

New website avlfilm.com stockpiles resources

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Ryan DuVal, a freelance software engineer and film lover from Michigan, always recalled feeling a tinge of creative pain when he saw a movie he loved knowing he did not make it.

"It started as an FAQ — which is what the homepage is — and I wanted to combine my new interest in filmmaking with my background as a software engineer and just make it because I could, basically. The whole purpose is to be valuable as a resource to the community," DuVal said.

avlfilm.com serves as an encyclopedia for locals searching for nearly anything film related, from finding equipment rentals to actors as well as local movie theaters and festivals.

"I had these questions about if I wanted to go out and make a short film or feature film, how would you do it?" DuVal said. "I like to take notice of when there's a void that can be filled."

Visitors on the website can continually add and update information and actors and producers can list themselves and job opportunities on projects for five dollars.

"The only reason I even have a paywall is to filter out people who aren't serious and to account for my time that goes into the site," DuVal said. "Five bucks isn't much but it's enough to probably stop someone."

DuVal began his filmmaking journey a little over a year ago when he took part in the 48 Hour Film Project, a hectic weekend in which participants work together in small teams writing, shooting and editing their own short films.

"From that I found out about the Asheville School of Film and took classes there," DuVal said. "By December, I had written and directed a short film through the school."

Through his immersion in the local filmmaking community, his new col-

leagues became friends and helped point him in the right directions for stockpiling the information needed for the site.

Cat Wityk, a local actress, filmmaker and co-founder of the Cat Fly Film Festival, met DuVal through the Asheville School of Film when she booked a role in a short film DuVal was working on.

"We did the 48 Hour Film Project together," Wityk said. "My crew friends and him, we all just started working on a lot of short films together and became a cohesive friend group."

Wityk got DuVal in touch with her agent at Screen Artists Talent who then gave DuVal a list of actors he could use for his online database.

"It's searchable by hair color, eye color, height, weight," Wityk said. "It's really cool and it's great for actors like me to get more work."

Wityk also suggested other things for DuVal to list such as studios, agencies in the region and the future possibility of putting voice-over actors on the site as well.

"Not only is it a good resource for people who are new to town or don't know much about Asheville," Wityk said, "but it's useful to people who've been here already but are just starting to look into film."

Since graduating from UNC Asheville in 2016, Wityk said she has become incredibly well connected in the community simply because she's open to it.

"This town is full of really nice people and everybody is so into indie film as an art," Wityk said. "Most people I come across are totally fine with doing free work or lending out equipment just because they love film and want to support it."

Charlotte Taylor, an instructor of film at Blue Ridge Community College and president of Mechanical Eye Microcinema, sees involvement with

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Ryan DuVal is the creator of avlfilm.com, an encyclopedia for locals searching for anything related to film.



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