

# La Vie en Verte

The WAMM Movie

Celebrating the potential of the human spirit, honoring the vulnerability of the human body.

# La Vie en Verte Synopsis

## Tag Line

Celebrating the potential of the human spirit, honoring the vulnerability of the human body.

## 50 Word

Members of the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana (WAMM) battle disease and face end of life with strength, dignity and celebration. In this documentary, patients and caregivers share their tragedies and triumphs as they make courageous choices, stand up to the federal government and demonstrate the healing potential of collective compassion.

## 100 Word

Members of the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana (WAMM) use an ancient yet controversial medicine to confront afflictions such as epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, and cancer as well as to face the end of life with strength and dignity. In this life affirming documentary patients and caregivers share their tragedies and triumphs as they make courageous choices, stand up to the federal government and demonstrate the healing potential of collective compassion. Shot over four years in Santa Cruz, California, *La Vie en Verte* reminds us how important it is to fight for our right to make decisions regarding our own wellbeing.

## 250 Word

Members of the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana (WAMM) use an ancient yet controversial medicine to confront afflictions such as epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, and cancer as well as to face the end of life with strength and dignity. *La Vie en Verte* is the account of *Michael and Valerie Corral* who became accidental activists for marijuana when they discovered its benefit in treating Val's epilepsy and recognized a greater need for it in their community. *Jackie*, a caregiver came to WAMM as a skeptic and emerged as an advocate. Jackie bakes medicinal muffins for her friends because she thinks that they deserve a break from nausea or constant pain. *Jeremy*, an HIV/AIDS patient was diagnosed over 20 years ago and has watched many friends succumb to a disease that he was sure would have taken him long ago. *Dianne* signifies her victory over breast cancer by transforming her mastectomy scar into a powerful image of beauty and strength.

*Lucy* is dying of ovarian cancer. She is afraid but struggling to hold things together for her 15-year-old daughter who she has been raising by herself. As Lucy's conditions worsen a team of her loved ones swing into action to ensure that her quality of life was as best as possible and that the end was as she wanted it. . Shot over four years in Santa Cruz, California, *La Vie en Verte* reminds us how important it is to fight for our right to make decisions regarding our own wellbeing.



## 500 Word

Members of the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana (WAMM) use an ancient yet controversial medicine to confront afflictions such as epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, and cancer as well as to face the end of life with strength and dignity. In this life affirming documentary patients and caregivers share their tragedies and triumphs as they make courageous choices, stand up to the federal government and demonstrate the healing potential of collective compassion.

La Vie en Verte is the account of *Michael and Valerie Corral* who became accidental activists for marijuana when they discovered its benefit in treating Val's epilepsy and recognized a greater need for it in their community. *Jackie*, a caregiver came to WAMM as a skeptic and emerged as an advocate. Jackie bakes medicinal muffins for her friends because she thinks that they deserve a break from nausea or constant pain. *Jeremy*, an HIV/AIDS patient was diagnosed over 20 years ago and has watched many friends succumb to a disease that he was sure would have taken him long ago. *Dianne* signifies her victory over breast cancer by transforming her mastectomy scar into a powerful image of beauty and strength. Dianne now seeks to educate others about this disease.

La Vie en Verte is about surviving and making positive experiences out of every moment but it is also about letting go and being present for the exquisite journey to the end of life. *Lucy* is dying of ovarian cancer; she has been for some time. She is afraid but struggling to hold things together for her 15-year-old daughter that she has been raising by herself. As Lucy's conditions worsen a team of her loved ones swing into action to provide round the clock care. Lucy's care team did not set out to nurse her back to health or even to extend her life. They were there to ensure that her quality of life was as best as possible and that the end was as she wanted it.

La Vie en Verte is about the life that happens after the worst has been faced and there is nowhere left to go but forward. That is the time when being alive really is about the very moment of existence that you experience. In this story, a young woman, Lucy's daughter was forced to grow up too early; she lost her mother to ovarian cancer yet found another place to call home with her mother's friend and deathbed companion Valerie Corral. In this story, Jackie finds love with another WAMM member and is married at a joyous occasion that takes the place of a previously planned triple memorial. According to Val, the connection between the marriage and the memorial is a transcendence into love.

La Vie en Verte: The WAMM Movie is about our transcendence into love.

La Vie en Verte: The WAMM Movie by Charlie and Bevin Hall

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# La Vie en Verte Directors Statement

As students about to graduate from The University of California Santa Cruz we knew we wanted to continue in our fields, Anthropology and Film & Digital Media, we made the choice to forgo Grad School and instead, make our own documentary film. We wanted to explore medical marijuana as a topic because we had been researching the use of vaporized marijuana in the treatment of asthma but were concerned about speaking with a doctor about it for fear of legal reprisal including the loss of federal college grants. We both wished the laws were very different so that we, and other could feel protected and safe trying a natural medication for a chronic illness. Also, there was very little media on medical marijuana available to the public at that time.

We were drawn to the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana because we had heard about the 2002 raid of the collective and of their subsequent lawsuit against the Federal Government. And we had learned that the co-founders had co-written proposition 215, allowing Medical Marijuana for medicinal use in the State of California.

Valerie Corral, one of the co/founders of WAMM, granted us an interview that at first we found frustrating. What we wanted to hear about was marijuana and standing up to the federal government. She kept talking about suffering and enduring what you never thought that you could and the exquisiteness of the journey to the end of life. What we did not realize at the time is that she was telling us about marijuana she was just talking about it in a different way, she was speaking about real things, people, hardship, fear, not political talking points. Furthermore, opposition to the government was not the grand heroic adventure we assumed. For many WAMM members there is simply no choice but to stand up for their rights just as they did not choose the suffering which marijuana provides relief. As we got to know these people, as they began trusting us with their stories, our decision to take the lessons of WAMM to the world with a documentary film became more a necessity than a choice.

The WAMM Movie is about a group of people to whom medical marijuana is a natural and inextricable part of their lives and deaths. WAMM members do see the world differently than the Lehman, not through rose-colored glasses, but perhaps through green-colored ones. We call the film La Vie en Verte (translated from French as "The Life in Green") because we hope audiences will peer through the green lens to discover and contemplate a perspective they may not have seen before.

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# La Vie en Verte Key Personnel

## Creative Personnel

### **Charlie Hall, Producer, Writer, Director, Camera Operator, Editor**

Charlie graduated with Highest Honors from the University of California, Santa Cruz with a BA in Anthropology. Throughout his time at the University his particular focus was the documentation of culture through the arts of film and photography which includes Watsonville High and VA Unleashed, two short documentaries based on 12 months of volunteering as a tutor and mentor to high school students at risk of failing to graduate. Charlie has also worked with several California non-profit organizations providing film and editing services such as A Good Idea in San Francisco, Birth and Early Parenting Educators in Nevada City, and ProsthetiKa in Santa Rosa.

### **Bevin Bell-Hall, Co- Producer, Writer, Director Camera Operator, Editor**

Bevin graduated from The University of California, Santa Cruz with honors in both Film and Digital Media and Porter College. Bevin is a creator, director and editor of the internet talk show, Through the Golden Gates, a joint venture between For Ai Productions and Sountru Productions: <http://throughthegoldengates.com>. A Theatre Arts Minor, Bevin interned at New York Powerhouse Stage and Film. She has worked as a producer, director, playwright, stage manager, drama instructor, choreographer, actress, singer and dancer. In April 2010, Bevin will be appearing as Sally in Artistic Differences' Regional Premiere of Reefer Madness: The Musical in Sacramento, California.

### **John Malkin, Composer**

John has created music professionally for fifteen years as an accompanist and as a solo performer. His music has been featured in two documentaries Peacemakers at the Nevada Test Site (1990) and Santa Cruz Responds to the Gulf War (1991). John's radio program, The Great Leap Forward on Free Radio Santa Cruz, explores social change and spirituality including interviews with such guests as Noam Chomsky and Dennis Kucinich. He has written two books Sounds of Freedom (2005) that includes interviews with popular musicians about social change and spirituality and The Only Alternative: Christian Nonviolent Peace makers (2008)

### **Mikail Graham, Sound editor**

Mikail is a composer, performer, producer, and promoter of music in Nevada City, California, with family roots dating back to 1849. Since 1975 he has composed more than 40 original scores for various live theater and independent film projects. In 1997 he produced and mixed the Red House Records CD release Loafer's Glory for folk legend Utah Phillips, which was nominated for a NAIRD award. He is also the executive producer of The Other Side, an eclectic radio program heard on Tuesday nights from 8pm-10pm at 89.5 FM & simulcast on [www.kvmr.org](http://www.kvmr.org) since August 1978.



## Board of Advisors

### Val Corral

Valerie is a death and dying and medical marijuana expert. She is the co-founder of the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana and the founder of Raha Kudo: The Death and Dying Project, and has been consultant and author of many medical marijuana ordinances and laws. She has won numerous awards for her tireless work and teaching in Santa Cruz, California and internationally.

### Allan Hopper

Allen is the Senior Staff Attorney at ACLU Drug Law Reform Project in Santa Cruz, Ca, he is part of the legal team who argued for the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana and City of Santa Cruz in their lawsuit against the federal government *SANTACRUZ V. HOLDER*

### Gustavo Vazquez

Gustavo specializes in video production as a professor at UC Santa Cruz, has been making independent films for the past three decades. He is co-author of *Documentary Filmmaking: A Contemporary Field Guide* designed to alert potential filmmakers to the most successful methods—as well as the pitfalls—of each stage in making a documentary film.

## Fiscal Sponsor

MAPS (Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies) <http://www.maps.org/>

MAPS is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation chartered in 1986 as a membership-based research and educational organization. MAPS mission is to develop psychedelics and marijuana into legal prescription medicines for therapeutic applications. They are actively developing and funding clinical trials with human subjects in accordance with guidelines set forth by the United States' Food and Drug Administration, the European Medicines Agency, and the International Council on Harmonization (ICH/GCP). During this process they are training therapists to administer psychedelic drugs in therapeutic settings and engaging in efforts to educate people about the benefits and risks of psychedelics and medical marijuana.

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