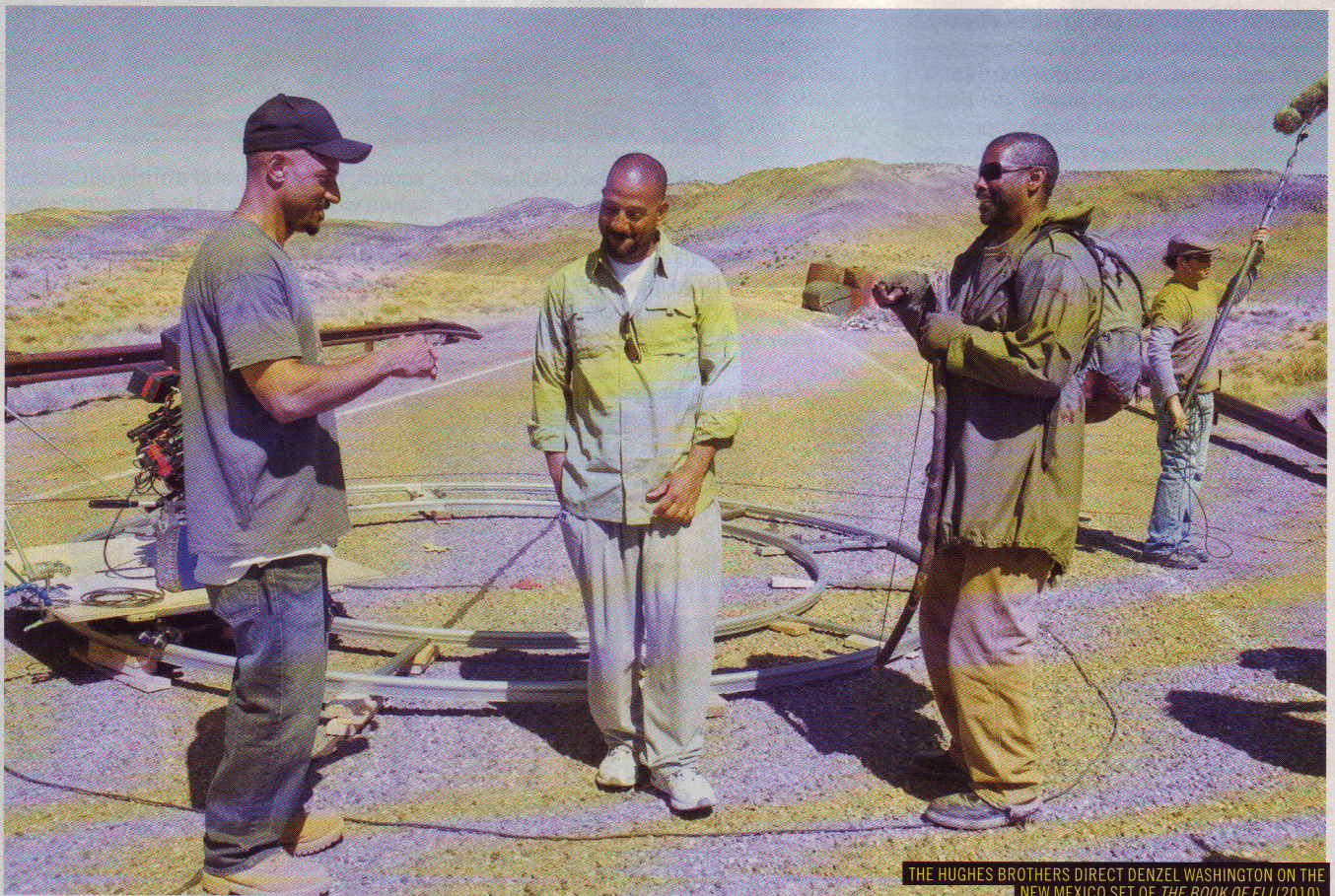


MM

THE HUGHES BROTHERS DIRECT DENZEL WASHINGTON ON THE NEW MEXICO SET OF *THE BOOK OF ELI* (2010).

# WHERE TO LIVE & SHOOT IN 2010

MM'S 10TH ANNUAL COUNTDOWN OF THE BEST PLACES IN AMERICA TO MAKE MOVIES AND TO CALL HOME

**S**ome say that money is the root of all evil, while others hold that evil follows money's absence. Likewise for today's independent moviemakers, while some contend that bigger budgets open up more creative options, others maintain that limited budgets have a better chance of generating true innovation.

The latter seems to be proving true in American cities big and small, as increasing numbers of would-be auteurs make the leap from moviegoer to moviemaker. They're being aided by the low cost of digital technologies, which make the medium ever more

democratic at the same time that costs creep lower. The barriers that existed for independent moviemakers just a few years ago have all but disappeared, not only in terms of accessibility to reasonably priced production and post-production equipment, but with distribution opportunities, too. Best of all, freshly minted moviemakers don't even need to leave home to make cinema happen.

For the past decade, *MovieMaker's* editors have paid careful attention to location trends. From recent financial incentives to new soundstages, we have tracked these developments while being vocal proponents of the "backyard/backlot" lifestyle—the idea that one should be able to shoot close to where he or she lives.

We also understand that moviemaking is not a solo enterprise; it's an endeavor that benefits greatly from the support of like-minded artists. It would stand to reason, then, that moviemakers in traditional "cinema cities" such as New York and Los Angeles might have an edge over their peers in lesser-known production areas. But with previously under-utilized areas such as Shreveport, Louisiana and Albuquerque, New Mexico continuing to climb our "best places" list year after year, the truth is that moviemaking can happen anywhere—as long as there are creative artists willing to make a go of it and a community of supporters happy to nurture their talents.

So how do we determine the *best* of