



**Lucky Coffe Productions
Presents
A Brian S. Kalata Film**

Pencils Down!

The 100 Days of the Writers Guild Strike

87 minutes
Documentary
This film has not yet been rated

PRESS NOTES

Contact Information

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Official Website-Trailer
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SYNOPSIS

In 2007, the Writers Guild of America (WGA), the labor union which represents writers in the American Television and movie industry, hit an impasse in their contract negotiations with the Studios. At the center of the dispute was jurisdiction over the Internet. Unable to make progress, the WGA called a strike, which brought Hollywood to a halt for 100 Days.

A blend of ground level strike footage, one-on-one interviews with key industry figures, and historical Hollywood footage, the film not only explores the historical components surrounding the decision to grind Hollywood to a 100 day standstill, but also examines the issues in terms of the relevance for today's entertainment workers and those coming into the industry in the future.

Apple TV and downloads from the iTunes Store, Amazon Prime Streaming Videos, Hulu and Hulu Plus, Google Play, Netflix, Roku; even gaming consoles, the ways to view content are growing exponentially. Society has coined the term "New Media" to address this form of content presentation.

At its core, *Pencils Down! The 100 Days of the Writers Guild Strike* tackles the all important question regarding this new frontier of entertainment accessibility: what is the industry business model for the internet?

As writer Jonathan Fernandez pointedly comments in the film, "strike is a miserable, miserable, thing". This strike and its issues were not products of frivolity or privilege unchecked; the issues were real and impacting and the decision to strike was made by hard-working groups literally putting everything on the line to frame and define the emerging world of New Media. Someone has to write the internet...right?

The documentary chronicles the events leading up to the writers decision to strike and events that occurred during the strike. One major issue of the strike was the fight for Writers Guild jurisdiction over internet productions. The film also examines the impact of the current Guild deals on the future of the industry as a whole, especially the rapidly developing sector of made for internet production, also known as new media. Television and movies were at a turning point. The distribution model was forever changing and no one was certain which direction it was heading. The Internet was developing at a tremendous pace.

Those interviewed for the film include: Actors, Alan Rosenberg and Justine Bateman; Writers, John Bowman, Harlan Ellison, Howard Rodman, Christopher Knopf, Jason Ross, and Peter Hankoff; industry historian, Dr. Miranda Banks; and noted entertainment commentators, Cynthia Littleton, editor at Variety and Jonathan Handel, of the Hollywood Reporter.

Many people, believe think that the entertainment industry is only for people who are rich, when in actuality, most of the people who this strike affected were regular working class people. Most people in the business work as freelancers and are not sure where the next job or check is coming from.

When ABC started to offer some of its content for free over the Internet on its web site - including full episodes of current programming- along with new ads on line- it set off a warning to the creative community that was creating this content - the studios were making more money on content they created - and they were not paying for it.

During the course of contract negotiations, there were several issues that the WGA brought to the Association of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) for negotiation. These included: Residuals for New Media uses of Previously created content and jurisdiction for content created specifically for New Media; DVD Residuals; Standard cost of Living Increases in the Contract in all areas; and Jurisdiction in Reality TV, among other issues. During the negotiations one of the main issues, Residuals for use of previously created work in New Media, was rejected by the AMPTP and the negotiations came to a grinding halt. Over 93% of the WGA membership voted to go on strike. When their contract expired in November of 2007 - they did just that.

One of the few things that was a major contention for years with the writers was residuals. Unlike other creators of intellectual property - film and television writers give up their copyright to the studios, in exchange for Residuals. That is the deal. The Studios have constantly been fighting to change and challenge the deal - to get more for less. And, The writers and Actors and Directors - are also fighting back to get a little more. The big question is: What is the right amount? This is the basis of the fight. This was what brought the call for a strike to a head: the Studios did not want to budge on new media - they wanted to wait and see - and the Writers were ready for a fight. The technology was about to break out - and in their opinion: it was now or never.

For 100 days, members of the Writers Guild of America were on picket lines in New York City and Los Angeles, as well as locations around the country. Actors, crew members and even fans, showed up on the picket lines in support of the writers. The Internet was opening up new models for distribution and once that door had opened, there was no turning back. The future of television and movies was changing forever and the creative guilds and other craft unions faced a challenge to see how they would fit in with New Media and what part they would play in Entertainment's future.

Director's Statement

This film originally started off as a smaller part of an idea I had for a documentary about Labor and unions in America. Unions in this country and even more so, workers in general, have been under attack and under a lot of stress today. As I started to put that project together, I started to see that I had great material for not one, but two movies. I had already shot many hours of footage on the picket lines during the Writers Guild Strike in 2007 and 2008. I decided to focus on *Pencils Down!* first. There is an important discussion in this time that applies to anyone who wants to understand the dynamics between employers and workers, as well as anyone who has an interest in the inner workings of Hollywood.

This movie was, in every sense, an independent film. It started quite simply on day one of the strike. I grabbed my Canon HV20 Mini DV camera and ran out the door. I headed over to Paramount Studios and started shooting the Writers on the picket line. I did not know where this would go - I just had a sense that this was going to be a historic moment and might be something bigger than we thought in the moment. I eventually became one of the Videographers working with United Hollywood, which was gathering and disseminating Videos online to give the public information about the strike, since it was largely ignored by the mainstream press.

After the Strike was over, most people in Hollywood were focusing on just getting back to work and trying to recover from the loss of income. The entire Economy at that same time was already taking a major hit. The recession was hard on every sector. I thought about making this film right then – but it seemed out of place at that time. It was very unclear what the real impact and effect of the strike was going to be, so I tabled it for a couple years. I believed that only after things had played out over a little bit of time, would I really be able to explore what happened in a meaningful way.

I shot footage throughout the 100 days of the strike. Then in 2014, I had scheduled interviews with the people who appear in the film. Overall, I think there was about 12 shoot days spread out over several months, to get the interviews completed. The edit was several months long once we started going at it full speed. Technically, it took over 7 years from start to finish to bring this film to the light of day.

Post Production on a documentary can be and was, on this project, the most difficult part of the process. Partly, because we organized this backwards. I started shooting, then decided to make the movie, from footage I had acquired years before. On most documentary projects, you can start the editing process as you shoot and organize things when they are fresh. This required going back and looking at old footage, along with acquiring new interviews in 2013 and 2014. I think we had over 30 hours of footage to cull through - not including the B-roll and historical footage we looked at.

Another aspect of the process that it took to get this movie completed was one that had not occurred to me fully when I started out. In my mind, this was my little documentary started from the footage I shot on the ground during the strike. I think once it started becoming a reality, and people started noticing that it was happening, they became wary of what it would be. I do not approach interviews as an advisory of the person I am talking to. I am genuinely interested in what the people I am talking to have to say. So, I was a little taken aback by how many people did not want to talk about this subject or the strike at all. Many people had much to say off camera and off the record, but I think some people in Hollywood are not eager to rock the boat, or be perceived as rocking the boat. They are reluctant to comment on a subject as potentially dividing as this one was at the time of the strike.

I started with a list of about 125 people who I wanted to interview for the project. A highly unrealistic number to actually get and it included a lot of people who I thought we were unlikely to get. What it did do, was give us a broad base to go after and see who would actually talk to us. My initial thought on this process was to find people in all walks of the industry to talk about how the strike impacted them, including the people who supported the strike and those who didn't. I wanted to set this up as more of a round-table discussion of the issues from many points of view. I ultimately had to shape the movie from the people who would talk to me on camera. So, Ultimately, simple cooperation, was a big part of deciding who to interview on this film.

I thought quite a bit about the ways to tell this story. Every filmmaker has a point of view and no matter what you do to step away from that in a documentary, it is always present, that's the nature of a film - you don't tell the story. You tell a story. I tried as much as possible, based upon the interviews that I was able to get, to tell an overview of what was going on. The issues, the events and even some of the reasons why the strike happened. I wanted to be as balanced as I could to at least create a starting point for further discussion about the strike, the issues raised by it and the nature of the relationship between creators of content and the people who sell that content.

One of the reasons that Post was so difficult on this film was the fact that we had so many different cameras and formats. There was footage shot on a Canon HV20 Mini DV, as well as a Canon C300, XA 25, 7D, Mark III and T2i; we also had a Sony mini dv cam footage and GoPro 3 Black edition footage. That is in addition to the Stock Footage and archival footage in standard definition. The multiple formats are not unusual in a documentary, but at times it felt like we were going for a new world record for using as many different cameras as possible..

Distribution of Film and Television had always been a monopoly, controlled by the studios. The barriers to entry had been very high - the capital needed to make and distribute a movie lay in the hands of a few. Distribution via the internet changed everything. The issues brought up by the strike were important in terms of understanding the relationship between the studios and the unions. This was a pivot point in entertainment, the most important change in the industry that has happened since the establishment of the film industry as a business.

Production Bios

Brian S. Kalata

Writer, Producer, Director

Brian began work on *Pencils Down!* over seven years ago - on the very first day of the Writers Guild Strike. He grabbed a camera and headed out to Paramount Studios and started filming. It took several years to bring it all together and he is proud to present to you this documentary as his Feature Directing debut.

Brian, along with writing partner Rick Shaughnessy became members of the Writers Guild of America while writing the feature film, *Dinner Rush*, which was directed by Bob Giraldi and stars: Danny Aiello, John Corbett, Edoardo Gero, Kirk Acevedo, Ajay Naidu, Summer Phoenix, Vivian Wu, Alex Corrado and Mike McGlone.

Dinner Rush, premiered at the *Telluride Film Festival* and was widely praised by critics and was listed on Richard Roeper's list of The Top 100 Movies of the Decade (2000-2010), and is selected in Leonard Maltin's book, *Leonard Maltin's 151 Best Movies You've Never Seen*.

A graduate of Columbia College in Chicago, Brian worked for a time with writing partner, Rick Shaughnessy, at First Generation Film/Video, before returning to school to earn his Juris Doctorate at Chicago-Kent Law School. He had a private Practice in Chicago, where he continues to maintain his law license.

Brian has worked as part of the creative team on numerous film and television projects, including: *Oceans 11 and Oceans 12*, *The Road To Perdition*, *Californication*, *The Middle*, *The United States of Tara*, *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*, *Stranger than Fiction*, *The Longest Yard*, *Monster-inLaw*, and *National Treasure*, to name a few.

In the fall of 2013, Brian founded Lucky Coffee Productions with David Klink and Marilyn Rall.

Stephen Andrzejewski

Producer

Stephen has worked in various capacities on dozens of Studio Feature Films and Network Television Series in a career spanning over three decades.

An alum of the Columbia College film program in Chicago and a member of the Directors Guild of America, Andrzejewski got his break in film production as an in house production assistant for famed commercial director, Joe Sedelmaier.

His career resume includes serving as a location manager on over 20 studio feature films including; *Backdraft*, *Soul Food*, *The Road to Perdition*, *The Ice Harvest* and *Stranger Than Fiction*.

His producing credits include the independent feature, "Under the Bus", French Canal's Documentary, *Chaser: The Robert Guinan Story* and working under producer Jon Kilik as Chicago Unit Line Producer on Spike Lee's, *He Got Game*.

He was also the Visual Effects Coordinator on Christopher Nolan's, *Batman Begins*.

Stephen has been a friend, creative partner and collaborator of Director/Writer Brian S. Kalata for over a decade.

Mathias Fain

Director of Photography

Originally hailing from both New York and Paris, Mathias has long immersed himself in the creative world of Film and television

In 2000, he joined the Art Directors Guild of America and worked in various capacities with such notable directors as Cameron Crowe and Mike Nichols. Despite his success as an art director, he yearned to travel behind a camera to tell his own stories again.

Mathias received a Masters Degree in Producing at the American Film Institute's Conservatory Program. His first short film as producer, *Peter Rabbit & The Crucifix* received honorable mention at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival. and he wrote and produced the short film *Off Track Betting*, which received the Grand Jury Awards at both Miami and Houston International Film Festivals In 2010, he directed a TV pilot, starring Tommy Davison for Murphy Boyz Entertainment Group,

His company Tyche Films, has serviced video content to a wide array of clients ranging from FOX (We Bought A Zoo) and other major studios. Most recently, Mathias completed work as director of photography on *Pencils Down!*

Nathaniel Nose

Editor

Nathaniel is an alum of Michigan State University, which he attended on a scholarship for Film and Theatre.

Nose has edited and directed several films including the feature *Unruly Nights*, *The Box* (which was an official selection of the East Lansing Film Festival) and he is currently in post production as Writer/Editor/Director on the short film, *Talent*.

Nathaniel was introduced to Director Brian S. Kalata and began editing *Pencils Down!* in the spring of 2014.

Seung-Wan “Sunny” Choi

Associate Producer

Seung-Wan is a native of Los Angeles and an alum of UCLA, where she graduated with a degree of Bachelor Arts in Anthropology and a minor in Political Science.

Seung-Wan began her career as intern at Winston Baker, a major producer of global finance and growth conferences for the financial, legal and entertainment industry. Her responsibilities included attending network events, managing databases of potential investors and personally assisting co-founder Katherine Winston.

Seung-Wan joined *Pencils Down!* producing company, Lucky Coffee Productions in the fall of 2013 as an office production coordinator. Besides managing the day to day production office operations on *Pencils Down!*, she was integral in coordinating all interviews, handling contracts and overseeing the research and licensing of all stock footage and photographs.

Dave Klink

Executive Producer

Dave serves as Lucky Coffee Productions, Chief Executive Officer.

Dave started his career in new accounts and business development for Norfield Industries based in Chico, California.

While at Norfield, Dave was recruited by Fortune 500 company Georgia Pacific to become the Sales and Service Coordinator for its Chicago Triad facility. Dave quickly rose up the ranks at the Triad eventually being handed responsibility for overseeing all logistics for the Triad’s Millwork operations.

Dave is a lifelong friend of Director/Writer Brian S. Kalata and *Pencils Down!* was the foundation for the creation of Lucky Coffee Productions in the fall of 2013.

Dr. Marilyn Rall

Executive Producer

Honored as Professor Emerita (Brooklyn College), Dr. Rall serves as Creative Advisor/ Executive Director for Lucky Coffee in addition to being a co-founder.

Dr. Rall completed her undergraduate studies at the prestigious Oberlin College before heading to the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill to complete her Master’s and PhD work in Social Psychology. Dr. Rall has traveled the globe for various educational pursuits including a stop as an academic visitor at the London School of Economics.

A lifelong supporter of the Arts, Dr. Rall is a noted advocate of and investor in Broadway theater productions, spending part of the year living in the New York City area.

In addition to her support of live theatrical productions, Dr. Rall had bit parts in director Susan Seidelman's (Sex and the City) first feature film *Smithereens* as well as *The World According to Garp*.

Dr. Rall also served as assistant director and executive producer for the documentary film *Memories Of Nokomi*

List of Interview Subjects

Miranda Banks, PhD
Assistant Professor

Department of Visual and Media Arts
Emerson College
*Author of: The Writers: A History of
American Screenwriters and Their Guild*

Christopher Barrett
President Metropolitan Talent Agency
President and CEO of MTA Interactive

Justine Bateman
Actor and Writer

Credits Include:
Family Ties, Modern Family
Desperate Housewives, Californication
Wizards of Waverly Place

John Bowman
Writer, Producer
2007 WGA Negotiating Committee
Chairman

Credits Include:
In Living Color, The Fresh Prince of Bel-
Air
Saturday Night Live

Kai Bowe
Writer and Producer

Credits include:
"America's Next Top Model", Big Smo
Airport 24/7, Pageant Wives, Tia and
Tamera, Lisa Raye: The Real McCoy 2,
Breaking Down the Bars

Harlan Ellison®
Writer

Awards Include:
4 Writers Guild of America Award, 2
Mystery Writers of America Awards
Credits include:
"Star Trek, Babylon 5, The Twilight
Zone, The Alfred Hitchcock Hour, The
Flying Nun, The Man From Uncle,
Burke's Law, Voyage to the Bottom of the
Sea, Web of the City, The Man with Nine
Lives,

Jonathan Fernandez
Writer, WGA Negotiating Committee
Member

Credits Include:
Star Trek: Enterprise
Rob the Mob

Jonathan Handel
Contributing editor for The Hollywood
Reporter and Entertainment and
Technology lawyer

Author of:
Entertainment Residuals: A Full-Color
Guide,
The New Zealand Hobbit Crisis
Hollywood on Strike!

Peter Hankoff
Writer and Producer

Credits Include:
Pearl Harbor Declassified; Crimes of the
Century; Hitler's Hidden Holocaust;
Unsolved History; A Day in Their Lives;
Killer Deal

Peter Hyoguchi
CEO and Co-Founder of Strike TV

Credits Include:
Creepy Caress
Dwelling
Unknown" Sender

Christopher Knopf
Writer

President of the Writers Guild of America, West 1965-67

Credits Include:

Equal Justice ;Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color; Peter and Paul; The Danny Thomas Hour; The Big Valley

Ken LaZebnik

Writer

Credits Include:

When Calls the Heart, A Prairie Home Companion, Star Trek: Enterprise;Touched by an Angel

Cynthia Littleton

Editor in Chief Television, *Variety*

Author of:

TV on Strike

Season Finale: the Unexpected Rise of the

WB and UPN (with Susanne Daniels)

Keith McNutt

Director of The Actors Fund Western Region

Former Positions:

AIDS Initiative in New York

National Grant Committee of Broadway

Cares/Equity Fights AIDS

Howard Rodman

WGA West Vice President, 2011-Present

Trustee of the Writers Guild Foundation

Professor USC School of Cinematic Arts

Credits Include:

August, Savage Grace, Takedown, Joe Gould's Secret, The Hunger, Fallen Angels

Alan Rosenberg

Actor, SAG President 2005-2009

Credits Include:

Luck, CSI: Crime Scene Investigation The Guardian, Cybill, Murphy Brown, Cloned, The Last Temptation of Christ

Jason Ross

Writer

Member of WGA Negotiating Committee

Winner:

7 Emmy Awards

1 Writers Guild of America Award

Credits Include:

The Daily Show, The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon

Patric Verrone

President Writers Guild of America, West 2005-2009, Writer

Awards include:

2 Primetime Emmys, 1 Animation Writers

Caucus Animation Award

Credits Include:

Futurama, The Simpsons, Muppets Tonight, Pinky and the Brain, The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson

**Lucky Coffee Productions
presents a
Brian S. Kalata Film**

"Pencils Down! The 100 Days of the Writers Guild Strike"

Written, Produced and Directed by
Brian S. Kalata

Executive Producers
David Klink
Marilyn Rall

Produced by
Stephen Andrzejewski

Associate Producer
Seung Wan "Sunny" Choi

Director of Photography
Mathias Fain

Editor
Nathaniel Nose

Featuring
Miranda Banks
Christopher Barrett
Justine Bateman
Kai Bowe
John Bowman
Harlan Ellison®
Jonathan Handel
Peter Hankoff
Peter Hyoguchi
Christopher Knopf
Ken LaZebnik
Cynthia Littleton
Keith McNutt
Howard Rodman
Alan Rosenberg
Jason Ross
Patric Verrone

Consulting Producer
Lynn Appelle

Consulting Producer

Michael Paolillo

Camera
Nathaniel Nose
Brian Kalata
Jason Camp

Assistant Camera
Irina Dragojevic

Additional Footage
Patrick Francis
Peter Hyoguchi
Seth Kurland
Jim Kunz

Accountant
Ron Giznik

Motion Artist
Relja Penezic

Sound Design
Bill Jenkins

Additional Dialogue Editing
Thomas Cassetta

Post Production Audio Mixing by
Monkeyland Audio Incorporated

Mixer
Mark Rozett

Executive Producer of Sound Services
Thayer Jester

Sound Studio and Scheduling Manager
Rob Embrey

Supervising Sound Editor and Re-recording mixer
Trip Brock

Color Processing and Post Productions Services
Roundabout Entertainment Inc

DI Coordinator
Crystal Angel

DI Producer
Randall Lehman

DI Colorist
Michael Smollin

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Bob Plowman
Neal Sacharow-WGA West
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Ericka Te Slaa -Global Icons
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John Wudulavic

Andaz West Hollywood
Hotel Shangri-La | Santa Monica, CA

IndieGogo Contributors

Jennifer Baron
Dea Brawley

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Wileen Dragovan
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Shawn Haugen
Richard Heichel
Eric Hooge
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Ted Kalata
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Noreen Klink
Chad LaMarsh
Phyllis Lamken
Ruth Mercado
Fran Molinari
Joanne Park
C. Picard
Heather Pollock
Gene Schick
Patricia Shapley
Cynthia Skocypec
Brandon Snider
Karie Strangeway
Christine L. Sundt
Darlene Ulmer

MUSIC

“Pencils Down” “Solidarity Forever”
2014 Arrangement

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Words by Ralph Chaplin

Music by Julia Ward Howe

Arranged by Michael Heaton

Performed by
Michael Heaton-Vocals and Guitar
Doug Wielert - Bass
Michael Amadei - Drums
Stan Dembowski - Lead Guitar and Banjo

"Hollywood"
Written by Stan Dembowski
Performed by Stan Dembowski & Mike Kott

Kevin MacLeod
(incompetech.com)

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Songs:

Americana
Call to Adventure
Fig Leaf Rag
Five Card Shuffle
Just As Soon
Monkeys Spinning Monkeys
No Good Layabout
Covert Affair
Hustle
Hidden Agenda
Divertissement
Sneaky Adventure
Slow Burn

Rollin at 5
Shades of Spring
Sidewalk Shade
Sweeter Vermouth
Tabuk
Unlight
Villainous Treachery
Faster Does It
The Builder
Delay Rock
Niles Blues
Open Those Bright Eyes

Images and Archival Footage

Images courtesy of the Mel Shavelson Collection, Mary O'Connor Collection, and Screen Writers' Guild Records in the Writers Guild Foundation Archive

Show Report from The Writers, Screen
Writer's Guild club, ca. 1921-1926
Jim R. Webb, age 51 (1960), on the picket
line during the 1960 WGA Strike

Mel Shavelson, undated, outside the Hotel
Del Coronado

Telegram from writer Stanley Rubin to
Valentine Davies, WGA President, 1950

The Screen Writers' Guild original clubhouse,
ca. 1923 (The Blue Book of the Screen)

Javier Barrios
Katie Buckland

Joanne Lammers
Kevin Ott

1988 WGA Strike photographs
courtesy of Anne Fishbein

1981 WGA Strike photographs
courtesy of Rolf Konow

2007 Hollywood Rally photograph
courtesy of Dexter Kim

David Young, John Bowman and Patric Verrone photograph
courtesy of Michael Jones

Jonathan Fernandez photographs
courtesy of Phillip V. Caruso

Nick Counter photographs
courtesy of the Brian Vander Brugg and Gary Freidman
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Special Thanks to The Writers Guild of America

In Memoriam
Tom Mankiewicz
Norman Borisoff

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