

Want to Make Movies?

Written by Ginny Grimsley

Monday, 17 September 2012 07:18

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Award-Winning Director Gives Tips for Ambitious Amateurs

Because technology is moving so quickly, it's easy to miss out on gadgets that may impact one's life.

"Anyone with a cell phone knows how accessible taking pictures and shooting footage is nowadays, but with a minimum of investment, movie fans can tell their own stories with the same professional hardware that legends are using today," says seasoned filmmaker Kerstin Karlhuber.

She completed her latest project, "Tides of the Heart" (www.silentgiantproductions.com), in collaboration with partner and renowned songwriter Daniel Jay Paul.

"It's a feature-length music video – there's no dialogue. The story is told completely through the music and Kerstin's direction," says Paul, whose latest album, "Clean Getaway" (www.danieljaypaul.com), not only makes up much of the score for the film, but also structures the plot.

"With the technology available today, you can really afford to experiment and innovate. That's what keeps pushing the artistry to the next level," he says.

Karlhuber and Paul offer suggestions for creative-minded individuals who have been kicking around ideas, but haven't yet pulled the trigger on a project:

• The Canon EOS 5D Mark III: Canon v. Nikon ... who cares? The point is that the big dogs in the film business, from James Cameron to Neill Blomkamp of indie-film success story, "District 9," are using digital gear that can be purchased by the average movie fan. The sharpest, crispest picture in the history of images can tell your story for a few

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thousand dollars.

- Adobe, CyberLink, Final Cut Pro, etc.: Film editing software, more than ever, is cheap, user-friendly and easy to acquire. There are several tutorial demonstrations available online, and if you need to come up with ideas for a project brainstorm with friends or family. That's half the fun.
- Getting started: Sadly, most of the failure of creative projects – whether film, music, art or writing – involves work-ethic issues, or lack of confidence. Ask the following questions: How long have I been thinking about my idea? Is my vision doable? What's keeping me from pursuing it? ... And, perhaps the most insightful question – Why not?
- A little help from your friends: Chances are that if you're a creative person, you have a few creative buddies who can help you troubleshoot concepts and technical issues. Lean on your artistic friends for moral support – they understand the struggle of the creative process. The same people may be a good source for constructive criticism, too, when the project is nearing completion.
- Consider trends: Karlhuber's film has no dialogue and relies solely on Paul's songs for sound. The most recent Oscar winner for best picture, "The Artist," also features no dialogue, relying on old-school Hollywood visual drama. While this is a coincidence, Karlhuber says it has helped her film gain attention. "If your creative ideas happen to line up with a trending topic, there's no reason why you shouldn't take advantage of the public's zeitgeist," she says.

About Kerstin Karlhuber & Daniel Jay Paul

Kerstin Karlhuber is an award-winning filmmaker and director. Her work in the arts has been seen around the world, from off-Broadway to Cannes, the Arclight Theater in Los Angeles to a segment on "Good Morning America." She is the founder and director of the film production company Silent Giant Productions based in New York City.

Daniel Jay Paul is a songwriter who recently released "Clean Getaway" on the Sunlight Communication Arts label. His songs have been described by Music Express' Marcus Wright as "music you hear with your heart" Paul is the author of the novel "The Last Sunset."