

KEEPING INTERNATIONAL TIME

WITH HER OWN PRODUCTION SHINGLE, ATLANTA-BASED AUTUMN BAILEY-FORD STARTS HER DAY BEFORE DAWN WITH OVERSEAS CALLS, AND PLOWS THROUGH AS MANY AS A HALF DOZEN SCRIPTS A DAY.

IN THE PRODUCER'S OWN WORDS

Television and movies have been a part of my life since childhood. As a teen, I spent countless hours watching black-and-white movies and daydreaming about what went into creating them. But I never wanted to be an actor. I knew my magic was behind the scenes. So I'd check out books on filmmaking from the library, and in high school, I got involved with the performing arts department and helped with lighting, camera work and whatever else I could get my hands on. By the time I enrolled in college, at Shaw University, I was known as the "film girl." I'd record all the on-campus events, and a lot of students thought I'd eventually become a director or videographer. But producing was always my goal. Three years after graduation, I created Autumn Bailey Entertainment.

Today through my company, I've produced over 40 films, helped numerous creators secure distribution deals, and worked to develop up-and-coming talent. Currently, I'm excited about the release of my first studio film, *On a Wing and a Prayer*, now streaming on Prime Video. Also, we just announced a partnership with Kevin Hart's Hartbeat Productions to create *The Backup*, which will star Keke Palmer. A lot goes into making these things come to fruition, and there is no typical day for me. But generally, it goes something like this.



Morning

My mornings can start as early as 3 a.m. I work on a lot of international projects, so I need to be awake when my colleagues are. I'm developing a few projects in London and South Africa, so this early schedule has become routine. But it doesn't bother me. I like the mornings, and I've always been a hustler. I believe in working hard. That means doing what you have to do to get the job done.

Production days follow a different routine. First, I arrive and do my best to greet everyone, because I like my cast and crew to feel like family. Then I grab some breakfast, which consists of bacon and ginger ale, delivered with a chef's kiss. Then I meet with my director to talk through the day and check in with actors. From there, it's a lot of watching monitors to ensure everything runs smoothly. If things are going well, I might shift gears and go to my office to take calls, send emails or drop in with different departments.

Afternoon

When I'm not in active production, lunchtimes can vary. Sometimes I may head to a creative workspace like The Gathering Spot in Atlanta. There I'm meeting with writers or actors to chat and discuss a project, and at other times I'm juggling Zoom calls. Unless it's Tuesday, Thursday or Sunday—those days are reserved for reading scripts. On those days I might hop out of the house to grab a quick bite and then return right back to reading. On a typical script day, I read four to six new scripts.

During a shoot, I usually take lunch on set to see how things unfolded. In between all of that, I could be doing a host of other tasks, like taking calls with investors, making distribution calls and sometimes putting out fires. It's a lot, but I do my best to solve problems and create a relaxing and safe environment for everyone.

Evening

My evenings are spent with two of my favorite things: books and my family. As things slow down for the day, I may dig into a new read or watch a good movie. I enjoy spending this time with my lovable and supportive husband and my son. I work hard for these special moments, so I try to relax and enjoy them. ■

