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Angel of Inclusion: Michele Spitz doubling her reach in the world of disabilities.

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Michele Spitz

submitted by Michele Spitz

When, exactly, does an angel find the time to relax and take a break from the daily routine of making arts available to everyone regardless of limitations? **Michele Spitz**, born, as she says, “with the entertainment section of the SF Chronicle in my hand,” has from her earliest memories loved inviting people out for an afternoon or evening of entertainment. “Come with me,” precedes her every step. Then came the day she realized that there were people whose limitations, either financial or physical, seemed to keep them from attending cultural events. Seemed. That never daunted Michele, Woman of Her Word, which is actually the name under which she operates and offers her everlasting invitations to take part in something uplifting. She says that she often kidnapped people to take with her whenever she was aware of someone who wanted to go but could not. Michele, devoted as she is to both people and the arts, whether stage, film, television, museum exhibits, or

music, in finding such joy in introducing people to new cultural beauty, found her calling. She was determined to remove barriers to attendance so that disabled, seniors, veterans, and others were not prevented in taking part in society's cultural offerings.

Add to this her remarkable voice that conducts warmth and strength, and you have a more complete picture of Michele's reach. As part of her philanthropic work, she offers her voice to audio description for the blind both for entertainment and education. **She has, to date, a long list of 35 audio described films**, including "Last Man Club," "Looking to the Stars," and "**Do You Dream in Color?**" In answer to the question about an angel taking a break from the daily routine, Michele's routine illustrates it well enough. Never. She has doubled her efforts, because that daily routine is the joy, and the time spent between projects seems to be celebrating family and friends and searching for new projects to include even more people in the cultural world she loves.

Woman of Her Word is now expanding her philanthropic reach to strengthen the mind and lift the spirit. Hers was the voice heard in films of **Superfest International** Disability Film Festival in 2014, 2015 and for 2016. She personally funded the closed captioning for multiple independent films. She continued her audio description sponsorship for the New York **ReelAbilities Film Festival** of 2015 and **2016**. As a member of New York Women in Film and Television Michele served as a judge on the annual disability film panel, and was the original grant provider for audio description for NYWIFT's disability film selected. With every project she joins or originates, there is another she cannot resist, as she also recently served on a panel for NYWIFT in 2016, educating filmmakers on post-production accessible media including audio description and captioning. She is endless generosity and gleeful perpetual motion personified. Yes, increasing her reach now looking to see museums implement accessible tours and multi-sensory immersive programming. Michele plans to have some of her films donated to the film club of Lighthouse for the Blind. She also recently voiced the new brand video for Easter Seals 100 year anniversary.

Her films can be found on Amazon, iTunes and Netflix. She sponsored and voiced the audio description for "**Becoming Bulletproof**", a story about a disability camp in Southern California. "**States of Grace**" is a San Francisco story about **Grace Dammann**, a physician who had a head on collision on the GG Bridge and now lectures on compassionate care issues.

Listen to Michele talk about her life and work in her familiar and loved voice and a laugh that carries a contagious feeling of well-being. And, **her love letter**? Get a box of Kleenex and **hear more** remarkable facets to this woman of her word.

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