Washington State JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Clement Lye

SUMMARY

Director Clement Lye discusses his film "Carla the Rescuer" which was screened at the Seattle Jewish Film Festival in March, 2025. He discusses his background in filmmaking and his motivation to create this film.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: I'm Ruth Kodish-Eskind, and it's March 30th. We're at the Seattle Jewish Film Festival. Can you state your name for me?

Clement Lye: Sure. My name is Clement Lye.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Um. And do I have your consent to record this interview?

Clement Lye: Yes, you have my consent to record this interview.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Thank you. Um, so what's your relationship to the film festival or to the Jewish Community Center?

Clement Lye: Um, I was fortunate enough to be selected by the film festival, uh, for my film, Carl the Rescuer to be screened here.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: So cool!

Clement Lye: Yeah.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Um, is this your first time at the festival?

Clement Lye: It's my first time at the festival, yep.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Um, how's your experience been?

Clement Lye: Oh, it's been wonderful. Um, I, uh, you know, when I was asked, I was really thrilled that, uh, this festival would recognize the film as, you know, worthy of being, uh, in the program. So, um, my experience has been great so far. Like, we got to have a little Q&A after the film, and I was blown away by the response to the film. So I'm really appreciative of this festival.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Yeah. How was the response?

Clement Lye: The response was, I mean, as a filmmaker, when you know, you just love it when people think your film doesn't suck, so [Laughs]. And I think that the questions that I got, um, and the excitedness that you could just feel, you know, with the community here was, was all you can ask for as a filmmaker.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Yeah. Are you based in Seattle or?

Clement Lye: I'm based in Spokane.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Yeah. Have you gotten to show the film there?

Clement Lye: Yes. Uh, so in January, we went to the Spokane Jewish Film Festival there. So, um, I unfortunately couldn't attend, but, uh, I heard the response was fantastic there as well.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Amazing. Um, do you want to tell me a little bit about, like, choosing to create this film?

Clement Lye: Yeah, absolutely. Um, so I work at Gonzaga University as an Associate Director where I make online content for our, you know, I'm in the instructional design department, so videos and filmmaking have been a huge part of my life. Um, I actually had a career in the film industry before that in Los Angeles. And when I heard about this story from a professor on campus who ended up becoming my producer for this film, um, I just knew I had to tell it because I couldn't believe that this story was not out there already. As as a cinematic, you know, form as a video, as, as any kind of media, really. All I saw were oral histories. And, um, she has an amazing story. So I just needed to tell it.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: It was just clear to you.

Clement Lye: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I'm like, come on [Laughs]. This is this is living history.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Yeah. Um, what's your experience been like? Uh, in Jewish community centers or. yeah, I'm sure this film is impactful in the Jewish community. So your experience around that?

Clement Lye: Um, uh, I just want to make sure I understand the question correctly. What's been my experience?

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Oh, just I'm trying to collect stories about the JCC especially, you know, what is the space like? So maybe this is your first time here. Maybe you've been to other JCC.

Clement Lye: Ah, okay. This is my very first time here. My only other experience with the JCC has been in Spokane, but for this community center, I'm I'm kind of blown away. I was like, I had no idea that this was here. Um, but the services that are offered here seem. I'm like, wow, I wish I had my own community center [Laughs] but, uh, I don't have one. So there we are. Yeah.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Um, are you gonna stay for the rest of the film festival, or what are your plans in Seattle?

Clement Lye: Um, well, I have family here, so I'm hanging out with them. But my wife and I do plan to screen as many as we can, virtually.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Awesome.

Clement Lye: Yeah.

Ruth Kodish-Eskind: Thanks so much for your time.

Clement Lye: Of course.