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## 'Slapstick' creator: rebel with a cause

By: Ed Naha

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HOLLYWOOD – Audacious is one way to describe 24-year-old filmmaker Steven Paul's forthcoming adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slapstick*. Filmed for a trim \$4 million, the movie stars Jerry Lewis and Madeline Kahn in their most outrageous roles yet.

The twosome play 7 foot-tall, 15-year-old twins who boast huge, malformed foreheads. When the two kids put their heads together, literally, they produce a genius intellect that is capable of solving any and all of the world's problems.

The movie is rife with Vonnegut's distinctive humor and some pretty nifty special effects, including the head-bonking scenes, a miniature Chinese spaceship in the form of a fortune cookie which houses, in turn, mini-Chinese astronauts, a massive close encounters-ish mother ship and a few stop motion animation scenes.

No one really expected Paul to actually complete the complicated movie. He pulled off that impossible task, however, and is shopping for a distributor. The headstrong Paul is not about to compromise on his movie with any studio.

Recently, he went to one Hollywood lot, film in hand, to screen *Slapstick* for the studio head. When a bevy of yes-men showed up in lieu of the Big Cheese, Paul calmly inquired if anyone present was capable of making a yes or no decision regarding his labor of love's theatrical fate.

When it became clear that none of the assembled possessed that power, Paul apologized, canceled the screening, took his film canisters and left. At last! A celluloid rebel *with* a cause.

*Slapstick* will probably be well worth seeing if only because it proves that you *can* buck the system and shoot for quality.