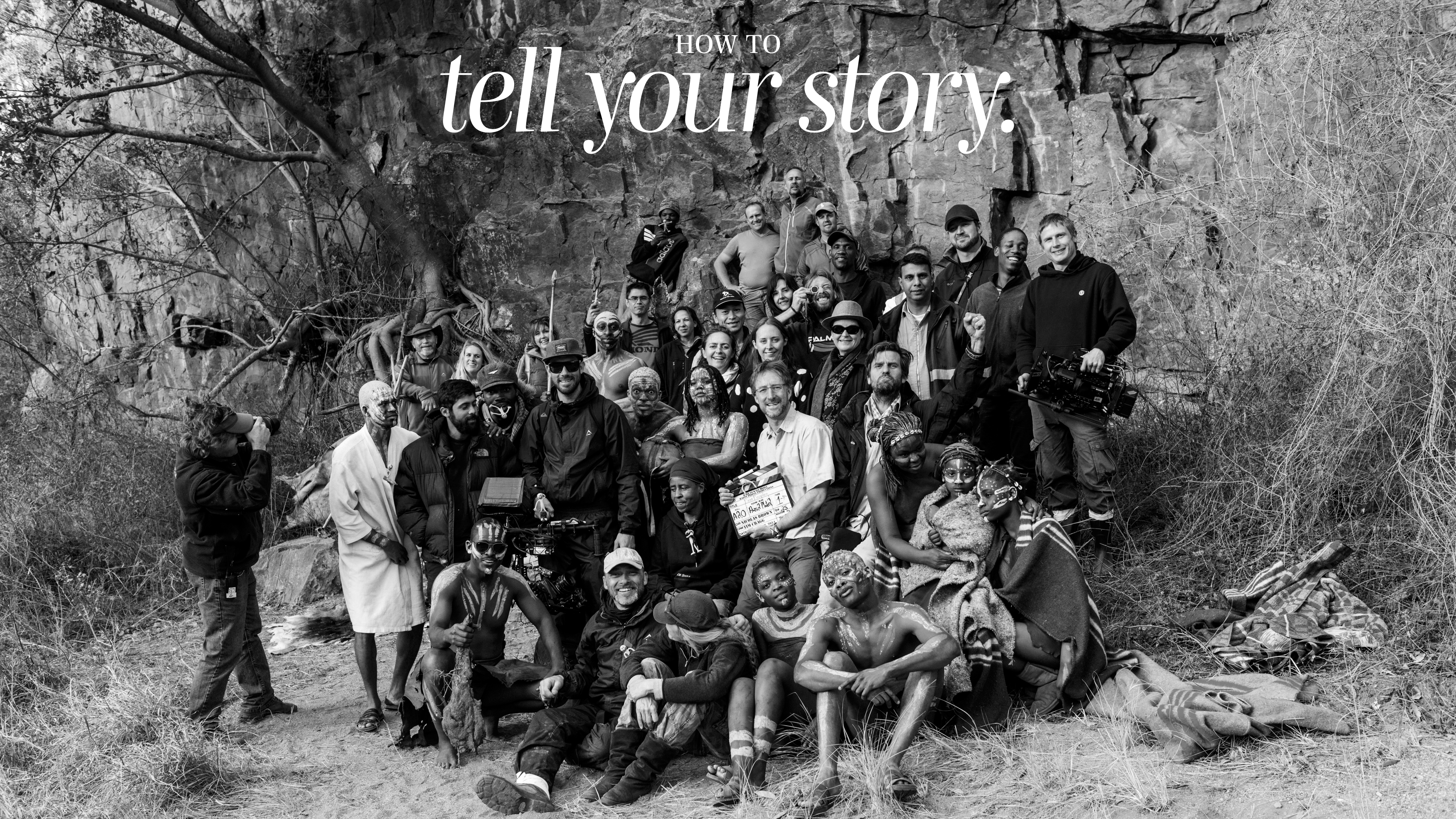


HOW TO
tell your story.



Beginning



01

To begin with,

MOST OF WHAT I HAVE TO SAY IS WRONG. IT IS RIGHT FOR ME
WHEN I MAKE MY FILMS. BUT IT MAY BE WRONG FOR YOU.

And most of what I say is wrong.

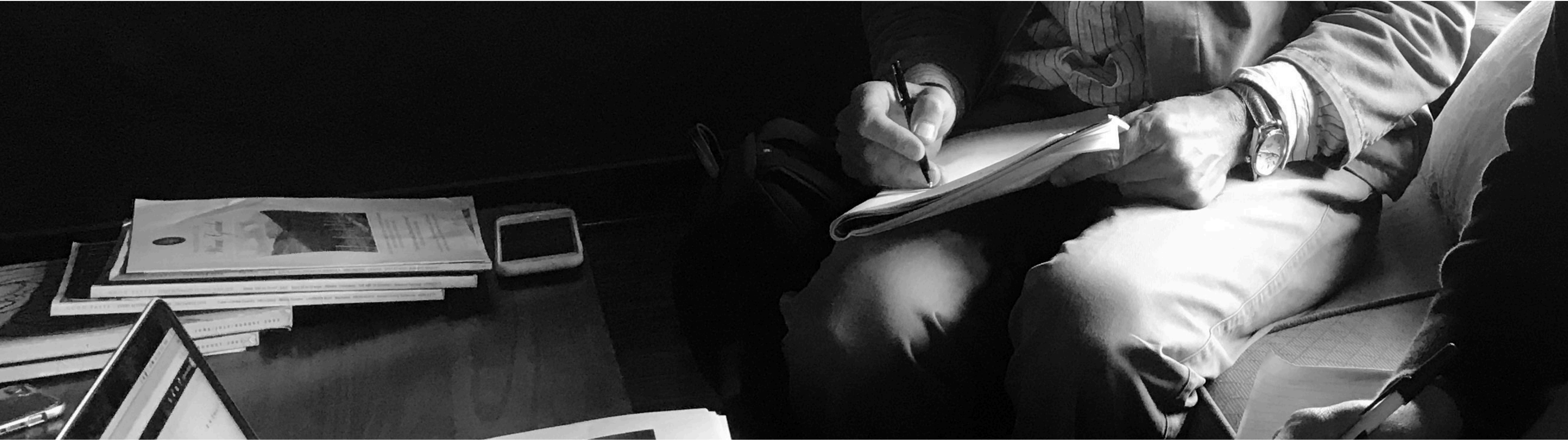


02

Don't wait

FOR THE PERFECT STORY TO ARRIVE...

...BECAUSE IT WON'T.



GO WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT FOR NOW, AND

keep making it better.

03

I MAKE A FILM *at least 3 times*

FIRST ON PAPER (OR IN MY HEAD), THEN IN CAMERA,
AND FINALLY, IN AN EDIT.



I'VE LEARNED TO ACCEPT THAT EACH VERSION WILL BE *different.*

SOMEONE ONCE SAID:

*“How do I know what
I think, until I’ve heard
what I’ve said?”*

04

LIKE WRITING, MAKING A FILM IS A *discovery*. YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW PRECISELY



Y WHERE YOU'LL END UP...

...BUT YOU DO NEED A *plan*.

05

IN YOUR FIRST DRAFT,
YOU CAN START WITH AN IMAGE OR A FEELING...
IT SHOULD WORK WHEN YOU PLAY IT IN YOUR

“minds eye”



06



TRY NOT TO MAKE
propaganda.

YOU MAY HAVE A MESSAGE YOU WANT TO GET ACROSS,
BUT YOU RISK MAKING AUDIENCES FEEL **MANIPULATED OR LECTURED TO.**
THE BEST STORIES INVITE THE AUDIENCE TO MAKE UP THEIR OWN MINDS.

Middle





07

ALWAYS THINK ABOUT

“*showing*”

INSTEAD OF

“*telling*”.

A TALKING HEAD IS REALLY

A LAST RESORT WHEN

OTHER OPTIONS FAIL

08

ONCE YOU BEGIN FILMING,
YOUR JOB IS TO FILM ALL OF THE

story 'beats.'

A GOOD STORY IS USUALLY A SEQUENCE OF MOMENTS.
BUT MANY FILMMAKERS STOP TOO SOON.

TO QUOTE PIXAR:

*“Once upon a time there was ____.
Every day ____. One day ____.
Because of that ____.
Because of that ____.
Until finally ____.”*



09

THERE ARE OTHER TOOLS I LIKE TO USE TO SHAPE STORIES
FIRST, I LIKE TO FIND A CENTRAL CHARACTER TO FOLLOW...



SECOND, I LIKE TO SEE THIS CHARACTER GO THROUGH SOME KIND OF A

pass/fail moment.

WE ALL WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.

10

EXPERIENCE,
HAS TAUGHT ME THAT

failure

IS MORE INTERESTING THAN SUCCESS.
WE RELATE TO FAILURE BECAUSE IN LIFE
WE DON'T ALWAYS GET WHAT WE WANT.

THAT IS WHY WE LOVE TO SEE PEOPLE
OVERCOMING PROBLEMS.

— ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY FAIL.



11

MOST STORIES ARE MORE COMPLEX
THAN A SINGLE PASS/FAIL MOMENT. SO I LIKE TO

film interviews.



THEN I USE THE CENTRAL CHARACTER'S VOICE,
TO SHOW US THEIR

“internal monologue”

12

CHARACTERS NEED:

strong entrances

WATCH HOW HOLLYWOOD MOVIES INTRODUCE MAIN CHARACTERS...

IT IS EASY TO FILM PEOPLE DOING SOMETHING ACTIVE AND REPETITIVE...



13

I ALSO LIKE TO FILM

people's faces



**IN THE EDIT IT SEEMS YOU CAN NEVER HAVE ENOUGH GOOD FACE SHOTS
TO GO WITH WHAT THEY SAY IN THEIR INTERVIEW.**

14

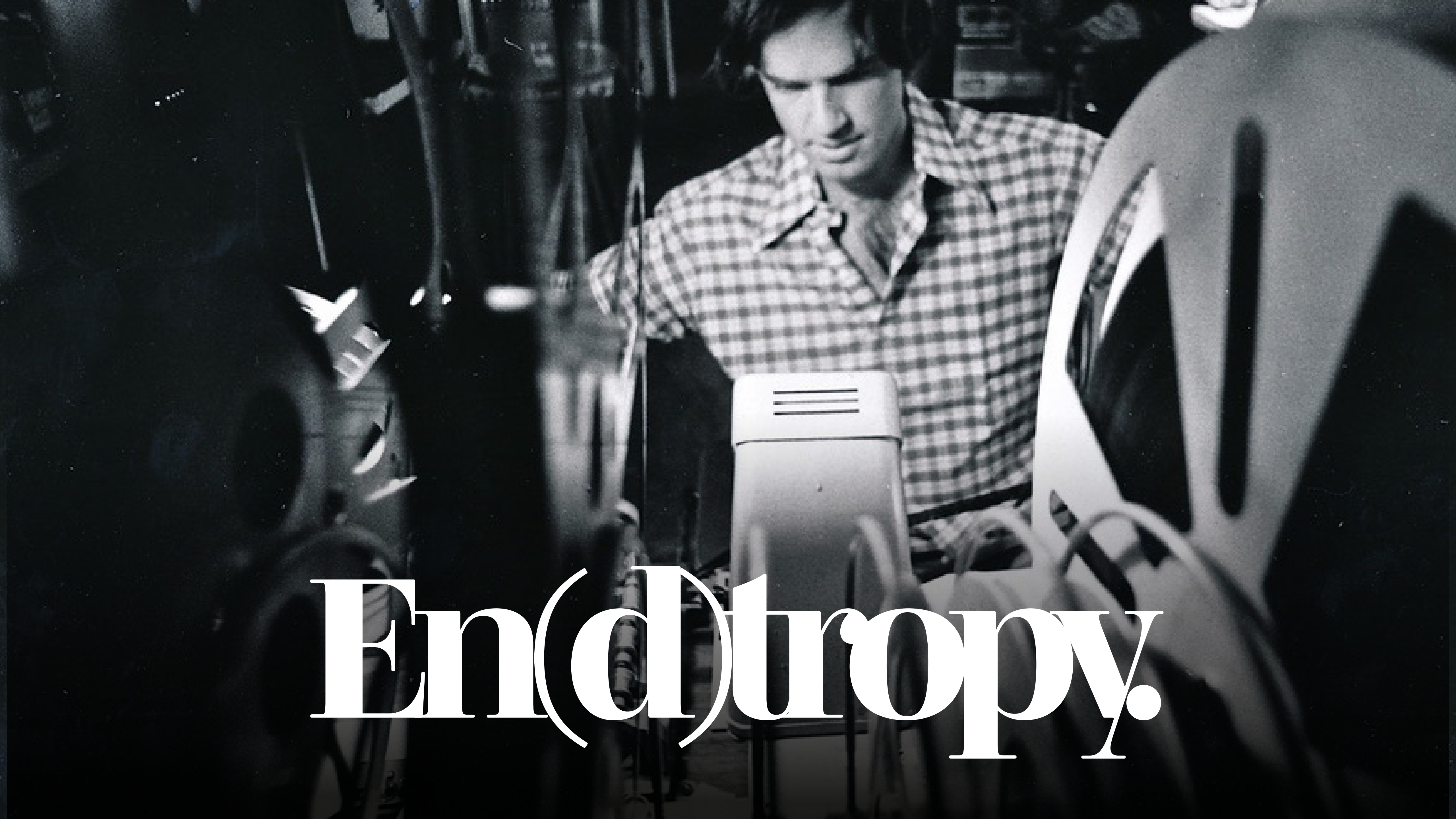
The beginning

IS ALWAYS THE HARDEST PART AND ONE SOLUTION

IS TO START THE STORY IN THE MIDDLE

WHEN THINGS ARE

exciting.



En(d)tropy.

15

in the edit
THE FINAL VERSION OF THE FILM IS MADE.
TRY NOT TO DO THIS ALONE, IT IS GOOD TO
collaborate.



16

FILM IS AN EMOTIONAL MEDIUM

I LOVE TO USE MUSIC AND I THINK OF MY CHARACTER'S WORDS AS

poetry.



(IF YOU ONLY WANT TO CONVEY INFORMATION, WRITE AN ESSAY INSTEAD.)



action
IS INTENSE

OR

music
IS INTENSE

BUT PLEASE, NOT BOTH.

19

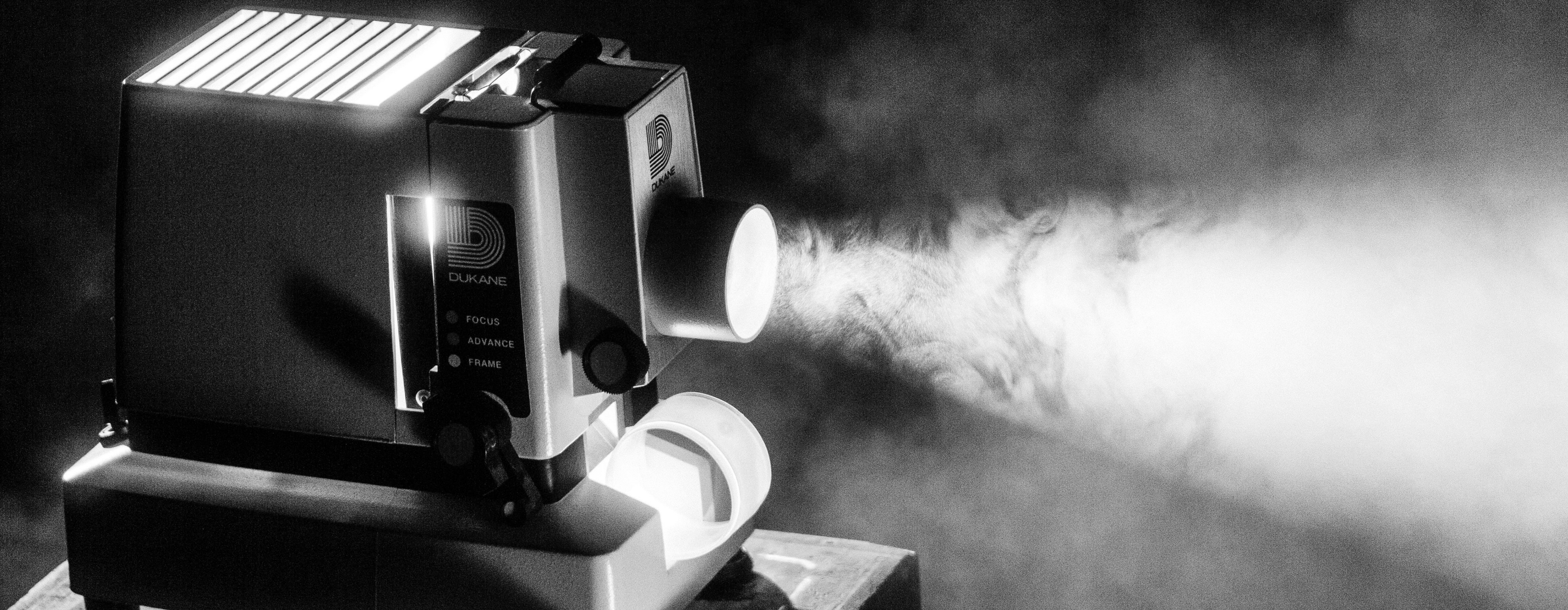
THERE'S A SAYING:
“kill your darlings”
I'M AFRAID IT IS TRUE.



IT IS VERY COMMON TO BE IN LOVE WITH AN IDEA THAT,
IF YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO REMOVE
SUDDENLY SETS YOUR FILM FREE

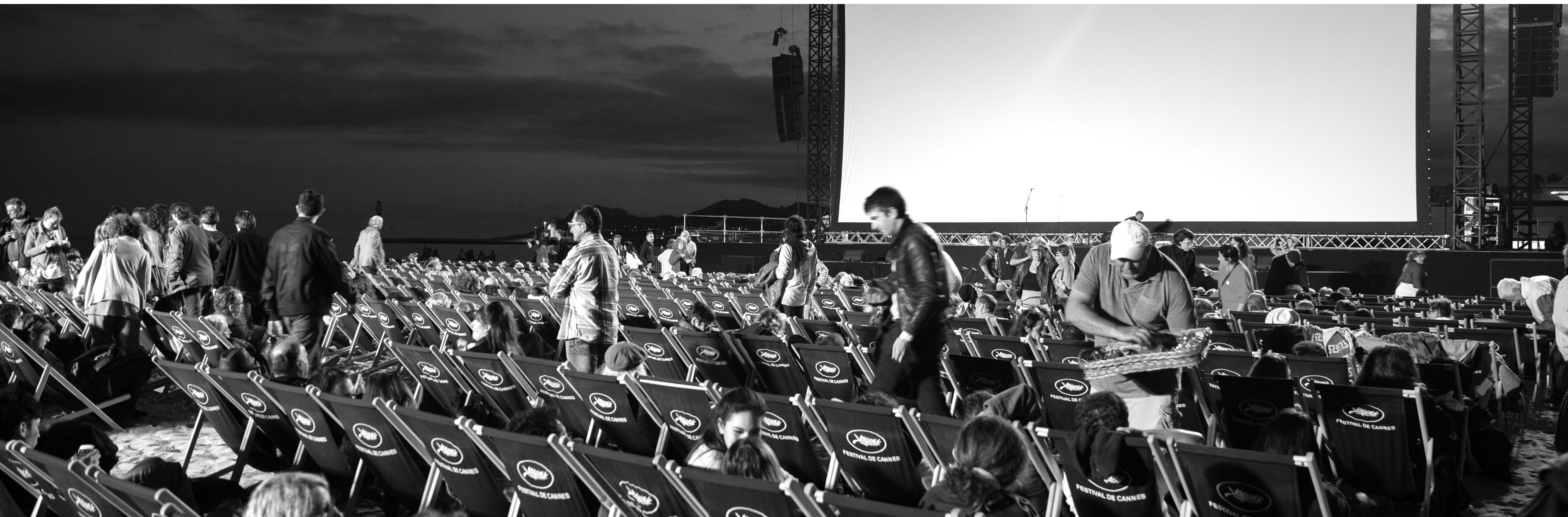
18

LET YOUR MATERIAL *Speak* TO YOU.
I ONLY REALLY DISCOVER WHAT THE FILM IS SAYING
ONCE ITS FINISHED.



20

BEWARE OF STORIES THAT OFFER *no hope.*



**IT IS CRUEL TO MAKE AN AUDIENCE WATCH A NEGATIVE STORY
WITHOUT A GIFT OF HOPE IN RETURN.**

21

FILMS COME IN 3 LENGTHS:

1. *too long.*
 2. *way too long.*
 3. *just plain ridiculously.*
- way too long...*





enjoy yourself!

CREATING FILMS TAKES SUCH ENERGY AND TIME.

IF ENJOY THE PROCESS, I'M CERTAIN THAT
JOY WILL SHOW UP IN YOUR FINAL FILM.

23

FILMS ARE NEVER *finished,*
ONLY
abandoned.



Thank you.
&
Good Luck!