



# Mega Joy

## A Collaborative Film Project

**WHAT:** An assignment-based competition for emerging documentary filmmakers.

The subject of this project is *Christmas Light Enthusiasts*. A film submitted to this contest should be produced as a short documentary about one person's or group's quest to create a spectacular holiday light display for their community. The film's goals will be to portray their passion, explore their motivation, record their process and results in order to develop a compelling story arc and artistically display the filmmakers' vision.

**WHEN:** The 2009 and 2010 holiday seasons. **The deadline for the film's submission is January 31, 2010.**

**WHERE:** Your film can be shot anywhere there are people working with an abundance of electric holiday lights for public display.

**WHO** (Eligibility): Any individual or group of individuals over the age of eighteen.\*

**HOW:** A filmmaker or a team of filmmakers will first fill out the application form, read the projects requirements, create a film and submit by mail a final product by the deadline.

**WHY:** This project is designed to create opportunity for emerging documentary filmmakers, producers and crews. Applicants will be competing for the chance to have their film distributed to a large audience. Six winners will be selected for inclusion in a collaborative ninety minute long documentary feature. Winners will be selected based on merit by a committee of industry professionals. Each winner will be paid an honorarium of one thousand dollars, awarded a contract for national distribution and promotion for their film, participation in film festivals, and profit-sharing in the proceeds from the collaborative feature's sales. \*\* Every applicant will have created a portfolio piece and gained experience to take with them into their film careers.

**SPECIFICATIONS:** This contest is open to everyone, except where laws prohibit it. The film must be primarily in English. The film must be between fourteen and seventeen minutes long. The film must be shot in 16x9 widescreen format in High Definition (HDV1080), 24p, NTSC. Each submission must be on DVD (Standard, Region 1), mailed, along with the completed application and with all of the required release forms to the address below by the deadline to be considered.

**POSSIBLE THEMES:** Portraiture, Character Study, Creative Vision, Synchronicity, Winter, Artificial Light, Color Selection, Innate Humor or Emotional Involvement, Competition, Holiday Mood, Motivation, Contemplation, Music Integration, Providence, Serendipity, Concise Editing, Technical Precision, Montage and Time-Lapse Imagery. Feel free to email us to discuss your project.

**INSPIRATION:** The documentary process of Werner Herzog, Errol Morris, and Albert and David Maysles have resulted in amazing films. Recent examples of excellent projects with original tactics and effect include *Big Rig*, *About a Son*, *Slasher*, *What Would Jesus Buy*, *Maxed Out*, *Bigger Stronger Faster*, *This American Life*, *Super Size Me*, *Super High Me*, *Roger & Me*, *Darwin's Nightmare*.

EMAIL: [darkranchproductions@gmail.com](mailto:darkranchproductions@gmail.com)

**DarkRanch Productions** POB 2311 South Florida, FL 34958-2311 USA

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**RESEARCH:** Everything you need to learn about Holiday and Christmas Light Enthusiasts can be found starting with the following list of websites. In particular, [www.planetchristmas.com](http://www.planetchristmas.com) has many links to specific individuals with impressive displays throughout North America and beyond, perhaps one of them lives near you.

<http://planetchristmas.com/ShowingOff2008.htm>  
<http://tinyurl.com/christmaslightenthusiasts>

**Other related resources:**

<http://www.indymogul.com/backyardfx/post/1740/production-101-release-forms>  
[http://documentaryfilms.suite101.com/article.cfm/make\\_your\\_own\\_documentary\\_film](http://documentaryfilms.suite101.com/article.cfm/make_your_own_documentary_film)  
<http://www.videomaker.com/article/12546/>  
<http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Good-Documentary-Film>  
<http://www.dependentfilms.net/files.html>  
<http://www.moonlightfilmfest.com/drupal/node/8>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DV>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/24p>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HD\\_video](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HD_video)



**SOUND:** In addition to natural and production sound, the use of music is encouraged. All music used in your submission must be either free (licensed under the Creative Commons), owned and royalty-free, or self-produced.

**Several excellent holiday theme and traditional music selections are available online:**

<http://tinyurl.com/freemasmusicpieces>  
<http://magnatune.com/holiday>  
<http://www.hermann-uwe.de/blog/10-100-creative-commons-christmas-songs>  
<http://listento.jaketolbert.com/art/free-christmas-music-album-creative-commons-for-remixing/>  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative\\_commons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creative_commons)



*\* If any applicant or participating production crew member is under the age of eighteen, a special consent form signed by the parents or legal guardian will be required. Email any questions about this specific issue to DARKRANCH Productions, [darkranchproductions@gmail.com](mailto:darkranchproductions@gmail.com).*

## Mega Joy - APPLICATION/SUBMISSION FORM

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE FILM'S SUBMISSION IS TO BE POSTMARKED BY JANUARY 31, 2010.**

**APPLICANT'S NAME** (Director's Name if submitting as a group): **FIRST:**  **LAST:**

**EMAIL:**  **PHONE NUMBER:**

**ADDRESS:**  **CITY:**  **STATE:**  **ZIP CODE:**

**SUBMISSION/FILM'S TITLE:**  **LENGTH IN MINUTES:**

**APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE:**

*(By signing this form and submitting your film, the applicant agrees to the contest rules and other agreements described in this document.)*

**SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:**

- COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM
- DVD DISK (REGION 1, USA)
- ALL SIGNED RELEASE FORMS
- DIRECTOR'S RESUME/CV
- LIST OF ALL PRODUCTION STAFF AND CREW INVOLVED WITH YOUR SUBMISSION

**METHODOLOGY:**

To apply for the Mega Joy Film Project send your submission BY REGULAR MAIL ONLY. IMPORTANT: Packages & envelopes requiring a signature cannot be accepted. DO NOT SEND Certified Mail!

All documents must be on 8 1/2" x 11" paper, COLLATED and PAPER CLIPPED together. DO NOT STAPLE, BIND OR PRE-PACKAGE MATERIALS. Be sure to include your name (First and Last) on all materials submitted.

The DVD must be playable on a standard, commercial DVD player. Put your First and Last name on the DVD and case with a marker.

**\*\*\*MATERIALS SUBMITTED WILL NOT BE RETURNED\*\*\***

MAIL SUBMISSION TO: **MEGA JOY FILM PROJECT**  
**DarkRanch Productions**  
**POB 2311, South Florida, FL., 34958-2311, USA**



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**RELEASE FORMS:** Obtaining proper written permissions is the responsibility of the applicant.

These are the four types of common releases required for documentary film work:

1. Talent Release which should be used with professional actors and models and people who are not actors.
2. Minor Release which must be signed by a parent or legal guardian of a minor (the legal age varies from state to state, as a precaution have anyone under the age of eighteen sign this form).
3. Materials Release is used for obtaining permission to use photographs, video, film or other media which may be copyrighted or owned by others.
4. Location Release when you wish to photograph, videotape or record property which you do not own.

## - SAMPLE RELEASE FORMS BELOW -

If you would like edit-ready Release Forms in Word Format or PDF, send an Email request to: [darkranchproductions@gmail.com](mailto:darkranchproductions@gmail.com)

## STANDARD LOCATION RELEASE

SERIES / PROJECT TITLE:  
PRODUCTION DATE:

(A MEGA JOY FILM PROJECT Official Submission.)

Permission is hereby granted to [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS to use the property located at

ADDRESS:  
consisting of (DESCRIPTION):

for the purpose of photographing and recording scenes for the above program produced by [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS.

Permission includes the right to bring personnel and equipment onto the property and to remove them after completion of the work. The permission herein granted shall include the right, but not the obligation, to photograph the actual name connected with the premises and to use such name in the program(s).

The undersigned hereby gives to [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, its assigns, agents, licensees, affiliates, clients, principals, and representatives the absolute right and permission to copyright, use, exhibit, display, print, reproduce, televise, broadcast and distribute, for any lawful purpose, in whole or in part, through any means without limitation, any scenes containing the above described premises, all without inspection or further consent or approval by the undersigned of the finished product or of the use to which it may be applied.

[YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS hereby agrees to hold the undersigned harmless of and free from any and all liability and loss which [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, and/or its agents, may suffer for any reason, except that directly caused by the negligent acts or deliberate misconduct of the owner of the premises or its agents.

The undersigned hereby warrants and represents that the undersigned has full right and authority to solely enter into this agreement concerning the above described premises, and that the undersigned hereby indemnifies and holds [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, and/or its agents, harmless from and against any and all loss, liability, costs, damages or claims of any nature arising from, growing out of, or concerning the use of the above described premises except those directly caused by the negligent acts or deliberate misconduct of [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, or its agents.

By: *Signature of Authorized Property Representative*

Printed Name:

Date:

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PRODUCTION NOTES:



JOIN THE MEGA JOY PROJECT MAILING LIST, SEND AN EMAIL TO: [darkranchproductions@gmail.com](mailto:darkranchproductions@gmail.com)

# Mega Joy - A Collaborative Film Project

## SUBJECT/TALENT/MODEL RELEASE

SERIES / PROJECT TITLE:  
PRODUCTION DATE:

(A MEGA JOY FILM PROJECT Official Submission.)

**SUBJECT/TALENT/MODEL NAME: FIRST:**

**LAST:**

In consideration of the sum of one cent (value: USD\$ 0.01) and any other good and valuable considerations, receipt of which is hereby acknowledged, I, being of legal age, hereby give [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, their licensees, successors, legal representatives, and assigns the absolute and irrevocable right and permission to use my name and to use, reproduce, edit, exhibit, project, display, copyright, publish and/or resell photography images and/or moving pictures and/or videotaped images of me with or without my voice, or in which I may be included in whole or in part, photographed, taped, videotaped, and/or recorded on [date] and thereafter, and to circulate the same in all forms and media for art, advertising, trade, competition of every description and/or any other lawful purpose whatsoever. I also consent to the use of any printed matter in conjunction therewith.

I hereby waive any right that I may have to inspect and/or approve the finished product or products or the editorial, advertising, or printed copy or soundtrack that may be used in connection therewith and any right that I may have to control the use to which said product, products, copy and/or soundtrack may be applied.

I hereby release, discharge and agree to save [YOUR NAME] and DARKRANCH PRODUCTIONS, their licensees, successors, legal representatives and assigns from any liability by virtue of any blurring, distortion, alteration, optical illusion or use in composite form whether intentional or otherwise that may occur or be produced in the making, processing, duplication, projecting or displaying of said picture or images, and from liability for violation of any personal or proprietary right that I may have in conjunction with said pictures or images and with the use thereof.

**AGREED AND ACCEPTED THIS** (DAY)                      **OF** (MONTH)                      , (YEAR)                      .

**SUBJECT/TALENT/MODEL SIGNATURE:**

**PRINTED NAME:**

**SUBJECT/TALENT/MODEL- ARE YOU EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD OR OLDER?**    **YES**    **NO** (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ANSWER)

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

**CITY, STATE, ZIP-CODE:**

**PHONE NUMBER:**

**EMAIL:**

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PRODUCTION NOTES:



JOIN THE OFFICIAL MEGA JOY BLOG, SEND A REQUEST TO: [darkranchproductions@gmail.com](mailto:darkranchproductions@gmail.com)

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## Official Contest Rules:

DarkRanch Productions Incorporated and/or "Sponsor(s)" invites you to submit your film project that promotes our mission of maximizing the distribution of independent films to the viewing audience. We encourage the submission of all film projects in all genres that display and celebrate the creativity and entrepreneurship of independent film makers that exist around the world.

Eligibility, entry period, instructions, judging criteria, prize details and winner selection and notification procedures are detailed below. BY ENTERING THIS CONTEST, YOU AGREE TO ALL OF THE RULES OF THIS CONTEST AND TO ALL OF THE LEGAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS LISTED BELOW:

### ELIGIBILITY

This contest is open to everyone, except employees of DarkRanch Productions. This contest is void where prohibited by law.

### ENTRY PERIOD

The contest begins October 15, 2009, 8:00 AM (PST) and ends February 11, 5:00PM (PST). All entries must be received within this time period in order to be considered for awards. DarkRanch Productions reserves the right to modify the deadline for submissions due to circumstances beyond its control. The film project submission must be postmarked January 31, 2010.

### ENTRANCE FEE:

There is no entrance fee.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Please enter the contest by completing the application/submission form, and other requested materials, including all required Release Forms and mailing it with your film on DVD to DarkRanch Productions, POB 2311, South Florida, FL., 34958-2311, USA.

You may submit as many film projects as you wish; however, you must complete a separate application for each submission. Films must not have been committed for distribution by another distributor. Films should be new, and made specifically for this project. Films should not be uploaded to the internet, YouTube or any other social networking website. DarkRanch Productions in its sole judgment shall determine whether a film meets the requirements for entry into the contest. Films submitted to DarkRanch Productions will not be returned and may be retained by DarkRanch Productions after the completion of the contest. By entering, you warrant that the film is original and is your own, and does not infringe on the rights of any third party. You further warrant that your participation in this contest does not violate any agreement between you and any third party, and that you have all rights needed to distribute your film nationally. By entering the contest, you grant DarkRanch Productions the non-exclusive right to publish, use, distribute, reproduce and publicly display your film, and to create derivative works from your film, for purposes of promoting DarkRanch Production's mission and awareness of its program, including but not limited to for editorial, advertising, publicity, and fund-raising purposes, without payment of compensation, unless prohibited by law. You grant DarkRanch Productions permission to provide your name, and your city and state of residence, when publishing, reproducing or otherwise using your film and when identifying you as an entrant or prize winner in the contest. While DarkRanch Productions will make every effort to credit producers when using its film, there may

be circumstances where it is not possible to do so. Subject to the rights granted to DarkRanch Productions, you retain all other copyrights and rights to future use of the film(s) you enter into the contest.

If your film(s) include a recognizable person or people, you must secure permission from each person (or in the case of a minor, the minor's parent or guardian) to use his/her image in the contest, and present it to DarkRanch Productions, if requested. DarkRanch Productions reserves the right to disqualify an entry if it finds, in its sole discretion, that an entrant has not secured a necessary release.

### JUDGING CRITERIA

After the close of the entry period, eligible DVDs will be judged based on criteria and assigned a score of up to a maximum of 100 points as follows: Visual appeal and composition (maximum 30 points); character (maximum 10 points); editing (maximum 10 points); sound (maximum 10 points); lighting (maximum 10 points); methodology (maximum 10 points); and originality and creativity (maximum 20 points). Judging and scoring will be done by independent judges from the movie/video/art industry. Six finalists will be chosen from all eligible submissions. The decisions of the judges are final and binding.

### PRIZE DETAILS AND WINNER SELECTION AND NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

All entries that are accepted for the contest will receive an "Official Selection" award logo. On or about March 15, 2010, or earlier, DarkRanch Productions shall notify each prize winner of his or her selection. Notification shall be by e-mail and/or telephone. If DarkRanch Productions is unable to contact a potential winner, does not receive an acknowledgment of receipt from a potential winner within ten (10) days, or if the notification is returned as undeliverable, DarkRanch Productions has the option to disqualify such potential winner and select an alternate winner.

A maximum of eight (8) prize winners will be selected: This has an estimated value of \$1,000.00 per winner selected. All federal, state and local taxes, fees and surcharges on prizes, if any, are the sole responsibility of the prize winners. DarkRanch Productions intends to offer a distribution agreement to the producer to distribute his/her film project(s) to all winners selected by DarkRanch Productions. Further sponsorship details and product integration will be determined as the project develops. DarkRanch Productions goals with this contest are to further its mission, promote new talent, distribute interesting film work and produce a viable product to better serve the film market. *\*\*Each winning project's creator/team will receive a percentage of every dollar profited (past initial expenses) from the film project for the duration of 20 years.*

Prize winners will be required to execute and return to DarkRanch Productions an Affidavit of Eligibility/Release of Liability/Prize Acceptance Form ("Affidavit and Release") within ten (10) days of notification of selection as a prize winner. The Affidavit and Release will, among other things and as required under these contest rules, certify the prize winner's eligibility to enter the contest, rights in the DVD submitted, and ability to grant rights to DarkRanch Productions to publish without further consent of or compensation beyond what is established in the Prize Acceptance Form to the winner and/or any person whose recognizable image appears in the DVD; release and indemnify DarkRanch Productions from and against liability associated with the entry, the DVD, the contest and the prizes; acknowledge responsibility for taxes; and certify compliance with

the U.S.A. Patriot Act and related anti-terrorism laws. Failure to sign and return an Affidavit and Release to DarkRanch Productions within ten (10) days of notification may result in disqualification and the selection of an alternate winner. The winners will also be required to grant access to the original source materials and clips to DarkRanch Productions for use in the creation of the final collaborative project.

### LEGAL TERMS & CONDITIONS

This contest is subject to all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations. As an entrant in this contest, it is your responsibility to determine that you are eligible to enter and to comply with the entry instructions and other contest rules set forth herein. Any violation of the contest rules may result in your disqualification.

### GENERAL RELEASE

By entering the Contest, you release DarkRanch Productions and Sponsor(s), participating sponsors and any of their respective parent companies, subsidiaries, affiliates, directors, officers, employees and agencies (collectively, the "Released Parties") from any liability whatsoever, and waive any and all causes of action, related to any claims, costs, injuries, losses, or damages of any kind arising out of or in connection with the Contest or delivery, miss delivery, acceptance, possession, use of or inability to use any prize (including, without limitation, claims, costs, injuries, losses and damages related to personal injuries, death, damage to or destruction of property, rights of publicity or privacy, defamation or portrayal in a false light, whether intentional or unintentional), whether under a theory of contract, tort (including negligence), warranty or other theory, to the extent permitted by law.

### MISCELLANEOUS

The Contest and these Official Rules will be governed, construed and interpreted under the laws of the State of Florida, United States. Entrants agree to be bound by these Official Rules and by the decisions of Sponsor, which are final and binding in all respects. Sponsor reserves the right to change these Official Rules at any time, in its sole discretion, and to suspend or cancel the Contest or any entrant's participation in the Contest should viruses, bugs, unauthorized human intervention or other causes beyond Sponsor's control affect the administration, security or proper play of the Contest or Sponsor otherwise becomes (as determined in its sole discretion) incapable of running the Contest as planned. Entrants who violate these Official Rules, tamper with the operation of the Contest or engage in any conduct that is detrimental or unfair to Sponsor, the Contest or any other entrant (in each case as determined in Sponsor's sole discretion) are subject to disqualification from entry into the Contest. Sponsor reserves the right to lock out persons whose eligibility is in question or who have been disqualified or are otherwise ineligible to enter the Contest. In case of dispute, entries will be declared made by the authorized account holder of the e-mail address submitted at the time of entry. "Authorized account holder" is defined as the natural person who is assigned to an e-mail address by an Internet Access Provider, on-line service provider, or other organization (e.g., business, educational institution, etc.) that is responsible for assigning e-mail addresses for the domain associated with the submitted e-mail address. Automated entries are prohibited, and any use of such automated devices will cause disqualification. If you have any questions about these Official Rules or the Contest, please e-mail them to or send written questions to DarkRanch Productions, POB 2311, South Florida, FL., 34958-2311, USA.