



16 VFX & Animation

A look at our two quarterly Chart top-pers, and a rundown of Visual Effects Society (VES) Award nominations.



18 Midwest Series

Execs and artisans assess the prospects for business in 2010, and share insights into recent unique projects.

Music & Sound Series: Quarterly Chart, Notes

Wieden Creates Group of Death:
The Rockumentary For ESPN
See page 14



Rolling Out The Red Carpet

*Nominees Share Their Award Season Insights;
SHOOT Previews Oscars, Spirit and ASC Awards*

By Robert Goldrich

HOLLYWOOD, Calif.—Whether you view the Oscar sea change from five to 10 best picture nominations as a watering down of the honor or as breaking the dam to open up the flow of competition to other deserving films, clearly the move has heightened interest in—and hopefully will boost TV audience for—next month's Academy Awards.

While the number of allotted nominations has not been upped in the other prime Oscar categories, paradoxically it didn't take such an increase to yield greater inclusiveness in the best director competition.

Oscar's best director category duplicates the select field that earned Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nominations: Kathryn Bigelow for *The Hurt Locker*; James Cameron for *Avatar*; Lee Daniels on the strength of *Precious: Based on the Novel "Push" by Sapphire*; Jason Reitman for *Up in the Air*; and Quentin Tarantino for *Inglourious Basterds*.

Two of these nominees represent the alluded to, often elusive element of diversity. Bigelow becomes only the fourth woman to be nominated for best director by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. On January 30, she earned the distinction of being the first female to win the DGA Award for outstanding feature directorial achievement, making her the favorite to take the Oscar, which would also be a first for a woman.

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Super Bowl Feedback Not So Super

A SHOOT Staff Report

MIAMI—While the New Orleans Saints rousing upset of the Indianapolis Colts in Super Bowl XLIV held viewers' interest, whether the commercials did the same is subject to interpretation.

As it has over the years, SHOOT sought such interpretations from creative folk whose agencies did not have any commercials on during the Big Game telecast so as to get an unvarnished, apolitical perspective on 2010's Big Game advertising.

Clearly this is a year when it's hard to figure what chords to strike. Is humor welcome with an economy still at best in recovery mode? Is there still a place for sentimentality? Does spending \$2.5 to \$3 million on a Super Bowl 30 time slot carry an inherent backlash in light of a high unemployment rate and so many people struggling to make ends meet? Or is this the time to forget about such troubles and enjoy the game and its commercials, to embrace the diversion and have some fun?

Along those lines, how was the Focus on the Family spot received, deemed by some as inappropriate issue advertising for a Super Bowl?

What themes marked this year's crop of Super Sunday commercials? How did this year's field of spots compare to those of recent past Big Games?

Continued on page 8

Sun And Slam: A Tale Of Two Film Festival Dances

By Robert Goldrich

PARK CITY, Utah—Director Nick Jasenovec knows the long and short of it when it comes to the Sundance Film Festival in Park City. Last year his full-length comedy feature *Paper Heart*, a mesh of documentary and narrative filmmaking starring Charlyne Yi and Michael Cera, scored a Sundance Screenwriting Award.

Last month Jasenovec returned

to Sundance, this time with a Microsoft Bing-sponsored short film, *Para Fuera*, which profiles cardiologist/researcher/medical professor/composer/Renaissance man Dr. Richard Bing on his 100th birthday.

In-between these two Sundance bookends, Jasenovec signed with bicoastal Nonfiction Unlimited for commercials and new media projects, and earned inclusion into SHOOT's 2009

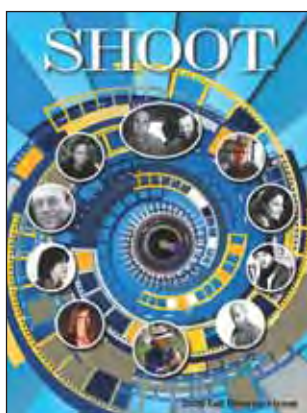
New Directors Showcase.

Meanwhile the interval between screenings at the neighboring Slamdance Festival was considerably longer for director Jordan Brady. Back in 1999, his feature mockumentary *Dill Scallion—a This Is Spinal Tap* for country music—debuted at Slamdance and was nominated for a Grand Jury Prize. Fast forward 11 years to 2010 and Brady's feature documentary on

stand-up comedy, *I Am Comic*, was the closing screening of last month's Slamdance Festival. Brady is active in commercials via bicoastal production house Uber Content.

SHOOT caught up with Brady and Jasenovec for their perspectives which serve as launching pads into our wrap-up coverage of the respective festivals.

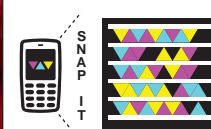
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is coming March 19

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Requirements for tag to work: Need a camera equipped cell phone with Internet data service and the barcode reader application. The barcode reader application is present for most of the common phones such as Windows Mobile devices, iPhone, Blackberry, Nokia, and so on. You can get free reader app for your phone at <http://gettag.mobi>.

What can a post-production company do for a post-disaster company?

Last year, we launched the Optimus One Shot contest for young creatives. We figured everybody needs a reel, and every reel needs to start somewhere. So why not give away a full, start-to-finish production?

This year, we challenged entrants to submit a script for ShelterBox, an organization that none of them—or us—had ever heard of. But the moment we got a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes power of ShelterBox, we felt we had to spread the word.

Whenever a disaster strikes, anywhere in the world, ShelterBox volunteers are among the first relief respondents to the site. They show up armed with big green plastic boxes packed with enough provisions to provide basic shelter for a family of ten for up to six months. A tent, a stove, blankets, even books and playthings for children. More than shelter in a box, it's normalcy in a box.

The winning One Shot script tells the ShelterBox story simply and eloquently, captured beautifully by Mehdi Zollo, one of our roster directors at our in-house production arm, ONE at Optimus, and edited artfully by Optimus editor Katherine Pryor. The spot was shot entirely in Argentina and finished entirely at 161 East Grand in Chicago.

We hope you'll visit us to take a look at the spot, but more than that, we hope you'll be encouraged to take a closer look at the extraordinary efforts of ShelterBox.

optimus.com
shelterboxusa.org



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Politically Incorrect

In this week's
"Then, Now and
Looking Ahead"

feature, part of a series marking
SHOOT's upcoming 50th year anni-
versary in which industry notables re-
flect on how the business has evolved,
Rich Silverstein, co-chairman/creative
director of Goodby, Silverstein & Part-
ners, expresses dismay over
reality TV shows and other
forms of mind-numbing
content which seem per-

vasive, ironically during a time when
exciting delivery systems for varied
forms of content have come of age.

"We have all these incredible de-
livery devices but it's amazing how
many of them deliver bad television,"
he said. "I don't care if I can get live
TV on my phone or on an airplane if
the content is bad."

Silverstein went on to observe,
"You can't help but think that we are
dummying down America." This in
turn led him to bemoan the recent

Supreme Court decision overturning
campaign finance laws, contending
it will open the floodgates for more
political advertising and more dum-
mying down clutter. "I know it means
more money for the advertising indus-
try but that's not the way we should
elect people or deal with issues."

I agree with Silverstein regarding

"I know it means more money for the advertising industry but that's not the way we should elect people or deal with issues."—Silverstein

the Supreme Court's ruling. But in
our corner of the world, I thought it
interesting to explore that ruling's im-
pact on advertising.

In a world that too often seems to
judge a situation's merits by "How
much?" instead of "How," the ad biz
comes out a winner. There are con-
servative estimates that another \$300
million will be generated for the po-
litical advertising pie, which is already
several billion dollars. Indeed with
this being a congressional election

year, there figures to be a lot of addi-
tional special interest dollars that will
be pumped into the marketplace.

Yet there's a price to pay for in-
creased revenue—continued erosion
of our industry's credibility. To say
we live in polarized times is an un-
derstatement, and negative political
advertising figures to fuel the fire. Ac-

cording to factcheck.org, a site run by
the Annenberg Public Policy Center
of the University of Pennsylvania, this
negative brand of political advertising
is largely an exercise in fabrication
and distortion—on both sides of the
political aisle. Unfortunately, twisting
facts and character assassination have
proven effective enough so that they
remain staples of campaigning. And
advertising's role in misleading the
public represents a figurative black
eye for our industry. It undermines the

many competitions we have that show
the creativity and care that goes into
great commercialmaking, which at its
best is undeniably an art form and can
have a positive effect and influence on
audiences, stirring thought and emo-
tion while stimulating prospective
consumers and commerce.

At the very least the public knows

who's behind mainstream advertising
and can judge those brands accord-
ingly. In the case of much political
and issues-oriented ad fare, backers
continue to hide behind organizations
with names that sound fair but in real-
ity are misleading "brand" monikers,
camouflaging hidden agendas.

Will Rogers' words sadly take on
even greater meaning in light of our
high court's green lighting of influ-
ence peddling: "We have the best
Congress money can buy."

By Jeremy Warshaw



Sympathy for the Devil

I thought I was
the big guy on the
shoot. My fee alone
gave me a certain swagger and it doesn't
hurt when the grips call me Sir.

But what I chose not to think about
was that I am paid about the same rate
as a production designer. Not bad and
I'm not saying I'm worth any more
but who knew? For all these years
I've looked at the AICP form and seen
how much lovely money is headed my
way. For a while I feel special, verging
on important.

And then I go to work. I have meet-
ings that go on endlessly. I attend
casting sessions, review these, think
about wardrobe, make choices, adapt
to revised budget news, scour loca-
tions, talk production design, do sto-
ryboards, revise storyboards, choose
crew, and run the pre-pro meeting.
Then, oh yes, I get to spend a day or
two at the shoot. (And I haven't even
included the hours conceiving, writ-
ing and presenting the treatment that
was presumably thought good enough
to get me the job.)

As an amusement I added up all the
hours I spent leading up to a recent
one-day shoot. My sense of self-im-
portance was severely shaken. I spent
about 70 hours before the shoot and
about 12 at the shoot so a quick add

and divide and I get a fraction higher
hourly rate than an AD. This thought
came up because I bid on a job for
an agency and we were told that in
the event they had to cancel the job
at the last moment only fixed costs
would be paid. No AICP guidelines
for them! So no director pay irrespec-
tive of any work that had been done
to this point.

This started me thinking. If we
book DPs for a job that doesn't come
off, we pretty much have to pay. We've
stopped them from taking another job
and we've given our word. Sounds fair
to me. But if directors are to be paid,
for some reason they have actually to
direct something in which cameras
are involved. Which seems like a pret-
ty narrow view of directing.

Maybe we need to rethink how di-
rectors are paid. As a rule a two-day
shoot, for example, is not twice as time
consuming as a one-day shoot, and
similarly a one-day shoot is often only
a bit less work than a two-day shoot.
So to be paid on the basis of how many
shooting hours is illogical.

Here's a suggestion: Don't have a
day rate based on shoot days. Instead
submit a director's fee for the entire
project. It seems that some jobs don't
require that much work while oth-
ers do and this has often nothing to

do with the amount of days allocated
for shooting. With a fee approach we
may end up at the same place but we
won't have clients thinking that we are
highly overpaid. We might get some
respect for the long hours we actually
put in rather than being thought of as
some effete artist who finally gets to
display his brilliance only at the shoot.
We're hired for the project so why not
pay us for the project?

I recently had a painter repaint a

large area of my house. Before the fi-
nal touch-ups he had helped choose
the color, put down protection, applied
masking tape, skim coated, primed
and put on two coats. And then he ti-
died up. I paid him for his entire work
and never thought his value was just
about the final coat. We're not so dif-
ferent, the painter and me. But I'll be
damned if I'm going to call him Sir.

*Jeremy Warshaw is a director at
The Observatory, New York.*

Flash Back

February 11, 2005 Spotmakers made their presence known at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, and one of the ad industry's talents—director Jeff Feuerzeig, who is represented for spots by Washington Square Films, N.Y.—won the best documentary directing prize for his film *The Devil and Daniel Johnston*....Bicoastal Headquarters has added director Richie Smyth, formerly of bicoastal RSA USA, and tabletop director/cameraman Jerry Simpson to its roster...Vinton Studios, Portland, Ore., has added three directors to its advertising division: Courtney Booker, Jeff Drew and Aaron Sorenson....

February 11, 2000 Jack Lechner, a former development exec at Miramax Films, has joined the motion picture division of bicoastal/international @radical.media....Composer Morgan Visconti has signed with JSM, N.Y. Visconti. He comes over from N.Y.-based Crushing Music....Ritts/Hayden, the L.A.-based production house headed by exec producer Bill Hayden, has signed Aussie director P.E. Goldman for exclusive U.S. commercial representation....

Oscar, Spirit Award Nominees Reflect

Continued from page 1

Meanwhile Daniels is only the second African-American to garner a directorial nod from the Academy. If he goes on to win the Oscar, he too would be setting an historic precedent.

Neither Bigelow or Daniels have focused on gender or race in their public appearances discussing the DGA and Academy Award nominations. Bigelow downplayed the gender angle backstage after winning the DGA Award.

However, in a *SHOOT* Chat Room interview in January (1/15), Bigelow said of the possibility of setting such a precedent for female directors, "What's important to me in that regard is that hopefully by doing what I do, perhaps it can translate into someone thinking that something seemingly impossible is possible. In that respect, I'm thrilled to be in a position to provide some inspiration to other woman filmmakers or woman who aspire to be filmmakers. To me that's very important."

Roundtable

The DGA nominees shed light on their work and influences during a DGA panel discussion the day of the Guild's Awards ceremony. From this discussion (moderated by helmer Jeremy Kagan), *SHOOT* gleaned insights from these five filmmakers who now comprise the field of best director Oscar nominees.

Bigelow said she gravitated to Jeremy Renner (a best actor Oscar nominee for his portrayal of expert bomb defuser Sgt. 1st Class William James) for *The Hurt Locker* based on his performance as serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer in the film *Dahmer* (2002). Bigelow recalled that somehow Renner was able to portray this gruesome murderer yet still leave room for viewers to feel some sense of compassion for the character. "I talked to Jeremy on the phone for two-and-a-half hours and I felt his acute and flexible imagination, liked his questions and thoughts. I hadn't met him yet but I began casting the other characters as if he were the guy."

Still, though, auditions can also prove necessary in certain situations. While she finds that auditioning can be valuable, Bigelow said she sometimes winces at what actors must confront in the process. Citing how difficult the auditioning process can be for actors, she observed, "I feel more their pain than their prowess."

Daniels concurred, noting that he used to manage actors and that he finds the auditioning process "humiliating" and "a game." Daniels said he prefers "to talk with actors, to connect as spirits" and to see if they can become "one" on a project.

On the technology front, Cameron



Cary Joji Fukunaga

addressed a prime misconception about motion capture—that it represents the antithesis of acting. The reality is quite the opposite, he said, explaining that in motion capture, you take away lighting, makeup, hair, wardrobe. You take away every artifice, which enables a director and actor to focus on the core of the scene, to focus on performance.

As for the best professional advice he had ever received, Reitman recalled that his father, director Ivan Reitman, said, "Your job [as a director] is to capture authenticity...Your barometer for comedy or drama isn't as good as your barometer for honesty. You may not always know if something is funny or dramatic enough, but you do know whether it feels true."

Tarantino credited actor Harvey Keitel for his advice on how a director should handle auditioning actors. Keitel said a director shouldn't tell the actor anything before he or she does the first reading. You can always adjust later. Adjustment is easy. But you want to get what the actor has at his or her core, what their choices and interpretations are in that first reading. It makes it easier for a director to assess what that actor has to offer.

Asked what was best and worst about being a director, Bigelow said there is "no worst." As for the best, she cited legendary director John Ford's observation that "filming is like painting with an army." Bigelow added, "I love that collaborative process, the team effort that impacts the result on the screen."

Reitman too only had a "best" part, relating simply that he values the opportunity "to tell stories using the culmination of every art form—and to tell those stories to so many people. The best part of directing is I get to do that."

Daniels quipped that the worst part is when "your mother tells you she hates your movie" and asks, "Why can't you make movies like Tyler Perry?" The best part, he said seriously, is "having so many people cry in my arms, that they've been touched by the movie." And he added that he's also heard from people who have improperly touched children, seen his film and asked him, "How can I get help?"

In the Spirit

Meanwhile another director finds himself grouped in a best direction category with such notables as Daniels for *Precious* and the Coens (Ethan and Joel) for *A Serious Man*. The category is part of the 25th Film Independent Spirit Awards competition, and the alluded to director is Cary Joji Fukunaga for his film *Sin Nombre*.

"Awards weren't on my radar when making this film," said Fukunaga. "I never thought much about awards but it certainly is nice to be recognized—and in this case, to be in the company of Lee Daniels and the Coen Brothers. Lee and the Coens are nominated for Oscars [Daniels for best director, best picture as a producer, and the Coen Brothers for best picture and best original screenplay] and to be grouped with them is an honor."

While Fukunaga didn't have awards in mind when making *Sin Nombre* (as writer/director), the film last year premiered in the dramatic competition of the Sundance Film Festival and won the U.S. Dramatic Directing Award and the U.S. Dramatic Excellence in Cinematography Award (for DP Adriano Goldman). *Sin Nombre* is a thriller about the collision of a gang member on the run and a Honduran teenager traveling with her family through Mexico in hopes of finding a better life in the U.S.

Sin Nombre has garnered a total of three Independent Spirit Award noms—the others being for best feature and best cinematography. The Spirit Awards honor films and filmmakers that embody independence and originality.

Fukunaga, who is repped by Anonymous Content's talent management arm, last year became available for select spots and branded content via Anonymous' commercial division. This led to his landing the centerpiece :60, "America," in Levi's "Go Forth" campaign from Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore. "America" features a black-and-white montage of landscapes and people from across the nation with a voiceover of what is thought to be an original wax cylinder recording of Walt Whitman reading from his poem of the same title.

Fukunaga said he was gratified that W+K gave him the freedom to not only take on the project but to trust him to do so sans script or storyboards. "I was free to come up with shots as I saw them in interpreting and trying to do justice to reflecting the spirit of Whitman's poem. I had four days to capture that, and it represented risk taking by Levi's and Wieden."

SHOOT caught up with Fukunaga in London where he is prepping an adapta-

Continued on page 6

Short Takes

BETC EURO RSCG CREATES "ALCHEMY"

We start with an old fashioned coffee grinder which explodes, the parts somehow becoming meshed into a bicycle that forms before our eyes. A motor enters the picture and turns it into a motorbike and then adds two wheels to make it a Quadrilette. A mixer blends into the VLV—which was the first mass produced electric car (introduced in 1941)—and as we progress through time other objects collide, implode and explode to yield more modern creations, which in-



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

cludes Peugeot vehicles, including a 207 which spawns a BBI which comes apart to open a door to an open-ended tomorrow. The messages "Combine Worlds," "Mix Ideas" and "Blend Technology" then appear on screen, giving way to the Peugeot logo.

This :60 is part of a campaign out of BETC Euro RSCG, Paris, commemorating Peugeot's 200-year anniversary, and will be aired worldwide. Titled "Alchemy," the spot was directed by Michael Gracey of Partizan, with visual effects out of Mikros Image, Paris.

HIGH SCHOOLS GOT MONEY FOR GOT MILK?

Online voters have spoken and after battling more than 100 high schools throughout California, Santa Susana High School in Simi Valley wins the grand prize, \$20,000, in the GOT MILK? Battle for Milkquarious, White Gold Milkdonkulous Giveaway. The contest was sponsored by the California Milk Processor Board (CMPB) to encourage California teenagers to get creative with their video-making skills for a chance to win thousands of dollars for their public high schools' art programs.

Santa Susana received close to 11,000 online votes. Students from the school submitted a video entry after recreating the last of seven scenes from GOT MILK?'s online rock opera titled Battle for Milkquarious (www.milkquarious.com). Created by Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco, the online 20-minute rock opera is intended to reach California teens with the message of the health benefits of drinking milk for strong bones, muscles, hair, teeth and nails. The rock opera chronicles White Gold's quest to save his hometown of Milkquarious from a potentially deadly milk shortage. The students at Santa Susana acted out the scene using homemade props and creative video editing.

Receiving the second most online votes was Pioneer Technical Center in Madera, which will get \$10,000 for its live action entry. The students acted out the second scene of the rock opera that tells the first meeting of White Gold and his comrade, Jug Life.

Besides live action entries, California teens used all kinds of medium such as animation, clay and even Legos to tell their stories surrounding the rock opera. GOT MILK? will also honor eight runners-up for their efforts, each with \$2,500: L.A. County High School for the Arts; L.A. High School for the Arts; Gardena High School in Gardena; El Molino High in Forestville; Dublin High School in Dublin; Santa Teresa High School in San Jose; Marysville Charter Academy for the Arts in Marysville; and San Dieguito High School Academy in Encinitas.

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS...



Christine Huang

Christine Huang has joined BBH N.Y. as head of business development. She previously was a freelance consultant, working with such agencies as Berlin Cameron United, and Venables Bell & Partners....Bill Oakley has expanded his responsibilities at TM Advertising, Dallas, to now include serving as both CCO and managing director. Oakley previously held the TM roles of group creative director, and worldwide creative director on the American Airlines account....

The average life span of a guinea pig is 5.5 years. We've just turned 6.

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Awards Season Preview: Ackroyd, Fiore, Back Gratified By Noms

Continued from page 4

tion of *Jane Eyre* for Focus and the BBC. Shooting is slated to start in March.

Oscar/ASC/BAFTA nominees

Receiving his first career cinematography nominations for an Oscar, ASC Award and British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award was Mauro Fiore, ASC, on the basis of *Avatar*. Also garnering his first career Oscar and ASC noms was Barry Ackroyd, BSC, for *The Hurt Locker*. Ackroyd additionally landed a BAFTA nomination for *The Hurt Locker*, marking his fourth career nomination in that competition—the other three coming for the short film *The Butterfly Man* in '97 (shared with Robin MacPherson), TV's *The Lost Prince* in '04, and the acclaimed feature *United 93* in '07.

The latter, directed and written by Paul Greengrass, told the story of United Flight 93, one of the planes hijacked on 9/11 that crashed near Shanksville, PA, when passengers foiled the terrorist plot.

Director Bigelow contacted Ackroyd about *The Hurt Locker* because she was drawn to his work on *United 93*. "That's what brought us together and I'm so glad it did," said Ackroyd. "Kathryn is a director who gives you her trust and going hand in hand with that she gives you space and freedom to work. I think the trust she placed in me stemmed from *United 93*, which had a style and signature I try to carry that's rooted in my documentary background. My approach is to foster a sensitivity and humanism in looking at the characters whether it's a documen-



Barry Ackroyd, BSC

tary or a written script with actors. And certainly *The Hurt Locker* is a personal film that gets into the minds and faces of its characters, their interactions and reactions with each other.

"Kathryn put together a great ensemble cast," continued Ackroyd. "I'm very proud of her winning the DGA Award—one, because she made history as a woman, and also because it was for a small film with a big heart."

Ackroyd noted that his documentary experience helped him on *The Hurt Locker* which had a challenged budget and a pressing schedule. "In documentaries, you're used to having to shoot something underlit or difficult to get or a once-in-a-lifetime moment," he said. "Working that way has you keeping the attitude that you have to get it, that this may be your only opportunity. I have that attitude on every shoot."

Ackroyd feels extremely gratified over his first Oscar and ASC nominations. "They are such high honors—to be one of five films recognized means so much."

Repped by William Morris Endeavor (WME) for features and commercials, Ackroyd has been active in spots over

the years and is looking to garner more choice ad work stateside via WME.

For *Avatar*, Fiore caught the eye of Cameron on the strength of his cinematography on *Tears of the Sun* ('03), directed by Antoine Fuqua, and *The Island* ('05), directed by Michael Bay. "James was interested in my treatment of the jungle scenes in those films. He liked the way I treated and lit the environment, how natural it felt—and of course the jungle environment is a big part of *Avatar*. For him it was important to have a cinematographer whose job was lighting and camera compositions to make sure he had the right live action platform for the motion capture renderings."

Fiore said of Cameron, "His discipline and unbelievable dedication and patience with the technology he decides to use is inspiring. His commitment to a vision is a huge lesson for anyone who works with him. I know the importance of being committed in my lifetime but Jim makes you realize even more how vital that commitment is. I have never known anybody that dedicated 100 percent every waking moment."

Of the ASC, Oscar and BAFTA nominations, Fiore said, "I'm overwhelmed by them. To have my peers and colleagues regard and respect the work in that way is a huge honor."

Fiore added that his experience over the years in commercials helped him on *Avatar*. "Commercials are often very visually and technically involved, and entail having to put together things quickly. You sort of have to be able to embrace new technologies and



Mauro Fiore, ASC

ideas quickly, and just run with it."

At press time Fiore, who is repped as a DP by ICM, had wrapped lensing of a Samsung 3D television spot directed by The Twins of Rabbit Content for Leo Burnett, Chicago. Fiore is handled as a commercials director/cameraman by Independent Media, Santa Monica. Via Independent he recently directed a campaign for the NFL as well as promos for the FX Channel.

Short takes

Director Joachim Back of Park Pictures is steeped in spotmaking experience. He decided to diversify into longer form for the first time with a short film, *The New Tenants*, produced by Park Pictures and M&M Productions. Last week *The New Tenants* earned an Oscar nomination for best live action short. Back collaborated on the film with his commercial industry colleagues, including DP Pawel Edelman and editor Russell Icke (of *The Whitehouse*).

A dark, twisted mistaken identity caper, the premise of *The New Tenants*, said Back, was an ideal outlet for the "fun madness I have inside." The

cast includes Vincent D'Onofrio, Jamie Harrold, Kevin Corrigan and David Rakoff. It was Rakoff who adapted the original script by Danish writer Anders Jensen.

Since receiving the Academy Award nomination, Back said he's been "getting emails and calls from interesting places" (a.k.a., different companies and agents) as momentum is starting to build for perhaps other long-form directing opportunities. "I'd like to do both—ads and features. I'm in love with telling stories."

Back observed that his commercial-making regimen helped him immeasurably on *The New Tenants*. "I've shot more film over the years than some feature directors. Commercials have had me constantly working on different concepts, in different nationalities, crews, equipment and emotions. You collect a lot of experiences and you learn to express a message. The more you can turn over a camera, the better you can be."

Spot ties

While the spot backgrounds of Back, Fiore and Ackroyd have been cited, several other nominees have commercialmaking ties, which were referenced last week in a *SHOOT* piece (2/3)—including Bigelow's affiliation with RSA Films for commercials and branded content.

The BAFTA Awards are slated for Feb. 21. The ASC Awards will be held on Feb. 27. The Spirit Awards ceremony is March 5. And the Academy Awards take place on March 7.

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Jasenovec At Second Straight Sundance

Continued from page 1

Sundance
At press time Jasenovec was working on a Ford commercial for JWT Detroit, a return engagement with the client and agency—and for that matter with *Dirty Jobs* host Mike Rowe who appears in this and last year's documentary-style ad work. The first spot with Rowe marked Jasenovec's commercial directing debut, and his diversification into the ad/marketing-related arena took on a branded content dimension with *Para Fuera*. While Microsoft and its Bing search engine sponsored the short, there's nary a mention of either in the film itself, only a closing credit offering "a special thanks" to Microsoft for making the project possible.

Para Fuera came about when Dr. Bing wrote a letter to Microsoft, noting the similarities in his own name and Bing.com. Drawn to Dr. Bing's life story—which included his research lead-



Para Fuera

ing to the discovery of Taussing-Bing disease (named after him)—Microsoft approached Nonfiction to produce and Jasenovec to direct the film.

Jasenovec's two Sundance screening experiences are 180 degrees apart. "There was both stress and enjoyment the first year with the feature film," related Jasenovec. "We were looking for distribution, doing a lot of press interviews to generate momentum, there

were many meetings, many ups and downs. I had a kind of nervous energy and didn't have the time to enjoy the rest of the festival."

In sharp contrast, last month's Sundance junket afforded Jasenovec some breathing room. "The short was paired in screenings with an incredible documentary called *A Film Unfinished* so I didn't have to do much but

Continued on page 12

My Favorite Places

I was sitting in a favorite Hollywood restaurant recently and couldn't believe how many years I've been going there now, but the reason is simple: trust. I can go in anytime, in the middle of anything, and get the same consistent and excellent care and attention no matter what.

When it comes to rental houses and Clairmont Camera, I've been going there for as long as I've been eating in that restaurant. From my earliest experience as a PA returning gear and subsequently my transition from documentaries to Hollywood, the thing that always amazed me was the treatment I received from Clairmont. It was the "above and beyond" support that I figured was years down the road, if ever.

In the course of a long and fortunate career, I've experienced a lot of other places to both eat and work. I've seen how other rental houses do things on almost every continent, and I can easily say that none of them have the same command of both the technical side of

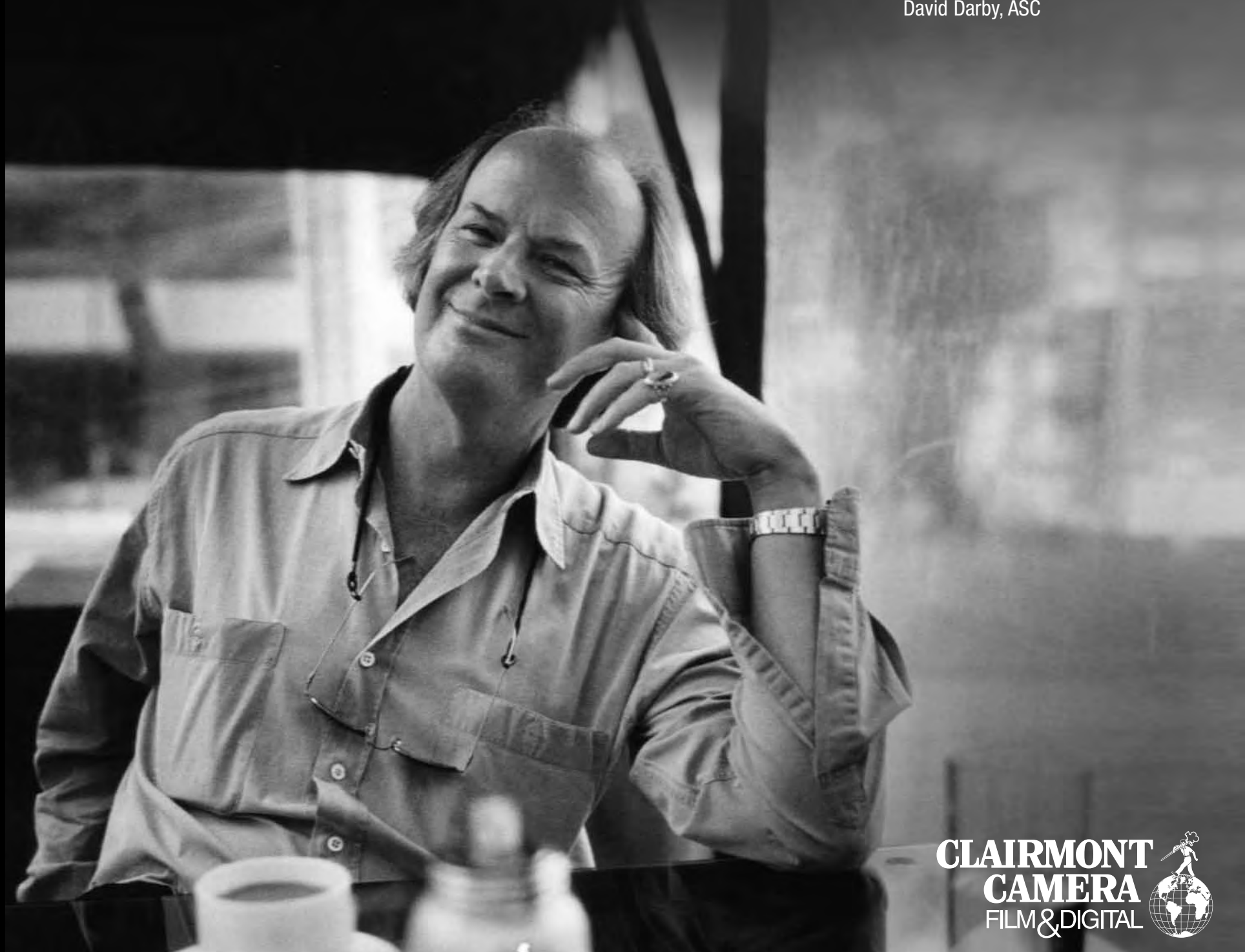
cinematography and equipment —be it film or digital — and the personal side at the same time.

They'll also answer plenty of what I call dumb questions; I'm happy to say I still come up with more than my share.

And it never ceases to amaze me how the experience and vision of Denny Clairmont and his staff is applied to their wares in order to make them just that bit more perfect and ready, well before we take them on the road. That alone sets Clairmont apart in a serious way.

I love the fact that these calm and professional hearts and minds are there for us, as if they were always a part of our crew, just a little farther away than the camera truck. For me, and other friends in the industry, Clairmont is very much like a lighthouse providing guidance. We can always trust that no matter what we're up against or what we're in the middle of, we'll have the best stuff and the best support no matter what.

David Darby, ASC



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Creatives Assess This Year's Crop Of Super Bowl Commercials

Continued from page 1

Here's a sampling of what our creative respondents had to say:

Chris Clarke,
CEO, SapientNitro, New York

Thank goodness the game was great because the advertising was terrible. There were so many misses.

The best far and away was the Audi "Green Patrol" commercial. It was charming, witty, engaging, pushed a great message and all linked to the eco-friendly Audi.

A distant second—but I also liked it—was Chevy Chase with the Griswold family back for Homeaway.com. It was fun and it linked back to the product. Both these spots illustrated linkage back to the product in a relevant way, which was a far cry from the rest.

The Doritos spots all missed, Boost was terrible, Dr Pepper offensive, Go-Daddy the worst. Overall this Super Bowl was the worst in recent memory.

Cameron Day, executive creative director, McGarrah/Jessee, Austin, Texas

First off, I want to say that it's a lot easier to have an opinion than to actually concept and produce a great Super Bowl spot, but that said, I've made a list of hits and misses in my opinion.

What's the deal with Go Daddy? Do they realize how badly they're embarrassing themselves and my profession? They remind me of a drunk who gets hammered in front of his friends and thinks he's funny. They deserve to wake up with an earth-shattering hangover, next to the world's ugliest media bill.

Dr. Pepper attempted to combine three things I love and made me like each of them less: Dr. Pepper, the band Kiss, and the cherry. I don't know who was smoking what, but the good doctor put a bullet through his foot on this one. I was so baffled, so I went back and watched it again. Big mistake. A flawed premise plus-50-year-old flabby rockers saying anything for enough cash equals



Chris Clarke

loss of respect for all parties combined. Ouch. Someone get the Doctor to a decent marketing surgeon quick because he's losing credibility fast.

Which leads me to Coca-Cola, who ran two spots, one with *The Simpsons*, which I thought was so-so and another one with a guy sleepwalking which I thought was wonderful and reinforced my love of the brand in the same way that the parade spot made me love them last year. "Sleepwalker" was abstract and gorgeously shot and made me proud to drink their sugar water. Good work, Coke.

Teleflora and Cars.com chose to tell the same exact joke as their prior year's spots. I don't tune in to the Super Bowl to see last year's exact game played in different uniforms. I like both companies less for their efforts.

Another strange thing happened—two spots with guys walking around without pants ran back to back, for different products. I think it diminished both spots, which is unfortunate because I really liked the first of the two spots for CareerBuilder.com, but then found myself wondering if the whole "no pants thing" has been done somewhere I hadn't seen it. Perhaps a recycled SNL schtick I missed?

Another unfortunate back-to-back incident involved the aforementioned Dr. Pepper/Kiss shrunken band episode directly followed by a shrunken football player debacle. Can you say borrowed interest? The spots that delved into "ownable territory" or that at least felt consistent and "on brand" were the ones that really resonated for me.



Cameron Day

Which brings me to a few great examples of that very point. My two very favorite spots were for VW and Google, with a big fat honorable mention to Dodge. All three ran only one spot, but each had a powerful and "ownable" idea driving them.

Goggle—I loved this spot and it reminded me of how much I appreciate Google for all it does for me, which is particularly important for them now that Bing is flirting with the launch of their national campaign, which I also like quite a bit. I saw this Google ad as a brilliant strategic move. It made me feel a little guilty for considering a new search engine. Ed McCabe once said, "A good ad should make you feel like an asshole for not using the product." This one made me realize that I really like the search engine I'm already with.

Volkswagen—Wow. This must be what won Deutsch the VW business. "They took a universal truth about VW and used it to reengage me in a brand that stopped being relevant to me years ago. A whole new Volkswagen. A whole new game. Thank you, VW. I'm 100% in. Within the "Slug Bug" spot itself, the Stevie Wonder gag could have been truly awful but was played pitch perfect. Nice job, Stevie, Ditto, Deutsch. But the best part of the whole thing plays out after the commercial has come and gone. When I chased the website down after the spot, I was delighted to meet the alleged creator of the original "slug bug" phenomena. Is he really the inventor of "Slug Bug"? Who cares? I'll be debating it at the water cooler tomorrow. I like that he introduces some new Slug



Evan Fry

Bug rules. Like that it counts for all VW models. Freakin' brilliant. I can't wait to see where it takes this brand. In fact, it reminds me of the "Let's Motor" movement that Crispin started with Mini, which is ironic, given that VW had to leave Crispin to get to this campaign. Is it as relevant to younger drivers as it is to me who grew up getting and giving slugs with every Beetle sighting? Are you kidding me? Any excuse to slug a friend. And what a brilliant way to get consumers looking for new VW models out there on the road. God, I wish I'd thought of this. Brilliant.

Which leads me to another observation. He who runs the most spots doesn't necessarily win the game. Take Hyundai, for example. They did a bunch of spots this year that had kind of an odd cumulative effect on me. I saw a couple of pretty interesting things, like "Farve Retirement 2020" in support of the 10-year warranty and "Built by Hand," which was visually stunning but didn't really lead to a real tangible benefit. The commercial was visually interesting with hundreds of hands literally carrying the car through the steps of its build, but it became a weak metaphor to me when the voiceover says something to the effect, the cars "almost" feel handmade. Then I saw a couple of far more typical Hyundai spots. What I failed to see was a consistent brand voice from the hodgepodge of what ran. On balance, I think they differentiated themselves much more last year.

Snickers was the first spot that gave me hope that the ad biz might have a decent performance this year. Love the "Betty White/Abe Vigoda" spot.

I liked the "Bridge Out" spot for Budweiser and it made me wish they'd stop trotting out the Clydesdale spots, trying to be all things to all people.

There was a Motorola spot I liked, which proves I'm not a complete technophobe. I thought Flo TV made a brilliant media move by using The Who's "My generation" in an interesting and relevant way in their commercial just prior to the Who's halftime performance. I have a funny feeling that Flo TV might have benefitted greatly by aligning themselves with The Who moments before the halftime performance, which I enjoyed.

I did chase a couple of spots to their websites out of intrigue and was re-

warded by one and underwhelmed by the other. Meeting VW's "Sluggo Patterson" was a real treat.

Miller Highlife.com, on the other hand claimed to be "giving up their commercial to help some of their small businesses friends." Cool. I'm intrigued. I wanted to know, for example, what made Loretta's Pralines so gosh darn special and if the "Flat Top" barber was part of a barbershop quartet, given the Baritone register of his voice. What I got on the site were a few shaky low-production films that seemed like they'd had very little thought or good old fashioned craftsmanship put into them. It made me feel like the creatives behind this effort spent all the time and money on the TV spot and the slick website and mailed the other part in. If you're going to give your commercial to the "Little People," invest in making those little people interesting and dimensional characters. Make sure they all have websites and/or Facebook pages prepared for the onslaught of public interest, which I predict will be short-lived at best. This thing felt slick on the front end and half-assed on the backend where it mattered the most if we're being "genuine" here.

It was a great game and I'm glad that a handful of advertisers used the opportunity to great effect.

Evan Fry, chief creative officer, Victors & Spoils, Boulder, Colo.

The Bud Light auto tune [with people talking in a Peter Frampton-like squeaky voice] tickled my funny bone. What I like about Bud Light is they stick with what they do best. They go for broad comedy, and sometimes squeeze in a little more and it can be really good.

The other work that I'd vote for was the Emerald Nuts/Pop Secret spot. They just went for it—but for them going for it didn't mean broad comedy. Instead they went for weird, which can be risky but they did it in a good way.

While those two would be my favorites, I'd also give high marks to the Google spot. The silence worked. You read what was on screen. It was a bit sappy but very solid. It was good proof you don't need celebs and crazy explosions to get your message across.

I'd also give props to the Volkswagen slug bug. And while all the Flo TV spots didn't do it for me—boy, they spent some serious money—I thought the Jim Nantz injury report spot was funny and well written.

My pick for the worst was the Tim Tebow [Focus on the Family] spot. Let's keep that stuff out of paid advertising on the Super Bowl. The Dodge "man's last stand" thing also didn't work. If that's me, shoot me in the face right now. It's an old strategic way of thinking that a

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vehicle is going to make you happy. I don't like that old strategic math. The same for the Dove men's skin thing. If that's the timeline of man, it's sad. Stick to women, Dove.

I had higher hopes for the Boost "Shuffle." I'm almost 40 and remember the Super Bowl Shuffle. I saw the teasers but didn't care for the spot.

The Coca-Cola spots were solid. I always think they do solid work

There are the typical spots where they try to slap something on to get your attention but usually it's not a great fit. I felt like the Brett Favre Hyundai spot was in that category. I was hoping Favre would be attached to the brand or product in a way that made more sense. It kind of made sense, but it wasn't integrated all that well. I liked the spot but not enough to give it a big thumbs up.

I missed FedEx. Whether in years past it was Gerry Graf or Eric Silver at the creative helm, that stuff was always work you'd appreciate. They always bring it. I also missed Graf and Silver on Snickers. That spot just wasn't there for me.

The overall crop of commercials certainly wasn't worse than any other year. It may have been better than last year. But there wasn't one commercial



Charlie Hopper

that made me stand up, take notice and make me wish that I had done it.

Charlie Hopper, principal/creative director, Young & Laramore, Indianapolis

So much about this year's Super Bowl was the perspective of looking backward, trying to recapture something—starting with the obvious was The Who performing at halftime. But it went much deeper than that. Betty White and Abe Vigoda [Snickers], Larry Bird [McDonald's], a semi-classic Budweiser spot [Clydesdales]. Watching Twitter, you see the kids don't even know Betty White or Abe Vigoda. The ad was entertaining but you have to be of a certain age to appreciate it. It just seemed that there were a lot of



Con Williamson

attempts in the advertising to capture the glory of the old days. Most everything was a throwback or extending campaigns. There were a lot of old tactics, scraping around trying to find a moment that people will remember. A year from now, no one is going to remember these commercials.

The hardest I laughed at an ad was awhile back for the Walmart spot with the clown stepping on the unicorn. That was the kind of big laugh commercial you used to see on the Super Bowl. Back in the day you had the grand Pepsi stuff. The funniest ads used to be on the Super Bowl but now they're mostly found virally.

The other trend that struck me is the punchline of most every ad being centered on what shallow bores guys

are—the beer ads, the Dodge commercial. It's not all that funny anymore. The shared punchline of guys being single minded, small minded and gross makes the ads all blend together.

Speaking of that, I don't know who was in charge, but how about the sequence of commercials—two in a row showing guys without pants [Career-Builder followed by Levi's Dockers], the succession of slapping or tackling ads. This weird grouping made the ads all blend together even more.

By contrast, people responded to the silence of the Google ad. It was different from the other ads.

I'd say this year's field of Super Bowl commercials was maybe a tick or two below par. But the problem is that par has been lowered overall. The whole thing just feels old.

Con Williamson, chief creative officer, Euro RSCG, New York

I was in a sports bar in Las Vegas watching the game. Being around the guys a lot of these ads were trying to talk to gives you a different perspective as you watch the commercials. Among the ads that got laughs were the Doritos spot where the mom's date gets

smacked by the little kid, the Snickers spot with Betty White, and the Motorola spot with the woman in the hot tub. Most of the Bud Light stuff didn't hit with the group I was with, though the spot with the people stranded on an island got some laughs.

I think the placement of the two spots featuring guys without pants lost something being played back to back. I thought that sequence was a little irresponsible on the network's part.

And the low light was GoDaddy.com. The guys in the sports bar didn't even react to it. I went to the website for the "to be continued" and when you get there, it's just more crap.

The commercials overall showed a commitment to going back to making Super Bowl spots. In the past, it seemed the ads were a big waste of money. But now you had more people trying to go big and funny—for Dodge Charger, Cars.com. I also thought the Monster.com ad with the beaver was pretty funny. Ironically the economy may be forcing creatives to step up and go back to the Super Bowl ads that are big in order to try to get viewers to take notice. I felt the overall crop was pretty good this year as compared to other recent years.

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Top Spot of the Week

Dir. Nicolai Fuglsig, BBH, The Mill Team On Wild Ride For Barclaycard

By Robert Goldrich

While the technical challenge was daunting, so too were the expectations for Barclaycard's "Rollercoaster," a :60 out of BBH London. Anticipation was high in that the spot is the sequel to the acclaimed "Waterslide," a commercial which helped director Peter Thwaites of Gorgeous Enterprises, London, earn the DGA Award last year as best commercial director of 2008.

"Waterslide" showed a swim trunks-clad employee taking a wondrous amusement park-like commute home from the office—his mode of transportation being an enormous waterslide that winds its way throughout the city, eventually arriving at his suburban abode.

Fast forward to 2010 and now the waterslide has been traded in for a rollercoaster, with the commute instead being in the morning and the passenger being on his way to work. The spot begins with him standing at the elevator doors of his apartment building. The elevator doors open, revealing a rollercoaster which he boards. The rollercoaster picks up speed and takes him on a liberating journey high above the hustle and bustle of the city below—as well as giving him a quick

view through a high-rise apartment window of a pretty woman shaving her legs. The coaster keeps on zipping, only slowing slightly when he makes a contactless payment via his Barclaycard at a "drive-thru" convenience kiosk for a quick breakfast.

Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ directed "Rollercoaster," lensed on location in NYC by DP Alwyn Kuchler, with a motion control shoot in L.A. and visual effects by The Mill New York. The final ad was a culmination of many different live action and digital elements.



Ben Smith

"Rollercoaster" combines the use of a real rollercoaster cart and 40 feet of working track; what's believed to be the first usage of Spydercam in a commercial since it was developed to film parts of the *Spider-Man* movies, as it could capture the variety of perspectives on location and mimic the feel of a rollercoaster; and complex CGI to help create a realistic vision of a rollercoaster weaving in and out of New York's skyscraper-lined cityscape. The Spydercam was devised to achieve fast and smooth shots in between buildings. It flies through the air on cables at the desired height or speed and from assorted varied angles.

Collaborative rapport

Fuglsig and The Mill have teamed on various projects over the years, which came in handy according to The Mill's joint head of CG Ben Smith, who served as shoot supervisor/CG supervisor on "Rollercoaster."

"Over a period of time, through a kind of osmosis working together, you get to know what a director likes and wants, so you're not starting from square one," related Smith.

One of those past collaborations was the lauded Coca-Cola commercial, "It's Mine," for Wieden+Kennedy. That spot also had Fuglsig and The Mill working wonders on Manhattan's skyline, filling it with larger than life Macy's Parade balloon characters.

Also helpful was the fact that The Mill, London, handled VFX on "Waterslide." Initially The Mill's U.K. operation was tapped to do the "Rollercoaster" sequel, for which it had done the first pre-vis. But the job wound up making its way to The Mill, N.Y. Artisans from both shops shared info and insights, including lessons learned from "Waterslide."

The process

"The pre-vis was massive for the director and editor," related Smith. "Once we had hours and hours of footage of empty plates of New York City—a panning shot for example with nothing in it—we would create 'digital rushes' as Nicolai called them. We took 130 plates and animated in a kind of roughly tracked, low-res version of the rollercoaster, often multiple different versions per shot. We churned them out quickly and turned them over to editor Rick Russell [of Final Cut] and Nicolai to cut, getting a sense of the action that could happen."

The Spydercam was deployed in downtown N.Y., running 500 feet down the length of a street and elevated high in the air. "Once selects were made from that footage, we created 3D camera moves, tracking the footage and animating the rollercoaster within that 3D camera move," explained Smith. "And once we had that, we extracted the movement from both the camera and the movement of the rollercoaster and applied that movement to a motion control rig and a gimbal rig for the second part of the shoot in L.A. We had a practical rollercoaster sitting on a gimbal. Using the data we had created, we drove the motion control rig and the gimbal simultaneously to recreate footage that would fit exactly into the Spydercam footage. That allowed us to do real mid

to close-up shots of the talent, looking into his eyes and seeing the wind blowing through his hair."

Furthermore The Mill created a CG double of the actor, with multiple facial expressions, dynamic hair and cloth. This complemented the protagonist's performance. The Mill also contributed dramatic compositing, and paint work done almost frame by frame in order to, as Smith described, "make the visuals sing."

TOP Spot OF THE WEEK

CLIENT

Barclaycard

Agency

BBH London

Adam Tucker, creative director; Szymon Rose, art director; Daniel Schaefer, copywriter; Olly Chapman, producer; Matthew Towell, assistant producer.

PRODUCTION

MJZ, bicoastal/international

Nicolai Fuglsig, director; Debbie Turner, exec producer; Suza Horvat, producer; John Lowe, 1st assistant director; Alwyn Kuchler, DP; Jeremy Hindle, production designer; Kelly Kerby, SFX supervisor.

VISUAL EFFECTS

The Mill, New York

Dan Roberts, VFX producer; Angus Kneale, shoot supervisor; Ben Smith, shoot supervisor/CG supervisor; Wyatt Savarese, Ruben Vandeboeck, shoot supervisors/CG artists; Alex Lovejoy, Dan Williams, lead Flame artists; Melissa Graff, Flare artist; Nitant Kamik, Nuke; Cole Schreiber, Naomi Anderlini, Corey Brown, Stefan Coory, Ian Richardson, Flame artists; Jeff Robins, Smoke artist; Keith Sullivan, Rosalind Paradis, Robert Bruce, Suzanne Dyer, Bruce Chen, Combustion; Andrew Proctor, lighting lead; Joshua Merck, animation lead; Kevin Ives, Michael Panov, Gregory Gangemi, Yorie Kumalasari, Rob Petrie, Emily Meger, Naotaka Minami, Jeff Lopez, Pete Devlin, CG artists; Fergus McCall, Seamus O'Kane, colorists.

EDITORIAL

Final Cut, New York

Rick Russell, editor; Edward Line, Stacy Peterson, assistant editors; Laura Patterson, producer.

MUSIC

Boston's "More Than A Feeling"

AUDIO

Wave, London

Parv Thind, sound designer/mixer.



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Who needs a cup of coffee when you have an adrenaline rush-filled rollercoaster commute to work? Talk about a morning pick-me-up. Director Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ teamed with The Mill, New York, to create this wondrous ride through Manhattan for Barclaycard and agency BBH London.

The Best Work You May Never See

Shane Drake Breathes Life Into Spec Work

By Robert Goldrich

Two guys are seated on a couch playing a videogame. One of the gents, though, feels a bit hot and bothered, which puts a crimp in his gaming enjoyment. “It’s funky in here,” he complains.

His buddy jumps off the sofa into action, exiting the apartment and making his way down a flight of stairs to the basement.

“Hey, ‘man conditioner,’” he says, at which point the camera reveals the building’s central air conditioning system—a heavysset man breathing heavily into an air duct.

“Can you turn it down a few degrees?” asks the young gamer.

The “man conditioner” hardly reacts, offering a deadpan facial expression before reaching for a peppermint Altoids.

Popping the mint into his mouth, the “man conditioner” exhales hard into the duct.

We next see an individual air conditioning unit come to life, pumping cool air into the livingroom—and presumably doing the same for units in other apartments throughout the building.

An end tag shows a tin of Altoids accompanied by the longstanding slogan, “Curiously Strong.”

Spotmaking aspirations

Titled “Man Conditioner,” this spec spot for Altoids is one of two directed by Shane Drake of Venice, Calif.-based production house Wild Plum. Drake took on the spec campaign to showcase his commercialmaking and storytelling talent. He’s looking to diversify more deeply into the advertising arena after having firmly established himself in music videos.

Drake’s clip credits include Panic at the Disco’s “Sins, Not Tragedies,” which won video of the year honors at the 2006 MTV VMA Awards. Other more recent directing endeavors include music videos for Paramore and Timbaland. Drake is handled for music clips by indie rep Tommy Labuda. The director runs his music videos through his own Los Angeles-based production house, Red Van Pictures.

Drake is no stranger to spots. For two seasons he has directed several of the *American Idol* music videos/branded commercials featuring competition finalists as well as Ford vehicles—and he is slated to do the same this year. Drake also recently helmed a Lincoln Mercury commercial for Team Detroit which debuted during last month’s Grammy Awards telecast on CBS.

The Lincoln spot and the *American Idol* fare were produced by Wild Plum, which funded the spec work for Altoids.

“Wild Plum has been totally supportive in launching my commercialmaking career,” said Drake. “They recruited me for my first year on *American Idol* and after seeing that work brought me onto their directors roster. They saw this spec campaign as being a way to help advance my career in commercials.”

Drake related that an agency creative he connected with—and “who prefers to be nameless”—ran the

Altoids ideas by him. The concepts, including “Man Conditioner,” were part of a client pitch that never came to fruition.

Instant Attraction

“I immediately fell in love with the premises of the two spots and have wanted to do them for some time. The stumbling block,” noted Drake, “was getting the funding for the spec production. Ultimately Wild Plum came through with the financial backing to make the spots a reality.”

The other spec spot, “Wall Kiss,” features a man and a woman who are separated by several walls yet still manage to kiss each other through those walls via the “Curiously Strong” prowess of Altoids.

Drake assembled the crew, including several of his long-time music video colleagues such as DP Christopher Pearson, for the spec job. Wild Plum’s Shelby Sexton and Sandy Haddad served as EP and head of production, respectively.

“Once I read the scripts, I had a very clear vision of what the spots should be,” observed Drake. “It was quite straight forward from there after we got the funding for production. We auditioned actors with my knowing very much the kinds of people and characters I wanted. I was able to find the actors who matched what I had envisioned.

“Even the location fell into place for the campaign,” Drake continued. “We wound up shooting in the warehouse for electronics store Crazy Gideon’s in downtown L.A. It’s a location where I’ve shot tons of videos over the years and we were able to recreate there what the storylines called for.”

credits

Client *Altoids (spec spot)* **Production** *Wild Plum, Venice, Calif. Shane Drake, director; Shelby Sexton, executive producer; Sandy Haddad, head of production; Ted Robbins, line producer; Christopher Pearson, DP; Danielle Clemenza, production designer. Editorial Wild Plum Ben Ross, editor. Post Ntropic, Santa Monica and San Francisco Nathan Robinson, colorist Sound Design Fluid, New York Fred Syzmanski, sound designer; David Shapiro, executive producer; Ian Jeffreys, producer.*

A most “Curiously Strong” breath of fresh air.



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News

Sundance/Slamdance

Continued from page 6

introduce the short, with the Q&A reserved for the feature filmmaker," said Jasenovec. "I had more time to actually enjoy the festival, I was able to see four movies in one day—which was my most enjoyable day at Sundance."

Para Fuera was one of 70 shorts chosen as an official Sundance selection (out of a record 6,000-plus entries), and one of 10 selections to be shown prior to the festival in YouTube's screening room.

said Jonze whose spotmaking home is bicoastal/international MJZ. "It's about the relationship between two robots living in Los Angeles."

The short, which stars Andrew Garfield and Sienna Guillory, is being screened at the Berlin Film Festival, which got underway this week, and is slated for global release in March.

I'm Here has nothing to do with vodka. From Absolut's perspective, the project represents a link with a creative artist and advances the company's position as a culture-shaping brand.

Continuing on both the branded short and robot themes was Honda. As part of its *Dream The Impossible* documentary series created by agency RPA, Santa Monica, Honda premiered its sixth docu short, *Living with Robots*, at Sundance.

Directed by Joe Berlinger of bicoastal/international @radical.media, the short explores the role of robotics in society now and into the future. The film highlights Honda's ASIMO (Advanced Step in Innovative Mobility), an advanced humanoid robot, and the company's commitment to researching and developing bipedal mobility and how that R&D can improve technologies elsewhere.

Doc. winner, spot ties

Also at Sundance, director Davis Guggenheim debuted *Waiting For Superman*, a feature documentary which puts a human face on the failure of the U.S. public education system. *Waiting*

Continued on page 23



Nick Jasenovec

Indeed branded shorts made a bit of a mark at this year's Sundance Fest. Spike Jonze wrote and directed a 30-minute film, *I'm Here*, billed as a robot love story and premiering as part of Sundance's first ever Opening Night's Shorts Program. The film is a collaboration among Jonze, sponsor Absolut Vodka and TBWA\Chiat\Day. *I'm Here* came about when Absolut reached out to Jonze to make a film, and gave him creative control to produce the film he wanted.

"I got to make my first love story,"



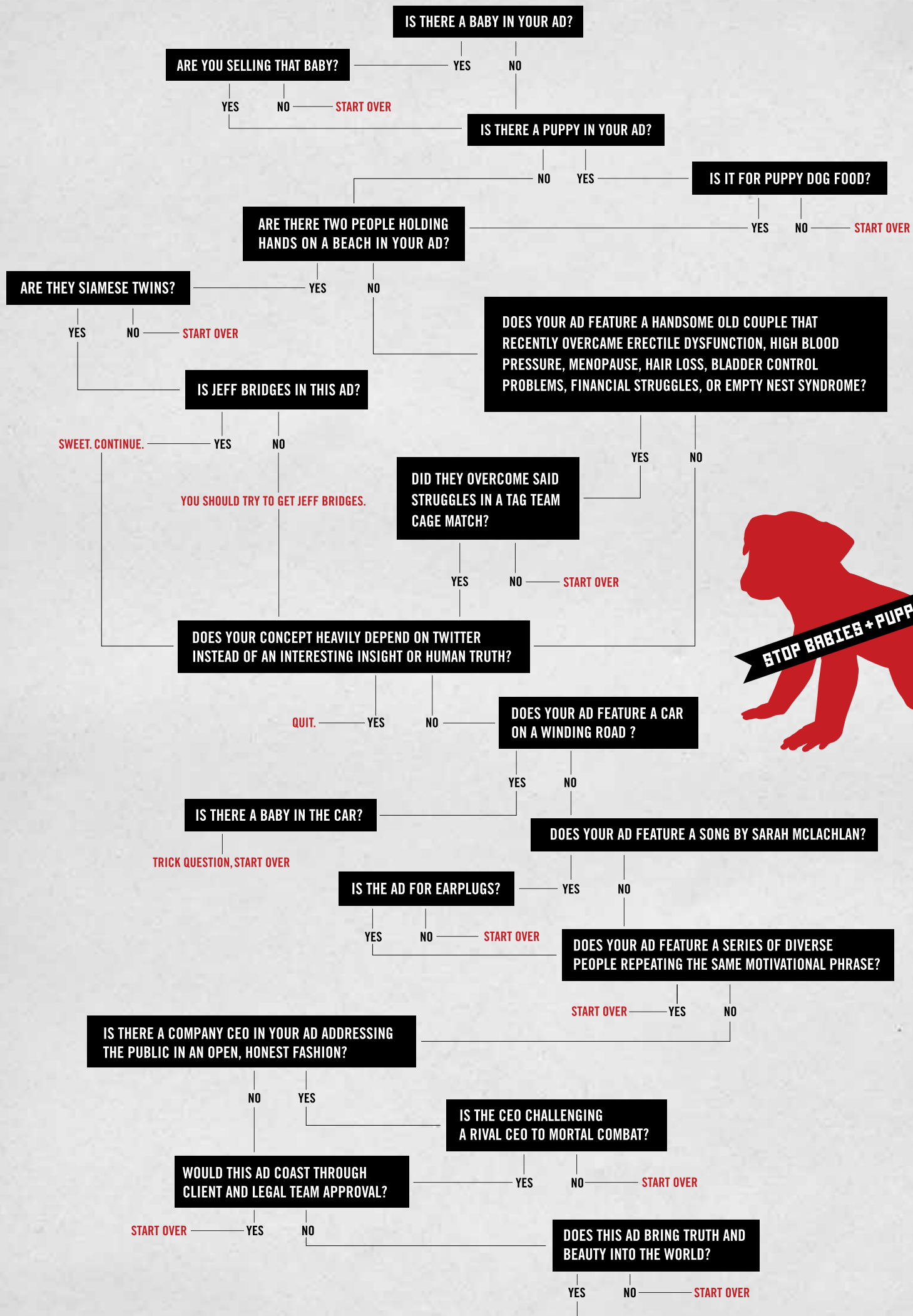
Living With Robots



I'm Here

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To enter, go to: www.aicp.com

SPOT TRACKS

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	ESPN World Cup's "Group of Death: The Rockumentary"	Wieden+Kennedy, New York Andy Ferguson, copywriter/lyricist; W+K creative team in concert with band members Steve O'Reilly, Matt Anthony, JT Weber and Matt Montalto composed the music.	38 Greene, New York Adam Charity, mixer	Wieden+Kennedy, NY Kim Nguyen, director
2	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	AT&T's "Spy Movie"	Groove Addicts, Santa Monica Dain Blair, creative director; Kaveh Cohen, Michael Nielsen, composers	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	BBDO New York Melissa Chester, music producer Alturas Films, Santa Monica Michael Mann, director
3	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Pepsi's "One People"	The Black Eyed Peas "One Tribe"	Resolution LA Josh Eichenbaum, mixer	TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles Paranoid US, Los Angeles Francois Vogel, director
4	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Guinness "Slide"	Bang Music, New York Brian Jones, composer; Brad Stratton, executive producer	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	BBDO New York Loren Parkins, executive music producer. MJZ, bicoastal/international Craig Gillespie, director
5	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Verizon's "Stealth"	Q Department, New York Trinitite Studios, Santa Monica Brian Emrich, sound designer	Lime Studios, Santa Monica Loren Silber, mixer	mcgarrybowen, New York MJZ Rupert Sanders, director
6	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Honda Accord Crosstour's "Instruments"	HUM, Santa Monica Alex Kemp, creative director/arranger (HUM cover and arrangement of Eddie Cooley and John Davenport's "Fever" as made famous by Peggy Lee) HUM Music Supervision department sourced the publishing) Jeff Koz, executive creative director	Margarita Mix, Santa Monica Nathan Dubin, mixer	RPA, Santa Monica a52, Santa Monica Andy Hall, director
7	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Montana Meth Project's "Ben"	740 Sound Design, Los Angeles Scott Ganary, sound designer; Rob Meritt, assistant	Play Studios, Santa Monica John Bolen, mixer; Sara Hartman, exec producer.	Venables, Bell & Partners, San Francisco Independent Media, Santa Monica Wally Pfister, director
8	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Ikea's "Tea Light"	Yessian Music, New York Brian Yessian, chief creative officer; Marlene Bartos, executive producer; Michael Yessian, head of production.	Yessian Music Scotty Gatteño, mixer	Grabarz and Partner, Hamburg Stink, Berlin Nacho Gayan, director
9	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Samsung Electronics Korea's "Urban Olympic Games"	JSM, New York Joel Simon, Adam Elk, John "Scrapper" Sneider, composers; Jim Nicholson, sound designer; Joel Simon, Ross Hopman, executive producers.	Blue Chip Studios, Frankfurt Armin Djalali, mixer	CHEIL Worldwide, Seoul, Korea Crossroads Films U.K. Terence Stevens-Prior, director
10	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Geico's "Ring Tones"	tonefarmer, New York Jared Hunter, composer; Tiffany Senft, executive producer	Sound Lounge, New York Philip Loeb, mixer	The Martin Agency, Richmond, Va. Smuggler, bicoastal Chris Smith, director

Music Notes: A Chart-Topping Trend—Create Your Own Rock Star

In Other News, A Record Label Launches A Spot Music House, Composer Comes Stateside From Down Under

SHOOT's Music & Sound Spot Tracks Chart topper this quarter is ESPN's tongue-in-cheek "Group of Death: The Rockumentary" from Wieden+Kennedy, New York. It continues a mini-trend of ad agencies creating not only inspired work but also the rock stars themselves who headline that work. Consider our Fall Spot Tracks lead entry (*SHOOT*, 10/23/09), California Milk Processor Board's "Battle for Milquarious" Rock Opera starring spandex-clad rocker White Gold, who brandishes a milk-filled guitar. White Gold and the Rock Opera were creations of Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco.

Thistimearound Wieden+Kennedy, New York, becomes the "star maker," assembling four musicians, with roots in heavy metal and soccer, to form the band Group of Death. The band has already started to generate a buzz for soccer's upcoming World Cup—held every four years—and ESPN's coverage of the games.

Although the global tournament doesn't get underway until June, soccer fans worldwide marked Dec. 4, 2009 on their calendars because it was the day of the World Cup draw. To capitalize on the excitement of this event, W+K fashioned The Group of Death band whose moniker comes from the nickname used to describe the toughest opening round bracket grouping of international soccer teams selected during the World Cup draw.

The Group of Death band rocked out with a concert on the evening of Dec. 4 at legendary New York soccer pub Nevada Smith's during the announcement of the tournament draw. The centerpiece of W+K's viral web campaign was a concert "Rockumentary" which also follows the soccer-obsessed band members during the days leading up to the World Cup draw. The band's MySpace and Facebook brand pages also went up the night of the draw.

The W+K New York team and Group of Death members Steve O'Reilly, Matt Anthony, JT Weber and Matt Montalto collaborated on composing the music, with lyrics written

by W+K copywriter Andy Ferguson. Among the songs performed in the "Rockumentary" was "Your Love is Like A Boot To The Face."

The concert is a kickoff to Group of Death's world tour which will culminate in Johannesburg—the site of the World Cup—in June.

Kim Nguyen, who works independently, directed the seven-minute "Rockumentary," which also features ESPN analyst Rob Stone covering the concert, and Jack Smith, owner of Nevada Smith's. The W+K ensemble included creative director Stuart Jennings, interactive creative director Jerome Austria, copywriter Ferguson, art director Ricardo Viramontes, project manager Kelly Kraft, broadcast producer Kelly Kraft, interactive producer Kristen Aron, executive producer Gary Krieg, and executive creative directors Todd Waterbury and Kevin Proudfoot.

Ed David was the DP. "Rockumentary" was edited primarily by Brandon Boudreaux of Post Millennium, New York, with additional cutting by Eben Bull, also of Post Millennium.

Audio post mixer was Adam Charity of 38 Greene, New York.

SAYING YEAH' TO SPOTS

After creating original music for Adidas, Microsoft, and McDonald's, and licensing tracks to Apple, Coca-Cola, and GMC, to name a few, San Francisco-based record label Quannum decided they should probably open an actual music house for the ad biz. The result is YEAH', which launches with a roster of diverse and accomplished artists turning out ad music and sound design to complement their longform work. YEAH' features such music creative talent as artists Blackalicious, Lifesavas, General Elektriks, Quannum and YEAH' co-founders are Xavier Mosley (a.k.a. Chief Excel, producer, writer, composer/arranger and founding member of Blackalicious) and Lateef Daumont, a member of bands Maroons and Latyrx, and a frequent collaborator with Fatboy Slim.

MORE MUSIC NOTES

Nylon Studios composer Oli Chang is moving from the company's Sydney quarters to its Manhattan studio. Among Chang's credits is the viral track "Chicken Techno," a song he penned originally for a Domino's Pizza ad in Australia that went on to catch viral wildfire, with people worldwide

downloading the track for enjoyment and as a ringtone....

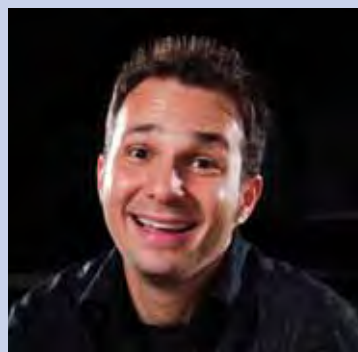
Woodland Hills, Calif.-based music library firm Songs To Your Eyes has licensed an upbeat pop rock tune to a national KFC TV spot, through DeepMix LA and Draftfcb, Chicago, as well as a retro jazz cue to four online and industrial videos promoting VW through agency Deutsch LA....

Going Global Commercially Speaking

By Brian Yessian

It wasn't too long ago that "global" work meant producing something here in the US and then adapting it for use in other markets, or even producing different campaigns for different markets. In the past year or so, we are seeing more and more work that originates somewhere else first and then makes its way to the United States for air. And it seems the world is collaborating more and more. An ad agency in Moscow creating a Pepsi campaign using a director from Austria, through a production company in the Czech Republic, a music house in the US and an editor in Germany for a commercial that will air in the US, Europe and the middle east is just one example of this new form of globalization.

The world's creative resources are becoming increasingly easier to access. Technology has brought people closer together than ever before. Between email, FTP, video conferencing, and general mobility, the only thing separating New York from Hong Kong, are a few time zones. From the commercial perspective, products and the way we utilize them are becoming increasingly similar from country to country. 10 years ago, Nutella (a chocolate hazelnut spread) was a product I would bring back from Italy to share with my friends in the US...it's now



Brian Yessian

found in Shenzhen, China at the local Walmart. I don't think Sam Walton ever envisioned selling Nutella, let alone in Shenzhen. So go the ways of advertising.

Beyond Commercials

I am writing today from seat 11D aboard a KLM flight from Amsterdam to Abu Dhabi. I will spend approximately 34 hours in the air/in airports all for 48 hours on the ground in Abu Dhabi. We are in Abu Dhabi attending a kickoff meeting for a large-scale entertainment venue for which we will create music, sound design and audio mixing.

Rewind 5 years ago...where the hell is Abu Dhabi?

It seems like these days EVERYTHING is "going global". Globalization is a word I hear at least a few times a day. For us, as a music and sound design company, I'd say 25 percent of our work originates out-

side the US. These numbers are continually increasing, therefore we must continually adapt our business and the creative work based on what's needed in a global entertainment marketplace.

So far, US and European based companies have taken the lead on the creative entertainment front. Developing regions yearn for the kind of talent we have. Emerging markets in Asia, Africa and the Middle East are hungry for entertainment content, but do not always have the level of expertise, nor the global outlook we have enjoyed for decades in this field. We are still in a position to be the global leading edge on the creative front and it's a great time to jump in and develop partnerships with clients everywhere. Our company has had the opportunity to work in Shanghai, Singapore, Frankfurt, Moscow, Dubai, Hong Kong, Hamburg, Paris, Amsterdam, and Seoul, all in the last year...but this is only the beginning. For all of us, there are great opportunities for true global expansion and partnerships in an industry we all developed. We have the resources; the only obstacle is how to combat the jet lag.

Brian Yessian is the executive creative director of Yessian Music, an original music/sound design and music licensing house.



"Group of Death: The Rockumentary"

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VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Barclaycard's "Rollercoaster"	The Mill, New York Dan Roberts, VFX producer; Angus Kneale, shoot supervisor; Ben Smith, shoot supervisor/CG supervisor; Wyatt Savarese, Ruben Vandebroek, shoot supervisors/CG artists; Alex Lovejoy, Dan Williams, lead Flame artists; Melissa Graff, Flare artist; Nitant Kamik, Nuke; Cole Schreiber, Naomi Anderlini, Corey Brown, Stefan Coory, Ian Richardson, Flame artists; Jeff Robins, Smoke artist; Keith Sullivan, Rosalind Paradis, Robert Bruce, Suzanne Dyer, Bruce Chen, Combustion; Andrew Proctor, lighting lead; Joshua Merck, animation lead; Kevin Ives, Michael Panov, Gregory Gangemi, Yorie Kumalasari, Rob Petrie, Emily Meger, Naotaka Minami, Jeff Lopez, Pete Devlin, CG artists; Fergus McCall, Seamus O'Kane, colorists. (Toolbox: Flame, Flare, Nuke, Smoke, Photoshop, Combustion, XSI, Mental Ray, 3DEqualizer, PFTrack, Maya)	BBH London	MJZ, bicoastal/international Nicolai Fuglsig, director
2	 Coca-Cola's "Finals"	MPC, London Yourick Van Impe, Robin Carlisle, VFX supervisors; Michael Gregory, Mikael Pettersson, Matthew Unwin, Rob Walker, 2D team; James Bailey, Anthony Bloor, Andrew Brooks, Jason Brown, Tim Civil, Craig Crane, Adam Elkins, Daniel Elliot, Guy Elson, Andreas Graichen, Dave Haupt, Greg Howe-Davies, Carsten Keller, Adam Leary, Jorge Montiel, Vicky Osborn, Dean Robinson, Andrey Ryabovichev, Wayne Simmons, Charlotte Tyson, Roman Vrbovsky, 3D team; Chris Allen, producer; Stefano Salvini, Jonathan Davies, line producers; Heather Goodenough, production assistant; Paul Harrison, telecine. (Toolbox: Nuke, Flame, Maya, Massive, Shake)	Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Rattling Stick, London Epoch Films, bicoastal Daniel Kleinman, director
3	 Skittles' "Plant"	Framestore, New York Maryanne Butler, sr. Flame artist; Miyuki Shimamoto, Flame artist; Mary Nockles, producer; James Razzall, exec producer (Toolbox: Flame) Brand New School, bicoastal (Graphics:) Robin Kim, Peter Murphy, animators	TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York	Smuggler, bicoastal Guy Shelmerdine, director
4	 Pop Secret's "Kernels/Dark Knight"	Nathan Love, New York Joe Burrascano, director; Michael Harry, EP; Rob Marmor, producer; Anca Risca, project lead/concept art/character design/compositor; Sylvia Apostol, concept art/environment model and textures; Brad Johansen, concept art/environment textures/environment design & layouts; Yli Orana, concept art/character design, character model/texture artist; Morgan Schweitzer, concept art/storyboards; Michelle Czajkowski, concept art; Youngmin Kim, environment models; Roland Womack, environment textures; David Han, animation lead/ animator; Ryan Moran, animation lead; Pat Porter, Kyle Mohr, Doug Litos, David Lam, animators; Frank Naranjo, rigging lead; Vadim Kiyaev, character/prop/environment rigging; Marc Berrouet, rigging cadet; Mats Andersson, lighting/compositing lead; Weito Chow, Max Komev, compositors; Denis Kozyrev, compositor/matte painter; Chase Massingill, FX compositor/ animator; Jesse Clemens, Stephen Mackenzie, TDs; Kristjan Zaklinsky, editing. (Toolbox: Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, Nuke, Temerity Pipeline)	Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Nathan Love Joe Burrascano, director
5	 Scrabble's "Word Strings"	Rhythm + Hues Commercial Studios, Los Angeles James Wahlberg, director; Paul Babb, exec producer; John-Mark Austin, CG animation director; Deborah Austin, CG producer; Steve Wellington, editor. Planet Blue, Santa Monica Maury Rosenfeld, Flame artist, previzualization, on-set VFX supervisor; Matt Welch, Flame artist; Matt Alvarez, exec producer. (Toolbox: Lightwave, Maya, R+H proprietary software to build the animation, spot finished in Flame)	Young & Rubicam Brands, Irvine, Calif.	Rhythm + Hues Commercial Studios James Wahlberg, director
6	 Infiniti's "G Line"	Digital Domain, Venice, Calif. Ed Ulbrich, president of commercials/exec producer; Karen Anderson, exec producer/head of production; Jay Barton, VFX supervisor; Ronald D. Herbst, CG supervisor; Chris Fieldhouse, VFX producer; Stephanie Escobar, VFX coordinator; Jeff Heusser, Lisa Tomei, Matthew James Bramante, Flame artists; Arthur Argote, Nuke artist; Daniel Thron, paint; James Atkinson, Casey Benn, Jun Watanabe, CG artists; Hilery Johnson Copeland, roto artist; Scott Gsop Edelstein, Som Shankar, tracking/integration artists. (Toolbox: Maya, Chaos Group V-Ray, Side Effects Houdini, After Effects, The Foundry Nuke and 2010 Flames)	TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles	RSA Films, bicoastal/international Carl Erik Rinsch, director
7	 Transunion Interactive's "zendough"	Fin Design & Effects, Sydney Emma Daines, VFX exec producer; Billy Becket, VFX producer; Justin Bromley, Flame; Stuart White, 3D supervisor; Tim Streets, Tom Corbett, Duncan McLaren, Shane Brouwer, 3D team; Maxence Peillon, 2D. (Toolbox: Flame, Maya)	Cramer-Krasselt, Chicago	The Sweet Shop, bicoastal/international Mr. Hide, director
8	 U.S. 2010 Census' "Community"	Shilo, bicoastal Shilo, director; Jose Gomez, creative director; Mike Slane, associate creative director/compositor; Blake Guest, 3D lead, 3D model/animation; Trentity De Witt, Zach Christian, Mason Stapleton, Colin Cromwell, 3D model/animation; Erik Anderson, Walter Schulz, 3D lighting/rendering; Ed Laag, compositor; Tim Turner, Nathan Davies, rotoscoping/3D tracking; Santino Sladavic, exec producer; Hilary Wright, sr. producer; Adam Bluming, Akira Chan, editors. (Toolbox: Adobe Creative Suite, Autodesk Maya, Adobe After Effects)	GlobalHue Latino, New York	Shilo, bicoastal Shilo, director
9	 Beeline's "Privet"	Rhino, New York Natasha Saenko, director; Goran Ognjanovic, Rob Dollase, animators/riggers; Jaime A. Castaneda, Sean Curran, animators; Rob Pearson, lead lighter; Yuheng Chiang, Gilad Kenan, lighters; Jagammay Himamshu, Brian Dinoto, modelers; Micky Gorenstein, Flame composite artist; Ivan Guerrero, CG TD; Cynthia Angel, production coordinator; Karen Bianca Bisignano, head of production/producer; Camille Geier, COO/exec producer; Rick Wagonheim, managing director; Zviah Eldar, CEO. (Toolbox: Maya, Maya Particles/Pond Fluid Effects, Mental Ray, Z-brush, Photoshop, Flame)	Lowe Adventa, Moscow	Just Us, Moscow Rhino, N.Y. Natasha Saenko, director
10	 Fidelity's "Around the World"	Radium/Reel FX, Santa Monica and Dallas Limbirt Fabian, co-director; Jeff Blodgett, executive producer; Paul Winze, producer; Dariush Derakhshani, VFX supervisor; Hatem Ben Abdallah, Nader Hussein, Dustin D'Amault, Erin McGuire, designers; Steve Cummings, Dave Damant, Dan Gutman, Victor Garza, Brian Lee, Takahiro Yamaguchi, Scott Tessier, CG artists. (Toolbox: Photoshop, Illustrator; Final Cut Pro, Maya, V-Ray, Nuke, Inferno, Paper, Tape & Scissors)	Arnold Worldwide, Boston Production	Aero Film, Santa Monica Michael Hartog, director

A Wild Rollercoaster Ride And Reaching A "Finals" Destination

A SHOOT Staff Report

Barclaycard's "Rollercoaster"—a commercial in which a man commutes to work in amusement park ride style—and Coca-Cola's "Finals," in which a student is aroused from slumber by characters in his history textbooks, enabling him to get to his history final exam just in time, are *SHOOT*'s Visual Effects & Animation Chart toppers this quarter.

The former is also this week's "Top Spot," and as part of that coverage (see separate story), Ben Smith of The Mill, New York, who was shoot supervisor/CG supervisor on "Rollercoaster," provides insights into the visual effects process that went into the project as well as the close working relationship The Mill enjoys with "Rollercoaster" director Nicolai Fuglsig of bicoastal/international MJZ.

Among the notable past collaborations

between The Mill and Fuglsig was the lauded "It's Mine" spot for Coca-Cola.

"Rollercoaster" came out of BBH London and is the much anticipated sequel to the Barclaycard commercial "Waterslide," which helped Peter Thwaites of Gorgeous Enterprises, London, earn the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award as best spot director of 2008.

Meanwhile Coke's "Finals" opens on a college student fast asleep at his desk next to his textbooks. It's 11:25 a.m. and we see from a self-reminder note that he has a final exam in history at 11:30.

So much for studying hard until the wee hours paying off at test time. It looks doubtful he will even be awake at test time.

But not to worry. Historical mini-figures come to life from the textbooks and make every effort to arouse him—initially to no avail as a volley of arrows

and even cannon fire fail to get him up.

Finally Napoleon, Da Vinci and Cleopatra have a sure-fire idea. They notice a nearby Coke bottle sitting on the desk and devise a plan to use the familiar "psshht" sound of the bottle opening to awaken him.

Sure enough the popping open of the Real Thing does the trick and the student dashes off hopefully to ace his final exam.

Daniel Kleinman of London-based Rattling Stick and bicoastal Epoch Films directed "Finals" for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland. Moving Picture Company (MPC), London, was the visual effects house.

"Finals"

While "Rollercoaster" and its visual effects challenges are covered in this edition's "Top Spot," *SHOOT* caught up with MPC visual effects supervisor



Coca-Cola's "Finals"

Yourick Van Impe to gain backstory on Coke's "Finals."

"What was precious creatively to Daniel [director Kleinman] about this project was to be true to the small characters and their world," related Van Impe. "Danny didn't want a big world shrunk down. He instead very much wanted a real small world which

these mini-characters inhabit—and then to bring them together with the big human world of the boy sleeping at his desk."

Van Impe said camera measurements were critical to attain the proper depth of field so that when the two worlds—shot on different stages—came

Continued on page 22

Weta Digital Tops VES Awards Competition With Nine Nominations

Zoic Earns Eight Noms, Followed By Six Apiece for ILM and Framestore; James Cameron To Receive Lifetime Honor

LOS ANGELES—On the strength of *Avatar*, Weta Digital in Wellington, N.Z., topped the field of nominated companies for the eighth annual Visual Effects Society (VES) Awards recognizing outstanding visual effects artistry in 20-plus categories of film, animation, TV, commercials and video games.

Weta scored nine nominations for *Avatar*—one for Outstanding Visual Effects in a VFX-Driven Feature Motion Picture; another in the Best Single Visual Effect of the Year for the "Neytiri Drinking" sequence; Outstanding Animated Character in a Live-Action Feature for the character Neytiri; Outstanding Models &

Miniatures in a Feature (for Samson/Home Tree/Floating Mountains/Ampsuit); three noms for Outstanding Created Environment in a Feature (Floating Mountains, Jungle/Biolum, and Willow Glade), Outstanding Compositing in a Feature; and Outstanding Matte Paintings in a Feature (Pandora).

Avatar also garnered Industrial Light+Magic (ILM), San Francisco, a pair of nominations, contributing to that studio's total of six.

Fittingly, in a year when *Avatar* has a dominant presence in the competition, its director James Cameron will be honored with the VES Lifetime Achievement Award during the VES

Awards ceremony slated for Feb. 28 in Los Angeles.

ILM's two *Avatar* noms were in the categories Outstanding Compositing in a Feature for the End Battle sequence; and Best Single Visual Effect of the Year for the Quarich's Escape sequence. ILM's other four nominations came for: *Star Trek* and *Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*, both in the Outstanding Visual Effects in a VFX-Driven Feature category; *Terminator Salvation*'s "VLA Escape" sequence" for Best Single Visual Effect of the Year; and *Star Trek* for Outstanding Matte Paintings in a Feature.

Right behind Weta's nine nomina-

tions was Zoic Studios, Culver City, Calif., with eight, including two for the *V* television pilot; another couple for *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*-episode 1001 "Opening Sequence"; another pair for TV program *Flash Forward*; and one apiece for *Ben 10: Alien Swarm* ("Montage) and *Fringe*-episode 206 "Earthling."

Next up, tying ILM with six noms of its own was Framestore, London and New York, which included recognition in the Outstanding VFX in a Commercial as well as Outstanding Animated Character in a Broadcast Program or Commercial, and Outstanding Compositing in a Broadcast Program or Commercial—all for

Pepsi's "The Flight of the Penguin." Framestore scored two more nominations for its work on the feature *Sherlock Holmes*, and one for video game trailer DJ Hero.

Copping five nominations was Portland, Ore.-based animation studio Laika, with five for *Coraline* and one for the feature 9.

Each earning four nominations were Sony Pictures Digital Productions, Culver City, Moving Picture Company (MPC), London, and Digital Domain in Venice, Calif. All four of MPC's noms were for spots: Kerry LowLow's "Mouse" and Plane Stupid's "Polar Bears" for Outstand-

Continued on page 22

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Art & Commerce Mesh

***A Serious Man*
Generates Serious
Revenue As Well
As A Pair Of Oscar
Nominations**

A SHOOT Staff Report

The critically acclaimed *A Serious Man*—produced, directed and written by Joel and Ethan Coen—has not only registered on the artistic barometer, landing Oscar nominations for best picture and best original screenplay, but also made its mark on the bottom line for the State of Minnesota.

Already on the awards show circuit *A Serious Man* has garnered best screenplay honors from the National Society of Film Critics, best original screenplay from the Writers Guild of America, was named one of the year's best pictures by the American Film Institute, and is slated to receive the Robert Altman Award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards.

And on the fiscal front, *A Serious Man* shot for 44 days during the fall of 2008 in locations throughout the Twin Cities metro, including Bloomington, Edina, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Roseville. The production budget brought just over \$6 million to the local economy and employed 130 Minnesotans in crew positions. Hundreds of Minnesotan actors played key roles or worked as extras in the film about suburban Minnesota in 1967.

The feature marked the first professional return of the Coens to their home state since *Fargo* (1996), which was nominated for best picture and earned best original screenplay Oscars for the Coens as well as a best actress Oscar for Frances McDormand for her portrayal of Marge Gunderson.

Clearly the importance of filming to Minnesota's economy—as exemplified in *A Serious Man*—hasn't been lost on the state which continues to maintain Snowbate, Minnesota's Film Jobs Production Program offering a reimbursement of 15 to 20 percent of Minnesota production expenditures. The incentive is available to feature films, national TV or Internet programs, commercials, music videos and documentaries.

Illinois report

Indeed Illinois too recognizes incentives programs as integral to keeping and attracting film, TV and new media production, which has a profoundly positive impact on the state's economy. This is evidenced in figures for 2008 (the last full

year thus far reported on in the state), which saw some \$141 million brought into the Illinois economy along with 5,392 job hires (excluding the number of extras who were employed).

At the time of the figures being released in '09, Warren Ribley, director of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, said, "Illinois' film industry continues to bring tremendous revenue to our state when it is most needed. Despite national economic challenges, the film industry proved its resilience by having the second most profitable year in Illinois history.

A number of high-profile films and TV series were produced in Illinois in '08, including: Universal Pictures' *Public Enemies* starring Johnnie Depp and Christian Bale, and directed by Chicago native Michael Mann (who helms commercials via Alturas Films, Santa Monica); Warner Brothers' *The Informant* starring Matt Damon and directed by Steven Soderbergh; *Nothing Like The Holidays* starring Chicagoan Freddie Rodriguez, Debra Messing and John Leguizamo, and produced by native Chicagoan Bob Teitel; and *The Beast*, a television series starring the now late Patrick Swayze and executive produced by native Chicagoan Steven Pearl.

On the heels of the '08 showing, a strengthened Illinois Film Tax Credit was enacted in January '09, offering a 30 percent tax credit to filmmakers for money spent on Illinois goods and services, including wages paid to Illinois residents. Previously the tax credit was 20 percent. In addition, the yearly

sunset provision was removed, highlighting the state's long-term commitment to growing the film industry. Features, TV, commercials and branded content are among the disciplines qualifying for the incentives package.

Looking ahead

As we enter 2010, *SHOOT* sought input from artisans and executives in the Midwest as to business prospects for the new year. We posed two questions:



MIDWEST PRODUCTION

1) What's your assessment of business prospects for 2010 (spanning commercials, branded content, television, features)? Are there certain opportunities emerging that the Midwest has a leg up on or can take particular advantage of—and/or what if anything should city and state governments and officials do to help promote business in the Midwest?

2) Tell us about one particularly unique project that you have been involved in dur-



Tom Duff, president, Optimus, Chicago

1) From all the people we talk to and all we see, 2010 has a brighter outlook than we've seen the last couple of years here in the Midwest. Our agencies are gaining new clients, and new business pitches are at a pace we haven't seen in a long time. It's like a breath of enthusiasm has been injected into our nation's bread basket. We have always had a really strong post community here in Chicago, and our reputation for creative excellence, technical expertise, and "going the extra mile" is second to none in the world. It's carpe diem time for us in both the production and the post community. We have enjoyed more upfront involvement (which we have been preaching about forever) in the creative process as a result of our clients being challenged with things like HD, file-based workflow, multiple format deliverables, and creative content in a myriad of mediums. These ARE our skill areas, and it is incumbent on us to seize the moment, demonstrate our value and just become more essential than we ever have. It's a trust and a reliance we all want to have with our clients, now is the time more than ever.

2) Our PSA for Shelterbox, a charity that sends long-term survival kits to victims of disasters, has taken on even greater significance in light of the devastating earthquake in Haiti. Because of this, we want to get as much exposure for the cause as possible.



Tracy Heropkie/ Carrie Lewis, executive producers, Foundation Content, Chicago

1) Projects have become so multi-faceted that it's looking like everything we do in 2010 needs to "have legs" and be adaptable to be used across many platforms. Open and innovative thinking—both creative and budgetary—can give anyone a leg up in this environment. The Midwest is home to several corporate headquarters, SCJ, Kraft, State Farm, Target, Allstate to name a few. With tighter schedules and budgets, keeping production local seems to make sense in this multi-tasking climate. Adding extra travel days to schedules (for both client and agency) doesn't need to be as much of a concern. Likewise, clients, schedules permitting, can sit in on the editorial process, which helps with overall communication.

2) Foundation produced a spot for Target's Channel Red that was to play in-store and online that promoted Target's reusable bag program. The collaboration between our director/editor, graphics team and the amazing Target team created such an effective spot that it got picked up for broadcast as well. We just finished up a project with Draftfcb for BCBS/Florida and scheduling was a concern. We had one-and-a-half weeks for pre-pro/production and one week to edit. The director and editor collaborated to ensure that quality wasn't sacrificed in the face of tight time constrictions.



Mike Matusek, colorist/partner, Nolo Digital Film, Chicago

1) 2010 is looking great for us, as we have a diverse client base from commercial agencies, independent filmmakers, creative editorial houses, and feature restoration work. All our work goes through our digital intermediate grading theater, so we offer a unique color correction experience for all our clients, whether commercial or long form. We are just finishing up on our third year in business, each year has shown to pick up in business, so 2010 looks to continue

that trend. We've seen an increase in RED camera productions and other new digital camera formats, whether commercial or feature. We color correct on a Baselight DI system which allows us to be able to seamlessly work with native RED files and have developed an awesome workflow for our clients. We are still seeing a lot of 35mm film come through, but being able to handle new file-based camera material seamlessly is essential, as digital based productions have increased quite a bit in the Midwest.

2) We're currently finishing an ESPN 30 for 30 documentary by director Steve James called "No Crossover: The Trial of Allen Iverson". (Steve James is known for directing the feature documentary "Hoop Dreams"). "No Crossover" will air April 13th at 8pm on ESPN. Nolo Digital Film is completing the HD online and color correction for the film. This will be the forth feature documentary that I have worked on with Steve James. The film will have it's theatrical premiere at the South by Southwest Film Festival in March.

ing the last three months. Include name of client and agency (if there was one), type of work, when and where it will air or appear online and why it was unique (i.e., type of work it was, how the project came about, there was something unique about the players who collaborated, etc).

Here's a sampling of the feedback we received:



Bruce McFarlan, president and director/analyst, Reelworks, Minneapolis

1) My Magic 8 Ball says "ASK AGAIN LATER". We've all read anecdotal evidence for higher TV ad spending in 2010, but how much higher remains the question, and will it be a noticeable increase for most production companies?

My animation studio has weathered a number of recessions in its 30 years, and one rationale for this is that us Midwest-based production companies enjoy lower overhead costs than our brethren on the coasts, making us more competitive when recessions hit and budgets become challenged.

We're also headquartered in a state that offers incentives for shooting films and commercials in the form of tax breaks on production costs, and rebates.

Given how many dollars are pumped into the local economy when a motion picture is filmed here, it's a smart move and something that, hopefully, our elected representatives will see fit to continue.



Joe Scudiero, director, Pivotal Pictures, Chicago

1) To put it frankly we've already hit the ground running. 2009 was a challenging year; it was difficult to make things stick. I already see much more spending early on. It's as if clients are coming out of hibernation. I truly believe that we have seen the worst. Don't get me wrong—it's still an uphill climb; at least we are moving upward. The Midwest is an epicenter of creativity. A lot of originality is developed here. The only issue is it's not always produced here. I have filmed all over the world and the talent here is on par to anywhere. Unfortunately we are not always on the radar. In time it will be.

We have an awesome tax incentive to keep production here.

2) I am really excited about one particular project, an animation cartoon based on Mob characters called "The Baritonios." a wacky crime drama surrounding a gang known as The Baritonios. These are the stories, and exploits, of this group of street thugs. We started from scratch developing the characters to designing the overall look of the entire cartoon. It has a film noir look based on the 1940's done entirely in 3D. It's currently being looked at by a number of major studios.



Teri Rogers, president/CEO, T2 and Back Alley Films, Kansas City, MO

1) Prospects heading in to 2010 look good across all media platforms and for all creative companies working here in the Midwest. Far from being just the "Fly-Over States," innovation and creativity thrive here. However, I do think that television commercials may become the much less relevant of media platforms in the next year with content for the Internet and product placement/branded content taking the lead. We are also seeing (for the first time here) new business models being adapted. Agencies adding production services—production companies adding creative and media/distribution strategy. Will we partner going forward—or compete? I think we'll see a mix of both business models. Either way it goes, we all need to embrace innovation and help clients create value for their consumers—with or without an agency partner. Finally, city and state governments should open up tax credits to more eligible projects and to the companies based here. Any incentive that can be given to help businesses/studios produce marketing and filmmaking in the Midwest—would be most advantageous to our industry.

2) Back Alley Films/T2 just completed a short film for the British clothing company, Fly 53, entitled "The Resistance". Directed by The Wade Brothers, the film tells a modern day love story—and will debut in January at the Bread and Butter show in Berlin, where over 500 fashion brands tout their image and products. The Wades teamed with another Back Alley Director/DP, Joshua Reis, who acted as DP on the project. The multimedia campaign features the five-minute film, 30-second teaser and numerous still photos. The film will appear on social networking sites and a Fly 53 micro site. "The Resistance" launches Feb. 15.



Then, Now and Looking Ahead

Perspectives On How the Industry Has Evolved As *SHOOT* Approaches A Milestone

By Robert Goldrich

To commemorate its 50th anniversary which comes upon us in December, *SHOOT* continues a special series of features that will run through 2010 in which noted industry executives and artists reflect on the changes they've seen over the decades, as well as the essential dynamics that have endured. These folks—from different sectors of the business—will additionally share their vision and aspirations for the future.

In our first series installment (*SHOOT*, 12/11/09), we tapped into the insights of Lee Clow of Media Arts, TBWA Worldwide, and TBWA/Media Arts Lab; Bob Giraldi of Giraldi Media; Larry Bridges of Red Car; and Robert Greenberg of R/GA.

Now we garner observations from Rich Silverstein, co-chairman/creative director of Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco; Stephen Dickstein, global president/managing partner of worldwide production house The Sweet Shop; and Phil Geier, former Interpublic Group CEO and current chairman of The Geier Group, New York.

Rich Silverstein

The metamorphosis that diversified mainstay creative agency Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, founded in 1983, into the interactive arena has been cited in recent years as a showcase example of an ad shop evolving to successfully span traditional, digital and integrated forms of marketing and communication.

Yet the inherent paradox about such change is that there are unchanging tangibles and intangibles that are needed to bring it about. Indeed Rich Silverstein sees his agency's oft-cited transformation as representing both a willingness to change and a steadfast commitment to not changing one's core values. "Some years ago, it was out of fear that we felt that we had better start embracing the Internet," recalled Silverstein. "We had to in order to stay relevant. Showing a reel of great commercials over the years means nothing in a media changing marketplace. Yet at the time we embraced interactive, the Internet was banners—not exactly the most inviting option. How can you win a gold medal for a banner?"

"But for us the key is that we were able to change and delve well beyond banners because we didn't change who we were. We just applied our values to new technology. Our values run deep as storytellers. Jeff [Goodby—co-chairman/creative director of the agency] grew up as a journalist. I grew up as a designer. Neither one of us started in advertising. I did graphic design. Jeff was a reporter. We applied our skills to advertising and when you look at it that way, the web was just waiting for those kinds of skills—storytelling, design, art direction, theater, writing, creative concepts. To help our agency adapt to the web, we did bring in fearless young people who didn't have a 35mm reel. We learned from them but we also applied our values to them—values which include respecting the intelligence of our audience and bringing them something of value."

At the same time, Silverstein sometimes wonders how valued those values are in the marketplace at large. "We have all these incredible delivery devices but it's

amazing how many of them deliver bad television," he related. "I don't care if I can get live TV on my phone or on an airplane if the content is bad. YouTube is an amazing delivery device with a lot of crap. You look at the reality TV shows, a society where Sarah Palin can be a heartbeat away from the presidency and you can't help but think that we are dumming down America. It's not about her politics. It's about someone who isn't even well read and informed—that's unacceptable no matter what your politics are. And then you have the Supreme Court decision opening the floodgates for more political advertising and dumming down clutter. I know it means more money for the advertising industry but that's not the way we should elect people or deal with issues."

While Silverstein sees this environment as the antithesis of the core creative, storytelling and educational values he and his agency espouse, add to the quandary a recession and high unemployment. "The economy has gone into the tank and that makes clients nervous, and so I don't see a high form of advertising out there right now. I just heard from one of my partners who came back from the U.K. and reported that things are pretty dreadful there right now. I always looked at the U.K. as a country that loved advertising and that does unique things. But fear and economic uncertainty are also being felt there, resulting in people being unwilling to take chances. And you need to take chances creatively in order to have great breakthrough advertising."

Yet the flip side, he noted, is the perspective of viewing the glass as being half full. In a dumbed down environment, thoughtful ideas can stand out even more. And in a tight economy, breakthrough ideas are needed more than ever. "People don't want to be part of a faceless company. People want brands that have identity, that mean something," said Silverstein. "People want brands that reflect themselves. So as an agency, you cannot operate out of fear. We never go into a situation thinking we might lose the account if we don't do so and so. We don't come from that position. We come from a position of what we believe is right for the account and is it something we can be proud of. As long as we stay true to that, we are fine. Steve Jobs is true to himself and the world has come to him. The world has come to Richard Branson, and to companies with points of view who stay true to who they are. Marketing is a reflection of what a company is. Instead of making stuff up, the best work is honest work. For example, I have great respect for Lee [Clow] and how he keeps true to Apple's values."

"Yes, marketing in the cloud of what's going on in the world today can be difficult," continued Silverstein. "But there's a place for marketing that tells relevant engaging, honest stories. Jeff and I started our business to give something back. Yes, we're marketers but we try to treat consumers with the deep respect and intelligence they deserve. We apply that to TV, the web, smart phones, Facebook, any delivery system. As long as there are people who value good writing and storytelling, who value educating and informing others and consistently giving back to society, there's hope."

PRELUDE TO 50TH ANNIVERSARY SERIES

Stephen Dickstein

"Over the last five years, everyone has felt change—more than they felt during the five years prior to that," related Stephen Dickstein, global president and managing director of The Sweet Shop. "The fact is that change is now happening at an accelerated pace. In our business, an obvious example of major change has been audience fragmentation. But it's important to remember that when in a world of change, the most important thing is being nimble, anticipating and reacting to change—not looking at the good old days and trying to hold on to them. I recently saw a college professor I hadn't seen for a long time. He asked me why I hadn't been in touch. My answer was that I'm much better at managing my present than my past."

Dickstein's professional past includes the vertical production house business model, perhaps best reflected in the venerable Propaganda Films, a breeding ground for talent and creativity. (Propaganda was founded in 1986 and closed in late '01. Dickstein, president of Propaganda's commercial operation, exited the company in '99.) "Today in the commercial production business, the landscape has changed," he said. "Those big vertical structures are challenged by economics. There's no room for those types of edifices because of thinning margins."

Now at The Sweet Shop, he's helped to shape a horizontal model. "Businesses are going from vertical to horizontal to cover a greater swath of opportunity. The Sweet Shop and its sister shop, the London-based digital solutions/interactive house] The Rumpus Room provide a single group of talent globally, taking advantage of opportunities throughout the world for our directors and digital talent. We don't rely on regional business that ebbs and flows with certain economic conditions in each country. You also aren't confined to one country's business seasons—whereas the second quarter could be traditionally slow in the U.S., it might not be in Europe, Australia or elsewhere. And you can take advantage of exchange rates wherever they offer the most leverage. Globalization is a reasonable antidote



Rich Silverstein

to the changing tide of business."

Per the globalization at The Sweet Shop, directors work all over the world at one company with one vision, being able to access low cost production centers as needed. This, Dickstein related, is far more economical than a director being represented by different shops—be they rep firms or production companies in different parts of the world. Factoring in production services, you have a scenario in which multiple sources of markup and multiple company agendas are part of the equation before you expose a frame of film. If you have a single company handling a director's schedule, contended Dickstein, you can leverage it the best way possible for a global rather than a local career.

A world view, affirmed Dickstein, also opens up far-flung opportunities. He noted, for example, that China, India and what was once the Eastern Bloc have expanding middle classes that have been growing at a healthy rate. This means more consumers for products, more competition for brands, with a deep need for marketing in order to be viable in that competition.

"But in some of these countries," observed Dickstein, "it's a matter of us adjusting to budgets that might not be quite as big as they have been in more mature markets. That's why flattening out and horizontalizing the business is important, being amenable to working within local and regional rules and realities instead of applying imperialistic methodologies and importing them around the world. If you're working from the old rules and a sense of entitlement based on the way things were, you are in for a rude awakening."

Beyond growth in different parts of the world, Dickstein sees another



Stephen Dickstein

prime cause for optimism being the entertainment sector. "We may be seeing the demise of the major television networks but we also see the incredible rise of cable, a model that mixes advertising and subscription, a better way to get entertainment sponsored. Entertainment sponsorship isn't going away. People are not going to create *Avatar* for half a billion dollars unless there's a chance to get a billion in return. Entertainment as a commodity is in demand all over the globe—and sponsor growth and opportunities are attached to it."

And with entertainment comes the chance to develop intellectual properties across traditional and digital platforms. Though he wasn't at liberty to publicly discuss specifics, Dickstein noted that the aforementioned The Rumpus Room—an idea think tank with a track record of creating and producing integrated digital advertising for agencies and clients—has some endeavors in the offing that will register on the intellectual property front.

Dickstein is enthused over multiple platform opportunities. "Even though there's fragmentation, there's been no death of the big idea. Now a big idea can be bigger when it works across different platforms. The big idea guides all facets of a brand campaign. Ideas need to work in different media and ad agencies will still have a strong place at the table in this mix. Not too long ago, integrated media, online digital content and events were an afterthought or ancillary to major ad campaigns. That's still the case at some places. But the leading agencies today are from the outset exploring and bringing together all aspects of media that can come into play and



Phil Geier

work for a client."

Phil Geier

A veteran marketer perhaps best known for his 20 years (starting in 1980) as CEO of the Interpublic Group, shaping much of the blueprint for the modern advertising holding company, Phil Geier today is chairman of The Geier Group, a New York marketing communications consulting and venture capital firm. He also has become an author, penning the recently released book *Survive to Thrive: Sustaining Yourself, Your Brand, and Your Business from Recession to Recovery*.

While globalization and localization (local creative agencies gaining a worldwide footprint by tapping into resources of the parent company and larger sister shops) helped to make the holding company business model successful, there were pitfalls that detracted significantly from that success. In his book, Geier pinpoints both the positive and negative dynamics.

But as he reflects upon his years in the business and the changes he's seen during that time span, among the most important lessons Geier has learned is centered on the fact that success stems from building relationships as well as brands, and by putting clients and their customers first. "In these days of the Internet and e-mail, everybody is doing business and connecting with each other through technology," Geier observed. "We are losing sight of the fact that to be successful you have to maintain personal relationships, to see people and get to know them. If I have a problem with the advertising business today, it's that people don't get to truly know each other—their clients, their competitors,

their suppliers, their customers, even people within their own companies. Without these relationships, you cannot find out people's real needs."

Being out of touch with those needs makes risk taking harder. "You have to be able to take risks to do breakthrough work. I was a great believer in having our people try new things and experiment," affirmed Geier. "But you have to know one another in order to build the trust necessary to take risks together. And taking them together is important—people will feel more free to take risks if they know management is behind them. I always made sure the creative risk takers made sure that management knew what they were doing. With that in place, if you succeed, you get credit. Or if you go down, you go down together."

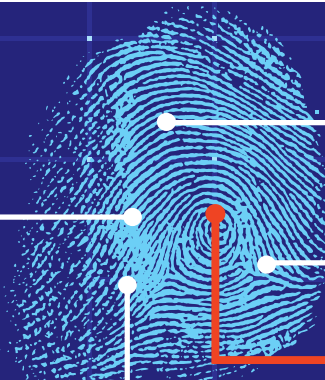
While he will leave those who read his book to mull over his 10 principles to stick by in good and bad times, as well as his reflections and remembrances of his first roost, McCann Erickson, and then Interpublic, Geier noted that his life-altering experience came when he almost lost his own life in Feb. 2006, just three weeks prior to his 71st birthday. He was playing tennis and collapsed on the court. There was no defibrillator at the tennis club but luckily cardiac surgeon Dr. Karl Krieger happened to be working out there that day. After four minutes, Krieger got Geier's heart beating again.

But Geier still was far from being home free. He later received a heart transplant. "The heart I received came from a 39-year-old woman in West Virginia. A liberal Democrat, no less," wrote Geier, a lifelong Republican. "Some have noted that the arrival of her heart in my body has coincided with a new sensitivity in my nature."

Before he got his new heart, though, Geier discovered the value of giving back. He had chaired the Ad Council, and has been active in such organizations as Autism Speaks, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, the New York and Columbia Presbyterian Hospitals, and Save the Children.

The latter has become more prominent recently in light of the Haiti tragedy. Geier urges us to visit www.savethechildren.org.

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MPC, W+K Ace "Finals" For Coca-Cola

Continued from page 17

together, they did so realistically. And while green screen was deployed, Van Impe noted that he also went with "sympathetic colors" for certain key settings—like gray to more closely coincide to the page of a book which the characters stood on, or brown to correspond to the desk.

"This helped to make our lighting as natural as possible," he said. "Yes, we could have used more green screen and then pulled the green out but when you do that you remove some of the other colors."

While close-ups of prime historical characters such as Napoleon



Yourick Van Impe

were live action, other scenes with depth of field and/or featuring other characters deployed Maya and Mas-sive software to create computer-

generated characters based on the live-action and on still shots of the performers.

For example, the CG route was taken for the scene in which a long line of soldiers appeared at the ready to try to wake up the student.

"It all comes down to our shooting two worlds that are of different scale yet making them mesh together so they look and register true as one," affirmed Van Impe who used Nuke, Mas-sive and Shake for the compositing.

Spots Score VES Noms

Continued from page 17

ing Visual Effects in a Commercial; "Mouse" for Outstanding Compositing in a Broadcast Program or Commercial; and Evian's "Skating Babies" for Outstanding Animated Character in a Broadcast Program or Commercial.

Digital Domain's field of noms consisted of one for Outstanding Visual Effects in a Commercial on the strength of Audi's "Intelligently Combined"; and three for the feature 2012.

Sony's noms included two for *Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs*.

Pixar in Emeryville, Calif., Image Engine, Vancouver, B.C., and The Mill each nabbed three VES nominations. Image Engine scored its three for *District 9*, while Pixar did the same for *Up*. The Mill L.A. earned two noms for the AMF spot "The Caterpillar"—one for Outstanding VFX in a Commercial, the other for Outstanding Animated Character in a Broadcast Program or Commercial. The Mill London copped a nom for Skellig in the category Outstanding VFX in a Broadcast Miniseries, Movie or a Special.

There were three other commercials recognized by VES judges: AMC Theaters/Coke's "Magic Chairs" from Radium/Reel FX, Santa Monica and Dallas, which registered in the category Outstanding Created Environment in a Broadcast Program or Commercial; Kaiser Permanente's "Emerald City" in the Outstanding Matte Paintings in a Broadcast Program or Commercial from Animal Logic, Sydney and Los Angeles; and Porsche's "Family Tree" in the Outstanding Compositing in a Broadcast Program or Commercial from Asylum Visual Effects, Santa Monica.

Besides the Lifetime Achievement honor going to Cameron, another special VES kudo, the Georges Melies Award for pioneering, will be bestowed upon Dr. Ed Catmull.

street talk

Director David Gaddie and visual effects supervisor James Rogers have formed The Colony, a multidisciplinary directing collective spanning VFX, design, post-production and live action filmmaking. Gaddie's honors include a Gold Lion at the Cannes International Advertising Festival for an Australian PSA. Over the years, his work also garnered such kudos as silvers at the One Show and Clios. Prior to The Colony, Gaddie was repped by The Sweet Shop. Meanwhile Rogers has contributed to visual effects for the Sony PlayStation game Final Fantasy VIII, and films such as *Daybreakers*, and *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King*. Located in Manhattan, The

Colony, repped by B Reel Films, completed its first campaign, a pair of PSAs for the Foundation for a Smoke Free America....Los Angeles-based Boxer Films has signed director Rodrigo Garcia Saiz, founder of eight-year-old Central Films in Mexico City. A visual storyteller with a comedic slant, Garcia Saiz has directed for assorted major clients in his native Mexico, including Tecate, Axe, Nike and Sony PlayStation. Garcia Saiz's irreverent "Mariachis" piece for Skunkles candy landed a Gold Lion at last year's Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival....Joe Lin has joined Digitas as creative senior VP for the agency's Stamford, CT office. He will serve as creative lead on the Delta account, among others, reporting to Lincoln Bjorkman, executive VP/exec creative director for Digitas/ N.Y. region. Lin had been exec creative director at Publicis Modem Asia. There he helped develop integrated brand and interactive strategies for clients such as Hewlett Packard, Cisco, LG Electronics, and P&G. Prior to that, Lin was creative director/VP at Publicis Dialog, San Francisco....

report

Nice Shoes, N.Y., has hired Travis Taylor as VP of sales & marketing. His responsibilities will include unifying the company's U.S. sales force, growing its core business, and expanding into new realms. Prior to joining Nice Shoes, Taylor held similar positions at MetroMedia Company and Clear Channel Communications....L.A. based direc-

tors' talent agency The Directors Network (TDN) now represents, for commercial directing, VFX supervisor John Bruno whose credits include *Avatar*, *The Abyss*, *Rush Hour 3* and *X-Men: The Last Stand*. Bruno's directing credits include spots for Nissan, Honda, PlayStation and Timex. Also bilingual comedy/dialogue director Anibal Suarez has re-joined TDN. Suarez is in production on a three-spot package for CableONE combining performance comedy and VFX....Brooklyn-based creative studio Dancing Diablo has signed Zindependent for representation on the East Coast and in the Midwest....Cinematographer Andrij Parekh has wrapped principal photography on Ryan Fleck & Anna Boden's "It's Kind of a Funny Story" and is again available for spots through The Skouras Agency, Santa Monica...

bulletin board

>February 16-19/Rancho Mirage, CA: HPA Technology Retreat. www.hpaonline.com

>February 17/Los Angeles: One Show Entertainment Awards. www.oneshowentertainment.org

>February 27/Los Angeles, CA: ASC Awards. www.theasc.com

>February 28/Los Angeles, CA: VES Awards. www.vesawards.com

>March 5/Los Angeles, CA: 25th Film Independent Spirit Awards. www.spiritawards.com

>March 7/Hollywood, CA: 82nd Annual Academy Awards. www.oscars.org

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AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: All items to be sold BY CATALOG from the Doubletree Guest Suites, 1707 4th St., Santa Monica, CA. **PLEASE MAKE INSPECTION at the 1207 4th St. (2nd Floor) location prior to sale.** Please also note all items MUST be paid for by Wednesday, Feb. 24th at 5 P.M. PST and removed by Friday, Feb. 26th at 5 P.M. PST.

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Dir. Jordan Brady Returns To Slamdance Festival, Screens Feature Doc.

Continued from page 12

For *Superman* earned the Sundance Audience Award for best U.S. documentary. Guggenheim, whose *An Inconvenient Truth* won the best documentary Oscar in '07, is handled for commercials by Santa Monica-based Bob Industries.

Last month in its Sundance preview, *SHOOT* interviewed and/or touched upon many of the artists with commercialmaking ties who were showcasing work at the festival.

Among others at Sundance who fit that hybrid profile were:

- Three filmmakers represented for commercials via Independent Media, Santa Monica-director Mark Lewis who premiered the 3D documentary *The Cane Toads*; director Rodrigo Garcia who debuted *Mothers and Child*, a feature starring Annette Bening, Naomi Watts and Sam Jackson, and which looks at the role destiny plays in the lives of three women; and director Nicole Holofcener whose witty film about New York interactions, *Please Give* starring Catherine Keener,

Amanda Peet, Oliver Platt and Rebecca Hall, made its world premiere.

- And Dylan Pharazyn, design director at bicoastal/international The Sweet Shop, wrote and directed his debut short *Vostock Station*. He was nominated for a New Frontier honor at Sundance on the strength of the eight-minute film which follows the sole survivor of a catastrophic disaster experiencing a mystifying moment of transitory beauty.

Slamdance

Jordan Brady is a stand-up guy. In fact, he first gained recognition as a stand-up comic in the late 1980s before successfully transitioning to directing, scoring with the aforementioned *Dill Scallion* and then diversifying into commercials.

Brady's Slamdance gig last month, the screening of the feature documentary *I Am Comic*, represents in some respects a return to his stand-up roots. The nearly hour-and-a-half-long documentary features interviews with and insights into some 80 comedians,



I Am Comic

from famous to the not so famous. Uber Content produced the documentary as part of its commitment to help its spot directors spread their creative wings.

"There was no script, no story, we just started interviewing people and got great backstage and personal access," said Brady whose self-deprecating comedic touch is evident in his quip about a romantic comedy he helmed years ago called *Waking Up In Reno* (with a cast headlined by Billy Bob Thornton and Charlize Theron).

Falling far short of boxoffice hit status, *Waking Up In Reno*, said Brady, should have instead been titled *Waking Up In Blockbuster*.

I Am Comic offers a funny psychological profile of working comedians while following a retired comic's attempt to get back on stage after a 13-year absence. We see his performances progress over time at different venues.

Brady regards landing the Slamdance Festiva; closing screening slot as "a real honor" and is gratified that the result has already been some queries from distributors. His immediate plans are to take the film on the road and hit some other key stops on the festival circuit.

"My goal," he added, "is to take the film to some big cities where there are already a few comedians playing in town. We can have them join us for the Q&A after the screening."

Brady believes the experience of making *I Am Comic* will inform his future spot endeavors.

"I've always enjoyed trying to get improv out of actors, but this docu-

mentary experience reinforced that," he said. "You let the camera roll just a little longer, give actors a little more room to play."

"At the end of the day, you will always shoot the commercial script and do justice to the idea," continued Brady. "Yet you can fall into the trap of thinking of time as the enemy in commercials during the shoot day. The point is that you can still go for that extra something magical that's going to happen. In editing and interviewing the comedians, that's what played out. Let the performers and actors have that little extra beat."

Meanwhile commercial director Mark Claywell, who owns Hype Media, Inc., in the Savannah, Ga., area, made his feature directing debut at Slamdance with the documentary *American Jihadist*.

The film examines militant Islam through the eyes of an American who fought for it.

American Jihadist won the Slamdance Grand Jury Sparky Award for best documentary film.

New Directors Wanted

SHOOT's 8th Annual New Directors Search Is On!

Do You Have What It Takes To Be The Next Hot New Director?

SHOOT will be conducting a worldwide search to discover the best up-and-coming directors who, based on their initial work, show promise to make positive contributions to advertising and/or entertainment in its traditional and emerging forms. The search is conducted by SHOOT's editorial staff with input from ad agency creatives, heads of production, production company heads and established directors.

After the best work is selected SHOOT will compile the 2010 SHOOT New Directors Showcase Reel and interview the directors for a special feature that will appear in SHOOT's May 7 issue, pdf version, HTML e.dition, and on SHOOTonline.com, bringing worldwide attention to the work and the directors. In addition, the work will be screened for an audience of key ad agency and production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's 2010 New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in New York City in May. Coverage of the event will appear in SHOOT in June and the showcase reel will be posted on SHOOT's website.

See last years 2009 New Directors Web Reel at www.shootonline.com/go/search. The directors selected for the Showcase come from diverse backgrounds. Some first established themselves on the agency side, while others were DPs, feature filmmakers or film students. One bond the directors share is great style and vision, whether it be reflected in comedy, visuals or storytelling.

ENTER SHOOT'S New Directors Search...

It could be a big step towards being noticed by companies that can represent you and ad agency & entertainment industry executives that can hire you. **Eligibility:** Directing commercials less than 2 years (3 if work has been regional only).



New Directors receive enormous career-making exposure!

"There are many wonderful phone calls one can receive in life. But I have to say, few feel as good as, 'Hello, you've just been included in SHOOT's New Directors Showcase.' Like the chicken and the egg, I'm still not sure which came first: getting to direct good scripts or getting into SHOOT's New Directors Showcase."

"Being included in SHOOT's New Directors Showcase is one of those great touchstones. Besides the breadth of industry exposure only SHOOT can provide, it provides a very real increase in offers for work as well as validation that you're doing something right. I will always count it as a big moment in my career."

Harold Einstein
SHOOT 2008
New Director,
Station Film



Kevin Kerwin
SHOOT 2009
New Director,
Authentic Films



What Work is Eligible to Enter?

Category 1

Traditional Broadcast: TV spots, spec work, cinema ads, branded content

Category 2

Alternative Media Content: webisodes, spots created for online use, mobile-phone content, in-game advertising, advergames, virals, alternate reality gaming, ads created for PDAs

Category 3

Other: music videos, short films, feature films

Directors can submit work completed during 15 month period of Jan. 2009-March 2010. (excerpts from shorts, longform film or other entertainment fare should be NO MORE than 5 minutes in length)

Entry Deadline: March 31, 2010

Entry Fee

\$85.00 for first piece of work, \$35.00 each additional entry from same director.

For additional entry information, please visit:

www.shootonline.com/go/search

If you have additional questions, please contact Bob Goldrich
email: rgoldrich@shootonline.com phone: 323/960-8035, ext 6681

Become a 2010 New Directors Showcase Event Sponsor!
(sponsors receive 5 months of promotion)

For information, please contact Roberta Grier
email: rgrier@shootonline.com phone: 203-227-1699, ext.13

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Entry Forms are available at WWW.SHOOTONLINE.COM/GO/SEARCH

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