



The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking: From Preproduction to Festivals and Distribution

By Dan Mirvish

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In *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking*, celebrated Slamdance Film Festival co-founder Dan Mirvish offers a rich exploration of the process and culture of making low-budget, independent films. Once labelled a "cheerful subversive" by *The New York Times*, Mirvish shares his unfiltered pragmatic approach to scriptwriting, casting, directing, producing, managing a crew, post-production, navigating the film festival circuit, distributing your film, dealing with piracy and building a career. Readers will learn how to game the Hollywood system to their advantage, get their films accepted by respected festivals without going broke, and utilize a broad range of media and tactics to promote and distribute their work. A companion website features behind-the-scenes interviews and footage from Dan's films, and much more.

- Learn everything you need to know to make, promote, and distribute your independent films, with time-tested lessons and practical advice on scriptwriting, casting and directing A-list actors, financing, producing, managing a crew, editing in post, creating visual effects on a budget, and successfully navigating the film festival circuit
- Find out what it takes to become a true "cheerful subversive" and adopt new and innovative approaches to producing your films, discover hidden loopholes in the Hollywood system and festival scene, take advantage of a broad range of media formats to promote and distribute your indie films, and generally make bold moves in service of your creative work, all while staying flexible enough to pivot at a moment's notice
- An extensive companion website features in-depth interviews with filmmakers, more than an hour of behind-the-scenes footage from Dan Mirvish's films, festival resources, and much more

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Editorial Review

Review

"What Mirvish has accomplished in this book, is to regale the reader with one man's journey in how to become a "wildly, successful" independant filmmaker. But, he doesn't hold his journey out as a map for everyone to follow. As he concludes in the book's epilogue, "Find your own way..."

- Michael Ogden, Journal of Media Education

"Hands down the most fun book on filmmaking I've read. I wish this book existed when I first started making films."

- Caveh Zahedi, award-winning filmmaker, Assistant Professor in Screen Studies, The New School

"My students would not only *buy* the book, but they'd hang onto it after the class was over."

- Lise Raven, Associate Professor, School of Communication & Media, Montclair State University

"An extremely realistic (not to mention funny) look at how to make a truly memorable independent film...or at least have fun trying! Dan's insight into the independent film world is invaluable, mostly because he's made all the mistakes he wants *you* to avoid!"

- Stephen Dest, award-winning filmmaker; Professor of Film Studies, University of Connecticut

"Dan Mirvish is Hollywood's Merry Prankster – a guerrilla filmmaking guru whose wisdom and insights are as valuable as they are entertaining."

- Award-winning filmmaker Kevin DiNovis, writing faculty, New York Film Academy

"Dan's book explains the current independent film industry from a producer-director's perspective in a thorough yet highly accessible manner that is sorely lacking in most film industry books. The fact that the book is presented in a conversational and even irreverent manner which never sacrifices the book's strengths is a pleasant bonus for any reader."

- Robert L. Seigel, entertainment attorney

"Dan cast Julia Stiles for a bag of peanuts! I also did not realize that the author is the co-founder of the Slamdance Film Festival. Those two facts, each individually and by themselves, made whatever he had to say gospel. More importantly, he wrote about something that he actually did and not just heard about."

- Christopher C. Odom, Professor, Full Sail University

"The biggest thing that Mirvish's approach offers is the fact that he has already done all this. Unlike most authors of filmmaking books, Mirvish has made several feature films, he has been to dozens of festivals with his movies, he has negotiated countless deals with representatives and he has founded and run his own major film festival. I can't think of any other writer of filmmaking books that has that pedigree. So he offers what the audience most craves: inside information. And he drops truth bombs constantly: filmmaking is really hard; doing things the ordinary way will probably result in

failure. He's not afraid to be negative, but he also offers ingenious ways around the typical land mines in the path of every filmmaker."

- Marc Pilvinsky, veteran film and video editor

"I've found myself referring to it, remembering it, listening to it as I finish post-production and enter the festival realm with my film. It is completely applicable, very accessible and totally useful. I think it will come in handy to a great many filmmakers who are looking for guidance. The book makes it feel like something which can, and will, be conquered. The book makes filmmaking understandable, like a how-to guide, while still allowing freedom for the filmmaker to explore and create."

- Daniel Moya, USC School of Cinematic Arts undergraduate; director of upcoming indie feature, *Rental*

"Dan is a true pioneer of the independent spirit. With one foot in a hot tub and the other on a mountain top he plants his independent flag somewhere between heaven and hell. In the great independent tradition of father John Cassavetes, Dan does what he has to do to exist in the inhospitable world of the true independent film artist. He is a fellow combatant against mediocrity in motion pictures and any upstart dreamer can benefit from what he has learned in the trenches of the 'just fucking do it' school of Cinema."

- Alexandre Rockwell, Sundance award-winning director of *In the Soup*; Associate Arts Professor/Academic Director, NYU Tisch School of the Arts

"The last 25 years has been the most turbulent period in the film industry's history and Dan has continued to navigate through it and survive. He is a legitimate insider with a wealth of information and knowledge."

- Sean Baker, Spirit and Gotham award-winning director of *Tangerine*, *Starlet* and *Take Out*

"Dan Mirvish's experience along with his intelligence and humor makes *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking* indispensable in the library of every filmmaker. If you have a budget for only one book, this is the one. This investment will pay off and help you not only make money, but to build a career and keep your focus where it should be. *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking* is insightful, filled with knowledge, wisdom, and real filmmaking experience. It's perfect for the independent filmmaker."

- Patricia Cardoso, Sundance award-winning director of *Real Women Have Curves*; adjunct faculty at USC School of Cinematic Arts

"Spend your hard-earned cash on Dan's book, read it, then go make your movie."

- Matthew Harrison, Sundance award-winning film and TV director of *Rhythm Thief* and *Sex and the City*; UCLA Extension instructor

"Both a brutally realistic view of the state of indie film and a remarkably comprehensive and aspirational step-by-step guide to the filmmaking process, Mirvish's book is essential reading for all working filmmakers: Equally applicable to traditional indie filmmaking, and also the brave-new world of digital content creators working at any level, from YouTube to network TV. With Mirvish's quirky sense of humor and shoestring-budget approach to filmmaking, it's an essential addition to any film school curriculum that wants to quickly engage their students with an accessible and relevant text."

- Jon Reiss, award-winning director of *Better Living Through Circuitry*; author of *Think Outside the Box Office*; film directing faculty at CalArts

"If making a feature film is your dream, but nobody is banging on your door to offer you a deal, this book is an invaluable guide on how to never take 'no' for an answer and make it happen yourself. Dan Mirvish demystifies the nitty gritty aspects of making your own film with enthusiastic DIY flair - seriously, I wish I had this book when we were trying to figure out what K-1s were for the first time!"

- Claire Carre, Gotham award-nominated writer/director of *Embers*

"This is the guidebook that belongs in the proverbial rucksack of anyone embarking on the perilous adventure of making an independent feature film. Read for advice, inspiration, and to remind yourself that with enough willpower and a little ingenuity - it can be done."

- Charles Spano, writer and producer of the award-winning feature *Embers*

About the Author

Dan Mirvish is a director, screenwriter, producer, inventor and author. Mentored by Robert Altman on his first film, *Omaha (the movie)*, Dan co-founded the Slamdance Film Festival. Dan's film *Open House* forced the Academy Awards® to rewrite their rules, and he also co-wrote the critically-acclaimed novel *I Am Martin Eisenstadt*. His award-winning film *Between Us* played in 23 festivals and sold to 144 countries. Dan's latest film is *Bernard and Huey*, written by the legendary Jules Feiffer. He's also written for *Filmmaker Magazine*, *Indiewire* and *The Huffington Post*. Dan has a master's degree in film from USC and has guest lectured at UCLA, NYU, USC, CalArts and many other film schools. Once labelled a "cheerful subversive" by *The New York Times*, Mirvish was named one of *Variety's* Top 50 Creatives to Watch.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jamie Lundquist:

As people who live in typically the modest era should be change about what going on or facts even knowledge to make these keep up with the era and that is always change and progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by examining books. It is a good choice in your case but the problems coming to you actually is you don't know which you should start with. This *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking: From Preproduction to Festivals and Distribution* is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Christopher Cunningham:

Do you have something that you like such as book? The publication lovers usually prefer to opt for book like comic, small story and the biggest one is novel. Now, why not trying *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking: From Preproduction to Festivals and Distribution* that give your satisfaction preference will be satisfied simply by reading this book. Reading practice all over the world can be said as the means for people to know world better then how they react when it comes to the world. It can't be stated constantly that reading addiction only for the geeky person but for all of you who wants to end up being success person. So , for every you who want to start reading as your good habit, you could pick *The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking: From Preproduction to Festivals and Distribution* become your own personal starter.

Thomas Krieg:

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Diane Wilson:

What is your hobby? Have you heard that question when you got scholars? We believe that that concern was given by teacher to the students. Many kinds of hobby, All people has different hobby. Therefore you know that little person including reading or as reading become their hobby. You need to understand that reading is very important as well as book as to be the factor. Book is important thing to add you knowledge, except your current teacher or lecturer. You discover good news or update regarding something by book. Amount types of books that can you go onto be your object. One of them are these claims The Cheerful Subversive's Guide to Independent Filmmaking: From Preproduction to Festivals and Distribution.

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