

“I Have Called You by Name”: Exploring the Unique Production Ecosystem of the Chosen

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Abstract: Christian films have fallen deeper into the category of independent film and away from Hollywood mainstream productions due to their diverging ideologies and values (Russell, 2013). Christian filmmaking is driven by the mission to evangelize and spread the Gospel, casting a rather unique vision for filmmaking. This sector of filmmaking has been notably cast to the side due to the challenging barriers of production and distribution. However, *The Chosen* (2017) has successfully proven to be an exception to this pattern with its unique independent production model that encompasses an efficacious crowdsource funding, unusual distribution strategies, and an uncommon participatory production culture. As the first ever television show about the stories of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, more research is necessary to understand how this show constructed such a unique and successful production ecosystem. This project aims to contribute to Christian film literature by providing a current and informative production study of *The Chosen's* successful and transparent production model through the inclusion of the voices of those who have worked in peripheral roles on the set of *The Chosen*. This research focuses on the many strategies utilized to produce this series through a media industry, production studies, political economy, and cultural studies lens. In addition to studying the production of *The Chosen*, this study also examines its industrial expansion into its own Studios and Biblical cinematic universe, as well as its fan and industry discourse.

References

Russell, J. (2013). In Hollywood, but Not of Hollywood: Independent Christian Filmmaking. In *American Independent Cinema: Indie, Indiewood and Beyond*, edited by Geoff King, Claire Molloy, and Yannis Tzioumakis, (pp.186-197). New York: Routledge.

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