HOLLYWOOD'S BATTLE PLAN

Posted on June 23, 2024 by Keghart

Category: Opinions

By Jirair Tutunjian, Toronto, 20 June 2024

Recently Hollywood's crème-de-la crème gathered at the penthouse of the iconic Black Rock building off Rodeo Drive. Unlike previous occasions when morning meetings included arugula salad, yoghurt, free-range eggs, Canadian bacon, Brie cheese, organic honey, several types of tea and coffee, and Perrier, breakfast menu was domestic bottled water. Chairing the gathering was Sol (Big Cigar) Sleezak, majority shareholder, CEO, Chair, and manager of Unimayer Studios. He was surrounded by his senior management team, including producers, executive producers, associate producers, co-producers, line producers, sequence producers, creative producers, and field producers. The aroma of expensive Cuban cigar, a feature of management meetings, was much missed.

Mr. Sleezak: You know why we are here. Due to COVID, SAG-AFTRA, and WGA strikes, and overseas DVD piracy, our industry has lost $32 billion in the past four years. In addition, there's demographic (age, gender, ethnicity) shift among moviegoers. The comic book-based movies are no longer drawing blockbuster crowds. Our crisis management team has studied the situation and recommended that we try a revolutionary strategy. They call it the Hybrid Formula. To draw various demographics in the upcoming two to three years we will produce movies which will combine nostalgia--the allure of the past--with the exciting times we live now. Thus, we will retain our young demographics and attract older demographics. What I expect from you this morning are movie titles which illustrate our novel strategy. The floor is open.

Mr. Nutter: How about a movie titled "The Adventures of Robin Hoodie"? It will combine Errol Flynn's actioner with the unprivileged life in an inner city social worker who fights gangs.

Mr. Sleezak: It sounds promising. Work on it. Next.

Mr. Clode: In light of the clashes in Yemen, how about a movie titled "East of Aden"? We can also play with another James Dean title: "Rebel with a Cause".

Mr. Sleezak: I like it. They need sharpening.

Mr. Dose: After more than 60 years "The Magnificent Seven" is still a cash cow while James Bond is the most profitable film franchise in the same 60 years. Why not combine the two genres and make "The Magnificent 007"? Sort of a cowboy who is a double agent, a mole in the pay of Geronimo's Apaches.

Mr. Sleezak: You must be joking. Next.

Mr. Goatee: To pick where Mr. Dose left off, why not "The Road to Casablanca"? It will be a road movie with murder and mayhem in North Africa during WWII. Lots of German nasties.

Mr. Sleezak: Check your film reference books. In the '40s, there was "The Road to Casablanca" with Hope and Bing. Or was it the Marx brothers?

Mr. Sneak: How about "Ben Whore? Soft porno two-thousand years ago. Centurion in love with the gladiator hero.

Mr. Sleezak: When you leave the room turn right. Go to the corner office where HR is located. Ask them to give you your resignation papers.

Mr. Sneak: I have another idea: A remake of 'Guys and Dolls." To avoid feminazi pushback, we'll call it "Guys and Women."

Mr. Sleezak: Looks like you didn't hear me the first time. I said "Scram," "Get Lost," "Vamoose."

Mr. Goldie: I have several good ones. How about "Mr. Deeds Goes to Silicon Valley," "Starlet Wars," "Godmother."

Mr. Sleezak: I guess the heroin of "Godmother" will be a Mafia dowager.

Mr. Goldie: No, no, no. It will be the heartwarming story of a childless Italian widow who adopts a 5-year-old Hispanic orphan. A Jane Wyman movie.

Mr. Sleezak: Any other ideas?

Ms. Kuper: I got a triple hitter: "One-Eyed Jackie," "I'm All Right, Jackie, " and "Jackie and Jill." It could become a neat franchise.

Mr. Sleezak: Flesh it out and give it to the brain thrust. I see several ideas here which may lift us from the current financial morass, but we still need a couple of high-profile movies which will pull in moviegoers to the ticket box.

Ms. Reaper: How about Ryan's Lesbian Daughter?

Mr. Sleezak: Ms. Reaper, was that a demonstration of your dubious sense of humor?

Ms. Reaper: I am sorry. I thought we were going to mix genres to attract various demographics.

Mr. Sleezak: Are you perchance saying that you expect the whole family to buy tickets to see a dyke movie? Listen, Marlene Dietrich kicked the bucket long ago. So did plain Jane Barbara Stanwyck, and the overrated marble statue Greta Garbo.

Ms. Reaper: O.K. I have a family-friendly movie. Everyone likes robins. Why not "The Maltese Robin" about a tourist who finds the statue of a golden robin on a beach in Malta?

Mr. Sleezak: Too expensive. We have to go to Malta and spend a couple of months shooting.

Mr. Craven: I have several promising titles.

Mr. Sleezak: Let me be the judge of that.

Mr. Craven: Sleepless in Abu Ghraib, Agony and Ecstasy…the tribulations of an Ecstasy dealer. My

third idea is to remake of "Giant." To appeal to young audiences, we will call it "Ginormous". Finally, to appeal to our African-American demographics or black Americans…"Beauty and the Beastie."

Mr. Sleezak: Listen…Sleepless in Abu Ghreib will not do. It hints at sympathy for A-rab terrorists. I don't have to tell you that this company, for more than a century, has used its muscle to expose the evil that is Muslimic racism and violence. We are running out of time. If you have further suggestions, shoot before I wrap up the meeting.

Mr. Numby: How about From Here to Paternity…? About a man who becomes pregnant. The woke crowd will love it. Once Upon a Time in Buffalo…. Grapes of Rat? The Importance of Being Woke…

Mr. Sleezak: Whoa, stop the nonsense. Before adjourning, I have to tell you I yam reading the first draft of a scorching screenplay titled Exodus II.

Mr. Numby: With all due respect, sir…There was no Exodus II unless you'd call the flight of Gaza Palestinians Exodus II.

Mr. Sleezak: I am sure you can find your way to the HR office. This meeting is adjourned. Why do they call it "adjourned"? What does it mean? Gotta ask one of our Limey agents over in the United Magic Kingdom.

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Illustration *by Chris Fernezian*

Comments

Vahe H Apelian – 2024-06-26 19:34:58
Jirair I hope you continue posting on keghart.com such humor articles. There is more to life than Nikol Pashinyan. In fact, there is more to life than Armenia. I cannot believe that I would say it. But I said it and I am not taking back. I read the kardashlars Ahmet and Mehmet. They are one of a kind. Thanks for sharing.

Jirair Tutunjian – 2024-06-25 14:05:47
Vahe, I am glad you found the article funny. There's so much nonsense floating in the air that it doesn't take a big effort to mock the Sea of Absurdity we swim in 24/7. If you like to read more of my humorous articles, type "Ahmet" or "Mehmet" in the Keghart SEARCH box.

Vahe H Apelian – 2024-06-24 10:23:07
Jirair I do not recall ever I have LMAO as I did reading your article. Only a group of genius creative producers, along with a many other kinds of producers could have come with brilliant themes such as ""The Adventures of Robin Hoodie"? "The Magnificent 007", "One-Eyed Jackie," "Ginormous", and many and many more to appeal to the assortment of the life styles.