

The New Face of Southern Oregon Film

BY GARY KOUT, MODERATOR,
SOUTHERN OREGON FILM AND TELEVISION

Everyone knows the Southwest region of Oregon is home to startling natural beauty and tremendous cultural activities, from the wild and scenic Rogue River and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, to the splendor of Crater Lake and the quaint cities and towns replete with art galleries and artisans. Lesser known amongst this natural splendor and high quality of life is a thriving and active community of filmmakers, and it's high time we were recognized as such.

I moved to Ashland four years ago from Los Angeles seeking a better quality of life, never expecting to find so many fellow filmmakers and media professionals, established production companies, and frequent feature productions. The third independent feature I have worked on in the

Rogue Valley in just two years recently wrapped principal photography. But there have been other films I haven't worked on—some I didn't even know were being shot at the time. I've been involved with some commercial and corporate/industrial production companies, only to discover many more here.

How can it be in a place this small I've only begun to scratch the surface? I could expect to not know everyone in a large market like Los Angeles or Portland, but down here, it didn't make sense. Besides, how could we make a bigger name for ourselves against the larger film markets of Portland and its surrounding communities if we were so unconnected?

In the spirit of bringing the various arms of media and film production in Southern Oregon together, I started Southern Oregon Film and Television, or

SOFAT for short. Created in the mold of other industry networking groups, SOFAT operates primarily through a Yahoo!group Web site and e-mail structure. Membership is limited to working professionals in the Southern Oregon film, TV and media industries. There are currently around 50 members with enrollment nowhere near complete. Every other day I am introduced to someone else suitable for SOFAT. Some membership inquiries have been turned down due to their lack of practical experience in the industry; a love of movies or a spec script in the computer does not a SOFAT member make!

Some may remember a group called SOFVA, the Southern Oregon Film and Video Association, which existed for several years. The group eventually fell prey to its own membership,

too many of whom lacked the credentials and experience to make the group legitimate enough to advocate for its needs. SOFAT is here to fill the void left by the disappearance of SOFVA. Already, SOFAT is recognized by the Oregon Film Office as a viable group in Southern Oregon, and the OMPA has requested a greater presence from us, offering extended deadlines for submission and reduced rates in order to swell our ranks in their publication of The Source Directory.

There isn't much we can't handle down here with the infrastructure that exists, and combined with the natural beauty and film-friendly environment, Southern Oregon is the next big thing in the Oregon film industry.

To contact SOFAT, please visit <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/sofat/>.



Serving the Community for Over Twenty Years

EYEBEAM
Event Services

*Stages / Stage Covers
Lighting & Sound Systems
Video Projection
Pipe & Drape*

*Concerts / Festivals
Trade Shows & Conventions
Special Events
Weddings*

4455 Franklin Blvd. Eugene, Oregon 97403 P: 541.726.8803 | F:541.726.3273
www.eyebamevent.com | eyebam2@aol.com



AP ASIA-PACIFIC PRODUCTIONS

PROFESSIONAL VIDEO PRODUCTION IN JAPAN
AND THROUGHOUT THE PACIFIC RIM

Based in Portland, Oregon
503 723 6456
www.approd.com