



THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors



LOUISE LEVISON, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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Special Edition

ALERT: PREPARE FOR PRODUCTION NOW!

- Audiences eager to return to theaters **ASAP**
- Raise production \$\$\$\$ before January 2021
- Let us start your new **Business Plan** now!
- Contact us for a **FREE CONSULTATION**

Moviegoers of all ages like to go to movies – and in groups. The big screen experience is “the ultimate experience,” says director Denis Villeneuve. Past history, such as the crowded theaters during the economic crash of 2009, and the aftermath of 9/11, also prove audiences need to deal with their anxieties in a movie theater along with others.

Independent distributors are holding numerous specialty films for theatrical release. After people rush out to see those films, indies will have more screens to fill. **You want your film to be ready.** “Theatrical also clearly creates value for all ancillary markets ... people who actually rent movies tend to have seen it already in the theater,” says Cinemark CEO Mark Zoradi.

Major chains – AMC, Regal and Cinemark – started opening theaters on August 14th. AMC initially plans to release high-budget films such as *Tenet* for only 17 days, however their multiplexes have many screens to fill. We believe independent films are likely to remain in theatrical release in those screens as long as the distributor is happy with attendance.

Some indie screens are now open. Currently 36 states allow indoor theaters. Every state has its own seating capacity rules. For example, in Alabama theater capacity is capped at 50%, in Arkansas it's 66% and in Colorado it's a maximum of 100 people-per-screen. Iowa even allows 100% capacity within the context of six-foot distancing. So, get ready. Audiences will be back! ■

FESTIVAL UPDATES

TORONTO 2020

As previously announced, this year's Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) is a hybrid offering of digital and in-person screenings. Festival audiences will be able to enjoy indoor screenings at TIFF Bell Lightbox and at the Isabel Bader Theatre at limited capacity. Audiences can also experience TIFF at the following drive-ins and open-air cinema: Visa Skyline Drive-In at CityView, RBC Lakeside Drive-In at Ontario Place, and West Island Open Air Cinema at Ontario Place, TIFF Co-Heads Cameron Bailey and Joana Vicente said in August. The Bell Digital Cinema for general public digital screenings is geolocked to Canada and will house most of the films selected for TIFF 2020. Festival-goers will be able to watch festival films at home on their television screens by using Chromecast, or a newly developed digital TIFF app, which was created for the festival and will be available in the Apple App Store on September 9. TIFF remains committed to the protection of copyrighted material, and strict anti-piracy measures such as forensic watermarking and visible watermarking are in place on Bell Digital Cinema for each film, the Co-Heads announced. Check tiff.net regularly for updates.

TRIBECA RETURNS IN 2021

The Tribeca Film Festival will return in 2021 running from June 9th to 20th after organizers were forced to scrub this year's edition due to the coronavirus pandemic. "We look forward to celebrating the 20th anniversary and to honoring what our founders Jane Rosenthal and Robert DeNiro have made a reality in bringing storytellers and communities together," Tribeca Enterprises Chief Creative Officer Paula Weinstein said in a statement. Submissions will open on September 8 for all categories: feature and short films, episodic storytelling, immersive, branded entertainment, and a newly added section dedicated to online premieres. The submission period has been extended by three weeks; the late deadline is pushed to January, and the eligibility rules are adjusted to include films that have previously screened at online festivals. "As we take our first steps towards the next edition of our festival, we have centered our thoughts and plans on the filmmakers and film-goers who have been so affected by the challenges of the last few months," said festival director and VP of programming Cara Cusumano. "Whether it's in the cinema, online, or outdoors, we look forward to welcoming everyone back to an innovative 20th anniversary festival in the spirit of our last 20 years celebrating community and storytelling in all their forms." 🍷

COMINGS AND GOINGS

Artists Film Group, LLC (AFG) is a global film investment and entertainment company set up by Wes Hull (*Zone 414*), Robert Rippberger (*The Inventor*) and David Lugo (*Welcome Home*). AFG's goal is structuring finance and providing debt to enable artists to focus on what they do best. In addition, "AFG actively develops and acquires, curating projects within our network. With a diverse set of expertise, we drive business and look out for Artist's interests" the team states on the company's website

Initially, the company has acquired sci-fi spec script *Back Home* written by Anne Vithayathil and with Drew Mylrea (*Spy Intervention*) attached to direct. "We very much look forward to working with AFG to bring this unique mashup of sci-fi and whodunit to the big screen..." Perkash said. AFG also is producing the feature *Those Who Walk Away*, written and directed by Rippberger. The high-concept horror film themed around male sexual assault is set to begin filming next month.

Director Davis Guggenheim (*An Inconvenient Truth*) and former Participant exec Jonathan King launched **Concordia Studio**, a nonfiction film and TV production company. Among Concordia's Films are four documentaries at Sundance 2020; *Boys State*, *Time*, *A Thousand Cuts* and *Bloody Nose*, *Empty Pockets*, as well as the television series *Inside Bill's Brain: Decoding Bill Gates*. The company is in partnership with Emerson Collective, founded by Laurene Powell Jobs. "We've been working hard for two years and waiting for the right moment to announce our new studio," Guggenheim told *indiewire.com* in January. Guggenheim will serve as Chief Creative Officer, Nonfiction. "Our strength is a small group of executives committed to great storytelling with the very best filmmakers." Concordia also includes an Artists in Residence fellowship program led by former Sundance Documentary Fund head Rahdi Taylor. The fellowship is meant to foster creative development in diverse documentary filmmakers in the U.S. who demonstrate talent, voice, and commitment to story-driven nonfiction content. "People talk about brand, but we're focused on films," said President of Nonfiction Jonathan Silberberg, who produced the 2011 Oscar-nominated documentary *Paradise Lost 3: Purgatory*. "That's the only way we know how to think." Although they have been forming the studio for two years, it only was announced at Sundance 2020.

MRC Film has created a new untitled label devoted to female comedies. Becky Sloviter, the producer of *Palm Springs* which sold to NEON in a record deal at Sundance for \$17.5M, will lead the label. The division already has two projects in development: *Let's Have Kids!* which will serve as the directorial debut of *Black Adam* and *Due Date* screenwriter Adam Sztykiel; and *The Inheritance* from Emmy winning *Full Frontal With Samantha Bee* and *A Black Lady Sketch Show* scribe Ashley Nicole Black. The new label will work with other producers as well as various distributors as they amplify female-driven properties with an independent development budget.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Becky who has a rare combination of taste, tenacity and bonhomie," Adler and Golfman told *deadline.com*. "We are excited to work with her to build a company that supports fresh and dynamic voices and tells stories that make people laugh." Sloviter added, "I'm delighted to partner with MRC Film, whose belief in supporting distinct voices dovetails beautifully with our collective goal of building upon the strong tradition of classic female-driven comedies." ■

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.

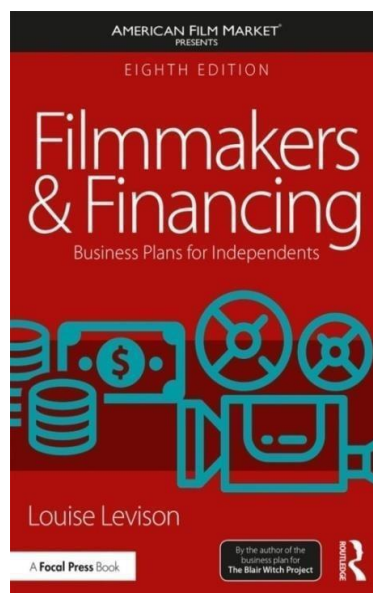
Pamplin and his crew shot 100 hours of footage and interviewed about 60 people including actress-producer **Salma Hayek** (*The Prophet*) and filmed one of the last interviews with the late screen legend **Burt Reynolds** at his acting school in North Palm Beach, Florida. The movie also filmed seminar-style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

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 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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