

The series FINEST HOUR is the brainchild of Hannah Baker and Bill Chamberlain as part of their Independent Sitcom Project. They set out to create a fully produced, television ready sitcom using independent resources and they certainly have gotten themselves off to a decent start. Their 22 minute pilot is certainly sitcom ready as far as the premise goes, and the actors and actresses are more than enthusiastic in their roles. The show creators definitely have something here and it will be great to see how it develops.

FINEST HOUR is a four part (at this point anyways) series about a small production company charged with the impossible task of creating a very low budget sequel for their demanding Russian boss. What follows are their poor attempts at casting (including an immigrant named John Stamost that they are trying to pass off as the real John Stamos), production problems on their set which is a borrowed backyard with barking dogs in the background, and 37 minutes of daylight left in which to shoot. If they can't pull something off, they're all fired! Will they fail? Or will it be their FINEST HOUR? (See what I did there?)

The camerawork is actually pretty good on this series. It has a certain low budget style and it is consistent throughout. This could easily have been on of those cinema verite shot pieces like CURB YOUR ENTHUSIASM that seems to be all the rage lately, but instead they went with a more traditional style, and it really works for the story. The audio is done well, even in the outdoor scenes, and the lighting is consistent as well.

The acting is pretty well done too. Definite nods should go to the actor who plays the flamboyant Intern (Christopher Davis Carlisle), and Jim Allen Jackson who plays their hapless supervisor Gary. Both of these actors stand out as being able to sustain further storylines, and the Intern could probably have a show all his own. The rest of the actors and actresses all do a great job as well, easily playing off one another. It would have been nice to see Stephanie's character (played by Abby Wathen) get a little more story development, but keep in mind this is only the "pilot episode", so there is plenty of room for these characters to grow. The main character of Holland (played by co-director Bill Chamberlain) could be toned down just a bit. I can see them going for over-the-top, but his character is just a little too much so. All the kinks can be worked out in later episodes though once they've had more of an opportunity to get into their character's skins.

If these guys and gals had a real budget, they could probably make something that could hit the primetime lineup on TV and probably do better than most of the tripe out there. It's great to see a webseries that highlights people working in the film industry, since there really isn't

anything else out there representing. This “pilot episode” is a good starting point, but I think we need to see more to really get a sense of who these characters are and where they came from.

For more on this series visit: <http://www.finesthour.tv>

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