

THE SOCIAL MEDIA REVOLUTION IS ALREADY BEING TELEVISED!

WATCH THIS **NOW** !!! YOUR FUTURE MAY DEPEND ON IT!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFZ0z5Fm-Ng> (& click “full screen”)

Dutch Angle Public Debate - The @ of Art Film 23 September 2010

“May I ask you a question?” a robotic-sounding voice inquired over the sound system, interrupting the moderator only a few words into his introduction. This simple sound cue error was eerily on-target – a disembodied, techno-voice already wanting information, only seconds into the discussion. What became abundantly clear during the following two and a half hours is that the future is already here. It’s fast and it’s hungry, and anyone involved in the financing and distribution of independent film better get with it, or prepare to get eaten alive.

The afternoon’s feature guest, flown in from Brazil by Binger Filmlab and the Holland Film Meeting, was former Trust-Nordisk Head of Sales / producer / consultant Thomas Mai. Affably blonde but with razor sharp teeth, Mai’s evangelical energy alone was enough to overheat the unseasonably warm Festival Pavilion, then adding flame to his fire were some high-calibre international panel members. Fortunately Screen International’s Mike Goodridge, with his wealth of experience edged with an aura of cool, was moderating the day’s hot topic: a distribution industry in crisis.

Different panellists weighed in with a litany of concerns and realities, which all told painted a dismal picture of the current and future state of distribution... The majors control the screens and fill them with studio fare, arthouse audiences are staying away in droves, and audiences are harder and harder to reach via traditional radio and television marketing methods.

“Then reach those audiences in different ways!” Thomas Mai countered. “Find out what they want to see, proactively, before discovering nobody’s interested in the topic of your film. Stop thinking in traditional modalities.” Find out how many times a term has been googled before you make a movie about it – at googlad.nu, or measure brand visibility at howsociable.com.

Use social media strategically – Facebook allows you to communicate with people you know, whereas Twitter connects you with people you DON’T know. Thomas Mai is in full swing now; “Want to post to your various social media networks, simultaneously? Then use tweetdeck.com. But don’t only collect followers, contribute into discussions as well, then use this base for crowdfunding. “Yes!” Mai congratulated Rutger Wolfson of IFFR’s Cinema Reloaded – “Gold Star for starting such a programme, but now reward financial contributors with special news, updates, information and member-

type advantages. Make everything more interactive; make it a two-way portal...”

How? Offer them something: create and sell merchandise for the film before it's made – others are waiting to do it for you, cheaply and efficiently. Check out: cafepress.com, and if you don't believe it consider musician Jill Sobule's story: jillsnextrecord.com of raising nearly \$90,000 from her online fans to record her album. Or try: *Where the hell is Matt?* youtube.com/watch?v=zlfKdbWwruY to see Matt do his goofy dance all over the world, get hordes of people to join him, and land a chewing gum company's sponsorship and 31 million YouTube views. This is all catchy and appealing stuff.

And Mai is way more than just talk. He has some truly staggering statistics, like Monty Python's profits increasing over 23,000 percent in one week – and no that's not a typo. The Pythons themselves explain how they upped the ante against piracy by launching their own YouTube channel: youtube.com/user/montypython?blend=1&ob=4#p/c/8DEEE5BE09B19227/0/OGqX-tkDXEk. This smart move of turning a negative into a positive, triggered their gargantuan increase in sales of DVDs and other Python products.

Mai started developing this presentation after tracking sales figures on two different releases from fellow Dane, Lars von Trier. What changed in the intervening years to the degree that *Antichrist*, released in 2009, only did 2.5 percent of the business of *Dancer in the Dark*, released in 2000? They're both smallish Danish films from a reputable, widely respected auteur. The films hadn't changed by 97.5 percent – so instead Mai chose to investigate audience behaviours and distribution modalities.

His search for answers led him plunging head-first down the internet rabbit hole to the discovery he now passionately shares: old distribution models are over and the new ones are right here for the taking. No more old concepts like gatekeepers, exclusivity, territories, windows and independence. Now it's time for no gatekeepers, non-exclusivity, no territory limits, no windows, and fandependence to all take the lead.

And if you're still despairing your film will never be seen by anyone, just keep in mind three of Thomas Mai's most salient points.

- A. There's hope
- B. It's not over
- C. There are many possibilities for your particular project

Don't get eaten. Just sharpen your teeth, get out there and have some fun.

A list of some terrific URLs follows, starting with the source:

thomasmai.net

Create your own audience

Twitter: Using the # sign on Twitter enables you to find specific communities to both follow, and to make tweets within so that you can gain followers yourself.

Email marketing tools and software
aweber.com

Email and event marketing and online surveys
constantcontact.com

Email marketing 2.0 for entrepreneurs
infusionsoft.com

Fund your own film

Fund and follow creativity
kickstarter.com

A collaborative way to fund ideas
indiegogo.com

Be a film producer – invest in cinema
touscoprod.com

Become a movie producer for the price of a movie ticket: \$10
mymilliondollarmovie.com

Demand to see the movie *Iron Sky* in your town
ironsky.net

Find, share and promote events
eventful.com

Distribute yourself; become an exhibitor!

Create, collaborate, distribute – an amazon company
createspace.com

Distribute your media everywhere
distribber.com

The global business-to-business marketplace for audiovisual content
mediapeers.com

Hire a film, show it, keep the cash – organise your own film screenings
indiescreenings.net

Find out licence fees and how much revenue you can generate
goodscreenings.org

Find professionals who get the job done
elance.com

By Matthew Curlewis, Binger Reporter

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Thursday 23rd September, 2010

International panel with Rutger Wolfson (IFFR director), Chris Paton (Fortissimo Films), Ronald De Neef (High Point Media Group), Pim Hermeling (Wild Bunch Benelux), Peter Bogнар (Budapest Film) and producer/consultant Thomas Mai. Moderated by Mike Goodridge (Screen International).

Organised by the Holland Film Meeting in association with Binger Filmlab and Eye Film Institute Netherlands.