

No, the newsletter hasn't been getting caught in your spam filter, as one impatient reader recently theorized. I have been traversing the country for 16 out of the past 18 weeks, which has made finding a few moments to log our progress a bit of a daunting task. My apologies for letting so much time transpire since the last newsletter. With that aside, let's review the latest poop...

A (SWEET) SCORE FOR RF... With his silvery shoulder length hair, his mysterious-sounding (and unpronounceable) European moniker and unbridled enthusiasm, composer extraordinaire Ludek Drizhal promised me back in December that he would create a musical score that would elevate Rounding First above the hundreds of indie films clogging the marketplace. And he has not disappointed!

Ludek's contributions were capped off by his travel last month to Slovakia for one week to record the score with the Bratislava TV & Radio Symphony – a 50-piece orchestra that does nothing but perform scores for TV, film and other recordings. They recorded a whopping 40 minutes worth of RF cues in a single eight-hour session, demonstrating the degree of professionalism and efficiency of both Ludek and the orchestra. Even more outrageous, the orchestra cost roughly 75% less than what it would have cost to record in the USA! I love free market economics!

Best of all, the results are outstanding. A comparison of the computer generated symphony against a live orchestra left me giddy with the difference in quality. One of our experienced audio engineers said, "I don't care how much you spent – it was worth every penny!" Ludek has made an immeasurable contribution to the film and I will never doubt the power of music again.

Don't believe me? Listen to the attached mp3 file, which is just one of the 25 cues created exclusively for Rounding First. In short order, we will be placing many of the cues on the website for your listening pleasure.

COLOR CORRECTION COMPLETE... Not to be outdone, all of the images in our film (let's see, at 24 frames per second, that works out to over 125,000 frames) have gone through a process known as color "timing" or correction. Each shot (1,300 in total) is painstakingly adjusted for the optimal combination of red, green and blue. To observe the process is akin to watching paint dry. To observe the result is to see the images in crisp, clean, saturated colors. The baseball field offers lush greens, the camp cabin is a moody collection of browns and yellows while the night-time amusement park sequence is washed with yellows, reds and blues.

As one of our recent viewers commented, "it looks like a film you'd see in a theater." I'll drink to that.

INVESTOR SCREENING... With the complete color correction, the orchestral cues placed and the latest (but not final) version of the sound mix, I received a FedEx the afternoon before a scheduled screening for five of our investors in the San Francisco area in early May. For me, it was my first time showing the film without many of the caveats and temporary fixes that I had proclaimed at so many prior screenings. Of course, that meant I had few excuses if the film sucked.

Fortunately, no suckiness was in evidence. A few (male) investors acknowledged the ending made them misty-eyed (but not so much that they couldn't maintain their masculinity!), while all of the investors expressed their enthusiasm of the project and their continued participation... always an important litmus test – no investor remorse here!

SEDONA SCREENING... Last week, we had three private test screenings of the latest version of the rough cut in Sedona AZ: one for 200 adults, another for 300 high school students, and a final

one for select group of local film enthusiasts. At last, a screening (or three) for people who had nothing to do with the film. Fortunately, the response was great!

In the post-screening Q&A sessions, kudos were volunteered by the audience for the performances, the locations, the music and the story. Star Michael Dean flew out for the high school screening, where he was inundated with autograph requests from dozens of giggly 16 year old girls! Okay, I signed a few autographs as well, but I didn't receive nearly as many giggles.

Validation aside, perhaps the greatest insight was the degree to which teenagers and adults responded most strongly to different aspects of the film. For the teens, the obnoxious putdowns, the farts and the nutcrackers all solicited raucous laughter, while the adults laughed less at the bathroom humor and more at the historical references and the plays on words (some of which went completely over the heads of the teens). It was also interesting to note how the teens were far less equipped to deal with the tension and vulnerability at the end of the film, while the adults were transfixed by the unfolding drama.

Thanks to Michael and composer Ludek Drizhal for making the trip to Sedona.

TO MARKET, TO MARKET... Now that post-production is almost complete, you might think that it's time to break out a bottle of bubbly to celebrate a large light at the end of a short tunnel. Oh, how I wish that were true. However, the reality is that we are now entering arguably the hardest phase of the project (yes, you heard that correctly - as if the prior phases were not sufficiently difficult.) Marketing and sales. That phase where someone must be persuaded to write a very large check in exchange for the right to distribute the film into theaters and/or your local Blockbuster Video.

That sounds sufficiently simple. A great summary was recently found in the Chris Gore's Ultimate Film Festival Survival Guide, an industry bible for those in this business. As he put it, sales and marketing is fairly straightforward:

"All you have to do is apply to festivals, lobby the festival staff, convince them your film must be seen, get into the festival, hire a publicist, a lawyer, a producer's rep, and an agent; travel to the festival – don't forget to make a killer poster, an EPK, a trailer and a website; get some press, create great buzz for your movie, pack the screening with a real audience along with press, friends, celebrities, and acquisitions executives; be humble, engaging and funny at the post-screening Q&A session, get some good reviews, create more good buzz; get "the call", make the distribution deal, negotiate tough to get the best deal, read the trades to look for your name and announcement, travel the world showing your film at other festivals, support the release of the film by doing interview after interview – and during this whole process have as much fun as possible while exhibiting your ability to remain witty. That's it. That's all you have to do."

Perhaps we shouldn't open that bottle of bubbly quite yet...

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Jim Fleigner
Hangin' Hams Productions LLC
Santa Monica, CA
310-345-7425

Home of the feature film **ROUNDING FIRST**
Visit the official website at www.roundingfirstmovie.com

*"ROUNDING FIRST is clearly a well-written and moving screenplay."
Nancy Israel, InDigEnt*

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*"LAST WRITES is great fun and very professional. Good going!"
Peter Bart, Editor-in-Chief, Variety*

*"Disturbingly hilarious and incredibly satisfying, LAST WRITES is solidifying proof of Feigner's mastery.
I'd love to see what he can do with a feature film."
Brian Matherly, Daily Reviews.com*