



**GREY**  
Famously effective since 1917



# SHOOT®

## The Year End Issue

The Road To Oscar • Agency of the Year • The Year in Perspective  
Best Work of the Year • Top Ten Tracks • Chat Room

[www.SHOOTonline.com](http://www.SHOOTonline.com)

December 2013



Photo by Sam Zhu. Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures.

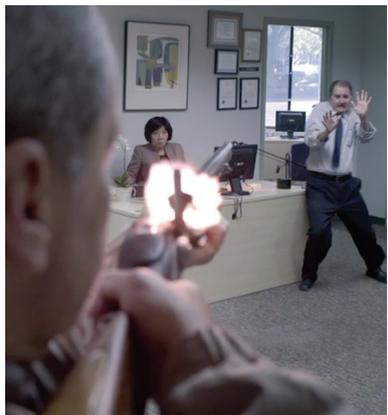


Photo by François Duhamel. © 2013 Annapurna Productions, LLC. All rights reserved.



From the December 13, 2013 Issue  
The following article has been seen by over 36,000 top advertising agency creative and production people around the world as well as executives and artisans in the production, post, music & sound, and production services communities. We thought it would be of interest to you.

© 2013 SHOOT/DCA Business Media, LLC. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of SHOOT.



# Creative Shades of Grey



CCO Tor Myhren Inspires Profound Shift In New York Shop's Heart, Soul and Culture

By Robert Goldrich

This isn't an "I told you so" story. Instead it's something I told myself several years ago—that Grey New York was on a path to creative prominence and would not too far down the road merit strong consideration for, if not emerge outright as *SHOOT*'s Agency of the Year. This wasn't some odd premonition. And it had nothing to do with the impressive credentials of Tor Myhren when he joined the agency as chief creative officer in 2007. Rather my gut feeling came from a decision Myhren made which bucked conventional wisdom—a decision I became aware of some three-and-a-half years ago when Grey had already begun its upswing. It turns out that just two

weeks after he took the job at Grey—with the daunting proposition of turning that agency around and overhauling its creative culture—Myhren had an idea for a film. It was a personal, self-funded passion project.

Titled *City Lax: An Urban Lacrosse Story*, the feature-length documentary tells the story of Tor's brother Erik, who at the time was an elementary school teacher in a rough urban neighborhood in east Denver, Colo. Back in 2010, after *City Lax* had won both the Jury Prize for Best Documentary as well as the Audience Award at the Sonoma International Film Festival, Myhren told *SHOOT* that he had long thought about writing a book, making a

film or finding another way to tell Erik's story, which is centered on the role he has played in helping to improve kids' lives.

Shortly after coming aboard Grey, Tor got a call from Erik who told him he was putting together a lacrosse team comprised of twelve year olds at his school. Tor Myhren recalled that these were "kids who I've met and known over the years—I knew I had the 'perfect storm.' Everything he [Erik] is about was summed up in this team. Putting my marketing hat on, I saw the natural human interest—a virtually all black team playing a rich white kids' sport, the whole notion of

*Continued on page 12*

From top left, clockwise: Tor Myhren; States United to Prevent Gun Violence's "Ed--A Petition for Stronger Gun Laws"; Canon's "Inspired"; DirectTV's "Funeral"; NFL Network's "Leon Sandcastle"; DirectTV's "Dinner Party"; Canon's *when you find me*.

Congratulations !

**GREY**

Famously effective since 1917

SHOOT 2013 Advertising Agency of the Year!



From your friends at:



Community Films



Black Iris Music

PULSE



MUSIC

## AGENCY OF THE YEAR

# Advertising Meets Entertainment At Oscars, Emmy Awards

Continued from page 11

youngsters learning a sport for the first time. But most importantly, you had these really special kids who have already lived through so much in their young lives. I just didn't fully realize how magical these kids would turn out to be on camera."

The problem for Tor Myhren was the timing. "Being chief creative officer at one of New York's biggest agencies entails a lot. How could I make a film having just taken on a demanding full-time job?"

But Myhren did just that in his "spare" time as developer and co-producer of the film which was two-and-a-half years in the making. And while on the surface, *City Lax* would seem to have spread Tor Myhren too thin, it in retrospect reflects what has made Grey successful, namely being motivated by creative passion and story. *City Lax* is moving, heartfelt and inspirational—and the desire to do such work infiltrated Grey, helping Myhren and others stir a new creative spirit at the agency in recent years, one that has translated into lauded work and breakthrough business suc-

cess. Key in Grey's ascent under Myhren has been a focus on exploring and finding ways to create effective, engaging work that is a source of pride and gratification.

"I hadn't thought about *City Lax* reflecting what's happened here at Grey," Myhren recently told *SHOOT*. "But there are some parallels. Sometimes at a big agency you can begin to get the mentality that only what's big matters—the big account, the big budgets. I made *City Lax* on a small budget. We poured so much heart and soul into it. And the importance of heart and soul, being quick and nimble to get something done helped mold the culture at Grey a bit into a passion project-type mentality. We don't care if it's a small project with a limited budget. We'll somehow get it done. If it's something we believe in, we will get a great director, we'll make this thing on a dime. We'll make it as great as we possibly can. When that approach—getting things done no matter

what the limitations—starts to seep into every project in a 1,000-person agency, you can accomplish a lot."

*City Lax* also exemplifies an acumen for getting the right talent to help realize a filmmaking vision. For *City LAX*, Myhren felt there was only one choice for director, Gabriela Cowperthwaite, his former classmate at Occidental College in Los Angeles. Up to that point, Cowperthwaite was involved in commissioned work on TV for more than a dozen years, directing, producing and writing documentary programs for such outlets as ESPN, National Geographic, Animal Planet, Discovery and History. *City Lax* represented her debut in independent feature documentary-making and she was up to the task—so much so that the film caught the eye of Tim Case, founder of Supply & Demand, who sought out Cowperthwaite and signed her for spot representation.

Fast forward to today and Cowperth-



(L-r) Creative directors Stu Mair and Dave Cuccinello; McCarroll, Halper, Fallon, Kelleher, Myhren, Fogel and Krauss.

harvest congratulates

**GREY**

ad agency of the year 2013

harvestfilms.com

# AGENCY OF THE YEAR

waite's second indie documentary, *Blackfish*, was one of five films nominated in the Features category of the International Documentary Association Awards. *Blackfish* is a revealing, emotionally wrenching investigation of what being kept in captivity does to whales and the devastating results on their human interactions. The documentary was covered in last month's installment of *SHOOT*'s ongoing The Road To Oscar series. This month, *Blackfish* was one of 15 feature documentaries to make the Oscar shortlist.

Like Cowperthwaite, Myhren's star has risen. In late 2010 he was promoted to president of Grey NY while retaining his CCO mantle. And recently Myhren was named Grey's worldwide CCO, continuing as president/CCO of Grey NY.

## Oscar, Emmy

Cowperthwaite and Myhren share another uncommon bond, marking one of the creative accomplishments that helped propel Grey to *SHOOT*'s Agency of the Year. While Cowperthwaite is on the cur-

rent Oscar shortlist, this past year Grey NY's *when you find me* for Canon became the only advertising film in history to be shortlisted at the Academy Awards. One of 11 live-action short films to make that coveted shortlist, *when you find me* was produced by two-time Oscar winner Ron Howard and directed by his daughter, Bryce Dallas Howard. The short was an outgrowth of Canon's Project Imagin8ion initiative which solicited submissions of still photos from the public at large. From thousands of user-generated photo entries, eight images were selected which served as inspiration for and appeared in *when you find me*, which was shot on the Canon C300.

In an evolving creative marketplace where advertising and entertainment continue to intersect, Grey stood out in 2013 for adeptly navigating that crossroads as underscored not only by the Oscar shortlist but also the Emmy competition. Back in September, Grey NY won the primetime commercial Emmy Award for Canon's "Inspired," breaking a four-year run of Emmy wins for Wieden+Kennedy.

Directed by Nicolai Fuglsig of MJZ, "Inspired" depicts the lengths people will go in order to take a special photograph, their ambitious endeavors accompanied by a specially arranged rendition of the song "Beautiful Dreamer." Their exploits are feted with "Long live imagination."

Beyond the Oscar shortlist recognition and Emmy win, Grey continued to mesh advertising and entertainment for Canon, rolling out the Project Imaginal0n Film Festival a couple of months ago in New York, with shorts by first-time directors Jaime Foxx, Eva Longoria, Twitter co-founder Biz Stone, Marchesa designer Georgina Chapman and LCD Soundsystem frontman James Murphy. Also showcased were five consumer-created shorts selected by Ron Howard and Bryce Dallas Howard. The initiative yielded 15 billion media impressions in a few months without the aid of a single commercial, reflecting what Myhren described as "realizing the holy grail in our industry which is becoming a part of pop culture, being able to get your brand into the cultural conversation, in social media,

around the dinner table."

## Consistency

Blending the worlds of advertising and entertainment is but one means to making an impact in terms of brand building and successfully weaving clients into the social fabric of mainstream and pop culture. Grey's varied creative did just that in 2013 spanning such accounts as DirecTV, the NFL Network, States United to Prevent Gun Violence, Pantene, Febreze, Red Lobster, Post-it/3M, Crown Royal and major new business such as Gillette.

This stellar performance of 2013, though, is not an island unto itself but rather continues a mini-legacy that has been built over time and has stayed at a consistently high level. For example, in the last three years, 16 different spots for DirecTV have won Lions at Cannes. This year's tally included three more Gold Lion-winning spots for the "Cable Effects" campaign—"Funeral," "Pizzeria" and "Dinner Party" (directed by Tom Kuntz of MJZ).

*Continued on page 14*

# the DIRECTORS NETWORK

REPRESENTING FREELANCE DIRECTORS AND CINEMATOGRAPHERS  
TO PRODUCTION COMPANIES AND ADVERTISING AGENCIES

theDIRECTORSNETWORK.com  
PHONE 818-906-0006

## Grey Area Includes Cannes, Brand-Driven Ideas and Styles

Continued from page 13

In total, Grey NY had nine Cannes Lion-winning films in 2013, more than any other agency.

The DirecTV creative lineage started several years ago with notable work including the offbeat “Opulence” featuring a Russian billionaire and a miniature giraffe (directed by Biscuit Filmworks’ Tim Godsall); cinematic commercials such as “Hot House” (directed by Biscuit’s Noam Murro) and “Robots” (helmed by MJZ’s Rupert Sanders) with stunning frozen moments that capture the immersive experience of DirecTV; and then the classic “Cable Effects” campaign fare which continues to make its mark now along with other new creative wrinkles, most notably this year’s viral hit “Football on Your Phone” (directed by Bryan Buckley of Hungry Man) which generated 7 million views in one week. The work helped spark a 158 percent increase in customers using an iPhone to watch live games.

“This body of work over the years contains so many different styles beyond the mainstay ‘Cable Effects,’” said Myhren. “No single style defines the work. Historically there have been a lot of agencies whose brand and style you see no matter what. You know who the agency is when you see the work. We aren’t one of those agencies that brands come to for a certain signature style. Instead we find the style and concept for the brand and go with it.”

While there’s no formulaic agency style, Myhren does see a theme running through much of Grey NY’s work in 2013. “There’s a real feeling of radical collaboration going on with the films we’re mak-



**Bennett McCarroll**

ing. We’re crossing different artistic industries. Clearly we’ve had the connection with Hollywood through initiatives like the Canon work with Ron Howard. Additionally, though, the Project ImaginalOn Film Festival incorporates films by James Murphy, which brings in the world of music, and Biz Stone, which gets into Silicon Valley and the tech world. Bryan Buckley directed “Football on Your Phone” which taps into the fact that the average person checks their phone 100 times a day. So we’re blending mobile with advertising and football, America’s favorite sport.”

Speaking of football and hitting a pop culture nerve, the NFL Network saw Deion become Leon in one of the year’s most memorable Super Bowl spots, generating online buzz along the way. Deion Sanders, who retired from the NFL, reinvents himself as Leon Sandcastle, dons a cheesy disguise, tries out for the pros at the NFL Scouting Combine and becomes the number one NFL Draft choice. Titled “Leon Sandcastle,” the Super Bowl ad was directed by Frank Todaro of Moxie Pictures and drove record viewership—

more than 7 million—to the NFL Network’s coverage of the Combine.

For Pantene, Grey saw 41.9 million digital impressions generated by #WantThatHair over three days before, during and after the 2013 Academy Awards. As a result, Pantene became the unofficial sponsor of the Oscars, beating official sponsors in brand lift at a fraction of the cost.

The success of all this and other work also translated into success in 2013 for Grey NY which saw its operating profit up 22.3 percent, revenue up 18.4 percent, and a 16 percent increase in staff over 2012. The agency earned \$736 million in new business billings this year—the biggest score being the P&G Gillette account with Grey making an auspicious debut for the client in the form of the “Conditions” spot featuring Green Bay Packers linebacker Clay Matthews for the Fusion ProGlide Razor. Bringing the visual sensibilities of director Mark Romanek (Anonymous Content) into play, “Conditions” shows Matthews’ face weathering the elements of each season—cold, rain, snow, ice, even mud. While his skin survives the harshest conditions that Mother Nature can offer, Matthews’ face cannot tolerate any razor that’s not a ProGlide.

“It’s an incredibly cinematic yet intimate piece and part of a campaign that takes faces somewhere you don’t normally see,” observed Myhren. “Bringing in a craft master like Mark Romanek helps us push brands into very fresh places.”

Instrumental in tapping into those craft masters is Bennett McCarroll, exec VP, director of film production at Grey NY, who began his second tour of duty with Grey

in 2000, moving up the ranks from producer to exec producer and now head of the department. For McCarroll, Grey has been two agencies during his tenure—“life before Tor and after Tor. To see how the culture here has changed under his leadership has been absolutely amazing.”

That change directly applies to the filmmakers McCarroll and his colleagues have been able to collaborate with. “I remember when we’d send work out to directors hoping that we could engage them and instead we got lots of passes,” related McCarroll. “I’ve seen that transform into directors seeking us out. When you see directors like Tom Kuntz, Nicolai Fuglsig, Bryan Buckley, Mark Romanek, Frank Todaro wanting to work with us, it’s a major change from where we were. If the creative is good enough, people will find a way to make things work, to make it for the money you have. The production community genuinely wants to collaborate with us because of the creative.”

At the same time, McCarroll noted that in-house production resources also play a significant role at Grey—both for full-fledged projects for clients as well as pitch and presentation work. “I’m proud of what we did to help win the Gillette business,” said McCarroll. “For new business pitches, we lean heavily on producing work, showing finished, produced content rather than just a storyboard or a script. It takes a lot of resourcefulness to get that work done either through favors or doing it internally. That’s been one of the secrets to our success. We bring produced work to a client so they can see first-hand what we have to offer. We showed Gillette stuff that

# CONGRATULATIONS GREY NEW YORK

It has been an absolute pleasure and we look forward to next year!

# AGENCY OF THE YEAR

they ended up buying and we are now in full blown production on. Even if new clients don't go down that path, by showing them finished work, they can see during the pitch process what we can do and how quick, nimble and resourceful we can be."

## Creative culture

The change in creative culture cited by McCarroll is a recurrent theme when talking to Grey staffers, including those who came aboard the agency this year such as executive creative directors Derek Barnes and Lisa Topol, and group creative directors Nick Pringle and Steve Wakelam.

Topol observed, "This sounds like a simple thing, but the people at Grey just tend to be nice and respect one another. I think it really does come from the top down, and it creates an environment where people feel more free to try things, take risks, and even fail on occasion. Leadership is crucial. And having Tor as both president and (now global) chief creative officer makes such a huge difference. It gives the agency a singular creative focus, and it happens to be the focus of someone who has a great instinct for both popular culture and business. He also makes me want to eat healthier things."

"I'm sure I'm not alone when I say that a few years ago I would never have dreamed of coming to Grey," acknowledged Topol. "The place was as exciting as its name would suggest. But now, the energy is infectious. I've never worked anywhere else where people actually look forward to things like town hall meetings. That's insane. I think Grey proves why it's a fallacy that creatives need to be mean jerks who yell at one another and throw telephones and deli meats in order to do great work...The culture really aims to in-

spire and encourage people, and it tolerates nothing less. There's just a sense of positivity here.

"Based on my own experience," continued Topol, "the rumors tend to be true: the big agencies are mired in red tape and are often too account driven, while the small agencies foster more creativity and nimbleness but often have less resources and organization. Grey somehow manages to take the best from both worlds. It's creatively driven and moves quickly, yet it



(L-r) Derek Barnes, Lisa Topol, Steve Wakelam, Nick Pringle

has the people and resources to actually make things happen."

Barnes said of the progressive creative culture at Grey, "Obviously it starts with Tor and his transformative vision for Grey—and the support of the broader Grey leadership. But honestly, at this point, pushing for great creative ideas has just become systemic. People here, regardless of the department they're in or the specific accounts they work on, seem universally excited by the potential to do something great. And motivated by the agency's mission to keep raising the bar creatively. And each success becomes infectious. When you catch wind of a great

new campaign being done down the hall or around the world at another Grey office, you feel even more energized to compete with the work that makes you jealous. In fact, Grey has a regular town hall mini-presentation called 'Ads we hate (because we didn't do them).' Basically a spotlight on somebody else's amazing work. And functionally, it's super motivating and inspiring. But also simply a chance for the agency to collectively appreciate great creative. And I don't know

creative directors. Pringle said of his new roost, "We are at this huge place—over 1,000 people but it doesn't feel like it. The nimbleness and focus on creativity, the stuff that tend to get lost in the machination of a big company, is found here."

Wakelam observed that DDB Australia also had a creative boutique feel. "That was an agency of just 250 people but it doesn't feel that different from Grey now. It's remarkable. Every agency is seemingly on the verge of reinvention, big shops trying to be more creative and responsive like their smaller agency counterparts. But ultimately nothing ever happens. The talked about change doesn't take hold. Grey though made that leap and there's been a meteoric rise here creatively."

In that regard, Myhren observed that his small agency experience has proved beneficial. "I opened up WongDoody's office in L.A. and learned so much working there. We got stuff done no matter what the odds or the budget. Being scrappy and moving fast helped us realize the work we conceptualized. Taking that mentality to a huge New York agency has been part of the secret to our success. There's something to the notion of fast, cheap and out of control—the way we worked at a boutique shop—and then applying that to a big agency, which means you can add some serious scale to your ideas. When people buy into that 'yes, we can do this' mentality, it can be a powerful thing."

Dan Kelleher, executive creative director on DirecTV has been with Grey for a little more than two years. "What struck me about Grey when I started was that they had a culture," observed Kelleher. "I've worked at agencies where you didn't have a sense of what the culture of the

*Continued on page 28*

congratstor&GREY

moxiepictures

### Park Pictures Director Chris Wilcha Teams with The Coen Brothers

Check out a trailer for the upcoming Showtime concert film, "Another Day/Another Time: Celebrating the Music of 'Inside Llewyn Davis,'" produced by Park Pictures, Joel & Ethan Coen, Scott Rudin and T Bone Burnett, and directed by Park's Chris Wilcha.

### Matt Fackrell Embarks On A "Dragons Adventure"

Agency Activeark JWT collaborated with baoboom productions and director matt fackrell to create two video game trailers for the new multi player Nokia phone APP for DreamWorks' *Dragons Adventure*, based on the animated feature film *How To Train Your Dragon*.

### Partners+Napier Acquires Post Central

Creative ideas agency Partners + Napier has acquired Rochester-based Post Central, effective December 2. The acquisition immediately expands Partners + Napier's core offerings to include a full suite of content creation and video production services.

### Chainsaw Hires Veteran DI Colorist John Persichetti

Chainsaw has hired John Persichetti as Senior DI Colorist. Persichetti brings more than 20 years of experience as a feature film colorist, most recently at Colorworks, Sony Pictures Entertainment's digital intermediate facility.

### Matt Checkowski Of The D4D Talks True Food Porn

The D4D founder/director Matt Checkowski's AEG Brand films "Mixed Berries, Three Ways" and "Beer Braised Ox Cheek" were featured in the touring 2013 Food Film Festival that offers the opportunity to taste what you see on the screen.

### Nice Shoes Goes "Every Step Of The Way" For Publicis Kaplan Thaler

In advance of the Sochi 2014 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, agency Publicis Kaplan Thaler created an interactive campaign called "Every Step of the Way." As part of the campaign, they produced a series of ten videos showcasing each Team Citi athlete, and enlisted Nice Shoes to assist bringing these spots to life.

### Filmworkers Recreates Chicago History for DDB, The Field Museum

Filmworkers helped Chicago agency DDB recapture the thrills experienced by visitors to Chicago's 1893 World's Fair in a new ad campaign for The Field Museum.

### Yahoo! & LA Director / Editor Joins Bongo Post

Bongo Post has added Yahoo! Studios' Craig Rice to its roster. Director / Editor Craig Rice joins the team at Bongo, a Northern California studio based in Sacramento.

### Editor Marco Perez Named Partner at Union

Editor Marco Perez, noted for his work in commercials, short films and documentaries, has been named a partner at bicoastal Union.

### Ruben Vela II Cuts Award-Winning Ad Council PSAs Created by KBS+

Optimus Editor Ruben Vela II recently cut three PSAs that were the focal point of the "Feed the Pig" financial literacy campaign created pro bono by KBS+ for the Ad Council and the American Institute of CPAs (AICPAs). KBS+ recently earned the Ad Council's top creative award, the Gold Bell for Creative Excellence, for the campaign.

### ArsenalFX Provides VFX for National Lexus Spots Through Team One

ArsenalFX has produced visual effects for two new national Lexus spots. The announcement was made today by ArsenalFX Executive Producer Ashley Hydrick.

### Stun Creative and Buster Team with Fandango For New Campaign

Stun Creative, along with its design and animation division Buster, and its BusterINK digital unit, have created a national TV, theatrical, and digital ad campaign comprised of a series of celebrity-driven promotional spots for Fandango.

### Hawthorne Direct New Multi-Media Campaign for It's Just Lunch Int'l

Hawthorne Direct has been retained by new client It's Just Lunch International (IJL) of Palm Desert, CA, to create and implement a multi-media marketing campaign.

### ShadowMachine Produces SoCal Honda Holiday Campaign via Secret Weapon

Selling a car to Santa is no easy feat. Neither is winning the confidence of Secret Weapon Marketing's Rick Sittig, a 30-year ad vet and accomplished director in his own right, showcasing the many offerings of the Golden State.

*For the full stories [and many more], videos, and contacts visit SHOOT® Publicity Wire (SPW). SPW is the best place to post your news 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 info on SPW and to post your news release visit [www.shootonline.com/go/publicitywire](http://www.shootonline.com/go/publicitywire).*

## AGENCY OF THE YEAR

### ECDs Ari Halper, Dan Kelleher

*Continued from page 15*

agency was and how the leadership was guiding the creative department and the agency as a whole. When I first got here, I felt the culture and the excitement over the work. It reminded me of years ago when I was at Cliff Freeman and Partners. Tor has created a creative-driven culture with a positive energy. People are motivated to push themselves, they enjoy what they're doing. Everyone appreciates what everyone else is doing and it's very inclusive—everybody feels a part of what's going on. This is tough enough to pull off in a small agency but to do it at an agency as large as Grey is nothing short of a miracle."

Still, the shop is far more than a creative hotbed, said Kelleher. "When I got to know Tor, I realized how strategic the agency is, with great planners, insights into the work and the marketplace. Combine that with a place that really believes in the value of great creative, and you end up with a working environment that turns out fulfilling, successful work."

That combination of creative and strategic insights is summed up in the agency's catchphrase for its work which aspires to be "Famously Effective."

"I came to Grey for two reasons—Tor and the opportunity to work on the DirecTV account. It's the best job I've ever had—a great group of creatives under me, Tor above me, and a great client," affirmed Kelleher.

Two of those star creatives on DirecTV are creative directors Steve Fogel and Doug Fallon. Fogel related, "The 'Famously Effective' tagline is a pretty simple notion. We want to make the brands famous and make the work effective. It's a simple goal but not that easy to achieve. It's a tagline that drives us. And we have the creative freedom to push towards that goal. This is a place which lets you push boundaries. Steve and I were able to go more comedic [for DirecTV] and let loose with the 'Cable Effects' work."

Fallon noted that a cross-pollination of ideas has emerged during his Grey tenure. "I've seen a shifting of attitudes with people not working behind closed doors in offices. When we moved into our new building in the Flatiron District [four years ago], what hits you first is that the space is wide open. The floor plan has fostered a lot of collaboration and creativity."



**Dan Kelleher**

At the same time, room has to be made for opportunities not to collaborate. Two years ago, Grey instituted The No Meeting Zone every Thursday from 9 a.m.-noon. "It's time blocked out on everybody's calendar," related Myhren. "You cannot have a meeting during that time. It's solely time for our people to have to themselves. In the creative process there's a time to be totally uncollaborative. An idea has to be born in somebody's head. So for those three hours you have time to create what you want to create. Nobody else owns that time. Some of our best ideas have been hatched during The No Meeting Zone."

Ari Halper, executive creative director, has been at Grey for nearly 11 years, overseeing with ECD Steve Krauss such stellar work as Canon's Project Imagination initiative and the Emmy-winning "Inspired." Halper described Grey as a place where creatives are "encouraged to take risks." He cited as an example the agency's Heroic Failure Award, which "encourages people to think big, to shoot for the stars." The honor is bestowed for great ideas, even if they end up tanking. Those behind the work have their name etched on the award in recognition of their risk taking. It's become a coveted award—Myhren said that only seven have ever won it—for work that the agency is proud of even though it didn't ultimately succeed in the marketplace or as part of a new business pitch.

It's essential, said Halper, to take risks and shape an environment that fosters creativity because we're in a marketplace in which consumers seek out entertainment on their own terms. "That's ultimately what we're competing with. We need to make sure that we are relevant and connecting with consumers."

Halper and Krauss served as executive

## Discuss Creative Culture

creative directors on a chilling piece that made such a connection: “Ed—A Petition for Stronger Gun Laws,” directed by Adam Goldstein of harvest films. The spot—which went on to win a Cannes Silver Lion—opens on a man with a blank facial expression who walks by and pays no heed to an office receptionist and former office co-workers. The office intruder is holding what appears to be a rifle. He then reaches a back office where he fires a shot at a man who appears to be in a managerial/supervisory role. When the first bullet rings out, the supervisor and all the workers flee. But they have ample time to escape as the assailant has a musket-like weapon which requires that he reload and clean out the barrel in order to fire another shot. A super reads, “Guns Have Changed. Shouldn’t Our Gun Laws?”

“A Petition For Stronger Gun Laws” launched on SUPGV.org, YouTube and Facebook and quickly went viral. In just one week, with no media dollars, the film spread to 180 different media outlets, there were over a million views online, site visits increased by 3,180 percent and thousands of petitions were signed. States United to Prevent Gun Violence enjoyed 75 million media impressions for an earned media value of \$1.29 million.

Later in the year, after the Trayvon Martin case resulted in an acquittal for George Zimmerman, a group of Grey creatives raised \$5,000 in a week and produced “Stand Up To ‘Stand Your Ground.’” The Coalition to Stop Gun Violence spot presents a reenactment of Zimmerman shooting Martin. Heightening the short film’s poignancy is audio from the real emergency calls made that fateful night which reflect the perspectives of different observers. However, after we hear gunfire, the camera pulls back to reveal other dead victims laying on the ground, each from a different state—Texas, Louisiana, Nevada, Alabama, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee, Alaska—where Stand Your Ground laws are in place. A super reads, “Our laws should protect victims, not create more.”

One of Grey’s creatives on the spot, producer Floyd Russ, directed via Narrow Margin Films. In one week, with no media dollars, the piece generated an earned media value of more than \$3.2 million.

Myhren is proud of Grey’s work against gun violence, noting that his favorite



**Ari Halper**

piece this year is “Ed—A Petition For Stronger Gun Laws.” “I’m from Denver where there’s been some horrific gun violence,” shared Myhren. “Aurora had just happened. Sandy Hook hadn’t happened yet. I put out a brief to everyone at the agency that if anyone can come up with an idea good enough—that we believe will make a difference on the gun control issue—we will pay to make it happen. Whatever the idea—a website, a film, a print ad, whatever. We got dozens and dozens of submissions, if not hundreds. This idea [for ‘Ed’] was great at its core. It was too far a bridge to travel to say we’re going to take all guns out of Americans’ hands. So we thought why not just attack the one major issue of automatic weapons?”

Both “Ed” and “Stand Up” were spawned by Grey NY’s self-examination of its pro bono and social cause work. “It was sort of all over the place,” recalled Myhren. “So we decided to base our social cause platform on the healing powers of creativity. Anything we do that’s cause-related has to be looked at through that lens. At the beginning of the year, we decided to tackle gun control and I think we turned out the year’s two best films on that issue. It all stems from the belief that if we can corral the creative forces here to tackle some of the world’s biggest problems, we can make a dent. Creativity has healing powers and we try to achieve that and strive to be an agency with a soul.”

Whether it’s creative for a social cause or for a major brand, Myhren affirmed, “This is the most exciting time that our industry has ever been in, largely due to the digital revolution. What you’re starting to see in this largely digital world is that film is more relevant than it’s ever been for its ability to tell stories and connect with people.”

## Flash Back

**December 12, 2008** Director Anthony Rose, whose creative reach encompasses spots, music videos, documentary and TV production, certainly no longer takes anything for granted after he and his crew survived the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai, a 60-plus hour siege that claimed the lives of 170 people. Rose who directs via Flying Fish in Sydney while being repped stateside for spots through Moo Studios, Los Angeles, had entered the Taj Mahal Hotel, one of the prime terrorist targets, just moments before the attacks began. He came to Mumbai to shoot the beginning of the first episode of *Nomad Traveller*, a series developed by and centered around Daniela Federici, a noted fashion and portrait photographer as well as an accomplished filmmaker in her own right. The series will explore Federici’s travels and work process as she shoots around the globe. Rose and Federici were slated to meet their crew at the Taj Hotel to discuss and map out production in India.... Todd Tilford has been hired as executive creative director at Grey NY. He had been running his own creative consultancy and devoting most of his time over the past two years as a key creative consultant for both Crispin Porter + Bogusky in Boulder, Colo., and Core in St. Louis.... Little Minx has signed director Ben Mor for U.S. and U.K. representation....

**December 12, 2003** Tim Case and Kent Eby, partners in Minder, have renamed the production company Supply & Demand and signed director Jeffery Plansker, formerly of Anonymous Content. Supply & Demand will continue to rep director Tony Kaye who has been at Minder since its inception in October 2002.... Michael Bodnarchek, co-president/CEO of A Band Apart, has departed the spotmaking shop he co-founded with feature producer Lawrence Bender in 1995. Bodnarchek described the parting of ways as amicable... ABC has partnered with ad media agency MindShare North America (a unit of the WPP Group) on a program development initiative that calls for MindShare to invest in the production of scripted series for the network. The deal calls for MindShare to work closely with network brass and outside studios in sharing the costs of developing projects that could be attractive advertising and integrated marketing opportunities for MindShare clients, which include Sears and Unilever. MindShare will own or co-own the copyrights to any productions, while ABC will retain all distribution rights. The arrangement is not exclusive for ABC or MindShare, meaning that either company could cut a similar deal with a rival agency or network....

# bulletin board

- > January 3-13/Palm Springs, CA: Palm Springs Intl Film Fest [www.psfilmfest.org](http://www.psfilmfest.org)
- > January 7-10/Las Vegas, NV: CES [www.cesweb.org](http://www.cesweb.org)
- > January 10/Los Angeles, CA: Critics Choice Movie Awards [www.criticschoice.com/movie-awards](http://www.criticschoice.com/movie-awards)
- > January 12 /Los Angeles, CA: Golden Globe Awards [www.goldenglobes.org](http://www.goldenglobes.org)
- > January 16-26/Park City, UT: Sundance Film Festival <https://www.sundance.org/festival/attend>
- > January 17-23/Park City, UT: Slamdance Film Festival <http://showcase.slamdance.com/Film-Festival>
- > January 18 /Los Angeles, CA: SAG Awards [www.sagawards.org](http://www.sagawards.org)
- > January 25/Hollywood, CA: DGA Awards [www.dga.org](http://www.dga.org)
- > February 1/Hollywood, CA: ASC Awards [www.theasc.com](http://www.theasc.com)
- > February 1/Los Angeles, CA: WGA Awards <http://wga.org>