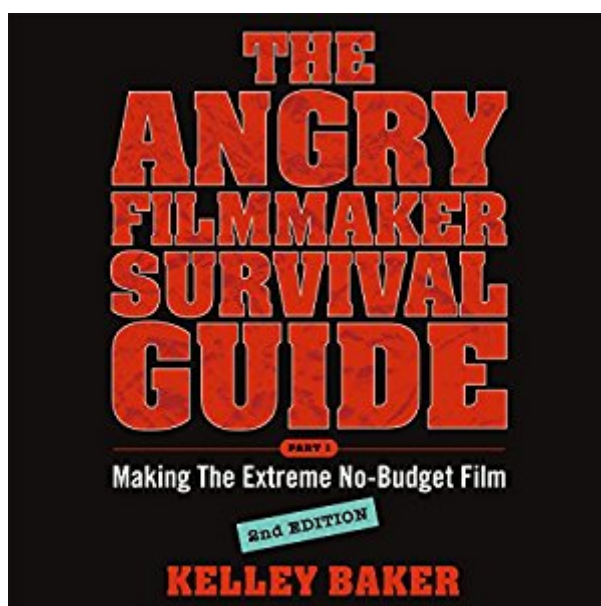


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# The Angry Filmmaker Survival Guide: Part One, Making The Extreme No-Budget Film



## Synopsis

Kelley Baker is the Angry Filmmaker. But his independent films are not angry - they're honest. He's angry at the state of independent film. For Baker, it's about telling the story, not what actors are starring in it. Baker worked in Hollywood for over 20 years. He was the sound designer on six of Gus Van Sant's feature films, including *My Own Private Idaho*, *Good Will Hunting*, and *Finding Forrester*. He is a graduate of USC's film school and has written and directed three full length features (*Birdog*, *The Gas Cafe*, and *Kicking Bird*), eight short films, and quite a few documentaries. His films have aired on PBS and Canadian and Australian television, and have been shown at Film Festivals including London, Sydney, Sundance, and Edinburgh. He travels the country showing his fiercely independent work at art house theaters, media art centers, colleges, universities, and even bars. Here, with all his attitude, is the wisdom of an Angry Filmmaker, gained the hard way, through experience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I've hesitated to write this review because I wanted to be able to do it justice. I also didn't know how much to share of the story around this book for me. To heck with that, I am just going to do it. So here goes .....About 6 weeks ago I knew nothing about filmmaking. Then I applied for a documentary-making scholarship I saw online for a local film school. I was one of 12 people selected, so before the class sessions began to teach us how to film the documentary I looked up the people involved. Kelley Baker was listed as "director". I did my homework, Googled him, and found this book on his web site where he sells other books, and DVDs. To make a long story

short, I ordered a lot of his stuff, and he handles the orders from his website himself. So, even before the classes and the documentary, I was in contact with him via e-mail. I remained in contact with him throughout the documentary. I have had a kind of "dual relationship" with him -- the director of the documentary, and our e-mail conversations. I give this book 5 stars because it was a very efficient fast track for me to learn about film making techniques. It is a very practical survival guide. One example is sound. We learned how to do sound in the classes before the documentary, but before the classes I read in the survival guide that poor sound is "torture". No matter how good the rest of the movie is. No mincing of words, just the blunt truth -- sound is important, and if you don't have good sound, then forget it. That's just one concept. The book talks about financing movies, how not to finance them, his short films, his feature films. He refers to his short films and feature films in his book but nowhere is there pressure to buy them. I did choose to do that, because I felt Kelley Baker provided me with a great "case study" of years of experience, the lessons he learned. The cost (to me) was small -- I was able to vicariously experience the learning curve of his career by buying his books, DVDs, short films (all one one DVD), and feature films. As director, I think he was hired as a consultant to the local film school to help us with the documentary. I think that's a big part of what Kelley does, and that he travels around doing that a few times a year. One thing that impressed me was that \*never\*, during the time he was in Madison helping with our documentary, did he try to sell his books, videos, or anything else. I just personally took the initiative to buy them -- all of it together would cost about what one credit of a film class would cost at a university or media school. His writing style is "efficient". If I have one criticism of the book, it can be so blunt that I felt I had to "decompress" after reading it. In one section I think he talks about two famous directors making an "indie" film for \$25 million. In the book he says they can "kiss his a\*\*!". Lots of really honest, blunt, statements like that, lot of exclamation points!, so that I had to be careful about the conversations I had immediately after reading the book because I was in that mindset and needed time to decompress. I say that mostly with a sense of humor. It helps the presentation, and makes the book effective and to the point. I really had to decompress however :-). Kelley might not like me saying this, but if you do order the book and have a question or comment, shoot him an e-mail. He is a very authentic, warm, genuine person. Take a look at his website. If you buy this book, if you were to buy one more thing I would recommend his short movies DVD. It's one DVD and I think it has all of his shorts on it (7 or 8 of them). If you are a film school, check out the author's site and if you want a consultant or director shoot him an e-mail and find out what he can do for you. I don't claim to know that part of his business, just my experience with him as advisor and director for the documentary that we created with his help. One last comment, and I am going to make this comment

on all books that I review in the future. Authors: please make your books available in Kindle format. I don't know the business side of this, or the politics. I do know that I want to be environmentally responsible, and every time I buy a paper-based book (now that I have an iPad) I think "what a waste of our natural resources". All of my reviews are very honest, and I am one of the top reviewers on Amazon and this book easily deserves 5 stars and is useful both for someone new to filmmaking and for someone more experienced.

Mr. Baker has really assisted in helping me gain valuable perspectives about Indie filmmaking. The cost awareness that this author demonstrates with the work care is also very useful. The majority of filmmakers in the world are ones working independently at the present time, having a guide for this filmmaking is very useful. And as the title implies the language in this book is not necessarily smoothed out for the people that like to be eased into the industry.

So, you want to get into filmmaking, do you? You hear that for under \$5,000 you can get a high-definition camera, a microphone, a light or two, and a computer to edit it on. Yes, it's true. So you're off and running to be the next Steven Spielberg...Uh, no. You're more likely to win the lottery than ending up as the next Spielberg. Sorry. But wait, you say. What about the guys that did Blair Witch Project, or Open Water? Or you read Robert Rodriguez book and think, why not you? Well, those are lofty goals, but whatever happened to the guys who did Blair Witch, or Open Water after their "hit"? And what Rodriguez didn't tell you in his book is that while he made a great \$7,000 movie in El Mariachi, he also had connections in Hollywood, such as his cousin Danny Trejo, and hasn't made a true indie movie like that again, no matter how under budget his million dollar studio funded films are. As such, to say you're the next Rodriguez isn't realistic either. But you could be the next Kelley Baker. And that's actually a good thing. Why Kelley? Well, he's worked in the industry, worked outside the industry, he's been on big films, and he's made a lot of shorts and features of his own. His work has been shown in theaters, on TV, at film festivals. And he did it mostly with little money, making every last penny count. Basically, this guy completely walked the path you're about to walk, almost every step of it. And in this book he shares how he does it, and why you can do it too. This isn't a book on how the film industry makes movies. It's not a book on how you can make it big in Hollywood. Or how someone made it big and now lives like a rock star. It's about a real person who has ground it out in the trenches. If you want to know how on a honest and practical level to make movies without having to break the bank, and without having to get studio funding, and actually get your work seen by people and maybe even make some decent money, buy this

book. Kelley shows the way.PS. He's not really that angry. But reading his "angry" side call BS on things you hear about (like \$20 million "indie" films, or various filmmaking "rules") may help you not be intimidated by often repeated nonsense about filmmaking he points out. This book won't beat you down with how rotten the industry is, but instead may give you some confidence knowing he's on your side when someone tries to stonewall you with a bunch of bull.

Great book for those interested in producing and directing profitable low-budget independent films. Despite the fact that the book was written before the introduction of DSLRs, this book offers a wealth of insights and suggestions into the fast, efficient and quality production of low-budget films. Highly recommended!! Grade: AAA+

I am glad that I purchased this book. It was a quick read and without a bunch of technical language that you find in all of the other filmmaking books. This filmmaker shares practical experience which provided me a guide to get started in my development and planning of the film projects I have in mind. There is humor (at least in my opinion-I am not offended by the f\*\*\* word) and good advice. It is always good to get the perspective of a person that has done what you are trying to do.

Better than I expected. Author has a distinctive voice, and an attitude. But you know that with the title, didn't you? Good information in the book

Baker's writing style is straight forward and his advice is honest. He shares his experiences, good and bad. Loved this book, looking forward to reading Part 2!

Very inspirational!

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