

Overcoming remote working challenges in the creative industries

with Marc-Daniel Dichant, Film Producer, Shoot'n'Post

Maddie Duke 00:07

You're listening to *The State Of Work*, the podcast by Lano. *The State Of Work* is about finding your place in the changing world of work as an individual or an organisation. Each episode we dive into some of the benefits and limitations we face when it comes to remote and flexible work, and take a look at how we work, how we hire and manage people, and how we live in this increasingly global workplace.

I'm your host Maddie Duke and today's episode is our first in a series focusing on creative industries. I'm joined by film producer Marc-Daniel Dichant in a discussion about the current state of the film industry, online film festivals and networking, making films remotely and how crucial cinema audiences are to film culture.

Don't forget to check the shownotes and visit podcast.lano.io for further links and reading.

Maddie Duke 01:07

Hi, Marc, thanks so much for joining us on *The State Of Work*.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 01:10

Hi Maddie! Glad to be here. Thank you.

Maddie Duke 01:13

Could you introduce yourself and let us know what your background is, and maybe a little bit about your studio as well.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 01:21

Yeah, I'm a film producer... since, oh it's 15 years now. I produced my first movie when I finished film school in Berlin. And since then, I've produced half a dozen movies, feature films.. mostly International co-productions—that's kind of what I ended up working in, internationally—and a couple of German TV movies. And I also worked in distribution. I represented films by Michael Moore on the German market, and other independent directors/filmmakers. And now I'm working for a film studio called Shoot'n'Post. And we are providing post-production services for film productions all around the world. And we also have our own production department, which I'm running.

Maddie Duke 02:13

Great. So on *The State Of Work*, we're talking a lot about remote work. So maybe with that in mind, can you talk about how films are being made at the moment? And what aspects of the whole process are being made remotely?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 02:29

I guess filmmaking is remote work per se, because, you know, films being shot all over the world, and most of the time on original locations, not in the studio. So the first step of filmmaking is usually you sit down and write a story.... so the screenplay. And then you're building up your team; starting with the right actors, casting process, but also finding the right Director of Photography, yeah, and all the other crew members, production design, etc, etc. And then it's a travelling circus most times, and we're used to working in different countries or different cities, you know, wherever this story takes place, or we use different studio locations/facilities. And after the film has been shot, there is this long, long process of post-production, which happens in a studio like the one I'm sitting in right now. And there is a long process of editing. And then you have the process of the sound design and the sound mix. And very often now, you have CGI, so computer-generated images. So visual artists are working on creating dinosaurs or dragons, or sometimes just, you know, a street in Paris in the 19th century.

That is a long process that can take a year, or sometimes, years. Before the film has been published, and then you have a long period of exhibition. So in the old days, big films would premiere in a cinema and have their first run in cinemas. And that is I think that's one thing we're going to talk about, but yeah, it's a model that's disrupted right now. It's a model that was disrupted already, before the pandemic. And now, of course, most cinemas in the world are closed. So a lot of films are waiting to be released. You know, James Bond is, you know, hanging out at a martini bar since 1 ½ years waiting for some cinema in the world. - he's still waiting. And a lot of films end up being released, you know, they have to premiere on a video stream platform. But that's the situation today, because we are now still in the middle of a pandemic. I hope cinemas will open up soon because I think a lot of films still belong in cinemas because there are a lot of films that need an audience, that needs the community. You know, the feeling of being together with other members of the audience laugh together, cry together and go for a drink after you've watched a movie and discuss it and

Maddie Duke 05:27

...yeah, absolutely. It's a totally different experience.

I know you've mentioned to me that there are two major aspects to film production or filmmaking. One is that production side, which has historically always been a little bit remote, let's say because you've got filming on locations, maybe several locations, and then multiple studios involved that could be like located in different countries. So that's not something that's new to people who work in film. But in that exhibition, that sales side and things like trade events and film festivals, can you talk a little bit about how that has been affected by

Marc-Daniel Dichant 06:10

The pandemic? Yeah. I miss film festivals a lot.

Maddie Duke 06:13

Oh, yeah, I'm sure. Yeah.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 06:16

..and the events. I visited some festivals in the last month.... you know, on my Macbook screen. It's all digital. And I have to say, for me, it's not the same. And I think the business is not the same. I mean, films are being sold. Yep, we just closed the European Film Market, which is always the first important market of the year in Berlin. So that is, you know, the Berlin Film Festival is like the front shop window of the film industry. And in the back for the professionals, there is a European Film Market. The next one would have been Cannes market and then in autumn, you've got Toronto and the American Film Market in November, these are the big events, where independently-made films are being sold to all the distributors in the world. And for some kind of films, it is very important to get this event "character", to be shown in front of an audience. So buyers can get a feeling of oh, does this really work for an audience? And then you have often, you know, this, this bidding contest that buyers have won, you know, most firms are sold per territory. So you have the German-speaking territory, which is Germany/Austria/Switzerland, then you have the Spanish-speaking world, and you have France and then all the other countries, so most independently-made films are being sold per country and the distributor takes all the rights. So from cinema, video stream, TV rights, etc. So this whole lifespan of a movie. And how do you choose from this overcrowded market? How do you pick the film that you want to show to your national audience? There is your own gut feeling? Does this work for me? Do I think there is an audience for it? But it's made for the purpose that that especially the European Film Market, or the Cannes Film market is connected to a film festival, where a lot of those films being sold on the market are also shown to a festival audience. Because that creates a buzz around the film. And a lot of films now are not really on the radar of the bias. Because there's no audience.

Maddie Duke 08:54

And I guess, it's also like, if you're one of the decision-makers, in a distributor, in, you know, for on behalf of a film distribution company, something might not resonate to you personally, which is fine. You know, not every film is for every type of person. But without that ability to screen something in front of an audience that is the relevant audience and seeing their response and the buzz that generates. Yeah, you're in a sticky position, trying to make that judgment on a, possibly also on a laptop screen at home. I mean, I'm sure people in the film industry have monitors, but like, worst-case scenario, yeah, you're making the decision, you know, based on a screening, that's not the ideal setting, without the relevant audience that's bought tickets to the festival to go and see it, because it interests them. How do you make that call?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 09:47

That's absolute, I mean, there are legendary stories out there about very, very small films that were hard enough to get made, and then how those firms fight an international audience. So one example is, it's an old movie, but I think it's still a good example of such as *Little Miss Sunshine*, for example. Um, you know, everybody knows the film. Everybody loves it. It's a very small film. Usually, when you read the pitch, that's an 11-year-old girl whose life dream is to become a contestant in some ridiculous beauty contest followed by does it sound like an international box office hit? Rather not. So your gut feeling would be rather not, then this film was shown at Sundance, to an audience. And after the first screening, all the distributors, all the big, you know, big studios made a bid...

Maddie Duke 10:34

... based on that audience response?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 10:37

..based just on the audience response of the first screening. You could have watched it on your monitor, and you could have thought, okay, it's a nice film. It really resonates. But is there an audience out there? And I think a lot of distributors would have shied away. But after that screening, everybody made a bit and the film was sold for a sum and the producers already made a profit without selling one cinema ticket.

Maddie Duke 11:21

Yeah.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 11:22

And we know, the rest of the story, the film was very, very profitable, everybody remembers it. And now, during the pandemic, I'm not sure if *Little Miss Sunshine* would have made the same buzz, would have been sold. And very likely, nowadays, it would be sold to a video streamer directly, like Netflix, Amazon Prime, and then buried in the algorithm, because Netflix releases those kinds of films without putting up a marketing budget. So you have to find it. And there are success stories all over the world of, of these streaming platforms where there are movies, suddenly, they get an audience to get to word of mouth. But it's not the same. We need the audience and we need festivals, we need markets, and we need to meet each other. So this kind of now, just [a] digital world doesn't work for us, I would say,

Maddie Duke 12:03

Is there a way that some festivals are doing... I think it was the Human Rights Film Festival last year where I watched a couple of the movies online. But of course, you know, there was no collection of response data. You know what I mean, as a viewer, I wasn't asked for my response. And I, you know, I think there's definitely an opportunity for some festivals who've had to go online to capture some of the audience response, and I'm sure some of them do. Are you able to speak a little bit about that? Like, are you aware of what some festivals have done to kind of bridge that gap and make an effort to try to get a good snapshot of audience sentiment?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 12:46

Yeah, they make efforts and I'm not saying that it's totally indispensable, so I visited the co-production market in Tallinn in November, which was fully digital. Of course, I didn't go to Tallinn. But I met a lot of fellow producers online, like, you know, the way we talk now. And it was nice, but not the same. Because what I think is, it is possible to sustain an already established contact online via Zoom meetings and calls and email exchange. It is very difficult to build up new relationships. Because there's all you know, this, this chemical process when you meet new people that is missing. And also this random talk that, you know, you have the official meeting and at a festival, usually, the real bonding happens after the official part - at the hotel bar.

Maddie Duke 13:49

Exactly.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 13:50

...or going to a movie together, whatever. And so at the moment, I think we all work hard to sustain our already established context. We make a couple of new contacts and the co-production markets and the festivals and make a big effort to keep everything alive. But I think we're all hungry to one day meet again in person. So the travelling circus, it's not over, I'm pretty sure. But of course, we are grateful that we have the instrument, the tools right now to keep you know, the fire burning a little bit.

Maddie Duke 14:22

Can you expand a little bit on that? What are some of the tools or technologies that you've seen embraced by the industry to support film work in film?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 14:32

Yeah, well, the Tallinn festival, (the Black Nights festival), and that it has a co-production market, they have their own platform. And you can ask for meetings with people you're interested in and that's a matchmaking platform. And then they had their own video platform where you could meet, and it's very nice, it's very efficient. And then later, you have the exchange of documents and what they also provided, and that was very nice, they provided a video platform, so you could prepare a meeting, you met a producer and the director and the previous work of the director was available on that video platform.

Maddie Duke 15:10

Okay, yep. So you had all the resources there?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 15:13

Absolutely. You didn't have to leave the meeting and ask for... oh, could you send me a screener? You already have the chance to prepare for the meeting by having a look at previous work of the respective director or producer. That was very nice. Of course, there are

advantages. I mean, I save travel time I save money, and I drink less alcohol. Yeah, but it's not a substitute.

Maddie Duke 15:41

Do you think that your ability to save money as a production company or as a producer, do you think that this then also makes film festivals and events more accessible for new people, like people that are new to the market with new films and new, like, you know, really small budgets that might not have otherwise been able to travel to attend a film festival? Is that something that's happening, that it's opening it up to a more diverse production market?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 16:04

That is a good question I have no answer for. Usually, a film needs a sales company that is putting this film on the market place. And I mean, we were used to watching screeners. So that is the sample of a film or the whole film. We already watched most of the films in our offices online, because you weren't able to jump from one screening to the other. That sometimes there were films that you know, okay, that is a film I really interested, I want to watch it on the big screen. So at the European Film Market, for example, there are a lot of small cinemas where you can watch a movie on a screen, not with a real audience, but with a professional audience. So all the other buyers. So you could see which other you know, you have a competitor, you can meet your competitors in the screening room. And when you see somebody is leaving, you don't know if he or she is leaving, because they want to make a bid on the movie.

Maddie Duke 17:09

It's like a poker face situation like, are they trying to throw you off on purpose?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 17:15

Right, and now we are kind of eBaying films. So you don't know if your competitors are waiting in the line and making the same bid on the same movie. And are there more smaller firms on the marketplace? I guess not. Because I think it's it's, you still need a sales company. buyers want the sales company behind the movie, because that is the first proof that the movie might have some market value. And I think because everybody is so insecure about the future at the moment, less titles get bought. And then you want to make sure that the title you buy is really finding an audience.

Maddie Duke 17:58

Yeah. People are being a bit more cautious. Maybe.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 18:01

And of course, there are so many films on shelves right now waiting to be released. Yeah, because some distributors, they wait for cinemas to open up again, not only James Bond is waiting, also a lot of small, independent movies. They don't want to be wasted or, you know, being released straight on Netflix and Amazon because it's got disadvantages. I mean, when you're hidden in the algorithm, then you don't exist.

Maddie Duke 18:26

Do you think that some filmmakers might be starting to (or maybe this is already happening) make films with the knowledge or awareness that they're likely to be seen more on laptop screens rather than cinema? Does that change the way people actually film?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 18:47

Yeah, for sure. I mean, that started already. Before the pandemic. Yeah, of course, you have not, not every film is suited for cinema. Cinema is always a special event. So film stories, bigger than life stories, controversial or comedy or action, you know. And then there are small stories that are very suitable for the small screen. I mean, a lot of I produced a film two years ago that was made to go straight to YouTube, actually.

Maddie Duke 19:16

Oh okay.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 19:19

..because it was a story suited for YouTube because it was a film to film about two young women. And the film is like a mock-up documentary, like the two women film each other, and their life story. And so it could have been made by a 16/17-year-old young woman, and being put up on YouTube, and professionally-made film professionally-produced, financed and everything made for a YouTube platform, run by a public broadcaster, that's how we got the budget, and you didn't have to sell the movie. So it was kind of financed by the public broadcaster.

Maddie Duke 20:02

Does it play into that whole trend of digital creators and YouTubers in general? Yeah. Okay. Would you like to tell us what it's called? So people can check it out?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 20:10

It's called *Wach*.

Maddie Duke 20:12

Wach, okay.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 20:14

“Wach” is German for “awake”. And because the storyline is a self experiment of these two young women. They want to keep each other awake as long as possible. Rule number one: without drugs.

Maddie Duke 20:29

Okay. We'll pop that into our shownotes.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 20:31

Yes, it resonated very well with a young audience because they really felt connected to the young, to the characters, to the main characters, to these young women, they thought I could have made this movie. And it was a very emotional story. And for me, the interesting part was, it's like attending the first screening at a festival where you feel the audience, does it work? Or is the audience annoyed? or bored or excited about the movie? And, of course, on a digital platform, you're not with the audience, but then on YouTube, you have the commentaries...

Maddie Duke 21:09

Yes.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 21:10

And we had, it's already started, you know, the film was just an hour on the platform. And we already had hundreds of comments. And they were so emotional, that we already knew, okay, yes, the film is working and there is an audience out there, and they're watching it, and they feel something they are interested in, they are engaged. That was a great feedback. I loved it. And now I think we have 5000 comments and, and most of them are very engaged. So there are, you know, not many internet trolls that just try to disrupt the good experience other people have. It's really a conversation between young people about their life and that's the best thing a movie can do. And that was a great experience. I mean, we can be grateful that we have a public broadcaster, and we don't have to sell this movie. Otherwise, of course, it wouldn't be a business model.

Maddie Duke 21:52

It's interesting because two of the examples you've mentioned, *Little Miss Sunshine*, and well, yeah, with female protagonists, let's say and it's, I think obviously a good skill for decision-makers in this industry to have to be able to empathize with different storylines and experiences because it really depends who's in that seat, you know, like, who's personally connecting to the story and that ability to go okay, I don't personally connect to it. But of course, there are young women in this world who might connect to this and then looking at where, where do they access, you know, film and TV? Are they the type of people you can kind of go even further into it and go who goes to the cinema? Like, forget COVID for a second and just go. Yes, we know there's an audience for this. Does that audience go to the cinema? Are they the type of people you can kind of go even further into and who go to the cinema? Like, forget COVID for a second and just go. Yes, we know there's an audience for this. Does that audience go to the cinema?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 22:39

Yeah, well, I think YouTube was the right platform for *Wach* because we always knew that it wasn't suited for cinema. It's a very intimate story. And that's the opposite to a movie, like a *Little Miss Sunshine*, which is a comedy, tragic comedy, but comedy, you want to have a laugh. And *Wach* is a very intimate story. And I think you'll feel more comfortable to watch it alone. And then and then you have to exchange with other viewers but also a kind of anonymous exchange. So I

don't want to give away too much of the story in case people want to watch it. But that story, at least hear a bit unsettled and you have questions about yourself, your life. And then you can have this exchange with total strangers, which is sometimes much more intimate than an exchange with good friends. And for that reason, that was totally the right platform. And yeah, I still love that we have made the decision to produce a movie for YouTube to have a professional movie for YouTube.

[Break]

Maddie Duke 24:19

While we are talking about films that you've been involved in, one of your films *In Darkness* was Oscar-nominated. And congratulations, I'd love to hear about what aspects of that film were or how it was made, and whether there were aspects to it that were remote and what some of the challenges were there.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 24:37

Oh, that was really, yeah, there was my first internationally made movie, internationally financed and also produced. Great success story, but a lot of trouble in between - it took years to get made, to get it financed, and then to get made. But it's a classic example of how independent firms are being financed and being made. For a certain kind of movies, and for a certain budget size, you need international partners. So you can't finance a certain portrait of a country such as Germany alone, because there wouldn't be an audience alone in Germany.

Maddie Duke 25:19

So immediately, you've got a distributed team of people basically,

Marc-Daniel Dichant 25:24

Yes, you need to make sure the film is being released in a couple of countries at least and being financed by a couple of countries. So you, you put your audience number together and your craft. And so *In Darkness* was a co-production between Canada, Poland, and Germany, which is kind of naturally based on the story because it's a story that took place in at the time it was eastern Poland. Now it's Ukraine, in the city of Lvov (*Lviv*). And it's during World War Two, it's a story about Holocaust survivors. And its script came from Canada, there was a guy, David Shamoon, who found the story and some side notes in a book about Holocaust survivors and about those righteous people who helped other people survive. There was this very unlikely hero, a Polish guy who was a crook. He was a thief, a burglar and in his day job, he was a sewer worker. And he met this group of people in the sewers. And they were Jewish family trying to, not escape the ghetto - they knew they couldn't escape, They were trying to find a hiding place in the sewers. To survive the war. The real story that happened - we met survivors - I met family members. Children, but also an actual actual survivor. A woman who was seven years old when it happened. And so David wrote the script. He never wrote a script before - he came from marketing, but he was so engaged to attract the best story. He thought: okay, I have to try it. And he found producers, and those Canadian producers, and they knew okay, it's a

European, it has to be European production, in a way. So they were looking for partners. And they went to the American Film Market. That is an event in Los Angeles and November, where people from independent film work, meet and and I tried to find partners for films to be made, or also films being made. It's like the European Film Market. And so that's where we met. And then we were together looking for a Polish partner, and we were looking for a director. And it was obvious that it's, it's not gonna be a cheap film, it's not gonna be totally low budget. Yeah, also, but also the firm their story is very dark. So it's not also not, not an entertaining blockbuster. It's still a film for a certain niche. And so we approached Agnieszka Holland, a very renowned Polish filmmaker, she's already been nominated for Oscars two times, at that time. And at that time, she was working a lot for HBO TV shows such as *Treme* and *The Wire* and, and she had a long history of arthouse films, European arthouse films, but also North American films. And yeah, we had to convince her, more than one time, to go back to the subject of the Holocaust. And yeah, luckily, we were able to work with her, and we made this movie and it was filmed. It was filmed in Studio Babelsberg—so Berlin—and on location in Leipzig, and on three locations in Poland. So we were really a traveling circus. That was based on the financing of the movie, because we had a couple of regional funds in Germany, and we also had regional funds in Poland. And when you get money from a regional fund, they expect you to work there, of course. And so it was not based on any that we needed a certain location there or that it was suitable or efficient. No, it was kind of the filming followed the money. But we had great support in those regions, and we found great locations. So it was really worth it, also this whole travelling circus that we were. And then the post-production part, again, was divided between the picture post-production in Germany, and the whole sound post-production in Toronto, Canada. So we always had to provide our guys in Canada with the new picture editing so that we're able to continue with the sound design and sound editing. And of course, we already used the internet. Sometimes, because at the time it was 2012 often the internet was too slow. We had to send hard disks and then we got hard disks back and we could hear, oh yeah, it sounds good. And yeah, in the end, and Berlin, we will put it all together. And suddenly, we had a movie.

Maddie Duke 30:17

I'm glad it got, you know, the recognition it deserved as well in the end, yeah.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 30:20

Then we had our premiere in Toronto, at the film festival in Toronto. And that was amazing. While the festival gave us a very, very nice stage. And we were so glad that we could have one of the film's protagonists there. She was a seven-year-old girl when she had to endure. I mean, she lived one a half years in a sewer before they were liberated, and the war was over. And, and she was very grateful to this man who helped them survive. And she, well the screening, I was mostly afraid of what the screening for (her name is Krystyna). And, we rented a cinema in New York. She lives in New York now. And I wasn't able to travel and our Canadian partners were there. And we waited, we desperately waited for the phone call. How she, how she explained how she liked the movie. It was her story. And she met her. You know, on screen. She kind of met her parents and her deceased brother and all the people she lived through this hell. And at the time, and then came the phone call. And they said she liked it. And of course, she

cried. And she liked it. And she was very grateful. And then we invited her to the premiere in Toronto. And she said, yeah, of course, I can, of course. And she brought her son and her husband. And then she came on stage when the movie was shown to the audience. And we got standing ovations and that was one of my greatest moments as a filmmaker and producer to get this recognition by an audience.

Maddie Duke 31:57

Well, yeah, again, congratulations. Because it's a huge achievement.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 32:01

Yes. And again, it shows how important festivals are, you know how to feel the audience. And yeah, we sold the film worldwide and didn't go bankrupt.

Maddie Duke 32:12

Always good

Marc-Daniel Dichant 32:16

And yeah we met again at the Oscars. And we were able to get Krystyna a ticket for the Oscar ceremony.

Maddie Duke 32:20

Good. Well, it's also really nice to hear that you know, as the producers and the filmmakers that you made sure to take care of the person who was most maybe most emotionally connected to the story.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 32:30

Oh, it's a huge responsibility when you tell real life stories, especially about people who are still alive or, or have family members who are still alive. It's a big responsibility, because you can't tell a story one to one, how it really happens. You have to do its storytelling, you have to condense things, you know, you have to change a lot of things. Sometimes you have to dramatize things also, for the effect, and we didn't do that much because that story was dramatic enough by itself, but sometimes you have to do it. It's a huge responsibility.

Maddie Duke 33:02

Is *In Darkness* available to watch anywhere at the moment?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 33:06

Yeah, sure. It's very worldwide. It wasn't a big blockbuster, but it's found its niche. And you can download it from iTunes, Amazon Prime. It's there. I went, I went to a DVD shop two years ago in Australia. And just, you know, out of curiosity and vanity, search through the international films, the Blu-ray section, and I found the movie for a special price. And I bought five copies.

Maddie Duke 33:45

Do you have any other examples of how Shoot'n'Post is involved in producing aspects of film on a remote basis?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 33:56

Well, at the moment, as we're still in the middle of a pandemic, and the film business is very vulnerable. We talked a lot about the exhibition side, the production side is very much affected by the pandemic itself. So we, as a post-production studio, have a huge responsibility to take care of our staff members and of our clients. And, for example, we've got actors coming in and out of the studio, because they have to do voice recordings here. Those actors have to go back to a set. And so all these rules of social distancing, of hygiene, we have to apply very carefully, because for us, it would be a huge damage, if anybody would get infected here. I mean, in the end, maybe you can't always avoid it, it's not always in the end, it's not your, your complete responsibility, because you can't be 100% sure, but we do what we can do to keep our people safe. Usually, when actors come in, and they do the voice recording - voice recording means that sometimes the sound from the set is not good enough to be used later in the post-production process. So they have to speak the lines again, and then they get dubbed. Or the director wants to have some changes and the text. So in every movie, there's an additional voice recording. And so the actors come in here. And usually, very often, in the old days, the director was with them because still, you know,

Maddie Duke 35:23

..they need to direct.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 35:25

Yep, the director needs to direct! So now we've got to direct them most times on the screen.

Maddie Duke 35:29

Okay.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 35:30

Well, the way we talk right now, yeah, and then and, and then but the director who sits in their office somewhere or sits in a van at the set, you know, and but they want to hear what we record and they want to see it on the you know, synced with the image. So to, you know, to prove that it's really lip sync, and it's really working for the scene. So we're using a software that that also transmits the, the image that we see in the studio so the image of the original film and it were the the director speaking the lines, the actors speaking the lines on so the director can follow it, they can see the same screen to and then we have the second screen where The director can communicate with the actor also face by face. And this has become quite common. And I think this will also be something that will survive the pandemic. It's very comfortable, it reduces travel time/travel cost, the director can keep on working on set or in the editing suite wherever they are. This is something that works very well and it helps us keep on working and keep the people

safe. You know, helps social distancing. So we try to have not too many people around here. So also a lot of our sound designers that work from home right now.

Maddie Duke 36:50

That's yeah, quite a bit to adapt to even as an industry that was already dealing with remote work, there's still changes that you're having to adapt to now.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 37:00

The good thing is we were used to working remotely because of our international cooperations of this traveling circus that a film set is. And, and also the division of, of works in the post-production process, which is also part of our international financing themes. You know, when you have a big show such as *Game of Thrones*, they used to work. Also the visual effects artists say they use what you have visual effects artists working in Australia and creating the dragon. And then you have the other team working in Berlin, on the background image, the sky or the skyline of an ancient city. So that is something that's already been established before. Yeah, we work in international teams. And I think that helps us also keep on working. I think, in that sense. We are kind of blessed that we have those tools and the film business is keeping on working through all the pandemic. So I guess, the production part—the distribution part— is more affected.

Maddie Duke 38:05

I mean, lucky for the rest of us, isn't it? Because with everyone spending so much more time at home..

Marc-Daniel Dichant 38:11

Yeah..

Maddie Duke 38:13

...I'm sure the demand for film and TV has increased, you know. So, it has to keep up.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 38:20

It has. And, and also, we're waiting for a couple of great films to be released when the cinemas open again, and yeah, but of course, you produce a lot for streaming services right now. And, and there is this huge demand and also in times of crisis. It's not only because people have time, but it's also because people are hungry for stories.

Maddie Duke 38:43

Yeah. And to escape a bit maybe,

Marc-Daniel Dichant 38:46

...yeah, escape, or it's also time where you, you know, reflect things about life. In this pandemic is it's, you know, it's all about solidarity. And yeah, it's a lot of introspection these days, and storytelling helps and also it helps to watch a comedy sometimes.

Maddie Duke 39:05

Yes absolutely. Well, I think that could be a nice place to leave things. Are there any final thoughts you have about the film industry and/or the future of maybe the film industry?

Marc-Daniel Dichant 39:18

I'm very curious. I'm not desperate. I think there are new possibilities and we were forced to be creative. And also not only in what kind of films we are making but also how we are working together. And maybe we also have a new sense for how important other people are. And and I hope this kind of yeah, I hope this also creates a new kind of solidarity, kindness with each other. And, and a cooperative spirit. We are worlds connected. We want to be connected. And we have to treat each other well. And we want to experience each other and not just sitting alone in our homes. And much as some of this is enjoyable sometimes too. But yeah, it's time that it's over soon..

Maddie Duke 40:13

Yep. Well, yeah, thank you, again, so much for taking part in this discussion. It's been really, really interesting to talk about film and just a totally different industry to what some of our listeners might be used to.

Marc-Daniel Dichant 40:27

Thanks for having me.

Maddie Duke 40:24

Well I hope you enjoyed the episode. And if you're in a position to get out and support your local cinema or film festival, please do. And keep an eye out in the next in our series on creative industries.

The State Of Work is available wherever you listen to podcasts. Find us on Instagram or Twitter by searching for *The State Of Work*. We'd love to hear from you. Join the conversation by using the hashtag *The State Of Work*, and be sure to check out our shownotes at podcast.lano.io for more information on anything we talked about in this episode. Thanks for listening and see you next time on *The State Of Work*.

Berlin, 23.03.2021