For Immediate Release

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Text of this release, photos and other information available at www.anybodylisten.com/press.htm

Motion Picture about Orange County Band Gets National DVD Release on Netflix

Critically Acclaimed 7-Year Film Project Indicts The Music Biz

Orange County, CA (January 17, 2005) - The compelling and universal true story of two brothers who left their small hometown for California to make it in the music business, *Won't Anybody Listen,* will be available to rent on DVD on February 22, 2005 through Netflix, the world's largest online movie rental service.

Described as "*Riveting, heart-wrenching, sometimes stabbingly funny**," "*Rousing, richly satisfying***," "*Required viewing****," the "accidental" film has been enthusiastically celebrated by mainstream movie critics. Filmmaker Dov Kelemer's initial plan was to shoot an intimate portrait of the members of an "unsigned" rock band that could be sold at their shows. Seven years later the project had evolved into a feature length unforgettable and eye-opening indictment of the music business.

Brothers Frank and Vince Rogala, departed Mackinaw City, Michigan hoping to fulfill their dreams of rock 'n' roll glory with their band *NC-17*. After ten plus years of soul-sapping day jobs and exhausting late night rehearsals/performances/recording sessions they are no closer to their dream. They encounter a world populated by wannabes, where the less than one percent who actually achieve some fame seldom see a cent for all their labor. By focusing on the real-life experiences of the brothers, Kelemer reveals a stirring portrait of what it's like to be a musical artist in America today, where life consists of taking part-time jobs, dealing with IRS audits and enduring the scandalous "creative" accounting practices prevalent in the music business.

Won't Anybody Listen was released theatrically and has aired nationally on the Sundance Channel.

Regarding the debut of the DVD on Netflix, Kelemer observed, "I am excited. Netflix has pioneered a way for filmmakers to make their work accessible to audiences that we had no hope of reaching before. The exposure alone gives a whole new grass roots/no-hype way for a film to reach its audience and it is

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* Los Angeles Times

** Daily Variety

*** The Hollywood Reporter

heartening to an independent filmmaker like me. It makes Netflix a supreme force for exposing little known, yet 'quality' films. It makes it possible for me to continue making independent documentaries with the knowledge that there is a way for them to be seen."

"Netflix is always happy to bring unique and interesting content to our members," said Ted Sarandos, chief content officer for Netflix. "Making films such as *Won't Anybody Listen* available on DVD allows us to support independent filmmakers and provide our members an insider's look into the creative process."

One of the subjects of the film is now making a film. Frank Rogala (lead singer of NC-17), has acquired motion picture rights for the book *Retards, Rebels & Slackers* by Jaina Bell www.jainabell.com. Rogala is currently co-writing the screenplay (*House of Tards* TM) with Bell and producing an audio version of the book with intellectually disabled actors www.houseoftards.com. Rogala describes the screenplay as a dramedy (drama-comedy) that is a cross between *One Flew Over the Cuckoos Nest* and *Animal House*.

Netflix (Nasdaq: NFLX) is the world's largest online movie rental service, providing more than two million subscribers access to over 25,000 DVD titles. For $17.99 a month, Netflix subscribers rent as many DVDs as they want, and keep them as long as they want, with three movies out at a time. There are no due dates, no late fees and no shipping fees. DVDs are delivered for free by first-class mail from regional shipping centers located throughout the United States. Netflix can reach more than 85 percent of its subscribers with generally one business-day delivery. The company provides subscribers extensive information about DVD movies, including critic reviews, member reviews, online trailers, ratings, and personalized movie recommendations. For more information, visit www.netflix.com.

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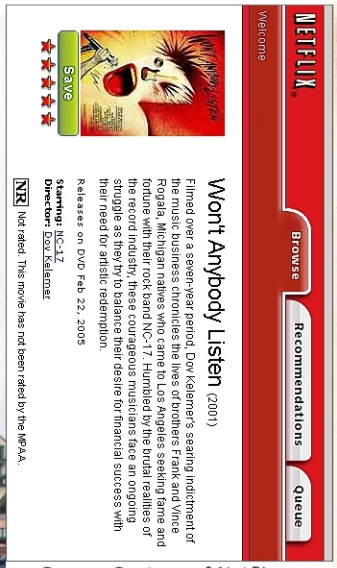
To book interviews or request materials, contact Sarah Jo Marks at (323) 656-3264 or sarahjomarks@hotmail.com. Information about the film visit www.anybodylisten.com Photos available www.anybodylisten.com/press.htm for overnight delivery (888) 372-6523

Developmentally Disabled and Disabled Voice Actors auditioning for audio version of Retards, Rebels & Slackers by Jaina Bell. Printable full resolution copy of photo available

ALL PHOTOS (below) available in print resolution:

Download from www.anybodylisten.com/press.htm or
Delivered overnight (full resolution photos) call (888) 372-6523

Trying to be heard, Frank Rogala, lead singer of NC-17 featured in documentary film Won't Anybody Listen. Photo by Dov Kelemer



Screen Capture of Netflix DVD selection *Won't Anybody Listen* the Dov Kelemer Film featuring Frank Rogala.

Poster for *Won't Anybody Listen* created by Peter Kuper Cartoonist and cover artist for *Time, Newsweek, Washington Post, The Nation*, and more; see http://www.peterkuper.com

PRESS PHOTOS TO ACCOMPANY PRESS RELEASE DATED JANUARY 17, 2005 LOCATED AT:
http://www.anybodylisten.com/press.htm

Retards, Rebels & Slackers by Jaina Bell is the basis for the new Frank Rogala Film, *House of Tards*, see HouseofTards.com

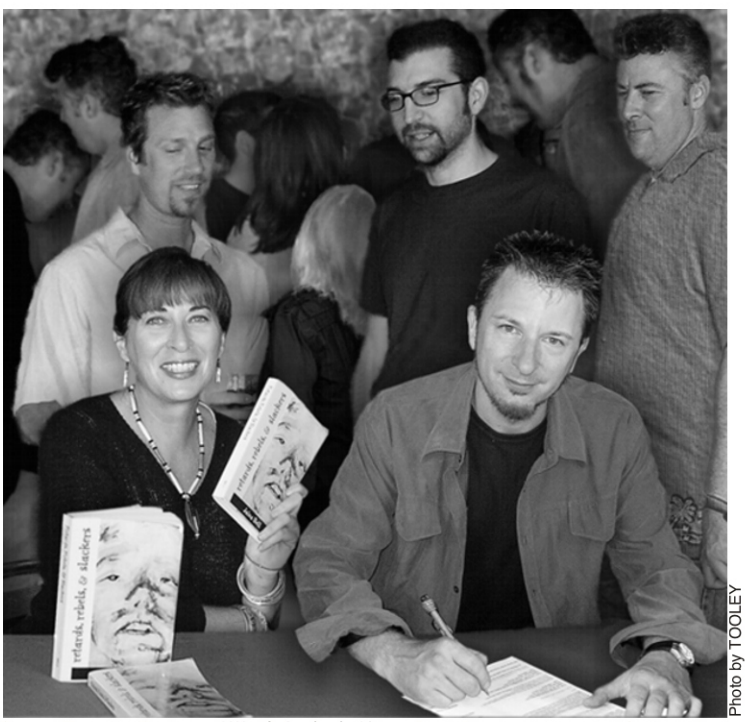


Photo by TOOLEY

Star and Executive Producer of *Won't Anybody Listen*, Frank Rogala, signing a deal for the motion picture rights of the controversial book *Retards, Rebels & Slackers* by Jaina Bell. FRONT L-R Jaina Bell, Frank Rogala BACK L-R, Emmy Award winning Art Director Aaron King, Director of *Won't Anybody Listen*, Dov Kelemer, and former *South Park* Animation Supervisor, George Maestri

Netflix signs for exclusive DVD release of Won't Anybody Listen

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The Genesis of *House of Tards*™

By Frank Rogala

January 16, 2005

I came across the book, *Retards, Rebels & Slackers*, by Jaina Bell as I was finishing my first film, *Won't Anybody Listen*.[1] I had been working on another screenplay and was doing research for a developmentally disabled character when a mutual acquaintance put me in touch with Jaina Bell. Bell had just finished a book based on her nine years of experience as a staff member in-group homes. I was immediately taken with Jaina's book and its heartfelt and personal story. I put everything else aside and set about obtaining the motion picture rights for the book.

A week after completing the agreement, the book received a mostly positive review in a psychology journal. A vicious hate e-mail campaign that immediately followed could only have been in response to that review. It was apparent that the letters were coming from people who had not read the book and were merely reacting to either the (politically incorrect) title or to incidents from the story that had been mentioned out of context in the review itself. This was my first warning that I had entered a truly volatile territory.

The next indication of controversy I was to face came when I decided to create an audio version of the book. I wanted to raise the visibility of the project, and being a big fan of audio books, I sent a copy of the first chapter to a few voice actors I thought might be interested. When none of them responded I was dumbstruck. I saw this as a very unique and artistically challenging opportunity. Why weren't they interested? Upon investigation I found that able-bodied actors were uneasy creating voices for the very "un-Gump-like" language and attitude of the developmentally disabled characters in Jaina's book.

Undeterred, I was convinced there was a great value in telling the story as Jaina had written it. A genuine truthful glimpse into the lives of a small group of intellectually disabled characters that was not patronizing or absurdly unrealistic. It was hard to name a film that had an intellectually disabled character that wasn't one-dimensional. What seemed to be missing from film and television was either the wisdom or the courage to portray the intellectually disabled as realistic characters who may misbehave, get angry, act out frustrations, long for acceptance and companionship, feel and sometimes act on sexual feelings - in other words, act like human beings.

In June 2004, after being alerted by a friend who had heard of it, I attended the *Perspectives International Film Forum* held at the Arclight Theater in Hollywood. The Forum featured an exciting and diverse program of domestic and international features, documentaries and short films that explored the lives of people with developmental disabilities. Each screening was followed by a lively and thought-provoking discussion between the filmmaker, a disabilities expert, and the audience. I stood up during the first panel discussion and asked how a producer could obtain a valid release from an actor who was developmentally disabled. Just having seen what

[1] "Won't Anybody Listen was critically acclaimed by major industry and media publications such as the Hollywood Reporter, Variety, New York Times, and Los Angeles Times. It was the rare documentary picked up for theatrical distribution by Seventh Art Releasing. Television rights were acquired by The Sundance Channel. Netflix has signed an exclusive DVD agreement and will make the movie available to its members in January.

was involved in obtaining "errors and omissions" insurance on *Won't Anybody Listen,* I had learned that each and every person appearing in a film must sign an airtight release of rights. Without the proper releases the film would be "uninsurable" and thus "un-releasable." The "panel" explained that under California law, if an intellectually disabled person was of legal age, and not conserved, they could sign a legal agreement on their own behalf. After the "panel" representatives from the Lantermen Regional Center, Easter Seals and Downs Syndrome Association of Los Angeles sought me out.

This gave me an opportunity to bring up issues that were weighing heavy on my mind. I had strong feelings about wanting to preserve the spirit of the book. Doing that would require going against the Hollywood formula of making intellectually disabled characters a "walking angel" that changed everyone's lives or the "unlikely genius" that saves the day. Making the film true to the book would require portraying the motley group home staff with its politically "INcorrect" language (as well as their hearts of gold), and "behaviors" by the "clients" that included adult language, public disruptions, and physical violence. I also wanted to use real intellectually disabled actors. I knew the integrity of the story would prevail and that the movie would stand on its own, however I was worried that isolated scenes or incidents from the book could be taken out of context and misunderstood by well meaning family and friends of the developmentally disabled.

All the representatives looked at me with knowing smiles and handed me their cards. They assured me that what they supported was multidimensional portrayals of intellectually disabled characters. They were also very supportive of using intellectually disabled actors to play the roles. They promised to help me with letters of support. After exchanging contact information I left the forum feeling heartened and newly energized.

Currently with the help of Jaina (the author) I have cast and begun recording an audio version of the book. Actors from Performing Arts West, Inglewood, CA and The Media Access Office, North Hollywood have been chosen. In addition able-bodied characters are being played by non-intellectually disabled (but otherwise handicapped) actors. After completing production on the first Chapter it will be submitted to Audible.com for their consideration. Audible.com has already expressed interest in the project but whatever their final decision I will finish and find a way to make the audio version publicly available, either through another distributor or through an online system from the book and movie web page. That said, I will be completing the rest of the audio book production during the months of January/February 2005 and press releases regarding the film project will be issued in connection with the January DVD release of *Won't Anybody Listen* by Netflix.

In the meantime, just as with my last film, the House of Tards (www.HouseofTards.com) web page will be developed and used to solicit funding and support for the production of the film. You can click on a link there to contribute any amount of money towards the creation of this new film. All contributors will be named in the final credits of the film (just as they were on *Won't Anybody Listen*).