

### 3 Ways to Get Your Creative Project off the Ground

Written by Ginny Grimsley

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#### Independent Filmmaker Offers Tips in Realizing Your Personal Ambition

With each passing year Andy Warhol's quote – that everyone will have their 15 minutes of fame – rings truer.

The caveat: some people get more than 15 minutes, in large part because they actually work at their success, says award-winning indie filmmaker Kerstin Karlhuber. In fact, she calls this the "golden era of self-starters," because this is an unprecedented time in which creative doers have access to achieving an audience.

"While there are some people who see the rise and fall of their name shortly after a quirky incident on a reality TV show, the more important success stories come from devoted artists who've worked their entire adult lives on a dream – and then something clicks," says Karlhuber, who recently completed her latest project, "Tides of the Heart" ( [www.kerstinkarlhuber.com](http://www.kerstinkarlhuber.com) ), an avant garde feature-length music video with no dialogue.

With some talent, a vision and that irrepressible itch to do something, amateurs such as "Fifty Shades of Grey" author E.L. James, or the co-creators of "It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia," initially shot by three non-professionals before the FX channel contracted the show, are changing what and how audiences are receiving entertainment, says Daniel Jay Paul. His latest album, "Clean Getaway" ( [www.danieljaypaul.com](http://www.danieljaypaul.com) ), not only makes up much of the score for the film, but also structures the plot.

"We're living in a golden era of self-starters when it comes to the arts," he says.

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Karlhuber and Paul discuss three ways those just starting out can kick-start their projects:

- **New methods of financing:** Sites like IndieGoGo.com are making it easier for self-starters to raise money for a variety of independent projects. It's a 501(c)(3) non-profit that utilizes a "crowdfunding" platform in which those who seek to raise money can create campaigns to detail their story and get the word out.
- **Alternative distribution:** A decade ago, it wasn't easy to get your self-made film out to audiences. If a committee liked your work, then you might get picked up by an indie movie festival, shown at the odd art house theater, Karlhuber says. Now, there are some households that go without cable or satellite, whose inhabitants rely completely on sites like Netflix and Amazon Instant Video, where the Karlhuber-Paul project can be found, for their entertainment. An independent filmmaker can reasonably expect their video to be watched tens of thousands of times, if not much more. Despite these handy advances, utilizing traditional methods is a good idea, says Paul, who is continuing to enter "Tides of the Heart" into film festivals after having won awards in past events. He is expecting more theater screenings in the future, and hardcopies of the film are available.
- **Marketing:** The old way of advertising – billboards, newspaper space – can still be effective, but no longer necessary. If you're not utilizing a method for online marketing, including the usual suspects such as Facebook and Twitter, then you're not doing your job as a passionate artist, Paul says. "Unless you have the means or cash for a professional to handle your PR, then you have to ask yourself a simple question: What good is your project if nobody is exposed to it?" he 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.

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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.”