



**Local movie director
shares insider secrets
in UC
Communiversity
class**

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The Bruce Willis movie 'Reprisal' is filming in Cincinnati, further proof that the Queen City is becoming Little Hollywood. Director Chris Hilsabeck wants to help local residents break into the biz.

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By: Stephanie Smith

Chris Hilsabeck, an assistant movie director and location scout, will share his experience and tips about breaking into the movie business in a UC Communiversity class called On Screen Cincinnati.

The class Sept. 30 coincides with the filming this year of the new Bruce Willis movie "Reprisal" at locations across Cincinnati.

Originally from Austin, Texas, Hilsabeck started his film career in Los Angeles in the early '90s after receiving a Bachelor of Science in Radio-Television-Film from the University of Texas.

"While working on my undergrad degree at UT Austin, I had an amazing internship opportunity with PBS documentary filmmaker Hector Galan. He was one of the best mentors I had early on before leaving Texas for L.A. It was in Hollywood that I really learned the most about the business by working on features, TV movies, and commercials," Hilsabeck said.



Hilsabeck has been living in Cincinnati with his family for more than 10 years and currently works as a location scout and assistant director on movies filmed in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. Since 2014, he has shared his knowledge and experience teaching On Screen Cincinnati at UC's Communiversity, located on the Victory Parkway Campus in East Walnut Hills.

"I was mostly working on commercial and corporate-video projects at that time but anticipated more film work coming with the Ohio film tax incentive in place. I felt the need to pull back the curtain somewhat on how to break into the production biz here in Cincinnati," Hilsabeck said.

The Ohio Motion Picture Tax Credit was created in 2009 as a way to encourage and develop a strong film industry in the state, according to the Ohio Film Office. Eligible productions must spend a minimum of \$300,000 per project in Ohio to be considered for the credit, which is about 30 cents on the dollar for qualified expenses.

The lower production costs and the work of Film Cincinnati have brought in actors including George Clooney ("Ides of March"), Cate Blanchett ("Carol") and Don Cheadle ("Miles Ahead").

"It's kind of an aligning of the planets with our attractive architecture and locations, film-friendly Midwest hospitality and experienced local crew," Hilsabeck said about the growing popularity of Cincinnati as a movie location. "Let's realize, too, that the producers that have filmed here and had a great experience with the crews and locations tend to spread that nice word-of-mouth to other industry people looking to take their movie projects on location outside of Los Angeles and New York."

In an industry where connections are everything, Hilsabeck makes sure students leave his one-day class with the resources on how to be cast as an extra, work on a film crew, or list properties for location scout access.

"One of the first big movies I worked on as a production assistant was 'Blaze.' It starred Paul Newman, and I remember sharing a burger with him and his co-star Lolita Davidovitch while on a break during rehearsals," Hilsabeck said. "I've got a few more stories, but you might want to register for my next class to hear about those."

Class Details:

On-Screen in Cincinnati, Saturday, Sept. 30 from 1 to 4 p.m., \$29

To Register, call 513-556-6932 or go online to uc.edu/ce/commu.



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