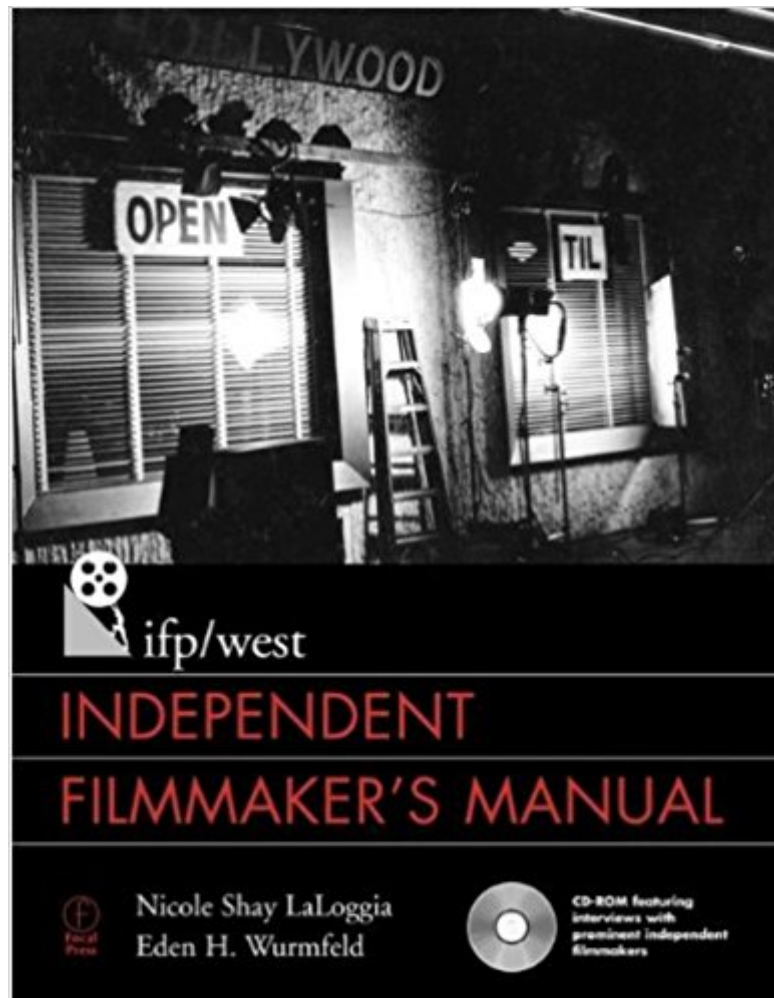




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IFP/West Independent Filmmaker's Manual



Synopsis

Backed by the resources of Independent Feature Project/West, co-authors Nicole Shay LaLoggia and Eden H. Wurmfeld have written the definitive low-budget production manual. Using examples from the Miramax film *Swingers*, this comprehensive manual offers the independent filmmaker a single volume reference covering every aspect of making a film: script rights and rewrites, financing, breakdown, scheduling and budgeting, pre-production, production, postproduction, and distribution. A resource guide listing useful references and organizations, as well as a glossary, complete this manual. The companion CD-ROM features interviews with important figures in the independent film industry, including Billy Bob Thornton and Ang Lee. Forms that are illuminated in the text are also included on the CD for ease of use. Independent Feature Project/West is non-profit membership organization for independent filmmakers. IFP/West provides its members with access to industry leaders, professional advice, discounts, and rental equipment. IFP/West also provides a comprehensive educational program covering all aspects of the filmmaking process from script to post-production, to marketing and distribution. Since its inception, IFP/West has become the primary support network for filmmakers in Southern California and is a strong advocate for diversity and innovation in filmmaking.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Focal Press; 1 edition (July 1, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0240803892

ISBN-13: 978-0240803890

Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 8.8 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,364,524 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Amateur Production](#) #468 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Television > Direction & Production](#) #1896 in [Books > Business & Money > Industries > Sports & Entertainment](#)

Customer Reviews

"This nuts-and-bolts manual of filmmaking will prove invaluable to the novice producer or documentary-maker." - American Cinematographer, April 2000

"The step-by-step structure of this

book makes it a great, practical tool; also included is a valuable resource guide listing addresses and phone numbers of support organizations, guilds, U.S. distributors and film festivals." - American Cinematographer, April 2000

Nicole Shay LaLoggia began her career in development before earning her first producer credit on *Swingers*, which was picked up for distribution by Miramax in 1996. She has developed, produced, line produced, assistant directed, post-produced, marketed, sold and taught about nearly every aspect of independent filmmaking. LaLoggia is currently a producing professor at the North Carolina School of the Arts.

I was slightly disappointed by this book. But I had heard so much hype about it that anything short of a divine masterpiece was going to be a let-down. I will however strongly recommend this book to someone who is knowledgeable about film, has a worthwhile project, and wants to know how to get it off the ground because what the authors do is detail how they went about making their indie film *Swingers*. Many will find this useful as it will tell you how to go about organizing, scheduling, budgeting, and then shooting your project. Anything you could possibly need to know is discussed. The one thing that I found the most enjoyable though was the cd it comes with that contains interviews with Kevin Smith (director of *Clerks*, *Mallrats*, *Chasing Amy*, and *Dogma*) and others.

For the aspiring producer of independent films, the "IFP/West Independent Filmmaker's Manual" is a great book to read. It gives the reader a solid overview of virtually every stage of the production process. With the production of *"Swingers"* still fresh in their minds, writers Nicole Shay LaLoggia and Eden H. Wurmfield give the reader an insider's view of making that all important first film. Although *"Swingers"* was made on a tiny budget and without the benefit of the Screen Actors Guild's new low budget agreements, the film proved successful within a fiercely competitive independent film market. These producers had what it takes to get a small film made without the benefit of a big budget or big name stars. Since most of the readers of this book are probably starting off in a similar situation, their insights are especially helpful. Veteran producers (while the writers may be considered veterans now) often lose touch with what it's like to be a new producer. It's also important to note that these producers simply did not roll over and die after making, *"Swingers."* At this writing, Eden H. Wurmfield is a finalist for the Motorola Producer's Award, part of the IFP's Independent Spirit Awards for *"Kissing Jessica Stein"* and *"Fanci's Persuasion."* In short, these producers are out there in the trenches and speak from not just knowledge, but experience. A very helpful feature of

the book are a series of checklists, to remind the producer of his or her daily responsibilities. Producing is a high pressure job that is very detail orientated. I wish this resource had been available when I started producing a few years before this book was published. On the two CD-ROMs included (one formatted for PCs, the other for Macs), you get a series of very worthwhile extras. This includes an ample supply of production forms and interviews with prominent people in the independent film world. The interviews include Geoffrey Gilmore (Sundance Film Festival), Kasi Lemmons (writer/director of "Eve's Bayou," the #1 independent film of 1997), Kevin Smith (writer/director of "Clerks"), Jon Favreau ("Swingers") and Billy Bob Thornton ("Slingblade"). Also included are interviews with veteran producers Ted Hope and Christine Vachon. These are all great for the independent filmmaker, particularly if you're trying to make deeply personal films to play at film festivals and on the "art house" circuit. If you're just interested in making B-grade genre films, these will be less helpful. My one complaint about the included production forms is that they include a navigational box at the upper left hand corner that says, "Return to Contents," that can't be removed unless you have the full version of Adobe Acrobat. LaLoggia and Wurmfeld's book demystifies the role of the "creative producer" on independent feature films. However, if you're interested in a nuts and bolts book on the role of a "line producer" (which is essentially a production manager and not one who develops a project from scratch), this book may still be beneficial, but perhaps less so. This is also true for people interested solely in producing mass market films for the major studios. If you don't yet know the difference or are trying to figure out which way to go, this book is a great jumping off point. Dive in, the water's fine.

This book was a big disappointment. It seems half the pages are just print outs of forms, budgets, etc. The information tucked between the pages of forms is the same stuff found in many more comprehensive and readable books. It seemed to be written by a computer, not a person. The index is weak as is the glossary. These folks made one movie and thought they could tell the rest of the world how it's done. The hubris is only exceeded by the vapidness. Sent mine back for a refund.

The IFP/WEST Filmmakers Manual walks you through the line producing responsibilities of the movie SWINGERS. Written with detailed information including example budgets, call sheets and production notes. The book also provides useful situational anecdotes from the production. This is the best resource for production management in independent filmmaking I have found to date.

The idea of an interview with Kevin Smith being a "bonus" is not appealing. Gimme REAL directors

like Sydney Lumet or Jane Campion.

I loved this book. You get the feeling that these women have lived and worked in the independent film world. A must read.

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