FANEXPO PANEL

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NAVIGATING INDIE FILM WORK

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Feature Titles on Youtube:
ALIVE: The Undead
The Agents
Not Another Monster Movie
Little Green People
Slasher Days of Summer

PATREON:
FUMBDUCKS: HEROES FOR HIRE

WELCOME

Want to be an independent filmmaker, learn about acting, or are experienced and growing networking connections? Then our panel is for you! We are here to talk about our +14-years' experience in the business and helpful tips on finding work throughout the country.

TWO SIDES OF THE INDUSTRY

There are two separate worlds of making movies, and that is usually defined as independent films, and the larger Hollywood/Union films. Pursuing work in both can be successful for the person involved depending on your aspirations and interests in the industry. Some people want to be an actor, some want to direct, and others simply just love building things and set pieces to be seen on screen.

THE RAPID SUCCESS IN INDIE FILMS

Though there are many successful productions before, the first notable independent film from 1999 was The Blair Witch Project. Their initial shooting budget ran between $35,000-$60,000, and after more investment to release the production generated $248 million worldwide. Since then, there has been a vast surge in indie production work by simply writing a story, and figuring out how to make it a reality on screen.

INDEPENDENT FILMS

Often called "b-movies", indie films are productions simply made with a personal budget. Not everyone needs $1,000,000 to shoot a feature film or master equipment to shoot it on, and most barely need $100 to express their ideas on screen. If you are confident in your budget and plan accordingly, you did the right thing. If you planned and overspent on your budget, you made room for growth and adapting. Alot of independent directors recycle their production gear (cameras, audio, props), locations, and cast into other films they plan on doing down the road. Auditioning for these films as an actor is typically a one-on-one interaction with whomever is casting or directing the project.

ACTING

Working as an actor in the industry is a very exciting path to pursue. Everyone comes from having a day-to-day job and personal life outside of the industry. While most of us use this as a mental escape and for extra income, those that pursue it fulltime are always in the fight for their success and growth. Some projects pay decent; when others can be with fresh directors trying to start their own. Jokingly called "exposure bucks", you can acquire experience from working on these

projects as a volunteer to help practice, grow, and learn more things about your abilities. The endgame is always doing what we love most and making a living off of it, and taking the chance on projects that speak to you most when you can afford to do them is the most important pursuit.

CAN UNION ACTORS WORK ON INDIE FILMS?

Yes. There are proper steps and paperwork that can be filled out for an actor to have permission from their union representative/agent to work on independent films. This is to ensure that the actor gets paid properly for their time that was negotiated, and to make sure all safety precautions are followed (on paper, and on set).
Each actor has an agent with information to contact them first if you are inquiring to cast via their agency, never reach out to the actor/actress directly unless you know them well.

I MADE A FILM, WHERE DO I SEND IT TO?

Congratulations on completing your first movie! To answer simply, anywhere you want! There are thousands of film festivals via Filmfreeway.com to have your movie shown in a film festival. There are submission fees with each, depending on their deadline and requirements of what they need from you. If you wish to have it online for the world to immediately see, uploading to sites like Youtube and Vimeo are usually the best options. Use your social media as much as possible to advertise your work and release.
My first film (ALIVE: The Undead) I shot when I was 19 years old to just upload online. It ended up generating over 200k views and had monetized my account. It is a nice secondary income while I work on other things.
If you submit to film festivals and get accepted, it is important to attend. NETWORKING WILL BE YOUR MOST VALUABLE EXPERIENCE in this career. The people I have met at film festivals have worked alongside me for a handful of features and upcoming things. Talking with other creatives will open your contacts and ability to pursue so much more.

GETTING YOUR FILM ON DVD

A website that is regularly mentioned for finding distributors outside of film festivals is called FilmHub, this is how your recent new indie releases end up on Tubi or Prime. You must ensure that everything is in order for copyright, that you own the permissions to the music, and all paperwork is in proper order.
Another option too is called Self Distribution, which you can order a bulk of printed dvds/bluray copies from a printing website that will put your movie on a disk, package into a case, and wrap it for your own sales. Most filmmakers with their own tables at conventions use this method to sell their films in person to the public. It is a great way to meet the people involved and direct customers too.

When ordering DVDs it is not as easy as uploading and selling, most vendors require an ISO file of the film; which handles the movie, menu, and all of the sequences to put onto a disk DVD/Blu-ray. There are programs online for this that can be utilized in getting an ISO file. Make sure it is the exact film you wish to show to the world!

USEFUL SITES FOR CASTING / PRODUCTION WORK

Facebook has become a huge tool in just searching for production work whether it is casting or working as a crew member. Other sites that I can recommend are:
IMDB PRO
BACKSTAGE

A TV/MOVIE IS IN MY AREA; HOW DO I GET ON?

Stay alert for locally published casting calls, research your local city casting agents to see if they are involved and simply submit if there is an open role or crew spot.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

No one has started with experience. You are the most important tool to your own success. If you can think of a movie and see it in your mind, you can make it. Be open to criticism, be open to things going wrong, because each step will be an opportunity to learn and adapt. There will be others that don't want to see you succeed while a handful of people will absolutely support your creative decisions and choices. You are your own boss, it is all for the art in the end. The world is yours, so make it a reality.

BE READY FOR ANYTHING

People are going to love your work, and other people are going to hate your work. This industry has a lot of opportunities. Your film might break the bank or exceed your most insane dream. Be ready for criticism and be open to new things as you go along.

Keep the arts alive and FUCK AI!

Thank you for being a part of our panel experience!