



THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors



LOUISE LEVISON, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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CINEMA CON 2018 CELEBRATES THEATRICAL RELEASING!

“It doesn’t stand to reason that moviegoing habits have permanently changed, based on the performance of any given movie, weekend, month, or quarter,” John Fithian, National Association of Theater Owners President and CEO as he opened the first day of CinemaCon 2018. “North America remains the biggest market in the world . . . when the movies are compelling, discerning audiences will turn out in massive numbers”

While we always are looking at the dollars and cents in how the film industry is doing, it was refreshing to see the following comment from MPPA Chairman and CEO Charles Rivkin. Quoting the creator of the Muppets at CinemaCon he said, “Jim [Henson] used to say: ‘Media – if used properly – can be an enormous source of good in the world.’ Let’s always deliver on the promise of our creative industry: high quality stories that speak to the hopes and dreams of our audience.”

A few other extracts from Fithian’s welcome talk:

“I have worked with NATO members for 26 years. I can’t begin to tell you how often reporters have asked me if the movie theater industry is dying. Every downturn in admissions is a sign of secular decline, every innovation or improvement is intended to “save” the movie theater business. There has been a lot of hype about the next “disruption” — VHS; DVD; Streaming; Shortened windows; PVOD; Subscriptions and simultaneous release. Yet we never die but remain a strong business in the face of disruption everywhere else in the entertainment landscape.”

“Would Black Panther, Get Out, Wonder Woman or any other major recent hits have become significant cultural landmarks if they went straight to streaming? Of course not. . . Jordan Peele to Greta Gerwig to Steven Spielberg to Christopher Nolan-bring their visions to life with the big screen in mind. In front of the camera, Margot Robbie made


it clear that she wanted *I, Tonya* to receive a robust theatrical run and not go straight to streaming. She's not alone.”

“We recently conducted a study with Ernst & Young of over 1,400 people who watched at least one movie in theatres in 2017 and spent one hour per week on streaming services. The study found that 33 percent of moviegoers who see nine or more movies per year-twice the national average-also spend 15 or more hours per week on streaming platforms.”

“The idea that younger adults aren't passionate moviegoers is a myth. According to data from comScore-NATO's official data partner- moviegoers aged 18-44 constituted 63 percent of the total box office in 2017- up from 61percent in 2016. Thirteen to 24-year-olds accounted for 36.1 percent, up from 35.6 percent the previous year.”

The CinemaCon Convention in Las Vegas (April 23rd to 26th) is for studios and a few independent to promote their 2018 films to the theater owners. A record-setting 11 distribution companies screened their products in private demonstration suite locations while the convention floor was crowded with 500 booths from businesses with other theater related products, such as screens, seats and miles of food such as popcorn, candy and soft drinks.) Fithian gave a special welcome to Entertainment Studios, and its founder and CEO Byron Allen. Other film distributors were Sony, Disney, Warner Bros., STX, Universal, Focus Features, Paramount, Fox, Amazon, and Lionsgate. More than 5,000 industry professionals attended the show.

For both Day 1 speeches go to:

<http://www.natoonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/John-Fithian-CinemaCon-Speech-2018.pdf> https://www.mpa.org/speeches_and_op_ed/cinemacon-keynote-remarks/ 

TRIBECA FILM FESTIVAL

The 17th Edition of the Tribeca Film Festival, which ran April 18th to 29th, included 96 films from 103 filmmakers. Of the 96 films, 46 percent of them were directed by women, the highest percentage in the Festival's history. The lineup included 75 World Premieres, five International Premieres, nine North American Premieres, three U.S. Premieres and four New York Premieres from 30 countries. This year's program includes 46 first time filmmakers, with 18 directors returning to the Festival with their latest feature film projects. With one of the first awards to honor excellence in storytelling by a female writer or director, the 6th annual Nora Ephron Award, presented by Chanel, Executive V. P. of Tribeca Enterprises Paula Weinstein said: “We are proud to present a lineup that celebrates American diversity and welcomes new international voices in a time of cultural and social activism.” The award of \$25,000 goes to a director who “For our program this year, we have curated a selection of filmmakers whose distinct voices illuminate the world around us. Audiences can choose their cinematic journeys to faraway places or closer to home, to discover unique stories told with audacity and emotion and to get to know heroic, flawed, and lovable characters,” said Artistic Director Frédéric Boyer as the festival opened.

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The Competition section featured 12 documentaries, 10 U.S. narratives and 10 international narratives; 14 Spotlight Narratives, 15 Spotlight Documentaries; five Midnight, 16 Viewpoints selections; and 11 Special Screening. The lineup of 55 diverse and engaging short films included 29 world premieres 10 distinct competition programs: five narrative, three documentary, one animation and one hybrid program. The selected shorts included a cross-section of international and U.S. filmmakers and were curated from a record 4,754 submission. Tribeca's 2018 slate was programmed from more than 8,789 total submissions.

In addition to moves, the festival followed the current format of other fests by having virtual reality and interactive installations in **Tribeca Immersive**, live music events, the **Tribeca ESPN Sports Film Festival**, various **Tribeca Talks** and free panels for working and aspiring filmmakers. Continuing the format set last year, all the talks were streamed on facebook. The videos can be found at: https://www.facebook.com/pg/Tribeca/videos/?ref=page_internal

AND THE PRIZE GOES TO . . .

AWARD	FILM	FILMMAKER
U.S. Narrative Features		
Founders Best Feature	<i>Diane</i>	Kent Jones
Best Actor	<i>O.G</i>	Jeffrey Wright
Best Actress	<i>Duck Butter.</i>	Alia Shawkat
Best Cinematography	<i>Diane</i>	Wyatt Garfield
Best Screenplay	<i>Diane</i>	Kent Jones
International Narrative Features		
Best Feature	<i>Smuggling Hendrix</i>	Marios Piperides
Best Actor	<i>The Saint Bernard Syndicate</i>	Rasmus Bruun
Best Actress	<i>Virgins</i>	Joy Rieger
Best Cinematography	<i>Obey</i>	Albert Salas
Best Screenplay	<i>The Saint Bernard Syndicate</i>	Lærke Sanderhoff
World Documentary		
Best Feature	<i>Island of the Hungry Ghosts</i>	Gabrielle Brady
Best Cinematography	<i>Tanzania Transit</i>	Niels van Koevorden
Best Editing	<i>When Lambs Become Lions</i>	Frederick Shanahan, Jon Kasbe, Caitlyn Greene

Best New Director Narrative	<i>To Dust</i>	Shawn Snyder
Albert Maysles New Documentary Director	<i>Bathtubs Over Broadway</i>	Dava Whisenant
Audience Award		
Winner Narrative	<i>To Dust</i>	Shawn Snyder
Runner Up Narrative	<i>Mapplethorpe</i>	Ondi Timoner
Winner-Documentary	<i>United Skates</i>	Dyana Winkler, Tina Brown
Runner Up Documentary	<i>Momentum Generation</i>	Jeff Zimbalist, Michael Zimbalist
Short Film		
Best Narrative	<i>Phone Duty</i>	Lenar Kamalov
Best Documentary	<i>Notes from Dunblane: Lessons from a School Shooting</i>	Kim A. Snyder
Best Animated	<i>Late Afternoon</i>	Louise Bagnall
Student Visionary	<i>The Life of Esteban</i>	Inès Eshun
Storiscapes (VR)	<i>Hero</i>	Navid Khonsari, Vassiliki Khonsari, Brooks Brown
The Nora Ephron Prize (Honoring a woman writer or director)	<i>Little Woods</i>	Nia DaCosta, Director



AWARDS RULES APPROVED FOR 91ST OSCARS®

The Academy's Board of Governors has approved Oscars® rules and campaign regulations for the 91st Academy Awards®. Submission deadlines for awards eligibility have been changed. There is now one submission deadline – Monday, October 1, 2018 – for the Animated Feature Film, Documentary Feature, Documentary Short Subject, Foreign Language Film, Animated Short Film and Live Action Short Film categories. The submission deadline for Best Picture and all other categories is Thursday, November 15, by 5 p.m. PT.

In the Music categories, all members of the Music Branch will view films eligible for Original Score and film clips of eligible Original Songs and vote in a preliminary round to produce a shortlist of 15 titles in each category using the preferential voting system. Five nominees for Original Score and five nominees for Original Song will then be chosen by branch members in a second round of balloting also using preferential voting.

In the Documentary Feature category, films that have won a qualifying award at a competitive film festival will be eligible for Academy Awards consideration regardless of any prior public exhibition or distribution by nontheatrical means. The Documentary Feature Qualifying Festival List will be available later this spring. Furthermore, the critic review eligibility requirement has been expanded to include additional New York and Los Angeles-based publications. To align with credits eligibility in the Best Picture category, rules in both the Animated Feature Film and Documentary Feature categories have been updated to allow for more than one producer to be designated as a nominee.

In a procedural change, members of the Visual Effects Branch Nominating Committee will now be able to stream bake-off reels from the shortlisted films or attend satellite bake-off screenings and vote online. Previously, committee members were only able to vote in person at the Academy's Visual Effects Bake-off in Los Angeles. Other amendments to the rules include standard date changes and other "housekeeping" adjustments.

Rules are reviewed annually by individual branch and category committees. The Awards and Events Committee then reviews all proposed changes before presenting its recommendations to the Board of Governors for approval. Updated campaign regulations, which specify how companies and individuals may promote to Academy members any movies and achievements eligible for the 91st Academy Awards, are also presented to the Board of Governors for approval. For the first time, studios, distributors and filmmakers will be required to use an Academy-approved mailing house to send sanctioned awards materials for eligible films to Academy members. Each approved mailing house will be provided with an official list of Academy members who have opted-in along with their contact information to facilitate both physical and digital mailings. Additionally, the number of post-nominations screenings with a filmmaker Q&A is now limited to a maximum of four regardless of category or country in which the event takes place. This rule eliminates the two additional screenings currently allowed for Documentary and Foreign Language Film nominees.

For the complete 91st Academy Awards rules, visit [oscars.org/rules](https://www.oscars.org/rules). 

CHINESE ART FILMS TO GET \$16M ACQUISITION FUND

The emerging art house film sector in China is to get a further boost from the launch of a \$16 million (RMB100 million) specialized acquisition fund. The initiative is backed by five companies already operational in the sector. The A.R.T. Project fund is intended to invest in 15 films by Chinese directorial talent over a period of five years. All are to be guaranteed Chinese theatrical release, international festival representation and overseas sales. The backers include: Perfect Village Entertainment, the merged production operations of Perfect World and Village Roadshow in China; Hong Kong and Chinese-based distributor and exhibitor, Edko Films; Hong Kong producer Irresistible Films; Chinese marketing firm and website operator Maoyan Media and state-owned distributor, Huaxia Film Distribution. "The A.R.T. Project partners all agree that there is nothing more important than nurturing the new generation of Chinese filmmaking talent. . ." said Bill Kong, Head of Edko Films. For more info go to:

<http://variety.com/2018/film/asia/chinese-art-films-get-acquisition-fund-1202755323/>

Things I've Learned as a Moviemaker: Olivier Assayas

Some 40 years into his moviemaking journey, Olivier Assayas shares why he's still asking questions, trying new things, and messing things up—and why you should, too.

Among the French auteur's films are such "genre-defying narratives" as *Personal Shopper*, *Clouds of Sils Maria*, *Irma Vep* and *Summer Hours*. Below are excerpts from an interview with Carlos Aguilar in *MovieMaker* on the occasion of a 4K restoration of his 1949 film *Cold Water*. For the full interview, go to:

https://www.moviemaker.com/archives/series/things_learned/things-ive-learned-olivier-assayas/

1. Directing is about creating disruption.
2. Don't try to make it the way the other guys did.
3. Some movies could have been made without the director, because everybody knows how it "should" be done.
4. Your mistakes are a part of your art and a part of your style.
5. Don't be shy to try new things.
6. The issue with moviemaking is not so much technique, but having something worth expressing, worth sharing, something that can only happen through your life experiences.
7. Maintain old working relationships, but sometimes, to move forward, you'll need to discover new, younger actors and technicians who will bring their own sensitivity.
8. Try to sleep.
9. Two incredibly relevant books that every film student should read: Robert Bresson's *Notes on the Cinematographer* and Andrei Tarkovsky's *Sculpting in Time*.
10. When it's time for preparation, you need to be patient.
11. Cinema is more about questions than about answers.
12. Move, change, travel, and open new spaces. Moviemakers are privileged because they have the opportunity, through cinema, to share experiences that audiences otherwise wouldn't be acquainted with, because most people live their own lives in their own environment. That's what I've been trying to do my whole career. 🍷

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

FILM	DISTRIBUTOR	REVENUE	COST
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<i>47 Meters Down</i>	Entertainment Studios Motion Pictures	44,993	5,000
<i>Call Me By Your Name*</i>	Sony Pictures Classics	18,096	3,500
<i>Case for Christ, The</i>	Pure Flix	14,682	3,000
<i>Disaster Artist, The</i>	A24	21,122	10,000
<i>Every Day</i>	Orion	6,102	4,900
<i>Florida Project, The</i>	A24	5,904	2,000
<i>Forever My Girl*</i>	Roadside Attractions	16,372	3,500
<i>Get Out</i>	Universal	176,041	4,500
<i>I Am Not Your Negro</i>	Magnolia	7,124	1,000
<i>I Can Only Imagine*</i>	Roadside Attractions	81,176	7,000
<i>Lady Bird</i>	A24	48,958	10,000
<i>Let There Be Light</i>	Atlas Distribution	7,242	3,000
<i>Loving Vincent</i>	Good Deed	6,682	6,500
<i>Midnight Sun*</i>	Open Road	9,524	2,800
<i>Paul, Apostle of Christ*</i>	Sony	17,276	5,000
<i>Strangers, The: Prey at Night*</i>	Aviron	24,370	5,000
<i>Traffik*</i>	Lionsgate	6,950	4,000
<i>Truth or Dare*</i>	Universal	35,614	3,500
<i>Unsane</i>	Bleecker Street	7,733	1,500
<i>Winchester</i>	CBS Films	25,092	3,500

*Still in North American distribution as of April 30, 2018. Revenues are from boxoffice.com and boxofficemojo.com. 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	REV. thous. \$	COST thous. \$
<i>12 Strong</i>	Warner Bros.	45,500	35,000
<i>American Assassin</i>	Lionsgate Films	36,250	33,000
<i>Atomic Blond</i>	Focus Features	51,574	30,000
<i>Bad Mom's Christmas, A</i>	STX Entertainment	72,110	28,000
<i>Commuter, The</i>	Lionsgate Films	36,343	30,000
<i>Darkest Hour</i>	Focus Films	56,443	30,000
<i>Den of Thieves</i>	STX Entertainment	44,947	30,000
<i>Early Man</i>	Lionsgate	8,267	50,000
<i>Hitman's Bodyguard, The</i>	Lionsgate/Summit	75,455	30,000
<i>Hostiles*</i>	Entertainment Studios	29,818	40,000
<i>I, Tonya*</i>	Neon	30,014	11,000
<i>I Feel Pretty*</i>	STX Entertainment	30,338	32,000
<i>Logan Lucky</i>	Bleecker Street	27,871	29,000
<i>Molly's Game</i>	STX Entertainment	28,781	30,000
<i>Only the Brave</i>	Sony	18,340	38,000
<i>Paddington 2</i>	Warner Bros.	40,442	55,000
<i>Proud Mary</i>	Screen Gems	20,868	14,000
<i>Shape of Water, The*</i>	Fox Searchlight	63,857	19,500
<i>Super Troopers*</i>	Fox Searchlight	22,578	13,500
<i>Three Billboards Outside of Ebbing, MO*</i>	Fox Searchlight	54,228	15,000
<i>Tyler Perry's Acrimony*</i>	Lionsgate Films	42,294	20,000
<i>Wind River</i>	The Weinstein Co.	33,801	11,000
<i>Wonder</i>	Lionsgate	132,423	20,000

*Same references as low-budget table.

LARGE FORMAT FILMS

FILM	DISTRIBUTION	REV. thous. \$	COST thous. \$
<i>Apollo 13: The Imax Experience</i>	IMAX	1,737	n/a
<i>Beautiful Planet, A*</i>	IMAX	13,94	n/a
<i>Born To Be Wild 3D*</i>	Warner Bros./IMAX	25,686	n/a
<i>Bugs!</i>	SK Films, Inc.	18,114	9,000
<i>Deep Sea 3D</i>	Warner Bros.	46,332	1,000
<i>Galapagos: The Enchanted Voyage*</i>	IMAX	18,588	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.	52,157	n/a
<i>Island of Lemurs: Madagascar*</i>	Warner Bros.	11,226	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	7,624	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>Roving Mars</i>	Buena Vista	10,408	1,000
<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	93,325	1,000
<i>Thrill Ride</i>	Sony Classics	18,795	9,000
<i>To the Arctic 3D</i>	Warner Bros.	14,525	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.	35,808	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

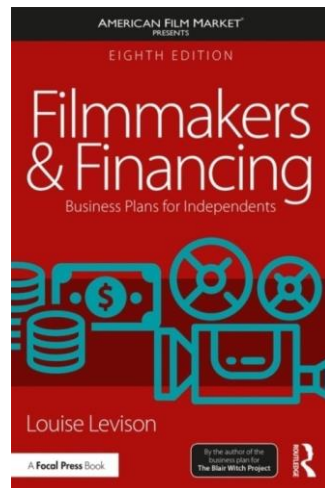
* Same references as low-budget table.

RICK PAMPLIN DIRECTOR OF NEW DOC

Local award-winning independent filmmaker Rick Pamplin has been announced as writer-director of a new feature length documentary inspired by Palm Beach resident Louise Levison's best-selling book *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents*. Pamplin says, "We are making a bold, truthful movie, which will reveal as many secrets as possible." He plans to interview multiple Palm Beach residents on camera and utilize locations throughout the County. 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**. Producers on the new film include Scott duPont, formerly a Jupiter Island resident turned Hollywood-based movie producer, and Palm Beach artist and production designer Maggie Phipps Pamplin. The executive producer is P.J. Marks. Follow updates on the production via Twitter at #ConfidentialFilmProject.



Pamplin and Borgnine



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

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

(Speaking of 21st Century technology, check out the updated [moviemoney.com](http://www.moviemoney.com) site)

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) which inspired the **#CONFIDENTIALFilmProject**.

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'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.

Levison also is editor of the online newsletter *The Film Entrepreneur: A Newsletter for the Independent Filmmaker and Investor*. 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*. Among her corporate clients are Danny Glover's Louverture Films (2008 nominee for Best Documentary Academy Award *Trouble the Water*), Pamplin Film Company (*Hoover*), Majestic World Entertainment and Tokuma International Ltd (*Shall We Dance*, *Princess Mononoke*). 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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