



Cannes Confidential I: Business and Pleasure

Added May 13, 2011

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By [Victoria Charters](#)

(from the [2011 Cannes Film Festival](#))

“Be careful what you wish for. You might just get it.”

I came to Cannes this year with a [documentary](#) in production, looking for a producing partner. I found one — at my first meeting, in fact. When the ink is dry on that deal, I’ll tell you who it is.

Attending the Producers Workshop at the [Marché du Film](#), I started my day with “How to Present Your Project,” a talk offered by Roshanak Behesht Nedjad of Flying Moon Productions. The thing about being tucked away in assembly rooms and screening rooms is that you miss a little bit of the dog-and-pony show that is the [Cannes Film Festival](#). During the presentation, we heard screams and camera flashes, even the sound of a metal barricade collapsing. But while trying to tune in to advice from the accomplished, rushing to gawk out the window didn’t seem like an acceptable option.

The day continued with dim sum at the Hong Kong Pavilion. The food was delicious, but the crowd was not. Thankfully, the many countries’ tents that line the beachfront of the Croisette are

steps away from sand-footed freedom; I pushed my way through and snuck out to the beach for a calmer place to lunch.

The workshop's afternoon seminar, "Do's and Don'ts of International Co-production," was conducted by Roberto Olla (of Eurimages) and Jean-Luc Ormières (producer of "[The Last Station](#)"). It was clear that these guys really know their stuff, and it was enlightening to be in the room. From their tales, the duo seem to be magicians of negotiation, combining love of film, artistic sensibility and European sophistication with sound international business sense.

At this point, I discovered that the coconut water I'd been drinking to hydrate contains 40 mg of caffeine per bottle. Oops! But, it's Cannes, so I suck up the queasy feeling and allow myself to be swept away by workshop buddies to the Producers Network tent for a cocktail hour and then off to dinner to celebrate a friend's birthday.

Not to be outdone by the films showing at the festival, I experienced a touch of free theater while waiting to taxi home. Three inebriated Australian girls were being refused cab rides: a tall blonde, a brunette collapsed on the curb in tears and their feisty leader pacing the sidewalk in sequins yelling, "Drunk people get cabs!" into the unresponsive night. Ah, Cannes ...

Photo by [Victoria Charters](#)