

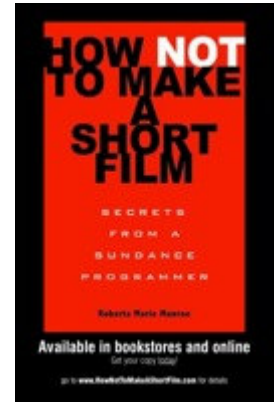
Film exclusive sundance film festival

## Exclusive: Roberta Munroe's 3 Tips for Tackling Sundance

8:27 am Tuesday Jan 13, 2009

by [Caroline Stanley](#)

It's the festival that has launched the careers of everyone from indie hot shots like Jason Reitman and Darren Aronofsky to cult icons like Kevin Smith and Quentin Tarantino. That's both exciting news and a boatload of pressure for a filmmaker who is headed for Sundance for the first time this year. Never fear. After the jump, [Roberta Munroe](#), a filmmaker who has been programming short films for Sundance and attending the fest for years, offers up her best advice for making the most out of Park City. If you're going to be there too, be sure to drop us a line at [tips \[at\] flavorwire \[dot\] com](mailto:tips[at]flavorwire[dot]com) with interesting celebrity sightings, insider industry info, or general questions you'd like us to help you get answered.



### Table your agenda.

“Sundance is a festival where you're more likely to meet the head of acquisitions for one of the big studios on the free shuttle than in the middle of some fancy party. Sarah Pierce, Director of Operations, has honed the getting around part of things to an art. Everyone rides it — well, everyone but maybe Harvey Weinstein. I tell filmmakers that their number one goal should be having a good time — not selling their film or securing distribution. It's such a stressful festival anyway that *everyone* is usually crying by Monday morning. Park City is about the size of Gansevoort Street. You're packed in at film screenings and parties, and on public transportation. It's freezing outside. You're 10,000 feet above sea level. You don't want to go into that environment stressed.”

### Forget about sneaking into parties.

“I come from a jaded perspective, but almost everyone who has been to Sundance has horror stories of waiting an hour and a half in the freezing cold to get into a party where it's a 100 degrees and they spent the next 45 minutes in line for a drink. And that's when you're on the list. If you've got free time, go to screenings — you're more likely to get a pay-off from that. Whatever you do, don't drink alcohol for the first two nights you're there unless you're used to drinking at higher elevation. I call it the 'zero oxygen blackout,' where you don't remember meeting Owen Wilson the next morning or hot tubbing with a bunch of other filmmakers. Remember that altitude sickness is a real thing, and it can take you out of the game in that first weekend. If you're going to drink anyway, I recommend consuming at least two liters of water before you have that first glass of wine.”

### Don't panic if you don't have screening passes.

“Even if all of the public tickets to a film have been sold and it's marked as sold out, there is usually a pretty large chunk set aside for the filmmakers, sponsors, and other industry types that may or may not be used. If you're in the front half of the rush line in the morning, you'll often get in to see something good that day. That said, on opening weekend it's close to impossible to score last-minute tickets because everyone just got there and most of the movies are showing for the first time. If you decide to go for it, stay away from the line for the Holiday Village theaters, because they're all incredibly tiny.”

*Roberta Munroe is the author of [How Not To Make A Short Film](#).*