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Slackery News Tidbits, July 11

By [Jordan Gass-Poore](#) on July 11, 2012 - 10:00am in [Slackery News Tidbits](#)

Here's the latest in Austin and Texas film news.

- The Harry Ransom Center continues its free [Biblical Film Series](#) on Thursday at 7 pm with Cecil B. Demille's *[Samson and Delilah](#)*. The film, starring Hedy Lamarr and Victor Mature, tells the story of Samson, the strongest man in his tribe. After his fiance is murdered, he is seduced by her sister Delilah, who learns the secret of his strength and betrays him to the Philistines. The series relates to the center's exhibition "[The King James Bible: Its History and Influence](#)," which ends July 29. The final movie in the series, *[Solomon and Sheba](#)*, will screen July 26.
- Central Texas-shot feature *[Bernie](#)* ([Don's review](#)) has earned more than \$7 million, making the dark comedy the highest grossing film for distributor Millennium Entertainment, [Indiewire](#) reported. Richard Linklater's film is expected to surpass his 1993 cult hit *[Dazed and Confused](#)* in the next few weeks. *Bernie*, made with a reported budget of \$6 million, is expected to become the Austin director's highest-grossing independently released film.
- [Indiewire's Criticwire](#) recently announced the best indie movies of 2012. Local director Bob Byington's movie *[Somebody Up There Likes Me](#)*, which premiered at SXSW, was picked as one of the top English-language features of the year ([Don's review](#)). Runners-up include the Mark Duplass-starring dramedy *[Your Sister's Sister](#)* ([Mike's review](#)) and *Bernie*.
- [Austin Movie Blog](#) reported that Evan Fitzmaurice has stepped down as [Texas Film Commission](#) interim director to practice law in Austin. The governor's office is seeking a replacement. Until a replacement is found, David Morales, general counsel for the governor's office, is acting as film commissioner. Fitzmaurice replaced Bob Hudgins as director in 2010.
- [Austin Film Festival](#) recently announced former film competition programmer Erin Hallagan as this fest's new conference director. Maya Perez, former festival conference director, has been granted a Michener Writing Fellowship at UT Austin. Perez will remain on the festival's board and *On Story* development team.
- The Onion AV Club's [Pop Pilgrims](#) online travel show went to Marfa, Texas to visit former locations of the award-winning movies *[There Will Be Blood](#)*, *[No Country For Old Men](#)* and *[Giant](#)*. Various *There Will Be Blood* locations were built on McGuire Ranch, an enormous private ranch just outside of Marfa, during the film's nine-month production. A church, train depot and a horse carriage are all that remain of the film's 2006 set.

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