

# SHOW-ME SHOWBIZ *bulletin*

June 26, 2009



**A**merica Is It a Hit, a new American Idol style reality show based on the song and songwriting, conducted auditions this week in Branson. [Check out more...](#) The pilot show for the series was taped on Wednesday at Branson's RFD Studio . . . If you missed that shot at stardom, auditions for **The Late Show with David Letterman's Stupid Pet and Human Tricks** segment will take place June 27 in **Branson**, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Town Square of Branson Landing. To qualify for an audition, call 1-800-PET-TRIK or click [HERE](#)... If that doesn't work, then head to Kansas City to audition for either ABC's **Who Wants to Be a Millionaire** June 29 or July 18 for NBC's **The Biggest Loser**... Magnetic North Films, a subsidiary of St. Louis-based Banyan Communications Inc., announced the production of a new broadcast documentary film entitled **Industrial Tsunami**. Actor and activist John Ratzenberger is the film's executive producer. The film will explore the U.S.'s increasingly urgent need for skilled labor, and how these skills have been devalued over the past 40 years. *Tsunami* is in currently in pre-production with principal photography planned for mid-August. A release date has not been announced. For more info, contact Kathleen Souder at [ksouder@banyancom.com](mailto:ksouder@banyancom.com)...

**A** Missourian, **Brad Pitt** (Springfield), seems likely to portray another Missourian, Steve McQueen (Slater), in an upcoming production based on a biography of McQueen. [Read more...](#) Saint Louis University high school grad **George Hickenlooper** is slated to direct an upcoming film about power broker Jack Abramoff. **Casino Jack** will star Kevin Spacey. [Read more...](#) *Saturday Night Live* regular – and Kansas City's own - **Jason Sudeikis** has been cast in the comedy **Bounty Hunter** with Jennifer Aniston and Gerard Butler. [Read on...](#) One of Missouri's most famous sons, **Walt Disney**, will have a museum in San Francisco dedicated to him, his family announced earlier this month. Disney, who was born in Chicago, grew up in the north central Missouri town of Marceline, and began his animation career in Kansas City. His studio at 31st and Forest in KC is currently undergoing restoration with plans to open it as a **MUSEUM**....

**Branson** is a documentary about, well, Branson, that is premiering this month at the Los Angeles Film Festival. [More info...](#)

**T**he KC filmmaking scene in general, and producer/director **Dennis Fallon** in particular, were highlighted in a Kansas City Star feature last week. The story followed the film history of Dennis and his company, Waldo West Productions, and the success of some of the films he's made locally, notably the recent *All Roads Lead Home*, which Dennis directed. Next in the works is an animated feature. [Read more...](#) Kansas City native **Dwayne Boyd** is one of four finalists in the narrative film category of the American Black Film Festival, going on this weekend in Miami. Dwayne, who graduated from Van Horn High School in 1990 and now lives in Atlanta, made the finals with his romantic comedy *4 Minutes*. The film was one of 600 entries. Click [HERE](#) for more info...



*From Left to Right:* Brad Pitt is slated to play Steve McQueen in upcoming bio-pic; Kansas City native Jason Sudeikis to co-star with Jennifer Aniston and Gerard Butler in *Bounty Hunter*; SLU high school grad George Hickenlooper is directing *Casino Jack*; Walt Disney will have a museum dedicated to him in San Francisco. Disney's old studio in Kansas City will also be made into a museum



**Circles**, by Brain Freeze Productions helmed by Dick Taylor, won the best film category (as well as seven other awards) at the 2009 St. Louis edition of the 48-Hour Film Project earlier this month. [Check out the other winners...](#) The competition attracted 74 teams of filmmakers (including two from the Cape Girardeau area featured in this Southeast Missourian [STORY](#)... The 48-Hour Film Project, a competition conceived just eight years with the premise "Can someone make a watchable movie in just 48 hours?" has experienced huge success and prodigious growth. Over 200 cities worldwide host a version of the project, which gives filmmakers just 48 hours to make a complete film, start to finish.

Up next: Kansas City, where the 48-Hour Film Project will happen the weekend of July 31. Films will screen Aug. 7 and 9 at the Screenland Theatre at the Crossroads. An informal networking party for interested filmmakers will take place Friday night, June 26, at The Foundry at McCoy's, in KC's Westport district. Get more info [HERE](#)...

**T**he Ninth Annual St. Louis Filmmakers Showcase, which screens works written, directed, edited or produced by St. Louis natives or those with strong local ties, will unspool July 19-23 at the Tivoli Theatre in University City. The 14 film programs that screen at the Tivoli include full-length fiction features and documentaries, multi-film compilations of fiction and documentary shorts. Most programs include post-screening Q&As with filmmakers. There are 60 films in this year's event. On Saturday, July 18, SLFS offers filmmaking seminars for anyone interested in the moviemaking process. Sessions include the lessons of the locally shot *Up in the Air*; case studies of film distribution from St. Louis filmmakers; the benefits of film school; and alternative filmmaking careers. The seminars are held from 10:30 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Regional Arts Commission, 6128 Delmar Blvd., University City. Admission is free. The closing-night awards party on July 23 will be at Blueberry Hill's Duck Room, just down the street from the Tivoli Theatre. Cinema St. Louis, the presenter of the Showcase, will announce the Showcase films chosen for inclusion in the St. Louis International Film Festival in November. Awards for the best Showcase films will be given by the St. Louis Film Critics.

Highlights of this year's Showcase include: Joe Leonard's feature debut, **How I Got Lost** – shot in St. Louis, Labadie, Mo., and New York City – about a life-altering trip after the trauma of 9/11. **The Rink**, by Ronald Butts, a fascinating documentary about the urban roller-skating tradition in the African-American communities of St. Louis and East St. Louis. **Just Shy of Being**, an intriguing blend of fiction and nonfiction that explores the difficulties of romantic relationships between Jews and Muslims, from filmmaker Derek Elz (*Mosquito Kingdom*). Brandon Wade's **Paving the Way**, a polished, Ken Burns-style documentary about the adventurous group of motorists who were the first to travel the 5,000-mile motor route connecting 12 Western U.S. National Parks. **Game of the Year**, a mockumentary by Chris Grega (*Rhineland, Amphetamine*) about a group of St. Louis gamers. Tickets for film programs at the Tivoli are \$10 each; \$8 for students with valid and current photo ID and for Cinema St. Louis members with valid membership cards. Advance tickets are on sale now at the Tivoli Theatre box office. Tickets may also be purchased in advance [HERE](#). For a complete schedule and more info, click [HERE](#).

**H**arry Styron, a Branson attorney and film industry supporter, emailed the following update earlier this week, which may be of particular interest to those with grip trucks/equipment: *I was privileged last week to spend several days in Belize, and my host was Nigel Miguel, director of the Belize Film Commission . . . Nigel took over the Belize Film Commission a few months ago. He moved from the United States to Belize about 10 years ago. Though he was born in Belize, he spent most of his childhood in Southern California. His position with the Belize Film Commission is unpaid with a very limited budget. He's looking for a grip truck that he can rent out to the film production companies that come to Belize. If you know of any deals on a truck or the equipment to go in it, let both of us know.* Harry Styron's email address: [hs@styronlaw.com](mailto:hs@styronlaw.com)

## Industry News

**A**fter a protracted period of threats, counter-threats and negotiations, Screen Actors Guild (SAG) members voted earlier this month to approve a two year contract. The specter of an actors strike has played havoc with film production schedules for over a year, with producers wary of beginning a production then being forced to shut down in the event of an actors strike. Read the SAG account of the contract ratification [HERE](#).

**D**aily Variety, in a story entitled *Pilots Flying from L.A.*, reported this month that production of television pilots is declining in southern California as producers are drawn to other states and countries with attractive financial incentives. In the last five year, pilot production has dropped 42 percent. Canada and New York, in particular, have been the beneficiaries of the production exodus.

## Industry News **Cont.**

**A**n Associated Press story earlier this month took an in-depth look at Los Angeles crew members who have relocated to other states where incentives have triggered healthy motion media industries. A 25-year veteran moves from L.A. to New Mexico. A native Californian and 20-year industry member relocates to Michigan. Now that work is steady and plentiful in some states outside California, these and other crew are moving to new locales because, among other things, the "locals are friendly," the cost of living is considerably lower and it's much easier to buy a home.

## Location **Spotlight**

### Old Missouri State Prison, Jefferson City

NOTE: Anyone interested in visiting the Jefferson City Prison (featured in the last newsletter) for a scout please contact Andrea at [sporcica@missouri.edu](mailto:sporcica@missouri.edu)

Check out prison slideshow [HERE](#)



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## Made in **Missouri**



**Albino Farm** (filmed in Warrensburg, Springfield)  
In theatres in September 2009.

<http://www.albinofarmthemovie.com>



**Edgar Allen Poe's Ligeia** (filmed in St. Louis and Ukraine)

<http://www.ligeiamovie.com>



FIRST LOOK: Paramount Pictures displayed the first poster for the Jason Reitman directed George Clooney starring film **Up in the Air** at the Cinema Expo International this week in Amsterdam.

Check it out [HERE](#)