



BEYOND HOLLYWOOD

The TOP Independent Creators of 2025



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THE
FILMMAKERLIFE

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Title:

Beyond Hollywood:
The Top Independent Creators of 2025

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Second edition in English 2025

© 2025 Edited by FilmmakerLife

ISBN 978-1-30031-600-8

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Introduction

When a single voice speaks truth, the world listens. When a solitary vision manifests in creative form, it can alter perceptions. When an independent creator breaks boundaries, entire cultural landscapes transform. This is not mere hyperbole—it is the demonstrated power of the visionaries featured within these pages.

The creators celebrated in this second volume have done more than capture our attention—they have shifted paradigms, challenged conventions, and sparked movements that ripple far beyond their respective disciplines. They are architects of change working outside traditional systems to craft experiences that resonate with profound authenticity and undeniable impact.

We live in an age where accessibility to tools has democratized creation, but true transformation requires something rarer: the courage to present uncomfortable truths, the vision to imagine alternative possibilities, and the skill to translate abstract concepts into tangible realities. These are the qualities that unite our featured creators—individuals who refused to compromise their integrity for institutional approval or popular acclaim.

Their work transcends conventional boundaries to become catalysts for social discourse, vessels for cultural preservation, and bridges between disparate human experiences. Whether amplifying overlooked communities, reimagining historical narratives, or constructing entirely new frameworks that reflect our deepest hopes and fears, these 51 visionaries have fundamentally altered how we perceive ourselves and our collective potential.

Beyond Hollywood: The Top Independent Creators of 2025 is not merely a recognition of creative excellence, though such excellence abounds. It is a testament to the transformative power of authentic voices speaking against the current, of visionaries who create not because the establishment demands it, but because they must—because the worlds they imagine demand to exist.

Behind each creator in these pages stands someone who believed their perspective mattered despite rejection and limited resources. Their journeys remind us that paradigm-shifting work often emerges from the margins before reshaping the center. These are the voices of our time—creators whose impact will endure well beyond 2025—and we are privileged to share their extraordinary stories with you.

Sara Plasencia & Rodrigo Rayón



MONTE ALBERS DE LEON



American



Director



Producer

In the evolving world of cinematic storytelling, few voices resonate with the depth and daring of Monte Albers de Leon. Rooted in a unique blend of cultures, experiences, and disciplines, his journey from the rural hills of Napa, California, to international acclaim is as compelling as the stories he tells. Born in 1977 to a Guatemalan immigrant mother and a blue-collar Texan father, Monte's upbringing was steeped in diversity, resilience, and a profound awareness of the human condition—qualities that now



www.theparables.net



Monte Albers de Leon



[@theparablesanthology](https://www.instagram.com/theparablesanthology)



Monte Albers de Leon, Esq



Monte Albers de Leon



serve as the backbone of his storytelling. Monte's debut project, *The Parables Anthology*, introduces a trilogy of interconnected screenplays that explore time, space, and the limits of human understanding. The first installment, *GOOD*, marked his arrival with resounding impact, collecting over 100 film awards worldwide and drawing praise for its philosophical depth and emotional resonance. From Cannes to critics' circles, *GOOD* has positioned Monte as a screenwriter unafraid to tackle the big questions, crafting narratives that engage both the heart and the mind.

"CINEMA IS NOT JUST ART; IT'S A POWERFUL TOOL TO TRANSFORM HEARTS, AWAKEN CONSCIOUSNESS, AND BUILD BRIDGES WHERE THERE WERE ONCE WALLS."

— Monte Albers de Leon

With *MECCA*, the second installment of *The Parables*, Monte continues to expand his cinematic universe, pushing narrative boundaries while maintaining his signature blend of intellectual boldness and emotional truth. The screenplay is already receiving accolades and industry recognition, further cementing his reputation as a visionary creator. Monte's path to storytelling is shaped by a life rich in academic and professional achievement.

A graduate of Claremont McKenna College, Harvard Law School, and NYU's master's program in real estate, he spent over a decade practicing real estate law in New York before launching his own successful firm. Yet, it was his calling to storytelling that ultimately took precedence.

Today, Monte Albers de Leon is not only redefining the landscape of modern screenwriting—he is inspiring others to embrace the power of their own stories and to see in cinema the possibility of transformation.



VICTOR BOCCARD



French



Writer



Producer



Director



ATTA FILMS

Some filmmakers find cinema later in life; for Victor Boccard, it was destiny from the beginning. At just seven years old, after an awe-inspiring trip across the U.S. West Coast, he felt a pull so powerful that he told his parents he would stay in Los Angeles if a producer discovered him. Years later, a cultural shock upon returning from a family trip to Japan prompted him to leave traditional schooling altogether—choosing instead to chase his artistic calling head-on.



Victor Boccard



Victor Boccard



@victor_boccard



victorboccard.com



Victor Boccard



Victor's work, from *I Am My Ambition* to *Empire of Others*, resonates with emotional truth wrapped in powerful visuals. For him, aesthetics are not an afterthought but the very source of emotion. Whether it's transforming an unassuming location into cinematic beauty or grounding a wide-reaching theme in personal experience, he crafts films with deep visual and emotional impact.

A passionate advocate for analog filmmaking, he often works in 16mm and 35mm formats, citing their cinematic texture, timeless quality, and emotional resonance.

"I FIND EMOTIONS IN THE MERE SENSE OF AESTHETICS."

— Victor Boccard

His short film *Martyr*—created swiftly but with precision—has since evolved into the conceptual seed of a larger universe, gaining early acclaim through the Nikon Film Festival. Boccard's storytelling is expansive. Whether directing commercials, music videos, or narrative films, he approaches each with equal seriousness, blending art, photography, fashion, and cinema into a unique signature. Collaborating with actors such as Didier Flamand, Lucas Bravo, and Leslie Medina, he seeks surprise, spontaneity, and soul.

His company, ATTA FILMS, remains the bedrock of his independence, empowering him to produce unfiltered personal work, including bold experimental pieces like *SSD* and *EX Inanis*. As he continues crafting his creative legacy, Victor Boccard stands as a fearless voice in modern cinema—unapologetically blending ambition with art, and ever chasing the next horizon with the spirit of a true auteur.

With a unique artistic vision and unwavering passion, Victor Boccard constantly redefines the boundaries of independent cinema.



NATHAN CRANE



American



Director



Producer



Editor



Plant Powered Athlete

Nathan Crane is an internationally recognized holistic health professional, bestselling author, 20x award winning documentary filmmaker, and meditation teacher. With 20 years of experience in holistic health research and education, meditation, and scientific approaches to health and spiritual awakening, Nathan has not only conducted more than 10,000 hours of personal health and wellness research and over 500 hours of interviews with world leading Doctors and health experts, but has nearly



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Nathan Crane



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Nathan Crane



Nathan Crane



2 decades studying directly under multiple masters of wisdom traditions including Yoga, Buddhism, Qigong, Native American Traditions, Trauma Healing, Nervous System Regulation, Hypnotherapy, Energy Healing, and Meditation. Nathan brings a fresh and dynamic approach to helping people awaken to their higher selves to experience greater clarity, health, and purpose in life.

He is a global humanitarian doing relief work in Kenya, an Amazon #1 best-selling author, 20x award-winning documentary filmmaker, and the founder of multiple successful organizations that have helped millions of people live with greater health and happiness.

"HUMANS ARE STORYTELLERS, IT'S OUR NATURE. STORIES THAT IMPACT PEOPLE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY ARE WHAT DRIVE ME TO DO THE WORK I DO."

— Nathan Crane

Nathan's contributions to the field are as varied as they are impactful. As a volunteer he has served on the Board of Directors for the Beljanski Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to pioneering scientific research into natural cancer solutions. He has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for various humanitarian projects, and helps provide famine relief in the most impoverished countries around the world.

Nathan is an active volunteer with the Art of Living Foundation, a global nonprofit promoting Vedic wisdom, meditation, and breathwork to enhance well-being. Through his Meditation with Nathan YouTube channel, he guides activation meditations to help individuals connect with their inner wisdom and spiritual insight. Recognized for his contributions, he has received prestigious awards, including the Accolade 2020 Humanitarian Award. A sought-after speaker, Nathan merges science with holistic and spiritual approaches. His documentary *Cancer: The Integrative Perspective* explores groundbreaking methods for addressing the cancer pandemic and advancing wellness education.



CIRO DAPAGIO



American



Actor



Producer



Director



Writer

The red carpet of the ultra-exclusive Miami Film Festival shimmered a little brighter on opening night as Hollywood's rising new power couple made a stunning debut at the premiere of *Silent Partners*—the latest mob-laced thriller from acclaimed filmmaker and star, **Ciro Dapagio**. While the buzz surrounding the film was undeniable, it was Dapagio's radiant wife who captivated the crowd, effortlessly blending glamour and grace.



ciro_dapagio55



Ciro Dapagio



Ciro Dapagio



Ciro Dapagio



Their appearance ignited whispers among insiders of a new Hollywood era—one marked by authenticity, grit, and powerful storytelling.

Dapagio's journey from concept to screen is a testament to his multifaceted talent and unyielding dedication to the cinematic arts. Best known for creating the MobKing franchise in 2017, he has carved out a distinctive path in the industry—blending real-life experience with gripping narrative. A true auteur, Dapagio doesn't just act; he writes, directs, casts, and produces his own films, infusing every frame with his signature style.

"YOU ARE EITHER ON MY SIDE, BY MY SIDE OR IN MY WAY"

—Ciro Dapagio

His latest project, *Silent Partners*, set in the perilous underworld of 1980s Miami, features a powerhouse cast including James Russo (Donnie Brasco), Garry Pastore (The Irishman), Nick Vallelonga (Green Book), and Antoni Corone (Bad Boys). Dapagio stars as Valentine, a ruthless Chicago hitman navigating betrayal and ambition—a role hailed as his most electrifying yet.

Honored with three prestigious Telly Awards and numerous accolades for Best Actor, Dapagio's cinematic presence continues to grow.

His films dominate festivals, securing wins that highlight his artistic prowess and immersive storytelling.

But beyond the accolades and flashing cameras lies a deeper truth: *Ciro Dapagio* is redefining what it means to be a filmmaker. With passion as his compass and authenticity as his guide, he is not just building a career—he's creating a legacy that will inspire generations to come.

Ciro Dapagio continues to leave an indelible mark on the film industry, blending his passion for acting with a unique creative vision.



COREY DAVIS



American



Writer



Producer



Actor



CD Player Productions

Corey Davis has been passionate about filmmaking since the age of six, immersing himself in the art of storytelling and visual expression. By thirteen, armed with his first smartphone, he began crafting his own films—using the medium as both a creative outlet and a means of translating emotions that words alone could not capture.



Corey Davis



Corey Davis



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coreydvisionary



Corey Davis



Corey Davis



Throughout his filmmaking journey, Corey has received widespread recognition, earning awards for Best Director, Best Actor, Best Editor, and Best Short Film, among others. His unique artistic voice resonates with audiences, as he often explores themes of isolation, self-discovery, and resilience. With a distinct ability to capture the struggles of characters who feel different from the world around them, Corey crafts deeply personal narratives that inspire and connect with viewers on an emotional level.

"THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY TO BE CREATIVE. BE THE FIRST YOU, NOT THE NEXT SOMEBODY."

— Corey Davis

As an independent creator, Corey's work stands as a testament to his dedication and originality. His films are not only a reflection of his personal experiences but also a celebration of the inner greatness that lies within those who feel unseen. His ability to merge raw emotion with technical excellence has solidified his reputation as a rising talent in the independent film industry.

With a deep appreciation for the craft and a relentless drive to innovate, he is committed to

exploring new perspectives, embracing challenges, and making a lasting impact through his work. His journey is a testament to the power of independent cinema and the enduring influence of authentic, heartfelt storytelling in an ever-evolving industry.

Corey's vision as a filmmaker is rooted in empathy, vulnerability, and courage. He believes in the transformative power of storytelling to heal, connect, and empower. Each project he undertakes is a bold step toward amplifying underrepresented voices and exploring human complexity.



DIANA DAVIS



American



Counselor



Film Producer



Founder



Movies Making A
Difference

With a heart forged in compassion and a spirit driven by action, she credits her parents for instilling the values that fuel her life's mission: to live joyfully, purposefully, and to bring as many people along with her as possible. Raised in an environment where kindness and tenacity went hand in hand, Diana Davis grew into a woman determined to make every day count—and to use her gifts to create a better world.



Diana Davis (Diana Douglas)



moviesmakingadifference.org



[@diana.davis_absolutely_mmad_](https://www.instagram.com/diana.davis_absolutely_mmad_)



Diana Davis



Beginning her career as an actress in New York, Diana found herself drawn to the stories of human trafficking victims, though at the time she felt powerless to help. It wasn't until decades later, after building a successful career as a Realtor in Scottsdale, that a chance encounter with award-winning journalist Mike Watkiss shifted the course of her life. Inspired by Watkiss's documentary on the FLDS cult, Diana committed herself—without any prior experience—to producing her first film. The result, *Cathedral Canyon*, won the Audience Choice Award at the 2014 Palm Beach International Film Festival.

“NOTHING IS AS HARD AS IT SEEMS IF YOU ARE GUIDED BY PASSION. BUT BE GUIDED, DON'T FIGHT THE PATH THE UNIVERSE PAVES THE WAY FOR.”

— Diana Davis

Her second project, *Cult Cartel*, emerged from a touching conversation with philanthropist Jack Koch, who passed away hours after suggesting a sequel told by FLDS survivors themselves. The film, directed by Paul Davis and featuring actors like Donny Most, Jud Tylor, and Winsor Harmon alongside real-life survivors, was filmed in Colorado City, using locals as actors, crew, and even catering and makeup artists—many of whom were former cult members.

Through her nonprofit *Movies Making A Difference*, Diana provides not only powerful, socially conscious films but also direct aid to survivors of trafficking and abuse—everything from housing and therapy to lifelong emotional support. Each project is personal, each life touched a triumph.

Diana Davis proves that one person, when fueled by empathy, passion, and purpose, can become a light that guides others from darkness into hope.



JUAN CARLOS DÍAZ



Peruvian



Writer



Producer



Director



GATO PARDO
PRODUCCIONES

Juan Carlos Díaz is a prominent producer, editor, and director with an established career in the audiovisual industry. His education at the Lima Film School provided him with a solid foundation in cinematic storytelling, leading him to create two short films that marked the beginning of his career.

In 2012, he began working as an editor and post-producer of advertising at Cineplanet, one of Peru's largest cinema chains, where he honed his skills in editing and post-production.



Juan Carlos Díaz



Gato Pardo Producciones



@gatopardoproducciones



Juan Carlos Díaz Amay



www.gatopardoproducciones.com



Juan Carlos Díaz



His talent led him to explore new creative opportunities, and in 2018 he wrote and directed his first teaser, *VIRUZ*, which received an outstanding response, quickly surpassing half a million views.

In 2021, Díaz wrote the script for *La Bruja de Cao*, a film based on real events that was presented to the Peruvian Ministry of Culture (DAFO). However, due to the pandemic, its production was postponed. Undeterred, in 2022 he independently wrote and directed *La Hora Roja*, the first Peruvian film shot in a single continuous take.

"CINEMA IS NOT A BUSINESS; IT IS A PASSION. IT IS NOT JUST ACTION; IT IS A LIFE FULL OF DEVOTION."

— Juan Carlos Díaz

This groundbreaking project has won over 34 awards at prestigious international festivals, establishing itself as a landmark in independent cinema.

Currently, Juan Carlos Díaz continues to push creative boundaries. He has written his new script, *Sola*, a post-apocalyptic film that will be the first of its kind to feature only one actress. This ambitious project is set to be filmed in 2025 and promises to redefine cinematic storytelling in Peru and beyond.

His avant-garde vision and commitment to innovation position him as one of the most influential creators in independent cinema today.

With an ever-evolving artistic vision, Juan Carlos Díaz is dedicated to challenging conventional filmmaking techniques. His projects continue to captivate audiences worldwide, demonstrating that independent cinema has the power to tell compelling, innovative stories that push the limits of the medium.



MICHEL & MICHAEL DOMINGUEZ BEDDOME



American - Mexican



Writers



Directors



Producers



M&MDB Films

M&MDB Films is an award-winning independent filmmaking duo based in Queens, New York. Comprising a Mexican-American and an Irish-Italian-American creative team, they have spent the past five years establishing themselves as a force in independent cinema, crafting eight short films that span horror, comedy, and drama. Their work has garnered recognition at esteemed festivals, including the Indie Memphis Film Festival, Queens World Film Festival, Coney Island Film Festival, and



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@mandmdbContext



Michael Dominguez Beddome



@mikeydominguezbeddome



Michel Dominguez Beddome



@micheldbeddome



Michel Dominguez Beddome with DP Daniel Farmer



Lady Filmmakers, affirming their status as rising voices in contemporary filmmaking.

Renowned for their evocative storytelling, M&MDB Films captures fleeting moments that serve as windows into time—intimate, atmospheric, and deeply human. Their debut short film won multiple “Best Short Horror” awards, setting a strong precedent for a body of work that continues to explore the extraordinary within the everyday. With a foundation in diverse cultural perspectives, their films seamlessly blend authenticity with striking visual narratives, resonating with audiences who seek stories that linger long after the screen fades to black.

**“WITH LOVE AND DEEP GRATITUDE
TO OUR FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND
CREATIVE COMMUNITY—YOUR
SUPPORT MAKES OUR
STORYTELLING POSSIBLE.”**

— Michel & Michael
Dominguez Beddome

M&MDB Films recently completed principal photography on their first feature film, marking a significant milestone in their creative journey. Their dedication to bold, evocative storytelling drives them to craft films that challenge, haunt, and inspire, reaffirming their belief in cinema’s unique ability to reveal truth. With a commitment to artistic excellence and an

unwavering passion for independent filmmaking, M&MDB Films continues to push creative boundaries, solidifying their place among the most compelling independent creators of 2025.

They actively collaborate with fellow filmmakers, expanding their creative vision while mentoring emerging talents. Their ability to merge striking cinematography with deeply resonant narratives has established them as a distinct voice in the ever-evolving world of independent cinema.



MICHAEL EVERETT



American



Producer



Director



Creation Lab Pictures

Rooted in a small town in North Georgia, a place far from the lights of Hollywood, this award-winning filmmaker and multi-faceted artist cultivated his creative voice not through formal instruction, but through pure observation, experimentation, and relentless passion. His earliest artistic expressions emerged through music—teaching himself guitar at the age of five by watching family members—and later through photography, mastering the camera by meticulously tracking settings and results.



thecreationlab.com



Creation Lab Pictures



Michael Everett



These instincts later flourished through a music business degree from Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, sharpening his skills as a recording engineer and producer.

Michael Everett's deep audio background and intuitive approach to storytelling have become defining characteristics of his acclaimed filmmaking style. In 2005, he co-founded Creation Lab Pictures and Creation Lab Records alongside Matt Swanson, establishing the core platforms for his creative endeavors. Over the past 30 years, Everett has produced, recorded, and mixed over 150 LPs—including Gold and Billboard-charting albums—while also directing music videos for CMT and GAC.

"IF I DIDN'T HAVE A SUPPORTIVE WIFE, I WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DO WHAT I DO. I AM BLESSED DANIELLE IS THAT WIFE. SHE REALLY GETS ME."

—Michael Everett

His portfolio of multi-award-winning films includes *The Irrigationist*, *The Race*, *The Narrow Path*, and the moving documentary *The Katinas – Love God / Love People*, which highlights the American Samoan Christian music group through powerful interviews with the five Katina brothers and renowned artists like Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, CeCe Winans, and Toby Mac.

Everett is celebrated for working improvisationally—rarely using storyboards—

and treating unforeseen obstacles as creative opportunities. He thrives under pressure, using intuition, adaptability, and a commitment to excellence as his compass. He also composes, arranges, and personally mixes the soundtracks of his films, ensuring each project bears his signature quality and emotional depth.

With unwavering dedication to his art, family, and values, Michael Everett proves that brilliance is born not from ideal conditions, but from passion, perseverance, and a fearless commitment to storytelling.



DEREK FREY



American



Director



Producer

A trailblazer in contemporary cinema, this creative powerhouse has earned acclaim across both the Hollywood mainstream and the independent film scene, seamlessly weaving his signature vision into every project. With more than twenty years of experience, he has become known for his compelling storytelling, expert production skills, and ability to bring deeply imaginative worlds to life.



Derek Frey



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Derek Frey



Derek Frey -
Lazer Film Productions



Derek Frey



Since beginning his film career in 1996 at Tim Burton Productions, he has played a vital role in shaping some of the most iconic and visually arresting films of our time. As a producer, his work includes *Dumbo* (2019), *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2016), *Big Eyes* (2014), *Here With Me* (2013), *Frankenweenie* (2012), *Dark Shadows* (2012), *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter* (2012), and *Alice in Wonderland* (2010). Earlier achievements such as *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2007), *Corpse Bride* (2005), and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005)

Green Lake (2016) demonstrate his range—embracing dark comedy, psychological depth, and philosophical themes while remaining universally resonant.

Looking ahead, he continues to innovate with *The Beating of a Moth's Wing*, *Die in the Dark*, and a new collaboration with *The Minor Prophets*. Through every endeavor, he champions bold ideas, nurtures emerging talent, and inspires audiences with films that entertain, challenge, and endure. His journey is a shining example of what happens when passion meets vision—and the world of cinema is better for it.

"SOMETIMES IT'S THOSE LIMITATIONS THAT STIMULATE YOUR CREATIVITY AND HELP YOU TO ACHIEVE SOMETHING BEYOND WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS POSSIBLE"

— Derek Frey

further cemented his status as a master of dark, whimsical cinema with mass appeal.

Simultaneously, his passion for independent filmmaking has given rise to a series of award-winning directorial works. With over 100 international accolades, his projects like *Viaticum* (2024), *The Book Club for Men* (2023), *Awkward Endeavors* (2022), *Pangea* (2018), *God Came 'Round* (2017), *Kill The Engine* (2017), *Vampires Kiss/Blood Inside* (2012), *The Ballad of Sandeep* (2011), and



ALEK GARCIA



Mexican



Director



Producer



Screenwrite



Filmmonkeys
Productions

Alek Garcia is a visionary filmmaker based in Guadalajara, Mexico, recognized for his work as a director, producer, and screenwriter. Passionate about storytelling, he continuously explores innovative ways to engage audiences through compelling cinematic narratives. Garcia trained in Filmmaking at Imaginary Spirit Films, Film Production at the Cinematographic Studies Center, and Screenwriting at the University of Audiovisual Media.



Alek García



@alek.garcia_



Alek García



Alek García



Alek Garcia



His expertise has led to the creation of critically acclaimed films that have garnered international recognition.

As a director, he has helmed the feature films *Tumorro* and *Stalked*, as well as the documentary *Echoes of History* for the Mexican Film Institute. His short films *Cristal*, *Maybe Tomorrow*, and *Camila* further showcase his distinctive narrative style and directorial vision. In the music industry, Garcia has directed visually striking music videos, including *Duality* by Nox Aeternus, *Cette Nuit* by Emiliano González, and *Life is Forward* by Roshana, demonstrating his ability to blend cinematic storytelling with musical expression.

**"WE CREATE FILMS WITH THE
ESSENCE DREAMS ARE MADE OF.
WE ARE DREAM MAKERS,
ONEIRONAUTS. WE ARE
ALCHEMISTS OF REALITY."**

— Alek Garcia

As a line producer, he contributed to the production of the feature films *Cupida* and *The Witch of the Dark Forest*.

His work has been recognized with numerous awards, including Best Director's Debut and Best First Feature at the Saudi Arabia International Festival, Best Music Video and Best Cinematography at the New Fort International Festival, and Best Music Video at the Bahrain International Festival.

Currently, Garcia is directing *Roses Street*, a psychological thriller that promises to captivate audiences with its suspenseful and immersive storytelling. Through his diverse and impactful body of work, Alek Garcia continues to shape the independent film industry and redefine cinematic storytelling.

With a continuously evolving career, Alek Garcia has established himself as one of the most prominent voices in independent cinema. His commitment to innovation and cinematic excellence positions him as an influential creator, whose impact will continue to shape the film industry and beyond.



DR. BRANDON M. GLOVER



American



Writer



Producer



Director



Out Da Barnz
Entertainment

Dr. Brandon M. Glover is a distinguished filmmaker, writer, director, producer, and media professional with an extensive background in the entertainment industry. He is best known for his 2022 drama *Son of a Preacher Man*, a compelling and emotionally resonant film that explores themes of addiction, faith, and redemption. Written and directed by Dr. Glover, the film stars Marquise Lashawn, Destiny Armani, Lachelle Walker, Jermaine Jackson, Merritt Vann, and Rayana Briggs.



Brandon M. Glover



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Out Da Barnz Entertainment



Dr. Brandon M. Glover



Dr. Brandon M. Glover



The story follows Jacob, the son of a local preacher battling a gambling addiction, and Abigail, a high-powered executive whose life takes an unexpected turn after a chance encounter. Through powerful performances, sharp direction, and stunning cinematography by Michael McClendon, the film offers a gripping portrayal of human struggles and perseverance. Complemented by Jayna Chou's evocative musical score, *Son of a Preacher Man* has been praised for its authentic storytelling and artistic execution, earning a four-star rating.

"CREATIVITY IS SEEING WHAT OTHERS SEE AND THINKING WHAT NO ONE ELSE EVER THOUGHT."

— Albert Einstein

Dr. Glover's passion for media and storytelling began in 2008 when he pursued a degree in Media Arts at the University of South Carolina. He further honed his expertise by earning a Master's degree in Entertainment Business from Full Sail University, followed by a Doctorate in Business Management from Northcentral University. In 2010, he founded his own entertainment and production company, through which he has developed an impressive portfolio, including major productions such as *American Idol* (multiple seasons),

The Charlie Rymer Golf Show, *On These Grounds* (Documentary), and *Hoarders*. His diverse body of work spans promos, commercials, music videos, short narratives, events, and weddings.

Beyond filmmaking, Dr. Glover serves as a youth minister at the Bible Way Church of Atlas Road in Columbia, SC, where he also contributes to the media ministry. He views media as a divine gift and strives to inspire and uplift people worldwide through his work.



VICENTINI GOMEZ



Brazilian



Actor



Writer



Screenwriter



Palha e entretenimentos
– Casa de criação

Vicentini Gomez is an accomplished filmmaker, actor, director, and writer celebrated for his ability to delve into the intricacies of the human condition. With a career spanning film, television, theater, and literature, his multifaceted talents have captivated audiences and garnered critical acclaim at prestigious international festivals.



www.palhaecia.com.br



Vicentini Gomez



@vicentinigomez



Vicentini Gomez



Vicentini Gomez

Vicentini Gomez





Gomez's cinematic works, such as *Doctor Hypotheses*, *Justice! A History*, and *History and Stories*, are lauded for their poignant exploration of societal issues, offering a nuanced critique of the relentless pursuit of freedom. These films showcase his remarkable ability to intertwine comic, dramatic, and reflective narratives, resonating deeply with audiences in Brazil and on streaming platforms. His ongoing project, the documentary *Ayrton: Childhood in the Heart of Brazil*, is a testament to his dedication to storytelling, as he works tirelessly to secure its global distribution.

"I BELIEVE THAT TO CREATE A CINEMATOGRAPHIC WORK IS TO LAY BARE THE HUMAN SOUL IN ALL ITS COMPLEXITY - IT'S TO TURN STORIES INTO MIRRORS OF LIFE, SO THAT THE AUDIENCE CAN FIND THEMSELVES, BE MOVED AND TRANSCEND THEMSELVES."

— Vicentini Gomez

As an actor, Gomez has left an indelible mark on both television and film. His compelling portrayals in hit soap operas like *Brazil Avenue*, *Rare Jewel*, and *Accomplices to the Rescue* have earned him widespread admiration. In cinema, his outstanding performance in *Doctor Hypotheses* earned him 25 awards for Best Leading Actor, solidifying his status as a powerhouse in the acting world.

Throughout his career, Vicentini Gomez has demonstrated an unwavering passion for art and storytelling, transcending borders and genres with his work. His ability to merge entertainment with social reflection has made him a standout figure in independent cinema. Beyond his talent as an actor and director, his skills as a writer have allowed him to craft stories that deeply resonate with audiences. With each project, he reaffirms his commitment to culture and artistic expression, solidifying his legacy as a visionary creator whose impact will continue to inspire future generations of filmmakers and artists.



ROBERT D. JONES



American



Actor



Executive Producer



Infinity World Media
Group (IWMG) Inc.

Robert Déon, professionally known as Bigg Sarge, is a decorated U.S. Army veteran turned powerhouse in the entertainment industry. With 24 years of honorable military service, including deployments in multiple conflicts such as the War in Iraq, he retired as a 100% disabled war veteran. His extensive military career shaped his unwavering values of leadership, loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage (LDRSHIP), principles that continue to guide his life and career.



Robert Deon



ROBERT (DÉON) JONES



linktr.ee/robertdeon



robertdeon74



@biggsargeentertainment



Robert D. Jones



As a SAG professional actor, Robert captivates audiences with his commanding presence and authenticity on screen. Beyond his acting career, he is the visionary force behind Bigg Sarge Entertainment Studios, a dynamic film production company committed to telling impactful and globally resonant stories. His dedication to storytelling extends into groundbreaking media ventures, ensuring diverse narratives reach audiences worldwide.

"FILMMAKING AND ACTING ARE NOT JUST ART—THEY ARE TRUTH, PASSION, AND THE BREATHING LIFE PURSUIT OF STORYTELLING GREATNESS."

— Robert D. Jones

Robert is also the Co-Founder and CEO of Infinity World Media Group (IWMG) and the owner of Infnit8+ Network, an innovative streaming platform championing independent creators and underrepresented voices. Through these ventures, he has created a platform for emerging filmmakers, fostering inclusivity and innovation in the entertainment landscape. With a remarkable ability to merge his military discipline with cinematic artistry, Bigg Sarge is a testament to perseverance, passion, and purpose.

His journey from the battlefield to the big screen exemplifies the power of resilience and creativity. He credits his success to God, his family, and the invaluable support system that has guided him throughout his career. As a leader in independent film and media, Robert Déon continues to inspire, uplift, and redefine storytelling beyond Hollywood.

Looking ahead, Robert remains committed to pushing the boundaries of independent filmmaking and media innovation.



KATY JORDAN



Scottish



Actress



Producer



Director



BlueCloth Productions

Originally hailing from Stirling, Scotland, and now based in Glasgow for the past decade, this multifaceted creative professional has carved out a distinctive path in the independent film industry. Her background in Graphic Design and Visual Communication, studied in Falkirk, laid the foundation for her signature visual style—evident in the fact that she personally designs all artwork for her productions.



katy-jordan.co.uk



[@_KJordan_](https://twitter.com/_KJordan_)



[@katyjordan92](https://www.instagram.com/katyjordan92)



[Katy Jordan](https://www.facebook.com/KatyJordan)



Katy Jordan



Katy's journey into film began in 2013 with formal acting training, which she pursued for a year before branching out independently. Her debut role was as Gemma in the short film *Just Gemma*, followed by her first written script *Girl Talk*—later refined and re-envisioned as *Ladies Night*, which is set to begin production soon.

In 2014, she penned what would become her most ambitious project to date: *Boundless*, a six-part, multi-award-winning murder mystery series. Filmed in 2015 during her annual leave and self-funded, *Boundless* premiered in 2019 in Glasgow and now streams on OpprimeTV.

"LEARNING AS I GO AND HONING MY SKILLS BY PUSHING PAST MY LIMITS AND LEAVING MY COMFORT ZONE HAS BEEN A HUGE ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR ME"

— Katy Jordan

It also marked the beginning of a successful partnership with Andy, her production collaborator, with whom she is co-founding BlueCloth Productions.

Under the BlueCloth banner, Katy has helped write and produce four additional award-winning short films: *Retail Therapy*, *Hidden Scars*, *The Weekend*, and *Hallowed Be Thy Name*. Her talent as a writer is further highlighted by two globally recognized scripts: *Me, Myself & I* (short) and *Regalia* (feature),

both of which have earned numerous accolades.

Beyond filmmaking, Katy is the author of the *Colour Coded* spy/gang book series, with trailers produced and edited entirely by her.

As an autistic artist, Katy's relentless pursuit of growth—whether through acting, editing, or visual effects—reflects her commitment to pushing boundaries and embracing discomfort as a catalyst for creativity. Her journey is a testament to resilience, vision, and the limitless potential of self-belief. The best is yet to come.



ANAYA KUNST



Brasilian



Director and Producer



Cinematographer



Writer and Composer



AnayaMusic

Anaya Kunst, professionally known as Anaya Music, is an internationally celebrated New Age composer, filmmaker, director, producer, and author whose artistic achievements have made her a luminary in the creative world. With an extraordinary tally of over 602 international awards, Anaya's work seamlessly bridges the realms of music and visual storytelling, crafting transformative experiences that resonate deeply with universal themes of love, peace, and spiritual harmony.



anayamusic.com



[AnayaMusic](https://www.youtube.com/AnayaMusic)



[@anayakunst](https://www.instagram.com/anayakunst)



[@AnayaMusic](https://twitter.com/AnayaMusic)



[AnayaMusic Kunst-
AnayaMusic](https://www.linkedin.com/company/AnayaMusic-Kunst-AnayaMusic)



Anaya Kunst



Holding a Post Doctorate in Leadership from Syracuse University, USA, and a PhD in Information Technologies from Loughborough University, England, Anaya exemplifies a rare fusion of intellectual rigor and artistic passion. Her professional journey includes significant contributions as a teacher, consultant, and corporate leader, but her ultimate calling has always been to elevate the human spirit through the arts.

A prolific artist, Anaya has released over 45 albums, 20 singles, and 120 music videos, each a testament to her dedication to pushing creative boundaries.

“ MUSIC AND MOVIE ARE THE MOST PERFECT ART THAT BELONGS TO HEAVEN ”

— Anaya Kunst

Her collaborations with the Prague Philharmonic Orchestra and esteemed American artists like Steve Salani and Matthew Shell highlight her ability to blend diverse musical traditions into harmonious masterpieces. Complementing her vision are sound designer Pedro Tavares and image designer Marcio Alves, whose contributions enhance the depth and unity of her projects. Anaya's musical foundation was shaped by her studies with maestros such as Waldemar


Henriques and Wilma Graca and further enriched through vocal interpretations of composers like Puccini, Bizet, and Villa-Lobos. Recognized as an Outstanding Keyboardist and a Music Diva, her compositions are celebrated for their healing power and ethereal beauty.


A GRAMMY®, ASCAP, and LIT Talent Awards voting member, Anaya's artistry is deeply rooted in her exploration of the universe and the immortality of the soul. Her work in music and film continues to inspire, making her a beacon of creativity in the New Age genre.



NANCEE LAFAYETTE

 American

 Actress

 Singer

 Director

Nancee LaFayette's illustrious career in acting and filmmaking began in her youth in Rhode Island, where she first discovered her passion for performance. Her formal education in film and television took shape at Apacheland Movie Ranch in Arizona, an iconic Western film location. Immersed in the industry, she participated in live street shows, performing stunts and working as an extra in various productions. This early experience allowed her to collaborate with Hollywood legends such as director Sam

 nanceelafayette.com

 Nancee LaFayette

 Nancee LaFayette



Nancee LaFayette



Peckinpah, known for *The Wild Bunch*, as well as Elvis Presley and Audie Murphy.

LaFayette's journey continued at Universal Studios, which became her personal film school over a span of thirteen years. She was granted invaluable access to numerous departments—including titles, film editing, and special effects—where she gained hands-on experience in the intricate processes behind motion picture production. This immersive environment provided the opportunity to observe and learn from some of the industry's finest actors, directors, and craftspeople, further refining her expertise.

"REPUTATION IS ALL, SYNONYMOUS WITH HONESTY AND KEEPING ONE'S WORD AND PROMISES."

— Nancee LaFayette

Throughout her dynamic career, LaFayette has remained committed to honing her skills and embracing the evolving landscape of independent film. Her unique path, shaped by legendary mentors and rich studio experience, has given her a distinct voice and artistic vision. Whether performing on set or contributing behind the scenes, her deep respect for the craft is evident in every project she touches. Today, Nancee LaFayette is widely regarded as a powerful force in independent filmmaking. Her work continues to resonate with audiences

and fellow creators alike, not only for its authenticity and technical mastery, but also for the dedication and heart she brings to the art form. Her legacy is one of resilience, creativity, and an unwavering passion for storytelling that transcends generations.

With a foundation built on real-world experience rather than conventional classrooms, LaFayette's career reflects a rare blend of grit, talent, and intuition. Her ability to navigate both the creative and technical sides of filmmaking has earned her the respect of peers and professionals across the industry.



KIMBER LEIGH



American



Actress



Producer



Director

Kimber Leigh is an internationally acclaimed, award-winning independent actor, producer, and director whose remarkable career spans over two decades. Her passion for the arts was ignited at the age of seven when her grandfather envisioned her becoming as renowned an actress as Greta Garbo—a vision that ultimately shaped her path to success. This inspiring story is recounted in her bestselling book *Greta GarBitch*.



Kimber Leigh



@kimberaleigh



Kimber Leigh



kimberleigh2488



Kimber Leigh



Since the early 2000s, Kimber has emerged as a prolific figure in independent cinema, starring in over 35 films, producing more than 14, and directing seven productions to date. Her contributions to the industry reflect a profound commitment to storytelling and creative excellence.

In 2024, Kimber further cemented her reputation with the release of two internationally award-winning documentaries: *Together in ALS: A Wife's Perspective* and *Taking Your Crack at Filmmaking: Through the Eyes of the Director Kimber Leigh*. These powerful projects showcased her ability to craft compelling narratives that resonate with audiences worldwide.

"DEDICATING THIS TO MICHAEL HARRELSON. ONE OF THE GREATEST CHARACTER ACTORS THAT I EVER HAD THE PLEASURE TO WORK WITH."

— Kimber Leigh

Looking ahead to 2025, Kimber is set to expand her directorial achievements with two highly anticipated documentaries: *The Sounds of the Soul* (working title) and *Pick It Up America*. Additionally, she will explore her comedic range as the female lead in the short film *Invasion of the Space Vixen*.

Kimber Leigh's dedication to independent filmmaking, her award-winning body of work, and her unwavering pursuit of creative excellence position her as one of the most influential voices in contemporary cinema. With an unyielding passion for storytelling and a fearless approach to creative expression, she continues to push the boundaries of independent filmmaking. As she embarks on new projects in 2025, Kimber remains committed to leaving a lasting impact, inspiring the next generation of filmmakers and captivating audiences worldwide.



MARIANO LUNA TÉLLEZ



Mexican



Businessman




Executive Producer



Luna & Group

Mariano Luna Téllez is a creator by nature and Executive Producer of the film *Canas al Aire*, a cinematic tribute to Mexico's cultural roots and the wisdom of grandmothers. Directed and produced by Puebla native Luis Eduardo Sánchez Domínguez, *Canas al Aire* is the culmination of over eight years of creative dedication. The film celebrates the essence of Puebla's Pueblos Mágicos through the stories of three iconic grandmothers—Janis, Delfi, and

 @mariano_luna_tellez

 Mariano Luna Tellez



Mariano Luna Téllez



Cholita—inspired by the grandmother of Governor-Elect Alejandro Armenta Mier. International star Belinda voices the narrative, and the production is backed by a distinguished team including Olga Méndez Juárez (President of Tesoros de México, SECTUR Federal), Juan Sánchez Domínguez (Vice President of CANAGRAF), and Pilar Sánchez Ramírez, who also stars in the film.

Recognized for his creative and social contributions, Mariano was named World Class Creator in 2024 at The World Class Film Awards—an acknowledgment of his growing influence in the cinematic world and his commitment to meaningful storytelling.

"I ASPIRE TO BE AN AGENT OF CHANGE IN OUR SOCIETY, IN OUR PEOPLE, IN OUR WORLD, IN OUR MEXICO"

— Mariano Luna Tellez

Born in Mexico City and rooted in Puebla, Mariano's path has been one of vision, grit, and transformation. He began working at 15 after a family separation that pushed him to take responsibility for his future. With over two decades of experience, he currently serves as an executive at Quálitas, Mexico's leading auto insurance company.

He is also a serial entrepreneur and the founder of a philanthropic foundation supporting children in shelters and orphanages.

For Mariano, cinema is a platform for impact. Whether through business, culture, or philanthropy, he remains driven by one mission: to be an agent of change and create a lasting legacy of purpose.

By telling stories that resonate across generations, he reinforces the importance of memory, identity, and human connection in a rapidly changing world.



SUZANNE LUTAS



French



Screenwriter




Writer

Suzanne's journey as a storyteller began at the age of ten when a dream of meeting her favorite actor ignited her passion for writing. This aspiration drove her to learn English, setting the stage for her eventual path from France to Hollywood.

Dedicated to mastering her craft, Suzanne earned both a Bachelor's and a Master's degree in English Literature.

 suzanne LUTAS

 Suzanne Lutas



Suzanne Lutas



She initially applied her expertise as an English and Art teacher before expanding into the world of screenwriting. Today, she is renowned for her ability to craft compelling narratives featuring strong female protagonists, seamlessly blending elements of Action, Sci-Fi, and the Supernatural. Her work delves into themes of identity and belonging, captivating audiences with its emotional depth and thrilling storylines.

Suzanne's screenwriting talents have garnered widespread recognition in prestigious competitions.

She is a passionate painter, creates handmade jewelry, and channels her love for music as the lead vocalist of her jazz band, Oh Happy Fiù—whose name, inspired by Tahitian, translates to "Carpe Diem." Her diverse creative pursuits fuel her imagination, enriching her storytelling and artistic expression.

As a visionary independent creator, Suzanne continues to push boundaries, crafting stories that resonate deeply with audiences worldwide. Her remarkable contributions to cinema have earned her a well-deserved place among the top independent creators.

"ANYBODY WITH ARTISTIC AMBITIONS IS ALWAYS TRYING TO RECONNECT WITH THE WAY THEY SAW THINGS AS A CHILD."

— Tim Burton

Notably, three of her scripts have earned gold awards, with *The Dead Ringer* standing out as her most celebrated work. This script has received top honors across more than 80 film festivals, securing accolades such as Best Original Screenplay, Best Feature Script, Best Original Story, and Best International Original Screenwriter. These achievements highlight her exceptional storytelling ability and dedication to the craft.

Beyond writing, Suzanne embraces a multifaceted artistic life.



ANASTASIYA MYKHAYLOVA



Ukrainian



Screenwriter



Director



Courageous Donuts

With a rare fusion of production design expertise and directorial vision, this dynamic filmmaker transforms the screen into a portal of the extraordinary. Anastasiya Mykhaylova is a visionary artist whose multidisciplinary roots allow her to craft deeply immersive, emotionally charged cinematic experiences rooted in magical realism and metaphysical space.

Her journey began with a passion for painting and photography, leading to a natural gravitation toward production design during film school.



Anastasiya Mykhaylova



anamiha.com



@utace



Anastasiya Mykhaylova



As a director and designer, she creates environments as emotional extensions of identity—spaces that breathe, grieve, and whisper. Her acclaimed debut short, *Made From Leakproof Plastic*, explored grief through a leaking fridge, earning praise for its poetic symbolism and personal resonance. Shot in Toronto, it was a tribute to her Ukrainian heritage and a deeply moving homage to her late grandfather.

Anastasiya's portfolio includes collaborations on *Praeis* (Cannes), *Saving Art* (Slamdance, Palm Springs ShortFest), *The Bull* (Tallinn Black

Nights), and *Sparare Alle Angurie*, a festival sensation nominated for BAFTA Yugo and BSC Awards. These projects reflect her deep creative bonds with trusted collaborators like Patrick Verlin, Antonio Donato, Tamás A. Méder, and Anna Abdullaeva—forming what she calls her "creative family."

Her work blends fantasy, folklore, and cultural identity, drawing from her Ukrainian roots and experiences as an immigrant in England and

Canada. Fascinated by language, accents, and stories of outsiders, she aims to reflect a more honest and global cinematic voice.

In 2025, she and Verlin will launch *Courageous Donuts*, a production company championing bold, character-driven films that challenge convention and elevate emerging voices.

From rustic Flemish barns to haunting, magical homes, Anastasiya Mykhaylova doesn't just build sets—she builds worlds. And through these worlds, she invites us to feel, reflect, and believe in the magic that lingers in the everyday.



YUUKI NATSUNAGI



Japan



Actress



Artist



Dancer

Yuuki Natsunagi is a distinguished artist specializing in traditional Japanese Kamigata dance, known as one of the most minimalistic forms of movement in the world. Through her performances, films, and photography, she conveys contemporary artistic expression using the Japanese fan and kimono, bringing the essence of this unique dance form to audiences worldwide.

From childhood, Yuuki immersed herself in dance and traditional Japanese arts, later refining her artistic vision at



Yuuki Natsunagi.



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Yuuki Natsunagi



the Graduate School of Fine Arts at Tokyo University of the Arts. Her body of work is deeply rooted in the elegance of Japanese aesthetics while embracing a modern perspective.

Her notable performance pieces include "tears of Eos" (2009, Tokyo Asahi ArtSquare) and "camellia" (2012, Beppu Contemporary Art Festival). She also gained international recognition with her dance film "aquarium" (2013), which was screened at prestigious venues across 12 countries, including the

Award at the Slovak Europe Music Award festival, and an Honorable Mention at the Budapest Film Festival in 2023. In 2024, it was screened as the Best Experimental Film at Théâtre Le Temple in France.

Through her artistry, Yuuki Natsunagi continues to push the boundaries of traditional Japanese dance, offering audiences a bridge between heritage and contemporary expression.

"WE ORIENTALS CREATE SHADOWS WHERE THERE IS NOTHING, IT CREATES BEAUTY."

—In Praise of Shadows
by Junichiro Tanizaki

Sculpture Garden in New York, the Ludwig Museum in Germany, the Freiburg Theater, and the Miró Museum in Mallorca, Spain. It was also showcased at La Briqueterie CDCN in France, further solidifying her global presence.

Continuing her exploration of dance and film, Yuuki's recent work, "peri" (2021), was exhibited at the Screen Dance Festival at Dansmuseet in Stockholm, Sweden. The film earned critical acclaim, winning the Best Dance Short Film Award at the Kiez Berlin Film Festival in Germany, the Best Experimental Film



DIAMIDA ORDAZ



Mexican



Writer



Cinematographer




Director

Diamida Ordaz is a visionary filmmaker whose work transcends conventional storytelling, deeply influenced by her love for stones, mountains, kintsugi, and sumi-e. The philosophy behind these elements shapes her creative process, bringing a unique perspective to her cinematography.

Born in Mexico, a country renowned for its rich culture and biodiversity, Diamida grew up between the bustling metropolis of Mexico City and the tranquil surroundings of Acalome, a small town within a Biosphere Reserve Zone.

 diamida.art

 [@diamida.ordaz](https://www.instagram.com/diamida.ordaz)



Diamida Ordaz



This duality—urban dynamism and rural serenity—infuses her artistic vision, allowing her to explore themes of contrast, nature, and human resilience.

Academically, Diamida holds a Ph.D. in Arts, with specialized studies in neuroaesthetics, education, dramatic literature, theater, and cinema. Her scholarly pursuits, combined with hands-on empirical learning, have honed her ability to craft compelling narratives that delve into the human experience and the essence of Mexican culture beyond clichés and misconceptions.

**““THANKS MOUNTAINS, INSECTS...
FIGUERÓA, KUROSAWA,
SVANKMAJER, HERZOG, AI. TO
SHOW ME THE COSMOS AND
CHAOS OF CREATING MOVING
IMAGES.”**

—Diamida Ordaz

Cinematography has become her home, a creative habitat where she finds fulfillment and purpose. Through her films, she showcases the depth and beauty of Mexico, sharing untold stories that resonate with audiences worldwide. Her work has traveled across the globe, captivating viewers with its authenticity and poetic visual language.

Her dedication to cinema as an art form, coupled with her philosophical approach, cements her as a distinguished voice in

contemporary filmmaking, continuously redefining the boundaries of independent cinema.

Her passion for storytelling extends beyond the screen, as she actively participates in discussions, workshops, and collaborations that nurture emerging filmmakers. Diamida's unwavering commitment to artistic excellence and cultural representation ensures her work will continue to inspire and influence the global film industry for years to come.

Her artistic journey is also a personal one—rooted in memory, shaped by contrast, and guided by intuition.



TONYA PINKINS



American



Actress



Filmmaker



Writer

A dynamic force in the entertainment industry, this celebrated performer, writer, and filmmaker has spent decades captivating audiences across stage, television, and film while relentlessly pursuing artistic truth and social impact. Her latest feature film, *Game Nite*, premiered at the Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles on February 8th and 9th, 2024, and reflects the same fearless storytelling that defines her work. Shortly after, she marked her Latin



Tonya Pinkins



@tonyapinkins



Tonya Pinkins



redpillmovie2020.com



tonyapinkins.com



Tonya Pinkins.



American concert debut at The American Trade Hotel in Panama for Valentine's Day, a testament to her boundless creative energy.

Never one to stand still, she spent 2023 traveling to twenty countries, directing *Game Nite*, producing a live concert at Little Island in Manhattan, and continuing her role on Tyler Perry's hit television series *SISTAS*. Her first feature film, *Red Pill*—a gripping political thriller shot by John Hudak Jr.—delves into the anxieties of the 2020 election.

"DON'T CONFUSE PRESENCE FOR POWER."

— Tonya Pinkins.

She expanded on the film's themes in her book *Red Pill Unmasked*, and further empowers audiences through her motivational work *Get Over Yourself!: How to Drop the Drama and Claim the Life You Deserve*, her podcast *You Can't Say That!*, and a series of candid essays on MEDIUM.

Her artistic legacy includes powerful performances in productions like *Caroline*, or *Change and Fear the Walking Dead*, and her Tony Award-winning presence continues to influence generations of performers.

Yet her voice extends far beyond the stage—she's a bold advocate, producer, and visionary. Projects like *Truth & Reconciliation: Womyn Working It Out!* exemplify her dedication to amplifying marginalized voices.

At 62, she continues to set new goals, including walking the 600-mile Camino de Compostela. With grit, grace, and unshakable integrity, she lives by her own words: "Speaking up for the people who don't get the microphone." Her journey is not just a career—it's a revolution in motion.



RAFA PICARD



French



Cultural Ambassador



Event Coordinator



Rafa Picard's Agency

With French heritage and a Mexican heart, this dynamic cultural ambassador has transformed the entertainment landscape through his unique ability to connect diverse ideas, people, and artistic expressions. His journey exemplifies how cultural fluency can transcend borders and create meaningful impact in our increasingly digital world.

Beginning his professional path in event coordination in 2013, this visionary entrepreneur found his breakthrough



rafapicardagency.com



@rafapicardagency



@rafapicard



Rafa Picard



Rafa Picard



moment in 2014 organizing inaugural events for Forever 21. This opportunity became the catalyst for establishing his own agency in 2019—a venture that has since collaborated with over 80 prestigious brands including Jaguar, Mango, Hublot, and American Eagle, executing more than 100 successful events and digital campaigns.

Behind Rafa Picard's professional achievements lies a profound philosophy that balances digital innovation with authentic human connection. "Screens are merely communication tools—the real connection

"SCREENS ARE MERELY COMMUNICATION TOOLS—THE REAL CONNECTION HAPPENS WITH THOSE AROUND US."

— Rafa Picard

happens with those around us," he often reflects, emphasizing that while social media platforms have become our "new business cards," they must remain servants to genuine human interaction rather than masters of it.

What distinguishes his contribution to art and entertainment is his commitment to creating spaces where ideas and experiences flow freely. His social media presence isn't merely about accumulating followers but building a community anchored in respect and honesty. He carefully differentiates between popularity and influence, noting, "Having many followers

isn't the same as being an influencer or having a positive impact."

His appreciation for literature and cinema informs his creative approach, while regular nature walks provide the grounding balance to his digital endeavors. This holistic perspective allows him to navigate both traditional and contemporary cultural landscapes with remarkable fluidity.

In a world increasingly divided by screens and algorithms, his story reminds us that our greatest cultural achievements still spring from our most human qualities: curiosity, authenticity, and the courage to bring people together across boundaries.



YULIA



American



Musician



Producer



Pianist-Composer

Yulia Petrova's (who goes by the stage name Yulia) remarkable journey as an artist and composer exemplifies dedication, talent, and a lifelong passion for music. Her love for the piano began at the tender age of five, and by eight, she was composing original melodies, signaling the emergence of a prodigious talent destined for greatness. In 2022, Yulia's artistry reached new milestones as she became a finalist for the Smooth Jazz Network's prestigious "Breakout Artist of the Year" award. Her music resonated with audiences worldwide, achieving top spots on radio charts and earning over 13 international awards within the same year.



YuliaMusic.com



imyulia.com



yulia_pianist



yuliapianistcomposer



ImYuliaMusic



Yulia



The following years saw Yulia's success soar even higher. In 2023, she released her acclaimed album *Best Wishes*, a collection of ten tracks, eight of which won top honors at international music festivals. This album garnered widespread recognition, earning two Gold Medals at the 2023 Global Music Awards and winning "Best Smooth Jazz Album" at the World Entertainment Awards in 2024.

Her accolades extended further in 2024, with nominations at the ISSA and Josie Music Awards, and a notable win at the World Class Film Awards, solidifying her position as a distinguished composer and artist.

"NOTES WITH MEANING CREATE MUSIC WITH DEPTH"

— Yulia

Yulia's journey continues to inspire as she collaborates with fellow musicians, performs live, and creates new musical masterpieces. Her dedication to her craft, coupled with her extraordinary talent, makes her a beacon of inspiration in the music world. Yulia's story is a testament to the power of passion and perseverance, as she continues to leave an indelible mark on the global stage.

In 2025, Yulia Petrova continues to captivate audiences with her latest release, *Isaiah 40:31*, a powerful composition co-written with Lew Laing Jr. that beautifully reflects her depth as an artist and composer. This masterpiece has already garnered critical acclaim, earning two Silver Medals at the prestigious Global Music Awards 2025. With its evocative melodies and profound musical storytelling, *Isaiah 40:31* further cements Yulia's reputation as a visionary in the industry, showcasing her ability to blend technical brilliance with heartfelt artistry.



ZSOLT POZSGAI



Hungarian



Festival Director



Writer



Director and Producer



Horatio Film Company

Zsolt Pozsgai, a distinguished writer and director from Pécs, Hungary, has carved an exceptional path in the world of independent cinema and theatre. His artistic journey began with a profound curiosity about life, which he explored through diverse roles such as ambulance nurse, car driver, bar singer, teacher, and postman. These experiences deeply enriched his storytelling perspective. In 1988, Pozsgai's first theatrical work debuted, marking the start of an extraordinary career in playwriting.



Zsolt Pozsgai



@pozsgai.z



Zsolt Pozsgai



Zsolt Pozsgai



Over the next three decades, he authored 114 plays, all of which were performed not only in Hungary but on international stages. His versatility and mastery across genres established him as a luminary in the theatrical world.

Transitioning seamlessly into film, Pozsgai directed his first feature in 2006. Since then, he has written and directed 17 films, showcasing his ability to captivate audiences with narratives that traverse a wide array of themes and styles. His films have garnered acclaim on the festival circuit since 2017, earning him hundreds of awards and culminating in a lifetime achievement award in Las Vegas.

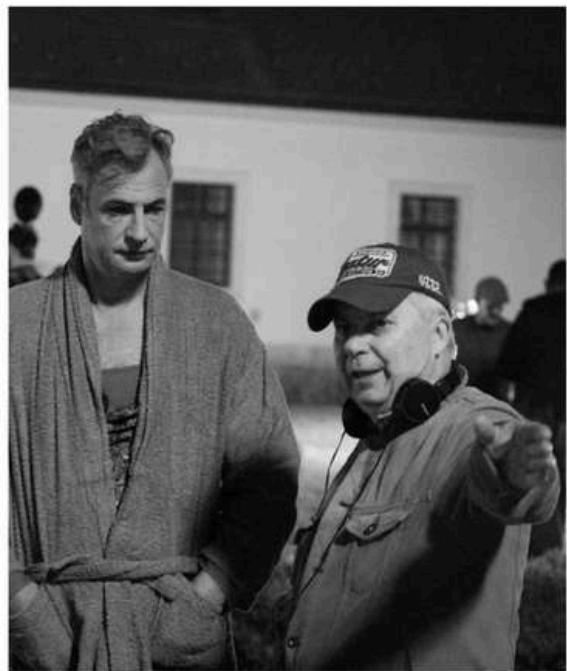
"I PROFESS THE TEACHINGS OF ONE OF MY MASTERS. MY HAPPINESS IS HAPPINESS STANDING GUARD OVER THE HAPPINESS OF OTHERS." THIS IS HOW I LIVE AND CREATE."

— Zsolt Pozsgai

In 2020, Pozsgai founded the Papa International Historical Film Festival (PIHFF), where he continues to serve as director, fostering a global platform for historical cinema. His commitment to the arts extends beyond creation; he actively contributes as a lecturer at universities and is a member of both the Indian and Persian Film Academies. Despite his prolific career, Pozsgai values his family above all.

His wife, a television editor, and their two daughters are his greatest treasures. A staunch advocate for creative autonomy, he identifies as an independent filmmaker, believing that inner freedom is essential to artistic integrity.

Recognized as a preeminent figure in Hungary and beyond, Zsolt Pozsgai's influence on independent cinema and theatre continues to inspire creators worldwide, marking him as an inspiring figure in the world of visual storytelling and a deserving honoree in Beyond Hollywood: The Top Independent Creators 2025.



STEEVEN PETITTEVILLE



French



Cinematographer



Filmmaker



Steeven Petiteville,
A.F.C.

Steeven Petiteville is a distinguished cinematographer based in Los Angeles and Paris, recognized for his compelling work in both narrative and commercial filmmaking. A member of the prestigious AFC (French Cinematographers Association), he has built a reputation for his eclectic approach to visual storytelling, seamlessly navigating genres from horror and thriller to comedy. Petiteville has collaborated with an array of acclaimed directors, including Phil Joanou, Logan Kibens, Franck Khalfoun, Julie Delpy, and Bret Easton Ellis.



Steeven Petiteville



@steevendop



steeven petiteville, A.F.C



steevenp.com



Steeven Petiteville



His versatility extends beyond traditional filmmaking, as he has also worked closely with esteemed artists and choreographers such as Youssef Nabil, Tracy Phillips, and William Forsythe. This diverse range of experiences continuously enriches his creative vision, allowing him to craft innovative and visually striking cinematography.

With a strong focus on storytelling, Petiteville's work has been celebrated at numerous international festivals, earning accolades at the New York Film Awards, the Lion King Festival, and the Odyssey International Film Festival.

"FILMMAKING IS A TEAMWORK."

— Steeven Petiteville

His ability to adapt to various directorial styles and his commitment to pushing artistic boundaries make him a sought-after cinematographer in the industry.

Now at a pivotal stage in his career, Petiteville continues to refine his craft, drawing from years of experience to deliver captivating imagery in any setting. Whether starting from a blank page or crafting visuals that enhance an existing narrative, he remains dedicated to exploring new horizons in cinematography.

Passionate about visual language and the power of images, Petiteville believes that cinematography is more than just capturing scenes—it is about evoking emotions and immersing audiences in compelling worlds. His dedication to innovation and artistic excellence drives him to experiment with new techniques, ensuring that each project stands out with a unique and impactful visual identity. His commitment to his craft, combined with his technical expertise and artistic intuition, allows him to bring directors' visions to life while constantly pushing the boundaries of cinematography.



PORFIRIO RAMÍREZ



Mexican



Lawyer



Cultural Advocate



Jurídico Empresarial
Dr. Porfirio Ramírez
Mendoza.

A passionate advocate for cultural initiatives and artistic expression, this distinguished Mexican legal mind has consistently leveraged his influence to strengthen Mexico's creative landscape. His commitment to fostering artistic endeavors culminated in his pivotal role as a key associate in the realization of The World Class Film Awards 2024 in Mexico, an event that elevated Mexican cinema's global profile while building international creative bridges. This dedication to cultural advancement earned him



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@drporfiriorm



juridicoempresarial.com.mx



Porfirio Ramirez Mendoza





prestigious recognition as a World Class Creator in 2024, acknowledging his multifaceted contributions beyond the courtroom.

Known affectionately as "El Midas del Derecho," Porfirio Ramírez Mendoza's legal calling emerged after witnessing his father struggle with inadequate representation during the economic turbulence of the 1990s. This experience shaped his understanding of justice and his professional path. A graduate of the prestigious Escuela Libre de Derecho, he holds four master's degrees, two doctorates, and specialized training in international human rights.

"WORK WELL, CHARGE FAIRLY, AND THE REST WILL COME."

—Porfirio Ramirez

His career began modestly in Colonia La Paz in 2003, where he placed newspaper advertisements while struggling to cover basic expenses. His father's counsel—"work well, charge fairly, and the rest will come"—became his north star. A chance encounter led to representing a prominent Tlaxcalan business family, transforming his practice. His growing reputation brought high-profile cases, including electoral disputes and victories against state giant Pemex.

His vision expanded with offices in New York

and Los Angeles serving Mexican migrants, alongside his Mexico City and Tlaxcala locations. Beyond his practice, he founded the Fundación Justicia para el que Menos Tiene AC, providing free legal counsel to those in need.

His remarkable journey demonstrates how passion, integrity, and unwavering principles can transcend professional boundaries to uplift communities and nurture cultural heritage—proving that with clean hands and an open heart, one person can indeed transform countless lives and leave an enduring legacy of justice and inspiration.



BRITTNEY RAE CARRERA



Cuban-American



Writer



Director



Actor



Comedian

Brittney Rae Carrera (known as Brittney Rae) is a Writer, Director, Actor, and Comedian from Miami, FL, raised in a Cuban-American household. She's known for both her film and TV work as well as her online comedy, which has gained viral recognition. First known for her feature on TBS Network Misery Index / Impractical Jokers video submission of her dancing in an empty room just before a 20 foot Yellow anaconda opens the door and slithers in, causing her to scream and run into the wall.



Brittney Rae



@brittneyraeallday



@brittneyraeallday



brittneyraeallday



Brittney Rae Carrera



She is also recognized for working with popular YouTube comedians like Cherdleys, Joel Haver, Cerspence, Blake Rosier, Trevor Wallace and Dax Flame.

A Sundance-supported filmmaker, Brittney was selected for the Sundance (Miami) Short Film Intensive for her short film "WATER" which is being adapted to a feature, along with her next feature film, "Scorpion Town 4" (There will never be a 1,2 or 3.)

Before breaking into film, Brittney worked briefly as a professional alligator wrangler in the Everglades- once saving an elderly man from the jaws of a 12-foot gator. The man later died, but it was not alligator-related.

Brittney continues performing and creating online, most recently launching a very serious sock business, welcometothesockfactory.com, as well as acting in TV and film- most recently opposite Glen Powell in Chad Powers (coming to Hulu in Fall 2025).

"BUY MY SOCKS"

—Brittney Rae Carrera

Her directing work has been recognized by Variety, LA Weekly, and Forbes, and she was featured in Directors You Should Know. She trained in NYC at HB Studio, UCB, and Magnet Theatre, performing Off-Broadway and in stand-up before making the jump to filmmaking. She's been honored at Sundance, San Diego Comic-Con, and Miami Film Festival, received a Best Actress nomination at Mammoth Film Festival, and her work has played at multiple festivals across the country.



ESTOVAN REIZO



Chinese



Actor



Singer



Songwriter



Dancer

A rising luminary in the international performing arts scene, he exemplifies what it means to dream boldly and work relentlessly from a young age. With an impressive résumé that spans singing, songwriting, acting, dancing, hosting, and modeling, Estovan Reizo has captivated audiences across the globe—all by the age of 14.

Displaying an exceptional passion for the performing arts since the age of 3, Estovan began composing original songs at just 9 years old, culminating in the release of nine



Estovan Reizo Cheah



@estovan_reizo



Estovan Reizo 谢颖泽



Estovan Reizo



singles that have been celebrated across various platforms. His talent as a songwriter was nationally recognized when his original composition, Hero in Me, won a top award at the Singapore Youth Festival "Youth Station Project." As one of the youngest registered song composers with COMPASS (Composers & Authors Society of Singapore Ltd), Estovan is regarded as a prodigious musical talent far beyond his years.

At only 7, he played the main child lead in Resorts World Sentosa's musical 我的妈妈是ENY, delivering more than 40 spellbinding performances.

"SHINES WITH PASSION AND CONFIDENCE, PROVING THAT AGE IS NO LIMIT TO GREATNESS."

— Estovan Reizo

His acting repertoire has since expanded to include numerous films, dramas, commercials, and short films, showcasing his artistic range. On stage, Estovan has performed at iconic venues and events, from the National Day Parade and ASEAN Tourism Forum to Hong Kong Disneyland and Paris Disneyland. His global reach was further solidified when he won first prize at the prestigious American Protégé competition, performing at Carnegie Hall in New York.

International television audiences in China also witnessed his brilliance on renowned programs

like 《中国新声代》, 《中国全国少儿春晚》, and 《浙江“浙音”青少年艺术节》. His extraordinary work earned him five nominations at the "Youth Oscars" by the Young Artist Academy, where he performed and won the "Most Outstanding Influencer Youth Actor" Award in July 2024. That same month, he was also crowned Overall Grand Champion for solo street dance by the Hong Kong Children and Youth Arts Association.

Humble, hardworking, and ever-evolving, Estovan Reizo continues to push artistic boundaries while inspiring a generation of dreamers.



YANN RICHEBOURG



French



Screenwriter



Director



Actor

Yann Richebourg is a self-taught French artist whose work spans multiple disciplines, including photography, poetry, cinema, and performing arts. Passionate about storytelling in its many forms, Richebourg has developed a distinctive artistic voice that blends visual and literary expression.

In addition to his creative pursuits, Richebourg is recognized for his humanitarian work, particularly a photographic making-of book that documents a theater play involving refugees.



yannrichebourg.com



[Yann Richebourg](#)



[@yannrichebourg](#)



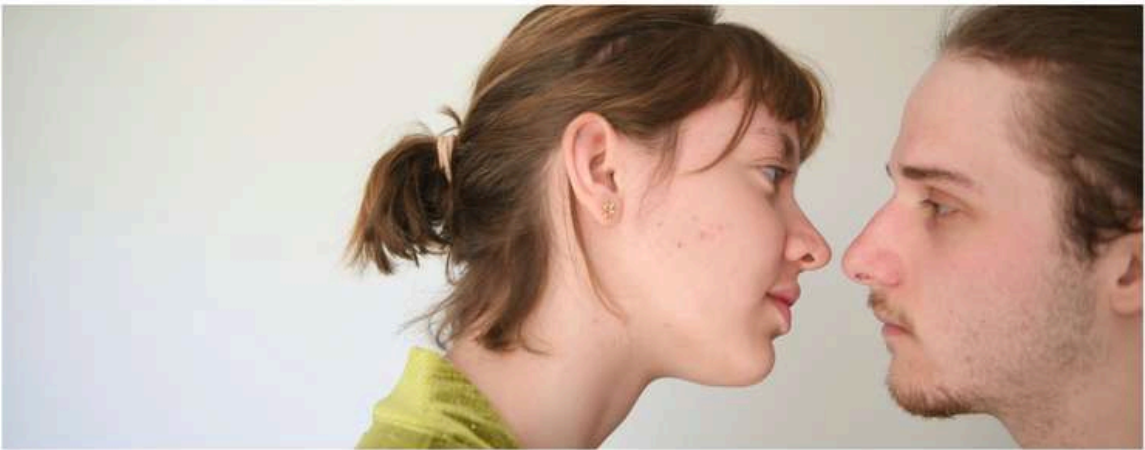
[Yann Richebourg](#)



[@yannrichebourg](#)



Yann Richebourg



An initiative that underscores his commitment to using art as a means of social engagement. In 2022, his artistic excellence in photography was acknowledged with a Certificate of Artistic Merit from the Luxembourg Art Prize.

His short film, "L'Amour est temps de reflets" (2023), has garnered numerous awards, honorable mentions, and selections at international film festivals. Described as a "poem-movie," this work explores an impossible relationship through the reflective nature of mirrors.

Additionally, he is inspired by the evocative close-ups in Mathieu Kassovitz's *La Haine*, which masterfully capture raw human emotion.

Through his work, Richebourg seeks to challenge artistic conventions and push the boundaries of storytelling. His dedication to blending different forms of artistic expression results in deeply personal and thought-provoking creations. With a growing body of work that resonates across mediums, he continues to establish himself as a visionary artist with a unique perspective on cinema, poetry, and performance.

"A CAMERA IS A SECOND HAND TO WRITE"

— Yann Richebourg

Notably, the film conveys deep emotions and meaning without a single line of dialogue, instead embracing the nuances of visual language to evoke a powerful narrative. Richebourg draws inspiration from various artistic influences. The film *Dead Poets Society* profoundly moved him, reinforcing his passion for poetry and the transformative power of words.

He admires Barbra Streisand's *Yentl*, a unique musical that merges storytelling with song—an art form close to his heart, as his first passion is singing and lyric writing.



LINDA ROSENFELD



Russian



Director



Producer



Filmmaker

Born in Russia in the year of the Water Rat, Linda Rosenfeld is an accomplished filmmaker whose diverse artistic background spans advertising, music, art, and yoga.

With nine years of extensive experience in advertising, she cultivated a keen eye for visual storytelling, which became instrumental in shaping her career as a film director.

Since 2003, Rosenfeld has lived and worked across multiple countries, including Egypt, Italy, the UK, Cambodia, Belgium, and India, immersing herself in various cultures while developing independent film projects.



lindarosenfeld.com



Linda Rosenfeld



Her directorial debut, *Dubliner* (2019), was met with great success, solidifying her passion for filmmaking. Rosenfeld not only directed but also played a role in *Dubliner*, incorporating elements of her own dreams into the film's docufiction narrative.

Since 2017, she has actively directed and produced films, further establishing herself in the independent cinema landscape. Her screenwriting credits include *When You Are Near* or *Mekong Express Arrives at 01:08* and *Remember... Remember*.

"ONE DAY I WILL FIND THE RIGHT WORDS AND THEY WILL BE SIMPLE".

— Jack Kerouac

Originally envisioned as a feature film, *When You Are Near* resulted in an 18-minute production, with dialogues crafted by Alan Dean (UK). The full version of the story—a feature-length spiritual quest and love story—could be implemented upon budget availability, featuring the best of Cambodian sites at any time.

Linda's artistic approach is deeply rooted in improvisation and inspiration, allowing her to explore new dimensions of storytelling through film and editing. With each project, she embraces a new level of creative freedom, continuously pushing boundaries in independent cinema.

Beyond filmmaking, Rosenfeld's artistic philosophy is a testament to her belief in the power of self-expression and cultural exploration. Her journey is one of constant evolution, where every project becomes a unique blend of personal vision and universal themes. As she continues to grow as a filmmaker, her work remains a source of inspiration, bringing fresh narratives to the world of independent cinema.

Welcome to the world of Linda Rosenfeld—a realm of passion, innovation, and cinematic excellence.



MARIA RUIZ OCADIZ



Mexican



Actress



Director



Screenwriter



Writer

Rooted in the vibrant spirit of Mexico City and molded by a household of musicians, mathematicians, and physiologists, this visionary artist channels a lifetime of eclectic influences into every frame of her work. A dynamic presence in the international film scene, particularly across Europe and Asia, she merges expressionist imagery with poetic narratives, challenging audiences with her fearless emotional truth and unconventional form.



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luminosapublishing.wixsite.com/ruizocadizfiction



Luminosa Films - Pertúrpure Cinema



Maria Ruiz Ocadiz



Raised under the artistic wing of her uncle, renowned jazz pianist Ricardo Ocadiz, and inspired intellectually by her father, Enrique Guillermo Ruiz de la Torre, she developed an early sense of rhythm and logic that seamlessly translated into the structure of her films. Initially pursuing a degree in science, she found herself drawn to performance—earning early credits in Mexican telenovelas like *CLAP* and *Reb3Ide*, and performing in stage musicals such as *Newsies* and *Peter Pan*. Yet it was the unseen magic behind the curtain that truly captivated her, eventually guiding her from center stage to behind the camera.

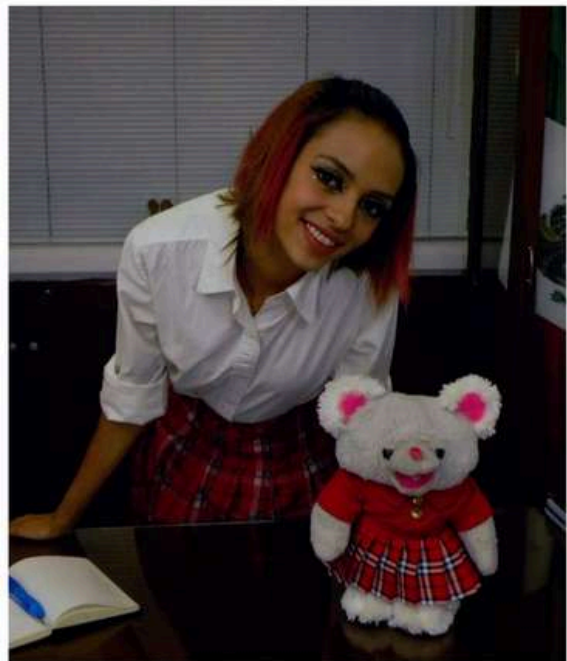
"I'D RESCUED MY BIG FISH FROM THE FROZEN DEPTHS. I'D A FILM TO MAKE. THANK YOU, DAVID LYNCH, FOR THAT TREASURE MAP"

— Maria Ruiz Ocadiz

Her academic thesis on eating disorders in ballet dancers foreshadowed the emotional complexity of her later fiction. She became a film critic for *F.I.L.M.E.*, won a screenwriting scholarship from Telemundo, and trained in cinematography at *Altrafílmica*, where she met her mentor, editor Juan Pablo Cortés. Following her first industry job on *Sátiros* (2017), she married actor-producer Roberto Arenas Farquet and published two critically acclaimed novels.

As a filmmaker, she has crafted over 60 award-winning works, including *Neither You Nor I*, *Misplace the Rabbits*, and *Love Without a Casket*, exploring human fragility through surreal, layered visuals. Her upcoming feature, *A Wakefulness of Indocility*, promises to be a bold statement of cinematic rebellion.

Maria Ruiz Ocadiz reminds us that storytelling is a visceral experience—one born from the marrow of being, daring us to confront the hidden, the unconscious, and the profoundly human.



CONSTANTINOS SAMARTZIS



Greek



Writer



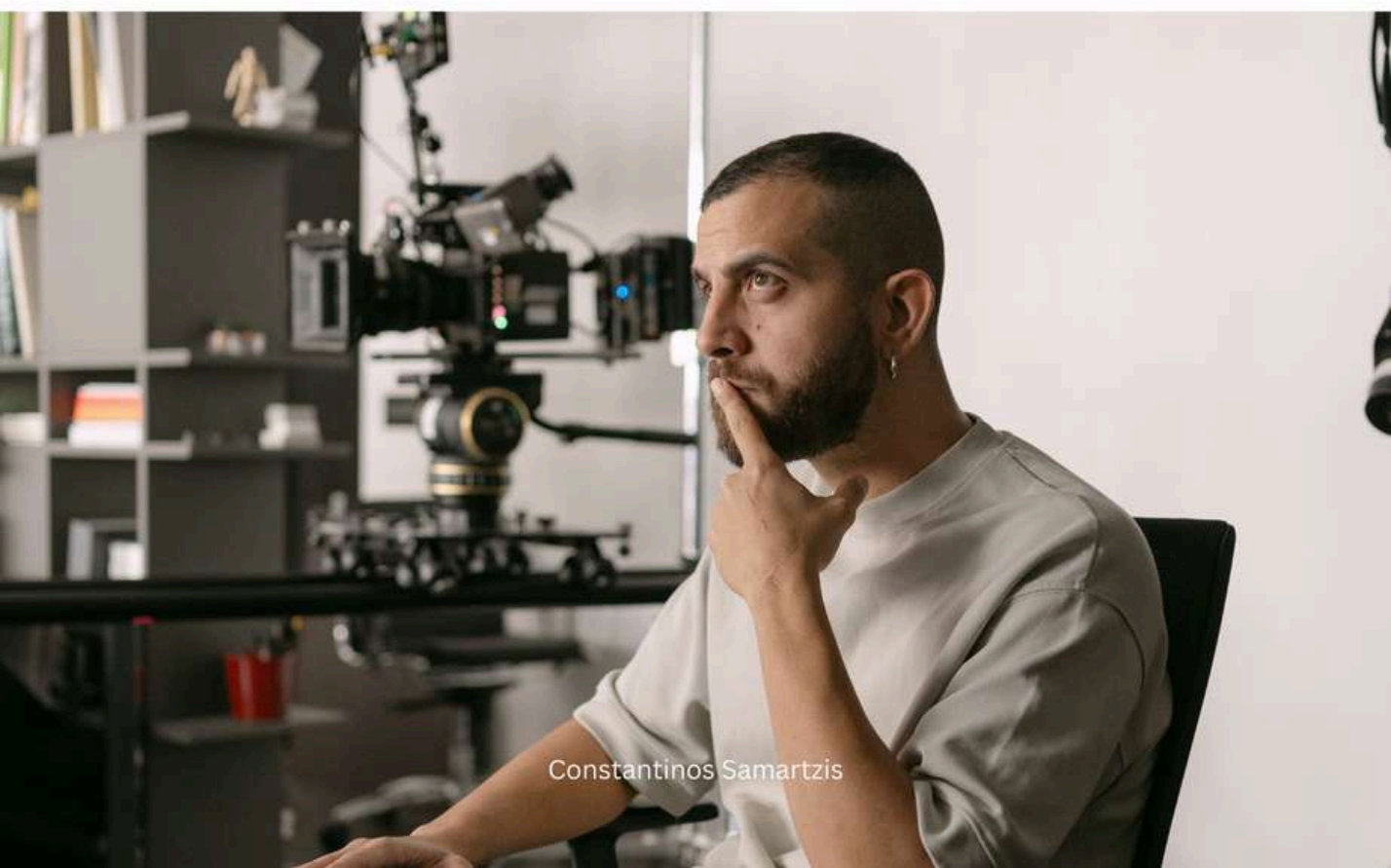
Producer



Director

Constantinos Samartzis is a self-taught director, producer, and screenwriter from Athens, whose journey into visual storytelling began with photography. His later work in short-form videos and visual effects has been featured on major platforms such as CNN, Redbull and National Geographic media, earning him international recognition. With a passion for crafting visually compelling narratives, Constantinos has produced advertising content for hundreds of companies worldwide.

@samartzis



Constantinos Samartzis



His collaborations include prestigious luxury hospitality brands and globally recognized names such as BMW, Waldorf Astoria Maldives, Dell, and Hugo Boss. His ability to blend breathtaking visuals with daring concepts has distinguished him as an exceptional creative force in the industry.

While his early career was marked by fast-paced and creatively ambitious projects, Constantinos has since transitioned into a more cinematic approach, focusing on storytelling nuances such as lighting, composition, and emotional depth.

"TO CREATE SOMETHING TRULY ORIGINAL, YOU MUST PAUSE WHO YOU'VE BEEN AND STEP INTO ALL YOU'VE YET TO BECOME."

— Constantinos Samartzis

His recent works, including Kinsteria Hotel, Noil and LAA, highlight his evolving artistry, capturing the magic of cinema through a refined visual and narrative style. His meticulous attention to detail and ability to convey complex emotions through moving images make him a visionary filmmaker with a unique perspective.

Now expanding into the film industry, Constantinos is actively developing his first three cinematic projects as a director and screenwriter.

His upcoming short film, Harsh Light, exemplifies his dedication to pushing creative boundaries while delivering emotionally resonant stories. As he sets his sights on larger-scale productions, his work continues to captivate audiences, promising to leave a lasting impact on the global cinema scene.

With an innovative vision, a relentless pursuit of excellence, and an unwavering commitment to storytelling, Constantinos Samartzis is a filmmaker poised to make a profound mark in independent cinema. His ability to merge artistic expression with technical mastery ensures that his future projects will not only entertain but also inspire and challenge conventional storytelling norms.



AJITESH SHARMA



Indian



Writer



Filmmaker



Cinematographer



KEEP ROLLING FILMS

Ajitesh Sharma is a distinguished filmmaker, scientist, corporate professional, and entrepreneur with a multifaceted career spanning media, business, and technology. A triple postgraduate, he has established himself as a visionary in multiple fields, combining technical expertise with creative storytelling.

As an internationally acclaimed filmmaker, Sharma has shot films across the globe, earning over 350 international official selections and awards in more than 55 countries.



Ajitesh Sharma



atikshentertainment.in



@thisisajitesh



Ajitesh Sharma



Ajitesh Sharma

Ajitesh Sharma





His ability to craft compelling narratives has positioned him as a key figure in independent cinema. In addition to his filmmaking achievements, he has contributed to international events as a curator, committee member, and jury, further solidifying his influence in the global film industry.

Beyond cinema, Sharma holds expertise as an internationally approved fire and safety auditor and fire forensics specialist, having consulted for multiple multinational corporations. His deep understanding of risk assessment and safety regulations has made him a sought-after expert in this field.

"THERE IS ALWAYS A NOW BETWEEN TODAY AND TOMORROW."

— Ajitesh Sharma

In the realm of personal and professional development, he is an internationally accredited life and business coach as well as an NLP practitioner, empowering individuals and organizations to achieve their full potential. His innovative mindset extends to game design, having created an award-winning board game that blends the strategic elements of Ludo and Chess.

Sharma's passion for storytelling extends into publishing, where he is the founder of the Indian

comics publishing house, 'Cinemics,' launched at Comic Con Bengaluru. Recognizing the need for a unified platform for comic creators, he established India's first association of comic publishers – the Indian Comics Association.

Further showcasing his versatility, Sharma also completed a nationwide documentary on 75 years of Indian Independence, highlighting the country's historical and cultural evolution.

His diverse expertise, creative ingenuity, and dedication to excellence continue to make a significant impact across industries worldwide.



DENISE L. SINGLETON



Black American

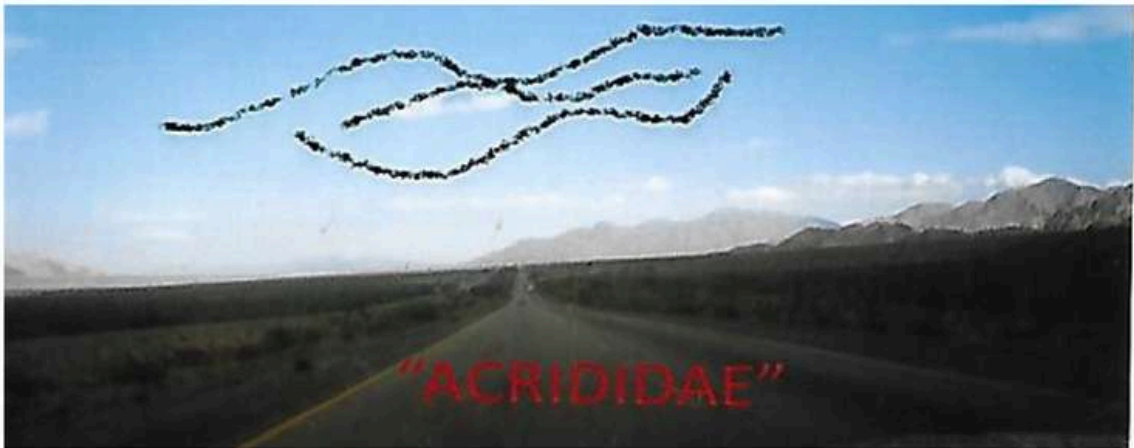


Screenwriter

Denise L. Singleton is a passionate and resilient storyteller whose journey into screenwriting is a testament to the power of perseverance and creative expression. Though writing has been a lifelong passion, she initially set it aside to navigate the challenges of survival. However, the absence of creativity led to a period of deep reflection, ultimately reinforcing her need to write. Inspired by life itself, Singleton rediscovered her purpose and reignited her creative spirit.



Denise L. Singleton



Determined to reclaim her voice, she attempted to revisit an old manuscript, only to find it had been destroyed. This moment of loss became a defining realization of the impact and power of the written word. Fueled by an unyielding drive to contribute to the storytelling landscape, she set her sights on the silver screen.

Over the years, Singleton has firmly established herself in the screenwriting arena, earning more than fifteen IMDb-qualified screenplay contest selections and wins.

Her stories reflect the triumph of the human spirit, blending raw emotion with bold storytelling choices that defy convention. Singleton's voice is unapologetically honest, fearless, and refreshingly original—qualities that resonate deeply with diverse audiences across the globe. With each script, she brings characters to life who are as complex and resilient as she is. As her creative path evolves, she is committed to inspiring others through her work and showing that it's never too late to follow your true calling.

**"IF LIFE IS NOT GOING YOUR WAY,
WRITE A RIGHT! WRITE A
SCREENPLAY"**

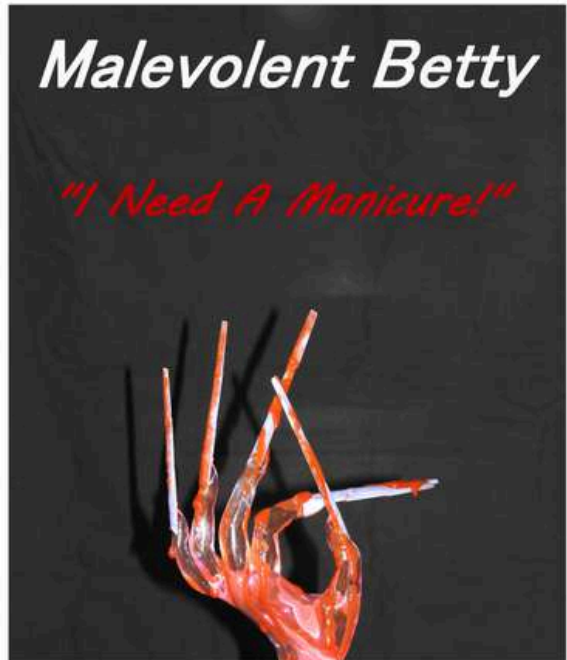
—Denise L. Singleton

Her work delves into thought-provoking narratives, offering audiences compelling and immersive experiences. With an unwavering commitment to her craft, she continues to push creative boundaries, crafting stories that captivate, inspire, and challenge perspectives.

As she looks ahead, Singleton remains focused on taking the next major step in her screenwriting journey—gracing the red carpet. With her talent, vision, and authenticity, she continues to break new ground in the world of independent cinema.

Malevolent Betty

"I Need A Manicure!"



JAMES SUGRUE



American



Animator



Storyboard Artist



Indie Comic Artist

James Sugrue is a dedicated animator and storyteller with a passion for crafting strong, dynamic female characters. Inspired by the Golden Age of Animation, he sought to create a heroine who was not only powerful but also embodied the whimsical, rubber hose aesthetic of classic cartoons. This vision led to the birth of Bluehilda, his lovable yet looney leading lady—an enchanting witch made from a blueberry.



James Sugrue



daffyfan83



@daffyfan83



James Sugrue



www.webtoons.com/en/canvas/bluehilda



James Sugrue



James first conceived Bluehilda after attending the Broadway production of *Wicked* in 2006, and her journey from idea to screen was a labor of love. In 2015, Chris Pynoski, founder of Titmouse, recognized James' talent and provided him with the resources to create an 8-minute *Bluehilda* short film. This animated feature quickly garnered multiple awards, solidifying Bluehilda's place as a standout character. The magical screwball even made a brief cameo in the popular horror film *M3gan*, further expanding her reach.

His late firstborn son, Felix, remains a profound source of inspiration, constantly reminding James to persevere and practice patience in both his personal and professional life.

With a deep appreciation for classic animation and a commitment to innovative storytelling, James strives to create heartfelt, entertaining narratives that resonate with audiences of all ages. His dedication to the craft ensures that Bluehilda's adventures—and his own creative journey—will continue to captivate viewers for years to come.

"DRAWING AND ANIMATING CHARACTERS IS THE EQUIVALENT TO PLAYING WITH MY CHILDHOOD TOYS."

— James Sugrue

Beyond animation, James continues to develop Bluehilda's adventures as an ongoing webcomic, allowing fans to engage with her mischief and charm in new ways. While pursuing his creative projects, he also works full-time at Titmouse Studio, contributing his expertise to the animation industry.

James' personal life is deeply intertwined with his work. He is a devoted husband to Melissa and a loving father to their newborn son, Teddy.



ODETTE SUGERMAN



Canadian - American



Director



Fashion Photographer



Filmmaker

Raised between the raw natural beauty of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, and the soulful charm of Birmingham, Alabama, this bicultural artist has lived a life defined by bold creativity and fearless reinvention. Her journey began in Beverly Hills, California, working at the renowned José Eber Salon, where she mastered the art of beauty and personal style. Driven by an insatiable desire to deepen her craft, she returned to school and graduated top of her class from the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising (FIDM), majoring in Fashion.



odettesugerman.com/



[@odettesugerman](https://www.instagram.com/odettesugerman)



[Odette Sugerman](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0836244/)





Odette's early design work landed her a role at Guess Jeans, where her talent quickly captured the attention of fashion legend Paul Marciano. This marked the start of a decade-long creative partnership that would define much of her career. Teaching herself photography, she reconnected with Marciano, becoming one of Guess's top fashion photographers for over 12 years. Her directorial debut—creating a commercial for Guess Jeans on YouTube—set the tone for a dynamic shift into motion storytelling.

"THERE ARE ONLY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE IN THE WORLD THAT REALLY KNOW HOW TO CAPTURE WOMEN AND BRING OUT THEIR BEST...AND ODETTE SUGERMAN IS ONE OF THEM"

— Paul Marciano

Odette's photography portfolio includes fashion editorials, swimwear, lingerie campaigns, and high-profile celebrity shoots. Her work has been featured in Italian Vogue, L'Uomo Vogue Italia, and campaigns with stars like Kate Beckinsale, Pamela Anderson, Hugh Hefner, Michael Phelps, Paris Hilton, and Terrence Howard. She remains the only woman to shoot three celebrity Playboy covers and contribute to three of Playboy's iconic coffee table books.

Expanding into directing, she has created fashion films and music videos, including Dove

Cameron's breakout video for Sony Records, which amassed over 3 million views in its first week and was featured in Rolling Stone. She continues to collaborate with Pamela Anderson and HGTV on creative projects.

Now splitting her time between Los Angeles and a remote island near Vancouver, Odette finds joy chasing whales and grizzlies in her vintage boat, Lil Bandit.

With her production company, Sugar Punch Club, Odette continues to shoot, produce, and direct powerful visual stories—proving that reinvention is not only possible, but truly empowering.



MANJU SUBBERWAL



Indian



Writer



Producer



Director



Mighty Swan
Productions

Manju Subberwal is a distinguished medical doctor turned award-winning filmmaker, whose transition from medicine to the creative arts is driven by a deep passion for storytelling. With an Advanced Diploma in Film Production from Toronto Film School and a Bachelor of Creative Arts from Yorkville University, Manju has cultivated a multifaceted skill set as a producer, director, writer, and editor.



Manju Subberwal



@manju_subberwal



Manju (Manu) Subberwal



Manju Subberwal



Manju Subberwal



Her short film *COLORS*, a poignant exploration of hope emerging from despair, has been celebrated worldwide, earning 34 awards at esteemed film festivals. Through her filmmaking, she masterfully blends emotional depth with compelling narratives, establishing herself as a visionary in the independent film industry.

Currently, Manju is pioneering a groundbreaking production studio that integrates film and gaming to craft immersive storytelling experiences.

Specializing in fantasy films enriched with high-quality VFX and interactive games inspired by cinematic narratives, her studio is set to redefine audience engagement and push the boundaries of storytelling innovation.

"FILMMAKING IS NOT JUST ABOUT TELLING STORIES—IT'S ABOUT STARTING A DIALOGUE AND INSPIRING CHANGE."

— Manju Subberwal

Her work is distinguished by its seamless fusion of imagination, technology, and emotional resonance, offering audiences globally meaningful and transformative experiences.

Manju's approach to filmmaking is deeply rooted in her profound understanding of human emotions, a perspective shaped by her medical background.

She remains committed to creating content

that not only entertains but also inspires and connects with audiences on a profound level. By merging cutting-edge technology with authentic storytelling, she continues to challenge and expand the creative possibilities within independent cinema.

Recognized as one of the top independent creators of 2025, Manju Subberwal's contributions to the film industry exemplify the power of innovation and artistry. Her unwavering dedication to storytelling ensures that her work leaves a lasting impact, solidifying her as a trailblazer in the evolving landscape of film and gaming.



KARL ANDRÉ TALBOT



Canadian



Writer



Producer



Director



Talk Encounters

Karl André Talbot is an award-winning filmmaker, producer, and entrepreneur whose visionary storytelling challenges perspectives and inspires change. His work spans documentary, feature films, and television, tackling pressing social and environmental issues with a commitment to truth and impact.

Talbot gained international recognition with *Silenced: As Mercury Rises*, a powerful documentary that won 21 awards worldwide in 2021.



www.inactivemovie.com



Karl Andre Talbot



@karlandretalbot



Karl André Talbot



His latest film, *INactive: America's Silent Killer*, released in July 2024, has already amassed over 32 awards, further solidifying his status as a leading independent creator. A newly edited short version of *Silenced*, titled *Intoxicated*, continues to earn global acclaim.

A key figure in *INactive* is Robert F. Kennedy Jr., now serving as the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Resources. Kennedy shares Talbot's mission to promote wellness and combat health crises, forging a strong alliance between them.

"CHOOSE LOVE OVER FEAR, AND EVERY STORY YOU TELL WILL SHAPE THE WORLD FOR THE BETTER."

—Karl André Talbot

Their collaboration has led to an upcoming sequel to *INactive* and additional projects tackling major public health challenges. Kennedy is also featured in *Intoxicated*, a short film produced by Dr. Derek Guillory, exposing the dangers of environmental toxins and harmful substances in modern food systems. Talbot's upcoming project, *Waters, Our Last Drop*, will explore the global water crisis, addressing pollution, climate change, and water mismanagement.

The documentary will highlight Kennedy's decades-long advocacy for clean water through the Waterkeeper Alliance,

the groundbreaking nonprofit he founded.

Beyond filmmaking, Talbot is a global marketing expert and a political advisor to high-level leaders. He is the founder of PHIT Canada, an extension of PHIT America, North America's largest movement promoting physical activity.

With a career defined by impactful storytelling, Talbot continues to use cinema as a catalyst for education and change, cementing his legacy as one of the top independent creators of 2025.



THEA TOUCHTON



American



Actress



Producer



Digital Marketer



Sueñito Media's

Rooted in a desire to bring light to dark places, this visionary filmmaker is on a mission to tell hilarious and impactful stories through Sueñito Media—a company dedicated to creating film and media that prioritizes diversity, mental health, and community. The foundation of her mission stems from personal battles with severe anxiety and suicidal ideation, experiences that now fuel her passion for providing resources and joy to those who, like her younger self, may be navigating life without adequate support.



Thea Touchton



suenitomedia.com



@theatouchton



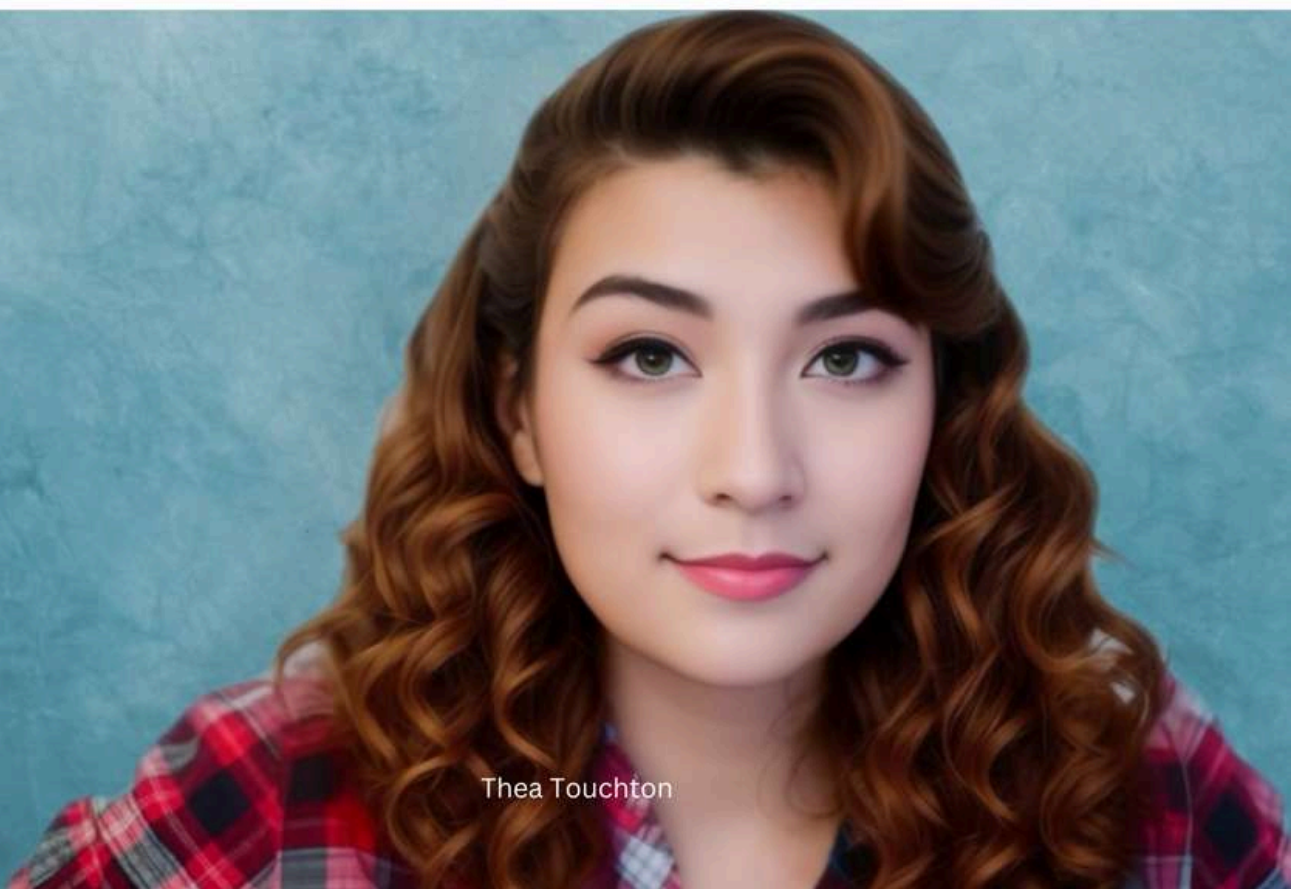
@thea_touchton



Thea Touchton



@Theatouchton



Thea Touchton



Her journey began in school choirs and community theater, ultimately leading to formal studies in theatre—though she now reflects that communications may have been a better fit for her entrepreneurial path. Despite not fitting the stereotypical mold of a Hollywood ingenue, she carved out her place in the industry through grit, creative drive, and the DRAESIS program, where she learned how to establish a film company from the ground up.

Today, Sueñito Media produces short films, animations, and mental health documentaries, while also offering consulting services on disability, creativity, and product management.

"WE ARE ALSO AN INTERNATIONAL MULTI AWARD WINNING COMPANY- SO THE MAJOR BONUS IS THAT THE WORK WE DO IS RECOGNIZED AND RESPECTED."

—Thea Touchton

What truly sets the company apart is its warmth and personalized attention—traits that empower collaborators and clients alike. Her leadership has taken the company to exceptional heights, including an invitation to the White House under the Biden administration in recognition of their mental health advocacy, and a screening of their first feature film at Paramount.

A major pivot came when her cofounder exited unexpectedly, revealing both the burdens she had carried and the freedom to shape her company's future. That turning point allowed her to elevate more women into leadership roles and strengthen her company's values.

Entirely self-funded through acting and social media work, Thea now seeks visionary investors to support Sueñito Media's expansion. Her story is proof that even in adversity, purpose can flourish—and from one woman's healing journey, a beacon of hope and creativity has emerged.



FRANK TIAN



Chinese



Director



Producer



Cinematographer



Journey Studio

With over a decade of experience behind the camera, this dedicated visual storyteller began his journey in China as a Director of Photography (DP), where he collaborated closely with directors to bring their visions to life. Immersed in the heart of cinematic storytelling, he became a vital force in shaping the visual tone and emotional depth of many acclaimed film projects.

After mastering the art of cinematography, he transitioned into directing, driven by a profound desire to inspire and move audiences through meaningful narratives.



Frank Tian



journeystudio.com



Frank Tian



Frank Tian



For over five years, he has embraced this role with passion and purpose, crafting films that explore the intricate beauty and complexity of life. His seamless shift from DP to Director not only reflects his versatile talent but also his deep understanding of both the technical and emotional dimensions of filmmaking.

Now based in Philadelphia, he continues his creative journey in the United States, expanding his craft to include writing, directing, and shooting original content. In addition to film work, he offers professional photography and video production services tailored to a wide

tells, he proves that powerful imagery can transcend language, culture, and distance. His work continues to inspire, reminding us all that with vision, heart, and purpose, creativity knows no boundaries.

His artistic approach blends cultural sensitivity, technical mastery, and a deeply human perspective. Every project he undertakes reflects his commitment to visual and narrative excellence. Whether on a film set or behind the lens capturing everyday moments, he always strives to evoke genuine emotion and leave a meaningful impact on the viewer.

"WE ARE COMMITTED TO CREATING DIVERSE JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR FILMMAKERS, BOTH ON AND OFF SET"

— Journey Studio

range of needs—from corporate branding and new product showcases to family portraits and individual visual stories.

With a strong foundation in international filmmaking and a passion for authentic expression, he brings a global perspective to every project. His dedication to storytelling—whether through film or photography—remains rooted in a desire to connect, uplift, and illuminate the human experience.

In every frame he captures and every story he




DAVID TOWNER

 American

 Actor


 Producer

 Writer

In the heart of Palm Beach, Florida, the creative spark of a master storyteller shines brightly. With a presence marked by both humility and brilliance, David Towner defies conventional expectations. Though his background includes military distinction and entrepreneurial success, Towner's true passion lies in storytelling—across genres, mediums, and emotional depths. Describing himself as a “prolific storyteller, not inhibited by structure or genre,” he has earned every word of that title.

 @thedavidtowner

 David Towner

 David Towner



David Towner



From comic books and young adult novels to screenplays and his latest psychosexual suspense novel, *Hollywood and Velvet*, Towner's creative repertoire is vast and vibrant. He produced and starred in the feature film *Our Scripted Life* and wrote, directed, and produced an animated short that has garnered over 300 million views—an extraordinary achievement in just three years.

Towner's journey begins on a dirt road in rural Alaska and continues through Maysville, Kentucky, where a vibrant theater community first ignited his love for performance.

"I'M NOT INHIBITED BY STRUCTURE OR GENRE. FOR ME, STORYTELLING IS ABOUT CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE, CHALLENGING NORMS, AND CREATING SOMETHING MEANINGFUL."

— David Towner

Under the guidance of director Mike Thomas, and later working with Peter Hunt on a local film adaptation of *Huckleberry Finn*, Towner discovered his fascination with the filmmaking process. Though he enlisted in the military after high school and pursued business ventures, these practical paths eventually afforded him the freedom to embrace his artistic calling in his 50s.

The emotional resonance of *The National's Trouble Will Find Me* album became the

heartbeat of *Hollywood and Velvet*, a deeply personal narrative about temptation, success, and identity. First shelved, then reignited by a live concert in Cincinnati, the novel and screenplay now stand as a bold, timely work reflecting the cultural moment.

David Towner's path is a testament to resilience, passion, and the power of storytelling. From rural beginnings to global recognition, he continues to inspire creatives everywhere to defy limitations and pursue their voice—fearlessly and without compromise.



WOLFGANG TONNINGER



Austrian



Escritor



Director



Dramaturg



ALMBLITZ – storywork

Wolfgang Tonninger is an Austrian filmmaker, storyteller, and consultant whose work seamlessly intertwines documentary cinema with philosophical and literary depth. Having studied philosophy and literature in Salzburg, he has cultivated a career that revolves around storylistening, storytelling, and storydoing—a dynamic framework that shapes his creative and consulting endeavors.

Tonninger's documentary filmmaking defies conventional distinctions between fact and fiction.



www.almblicht.com



Wolfgang Tonninger



He posits that narrative structure is not merely an overlay on reality but a fundamental aspect of perception itself. His approach challenges the notion of pure observation, asserting that storytelling inherently influences the reality it seeks to depict.

Two pivotal moments ignited Tonninger's deep passion for film. In 1995, he worked on *Seven Years in Tibet* as a mountain guide, stunt double, and actor alongside Brad Pitt, David Thewlis, and longtime friend Tom Raudaschl. Later, the global Covid pandemic reshaped his trajectory.

"THE STORIES WE CARRY IN OUR HEADS DETERMINE WHAT WE PERCEIVE. THIS IS THE FOUNDATION OF EVERY DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING."

—Wolfgang Tonninger

After contributing to *Shadows of Light* (2020) as a story architect—a film that won Best European Independent Documentary in Paris—he ventured into directing with *Everyman on Journey: The World Survey of a Homeless* (2021). This documentary, characterized by a distinctive narrative form, received widespread acclaim within the film industry.

In 2023, Tonninger further expanded the documentary genre with *Wild in the Mountains: Meditations on Hunting*. This film enriched nature cinema with innovative stylistic elements,

drawing audiences into a poetic and intimate exploration of hunting. Its success was marked by numerous international awards.

Looking ahead to 2025, Tonninger embarks on his most ambitious project yet: *Head of Mountains: A Border Crossing Through the Centre*. This feature documentary delves into the mountainous chambers of the Austrian soul—revealing what is behind the heroizing or kitschifying embellishments of mountain experience. Combining essayistic storytelling with cinematic action, the film aims to uncover the vanishing essence of the elemental—a pursuit that he enigmatically describes as a "true-crime documentary of nature."



FORREST TUFF



American



Actor



Director



Producer



One Vision Productions

A visionary force in business and a passionate advocate for human potential, this accomplished professional has built a legacy rooted in excellence, service, and transformative leadership. With a career that bridges entrepreneurship, creativity, and philanthropy, he continues to engage communities, empower individuals, and uplift future generations through his dynamic endeavors.

Celebrated as a "Top 5 CEO to Watch in 2024" by CIO Times Magazine, he is the principal and founder of One



forresttuff.com



Forrest Tuff, AS, CVP, MLC



@forresttuff



@ForrestTuff



Forrest Tuff



@ForrestTuff



Forrest Tuff



Vision Productions, an award-winning media and branding agency recognized by industry giants and grassroots clients alike—from Fortune 100 companies to government agencies and small businesses. The company has earned accolades such as “Best of Georgia” and inclusion among Atlanta’s “Best and Brightest Companies to Work For.”

Honored as one of Georgia’s Most Powerful Leaders and listed among the John Maxwell Team’s Top 100 Transformational Leaders, he is also a Master Life Coach and Internationally Accredited Speaker.

“THANK YOU TO INDIA, JORDAN, SYDNEY, AND SKYLAR TUFF FOR INSPIRING ME TO BELIEVE IN MY VISION, PUSH PAST MY PERCEIVED BOUNDARIES, AND CREATE MY OWN LEGACY”

— Forrest Tuff

His compelling keynotes and workshops are known for inspiring high-level entrepreneurs, professionals, and thought leaders to achieve their fullest potential.

A talented author and producer, he was a finalist for the Georgia Author of the Year Award and trademarked Filmpreneur®, a testament to his unique blend of artistic vision and business acumen. His impressive body of work spans films, documentaries, commercials,

music videos, podcasts, stage plays, and television. As a respected judge for the Telly Awards, NATAS SE Emmy, and an Academy-Award Qualifying Film Festival, his influence in the creative world is profound. In 2025, he was inducted into the FilmmakerLife Hall of Fame.

Beyond accolades, he remains deeply committed to service. From awarding the Pay It Forward grant to supporting global education initiatives in Mexico and the Philippines, his efforts have earned the MLK Community Service Award and the President’s Call to Service Award.



JOEL VANDER MOLEN



British



Producer



Actor



Vandercom

In a time when documentary filmmaking is often about spectacle over substance, one director stands out for his fearless curiosity and emotional depth. With a camera as his compass, he ventures into worlds many shy away from—seeking not controversy, but truth. His latest work, *FansOnly: The Human Side of Porn*, exemplifies this mission. Teaming up with adult film icon Tommy Gunn, he steps behind the scenes of the adult entertainment industry to uncover the human stories behind the spotlight.



Joel Van der Molen



@joelvandermolen22



@joelvandermolen1668



Joel Van der Molen



Joel Van der Molen

— JOEL VAN DER MOLEN'S —
GIPSY KINGS
The Tonino Baliardo Legacy

COMING 2025

Cholita—inspired by the grandmother of featuring voices like Alexis Texas, Emma Hix, Alexis Fawx, and Holly Randall, the film dives into themes of empowerment, mental health, stigma, and the evolving dynamics of platforms like OnlyFans. Candid, intimate, and unflinchingly honest, FansOnly challenges viewers to rethink everything they thought they knew about the industry—and the people within it.

Simultaneously, he turns his lens to the world of music with a new documentary on Tonino Baliardo, founder and leader of the legendary Gipsy Kings. From being discovered by Brigitte Bardot while busking in St.

Billionaire, the surprise Amazon #1 hit Tchronicling Alfie Best's rise from a snowy layby to becoming the world's richest gypsy. The film earned 33 global awards, including the SIFFA President Award, and cemented the director's reputation for meaningful, thought-provoking storytelling.

With roots in Southeast England, early dreams of tennis stardom, and formal acting training at The Webber Douglas Academy, his journey is as unconventional as the stories he tells—always led by a desire to reveal the people behind the headlines.

"NEARLY EVERY DECISION THAT PEOPLE MAKE IS BASED ON WHAT OTHER PEOPLE WILL THINK OF THEM"

— Joel Van Der Molen

Tropez to selling over 20 million albums and winning a Grammy for Savor Flamenco, Baliardo's story is one of artistic genius and cultural impact. The film explores his greatest hits like Bamboleo and Djobi Djoba, and his contributions to The Big Lebowski and Toy Story III, capturing the passion behind the flamenco-driven global phenomenon.

these projects follow the success of Gypsy



CJ WILLIAMS



American



Actor



Producer



Director

From the vibrant streets of South Chicago to the bright lights of television and film, this multifaceted artist has carved a distinguished path in the entertainment industry. A proud son of Charles and Brenda Williams and the youngest of five siblings—with four older sisters—CJ Williams grew up surrounded by strength, creativity, and resilience. These early influences shaped his journey into the world of acting, modeling, screenwriting, and filmmaking.

CJ Williams

cj_theactor



CJ Williams



CJ Williams has captivated audiences through compelling performances in acclaimed productions such as *All the Queen's Men* (2021), *Law & Order* (1990), *Swagger* (2021), *Dopesick*, and *Trophy Wife*. With a commanding presence and natural versatility, he continues to earn recognition for his impactful portrayals and storytelling prowess.

Beyond his contemporary success, the name CJ Williams holds historical weight. Charles Jay Williams (July 23, 1858 – January 26, 1945), an American film director from New York, was a pioneering figure of the silent film era.

**"I DON'T JUST PERFORM TO BE SEEN;
I CREATE TO BE FELT."**

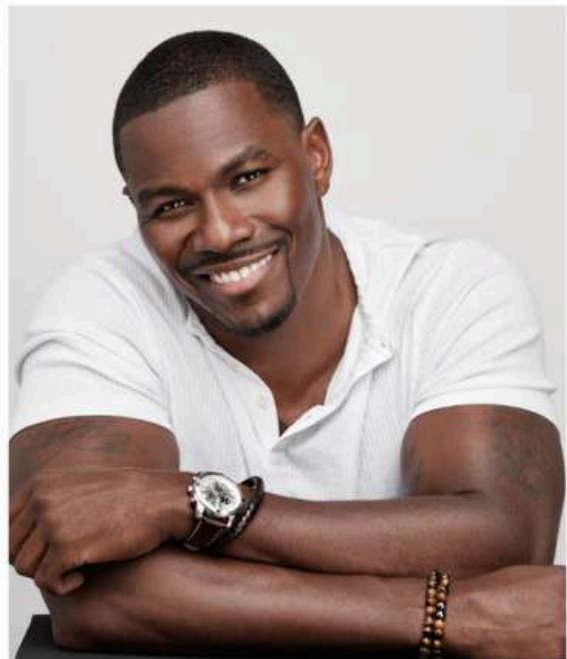
— CJ Williams

Between 1910 and 1919, he directed over one hundred productions, also appearing in three films, producing one, and writing two. His wife, Ida Williams, a noted character actress, appeared in many of his works under the traditional credit "Mrs. C.J. Williams." His enduring legacy lives on in the annals of early cinema.

In the present day, CJ is devoted not only to his craft but also to his family. Married to Jessica Louise Williams since May 30, 2009, the couple shares the joy of raising a son together—a

testament to love, balance, and shared dreams. Whether through the lens of history or the pulse of modern storytelling, CJ Williams continues to elevate the art form. His journey is far from over; it is a living testament that greatness is not inherited—it is built, moment by moment, with purpose and heart.

CJ Williams embodies the spirit of perseverance and artistry. His work honors a rich cinematic past while shaping a dynamic future. With every role and project, he proves that true greatness lies in passion, authenticity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence.



KALYN ELIZABETH WOOD



American



Actress



Producer



Citizen Skull
Management

What began as quiet performances in front of a bedroom mirror evolved into a powerful and purposeful career rooted in storytelling, truth, and resilience. From early school musicals to professional TV roles by the age of 16, Kalyn Elizabeth Wood's journey has been marked by a relentless curiosity about the human experience and a deep love for cinema. Her first on-screen experience sparked a lasting fascination with film and performance, which she continued to nurture while earning a degree in



Kalyn Elizabeth Wood



Kalyn Wood



@kalynelizabethwood



Kalyn Elizabeth Wood



History from the University of Mississippi. That academic pursuit, while not directly tied to acting, became a valuable life experience that continues to shape her worldview and artistic voice.

Kalyn's career highlights include leading roles in *Undeclared* and the upcoming *Molar*, as well as working alongside renowned actor Eric Roberts. During the pandemic, she began to explore the world of filmmaking, a path that reached a new level when she moved to London to earn her MA in Text & Performance at Birkbeck University.

"MY JOURNEY INTO A CREATIVE CAREER, MAINLY ACTING STEMS FROM A DEEP-ROOTED LOVE FOR MOVIES THAT I DEVELOPED WHILE GROWING UP."

—Kalyn Elizabeth Wood

While studying, she created a short film, *Screaming Silence*, originally intended solely as a dissertation. Yet its emotional power and artistic resonance caught the attention of audiences and jurors alike, gaining festival recognition in categories like performance, editing, and sound design. It was a passion project born of collaboration, grit, and instinct—crafted in just 48 hours and edited in a week.

Kalyn's work is defined by emotional depth, conviction, and a fearless embrace of challenge. Her unwavering dedication is rooted in a childhood filled with cinematic wonder—like Christmas Day double features with her family—and a belief, instilled by her late father, that "every day is a great day." Driven by blind ambition, sharpened by struggle, and grounded in integrity, Kalyn Elizabeth Wood continues to shape stories that not only reflect life but uplift it—reminding us all that vulnerability is a strength and that the truth, when shared through art, can change lives.



GINO ZHANG



Chinese



Writer




Cinematographer



Director

Gino Zhang is an accomplished filmmaker with a Master of Arts degree from the prestigious Shanghai Theatre Academy. His work has been recognized on an international scale, earning selections at numerous esteemed film festivals.

In 2024, Zhang's feature film *Four Musical Movements, Ancient Town/Lane/Dock/River* was officially selected for the Visions du Réel International Film Festival's VdR-Film Market, a testament to his unique storytelling and cinematic vision.

 Gino Zhang



Gino Zhang



Continuing his success, his latest feature film, *Woman Living Alone*, has been selected for the 2025 edition of *Visions du Réel*, further solidifying his reputation as a significant voice in independent cinema.

Beyond feature films, Zhang has an impressive record in short filmmaking, with his works having been screened at over 60 film festivals worldwide. His films explore deeply human themes, often blending poetic visuals with introspective narratives, showcasing a profound understanding of cinematic language.

Zhang's work not only reflects a profound sensitivity to human experience but also a fearless pursuit of creative expression. Through his evolving body of work, he exemplifies the spirit of independent cinema—bold, personal, and globally relevant—solidifying his reputation as one of the most compelling creative voices of his generation.

With a growing portfolio of internationally recognized films, Gino Zhang continues to push the boundaries of independent filmmaking, establishing himself as a visionary in the global cinematic landscape.

**"THE FILM SHOULD NOT BE DEFINED,
BECAUSE THE FILM THAT IS NOT
DEFINED WILL ALWAYS HAVE LIFE!"**

— Gino Zhang

As a visionary independent filmmaker, Gino Zhang continually challenges the boundaries of cinematic form, crafting narratives that are both emotionally resonant and culturally rich. His ability to blend intimate storytelling with striking visual composition has earned him widespread acclaim across the international film community. In 2025, his contributions have stood out for their originality, depth, and artistic integrity.



HAI ZHANG



American



Director



Producer



Writer



Shanghai Luheng
Culture Media Co.

Hai Zhang is a distinguished alumnus of Donghua University in China, with advanced studies at the prestigious New York Film Academy. He completed his doctoral program at the School of Philosophy Beijing Normal University, demonstrating a unique blend of academic depth and artistic vision. Renowned for his creative contributions to the global film industry, Zhang served as the director of Nokia's iconic campaign "Nokia - Connecting People," a testament to his ability to craft compelling visual narratives.



filmfreeway.com/ZhangHaiFilm



Hai Zhang



Hai Zhang



He is a respected member of the California Film Fund and an active participant in the American Anthropological Association and the American Society for Visual Anthropology. Additionally, he holds the prestigious position of Chairman at the China Jingdezhen International Research Center for Audiovisual Communication.

Zhang's illustrious filmography boasts over 80 awards from internationally recognized festivals, including those endorsed by the Oscars, BAFTA, Canadian Screen Awards, and IMDb.

**"ENDURING FAITH SHALL ONE DAY
FIND ITS ECHO."**

— Hai Zhang

His collaborations include esteemed figures such as Mr. Thom Palmen, a Berlin International Film Festival juror, Executive Chairman of the Tampere Film Festival in Finland, and an Oscar-nominated producer, underscoring his significant influence in the film community.

As the founder of the Shanghai International Short Film Week (SHISW) and the Cui Lin International Short Film Award, Zhang has been instrumental in fostering a vibrant platform for global cinematic talent.

In just two years, SHISW has attracted nearly 1500 entries from over 70 countries and regions, solidifying its reputation as a prestigious event in the international film landscape.

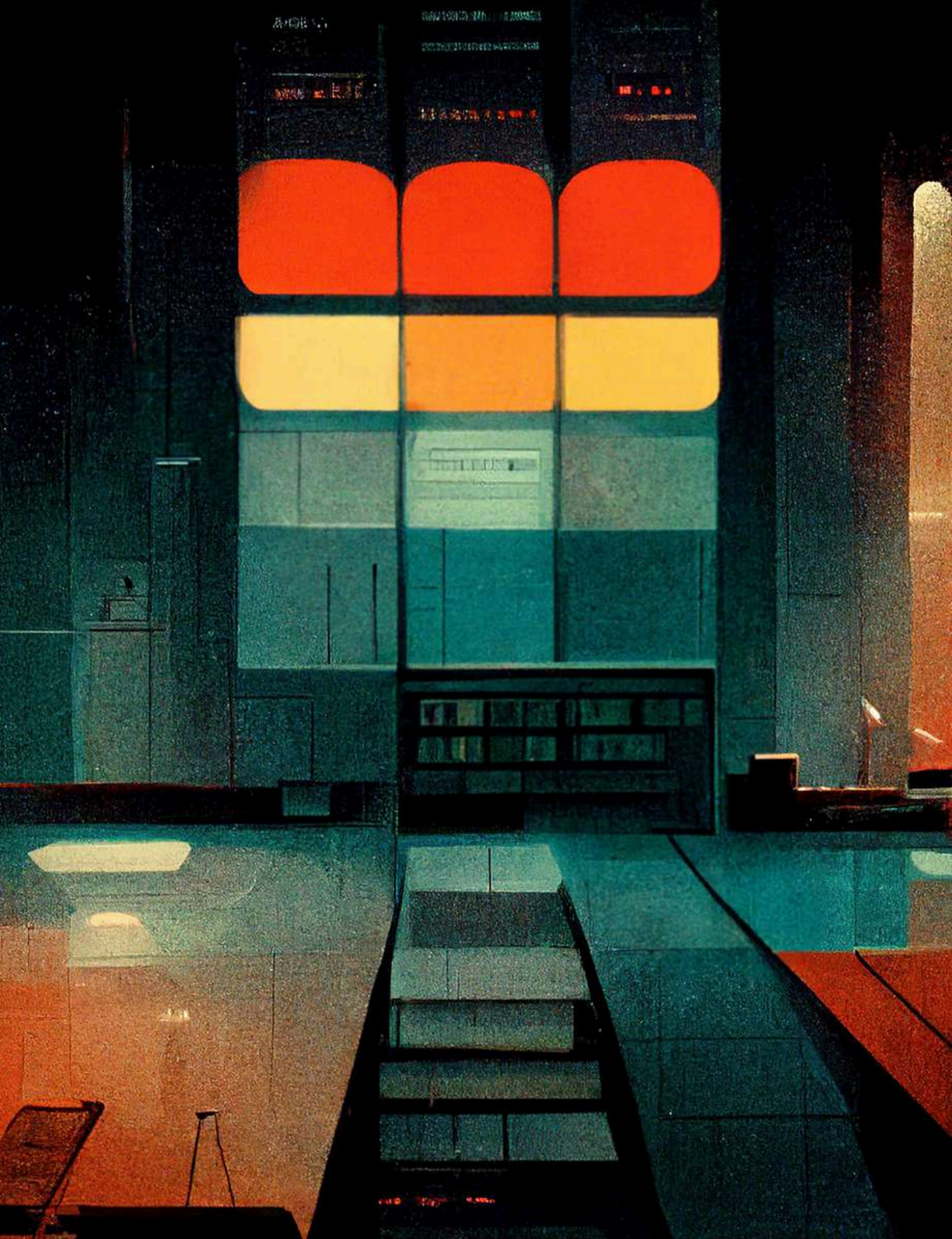
Zhang's work continues to bridge cultural and artistic boundaries, inspiring emerging filmmakers around the world. His dedication to innovation and global collaboration not only elevates independent cinema but also fosters meaningful dialogue across disciplines. Through his leadership and vision, he remains a powerful force shaping the future of audiovisual storytelling.





BEYOND HOLLYWOOD

The TOP Independent Creators of 2025





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What's the point of being alive if you don't at least try to do something remarkable?

– **The Secret Life of Walter Mitty**



BEYOND HOLLYWOOD

The TOP Independent Creators of 2025

Visionaries don't simply create—they transform. They capture elusive truths and manifest them in ways that forever alter how we see ourselves and our world. The luminaries featured in this volume illuminate hidden paths and challenge comfortable certainties, working beyond institutional constraints to craft works of rare authenticity and purpose.

What distinguishes these individuals is not just technical mastery but their unwavering commitment to creative integrity against formidable odds. Each has persisted when pragmatism suggested surrender, reminding us that meaningful artistic revolution rarely emerges from centers of power.

This collection celebrates creators whose distinctive visions have redefined storytelling in 2025. Their diverse approaches offer a panoramic view of excellence outside traditional systems—revealing how authentic artistic voices ultimately become our most important cultural compass points for generations to come.



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