
FFEAC 1ST QUARTER MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (March 19, 2008) - The Office of Film & Entertainment and the Florida Film & Entertainment Advisory Council held its regular quarterly meeting on Tuesday, March 18, 2008 from 12:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Location -- The Capitol, 400 S. Monroe Street, Conference Room 2103. Tallahassee, FL 32399

The agenda included discussions on general administrative matters of the Advisory Council. Lieutenant Governor, Jeff Kottkamp, attended the meeting and encouraged board members to continue its excellent work.

Dale Britt, Commissioner of the Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development shared how the continued growth of the film industry in Florida stimulates the states economy. Britt shared how the commission understands that the success of our state will continue to be built upon the innovation of companies such as those involved in this industry.

A copy of the agenda for any of the advisory council's meetings may be obtained by writing to Frank Andrews, Executive Assistant, The Office of Film & Entertainment, State of Florida, Executive Office of the Governor, Suite 2001, The Capitol, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0001 or calling (850) 410-4765. Should any person wish to appeal any decision made with respect to the above referenced meeting, he/she may need to ensure verbatim recording of the proceedings in order to provide a record for judicial review. Pursuant to Chapter 286.26, Florida Statutes, any handicapped person wishing to attend this meeting should contact the Commission at least 48 hours prior to the meeting in order to request any special assistance.

2008 SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL, THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY

(Sarasota, FL) - April 3rd - 14th, 2008

Single Tickets go on sale for the 10th Annual SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL on Friday March 14th, 2008.

Don't wait until April to get your tickets to the finest films the industry has to offer! Be first in line for Narrative Features, Documentaries, Shorts, Foreign Films and much more. With over 200 films to chose from, even the most selective movie-buff will be satisfied.

Join the likes of Governor Charlie Crist, Paula Wagner, Rick Nicita, Charlize Theron, Liv Ullmann, Stanley Tucci, Ted Hope, William H. Macy, Jason Ritter, Steve Buscemi, Norman Lloyd, Michael Badalucco, Steven Schacter, Stuart Townsend, Michael Barker and all our many filmmakers at our films, conversations, parties and all around town. During April, the place to be is the Sarasota Film Festival.

Film guides will be available March 14 online and at our Box Office, located at 1991 Main St., Suite 108, inside of Main Plaza. Mark your calendars, because films sell out quickly.

Once you narrow down your film choices, purchase individual tickets for the films, programs and events at the 2008 Sarasota Film Festival by calling the Sarasota Film Festival Ticket and Information Line at 1-866-575-FILM or 1-941-366-6200, by logging on to www.sarasotafilmfestival.com or by going to The Sarasota Film Festival Box Office in Sarasota Main Plaza, adjacent to Hollywood 20 at 1991 Main Street, Suite 108. Film packages, event tickets and passes are on sale now (available on web and at box-office only). Single tickets \$9. Opening Night & Closing Night \$20. Senior and matinee discounts available.

FILM FESTIVAL GOES ONLINE, BUT IS ANYONE WATCHING?

By Eric Pfanner, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE (www.ihf.com)

March 9, 2008



PHOTO - Valerio Zingarelli, chief executive of Babelgum, left, with the director Spike Lee.

Those fears remain, but over the last year many broadcasters have moved onto the Internet in a big way, often creating their own Web TV services, rather than releasing their content to the likes of Joost or Babelgum.

In the United States, new online ventures like Hulu.com, a partnership between NBC Universal and News Corp., offer prime-time network TV fare and even some movies. The British Broadcasting Corp.'s iPlayer, which started in December, streams half a million programs a day to Internet users in Britain.

While Joost provides some second-tier programming from mainstream broadcasters like Viacom, Babelgum is taking a different approach. Most of its content is "user generated," as on YouTube. But Babelgum says all of it must come from "professionals," which it defines as a registered company, a film student or another comparably trained source.

"People want to find platforms to express themselves, to present," said Valerio Zingarelli, chief executive of Babelgum. "The talent is coming from the bottom up. It is not necessary for Babelgum to go to Hollywood and have lengthy discussions with the majors."

The festival submissions generated about 100 hours of video, which makes up the majority of Babelgum's content. Like Joost, but unlike YouTube, Babelgum prevents copying of the material, using so-called digital rights management technology.

Both Joost and Babelgum make their videos available free of charge, hoping to make money from advertising.

The initial advertisers include Vodafone, Benetton, Toy Watch, Ducati and Dunlop, Zingarelli said. Their ads will run free of charge during a promotional period; after that, Babelgum will be paid using a formula that combines the number of viewers who see an ad and the number of people who click on it; ad revenue will be shared with the creators of the short films.

Analysts say Babelgum, along with other new video platforms like Joost, could struggle to attract viewers and advertisers, now that mainstream media companies have woken up to the potential of Internet video.

"They've got good ideas and good technology, but getting these kinds of things to work as a business could be another matter," said Michael Philpott, an analyst at Ovum, a telecommunications and technology consulting firm, referring to the likes of Babelgum and Joost.

Joost, founded by Niklas Zennstrom and Janus Friis, the duo behind the Internet telephony company Skype, has generated considerable attention. But it has gotten off to a slow start since its public debut last year. It drew 329,000 unique users worldwide in January, according to ComScore, which tracks Internet traffic.

That is a tiny fraction of the global YouTube audience of 258 million, according to ComScore - though some of the Joost viewers may have stayed longer on the site, given that it features longer videos than the typical YouTube clip. Joost did not respond to questions about its audience size or advertising sales.

Scaglia, the Babelgum owner, has risen to previous challenges. In 1999 he left his job as chief executive of Omnitel, an Italian mobile phone operator, and founded Fastweb, which pioneered the delivery of broadband Internet access, telephone calls and television via a single wire. Last year a majority stake in Fastweb, in which Scaglia was the largest shareholder, was sold to Swisscom for €3.1 billion.

Scaglia has invested €50 million in Babelgum and plans to spend a further €40 million to €60 million annually over the next two or three years, a spokesman said.

With such a deep-pocketed backer, Zingarelli is undaunted by the arrival of mainstream television companies on the Internet. "There's a place in the market for people who want to present content in ways that the market is not currently providing," Zingarelli said. "Web TV has to be something different."

Web video may be different, but Babelgum is sticking to one convention of the offline world. The winners of its online competition, chosen by Lee, will be honored at an awards ceremony in May, during the Cannes Film Festival.

THE ENIGMA FACTORY WORKSHOPS PRESENTS: INDIE FILMMAKING WORKSHOPS

Hollywood, FL: Saturday, March 15th, 2008

Color Correction in Final Cut Pro Workshop

When: Sat. March 15, 2008, 9am-1pm

Location: 2040 Sherman Street, Hollywood, FL Hollywood Production Center

This course is an intensive workshop that covers Apple's Final Cut Pro Color Correction capabilities by using the Final Cut Color Correct and 3rd Party Plug-ins. It is designed for editors, directors, or indie producers that want to learn how to get a professional look out of MiniDV and HD footage using Final Cut Pro.

Award-winning editor/director Alex Ferrari and founder of VFX/Post Production company Numb Robot (<http://www.numrobot.com>) will teach you the basics of color correction and show the tricks of getting the most out of your footage and adding an amazing amount of production value to your project.

Alex Ferrari has 14 years of experience in the post world and his color correction work has been featured in feature films, shorts, documentaries and music videos.

Topics covered in this workshop are:

- Intro to Color Correction - Final Cut Pro Color Correction Tools
- Using 3rd Party Plug-ins - MiniDV Color Correction Workflow
- Color Space - Color Correction in Post Production
- Legal Broadcast Levels - Goals of Color Corrections
- Waveforms & Vectorscopes - and much more...

Fee: \$45 General (\$50 @ the door) \$15 Student with valid school ID (\$20 @ the door)

Pre-registration with payment guarantees a spot in the workshop
For more info visit: http://www.enigmafactory.com/workshops_color_correction.html

Call 954-554-5303 to register or email: workshops@enigmafactory.com

Post Production and Visual Effects Work Flow in Indie Film

When: Sat. March 15, 2008, 2pm-6pm

Where: 2040 Sherman Street, Hollywood, FL - Hollywood Production Center

This workshop is must for any indie filmmaker, producer or director wanting to learn more about the post production & visual effects. When production of a film ends, the next phase of filmmaking is only just beginning. This course covers the methodology, workflow, and artistic aspects that every filmmaker needs to know for post-production.

Learn how to plan a project, color corrections, transfers, and final output as well as introductory technical instruction of digital post-production workflow. Also covered are techniques to save you thousands of dollars in post production costs with understanding what needs to be done to get your project to the market place. Our visual effects curriculum has been developed for the Indie filmmaker who is artistically driven and technically challenged individual. We want to take the mystery and hard ship out of the way from progressing in the visual effects industry or your own personal projects. The workshop features:

- Pre-production prep for Post Production/Visual Effects
- Format choices
- Editing systems
- What is a post supervisor?
- Choosing the right camera for your project
- Final mastering: SD, HD or Film?
- How to shoot for Post Production
- Pitfalls of bad prep - Money Saving Preparation
- Color Correction
- How to give your project a big budget look
- Visual Effects software overview
- Compositing - The Lost Art
- When to use 3D
- Green screen workflow
- Wire Removal
- VFX Plates
- Muzzle Flashes
- Low Budget Visual Effects • Title Sequences
- and much more...

Fee: \$45 General (\$50 @ the door) \$15 Student with valid school ID (\$20 @ the door)

Pre-registration with payment guarantees a spot in the workshop

For more info visit: http://www.enigmafactory.com/workshops_post_vfx.html

Call 954-554-5303 to register or email: workshops@enigmafactory.com

SARASOTA FILM SOCIETY FILMMAKER'S FORUM TO PRESENT FREE SCREENING OF RINGLING COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN STUDENT FILMS

SARASOTA, Fla. (March 14, 2008) -- On Saturday, March 15 at 9:30 a.m., the Sarasota Film Society will present a free screening of short animated films made by seniors at the Ringling College of Art and Design. The films include *The Animator and the Seat* by Eric Drobile, *The Kite*

by Gwynne Olson-Wheeler, *Urgent News* by Jim Christopher, *Taken* by Tony Cabrera, *Escar Go!* by Hannah Sherman, *Scavenger Hunt*, by Matt Kumer, *Respire*, *Mon Ami*, by Chris Nabholz, *A Leg Up*, by Bevin Carnes, *End*, by Joe Sun and *Dupleggated*, by Bobby Huth.

The Ringling College of Art and Design has a student body of over 1,000 students from 43 states and 23 foreign countries. It is recognized as being among the best and most innovative visual arts colleges in the United States as well as a leader in the use of technology in the arts.

Screening will be held at Burns Court Cinemas' auditoriums. These facilities are equipped to meet the projection needs of professionals and amateurs alike, with support for 16 and 35 millimeter film and most digital formats as well, including Beta, Digi Beta, VHS, DVD, and Mini DVD. All Filmmaker's Forum Screenings are free and open to the public.

For more information contact Jerry Kovar, Executive Director, Sarasota Film Society at (941) 364-8662 x2008 or email jerry@filmsociety.org.

CENFLO ACCEPTING ENTRIES THROUGH MAY 9TH

The Central Florida Film Festival (CENFLO) is now accepting entries for its 2008 program which will be held over the Labor Day weekend (August 29 - 31) at the Osceola Center for the Arts, in Kissimmee, Florida. The third annual event will feature a gala opening night party, the screening of fifty plus films, four seminars, and an "academy-award-like" finals ceremony and mixer.

CENFLO prides itself in giving special consideration to films made in Florida, with Florida themes, or starring Florida residents. For more information visit: www.CentralFloridaFilmFestival.com or www.withoutabox.com.

2008 INDEPENDENTS' FILM FESTIVAL CALL FOR ENTRIES

TAMPA, Fla. (March 14, 2008) - The Education Channel in Tampa, Florida is currently soliciting films, videos, animations and digital media from independent artists, producers and students in Florida and beyond for inclusion in its 2008 Independents' Film Festival. In celebration of fifteen years of promoting engaging quality movie making, the festival coordinators have announced a special pricing discount for Florida filmmakers this year. All Florida filmmakers will be able to enter for \$20 while Florida students' entry fee is \$15.

All genres of film completed between March 2006 and May 2008 are welcome. Work must be submitted for review on DVD (NTSC) in English or with English subtitles by May 30, 2008. Premieres are strongly preferred.

The Education Channel will televise the Independents' Film Festival in the fall with presentations throughout the month of September, culminating in a public event in early fall of the "best of" the festival. Web and flash films are also accepted for viewing on the Independentsfilmfest.com website as part of the festival.

All entries are competitively judged in the professional independent, and student categories for the "best of" awards. Entry forms must accompany submissions and are available in a PDF format on the website at <http://www.independentsfilmfest.com>. Entries are also accepted through the Withoutabox.com website.

For additional information call 813-254-2253 ext. 206 or email info@indiefilmfest.us

THE 48 HOUR FILM PROJECT IS RETURNING TO JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA!

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (March 14, 2008) - In a wild, sleepless weekend, you and a team will make a movie--write, shoot, edit and score it. From scratch. In 48 hours. On Friday, May 2nd, you'll get a character, a prop, a line of dialogue and a genre, all to include in your movie. By Sunday, May 4th, the movie must be complete. It will show at The Florida Theatre in downtown Jacksonville at a screening in the next week.

This is the second year we are having this very unique film challenge here in Jacksonville. Last year we had 26 teams enter the competition and 25 of them turned in films. This year we would like to double that number. Remember register before April 4th and save by paying only \$135.00.

There are three ways to be involved:

1. **FORM A TEAM.** If you can rustle up enough folks to make a movie, great! This year the project is open to Pros, Amateurs and Students alike. Just put together a team and register on-line at <http://www.48hourfilm.com/Jacksonville> and then meet us on Friday, May 2nd, ready to go. There are only a limited number of slots, so apply soon...
2. **JOIN A TEAM.** If you're interested in participating, but can't form a team, you can still definitely be involved! There will be at least two "Meet & Greets" where folks can meet team leaders and join their teams. Get your information to team leaders at: <http://www.48hourfilm.com/jacksonville> and click on the "Join a Jacksonville Team" link.
3. **WATCH THE MOVIES.** Come on by to see the movies! They will be showing at the Florida Theatre in downtown Jacksonville on Tuesday, May 6th and Wednesday, May 7th. Or come to the Best of Jacksonville screening to see who wins, location TBA.

Meet other filmmakers, spend 48 hours in intense movie making, and have your film screened at the Florida Theatre! And compete to represent Jacksonville at the 48HFP national screening!

The winning Jacksonville team will compete against other films to represent Jacksonville at the 48 Hour Film Project's national screening, and will compete for additional prizes. Entry instructions can be found at <http://www.48hourfilm.com>.

"UNDER THE SAME MOON" AVANT PREMIERE FOR NALIP MIAMI MEMBERS!

MIAMI, Fla. (March 14, 2008) - "UNDER THE SAME MOON" (BAJO LA MISMA LUNA) earned a standing ovation at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival for its poignant, emotionally rich tale of a mother and son living on opposite sides of the U.S.-Mexico border connected by an enduring love. It was also shown at the NALIP National Conference last week in L.A.

In her feature film debut, director Patricia Riggen weaves their parallel stories into a vividly textured tapestry of yearning and devotion that portrays a child's courage and tenacity and a mother's sacrifice.

FOX SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES invites all NALIP Miami Chapter Members to participate in the Avant-Premiere of this film, Monday, March 17th, 2008, AMC Sunset Place 24, U.S.1 @ Red Road & Sunset Dr. South Miami, FL.

Find out more information and check out the trailer:
<http://www.foxsearchlight.com/underthesamemoon/>

Fifty (50) pairs of tickets are available!

To get free tickets write an email to forkingpaths@comcast.net

GLICKMAN NOT NEUTRAL ON NET NEUTRALITY

By Carl DiOrio, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (March 12, 2008) -- Don't regulate cyberspace.

MPAA chairman and CEO Dan Glickman used his annual ShoWest address to issue that warning to Washington as the former Beltway pol formally came out in opposition to so-called net neutrality legislation.

"Government regulation of the Internet would impede our ability to respond to consumers in innovative ways," Glickman said Tuesday. "And it would impair the ability of broadband providers to address the serious and rampant piracy problems occurring over the networks today."

That latter issue always is a big talking point at ShoWest. Distributors and exhibitors alike view the unauthorized video camera recording of films -- which then show up on the Internet as well as on pirated DVDs -- as picking their pockets big-time.

But Glickman's joining the policy debate about proposed regulation of the Internet also reflects growing concern by MPAA member studios that any such law could prevent them from effectively tapping the Internet as an ancillary distribution channel and profit center.

Opponents suggest that net neutrality is a deceiving catchphrase because it would involve overt government action to prevent content companies from striking exclusive partnerships with Internet providers. Net neutrality proponents including the giant cybersearch company Google are motivated by their own business agendas.

"This is a high-stakes debate," Glickman told the convention crowd. "Do we take a stand for intellectual property rights or cast them aside in the digital environment? Are we permitted to respond to consumers, innovate on their behalf and compete with the world, or are we told by our government to stand down? Today, MPAA and all of our studios are standing up in opposition to broad-based government regulation of the Internet."

John Fithian, chief of the National Association of Theatre Owners, didn't address net neutrality but joined Glickman in again stressing industry anti-piracy initiatives.

"NATO has worked with the MPAA to pass laws in Congress and in over 40 states that outlaw the use of recording devices in movie theaters," Fithian said. "Our Canadian colleagues were recently successful in a similar effort in Canada, (and) many other countries have enacted or are considering new laws. These laws can only be effective if theater managers and our patrons know about them."

Once a piracy threat primarily found in New York and Los Angeles, unauthorized camcording quickly spread elsewhere, including north of the border, the industry leaders said.

"Canada became worse, and that's why we pushed for an anti-camcording law," Glickman noted in a postspeech news briefing at the Paris hotel here.

Digital cinema has been another recent evergreen issue at ShoWest, and this year's Fithian's update for the assembled exhibitors was at once encouraging and cautionary.

"Looking to future growth of the technology, I believe that the pact of digital cinema installations will increase even more toward the end of this year," the NATO chief said. "At least two significant deals -- from Digital Cinema Implementation Partners and the Cinema Buying Group -- will likely be achieved this year."

DCI Partners serves mostly the larger, big-city chains, while CBC targets smaller markets, and Fithian said he hopes their imminent pacts will expand the current digital footprint significantly. But he also voiced concern that the smallest markets could get left out of the digital revolution.

"The big question is (whether) the transition covers all of the cinemas or if small-town America will be left behind," Fithian told reporters.

Joking that he's become known as a relentlessly "glass-half-full kind of guy," Fithian also expressed enthusiasm for the prospective benefits of 3-D exhibition, another burgeoning digital trend. And he joined the chorus of optimistic voices as ShoWest this year stressing the recession-resistant nature of the movie business.

"In the past four decades, there have been seven recession years in this country, and boxoffice climbed strongly in five of those years," Fithian said.

As for the recent competition between theater owners and DVD marketers, the NATO topper had more good news: The theatrical window actually grew this year, reversing a recent trend. The average theatrical window grew to four months and 16 days in 2007, five days more than in 2006.

"Theatrical release remains the locomotive that drives the movie train," Fithian said. "The big screen will always be the best way to experience movies. You can check out Michaelangelo's artistry on the Internet, but who would prefer a computer screen if you could visit the Sistine Chapel itself for 10 bucks?"

ShoWest continues through Thursday at the Bally's and Paris hotels.

SPITZER'S EXIT THREATENS HIS TAX-CREDIT PLAN



PHOTO - Gov. Eliot Spitzer resigns Wednesday. (Getty Images photo)

By Gregg Goldstein, New York Times, March 13, 2008

NEW YORK -- The film business has seen its share of prostitution scandals, but few could've imagined that one involving a New York politico might impact the landscape of film and TV production.

Gov. Eliot Spitzer resigned Wednesday because of his connection to a call girl investigation. Now it will be up to Lt. Gov. David Paterson -- who takes over the governor's job Monday -- to step in and bridge the divide in the state Legislature over Spitzer's aggressive expansion of film and TV production tax credits.

And despite Paterson's new status as the Democrat heading the state, the scandal that ushered him in likely will benefit the Republicans.

By the end of Wednesday, both the Republican-led state Senate and Democratic-led Assembly had unveiled proposed budgets with their partisan versions of the legislation Spitzer spearheaded. The outgoing governor proposed an extension of the current 10% state tax credit on below-the-line production costs, upping it to 15% of all production costs (including above-the-line costs for actors, producers and directors). He also pushed for an incremental bump in the benefit cap from \$60 million to \$75 million by 2011.

The tax credits, initiated in 2004, have bipartisan support, but the Senate and Assembly have much different takes -- and price tags -- on the bill. The Assembly agrees with Spitzer's caps but wants an increase to 30% of productions cost with no above-the-line credit, taking about \$100 million from the budget. The Senate agrees with Spitzer's overall 15% plan but wants to "blow the cap out" -- as proponent Sen. Martin Golden puts it -- at an estimated \$300 million budget cost.

"There'll be a 'Gerald Ford lull' " for the new governor, suspects one Republican lawmaker, alluding to the succeeding president's post-Nixon impeachment tenure where Democratic legislation generally passed easily. "He'll be concentrating on healing, playing peacemaker and just trying to get things through."

Another factor giving Democrats less leverage, according to several involved, is the friendly relationship between Paterson and Senate leader Joseph Bruno, a fierce Spitzer opponent.

Democratic Assemblyman and tax credit bill proponent Joseph Lentol said the emphasis on below-the-line credits is meant to help build New York's film industry infrastructure by supporting and establishing ongoing production jobs. "It's better to give tax relief for the hiring of people who need jobs, as opposed to offering tax relief in relation to the employment of marquee actors and directors," said Derek Murphy, a spokesman for Democratic Assemblyman Joseph Morelle, who's also behind the tax credits

Republican Golden argues that the above-the-line breaks will bring in more production in the longer term and that the percentages are similar and a wash: about 50% for big-budget films and about 60%-80% for below-the-line costs on low-budget films. The Senate plan, however, does seem to place a greater emphasis on pulling in large studio productions, given their more expensive above-the-line talent than low-budget films.

Strong supporters of the tax credits such as Steiner Studios' Doug Steiner and Silvercup Studios' Stuart Match Suna said they don't expect any delays -- a belief shared by the bills' legislative leaders Golden, Lentol and Morelle -- though the state government typically misses its April 1 budget deadline even without a huge scandal on its hands.

The legislation is a response to fierce competition created by Connecticut's recent 30% above- and below-the-line tax credit. The state has siphoned away numerous film shoots, including the

New York-based "Righteous Kill," starring longtime Gothamites Robert De Niro and Al Pacino. Other states taking New York business include Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Rhode Island.

The ultimate impact of either version of the bill might be most harshly felt in New York City, the only city in the nation with production tax credits. The city tacked a 5% below-the-line tax credit on the initial legislation and this percentage will remain added to whatever new legislation the state government passes in the future, but there is concern that the resulting big boom in productions will eat through the budget cap that Spitzer and the Assembly want."

But then again, as with the last time, legislators can always go back to the budget well with another earlier-than-scheduled extension.

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EA TURNS HOSTILE – TAKE-TWO OFFER IS \$26 PER SHARE

By Paul Bond, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

March 14, 2008

Electronic Arts, having been rebuffed in its offer to purchase Take-Two Interactive Software, has gone hostile.

The world's biggest publisher of video games made an unsolicited conditional offer Thursday to buy Take-Two at \$26 a share, or \$2 billion, the same price Take-Two executives and chairman Strauss Zelnick already have rejected.

Noting that the offer is a 64% premium to where Take-Two shares traded in mid-February, EA

CEO John Riccitiello told Take-Two shareholders that the bid "is a great opportunity" to maximize their investment.

Indeed, some of Take-Two's biggest investors already have cashed in much of their holdings, suggesting that they don't see much more upside to EA's bid. Analyst Michael Pachter of Wedbush Morgan Securities added Thursday that those who purchased the recently available shares are unemotional about their investment and "will jump at the offer" of a quick return on their investment.

The clock is ticking, however, as EA's tender offer expires April 11, conveniently 18 days before Take-Two's expected blockbuster "Grand Theft Auto IV" is set for release.

Take-Two, however, is asking its shareholders to "take no action at this time," instead allowing its board 10 business days for further consultation with financial and legal advisers.

Before month's end, executives "will advise Take-Two stockholders of the board's position regarding the offer as well as its reasons for that position," the company said Thursday.

Observers said that while EA could extend its April 11 deadline, its intent is to close its acquisition in plenty of time to benefit from the holiday gift-giving season.

Pachter predicted Thursday that a deal likely would close in October. He also suggested that Take-Two might choose to invite EA to the bargaining table and avoid a hostile takeover, but he thinks such negotiations would result in an offer of only about \$1 more.

Shares of Take-Two closed up 3% on Thursday to \$25.64.

Pachter also reiterated his "buy" recommendation and \$66 price target on EA shares, which closed Thursday at \$47.26.

"We think that synergies to EA are substantial, and would contribute anywhere from \$110 million-\$210 million in annual pretax profit," he said.

AFTRA MAKES NETWORK TV DEAL

By Leslie Simmons, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER March 10, 2008

After less than a month at the bargaining table, AFTRA and the major networks and producers reached a tentative agreement late Saturday on a new network TV code for its daytime and other members, which will include a new residual structure for new media.

"This agreement is a major milestone for AFTRA as substantial gains in wages and working conditions for performers were successfully achieved," said AFTRA president Roberta Reardon, chair of the negotiating committee. "This contract is extraordinary for performers and made significant progress on many fronts, including importantly new-media jurisdiction and compensation."

Talks between AFTRA's 35-member negotiating committee and the networks and producers began Feb. 19 in Los Angeles and concluded Saturday in New York. The current contract is set to expire June 30.

The agreement comes at a time when AFTRA has been urging SAG to start early talks with the

Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers on the two unions' primetime contract, known as Exhibit A of the network code, which the two actors unions have jointly bargained for years.

In recent weeks, tensions have flared between the unions, with SAG saying that the "wages and working conditions" process must conclude before formal talks with the AMPTP. SAG has indicated that it does not intend to start those talks until April.

AFTRA's ability to reach an agreement with the producers and networks could bolster its position that starting talks now on the unions' primetime contract is in their best interest. Although not all members of the AMPTP were involved in the network code negotiations, it does indicate a willingness by producers to start talking now rather than later.

The AMPTP also has said that it welcomes talks now with the unions and in a statement issued Sunday applauded "the latest labor agreement between AFTRA and the television networks. This agreement shows what can be accomplished when both sides approach the negotiating table in a timely, serious and focused way."

A SAG representative could not be reached by press time Sunday.

The new network code agreement includes increases in wage rates, increases in contributions to AFTRA's health and retirement plan and preserves universal coverage of background performers and contract security for daytime serial contract players.

In the area of new media, the agreement establishes a new residual pay structure for paid Internet downloads that boosts the rate currently paid by employers and establishes a residual rate for ad-supported streaming and use of clips on the Internet. Additionally, it establishes union coverage and terms for entertainment programming and promotion announcements made directly for new media, like webisodes.

"Our fundamental goal in these negotiations was to protect performers' interests and improve their wages and working conditions in the face of challenging times," said Ron Morgan, AFTRA network code negotiating committee co-chair and Los Angeles Local president. "Our priorities were to modernize certain aspects of our contract and establish a framework for union members to participate in new media as these businesses evolve."

The AFTRA network TV code covers actors and all on-camera and off-camera talent on all forms of television programming: syndicated dramas, daytime serials, game shows, talk shows, variety and musical programs, news, sports, reality shows, and promotional announcements.

The agreement is subject to approval by the national board and ratification by its members.

STUDIOS DREAD POTENTIAL SAG STRIFE

By Carl DiOrio, HOLLYWOOD REPORTER

March 13, 2008

LAS VEGAS -- Studio executives insisted Wednesday that the after-effects of the Hollywood writers strike haven't hurt their movie-release plans through summer 2009.

That was the good news. The bad news is that the looming SAG negotiations still can screw up things beyond then.

"It's not a foregone conclusion that it's going to work itself out," Sony Pictures Entertainment vice

chairman Jeff Black said of the actors' contract talks.

Other film executives participating in a "Hollywood Elite" panel discussion moderated by The Hollywood Reporter editor Elizabeth Guider also expressed concern that pre-negotiations sabre-rattling by SAG could presage another troublesome labor dispute.

"If the SAG situation doesn't resolve itself fairly quickly, then you do start to develop a situation where there might be a little gap (in) late 2009," Paramount vice chairman Rob Moore said.

Of course, with most distributors lamenting the recent crush of releases over competitive weekends, having fewer films in the pipeline might not be such a bad thing, he added.

"People would start to spread out their slates," Moore said.

Disney Motion Picture Group president Mark Zoradi noted that his studio already has moved to cut annual releasing activities to about 12-14 films per year, with a pair of animation tentpoles slotted in the summer and holiday periods.

Sony is on the other end of the scale, still releasing upward of 20 films annually, including Screen Gems titles, Blake noted.

Fewer prestige titles will get released this fall following last fall's problematic crush of adult-targeted films, Universal worldwide marketing and distribution president Adam Fogelson said.

Releasing trends tend to be cyclical, Fogelson added. But he also noted Uni that executives embrace a recent movement toward slotting films throughout the calendar year.

"The weekend after Labor Day and the one after Thanksgiving do tend to offer some problems," Fogelson said. "But generally speaking, there are like 49 or 50 weekends throughout the year that can work."

Getting producers to endorse unconventional release slots can be tough, Moore said.

"The most common refrain you have when you're looking at a release date is, 'What other movie has worked in that window?'" the Par executive said.

Meanwhile, the increased use of Internet marketing, especially for young-skewing films, means campaigns have to begin six to eight months ahead of release dates if they are to succeed in generating prerelease buzz, executives noted.

The Internet has become a good additional resource for distribution clips and trailers to hype films, they said.

"(But) the theater is absolutely the best place to get that message out," Fogelson said, as other panelists nodded in agreement over the importance of theatrical trailers.

There also was broad consensus on the panel that digital cinema finally has arrived on the exhibition scene in a meaningful way and soon should ease distributors' costs and logistical challenges considerably.

"The next 24 months are really the tipping point for digital, certainly in the U.S. and Canada," Zoradi said. "International is 12-24 months behind, relative to digital."

And that's a problem, Moore said. Greater numbers of digital screens are needed overseas as well as boosted foreign 3-D installations, he stressed.

The big challenge right now is catching international up," he said. "When you are asking that question -- should we make this movie in 3-D? -- it's hard right now because the international piece of that equation isn't there yet."

The panel discussion was part of a ShoWest panel co-sponsored by Facebook, used by many studios in viral marketing campaigns, and Sony Electronics, which is pushing exhibitors to install its 4K-resolution digital-projection systems.

"Sometimes good enough is not good enough," said Gary Johns, vp at Sony Digital Cinema Systems. "In the early days of (HDTV), you sometimes heard people say, 'Why high-def? Standard-definition television is good enough.' You don't hear anybody say that anymore."

ShoWest, which has been running since Monday at the Bally's and Paris hotels here, concludes tonight with an awards gala.

DEAL COULD BRING 3-D MOVIES TO 10,000 SCREENS

LOS ANGELES, California (AP) -- Hollywood took a big step Tuesday toward offering more movies in 3-D, announcing deals to convert as many as 10,000 more theater screens for the digital technology needed to accommodate the resurgent, eye-popping format.



The 3-D movie starring Miley Cyrus and her father Billy Ray Cyrus pulled in \$31.3 million in its opening weekend.

Access Integrated Technologies, Inc., said it had reached agreements with four studios – Disney, News Corp.'s 20th Century Fox, Viacom Inc.'s Paramount and Universal Pictures, which is owned by General Electric Co.'s NBC Universal – to finance and equip the screens in the U.S. and Canada during the next three years.

The conversion will cost as much as \$700 million, said Bud Mayo, chief executive of Access Integrated Technologies, which completed a first tranche of 3,700 digital conversions in October.

The announcement came during the kickoff of ShoWest, a conference in Las Vegas where studios unveil clips and other details about upcoming movie lineups.

Hollywood is anxious to convert as many theaters as possible to the digital format, which provides sharper images while eliminating the need for expensive celluloid film. It also allows theater companies to offer live events and shows from other venues.

The digital technology can also be used to show 3-D movies with the addition of software and hardware costing about \$25,000 per year for each screen.

"Hannah Montana & Miley Cyrus: Best of Both Worlds Concert," a 3-D movie, pulled in \$31.3 million in its opening weekend, an impressive feat because it played on only 683 screens, compared with many wide-release films that open on more than 3,000 screens and make half as much.

"We were in as many locations as we could possibly get," said Chuck Viane, president of distribution for Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures. "If there were 3,000 3-D screens available, would we have played them all? Yeah, I think we would."

Even "Chicken Little," the first ever animated 3-D movie released in November 2005, made \$23,864 per screen, compared with \$10,949 for the 2-D version.

At least 30 more 3-D movies are in the pipeline from Hollywood, including this summer's adaptation of Jules Verne's "Journey to the Center of the Earth."

Theaters owners and studios hope the offerings will help bring people back to multiplexes for an experience that cannot be matched by increasingly sophisticated home theater systems.

The theater industry is also battling competition from video games and other alternative entertainment along with Internet movie downloads.

The push to convert screens had been bogged down by a number of issues, including the shaky credit market that has threatened to increase costs even further.

"It's just been maybe slower than anticipated," said Stifel Nicolaus analyst Drew Crum.

Thus far, about 4,000 screens -- just 10 percent of the estimated 38,000 screens in the U.S. and Canada -- have been outfitted with digital technology.

Only about 1,040 of those screens are now outfitted to show 3-D movies.

Interest in 3-D has come and gone since the 1950s, but studios began to take the format seriously again after a 3-D version of 2004's "The Polar Express" from Warner Bros. grossed more than \$45 million.

A number of high-profile filmmakers now have 3-D projects in the works, including James Cameron and Tim Burton.

Walt Disney Co. is making "Toy Story 3" in 3-D and plans to rerelease the first two "Toy Story" films in the trilogy in the format.

Box office figures have shown the submersive effect of 3-D can attract two to three times more moviegoers who are willing to pay as much as \$3 more per ticket, Crum said.

Along with digital projection, today's 3-D technology makes use of polarized lenses rather than the flimsy red and green cardboard cutouts of the past that could cause nausea and headaches.

In October, Access Integrated Technologies completed a two-year effort to retrofit multiplex screens at a cost of nearly \$280 million -- about \$75,000 per screen.

AccessIT is recouping the cost from studios over the next 10 years.

Meanwhile, theater chains are ponying up as much as \$25,000 a year per screen to technology firm REAL D for the software, physical upgrades and maintenance that makes it possible to show 3-D movies.

The current dearth of screens has caused some short-term kinks.

The 3-D concert movie featuring U2 took in only \$4.8 million because the tail end of its run was trampled by the Hannah Montana juggernaut, which took up most of the available 3-D screens.

DreamWorks Animation SKG Inc. said last month it pushed back the release of its "How to Train Your Dragon" by four months to March 2010 to avoid competing for 3-D screens with James Cameron's hotly anticipated feature film "Avatar."

The logjam has only ramped up the pressure to cut deals.

A second financing vehicle called Digital Cinema Implementation Partners was formed last March by the three largest theater exhibitors, Regal Entertainment Group, AMC Entertainment Inc. and Cinemark Holdings Inc. with plans to outfit their 14,500 theaters with digital technology.

"We, the exhibitors, and most of the studios want to make things happen so we can support what is a major commitment by multiple parties to the 3-D space," he said. "It's going to happen."

KENYA FOCUS

The Location Guide Report - March 2008



The conflict in Kenya has attracted numerous news reporters to the area but many film projects have either stalled or been cancelled. Those living and working in Kenya report that the international media has exaggerated the danger but how safe is it to film there and is any normality now returning?

Mario Zvan, executive producer at Blue Sky Films points out that the large majority of tourists that were in the country decided not to cut their holidays short and to stay on. "This is because they felt absolutely safe," he asserts.

According to Jenny Pont of Pontact Productions, the current 'no go' areas were not popular filming locations even before conflict began. The fact remains, however, that some areas are far more risky than others and an in depth knowledge of the trouble spots can only be an advantage. Pont comments: "Throughout the recent chaos, our Security Advisor patrolled and, working closely with the Police, was able to send out regular Traffic Safety Alerts text messages advising which areas were safe/unsafe at any given hour, countrywide." Zvan adds: "As locals, we have an understanding of how and where these disturbances occur and what to avoid."

Film production has not come to a complete standstill. Ginger Wilson, producer with The Ginger Ink Group, explains that local production is in action, although as far as overseas productions are concerned, "I don't know of any here at the moment other than documentary crews." There are also "plane loads of foreign correspondents," according to Wilson.

Pont adds: "Of the larger productions who were intending to shoot from January-March 2008, some have postponed and a couple have moved elsewhere."

Industry insiders tend to agree that filmmakers are not turning to Kenya's neighbouring countries as alternative locations. Zvan explains: "There is generally very little work in neighbouring countries. Because Kenya traditionally had a manufacturing base, a small advertising industry developed, and this has been the backbone of the local film industry. The other countries do not have the filming infrastructure required."

Pont comments: "Apart from one shoot which moved to Kampala, together with Kenyan PSC and crew, I don't know of any others who are working in neighbouring countries. Filming in Tanzania is time-consuming and expensive and there is little film infrastructure but that is not to say local PSC's do not work there and will continue to do so."

Those who are planning to film in Kenya may well find it difficult to get the required insurance. Wilson explains that it is not simply a matter of convincing clients to come to the area. "They want to come, but often they and their insurers are bound by the travel advisories which sadly are one of the last things to return to normal despite things being peaceful on the ground. The foreign press have also predictably skewed the public perception of how Kenya is as a whole."

Daniel Woods, at the entertainment practice of insurance broker Marsh says it is important to both check the latest foreign office advice and consult your broker.

The message is that if the foreign office advises against it, insurers will be unwilling to provide cover or may want to add certain caveats or exclusions. Woods observes that some production companies take the commercial decision to go ahead with the shoot even if they are not insured. "It is of course up to them to take that risk," he observes.

The high profile nature of the Kenyan Conflict has certainly taken its toll on film production in the area. Wilson looks forward to the return of Kenya's reputation as a stable country, observing: "Thankfully, most crews come here because of the landscape and people. Those haven't changed."

CASTING NOTICE

Project Title: Kidz Incorporated

Dates: 3/15/2008–3/30/2008

Location: Tampa, FL

PrinWall Entertainment is producing a new live performance group ages 9-12 based out of Tampa, Florida. All auditions and rehearsals will be in Tampa and the talent must be able to travel for performances, choreography and recording. Kidz Incorporated is looking for the triple threat of acting, singing and dancing. Email submissions accepted as well as mailed submissions.

Send demos, resumes and pictures.

PO Box 1259

Lutz, FL 33548-1259

Parents may call with questions or to schedule an audition day and time in Tampa. Please ask for Helen who will be handling the scheduling. This group will perform in the Tampa Bay Area and travel to LA, Nashville and surrounding Florida counties. A one-time yearly fee to cover costumes, training, etc. is \$125. There will be pay when the group is not donating their performance to a charity event.

Breakdowns: Male & Female Actors, Singers & Dancers ages 9-12. No performance experience is necessary as long as training in the three areas applies.

Contact Helen Williams , Phone: 813.385.0634

REVIEW: 'HORTON' DOES JOYFUL JUSTICE TO SEUSS

(CNN) March 14, 2008 -- First the good news: As the lead character in "Horton Hears a Who!", Jim Carrey does not parade around in an elephant costume.

No, after two laborious, decidedly overstuffed live-action Dr. Seuss movies -- "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "The Cat in the Hat" -- Hollywood has gone back to the drawing board ... or more accurately, the computer. "Horton" is an animated film, not an extravaganza of makeup and special effects. It seems like such a no-brainer, you have to wonder why it took the studio so long to figure it out.

At any rate, "Horton Hears a Who!" is the first Seuss movie since the beloved Chuck Jones TV specials to look comfortable in its own skin. The visuals are bright, poppy and fun. Of course Jones' 1970 TV version of "Horton" -- written by the good doctor himself -- clocked in at a TV- (and child-) friendly 26 minutes. Size may not matter in metaphysics, as the moral of this story insists ("a person is a person, no matter how small"), but that kind of running time won't wash in theaters.

So screenwriters Ken Daurio and Cinco Paul had to come up with an additional hour of material. Much of it is amusing, and most is in the Seussian spirit, but there's a limit to how far you can gild the lily before it droops, and this story's very simple design teeters as precariously as the cat in the hat's leaning tower of bric-a-brac. Fortunately, somehow, catastrophe is averted, and "Horton" emerges as 90 decent minutes of entertainment.

Horton (voiced by Carrey) is a big-hearted, small-brained, happy-go-lucky elephant whose huge ears pick up a whisper from a tiny passing speck. To the bemusement and perplexity of his friends and enemies in the jungle, Horton berths it on a freshly cut clover and announces he has befriended the miniscule Mayor of Whoville (voice of Steve Carell).

A lot of the new material concerns this new character (in the original, more logically, Horton connects with an astronomer). The Mayor has a wife, a son -- JoJo -- 96 daughters, and just one bathroom. He's dismayed to discover that his world is nothing but an insignificant particle of dust floating through space, aghast to learn that the sudden dramatic shifts in climate besetting Whoville signify impending doom and distressed to realize he must inform his helplessly complacent fellow citizens their safety lies in the benevolence of an invisible giant elephant in the sky.

Do we detect the faint toot of a political message? Perhaps, but the leap of faith Horton and the Mayor must make (despite ridicule on all sides) could apply equally to spiritual belief or scientific inquiry. Aside from its unconscious chauvinism, there's not much to get upset about in a film that preaches universal tolerance and inclusion.

Horton's nemesis is the jungle's self-appointed governess, Kangaroo (voiced with impressive venom by Carol Burnett), an empirical control freak. It's not abundantly clear why she's so

threatened by an elephant talking to a clover, but with a true dogmatist's reactionary zeal, she declares the flower must be destroyed.

Will Arnett racks up the tension and the laughs as Vlad, the vulture assigned the hit (not to be confused with "the bunny Vlad that makes the cookies," as Horton asks). Carrey noodles whimsically between the beats -- "We can be a secret society," he tells the clover, "and no one else can join unless they wear funny hats" -- while his "Bruce Almighty" co-star whips up enough of a hullabaloo that the voice of the people is finally heard.

"Horton Hears a Who!" is a better storybook than it is a movie, but it's still a pretty good family film, for big and small alike.

"Horton Hears a Who!" is rated G and runs 88 minutes.

FINAL 'HARRY POTTER' BOOK TO BE SPLIT INTO 2 MOVIES

(**LOS ANGELES, California (AP)** -- Harry Potter was the center of seven novels, but he'll star in eight films.

The final book in the wildly successful series will be made into two films, the Los Angeles Times reported Wednesday.

Producers are expected to announce Thursday that J.K. Rowling's last "Potter" installment, "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows," will be split into two parts on the big screen. The first film is slated for release in November 2010, with part two following in May 2011.

"It was born out of purely creative reasons," producer David Heyman told the Times. "Unlike every other book, you cannot remove elements of this book."

The two final "[Potter](#)" films will be shot concurrently, much like the blockbuster trilogy based on J.R.R. Tolkien's epic fantasy novel "The Lord of the Rings."

Another famous Tolkien tome, "The Hobbit," is also being split into two live-action movies set for back-to-back shooting to begin next year.

Filming on the sixth "Potter" flick, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," began in September.

"It's been brilliant," said star Daniel Radcliffe. "It's also, I think, the funniest of the films so far."

The "Potter" film franchise has pulled in \$4.5 billion at the worldwide box office.

FANS AWAIT RETURN OF STAR WARS

LAS VEGAS, Nevada (AP) -- Fans never seem to get their fill of "Star Wars," and George Lucas is happy to oblige.



Star Wars creator George Lucas poses in Las Vegas with a pair of storm troopers from his "Star Wars" films.

Lucas offered a glimpse into the latest creation in his sci-fi universe at the theater-owners convention ShoWest on Thursday, showing a sequence from "Star Wars: The Clone Wars," a computer-animated movie due in theaters August 15. It will be followed by a TV series of the same name, to air on the Cartoon Network and TNT this fall.

The movie came about as an afterthought while Lucas was developing an animated TV show of the same name. That show debuts this fall, but Lucas figured it was ripe for big-screen treatment, too.

"You've got the whole assembly line built, and then you say, 'Hey, we can make up something,'" Lucas said in an interview. "It was like old-time movie making. What I love about television, it's like Monogram Pictures or the old studio system, where a couple guys come to work and they sit and have some coffee and go, 'Why don't we make a movie about such and such? OK, fine.' And at the end of the day, it's pretty much on its way."

Set in the years between episodes II and III -- "Attack of the Clones" and "Revenge of the Sith" -- of the big-screen "Star Wars" chronicle, the movie and series present fresh adventures of Jedi warrior Anakin Skywalker, his mentor, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and other colleagues.

The movie introduces a female Jedi, Ahsoka, who is Anakin's young apprentice. "It's like 'Band of Brothers' in space, with Jedi," Lucas, 63, said. "You can tell lots of stories. They come up all the time."

Lucas said he plans to produce at least 100 hours worth of TV episodes of "Clone Wars." He also is moving forward with a live-action "Star Wars" TV show focusing largely on new characters removed from the Skywalker family. That show will be set in the decades between "Revenge of the Sith" and the period when the original film, 1977's "Star Wars," takes place.

So can fans ever get enough of "Star Wars"?

"I don't know," Lucas said. "I'm thankful every year that it keeps going."

MGM promotes Parent to chairman

MGM has named Mary Parent chairman of its worldwide motion picture group. Parent will oversee the studio's worldwide theatrical production, distribution, marketing and business affairs. She will report to MGM chairman and CEO Harry Sloan.

Slater set to spy for NBC

Christian Slater is coming to primetime. Sources said NBC is close to handing out a series order

to an untitled drama from writer-producer Jason Smilovic starring Slater in what would be the actor's first TV series.