

# MAKING

BY ROBYNE PARRISH



# IT HAPPEN

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## "Film Festivals and Contests: What THEY can do for YOU"

A film festival is a special showcasing of films in various venues. The films are usually recent date and often include major international releases as smaller films by newcomers. Sometimes there is a focus on a specific genre or subject. These festivals are typically annual events.

One of the best places to start with on your screen play or completed short film journey is a festival or contest. In these settings, you can garner attention for your project and sometimes you can even win a little cash!

Below is a starting point for your own research into the world of the film festival. I have included five film festivals that have inspired me in my own work.

- 1) 2nd Annual Greater Orlando Christian Film Festival
- 2) Upstate South Carolina Christian Film Festival
- 3) Merrimack Valley Christian Film Festival
- 4) Newport Beach Film Festival
- 5) Greater Syracuse Christian Film Festival

The above list is just a small percentage of what you can find on the internet through our friend GOOGLE and other handy search engines. Additionally, I have included some links below which are quick and easy short cuts to some of the most interesting and informative sites out there!

<http://festival.sundance.org/2009>  
<http://www.christianfilmfestival.org>  
<http://www.independentchristianfilms.com/film>  
<http://www.newportbeachfilmfest.com>  
<http://www.filmfestivals.com/index.html>

There is usually a contest application fee involved. But if you take home the big prize it

turns out to be worth it. Even honorable mention in some festivals is a great opening for further success, even if you only use the information for "tooting your own horn" as they say.

Michael Fuller and Michael Stavinsky of (working title) MIKE PRODUCTIONS in Pittsburgh, PA are quite familiar with the festival contest and process. The indie company began with the task of shooting announcement videos for the Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, where the 2 Michaels met.

I had the good fortune of sitting down with these two young men to pick their brains on their experience in the indie film making world.

"Finding a way to present the church announcements and news that would incite the congregation, young and old and keep them coming back was a great way to learn the art of creating with a time limit," said Michael Fuller. "We must find a clever way of presenting the facts in a five minute time limit."

The men said the practical skills they learned from shooting PA's for their church led to the decision to enter the 48 Hour Film Project. Their film HEART FAILURE placed as runner up. This year the team placed first with their short film THE TRAINING FILM.

When asked if they had any suggestions for awesome web sites to visit for free materials to use when making a film, they offered "Freesound.org for file sharing sound effects and Freeplaymusic.com for post production scoring of your film." Here are some others:  
[Withoutabox.com](http://withoutabox.com)—excellent tool for submitting to festivals.

[SimplyScripts.com](http://SimplyScripts.com)— a big selection of popular screenplays to learn how to write.

[Mandy.com](http://Mandy.com)—A Craigslist of sorts for filmmakers. A good place to look for work in film related fields.

You can contact MIKE PRODUCTIONS at [McSavisky@verizon.net](mailto:McSavisky@verizon.net)