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**SPRING 2010
DIRECTORS ISSUE**



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15 Spring Directors Series

Profiles of leading helmers spanning multiple disciplines, and a close-up look at promising new talent.



28 Cinematographers

ASC Lifetime honoree Deschanel, *Up in the Air* cinematographer Steelberg and spot/video lenser Kim profiled.

Destination Broadband Theater



10 NAB Preview

Transmedia, new platforms and technology front and center stage at upcoming NAB Show in Las Vegas.



50th Anniversary Series: Then & Now

Pytko, Buckley, Sedelmaier reflect on the industry's evolution. See page 34

The Long And Short Of It

South by Southwest Festival Shows Its Stripes, Picks 6

By Robert Goldrich

AUSTIN, Tex.—Commercialmakers are making their mark at the South by Southwest (SXSW) Film Conference and Festival which runs through Saturday (March 12-20) in Austin. And spanning the long and short of it as prime examples are directors Emmett Malloy who is repped by HSI Productions for spots as part of the duo The Malloys, and Jeff Bednarz, partner/president of Dallas-based production house Directorz.

The latter is debuting his documentary short entitled *6*, a portrait of modern day small town America told through the story of two Six-Man Football teams vying for the Texas State Championship.

Meanwhile Emmett Malloy's *The White Stripes Under Great White Northern Lights* is making its U.S. premiere at SXSW. The feature-length film documents The White Stripes on tour all over Canada—from bowling alleys, to city buses and other local venues, and onward to the legendary Savoy Theater for the band's 10th anniversary show, which turned out to be the longest performance ever done on stage by The White Stripes duo. (*Under Great White Northern Lights* made its world premiere at last year's Toronto Film Festival.)

This marks the first time that Emmett Malloy has had a film showcased at SXSW, though he's attended the music portion of the fest in years past. "It's such a cool honor to have your film accepted, especially during a time when it's hard to get a movie into a theater," said Malloy. "You cherish the moments you can watch your work with an audience, a movie you worked on for several years. You want at least a few chances to watch people watch your film."

Continued on page 6

AICP Survey: Snapshot Of Evolving Biz

By Robert Goldrich

NEW YORK—While the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) seventh annual Survey of the Commercial Production Industry—independently conducted by Goodwin Simon Strategic Research—provides a valuable snapshot of an evolving business landscape, the question remains if this clear picture will get California to focus and take heed of a call to action if it wants to retain the economically vital spot and branded content production that is leaving the state.

Covering calendar year 2008, the survey found that Southern California's share of commercial production dropped to 48 percent as compared to 54 percent in '07.

This decline took place as more AICP-member company spotmaking biz is returning to the U.S. from foreign countries, meaning as the percentage of overall domestic production increases, California's market share is decreasing.

Eighty-eight percent of all reported shoot days took place domestically with 12 percent abroad in '08.

This represents a decrease from the 23 percent of shoot days that went outside the U.S. in '05, and the lowest ratio of shoot days in foreign locales since the survey's inception in '02.

So where is the filming that was

Continued on page 8

AFCI To Make An IndieGoGo Of It At Locations Show

SANTA MONICA, Calif.—The 24th annual Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Trade Show, slated for April 15-17 at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium, is on track to meet or exceed last year's record numbers for exhibitors and attendees. But the event isn't resting on its laurels. New wrinkles are in the offing, including reaching out to the independent film community as the

AFCI has linked with IndieGoGo, an online social marketplace connecting filmmakers, fans and other support resources to help bring projects to fruition, be they feature films, shorts, or other content.

AFCI and IndieGoGo are scheduled to team on a Pitch Camp at the nearby Doubletree Hotel where established and aspiring indie filmmakers can pitch to their favorite brand, agency,

TV and/or broadband network. Execs from networks, portals, agencies, studios and brands will give a listen to the content development pitches. The first 30 minutes of the two-hour session on April 15 will have a panel of experts evaluating three to five public pitches and providing feedback. After that, it's a pitch free for all. Among the judges lined up are Ravi Mehta, senior VP of physical production at Warner Bros.;

Chris J. Russo, independent feature account manager at Kodak; and Josh Welsh, director of talent development, Film Independent.

Set for the following day at the Doubletree is the fourth installment of AFCI's Candid Conversations (for an additional registration fee), an industry session that's closed to the media. This latest two-and-a-half hour dis-

Continued on page 8

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California Dreamin'

According to the seventh annual AICP Survey of the Commercial Production Industry (see separate story), Southern California's share of spot production stood at 48 percent in 2008. While that sounds like a healthy figure, clearly the business is eroding in the Golden State.

For '07, the AICP Survey pegged Southern California's share at 54 percent. This decline from '07 to

'08 took place as more AICP-member spotmaking business is returning to the U.S. from foreign countries, meaning as the percentage of overall domestic production increases, California's market share is decreasing.

As for where the business is going, AICP president/CEO Matt Miller pointed to other states (New York, Illinois, New Mexico, Connecticut, et al) that have economic incentives such as tax credits and rebates in place for commercial production. Furthermore,

this dynamic has contributed to significant filming activity outside of traditional production centers. The AICP survey reported that in '08 about 20 percent of all shoot days, and 26 percent of domestic shoot days took place away from the major production centers of N.Y., Illinois and California.

Last year California pushed through

How many more services could be provided today if California had taken the proper action to retain the filming business a decade ago?

a film tax credit program but commercials were excluded from the incentive. In that commercials and branded content are particularly bottom-line sensitive, cost savings via incentive initiatives carry significant weight in the decision of where to shoot.

"California needs to figure this out," said Miller. "Producers use incentives to make up for lowering margins and smaller budgets. Being able to use those dollars sometimes makes projects possible to do on behalf of agen-

cies and clients."

And if the decline in spot production share continues, industry infrastructure could suffer long-term damage in California, continued Miller.

As reported earlier this year, on-location filming in Greater L.A. across all categories (features, TV, commercials) decreased 19.4 percent in '09 com-

filmmaking and entertainment.

One argument against incentives is that they aren't a priority when funding for education, healthcare and other services is hard to come by. Furthermore, there's the notion that anti-runaway programs amount to little more than subsidizing industry fat cat movie stars and executives.

Both contentions are off base. The fact is that the lack of a competitive incentives package is forcing good paying working middle class jobs out of the state. And the tax revenue that would be generated by keeping those jobs in California could help to bank-roll progressive education and social service programs.

How many more services could be provided today if California had taken the proper action to retain the filming business a decade ago?

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How many more services could be provided today if California had taken the proper action to retain the filming business a decade ago?

POV



Freelance Lifestyle

It's funny how sitting and staring at your newborn will make you quickly reconsider the choices that you have made in life and re-examine how you want to keep living and working.

With the birth of my daughter almost five years ago, that contemplation led me to one conclusion. It was time to change. My responsibilities now were vast. How could I create a stable environment for my family? As I looked around, my world was changing, not just at home, but also in my industry. I asked myself, What path should I take? What was the wave of the future in commercial directing? It seemed that the old way of doing business was changing. Business models were being turned upside down and looked at every which way. As a director I knew I needed to find other ways to work and express my artistic vision.

Once I realized that working as a freelance director was a viable option for me, I soon also realized that great flexibility came with it. Being based in Los Angeles gave me a launching pad to expand and diversify into many areas of directing, travel extensively, and form key alliances and relationships with agencies and companies in many markets around the country. This has

been invaluable to me professionally, as we are an industry based almost completely on relationships and repeat work. As a freelance director I have developed and expanded relationships throughout the country. This fresh take has allowed me to be agile, be constantly challenged, and learn how to work effectively in a modernized approach to this business.

Since working with an agent, I have been positioned and exposed to different forms of production. We are currently experiencing a blurring of lines within the business and realizing the fragility of the old structure. I am able to walk into this new terrain of commerce, entertainment, and technology, in a different way. I have more freedom to choose a variety of jobs, and am more available to be chosen by a variety of companies. Is this because I am freelance or is it a result of my 20 years in the business and the experience and knowledge that garners? Perhaps it is a combination of both.

This business is ever changing and evolving. Transmedia is under way and everyone is trying to understand how that will work for the future of our business. It's an exciting time and I find myself feeling more enthused and inspired every day. We are witnessing and participating in the birth

of digital communications including online media, mobile media and how they intersect with television, retail marketing, events, and so much more. There is a lot of great work becoming available out there regardless of where you are or to whom you are connected. The essential core of all this content is storytelling. And that's the most exciting part for me.

Who knows where this industry is heading. We are living in a time

with seemingly unlimited choice. I can only say for myself that I aim to continue to expand my professional development. I have been fortunate to see the volume and the quality of my work grow from year to year. To this day I am keenly aware that I am blessed to actually follow my professional calling in life.

Director Ron Hamad has been represented by L.A.-based The Directors Network since 2005.

Flash Back

March 18, 2005 Bruno Delbonnel, AFC took top honors in the feature film competition of the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Outstanding Achievement Awards last week on the strength of *A Very Long Engagement*, which was directed by Jean-Pierre Jeunet....Bicoastal Moxie Pictures has launched a London operation under the aegis of managing director Dawn Laren....Editor Jim Hutchins, formerly of Nomad Editing Company, Santa Monica, has launched Los Angeles shop HutchCo...

March 17, 2000 After five-and-a-half-years as director of broadcast production at FCB Chicago, Florence "Flo" Babbitt is moving over to Publicis & Hal Riney, San Francisco, as senior VP/director of broadcast production.... Bicoastal/international Partizan has signed U.K.-based director Dominic Murphy for exclusive commercial representation in the U.S. and most of Europe....Paul Gold, a former senior VP/associate creative director/executive producer at Bozell, New York, has signed with The Story Companies for exclusive representation as a commercial director....



Ted Royer
creative director.
artist. storyteller.

"I was on location recently looking at the most astonishing view I've ever seen. And all I could think about was how much better it would look on film. If I had my way I'd shoot 35 all the time."

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SOMETHING THAT MAKES YOU
THINK AND FEEL,
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Ted Royer of Droga5 refuses to compromise. As an agency creative with nearly 100 international awards, he knows how important film is to his work. Learn more at kodak.com/go/motion

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Malloy, Bednarz Reflect On SXSW Films

Continued from page 3

You can bask in the moment, whether good or bad.

"What I like about this festival is the music vibe which is ideal for our film," continued Malloy. "But what's particularly great is that this is one of the most grounded festivals around. It's not about glamour and glitz. This festival applauds filmmaking and I'm happy we waited to make this the U.S. premiere."

Emmett Malloy is still very much part of a directorial team with his brother Brendan Malloy. Among The Malloys' assorted collaborations is last year's lauded documentary for Oasis' "Dig Out Your Soul In The Streets" campaign out of BBH New York.

"My brother and I are still alive and well as a team but we occasionally drift off and do something on our own," said Emmett Malloy. "This White Stripes documentary is what I went off to do solo."

The documentary does much more than chronicle a concert tour; it also delves into the relationship between The White Stripes duo of Jack and Meg White. "You can see the power of their relationship and what I like most," affirmed Malloy, "is that on one hand we told maybe more than anyone has ever gotten on them but at the same time we didn't resolve some of the big questions about Jack and Meg and who they are to one another—but it's clearly a beautiful relationship with ups and downs. And Jack's idea for the film added a lot—he decided to go and tour at all these crazy places in the north of Canada. This made the documentary a rich study of the places and people we encountered along the way."

Malloy feels the documentary experience in turn has informed his commercialmaking. "For three weeks, I got to follow a rock 'n roll band who in my book is historic and legendary. We tried with our cameras to do justice to them, their relationship. Then over a year-and-a-half we tried to craft a story out of hours and hours of footage. I worked with my long-time editor Tim Wheeler who was running a camera the whole time as well. The experience of trying to capture the essence



Emmett Malloy

of people can only help refine you as a director. My brother and I have been teaming on a lot of real, true life campaigns in our advertising work. We just did a big campaign for Ford with real drivers and Ford owners. We have learned a lot making people feel comfortable so they can be themselves and we can do justice to who they are."

Plans call for *Under Great White Northern Lights* to be distributed worldwide to select theaters that are going White Stripes' "red and white" a



Jeff Bednarz

day or a week at a time for special presentations. The documentary on DVD is also part of a limited edition box set being released this month which also includes a double LP/CD of 16 live tracks, an exclusive 7" on colored vinyl, a DVD of the 10th anniversary show *Under Nova Scotia Lights*, and a hardcover book of photography.

Jeff Bednarz's 6

For director Bednarz of *Directorz, 6* represents both a continuation and a

new era. On the former score, the documentary short is an extended slice of life akin to what he has done throughout his career in commercials, capturing the truth and essence of people from varied walks of life. "A big part of what I have done over the years is shoot a lot of film and do a lot of interviews with real people, and shoot tapestry around that," related Bednarz.

Yet while the longstanding spirit of his work remains intact in 6, this 20-minute documentary is Bednarz's first venture into a considerably longer form than the commercials and branded content for which he's known. (His branded fare includes a recent web campaign centered on portraits of people and families for the Salvation Army out of The Richards Group, Dallas.) The documentary also marks the first time Bednarz's work has hit the film festival circuit.

"You're only as good as your reel and you have to continually expand on what you do," said Bednarz. "My whole deal is compassion about people and studying them accordingly. Being a fly on the wall and letting them tell their story rather than trying to impose my thoughts on who they are. I want them to feel comfortable enough to tell me who they are. And now 6 does this in a longer format, showing what we can do beyond the :30 or :60 when we get the chance to tell stories—which hopefully will lend itself to our getting other opportunities in branded content and other lengthier projects."

The short 6 provides insights into not only the high school kids who play Six-Man Football and their coaches, but also the small communities that come together as a result of the games. 6 chronicles the two teams vying for the Texas State Six-Man Football high school championship—the Follett Panthers and the Strawn Greyhounds. Follett is a farm community while Strawn is more of a rough and tumble neighborhood. Bednarz captures the spirit and distinctly different personalities of these communities as well as follows the players and coaches leading up to and then right through the championship game.

The high schools in these communities are too small to field full football teams so the Six-Man game is their ticket to the gridiron in arguably the most football-crazy state in the country. Strong work ethics, perseverance and community values are taught and reflected in the competition. And the Friday night games are the social events and glue that unite the people in these small towns.

Bednarz himself played junior football through high school but he was

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Short Takes

CMPB, GRUPO GALLEGOS VISIT THE DENTIST

"Dentista" ("Dentist"), the first of three California Milk Processor Board (CMPB) TV spots in the 2010 "Toma Leche/Got Milk?" Hispanic market campaign, has debuted. "Dentista" opens with a girl sitting in a medical office being examined by her dentist. Then a voiceover (translated into English for this column) follows: "Beautiful teeth. Strong teeth. Healthy teeth all-year long. Presenting a product that has it all, that fights for you." While audiences may think this is an ad



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for a new toothpaste, as we see dancing animated teeth cavorting with the girl, the dentist and his hygienist/assistant, we quickly cut to a carton of milk in a fridge. The voiceover continues, "Presenting: Milk. Its calcium helps produce strong teeth and prevents cavities."

Ads promoting healthy hair (first seeming like a shampoo commercial) and athletic performance (promoting chocolate milk but at first appearing to be a generic sports drink ad) premiere on Spanish language TV in California next week and in May, respectively.

For the first time in its five-year history, the "Toma Leche?" campaign will extend beyond TV to also include radio, print and online ads. Agency is Grupo Gallegos, Long Beach, Calif. Armando Bo of Rebolucion, Buenos Aires, directed the TV commercials, with Javier Julia serving as DP. Editor was Pato Pena of Rebolucion, with 3D FX from Bitt Animation, Buenos Aires.

NEW HAT DEBUTS DI THEATER

Santa Monica-based nonlinear boutique New Hat—founded last year by digital colorist Bob Festa and partner/exec producer Darby Walker—has completed the build-out of its million-dollar Digital Intermediate (DI) Theater, opening the door to more extensive feature film work. Already home to digital colorists Festa, Beau Leon and Marcelo Aprile, New Hat has brought on feature DI colorist Michael Mintz, a vet of more than 40 feature films, collaborating with filmmakers such as Ridley Scott, Paul W.S. Anderson, and Michael Cuesta. Mintz's former roosts included Tunnel Post, iO Film, and The Sony HD Center. The New Hat DI Theater has already been awarded its first project, the indie feature *Lucky* directed by Gil Cates, Jr.

Also joining New Hat in support of the DI Theater are senior producer Wyatt Valentine and producer Stuart Heising.

The DI Theater is equipped with Baselight 4 color grading system, 14' Stewart Screen, Barco 2k projector, and Blue Sky 5.1 audio. New Hat now channels its nonlinear approach into features, which has unique requirements for digital color correction. "The breadth of New Hat's talent and capabilities," said Walker, "opens the door to all kinds of projects, from movies to feature restoration, trailers, and commercials that will be screened in theatrical release."

The DI Theater development comes on the heels of recently completed New Hat color correction projects for Hyundai, Toyota, Life-Styles Condoms, HBO, and the Brazilian feature *O Bem Amado*....

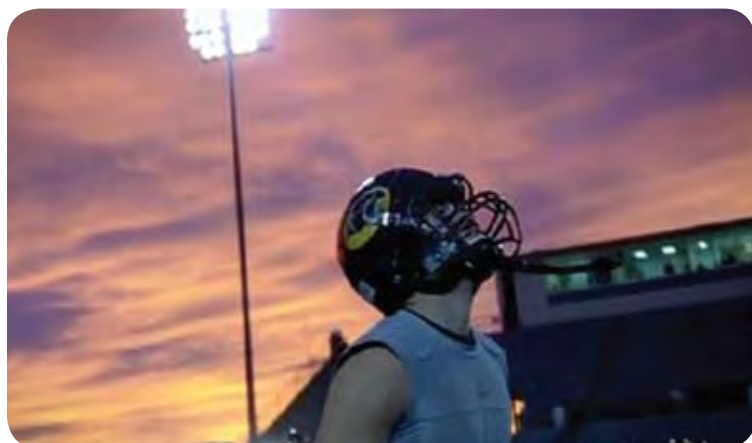
PEOPLE IN THE NEWS...

GSD&M Idea City, Austin, Tex., has hired Jefferson Burruss as exec producer in its integrated production department. Burruss comes



Jefferson Burruss

over from DDB/L.A. where he held the title of director of digital and online, and led strategic development of digital initiatives....The Mill L.A. has added five CG artisans: Robert Durnin who joins from Digital Domain; James Studdart from The Mill's N.Y. office; James Going from Sandbox F/X; Robert Kim from Psyop; and Bowling Green State graduate, Adam Carroll. Durnin's speciality is lead rendering TD and he has six years experience in creating high-end CG animation for both spots and features....



A scene from 6

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AICP Survey Findings Span Runaway Production, Biz Practices

Continued from page 3

once in Southern California going? According to AICP president/CEO Matt Miller, the benefits are being realized by other states (New York, Illinois, New Mexico, Connecticut, et al) that have economic incentives such as tax credits and rebates in place for commercial production.

Furthermore, this dynamic has contributed to significant filming activity outside of the so-called traditional production centers.

The AICP survey reported that in '08 about 20 percent of all shoot days, and 26 percent of domestic shoot days took place away from the major production centers of New York, Illinois and Southern California.

Last year California did adopt a film tax credit program but commercials were excluded from the incentive. Spots were supposedly part of the drafted incentives language yet ultimately failed to make the final cut (*SHOOT*, 3/20/09).

Commercials and other forms of branded content are particularly bottom-line sensitive, meaning that cost savings via incentive initiatives carry considerable weight in the decision of where to shoot.

"California needs to figure this out," said Miller. "Producers use incentives to make up for lowering margins and smaller budgets. Being able to use those dollars sometimes makes projects possible to do on behalf of agencies and clients."

Miller noted that if the exodus accelerates, California could see its industry infrastructure—such as equipment rental firms, production facilities, and other support services—erode, trans-

lating into long-term damage to the Golden State.

Latin leverage

Meanwhile somewhat bucking the decrease in foreign filming is Latin America which ranks first among international locations for the second straight year in the industry survey.

In '08, Central/South America remained the most frequent non-U.S. location for commercial shoots, with five percent of all lensing days (and 37 percent of all foreign shoot days—up from 26 percent in '06), again outdistancing Canada which had been the most popular destination for shoot days before '07.

This growth has come mostly at the expense of Europe and the U.K., as well as Canada (Vancouver in large part) which has seen a decline from 24 percent of foreign shooting in '02 to 14 percent in '08.

Economic clout

In terms of economic impact, AICP members spent about \$251 billion in direct production expenditures in '08—with roughly \$2.16 billion of that total spent in the U.S. and \$352 million on foreign soil.

This includes \$2.42 billion spent on live-action production, with \$94 million on in-house digital production. When factoring in postproduction, talent payment and other indirect expenditures, commercial production represents a \$5 billion industry.

Other findings

While *SHOOT* reported on major findings of the survey when it was released by AICP last month (2/17),



Matt Miller

there are some other points of interest not touched upon in that bullet points rundown of highlights.

For example, payment delays continue to pose a major problem for spot production houses.

In the latest survey, 61 percent of respondents said that delays in payment increased in '08, compared to 50 percent the prior year.

The cash flow problem has become more profound, said Miller, noting that production companies are increasingly being asked to serve as what amounts to being interest-free banks, thus jeopardizing their financial wellbeing.

Indeed some 84 percent of respondents ranked timely payment of agency contracts—or more accurately the lack thereof—as the single most important factor in the financial health of production houses.

It's unclear if payment delays are as prevalent in nontraditional ad industry projects as they are in commercials. However, it is clear that the creation of nontraditional fare represents a business that's on the rise.

Producers estimated that about 24 percent of their billings currently

come from nontraditional or so called new media projects.

Respondents further projected that on average some 40 percent of their billings will be from such projects by the year 2013.

Additionally, for the first time in the independent survey's history, producers were asked to allocate their projects to live-action production, in-house digital production or a combination of the two disciplines.

Eighty percent of all projects AICP members completed in '08 used live action only, while 13 percent were produced only digitally in-house, and eight percent deployed a combination of live and digital.

Digital chapter

Still, digital is indeed an area in which the AICP sees clear industry need and opportunity, last year launching its digital production chapter, AICP Digital.

An inaugural AICP Digital board was set up last October under president Ed Ulbrich who is executive VP of Digital Domain, president of that studio's Commercial Division, and part of a leadership team overseeing the recently formed, broad-based transmedia production house Mothership (which is a sister shop to and can tap into the resources of Digital Domain as needed).

AICP Digital board members are: chapter VP Justin Booth-Clibborn of Psyop; Paul Babb of Rhythm + Hues; Jake Banks of Stardust; Kevin Batten of Superfad; Javier Jimenez of Motion Theory; Chip Houghton of Imaginary Forces; Elizabeth Kiehner of Thornberg & Forester; Jason Mayo of Click

3X; and Danny Rosenbloom of Brand New School.

"AICP Digital was launched as the first-ever issues-based, national chapter of the organization," related AICP's Miller. "This board—which comprises a wide cross-section of companies—will be tasked with managing an agenda that fully addresses and represents the issues and concerns of our member companies producing content digitally."

Several committees have been formed including: Standards & Practices, covering assorted labor issues as well as business affairs concerns; Education and Technology; and a Membership drive committee.

"AICP Digital will help fill a void that has existed in the industry—namely, addressing the business issues that directly affect companies that produce digitally," said Ulbrich. "We're all really excited about working together to create concrete solutions and best practices for our industry."

Miller added that indeed digital production has its own set of issues and practices, including for example payment schedules that are much different from live action.

The formation of AICP Digital was unanimously approved by the AICP's national board of directors in June '09. Ulbrich was a key mover in helping to bring the chapter to pass.

AICP Digital has a ready-made base to draw from in that nearly 50 companies primarily in the digital realm have for some time been full-fledged AICP members. The plan is to now reach out to other digital production houses and bring them into the AICP Digital fold.

Preliminary Numbers Appear Healthy For Locations Trade Show

Continued from page 3

cussion will center on film financing as entertainment/media lawyers and other experts share the latest developments on how to establish viable co-production deals and/or financial joint endeavors between production companies and studios from different parts of the world.

Panelists will examine how distribution deals are arranged, how tax break issues are handled, how filmmakers can access national film funds, and assorted other details that come with international co-production financing.

The session will be moderated by veteran film commissioner Ward Emling of the Mississippi Film Office. Emling, a past president of the AFCL, played a key role in helping the Mississippi film business to mo-

bilize and start to recover from the impact of Hurricane Katrina.

Tally Gung-ho

At press time the number of Location Trade Show exhibitors spanning film commissions and support services was approaching 240, which would match the tally in '09, the highest in the history of the event.

And attendee pre-registration was also encouraging, very much in line with the preliminary numbers which yielded last year's record setting foot traffic of more than 4,000.

To see AFCL's Locations more than hold its own in the current economy is a notable accomplishment.

But arguably the economy could in part be responsible for the achievement in that the financial benefits of filming are now more highly coveted



Larry Brownell

than ever as other sectors remain sluggish and unemployment levels are high. For example, while Detroit has been hit hard by the decline in the automotive industry, Michigan has picked up some of the slack with incentives that have yielded increased filming revenue (though spots aren't eligible for the incentive program).

Spot session?

At press time, the AFCL was working to possibly form a panel session or separate event at the Locations Trade Show geared specifically to the commercial production community.

Spots are gaining recognition as a major contributor to a healthy filming economy with more incentive programs taking ads and branded content into account, often with lower qualifying thresholds to attract clients, advertising agencies and commercial production companies.

Some states have even established incentive packages specifically for commercials, a prime example being the program in New York.

Brownwell

"The Locations Show is a priority for the industry as people look

to stave off the effects of the economy," related Larry J. Brownell, who stepped in as AFCL's executive director last month, helping to fill the role vacated by CEO Bill Lindstrom.

Brownell resides in the L.A. area, providing the AFCL with a Southern California base for many of its programs. Prior to joining the AFCL, Brownell served as chief executive of the Market Research Association, a membership organization consisting of more than 3,000 individuals and businesses that are involved in the survey and research profession.

Brownell brings to the AFCL 20-plus years experience in managing not-for-profit and membership organizations with expertise in communications, new technology, finance, trade shows, conferences, education and international relations.

SXSW Film Lineup Includes Directors Gondry, Vaughan, Korine

Continued from page 6

unfamiliar with the Six-Man game up until four years ago when Jim Ferguson, then chairman and chief creative officer of Temerlin McClain (TM Advertising), Dallas, invited him to a fully sponsored daylong Six-Man extravaganza event which featured multiple games.

Bednarz, who has directed assorted projects over the years for Ferguson at his different agency roosts, became intrigued with Six-Man Football, planting the seed for what would eventually blossom into a documentary.

In '09, Bednarz got a phone call from Ferguson, now partnered in Dallas boutique agency JimBob, who suggested that a film be made on the upcoming Six-Man Football high school championship. Bednarz jumped at the chance and had Directorz finance the documentary short.

He finds it especially gratifying to have 6 make the cut and get showcased at SXSW.

"It's a great honor to be part of the festival, particularly one so well known that happens to be in our home state," affirmed Bednarz. "And most importantly, we are excited to gain this kind of exposure for a story we very much wanted to tell."

Lineup

Among the other filmmakers with commercialmaking ties whose work is being showcased at this year's SXSW Festival are:

- Michel Gondry whose spotmaking home is Partizan, Gondry's latest film, *The Thorn in the Heart*, is a personal documentary centered on the Gondry family matriarch, his aunt Suzette Gondry and her relationship with her son, Jean-Yves. Michel Gondry is slated to be on hand at SXSW for a conversation session with TCM's Elvis Mitchell.

- Daniel Barber of London production house Knucklehead directed *Harry Brown*, a character-driven thriller starring Michael Caine as a man coping with a chaotic world in which teenage violence claims the life of his best friend.

- Floria Sigismondi who is handled in the advertising discipline by Believe Media directed and wrote *The Runaways* which follows two friends, Joan Jett (Kristen Stewart) and Cherie Currie (Dakota Fanning) as they rise from rebellious Southern California kids to rock stars of the now legendary group that paved the way for future generations of girl bands.

- Jay and Mark Duplass, who are repped for commercials via RSA Films, directed and wrote *Cyrus*, a humorous and sometimes heartbreaking look at love and family in contempo-

rary Los Angeles.

- Matthew Vaughan, whose spotmaking roost is HSL, directed *Kick-Ass*, an adventure which tells the story of a man whose comic book obsession serves as inspiration for him to become a real-life superhero.

Vaughan is scheduled to be part of a SXSW Fest panel discussion centered on *Kick-Ass*.

- Jean-Pierre Jeunet, repped for spots by Grand Large, Inc., saw his *Micmacs/Micmacs a tire-laigot* make its stateside debut. The movie is a

piece of romantic filmmaking set against the storm clouds of warring arms dealers.

- Documentary filmmaker Steve James' *No Crossover: The Trial of Allen Iverson* makes its world premiere at SXSW. Part of ESPN's *30 for 30* series

this year, the piece examines the 1993 bowling alley brawl that landed Iverson, the nation's top high-school basketball player, in jail and divided the community of Hampton, Va., along racial lines. James, a DGA Award-win-

Continued on page 38

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Multiple Platforms Set For NAB Show

Transmedia, Destination Broadband Underscore New Media Bent

LAS VEGAS—Yes, the latest technologies will once again grace the exhibit floors at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Show running from April 10-15 in Las Vegas. But there are some new wrinkles to the perennial state-of-the-art showcase that is NAB (exhibits open April 12), with an exploration of multi-platform content during a panel discussion, and a special exhibit area focusing on advances and applications for broadband technology.

On the former score, the panel session, slated for April 13, 4-5 p.m., is titled “Unboxing Advertising and Entertainment: Building a Transmedia Experience.” The discussion will delve into how entertainment and digital advertising creatives tell stories and build brand across multiple platforms. Speakers will share their approach to designing rich, fictional worlds; shaping content for specific media; and enhancing interactivity and audience engagement.

The panel of experts includes writer/producer, Jesse Alexander; Ivan Askwith, director of strategy at creative agency Big Spaceship; Elan Lee, chief designer/founder of Fourth Wall Studios; Mike Monello, co-founder/executive creative director at entertainment marketing agency Campfire; and Ian Sander, executive producer, *Ghost Whisperer*.

Alexander served as a prime creative force behind three television series that featured rich, multiplatform mythologies. He was an executive producer for the first three seasons of the NBC epic *Heroes*, for which he earned an Emmy for online content. Alexander also served as executive producer on J.J. Abrams’ innovative and elaborate spy drama *Alias*, and as co-executive producer for the first season of the worldwide television hit *Lost*.

As the head of the strategic practice at agency Big Spaceship, Askwith works to help clients navigate the digital landscape and understand emerging behaviors. He specializes in generating deep cross-platform audience engagement and helping brands build meaningful, relevant relationships with consumers and fans. Recent projects include work for NBC, Sony Pictures, A&E, HBO, EPIX, Second Life, Skittles and GE. Askwith is a founding member of MIT’s Convergence Culture Consortium and currently sits on its executive committee.

Game designer Lee is considered one of the originators of the Alternate Reality Game (ARG) genre and has more than a decade of transmedia experience. He is a founder of Fourth Wall Studios, and 42 Entertainment, the company behind the ambitious and groundbreaking Nine Inch Nails: Year Zero, a multimedia project that includes a music album, an ARG, and

an extensive online/offline promotional campaign. Additionally, Lee was the creative director on I Love Bees, the highly successful Halo 2 promotion.

Campfire’s Monello was one of the creators of the pop culture phenomenon *The Blair Witch Project*, and helped architect that film’s integrated, interactive mythology and community. *The Blair Witch* campaign instantly changed the way entertainment marketers engaged the Internet. Campfire’s clients include HBO, Discovery Channel, Sega and Audi. Campfire projects have won numerous awards including top honors at ad:tech, the One Show, Clios and Addys.

Multiple Emmy-nominee and Producers Guild TV producer of the year Sander is executive producer and director of the CBS hit drama *Ghost Whisperer*. Sander co-authored the show’s companion book “Ghost Whisperer Spirit Guide,” and is co-creator of the award-winning *Ghost Whisperer: The Other Side* web series, now in its fourth installment.

Destination Broadband

The 2010 NAB Show will debut Destination Broadband, a dynamic exhibit space focusing on advances and applications for broadband technology, April 12 to 15. Destination Broadband, featuring more than 50 leading-edge companies and a presentation theater, will examine the entire online video experience within the broadband ecosystem from back end infrastructure to revolutionary technologies for the home.

A pavilion within Destination Broadband will feature three specialized areas: Broadband Innovations, Mobile Solutions and Broadband Lifestyles, a living room-like setting for consumer products and services. The pavilion will comprise more than 25 companies showcasing the latest in content delivery network solutions, online video, IPTV, video streaming and advertising and monetization platforms enabled by broadband.

“The ability of broadband technology to increase audience reach across multiple platforms, expand monetization options and make anytime, anywhere content a reality will profoundly impact the future of media and entertainment,” said Chris Brown, NAB executive VP of Conventions and Business Operations. “We are excited to present Destination Broadband as a showcase for the companies that are leading innovation in this important area.”

Among the companies slated to be featured in Destination Broadband are: AdJuggler, Inc., Ankeena Networks, AT&T, Backchannelme-

dia, Brightcove, Cisco, Digisoft tv, Internap, Limelight Networks, Opera Software, MobiClip, Neulion, TVU-Networks, Vericorder Technology and Verizon Wireless.

Also located within Destination Broadband, the Destination Broadband Theater, sponsored by Ambrado, Inc., will offer informative discussions, case studies, research and top level insights on delivering and monetizing broadband content. The power panels featuring “Bits and Bytes” segments will also address how the evolution of broadband is changing traditional content distribution. The Destination Broadband Theater is co-produced by the Society of Satellite Professionals International, World Teleport Association, VideoNuze, Interactive Television Alliance (ITA) and other industry experts.

“It’s terrific to see the NAB Show stepping up to meet the challenges brought by the digital revolution. Not only is the venerable show adapting, it’s aggressively pursuing innovations on the floor and in the conference,” said ITA president Ben Mendelson. “Clearly, the NAB Show intends to expand its relevance within the 21st century television and media landscape.”

The NAB Show’s renowned annual overall exhibition comprises more than 1,500 companies covering over 800,000 net square feet. Other technology focused pavilions include the Mobile DTV Pavilion, 3D Pavilion, Technologies for Worship and Content Central.

TV ad session

Also on tap is a panel discussion titled “Television Advertising: Creative Differences and Perspectives,” moderated by TVB president Steve Lanzano. The April 13th session, slated for 10:30-11:45 a.m. features a panel consisting of: Colleen Brown, president/CEO, Fisher Communications, Inc.; Dave Lougee, president, Gannett Broadcasting; Lee Doyle, CEO of North America, Mediaedge:cia; and Matt Seiler, global CEO, Universal McCann.

Panelists will exchange thoughts on the evolving role of television—on every screen—in today’s media mix. The discussion will examine the value of Diginets, mobile live-video opportunities, and the promise of hyper-local media. How will emerging local multiplatform opportunities enhance TV stations’ offerings, enable advertisers to better target and reach consumers and force changes in the traditional metrics? Is there an ROI model to measure the success of local multiplatform marketing campaigns?

For more on the NAB slate, log onto www.nabshow.com.

Off The Wire

Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief
HOLLYWOOD (SPW) — Like all adventure and fantasy films, the visual effects were a critical component for Chris Columbus’ *Percy Jackson & the Olympians: The Lightning Thief* (2010). VFX Producer Denise Davis and Post Production Supervisor Jeffrey Harlacker brought Nashia Wachsman on board as the data coordinator of VFX for this film. Wachsman also used his creative and IT talents to manage the daily flow of data files to and from San Francisco and Los Angeles; run the 2K dailies; and work as the on-site guru of ASSIMILATE’s SCRATCH digital workflow that was used as a multi-purpose tool throughout the post-production process.

Directors Miller, Schwarz Sign with Red Truck Films

RALEIGH, NC (SPW) — Red Truck Films just got better. The company has signed New York-based director Jody Lauren Miller and DP-turned-director Bill Schwarz.

DIVE Helps Bring ‘Lebanon, Pa.’ to SXSW Fest

PHILADELPHIA (SPW) — “Lebanon, Pa.” Director Ben Hickernell wanted Hollywood-quality post production while maximizing the Pennsylvania Film Tax Credit. He chose DIVE for feature film expertise and precision in visual effects, RED digital cinematography and the Digital Intermediate (DI) process. The film premiered at the SXSW Film Festival on March 14.

Int’l Film Comp Extends Deadline; Waives Late Fee

LOS ANGELES (SPW) — 44-year-old, U.S. International Film & Video Festival, responds to weather and business climate by waiving late entry fees and extending its 2010 competition deadline from March 1 to March 31.

PRODUCERS Completes Spot For Slazenger Brand

BALTIMORE (SPW) — “Slazenger Long Drive” :30 begins airing nationally on ESPN and The Golf Channel PRODUCERS completes 35 mm production on Slazenger Golf Ball Brand commercial. Directed by Rip Lambert and Executive Produced by Ross Jones. Post Production completed by PRODUCERS post production group.

Blastwave FX, Avid Announce Competition & Giveaway

NEW YORK (SPW) — \$12,000 in Prizes to Answer “What Role Do Sound Effects Play in Picture?” HD sound effects publisher Blastwave FX and Avid have teamed up for a Competition & Giveaway with prize packages worth \$12,000. Three award winning sound designers will select the Grand Prize winner, who will receive a Turnkey A/V Post Package worth \$8,300.

Global Mechanic Creates New Company ID, Expands

VANCOUVER, BC (SPW) — Hybrid production company Global Mechanic celebrates its 10 year anniversary by an expansion and a re-branding. With the company’s growth in non-commercial production dramatically expanded, creative director and founder Bruce Alcock felt it was time to tweak the identity to better match the company’s total offering.

Final Frame Helps Bring “The Cove” To The Screen

STOCKHOLM (SPW) — Digital Vision’s Nucoda’s Film Master played a pivotal role in Final Frame’s successful finish for the Oscar winning documentary, “The Cove.”

Ravenswork Promotes Edgar Maldonado to Mixer

Venice, CA (SPW) — Ravenswork, a leading provider of audio post services for advertising, film and television, has promoted Edgar Maldonado to Mixer. Maldonado has worked as an assistant mixer at the facility since 2007 and has recently contributed to advertising projects for Toyota, Coffee Mate, Northrop Grumman and Toy R Us.

Ace and Edie Launches in Santa Monica

Santa Monica, CA (SPW) — Editors Jim Edwards and Ron Sussman announce a strategic partnership with the launch of editorial house Ace and Edie here. Ace and Edie specializes in post-production for advertising, tv and the web.

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Top Spot of the Week

The Perlorian Brothers, 180LA Get Carried Away For Boost Mobile

By Christine Champagne

Two pigs enjoy ham for dinner, a woman's overgrown armpit hair flies in the face of a man riding behind her on a bicycle built for two, and a coroner drops his breakfast burrito into a cadaver during an autopsy—then picks it right back up and takes a big bite out of it. These are some of the bizarrely funny situations portrayed in Boost Mobile's "Unwronged"-themed campaign out of Santa Monica's 180LA, and "Pet Carrier," the latest :30 in the campaign, adds yet another delightfully insane scenario to the mix.

Directed by The Perlorian Brothers, who are represented by Furlined, and edited by Steve Gandolfi of Cut + Run, "Pet Carrier" finds a woman checking in for a flight at the airport, bending down to look in on her young son, who is dressed as a dog and sitting inside a pet carrier. He seems perfectly fine in the cramped space, noting that he has a coloring book to keep him busy.

Addressing the camera, the mother, who looks incredibly uncomfortable, asks, "Do you think this is wrong?"

"Pets fly cheap," she says, trying to defend her decision to jam her kid

into a pet carrier, "and we could use the money we save to put towards our cell phone payments."

Two airline employees, neither of whom notices that her "dog" is actually a little boy, step into the picture to tell the harried mom about the benefits of Boost Mobile's pre-paid cell phone service. "It's only fifty bucks for unlimited talk, text and web on a dependable nationwide network," a baggage handler says, holding his Sanyo Incognito (Boost Mobile's first-ever QWERTY clamshell phone) up for her to see.

"Is that the talking dog?" the other guy asks as he loads the pet carrier onto a cargo ramp.

"Pet Carrier" is one of three spots—the others are "Lawyer" and "Medical Testing"—directed by The Perlorian Brothers for the "Unwronged" campaign. As for why they were drawn to the assignment, "We liked the idea of the unwronged. It felt like a really fun and subversive area to explore," said Michael Gelfand, who along with Ian Letts, comprises The Perlorian Brothers.

The Perlorian Brothers had an interesting approach in that they wanted to bring a sense of realism

to "Pet Carrier," according to 180LA creative director Gavin Milner. "They felt that the wrongs would feel that much more egregious if the situation felt that much more honest, which we thought was a really wonderful take on things," Milner remarked.

Comedy with humanity

Alexandra Hoover, who plays the mother in the spot, delivers the sincere, genuine performance that really makes the spot work. "She needed to have a little bit of weariness and sad, tired eyes so that she was seen as a little bit sympathetic," Letts said, noting, "It's quite a cruel thing she's doing, right? So we needed to feel that there was some humanity there. That's always the way with comedy spots, I think. The characters need to have some sympathetic quality."

It was also important to the directors as well as the agency to create an original cast of characters, so a lot of "real people" were brought in to audition for the spot. "That meant sitting through horrible, horrible casting calls," Milner recalled with a laugh. "But we found some gems in there, and the beauty of it is these guys probably aren't going to end up in another TV spot on the air at the same time. It feels like we have our own world of characters."

Child's play

Taylor Cosgrove, whom The Perlorian Brothers believe to be about seven years old, was cast as the "dog." "We went around and around on his age quite a bit. We needed to have a kid of a certain age in order to make this not feel particularly wrong," Milner shared.

A baby would have been particularly wrong, right?

"Yeah, exactly," Milner said. "The kid had to be a little person in his own right and sort of okay with the whole thing. We also didn't want him to be too big physically because that would have been strange, so we found this kid who was pretty small, and he had a very sweet face, and he and the mom worked together really well."

The kid really did sit in the pet carrier, by the way.

"Thankfully, for him, he nailed it in a couple of takes," Milner added.

Asked why the child is dressed as a dog and not a cat (cats also fly the friendly skies, you know), Milner explained, "That's a good question. To my mind there was never any doubt it was going to be a dog. When the writer first riffed the spot to us, it was a dog, and it just so happens that the punch line to one of my all time favorites jokes

is, 'Look, it's a talking dog.'"

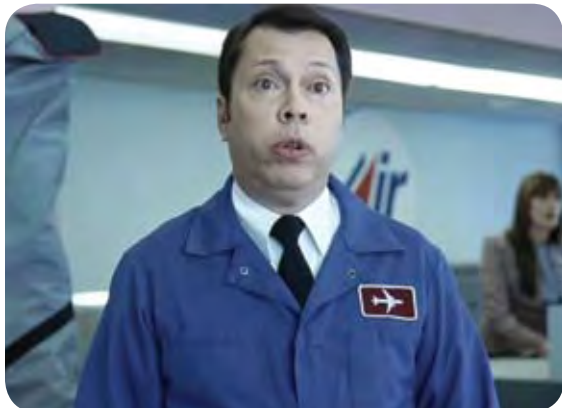
Letts quipped: "They've done research about cell phone users and dog people, and there was a correlation."

That's not true.

What is true, according to Milner, is that while Boost Mobile once targeted a younger demographic, "Pet Carrier" and the other new commercials are aimed at a broader audience. "We've tried to age it up little by little as they introduce better and nicer phones targeting a different crowd, moms and families," Milner said, adding, "Given that the world's broke, we're finding all of a sudden that the pre-paid arena has really exploded."



The Perlorian Brothers



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Getting rid of excess baggage is the ticket to more affordable airfare. Except in this case the route to savings entails making a pet out of your son as depicted by The Perlorian Brothers for Boost Mobile agency 180LA. The money saved can then be applied to exorbitant cell phone bills.

TOP Spot OF THE WEEK

CLIENT

Boost Mobile.

AGENCY

180LA, Santa Monica.

William Gelner, executive creative director; Gavin Milner, Grant Holland, creative directors; Jung-shih Wang, art director; Ben Barney, copywriter; Peter Cline, head of production/managing partner; Dave Stephenson, producer.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Furlined, Santa Monica.

The Perlorian Brothers, directors; Bryan Newman, DP; Diane McArter, managing director; David Thorne, executive producer; Jay Shapiro, producer; Robbie Freed, production designer; Debra Le Claire, stylist. Shot on location at Ontario International Airport, Ontario, Calif.

EDITORIAL

Cut + Run,

bicoastal/international.

Steve Gandolfi, editor; Isaac Chen, assistant editor; Michelle Burke, executive producer; Carr Schilling, producer.

POST

MPC, Los Angeles, London and Vancouver.

Mark Gethin, colorist. MassMarket, bicoastal.

Sarah Eim, Flame artist.

MUSIC

johnnyrandom, San Francisco.

Flip Baber, composer.

AUDIO

Eleven, Santa Monica.

Jeff Fuller, mixer; A.J. Murillo, assistant mixer.

PERFORMERS

Alexandra Hoover, Taylor Cosgrove, Geo Sargent, Eric Blackmon.

The Best Work You May Never See

O'Hare Offers A Short Take On Big Apple

By Robert Goldrich

It doesn't get much bigger than the Big Apple yet in his short film, *The Sandpit*, director Sam O'Hare pares Manhattan and Brooklyn down to size without losing any of New York's charm, energy and often frenetic nature.

In a nutshell, the short—which O'Hare directed, shot, edited, finished and funded on a modest budget—captures a day in the life of New York City as seen in miniature.

"I like the tilt-shift style, the way you can draw large scenes and make them seem like miniatures," said O'Hare who is also a fan of time-lapse fare, among his personal favorites being the classic film *Koyaanisqatsi*.

However, O'Hare, who is on the directorial roster of Santa Monica-based Aero Film, wound up not going the tilt-shift lens route for *The Sandpit*. He did some initial tests using a rented 24mm tilt-shift lens but ultimately felt it made sense to instead go for his desired effect in post rather than in camera.

"Shooting tilt-shift requires a tripod, as it is very hard to stabilize afterwards, and gives less flexibility in the final look. I opted to shoot it on normal lenses, which allowed me options in the depth of field and for shot movement in post. I used a tripod for the night shots but many locations—like hanging over the edge of a roof or through a gap in fencing on a bridge—had to be shot hand held, and the inevitable wobble removed afterwards."

Virtually all of the short was shot with a Nikon D3 still camera, usually at four frames a second. O'Hare deployed some slower frame rates on occasion. He lensed a total of more than 35,000 stills over five days and two evenings.

Logistics played a key role, including being able to gain access to the proper high vantage points such as rooftops, penthouses and balconies. From a penthouse apartment on Park Avenue, O'Hare captured the Metropolitan Museum of Art, giving a miniature feel to that historic landmark as people stream in and out of it.

O'Hare also credited the musical score created by Human for helping to smartly and elegantly drive the piece.

Tech talk

O'Hare explained other technical aspects of the project. "The footage," he said, "was shot as raw NEFs, which I organized and color graded in Adobe Lightroom. I always shoot raw, as it gives you so much more latitude when grading. These were then output as 720p jpg sequences and quickly stabilized to do the initial edit.

"Once the edit was mostly locked," he continued, "all the final footage was re-output at full 2800px resolution, tracked, stabilized and the DOF effect and movement added in Eyeon Fusion, using Frischluft Lenscare. I output the final shots at 1080p. Although most shots stay with the basic tilt-shift effect, some have focus pulls, or more complex depth mattes were built up along with some paint work to allow buildings to drop out of focus next to the in-focus ground. This would not have been possible if

I had shot using tilt-shift lenses on the camera, which works best with relatively flat landscapes. New York City is anything but flat.

Effects pedigree

O'Hare has a design background, first brought to bear at a U.K. firm where he worked on marketing films and animation projects for architectural clients. The films showed what the architects envisioned for planned buildings, showcasing the character and functional purpose of certain structures to prospective investors and customers.

Looking to get more fully into filmmaking, O'Hare moved to New York where he served in visual effects artist capacities on a freelance basis at various effects/post houses. He got the chance to work in commercials, film and music videos, developing talents for creating photo-realistic worlds, with strict attention to lighting, detail, textures and movement.

Much of O'Hare's work was marked by a combination of live action and CG, a prime goal being making it difficult to distinguish what was shot in-camera from what was created in CG.

Aero Film executive producer Lance O'Connor saw O'Hare's work, including spots for AT&T and Samsung for which he served as lead artist and visual effects supervisor while freelancing at New York effects house 1st Avenue Machine.

Favorably impressed, Aero brought O'Hare aboard its directorial roster where he has already wrapped a spot for sleep aid Lunesta. O'Hare is featured in this issue's Directors Series rundown of up-and-coming helmers.

credits

Production Sam O'Hare, director/cameraman; Sara Eolin, Mary Joy Lu, producers. **Editorial** Sam O'Hare, editor, post artist **Music** Human, bicoastal Human, composer; Rosi Golan, Alex Wong, writers.

Miniature-style POV casts NYC in a new light.



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DIRECTORS



DPS moving into the director's chair. Documentarians moving into commercials. Animators enjoying success helming in short and longer form. A music video/spot director making an auspicious feature debut with a self-described "coming-of-age film masquerading as a romantic comedy," only to now get the chance to break into the blockbuster stratosphere with the next *Spider-Man* movie.

Mix in the five nominees for the DGA Award as Best Commercial Director of 2009, including the winner of that honor, and you have a taste of our spring 2010 batch of established and emerging directors.

The director on the cusp of *Spider-Man* is Marc Webb who broke into features with last year's critically acclaimed *(500) Days of Summer*.

Meanwhile some directors qualify in more than one of the aforementioned designations. Joaquin Baca-Asay earned his first career DGA nomination while serving as a shining example of a noted DP who several years ago made a graceful transition to directing. Now at Park Pictures, the same company that is home to Baca-Asay, acclaimed spot and feature cinematographer Ellen Kuras breaks into commercial directing, though she is no stranger to directing, having last year garnered a Best Documentary Oscar nomination for *Nerakhoon*. And then there's three-time Academy Award-nominated cinematographer Wally Pfister who has broken through as a director via Independent Media.

The documentarians testing the commercialmaking waters are Marina Zenovich who in September won two Emmys—one for directing, the other for writing—on the strength of *Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired*. Zenovich joined Saville Productions to embark on a spot career. Separately in our Up-And-Coming Directors feature, there's the LOKI duo whose documentary work has garnered Oscar and Emmy nominations while also scoring on the film festival circuit. LOKI, a.k.a. Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady, have secured their first spot representation via Rabbit.

Animators too crop up in both our Profiles and Up-and-Coming coverage, the former being Pete Circuit of The Ebeling Group who earned rave reviews for his direction of *Yes, Virginia*, a primetime CBS Xmas special for Macy's and JWT. And the up-and-comer is Emma Lazenby of Aardman Animations whose animation short just won a BAFTA Award.

Our line-up of new directors to watch is quite diverse, including artisans from editing, cinematography, design and VFX backgrounds.

And then our Cinematographers Series looks at Eric Steelberg, DP on Jason Reitman's *Juno* and *Up in the Air*; recent ASC Lifetime Achievement Award winner Caleb Deschanel, ASC; and rising music video and spot lenser Shawn Kim.

So read and enjoy. And as always, we welcome your feedback..

—**Robert Goldrich**, Editor
rgoldrich@shootonline.com



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Joaquin Baca-Asay

Punctuating a successful transition

By Robert Goldrich

For some time it's been clear that Joaquin Baca-Asay had arrived as a director. But putting a punctuation mark on his successful transition from cinematographer to commercial helmer was his first career DGA Award nomination back in January on the strength of four spot entries: CSX's "Breathe" for Mullen, Winston, N.C.; Volvo's "Switch" for Arnold Worldwide, Boston; Bank of America's "Doors" out of BBDO New York; and Lenscrafters' "See What You Love" via Cutwater, San Francisco.

In terms of underscoring Baca-Asay's career progression, it's the varied nature of those competition entries which in some respects rivals the Directors Guild nomination itself.

A scant three and a half years ago, Baca-Asay, an accomplished cinematographer, moved to the director's chair at Park Pictures, which is still his commercial-making home. His first major directorial gig was the lauded Nike spot "Defy" for Wieden+Kennedy, Amsterdam, which was largely visually driven as reflected in it being recognized with a 2007 AICP Show honor in the Cinematography category (the spot was also lensed by Baca-Asay). Still, Baca-Asay's directorial touch was evident as that same year he earned inclusion into Saatchi & Saatchi's New Directors Showcase. Later came such spots as Net 10's "Bill," about a guy who rescues greyhounds, and Nike's "How I Fight." Both Baca-Asay-directed pieces are people portraits that reflect far more than just visual acumen.

Fast forward to this year's DGA Award nomination and the spots that earned him that honor are still marked by adroit cinematography but are also driven by a humanity that takes different forms. "Breathe" and "See What You Love," take simple approaches that accentuate the human element. Lenscrafters' "See What You Love," for instance, depicts folks—whose faces are unseen—positioning their hands as if they were eyeglasses or mini-binoculars focusing in on and framing the people and objects of their affection.

Meanwhile, although B of A's "Doors" is on a larger scale, the spot doesn't lose its humanity. "Sometimes you can run into the danger of people becoming props in something carefully designed but as we see different people going through different doors, we still feel them and their warmth," related Baca-Asay.

And "Switch" takes on a whimsical storytelling dimension as two women in side-by-side parked Volvos switch identities in a slice of life that takes on the feel of a French farce.

Playing favorites

Baca-Asay feels deeply honored by the DGA nomination as best commercial director of 2009, not only because of the peer recognition but also for being included in a field of nominees whom he greatly respects. In fact, among his favorite directors are fellow nominees Chris Palmer of Gorgeous and Tom Kuntz of MJZ (who won the DGA Award).

Baca-Asay's appreciation of Kuntz is based on first-hand experience in that he served as DP for Kuntz on a number of jobs, including such notable spots as Skittles' "Trade" and "Leak," both honorees in the humor category of the 2007 AICP Show, the same competition in which the Baca-Asay-directed "Defy" was honored.

That symmetry in timing, though, isn't representative of any grand design or plan. In fact, Baca-Asay hardly fits the profile of a cinematographer who had a long burning aspiration to become a director—quite the contrary. He spent much of his life resisting any move to the director's chair.

At NYU, Baca-Asay learned the nuts and bolts of narrative filmmaking. He focused on cinematography. "I worked on everyone's film and found that a great advantage," he recalled. "I directed one film which turned out well but I hated the process of directing. I found it stressful while cinematography was a joy. I



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Lenscrafters' "See What You Love"

liked collaborating with a director and trying to bring forth his or her vision."

Baca-Asay pursued such collaborations as he sought to make a career of cinematography, moving rather quickly up the industry ladder, as a P.A., grip, gaffer. He gaffed for assorted young DPs, including Lance Acord who later hired him as a camera operator. "I quit gaffing when I was 26 or 27, got a DP agent and then had a two-year freefall with barely any work," recollected Baca-Asay. "I got a series of small features of a higher budget than what I had been doing on the side while gaffing. And then I met Mike Mills, a very talented commercial director, who gave me a chance. Lance recommended me to Mike."

This was the beginning of Baca-Asay becoming a respected spot DP, working regularly with Mills and going on to shoot for such helmers as Mark Romanek, Kuntz and Lisa Rubisch. Over the years, Baca-Asay also made his mark on the long-form front, directing the features *Roger Dodger* (directed by Dylan Kidd), *Super Troopers* (directed by Jay Chandrasekhar), *Thumbsucker* (helmed by Mills), *We Own The Night* and *Two Lovers* (both directed by James Gray).

Though regularly fielding queries about directing, Baca-Asay wasn't tempted. "As a DP I could pick from five jobs but directors were always hustling just to get considered for one. I had people who regularly hired me, and I didn't have to compete in those cases with anyone else as a DP. I saw how taxing being a director could be. The whole bidding process and the work they had to do weren't attractive to me. The idea of building a new reel didn't interest me. I'd occasionally direct a music video for a friend but wouldn't go further than that."

There were opportunities to go much further, at one point for a Coca-Cola assignment via Berlin Cameron. Later the same agency came back with a small spot project for Silk Soy Milk. Baca-Asay relented, calling a producer he holds in high regard, Lalou Dammond, who suggested the job be run through Park Pictures, a company in which Acord is partnered.

The experience was a positive one and Baca-Asay was later asked if he would like to come aboard the company's directorial roster, the first project being the high profile "Defy" for Nike, which initially came in for Acord who became unavailable due to his having to prep for cinematography on Spike Jonze's *Where The Wild Things Are*. Again, Acord played a supportive role in Baca-Asay's career, being available for help if needed on the job and providing him what has turned out to be a long-term home at Park Pictures.

"I found it fun to control the elements [in 'Defy'], to work with and collaborate with the very best people," said Baca-Asay. "I was so fortunate to get such a big job out of the gate and I wound up loving directing. To this day, I love bidding on jobs, doing treatments, the agency phone calls, mapping out my vision."

After "Defy," Baca-Asay served as DP on a Kuntz-directed music video, and a few more spots. From then on Baca-Asay's commercialmaking endeavors have been as a director. And now with the DGA Awards in his rearview mirror, he finds his directorial assignments "continuing to move more and more in the direction of capturing humanity," building upon the nature of the work which earned him the Guild nomination. "The jobs I'm getting are more narrative-based work and the level of characters I'm able to create has risen. I just wrapped another B of A commercial with little stories that add up to more than the sum of its parts."

On the horizon is a UNICEF spot advancing the issue of clean water for Droga5, N.Y. "It's a social realist piece with vivid characters and details," related Baca-Asay. "It's gratifying to get the opportunity to do this kind of work."

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Pete Circuitt

A Gold standard for branded entertainment

By Robert Goldrich

Consider this a tale of two awards competitions, the first being the 2007 Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) Show which honored the Pete Circuitt-directed and animated Microsoft Zune "Monsters" spot in the Animation category.

Fast forward to last month and Circuitt had a major hand in another accolade, a One Show Entertainment Awards Gold Pencil for the primetime CBS TV animated Christmas special *Yes, Virginia*, which he directed for Macy's and JWT New York.

The two award bookends underscore a career progression for Circuitt, a.k.a. Bitstate (which is also the name of his U.K. studio), who continues to be active in commercials yet has diversified successfully into longer form branded content. *Yes, Virginia* was created and produced by Macy's and JWT in conjunction with The Ebeling Group (the production house headed by CEO/exec producer Mick Ebeling, which handles Circuitt worldwide) and MEC Entertainment, a division of Mediaedge:cia.

Based on a true story, the half-hour special, which debuted Dec. 11 on the CBS Television Network, tells the story of eight-year-old Virginia O'Hanlon, a girl growing up in late 1800s New York City who started to have doubts about Christmas—a holiday she loved—when a playground bully tells her and other kids that Santa Claus doesn't exist.

This leads Virginia and her friend Ollie to venture out on their own to seek the truth. On the streets of New York they encounter Scraggly Santa (voiced by Michael Buscemi), a threadbare St. Nick who is trying to raise money for the less fortunate. Virginia also turns to her parents (voiced by Neil Patrick Harris and Jennifer Love Hewitt) for guidance but to no avail. Unable to find a definitive answer, Virginia turns to the voice of authority, writing a letter to *The New York Sun*, a newspaper steeped in the motto, "If you see it in *The Sun*, it's so!" Virginia's letter makes its way to *The Sun*'s curmudgeonly editor, Francis Church (voiced by Alfred Molina) who at first dismisses it, having more important things to do. But thanks to Virginia's determination and some help from Scraggly Santa, editor Church comes around to write the response that became arguably the most famous newspaper editorial ever and part of Xmas lore: "Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus!"

Yes, Virginia received critical acclaim, for many hearkening back to the yuletide tradition of the animation special which in the 1960s brought us such perennial favorites as *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, and *Frosty The Snowman*. It would seem *Yes, Virginia* is on course to become another annual holiday TV event.

Suffice it to say that *Yes, Virginia* has also made an impression in the ad community, perhaps the first of many on this year's awards show circuit but just as importantly on how others might be coming to view branded content.

First, there's the importance of story and entertainment value, both realized via the artistry involved in making a period piece, replete with a full cast of well developed characters. That artistry deployed CG in a manner that gave the final project a hand-crafted, stop motion animation-like feel.

"I needed the film to look like it was crafted by the human hand," explained Circuitt. "I was afraid that the connection between the audience and the time period would be compromised if the work looked like CG."

"I was afraid that the connection between the audience and the time period would be compromised if the work looked like CG."



Yes, Virginia

Robin Feldman, executive producer at JWT N.Y., earlier told *SHOOT* that the fully animated 3D is at times "hard to distinguish from the look of stop motion... You don't feel the computer when you watch it."

Feldman cited the contributions of Circuitt who used "as many real textures as possible to retain that homey stop motion holiday feel. The research he put in to make this show an authentic period piece in 1897 was meticulous."

The second major lesson reflected in *Yes, Virginia*, is the naturalness of Macy's involvement. Macy's has a rich Xmas tradition, not only with its annual Manhattan parade but also the department store's role in the classic feature *Miracle on 34th Street*.

JWT and the client thus let the special speak for itself, without any heavy-handed mentions or appearances for the Macy's brand. And when Macy's was part of the action, it wasn't in an obtrusive manner.

In one scene, for example, Virginia is at one of her lowest moments as she walks aimlessly through New York's Herald Square. She then sees a Santa display in a Macy's window, helping to advance the story. It doesn't feel like a forced product placement.

"The branded part of branded content wasn't in your face, which respects viewers' intelligence and allows the entertainment itself to shine," observed Circuitt. "You can't overlook the importance of that, which likely played a part in winning the Gold Pencil."

Long and short Circuitt

Yes, Virginia and the Gold Pencil have already helped spawn other major branded content opportunities for Circuitt and The Ebeling Group, though neither was yet at liberty to publicly discuss this pending work at press time.

"My hope is that *Yes, Virginia* will have a hand in opening up more branded content opportunities for us and others," shared Circuitt whose animation background spans formal and real-world education.

After attaining a Bachelor of Arts in New Zealand, Circuitt went on to a post grad animation degree at Melbourne's Victorian College of the Arts. He eventually made his way to the U.K., partnering in London house Tommygun, which specialized in online content.

But his fascination with the web and related animated gimmickry waned, leading him to focus more on film, video and motion graphics with the launch of the Bitstate studio in 2004. He became active in varied forms, including music videos. One music clip, Plastic Operator's "Folder" featuring animation of cutout characters, caught the eye of Mick Ebeling.

As a result Circuitt partnered his Bitstate moniker with The Ebeling Group, landing global representation and stepping up his ad industry involvement with such commercials as Zune's "Monsters" via agency 72andSunny, an ambitious ad for Carlsberg in the U.K. which due to circumstances never aired, and a relatively recent Royal Bank of Canada commercial, "Shiny Happy Relay" for BBDO Toronto, which centered on the Winter Olympics torch relay.

"This short-form work has refined my craft, making me a better storyteller for having to deal with the challenge of telling a story in thirty or sixty seconds," said Circuitt who also keeps artistically nimble with short films he does for himself, the latest being a zombies-themed piece which he is in the midst of and which deploys CG to create cel and clay animation looks.

"It's just another project full of experiences," he explained, "that will enable me to bring new textures and feels to the rest of my work in commercials and branded content."

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Garth Davis

From DGA Awards To The Super Bowl

By Robert Goldrich

When Garth Davis of Anonymous Content earned his first career DGA Award nomination for best commercial director of the year, he knew the honor was significant and hoped it might help to firmly establish him in the stateside market. Though he didn't end up winning the Directors Guild Award (which went to Tom Kuntz of MJZ), January's gala DGA ceremony in Los Angeles provided an unexpected additional pleasure and creative impetus.

"I aspire to make a feature film and to hear the stories of the five DGA feature nominees was truly inspiring," he related. "Their work [Kathryn Bigelow for *The Hurt Locker*, James Cameron for *Avatar*, Lee Daniels for *Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire*, Jason Reitman for *Up in the Air*, and Quentin Tarantino for *Inglourious Basterds*] was terrific. You felt the close camaraderie of directors at the dinner.

"I also got to mingle with the other commercial nominees and that was a real trip," continued Davis. "It's something you don't normally get to do as a director. I felt a real sense of community among directors. You don't have an event supporting directors like that in Australia."

The reference to Down Under is due to it being the market where Davis first made his mark. He continues to be repped there by Exit Films, and in the U.K. by Anonymous@Independent. While his commercialmaking first took flight in Australia, then in the U.K., Davis has seen his American stock rise as of late.

Besides the DGA nomination, he also landed a plum Coca-Cola assignment from an agency with which he has long wanted to collaborate, Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

Titled "Sleepwalker," the commercial debuted during last month's Super Bowl telecast, depicting a man sleepwalking through the night, unknowingly braving the treacherous, wild plains of Africa to nab an ice cold bottle of Coke.

"I wanted the sleepwalker to feel likeable, real and a bit cinematic. I directed the spot to find its humor in a real human way, which was fun. There were touches like his waving to a leopard as if acknowledging a next door neighbor. But we didn't go over the top to be funny. The humor just naturally came out of the situation—and I appreciate getting the chance to do it that way, particularly for a Super Bowl spot in which it's tempting to play things very broad to make sure you get a laugh."

Similarly, he appreciates the DGA

nomination even more because of the spot his peers chose to recognize: U.S. Cellular's "Shadow Puppets" out of Publicis & Hal Riney, San Francisco.

"It's the kind of work that usually doesn't get noticed in awards shows," Davis observed.

The charming commercial depicts a

shadow puppet show—with two loving shadow bunnies as the protagonists—against a cityscape. The show brings peo-

Continued on page 33



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HTML edition, 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 on May 11. 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 direc-

tors 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.

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SHOOT 2008 New Director,
Station Film

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“I have empathy for what ad agency creatives go through.”

Craig Gillespie

A Super showing

By Robert Goldrich

It's only March and already director Craig Gillespie of MJZ has had an eventful 2010. In January, he earned his fourth career nomination for the DGA Award in the commercials category.

In February, he was the most ubiquitous director on the Super Bowl telecast, having helmed Bud Light's "Stranded" and "Asteroid" for St. Louis agency Cannonball, Snicker's "Game" featuring Betty White and Abe Vigoda via BBDO New York, Cars.com's "Timothy Richman" for

DDB Chicago, CareerBuilder's "Casual Friday" (client-direct and the result of a consumer-generated content contest), and the dual Emerald Nuts/Pop Secret commercial "Awesomer" from Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco.

As for this month, Gillespie was slated at press time to begin shooting a pilot for an hourlong ABC drama series.

Common thread

If there's a unifying theme to these diverse accomplishments and credits from January through March, they all represent an ongoing diversification for Gillespie. For example, the three commercial entries which earned him his latest DGA nomination were: Car.com's "David Abernathy" for DDB Chicago; Guinness' "Slide" out of BBDO New York; and Orbit's "Dusty for Energy BBDO Chicago.

"I tried to show a bit of an expanded range beyond the comedy/dialogue work for which I've been nominated in the past," noted Gillespie. While "David Abernathy" has a wry humor, it had quite a cinematic feel. The combination resonated when the commercial debuted during the '09 Super Bowl telecast.

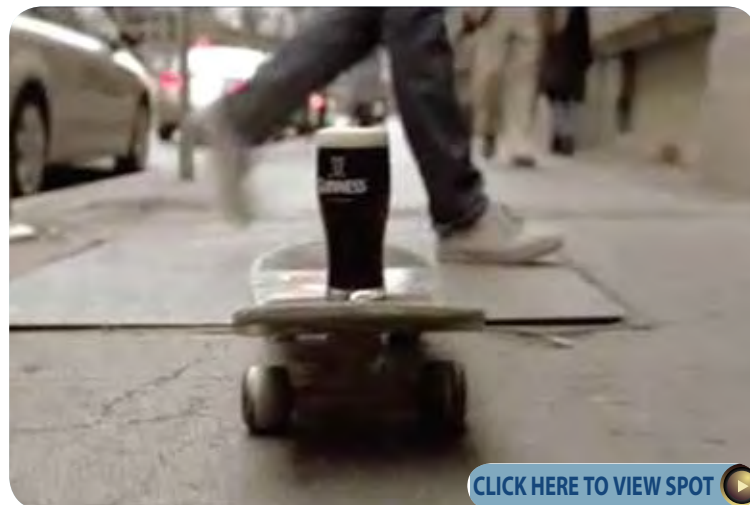
Also stretching perceptions of Gillespie was "Slide," which entailed adroit visual effects work showing a glass of Guinness making its way in Rube Goldberg-esque style along a winding path to an office building window ledge and eventually an office desk in front of—and as a libation for—an earnest worker who boldly asks his boss for a raise after less than a week on the job.

However, not departing from the comedy/dialogue genre for which Gillespie is known was "Dusty" which gives us an over-the-top depiction of Orbit chewing gum being the ultimate antidote for dry mouth.

"I love continuing to be able to do comedy," said Gillespie, "but it was nice to also showcase some different kinds of work for me as well."

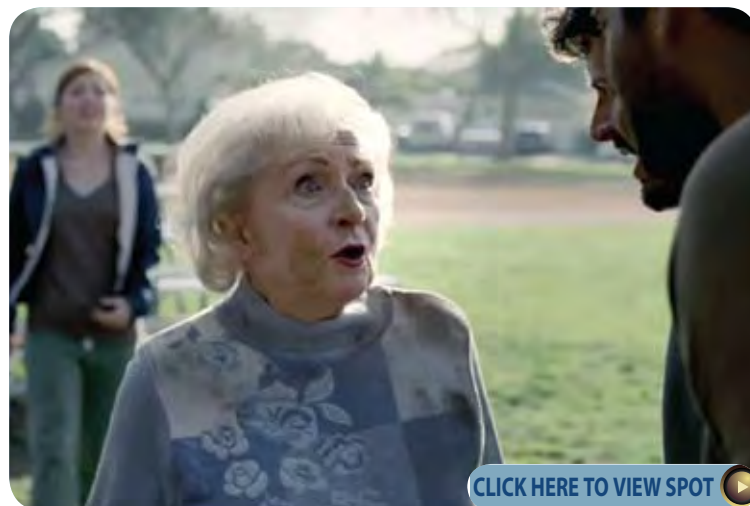
The range of comedy is considerably greater, for example, than that which earned him not only a nomination for but also the DGA Award itself as best commercial director of 2005.

Similarly, there's comedic range to be found in February's crop of Gillespie-directed Super Bowl spots. For example, the return Cars.com engagement had a definite cinematic vibe. Snickers is physical comedy with some hand-held shooting touches placing White and Vigoda on the gridiron—and in the process register-



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Guinness' "Slide"



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Snickers' "Game"

ing as number one in the day-after *USA Today* poll ranking the public's favorite Big Game commercials. CareerBuilder is intentionally awkward and uncomfortable, thrusting us into a workplace populated by underwear-clad employees. And the joint Emerald Nuts/Pop Secret promo is flat out over the top and off the wall.

Empathy

Years back prior to becoming a director, Gillespie first established himself on the agency side of the business, primarily as an art director for some eight years.

"Now as a director, I have empathy for what ad agency creatives go through—with even greater pressures brought to bear on them for a Super Bowl spot," said Gillespie. "But the trick is not to let the pressure contaminate your choices. If you sit back and dwell too much on what's at stake, you can get paralyzed.

"I give the creatives I worked with this year a lot of credit for not being afraid to take chances," continued Gillespie. "In the Snickers spot, we wound up with dialogue that hadn't been scripted. And the hurricane scene with the cheerleaders wasn't originally planned for Cars.com. Ev-

erybody had the courage to try to make the work better."

As for how he wound up with so much Big Game fare, Gillespie said, "It was hardly anything you plan for. Circumstances just came together. I got CareerBuilder very early on by Super Bowl standards, back in October. By contrast the Snickers spot happened very late in the game—it came from a relationship I enjoy with BBDO. There was also repeat business with Cars.com for the second straight year on the Super Bowl. Thankfully it all came together."

Television content is also coming together for Gillespie who last year directed the pilot for the well received Showtime drama/comedy series *United States of Tara* and went on to helm four more episodes.

Now Gillespie moves further and deeper into the dramatic realm with the alluded to ABC hourlong pilot for an undisclosed series—though he added that there are elements of comedy in the show.

"It was just a great script that came my way," said Gillespie. "Whether television, features or commercials, it all comes down to if I'm attracted to the work and feel I can bring something more to it."

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Tom Kuntz

Third time's the charm

By Robert Goldrich

For director Tom Kuntz of MJZ, the third time proved to be the charm as he recently won the DGA Award as best commercial director of 2009. This was Kuntz's third career DGA nomination, having previously been nominated for the honor based on his spot work in '06 and '08.

This time around, a diverse mix of comedy commercials earned Kuntz his first DGA Award: Cadbury's viral sensation "Eyebrows" out of Fallon, London; Skittles' "Tailor" for TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York; and CareerBuilder.com's "Tips," a 2009 Super Bowl spot, as well as Old Spice's "Scents For Gents," both from Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

"Tips" also earned a primetime commercial Emmy nomination last year. But in the big picture, "Tips" was just the very tip of a prodigious award show circuit performance for Kuntz in '09, as perhaps best underscored by last year's AICP Show at MoMA.

MJZ led the production house derby with 10 AICP Show honors in '09—seven of which were for projects directed by Kuntz.

The Kuntz-directed "Pinata" for Skittles out of TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York, figured prominently in the mix, earning honors in the AICP Show's Advertising Excellence/Single Commercial (Best of Show spot), Humor, and Performance/Dialogue categories. Another Kuntz-helmed Skittles spot, "Tailor," also gained Performance/Dialogue recognition.

The balance of Kuntz-directed honorees were: Cadbury's "Eyebrows" in the Advertising Excellence/International category; CareerBuilder's "Tips" in the Visual Style category; and Altoids' "Promotion" from Energy BBDO, Chicago, for Production Design (production designer Roger Swanborough).

And the high-profile comedy beat just goes on for Kuntz. On the heels of the DGA Awards, spots he helmed made their debut during last month's Super Bowl telecast, including Monster.com's "Fiddling Beaver" and "Boogeyman" out of BBDO New York.

Creative roots

In his brief acceptance remarks at the DGA Awards ceremony, Kuntz thanked the DGA, his crew, MJZ principal David Zander and executive producer Jeff Scruton, and first assistant director Thomas P. Smith.

A couple of days earlier, during the DGA's Meet The Nominees: Commercials session at the DGA Theater in Los Angeles, Kuntz reflected on his early days in the business as an agency creative for several years, and how that experience gave birth to his directorial aspirations.

"I was an art director and not a very good one," quipped Kuntz, noting that he became a bit frustrated working all year on the agency side with maybe one commercial to show for it.

Kuntz very much wanted to be more prolific and saw that there were directors who were getting that opportunity. Among the directors he recalled admiring back then from his agency vantage point were Spike Jonze, Mark Romanek, Phil Morrison and the Traktor collective.

Kuntz's agency pedigree includes serving as an art director at JWT New York, then moving onto Kirshenbaum Bond+Partners, N.Y., and MTV's on-air promotion department where he and creative colleague Mike Maguire stumbled onto directing, first establishing themselves as a helming team.

Kuntz and Maguire then joined their first production house roost, the venerable Propaganda Films. After Propaganda closed, the duo wound up at MJZ. In '05, they split to become individual directors, with each firmly establishing his solo career. (Maguire is at The Directors Bureau.)

Kuntz's solo success was punctuated by an earlier referenced DGA Award nomination, his first, as best spot director of '06. That nom was earned on the strength of such quirky humorous fare as Altoids' "Fruit Pants" from Leo Burnett, Chicago, and Skittles' "Trade," "Beard" and "Leaks" for TBWA\Chiat\Day, New York.

Kuntz's creative chops on the agency side continue to serve him well. At the recent DGA Meet The Nominees event, he related, "I like doing treatments. Sometimes it's the only way I force myself to think deeply about a project at the outset when competing for a job. I don't like the dog-and-pony-show treatments. I like writing, thinking it through. I find that the treatment often represents a huge chunk of the work I need to do for a job."

At the same time, Kuntz said he's learned the delicate art of not giving away the store.

"You learn how to suggest ideas but to not be so specific that others can take advantage and deliver them."

Certainly underscoring Kuntz's delivery prowess is the recent DGA Award win and a continually evolving body of work as well as ongoing repeat business.

On the latter score, consider that at least one Skittles spot has been part of the entry mix for each of Kuntz's three DGA Award nominations.



"I don't like the dog-and-pony-show treatments. I like writing, thinking it through."



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“Seeing how the film connected with audiences and being nominated for an Academy Award and a Spirit Award represented some validation for me and the project.”

Ellen Kuras

An ongoing commitment

By Robert Goldrich

Ellen Kuras, an accomplished cinematographer spanning features and commercials, has embarked on a new chapter in her career, signing with Park Pictures for her first representation as a spot director.

At press time she was in the process of wrapping her spot helming debut, a Target assignment for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.

While she will be selective, Kuras is committed to directorial pursuits. She isn't one to take commitment lightly as reflected in her major achievement as a director, *Nerakhoon* (the Lao word for *Betrayal*), which earned Oscar and Independent Spirit Award nominations last year for best documentary.

To say that *Nerakhoon* was a labor of love and represented a deep personal commitment for Kuras is an understatement.

Back in the mid-1980s, she began exploring the prospects of what it means for people to be forced from their homeland and having to find new lives elsewhere. At first this exploration took her to a Laotian woman in New York, the intent being to show how American culture has impacted her.

In order to do justice to this filmmaking quest, Kuras felt the need to learn how to speak Lao, the language of Laos, which in turn led her to a young teacher/translator, Thavisouk (“Thavi”) Phrasavath.

But Kuras got far more than she bargained for when she got to know Phrasavath whose family was forced to emigrate stateside due to the secret U.S. bombing campaign in Laos during the Vietnam War.

The Phrasavaths' saga is moving, poignant, an intimate love story, a soulful dramatic narrative that blends with documentary to show how a family copes with and somehow perseveres in the face of varied betrayals—personal and socio-

political, the latter including the communists' betrayal of the country's soldiers and a U.S. betrayal relative to denying the bombing.

Over the next some 21 years, Kuras documented the life of Thavi's family.

It was done in piecemeal fashion in that Kuras worked on the project in-between her extensive cinematography duties which have included such features as the Michel Gondry-directed *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* and his *Be Kind Rewind*, and commercials like the lauded Spike Jonze-directed “Hello Tomorrow” for adidas.

While Kuras directed and shot *Nerakhoon*, she felt that Phrasavath deserved a co-directorial credit for his contributions, particularly so that people in his home country would know that this is a film which one of their own is presenting as a gift to them.



Nerakhoon

Nerakhoon made its world premiere at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, and was screened several months later at the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival in New York.

In '09, *Nerakhoon* gained the Academy Award and Spirit nominations.

Catalyst, deterrent

Paradoxically *Nerakhoon* served as a dynamic both delaying and spurring on Kuras' commercial directing career.

On the former score, she had been asked many times over the years about moving into the spot director's chair. “But I knew that if I launched into directing commercials at that point,” explained Kuras, “I would be hard pressed to return to *Nerakhoon*. I might not have had time to go back and finish it so I held off.”

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“What platform is involved is irrelevant. The idea is everything. And that's what I've based my career on as a director.”

Chris Palmer

All You Need Is Love (Stateside)

By Robert Goldrich

Director Chris Palmer of Gorgeous Enterprises, London, has wondered off and on again why he doesn't do more work stateside. Yet as of late one has to wonder what he's wondering about.

Consider his directorial and conceptual involvement in Starbucks' global sing-along of the legendary hit “All You Need Is Love” from BBDO New York. Performances of the song from 124 countries were simultaneously streamed online Dec. 7, 2009, at StarbucksLove Project.com, commemorating the company's one-year anniversary in partnership with the (RED) initiative. After the performance, anyone could in turn add their own rendition of the song. For each rendition submitted (up to a million), Starbucks committed funds to the charitable (RED) drive. In year one, the Starbucks (RED) product generated funds equivalent to seven million days of medicine for the Global Fund to help fight AIDS in Africa.

Meanwhile Palmer also recently earned a coveted stateside honor. The Directors Guild of America recognized him in January with his first career DGA Award nomination as spot director of the year.

True, the entries were all for U.K. ad shops—Budweiser's “Lyric” out of DDB London, and a pair of J20 fruit drink spots, “Riviera Truckstop” and “A Horse Named Cynthia” from BBH, London. But clearly this work resonated with DGA judges who are well ensconced in American filmmaking and advertising.

Currency

Whether the DGA nomination translates into more American ad work for Palmer, who's repped stateside by Anonymous Content, remains to be seen. (His

past U.S. credits include Nike via Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, and Jack Daniels for Arnold, Boston.)

However the currency Palmer deals in carries weight on both side of the Atlantic, honed during his early days in the business as an agency creative in London, first at BBH, then Lowe, and a startup shop in which he was partnered, Simons Palmer.

“I suppose at the end of the day,” related Palmer, “the valuable currency in any platform is a really good idea—whether it's for a commercial, a theatrical movie, a TV show, anything. What platform is involved is irrelevant. The idea is everything. And that's what I've based my career on as a director. I respond to the material. If it stimulates me, I respond and I think others will respond.”

Perhaps it's this approach that has kept him from being pigeonholed directorially. “Years ago I did an Orange script with miniature cars,” he recalled. “I hadn't seen anything like it before. The spot was quite a success yet I never saw any more special effects scripts. I remember other people referencing the commercial as part of their vision for other effects spots. But those scripts never came my way. I never see any logical pattern. I never get two scripts that are the same. Maybe people just think of me for good ideas. Touch wood, I'm lucky.”

Attracting such ideas from creatives might also be a by-product of Palmer's extensive agency experience. “Having been there [on the agency side], I understand the process—what it's like handing over an idea to a director, what it took just to get to that point. For me it's a reference point of what I should and shouldn't be able to do to a concept as a director.”

Continued on page 36



Visa's “Football Evolution”

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

Wally Pfister

Emotionally vested in directing

By Robert Goldrich

Wally Pfister's world-class visual acumen is acknowledged throughout the industry, reflected in three best cinematography Oscar nominations (for his lensing of the Christopher Nolan-directed features *Batman Begins*, *The Prestige* and *The Dark Knight*), among other honors.

So it stood to reason that when he moved into the commercial director's chair, the initial assignments would be of a visual bent, tapping into his renowned eye. But now there's a move to access matters of the heart as Pfister has made major strides in broadening perceptions of his directorial mettle with an emotional, powerful, heartfelt campaign for The Montana Meth Project out of Venables Bell & Partners, San Francisco.

The centerpiece spot of the package made *SHOOT*'s "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery in January. Titled "Ben," the PSA presents a series of flashbacks, showing scenes from a meth addict's life and the now eerily silent and empty venues in which they took place. First we see dramatic glimpses of a man going into convulsions on a couch. As we see the couch today--now sans the man--a female voiceover relates that this is where he started uncontrollably convulsing.

Next we're taken to a hospital emergency room where the addict nearly died--and then to an alley adjacent to what appears to be a junkyard. The young female voiceover continues, telling us that this is where he began smoking meth again right after he got discharged from the hospital.

And then we see a dark, dank, secluded basement/supply room which is where, the woman says, he hung himself because he couldn't quit meth.

Finally we see the woman who has been speaking to us. She continues, "And this is what I said when he told me he was going to try meth." What follows is a prolonged silence as we see anguish across her face.

An end tag carries the slogan, "Meth. Not Even One," accompanied by the website address MontanaMeth.org.

"Ben" is one of four TV spots telling stories based on composites of real testimony from addicts and those close to them across the State of Montana. The campaign tells the heartbreaking stories of kids who saw their friends consumed by addiction--and who recall with guilt, regret and sadness not having said anything when informed that their friends were going to try meth for the first time.

Pfister, who directs via Santa Monica-based Independent Media, was

immediately drawn to the campaign. "Having teenaged children made it easy for me to lock into this material," he related. "I had also seen what The

Montana Meth Project had done in the past--visceral, powerful advertising. They didn't cower from jarring, gritty or scary. I knew going in that

there would be no roadblocks as we tried to reach kids in a real, impactful, credible way."

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“There are a lot of commercial and music video directors I deeply admire who I cannot wait to see make movies.”

Marc Webb

Breaking out, breaking through, breaking down barriers

By Robert Goldrich

The National Board of Review highlighted several breakthrough performances in 2009, one of which was the feature directorial debut of Marc Webb on *(500) Days of Summer*. The film is energized by dance numbers, split screens, a Los Angeles backdrop, and dynamic, engaging performances by Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Zooey Deschanel.

While the movie, which premiered at the '09 Sundance Film Festival, has been generally characterized as a romantic comedy, that description hardly does it justice in that there are so many other dimensions, including notably the sense of romance struggling.

Fittingly, getting the opportunity to direct the film was a struggle unto itself for Webb, who previously was best known for his landmark music video work as well as a diversification into commercials.

“I had to wage war to get the opportunity,” related Webb whose spot and clip roost is Hollywood-based production house DNA.

“One of the good things about music videos and commercials is that I was trained to do the dog-and-pony show, to make people feel comfortable with what I’m going to bring to a project,” explained Webb. “I’ve been through the presentations, the pre-pro meetings. I think that proved to be a really key asset in making the executives [at Fox Searchlight] comfortable with me on *(500) Days of Summer*.”

But while going from music video maker to helmer of a heavy dialogue, actor performance, character-driven feature seems on the surface an enormous leap, the reality is that the transition was anything but culture shock. Many of Webb’s videos have been heavily narrative and his rapport with actors translated well into taking on what he described as a feature that was “a coming-of-age story masquerading as a romantic comedy.”

As it turns out, *(500) Days of Summer* is just the start of Webb breaking down barriers and moving into new arenas.

Though he wasn’t yet at liberty to discuss it at press time, Webb has landed a blockbuster gig, the next *Spider-Man* movie. Certainly the success of *(500) Days of Summer* helped Webb garner the plum assignment, demonstrating his prowess in movie-making with a pop culture element while still staying centered on thoughtful attention to character development.

However, the diversification doesn’t stop at, though it has certainly been punctuated by, the *Spider-Man* coup. Webb recently wrapped his first foray into primetime sitcom territory with an episode of *The Office*.

Furthermore, at press time he was in the midst of a Fox pilot for an hourlong drama series *Midland* (being shot by cinematographer Eric Steelberg who also lensed *(500) Days of Summer* and is profiled in this issue’s Cinematographers Series feature story).

At the same time, Webb still managed to recently return to his music video roots with a new Greenday video, “Last of the American Girls.”

The director also scored in the ad arena with an ambitious Allstate commercial campaign, including the anthem spot “Great Recovery,” conceived by Leo Burnett, Chicago.

Webb observed that his acceptance by the advertising agency community has come around but perhaps more slowly than his reception by feature film industry decision-makers.

“I’ve found it easier getting my movie career going than my commercials career in some respects,” related Webb. “They are different worlds. Agencies can be skeptical but not without good reason. I remember having trouble initially because I didn’t have dialogue on my reel or there wasn’t a car on my reel. But over time you can build trust. And the movie [*(500) Days of Summer*] now serves in a sense as dialogue on my reel.”

According to script

Webb observed that there are some similarities, though, in those “different worlds” of features and advertising. For one, the quality of the script, the quality of the idea, is essential.

“I was very lucky in that the script for *(500) Days of Summer* was fantastic. And whether it’s commercials, features or TV, I’ve been well served by trying to work with writers and people who are smarter and more talented than I am. You learn so much from writers in particular. And I’ve also been well served by the joy I get from working with actors. I have a lot of respect for actors and that’s a bigger priority than the tone of the work. I find that the actor’s process isn’t all that different whether it’s comedy or drama. They’re always trying to find something real in performance, and to be in on that journey with them has



(500) Days of Summer

always attracted me.”

For instance, Webb reveled in his recent experience on *The Office*. “I’m a fan of the show and I wanted to re-engage in the narrative world in that it had been over a year since I shot *(500) Days of Summer*,” he related. “I wanted to re-prime that narrative pump. The cast of that show is unmatched. If you do your homework properly and support the actors, it’s pretty hard to mess up as a director. Everybody there is just so very good at what they do.”

Leap of faith

As for why he’s been able to broaden his wings and diversify so successfully into different disciplines over the past couple of years, Webb said, “It’s hard to tell, I don’t really know for sure. I think ultimately you have to give some credit to the people who hire you, who take the leap of faith and believe in what you can offer them, sometimes without seeing it exactly in your body of work. But they see the spirit of that work, the sensibilities exhibited in that work and give you the opportunity.”

On the pragmatic side, Webb conjectured that his getting the chance to direct *(500) Days of Summer* also had something to do with the fact that “they knew they could get me cheap. And I don’t just mean my price, but also my experience making music videos which didn’t have expensive budgets yet still managed to tell a story and connect with viewers. I think they knew they could leverage that video experience and that it could translate into working well on a modestly budgeted feature.”

Among Webb’s many lauded music videos are My Chemical Romance’s “Helena,” All American Rejects’ “Move Along” and Weezer’s “Perfect Situation,” all of which contributed to his earning director of the year distinction a few years ago at the Music Video Production Association (MVPA) Awards.

“Move Along” additionally scored an MVPA kudo as pop video of the year, and a coveted MTV Video Music Award.

Webb’s filmography also includes short films, most notably *Seascope* which premiered several years back at the Aspen Comedy Festival.

In reference to his short form colleagues, Webb believes there’s “a rich pool of talent that hasn’t been fully tapped into. There are a lot of commercial and music video directors I deeply admire who I cannot wait to see make movies.”

Maria Zenovich

Bringing documentary sensibilities to spots

By Robert Goldrich

Marina Zenovich hardly had time to enjoy the two Emmy Awards which she won on Sept. 12, 2009—for outstanding directing as well as outstanding writing for nonfiction programming on the strength of her feature-length documentary *Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired*.

A couple of weeks later, the famed filmmaker Polanski was arrested in Switzerland. He currently is under house arrest in his Swiss chalet awaiting what looks like pending extradition to the U.S. to stand trial on a 32-year-old arrest warrant for his allegedly having sex in 1977 with a 13-year-old girl.

Just prior to that turn of events, Zenovich was working on a follow-up to the documentary in between her other projects. But the nature of that follow-up centered on an appeals case initiated by Polanski. *Wanted and Desired* was cited by Polanski's legal team as evidence warranting a reopening of the case based on prosecutorial and judicial misconduct.

"I felt I had to follow this through to its conclusion with a short or even a half-hour film about this case once it went before an appeals court," related Zenovich. "But then he was arrested out of the blue, and now it's a major international story." So suddenly Zenovich went from contemplating a short film to what is now shaping up as a project that is part documentary, part geopolitical thriller.

She's again on the case, having flown to Switzerland to interview officials there but not getting the chance to talk to Polanski. Now she's in a wait-and-see mode for the next development in a slow-to-unfold process. "There's a greater international story to be told and that's what I will try to do," said Zenovich.

A sequel to *Wanted and Desired* will have a high artistic and journalistic bar to reach. The original documentary earned great acclaim at both the 2008 Sundance and Cannes Film Festivals, was bought by HBO, aired and went on to earn the aforementioned pair of Emmys—for directing and writing (the latter honor shared by Zenovich with fellow writers Joe Bini and P.G. Morgan).

It's this high creative bar set by Zenovich that attracted Saville Productions to the director, resulting in her signing with the production house for her first ever representation in commercials. In announcing her coming aboard the Saville roster last year, Johnny Doran, the company's executive producer, described Zenovich's directing style as "gripping and entertaining" and lending itself to "those commercials or branded content films that are trying to communicate a strong message. Marina's ability to put people at ease results in a rare honesty in her filmmaking."

Zenovich told *SHOOT* she was drawn to Saville's penchant and appreciation for documentary filmmakers. (The shop handles feature film, documentary and spot directors for commercials.) "I like their roster of talent. The company approached me and in talking to them it seemed like the right fit. As a documentary filmmaker, it's nice to see a company reaching out to other documentary filmmakers, understanding their essence, and finding merit in their getting involved in advertising."

Majors mesh

Originally a drama major at the University of Southern California, Zenovich then switched to studying journalism there.

She went on to perform as an actress in off-off Broadway productions in New York but began to feel more and more like she belonged behind the camera. Then in '95 came what she referred to as one of her "light-bulb moments," which she said has spurred her on to all three of her self-described documentary "passion projects."

A friend of hers had failed to get his film into Sundance. Zenovich related, "He asked me, 'Should I Slamdance?' I didn't know what he meant but it turns out he was referring to the Slamdance Film Festival."

From this, Zenovich came up with the idea to follow aspiring filmmakers on the festival circuit, gaining insights into the independent filmmaker psyche and spirit. The resulting documentary, *Independent's Day*, was well received and put her on the documentary filmmaking map.

Independent's Day featured several at the time fledgling directors who have since gone on to considerable success, including Steven Soderbergh, Neil Labute and Greg Mottola.

Zenovich's next "light-bulb moment" and subsequent "passion project" came right after the screening of a French Film at the DGA. Director Claude Lelouch was there and dedicated the film to his friend Bernard Tapie who was in jail.

"I was mesmerized by Bernard's performance in the film but didn't know why he was in jail," recalled Zenovich. She then began pursuing some answers, finding out that Tapie was a former French politician turned convicted criminal

and then actor to help pay his legal bills. The resulting 2001 documentary *Who Is Bernard Tapie?* again scored critical acclaim and served to further establish Zenovich as a documentarian.

The alluded to third light bulb went off in 2003, triggering *Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired*. "I read about Polanski and the question of whether he could return to Los Angeles if he received Academy Award nominations for *The Pianist*," recollected Zenovich. "Again, it sparked my interest and I began researching the case. Five years later, *Wanted and Desired* emerged at the Sundance Film Festival.

In between these "passion projects," Zenovich took on notable jobs for hire, including a BBC assignment which yielded *Estonia Dreams of Eurovision!*, a documentary which centers on the offbeat world of Tallin, Estonia, as it prepares to host the Eurovision Song Contest, Europe's counterpart to *American Idol*. Zenovich has also profiled the likes of filmmakers Julian Schnabel and David Lynch for Gallery HD's *Art in Progress* series.

Looking back, Zenovich noted that her majors at USC—acting and journalism—somehow made sense. "I ended up doing a combination of both in my career," she observed. "What they have in common is listening. Training in acting is learning how to listen and react. In documentaries and commercials, people aren't use to others truly listening. That's what I do. When people feel you're listening, they can't help but open up to you. Of course you have to open up too."

Zenovich feels commercials may serve to open her up as a filmmaker, providing a change of pace and perspective as compared to her documentary work. She's looking forward to getting involved in spots, having been accustomed to toiling for years on a documentary. The process of collaborating with others over a shorter, concentrated burst of time, and gaining the more immediate gratification of completing a project in a tight turnaround, are among the dynamics in the advertising discipline that excite her.

"It seems that commercials are more in synch today with what I do," said Zenovich. "They seem to be more about real people and authenticity. As a documentary filmmaker, I find that a natural fit. People relate to stories and characters that seem authentic, honest and true."



"When people feel you're listening, they can't help but open up to you."



Roman Polanski: *Wanted and Desired*

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DPs Discuss Film, Digital, Their Work And Directors

By Robert Goldrich

One cinematographer has enjoyed a close-knit working relationship with director Jason Reitman spanning features and commercials.

Another was just honored with the American Society of Cinematographers Lifetime Achievement Award, is a five-time Oscar nominee and no stranger to the director's chair for either long-form fare or commercials.

A third DP broke into the industry via music videos, has diversified successfully into spots, made forays into features and even dipped his toe in directing, though cinematography remains his prime focus.

Here's a close-up look at cinematographers Eric Steelberg, Caleb Deschanel, ASC, and Shawn Kim.

Eric Steelberg

Cinematographer Eric Steelberg's career in commercials started with two directors: Jason Reitman and Carl Erik Rinsch.

For the former, Steelberg shot some early short films, then commercials when Reitman first hooked up with production house Tate & Partners (now Tate USA, which continues to handle the director for spots), followed eventually by two lauded Reitman feature films, first *Juno* and then this year's multiple Oscar nominee *Up in the Air*.

Meanwhile, Steelberg and Rinsch were long-time friends dating all the way back to when they were kids in the seventh grade.

Steelberg initially lensed some spec spots for Rinsch who was looking to establish himself in the ad arena. The specs did just that, piquing the interest of RSA Films which signed the director to its roster. Steelberg lensed a couple of real-world commercials for Rinsch shortly after he joined RSA. The director and DP then reunited years later on a recently wrapped live-action portion of a combo spot (live and CG) for Auto Trader.

While Reitman and Rinsch helped to get his spot career rolling, Steelberg was over the years paying his dues on the low budget feature front before making his first major splash with *Quinceañera* directed by Richard Glazer and Wash Westmoreland. A coming-of-age story centered on a teenaged Hispanic girl, the

film scored the Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival. That same year Reitman's *Thank You For Smoking* premiered at Sundance. Reitman saw *Quinceañera*, which eventually led to his spot cinematographer colleague landing *Juno*.

A return engagement with Reitman on *Up in the Air* wasn't the only feature highlight for Steelberg in terms of 2009 releases. Steelberg also shot *(500) Days of Summer*, the acclaimed romantic comedy marking the feature filmmaking debut of Marc Webb, a noted music video and commercial director at production house DNA. (Webb is profiled in this issue's Directors Series.)

At first Steelberg was reluctant to take on a romantic comedy with a music video helmer. But upon talking to Webb on the phone, he found a sensitive, intelligent director who wanted to be true to story and character—and wasn't looking to make a music video-like visual splash. The two hit it off, to the point where Steelberg garnered the assignment during a follow-up phone call a week and a half later, without having ever met Webb in person up to that point.

At press time, Steelberg—who is repped by ICM—was about to embark on another Webb-directed project, a one-hour series pilot titled *Midland* for FOX.

The TV show adds to a diverse mix of disciplines, including commercials and features, for Steelberg who finds that one informs the other.

"Commercials have taught me how to achieve a higher quality at a fast pace," he observed. "That has helped to shape my decision-making process in terms of how I tackle a task with just a short amount of time while still being able to attain as high a quality as possible for the story whether it's a

commercial or a feature film."

Conversely features have engendered, he continued, "a perspective of being able to add an element of storytelling to commercials that might not have been there otherwise. I'll make a suggestion to the director that brings a narrative element that wasn't scripted. The feature world has given me the mindset of never forgetting about story so in commercials I don't lose sight of that as well, even

Continued on page 30





Clairmont Raises The Bar!

Cinematographer Salvatore Totino, ASC, explains why he feels Clairmont Camera raises the bar in every aspect.

"The quality of Clairmont's equipment, their service, their reliability and their willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty is by far the best in the industry. Their standard level of quality, their attention to details and the

improvements and enhancements they make to their gear is incredible.

What I really like about Clairmont is that they get excited about your projects, and will strive to find solutions to even the most obscure problems. They never question any crazy idea —they just make it work!"

Salvatore Totino, ASC
Director of Photography

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Cinematographers Reflect On Different Disciplines, Film, Digital

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if it's a small element that makes the work just a little bit more relatable to an audience."

Steelberg has been able to relate to photography since he was a kid. He was active in still photography in high school back when many of his friends were involved in short films.

"I was the only person they knew who had a light meter so before you knew it I was out there shooting Super 8 and 16mm for my friends who wanted to be directors or producers," Steelberg recalled.

"I fell in love with cinematography the first time I turned on the projector and saw my first Super 8 film. It became an addiction. I loved shooting and kept coming back to it. I was always a movie fan but became even more obsessed with cinema, thinking about ways to best tell stories, which led to my shooting more short films, and then spec commercials."

He came close to applying to film school but didn't, reasoning, "I'm already doing shorts. That's what I'll be doing once I graduate from film school. Why delay shooting in the real world? If it doesn't work out, I can always go back to film school or figure something out."

While there were some lean times, Steelberg stayed at it.

"I think it's partly because many people give up and through that attrition, opportunities ultimately end up emerging for those who persist and keep on trying no matter what."

Those career opportunities crystallized for Steelberg into varied commercials—including a Reitman-directed national Heineken spot entitled "Mardi Gras"—and then eventually theatrical feature films.

Steelberg's big-ticket feature endeavors have all been shot on 35 mm film. However, he lensed *Quinceañera* with the Sony F900 digital camera.

And over the past year and a half or so, most of his commercials have entailed digital cinematography via the Sony F23 and F35 as well as the RED ONE camera.

"Advertising agencies have become more knowledgeable about how to handle digital postproduction, so shooting digitally has become a no brainer for many of them. It can save them money. The digital technology is very good," assessed Steelberg. "I can work with any camera out there. It all comes down to learning the format and shooting the project in the best way possible. I treat digital like it's another film stock. You learn the new stock and apply it accordingly. I don't try to make it look like film. I try to go for a good digital image. There's a nice immediacy to having the image right



Eric Steelberg

there and getting feedback. I kind of enjoy that.

"But that's not to say I don't relish the beauty and emotional reaction to film," he continued. "I still think as a whole, people will enjoy the experience of expertly shot film as compared to watching expertly shot digital. There's an emotional quality to film that hasn't been realized yet digitally. But that breakthrough is just around the corner, maybe in the next year and a half to two years for digital. As a cinematographer, I love having many tools and options so I try to embrace them all."

Caleb Deschanel, ASC

The legend of cinematographer Caleb Deschanel, ASC, grew even greater when he received the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Lifetime Achievement Award last month in Los Angeles.

In his acceptance speech, Deschanel talked of his unabashed love for the film medium, "I don't care about comparison tests," he related. "Digital is wonderful but it lacks mystery and surprise."

Deschanel observed that while film doesn't provide "instant" gratification like digital, there's something to be said for waiting for dailies and for attaining movie magic over time. He shared that such magic comes when you discover in dailies that what you have managed to capture on film turns out to be "better and filled with a life you never imagined when the camera was rolling."

In a separate chat with *SHOOT*, Deschanel related, "I enjoy the digital tools. I have a bunch of digital cameras which I shoot stills with. I use them as reference. But ultimately I still prefer film. It's great from an archival point of view but there's so much more. The fact is that I simply love the process of shooting film. It's what I've long embraced. I love the artistry of film."

Deschanel's artistry spans short and long form. He earned Best Cinematography Academy Award nominations for *The Right Stuff* in 1984, *The Natural* in '85, *Fly Away Home* in '97, *The Patriot* in '01, and *The Passion of*



Caleb Deschanel, ASC

the Christ in '05.

Deschanel also won an ASC Award for his cinematography on *The Patriot*, and received two other ASC Award nominations for *The Passion of the Christ*, and for *Fly Away Home*.

His body of work also includes such memorable films as *The Black Stallion*, *Being There*, *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, *My Sister's Keeper*, *National Treasure*, *Ask the Dust*, and the Rolling Stones concert film *Let's Spend The Night Together*.

Deschanel has additionally earned an array of credits as a director of theatrical motion pictures, television programs and commercials.

On the latter front, Deschanel co-founded spot production house Dark Light Pictures in '93 with executive producer Vincent Arcaro. Deschanel continues as a director/cameraman on the commercialmaking roster of the Hollywood-based Dark Light. Pictures He remains repped as a cinematographer by The Gersh Agency.

Deschanel's alluded to directorial experiences in other disciplines include, for example, *Trains*, a short film he wrote, directed and shot that went on to win the Silver Bear at the '76 Berlin Film Festival.

Deschanel later made his feature directing debut with *The Escape Artist* ('82), shot by Stephen Burum, ASC.

As for what the ASC's Lifetime honor means to him, Deschanel related, "It's wonderful to be recognized by the people who you know understand what you do. What's also great about the honor is that it has been won by my mentors—Conrad Hall, Haskell Wexler, Gordon Willis. To follow in their footsteps and get the same award is quite special."

At the same time, Deschanel observed that the Lifetime Achievement Award "is a bit embarrassing. I feel like I still have to let people know that I'm not retired—that I'm still shooting."

At press time, Deschanel was indeed still working, shooting a feature in Toronto titled *Dream House*, being directed by Jim Sheridan and with a cast headlined by Daniel Craig, Naomi Watts and Rachel Weisz.

"Every project you do informs the



Shawn Kim

next one," related Deschanel. "I like commercials, for instance, because they represent a change from the feature mindset. But no matter whether it's a feature or commercial, the experiences are all different—if you direct, if you work with different directors. What I love is the adventure of working new ways and with new people all the time. I feel blessed in that I've never done the same job twice."

Shawn Kim

Music videos proved to be the springboard propelling cinematographer Shawn Kim into a well rounded career in commercials.

Out of the gate in the mid to late 1990s, he paid his dues on fairly non-descript hip-hop music clips, then got on the map with the video "Maps" for the Yeah Yeah Yeahs and singer Karen O, directed by Patrick Daughters.

Kim and Daughters got to know one another during their formal filmmaking education in New York, dating back to when Daughters was studying at NYU and Kim at the nearby School of Visual Arts. The two initially worked together on several short films before eventually broadening out into music videos and commercials.

"Maps" helped build momentum for Kim who then took on music videos for other notable directors, including the likes of Michel Gondry and Roman Coppola.

And when these and other directors with whom Kim collaborated started to diversify meaningfully into commercials, so too did the DP along with them.

"It was a great time to be in videos because so many talented directors started branching out into spots," related Kim, whose dual discipline lensing includes such examples as a Beck music video and an American Airlines commercial campaign, both directed by Gondry.

To this day, commercials continue to account for the lion's share of Kim's workload, with recent projects including a Kayak.com campaign and an Ebay spot, both directed by Randy Krallman of Smuggler for Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco;

Motorola helmed by the Snorri Brothers of The Cartel for Anomaly, New York; the New York Lottery directed by Mike Maguire of The Directors Bureau for DDB New York; U.S. Census spots helmed by Roman Coppola, also of The Directors Bureau; a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) commercial directed by Grady Hall of Motion Theory for Young & Rubicam, Irvine, Calif.; and Daughters-helmed work, produced by The Directors Bureau, for such clients as LG via Y&R, and ESPN.

Yet at the same time, Kim hasn't turned his back on his music video lineage. He continues to be active in videos, albeit on a select basis.

Kim and director Daughters re-teamed on a Depeche Mode clip, "Wrong," which recently won a best cinematography honor at Camerimage in Poland.

A year earlier, Kim's cinematography on the Death Cabs For Cutie video "I Will Possess Your Heart" won Camerimage's Audience Award. Kim and Aaron Stewart Aha co-directed the clip.

Kim has gotten his feet wet directorially, represented by production house Paydirt in Beverly Hills. But he affirms that his priority is cinematography spanning commercials, videos and features—he is repped as a DP across all disciplines by the Sheldon Prosnit Agency.

On the theatrical feature front, his most prominent credit thus far would be *Smiley Face*, directed by Gregg Araki, the filmmaker behind the lauded *Mysterious Skin*.

Over the past year, the bulk of Kim's spot assignments find him shooting 35mm film.

Prior to that, a good share of his commercials entailed digital cinematography, deploying such cameras as RED, Genesis and the Arriflex D-21. His experience in digital experimentation goes back to '97 when he shot a short film with what was billed as the first HD camera.

Some of Kim's alluded to directorial pursuits allow him to stretch his cinematography muscles.

For example, he helmed and shot an Audi spec commercial in order to test the RED camera's Epic chip, putting it through its paces.

"I direct at times to create a proving ground to experiment and try out new ideas in cinematography," said Kim. "It's the kind of work you can't push on other directors' jobs, and it allows me to grow as a cinematographer. I simply love shooting, interpreting other's visions and infusing your own style somehow into the work while helping to realize that overriding story and vision."

Different Pathways

An editor making his directorial debut with a short film that has scored in the festival marketplace.

An acclaimed cinematographer settling into the director's chair for the first time in his career.

A designer who initially made films reflecting architects' visions for planned buildings, then segued into visual effects spanning spots, videos and films, and now is making inroads as a director with a short film providing a distinctive perspective on New York City.

An animation artist and designer who directed a short that recently earned a coveted BAFTA Award.

And a lauded documentary film-making duo looking to make its first foray into the advertising discipline.

This is the mix represented in *SHOOT*'s spring 2010 installment of the ongoing Up-and-Coming Directors series. While each has taken a different pathway leading to the commercialmaking altar, they share the common bond of inspiration, aspiration and talent. Here are their stories:

LOKI

In Norse mythology, Loki, the brother of Thor, is the god of mischief and troublemaking. So when Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady thought about a slightly tongue-in-cheek moniker for themselves as a directing team—and for their New York-based documentary filmmaking studio—LOKI felt like a natural choice. Indeed their work has stirred the pot, with documentaries that provide access into otherwise hidden worlds and share an honest approach to delicate subject matter, making a mark on audiences as well as the award show and festival circuits.

The LOKI duo is currently in development on *Detroit Hustles Harder*, a documentary centered on people who are committed to and are persevering in Detroit, hoping to keep the Motor City afloat.

The directors are also part of a team of noted filmmakers adapting the best selling book *Freakonomics* into a feature-length documentary. LOKI wrapped

its 20-minute film adaptation of a chapter in the book revolving around teenagers who are being paid to get good grades in school. Also charged with translating different chapters of the book to film are documentarians Alex Gibney (*Taxi to the Dark Side*), Morgan Spurlock (*Super Size Me*) and Eugene Jarecki (*Why We Fight*). Directing the interstitial glue that will mesh these chapters into a unified film is Seth Gordon (*The King of Kong*). That *Freakonomics* film is slated to debut at next month's Tribeca Film Festival.



Recently Ewing and Grady—who initially teamed on a Scientology documentary before launching their own LOKI Films studio in '01—secured their first career spot representation, signing with New York-based production house Rabbit. Grady said the more immediate gratification of commercialmaking appeals to her. “Our documentary projects typically take between a year and five years,” she related. “There’s something really refreshing and liberating about starting and finishing a project in a month.”

Presenting Our Spring Collection: Up-And-Coming Directors

A *SHOOT* Staff Report

Back in January, LOKI's documentary *12th & Delaware*—a powerful look at the abortion-rights controversy and how it affects one community on a daily basis—premiered at the Sundance Film Festival and will be broadcast on HBO this summer. The directing team's body of work over the years also includes: *Jesus Camp*, a look at Pentecostal children in America, which earned an Academy Award nomination for best feature documentary in 2007; the Emmy-nominated *The Boys of Baraka*, a film about struggling pre-teens in Baltimore that was distributed by Thinkfilm and broadcast on PBS' *POV* series; a recently wrapped documentary on the youth of Saudi Arabia which is scheduled to run on MTV in May; and television work that has explored such subjects as the criminally insane, ritualistic body piercing, even the plight of an aging rock star. LOKI's work has been seen on such networks as CBS, A&E, PBS, VH1, Al Jazeera, Channel 4 and Canal Plus.

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UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS



LOKI: Rachel Grady, Heidi Ewing



Emma Lazenby



Rodrigo Prieto



Sam O'Hare



Mark Nickelsburg

Dirs. Spring From Docu., Animation, DP, VFX, Edit Backgrounds

Continued from page 31

Ewing observed that LOKI's style often encompassing cinema verite documentary filmmaking doesn't afford the directors many controlled situations. "To have a greater degree of control in shooting situations offers a new opportunity and is quite tantalizing for us," she said. "You want to work different muscles as a filmmaker."

Though they haven't yet done any commercials, LOKI is no stranger to shorter format fare. Grady said they whetted their appetite for spots with short films for the *CNN Heroes* awards show each of the past two years. In both '08 and '09, LOKI directed a pair of two-minute pieces profiling real-life heroes who are contributing to the betterment of the world.

For example, LOKI profiled Liz McCartney who saw TV coverage of Hurricane Katrina's devastating impact on people in the region. She then upped and left her home in Washington, D.C., and headed to Louisiana to help, starting an organization at St. Bernard Parish, a community located just outside New Orleans.

Galvanizing her friends, acquaintances and other volunteers, McCartney has led the St. Bernard Project which has rebuilt one by one the homes of more than 120 families.

"It was a great experience to direct an emotional profile of McCartney, distilling her essence down to two minutes," related Grady.

Of LOKI's decision to now extend their reach into commercialmaking and perhaps other forms of branded

content, Ewing assessed, "The timing seems right. A lot of advertising is trying to recreate real life, real conversation, the feeling of being alive. The spirit of documentary filmmaking goes hand in hand with that, trying to create something authentic that people can relate to."

Emma Lazenby

Emma Lazenby is just starting out as a director but you wouldn't know it from a recent accomplishment in her young helming career. Last month her short film *Mother of Many* won a British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award in the Best Short Animation category. A BAFTA honor is generally regarded as the U.K. counterpart to America's Oscar.

Mother of Many was a labor-of-love, paying homage to the profession of Lazenby's mom who was a midwife for nearly 30 years and helped to bring some 3,500 new lives into the world. The short film combines such disciplines as painting on glass, hand-drawn animation, Flash and After Effects.

Lazenby is handled for spots, virals and branded content by Incubator, Aardman Animations' unit for new talent. She directs shorts and other projects out of ArthurCox. Both ArthurCox and Aardman are Bristol, U.K.-based studios.

Produced by Sally Arthur for ArthurCox with funding support from South West Screen, the U.K. Film Council and Channel 4/4matons, *Mother of Many* moves to a sound-

track of actual childbirths and fetal heartbeats, meshing the rhythms of a baby inside the womb and the working rhythms and daily routines of the midwife calmly helping women through what is a life-changing event.

Though not nearly so profoundly life changing, the BAFTA win has been a bit of a career changer for Lazenby. Prior to the BAFTA Awards, she was able to earn some local festival exposure for *Mother of Many*. Now with the BAFTA accomplishment, she said the phone has been ringing off the hook.

This recognition is also helping to build momentum for another short she has in the offing but isn't yet at liberty to publicly discuss in detail. Suffice it to say that it is based on helping people cope with a certain kind of medical treatment. The animation short will explain the treatment these patients are about to undergo, providing them with a better handle on the care being given and hopefully in the process putting their minds and hearts at ease.

Meanwhile Lazenby has also set her sights on getting established in advertising, from spots to branded content. She has done just that during her relatively brief stay at Aardman, directing a viral ad titled "Little Goat" for Nando's, a restaurant in South Africa with a Portuguese/Mazambique theme. The offbeat spot features a peasant family fattening up a goat for feast day, letting it drink from a veritable bottomless bucket of milk. We then cut to a Nando's restaurant where the customer is akin to the goat, having access to unlimited soft drink refills but without having to worry about being roasted in that Nando's has plenty of chickens being fire grilled.

The viral was made over a two-week span utilizing Flash cut-out and traditional animation, with scanned-in textures and photographs. After Effects was also deployed.

Lazenby comes from a design and animation background, and lived in a remote part of the Scottish highlands where she made a Gaelic series on 35mm film. She later moved to London where she animated for various

leading studios (Nexus, Bermuda Shorts, Sherbet, Trunk) on commercials, pop promos and series before becoming a designer for the charming series *Charlie and Lola* produced by London-based Tiger Aspect. In '07, Lazenby relocated to Bristol where she designs, animates and directs for ArthurCox and Aardman. Incubator has just begun to actively represent her as a director.

Rodrigo Prieto

Recently signing with Little Minx for his first representation as a commercials director was Rodrigo Prieto, an Oscar-nominated cinematographer for the Ang Lee-directed *Brokeback Mountain* and whose lensing credits also include such features as Pedro Almodovar's *Broken Embraces*, Alejandro González Iñárritu's *Babel* and Julie Taymor's *Frida*.

Prieto is experienced in spotmaking, having shot notable commercials that include Ikea's "Lamp" directed by Spike Jonze and American Airlines' "New York Minute" helmed by Rupert Sanders.

Born in Mexico City, Prieto studied at Centro de Capacitación Cinematográfica, a leading Mexican film school, and began his career as a still photographer, then a cinematographer on commercials. Concurrently, he moved into features, gaining international acclaim with Academy Award, ASC, BAFTA and Independent Spirit nominations. He's also been honored with Ariel Awards (Mexico's equivalent of Oscars) and the Venice Film Festival's Golden Osella Award. He moved to Los Angeles in 2000 after he shot Iñárritu's breakthrough film, *Amores Perros*.

Also among Prieto's cinematography credits is the Detroit rap film *8 Mile*. The movie's saturated blues and greens and gritty textures stemmed from Prieto and director Curtis Hanson canvassing Detroit for locations and spending a lot of time talking with residents, doing numerous tests for colors and textures, and drawing inspiration from frescos by Detroit Institute of Arts' Diego Rivera.

"I had just finished shooting *Frida*

and went to see Diego Rivera's work in Detroit," Prieto related. "It ended up being very inspiring for me on the film *8 Mile*."

More of Prieto's cinematography is slated to hit the big screen this year, with Oliver Stone's *Wall Street 2* and Iñárritu's *Beautiful*.

Prieto's modus operandi as a cinematographer has been to operate the camera on his movies. He told *SHOOT* that his prime reason for doing this is to attain "closeness with the actors. It's like being in the front row of the theater in a way. I'm the first to see their performance and to feel the energy directed towards the camera and lens. I very much enjoy working with actors as a cinematographer. And it's my interest in actors that motivated my decision to start directing. I've wanted to direct actors for a long time. I acted myself back in high school, did some theater. With the experience I've had working with such a wide variety of directors and actors on different projects, I thought this could be a good time to start applying that experience to directing my own work."

At the same time, Prieto related, "I'm not abandoning shooting. Cinematography is still a passion for me. I will continue to shoot movies and some select commercials. But I see directing as an area that will enable me to grow. Directing spots will add to my filmmaking experience. I want to get involved in all aspects of a project, from actors' performances to design, visuals and finding creative ways to tell a story, collaborating with [agency] creatives. Directing commercials will afford me that opportunity."

He noted that cinematography has given him a window, "an angle, a point of view into when things are working for an actor. All actors are different, but I've had a great education when it comes to being able to recognize what works for an actor, how to communicate with actors in ways that help and work for them."

Prieto has begun researching a personal documentary film project, a historical account of part of his family. He hopes to develop this as a project that he will eventually direct. Mean-



Mother of Many

UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS

while, he is open to spot helming opportunities via Little Minx, part of the RSA family.

Prieto said that Little Minx president Rhea Scott approached him about directing. “She called, we met and there was an instant chemistry,” recalled Prieto. “There’s a warmth, sincerity and understanding there of what I can contribute. I feel that I’m at the right place at the right time to explore new opportunities.”

Sam O’Hare

Sam O’Hare took a small bite out of the Big Apple in his short film *The Sandpit* which is featured in this issue’s “The Best Work You May Never See” gallery.

The film, which captures a day in the life of NYC as seen in miniature, has taken on a viral life of its own (with 260,000 views on Vimeo and counting at press time)—and so too has O’Hare’s directorial career.

Additionally the short, which O’Hare directed, shot, edited and finished, is gaining other forms of exposure, including a late February screening at The Quarterly Art Soiree at Webster Hall in New York.

He directed and shot the film in August 2009 but didn’t finish it until early this year because other paying gigs and professional pursuits got in the way—one being his joining the directorial

roster of Aero Film, Santa Monica, in September for commercials and branded content. Already at his new roost he has directed a combo live-action/visual effects job for prescription insomnia remedy Lunesta, depicting a woman surrounded by a boxing ring in the bedroom, a scenario underscoring the battle for sleep.

O’Hare took a circuitous route to the director’s chair. He studied architecture in England, then moved into the design arena, working on marketing films and animation projects for Uniform, a Liverpool-based design group. The films brought proposed buildings to life, showcasing architectural visions for the structures’ character and purpose to prospective investors, customers and planners. Featuring a mix of live-action elements and fully photoreal CG buildings and environs, the films drew a narrative of the architects’ designs.

Bitten by the film bug, O’Hare then moved to New York to diversify into commercials, music videos and other film projects. He wrapped several jobs with 1st Avenue Machine as a freelance lead artist and VFX supervisor, including AT&T’s “Spring” and Samsung’s “Hummingbird.” He also worked as a freelancer at TANQ and consulted at other N.Y. studios.

O’Hare’s mix of work and talent across multiple production disci-

plines caught the eye of Aero executive producer Lance O’Connor. Citing O’Hare’s prowess in live action, CG, design and visual effects, O’Connor observed, “Agency producers want to do ambitious spot campaigns with the simplest possible pipeline. That makes O’Hare a great fit for Aero.”

Mark Nickelsburg

Mark Nickelsburg is an established editor at New York-based Homestead Editorial where he continues to cut assorted projects, mostly commercials.

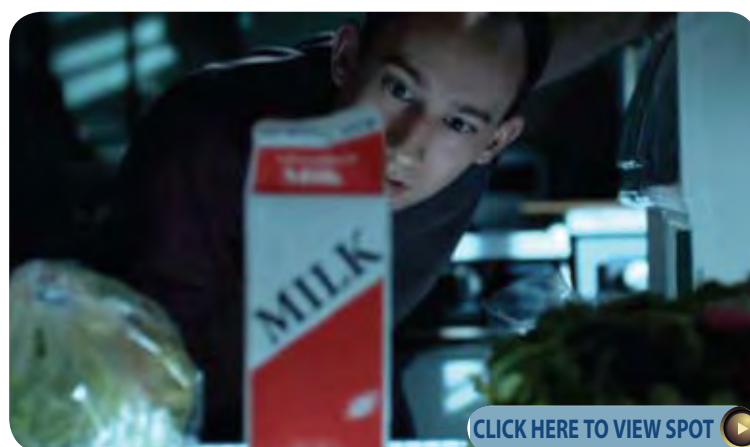
However, he has now made a foray into directing with *Expiration*, a short film about a man who courts danger by drinking milk just seconds before its expiration date.

Expiration was screened at the South by Southwest Film Conference and Festival which runs through Saturday (3/12-20). The short, which Nickelsburg also wrote and edited, debuted last summer as the opening film at the Palm Springs International Short Festival, later winning the Audience Award for best short at the Orlando Film Festival. *Expiration* has also been screened at numerous other fests, spanning events in Ft. Lauderdale, Los Angeles, Vancouver, B.C., and St. Louis.

Expiration started out as a spec spot but in developing the project Nickelsburg saw the potential for it becoming



The Sandpit



Expiration

a short film so extra footage was shot. Nickelsburg edited both a two-minute short and a :60 spec spot version.

“The story is comedy but I directed and cut it structurally as a suspense

piece,” said Nickelsburg. On the strength of the short, Nickelsburg has landed representation as a director via Miami-based commercial production house Oolala.

Garth Davis

Continued from page 19

ple in this urban night setting together.

“The direction of the film is very raw and honest. It’s a very pure film that tells a simple engaging, quiet story. This typically isn’t the variety of work that scores in competition. To have your peers judging and recognizing it gives me hope that there’s room for other different types of work.”

Speaking of different work, a longer form content project for Coke out of Publicis Mojo, Sydney, appeared in the offing for Davis at press time. Publicis Mojo was the same agency behind the Davis-directed Toyota commercial “Ninja Kittens,” a *SHOOT* Top Spot in late 2008 that went on to earn cult status. Rapper Kanye West even posted a link to the commercial on his blog. The spot combines adorable kittens practicing vigorous martial arts maneuvers with head-turning music as the backdrop.

Davis’ other notable ad work over the years includes Toohey’s Extra Dry Beer’s “Tongue,” which took two Golds and a Bronze at AWARD, Australia, and a Gold and Silver Clio, among other awards. In 2008, his Schweppes’ “Burst” commercial earned a Gold Lion at Cannes.

His earlier stateside endeavors included Xbox’s “Cops & Robbers,”

which came out of McCann Erickson in San Francisco.

Circuitous route

Davis took a circuitous route to the director’s chair. He originally had no directorial ambitions. His first love was design.

An honors graduate from Swinburn School of Design in Australia, he spent a year at leading design firm Emery Vincent and Associates, then went on to form a collaborative experimental design shop. But the best laid plans... well, you know the story.

“I got my design career really going at a time when graphic design was moving more and more into web-based stuff,” he recalled. “I found that boring. I was into murals and other fine art. I loved design because I found it hands on and immediate—and suddenly it was moving more into the direction of writing code and lingo for web design.”

To satiate his creative needs, Davis began “mucking around with video cameras and software,” turning out experimental videos.

“I was lucky because just about then,” recalled Davis, “experimental designers were becoming a bit of the flavor of the month and started to bleed into the advertising arena.”

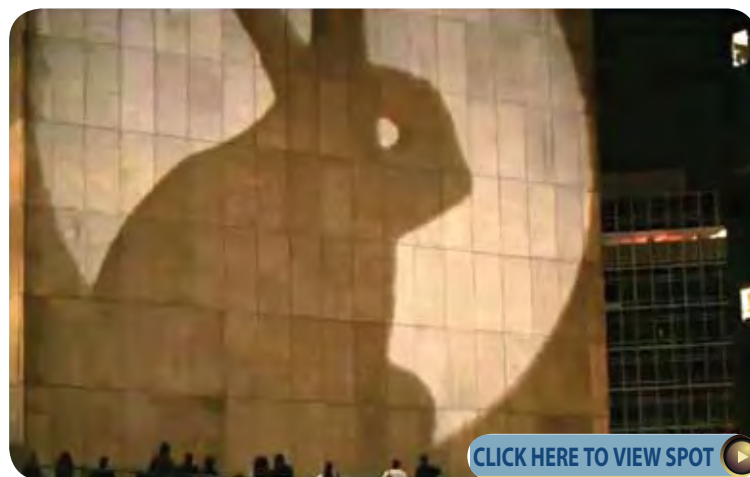
Opportunities to direct commercials started to emerge for Davis, initially with a design bent.

“It was great for awhile but I began to change,” related Davis. “My work was highly graphic and stylized back then. Yet I found myself looking for something more. I didn’t want to do another funky camera move in a spot or music video.

“I finally saw the light, realizing that the real trip is storytelling and moving someone emotionally. Style can emerge out of storytelling, which became my goal. I no longer just wanted to do style for style’s sake.”

Gradually Davis began to attract scripts that had a bit more story to them. His work on the storytelling front spawned more such opportunities spanning humor and drama.

Asked how he was able to gain access to more story-driven fare, transitioning from style-based work, Davis explained, “I think you can put out an energy that people can feel. I matured and had changed my attitude which made me able to make the transition—and this change also helped to change perceptions of the agency people I met with. They were open minded enough to give me new opportunities for which I’m grateful.”



U.S. Cellular’s “Shadow Puppets”



Coca-Cola’s “Sleepwalker”



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 industry notables 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.

Thus far we have tapped into the insights of such leading players as Lee Clow of Media Arts, TBWA Worldwide; Rich Silverstein, of Goodby, Silverstein & Partners; former Interpublic Group CEO Phil Geier; Robert Greenberg of R/GA; director Bob Giraldi of Giraldi Media; editor/filmmaker Larry Bridges of Red Car; and Stephen Dickstein, global president of production house The Sweet Shop.

Now we garner feedback from three notable directors: Joe Pytko of PYTKA, Bryan Buckley of Hungry Man, and the celebrated Joe Sedelmaier who last year earned the New York Festivals Lifetime Achievement Award.

Pytko has won the DGA Award as best commercial director of the year a record high three times. He has been nominated for the DGA honor 15 times, a tally which also tops all spot directors in the history of the competition.

Pytko's DGA wins have been earned on the basis of such classic spots as Henry Weinhard's "Chuckwagon," Nike's "The Bo Show" and Hallmark's "Dance Card." Pytko also earned distinction for having directed HBO's "Chimps," the first commercial to win a primetime Emmy Award.

Buckley too has been recognized by the DGA, earning the coveted award once while being nominated three times.

Buckley's DGA-recognized entries included the notable Monster.com spot "When I Grow Up," and E*Trade's "Monkey." Among his more recent endeavors is last year's Emmy-nominated "Airport Lounge" for American Express, and the JCPenney web short *Beware of the Doghouse*.

And Sedelmaier is simply a legend for his offbeat sense of ad humor, yielding classic, groundbreaking work for the likes of FedEx, Burger King ("Where's The Beef?") and Alaska Airlines.

Here are their observations:

Joe Pytko

Reflecting on the most profound changes in the industry over the years, director Joe Pytko of PYTKA cited "the corporatization of ad agencies" as being high on his list. "Agencies used to be more entrepreneurial," he said. "In the day, agencies were led by great minds—David Ogilvy, Phil Dusenberry, Hal Riney, Lee Clow. Now it seems like many of them have been replaced by corporate monsters."

Pytko recollected, "Phil Dusenberry insisted on great work. He wanted every commercial to play like a great movie, a vintage Technicolor film. Hal Riney had a sense of fables. Ed McCabe had a tremendous irony to his work. He had a caustic pen and wrote beautifully. Who has replaced them? I don't think corporate America wants true replacements. These men were iconoclasts who did things

their way. The corporate mentality doesn't want those kinds of independent people and thinkers."

Pytko further recalled legendary advertising creative Carl Ally who ideally wanted to maintain five great clients—and if one left, he would seek out and find the right replacement. "Carl Ally had as many going in the door as out to keep a balance and ensure that he could do the best possible creative job for them," said Pytko. "That philosophy has since been cast aside as the advertising agencies that have become giant corporations instead seek only growth and sheer volume, without any regard for what that does to creative performance. They want their fifteen percent annual growth no matter what, not caring as to how that will affect creative balance and harmony."

As the Golden Age creatives have retired or passed on (though the aforementioned Clow is still going strong), the industry has in the process pretty much lost advertising talent with the clout, observed Pytko, "to look a client in the eye and say, 'This is what it is'...There was a great David Ogilvy story where he is about to make a presentation to a client. He was one of several there to pitch for the business. The client informs him that after ten minutes, a bell will ring, at which point he must stop the presentation no matter what. Ogilvy said that a great deal of work was put into the presentation, and that it needs more than ten minutes for him to do full justice to it. So David simply tells the client, 'You might as well ring the bell now,' and then he walks out the door."

Much creative today, assessed Pytko, lacks originality. He conjectured that perhaps part of the problem is that "people coming into advertising have studied advertising to a fault. That contributes to a lot of work being incredibly derivative. The creative is not coming from outside experience. Hal Riney came from outside the advertising world and brought his life experience to advertising. It's like the great screenwriters of Hollywood in the 1940s—many of them were immigrant Jewish men who escaped fascism in Europe. Their lives had great political and social content and meaning. They told great stories with moral values and wisdom."

Riney's creative instincts weren't rooted in traditional advertising industry thinking. As an example, Pytko cited the classic, successful Bartles & Jaymes wine cooler campaign.

"Riney and Ernest Gallo went with two old curmudgeons as spokesmen for a young adult beverage," related Pytko. "The campaign was a hit in the youth market but it took Riney's instincts to realize he had something special."

Today Pytko sees something else special—the potential presented by new media outlets. Storytelling opportunities are no longer confined to :30 and :60 formats.

Still, Pytko wonders why this potential hasn't been mined. "The Internet is a form of free media, the only real expenses you incur being for production. You can put long-form material on the Internet, movies for young people, content that can tell stories and inspire people. But I don't see much high quality content

PRELUDE TO 50TH ANNIVERSARY SERIES

being produced.”

With the opportunity to create content that elevates intellect and the human spirit, said Pytka, “what we are seeing instead are fart jokes,” among other forms of lowest common denominator humor. It’s difficult to explain, he observed, why the bar is being lowered when we’re afforded an unprecedented chance to raise it.

Bryan Buckley

“The riskiest thing you can do is play it safe,” said the late, legendary creative director Bill Bernbach. And decades later, Bryan Buckley cites this quote because he believes it has finally taken hold and been taken to heart by most clients.

“I see clients trying to push things as best they know how,” assessed Buckley. “That doesn’t mean everyone is going to do it successfully but clearly the idea of being complacent has come to an end. That era is, I think, finally over.”

Hastening the end to that era, noted Buckley, is the fierce competition among advertisers to get noticed, and the power wielded by consumers to tune into whatever content, message and/or brand they want.

“You have to entertain people, provide value to viewers in order to be able to hold an audience,” affirmed Buckley. “Name any brand and you see the change, sometimes quite dramatic, in their approach. Procter & Gamble may have the same strategic foundation but their content is quite different from what it was ten years ago.”

Yet with change comes at times an even greater need to adhere to some essential constants.

“You need to tell stories, to study, develop and have characters that people can relate to. Character is still essentially the centerpiece of anything I get involved with,” said Buckley. “Whether it’s a big visual effects piece or two people in a room, the human factor is vital. It’s an intangible that hasn’t changed one bit—except that now it’s easier to go against stereotypes, and to get interesting casting and characters on the screen.”

Another change has also paradoxically underscored the continuing val-



Joe Pytka

ue of mass media, observed Buckley, who noted that while audiences have become fragmented across multiple choices and platforms, that has made those television events able to draw large viewership all the more coveted and invaluable.

“This year’s Super Bowl telecast set a record for number of viewers which is astounding these days,” noted Buckley. “It’s like having the coldest winter in the midst of global warming. But sports and major events like the Academy Awards are kind of like the last frontiers, reminders of the power of being able to reach a mass audience. Television can still be a force, and in the case of the Super Bowl it’s a force that’s enhanced by the web, the blogging, the different polls, the post-game analysis of all the commercials. Apple’s ‘1984’ and other great classic Super Bowl commercials continue to be looked at. Apple gets that spot looked at online every year during the Super Bowl as people start to compare it with the current Super Bowl commercials. It’s a buzz-generating public conversation centered on advertising.”

The web is also inviting for Buckley on another level, as reflected in Hungry Man’s own channel (www.HungryManTV.com).

“You can expand beyond the :30 and :60 format, and it’s provided our company’s directors with an essential kind of release for creativity and experimentation. The question is how do you turn this into a successful business model. It’s a matter of sorting that side out but you know you have to continue to be involved and experiment—our directors, agency creatives have been able to strut their stuff beyond thirty seconds on our website and across the



Bryan Buckley

Internet generally. It provides room for different types of thinking.”

And while he and others grapple with how to commoditize this original web content, Buckley said that the company’s channel has helped to brand Hungry Man.

“People have a better sense of Hungry Man and what its people can do because of our web content. It’s helping our directors creatively within the company and as a recruiting tool for outside talent.”

One of the early pieces of content on Hungry Man TV was a series of *Undercover Cheerleader* shorts for which a pilot was developed with the G4 network but a hoped for TV series never came to fruition.

Buckley recalled that the pitfalls of commercial television—including restrictions on what could be presented—entered into the picture. “It’s all part of the learning curve,” he said, expressing confidence, though, that web content can be the springboard for such fare as TV shows, telefilms and theatrical features.

Joe Sedelmaier

One can only wonder what work Joe Sedelmaier would generate in today’s advertising landscape, mining the potential of the Internet, being able to go well beyond :30 and :60 time frames, and having the creative latitude enjoyed by web and cable practitioners that was only dreamed of back when the only game in town was network television.

The wonderment comes based on the breakthrough work Sedelmaier was able to realize within those confines, heralding a new kind and new age of comedy, poking fun at conventional contrived advertising and putting cli-



Joe Sedelmaier

ents like startup FedEx and Alaska Airlines on the map.

He was creating buzz before buzz became a buzzword, turning out work that remains part of pop culture to this day such as senior citizen Clara Peller’s spirited “Where’s The Beef?” proclamation for Burger King, and “Fast Talker” for Federal Express.

Yet Sedelmaier isn’t one who pines for the good old days.

“I have people tell me, ‘You lived in the Golden era.’ But the fact is that we had the same hassles back then. And if you look at today compared to then, you still have some good work, some bad work, and a lot of mediocre work. The quality from bad to good and how much you have of each hasn’t changed all that much.”

No matter the era, he observed, “It all starts at the top. You need the Lee Clows, the Carl Allys, the John Kellys, the Vince Fagans, and then others will follow their lead.

“I think of John Kelly, the marketing manager at Alaska Airlines, who was right there on the set with us all the time. John gave us the freedom to be funny and to do the very best advertising we thought was possible. He eventually became the president of Alaska Airlines.

“I think of ad agency creative people like Carl Ally and Emil Gargano [Ally & Gargano]—along with the client’s marketing director Vince Fagan—who made the Federal Express work possible, back when the dominant notion was that humor wouldn’t work, that people would only remember the joke but not the product. That was a pile of crap and guys like Carl, Emil and Vince destroyed the myth that funny doesn’t sell. You could make

fun of businessmen—and businessmen would laugh because they thought that guy wasn’t them. But there’s a key distinction to be made. It’s not just the joke, it’s the storytelling that gets you to the joke. Good comedy is all in the telling.”

Sedelmaier, who stopped directing commercials some 11 years ago, has remained active, helping the short *OpenMinds* which was a 2003 Sundance Film Festival selection, and teaming with his producer Marsie Wallach on a new DVD retrospective of his spots and shorts.

Sedelmaier is also slated to serve as a judge on the Grand Jury for this year’s New York Festivals International Advertising Awards. This comes one year after he received the New York Festivals’ Lifetime Achievement Award. (Also earning the Lifetime honor last year was lauded ad man Neil French, a former WPP creative director and a pioneer in Asian advertising, who too is on the 2010 New York Festivals International Awards Grand Jury).

As for his take on today’s filmmaking landscape, Sedelmaier marvels at the amazing leap that technology has taken in recent years.

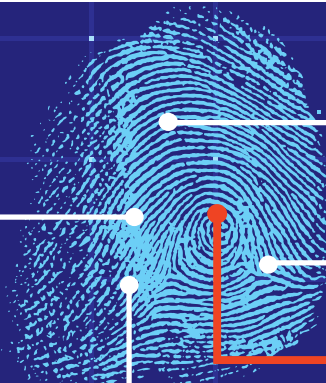
“Technology got me into the business a little over forty years ago,” he recalled. “You had the Mitchell camera, enormous, unwieldy lights, the cost was prohibitive trying to enter the marketplace and being able to do something professional.

“But then the Arriflex camera came, you didn’t need a massive sound truck anymore, and I was able,” related Sedelmaier, “to start my film production company in Chicago in 1967 for about \$30,000.”

Fast forward to today and the cost of entry has become even more affordable, opening the door for new voices to be heard., which is a healthy dynamic, Sedelmaier affirmed.

“Digital has allowed new talent to break in, enabling them to show what they can do. Innovations like the digital cameras, Final Cut Pro, have opened up opportunities and access. To me what’s important,” noted Sedelmaier, “is that young filmmakers can now experiment and grow because they can afford to fail.”

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Wally Pfister

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To bring out the emotional core of the stories, Pfister's visual sensibilities represented but one, albeit important means. Playing just as if not more prevalent roles were his casting instincts, his creation of backstories for the addicts as well as the narrators to help propel the action on screen, his collaborations with the advertising agency creative team, including art director Keith Scott and copywriter Paul Johnson, and a close-knit working rapport with editor Paul Martinez of Arcade, Los Angeles.

"This was a breakthrough campaign for me as a director, being called upon to provide so much more beyond just my eye," said Pfister who added that the work elicited positive responses from movie studios which relayed on to him prospective scripts

to direct.

"They respond to things that are dramatic and that have impact from an emotional standpoint. It was great to see new perceptions form about what I can take on as a director."

The response from the advertising community was also an eye opener as Venables Bell & Partners came right back to Pfister to direct a Super Bowl commercial for Vizio starring Beyonce and entailing ambitious visual effects from MassMarket.

This adds to a body of spot work directed by Pfister over the past couple of years which spans such clients as Verizon, Subaru and Rolling Rock. He first saw the developing script and boards for the Montana Meth campaign as he was wrapping cinematography on the Nolan-directed feature *Inception*, which is slated for wide

release this summer.

"It's been a great, ongoing education working with a master like Chris Nolan for ten years, watching him get great performances out of actors—from Leonardo DiCaprio in *Inception* to Heath Ledger in *The Dark Knight*, Al Pacino in *Insomnia*, Michael Caine and Hugh Jackman in *The Prestige*. Chris has been a mentor and I learn and absorb so much from each of our collaborations."

In some respects, Pfister was able to apply those lessons to the public service campaign on behalf of The Montana Meth Project.

"It's always been understood that I would deliver the visuals as a director. But I was pining to play with performance, to tell full emotional stories with impact—and with hopefully enough impact to get youngsters



The Montana Meth Project's "Ben"

to think long and hard about their choices," said Pfister.

"I felt I was able to draw from my twenty years of doing movies and being around some of the best directors

in the world. And to be able to draw on that to potentially make a positive difference in the lives of kids that Montana Meth Project is trying to reach means a lot to me."

Chris Palmer

Continued from page 24

The closest Palmer came to recently being pigeonholed in any sense could be reflected in his body of DGA Award-nominated work.

Technical challenges

All three commercial entries were similar in the key respect that they were technically challenging and very much linked to coinciding properly with their respective soundtracks.

In "Lyric," we hear a song that recites the alphabet and counting from one to 10 as we see corresponding visuals through the windows of a fairly fast moving train.

Palmer came up with the idea of a train passenger's perspective in that there's "something musical" about that POV, which worked with a slightly slower sing-songy pace.

Shot on a Chicago railway, the commercial came together, said Palmer, thanks in large part to the coordinating prowess of first assistant director Cliff Lanning.

"Cliff had to have balls of steel to take this on and pull it off," quipped Palmer. "We only had so many takes. On cue we had to have forty people run into a scene as viewed through moving train windows."

"If you blow it, you don't have too many opportunities to do it again," noted Palmer. "Juggling these logistics and dealing on the fly with suddenly, for example, not having clearance to shoot a certain rooftop made this an extremely complex project. It was like trying to solve a constantly moving Rubik's cube. Our goal, though, and I think we succeeded, was to make the commercial look as if it were

something that was just thrown together for YouTube."

Though distinctly different from "Lyric," the J20 fruit drink spots carry parallels to the daunting logistics of that Budweiser commercial.

"I wanted to make the J20 commercials look like found pieces of footage, each with two scenes playing to the wrong track," related Palmer. "We literally took the audio of one and put it on the other scene."

But even with the incongruous placement, the pacing and timing of the incorrect track (e.g., banter by a couple at a prim and proper garden party in "Riviera Truckstop") had to correspond with the accompanying visuals (a cowboy and his horse).

Palmer worked closely with editor Paul Watts of The Quarry, London, to



J20's "A Horse Named Cynthia"

painstakingly map this out, meaning there was little or no room for changes during the shoot.

"The words down to every syllable

had to fit, which was nightmarishly complicated. Ultimately," affirmed Palmer, "it was gratifying to tackle the challenge and see the end results."

Ellen Kuras

Continued from page 24

On the flip side, the success *Nerakhoon* has enjoyed affirmed to her that the time was right to start directing more regularly.

"Seeing how the film connected with audiences and being nominated for an Academy Award and a Spirit Award represented some validation for me and the project," observed Kuras.

"The film moved people in a way both creatively and emotionally so that I felt that I didn't have to question my inner creative voice as a director. I could go out and be creative as a director on other projects. And what's great about commercials is that you have other creatives to bounce ideas

off of. It's not as solitary as my feature was for me creatively. I very much look forward to collaborating."

Wieden+Kennedy certainly didn't hesitate to collaborate with Kuras as a director. The agency is all too familiar with Kuras, having worked with her as a DP on high-profile projects, including Super Bowl spots for Coke.

For example, Kuras lensed Coca-Cola's "Sleepwalker" commercial, which debuted during this year's Super Bowl telecast.

Depicting a man sleepwalking across the African savanna for an ice-cold Coke, the commercial was directed by Garth Davis of Anonymous Content (who is also profiled in

this Directors Issue).

And back in '08 for the Super Bowl, Kuras was cinematographer on Coke's "It's Mine," in which Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade balloons—including Underdog and *The Family Guy*'s Stewie—give chase after a Coca-Cola contour bottle balloon only to have Charlie Brown unexpectedly rise up and take possession of the coveted refreshment. Indeed Charlie Brown finally won one.

Kuras shot "It's Mine" for director Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ.

Now Kuras finds it gratifying to be in the director's chair for Wieden+Kennedy, starting a new chapter in her career.



Nerakhoon

Director/Cinematographer Amundsen Joins Bandito Brothers

CULVER CITY, Calif.—Director/cinematographer Mitchell Amundsen has joined the roster of Bandito Brothers, Culver City, for exclusive representation as a commercial director. He comes to Bandito Brothers from the world of action/adventure feature films, a genre that dovetails with the nature of much of Bandito's work.

Amundsen sees a kinship between his feature work and the advertising arena. "Two of my recent projects were *Transformers* and *G.I. Joe [The Rise of Cobra]*, so essentially I was delving into the world of marketing and promotion," he observed. "These movies are longform branding efforts."

As the cinematographer on those films, and assorted others, including *Wanted* and *Transporter 2*, Amundsen

has displayed a passion for footage that is as thrilling as it is beautiful. "I got into film based on a love for beautiful imagery, but I also dig the idea of doing something different every day, traveling all over the world, and having every project be an adventure," Amundsen said.

While those adventures have made him something of an expert on car chases—he served as second unit DP on *The Bourne Supremacy* and *Mission Impossible III*—Amundsen finds excitement in a wide range of genres. He shot, for example, *Jonas Brothers: The 3D Concert Experience*, and was one of the all-star DPs chosen to serve as camera operator on the Rolling Stones' *Shine a Light*.

"We are stoked to have Mitchell

join the team," said Bandito executive producer Jeff Rohrer. "He is known around town as one of the hardest-working guys in the business, covering massive action sets under incredible pressure and still producing stunning images film after film."

Rohrer said that Bandito Brothers is the ideal home for Amundsen, given the company's high volume of action-oriented work.

"Mitchell covers action in a cinematic fashion that brings dignity to the action script," added Rohrer.

Indeed, as he makes the transition to directing, Amundsen brings to this endeavor a wealth of lessons learned on-set with some of the industry's most notable filmmakers, including Martin Scorsese, Stephen Sommers,

Gore Verbinski, and Michael Bay.

Born and raised in Northern California's Marin County, Amundsen loved music but in high school discovered that still photography was a more natural fit.

"I was always interested in imagery," he recalled. "I drew a lot, and was attracted to the crazy, psychedelic posters that were on the streets in the Haight Ashbury district."

As a video assist tech for Francis Ford Coppola on *The Outsiders*, *Rumblefish*, and *The Cotton Club*, Amundsen was able to work closely with cinematographers such as Vittorio Storaro, Steve Burum, and Stephen Goldblatt.

As a first assistant cameraman, operator and eventually second unit DP, Amundsen worked with Ralph Bode,

Michael Ballhaus, John Schwartzman, and other noted cinematographers, amassing credits on theatrical feature films such as *Heathers*, *Benny and Joon*, *Conspiracy Theory*, *Sea Biscuit*, *Pearl Harbor*, and *Armageddon*. By 2001, Amundsen was actively working as a cinematographer.

Amundsen recently completed work on three new films: *High School*, *Jonah Hex*, and the current remake of *Red Dawn*.

He is repped for features by The Gersh Agency.

Amundsen rounds out a Bandito Brothers roster comprised of partners/directors Mouse McCoy and Scott Waugh, director Stewart Hendler, the directing duo Gentlemen, and director/cinematographer Vic Huber.

FilmTecknarna Signs Directors Toorell, Nordqvist, aka Bold Faces

STOCKHOLM—FilmTecknarna, the storytelling and design studio with headquarters in Stockholm and offices in New York, has brought directors Johan Toorell and John Nordqvist, a.k.a. Bold Faces, aboard its roster for exclusive spot representation worldwide.

Toorell and Nordqvist met at the Forsberg School of Design in 2001, where they quickly discovered a shared passion for design and music. During this time they formed Bold Faces, which became both their punk group name and their alias when working in the field of graphic design.

After graduation they worked as graphic designers and art directors at the agency Vårdag.

In '05 they decided to move full-



Johan Toorell

time into directing and animation.

Bold Faces is known for a humor-driven, playful style that incorporates various film techniques including collage, live action, stop-motion and combining high-tech animations with

retro looks. Their creative portfolio includes work for MTV, broadcast graphics for Swedish TV channels and television commercials for Samsung, Canal +, and Estrella.

The directorial team has also worked regularly with the music duo The Knife, designing record covers and making music videos. Bold Faces had most recently been with production house Mister Krister.

Bold Faces joins a FilmTecknarna lineup of directors that includes Jonas Odell, David Nord, Johanna Andersson, Jessica Laurén, Boris Nawratil, Stig Bergqvist, Jonas Dahlbeck, Jory Hull, and Lucas Zanolto.

Odell, Bergqvist and company president Lars Ohlson are FilmTeck-



John Nordqvist

narna's founders, originally united by their affinity for graphic art and animation. The trio designed, created and illustrated assorted film projects, migrating into Sweden's fledgling commercial market in the 1990s.

FilmTecknarna's body of diverse work includes a series of high-profile and award-winning films, music videos, television series, and commercials for the Nordic market as well as different international audiences.

The firm naturally evolved into a storytelling, design and multimedia production studio, creating classic 2D animation, computer-generated imagery, and 3D animation, as well as extensive live action.

In the U.S., the company is handled by independent reps Judy Wolff on the East Coast, Hilly Reps in the Midwest and Reber Covington on the West Coast.

Hesty Reps handles FilmTecknarna in Canada.

Groome Named Deputy Director Of Broadcast At Publicis N.Y.

NEW YORK—Publicis New York has promoted Leelee Groome to deputy director of broadcast production. She reports to Nadia Blake, who is head of broadcast production.

Groome joined the ad agency as senior VP/executive producer in 2005. Over the past five years, she has produced campaigns for Maytag, Citi Bank and BMW. Groome was instrumental in the successful and much publicized case study "The Search for the Maytag Repairman."

In her role at the shop, Groome will help to best maximize the potential for integrated production over Publicis New York's client base as well as traditional broadcast.

Prior to joining Publicis, Groome worked in the film industry in Los Angeles. She began as a junior production executive at Universal Studios



Leelee Groome

working on feature films such as *Patch Adams*, the *Psycho* remake, and *For Love of the Game*.

She went on to line produce the independent theatrical motion picture, *Too Smooth*, released by Lions Gate Films, starring Neve Campbell and Rebecca Gayheart.

Groome was then appointed to story

editor for Tommy Lee Jones's production company, Javelina Films.

In '00, Groome sold a feature film screenplay to Paramount Studios and then moved to New York City and worked at Grey Worldwide as a VP,

senior producer.

While at Grey, she produced commercials for Canon, Hasbro, Panasonic and Procter & Gamble.

Groome graduated from Harvard University where she was the captain

of the Harvard Women's Lacrosse team and she continued her education receiving a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Peter Stark Program at the University of Southern California in motion picture producing.

The Mill Expands Its U.K. Spot Team

LONDON—A trio of producers with extensive experience in commercials has come aboard visual effects studio The Mill in London.

Joining as visual effects producer is Philip McCluney who had been with McCann Erickson, London.

During his nine-year tenure at McCann, McCluney produced spot projects spanning such brands as Budweiser, J&J, Unilever, Kraft, Microsoft Xbox

and MasterCard.

Also taking on the role of visual effects producer at The Mill, London, is Paul Schleicher.

He had served in the same capacity over at London facility Smoke & Mirrors, lending his talent to a wide range of commercials.

And Becky Lock, formerly of Triangle Post, London, has become a senior producer at The Mill.

Schleicher produced high-profile spots at Smoke & Mirrors for international brands that included Nokia, HMV, Vodafone and Fiat, as well as on-air promos for broadcasters Sky and ITV.

And at Triangle Post, Lock worked closely with a number of advertising agencies, including such shops as CHI & MEC, Euro RSCG, M&C Saatchi, and Saatchi & Saatchi.

JWT Creates Global Task Force

Roché, Pallete and Goldaracena Tabbed To Lead New Venture

MADRID—Bob Jeffrey, worldwide chairman and CEO of JWT, announced the creation of a Global Task Force (GTF) that will be led by Jean-Louis Roché, Alex Pallete and Facundo Goldaracena, a trio that comes over from Lowe Madrid's office LOLA (Lowe-Latina). They will team with Global Vision, created by JWT's Fernando Vega-Olmos, to carry responsibilities for the creation and development of global ideas across the JWT network.

Jeffrey said that the JWT GTF will act as a SWAT team deployed to help tackle issues or opportunities on exist-

ing or potential global clients."

The GTF will report directly to Jeffrey and Fernando Vega-Olmos, creative chairman, Continental Europe and Latin America, Worldwide Creative Council Chairman, JWT, and will be based in Madrid.

Roché, former CEO of LOLA, will hold the title of international head of business development, JWT GTF.

Roché was also heading up for LOLA the Unilever Global brands Rexona, Oral Care brands, and Ice Cream brands.

Pallete joins as planning director, international business development,

JWT GTF Pallete is the former chief strategic officer of LOLA, where he worked on marquee brands including Unilever Global Ice Cream brands (Magnum, Cornetto and Kids brands) and Unilever Oral Care business.

And Goldaracena has been named creative director, international business development, JWT GTF. Goldaracena is the former global creative director of LOLA, where he led the Unilever Ice Cream and Unilever Oral Care businesses, as well as the Rexona and Knorr businesses for Europe.

JWT's parent company is WPP (NASDAQ: WPPGY).

Cutting Room Lands Editor McMurtrey

NEW YORK—Editor Debbie McMurtrey, formerly of Nomad Editing Company, has joined New York-based Cutting Room. The move reunites her with mentor/editor Chuck Willis, whom she first assisted at Crew Cuts.

A Chicago native, McMurtrey first discovered editing while studying visual communications at the University of Michigan.

Moving to New York after graduation, she launched her career at Crew Cuts in 1999, rising quickly through the ranks to editor.

She joined Nomad, New York, in 2007 when the East Coast office opened. Her eye for comedy and dia-



Debbie McMurtrey

logue is seen in successful campaigns for NFL, PepsiCo, Dick's Sporting Goods, Pizza Hut, Gillette and Oral B,

working with such directors as Joe Pytko, Jesse Dylan, Rocky Morton, and Matt Aselton.

McMurtrey's TV credits include a six-year tenure cutting popular parodies for NBC's *Saturday Night Live*. Her best known SNL spoofs include "Taco Town" and "Tressant Supreme" with Kelly Ripa. In 2008, McMurtrey cut a VHL pilot, *Star Stories*, an adaptation of a popular British comedy.

Her film editing credits include *The Path of Most Resistance*, which hit the festival circuit in 2006.

Cutting Room is led by partners/editors Willis and Mike Douglas, and exec producer Susan Willis.

Shorts Rundown At SXSW Festival

Continued from page 9

ning documentary filmmaker (*Hoop Dreams*) is handled for both commercials and branded content by production house Nonfiction Unlimited.

- Filmmaker Harmony Korine, who is repped by MJZ for commercials, directed and wrote *Trash Humpers*, which follows a small group of elderly "peeping toms."

Short takes

And those artisans with a commercialmaking pedigree who are having short films showcased at the SXSW Festival include:

- Bill Plympton who directed the animated short *The Cow Who Wanted To Be A Burger*, the tragic story of a bovine seduced by advertising down the path of butchers and carnivores.

Plympton is repped for commercials by Acme Filmworks, the Hollywood animation studio headed by executive producer Ron Diamond.

- Tom Gasek directed *Off-Line*, an



Expiration

animated short that shows what can happen inside a microwave oven when it is abused.

Stop motion animation artist Gasek maintains his Out of Hand Animation (OOH, Inc.), a studio in Great Barrington, Mass., for commercials as well as special projects.

- And Mark Nickelsburg directed, wrote and cut *Expiration*, a short about a lonely man who courts danger

by drinking milk just seconds before its expiration date.

Nickelsburg is an editor on the roster of Homestead Editorial, New York, and has taken on representation as a director via Miami-based production house Oolala.

On the strength of his work on *Expiration*, Nickelsburg is included in this issue's Up-and-Coming Directors Series feature story.

street talk

Veteran creatives Arthur Bijur and Pat Stern have teamed with director David McNamara to launch Workshop, a N.Y.-based full service ad agency with production capabilities across all media. The new venture offers strategy, creative, digital marketing and branding solutions, as well as editing and post services. Bijur is best known as creative co-founder of Cliff Freeman and Partners. Stern served as a creative director at R/GA. And McNamara was a creative at DDB and currently continues as partner/director at his own production house, Collective.... Director Dean Karr and studio Wild Media have signed with Burbank-based Lemonaide Media for commercial production. Karr will be repped by Lemonaide, headed by exec producer Jeanne Mattiussi, for North American broadcast spots and web media.... Editorial house Beast has hired Elizabeth Krajewski as executive producer at its New York facility. She formerly worked at JUMP where she started as a senior producer in 2005 before being promoted to exec producer in '07. Beast maintains facilities in N.Y., Santa Monica, Chicago, Detroit, San Francisco and Austin.... Editor Jeremy Baumann has joined creative digital shop Click 3X in N.Y.... Bang Music has hired Anne Kaehny to serve in the newly created position of head of strategy & development. She will spearhead the company's new media and social networking strategies, manage its online portfolio and credentials messaging, and be project coordinator between Bang's office/studios in N.Y.'s Flatiron District and its new audio post services for film and TV in SoHo. She will work directly with Bang's exec producer Brad Stratton and sr. producer Sara Iversen in developing client interaction online and face-to face....

report

The Directors Network (TDN), Los Angeles, has signed director John Bonito, known for his action-based comedy spots. Also now available for commercials through TDN is cinematographer Dana Christiaansen whose credits include extensive car work spanning the major automotive companies.... Santa Monica-based edit house chrome has hired Tracy Fetterman as its West Coast sales rep.... L.A.-based Montana Artists Agency will represent Italy's Cinecittà Studios in the U.S. Cinecittà Studios services film, commercial, television, music video and multimedia industries worldwide.... Red Truck Films, Raleigh, N.C., has signed N.Y.-based director Jody Lauren Miller and Dallas-based helmer Bill Schwarz for representation in the Southeast. Miller cut her teeth at NFL Films where she produced, wrote and directed interstitials and promos. She later went freelance, and was included in SHOOT's 2006 New Directors Showcase. Schwarz first established himself as a DP.... Orlando Management has signed DP Daron Keet for exclusive representation.... Angelique & Associates has signed DPs Tom Camarda and Anton Klima....

bulletin board

>March 31/Westport, CT. **SHOOT 2010 8th Annual New Directors Search Entry Deadline:**(postmark by 3/31) www.shootonline.com/go/search
>April 10-15/Las Vegas, NV. **NAB Show:** www.nabshow.com
>April 15-17/Santa Monica, CA. **AFCI Locations Show:** www.locationstradeshows.com
>May 11/New York, NY. **SHOOT Directors Symposium & 8th Annual New Directors Showcase Event:** www.shootonline.com/go/showcase
>May 20/Chicago, IL. **AICE Awards:** www.aice.org
>June 3-6/Hollywood, CA. **Cine Gear Expo:** www.cinegearexpo.com

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