



Chat Room 13



Mid-Year Report Card 14



Cinematographers & Cameras 22



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# SHOOT®



## THE ROAD TO EMMY

Series Part 14, Page 4



From Top Left clockwise, scenes from *Ted Lasso*, *Poker Face*, *Fleishman Is in Trouble*, *Daisy Jones & the Six*, *The Last of Us*, and *A Small Light*.



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By Robert Goldrich

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## Gratitude

In this issue's Chat Room interview, Davis Guggenheim reflects on *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie* (Apple TV+), which last month picked up seven Emmy nominations. That tally included two for Guggenheim who served as director and producer--one for Outstanding Documentary or Nonfiction Special, the other for Outstanding Directing for a Documentary/Nonfiction Program.

The remaining Emmy nods for *Still* spanned cinematography, picture editing, original dramatic score, sound editing and sound mixing categories.

While his dream-like rise from obscurity to stardom turned nightmarish with the diagnosis at 29 that he had Parkinson's disease, Fox has over the years done much more than just persevere.

The documentary shows his resilience,

how he's maintained a self-deprecating sense of humor, and managed to keep on keeping on--with the love and support of his wife, Tracy Pollan, and their kids.

His family has provided a steadfast anchor and stability. Fox says that he's become more present in the moment and still. To attain a stillness while enduring an illness that causes physical tremors

I'm dealing with getting older, facing your mortality. The challenge became how do you make a movie that includes Parkinson's but wasn't a sob story, that didn't fall into those tropes. The key was not to fall into the trap of just another celebrity story--with all the trappings."

Ultimately, though, Guggenheim's biggest takeaway or major lesson learned

"He sits on my shoulder now smiling when I get too dark, reminding me how lucky I am."

reflects in a sense the triumph of the human spirit.

Guggenheim--whose *An Inconvenient Truth* won the Best Feature Documentary Oscar in 2007--felt a connection to Fox as a person.

"It was about the way he's approaching his life," observed Guggenheim who will turn 60 in November. "We're about the same age and his experiences were meaningful to me. I don't have Parkinson's. But

from his experience on the documentary goes back to the resolute soul of its protagonist. "Michael J. Fox has taught me a lot about finding gratitude in my own life," affirmed Guggenheim. "It's strange. I'm a lucky person yet feel like I have a darker, negative outlook on things. I look at Michael who is relentlessly optimistic. He sits on my shoulder now smiling when I get too dark, reminding me how lucky I am."

By Robert Goldrich

## POV

## A+E NETWORKS

## A Bespoke Curriculum For BIPOC Representation

A+E Networks has unveiled a career training program that will further opportunity and BIPOC representation in the industry and underscores the media group's commitment to DEI initiatives. The Career Accelerator from A+E Factual Studios, launched in collaboration with Reel Works and their MediaMKRS workforce development program, welcomes an inaugural class of eight trainees to receive on-the-job experience and learn through a custom curriculum created by A+E. Reel Works' MediaMKRS program aims to diversify the media landscape and create equitable solutions to barriers to entry into the entertainment industry by training and credentialing early-career professionals.

"We know the value of having many perspectives in all projects, but underrepresented communities, including persons of color, have historically lacked exposure

to production and postproduction roles resulting in extremely limited diversity across these teams, industry-wide" said Sharon Scott, president of A+E Factual Studios.

"By creating our own curriculum and real-world opportunities, we are providing access and training for the roles of associate producers and assistant editors. We hope to expand the pool of qualified candidates, creating career opportunities to highlight unique points of view."

The 12-week program aims to provide trainees with the tools for successful careers in production and editorial roles--with a focus on unscripted content--and will consist of in-person training, virtual learning, and on-the-job experience for the eight candidates who have exhibited interest in assistant editor or associate producer roles and have been identified by Reel Works as high-potential early-career creatives.

"Our collaboration with A+E is an exciting opportunity for our participants to gain hands-on experience in unscripted television production," said John Williams, CEO and co-founder of Reel Works. "We are grateful that A+E shares our passion for uplifting diverse voices in media and look forward to working with them to usher this new wave of talent into the media and entertainment industry."

A+E Networks and Reel Works believe it is imperative that the next generation of filmmakers be raised to know that their stories matter. Through the Career Accelerator initiative, A+E Networks is proactively furthering its mission to increase diversity behind the camera and together with Reel Works aim to create a workforce for the media industry that will accurately represent the diverse global community.

A+E Networks is comprised of brands including A+E, Lifetime, The HISTORY Channel, LMN, FYI, VICE TV and Blaze.



# Director, Editor, Composer & Production Design POVs

Insights into  
*Fleishman Is  
in Trouble*, *Ted  
Lasso*, *The Last of  
Us*, *A Small Light*,  
*Daisy Jones & the  
Six* and *Poker Face*

By Robert Goldrich,  
The Road To Emmy Series,  
Part 14



Directors Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton now have an Emmy nomination to go alongside their Oscar recognition. The latter came back in 2007 with the wife-and-husband directing duo's feature debut, *Little Miss Sunshine*, which earned four Academy Award nominations, including for Best Picture while winning for Best Original Screenplay (Michael Arndt) and Best Supporting Actor (the late, great Alan Arkin). On the strength of the film, Faris and Dayton received a DGA Award nomination as well as a BAFTA nom for the David Lean Award for Direction, and won the Best Director honor from the Film Independent Spirit Awards.

Jumping ahead to just several weeks ago, that's when Faris and Dayton landed that alluded to first career Emmy nomination—for directing the “Me-Time” episode of the limited series *Fleishman Is in Trouble* (FX). This was one of seven nominations bestowed upon *Fleishman Is in Trouble*, the others spanning casting, contemporary costumes, lead actress (Lizzy Caplan), supporting actress (Claire

Danes), writing (Taffy Brodesser-Akner) and the Outstanding Limited or Anthology Series categories. Faris and Dayton also served as exec producers on *Fleishman Is in Trouble*.

Initially there were 10 episodes of *Fleishman* in the works, with Faris and Dayton slated to direct them all. However, the series got pared down to eight installments with Faris and Dayton early on knowing that even then, other directors had to be brought into the mix to do full justice to the show. Faris and Dayton wound up directing three episodes, with four helmed by another married team, Robert Pulcini and Shari Springer Berman, and the remaining episode directed by Alice Wu. Like Faris and Dayton, Pulcini and Springer Berman have an awards pedigree which includes a Best Adapted Screenplay Oscar nomination for *American Splendor*, and a DGA Award nod last year for an episode of *Succession*.

While it seems somehow fitting that two married couples direct most of a limited series dealing with divorce and

struggling marriages, such matchmaking wasn't by design. Based on the novel by Brodesser-Akner, the series—which she also wrote—simply drew in Faris and Dayton who in turn gravitated to Pulcini and Berman, having been fans of their work for some time.

While matrimony wasn't a directorial prerequisite, Faris noted that being part of a duo to “bat things around” helped as a dynamic when approaching the series—as did exchanging ideas as EPs/directors with another couple as well versed as Pulcini and Springer Berman.

But Faris explained that the prime attraction to *Fleishman Is in Trouble* for her and Dayton was that they simply loved Brodesser-Akner's writing. “For us it's always about the writer and a voice,” related Faris, who described Brodesser-Akner, also a series EP, as “a force of nature.” Faris also found the voiceover orientation of *Fleishman* to be creatively “liberating,” departing from her and Dayton's directorial norm which up until then had been dialogue-driven storytelling. Dayton

From top left, clockwise: *Fleishman Is in Trouble* directors Jonathan Dayton (l) and Valerie Faris; Jason Sudeikis in a scene from *Ted Lasso*; Pedro Pascal (l) and Bella Ramsey in *The Last of Us*; Riley Keough in *Daisy Jones & the Six*; Bel Powley in *A Small Light*; Natasha Lyonne in *Poker Face*; *A Small Light* composer Ariel Marx

## Dayton and Faris Reflect On *Fleishman Is in Trouble*

added that Brodesser-Akner is “so ambitious and so fearless,” pushing the envelope with inspired writing which in turn inspires her collaborators.

Additionally Faris said that she and Dayton felt simpatico with Brodesser-Akner and EPs Susannah Grant and Sarah Timberman, affirming this was “a great group of people to get into business with.”

Dayton and Faris marveled over the

cal ultimately didn’t make sense to pursue with a workload encompassing other episodes and time being of the essence.

Still, there was plenty of creative space in which to stretch out as eight hours of content afforded more opportunities for in-depth storytelling and character development. Dayton related, “The form of the limited series is an important new medium. There are times when films

that people could more often be able “to experience a certain intimacy together” in a communal setting such as a theater. That, she observed, is what’s missing in the world today—the lack of shared experiences to underscore our similarities and common ground, helping to push back against the isolation, fragmentation and dividing of audiences.

Faris and Dayton came together and made their mark on the filmmaking side across varied disciplines. It started with the MTV music documentary show *The Cutting Edge* and then spanned music videos (for the likes of The Smashing Pumpkins and Red Hot Chili Peppers) as well as commercials before successfully dovetailing into features with first *Little Miss Sunshine* followed by the under-the-radar and underrated *Ruby Sparks* and then *Battle of the Sexes*, a 2017 release which delved deeply into the psyches and internal emotional battles of Billie Jean King (portrayed by Emma Stone) and Bobby Riggs (Steve Carell) whose lives intersected in a historic tennis match held at the Houston Astrodome in 1973.

On the TV series side, Faris and Dayton have served as directors/EPs on *Fleish-*

almost like music to us,” which is conducive to being able to play in “a much more free visual style.” She and Dayton said it very much reminded them of their past music video work and how that spawned new turns visually.

### Declan Lowney

When jurors bestowed a Peabody Award upon *Ted Lasso* (Apple TV+) in 2021, they issued a statement which described the show as “a smart, funny, captivating celebration of good heartedness.” Jason Sudeikis portrays the title character, a folksy American college football coach who is enticed to the U.K. to lead a down-on-their-luck Premier League soccer team. The show’s heart comes from the quietly radical way that *Lasso*, a man in a position of power, chooses kindness at every turn without sacrificing his authority. He coaches a highly competitive group of athletes to perform at the highest level by embracing vulnerability, empathy and decency. Peabody judges characterized *Lasso* as “affecting change by being a deeply good human, one with his own quiet anxieties and pain. The Apple TV+ series is the perfect counter to the enduring prevalence of



Photo courtesy of FX

### Valerie Faris (I) and Claire Danes on the set of *Fleishman Is in Trouble*

entire cast and crew. For instance, Danes gave a tour de force performance, perhaps most notably in the “Me-Time” episode. Up to that point, viewers of the limited series had seen the results of the emotional breakdown suffered by Danes’ character. But in episode seven (“Me-Time”), the audience experienced that breakdown, observed Dayton. “And Claire did it in such a fresh way.”

Faris recalled wondering how Danes was going to realize such a performance. Ultimately the directors trusted her first instinct. “She surprised us every time,” said Faris, noting that the actor brought so much to the role. Being able to see people like Danes at the top of their game was the fun, fulfilling part of the production, affirmed Faris.

At the same time, there were some aspects envisioned that proved a bit too ambitious and couldn’t be brought to fruition. Dayton shared that at one juncture there was an episode where “we were going to suddenly stop the story and see a musical” (“Presidentrix,” as featured in the story). “The idea of a musical within an episode “loomed large for quite awhile,” continued Dayton. While it qualified as a potentially fascinating addition, the musi-

expand into three-and-a-half hours and push the limits of what a feature could be. Certain stories want to be told over multiple episodes. This experience has been very gratifying. We had more positive feedback about this show than anything we’ve done since *Little Miss Sunshine*. I felt we reached the public with this.”

Faris chimed in, “That’s part of the reason we do what we do. We find material that speaks to us. And we hope it will speak to an audience.”

On the flip side, Faris feels there’s no substitute for the shared big-screen experience. She would like to see more films—and content that is otherwise streamed-enjoyed in theaters. At the time of this *SHOOT* interview, Faris and Dayton the evening before had attended a theater screening of *The Beanie Bubble*, directed by Kristin Gore and Damian Kulash. It was a special, fun experience to see such a beautifully made film on the big screen—in a theater full of people, Faris said.

However, asked if the intimacy and personal nature of content like *Fleishman Is in Trouble* are enhanced when seen in the privacy of one’s home, Faris said there was some validity to that argument. Yet at the same time, she wished out aloud



Photo courtesy of FX

### Claire Danes in a scene from *Fleishman Is in Trouble*

*man Is in Trouble* and the Paul Rudd-starring *Living With Yourself*. Faris and Dayton continue to direct select commercials and branded content projects through production company Bob Industries. And Faris noted that their short-form endeavors inform their TV series and feature work, and vice versa. She observed, for example, that the voiceover orientation of *Fleishman Is in Trouble* translated for her and Dayton into “a language that is

toxic masculinity, both on-screen and off, in a moment when the nation truly needs inspiring models of kindness.”

Being involved with a show that touches people in a positive way can be a transformative experience. When *SHOOT* first connected with director Declan Lowney to discuss *Ted Lasso*, he had earned his first Emmy nomination in 2021 for Outstanding Directing for a Comedy Series

*Continued on page 8*



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## Declan Lowney Earns 3rd Career Emmy Nod For Ted Lasso

Continued from page 5

on the strength of the “Make Rebecca Great Again” episode. He observed back then that *Ted Lasso* is “a comedy series where people are nice to each other at a time when people are often horrible to each other in comedy.” While contribut-

netted him the chance to serve in a hybrid director/supervising producer role during the second season. He went back to just directing in season three as an increased workload (including helming two episodes of *The Big Door Prize*) caused him to step down from his supervising

producer capacity on *Ted Lasso*. Still, looking back on it, Lowney shared that the producing experience on season two was an eye opener. He became involved in the hiring of other directors and got the opportunity to see what other directors did and how they worked. “I would think, ‘I am just like that. Or shit, I’m nothing like that.’ We all have our insecurities.” Lowney found great value in seeing “how different directors approach things differently. It was a golden opportunity to see other directors working. Most directors don’t want other directors watching them.”



Photo courtesy of Apple TV+

Jason Sudeikis (I) and director Declan Lowney on the set of *Ted Lasso*

ing to any hit show is gratifying. Lowney affirmed it is even more so when the show is centered on the power of kindness.

Fast forward to today, and Lowney has since received two more Emmy nods for *Ted Lasso*. As supervising producer he was part of the team that won the Outstanding Comedy Series Emmy in 2022; and last month he again became a directorial nominee—this time for the “So Long, Farewell” finale.

*Ted Lasso* has proven to be transformative in another respect for Lowney. Prior to taking it on, he was looking to more firmly establish himself in the American market, having a foothold already as an accomplished director in the U.K.; he had already been a six-time BAFTA TV Award nominee and two-time winner (for the comedy series *Father Ted* on U.K.’s Channel 4, and *Help* from the BBC). *Ted Lasso* has given Lowney a high-profile perch in the U.S., also yielding a Producers Guild Award win for him in ‘22 in the episodic TV comedy category.

Though he lost out on a pitch to direct the pilot for *Ted Lasso*, Lowney wound up getting the opportunity to helm episodes seven and eight during that first season—with lucky number seven, “Make Rebecca Great Again,” garnering him his first career Emmy nomination.

Lowney’s first season showing also

Lowney also got a deeper sense of and appreciation for how the writing worked, how directors pushed to do justice to the story, and the importance of having structure yet being fluid. “Jason [Sudeikis] doesn’t like to tie anything down until he really has to. Comedy is an organic thing. What you thought at the beginning of a season might need to be re-thought a bit later. Certain characters may turn out to be stronger than you originally thought and so on.”

The supervising producer perspective, noted Lowney, informed his directing—as did Sudeikis. Lowney observed that conventional thinking has a director embarking on a shoot day intent on “having to do this and that,” completing a certain num-



Photo courtesy of Apple TV+

Brett Goldstein (I) and Phil Dunster in a scene from *Ted Lasso*

ber of pages. “Your brain is conditioned to work that way in television. But Jason doesn’t work that way. He works kind of in the opposite way. He’s willing to bend a little to accommodate what’s happening. If something is working brilliantly, he goes with it. Maybe you won’t get this or

production value in television.”

On the flip side, he continued, “Working with great comedians, celebrity A-listers in TV, brings a special comedic experience,” which has befitting his spotmaking endeavors.

*Ted Lasso*—which earned 21 Emmy

that during the day. But what you’re getting is valuable and can put you in a position to make the work better. He has the confidence to challenge the norm and try to roll with what’s going on. If a guy is struggling, give him a bit more time to get it right. It’s a slightly more relaxed vibe which is important, particularly in comedy.”

Lowney’s body of work extends beyond TV comedy series (including U.K. stalwarts *Little Britain* and *Cold Feet*) to features (*Alan Partridge*) and commercials which include the famed ongoing Warburtons bread campaign which over the years has featured Sylvester Stallone, The Muppets, Robert De Niro and George Clooney, among others. (The latest being Samuel L. Jackson.)

Lowney is repped in the U.K. ad market by production house Merman; his U.S. spotmaking roost is Minted Content. Lowney’s commercialmaking has won a Cannes Grand Prix, Gold and Silver Lions, D&AD Pencils, British Arrows and Kinsale Sharks.

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### Timothy A. Good, ACE and Emily Mendez

*The Last of Us* (HBO) made an impact on the awards show circuit well before any nominations were announced. The season finale drew 8.2 million people despite airing against this year’s Oscars telecast, continuing a run of impressive numbers. The series premiere garnered 4.7 million viewers in the U.S., which amounts to HBO’s second largest debut ever, just behind *House of the Dragon*.

Then last month, *The Last of Us* made its mark in the Emmy competition with 24 nominations, including Outstanding Drama Series—the second highest tally this year, just behind the 27 nods for *Succession*. Clearly *The Last of Us*—adapted from a popular video game that bowed 10 years ago—has struck a responsive chord with TV Academy members, critics, audiences, gamers and non-gamers alike. Created by Craig Mazin, the architect of the Emmy-winning limited series *Chernobyl*, and Neil Druckmann who developed

## Editors Good, Mendez Come Together For The Last of Us

the video game, *The Last of Us* stars Pedro Pascal as Joel, a smuggler who's assigned the task of escorting a teenager, Ellie played by Bella Ramsey, across a post-apocalyptic U.S. The teen is immune to a fungal infection that has taken over the planet.

Among *The Last of Us* nominees are a mentor and a mentee—Timothy A. Good, ACE and Emily Mendez, respectively—who have been recognized in the Outstanding Picture Editing for a Drama Series for the “Endure and Survive” episode. This marks the first Emmy nomination for both. Mendez had been Good's assistant for several years and they built a nurturing relationship. Describing himself as “a big advocate of mentorship,” Good noted that he's made a concerted effort “to train every assistant I ever hired.” When he and Mendez first worked together on the series *The Resident*, Good afforded his assistant the opportunity to cut select sequences, ultimately translating into their co-editing a

*Last of Us*—starting as an assistant, co-editing episodes and now getting an Emmy nod—as being “like a dream. Working on a story I love, with a person [Good] I love, and Craig whom I love. We just understand each other. It feels like solving puzzles everyday with friends.”

Good, a 20-year editing veteran whose credits also include such shows as *The Umbrella Academy* and *Fringe*, related, “I've never really concerned myself with awards because I just love the work so much. But I'm so excited about this nomination because it includes Emily. With my journey as an editor helping and mentoring others, to be nominated alongside her is gratifying—as it is to be recognized by fellow editors, some of the most discerning people in the film business.”

Still, there are challenges to even a dream project. Mendez observed, “My biggest challenge was both a good and a bad thing. I felt so connected to the material and the storylines, I would bring it home with me, constantly feeling the

introduction of Ellie and mesh it somehow with the pilot. With Mendez's help, Good did just that, deleting some scenes, bringing others together in new ways. With the support of Mazin and Druckmann, a new structure was fashioned, realizing a greater connectivity between the two episodes

‘Let's not add music. Let's keep things simpler.’ I saw how that paid off a lot of the times when you think you have to push to get an audience to connect.”

Similarly Mendez noted that when she started out working with Mazin on sound design for the pilot, there was a chaotic



Camila Morrone (l) and Sam Claflin in *Daisy Jones & the Six*

to create a singular pilot of about an hour and 20 minutes. Pickup shots done nine months after the original lensing were incorporated into the pilot. Making sure that the original photography connected emotionally with material shot nine months later was a major challenge which Good and Mendez embraced.

For their co-editing exploits on four episodes, Good explained that he and Mendez have a division of labor in which “each of us chase a specific character arc all the way through. We follow specific characters through their journey. At the same time we are always talking to each other. We show each other our work so that we can pinpoint ideas and things that are working in my sequences versus her sequences.”

Mendez said the major advantage they enjoy from the outset is the top-drawer quality of the story. “We are lucky that Craig Mazin is such a beautiful writer. We have beautiful scripts to work on as we keep pushing each other.”

Beyond the writing, Good said he's benefited from another lesson imparted by Mazin. “What I learned from Craig was how to really restrain yourself when you're telling stories that have such an emotional impact. Normally you might try to go big with certain sequences, to go operatic. But he's very cautious about connecting with audiences organically.

scene with characters trying to escape in the wake of a terrible disaster. At first, she recalled, there was a lot of sound design coming at you. Mazin proposed an alternative, little pockets of sound—a gunshot, a couple of people screaming. Mendez found that this more subdued approach added to the tension and fear. “This reverse approach makes such a huge difference. And we continued to do that for our sound design and editing in certain scenes.”

Good observed that this restrained approach reflects a trust in the intelligence and emotional wherewithal of the audience to fill in the gaps, making viewers more intimately involved in the narrative as it unfolds.

### Jessica Kender

The story behind production designer Jessica Kender taking on *Daisy Jones & The Six* (Prime Video)—a musical drama for which she recently scored her first career Emmy nomination—began on the second shoot day of *Little Fires Everywhere*. Kender recalled Lauren Neustadter, president of film and TV at Reese Witherspoon's company Hello Sunshine, coming by the set and asking her how she felt about the 1970s. Kender recalled Neustadter handing her a book and imploring her to read it. That week-

*Continued on page 10*



Bella Ramsey (l) and Keivonn Woodard in a scene from *The Last of Us*

number of episodes.

Similarly with *The Last of Us*, Mendez served as Good's assistant and got the chance to edit a couple of scenes for episode three, “Long, Long Time.” Also early on, Mendez connected with Mazin, bonding over their mutual love of sound design. With impetus from Good and the support of Mazin, Mendez dovetailed into co-editing four of the episodes, including the Emmy-nominated fifth installment.

An unabashed fan of the video game and over the moon when she got to work on the HBO series it inspired, Mendez characterized her progression on *The*

emotions of the stories and our characters. Having that connection is wonderful—to put that into the work we are doing. But it also had me feeling that I can't get it out of my mind—back home when I see my wife and our dog. The challenge was ultimately finding the right balance.”

For Good, a prime challenge involved the pilot. Originally that first episode came in at between 35 and 40 minutes and ended without establishing the character of Ellie, offering only a glimpse. The pilot centered on Joel and ended on a particularly bleak note. Good saw the need to take elements of episode two with its in-



## Kender Designs Daisy Jones

*Continued from page 9*

end Kender read it in one sitting and was hooked. The book was Taylor Jenkins Reid's "Daisy Jones & the Six."

Scott Neustadter, Lauren's husband, co-created and was a showrunner on the 10-episode series of the same title based on that novel. Like *Little Fires Everywhere*, *Daisy Jones & the Six* was a Hello Sunshine project. *Daisy Jones & the Six* centers on a rock band in the 1970s fronted by two charismatic lead singers: Daisy Jones (portrayed by Riley Keough) and Billy Dunne (Sam Claflin) who have palpable onstage chemistry and a tumultuous behind-the-scenes relationship. The show chronicles a high-profile rock band's skyrocket-like ascent to fame and then its precipitous fall.

The series struck a responsive chord with critics and viewers alike, scoring nine Emmy nominations, including Outstanding Limited or Anthology Series and Best Lead Actress for Keough.

Kender and her compatriots—art director Brian Grego, and set decorators Lisa Clark and Andi Brittan—share the production design Emmy nomination for *Daisy Jones & the Six*. It's the first Emmy nod for each artist. Kender has a track record of collaboration with Grego and Clark. *Daisy Jones & the Six*, though, marked Kender's first time working with Brittan.

Kender described Grego as "my work husband." They have collaborated together over the past 10-plus years, going all the way back to *Dexter*. "We share the same aesthetic sense, the same work style," said Kender, noting that upon fashioning the basic plan for a set, she can always count on Grego to take it "a step further."

Similarly Clark consistently brings something extra to the table. Kender has enjoyed a collaborative bond with Clark for some seven years. "A set will be dressed in the way that I have in mind," related Kender. "But with Lisa, there's always something that goes one step further, something I would have never thought of and that is the icing on the cake." Kender noted that she, Clark and Grego are a close-knit unit.

Kender explained, though, that *Daisy Jones & the Six* was such "a monster" of a project that another set decorator was needed. At the strong recommendation

of a trusted friend, Kender gravitated towards Brittan who was a revelation, going on location to New Orleans at one point when Clark had to stay in Los Angeles. Kender noted that Brittan came on when much of the look of the series was established yet still managed to add her own creative spark while maintaining the overall continuity of what had been designed, successfully navigating a delicate balancing act.

The degree of difficulty was elevated for *Daisy Jones & the Six* when the decision was made to make this primarily "a location show," particularly in terms of iconic venues like L.A. recording studio Sound City and performing venue the Troubadour, explained Kender. "A lot of series are built around a permanent sets. You could have four big sets to go back to. For this [*Daisy Jones*] we built sets but none of them were an anchor point. We were constantly on location."

Kender said that originally there were plans to build an ambitious Sound City set. Then one of the series directors, Nzingha Stewart, who came from a music video background, walked into the actual Sound City. Kender recalled that Stewart said, "If we shoot it here, we will give the actors the gift they would not get somewhere else—the ghosts of music past."

Sound City, however, had been modernized, necessitating that Kender and her crew "build a set within the location." Thankfully the original sound board was still intact. Yeoman work brought the Sound City setting to life, adding a feel and realism to the show.

Similarly, continued Kender, the Troubadour's modern lights had to be scaled back in order to attain the desired 1970s' look. The lensing for the series took place right around the time when the COVID pandemic had eased and live music had returned to the Troubadour and other venues. Bands got booked and the Troubadour was fully honoring that scheduled activity, meaning that there was no wiggle room for Kender and her ensemble in-between these concerts/performance. "We had to think 'how do we cover up all this modern stuff to create the [1970s] era and then restore it to what it is today in just a day and a half [when the next band is scheduled to perform]?" Kender's team

*Continued on page 11*

## Short Takes

### VCCP, DIRECTOR SAM BROWN GO GOAT GLIDING

This Virgin Media spot out of VCCP London opens on a herd of goats stuck on a remote mountainside, each stumbling around on the precipice. As the '80s classic song, "St Elmo's Fire" by John Parr, kicks in, the wheels of a hang glider come into view traveling across the rocky mountain terrain. As the glider gathers speed, a plucky goat is revealed as the pilot, and reaching the edge of the mountain, it takes off, soaring off into the skies. Having found a better way to the rest of the herd, the camera pans to its joyful face, at the same time the voiceover reveals the campaign strapline, "Why stumble when you can soar?"



Inspiring folks to reach their fullest potential and never settle for less, this "Goat Glider" commercial was directed by Sam Brown of Rogue Films, with VFX including a CGI mountain goat from Untold Studios.

### VINCENT LIN MAKES FEATURE DIRECTING DEBUT

A 25-day shoot has been wrapped for *Chopin*—starring Eddie Liu (*Kung Fu, Never Have I Ever, Silicon Valley*) and Violet Beane (*God Friended Me, The Flash*)—which marks the feature directorial debut of Vincent Lin, who helms commercials through Valiant Pictures, the company he co-founded with executive producer Matthew D'Amato. Written by Lin, *Chopin* also stars Golden Horse Film Award winner Leon Dai (*Your Name Engraved Herein, Cannot Live Without You*) and Taiwanese legend Wu Min (*The Queen!*). Additional cast includes Jake Manley (*The Order*), Michael Bow (*The Maze Runner, S.W.A.T*) and Janet Hsieh (*Fun Taiwan, Home*).

*Chopin* tells the story of Chopin Wu (Liu), who returns home to small-town America where he grew up to amend an estranged relationship with his workaholic father. With a sudden appearance from his ailing grandmother, Chopin Wu is confronted by a past he had left behind. In the midst of a health crisis and a broken family, he is forced to re-examine old relationships, embrace a heritage he once denied, and discover the importance of family.

Lin is a Taiwanese-American writer and director. For his commercialmaking, he has received accolades including Cannes Lions, Clio, Tellys, Webby's, and D&AD Pencils.

### PEOPLE ON THE MOVE....

London-based agency Above+Beyond has set its new leadership team following the promotion of internal talent, as well as the senior hire of Dena Walker, currently global strategy director at BBDO New York, as its new chief strategy officer. The leadership team comprises promotions of Laura Graham to the role of chief production officer, working alongside Walker who will join later this summer, and Jonny Ray to managing director. They join chief CCO

Dominic Goldman, with Zaid Al-Zaidy remaining as Above+Beyond Group CEO. Graham joined the agency in 2021 and in that time she has transformed the agency's production capabilities, and launched The Beyond Collective's integrated production and design studio, Collective Studios. Ray has headed up Above+Beyond's account management team for the past five years. In his new role as managing director, Ray will be responsible for the agency's day-to-day leadership, and its clients including Amazon, Alzheimer's Research UK, BoyleSports, Premier Foods, and Akzo Nobel. Walker will lead strategy for Above+Beyond across both existing clients and new business. Earlier she held positions at BBDO Dublin—for nine years—and DentsuX in Singapore....



L-R: Graham, Ray, Walker



## Ariel Marx Scores A Small Light, Her First Emmy Nomination

Continued from page 10

managed to neatly turn that trick.

Kender added that her experience on *Daisy Jones & the Six* “gave me a new appreciation for how music is made. What I love about this job is I get to meet and in a sense become people you would never get a chance to know in your day-to-day activity. You get to see into these worlds that you aren’t let into otherwise. You see the way music is made and the passion for

of Anne Frank (Billie Boulet) from the Nazis during World War II. Gies and her husband, Jan (Joe Cole), along with several other everyday heroes, watched over the Frank, van Pels and Pfeffer families hiding in a secret annex.

Marx comes from a Jewish family. Her great grandmother fled Poland to escape the rise of antisemitism. The family eventually settled in the Bronx.

Composer Marx was drawn to the

stood by, Gies stood up and stood tall in *A Small Light*.

“The language of the show is as modern as it can be for that time. A solemn reverence is often given to people from different time periods and sometimes it’s hard to relate to them,” said Marx who described the protagonists in *A Small Light* as normal, fairly ordinary people. “Miep was kind of a hot mess before she was given the opportunity to do the right thing,” pointed out Marx. “She was unemployed, living with her parents.” Yet Gies and the families in hiding—ordinary, everyday folks—responded to harrowing circumstances in an extraordinary, courageous and heroic manner.

For Marx it was important to “not

don’t see the violence upstairs,” noted Marx. “We can hear it, with the helpers on the ground floor able to do nothing. They throw all the obstructions they can into the situation, trying to keep the families hidden as long as they can.” The emotion inherent in this scenario was challenging for Marx. This “What Can Be Saved” episode was “scored almost wall to wall,” said Marx, citing a prime musical challenge as being to maintain the tension for a lengthy period without being exhausted, gratuitous or melodramatic.”

The major lesson that Marx gleaned from her experience on *A Small Light* was, “We can take these historic stories and break them down into more evocative and effective stories by making them a



Liev Schreiber (l) and Bel Powley in a scene from *A Small Light*

it, which is very exciting.”

The production designer noted that she comes away from every project “just astounded by my peers,” feeling lucky to get the opportunity to work with artists ranging from the writers to the directors, people in her art department and so on.

Kender’s Emmy nod for *Daisy Jones & the Six* adds to career recognition which also includes a pair of Art Directors Guild (ADG) Excellence in Production Design Award nominations—in 2018 for the series *Future Man*, and in 2021 for *Little Fires Everywhere*. Like for *Daisy Jones & the Six*, Kender shared these ADG noms with Grego and Clark.

### Ariel Marx

*A Small Light* (National Geographic) means a lot to composer Ariel Marx both personally and professionally. On the latter front, she garnered her first career Emmy nomination for creating the original dramatic score for the “What Can Be Saved” episode of the limited series.

And personally, the story looms large for Marx. It is based on the inspiring true story of Miep Gies (portrayed by Bel Powley) who helped to hide the family

story—and to the creative approach that was adopted to realize it. Marx noted that she and costume designer Matthew Simonelli, for example, were brought onto the project even though they had never done a period drama before. “They intentionally asked people with other and more modern sensibilities to bring those values to the show,” related Marx, explaining that while *A Small Light* delves into history, the story carries modern-day relevance. The creative braintrust of the series wanted contemporary audiences to be able to relate to that story—thus the decision was made not to fall into the trap of taking a straight period drama approach. While period elements would be part of the show’s fabric, the feel of today was essential. The story almost asks us what we would have done in Gies’ shoes. And in modern times, would we have the courage to push back against hatred, injustice, racism and religious persecution?

Sadly, the question is painfully relevant today with the rise of bigotry, white nationalism, racism, anti-antisemitism and the villainizing of refugees. There’s much to be learned from Gies relative to what she means to the present era. While many



Liev Schreiber as Otto Frank in *A Small Light*

make the music bigger than they were essentially.” This underscored that ordinary people were capable of doing the extraordinary, particularly Gies whom Marx regards as the centerpiece of a “coming-of-age story” in *A Small Light*. Marx also incorporated avant garde, electronic music as well as elements of improvisation to again help bring the narrative to the contemporary world in which we live.

Similarly, *A Small Light* very much lived in its own present—not in the tragic ending for the Frank family and Anne in particular. “We were being very present with these people. Everyone believed that they would see the end of the war. We were not playing to the ending. We were playing in the existing light, the existing stakes.”

And in the penultimate episode (number seven, for which Marx got the Emmy nomination), the annex gets raided—as seen only through Gies’ perspective. “You

bit more relatable. People are craving less distance from period drama.” Viewers, she observed, are responding to more modern and relatable moments along with being able to see historic figures in new ways, reflecting the good, bad and the ugly inside them, the flaws and the minutiae of everyday life. This truth, continued Marx, helps history and its stories to resonate.

### Judy Rhee

Among the four Emmy nominations earned by the Rian Johnson-created *Poker Face*, the mystery-case-of-the-week Peacock series, is Outstanding Production Design for a Narrative Contemporary Program (One Hour or More) by a team headed by production designer Judy Rhee for “The Orpheus Syndrome” episode. Rhee is nominated alongside art director Martha Sparrow and set decorator Cathy T.

Continued on page 12



## Judy Rhee Production Designs Poker Face For Rian Johnson

Continued from page 11

Marshall. Rhee and Marshall are first-time Emmy nominees. Sparrow has received

explained, "As much as the premise of the series excited me, I was equally concerned how to accomplish the requirements of a

the legendary Phil Tippet, who designed and created the stop motion characters of 'The Orpheus Syndrome.' This aspect was helpful for our research. All while simultaneously prepping episode 10, and starting prep for episode 2 in New Mexico which were both filmed after episode eight."

Helping immeasurably in meeting these and other challenges was a core team which included Sparrow and Marshall. "I feel fortunate to have had the crew I did on *Poker Face*," said Rhee. "Without them, none of what we accomplished would have been possible. I first worked with Martha Sparrow in 2015 as one of the set designers on an Amazon pilot for Steve Conrad's *Patriot* in Montreal. She displayed an uncanny ability to stay calm, produce eloquent work under extreme pressure in a condensed schedule. Her ability to anticipate and follow through on many tasks made her efforts on that pilot invaluable. Her progression into art directing a few years later was no surprise. I tried to hire her on other projects since then, but our schedules did not align until last

stay calm and focus on the tasks at hand while running her crew. Our dialogue and conversations sometimes consisted of fast, compact exchanges of ideas, since we rarely had time for extended meetings and discussions. This non-traditional arrangement somehow worked for our alliance."

Rhee was also gratified by the nature of her collaborative relationships with Johnson and Lyonne. "Working with Rian Johnson was a great experience and I look forward to collaborating with him again soon. Although, he had clear and sometimes specific ideas for some of the scripts and story-points, he was also very generous and open to having a dialogue on some of my ideas. He was always accessible and able to make decisions quickly. He demonstrates a trust and allows space for discovery, which I think is key to getting the best performance from people."

As for Lyonne, Rhee noted, "I was rarely on set during shooting, so I only really got to know Natasha when she was directing 'The Orpheus Syndrome.' Because she has worn many hats; acting, directing and producing, she's aware of the broader picture of the best way to achieve what's needed, but also attentive to details. I found her to be incredibly prepared, smart and creatively collaborative."

Regarding lessons learned from her *Poker Face* experience, Rhee shared, "Every project is different so the takeaway from each show is unique to the specific circumstances of the pursuit. There's no one formula that works for every show, but I can now add to my repertoire how to do a series with each script uniquely different, written for locations other than where you're filming, on an episodic schedule."

Beyond her initial Emmy nomination, Rhee has a pair of ADG Excellence in Production Design Award nominations to her credit—in 2003 for the feature *The Hours* on which she served as an art director, and in 2019 as production designer on a pair of *Better Call Saul* episodes. Other notable production design credits include the *Jessica Jones* series and *El Camino: A Breaking Bad Movie*.

This is the 14th installment of SHOOT's weekly 16-part *The Road To Emmy Series*. The Creative Arts Emmy Award ceremonies are slated for the weekend of January 6 and 7, 2024, and the primetime Emmy ceremony is scheduled for January 15.



Photo courtesy of Peacock

### Cherry Jones in "The Orpheus Syndrome" episode of *Poker Face*

six career nods over the years, the other five for *A Handmaid's Tale* for which she won in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

An admirer of director/writer/producer Johnson's work over the years in film, Rhee was enthused over landing an interview for *Poker Face* with Ram Bergman, executive producer at production company T-Street. Johnson and Bergman are at the helm of T-Street, and *Poker Face* marked their first TV series. Rhee's interview with Bergman led to a get-together with Johnson. "We discovered in our meeting that we shared a mutual admiration for Italian neo-realism films," recalled Rhee who after reading the treatment and first script for *Poker Face* knew she had to work on the show. "I connected to the material on many levels; the reference and homage to the '70s and '80s mystery-of-the-week shows like *Columbo* and *Rockford Files*, which I thought was interesting and original, and the main character traveling across the country encountering different characters and stories. I was also aware this would be challenging on an episodic schedule."

That schedule represented what Rhee regarded as "the biggest hurdle of the show," which stars Natasha Lyonne (who also serves as a director, writer and exec producer) as Charlie Cale, a woman with the uncanny knack to detect if people are lying, which serves her well at poker tournaments and as a sleuth.

Rhee, who served as production designer on all 10 episodes of season one,

new and different story every 10 days. Each episode posed its unique undertaking, but for 'The Orpheus Syndrome' the script written for Northern California presented a few dilemmas; the cliffside jump onto the rocks of the Northern California coastline,



Photo courtesy of Peacock

### Nick Nolte guest stars in *Poker Face*

the geographically specific architecture of Laura's house [Cherry Jones guest starred as Laura] and an uncommon building to represent [VFX studio] LAM, which was loosely based on Industrial Light & Magic. All had to be found and modified in the Hudson Valley of upstate New York. The other considerable endeavor was to find and create a substantial amount of work to represent Arthur's [guest star Nick Nolte] 40+ years in the industry as an animator, stop-motion filmmaker, visual effects artist and creature designer, among other things. Arthur's character was loosely based on

year when she was available to join us on *Poker Face*.

"Both Martha and Cathy have the ability to efficiently spin multiple plates, which was necessary to meet the demands of the series," continued Rhee who recalled being "equally thrilled when Cathy Marshall was available and decided to join us as our alternating set decorator. Although, we've tried to work together in the past, this was our first time collaborating. Cathy's experience and self-motivated approach was key to managing the necessities of the schedule. She too had the ability to



# Davis Guggenheim

*Oscar winner earns 2 Emmy nominations for Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie, which scores 7 nods overall*



**By Robert Goldrich**

Documentarian Davis Guggenheim has garnered assorted high-profile honors for his work, the latest being a pair of Emmy nominations for *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie* (Apple TV+)—in the Outstanding Documentary or Nonfiction Special and Directing for a Documentary/Nonfiction Program categories. Overall, *Still* earned seven Emmy nods—the others for cinematography, picture editing, original dramatic score, sound editing and sound mixing.

Guggenheim served as director and producer on *Still*, which delves into Michael J. Fox who recounts his life, career and battle with Parkinson's disease. The film adroitly uses clips of Fox's feature and TV series to reflect his life, coupled with home movies, intimate on-camera interviews and narration read by the actor.

While his dream-like rise from obscurity to stardom initiated by the break of a lifetime with his casting on *Family Ties* turns nightmarish with the diagnosis at 29 that he had a degenerative disease, Fox has persevered, showing his resilience, retaining a self-deprecating sense of humor and managing to keep on keeping on—with the love and support

of his wife, Tracy Pollan, and their kids. Fox says that he's become more present in the moment and "still." To attain a stillness while enduring an illness that causes physical tremors reflects in a sense the triumph of the human spirit.

Guggenheim professionally has had his share of triumphs as well, directing and exec producing *An Inconvenient Truth* which won the Best Feature Documentary Oscar in 2007. He's no stranger to the Emmys either with two earlier nominations—with his *Boys State* topping the Outstanding Documentary or Nonfiction Special category in 2021, and being nominated for Outstanding Directing for Nonfiction Programming in 2016 on the strength of *He Named Me Malala*.

The latter is a portrait of teen activist Malala Yousafzai, who was shot in the head by the Taliban in 2012 for advocating for girls' education in Pakistan. Yousafzai recovered and continued her work worldwide, addressing the United Nations and winning the Nobel Peace prize.

Guggenheim was a DGA Award nominee in 2011 for the documentary *Waiting for Superman*. Guggenheim's credits also extend to films about rock stars such as U2, Jimmy Page, Jack White.

**SHOOT:** Please provide some backstory relative to this documentary. How did you become involved in *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie*? What attracted you to his story and why did you feel the need to tell it?

**Guggenheim:** I was looking for a different kind of movie, something a little bit more adventurous, fun, a little more creatively wild. I read Michael J. Fox's books—including "No Time Like The Future" and "Lucky Man." They had a lot of heart. Also there was tremendous storytelling in them. I started imagining a documentary.

**SHOOT:** What was (were) the biggest challenge(s) that *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie* posed to you as a director and executive producer?

**Guggenheim:** At first, I thought who

should I get to direct this. In my simplistic mind, I thought this is a story about a celebrity. Then I found out it was much more and that I had a connection to it as a person. It was about the way he's approaching his life. We're about the same age and his experiences were meaningful to me. I don't have Parkinson's. But I'm dealing with getting older, facing your mortality. The challenge became how do you make a movie that includes Parkinson's but wasn't a sob story, that didn't fall into those tropes. The key was not to fall into the trap of just another celebrity story—with all the trappings.

**SHOOT:** Would you provide some context for what some of the other Emmy nominees behind *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie* brought to the table, why you gravitated towards them for this documentary

**Guggenheim:** I'm filled with joy when I think about my collaborators being recognized. C. Kim Miles [Cinematography for a Nonfiction Program] shot re-creations in Vancouver. I had seen his work and fell in love with it. He's a man of tremendous modesty but also tremendous craft. He shot *Welcome to Marwen* for Robert Zemeckis and episodes of *Yellowjackets*. Every image he shoots is gorgeous. I saw a refined, gentle touch with lighting that goes across all his projects.

John Powell [nominated for Original Dramatic Score] is an extraordinary composer who took a big leap to make his first documentary with me. He's done *The Bourne Identity*, *Happy Feet*, *How to Train Your Dragon* [for which he earned an Oscar nomination]. He was a stranger in a strange land making a documentary. But he was able to find the right tone for the documentary. His music makes me cry. The audience isn't conscious, though, of the music or the composer. That's what a great score is. The work is hidden yet it's deeply powerful.

Michael Harte [Picture Editing for a Nonfiction Program]. Anyone who makes documentaries knows that the editor is kind of your writer. Michael is more than that. He pushed me in directions I didn't

think I would go. His editing is next level.

And Skip Lievsay [re-recording mixer nominated for Sound Mixing for a Nonfiction Program] is a genius. We did *An Inconvenient Truth* together. He's worked on almost all my movies [including an Emmy-nominated turn on *He Named Me Malala*]. Skip is a genius. He too has this delicate touch, a great ear. Seeing Skip get acknowledged is the most gratifying thing. [Lievsay is an eight-time Oscar nominee, winning in 2014 for *Gravity*].

**SHOOT:** What's your biggest takeaway and/or the major lessons you learned from your experience on *Still: A Michael J. Fox Movie*? What is the documentary's most lasting impact on you?

**Guggenheim:** I'm an old dog and I've learned a few new tricks. I will be 60 in November. I learned I can still push myself further creatively.

Michael J. Fox has taught me a lot about finding gratitude in my own life. It's strange. I'm a lucky person yet feel like I have a darker, negative outlook on things. I look at Michael who is relentlessly optimistic. He sits on my shoulder now smiling when I get too dark, reminding me how lucky I am.

"The challenge became how do you make a movie that includes Parkinson's but wasn't a sob story."



Photo courtesy of Apple TV+



# Hollywood Strikes, AI, Brands & Entertainment, and DEI Backlash

Ad agency artisans provide feedback on significant news, trends and developments thus far in 2023

### A SHOOT Staff Report

It's been an eventful first half of 2023, prompting SHOOT in its latest Mid-year Report Card Survey to once again seek feedback from the ad agency community on trends, developments and issues which have emerged as the most significant.

For the first time in six decades, we have dual strikes in the entertainment industry as members of SAG-AFTRA and the WGA have hit the picket lines. The ad sector figures to feel the ripple effect of a prolonged strike or strikes. Meanwhile agencies and brands are also grappling with how to handle AI.

Geneva Wasserman, EVP, TV and film development and financing at Dentsu, observed that content creation will focus on "the unscripted and podcast models as the dual strikes largely affect the scripted market. As SAG is providing waivers to independent film, I do think we will see some amazing projects produced in the second half of this year. Once the strikes are settled and business resumes, I am hopeful that we will see independent films find more exposure and traction in the marketplace."

Meanwhile it's also been a year in which entertainment and brands have connected in an impactful way, a prime example being the box office success of *Barbie*. It's also been a year where brands taking a stand for inclusion--such as Target and Bud Light--have been feeling significant backlash.

Abby Allen, founder and CCO, Neon Butterfly, Inc., related, "The fear now is that companies will double down on that bias and behavior. So as a creative agency, it means that we have to find new language for talking about the importance of representation and what it really means without watering down the message. We have to make it clear that representation isn't about replacing cis-gendered white people, but about accurately telling the stories and experiences of everyone else as well."

Allen and Wasserman were among a cross-section of agency pros surveyed. SHOOT posed the following questions:

**1) What trends, developments or issues would you point to thus far in 2023 as being most significant,**

**perhaps carrying implications for the rest of this year and beyond?**

**2) What's the biggest takeaway or lessons learned from work that you were involved in this year? Or if you prefer, what's the biggest takeaway or lessons learned from work you were involved in that won, was or is in the running for current awards season consideration (Emmys & Cannes Lions, etc.)**

**3) Have you been involved or experimented with AI, AR or other emerging disciplines or new technologies? If so, relative to experimental or actual projects, briefly tell us about the work and what you've taken away from the experience. If the work is complete and you'd like to share a link to it, please include.**

**4) Have any societal issues--including DEI, recent Supreme Court decisions and/or backlash against advertisers like Target and Bud Light--impacted the way you do**

**business, company policies and/or selection of projects/creative content?**

**5) What work (advertising, entertainment, documentary, etc.)--your own or others--struck a responsive chord with you so far this year and why?**

**6) While gazing into the crystal ball is a tricky proposition, we nonetheless ask you for any forecast you have relative to content creation and/or the creative and/or business climate for the second half of 2023 and beyond.**

**7) Has the first half of 2023 caused you to redefine or fine tune the goals of your company--and if so, in what way(s)?**

What follows is a sampling of the feedback we received from a wide range of respondents. Full responses can be accessed at [www.shootonline.com](http://www.shootonline.com) and in the concurrent SHOOT>e.dition.







# Need a director who's gonna crush those boards?



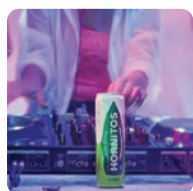
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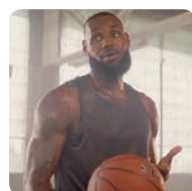
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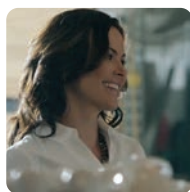
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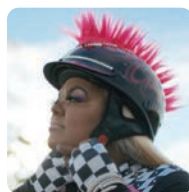
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LIFESTYLE | STORYTELLING



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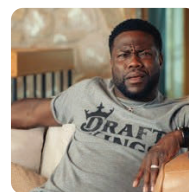
**lucky twins**

REAL PEOPLE | DIVERSITY



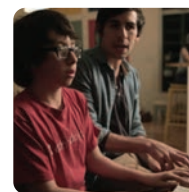
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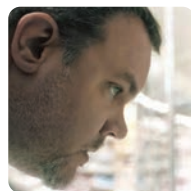
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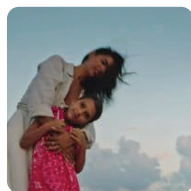
**norman brothers**

HUMOR | DIALOGUE



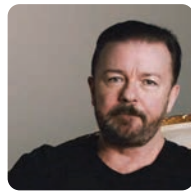
**ramesh iyer**

DRY HUMOR



**ron hamad**

CINEMATIC | LIFESTYLE



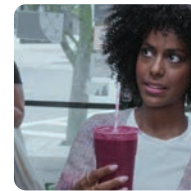
**sam washington**

STORYTELLING | DIALOGUE



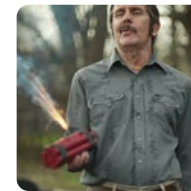
**tamir moscovici**

VISUAL STORYTELLING



**tessa greenberg**

IMPROV COMEDY



**timothy kendall**

COMEDY | CELEBRITY



## Feedback From Neon Butterfly, Foul Mouth and Remezcla

Continued from page 14



**Abby Allen**  
**Founder & Chief Creative Officer**  
**Neon Butterfly, Inc.**

3) We've been working behind the scenes to figure out how we can get involved with affecting the input going into machine learning since it will have a massive impact on the creative and entertainment industries in the very near future. If left to just technologists AI will perpetuate existing biases because it's only as "good" or as accurate as the input it receives. So, just like any other company, organization, or agency, it needs diverse and cross-functional teams of people checking and balancing input. So that when someone types in the word "art director" it doesn't just spit out a bunch of white hipsters in beanies and glasses like that meme that went around, though there's also truth in that. So, we've been experimenting as much as we can, using it to make mood boards and offer copy suggestions, really seeing what these tools are capable of and getting comfortable using them as

well as learning about their limitations.

5) *Never Have I Ever*, the Netflix series by Mindy Kaling and Lang Fisher, that recently released its final season. The series is funny, smart, and touching all at once. And the best part is that it centers on an Indian-American teenager and one of the main love interests is bi-racial without the show making their lives all about race, which so often happens. It's not reductive but rich and complex. The show brilliantly gives us a fresh take on teen life in America, and manages to incorporate authentic Indian cultural references without hitting us over the head with the fact that Devi is Indian. First and foremost she is a teenage girl in America, period. So in that vein she is similar to every other teenage girl in America, but also has an experience that is unique to having immigrant parents from India. It humanizes POC teens and because of that it's relatable to all of us, regardless of our ethnicity.



**Rachel Carlson**  
**Co-Founder + Creative Director**  
**Foul Mouth Creative**

1) Advertising's past of selling aspirational lifestyles through, say, a toothpaste brand, is dead and gone. It's been a rough few years, and dopamine is the biggest motivator. We want to know we're OK. Reassurance, connection and embracing the weird, wonderful complexities of humans is the sweet spot.

2) If you're making work that doesn't make people give a shit, it's not worth doing. Brands have to become part of their audience's zeitgeist. Our work on GameStop's "There's A Place for Us" brand campaign resonated very deeply with the gamer audience because it went hard into the dark humor of the community, in an "us VS them" mentality. You either got it, or you didn't. And good news: the gamers got it.

3) We're using AI for social listening and insight-gathering to help eliminate unconscious bias in the work. While we'll continue to use technology for strategic short-cuts where it makes sense, we'll always put human talent first across creative and production. Great work has soul; robots have none.

5) Taco Bell's recent campaign pressuring Taco John's to release the copyright hold on the phrase "Taco Tuesday" for free use is incredible. It was done in the full spirit of collaboration -- letting anyone use something everyone is already using without fear of legal repercussions. A brilliant twist on exploiting capitalism in the name of cooperation from the big guys who can afford to fight those battles for the little guys.

6) The Hollywood strikes against AI and big business profiting off creatives is going to have a massive impact on the ad industry. There will be a rise in indie output, cutting out the fat-cat boss man. Art is not a commodity and we will see this trickle down into advertising and content creation. Soulful creative expression and execution will be embraced, moving away from the fast-churn garbage filling our screens and feeds.



**Morris Dávila**  
**Executive Creative Director**  
**Remezcla**

2) This year, at Remezcla, we won our first Cannes Lion, a Silver award in the Entertainment Lion for Sport category. The recognition came for a beautiful short documentary we created for MLB as part of the series *Fuera del Ballpark*. Throughout the series, we journeyed across Latin America to uncover incredible baseball stories that extended beyond the game itself. The winning piece revolved around the Diablillas, a courageous group of Mayan women who formed a softball team. They play wearing their traditional handmade dresses and go barefoot, challenging traditional gender roles in their small Yucatán community.

This award taught us that at Cannes, it's not always necessary to rely on the typical advertising festival plot twist to achieve success. Instead, what truly matters is the power of the story, the craftsmanship, attention to detail, and the right director (in our case, Yupi Segura). Winning with a Mexican story entirely in the Mayan language, celebrating women's empowerment and paying tribute to indigenous culture, holds immense significance for us. We take great pride in creating content that deeply resonates with audiences and leaves a lasting impact.

5) One thing that caught my attention among the Cannes Lions winners this year was the Rosalía TikTok Live experience. It won four awards (1 Gold, 1 Silver, and 2 Bronzes). If you've ever been to or seen Rosalía perform live, you know she takes her concerts to a whole new level. The stage design, choreographies, wardrobe, visuals on the screen, and the use of different cameras -- it's not just about singing songs; there's a concept and storytelling in each one. Well, she took that same creative approach to a livestream experience tailor-made for TikTok, bringing 14 tracks from her album "Motomami" to life. Each song had its unique visual and feel, and everything was conceptualized and created by Rosalía herself, directed by Stillz, and filmed entirely on mobile phones. It's amazing to see this kind of work recognized at Cannes because I believe brands should consider adopting a similar approach to how music artists release their music.

Continued on page 18





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## Agency Observations

Continued from page 16



**Miriam Franklin**  
EVP, Director of Integrated Production  
Deutsch NY

1) Certainly AI and technology are at the forefront and will continue having significant implications on how we create and consume content. The speed with which new tools are continually introduced affects our approach, workflows and how we adjust and evolve.

We've already seen what the latest developments in virtual stages, unreal engine and gaming technology have done to expand our toolkit and the way we plan productions. The main thing we need to ensure as an industry is that we learn how to master the tools in service of the storytelling and craft and not just as trends or gimmicks for the sake of it.

5) That's a tough one as so much great work continues to come out. I'd have to say in advertising the Tubi Super Bowl campaign was one of my favorites not only because it was a great idea but the execution was superb across all channels. In entertainment, the second season of *The Bear* has been stellar. Superb storytelling, filmmaking craft, acting and killer cameos that actually had purpose rather than just being stunt casting! It's a masterclass. For documentary, this may sound silly but I was surprised by how much I was entertained by and sucked into the Arnold Schwarzenegger docu-series. I binged it in one sitting.

6) Content is and will remain king. How we create it, distribute it and consume it will continue to evolve and grow as channels and tools become more easily accessible. I think with the SAG and WGA strikes, the content we and our brand partners create will have a greater impact and there is tremendous opportunity for those with vision to capitalize on it.



**Paul Greco**  
Executive Director of Music & Audio  
Wunderman Thompson

1) There continues to be a great trend of brands wanting and asking for "sonic identity" or "sonic branding". Across our global network there have been requests to create sonic signatures and music unique to the brand. Clients have seen their competitors jump into this with success and then realize they need to do it too. The data shows the

brands that have a sonic identity have more recall and recognition and now brands are asking for it to be included in the brand strategy. This is happening across all touchpoints, not just traditional media and brand website as they have been in the past. It has become more ubiquitous.

2) Our recent work for Gold Peak Tea (Coca Cola) was a true team effort across agency disciplines and our client. We were able to solve a very tricky music situation with great input and communication between the agency and our client to get a great outcome.

4) Not really, other than the recent court decision involving Ed Sheeran's alleged plagiarism of a Marvin Gaye song. That had potential to impact our business in some ways on how we source and create music for ads. The court found that he did not plagiarize the song in question.

5) Our work for The Foundation to Combat Antisemitism. It was a powerful series of films that put the issue at the forefront of the concerns of our society. The work was an important message and was awarded at Cannes.

6) I'm hoping that as economic issues continue to improve and the fears of a recession abates, brands will be willing to commission more work and bigger productions. I also think that AI will impact how we create content and I hope it can be a useful tool in many ways.

Continued on page 19

### Women In Music Names New Advisory Board Members

The 501(c)3 non-profit Women In Music has added Advisory Board members and Ambassadors to the organization to continue their mission in advancing equality, visibility and opportunities for women in the musical arts through



Rapsody

education, support, empowerment and recognition. The 2023 WIM Ambassadors are: Rapsody, the Jamla/Roc Nation hip-hop artist, who's featured as the only female artist and role model in episode 6 of the Netflix/Mass Appeal eight-part documentary series, RAPSURE; Faryal Khan-Thompson who recently joined CD Baby (part of Downtown Music Holdings) as SVP of marketing & community engagement; Amy Davidman, a veteran agent with more than 20 years' experience in the music business; Dina Marto who's shattered gender and ethnic glass ceilings during her over 20 years as a music executive and small business owner, and has partnered with marketing guru Courtney Rhodes to form C & D The Agency in 2020, an all women-led management agency dedicated to empowering minority women; Adriana Arce, VP at REBEL where she manages Lil Nas X, and previously Miley Cyrus for a decade. Prior to being on the business side of entertainment, she was a full time artist and musician, having been awarded a singing scholarship to Berklee College of Music.

2023 WIM Advisory Board members are: Lauren Apolito, EVP, strategy & business, Rumblefish; Nikisha Bailey, general manager, NVAK Collective; Erin Barra, director of popular music, Arizona State University, and executive director, Beats by Girlz; Cindy Charles, head of licensing & industry relations, Twitch; Liz Cimarelli, COO/head of business development, Cosynd; Alex Flores, EVP, music, Hello Sunshine; Maureen Ford, president of national sales, Live Nation; Ali Harnell, president & chief strategy officer, Live Nation Women at Live Nation; Ariel Hyatt, founder, Cyber PR & Cyber PR Music; Lauren Iossa, CMO & EVP, ASCAP; Sari Kohen, head of partner marketing, Melio; Bea Koramblyum, global head of business affairs, Downtown Music Publishing; Linda Lorence-Critelli, assistant professor II, arts & entertainment industries management, Rider University; Molly Neuman, CMO, Downtown Music Holdings; Mayna Nevarez, CEO, Nevarez Communications; Jennifer Newman Sharpe, general counsel & head of legal and business affairs, Exceleation Music; Jessica Sobhraj, CEO, Cosynd; and Monika Tashman, partner, Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, LLP.

### Sica, Bradley, Bissett Launch Juice

Former TikTok creative licensing exec Rich Sica and commercial music industry vets Jack Bradley and Aleena Bissett have teamed to launch Juice, a music company focused on social media and short-form online content for brands and creators. The new venture will partner with brands, marketers and content creators to produce both bespoke and customizable ready-to-go music solutions that drive brand awareness for their partners. Curating an ever-growing library of tracks that were made by relevant artists and brand music experts will allow marketers to move very quickly without sacrificing creativity and engagement.

Juice will tap into an extensive network of composers and artists primed for short-form musical scoring, ranging from Grammy-nominated composers and producers to viral TikTok creators. Juice has adopted a sonic approach for campaigns to be launched across TikTok, Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts. Juice offers both exclusive, pre-cleared music and custom collaborations with its network of diverse and talented musicians.

Juice advising creative director Sica recently spent two and a half years at TikTok, overseeing creative music licensing across North America and LATAM



Juice logo

markets and working with brands that leveraged the platform's first audio library and royalty-free music and the platform's distribution and artist marketing service, SoundOn. He also served at agencies like R/GA and 72andSunny.

Juice managing director Bradley and head of production Bissett will continue to run commercial music shop HiFi Project in addition to Juice.

# MID-YEAR REPORT CARD

## Jo Kang, Mark Koelfgen Assess First Half Of 2023

Continued from page 18



**Jo Kang**  
Group Creative Director  
Amplify LA

1) Developments in AI have been a big driver for many interesting conversations.

Everyone is excited, terrified, and experimenting with AI. All social platforms are still plagued with Dall-E or Midjourney experimentations and fear-mongering clickbait articles about what jobs AI is, and will be, replacing.

It is a fascinating tool that shows that we are at a critical juncture to make some decisions that can have huge implications in the future. Decisions need to be made not just based on profits and glory, and there's an urgent need for an inclusive conversation where we get all the affected parties involved--policymakers, industry, and consumers whose lives will

be changed irrevocably.

2) In the first half of the year, most of my work was for Google. Working with their team, from Healthcare to Cloud, you can definitely tell that this is the year of AI. There is a sense of urgency and excitement about the sector and the desire to get this right. Ethical AI is an interesting and very necessary topic. As AI gets embedded even more than it already is in our everyday lives, there are many unanswered questions and unimagined scenarios. We want this year to be the catalyst for changes that enrich our lives, not the year Sarah Connor returns to correct history!

4) Authenticity speaks louder and reaches more audiences than celebrity and timely push for monetization. Personally, I am all for this and excited about this push. Brands need to put money where their mouth is and show a genuine effort, not just an opportunity to be seen as champions of DEIB. I am always excited to see longer-term commitment that lasts longer than a campaign around a particular day, a partnership that nourishes both the brand and the community.



**Mark Koelfgen**  
Executive Creative Director  
Team One

5) I've been thinking about the Ikea "Second Best" campaign a lot. There's no mad science to it. It's an achingly beautiful thought. I have to believe the production cost didn't break the bank. But it's so disarmingly reductive. The complexity and volume of messages we're getting is verging on information overload. We all carry around 4X6 hunks of plastic in our purses and pockets that catastrophize every data point. And look, there's legitimate reason for concern everywhere. But we're not hard-wired to be in a state of constant stress and agitation. "Second Best" takes the opposite approach. Letting us sink into a gorgeous rendition of reality for just a moment. There's a truth to it. But also an element of escapism. I'd wager we'll see more work like this. And more work like this getting honored.

6) I'm guessing we'll see less resistance around being in the office. Not because of the arm-twisting. More due to rampant loneliness. *Harvard Business Review* says that 36% of survey respondents report serious feelings of loneliness "frequently" or "almost all the time." But those numbers skyrocket for young people to the tune of 61%. That's nuts. I grew up in advertising back in the mid-90s. Those were intensely social years. The bulk of my friends I met in agency settings. My partner of 20 years was introduced to me through another copywriter who's still one of my closest friends. I understand the need for a firewall between work and life. That said, I think there's a generation of younger ad folks who are really missing out on a key channel of friend and significant other discovery. And it's the office.

Maybe this is wishful thinking. But I see TV making a comeback. FAST Channels (Free Ad Supported Television) are growing fast. Streaming services are bolstering their valuation with ad-supported models all over the place. And Wall Street's eating it up. This opens up huge visibility opportunities for brands. Remember when movie studios were pronounced dead. Then "Barbenheimer" happened. Turns out we can get people back to theaters. I think the rumors of TV's death are premature. It's quiet now. But look for brands to throw more TV investment in their media mix.

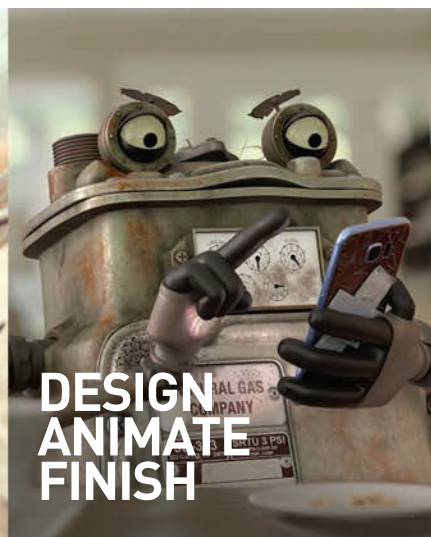
Continued on page 20



**DIRECT  
PRODUCE  
SHOOT**



**EDIT  
MIX  
SCORE**



**DESIGN  
ANIMATE  
FINISH**



**CHARLIE  
UNIFORM  
TANGO**



## Advertising Agency Feedback

Continued from page 19



**Jason G Lau**  
VP, Content Production  
Giant Spoon

1) Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning has become an interesting topic. It hasn't significantly affected us, but we're curious to know how AI can be useful in a positive way. I expect that this new tool will continue to grow as AI technologies become more advanced and accessible.

Short-form video content, especially on platforms like TikTok, continues to gain popularity and has become an essential part of how we advertise. We're always trying to create innovative and engaging short videos/content to capture the attention of the younger demographic. In addition, we do a good amount of longer-form branded content that is more than a traditional broadcast spot which keeps things different and exciting!

Inclusivity and diversity are always top of mind. We create campaigns that celebrate different minds, cultures, identities, and perspectives.



**Ashley Marshall**  
Executive Creative Director  
The Martin Agency

6) As an industry we are paid for our time, not our potential and that's hurting creativity and making some broad stroke hits to the overall craft. But AI might be the key to regaining some of the time that's been robbed of us back in this industry. It won't be real time we get back of course but it will allow us to run our own creativity at

a faster speed, compressing the time it takes for us to strike brilliance. I'm hoping we feel some relief in compressed timelines the better we get with directing AI. I'm in a personal race to unlock the creative potential of AI as it relates to idea amplification. We have to continue to prove our worth by demonstrating machine + humans will always trump just machine. AI can only process information it is given. We have to continue to feed it fresh thinking.



**Julia Millison**  
Senior Music Producer  
BBDO New York

1) The rise of AI has been the catalyst for so many conversations around what creativity and ownership means. It is definitely going to have a lasting impact beyond 2023, and I'm excited (and scared!) to see how that technology develops. I see it changing the way we operate in a similar way to how search engines and the rise of web

2.0 changed the way we work, but we have to be careful to not act too fast and implement AI in irresponsible ways or shoehorn it in just because it's trendy now. I think it's here to stay, and we need to embrace it thoughtfully.

5) I've been blown away by the *Barbie* movie campaign. I don't think I've ever been hit on so many platforms at once (even while shopping for home goods), or seen marketing efforts trickle down to almost every person I know on social media, to the point that my peers have almost forgotten that Barbie is a product and have instead fully embraced Barbie as a character and cultural icon. I think it speaks to the fact that most of us needed some levity this year.

Continued on page 21

## Spielberg Animation Collection Donated To Film Academy



Bugs Bunny cel art

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences announced the newest acquisitions to its expansive collection—the largest film-related collection in the world—housed at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, Margaret Herrick Library, and Academy Film Archive, leaders in the fields of conservation, preservation, and exhibition of film-related objects and materials.

Among the work in the mix is a gift from filmmaker Steven Spielberg and his wife, actress Kate Capshaw—the Steven Spielberg Animation Collection consisting of 157 pieces of original animation art, dated from 1932-1952, including cels and setups from films including *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Pinocchio* (1940), and animation setups and cels for characters, including Goofy, Pluto, Donald Duck, Bugs Bunny, and Woody Woodpecker.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has been collecting and preserving film and film-related material since 1927, and its unparalleled permanent collection contains more than 13 million photographs, 8.3 million clippings, 95,000 screenplays, 73,500 posters, 145,000 production and costume design drawings, 45,000 sound recordings, 39,000 books, 1,900 special collections, 242,000 film and video assets, and 8,000 props, process, and production items representing motion picture technology, costume design, production design, makeup and hairstyling, visual effects, promotional materials, and more.

The Steven Spielberg and Kate Capshaw Graphic Arts Department houses the Academy's collection of posters and production art, including animation artwork, production and costume design drawings, storyboards, and other design works. The department, part of the Margaret Herrick Library, was established in 1998, and its production art collections, acquired from designers, private collectors, and professional organizations, document more than 80 years of motion picture design.

## VFX Supervisor David Sewell Joins Ingenuity Studios U.K.

Ingenuity Studios, one of Streamland Media's VFX divisions, has appointed



David Sewell

David Sewell as VFX supervisor in the studio's London office. Reporting to Grant Miller, partner and VFX supervisor, Sewell is responsible for supervising all client projects as well as supporting business development efforts in the U.K.

With more than 25 years of experience in the industry, Sewell is an award-winning visual effects authority who honed his skills working on blockbusters such as the *Harry Potter* franchise, *World War Z*, *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*, and the *James Bond* franchise.

Additionally, Sewell's previous and more recent clients have been *Chernobyl*, and *The Wheel of Time*, among many others. He also supervised the visual effects for director Michael Mann's upcoming film *Ferrari* which is set for release later this year.

## Camp Lucky Adds Flame Artist Artie Peña

Dallas-based Camp Lucky expands its creative post talent with the addition of Flame artist Artie Peña whose work spans many genres and includes long and short-form branded content, television series and film. Among his credits are collaborations with Samsung, Universal Studios, Chick-fil-A, Tito's Vodka, American Airlines, HGTV and Amazon.



Artie Peña

Peña first gained industry experience while working at Click3X in New York City, which is where the magic of Flame first caught his attention.

After gaining valuable knowledge on the East Coast, Peña returned to his native Texas to start a long tenure in the editorial department at charlieuniformtango, quickly becoming a highly sought after Flame artist.

# MID-YEAR REPORT CARD

## Von Ohlen, Wasserman Share Takes On 2023 Thus Far

Continued from page 20



**Adam Von Ohlen**  
Chief Creative Officer  
Two by Four

**1)** I think the obvious answer is AI. In my opinion, some of the graphic possibilities have been overpromised, but you can see the potential going forward. However on the writing side, it seems like there is already a real opportunity to turn to AI and to have success with it. Specifically, longer form writing like blogs and white papers. Once there's an established voice that the technology can dial into, it's easy to generate fresh content in a similar voice, affecting the need for humans to create it. For now I'm still not fully convinced that AI is coming for our jobs. New ideas and thoughts will always drive our business. And that's not something AI is built to handle yet.

**2)** I can't say that there were any particular lessons I've learned this year. I will say this though—I've realized that as much as things change, the more they stay the same. Today we approach projects strategically and tactically in a much different way than we did 10 years ago. But what hasn't changed is that we're still coming up with big ideas, we're putting in the work to get it right and we're always being the best stewards of our client's business that we can be. I'm often reminded that sticking to these principals is what keeps you in business.

**3)** On the creative side, we haven't been involved with AI much yet. Our art directors and designers have started to experiment with generative graphic features but not much has come from it.

**6)** For us, we've had clients come to us because they feel like we can help them be more efficient. I've heard from a few clients that tell me they've struggled to maximize content created from expensive shoots. And they're challenging us to come to them with ideas that can be created more cost-effectively and be used in more channels. I see this trend continuing for us.



**Geneva Wasserman**  
EVP, TV and Film Development and Financing  
Dentsu

**1)** The most significant issues are highlighted by the SAG and WGA strikes currently underway. Issues such as AI, streaming revenue reporting, wage stagnation, mini-rooms, etc., have put our industry at a crucial turning point.

**2)** This past year, we produced a new series called *The Winning Spirit* with our partners P&G Studios, SMAC and Gillette. We previously produced a show with these partners called *The Cost of Winning* which became an HBO original series. We are increasingly seeing that platforms and audiences have shifted their views on brand-funded content. Instead of cynicism, we are finding interest and gratitude among audiences. When a brand mission and message is authentic to the story and the series is driven by an entertainment-first approach, we are finding incredible results for all involved. Brands are now seeing that they can deliver value for their customers that is cost-mitigated (and in some cases profitable) resulting in content that is engaging rather than interrupting.

**3)** We are having fun with AR and immersive storytelling. We are developing several projects that are designed to be "lean in" programming — from shoppable content to second-and third-screen gamification. We are finding that creating experiences around our programming further engages our audiences.

**4)** Our approach to content has always been based on organic storytelling that is authentic to the brand and the story. When these values are aligned, the results for the brand have been stellar.

**5)** I am sure that I am not alone in my answer, but I was really impressed with the role that brands have taken in entertainment content this year. From *Barbie* to *Flamin' Hot*, to *Air* to *Tetris* to *Blackberry*—products have been the IP rather than comic books or other sources of storytelling.

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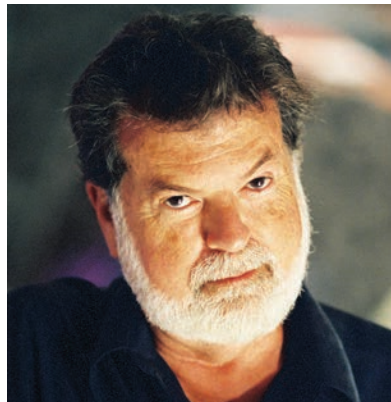
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David Lanzenberg



Dean Cundey, ASC



Igor Martinovic

## Emmy Nominees Reflect On Their Work and Collaborators

A Look At *Wednesday*, *The Mandalorian*, *George & Tammy*, *Black Bird*, *How I Met Your Father*

### By Robert Goldrich

One DP got a gig that landed the first Emmy nomination not only for him but also the two-time Oscar-nominated filmmaker whose vision drove the series.

Another Oscar nominee and ASC Lifetime Achievement Award winner scored his first Emmy nomination for a sojourn into the Star Wars universe.

Yet another DP picked up his third career Emmy nomination—this one springing from his first collaboration with a director known more for his feature film endeavors.

Our next DP saw her first foray into TV score an Emmy nomination.

And our fifth cinematographer garnered his 13th career Emmy nomination, this one for a series he won the Emmy for last year.

Here are insights from Emmy nominees David Lanzenberg on *Wednesday* (Netflix), Dean Cundey, ASC on *The Mandalorian* (Disney+), Igor Martinovic on *George & Tammy* (Showtime), Natalie Kingston on *Black Bird* (Apple TV+), and Gary Baum, ASC on *How I Met Your Father* (Hulu).

### David Lanzenberg

The dozen Emmy nominations bestowed last month upon the *Addams Family* spinoff *Wednesday* included Outstanding Comedy Series, Directing for a Comedy Series (Tim Burton) and Cinematography for a One-Hour Series. The latter was earned by David Lanzenberg, his first career Emmy nod coming for the “Woe What a Night” episode.

*Wednesday* also marked the cinematographer’s first collaboration with Burton who served as director/EP on the series. Burton is a two-time Best Animated Feature Oscar nominee (for *Corpse Bride* and *Frankenweenie*) whose body of directorial work includes *Edward Scissorhands*, *Ed Wood*, *Batman*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Beetlejuice* and *Mars Attacks!* The Emmy nomination for *Wednesday* is the first of Burton’s career.

Lanzenberg isn’t sure how he got the *Wednesday* gig, conjecturing that some prior episodic work he had lensed for the Netflix series *Shadow and Bone*, directed by Lee Toland Krieger, may have opened the door for him. *Wednesday* showrunners Alfred Gough and Miles Millar reached out and initiated a productive conversation with the DP. Lanzenberg was later informed that Burton wanted to meet him. That buoyed Lanzenberg’s

hopes but when a Zoom call with Burton lasted just 10 minutes—“the shortest meeting I ever had”—the DP figured he was out of the running. Soon thereafter, though, Lanzenberg got a call that the show was his. He quipped that there are still cracks in the ceiling created when he jumped up and down out of pure excitement and joy upon receiving the good news.

The opportunity to work with Burton has been fulfilling and inspiring. And with the famed Burton aesthetic, his visual sense, and the prospect of helping to create a Burton-esque world, the overriding revelation for Lanzenberg is the filmmaker’s priority—namely the performance of actors. Wanting to avoid doing anything to diminish actor performance, Burton gave Lanzenberg some key direction early on in the process relative to the tone of the series. “He didn’t want it to be

gimmicky,” said Lanzenberg, noting that this assertion “stayed with me throughout the duration of the show.” Lanzenberg said of Burton, “He did not want to create weird gimmicks with the camera and so forth. It was really an amazing piece of directing instruction.”

Lanzenberg further noted that every morning he, the director, the actors, the camera operator would discuss scenes—the beats of the scene. Where does the character start and end? How does the scene fit in the story? The DP related, “Everything always started with performance. It was truly appreciated and a strong influence as to how and where we would place the camera, how we told the story.”

And the driving performance is that of Jenna Ortega in the title role. For her work as Wednesday Addams, Ortega just picked up her first Emmy nomination—for lead actress in a comedy series.

Lanzenberg shot the first four episodes of *Wednesday*, with his Emmy nom coming for that fourth installment. Among the highlights of that episode, carrying its own set of challenges, was *Wednesday*’s brilliant dance sequence. “We had no idea at the time it would become such a vital moment,” related Lanzenberg.

*Wednesday*’s tour de force triumphant dance, called the Rave’N, is sabotaged by infiltrators who have filled the ceiling sprinklers with blood, seeking revenge on the “freaks” like Wednesday for their earlier disruptive behavior. While chaos ensues, Wednesday is unperturbed and



Photo courtesy of Netflix

Jenna Ortega As Wednesday Addams in *Wednesday*

# CINEMATOPHILERS & CAMERAS



**Natalie Kingston**



**Gary Baum, ASC**

seems to even embrace the havoc. Lanzenberg recalled all the prep that went into the scene in terms of not just performance but figuring out what red paint or material would be best to create the desired effect.

The sequence was shot in February 2022. In preparation, Lanzenberg said that talks about it began in October 2021, with multiple tests of different red material, trying to find the right thickness, feel and shade of color while making sure that the transition from the dance itself to the appearance of the crimson fluid would ring true. Experimentation was also extensive relative to the lighting of the scene which is a wink and a nod to the cinematic blood-soaked prom sequence in Stephen King's *Carrie* yet with its own unique flair to make it play properly in the context of the *Addams Family* universe.

Lanzenberg went with the ARRI Alexa Mini LF with ARRI Signature Prime lenses for his *Wednesday* episodes. The Signature Primes offered more options on the wide end of lenses with smaller increments and different millimeter sizes available, he explained. The spherical path was less gimmicky than the anamorphic option--and, noted Lanzenberg, "It was nice to change things around in that a lot of shows seem to look to shoot anamorphic."

The DP described Burton as a director who is drawn by camera and lens choices that help him and viewers in terms of "feeling the set" and "feeling the story." A simple spherical route was thus navigated, with Burton placing his trust in Lanzenberg regarding the specifics on

that end.

The Signature Primes meshed nicely with the Alexa Mini LF, which Lanzenberg gravitated towards in part due to his comfort and familiarity with the camera and what it can do.

Lanzenberg started out working on music videos as a camera assistant, moving up the ladder to DP. He was 39 when he started shooting long-form narrative, driven by an appreciation for the importance of story and actor performance overall, as well as how these dynamics help to shape visual language and cinematography.

Burton, though, reaffirmed all this to him in a profound way. Lanzenberg saw how Burton would be open to what actors did during rehearsals and shoot days, tapping into their wonderful ideas when they emerged about character and story, how their characters should move about the room. This discovery of the best way to perform and do justice to a

character merited Burton's attention and when needed, a rethinking of what had already been planned. That's part of the art of cinematography, observed Lanzenberg. "How actors move about the room, the movement between the camera and actor is a choreography and ballet you have to adapt to and be respectful of."

The cinematographer said that Burton responds to what actors do, imparting the lesson that "if you aren't respectful of the craft everybody does, it can get you in a bit of trouble." Working with Burton, continued Lanzenberg, "solidified the idea that you really are working with everyone on set to find solutions."

## Dean Cundey, ASC

In 2014 the American Society of Cinematographers presented a Lifetime Achievement Award to Dean Cundey, ASC. But clearly there's a lot of life left in Cundey as an artist. Nine years later, he's earned his first career Primetime

Emmy nomination--for Outstanding Cinematography for a Series (Half-Hour) on the strength of the "Chapter 20: The Foundling" episode of *The Mandalorian*. The Emmy nod resides alongside his Best Cinematography Oscar nomination in 1989 for *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*--and ASC Award noms in 1992 and '96 for the theatrical features *Hook* and *Apollo 13*, respectively.

Cundey is no stranger to the *Star Wars* universe, having lensed episodes of *The Book of Boba Fett* prior to delving into season three of *The Mandalorian*. Both series were created by Jon Favreau whom Cundey credited with bringing a unique mix of comfort and adventure to the work. "None of the world of either *Boba Fett* or *The Mandalorian* exists off the shelf. Everything you see is designed, fabricated," said Cundey, adding that Favreau helps to make these newly created worlds relatable by assigning disciplines/genres to them.

For example, Cundey saw a cowboy Western tinge/tone as characterizing season three of *The Mandalorian* when he came aboard. Favreau sought to apply some of the ways in which Westerns were shot to *The Mandalorian*. The impact, observed the DP, lends a comfort level to viewers. While they are being whisked off to a completely fabricated, invented, created, other worldly place, that world is shown to them in a way that is familiar. That new world becomes a bit less jarring as a result and viewers can find their place in it, having a relatable storytelling dynamic within the narrative.

"The Foundling" episode marked  
*Continued on page 24*



**Iman Marson (I) and Emma Myers in a scene from *Wednesday***



# Lensing The Mandalorian

Continued from page 23

Cundey's first time working with director Carl Weathers who first established himself as an actor. In the context of *The Mandalorian*, Weathers actually garnered an Emmy nom in 2021 for Outstanding Guest Actor in a Drama Series.

Cundey was impressed by how Weathers has diversified into directing over the years. "He's a very intuitive kind of guy," said Cundey of Weathers. The DP

and third episodes which were directed, respectively, by Rick Famuyiwa and Lee Isaac Chung. Cundey noted that he was conscious of blending his episodic work into the visual style of previous seasons. "I took that very seriously yet somehow looked to put my little spin on things," Cundey related.

Cundey's first high-profile work as a cinematographer came in 1978 with the release of *Halloween* directed by John



Ahmed Best as Jedi Kellerman Beq in a scene from *The Mandalorian*

found his initial discussions with Weathers about pre-vis and digital storyboards from the VFX team to be beneficial and creatively stimulating. Weathers and Cundey would explore various scenes, review the pre-vis work and suggest ways they could best approach sequences and storytelling.

*The Mandalorian* entailed its share of work on the volume stage where a large LED wall surrounds the space, deployed to help create other worldly settings and generally providing a viable option to blue screen or location lensing. Cundey credited his predecessor on *The Mandalorian*, cinematographer David Klein, with adroitly selecting lenses as well as the ARRI Alexa camera to get the most out of the volume stage.

Cundey's nomination for *The Mandalorian* was one of nine earned by the series this year, spanning such categories as fantasy/sci-fi costumes, hairstyling, non-prosthetic character makeup, visual effects, sound editing, sound mixing, stunt coordination and stunt performance.

Besides his Emmy-nominated episode four in season three of *The Mandalorian*, Cundey lensed that year's first

Carpenter. Cundey and Carpenter subsequently worked on *The Fog*, *Escape from New York*, *The Thing*, and *Big Trouble in Little China*.

Cundey also bonded with director Robert Zemeckis, a collaboration which yielded *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* in 1988, earning the cinematographer Oscar and BAFTA nominations. Cundey also shot Zemeckis' *Romancing the Stone*, the trio of *Back to the Future* features, and *Death Becomes Her*.

Additionally the cinematographer enjoyed a collaborative relationship with director Nancy Meyers encompassing such feature films as *The Parent Trap*, *What Women Want* and *The Holiday*.

Cundey's body of work also includes *Jurassic Park*, *Crazy Kind of Love*, *Walking With the Enemy*, *Freedom*, *The Girl in the Photographs*, *Diablo*, *Slamma Jamma*, *The Flintstones*, *Loony Toons: Back in Action*, *Garfield* and *Garfield II*, *Sakura-The Blue Eyed Samurai*, *Whisper*, and *Jack and Jill*.

Cundey received a Creative Craft Daytime Emmy Award in 2002 for his lensing of *The Face: Jesus in Art*, an artful two-

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## This Hits Home Shot with Pocket Cinema Camera 6K G2

Filmmaker, director, producer and actress Sydney Scotia's new documentary *This Hits Home* was shot using Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 6K G2 digital film camera. The feature-length documentary reveals the



*This Hits Home*

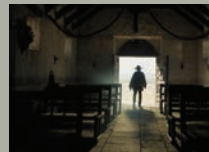
invisible and silent epidemic of permanent traumatic brain injury in women devastated by domestic violence. Built around intimate and compelling stories of courageous women, insights from lawmakers and domestic violence authorities, and the shocking revelations from world renowned experts at the Mayo Clinic, Harvard University, Boston University, and the University of Pennsylvania, the film paints a chilling portrait of brain injury that forever changes the lives of women and their children.

The film was shot on a small budget with a crew of Scotia and cinematographers Erik Rojas and A.J. Raitano. The Pocket Cinema Camera 6K G2 was used as the primary camera for the film, shooting interviews, B roll, exteriors and inside car scenes. Due to the seriousness of the topic, Scotia needed to ensure that anyone interviewed was completely at ease and relaxed. A large camera that required extensive lighting and rigging was not possible.

DaVinci Resolve Studio editing, grading, visual effects (VFX) and audio post software was used for color correction of the documentary, as well as for preparing the film for delivery to festivals and streaming services.

## Latin Western Series Deploys Cooke Anamorphic Lenses

Cinematographer Paulo Perez, ADFC, chose Cooke® Anamorphic/i FF SF (Full Frame Special Flair) lenses to capture the wide vistas of Mexico in the new Latin Western series, *La Cabeza de Joaquín Murrieta* (*The Head of Joaquín Murrieta*).



*Head of Joaquín Murrieta*

In 1851, the newly established border between Mexico and the USA is the setting for a conflict fueled by the anger and xenophobia caused by the Mexican-American War. A group of immigrants forge the myth of the Latin Robin Hood, Joaquín Murrieta. *La Cabeza de Joaquín Murrieta* was created by Mauricio Leiva-Cock and Diego Ramírez-Schrempf, directed by David Pablos (episodes 1-4) and Humberto Hinojosa (episodes 5-8). The series was produced by Dynamo Productions and Amazon Studios.

Writing began in 2019 and Perez kept in close contact with the writers while working on other projects, all the while visualizing the concept. In 2021, as principal photography was about to start, cinematographer Ximena Amann joined the team and alongside Perez developed the visual narrative for the series.

"We very much wanted to shoot anamorphically to really capture the space and the beautiful landscape. We had to fight for it because some companies don't like the anamorphic aspect ratio, but Amazon allowed me to do it in full anamorphic," Perez said. "I love the compositions you can achieve, not just of vistas but you can have three, four, five people in the frame talking to each other, and framing in different layers... it's so beautiful and cinematic. And if you need more choices, you only need two or three more shots, no more than that."

Perez chose to pair the Cooke lenses with two ARRI ALEXA Mini LF full frame cameras.

## Cluster Studio Upgrades Baselight TWO Systems

Mexico-based Cluster Studio has re-invested in FilmLight by upgrading its pair of Baselight TWO systems. Cluster Studio has been a Baselight customer for



Cluster's Baselight suite

more than 15 years. It currently has a Baselight ONE system, as well as two Baselight TWO systems—which they use to conform, grade, integrate VFX and render out projects.

"We are handling more and more content each month with multiple raw materials being captured across a variety of camera formats and color spaces, including 4K and HDR," said Cluster CTO and head colorist Juan Magaña who noted that the upgrade has allowed his shop to triple its storage capacity.

# Martinovic Shoots George & Tammy, Earns 3rd Emmy Nom

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hour PBS documentary on the history and role of art in the Christian religion for WNET-TV.

## Igor Martinovic

Igor Martinovic is now a three-time Emmy nominee, the latest coming for the “Stand by Your Man” episode of *George & Tammy*. His first Emmy nom came in 2014 for an episode of *House of Cards*. Four years later (in tandem with DP Rachel Morrison), he was again nominated—this time for the documentary *What Happened Miss Simone?*

Incidentally, Martinovic’s awards pedigree extends beyond the Emmy nods. He won an ASC Award for the “Subtle Beast” episode of *The Night Of* in 2017, and gained acclaim for shooting *Man on Wire*, James Marsh’s Oscar-winning documentary.

*George & Tammy* stars Jessica Chastain in a SAG Award-winning portrayal of Tammy Wynette, and Michael Shannon as George Jones. The limited series chronicles Wynette and Jones, the country music power couple who had a tumultuous romance and 30-plus chart-topping country songs between them.

of glamorous show business life and human drama.”

*George & Tammy* was the first collaboration between Martinovic and director/executive producer John Hillcoat, known primarily for his work in features (*The Road*, *The Proposition*). Hillcoat approached *George & Tammy* much as he would a feature, tapping into his vast picture library to share images with Martinovic to help pinpoint a visual direction that would reflect Wynette and Jones’ emotional journey together. “I went through John’s incredible library of visuals and picked out what spoke to me,” related Martinovic.

The cinematographer observed that Wynette and Jones’ music reflected what was happening in their lives. The DP felt he needed to take a visual approach that would depict Wynette and Jones’ public as well as their private lives. For the latter, Martinovic shot “a little bit more edgy and rough,” underscoring a very human struggle with addiction. Martinovic opted for more handheld work, a little more grain and muted colors, for example, for scenes involving drug and alcohol abuse. For the duo’s public persona and concert performances, Martinovic went for “a

affording the user more freedom with movement and camera placement. This dovetailed well with intimate sequences that helped to define the relationship between Wynette and Jones. Martinovic selected Canon K35 lenses to use in conjunction with the VENICE.

Martinovic brought a measure of his documentary sensibilities to those intimate actor performances. He has doc. experience that includes not only *Man on Wire* but also work with Oscar-winning documentarian Errol Morris, including the Netflix series *Wormwood*. Martinovic used his eye to capture the immediacy of the moments deftly created by Chastain and Shannon.

*George & Tammy* additionally marked the first time Martinovic took on a music performance piece as a project. “I learned a lot. I learned how to stage, how to deal with large-scale performances.” He experimented with different lights from the period [late 1960s into the ‘70s] and for some on-stage performances even used actual cameras from that era as well.

Martinovic’s artistry extends beyond lensing. For example, he served as both cinematographer and a director on the HBO series *The Outsider*. In fact, earlier on in his career, Martinovic—who was already an accomplished DP—earned inclusion in *SHOOT*’s 2011 New Directors Showcase on the strength of “Dream,” an Adidas spec piece.

Among Martinovic’s other cinematography credits is director Christopher Zalla’s narrative feature *Sangra de mi sangra* (originally *Padre Nuestro*) which won a Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival and garnered nominations for Zalla at the Film Independent Spirit Awards for Best First Feature and Best Screenplay.

## Natalie Kingston

Having lensed feature films such as *Lost Bayou* and *Shapeless* which made the Tribeca Film Festival cut in 2019 and 2021, respectively, *Doretha’s Blues* which debuted at SXSW in 2021 and the well received *The Wolf of Snow Hollow*, cinematographer Natalie Kingston diversified into television, taking on all six episodes of the limited series *Black Bird*. Her first TV foray just landed Kingston her first Emmy nomination—with *Black Bird*’s

other three nods coming for lead actor (Taron Egerton) and two for supporting actor (Paul Walter Hauser and the late Ray Liotta).

Kingston’s Emmy nomination was specifically for the “Hand to Mouth” episode. She had earlier garnered a Camerimage Golden Frog nod, shared with director/EP Michael R. Roskam, for the *Black Bird* pilot.

Egerton portrays James Keene, a dope dealer who’s imprisoned but finds a way out by going along with a plot to befriend a suspected serial killer, Larry Hall (Hauser), and trying to get him to confess. Liotta plays Keene’s father, Big Jim, who’s health is failing. The scenes between father and son shed light and poignancy on their relationship.

Kingston was drawn to *Black Bird* on several levels, the first lure being the quality of the scripts. She read all six, deeming them “fantastic.” The DP added that “the material was right up my alley, I love dark, character-driven dramas, true crime as well. It was a dream project.”

And she’s not yet ready to wake up from that dream, describing the Emmy nomination as “surreal,” especially for her first TV series gig. Kingston also found appealing the prospect of shooting all six episodes, being able to set the visual language, look, feel and tone of the show from the outset right through to the conclusion.

Among the challenges was shooting extensively at Orleans Parish Templeman Phase V Jail in New Orleans, a facility that closed shortly after Hurricane Katrina. Cast and crew were in that location for months. Lighting would have been much easier if a prison set were built on stage. But conversely, there was a major layer of authenticity gained from lensing at what had been an operational prison.

Kingston credited her art department colleagues with making the prison venue more camera-friendly. Without wild walls which you would have on a stage, the art department built a camera portal, a hole in a cell wall to get the camera and jib through, still leaving enough space within the confines for the actors to perform.

Kingston opted for the ARRI Alexa Mini LF deployed in tandem with Panavision H Series lenses. She felt the camera

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Jessica Chastain (l) and Michael Shannon in *George & Tammy*

Martinovic said that he was immediately drawn to the story of “two talented people fighting their own demons, hoping to find a way to live in peace with themselves and with each other. It’s a universal story of human struggle. At the same time, it’s a celebration of creative energy. Both were gifted. The combination of talent and human struggle was interesting to me. There was a dichotomy

little more polished and glamorous photography,” deploying a more colorful, less grainy approach with the camera at times moving slowly on a dolly.

Martinovic opted for the Sony VENICE camera for *George & Tammy*, at times utilizing its Rialto Extension System to afford him greater versatility. The system frees sensor and lens from the rest of the camera body (connected only by a tether),



## Kingston Talks *Black Bird*; Baum Secures 13th Emmy Nod

Continued from page 25

was appropriate for the character-driven story, particularly being inside the cell block for such a long time, creating the need to get up close and intimate with the protagonists, to create an immersive feeling by being physically close to the actors. The large format, she reasoned, would allow her to “create a landscape out of their

assorted other collaborators made the Emmy nomination possible. Director Roskam and her worked closely together to develop and establish the look of the series. They shared similar sensibilities and aesthetics, driven by the desire to have the visual language first and foremost enhance and do justice to the stellar acting performances.



Photo courtesy of Apple TV+

**Tara Egerton (l) and Paul Walter Hauser in a scene from *Black Bird***

faces,” helping audiences to feel “every nuance, expression and reaction from the actors.”

Kingston added that the H Series lenses, which she previously used on select commercials and shorter form projects, provided a pastel-like palette, which coincided with the creative spirit of a painterly photo essay, “The Atmosphere of Crime,” by the legendary Gordon Parks. The 1957 collection of Park’s images—which depicted crime in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago and San Francisco—was cited by Kingston as being a prime source of visual inspiration relative to setting the tone and feel for *Black Bird*. The lenses, observed Kingston, were very complementary to the light pastel pink, seafoam green and light blues deftly incorporated into that particular piece of Parks’ work.

*Black Bird* was described by Kingston as “a transformative experience for me on so many levels—personally, artistically, as a filmmaker. Among the main takeaways, continued Kingston, was “to trust my gut. I had to do a lot of that,” she recalled as prep time was a bit limited. “I was relying on instincts and past experience, trusting myself.” The cinematographer added that her team and

dy” to have made the final nominees’ cut. He also regards it as an honor to again work with exec producer Pamela Fryman who directed multiple episodes of *How I Met Your Father*, a spin-off of the hit sitcom *How I Met Your Mother*. Baum had previously teamed with Fryman, an EP on *How I Met Your Father*, on episodes of *Man with a Plan*, *One Day At A Time* and *Call Your Mother*.

Fryman directed the *How I Met Your Father* pilot for which Baum won the Emmy last year, as well as the “Daddy” episode for which the DP is nominated this year. Baum said that he and Fryman have “a shorthand with each other,” recalling that when she originally asked him to do the show, he was “ecstatic.”

Baum cited the inherent challenge in *How I Met Your Father*—an array of flashbacks and flash-forwards in what amounts to a co-mingling of parallel scripts. The DP credited Fryman with helping to create this hybrid dating back

nated for Outstanding Picture Editing for a Multi-Camera Comedy Series (editor Russell Griffin, ACE). *How I Met Your Father* received a total of three Emmy nominations this year, the other being for “The Reset Button” episode in the Outstanding Production Design for a Narrative Program (Half-Hour) category (production designer Glenda Rovello, art director Conny Boettger-Marinos, set decorator Amy Beth Feldman).

For *How I Met Your Father*, Baum continued to deploy the Sony F55, which he described as “Panavised,” accommodating customized 11:1 Primo Panavision zoom lenses. The F55 facilitated the 4K delivery required by Hulu.

In addition to the Emmy win last year and the nom this year for *How I Met Your Father* and the wins for *Mike & Molly* and the return of *Will & Grace*, Baum has garnered three other nominations for *Mike & Molly*, two more for *Will & Grace*, and one apiece for *Superior Donuts*, *Garry*

### Gary Baum, ASC

Last month Gary Baum, ASC earned his 13th career Emmy nomination. It came in the Outstanding Cinematography for a Series (Half-Hour) category on the basis of the “Daddy” episode for *How I Met Your Father*. Baum is a three-time Emmy winner—for *Mike & Molly* in 2015, the revival of *Will & Grace* in 2018, and the pilot for *How I Met Your Father* last year.

However, the win in 2022 for *How I Met Your Father* was for Outstanding Cinematography for a Multi-Camera Series, a category that fell by the wayside this year as not enough multi-camera entries materialized following the move of certain children’s and family programming from the primetime competition to the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences’ (NATAS) Emmy ceremony. Thus the remaining multi-camera entries for primetime consideration, a reduced number of programs, were vying for one nomination slot in the Outstanding Cinematography for a Series (Half-Hour) category—with the “Daddy” installment of *How I Met Your Father* topping that field.

Baum said that it’s an honor for “Dad-



Photo courtesy of Gary Baum, ASC and Hulu

**On the set of *How I Met Your Father***

dy” to her days as director/EP on *How I Met Your Mother*.

“She’s a driving force on *How I Met Your Father*, a very complicated program as far as how it’s produced and how the story develops,” noted Baum who affirmed that no one could pull off this unique genre better than her. She is adept at maintaining a calm set, moving ahead in a logical, sensible direction for a hybrid form that could otherwise breed chaos.

Baum submitted “Daddy” for Emmy consideration in that he felt it was a particularly well-written and adroitly directed episode. “Daddy” was also nomi-

nated for Outstanding Picture Editing for a Multi-Camera Comedy Series (editor Russell Griffin, ACE). *How I Met Your Father* received a total of three Emmy nominations this year, the other being for “The Reset Button” episode in the Outstanding Production Design for a Narrative Program (Half-Hour) category (production designer Glenda Rovello, art director Conny Boettger-Marinos, set decorator Amy Beth Feldman).

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# A Tale of Two Seasons: Awards and Labor Unrest



Photo by Shane Brown/Courtesy of FX



Photo courtesy of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office



Photo courtesy of Montana Film Office



Photo courtesy of AFCL



Photo courtesy of Montana Film Office



Film commissions deal with SAG-AFTRA and WGA strikes as awards season unfolds; AFCL postpones Cineposium

A SHOOT Staff Report

For the production community, including film commissions, Charles Dickens' famous quote—"It was the best of times. It was the worst of times"—is quite apropos. The "best" is reflected in the current awards season when deserving work, the artists behind it, and those who facilitate it are recognized.

Sadly, tempering the celebration is the "worst" which has emerged front and center—and it's historic as actors have joined screenwriters in the first joint strike in more than six decades, shutting down production across the entertainment industry. The negative impact on the economy has already been profound and it's been reflected just in part by the figures recently released by FilmLA, the partner film office for the City and County of Los Angeles.

FilmLA issued its tally of shoot days during the second quarter of 2023 for on-location production in Greater Los Angeles. The Q2 report found a total of 6,566 shoot days representing a 28.8 percent decline for the quarter, measured year

over year.

This marks the sixth consecutive quarterly production drop reported by FilmLA. The drop was accelerated by the WGA labor action, which began in May. SAG-AFTRA members were not yet on strike at the time this data was captured.

"Greater Los Angeles is the North American epicenter of scripted television production. Before long, this sector's shutdown will be felt in every corner of the regional economy," observed Paul Audley, president of Film LA.

"Like all others watching with hope from the sidelines, we are eager to see the studios and unions reopen their contract negotiations," Audley continued. "Much is at stake for WGA and SAG-AFTRA members, and also for the small business supply chain on which future filming depends."

Feature film production fell 18.9 percent in the second quarter to 728 shoot days, 26.6 percent below the category's five-year average.

The aggregate television category,

which has long been a major employment driver in the region, saw the steepest quarterly decline (36.4 percent to 2,630 shoot days), reflecting the impact of the recent WGA strike.

Recorded shoot days generated by TV dramas fell by 63.8 percent (to 360 shoot days) in the second quarter, and TV comedy shoot days fell by 72.8 percent (to 84 shoot days) compared to the same period in 2022. These are the categories most heavily impacted by the ongoing WGA work action.

"The last time production levels were this low, we were in the middle of a global pandemic," Audley observed. "Families and businesses affected then are again being tested today, lending urgency to the moment to sustain creative careers."

## Awards season

As for awards season, among the productions put on pause due to the Hollywood strikes is the 75th Emmy Awards ceremony which will not air as planned

*Continued on page 28*

**From top left, clockwise: A scene from *Reservation Dogs*; Jeanette Stanton, director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office; the 1923 set in Butte, Montana; *Reservation Dogs* co-creator Sterlin Harjo; Paul Audley of FilmLA; Montana Film Office's Allison Whitmer on the 1923 set in Butte; AFCL's Jaclyn Philpott.**



## LMGI Award Nominations

Continued from page 27

on September 18. The telecast is now set for January 15, 2024.

Still, there are other awards proceedings including The Location Managers Guild International (LMGI) Awards slated for August 26 which recognize the collaborative contributions of location managers and scouts, varied other professionals and the film commissions themselves. On the latter front, nominations were recently unveiled for the LMGI Award honoring the Outstanding Film Commission.

The nominees are: The Alberta Film Commissions (Calgary, Edmonton/Calgary Economic Development) for their work on *The Last of Us* (HBO); the City of Brantford (Ontario, Canada) for season five of *The Handmaid's Tale* (Hulu); the City of Worcester/Massachusetts Film Commission for *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (Marvel Studios/Walt Disney Pictures); the Czech Film Commission for *The Gray Man* (Netflix); the Oklahoma Film + Music Office for season two of *Reservation Dogs* (FX); and the Montana Film Office for *1923* (Paramount+).

SHOOT connected with Allison Whitmer, film commissioner, Montana Film Office, and Jeanette Stanton, director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office, to discuss their respective LMGI Award nominations for *1923* and *Reservation Dogs*, respectively.

The Oklahoma Film + Music Office not only was nominated in 2022 but also won the LMGI's Outstanding Film Commission honor that year—for the first season of *Reservation Dogs*.

Stanton observed that the season one experience on *Reservation Dogs* paved the way for a seamless transition to the second season. She shared, "Aside from a few minor circumstances that naturally occur on most any production shooting on-location, *Reservation Dogs* posed no major challenges due in large part to the professionalism of the cast and crew working among our tribal, state and city leaders. Collectively, we all learned a lot in having hosted the first season of the series, so when season two began, the series ran like a well-oiled machine from our perspective as much work had previously been accomplished to improve certain areas of need. Because the majority of the production's talent is from Oklahoma

and respects the opportunity to work in their own backyard, *Reservation Dogs* has fostered a welcoming sense of community that is eager to host them. We've been grateful that each new season of the series has allowed us the opportunity to learn and grow alongside them to make things not only better for their series, but future prospects in Oklahoma."

Among the factors that brought *Reservation Dogs* to Oklahoma, continued Stanton, were financial incentives which "are naturally a part of the conversation when it comes to hosting a major film or television production in Oklahoma or elsewhere, and we're grateful to have a program that supports the development of productions like *Reservation Dogs* in Oklahoma. However, one of the biggest champions of hosting the production in Oklahoma remains co-creator Sterlin Harjo who advocated for its filming in our state among the authentic, Indigenous communities which served as the inspiration for the story."

Asked to reflect on her biggest takeaway from Oklahoma's experience on *Reservation Dogs*, Stanton related, "Welcoming filming for the second season of *Reservation Dogs* in Oklahoma was incredibly rewarding, particularly as season one marked the first time a scripted series filmed the entirety of its production in the state. *Reservation Dogs* is an ideal television production for Oklahoma to host. Not only is the show creatively born in Oklahoma from our own Sterlin Harjo, but the scope of the production perfectly aligns in furthering career and development opportunities for our local film workforce as well as laying continued groundwork for collaboration among our statewide agencies and film friendly communities who work in supporting the needs of the film and TV industry while filming on location throughout the state."

As for *1923*, Whitmer of the Montana Film Office discussed the arc of the state's facilitating role and community involvement in the worlds created by writer-producer-director-actor Taylor Sheridan, a Best Original Screenplay Oscar nominee for *Hell or High Water*. Whitmer observed, "Seeing the expansion of the *Yellowstone* universe from modern day Montana to the next series *1883* showed

Continued on page 30

## Tax Credit Generates Funding For WCNY Academy

Empire State Development (ESD) announced that WCNY, located in Syracuse, Onondaga County, has been awarded \$499,766 from the State's Entertainment Workforce Diversity Grant Program for its new WCNY Entertainment Academy. The Academy will train the next generation of television and film production engineers, electricians, set designers, sound mixers, and camera operators to help support the growing entertainment industry in Central New York.



Hope Knight

The award comes from the first-in-the-nation New York Entertainment Workforce Diversity Grant Program, which funds job training and workforce development across New York State's entertainment industry and is financed by a percentage from New York State's Film Tax Credit program. The program is designed to further diversify the industry by targeting residents in economically distressed areas of the state and creating a pathway to permanent jobs in film and television production. The grant will complement more than \$300,000 that WCNY, the region's leading public communications organization, will contribute to launching the Entertainment Academy.

The WCNY Entertainment Academy, which will open this fall, will train a diverse group of people ages 25- to 39-years-old in one of three annual 14-week training sessions with approximately 16 trainees per session. The curriculum will be taught by local union reps, experienced staff at WCNY, and adjunct faculty members and guest lecturers from across the entertainment industry. IA-TSE Local 52 will collaborate with WCNY to provide instructors for the program and offer a real-world baseline of knowledge and specific skills in grip, electric, video, sound, and shop craft.

Grads will earn certifications, including OSHA and Aerial Lift certifications, and will develop relationships that may lead to union membership and job placements. They will also have an opportunity to gain professional and life skills in multiple areas centered around comprehensive TV and film production roles, and, in the process, to earn an enduring path to self-sufficiency.

ESD president, CEO and commissioner Hope Knight said, "WCNY has been educating Central New York communities for decades and we are pleased to support the new WCNY Entertainment Academy that will create a pipeline for well-trained workers in the entertainment industry. The individuals who graduate from this program will have vital skills and connections needed for new careers and brighter futures."

As part of the fiscal year 2024 budget, Governor Kathy Hochul secured a historic expansion of the New York Film Tax Credit. As part of the budget, New York State raised the film tax credit's annual cap to \$700 million, added a capped credit for "above-the-line" salaries alongside the existing credit for "below-the-line" salaries, restored the credit to 30% for qualified expenses, and increased upstate filming up to 40% and added production costs.



Amber Dodson

## Spiral into the Yellow Void Wraps Lensing

New Mexico Film Office director Amber Dodson announced that the feature film *Spiral into the Yellow Void* wrapped shooting in and around Santa Fe.

*Spiral into the Yellow Void*, starring Monique Candelaria (*Breaking Bad*), Ellar Coltrane (*Boyhood*), and Kelton Jones (*Passion of the Christ*), directed by Levin Garbisch (*Miranda Veil*), and produced by Jordan Henderson with Planet Forth and Maggie Brown with Purple Magnet Productions (*Yellow Wallpaper*), is the story of a psychic healer who heals other people's trauma while battling her own personified depression.

"My films often deal with real-life issues while being very strange and otherworldly," Garbisch said. "I moved to New Mexico during the pandemic and found the scenery and serenity very beautiful as the backdrop for this story."

The production incorporated Native American diversity in casting, and employed 35 New Mexicans—25 crew members and 10 principal actors.

**How The Strike Impacts The Post Production Industry** The current SAG and WGA strikes have brought film and television production to a screeching halt. Much has been written about the strike's effect on studios, actors, and writers. But little has been said about the impact of the shutdown on the small and mid-sized companies and skilled professionals who make up the Post Production Industry.

**Breaking Boundaries: Pete Crimi's Multitalented Expertise Shines In Season 3 of *How To With John Wilson*** Sound Lounge, a leading audio post-production facility renowned for its excellence, announced the involvement of multitalented mixer Pete Crimi in the highly acclaimed and Emmy®-nominated series, *How To With John Wilson*.

**Humor, Distinctive Assets, Shared Value of Purpose, and Driving Fame Through Earned Media Lead To Commercial Success** WARC, a global authority on marketing effectiveness, has released 'Creative Effectiveness Lions 2023 - Insights from the winners,' a report identifying trends and themes common to the award-winning campaigns of this year's Cannes Creative Effectiveness Lions, celebrating the measurable impact of creativity.

**WPP Earns Top Three Industry Awards in 2023 New York Festivals Advertising Awards: WPP Awarded Holding Company of the Year VMLY&R - Agency Network of the Year, VMLY&R Commerce US - Agency of the Year** The NYF Industry Awards honors those companies whose multi-award winning campaigns demonstrate innovation and creativity. This honor is the ultimate recognition celebrating holding companies, networks, and agencies whose cutting edge work has not only inspired and engaged consumers but also fostered brand affinity.

**Led by Founder Dana Astrow, Talent Recruitment Company ARC Celebrates Its 15th Anniversary Milestone** Led by Founder & Industry Leader Dana Astrow, talent recruitment company ARC celebrates its 15th Anniversary. Joined by Partner Sally Coonan and Lisa Sabatino, ARC honors its 15 years in business serving clients in the creative industry.

**Camp K Lev Winners Announced, 2023 Trailer Competition Issues Call For Entries** Caralyn Moore of Optimus wins Grand Prize for Editing, Emmalyn Meyers of Vaudeville Sound wins for Sound Design and April Faison of Mr. Wonderful wins for Graphics as trailer competition adds music composition category.

**New York Festivals TV & Film Awards Opens 2024 Competition For Entries** The 2024 New York Festivals Television & Film Awards is open for entries. New York Festivals TV & Film Awards celebrates groundbreaking storytelling.

**OceanGate A.I. Filmmaker Hooroo Jackson Unveils The First A.I.-Generated Feature Film, "Window Seat"**

Renowned indie filmmaker Hooroo Jackson unveiled the groundbreaking A.I. feature film, "Window Seat," marking a bold departure from traditional filmmaking. At 61 minutes in length, this is the first feature film entirely generated with Artificial Intelligence (A.I.).

**DWA Presents Ultimate Events, August 2023 Edition (Hybrid Special)** Among dozens of momentous events set to play out in the weeks ahead, many are already underway, or will commence with the dawn of August. The list includes some of the world's most famous cultural and creative-industry gatherings set to welcome attendees virtually and/or in person.

**New 3D Shop and Major Los Angeles Production Update** vrbn studios has just announced its brand new online shop featuring the latest generation of high-quality 3D content. The shop features countless full-PBR, urban 3D assets and richly detailed 3D buildings (most of them also with three material variants) of different architectural typologies.

**T. Marzetti Company and The Shipyard Tap Paul Scheer To Direct New Simply Campaign** The Shipyard has partnered with renowned actor, podcaster, and producer Paul Scheer to spearhead an improvisational campaign for Marzetti's new line of healthy salad dressings, aptly named Simply. The campaign, titled "It Simply Sells Itself," showcases Simply's 11 exciting new flavors.

**Canyon Partners and J.P. Morgan Provide \$193 Million Construction Loan for the Development of East End Studios - Sunnyside Campus** Canyon Partners Real Estate LLC ("Canyon") and J.P. Morgan announced they have co-originated a \$193 million senior construction loan to East End Studios for the ground-up development of the firm's Sunnyside Campus, a media and content production studio in Queens, New York.

**Plastico and Maca Rubio Go Retro For For Entel, Chile's Largest Telecommunications Company** Before cell phones, GPS, and the streamers, there was "the 80s." The period has been recreated countless times, but in a new spot for Entel - Chile's largest telecom company - we get a unique take from a trio of filmmakers whose perspectives make the commercial pop. Directed by Plástico (Ale...

**Union's Vinnie Hobbs Carves Himself a Piece of The "Barbie" Pie...**

BARBIE had a record-breaking opening weekend, and with the attendant fanfare comes Barbie The Album, which includes "Dance the Night" by Dua Lipa, the first single released off the soundtrack. Union's Vinnie Hobbs edited the video, which features a cameo from director Greta Gerwig. Also cut by Hobbs is the official music video for another Barbie The Album track: Karol G's "Watafi," feat. Aldo Ranks. Washington Square Films Director Lana Wilson Snags Two Emmy Noms For "Pretty Baby: Brooke Shields" Washington Square Films Director Lana Wilson received two Emmy® nominations for her two-part documentary series *Pretty Baby: Brooke Shields*. The series follows actor, model, and icon Brooke Shields as she becomes a woman who discovers her power.

**A Generative AI Tech Startup Wayne Hills Bryant AI Produces Sci-fi film, 'An AI-driven New Cinema Movie'** A South Korean company Wayne Hills Bryant AI (subsequently named Wayne Hills) have kicked off producing sci-fi films using generative AI. Wayne Hills recently released a trailer video for the movie 'AI New Cinema Movie' produced with generative AI through its official YouTube channel.

**Director/DP Scott McCullough Among Top 10 Innovative Minds Disrupting The Entertainment Space Named By *LA Weekly*** *LA Weekly* Names The Award-Winning Commercial Director/DP Scott McCullough in 2023 Year.

**Norton Healthcare Celebrates All Things Louisville In New Campaign** Doe-Anderson creative and production rallies community to create a one-of-a-kind love letter by locals for locals for Norton Healthcare, the largest health system in Louisville, KY.

**New York Festivals 2023 Advertising Awards Announced Trophy Winners; "The Air Drummer" Wolf BKK Thailand Earns Best of Show** New York Festivals

Advertising Awards announced the 2023 award-winners submitted from 60 countries around the globe. DDB Mexico SA DE CV Honored with 4 Grand Awards; Grands Awarded to BBDO Group Germany GmbH, DDB Chicago, FCB Lisboa, Promise South Africa, Saatchi & Saatchi Düsseldorf, TBWA\Hakuhodo Japan, VMLY&R Commerce USA, and Wolf BKK Thailand

**Resonating Soundscapes: A Journey with Transported Audio - From In-Home Studio To Prominent Audio Powerhouse**

Meet Eric Marks, the visionary founder, and CEO of Transported Audio, a leading post-production audio company that has made waves in the industry since its inception in 2016. Starting as a small in-home studio, Transported Audio has grown exponentially, becoming a one-stop shop for all post...

**Maxon Boosts Creative Freedom of Maxon One Users With New Features and Performance Enhancements**

Maxon, developers of professional software solutions for editors, filmmakers, motion designers, visual effects artists and creators of all types, announced significant updates to several products included in the company's Maxon One subscription offering.

**Camp Lucky Sparks New Collaboration With Noted Flame Artist Artie Peña** Camp Lucky expands its creative post talent with the addition of Flame Artist Artie Peña. Artie's work effortlessly spans many genres and includes long and short-form branded content, television series and film.

**Unicorns & Unicorns Celebrates 5th Anniversary; Continues to Support Diversity of Filmmakers & Storytellers** Unicorns & Unicorns celebrates its 5th year milestone of making magic with 200+ successful projects that have and will continue to open doors for underrepresented filmmakers and storytellers.

**Sports Broadcasting Needs Music More Than Ever** Music and sports have always had a close relationship, but television and mass media have taken this relationship to a whole new level. These days, the two are inseparable. From the in-stadium experience to the live stream, music permeates nearly every facet of sports broadcasting. Now, with regional sports broadcasting rights up in the air and several new players entering the market, music will play an even more vital role in establishing the identities of new and existing players. From music licensing to sonic identities, music for regional sports is needed now more than ever, but for whom and in what format? - *Stephen Arnold Music (SAM) Sports - developing music and graphics for sports programming.*

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## Lensing Reservation Dogs, 1923; Cineposium Postponed

*Continued from page 28*

us the potential to be involved in many of the storylines, and we also knew that Taylor Sheridan and the production team were very committed to physical locations to convey story. Our work on *1883* was finding landscape options for their location team, while *1923* is an entire cityscape with specific ranch continuity touchpoints.

"This became a unique opportunity to identify potential areas of interest, develop in-depth relationships and bring community leaders into conversations about entertainment usage in their areas. We had been focusing on Butte for over five years, bringing projects to their National Historic District and really working on pinch points around permitting, inter-departmental logistics, housing and coor-

dination of resources, as we saw them as a potential location for large projects in the future.

"This was key," continued Whitmer, "to a successful first scout and evaluation by their team, and when they returned several months later, the community was asked to make a large commitment to the show [*1923*] very quickly. All of the ground work paid off handsomely. The community leaders trusted us to bring them a legitimate deal, and in one critical meeting, agreed to move concerts, high school sporting events, community events and local elections to other venues to accommodate the production, as well as begin close coordination with the city/county government and private owners for locations and permits. The demand for warehouse space, housing and office

space was immediate and specific. They found options for everything, including historic schools in a nearby community and a wide selection of ranch landscapes. The Civic Center became a soundstage inside, and the local mall had a wide expanse of single level space that was perfect for costume and art department work. It was a big ask, and they rose to the occasion with grace and humor. The entire community rallied in support of the show."

Incentives helped bring *1923* to Montana. Whitmer explained, "The Media Act incentive program played a major role in assisting the production to be on location in Montana, using nearby goods and services and working with qualified area crew. The beauty of the incentive encouraging productions to search locally was very beneficial to Butte, and it's estimated that the local spend on goods and services was above \$20 million. One of the key advantages to bringing *1923* into Montana was the established relationship between the existing productions of *Yellowstone* and *1883*. They were familiar with the tax credit, the process was working well for them, and they had established resources a few hours away. Crew was generally familiar with the weather, drive times and local government contacts both state and federal, and it was clear from the success of the existing shows that the landscapes and storylines were resonating with audiences."

Regarding her biggest takeaway or lessons learned from the *1923* experience, Whitmer shared, "Transparency and communication with the host community early and often was key to success. Striking a balance between access and turnaround times regarding permits, equipment placement and safety around locations and crew movements kept everything on schedule with the key contacts. Having key contacts on board, updated and involved around the process created a positive working space and wonderful memories for both parties."

Whitmer described the LMGI Award nomination as being "such an honor to Montana. The state has been part of iconic films for many years, and it's been a goal of the filmmaking community for over 30 years to have narrative series

work. We saw the impact of runaway production with features in the mid 1990s, and creating an environment to host long form work has been so rewarding. Having series work also be so popular and critically well received, that is a bonus I would have never expected. Personally, bringing the incredible landscapes of the mountain west to the public, and seeing the professional development of the cast and crew living here, that makes all the long hours worthwhile. We live in a special place and it's a joy to share it with millions of viewers."

### Cineposium

In addition to being recognized by the LMGI Awards, the film commission community originally planned to spread its wings geographically as Limerick City in Ireland was set to host the Association of Film Commissioners International's (AFCI) 46th Annual Cineposium Conference in late September.

However, the global uncertainty triggered by the SAG-AFTRA and WGA strikes prompted the AFCI-headed by exec director Jaclyn Philpott—and Film in Limerick to reach a decision in consultation with Screen Ireland to postpone this year's Cineposium event.

AFCI's Cineposium brings film commissions and industry leaders from around the world together to discuss policy, economic development and screen production and this year would have served as an opportunity to showcase Limerick and the west coast of Ireland to major studio executives. This would have marked the first time in Cineposium's 46-year history that the conference would have taken place in Ireland.

Perhaps Cineposium could still come to pass in some form this year if the actors' and writers' strikes are resolved in the not-too-distant future. If not, commercial-making and branded content could become a priority, though the ripple effect of the strikes might still adversely impact the advertising sector. Reality TV is also still in play to an extent. Plus there's the prospect of certain independent productions being in the mix. SAG-AFTRA has an interim agreements program that allows indie productions with no direct ties to the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers to continue filming.

### Flash Back

**August 8, 2018** John Bailey, ASC was re-elected president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences by the organization's Board of Governors. Bailey is beginning his second term as president and his 15th year as a governor representing the Cinematographers Branch. Bailey is the first cinematographer to hold the position of Academy president. His credits include *Ordinary People*, *American Gigolo*, *The Big Chill*, *Groundhog Day*, *As Good as It Gets*, *The Anniversary Party*, *The Way Way Back* and *A Walk in the Woods*....Alex Bogusky, one of the original founders of Crispin Porter + Bogusky, has rejoined the agency as co-founder, chief creative engineer. In this new position, he will assume a leadership role in all aspects of the company. Bogusky will be working closely with CEO Erik Sollenberg, president Danielle Aldrich and chairman Chuck Porter....Sweetshop has signed director Jakob Marky for representation globally, excluding most of Europe where he is handled by Scandinavian shop Bacon (the U.K. is covered by Sweetshop). Marky's Facebook campaign for Skittles' "Super Mega Rainbow Updater" won a Silver and a Bronze Lion at Cannes in 2011....

**August 8, 2013** Director Brett Fallentine has signed with The Famous Group for commercials and branded content. His credits include a *Refresh* web video documentary for Pepsi out of TBWA\Chiat\Day, as well as spots for Google, IBM, Pepsi, Microsoft, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Nikon and FC Barcelona....Crispin Porter+Bogusky has hired three creative directors for its office in Boulder, Colo.: Sesh Moodley, Matthew Elhardt and Avital Pinchevsky. Moodley comes over from AKQA, where he was a creative director on a number of Anheuser-Busch InBev brands, including Budweiser and Bud Light. Prior to AKQA, Moodley was at Naked Communications in Sydney, where he received top honors for campaigns like "Steal Banksy" for Art Series Hotels, which won Cannes and Effie Gold, and the "Speedkills" for Transport Accident Commission (TAC), which received Gold at both New York Festivals and Spikes Asia. Moodley has also worked at Lowe and Partners, Leo Burnett and Ogilvy & Mather. Elhardt had most recently been creative director at 180LA. Pinchevsky comes to CP+B from DDB South Africa where she was creative director on McDonald's, First National Bank (South Africa), Bob Martin and KWW.....

# street talk

Director and photographer India Sleem has joined the Somesuch roster for representation across music videos, commercials and branded content in the U.K. and Amsterdam. Her work spans global brands including Apple, Nike, McDonald's, Fenty, Gap, Square, Converse, Chillys, Marie Curie and *Vogue*. This year, her work for Nike's AirForce 40th Anniversary campaign was an Advertising Campaign finalist at The AICP Show. In 2019, she was named to The One Club's Young Guns 17 winner for her work including her film *The Game*, a golden hour love letter to NYC's basketball culture, and photo series "Indian Hills" for *Dazed & Confused Magazine*. Born and raised in Manchester, England, Sleem is based in L.A. She is currently in production on a short film, a semi-autobiographical look at growing

up mixed race. She is also in development on her first feature film.....Toronto-based production house Feels Like Home has added Paul Santana to its directorial roster for representation across Canada. He made his directing debut for the American Cancer Society with "Odds," a film that earned him a slot in SHOOT's 2005 New Directors Showcase and earned recognition at the AICP Show. Santana has gone on to work for brands including Nike, Coors, Budweiser, Samsung, Coca Cola, Jeep, Toyota and Chevrolet. A career highlight for Santana has been filming annual campaigns for Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism. Taking a break from L.A., these campaigns allow him to immerse himself within the natural beauty of the province and interact with the people there....Eddie Gold, founder of The Gold Studios, has launched The Gold Directors, a U.K. production company featuring "vertical directors." The new venture has assembled a lineup of U.K.-based directors—Philip Lawson, Rebekah Creative, Joe&Jackson and James Dean—who specialize in shooting for 9:16. Demand for vertical content has risen in recent years with SnapChat, Instagram Reels, YouTube shorts and TikTok driving it forward....

# rep report

Sarah Gitersonke of Chicago-based indie rep firm SG & Partners has signed The Garage to its roster for Midwest representation. Owned by first-generation Cuban American director Steve Giralt, The Garage, which recently signed director Matt Genesis, is in the process of minority-owned certification. Gitersonke joins a sales team at The Garage that already includes Minerva on the East Coast and N

CAHOOTS on the West Coast....Gisbert Hochguertel rejoins Ikegami Electronics to handle broadcast sales and marketing throughout the EAME (Europe, Africa, Middle East) region. Hochguertel started his broadcast industry career at public broadcaster Westdeutscher Rundfunk Köln before joining Ikegami in 1991 where he was active in sales and product management for nearly a decade. He subsequently worked in a similar role at Sony Europe before moving to virtual advertising specialist LANE GmbH as head of broadcast....Riedel Communications, which designs, manufactures, and distributes real-time video, audio, data, and communications networks, has appointed Kevin Collins to serve as sr. VP of sales, North America. Collins joins Riedel after nearly 30 years at Diversified, where he was a founding member. Collins maintained an executive management role throughout his tenure and was instrumental in the strategy and growth of the organization. He held management roles at Diversified including VP of sales, 12 years as EVP and chief operating officer, and president and COO for four years. His last role was as president of the company's international business unit. One of Collins' key initiatives in establishing Diversified's role as a thought leader included creating a team of subject matter experts for emerging technologies and solutions (ET&S). The goal of ET&S was to partner with clients to improve their tech operations and deliver solutions based on their real-world understanding of the actual capabilities of systems, people, and spaces....



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