

Actress Fights the Good Fight for Christ in Hollywood

When Mimi Sagadin got her first role on a Hollywood set as actress Emma Thompson's stand-in, she was ecstatic. She never dreamed God would help her fulfill her childhood dream of becoming an actress. Yet she remembered the real reason she was there when an unbeliever on the set joked that they might as well "hurry up and die to see what's on the other side."

Without missing a beat, Sagadin replied, "I know what's on the other side." The ensuing conversation was a divine appointment that opened the door to sharing the gospel. She recounts a number of similar opportunities, several of which resulted in people making commitments to Christ. Sagadin compares her most recent role as Corrie ten Boom in *Return to the Hiding Place* to Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush. It reminded her of her call: to be an ambassador for Christ in Hollywood.

"We want to be infiltrators," Sagadin says. "We want to be the rivers in the desert of Hollywood."

After all, Hollywood is the world's most influential mission field. Few other industries reach as many people groups around the world. Christians making faith-based films have the chance to produce excellent work that impacts viewers with biblical truths, and on secular sets they have numerous opportunities to share their faith.

One young Christian actor, much to his executive producer's chagrin, inspired his co-workers to stop cursing on the set simply by showcasing Christ with a pure life.

Being a Christian in Hollywood, though, is no walk in the park. Some of the biggest struggles are isolation and depression. Few people working in Hollywood can earn enough to live without a supplemental income. Because of the intense

competition and frequent rejections for roles, Christian actors can quickly get discouraged.

In response, Karen Covell started the Hollywood Prayer Network (*hollywoodprayer*) in 2001, giving Christian actors and filmmakers an opportunity to connect with a prayer partner. Covell says she tries “to get (believers in Hollywood) connected with other people, to stay strong in their faith, so that they’re ready to deal with the spiritual temptation.”

This is also why Covell strongly encourages Hollywood Christians to get plugged in to a local church. With that support, they are more effective for Christ in their work and in impacting hearts.

“We will never see a change in the content of Hollywood until we see a change in the hearts of those creating content,” Covell says.

Actor, writer and producer Shun Lee Fong also recognizes loneliness and discouragement as major struggles for Christians in Hollywood.

Through Greenhouse Arts & Media () and Hollywood Connect (), he and his peers provide Christians and nonbelievers alike with training in their craft, financial and career advice, networking opportunities and relational support. Fong has a heart for Hollywood because “artists have a prophetic edge in their culture today. Not just locally and nationally, but globally. They’re culture-shapers.”

Yes, Christians exist in Hollywood, and they desperately need our prayers. They are on the frontlines of a battlefield that Satan does not want to give up. We as Christians can be supportive of our brothers and sisters in Hollywood by getting behind them, giving financially and, above all, interceding for them.

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