

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Claire Ayoub - 00:01

Oh, same. I can't wait. I can't wait. Thank you. What's up, Steve? I'll let you and Steve turn. Awesome. Great to see you, Elise. Take care. Bye. Bye. Oh, she's awesome. She's awesome. Your whole team is just. They. I just want to say thank you. Like, everyone has been so wonderful to work with. And I'm a big believer when you see people doing great work, to be like, you're doing great work. So thanks for.



Steve Sorowitz - 00:34

It's been a long few weeks, actually.



Claire Ayoub - 00:36

Oh, I'm sure it's been a long few weeks, absolutely.



Steve Sorowitz - 00:39

But, you know, I think people can say what they want to say. And I don't know if you're watching the media at all.



Claire Ayoub - 00:48

No, I have been. I don't. I don't know what's going on. I haven't. No one's spoken to me about it, so I just know. I don't know what happened on that set, but I know the media can turn really bad and negative. And I just rejoined TikTok for the film. And I was texting Rain. I was like, I rejoined it. It scares me, but I'm doing it. And just seeing how fast stuff blows up there too, is really tough. Really tough.



Steve Sorowitz - 01:14

Well, I don't think you're gonna have any issues with this film.



Claire Ayoub - 01:17

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No, we. Steve, when I tell you our cast and just. Just the response from people, just from the trailer, like. And this is why I want to give major kudos to Ashmi, who is kicking ass at marketing. I, like, emailed way back. I emailed. She helped me out so much early on in our relationship with Blue Fox, and she was able to make a graphic for me with our awards. Cause I was gonna be featured in the newspaper to, like, hype our film festivals and everything. And she created that herself and I legit and, like, was there with all the answers, there to help, there to push. And when I, like, basically emailed, I think it was Jamie, Andrew, and Ryan being like, please give her either a raise or a promotion or both.



Claire Ayoub - 02:05

Because this is someone who, like, I worked in advertising for a long time, and when you see someone who's good at what they do, oh, man, she's been a real dream. Real dream.



Steve Sorowitz - 02:15

And Clay's easy to work with, huh?



Claire Ayoub - 02:17

Oh, yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 02:18

Theater scene. No problems there.



Claire Ayoub - 02:21

Oh, yeah. No, Clay's been great. Absolutely.



Steve Sorowitz - 02:23

I'm excited to see the space begins with less drama. Simply that it's a drama. I'm done with it.

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Claire Ayoub - 02:28

Yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 02:30

It's gonna happen when it's gonna happen, you know, whatever's gonna happen, whatever people want to think they're. They're gonna think. I was worried about it at one point, and now I just. Now I'm just gonna let the ships fall where they may. Honestly likes us. Great. If they don't. We are who we are.



Claire Ayoub - 02:49

I think it's really tough, too, when it's something you've been really excited about. Right. I think that makes it hurt even more when it almost eclipses the work and the message and all of that. And it's really painful to see.



Steve Sorowitz - 03:02

The time we released, we were not excited about it. We just wanted to get done with it.



Claire Ayoub - 03:06

I'm sorry. No, I'm sure.



Steve Sorowitz - 03:08

Way before all the stuff.



Claire Ayoub - 03:10

No, I'm sure.

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Steve Sorowitz - 03:10

I'm sure this is too tough. Let's get through it. Let's. Hopefully it's not too bad, and it's turned out very well. We've made a lot of money.



Claire Ayoub - 03:16

I was gonna say it's been very successful. And I love the no more partnership. I think that's awesome and important and, like, you know, looking at that side of doing that work and focusing on that and focusing on centering a story of, you know, domestic violence that is so common for so many people in the US and around the world. So I was really glad to see it resonate around the world too, because it's very much not an American issue.



Steve Sorowitz - 03:45

No, it's. It's a worldwide issue. So, yeah, we. We did our best to try and keep it centered on that. We didn't succeed, but that's okay. The public said, please center on this.



Claire Ayoub - 03:55

There you go. I know, I know it's tough. It's tough with that side of. Been very grateful to have. Be able to be in the room. Because it's my production company and because I own the ip, I've been very lucky to be able to have my voice have weight. And since it is, even though, for me, it's a huge movie and thank you for funding it, like, looking at that. Right. Of having people who respect the work that's already been done and are aligned with the impact. Right. Of really being like we. Instead of, like, creating a fashion line, what we're gonna be doing. I'm so excited.



Steve Sorowitz - 04:32

I'm not creating a fashion line.



Claire Ayoub - 04:33

Not for this. What we're gonna be doing for the social.

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Steve Sorowitz - 04:36

I mean, if you did create a fashion line.



Claire Ayoub - 04:37

Oh, no, it will be great. It will be great. But for now, for, like, social, we're gonna be amplifying the work of everyone who's already doing inclusive fashion, accessible fashion to drive people to their stores, to drive people to their accounts. So like, that's what we're gonna be doing for the lead up and. Cause I got to meet so many people in this process. Steve, who are the Lenores, right. They are doing this work, especially both in the plus size space, but also the accessible fashion space, including like disabled designers who are creating what they wish they had. So that is what I'm so psyched about and just continuing to build our community in that way. But yeah, and we're making, I'm creating, I'm running leading merch. So I'll send you merch when it comes out, which I'm so excited about.



Claire Ayoub - 05:21

And yeah, it's just, it's really fun. We're working with this great designer illustrator who did. I don't know if you ever saw the illustration of the five girls before the casting call. I basically had no ability to make a composite to show what our cast would look like because this kind of representation had not been seen in films. And so I basically had her draw me an illustration of the five characters. And we used that until we had stills from some set. Like, it's incredible. So she is creating all these like fun quote graphics and then we split it's a 60, 40 with Wayfair and PNG on profits. So I'm super psyched. And so we're gonna be creating that. I think we got the okay to use.



Claire Ayoub - 06:02

We're gonna be making the Empire waste T shirts from the movie, which I'm so excited about, and getting our. Our designers from that involved, which I'm so psyched. So that is fun. But for now, for this first. First line is really pushing people to see the work that's already being done out there because a lot of them have their own communities too. And using this as a way to amplify. Ditto other female writer directors. Right? There are a lot of people out there that aren't going to have our.



Steve Sorowitz - 06:26

Commercial female centric films will never succeed. So I don't know.



Claire Ayoub - 06:30

Lol. Oh my God. Barbie baby.

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Steve Sorowitz - 06:35

And it ends with us and.



Claire Ayoub - 06:36

Right, Exactly.



Steve Sorowitz - 06:37

They dissed it. They dissed it.



Claire Ayoub - 06:39

Oh no.



Steve Sorowitz - 06:39

It's oe like lively mess. It ends with us. I was talking to people, I talked to some people, the numbers like a couple months ago at Cinemacon and maybe three months ago, and they said this is gonna do 40 million domestically. Women, of course, women are not expected to like. Women are like the ones who drive so many things. Of course a female centric movie is gonna do well.



Claire Ayoub - 07:04

That's crazy, honestly. And what so drives me bananas. Ditto. I talk, I mentor a lot of creators, especially writers of color and directors of color. And what drives us bananas is that if you look at the box office, if you look at a lot of the big sales leading up to the first part of the summer, majority of your audiences were black and Latino. Right. Yet the majority of stories we're seeing on screen are not reflecting them and their stories and their experiences. So you have this incredible juggernaut of the economy willing to go to the box office, yet they're not taken seriously or worthy enough to have project backs to be seen on screen. So it's just. It's really undermining the power of different. Of different groups. Like breaking it down into financials. Right.

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Claire Ayoub - 07:54

And undermining the power of word of mouth from women. Undermining the power of word of mouth of communities of color. Right. Of saying, this has our seal of approval. We all have to show up and show out for this person. Right. It's incredible. So it's just this. It's really frustrating. And one of the reasons I held onto the IP was I wanted with my other projects to be able to fund similar to me, like voices that are not seeing themselves, people not seeing themselves represented on screen just for development. Right. Just to be like, set aside time to do these live readings. Set aside time to meet your audience where they are and develop it because you are worthy of doing it. Because that, for me, yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 08:33

If you look at Hollywood, like the top. So it ends with us, is now, I think, the 11th highest grossing film. It's going to be 10 pretty soon.



Claire Ayoub - 08:42

I'm so excited for you.



Steve Sorowitz - 08:44

But it's the. Every film in front of it is a. Is a rewrite.



Claire Ayoub - 08:49

Yeah, right. Every. The best feedback we've been getting in addition to people seeing themselves represented on screen has been, oh, my God, it's not a remake or a sequel. And I'm like. And take it from, like, I'm part of these amazing filmmaker communities, and I'm sure you have them too, in Chicago, of just people creating incredible original work who they're not seen as being valuable because it doesn't have an IP or it doesn't have, you know, is. It hasn't been proven that it works before. So you look at it and it's like, the industry can be incredibly uncreative for being a creative industry. And it's one of the reasons why, like, I encourage people to meet your audience first. Like, prove that. Because our movie resonated with people from 14 to 84 across. Like, and that was for me in addition to the creative.



Claire Ayoub - 09:39

This is why I teach it. I teach the creative, but I also teach the business. I'm like, prove why you are worth an investment. And like comfortable.

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Steve Sorowitz - 09:48

I think it would go lower than 14.



Claire Ayoub - 09:50

Oh no, that was just the script. The movie went down to eight. Movie went down to eight and beyond. And like that for us. I don't know if I told you this. Our editor Aziza, her she has a Now her daughter's God, 8, 7. She was 5 years old when were editing and she we edited on Zoom for most of it and she would love watching the movie. She still quotes the movie, but there's one part where Kayla goes, it's me, bitches. During like a photo shoot. And Aziza would jump in front of her go. So she wouldn't hear the word and start saying it over and over. It's the best.



Claire Ayoub - 10:25

But the best part was when we moved to from remote to our edit bay as Satya drew all these adorable dresses that we covered our whole, all our walls in the edit bay. And she would come to visit us and like, you know, she was five and I had a designer who I met who's an amazing Melissa Mercedes. So I'm going to ask to do some work for us for screenings. Like she brought her 16 year old daughter and her 8 year old son. And it was so cool because Melissa, Marissa, she's crying. She's crying from the emotional side of being a mom, being a woman who's plus size. Her daughter turns to me and goes, I'm gonna force everyone I know to see this. Like it was so earnest.



Claire Ayoub - 11:04

And then her son goes, I liked when the dad put his hand in peanut butter. Like it was just so rad, right? Because it hits everybody and it hits everyone.



Steve Sorowitz - 11:14

The movie, which we don't have, like I said, Ezra, which we made was an original movie which I loved.



Claire Ayoub - 11:19

Which I loved.



Steve Sorowitz - 11:20

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We just have to get, we have to get more people out. So let's see what happens. You know, we'll put it out there. We'll, we'll. I'm sure we'll have a good run here in island park. At least decent.



Claire Ayoub - 11:28

Oh, I can't wait. I can't wait.



Steve Sorowitz - 11:31

No, we'll see. And the bottom line is that the victory is getting it out honestly.



Claire Ayoub - 11:35

Right? And the fact that we're going to be in theaters, we're going to be on Friday. We're going to be. Our trailer is going to be in theaters, which for me and Chris. So I, like, stopped our meeting with Blue Fox and I was like, sorry, I'm just going to scream real quick. That is so cool. And the fact we had, like a million views on Twitter, we had, like, just an incredible response. And all these people, Steve, who inspired me to get into this work, who have incredible followings, are now following and reaching out to me and asking if I'll talk about it. I'm like, your book shaped how I, you know, your. Your social movement shaped how I see the world. Like, and, you know, so that in particular, like the word of mouth campaign as well as the. The paid.



Claire Ayoub - 12:19

We're going to be putting behind this. I know we got, I think, 150k promised from P and G, which is going to make a big difference. But for the education curriculum, the conversation we had with Debbie is fantastic because a lot of what we're doing for Crystal I are doing is really, like, word of mouth, spreading everything to people who will really be able to amplify the education curriculum, too. So that way we can keep the money focused on promoting the film and getting, you know, butts and seats for theaters and then us amplify our network, which is really fun.



Steve Sorowitz - 12:54

Amazing. We'll do our best tonight.



Claire Ayoub - 12:57

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You're doing great. You're doing great. But I also know, coming off the ends with us stuff, I just wanted to say I see you and it is exhausting. It's exhausting. It. It's a lot. It's a lot.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:09

I mean, Jamie was the most exhausted.



Claire Ayoub - 13:12

Was. He was, I'm sure, the go between with Sony. Right?



Steve Sorowitz - 13:16

He was the go between. He was the one who was taking the brunt of the hits. Because you didn't see the brunt of the hits like the slam jobs on us.



Claire Ayoub - 13:24

Oh, I didn't.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:25

No. Because nobody saw it.



Claire Ayoub - 13:26

Right.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:28

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Jamie was stopping it. So Jamie was stopping the worst of the worst. There was a point where they were trying to slam the Baha' I faith. He got that done and out. So, you know, basically who was.



Claire Ayoub - 13:38

Was it Sony or was it public? Yikes. That's icky. That's icky.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:45

Oh, they. They went after everything we had. Luckily, I was out of it. Nobody mentioned me. And I'm glad because I'm an. I'm like, I'm. I'm nobody, you know.



Claire Ayoub - 13:54

We know who you are.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:56

Yeah.



Claire Ayoub - 13:56

But it's kind of a blessing. Let me tell you. It's kind of a blessing.



Steve Sorowitz - 13:59

I know, I know. That's right. No, there's all these things that you know well because Blake and Ryan paid for the movie. I'm like really? I really sent me a check.



Claire Ayoub - 14:08

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Every time I've seen that or some of the comments I see or on the flip they'll say that Blake sold her cut back to. And I was like that's not how it works. They own. You own the footage. Like that's not how. And so. And people will say it so confidently and they'll be like yeah, cuz they bankrolled the movie. And I'm like that's not how that. No, that's not how it works.



Steve Sorowitz - 14:29

Right. But we just sit there quietly, let them think what they want and you know, ultimately we're not going to. You know. But Blake and Ryan are billionaires. I don't think they are actually.



Claire Ayoub - 14:39

No. And even if then like everyone has a stake in everything. It's just, it's a lot and yeah, I think it was just fanning the flames and people I saw this great. Okay. So I started following this great tiktoker who is a PR expert and she specifically talked about how August is like the worst thing for something to happen because people blow it up. Because it's like very quiet and so like looking at that. She's fascinating but she basically is like a lot of the biggest dramas have happened in August when people are like out office at these publisher at these like publications and people just kind of run rampant because it's still summer and just blow everything up. But no matter what, it just sucks to. I'm just, I'm sending all the love. I'm sorry it's been so exhausting.



Claire Ayoub - 15:24

I'm hoping this is a positive boost.



Steve Sorowitz - 15:27

I just talked to Jamie. He's going on vacation for two weeks. So I'm hoping that nothing, it's too hard while he's on vacation.



Claire Ayoub - 15:32

There you go. Good, good.



Steve Sorowitz - 15:34

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So hopefully he needs a two week vacation. He's been working around the clock.



Claire Ayoub - 15:38

Yikes.



Steve Sorowitz - 15:39

And their families are going on vacation.



Claire Ayoub - 15:42

Good, I'm glad. I'm glad.



Steve Sorowitz - 15:44

So what can I do when you're in Chicago?



Claire Ayoub - 15:46

Oh my God. Who knows? I mean I'm just excited to see you. I'm. I'm excited to meet the humanity rising kids. Seriously, like very. Because this is what Crystal and I love doing and so do Mia and Mima. But no, I think looking at that, talking to students always makes us really happy. I know. I'm going to try to find a photographer to do Like, a little photo shoot with me, Mima and Mia, since we're all going to be together, all glammed up. So I'll keep you tuned in on that because I'd love for you to be in on that, too. But, yeah, no, I think for us, we're just excited to reunite, and I think Blue Fox is working with Humanity Rising to get some, like, press involved and stuff like that. But, yeah, but. But you. You. You let me know.



Steve Sorowitz - 16:36

That's good. I think. Press. No, Blue Fox is going to do the press. Is that correct?

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Claire Ayoub - 16:45

Blue Fox, Yes. So they have their PR person who's pushing, and then I connected him with Debbie because. Oh, man, she's on top of it. She sent me, like, three emails the next day being like, here are eight different things you can do. I'm like, all right. Hell, yeah. So I connected her to all people to help out. So she's going to connect us to Alicia Gupta, who's at NBC, who's a partner who featured Humanity Rising. And then I also have some folks in Chicago that I'm reaching out to who are writers on the ground and great folks that could potentially amplify our work, too, which is the best.



Steve Sorowitz - 17:20

But, yeah, we'll work with our community and try to get our community out there. I think we'll probably push our community more on the. On the.



Claire Ayoub - 17:29

Makes sense. Well, you let me know. Honestly, Steve, this is a collab. So, like, you let me know if you want me to spread the word with our. I wanted to make sure you guys get priority for filling the space. But also, if you want me to push our community. You got it.



Steve Sorowitz - 17:44

Push it all. I'd rather have. I'd rather be turning people away.



Claire Ayoub - 17:47

You got it.



Steve Sorowitz - 17:48

So I, you know, look, our. Unless our theater is full every night, you guys, which is not you guys. You guys can push all you want.

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Claire Ayoub - 17:57

Awesome.



Steve Sorowitz - 17:58

We rarely fill theater.



Claire Ayoub - 17:59

Yeah. So this is, what, 198, right?



Steve Sorowitz - 18:02

189.



Claire Ayoub - 18:03

Oh, that's exciting.



Steve Sorowitz - 18:05

Worst case scenario, we're turning people away at the door. That's great.



Claire Ayoub - 18:08

Cool. I know. We have. Because we have our. So my. We call it the Wellesley Mafia. I went to Wellesley College, and when I tell you they are the Mafia. Who was, like, a huge reason why I got the movie made in the first place, because I did that, like, nationwide script tour, and they were the ones that were, like, amplifying when I would be in different cities, that were, like, putting me up, that were calling in favors, that were hosting me for the events and stuff. And so they're all over the country. And we're going to be doing. I don't know if I told you this. We're doing a nationwide or a Wellesley worldwide watch party for opening weekend. We're basically. I just sent it out yesterday to all the different. There are 80 different alumni clubs around the world.

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Claire Ayoub - 18:46

So we sent it out specifically for the US And Canada to do opening weekend to go together with their organization, do group tickets, and, like, post about it. And then Wellesley College is going to be posting about it, and they're going to encourage all their students to go opening weekend, too, because we should be in Framingham in Massachusetts. So, like, it's really exciting, but we have a very active Chicago club. So I will share it with them. Yeah, I'll share it with them.



Steve Sorowitz - 19:11

All their families, their friends.



Claire Ayoub - 19:13

Oh, they'll love it. They'll love it. They'll love it. No, absolutely. So no, we'll. We'll team up on that. I always want to make sure. That's what Debbie was saying to you. I was like, I want to make sure, you know, we have space for humanity, rising students and. But if you want me to fill that place up, we will fill it up. And Crystal has space, too.



Steve Sorowitz - 19:28

Fill it up. And we have another showing on the 30th. Our people get. Or on the 29th with rain. So they can go to the Rain showing. And if they don't want to go to the Rain showing, if they can't make that. It was a showing on the 30th.



Claire Ayoub - 19:39

I love it. I'm so glad he's coming down there for opening night. When I tell you he has been. He really had my back during filming. I can't tell you how.



Steve Sorowitz - 19:48

I'm sorry, the 29th is what, the 27th.

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Claire Ayoub - 19:51

27Th. Yeah. Yeah. But, like, he really had my back during filming because this was my first feature. And he just really. He would always. When he had. I thought he'd go, you don't have to take this. I was like, brain, I'm gonna take your thought. It's gonna be great. But he really, you know, I was so grateful to work with him. And just the way he approached the actors, and he still does. Of being like, I'm an equal, like, I'm rain. Hello. Like that for me, for all of them, made them feel really seen and safe.



Steve Sorowitz - 20:16

They must have been, like, so, like, starstruck to be working with Rain.



Claire Ayoub - 20:20

They were. But he, like, from the first time we talked on the phone, he's like, I don't want Them to feel intimidated by me. Like, that was. And I. And I relayed that to the team. I was like, rain wants you to know. And he walked the walk. When he got there, he, like, shook everyone's hand, including the extras who had no lines and, like, no names in the movie. And he's like, I'm Rain. It's so nice to meet you. Let's have fun. And like, when I tell you. Because that was like the vibe were really cultivating on this set of making sure people felt safe. And he, wow, what a gift. What a gift.



Steve Sorowitz - 20:48

The irony is Justin is just like that. And like, you think some of the events with us set. So you hear two different sets. It's like, which set was it? Was it the set that Brandon Splinter talked about was amazing.



Claire Ayoub - 20:59

Yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 21:00

Or was it the set that Brandon Splinter talked about?

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Claire Ayoub - 21:03

Honestly, it's just. It's so tricky, especially. Yeah. I don't know. I don't know. Because again, I wasn't there, so I don't know what it was like. You were there. Was it bad?



Steve Sorowitz - 21:16

No.



Claire Ayoub - 21:17

Oh, God.



Steve Sorowitz - 21:18

Justin never has a bad set. Yes, it was the worst set of ever been on. But no, it wasn't bad. I was there on set. It was. You know, Justin is. Is really kind and loving and he's like, reigns. Imagine reigns running a set.



Claire Ayoub - 21:30

It's just.



Steve Sorowitz - 21:32

It's the Baha' I said it's never going to be like that. No, it was just. Everything was made up. It was manufactured and it was. It was manufactured on purpose in order to take Justin down.



Claire Ayoub - 21:42

That sucks. I'm sorry. I'm just sorry because I know the intentions of making the movie were with such a purpose. I'm sorry to have this going on.

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Steve Sorowitz - 21:51

I'm hoping it didn't take Justin down.



Claire Ayoub - 21:54

No, I'm hoping it's winding down. Fingers crossed.



Steve Sorowitz - 21:57

I think it's going well. Hollywood's still got a hold of it.



Claire Ayoub - 22:01

Yeah, that's because it's quiet again. August, man. August. I'll send you this video from this tiktok. I love her. I love her. She is just like, she is a pro. I think she's in her, like, 50s and she, like, breaks it down to, like, educate people to also make them better consumers of being like, hey, is what you're reading true? Or, you know, what is a source? Like, who could it be? You know, like, breaking it down to everything to make people more informed readers too. Because, yeah, when I saw everything blowing up, I was just like, oh, Jesus. Like, it just. And just. Yeah, I Was actually in Chicago for a wedding, for everyone's wedding that week yet. And I was just like, had rejoined Tick Tock to like share the trailer and then I was like, oh, my God, what's going on?



Steve Sorowitz - 22:45

But yeah, I've read, I've read more of that. I've Never was on TikTok before. I've read enough, but.



Claire Ayoub - 22:49

Right.



Steve Sorowitz - 22:49

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You know, seems like TikTok, Instagram are pretty pro, Justin. Yeah, yeah, there's. Reddit is a little bit more even, but Reddit just seems mean spirited.



Claire Ayoub - 22:59

Reddit can be very weird. I've. I've been on some pages that are like, so, like for plus size fashion and stuff, it's very supportive. But I think it's also, there are different corners of it where people go just to be like, terrible. Yeah, Reddit freaks me out. Reddit freaks me out.



Steve Sorowitz - 23:12

Oh, they're both. They're both. Yeah, whatever.



Claire Ayoub - 23:14

No, Reddit freaks me out.



Steve Sorowitz - 23:16

You have no idea what you're talking about anything. You haven't watched anything. You're just trying to be me.



Claire Ayoub - 23:22

Yeah. And like, that's the thing. We're also. There's a big push right now about parasocial relationships. Like, I don't know if you know the singer Chapel Roan, she just blew up this year. She was like an indie artist, I want to say, like six months ago, and like, completely blew up. And she actually came out this week or last week on a podcast talking about that it's not okay to stalk people because they're famous. Like, it's not okay, like, you don't know me. And like, it was very honestly brave because people are like, well, you know, I made you. And she's like, no, like, I don't owe you anything. And my family's in danger right now and people keep trying touch me and keep trying, you know, and like, putting up that kind of boundary to be like, we don't know each other.



Claire Ayoub - 24:05

But people form these parasocial relationships, right? Of where they're like, oh, I know you. I've known everything you've ever made. And, and I, you know, they attach their hopes and dreams to a person who's human, who they've never met or, like, haven't worked with, or, you know, it can just be really scary. It can be super scary. I don't know.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Steve Sorowitz - 24:24

I don't know.



Claire Ayoub - 24:25

But I'm sorry, it's been. So are you able to take a vacation soon, Steve? Do you get to rest your brain?



Steve Sorowitz - 24:30

No, no, but mine isn't so bad. I'm okay.



Claire Ayoub - 24:34

Yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 24:35

Jamie wasn't working till 11 o' clock at night. I just checked in occasionally. There was a week that was long for me when we thought were gonna have to go into court.



Claire Ayoub - 24:43

Oh, God.



Steve Sorowitz - 24:44

I still don't know that we won't have to go into court. I just know that right now it seems like Dayton. And then if

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

they persist and they push to the limits, then we'll go to court and then it's all on me. Then. Then I'll be working harder than Jamie did because I'm gonna.



Claire Ayoub - 25:00

It's gonna be protecting the studio. Right.



Steve Sorowitz - 25:04

I will protect the studio like Israel protected itself from hamas. There were 39,000 dead bodies. There will be two dead bodies when I'm done, minimum. And so not dead, but, you know, dead. You're dead to me. So that kind of. That, that kind of dead, but dead to a lot of people. If, if they ever get me to that point, then I'll make it worth their while because I'm going to spend a lot of money to make sure the studio is protected. But I don't think we'll go there.



Claire Ayoub - 25:33

Yeah, I hope not. As you're. As someone who.



Steve Sorowitz - 25:35

That's not the world I want to live in.



Claire Ayoub - 25:37

No, no. I hope it goes away. I just hope it goes away. Or that people lose interest or realize it's harming everyone's career.



Steve Sorowitz - 25:46

Yeah, I think that we'll just probably for years. Yeah, this is not going to go away. I don't think it's going to go away anytime soon. Yeah, we'll have to be defensive for years because there'll be stuff coming at us. I will be defensive for years. So if they ever cross the line, ever, then I will go after them. Jamie at one point called me up and said, I think we're gonna need you.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Claire Ayoub - 26:11

Yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 26:11

And then. And we have lawyers ready to go. We have. We have our press people, our PR people working. We haven't had to engage the lawyers much yet.



Claire Ayoub - 26:20

That's good. That's a good sign. That's a good sign.



Steve Sorowitz - 26:24

Nothing's really hit our studio. You know, it's never like. Basically, people love Justin and they still love Justin.



Claire Ayoub - 26:29

Yeah, that's good.



Steve Sorowitz - 26:31

And if you meet Justin, how could you not love Justin?



Claire Ayoub - 26:33

I know, but. Yeah, I'm just glad that I'm just sending all the good energy. I hope it. I hope it stays safe. I hope it stays safe. It's tough.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Steve Sorowitz - 26:46

You know what? Just. You were lucky you had a production like that. Almost all of our Production is. Almost all of our productions are like that.



Claire Ayoub - 26:57

I'm glad. Oh, I also heard. Wait, just total tangent. Adhd. I heard the Hurricanes got their trailer premiered on NBC this morning.



Steve Sorowitz - 27:05

Really?



Claire Ayoub - 27:06

Yeah, they got their premiere on NBC, which is so. They talked about it in our meeting on Tuesday. I'm so excited to see this doc. I'm so, so excited. It's like, right up my alley. I'm so psyched.



Steve Sorowitz - 27:18

That is Hurricanes is very good. Yeah. We've been involved with some really cool stuff and we've got other films by other people. We're playing. Yeah, we're playing a film about disabled people called Daruma. We're playing. We have. We have a film that's coming out. We have Sugar Cane, which is playing now. And then we have. Hang on. I'm trying to think of the name of the next film. Bull Street.



Claire Ayoub - 27:49

Cool. I was going to ask, have you always wanted to open a movie theater or was it. Is it something that's been percolating in your brain or was it just because I love a dear friend of mine. I thought of you. A dear friend of mine who's like, she's a product manager and she's a phenomenal filmmaker as well on the side, but she's trying to switch careers and wants to open up a movie theater. So I'm loving talking to people who run them to ask what made you get into it? And also any advice you have for them I could pass along.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Steve Sorowitz - 28:17

What is her job right now?



Claire Ayoub - 28:19

Product manager at Warby Parker. She's a genius. She keeps everything moving. And she's based in New York. She really wants to move to Barcelona. She lived in, I think France for years, right out of college or right after high school. And we met in a theater festival you're both in. And she is just one of those people who's brilliant but also supports the hell out of other creators. And I just love being her friend. But she loves, loves movies. Basically. Movies are how she gets through tough times at work. She to, like, double up on her movie going during the week and, like, wants to share that with people.



Steve Sorowitz - 28:51

Here's what I would say. People aren't going to movies. It's been a challenge for me. I've lost a lot of money. Having said that, it's also. I don't think movie theaters are completely going away.



Claire Ayoub - 29:01

No, not at all.



Steve Sorowitz - 29:02

I think the renaissance will come, but you have to have angle at it.



Claire Ayoub - 29:06

Yeah, right.



Steve Sorowitz - 29:08

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

Does she have. Does she have the money to withstand some bad times?



Claire Ayoub - 29:10

No. Not yet. Not yet. Not yet.



Steve Sorowitz - 29:14

I wouldn't do it unless you had a little. Little extra money.



Claire Ayoub - 29:16

I know. I think for her it's more. It's a dream in the future, but also, like, she wants to learn how to run one. But. No, but that's. But that's important to know. Same thing with this is why I love, like, very close to my lawyer for this reason where I like talking through stuff with her to be like, okay, what is the real meat and potatoes? Same thing with my accountant, right? Or I'm like, hey, how do I actually do this? Like, what's the paperwork? How much will it cost me to keep accounting going for this. This one project? Right? And, like, stuff like that of knowing the nitty gritty. But I feel like, is there any way I can support y' all for. For Wayfarer Theaters?



Steve Sorowitz - 29:49

Just give us a shout out. Give us a video. A video would be great. Saying, hey, so work with. Work with Clay on that. A video would be great.



Claire Ayoub - 29:58

And we're gonna be there. So, like, for us especially, creating that kind of a fun experience with, like, the catwalk and just. Steve, thank you. We're so freaking excited to do the screening there, like, and to have us be together for that is so exciting.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:12

You're gonna love, love.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Claire Ayoub - 30:14

I can't wait. I love a theater. Theaters make me feel. This is why my friend and I are friends. Like, theaters make us feel very safe and like, we're about to explore a different universe.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:23

It's always the best art theater is not a typical theater.



Claire Ayoub - 30:26

I love it. I love it.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:28

You heard much about it.



Claire Ayoub - 30:29

We know. I know that the point of it is. Wait, do you mean the actual space? Oh, wait, walk me through. No, I know about what you're offering, but I don't know about the space.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:38

You walk in and there's a hologram of Justin and Jamie and Tara and me saying, welcome to Wayfair and, oh.



Claire Ayoub - 30:46

My God, I'm obsessed.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Steve Sorowitz - 30:48

And then there's. You walk upstairs, actually, when you walk in, your right, it says flowers of one garden.



Claire Ayoub - 30:55

Community.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:55

So community board.



Claire Ayoub - 30:57

Love it.



Steve Sorowitz - 30:57

You walk, there's. And it says oneness. Then there's a nine pointed Baha' I star on the ceiling. The lobby's all been redone. There's a big screen in the back showing the movies we make, and there's a cafe. And then as you walk down the hallway, though, there's. There's kind of cool carpeting and ceiling, and there's also a Lily Bloom's flower shop right now.



Claire Ayoub - 31:17

I love that. I know. I saw that from the screen, from Social. I did. I thought I looked very cool.



Steve Sorowitz - 31:23

A sign that says, where there was love, nothing is too much trouble, and there's always time. Love it at the end of

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

the hall. So basically what I'm saying is that it's a. It's a Baha' I inspired, open, high inspired movie theater, but which is beautiful. Everyone knows, like, we will not play violent movies. We will not play horror movies. We'll only play, like. And so we've got just this ton of women movies.



Claire Ayoub - 31:49

Very cool. Well, I have a question. How far is. Is it DePaul? How far is DePaul from you?



Steve Sorowitz - 31:57

About less than an hour, depending on traffic.



Claire Ayoub - 31:59

I have a friend of mine who I met through the blacklist, who is a. He's, like, a genius. He works with them for their feature lab, so he was my mentor for that. But he teaches at DePaul, so it could be a potential collab for them to show, like, their student films to, like, do that kind of collaboration. Collaboration or even, like, to turn it into, like, a film marathon for them to, like, learn from or things like that for an hour. But I could connect, y'. All Connecting with Clay.



Steve Sorowitz - 32:24

Absolutely.



Claire Ayoub - 32:25

Yeah. Oh, no. I love. I love the community stuff. So that's why I asked, how can I help?



Steve Sorowitz - 32:30

And I have. I'm extremely connected.

Claire Ayoub - 32:32

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Oh, I know you are. Yeah.



Steve Sorowitz - 32:34

So.



Claire Ayoub - 32:34

But especially I think that's. That's been the coolest thing. And I know for me, like, the first time I got to see my movie on a big screen, like, was unreal. Like, unreal. Or even, like, going to film festivals and stuff and meeting other filmmakers is just always really fun and affirming. And. I know. Let me. Let me ask around. I'll ask around. Especially in the Highland park area, who I know doing stuff, because. Yeah, especially, like, for young kids of color to see stuff that they've shot on their freaking iPhone, like, up on a big screen. Like, it's so cool.



Steve Sorowitz - 33:02

It's so cool we've done that.



Claire Ayoub - 33:05

I love it. Honestly, like, that. That side. And it's clear where your heart is, too. But it's tough with the business side of wanting to make sure, you know, everything, of course, is in the black, because that's our job.



Steve Sorowitz - 33:17

I arrive in front, who might want to do that for me? I got to talk to.



Claire Ayoub - 33:20

Yeah.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Steve Sorowitz - 33:20

Like, start doing some classes.



Claire Ayoub - 33:22

Honestly, like, when I tell you, like, this is. I teach, and I always offer financial aid because a lot of folks, just to, like, clear that barrier. But what is so fun about it is it's them starting to build their own community too. So it's like having a teacher, but for them to be able to text each other, support each other, and like, start building that community early instead of feeling isolated. Like, my filmmaker community had my back so hard during this. Like, half of them were part of my director's cut early screening when I was like, getting notes and things like that. And we support the hell out of each other and like forming that early as a young creator, I mean, no brainer.



Claire Ayoub - 33:59

And making, especially since you have a cafe, making it a place to hang out and like, bring your ideas. Something I had for an idea down the road was having like a little board of like, looking for creatives, like looking for a cinematographer, looking for a, you know, like kind of a thing where you can hang out. So like, even turning your cafe into that kind of a supportive space for filmmakers could be fun.



Steve Sorowitz - 34:23

You got a lot of work to do in front of us right now.



Claire Ayoub - 34:24

I don't know. I know, I know.



Steve Sorowitz - 34:27

Anyway, I better run so I can. My break today.

Claire Ayoub - 34:29

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Go have your break. And it was great talking to you and I'm just sending all the love. I hope, I hope. I do hope it calms down.



Steve Sorowitz - 34:36

I will say that it's gonna calm down. It's already calmed down.



Claire Ayoub - 34:38

Good, I'm glad. All right, my friend, it was great to see you. Thanks for hanging out.



Steve Sorowitz - 34:43

Just. We will see each other in person in one month.



Claire Ayoub - 34:46

I'm so psyched. I'm so psyched. And I'll. I'll send you all the good stuff.



Steve Sorowitz - 34:51

Well, I'm really looking forward to getting it out there. And I'm glad that I'm, you know, I couldn't believe weren't going to do anything.



Claire Ayoub - 34:58

I know. I was a little bummed, too. I was a little bummed too. I know that. But also it's such a huge ensemble and it's such a small budget film. And like, you know, Blue Fox is putting up a lot of cash to do a lot of this stuff, which I'm so grateful for. So for us, what I'm going to try to do, between you and me, if we do a New York screening with Blue Fox, I'm gonna see who they're flying out and then I might fly out two other people from our, like, forecast so they can all just like reunite together and we could just celebrate, like go do karaoke or something. Just to

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

celebrate. Yeah, it's just, it's. It's why we do it right. Community's everything. Community's everything.



Claire Ayoub - 35:32

But when I tell you how excited people are around the world, I am. It's unreal. It's unreal.



Steve Sorowitz - 35:38

That's wonderful. You know, this would be a sleeper head thing.



Claire Ayoub - 35:41

Honestly, that's what everyone's saying. It's very cool. I'm not getting.



Steve Sorowitz - 35:47

If we have another hit for Wayfair and we're gonna.



Claire Ayoub - 35:49

No. Right. And that's the thing. And this is a female led project. Right? Like really, like all female department heads. Like everyone working on this project. I'm really centering like our casting team that did the nationwide casting call because the casting agencies didn't have people. They didn't have them. So, like we're hoping with especially Blacklist is going to be really amplifying the development process and what we did. So, like adding that to industry recognition is going to be huge. So I'm very excited. Very excited.



Steve Sorowitz - 36:19

I love this woman's environment. You know, we. We have another. I think I told you, another first time director we supported.



Claire Ayoub - 36:24

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

Yes. A small. A woman named Scarlett Johansson. Yeah. I'm so excited for her. I'm so excited.



Steve Sorowitz - 36:30

Trying to get her first big break. Maybe people will hear her.



Claire Ayoub - 36:33

I mean, but Scarlett Jo. Who? I can't. I love it. No, but honestly, every time a first time feature director. It's your first time being a feature director. It's tough. I love that.



Steve Sorowitz - 36:43

She was very. She was so cool, calm, collected and confident.



Claire Ayoub - 36:47

No, she.



Steve Sorowitz - 36:49

And nice. And nice.



Claire Ayoub - 36:50

Which is what you want. And just professional. Right. You want someone who's professional. Who, like, I don't.



Steve Sorowitz - 36:55

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

You know, it's so interesting because you work with so many people and almost everybody's nice. And then there's Blake, who. She's totally different than everyone else.



Claire Ayoub - 37:01

Sorry. I'm sorry.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:03

Not to say anything bad about her, but different.



Claire Ayoub - 37:06

There you go. There you go.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:07

And I don't. I think for the most part, most people see what we're doing, See, we're nice and they're nice back. Even, like, even if they weren't perfectly nice. And I just think, you know, some people forgot to learn how to be nice.



Claire Ayoub - 37:21

We. Oh, the industry. I left it. I left it for a while, Steve. I left it for a while. There was a reason I was originally gonna make this movie in my. My hometown. It's a tough, icky place. It can be a very icky place.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:32

I think that there's a lot of good people out there. So we're. What we're doing is we're figuring out who we want to work with, who we don't want to work with and then we'll just work with them and then it's done. Anyway, have a wonderful day. I'll see you too.

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...



Claire Ayoub - 37:43

I hope you enjoy your break. It's good to see you.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:45

Let tell it. Tell all your friends.



Claire Ayoub - 37:47

I will. No, I'm gonna send the invite out. Absolutely. And I just have them RSVP to Clay, right? I think.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:52

Yes, exactly.



Claire Ayoub - 37:53

Perfect. Awesome.



Steve Sorowitz - 37:55

You play and or Elise. She can help as well. Anyway, you can talk to Elise and Clay and ask who they want.



Claire Ayoub - 38:01

Perfect.



Steve Sorowitz - 38:03

Meeting Title: Claire Ayoub + Steve Sorowitz call recording (BL/W...

I think. I actually think that it's probably better having it go through a lease and her team but ask them who they wanted to go through.



Claire Ayoub - 38:08

I'll ask. I'll ask. Awesome. Thank you, Steve. I hope you have a good rest of your week.



Steve Sorowitz - 38:13

You too.



Claire Ayoub - 38:13

Bye.