossible without her.



By the way, when I say "my dad" I mean my character's dad.... I am trying to become my character... sort of... We start shooting on Monday with one of the hardest days: three huge scenes inside a coal-burning power plant in the mountains. It is so loud there that we have to use hand-signals. We have 30 extras and the plant is in full operation. A good way to get to know your crew? We shall see. Though I was hoping, after my months of scouting that this Utah location would work for New Mexico-and the weather has been glorious during prep (Murphy's law), the weather now does not look promising... so I will try to learn from the past few weeks of ups and downs to trust that nothing will be what I expect, but if I stay true to my intention, its core will come through...



My brother Ethan has written a bunch of original songs in many different genres and is sweating it out in LA to get the songs ready in time for the shoot there. I'm happy to have him creating the musical landscape for the film. He's running his own campaign of chaos down there. Hard rock, 80's powerballad, Algerian rai, Mexican speed-metal, new-country-combined-with-pop-punk-and-a-little-hip-hop, and burned-out-hippie music are just a few of the genres I've thrown at him (with no budget), asking for songs that are funny but sonically convincing, and catchy too.

I'll speak to you again in two weeks when the Utah portion of the film is done. Those of you with connections please ask the weather to be good, or if you can't, send me good vibes to enjoy it even when things go haywire. Haywire seems to be standard.

Ari





Hello people,

The sleepless, terrifying night before my shoot started, I received the following email advice from my brother: "Have fun, have fun, have fun." And my friend from Germany wrote that before he shot his last film, he told himself "things will go wrong. not work out. i will be disappointed, frustrated and lost at times. but thats not bad. or wrong. as long as i can lay in bed at nite and honestly tell myself: i gave it all i got.' this is not about winning. this is about doin' it. with all your might and love. than the gods will look after you."

Both of these emails were incredibly helpful. I'd forgotten, as I wrote them in a 5am email before heading to set, how hard it was to let the screenplay—so labored after for 2 years, so "perfect"—go to the winds of fate, weather, casting, and so many other disasters (and blessings) out of my control.

They say you write a film 3 times: when you write it, when you film it, and when you edit it. The first and third times writing, you can be a perfectionist. But the second time you have to be a philosopher, because you're not the one doing the writing.

Normally I've had a problem, psychologically, of dwelling on disaster. The three weeks of prep before the shoot, I was a nervous wreck in Utah, seeing my casting plans go out the window, feeling I was making huge mistakes, and knowing with each perfect sunny day that the good weather couldn't last forever. Twitching in bed at night at 4 am, banging my head against the wall that 2 1/2 years of work were about to get destroyed by the weather and my own incompetence.

Our week in the Utah mountains, normally mostly sunny this time of year, was hit with almost nonstop rain. As the day approached, I felt myself slipping into terror and doom as my idea of the "New Mexico" portion of the film (the orange earth, the blue sky!) dripped into the gulleys along with my idea of who should be in the movie. And on the first day, noise was so loud in the power plant that the crew couldn't hear each other and my lead actors, I think, thought I was insane. One of the key crew members was, through defensiveness and stupidity, causing huge fights in his own team that were delaying us and costing us thousands of dollars by the hour. Rain was pouring into the power plant, forcing us to move from location to location trying to get the shots done.

By the end of the first day we were already over 50% behind schedule. But somehow, amazingly—thanks to the love of my friends and family, and probably to my morning yoga which I've started using to replace coffee—I found myself feeling okay. Day two, we now had to shoot the remainder of the power plant scene, as well as the riot outside that was supposed to be a full day's shoot. To my amazement, we managed to catch up. My perfect shot-list went out the window, but we got the story told.

Each day has been like this. Hours and a look lost to rain. Incredible tension as the daylight dwindles. Last night, canceling a whole scene because of a lightning bolt that blew up an 80-foot condor light that was supposed to light our little "desert" town and sent the electrician to the local hospital. (He's ok.)

But somehow I'm managing to remember that it's all a blessing to be here, and that as long as I address the disasters as creative challenges, the story will come through. It just won't come through how I thought. I guess it's a good life lesson, even if it's a hard one to learn.

Ani



Hi everyone,

I wish I could write more often, but things are so chaotic here that I barely have time to think.

The end of our second week in Utah brought so much torrential rain that it actually threatened to stop our shoot for real. It was terrifying. The locations manager, in charge of the emergency set, had failed to sign the deal on our Plan B set, and as the day crept on we realized that the shoot was about to derail. A mood of quiet descended over the crew as 50 people worked on a tiny indoor scene which looked like it was going to be the only thing we could get in a whole supposed-to-be-outdoor epic night. My stand-in obsessively checked his cell-phone radar-weather-map and announced the storm's movement to the crew. We knew that if it kept raining the thing was ruined.

At 8pm, suddenly, the rivers of water flowing down the street were babbling without rain. The sky was glowing. At 8:30 the moon came out. We ran outside and started setting up for the night and by dawn we'd shot what we needed.

The second week was far less stressful, and though a lone fogbank settled on our fake-Mexico set, it actually lifted and for the first time, we shot film under a blue sky. By the end of the week, when the unbelievable caterers working for our godfather-like line producer served us goodbye king crab, I felt in the swing of things.

Now a few weeks have gone by and I'm back in some form of nightmare, but, having been through it before, realize I'll wake up.

Monday we begin phase 2 of the production. Preparing L.A. has proven to be no less of a challenge than Utah-sometimes for the same reasons, sometimes for different. In the past four days, I've seen as much planning go out the window as in Utah. This time the weather has nothing to do with it.

It's difficult when you think you've learned enough to have a Plan B AND a Plan C in case of any disaster, and even then you end up with a gun to your head and you have to make a decision based on Plan Zero because A B and C are gone. This has happened several times this week, and the only reason I'm not beating my head on the pavement like I did one day in Utah (literally) is because I survived Utah prep.

Casting a film in the LA Way is a really infuriating process. The highest tier of actors are "offer-only", meaning you don't have the right to meet them. You make an offer and wait and wait. These are the people who you supposedly want in the movie, because they are "names", and they help bring investment. While you're waiting for them to read, you're not allowed to even ask other actors to read the script.

The next tier is the people who'll meet for coffee. You meet them, you rent the movies or TV shows they've been in, but they won't audition for you. So you have to try to imagine, based on a 20 minute chit-chat, what they will be like in the role you've sculpted for 2 years. Not easy. These people aren't "names" but their managers usually think they are. I've loved some of these people, and lost them because I wasn't able to imagine them in the part so I waited to hire them. I may have been wrong.

The next tier is all the gutsy people who put themselves on the line and actually audition. I've seen hundreds of people over the past few months, and respect them hugely for putting themselves on the line. Most of them actors; some of them, in houses and apartments spread 100 miles around LA, non-actors such as Indian and Pakistani tabla players who had the courage to respond to my ad and try acting in a scene. (One Indian guy insisted he could act and therefore I had "no problem." He insisted I come to him, way way out in the valley. I was worried he didn't understand that he would be auditioning. He said, "I am great actor since eight years old. We will sit, and talk, and I will play tabla." I reminded him I needed "air tabla" and said I was making a comedy. He said, "Oh, it is comedy? That is no problem. I can do comedy!" and then, to prove his point, shouted, "HahaHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!" He ended up being nice, actually, and not as heartbreaking as some of these other tabla men, but he didn't get the part.)

At the same time, I can't deny that I've changed the names too. How can I not, when we can't afford to shoot a little scene on a train-track because the LA location charges \$400 an hour (unlike the generosity we met in Utah)... and a name actor would probably mean another investor puts in a few dollars, which pays for that train-track shot?

So the agents and the managers and the casting director plot and politicize with each other, and the end result, in both shoots, was that I waited and waited on people who were never going to act in a scale-level movie anyway--their managers just wanted to get them offers to make themselves look busy. And my casting director wanted to prove he was friends with so-and-so's agent and so-and-so really wanted to do the film. Then we make an offer and wait and wait and can't talk to anyone else--even to put together a plan B. But it's not just managers: I've had actors I met for coffee and who told me how much they wanted to work on the film suddenly change their minds once we made an offer, because we weren't paying enough--even though pay was the first thing we told them about--or because they were "offended" that they weren't the first person we made an offer to--or, incredibly, after saying how much they adored it, changing their minds because their acting coach told them to! And this from a genius actor known for his level head.

All the while, of course, I am not allowed to meet these people (other than in the first 20 minute coffee months ago). I am not allowed to talk to them.

to be continued...

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So, with this ever-shifting set of ingredients, I continue trying to alter the flavor of my remote-control gumbo: if this character is older, than this one should be younger... if we cast this actress, who's funny, we should change this actor into someone less funny and more soulful... and all this while cooking and the gumbo's about to be served and I haven't even been allowed to taste it yet. And so the last few moments, I'm throwing spice all over the place with whatever brain power I have left, and just praying it's going to taste right.

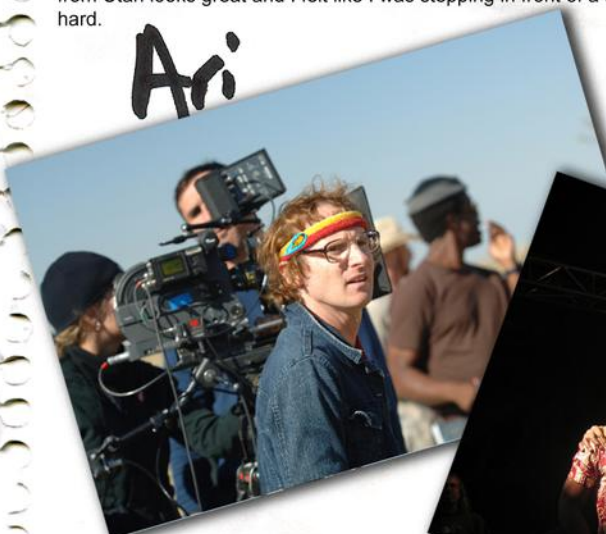
Somehow when this is over I'm going to have to train my brain to see people and not characters; places and not locations. I can't drive down a street without thinking "That would make a great Joanie's house, it looks like a small town!" and then remembering that not only do I not have to shoot Joanie's house in LA like I once thought, but I already shot that scene, weeks ago in Utah.

And the location-hunt (which has taken me across thousands of miles all over the west and east, and many many thousands of pictures on my camera) along with the casting hunt (hundreds of actors, many good, many bad) has haunted me with so many images and voices that begin to rattle in my brain as being "true". Sometimes that dream-version of the perfect face or voice or house or train-track does end up on film, but when you're making a low-budget film, more often than not, the incredible actor or location-discovery that I think means "it's fate!" turns out to be nothing more than a moment. Eight hours after offering bit parts to two comedians I adore--and their agent says they want to do the movie--I happen to meet them in person, by sheer chance! But then... it's not fate: they're too busy to be in the movie.

In the end, as before, I have to surf on whatever waves comes my way in the next 72 hours. There is no backup plan but breathing deep and making the best of it. The waves are going to keep coming.

Next time I'd like to say I have to find a way to lock down my cast and locations earlier. At this point, I don't have the clout or the money to do it; and to some degree, I didn't have the skill to read the tea leaves. No matter: I'm going to make sure this stuff tastes reeeeeeeeeeal good no matter what my ingredients end up being. The footage from Utah looks great and I felt like I was stepping in front of a train before that shoot. I wish it didn't have to be this hard.

Ari





Hi all,

Thank you for your encouraging emails. My fifth choice for one of the lead characters ended up being a genius, after so much chaos my gut seems to be working out ok; once I've cast a part it becomes hard to visualize anyone else playing it. But it felt like a train-wreck getting to that point.

At midnight the night before we started phase 2 of the shoot (with a 7am call), the non-actor tabla player who I'd chosen left a message saying he could no longer do the shoot. Delirious, I began consulting with my producer and coach as to who might be best for the job, all the while lamenting that after going through the whole process of putting together the right combination of characters, I was now going to be forced to cast whichever non-actor happened to answer his phone at 2am and agree to come make a movie five hours later.

After inviting a few people who barely spoke English to come to set and (at the bare minimum) get paid for a day of maybe starring in a movie, I finally--after many calls--got through to my original guy, who explained that his commitments to dental school made it impossible to do the film. He offered to send a friend to my house to audition at 3am. Once the guy hit the road I felt my brain melting and I just called the original guy back and tried to talk him into doing the film again. We spoke for 30 minutes on spiritual matters and I finally left it in his hands, knowing that I needed at least a couple hours sleep before the shoot began. I went to sleep with no idea who was going to show up on set.

By a few minutes before set-call, my man had decided to take this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be a star. I was deeply relieved though I didn't quite know if the guy was going to stick around. He ended up working out just great, and he seemed to enjoy the perks of being an actor on set. He liked to change outfits.

The shoot went well; on one crucial day we managed to shoot 8 pages of dialog in order to stay on schedule. I'd by now begun to get used to the hardest thing about shooting, which was moving on (or being forced to move on) when another 60 seconds could get me a shot I really wanted. Several times a day, every day, I would ask for a shot and be forced to cut it. This drove me a little crazy because often I'd be waiting an hour for a shot to be lit, but then I'd have all of 5 minutes to get it right before being told my time was up. The boss of the set operations seemed to enjoy proving that he was right, and several times backed my schedule into a corner where I would be forced to cut something, in order to prove he was right about the shot being unnecessary. Ultimately he was a decent organizer but I will have a hard time forgiving him for that, when I long for those shots in the editing room. Sometimes it felt like sabotage.

But in general I became used to chaos, used to not winning all my battles. My cast was great, we really felt like a wacky team together, especially when we were jogging in our Jersey Krew uniforms through skid row in downtown LA, getting spontaneously cheered by the people on the street just like the script called for. Though I didn't get to run down all the streets I wanted the emotion will come through.

The best day was the day of the real air-drumming, when we had about 15 air-drummers, drumming to a pile of original songs in every genre written and produced by my brother. The first up was a woman of 70 air-drumming to a song called "Show Tunes"; my dad, at 83, topped her as a blind drummer. What started as a rock-n-roll movie has become a freak show, and I like it. I was finally able to sit back for a few minutes in the Palace Theater next to dozens of blow-up dolls pretending to be a crowd, and watch this crazy thing.

I'm going to edit for at least a month or two before finishing the final week of shooting. What's missing is the love story, though I did do my first screen kiss (the last scene of the movie). Shoshannah Stern, the actress playing the part, reassured me that it wouldn't be awkward, and said she would de-virginize me in screen-kiss land gently. Our characters' final kiss was the first thing we shot together. She said, "Don't worry, it won't feel real" before we started, and she was right. But she was great, particularly when I asked her to do fake-slow-motion, and every take was hilarious. I'll have to wait to finish her story.



Am



Okay, I realize you were expecting a winter update, and its spring, but you try raising half a million dollars! Strange thing happened as we were editing together our footage -- we cut a trailer, and people liked it so much that a bunch of companies wanted to invest in the movie. Hallelujah! Except that it turned out they all wanted a bigger piece of the pie than the investors who put themselves on the line last summer. It doesn't seem right to put my original investors into second position, so I'm not going to take the money. This hurts. But all is not lost: I did get flown to LA by a major Hollywood comedy director who saw the trailer and a few of the finished scenes, like the big air-drumming Phil Collins scene. He offered to help me get the movie finished. We'll see where it goes.

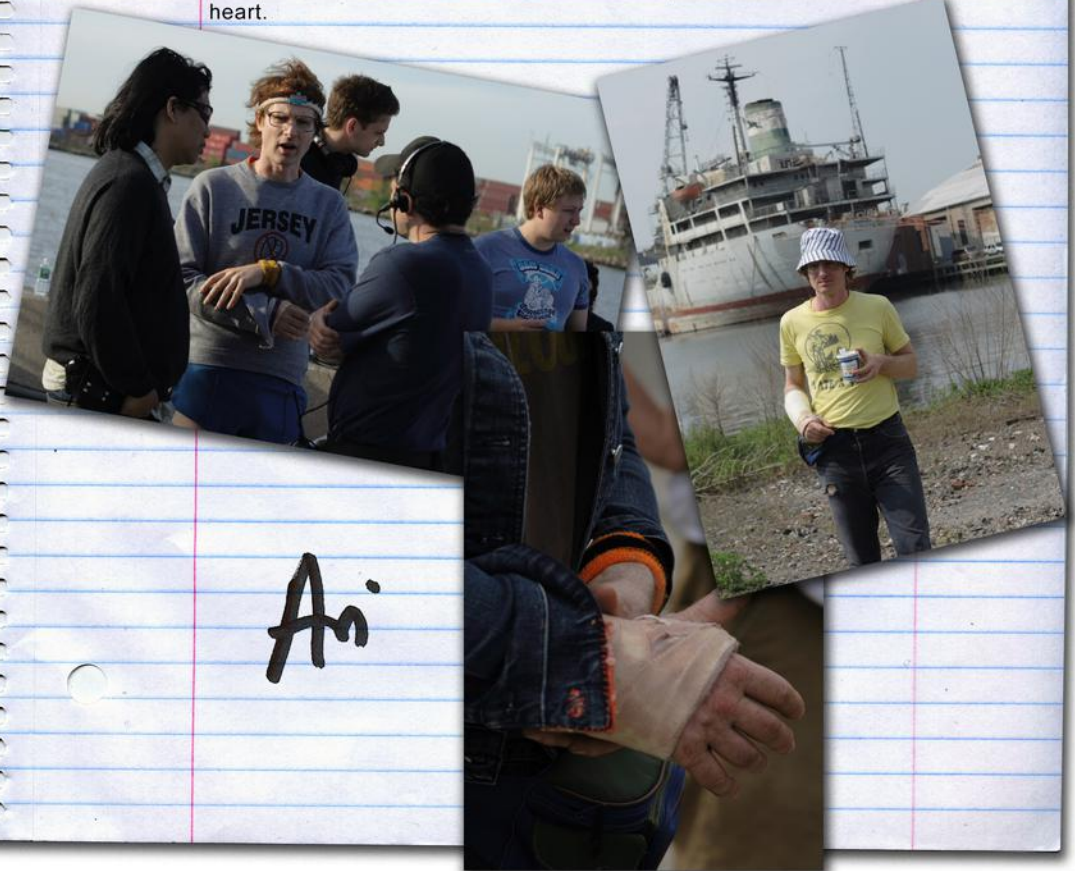
People warned me that it was harder to raise money when you've started, and it was true. I had to say no to these film companies because it would have been unfair to my first investors, most of who aren't in film and were "trusting" enough to get involved... It was painful to say no, since now it's been six months of raising money one unit at a time, and riding around the five boroughs and New Jersey on my bicycle, like a crazy person, trying to find my perfect Chinese restaurant, ghetto, and dock locations. I've been taken to a lot more steak dinners with hedge-fund managers, which is some consolation. We lowered the budget and now, finally, we'll be shooting the New York action scenes (boat scenes, dance scenes, etc) with a great new crew; then in a month we'll have Shoshannah out to finish all the scenes in the Chinese restaurant. I've put together a new crew and we'll be shooting on the docks in NY and NJ -- going to be crazy as ever, but I feel better prepared. I had to get these next scenes done right now, though, because the dockside factory I've been dreaming about shooting at for two years (and going out to photograph whenever I felt antsy) is about to get torn down! We'll be shooting there in its last four days on earth. I think I got the timing better on the weather--crisp clear days ahead, just like two years ago when I shot the tests!

Ari





I'm going to keep this short. I broke my arm the night before our shoot. I am extremely depressed and it's hard to type. I was showing the crew a stunt and I ran into a pole, deliberately. There was soldered metal sticking out of the pole which I didn't see. I cried in the hospital when they told me I cannot move my arm for at least six weeks. I am going to cancel half of the shoot, but try to get the boat and factory shots done before the locations disappear. I can't shoot the scenes which I started last year in short sleeves, but I will do the long-sleeve scenes, so I have some more to edit, and some of the stuff in the projects in Newark too since the costumes aren't established. Of course it is sunny and perfect and most of my shoot is being canceled, it is really breaking my heart.



Ani

Okay, everybody, on the one-year-anniversary of the commencement of Adventures of Power, we are finishing the shoot. My arm is mostly healed and I am doing physical therapy so I can do the dancing/ drumming stuff. No more stunts, I promise. After taking hundreds of pictures of Chinese restaurants across all of NY and LA (and Utah, once, too!)—we are ending up shooting at a location that's a 6 minute bike ride from my apartment. Amazing luck, too, since so many of the places I wanted said "no."

The final phase of shooting was as grueling as ever—long hours, rats and maggots all through our set, and as usual a new crew to get to know (most of the old crew wasn't available, so that makes crew #4), but things worked fine. We had some hilarious days with a sign- language interpreter and a Cantonese interpreter trying to communicate through bullet-proof glass to me and Shoshannah and Chiu (the wonderfully crazy kung-fu master and charmer of "Kung Fu Hustle").

We had an interesting time in that Chinese restaurant. Our first two days were completely out-of-focus. Some mystery of the 16mm lens, and a total disaster. We were attacked by a giant rat one night while trying to figure out how bad the focus problem was. Then we discovered the problem—somebody had moved the Buddhist shrine in the noodle room! The restaurant owner insisted that we'd cursed ourselves, so we had to stop the shoot and let him move it back into position. We weren't sure if his word could be trusted, though, because all the menus said "No MSG" and the noodle room was filled with gigantic red tubs of MSG, sitting right under Buddha's nose. Neighborhood kids kept coming in to buy food, especially late at night, and were confused to be told the restaurant was closed for a movie. Some crew members told the kids to avoid the rat-and-maggot-filled place, but no one had ever gotten sick there, and the owner wasn't too happy to be publicly criticized this way. He fixed the shrine though, and our camera stayed in focus for our love scene. Later in the week we shot in some abandoned housing projects in Newark, and scared some squatters out of their cots, I'm afraid to say. The floors were covered in chicken bones, old dolls, mattresses, and syringes; we had a cop holding a gun to protect us, and we weren't sure who to be scared of. Still easier than trying to talk to Michael McKean in a factory on my first day of shooting, when I was terrified, and it was raining, and the factory was so loud that he couldn't hear a word I was saying. We'll be picking up a few shots in LA, but the hard part is finally done.

Ani



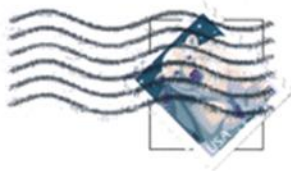




## I Still Love This Movie

I haven't had a day off in 96 days. Mostly editing, though we shot some pickups too, and working with several editors around the clock, and me cutting on my laptop. I can barely talk, but somehow we're still able to edit, and I'm doing what everyone warned me I'd do--I'm cutting scenes I loved, some scenes that nearly killed me to make, so that the story works as best as it can. I have no idea why, but I still love this movie. I hope you do too. Sorry it's taken so many years. Try to warn me next time.

Ani





It has become a little factory here at this squalid, windowless dump in the San Fernando Valley, me and three editors crammed into a room on laptops, all four of us working on scenes and trying to get the movie in order in case we get into Sundance. I'm editing 18-hour days, 7 days a week, commuting from my friend Josh Leonard's place in Echo Park where I'm staying, and my brother Ethan thinks I should abandon the rush and go for Toronto next year. But I feel like I have to give it my best shot. We've started having test screenings for fans of my band, and we're learning which scenes and characters are working best. Interesting how a scene can be made to seem twice as good just by deleting something (even something good) that came two scenes earlier.

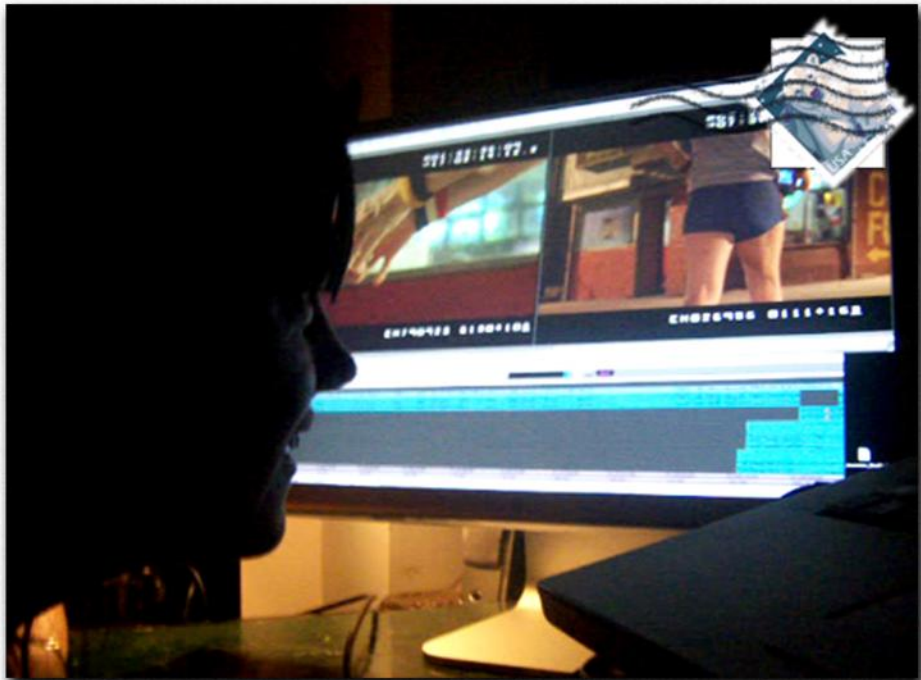
We still had a few scenes left to shoot, including the scene inside the freezer with Shoshannah (focus problems meant we had to abandon that scene in Brooklyn) and, amazingly, a few lost shots back at the factory in Utah. So we shot what we could in the Valley with the lovely Shoshannah and DP #5, including the "Bird" scene, and then trucked off with a miniscule crew to Helper, Utah, in what seemed like a kind of homecoming, 13 months after we first shot there.

We were shocked that the signs we'd put up for the union strike on Main Street in Helper, and the name of the bar we'd changed, were still as we'd left them. The elk-jerky dude was still standing on the side of the road selling elk-jerky. This time I wasn't surprised the weather wouldn't cooperate; I was used to it by now. Rain, sun, and snow flurries all in one day. The power-plant manager was as cool as ever, happy to have us back, this tiny group of weirdos with a camera and orange jumpsuits. We set the camera up high above the train tracks, on the smokestack, for the opening shot.

Then we heard the sound of massive engines shutting down, like a dying monster. The manager told us we had to go to the ground floor. We covered the camera to protect it from rain and headed into the belly of the beast, unsure what was going on. Well, well... for the first time in several decades, the power plant was itself having a power failure, caused by lightning somewhere in the region. So we hung out with the workers in the main room, where, the manager said, we were more likely to survive if the plant exploded. 13 months had passed since we started shooting and during that moment of truth, I didn't regret a thing. I realized that if the plant blew up, at least it would be a good punch line.

Ari





## LOCKING PICTURE

The past eight weeks have been insane. Still no days or nights off. We got into the midnight program at Sundance. Everyone was thrilled including our sales agent, who insisted he'll sell the movie for \$10 million dollars, that everyone was loving it, etc etc. I was not as thrilled. I don't feel finished, and I'm scared about premiering the movie in the middle of the night, four days into the festival. Will people be tired? Could we even be done in time, given that we were still shooting a few weeks ago?

The young guys working at the color-timing lab and watching the movie think it's going to be a massive hit, and when I told my overworked brother, he became terrified that, as my twin, he'll have to deal with a

bunch of nightmarish crap if the film does become a hit, since he looks like me. I've tried to convince him that I don't even look like Power, even though I played him. I feel bad dragging him into this kind of fame-shunning paranoia, also because he's been working as hard as me, insane hours creating this incredible score for the movie. 20 songs and a score for almost no money. He insisted wisely that we use all natural instruments, no synthesized orchestra like all half the movies out there. We discussed all the melodic scenes and hummed them before recording; Ethan realized these hums could be the foundation of the soundtrack and capture the feel of the working men on screen. It's brilliant.



Meanwhile, I had to lock the picture, even though I'd barely seen the movie all the way through. We went into the sound mix full of unfinished music and effects, and lots of scenes I still hadn't wrapped my head around, and premiering in just a few days. We were mixing by day and color-timing by night right up till yesterday, when we found out that there was a giant piece of negative missing, from the riot sequence. Having shot with five DP's and seven different crews, in Salt Lake, Helper, Tooele, Bauer, and Magna, Utah; Los Angeles, East L.A., and Piru, California; Newark, Jersey City, and Bayonne, New Jersey; Red Hook, Brooklyn, Manhattan; and on some backroads in Pennsylvania, spread out over 13 months with five separate crews, we managed to lose one of the most important pieces of

film we have. "Cut around it," was the supervisor's suggestion. I didn't have time to panic, and sure enough, someone found a can of film of ours at one of the labs, just in time.

Tomorrow I go to Sundance, having not seen the movie in its entirety yet, but only in parts as we mixed. I managed to meet with a few interested studio people but could barely put a sentence together; they probably thought I was on drugs. The fest is screening it for volunteers as one of the "sneak peek" films, and word from people at the screening is that people loved it and will be talking about it in these coming days up to our official premiere Sunday. I need to sleep and forgot how.

Ari





## SUNDANCE - THE PREMIERE APPROACHES

I've been at Sundance three times as a short-filmmaker, once as an actor, and three times as a musician. This is the first time I'm going as all of them at once. The Honey Brothers will perform (complete with me and Adrian and Ethan, all part of the movie), and after a day of press with Shoshannah and Adrian (whose management may have finally heard the positive reaction to his amazing performance, after the Sundance secret volunteer screening). But the stress is unlike anything I experienced before, here with a short film. It's the culmination of 3 years of work. There was one volunteer who rushed onto his blog to bash the film, but other volunteers have been stopping me on the street to thank me for it. I feel nervous but good--I can't believe we finished at all.

When you're shooting with a low budget, people tell you to avoid doing certain "impossible" things. We did every single one of them: crowd scenes, stunts, major company moves, chart-topping songs integrated into the film, on-location shooting across the country, music playback, live performed music, choreographed dance, driving scenes, child actors, animal performers, multiple languages on set (in this case, English, Spanish, Cantonese, and American Sign Language), and a first-time director acting in his own movie. "Kill me now," as Andrea always said. (And thank God I had Rachel Robinson to give my performance a quick thumbs up-or-down so we could shoot fast.)

In the interviews that Adrian's management ok'ed for us to do (unfortunately nothing national since they're reserving his name for bigger movies, in spite of having no qualms about stealing my name for their TV show) I was asked my strongest memory of the process. The craziest moment might have been sending, unannounced, a naked blonde running on stage at a Ted Leo show in Brooklyn so we could film the groupie-flashback. But I can't think straight--really what I think of are long winter weeks on my bicycle, riding through swamps and highways and ghettos in New Jersey, looking for a Chinese restaurant to be my Fongs. Years of so much work that I can hardly remember anything.

I just know that I wouldn't have spent three years of my life doing this if (a) I didn't think air-drumming looked funny and (b) it didn't represent something powerful to me, both politically and spiritually. "Repo Man" and "Babe," my two favorite movies these recent years, both took absurd ideas and made them mean something, for those who could see the purpose. I'm trying to bring something good into the world.

But I certainly never imagined the pitfalls of fundraising, the near-death experiences, shoot-threatening injuries (and the associated painkillers), and the war with copper mining companies, in making a movie about air-drummers. I never imagined it would take so long. But I think I've done justice to the initial inspiration, the lost old town's mine-workers, cowboys, and hippies; the beautiful sunsets and toxic groundwater; the mine workers who air-drummed in their trucks and felt the world was passing them by, and the Power in myself, a bit lost and innocent, but still idealistic in spite of the wind blowing hard in his face. I managed to film a fantasy America in the epic way I see it.

For the most part, my worst fears actually did come true, and yet I survived the disasters, as did the movie. For everything that went wrong, there was something that went better than I could have imagined. A coveted actor takes a studio film the night before my shoot, and we accidentally find a genius like Steven Williams to replace him. Rain destroys a perfectly planned outdoor scene, and the simple revision ends up stronger. A publishing company pulls their song from our soundtrack and my brother Ethan writes something better in its place. We were able to roll with it because the crew was small and dedicated, and we were all able to lie in bed at night (as my friend suggested) knowing that we'd given it all we had.

I'm trying to remember all this, as agent and producers are breathing down our necks, and I feel ill with dread and relief. And now a few days have gone by at the festival, and the normal film-sale hype is abnormally slow for Sundance. It's out of my hands now, we have a party, we have a show to put on.

- Ari





## We Are Power

I can't begin to describe the premiere. Before the movie started, something was already terribly wrong. At 11:45pm, there were crowds of kids from Salt Lake fighting to get in, though they couldn't; meanwhile all the tickets were held by business people, who looked worn and tired, hunched up in their parkas and staring at their Blackberries. I was pacing and worrying about whether the sound mix was set up right. By the time the festival coordinator, champion of the movie, told me we were ready, it was already 12:30 in the morning. The most famous distributor was there, blisteringly drunk, and my sales agent bragged that he'd plied the guy with red wine for three hours while watching a game at a bar down the street, telling him this movie was the next Napoleon Dynamite. I groaned at the thought, but Andrea reminded me that the agent knew what he was doing, this was his game.

I was introduced as "Ari Gold—writer, director, air-drummer," which somehow seemed off-pitch too given the purpose of the whole thing, and I tripped on my way onto the stage. I tried to look jaunty after tripping, and spoke barely a word, wanting the movie to start before people fell asleep or ran off to one of the parties they were missing.

The lights went down and I started watching my movie, for the first time. Within six minutes, a fat man in the middle of the theater stood up loudly and started to push his way out. For an entire scene, I felt the energy of the audience go to this guy, his Blackberry glowing, pushing his way to the aisle. I felt my face go hot and started sweating.

I nearly threw up as I stood onstage at 2:15am, trying to answer questions. There was a "rowdy response" as Variety reported, but the businessfolk and bloggers who'd taken the seats were all gone.

At 3:30am I stood up with my band to play a show down the street, but I could barely get through it. A well-meaning friend told me that three major bloggers had already posted reviews, explicitly competing with each other to see who could be funnier in their attacks on the film. One of them wrote that he wished my sister would get cancer; another referred to me as "that asshole" through the entire review; another said I was trying to capitalize on Napoleon Dynamite. I felt like I was watching people stab my newborn child before she'd taken her first breath.

In the morning, I tried to reach my sales agent by phone, but my producer said he was too busy to meet with me. We had another screening the next afternoon, and afterwards, the 19-year-old daughter of a studio President wrote a letter to her dad, saying he was a fool if he didn't buy our movie. Our sales agent told my producer about this, laughing at the way they'd laughed at this silly girl. But you should listen to her! I thought.

Little did I know at that point, but this company, as well as many of the others, were already on the verge of going bankrupt or being shut down by their parent companies. Hardly anyone was buying. You're not alone, my real friends said to me.

Later in the week, Sundance sent me down to Salt Lake for three "special screenings" for local people—one for junior high kids, one for high school, and one at the art house. I knew from the cheers as I listened in from outside, 86 minutes into the film, that the film was working. Each Q and A session had to be broken up by the theater managers, as I was mobbed by people asking questions about Power. I said, "Can I put you all on a bus up to Park City and tell the world what you think?" One girl said to me, "Our teacher said the movie was supposed to be like Napoleon Dynamite—but it was so much better! It actually had a story!" Many people said they'd cried during the riot scene, including one guy who actually acted in Napoleon Dynamite. I appreciated it from him—I'd been playing Power since before that movie came out, or the only strong similarity I saw was that both our movies feature a redhead with glasses. Or maybe both directors like Repo Man and grew up in the West.

Back in Park City, I try to remember these fans, all the local people who said it was their favorite movie in years, but in the world of Sundance, where the cool kids and the quarterbacks and cheerleaders have been replaced by directors and producers and actresses, I feel like a high-school replacement kicker who missed a field goal in the fourth quarter. Or, better: I feel like Power feels at the beginning of the movie, but I don't have his hopefulness today. Business buddies of mine seem to be avoiding me. There's a smell of death around the crowded condo where my team is camped out, trying to find something online to counteract those three bloggers, who've succeeded in warning the world against my movie as though it was the plague. From their posts I can see that at least one of them posted his review from his seat, before the movie was even over. And somebody even went to the effort of making a montage of quotes from those three reviews, and posted it anonymously calling it our trailer. Where are the hundreds of fans, the real people who seemed to adore the movie, to make their case?



Ari





IN  
GUATEMALA.

I'm sorry to all of you for disappearing. I might feel it but I'm not dead. I went out to L.A. to have some meetings after Sundance, but nobody was returning my calls. There were four companies claiming to want to distribute AOP, but I couldn't get a straight answer from our sales agent as to what was happening with them, and my producer didn't want to jeopardize her relationship with the sales agent by pestering him. This made no sense to me. One of the companies said they were thinking of "testing" the movie with suburban kids at an undisclosed screening in Orange County, but I wasn't invited to attend, or even know if/when that was going to happen.

After feeling sick for a few weeks, waiting to get some answers, I realized I had to get out of LA before I killed myself. Since I play ukulele, I've always wanted to go to Hawaii, but some online research made it seem too expensive. I pictured myself staring at a parking lot by a beach and trying to hitch a ride somewhere, and the thought seemed too depressing. It occurred to me I could go to Mexico for longer than the hours I spent walking across the border while researching Power, and study Spanish for the first time in my life. I could accomplish something that I wouldn't have if things had gone differently. And I could get away from all these people asking me how things were going with the movie.

The first non-stop flight I could find wasn't to Mexico, it was to Guatemala, which apparently was even cheaper, so within two hours of making my decision I was at the airport, and a few hours later, 5 a.m., I was in the sprawl of Guatemala City, with no destination and unable to speak a word of Spanish.

Now I've been for a few days on Lago de Atitlan, which is beautiful, but mostly in the old capital, Antigua. I went to the first school I found, and they sent me to a family where I'd be living. I've ended up meeting a lot of EuroGringos and seem, for whatever reason, to be needing more "normal" socialness with them at night than a pure disappearance into Guatemalan life. Not as good for my Spanish, but there it is, I'm not going to beat myself up about anything down here if I can help it. It's true I can't underplay how hard this time is for me. It feels close to suffering a death but it's mixed with humiliation and shame. The only thing that makes me feel better is trying to teach some of the local kids to play ukulele with my ten days of Spanish. I don't really know what to do about my career, since the managers/agents I thought would help employ me now (even directing TV or whatever to pay the bills) don't want anything to do with me--I feel worse off than if I hadn't slaved for 3 years on this labor of love. Somewhere I hope there's at least a small something to salvage, but I don't know how or what. I'm still kind of in shock. I was expecting a big change in my life to finally being a professional filmmaker (with the added terror/anticipation of possibly being famous) but anyway, having doors open to me, and this work of art being seen by the world. Liz isn't happy I'm down here, but I just can't face my own country without spiraling into the tension of my workaholicism coming up against my unemployment, and the shame of feeling like I failed Power.

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But I do have moments of perspective and happiness along with distraction here, while there's also some loneliness. It's very easy to meet people in the traveler community so I'm never lacking for temporary friends to have a drink. Most of them younger than me, and I do find myself wondering why I didn't spend 6 months or ten years living fancy-free, instead of working so hard to build a career that currently doesn't exist. I envy the love-affairs and random "hey, want to go surfing in El Salvador for a month?" that I hear in bars, and then the next night at 2am, there they are, a new grungy couple walking to catch a chicken-bus to Honduras. I'm doing some smaller version of that, but feel that I need to justify my existence (what do you do? what are you escaping from?) because I can't say I'm just tooling around. And my pride says I don't want to be one of those gringo ghosts, old motorcycle dudes hanging out in the other bar and bitching about the US.

Last week I met a Liverpoolian girl who's interning in architecture, and walked through the streets and markets of Antigua to help me buy me a phone. She invited me to her boyfriend's party in big bad Guatemala City to celebrate his new advertising company/studio. He's clearly part of the local elite, and went to college in the states. I was more than a little terrified to go, given that looking at the successes of younger people than me, and the happy sense of adventure and possibility that this group has in their lives. But I realized that lying in my homestay room contemplating suicide wasn't going to do me any good either, so I hitched a ride with a different young couple heading down there. We got a late start so their plan to dump me on a street corner in the huge city while they had dinner with her parents seemed cruel; I joined them and it was a good thing too. After driving through the polluted endless city, what a shock to walk into a plush, square/modern suburban house that was a dead-ringer for Palm Springs circa 1972, contents included: a brash, cocky, tan Jewish charming cock of a dad who looked like Ralph Lauren and talked like Tony Soprano, along with his Guatemalan wife, and his parents, all in pastels and ready to sit down to Sabbath dinner, yarmulkes ready and waiting. The boyfriend was clearly miserable as the dad grilled him and the daughter about their career plans, talked about his own successes, and expressed his love. Silent Guatemalans served several courses. I knew how to handle the dad's aggressive badgering and win him over, and was grateful for the big meal and the aspirin. I justified my own non-existent career and apartment in the East Village, and fortunately was able to survive that, and after dinner played Wii-Tennis (active-style video game) with the family. No air-drum Wii game yet. I went head-to-head with the grandfather, who beat me with his skills slamming imaginary tennis balls on the court. My "avatar" character was the daughter's, and so I lost on her behalf, earning the nickname "Happy Feet" because I couldn't seem to remember that there was no need to run after the "ball"--the electronic "racket" was all that counted. I nearly knocked grandpa's arm off, but he beat me bad. The weirdness of the whole evening made me feel better.

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I steeled myself for the night at the production company opening, and indeed got to see onto the "nice" side of the barbed wire at the top of the city; a lot of local musicians and advertising people; not the super-rich of town, but definitely some kind of elite. Though I was weirded out by the whole barbed-wire-community thing, I told myself that these countries with their disparities of wealth are just a miniature version of the world itself--a gated house in Guatemala isn't so different from a gated country (the USA). I tried to keep my envy of these happy campers at bay and fortunately got stoned, for the first time in years.

We wound our way back to Antigua late at night, and a few days later I escaped town with the same two couples (by chance--my suggestion, their car) to a music festival somewhere near the lake I'd wanted to go to. The ride was beautiful, Bob Dylan on the CD player, no Power soundtrack, and finally happy when we arrived at the intimate festival high in the pines above the lake I'd yet to see (it was dark when we arrived). It smelled like summer camp. My friend's friend owned a hotel on the lake nearby so accommodation was secure, though I wasn't sure I didn't want to strike out on my own where I wouldn't have to feel like a 5th wheel. But I wandered through the small crowd clustered in the pine grove for a mix of salsa, meringue, "indigenous" music re-done new-age style, and finally horrible rap. It was ironic that the concert, a benefit for the local indigenous population, cost 100Q (about 13 bucks), and therefore the local indigenous population had to watch the concert from the road, behind a fence. Whitey enjoyed the music on the pine needles, they enjoyed it on the winding road.

I met some Norwegians and was torn as my party pulled me away to the hotel. Even as we were motorboated across the dark lake to a castle-like structure lit up against the giant volcano, I knew that as special as it was, I was going to get depressed once I arrived. The place was too beautiful for words--Crane Point on a volcano and right on the lake, if that gives you an idea. I listened for the festival across the water and wondered if I should swim back. Finally I dragged myself to my room, feeling lonely and dreading the sound of the two couples fucking on either side of my room. I had nightmares about the failure of my movie all night, and awoke to the sound of my female friend having multiple orgasms on a squeaky bed, through the walls. I went outside to stretch in the sunshine, and the stunning beauty of the lake was nice. Only when I walked back through the swinging screen door and heard it tremble back and forth did I realize the squeaky door was the "orgasm" I'd heard all morning--it was a startlingly realistic mix of squeak and moan that sounded just like sex. Well, at least I wasn't the only one not fucking.

I went down to the lake to swim. It was warm and windless, and the local Mayan family who worked at the hotel watched, the little girls giggling endlessly at the sight of me swimming. The whole thing was really pleasant. Mornings have been consistently full of hope here, once I drag myself out of my nightmares and force myself to greet the day.

More later, I promise to stick around.

Ari







BELLS





And now is a list of things that have helped me forget about Sundance:

(Good)

- Chickens in the street have always cheered me up, and there are lots of 'em.
- Church bells. I decided that every time I heard a bell, I'd stop what I was doing and count my blessings, and take in the beauty of whatever was happening.
- My real passport is my ukulele. Playing at open mics with my ukulele, feeling like that was good enough (though I felt bad for not knowing the Guatemalan songs every else sang along to--though they also did Oasis--and at San Pedro I felt intimidated by the Tom Waits imitation band from Wyoming). Playing the uke and working on songs as I strolled among tiny lakeside farms. Strolling past weary horses and nodding at the Mayan locals who were amused by the uke. I wished Ethan were there to play music with me.
- Jumping a little motorboat with Mayans for whom Spanish is usually a distant second language, and riding across the water to a new town, not knowing where I was going.
- Daylight and a sense of the world being bigger than my movie (as long as I can avoid the subject).
- Hanging out with a friend's host families, making Semana Santa "carpets" from colored sand, flowers, vegetables, on the cobblestones in front of their house. Then the religious procession came through town, hundreds of people dressed up for the arrival of Jesus into Jerusalem. First the Roman centurions, then tribesmen in purple robes and Arab-looking headscarves, and eventually a float with a giant Jesus on it, shaking back and forth and carried on the backs of dozens of people. Some floats are carried by children. They walk in the heat with these intense colorful shiny sculptures on a float the size of a truck, on their back--it's a big honor and the carriers' positions are passed down through generations. Anyway, the procession makes its way through town and walks over the "carpets", destroying them. This trampling is considered a blessing onto the house. It does feel like a strange metaphor for the Church's trampling of Mayan culture, but only foreigners seem to read it that way. Sleepless one night, it was really beautiful to come out by the church at 3 in the morning and see hundreds of Mayan families, in from the mountains, weaving corn stalks and sleeping in the plaza and making carpets in anticipation of the festival. A few days later, when the procession came down their street with hundreds of people and thick incense smoke, my friend fainted. Not knowing her well enough to know if she was joking or I had permission to grab her, I hesitated, and she hit the cobblestones face-first. Her face was dirty and grey and bloody, her eyes white, as I turned her over. Then I got to enjoy the James-Bondian feeling of running against the flow of thousands of people as I tried to get across town to get medicine (disinfectant, arnica) from my house, and by the time I got back she seemed to be okay, though still bloody and embarrassed. Three Swedes I'd grown fond (two blond guys and one blonde girl with a habit of accidentally making hordes of men fall in love with her, which is why they were leaving town) of had gone to work at a farm, but I couldn't remember where it was, and anyway the heat and lack of Spanish classes there made things less appealing.



Bad things:

--Mornings and nights.

--Insecurity as I define myself to new people.

--Finding out that the last movie studio which loved my movie decided they're not going to make an offer, and the indie companies that made offers have gone bankrupt.

My Liverpoolian friend recommended a good cry, and I couldn't remember how, but I tried, to sway myself from jumping off a building. I wouldn't mind a little Ayahuasca to try to get that stuff out more, or I'd by Cryagra if such a thing existed, because it don't come easy to me.

I managed to convince myself the ocean would do me good, and hitched with a tour-group to El Salvador for surf lessons, and found myself stuck with a bunch of Norwegian and Dutch tourists in a dirty little beach community with a very good seafood cook working right by the mud-colored sand. The whole trip, coordinated by an "adventure tour" scammer who is hell-bent on turning the other travelers against me since I'm not charmed by his BS. As we rode in the back of a truck for the girls to buy swimsuits, I offered a hand to make sure one of them didn't fly out onto the road on a sharp turn, and my new hat flew off; nobody in the truck even budged to stop for it, as though I deserved it for not being a team player.

Full moon came and I was itching to get out; the girl who'd taken me to her parents' house in Guatemala City was visiting a friend in El Salvador; turned out by crazy coincidence that she was staying all of a few miles away, on the other side of some cliffs. I bade a cold goodbye to the tour group on their way to cook "traditional food" with some other scammers, and walked on the moonlit road, happy to be alone with crickets and a little bit of nighttime terror. I arrived at a stunning, private enclave on the cliffs, with long stone steps leading down to salt-water swimming pools built on the Pacific's edge, fed by the sea during high tide. The full moon lit up this ungodly wealth perfectly, and though I wished I could transport myself to Guatemala again, I at least got to take mental note of another interesting disparity-of-wealth thing. We played cards and drinking games, me and the internationalist Guatemalans, including a 6-foot-8 inch Jewish giant who was also stunned by the property. The girl whose family owned this house was very nice, although I wasn't surprised to find that her maternal grandmother was one of the old fascist families from Nicaragua. I slept in a lawn chair outside, and the next night, we went to a locals' beach, where a group of two hundred people watched a fat, drunk oaf, who was stumbling around the sand like a toddler, trying wake up his passed-out girlfriend before the tide came in. When they realized they were being watched, they tried to put on a sex show for the screaming crowd. This was a far cry from life in a quiet Mayan town on a lake.

I've been avoiding email, trying to disappear, but to my horror, "Adventures of Power has been selected by the Vail Film Festival, and one of my producers is trying to convince me to come back. I'm sure I can bear returning to the US and all the reminders of my failure, but now a festival at Brown University requested that I come screen the movie on the same weekend too. I've decided to fly to Colorado and then Providence, to give it one last shot and see if my film's as bad as the reviewers said, and if I really can't face my country I'll come back to the Mayan town in a week and never look back.

An

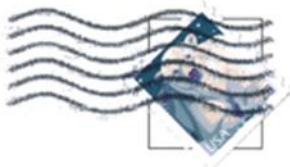




## Power to the People!

It was brutal to drag myself from the lethe of Guatemala (the volcanoes, the traveler gossip, the language teachers talking to me about politics, the 35 best-friends including a stray dog who came to sing with me on my last night in town), on a crazy series of flights to Vail, Colorado, for a film festival I did not want to attend. But here I am, suddenly, in the mountains, for the second public appearance of "Adventures of Power."

And something very strange has happened. Snowboarders came in off the mountain early to catch my movie. The theater was packed at the screenings. I hid in a hallway, trembling, but when I returned 90 minutes later, I heard cheering. I thought it must be a joke. In the Q and A, it was me who kept asking them, "Did you actually like it?" How could this be the same movie that had been so attacked at Sundance? Amy Redford, a Sundance colleague also fighting for her film, told me my movie kicked ass. The women in the audience said they'd cried.



The snowboarders asked how they could see it again.

Adrian showed up the next day, swooping in to collect an award for his environmental work, and I think he was as surprised as I was when the Audience Award for Best Film at the festival was announced: "Adventures of Power." I was happy for him to realize that people loved the movie (though I wished his management would, as well), and I'm leaving the mountains in shock, and giddy, and thinking it's not all over. Power to the people!

**Ari**

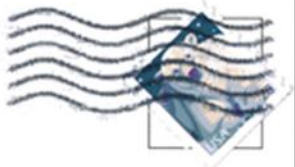
# 4-20

Hi friends,

I was invited to present "Adventures of Power" at Brown University and it went over like gangbusters. There were a bunch of Hollywood bigwigs at the event (their kids go to the school, apparently), but not at the screening. I keep meaning to record the audience cheering as a way of proving my movie doesn't suck.

Then I was on the panel with filmmakers Jonathan Levine (who actually went to Brown) and Tao Ruspoli, where I was brutally honest about the the film world. I told the pro-Power crowd how people had attacked Power at Sundance. Some of the students were terrified, but many came up to me afterwards, thanking me for being honest, and inviting me to smoke-out with them at 4:20 am, since it is, after all, 4/20. That's a double 420, which I'd never thought of, since even though I won "Stoner of the Year" from High Times Magazine, I barely know how to roll a joint. I teased the students about their school's renovation slogan, "Building Brown," which sounds like what you do after eating too many hot dogs.

I told a seasoned film producer on the



panel that I was planning to get some studios to watch my movie at a non-midnight slot, now that it had won the Audience Award at its second film festival. "Audience Awards are the kiss of death," he grumbled, which confused me, until I emailed one studio guy I know, asking him to watch my movie, and he replied, "It's not for us. The market's really tough for audience-friendly films." Feel free to read that sentence again. If the indie film business collapses, it will be thanks to idiocy like this.

4:20 am rolled around and I found myself in a crowd of 300 rowdy college students, all of them hoping for a riot. But when the cops showed up at 4:22, they dispersed quietly to their dorm rooms.

Ari





Dobry večer!

I'm writing you from my new favorite place on earth, the Karlovy-Vary Film Festival. They put me up in the hotel that was used as the set for Casino Royale. Holy moly. This is what a festival should be. Love of cinema & love of life. New friends. Thousands of film fans mobbing the streets and sleeping in the stadium, taking over a stunningly beautiful Russian-mob-owned spa town in the Czech mountains. Artist-fueled parties all night in castles, with free Becherovka. No danceless hater-filled parties like Sundance. This is the greatest festival experience of my life.

Por ejemplo: I joined Glen Hansard (from "Once", the beautiful Irish indie from last year) on stage for his show. Yes friends, I played ukulele for the First Lady of the Czech Republic, who was in the front row, as well as for Glen's partner Marketa Irglova & her amazingly cool parents and grandfather, who came to see my movie along with a way-sold-out crowd the next day. (Marketa's sister video'ed our ragged performance of my brother's song "Into the Blue", but in my night of dancing I managed to lose my camera with the video. Oh well.)

By day, on my laptop in the theater lobby, I've started finishing the final cut of AOP at last. Showed a scene to an Indian filmmaker who'd loved the movie, and he agreed the newly cut scene was better, so I felt bad that the old



version is all I can screen on the big screen--yet. The movie got huge cheers and the highest scores of all the comedies. Line of Czech fans around the block. I was in such a great mood that I cried with happiness during the premiere of "Mamma Mia." Long live music.

Ari





Hello friends,

I've finished the final cut of the movie. I wish I'd had the time to do this on a good night's sleep before! The festival tour has been a lot of fun, other than the one festival whose "media partner" interviewed me with a smile as an excuse to mock me and bash the movie without even watching the final cut, and there was nobody - literally nobody - at the screening. That was a little less fun.

I wish I could tell my investors that there is money coming in, but there isn't yet. The two distributors who made us offers have since declared bankruptcy. At least we didn't go down with those ships! Two of my investors, because of two separate incidents I had nothing to do with, are in jail! Financial collapse, drug deals, and movies about air-drummers... what a sexy combo! My sleazy sales agent doesn't return my phone calls, and neither does one of my producers now - they've collected money off the top in production/foreign-sales deals and moved on to other things. But the true-believers and I keep fighting for the "long tail," in the hopes of translating these thrilling audience responses into something tangible. I have a responsibility to the investors. I'm sleeping on a lot of couches.



We swung through the South, too, opening a festival in Birmingham and winning the Audience Award, again, in Memphis. Ethan came and played shows with me. It's like a traveling circus.

Ari



## Greetings from Oz



Hi hi,

On tour in Australia with the Honey Brothers, I've done more yacht trips with fresh oysters and bikini-clad girls in four days than I'd have imagined in a lifetime. "Oidrain Grenyoi: 'Strallian Fi'Dooshbeeg" - somehow I don't sleep on couches when I'm in this crew... But the best thing moviewise was meeting a wry awesome lady named Gracie, who then took me to meet her parents, who are crazy/wonderful theater folks, reminding me of my hometown--and after they'd watched and seemed to love AOP, I asked them shyly on the off-chance if they knew one of my heroes, George Miller (creator of such a range as "Road Warrior" and "Babe"). You know, same country, but what the hell. And to my complete shock, they said, "Georgie?" and within seconds they were on the telephone, talking about "a brilliant new filmmaker", and then handed me the phone, and there was George Miller on the other end of the line. After I got my brain together I told him about myself. My movie's being released by Madman here in Oz. He said he thought small movies may be done-for on the big screen. Small movies should



be really small, really cheap; big movies must be huge. Everything in between is screwed. Depressing thought, but maybe true, and he was generous with his time, and my mind was reeling at the end of the half-hour conversation. I'm leaving this country with a feeling that I want to come back as soon as possible... More oysters.

Ari

# Hotel Bangkok



Hi all,

On the eve of leaving for another tour (back from Serbia, on to Norway to act in a train ad, then Thailand for a festival) with the movie, I got a nice sock in the gut. Some actors from my movie saw the trailer and early press screenings of a new big-name Hollywood comedy that had a scene involving air-drumming to Phil Collins's signature song: just like one of the signature scenes from *Power*. The coincidence wouldn't be so painful if the director of this big movie hadn't flown me to LA 18 months ago, offering to help me find money and a distributor, and then stopped returning my calls. One of my actors said she wanted to kill him.

Speaking of which, I spent this evening on the private pleasure-boat of an "investor" on the Chao Phraya in Bangkok. We're here for an incredibly hospitable comedy festival in Bangkok, but somehow the filmmakers and actors got stuck on this boat, where a dude with a huge scar on his neck, straight out of a John Woo film, in broken English, made us listen to his karaoke of John Denver songs. Shoshannah Stern's reactions were the funniest: she laughed hysterically to all of his unintelligible jokes, and he was charmed. It didn't matter to him that she's deaf: she felt that if we didn't laugh along, we might get thrown off the boat by his men and eaten by Chao Phraya piranhas. My friend Natasha Leggero, whom I'd asked the festival to invite, loved the way we were introduced on every red carpet as "Celebrities of America!" Surreal. Liz and I dressed in royal gowns, then got whipped while riding a mechanical bull. I'll post a video... I'm still not sure if I was invited here because they think I'm Jeremy Piven.



Ari







### Guten Abend!

Back in Europe: informal screening in Estonia at a commune (I couldn't get a visa to Russia); then sauna-building and salsa lessons. Now in my beloved Berlin, where the Kino Babylon screened the film for a thrilled crowd, thanks to my friend Anna Winger. Wim Wenders couldn't make it but told me he was a good air-guitarist! A local air-guitarist joined me for a Queens Of The Stone Age performance. After the movie, a man in his 70's told the people sitting next to him that he was now going to air-drum daily to "feel alive!" And Hungarians journalists told me my movie was "too socialist for America". Within a day I got myself an agent in Berlin. Funny: no one returns my calls in Hollywood.

I also performed "YYZ" and my "History of German Music According to Power the Air Drummer" (a medley from Beethoven to Peter Fox) at the German Air Guitar Federation Finals (and in front of the Reichstag, just to mess with the police and tourists... video soon!). I loved the odd & wonderful true believers of the Federation - and they asked me to be a judge at the Air Guitar World Championships in Finland! I said yes, if they also bring the "shreds" inventor, my buddy Santeri Ojala. Pretty hilarious, given that I was booted from the US competition for air-drumming, and now I'm going to be judge at the world championships! Take that, US Air-Guitar... Don't neglect the beat...

A



# AIR GUITAR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS GET TAKEN TO SCHOOL



Drunk. Oulu, Finland, at the film fest. Power just performed for 7000 Finnish fans!!! People have memorized passages from the movie, and I drummed "Hot for Teacher," to take the air-guitarists to school (get it?...), at the Air Guitar World Championships taking place simultaneously, where I'm also a judge. At the afterparty, fans asked me to do "Eye of the Tiger" with them... we got the power. And an irate air-guitarist, formerly friendly, now drunkenly attacked me for "not understanding air guitar" because we judges selected a French guy as champ. Santeri (St. Sanders/Shreds) and the other judges agreed on the winner... nothing personal, guy. Crazy days. Bjorn Turoque was a great host. But still, performing Van Halen: holy moly, Carlos doesn't lie in Adventures of Power: air-drumming is a double workout. I could barely walk for 2 hours after I played. Luckily I had a bike and could coast to the night-sauna party on a lake. My legs were still trembling from the double-bass-drums... Belly full of hot dogs, beer, and folk songs.

In six weeks we'll start our little theatrical run of AOP in the USA. I wish I could bottle the energy here - how are we going to compete with Hollywood movies, with nothing but my short shorts to get attention?



Ari







# PEART POWER



Hello USA! A movie release with no ad budget is scary. I'm glad my theatrical guy, Dylan Marchetti, busts his ass like I do. We're doing the best we can to build awareness of the movie online (Amanda Palmer gave me a bit of advice) but will it be enough? I toured with The Honey Brothers wearing my Power T-shirt. It's a start... Played with the good people of Airpocalypse, an air-band, at Bumbershoot.

The best day on tour, we played the Troubadour in LA, and in the morning I raced up to Oxnard to shoot an air-drumming video with Neil Peart at Don Lombardi's DrumChannel studio. When I think of the struggle I've had to get any press or help from the business, and I compare it to the generosity of this incredible human being, it gives me hope for the world. Neil and I filmed a long interview about the power of music to change lives for kids, since I've decided to use all my Power parties to raise money for music education. I told him how his drumming brought a friend's brother back from a coma. And then we went head-to-head, drums-versus-air, playing "Tom Sawyer"...

I also got to go berserk on Terry Bozzio's insane 200-piece drum-set, and Terry gave Power a lesson in "real" drumming. Another fine specimen of a man, and another funny video for the drum community. I raced to San Diego for my next show on ukulele, still winded from the battle with Peart. I feel good today.



A





The NYC opening approaches. Dylan was thrilled to report that we're able to get a good theater to show the movie, but we'll have just two days to prove we can sell tickets. How do you build word of mouth in two days on screen?

I'll tell you how we thought we could: TV. As it turns out, Jimmy Fallon has had two (!) air-drum competitions on his show on NBC. This is incredibly perfect - they had random dudes, air-drummers off the street, on his show! So we went to the show's producers and said that Power, the most random but dedicated of all air-drummers, would love to appear. They told us that Power could be on the show - if Adrian Grenier came with him. OK, OK, they want celebrities, what else is new. So I called Adrian's people and they said that though Adrian was happy to promote our movie (which he did, trekking around town with me for a full exhausting day of small press), they were asking him not to do any "big" press. They wanted to save the NBCs and MTVs of the world until Adrian's next "real" movie came out. So. We went back to the Fallon's people, and told them that Power, the only air-drummer to have faced Neil Peart, would love to come on the show, but he would have to come alone, like all other air-drummers had. Their response: they'd have me on the show without Adrian... for \$45,000.

When we got word, I was sleeping in my friggin' car in Brooklyn. I'd subletted my apartment to pay for posters.

I've held on to the David-versus-Goliath theme of the movie itself to keep me going. We're doing everything we can. Funny videos shot in the streets of my neighborhood. Viral buzz. The German teen rock band Tokio Hotel blogged about my Led Zeppelin video, which led to thousands of views online, which helped me to get more views than the Red Hot Chili Peppers drummer air-drumming, and this is what led DrumChannel to contact me in the first place! (Yes, I beat Chad Smith, thanks to Tokio Hotel!) We made crazy mock "American Apparel" ads with Power. My "peeps", including the artist Daniele Frazier, the illustrator Trenton Duerksen doing Power comic strips on my blog, the musician Alana Amram, Adrian's mom (who got the spiritual side of the movie) and a few dozen volunteers, all came together to make something eye-catching on the web and on telephone poles. My band, the Honey Brothers, played a Power Party / charity-event (how did I become an event planner??) where I auctioned off costumes to support the Impact Repertory in Harlem. The Impact kids also rocked the house. Tried to get a corporate sponsor for the event, and got some free cereal from Nature's Path. I have no time to sleep, but I seem to have a great feeling of friendship for the people who are helping. I've lost that sense of painful struggle that I had before. But still, I have a sinking feeling that we can't compete with the tidal wave of the media machine. At least we raised a few thousand dollars for the Impact Repertory. I sold off my shoes at the auction. Do you think I can give Jimmy Fallon my socks?



Adventures of Power is coming:  
October 9th in NYC  
October 13th in LA  
Join the adventure.  
[www.powerthepower.com](http://www.powerthepower.com)



Adventures of Power was produced 100% independently, and the proceeds will go to charity. From the forgotten industrial zones of the West to the golden cities of the East, it is being filmed 100% independently with the help of volunteers and fans from all over the country who believe that the power of the human heart can change the world.

Meet Power

Bang a drum.



See Adventures of Power in theaters:  
October 9th in NYC and October 13th in LA  
Join the adventure.  
[www.powerthepower.com](http://www.powerthepower.com)



Get Air.  
October 9th.







"We didn't know it was playing." This is what a group of NYU kids said to me outside the theater on 3rd Avenue in New York. I'd handed them a flyer, and they'd told me they were "obsessed" with my trailer online. And yet: they didn't know the movie was playing right across the street from their dorm. It's our fourth day. We've done tolerably, but not well enough to stay in the theater.

We got some great reviews, some hate reviews, and a few re-runs of our old reviews from the rough-cut at Sundance (returning like phlegmatic zombies from the grave, to cover for all the journalists who've been laid off this year). The movie still seems to drive some people to love/joy/tears, and others into a kind of violence. My friend Elvis Perkins suggested in an interview we did for Daniel Pinchbeck that *Power* is like a child, "close to the void", and his innocence frightens some viewers, especially insecure men! I'll accept that...

Volunteers passed out flyers and sang in the streets. But how can you compete with movies that have tens of millions of dollars?

I just flew to LA for our opening pre-party there. Drum Channel, my brother Ethan and a friend have helped put together an incredible charity benefit there, with Ozomatli, DrumChannel, Terry Bozzio, the Good Listeners, my co-ukulele princess Soko - and a band that will play a bunch of original songs from the movie, with Ethan singing and changing costume for each song. California volunteers are hitting the streets, in spite of a torrential rain. We're raising money for another kids' charity, this one in South Central, called A Place Called Home.

As usual, none of the local papers are covering our event, because, they say, the Reality TV Awards and the release of "Where the Wild Things Are" take precedence this week. My factory costume is getting a lot of wear. But I met "Jesus" on the street on Sunset Boulevard, and he's on our side!



Ari

# TRAVELING CIRCUS!



## TRAVELING CIRCUS DIARY

Austin: incredible group of Rush fans and Power volunteers hits the streets. We try to get local indie-music stores to mention AOP in their newsletters. Rock radio shows say they'll have me on the show if I can get a celebrity to come. Meanwhile, I heard that back in LA, we sold out out last night in town. But it was too late to extend the run!

Salt Lake City: back in this beautiful strange mountain city where I shot a lot of the movie. Markie and Lexi, the Utah Power cheerleaders, storm the town to get the word out. Rainy nights and sunny days plotting world conquest, and even a desk display at a suburban Guitar Center... Small victories. Local skaters make a video with me in a parking lot. Late night debates about whether the world is controlled by lizards.

Phoenix: sleeping in rental car; my Power-factory costume now really smelly. In college-zone of Tempe; ended up at a college party for which I was at the right address but the wrong city (the party was in Phoenix, but there happened to be a different party at the same address in Tempe). Watched Ryan Avery's punk band in library. From way up in the mountains, some copper workers who inspired the movie came to a screening with their kids. I'm glad my logo is a tent, this is a travelling circus, and we are the freaks...

Ari



Hi all,

A rainy night in Portland. I'm standing outside the theater with duck-poo on my shoes from my aunt's place. I've spoken on sports radio, union radio programs, done photos with a cool photographer, and found help from an incredible group of locals, one of whom got me to speak, at the last minute, to an entire high school. All the other schools are asking me to speak next week. But the theatrical run is coming to a close. It's our last night. Tomorrow I'm going home, or to New York anyway, though the road feels like my real home now.

I'm standing outside the theater after the last show's begun, when a young couple stops in shock. "Are you... Power?" the guy asks, barely able to speak. I tell him I am. His girlfriend tells me that the guy has been obsessed with "Adventures of Power" for months, and had played me for Halloween! I'm thrilled by this crazy news. They'd made his costume from scratch. Then he asks: "When's the movie opening?" Now I'm the one who's shocked. I point to the wonderful display the theater set up, right behind me. The poor guy had watched my trailer hundreds of times, but iTunes didn't allow us to add a website tag, and the guy hadn't known to sign our mailing list to hear about the opening. Assuming it was a "real" (!) movie, he'd been waiting for the ads on TV to tell him when to come to the theater.

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is the challenge of independent film. I ushered them in for free, and they got to enjoy the last 58 minutes of the movie, and watch the air-drum competition I ran after the credits. The winner was a girl from the local high school. She won a drum from a local drum shop, and when the DVD comes out, I expect she'll be local fan-club president.

Ani



AMAZING  
CINEMA 21  
POSTER  
ARRAY

LIFE ON THE  
ROAD



MOSQUITOS  
IN TENT

FRANK'S MONTAGE  
COLLAGE







TO THE WORLD!!

In a few short weeks, Power is going to be available worldwide on DVD, VOD, download, streams, and even phone apps. I feel like I've lived Power's story - making something of nothing, fighting crooks and thieves, relying on faith and energy and the support of people with their heart in the right place. My newest team-member is The Film Collaborative, which steered me away from the kind of deals that I made with foreign sales (enriching agents, but netting us nothing except amazing cover art, including my face photoshopped onto a Japanese man's body, and a shockingly German-dubbed Power).

Power to the people. I got an email yesterday from a new fan in Turkey. How did he see the movie? I have no idea. "Those drummers are us," he wrote.

Power to the people. My interview with the student radio station found me face-to-face with two guys who'd memorized whole passages of the movie since receiving it. Between Thursday and Sunday, they'd watched it seven times! Here's to cult classicdom!

Power to the people. We're raising more money through our charity auction, now with Neil Peart, Lars Ulrich, Ringo Starr, Brian Viglioni, Judas Priest, Weezer, and more.

Now's when I ask those who are meant to find the movie, those who found it who-knows-how - like you - to tell me what the Power is. And hope that you'll use it. Imagine that!

**イケてない置業オタク青年が「エアドラム」で人生大逆転!**  
**最高に笑って泣ける、ちよびりせつない青春ロックンロール・ムービー!!**

**POWER**  
 名前: パワー  
 職業: 伝説的ロックンロールドラマー  
 好きな食べ物: ミルクシリアル  
 趣味: 読書鑑賞 (DVD鑑賞)  
 特技: 非常なスピードでドラムを叩くこと。

**STORY**  
 経緯の裏を隠して「ピエロ」と一緒に暮らす、オタク青年のパワー。シリアルとミルクだけを食べて暮らす彼は、いつも無礼の言動で周囲の者を怒らす。一日の晩はロックンロールの伝説的ドラマーと出会う。彼は、彼を「伝説的ドラマー」を「エア」で置き換えていくだけ。そんなある日、彼はロックンロールの音で目を覚めた。だが、彼は伝説的ドラマーを失ってしまう。そして、この瞬間「ピエロ」を彼女に伝えるため、パワーはある大冒険に、イケてるヤツと戦う決心をするのだ。

**CAST**  
 アリ: マイク・ペルト  
 ピエロ: マイク・ペルト  
 シリアル: マイク・ペルト  
 ミルク: マイク・ペルト  
 ドラム: マイク・ペルト

**Ari**

「近年最高のロック映画だ!」  
 ニール・パート...  
 ...「ラッシュ」ドラマー

**エア☆ドラム!** 世界イチせつないロックンローラー

心のビートが、  
 隅り止まらぬです。

**エア☆ドラム!**  
 世界イチせつないロックンローラー

STORY 経緯の裏を隠して「ピエロ」と一緒に暮らす、オタク青年のパワー。シリアルとミルクだけを食べて暮らす彼は、いつも無礼の言動で周囲の者を怒らす。一日の晩はロックンロールの伝説的ドラマーと出会う。彼は、彼を「伝説的ドラマー」を「エア」で置き換えていくだけ。そんなある日、彼はロックンロールの音で目を覚めた。だが、彼は伝説的ドラマーを失ってしまう。そして、この瞬間「ピエロ」を彼女に伝えるため、パワーはある大冒険に、イケてるヤツと戦う決心をするのだ。

CAST アリ: マイク・ペルト / ピエロ: マイク・ペルト / シリアル: マイク・ペルト / ミルク: マイク・ペルト / ドラム: マイク・ペルト

DVD VIDEO

TMSCD-278





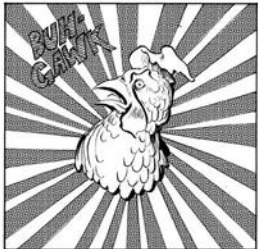




## ADVENTURES OF POWER

"INTENSE IN TENTS"

TRENTON DUERKSEN



## ADVENTURES OF POWER

"DREAM ANALYSIS"

TRENTON DUERKSEN



## ADVENTURES OF POWER

"DREAMWEAVER"

TRENTON DUERKSEN







**ARI GOLD (on a horse)**

Ari Gold's first feature film "Adventures of Power", an epic comedy about air-drumming and the American dream, won best-of-festival prizes at film festivals around the world, and was called "One of the funniest films in recent years" by *New York Magazine* and "the best rock movie in many a year" by Rush drummer Neil Peart.

Ari was named one of *Filmmaker Magazine's* "25 Faces to Watch" after having an unprecedented three short films in a row at Sundance. He won a Student Academy Award for "Helicopter," an autobiographical retelling of his mother's death in a helicopter crash with rock-music promoter Bill Graham. "Helicopter" was called "the best short film of the year" by *Film Threat*, and won top prizes at short-film festivals in the US, France, Germany and Brazil. His previous short film "Culture" which he directed and starred in, was written up in the *New York Times* after its Sundance premiere and was called "the best sixty seconds of film at Sundance."

As an actor, Ari won "Stoner of the Year" from *High Times Magazine* for his performance in the Sony Classics release *Groove*. (Feel free to read that sentence again.) He also stars as Power in "Adventures of Power."

Ari was raised in San Francisco, and has lived at various times in New York, Los Angeles, New Mexico, Montana, Germany and Serbia. His name was "borrowed" for his bandmate's TV show, because it's a cool name. Ari performs in the bands The Honey Brothers (with Adrian Grenier) and Gold Brothers (with his twin brother Ethan), and plays ukulele, piano and sometimes drums.



## ADVENTURES OF POWER

“One of the funniest films in recent years.”  
--*New York Magazine*

“An enthusiastic Drums Up. Totally awesome.”  
--*Los Angeles Times*

"*Spinal Tap* caliber. Writer-director Ari Gold (real name) stars as Power, whose compulsive air-drumming to classic rock makes him village idiot of a New Mexico copper town beset by labor strife. Fired from the mine and estranged from his union-leader father (Michael McKean), he sets out to conquer big-league air-drumming in New Jersey. Imaginative sight gags and laugh lines are timed like Neil Peart solo, but the film also inexplicably succeeds as a melodrama and a heartfelt pro-labor statement. The wonderful cast includes the sublime Jane Lynch (Best in Show) and a raft of people we should have heard of already."  
--*The Chicago Reader (Pick of the Week)*

*Adventures of Power* premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and won the top Audience Awards at the Vail and Memphis Film Festivals, and the Grand Jury Prize at the both the TriMedia Colorado Film Festival and the San Antonio Film Festivals, Best Comedy at the Philadelphia Independent Film Festival, and was ranked the best US comedy by audiences at the Karlovy-Vary International Film Festival. *Adventures of Power* is released by Phase4 on DVD/VOD.

Initiatives:

The *Adventures of Power* Vh1 Save the Music Auction, with donations from **Ringo Starr, Rush, Metallica, David Wain, John Mayer, Ke\$ha, Judas Priest, Dresden Dolls, Ween, Weezer**, and many others, benefits children's music education.  
**PowerSavesTheMusic.com**

**PowerAirDrumBattle.com** is an online air-drum competition, a joint venture of Adventures of Power and DrumChannel.

**AdventuresOfPower.com**



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**AriGoldFilms.com**



**please say hello.**

