

ANGELS IN THE DUST

A Film by Louise Hogarth
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NOTE: I wrote this treatment for award-winning filmmaker Louise Hogarth when she was seeking funding to finish shooting her African AIDS documentary Angels in the Dust. She subsequently used it to secure a production and distribution deal with Participant Productions (makers of the Oscar-winning Al Gore film An Inconvenient Truth). Hogarth's completed film is now playing in film festivals around the world.

– Diana Rico

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

More than 14 million children worldwide have been orphaned because of AIDS. That's the equivalent of every child under five in America with no one to watch over them.
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ANGELS IN THE DUST (80-90 min.) tells the story of Botshabelo and its founders, Marion Cloete, her husband Con and their three daughters, who gave up their wealth to build a village and school that provides shelter, food and education as well as love, hope and healing to more than 550 orphans and other children in need. The story of this amazing family's compassion and sacrifice is a beacon of hope for a nation overwhelmed by an epidemic of HIV/AIDS, orphans, rape, violence and Apartheid's legacy of social and political unrest.

BACKGROUND:

Often documentaries are produced that investigate human rights abuses. Documentarians choose these subjects with the hope that the horrors of the past will not be repeated. **ANGELS IN THE DUST** is a vehicle that will make people aware of the gross human rights violation that is occurring right now in South Africa. Currently the only known scientific treatment for HIV/AIDS is antiretroviral drugs, or ARVs. ARVs can suppress HIV infections and extend an individual's life ten to fifteen years or longer (no one knows for certain, as the drugs have only been available since 1996). Most of the world may not realize that this known treatment for HIV/AIDS is barely available in South Africa. Tragically, both President Mbeki and his Minister of Health are in AIDS denial. They don't believe HIV causes AIDS; consequently, they are denying treatment to their own people. Over 6 million South Africans are currently infected, and there are more than one million orphans due to HIV/AIDS. To the public, Health Minister Manto frequently highlights the risks and side effects of ARVs while praising the benefits of a diet strong in beetroot, garlic, olive oil and lemon as a "treatment" for AIDS.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu has called HIV/AIDS "the new Apartheid." Out of the 6 million infected in South Africa, approximately 200,000 are receiving ARV treatment, largely supplied by corporations to enable skilled workers to stay healthy. The government has turned a blind eye to the staggering HIV/AIDS crisis, refusing any real medical support in the form of a promised ARV rollout ("rollout" is the process of making HIV/AIDS drugs widely available). Pfizer Pharmaceutical and the Clinton Foundation, who had tried to bring widespread treatment to South Africans, recently pulled out of South Africa because of administrative difficulties with the current government.

CNN recently produced *The End of AIDS: A Global Summit*, hosted by President Bill Clinton. He told us mind-numbing statistics for the projected HIV/AIDS horror. By the year 2010, only four years from now, 100 million people will be living with the HIV/AIDS virus, 40 million children will

be orphaned, and one in five adults will die in Sub-Saharan Africa. Clinton also expressed that AIDS is like a fire threatening to consume our world. He posed the question, "What can we as Americans do to fight this war of HIV/AIDS on a global scale?" **ANGELS IN THE DUST** offers one possible answer, as our cameras find in an unknown corner of South Africa a replicable model of hope for the future.

PROLOGUE

FADE IN. Establishing shot of the African savannah. As the camera gradually zooms in, we see a herd of elephants—bulls, matriarchs, babies—moving slowly through the veldt. From far away we hear the sound of helicopters approaching. As the herd grazes, undisturbed, several helicopters come into view. In voiceover we hear: "1992 elephant cull—killing adults as a means of population control. Kruger National Park, South Africa."

Suddenly we hear the sound of rifle shots. Elephants start dropping to their knees. The herd goes wild: bulls running, babies crying. A helicopter swoops down towards a matriarch; a marksman on board downs her with one shot to the head.

Cut to: Interior, a warehouse filled with bunk beds. Nighttime. We see a matronly white South African woman surrounded by black children who are ready for bed. "They didn't know what to do with the baby elephants—they had no mummy, no daddy to look after them," she tells the children. "So you know what they did? They decided that they were going to move a whole lot of the baby elephants. They didn't go and speak to the mother elephant before she died. They took all her babies away from her, and they said, 'She is an animal. She doesn't care.' Do you think she cared?" The kids yell, "Yes!" "You'll never guess what happened when the baby elephants grew up," she continues. "In a few days we're going to go to the park, and we're going to see those baby elephants."

MAIN TITLES: "ANGELS IN THE DUST"

ACT 1

Cut to a TV news clip:

"HIV/AIDS is the new Apartheid, the new enemy. People are dying, people whose lives could be extended by getting the right drugs. Discussing whether this or that is the cause is a luxury we cannot afford." Archbishop Desmond Tutu, SABC TV, October 2005

Cut to Magaliesberg, South Africa. Over footage of a child's funeral in an obviously poor community, we hear the voice of the same woman who told the children about the elephants: "I watch as the children and adults move past the coffin, giving her a blessing for her journey. Nobody cries. This is our life. Most of the children have lost a parent, a relative or sibling from AIDS."

Our cameras find the speaker: MARION CLOETE, 48, surrounded by playful black children who clearly love her as much as she loves them. We learn that Marion, her husband CON, and their three daughters gave up a life of privilege in order to build Botshabelo, an orphanage, school and village that provide shelter and hope to more than 550 children in need.

In a montage of scenes from Botshabelo, we see young children feeding, clothing, carrying, dressing and bathing smaller children; children playing on a merry-go-round that pumps water into the nearby village; children gardening; children in school. We hear Marion's voiceover: "The

children are the angels in the dust. We have to lift them. And let them stand in the dust so that they'll be straight. Many of the children we find are lying face down in the dust in a dark place and lost. But children don't qualify as caretakers. Their heart space is not big enough to have that spirit to grow and care for yourself at the same time. And they've got beautiful wings – have you got wings, Lillian? Oh, yes. Show me how big your wings are.”

The camera goes to twelve-year-old LILLIAN as she happily holds her arms out as wide as she can. Lillian tells us her story: one day, while her grandfather was working, a family friend raped her. Lillian was only five. To ensure her safety, her grandfather took Lillian to live in Botshabelo. “Marion did counseling with me, and I started getting better,” Lillian tells us. “And then at night whenever I sleep, that man came to me on my dreams and said that whenever I tell somebody, he is going to kill me. Marion put my bed next to hers. Whenever I dream bad things, she wakes up and makes for me coffee. I am happy I am staying here because I am safe.”

We learn that Marion is a university-trained therapist who has taken traditional European-based counseling methods several innovative steps further. Dealing every day with the devastation brought about by HIV/AIDS has forced her to develop new tools. As we see in her work with the orphans, she combines Western scientific treatments with modalities drawn from traditional African wisdom and Eastern spirituality. Lillian demonstrates how Marion used sound therapy to help her find a safe place inside herself. She crosses her arms around her chest and begins to hum what she refers to as “the mummy sound,” explaining: “I say that I push the world so that men can get away from me.”

Cut to the neighborhood surrounding Botshabelo. The camera shows us crowded huts, rutted roads, open sewage, hungry children, grannies carrying raggedy toddlers, children caring for dying adults. Marion explains that the word *Botshabelo* means “place of safety.” We meet Lillian's grandfather, JOSEPH, who tells Marion that she's African, because she's running a village in the old African way. Marion explains the ancient African concept of *Ubuntu*, which means, “Everything that I am, I am that through you.”

Next we visit Bryanston, the wealthy Johannesburg suburb where Marion, her husband Con, and their three daughters once lived a life of luxury. As we walk through an elegant walled estate, Marion recounts that during Apartheid, many African women were employed as live-in domestic workers, and by law, their infants had to leave the white area nine weeks after birth. Marion began illegally hiding children in their home so that the children's mothers could visit them. “Marion was always being arrested,” remembers Con. Finally, disapproving neighbors pressured them to move. The Cloetes walked away from their five-bedroom house, swimming pool, servants, and many family and friends to create Botshabelo. “The most amazing thing I've come to realize is how little it takes for one to live,” says Con. “Some people say, ‘Yeah, but you're surviving.’ No, I'm not surviving. The quality of life here far surpasses anything that money can actually buy me.”

Back at Botshabelo, Marion and her 28-year-old daughter LEIGH are called to care for MARGARET, a 23-year-old mother who's dying of AIDS. Margaret will leave behind two young children. The children watch as Marion tries to convince Margaret to go to the hospital, but Margaret won't admit she has AIDS. The next day, Margaret dies. “What happens is your parents die,” Marion says. “You move in with your aunts and uncles, and they die. Then you move in with your granny, and she dies.”

“These children have nowhere to go,” adds Leigh. “The government doesn't support orphanages like Botshabelo. They have these drop-in centers.” Cut to a nearby drop-in center, where we see tiny children no older than five singing songs. “The children get one meal a day, and they only get care for a few hours,” because the drop-in centers are for daycare only. At dusk, our camera follows several small children as a center employee drives them to their cold, dark, dangerous

villages and leaves them to fend for themselves. "We're losing everyone," Marion says in voiceover. "In the future we're going to have many, many more children without parents. The nuclear family's dead."

Cut to a TV news clip:

*Ten thousand TAC (Treatment Action Campaign) members march in Pretoria to call for "countrywide access to HIV prevention, ARV treatment and decent care."
SABC News, May 2006*

Another day. Establishing shot of Botshabelo. Cut to the school grounds, where 30 kids are practicing karate. As the camera zooms in on TOMMY, 15, we hear his voiceover: "Me and my sister, we were always starving. We begged for food. She cried and cried. I gave her my food. It was not safe." Cut to Leigh and her twin sister, NICOLE, sitting on a log watching the karate practice. Nicole says, "The aunt used to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning because she had to go very far to work. And they'd just lock Tommy and his sister Dapur outside. He used to go from house to house begging for food."

Next, we meet shy, sweet VIRGINIA, 14, whose mother died when Virginia was six. By age eight, Virginia became very sick from HIV. We learn that Virginia occasionally attended the Botshabelo School. Virginia was painfully thin and didn't have enough clothes. The teachers brought her to Marion's attention. Con recounts how Marion went looking in the hills for Virginia. When she found the girl, she was so ill that "there was no part of her body that wasn't covered in pus," Marion says. Virginia, in fact, was on the verge of death when she came to Botshabelo. She did nothing but eat and lay down, preparing to die, with Marion's help. "When a child comes in, and they are broken," says Marion, "I have to have a team. And the team is normally made up of their own angels – I feel it."

Cut to the local state hospital, where we see two children per every bed. Marion counsels a child who is dying. Marion continues in voiceover: "We aren't working just with the physical – there are spiritual beings that are with this child. When a child is dying – oh, it's amazing. You can actually feel the angels around us. Because they're so busy."

Now we meet lively, bubbly, teenaged BETTY, who is something of a wild child. Betty was a day scholar at the Botshabelo School. Betty tells us how she had sex with someone she was in love with. He told her that to prove her love, she had to have sex without condoms. Betty agreed. "I thought I loved him and he loved me," she says. We follow Betty as she is taken for an HIV test, and we discover she is HIV positive. Her boyfriend leaves her after she tests positive.

Betty tells Marion that when she informed her mother of her HIV status, her mother got very angry and kicked her out of the house. The orphanage took her in. Cut to a montage of children at the orphanage singing, welcoming three new children, washing dishes and jumping rope. In voiceover, we hear that Marion has an open-door policy: "It's my agreement with the angels. We'll never turn anyone away. I did that once, and I paid bitterly for it. Because when we didn't have enough food, I turned away about 30 children, and some of them died, some of them were raped; and I learned a bitter lesson, and that's mine to carry."

Cut to a TV news clip:

*Nozipho, the daughter of Ruth Bhengu, a national politician, gained prominence by publicly refusing ARVs. Instead she followed remedies endorsed by the health minister: beetroot, garlic, olive oil and lemon. Nozipho died at age 32. Health Minister Manto Tshabala-Msimang says, "Ruth Bhengu's courage in dealing with her daughter's HIV/AIDS has inspired me."
SABC News, May 2006*

Marion, watching the TV news broadcast, says, "The death of Nozipho was unnecessary. Her mother and Manto have murdered her."

DIP TO BLACK.

ACT 2

FADE IN. Thirty-five children are clambering onto a safari bus, along with Marion, Con, Leigh, and Nicole. Cut to establishing shot: "Welcome to Pilanesberg National Park Manyane Gate." The bus drives in. From the bus interior, we see POV shots of rhinos, wildebeests, springbok, and giraffes intercut with footage of the excited children.

MARION: Remember I told you what happened to the elephants.

ALL: Yes.

CHONI: They left the babies, and they took their mother away.

MARION: Do you think that was good?

ALL: No.

MARION: Why?

CHONI: Because the babies are going to be naughty, because their mother had not taught them what's right and what was wrong.

MARION: They became very, very naughty. So it's very, very important to have a--?

ALL: Mother.

Back at Botshabelo, the children's painful pasts must be uncovered and dealt with. In counseling, Marion gradually discovered that Lillian was raped by a family friend. In another counseling session, Lillian revealed to Marion that she had told her mother and her mother had not believed her. Marion tries to get Lillian to forgive her mother, Zelda, who is dying of HIV/AIDS.

LILLIAN: The time my mom didn't listen to me makes me the angriest.

MARION: Because actually you were raped twice, weren't you?

LILLIAN: Yes.

MARION: The first rape was by a man, and the second was a rape of your trust. And that's painful, isn't it? But one day if your daughter tells you such a sad thing, would you believe her?

LILLIAN: Yes. I would believe her.

Cut to Tommy, who suffered intense starvation when he was very young; at times, he lived on nothing more than hot water, giving what little food he could scrounge to his beloved little sister Dapur. "We're dealing with the hunger issues," explains Marion. "I mean he had terrible stomachaches all the time. When I did counseling and we actually went there, we just found this big black hole that you could never fill. So we did counseling on that and he's much, much better now."

But memories of hunger are not the only cross Tommy bears. "Tommy's just buried his mum," says Marion. "He's buried his whole family. His father died. His baby brother died, and Dapur, his sister, died. But he's not HIV positive."

But Tommy has also found joy, healing and self-respect by studying karate, a sport for which it turns out he has a natural gift. We see Tommy practicing his karate and learn that he has competed all the way up through the ranks to become a South African champion.

Cut to Virginia. At age 11, she was on the brink of death, with full-blown AIDS. Just when it appeared Virginia would die, a local woman, Jenny Gillis, offered the money to provide the ARV drugs for one child. Virginia started taking the cocktails and made a miraculous recovery. We see Virginia taking her cocktails on her own and hear her tell Marion she wants to be a pharmacist when she grows up.

Next, we see Betty leaving the orphanage to take medicine and food to an old woman. She's also become a full-fledged HIV-prevention activist: "If I am going to have sex, I have to make sure that I am going to use a condom," Betty says. "And if you say no, I am not going to have sex with you. Goodbye." Betty's a rarity in the village—a young woman who talks publicly and often about her HIV status and about prevention.

But Betty, who is unable to get ARV treatment because the drugs are hard to obtain and expensive (R980 SA per month, or \$163 US), is very worried about dying. One day we see three of Betty's cousins arrive at the village to pick up two young children whose mother had died. The dead mother was also related to Betty. In voiceover we hear Betty say, "I thought like all the world was falling onto me. I was like dead already. I'm not going to live. It's just that too many people are dying which I know and which I love. And sometimes I wonder if I could like save their lives, I would. Too bad I can't."

Because Betty is worn down by the stress of so much death, Marion sets up a death counseling session for all the children. We watch as Marion goes around the room, and we discover that every child in the circle has experienced death. "We are in a massive death concentration camp, and no one gives children counseling for death," says Marion in voiceover. "That's why we are doing our death circles, talking about death, because it's now become our cousin. It used to be a distant relative, and then it became a cousin, and actually it's becoming a parent."

Betty comes into the session very upset. By the end, her fears seem to be assuaged; we see she is back to her ebullient self. "Having counseling, it helped me. Now I can feel that I am alive."

Cut to a TV news clip:

"The South African Police Services in Queenstown brutally assaulted and then opened fire on unarmed, peaceful protesters asking for HIV treatment." Frontier Hospital serves a population of 200,000 people. It is estimated that 2,000 people need treatment, but fewer than 200 are on treatment. Eight people have been put on treatment this year. SABC News, July 12, 2005

Cut to b-roll of Lillian playing cat's cradle with other kids, playing with her doll, hugging a younger child. In voiceover we hear Marion say, "When I worked with the children, these little angels in the dust, I thought my heart was cracking up. I thought I was dying, from the things I heard and had to help them with. But my heart wasn't cracking, it was growing."

Cut to Lillian talking about how she cannot forgive the man who raped her. "One word. Forgiveness," says Marion. "You can never, ever get rid of something until you forgive it. The more the hate and the revenge brews, the closer it comes into your face. You just have to love something to let it go." Like her innovative counseling methods, Marion's work with rape victims is also on the leading edge. She refuses to vilify the rapist/perpetrator, seeing him as another victim in a long cycle of abuse that must be broken, and she also recognizes the healing power of forgiveness. But Lillian is not an adult; she cannot let go of her rage yet.

MARION: So Lillian, this guy that raped you, let's talk about him, think about him. If he came here and just said, "I had a terrible father. He raped me when I was a child. My parents were alcoholics. I never had a proper home." Do you think you could maybe forgive him?

LILLIAN: No.

MARION: No. Because he stole something from you, hey?

LILLIAN: Yes.

MARION: What do you think he stole from you? Can you get it back? Show me how much he stole from you with your hands. Show me how much he stole. *(Lillian holds her hands out as wide as she can.)*

MARION: See, that's what's been taken away. It's bigger than her.

Lillian decides she wants to be tested for HIV. As her mother Zelda is still Lillian's legal guardian, Marion must go and ask her permission. "If the mother doesn't even believe that she was raped and she now asks her mother for an HIV status test, the next thing she is going to scream at her and say, 'You've been naughty with boys.' So either way, she is not going to win," says Marion. But "the mother knows that when it comes to children's rights, I am immovable. So I will go and see her."

Cut to footage of white men in their expensive cars pulling up to the road outside Botshabelo and picking up teenaged girls for sex. We hear Marion in voiceover: "Very fancy cars come out here, 4x4s, BMWs, and pick up my girls. And they want sex without condoms. And they pay more. Perhaps they think our children are not infected. And they are infected." In a surprise twist, we discover that one of the girls is none other than Betty. Angry and broken, freaked out about her impending AIDS death, we learn that Betty has become more and more emotionally unstable. She has left the orphanage and is now working as a prostitute. We will talk to Betty about why she—previously an outspoken advocate of AIDS prevention—is now risking lives by sleeping with men without condoms. Through her contacts, Marion sends out the word to Betty that she would like to see her—but will Betty be willing to face her?

Cut to a TV news clip:

"The South African Doctor's Association predicts HIV/AIDS infection rate could easily be 50% in the next two years." Special Assignment, May 30, 2006

DIP TO BLACK.

ACT 3

FADE IN. Back at Pilanesberg National Park, the children are sitting on the grass, listening raptly to a uniformed PARK RANGER: "The elephants that we see in Pilanesberg have got a sad story. If they could tell a story, the story goes like this. These young elephants were mostly orphaned elephants because when they wanted to bring down the number of elephants, they would usually kill the adult ones. So these orphaned youngsters were all bundled into a truck, transported to Pilanesberg and then released into the park."

Cut to footage of baby elephants being unloaded into a park by African handlers. The little elephants scream, sulk, run at the handlers, butt them with their heads. The ranger continues in voiceover: "Now, imagine all the youngsters put in a strange land, in a strange park with nobody to take care of them. Elephants are like people." Cut to footage of the elephants, now slightly older. Instead of being in a normal herd, these elephants stand in isolated groups of two or three. The ranger continues: "They live in a group, and they raise their kids, and they teach their kids how to live and how to behave. But these youngsters were unfortunate. They didn't have anybody to guide them elephant-wise. So they misbehaved."

Cut to the elephants, now teenagers, aggressively attacking each other, hurting each other. In voiceover, the ranger continues, "They misbehaved in the sense of running after the rhinos, killing

the rhinos, wanting to mate with the rhinos and doing all of these things that were not very much in line with elephants. So it was a very big concern.” Cut back to the ranger on-camera: “Pilanesberg lost more than 30 wild rhinos that were killed by elephants who were misbehaving. The park management decided to bring in adult elephants. And within months, the behavior of these youngsters was corrected. And as time went on, they started behaving in an acceptable elephant way.”

Cut to reaction shots of the Botshabelo orphans as they take in the ranger's words: “Now this is a lesson that does not only end up with elephants. It can be extended to us as human beings. Even if you don't have a mommy to take care of you or a father to take care of you, there would be people who can adopt you like those elephants adopted the youngsters, and you can grow up being no different from anyone who has grown having both parents to look after them.”

It's now October 2006. Virginia is turning 15—the age at which she is legally considered an adult. That means she must leave the hospital where she's been receiving treatment for five years and the doctor with whom she has a strong bond. In October, we will film Virginia as she travels to Joburg Hospital, two hours away from Botshabelo, to enroll in the adult healthcare system. We will see 800 people in line before 8 a.m. Even when people make it to the head of the line, often the ARVs are not available. But, unlike hundreds of other sufferers we'll see at the hospital, Virginia has more than a fighting chance—she has advocates in Marion and Con, who read and write and have access to money for transportation. With Marion and Con helping her, we will watch as the 15-year-old orphan navigates the adult system to seek the treatment she needs.

As Virginia is learning to make her way through the healthcare system, Lillian wants to find out whether she has the HIV virus. We will follow Marion as she goes to convince Lillian's ill mother, Zelda, to grant permission for Lillian to be tested. We will film Lillian as she goes into a local clinic in the nearby city of Krugersdorp to get her HIV test, and we will discover whether she is positive or negative. This information will be juxtaposed against Lillian talking about her hopes and dreams for the future. Lillian, who has a lovely voice, wants to be a singer and dancer. “I am going to go to Krugersdorp and then I find a way where they, eh, practice, people can sing and dance and then I will learn. When I am finished, I will come back again here to live.” We will film her happily taking dance lessons in Krugersdorp; the reality of her health condition will color how we feel about her pursuing her artistic goals.

Cut to Tommy, who, like Lillian, is pursuing his dreams. As he continues to excel in karate, he competes in various contests. We will film Tommy taking part in a major karate championship and witness firsthand how he handles the challenge. We will also see that Tommy is doing well on the psychological front, as he works through some critical issues with Marion's help. Our cameras will capture Marion and Tommy as she does counseling with him around the subjects of sexuality and death. When death is everywhere, and it's been brought on by sexual activity, how will a child learn to separate the two? As we follow Marion's unique blend of therapeutic modalities in action, we observe concrete evidence of how Tommy is being helped to overcome his demons:

MARION (*as camera zooms in on Tommy*): I know you will be an excellent father. You are already. I mean, you are still helpful with the small children, with everything. He is very caring, very compassionate. Imagine, he is very compassionate and yet, he was not shown a drop of compassion. I mean, how is that possible?

TOMMY: I will be a father and, eh, I will feed my children. Never will they be alone.

Elsewhere in Botshabelo we find other signs of hope. From Con we learn that Jenny Gillis, the local woman who provided ARVs for Virginia, has set up a trust for monthly contributions. As a result, Con tells us, “Locals have given us money to treat three more” in Botshabelo. The cost of ARVs has come down considerably as well, to R425 SA (about \$53 US) per month.

And there is more surprising news. Our cameras catch Betty as she arrives at Botshabelo to meet with Marion and Con; Betty is shocked to find that Con and Marion are willing to take her back, no questions asked, no recriminations, no judgment. "I think she realized how rough it is out there," says Con. Adds Marion, "Lots of things have been written about Jesus, but the one thing that he was trying to teach us was about love, and using it as a tool inside of you. And that's what we're doing. We just use that tool." Betty, crying, says, "I was so scared, so afraid. Marion is my mom and Con is my dad." We learn that Betty has decided to give up prostitution.

Marion ends by saying, "But of course the biggest question that everybody asks us is, 'Why? Why? Why would you do this?' This is my child, and this is your child. They belong to all of us. I just happen to be doing it full-time. In Africa, in South America, in India, we are all going to have to come together and say, 'We are the parents.' Otherwise, we're going to be in chaos. And why? Then I have to say, 'Why not? Do you have something better to do with your life than to help children survive what has happened on this continent?'"

*"You don't have to have the connections of a Bill Clinton or the money of Bill Gates; we can all donate time, or give \$5-10. **Nevertheless, you must realize you can make a difference and because you can you must.**"* Bill Clinton, "The End of Aids: A Global Summit," CNN, April 2006

CREDIT ROLL.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT:

I try to show different kinds of heroes. The Cloete family demonstrates courage, forgiveness and a tolerance and a love of humanity I have never ever encountered anywhere. This is the story of a family choosing the spiritual world over the material and the rich benefits accrued from a choice made out of love.

These themes of hopefulness and joy, present even in the most dire and tragic of circumstances, is what I wish my audience to take away from **ANGELS IN THE DUST**. My hope is that those who are touched by the stories of the orphans and Marion's generosity of spirit will feel encouraged in their own lives to overcome adversity and experience happiness no matter what has befallen them.

ANGELS IN THE DUST is only the first step in an ambitious campaign which will focus on making AVR treatment available and contribute to ending the cycle of violence and despair for South Africa's poorest children. Today the most urgent need is to increase access to HIV/AIDS treatment for parents, particularly mothers who are infected. The longer parents can be kept alive, the more children can be raised to a socialized adulthood.

Using **ANGELS IN THE DUST** as a tool for awareness and training, I hope to present Botshabelo as a pilot program to open new orphanages in and around South Africa's poorest regions. While ambitious, I feel this goal could have unparalleled impact on the future of the country and is well within reach.

In addition, during my last trip, I learned of a community of women, from the Venda Tribe, who make decorative bracelets from oil-can seals. Please see the enclosed photo of one of the bracelets. I have added as an action item the sale of these bracelets to benefit the children and to be used as a tool to raise awareness of the millions of children who will be orphaned by the AIDS pandemic.

Upon completion of **ANGELS IN THE DUST**, we intend to use a genuine grassroots approach, working with community leaders, parents and teachers to host fundraising dinners, screenings

and other events. With its focus on the personal stories of several AIDS orphans and the Cloete family's efforts to help them, we believe the film will also have international appeal, capable of reaching audiences in a way that standard news media cannot.

From the promotional trailer I have made, I've already seen the powerful impact **ANGELS IN THE DUST** can have. For example, U.S. therapists who have seen the promo, impressed with Marion's cutting-edge blend of Western, African and spiritually based therapy techniques, have offered to travel to Botshabelo to document Marion's methods. They feel that the West is suffering from a similar crisis in dealing with the victims of traumatic death and the loss of community, and that Marion's potent techniques should be recorded and implemented beyond the borders of Africa. Her work with the victims of rape—in which she helps the victim move towards forgiveness, and views the rapist/perpetrator himself as a victim of a larger cycle of violence which must be stopped—is also forward looking and has important applications in the Western world.

Ultimately, **ANGELS IN THE DUST** is about hope. The film will bring audiences together in heightened awareness and collective effort. It will help all who see it move away from despair over mind-numbing statistics and take concrete steps towards viable solutions impacting real human beings.

THE ACTION

- Letter-writing campaign to petition the South African government to make anti-retroviral medication widely available (6 million are infected, yet less than 1 percent receive treatment).
- Letter-writing campaign to petition the South African government to fund residential orphanages as well as daytime drop-in centers.
- Sale of bracelets to raise funds and awareness for orphaned children.
- Fundraising parties to establish new orphanages.
- Link to anti-rape campaigns in the U.S.
- Link with groups dealing with death and dying issues.
- Book to document and make widely known Marion's innovative therapeutic methods for dealing with child trauma, rape and death.