

2nd Annual WIFV Screenwriters' Conference
BIOGRAPHIES

Khris Baxter

Screenwriter, Producer, Script consultant

Khris Baxter is a screenwriter, producer, and script consultant. He has sold and optioned numerous screenplays to Hollywood studios and production companies, including *Voyage*, produced by USA Pictures. His screenplay, *Outrider*, is currently in development.

Khris teaches screenwriting at Gettysburg College, The Writer's Center in Bethesda, MD, and at the Low-Residency MFA in Creative Writing at Queens University in Charlotte, NC. He is a member of the Virginia Film Office and a judge for the annual Virginia Screenwriting Competition. He lives in Reston, Virginia.

Laura Bernieri

Tin Can Films - Producer

Laura Bernieri has 25 years of film development and scriptwriting expertise. In 2005, Laura executive produced *Kettle of Fish* for Saint Aire Productions. She was co-executive producer with Nick Peleologos (*Quiz Show*) on the independent feature, *It Could Be Worse!* She previously co-founded the Boston film company Brighten Avenue, where she participated in the marketing and distribution of *Passage to Paradise*, produced by Cristaldi (*Cinema Paradiso*) and starring Julie Harris. As Vice President of Creative Affairs for Robbins Entertainment, she bought in her first feature film, *Squeeze* (nominated for the Independent Spirit Award) and was Associate Producer of the Sundance 1996 Favorite *The Darien Gap*.

Laura co-produced *Next Stop Wonderland*, which was made for \$1.2 million and sold after a bidding war to Miramax for \$6.5 million. Prior to Robbins Entertainment, Laura founded the Harvard Square Scriptwriters collaborative and worked for over a decade as a mentor to independent filmmakers in the Boston area. She frequently speaks at film industry conferences and has organized events for the Woods Hole Film Festival, Nantucket and the Northampton Film Festival. Laura regularly contributes articles on screenwriting and filmmaking to national and regional publications. Laura received her BA in three years from Hampshire College.

Arla Bowers

Knock Me Over With a Feather Films - Screenwriter

Arla Bowers is a local screenwriter who has navigated the Hollywood system from the DC area. Her scripts have earned her a Maryland Individual Artist Award, honors in the Nicholl, Chesterfield, and Scriptapalooza competitions, and a Cine Award for her first short comedy film. Hired for a rewrite of a direct-to-video feature, she now has a screen credit and is represented by an agent in Los Angeles.

Arla has taught at American University's summer high school filmmaker symposium, as well as Eastern Middle School's media production program. Currently, she is an instructional specialist in the area of moving image education for the Montgomery County Public School system.

Denene Deverman Crabbs

Visionary Associates/Visionary Productions - Owner, President

As owner and President of Visionary Associates/Visionary Productions Denene Deverman Crabbs' career encompasses two decades of production and marketing/promotion experience. In 1985, she launched Deverman and Associates, an event/video production, public relations and marketing communications company serving corporate, non-profit, government and entertainment clients worldwide based in San Diego and Los Angeles, California.

Since 1992, when she worked with actors Keith Carradine and Mel Gibson at the Sheridan Arts Foundation to preserve the Sheridan Opera House, home of the Telluride Film Festival, Denene has focused her production experience toward film and television.

During her eight years in Hollywood, she assisted in the development, production and marketing of feature films, documentaries, children and family programming at Warner Brothers, Vin Di Bona Productions and PBS. In addition, Denene independently produced programs for ABC National News, NBC, CBS and ESPN's Aviation TV series.

Denene is particularly committed to writing, producing and directing educational and family friendly programming, feature films and documentaries that address social and health-related issues. Recent projects have been completed for Summer Productions, The Learning Channel, Discovery and Points of Light Foundation.

Ms. Crabbs holds a Magna Cum Laude Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology with honors from the University of Illinois and a Professional Certificate in TV/Film Production and Screenwriting from UCLA.

Pamela Gray

Screenwriter, Poet

Pamela Gray's feature credits include *A Walk on the Moon*, *Music of the Heart*, and *Dirty Dancing 2: Havana Nights*. *A Walk on the Moon* (aka *The Blouse Man*) was produced by Dustin Hoffman, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival, received a Golden Satellite nomination for Best Original Screenplay and the Samuel Goldwyn Writing Award.

Ms. Gray has also written for television, including two Hallmark Hall of Fame movies, episodes of *Once and Again*, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, and one-hour drama pilots for CBS and ABC. Variety named Pamela one of "Ten Screenwriters to Watch." She is currently writing an original "chick flick" for Fox Searchlight, as well as a remake of *A Star is Born* for Warner Brothers, with Beyonce attached to star.

Debi Hammack

Black Opal Productions, LLC - Illustrator, Storyboarder

For most of her life, Debi Hammack has rotated between an interest in both art and science, but it was only after being handed her diploma for a B.S. in marine biology from UNC-Wilmington that she fully gave her life over to art. The irony is not lost on her.

Since 2000, she has studied under herself in art and sequential storytelling. In 2005, after working as a penciler on several small press comics, she wrote, illustrated and published her own science fiction/fantasy comic series, "A'pertua". She also illustrated the children's book "Eerey Tocsin in the Cryptoid Zoo", written by Kevin Noel Olson. At the end of 2006, she branched off and started work as a storyboard artist. In the span of seven months, she has already worked on storyboards for three short independent films and one prospective TV series. In addition to storyboards and illustrations, she also creates character designs, logos, and websites.

Samples of her work can be found on her website, www.debihammack.com, and she can be reached at debi.hammack@gmail.com.

Gordy Hoffman

Screenwriter, Filmmaker - Founder of BlueCat Screenplay Competition

Winner of the Waldo Salt Screenwriting Award at the 2002 Sundance Film Festival for *Love Liza*, Gordy Hoffman made his feature directorial debut with his script, *A Coat of Snow*, which world premiered at the 2005 Locarni International Film Festival. *A Coat of Snow* made its North American Premiere at the Arclight in Hollywood, going on to screen at the Milan Film Festival and the historic George Eastman House. Recently, the movie won the 2006 Domani Vision Award at VisionFest, held at the Tribeca Cinemas in New York City.

Gordy is the founder and judge of the BlueCat Screenplay competition. He currently teaches screenwriting at the USC School of Cinematic Arts.

Marilyn Horowitz

ArtMar Productions - CEO

Marilyn Horowitz is the president of ArtMar Productions, a script consulting and film production company based in New York City. Marilyn is a Writing Coach, whose private students have achieved high levels of success; Her students include published novelists, award winning filmmakers, screenplay and television writers.

Marilyn was the script consultant on the upcoming Warner Bros. film, *Then Came Love*, starring Vanessa Williams, Eartha Kitt and Ben Vereen.

In 2004, Marilyn won the coveted New York University School of Continuing and Professional Studies Award For Teaching Excellence, where she teaches "Writing The Screenplay In Ten Weeks".

Marilyn teaches "Writing The Feature and Aesthetics II" in the New York University Graduate Film Program. Her book, "How to Write a Screenplay in Ten Weeks", is used as a textbook for both of these courses.

Her latest workbook, "Writing The Screenplay Using The Horowitz System—The High School Edition" was recently adopted by The Montgomery School system, and you can look at a sample at the break.

Marilyn hosts two seminars per year on the Creative Business of Screenwriting for New York Women in Film and Television (NYWIFT). She presented at the recent WIFV Screenwriting Conference on October 14, 2006. She recently gave a seminar on writing treatments for the NY Script club.

Marilyn's latest script, *The Fixer*, is being produced by Snackpack Productions, an independent film company.

She recently produced an independent feature film, *Caleb's Door*, which is currently making the rounds on the Festival circuit.

She is also a Senior Writer for Script Magazine.

KURT KLAUS, Esq.

Entertainment Attorney

Bio to come

Claudia Myers

Screenwriter, Director

Claudia Meyers received her undergraduate degree from Yale University and went on to receive a MFA at Columbia University's School of the arts where she graduated as a writer/director. Most recently, Claudia directed her script, *Kettle of Fish*, which won a Nickelodeon Screenwriting Award. The film, starring Matthew Modine and Gina Gershon, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York. Her script "Clinical" was a finalist at the 2003 Sundance Filmmakers Lab. Claudia also wrote *Wild Oats*, an unconventional buddy comedy that won 2nd Place at the 2004 Slamdance Screen Competition. In addition to several other screenplay and teleplays, Claudia has had experience as a script doctor, and teaching at Columbia's graduate film school.

Laurie Scheer

Yale University - Author

Laurie Scheer is a former vice president for WE: Women's Entertainment and is currently teaching at Yale University. She has worked as an assistant, d-girl, and producer for some of the most powerful media conglomerates in the world, including ABC, Viacom, Showtime and AMC-Cablevision.

She has been a professor at numerous universities across the US and considers herself a media goddess, helping creative professionals realize their goals of working and improving 21st century media.

Her book "Creative Careers In Hollywood: From Extra Girls to Errand Boys" (Allworth Press, 2002) chronicles and celebrates all of the movies ever made that feature women working in Hollywood. She also has a DVD, "How to Pitch and Sell Your Screenplay".

Cid Collins Walker

Black Opal Productions, LLC - Creative Director

Cid Collins Walker is the founder and creative director of Black Opal Productions, an award winning production company with four independent projects currently in development. Black Opal Productions also provides creative direction, 2/3D animation and special effects, brand management and print design, storyboarding for spots, opens, features, documentaries, set and lighting design.

Working as an art director, broadcast designer and animator, in network, cable and in post production, Ms. Collins Walker has provided her clients with her extensive expertise for more than a decade. Her clients include International Broadcasting, Voice of America, Black Entertainment Television, NBC Networks and W*USA TV Channel 9, the CBS affiliate in Washington, DC.

Ms. Collins Walker is a graduate of Scripps College, where she studied painting. Ms. Collins Walker received a fellowship from the Whitney Museum of American Art and went to on receive advanced study at the School of Visual Arts before relocating to the Washington, DC area. One of her first feature films was storyboarding segments of In the *Line of Fire*, starring Clint Eastwood, Rene Russo and John Malkovich. She has received many awards for creative production and animation, including a Bronze Telly Award for Eritrea to support drought relief in Africa, a Bronze Telly for her work on ESPN's daily sports show *Around the Horn*.

She is the Vice President of Development of the Board of Directors for Women In Film & Video, Washington, DC. Cid is in "Cambridge Who's Who" and is a member and judge for the PROMAX/BDA Design Awards International.

Paul Willard

Creative Pursuits

Paul Willard, founder of Creative Pursuits is a Business Strategist and WIFV Board member. As a former graphic designer he understands the pressures and responsibilities of running a creative business. He helps struggling independent creative professionals, writers, film directors, producers, composers, to get the information they need to grow their businesses and create systems to make money and do what they love the most – the creative. “Creative Pursuit’s philosophy is that the purpose of business ownership is to support your preferred lifestyle, not interfere with it.”

Since 1983, Paul has been helping creative professionals design strategies to: make career transitions, develop business plan and marketing strategies, crystallize ideas into actual strategies and action plans, find ways to attract better clients, create a better balance between work and personal life, and inspire creativity.

Heather Zicko

Guy Walks into a Bar - Creative Executive

Heather Zicko entered the world of film production working craft service on the set of *The Saint of Fort Washington*. This alluring position solidified her calling and she proceeded to work production...as PA, 2nd PA, Production Coordinator, Actor and Extra on numerous NYC productions over the following years.

After receiving her B.F.A. in Acting at SUNY Purchase, MS. Zicko worked with Academy Award Nominated Director, Milcho Manchevski, running his NYC office and pre-production on his 20th Century Fox project, *Ravenous*, starring Robert Carlyle & Guy Pierce. Upon her return from this Czech Republic based production, Ms. Zicko met Todd Komarnicki and walked into Guy Walks into a Bar in NYC only moments after its inception. Ms. Zicko began at Todd Komarnicki’s assistant, upgraded to development, and now serves as the company’s Creative Executive.

Heather also holds a B.A. in Dramatic Literature & Film Studies from NYU and hails from Boston.

GUY WALKS INTO A BAR

Guy Walks into a Bar is a multifaceted film, television production and management company. Founded in 1998 in New York with the Los Angeles branch opening in 2001, the company is headed by producing partners, Todd Kormarnicki and Jon Berg. Matt Weinberg heads the management division, representing a number of high profile writers and directors. And Heather Zicko runs the New York office and serves as Creative Executive.

Guy Walks into a Bar’s motion picture production division is currently in post-production on Eddie Murphy film, *Starship Dave* at 20th Century Fox. Other projects include: *Don’t Lean on Me* with Fox Atomic, *Bulls* starring Paul Rudd, among others. TV-wise, Guy is actively developing pilots for production this season with 20th Television and other networks.

Guy Walks into a Bar’s management clients run the gamut, writing for both major TV networks and Film Studios: including upcoming TV, *Carpoolers*, *Miss Guided*, *Sam I Am*, as well as, *Perfect Stranger*, *Elf*, *The Haunted Mansion*, *Zoom’s Academy*, and *I Heart Huckabees*, among others...

Clients also work with Disney & Warner Bros. Writing Programs, Luc Besson, Rob Minkoff, Red Wagons Prods, Fox Searchlight, Nickelodeon and more...