

THE Call Sheet

HOLLYWOOD

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD



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Making a Career Move in NEW MEDIA

You're talented, dedicated and ready to work, and yet you can't find an agent and find yourself frustrated looking for a way to showcase your talent. Tired of waiting around for your break? Want to find a way to gain a competitive edge? Then do what many of your fellow SAG members have done and produce original scripted content for new media.

On October 2, MOVE (Member Organizing Volunteer Efforts) hosted a panel of members and experts working in this arena and proved to a packed house at SAG headquarters that working under a SAG new media agreement is not only easy, but essential to the success of a project.

"Taking yourself seriously as a professional in your approach to new media production is absolutely critical to success on the Web. You achieve that goal by using the best resources available," stated Drew Baldwin, co-founder of Tubefilter, the go-to place for news and reviews of Web television shows. "Audiences will only take your show as seriously as you do. As new media producers you must understand the importance of building relationships between your shows and your viewers, and you are destined to fail if you have a preconceived notion that if you just build it, they will come."

The evening was part of the Guild's ongoing campaign to raise awareness among SAG members that beginning January 1, 2009, SAG's Rule One will be vigorously enforced in new media. Working under union agreements helps all actors by establishing union standards in this growing new creative space. It also ensures that the actors will share in



MATHER ZICKEL, KRISTEN SCHAAL AND A.D. MILES OF HORRIBLE PEOPLE

the revenue should the project become profitable.

"There are two different mindsets in developing shows for the Web. One looks at online content as a farm league for television, as a way to make cheap pilots and test them in front of an audience. The other is to develop something specifically for the online audience, which is hungry for well produced scripted programs," said A.D. Miles, writer and star of the Web sudser *Horrible People*. "The difference is that making something intentionally as a stepping stone to TV waters it down and robs the audience of something original. Online series can certainly be adapted for TV, but I think you have to start out thinking of the online audience as an end unto itself, an audience that deserves something different, maybe something that wouldn't even work on regular television as it exists today."

Other panelists included Melissa Hunter and Jenn Crohn of LetsGetLaid.tv and Tyler Malin of the social networking site Secret Fun Time. They both expressed the idea that Internet programming is the best

TV/THEATRICAL CONTRACT UPDATE

Negotiating Committee Asks National Board to Approve Strike Vote and Campaign.

The National Negotiating Committee has recommended to the Screen Actors Guild National Board that action be taken to end management's intransigence to resolve differences in the TV/Theatrical Contract negotiations.

In an October 1 motion, the committee said the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers "will only seriously engage in further negotiations after the members of the Guild express their confidence in their leadership by authorizing them to take all actions necessary to protect the interests of the membership."

The motion included the request for the National Board to put a strike authorization to a member vote. Authorization means that the power to strike only would be wielded as a last resort. An informational campaign would precede the vote to educate members about the importance of this leveraging tool.

Most members agree that the current offer is lacking, potentially in ways that could be damaging to their careers and to the profession as a whole. Eighty-seven percent of members returning response cards attached to the TV/Theatrical Contract Special Bulletin indicated that the "final" offer from the AMPTP is not acceptable and that formal negotiations should continue.

In light of this dictate from members, the negotiating team followed up with a renewed request for formal meetings, which was hastily swatted down by the AMPTP.

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way for actors to showcase their work while holding complete control by expressing themselves in a new product that can be very competitive and unrestricted.

David Burns, producer of Joss Whedon's *Dr. Horrible's Sing Along Blog*, starring Neil Patrick Harris, echoed "It was always our intention to deliver a product comparable to a studio product, but with greater freedom. Right from the start, we contacted all of the guilds to make sure we could be signatory to secure the best talent."

With noted final budgets ranging from \$9,000 to a half-million dollars, the panelists all proved that SAG new media agreements are accessible and flexible. So, when asked to work on a new media project—whatever the length or budget—SAG members should insist on a SAG contract.

For more information on SAG new media contracts, call (323) 549-6777, or e-mail organizingnewmedia@sag.org.

Beginning January 1, 2009, SAG will begin vigorously enforcing Rule One in new media. SAG members may only work in new media under the appropriate SAG or AFTRA agreement.

Look Who's Leading

The Association of Hispanic Advertising Agencies (AHAA) recently held its 2008 Creative and Account Planning Conference in Beverly Hills. The theme of the conference was "Look Who's Leading." Gustavo Rex, who is a National Spanish Language Media Task Force member, and Carlina Rodriguez, director of Spanish language organizing for SAG, attended the conference.

"I am so pleased with the direction AHAA is taking," Rodriguez said. "This conference brought together not only Latino leaders from the commercial industry, but from film, television and music to talk about how Latino culture is influencing the changes taking place in entertainment and marketing in general."

The association presented workshops such as "Liders in Entertainment" and "Liders of Latino Generated Content" with SAG members and speakers such as Yareli Arizmendi, best known for her role as "Rosaura" in *Like Water for Chocolate*, Freddy Rodriguez of *Six Feet Under* and currently *Ugly Betty*, and Luis Avalos, a director-actor-playwright with a career spanning 45 years.

"I achieved a greater knowledge regarding the challenges, market trends and other issues facing Hispanic advertisers and their clients," said task force member Rex. "They addressed complex issues regarding race, ethnicity, regional accents and other aspects of diversity unique to the Hispanic community. I was also able to chat with producers, directors and copywriters I've worked with in the past, discuss runaway production, non-union work and, most importantly, stress the advantages of doing their commercials with union talent."

THE SAG FOUNDATION

★ ★ ★ Who we are, What we do, ★ ★ ★
How you can help

Since 1985, the Screen Actors Guild Foundation has embraced its mission to assist, educate and inspire actors to their fullest career potential and to give back to the communities in which they live. While we are not a part of Screen Actors Guild, we are dedicated to serving its members.

From Board of Directors to staff to volunteers, the foundation's diverse makeup is a large component of this non-profit 501(c)3 organization's success. Governed independently of the Guild, the non-political, non-partisan foundation is a collective body bringing different personalities, attitudes and opinions together in service of actors who, like us, come from all walks of life.

Our work is rewarding, but not easy. Our programs and benefits are supported not by your Guild membership dues or fees but by grants, donations and our own fundraising efforts. Resources are limited, and times have been exceptionally hard. Our Emergency Assistance Program, overtaxed by economic blows such as the recent Writers Guild strike which put countless actors out of work, has far exceeded its budget and the livelihood of the foundation as a whole is in delicate balance.

It takes an actor to understand an actor's struggle. Most of us at the foundation are actors, and by learning more about the Screen Actors Guild foundation, we

hope that you will gain a greater understanding of our work and what it takes to keep us going. Your tax-deductible donation can make a huge difference in the life of a fellow actor. You can donate online whenever you wish, make automatic monthly donations, or send us a check made payable to Screen Actors Guild Foundation. You can also think about residual checks, no matter what their size, which might benefit your peers by signing them over to the foundation as a charitable contribution.

Mail contributions to Screen Actors Guild Foundation, 5757 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 124, Los Angeles, CA 90036, phone: (323) 549-6661, fax: (323) 549-6710 www.sagfoundation.org.



Candy Spelling, wife of late producer Aaron Spelling, and Alan Rosenberg at the opening of the SAG Foundation Actors Center, one of the many beneficial services the foundation offers.

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HAS BEGUN.**

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