

THE COUNTDOWN (5:49 minutes)
Directed by Rene Dongo
Produced by ICA Fast Forward Boston
Winner of the Emerging Artist Award



About the Film

The Countdown is a collaboration that had been in the works ever since Sofia Snow and I met. We have been friends since taking the bus home together in the 3rd grade. Since giving her The Spoken Word Revolution for her birthday, Sofia has come to every screening of my first short films. We are friends who have supported each other through the years, but it wasn't until our senior year that we had the idea to come together and create something. Our trust in each other came out through the process of making the film.

With a work-in-progress piece titled The Countdown, Sofia decided to challenge herself by capturing the emotions that 9/11 created. To me, it was important not to take away from what Sofia had to say but to evoke the viewer to dig into their own memories of their experience. She trusted in my vision and I trusted Sofia in hers. When we came together to shoot, it flowed just like her poetry.

The Countdown is something very personal for both of us and we appreciate the idea that others can take something away from it as well.

Filmmaker Bios

Rene Dongo, Director

Rene Dongo, a Boston native, began to make short films as a student of Boston's ICA Fast Forward program. He strives to create new emotions with the use of humor or charged imagery in his films. Rene has shown his work in festivals across the country, including the Atlanta Teen Screen, Future Filmmakers Festival Chicago, Cloud Place Youth Fusion Film Series and Roxbury Film Festival where he won "Best Youth Filmmaker" in 2005. Rene is currently a film major at Emerson College.

ICA / Fast Forward Production, Producer

The mission of The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) is to share the pleasures of reflection, inspiration, provocation and imagination that contemporary art offers through public access to art, artists and the creative process. Its extensive education program includes a Teen Arts Council as well as the Fast Forward Teen Video program. In existence for over ten years, Fast Forward is now a major component of the ICA's Teen New Media program.

The Fast Forward program fosters a teen-centered environment that ultimately allows teens to develop technical, social and leadership skills in an open, creative and supportive environment. Teens apply to the Fast Forward program year after year because it provides

them with access to the highest quality equipment while giving them the freedom to create works of video art that they find meaningful. While basic project guidelines are established by Fast Forward staff, teens are free to create films about their families, themselves, their cultural background or any issue that interests them.

Take Action

Model UN Headquarters (<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/modelun/index.asp>)
Start your own Model United Nations! Discuss possible solutions to local and global problems with your peers.

American Immigration Law Foundation (<http://www.aifl.org>)
Want some context on this issue? Check out these resources and find out how the US's immigration and security policies after 9/11 are affecting immigrants today.

Outreach World (<http://www.outreachworld.org/resource.asp?curriculumid=174>)
Help to foster understanding and cross-cultural appreciation! Find resources and lesson plans on how to teach respect for ethnic and religious diversity, and much more.

Poetry Slam, Inc (http://poetryslam.com/index.php?option=com_sobi2&Itemid=75)
Like what you heard? Now check out one of the international slam poetry sessions and speak up!

For more information about *The Countdown* and the other films from the eighth annual Media That Matters Film Festival, visit www.mediathatmattersfest.org or contact us at festival@artsengine.net.

