

# Monthly Newsletter

January 2024

## Confessions of a Serial Creative

by James Fox,  
Producer/Director/Screenwriter/Author

The question I get asked the most often is, “How the hell are you so productive?” To which I normally quip, “I don’t sleep.”

The truth is, it’s part of my process. The routine that I’ve settled into that works for me. I realized I’ve never really gone into much detail about it, so here it is. Now, this might not work exactly like it does for me, when you try it. So, I’ve tried to distill it into some small kernels of advice. Hopefully, to illustrate what each activity or thought-process is about, in case something else might work better at achieving that goal for you.

Buckle up, cause here we go!



## This issue:

Confessions of a Serial Creative  
BY JAMES FOX

Featured Speaker  
ALEXIA MELOCHI

UPCOMING EVENTS INFO

HOLLYWOOD NEWS ROUNDUP

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## Confessions....contd.

So, here's the deal with how I start my day. I'm up early, like before-the-sun-early, around 6:00 am, and I dive straight into writing. First thing I do? A free-write session. I grab a random prompt from a website and just go at it until I hit a wall. It's like a morning jog but for my brain. I do this Monday through Friday, without fail. Sometimes I crank out 150 words and am stumped. Other times I get several chapters in, and realize I've stumbled upon something I might use in another novel, script, or a whole new series. Either way it's a great habit to train creativity.

You might ask, "Why so early?" Simple - it's quiet. No calls, no emails buzzing, just me and my thoughts. This is when I'm at my sharpest, and everything feels fresh. Now, about these random prompts - they're gold. They toss me into new scenarios, with characters I've never thought about. It's like a workout for my storytelling muscles. Keeps things interesting and, honestly, it's a bit of fun too. You never know what you're going to get, and as I mentioned before, sometimes these prompts spark ideas that I end up using in my actual projects.

Quick bit of advice: don't be afraid to mix up your routine from time to time. It keeps your creative juices flowing.



We all hit walls. Even the best writers out there can burnout on a story or get what I call 'creative fatigue' as I refuse to use the term writers block. When I hit a snag in a project, instead of stepping back, I switch gears. I'm usually juggling between 3 to 6 projects at a time. If I'm working on a dark sci-fi and it's not flowing, I'll jump to something completely different, like a light-hearted comedy. This keeps my mind agile and my ideas fresh. It's all about maintaining that creative momentum, even if it means hopping between totally different worlds.

Just remember, flexibility in your approach can be a huge asset. It's like having a creative toolkit at your disposal.

I do a lot of different things. There are days where it's pretty challenging. Juggling roles - writer, director, author, producer, collaborator - it's like being in a rock band where you play every instrument. I've found that communication is key. I'm always chatting with my team, making sure we're on the same page. It's about listening as much as talking, maybe even more so. And hey, it's a team effort. We're in it together, which makes the whole process a lot smoother and frankly, quite a bit more fun.

Another piece of advice here: collaboration is not just about sharing ideas; it's about building them together. Don't just talk; do. Get in there. Get your hands dirty. It gives you an entirely different perspective than you would have away from the "work."







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Why storytelling? Well, it's like asking why breathe, right? It's just part of who I am. Telling stories, especially from different backgrounds, it opens up the world, you know? It's like sharing a piece of yourself but also discovering something new about others. And that's kind of magic. Honestly, it's a type of magic that we have lost over the decades. I strongly believe that's partially why the world has grown steadily darker. We need to get back to a place where we are all sharing our unique stories, creating empathetic connections and relationships. That's the root of the human experience and the power of story.

Tip: always stay curious. It fuels your storytelling like nothing else. Crave other people's stories and respect the time and heart it takes to share it.

What keeps me going? Easy – it's the stories themselves. There's always a new tale to tell, a new character to explore. And my family and close friends, they're a constant source of inspiration. We fuel each other's creativity. It's this never-ending cycle of ideas and enthusiasm. I'd be nothing without them.



Here's a thought: let your passion be your guide, but also let it evolve as you do.

Looking back, every project has been a learning curve. I've grown with each story, each character. Have I made mistakes? A ton of them! But that's part of the deal. You learn, you grow, you get better. It's a journey, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

And what about the future? I'm excited about the stories we haven't told yet, the characters we haven't met. The teams I have yet to work with. There's always something around the corner, and that's what keeps me going. It's not just about telling stories; it's about connecting with people, sharing experiences, and hey, maybe making a bit of a difference along the way.

That's my life in storytelling – early starts, a bit of randomness, and a whole lot of passion. It's a wild ride, but man, it's been a good one. Remember, the key is to keep moving, keep creating, and above all, keep enjoying the ride.





## FEATURED SPEAKER - ALEXIA MELOCCHI

Our first featured speaker is also on the Hanè Saga Board and an ambassador and passionate advocate for storytelling in any form

Alexia Melocchi, is a partner of Little Studio Films, a family-owned international Production and Distribution Company, and serves as the American liaison office for various international media and production companies. She's had a seat at the table in pivotal meetings where Oscar-winning films and blockbuster movies are greenlit, Melocchi's expertise and passion for the industry are evident. Since her company's inception in 2000, co-founded with her mother, Melocchi has been dedicated to providing global voices with opportunities to create impactful movies and television shows.

As Melocchi's involvement in the industry expanded, she became a sought-after speaker on Industry Panels, aiming to demystify the filmmaking process from idea to distribution. Recognizing a gap in both understanding and business acumen among artists, Melocchi is committed to bridging the divide between art and commerce. She firmly believes that success in Hollywood requires a harmonious blend of creativity, strategic thinking, and mindset.



Driven by this belief, Melocchi has cultivated a personal brand centered around the essence of show business. Through avenues like her podcast, exclusive mastermind groups, and her recent book, "An Insider's Secret: Mastering the Hollywood Path," she shares actionable advice and insights. Her mission is clear: to empower storytellers and entrepreneurs, including herself, to navigate the industry with purpose and success.

At our retreat and our virtual workshop in 2024, Alexia will teach about pitching, the global market, and distribution.

## UPCOMING EVENTS 2024

Hanè Saga will be back with a virtual workshop and a retreat in 2024, changing our format slightly. Our virtual workshop will be held in early June, date TBD where we have industry leaders with panels and workshops. At our retreat in St. George/Zion, Utah - which will be in early October, date TBD, we will have in-person workshops and panels, creative and inspiring activities, and a scenic backcountry tour of Zion.

We will have the dates confirmed in the next week, and will open up for ticket sales in a week or two - our next newsletter in February will have the option to get your ticket to your event. Note that for our retreat, space is limited.



# HOLLYWOOD

## Hollywood News Roundup

As we eagerly await the Oscars, the bustling streets of Tinseltown have been abuzz with celebrities gracing various award ceremonies such as the Golden Globes and the Emmys.

We are celebrating all the nominations – and feel that Lily Gladstone’s Best Actress Oscar nomination marks a significant milestone in the future of show business. She is the first Native American to be nominated for an Oscar, and after her Golden Globe win – shows us that she has more in store.



Recently a photo surfaced from her High School yearbook with the Most Likely to Win an Oscar Nominee – did her High School class predict correctly?

One of the most talked-about topics revolves around the notable omissions in the nominations. Greta Gerwig's absence from the Best Director category and Margot Robbie's overlooking in the Best Actress category have stirred significant discussion across town. The oversight has sparked debates, with many drawing parallels to the storyline of the Barbie movie. Even Ryan Gosling, nominated for Best Actor, weighed in on the matter; "But there is no Ken without Barbie, and there is no Barbie movie without Greta Gerwig and Margot Robbie, the two individuals most integral to this groundbreaking, globally celebrated film." The full article and Gosling's statement can be found [HERE](#).

Chris Roger, a member of the Hanè Saga team, has curated a comprehensive FYC Screener Grid featuring all the Oscar-nominated movies. For cinephiles aiming to catch up on these acclaimed films before the awards ceremony on March 10th, the grid is available [HERE](#).



Moreover, 2024 marks a significant milestone for Utah, as it commemorates 100 years of contributions to the film and television industry. As part of the Hanè Saga retreat, we are thrilled to be situated in St. George/Zion, actively participating in the endeavor to bring more projects to Utah. Utah has been the host for many movies – I worked on season 2 of Westworld, in addition to multiple commercials and indie productions.

Here is a mention of some of the movies that have been filmed in Utah throughout the years; The Sandlot, Independence Day, Con Air, Jeremiah Johnson, Galaxy Quest, Thelma & Louise, Mission Impossible 2, Point Break, Butch Cassidy, Gunsmoke, Forrest Gump, Gravity, Planet of the Apes – I can continue, there are many spanning the last century, and more productions are continuously finding their way to Utah’s unique landscape. [HERE](#) is a fun article to read if you want to follow in the “footsteps” of film locations in Utah.



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