San Diego Media Pros

NEWS YOU CAN USE

May 26, 2021
COVID PRODUCTION UPDATE
Hollywood’s major production companies and key unions have agreed to extend COVID safety protocols for TV and film production until June 30.

The extension of safety protocols hammered out last September by the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers and key unions including IATSE, SAG-AFTRA and the DGA comes as no surprise.

However, the AMPTP protocols will not require those working on productions to be fully vaccinated.

This is encouraging as Sony Pictures Entertainment is planning a phased-in return of hundreds of employees to the Culver City lot beginning in June. Disney is looking to bring staffers back starting in July.
Killers of the Flower Moon

The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI

David Grann

Bestselling author of The Lost City of Z
“KILLERS” MOVIE MAINTAINS COVID PROTOCOLS

The shoot in Oklahoma, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro, is said to have a Covid team of 75 to 100 people.

With some days having 13 locations, every day they get a spreadsheet of who is testing the next day and where there need to go, and it’s 10 pages long.

According to their location manager Mike Fantasia; “The biggest thing for me is the space I need when we have 500 extras - dealing with spacing, Covid protocols and catering... I can’t imagine trying to do this in New York City.”
ALEXA VS IPHONE: CAN IT BE?

FilmConvert – a company that makes film emulation plug-ins - performed an experiment with its Cinematch software, attempting to match an iPhone 12 to an ARRI ALEXA. The colour matching is quite surprising, though there's much more at play here.

Cinematch is a software that matches one camera to another, taking the LUT several steps further.

Note that there are several caveats at work that one can poke holes in when comparing the two, but well shot and exposed footage in both camps make the match pretty impressive. Take a look.
HOW DID WE LOSE CONTROL?
In a world where the theatrical release is an option, not a necessity, movie studios are no longer in charge of Hollywood.

We have reached a point where “major movie studio” has begun to sound like an anachronism. Certainly, Warners and Universal and Paramount and Disney and Sony remain premier global suppliers of films that generate billions — but the studio bosses occupy a lower position on the power charts because it’s no longer the movie business that drives the industry.

When Netflix sent CEO Ted Sarandos to Hollywood, he slowly but inexorably turned the streamer into the top movie and television employer in Hollywood and around the globe.
This was the month that movie studios finally lost control of the industry

Movie studios used to have an ace in the hole: exclusive access to movie theaters. Now, Netflix owns several theaters and Amazon is in talks to buy the AMC theatre chain.

Studios are now likely to suffer trimmed budgets. On the cutting block: cushy expense reports, travel allowances, car leases, fat salaries, vanity projects, and inflated development slates. Many “deal contracts” are as archaic as the old lexicon.

But according to Blumhouse founder Jason Blum: “With change comes opportunity. Every studio is experimenting with different windows and bespoke business models. Movie theaters is where we want to see our work.”

Bonus points if you can accurately use “bespoke” in your own sentence.
WANNA GET AWAY?
Last summer, comedian Chris D’Elia was accused by multiple women of sexually harassing underage girls. He admitted to having a problem and D’Elia was dropped by CAA amid the scandal.

With the movie already shot, Netflix and director Zach Snyder decided to replace D’Elia with comic/actress Tig Notaro.

“It was an expensive one, that’s for sure,” said producer Deborah Snyder. Director Snyder put the figure at “a few million.” Added Deborah Snyder, “I will say, Netflix did the right thing. They put their money where their mouth is.”
Netflix spent millions replacing Chris D’Alia with Tig Notaro in ‘Army of the Dead’

The pandemic prevented the entire cast from getting together to reshoot select scenes so Notaro would have to film almost all of her scenes in front of a green screen with no other actors in sight.

Snyder and the VFX team replicated the physical spaces and camera angles of the original scenes at a studio in Simi Valley, California, referencing the old footage on a monitor and using greened-out props, laser pointers, and tennis balls hanging from stands to approximate where Notaro should be looking.

And there could be no ad-libbing: Notaro’s dialogue had to sync with the other characters’ reactions."

Here’s a quick look at the result:
Can you hear me now?
Can you hear me now?
THE NOLAN PARADIGM:
THIS COULD BE WHY SOME NEW FILMS ARE INAUDIBLE

When the Hollywood Professional Association (HPA) met this year, they addressed the subject where scenes were so underlit the audience complained they couldn’t see the action, or so indistinct that even people with no serious hearing impairment were wishing for subtitles.

The talk was titled “Is creative intent wrecking the intent of the creative?”

Many members nodded in agreement in reaction to the idea that a lot of directors don’t care that the audience can’t hear or see.

Apparently, the concept of film as an audiovisual experience not necessarily dependent on its plot, or what is being called the “Nolan Paradigm,” is widespread.
The Nolan Paradigm: This Could Be Why Some New Films Are Inaudible

Examples of the Nolan Paradigm included the Undead attack scene from *Game of Thrones* and of course the soundtrack from the movie *Tenet*.

A solution may be something that is well-known to the industry but perhaps not practiced enough. It’s the notion that indistinct things seem a lot more distinct if you already know what they are.

Listen to this short clip from the BBC Radio 4 series titled “Uncommon Senses” for a great demonstration of this concept:
The Uncommon Senses
THE NOLAN PARADIGM:
THIS COULD BE WHY SOME NEW FILMS ARE INAUDIBLE

So people in mixing or grading suites, who will probably have heard unmixed dialogue and seen the ungraded shots, are very likely to assume that things are a lot more audible or visible than they really are, even if the director isn’t suffering the same problem – which he or she very likely is, being intimately familiar with every syllable uttered.

It’s for this reason that experienced sound and grading people, regardless of an approaching deadline, should do everything they can to schedule as much downtime as possible between the end of primary work on the project and the final look or listen before it leaves the facility.

Unless your director likes it that way. In which case, you learn to call it art!