

Filmmaking, Southern Oregon Style



Photo by David Gibbs | www.dgibbphoto.com

ASHLAND, OR - Not every filmmaking couple would trade their successful careers in Southern California for seemingly riskier options in Southern Oregon, but it made sense for entrepreneurs Gary and Anne Lundgren. For ten years they had traveled north of the California border on filming projects – while living and working in Los Angeles. So, they thought, “Why not move to Southern Oregon where we’re already making movies?”

Neither Gary nor Anne expected to find high-level jobs doing feature films in Southern Oregon. At the time, those kinds of opportunities existed in the city they planned to leave. Instead, the filmmakers opted for becoming industry pioneers in a region that screamed location, location, location. With lots of trees and little traffic, Southern Oregon fit their ‘business and balance’ lifestyle of doing what they love and being a family.

Still, there’s more to the Lundgren’s relocation choice than finding balance in their everyday life! Truth is, the entrepreneurial, creative spirits of Gary and Anne began beating louder and faster when they realized they could unleash their passions and talents while helping to grow the Southern Oregon film industry.

by Make It Happen Marketing

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“Putting the right people together in teams, and removing the road blocks so they can do their best work, is what inspires me.”

- Anne Lundgren
JOMA Films

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“We saw a real possibility to start a company here,” says Anne, co-founder and producer of JOMA Films based in Ashland, Oregon. So, they did, and along the way, the filmmakers worked with SOREDI and the Southern Oregon Angel Investment Network to get their ideas on the table and move their concepts forward. Currently, the couple is networking with Southern Oregon Film and Media and other like-minded Southern Oregonians in a strategic effort to transform the region into a filmmaking hotspot. “Our bigger vision is to facilitate the organization of quality creative teams making our valley a Regional Film Center.”

Anne says independent filmmaking companies like theirs are beginning to pop up in smaller cities around the country. If you ask Gary, this is largely due to technology: the advancement in digital technology allows filmmakers to hire smaller crews, which reduces movie-making budgets. That’s the upside, but as Gary points out, there’s a price to pay for a smaller team. “There’s so much to do, but fewer people to help you do it,” he explains. “And once we mobilize the talent, we’re ready to work 24/7.”

No matter the cost or time involved in bringing a project to the screen, it’s about the quality of the film, according to Gary, co-founder, writer, director, and editor at JOMA Films. “Your work has to stand out, and it has to stand up,” he says, noting that he specializes in character-driven cinema that is “memorable, not typical.” And since his company is based in Ashland, he says that JOMA Films movies are made “Southern Oregon style.”

JOMA Films successes include “Redwood Highway” and the award-winning “Calvin Marshall.” Gary recently completed editing work on “When Giants Fall,” a documentary about the plight of the African elephant. Currently, Gary and Anne are working on their latest feature film titled “Black Road.” Gary describes the genre as film noir, while others refer to it as a sci-fi thriller. In short, the movie is set in 2049 and features a cyborg drifter who risks his life to protect a woman from her evil ex in the “lawless” state of Jefferson.

“Black Road” was started with Kickstarter, a crowdfunding platform that helps finance creative projects. Through it, backers of JOMA Films raised over \$45,000 for the making of the movie. In turn, Southern Oregon investors have matched funds. “We see these investors as integral members of the JOMA Film’s team.”

No doubt Gary and Anne stay busy making the numbers work, but it’s the imaginative side that keeps the JOMA Films founders on the edge of their seats. And according to Anne, there’s a common thread to all of their work. “In the end, it’s all about love and hope.”



Photo by Mark Arnsberg

Gary and Anne Lundgren on set for the filming of their recent film project “Black Road.”

THE SOUTHERN OREGON
EDGE

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