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The Road To Oscar
Agency of the Year
Best Work of the Year
Year in Perspective
Music & Sound
VFX & Animation
Chat Room

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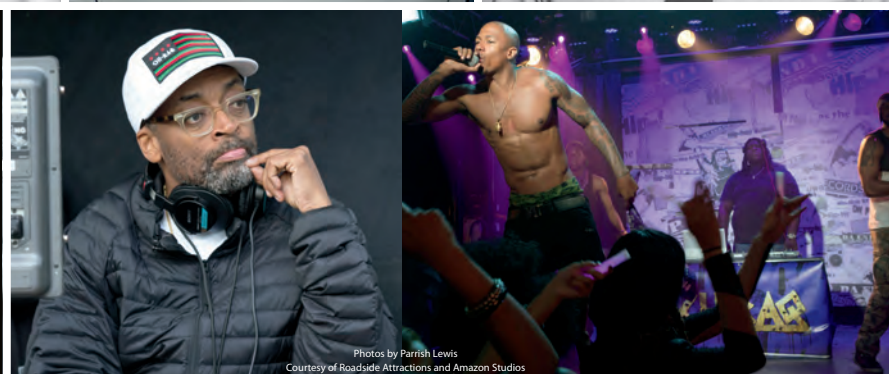
The Best of 2015

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December 2015



the
martin
agency



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Courtesy of Roadside Attractions and Amazon Studios

THE BEST FILM OF THE YEAR

New York

DAVID EDELSTEIN

“BRILLIANT.
ONE OF THE BEST
FILMS OF THE YEAR.
THE WHOLE CAST IS
TERRIFIC.”

Rolling Stone

PETER TRAVERS

“HILARIOUS.
‘THE BIG SHORT’ IS
A COMEDY FOR RIGHT NOW.
BRILLIANTLY CONSTRUCTED
TO HIT WHERE IT HURTS.
DOES ‘THE BIG SHORT’ PAY OFF?
BET ON IT.”

SCREEN ACTORS
OUTSTANDING PERF

GUILD NOMINATION
PERFORMANCE BY A CAST
IN A MOTION PICTURE

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

JOE MORGENSTERN

“BRILLIANT,
POWERFUL
AND EXPLOSIVE.
ALL FOUR STARS ARE SMART,
FASCINATING AND FUNNY.
‘THE BIG SHORT’ IS
A TRIUMPH.”

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

RICHARD ROEPER

“THE FUNNIEST,
AND YET MOST
SOBERING, AND
MOST ENTERTAINING
MOVIE OF 2015.”



4 GOLDEN GLOBE®
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BEST ACTOR CHRISTIAN BALE
BEST SCREENPLAY CHARLES RAND

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BEST ACTOR STEVE CARELL
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BREAKTHROUGH DIRECTOR

THE BIG SHORT

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By Robert Goldrich

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Crossing Over

Many moons ago a feature director working in commercials was frowned upon in some circles. That was due to the prevalent notion that only a filmmaker with extensive ad experience would have the proper creative and political sensibilities for spots. Happily that line of separation has since disappeared—in both directions, with feature directors making their mark in

ads, and a number of spotmakers diversifying successfully into features and TV. On the former front, we're seeing more examples during the course of our "The Road To Oscar" series and related coverage. In our profile on Scott Cooper (SHOOT, 10/23) relative to *Black Mass*, he talked of his trust in the movie's producer John Leshner, who's a partner in Superprime Films. Cooper has joined Superprime for spots and branded content.

In this week's "Road To Oscar" we interview Tom McCarthy who directed *Spotlight*. Via Park Pictures, McCarthy recently directed his first commercial, Duracell's "Teddy Bear" for Anomaly NY.

Seth Jacobs, group CD at Anomaly, said, "Tom is a master storyteller, and his ability to convey emotion in a short amount of time is uncanny. From *Station*

consumer audience to actually feel strong emotions in that amount of time is even harder. Add onto that the fact that there are clients sitting there and it can be a daunting task for some feature directors, but Tom navigated it with ease and delivered a beautiful, emotionally resonant story that audiences have loved."

And delving into spots can lead to new

"Tom [McCarthy] is a master storyteller, and his ability to convey emotion in a short amount of time is uncanny."

Agent up through *Win/Win* and now with *Spotlight* he has cemented himself as one of America's great directors. We were honored to have his talents on "Teddy Bear." Tom is an actor's director, quickly able to get incredible performances that got to the essence of the story. Transitioning from features to commercials is not always easy. It is a very different medium. Telling a story in 60 seconds is not something a feature filmmaker needs to do. Getting a

collaborators. Costume designer Paco Delgado earned an Oscar nomination for *Les Misérables*, his first feature with director Tom Hooper. Now a return engagement with Hooper has yielded *The Danish Girl*. Delgado first worked with Hooper via Smuggler on a Captain Morgan commercial. This eventually led to Delgado getting the *Les Misérables* gig.

Sometimes "The Road To Oscar" is paved by commercialmaking.

POV

By Rupert Maconick



Brands: Content Moguls of the Future

\$600 billion was spent on traditional advertising during 2014, but there is a new approach happening, which is a throwback to a bygone age: Brands are shifting away from TV commercials to funding and sponsoring documentaries, TV programs and specials, and films. Brands will emerge as the film and TV moguls of the future.

Sponsored programs are not new. In the late '40s, Texaco and Admiral sponsored TV shows starring Milton Berle and Sid Caesar. In the 1950's and 60's, the term "soap opera" was coined because shows were sponsored by brands like P&G.

Our challenge now is that consumers are no longer watching traditional TV. Most consumers under the age of 40 do not have cable. The future of advertising is transforming, shifting away from TV, billboards and magazine ads to platforms like Netflix, HULU and Amazon.

The 30-second commercial is dying. Consumers ignore or fast forward through ads on their smart phone or computer. To reach customers, brands are now in the content business. In 2013, Werner Herzog directed a 35-minute PSA film for AT&T, which was a huge success: "From One Second to the Next." The film has been screened in over 40,000 schools and colleges. That film worked because it was positioned as a documentary short and not a commercial. The focus was on the storytelling and the message, not the brand.

Many forward looking brands and agencies are adapting to the same model.

The younger generation of consumers want innovation and engagement. Red Bull has long been far ahead in creative marketing and creating short films that people want to watch. The Red Bull "Stratos Space Jump" not only broke several records, it was watched by millions of people live on YouTube.

Young people have been dubbed an idealistic generation who emphasize social change. They want to support brands that do good. Herzog's film became a marketing success because of, not in spite of, the film's authentic call for social change.

Forward looking brands and agencies are partnering with production companies and filmmakers who can bridge both worlds. The Millennials are the main consumers of the future. In order for the ad industry to survive the current changes to the marketplace, the \$600 billion, which is spent annually on selling young people stuff they don't want, will be funneled into stories and content that they actually do care about. In the very near future cutting edge brands will connect with consumers by funding or sponsoring the next impactful and socially relevant documentary, indie film or TV series.

Rupert Maconick is the owner/founder of bicoastal Saville Productions.

Director, DP Perspectives



Insights into
The Danish Girl,
Spotlight, *The Big Short*,
Concussion,
Sicario and *Bridge of Spies*

By Robert Goldrich | Road To Oscar Series, Part 6

Tom Hooper won an Academy Award and the DGA Award in 2011 for directing *The King's Speech* which was nominated for 12 Oscars, also winning for Best Picture, Best Actor (Colin Firth) and Best Original Screenplay (David Seidler). The accolades continued for Hooper's next movie, *Les Misérables*. The 2012 film earned eight Academy Award nominations, winning for Best Supporting Actress (Anne Hathaway), Best Sound, and Best Make-up and Hair Styling. Hooper also garnered a DGA nomination on the strength of that film.

Hooper's latest film, *The Danish Girl* (Focus Features), went wide in the U.S. last month, and the director again finds his work prominent in the Oscar conversation. With a screenplay by Lucinda Coxon based on the book by David Ebershoff, *The Danish Girl* tells the remarkable, real-life love story of Lili Elbe and Gerda Wegener, portrayed in the film respectively by Eddie Redmayne (a Best Actor Oscar winner for *The Theory of Everything*) and Alicia Vikander (*Ex Machina*).

The story takes us to Copenhagen in

1926. Einar Wegener is married to Gerda. Both are painters—Einar the more revered. They have a strong marriage, which is about to be tested in a profound way, ultimately deepening their love.

Asked by Gerda to fill in for a model by putting on a dress, Einar has a transformative experience, soon realizing that his inner Lili is his true self. Gerda unexpectedly finds that she has a new muse. But the couple feel society's disapproval and moves to Paris. While their marriage is strained at times, their love remains steadfast. Gerda is supportive and selfless in the quest for Lili to find her true self as a transgender woman.

For Hooper, among the creative challenges was "the balancing of pain and joy, anxiety and hope. We could not be too centered on the pain of the transition. We didn't want the audience to sort of feel sorry for someone being a transgender person. We wanted them to understand the happiness that was possible for her. At the same time if we made the film free of pain, that wouldn't

have been true to the dark aspects of the journey we know from Lili's diaries." This delicate balance was easier to attain thanks to the acting prowess of Redmayne. "When Eddie holds the dress against herself, puts the stockings on that first time," observed Hooper, "you can see her on one hand connecting with her true identity. We get a glimpse of happiness and contentment she couldn't have previously imagined. Yet at the same time the implications of this are so scary and anxiety inducing—we see Eddie's character feeling all of that. Eddie brilliantly balanced all this."

Hooper also discussed several in his ensemble of long-time collaborators, including cinematographer Danny Cohen, BSC, editor Melanie Ann Oliver, ACE, and production designer Eve Stewart.

The Danish Girl is the fifth project Cohen has shot for Hooper, starting with HBO's *Longford*, then the HBO miniseries *John Adams*, *The King's Speech*, and *Les Misérables*. Cohen was an Oscar

Continued on page 6

From top left, clockwise: *The Danish Girl*, *Spotlight*, *The Big Short*, *Concussion*, *Sicario*, *Bridge of Spies*, and Tom Hooper who directed *The Danish Girl*

Hooper Reflects On The Danish Girl; McCarthy On Spotlight

Continued from page 5

and BAFTA Award nominee for *The King's Speech*, and earned BAFTA, ASC and BSC Award nominations for *Les Misérables*. He shared an Emmy Award nomination as one of the DPs on *John Adams*, and received his first BAFTA nod for the

miniseries for which Oliver was both an Emmy and Eddie Award nominee.

"Melanie is the most extraordinary editor. She is very intuitive and instinctive, unbelievably thorough," assessed Hooper. "When you sit down with her, she knows every frame, even when the camera is run-

of ourselves—and how we overcome those blocks. But in the case of *The King's Speech*, the obstacle was stammering. For *The Danish Girl*, there was no medical condition identified, no road map, the word 'transgender' didn't exist back during that time. Lili was a pioneer. She was one of the world's first people to undergo gender confirmation surgery, and we get to see the powerful love story of two people who go through this journey together. It movingly portrays a marriage going through a profound transformation."

Spotlight

Several years ago when he was in the editing stages of *Win Win*, director Tom McCarthy was approached by producers with the rights to the stories of *The Boston Globe* reporters whose Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation revealed cases of childhood molestation by some 70 local priests and the Catholic Church's systematic cover-up of the abuse. "I was immediately drawn to the thumbnail version of the story," recalled McCarthy. "An outsider comes to the *Globe* and picks up on a small story in the paper mentioning the Church's possible complicity in certain crimes. He assigns a team of reporters to dig into the story. This circumstance of an outsider—who

comes into the country's most Irish Catholic city—sparking an investigation struck me as a great storytelling opportunity. The more I dug into the material, the more I saw this incredibly rich story of deep social relevance. I brought in writer Josh Singer to work with me on the screenplay and we dove in."

Among the prime challenges for McCarthy was the rigor of the investigation he and Singer had to conduct for the movie, which was ultimately titled *Spotlight* (Open Road Films). "There was no source material. The reporters did not write a book about the investigation. We had to spend time thoroughly researching and

investigating their investigation. There was a lot of information to deal with. We read everything we could and then had to figure out how to parse it out throughout the screenplay. Early on we felt the movie had to feel as real and authentic as possible, committing to showing the smaller details of their investigation as often as possible. If we were too slick with it, that would undermine the essence and spirit of their investigation, the hard work these people put in. And that in turn would have undermined the emotional payoff of the film. We had to have a real commitment to craft—a commitment to the process and craft of journalism."

Spotlight takes us through that process of investigative journalism—the good steps and the missteps—which for this story began in mid-2001 and extended through early 2002. The movie's title refers to the four person Spotlight section team at the *Globe*—editor Walter "Robby" Robinson (Michael Keaton), reporters Sacha Pfeiffer (Rachel McAdams) and Michael Rezendes (Mark Ruffalo), and researcher Matt Carroll (Brian d'Arcy James).

Beyond receiving critical acclaim, *Spotlight* has elicited positive feedback from different circles. "Journalists across the country feel we've captured their world—and the importance of journalism to society at large. We tell this story through the eyes of the journalists investigating it. I think in ways it makes the story more accessible to the audience. It gives them a lens through which to see these times.

"We're also hearing from survivors and families of the victims who feel they were well represented by the film. They are the heart of this film," affirmed McCarthy. "And the Catholic community has by and large embraced the movie. People are connecting to the movie for different reasons. We're connecting with different people on different levels and what's most exciting is that we're unifying them through this story and the issues involved."

Continued on page 8



Eddie Redmayne (L) and Alicia Vikander in *The Danish Girl*

tefilm *Longford*. Among Cohen's other credits is the recently released *Room* directed by Lenny Abrahamson.

Hooper said of Cohen, "This [*The Danish Girl*] is completely unlike anything he's done before. Danny captured the extraordinary soft Scandinavian, northern European light, the light of long days and long dusks to bring the gentleness of Lily to life. He was instrumental in bringing her to life in this film. He in many ways went on a visual quest similar to Gerda's quest to see Lily. Gerda was fascinated as she uncovered the femininity of Einar and painted portraits that revealed the true Lily. Danny too explored Eddie Redmayne through the camera and lighting to reveal Eddie's femininity on screen to the audience. Danny helped Lily to emerge—and the audience to realize Lily's emergence. Gerda was an artist. Her love and sensibilities as an artist gave her the ability to see things that were buried deep down in her husband. Danny's work as an artist reflected Gerda's journey as she fully saw Lily."

Editor Oliver previously collaborated with Hooper on: *Les Misérables* for which she was an American Cinema Editors (Eddie) Award nominee; *Longford* for which she won a BAFTA Award; the historical miniseries *Elizabeth I*, for which she was an Emmy nominee; the feature *The Damned United*; and the *John Adams*

miniseries for which Oliver was both an Emmy and Eddie Award nominee. "Melanie is the most extraordinary editor. She is very intuitive and instinctive, unbelievably thorough," assessed Hooper. "When you sit down with her, she knows every frame, even when the camera is run-

ning before you say, 'Action.' Some of her edits require no changes whatsoever. The peep show sequence [in *The Danish Girl*] was Melanie's assembly cut. She could be a director in her own right—she is that talented. When I'm in the cutting room with her, I feel like I'm with another director who is also a great editor."

And without giving away storyline, there's a pivotal scene in *The Danish Girl*, for which Hooper did a pickup shot towards the end of the production "based on Melanie's suggestion. She was right about it needing a different feel. That's how integral she is to me."

Production designer Stewart has also garnered accolades for her work with Hooper, including Oscar nominations for *The King's Speech* and *Les Misérables*. Hooper said he marvels at Stewart's ingenuity and her ability to bring a big feel to projects within the confines of challenged budgets. He described her contributions as essential to creating characters and advancing the story. (For more on Stewart, see the 11/25 installment of our "Road To Oscar" series.)

“THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR.”



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BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY **Masanobu Takayanagi**

“A LANDMARK FILM.

Tom McCarthy and camera wizard Masanobu Takayanagi track the grinding work of real reporting.”

ROLLING STONE, Peter Travers

“Working with ace d.p. Masanobu Takayanagi, McCarthy directs in a clean, fluid style as he traces the story from the Boston Globe newsroom (the camera often following staffers through the corridors in lengthy tracking shots) to the city’s low-income margins, where priests reliably went after the most vulnerable kids they could find.”

VARIETY, Justin Chang

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SPOTLIGHT

ABOVE THE INFLUENCE PLAYS PUPPETEER

Director Maris Jones of production company Adolescent teamed with Hill Holliday, Wax editor Christopher Huth and Sonic Union mixer David Papa to literally force the hands of teens into making questionable decisions in the impactful new :30 PSA “Who Controls You” for Above the Influence, a program of the non-profit Partnership for Drug-Free Kids. The spot features teenagers in a variety of potentially precarious situations, with a hand reaching in from off-screen to compel them to go against their own better judgment and influence their decisions.



A girl has her sandwich pushed away from her as she reads a fashion magazine emblazoned with underweight bikini-clad models; another girl plucks a bottle of prescription medication from the bathroom cabinet while a friend looks on eagerly; two smitten teenage boys are pushed to break affection and are scurried to different sides of the couch; and a girl is driven to become the ringleader of her group of cackling friends to bully a nearby loner.

In the final vignette, a boy continues to reject a red cup continuously pushed his way, deliberately placing it out of his eyesight, followed by the voiceover, “If you’re not in control, then who is?”

AFI ALUMNI SHOW STRONG SPIRIT

The American Film Institute announced that the following AFI Conservatory alumni have been nominated for four 2016 Film Independent Spirit Awards: *Anomalisa* co-director/producer Duke Johnson (AFI Class of 2006) for Best Feature and Best Director; *Spotlight* producer Steve Golin (AFI Class of 1981) for Best Feature; and *Advantageous* director/writer Jennifer Phang (AFI Class of 1999) for the John Cassavetes Award. Altogether, 17 Conservatory alumni are credited across the feature films nominated for Independent Spirit Awards this year. Winners will be announced on February 27, 2016.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

San Francisco-based creative agency Eleven, Inc. has hired Aaron Richard as director of innovation, a new position at the shop, and TJ Tshionyi as EP of digital. Richard will focus on bringing new communication channels, technologies and ideas to Eleven and will report to Gary Stein, Eleven’s group director of marketplace insights. Tshionyi will lead production initiatives across a range of accounts and report to Anastacia Maggioncalda, head of integrated production. Prior to joining Eleven, Richard was a sr. innovation strategist at Heat, where he spent several years working on strategic technology projects for Electronic Arts, AOL, Anheuser-Busch, Bank of the West, Levi’s, Pure Storage and Dolby. Tshionyi spent time at McCann Erickson San Francisco



TJ Tshionyi

working on Microsoft, and had a lengthy tenure at AKQA San Francisco where he worked on clients spanning Nike, Old Navy, Gap, Red Bull and Jordan Brand....Derek Anderson has joined Publicis Seattle as associate creative director. Anderson was most recently at Taxi NY. He has also spent time at Whybin/TBWA/Dan Sydney and Leo Burnett Sydney. Anderson will join newly hired creative directors James McKenna and Matthew Trego on the T-Mobile business. Also coming aboard Publicis Seattle

is sr. broadcast producer Tim Biggins who had been freelance producing on brands such as Budweiser, Discover, American Express, Pepsi and Skittles. In his new role, Biggins will work mostly on T-Mobile’s live action production....

ROAD TO OSCAR

Directors McKay, Landesman

Continued from page 6

Among the many collaborators who helped McCarthy realize his vision for *Spotlight* were DP Masanobu Takayanagi, ASC, and editor Tom McArdle. The latter has cut all five of the movies directed by McCarthy, including *Win Win*, *The Station Agent*, *The Visitor* and *The Cobbler*. By contrast, *Spotlight* marks the first time McCarthy has collaborated with Takayanagi. McCarthy said that McArdle helps open up opportunities for him to explore new relationships, like the connection the director made with Takayanagi.

“To have an editor who knows my work inside and out allows me to collaborate with new people for the first time. Tom has a great sense of clarity and space, is very rigorous and relentless in trying to get the movie as tightly constructed as possible—especially for a film like this which tries to maintain tension throughout. He has a tremendous ability to approach material very objectively, to get rid of the bits and pieces not necessary to tell the story. I try to allow space for the characters in a story. Feeling that space and not rushing the story are important elements of my work. I shoot that way and Tom has a nice way of tightening what I shoot, yielding a film that has space and propulsion for the story, bringing it to life.”

Exploring different DPs for *Spotlight*, McCarthy said he was most impressed by how Takayanagi “connected to the material. He didn’t come into the project with preconceived notions. Before he makes choices, he wants to make sure he’s on the same page with the director. He doesn’t get ahead of himself. Together you discover. We dug into the screenplay and material, and organically together started to come up with how we wanted to approach the story visually. It was a fun process. In six or seven weeks of prep, we found our approach. He’s very fast, smart, quick with lighting and composition. Masa has a real organic sense of storytelling, a real command of shooting. There were moments of inspiration where we let the other take the lead. We had a wonderful, very easy working relationship—particularly for a first-time collaboration.”

SHOOT connected with McCarthy via Park Pictures, the production company which handles him for commercials and branded content. Observing that feelings

are often shaped by your first experience, McCarthy shared that he had a most favorable one at Park directing a Duracell project for ad agency Anomaly. “I loved the experience with Park and the people at Anomaly. They were very collaborative, open-minded. There was a good energy all the way around making for an interesting, refreshing creative process. I’m drawn to storytelling in all forms—features, a short, a :30 or a :60.”

The Big Short

It’s said that comedy is tragedy and both are skillfully blended by director Adam McKay to tell a true story that is humorous yet infuriating in *The Big Short* (Paramount Pictures) which is based on the book “The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine” authored by Michael Lewis. McKay also wrote the screenplay with Charles Randolph. The cast includes Christian Bale, Steve Carell, Ryan Gosling and Brad Pitt.

Like the book, the movie introduces us to a small group of Wall Street outsiders who find themselves ahead of the investment curve when they bet against the booming, seemingly “can’t lose” housing market well prior to when the real estate bubble burst in the mid-2000s, triggering the global economic meltdown. Their contrarian thinking is rooted in the real-



Adam McKay

ization that assorted delinquent home loans headed ultimately for default are being bundled into highly rated mortgage bonds. Big banks, the financial media and government regulators choose to ignore this ticking time bomb which has mainstream Wall Street making money hand over fist. But the looming inevitable fall-out represents a golden opportunity as this small group of maverick outside inves-

Discuss, Respectively, *The Big Short* and *Concussion*

Continued from page 8

tors concoct a financial instrument called the credit default swap in order to “short” the housing business.

Some five years ago McKay read Lewis’

into the story, on select occasions breaking through the fourth wall to reach the audience with inventive cameos that tap into celebs to explain financial matters which banks would prefer to keep com-

Street world in *The Big Short* to be cold and monolithic—we’ve seen that before in great films about Wall Street. I wanted to go in another direction—like the contrarian investors. I wanted to show a Wall Street that was much more rumpled, much more raggedy yet artful to reflect these outsiders as human beings. Barry Ackroyd did this brilliantly, helping to capture and reflect these characters.”

A happy discovery for McKay was editor Hank Corwin, ACE (of editorial house Lost Planet). Corwin’s long-form editing credits span such features as *Snow Falling On Cedars*, *Natural Born Killers*, *Nixon* and *The Tree of Life*.

“Plan B recommended Hank and in the first five minutes of our first conversation, I just knew he was the guy,” recalled McKay. “Hank is a fountain of imagination, ideas, talents, skills. He’s so collaborative and adventurous.”

where in 2002 he conducts an autopsy on Mike Webster who had committed suicide. Though he did not initially know who Webster was—much less anything about football—Dr. Omalu learned that his “patient” was once a revered member of the Super Bowl champion Pittsburgh Steelers. While the “patient” description seems strange, it actually fits in that Dr. Omalu talks to corpses as if they are live people, developing a rapport with them as he tries to learn their stories—to find out what their bodies tell him.

Dr. Omalu found that repeated concussions during offensive lineman Webster’s career took their toll on his brain, resulting in a range of debilitating cognitive and emotional symptoms, which ultimately led him to take his own life.

Dr. Omalu goes on to identify and give this degenerative disease in football players a name: CTE or chronic traumatic encephalopathy. Omalu uncovers other



Christian Bale in *The Big Short*

book and became fascinated with the inside story of the 2008 market crash. It’s a story that McKay aspired to tell in a movie yet on the surface he didn’t seem likely to make the shortlist to direct *The Big Short*. After all, McKay is best known for his comedy chops, most notably his ongoing collaborations with Will Ferrell. McKay was head writer on *Saturday Night Live* where he met Ferrell. The two went on to connect with Chris Henchy to launch the comedy website Funny or Die. Director/writer McKay and writer/actor Ferrell have also teamed on such features as *Step Brothers*, *Talladega Nights*, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, and *Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues*.

Yet McKay’s brand of humor, even at its silliest, often has political elements dating back to *SNL* and his work as a founder of the Upright Citizens Brigade comedy troupe. He’s been a frequent contributor to the *Huffington Post* and has written for TV projects such as Michael Moore’s *The Awful Truth*. Still he acknowledged that there had to be a bit of a leap of faith for him to get *The Big Short* gig. He credited the team at Brad Pitt’s Plan B Entertainment, particularly Jeremy Kleiner and Dede Gardner who oversee the company’s development and production slate, with taking that mini-leap.

McKay shows his acumen for drama and character-based storytelling while injecting some of his signature humor

plicated. For instance, McKay deploys chef/TV host Anthony Bourdain comparing leftover seafood to toxic financial assets. McKay recruited Bourdain for the scene after reading his memoir “Kitchen Confidential.” “He [Bourdain] tells readers that they should not order seafood stew because it’s where cooks put all the crap they couldn’t sell,” related McKay. “I thought ‘Oh my God that’s a perfect metaphor for a collateralized debt obligation, where the banks bundle a bunch of bad mortgages and sell it as a triple-A rated financial product.’”

McKay said he was nervous about breaking the fourth wall and waited to see the audience reaction at the first screening of *The Big Short* that he attended. “That was one of the challenges I was a little apprehensive about. But I’ve seen a lot of movies I’ve enjoyed over the years reach out to the audience with explanations and observations. I felt this could work for us.”

Besides getting the chance to take on a story he very much wanted to tell, *The Big Short* also fulfilled another ambition for McKay—the opportunity to work with Barry Ackroyd, BSC, the Oscar-nominated and BAFTA Award-winning cinematographer of *The Hurt Locker*. “I’m a huge fan of his,” affirmed McKay about Ackroyd. “*United 93* is a modern masterpiece—thanks to Barry and [director] Paul Greengrass. I’ve tracked Barry’s work over the years. I didn’t want the Wall



Will Smith (l) and Alec Baldwin in *Concussion*

Concussion

Among the biggest takeaways for director/writer Peter Landesman from his feature *Concussion* (Sony Pictures) was that it affirmed the responsibility of a filmmaker towards an actor, in this case Will Smith. “When an actor really digs deep into a role, lays out for you, really finds something that neither of you anticipate, a director has to honor and protect that,” said Landesman. “His performance was one of the very best I’ve seen in a long time. It was a transformative performance.”

Smith portrays Dr. Bennet Omalu, a Nigerian-born forensic pathologist working in the coroner’s office in Pittsburgh

cases of former NFL players whose brains were irreparably damaged by repeated head trauma. Naively Omalu at first thinks his scientific discovery will be embraced and lauded but instead he is discredited by the NFL, with negative repercussions on his personal and professional life. But subsequent suicides of former NFL players—most notably Dave Duerson and later Junior Seau—made it difficult for even the NFL to deny Omalu’s findings.

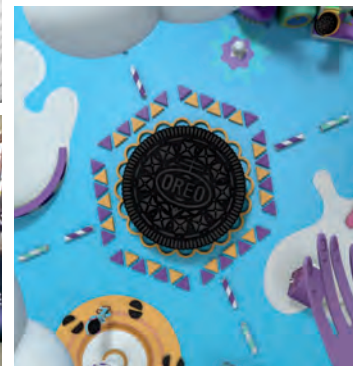
Landesman’s experience as a journalist prior to becoming a filmmaker informed his approach to *Concussion*. He was an investigative reporter for *The New York*

Continued on page 26

“It’s What They Do”

Executives at The Martin Agency reflect on the shop’s creative culture, and breaking new ground in 2015

By Robert Goldrich



Making pre-roll ad fare a creative must see is in and of itself arguably enough to justify the selection of The Martin Agency as Agency of the Year in 2015. But there’s much more to consider in that the “Unskippable” campaign for long-standing client Geico not only changed the perception of pre-roll but also in some circles Martin itself. The “Unskippable: Family” spot won The Martin Agency its first ever Cannes Grand Prix, brining high-profile Film Lions Jury recognition to a shop that had in some respects been taken for granted over the years, akin paradoxically to the Geico tagline, “It what you do.”

The fact is that the Richmond, VA-headquartered The Martin Agency, celebrating its 50th anniversary, has long been home to breakthrough advertising—it’s what they do and what they’ve done for decades, successfully diversifying from a heralded print agency in its early years to a TV shop and now embracing social media, consistently weaving brands into mainstream and pop culture across multiple platforms. 2015 was a great year

for all this at Martin, prompting *SHOOT*’s selection as its Agency of the Year.

“We’ve become a content shop across all media and outlets,” assessed chief creative officer Joe Alexander.

“Unskippable”—directed by the Terri Timely duo at Park Pictures—“breaks every rule of filmmaking,” said 2015 Cannes Film Lions Jury president Tor Myhren, worldwide chief creative officer for Grey, which scored *SHOOT*’s Agency of the Year honor just a couple of years ago.

In talking about the jury’s rationale for bestowing Grand Prix distinction upon “Unskippable,” Myhren observed that Martin bucks conventional wisdom by challenging viewers not to watch the ad, which only reinforces what becomes a “can’t take your eyes off of it” dynamic. With the insurance brand pitch wrapped in the first five seconds (prior to the appearance of the “Skip ad” button), a voiceover boasts, “You can’t skip this Geico ad because it’s already over.” Then the action—prompted by inaction—begins. Each “Unskippable” video humorously

shows characters pretending to be frozen as action continues around them. In the case of “Family,” folks at the dinner table suddenly becoming “frozen” translates into a golden opportunity for their beloved dog to gorge himself on all the food laid out, making a mess in the process—all with the Geico brand logo front and center.

Myhren said this “deceptively simple piece of communication” demonstrated that film “can reinvent the way you look at media,” even for pre-roll, arguably the least sexy, most deservedly ignored medium around.

Litmus test

During the course of any given year, *SHOOT* seeks out and is sent assorted pieces of notable work. But the litmus test is not how well that work plays in a vacuum—when we screen it at our offices—but rather if it breaks through in the medium, traditional or otherwise, for which it was originally intended.

Continued on page 12

From top left, clockwise: Geico’s “Unskippable—Family”; chief creative officer Joe Alexander; Geico’s “Unskippable—Elevator”; “Play With Oreo”; Walmart’s “Star Wars Grandpa”; Benjamin Moore’s “Dummy” spot; Tie The Knot’s “Supreme Save The Date” initiative

CONGRATULATIONS MARTIN AGENCY!



FROM YOUR FRIENDS AT



FRAMESTORE

Out-Of-The Box Thinking; Enduring Strategy; A “Good To

Continued from page 10

Just as “Unskippable” made an indelible impression online, Martin’s TV work broke through in a big way in 2015 with Geico being at the forefront. If you’re the guy from the Operation board game, you get operated on. If you’re golf commentators, you speak in hushed tones—even if a giant serpent is wreaking havoc on the golf course. If you’re the band Europe, you play “The Final Countdown”—replete with pyrotechnics—at every opportunity, even at a company lunch room where the song coincides with the readout on a microwave oven, counting down to a properly heated and ready to eat entree. In each of these different spot scenarios, “It’s what you do”—just like saving you money on auto insurance is what Geico does.

Steve Bassett—who heads the Geico account along with fellow group creative director Wade Alger—noted that this far ranging, engaging creative content is helped tremendously by rock-solid, enduring strategy.

Alger agreed that the Cannes Grand Prix and other accolades are in fact both for Martin’s creative wherewithal as well as its savvy strategic planning. For years, we’ve been hearing Geico’s “15 minutes can save you 15 percent” message—delivered by geckos, cavemen, a high-decibel Little Richard, the humpday camel all the way through to the aforementioned spate of recent creatively inspired work. Rather than bouncing from strategy to strategy, Geico has kept its money-saving credo simple and consistent—and the foundation from which great creative can spring.

This foundation over time also applies to the people themselves at the brand and the agency. Alexander has been on the creative lead for Geico since 2000 and Alger since 2009. They work closely with Geico’s chief marketing officer Ted Ward, who’s been there for the duration, dating back to when Geico and The Martin Agency first came together some 21 years ago. Knowing the message, the brand, the brand’s needs and aspirations leads to the creation of work that’s inherently relevant to the marketplace.

A Martin veteran approaching 25 years at the agency, Alexander is embarking on his fourth year as chief creative officer. “Having a core group of leaders who have been here a while helps us in terms of the



Steve Bassett

creative content, and it sends a message to the influx of new creative talent,” said Alexander. “There’s a stability from having people who know the place inside and out, who know the clients, who know that you can fail and still thrive. Ironically, stability leads to more fearlessness for those who’ve been here and those who are new to the agency.

“When you get comfortable with the creative leaders, you feel more comfortable taking chances. That’s been true with Geico and was reflected this year in animated musical pieces for Oreo, Benjamin Moore—with this year’s “Dummy” spots, and the earlier Green Monster (Fenway Park, Boston) work which last year won an Integrated Silver Lion at Cannes—our Star Wars tie-in and our new Craig Robinson work for Walmart, our new campaign for Tic Tacs, a great social experiment for Tie the Knot.”

The latter was the “Supreme Save the Date” initiative. Founded by *Modern Family* actor Jesse Tyler Ferguson and his husband Justin Mikita, Tie The Knot, a nonprofit organization that supports marriage equality, teamed with Martin to create a “Save the Date Builder” which helped gay couples who hope to marry create their own Save the Date invites and relay them to Supreme Court justices prior to what turned out to be their historic decision upholding gay marriage.

Save the Date invites were designed and available for personalization on the Tie The Knot/Supreme Save the Date website. Couples then selected a design and inputted their info, including a wedding date and the state in which they live (with emphasis on those states that were yet to legalize gay marriage). The invites were then addressed to a Supreme Court



Wade Alger

justice, with Tie the Knot printing and delivering the cards. The Supreme Court thus received news of wedding plans that could only move forward easily with a favorable verdict by the justices.

Creative culture, craftsmanship

Alexander joined The Martin Agency in 1991. The venerable creative director Mike Hughes, who later became agency president, hired Alexander. (Hughes passed away in December of 2013.)

“When I came here, I didn’t think I’d stay all that long but I fell in love with the culture, the city, raised my three daughters here,” said Alexander. “I’ve watched this place keep growing and found that I could grow with it. In Richmond and at Martin you have a great quality of life but can still create great work.”

Executive creative director Jorge Calleja said that the great quality of life for Richmond residents helps to nurture and advance creativity.

“When you have a better life outside of work, it can make your work that much better. It pushes you in a different way and you’re more hungry to go for things outside of the box. There’s a certain humanity and coziness in Richmond and at The Martin Agency. It frees your mind to come up with things you might otherwise ignore or not come up with to begin with. Attaining that simplicity in thinking is crucial to turning out the work we do.”

Bassett observed that Hughes was “huge in creating a wonderful culture” at Martin. “Always doing work you love with people you love may sound corny, but Mike was all about that and it permeated the agency. There are less politics here than any place I’ve ever worked.”

The mantra born out of that, shared



Steve Humble

Alexander, was for people at The Martin Agency to be “good to each other, tough on the work.”

John Adams, who is chairman of Martin, had been business partners with Hughes for 35 years. Steve Humble, executive VP, managing director of production and development, said that Hughes and Adams historically set the tone at Martin. “You couldn’t find two more honest guys in the business,” affirmed Humble. “They were about doing the right thing at all times. From that came a culture that is not hierarchal. No one’s opinion is better than another’s. The best opinions and ideas win out, no matter where they come from.”

That inclusiveness is also reflected in Humble being named to serve on the Martin executive committee two years ago. “It’s a great honor. Heads of production and producers don’t make it to the management of most agencies. But here it’s about what you bring to the table,” said Humble who’s been with Martin for 16 years, having come over from Chicago where he was a producer at Leo Burnett and Foote Cone & Belding.

The Martin Agency’s roots also emphasize craft and craftsmanship, which remain relevant today, maybe more so than ever.

“There’s a lot of focus on technology, digital, social media and trends nowadays but no one is really talking that much about craft and craftsmanship,” related Alexander. “Mike Hughes said that craft would be at the core of everything we do. It’s what separates our work from other agencies. Technique, media and the like will come and go, and change. But craft and attention to detail are constant. Consumers respond to and brands prosper

AD AGENCY OF THE YEAR

Each Other, Tough On The Work" Approach; Craftsmanship

from a high level of craft."

Appropriately enough, craft, Martin and the City of Richmond go hand in hand, perhaps best embodied in the RVA Makerfest, an annual event where attendees can interact with more than 100 makers from the Greater Richmond area, including blacksmiths, glassblowers, drone pilots, video game developers, 3D printer manufacturers, robot creators, puppeteers, chocolatiers and assorted other artists. The free, family-friendly event features interactive demonstrations in science, art, technology, engineering sustainability, food, music, crafts and fashion.

Several employees at The Martin Agency came up with the idea for RVA Makerfest in order to get more involved with the community and to create unique learning and development opportunities. Martin has been an active sponsor both years of the fest. And The Martin Agency Kitchen program has created the commu-

nications for the event two years running, including an IMAX movie trailer in 2014 and the screen-printed poster that made its way into the Virginia Historical Society's collection this year.

Creative technologists at Martin participated in MakerFest both years, demonstrating concept work for Mondelez (parent to Oreo, among other brands) and Moen as well as a custom robot PartyBot built for the event.

"Talk less and do more is the theme of Makerfest. And it's the way we operate as well," noted Alexander. "We put a big emphasis on doers and makers." He said this applies to the directors, editors, visual effects artists and everyone else Martin hires at production companies, post houses, visual effects/animation and music studios—and to the in-house capabilities that Martin has developed.

For its craft and content, The Martin Agency has ongoing relationships with

top drawer outside vendors while also tapping into in-house resources such as post/visual effects/animation house Hue & Cry, and editorial arm Running With Scissors. "We built Running With Scissors and Hue & Cry for lifestyle reasons," shared Alexander. "Being in Richmond, our people were often traveling to New York, L.A. and other major centers, spending an inordinate amount of time on the road. In addition to the economic advantages of having our in-house units, they allow our people to stay home, to edit and post here. We have many people with young families who have the personal need to spend more time close to home. By having in-house options, we add to the sanity of this business and their lives, making things a little less frantic and with a little less anxiety for our staff."

The in-house capabilities also enable Martin to, explained Alexander, "rapid prototype and get concept approval from clients. Instead of presenting a storyboard in static form, we can put an idea into motion with film and sound. It gives us a leg up, helping us experiment with concepts, move quicker on them, and then handling the final execution—or going to talent outside to help us realize an idea."

Alexander characterized Martin's in-house production and postproduction resources as "a nice complement to our outside partners."

This outside talent has been vital to brand success, pointed out Alexander, citing as an example director Wayne McClammy of Hungry Man whose first endeavors for Geico included the camel "Humpday" commercial and more re-



Jorge Calleja

cently rock band Europe's rendition of "The Final Countdown."

"Wayne has a great sense of comedy, is very collaborative, has a strong point of view without being a jerk about it, and he's also good at marrying humor and dialogue with sophisticated visual effects [the serpent creature from MPC in the aforementioned wryly humored golf commentator commercial]."

Over the years, Alexander observed that Martin has been "spoiled" by its great relationships with vendors. "Since we're in Richmond, they come to visit us, we hang out for a night, do a screening. They get out of the big city and get to know us and Richmond. That face-to-face in a welcoming city has helped us get relationships off on the right foot. It's especially valuable, particularly now that so much is done via email and online in an insular fashion."

The mix of outside vendors and in-house resources is also reflected in the Oreo account. Alexander noted that the new Oreo yuletide spot is from visual ef-

Continued on page 29



Geico's "The Final Countdown"

Congratulations!

the martin agency

SHOOT 2015
Advertising Agency
of the Year!

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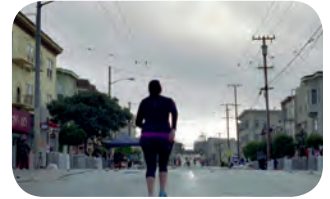
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BEST WORK OF THE YEAR

Top Spots of the Year



The Year's "Best Work You May Never See"



Top row (l-r) Geico's "Unskippable: Family"; Allstate's "Social Savvy Burglar"; Comcast/Xfinity's "Emily's Oz"; Snickers' "Brady Bunch"; Nike's "Last." Bottom row (l-r): The Weingart Center for the Homeless' "Don't Donate To The Homeless"; Sharp's "Sobriety Test"; The Newport Beach Film Festival's "Skeet Art"; Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence's "Unforgotten"; Coop supermarkets' "The Organic Effect"

2015's Best Creative Content Seen Through SHOOT's Lens

From a pre-roll revelation to social media initiatives, Super Bowl and Oscar ads, and PSA fare

A SHOOT Staff Report

As 2015 draws to a close, it's time for reflection on assorted industry fronts, including assessing what work was among the year's most worthwhile creatively.

Determining any year's "best" is a highly subjective proposition so *SHOOT* staffers looked to narrow the field by first culling through two bodies of work, our weekly Top Spots as well as our "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery entries in 2015. We also added to the field other Screen-Work section fare from throughout the year as well as notable work we had covered in various stories during the course of 2015.

We did the same for our reviews of our quarterly Top Ten Tracks and VFX/Animation Charts. We ultimately chose a Top Five from each.

So here are *SHOOT*'s selections for the Best Work of 2015 divided into Top Spots, The Best Work You May Never See, and our Top Music/Sound Tracks and Top VFX/Animation entries.

Top Spots of the Year

While insurance is typically not regarded as a product category synonymous with creative filmmaking, the first two slots for our Top Spots of the Year are taken by Geico and Allstate, respectively.

Our number one Top Spot was from our Agency of the Year, The Martin

Agency-Geico's "Unskippable: Family" a breakthrough piece which brought creative cache to pre-roll, an online medium that had largely been bereft of innovation. Directed by the Terri Timely duo at Park Pictures, "Unskippable: Family," which won a Cannes Grand Prix from the Film Lions Jury, grabs its audience in those normally forgettable first five seconds of pre-roll, concluding a quick pitch so that the voiceover can boast. "You can't skip this Geico ad because it's already over." But then the action begins. Each "Unskippable" video humorously shows characters pretending to be frozen as action continues around them. In the case of "Family," folks at the dinner table suddenly becoming "frozen" translates into a golden opportunity for their beloved dog to gorge himself on all the food laid out, making a mess in the process—all with the Geico brand logo front and center.

Number two in our ranking is Allstate's "Social Savvy Burglar" from Leo Burnett, Chicago. The inspired initiative broke during the Allstate Sugar Bowl college football championship game in the form of eight spots—directed by Jeff Tremaine of HeLo—depicting the brand's Mayhem character ransacking the home of a couple who posted on social media that they were away for the weekend to watch the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans. Portrayed by

actor Dean Winters, Mayhem proceeds to sell off the couple's possessions at bargain prices on a website—with updates tweeted about the sale using the hashtag #Mayhem Sale. On that debut evening, the site generated more than 6,000 hits per second immediately following each of the Mayhem commercials that aired on TV. Though elements of the campaign are comedic, like the sale of the family car for \$200, there's a serious overriding element—the lesson that you need to watch what you post online. A Facebook posting revealing your whereabouts can translate into your home becoming an easy target for burglary. Allstate and Burnett struck a resonant audience chord.

Ads debuting during the Academy Awards telecast usually don't yield enduring memories but this year we give an ad Oscar to "Emily's Oz" for Comcast/Xfinity, which takes the third slot in *SHOOT*'s countdown. Conceived by Goodby Silverstein & Partners' since shuttered NY office and directed by Andreas Nilsson of Biscuit Filmworks, "Emily's Oz" illustrates what a blind person sees in her head when she "watches" her favorite movie. The :60—with visual effects from a52 and puppets/puppeteering from Legacy Effects—brings to life The Wizard of Oz according to Emily, a seven-year-old girl who was born blind. We see her vision

of what such iconic characters as the Tin Man looks like, the Cowardly Lion, the Scarecrow and Dorothy herself.

The spot promotes Comcast/Xfinity's accessibility services for its viewers, including a talking guide created in the Comcast Accessibility Lab so that the visually impaired can independently search for and find movies.

Coming in fourth in our assessment of the year's best work is Snickers' "Brady Bunch" directed by Jim Jenkins of O Positive for BBDO New York. This entry in the ongoing "You're Not You When You're Hungry" campaign was released online just prior to its broadcast debut on the Super Bowl. The spot features a very hungry Marsha Brady, portrayed by movie star Danny Trejo, throwing an uncharacteristic tantrum until given a Snickers by her parents. Her hunger satiated, Marsha returns back to everyone's favorite girl next door, while fans experience another enjoyable moment with surprise actor Steve Buscemi playing Jan Brady.

And taking the fifth slot in our rundown is Nike's "Last" directed by Lance Acord of Park Pictures for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore. The spot is a fittingly quiet, introspective sequel of sorts to Acord's lauded "Runner" spot. "Last" simply and poetically celebrates the triumph of the runner who struggles to finish last in a

BEST WORK OF THE YEAR

A Public Service Bent To “Best Work”; Stellar VFX

marathon. Again, W+K, Nike and Acord have teamed to show us the true, deeper meaning of personal achievement.

“Best Work” gallery

There’s a definite public service bent to our best of “The Best Work You May Never See” in 2015. Four of the top five are of the PSA variety, starting with our number one pick, The Weingart Center for the Homeless’ “Don’t Donate To The Homeless” directed by Ricardo Mehedff of Check Your Head Films for Culver City, Calif.-based agency Pitch. In this short, a businessman walks into a corporate boardroom to pitch an investment. He promises great returns, and innovation that can change the world. He then brings into the room a disheveled homeless man—who’s the investment opportunity. The pitch man points out that taxpayers spend \$35,000 a year to leave a homeless person on the streets. Investing in job training offered at the Weingart Center puts these people back to work and makes them productive members of society. Taking the homeless off the streets results in a reduction in costs for law enforcement, emergency room visits, welfare and food stamps. Our pitch man then reveals that he was once a homeless drug addict and that The Weingart Center turned his life around. He is now married, has an adopted child, runs a business and has five people in his employ.

Taking the second slot is a spec spot for Sharp’s non-alcoholic brew in which we see that police have stopped a young woman they suspect of DUI and put her through a sobriety test. Shot in the guerrilla style of a police/security surveillance

camera, we see the woman pass every aspect of the test—adding the flourish of some impressive acrobatics as she does far more than just walk a straight line. We then hear one of the police officers apologize to the woman for pulling her over and wasting her time—at which point the Sharp’s logo appears. Justin Wilson of Liberal Media Films, Dallas, directed this spec piece which was based on creative from the team of Clint Carter and Janet Mistretta of agency Johnson & Sekin.

Third place goes to “Skeet Art,” an in-theater promo for the 16th annual Newport Beach Film Festival. Directed by the Freise Brothers of Biscuit Filmworks for agency RPA, the promo follows an eccentric, rifle-toting new-age punk and her butler/skeet puller through a field of high grass, where they pause to shoot a round of skeet. Clay pigeons have been replaced with homemade color bombs filled with brilliant powder, with which the sharp-shooting artist paints the sky in breathtaking fashion. This new form of nontraditional “painting” is akin to the creativity of new artists whose unconventional work is on display at the Newport Beach Fest. “Skeet Art” helped earn the Freise Brothers inclusion into this year’s *SHOOT* New Directors Showcase.

Coming in fourth is FCB Chicago’s “Unforgotten” video for the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence. Unforgotten is a traveling exhibit that remembers actual victims of gun violence. Working with victims’ families, FCB Chicago created lifelike statues of the victims in their actual clothing. Each individual statue serves as an emotional and powerful reminder of the senseless loss of life due

to gun violence. Part of the overall campaign was this documentary video, directed by Ben Flaherty of Lord+Thomas, which shares personal stories behind the victims and chronicles the reactions of those who experienced this first exhibit.

And finishing fifth is “The Organic Effect,” a 90-second film for Swedish supermarket chain Coop directed by Marcus Svanberg of Acne Film for Swedish agency Forsman & Bodenfors. The short introduces us to a family whose members have retained pesticides in their bodies from eating conventional produce. Then when that same family switches to organic food, most of those pesticides are gone within a few days. While the primary goal of the campaign was to strengthen Coop’s brand in Sweden, it also aimed to give organic farming a push globally.

VFX/Animation

The aforementioned “Emily’s Oz” for Comcast/Xfinity tops our 2015 lineup of VFX/Animation Chart entries. VFX houses were a52 and puppets/puppeteering studio Legacy Effects.

That’s followed by Under Armour’s “Rule Yourself—Anthem” spot featuring American Ballet Theatre principal dancer Misty Copeland, golf champion Jordan Spieth and NBA MVP Stephen Curry. Directed by Wally Pfister of RESET for Droga5, NY, the commercial shows Curry, Copeland and Spieth multiplied before our eyes, becoming an army of synchronized athletes, relentlessly practicing the skills that set them apart. The impactful visuals underscore that you are the sum of all your training.

Next up in our rankings is Perrier’s “Hot Air Balloons” directed by Fleur & Manu of Les Télécréateurs for Ogilvy Paris, with VFX from MPC (primarily its new Paris studio). The hot air balloons represent effervescent Perrier bubbles racing their way to the top of the mineral water bottle. Each balloon has a character all its own, with passengers who are from assorted walks of life and for that matter, species (a lion, marmoset and parrots).

Fourth place goes to Honda automobiles’ “Great Thinking Inside.” Smith & Foulkes of Nexus London directed this spot which shows how various models of Honda automobiles literally helped spawn the creation of the new Honda HRV Crossover. Nexus teamed with London-based Time Based Arts and Acme Digital Content on the visual effects tour de force for ad agency RPA in Santa Monica, Calif.

And fifth place went to another Honda job, “Paper,” directed by stop-motion animation filmmaker PES via production company RESET for RPA. This two-minute piece deploys thousands of hand-drawn illustrations to create an intricate paper-flipping journey through Honda history. The short depicts the many iterations of Honda engines over the years, dovetailing with the company’s continuing “Power of Dreams” campaign.

Music & Sound

Number one on our hit parade is the National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse (NCADA)’s “That’s How” which depicts heroin’s tragic impact on a teenage boy, dramatically contrasted by an

Continued on page 17

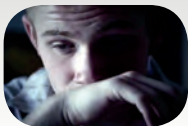




DIRECT SHOOT MIX ANIMATE
PRODUCE EDIT DESIGN FINISH

CHARLIE UNIFORM TANGO & LIBERAL MEDIA FILMS

CHARLIE
UNIFORM
TANGO



2015 Top Five Music Tracks

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse's "That's How"	Mix Kitchen, Chicago Craig J. Snider, lyrics and music supervision; Sam Fishkin, executive producer; Lauren Duski, vocals Schupp Consulting, St. Louis Jesse Wabeke, copywriter (lyrics in tandem with Mix Kitchen's Snider)	Mix Kitchen, Chicago Sam Fishkin, mixer	Schupp Consulting, St. Louis	Schupp Consulting, St. Louis Scott Ferguson, director
2	 Nissan's "With Dad"	Song: "Cat's in the Cradle" by Harry Chapin stimmung, Santa Monica, Calif. Gus Koven, sound designer & music editor; Nicholas Tuttle, sound design assistant; Ceirwyn Clark, executive producer	Play, Santa Monica, Calif. John Bolen, mixer	TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles	Park Pictures, bicoastal Lance Acord, director
3	 Nike's "Short A Guy"	Song: "Surfin' Bird," The Trashmen Barking Owl, West Los Angeles, Calif. Michael Anastasi, sound designer; Kelly Bayett, creative director; Whitney Fromholtz, producer	Lime Studios, Santa Monica, Calif. Loren Silber, mixer; Susie Boyajan, producer	Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.	Park Pictures, bicoastal Lance Acord, director
4	 Gillette's "Shave Forth"	Human, New York DJs From Mars, Dr. Lektroluv, Morgan Visconti and Gareth Williams, composers	Heard City, New York Philip Loeb, mixer	Grey New York Josh Rabinowitz, EVP/director of music; Zachary Pollakoff, VP/music producer	Ninja Hiro Murai, director
5	 Macy's "The Wish Writer"	Yessian New York Brian Yessian, chief creative officer; Dan Zank, composer/arranger; Weston Fonger, sound designer; Gerard Smerek, music mixer; Marlene Bartos, executive producer	Yessian New York Weston Fonger, audio engineer	J. Walter Thompson, New York Paul Greco, director of music	Smuggler, bicoastal Filip Engstrom, director

2015 Top Five: VFX/Animation

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Comcast/Xfinity's "Emily's Oz"	a52, Santa Monica, Calif. Stefan Gaillot, lead Flame artist/2D VFX artist; Kirk Shintani, CG supervisor; Matt Sousa, Andy Bate, Enid Dalkoff, Steve Wolf, Tiffany Germann, 2D VFX artists; Jose Limon, Joe Paniagua, Jon Balcome, Christian Sanchez, Adam Carter, Paulo Mauro, Vivian Su, 3D artists; Scott Boyajan, producer; Patrick Nugent, Jennifer Sofio Hall, exec producers. (Toolbox: Flame)	Goodby Silverstein & Partners, New York	Biscuit Filmworks, Los Angeles Andreas Nilsson, director
2	 Under Armour's "Rule Yourself—Anthem"	The Mill New York Sean Costelloe, sr. exec producer/head of production; Nirad Bugs Russell, sr. producer; Rachel Greco, Kristy Chooi, production coordinators; Gavin Wellsman, VFX supervisor, joint head of 2D, 2D lead artist; Nathan Kane, VFX supervisor/2D lead artist; Wyatt Savarese, VFX supervisor/CG lead; Hitesh Patel, VFX supervisor/shoot supervisor; Iliia Mokhtareizadeh, Emily Bloom, Michael Smith, sr. compositors; Alex Dreiblatt, Heather Kennedy, Rob Meade, Chris Glue, Sung Eun Moon, Yoon-sun Ba, compositors; Corey Langenlotti, Eric Lane, Katie Schiffer, Edward Hick, Cole Clark, Adam Willis, Can Y. Sanaian, German Casado, Melanie Climent, Ivan Joy, Justin Diamond, Ehsan Parizi, Laurent Glaume, Ren Hsien-Hsu, CG artists; Fergus McCall, colorist. (Toolbox: Flame, Flare, Nuke, Massive, Maya, Houdini)	Droga5, New York	RESET, Santa Monica, Calif. Wally Pfister, director/DP
3	 Perrier's "Hot Air Balloons"	MPC Paris Franck Lambert, VFX sup.; Fabian Frank, 3D sup.; Quentin Martin, prod.; Martin Joas, Tim Van Hussen, Jon Park, Andreu Lucio Archs, Steve Oakley, Thanos Topouzis, Thomas Carrick, Arttu Koskela, Timo Schumacher, Amir Bazazi, Bjorn Blaabjerg Sorensen, Chloe Dawe, Jesse Amadio, Olivier Sicut, Ross McCabe, Luca Maccarelli, Ravinder Sembhi, Rune Mansson, Ingo Putze, Ajai V John, Sumesh Chammancheri, Bibin Balan P, Akshay Sunil Wadwalkar, Shalwin Shaiju, Yashaswi Salandri, Sindhuja B, Prashanth Parasivam, Manoj Ravi, Hemanth Anusuri, Ganesh Kumar S, Dheeraj Hebbar, Ankit Dheraj Toppo, Yasaswini V, Sravan Kumar, Roy Nukala Srikrishna, Mithilesh G, K. Gandhiraj, Bruno Roosewelt, Radhakrishna Rethinasamy, VFX; Javier Cid, Alexander Kulikov, compositors; Tomek Zietkiewicz, prod. (London); Rashabh Bhutani, Ginesh Gandhi, S. Sundaramoorthy, Rajkumar C, Avinash Bhandary, compositors (Bangalore). (Toolbox: Houdini, Arnold, Photoshop, Mari, ZBrush, Mudbox, Nuke Studio, Nuke, Maya)	Ogilvy Paris	Les Télécréateurs, Paris Fleur & Manu, directors
4	 Honda's "Great Thinking Inside"	Nexus, London Smith & Foulkes, directors Time Based Arts, London Chris Wood, Sam Osbourne, animators; Mike Skrgatic, James Allen, Sheldon Gardner, Flame artists; Ben Cantor, Mike Battcock, Kristoffer Andersson, Poul Resen Steenstrup, Eva Kuehlmann, Simon Goodchild, 3D artists; Simone Grattarola, additional grade Acme Digital Content, London Kevin Malling, Brandon Acree, Tyson Hill, John Wang, vehicle scanning & modeling (Toolbox: XSi, Maya, Flame, Flare Smoke, Resolve)	RPA, Santa Monica, Calif.	Nexus, London Smith & Foulkes, directors
5	 Honda's "Paper"	RESET, Santa Monica PES, director; Jen Beitleir, Jeff McDougall, EPs; Amanda Clune, head of prodn; Stan Sawicki, prod; Eric Adkins, DP; Mark Eiert, motion control; Eileen Kohlhepp, animation sup; Amy Adams, Sihanouk Mariona, David Braun, Julian Petschek, Javan Ivey, Jen Prokopowicz, Brandon Lake, Ranko Tadic, Quique Rivera, animators; Jerrod McIlvain, Nicole Cardiff, Vincent Lucido, Arwen King, Meghan Boehman, Monica Magana, Kei Chong, Trevor Brown & Alex Theodoropoulos, illustrators; Veronica Hwang, set dresser/painter. a52, Santa Monica Andy Rafael Barrios, VFX sup/lead Flame; Kirk Shintani, CG supervisor; Patrick Nugent, EP; Lusja Boryczko, producer; Kim Christensen, head of prodn; Michael Plescia, Enid Dalkoff, Chris Moore, Cam Coombs, Michael Vaglienty, 2D artists; Aaron Baker, Mike Bettinardi, Michael Cardenas, Jon Belcome, Joe Chiechi, CG artists; Cathy Shaw. (Toolbox: Maya, Flame)	RPA, Santa Monica, Calif.	RESET, Santa Monica, Calif. PES, director

BEST WORK OF THE YEAR

Standout Music/Sound Contributions To Storytelling

Continued from page 15

uplifting, almost liltingly sing-songy soundtrack from Mix Kitchen's Craig J. Snider who wrote the lyrics in tandem with Jessen Wabeke, a copywriter at St. Louis ad agency Schupp Consulting. Airing during the Super Bowl telecast in the St. Louis market, the PSA was designed to generate publicity and controversy in order to bring awareness to the heroin/opiates epidemic in the St. Louis area.

"With just ukulele and voice, the song's lightness contrasts the frightening visuals," according to Mix Kitchen partner/producer Sam Fishkin. "It creates a striking juxtaposition that is indeed startling." Perfectly timed music and lyrics written by copywriter Wabeke and Snider follows the boy's mother at home as she finds her son moments after his overdose.

"In using the tools of drama to convey this crucial truth in a 60-second spot, we created a parallel disconnection between

the visual story we see on screen and the musical story we hear. It is disturbing. It is painful to watch. And we must pay attention to it," said Howard Weissman, exec director of NCADA in the St. Louis area.

Taking second place was a much higher profile Super Bowl spot which ran nationally, Nissan's "With Dad" from TBWA\Chiat\Day, LA. The story, which follows an up-and-coming race driver through his journey to the highest levels of motorsports competition, uses a narrative soundtrack provided by Harry Chapin's iconic "Cat's In The Cradle." It depicts the struggles of a father and mother to balance work and family while they raise their son. In the end, the cycle, so well known in Chapin's song, is broken. Complementing "Cat's In The Cradle" is sound design by Gus Koven of stimmung.

Earning third place was Nike's "Short A Guy" in which a youngster is asked to join a pick-up game of basketball on a hot

summer day and this leads to a string of invitations to join other teams spanning different sports in whirlwind across varied locations. The invites on the fly come from famous athletes such as MLB star Mike Trout, NFL quarterback Andrew Luck, soccer superstar Mia Hamm, beach volleyballer Misty May-Treanor, and NBA big man Anthony Davis. This young recruit—coveted because all these teams are "short a guy"—then embarks on a whirlwind adventure, playing in one game after another with several of these star athletes in their respective sports sans any respite. Conceptualized by Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, the spot makes clever use of Nike star athlete endorsers yet its focus is on the youngster, the grass-roots athlete, to whom viewers can relate. This hyper energetic piece is driven by the frenetic beat of The Trashmen's "Surfin' Bird" song, and sound design by Michael Anastasi of Barking Owl in West Los Angeles.

Finishing fourth in our rundown is Gillette's "Shave Forth," a curious, charmingly absurd music video promoting the Gillette body hair razor out of Grey NY. The video is all about confidence—reflected in such antics as synchronized swimming by gents who are properly manscaped thanks to Gillette. The music clip is set to an EDM track created expressly for the project by DJs From Mars and Dr. Lecktruluv. Music house was Human, NY.

And rounding out our Top Five in Music & Sound for 2015 is Macy's "The Wish Writer" from J. Walter Thompson, NY. The short introduces us to a girl who is finding it hard to believe in the spirit of the holidays. That all changes when she and her brother discover a pen with magical wish-granting powers. The siblings then spread the magic of giving and generosity throughout town—one wish at a time. The enchanting story is advanced by a score from Yessian Music, NY.



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From Pre-Roll To Features

The creative potential of content is being realized across varied fronts; borders continue to blur

A SHOOT Staff Report

In a year when pre-roll ad fare became must-see creative—with The Martin Agency winning its first ever Cannes Grand Prix for Geico’s “Unskippable-Family”—the takeaway is that any platform, even one previously regarded as devoid of innovation, has the potential to be entertaining and engaging.

In some respects, this underscores that 2015 has been a year when the walls figuratively came down separating television, features and all things audio-visual (even humorous, strategically savvy pre-roll videos). Indeed content has creative promise whether it be on cinema, TV, computer or mobile device screens. And those who realize that promise, be they movie or TV producers, brands, ad agencies, clients, video game creators or aspiring filmmakers can break through and find an audience.

Furthermore the borders separating different forms and platforms continue to dissipate. Television itself is more than the TV set. Platforms from Netflix to Hulu and Amazon took firmer hold this year. Their profound influence on content is evident on assorted fronts. Earlier this month, for example, the International Documentary Association presented its Pioneer Award to Ted Sarandos, chief content officer at Netflix, in recognition of the company’s game-changing and unwavering support of creating and showcasing nonfiction programming. The

Pioneer Award is presented by the IDA to acknowledge extraordinary contributions to advancing the nonfiction form and providing exceptional vision and leadership to the documentary community.

Meanwhile Amazon’s *Transparent* won assorted awards, including a Best Director Emmy for its creator Jill Soloway and Best Comedy Actor distinction for Jeffrey Tambor. Amazon also just released its first feature film, Spike Lee’s *Chi-Raq*. Via its Original Movies division Amazon plans to turn out about a dozen films annually that will hit theaters prior to running exclusively on the company’s streaming service. (See this week’s SHOOT Chat Room interview with director/writer/producer Lee.)

Just as Amazon has spread its wings to TV and features, so too has the barrier between those two disciplines become porous in the marketplace at large. Leading feature filmmakers, writers and producers continue to gravitate to the smaller screen during this new Golden Age of Television. And in 2015 this has manifested itself in different ways. Consider the recently concluded Gotham Film Awards, the Independent Film Project’s celebration of independent filmmaking, which for the first time has extended its reach to smaller screens, adding categories for TV and digital content. Winning best long-form series was the USA series *Mr. Robot*. And earning the Gotham Film Award for

Breakthrough Series–Short was the web show *Shugs and Fats*.

For perspectives on this brave new world, including such new wrinkles as virtual reality, SHOOT sought out a cross-section of the industry to share their assessments of 2015 spanning significant trends, developments, strategies, issues and their best work. These executives responded to several or to all of the following questions:

1) What industry trends or developments were most significant in 2015?

2) How did your company adapt or adjust to the marketplace in 2015? (diversification, new resources and talent in different areas, new strategies, etc.)

3) What work in 2015 are you most proud of? (Please cite any unique challenges encountered)

4) What do you think the “next big thing” in production or post will be in 2016?

Here are excerpts from the feedback we received. Full responses can be found on SHOOTonline and in the SHOOT>e.dition along with responses from additional execs including: Nick Litwinko of Alkemy X; Michael Pardee of The Mission; Wendy Rosen of TwoPoint0; Jonathan Schwartz of Washington Square Films; and Alberto Scirocco of leftchannel.



Matt Bijarchi
CEO
Blend

1) The continued shift of marketing spend towards original social media content, live experiences and mobile-first marketing was the dominant trend we saw in 2015. For us at Blend, 2015 signaled a litmus test of sorts where we witnessed first hand marketers realizing that to achieve their desired consumer engagement results they had to increase their investment in non-traditional content and technology platforms. Plain and simple. It’s a welcomed relief relative to original social content because ‘earned’ social efforts, while critical to sustainable, long-term consumer engagement, can only take a brand so far. TV remains the most powerful spend, yes, and TV isn’t going away. But TV is TV. It’s effectiveness doesn’t translate across media channels, and I do believe that fact has finally caught up with the industry as a whole. As a result spending on mobile, social and live event engagement has increased significantly and will continue to do so in 2016.



James Bray
Executive Creative Director
M&C Saatchi LA

1) Content is being abused. Unless you’re Lady Gaga, Taylor Swift or Red Bull, the masses don’t care deeply about what you’re putting out there. However, many see content as marketing du jour and creativity has given way to volume. They just refuse to put Twitter down. As a result, there’s just too damn much stuff out there. There’s no way a clothing or detergent brand is going to compete with the Jimmy Fallons of the world. And yes, that’s who we’re competing with.

I like the DC Shoes approach. They drop one or two pieces every six months, because they know fans are not trolling their channels daily. And those pieces always blow well beyond the confines of their followers. No one watches Netflix all day – the same is true for social. But if the content is good enough it finds its way to us. And gets talked about on everyone else’s channels. This is what our industry means by surprise and delight. Make innovative and creative ideas, and results will follow.

YEAR IN PERSPECTIVE



Andrew Christou
Chief Creative Officer
Publicis Seattle

1) Content, digital, social, engagement, disruption, CRM, DDR, OOH, TV. Enough to give anyone A.D.D.

Watching trends in advertising is like watching little kids play soccer. Everyone chases the latest buzzword with hopes of telling clients “we got this.” But really, the most significant trends in 2015 were the same for the last 30 years. The agencies that understand and translate their brands’ “tone of voice” or “essence” into meaningful communications are winning, regardless of the platform.

2) Speed. Pure Speed. Our biggest client — T-Mobile — moves in real time. Telecom is ferociously competitive and having the right talent is imperative. We look for people who actually enjoy the heat and can deliver from brief to air in 4-6 days — And still smile about. Same with our production partners. We’ve had times where we’ve cut for six hours and presented to client that evening. We adapt both internal and external resources and use different mediums to react to market forces. Sometimes it’s purely a social play, sometimes it is big TV. The beauty of adapting our team to the one we have now is that there is no client we can’t think smartly for. Our more traditional timelines are a luxury for us.



Brett Craig
Executive Creative Director
Deutsch LA

1) Brands demanding more digital content — faster and for less money. This year was a tipping point. The metrics are telling clients they simply can’t get the impressions they want via television anymore. TV is still powerful, but for youth brands, in particular, reach is a real challenge. On Taco Bell and Dr Pepper, we’re doing more content, like promoted ads on Facebook and Twitter than ever before. In fact, on Taco Bell, there wasn’t a single assignment where this kind of content wasn’t a deliverable.



Sally-Ann Dale
Chief Creation Officer
Droga5

1) Mobile video with Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook and Instagram leading the charge. Influencer-led campaigns. And seeing the beginning of what can be achieved with VR.

3) Of course there is a lot that I am proud of! From a producer’s standpoint: Under Armour—the broadcast, print and integrated work is all beautifully crafted. Our latest Prudential 4.01K Race For Retirement was a massive integrated production effort that put together a race for thousands of runners in Washington, DC. It was a pretty great experience.

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Observations and Insights From The Advertising Agency,

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Tom Duff
President
Optimus

1) The first words out of everyone's mouths are "shrinking budgets are killing us." That's certainly not new for 2015, but increasing at warp speed. Our challenge is to maintain the creative quality while still being able to buy a beer once in a while.

We can also talk about mobile being today's #1 platform and using that to figure what kind of content is created. But no matter the size, the length or how long it lives, at the end of the day storytelling is still the backbone of selling your brand—just make sure you grab their attention in the first three seconds.



Tom Dunlap
Chief Production Officer
72andSunny

1) The validation of the social influencer as a bonafide media and production force. Leading up to 2015, there was a lot of buzz about how brands should leverage influencers and their social channels. But in 2015, we saw social influencers legitimized as a creative partner for major brands, not just for small brands with limited budgets.

2) Creating at the speed of culture. One of 72andSunny's biggest production opportunities was to build the systems and tools that allowed our brand partners to have relevant and timely conversations with their audiences and consumers. The challenge has been to create at the speed that culture moves while maintaining quality. This resulted in us building HECHO EN 72, our in-house studio and production company which is designed to provide bespoke production solutions for 72andSunny and our brands.



Elizabeth Furze
Managing Partner
AKA NYC

1) As an agency that specializes in entertainment advertising, we have always focused on making our advertising entertaining. In 2015, we saw more of our clients get on board with the idea that we could utilize integrated TV and online campaigns to distribute content that, as a whole, was able to tell a richer story to potential consumers and ticket purchasers. More people find out about live events in 2015 by browsing the Internet than they do from word of mouth or ads. In a recent Google Performing Arts study 26% of respondents reported online video as most influential in impacting their likelihood to go to a performance. With Performing Arts ticket buyers now watching 5 million YouTube videos every month, the same Google

study shows their likelihood of buying a ticket to a live event after watching related videos increase up to 6 times. Video content is now more important than ever to our industry and 2015 has seen us create more exclusive video content than ever to authentically showcase the experiences we are selling.



Cedric Gairard
Head of Integrated Production
Johannes Leonardo

1) Across the board, I would say 'collaboration' — not just from the perspective of consumers/influencers contributing to brand building, but the fact that more than ever 'great' and 'smart' cannot be done without everyone having skin in the game. In the game of "No risk. No reward," all parties (client, agency, production partners) can do better at playing ball. It follows the success and impact of the collaboration economy, with examples like Airbnb, Uber, Kickstarter, and Etsy.

Continuing into 2016, mobile will keep demanding new ways to plan and execute with dramatic shifts in consumer behavior, and harvesting the abundance of data to make better creative will remain a challenge.

In 2015, there was no more room for using buzzwords like agility, transparency, or simplify. It was time to deliver in order to retain and grow business.



Judge Graham
Chief Digital Officer
Ansira

1) The proliferation of data modeling & activation (1st & 3rd party)

The buzz word Omni-channel

Attribution & Media Mix Modeling

Programmatic Media (Display/TV)



Diane Jackson
Chief Production Officer
DDB Chicago

1) With more than half of U.S. Internet usage already coming from mobile devices, there's no reason to expect that trend will end anytime soon.

Mobile data usage rose 69% last year, and 55% of mobile data traffic was from video. The mobile ad industry as a whole grew 34% year over year.

Vertical screens and content is becoming increasingly popular and Snapchat for example, with its 100 million daily active users, is all about vertical ads and says users watch them nine times more frequently than they watch horizontal ads in its app. In a world where we are always on, brands need to connect in real-time, with relevant advertising. We are moving to a place where brands will really know us — and they'll be able to get their messages in front of us when we are most likely to act.

Wearables will help accelerate this but a word of caution... there are strong indicators that there is an increase in consumer skepticism as sorting the wheat from the chaff is becoming loathsome.

Production Company and Postproduction Communities



Colin Jeffery
Chief Creative Officer
David&Goliath

4) We'll see quality video content produced more quickly and cost effectively, with agencies expanding their content studios and production companies becoming more competitive. From a VFX standpoint, we'll start to see an increase in the use of CAD data. Product designs can be easily updated and accessed by vendors via cloud based libraries. It's a quick, effective method impacting how we produce video and still assets.



Jesse Korosi
Director of Workflow Services
Bling Digital-The SIM Group

1) Within 2015 more and more on set DIT's started live grading remotely. We certainly had the odd person do this in the past, but more and more DP's this year have opted to not have their DITs tethered to their cameras. Running a live grade system with a Teradek for taking the wireless signal was seen often, as well as other more unique workflows like running FoolControl for controlling a RED camera remotely. Another great development we have seen within 2015 is the release of DNxHR codecs for Avid. Having the ability to edit in 4k for your offline cut is starting to gain a lot of traction with our non scripted dramatic work.



Jackie Lee
Senior VP, Features
Company 3

1) Company 3 mastered the first Dolby Vision feature, Tomorrowland, and we're very proud of the work our colorists and technical team have done in the field of HDR. Also, a lot of filmmakers have been very excited about the possibilities of working with the ARRI 65 camera and we've posted some of the early projects to use the format. Our dailies division, EC3, has had its biggest year ever because so many productions are finding out how useful it is to have dailies graded and deliverables made right near the set, whether it's on a stage or in a remote location anywhere in the world.



Greg Lotus
Executive Director of Integrated Production
Y&R New York

1) The most significant is the continuing trend of producing an array of content, experiential and digital while being extremely cost efficient and keeping a high level of quality. There are a lot of screens to fill and there is a year's worth of content uploaded to YouTube each day. It's more and more challenging to create something that stands out and gets noticed, and to do it with the lightning speed that is required.



Geoff McGann
Co-founder and COO
McGann|Zhang

1) The industry is becoming more and more committed to finding ways of creating positive impact in the world. This is not only expected from brands, it is crucial to success in business today. For marketers, we see proof of this in the creative work, and with the rise of sustainability job titles and increased CSR budgets. Also, the true integration of ideating and producing given that content is content not tv or digital or the like. Expectations are high for streamlining the process within much slimmer budgets while inciting the same result.



Lisa Mehling
Owner
Chelsea Pictures

3) Henry Mason's Dixie 'Dark for Dinner' for Droga5 was slated to be 3 spot campaign and grew into a 14 spot social conversation. David Gordon Green's Nike Ducks for Wieden Portland was far and away the most fun with so many well known Oregon alums in one room going nuts. Nadav Kander's NFL/No More for Grey was a powerful project to be involved with helping curb the perennial problem of Domestic Violence- and the NFL was bold enough to air it on the Superbowl.













Kate Morrison
Head of Content Production
BBH New York

1) I think that 2015 saw the resurgence — refreshingly — of the Big Idea. As media gets more and more fragmented the primacy of the big idea becomes more and more important. I feel that the things that really managed to cut through this year — whether it was Always' like a girl, RGA's True Love or the XXXX Anti-Nazi March — really had a great and important idea at the heart of them. I think there is a social movement afoot in the world at the moment where consumers are calling for more transparency and accountability from their brands and I think that creates a great opportunity for us to really push messaging that means something. Advertising at it's best has the ability to change and progress the cultural landscape and I think that using our creative firepower for that is huge, meaningful and important. It was nice to feel those sorts of ideas making a real comeback in 2015.

Continued on page 23

MUSIC & SOUND

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Macy's "The Wish Writer" Yessian New York Brian Yessian, chief creative officer; Dan Zank, composer/arranger; Weston Fonger, sound designer; Gerard Smerek, creative mixer/music; Marlene Bartos, exec producer.	Yessian New York Weston Fonger, audio engineer	J. Walter Thompson, New York Paul Greco, director of music	Smuggler, bicoastal Filip Engstrom, director
2	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Microsoft's "Peace on Fifth" JSM Music, New York Joel Simon, music director/CCO; Doug Katsaros, choir director.	Sonic Union, New York Steve Rosen, mixer; Justine Cortale, studio director	m:united//McCann, New York	Tool of North America, Santa Monica, Calif. Erich Joiner, director
3	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Pepsi's "Uncle Drew, Chapter 4" Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif. Andrew Feltenstein, John Nau, composers; Leslie DiLullo, EP/head of production; Mike Franklin, sound designer; Aaron Cornacchio, assistant sound designer.	Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif. Mike Franklin, mixer; Aaron Cornacchio, assistant mixer; Erin Reilly, exec producer.	Davie Brown Entertainment, Marina del Rey, Calif.	O Positive, bicoastal Jonathan Klein, director
4	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	JBL's "CordFail Effect" Q Department, New York Music Henryboy, Brooklyn, NY Bill Chesley, sound designer; Kate Gibson, exec producer.	Soundlounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	BBH New York	Smuggler, bicoastal Guy Shelmardine, director
5	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Volvo's "No Snow" Bang, New York Lyle Greenfield, Naren Rauch, composers; Brian Jones, producer.	Gramercy Park Studios, New York Colin Blendell, mixer	Grey New York Josh Rabinowitz, EVP/director of music; Ben Dorenfeld, music producer	None (already existing footage deployed)
6	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Autism Speaks' "Signs of Autism: Jacob's Story" Human, New York	Corey Bauman, mixer	BBDO New York Melissa Chester, executive music producer	Lobo Productions, Brooklyn, NY Guilherme Marcondes, director
7	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Ad Council/Anti-Bullying's "I Am A Witness" Mutato Muzika, Los Angeles Mark Mothersbaugh, composer stimming, Santa Monica, Calif. Gus Koven, sound designer	One Union, San Francisco Joaby Deal, mixer	Goodby Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Moonbot Studios, Shreveport, LA Limbert Fabian, Jake Wyatt, directors
8	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Audi's "The Forecast" SOUTH, Los Angeles Barking Owl, West Los Angeles Rommel Molina, sound design	Barking Owl, West Los Angeles Rommel Molina, mixer	Venables Bell & Partners, San Francisco	Smuggler, bicoastal The Guard Brothers, directors
9	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Celebrity Cruises' "Two Thirds" Elias, bicoastal Vincenzo LoRusso, music executive creative director; Vicki Ordeshook, music EP; Katie Overcash, music head of production.	M Squared, San Francisco Mark Pitchford, engineer; Sarah Benedict, mix producer.	Venables Bell & Partners, San Francisco	None (licensed and client footage)
10	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Ritz Carlton Hotels' "Little Ballerina" HiFi Project, Los Angeles Garth Neustadter, composer; Paul Robb, creative director; Birgit Roberts, exec producer	Team One, Los Angeles William McGuigan, mixer	Team One, Los Angeles	The Roster, Los Angeles Gizmo, director

Q Department, Shelmerdine Delve Into VR For Muse



Muse's "Revolt"

Via virtual reality studio Vrse.works, Guy Shelmerdine directed English rock band Muse's first VR music video, a 360° immersive experience for their track, "Revolt." The VR video was created in partnership with Apple Music, and with VR sound by Dražen Bošnjak of Q Department in association with its sound technology company Mach 1

In this reimagined music video experience, Muse's performance fuels an explosive riot. The video is set within a dystopian future, where rebel women fight against cold cyborg riot police. Shelmerdine cleverly weaves the story through the POV of drones, hovering above (and interacting with) the mayhem. The result is a sweeping, epic, cyber-punk VR experience. "Revolt" was shot on location in Prague. The "Revolt" track is from Muse's latest album, "Drones."

Amber Scores For Johnnie Walker, Anomaly

Amber Music has produced the score for Part Two of Johnnie Walker Blue Label's *The Gentlemen's Wager*, starring Jude Law, Giancarlo Giannini and Zhao Wei. *The Gentleman's Wager II* film was released on YouTube and the Johnny Walker website.

Directed by RSA's Jake Scott, the 10-minute film was created by CCO Mike Byrne and creative director Mark Sarosi of Anomaly NY, with Winslow Dennis producing for the agency. The short tells the story of Law's journey through Italy and France (ending in Monaco) in a vintage race car he wants to win as the result of a bet he made with Giannini. The music is all loosely based on 1960s film scores, with that humorous feel typical of Italian movies from that time. "We were looking for a score that acted as another character in the film, music that lived in the narrative and helped bring the different emotions to life," said Byrne.

Amber created 7 minutes of original music, composed by Mark Tewarson and produced by Michelle Curran. The track includes music by Plastic Bertrand, with contributions from Eclectic. Amber mastered the tracks on 1/4" tape to aid in creating an authentic 1960s sound.

A Magical Score For Macy's *Yessian tops Chart for short The Wish Writer*

A SHOOT Staff Report

Just when a young girl is finding it hard to believe in the spirit of the holidays, she and her brother discover a pen with magical wish-granting powers. The siblings then spread the magic of giving and generosity throughout town—one wish at a time. That's the Xmas story captured in this short film for Macy's, *The Wish Writer*, directed by Filip Engstrom of Smugler for J. Walter Thompson New York.

Helping to advance the story are music and sound design from Yessian New York with Brian Yessian serving as CCO, Dan Zank as composer/arranger, Weston Fonger as sound designer and audio post mixer, Gerard Smerek as creative mixer/music, and Marlene Bartos as EP.

Bartos related, "Creating the music for a campaign like this is a big undertaking as you need to be telling a story and to evoke an emotional response. Our aim

was to create a magical experience and give the viewer goosebumps. We had to write a theme that would draw people into the story and give them the sense that they are experiencing every moment with the boy and girl. And by the end of the film, the icing on the cake is if we have created a sound that sheds a tear or two."

Bartos noted, "We have worked for Macy's over the years for holiday campaigns as well as their iconic 'One Day Sale' campaign that had been used for over five years. This project came together fairly quickly and we worked hand in hand with J. Walter Thompson and its music producer Paul Greco to craft something that would spark something magical. It all stemmed from the original 3-minute film and from there we had to re-tell the story in :90/:30/:15 formats which is not always easy when you have the time to tell a story in 3 minutes initially."

Continued from page 21



Thomas Murphy
Co-Chief Creative Officer
McCann New York

3) We just broke our first big campaign for the New York Lottery — "You'd Make a Way Better Rich Person". I love that the campaign speaks to a cultural truth, and how the idea can come to life in so many ways. We also just launched a holiday idea for Office Depot OfficeMax called "The Co-Worker Collection". It started with a very simple digital business idea, but became way more.



John Noble
EP/Partner
The Traveling Picture Show Company

1) In the garment industry the word "trend" is often used relating to the latest and greatest, but also inevitably resulting in a passing fad. Much like the fashion world the luster of the newer technical developments such as 3D, Virtual Reality (VR), and Aerial Drone Photography will fade. They won't truly disappear, but none of it will be ultimately significant art form in the grand scheme in the commercial/branded space. New tools, new technologies allow us to do more but as in all artistic mediums the truly talented artists, the directors, the editors, and the agency creatives will be the ones who create something truly unique and special with those tools. Story first. Technique second. One development, however, I do see sticking around for a while is the emergence of Non Scripted/Experiential spot and branded work. It seems to be a medium where some good content has been produced already but it seemingly has legs with plenty more room to grow.



David Rolfe
Director of Integrated Production
BBDO New York

1) I've seen a few interesting polarized trends, that are either colliding or assimilating, depending how you look at it.

Firstly, we are experiencing at times understandable production commoditization, from both a production discipline standpoint as well as the finished construct itself, at a time when distinguished craft and production skills — whether through creative, production or direction — couldn't be more important. Creating distinguished work requires distinguished methods. And I'll fall for just about any Federer YouTube/FB video, but I'm a stalker, not a robot.

Additionally, I think it's important to bear more of a video mentality in the creation of our content. I see the industry at-large continue to start from a premium (bigger-budget) context and, with blazing attrition, work down. There's a better path, as we evolve from "execution perfection" toward "execution occasion." Big idea, big execution will always wow and motivate, but engagement works in steady streams, and we need to stock the stream. With an up-front video mindset, we've been working hard to carry off that work reasonably and effectively.

Continued on page 30

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

TITLE

VISUAL EFFECTS/ANIMATION

AGENCY

PRODUCTION

1


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Make-A-Wish
Alaska and
Washington's
"Alexis's Wish"**

World Famous, Seattle

Dan Brown, director; Juan Carlos Arenas, art direction, character design and backgrounds; Alan Nay, executive producer; Shawn Fedorchuk, Thomas Prince, Andy Seaver, editors; Rogelio Salinas, lead animator; Yassir Rasan, lead character animator; Ben Bullock, Cody Cobb, Joe Garber, Chase Hochstatter, Corey Lewis, Alan Llave, John McIntosh, Andy Musser, Carl Nelson, Stieg Retlin, Jake Wegesin, Lawrence Wyatt, animators.

(**Toolbox:** Adobe Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects, Premiere; Cinema 4D)

None

World Famous, Seattle

2


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Electronic
Arts' "Star
Wars
Battlefront"
(trailer)**

The Mill LA

Sue Troyan, sr. exec producer; Dan Roberts, producer; Chris Lewis, Anwei Chen, production coordinator; Chris Knight, shoot supervisor/2D lead artist; Koen Vroeijenstijn, shoot supervisor/3D lead artist; Jacob Bergman, Jason Jansky, 3D lead artists; Ben Smith, Scott Wilson, Robert Murdock, Tim Robbins, 2D artists; Bora Jurisic, Martin Rivera, Sharlene Lin, Matt Bohnert, Katie Yancey, Steven Olson, Monique Espinoza, Blake Guest, Berk Hakguder, Michael Archambault, Cory Cosper, Majid Esmaeili, 3D artists; Kyle Moore, Vinicius Naldi, Greg Park, motion graphics; Brett Lopinsky, Kelsey Napier, Matthew Dobrez, art department; Adam Scott, colorist; Thatcher Peterson, exec producer, color; Ali Struck, color producer; Diane Valera, production coordinator, color. (**Toolbox:** Flame, Flare, Nuke, After Effects, Cinema 4D)

Heat, San Francisco

MIZ, bicoastal/international
Dante Ariola, director

3


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Myers' "Where
Christmas
Comes For
Christmas"**

Aardman Animations, Bristol, UK

Steve Harding-Hill, director; Steph Owen, producer; Caroline Hague, production coordinator; Chris Entwistle, head of modelmaking; Mark Chamberlin, DP; Jeremy Hogg, lighting cameraman; Dave Osmond, animator; Jim Lewis, postproduction supervisor; Dan Hembrey, editor.

(**Toolbox:** Dragon, Flash, After Effects, Nuke, Resolve, Premiere)

Clemenger BBDO, Melbourne,
Australia

Aardman Animations, Bristol, UK
Steve Harding-Hill, director

4


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Autism
Speaks/Ad
Council's
"Signs of
Autism—
Jacob's Story"**

Lobo Productions, Brooklyn, NY

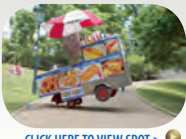
Guilherme Marcondes, director; Loic François Marie Dubois, creative executive producer; Aron Matschulat Aguiar, producer; Alexandre Elaiuy, Vince Vennitti, DPs; Eliza Flores, associate producer; Marcelo Righini, type designer; Carolina Azevedo, digital creative director

(**Toolbox:** Maya, Nuke)

BBDO New York

Lobo Productions, Brooklyn, NY
Guilherme Marcondes, director

5


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**JBL's "CordFail
Effect"**

Blacksmith, New York

Charlotte Arnold, exec producer; Iwan Zwarts, VFX supervisor, 2D lead; Dan DiFelice, compositor; Tom Bussell, CG lead; Teemu Eramaa, CG artist.

(**Toolbox:** Nuke, NukeX, NukeStudio, Photoshop, Houdini, V-Ray, Flame)

Windmill Lane, Dublin, Ireland

Lucas Georgescu, Fred Burdy, Richard Merrigan, CG artists; Clíodhna Long, producer.

Trace VFX, Mumbai, India

VFX, rotoscoping.

BBH New York

Smuggler, bicoastal/international
Guy Shermeldine, director

6


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Oreo's "Wonder
What's
Inside the
Holidays" Visual
Effects/
Animation**

Psyop New York

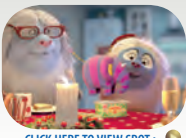
Fletcher Moules, director; Luisa Murray, Rich Ping, exec producers; Sanaz Sattari-Tabrizi, producer; Eric Escott, line producer; Jonathan Iwata, VFX supervisor; Julie Jang, 2D supervisor; John Geehreng, Flame artist.

(**Toolbox:** Photoshop, Flash, Nuke, Flame)

The Martin Agency,
Richmond, Va.

Psyop, New York
Fletcher Moules, director
Unit + Sofa, Prague
co-production unit

7


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Anchor
Spreadable's
"Little
Elephant"**

Passion Pictures, London

Kyra & Constantin, directors; Ryan Goodwin-Smith, exec producer; Matt Saxton, producer; Kirsty Ratcliffe, production assistant; Tim King, editor.

(**Toolbox:** Maya, Modo, Nuke, Arnold, ZBrush, Photoshop, Yeti, Houdini, Premiere)

Creature of London

Passion Pictures, London
Kyra & Constantin, directors

8


[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Hugo Boss'
"Boss Runway
Edition—The
Animated
Film"**

Not to Scale, London

Stephen Fuller, director; Phoebe Scott, producer; Prema Weir, animation lead/supervisor; Linda Johnson, Remi Borgeal, Sandra Guarda, Andrew Wilkin, Luca Paulli, animators.

(**Toolbox:** After Effects, Photoshop, Maya)

Grey London

Not to Scale, London
Stephen Fuller, director

9


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**Kia's
"Newspaper"**

Eight VFX

Jean-Marc Demmer, Philip Ineno, VFX supervisors; Damien Bataille, 3D lead; Shira Boardman, Baptiste Andrieux, exec producers; Ian Dawson, producer.

(**Toolbox:** Flame, Nuke, Maya, Houdini)

David&Goliath, Los Angeles

MIZ, bicoastal/international
Craig Gillespie, director

10


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**RSM's "The
Gauntlet"**

Carbon VFX, New York

Frank Devlin, exec producer; Kieran Walsh, creative director, Flame lead, VFX supervisor; Paul O'Beirne, sr. producer; Leo Nguyen, design director; Max Benjamine, CG artist; Chris Wiseman, Flame artist; Colin Travers, colorist; Joe Scaglione, assistant/tech ops.

(**Toolbox:** Autodesk Flame, Adobe Creative Suite, Cinema 4D, Nuke)

Luquire George Andrews (LGA),
Charlotte, NC

Cap Gun Collective
Ivan Grbovic, director



Mercedes-Benz's "Shattered"

MPCC' Breaks Glass For Mercedes
MPCC NY teamed with Merkley + Partners and director Nico Beyer of aWHITELABEL-product to bring a trio of spots, including "Shattered," to life for Mercedes-Benz. "Shattered" demonstrates to viewers how the Mercedes GLA's price and quality "shatters" expectations—along with surrounding objects as it passes by. As it drives through different environments, things begin to "shatter"—windows, neon signs, glasses, even fruit on a fruit stand, all leading up to the culminating shot of a theatre's brightly-lit marquee shattering.

The MPCC effects team helped creatively direct the way objects shattered, their timing, and how the series of shatters unfolds in each of the shots, particularly in the grand finale of the marquee.

New Boston Digs For Brickyard VFX

Brickyard VFX Boston has moved into a new 8,000-square foot studio near downtown Boston in the Leather District. The "new" home is in a 100-year old factory that was stripped to the studs and retrofitted with Brickyard's collection of vintage doors, furniture, walls, windows, and floors—including an 1890s carved oak bar and glass studded sidewalk from an old industrial neighborhood in Fitchburg, Mass. Brickyard was founded in 1999, and this marks the company's third location, moving from its previous Newbury Street home.

The new space houses seven Flame bays, multiple CG workstations, a four-wall edit room, expanded production offices, and a screening room to facilitate virtual grading sessions with Company 3 colorists in L.A., NY and Atlanta.

Brickyard maintains shops in Boston and Santa Monica, Calif.

Alexis's Wish Tops The List

Girl, World Famous create animated tale

A SHOOT Staff Report

Seattle-based production studio World Famous has partnered with Make-A-Wish Alaska and Washington to grant a wish for six-year-old Alexis, who recently battled acute lymphoblastic leukemia. Alexis wanted to create a cartoon that would tell her own story in a way her friends could understand and bring awareness to pediatric cancer. The three-minute *Alexis's Wish* is a powerful yet whimsical fairy tale starring Princess Alexis as herself battling the dragon "Kemia" with the help of her family and friends.

Alexis's Wish tells her tale starting at the age of three when we see her with friends at a party celebrating her birthday. But lurking in the weeds is a disease embodied in a foreboding creature. She is stricken by the dragon "Kemia" but soon learns that she cannot run away from the disease but instead has to fight

it, with the counsel of a hospital nurse who transforms into a fairy godmother-like being. The nurse/fairy godmother tells Alexis of a magic wand she needs to obtain but the quest will make her weak and she will lose her beautiful hair. Helping Alexis in that quest are her family and friends—friends who at first left her alone when she was sick, afraid that they too would get the disease. These friends, though, overcame their fear and rallied to aid Alexis. Ultimately we see Alexis well again and blowing out the candles on her birthday cake as she turns five years old.

"We really wanted Alexis's involvement at every stage of the process—from story to design to even having her come in for a VO session to play herself," said World Famous ECD Daniel Brown, who directed the short film. "It's her story, so we really wanted her to inspire everything that happens in the film."

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DPs Roger Deakins, Janusz Kaminski Discuss Collaborating

Continued from page 9

Times Magazine for a dozen years. Landesman covered the conflicts in Rwanda, Kosovo and the post 9/11 worlds of Afghanistan and Pakistan. As a reporter, he delved into trafficking networks involved in sex slaves, weapons, illegal drugs, stolen and forged art and antiquities. "I was often involved in investigations where the shape of the story wasn't obvious. You had to dig to pull the story out and define it. I learned that politics and ideology rarely inform why anyone does anything. Instead the driving forces are quite human—greed, appetite, desire, shame, and after the fact political labels are sort of retroactively placed on this behavior."

So in the case of *Concussion*, while there was much information for Landesman to gather and sift through, ultimately the movie tells a story about human beings—Omalu, his wife and the colleagues who supported him. "At the end of the day, you're focused on the human story, with Dr. Omalu being the focus," said Landesman. "There are many interesting characters and their perspectives on the story are worthwhile. That was one of the biggest challenges I faced. As a writer I was challenged by the number of compelling threads to the story and I had to somehow weave those threads into a single, compelling rope. As a director, this meant having to make some tough choices. We had shot stuff with some strong performances but ultimately I couldn't use these scenes because they took away from or didn't reflect Bennet's journey. The journey Will [Smith] took us on had to take priority."

Helping to capture that journey on film were various collaborators, including DP Salvatore Totino, ASC, AIC, and editor William Goldenberg, ACE. This marked the first time Landesman worked with Totino. *Concussion* also marked a return to football for Totino who after starting his career in commercials and music videos landed his first theatrical feature as a DP—director Oliver Stone's football drama *Any Given Sunday*. Totino has gone on to enjoy a fruitful relationship with director Ron Howard spanning such films as *Frost/Nixon*, *Cinderella Man*, *The Da Vinci Code*, and the upcoming *Inferno*. While *Concussion* is slated for an Xmas Day release, another film shot by Totino—director Baltasar Kormakur's *Everest*—recently

bowed and is gaining Oscar buzz.

Landesman said he was drawn to Totino for *Concussion* based on his prior work which the director described as being "muscular, lively and beautiful. Sal has a beautiful eye. His camera movement is subtle yet strong. And I also like him very much as a human being."



(R-L) Emily Blunt, Victor Garber, Phil Cooper, Reggie Wayne in *Sicario*

As for Goldenberg, Landesman worked with him previously. Goldenberg served as an edit consultant on *Parkland*, Landesman's feature directing debut. Goldenberg is a five-time Academy Award nominee, winning the Oscar in 2013 for *Argo* (he was also nominated that same year for *Zero Dark Thirty*). Goldenberg's other Oscar noms came for *The Insider* in 2000 (shared with Paul Rubell and David Rosenbloom), *Seabiscuit* in 2004, and *The Imitation Game* earlier this year. Landesman described Goldenberg as "the most interesting and efficient editor in the movie business. He's worked with Michael Mann for many years [on such films as *Heat* and *Ali*]. Michael is a filmmaker I respect. I admire the look of his movies. Billy's cutting pattern is deeply psychological. His cuts reflect and almost mimic what characters are feeling and going through. He brought that to *Concussion*."

As for what's next for writer/director Landesman, the answer is *Felt* which will star Liam Neeson as Mark Felt who under the name "Deep Throat" helped *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein uncover the Watergate scandal in 1975. Landesman is scheduled to begin production on *Felt* in March.

Sicario

Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC, finds "The

Road To Oscar" to be a most familiar path, having been a Best Cinematography nominee 12 times, the first coming in 1995 for *The Shawshank Redemption* and the most recent this year for *Unbroken*. In between came Oscar noms for: *Fargo*; *Kundun*; *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*; *The Man Who Wasn't There*; *No Country For Old Men*;

conventional action. We wanted a viewpoint to it. We put the audience in Kate's position. Then it shifts to Alejandro's (Benicio Del Toro) perspective as we start to understand him more as a character. And finally we arrive at the perspectives of both Kate and Alejandro. It's kind of a split perspective at the end. Denis steered away from coverage of action just to make it exciting. He went after a personal kind of perspective on the action—the perspective of leading characters."

For *Sicario*, Deakins went with the ARRI Alexa XT. "It's the best digital camera, with strong color fidelity. It feels much more naturalistic than any other digital camera," assessed Deakins. "Also the XT Studio has an optical viewfinder which relies on my vision—I prefer it over the electronic viewfinder. The Alexa with ARRI/Zeiss master primes supported the subjective points of view Denis and I wanted for *Sicario*."

Deakins' collaborative relationship with Villeneuve will extend beyond *Prisoners* and *Sicario*. The DP is slated to lens for Villeneuve what's referred to as *The Untitled Blade Runner Project*. Inherently

The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford; *The Reader* (shared with Chris Menges); *True Grit*; *Skyfall*; and *Prisoners*.

Though he is yet to win the Oscar, Deakins scored a related prize when he was called upon several years back to introduce director Denis Villeneuve to a gathering at an Academy Award-related evening function. "That's how I met Denis," recalled Deakins. "A year later, I heard he would be directing a film, *Prisoners*, in America. I loved his work, the films he made in Canada. *Incendies* was a fabulous film. I put my hat in the ring for *Prisoners* and was fortunate enough to get the opportunity to shoot that film for Denis."

For *Prisoners*, Deakins wound up earning nominations for both the ASC Award and an Oscar in 2014. (Deakins has 13 career ASC Award nominations, including four wins—*The Shawshank Redemption* in 1995, *The Man Who Wasn't There* in 2002, *True Grit* in 2011, and *Skyfall* in 2013.)

Now Deakins is once again in the awards season conversation, this time for *Sicario* (Lionsgate), his return engagement with director Villeneuve. For Deakins, the perspective of the story was key. "Denis and I talked about that a lot and thought it had to be centered for the most part primarily around Kate [portrayed by Emily Blunt]. We didn't want to just shoot



Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC

that movie poses a daunting challenge given the seminal visual pedigree of the original *Blade Runner* directed by Ridley Scott and shot by the legendary Jordan Cronenweth, ASC. Cronenweth, who passed away in 1996, had won the BAFTA Award for Best Cinematography on the strength of *Bladerunner*.

Bridge of Spies

Cinematographer Janusz Kaminski's first feature with director Steven Spielberg was *Schindler's List* in 1993. They have gone on to work on more than a

With Filmmakers Denis Villeneuve and Steven Spielberg

dozen films together. Kaminski has been nominated for an Oscar six times, winning twice for Spielberg films: *Schindler's List* in 1994; and *Saving Private Ryan* in 1999. Kaminski also earned Oscar nominee status for *Amistad* in 1998, *War Horse* in 2012 and *Lincoln* in 2013, all Spielberg-helmed movies. Kaminski's remaining Oscar nom

ally, on the relationship between Donovan and Abel. A single light source peered through frosted covered windows, underscoring the coldness not only of the Cold War but also the first meeting of Donovan and Abel. Over time as a connection evolved between the characters, the cool light slowly gave way to warmer possi-

Spielberg and Kaminski have a knack for doing their best in tandem. "In some ways, our relationship has not changed," related Kaminski. "What I see from Steven is the continuous ability to be invigorated by material. He puts his creative thinking towards how to make characters more human, better—not necessarily more entertaining. He's collaborating with everybody—me, the actors, screenwriters—to do justice to the characters through the moviemaking process."

For *Bridge of Spies*, Kaminski went with a Panavision film camera, opting to shoot anamorphic with Hawk lenses to realize the desired look. "The lenses are not so perfect and pristine, which made them a fit for that time period, the Cold War era, we were trying to create."

Towards that end, Kaminski cited the contributions of production designer Adam Stockhausen. "He's a great artist and a great asset to us," said Kaminski of Stockhausen. "He didn't have the luxury of constructing a huge set. Instead he had to create worlds of the 1950s within a limited budget. He discovered a neighborhood in Poland that was touched by World War II. It was a well preserved neighborhood from 1945. Soviets did not go to that part of the city so nothing had been destroyed after World War II. We were able to incorporate what was there and then build on top of it. Adam had a vision to turn something like this into what we needed. That kind of eye is so valuable to Steven and me—particularly from a production designer who truly understands the story we're trying to tell. Adam also managed to find some locations in Berlin that worked

for the exteriors after World War II."

Stockhausen is a two-time Oscar nominee, winning earlier this year for



Janusz Kaminski

Best Achievement in Production Design (shared with set decorator Anna Pinnock) for *The Grand Budapest Hotel*. Stockhausen's first nomination came in 2014 for *12 Years a Slave* (shared with set decorator Alice Baker).

This is the sixth in a multi-part series with future installments of The Road To Oscar slated to run in the weekly SHOOT>e.dition, The SHOOT Dailies, SHOOT's Jan./Feb. print issue (and PDF versions) and on SHOOTonline.com. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards. Nominations will be announced on January 14, 2016. The Oscars will be held on Sunday, February 28, 2016. The Oscar presentation will be televised live in more than 225 countries and territories worldwide. (For info on SHOOT's Academy Season "FYC Advertising" print, digital and email blast marketing opportunities, please visit <http://www.shootonline.com/fyc>.)



Bridge of Spies

was for director Julian Schnabel's *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* in 2008.

The latest pairing of Spielberg and Kaminski has yielded *Bridge of Spies* (Walt Disney Studios), a suspenseful drama that is based on a true story, taking us to the height of the Cold War when an American lawyer (James Donovan portrayed by Tom Hanks) is recruited to defend an arrested Soviet Spy (Rudolf Abel played by Mark Rylance) in court, and then help the CIA bring about an exchange of the spy for the Soviet captured American U2 pilot, Francis Gary Powers.

Kaminski's approach shed light, liter-

bilities. "Later you see the friendship between Abel and Donovan build until they eventually have to say goodbye to each other. At that point, there's a brightness as we see their concerns for each other," said Kaminski. "You see Donovan's concern over what life Abel is going to encounter back home. The possibilities of Abel being punished for possible collaboration with the FBI could be severe. The brightness with concerns evident is quite different from when their relationship started out in the shadows. Our approach was to set the proper environment for great actors like these to do what they do best."

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Info on the next print issue
<http://www.shootonline.com/go/upcomingissues>



Radiant Images Tripling in Size with Move to New Location Radiant Images, is expanding and moving into a 28,000-square-foot facility in Northeast Los Angeles to better meet the needs of its filmmaking clients, company officials announced.

Tour Target's Magical Wonderpack Factory in Film From Flavor Creative production studio Flavor was recently engaged by Target to promote the brand's playful line of curated, specially designed Wonderpacks that are now available on Target.com. The result is the '54 animated brand film currently appearing across Target's social media channels.

Warner/Chappell Music in 18 Golden Globe Award Nominated Films, Trailers & TV Shows Warner/Chappell Production Music announced that music from several of its catalogs appears within, or in promotional media for, 18 films, trailers and/or TV shows which have been nominated for a total of 35 Golden Globe Awards for 2016.

City Pass Partners with Teak and ZaneRay To Reimagine Brand Brands are always trying to find and solidify their voice, and there are many different ways to go about that. But it can often be a complex and difficult process, especially when there are few single agency resources that can truly "do it all," and do it well.

International Film Competition Opens The 2016 US International Film & Video Festival has been launched with early pricing through Dec. 31, 2015, and a final deadline of March 1, 2016. The Festival recognizes outstanding Corporate, Education, Entertainment, Documentary and Student productions.

Sarofsky Scales Powers for Transformative "Ant-Man" Titles Marvel's "Ant-Man" directed by Peyton Reed released recently on Blu-ray and video-on-demand, featuring main-on-end titles created by design-driven production company Sarofsky.

King and Country Creates New On-Air Identity For Chiller King and Country (K&C) has created the new on-air identity for horror network Chiller.

Corning Turns to Cogswell MediaWorks Students Produce Promo Video Students within Cogswell College's innovative MediaWorks program were recently retained by the Silicon Valley research group of Corning, to develop and produce an original short video describing the operations and opportunities to work with the Corning West Tech Center.

PostFactoryNY Hosts Post-Production of Acclaimed Film "Spotlight" *Spotlight*, director Tom McCarthy's powerful, new drama, tells the true story of the Boston Globe's investigation of child molestation by Catholic priests and the subsequent cover-up by the local archdiocese.

Sony Creates 4K Restoration of Rita Hayworth Musical "Cover Girl" Sony Pictures Entertainment recently completed an all-new 4K restoration of *Cover Girl*, director Charles Vidor's 1944 Technicolor musical that marked one of the first starring roles for Rita Hayworth.

Fried Okra Partners With Exec Producer Matt Hill Matt Hill has signed on as an Exec Producer and Partner with Fried Okra Entertainment, of Ft. Lauderdale and New York.

'A Reasonable Request' To Screen At The 2016 Sundance Film Festival *A Reasonable Request*, directed by Andrew Laurich and written by Laurich and Gabriel Miller, will screen in the Short Film Program at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival.

VFX Producer Andrea D'Amico Joins FuseFX Award-winning visual effects studio FuseFX has brought on veteran VFX Producer Andrea D'Amico. D'Amico arrives with more than 25 years of experience in visual effects, including tenures at Eden FX, Digital Domain, RIOT, P.O.P. and CIS Hollywood.

Ithaca College Chooses Cartoni Camera Support for HD Prod Facilities Ithaca College's Roy H. Park School of Communications recently selected Cartoni camera support products from Manios Digital & Film as part of an upgrade of its studio production facilities.

Ring The Alarm and Therapy Studios Form Creative Partnership Emmy®-Award winning post production house Therapy Studios and bicoastal music production company Ring The Alarm have teamed up to form a partnership that will allow for seamless music and sound offerings to clients in the advertising, film, and television industries.

Adria Petty Joins Wondros Founder Jesse Dylan announced that Adria Petty has joined the collective of noted directors at Los Angeles-based Wondros.

Generation Tough Stars in National Panasonic Toughpad Spot from Sigma Group and Wondersmith, Directed by Mortimer Jones Panasonic is currently showcasing an epic spot that features scores of hard-working professionals putting its Toughpad to use in countless situations and locations. Entitled "Generation Tough," the :100 and shorter versions of the spot were produced by Wondersmith and directed by the team of Mortimer Jones via advertising agency Sigma Group.

M&C Saatchi LA Launches Fighting Fitness Brand Gloveworx USA M&C Saatchi LA has partnered with Leyon Azubuike & Nick Henry to launch Gloveworx USA, Santa Monica, a place for people to get Fighting Fit.

New SCRATCH 8.4 Sets Pace For Advanced Features at a Affordable Price ASSIMILATE announced its new SCRATCH 8.4, the latest version of its advanced, real-time post-production tools and workflow.

Colonie's Innovative Talent and Award-Winning Work Takes Spotlight Top honors along with multiple wins at the AICE Camp Kuleshov competition, and The Midwest Independent Film Festival - showcase the full service company's accomplished talent and innovative work in a mix of genres

Visual Music Shakes Up California Earthquake Authority Visual Music recently completed scoring a series of TV and radio commercials for the California Earthquake Authority (CEA). The spots feature music from Emmy® Award-Winning composer Dean Grinsfelder and sound design by Academy® Award-Nominated expert Herwig Maurer.

ContagiousLA Director Jeff Jenkins Connects with the Ladies of UNSINGLE "Uncouth, unadulterated and unapologetically UNSINGLE" - that's how the women of LA-based sketch comedy group LadyPantz describe their first scripted series, an edgy comedy about three women teetering on 30 and the men who love them. The series launched recently on YouTube and is directed by ContagiousLA's Jeff Jenkins.

GPL Technologies Demonstrates NVIDIA Virtualization and Visualization Technology at Autodesk University GPL Technologies demonstrated new solutions for virtualization and visualization using the latest graphics acceleration technology from NVIDIA at Autodesk University in Las Vegas.

Valiant Director Vincent Lin Joins All-Star Team for "Pass It Forward" Sled Hockey Promotional Spots for Labatt USA An integrated campaign debuted all across America from Labatt USA with the goal of driving awareness and providing support for the growing sport of sled hockey.

Vagabond Production Services Expands To Dominican Republic, Cuba New York-based Vagabond Production Services has expanded, launching offices in the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

Cutters Assistant Editor David Rubin Named Camp Kuleshov International Grand Prize Winner in Editing Assistant Editor David Rubin of Cutters in Chicago has been named the top winner in the Editing category of the 2015 Camp Kuleshov competition, AICE's annual contest for assistant editors, audio mixers and graphic designers.

Levels Beyond Ranked Number 266 Fastest Growing Company in North America on Deloitte's 2015 Technology Fast 500 Levels Beyond announced it ranked #266 on Deloitte's Technology Fast 500™, a ranking of the 500 fastest growing technology, media, telecommunications, life sciences and energy tech companies in North America. Levels Beyond grew 272% percent during this period.

Brickyard VFX Boston Moves Into New Digs Brickyard VFX Boston has moved into a new 8,000-square foot studio near downtown Boston in the Leather District.

Modern Industry Pictures' Jeff Apps Lights Up Sycuan Casino, in the Heart of San Diego There's much to see and do each day in San Diego: Mission Beach, the Gaslamp, Petco Park, and more. as we learn in the :60 "Play.Win.Together," part of a TV, Radio and Outdoor campaign for Sycuan Casino. Directed by Jeff Apps of Modern Industry Pictures, and created by the client's in-house team.

East Lake Pet Orphanage Squash Blossom Studios Work on JFK Mini-Series and New Feature Film KKaren Fling, DVM and owner of East Lake Veterinary Hospital in Dallas announced Squash Blossom Studios provided supplies for the wardrobe crew of the new Hulu mini-series based on Stephen King's novel *11/22/63*, which follows a high school teacher who travels back in time to prevent the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The series was shot in Dallas in October and stars James Franco. All proceeds from Squash Blossom Studios projects go to benefit the orphans of East Lake Pet Orphanage.

For the full stories [and many more] and contacts and SPW videos with credits, visit SHOOT® Publicity Wire (spw.SHOOTonline.com). SPW is the best place to post your news or video release to amp up the "buzz" among the entertainment & advertising industries motion picture segments' movers and shakers from Hollywood to Bollywood and from Madison Avenue to Cannes and beyond. To get more info on how to "Toot Your Own Horn" via SPW visit pr.SHOOTonline.com



Networking, Extending Reach Via NY and London Shops

Continued from page 13

fects/animation studio Psyop, and the global Oreo campaign launched in early 2015 included animation from Brand New School.

On the flip side, last year's "Mel's Mini Mart" spot for Oreo was done entirely in-house via Hue & Cry and went on to score a 2015 AICP Show honor.

Executive creative director Calleja, who oversees creative on business that includes Oreo, described Hue & Cry as "a great little secret. We have been able to develop a full production company inside the building and they deserve a lot of credit for the work we do."

Humble, who heads development of in-house capabilities, noted that "we don't force anyone to work with our internal production units. People choose to work there based on the quality of work and service like any outside vendor."

And while Martin launched Hue & Cry and Running With Scissors, those units are actually part of an LLC owned by the Interpublic Group. Martin is a shop in the IPG family of companies.

The in-house digital production department and other in-house resources are available to work with advertising agencies and companies other than Martin. The digital production department in fact has done some outside work for agencies within IPG.

Networking

2015 has also seen The Martin Agency graduate its New York operation to a full-fledged shop with the hiring of executive creative director James Robinson who previously served as co-chief creative officer at 215 McCann.

The Martin Agency has additionally extended its reach internationally with Daniel Fisher who becomes the first executive creative director at Martin's new London office.

Kicking off the year with the landing of cable account Optimum, the New York office of Martin turned the corner. Around mid-year Robinson came on board and what had been a modest Manhattan presence centered on a group of designers has grown into a standalone operation of some 50 staffers servicing accounts such as Optimum and Madison Square Garden (which includes The Rockettes and the National



James Robinson

Basketball Association's New York Knicks). Furthermore work for Sunglass Hut is slated to break next year.

Robinson came up the ranks at 215 McCann, joining the San Francisco shop as creative director on Xbox in 2011, rising to executive creative director and ultimately co-chief creative officer. During his tenure there, 215 became agency of record for Pandora, Annie's Homegrown and Workday while expanding its Xbox portfolio to include digital responsibilities for the brand.

Prior to 215, Robinson was at Venables Bell & Partners, San Francisco, where he helped to run the successful pitch for Audi, and turned out lauded work for the Meth Project, cited by the White House as one of the most effective anti-drug programs of all time. Robinson began his agency career in New York as a writer at Mad Dogs & Englishmen.

Robinson noted that he joined The Martin Agency to not just build a NY office but also to help get a network [with Richmond and London] up and running.

"There are exceptions but in a lot of network shops, people closely guard their projects and their people," said Robinson. "At The Martin Agency we allow work and people to flow freely through the network. If there's a need, our resources can flow into Richmond to help meet that need. It's possible to actually do that because of the nature of Martin's culture—no egos, no turf. We've done this already as well as tapping into creatives in London. At the same time, we're putting more in place in New York. We now have three permanent creative teams here backed by the immense creative talent in Richmond. And we're still hiring more people in New York."

London executive creative director Fisher came over to Martin earlier this year from Adam&EveDDB, London, where he had a creative hand in U.K. retailer John Lewis' "Monty The Penguin" which won the Film Craft Grand Prix at Cannes in 2014.

Martin's CCO Alexander noted that the London and New York shops are part of a grand plan.

"We made a decision in the last year or so to start building a creative network, eventually with six or seven offices around the globe that can serve clients and compete against the best creative agencies in the world," related Alexander. "We're not looking for global dominance; instead, just a micro network of shops—with the Martin creative culture—to simply make good work."

Flash Back

December 10, 2010 Tor Myhren has been promoted to president of Grey New York. He remains the agency's chief creative officer and becomes the first creative ever to lead the agency's flagship office....Bicoastal Park Pictures is slated to open its first-ever London office January 1, 2011. The new hub will be run by executive producer Stephen Brierley, former head of production at Stink, London....Peter Nicholson has joined JWT New York as chief creative officer. He will be responsible for driving the creative vision and future growth of JWT's flagship office, reporting to David Eastman, CEO of JWT North America. A former JWT executive creative director, Nicholson returns to JWT from Redscout, where he held the title of chief creative officer. Nicholson joined 50-person Redscout to help move the marketing strategy and design-focused shop toward a more full-service creative offering, focused on consumer-oriented executions. During his time at Redscout, he worked on Activision, Diageo, Kate Spade, PepsiCo and Samsung. Prior to Redscout, Nicholson was chief creative officer at Deutsch New York where he pitched and won more than \$200 million in new business, garnering the USAA and PNC Bank accounts....Goodby, Silverstein & Partners has hired Joakim Borgstrom as creative director. He comes over from Wieden+Kennedy Amsterdam and will be working closely with Rick Condos and Hunter Hindman on Chevrolet....

December 9, 2005 Lisa Hinman, president of San Francisco-based Phoenix Edit.Effects.Design, has been elected president of the Association of Independent Creative Editors (AICE) for a two-year term starting on January 1, 2006. She will succeed Richard Gillespie, owner/editor of Fast Cuts Edits, Dallas.... Susan Credle has been promoted to executive creative director at BBDO New York....Alan Pfafenbach, managing partner/exec creative director at Arnold Worldwide, Boston, will leave the agency at the end of the year. He was one of the key creatives on the Volkswagen account which moved over to Crispin Porter + Bogusky....Frank Lowe, the founder of Lowe Worldwide, is launching an agency in partnership with several ad execs, including Paul Weinberger, former chairman of Lowe London....Web ad revenue hit a record quarterly high, surpassing \$3 billion from July-August 2005 according to figures released by the Internet Advertising Bureau. This total represents a nearly 34% increase over the revenue generated during the same three-month period in 2004....

See **SHOOT** in depth
Calendar of Industry Events
IndustryEvents.SHOOTonline.com

YEAR IN PERSPECTIVE

Industry Trends & Developments

Continued from page 23



Frank Scherma
President
@radical.media

1) Everyone is attempting to be producers and directors. But not everyone can deliver content that reaches consumers. Directorial talent and producing skills are still crucial in delivering content that works for brands.

Seems that we are on the "need it even faster" track than ever before. But getting paid seems to be slower than ever before.

2) We continue to expand our expertise in being storytellers in every medium available. Be it commercials, movies, TV shows, webisodes, music videos, location based entertainment, live events, apps, VR and everything you can throw at us.



Liz Silver
Executive Producer
Believe Media

1) In 2015 we felt the importance, more than ever, of the director's treatment—highly designed, produced packages often partially outsourced to visualists and writers, who comprise a newly created industry to support the demand.

There is the mindset for a very detailed commitment and director's approach to be presented upfront before jobs award. This seems to coincide with the abbreviated pre-production period—a critical phase of the filmmaking process where important collaboration with our partners and the exploration of ideas traditionally occur.



Sylvain Tron
Head of Content-North America
Company Havas Worldwide

1) In 2015, the industry realized that all of the access and technology available today actually allows us to go back to the basics of storytelling and to focus on the talent who create that. For the past several years, we got lost in the tools, put the technology at the forefront of what we were

doing while, too often, forgetting that the talent and the story are what the tools should be serving, not the other way around.

Looking back at 2015, I am very hopeful that we are going back to what we know how to do best - tell stories by investing time and energy in human talent.

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February 5, 12, 19, 26

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March/April Issue + PDF version

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street talk

Merman X Pulse--launched a couple of months ago by global content studio Pulse Films and transatlantic comedy production outfit Merman--has signed British director Peter Lydon, who recently wrapped a (SHOPATHON)RED spot starring Scarlett Johansson for Bono's (RED) shopping extravaganza, which features the likes of Snoop Dogg, The Weeknd, and Meryl Streep, co-produced by VICE Media. The spot premiered on Jimmy Kimmel Live last week. Lydon's credits span TV series such as Showtime's Secret Diary of a Call Girl, Channel 4's Shameless, and the BBC's Mistresses as well as commercials for Ikea, Carlsberg, Samsung and Sky Broadband. For the latter Lydon helmed the successful

Fairytale campaign in which The Princess and the Pea, The Emperor's New Clothes, and The Boy Who Cried Wolf were reimagined. His recent commercial work features stars who included Al Pacino, Benedict Cumberbatch and Joanna Lumley. In addition, Lydon wrote and directed the short film Dating Eliza which won several awards, including multiple honors at the L.A. Comedy Film Festival....L.A.-based creative studio Eskimo has added indie-bred filmmaker Nicole Dorsey to its directorial roster. The Toronto native brings a multi-faceted skillset to Eskimo, having not only worked on short and long-form films, but commercials for the likes of Arla, Nike, Nestle and Kashi....Editor Micah Scarpelli, who's worked with brands such as Mercedes-Benz, Subway, Reebok, Gillette and Volvo, has officially opened the doors to his own full-service, New York City-based editorial/postproduction company, Uppercut, which also features Joe Wenkoff as partner/creative director of VFX including finishing and color correction, and editor Alvaro del Val....

report

Indie firm **bueno** is representing editorial house **Cut + Run** and VFX studio **Jogger** on the West Coast. Cut + Run features an award-winning and diverse roster of talented editors for advertising and entertainment. The company's editors are available worldwide on location and via its offices in Los Angeles, New York, London, San Francisco and Austin.

Meanwhile Jogger is a visual effects and finishing company in Santa Monica led by executive producer Rich Rama and creative director David Parker....Cinematographer Alejandro Lalinde has joined the roster of Dattner Dispoto and Associates for representation. Lalinde was signed by DDA agent Juanita Tiangco. DDA additionally has booked DP Lyn Moncrief for the feature The Scent of Rain and Lightning being directed by Blake Robbins....DP Andrij Parekh has recently completed principal photography on Niki Caro's feature The Zookeeper's Wife starring Jessica Chastain and Daniel Bruhl. Parekh is again available for commercials, television, and feature films through The Skouras Agency, Santa Monica....Michael E. "Mike" Antonovich has been appointed to the newly created position of sr. VP, global sales for Media Global Links, a leader in media and data over IP transport solutions, and winner of a 2014 Technology and Engineering Emmy Award. Antonovich is an industry veteran, having served in a variety of operations, engineering, sales and executive positions for a diverse group of companies across the telecommunications spectrum. He has played key roles at organizations including ESPN, Group W Satellite, PanAmSat, Space-connection, Genesis Networks, Global Crossing, Roberts Communications, and ATEME....

Vagabond extends reach to Cuba, Dominican Republic



On location in Cuba

New York-based Vagabond Production Services has expanded, launching offices in the Dominican Republic and Cuba. The new locations will be led by seasoned local production talent, tapping into their cultural expertise to assist production companies, producers and directors to facilitate shoots in the two countries. They will be equipped to handle commercial, feature, content, event and still shoots.

The decision to move into the Caribbean was spearheaded by Vagabond producer Pablo Tourrenc, who currently runs the Colombian office.

"Pablo really took the initiative and made the effort to go to the Dominican and find the right people there," said NY and Geneva-based Vagabond EP/partner Lorenzo Benedick.

French-born, Swiss-raised and US-trained Tourrenc also led the expansion into Cuba, on the heels of the recent boost in US-Cuba relations and elimination of restrictions on the island.

Vagabond producer Javier Laiz will be managing operations in both the Dominican Republic and Cuba. With more than 15 years of experience in film production and advertising, Laiz began his career in Chile before moving to the Dominican Republic and Cuba to work in international and national production. In his new role, Laiz will be directly managing local operations on the ground to create the smoothest experience for clients.

The new locations join currently established branches in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Switzerland, Uruguay, the U.S. and Venezuela.

Illinois reinstates deferred film tax credit approvals

Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner announced last month that he will be re-instituting the film tax credit approvals. Initial approval of productions was deferred on June 2, in anticipation of the state's fiscal year budget impasse. Accredited production certificates will be issued for qualifying applications affected by the deferral.

The Illinois Tax Credit is a statutory program administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. The accredited production certificate issued to approved applicants does not require appropriation authorization and obligates the state to pay the credit pursuant to the terms and conditions set forth in said statute and after internal and legal review of qualifying expenditures provided in the independent audit of the production.

At the completion of the project, productions have up to two years to provide the Illinois Film Office (IFO) with an audit performed by an independent CPA of all qualified expenditures. The (transferable) tax credit to the certified accredited production is issued when the audit has been verified by the IFO tax and legal team.

Pennsylvania proposes amendments to incentive program

Pennsylvania Senate Bill 1050 proposes to amend the film production tax credit program as follows:

- Increases the funding cap from \$60 million to \$75 million per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30);
- Creates a post production only credit of 25% of qualified post production expenses incurred at a qualified post production facility in the state;
- Creates an additional 5% credit for post production only projects that conducts at least 50% of all qualified post production expenses at a qualified post production facility;
- Allows productions that qualify for the production tax credit to earn a 30% tax credit on any post production work in the state; and,
- Allows for a reissuance of tax credits in the amount of the difference between what a production was qualified for upon application and what a production is certified for upon completion.

New Jersey looks to re-establish film tax credits

New Jersey Assembly Bill 2474 has been amended. The bill re-establishes the film production tax credit program and includes the following:

- Creates a transferable tax credit equal to 20% of qualified production expenditures;
- Allows for a credit equal to 22% of qualified production expenses purchased from businesses located in or for services performed by residents of an enterprise zone;
- Creates an annual cap of \$50 million per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) for the film production tax credit and \$10 million per fiscal year for the digital media production tax credit;
- Creates a sunset date of July 1, 2022.

Spike Lee Rolls Out *Chi-Raq*

1st movie from Amazon breaks new ground

By Robert Goldrich

Spike Lee made his initial industry splash in 1983 when he won a Student Academy Award. Fast forward to last month and Lee again earned special distinction from the Academy, receiving an Oscar for exceptional contributions to motion pictures.

While the two Oscars separated by some 30-plus years—with a pair of Academy Award nominations in-between for Best Original Screenplay for 1989's *Do the Right Thing*, and Best Documentary Feature for 1997's *4 Little Girls*—underscore an enduring industry impact, in no way does the latest honor represent a career

A year ago, I called Kevin up and asked him if he still owned that property. I said, "We need to do it again. We need to write it again. The first attempt was set in a non-descript area. Now we need to make this contemporary film on Chicago's South Side." The whole Greek satire idea, though, came from Kevin Willmott.

SHOOT: This is a tragic story yet it's told with elements of humor—somehow without diluting the seriousness and social importance of the tragedy. That's quite a balancing act. Was that one of the biggest challenges this film posed to you?



Photo by: Ruyh Lee/Courtesy of Roadside America & Amazon Studios

"It's been a great trip but it's not done yet. To me, that recent Oscar is like a halfway marker."

bookend for the director/producer/writer who continues to show his penchant for breakthrough work with the recently released *Chi-Raq*, the very first production of Amazon Original Movies.

Chi-Raq brings an ancient Greek satire to the South Side of Chicago in order to raise awareness of a contemporary tragedy. Written some 2,500 years ago by Greek playwright Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* tells the story of a woman who ends a war by organizing a sex strike that forces male warlords to put down their weapons. In *Chi-Raq*, we are thrust into today's gang warfare-riddled Chicago. When a little girl is killed, the beautiful Lysistrata (portrayed by Teyonah Parris)—who's in love with gang leader Demetrius "Chi-Raq" Dupree (Nick Cannon)—organizes a sex boycott which becomes a global movement in a bid to bring peace to Chicago and ravaged communities everywhere.

Lee: The biggest challenge was how am I going to get this mother f..kr made? How were we going to get the money? Everybody said no but Amazon. It only takes one "yes" to open the gate. Amazon said yes at Sundance.

Being humorous with serious subject matter has been done before. Ours is not the first film to use satire. Kubrick did it with *Dr. Strangelove*. What's more serious than the destruction of God's planet by nuclear arms? Another major example is our source material. The great Greek playwright Aristophanes satirized ancient Greece all the time.

I will say, though, you're right. Applying humor to a serious story is not an easy thing to do. You've got to juggle four or five balls in the air at the same time. But I was confident I could do it.

SHOOT: Where did the inspiration come from to turn to an ancient Greek satire in order to tell the story of an ongoing modern-day tragedy in Chicago?

Lee: My co-writer Kevin Willmott. Years earlier he wrote this script titled *Got To Give It Up*, an adaptation of *Lysistrata*. We tried to get it made. No one wanted it.

SHOOT: You won a Student Academy Award more than 30 years ago and last month received an honorary Oscar. Would you reflect on what the Motion Picture Academy recognition means to you and how far you've come in your career?

Lee: I have come a long way. It's been a great trip but it's not done yet. To me, that recent Oscar is like a halfway marker.

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