ARRI MASTER ANAMORPHIC LENSES. TRULY CINEMATIC.

STRETCH YOUR IMAGINATION

FAST T-STOP OF 1.9
BEAUTIFUL SKIN TONES
LOW DISTORTION
LARGE IMAGE FIELD
OVAL OUT-OF-FOCUS HIGHLIGHTS
CINEMATIC BOKEH

Damon Lindelof

"The cliff’s edge is a very exciting place to do television."

In this issue:

David Friendly’s leap of faith
Boyhood plays the long game
Produced By Conference at Warner Bros.
A few observations: For one, there is a misleading “slice” of the revenue pie — corporate sponsorships actually account for considerably more than that orange slice you see in chart A. Much of our true sponsorship revenue provides for our two primary events — the Producers Guild Awards and the Produced By Conference (the latter of which, you’ll observe, is only a break-even proposition). That narrower “Sponsorship” slice only accounts for sponsorship money not specifically allocated to the Awards and Conference. Second, there’s an unusually large slice of the pie dedicated to our financial reserves for this year; this is to compensate for earlier years in which our budget didn’t allow for such savings. Conversely, our “Committee Budgets” outlay may look small, but that slice doesn’t reflect the considerable investment of time and resources by the PGA staff, much of which supports the committees’ work, but is accounted for under staff compensation and general administrative expenses. Finally and most obviously, you’ll notice that we haven’t included numbers for these charts. After all, this column isn’t the appropriate space for a detailed budget breakdown. The goal is simply to give our members a ballpark sense of the Guild’s inflow and outflow. If any PGA member is sufficiently interested, she or he is welcome to review the Guild’s full budget at the PGA office, with the guidance of our intrepid Treasurer, Christina Lee Storm.

Fourteen years ago, an analogous set of charts would have had a lot fewer colors on them. But today, with multiple revenue streams funding an even wider variety of programs and benefits, I can proudly say that our Guild’s growth hasn’t just been steady — it’s been smart. It’s what comes from and how it’s spent.

At heart, the PGA is a fiscally conservative organization, and as with any of our members’ productions, we try to deliver maximum ROI. That “r” is, of course, the investment of your dues and fees — still by far the largest and most essential slice of our “revenue pie.” We hope that you see the return on that investment everywhere — the high quality of the Produced By Conference and Producers Guild Awards, the informative seminars and lively networking events, the still-growing staff (on both coasts!) that is there to address your needs and answer your questions, even in the magazine you’re holding right now. It’s not easy to stretch our annual budget to cover all those areas, but we learned from the best — our members themselves.

If you know me (or have been reading this column for any length of time), you know that I love to talk about our Guild’s growth. And fortunately for me, there’s been a lot of growth to talk about. But our Guild hasn’t just grown in size — it’s grown in scope, in ambition and in the effectiveness with which it serves its members. And that’s meant a growth in budget as well.

Today, the Guild’s annual budget stands at just over $4 million. And among those 6,500 PGA members, I know there’s at least a handful who are curious about where that money comes from, and how it gets spent. Our Guild is a 501(c)(6) organization, a not-for-profit. We have no shareholders; we pay no dividends. All of our revenues are poured back into the organization in order to improve its level of member service, increase its impact within the industry, and ensure that its financial future is secure. So to that end, I’m happy to offer an admittedly highly generalized — but fundamentally accurate — picture of where our revenue comes from and how it’s spent.
Damon Lindelof

Be careful what you wish for.

Following a movie-obsessed youth in New Jersey, NYU Film School and a Hollywood apprenticeship at the Metropolitan Talent Agency and, later, at Paramount, Damon Lindelof parlayed his talent and tenacity into a job as a journeyman writer of hour-long dramas. What was supposed to be a quick, get-to-know-you meeting with rising showrunner J.J. Abrams instantly blossomed into an intense week of work drafting an outline for an ABC pilot — developing some idea the network had about survivors of a plane crash on a remote island.

Within a matter of months, Lindelof would find himself the creative point man on the most ambitious series yet produced for broadcast network television. The ambition of Lost spun out in every direction... its huge ensemble cast, its cinematic production values and most notably, the wildly intricate (or as naysayers argued, impenetrable) mythology that came to undergird its narrative. It became the emblematic series of the first years of the World-Wide Web, endlessly puzzled over and debated in online chatrooms and bulletin boards.

The series began in an explosion of mystery and ferocity, and for six seasons, it never let up. By the end, Lindelof found himself creatively exhausted, and evidently hurt by the mixed reception for the series’ final episodes. After a successful venture into motion pictures, including Abrams’ Star Trek reboot and its sequel, it was an open question whether he would return to television.

The answer came this year, in the form of another highly cinematic series, rooted in another inexplicable mystery at its core. HBO’s The Leftovers plays like a series of snapshots of a world barely able to countenance the trauma it’s suffered — the rapture-like vanishing of 2% of the world’s population. In its 10 episodes, The Leftovers has already afforded Lindelof some perks that Lost never could, like the opportunity to collaborate with novelist Tom Perrotta, and the chance to tell a story whose main action wasn’t confined to a single island in the Pacific.

This is the 67th in Produced by’s ongoing series of Case Studies of successful producers and their work. Editor Chris Green spoke to Damon Lindelof just as he was wrapping The Leftovers’ season finale, and a few weeks before HBO renewed the series for a second season. It was a fun talk, including everything from the role the DVD boom played in Lost’s success, to the creative possibilities offered by The Leftovers’ invisible apocalypse, to a surprise discovery of shared roots along New Jersey’s Route 4 corridor.
Berg on the set of The Leftovers

Damon Lindelof and director Peter Berg

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How can I go to that place?” And I think that phase one was

jected on this screen? Where did these spaceships come from?

life. I mean, “How did this happen? How did this thing get pro-

Where did it start for you? What put you on the path to

being a TV and movie producer?

As long as I can remember, I always loved stories. I loved

being read to by my folks. I was a bookworm before I even

knew how to read. And I loved making up stories. Both of my

parents were always soliciting, “Well, you tell us a story.”

My dad, in particular, had a huge appreciation for sci-fi

and horror and genre stuff, and he exposed me to it at a fairly

early age. He and I went to go see

and horror and genre stuff, and he exposed me to it at a fairly

early age. He and I went to go see Star Wars for the first time

when I was 4. And that was sort of the defining moment of my

life. I mean, “How did this happen? How did this thing get pro-

jected on this screen? Where did these spaceships come from?

How can I go to that place?” And I think that phase one was

a little bit of a Santa Claus presentation of let’s-pretend-that-

place-is-real. And even as I came to learn, well, it’s just pretend,

there was the transition to, oh, I want to do that, I want to

make movies. And then there’s the jump-cut to my early teen-

age years, when I was 14. As soon as I was old enough to get a

work permit, I applied for an usher job at the Route 4 Tenplex.

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Oh, man, the Tenplex. Yeah. I would walk there from my

house.

Yeah. Well, if you walked there between the years of 1985 and

1990, I was working there.

Well, jeez, you sold me popcorn or took my ticket or some-

thing like that. You must have.

Yeah. Most definitely.

I was there all the time.

Yeah, well, me too. I saw every single movie that came out, even

if it was something that I wasn’t interested in. In addition to that,

my dad continued to curate a love for the movies that came out

before I was born. We would go into New York City all the time

and we would see foreign films, Orson Welles films, Preston

Sturges, Kubrick. Malcolm Gladwell has the “10,000 rule”… You

have to put in 10,000 hours of practice before you can be consid-

ered an expert in something. I had 10,000 hours of movies and

television to watch, and that’s a lot.

So, I’m trying to put a positive spin on the fact that I was a

couch potato for the majority of my adolescence. [laughs] But it

ended up paying off in the long run. On some level, I always viewed

myself as a DJ, as opposed to a composer. I feel like I’ve curated all

this great television and film I’ve watched over the years, and now

I’m remixing it and mashing it up together in interesting ways. Or I

put a rhythm from piece A sort of under the melody of piece B and

put a rhythm from piece A sort of under the melody of piece B and

made them combine to make something new.

That’s not to say that I’m just a glorified plagiarist. I’ll leave

it for others to make that argument. But I look at myself and

I’m proud to be a fan, an aficionado, first and foremost. I want to

honor all the things that inspired me by bringing them back to

life but trying to present them under a slightly different lens.
was that being a movie writer was an immensely difficult job. There were very few people who could do it particularly well, and even those people were fired on a regular basis because of how bad things were. There were very few people who could do it particularly well, and even those people were fired on a regular basis.

But in the meantime, I was making lots of friends and contacts in the television business. Around that time, in the mid-90s, I was writing The Sopranos and ER and NYPD Blue, and thinking: This is better than most of the movies that I’m seeing.

And I also started feeling like I’m not my best in front of a computer by myself. I am at my best when I am sitting across a desk or a round table with other talented people. Collaboration is something that I really enjoy, and that was happening in television in a way that it wasn’t really happening in movies. So there was a shift by the time I was 26 years old, to think that if I’m going to make a go of it, it’s going to be in television in a way that it wasn’t really happening in movies. So there was a shift by the time I was 26 years old, to think that if I’m going to make a go of it, it’s going to be in television in a way that it wasn’t really happening in movies.

Then Nash Bridges, which was in its sixth season, got cancelled. Presumably this was not my fault but I admit the timing was a little bit fortuitous. For the next job that I took, I wanted to go back onto a new show, now that I had been on a show that was on the air and running and had worked out the kinks. I wanted to take another stab at something from the ground up

So I took a job working as a writer’s assistant on a show called Crossing Jordan, written and run by this guy, Tim Kring, who also took me under his wing and gave me a level of access so that I could learn. I ended up working on Crossing Jordan for three seasons. And then toward the end of the first season, I drew a fundamental confidence boost from a story that I pitched on Crossing Jordan, Jill Hennessy was pregnant and so we went on hiatus for her maternity leave. And it was during that time period that I got a call from a colleague of mine at ABC, Heather Kadin.

Now, I had been stalking Heather for quite some time to meet J.J., because I was obsessed with both Felicity and Alias. But I was already under contract on Crossing Jordan so the timing never worked out. But it just so happened that she was calling about this pilot idea that Lloyd Braun, the President of ABC, had about a plane crashing on an island, that they were forced to build out this incredibly dense mythology from the ground up, and the way that he acquit himself. I mean, you’re well aware, we work in a business of very passionate people and sometimes passionate people are yellers and screamers or afterthoughts or unlikable. Carlton was always a professional, always a gentleman, always kept his head about him and did the job with incredible grace. And just standing in the presence of that was deeply inspiring, because at the end of the day, as corny as it sounds, no level of success is worth being an asshole. And if you can retain your basic fundamental humanity despite overwhelming pressure from every corner... you want somebody like that in motion and there’s a certain grace to it.

From Tim I learned what I think were really good writing habits, understanding how to make material work, how to communicate with other writers, fundamental aspects of the heavy lifting, writing-wise, and develop this material a little bit further.

If you’re doing a cop show, your phone rings and there’s just been a murder down the street. If you’re doing a medical show, there’s a gurney rolling in with somebody bleeding out every five minutes. We didn’t have any of those things. There were really no sets, if so it rains, you’kind of screwed. And it rained a lot.

Heather called me on a Friday night and I met with her and Carlton on a Monday morning. Then the following Saturday, five days later, we turned in a 23-page outline called Lost to ABC and they greenlit the outline.

That’s a good week’s work, it seems. Indeed, yeah.

“The week we created Lost.” Exactly. And then 12 weeks after that, we delivered the two-hour pilot, cut and finished. So it was a whirlwind winter into spring.

Mentoring is a theme we’re constantly coming back to in the magazine. I just wanted to go back and ask you to say a little bit about what you found in Carlton’s and Tim’s styles that you could borrow, to make yourself a better producer?

I mean, each guy had his own style. But ultimately for Carlton, it was the idea of allocating your time between what I would call the creative side of the show, breaking the stories, writing the scripts, editing the shows, and then the managerial aspects of the job, hiring and firing people, the budgetary ramifications, dealing with the studio and the network on nearly every aspect of the job, hiring and firing people, the budgetary ramifications, dealing with the studio and the network on nearly every aspect of the job.

If you were to list what a showrunner does between the hours when they get out of their car and they arrive at work, and then when they get in their car and close the door, you’d say: It is impossible that you actually did all of these things today. Being a showrunner means pulling off that magic trick — on a daily basis — where, like, there’s way too many clowns going up that car. They couldn’t possibly all fit in there.

And what I learned from Carlton was how not to spread myself too thin, how to trust and delegate to others, how to have maximum impact when you’re sticking your head in the middle of all the creative side of the show.

And the way that he acquitted himself. I mean, you’re well aware, we work in a business of very passionate people and sometimes passionate people are yellers and screamers or afterthoughts or unlikable. Carlton was always a professional, always a gentleman, always kept his head about him and did the job with incredible grace. And just standing in the presence of that was deeply inspiring, because at the end of the day, as corny as it sounds, no level of success is worth being an asshole. And if you can retain your basic fundamental humanity despite overwhelming pressure from every corner... you want somebody like that in motion and there’s a certain grace to it.

From Tim I learned what I think were really good writing habits, understanding how to make material work, how to communicate with other writers, fundamental aspects of the heavy lifting, writing-wise, and develop this material a little bit further.
There were really no sets, so if it rains, you’re kind of screwed. And it rained a lot. [laughs] Every single episode, there’d be a flashback that was set somewhere else in the world. And they had to do anything like that live, which probably means that if we were to adapt it, people wouldn’t have seen anything like this before.

So I hope you can talk a little about the process of working with Tom Perrotta?

I would much rather work with Tom Perrotta than take Tom Perrotta’s book and just strike out on my own. Tom has been bowled over by this complete and utter strange step in and to co-parent this thing together.

Tom and I met, believe, in June of 2012, just a couple of summers ago. And it took us a while to figure out how to get the pilot script just right, and a little while longer to shoot the pilot and get that right as well. And obviously Peter Berg, who directed the pilot, was a huge part of making that happen. And I’m knocking at the door of next week finally locking the season finale. That’ll be the conclusion of this two-year process, which has been relatively all-consuming.

Within the development process, what was it like to work with Tom to take the story in different directions, to expand it or move it? How did he approach that process? And what was the push and pull like between the two of you?

It felt, to me, like playing catch or Ping-Pong. There was a lot of: I hit it, and you hit it back. Our relationship was absently, and not change too much. There were a couple elements from the book that I wanted to put under the microscope. But all in all, our first crack at the pilot was pretty straightforward: “this is what the book is.”

And then in collaboration with HBO and Warner Bros. and each other, we began to realize that what worked really well novelistically and perhaps even if we were adapting The Leftovers into a feature film, might not serve a TV series as well. I was flying somewhere. I bought the book at the airport and at the same time made an inquiry as to the status of the book. And the next time I landed, I got word back that HBO had optioned it.

And so that was kind of the fourth cherry. Even since The Sopranos came along, the idea of having a HBO drama, that’s the gold standard. To have it in this new production, and the “large canvas” storytelling. But what was really new was any kind of fundamental aspiration or idea, to be able to say, “I really want to do a television show about this.”

And then I read The New York Times book review written by Stephen King, who is my favorite author and was my dad’s favorite author, and he says, “The author is playing ‘what if?’” He was a present and an active, and is an incredibly creative guy. Carlton was writing and story-centric, but also carried the function production, and the “large canvas” storytelling. But what was really new was any kind of fundamental aspiration or idea, to be able to say, “I really want to do a television show about this.”

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So we tried a slightly more radical approach in terms of playing “What if?”

And Tom was incredibly game to play “What if?” He has never been remotely precious about the material. He doesn’t roll over either. Certainly not every idea that leaves my mouth is a winner and I think that he’s always very respectful about that. He says, “We could do it that way, but we could also do something that didn’t suck.” [laughs] He is a present and a creator, so it’s not a big obstacle of the creative process. He and I wrote three episodes together of the 10, and he was actively involved in all the others.

In terms of wrangling with particular story elements, how did you arrive at the creative decisions you did?

I think there are two fundamental shifts between the book and the television series. The first is that we changed the orientation of the main character, Kevin Garvey, who in the book is the mayor of the town. He’s a hometown hero, ex-high school athlete who’s just a very affable, well-intentioned guy, who just happens to have been the mayor of the town. In the television series, Kevin has become a stranger step in and to co-parent this thing together.

But the things that he has to worry about are more like how is he going to fill out his software team because they lost their startup in the capture. That’s a storyline in the book, which I loved.

But when you think about what that story looks like on screen, the audience is wondering, “I’m supposed to care about his new startup? What I care about is, what the eff happened? Where did those people go? How does this world feel?” We’re living in this space of unresolved mystery, with no expectation that it’s going to be resolved for us. It seemed that that would create a tremendous amount of anxiety.

And so I think that the big shift from the book was how we ratcheted up the anxiety and the fear. I think that the word “bleak” has been used to describe the show. I wouldn’t necessarily use that word. It’s not a show about hopelessness or despair.

But everybody is suffering from some kind of collective fundamental PTSD. I think it draws on the way we all felt after 9/11. The illusion of safety was gone… it was so unpredictable and inexplicable and destabilizing. Pete Berg, certainly, when he read the script, was really fixated on Newtown as a way into how a town, six months after this devastating event… How do you go to a little league game? What does that feel like? What does that look like?

And then, as I was saying, the other big shift was we made Kevin into the chief of police. Because it’s literally his job to keep it together, to keep the town from spinning off into chaos.

You know, the mayor isn’t on the front lines, if there’s a riot. That’s not his job. But the chief of police is. If we’re presenting a world in decay, or at the very least, a world that came very close to breaking but has somehow managed to stay together, a cop would probably be dealing with people closer to the cliff’s edge. And the cliff’s edge is a very exciting place to do television.
The 12-Year Gamble

How a quartet of producers pulled off the year’s most audacious film.

by Cecilia F. Lederer

Boyhood was filmed over a 12-year period and at its close was, Joseph Szustar (right) and Jonathan Sehring arrive at a screening of Boyhood. (Photo: David Livingston)

The enthusiasm was evident in everyone I spoke to. “I’ve got three boys,” Sehring tells me, calling this film the single greatest achievement of his career. “My oldest was just about 12 when Rick pitched this. My two youngest were 5 and 7.” No one seems to be able to resist the draw of this extreme experiment in realism. Simultaneously unique and universal, Boyhood draws empathy out of the audience with the inevitability of passing time, and so Sloss tells me: “on the other hand, I’ve got a daughter and son exact ages of [cast members] Ellar [Coltrane] and Lorelei [Linklater] now, when Rick started shooting.” Boyhood walks the line between the simplicity of a classic stage story and the complexity of a groundbreaking shift in how we think about the limitations of media and entertainment. It’s an unprecedented work of art, but when asked where they found the courage and conviction to follow through on this unconventional project (especially given that the fruits of their labor would not be seen for more than a decade), the producers shrugged it off as if they’d been working on something as run of the mill as a wedding video. “On the surface it’s a pretty daunting task,” Linklater agreed. “It’s a pretty big commitment, obviously, from everybody involved, but everyone was excited about the storytelling possibilities, that you could tell a story in a new way and push the boundaries of that and explore something that hadn’t been done before. It’s about storytelling, and perhaps it is more about time.”

Boyhood was a labor of love for all involved, telling the one story we can all relate to: the story of getting older. The subject matter lent itself to collaboration, and the personal experiences of the cast and crew filtered their way into the film. Everyone I spoke to mentioned their own family life and how they related personally to the story, not just artistically or financially. Trust and mutual respect were the cornerstones of this production, and I can’t help but believe that has something to do with Boyhood’s success. The enthusiasm was evident in everyone I spoke to. “I’ve got three boys,” Sehring tells me, calling this film the single greatest achievement of his career. “My oldest was just about 12 when Rick pitched this. My two youngest were 5 and 7.” No one seems to be able to resist the draw of this extreme experiment in realism. Simultaneously unique and universal, Boyhood draws empathy out of the audience with the inevitability of passing time, and so Sloss tells me: “on the other hand, I’ve got a daughter and son exact ages of [cast members] Ellar [Coltrane] and Lorelei [Linklater] now, when Rick started shooting.” Boyhood walks the line between the simplicity of a classic stage story and the complexity of a groundbreaking shift in how we think about the limitations of media and entertainment. It’s an unprecedented work of art, but when asked where they found the courage and conviction to follow through on this unconventional project (especially given that the fruits of their labor would not be seen for more than a decade), the producers shrugged it off as if they’d been working on something as run of the mill as a wedding video. “On the surface it’s a pretty daunting task,” Linklater agreed. “It’s a pretty big commitment, obviously, from everybody involved, but everyone was excited about the storytelling possibilities, that you could tell a story in a new way and push the boundaries of that and explore something that hadn’t been done before. It’s about storytelling, and perhaps it is more about time.”

Boyhood is not only the film of the moment, but also itself a film of moments. Asked what he thinks of the notion that time itself is the true protagonist of the film, Linklater compares that “the main character might be how we process time, or how time flows through our lives, or how we flow through time.” When I asked him how Boyhood compares to his Before series (which also deal naturalistically with the passage of time), he called them flip sides of each other. “In the Before movies, you get these nine-year gaps and then you spend very little time with Jesse and Celine relative to the time that’s gone by. And we were spending continuous time with this family over 12 years. One year is almost imperceptible even in a kid’s life. I wanted it to feel like a gradual process. In the adults you notice little things too. But still coming from a similar place, using time for cinematic storytelling. While the Before films were still shot in a largely conventional manner, the unprecedented structure of Boyhood presented uncommercial obstacles. Producer Cathleen Sutherland had some practical insights on the way this film processes time. “Things evolved over the course of 12 years that you might not have expected. We went through three payroll companies. The first one went bankrupt, the second one changed their business model, and finally, we finished with a third. And we had all that production time. When you add up our production days, every year was a month or two of production — that’s about one to two years of pre-production for 49 total days of shooting. Not only that, digitally things changed so much. Some of our film stock numbers were retired by Kodak.” When I asked Linklater why he stuck with 35mm even as it fell out of favor, he quickly shot back that he: “never even thought twice about it... I wanted it to feel as consistent as possible. To this day, you can’t get any more of a stable long-term consistency than a 35mm negative. Over the years, I shot a couple of films with the Alexa — you know, digital — but those were just singular projects. Things don’t change that quickly. Industry standards change, but I knew it wouldn’t disappear completely. And it didn’t. It hung in there. Barely. We kind of witnessed the slow death spiral of shooting on 35mm. By the end, it was kind of fun to hear ‘checking the gauge’ and ‘camera reload.’”

The film stock may not have changed, but shooting catch-as-catch-can over summers and weekends with two school-aged boys (Coltrane and Linklater) and two movie stars (Hawke and Arquette) presented challenges to the production team. Each shoot was treated almost as if it were for its own...
short film, a short film on which the plug could be pulled at any moment. There was no obligation on IFC’s part to do it every year,” Sloss tells me, "but after a few years, we all conveniently forgot.” Sehring adds that nobody ever went back to the original agreement because they all had such shared mutual respect and confidence in one another and the project. “We are friends as much as we are business associates," Sehring chuckles. "I don’t know if John would say that, but I’d say that.” And of course, Sloss agrees. “This was a remarkably harmonious project," he beams. “From top to bottom, I think you’d hear everyone say that. And that’s not always the case.”

It was clear to me, after only a few minutes with the producers, that everyone on board was committed to Linklater’s vision with a passion rivaled only by that of the artist himself. Sloss remembers working with Linklater on Slacker and that everyone on board was committed to Linklater’s vision with a passion rivaled only by that of the artist himself. Sloss remembers working with Linklater on Slacker and when he talks, I can hear the admiration in his voice. "I know Rick," he says with pride. "He is an organic, holistic guy. He takes in what he talks, I can hear the admiration in his voice. "I know Rick," he says with pride. "He is an organic, holistic guy. He takes in the essence of the people around him, but he had very specific structural and narrative ideas for this film. He knew how it was going to end from the beginning," Sehring describes how details such as the camera were being considered as a painter changed, but explains that these were not the producerial headaches they might have been on another project. "He was doing something else than when we originally discussed the project, but we adapted." Faith in the project was doubtless helped by Linklater’s refresh for collaboration. “Even if we are just getting final lines perfected the night before we shoot, that doesn’t mean we've lived in a vacuum for a year,” he tells me. “As best I could, I let everyone know what’s happening next year and we could talk about it, or, more importantly, think about it. The beauty here that we tried to use to our advantage was just to have all that gestation time. Film doesn’t usually offer you that opportunity. It’s more like a time sculpture than a strict plot-driven narrative. That time was super-important because of the realism of what I was going for. We could really work on the dialogue. We might get together and start thinking depending on needs and wants. Regardless, by the time the camera was rolling, we were ready.”

To be ready to shoot this sequence of time capsules required a constant willingness to adapt. Perhaps the most recognizable pop culture contribution to the mise-en-scène is the Will Ferrell/Adam McKay sketch "Pearl the Landlord" from the early days of the comedy website Funny or Die. "I was always looking for things like that," Linklater observes. “And you never know how time’s going to treat anything. It could be forgotten, or it could be an in-joke for people who remember it. We were in that position quite often. The Obama election of '08, we’re shooting before the election, during the campaign season. That could have gone either way, but either way I thought it would be something that you might remember. I wanted the whole film to be like a memory of some kind. You’re looking back at something you might remember from those years.” Sloss notes that cultural evolution is one of the main subjects in the film. "Rick has all these signifiers throughout the movie. Whether it’s music or video games or technology in general. It’s interesting, the effect of the film. It’s really struck a nostalgic chord with the younger audience. They are nostalgic for that iMac. They’re flashing back on their young lives. That’s one of Rick’s great talents. When he was going to direct Dazed and Confused, he made two tapes with music and I think that contributed to the film getting greenlit as much as anything."

But it wasn’t just cultural trends that dictated production; Washington had an influence too. "We were going to shoot the final scene at Big Bend National Park, and the federal government shut down. They shut the park. They kicked everyone out. Thank you Ted Cruz and the Tea Party," Sutherland laughs. "And this was a location that Rick and I had gone and scouted. Like, thoroughly scouted. We were going to do the sunset. We knew where our shots were and the thing blew up on us right beforehand. We went out to the state park and they said: ‘Yes, you can come over, we understand.’ They were getting a lot of people who had been displaced from the other park. And so we got out there, and we hadn’t scouted it. We just went: ‘OK, let’s quickly run by.’ And it’s not quick, because you’re in the middle of West Texas and you’ve got to drive 30 minutes down the road in the middle of nowhere. I had pulled up as many images as I could of the park. We got out there, and it actually turned out very well, the wilderness of the state park. It’s a little wilder. It’s not as picture-perfect as the other park. And hopefully, the film will encourage tourism to West Texas. It was a really nice way to end the movie. I can’t imagine if we’d been shooting in a crummy apartment. It was weird to call wrap for the final time. I can’t imagine if it had been anywhere else but there, in the middle of that wild Texas beauty and that wild landscape. You get out there and your heart soars. And you get out there with everybody in the film, with people from the beginning, and we’re all out there finishing this huge project with that beautiful sunset, and were like, ‘OK, that’s a wrap.’ It was very fitting.”

After hearing the producers’ pride and satisfaction, it’s easy to see why this beautiful final shoot was the natural end to their humble epic. "We are dedicated to seeing Rick appreciated as the great American director that he is," Sloss tells me, with Sehring adding: “Not just director, but storyteller.” They say they "are expecting every living human to see the movie" and that goal, while lofty, seems achievable when a universally relatable story is coupled with the passion of a team of producers who believe in their art as much as these four.
On the weekend of June 7 and 8, more than 1,000 producers descended on the Warner Bros. studio lot for the sixth edition of the Produced By Conference, which even by today’s sequel standards represents an unqualified success.

Set among the legendary soundstages and backlot of Warner Bros., the famous song from *Casablanca* was a fitting underscore for a conference that so effectively surveyed the past, while fearlessly looking forward at this ever-changing industry and the artists who represent its future. The following are some notable highlights from the weekend…

**A case of do or die**
Mark Gordon kicked off the conference (and his last day as one of the Guild’s two Presidents) moderating a conversation with multi-hyphenates Seth Rogen, Evan Goldberg and James Weaver, which was perhaps most notable for the fact that all of the participants appeared to be in full possession of their faculties. It almost seemed like the NO SMOKING signs in the auditorium were glowing more brightly than usual.

After listening to the stories of their hijinks on and off the set, who wouldn’t want to work with these guys?
James Weaver described his early career as the manager of Express for Men at the Northridge mall, moving on to UTA and eventually working as Seth Rogen’s assistant on *Funny People* and *The Green Hornet*. His transition to producer might be a case of “looking for a part,” since according to Rogen, Weaver was the only one who consistently wore shirts that weren’t wrinkled.

More likely, this trio’s collective success was a case of each person bringing something complementary to the table — Mr. Rogen as primarily a stand-up comic and performer, Mr. Goldberg as primarily a writer and storyteller, and Mr. Weaver as primarily a business-minded producer. They all had aspirations to make movies from a young age. The team was fortunate to work within the Judd Apatow “bubble,” where there’s a certain budget level at which the studio just writes a check and goes away. Inside the bubble, in a span of less than two years, they made *Superbad* (by miming “weird shit that happened in high school”), *Pineapple Express* (essentially a live-action cartoon aboutstoners on the run) and *50/50* (which is about as close to a serious movie as they ever plan to make).

A memorable insight of the session was Rogen’s observation that comedies don’t get the respect they deserve because people falsely think comedy is easy. Accompanied by his inimitable chuckle, he reminded the audience that “the most unfunny person in the world thinks he’s hilarious.”

**No matter what the future brings**

One of the more technically-oriented sessions of the weekend, “The Big Picture: Imaging and Creativity from Capture Through Post,” was a discussion about the succession of assets from physical production through the post-production process and beyond, and the importance of establishing a dialogue among the different departments as early as possible.

Moderated by Carolyn Giordina (*The Hollywood Reporter*) and co-sponsored by *The Hollywood Reporter* and Arri, the session’s panelists included Tim Sarnoff (Technicolor), David Stump (visual effects director of photography), Mike Sowa (Technicolor) and Stephen Ukas-Bradley (Arri).

While much of the session may not have been layperson-friendly, there were a few takeaway quotes such as Mr. Ukas-Bradley’s remark that “resolution is only one of the measures of image quality, Mr. Sarnoff’s comment that “fix it in post” no longer applies in today’s complex world of exploitation methods, and Mr. Sowa’s axiom that “more bit depth gives you more impunity.”

All of the panelists commented on how important it is for the different technicians involved in all phases of filmmaking to be knowledgeable about the other departments and what they do. “A DP who knows what the colorist can do,” explained Mr. Sowa, “can save a lot of time on the set.”

**That no one can deny**

As his conversation with Modern Family’s Steven Levitan demonstrated, Mr. Norman Lear is an American treasure — one of the greatest storytellers, and one of the greatest comedy geniuses of our time. Period.

**It’s still the same old story**

A group of executive producers from some of TV’s best came together for the session entitled “Adrenaline Rush: TV on the Edge of Your Seat,” sponsored by *The Hollywood Reporter* and moderated by Christopher Keyser (*TVyarm*). The panelists included Scott Stephens (True Detective), Alex Cary (*Homeland*), Bryan Fuller (*Hannibal*) and David Alpert (*The Walking Dead*).

Although the panel was ostensibly focused on the compelling viewing experience as exemplified by these envelope-pushing shows, it was story and character that dominated the discussion. Among the many surprises during the session, Mr. Fuller spent more time expressing his fandom obsession with *The Walking Dead* than talking about his own show, which ultimately led to a declaration of love from Mr. Alpert.

**The fundamental things apply**

A flood of private equity is available in film financing. Rich people want to be involved with the movies. The Chinese are looking to co-produce or bring technology to the table.

There’s nothing more fundamental to the role of the producer than film financing, and these were some of the takeaways from the session, moderated by new PGA President Gary Lucchesi, titled “Financing Independent Film: New Business Models,” and sponsored by Deadline Hollywood. Among the panelists were Glen Basner (Founder and CEO, FilmNation Entertainment), Schuyler Moore (Partner, Stroock & Stroock & Lavan, LLP), Stephan Paternot (Co-founder and CEO, Slated), Lydia Dean Pilcher (producer, *Cutie and the Boxer*) and Rona Ronson (Co-head of Independent Film, UTA).

Mr. Paternot, however, stole the spotlight as the Co-founder and CEO of Slated, an online marketplace with more than 1,100 investors representing $700 million in potential film financing. Some members of the audience were signing up on their smartphones before the session even ended.

**You must remember this**

The conference came to a memorable conclusion with a career-spanning conversation with the prodigiously talented, inspiring and magnanimous Francis Ford Coppola.

Outgoing Guild President Hawk Koch appeared genuinely honored to be the moderator of this rare Southern California appearance by one of the industry’s greatest artists.
In his analogy comparing the production of a movie to the building of a house, Mr. Coppola aptly described the director as the architect, and the producer as the contractor. He praised his collaborators Gordon Willis (The Godfather Trilogy) and Vittorio Storaro (Apocalypse Now), as well as his talented children Sofia Coppola and Roman Coppola, and his first-time director granddaughter Gia Coppola.

If there is space for one anecdote, it would have to be a story Mr. Coppola told as a cautionary tale of the power of the director and the importance of communication. In directing one scene, he wanted a car to be on the other side of a fence from where it was. He went back to his trailer and was surprised hours later by how long it was taking to do this simple thing — until he found out that the only way to move the car as he had asked was to tear down the entire fence and put it back up again.

Mr. Coppola’s advice for young filmmakers: “Make personal films that illuminate our times.”

As time goes by
At the emotionally-charged General Membership Meeting on Saturday, June 7, Gary Lucchesi and Lori McCreary succeeded Hawk Koch and Mark Gordon as Presidents of the PGA, leading a talented collection of newly-elected officers and Council Delegates. But nothing approached the ovation for Carole Beams, who was announced as the winner of the Charles FitzSimons Award, making her the first member of the Guild’s AP Council to be awarded our organization’s highest honor for service to the Guild.

Conference Spotlight: Ceán Chaffin and David Fincher
One of the most anticipated sessions of the 2014 Produced By Conference was its “Conversation with Ceán Chaffin and David Fincher”— a rare look into the process of the producing and directing team behind some of the most provocative films of the last 20 years, including Fight Club, The Social Network, The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo and the upcoming Gone Girl.

In order to keep the discussion candid and open, members of the press were not allowed into the session, but Ms. Chaffin and Mr. Fincher graciously agreed to sit down with Produced by for a brief interview just before taking the stage.

Many of your films feel more like independent or even art films, given their challenge and complexity, and yet you’ve been able to make them within the major studio system. What’s your secret?

David Fincher: We’ve been pretty lucky. You have to have people within those bureaucracies who are fervent believers. We could not have made Fight Club without Laura [Ziskin] and Bill [Mechanic]. They bought the material. They had it before I had it. So I think you have to look for like-minded perverts within those bureaucracies to convert. And you have to do what you say you’re going to do.

Ceán Chaffin: And do it time and time again, so they start believing. It takes a while for that trust to be built up so you have a reputation that you can do what you say you’re going to do.

Wasn’t Seven famously a script that everyone said couldn’t be made?

Fincher: No, they just didn’t want to make it as written. They wanted to take out all the things that were disturbing. When it came down to whether there was going to be a head in the box at the end, my argument was: This movie is known around town as the ‘head in the box’ movie — so taking it out makes no sense. It’s like taking the wizard out of The Wizard of Oz.

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Photos 12, 14, 15, 17, 18 and 19 by Jordan Strauss/Invision for Producers Guild of America/AP Images
Photos 13 and 16 by Todd Williamson/Invision for Producers Guild of America/AP Images

July – August 2014
produced by Fincher: Well, it is true. Or when we were casting Dragon Tattoo, Ceán was there right at the beginning saying, “I think Rooney [Mara] might be able to do it.” She has a legacy of experience, and I have that with 10 or 12 people that I continue to go back to because I know that they're not going to try to talk me out of things that discomfort the audience.

Chaffin: But creative input — that's not something I focus on with David. To me it's all about watching the director's back. And you're in the position that you're also working for the studio, and it's very important that there's somebody out there trying to work with both sides. It's not just “us against them.”

Speaking of conflict, how often do you fight, what are the fights about, and who generally wins?

Chaffin: [Long pause] I don’t know.

Fincher: We don't fight, we disagree. We disagree about a lot of things. Usually it’s because we’re looking at it from diametrically opposed [places]. I’m looking at it in terms of mortality, and she’s looking at it more in terms of feasibility. What can we guarantee? What can we expect from someone hanging from wires for nine hours?

Chaffin: We’ve worked together longer than we've been a couple, and we found early on that we have the same philosophy. That’s so much better, because if you don’t have that same care, it’s really tough, and can be dangerous, and can be dishonest, and that’s not comfortable for me. And with David, I have that. Then it was about...

Fincher: Not making you cry.

Chaffin: [Laughs] He made me cry on the first job; that’s true. But he makes everybody cry. I didn’t take it personally. His old person said, “Don’t worry, everyone cries.” [Fincher nods in agreement.] I’m kidding. But it’s not just with David, it’s all the people [we work with] who are so talented. You have to learn what their process is. Because when you don’t understand that, it can create conflict. It’s not about being right, it’s about making the whole work, and if you don’t understand each individual’s process, you can’t really be that person that moves [things] along, makes deadlines, makes budgets. I think that’s the part that keeps us from knocking heads — as a producer, sitting back and asking, “How does this person work? Let’s observe how they behave.” And then you support them.

Fincher: I also think that the assembly-line nature of our industry encourages specialization, but I really have an aversion to that. So the people I am naturally going to turn to are people who can think about it from multiple facets. So for me, what Ceán brings to it is... for my job, I have to be out there, not trying to fail, but certainly exposed to failure. And I need someone behind me saying, “You need to keep in mind that if this goes horribly awry, that’s three days of shooting.” You need that balance. Or when it comes to music, like the Pixies song at the end of Fight Club — that’s Ceán saying “Listen to this.”

Chaffin: That’s not true. I just listen to a lot of music...

Chaffin: The champion.

Fincher: ...the fellow pervert!

Chaffin: The like-minded people.

Working on projects with successful, popular source material often means that there are other producers attached. How do you stay true to your vision while collaborating with other producers?

Chaffin: It depends on the competence level and ego of each person. People know that David and I come together as a team, and I fill a space that they don’t [always] want to fill. [Other producers] have so much respect for David, and by this point they appreciate how we work, and they just want to be there when we need support. But a lot of people don’t want to do the things that we do and work how we work.

Let’s talk about that. What are those things?

Chaffin: We come from working on short-format together, and in that world you do everything from start to finish — and we just moved that over to films. I also line produce. You just wear more hats when you come from commercials and music video. So there’s more of an immersion in the whole process.

Fincher: I also think that the assembly-line nature of our industry encourages specialization, but I really have an aversion to that. So the people I am naturally going to turn to are people who can think about it from multiple facets. So for me, what Ceán brings to it is... for my job, I have to be out there, not trying to fail, but certainly exposed to failure. And I need someone behind me saying, “You need to keep in mind that if this goes horribly awry, that’s three days of shooting.” You need that balance. Or when it comes to music, like the Pixies song at the end of Fight Club — that’s Ceán saying “Listen to this.”

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The PGA Supports AB 1839

First, for the record, our Guild strongly supports all of the production incentive programs found among the 50 states. Any legislation that helps to keep production in the U.S. is good for producers and good for our national and state economies.

But Assembly Bill 1839, The Expanded Film and Television Job Creation Act (aka The California Film and Television Job Retention and Promotion Act), which is currently making its way through the California State legislature, has a special importance. California isn’t just the birthplace of the modern entertainment industry, it’s the state that roughly 75% of PGA members call home. To date, California has lagged behind many other states in terms of the incentives it offers producers, and among the individuals who have borne the brunt of that shortcoming are our members. The lack of a competitive California incentive has translated to more members being uprooted from their homes and families for weeks or months, compelled to travel out of state for production jobs that otherwise might have remained in California.

AB 1839 seeks to change that, increasing the funds available to in-state productions to a robust $400 million, and allocating those funds to productions based not on a lottery system, but on how many jobs they would create for the state’s residents. It’s a strong piece of legislation, and our Guild supports it wholeheartedly. You should, too. If you are one of our thousands of California-based PGA members (or simply a subscriber who resides in the Golden State), we encourage you to call your State Assemblymember, State Senator, and particularly, Gov. Jerry Brown, and urge them to support AB 1839.

Our industry has shown that production will go where the incentives are — and take their valuable production dollars with them. At the end of the day, producers want to be able to go home to their families, not Skype with them from out of state. This legislation will help keep producers closer to home, and keep our production spend in California. It’s time we leveled the playing field.

—FRED BARON, Board Member, Producers Guild of America, California Film Commission

AB 1839 is absolutely essential to maintaining the film and television industry presence in the state. Given the number of cast, crew, writers, directors and producers employed statewide in the entertainment industry, it is imperative that we do what we can to stem runaway production, with billions of dollars at stake. The PGA has worked tirelessly (and successfully) with our fellow Guilds and unions to lobby for passage of this critically important legislation.

—GALE ANNE HURD, Executive Producer, The Walking Dead

California is where this industry was born. Jobs that could (and should) stay in California are going to other states because our incentives aren’t competitive. This is our chance to reverse that trend. Call your state assemblyman and your state senator. Call Gov. Brown. Let them know how important this legislation is to you, to our industry, and to all of the California businesses who benefit from our productions.

—HAWK KOCH, President Emeritus, Producers Guild of America

On behalf of our members, we write in support of AB 1839, which expands the existing Film and Tax Credit Program to accommodate the quantity and scale of film and television productions that stand to employ thousands of Californians and inject billions of dollars into state and local economies. The existing Film and Television Tax Credit Program represents a successful first step in returning California to its rightful place as our nation’s leader in entertainment production. Unfortunately, the Program’s scant $100,000,000 annual limit on tax credits and the disqualification of big-budget productions has compelled the vast majority of productions that would otherwise shoot in California to turn to other states such as New York, Louisiana and Michigan, where more aggressive incentive programs stand ready to meet the needs of producers.

These productions dearly want to shoot in our home state. There is no compelling reason why our members should have to uproot their lives, parting from their families for weeks or months at a time in order to shoot elsewhere. There is no compelling reason why the many ancillary crew positions should not be held by Californians. “Film Flight,” the 2012 study released by the Milken Institute, has thoroughly detailed the disastrous consequences of runaway production for our state economy. Producers would like nothing more than to keep their teams close to their families, provide thousands of jobs to the workers of our state, and channel their productions’ considerable spending power into our towns and cities. Thanks to your support, this goal is within reach.

If the Assembly fails to rise to meet this challenge, it would be a terrible shame and a painfully lost opportunity. Film, television and new media are California’s home-grown industries, inescapably tied to our state’s history and its future. For the sake of our thousands of PGA members and the millions of California citizens who will benefit from expanded production opportunities in our state, we thank you for your essential work on behalf of the California Film and Television Job Retention and Promotion Act, and urge your colleagues in the strongest possible terms to lend their support to AB 1839.

Sincerely,

Gary Lucchesi
President

Lori McCreary
President

June 9, 2014

The Honorable Lois Wolk
Chair, Senate Governance and Finance Committee
State Capitol, Room 5114
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Wolk:

On behalf of the Producers Guild of America, we thank you for co-authoring Assembly Bill 1839, the California Film and Television Job Retention and Promotion Act. The Producers Guild of America represents over 6,000 hardworking professionals in film, television and new media; while we are a national organization, the great majority of our members live in California. We wish we could say that all of these members worked in California as well, but over the past two decades, it has become increasingly difficult to make that claim.

On behalf of our members, we write in support of AB 1839, which expands the existing Film and Tax Credit Program to accommodate the quantity and scale of film and television productions that stand to employ thousands of Californians and inject billions of dollars into state and local economies. The existing Film and Television Tax Credit Program represents a successful first step in returning California to its rightful place as our nation’s leader in entertainment production. Unfortunately, the Program’s scant $100,000,000 annual limit on tax credits and the disqualification of big-budget productions has compelled the vast majority of productions that would otherwise shoot in California to turn to other states such as New York, Louisiana and Michigan, where more aggressive incentive programs stand ready to meet the needs of producers.

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Sincerely,

Gary Lucchesi
President

Lori McCreary
President

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by Michael Ventre

David Friendly greets a visitor to his quietly exquisite Monterey Colonial home in Brentwood by saying, “Welcome to the house that Big Momma’s House built,” a reference to the Martin Lawrence-starring franchise whose three installments raked in more than $400 million worldwide. A long-time producer of studio multiplex fare that includes My Girl, Courage Under Fire and Doctor Dolittle, Friendly also earned a hefty dose of awards season love with Little Miss Sunshine in 2006. Friendly and fellow producers Marc Turtletaub, Peter Saraf, Albert Berger & Ron Yerxa took home the PGA’s top film honor, the Darryl Zanuck Award, and the film snagged a Best Picture Oscar nomination.

But it is more than that. Sneakerheadz is Friendly’s step away from pricey stars, huge crews and bountiful craft services tables to shoestring filmmaking on a labor of love. Some might see that as a step down. Friendly views it as quite the opposite.

“There is something really exciting about ‘Let’s put on a show,’” he explained.

He is used to that, of course, the putting on shows. It’s just that his previous shows were mainstream and well funded. Since 1991, the former journalist (who still pens occasional columns for The Hollywood Reporter) and son of legendary news producer Fred W. Friendly has been churning out pictures under the banners of companies like Imagine Entertainment, Davis Entertainment and Deep River Productions and working with stars like Denzel Washington and Meg Ryan (Courage Under Fire), Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau (Out to Sea), and Pierce Brosnan and Julianne Moore (Laws of Attraction).

“For about the last 25 years. I always had a company or a production deal,” he said. “And about two years ago, around 2012, all of that suddenly dried up. I often think of this Italian expression, ‘Don’t cry with a loaf of bread under your arm.’ I felt like I was doing fine. But there was no more support system. I was completely on my own. I started working out of my house, and at a little office on 26th Street (in Santa Monica) called ‘the Office,’ which is like a big study hall. ‘I thought it was incredibly ballsy of him, in a good way,” Madden said. “When David said he was going to do it, I saw it as coming from his journalistic background. He’s always been an intellectually curious person. It seemed like a great way for him to combine his reportorial instincts with his filmmaking skills.”

But the 58-year-old Friendly, recently elected (along with fellow producer Lydia Dean Pilcher) as the PGA’s Vice President of Motion Pictures, also realized he needed a collaborator, a younger filmmaker who could help steer the project so it would better appeal to the desired 18-to-24 (or

By contrast, Sneakerheadz might bring Friendly a gazebo, a toolshed or a doghouse — and that’s not a reflection on its worth. It’s just a tiny documenta-

Most of the time when I walk onto a set, I’m hoping the director is in a good mood. And this time it was ‘OK, what is the shot?’ I love that.
He also researched the world of sneakers and collectors, marveling that it’s a $42 billion a year business. He estimates he owns more than 75 pair of sneakers himself — and that collection wouldn’t even qualify him for entry into his own film. It was his own particular affection for the adidas Superstar — he stumbled upon a pair of chocolate brown Run DMC models in a little shop in Soho in New York City and fell head over heels in love — that sparked his interest in the topic as a documentary.

“I started going on the Web to find more Superstars,” he explained. “When I was 14, that was the shoe I wanted that my parents wouldn’t get for me because it was $25. Later in life, of course, you hopefully get to the point where you can buy whatever sneakers you want. What I discovered was websites devoted to the Superstar. There were sneaker blogs. There were incredible amounts of sneakers available for sale on eBay. And I wanted to penetrate this world. The deeper I got into it, the more I realized it was a great subject for a documentary.”

“When I got serious about making my first doc,” says David Friendly, “I started watching at least one a day to draw inspiration and to settle my mind.” He traveled with Produced by five recent films that stayed with him and strongly influenced him in making Sneakerheads.

Jiro Dreams of Sushi (2011) Directed by David Gelb. Beautiful storytelling, beautiful cinematography and editing. This was the doc that made me pursue mine. I even asked Gelb to direct Sneakerheads. Only after he passed, did I decide to keep it for myself.

Dogtown and Z-Boys (2001) Directed by Stacy Peralta. Peralta completely nails his landing with this raw and energetic take on the Zephyr skateboarding team. This is rock and roll filmmaking and my editor Steve Prestemon is really tired of me saying, ‘We gotta pace it up like Dogtown!’ The vintage footage, which could have felt old-fashioned, makes it.

I really enjoyed walking onto the set and being asked what I want to do,” he added. “Most of the time when I walk onto a set, I’m hoping the director is in a mode they want? How can I accomplish this? And this time it was ‘OK, what is the shot?’ I love that.”

“I kept scratching my head saying, ‘Really? That’s all? That’s what we have?’” Friendly said with a chuckle about his doc’s paltry budget. “To be honest, it was fun, because sometimes on a movie, because you’re a producer, they won’t let you do anything. Literally when you go to help out, to pick up an apple crate, they say, ‘You can’t touch that.’

“I really respected my father as a guy who was not afraid to walk onto the set and being asked what I want to do,” he added. “Most of the time when I walk onto a set, I’m hoping the director is in a good mood. ‘How can I support him or her? What do they want? How can I accomplish this?’ And this time it was ‘OK, what is the shot? I love that.’

It was down-and-dirty doc making, the kind that would have made his father proud.

“I really listened to my father throughout my career,” David Friendly said of Fred, who worked closely for years with the esteemed Edward R. Murrow. “Whether it was journalism or making movies. Largely on a character basis. My father had great integrity, and he taught me and my siblings the importance of having a conscience and being responsible. That was one of his greatest gifts to me.

“Obviously growing up watching things like Harvest of Shame [the 1960 documentary about American migrant workers] and the documentaries on [fascism] Curley’s Wonderland. Believe me, I was absorbing this stuff internally.”

There was another instance involving music (initial clearances will be done for a cheaper “festival cut”) in which Partridge politely suggested to Friendly that perhaps there was a better way to go. “He had had this old-school blues song (he co-wrote with Friendly) that was a few stars short of five.

I was influenced by my father throughout my life,” he said. “When I was 14, that was the shoe I wanted that my parents wouldn’t get for me because it was $25. Later in life, of course, you hopefully get to the point where you can buy whatever sneakers you want. What I discovered was websites devoted to the Superstar. There were sneaker blogs. There were incredible amounts of sneakers available for sale on eBay. And I wanted to penetrate this world. The deeper I got into it, the more I realized it was a great subject for a documentary.”

Most of the time, working with just Partridge and director of photography Paul DeLumen, Friendly shot 47 hours of footage, which is being cut down to an anticipated running time of 88 minutes. They flew coach — sometimes cashing in airline miles — to places like Tokyo, Boston, Miami and New York City. They schlepped equipment. They dined in restaurants that were a few stars short of five.

Whatever Sneakerheads is to the skateboarding world, Sneakerheadz is to the sneakerhead world. It’s a world where people are watching the content in different ways. But Friendly is sure about: ‘If you want to find a way to break the model’ Chen says they’re still pondering their distribution options.

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night in black tie at the Oscars, Friendly has arrived at a creative oasis because he followed Coco into the water. “It’s important to try,” said Friendly, who is also producing a feature called I.T., starring Pierce Brosnan, as well as serving as executive producer on another documentary, this one about Earl Lloyd, the first African-American NBA player. “It’s important to take that shot. For me, this has been, other than Little Miss Sunshine, the most creatively satisfying project I’ve worked on. The reason I single out Little Miss Sunshine is because that was a project that had been turned down by every studio and every specialty division in town. My partner Marc Turtletaub and I just loved the script, and we just said, ‘We’re gonna go do this.’ And we followed our instincts and succeeded beyond our wildest imaginations. “So nothing will probably top that as an experience for me culminating in an Oscar nomination,” he added. “But I like the feeling here of complete responsibility and the fact that I’m on a high wire and there’s no net. It’s a good feeling.”

article about sneakers that he just read,” Chen said. “I can be on the phone with him and we can have a discussion about anything under the sun and before you know it, 45 minutes have passed. He’s passionate about anything he puts his heart into. I enjoyed working with him. He’s really a 24/7 guy.”

After a long and accomplished career that included Martin Lawrence in drag and a special
Welcome to the sixth and final installment of “Naked: Story to Revenue Using the Direct-to-Consumer Video.” Thanks Chris, for the space and to our readers for their patience.

In the last installment, I shared how Kim’s message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein, I shared how the message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein, I shared how the message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein, I shared how the message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein, I shared how the message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein, I shared how the message was now unified, we heard from Jim Louderback and Dan Weinstein. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists. In case you didn’t know, a playlist is a way to link videos of a channel or a YouTube technical advance added to playlists.

We now limit the cold open to just shy of 15 seconds for use as promos or teasers off YouTube. Facebook rewards video uploaded to their platform (versus embedding from YouTube) with greater distribution and auto-play functionality. Instagram now accepts video as well, which is ideal for YouTube (with greater distribution and auto-play functionality).

One difficulty I’ve been having is finding the right YouTube channels for collaboration. This has led me to look for channels that have a wide range of subjects that reflect Kim’s content. They have text and image content, but typically no video. They are willing to trade. Georgie Koch, Channel Manager at the YouTube channel SoulPancake, validated this fact. A major part of SoulPancake’s channel growth is driven by their engagement with bloggers. I’ve focused on bringing bloggers and experts with blogs into our content thread, and they in turn will embed kimTV in the well-trafficked blogs.

Once a KimTV channel content has taken a wonderful turn, fueled by the goal of a variety/talk show, theme clarity and the YouTube world would grow up. Well, VidCon co-founder Chris and I visited the trade show — he was.

The instinct to launch both simultaneously — the number of videos that are watched per session — the number of videos that are watched per session — the number of videos that are watched per session — the number of videos that are watched per session — the number of videos that are watched per session, and viewers will fall in love with the truly vulnerable kimTV is currently marketed to small business owners and entrepreneurs, I knew one day it would be good for the channel “super fan.” I see how selected videos can build intimacy with the viewers. 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and YouTube Creator John Green already has a bestselling novel and a $200+ million worldwide movie (made for just $12 million) based on it. *Camp Takota*, made with three Creators, Grace Helbig, Hannah Hart and Mamrie Hart, sold direct online, making $3 million in just three days. There’s nothing to wait for, the platform is maturing, the talent is assembling, the audience is watching… and buying. It’s time for prime time.

The industry just needs to figure out how to program for all the eyeballs of all ages, not just the ones of screaming tweens and teenagers. We’re happy to be a part of the solution.

VidCon has emerged as a space similar to software developer conferences like Apple’s, the time and place for major announcements.

For example, Fullscreen, the last major independent MCN, announced it will invest $10 million in original programming from their Creators.

YouTube’s CEO Susan Wojcicki, took the stage to unveil more features to help Creators thrive. The top three features being 1) fan funding directly on the channel, 2) interactive annotations (links off the channel that will work across desktop and mobile!), and 3) fan-submitted subtitles or captions and translations to aid in global localization.

Oh, speaking of announcements — Kim’s five lines on video…

Maker announced the reorganization of their verticals and unveiled the new branding for their talent — Maker Gen. They are getting ready to transform their talent and shows as a public-facing network.

And Kim was prominently featured in the booth video and on their channel.

The top executives knew her, made a point of meeting her, and discussed plans for a presence beyond her channel in their Lifestyle vertical on Maker.tv:

They are serious. Good. We are, too.

On day two of the three-day VidCon, something dawned on me, something that casual observers sometimes miss. Approximately 25 percent of the audience were parents — more specifically, women over 35 — our channel’s audience. We spent the third day with a camera and Kim doing man-on-the-street interviews with them!

It was amazing! The women were appreciative, surprised and interested. Kim and our channel are positioned exactly where they should be. Our interview subjects proudly looked into the camera and said, “I want my kimTV!”

With a body of work, a clear message, a range of show formats, and now audience testimonials, we are cutting a new trailer and fan ad for the additional promotion from Maker.

In just the last 30 days, the channel growth is 2,400% and still climbing!
A recent Deloitte report stated crowdfunding portals raised $3 billion for businesses in 2013, double its total in 2011, and is far outpacing growth of traditional financing.

As you may remember from the last installment, we partnered with David Khorram and CrowdFundingPlanning to crowdfund completion of the Aging Ungracefully digital series. Just as in producing, development and prep is where the success potential is cast.

As I’ve been developing the creative to support the crowdfund efforts, David’s team has been busy researching subject matter influencers, collecting campaign best practices and identifying people that fund media-related projects.

They ran a test campaign using Thunderclap interested in supporting the campaign in just 30 days, the campaign was more than 1 million people. Nice! David has developed a plan that is organized into four phases:

**Research and Prep** - Influencer discovery, best practices, core creative message and perks;

**Pre-campaign Campaign** - “Crowd gathering” using subject matter and Kim’s deeply personal story related to the series purpose;

**Crowdfunding Campaign** - Engaging the crowd in the creative to support the campaign;

**Stretch Campaign** - Pushing past the goal with added perks and creative content.

The pre-campaign will leverage the story lines that are being seeded on kimTV and anchored by revealing videos that will be included in phases 2-4. We’re ready to go!

As a trusted mentor shared with me, the investment environment for digital media is “frothy.” Sounds yummy, like great food on a cappuccino! While I mentioned investment as a funding source many installments ago, my focus has been elsewhere. Am I missing something? I think so.

At VidCon, Mark Terbeek, Partner at Greycroft Ventures, an early-stage venture capital firm focused on investments in digital media, shared their investment decision matrix that they’ve used successfully when investing in AwesomenessTV, Glam Media, Huffington Post, Maker Studios and much more.

Kevin finds this an exciting time because of the large pool of accessible talent that can become the next multi-hyphenates, and the deep verticals of 35–55 year olds that are voracious for content.

My experience has led me to a similar point of view. As my journey has unfolded, I see the place for a media company that serves the needs of women 35–55. As I move from story to revenue for the channel, it’s time for our company to actualize its slate of projects and support others with a resonant voice.

Thanks again, say hello at events... and see you soon!1

If you have questions or would like to explore the digital landscape, please email me at wvitom@gmail.com or connect on LinkedIn http://www.linkedin.com/in/wvitom.

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1Aging Ungracefully, “naked kim” and kimTV are trademarks of Castle Montone, Limited.
The story is a classic one. A young man discovers his passion and works tirelessly to pursue it, achieving great success along the way. Fatigued after years of fulfilling work, the now older man, having accomplished more than he ever dreamed, finds a pair of like-minded younger men to carry on the legacy of all that he built. It sounds like the kind of narrative usually associated with, say, a small-town hardware store, and it feels somehow incongruous when revealed to be the chronicle of a reality television production company. Nonetheless, that is the story of PGA member Howard Schultz, president and founder of Lighthearted Entertainment, a company that has been responsible for creating some of the most ubiquitously watched and highest rated shows in the brief history of reality television. With credits that include ABC’s Extreme Makeover, MTV’s Next and Fox’s The Moment of Truth, Lighthearted Entertainment has been at the forefront of the reality TV industry for more than 20 years.
Schultz began his career after graduating from the University of Colorado in 1975, where he first became enamored with the idea of broadcast television. He moved to Chicago to work for an ABC affiliate, achieving almost unimaginable success right out of the gate when he garnered two Emmys for his work on a morning/talk show, as well as a late-night show.

It would not be a stretch to say that Schultz was responsible, at least in part, for the birth of reality TV as we know it today. After moving to Los Angeles, he helped develop NBC’s show Real People, one of the very first iterations of reality, which ran from 1979 to 1984. The show was formatted like a comedy talk show, but also featured short segments of actual people discussing or showcasing their particular interests or hobbies. Schultz recalls that, “Real People... was these unusual people doing six- to eight-minute segments; these are people that now [would] have their own series.”

Effectively, they were short-form versions of the now common docu-series that have dominated the reality medium of late, and include such ratings juggernauts as Duck Dynasty and Keeping Up with the Kardashians. Real People was the highest-rated show on NBC for a time, proving that unscripted television, beyond the talk show, was something viewers were ready to start consuming on a broader scale. Schultz continued to work his way through the industry, ultimately landing at Fox Television in 1991, where he became the executive producer of the series Studs. Though the show may have provided late-night hosts with a few easy punchlines, its massive success opened the door for Schultz to found his very own production company, and in 1992, Lighthearted Entertainment was born.

In 2011, after almost 20 years of great success, Schultz hit a bit of a breaking point. “I had just come off of almost three years of flying all over the world setting up The Moment of Truth... and I went to [VP of Development] Jeff [Spangler] and I said, ‘Look. I’m really tired. I don’t know if I’ve got any juice left in me.’” Despite the fact that Lighthearted and its projects were his passion and pride, Schultz felt that he could no longer continue in the same capacity in which he had been functioning. The company had arrived at a crossroads with two apparent options: shut down and move on, or find a new executive to run the day-to-day operations. It was fellow PGA member Spangler, Schultz’s loyal right hand, who advised him to “double down” and keep the company. Spangler and Schultz had worked together since 2006, and in that time Spangler had become an essential piece of the Lighthearted puzzle. His counsel was highly regarded and Schultz agreed to make moves toward finding a suitable replacement.

It wasn’t long before Lighthearted’s current Executive Vice President, Rob La Plante, landed on the company’s doorstep. La Plante had spent several years working for Bunim-Murray Productions (the company responsible for producing MTV’s The Real World among other reality mainstays), which eventually led to his casting and producing shows like The Apprentice and For Love or Money? His resume made him a viable successor to Schultz on paper, but if Schultz was going to bequeath the company that he had built from the ground up, there had to be something more.

With regards to the company culture, Schultz says, “Lighthearted is the name of the company, but lighthearted is really the way it is around here.” Whoever had designs on running the day-to-day had to inherently understand that we tear through ideas, and some of them get completely decimated and defeated and they’re gone. But the ideas that come out of that are bulletproof.”

For over 90 years, MPTF has been helping Hollywood take care of its own. Together, we ensure that the magic we create isn’t just on screen. Find out more at MPTF.com
culture, and as Schultz says of La Plante, "for my money, we could not have found a more ideally suited individual for what this company is." But it wasn’t just about finding an individual who fit in the office personality-wise, it also had to be about forming a fulfilling creative matrimony.

“ **You’re looking for something that is so simple that it’s essentially human.**”

Reality television has become increasingly serialized with multiple iterations of essentially the same idea, yet Lighthearted has garnered a reputation for generating shows that aren’t afraid to veer from established conventions. When PGA member La Plante joined the company, he realized quickly their commitment to pushing the envelope was unique. La Plante says, "Bred into the DNA of Lighthearted, and our reputation in the industry is a commitment to cutting-edge kinds of formats." But it isn’t just a flashy format that makes for a good reality show, according to the three gentlemen. The key to generating an idea that truly resonates with networks and viewers alike is to uncover an issue that is widely relatable. "You’re looking for something that is so simple that it’s essentially human," Spangler says. These ideas tend manifest in the form of a fundamental or universal question, and these are the questions that the Lighthearted shows seek to explore. Take for example, MTV’s *Are You The One?* This show has the question built right into its title: "If your perfect match were standing right in front of you, would you be able to identify them?" This concept is explored via a competition in which the gentlemen can have complete freedom to express their ideas to one another on an equal playing field. La Plante notes that "So many times in the entertainment industry, you sit around a conference table and you try to express your ideas to one another on an equal playing field, but in a meeting that the company refers to as a "Full Contact Development." Egos are checked at the door and ideas are pitched, fortified and destroyed in an all-out creative melee. "We tear through ideas, and some of them get completely decimated and defeated and they’re gone. But the ideas that come out of that are bulletproof," La Plante explains. "If they’ve done their homework with regards to trying and failing to find flaws with a show’s premise, then chances are good that they can contend with any qualms the networks might have. But insulating those ideas can’t occur without a dialogue in which the gentlemen can have complete freedom to express their ideas to one another on an equal playing field."

Lighthearted’s newest product, VH1’s *Dating Naked*, explores another question in the romantic arena: "How does dating change with instantaneous vulnerability?" Here again, romantic vulnerability (or the lack thereof) is a frustration that many can relate to, and generating a social experiment that explores this territory certainly makes for a compelling watch. Nonetheless, the widely voiced criticism of reality television is that it fails to portray an actual lived reality, "owing to tight on-set controls, and the contrivance of dramatic situations in the interest of better television." La Plante thinks that this is a legitimate qualm, but one that is not representative of the Lighthearted product. "It’s a valid criticism," he admits. "That’s not [the Lighthearted] way… There’s always going to be loud shows, and there’s always going to be ridiculous shows, but I lean back on the authenticity of the premise… I think the shows, whichever they are, that are presenting the real drama and the real emotion, are the ones that will last.”

When asked if he felt like the shows that the company produces might aid in uncovering some answers to these human queries, La Plante is philosophical. "I don’t think that any of us would say that we have the answer to some of the questions that we’re asking," he replies. "But I think what we’re doing is floating out the question in a way that gets people to think about it and find their own answers.”

How does one go about identifying issues that might be worth exploring in the medium of a reality show? Schultz, much like any other creative, contends that the best inspiration stems from real-life experiences. "The things I’m noticing, the things I’m observing, become food for ideas for shows," Schultz says sometimes he will simply ask the Lighthearted interns what is it that they have on their minds, or occasionally he will just free associate off of ideas he sees in a magazine, book or movie. The general framework of inspiration can come from anywhere, but the idea is only the beginning.

Once a kernel of an idea has been established, it is then taken to the Lighthearted development coliseum, a meeting that the company refers to as a "Full Contact Development." Ideas are checked at the door and ideas are pitched, fortified and destroyed in an all-out creative melee. "We tear through ideas, and some of them get completely decimated and defeated and they’re gone. But the ideas that come out of that are bulletproof," La Plante explains. "If they’ve done their homework with regards to trying and failing to find flaws with a show’s premise, then chances are good that they can contend with any qualms the networks might have. But insulating those ideas can’t occur without a dialogue in which the gentlemen can have complete freedom to express their ideas to one another on an equal playing field."

Spangler and La Plante on location in Hawaii for 72 Hours.

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When asked if he felt like the shows that the company produces might aid in uncovering some answers to these human queries, La Plante is philosophical. "I don’t think that any of us would say that we have the answer to some of the questions that we’re asking,” he replies. "But I think what we’re doing is floating out the question in a way that gets people to think about it and find their own answers.”

How does one go about identifying issues that might be worth exploring in the medium of a reality show? Schultz, much like any other creative, contends that the best inspiration stems from real-life experiences. "The things I’m noticing, the things I’m observing, become food for ideas for shows," Schultz says sometimes he will simply ask the Lighthearted interns what is it that they have on their minds, or occasionally he will just free associate off of ideas he sees in a magazine, book or movie. The general framework of inspiration can come from anywhere, but the idea is only the beginning.

Once a kernel of an idea has been established, it is then taken to the Lighthearted development coliseum, a meeting that the company refers to as a “Full Contact Development.” Ideas are checked at the door and ideas are pitched, fortified and destroyed in an all-out creative melee. “We tear through ideas, and some of them get completely decimated and defeated and they’re gone. But the ideas that come out of that are bulletproof.” La Plante explains. “If they’ve done their homework with regards to trying and failing to find flaws with a show’s premise, then chances are good that they can contend with any qualms the networks might have. But insulating those ideas can’t occur without a dialogue in which the gentlemen can have complete freedom to express their ideas to one another on an equal playing field. Lighthearted interns what it is that they have on their minds, or occasionally he will just free associate off of ideas he sees in a magazine, book or movie. The general framework of inspiration can come from anywhere, but the idea is only the beginning.

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La Plante and Spangler on location in Hawaii for 72 Hours.

Spangler are Schultz's two sons, continuing the family business. These days, Schultz is content to function as more of a mentor, the sage patriarch who offers advice — creative and otherwise — as needed. The Lighthearted gears normally turn marvulously, but if there is ever a hiccup, Schultz is there to be "the guy with a can of WD-40.” The small-town hardware store model might seem quaint in Hollywood, but Lighthearted Entertainment’s continued success has proven it to be a worthy method of operation. Perhaps one day, if they stay true to "The Lighthearted Way,” La Plante and Spangler will have the opportunity to pass the company along to the next generation.

Howard Schultz (left) and Rob La Plante (right) on location in New Mexico for 72 Hours. Center: TNT exec Rachel Brill

La Plante and Spangler on location in Hawaii for 72 Hours.
At the very first Produced By Conference in 2009, I was surprised to see a panelist in a US Army uniform. Speaking on the topic of green productions, there was Dr. Kevin Geiss, then the head of the US Army’s Energy Security program. In his opening statement, Dr. Geiss mentioned that many of the American soldiers killed in Afghanistan and Iraq had died while guarding fuel convoys and not in combat. The news was dispiriting, but left me wondering what it had to do with green production. Dr. Geiss explained that troops being deployed to remote locations needed mobile energy supplies to provide power for essentials like computers, walkie-talkies, lights, etc., and that power from solar and algae fuels were being implemented by the Army to help save lives and cut our dependence on oil. The same technologies could be used on sets.

The next day, I was off to produce a renewable energy conference at New York, so after the panel, I introduced myself and invited Dr. Geiss. He and some colleagues from the US Army’s Energy Security program connected me to Roger Sorkin. Roger is the producer, writer and director of The Burden, and was intrigued to see a panelist in a US Army uniform. I was shocked to hear such an admission from the Pentagon.

My experience was that the only people who understood the threat of climate change were scientists and tree-hugging liberals. They gave me a book by the RAND Corporation, titled Green Warriors, emphasizing how our soldiers must not only clean up the environment after leaving a field of battle, but leave it better off ecologically. Since then, I’ve been frustrated that this message is not coming across to the American people. The production company I founded with my son to make his short film about global warming in 2008, Save It, has since expanded into a consulting firm focusing on getting that message out. This is why Brandon Hubbert, former Chief of Staff of the Secretary of Energy, connected me to Roger Sorkin. Roger is the producer, writer, and director of The Burden, and was raising funds via Kickstarter to complete a short-length documentary on freeing America from fossil fuel dependence.

Roger and I agreed that the military’s initiatives could be the unconventional way to get everyone’s attention and he asked me to come on to executive-produce The Burden. The frustration with the polarized way we discuss climate change and renewable energy, in the hopes of providing an airtight tool for policymakers and advocates to puncture the misconception around these topics.

After reading the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, in which climate change was mentioned as a “threat multiplier,” Roger found the frame with which to tell this story. “It’s not about Al Gore and saving polar bears; it’s about four-star generals and admirals saying that what’s at stake is nothing less than American blood and treasure.” In addition, he wanted to convey a story that steered clear of the frightening climate change narratives we’ve heard so often. As a former strategist for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Roger advised me after an interview, “Stay away from doom and gloom. Fear is inherently a contractual condition. Capture people’s imaginations. You need to inspire people if you want them to take positive action toward finding solutions.”

Roger resolved that he would focus on solutions, featuring, among others, former USMC logistics officer and current Republican Mayor of Indianapolis Greg Ballard, who’s taking concrete steps to wean his city off oil. He avoids preaching to the liberal choir, with a narrative conservatives can embrace, with its emphasis on national security, economic prosperity and how the solutions to our problems run through the private sector, including the defense industry. As Gen. Anthony Zinni points out in the film, “If they want the contract, that’s where industry is going to have to go.” Now Roger finds himself trying to convince some liberals of the good faith of others in the military-industrial complex. Many of my own clients are military contractors, including Maddox.

The Burden was shot in 40 minutes, with an option to expand into a full-length feature if more funding is secured. The Truman National Security Project and Center for National Policy served as fiscal sponsors and are hosting private screenings with key decision makers including lawmakers and business leaders in Washington, D.C., who can tip the balance on policy and public opinion.

US soldiers inspect a solar array.

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Producers, Roger Sorkin, right, with Col. Bob Charette.
Your PGA Health Benefits

PGA members have a variety of healthcare options available to them. While none of them represents a “perfect plan,” many members will be able to improve their coverage or the cost of their coverage through their PGA membership. Members may take advantage of two options: Employer-paid coverage and self-pay coverage.

Qualifying for Employer-Paid Coverage Through the Motion Picture Industry Plan

Am I eligible?

To be eligible for the program, you must:

• Be credited as an executive producer, producer, associate producer or post-production supervisor;
• Work for a company that is an AMPTP signatory, or signatory to Motion Picture Industry Health Plan;
• Work on a theatrical motion picture or prime-time network television program; some primetime cable and syndicated series also qualify, as do productions for which an AMPTP member agrees to make contributions; and
• Work on a production that utilizes a West Coast IA Crew.

How many hours do I have to work to qualify for coverage?

To qualify for the Industry Health Plan, a producer must be credited with 600 hours (automatically computed at 60 hours per week) within a six-month qualifying period¹. To maintain coverage, he or she must be credited with at least 400 hours for each subsequent six-month period. If a member becomes ineligible, his or her eligibility for benefits will be reviewed every month until he or she accumulates enough contribution hours within a six-month span to re-qualify for benefits.

I’ve determined that I qualify; how do I get my coverage to start?

Contributions are not automatic; they must be directly requested by the producer. Producers request contributions by signing and submitting a participation form within 60 days of starting eligible employment. If the producer does not submit a signed participation form, he or she will be deemed to have waived his or her right to contributions with respect to the job. Participation forms should be provided by the employer upon request. If you have difficulty obtaining a form, contact PGA National Executive Director Van Petten at (310) 358-9020 x104.

My company isn’t an AMPTP signatory. Am I out of luck?

Not necessarily. If you are employed by a company that is a signatory to both the IATSE Basic Agreement and the Motion Picture Industry Health & Welfare and Pension Plans, you can request that they make voluntary contributions, even if they are not members of the AMPTP. This request has been granted many times, but can be difficult to secure. A good way to know if your production has signed on to the IATSE Basic Agreement is to check if the camera, grips, or sound providers are union.

If I qualify, is my employer required to approve my coverage?

Unfortunately, no. However, the cost to the employer is reasonable enough that many employers will approve the coverage.

Additionally, standard practice has dictated (though again, not required) that once a production begins making contributions to the Health Plan for one producer, it will make those same contributions for any eligible producer on the show, provided coverage is requested in a timely fashion.

Self-Pay Plans: Producers Health

In a perfect world, every PGA member would qualify for employer-paid coverage. For those who do not qualify, the PGA offers self-pay options which, because of our group status, are likely to offer better rates than what members can find on the open market.

The Producers Health Plans are available nationally. If you’re currently without health insurance, we encourage you to call immediately to see if you qualify for a plan that suits you. Even if you currently have coverage (particularly other self-pay coverage), it would be worth your while to investigate the options you may have through the PGA self-pay plans.

Questions? Contact: Scott Brandt (888) 700-7725

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¹If the producer is also an owner of the signatory company, qualifying hours are computed at 56 hours per week.
The Producers Guild is proud to welcome the following new members, who have joined the Guild since July, 2014:

### New Members

**PRODUCERS COUNCIL**
- Ilan Arboleda
- Michael Benaroya
- Gregory Choa
- Daniel Davila
- Alan Deutsch
- Roma Downey
- Susan Downey
- Darryl Frank
- Mike Gange
- Alfonso Gomez-Rejon
- Erik Gordon
- Vlokkie Gordon
- Gary Groth
- Julio Hallivis
- Noah Hawley
- Alex Heineman
- Ted Humphrey
- Jay Ireland
- Helen Kalafatic
- Jon Kikik
- Ben Kundie
- Carrie LeighLand
- Stephanie Levy
- Carolyn McMastor
- Andrea Miller
- Benito Mueller
- Ryan Murphy
- Matt Palmeri
- James Peck
- Melissa Pelletier
- Sergio Pizzolante
- Adrian Politowsky
- Emily Raiber
- Stephanie Renne
- Gleen Rigberg
- Barry Rosen
- Lisa Schuster
- Jonathan Sehring
- Douglas Shafter
- Allison Shearmur
- Pete Shalmon
- Spencer Silna
- Nick Silver
- Robert Szemere
- Tony Tackaberry
- Judy Train
- Brian Volk-Weiss
- Shawn Williamson
- Michael Wimer
- Cary Woods
- Janet Yang

**NEW MEDIA COUNCIL**
- Courtney Dixon
- Brad Graeber
- Quincy Jones
- Brian Kahn
- Colin Lawrence
- Neel Leet
- Chase Pierson
- Timothy Stevenson

**AP COUNCIL**
- Vanessa Ashton
- Adria Castillo
- Alexis Del Vecchio
- Shelby Eden
- Ahmed Fallat
- Bree Frank
- Janea Green
- Rebecca Huntley
- Rayne Marcus
- Saimus Markar
- David Melito
- Thomas Moran
- Peter Sobel
- Matthew Spain
- Jillian Stein
- Dan Winkur

**Segment/Field/Story Producer**
- Michael Burke
- Ben Dwor
- Stacie Gottsegen
- Emily Hewson
- Mira Lew
- Adam Mainsfield
- Lindsay Marcus
- Brett McCosker
- Ryan Sommer
- Christy Wiegenier
- Dwight Yao
- Joseph Zeoli

**Production Coordinator**
- Devra Zabot

**Post-Production**
- Heather Blanchard
- Melissa Butts
- Andrew Johnson
- Jacob Lane
- Michael Manning
- Claire Newman
- Hamed Shaukat
- Gillian Sonnier
- Timothy Stormer
- Melissa Swanson

**Visual Effects**
- Robin D’Arcy
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN FOR PRODUCED BY: NEW YORK!

New York-based producers and team members, rejoice! The PGA’s newest conference, Produced By: New York, is coming to the Time Warner Conference Center on Saturday, October 25, and you’re first in line for registration. Of course, it’s not only NYC producers who can register: Produced By: New York is open to all PGA members, as well as the general public. But if you were looking for an excuse to head to the Big Apple this fall, here it is, on a silver platter.

Produced By: New York will be a one-day event featuring a dozen conference sessions, as well as a selection of Produced By’s trademark Mentoring Roundtables. Confirmed speakers at the event include such New York film and television mainstays as Harvey Weinstein, James Schamus, Tom Fontana, Lydia Dean Pilcher, Terence Winter, Peter Saraf and Donna Gigliotti. Chaired by PGA East members Blaine Grabley, Dana Kuznetzkoff, Benjamin Lehmann and Bruce Cohen, Produced By: New York allows PGA East members to share in the excitement and energy (not to mention the networking and cutting-edge information) of the PGA’s west coast Produced By conferences.

Of course, the conference program is still being assembled. That means that as of press time, your registration is for a slot to attend the event, not a reservation for specific conference sessions. But here’s the good news: Early registration for Produced By: New York means that you’ll be first in line to select your conference sessions when they become available. We give our early registrants a full day to register for their top-priority speakers and sessions before opening the field to everyone else. So that’s our advice: Register today at producedbyconference.com, and get your pick of sessions when the schedule is announced.

THE ACTORS FUND HELPS PRODUCERS, TOO

The Actors Fund might not be the first place your average producer (or producing team member) would think to turn when faced with difficult life circumstances. But despite its name, the long-established service organization is available not only to actors, but producers and other industry professionals as well. If you’re a PGA member who needs help urgently, please consider reaching out to them.

Produced By: New York is open to all PGA members, as well as the general public. But if you were looking for an excuse to head to the Big Apple this fall, here it is, on a silver platter.

In addition to providing emergency grants for essentials such as food, rent and medical care, The Actors Fund provides counseling, substance abuse and mental health services, senior and disabled care, nursing and retirement homes, and an HIV/AIDS Initiative. Recently, they’ve been proactive in providing our community with guidance regarding the new healthcare laws going into effect. Their recent series of workshops throughout California has helped industry workers familiarize themselves with the state insurance exchange and helped them to take advantage of the benefits the new legislation offers, such as healthcare subsidies for qualifying applicants.

The Actors Fund helps PGA members in dire circumstances, or could benefit from timely information about the healthcare options in your state, consider reaching out to them at theactorsfund.org.

LINDA MARR

I began writing and producing right out of college, first in New York City, then in Los Angeles. My projects ranged from news, to high-end infomercials, to non-fiction television. It was while producing for the syndicated TV news magazine show America Now that I had the opportunity to join the Producers Guild. One of the best career moves I’ve ever made. I was especially impressed by all the programs and networking opportunities the PGA offered — among them, the PGA Mentoring Program.

I applied in hopes of finding a mentor who could advise me on the skills I needed to move from non-fiction into hour-long episodic television, something I’d dreamed of for a while. I was invited to PGA headquarters to meet with two members of the committee to nail down what I hoped to find in a mentor. Then I went home to wait. Finally, I received word — the committee couldn’t find a mentor to match my needs. To say I was disappointed would be an understatement. But the committee members were very supportive and encouraged me to try again when the program started back up — which I did.

And the second time? That turned out to be the charm. Producer Sydell Albert offered to step in and mentor me. Sydell had several television movies under her belt and was in the middle of developing a number of miniseries for cable and network when we were paired up. I was incredibly excited to meet her, knowing how busy producers are, and how precious their time can be.

We emailed back and forth before getting together for lunch, where Sydell encouraged me to talk about my current experience and my future goals. I was impressed not only by her knowledge and advice about identifying the kind of projects that are viable in today’s marketplace, but her kindness as well. She very graciously offered to read some of my screenplays. I admit I was a little nervous. After all, Sydell had produced numerous network movies. But the majority of her notes were actually compliments. I couldn’t have been more thrilled. The few notes she did give were incredibly insightful and helped me craft what I think are even stronger scripts.

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In the months that followed, we have remained in touch. My biggest challenge tends not to be the writing or producing, but the networking — an especially important skill in the entertainment business. Along the way, Sydell has generously made herself available to help with any questions or concerns I’ve had. While mentoring in the program technically has an end-date, Sydell made it clear that she is my mentor for as long as I want her to be — an invaluable gift.

My goal of breaking down that hour-long producer-writer door is still a work-in-progress. But just recently I received some exciting news — all the producers on America Now were nominated for Daytime Emmys. And while — news update — we didn’t win, that old saying really is true: “what an honor to be nominated.” And not just an honor, but a lot of fun! These days I find that thanks to Sydell and the members of the Mentoring Committee who worked so hard to match us while I’m still focused on my goal, I’m totally enjoying the journey.
The Producers Guild proudly salutes the following producers whose credits have been certified with the Producers Mark. This list includes films that have been released in July and August, 2014.

Certification via the Producers Mark indicates that a producer undertook a majority of the producing duties on the motion picture.

DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES
Peter Chernin, p.g.a.
Dylan Clark, p.g.a.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL
Jerry Bruckheimer, p.g.a.

GET ON UP
Brian Grazer, p.g.a.
Mick Jagger, p.g.a.
Victoria Pearman, p.g.a.
Erica Huggins, p.g.a.

MAGIC IN THE MOONLIGHT
Letty Aronson, p.g.a.
Stephen Tenenbaum, p.g.a.
Edward Walson, p.g.a.

THE GIVER
Nikki Silver, p.g.a.
Jeff Bridges, p.g.a.

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
Kevin Feige, p.g.a.

HERCULES
Beau Flynn, p.g.a.
Brett Ratner, p.g.a.

IF I STAY
Alison Greenspan, p.g.a.

LET’S BE COPS
Simon Kinberg, p.g.a.
Luke Greenfield, p.g.a.

PLANES: FIRE & RESCUE
Ferrell Barron, p.g.a.

SEX TAPE
Todd Black, p.g.a.
Jason Blumenthal, p.g.a.
Steve Tisch, p.g.a.

SIN CITY: A DAME TO KILL FOR
Robert Rodriguez, p.g.a.

WHEN THE GAME STANDS TALL
David Zelon, p.g.a.

Make certain your next credit carries the Producers Mark. See producersmark.com for details.