

Delta Film Commission

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TEEN VOGUE MAGAZINE: MISSISSIPPI DELTA FEATURED IN APRIL 2009 ISSUE Delta Film Commission produces photo shoot in Clarksdale for Teen Vogue Magazine

December saw high fashion come to the cotton fields of Coahoma County when Teen Vogue magazine arrived for a photo shoot. The twelve person crew, including famed New York fashion photographer Arthur Elgort and up-and-coming Polish model Monika "Jac" Jagaciak, spent six days in Clarksdale taking pictures for a photo spread to run in Teen Vogue this spring.

The Delta Film Commission first fielded the call from Teen Vogue, a Conde Nast publication, in November.

"I was a little surprised when they called and asked us to produce the shoot," said Floyd Graham who, along with Randall Andrews and Win Graham, founded the commission one year ago.

"We haven't actively advertised the commission to the bigger magazines and studios yet. We wanted to cut our teeth on a few smaller projects first, but landed a big client right out of the box."

Graham, who served as the Producer, and Andrews, who worked as the Prop Stylist, first conceived the idea for a film commission when they realized movie studios were coming to Mississippi but bypassing the Northwest Mississippi region and particularly the North Delta area.

"It was discouraging to see production companies coming to the state and ignoring Clarksdale, especially when the movies focused on the blues. We just saw it happen again with the movie Cadillac Records which was about Muddy Waters but was filmed in Yazoo City. There's no reason this movie couldn't have been shot here," said Graham.

The goal of the Delta Film Commission, which operates independently of state and local tourism boards, is to aid production companies and magazines that are looking to come to Mississippi for an authentic Delta experience. After developing a mission statement and a website they waited. A few phone calls came but it wasn't until this past November that they had their first big break.

"We got lucky. Teen Vogue was initially going to shoot this in South Carolina until one of the photographer's assistants suggested Clarksdale or Greenville. Teen Vogue Senior Producer, Jennifer Kim, did a quick Internet search and hit on the Delta Film Commission website and was pretty much sold on the area after viewing some of the location photos. But I have no doubt that without a film commission here to help produce the shoot for them they would have shot this somewhere else," said Andrews, who spent several years in Los Angeles working on various photography and film productions.

Despite down pouring rains, freezing temperatures and thirty mile per hour winds, the event ran as smoothly as possible.

"It's great that we were able to pull this off as well as we did under those conditions. Everyone with the magazine was very pleased with the way things turned out. And if they are happy we hope they spread the word with colleagues and other Conde Nast publications. We would love to do 5 to 10 projects like this a year."

More projects like photo shoots and film productions would be a huge boon to the economy in this area.

"I think the thing we are most proud of is the positive impact this had on the community," said Graham. "Teen Vogue came in with a sizeable budget, for a shoot like this, and we are happy to say that virtually 100% of that was spent with businesses and individuals in Coahoma County."

For more information about the Delta Film Commission visit their website at www.deltafilmcommission.com and if you have an old vehicle, farm implement or other item that could be used as a prop send a photo and brief description to props@deltafilmcommission.com.

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All photographs by Win Graham / Delta Film Commission

