



THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors



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DON'T DELAY: GET YOUR BUSINESS PLAN TODAY!

- DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND
- BE PREPARED WHEN AUDIENCES FLOCK BACK
- FINISH YOUR TREATMENT OR SCREENPLAY
- PREPARE A BUDGET
- HIRE US TO WRITE YOUR BUSINESS PLAN*

EXCLUSIVE: The future absolutely belongs to content providers with new emerging opportunities. Exhibitors will want to fill their screens. All genres will be welcome. Independent distributors will seize the opportunity. Many distributors have been pre-buying films that will be made and pushing the theatrical release dates forward on films previously acquired to October 2020 and later. Will your film be ready to follow these movies through the pipeline? "As audiences from around the world head back to theaters, most will return feeling that specialness that only the traditional theatrical experience can offer," Damon Wolf, Lionsgate Chief Marketing Officer and Head of Global Distribution.

Accordingly, this is an excellent time to also approach potential investors. The market has been fluctuating, and a recession is likely. **Films historically are recession proof.** "Suddenly, Hollywood Seems a Conservative Investment" was a headline in the *New York Times* on January 24th, 2009 during the last big market crash. In the current economic conditions, low-to-moderate Independent Films will be prized.

What will you tell potential investors? Our new business plans will reflect these changes and reassure investors. I have revised my forecast methodology to account for the current scenarios of when and how theaters will reopen, including drive-ins, streaming and other online opportunities. As always, investors will see a detailed text explanation of the data analysis in the Business Plan, protecting investors and filmmakers.

Our new Business Plans are the road map to getting your film financed and launched successfully in the new economy.

*My home office is working on plans every day. The good news is that everyone involved can work online. Contact me at louisel@earthlink.net for your Business Plan proposal. 📧

ACADEMY AWARDS CHANGES

Changes to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Awards rules, which were being discussed as early as December 2019, have been made final. As of April 28, 2020, the categories of Best Sound Editing and Best Sound Mixing are now one category recognizing the best achievement in sound. Until further notice, films that had “previously planned theatrical releases” can qualify without a Los Angeles qualifying run. The films, however, “must be made available on the secure Academy Screening Room member-only streaming site within 60 days of the film’s streaming or VOD release.” Eventually, the rule will go back to actual theatrical runs; however, additional metropolitan areas - the City of New York, the Bay Area, Chicago (IL), Miami (FL) and Atlanta (GA) - will be added to the list. The governors stated, “Everyone that has been part of the discussion so far feels that this change will give us more unity as a community and strengthen us as a branch.”

In the Music (Original Score) category, for a score to be eligible it must comprise a minimum of 60% original music. Additionally, for sequels and franchise films, a score must have a minimum of 80% new music. In a procedural change in the International Feature Film category, all eligible Academy members will now be invited to participate in the preliminary round of voting. For the first time, film submissions will be made available through the Academy Screening Room streaming platform to those members who opt-in. These members of the International Feature Film Preliminary Voting committee must meet a minimum viewing requirement in order to be eligible to vote in the category. In addition, the 93rd Awards season will be the final year DVD screeners will be allowed to be distributed. Beginning in 2021 with the 94th Annual Academy Awards all physical materials will be discontinued. This includes, but is not limited to, physical DVDs, music CDs, screenplays, hardcopy mailings, paper invites and screening schedules. Digital links to materials will be permitted. Access to the Academy Screening Room will continue to be made available for all eligible releases.

The rule that will generate the most questions, including many from your editor, is “previously planned releases.” Most independents and studios can prove that they planned to release a film theatrically that ended being distributed online only. Before now, all films submitted for Oscars had an initial theatrical release. After the short qualifying Oscar run, the films continued for a full theatrical run before going to home entertainment. But what about Netflix? The company “can submit everything for the Oscars that they have, but so what?” a consultant told *indiewire.com*. “Remember the bar for qualification was just one week in one Los Angeles theater. . . The point is anything that Netflix wanted to qualify in the past, they’ll qualify. They’re not going to suddenly change because of this.” The trade paper gives as examples *Marriage Story* and *The Irishman* which both had multiple Oscar nominations. Netflix distributed the films online first and only put them in theaters for one week but long after their streaming started. Perhaps the Academy will be firmer in February. ■

AMERICAN FILM MARKET

The American Film Market (AFM®) organizers say the event is still on course for its November edition. “We know how difficult the past few months have been for our industry around the world and our thoughts go out to those whose loved ones have been directly impacted by the

virus,” they told screendaily.com. “Plans for AFM 2020 continue to move forward as scheduled. We are committed to providing the industry with a market where participants can connect and do business in a safe and secure environment. Online Registration is set to open on July 6th, and we look forward to welcoming the world to Santa Monica in November.”

The AFM has adopted a new six-day schedule beginning with its 2020 edition set to run Tuesday, November 3 - Sunday, November 8 in Santa Monica, according to the Independent Film & Television Alliance® (IFTA®). More than US\$1 billion in deals are sealed every year - on both completed films and those in every stage of development and production. Over 7,000 industry professionals from more than 70 countries converge in Santa Monica every November. They include acquisition and development executives, agents, attorneys, directors, distributors, festival directors, financiers, film commissioners, producers, writers, the world’s press and all those who provide services to the motion picture industry.

This marks a major moment in the AFM’s 40 years as it pivots to a shorter timeline in recognition of the changing needs of the global film industry. “While the film industry has changed drastically since we first launched AFM, markets are essential as this remains a face-to-face business,” said Michael Ryan, IFTA Chairperson and Partner, GFM Films. “Markets serve as a launching pad for new films and projects and they bring the entire industry together to share marketplace intelligence.” This timeline empowers AFM to continue offering the most effective experience for all segments of its attendee - sales companies, buyers, producers, and the independent production community at large - while retaining all of its programs, including Screenings, Conferences, and LocationEXPO. Ryan continued, “IFTA’s priority is to put forth programs and services that support and protect Independents. This new AFM schedule is tailored to best serve the industry by allowing participants who travel from around the world to better maximize their time and costs.”

The Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel will continue to serve as the show’s headquarters. Dates through 2024 will be:

2020: November 3 – 8
2021: November 2 – 7
2022: November 1 – 6
2023: October 31 – November 5
2024: November 5 – 10 

COMINGS AND GOINGS

STX Entertainment is merging with India’s Eros International to form the new, publicly traded media company, **Eros STX Global Corporation**, with operations across film, TV, streaming and other area. The new management team will be led by Kishore Lulla as Executive Co-Chairman and STX Founder Robert Simonds as Co-Chairman & Chief Executive Officer. “The combination will create the first independent media company with the expertise and creative cultures of Hollywood and Bollywood, while also leveraging the important inroads both companies have made into the Chinese market. . . Together with Eros, we will realize our ambition to be a

global powerhouse in entertainment, digital media and OTT,” Simonds said in an internal memo to the STX staff. “We will combine our forces of distribution and creation, and partnerships that both the organizations have, and look at China afresh, not just from a distribution or a market perspective, but also as a source of talent,” Eros India CEO Pradeep Dwivedi told *Variety*. STX previously positioned itself as a bridge between Hollywood and China (the world’s second largest entertainment market) and struck deals with Alibaba, Tencent and others. The merged entity hopes to achieve cost savings of \$50 million over two years, mainly by outsourcing backend post-production of Hollywood content to India, and by combining their respective global distribution networks. New content produced will eventually make its way to the Eros Now streaming platform, which has 188 million registered users and 26 million paying subscribers.

UK producers Stephen McCrum (*Mrs Brown’s Boys*) and Simon Mayhew-Archer (*This Country*) are launching UK film and TV comedy outfit **Camden Productions** with backing from UK financier Great Point, *Deadline* reports. “We have already started working with some fantastic writers and performers and can’t wait to bring cheer to the living rooms, hearts, and cellular connected mobile devices of the world,” McCrum said. Jim Reeve, Co-Founder of Great Point, commented, “In spite of the huge hit to the production community in recent weeks, it’s important that we continue to look to the future and invest now to help ensure the ongoing success of the UK’s creative industries post Covid-19. The Camden team has an impressive reputation for crafting content that captures the attention of audiences.” The investment is the eighth from Great Point’s Ventures EIS (Enterprise Investment Scheme) Fund.

Two Thai women, Narissara Thanapreechakul and Panita Chanrasmi-Lefebvre have founded **Whiteline Productions**. Stemming from the Thai word “ไฉไล” meaning “to show one’s determination or resilience”, the company’s goal is to help bring new voices to light. Toward that end, the company is working to bring immigrant filmmakers, not just from Thailand, but around the world and onto American sets. A love of filmmaking is a universal trait, and anyone regardless of their background deserves a chance to live it. Chanrasmi-Lefebvre produced *Walk with Me*, directed by Cuban-American Isabel del Rosal. Other projects include the music video for *Home* by Bark, the short film *Girlhattan* and has done promotional work for Samsung Thailand, Maybelline New York, and Tacet. Both women have a background in advertising and got their start in producing through commercial work. Thanapreechakul has experience making Thai connections in New York, as she ran the non-profit Thai Artists New York to help shine a light on Thai filmmakers.

Elysian Film Group, Danny Perkins’ film and TV production company, has formed Elysian Film Group Distribution, which is backed by a minority investment from CAA (Creative Artists Agency.) Elysian states they will focus on a “diverse slate that appeals to mainstream UK cinema-goers.” The company is in acquisitions mode. Founders Perkins, formerly StudioCanal UK chief and producer Kate Solomon (*United 93*) are working on a slate of film and TV projects. *Greatest Days*, a feature adaptation of *The Band*, a Broadway musical featuring the songs of the English pop group, Take That, is set to be the company’s first production. The stage play featured songs from the hit UK boy-band, whose members have included Robbie Williams and Gary Barlow. Tim Firth (*Kinky Boots*) is adapting his stage play, and Coky Giedroyc (*How to Build a Girl*) is attached to direct. Talks are underway for Take That to record an original song. Hits set to be included in the film include *Patience*, *Back for Good*, *A Million Love Songs*, *Shine*, *Relight My Fire* and *Could It Be Magic*. 🍷

NUMBERS! NUMBERS! NUMBERS!
(North American Box Office)
LOW-BUDGET INDEPENDENT FILMS (\$10.0M and under)

FILM	DISTRIBUTOR	REVENUE	COST
		thous. \$	thous. \$
<i>47 Meters Down: Uncaged</i>	Entertainment Studios	22,260	5,000
<i>Biggest Little Farm, The</i>	Neon	4,367	<1,000
<i>Brahms Boy 2, The*</i>	STX Entertainment	12,611	10,000
<i>Brightburn</i>	Screen Gems	17,300	6,000
<i>Countdown</i>	STX Entertainment	25,622	6,500
<i>Dragon Ball Super: Broly</i>	Funimation	30,382	8,500
<i>Farewell, The</i>	A24	17,696	3,000
<i>Gretel and Hansel*</i>	United Artist Releasing	15,248	5,000
<i>Grudge, The</i>	Sony Pictures Releasing	21,222	10,000
<i>Hidden Life, A</i>	Fox Searchlight	1,731	7,000
<i>Impractical Jokers: The Movie</i>	DreamWorks Dist.	10,691	3,000
<i>Invisible Man, The*</i>	Universal	64,914	7,000
<i>I Still Believe*</i>	Lionsgate	9,868	10,000
<i>Intruder, The</i>	Screen Gems	35,419	8,000
<i>Midsommar</i>	A24	27,426	8,000
<i>My Hero Academia: Heroes Rising</i>	Funimation	13,304	5,800
<i>Overcomer</i>	Affirm	34,713	5,000
<i>Peanut Butter Falcon, The</i>	Roadside Attractions	20,457	6,200
<i>Prodigy, The</i>	Orion Pictures	14,856	6,000
<i>Run the Race</i>	Roadside Attractions	6,424	1,500
<i>Sorry to Bother You</i>	Annapurna	17,493	3,200
<i>Unplanned</i>	Pure Flix	19,005	6,000

*Still in North American distribution as of March 19, 2020 which also was the last update of the data by Box Office Mojo as we go to press. Negative costs (production prior to prints and ads) are approximate, based either on industry estimates, and published interviews with filmmakers or personal conversations with filmmakers. 🍷

MORE NUMBERS! NUMBERS! NUMBERS!
(North American Box Office)
HIGH-BUDGET INDEPENDENT FILMS (Over \$10.0M)

FILM	DISTRIBUTOR	REVENUE	COST
		thous. \$	thous. \$
<i>21 Bridges</i>	STX Entertainment	28,540	33,000
<i>1917*</i>	Universal	159,227	100,000
<i>Ad Astra</i>	20 th Century Fox	50,188	100,000
<i>Adams Family, The</i>	United Artist Releasing	97,186	40,000
<i>Angel Has Fallen</i>	Lionsgate	69,030	40,000
<i>Black and Blue</i>	Screen Gems	22,055	12,000
<i>Bombshell</i>	Lionsgate	31,763	32,000
<i>Favourite, The</i>	Fox Searchlight	34,244	15,000
<i>Fighting with My Family</i>	MGM	22,959	11,000
<i>Gentlemen, The*</i>	STX Entertainment	36,297	22,000
<i>Glass</i>	Universal	111,035	20,000
<i>Hustlers</i>	STX Entertainment	104,964	20,700
<i>John Wick: Chapter 3-Parabellum</i>	Lionsgate / Summit	171,016	55,000
<i>Knives Out*</i>	Lionsgate	165,363	40,000
<i>Midway</i>	Lionsgate	56,847	100,000
<i>Parasite</i>	Neon	53,370	11,000
<i>Queen and Slim</i>	Universal	43,808	20,000
<i>Rambo: Last Blood</i>	Lionsgate	44,819	50,000
<i>Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark</i>	Lionsgate	68,947	25,000
<i>Second Act</i>	STX Entertainment	39,282	16,000
<i>Tyler Perry's A Madea Family Funeral</i>	Lionsgate	73,257	20,000
<i>Uncut Gems</i>	A24	50,024	<20,000
<i>Upside, The</i>	STX Entertainment	108,252	37,500
<i>Where'd You Go Bernadette?</i>	United Artists Releasing	9,198	20,000
<i>Yesterday</i>	Universal	73,190	26,000

*Same references as low-budget table.

LARGE FORMAT FILMS

FILM	DISTRIBUTION	REVENUE	COST
		thous. \$	thous. \$
<i>Apollo 13: The Imax Experience</i>	IMAX	1,737	n.a.
<i>Beautiful Planet, A*</i>	IMAX	15,561	n.a.
<i>Born To Be Wild 3D*</i>	Warner Bros. / IMAX	25,979	n.a.
<i>Bugs!</i>	SK Films, Inc.	18,114	9,000
<i>Deep Sea 3D</i>	Warner Bros.	46,405	1,000
<i>Galapagos: The Enchanted Voyage</i>	IMAX	18,627	7,000
<i>Ghosts of the Abyss</i>	Buena Vista	17,041	13,000
<i>Haunted Castle</i>	NWave	13,652	n.a.
<i>Hubble 3D*</i>	Warner Bros.	52,522	n.a.
<i>Island of Lemurs: Madagascar*</i>	Warner Bros.	11,272	n.a.
<i>James Cameron's Deepsea Challenge</i>	DisruptiveLA	236	n.a.
<i>Jerusalem 3D</i>	National Geographic	7,880	n.a.
<i>Journey to the South Pacific*</i>	IMAX / MacGillivray	7,654	n.a.
<i>Magnificent Desolation</i>	IMAX	34,109	3,000
<i>NASCAR 3D</i>	Warner Bros. / IMAX	21,337	10,000
<i>Ocean Wonderland 3D</i>	3D Entertainment	11,035	3,000
<i>Sea Monsters: A Prehistoric Adventure</i>	National Geographic	23,746	n.a.
<i>Sea Rex 3D: Journey to a Prehistoric</i>	3D Entertainment	6,097	n.a.
<i>Space Station 3D*</i>	IMAX	93,384	1,000
<i>To the Arctic 3D*</i>	Warner Bros.	14,560	n.a.
<i>T-Rex: Back to the Cretaceous</i>	IMAX	53,347	14,500
<i>U2 3D</i>	National Geographic	10,362	13,000
<i>Under the Sea 3D*</i>	Warner Bros.	36,262	n.a.
<i>Wildest Dream: Conquest of Everest</i>	National Geographic	898	n.a.
<i>Wild Parrots of Telegraph Hill</i>	Shadow	3,058	n.a.
<i>Wild Safari 3D</i>	NWave	16,621	4,500

*Same reference as low-budget table.

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BEST ON-SET PHOTO OF ALL TIME

LAST SHOT OF THE LAST MOVIE STAR



It was July 2018, just two months before we would lose one of the most prolific and popular actors of his generation—Burt Reynolds—and he was working right up until the end. Reynolds was being interviewed for a documentary called *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL*. It explored the intersection of filmmaking and financing, particularly how to raise money for low-budget and independent movies. The production schedule was very tight, and the filmmakers weren't sure they would be able to include Reynolds. He had been extremely busy promoting *The Last Movie Star* and prepping for *Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood*. Scott Dupont, PGA member and one of the producers, explains: "The last week of filming we got a call that Mr. Reynolds agreed, on two conditions—that the interview take place at the Burt Reynolds Institute for Film & Theatre and that his Master Class students be in attendance."

So it was a moment when DuPont was slating for the cameras that another producer, Maggie Pamplin, captured this classic shot of Reynolds during his interview. Sitting across from him was the director and a room full of the actor's students. DuPont says, "His passion for teaching the next generation of filmmakers was palpable. Even with the large audience of students and crew during the interview, you could hear a pin drop."

Growing up near Reynolds on Jupiter Island, Florida, DuPont always dreamed of working with the star. When the movie debuted, he summed up his feelings for the project, saying "I hope this new documentary will inspire and empower the next generation of filmmakers and hope that Buddy—as his friends called him—would be proud."

This touching photo captures the actor doing what he loved best, performing and teaching. It's a picture-perfect ending to a life well lived. ■

We know what you're thinking. "Best of all time? No way. I've got an on-set photo way better than that." If that's the case, we dare you to prove it. Submit it to BOSPOAT@producersguild.org. Before you submit, please review the contest rules at producersguild.org/bospoat. Because no matter how great your photo is, we have no desire to get sued over it.

RICK PAMPLIN'S 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.

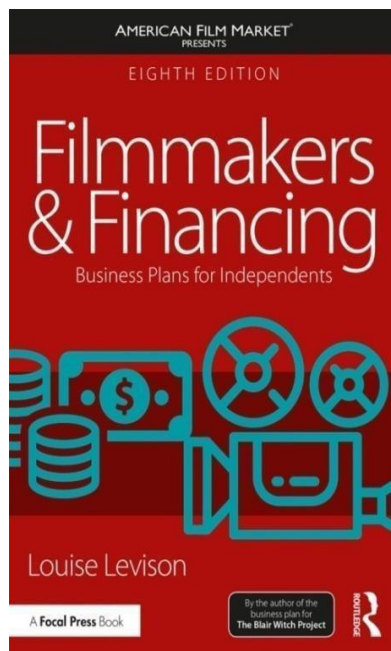
Pamplin and his crew shot 100 hours of footage and interviewed about 60 people including actress-producer Salma Hayek (*The Prophet*) and filmed one of the last interviews with the late screen legend Burt Reynolds at his acting school in North Palm Beach, Florida. The movie also filmed seminar-style 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

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



<https://www.routledge.com/Filmmakers-and-Financing-Business-Plans-for-Independents/Levison/p/book/9781138947443>

**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. A polished business plan with projections based on the worldwide results of other films and with clear explanations about the industry, markets and production personnel attached to the film is far more effective than an incomplete document that leaves prospective investors wanting more information.

Levison, President of Business Strategies, is highly respected in the entertainment industry for 30 years of creating film business plans. She is author of the best-selling *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents* now in its Eighth Edition.

Clients have raised money for \$100,000 low-budget films, for *The Blair Witch Project*, the most profitable independent film in history, and for companies raising \$300 million for slates of films.

Corporate clients have included Danny Glover's Louverture Films (2008 nominee for "Best Documentary" Academy Award *Trouble the Water*), Pamplin Film Company (*Hoover*), Creative Projects Group (*Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet*), Tokuma International Ltd (*Shall We Dance?*, *Princess Mononoke*) and Gundersen Entertainment (*The Redemption of Henry Myers*). Other projects include *The First of May*, *Michael Winslow Live*, *The Open Road*, *Emoticon* ;), *Greater*, *Burning Bodhi*, *Aluna*, *Yak: The Giant King*, *Moving Midway*, *Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman* and *Redemption Road*.

Levison's finance career began as Market Analyst for American Iron and Steel Institute in New York, then as an Economist at SRI International (formerly Stanford Research Institute) in California and a corporate planner at Hehr International in Los Angeles while earning an MBA. Levison spent 10 years in the health care industry as Director of Corporate Strategy for City of Hope and at Torrance Memorial Medical Center. She also worked as a part-time stockbroker. She has an MA in Asian Area Studies from New York University, an MBA in Finance from California State University (Dominguez Hills) and a BA from Simmons University (Boston). Levison was a Visiting Professor in the Extension Program at UCLA for 22 years, before re-locating to Florida, and a Visiting Professor at Taipei (Taiwan) National University of the Arts and University of Montana (Missoula).

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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