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SHINING STARS

COMING

ATTRACTIONS!

Filmmaking, Interactive Entertainment & Digital Games

WIFTA's June program, *A Different World: Filmmaking in the Age of Interactive Entertainment & Digital Games*, featured Asante Bradford of the GA Dept. of Economic Development, Deborah Thomas of Silly Monkey, LLC and Joseph Saulter of Entertainment Arts Research. The panelists provided introspect into the gaming world and media production professionals' place in it.

One portion of the program focused on how filmmakers can use interactive platforms to their advantage. Panelists recommended taking full advantage of the Internet. According to the panel, when it comes to promoting your film / TV / webisode products, fan pages on Facebook and Twitter posts are great ways to use digital media promote your projects. For example, J.J. Abrams promoted his movie trailer for *Super 8* Twitter a day ahead of the national TV release of the trailer. He had a tremendous buzz going with the anticipation of the Twitter-accessible trailer, which spun into increased overall buzz for the film. Personal Web sites were touted as a good way to promote movies too. The goal, whether you use a Web site or a social media site, is to build a following. Your following can then

con't. on pg. 3

Diversifying Distribution

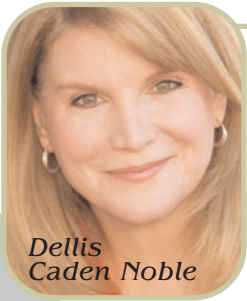
Most filmmakers have one vision when it comes to showing their film: Seeing it on the big screen. It's a lofty aspiration, considering the expense the filmmaker / a third-party distributor would encounter to make that happen. Still, it's a great

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Productions Underway in GA

Lots of productions are underway, or will be shortly in the coming months. So, if you're looking to get involved, these may be some opportunities to look into.

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Dellis
Caden Noble

President's Message

Thank you to all of the members who have been providing such wonderful feedback on your WIFTA experiences this year! WIFTA is all about educating and being a resource for our members to be aware of job opportunities to apply their skills. Our Program Director, Ayoka Chenzira, did a cutting edge June program that was excellent. It was about filmmaking in the age of interactive entertainment and games, a field that's wide open for filmmakers, editors, sound designers, special effects designers / technicians and voiceover actors to be successful. Atlanta has over 50 video game companies, including Hi-Rez Studios, TransGaming, CCP North America, Tripwire Interactive, Kaneva and Blue Heat, Cartoon Network and GameTap to name a few. The economic impact has been estimated at over \$98.9 million and a number of state leaders expect that number to double once productions take advantage of the tax incentives which is a tax credit of 20 percent with a minimum investment of \$500,000 and additional 10 percent if the company embeds the state's logo in the game. The interactive entertainment and video game industry is estimated to be worth more than \$9.5 billion covering more than consoles like the XBOX or the Wii. It's also about online, mobile phones, cable TV, apps, and social media like Twitter. To learn more, be sure to check out the event re-cap article.

I n d u s t r y C l i p s

Voice over actors will now start receiving payments for video game streaming work they've done. That's per a new AFTRA Interactive Media Agreement. Actors will receive a single 15% initial payment prior to receiving streaming payments. Also, the minimum for a four-hour session fee jumps to \$809.

September is Independent Film Month, which means that there will be several film festivals running all month long. Festivals include Atlanta Shortsfest, Atlanta Horror Film Fest, DocuFest, Animation Attack! and the Atlanta Underground Film Festival.

Steve Harvey's Green Screen Studio opens in Buckhead. The facility features a 665 sq. ft., 3-sided green screen cyc wall and 740 sq. ft. of open studio space. Green Screen Studios is located at 3495 Piedmont Rd. NE, bldg. 11, suite 560, Atlanta, GA 30305.

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Digital Games (con't.)

be your “word-of-mouth” promoters of your project. Plus, if your following is large enough, you may even make money from advertisers seeking to help reach the type of people who frequent your Web site / twitter pages.

Later, the discussion turned to work opportunities in the gaming, or interactive entertainment as it was coined that night, industry. The panel was quick to reassure the audience that the interactive entertainment industry, especially here in Georgia, does need voice actors, storytellers and producers to keep up with the surging demands of the digital / interactive entertainment industries. According to the panel, the opportunities are vast because the notion of games has changed. Today, so called digital games are used today for entertainment—the use most associate games with—but they are also being used for branding, luring audiences to a particular Web site and to promote products within the games themselves; games are also used in corporate arenas to help people to understand complex processes and for training of a variety of topics / processes / skills, etc.

So, how do you get the interactive entertainment industry as an actor or production professional? According to the panel, the best thing to do is to network with developers. They suggested that writers, producers and actors check out the Georgia Game Developers Association and attend conferences such as the Game Developer Conference and Siege. The goal is to connect with a handful of good developers. In addition, the panel suggested that actors register on sites like Voices.com too.

Keep up with Reel Focus and visit the WIFTA Web page often. This event was a hot topic! The panelists and audience agreed that the surface was barely scratched that night. So, a part two just may be in the making. Time will tell!



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Production

Distribution (con't.)

goal to shoot for. However, for those filmmakers whose aspirations include generating revenue in hopes of profiting from the movie, distribution dreams should not stop with the big screen. In actuality, movie theatre screening, if you choose to distribute in theatres, should only be part of your overall distribution plan.

PART I: Channel

In today's environment, there are five major paths for movie distribution: third-party DVD sales, Internet / Cable VOD, Television, Consumer Direct and theatre. Therefore, there are plenty of combinations that you can use to diversify your distribution...and you should diversify. Why? Like the old saying goes: You should never put all your eggs in one basket. If you only choose to distribute via theatres or to only focus on securing television distribution opportunities, what happens if your sales are low / fall through? Sales overall suffer! That's what happens! However, if you set up a distribution strategy that involves multiple channels—say you've chosen to distribute your movie via third-party DVD sales, Cable VOD and Television—you decrease your risk of sour overall sales if there's a dip in sales in one of you're the three areas.

PART II: Rights

While the channel of distribution is one way to diversify, it's not the only way. Another is by how you manage your rights. Several companies have the ability to provide distribution across multiple mediums, which can

be appealing at first glance. However, think before you sign over rights to insure it's fiscally responsible. What happens if you hand over rights to one company for all five major channels and that company loses distribution partners or fails to market your film appropriately? Yep. You guessed it. So, when it comes to diversifying, go ahead and entertain offers from "one-stop"

The *smart* way to network and to stay 'in the know' is to be a part of what's happening. So, quick, volunteer for a WIFTA committee! Just email the Director or VP you would like to work with...today!

firms but do pursue opportunities from firms that specialize in just one or two channels too.

PART III: Territory

A final way to diversify your distribution strategy is by where you allow a distributor to distribute your movie. As with rights and channels, giving the whole kaboodle away in one deal isn't necessarily the way to go. Instead, consider selling rights by continent, country or a combination of countries. This, as with the other diversification strategies will allow you to keep revenues coming even if a distribution deal in a certain region doesn't pan out as projected.

The takeaway: The more you diversify—by channel, rights, territory or all of the above—the more reliable your distribution revenue stream will be.

Techie

7 iPad Apps “Productionphiles” Will Love

Most filmmakers don't have the luxury of having expensive tools to help them make films. But one tool that's helping some filmmakers be more efficient with production is the iPad, thanks to some highly handy production-related applications. Here's a look at some of the apps filmmakers are using for pre-production and production:

Scripts Pro is an easy-to-use screenwriting software; formatting is as simple as hitting the tab key. Bonus: This app is compatible with Celtx and Final Draft files too. Now, if you're already using FinalDraft, there's good news: There's an iPad app for *FinalDraft* too.

Artemis Director's Viewfinder allows directors to work out shot composition...without even having to be on location!

Movie Slate is useful for slating and tracking audio quality, video quality, circle takes, etc. For those working on multi-camera shoots, *Action Log Pro* may work better; it has the ability to track up to 25 cameras simultaneously!

ProPrompter turns your iPad into a teleprompter. It can be used handheld and running the program but works best when the iPad is coupled with a mirror rig so talent can look directly into the camera.



Rehearsal2 is for actors but others on the crew may find it useful as well. *Rehearsal2* allows actors to record and review lines via the actual script; voice over actors can also record and send voiceover demos through the app!

BONUS: Another awesome app that filmmakers will love is called *Storyboard Composer*. It's currently only available as an iPhone app, but since apple products are quasi addictive, I'm willing to bet that some of you iPad owners also have an iPhone. If you do, *Storyboard Composer* is a must-have. It allows you to use real images that you've taken with your iPhone and create a realistic storyboard for your film. How awesome is that? See it in action: <http://vimeo.com/6030115>.

Performance

To Stand-In or Sit It Out?

A casting director calls and asks you to work as a stand-in for a feature film or television show. Your heart jumps a beat...or does it? Well, that depends which side of the stand-in debate you side with.

For those who don't know, a stand-in is someone who, as the name suggests, stands in for the actor or actress that plays a character in a film when the camera is not rolling; more specifically, the stand-in is the person who is on set while the crew is setting a shot. He or she may be asked to stand in a certain spot so that the crew can set the lighting, assess the composition of a shot they're considering or practice a camera move. Once the shot is set, however, the stand-in steps out and the actor for which the stand-in is, well, standing in, steps in. Get it? Good. Now to the debate...

Many agents will suggest that seasoned actors or new actors who already know basic set etiquette steer clear of work as a stand-in. The most common reason given: Once a stand-in, always a stand-in...in the director's eyes, that is. They say that stand-ins are rarely able to secure work in a principal or supporting role on a show for which they've done stand-in work (despite what the casting agent may say) because the directors typically do not view them as being an actor. This is not to say that it hasn't happened. There have been occasions where a stand-in was upgraded to a speaking role...and even earned (or got one step closer to earning) their SAG card. Both scenarios are plausible; it often boils down

to (a) the actor's personality and (b) being in the right place at the right time.

Now here's the flip side...

To understand this argument, you must understand three things: (1) Acting is a challenge in itself, (2) most stand-ins want to be (or are actors) and (3) being a good actor and being a good actor who is able to perform with dozens of people, cameras and lights six feet away from you are two very different things. So, the argument that some stand-ins swear by is that being a stand-in helps you to understand what goes on behind the scenes on set—the technical and creative aspects; some also say that working as a stand-in does wonders for helping an actor to feel comfortable on-set. Plus, a lot of actors like to hope they're in that small percentage of folks who get upgraded. Can you blame 'em?

Shining Stars

Gwen Jackson of LMG Production & GetCrewed.net is in the midst of shooting a pilot. Details remain under wraps. In addition to the pilot, Jackson's team is revving up to shoot a new project in January 2012.

Actress **Masha Dowell** is adding a new a new title to her resume: Director! Masha will be making her directorial debut with the SAG new media project called Dear Marcus Luke. The short film is a three part story about three unrelated women whose lives intersect during the mysterious molestation of a young boy.

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The Look

Closet Style: Self Styling Tips for Actors

While the film and television industry in Atlanta may be booming, the budgets for many of the productions are not. Most independent films just don't have the extra monies to outfit the entire cast. As a result, when it comes to the look, many actors are being asked to "pitch in" by supplying their own wardrobe. The question is: What to wear? The following are some tips that will help actors decide which items in their closet are camera-worthy...or worth investing in.

Light, Not Bright: The camera loves pastels and earth tones. Therefore, colors such as gray, green, brown, blue and purples are great colors to have in the closet. You can have, and should have, other colors as well but be careful of "hot" shades of red, pink, yellow and orange.

Just Say, "No!": Busy patterns are an absolute no-no...even if zebra is in this season! Patterns such as checkerboard, herringbone, paisley and stripes don't always translate well on TV / Film. Play it safe and steer clear.

Go Natural: As a general rule, clothing made with natural fibers photograph better than those made with synthetic materials. So, they will look good on camera. However, two natural fabrics you may want to stay away from are silk and linen; silk can be loud as you move and most linen fabrics wrinkle easily.

Double Up: For your classic pieces—blouses and slacks, for example—buy more than one or have two similar pieces. That way, you will have a back up in case you have a mishap on set.

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Reel Focus

Projects Underway in GA (con't.)

The Walking Dead – Television / Episodic - Stu Segall Productions, Inc
Location: Atlanta, GA Shoot Dates: through October 2011

Let's Stay Together – Television / Episodic - BET
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: Unknown

Reed Between The Lines – Television / Episodic - BET
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: Unknown

Tabitha's Salon Takeover – Television / Episodic - Bravo
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: Unknown

Family Feud – Television / Episodic
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: Unknown

Probable Cause – Ultra Low Budget - Blue Lion Club Productions
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: July 25, 2011

What to Expect When You Are Expecting – Theatrical – WTE Productions, Inc
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: July 27, 2011

Solace – Ultra Low Budget – Graphite Pictures, LLC
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: July 29, 2011

The Reluctant Fundamentalist – Theatrical - The Reluctant Film Company, LLC
Location: Atlanta, GA & NY Start Date: August 1, 2011

I Jerk – Low Budget – Fearless Film Group
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: August 8, 2011

Broken Bridges – Theatrical – Cattail Falls
Location: Bainbridge, GA Start Date: August 16, 2011

Needlestick – Low Budget Modified Affirmative Action - Needlestick, LLC
Location: Savannah, GA Start Date: September 15, 2011

Charming the Hearts of Men – Theatrical – High Hopes Production, LLC
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: September 26, 2011

Red Hook Summer – Low Budget Modified – Brooklyn Morningstar, LLC
Location: Atlanta, GA & Brooklyn, NY Start Date: Conditional Start

Don't Dress For Dinner – Ultra Low Budget – Sotil Productions
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: To be determined

Good Ole' Days – Ultra Low Budget – StarMaxx Media
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: To be determined

I Don't Wanna be a Player No Mo – Ultra Low Budget – The Emmbre Perry Company, LLC
Location: Atlanta, GA Start Date: To be determined

Member Spotlight



Darija
Pichanick

Going Abroad: Lens on Darija Pichanick

Born and raised in Sarajevo, exploring foreign countries is nothing new for filmmaker Darija Pichanick. She left Sarajevo at the end of '93, nearly two years into the war, and headed to the United States. Ever since then, America has been "home" but Darija has only settled down in spurts over the years; her time working with Amnesty International, Save The Children and women's activists organizations kept her immersed in world affairs while her documentaries kept her globetrotting. Darija's latest documentary, about refugees and asylum-seekers in South Africa, has her hopping on and off airplanes once again. But, just before some downtime with her family, I was able to catch up with Darija for a couple of hours to ask her what it takes to be a successful international documentarian. She laughed then, like the personable, no-nonsense pro she is, she laid down the ground rules:

Rule #1: Do your research!

"Find out everything you can about people, topic, and issue, as well as distribution, marketing, and existing coverage of your chosen topic. But don't overdo it," Darija warned. "At some point, you do have to just pick up a camera and shoot."

Rule #2: Build and cultivate relationships and partnerships.

"That is important for any filmmaker, for everyone really. But when you are parachuting into different cultures and hoping that people will tell their stories on camera, this aspect of your work as a documentary filmmaker becomes even more important."

Rule #3: Decide who you are as a documentary filmmaker and be true to it.

"I am, for better or worse, what I would call a documentary activist," Darija proclaimed. "I want my documentaries to promote an agenda to a degree. And I fall in a category of filmmakers that hope their films will inspire action. Don't get me wrong...I love watching 'escapist' films. But they're just not in me, even if I tried. My personal life experience has taken that toll on me. You've got to be honest with yourself because if you're not, it'll affect the quality of films you make."

Rule #4: Be clear with your subjects up front.

Darija cautioned, "Some interviewees may want to control how they're portrayed in your film; some subjects would like to exercise creative control over the final cut. You need to set those expectations, and any limitations that interviewees might have, up front. You need to be considerate of your subjects but, at the end of the day, it is your film. And have it all in writing!"

Rule #5: Logistical planning is key.

According to Darija, every detail matters—even more than with a normal production—when you are shooting in a foreign country. From the macro—like knowing the country and culture—to the micro—like knowing which power adapters you'll need to be able to plug up your computer—it all matters. Plan ahead.

Rule #6: Stop rolling. Stop editing.

"Just like narrative films, there comes a point when you just have to trust that you have enough content to craft a good story, which is the goal. And eventually you have

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Member Spotlight: Darija Pichanick (con't.)

to stop editing and re-editing. As one of my film professors said: 'You never finish the film, you abandon it. You just have to move on.'

Rule #7: Show and listen.

"As an independent documentary filmmaker, I am often a one-person show," Darija noted. "So, I like to have someone who is fresh to the project to review the story to see if they're getting the message I am trying to send. After all, you're making the film for others to see, not just for yourself. The feedback is helpful; it doesn't mean that you're going to change it."

The Golden Documentary Rule

When asked to give a final, all-encompassing piece of advice for a documentary filmmaker shooting abroad, Darija shared this: "Be open-minded. That's going to take you the farthest. It's going to help you make the best movie because you're not going to close yourself off to the possibilities once you're on the ground. It will also stop you from being judgmental and prejudicial."

New Members!

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Ameda Henderson
Celia Myrick
Ama Roberts
Hilary Smiley
Lee Woodriffe

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Sep 8 - 10: Atlanta Shorts fest

Sep. 15 - 17: Atlanta Horror Film Festival

Sep. 22 - 25: Atlanta Internat'l Documentary Festival