



- [About Slackerwood](#)
- [Contributors](#)
- [Venue guide](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Archive by category](#)
- [Archive by month](#)
- [Contact](#)

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[Home](#) » [Blogs](#) » [Jordan Gass-Poore's blog](#)

The Value of Shorts: David Fabelo and His 'Do Over' Philosophy

By [Jordan Gass-Poore](#) on May 30, 2013 - 1:30pm in [Local Indies](#) | [Short Films](#)



It's been native Austinite [David Fabelo's](#) philosophy for years: if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. It's worked in Fabelo's romantic life -- despite spilling a beer on a woman during their first date he redeemed himself and now they're married. It's also worked in his professional life, with the release of his award-winning short film *Do Over*, about Adam ([Garrett Jester](#)), a high schooler who attempts to make a good first impression on his date with Sarah ([Jacobi Alvarez](#)).

This attitude of utilizing experimentation in an attempt to get it "right" has led co-writer/director Fabelo to VHX, an online platform that allows independent filmmakers to distribute their content directly to their fans via paywall. Fabelo has used VHX to [set up a site](#) where viewers can preview and hopefully purchase a download of *Do Over*.

"It's about putting a value on our work," said Fabelo. "A way to value shorts."

He's striving for an understanding of the value of hard work and is determined to overcome the odds that many creators of short films face -- not being taken as seriously as their feature-length counterparts. *Do Over* has played about 20 festivals, including Austin Film Festival and most recently the Hill Country Film Festival ([Jette's photo essay](#)). The comedy has garnered a fan base Fabelo feels will be responsive to the romantic comedy's instant streaming and HD downloads release. Fabelo plans to use proceeds from *Do Over* purchases for a future film project.

The film's release isn't the only thing that's cause for celebration. Garrett Jester recently graduated from St. Stephen's Episcopal School in Austin, where Fabelo teaches part time. Jester's involvement with *Do Over* was pure happenstance. Jester had been a part of the school's theater tech crew when fellow filmmaker and teacher Mike Dolan, who Fabelo worked with on the Austin-shot film *Dance with the One*, asked him to audition the high schooler.

Jacobi Alvarez, who now attends Northwestern University, was also a student at St. Stephen's when she auditioned and joined the all local cast and crew as the main female lead in *Do Over*. Fabelo said he'd like to direct her again because she has great comedic timing, reminiscent of 1940s movie stars.

"She's like a ball of nuclear energy and when you say action she's going to explode and you don't know the aftermath," he said.

Do Over premiered early last year at Cinequest Film Festival, a culmination of years' worth of work, which began in notebooks from Fabelo's days at The University of Texas in Austin. What started as an attempt to get him out of the editor's chair -- his editing credits include Austin movies *Good Night*, *Fourplay* and *An Ordinary Family* -- has led to opportunities to be an activist for short films and to foster young talent.

"'Do over' is part of our lexicon," he said. "We invite you to take a chance on our film."

Not only can you watch *Do Over* online, but it will have a public screening in Austin next month -- we'll keep you posted with details as they're available.

A Real Gem!

Submitted by [Debbie Cerda](#) on May 30, 2013 - 2:12pm.

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This endearing short film was high on our curated list for last year's AFS ShortCase for SXSW, but we weren't able to fit in. I'm so glad that it's out and available for screening -- and gives me programming ideas!

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