

A close-up photograph of a brick wall. The bricks are painted in three distinct colors: pink, blue, and yellow. The pink bricks are on the left and right sides, while the blue bricks are in the center. The yellow bricks are at the bottom. The bricks are arranged in a standard staggered pattern. A semi-transparent dark blue rectangular box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text.

Dear Producer

2020 in Review

2020: A Year in Review

It's tempting to want to wash over 2020 for obvious reasons. But it is important not to; This past year has been both too much and not enough. It's in these storms and complicated areas, though, that change can actually take place. And we need it to.

When I started Dear Producer in 2018, I knew independent film was in trouble. This year brought all of it closer, hopefully close enough that no one can ignore it any longer.

The future of the theatrical moviegoing experience is being threatened. Production has become exponentially more expensive due to COVID-19 protocols. Film festivals have shifted in ways that make it difficult to sell films and connect with the community. The non-profit organizations filmmakers rely on for granting and educational programs are suffering. Financing is drying up due to the unpredictable pathway to distribution.

And the ability to sustain a career as a filmmaker feels like an impossibility.

We don't want to go back to the way things were — it wasn't working. I want this report to act as a reminder of that as we move into a new way forward. We shouldn't be grasping on tight in the hopes that 'when this is all over' we will be able to resume business as usual. Business as usual was kind of terrible. What did emerge from this past year is the strength of our community. You showed up. Even when tired of Zooms. Even when tired of not knowing what tomorrow will bring. You kept going. And that keeps me going.

Rebecca Green
Dear Producer, Founder and Editor-in-Chief



**"Dear Producer is a
force. Thank you for
investing your time
on it for all of us."**

- MARILYN NESS

**"Brilliant. Hard.
Dead on."**

- MEGAN GILBRIDE

**"Dear Producer is
something that I really
look forward to reading,
and I truly believe that
your efforts are making
an impact on the indie
film industry."**

- DAN EASON

Publishing Original Content, Community Building and More

Despite the pandemic, Dear Producer published more than 40 pieces of content including live and on-demand webinars, a town hall, industry news digests, producer profiles, first-person perspectives, and resource roundups during 2020.



11 Producer profile interviews to highlight their hard work, perspectives, and talent.



8 Digests of and commentary on industry news by Editor-in-Chief.



7 *Now in Virtual Cinema* roundups.



6 Webinars and town hall event, live and video-on-demand.



4 Pieces republished on Dear Producer to help amplify other voices.



2 COVID Resources for filmmakers and artists.



1 Producer Sustainability survey.

Producer Sustainability Survey

Dear Producer launched the first Producers Sustainability Survey in 2020 with a report published in 2021. The survey aimed to take a snapshot of what life is like for film producers today. We wanted to gather data to benchmark the state of independent film producing in the U.S. — and to use this data to advocate for better working conditions for producers based on direct input from producers themselves.

We entered into the survey with the assumption that there are challenges (!) in film producing as a career — an assumption based on decades of experience and in hearing from the Dear Producer community. We covered a lot of ground, from basic demographics to specific income and fees, to mental health, career barriers and resilience.

The ultimate goal was to answer the question: *Is film producing, as it exists today, a sustainable career?* More than 63% of respondents said it is not sustainable.

See: dearproducer.com/is-producing-a-sustainable-career

Live and On-Demand Virtual Events

While it seemed like a natural solution to stay-at-home orders and sheltering in place, getting together virtually quickly became overwhelming and unfocused. Dear Producer set up a series of webinars and a town hall that were meaningful and relevant. In less than one week of promotion, 1,300+ filmmakers and industry specialists registered for the first-ever Dear Producer webinar *Producers Navigating the Unknown* on April 3, 2020.



The *Indie Town Hall* and *Producers Navigating the Unknown* saw the most playbacks, with 509 hours spent watching the videos



This was one of the most helpful and informative Zoom filmmaker conversations I've heard lately. Good ideas about protecting people in production, being patient in the pause, and persistence in the work. Thanks, @DearProducer, for hosting!

DEAR PRODUCER THE UNCERTAINTY OF DOCUMENTARY PRODUCING Friday, May 1 @ 2pm ET | Free Webinar



REBECCA GREEN MODERATOR MEGAN GILBRIDE KELLEN QUINN DIANE QUON

Dear Producer Webinars and Town Hall

- **Producers Navigating the Unknown**
April 2020
- **The Uncertainty of Documentary Producing**
May 2020
- **Reimagining Film Festivals for the Future**
May 2020
- **Miss Juneteenth Case Study**
June 2020
- **Preparing for 2021**
December 2020
- **Indie Town Hall**
September 2020 - live event was by invite only, playback open to all



+3,800
Participants and Viewers Overall

2,098 People
in Live Events

1,708 People
Viewed Playbacks

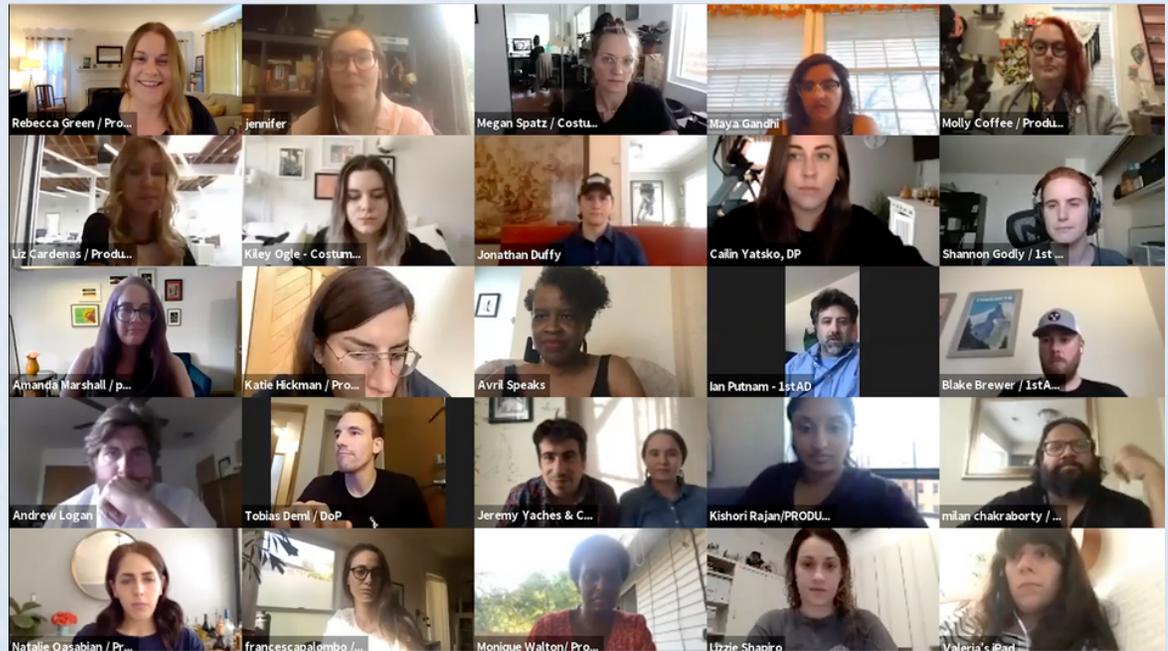
832 Hours
of Video Play



Indie Film Town Hall Event

Dear Producer organized the indie town hall so the film community could hear from not just producers and directors, but also creative collaborators — our crew who fight in the trenches with us and who rely on us to create jobs and keep everyone safe.

On September 18, Dear Producer hosted an Indie Town Hall, which brought together 20 producers with 40 of their favorite creative collaborators, including cinematographers, production designers, costume designers, hair and make-up arts, and first assistant directors, to listen and learn from each other about what we're all up against as we struggle to create and thrive during a pandemic and beyond.



"Thank you so much for putting last night's Town Hall together. It was so helpful and interesting to have the space to speak with nuance and collaboration about the ecosystem of indie filmmaking amidst Covid. Everyone was candid and specific - and it reminded me of the blessing that is a diverse community."

-TAYLOR SHUNG



agmarshall @agmarshall · Oct 16, 2020

I've listened/participated in so many of these over the last few months but this was one of the best for real practical advice.



Authentic Connection Through Virtual Video

These vital conversations helped filmmakers navigate the pandemic, lean on each other for support, and evolve the community. Participants from around the world found connection and comfort in Dear Producer events.

"I'm watching videos right now and it's been so helpful and soothing in a moment of being overwhelmed by the solitude of producing... It's so easy to feel like I'm all alone in this (especially now!) and to get bogged down by fears of not knowing what I'm doing — but the interviews and articles have really helped break things down and remind me that I don't need to reinvent the wheel and that there are supportive smart people out there who I should lean on."

- WHITAKER LADER

"Thanks for doing the case study on *Miss Juneteenth*. I tuned in and enjoyed it so much. It inspires and moves me to no end to hear artists share their journeys - the highs and the lows and I liked how you allowed for the conversation to breathe."

-JENNIFER KUSHNER

"You are honestly the best moderator I have ever seen. You ask the right questions and hard questions."

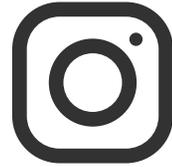
- RON NAJOR

"Just wanted to... tell you how fantastic I thought the panel you moderated was. You have a standard of excellence in how you moderate discussion, disseminate information and curate conversation and ideas. I truly admire and am grateful for the work you are doing and how out front you are with it."

-JULIE CRISTEAS

Growing the Dear Producer Social Network

Overall, the Dear Producer social channels have nearly doubled in a year, with a 93% total increase in social audience. The Dear Producer Instagram presence more than doubled. #growth



2,490 Followers

↑ 161%



1,719 Followers

↑ 91%



215 Followers

↑ 183%



1,572 Followers*

↑ 33%

* In an effort to streamline and be present in social conversations, Dear Producer decided to move away from Facebook, keeping the page up but no longer posting and interacting on that platform as of Nov. 2020



Growing the Dear Producer Social Network

But it's not just about gaining followers. It's about carrying on the conversation and building a community.



Megan Griffiths
@thecinechick

"If you stop reading the trades and get on the phone with producers, what you'll hear is that nearly everyone's projects are stalled."

Thanks @rebfive & @DearProducer for adding this valuable perspective to the conversation. (Also, everyone please VOTE.)

"...It's HARD out there. The cracks in the system ARE canyons. The train has gone off the tracks. Keep writing the truth. It's the only [way] we'll build something better."

-@BETH_LEVISON



Milan Chakraborty
@tajmilan

Another must read from @DearProducer once again great work by @rebfive asking the questions to the answers we want/need to know and share. #indiefilm



Mynette Louie
@mynette

"As usual, @rebfive says what so many of us indie producers are thinking. And that gives us comfort and community."



Anise Davis (she/her) 🍷🏳️‍🌈 @AniseDavis1 · Oct 27, 2020

Didn't realize how much I needed to see this article. 🙌🙌 Fellow filmmakers & creative freelancers please read this! It's so important to take this time to reflect on how we see ourselves in this industry during this time. Most importantly to put our mental health first. ✨



NC Film Fest @NCFilmFestival · Jul 28, 2020

This episode of @DearProducer rocked our world and changed how we approached this year's festival!



Kelly Ann Parker
@elle_parks

Thank you to @rebfive & @DearProducer for hosting today's highly beneficial conversation surrounding the future of indie filmmakers & film fest circuit. Such an intelligent, thought-provoking roundtable.

I fully believe we as producers can instill change if we work together.

The Dear Producer Email Newsletter

The Dear Producer newsletter was dispatched 50 times during 2020, and included full-text versions of the articles, producer profiles, news, digests and announcements that were posted on the Dear Producer website. **Subscribers nearly doubled from 2019 to 2020**, showing there is still growing interest in 'real talk' about producing. What's more telling, however, is subscriber commitment. **More than 74% of Dear Producer subscribers are considered 'engaged,'** meaning they open, click, and/or forward content regularly.



2,720 Subscribers

↑ 82%

Growth from 2019 to 2020

"Late to the party on this, but OMG this newsletter from last week is so damn good."

- EMILY ABT

More than half of Dear Producer subscribers opened **each** email newsletter

Dear Producer's audience is tapped in! The 2020 Dear Producer email open rate is +88% higher than the Mailchimp (email software provider) benchmark. And nearly 150% higher than entertainment, media, and publishing industry average of 20.8% (*Campaign Monitor, 2021 Global Email Benchmarks data*).

Dear Producer 2020 51.4%

Industry Benchmark 27.3%

Open Rate = the portion of sent emails that were opened.

Dear Producer email Click-Through Rate also exceeded benchmarks

CTR is a solid measure of engagement. If someone is clicking a link in an email, it means they have read it and are taking an action. Dear Producer's CTR is more than double the industry benchmark.

Dear Producer 2020 6.5%

Industry Benchmark 3.2%

CTR = the proportion of times a link was clicked vs. the number of emails sent.

Most popular of 2020?

The email *Survival of the Fittest*, a first-person perspective by Editor-in-Chief Rebecca Green in May.

It had an open rate of 62.1% and a CTR >7.8%

The Dear Producer Website Overall

The number of people as well as page views, and the average time spent on page increased in 2020 over the previous year. Female readership notably grew, showing a 5% increase over 2019 (*female as identified by Google Analytics*).



28,637 Visitors

↑ 7%

In Year-Over-Year Comparison



40,636 Sessions

↑ 25%

In Year-Over-Year Comparison

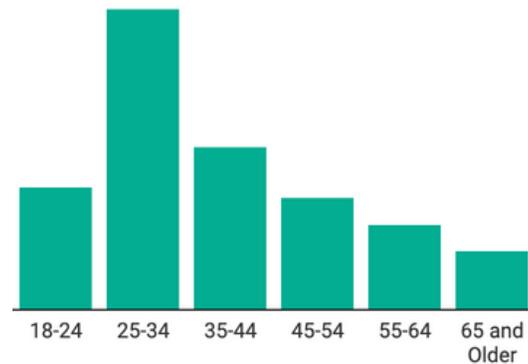


62,191 Pageviews

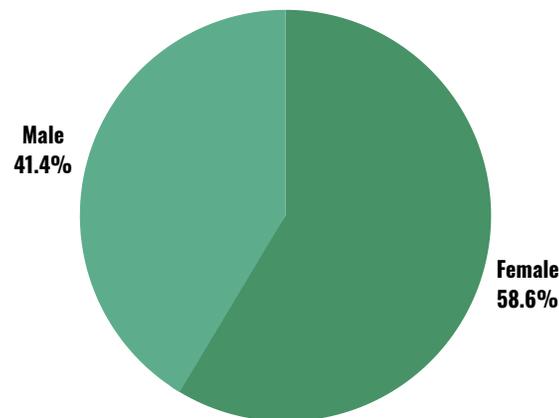
↑ 19%

In Year-Over-Year Comparison

Web Visits by Age Groups



Web Visitors by Gender*



*Gender as reported via Google Analytics, which only offers *Female* and *Male* as gender categories.

Top 10 Website Visitor Countries

1. United States
2. United Kingdom
3. Canada
4. India
5. Australia
6. Germany
7. New Zealand
8. France
9. Argentina
10. China



Top 10 Website Visitor Cities

1. Los Angeles, CA
2. New York, NY
3. London, Eng
4. Chicago, IL
5. Austin, TX
6. San Francisco, CA
7. Toronto, Ont
8. Seattle, WA
9. Sydney, Aus
10. Atlanta, GA

The Dear Producer Website: Most Viewed

The Dear Producer homepage was the most visited page on the site. The most popular unique content was ***Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before I Became an Independent Film Producer*** by Gabrielle Nadig in October 2020. Visits to that content page accounted for 14% of the website traffic. And people spent time with Gabrielle's words — the average was more than 7 and a half minutes. For context, 62 seconds is considered a good average time spent on a web page (*Contentsquare, 2020 Digital Experience Benchmark report*).

Resources for Artists During Covid-19, the page for the ***Producers Navigating the Unknown*** webinar, and the first-person perspective ***Smoke and Mirrors*** by Editor-in-Chief Rebecca Green were the next most popular unique pages. All kept visitor interest with a higher-than-average time spent on page.



Mollye Asher
@MollyeAsher

@GabsNadig's piece at @DearProducer is a must-read for fellow producers, aspiring producers & anyone in the business of supporting producers.

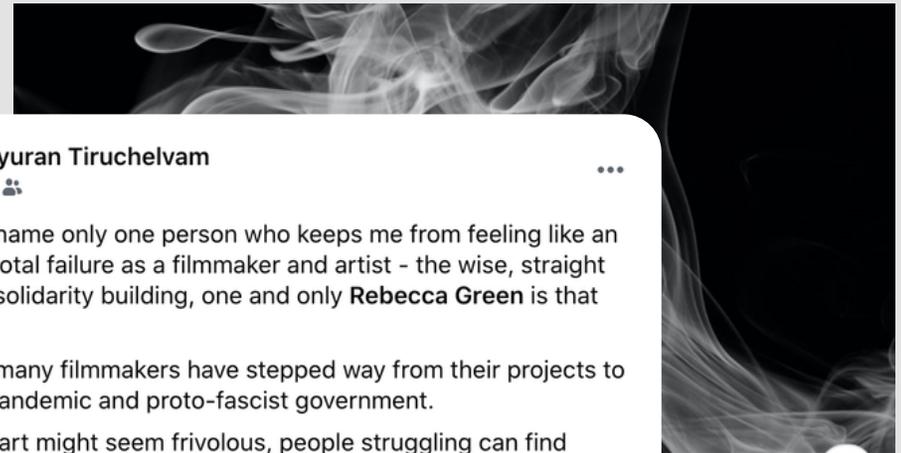


Emily Best
@emilybest

As always, @DearProducer comes through



Resources for Artists During Covid-19
dearproducer.com



Mayuran Tiruchelvam

7h · 👤

If I had to name only one person who keeps me from feeling like an utter and total failure as a filmmaker and artist - the wise, straight shooting, solidarity building, one and only **Rebecca Green** is that person.

I know so many filmmakers have stepped way from their projects to fight the pandemic and proto-fascist government.

And while art might seem frivolous, people struggling can find inspiration, hope, and an imaginative escape through the important stories that so many of us are trying to tell (while all the nonsense gets produced and promoted).



EFFIE BROWN



REBECCA GREEN



AVRIL SPEAKS



KELLY WILLIAMS

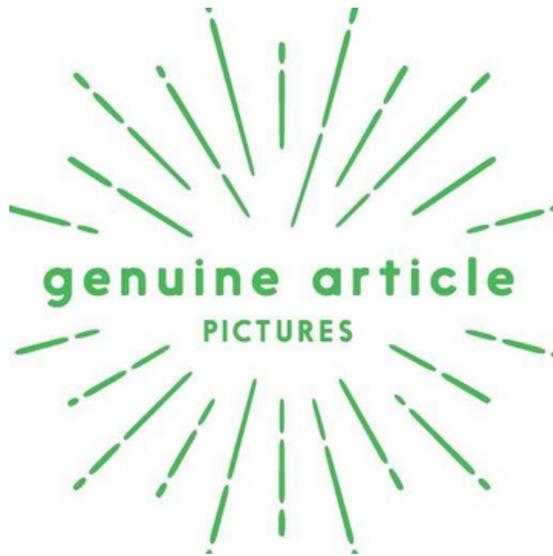
MARCH 29, 2020

PRODUCERS NAVIGATING THE UNKNOWN | Webinar Replay

READ MORE

Support and Sustainability: Generous Donors

Organizations that Financially Supported Dear Producer in 2020



166 Individual Donors

**Average Give:
\$27.49**

Thank you!

Thank You Dear Producer Community!

Thank you for another year of intelligent, honest and emotional conversations, support, commiseration, sadness, anger, grief, hope, and happiness.

You are what keeps us going. We hope to do the same for you.

Contact Rebecca

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Converse: @DearProducer

DEAR
PRODUCER,