

Director Bio



Leo Zahn attended the USC Cinema Film School Los Angeles, studied architecture and design at the universities of Berlin and Vienna in the mid 70s. Back in California he began his film career as director and editor of short-form promos and making-of featurettes for Hollywood studios. This led to an offer to direct TV commercials for the Rothschild Group in Berlin, commuting between Berlin, London and Los Angeles in the mid 80s. Based in Los Angeles full time again Leo's advertising career continued with commercials that were filmed in the US, Canada and Europe, specializing in fashion, lifestyle, beverages, table-top and toys.

Over the course of his 30-year career Leo directed and photographed more than 600 commercials. He was awarded the International Cinema Advertising CLIO and the Creativity Award from British Art Direction Magazine and has been a member of the Directors Guild of America since 1988.

In 1996 Leo directed the pilot for the "Cobra 11" television series for RTL Network. The series just completed its 20th season and is shown in 25 countries.

In 2014 he was a working group member of the Motion Picture Academy (AMPAS) Science and Technology Council, charged with creating test materials for the [Next Generation Cinema Technology](#) (NGCT) program.

His first feature-length documentary "Desert Maverick" premiered during Modernism Week 2016. The film was Official Selection at Newport Beach and American Documentary Festival and won "Best Documentary" at the 2016 Laughlin International Film festival. Leo's 2nd feature length documentary ["Sinatra in Palm Springs"](#) had its World Premiere with two sold-out screenings during Modernism Week 2018 and was Official Selection of Santa Fe, Phoenix, Pasadena, Newport Beach, Albuquerque, New York and Amsterdam festivals. "Sinatra in Palm Springs" was released in North America by [Shout!Factory](#) in June 2019 after a 10-month theatrical run in selected theatres in Southern California, Arizona and Florida.

