



“LIFE. SUPPORT. MUSIC”

By Eric Daniel Metzgar

Tuesday, July 7, 2009, on PBS (Check local listings)

Filmmaker’s Statement

I knew Jason before this tragedy struck. He wasn’t one of my closest friends, but he was one of my favorite people. Funny as hell, warm and wise. A wildly talented musician. I was in Connecticut when I got a call — “Jason’s in the hospital. It’s touch and go.” My girlfriend and I hopped on a train, and a few hours later I was looking down at Jason on a hospital bed. He looked awful. He had a hole in his skull. Tubes everywhere. Dozens of friends were lingering in the halls. All we could do, it seemed, was to keep hugging each other.

The filmmaking didn’t begin then. No one considered it. Jason’s family was in shock. Everyone was.

It was many months later that the Criglers called me and said, “We were going to write a book about this whole saga, but we think a documentary might be better. Are you interested?”

Of course I was. For months, I’d been in the email loop, receiving occasional updates about Jason’s condition, Monica’s pregnancy, the surgeries, the setbacks and all the other aching news. But these updates, sent by the Criglers to their vast web of friends, were more than just informational. They were illuminated by the family’s intense optimism. There was an incandescent love in these letters, in these people. This misfortune, it seemed, had created, or uncovered, something splendid.

That, I thought, will be the story. Amid the heaps of suffering, I’ll focus on this beautiful and shining optimism. I’ll search for the source of the family’s strength, the seed of their unwavering faith. This will be a love story.

Of course, I underestimated the entire thing.

— Eric Daniel Metzgar, Director/Producer/Cinematographer

