

# TFE THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR:

A Newsletter for Independent Filmmakers and Investors

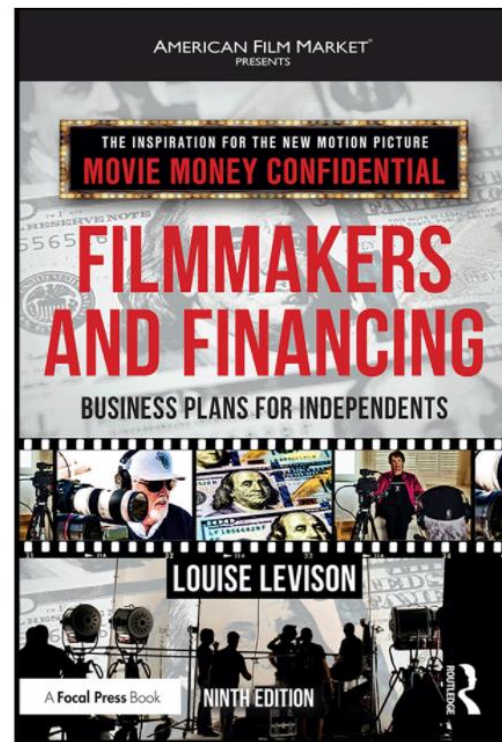
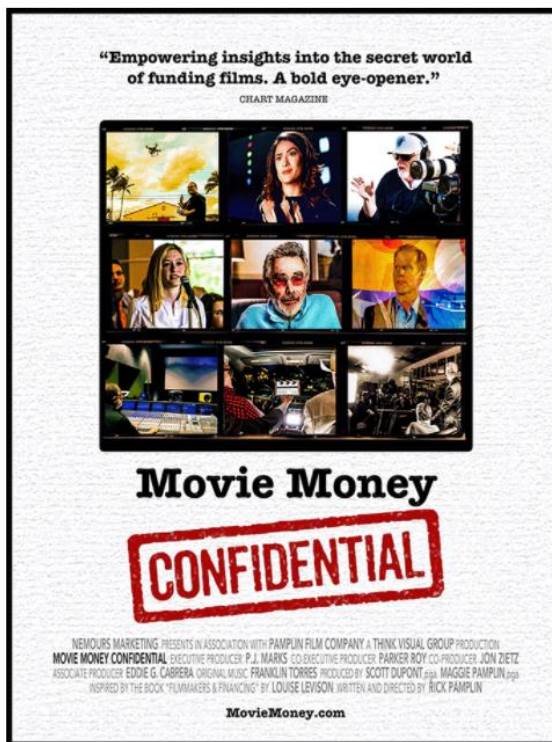


LOUISE LEVISON, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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## BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL

The 72<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Berlin Film Festival and European Film Market (EFM) were both onsite and virtual again this year; however, the market had “record number of deals” signed, according to EFM Director Denis Ruh. EFM was able to accommodate a few local film distributors and industry reps onsite by offering limited industry screenings, which had 50 percent reduced seating anyway due to COVID-19 restrictions.

More than 600 films had their market premieres in Berlin's virtual market this year, with over 600 companies from 62 countries presenting on the EFM platform up from 504 companies from 60 nations last year. There also were more titles on offer - 827 films compared to 821 last year. And more than 1,300 screenings (compared to 1,453 in 2021). In addition, companies from Costa Rica, Malaysia, Mongolia and Uruguay were among the exhibitors for the first time.

At the top of the list was Tom Hank's *A Man Called Ott* for which Sony Pictures pre-paid \$60 million acquiring worldwide rights. “But arthouse film and films from the Berlin Festival lineup also did well,” said Ruh in an email to *The Hollywood Reporter (THR)* “...The sales business felt a breath of fresh air again in the wake of the easing and lifting of restrictive [COVID-19] measures in Europe and in the rest of the world.” He also believes that people feel “Zoom fatigue and prefer the in-person experience. Business is also about mutual trust, and you're more likely to create that by spending time together in one place than through strictly scheduled online meetings. This remains a people's business that needs a specific meeting place.”

On the other hand, as with other festivals and markets, they spend less money by doing business from their home office. One U.S. sales agent told the publication that they only need to go to two markets per year: Berlin and Cannes. “And the buyers are shifting too: Asian buyers only want to come to Cannes and AFM; a lot of Europeans like to do just Berlin and Cannes.” Ruh noted the number of “lucrative deals” at EFM 2022 as proof positive of the “benefit for most world sales companies” in making the trip to chilly Berlin. He also mentioned “Zoom fatigue.”

Festival Co-Directors Mariette Rissenbeek and Carlo Chatrian said, “If films claim and aspire to depict human beings and the world in which they live, they must address a community, an audience, and not a collection of users each with their own login.” In an editorial on his blog, Chatrian wrote, “The year 2022 comes with a new set of challenges. We believe that flexibility must now be replaced by firmness in the context of a project that can no longer forsake its primary role. Seeing a film in a theater; being able to hear breathing, laughter or whispers next to you [even with correct social distancing], contributes in a vital way not only to the viewing pleasure, but also to strengthening the social function that cinema has, and must continue to have.”

Claudia Roth, Germany's new Minister of Culture and Media, drew loud applause, reported *THR*, as she made the point: “Yes, it's a festival under pandemic conditions, with restrictions that you can criticize, with deficiencies that you might want to flag up ... but the really, really important thing is that the Berlinale is happening. I am perhaps more grateful than a culture minister has ever been on a February evening. I am happy that this Berlinale can take place as a real Berlinale - the international film festival that it has always been. Today we are making a statement for cinema, the culture of cinema, for everybody who loves culture and cinema. We are sending a signal for democracy too, because without culture, without theater, without concerts, without cinema, life is silent.”

From February 10<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> film teams presented their movies to the public and accredited audiences at the premieres. Despite numerous international travel restrictions, around 1,400 journalists from 65 countries came to Berlin to report on the festival, and 156,000 tickets were sold. On the evening of February 16<sup>th</sup> the awards ceremony took place

## AND THE WINNERS ARE . . .

AWARD	FILM	FILMMAKER
<b>GOLDEN BEAR</b>	<i>Alcarràs</i>	Carla Simon
<b>SILVER BEAR</b>		
Grand Jury	<i>The Novelist's Film</i>	Hong Sang-soo
Special Jury	<i>Robe of Gems</i>	Natalia Lopez Gallardo
Best Director	<i>Fire</i>	Claire Denis
Best Leading Performance	<i>Rabiye Kurnaz vs George W. Bush</i>	Meltem Kaptan
Best Supporting Performance	<i>Before, Now &amp; Then</i>	Laura Basuki
Best Screenplay	<i>Rabiye Kurnaz vs George W. Bush</i>	Laila Stieler
Outstanding Artistic Contribution	<i>Everything Will Be Ok</i>	Rithy Panh
Special Mention	<i>A Piece of Sky</i>	Michael Koch
<b>ENCOUNTERS</b>		
Best Film	<i>Mutzenbacher</i>	Ruth Beckermann
Best Director	<i>Unrest</i>	Cyril Schaublin
Special Mention	<i>See You Friday, Robinson</i>	Mitra Farahani
<b>GWFF Best First Feature</b>	<i>Sonne</i>	Kurdwin Ayub
<b>BERLINALE DOCUMENTARY AWARD</b>	<i>Myanmar Diaries</i>	Myanmar Film Collective
<b>GENERATION KPLUS</b> (Crystal Bears by youth jury; other prizes by adult voters)		
Grand Prix Best Film	<i>An Cailín Ciúin!</i>	Colm Bairéad
<b>YOUTH JURY GENERATION 14PLUS</b>		
Grand Prix Best Film	<i>Kind Hearts</i>	Olivia Rochette, Gerard-Jan Claes
<b>SHORT FILMS</b>		
Golden Bear Best Film	<i>Trap</i>	Anastasia Veber

<b>Silver Bear Best Film</b>	<i>Sunday Morning</i>	Bruno Ribiero
<b>Generation 14Plus</b>	<i>Au revoir Jérôme!</i>	Adam Sillard, Gabrielle Selnet, Chloé Farr
<b>Generation KPlus</b>	<i>Gavazn</i>	Hadi Babaeifar



## SCREEN ACTORS GUILD AWARDS

The 28<sup>th</sup> Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards on February 27<sup>th</sup> was a full-length in-person event (with COVID protocols followed) compared to the hour-long version last year. Three cast members from the original *Hamilton* stage play - Daveed Diggs, Lin-Manuel Miranda and Leslie Odom Jr. - were hosts for the show. During the broadcast, the big surprise of the evening was the win by the *Coda* cast of deaf actors. In addition, Troy Kotsur from the film was the first deaf actor to win Best Supporting Actor. Speaking for the cast (with a sign-language interpreter) Marlee Matlin said, “We deaf actors have come a long way. This validates the fact that we deaf actors can work just like anybody else. We look forward to more opportunities for deaf actors, deaf culture.” Then she ended by using the sign for “I love you” to the audience and SAG-AFTRA voters. During the broadcast, Kate Winslet presented Dame Helen Mirren with the Lifetime Achievement Award. “I joined our tribe of rogues and vagabonds a long time ago,” Mirren said, “And it is you, you actors, that I want to thank.”

As usual, there was much discussion among the analysts as to whether or not the “Best Ensemble Cast” Award is an indication of a surprise Oscar winner. Only four films in the last 28 years have won the top Oscar without the ensemble nod; however, three of those were within the last four years: *The Shape of Water*, *Green Book* and *Nomadland*. Of the two films seemingly battling it out for the Oscar win, *Belfast* was nominated in the ensemble category, but *The Power of the Dog* was not. As *Vanity Fair* wrote at the end of its article, “As to how far *CODA* can take it, well, there’s a month of campaigning left. And we’re off!”

## AND THE FILM WINNERS ARE . . .

<b>OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>WINNER</b>	<b>FILM</b>
<b>Ensemble Cast</b>	—	<i>Coda</i>
<b>Female Actor Leading Role</b>	Jessica Chastain	<i>The Eyes of Tammy Faye</i>
<b>Male Actor Leading Role</b>	Will Smith	<i>King Richard</i>
<b>Female Actor Supporting Role</b>	Ariana DeBose	<i>West Side Story</i>
<b>Male Actor Supporting Role</b>	Troy Kotsur	<i>Coda</i>
<b>Ensemble Stunt</b>	—	<i>No Time to Die</i>

**Reminder:** The 94<sup>th</sup> Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 27, 2022.



## INTERVIEW WITH THE STARDOM CHANCE TEAM



Q. What is Stardom Chance?

A. Stardom chance is a new way for writers, actors, directors and crew all around the world to break into the film business, even if you're not in Hollywood. Prior to our new, exciting business model, it took most people years of persevering, often enormous sums of capital, nepotism at its finest, and a plethora of inner circle relationships, to have even the remotest chance of breaking into the Hollywood that excludes 99.9 percent of artists and dreamers who try to break in. With the Stardom Chance™ business model we turned the most exclusive industry in the entire world upside down into one of the most "inclusive" industries anywhere.

Q. How is Stardom chance so different?

A. Stardom Chance will NEVER fall into the trap that many screenplay competitions, film festivals and award shows have by asking information about your race or sexual preference or being concerned about filling equity quotes. Our business model is based 100 percent on talent, pure and simple! Applicants will send in a registration fee of just \$99, and each position in front of and behind the camera will be limited to a specific number of slots. For example, Stardom Chance is only accepting 450 screen plays that will be considered for best screenplay.

This is ground breaking as many screenplay competitions and film festival contests have thousands (some tens of thousands) of applicants. The other big difference that sets Stardom Chance apart is that the lucky winner of the best screenplay will have his or her script financed and produced into a finished movie! This means that a writer will have a definitive 1 in 450 shot to have their script produced into a feature film and only has to beat out 449 other applicants to have it projected onto the big screen. We call Stardom Chance the great equalizer, the democratization of Hollywood, the ability for everybody, no matter who or where you are, to have a real shot.

Q. Jeff, what inspired you to do this this?

A. I have always loved the underdog. I love stories and movies that have the underdog as the protagonist in the story. Movies like *It's A Wonderful Life*, *Rocky*, *Remember the Titans*, *Rudy*, *Slumdog Millionaire* and *Invincible* have inspired me to be a screenwriter and filmmaker all my life. Just like most people, I have faced the numerous obstacles and barriers the outdated Hollywood studio system has put up. I also don't like bullies and am not a fan of people or businesses that throw their weight around, because they can squelch the little guy's (or girl's) chances of success while making their own worlds infinitely better, usually at the expense of the people who never get a fair shot.

I have dozens of stories I could share, but here's one quick one. After years of trying to sell a script that I had put my heart and soul into, I finally got an offer from a Hollywood production company to buy my script. I was quickly humbled when they lowballed me an offer price. And the icing on the cake was when they were going to bring in a professional script doctor to re-write parts of the script, and then were going to delete my name as the original screenwriter! I turned this offer down, and that was my first inspiration to build this business model. It literally has been 22 years-plus in the making.



Q. Can anyone apply?

A. Yes, anyone can apply who is interested in any form or fashion of being in the entertainment business. Anyone who has a yearning and a desire to be in front of or behind the camera is going to be interested in the Stardom Chance business model; and the cost of admission is far less than a one-way plane, bus or train ticket to Hollywood. Think of it as the cost of a nice dinner. And your odds have never been better. To be specific, an aspiring leading man or woman, director, cinematographer, editor or make-up artist will have their fair shot at making their mark and being part of a fully-funded feature film with incredible odds of 1 in 450 or even 1 in 350.

Q. What do applicants get when they register?

A. Members of the Stardom Chance community receive many benefits not available to them anywhere else. Each applicant will receive a screen credit at the of the movie that they apply for and a special thanks acknowledgement. Without them there can be no feature at all. Members can purchase the Stardom crypto coin oncer it is launched, at a substantial discount, which will have many uses inside the Stardom Chance ecosystem.

You will be invited to the red carpet premiere of the movie you registered for and be allowed to participate in celebrity and influencer workshops that we plan on having in the future. They presumably will enhance your career. The more successful our people are, the more successful we are. Applicants also will have special opportunities to purchase NFTs that others may not, and you will have the unique privilege to register for future films where the odds have been so whittled down as to not be comparable to any other business model in the world today for chance of selections. You will be part of a community offering up exclusive access to film industry mixers we plan the have and dialogue with fellow people interested in entertainment.

Finally, every applicant will receive special access and discount opportunities to the Stardom Chance social platform as members where you will have the unique opportunity to learn about job opportunities in your special niche and possibly win incredible prizes like trips to Hollywood events and major film festivals in the future.

Q. When will the website be open and can interested people apply now?

A. The Stardom Chance registration portal opens April 2<sup>nd</sup>. We are not taking actual registrations until then but mark your calendar as spots for all categories are very limited at no more than 450 for each Stardom Chance opportunity. In the meantime, anyone interested can join our community at: <https://community.stardomchance.com/community-link/53460>

Q. Is this something I should share with my friends?

A. Only if you truly like them! Tell your best friends to visit [StardomChance.com](https://StardomChance.com).



## **MOVIE MONEY CONFIDENTIAL INSPIRED BY FILMMAKERS AND FINANCING BOOK**

Award-winning independent filmmaker Rick Pamplin has created, written and directed a new feature length documentary inspired by Louise Levison's best-selling book *Filmmakers and Financing: Business Plans for Independents*. Pamplin says, "We made a bold, truthful movie, which reveals many secrets about the often-mysterious world of film financing - and the previously untold behind-the-scenes story of *The Blair Witch Project*," he added. Pamplin, a Levison client, sees the film "as empowering a new generation of filmmakers" with insight, information and real-life advice from filmmakers, fundraisers, investors, lawyers, producers, movie stars and, of course, Louise Levison.

Pamplin and his crew shot 100 hours of footage and interviewed about 60 people including actress-producer **Salma Hayek** (*The Prophet*) and filmed the last interview with the late screen legend **Burt Reynolds** at his acting school in North Palm Beach, Florida. The movie also filmed seminar-style panels with students at Saint Andrew's School in Boca Raton and an open-to-the-public event with artists and writers at the legendary Harold's Coffee Lounge in the Northwood Arts Village.

Pamplin's storied career spans 18 years in Hollywood and 14 years at Universal Studios in Florida before he relocated to Palm Beach. He has written and directed several award-winning films including *Hoover*, starring Academy Award winning actor **Ernest Borgnine**.

Worldwide distribution rights for *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL* have been acquired by Kaczmarek Digital Media Group (KDMG). It is presented by Nemours Marketing, Inc., in association with Pamplin Film Company, a Think Visual Group Production produced by Scott duPont and Maggie Pamplin, co-producer and editor Jon Zietz, associate producer and director of photography Eddie G. Cabrera. For more information and up-to-date streaming platform links visit: [MovieMoney.com](http://MovieMoney.com)



**Rick Pamplin on the set of *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL***

## **MOVIE MONEY CONFIDENTIAL WINS DOVE AWARD, RECEIVES APPROVAL AND "FANTASTIC" REVIEW**

*Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL*, the feature length documentary film inspired by Louise Levison's best-selling book *Filmmakers and Financing*, has been awarded a prestigious Dove Foundation seal of approval, a "12+" rating and a "fantastic" review. The much-coveted Dove Awards are given "to encourage and promote wholesome family entertainment" and are used by schools, libraries, streaming services and churches for purchasing and licensing guidelines.

Producer **Scott duPont** was notified of the award in Hollywood and sent an advance copy of the review, now published online at **Dove.org**. "It is a great honor and achievement for our creative team and crew, and this award helps us reach an even wider audience," he said.

The review says, "With great advice from start to finish, *Movie Money Confidential* gives important details on how to create a film with little to no budget." It continues on, "This documentary is full of great information, including tips for people to start making their own films. It includes many one - on - one interviews and panels with questions asked by real actors and aspiring producers."

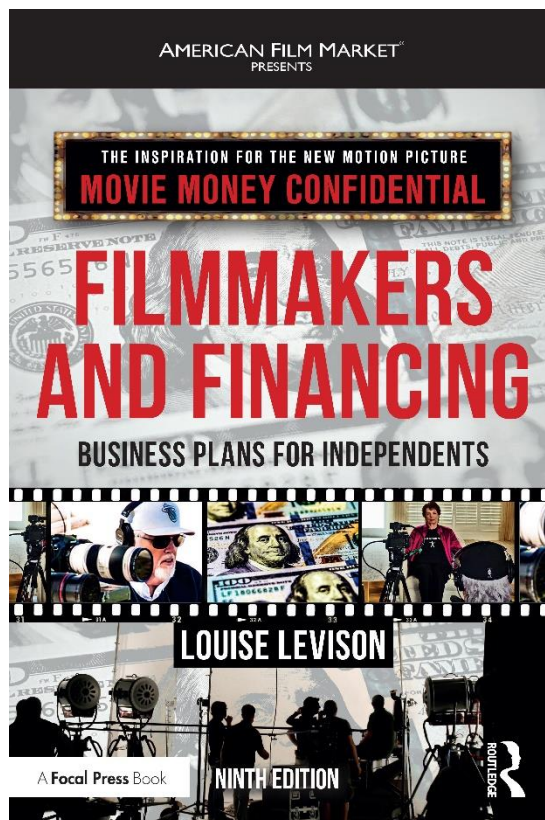
Producer-Production Designer **Maggie Pamplin** also noted the recognition for director **Rick Pamplin** and his collaborative partners at **Think Visual Group** in the review: "*Movie Money Confidential* is a fantastic documentary with great visuals and audio. The information is thorough about how a filmmaker should deal with investors - telling them facts instead of what they want to hear, asking for their advice and how to avoid promising what you might not be able to deliver."

In summary, the review says "*Movie Money Confidential* contains information that can be valuable in every aspect of life for any person - not just aspiring filmmakers and producers. Its well-thought-out scenes and interviews provide priceless information and answers to questions that people may not have thought to ask. It is great for anyone to watch and learn from."





**The latest edition of *Filmmakers & Financing:  
Business Plans for Independents***



In this new and updated ultimate filmmaker's guide, Louise Levison gives you easy-to-use steps for writing an investor-winning business plan for a feature film, including:

- Comprehensive explanations for each of the eight sections of a plan
- Full financial section with text and tables
- A sample business plan
- A companion website with additional information for various chapters and detailed financial instructions - advanced math not needed
- An explanation on how feature documentary, animated and large-format films differ
- A guide to pitching to investors: who they are, what they want and what to tell them
- Words of advice: Filmmakers share their experiences raising money from equity investors

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

The benefit of using a reliable business plan to raise financing for a film is that it allows the investors and the filmmaker to gauge the potential success of a film. Louise Levison, the President of Business Strategies, is a highly respected financial consultant in the entertainment industry, specializing in creation of film business plans. She is the author of *Filmmakers & Financing: Business Plans for Independents*, currently in its revised and expanded eighth edition (A Routledge/Taylor & Francis book, 2017). She also has a starring role in the feature documentary *Movie Money CONFIDENTIAL* which was inspired by the book. More information at [moviemoney.com](http://moviemoney.com). Levison also is editor of the newsletter *The Film Entrepreneur: A Newsletter for the Independent Filmmaker and Investor (TFE)*.

A polished business plan with projections based on the worldwide results of other films and with clear explanations of the industry is far more effective than an incomplete document that leaves prospective investors wanting more information. In our “new normal,” *TFE* has developed (and continues to adjust) a new format for forecasting Indie films to include the current hybrid system of releasing films for a shorter span in theaters (currently mostly drive-ins but also the rest of the country’s cinema sites as the industry opens) and, often, into streaming rather than the standard online release pattern of DVD/Blu-ray and downloading.

Levison’s clients have raised money for low-budget films including *The Blair Witch Project*, the most profitable independent film in history, as well as for companies raising as much as \$300 million.

Among other clients’ projects are *The Prophet (Kahlil Gibran’s)*, *Unlimited* (Nathan Frankowski), *Burning Bodhi*, *Greater*, *The Redemption of Henry Miller*, *Emoticon*., *Moving Midway*, *Redemption Road*, *Haunted* (2012), *The First of May*, *The Open Road*, *Aluna*, *Yak: The Giant King*, *Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman*, *My Father and the Man in Black* and *Michael Winslow Live*. Her corporate clients include Danny Glover’s Louverture Films (2008 nominee for Best Documentary Academy Award *Trouble the Water*), Pamplin Film Company (*Hoover*), Majestic World Entertainment, Gundersen Entertainment and Tokuma International Ltd. Levison was an Instructor in the Extension Program at UCLA for 22 years before moving to Florida. She also has been a Visiting Professor at the Taipei (Taiwan) National University of the Arts, Chapman University (Orange County, CA) and the University of Montana (Missoula). She also has presented seminars and/or been on panels at festivals and markets around the world.

Contact Levison at [louisel@earthlink.net](mailto:louisel@earthlink.net) to find out how you can put her 30 years of experience as Film Business Consultant to work creating a business plan for your film.

**THE FILM ENTREPRENEUR**

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