



**Cieri Media
International Corp.**

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358 West 44th Street, 2nd Floor

New York, NY 10020

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Building The 21st Century Toilet

**A journey from a health hazard
to
a renewable energy source**



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Table of Contents

Introduction	03
Treatment	
Logline	03
Summary	03
Director's Vision	05
Production Crew Bio	06
Timeline	09
Budget	09
Contact Information	09



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Title	Director/Producer	Genre	Length	Stage
Building the 21 st Century Toilet	Dennis Cieri	Documentary	60 mins	Post Production

Treatment

Log Line

Exploring innovative sanitation solutions in Madagascar, **Building the 21st Century Toilet** features a waterless, off-grid loo that can charge your phone and cook your food, and how 21st century science can turn a sanitation problem into a renewable energy source.

Synopsis

Building the 21st Century Toilet will be told as a captivating mosaic of Malagasy characters and scenes, interspersed by interviews with science, technology and sustainability experts. Using a stark juxtaposition of Madagascar's vibrant nature with the abject poverty of its residents, we will present the challenges of building Western-type sanitation systems and the urgent need for technological advancements. Through interviews with UNICEF and WASHPlus experts, we will reveal the pressing hygiene and drinking water problems caused by inadequate sanitation, and explain the innovative solutions piloted by technological startups.

Using the revealing footage of Madagascar's capital Antananarivo, we will let the audience follow the Loowatt startup's crew on their daily waste-collection walks through the impoverished neighborhoods, where chickens and cars trot down the street with the same speed, and children jump over open sewer ditches. Through our film, the audience will meet the locals who now use the waterless toilets, listen to the crewmembers' explanations of how their



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bio-digester technology produces biogas, and hear their hopes for the future of their country—while expanding this view to the rest of the world. Finally, through interviews with scientists and visionary thinkers, we will also explain what the rest of the world can glean from this new technological approach and explain why waste management methods will have to evolve even in the planet's most affluent regions.

Director's Vision

The documentary presents the massive sanitation problems that hinders health and prosperity of developing nations, while also revealing the pressing environmental issues caused by the outdated sewage systems in the more affluent countries. Using Madagascar as a platform, the film explores innovative remedies to the world's waste problem by turning it from pollution into a solution. Using ideas from science and technology experts, we rethink our assumptions of what human waste is, and how smart technologies can turn this dangerous, pathogen-laden health hazard into a renewable energy resource. Using real life examples, we show how future toilets will operate off the grid, without relying on water, electricity or gigantic sewage plants, and fit into both poor and wealthy urban environments, integrated into the mix of renewable energy sources.

Cinematically, the film will juxtapose the beautiful pristine Madagascar nature and its unique flora and fauna, with the unsanitary living conditions of its rural and urban residents—due to the lack of proper waste management. Using interviews with vibrant and photogenic Malagasy natives filmed in their homes, the film will reveal how heavy rains can flood their dwellings with latrine filth, and a midnight walk to an outhouse can be a dangerous adventure. Coupled with the interviews of the sanitation experts worldwide and the local sanitation engineers, we will show how a new, waterless sewage system in Antananarivo is being piloted right now, converting waste to biogas and fertilizer—and what the residents think of it.



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The post-production work will intermix the Malagasy lifestyle shots with interviews of the locals and the experts to build a visually engaging, emotionally rich and educationally important story. The film's visual narrative will follow the sanitation crew on their regular waste-collection walk through an impoverished Antananarivo neighborhood, and later to their bio-digester facility up on a cliff overlooking the city. Interspaced with expert talks, engineers' descriptions of waste to energy conversion and dramatic close-ups of the equipment and toilets being serviced, with music enhancing the storytelling, the documentary will take its audience onto a unique and captivating journey.

Background Information

When nature calls, Madagascar residents head out to latrines if they have them—and into the bushes if they don't. As in many developing countries, flush toilets can't be built in Madagascar because of droughts and floods. That causes 200 million tons of human waste going untreated every year with 90 percent of it ending up in rivers and lakes—seeping into drinking water, spreading deadly diseases that kill nearly a million people a year. And while in the Western world the industrialized sewage plants eliminated the outbreaks, we still dump our waste into the ocean and landfills, polluting the planet one flush at a time.

But, the 21st century science tells us that we have been foolishly wasting our waste. As counterintuitive as it may sound, in the new millennia human excrement appears to be a very valuable substance, and innovative startups are developing technology to transform this cheap and renewable resource into electricity, fuel and fertilizer. From converting waste into biogas and compost, these technologies improve agriculture and living standards, and eliminate poverty and disease. The film features science and technology experts, the startup team that runs the waterless sanitation system, and the Madagascar locals, who are adopting the new toilet system in their homes.



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Film Team Bios

Dennis Cieri , Director/Producer...

... Dennis is a native New Yorker, who has produced a number of film and TV projects throughout his career, focusing on social justice and environmental storytelling. His latest travel series, Beyond Moscow, which featured five undiscovered Russian cities through historical narratives interwoven with modern culture and social allure, has been acquired in 2017 by SES, a European TV network broadcasting to over 300 million homes worldwide. Dennis also produced and directed a mini-documentary, Redesigning the Sanitation System for JSTOR Daily, featuring a novel waterless toilet system, piloted in Madagascar, timed for the UN World Toilet Day 2017. Prior to that, he produced a mini-documentary What's in Brooklyn Gowanus Canal? for the Hakai Magazine, about rare and unique microbes dwelling in one of the most polluted waterways in North America.

In his short, The End of Fair Trade, Dennis investigated how Internet bots force consumers to settle for higher prices based on their perceived ability to pay, which is calculated using personal information gathered on the web. Additionally, as the founder and executive director of The New York City Independent Film Festival, which screens over 250 indie films yearly, he has created a collaborative and supportive environment for filmmakers from around the world, attracting enthusiastic New York City audience of indie film fans. His latest travel series, Beyond Moscow, which featured five undiscovered Russian cities through historical narratives interwoven with modern culture and social allure, has been acquired by Amazon Prime in 2018 as well as by SES, a European TV network broadcasting to over 300 million homes worldwide, in 2017.



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Lina , Writer...

... Lina grew up in a family of Russian scientists listening to bedtime stories about black holes, volcanoes and intrepid explorers. Since then, she edited features at the ASME award-winning Nautilus magazine, won multiple awards, and has written dozens of stories for major publications in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom, including Newsweek, The Atlantic, Smithsonian, Audubon Magazine, Sierra Club, Hakai Magazine, Popular Mechanics, Mosaic Science, Nautilus, Nature, Scientific American and Psychology Today. Lina specializes in complex science and sustainability topics, revealing the intricate relationship between humans and their environment, and illuminating the challenges and the surprising solutions, while telling her stories in an optimistic tune, of “yes, we can!”

In her award-winning narrative, Redesigning the Toilet, Lina explored pressing global sanitation needs, and surprising solutions, applicable to both, the developing and the developed world. Another award-winning narrative, The Sailing Farmer, told the story of an eco-conscious Vermont farmer who built a sailboat to deliver his produce to New York City by way of water and wind. Her investigative piece What Would it Take to Stop International Killer Whale Capture? revealed the plight of Russian orcas caught and sold to Chinese attraction parks, and what can be done to stop it. In United We Fish!, she traced the rise of community-supported fishery movement across North America, and explained how small-scale fishers can build sustainable niche markets to compete with destructive industrial fleets. As a Columbia Journalism School alumna, Lina firmly believes that journalism can make a difference.

Teirra Kamolvattanavith, Writer...

... Teirra recently discovered her deep love for Documentaries. Leveraging her background in sales, play/content writing and over 12 years in show business, Teirra is passionate about bringing this important, but little known, issue to the greater public. Selected favorite works include “Reflections”, a one-woman show (wrote and performed), *Three Little*



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Words (workshopped with Neil Labute) and her contribution to several digital publications regarding health and women empowerment.

Hannah Beal, Editor...

... Hannah is a film editor based out of New Jersey. She's currently a videographer and editor for Big Talk Productions, where she collaborates with director, Tricia Brouk, on short documentaries. Her work has been featured at Terminus film festival in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as the New York Women in Film and Television festival.

Angela Hammer, Editor...

... Angela is a 22-year-old undergrad at Florida State University working towards a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Media Studies. Originally from Destin, Florida, she worked as a freelance photographer/videographer for about five years now. Angela's professional work as an editor began in 2013 after learning the ins and outs of editing software such as Final Cut Pro X and Adobe Creative Suite. Editing photos, videos and creating content is a serious passion of hers. Today, she continues on her pursuit of happiness and aspires to one day have the privilege to inspire others through the use of visual storytelling.

Trishala Kadam, Production Coordinator...

... Trishala is a tech savvy production coordinator with a zeal for storytelling. With her passion for purposeful cinema to reach large audiences, she enrolled in The New School graduate program where she studies Media Management and Film Distribution, in the past she has worked on various film series in New York which screen independent films and has been a research assistant at the Creatively Speaking Film Series. Her recent audience research paper on 'India's Daughter' was published in The New School magazine, and received many accolades. Through this documentary, she aims to encourage the world towards a longer, healthier planet life.



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Current Stage

The documentary is in its post production stage, where footage shot in Madagascar is being indexed, timelined and put together for editing. At the same time, interviews of experts in sanitation and sustainability are being scheduled to be videotaped. This includes David Waltner-Toews, a Canadian epidemiologist who specialises in food and waterborne diseases and Francis de los Reyes, an environmental engineer, his research focuses on biological processes, molecular microbial ecology tools in addressing issues in environmental biotechnology and environmental engineering.

Timeline

****attached****

Budget

****attached****

Video Sample

****attached****

Contact Information

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