

Inspired by a NY Times Cover Story, Veteran Producer Jeff Mazzola Joins The Final Fight as Line Producer

Based on a New York Times cover story, the short film adds veteran producer Jeff Mazzola as it gears up for production, casting, and festival rollout.

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, February 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The upcoming short film [The Final Fight](#), based on the true story of filmmaker Todd J. Stein's family that was chronicled in the New York Times cover story, "[The Fight of This Old Boxer's Life Was With His Own Family.](#)" by John Leland, has officially attached veteran film and television professional Jeff Mazzola as Line Producer, bringing decades of production expertise to the project.



The Final Fight's Jeff Mazzola, Line Producer

Mazzola is an experienced producer and production specialist whose career spans major network television and independent film. He recently served as a producer on the feature film [A Brooklyn Love Story](#) (2024), further expanding his producing portfolio in the independent film space, where he teamed up with The Final Fight director Steven Feder.

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We are thrilled to welcome Jeff to The Final Fight.”

Writer, Creator of The Final Fight, Todd J. Stein

Over the course of his career, Mazzola has contributed to numerous high-profile television productions, including work as Property Master on acclaimed series such as Person of Interest, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, Third Watch, The Americans, and Jessica Jones, demonstrating

extensive on-set leadership and logistical expertise across large-scale productions. His earlier credits also include producing and directing projects such as Last Laugh, along with producing

work across television and independent content, reflecting a versatile background that combines creative and operational leadership.

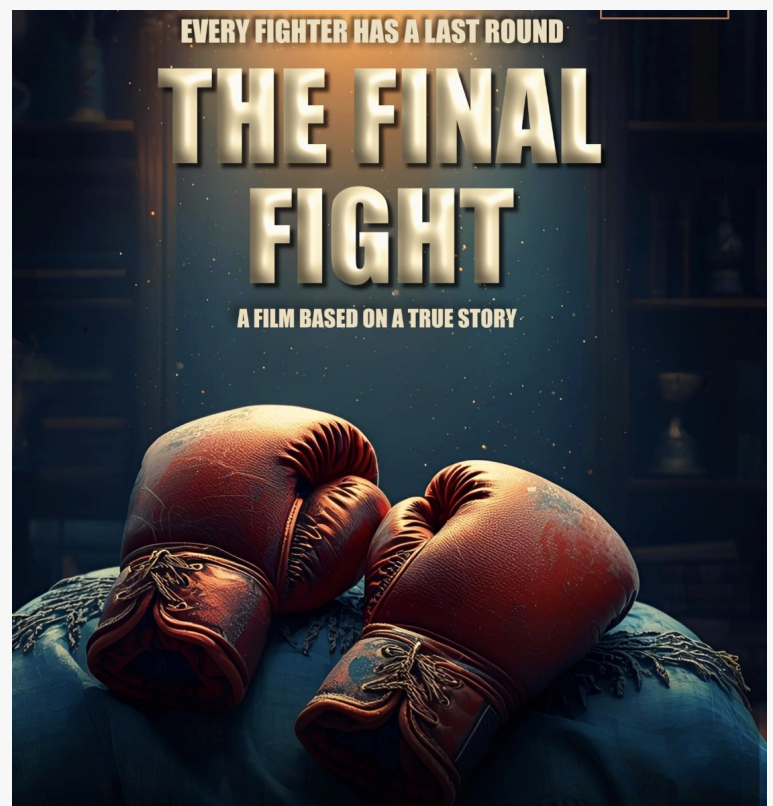
"We are thrilled to welcome Jeff to The Final Fight," said Stein, the film's creator. "His experience managing complex productions, combined with his deep knowledge of both television and independent filmmaking, makes him an invaluable asset as we bring this powerful true story to life." As Line Producer, Mazzola will oversee budgeting, scheduling, and physical production for The Final Fight, helping guide the film from development through principal photography.

The Final Fight tells the gripping true story of resilience, justice, and the human spirit, and is currently in development with plans to move into production in March. Casting is underway with acclaimed New York casting director Adrienne Stern, who is currently in discussions with top agents and managers regarding talent interested in the project. Stern believes the central roles, Scott Cohen and Martin Cohen, inspired by Stein and his father Marvin, will resonate strongly with actors seeking meaningful, emotionally grounded material.

The film is being positioned for the international prestige festival circuit. Jeff Mazzola is a producer and film professional known for A Brooklyn Love Story (2024), The Zombie Wedding (2023), and It Had to Be You (2000). His extensive television background includes key production roles across major network and streaming productions. He joins a growing team committed to bringing this important story



Stein's father inspired him to write the screenplay
The Final Fight



The Final Fight short film in Development

to the screen.

Stein is no stranger to grassroots organizing. A crowdfunding campaign launched to support initial production has already raised close to \$11,000 in just over a month, demonstrating strong community engagement and national interest in the project through word-of-mouth support. Last year, Stein ran on the Upper East Side for the volunteer party position of District Leader, earning an impressive 48.5% of the vote against an incumbent, an unusually strong showing fueled by a community-driven campaign. A native New Yorker who believes deeply in neighborhood advocacy, he funded that effort the same way he is funding this film: by reaching out directly to the community for support. The production has also signed with SAG-AFTRA under the SAG Short Project Agreement (SPA), covering the short film.

The film centers on Martin Cohen, a once-proud Golden Gloves boxer who finds himself trapped in a guardianship arrangement, and Phyllis, his former wife, whose home becomes his refuge when their son returns him to the place where he once felt safest. The story also features the volatile presence of Hacks, a mob-connected figure whose intimidation underscores the power dynamics surrounding Martin's control and care.

Many successful independent films began as proof-of-concept shorts that later evolved into award-winning features. Damien Chazelle's *Whiplash* launched through the festival circuit before achieving Oscar success, and Jim Cummings followed a similar path with his deeply personal *Thunder Road*, which became a major independent breakout. Other notable examples include *Napoleon Dynamite*, which expanded from a character-driven short into a feature, and *District 9*, which used its proof-of-concept to secure financing. *The Final Fight* follows this same pathway: a festival-driven short designed to launch a feature film.

With New York's cinematic legacy, from *The Sopranos* to *A Bronx Tale* to *Goodfellas*, the production is already drawing interest from established actors and rising talent alike. Agents and managers have responded enthusiastically to the opportunity, recognizing the rarity of substantial roles in this demographic and genre space.

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