

March 13, 2008

Dear Festival Programmers,

My name is Andrew Lange; I am the former president of the National Association for the Deaf and the current president of the Gallaudet University Alumni Association. For the greater part of my career, over the last 17 years, I have worked in the telecommunications industry with the Communication Services for the Deaf, HOVRS, Inc, Spirit Corporation, and AT&T. I have worked tirelessly to provide communication tools and advocate for the 20 million Americans with profound hearing loss and estimated 6 million American Sign Language users.

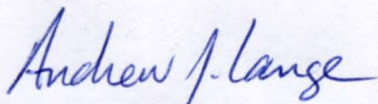
*Universal Signs* is especially significant to me. I was born hearing into a family of deafness, and at the age of 14, I progressively lost my hearing. My grandparents, parents, sisters, and brother along with many aunts, uncles, and cousins are Deaf. I am proud to be a third generation Deaf American.

Currently, I am work as a leadership consultant. Many of the organizations that contract me are looking for ways to unlock leadership potential, increase prosperity, step outside of the box, and embrace change. I believe that true leadership begins with leading ourselves, finding fulfillment not in isolation, but in collaboration with others.

I believe that *Universal Signs* is a leader and a guide; it sets new, lofty goals for Deaf and hearing filmmakers and the film industry. The film has vision and passion; it rises to the challenge of advocating and promoting a minority cultural group. It takes risks and pushes the boundaries not only with its filmmaking technique, but also by asking the hearing audience to step outside their normal comfort zone. It communicates on a profoundly deep level with a story that unites people through common human experiences – love, loss, and forgiveness. *Universal Signs* is about one man's personal transformation, and asks its audience to transform as well by requesting them to change their perception, attitude, and emotions about deafness and Deaf people.

*Universal Signs* is important to Deaf Americans. *Universal Signs* is important to all Americans. In a time where many films seek provocation through death and destruction, *Universal Signs* enlightens with hope and peace. This is true leadership. I request that you include *Universal Signs* in your festival.

Best regards,



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