

Due to an error my interview with James Blanchard was not captured:

Advisory meetings with John Gibbons, Keegan Choffat, Sean Temple:

(0:00) Is it recording? I think it is. It looks like it is. The little blinky goes.

(0:09) All right. Okay. So thank you for coming.

I have spread these out a little bit, and I think the (0:17) first one I may have recorded wrong, but I appreciate you, and Keegan should be here shortly. (0:23) So in the space of time, my first thought was if you need rejiggering of your memory, (0:30) just let me know. What has, if anything, changed in your industry since the last time we talked (0:36) in October? Like in terms of, yeah, the job landscape, the careers, what's available.

(0:47) Yeah. That, yeah, that was a while ago. That was, I was, I was in the midst of a lot of travel.

(0:54) You were getting married. (0:57) And yeah, yeah. A lot's been happening.

(1:00) What's different in the industry? I am now a married man. (1:05) Yeah, regarding the industry. (1:08) You can take as much time as you like.

I'm on your time, so. (1:13) Yeah, it's just, yeah, so much in the world and so much personally has just been happening. I'm (1:20) getting whiplash just thinking about it.

Yeah. I guess in the industry, (1:29) I guess like turn of the new year, we were just kind of still kind of business, like (1:36) settling to business as usual, like pandemic changed a lot, and now we're kind of back to (1:40) that. We were getting back to that.

Oh, things are, this is the busy season. This is the, (1:45) the summer's coming. It's the, the preparing for the next busy season kind of spot.

And now, (1:58) honestly, tariffs have changed a lot of the landscape everywhere. So we were about, (2:03) our business was about to, you know, like buy a bunch of LED panels and everything. And that's (2:08) just kind of out the window now because, you know, kind of makes like all the LED (2:15) that's affordable in the world.

So yeah, we're going to be doing like a more of the rental (2:22) route in those instances, I think, until we figure out what things actually cost. (2:30) So like, yeah, kind of like materials and assets and things like that. That's certainly (2:35) changed in the industry.

I'm sure that's going to change wildly in the next few years. (2:43) More immediately, I guess, yeah, more immediately, I guess. Yeah, we just, we just like, (2:54) otherwise we've been like on track, like going into a more networked environment technology wise.

(2:59) So we're always looking at internet solutions and networking, sending signals via networks (3:08) via classical analog signals and everything like that. So there's always, technology's always (3:15) evolving. It has not stopped.

Well, you kind of briefly touched on one of my follow-up questions, (3:23) which was, since we last spoke, one of the big changes is a new administration, which could be (3:31) considered hostile to anything outside of our country. And you already gave it a good example (3:38) of that. So on the topic of new technology, I feel like the thing, like the buzzword on the street (3:48) and like everything that everybody wants to know is like, is this impacting you? How are you using (3:53) this? You know, what is, what is the, how are you, or like, how is it changing your job? Is, (4:01) you can guess, I'm sure, where I'm going.

The we. Yeah, yeah, it's, yeah, it's certainly, (4:07) like, it's, I feel like it's been like the norm for like a few decades, probably, that it's like, (4:13) we live in a corporate world and like countries are just kind of like places they happen to be in. (4:19) And now it's like, oh, this is the relationships between these countries are directly going to (4:24) impact business and reverse that, that norm.

So we're, yeah, yeah, definitely things like (4:34) in the AV industry for sure, like all the gear and everything, like it's all, it's all electronics. (4:41) And a lot of the electronics that you want to get in bulk and in cheap are going to come from (4:46) other countries. So, yeah, that, that's certainly a facet where we're trying to (4:53) struggle to acquire things at a price we, we were planning for and that you can't because it's (4:59) wildly more expensive now.

And then just like getting to working on the logistics of things (5:06) like that, like now we're going from a, maybe we'll buy this set thing to now, okay, well, (5:12) if we can't afford to buy it, we're going to have to rent. It would look locally within our (5:17) country to rent and do cross rentals with probably a bunch of different rental companies to acquire (5:24) the amount we would need in a given year. Also competing with other, other agencies of our own (5:31) that also have their own shows and things like that.

Like it'll be, it can be tight and it'll (5:37) be a race to see who can lock in what they need first. So that's a whole different pressure (5:43) to accomplish. Well, I was going to ask then, because, you know, I feel like, and maybe this (5:52) is something we talked about a lot because you guys obviously use a high amount of equipment (5:55) and gear, but I feel like, especially in people who do AV and media and stuff, there's this, (6:03) I don't know, push for like, not equipment supremacy, but like there's a constant evolution (6:12) of models.

Yeah. There's just a constant like, yeah, yeah, yeah. But like also people who like (6:19) say like, you have to have this to do this.

And a lot of kind of what I like to do educationally (6:26) why is like kind of demystify the barrier for entry in terms of what it takes to make media. (6:33) Because like, you know, like I, I don't even, I can't say for sure, but I feel like even I had (6:39) this misconception that like to make, like, for example, like I teach kids more in the world with (6:46) film, but like I had this misconception that you needed like a fancy Alexa camera and lights and (6:54) all that kind of stuff just to get into it. So I guess what I'm asking of you is, is as someone (7:00) who handles media professionally, A, do you feel the need to be like in a part of a constant (7:05) upgrade cycle? And if not, you know, like do you feel like there is a way to be familiar with the (7:16) technology you need without like having to just constantly be chasing one specific object? And (7:22) while you answer that, I got to plug my computer and I'm still sorry.

What's up Keegan? (7:31) Oh, he can't hear you. New mic. (7:39) Yeah.

And then I kind of, I fumbled the end of there, I apologize, but it was more about (7:48) again, your relationship with like, do you feel the need that you guys are constantly upgrading, (7:53) constantly staying on the cutting edge, or do you feel like there are general options that (7:58) work for you and your business for long periods of time? Yeah. I mean, yeah, I can give the, (8:05) I can actually give an example of something that happened today. It's, it's more like, (8:12) I was doing, I had to do a site visit for this company and they, you know, they have like an (8:17) IT team and they have their own opinions on things and stuff like that.

So they were like, (8:21) we got to buy the 4k camera, we got to do this, do that. And, and, you know, I walked in there (8:28) and I was like, I was like, what are you trying to accomplish? And

it's, it's really just, you know, (8:33) like a, it's just a little town hall, just like this. Someone sits in front of a camera and (8:41) does a business update or something.

And I'm like, and I like, so I'm like, you don't really, (8:48) you don't really need a 4k camera to, to convey that. And they were, and they like, I saw like, (8:56) well, what if we wanted to put it on a big, you know, like big screen in a, a big event later on (9:02) or something. I was like, no, that's, that's up to the tech in that room.

That's going to scale up (9:07) your pictures. That'll output whatever video you honestly want. It's, it's a matter of the content (9:13) you're trying to convey.

If you're doing something more cinematic, I'd say, absolutely. You should (9:17) go for 4k, 8k kind of footage and get like, add more production value to it. But something like (9:24) what we're doing right now, HD video is almost very like plenty, like it's, it's above almost (9:32) above like YouTube is even YouTube's getting to a standard of just HD, like everywhere.

(9:38) So like, there's certain things that are like, they're not going to change as much (9:42) within the next few years. And especially if you're trying not to tax systems and everything, (9:48) like where the scale of resolutions and stuff like that is fine. I think the thing that's going (9:54) to be the struggle to keep up with is computers.

Pretty much where it used to be like, maybe 10, (10:01) every 10 years, you'd get a new computer or whatever, like that key that, that window keeps (10:06) shorting to probably like, I think the standard now is every three to five years, you got to get (10:11) a new computer because it's got to keep, it has to keep up with the latest softwares or like, (10:17) Google Chrome is blowing up your computer or something. So they kind of designed these (10:22) systems to kind of like you have to retire this. So you can download Windows 11.

It's, it's a, (10:29) it's kind of like a necessity in that sense. So that'll be the more of the struggle regarding (10:35) computers. But as far as other elements, like video and everything, like you have a little more (10:42) longer term with, and it also depends on your application.

And, you know, there's also just (10:48) principles of things like, do you need something like this? Do you need something with flair? Do (10:55) you need, you know, like storytelling foundations in general, those things never really change. (11:01) You could always adapt and use unique ways to convey whatever you're trying to do. (11:07) Yeah, that's great.

(11:09) Yeah, Keegan, I don't know if you missed the question, but it's on the topic of kind of (11:14) equipment, the evolution, the need for it, because I just for context of telling John how I do try to (11:22) demystify the barrier for entry, because it's the gain a lot of basic level skills, you can use very (11:27) entry level tools. And the example I was going to say is like, (11:30) I do have one student who's really taken to filmmaking, and he's using a (11:37) 11 year old Canon C 100, that outputs an AVCHD, like 1080p, but and he's got like a out of the (11:46) box basic Canon 80D zoom lens on it, and it's coming out crisp as heck, you know what I mean? (11:53) So I don't know, Keegan, like, but obviously, you do have to keep up with what the industry (11:57) because the other thing I was thinking of is, we see memes about them, but the Netflix approved (12:02) cinema camera list, right, which is like lists every camera you can use to get on to have your (12:08) thing on Netflix. And the joke, of course, is like, an iPhone 716 is on there.

But the point (12:17) is, to some degree, there is still going to be, you know, industry things that say you have to (12:22) X gear, but I do wonder if like, John, you've spoken to that quite well in

your experience, (12:27) but Keegan, don't know if we can hear you yet. But there's some things. Nope.

You got closer, though. (12:39) Yes, yes. We can come back.

And I am talking. Okay. Yeah, I see you got some gear (14:01) there.

Could you speak? I can repeat the question or rephrase it. No, no, no. I got a question.

(14:07) So so your student who shoots with the C 100 that only outputs ABC HD, and you have to go into the (14:13) ABC HD BDMV folder. He's got a C. He's got a mark one. Yeah, to include an option for (14:22) outputting to mp4.

We've got like two mark ones and like two mark twos. But this bad boy right (14:31) here is a C 200. We also have a C 300.

But I we upgraded to the C 300 because it has another (14:40) higher number on it. But I always shoot with the C 200 because it's actually better. (14:47) But to add to that thing about equipment, like, as you can see, it has a EF mount lens, (14:56) and Canon is on RF.

Also, wait, can you hear me? You both froze? No, we're listening. Okay, cool. (15:02) Um, and it's got an EF mount lens on it, not just any EF mount lens.

(15:13) It's a full manual Rokinin circa 20 2014. These things came out like they're they have autofocus (15:22) Rokinons now but like why why why upgrade like because I have students ask me all the time like (15:28) what camera should they get and like first it comes down to budget but second if they're going (15:34) to get a Canon get something with an RF mount I mean something with an EF mount because you're (15:41) going to save some money by buying into an ecosystem they're not producing lenses for anymore (15:47) for the 5d mark for you can shoot 4k but also all of the EF lenses are going to be really cheap (15:55) and so that's just kind of you know like it doesn't the the glass didn't change just the (16:01) mount changed you you'll you'll get onto these productions where like you've got a red dragon (16:08) weapon x whatever sensor upgrade it is and it's like yeah they're still adapting a vintage 60 (16:17) 50 year old ingenue lens uh positive lock mount and it's like yeah it's the same thing it doesn't (16:23) matter so yeah I um a little bit like when it comes to what's that go ahead I just at a certain (16:34) point I was like it's like when I watch a review of a fighting game and they start talking they're (16:38) like in the wave dash cancel up bounce d down b I'm like what I lost me so I was with you for (16:45) quite a while but um pixel auto focus on this thing it's the rf it has six axis uh uh control (16:53) but like you know like a ps3 controller uh I I upgraded oh I met a student uh recently who had (17:02) a sony forget what it is but it was before they went to the f mount lenses and so like he's got (17:09) an old sony camera but it shoots all of the um the pentax lenses maybe it's not pentax anyway (17:16) one of those companies bought another company uh before sony developed the lenses but anyway yeah (17:23) if you don't mind so just to kind of put a finer point on it so would you say broadly speaking in (17:28) terms of your experience the industry is it necessary to be constantly keeping up with (17:32) new innovations or new technologies or can you reliably find pieces that work for you (17:38) and kind of upgrade as kind of the it's like absolutely demanded for in terms of like john (17:46) was pointing out like upgrades to computers and you know software and such almost nothing (17:53) equipment wise needs to be upgraded unless the infrastructure is is upgraded and you have to (17:59) catch up so if you've got ptz cameras um and you need to get ptz cameras with like ppoe injection (18:08) then you need to be because of a new board then you would need to if you were shooting for netflix (18:15) and you needed to uh have one of their approved cameras it's it's not

so much the camera but it's (18:22) the time codability that goes into their their avid workflow so that's necessary but i wouldn't (18:29) say that any equipment needs to be upgraded just because a new version came out or five six years (18:37) later you need a new one however yeah infrastructure and still there's a whole youtube (18:44) economy dedicated to be like here's the new sony wuzzy wuzzy um so i mean i like a new iphone (18:52) cameras that have been in circulation we're using this for like 20 years i feel like they (18:58) have they do 1080p they're good over there like yeah i got one down here it's like a sony (19:07) is it a p100 fw3 or something and people are like yeah we still use it of course the format's (19:12) incredibly difficult to work with but i was like people use it um and i guess i'll just go (19:17) ping pong back to john so like in terms of the other things because you know you talk about (19:23) changing fegan i mentioned how we hadn't spoken since last october (19:28) um it's like something i can't even get kind of sick of having to ask people about it (19:34) ai radically changing industries or the way your workflow happens i'm just gonna keep it as broad (19:41) as that starting with john any impact any do you feel changes do you feel like a loss of (19:49) you know work or maybe an increase of effort i'm just kind of open blankly just with the term ai (19:55) and go say i'll say it frankly ai is really good at making amateurs look (20:05) competent and it also is a nice it can complement parts of your workflows um so for example something (20:14) that another thing i just thought of today uh we were like looking into a scenic company for (20:18) fabrication of like signs and a wall like a custom custom background like slat wall with (20:25) graphics and stuff like that um we had like a render like our design uh we had a designer make (20:32) and everything um someone like we were just like reaching out to vendors to be like how much would (20:38) this cost to make blah blah blah we got one vendor that replied to us back with like a five minute (20:43) clip they generated in chat gpt of just like they put our background the background of the (20:49) wall we had designed and then likes like a person like talking in front of it as if it was in the (20:56) event and everything i was like that that's a quick thing that looks like it's a value add (21:02) on to us because it looks like oh they get it they know what kind of environment this is gonna (21:08) be going in blah blah blah someone put someone put some kind of effort to be like (21:14) let's let's up the the ante here with this and we're like okay that shows some initiative (21:20) if they were actually designing it with with ai and everything like then we'd be like okay well (21:27) do these screws actually fit the holes they're trying to go to that would be like showing (21:30) concerns and stuff but like certain aspects of the industry i feel like do benefit from it um (21:37) and it should it should be a tool it should be something that is helping you either speed up (21:42) or enhance what you're already doing it shouldn't be replacing anything or any state of mind um and (21:49) then as far as my prior comment makes energy amateurs look confident it's again like if you (21:55) need to get something not necessarily critical but like something you have to do done like a quick (22:04) background for something like a digital background i just need a wallpaper for a (22:08) desktop for a scene i'm shooting blah blah blah but it can't be something that's from (22:14) getty images or it's but i need i need a quick or whatever that those are like instances where (22:19) it can be useful and it's not worth it's not worth someone's human time to design a whole (22:25) little background for a desktop in a scene of your uh video shoot like it's something like (22:32) i can generate that and i have something that calls upon blah blah that's that's my take (22:40) thus far and i and i think before i throw keegan here i think maybe because speaking to your point (22:45) is talking about amateurs looking professional is that my fear is that like anything that makes (22:52)

something easier is that people will lose the defining steps in the beginning to actually learn (23:00) some competency so you get that false sense and so then there's nothing actually to build off of (23:05) because instead of ai just giving you a big a bit of a boost it's all you had so then you know it (23:12) falls away like with the whole endemic of just about everybody's just using ai just to boost (23:18) their way through college and high school and all that jazz but like you know you're not actually (23:24) what's what's gonna happen in the end you know but do you do you think john and this is just (23:30) anecdotally could do you think you can still tell when something is ai generated without being told (23:35) if it is or not do you think you could tell at the moment i can i can i could tell if someone (23:42) drafted an email and it it was it was definitely ai because i'm like they don't talk like that (23:47) things like that nature it takes it's basically comes down to like media literacy (23:54) um the thing i the thing that i think is as it evolves there's going to be the the deep fake (24:01) uh industry and that's going to be the scary parts of like i'm using ai to image like make a (24:07) replica of someone's voice pretty well and accurately and like that that's where or like (24:13) video images and trying to like yeah that that's where like at a certain point sometimes video (24:20) used to be like oh this is a defining evidence in a trial or something and now you're like well (24:25) that could have just been generated and you're like there's no way to tell unless you have the (24:31) little chat gpt bug at the bottom or something like that like like as it evolved and it will (24:37) it does get better like it will it will be a challenge in media literacy to (24:41) to be able to determine and define for on the individual level what what is actually real (24:48) what is generated that is in air keegan i'll let you i'll let you take it then i'll give (24:54) john one more so he can head out but and then we can keep going but i'll ask you to what's your (24:59) experience (25:02) talking about ai uh you you brought up that um it kind of gives a shortcut to (25:12) being able to accomplish a task without understanding the principles required to get (25:17) to it it it kind of feels like um like right now on this call we've we've got blurry backgrounds (25:25) to our our cameras but like to to the webcams but like that's something that you achieve (25:32) understanding aperture and shutter speed on a dslr um and there's like uh like literacy when (25:43) it comes to so you mentioned media literacy and having something written in ai uh fortunately (25:50) i work at a school and it's obvious to tell when a student has used used ai to write a paper (25:57) because it's usually off prompt and does not address the actual like requirements of the paper (26:05) so like my stance to take is when a student writes like does an assignment using ai i'm (26:13) going to grade it as if they wrote it knowing that they haven't but also like seeing that like (26:21) yeah this this computer regurgitated text predictively based on what you typed into it (26:30) even if you copy and paste the the the prompt for the paper in there it just it just isn't (26:35) getting it like you're supposed to get it at a critical thinking level um and so specifically (26:43) industry wise it's good for writing boilerplates uh you know sometimes i remember back in the day (26:50) you'd have to come up with deal memos or contracts or um call sheets and you would look on blogs and (26:59) websites and there'd be like four or five blogs and sites like premium beat which would have (27:03) like templates that you could download and use but now you can just generate a template (27:08) in chat gpt and so that's been really beneficial because you have it generate a template you have (27:14) it generate the deal memo for you and then you go in and you actually like change the deal memo so (27:19) that it realistically reflects what you're doing and then it's actually authentically your work (27:26) but if you just turn something in that isn't actually your thing then it's not actually (27:32) your thing and you're

going to be on the line for holding the bag on money or turning a project in (27:38) on time because you had a computer that can't think feel or understand create the restrictions (27:44) and contract for you and a client but when it comes to video editing and graphic design (27:52) removing backgrounds quickly in photoshop has been really helpful (27:56) um generating images has not been helpful at all because it still looks like it's ai and when you (28:03) get into media literacy it's like you can tell when you buy uh something cheap on amazon and (28:10) like the little card that's in there has like and it's no longer somebody with six fingers because (28:16) it's gotten better but you can tell that the company cheaped out and gave you an ai image (28:22) in the instruction booklet or whatever and so it it helps those lower end clients (28:30) like race to the bottom but it doesn't actually scream competency uh and then video editing (28:39) it's been nice to transcode media uh not having to type in like the full interviews but you still (28:46) have to go in and write the interview like like do the proofread because i we had a series of (28:53) interviews we recorded where you know the college uh we're at is mcc and half the time it got mcc (29:01) right and sometimes it would be like my macy or something and you'd have to go in and edit so (29:07) it sped that up but it is not going to do the work and it can't do the work because the work we do is (29:14) out here in the real world like setting up a camera and setting up some lights um and were (29:19) you to really try to get into virtual production where you just take a photo of somebody and you (29:25) have ai animate that as if they're actually there and have an ai like shoot a video for you it (29:33) doesn't look real and you you know that's just not it's not a tool that's feasible in the day-to-day (29:41) workplace it's more like a coaster that you bend and fold to put under a coffee table so that it (29:48) stops wiggling you know yeah i think that's well yeah well thank you yeah i think that's (29:56) kind of cleans it up because like even today i was at a meeting where they're like

(The first three minutes of Sean Temple was cut off- we pick up talking about how he got started in Film and referencing staying home to watch TV:)

(0:03) I was told if I missed one more day, I'd be held back, and then I got really sick and (0:07) just had to be in the nurse's office all day. (0:10) But that kind of just kept going, I just kept watching movies as I grew up, it didn't feel (0:15) like something I could do, I didn't have much, I didn't have a class like you all have, so (0:22) it just never felt like a reality, but I kind of in retrospect realized I was making, I kept (0:26) making movies, I was making stop motion movies using PowerPoint in the early 2000s on old (0:33) Dell computers that would take 30 minutes to open a PowerPoint, and I did stop motion (0:37) claymations in high school, and I kind of was pushed away from studying film in high (0:44) school by my gowns counselors and actually ended up going to physical therapy at first (0:48) and then switched to film because I got to school and just realized I needed to do something (0:53) I knew I loved instead of floundering and trying a bunch of things that I had no idea (0:58) if I even liked. (0:59) So once I got into film school and really just dived into filmmaking and school, it (1:05) just really became very clear to me as to what I was supposed to do and that I felt (1:10) confident with time and practice, I would become good at it, and I just kept doing that. (1:15) I rushed through that major in two years because I switched into it halfway through, then I (1:20) went to grad school in Boston at Emerson College to keep learning, to keep making films. (1:27) And then once I graduated, I moved to L.A. (1:31) with my partner who we directed this

movie together to work in the L.A. (1:35) film industry, and I was doing movie trailer editing as my day job, and then we kept making (1:42) short films on the side and then moved back to Vermont during COVID, during the beginning (1:49) of COVID, and then made this movie once we were back in Vermont. (1:56) And then, yeah, just kept making movies and been doing okay. (2:01) Well, that's great. (2:02) Well, obviously, the movie is pretty intensely horror-focused, and I was just curious, what (2:09) kind of things inspire you and how do you find the things that do inspire you for, like, (2:14) folks who might be trying to figure out how to find something they care enough about to (2:17) put, like, a lot of effort into? (2:22) Yeah, that's an interesting question. (2:25) I think that, I don't know, everyone's inspirations are so different, and I don't necessarily (2:33) have the same inspirations for every movie that I make or every project that I work on, (2:39) but I think the important thing to just think about when it comes to that kind of stuff (2:43) is that to pull off any movie, let alone movies as you get on bigger scales and you (2:49) start, like, leading a team of 30 people, is that it's really hard. (2:55) It takes a lot of time, and basically, to be able to pull that off, you need a very (3:01) extreme passion for whatever story you're trying to tell to bring that story to life. (3:08) And you need to understand it really well and think a lot about it, because eventually (3:12) you have to be able to communicate your vision to your 30-person or bigger team. (3:17) It's not just you making this on your own with a few friends. (3:20) It becomes a job for people, and people need to believe in you and your ability to communicate (3:26) your vision. (3:27) Because ultimately, one thing I always love to say to people when they're starting to (3:30) try directing or filmmaking in general is that when you're starting, you're basically (3:35) doing almost everything on your own, and you're not experiencing the actual filmmaking process (3:40) as intensely, which is very collaborative and bouncing ideas off other people. (3:47) And you don't have to know how to do everything on the camera to be a director. (3:51) You actually don't need to know how to do anything on the camera to be a director. (3:55) Just be able to describe to a cinematographer what you want your image to look like. (4:00) Some directors don't even really care. (4:01) They just want to work with their actors, and the cinematographers come up with how it (4:05) really looks like. (4:06) There's no right way to make a movie, and I think the best way... (4:11) It's just the hard part of being where you are and in the future, but the long-winded (4:16) way of the thing I'm trying to say is that it takes an intense passion to bring these (4:20) things to life. (4:21) So whatever story idea you come up with, you just have to really care about it, or it's (4:25) going to be really hard to get it off the ground. (4:28) Awesome. (4:29) And then the other thing that I was talking about is you've had, and even just looking (4:33) at the Vimeo link, you've had a great success with festivals and distribution, and that's (4:39) such a can of worms unto itself. (4:41) So I was wondering, could you tell us about the process of you getting this film out there, (4:46) getting it into festivals, and kind of what that looked like for you, both from a career (4:50) and creative standpoint, being able to communicate with all these different people in these different (4:54) places? (4:59) Yeah, film festivals are super important when it comes to short films. (5:05) I think everyone's goal, and my goal included, is to eventually make feature films, because (5:10) those are the films everyone sees in movie theaters, it's the movies that we actually (5:14) know. (5:16) And then it's how do you get to a point where you can make those

longer movies that will (5:21) be bought by distribution companies that everyone can see. (5:26) And the best way, one of the best ways, the best way is to become a really great writer (5:31) and write something that's so great that everyone wants to make it, and the only way, when you (5:37) have the opportunity to sell that idea, you specify that you have to direct it in order (5:42) for you to sell it.

(5:43) So that's always like, the best way to really become a filmmaker is probably to start as (5:47) a writer. (5:48) But another process is making these kinds of short films that show what you can do as (5:54) a director, so that once you write that script, then you can also be like, but look what (5:57) I can also do as a director, I could turn this into the movie instead of you having (6:02) to hire someone else to direct the movie. (6:04) And so how do you really navigate those film festivals is really important, because those (6:09) film festivals are essentially the only way to really get recognized with a short film (6:13) and to get attention.

(6:15) Even like online ways of eventually putting your movie online, most of those online ways, (6:20) they pull from the movies that did really well at film festivals. (6:23) So right now, we're on Alter, which is a YouTube specifically for horror shorts, with like (6:29) 5 million subscribers. (6:31) And they basically go to all the film festivals, watch movies, and then reach out to the films (6:36) they want to put on their YouTube, and then if you get on that YouTube, you are basically (6:40) guaranteed like 50,000 views minimum.

(6:44) So basically, you really want to think a lot about film festivals, it's a way to like think (6:49) about what your audience and end goals are, as you come up with your creative idea for (6:54) a movie. (6:55) It's kind of an early way to deal with this idea of creativity versus commerce.

(7:01) And what's like, the best movie you could ever make might not work for a film festival.

(7:06) And if film festivals end up being really important for your end goal, then you have (7:10) to start thinking about how can I make something that might fit into film festivals. (7:15) So for like me personally, I found I earlier in my filmmaking career didn't necessarily (7:22) lean into the genre of filmmaking and horror as much, but then found that once I made movies (7:28) that were equally as good in horror, it was so much easier to find the audience and get (7:33) into the really, really great film festivals and build that kind of recognition that I (7:40) needed that's gotten me to the point where I'm right on the verge of making feature films. (7:45) And like things that like, like this movie could easily be 25 to 30 minutes, but the (7:52) shorter your movie is, the more likely you are to get into a film festival.

(7:55) I would say this movie is too long, and it did as well as it did with How Long It Is (7:58) is lucky and based on the connections I made with previous movies and already being kind (8:05) of a known entity within the short horror filmmaking community. (8:10) But that's something like we actively chose to film this movie and edit it at a pace that (8:17) could fit into a shorter version of this story. (8:21) And that was an active choice we made because of the idea of film festivals.

(8:25) If I can make this movie however I wanted, it would be slower. (8:28) It would be more dreadful. (8:31) I wouldn't be as like intense and bombastic.

(8:33) But that was the best way to approach the story in the context of a short film. (8:37) And we just made the choice to do that and do that as well as we could. (8:44) Yeah, I also want to go back to your previous question for a second, because I think (8:48) something like Sinners and Ryan Coogler, who you all have seen that vampire movie (8:54) recently, he's a really great example of what I also like to do with my filmmaking, is (9:00) that he is kind of equally

influenced by like art house, European, independent cinema (9:07) and like Hollywood filmmaking, Spielberg, Jurassic Park kind of stuff.

(9:12) And what he really tries to do is conflate these two different kind of styles of (9:17) filmmaking to make something that's really artistic and has something really interesting (9:21) to say in a package that allows more people to watch it and be entertained. (9:28) That kind of idea of like making a mess and go down with sugar that people say, that's (9:33) something that I like a lot. (9:35) But that's all about everyone finding their own approaches.

(9:38) And that's not necessarily what anyone has to do. (9:39) But there's no one way to do anything. (9:44) Anyway, so I have one more, if you don't mind, Sean, and I'll see if anybody else has (9:48) any questions.

Just curious. (9:50) So for a lot of folks who are either graduating soon or maybe are juniors, you've had (9:55) experience in community media and actually moving out West. (9:59) And I was wondering if you had any advice or suggestions for folks who might want to (10:03) start out with camera ops, with audio, with writing.

(10:07) What are some good places to start out looking for careers or opportunities and kind of (10:12) what some of those might be? (10:13) And it could be from filmmaking, could be from community media, any of your previous (10:16) experience. (10:18) Right. I think, well, when you're about to graduate from high school, the first big (10:24) question is like, should I go to film school to learn how to make films? (10:28) And I think starting there, that's kind of a hard question because I think a lot of it (10:34) depends on your background and how worth it is studying film by going into a very (10:41) extreme amount of student debt, because filmmaking is one of those things you can (10:46) learn on your own if it's something you really want to do. (10:49) Some of the most famous filmmakers ever dropped out of film school or didn't go to (10:52) film school. So there's like, if you have that incentive in your own way to go learn (10:58) how to make movies and just go make it, there's an argument that's worth doing. (11:02) The other end of the spectrum is that film school is where you meet your collaborators.

(11:06) Most people that make movies have key collaborators they work with forever, and a (11:11) lot of times they meet those collaborators in film school. (11:13) Alfonso Cuaron, who's one of my favorite directors, who did Children of Men and (11:17) Roma and Gravity and the third Harry Potter, he met Cheebo, Amelia Lubezki, who's (11:25) like one of the best cinematographers in the world in school, and they just kept (11:27) working together. And you're also in this environment where your whole life is (11:31) basically devoted to making films, which when you get outside of school, it's way (11:35) harder to keep making movies and when everything is devoted to that.

(11:39) So those are kind of like things to think about when it comes to film school. (11:43) When it comes to like after film school, or maybe like part-time jobs you can do (11:47) while in film school, my experience with community media has been pretty eye (11:52) opening. I think it's a good place for folks like you to start working part-time (11:58) flexible jobs where you're getting hands on with cameras.

(12:03) And a lot of times with community media, you're filming like school boards and (12:06) psych boards, so it's maybe not like the most creative thing in the world. (12:10) But getting to like film something happening in real life as it happens and (12:15) practicing those skills of capturing unplanned things, I think is super (12:20) beneficial for any kind of person who's interested in filmmaking. (12:24) And then you just get to make money by editing these things,

like working in (12:30) video in some kind of way, because it can be hard to find those kinds of jobs (12:35) because the thing about filmmaking is if you want to try to be a director, like (12:39) most people don't actually become full-time feature directors until they're (12:43) like, if they're lucky, they're mid-30s, 40s, like it takes a lot of time to (12:49) build to the point where people are finally like, yes, let's give you a (12:52) million dollars to go make a movie.

(12:54) Most of those people could have done it when they were 25, but no one would have (12:57) done it. So you have to like find the way to live your life and make a living (13:03) while you're trying to make your films. (13:04) And then even once you get to make feature films, you don't actually make (13:08) enough money off of them for it to be your only career until you're like (13:12) making Marvel movies.

(13:13) And even if you ever get to the point where you're making Marvel movies, (13:17) someone like Nia DaCosta, who directed the Marvels and the Candyman reboot and (13:24) her first movie is Little Woods, her Marvel movie didn't pay for all of her (13:26) student loans. So it's just like you have to be realistic about the financial (13:32) cost of filmmaking. (13:33) It's unfortunately like the most outrageously expensive artistic medium (13:38) there is.

If you want to make kind of more traditional narrative films, you can (13:43) always make other things that where money isn't the goal. (13:48) But I think working in media is a potential way to have an early job that you (13:56) can have flexible part time hours while you're like, if you're interested in (14:00) being crew members, like some people that do film don't want to direct.

(14:03) They want to be a cinematographer.

(14:05) They want to be a gaffer. They want to be a production designer. (14:08) But those jobs are essentially freelance for the most part.

(14:11) You're not going to get like a nine to five production design job, right? (14:16) So like having some kind of part time flexible work that you can build around (14:19) those kinds of looking for those jobs can be important. (14:23) And then also, if your goal is to go to L.A., to California and get into the film (14:29) industry, I highly recommend looking for a program, a school that has an L.A. (14:34) program, a semester and then doing your last semester in L.A. (14:38) so that you can transition. (14:41) You can be looking like you can go live on the on campus L.A. (14:44) place, look for a place to live, look for a job while you're in school versus (14:48) moving out there and hoping you find those things.

(14:51) Because when you move out to L.A. (14:54) All my undergrad friends moved to L.A.

(14:56) after graduating, came right back because they ran out of money and didn't find (14:59) jobs fast enough. (15:01) And I would say from personal experience, my partner, it took her a

year and a half (15:06) of nonstop applying for assistant jobs to become an assistant to a producer. (15:10) It took me probably a year to a year and a half to find my L.A. (15:15) job to which ended up being trailer editing, which I got because the producer, (15:20) she became an assistant for his assistant from the 80s, went on to then make a (15:25) trailer editing company.

(15:27) And I got introduced to that way. (15:28) And that's an example of how Hollywood is completely who you know and the (15:33) connections you make and has really not much of anything to do with your skills (15:37) or talent, because everyone there is talented and skilled.

(15:42) Yeah, well, that's kind of part of the reason I stayed in Vermont myself, because (15:45) I have the community and you can keep working here.

(15:48) And you're right, it's it's tough, but kind of making the careers that you can (15:52) wherever you are is really important. (15:54) So, well, I want to be. (15:56) Well, go ahead, Sean.

(15:57) I was just going to say, and so like you go if you're going to L.A., you have to (16:01) be ready for the fact that more than like it is going to take a long time to get (16:05) that first job.

(16:06) And then it's like, how do you live your life until you get to that point? (16:10) I worked as a teacher's assistant at a for profit film school called the New York (16:15) Film Academy, which is not something I felt great about because it was a pretty (16:20) exploitative form of film school. (16:22) But it's what I did until I found the job.

(16:25) I think that one of the biggest things to just keep in mind when you want to try to (16:30) get into filmmaking is it's a very long process that you have to be very (16:34) passionate about.

(16:37) And most people that try give up because that process is so long. (16:41) And even if they were super passionate about it, it's unfortunately the reason (16:45) most people become filmmakers came for money because they had the ability to keep (16:51) going without having to worry about the financial constraints.

(16:54) So if you don't come for money, it's going to be even harder. (16:56) It's a realistic thing that I think it's important for people to hear. (16:59) And that's why that passion for it is so important.

(17:03) That's why you keep making stuff in your own time and using if you just got a (17:07) camera and you got some time, work on your own thing because, you know, it's hard (17:11) to get the money for it, but you can't stop yourself from working on it. (17:15) So. All right.

(17:16) Well, does anybody have any questions at all for Sean? (17:19) I know it's awkward to do a Q&A portion about the movie or anything related to (17:24) what he's said so far. (17:25) It's OK if it's not. I know this is the awkwardest part.

(17:29) I'm very used to Q&A is getting quiet. (17:31) Yeah, no, that's the funny thing. (17:33) I was like, I've been on either side and I'm always like, I never want to.

(17:36) It's suddenly like if I raise my hand, they'll know I'm existing. (17:39) So there's never any pressure. (17:41) But anyway, that was excellent, Sean.

(17:43) I really appreciate you taking time out of your day to talk to us. (17:45) And maybe if any questions come up later, I'll send them your way and I'm sure (17:50) we'll talk again. (17:52) Sounds good.

All right. (17:53) Thank you very much. (17:55) Bye bye.

(17:59) Oh, and the call for everybody. (18:01) All right. (18:04) Bye, guys.

(18:05) No, I mean. (18:10) Everyone's got to do that once in high school. (18:12) It's OK.

(18:12) I love you, Brock. (18:15) Well, just to wrap up, Sean's super nice guy. (18:18) If you guys do think of any questions or you're like.