

Shooting to Kill: How an Independent Producer Blasts Through the Barriers to Make Movies that Matter

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Complete with behind-the-scenes diary entries from the set of Vachon's best-known films, *Shooting to Kill* offers all the satisfaction of an intimate memoir from the frontlines of independent filmmaking, from one of its most successful agent provocateurs - and survivors. Hailed by the *New York Times* as the "godmother to the politically committed film" and by *Interview* as a true "auteur producer," Christine Vachon has made her name with such bold, controversial, and commercially successful films as "Poison," "Swoon," "Kids," "Safe," "I Shot Andy Warhol," and "Velvet Goldmine." Over the last decade, she has become a driving force behind the most daring and strikingly original independent filmmakers—from Todd Haynes to Tom Kalin and Mary Harron—and helped put them on the map. So what do producers do? "What don't they do?" she responds. In this savagely witty and straight-shooting guide, Vachon reveals the guts of the filmmaking process—from developing a script, nurturing a director's vision, getting financed, and drafting talent to holding hands, stoking egos, stretching every resource to the limit and pushing that limit. Along the way, she offers shrewd practical insights and troubleshooting tips on handling everything from hysterical actors and disgruntled teamsters to obtuse marketing executives.

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Christine Vachon has emerged over the last ten years as one of the key leaders of the New York independent film movement. She lives in New York City, where she heads her own company, Killer Films. Labeled the "godmother to the politically committed film" by the *New York Times*, producer Vachon, head of NYC's Killer Films, emerged as one of the key players in the current independent film movement with such movies as *Kids*, *Safe*, *Go Fish*, *I Shot Andy Warhol* and *Velvet Goldmine*, scheduled by Miramax for November. For this guided tour through the world of low-budget independent filmmaking, Vachon teamed with *Slate* film critic Edelstein to "tell you what producers do and how you can do it too." With 15 years of experience, she's writing about what she knows—the full filmmaking process from the pitch and story rights to script development and financing through casting, costs, crews, computer schedules and storyboards, scouting locations and constructing sets, editing and postproduction, deals and distribution, film fests and marketing. Covering all aspects, she outlines factors that make "the difference between a dream shoot and a campfire-ready tale of terror." This is no dry textbook, since even chapters crammed with facts and information communicate a kinetic enthusiasm. Diary excerpts and 50 b&w photos punctuate the blitz on budgets and breakdowns, and other industry pros toss in short sidebar observations. Entertaining, emotional anecdotes abound, contrasting negotiation nightmares with Vachon's desire to protect her directors, actors and associates. Although the prose style's jump-cut jumble might leave some yearning for a more conventional chronological structure, Vachon reaches readers on such a level of intimate intensity it's evident that her future books will be green-lighted. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Other Books

International Dictionary of Films and Filmmakers: Writers and production artists. Contains over two thousand entries, arranged alphabetically within four volumes, that provide information about significant films, actors and actresses, directors, and writers and production artists in North American, British, and West European cinematic history. Includes photographs and indexes.

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