

The Producer's Creative Partnership (PCP)

Malta's longest established and premier film production service company



www.pcpmalta.com

May 2015 Newsletter

Quality - Experience - Cost Efficiency

Tel: (+356) 3550 0678

Cannes & Los Angeles



FESTIVAL DE CANNES

The PCP shall be in Cannes in mid-May and in Los Angeles in June. Let us know if you wish to discuss filming in Malta. E-mail us here:

production@pcpmalta.com

'Gap' financing



The PCP will soon be announcing details of financing available for independent films with a budget under 4m Euros and with a completion bond. In association with a reputable European bank, this offering aims to attract low budget films eligible for Malta's government cash rebate. The funding will not exceed the rebated amount (currently a maximum of 27% of qualifying expenditure). This will typically form 10-20% of a small independent film's entire budget.

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Busy times for Malta

Last year the island of Malta, measuring only 122 square miles, experienced such a strong wave of foreign film production that some producers felt the need to bring in an unusually high number of foreign crews. The



previous two years has been slow in production and this had unfortunately forced some experienced crews to seek alternative careers. But the problem about crew shortages in Malta is not a new one. Prominent productions in Malta during 2014 were Angelina Jolie's BY THE SEA for Universal and starring Jolie and Brad Pitt, CBS's return to mini-series with THE DOVEKEEPERS starring CSI star Cote De Pablo, and director Kevin Reynolds's biblical film for Sony called RISEN. (Reynolds previously filmed in Malta THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO) These sizable productions, together with other smaller shoots, made 2014 a testing year for Malta as local film crews and supplies were spread rather thinly.

2015 is set to be an equally challenging year as Michael Bay shoots a substantial part of TEMPEST with Malta doubling up for Benghazi. Meanwhile a German & French co-production takes over the water tank facilities for a full six months. In addition to these two large productions is the new series for Sky/NBC Universal APOCALYPSE SLOUGH, starring Rob Lowe and portraying Rome as Malta. Moreover, the addition of an American and French feature in the summer could make 2015 Malta's busiest year ever!

The realities about crew challenges



Malta has a small population of 400,000 and boasts an A-crew and a B-crew, both of which form approximately 80% of a full crew. Logically this means any 3rd, 4th

and subsequent production operating concurrently in Malta will struggle to find experienced crew. Even when productions can afford to bring in foreign crews for all levels, the absence of at least one or two local experienced contingents in crucial departments such as production can be very painful, especially for those productions that hope to shrink their prep-time. Strains were felt back in June 2011 when one production struggled to find even self-drive passenger minivans because of the huge influx of productions at the time which included Paramount's "WWZ". The current situation bodes well for training opportunities but there is a limit to the number of trainees that can be safely placed in departments. Fortunately Malta plans to establish a permanent film training scheme to replace the sporadic film courses of the past which were not sufficiently coping with the growth of the industry.

Film Incentives

Malta recently increased its incentives to up to 25%, with a further 2% if a film portrays Malta as itself or provides equal cultural exposure. Not every expenditure is eligible (for eg. fuel and construction materials are exempt) but all EU crew salaries and per diems are accepted. There are small caveats such as producers being required to provide video clips of interviews with their creative staff, including actors, which the film commission can then use for promotional coverage about Malta. There is also a requirement to contribute props to a future film museum. The commission has so far been fairly flexible and adaptable to the sensitivities of productions where high profile actors were involved.



Film Policy

Politicians and lawmakers are undoubtedly aware that the local infrastructure and human resources cannot cope with the huge influx of



productions, and the strength of the industry should be gauged by the amount of local resources being utilized and not by the quantity of productions reaching the island's shores. Some foreign productions are forced to bring the majority of their crews from the European mainland. Equipment on the island remains limited, with rentals mainly stemming out of Italy, Germany or the UK. The government has recently set up a commission to create a report on a future film policy for Malta. This is the third time such a report was commissioned in the last fifteen years, but this is the first one by the new labour government administration and it might actually prove to be the most comprehensive. Various government departments shall be involved in an effort to better streamline government support to the industry. More importantly, the report shall be presented for consultation with industry stakeholders before any implementation begins. The strategy of the new film commission since its overhaul one year ago is to provide a more holistic solution to the servicing industry rather than rely on financial incentives alone to create and sustain growth in the industry.

Water Tanks

The famous water tank facility, formerly known as Mediterranean Film Studios, is to be no longer. The company boasted the most



comprehensive tanks in the world and the first largest water tank ever built back in 1964. Following a court dispute of ground rent government repossess its land upon which the tanks were constructed. Presently productions are able to four-wall the facility until a tender is issued for its new privatization. Government intends to turn this facility into a world-class facility with at least one sound stage.

Drones

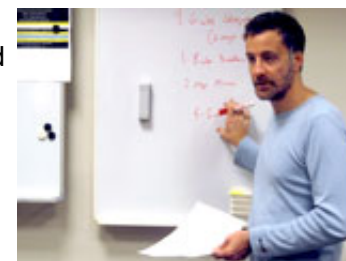
As drone technology for aerial filming makes the headlines worldwide, the PCP is jumping onto the bandwagon with its own set of drones.



Barely two months after venturing into this sector we have already serviced The History Channel, CBS Studios and Gibraltar TV with shots filmed in Malta and Jordan. Our own drones are supplemented by more versatile drones from our European associates. For an island where aerial camera systems and helicopters imported from the mainland are often cost prohibitive, drone filming in Malta is fast becoming popular with foreign film productions.

Crew Training

In summer the PCP shall be organizing a seminar entitled "An introduction to Film Production". This event shall be non-profit and by invitation only. It aims to introduce newcomers to the roles of Production



Coordination, Location Management and Production Management. The seminar will prepare trainees for their first Trainee or Production Assistant job in order that they can immerse themselves better and quicker into the industry. Full details shall be announced on our [facebook](#) in due course. The last time the PCP organized a similar event was in 2007 at the University of Malta which led to seven trainees being placed on a film production that same year. Most of them are still active in the industry today.