



PrimeLife RCUITS

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Creative Inspiration of Harlan Rector

By Suzanne Corbett

Ask Harlan Rector about his remarkable multi-faceted career he simply says it was luck.

"I was in the right place at the right time most of my life," said Harlan. "I was lucky."

Granted, luck was a factor. But I think Harlan was led down a creative path, which took him from St. Louis to New York and Los Angeles, where he honed his creative talents as an art director and media producer for numerous national ad agencies. It was during one of his commercial productions Harlan found himself filling in as the voice talent.

"That was a job that had a tight budget. So since we didn't have anyone to do the voice over, I did it myself," said Harlan. "After it was recorded, someone asked me to have my agent call them. I had to laugh because at that time I didn't have one."

That opened the door of opportunity that led Harlan to New York, where he became the voice for countless commercials, including Manwich and Quaker Oats.

"One day, I got a call from my agent telling me that a new cable channel was deciding between me and another guy for being their voice. That was the History Channel. That other guy was James Earl Jones so I didn't think I had a chance - but I got it."

Harlan's next success arrived from more divine inspiration than luck, taking him to the new role playwright and lyricist.

"It just started coming to me one day," said Harlan. "I would write the words to the songs that were coming to me on a yellow pad. When I was done, I had 14 songs. I looked at it and thought this could be a musical."

After connecting with a composer and adding a few more songs, the score and book for A.D. The Musical was complete. A.D. is a story that brings Morty, an angel who only recently arrived in heaven back to earth along with the old prophet Isaiah to produce a musical revenue based on Jesus' life. Morty, thinking he is going back to his hometown of Manhattan, Kansas is shocked when he arrives in Manhattan, New York to produce the show.

"The switch sets the stage for a humorous yet an inspiring story," said Harlan, who noted the musical's characters reflect many different religions. "Besides the entertainment factor, it's my hope A.D. will help reconnect one to their faith."

A.D.'s musical score is a lively collection of songs produced with full orchestra accompaniment.

"I even sent Andrew Lloyd Webber a sample of the work for his review," said Harlan, who actually received an encouraging letter in return.

A.D. The Musical is Harlan's second Christian based production project. He also wrote and produced L.I.G.H.T. (Living In God's Hands Today), a dramatic radio drama with true stories of how God works in people's lives. L.I.G.H.T. was produced in New York City using some of the local leading actors and voiceover talent. Harlan produced 39 episodes, which ran on Christian radio stations across the country and won the coveted Angel Award for 'Excellence in Broadcasting.'

Harlan continues to serve as the voice of Blue Bell Ice Cream and in his spare time takes pleasure in art. He is an accomplished artist in paint and watercolor.

When asked how this multi-talented man does all that he does, Harlan smiled and said, "Inspiration."

