

NEW MEMBERS

A SPOTLIGHT ON SOME OF THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF THE PRODUCERS GUILD AND WHAT MAKES THEM TICK



John R. Blythe

Blythe's penchant for horror began as a child, when he rented *Grizzly* and *Halloween* on VHS tapes. Later, when he learned that both films had been top-grossing indies, he plotted his own path into independent producing.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received about producing?

Producers have three main pressures: time, quantity and quality.



Amy Seidenwurm

Producing a virtual reality film on the Los Angeles Philharmonic and seeing it travel to communities that didn't have much access to the arts is what led Seidenwurm to leave her job with the orchestra and move into producing more VR content with social impact. She's now the executive producer at Oculus' VR for Good program, where she has ushered more than 20 projects that travel across film festivals.

What's on your producing bucket list?

I really want to work with Ava DuVernay. I admire her so much because she never, ever compromises her integrity or her artistic vision.



Dayana Ariza-Gonzalez

For Dominican American producer Ariza-Gonzalez, telling stories from her community and from underrepresented voices is what drives her work. She witnesses the power of storytelling when strangers and loved ones alike share their joy with her in seeing themselves represented on screen.

Who or what inspired you to go into producing?
Having empathy for others is my superpower as a producer. There is something so magical in being part of someone's life story in this way. Whether in preproduction, production or postproduction, highlighting people's experiences and facilitating this form of self-expression without reservations feels like I've hit the jackpot every day. I wouldn't trade this work for anything else. I've found my calling.



Jenn Halweil

As an electrical engineer with dreams of saving the planet from climate change, Halweil realized she was often the only woman in rooms with people from government, utilities and start-ups. Understanding that major innovation can only come through diverse teams, she launched production studio and innovation lab #GoBeyond to drive inclusive and sustainable ideas.



Aaron Pulkka

Pulkka began his career as an interactive software engineer and designer at Walt Disney Imagineering, where he was drawn to the workflow process between departments and highlighted ways to improve collaboration. But it was his boss, Sony Imagineering veteran David Spencer, who encouraged him to explore producing.

What's the best piece of advice you've ever received about producing?
It is important to remember that major life events that cannot be rescheduled—like the birth of a child or caring for a family member in their time of need—must be prioritized over the needs of a project deadline. When producers mitigate risks to accommodate the needs of their team, everyone wins.

What's on your producing bucket list?
A feature about Sally Ride, most famous for being the first female American astronaut, but she was so much more than that. She is one of the reasons we know about climate change, because she advocated using the satellite architecture she helped place in space to study our own planet. She was also an advocate for Mars exploration. I feel a strong affinity for her with our similar backgrounds spanning both science and storytelling.