

PREVIEWS

Information for the California and Nevada Motion Picture Theatre Industry

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Winter/Spring Film Product Seminars Offer New Element

The popular NATO of California/Nevada Film Product seminars will return in October with a new element, "Meet and Greet" tables for one-on-one discussions with the studio marketing representatives. Our hosts will be Rave Cinemas in Southern California at the Rave L.A. 18 + IMAX on October 23rd, and on October 25th in Northern California at Cinemark's Century San Francisco Centre 9 Theatre.

The full day seminars will include a continental breakfast, lunch, back stage footage and previews of winter, holiday and spring films, plus time for networking with other managers and studio representatives.

The seminars are free to employees of NATO of California/Nevada corporate offices and member theatres. Reservations are now being accepted through October 5th in the Seminars and Meetings section of the Association's web site www.NATOCalNev.org or by following this [LINK](#) to register for the Southern California seminar, or [HERE](#) for the Northern California seminar.

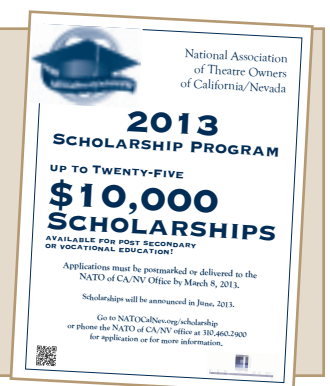


Rave L.A. 18 + IMAX Theatre in the Howard Hughes Center.



Lobby of Cinemark's Century San Francisco Centre 9 Theatre

Applications for the 2013 NATO of California/Nevada Scholarship Program will be online on October 15th. Don't miss out on your opportunity to be one of 25 winners of a \$10,000.00 scholarship award.



Theatres Join Battle Against Local Soda Taxes

Previews is published by the National Association of Theatre Owners of California/Nevada

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In what is likely a preview of tax battles to come, the California cities of Richmond and El Monte have placed local measures on their November ballots asking voters to approve increased business license fees of one cent per ounce of finished beverage for all sugar-sweetened drinks sold or served by local businesses. Recognizing the threat NATO of California/Nevada, with the support of the American Beverage Association produced a trailer that is now being shown on all screens at Cinemark's Century Hilltop 16 in Richmond and

Regal Entertainment Group's Edwards El Monte 8 in the City of El Monte to educate audiences about the proposed taxes. An updated trailer filmed on location at Century Hilltop 16 is currently being edited and will be on screen by the time of publication. Special display materials are also being produced; posters, banners, standees and clings will soon be on display in the theatre lobbies; buttons and t-shirts will be worn by theatre employees.

The campaigns in both cities promise to be fierce. Tax proponents claim that the soda levies will fund health programs and help to balance local budgets, and early polling shows that these arguments are fairly persuasive to voters. It will be up to the No campaigns to demonstrate that these tax proposals are regressive and cynical attempts to raise money for pet projects for politicians, at the expense of local businesses and residents.

NATO of CA/NV would like to thank Cinemark and Regal for their early and strong support. Both chains have pulled out all the stops to ensure that the anti-soda tax campaigns could get their word out, and their efforts should prove decisive come November.



For a preview look of the Anti-Beverage Tax Trailer...	Click on the city whose trailer you wish to view:	Click here for <u>RICHMOND</u>	Click here for <u>EL MONTE</u>
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NATO of CA/NV Offers Support to Aurora, CO Victims

The summer movie season kicked off with blockbuster movies and horrific tragedy. But tragedy also offers opportunities for people and communities to come together and bring out the best in those communities near and far. NATO of California/Nevada sent a \$50,000 contribution to The Aurora Victim Relief Fund immediately following the tragedy and received the following note. To date the Fund has received over \$5M.



August 7, 2012

Mr. Milt Moritz
President and CEO
National Association of Theatre Owners of California/Nevada
11661 San Vicente Blvd Ste 830
Los Angeles, CA 90049

Dear Mr. Moritz:

Thank you for your very generous contribution to The Aurora Victim Relief Fund.

This fund has been established at Community First Foundation in partnership with the office of Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper. The sole purpose of this fund is to meet the immediate and long-term needs of victims and their families and, as funds are available, the broader needs of those affected by the tragic event which took place on July 20, 2012.

An advisory group of community representatives comprised of individuals and service providers will be convened to identify funding priorities and areas of need. Please know that we will only make grants from The Aurora Victim Relief Fund to qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that are assisting the victims and their families. Community First Foundation will not make any grants directly to individuals or loosely affiliated groups that operate without formal, IRS certified charitable status.

In these trying times for our community, the spirit of giving and impulse to contribute in any way possible, big or small, is a powerful countermeasure to a single and horrific act. Together, with common purpose and time, we can begin to heal.

Again, we thank you for your generous gift.

Sincerely,

Marla J. Williams
President & CEO

MW/pm

*and your generosity
and compassion reaches
across the miles. Thank you
for making a difference.
-M*

Please keep this letter as a receipt of your contribution for tax purposes. Community First Foundation did not provide any goods, services or other privileges to you for your contribution.

Gift Amount: \$50,000.00
Check Number: 21271
Date: 7/24/2012

UCLA Support is Acknowledged

NATO of California/Nevada has awarded \$300,000 to 46 promising film students at the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television through its Fellowship in Film Awards program established in 2004. Many winners have attended the Association's annual membership meeting where some of their work has been exhibited. Some of the many recipients have gone on to win awards at film festivals across the nation and around the world. The Association is proud of its partnership with UCLA and the promising filmmakers who have benefitted from this generous award program. We look forward to following the progress of our Fellows and want to share the following letter from UCLA Chancellor Gene D. Block.



Shown above are five of the six 2012 UCLA Fellowship in Film Award recipients: Brynach Day, Production/Directing; Emezie Okorafor, Animation; Dana Gills, Producers Program; Amy Michalik, Screenwriting; and Richard Parkin, Production/Directing. Ben Kopit, Screenwriting, is the sixth 2012 Fellow.

Dear Milt:

It is a pleasure to thank you and NATO of California/Nevada for your commitment to the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television. I deeply appreciate your dedication to our students in the Department of Film, Television and Digital Media, and I am heartened that you continue to provide such generous support through the National Association of Theatre Owners Fellowship in Film Awards program.

We are pleased to have you and your colleagues as partners in nurturing a dynamic new generation of storytellers. Please accept my gratitude and that of the campus community.

Sincerely,

Gene D. Block
Chancellor, University of
California Los Angeles (UCLA)

USC Filmmakers Appreciate Scholarship Support

Forty promising filmmakers from the USC School of Cinematic Arts have received \$235,000.00 from NATO of California/Nevada's Fund for Student Support since its inception in 2005. NATO of CA/NV shares in the accomplishments of its USC filmmakers. The Association's members had the privilege of viewing *LOCKS*, a short film by Ryan Coogler, a past winner, at the annual membership meeting this June. Following is a note of appreciation from Dean Elizabeth M. Daley that we would like to share with you.



Some of this year's USC School of Cinematic Arts scholarship funds recipients are pictured with Professor John Watson who holds the Broccoli Endowed Chair for Producing. Joseph Yeh, John C. Hench Division of Animation and Digital Arts; Professor Watson; Victoria Rose, Film and Television Production; Jeremy Masys, Writing for Screen and Television; and Joshua Berman, Peter Stark Producing Program. Emily Ferenbach, Film and Television Production, was also selected to receive funding.

Dear Milton,

The School of Cinematic Arts (SCA) has recently announced its latest scholarship recipients for the coming academic year. I want to thank NATO of California/Nevada for their ongoing support. We strive to provide our diverse student body with a world-class education but, of course, such an education is very expensive and presents a financial hardship for many students. Especially in today's economic environment, financial aid is more critical than ever. Without substantial assistance, so many of our very talented and intellectually gifted young women and men could not be at SCA.

Thanks to your generosity, the School becomes stronger each and every year and a new generation enters our profession.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Daley
Steven J. Ross/Time Warner
Professor and Dean
USC School of Cinematic Arts

Businesses Fight San Jose Wage Proposal

By Bobby White for WSJ, San Jose

SAN JOSE—A voter initiative to raise this city's minimum wage, set for the November ballot, has spurred a fight with small-business owners who say it could drive up costs and force layoffs.

The proposition, created by a group of San Jose State University students, would raise the city's hourly minimum wage to \$10 from the current \$8 state requirement, and include yearly inflation adjustments. It is modeled on San Francisco's 2003 minimum-wage ordinance, which is tied to the Consumer Price Index that since 2003 has raised the minimum wage by \$3.49 to \$10.24 an hour.

San Jose business leaders say the increase would drive businesses from the city.

"I don't think the measure's proponents understand the economic impact this will have on small and medium-sized businesses," says Matt Mahood, president of the San Jose Chamber of Commerce. "Most of these guys are already struggling with the down economy and now this will compound their problems."

Charlie Major, of Charlie's Cheesecake Works, says the wage increase could make his bakery unprofitable.

Mr. Mahood says business owners won't only have to pay more to their workers but also will see a 15% to 17% increase in their payroll taxes, since they are tied to the wage rate.

The proposition's backers say the minimum-wage increase will help to pare the growing inequality in the city. "Costs in every major category have increased—energy, health care, education—and yet salaries for those making the bare minimum have remained stagnant," says Alberto Perez, a recent sociology graduate from San Jose State who helped craft the measure.

The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 an hour. States can set their own minimum above that. California's is \$8.00.

Few U.S. cities have established their own minimum wages. In addition to San Francisco, Santa Fe, N.M., has set its minimum at \$10.29 and Washington, D.C., has a minimum of \$8.25.

About 30 California cities require certain employers to pay a "living wage," a minimum hourly pay for employees of companies that have been awarded government contracts or that operate in a certain industry. San Jose, for example, requires businesses contracting with the city to pay at least \$13.59 an hour, or \$14.84 if the employer doesn't provide health insurance.

A 2007 study by the University of California, Berkeley, which analyzed the impact of San Francisco's minimum wage on businesses, found that the city's wage didn't affect employment growth.

The study also said that job tenure increased for workers by about four months and that 6% of the work force moved from part-time to full-time jobs after the law's enactment.

"The data just do not bear out any adverse effects on employment after a minimum-wage increase," says Michael Reich, a UC economics professor who led the study.

Other academics, such as Suzanne Clain of Villanova School of Business, have argued that raising the minimum wage does lead to certain job losses. Ms. Clain says most proponents focus on minimum-wage employers like Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and McDonald's Corp., which she says can absorb such increases.

"The small businesses in San Jose should be concerned," she says. "I understand the popular idea but there is no denying the effects on costs for the small businesses there."

The San Jose initiative began in October 2010, springing out of a sociology-class assignment in which students analyzed social problems in the Bay Area. The San Jose State students decided to challenge the city's minimum wage after analyzing San Francisco's increase and finding that Oregon, Washington and Nevada set higher minimums than California's.

In 2011, the students decided to push for a ballot measure and raised about \$6,000 to hire a pollster to see if such an initiative would be attractive to voters.

The pollster projected a 60% approval rating, and in November 2011, the students began collecting the more than 40,000 signatures needed to place the issue on the ballot. By January, they had gathered enough.

"While it has been portrayed as if we naively took this issue on without taking the time to study up, that is just wrong," says Scott Myers-Lipton, a San Jose State sociology professor who manages the project. "The students have worked hard to be sure this is a viable and worthy issue to take up."

Local merchants like Charlie Major say an increase in the minimum wage could hurt their business.

Mr. Major, who operates a bakery, Charlie's Cheesecake Works, southeast of downtown, estimates the wage increase could boost his costs by about \$7,500 annually, or about 3% of his yearly revenue.

Mr. Major has four employees whose hourly wages range from \$9 to \$10, based upon experience. He says he sympathizes with workers but that the increase could make his business unprofitable.

"I understand the moral argument but that does not negate the reality of how the math works out," says Mr. Major, a single father of two who worked his way through college. "This is going to kill a lot of the mom and pops that operate in this city."

Rich De La Rosa, president of De La Rosa Latin American Imports Inc., a retail business his family has operated for more than 70 years, says the additional annual cost for his six employees would be as much as \$8,000 at his store, located in a shopping mall south of downtown.

Mr. De La Rosa says the current economic environment is the worst he has ever seen, resulting in stagnant sales.

"It's going to be hard to keep my doors open if this [ballot measure] is approved," he says.

Bad news for movie fans, U.S. drought hits popcorn crop

By P.J. Huffstutter, for Reuters

For more than half a century, the Shew family has harvested mountains of popcorn kernels to be buttered, salted and munched by movie fans.

But as a crippling Midwestern drought sends commodity soybean and grain prices soaring, the family's farmland in west-central Indiana is suffering from a popcorn drought. Plants are listing, stalks are spindly and corn ears small.

It's an ill portent for the snack food world. All across the Midwest, where rows of popcorn normally thrive alongside fields of soybeans, U.S. popcorn farmers have watched in horror as stifling, triple-digit temperatures and weeks without rain withered crops.

"This is the worst season we've ever had," said third-generation popcorn purveyor Mark Shew, who runs the family's farm in Vigo County. "In some places, they're going to be down to counting kernels at the bottom of the storage bins."

BUYERS LINING UP

The situation has had popcorn buyers -- from small mom-and-pop shops to larger food chains -- scrambling for months to line up their supplies for this fall. Their options are limited.

Retail prices have jumped this summer: from about \$20 for a 50 pound bag to \$30 or higher, said Tim Caldwell, owner of Pop It Rite, an Illinois-based popcorn industry expert and snack foods consultant. Wholesale prices have started to creep up, too, he said.

The hunt for product has staff at the Weaver Popcorn Company Inc searching far and wide for supplies, said Matthew Johnson, who grows for the Van Buren, Indiana firm.

He said his grower representative told him recently company staff are wooing farmers in Louisiana and elsewhere in the South, where the growing season typically starts and ends earlier than the Midwest. They're also scouting acreage in South America, Johnson said, where farmers are preparing to plant their crops in the coming weeks.

Officials for Weaver Popcorn could not be reached for comment Friday.

HIGHER POPCORN PRICES UNLIKELY AT THEATERS

While consumers may have to pay more for the snack at the grocery store soon, some analysts say the chances of prices rising for a bucket of movie theater popcorn are slim.

"The popcorn portion of the product is a very low percentage of the price, and the prices are already so high, I think consumers would balk if they went up any higher," said Bob Goldin, director of the food supplier practice at Technomic Inc.

The popcorn industry -- which sold \$985.7 million in 2010 worth of unpopped kernels, down 2.2 percent from five years earlier -- is barely an economic nibble out of the country's corn world. Most of the popcorn consumed worldwide is grown in the United States. Export demand for the fluffy, crunchy snack has been slowly rising in recent years from China and Russia.

Still, more than 80 percent of U.S. popcorn production is consumed domestically, according to research by the Ag Marketing Resource Center at Iowa State University. The Popcorn Board, an industry trade group, said Americans munch 16 billion quarts of popped popcorn a year.

Eager to feed that appetite, Midwestern farmers say they have long used popcorn, a bit player in the field, as a companion crop for filling up more marginal ground around their field corn and soybeans.

During even the toughest times popcorn can provide an economic boost for those willing to fuss over the plants, as long as the weather stays mild. But when temperatures soared, the crops withered.

The poor weather fueled recent supply concerns for popcorn buyers, said Norm Krug, chief executive officer of Preferred Popcorn, a Nebraska-based, farmer-owned cooperative that supplies popcorn to movie theaters and others.

As prices for commodity corn, used as livestock feed, and soybean hit record highs, Midwestern farmers shifted more of their land to those crops, Krug said.

That competition for land, said Krug, steadily dropped the amount of U.S. planted popcorn acreage to about 190,000 acres (76,890 hectares) last year, according to farmer surveys his group had conducted. The most recent federal data, from 2007, shows that U.S. farmers harvested nearly 202,000 acres (81,747 hectares).

Farmers may have planted even fewer acres this year, Krug said. That left fewer popcorn plants to harvest.

"Most seed growers I know are not taking new customers, because they're afraid that they won't have enough supplies to meet their current demand for their present customers in the fourth quarter," said Pop It Rite's Caldwell.

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'MAY LOSE THE CROP'

In Nebraska, the nation's leading producer of the tasty yellow and white kernels, popcorn farmers with irrigation are thankful they've been spared.

"The dry land fields? Those will be pretty much zero," said Mark McHargue, who farms 230 acres (93 hectares) of yellow popcorn in Central City, Nebraska.

In southern Wisconsin, where irrigation is less prevalent, farmers

worried recent rains would have little effect on a crop that struggled through the driest planting season in decades.

And in Indiana, where sizzling weather has devastated large swaths of farmland and shortened the pollination cycle to only a few days, farmers fear strong winds from the remnants of Hurricane Isaac could flatten their already hard-hit fields.

"As you walk through the fields, you have to be careful because if you touch a stalk too hard, it will fall over," said Johnson, who farms 1,200 acres (486 hectares) of popcorn at his family's farm in Jay County, in eastern Indiana. "We get anything 30 mile an hour, we'll lose what crop we have."

Summer B.O. tallies still trail 2011

Superheroes deliver, but box office down 3% from last summer

By Andrew Stewart for Variety

With a trio of superhero smash hits and a record R-rated original comedy bow on the books, a new high-water mark at the summer domestic box office would've seemed a slam dunk. But even Batman, Spider-Man and the Avengers need a little backup sometimes -- and it never came.

Summer 2012 will wind up trailing last year's Stateside pinnacle by nearly 3%, despite "The Avengers'" record-wrecking \$207 million opening, "The Dark Knight Rises'" 2D-record \$160.9 million bow and a robust \$258 million domestic cume for "The Amazing Spider-Man."

How could that not be enough?

Simply put, there were fewer middle-of-the-road players than last year, coupled with a few big-budget clunkers and audiences' unwillingness to pay higher 3D ticket prices for many pics. Not even the unexpected lift from Universal's "Ted" -- now at \$215 million and counting -- could overcome the season's disappointments, including "Battleship," "That's My Boy," "Rock of Ages" and "Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter."

Still, this summer's players were enough to keep year-to-date domestic B.O. up over 2011 by about 4%.

Though international totals also trail last summer by 4%, the 2011 campaign benefited from an unprecedented three \$1 billion worldwide grossers -- "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2," "Transformers: Dark of the Moon" and "Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides." This year, "The Avengers" is the only film to reach \$1 billion globally, though "The Dark Knight Rises" is just \$40 million shy of hitting that mark -- a feasible goal given the picture's record-setting start in China.

In the wake of the July 20 shootings at a movie theater in Aurora, Colo., some speculated the incident would discourage attendance. But no evidence ever emerged conclusively tying the rampage that left 12 dead to a downturn in moviegoing. The tragedy's impact on summer biz appears to be negligible.

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Rather, the lack of a solid mid-sized performers put 2012 off the pace. Last summer boasted plenty of mid-range surprises, from R-rated successes like “Horrible Bosses” and “Bad Teacher” to “The Smurfs” and “Super 8.” There were 17 \$100 million-plus grossers, from the first weekend in May to Labor Day weekend. In 2012, there were only 11.

There were more eleventh-hour date changes than usual this summer, and they had a mostly positive effect. U, for one, quickly snagged the late-June launch pad for “Ted,” after Paramount bumped “G.I. Joe: Retaliation” to 2013.

The season’s unpredictable nature came crashing down on other big-budget bets, however. U’s \$300 million global grosser “Battleship,” which avoided complete disaster by the grace of international audiences, landed in the wake of Disney-Marvel’s “Avengers” steamroller. Other Stateside disappointments, including Warner Bros.’ “Dark Shadows” and Par’s “The Dictator,” were also buoyed by larger international tallies.

O’seas overload

This year, the international box office faced major scheduling challenges as distributors fought to avoid the one-two punch of the Euro Cup soccer tournament and the Summer Olympics.

“From a dating perspective, those events are always a big challenge because you have a bottleneck of product in May,” Warner Bros. Intl. distribution president Veronika Kwan Vandenberg said. “It’s been quite congested before and after. Although that gave rise to some great counterprogramming opportunities, especially for family films.”

Fox’s boffo toon “Ice Age: Continental Drift” was the biggest beneficiary as it went head-on with the Euro Cup in late June throughout Europe and Latin America. As a result, the film has grossed a mammoth \$822 million worldwide, of which more than \$668 million (or 81%) comes from overseas, making it the second-highest grossing animated film ever internationally.

Also making waves outside the U.S., Warner’s “Dark Knight Rises” nears \$1 billion in global grosses with \$535 million internationally so far, positioning it to be the first of the trilogy to perform better overseas than at home.

The worldwide divide for 3D continued to evolve: International audiences showed their usual support of the format, while domestic interest waned -- and not just with family films. Sony’s “The Amazing Spider-Man” stands as the summer’s third-highest grossing film (and best of the numerous franchise reboots) with \$710 million globally. But it failed to measure up to the 3D standards set by past fanboy pictures. Spidey earned just 44% of its domestic opening from 3D, which occupied more 70% of its

debut locations during Fourth of July weekend. By comparison, “Transformers: Dark of the Moon” earned 60% from 3D during the same frame last year.

All told, 3D domestic summer admissions are down around 17% vs. last summer.

The opening weekend 3D share has deflated slightly with each new entry, especially when it comes to family fare. Par-DreamWorks Animation’s “Madagascar 3,” for instance, earned 45% of its domestic bow from 3D, followed by Disney-Pixar’s “Brave” (34%) and “Continental Drift” (35%).

“It’s a light bulb that goes off that the industry should clue in to,” said U distribution president Nikki Rocco. “There are films to be enhanced by the format, but you have to be careful.”

Warner domestic distribution topper Dan Fellman agreed that audiences are struggling to justify paying higher 3D ticket prices, which this summer lifted the national average cost of ducats to an all-time high of \$8.12 per ticket. “There’s a point where 3D pricing isn’t justified, probably for family films,” Fellman said. “That’s a fundamental problem.”

2D strikes back

It’s notable that two of this summer’s top-five grossing pictures -- “Dark Knight Rises” and “Ted” -- were 2D pictures, compared to one (“The Hangover Part II”) last year.

Similar to 2011’s “Bridesmaids,” U’s R-rated laffer “Ted” developed shapely legs, as did Warner’s male-stripper pic “Magic Mike.” The latter picture ranks as one of the summer’s biggest financial hits, grossing more than \$150 million worldwide while costing around \$10 million.

A pair of crossover pictures easily led the season’s specialty field: Fox Searchlight’s “The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel” and Focus Features’ “Moonrise Kingdom.”

“Marigold” entered the domestic fray May 4 with nearly \$75 million already in the till from overseas plexes. Pic now has cumed \$134 million worldwide, of which more than \$45 million comes from the U.S. “Moonrise,” meanwhile, was a close second domestically, with \$43.8 million, for a global take of almost \$60 million.

While the summer ultimately fell behind 2011, observers insist there are enough high-profile offerings this year (i.e. “Twilight” finale, James Bond picture “Skyfall,” “Rise of the Guardians” and the first “Hobbit”) to keep year-to-date totals ahead of the curve.

“We are in a business that is very cyclical,” Fellman said. “We really lose perspective when it comes to looking at raw data, because at the end of the day, our business has been about one thing: content.”

CALENDAR of EVENTS & HOLIDAYS

**Rosh Hashanah
(Jewish New Year)**
September 17 and 18



Autumn Begins
September 22

Yom Kippur
September 26

Columbus Day observed
October 8

**NATO of CA/NV
Film Product Seminars**

October 23
Southern California

October 25
Northern California

Halloween
October 31



**Daylight Saving
Time Ends**
November 4

Veterans Day
November 11