

indie source

FREE INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER MAGAZINE
a publication by Parker Entertainment Group in association with Stand By Entertainment

Interviews

Daniel Rodrigues
Karin Chien
Samuell Benta
Malte Greis
Francesco Caradonna
Chiko Mendez
Ivan Hronec
Ralph Cole Jr.

Summer 2012

Highlights

Adobe Creative Suite 6 Production
Premium and Vision Research
Phantom Miro combine for fast,
efficient filmmaking workflow

Mr. Stage 32 Richard Botto Speaks

Making A Movie From Start To Finish:
Advice From Veteran Film Producer

Synopsis

Adobe and Cannes Film Residency Program:
Technology Meets Creativity

\$0.00 U.S. | \$0.00 Canada
Summer 2012, Vol. 1, #4



www.indiesourcemag.com

Mr. Stage 32

With Richard Botto

Interview By: Christopher Parker



ISM: When was Stage32.com created?

RB: The very basic idea of the site was discussed as far back as the Fall of 2009. We took a year for research and to explore what we wanted included in the initial product. As with any startup, as you go into planning, there is an evolutionary process within which fantastic ideas rise to the surface, taking the original concept into broader, more ambitious territory. At some point, you have to pick your features and get into development. For us, that point happened in early 2011. We went into beta in August, and we officially launched the site on September 1, 2011.

ISM: What are you trying to achieve with Stage32.com?

RB: A few different things. The base idea was to create an environment where film, television, and theater creatives would have the opportunity to network 24/7/365 regardless of their geographical location. That was the ground floor idea. We felt the broader social networks did not, and do not, serve the creative community in any consistent or sustainable fashion. As we began to blueprint, and part of that process was to ask what we, as creatives ourselves, wanted to see in the site, I coined a motto of sorts that served as the framework for all additional planning: Concept to Completion. The goal was and remains to build a site where anyone with an idea could see that idea through from conception through a finished project. That meant the site needed not only to connect people, but to provide educational tools and resources. Over the next few months, the community will discover through new features that our scope has broadened even further. But the ultimate goals will always remain the same: to connect, to educate, to inform, and to increase the odds of success.

ISM: Can you tell our readers what your job as a Creative Executive entails?

RB: In a word, everything. I think if you asked the CEO of any startup, he or she would have the same answer. We have a very small staff, and that requires all hands on deck all the time. It also means that you perform tasks outside of your job description. Grunt work. Ideally, as a CEO, I would spend my days developing strategy, delegating responsibility, and overseeing progress. Ultimately, 95% of all non-programming related projects and initiatives, I delegate to myself. But I love every minute of it, and observing or hearing from a member of the community who has found success through the site, something that has become a daily occurrence, serves as the reward for all the hard work.

ISM: Bringing creative people together globally is a great

achievement. Do you know of any productions that have been created using your site as the means of meeting and collaborating?

RB: First off, thank you. I appreciate the statement. Yes, we know of at least seven directors or producers who have put together films using nothing but Stage 32 members: cast, crew, and post production personnel. There have been hundreds of other examples where filmmakers or theater producers have found the final pieces of the puzzle toward getting their project off the ground through the site. And, of course, thousands have found work through 32. It's been an incredibly rewarding experience.

ISM: You recently produced a film titled Another Happy Day, could you tell us about this film and your exact role?

RB: Sure. Another Happy Day was written by Sam Levinson, son of Barry Levinson, when he was 23 years old. The script floated around for a few years until Ellen Barkin discovered it and decided to attach herself as a producer,



and agreed to play the lead role. I signed on as an associate producer during the pre-production phase when Demi Moore, Thomas Hayden Church, and Kate Bosworth were added to the cast. The film debuted at Sundance in 2011, and Sam's script won Best Screenplay. The film is fantastic. Sam did a hell of a job directing. It deserved a better theatrical fate, but it's had a very nice life on DVD and On Demand. I'm very proud to have been involved.

ISM: Do you have any plans to produce feature films in

the future?

RB: Absolutely. I am in discussions with a couple of companies regarding having them serve as co-producers on two of my scripts. There is another project I am attached to as a producer which I'm extremely excited about. We are early in the game, but it is a project I believe has widespread appeal.

ISM: How does Stage32.com tailor to its' foreign users that may speak a different language other than English?

RB: Currently, the site is only available in English. We do have plans down the road to introduce other languages.

ISM: What is the most rewarding part of your job?

RB: Without question, watching your various initiatives take root and bear fruit. Nothing makes me happier, gives

RB: Well, from the producing end I would say financing, but that has always been a difficult aspect. Crowdfunding, to an extent has made things a bit easier, at least for those looking to create a calling card, or a stepping stone toward bigger things.

For screenwriters, I think the tentpole, remake mentality of the studios has poisoned the water. Managers and agents who normally would sign a writer with a great, but unmarketable script, which is purely based on potential, these days are mostly only interested in concept. You may have the next Casablanca, but they only want the next Transformers. Again, to turn that into a positive, as distribution channels continue to evolve and multiply the need for content will continue to increase. There are plenty of independent production companies still interested in character driven films.

Theatrical distribution is a nightmare as well these days, but we would be here all day if I got started on that.

ISM: When it comes to financing feature films, what do you think could be done differently/better?

RB: I'm not sure if anything can be done differently. If you are trying to raise money through private investment, you need to bring something sexy to the table. A great script

me a bigger high, than hearing from someone who has found success through the site. Knowing you are playing a part in making a person's dream come true, there is nothing more rewarding and fulfilling than that.

ISM: Where do you see yourself within the industry in ten years?

RB: Acting, writing, producing, and maybe directing. Sustainability in this industry requires a commitment to quality, but it also requires success. One you can control, the other only marginally so. The goal is to be involved with projects I believe in. Sometimes, all you have is your judgment and your instincts. You put in the work, you release it to the wild, and you let the chips fall where they may.

ISM: In your opinion, what is the most difficult aspect of the industry right now?

isn't going to cut it. You need star attachments, maybe a director commitment. There's a whole chicken and egg conundrum that has existed forever as it relates to raising funds for a film. Should we first raise capital, and then go after stars? Or can we get star commitments and then raise capital? But how can we get star commitments if we have no capital? It is a delicate balance to be sure. It requires patience and constant massaging, but it can be done.

As for crowdsourcing, the biggest mistake people make is thinking their idea is "the be all, and end all". I call it the "If You Build It They Will Come" mentality. Wrong. It's

not enough to be a creative genius, you need to be a business and marketing guru as well. You need to know how

Continue pg. 40



and Rich Wong.

ISM: You have formed a partnership with The Center for Asian-American media for mentoring. How can our Asian-American readership find out more about this initiative?

KC: It is called the CAAM Fellowship and there is more information on the www.caamedia.org website. It came from my own desire to have a mentor when I started in the film industry. Most Asian-Americans go against their families' wishes when they enter the entertainment industry, and most of our friends do not work in entertainment. So, we're totally on our own, yet Hollywood is a place where you need to know people to move ahead. The Fellowship is in its second year, and demand is incredibly high. We have already received over 200 applications across all disciplines. Our Fellows have on average five years' of experience in the industry, and I work closely with them to find the right mentor for their project's needs and their professional development. This is our effort to grow Asian-American media from within our own community.

Ear For Sound Cont.

from page 6

ISM: Have you watched a film with music you composed and thought you could have done things differently?

DR: As an artist I am always critiquing my own work and looking for different ways to make it better, to make it perfect. That being said, once I have let it go public I try not to go back and look for ways to make it better.

ISM: What types of films or series are you interested in working on?

DR: The types of projects I tend to work on are in sci-fi, thriller, and action/adventure; however I also enjoy the challenge of working on projects in other genres that require a completely different style of music.

Mr. Stage 32 Cont.

from page 16

to get eyes on your campaign, how to sell your campaign. Another big mistake people make is they have no idea how to fix a budget. Do you really need 20K for a fifteen-minute short with two actors that takes place

exclusively at a kitchen table? Probably not.

ISM: Have you made connections on Stage32.com which have benefitted your film career?

RB: Oh, absolutely. I'm on there networking every day. I would be a fool not to. Over the last month alone, I've taken no less than a half dozen meetings that were a result of networking on Stage 32. We have a running joke around here that I am like Sy Sperling. I am not only the Stage 32 CEO, I'm also a member.

ISM: Since closing Razor Magazine, have you had any desire to create another publication?

RB: Oh god, no. (Laughs) RAZOR, much like Stage 32, was a labor of love. From an editorial standpoint, everything I wanted to do we were able to accomplish. We had top name writers, progressive long form journalism, frontline fashion editorial, and stellar photography. Everyone bought in to what we were doing. I would spend my days speaking to people like David Mamet about writing, Paul Haggis about directing, or James Carville about, well, things I shouldn't mention here. People loved the product. Our readership was over 1.5M when we decided to shut things down. That was an incredible number for an independent publisher with only one title. Ultimately and sadly, print has been dying a slow death. Advertisers have turned their budgets toward the web.

There is one area of Stage 32 where the spirit of RAZOR lives on, and that is the blog. My mission from day one was to find writers who have been in the trenches to come in and tell their stories for the benefit of the entire community, to entertain and educate. To that end, we have featured such accomplished professionals as Rex Pickett, Doug Richardson and Danny Rubin. We plan on bringing more extraordinary and diverse talent to the blog as we progress.

ISM: What are your future plans for expansion with Stage32.com?

RB: To say we have a myriad of plans in the works would be an understatement. Some ideas fall directly within the boundaries of "Conception to Completion". Others are broader and more ambitious. Many of them, we feel will give our members even more opportunity to be successful. Stay tuned.