



THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors



LOUISE LEVISON, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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REASONS TO BE POSITIVE ABOUT INDIE FILM'S FUTURE

WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- As availability of quality film content shrinks, there are enormous opportunities for independents.
- Movie theaters are expected to reopen in 2023 and 2024.
- Projected spending on streaming services and software in 2021 is \$112 billion (Consumer Technology Association.)
- Hybrid film festivals are the likely future, as virtual fests lead to more buyer awareness and audience diversity.
- “I think we need to get closer to standardizing a view across every platform and making it something more realistic... [After the pandemic,] I think we'll start to see a marriage of streaming and theatrical and find a happy medium for it.” -Shawn Robbins, Chief Analyst, Boxoffice Pro.
- “...PVOD (Premium Video-On-Demand) is poised to complement the theatrical business in a way that can meaningfully benefit the ecosystem across consumers, distributors and studios,” said Michael Bonner, President, Universal Pictures Home Entertainment.

NOW is the time to have a business plan and raise money for production!

Theaters and studios need each other to create positive revenue streams. Even as digital streaming changes “legacy” revenue in segments such as music and television, the film industry has continued to bet on box office paydays with increasing blockbuster releases. Open theaters welcome quality independent films to help build revenues. The number of theaters will be different from the past 20 years, but an adjustment that previously needed to be made. Nevertheless, the results are estimated to be comfortable for both studio and independent earning needs.

The growth of streaming's boom has given filmmakers and buyers greater choice in distribution methods. However, as much as competition in the streaming business has grown, many feel that consolidations are in its future. Netflix, Amazon and Apple continue to be the agenda-setters, as Indiewire commented during Sundance. The financial industry is betting that there will be more consolidations within the studio system. Companies that used to be the giants of entertainment found themselves too small and started merging. Murdoch sold most of 21st Century Fox to Disney while Time Warner sold to AT&T and Viacom merged with CBS. NBC has Peacock and WarnerMedia which each generated close to \$30 billion in revenue last year. Many believe they will make a deal soon. The last "streaming independent" studio is Sony Pictures Entertainment which has partner choices among Amazon, Netflix, HBO Max and Hulu.

WHERE HAVE WE BEEN?

2020 started off looking good. Theaters were busy, studio and independent films were both having a good year. Then things went downhill by March when theaters closed. Slowly a few theaters - mostly drive-ins - opened. The first full week of 2020 - Jan 1-7, 2020 there were 81 films in 39,366 theaters, March 27-April 3 there were 3 indie films on 28 screens (with *Phoenix Oregon* on 25 of them). The last week of December (25-31) 2020 there were 31 films in 11,791 theaters. At the end of the year, vaccines were becoming real, and there was hope. 🍷

HOME ENTERTAINMENT \$30B - UP 21 PERCENT

Led by subscription streaming up 37.1 percent to \$21.2 billion in 2020, digital home entertainment was \$30 billion up from 2019's \$25 billion driven also in part by stay-at-home orders and the establishment of major new services including HBO Max and Peacock, reports the Digital Entertainment Group (DEG). During the year, transactional demand was strong across purchase and rental models with spending rising 16 percent on Electronic Sell-through (EST) and 18 percent on Video-On-Demand (VOD).

Among other highlights from the DEG report are:

- Rental transactions through internet services (iVOD) experienced robust growth of 43 percent for the full year, as consumers continue to transition from legacy cable and satellite services.
- With movie theaters closed in much of the country, spending on digital rentals of theatrical titles grew more than 40 percent for the year. With few new theatrical releases, catalog films and independent titles experienced brisk demand, particularly in the latter part of the year.
- Digital purchases via EST of theatrical titles grew nearly six percent for the year, limited by the lack of new theatrical releases.
- Premium Video-on-Demand (PVOD) results currently are not included in industry reporting or the overall home entertainment market forecasts, DEG reports; however, early insights suggest that interest is high, and results are strong.

- DEG compiles the weekly Watched at Home Top 20 list with the titles most widely consumed on disc and through digital transactions during the previous week. For full reports:
https://www.degonline.org/portfolio_page/deg-ye-2020-home-entertainment-report/
https://www.degonline.org/portfolio_page/watched-at-home-top-20/ 📌

INDUSTRY EXPERTS' 2021 ANALYSIS

The following quotes for the coming year are from an article by Thomas K. Arnold, Publisher and Editorial Director of mediaplaynews.com:

“The overriding trend we saw in 2020 was consumers’ hunger for, love of, and engagement with entertainment content...When new releases slowed as a result of production halts and theater closures during the COVID-19 pandemic, consumers hardly missed a beat, they just expanded their viewing to include many catalog movies and TV shows, as well as discovering films that were independent productions or may have had limited prior release.” Amy Jo Smith, DEG President and CEO.

“A case can be made that COVID-19 didn’t really bring about monumental changes in the entertainment industry. Rather, the pandemic accelerated changes that were already in the works: specifically, declining movie theater attendance and a steady increase in streaming video subscriptions.” - Bob Buchi, Paramount President of Worldwide Home Entertainment
<https://www.mediaplaynews.com/2021-what-now> 📌

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

The 37th edition of the 2021 Sundance Film Festival took place January 28th to February 3rd. Its online edition and 20 city theatrical extension drew a total audience that was 2.7 times larger than the 11-day, in-person 2020 editions and the largest-ever audience in the festival's four-decade history, organizers announced on February 8th. The seven-day program included 73 features, 50 shorts, four Indie Series, 23 talks and events and a New Frontier section with 14 projects. Over 70 percent of the feature film program as well as screenings played on 40 satellite screens run by 20 cinemas and organizations around the country. Participants watched from over 120 countries and in all 50 states, plus Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin islands. Sundance said that 48 percent of participants were aged between 18 and 34 and came from more than 120 countries and territories around the world and all 50 states.

In a normal year, Sundance showcases around 120 features, all screening in and near Park City, Utah over 11 days. "We talked about this year's festival as a grand experiment," said Festival Director Tabitha Jackson, "and now we are in the process of analyzing the results – a vital part of informing the expression of Festival in 2022. There is a lot still to learn but we are delighted that a combination of online and in-person participation, innovative social spaces, hard work, and a lot of crossed-fingers came together to expand and connect audiences for the incredible slate of work we were lucky enough to program this year." Of course, that does not mean that future fests will be all virtual.

Forty-seven percent of the feature films were directed by women. Sixty-four percent of viewers opted to watch films during their three-hour premiere window, which included live chat and Q&As. There was also a five percent increase in press and industry accreditation compared to last year, with 1,800 industry members and 1,272 press accredited. Per Sundance organizers, there were a total of 251,331 views of features, shorts, and Indie Series through the online platform and apps in 2021.

As with everything else in the film business this year, opinions will vary on whether or not Sundance is relevant. Both the buyers and the audience appeared to like the films which makes the festival relevant. Many of the films were made possible by modern technology, and some filmmakers managed with great difficulty to make films during the pandemic. On the eve of the 2021 Sundance Film Festival, *Screen International* spoke to three prominent U.S. buyers to take the pulse of the independent market ahead of the mostly virtual event. Arianna Bocco, President, IFC Films said that the company was "full-steam ahead and are already scheduled for the most part through early summer, so we're looking at titles for the fall and for 2022. We're looking for everything: documentaries, genre titles, and we're looking for bigger titles." There "absolutely" would be theatrical releases, but "it will be very dependent upon what kind of a film it is. Kent Sanderson, President, Acquisitions and Ancillary Distribution at Bleeker Street Media said, "Our core audience remains sophisticated adults. If you look at our slate over the course the next year, we have everything from specialized LGBT dramas to an animated documentary that's going into production... We're primarily targeting a theatrical audience first, but obviously, this year...we're changing things up and trying to reach people on a variety of platforms." Mark Ward, RLJE Films Chief Acquisitions Officer said, "We like to find very audience-accessible content for everyone,

for every bucket from the iTunes audience to streaming audience to the Walmart audience. That usually entails genre, or star-driven stuff. That's been our MO for the last five or six years..."

Considering our current environment of limited box office and massive streaming, early sales were better than expected. Nine films were acquired between the line-up announcement on December 16th and before the official first day of the festival. A total of 19 films have been acquired. Once the festival opened, the biggest deal announced was for Sian Heder's *CODA*. A bidding war that began after the movie's day one premiere, which saw Netflix and Amazon put in bids for the movie. The final \$25 million price tag makes the film the biggest sale in the festival's history, beating out last year's record-breaker *Palm Springs*, which sold to Neon and Hulu in a deal that was worth \$22 million. (Prior to *Palm Springs*, 2016's *Birth of a Nation* held the record with a \$17.5 million to Fox Searchlight.)

CODA, a family drama centered on a high school student who is the child of deaf adults (hence the title), is the first film in Sundance history to win all three top prizes in the U.S. Dramatic category—grand jury, directing, audience award—plus a special jury prize for best ensemble. "I hope that this opens the door to people getting that audiences want to see these kinds of stories," director Siân Heder said while accepting the audience award. "And I hope that this means that more stories that center deaf characters and characters with disabilities get put front and center because clearly people want to respond to that."

And the golden age of documentaries continues. Seven docs were among the 18 sales reported to-date. Academy Award winning documentary filmmaker Alex Gibney told *Variety* that audiences are becoming less likely to distinguish between scripted films and nonfiction storytelling, regarding both as examples of compelling cinema. The first film bought as Sundance opened was *Flee*, an animated documentary that Neon acquired for \$1 million. The most exciting and interesting documentary purchase occurred after the festival officially closed when Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson's documentary *Summer of Soul (...Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)* was acquired by Searchlight Pictures and Hulu for \$12 million-plus. The previous documentary sales record at Sundance was 2020's *Boys State* which sold for \$12 million to Apple and A24. *Summer of Soul* will have a theatrical release. It also will stream in the United States on Hulu and internationally on Star and Star+. As the newsletter goes to press, more sales activity is expected, as distributors remain engaged in bidding wars for both narrative and documentary titles.

Summer Of Soul (...Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised), directed by the Roots frontman Ahmir "Questlove" Thompson, won both the grand jury and audience awards in the U.S. Documentary Competition category. The opening night film recreates the 1969 Harlem Cultural Festival, a massive music event with stars such as a 19-year-old Stevie Wonder, Sly and the Family Stone, the Staple singers, BB King, Nina Simone, and about 20 other artists of note celebrating African American music and is a sociological discussion as well. The original film was 40 hours of 50-year-old unshown old television footage that had been in a basement.

The other big purchase was Rebecca Hall's debut film, *Passing*, which was acquired by Netflix for \$15.75 million. Based on the 1929 novel of the same name by Nella Larsen, the film is a drama set in the Harlem Renaissance. Irene (Tessa Thompson) and Clare (Ruth Negga) are two mixed race women, and childhood friends, who reunite in their adulthood, discovering that they

now live on two different sides of the color line, with Clare “passing” as white. As the two women’s lives become more intertwined, the narrative turns inward, giving a look into the complicated nature of racial identity and how we all are impacted by how the world sees us.

SUNDANCE FILM SALES – 2021*

FEATURE FILMS ACQUIRED DECEMBER 16TH TO JANUARY 27TH

FILM	DISTRIBUTOR	TERRITORY	Estimated Purchase Price (Million \$)
<i>Captains of Zaatari</i>	Dogwoof Cinetic	International, U.S.	n.a.
<i>Cryptozoo</i>	The Match Factory	International	n.a.
<i>Glitch in the Matrix, A</i>	Magnolia	World	n.a.
<i>Luzzu</i>	Memento Films Int’l.	North America	n.a.
<i>Most Beautiful Boy in the World, The</i>	Films Boutique	World	n.a.
<i>Prisoners of the Ghostland</i>	RLJE Films	North America	n.a.
<i>Sesame Street</i>	Screen Media	North America	n.a.
<i>Together Together</i>	Bleecker Street	North America	n.a.
<i>Violation</i>	Shudder	Streaming	n.a.

*Does not include “buyer(s)” who financed the film or made purchase before acceptance by Sundance.

FEATURE FILMS ACQUIRED JANUARY 28TH TO FEBRUARY 3RD **

FILM	DISTRIBUTOR	TERRITORY	Estimated Purchase Price (Million \$)
<i>Ailey</i>	Neon	North America	n.a.
<i>Coda</i>	Apple Studios	World	25.0
<i>Cryptozoo</i>	Magnolia	North America	n.a.
<i>Flee</i>	Neon	North America	1.0+
<i>Jockey</i>	Films Boutique	International	n.a.
<i>On the Count of Three</i>	Annapurna Pictures	North America	2.0
<i>Passing</i>	Netflix	World	15.75
<i>Playing with Sharks</i>	National Geographic	World	n.a.

<i>Pleasure</i>	A24	U.S.	n.a.
<i>Summer Of Soul (... Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)</i>	Searchlight Pictures Hulu	World/Theatrical Streaming	12.0+.

****** Includes purchases made after Feb. 3rd due to negotiations and virtual screenings.

AND THE SUNDANCE PRIZES GO TO...

AWARDS/PRIZES	FILM	FILMMAKER
U. S. DRAMATIC		
Grand Jury Prize	<i>CODA</i>	Siân Heder
Audience	<i>CODA</i>	Siân Heder
Directing	<i>CODA</i>	Siân Heder
Waldo Salt Screenwriting		
Special Jury /Best Actor	<i>Jockey</i>	Clifton Collins Jr.
Special Jury / Ensemble Cast	<i>CODA</i>	—
U.S. DOCUMENTARY		
Grand Jury Prize	<i>Summer Of Soul (... Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)</i>	Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson
Audience	<i>Summer Of Soul (... Or, When The Revolution Could Not Be Televised)</i>	Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson
Directing	<i>Users</i>	Natalia Almada
Jonathan Oppenheim/ Editing	<i>Homeroom</i>	Kristina Motwani Rebecca Adorno
Special Jury / Emerging Filmmaker	<i>Cusp</i>	Parker Hill Isabel Bethencourt
Special Jury / Nonfiction Experimentation	<i>All Light, Everywhere</i>	Theo Anthony
WORLD CINEMA: DRAMATIC		
Grand Jury	<i>Hive</i>	Blerta Basholli
Audience	<i>Hive</i>	Blerta Basholli
Directing	<i>Hive</i>	Blerta Basholli
Special Jury / Creative Vision	<i>One for the Road</i>	Baz Poonpiriya
Special Jury / Acting	<i>Luzzu</i>	Jesmark Scicluna
WORLD CINEMA: DOCUMENTARY		

Grand Jury	<i>Flee</i>	Jonas Poher Rasmussen
Audience	<i>Writing With Fire</i>	Rintu Thomas, Sushmit Ghosh
Directing	<i>Sabaya</i>	Hogir Hirori
Special Jury / Vérité Filmmaking	<i>President</i>	Camilla Nielsson
Special Jury / Impact for Change	<i>Writing With Fire</i>	Rintu Thomas, Sushmit Ghosh
NEXT		
Audience	<i>My Belle, My Beauty</i>	Marion Hill
Innovator	<i>Cryptozoo</i>	Dash Shaw (director), Jane Samborski (animation director)
NHK	<i>Motherhood</i>	Meryam Joobeur
Alfred P. Sloan Prize	<i>Son of Monarchs</i>	Alexis Gambis
Amazon Studios Producers		
Narrative Features	<i>Run</i>	Natalie Qasabian
Documentary Features	<i>Philly D.A</i>	Nicole Salazar
Adobe Mentorship Award		
Editing Fiction	—	Terilyn Shropshire
Editing Nonfiction	—	Juli Vizza
SHORT FILM PRIZES		
Grand Jury	<i>Lizard</i>	Akinola Davies, Jr.
Special Jury / U.S. Fiction	<i>The Touch of the Master's Hands</i>	Gregory Barnes
Special Jury / International Fiction	<i>Bambirak</i>	Zamarin Wahdat
Special Jury / Non-fiction	<i>Don't Go Tellin' Your Momma</i>	Topaz Jones, Rubberband
Special Jury / Animation	<i>Souvenir Souvenir</i>	Bastien Dubois
Special Jury / Acting	<i>Wiggle Room</i>	Deanna Gibson
Special Jury / Screenwriting	<i>The Criminals</i>	Serhat Karasslan

Note: For more details on these awards, go to: <https://deadline.com/2021/02/sundance-film-festival-awards-2021-winners-1234686070> 🇺🇸

IDA AWARDS

The 36th annual International Documentary Association (IDA) Awards for 2020 took place virtually on January 16th, 2021. Celebrating the best nonfiction films and programs of the year, the organization seeks to represent excellence by emerging and established documentarians worldwide. “This past year has not been normal in any way,” said outgoing IDA executive director Simon Kilmurry. “If 2020/2021 has shown us anything, it’s that even with all the challenges we face and the grief we’ve had, the work of storytellers is essential.” Netflix had a good night with eight wins and an honorable mention.

AWARDS	DOCS	WINNERS
Best Feature	<i>Crip Camp</i>	Nicole Newnham, Jim leBrecht
Best Director	<i>Time</i>	Garrett Bradley
Best Short	<i>John Was Trying to Contact Aliens</i>	Matthew Killip
Best Curated Series	<i>American Experience</i>	Susan Bellows, Mark Samels
Best Episodic Series	<i>Last Chance U</i>	Greg Whiteley
Best Multi-Part Documentary	<i>Atlanta’s Missing and Murdered: The Lost Children</i>	Sam Pollard, Maro Chermayeff, Joshua Bennett, Jeff Dupre
Best Short Form Series	<i>POV Shorts</i>	Opal H. Bennett
Best Audio	<i>Somebody</i>	
Best Music	<i>Universe</i>	Sam Osborn, Nicholas Capezzer
David L. Wolper Student	<i>People Like Me</i>	Marrok Sedgwick
Best Cinematography	<i>The Earth Is Blue as an Orange</i>	Viacheslav Tsvietkov
Best Editing	<i>Dick Johnson Is Dead</i>	Nels Bangerter
Best Writing	<i>Dick Johnson Is Dead</i>	Nels Bangerter, Kirsten Johnson
Best Musical Score	<i>My Octopus Teacher</i>	Kevin Smuts
ABC News VideoSource	<i>Crip Camp</i>	Nicole Newnham, Jim LeBrecht
Pare Lorentz		
Winner	<i>My Octopus Teacher</i>	Kevin Smuts
Honorable Mention	<i>Crip Camp</i>	Nicole Newnham, Jim leBrecht

For more information, go to <https://www.documentary.org/awards2020> 📺

SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST FILM FESTIVAL

The South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW), which will run March 16-20, 2021, will launch seven films at a time in two-hour increments, with most of the films launching during the first three days of the event. “We feel privileged to have been able to pivot to SXSW Online and present a fantastic treasure trove of programming, including a pared-down and wonderful selection of films that we know will delight, entertain and move our attendees,” said Janet Pierson, SXSW Director of Film. “While we won’t have the wonderful in-person SXSW that we know and love, we can gather together to be inspired by the work.”

Here’s how this year’s virtual fest will work: seven films at a time will be launched in two-hour increments from 10AM-8PM CT, with most of the films launching during the first three days of the event, starting with the films with global access and no audience capacity limits. Once a film is available, it remains available on-demand until it hits its audience capacity or the event ends. The good news is that many films won’t have a capacity limit and will be available for the duration of the event. However, since SXSW is a global event, certain films will be restricted to access in the U.S. due to rights and/or filmmaker or distributor discretion.

To make this online fest happen, several platforms will be integrated to create the SXSW Online experience across web, mobile and premium viewing from your own TV. There will be a dedicated Connected TV app using Brightcove which can be accessed via Apple TV, Roku, Fire TV, Android TV and Samsung TV. There will be four concurrent channels that will be curated by SXSW Programmers in addition to over 600+ on-demand Films, Conference Sessions, Comedy and Live Music Showcases. A fifth channel will host partner programming. Swapcard is the online platform, accessible through web browser and mobile app, for attendee networking and facilitating business connections, as well as viewing channels and all on-demand content.

The competition awards will be announced on March 19 along with all the films in the Short Film Program, which are eligible for Jury Awards within their respective screening categories. There are also special awards including this year’s new Brightcove Illumination Award to honor a filmmaker on the rise, celebrating the innovation and creativity of new artists within the official selections which can be found at <https://www.sxsw.com/festivals/film/lineup/>

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Neon and Bleecker Street have formed **DECAL**, a joint home entertainment distribution company. The standalone full-service operation will handle distribution deals on the home entertainment rights to both NEON and Bleecker Street’s curated slate of features and will be overseen by Neon’s Andrew Brown and Bleecker’s Kent Sanderson. In the current climate and upheaval in the film business, DECAL will also be in the market of acquiring third-party content, offering an option for independent filmmakers to optimize the transactional window with both distributors’ strategic partnerships. *Deadline* reports that the two partner companies will handle their own costs and reap their own revenues and profits on their respective titles. When it comes to handling third party content, each will pool resources and share in the returns. The first DECAL release is Bleecker Street’s *Supernova* which launched on Feb. 16th.

New Slate Ventures is a film and TV fund headed by 28-year-old Jordan Fudge and partners Zach White and Jeremy Allen. The company financed Lee Daniels' *The United States vs. Billie Holiday* to be released Feb. 26th by Hulu and has upcoming projects highlighting "intersectional, inclusive and culturally impactful" stories. Fudge is the founder of L.A.-based hedge fund Sinai Capital Partners which raised \$600 million in new capital late last year. Most of the money is for tech investment, but \$100 million has been set aside for New Slate Ventures that's already had success with Radha Blank's autobiographical dramedy *The Forty-Year-Old Version*. The film was acquired by Netflix for seven figures at last year's Sundance. Fudge runs the operation out of a \$9 million Bel Air mansion with his partners, 28-year-old White (in charge of startups) and 26-year-old Allen (the former assistant to Endeavor's Patrick Whitesell who oversees film and TV development). He stands apart from the VC pack in that he happens to be Black and gay. New Slate is currently filming a documentary on Magic Johnson and developing a limited series about Michael Milken, the junk-bond king turned philanthropist. The company is well situated for the pandemic and beyond, Fudge told The Hollywood Reporter. "There is a big need for content out there."

Pure Flix Entertainment, the faith-based film studio behind the *God's Not Dead* franchise, has changed its corporate name to **Pinnacle Peak Pictures**. The move follows the acquisition of the Pure Flix subscription VOD service in November by Sony Pictures Entertainment's subsidiary AFFIRM Entertainment. The deal left Pure Flix Entertainment operating as a separate company, along with the indie studio's *God's Not Dead* trilogy. The company has started production on *God's Not Dead: We the People*, the fourth installment of the franchise, with Isaiah Washington, David A.R. White and William Forsythe as leads. Directed by Vance Null and written by Cary Solomon and Chuck Konzelman, the cast also includes Antonio Sabato Jr., Judge Jeanine Pirro and Francesca Battistelli. A fall 2021 theatrical release is planned. *The God's Not Dead* franchise has grossed over \$100 million worldwide to date.

Drafthouse Films is stepping back into the world of distribution after a five-year hiatus with the North American co-release of India's Oscar entry, *Jallikattu*. The company — which is the film distribution arm of the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema — is partnering with XYZ Films, which picked up the phantasmagorical *Jallikattu* for North America back in December. The title, which is Drafthouse Films' first new acquisition since 2016, marks a new directive by the distributor to support emerging filmmakers. "[*Jallikattu*] blew us away because it felt like it was beamed in from another dimension and left a permanent imprint on our brain," said Drafthouse Films in a statement shared with *Variety*. XYZ and Drafthouse are planning a spring release that will include theatrical support, as well as all digital platforms along with a Blu-ray edition of the film. Drafthouse parent company Alamo Drafthouse launched curated VOD platform Alamo on Demand in May. 🍷

2021: THE YEAR OF GIVING (OR HOW WE TRIED TO SAVE THE WORLD FOR \$10,000)

Award-winning independent filmmakers **Rick and Maggie Pamplin** began production on their next feature film **2021: The Year of Giving (Or How We Tried to Save the World for \$10,000)** on January 1. The documentary explores their efforts for one year as they give away \$25 a day in donations and micro-loans to make a better world.

“A few years ago, we began giving micro-loans to artists and small businesses throughout the world, helping people in desperate situations survive, become self-supporting and successful,” said producer Maggie Pamplin. “We then started developing a movie about how a single \$25 investment could literally change the world,” said writer-director Rick Pamplin. “In one year, we want to do as much good as possible, document it on film and inspire others to step forward and do the same.”

Partnering with Pamplin Film Company is 10-time Telly Award-winning **Think Visual Group**. Production is slated for 14 months, ending in February 2022. See more at twitter.com/PamplinFilmCo.



MOVIE MONEY CONFIDENTIAL INSPIRED BY FILMMAKERS & FINANCING BOOK

Award-winning independent filmmaker Rick Pamplin has created, written and directed a new feature length documentary inspired by Louise Levison's best-selling book **Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents**. Pamplin says, “We made a bold, truthful movie, which reveals many secrets about the often-mysterious world of film financing.” Pamplin, a Levison client, sees the film “as empowering a new generation of filmmakers” with insight, information and real-life advice from filmmakers, fundraisers, investors, lawyers, producers, movie stars and Louise Levison.

Pamplin and his crew shot 100 hours of footage and interviewed about 60 people including actress-producer **Salma Hayek** (*The Prophet*) and filmed one of the last interviews with the late screen legend **Burt Reynolds** at his acting school in North Palm Beach, Florida. The movie also filmed seminar-style panels with students at Saint Andrew's School in Boca Raton and an open-to-the-public event with artists and writers at Harold's Coffee Lounge in the Northwood Arts Village.

Pamplin's storied career spans 18 years in Hollywood and 14 years at Universal Studios in Florida before he relocated to Palm Beach. He has written and directed several award-winning films including **Hoover**, starring Academy Award winning actor **Ernest Borgnine**. **Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL** is a Think Visual Group Production in Association with Pamplin Film Company. Go to MovieMoney.com for upcoming screenings and release information.



Rick Pamplin on the set of *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL*

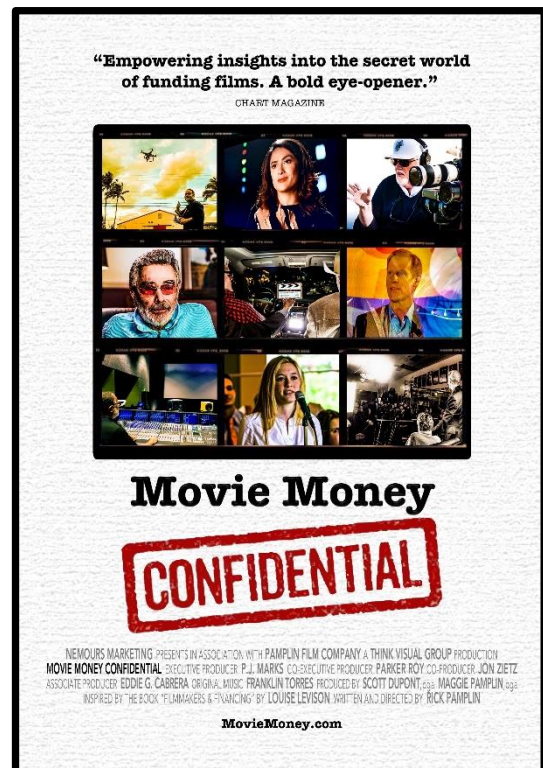
MOVIE MONEY CONFIDENTIAL WINS DOVE AWARD, RECEIVES APPROVAL AND "FANTASTIC" REVIEW

Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL, the feature length documentary film inspired by **Louise Levison's** best-selling book *Filmmakers & Financing*, has been awarded a prestigious Dove Foundation seal of approval, a "12+" rating and a "fantastic" review. The much-coveted Dove Awards are given "to encourage and promote wholesome family entertainment" and are used by schools, libraries, streaming services and churches for purchasing and licensing guidelines.

Producer **Scott duPont** was notified of the award in Hollywood and sent an advance copy of the review, now published online at **Dove.org**. "It is a great honor and achievement for our creative team and crew, and this award helps us reach an even wider audience," he said.

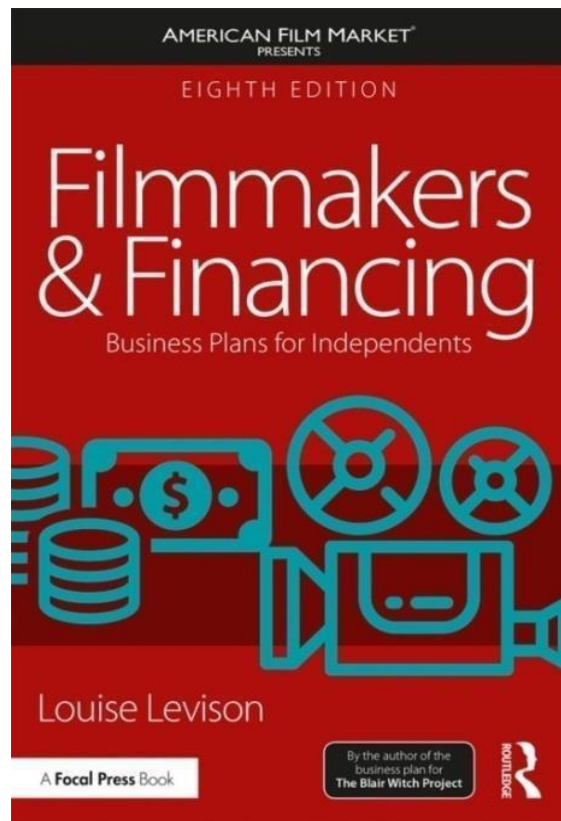
The review says, "With great advice from start to finish, *Movie Money Confidential* gives important details on how to create a film with little to no budget." It continues on, "This documentary is full of great information, including tips for people to start making their own films. It includes one-on-one interviews and panels with questions asked by real actors and aspiring producers."

Producer-Production Designer **Maggie Pamplin** noted the recognition for director **Rick Pamplin** and his collaborative partners at **Think Visual Group**: "*Movie Money Confidential* is a fantastic documentary with great visuals and audio. The information is thorough about how a filmmaker should deal with investors — telling them facts instead of what they want to hear, asking for their advice and how to avoid promising what you might not be able to deliver."



In summary, the review says "*Movie Money Confidential* contains information that can be valuable in every aspect of life for any person — not just aspiring filmmakers and producers. Its well-thought-out scenes and interviews provide priceless information and answers to questions that people may not have thought to ask. It is great for anyone to watch and learn from."

The latest edition of *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents*



In this new and updated ultimate filmmaker's guide, Louise Levison gives you easy-to-use steps for writing an investor-winning business plan for a feature film, including:

- Comprehensive explanations for each of the eight sections of a plan
- Full financial section with text and tables
- A sample business plan
- A companion website with additional information for various chapters and detailed financial instructions — advanced math not needed
- An explanation on how feature documentary, animated and large-format films differ
- A guide to pitching to investors: who they are, what they want and what to tell them
- Words of advice: Filmmakers share their experiences raising money from equity investors

Eighth Edition available for purchase: <https://www.amazon.com/Filmmakers-Financing-Business-Independents-American/dp/113894744X>

NEED MONEY FOR A MOVIE? DON'T GO IN EMPTY-HANDED. HAVE A BUSINESS PLAN.

The benefit of using a reliable business plan to raise financing for a film is that it allows the investors and the filmmaker to gauge the potential success of a film. Louise Levison, the President of Business Strategies, is a highly respected financial consultant in the entertainment industry, specializing in creation of film business plans. She is the author of *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents*, currently in its revised and expanded eighth edition (A Routledge/Taylor & Francis book, 2017). She also has a starring role in the feature documentary *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL* which was inspired by the book. More information at moviemoney.com. Levison also is editor of the newsletter *The Film Entrepreneur: A Newsletter for the Independent Filmmaker and Investor (TFE)*.

A polished business plan with projections based on the worldwide results of other films and with clear explanations of the industry is far more effective than an incomplete document that leaves prospective investors wanting more information. In our “new normal,” *TFE* has developed (and continues to adjust) a new format for forecasting Indie films to include the current hybrid system of releasing films for a shorter span in theaters (currently mostly drive-ins but also the rest of the country’s cinema sites as the industry opens) and, often, into streaming rather than the standard online release pattern of DVD/Blu-ray and downloading.

Levison’s clients have raised money for low-budget films including *The Blair Witch Project*, the most profitable independent film in history, as well as for companies raising as much as \$300 million.

Among other clients’ projects are *The Prophet* (Kahlil Gibran’s), *Unlimited* (Nathan Frankowski), *Burning Bodhi*, *Greater*, *The Redemption of Henry Miller*, *Emoticon*), *Moving Midway*, *Redemption Road*, *Haunted* (2012), *The First of May*, *The Open Road*, *Aluna*, *Yak: The Giant King*, *Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman*, *My Father and the Man in Black* and *Michael Winslow Live*. Her corporate clients include Danny Glover’s Louverture Films (2008 nominee for Best Documentary Academy Award *Trouble the Water*), Pamplin Film Company (*Hoover*), Majestic World Entertainment, Gundersen Entertainment and Tokuma International Ltd. Levison was an Instructor in the Extension Program at UCLA for 22 years before moving to Florida. She also has been a Visiting Professor at the Taipei (Taiwan) National University of the Arts, Chapman University (Orange County, CA) and the University of Montana (Missoula). She also has presented seminars and/or been on panels at festivals and markets around the world.

Contact Levison at louisel@earthlink.net to find out how you can put her 30 years of experience as a Film Business Consultant to work creating a business plan for your film.

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Louise Levison, Editor
11231 U.S. Highway 1 #308
North Palm Beach, FL 33408
Phone: (818) 427-7108
E-mail: louisel@earthlink.net; <http://www.moviemoney.com> @predictfilm