

# Tilt

THE BATTLE TO SAVE  
PINBALL

## Press Kit

The Future of Pinball, LLC  
461 2nd Street C-301  
San Francisco, CA 94107  
415-377-6045  
info@Tilt-Movie.com  
www.Tilt-Movie.com



### **For additional information...**

Additional press information—including a PDF version of this document, high-resolution photos from the film, and audio interviews with me about the state of the pinball industry and the making of the film—can be found at the TILT web site at <http://www.tilt-movie.com/press>. (Log in with username “press”, password “tilt”.)

Thanks you very much.

–Greg Maletic  
Director, *TILT*



## Synopses

### Brief synopsis

*TILT: The Battle to Save Pinball* tells the story of Pinball 2000, the 1999 effort by industry giant Williams to resuscitate the withering fortunes of pinball. The 60-minute documentary is a fascinating case study for anyone interested not just in pinball, but in the march of technology and the intersection of art and commerce.

### 125-word synopsis

In 1998 pinball was dying, thanks to a saturated market and shrinking player base. Williams, the world's largest pinball manufacturer, planned to abandon the game in favor of the more lucrative video slot machine business. *TILT: The Battle to Save Pinball* is a 60-minute documentary that tells the story of Pinball 2000, a clever attempt at resuscitating pinball that failed just at the moment a lot of people thought it might succeed. A *Soul of a New Machine* for the pinball world, *TILT* is a compendium of interviews with legends of the pinball industry, photos, and film of the best games the industry has produced. It's a story about personality and passion, of bold success dizzyingly followed by stunning failure.

### 250-word synopsis

One is often able to see documentaries about the ascendance of new technologies, but rarely does one get a glimpse at the end of a technology. That's what *TILT: The Battle to Save Pinball* is about, and about the dedication of a group of individuals who manage to be passionate about a product despite the fact that history is against them.

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*TILT: The Battle to Save Pinball* is a fascinating case study for anyone interested not just in pinball, but in the march of technology and the intersection of art and commerce.



## **Praise for *TILT: The Battle to Save Pinball* from preview audiences...**

*"I have to say it's fantastic. Its representation of the geeky allure of pinball is surprisingly sexy. But the film gets at something more universal: the precarious and ephemeral conditions of technology, demand, and culture that give life to particular artistic and engineering efforts, and ultimately take it away. A really fun and thoughtful film."*

*"...extremely good. For the more general audience, the movie offers a fascinating portrait of how there are many, many more factors at play in "success" than being the best at what you do and developing a great product."*

*"Very insightful, revealing not only the mysterious end of pinball, but the passion and commitment of the games' creators. If you appreciate the art and dynamics unique to pinball, you will appreciate this movie."*

## **...and from the media...**

*"The movie's a total labor of love, and we were extremely impressed with the graphics in the movie—animated patent drawings, pinball-style corporate graphics, the posed photographs along with the text of the script. Subtle, but...wow! Our [pinball-loving] companion sat through the movie, rapt."*

—Rita Hao, SFist.com

*"I never thought about how the games were made, who designed them, or how the fast-changing world of video games was affecting pinball. Greg Maletic's documentary answers all the questions I was too self-absorbed to ask, creating a fascinating history of pinball." Rated "Pick of the Week"*

—David Walker, Willamette Week



## Director Statement

For a couple of years, I'd had a Williams "Revenge From Mars" pinball machine sitting in my office at my company, Zero G Software. I'd become enamored with this particular game when I first discovered it in a Paris cafe in 1999, and it wasn't long after then that I'd tracked down a brand new one on eBay and started playing it voraciously. Revenge From Mars was one of Williams' intriguing Pinball 2000 machines that used a reflected video monitor to paint virtual targets on the pinball playfield. It was real pinball—with steel balls, flippers, etc.—but it utilized the video in a very clever way, to enhance rather than distract from the pinball experience. After a couple decades of video game playing, it got me interested in pinball again.

I became exceedingly protective of my Revenge From Mars machine, knowing that I harbored what was now an endangered species: after producing this incredible machine in 1999, Williams shut down its pinball division for good. Not a surprise, I guess. Hadn't pinball been suffering for decades? The number of players was dwindling, of course, and there was no way pinball could possibly hold anyone's interest as flashier video games took over the market. Right?

Then a strange thing happened. I knew I loved pinball, but I wasn't expecting that the other Zero G employees (none of whom were die-hard pinball players) would become as obsessed with playing Revenge From Mars as I was. So much for lack of interest in pinball. And after some research, I found that the conventional wisdom claiming pinball had been dying for years was mistaken as well. Pinball's strongest sales year ever was in 1993, long after video games had made their debut. This led me to wonder...how could this amazing thing have failed?

With this realization, I knew I had found the subject for a great documentary: the story of Pinball 2000, the pinball machine designed by arguably the greatest pinball manufacturer in the world—Williams Electronic Games of Chicago, Illinois—in an effort to save the pinball industry from extinction.

Here in Silicon Valley, technologies die every day. For the most part, no one's sad to see them go; the replacements are always better and faster. But with pinball threatening to disappear (one company—Stern—is doing its best to keep it alive) there is no replacement technology on the horizon. When you see a Pinball 2000 machine, you can understand what a loss this is. Conventional wisdom says that pinball is dead, but if you take a look at a Pinball 2000 machine, you won't think that anymore. It's easy to see how pinball could have staved off its demise...at least for another decade or so.

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—Greg Maletic

*Please visit [www.Tilt-Movie.com](http://www.Tilt-Movie.com) for additional details,  
and [www.Tilt-Movie.com/trailer](http://www.Tilt-Movie.com/trailer) for a glimpse at the online trailer.*

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## People in the Film

### George Gomez

George Gomez was one of Williams leading pinball designers in the '90s and one of the inventors of Pinball 2000. While at Williams, George designed hits like Corvette, NBA Fastbreak, and Monster Bash. After leaving Williams in 1999, George became an Executive Producer at Midway Games working on titles such as NBA Ballers, and in his spare time developed the hit Lord of the Rings pinball machine for Stern Pinball.



### Larry DeMar

Larry DeMar is one of the coin-operated industry's most significant players. He's written software for hits in both the video game (Defender, Robotron, Stargate) and pinball (Black Knight, High Speed, The Addams Family) worlds, not to mention the operating system software that drove Williams pinball games for nearly twenty years. Larry became the Director of Engineering at Williams in 1995 before leaving in 1999 to start Leading Edge Design, a creator of electronic gaming machines.



### Pat Lawlor

Pat Lawlor entered the coin-op business in 1980 and is one of the most successful pinball designers of all time, with incredible hits like The Addams Family, Twilight Zone, and Funhouse. Pat is also one of the inventors of Pinball 2000. After leaving Williams in 1999, Pat founded Pat Lawlor Design and has gone on to design games like Monopoly and NASCAR for Stern Pinball.



### Steve Kordek

A legend in the pinball industry, Steve Kordek designed his first pinball machine—Triple Action—in 1949. With Triple Action, Steve became the first designer to place two flippers at the bottom of the playfield, an arrangement that forever after became



the industry standard. Steve went on to design nearly one hundred other pinball machines until retiring from Williams in 2000.

### **Roger Sharpe**

Roger Sharpe became one of the pinball industry's most well-known and respected figures after authoring the book Pinball! in 1977, which quickly became the bible of the industry. Roger went on to design pinball machines for both Game Plan and Williams, and from 1988 to 1999 was Williams' Director of Marketing and Licensing, helping to bring to life the licensed themes that became so much a part of the company's portfolio. Roger currently works for Williams (now WMS Gaming) as their Licensing Brand Manager.



### **Duncan Brown**

Duncan Brown moved his family from Virginia in 1997 to become a part of Williams' pinball organization. Though he first worked in the company's electronic gaming division writing software for slot machines, Duncan soon transferred to Pinball and became a software developer for the Pinball 2000 machine Star Wars: Episode I. Duncan is an avid pinball collector and historian.



### **Cameron Silver**

Cameron Silver moved from Australia in 1995 to work at Williams. In addition to assisting on the Pinball 2000 operating system, Cameron wrote software for redemption machines like Ticket-Tac-Toe and pinballs such as Scared Stiff, Circus Voltaire, and the Pin 2000 machine Star Wars: Episode I. Cameron now works at Midway Games and is on the team developing NBA Ballers: Phenom, the sequel to the smash hit NBA Ballers.



### **Tom Uban**

Tom Uban first came to Williams' legendary pinball design organization in 1993 and made a name for himself by creating software for hits like Corvette, Johnny Mnemonic, and NBA Fastbreak. Tom is one of the co-inventors of Pinball 2000 and was the system architect for the Pinball 2000 operating system.



### **Lyman Sheats**

In addition to being one of the world's best pinball players, Lyman Sheats has achieved notoriety by designing the software for legendary Williams pingames like Attack From Mars, Medieval Madness, and Monster Bash. Today, Lyman works for Stern Pinball and is the software architect of Stern's next-generation pinball operating system.



### **Jim Patla**

A renowned designer while working at Bally in the '60s, '70s, and '80s, Jim Patla designed more than forty pinball machines including Mata Hari, Playboy, and Centaur. After Bally was purchased by Williams in 1988, Jim became Director of Product Development at Williams until 1999, when he transferred to the company's gaming division.



### **Louis Koziarz**

Louis Koziarz arrived at Williams in 1994 and soon became one of the company's leading software developers. Louis worked on games like Tales of the Arabian Nights and No Good Gofers, and was one of the major contributors to the Pinball 2000 operating system. Louis is now a pinball designer and programmer at Pat Lawlor Design. His more recent games include Monopoly and NASCAR.



### **Skip Heller**

Declared an "All-American hero" by *Time Out New York* and "genius" by *All About Jazz*, Skip Heller is an accomplished musician and composer, and the author of TILT's luxurious exotica-style soundtrack. "An excessively versatile artist," says Isaac Josephson in *Downbeat*, "he has served as exotica master Les Baxter's score librarian, done time as tour guitarist for NRBQ, written big band scores for commission, and recorded works that could arguably be categorized as jazz, rockabilly, space-age pop, cartoon music, Latin R&B and classical." (Photo credit: Melinda di Mauro)





## **Contacts**

### **Producer, Writer, & Director**

Greg Maletic  
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greg@Tilt-Movie.com

Greg Maletic is the writer, director, and producer of TILT, his first film. He is currently the Vice President of Game Development at Bunchball, a social game development company. Prior to Bunchball Greg worked as a freelance software developer and illustrator in San Francisco while developing the film. In the late '90s Greg was a co-founder of San Francisco-based Zero G Software, a leading producer of software installation solutions, and before Zero G worked as a Product Marketing Manager at Apple Computer in Cupertino, California. Greg has an MBA from the University of Michigan and a BS in electrical engineering and computer science from Duke University. Outside of producing this documentary, Greg loves watching movies, plays a lot of videogames, and lives with his wife and small dog in the South of Market area of San Francisco.

### **Distributor**

Worldwide television distribution rights are held by Solid Entertainment:

Solid Entertainment  
15840 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 205  
Encino, CA 91436 USA  
Telephone: (818) 990-4300  
Facimile: (818) 990-4320  
E-Mail: info@solidpgms.com

Theatrical and DVD distribution rights are still available.

### **Formats**

NTSC 4:3 video, available on DVD and MiniDV.

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