

Cannes Confidential IV: Premieres Missed and Parties Made

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By [Victoria Charters](#)
(from the [2011 Cannes Film Festival](#))

Day six of the festival.

I wake at 4 a.m., bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. I usually average four to six hours of sleep each night during festivals — some of my über-human fellow nomads can exist on less, buoyed with the energy of the occasion.

At Cannes, as is the case at all of the big festivals I have worked or attended, there's a buzz from all that is happening, the air supercharged from the excitement of new releases, meetings with co-workers and/or potential partners, brushes with strangers, invitations to the incredible parties and the millions of dollars of deals still being made in and around the Marché.

If you are into stats, here they are for Cannes 2011: 4,200 titles, 15,000 screenings, 60 territories, 2,500 distributors and 450 sales agents, all revolving around 10 days of star-studded [red carpet](#) events.

At 10 a.m. on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, my first meeting is with one of the biggest studios in the world. I must be moving on up in the world for them to have requested a meeting with me. Sitting on white, inflatable couches, we riff on topics ranging from sleep deprivation to red-carpet cartwheels. I receive a glossy brochure and a USB stick with all their info together with the advice, “You can take a look, or delete all the info and use the stick.” The stick is branded with the studio’s logo, so it’s a win-win either way.

I head to La Croisette with the luxury of a half-hour break before my next meeting and remember that I have not yet summoned breakfast. The word on the street is that the food-truck crepes are sublime, but sadly they haven’t fired them up just yet. I order a sandwich labeled “Le Formidable” and lament that my eyes are larger than my stomach.

My next meeting is with one of the Marché’s smaller production companies. Housed at the “Cinema from Spain” booth in the Riviera, they seem to be interested in me as both a producer and a director. They present two scripts; I present one idea. When my [documentary](#) is done, it might be something to explore.

Finally, I have some free time! I make it down to the [Short Film](#) Corner and check on my film, “Backstage.” *Ca c’est bon*. I also check out a buddy’s film, Nash Edgerton’s “Bear,” which is an official selection for the [short films](#) in competition. I “like” it on [Facebook](#) (and “like” my film too).

At 2 p.m. I find the Olympia, one of the theaters in the streets near the Palais, for a screening of “Code Blue” by Urszula Antoniak. With 15,000 screenings, determining which to see depends on your timing and whether you can get in (or get a ticket). One rule I try to follow is if the film can easily be seen later in the U.S. or has been made for the U.S. market, I save it for later. Best to utilize Cannes to educate myself on the extraordinary foreign films that aren’t otherwise easily accessible. The film-festival circuit is my film school, and it’s a great one.

As for “Code Blue,” I know nothing about the film apart from the fact that it plays at a time when I have a window. The poster is cool, and the short synopsis is an intriguing description of a nurse who also acts as an angel of death. It turns out to be a very interesting film with dreamy [cinematography](#) and innovative storytelling and includes a scene that would have any member of the MPAA running for impossible ratings. I am happy with my choice.

I head home, snack and shower. After dressing up (as is required for any screening at the 2,300-seat La Grand Lumiere), we stop in at a co-producer’s dinner. Dinner is so vibrant we miss the [premiere](#). *C’est la vie*.

Après dinner is find-a-party hour. We whistle until we locate some friends on La Croisette. We attempt the German party (can’t find it), the Indian party (don’t know anyone who can help to get us in) and are delighted to be welcomed into the Egyptian party. Everyone there seems to be happy to celebrate both Egyptian culture in film as well as Egypt’s liberation. On the way out, we are given my favorite piece of Cannes swag to date, a bag containing a Taschen-style hardcover book. Both the book and bag read, “I AM FILM.”

Photo by [Victoria Charters](#)