

I had the pleasure of interviewing an author and founder of Film by Faith Productions, Lakisha Louissaint. Lakisha Louissaint is a local Troy resident; she is a multi talented creator. Louissaint executive produced and directed her first feature film, based on her second novel. In addition to trying to establish a career in the film industry, she is a committed mom of two. I've always had an interest in the television and entertainment industry. However, I've never been sure as to what area I wanted to pursue full time as a career. I gathered as much information from reading her other interviews, personal website, and researching some of her bio.

**Interview:**

**How did your career of being a filmmaker begin ?**

I was just going after my dreams, anything I wanted to do I did it. I wrote a novel and being that I published it myself, I felt like it flopped. So then, I decided it's not a book, it's a movie. I broke down a four hundred page novel and turned it into a 60 page script. I started the process and it was a lot that went into it. I'm always up for a good challenge when it comes to a dream.

**Why did you choose “Faith Productions” as the name for your company?**

Film by Faith productions came from us literally filming this by faith. Everytime we had to film, I had to have faith. Like, how am I going to get this money ? How will I come up with this budget? I was literally standing in faith, not knowing what I was doing.

**You serve in multiple positions in the film industry - producer and director. How is it juggling the responsibilities on set?**

It was overwhelming! First, you have to know what a producer does. Learning the roles was difficult to learn. However, I am a visual learner so, show me one time and I got it. It was frustrating to learn.

**You started as an author and later created a film. Did you have previous experience in the film industry before creating your first project?**

No. I didn't know how much detail it required . There's so much that goes into it. You have to have original music and so many tech positions.

**How did you know where to begin the filming process?**

I have two friends, who are both writers and directors, in California. It's different in California because there are so many people who're willing to be a part of the process. The price is not as steep. Here, when people know that you don't know they will try to get over on you. That was my case.

**How was your experience translating your novel into a film?**

That process first started with the script. I was trying to chop up a book but still telling the whole story. After I did that and found my cast, it was more sitting down with them and getting a feel for each other. You don't want to take away an actor's creative space. You want to allow and trust them to bring the character to life.

**In addition to serving in roles on set life , you are a mother of two? How is balancing motherhood with your profession?**

It is difficult. My oldest son graduated from the theater department at Troy University. My youngest son was diagnosed with autism. There's this fine line. It has its challenges. I've had to

make minor adjustments throughout the process. Also not giving up in front of your kids because if you do, you're giving them an example of what it looks like.

**Can you speak to your journey of how you went from a high school dropout to being a successful producer and director?**

I dropped out of high school my senior year. I earned my GED in like 2007. I went to college and couldn't get past the practices for nothing in the world. I dropped out but I eventually went back and got my associate and later my bachelors degree. I do it for people like me. If I give up, who do they have to cheer for in the end? What example do they have that these things can happen? A lot of people have given up on their dreams but for me, I have to keep going.

**If you had a chance to start all over, what would you change ?**

I don't think I'd change anything. The reason why is because there are so many lessons and so much wisdom that I gained. If I went in knowing everything, what would there have been for me to learn? How can I pour into others, had I not gone through these things. Sometimes we would change things to avoid the challenges but, we go through them to teach others.

**What would you add?**

I would add a prayer team! When I watched the war room I remembered them saying they had a team that would pray for them on set. I would make sure there is a team that is praying, fasting, and laboring for us.

**Is there anything you wish you knew before creating your first project ?**

Yes, I wish I would've known about grants. I wish I would've known the price for everything and I didn't.

**What was the most challenging part of your journey?**

“Budget was the biggest challenge which I'm still left paying for. I couldn't find anyone to donate. So now, I'm just digging myself out of this hole for a dream.”

**Where do you see yourself and your company in 5 years?**

“ I definitely want my studio within the next five years. I want a place to film and get everything there versus having to find locations to film.

**What is your biggest motivation ?**

**What advice would you give someone who was interested in being a filmmaker particularly?**

“ You have to have strong faith. I would say know who you are before getting into the industry. If you don't know, people will try to take advantage and shape you into who they want you to be. When you're confident in who you are, you'll have faith during your process.”

**What is a character trait you feel is most important in order to succeed in the production/film industry?**

“Integrity in a nutshell. If you don't have that you'll fall for anything.”

**How are you able to remain motivated in a cutthroat industry?**

“ Staying grounded in my faith, just being honest. Actually seeing my dreams come true really pushed me as well. It was a great film! As long as God continues to give me a storyline, I’m going to continue to stay motivated. My children and people like me are what motivates, me as well.

**What's next?**

“ I’ve submitted to two film festivals. I could only afford to send two because of the budget; I would like to submit to more. The next step is to put it on a platform for everyone to see.”

**What's the purpose of film festivals?**

“Film festivals have another audience. There are some people who have agents and some who don’t. If your film is accepted, it gives you wiggle room to expand or sell your film. It puts you in front of celebrities, producers, and directors. You can win awards and that looks good.

**Is there anything you’d like to add?**

“No. I have a question for you though. What would you like to do with your major ?”