

Minnesota Now (MPR) | Minnesota Now Minnesota-made podcast explores and connects the state's film scene 01GYTCQR2G3NM036JK52CNGJ54

CATHY WURZER: Minnesotans are accused of almost always talking about the weather. And let's face it, it's a good conversation starter, right? But here's another one that's almost as popular, what have you been watching lately.

We've got a couple of guests who've turned that conversation into a podcast, Alan Tracy, a director, and Rehana Power, an actor, are the hosts of the *Minnesota Made* podcast, Film in Minnesota. It's about the business and art of film in Minnesota. And they're on the line right now. Welcome to the both of you.

REHANA Thank you, Cathy. Appreciate you having us on.

POWER:

CATHY Absolutely. Rehana, tell me about the podcast. What makes it different from everything else that's out there?

WURZER:

REHANA Well, we are here just trying to really connect the film community, but also really make our presence known.

POWER: Expand the awareness of the fact that film is here and try and get more and more interest and engagement.

CATHY Are you focusing on folks in the business or people who just have a general interest, Alan?

WURZER:

ALAN TRACY: Yeah. We're definitely focused on filmmakers locally, as well as, outside of the state as well who may bring their films here, like to festivals or such.

CATHY I'm glad you did an interview with Nickolaus Swedlund. We're going to listen to a little snippet right now of this

WURZER: interview they did with Nickolaus and why he became a filmmaker.

NICKOLAUS I grew up with a severe speech impediment and have since basically grown out of it. But that is the [INAUDIBLE]
SWEDLUND: reason why I'm a filmmaker today.

Well, originally, in about sixth grade, seventh grade, I picked up a camera and I just made silly videos with my older brother and my friends. But I realized when people would watch them, that they were reacting to my ideas.

Previous to that point, I couldn't really get my ideas out and have a normal conversation. They were always a bit removed. So I think once I realized that in the seventh grade, it was like, this is a way for me to communicate with people.

CATHY So I got to be honest with you both, I love Westerns and I'm glad you talked to Nickolaus about *Sanctified*.

WURZER: [CHUCKLES] So what did he say about the making of that movie?

ALAN TRACY: Well, he went into the logistics of filming in North Dakota, as well as, just the stunt performances. Yeah, just a lot of Minnesota talent was up there filming for that film though, so.

CATHY And I'm sure it was-- well, gosh, they had all manner of horses. I can imagine the riding training that went into

WURZER: that, the firearm training. I mean this is all before the *Rust* tragedy, obviously.

ALAN TRACY: Right. Yeah, lots of firearms, horse training, like you mentioned. They planned out their stunts. Like for each shot fired, they would have a number count for each scene. So in rehearsals, they would be able to see it as it happens as it would be rehearsed in a play. So yeah, it makes it a lot easier for the camera to know where to be for each shot then.

CATHY WURZER: OK. So I'm curious here. Rehana, you've talked to a lot of people over the course of this podcast, which is the sixth season already of *Film in Minnesota*. Do you have a standout conversation?

REHANA POWER: Yeah. So Nickolaus definitely was, honestly, one of the more fun that we've had. But we were able to speak to the writer, director, creator of *Emily, the Criminal*, right before or right as it was being released. It was going through the Film Festival circuit.

And we were lucky enough to have film festivals here that he brought the movie to. And Alan had the opportunity to chat with him. And which was really great. So John Patton Ford joined our podcast and went into a lot of depth.

He's from California, from LA. But he was willing to chat with us about filming and coming to Minnesota to experience our Film Festival and bring that to us, which was really exciting to get to see that right as soon as it was coming out.

CATHY WURZER: Say, I had the great good fortune of working on the Catalyst Film Festival in Duluth and was one of the interviewers of that festival, its inaugural festival when it was in Duluth.

And it was great fun to not only see the Minnesota filmmakers there, but of course, some national folks too. How do you describe the health of the film community in Minnesota when someone comes up to you and says, well, is it really easier for filmmakers to develop a career here or do you still have to go to LA? Alan?

ALAN TRACY: Well, as a filmmaker, I'd say, it's both ways, especially independent film might be easier to make it here just because there's less red tape, I'd say. Whereas, in LA, it's a studio system. So within the 30 mile zone, you have to have permits for everything and have approval to do such things. So not that isn't here, but I think filmmaking, in general, there's a little more freedom here as it stands for now.

CATHY WURZER: Where's the best place to go to shoot in Minnesota, I'm just curious about that if you had your-- it depends on the story, I understand that. But if you had your choice. Yeah.

ALAN TRACY: I personally like the cities, like Minneapolis, Saint Paul. or around the cities here, there's a lot of opportunities for businesses that or locations that look like the part you want within a short driving distance. But if you're talking like tax incentives or rebates for the state, that would be more in the Duluth or Northern Minnesota area.

CATHY WURZER: Rehana, I'm curious about your-- when you're not interviewing guests, do you do you both talk about your favorite films or film scores? And I mean there's a lot to talk about there too.

REHANA POWER: Yeah, absolutely. We actually started doing episodes just Alan and I in the beginning of quarantine. And have really gotten to have a lot of great conversations opening up on our personal thoughts and opinions on reviews for movies, big and small, that are coming out and trying to talk about things that we like.

Example, I have a playlist of film scores that I listen to. And so talking with film composers on our podcast has been really fun to get an idea of what their favorite scores are. And maybe add them to the playlist. But getting to really chat and learn about each other, but also let our listeners learn more about us and experience those fun conversations.

CATHY WURZER: OK, favorite film, Rehana, what is it?

**REHANA
POWER:** Oh, goodness. It's so hard. I'm very indecisive. I would probably have to say *Moneyball*, just because I am a huge baseball fan and the A's are my original team. [CHUCKLES]

**CATHY
WURZER:** OK, I'll take that. That's good. Alan? I know it's like asking if you have a favorite kid, I know that. But--

ALAN TRACY: Oh, yeah. Gosh, I love the *Matrix*. I love *Mad Max*, *Fury Road*, for instance, just yeah. Those are some of my favorites.

**CATHY
WURZER:** OK. And of course, since you direct film, do you have a favorite director? Of course, I'm sure you haven't patterned yourself after anybody. You are unique. But who do you-- who do you watch with a critical eye and think, oh, that was amazing?

ALAN TRACY: Yeah. I think, obviously, Steven Spielberg is kind of the original. But I tend to gravitate towards David Fincher, more of that gritty, adapted novel type of thing, so.

**CATHY
WURZER:** Rehana, any thought on that too, director?

**REHANA
POWER:** Yes. And I just had his name and now it's suddenly gone.

**CATHY
WURZER:** Don't you hate that?

**REHANA
POWER:** [CHUCKLES] Director of *Memento* and *Inception*. Alan, help me out here.

ALAN TRACY: Nolan.

**REHANA
POWER:** Yes, Christopher Nolan. I think he's brilliant. And have not seen a movie of his that I just didn't absolutely love.

**CATHY
WURZER:** All right. It was fun talking to you both. Of course, the podcast is FilmInMinnesota.com. I mean, it's out there. You've got to download it wherever you get your podcasts. Thank you for joining us.

**REHANA
POWER:** Thank you so much.

ALAN TRACY: Thanks for having us.

**CATHY
WURZER:** Alan Tracy, Rehana Power, co-hosts, *Film In Minnesota*. They have a website, FilmInMinnesota.com. By the way, of course, arts programming is made possible in part here on MPR by the Minnesota Cultural Arts and Heritage Fund. I am glad that you've been with us here on a busy Monday. It's been a pleasure having you aboard. Of course, we'll do it all again tomorrow at noon right here on MPR News.