



FILM CREW PREPARES TO SHOOT LOCAL SCENE
(L-R) Steff Gruber, Director; Billy Sherrill; and Andy Humphries

'Shady Grove' Footage To Feature Athens Sites

By ANNE PELFREY
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It's a hot afternoon and the Athens sun beats down on a film crew fidgeting with cameras and sound equipment on a construction site.

Bulldozers groan about their work of pushing red mud to make way for the Athens Bypass, while film crew members mull over their work. The crew is making a movie called "Shady Grove." The movie is one which its Swiss producer-director says attempts to create a new reality through film.

The film, according to 25-year-old producer/director Steff Gruber, captures the past and present in the conversations between a woman and the two men she loved. But it does so in a more realistic way than traditional films, he indicates.

The three main characters in the film were actually involved in relationships with one another. Gruber, himself, lived with the woman in the movie for more than a year in Europe. The woman returned to Athens and Gruber followed her. He lived here for less than a year before returning to Europe.

This is a film about Gruber, the woman and her ex-husband. It is a film about the three persons as they relate five years after the break-up between Gruber and the woman.

There is no rehearsal and there is no pre-planned dialogue. The film records the actual conversations between the three persons and others.

"We shoot this movie like one would

shoot a sophisticated documentary," Gruber says. "So the actors or characters play real life. They don't act."

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Even though the characters are realistic in the sense that they were involved in past relationships, there is a question about whether or not the three persons would have ever met together without being asked to do so for the movie. "Without the camera," Gruber says, "one could walk off."

The camera forces the individuals to commit themselves to talk with one another. This commitment which the camera imposes on the individuals is what creates the "new reality."

It's is not necessarily a true reality, Gruber indicates. In reality, the three might never have had a conversation together.

Gruber had feared that the camera would inhibit the characters. But, rather than inhibit them, it allowed them to open up and discuss their feelings.

Gruber and his crew filmed what he plans to be the last scene in his movie Monday afternoon on the College Station Road at the construction site of the Athens Bypass.

Gruber and the young woman walk together along the barren area where construction has begun. The couple is in the distance — away from the camera which is rolling. A crew member holds a long microphone picking up the grinding sound of the bulldozers.

One, if he looked for meaning in the scene, might see the symbol of starting anew. The grinding sound of the bulldozers might represent the churning under of memories and past dreams making way for something new.

The making of the movie will cost approximately \$150,000, according to Linda Depascale of Depascale Advertising and Public Relations. Mrs. Depascale is handling publicity for Gruber's film.

Gruber earned the money for his film by working with a Zurich advertising agency which he began several years ago with only \$20. Gruber runs the agency so that he can earn enough money to make films.