

Behind the scenes look at the world of independent Christian filmmaking

Faith Flix



Kingdomwood was such a great assembly of talented Christian filmmakers. Forrest Tuff is one of those filmmakers. In addition to being an award winning filmmaker, he is also a respected Georgia businessman, humanitarian, and children's book author.

Forrest Tuff – Filmmaker, Photographer, Author, and Entrepreneur



ABOUT ME



Sharon Wilharm

I am a writer and filmmaker helping to spread the word about indie Christian filmmakers via my [Faith Flix blog](#). I mostly do e-mail interviews with actors and filmmakers, sharing about their personal careers or their individual films. I also do movie and book reviews and helpful articles of interest to filmmakers. I'm always on the lookout for new people to interview so let me know if you'd like to be interviewed. You don't have to be a household name. In fact, I've found my readers enjoy reading about little known individuals who are just getting established or who have been quietly working in the background.

My husband, Fred, and I have been making feature films for the past decade.

We are currently in post production on Providence, our newest film, getting ready for a limited theatrical release in February 2015.

Our last film, [The Good Book](#), an evangelistic silent film received numerous festival accolades including "Best Film", "Best Cinematography", and "Best Score" at the AFA Truth Awards, "Mostly Uplifting Film" at International Christian Film Festival, "Best Feature" and "Best Female Director" at GloryReelz Christian Film Festival, "Best Inspirational Film" at Hollywood Christian Film Festival, "Film Innovation Award" at Churches Making Movies, and many more awards and nominations including nomination for the prestigious "Best Mission" Stellae Award at the Pan Pacific Film Festival in Los Angeles. It released to DVD in February 2015 and is currently available in most Christian bookstores in the US as well as Australia and Canada .

Our film [Flowers for Fannie](#) is available at Christian bookstores across the country as well as online on [iTunes](#), [Google Play](#), [Christian Cinema](#), and [ChristianBook.com](#).

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First, tell us about your educational background.

I attended Druid Hills High School which was next door to Emory University. An avid athlete in high school, and dreams of becoming a professional NBA star, I lettered in basketball, football and track.

Upon graduating, I accepted an academic and basketball scholarship to Gordon State College. In only my second year at GSC and averaging 25 points per game, I became the #1 three-point shooter in the state of Georgia and 3rd in the nation. I received a full-ride basketball scholarship to Western Carolina University (Div I). My dreams of becoming an NBA player were now within reach. I chose to concentrate in Sports Medicine as a major. Unfortunately, I suffered a career ending injury to my shooting hand and had to focus on academics. I completed an internship at the #1 Georgia ranked Health South Orthopedic Clinic. After completing my internship and graduation ceremony (1996), I never worked in the field of Sports Medicine. So began my journey.

HALL OF FAME



What led to your transition from basketball star to entrepreneur?

Looking to find the same purpose in life that I had with basketball, relocating to Asheville North Carolina seemed reasonable at the time. I became an assistant manager at Footlocker and later manager of Wilson's Leather. After record-breaking success in sales, I began to realize my passion for sales, management and people interaction. After 5 years in Asheville, I decided to move back home. Picking up where I left off, I became a salesman for Radio Shack. After 3 months and garnering the #1 salesman in the region title, I was offered a management position and new store. I jumped at the opportunity! I helped to build the store from the ground up; hiring employees, setting up computer systems and organizing all inventory. After a few successful years with RadioShack, I parted ways to explore new ventures. In 2002, I decided to help my father's ministry and once again became the audio/visual director (with no formal training). Multimedia had changed drastically and I had my work cut out. I began to read books and experiment with various software. In August of 2003, during my church's 21st anniversary, I decided to make a movie on our history using a 8mm digital camera and Windows Movie Maker. After much trial and error, I created an exciting film consisting of picture slides and video from old VHS tapes. The church loved it and applauded the work with an inspiring ovation. Later, someone approached me and asked, "How much would you charge for a slideshow? I can pay you \$100." I found my purpose and in January 2004, I started One Vision Productions. After several years of working at the church and producing my father's TV show (*The Giver of Life*), I knew my time to leave was drawing near. In 2011, *The Giver of Life* won the Atlanta Interfaith Broadcast (AIB) Allen Award for best programming. I always feel it's best to leave on top. So, I began my journey as full-time CEO of One Vision Productions, LLC. Soon after making this decision, I was inducted into the Gordon State College Inaugural Basketball Hall of Fame in 2012. One chapter ends and another one begins.



Tell us a little about your work and accomplishments with One Vision Productions. One Vision Productions, LLC is an award-winning, client-focused multimedia company that

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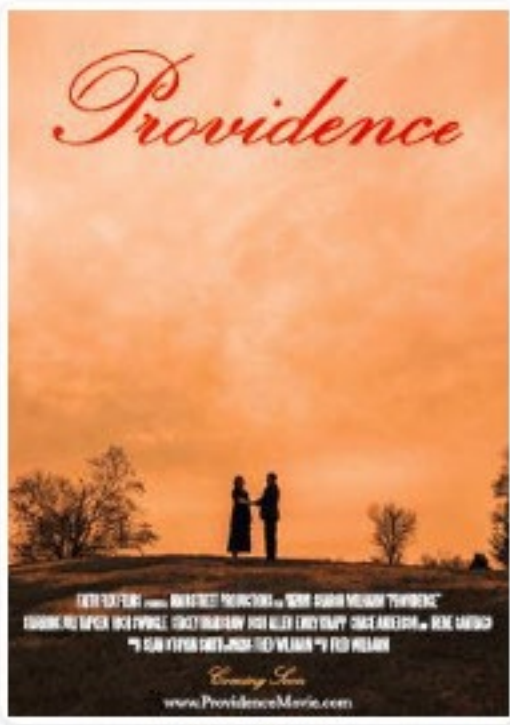
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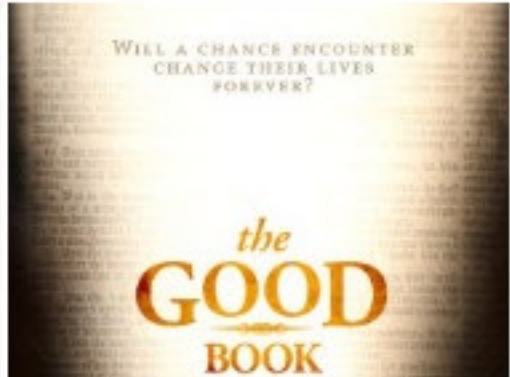
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PROVIDENCE



A New Redemptive Love Story

THE GOOD BOOK



concentrates on the development of powerful and creative productions. Founded in 2004, we have developed a diverse client-base ranging from small businesses to Fortune 100 companies. Some of our more notable clients are Canon, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Charlotte Russe, Coca-Cola, MillerCoors, Sam's, Sodexo, The Woodruff Arts Center and White House Black Market. One Vision Productions specializes in film, photography, video production, television shows, graphic and web design. We have maintained an A+ Rating with the Better Business Bureau and were the recipient of their Torch Award for Customer Service. We have been featured in the *Atlanta Business Journal*, *Black Enterprise*, *Business Leader Magazine* as one of the Top 300 Small Businesses in the Southeast and *CORP! Magazine* as one of Atlanta's Best and Brightest Companies to Work For.

One Vision Productions believes in giving back and supports various nonprofit organizations such as the American Heart Association, CARE and youthSpark, to name a few. We are an official Certifying Organization for the President's Volunteer Service Award and our community action initiative Pay It Forward provides financial donations to eligible non-profit, educational or faith-based organizations. We have received the United States Attorney's (Northern District of Georgia) Community Outreach Award, E3 Magazine's Spirit of Excellence Award and the Communitas Leadership Award for our community service.



What's the biggest difference between video production and filmmaking?
 Filmmaking uses the art of storytelling with words and visuals to create emotion. A filmmaker creates a hyper reality version of reality. A videographer is a person who shows up with a camera and shoots an event straight on. A filmmaker creates a hyper reality version of reality.

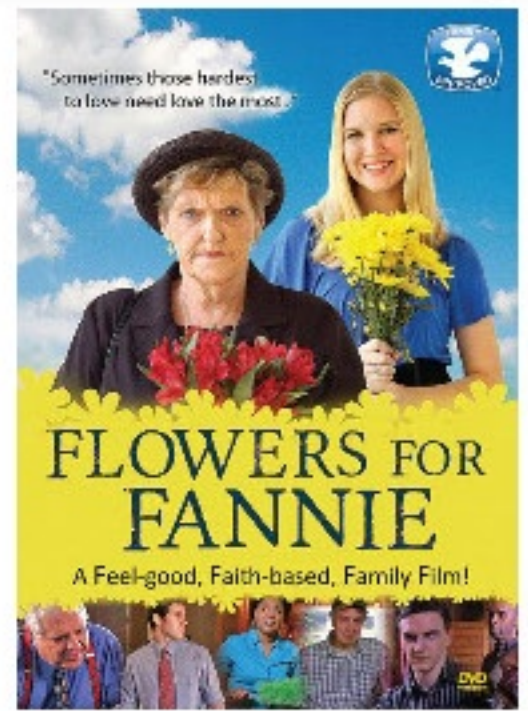
What is your goal as a filmmaker?
 As a filmmaker my goal is to reach, teach and entertain my audience. I want to create films that touch different human emotions and challenge others to look introspectively. Focusing on topics such as compassion, life's turmoil, human resilience and spirituality using the genres of action, comedy and drama to achieve those goals. I want to be relevant and remembered in the film business. I look to continue the legacy of great black entrepreneurial filmmakers such as Tyler Perry, Spike Lee and Oscar Micheaux,

I want my legacy to inspire others to dare, see limitations, but not be contained in them. I want others to speak of my obstacles, but to say that I didn't own them. Instead, I championed the idea that with the right tenacity, work ethic and team, I achieved my greatest ambitions. I would like to win an Academy Award (Oscar)



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Tell us about your award winning film *Confidence*.

Confidence is a film that deals with the trials of bullying (physically and online) that a young teenage girl has to deal with. In this movie, she struggles to find her place in the world and other people's bad dispositions, personal circumstances and self-hate become the catalyst for Confidence's low self-esteem. The project is significant to me because it deals with a prevalent issue in our society. This problem also extends to celebrities, people of various color, weight, religious preference and sexual orientation. Bullying in any form is hurtful and may have a catastrophic impact or outcome on a person or situation

I truly enjoyed working on this project. The DeKalb County School system will use the film as an anti-bullying PSA. I am very thankful to have had my wife India, Creative Dream Alliance, Dynasti (singing group), Principal Oliver Dean II, Principal, Dr. Marchell Boston and Freedom Middle School support this project. The lead characters, Sydney Tuff (as Confidence) and Jordan Tuff (Bully) are my two daughters. It was truly a joy working with them and completing a film that has had some success. A couple of the songs in the film belong to my brother Marcus Tuff "Sabbyth." He passed in 2011, shortly after completing his album and a month before he graduated from Full Sail University. We were very close and shared a love for music. I promised him that I would not let his music go unheard. So, it was very special to use music from his album "Pop Rockz" to help create a mood for different scenes.



What was your inspiration for writing a children's book?

At night, when I would put my two eldest daughters to sleep (when they were younger) and tell them made-up bedtime stories. One night, they said, "Dad you should write a book, your stories are the best!" Inspired by their belief in me, I started Happy Hopes Books. Using the pen name Horrace Forrest, I wrote my first children's book entitled, *Things I Like 3-D*. The reversible book comes with a pair of 3-D glasses and free audio cd. Once you have read the book with your 3-D glasses, flip it over and read it again without them.

Things I Like 3-D has simple sentence structure and strives to equip kids with reading skills which are aligned with today's reading standards. As a result, a child's knowledge of letters and sounds will be strengthened through phonemic awareness, repetition of sight words, and segmenting and blending sounds through pairs of rhyming words and initial consonants in single-syllable words. The publication was used in the DeKalb County School System at the elementary level. In 2010, I was nominated for the Georgia Author of the Year Award by The Georgia Writers Association.



What other projects do you have planned for the future?

I am currently the co-executive producer (with Ku Diggs) of the award-winning short film *Jackpot*. I am the editor (Directed by Shanalya Palmer) for a pilot TV series *Miss Winn's Garden* I am also working on a series of sports documentaries featuring various professional athletes.

Anything else?

a. I am a certified business mentor with the SCORE Association, "Counselors to America's Small Business" which is a non-profit association comprised of 13,000+ business counselors nationally who are trained to advise and mentor aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners pro bono, as a community service.

b. In 2007, I produced a Broadway-styled, musical stage play at the 14th Street Playhouse in Atlanta for The Way, The Truth and the Life Christian Center, Inc. The play entitled *The Mission* was the first faith-based stage play to premier on the main stage to a full-house.

c. In 2009, I created *Tuff TV Show*, an online sketch-comedy segment. Following comedians such as Eddie Murphy and Martin Lawrence, It portrayed several characters in my sketches. In 2011, *Tuff TV Show* won the International Videographer Award for Humor.



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- > [film resources](#) (2)
- > [Filmmaking Folks](#) (224)
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- > [Movies in Review](#) (22)
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- > [October 2014](#)
- > [September 2014](#)
- > [August 2014](#)
- > [July 2014](#)
- > [June 2014](#)
- > [May 2014](#)
- > [April 2014](#)
- > [March 2014](#)
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Tuff is happily married to his childhood friend India and proud father of three beautiful girls Jordan, Sydney and Skylar. He sits on several boards and in his spare time he is an avid photographer

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