

Producing & Distributing in a Pandemic

U.S. Studio Perspective

Scott Martin



Hollywood response to the Pandemic

- **February/March** – COVID-19 spreads, shutting down all studio film & TV production in the U.S.
- **June** – “White Paper” sent to the State governments, at the initial request of NYS Gov. Cuomo, offering broad-stroke COVID production protocols.
- **July/August** – Some productions resume based on “mother-may-I” discussions with the unions.
- **September** – Return-to-Work agreement on safety protocols reached between producers (AMPTP) and the creative unions.



Producer/union participants

Protocols apply to all employees employed under the following union jurisdictions:

- DGA
- SAG-AFTRA
- IATSE and IATSE Locals throughout North America;
- Teamster Local throughout the United States;
- Local #40 IBEW
- Local #78 Plumbers and Pipefitters
- Local #724 Laborers Studio Utility Employees Agreement
- Local #755 Plasterers



The RTW Agreement is a moveable feast...

- The RTW agreement expires on **April 30, 2021**.
- Producers & unions agreed to **meet one month after the effective date** of the Agreement to discuss whether modifications to the Agreement are necessary.
- We will **meet again every 2 months** for continuing discussions.



Testing & Zones

4 zones for productions
with 4 protocols for
minimum mandatory testing



Testing & Zones

ZONE A = active hot set

**TESTING
EVERY 3 DAYS**

- ✓ All performers working on set
- ✓ All individuals present in a workspace with a performer while the performer is not wearing Personal Protective Equip.

ZONE B = idle hot set

WEEKLY TESTING

- ✓ Individuals who work on a hot set but are not present while performers are not wearing PPE
- ✓ Zone B applies during prep (ex: Set Decorator or Prop Master during prep still treated as Zone B)
- ✓ Individuals who work in areas that are not Zones C or D



Testing & Zones

ZONE C = close but not too close

- ✓ No contact with any Zone A or Zone B individuals for longer than 15 minutes and never closer than 6 feet
- ✓ Must wear PPE at all times

**TEST EVERY
OTHER WEEK**



ZONE D = off-set employees

NO PERIODIC TESTING

- ✓ Individuals who are never present on-set and...
- ✓ Who are employed by a listed Local...



Testing & Zones

ZONE D qualified Locals

- Local #600 = Publicists
- Local #695 = Projectionists & post-production & animation
- Local #700 = Postproduction & archives
- Local #700 = Lab Technicians
- Local # 705 = Costume/wardrobe not on location
- Local #800 = Set Designers & Model Makers
- Local # 800 = Scenic, Title & Graphic Artists
- Local #871 = Script Coordinators & Writer's Room Assistants



Testing & Zones

IMPORTANT!

An individual may never enter a higher-level zone without qualifying for access to that zone.

No pop-in visits allowed!



Compliance Supervisor

The protocols require employment of on-site COVID-19 Compliance Supervisors (CSS).

The Roll-Out

- Each production must have its own designated CSS.
- Each studio facility must have its own CSS.
(at the Paramount lot we have multiple CSS)

The Role

- The CSS is responsible for compliance & enforcement of COVID-19 safety protocols.
- The CSS must be accessible at all time during working hours.



But wait, there's more...

The protocols also address:

- Paid sick leave
- Compensation during isolation & self-quarantine
- Testing in connection with Air Travel
- Impact of Covid-19 production interruptions
- Types of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Food service (*no more Craft Services buffets!*)
- Production basecamps
- Physical distancing
- On-set tutors for minors, and
- Training on COVID-19 protocols



What's happening on the Paramount studio lot?



What's happening on the Paramount studio lot?

3 main challenges for creating a safe environment for employee return-to-workplace:

- Air systems upgrades (*beware the myth of MERV-13*)
- Cleaning protocols
- Workplace distancing – *how many can safely return?*



A few closing Predictions...



Production in 2022

- Massive increase in L.A. production
- Innovative (and disruptive) digital technology
 - Stagecraft / *Mandalorian*
 - No more extras
- Production pivots are the new normal

Distribution in 2022

- Return to theatrical
- Blockbuster driven, more than ever
 - More theatrical opportunities for independent producers
- **Paramount+** surpasses Netflix in subscribers

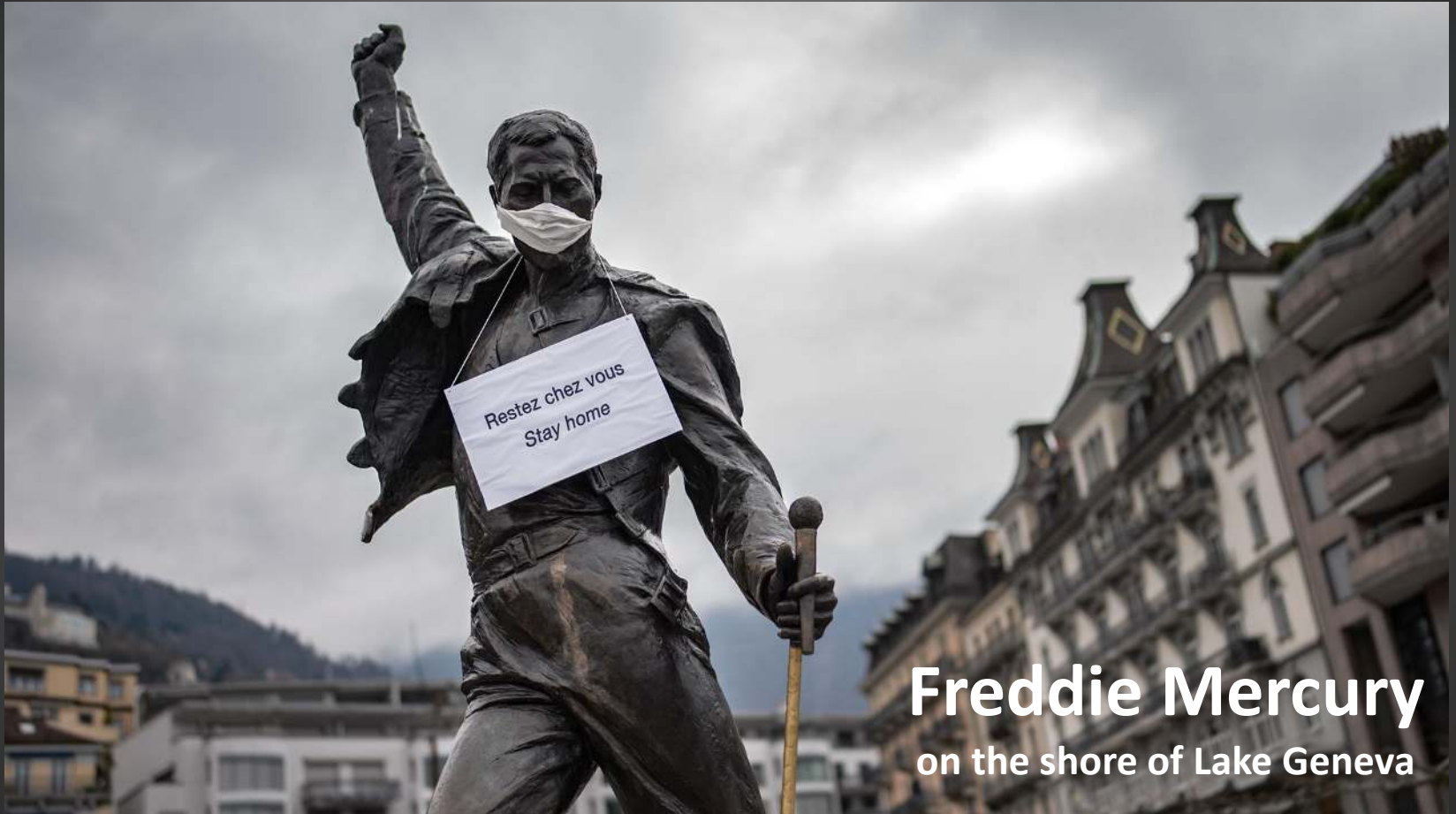


EU-US-DE 20th Anniversary Summit in 2022

- Bier, Beer, Bière



Thank you!



Freddie Mercury
on the shore of Lake Geneva

Please feel free to call or email me with any questions

Scott Martin

