

**Thursday, October 28, 1999**

I don't even know what week it is anymore! Steve insists it's the third week of production, but he's been saying that for the past two. The schedule is all screwed up and it's gotten to a point where I just get up in the morning and say, "if you need me, call me." This is ridiculous.

Steve schedules edit sessions for "Lost & Humor" then last minute they get canceled. Poor Pip! His sessions keep getting bumped week after week. It's no one's fault, really. The management problem at his office has gotten so far out of control that Pip's schedule uncontrollably changes.

Steve's plan was to get all the actors together and record "Lost & Humor" using our usual method (stage play style). But now he's grumbling about recording everyone separately and cutting lines together in post. I reminded him how many times we've done that on other shows, but it doesn't seem to comfort him. Steve really wants to do this theatrically for the natural effect it produces.

It also looks like Steve can't record Gayle's and Joan's parts at Lux as we planned. No studio available for the times we need it. So he has to go to Arneodeo Recording Studio. All this is going to raise the budget. But since our goal is to put this thing in the can by Thanksgiving for an early December release, we don't have much choice.

So what do I do all day? Steve and I have temporarily stopped rehearsing our parts for "Lost & Humor". Now I write (what else can I do?). I'm working on future episodes for the radio, some screenplays and TV one-offs. Spec stuff. Plus, Steve and I are reissuing our comic strip from 1990! It will be published by Know News Press!! I'm so glad! There are hundreds of episodes that never saw the light of day. Now, seven/eight years later they finally get published.

It was great bringing them out of the vault and reading them again. I hadn't realized how much work really went into that strip. They're yellow with age! Wow, that makes me feel old! Know News is also considering publishing original "Steve and Bluey" short stories. Steve and I will both write them. The really good news is that by reissuing the comic strips, we can still be in print without having to do any work!

**October 29, 1999**

Another laid back office day. I should title this entry "A Day in the Reality of an Independent Artist". This is how it goes: while we await our next production day on "Lost & Humor", Steve and I work on other projects. We gotta drum up some more business. I'm sitting here on the couch in our office and Steve's at his desk writing a letter. Morale is low. It's the idleness of down time. What do they call it, the devil's playground or something? (although Alive Broadcast is talking to us about doing another live radio comedy special next month. That'll be fun).

Anyway, there's an overall frustration because "Lost & Humor's" on hold until Jim Mardi can organize the cast and crew schedule. I'm kind of depressed because things aren't going right with rehearsals of our new stage act. And Steve's all mad because he keeps biting his lip while eating pretzels. I've never heard such language!

When you work for yourself, you've got to be your own salesman in addition to doing the job you're hired to do. Balancing the two can often be a challenge. You frequently spend more time looking for your next gig than you actually spend working on it.

An actor-friend of ours named Noel Reilly was talking about this the other day. Steve and I were having tea in the sunny garden at the Reilly cottage. Noel described it as a crossroads. You either take the salesman road and become an agent or take the artist road

and become an actor. He says that dividing your time means dividing the energy put into each task. I disagreed. I said that a person can take on both roles and that these days almost has to, and that having the knowledge and skills of a craftsman and a salesman gave a person power.

Steve talked about our days in London, pounding the pavement to sell our comic strip and how when an artist is forced to also sell his services it can be very discouraging. And there's truth to that. Back then we weren't salesmen. We didn't know how to make a sale on our own. Before Graphic Syndication came along, we were stuck trying to sell it ourselves, and that was a real struggle. My advice to aspiring indie producers: learn as much as possible about every aspect of the industry from art and craft to legal and promotional.

**Saturday, October 30, 1999**

Got a phone call from my friend Enrique Rossa who is discovering popularity in Puerto Rico with his new music album. He said he wasn't sure if he liked it or not. Apparently, he was having lunch with a friend at some restaurant and these two girls approached him all giggly. They made such a fuss over him that poor Enrique didn't know what to do. And, you know, he really is shy. So I said, "Alright, let me tell you what happened to Steve and I..."

One time Steve and I stopped at a dusty road-side flower stand for a gift en route to a friend's house for brunch. From across the street, a woman started screaming excitedly. We turned to see this lady waving her fist in circles and whooping at us in a supportive kind of way and yelling, "Alright! Steve and Bluey!"

Steve always gets too embarrassed to respond and he just smiled politely as he got into the car. Me? I'm waving my arms at the lady and yelling back at her. Of course, this drew more attention from the drivers at the traffic light and some started honking their horns. Steve covered his embarrassment with the business of merging into traffic, which, at the time, I kind of thought was rude.

We talked about it as we drove on to brunch. We talked about how personality seems to dictate such moments of awkwardness ... or moments of fear. As a mentor of ours once said, these are the moments you discover your character. So, to Enrique I said that once you decide what your character is and become confident with it, you don't need to know how to react in an awkward situation. Your personality will naturally dictate.

No work got done today on "Lost & Humor".

**October 31, 1999 Happy Halloween!!**

Yes, it's Halloween. And in just a few hours our Halloween special will hit the air waves. (Yay! Royalty check!) It's the one from 1987 – with Baby Ebby and our sister Michele. Radio Channel 10 calls it a classic! That makes me laugh!

Every time I hear the '87 special I get filled with so much happiness. Just the thought of that ghoulish opening evokes so many wonderful memories of that production – of that whole decade! We were so carefree. There were no complications. Work was abundant and we could escape into the world of makebelieve. I remember finishing that special in October and going right into prepping our Christmas comedy show.

But really, each time has its own unique sweetness. When the 1993 Halloween special debuted, Steve and I were still very new to Jim Mardi, Paul Baum, and Galaxy Film Studios. Life was filled with the exciting possibilities new friendships offer. Steve invited Caroline over to our place for the premiere party. It was their first date.