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# Freelance Filmmaker, Maximilian Reid '11, On Creativity and the Benefits of Living a Full, Fascinating Life

Posted on [June 14, 2013](#) by [Tanya Seale](#)

**Maximilian Reid** is an LA-based filmmaker. He is also an intellectual—a multifaceted, creative thinker, a man of many skills, and an all-around remarkable person.



Maximilian Reid, Film Production '11

A year and a half ago, a recently graduated Max moved to LA, where he says he was happy to work on set for free in order to begin gaining experience and building his résumé. Now, Max says the tricky part, “is knowing when to say, ‘No thank you.’”

Max advises anyone interested in a similar career path to “Spend your time deliberately and your money wisely.” In the film industry, the route to success often starts as a production assistant. “And for most people that’s the right path,” he says. “It’s where I started. But I’ve found that progress depends on luck, ingenuity, and personality.”

Plenty also depends upon the creativity and versatility of the person. While studying film production at Webster, Max, who is a life-long learner, studied across disciplines and that enriched his perspective. For example, Max says philosophy classes helped to shape his storytelling. Audio classes, he says, taught him how to use the science and power of sound to bring his work to life.

His vision is unique because he has nurtured not only the practical knowledge of film production, but also his fascinations.

“I’m a person of countless fascinations,” Max says. “I’m fascinated with music, poetry, history, scientific discovery, language, and more. Every one of my interests is linked to the other in some tangential but profound way, and I have so many to reflect on that I can’t remember the last time I was bored.” A person’s fascinations should be indulged, Max says, “because they are the sources of your creative identity.”

We asked Max how a freelance filmmaker spends his days. He says he follows a fairly consistent pattern. “My routine is to plan, brainstorm, network, create, and rejuvenate. First I figure out what I want to accomplish and how to accomplish it. Once I find people to help me accomplish my goal, I make my ideas into reality. If I have a script idea, I write it. If I have written a script, I shoot it. Before the day ends, I make sure I get plenty of sleep, exercise, and social time.”



Max Reid with Andy Alton, filming “The Pitch” while enrolled at Webster

Max also knows how to refuel creativity. “The most sustainable source of creativity is life experience,” he says. Max practices by going out into the world, encountering people and places he has yet to experience, and he regularly stretches the bounds of his familiarity. He says he likes the idea of “standing on the edge of a box, a summit upon which I can both oversee conventional reality and gaze at the vast beauty of the uncontainable . . . For me, it’s not enough to sit in a room and try to imagine a story or character. I need to meet those characters and go to those places, even if I’ve never been introduced to, say, a lightning-bodied alien inside a dark, atmospheric spaceship.” True enough. “But,” he explains, “I have met people with live-wire personalities in strobe-lit dance clubs.”

Max likes to visit places he says he’s not “the type” to frequent, “because I get to experience those cultures and personality types with fresh eyes. And for the things I can’t experience, I spend plenty of time reading, watching movies, and listening to music.”

Max also believes strongly in surrounding oneself with “people who love their craft and who put heart into everything they do.” This seems crucial, since living and working in LA can be taxing. “I choose my allies, wisely,” says Max. “I avoid the bitter, the jaded, and the entitled people, because those are the people who don’t get things done. I surround myself with people who love their craft and who put heart into everything they do. Sometimes I have had bad experiences, and sometimes I even find myself nodding to someone else’s negative outlook. But I routinely dust off the pessimism because I’ve noticed the optimists are the ones who thrive.”

About the future of the industry, Max predicts that new media outlets such as *YouTube* and *Vimeo* will “continue to democratize the industry. More filmmakers will reach audiences without abiding by the traditional festival circuit and theatrical release.” He believes a person interested in film production should, “be a person of many skills. Get experience in every facet of production so that you know how to communicate with different departments. And make absolutely sure you have a car, a smartphone, and a strong work ethic.”



Max's new project, Les MiséraBaristas

Max is currently working on a new project, **Les MiséraBaristas**.

We look forward with great anticipation to this and to all of Max's future fascination-fueled achievements.

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