



“Death Row Stories”™ Gets Gritty Launch Campaign for HLN Debut

03.16.2018

To introduce the debut of Death Row Stories on HLN, CNN Creative Marketing teamed up with 2C for a gritty, multi-platform launch campaign around the show's March 18 season three premiere.

The campaign-which includes on-air launch creative, key art, digital banners and episodic promos-targets HNL viewers who are already tuned in to Forensic Files. At the same time, the creative gives the series a distinct look and tone that establishes it on its new network, and highlights its unique place in the crime documentary genre.

Narrated by Susan Sarandon, Death Row Stories features stories told by current and former death row inmates as it seeks to unravel the truth behind a different capital murder case in each episode, and poses tough questions about the U.S. capital punishment system.

While campaigns for the show's two previous seasons on CNN used a clean approach with well shot, documentary-style footage, 2C was encouraged to push the creative to another level through powerful storytelling and a decisive look that incorporated strong design.

The agency gave each frame a dark, gritty treatment to echo the intensity of the life-and-death struggle to prove innocence, while simultaneously elevating archival footage and evidence to stand side-by-side with current video from the cases.

2C also applied diminishing light to each moment, creating an effect where shadows encroach on every image, but never reach total darkness. When applied to the rhythmic edit, the repeating pressure of darkness is used to subtly increase tension.

The technique goes hand-in-hand with the signature audio and visual language 2C crafted that's carried through all on-air creative. The audio uses an aggressive, ever-increasing rhythm that paces the delivery of powerful phrases that highlight the magnitude of what's at stake: right or wrong; freedom or incarceration; exoneration or execution — the time for justice is running out.

"We created a campaign that speaks to the urgency of these inmates' literal fight for their lives and the dwindling time left to prove their innocence, telling their story one powerful word onscreen at a time," 2C Creative Director Ben Frank said in a statement.

The impact of the titles and gritty elements extends to the show's key art and digital banners with the statement, "Sentenced to Death. Fighting for Life," a sentiment that speaks to the gravity of the show.

The campaign includes 55 different deliverables, including launch spots, teasers, episodics, key art, digital banners and "original series" animation.

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