



Stanford eCorner

Financial Support for the Arts

Michealene C. Risley, *Fresh Water Spigot*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2010/Financial-Support-for-the-Arts>

We're living in the YouTube world, say documentary film *Tapestries of Hope* creators Michealene C. Risley and Anand Chandrasekaran. While the statistics are stacked against their film making money, these seasoned cinematic entrepreneurs say still possible to find investors willing to support their core mission and bolster their passion.



Transcript

So statistically, the top 0.5% maybe all documentaries every year do make money, right. So the goal is - you never know what other documentaries are getting made every year. Because you're so deep in the trenches making this film that you don't know what Michael Moore is working on, right? Essentially and if - and essentially if Michael Moore is making a movie or Errol Morris is making a movie, that movie is going to be the documentary that attracts most of the press and the money and the attention and the audiences. So you really have no idea what else is going on out there and especially now, it doesn't cost a lot of money to make a good documentary. So there are a lot of people who are not based in the US or are not even documentary filmmakers who were making good documentaries. So it's a little bit like we're living in the YouTube world, right? So standards have come down, costs have come down, and so it is a lot easier than you think to make a documentary and it's also quite easy to make a good documentary. And of course the best documentaries are obviously really in a different orbit but you know - so ignoring them for a second. So statistically speaking it's not very easy to make money on the documentary. So you're not only counting on you doing a great job but everything else that's going on. So what we look for was just investors that were okay with that uncertainty and still believe on the social side of what we were doing.

I think you really have to tap into the heart of people and it has to be something they're passionate about.