



# the Charities

A Story of a  
Brotherhood of  
Funk and Soul



## Story Synopsis



### Making it in the music industry looks different to everyone.

Some artists consider “making it” to be topping the charts, hearing their own songs on the radio, or even signing a record deal with a major label. To others it might be selling out a local club or maintaining a loyal fan base. Whether or not an artist “makes it” is subject to their own belief.

Living in a culture so infatuated with celebrities and fame, these struggles have been showcased on the screen many times before. Countless films have been made about bands in retrospect and based upon society’s general consensus that the band has “made it” in some way. This film, “The Charities” (working title) follows the journey of The Charities, an up-and-coming funk and soul band based in Southern California, as their unique story unfolds.

Through the lens of their manager, director Jo Anna Edmison, this film will offer a unique twist on the visualization of brotherhood through a woman’s perspective as she helps the band grow and shape their future. The film is presented from a relatable point of view, capturing the triumphs and struggles of young, independent musicians. This allows the audience to understand, empathize, and connect with the band’s mission to achieve their dreams and define their own idea of success.



# Who are The Charities ?

The Charities first banded together in sunny Southern California. They originally formed in Hermosa Beach and then moved up to the San Luis Obispo County after getting kicked out of their duplex in Manhattan Beach where all six of them lived.

They found their own style of music in the melting pot of different cultures that is the West Coast with their mix of soul, rock, R&B, and funk. While their live performances serve as the heartbeat of The Charities' identity, their creative evolution extends far beyond the stage. In the early days, the band's music could be compared to Parliament Funkadelic, yet recently the band has developed into writing more sweet soul music that can be compared to Brenton Wood.

With a deep reverence for vintage aesthetic and sound, the band immerses themselves in a timeless allure, infusing their music with a nostalgic charm that resonates with listeners of all ages.



Characters (of the band)

As a whole, The Charities are a brotherhood of funk and soul. They are a ragtag crew of friends who all grew up together and have known each other for years. After living on a ranch for four years, the band built a foundation similar to the dynamic of a family. Their closeness is evident on and off the stage.

The Charities made their mark on California's Central Coast music scene during these years (2018-2022) and will always consider San Luis Obispo as the landmark of their sound.



Alec Kersenboom  
Guitar



Shane Nowak  
Drums



Derek Doszkocs  
Bass



Sage Provins  
Guitar

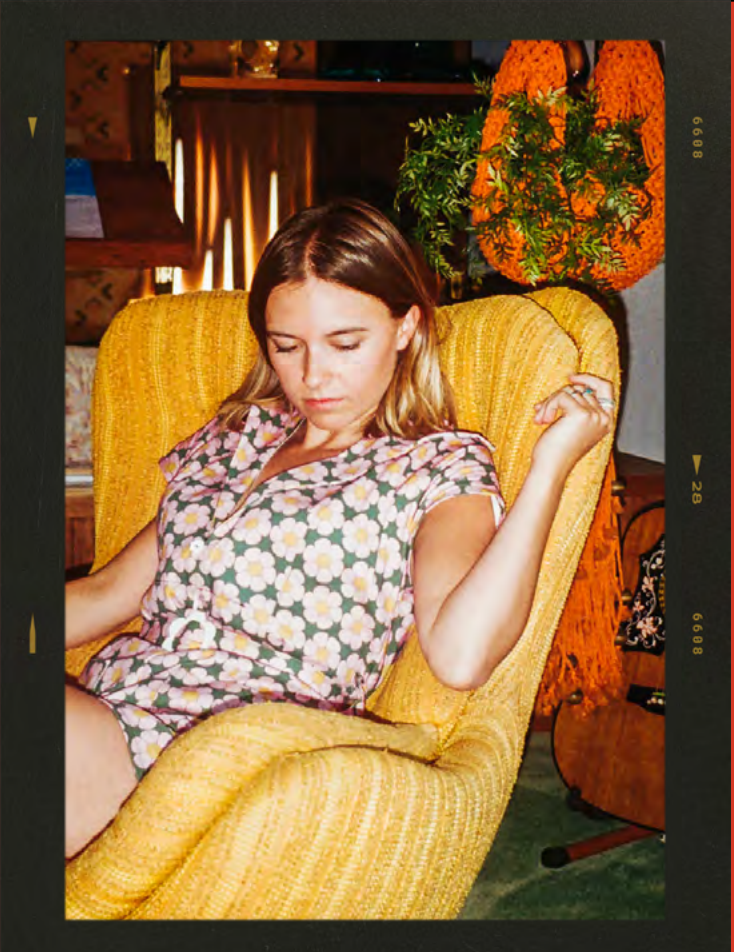


Mike Butler  
Keys



Brock Van Pelt  
Lead Singer & Songwriter

Brock (lead singer and songwriter) takes on the role of the main character. We get to know him and begin to understand his connection to music. Growing up with a single mother who struggled with addiction her whole life, the audience gains a deeper perspective on his balance and relationship between tragedy and comedy, and where many of the sincere lyrics come from. His charisma, sense of humor, and stage presence are what keep people listening and invested in the band.



Director

Approach

Director Jo Anna Edmison started managing and filming The Charities in 2018 at 19 years old.

As an old friend from the South Bay, Brock asked Jo to manage the band in the early days when they needed help booking their backyard shows. She has become a key component in the evolution of the band and has grown up with each of them for the last seven years. Through years of working with The Charities, she has captured hundreds of hours of footage and thousands of photographs throughout their career. The closeness of the relationship grants the film premiere access to their candid moments and authentic feelings. They often forget the camera is even there.



# Film Concept



Within the last year, Jo began to recognize The Charities are at an important moment of transition. Standing at the crossroads of uncertainty, the band grapples with the question of whether they will ascend to the mainstream or remain relatively unknown. The hours of footage takes on newfound importance.

**Blending documentary and narrative elements together, the film takes a different approach to the conventional, timeless story of a band.**

A written, play-like performance of The Charities will lead the viewer through the story. Band members will perform on a theater stage as old footage is inserted into the film's timeline. Both the staged sequence and the collected footage will piece together the band's past, present, and future.

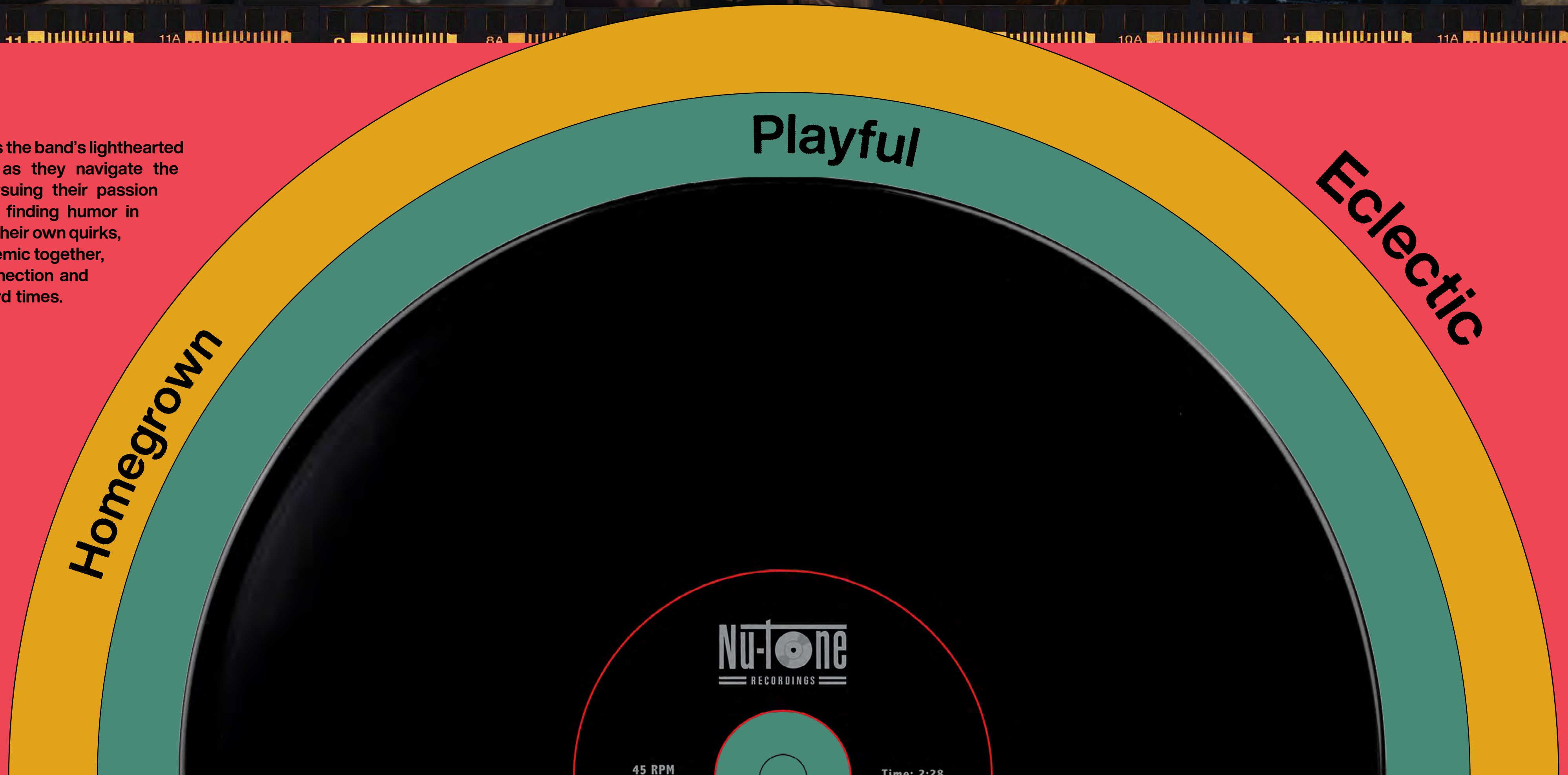
The film sifts through the memories captured— from live performances to intimate moments shared on tour and in the studio. It's a path defined not only by external markers of success, but by the profound impact of their music on the audience and themselves.





The film showcases the band's lighthearted and easygoing nature as they navigate the ups and downs of pursuing their passion for music. Whether it's finding humor in setbacks, poking fun at their own quirks, or living through a pandemic together, humor is a form of connection and resilience during the hard times.

Mood/Tone



Mood/Tone

Members of The Charities grow up throughout the film. We see characters leave the band, lose sight of the vision, and even struggle with substance abuse. With the suspension of live music in a world shut down, they find a way to overcome these challenges through their ultimate devotion to music and love for one another.

Soulful

Personal

Heartfelt

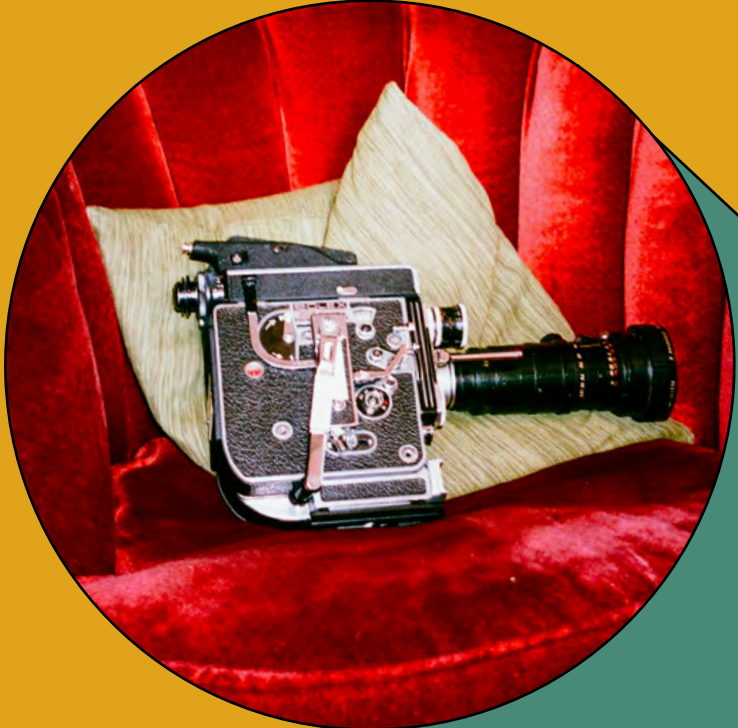




# Style/Technique

- Digital
- 16mm
- Super 8mm
- DSLR
- 35mm photo
- VHS
- Demos
- Graphics

Over the course of 7 years, the band has been documented with many different mediums. Utilizing authentic 16mm and Super 8 film footage, VHS tape footage, 35mm film photos, and other complementary graphics, the project calls back the aesthetics of an era in which their music is inspired by. The story becomes a collage of visual expression and experimentation in itself. The film seamlessly weaves the timeless charm of 16mm film with the contemporary look of digital interview footage and backstage moments of the band's candid realism.





**Get a Feel**  
(click here for clip)

## Why This Film

We want to tell the story of young musicians who deal with isolation, doubt, and regret while transforming these feelings into newfound creativity, confidence, and ambition. By putting an example out there to relate to, we hope to promote an open, vulnerable conversation for other independent artists.

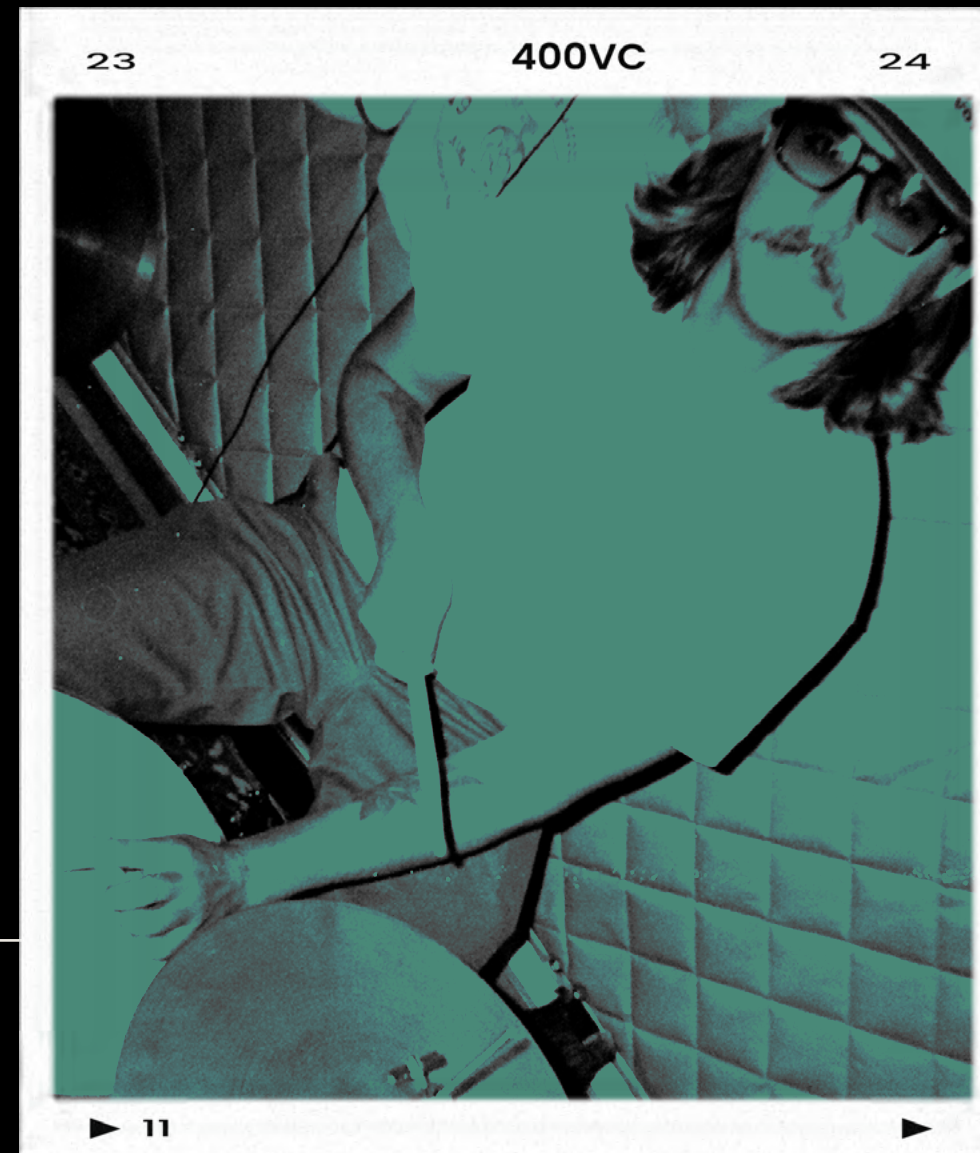
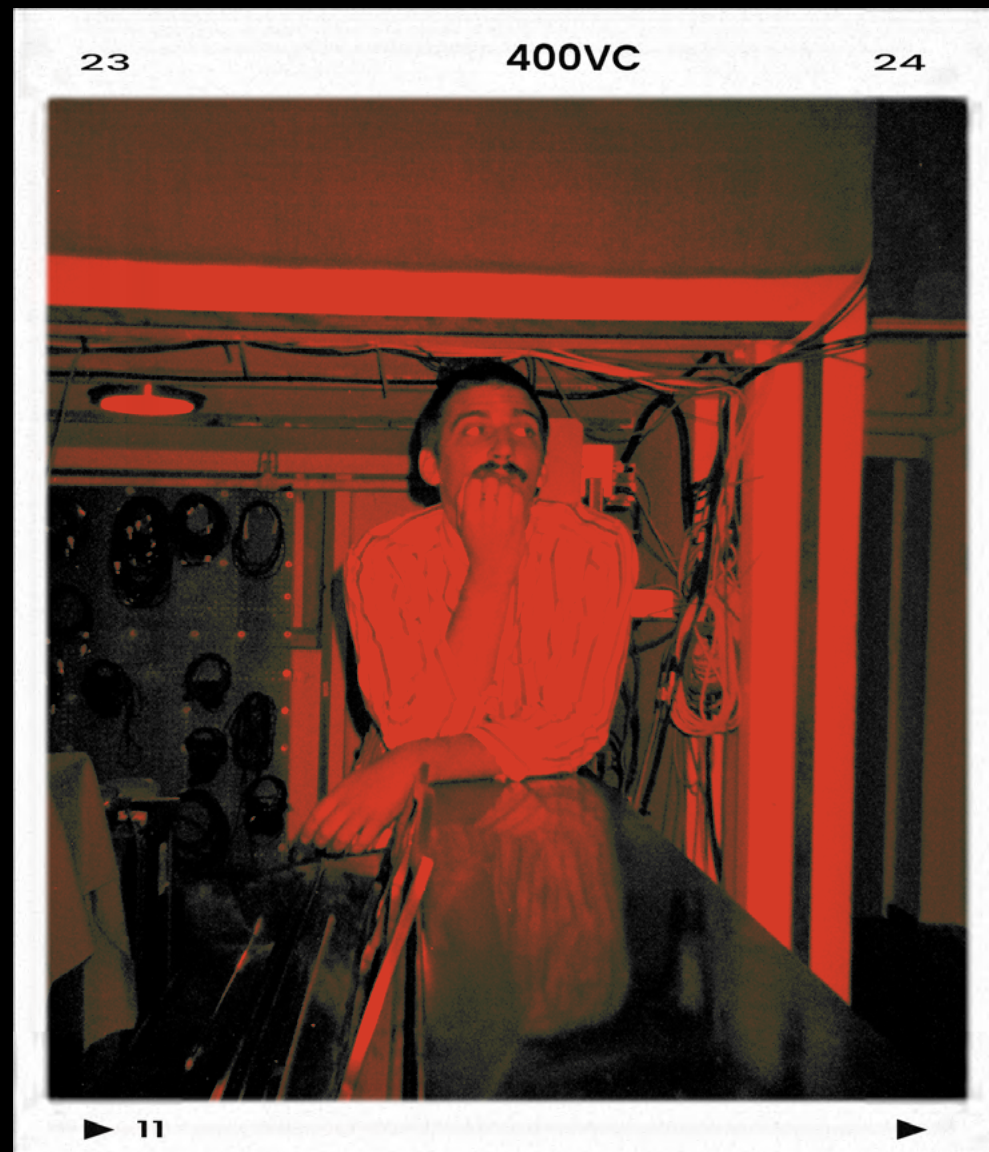
This film aims to inspire and remind people that pursuing your passion can be a slow burn toward success, however you may define such a thing. Realizing your own means of self-expression can be a lifelong task and understanding you are not alone can be a lifeline.



# Project Timeline



# Film Budget



Pre-Production: \$14,500  
Production: \$17,159  
Post Production: \$33,750  
Distribution / Impact: \$28,000

**TOTAL: \$98,605**

# Impact Distribution


**We want this film to be seen by creatives, entrepreneurs, long time culture buffs, and music lovers.**

Our goal audience and primary festival to premiere at is SXSW. We will then submit to 15+ film festivals for the 2025 calendar year. This will likely be a year-long festival run.

We will plan a 6 month community screening campaign, starting in California and then moving to other locations nationally. We will likely show the film in theater and music venues and on tour with the band. We will include screenings at universities with creative departments.

After we are finished with in-person screenings, we aim to have the film licensed on a streaming platform— on branded channels like YouTube, WaterBear, and Vimeo for even wider audiences to see.





**“This is not a brotherhood that can be disbanded. It’s hard, you know, living with each other and basically breathing music, living music, exploring music, being everything that you can try to be and pushing each other constantly.”**

**– Brock Van Pelt**

To Get

Involved

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