

# SHOOT®



## Production Outlook 14

From top to bottom: Marty Senn, Katie Keating, Chris Crawford



From top left, clockwise: Scenes from *The Color Purple*, *Killers of the Flower Moon*, *Oppenheimer*, *The Holdovers*, *Society of the Snow*, *Poor Things*. **Series Part 9, Page 4**



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Left to Right: Scenes from *BEEF*, *Somebody Somewhere*

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By Robert Goldrich

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## Word of the Year

Discussing his role in the 1979 movie *Going in Style*, George Burns said, “The most important thing in acting is honesty. If you can fake that, you’ve got it made.”

Fast forward to today and the fine line between what’s real and what’s fake seems more blurred than ever. Merriam-Webster, for example, recently selected “authentic” as its word of the year.

The yearning for authenticity has been spurred on in part by growing concerns over artificial intelligence and its ability to deceive and dehumanize.

Artificial intelligence was also among the topics discussed by several ad agency creatives in our Production Outlook Survey, which is in this issue of *SHOOT*. Reflected in that feedback was the need for humanity—our thoughtfulness and even a recognition of our biases—in order to

properly harness AI.

Survey respondent Chris Crawford, chief creative officer of Elite Media, related, “There is a lot of buzz and excitement about the power of AI and how we can push the bounds of creativity and use it for good. Technologies are advancing at a fast rate, and regulators are trying to get a handle on how to implement safeguards.

**“The most important thing in acting is honesty. If you can fake that, you've got it made.”**  
---George Burns

We’re in constant conversation about what that will mean for multicultural audiences and how to use these tools responsibly. Content creators should continue to seek to understand how bias shows up, how it impacts representation and the way that people see themselves, and how to keep human connection at the center of our creative products. We’re looking for natural openings and opportunities to use new technologies in ways that make sense

for our clients and audiences instead of trying to force them. This is an exciting time to lean into new opportunities and innovate while also not losing sight of our audiences and the connection they seek to make with brands.”

Cedric Devitt, chief creative officer at Big Spaceship, shared, “Currently, over 80% of Big Spaceship AI use is in our

workflow and efficiency, with the remaining 20% focused on AI-enhanced creative. However, no purely AI-produced copy, visuals, or creative of any kind has been leveraged in consumer-facing work unless a concept specifically and transparently has required it. While AI is a valuable tool employed by our teams, it remains critical that human expertise guides how we prompt these tools and thoughtfully refines the output that they can give us.”

By Robert Goldrich

## POV



## Fearless Diversity

In this edition of *SHOOT*, our Production Outlook Survey of agency CCOs, creative directors, heads of production and executive producers found diversity and inclusion to be among the prominent issues of concern. Various initiatives have emerged to help spark progress on the DEI front—including on the entertainment content creation side. One such program is the inaugural Film Independent Imaginar TV Incubator for Fearless Latinx Creators launched by Film Independent and FX, a division of Disney Entertainment, in collaboration with the National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP).

The Incubator will sponsor six Latinx creators as they participate in workshops, conversations and individual meetings providing support, insight on the FX Networks drama programming brand and direct access to industry leaders.

Shola Ajewole, SVP creative & cultural diversity, FX, said, “This program continues our longstanding commitment to developing programming that is reflective of the world we live in, and amplifying the voices we have not yet heard from.”

Gina Balian, president, FX Entertainment, added, “By combining Film Independent’s innovative writer programs and knack for finding the next generation of creators with FX’s brand of fearless storytelling, we have been able to create a new program to engage Latinx creators in our search for the next hit series for FX.”

The first part of the two-week Incubator is a three-day intensive that will focus on workshoping selected one-hour drama pilots, deepening pitch skills, and gaining access and insights into the FX development process. Creators will pitch their original one-hour drama pilots to FX at the conclusion of the initial intensive. Over the remainder of the program,

creators will have individual meetings with creative advisors and execs to develop a second original drama concept that will be pitched to FX on the final day. A \$3,000 grant will be awarded to each participant, along with travel grants as required for selected creators participation.

Celebrating 30 years, Film Independent Artist Development programs support creative voices and diverse perspectives in film and television by giving filmmakers crucial resources they need to advance their projects and build sustainable careers. Alumni of Artist Development programs include Tze Chun (*I’m a Virgo*), Linda Yvette Chavez and Marvin Lemus (*Gentified*), LaToya Morgan (*Duster*), and Robbie Pickering (*Gaslit*).

The application deadline for the Incubator for Fearless Latinx Creators is February 2, with an extended deadline for Film Independent members on February 9. To apply, visit [filminddependent.org](http://filminddependent.org).

# Director, DP, Editor, Designer and Casting POVs

Insights into *The Color Purple*, *Society of the Snow*, *Poor Things*, *The Holdovers*, *Oppenheimer* and *Killers of the Flower Moon*

By Robert Goldrich, The Road To Oscar Series Part 9

From top left, clockwise: Taraji P. Henson (from left), Fantasia Barrino and Danielle Brooks in *The Color Purple*; a scene from *Society of the Snow*; Emma Stone in *Poor Things*; Dominic Sessa (l) and Paul Giamatti in *The Holdovers*; Cillian Murphy in a scene from *Oppenheimer*; Lily Gladstone (l) and Leonardo DiCaprio in *Killers of the Flower Moon*; and *The Color Purple* director Blitz Bazawule.



Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Pictures



Photo by David Walter Banks



Photo by Melinda Sue Gordon/courtesy of Apple TV+



Photo courtesy of Netflix



Photo courtesy of Universal Pictures



Photo by Yonko Lanthimos/courtesy of Searchlight Pictures



Photo courtesy of Focus Features

Back when he was a freshman at Kent State, Blitz Bazawule read Alice Walker's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "The Color Purple" for an English literature class. "It stuck with me," he shared, citing not only the book's "brilliant poetry" but also that it marked the first time he had read "African American literature that was directly connected to the continent of Africa." That struck a deeply responsive chord for Bazawule as an immigrant from Ghana.

From that point on, the works of Walker have been part of Bazawule's personal library—alongside those of Toni Morrison, among others.

Yet when he was asked to take a meeting to discuss possibly directing a movie musical rendition of "The Color Purple," Bazawule had serious reservations. After all, Steven Spielberg had directed a lauded feature film adaptation. That 1985 release scored 11 Oscar nominations, earning Spielberg the DGA Award. And in 2005 a Broadway musical version emerged and became a great success, garnering 11 Tony Award nominations. A

revival of the Broadway production won two Tony Awards in 2016.

Assessing the prospect of reimagining the story as a musical feature film, Bazawule initially and understandably thought: "What more could be done?"

What Bazawule did to answer that seemingly rhetorical question was go back to the source material, cracking open Walker's book once more and finding inspiration at the very beginning when Celie, a 14-year-old African American girl living in rural Georgia—experiencing unspeakable abuse from her father—starts writing letters to God because she thinks no one else will care or listen. This stirred something in Bazawule who marveled at the "beautiful imagination" of a girl to reach out and try to converse with God.

"That's the hook," realized Bazawule who was searching for something new and of value he could bring to the new film. By exploring Celie's headspace, her inspired imagination, Bazawule reasoned that he could find a unique way into the story that "would be mine," enabling him

to contribute more to the narrative and substantively push its boundaries.

Bazawule further realized that for this project he had to reimagine the movie musical itself. He watched as many musicals as possible, analyzing why some worked while others didn't. Bazawule discovered that the successful movie musicals had one similarity—the music had a source. It didn't fall out of the sky. The music was born out of human circumstances, the souls of people. And that origin needed to be present to do justice to the spirit of Walker's work. He wound up deploying gospel, blues and jazz in his film—respectively in acts one, two and three. While there had to be a consistency across the arc of the story, each act, he shared, had to musically have its own "sonic, spiritual kind of North Star."

And that North Star helped guide Celie (portrayed by Fantasia Barrino) as she escapes the drudgery and tragedy of everyday existence—the loss of two children, separation from her sister, Nettie

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# Directorial POVs on *The Color Purple*, *Society of the Snow*

*Continued from page 4*  
(portrayed by Ciara), brutal abuse from a husband (Colman Domingo)—through vibrant fantasy episodes full of life and rich color. This was essential, related Bazawule, to reflect the dreams, imagination and indomitable spirit of Celie. “Often people who have dealt with trauma and abuse are mischaracterized as docile and passive, waiting to be saved. I couldn’t make that film. I know the opposite is true. People are constantly working their way out of their trauma.” And Celie envisioned a better existence, with a zest for life and an enduring kindness and caring.

*The Color Purple* (Warner Bros. Pictures) brought Bazawule together with cinematographer Dan Laustsen for the first time. Laustsen is a two-time Oscar nominee for the Guillermo del Toro-directed Best Picture winner *The Shape of Water*, and *Nightmare Alley*.

“Dan is a master of scale and intimacy,” assessed Bazawule, citing the *John Wick* movies and *The Shape of Water*, as respective examples. “I knew I needed somebody who understood both worlds. Our movie [*The Color Purple*] would oscillate between rambunctious set pieces and intimate scenes.”

Bazawule noted that Laustsen “loves a liberated camera. So do I.” Bazawule—who has an extensive music background, best known as a hip-hop performer—shared that his work in that field is “percussive and free,” and that African music informs his filmmaking trajectory. “Dan somehow has the same kind of feeling, the need to keep the camera alive. The camera is alive.” With that approach, the camera seeks and “finds things,” said Bazawule. “It’s freedom. Dan and I are in sync.”

Bazawule added that he and Laustsen agreed immediately that they “were not going to make a period film like people used to.” The norm entailed sepia and black-and-white sensibilities, which Bazawule conjectured stem from people using old surviving photographs as their visual references. Photos taken 100 years ago invariably were faded, black and white, and of sepia tone. He observed that people are generally not conditioned to see the past in vivid color. Bazawule said that he and Laustsen were not going to fall into that trap. “The photography should instead push into the world where people live,”

affirmed the director, further noting that he and Laustsen are not big visual effects filmmakers, instead preferring to attain effects in-camera.



Colman Domingo in a scene from *The Color Purple*

As for the biggest takeaway he had from his experience on *The Color Purple*, Bazawule singled out “my connection to cast and crew,” and his feelings for “the people who helped me make this movie.” He described himself as “thankful these are people I deeply care about. They will remain my friends long after this movie is out in the world.”

Bazawule’s previous credits as a director include the Ghanaian drama *The Burial of Kojo* and segments of Beyoncé’s *Black Is King*.

## J.A. Bayona

While his filmography is diverse, there’s a thematic thread running through several of director J.A. Bayona’s features—first with *The Orphanage*, then *The Impossible*, followed by *A Monster Calls*, and now *Society of the Snow* (Netflix), which debuted at this year’s Venice Film Festival and was selected by Spain as its official submission for the Best International Feature Film Oscar.

These four creatively ambitious movies center on characters finding themselves in a very intense situation, with death on the horizon. It started with *The Orphanage*, a poignant horror movie which made its initial mark at the 2007 Cannes Film Festival. Next up was *The Impossible*, Bayona’s film based on the true story of a family that survived, was separated and then somehow miraculously reunited after a tsunami ravaged the western coast of

Thailand on the day after Xmas in 2004. Naomi Watts starred in the film.

Bayona’s third feature, *A Monster Calls*, came out in 2016 and centers on 12-year-

olds to stay alive. Some of the survivors died in the ensuing days. On December 23, 1972, two-and-a-half months after the crash, 16 were rescued alive.

Vierci’s book, also titled “*Society of the Snow*,” was written 36 years after the plane crash. It gives a voice to the survivors as well as those who didn’t make it out alive. Though it took place 50-plus years ago, the disaster has impacted—and continues to affect—generations of people.

This film has been percolating within Bayona for some time. He first read journalist/author Vierci’s book more than 10 years ago while prepping for *The Impossible*. In fact the title *The Impossible* came to Bayona upon reading a comment by Roberto Canessa, one of the survivors of the Andes crash. Bayona even recalled sharing excerpts from the book with stars of *The Impossible*, Watts and Holland, during breaks between takes. The book, explained Bayona, was very relevant to the story of *The Impossible*. There was a common bond of human caring, faith, selflessness, the will to sacrifice for others, and the will to live.

Bayona described *Society of the Snow* as “a journey of self-discovery.” He observed that the film is akin to people discovering themselves in their “own shadows.” At the outset, Bayona said he found himself “trying to find out what was missing, what was left to be told.” He recalled the first time he met the actual survivors, he left with the “impression that they needed the film more than me. There was something that still needed to be told.” A large part of that was centered on those who didn’t survive. Rescuing those names from the past carried a level of importance—it was as if the survivors wanted a conversation between the living and the dead, related Bayona.

The director also put other conversations into motion as he connected with survivors as well as families of the deceased, making sure they were in agreement on the story and the way it was told. Furthermore, Bayona put his actors in touch with the survivors—and the families of those who didn’t survive—which helped to inform the on-screen performances. Deep friendships developed among them all—and are ongoing.

Throughout the shoot, Bayona and his

*Continued on page 8*





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# Robbie Ryan On Lensing Yorgos Lanthimos' *Poor Things*

Continued from page 6

cast were able to phone the survivors to seek answers to any questions or to address any feelings that came up. Bayona tried to give as much freedom as possible to the actors as they dealt with their emotions while trying to do justice to this real story. Bayona observed that there are “moments where performance disappears and things happen in front of the camera.” These moments and experiences can bring more than what you might

ona, breathes life into the story, helping to fuel the empathy and sense of purpose you see and feel on screen among the characters.

## Robbie Ryan

*Poor Things* (Searchlight Pictures) marks the second film that Robbie Ryan, BSC, ISC has lensed for director Yorgos Lanthimos. The first was *The Favourite* for which Ryan earned Best Cinematography Oscar, ASC Award, BAFTA Film

*The Favourite* writer Tony McNamara, adapted from Alasdair Gray's 1992 novel.

Ryan worked closely with Lanthimos in experimenting with lenses (Pertzval lenses, adapted film project lenses, film lenses) and film stock to get the right combination for individual scenes. Kodak had to manufacture Ektachrome in 35mm specifically for portions of *Poor Things* because the film stock wasn't readily available for straight up purchase. Ryan described Lanthimos as “a visual cinematographer in his own right.” The DP observed, “I'm working in a collaboration learning from a master. He knows cinematography better than I do. I feel like I'm matching up against him in a way” as they teamed to create a visual language for *Poor Things*.

Fittingly Ryan in tandem with Lanthimos scored three honors at Camerimage this year *Poor Things*--a Golden Frog nomination, as well as winning the Audience Award and a Bronze Frog.

And while Ryan may feel he is looking up at Lanthimos on the figurative cinematography pyramid, the DP is accomplished in his own right, having won a Golden Frog and an Audience Award in 2021 for the Mike Mills-directed *C'mon C'mon*, and a Bronze Frog in 2011 for director Andrea Arnold's *Wuthering Heights*, which too was nominated for the

VistaVision--used famously by Alfred Hitchcock in *Vertigo*--was Lanthimos' choice (with an aspect ratio of 1.66:1, not widescreen as frequently associated with VistaVision). On the other end of the continuum, in contrast to vintage VistaVision, virtual production techniques and an LED backdrop were used to help create views from a cruise ship at sea which carried Bella Baxter and Wedderburn on part of their travels. Ryan described the setting as “a moving painted backdrop” replete with ocean vistas and moving skies, helping actors to feel as if they were in that world. It felt like the ship was moving in a magical environment.

Extensive preparation with space for improvisation marks Lanthimos' approach to filmmaking, explained Ryan. “There's a real rhythm of how Yorgos works on a film. He doesn't want anything slowing up the filmmaking process. He's ready to go and doesn't want to be wasting time.”

Part of the prep to avoid wasting time has Lanthimos reacting to what he sees and feels prior to production. For example, Ryan related that Lanthimos' choice of lenses for various sequences was “informed by his being on a film set as it was being built.”

While its story is set in the Victorian era, *Poor Things* is not a period film, said



A scene from *Society of the Snow*

have originally imagined to the narrative--and how audiences relate to it. But these unexpected moments have to be grounded in reality. Bayona wanted to give the actors the confidence to improvise--but that improvisation had to be informed by the facts and the emotions related to them by the survivors.

For Bayona--who also served as a producer on the movie as well as a co-writer--there was another dimension of comfort afforded him in *Society of the Snow*. This was the first Spanish-language feature film he had directed in some 15 years. He said being “able to talk to the actors in your own [native] language” felt like a luxury--but in the case of *Society of the Snow* it was also a bit of a necessity as that helped Bayona to stay especially close to the actors and continue to build trust with them as they handled complex situations in which they and their characters had to be emotionally vulnerable for a story that has deep spiritual and philosophical aspects. Translating the spiritual to the screen is always challenging, Bayona affirmed. That can only be done with a profound trust between the director and actors. And that in turn, continued Bay-

Award and BSC Award nominations.

The first half-hour or so of *Poor Things* is in black and white, introducing us to among others, Bella Baxter (portrayed by Emma Stone). Then when Baxter goes on a globetrotting journey with the poorly intentioned attorney Duncan Wedderburn (Mark Ruffalo), the film takes on striking color--reflecting the previously sheltered Baxter breaking out as she's experiencing new things in new places.

This is a coming-of-age story--literally but not typically. We learn that in Baxter we have an infant's brain in the body of a young woman, part of a Frankenstein-esque experiment conceived by mad scientist Dr. Godwin Baxter (Willem Dafoe). The doctor resurrects a female suicide victim, re-animating her with the brain of her baby and naming her Bella whom he takes on as his daughter.

We witness Bella Baxter over time as her brain grows into her body and she comes to grips with human nature, her sexuality and life itself. Her fresh, innocent perspective is refreshing as we see her naivete, which Wedderburn tries to exploit, mature into understanding.

The screenplay for *Poor Things* is from



Emma Stone in a scene from *Poor Things*

Golden Frog.

Ryan deployed an ARRI camera adapted to turn into a VistaVision model for select sequences of *Poor Things*. He also shot with a workhorse ARRI ST camera.

Lanthimos had Ryan tapping into both the old and new. On one hand, for the re-animation Frankenstein-like sequence,

Ryan. “It's kind of a manufactured world, different than what you would imagine.”

That coincides with Lanthimos being very open to the unconventional to find what's right for the narrative or a scene, continued Ryan, citing the choice to take a 4mm Optex lens made for 16mm camer-

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## Kevin Tent Edits Director Alexander Payne's *The Holdovers*

*Continued from page 8*

as and place it on a 35mm camera to create “a crazy circular portal effect” which brought a unique storytelling perspective to an offbeat dance sequence in a fancy Lisbon restaurant. As Bella Baxter breaks out into a strange dance, she is joined by Wedderburn and their movements across the floor get progressively crazier. The portal feel of the lens make it seem as if we’re gazing into another world, enhancing the humor and peculiarly liberating feel of the moment.

Reflecting the value of varied storytelling perspectives in *Poor Things* was it winning the Venice Film Festival’s top prize, the Golden Lion, when it premiered there in September.

### Kevin Tent

Kevin Tent, ACE and director Alexander Payne have been connected at the collaborative hip. This dates back to Payne’s feature directorial debut, *Citizen Ruth*, a 1996 release. Payne recalled seeking an editor for *Citizen Ruth*, a search which led him to editor Carole Kravetz for advice and perhaps a referral. Payne remembered telling Kravetz she was too busy and too expensive for him at that point-

ship has yielded a Best Editing Oscar nomination for *The Descendants* in 2012 and five American Cinema Editors’ Eddie Award nominations--for *Election* in 2000, *About Schmidt* in 2003, *Sideways* in 2005, *The Descendants* in 2012 and *Nebraska* in 2014. Tent won the Eddie for *The Descendants*.

Kent is grateful for his bond with Payne, relating that some well established editors were “dangled” in front of the director when he was getting ready to shoot *Citizen Ruth*. Kent conjectured that Payne “wanted more of a collaborative person as opposed to a grandfather” who would tell him how the picture should be cut. Kent said that this led to a relationship more conducive to experimenting and being able to learn and grow with each other.

Already this awards season, the American Film Institute has named *The Holdovers* one of the year’s Best Films in its AFI Awards rundown.

*The Holdovers* brings together an unlikely trio through circumstance. We are taken back to 1970 over winter break at a New England boarding school. Paul Giamatti stars as Paul Hunham, an adjunct professor of ancient history who’s stuck with the task of being held over at Bar-

Vietnam War. Hunham, Tully and Lamb somehow form and find a semblance of family--something they either tragically had lost or never truly had before.

In *SHOOT*’s Road To Oscar Preview, Payne explained that with *The Holdovers*

dropped for the pacing of the film. And it can be painful to see such work end up on the cutting room floor. The creative rapport he enjoys with Payne is a godsend. “We have similar tastes but keep each other honest. We have this editorial radar



**Dominic Sessa, Paul Giamatti, Da’Vine Joy Randolph in *The Holdovers***

he sought to make “a contemporary film in 1970.” It was as if he and his collaborators were living in 1970 and teaming to create a movie back then. It wasn’t imperative to find iconic locations that screamed 1970 to the audience. Rather, living in that year could be reflected in banal and unremarkable backdrops at times--part of everyday life during that era. Payne recalled that production designer Ryan Warren Smith, for example, embraced that approach--the focus, as it’s been in all of Payne’s movies, being on the human story.

Tent said that such humanity is achieved through Payne’s affinity for actors which translates into his allowing them “to often go at their own pace, to let them find their characters and their lines.” *The Holdovers* had an embarrassment of riches for an editor. Tent cited not only having “such amazing actors on this film” but also a remarkable script by David Hemingson, a first-time collaborator for Payne.

Tent said it’s hard to describe the editorial process on a Payne film but a prime priority is doing justice to the actors in character, bringing a pace to their performances without diluting or compromising them. Tent noted that Payne shoots a lot, even if he doesn’t believe he needs a scene. This offers a wider range of possibilities in the edit room. It also means some worthy scenes and takes have to be

that tells us when something is not good yet. We keep working on it until one of us says, ‘that’s it.’”

Tent added, “We’re both even more comfortable with each other than ever before. We’ve become close friends over these years. I don’t consider it going to work when I work with him. He keeps the cutting room a light, fun place to work, which makes going to work so much better.” Payne, no matter how accomplished, has continued to grow over the years, observed Tent. “He’s an enormously respectful person and collaborative. He’s become a more mature filmmaker, more confident in what he’s doing. It shows in his films. They’re still him but more sophisticated versions of him.”

### Ruth De Jong

Production designer Ruth De Jong wrapped director Jordan Peele’s *Nope* on a Tuesday and the next day embarked on Christopher Nolan’s *Oppenheimer* (Universal Pictures). It was the first time that the Emmy-nominated De Jong, whose feature work includes the lauded *Manchester by the Sea*, had gone back to back on two massive motion pictures. But she embraced the chance to work consecutively with two such inspired auteurs as Peele and Nolan.

And it’s somehow fitting that she immediately went from one to the next in that the two features had a cause-and-



**Ramy Youssef (l) and Willem Dafoe in a scene from *Poor Things***

-so whom might she recommend instead. She came up with two names, one of which was Kent. “He [Kent] dropped off a VHS demo at my apartment in Koreatown [in Los Angeles]. He said hello at the door. I liked it and I liked him.” That case of like has been everlasting as Kent has cut all of Payne’s feature films, from *Citizen Ruth* right through to the recently released *The Holdovers* (Focus Features).

For Kent, that collaborative relation-

ton Academy, having to supervise those kids who can’t go home for Christmas. A bit of a curmudgeon, Hunham is generally disliked by his students. But during their holiday confinement, he bonds with a held-over lad, Angus Tully (portrayed by Dominic Sessa in his feature debut). With them during the holidays is the school’s head cook, Mary Lamb (Da’Vine Joy Randolph) whose only child Curtis, a recent Barton grad, was killed in the



# Production Designer Ruth De Jong Discusses *Oppenheimer*

effect dynamic. De Jong noted that *Nope* helped her land *Oppenheimer* and the chance to collaborate for the first time with Nolan. De Jong had worked on *Nope* with two collaborative colleagues of Nolan—cinematographer Hoyte van

from the outset in detailed preparation was a departure from the norm for De Jong but it was a process she found invaluable and fulfilling.

At the same time, while this way of working with a director was new to her,

ing ensemble. Still, De Jong sought even greater insight, bringing in a researcher, Lauren Sandoval, who dug deeper, collecting never-seen-before imagery from archives in the U.S. and Europe, tapping into unclassified documents, manuscripts from *Oppenheimer*'s trial, shedding light on a specific epic moment in U.S. history, and thus gaining a firmer handle on the characters—and their character—including that of theoretical physicist *Oppenheimer* (portrayed by Cillian Murphy), known as “the father of the atomic bomb” in his capacity as director of the Manhattan Project's Los Alamos Laboratory in New Mexico during World War II.

Similar to her *modus operandi* on *Manchester by the Sea*, De Jong went to Los Alamos where there are still descendants of people who were familiar with the Manhattan Project and the town of Los Alamos during *Oppenheimer*'s time. De Jong reached out to those folks, gaining recollections from for example someone whose grandmother worked with *Oppenheimer*, someone else whose great grandfather knew him. This feedback helped De Jong and her colleagues as they teamed to build these worlds for the movie. She even ran into a scientist

want to make a documentary.” De Jong related that Nolan knew full well that the various disciplines—production design, visual effects, cinematography, wardrobe and music—have to be informed by the research. Yet while the artists behind these disciplines have to look at and be mindful of the research, they at the same time need to “divorce” themselves from it, focusing on capturing the spirit and essence of that moment in time.

De Jong explained that Nolan did not need to have what's on screen heralding the year when the film was supposed to be taking place. He did not want the time period to be distracting. Instead he wanted the feel to be timeless with minimal dress and clean sets that would facilitate the storytelling and the characters. Rather than be restricted by history and research, she and her colleagues are informed by them to create a world reflecting the essence of the era. Cast and crew are ultimately free to “make our own film,” related De Jong who found that notion very liberating.

Also liberating was the trust and confidence Nolan exhibited in cast and crew. He might at times ask what on the surface would seem impossible but he believed in the capabilities of his collabora-



**Dominic Sessa (I) and Da'Vine Joy Randolph in *The Holdovers***

Hoytema, ASC, FSE, NSC and special effects maven Scott R. Fisher. The former earned an Oscar nomination for Nolan's *Dunkirk* while Fisher is a two-time Academy Award winner for Nolan's *Interstellar* and *Tenet*. De Jong enjoyed a positive working relationship with van Hoytema and Fisher on *Nope*, with the production designer's accomplishments on that film including the creation and construction of a Western town from the ground up. Their gratifying experience on *Nope* translated into van Hoytema connecting De Jong with Nolan who was looking for a production designer to take on the creatively ambitious *Oppenheimer*. During a three-hour meeting, De Jong struck up a creative rapport with Nolan and his producer wife, Emma Thomas, and a foundation was laid for their collaborating on *Oppenheimer*.

Nolan brought her in very early on. The writer-director's process is to spend time with his production designer prior to anyone else. De Jong enjoyed a month-and-a-half-plus stretch with Nolan, the first few weeks including extensive discussion about the script, scenes and how he envisioned them, the settings for those scenes, historical references delving into specific venues in J. Robert *Oppenheimer*'s life, and checking out prospective locations. Even when certain places didn't pan out, they informed the production design. This close-knit relationship

De Jong found that her approach over the years dovetailed nicely with that of Nolan. That approach to production design is grounded in an orientation which De Jong touched upon back when she talked with *SHOOT* for its Road To Oscar Series in 2017 for *Manchester by the Sea*. Back then, she likened the role of production designer to that of researcher and journalist in a sense. “So much of our design influence comes from a heavy amount of research no matter what period, what time frame a film calls for—unless it's some fantastical world that doesn't exist anywhere. Otherwise, though, you have to ground your design in reality.” Thus for *Manchester by the Sea*, De Jong became a student of the coastal towns of Massachusetts and their residents. De Jong connected with locals to gain insights into their communities. She immersed herself in the towns to zero in on locations and the feel of settings that would help advance the story.

Similarly for *Oppenheimer*, De Jong took a deep dive into history. Thankfully a wealth of research had already been done in that Nolan wrote an adaptation of Martin J. Sherwin and Kai Bird's Pulitzer Prize-winning 2005 book “American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert *Oppenheimer*.” De Jong noted that the book's authors spent 25 years researching the subject matter, providing a foundation of knowledge for the filmmak-



**Cillian Murphy (I) and Emily Blunt in a scene from *Oppenheimer***

who had a clock from *Oppenheimer*'s office. De Jong quipped that she had some “Manchester” moments when delving into the Manhattan Project.

Key, though, was not falling into the trap of being so obsessed with history that it bogged down the proceedings and made the filmmaking unwieldy. Budget and time remain realities that have to be taken into account. De Jong said that Nolan “made it very clear to me he didn't

tors to bring his vision to fruition. Nolan's experience, intimate knowledge of what every department does and is capable of helps department heads to do their best work, said De Jong. There's a feeling of empowerment and trust that spurs on each department, erasing any self-doubts about what can be achieved—even within tight budgetary and time parameters. In fact, those parameters are embraced in a

*Continued on page 12*



## Casting An Indigenous Net

Continued from page 11

sense, she observed. For example, De Jong conjectured that if she had “all the money in the world” to re-create Los Alamos, “it would have been a mess.” Having too much money and time would have you all over the place and serve to “stop critical thinking.” Instead, working within budget and time constraints gets you down to focusing on what you truly need to tell a story, which can prove “a most

outset, there was a firm commitment that every person who portrayed a native character would be native and that includes Lily Gladstone who grew up on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana and delivers a tour de force performance.

*Killers of the Flower Moon* takes us to the turn of the 20th century when oil brought a fortune to the Osage Nation in Oklahoma, who became some of the richest people in the world overnight. The



Photo by Melinda Sue Gordon (courtesy of Universal Pictures)

### Oppenheimer's Ruth De Jong, Hoyte van Hoytema, Christopher Nolan

powerful way to work, You strip away everything else. You get rid of all the noise.”

### Ellen Lewis, Rene Haynes

As casting directors on Martin Scorsese's *Killers of the Flower Moon* (Apple TV+), Ellen Lewis and Rene Haynes came together for the second time—the first being their collaboration on *Godless* for which they in 2018 earned a prime-time Emmy nomination for Outstanding Casting for a Limited Series.

Their collaborative paths, though, are quite different from each other when it comes to Scorsese. *Killers of the Flower Moon* marked Haynes' first turn on a Scorsese film while Lewis has a long track record with the legendary filmmaker—spanning such films as *The Irishman*, *The Departed*, *The Wolf of Wall Street*, *The Aviator*, *Shutter Island*, *Casino*, *Gangs of New York*, *The Age of Innocence*, *Cape Fear* and *Goodfellas*—as well as the TV series *Boardwalk Empire* for which Lewis in 2011 won an Emmy for Outstanding Casting for a Drama Series.

For Lewis and Haynes on *Killers of the Flower Moon*, the priority was to do justice to the Osage story and bring indigenous acting talent into the fold. From the

wealth of these Native Americans immediately attracted white interlopers, who manipulated, extorted, and stole as much Osage money as they could before resorting to murder. Based on a true story and told through the improbable romance of Ernest Burkhart (Leonardo DiCaprio) and Mollie Kyle (Gladstone), *Killers of the Flower Moon* is an epic western crime saga, where real love crosses paths with unspeakable betrayal. Also starring Robert De Niro and Jesse Plemons, *Killers of the Flower Moon* was directed by Scorsese who teamed with Eric Roth to write the screenplay based on David Grann's best-selling book of the same title.

Lewis reached out to Haynes based on her experience in indigenous casting and the rapport they enjoyed on *Godless*. Back in 2018, Haynes began to formulate a lineup of indigenous women who might be right for the role of Mollie, her sisters and mom. Haynes and Lewis culled through them and select candidates emerged. Lewis first connected with Gladstone many years ago on a film and saw the actor's career progress over the years, breaking through in Kelly Reichardt's 2016 film *Certain Women*.

Continued on page 26

## Short Takes

### CREATIVE VISION BRINGS SIGHTWALKS TO PERU

Circus Grey Perú has teamed with Cemento Sol and the Municipality of Miraflores to transform sidewalks in their community. Over the course of nearly two years, they have laid more than 75,000 square meters of special tiles, creating a signage system designed to empower over 500,000 visually impaired individuals in Lima.



By introducing special tiles integrated into the sidewalks, Circus Grey Peru and Cemento Sol have pioneered a groundbreaking navigation system that stands out as a beacon of inclusivity and innovation. These tiles serve as a tactile guide allowing visually impaired individuals to navigate independently, enriching their daily lives and fostering a newfound sense of autonomy.

Circus Grey Peru recently released a film—directed by Mario Angulo of REBECA—outlining the initiative, dubbed “Sightwalks,” and its impact.

### IPG EXPANDS MARKETING FELLOWSHIP

Interpublic Group (NYSE: IPG) has expanded its Motor City Marketing and Communications Fellowship, a jobs program exclusively associated with IPG's Detroit-based communications and marketing companies supporting client General Motors. This includes Weber Shandwick, MRM, McCann, Jack Morton Worldwide, and Commonwealth/McCann.

Now in its third year, the Motor City Marketing and Communications Fellowship will continue to recruit applicants specifically from Detroit-based institutions, including Wayne State University and the College for Creative Studies. Dedicated to growing relationships with educational institutions across Detroit, the program plays a key role in engaging local talent, facilitating career development, and cultivating collaborative learning.

Unlike traditional internships, the two-year rotational program offers comprehensive and in-depth experiences across various disciplines, providing recruits with a holistic understanding of the communications, marketing, creative, experiential, and relationship marketing landscape. Fellowship candidates will also have the opportunity to support multiple vehicle brands including Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and Cadillac, as well as agencies like GM Customer Care and Aftersales, CarBravo and OnStar.

General Motors and IPG recognize the significant impact of younger generations on today's global economy. By investing in emerging talent, IPG is nurturing the growth and success of the next generation, providing them with the resources to thrive in the advertising and marketing industry.

### PEOPLE ON THE MOVE...

Rewilding America Now (RAN), a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving America's wild horses and promoting environmental conservation practices, has appointed former Hollywood studio chief Michael Nathanson as its new CEO and managing director. RAN has led the way for innovative wild horse rewilding, conservation awareness, and the inclusion of invaluable knowledge through Native American culture. RAN has been working towards a groundbreaking next step in the world of conservation as it is in the process of acquiring 400,000 acres of grazing lands in the Birch Creek Valley of Idaho to rewild. Nathanson previously served as chairman or president of motion picture companies and studios including MGM, Columbia Pictures, and New Regency. He has produced numerous films, including *LA Confidential* and *Hell or High Water*....



Photo courtesy of Rewilding America Now

Michael Nathanson

# Jake Schreier

Director reflects on *Beef* and Kendrick Lamar's Cannes Grand Prix-winning short, *We Cry Together*



By Robert Goldrich

Jake Schreier is currently nominated for two Emmy Awards on the strength of his work on *Beef* (Netflix)—for Outstanding Limited Series as an EP on the show, and for Outstanding Directing in a Limited Series for his helming of “The Great Fabricator” episode. *Beef* has earned a total of 13 Emmy noms, including for Outstanding Limited Series. And most recently *Beef* picked up three Film Independent Spirit Awards—for Best New Scripted Series and two for Best Lead Performance in a Scripted Series (individually for Steven Yeun and Ali Wong).

*Beef* follows an epic, ever escalating feud—triggered by a single road rage incident—between two strangers, portrayed by Wong, and Yeun. The twists and turns, while darkly entertaining, say a lot about our society, laying bare the rage, angst, ugliness and insecurities that have become so prevalent—but still managing to cast a cathartic ray of hope somehow reflecting the better side of human nature.

*Beef* capped a stellar award-winning 2023 for Schreier. He teamed with Dave Free and Kendrick Lamar to direct *We Cry Together*, a Lamar short fwhich won the Cannes Lions Grand Prix for Film Craft.

**SHOOT:** Has your short-form experience in commercials and music videos informed your TV and feature endeavors? And if so, how?

**Schreier:** I don’t know that the commercials really influenced a lot of the actual approach to filmmaking. But by the time we showed up on our first feature film set [*Robot & Frank*], we had been on 100 sets [for commercials]. I wasn’t a major commercial director at that time. I was four tiers down from Lance [Acord, partner in Park Pictures]. But you were making something. I used to do commercials for Eastern Europe. I’d go there for nine days and shoot some weird Russian bank ad but you’re still on set. I don’t think I’ve ever taken a job or done anything that I didn’t learn something from. To be able to step on that first set when it’s a feature

and to have that part out of the way—on a set, you’ve worked with people [is of great help]. Whether you’re going to be good at [feature] filmmaking is a whole different set of challenges.

**SHOOT:** What drew you to *Beef*? How did the opportunity come about for you to work on the show? What was the nature of your working relationship with its creator, Lee Sung Jin (aka Sonny)?

**Schreier:** I met Sonny and we had been friends for about six years. We met and just really connected in the way we looked at film. We would have talked about this [*Beef*] whether I worked on it or not. He got to a place where he needed some help so I kind of came in and helped out and then the role sort of expanded as we tried

to get it made.

*Beef* is an extremely personal show to Sonny. I sort of look at my role in those situations as just trying to help those people with their vision, to translate it cinematically, to be there and support that. I think *Beef* is really an example of that

I kind of assumed [said with a smile] that my friendship with Sonny would end in post, when we were in the edit room—but it didn’t, which was great. As a friend of his for a long time. [I’m] just sort of proud of him for having made that. It’s very much his show but I probably feel about as proud of that as anything else I’ve made.

**SHOOT:** What was your biggest takeaway or lessons learned from your experience on *Beef*? We ask this in the spirit of what are among the things you walk away with first and foremost from that experience. What has made a lasting impression?

**Schreier:** I think just how important that alchemy is of who you’re working with. And how so many things need to be great to make something greater. You can be very proud of your work, and think

*We Cry Together* stars Lamar and Tylour Paige as a romantically involved couple who get into an intense, heated argument which takes the form of live vocals.

Schreier’s body of work spans commercials, music videos, features and television. He is currently in prep on a Marvel feature, *Thunderbolts*.

Schreier continues to direct spots and other fare via Park Pictures, his longstanding home. Park via its feature division also produced Schreier’s theatrical motion picture directorial debut, *Robot & Frank*, which premiered at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival.

On the TV side, in addition to *Beef*, Schreier has had a hand in directing the Michel Gondry-produced *Kidding*, and the FX comedy series *Dave*. Schreier’s work for music artists extends beyond Lamar. Schreier has directed music videos for performers including Justin Bieber, Haim, Benny Blanco, Cashmere Cat, and Chance the Rapper.

This interview is excerpted from SHOOT’s “In The Director’s Chair” session held on October 26 at the DGA Theater in New York City, part of our New Directors Showcase festivities that day. Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

well I worked hard on this and did all this stuff. But then step back even for a second and think about what it would have been like if we didn’t have Larkin there, we hadn’t had [production designer] Grace [Yun], in particular Sonny’s vision, Steven [Yeun] and Ali [Wong], everything that they brought to it, so many people down the line of what they brought.

I have no idea if this has changed or not. I remember when we were coming out of film school, I think there’s this sense of what a director is, these auteurs you look up to. There’s kind of a mythos to it. “It’s your film and you have to hard charge through it.” That’s not an aspiration any more. I really just feel it’s finding the right group of people to make a thing is so essential to what it is. And it feels like again, sometimes you get very lucky. A lot of the time I feel very lucky to be there. That’s how I felt on the set of that Kendrick video. I felt this is a gift to be there with these people who are so incredibly talented. The shot is cool I guess but if the shot weren’t photographing those people doing that thing, it wouldn’t be anything at all.

I’ve been lucky enough to have a lot of those experiences. And if you are, you just want to find more of those.

“I sort of look at my role in those situations as just trying to help those people with their vision, to translate it cinematically, to be there and support that.”



Photo by Andrew Cooper/courtesy of Netflix



# What's Next In 2024? Predictions, AI, DEI, Lessons Learned

Agency CCOs,  
creative directors,  
heads of  
production among  
those looking  
to the new year,  
reflecting on 2023

A SHOOT STAFF REPORT



It's that time of year—for a new beginning, for New Year's resolutions, which often aren't kept, and predictions, which often aren't accurate. Nonetheless *SHOOT* called upon a brave cross-section of advertising agency executives, chief creative officers, creative directors, heads of production, executive producers, an executive creative director and even a sr. VP of content production across North America to offer their hopes, goals, projections and plans for 2024.

We also asked respondents to reflect on lessons learned from 2023 and how they might be applied to this year.

AI was among the topics discussed by several agency folks. Richard Adkins, joint head of production, Wieden+Kennedy London, observed, "AI can be a rather daunting premise for creative agencies. The more the technology advances and the smarter AI becomes, the more we question the future of our industry. Will clients continue to invest in productions that soon they'll be able to produce without having to hire directors, actors, or perhaps even creatives? The change is coming whether we like it or not, so the key is how to embrace it and evolve our offerings in line with the technology - rather than simply run away from it. For example, we're beginning to experiment with how AI can help us achieve a high volume of deliverables based on one original piece of creative. Or how AI can help us localize global campaigns.

Chris Crawford, chief creative officer of Elite Media, related, "There is a lot of buzz and excitement about the power of AI and how we can push the bounds of creativity and use it for good. Technologies are advancing at a fast rate, and regulators

are trying to get a handle on how to implement safeguards. We're in constant conversation about what that will mean for multicultural audiences and how to use these tools responsibly. Content creators should continue to seek to understand how bias shows up, how it impacts representation and the way that people see themselves, and how to keep human connection at the center of our creative products. We're looking for natural openings and opportunities to use new technologies in ways that make sense for our clients and audiences instead of trying to force them. This is an exciting time to lean into new opportunities and innovate while also not losing sight of our audiences and the connection they seek to make with brands."

Angela Barber, SVP, content production North America for Wunderman Thompson/VML, noted, "I've used AI for a few voice cloning projects. AI for sure saves us time and money. But, I respect the community at large who doesn't want their name, likeness, or voices to be taken for granted. I don't think AI should be used without the proper permissions and usage plans for talent payments in place when necessary."

Cedric Devitt, chief creative officer at Big Spaceship, shared, "Currently, over 80% of Big Spaceship AI use is in our workflow and efficiency, with the remaining 20% focused on AI-enhanced creative. However, no purely AI-produced copy, visuals, or creative of any kind has been leveraged in consumer-facing work unless a concept specifically and transparently has required it. While AI is a valuable tool employed by our teams, it remains critical that human expertise guides how we prompt these tools and thoughtfully refines the output that they can give us."

As for real intelligence, that calls for embracing diversity and inclusion, affirmed Katie Keating, co-founder/chief creative officer at Fancy LLC. She commented, "Fancy is 100% women-owned, operated, and driven. And we've been that way since day one in 2011. As important to us as the work we create on behalf of our clients is creating an environment that works for the way women want to work. We've had a distributed workforce for over ten years, we create bespoke solutions for family leave, and we assemble teams on a case-by-case basis to maximize opportunities for passions and skillsets to align with client objectives. We know that when women can fit the job into their life (as opposed to their life into whatever's left after their job), the work is more inspiring, and the experience is more fulfilling for everyone. We're not doing this because we have to, because the industry is shifting, because the world is watching. We work this way because it's the only way we can. It's who we are.

Creative director Rachel Carlson, co-founder of Foul Mouth Creative, noted that her shop is "one of the 1% of women-owned agencies. We prioritize working with diverse voices and talent.

# PRODUCTION OUTLOOK

Actually, that's false. It's not some bullshit "prioritize, yada yada buzzy diversity". We exclusively work with diverse talent. Entirely. So many shops spout off DEI goals, but behind the scenes, deadlines and demands often lead to defaulting to traditional talent who have the proven work and resume because it's the easier path. We purposefully build in time monthly to make connections with a diverse creative village. Networking, baby."

## Survey

For this Production Outlook Survey, *SHOOT* posed the following questions to folks in the agency community:

1) What's the most relevant business and/or creative lesson you learned in 2023 and how will you apply it to 2024?

2) 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 2024?

3) Does your company have plans for any major diversification and/or expansion/investment in technology and talent in 2024 and if so, what? How will this investment or diversification add value to what you can offer to clients? If instead you have already realized any actual expansion, made such an investment and/or diversified significantly recently and brought on new talent and expertise, share those developments with us along with what they mean to your staff

and clients.

4) Are you involved in virtual production or experimenting with AI, AR or other emerging disciplines or new technologies? Have you engaged in any real-world projects on these fronts? If so, relative to experimental and/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.

5) Gender pay disparity, sexual misconduct and the need for diversity & inclusion are issues that have started to be dealt with meaningfully. While the industry has made strides to address these issues, there's still a long way to go. What policies do you have in place or plan to implement or step up in order to make progress on any or all of these fronts?

6) What was the biggest challenge posed to you by a recent project? Or share insights to a recent project you deem notable. Briefly describe the project, why it was particularly noteworthy or what valuable lesson(s) you learned from it. If the work is complete and you'd like to share a link to it, please include.

What follows are excerpts from feedback provided by agency respondents. Their full responses will appear on *SHOOT*online in the 12/29 *SHOOT* Dailies and *SHOOT*>e.dition.



**Richard Adkins**  
Joint Head of Production  
Wieden+Kennedy London

5) Diversity and inclusion across our productions is an area in which we've brought about significant change over the past year. Involving diverse perspectives and skill sets in the creative process is critical for remaining relevant and credible to the audiences we speak to. As Dan Wieden said, "There are many, many undiscovered voices out there — voices that against all odds can rise up and enrich this culture and perhaps one day change the very nature of the marketplace for the better." This year at W+K London, we implemented a new bidding policy for film and stills production—Bid Different—which promotes assembling a balanced list of talent: one female director/photographer, one individual from an underrepresented community, and one other candidate. The key challenge lies in executing pitches using this framework while ensuring that our choices remain inclusive without turning tokenistic or creating an uneven field based on experience levels. There's no "silver bullet" or universal guide that fits all scenarios perfectly, but we're dedicated to improving, contributing to industry progress, and getting to fresh and exciting work.



**Angela Barber**  
SVP, Content Production North America  
Wunderman Thompson/VML

1) 2023 has confirmed that there are still big opportunities for evolution and growth. We're evolving in the technical space with the impact AI is having on the business, good or bad. AI is forcing us to rethink how we make content and it's challenging the tools required to make impactful content. 2024 will be the year we start approaching advertising with the "anything is really possible" attitude.

2) 2024 will be a year of dynamic impact! At VML we'll use our robust collective of capabilities to corner the market in all ways, using AI to foster an accelerated pace of thinking, making, producing, and delivering for our clients in a way that they have never seen before.

4) I've used AI for a few voice cloning projects. AI for sure saves us time and money. But, I respect the community at large who doesn't want their name, likeness, or voices to be taken for granted. I don't think AI should be used without the proper permissions and usage plans for talent payments in place when necessary.

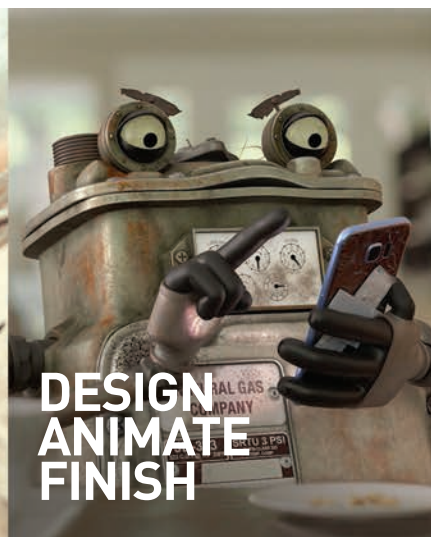
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**DIRECT  
PRODUCE  
SHOOT**



**EDIT  
MIX  
SCORE**



**DESIGN  
ANIMATE  
FINISH**



**CHARLIE  
UNIFORM  
TANGO**



## TDA\_Boulder, Hansen Dodge

Continued from page 15



**Maru Bernal**  
Creative Director  
TDA\_Boulder

1) Embracing change, embracing different, is the way to go.

Considering different points of view, inviting people that are different into your teams, trying new technologies, grabbing AI by the horns! because embracing change will always lead to something fresh. The pursuit of what is different becomes an invaluable asset,

fueling creativity and success.

2) We've not only mastered the complexities of remote productions, ideation, and mentoring, but we've also cultivated a mindset and a unique flexibility for content creation no matter the limitations.

Technology has been our ally, and this alliance is set to endure. As we step into a new and rapidly evolving chapter of technology, particularly with AI, I think the key is to make sure we keep things human—keeping our focus on the authentic core. We can't take the eye off that.

It's election's year so we'll again have division amongst people. If a brand wants to really connect with people, it'll have to be stay truthful and honest, use a very distinctive storytelling, and not only rely on AI because it won't be enough. The magic lies in combining strong insights, a creative strategy, and the human touch. Chances are that budgets won't increase so we'll need to continue being creative in that sense as well.



**Chris Buhrman**  
Executive Creative Director  
Hansen Dodge

1) Make a strong recommendation. If you can't, you haven't cracked it yet.

I'll use the development of strong recommendation muscles in 2024 to bullet proof our work both internally and with clients, and to inspire us to create unexpected solutions that are force multipliers of

the strategic objective and the media spend.

2) I think you are going to start to see creative people who have both the classic art direction and/or writing skills and are also prolific content creators.

5) We have a steadfast commitment and annual goals to build and maintain an agency that reflects the world around us.

Continued on page 17

## Hot Locations

### HBO Wraps *Like Water For Chocolate* In Mexico

Filming has wrapped throughout Mexico for the new HBO Original series *Like Water For Chocolate*, based on the novel by Laura Esquivel. Production took place in Mexico City and in Haciendas (ranches) in the State of Tlaxcala, involving approximately 1,200 people from the cast and crew.

Bringing to life the endearing characters from the story, the cast for *Like Water For Chocolate* is led by Irene Azuela as Mama Elena and Azul Guaita as the beloved character Tita. Ari Brickman is Don Felipe and Ana Valeria Becerril portrays Rosaura, Tita's sister and love rival. The young Andrea Chaparro interprets Gertrudis and Andrés Baida portrays Pedro, Tita and Rosaura's romantic interest; Ángeles Cruz plays Nacha, the ranch cook and Tita's mentor, and Louis David Horné is Juan Alejandro.



*Like Water For Chocolate*

To prepare for their roles, the cast took classes in cooking, dancing, and horseback riding. Additionally, each department worked with historians to refine details regarding the period in which the story takes place.

The special locations in the State of Tlaxcala will also be a core part of the series. The beautiful natural landscapes, as well as the unique Haciendas selected to serve as the setting of the story, will allow the audience to be immediately transported to the universe of *Like Water For Chocolate*.

Portraying the entire period was challenging, not only in the selection of locations. The costumes, by Amanda Cárcamo, were based on wool garments worn at the time of the Mexican revolution in which the story takes place.

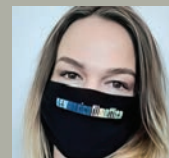
*Like Water For Chocolate* will show that tradition is not always the best path. Our protagonists Tita de la Garza and Pedro Muzquiz are two souls in love who cannot be together due to deep-rooted family traditions. Tita will be forced to navigate between the destiny dictated by her family and her fight for love through magical colors and flavors, as we accompany her in the place where she finds her greatest refuge: the kitchen.

*Like Water For Chocolate* is the first television series adaptation of the original novel of the same name by Esquivel. It is directed by Julián de Tavira and Ana Lorena Pérez Ríos and executive produced by Salma Hayek Pinault, José Tamez and Siobhan Flynn from Ventanarosa Productions; Sharon Levy, Lisa Fahrenholt and Flavio Morales on behalf of Endemol Shine North America; Alejandro Rincón, Jerry Rodriguez and Clara Machado, as well as Manuel Vargas, who supervises the physical production, for Endemol Shine Boomdog; and Mariano Cesar, Mônica Albuquerque and Anouk Aarón on behalf of Warner Bros. Discovery.

### Killing Faith To Begin Production In New Mexico

New Mexico Film Office director Amber Dodson has announced that the feature film *Killing Faith* will begin filming in and around Santa Fe beginning in January.

*Killing Faith* is written and directed by Ned Crowley and features the acting talents of Guy Pierce (*LA Confidential*), Dewanda Wise (*The Harder They Fall*), and Tim Roth (*Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*). Triple Seven Pictures, a previously New York-based production company that has relocated to New Mexico, is providing locations and production services for this project. Zori Davidkova and Wes Hager are the producers for Choice Films while on location in Santa Fe.



Amber Dodson

*Killing Faith* takes place in the summer of 1859. A widowed physician reluctantly agrees to take a recently freed slave and her mysterious Caucasian daughter on a five-day journey through the West to find a faith healer in a distant town. The woman believes her daughter is possessed. The doctor believes she carries The Sickness. Either way, the fact remains that every living thing the girl touches mysteriously dies.

The production will employ over 100 New Mexicans—approximately 45 as background talent, 60 resident crew members, and five principal actors.

## Feedback From Foul Mouth, Elite Media, Grey NY and Tilt

Continued from page 17



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

1) We started Foul Mouth Creative eight months ago. Early on, in some existential panic of wtf-are-we-doing, someone told us “You can’t back out until you fail spectacularly.” We’ve failed at many things so far, but none have been particularly notable or spectacular. Risks are worth it, in business and in creative. There’s something comforting in letting yourself fail. It’s not that scary. And as it turns out, the wins really do overshadow the suck.

5) Foul Mouth Creative is one of the 1% of women-owned agencies. We prioritize working with diverse voices and talent. Actually, that’s false. It’s not some bullshit “prioritize, yada yada buzzy diversity”. We exclusively work with diverse talent. Entirely. So many shops spout off DEI goals, but behind the scenes, deadlines and demands often lead to defaulting to traditional talent who have the proven work and resume because it’s the easier path. We purposefully build in time monthly to make connections with a diverse creative village. Networking, baby.



**Chris Crawford**  
**Chief Creative Officer**  
**Elite Media**

3) We have invested in bringing in talent to help strengthen our team and take our agency to the next level. As a result, we have closed some gaps and brought better, more innovative ideas to our clients. Internally, our staff doesn’t need to feel like they need to have all of the answers; rather, they can tap our internal team of experts to get strategic guidance and input on our work products. Furthermore, the additional people-power has increased our output, promoted better collaboration, and allowed people to step into new leadership roles. Investing in our staff is a critical component of our success, and we’re constantly thinking about new opportunities to invest in people so that they bring their best to the table.

6) We are thrilled to have worked with American Family Insurance on their ‘Life’s Better’ brand refresh campaign, where we unveiled the next visual iteration of their iconic red roof in 3D. The red roof has been American Family Insurance’s symbol of protection, safety, and inspiration for over 60 years, and this campaign allowed it to set itself apart and creatively redefine itself as a challenger brand in a highly competitive industry. We learned that risks can pay off. The campaign has seen great results after its initial release, and the team is hard at work thinking about how to bring the red roof to life in new ways.



**Thiago Cruz**  
**Chief Creative Officer**  
**Grey NY**

1) The power of making ‘til we make it. At Grey we’ve been really focusing on the iterative nature of the creative process. We believe that only by making a ton of work, and actively trying to learn and improve with each one, we’ll be able to create meaningful and sustainable change on the quality of our work in 2024.

2) I’m curious to see how the conversation will evolve in terms of the legalities and other more practical and logistical questions around the use of AI-generated content. I think everyone agrees that it’s an incredible tool for the creative process, but we still need to understand how to navigate its usage in the real world.

3) We’re completely revamping the creative side of our Social capabilities at Grey. We’re in the process of recruiting for a new Head of Social, as well as exploring more modern ways to approach social content production for 2024.



**Shanky Das**  
**Co-founder & Chief Creative Officer**  
**Tilt**

1) It’s that the clutter of content out there is more confusing than ever before. That addiction to content, and types of content, is greater than ever in history. Binging on content is not something few of us, it’s become second nature and we do it unconsciously. Which means whatever we produce needs to not only stand out, but be binge-worthy as well.

2) It’s going to be a messy. Management consulting companies, tech companies and the like will want to drive AI as much as they can and will probably make it easier for clients to get volume content. The downside? Storytelling will suffer. Memorability will suffer. Quantity over quality will be the norm. Meanwhile, creative agencies will be left with the challenge of delivering quality content at scale. Coming up with great stories and crafting them in the right way is hard enough. Add speed and volume to that and it just makes everything that much more challenging.

5) We consciously make sure our HR team provides us and helps us maintain a fair with a ratio balance of various genders in leadership positions. Same goes for ensuring all genders have equal training and progress opportunities. This year, we’re expanding our diversity outlook and looking at an even more formal DEP program to ensure we’re considering and are exposed to more than what we’ve done so far.

Continued on page 18



## Big Spaceship, Deutsch NY

Continued from page 17



**Cedric Devitt**  
Chief Creative Officer  
Big Spaceship

1) In an extremely fragmented world where people are consuming content and experiences through nonlinear journeys, and where loyalty is fleeting, it's becoming increasingly more difficult for brands to strike a chord with consumers. Digital connectivity has enabled people to become more dimensionalized, because they have more

freedom to explore and express themselves in new channels and through new formats.

To resonate, you need to drill down deeper and activate your brand in an authentic way against a multitude of micro-communities. Speaking to your core audience — who loves you — will have an outsized impact on your brand.

AI will continue to be invaluable in pinpointing and understanding the real-time landscape. But, hold tight, humans — you're not off the hook. When it comes to crafting narratives that ignite meaningful conversations, AI takes a back seat, and human creativity will still reign supreme. It's a dance between the technological precision of AI and the creative finesse of human intervention that sets the stage for the future of brand engagement.

2) 2024 will be the year where we see peak content creation and velocity will continue to be the key to unlocking connections for your brand on social media. To be successful, we will need to move faster than ever before and make more content than ever before. But content budgets, due to inflation, will continue to be flat. So, we will be forced to find new models and new ways of working and new narrative structures to connect with consumers. Expect to see a shift away from celebrities and influencers and toward micro-influencers to activate your most passionate fans.



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

1) The most relevant lessons I've learned, or should I say that have been reinforced, are change is constant and expect the unexpected — always. 2023 saw an exponential growth in technology and adaption into workflows and it's only going to move faster and faster. 2024 looks to be an exciting ride I cannot wait to see all the new and interesting ways we and clients embrace the constant changes and create amazing work.

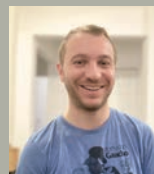
2) Content creation will continue to grow and change — especially as AI becomes more the norm in workflows. Clients will continue to demand more — quicker & cheaper, quicker & cheaper, quicker & cheaper. But with new tools at our disposal, let's make sure we pay attention to the legalities, while we also ensure that craft and quality of output do not have to be the sacrificial lamb on the altar of expediency. 2024 is gonna be an exciting ride.

5) We have always been conscious of diversity & inclusion as well as gender pay disparity. As part of a leadership team that is headed by a woman and is comprised largely of women, we are keenly aware of and sensitive to these issues and are always pushing to ensure our policies are fair and equitable to all. To successfully reflect today's world, we need to ensure there is meaningful representation on all sides of the table. We strive to ensure select partners with similar beliefs.

6) LOLLOL. By nature, every production poses challenges and half the fun and satisfaction is running toward those challenges and finding clever ways to solve them. As a producer, I learn something new on every project as no "opportunity" ever presents itself the same way twice. It's what makes the job so exciting and fresh.

Continued on page 19

## Sound Designer/Mixer Dean Metherell Joins Sonic Union



Dean Metherell

Sonic Union has brought sound designer/mixer Dean Metherell aboard its NY team. He most recently served as an audio engineer with TA2 Sound + Music in Toronto.

Born in Canada but raised in Southern California, Metherell decided at the age of 17 that he had enough of the good weather in SoCal and returned to his frigid hometown of Toronto. After studying audio engineering both in Toronto and Glasgow, he spent a decade working at some of the top audio post facilities in Canada, engineering on hundreds of ad campaigns, audiobooks, podcasts, and TV series. For his first project with Sonic Union, Metherell was tapped to mix the viral "Arnold Intelligence" campaign out of Orchard Creative.

In his free time he has been involved in community radio, formerly helping run Toronto Radio Project, which was named North America's best online radio station by Mixcloud. He is also a collage artist whose work has been featured in galleries, print media, album artwork and more.

## Wolffington To Preside Over Guild of Music Supervisors

The Guild of Music Supervisors has set its board of directors and leadership lineup. Lindsay Wolffington (*To All the Boys* franchise) is the new president of the Guild, with Heather Guibert (*The Americans*, *VEEP*), taking on the role of VP.

Serving on the board of directors alongside Wolffington and Guibert consists of Joel C. High, Jonathan Leahy, Howard Paar, Todd Porter, Aminé Ramer, Jennifer Smith, Robin Urdang, Andrea von Foerster, and Madonna Wade-Reed. Leahy and Urdang are newcomers to the board.



Guibert, Wolffington

Next on the calendar for the organization is their 14th annual Guild of Music Supervisors Awards. The ceremony will take place on March 3 at the Wilmet Theater in Los Angeles. The awards were established to honor the craft of music supervision across film, television, video games, documentaries, advertising, trailers, and the role of music supervisors in original songs for film and TV.

## ALIBI Goes Back To "Old School Rap" For Production Music

ALIBI Music is going back to "Old School Rap" with its latest production music release. The new album—14 royalty-free tracks, plus stems and alt versions—features full male and female lyrical rap, as well as authentic production techniques such as sampling, chopping and turntable scratching. Time traveling to the iconic '80s and '90s, "Old School Rap" blends nostalgia and authenticity in three fresh takes, with each producer/rapper pairing bringing a different vibe.



"Old School Rap"

Producer Jason Szklarek and up-and-coming female rapper/writer Remedy Da Franchise put their spin on two of the album's tracks. "Are We Clear" was inspired by Wu Tang, Queen Latifah and TLC, while "Get Busy" has a party vibe reminiscent of Salt-N-Pepa.

Longtime ALIBI collaborators Thomas Donovan and hip-hop artist/writer The Audible Doctor took on eight of the new album's tracks: "Never Stopping," "The Wickedest," "Brightest Lights," "Streets Is Real," "Keep It Going," "Party Machine," "Street Moves" and "Bout to Bring It."

Finally, the tracks "I'm the Man," "Gone Get It," "House Party" and "We Came to Play" were produced by Jazzelicious and performed by artist/rapper King G. Jazzelicious, who grew up in the early days of breakdancing, house parties and rap battles, was inspired by the unique energy specific to the party anthem era of '80s and '90s hip-hop, with artists like Run DMC, LL Cool J, Beastie Boys, Biz Markie, Slick Rick and others. To keep his sound authentic, he used vintage drum machines and samples he had been collecting in his library for years.

Previous Jazzelicious work includes "The Tao of Groove," "The Bright Wild" and "Orb Roybison" for Groove Gravy Records, and he was also a composer on the TV series *Beyblade Burst*.

## Observations From Majority, Fancy LLC, TBWA\Chiat\Day LA

Continued from page 18



**Nicolò Giarrano**  
Creative Director  
Majority

1) Trust your gut. You've spent your whole life honing your taste, your point of view. Don't assume it's irrelevant. In the specific lies the universal. If it means something to you, it will mean something to others.

2) Pretty sure we're going to see this new cool thing: real-life nft's, formerly known as "things."

4) We're past the point where the idea can just be "it's AI!" it's another tool in the belt. Think of a great idea, and if AI, AR or some great new tech can help bring it to life, great. But the best ideas are singular, simple, and easy to understand. Don't let technology unnecessarily muddy the story of the idea.

A lot of wonderful ideas use AI, but the audience doesn't even know it.



**Katie Keating**  
Co-Founder/Co-Chief Creative Officer  
Fancy LLC

2) I think we will see brands that had previously had tunnel vision for transaction-based advertising embrace brand-building. They're starting to realize that in a world where everything can be copied and commodified, building deep and meaningful relationships with consumers is the only way toward long-term brand loyalty and growth. And I hope that extends to brands building authentic connections with a certain affluent, outspoken, and powerful (over 25% of the country) group: Women over 40.

5) Fancy is 100% women-owned, operated, and driven. And we've been that way since day one in 2011. As important to us as the work we create on behalf of our clients is creating an environment that works for the way women want to work. We've had a distributed workforce for over ten years, we create bespoke solutions for family leave, and we assemble teams on a case-by-case basis to maximize opportunities for passions and skillsets to align with client objectives. We know that when women can fit the job into their life (as opposed to their life into whatever's left after their job), the work is more inspiring, and the experience is more fulfilling for everyone. We're not doing this because we have to, because the industry is shifting, because the world is watching. We work this way because it's the only way we can. It's who we are.



**Jeff O'Keefe**  
Creative Director  
TBWA\Chiat\Day LA

1) This year I put a lot of thought into how I can be a better manager – inspiring teams, ensuring that they feel the engagement and ownership that's so key to the making of great work. I was lucky enough to recently attend TBWA's Master Gunners training program in Madrid, with creative directors from around the world. I was struck by an idea we discussed that, as a CD, your job is mostly about relationships. How do people feel around you? Do they want to come toward you or away from you? I love the simplicity of that.

We have a new program at Chiat called Boat Building, where creative leaders choose a topic and lead a discussion on it with the creative department. I decided to lead a session on brand manifesto writing, having just come out of a weekend of work on a new business pitch. As I built the presentation, I realized I had more and more to say on the subject—more actionable tips, more watchouts. Even stuff I was unsure of, or felt was subjective, I left in, so we could talk about it. It was a great session – lively, fun. I could feel, in the room, this desire for practical, applicable knowledge.

If you've been in the trenches long enough as a creative, you have a lot of wisdom to share. I think we all need to be sharing it more. I'll be looking for opportunities to do more of that in the new year.

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## SHOOT

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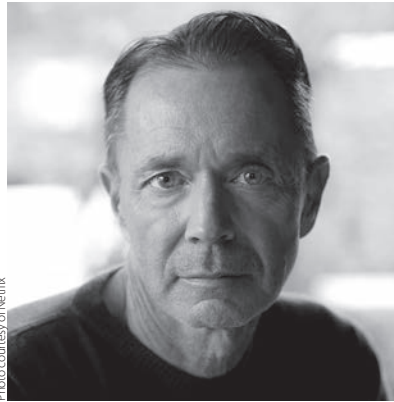
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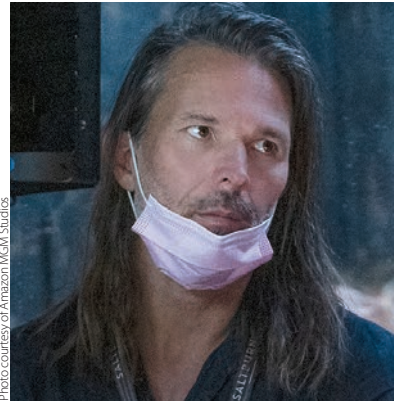




**Matthew J. Lloyd**



**Tobias Schliessler**



**Linus Sandgren**



**Cristina Dunlap**

## Lensing *Origin*, *Rustin*, *Saltburn* and *American Fiction*

*DPs Lloyd, Schliessler, Sandgren and Dunlap shed light on their work, directorial collaborators*

**By Robert Goldrich**

One cinematographer took on a feature which is now generating Oscar buzz, thus continuing what's been a fruitful collaborative relationship with writer-director Ava DuVernay

Another DP embraced a return engagement with director George C. Wolfe, also on a movie that's considered an Academy Award contender.

Our third cinematographer connected for the first time with writer-director Emerald Fennell on a film that too is in the awards season conversation.

And our next DP came together with a first-time director, Cord Jefferson, who also wrote the movie which won the People's Choice Award at the Toronto International Film Festival, an honor that has a history of foreshadowing the Oscars.

Here are insights from lensers Matthew J. Lloyd, ASC, CSC on *Origin* (Neon); Tobias Schliessler, ASC on *Rustin* (Netflix); Linus Sandgren, ASC, FSF on *Saltburn* (Amazon MGM Studios); and Cristina Dunlap on *American Fiction* (Amazon MGM Studios).

### **Matthew J. Lloyd, ASC, CSC**

While *Origin* is a project to which he became deeply committed, Lloyd was captivated by it well before then—sight unseen. The magnet drawing him in initially was its writer-director DuVernay. Lloyd explained that “getting to know her professionally and becoming dear friends over the years, I had no doubt that whatever she wanted to do is what we were going to do. If you're blessed with

one of these relationships in a lifetime, you're doing pretty well.”

Lloyd had first worked with DuVernay on the television side—lensing *Colin in Black and White*, and episodes of *DMZ*.

Now on the feature front with *Origin*, Lloyd served not only as DP but also co-executive producer. *Origin* chronicles the remarkable life and work of Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson (played by Academy Award nominee Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor) as she investigates the genesis of injustice and uncovers a hidden truth that affects us all. DuVernay and Lloyd teamed to create powerful cinematic images from the stories that Wilkerson brought to light in her non-fiction book “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents,” as well as tragic events of her personal life—the death of her husband and shortly thereafter her mother—which framed her writing. The result is a film that's a portrait of grief and healing—both personally and in the world.

Lloyd recalled DuVernay first reaching out to him for *Origin* through “Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents.” She told him about and then sent him the book, which he read immediately—twice. “Maybe 10 months later a script arrived which was absolutely stunning,” said Lloyd. The script reflected DuVernay having developed a rapport with Wilkerson, noted Lloyd, and then harnessing her journey of writing the book, taking a deep dive into the legacy of stories that are the foundation of its thesis.

That thesis traces injustice and persecution to a caste system, a hierarchy

placing some groups over others—as it exists now and historically in India, in the U.S. relative to the disadvantaged such as Blacks, and dating back in part to Nazi Germany with the systematic killing of Jews. Wilkerson sees these travesties as being connected—not a function of race or religion but rather a caste system in which people are treated as lower forms of life. Wilkerson pinpointed the Third Reich, for example, as being inspired by Jim Crow laws which disenfranchised and persecuted Blacks in the U.S. Jim Crow helped Nazis in turn to make an argument for and to craft legal discrimination in Germany against Jews.

The caste thesis prompted DuVernay and Lloyd to look at its impact on the film industry. “Hierarchy is innate to the human experience,” observed Lloyd who noted that these deep systematic dynamics addressed in Wilkerson's book manifest themselves in the movie business. Films in America, related Lloyd, are often made in “incredibly diverse cosmopolitan places—L.A., New York, Atlanta, Chicago,” cities made up of people from all over the world, from all walks of life. Yet monolithic hiring practices yield a predominantly white male workforce. Additionally, roles are often defined in such a way that leads to a totem pole hierarchy.

For *Origin*, DuVernay and Lloyd sought to eliminate hierarchy on the set. Particularly for a project like *Origin* calling for nimble shooting by varied artists spanning the U.S., Germany and India in just 37 days, DuVernay reasoned that a new lensing philosophy needed to be ad-

opted. Images from multiple cameras and their respective teams had to be regarded as equally important across the board. A hierarchy with labels like 1st and 2nd unit or A/B/C/D cameras is not conducive to that. These rankings nurture self-importance for some and a lack of self-worth for others. This can deflate the contributions of some people lower down on the food chain, and can adversely impact the behavior of crew members toward one another. For *Origin*, the objective was to create images with multiple cameras that all carried the same weight, visually and emotionally. This fostered teamwork and an equal sense of belonging and purpose for more people.

DuVernay decided to shoot *Origin* on 16mm film. When she first mentioned that to Lloyd, he thought it would be for part of the movie, likely in Germany for which dramatic scenes included a horrifying public book burning in 1933. However, DuVernay affirmed that she wanted to go 16mm for the entire feature. Surprised at first, Lloyd quickly saw the rationale, observing that DuVernay selected the film format that was most suitable for her process and the overall movie, which had a preponderance of long takes and would benefit from a filmic feel.

Lloyd deployed the classic Arriflex 416 16mm camera on *Origin*. At this point, the camera is at least 15 years old but, said Lloyd, was “built so well with exacting engineering.” For the lion's share of *Origin*, Lloyd paired the ARRI cameras with Cooke S4 16mm lenses. Also utilized for choice sequences were Canon 16mm

zoom lenses.

What stands out for Lloyd on *Origin* was the chance to get to watch DuVernay, “someone whom I consider a great American artist, operating at the peak of her game—intellectually, creatively...for the entirety of the process, from start to finish.” He added that with DuVernay, there is “a sense of singular vision being brought to the film.”

## Tobias Schliessler, ASC

Schliessler embraced the chance to work again with director George C. Wolfe. They first collaborated on *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, a 2020 release which earned five Oscar nominations, winning for costume design and make-up & hair styling. The reunion of Wolfe and Schliessler came on *Rustin*, which is now generating buzz as an Academy Award contender, including most notably for Colman Domingo, star in *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom*, whose performance in *Rustin* as civil rights activist Bayard Rustin has garnered rave reviews. Rustin served as organizer of the 1963 March on Washington where Dr. Martin Luther King delivered his historic “I Have A Dream” speech.

Schliessler shared, “Working with a director like George is a dream for any cinematographer, as he has such an extensive knowledge of the material and a very clear vision for how he wants the movie to look. For *Rustin*, George wanted the audience to feel completely immersed in the film without being distracted by an aesthetic that felt too ‘period’ or overly stylized. We let the color tones of the sets, costumes, makeup, and hair define the era, while keeping our lighting classic and natural.

“One theme that influenced our lighting set ups was that of Rustin’s sexuality and living as a gay man in the 1960s. George wanted to visually convey what it would have felt like to have to hide who you are to society and literally stay in the shadows. This intention influenced how we lit not only what we saw on camera, but also what we didn’t.”

Schliessler continued, “Another aspect to George’s process that I love is how he treats the camera like another character, always making decisions that serve the scene. Sometimes we shot handheld



Photo by Atsushi Nishina/courtesy of Neon

## Jon Bernthal (I) and Aunjanue Ellis-Taylor in a scene from *Origin*

to feel the kinetic energy of Bayard and his volunteers, whereas other times, we stayed still, taking in the story as a voyeuristic fly on the wall.”

Schliessler deployed the ARRI Alexa Mini LF camera on *Rustin*, along with ARRI DNA LF Primes. “We chose the Alexa Mini LF as the large format allowed us to use wider lenses (29mm, 35mm) for intimate close-ups of the actors without distorting their faces,” explained Schliessler. “We used the DNAs as they are made out of vintage glass and give a slightly softer look with beautiful contrast.”

In the overall scheme of things, Schliessler shared, “My hope is that *Rustin* inspires every person to be a peaceful, nonviolent advocate against the racial and sexual discrimination that is far too prevalent in our world today.”

## Linus Sandgren, ASC, FSF

Among Sandgren’s close-knit working relationships is one with director Damien Chazelle which has yielded Best Cinematography Oscar and BAFTA Film Award wins for *La La Land*. Additionally Sandgren received a pair of ASC Award nominations—for *La La Land* as well as Chazelle’s *First Man*. Now Sandgren finds himself once again in the awards season conversation but this time for his first collaboration with writer-director Emerald Fennell—the darkly comic psychological thriller *Saltburn*.

*Saltburn* marks Fennell’s second turn as a feature director, the first being *Promising Young Woman* which garnered her a DGA Award nomination as well as three Oscar nods—for Best Picture, Director and Original Screenplay. She won the

Academy Award in the latter category.

Sandgren met Fennell through Margot Robbie whom he lensed in Chazelle’s *Babylon*. Robbie served as a producer on *Saltburn* as well as this year’s box office smash, *Barbie* (in which she also starred).

That connection with Robbie ultimately resulted in Sandgren being sent Fennell’s script for *Saltburn*, which the cinematographer affirmed as being “brilliant,” adding that “when she writes, she writes very visually,” to the point where he could feel a number of camera moves and shots in her descriptions.

*Saltburn* centers on a strange, reserved, isolated, slightly pitiable middle-class Oxford student, Oliver Quick, portrayed by Barry Keoghan. He struggles to fit in with the upper crust until his personal story of adversity—coupled with seemingly unplanned circumstances—result in his successfully infiltrating the world of the decadently wealthy with an invite to spend the summer at the family estate of an affluent, handsome, popular classmate, Felix Catton (Jacob Elordi) who’s befriended him. There Quick meets an odd blend of characters, including Catton’s parents (Rosamund Pike and Richard Grant). A chain of bizarre, shocking events unfolds with varied revelations revealed along the way.

Sandgren was drawn to Fennell’s point of view, observing that she deeply understands story and knows why she’s telling it. That enabled the director and DP to craft a visual language for *Saltburn* which takes us on a journey into intoxicating wealth that turns unsettling, profoundly dark and erotic. Sandgren noted that Fennell metaphorically evoked—and he embraced—the feel of “vampires” to reflect in

part the story and visual tone of the film. Aristocracy, related Sandgren, can work kind of like vampires replete with the blood-sucking dynamic. He characterized *Saltburn* as a film that “takes place in the real world” yet feels like it is “metaphorically a vampire movie,” capturing the Gothic vibe of the estate, even in one scene deploying black silhouettes against a window, figuratively paralleling the tone of the silent German Expressionist horror film, *Nosferatu*.

Fennell and Sandgren opted to shoot on 35mm film, deploying the Panavision Panaflex XL2 camera and spherical Primo lenses. Film provided a texture and different way of seeing colors, their richness—particularly playing with blacks and reds—that lent itself to the story, observed Sandgren. The lenses were sharp but not too sharp, conveying some flaws that helped visually make the film what the cinematographer characterized as “naturalistically poetic.”

The DP related, “I learned a lot from Emerald. I may have shot more films than she directed yet she’s more brilliant than I am as a filmmaker. She thinks so smartly and is so precise about driving story, about driving the next step.” Sandgren observed that she creates fertile ground for emotions and visual expression. “Her voice is so strong.”

## Cristina Dunlap

*American Fiction* marked the first time that cinematographer Cristina Dunlap collaborated with writer-director Cord Jefferson. The feature was also the first directed by Jefferson. Both these firsts have made a lasting impression, starting in September at the Toronto International Film Festival where *American Fiction* won the People’s Choice Award, a perennial bellwether in the Oscar race. Historically the Audience Award, voted on by festival attendees, has almost always translated into Academy Award contention. In fact, every People’s Choice winner at the Toronto fest since 2012 has gone on to earn a Best Picture Oscar nomination.

When she first read the *American Fiction* screenplay, Dunlap remembered thinking, “This is one of those scripts that can change your life if you get it. It was the best script I think I ever read.”

*Continued on page 22*



# Lensing American Fiction

Continued from page 21

Based on the 2001 novel "Erasure" by Percival Everett, *American Fiction* confronts our culture's obsession with reducing people to outrageous stereotypes. Jeffrey Wright stars as Thelonious "Monk" Ellison, a professor of English literature. He is a respected yet frustrated novelist, fed up with the establishment profiting from "Black" entertainment that relies on tired and offensive tropes. To prove his point, Monk uses a pen name to write an outlandish "Black" book of his own which propels him to a lucrative publishing deal, the promise of a feature film adaptation—and in the process into the heart of hypocrisy and the madness he

a flowing movement of the camera to capture the performances of an expert ensemble cast. Dunlap said that a camera moving through the actors, allowing their performances to reveal more about the characters, lent itself to the story as it unfolded. She also enjoyed the flexibility to be in tighter on the actors as needed, particularly for "Monk" whom his brother describes as being "unknowable." The camera helps us to know more, observed Dunlap.

The Thelonious "Monk" moniker—shared with the famed jazz pianist and composer—also had Jefferson and Dunlap aspiring to attain a sort of jazz vibe and related rhythm through camera movement.



Photo by Claire Elger/courtesy of MGM-Orion

## Erika Alexander (l) and Jeffrey Wright in *American Fiction*

claims to disdain.

Dunlap saw *American Fiction* as multi-faceted—a satire on one hand, a beautiful family story on the other, with elements of surrealism figuring into the mix. She and Jefferson "talked a lot about how we would make it tonally cohesive while veering off in these different directions." She wound up with the luxury of eight weeks of prep in Boston, conducting much location scouting, blocking scenes on location, and working with production designer Jonathan Guggenheim to find locations that would benefit the story.

Dunlap went with the ARRI Alexa Mini LF camera paired with BLACK-WING7 lenses by TRIB7. She and Jefferson opted for a 2.35:1 crop which is typical of anamorphic lensing—even though spherical lenses were deployed on *American Fiction*. Dunlap reasoned that the anamorphic framing afforded her more room horizontally, facilitating

Dunlap's cinematography elevates the dramedy, propelled in part by a penchant for translating emotion and comedy into brave images—as well as capturing the Massachusetts landscapes, helping the settings take on a character of their own.

Dunlap greatly valued the esprit de corps among cast and crew on *American Fiction*. While it was not the easiest shoot from logistical and other standpoints—with the process moving at "a crazy pace"—the workplace remained nurturing. Dunlap felt "a genuine love and respect for everyone I worked with on this film." She went on to affirm that "finding those people who are going to support your vision, support you as an artist and a collaborator" makes all the difference. And her colleagues throughout had a knack for maintaining their composure in the most challenging situations. Dunlap said she would love to collaborate again with anyone involved in this movie.

## Getting Inventive For *The Inventor*

*The Inventor*, a stop motion and animation feature film that delves into the life story of Leonardo da Vinci, was edited and graded in Blackmagic Design's DaVinci Resolve Studio with other aspects of postproduction composited in Fusion Studio.

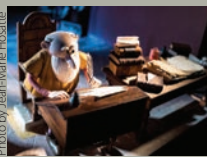


Photo by Jean-Marie Houtre

*The Inventor*

Co-written and directed by Oscar-nominated screenwriter Jim Capobianco, *The Inventor* has a cast which includes Stephen Fry, Daisy Ridley, Marion Cotillard, and Matt Berry.

For the film Capobianco turned to Foliascope, an independent animation studio in France. Foliascope CEO Ilan Urroz and his team embarked on an extensive research mission to faithfully recreate da Vinci's legacy. Detailed archives and da Vinci's own drawings were used to build sets, machines and accessories. Puppets, central to the film's unique blend of stop motion and cartoon animation, were meticulously crafted and designed.

"Films of this scale and complexity represent a massive investment in both time and money, with some projects lasting upwards of 24 months, during which multiple stages of production and post are undertaken simultaneously, mixing both offline and online formats. And all that requires us to distribute the work amongst multiple collaborators," explained Urroz who added, "We mix all sorts of techniques to tell our stories, and in DaVinci Resolve Studio, we have found an ally to help us do just that."

DaVinci Resolve Studio was the ideal software for managing all aspects of stop motion editing within a single tool, eliminating the need for roundtripping between multiple applications. This allowed Foliascope to carry out editing, VFX, color grading, sound and export tasks in parallel throughout the production.

Furthermore, Foliascope expanded its workflow to encompass audio mixing and mastering with DaVinci Resolve Studio's Fairlight tools. This included dialogue, foley, and the film's original soundtrack, composed by Alex Mandel.



Avid Media Composer

## ENVY Extends Partnership with Avid

Postproduction facility ENVY has signed a multi-year subscription and support contract with media systems integrator Jigsaw24 Media to extend its relationship with Avid® and supply its facilities with Avid's state-of-the-art video editing and storage capabilities.

The deal will provide ENVY's five London facilities with the latest Avid Media Composer | Enterprise™ video editing software and Avid NEXIS® F-Series storage engines. It will enable ENVY editing teams to increase efficiency through powerful, time-saving AI-driven tools, collaborate from anywhere, and gain the flexibility to scale their offering as demand increases.

## Dr. Kiesel Named SVP of ARRI's Business Unit Lighting

Dr. Raphael Kiesel has taken over the management of ARRI's lighting division in Munich as its SVP. In this role, he is responsible for the entire business unit. Dr. Kiesel reports directly to Dr. Matthias Erb, chairman of the executive board at ARRI.

Dr. Kiesel previously held the responsibility for global quality management at ARRI. In this capacity, he has systematically refined quality management at the company.



Dr. Raphael Kiesel

Even before joining ARRI, Dr. Kiesel acquired a deep technical understanding combined with entrepreneurial thinking and international experience.

He spent time in the US., France, and China. During his time as a research assistant and department head at the Fraunhofer Institute IPT and Machine Tool Laboratory (WZL) at RWTH Aachen University, he completed his doctorate in mechanical engineering. At the same time, he completed an MBA at the Collège des Ingénieurs in cooperation with Siemens.

# A Mix Of New and Emmy-Nominated Fare



Photo by Doane Gregory/courtesy of Netflix



Photo by Andrew Cooper/courtesy of Netflix



Directors, DPs and editors reflect on *All the Light We Cannot See*, *Beef*, *Barry*, *Somebody Somewhere*

By Robert Goldrich



Photo by Toby Fleischman



Photo by Sandy Morris/courtesy of HBO



Photo courtesy of HBO



With the guild awards season fast approaching, we can expect as in years past a series of currently Emmy-nominated TV shows, telefilms and limited series to gain recognition as they retain eligibility for the ACE Eddie, Art Directors Guild Excellence in Production Design, ASC, VES, Golden Reel, Writers Guild and DGA Awards, among other competitions.

But there will also be new content in the running for guild honors—and next season's Emmy derby for that matter. And one of the high-profile entries in that mix is *All the Light We Cannot See*, a limited series which debuted on Netflix last month. Based on Anthony Doerr's Pulitzer Prize-winning book of the same title (adapted by writer Steven Knight), *All the Light We Cannot See* follows the story of a blind French girl named Marie-Laure (portrayed by newcomer Ari Mia Loberti, a first-time performer with limited eyesight in real life), and her father, Daniel LeBlanc (Mark Ruffalo), who flee German-occupied Paris with a legendary diamond to keep it from falling into the

hands of the Nazis during World War II. The series explores the worlds of Marie-Laure and Werner (Louis Hofmann), a German soldier, whose paths cross in occupied France. We find that these two characters on opposite sides of the war have a unifying bond—radio broadcasts they listened to as children featuring a professor who inspired them and provided a sort of sanctuary for their hearts and minds during tumultuous times.

Tobias Schliessler, ASC lensed *All the Light We Cannot See*. Last month at Camerimage, he and EP Shawn Levy, who directed all the episodes, earned a Golden Frog nomination in the TV series competition for their work on the show. *All the Light We Cannot See* marked Schliessler's second time working with Levy—their first collaboration being on the film *The Adam Project*.

Schliessler said that his collaborative process with Levy “starts by gathering and sharing visual references which help us get on the same page and acts as a guide for the project. On a location scout

or walking through of the sets, Shawn is amazing at knowing exactly what key shots he wants, which helps us early on in planning the lighting and where will be the best place for the camera.”

From a technical standpoint, Schliessler said that the biggest challenge posed by *All the Light We Cannot See* was “matching the lighting and interactive lighting in the scene where Werner runs through Saint-Malo to get to Marie as a night bombing is taking place. We shot this scene in three different places and two countries—first, in Budapest on an exterior stage set, part on location in Saint-Malo, and lastly in Villefranche-de-rourgue. Making it feel like it's all happening in one place and in one running sequence was definitely a challenge, but I think it turned out nicely and the audience can't tell.”

Schliessler added that being on the set of *All the Light We Cannot See* proved inspiring while underscoring the importance of learning from history. He cited

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From top left, clockwise: Ari Mia Loberti in *All the Light We Cannot See*; Ali Wong and Steven Yeun in a scene from *Beef*; *Barry* editor Franky Guttman, ACE; Bill Hader in a scene from *Barry*; *Somebody Somewhere* DP Shana Hagan, ASC; Jeff Hiller and Bridget Everett in a scene from *Somebody Somewhere*; and *Somebody Somewhere* director Lennon Parham.



## Editors Share Insights Into Their Work On *Beef* and *Barry*

Continued from page 23

working with actor Loberti as “a true inspiration,” noting that it was astonishing to see someone who never acted before “coming onto such a big project with so much poise and an incredible work ethic. It was impressive to see how she worked with limited sight, and also made me think about lighting in a different way, for example keeping my lights always as low as possible as her eyes are extremely sensitive. It was these little things that I never had to think about before which were a good lesson for me in adapting my work to meet the needs of others.

“Another takeaway,” continued Schlessler, “was just how important it is that we, as a society, continue to work towards peace. You’d think we’d learn from the horrific lessons of the past, and yet there is still so much conflict and suffering in our world. I hope audiences will take away from this film a little more compassion for people, and specifically children, who are victims of war.”

### Beef

Another Netflix limited series, *Beef*, may also figure prominently in the guild awards proceedings. Created by Lee Sung Jin (aka Sonny), *Beef* garnered 13 Emmy nominations. The series follows an epic, ever escalating feud-triggered by a single, off-the-charts road rage incident—between two strangers, Amy Lau portrayed by Ali Wong, and Danny Cho played by Steven Yeun. The twists and turns, while darkly entertaining, say a lot about our society, laying bare the rage, angst, ugliness and insecurities that have become so prevalent—but still managing to cast a cathartic ray of hope somehow reflecting the better side of human nature. Wong and Yeun are nominated for Leading Actress and Actor primetime Emmys.

Also among the Emmy nominees for *Beef* are editors Laura Zempel, ACE and Nat Fuller. They earned the nod for “Figures of Light,” the series finale. Zempel did the first assembly but had to leave to take on another project, with Fuller then coming in to take the episode over the finish line. The editors got to know each other during the course of the series, having a productive give-and-take during the entire season even though they only formally teamed on “Figures of Light.”



Photo courtesy of HBO

Sarah Goldberg (from left), Zachary Golinger and Bill Hader in *Barry*

Fuller said that by the time the last episode rolled around, he, Zempel and Sonny had done “so much work to get these characters to this place” that it seemed natural “to punch this ticket and drive this thing home in a meaningful way.”

Fuller added that by the time Amy and Danny are put in the wilderness in episode 10, viewers had seen “a crazy, zany drama” unfold between the characters. With “Figures of Light,” he said, it was time to “see what their connection really is,” to experience “the culmination of these two characters’ motivations.” Amy and Danny come together “in the middle of nowhere,” noted Fuller, and finally “have to face each other and themselves.”

Zempel shared that on occasion she is a bit “nervous” when working with writers/directors who can be “strict with the script sometimes.” But Sonny was open to new ideas, to building upon the script.” He was “very collaborative” throughout, including on “Figures of Light” which was the lone episode of *Beef* that he directed. Zempel felt that Sonny trusted her and Fuller to help tell this story.

For the duration of the series, Zempel and Fuller noted that they had to walk a fine line spanning action, drama, humor and emotions, with one beat informing the next. The finale, though, had a different variable, said Zempel, citing a surreal element as reflected in two crows talking to each other at the outset, setting the tone for what viewers are in for as our protagonists end up hallucinating. Brought on by the ingestion of some very wild elderberries, their drug trip brings a new dimension, lending what Zempel described as a “subtextual feeling that the

world around them is shifting,” setting the stage for when they seemingly swap bodies, with each in the other’s shoes for the first time, perhaps better understanding each other’s vulnerabilities—spanning the good, the bad and the ugly.

### Barry

Another pair of editors who are current Emmy nominees find themselves in guild awards season contention—Ali Greer, ACE and Franky Guttman, ACE. Greer won an editing Emmy last year for the *Barry* (HBO) episode titled “starting now.”

Fast forward to the new “now” and Greer and Guttman find themselves jointly nominated for an Emmy on the strength of the *Barry* series finale, “wow.” It’s one of 11 Emmy nominations captured by *Barry* in its final season—including for Outstanding Comedy Series and direction (for Hader on “wow”).

The editors felt a mix of professional and personal pressure during the fourth and final season of *Barry*. On the professional score, Greer shared, “There was a lot of pressure to wrap it up in a way that is satisfying, fun and engaging all at once.” Specifically for “wow,” Greer added that she and Guttman wanted to make “sure that the string of dramatic tension held tight throughout the whole episode” and that “the characters were still learning, growing, progressing even though it’s the last time we see them.”

Guttman concurred, acknowledging there was immense pressure to do everything possible so that the audience would be “really satisfied with that last time.”

On the personal score, Guttman was dealing that season with a roller coaster

of emotion marked by the passing of his father, two months later the joyous occasion of having a baby, then two months after that the death of a beloved family dog. He characterized the season as a bit of a struggle but his saving grace was Greer. He found solace in their “collaborative process,” the trust they have in each other, and her selfless willingness “to be there for me in that moment.”

Greer and Guttman also greatly value their collaborative bond with Hader as the series co-creator (with Alex Berg), star, director, writer and exec producer. “What Bill does that I don’t see often in directors is that he thinks about the shots in a dramatic way that I think is really helpful in the edit and for the storytelling in general,” observed Greer. “How does the shot convey an emotion that makes sense? He does it in such a simple way that is often overlooked. I love that he directs in that way, very emotion forward.” Thus Greer said that when culling through the footage, she often finds herself with “an emotional shot for an emotional moment.”

Guttman added that when he and Greer sit with Hader in the edit room, their process is centered on “What’s the story we’re trying to tell?” The level of commitment to that is intense, described by Guttman as “almost a meditative-like focus on the story.” That’s the priority, even if at times it means not including “great, funny scenes” and “moments that are really charismatic,” related Guttman. Everything has to serve the story.

On the Guild awards front, Greer and Guttman were individually nominated earlier this year for ACE Eddie Awards in recognition of their work on *Barry*—for the “starting now” and “7ION” episodes, respectively. Greer additionally has two prior Eddie nods—for episodes of *Portlandia* in 2018 and ‘19. Greer’s current Emmy nomination is her third—the first coming in 2021 for an episode of *Hacks*.

### Somebody Somewhere

With Peabody and Humanitas Prize nominations, *Somebody Somewhere* (Max) had made its mark—yet somehow it seems to have a lower profile than other acclaimed shows. On the Peabody website, the series is described as one that “can get easily lost in the flashy HBO

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## Reflections From Carmichael Lynch, BSSP, TMA, Humanaut

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**Marty Senn**  
**Chief Creative Officer**  
**Carmichael Lynch**

**1)** It's not a new lesson, but 2023 doubled-down on a simple observation for us: our best work works best. It sounds trivial, but the work we love the most as an agency is always the work that works best out in the world, too. Sometimes we try to outsmart our intuition (and it's certainly worthwhile to validate that intuition in any number of ways) but leaning hard into emotion and real connection always works best for us and our clients. Letting the fun we're having and the passion we feel show up in the work we're making keeps proving to move the needle for our clients more than anything else. That's where we've found our biggest wins, and how we're setting up for even more of them next year.

**2)** The crystal ball says the same thing as the writing on the wall: things will get a little weird in 2024. Good weird. Marketers, the smart ones at least, will wake up to the fact that their consumers (which is another word for people) are way weirder and more interesting than they've historically acknowledged. When "Everything Everywhere All At Once" wins the Oscar, Barbenheimer is a genuine double-feature, and Liquid Death continues its ascent, the only real way forward is creating work that's just as individual and layered and nuanced as the people we're all trying to connect with. It'd be weird not to.



**Robyn Tenenbaum**  
**Creative Director**  
**BSSP**

**1)** Small budgets don't have to mean bad creative. We did so much this year with challenging budgets—made really great pieces that weren't just highly creative, but incredibly impactful. We won a few creative effectiveness awards which arguably mean the most to our clients and did it without breaking the bank. More of that in 2024, please.

**2)** I'm a firm believer that in 2024 we will see even more influencer content and brand integration explode. Brands are finding new/clever ways to have influencers plug their products and people are quite literally buying it.

**4)** All the time. Experimenting with ChatGPT for writing assignments has been an interesting approach for me personally. I love to just plug things in and see what I can get out of it. Maybe I use some of it, maybe I don't. It's nice to play around with the technology. Also Midjourney. Our teams use this quite often for comping and design. We're just wrapping a pitch where one of the visual directions was a direct Midjourney output. I am utterly amazed by it.



**Harris Wilkinson**  
**Chief Creative Officer**  
**TMA (The Marketing Arm)**

**1)** The lesson I want to take into 2024 is this: while data can inform briefs and prove the work's efficacy, it can't replace the magic of that pen to paper moment when something new is created. People still respond on a purely visceral level to great, unexpected creative. That has nothing to do with analytics, and I hope it never does.

**3)** We're building out TMA's Resonance Connect Platform. It's a predictive tool that helps identify our audience's passions, and then we leverage our culture platforms like Gaming, Sports, Music, and Entertainment to find ways to connect with that audience on a deeper level, and deliver Cultural Resonance for our brands. The net of this tech and creative mash-up is that we bring bespoke solutions to our partners tailored to their specific needs, versus a traditional one-size-fits-all approach.

We're also working on Generative AI Platform integration across the agency by weaving GPT technology into our workflows, to increase efficiency and also the availability of data. And we're enabling image and video generation tools for our creative and production teams. That's all geared to help us produce high quality content at a faster rate. I want to repeat the "high quality" part again, because while everyone is using AI now, most of the outputs are pretty banal.



**Tommy Wilson**  
**Executive Producer/Head of Production**  
**Humanaut**

**1)** In 2023 we realized that we can apply our unique Humanaut production ethos and process to projects outside of our own creative agency sphere, generating revenue by partnering directly with outside brands and other entities as a production company and post house. We've spent nearly eight years growing what was a small in-house production team into a full-scale, full-service production department complete with back office staff, a 6,000 square foot stage and full postproduction team. Growing in parallel with the creative agency, we've developed a collaborative process that keeps the creative idea at the forefront of every project and emphasizes putting as much money in front of the camera as possible.

Our in-house creative/production relationship helps shape the creative from its earliest phases by putting contours around what's possible with the time and money allotted for production early on, fostering an empathetic relationship between high-level ideas and how to actually bring them to life. We've developed a sort of 'Creative Empathy' that serves the project first and removes a lot of the tension and ego found in many traditional agency/production company relationships. In 2024 we look forward to opening up our ethos and this offering to the rest of the advertising world, partnering directly with brands as well as select creative agencies that share our unique perspective to produce high-level campaigns from start to finish. We love the potential for collaboration!



# Killers of the Flower Moon

Continued from page 12

Exploring various actors for the pivotal role of Mollie, Lewis and Haynes found themselves gravitating back to Gladstone. A Zoom call was set up among Gladstone, Scorsese and DiCaprio, which laid the foundation for her being cast as Mollie.

Among other notable bits of indigenous casting was securing Tantoo Cardinal as Mollie's mother, Lizzie. Haynes worked with Cardinal in *Dances With Wolves*, and Lewis noted that Scorsese was well aware of Cardinal and was enamored with her performance in the film *Black Robe*.

But beyond performers who had already made their mark to one degree or another, Lewis and Haynes reached out to the community at large to discover native American talent. A big open casting call was initiated in Oklahoma, part of an

varying age to play a daughter of Ernest and Mollie over the years. That daughter was in fact portrayed by three indigenous girls cast by Haynes and Lewis.

Lewis and Haynes both felt gratified over their experience on *Killers of the Flower Moon*—and the final result. Haynes said that among the memorable takeaways she had was “seeing the celebration of indigenous talent on the red carpet at Cannes. That’s something we’ve never seen before.” She added that a story about indigenous women “is also something we don’t get to see very often.”

Lewis concurred, noting that the film carried a deep sense of purpose, telling “a painful, deeply important story of American history, a family of women.”

In addition to their shared Emmy nomination for *Godless*, Lewis and Haynes have individual Emmy nods. Lewis not



Photo by Melinda Sue Gordon/courtesy of Apple TV+

**Robert De Niro (l) and Leonardo DiCaprio in *Killers of the Flower Moon***

only won an Emmy for her casting on *Boardwalk Empire* but also *The Queen's Gambit* and *Angels in America*. She was additionally nominated for her work on *Wit*. Haynes has a total of three Emmy nominations—the other two being for the film *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and the miniseries *Into the West*.

The process initiated by these grassroots meetings proved successful. Haynes noted that ultimately *Killers of the Flower Moon* had 60-plus main indigenous characters in the final credits—only 14 of whom were actors she had previously worked with or cast before. All the other talent was discovered through the open call process and nurtured during the course of the film.

Haynes embraced the little challenges such as the passage of time which saw kids grow up. She, for instance, found girls of

only won an Emmy for her casting on *Boardwalk Empire* but also *The Queen's Gambit* and *Angels in America*. She was additionally nominated for her work on *Wit*. Haynes has a total of three Emmy nominations—the other two being for the film *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and the miniseries *Into the West*.

(This is the ninth installment of a 16-part series with future installments of *The Road To Oscar* slated to run in the weekly SHOOT>e.dition, The SHOOT Dailies and on SHOOTonline.com, with select installments also in print issues. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards gala ceremony. Nominations for the 96th Academy Awards will be announced on January 23, 2024. The 96th Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 10, 2024.)

## Shortlist Set For Visual Effects Oscar



Napoleon

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences unveiled the shortlist in the Best Visual Effects Oscar category.

Ten films remain in the running. The Visual Effects Branch Executive Committee determined the shortlist. All members of the Visual Effects Branch will be invited to view excerpts and interviews with the artists from each of the shortlisted films on Saturday, January 13, 2024. Branch members will vote to nominate five films for final Oscar consideration.

The films, listed in alphabetical order by title, are:

- The Creator*
- Godzilla Minus One*
- Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*
- Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*
- Mission: Impossible – Dead Reckoning Part One*
- Napoleon*
- Poor Things*
- Rebel Moon – Part One: A Child of Fire*
- Society of the Snow*
- Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*

Nominations voting begins on Thursday, January 11, 2024, and concludes on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

Nominations for the 96th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, January 23, 2024.

## Accenture Invests in Vū Technologies

Accenture (NYSE: ACN) has invested in Vū Technologies, a technology company specializing in virtual production and filmmaking. Vū helps companies create immersive, engaging experiences through a combination of real-time computer-generated imagery and live-action filming. Terms of the investment were not disclosed.

Vū has established a vast network of virtual studios across North America, producing memorable immersive environments and visual effects for companies



including Amazon, CBS Sports and Disney. Using advanced technologies such as real-time rendering, motion capture and virtual reality to seamlessly blend live-action footage and computer-generated content, Vū helps companies visualize and transform creative

production at pace and scale. Vū also uses a proprietary generative AI workflow tool called Vū.ai that augments pre-built virtual environments and designs workflows based on image and text prompting.

“Massive potential exists for companies to combine virtual production and state of the art technologies to create shared, immersive experiences for customers, employees, and other key stakeholders,” said David Treat, co-lead of Accenture’s Metaverse Continuum business group. “With technologies such as digital twin environment simulation, volumetric video capture and motion control robotics, Vū’s end-to-end capabilities can help our clients create powerful new experiences that attract and engage audiences.”

Dan Garrison, Accenture Song’s chief technology officer, added, “We always look for new ways to fuse creativity and technology at scale, to help clients navigate and accomplish transformational change. We believe Vū Technologies’ immersive studio network can help our clients and our people reach new levels of creativity and multifaceted storytelling in their efforts to engage relevant audiences.”

The investment was led by Accenture Ventures as part of its broader Project Spotlight initiative. Vū is the latest company to join Project Spotlight, an engagement and investment program focused on working with companies that create or apply disruptive enterprise technologies.

## Director And DP Perspectives On Somebody Somewhere

Continued from page 24

landscape populated by the likes of *Succession*, *Barry*, *The Last of Us* and *White Lotus*.” But Peabody refers to *Somebody Somewhere* as “a quiet gem.” The show’s focus is seemingly mundane, centered on the life of Sam (portrayed by Bridget Everett) who has returned to her small Kansas hometown as she grieves her sister’s death and works at an unfulfilling job, yet also finds salvation in a new friendship with a fellow outcast (Joel played by Jeff Hiller), in the music they make together and in the community they find.

The series has attracted such talent as cinematographer Shana Hagan, ASC who has been on board from season one on, and Lennon Parham who directed a pair of season two episodes. Season three is in the offing for both.

Hagan first established herself in the documentary realm, shooting such projects as *Generation Wealth* and *The Kingmaker* for director Lauren Greenfield; *63 Up* for Michael Apted; and *Breathing Lessons: The Life & Work of Mark O’Brien*, the Best Documentary Short Oscar winner directed by Jessica Yu.

Hagan then diversified into scripted work, becoming a camera operator on *Parks and Recreation* where she met director Paul Feig who reached out to her years later for *Welcome To Fletch*, needing a documentary-style operator to help do justice to the project’s mockumentary vibe. One of that show’s episodes co-starred Murray Hill, who went on to play Fred Rococo, soil scientist, professor and cabaret emcee in *Somebody Somewhere*.

Hagan credited Hill with putting her name in the mix for *Somebody Somewhere*, for which a portion of the pilot was shot by Jim Frohna prior to the COVID pandemic. When the prospect of resuming production eventually emerged, Frohna wasn’t available and a search was on for a DP. Hagan got the gig and has continued on ever since.

Hagan’s documentary sensibilities have served her well on *Somebody Somewhere*. She shared that the shooting approach is to let the acting performances dictate coverage. “We wanted to stay out of our own way,” she explained, the priority being to “let the performances shine.” Toward that end, smaller crews are deployed along with naturalistic light-

ing, and nimble handheld camerawork leaving room for potential improv. Hagan noted that *Somebody Somewhere* does not have a documentary look but rather is very observational, very present with the actors. The look is made “as inviting and intimate as possible” so as to help strip down scenes to their “emotional essence,” letting “the emotion and the characters play out.”

Perhaps best exemplifying the value of this approach—and a docu-honed instinct—is a moment in season one, episode three, when Sam gets on stage and lets loose. We witness a woman trying to rediscover her voice, then finding her voice and in a sense her place in the world. Her love of singing is rekindled. She then leaves the stage, kind of leans on a post and exhales. This wasn’t a planned moment but rather Everett continuing her portrayal of Sam

two, Parham realized that they worked together before when she was a day player in an episode of *Parks and Recreation* and Hagan served as a camera operator.

That was among several ties Parham had to *Somebody Somewhere* before joining the series. As an actor she had worked with Everett on *Lady Dynamite*. That show marked one of Everett’s first regular roles and Parham recalled feeling that they had a solid relationship from the get-go. From that point on, Parham followed Everett’s exploits and was excited to see that she had a new show on Max. Meanwhile Parham also had a bond with other *Somebody Somewhere* cast members—Hiller who plays Joel, and Mary Catherine Garrison who portrays Tricia. Parham and Hiller were improv buddies in New York. And Parham and Garrison were undergrad classmates in

decadent—not having to worry about my own performance and lines.” While she hopes in the big picture to continue directing, Parham remains enamored with acting and writing, quipping that she’s open to “all job requests.”

*Somebody Somewhere* meanwhile has answered a prime request for Parham who related that the show’s creative environment has been set by Everett, series creators Hannah Bos and Paul Thureen, and executive producer Carolyn Strauss. “They have crafted a safe place where people are free to do their best work,” said Parham, adding that “everybody is great at what they do. Everybody is there for the right reasons. It all follows Bridget’s lead, the amount she gives of herself in this performance.” Everett’s work, concluded Parham, inspires everyone to “really feel like I better be on my ‘A’ game.”

Still, this idyllic place is not immune from stark reality. Hagan shared that the death of Mike Hagerty, who portrayed Ed, Sam’s dad, took an emotional toll on everyone. He passed away shortly before production on season two got underway. Hagan recalled how generous and collaborative Hagerty was as an actor. She in particular remembers a rehearsal for a therapy scene in which Hagerty was playing with his wedding ring. It was a fidgety action that he didn’t continue during the take. Hagan asked the director, Robert Cohen, if she could talk to Hagerty about “doing this amazing thing with your ring” when the camera was rolling. He did and it ended up in the final cut. Later Hagan said that Hagerty thanked her for the suggestion relative to something he was doing without thinking. He was grateful for the attention to little details that are part of the collaborative process.

Hagan added that little details—nods to Hagerty—were part of season two. Sometimes they were hard to shoot emotionally but Hagan is grateful for how the writers handled Hagerty’s passing.

Like Parham, Hagan regards working on *Somebody Somewhere* as a privilege. In the big pictures, she observed, “There is so much darkness in television now. This show is a little bit of sunshine. It’s not about a lot. It’s about the little moments in life that are special and that make life great—the friendships and family stuff, the fun little things that make life, life.”



**Bridget Everett in a scene from *Somebody Somewhere***

and what she felt after exiting the stage. She was still in the moment, swept up in emotion. Instinctively, Hagan kept the camera rolling though she should have already stopped. “It was natural for me to follow and feel. She is performing and I am performing.” The moment that was so real and authentic made the final cut.

Hagan recalled Everett coming over to her right after and thanking her for “staying in the moment with me.” The chances are that many if not most DPs would have ended the scene on stage.

When Parham later came aboard to direct two episodes, she embraced Hagan’s work, admiring her sense of drama and comedy, a talent for facilitating improv and her knowing knack for having the camera “stay after the words were finished.” Upon meeting Hagan for season

acting school.

Parham was also struck in season one by a particular camera move made through a window with a pan to find a character. Parham recalled wanting to get a shot like that for an episode of *Bless This Mess* that she had directed. The proverbial “light bulb” went on for Parham who began to think that she was destined—or at least supposed—to direct *Somebody Somewhere*. So she reached out via email and within a week had a Zoom meeting with the *Somebody Somewhere* team, the only participant she knew being Everett. “The meeting felt like a homecoming, a reunion of sorts,” remembered Parham who wound up helming episodes five and six of season two last summer.

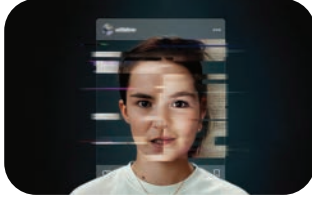
“This is the first thing I directed that I’m not in [as an actor] which feels kind of

Photo by Sandy Morris/courtesy of HBO



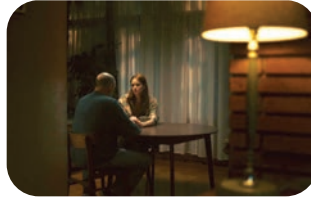
# BEST WORK OF THE YEAR

## Top Spots of the Year



Click images to view work

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



**Top row (l-r): Deutsche Telekom's "Ella"; Apple's "Waiting Room"; PAWS NY's *The Bridge*; Coca-Cola's "Masterpiece"; and Tubi's "Rabbit Holes"**  
**Bottom row (l-r): Canadian Down Syndrome Society's "Care Instructions--Wendy"; ArtHelps' "Breaking the Silence"; the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's "Talk Away The Dark"; Cadbury Milk Chocolate's "Speakerphone"; and The Unbanned Book Club/Little Free Library's "Flip Book."**

## SHOOT's Selections For The Best Work of 2023

*Mix includes a couple of creative AI endeavors, and fare marked by poignancy, humor and empathy*

### A SHOOT Staff Report

With 2023 about to fully enter the proverbial rear-view mirror, it's time for reflection on varied fronts, including assessing what work was among the year's most worthwhile creatively.

Determining any year's "best" is a highly subjective proposition so *SHOOT* staffers looked to at least narrow the field by first culling through our weekly Top Spots as well as our "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery entries throughout 2023. We then added to the field select pieces of work that might have fallen through the cracks and not earned weekly Top Spot (perhaps beaten out by another piece in a given week) or "Best Work" distinction--work which we had covered extensively in other stories during the course of the calendar year.

We also reviewed our quarterly Top Ten Tracks and VFX/Animation charts, ultimately choosing a Top Five from each.

So here are *SHOOT*'s selections for the Best Work of 2023 divided into: Top Spots; The Best Work You May Never See; and our Top Ten Music/Sound Tracks and Top Ten VFX/Animation entries.

### Top Spots of the Year

This time around, all five pieces of work in our rundown of the crème de la crème in 2023 were *SHOOT* Top Spots of

the Week

*SHOOT*'s pick for the number one content slot of 2023--a film in a Deutsche Telekom campaign from adam&eveBerlin--is apropos of a year in which artificial intelligence became a hot button topic. Directed by Sergej Moya via Berlin-based production company Tempomedia, this hero film raises awareness about the practice of sharenting, where parents share personal details and images of their children's lives online. From an image of a nine-year-old actress, called "Ella," springs the film's protagonist. With the help of the latest AI technology, a virtually aged deepfake of the girl was created. In the video, you can see how the "grown-up Ella" turns to her surprised parents in a message screened at a movie theater. She sends a warning from the future and confronts mother and father with the consequences of sharing pictures of their child on the internet. By carelessly sharing children's photos and other data, such as names or ages, via social media and short messaging services, guardians unintentionally expose children to risks. Possible consequences include profiling by data brokers, hacking, facial recognition, pedophilia and other threats to privacy and security.

Speaking of privacy, our second place spot is Apple's "Waiting Room"--which tackles health data privacy or the lack

thereof--with humor. Directed by Craig Gillespie of *MJZ*, the film takes place in a waiting room filled with people, as a narrator comedically shares the patients' most personal health info with everyone within earshot, demonstrating how much of the health data that is shared digitally goes unprotected. However, our narrator is at a loss upon crossing paths with our hero iPhone user whose health data, protected by Apple, can't be shared.

Third place in the *SHOOT* countdown goes to *The Bridge*, a four-minute film for nonprofit PAWS NY from agency Klick Health. The bittersweet animated short spotlights the mental health benefits that pets provide to humans. The film is inspired by a true story about a lonely New Yorker having suicidal thoughts and an abandoned dog experiencing parallel lives of rejection, until their paths repeatedly cross on the Brooklyn Bridge, and a bond begins to grow. The short was animated by Lightfarm Studios with Gabbo Freire and Ramon Lima directing.

Finishing fourth in our rundown is Coca-Cola's "Masterpiece" directed by Henry Schofield via Academy Films for agency Blitzworks, with Electric Theatre Collective serving as VFX house. The film features universally recognized works of art by the world's most famous masters. Set in an art gallery and jumping

off from the iconic 1962 "Large Coca-Cola" by Andy Warhol, the film shows a Coca-Cola bottle being passed from artwork to artwork as an entire universe magically comes together to deliver a moment of refreshment to someone who needs it most.

Rounding out the top five is a Super Bowl spot for Tubi, the video-on-demand service. Directed by Tom Kuntz of *MJZ* for agency Mischief @ No Fixed Address, this :60 titled "Rabbit Holes" followed the everyday lives of various people who are unexpectedly plucked out of the real world by oversized rabbits and dropped into the magical world of Tubi's library of entertainment and escapist content.

### "Best Work" gallery

There's a decided poignancy to the top five entries from *SHOOT*'s 2023 "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery, starting with the Canadian Down Syndrome Society's "Care Instructions" directed by Yael Staav via Animals for FCB Canada. Medical advances have seen the life expectancy for Canadians with Down syndrome more than double over the past 40 years. The campaign includes this video titled "Care Instructions--Wendy" in which an aging parent offers heartfelt words of encouragement and advice to a future sibling caregiver.

Our #2 Best Work entry is German

# BEST WORK OF THE YEAR

## Best Work You May Never See, VFX/Animation & Music Picks

agency Jung von Matt's "Breaking the Silence" music video for ArtHelps, sending a message of hope to Ukraine by turning repurposed weaponry into musical instruments. Part of the "Resistruments" campaign, the music video—directed by Samuel Ramm of ArtHelps—features Ukrainian youth playing the instruments.

Taking third place is the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's "Talk Away The Dark," which introduces us to a depressed man enshrouded in darkness. But this piece casts some light on him and offers hope—the light coming from a daughter who talks to him, draws him out as he starts to discuss his feelings. This piece was directed by Vincent Rene Lortie of The Corner Shop for TBWA Chiat Day New York.

A more lighthearted spot underscoring the love between parent and child is depicted in our #4 entry, Cadbury Milk Chocolate's "Speakerphone" directed by Steve Rogers of Somesuch for VCCP in London. "Speakerphone" opens on a man sitting in a car pensively. Interrupted by his son calling, the conversation plays out on speakerphone. The son phoned to find out how his dad's first day at a new job went. Dad is down as you can see and hear the doubt he feels. The son offers reassurance. The film concludes with the son telling his dad to check the glove compartment. There he left his father a bar of Cadbury Dairy Milk.

Finishing fifth in the countdown is a spot in which a flip book is deployed to push back against the banning of books. Venables Bell + Partners launched The Unbanned Book Club, an initiative that will provide communities in Duval County, Florida, access to books currently banned and challenged in the local school systems. Animator on the flip book video was Luke Davisson of Optimyst.

### VFX/Animation

Our #1 entry from the quarterly Top Ten VFX/Animation Charts of 2023 has, like our lead Top Spot entry, an AI bent. Irish homelessness charity, Dublin Simon Community, launched this brand film by using cutting edge AI technology. Created by BBDO Dublin and directed by Diogo Kalil of production company Lobo, the film entitled *Unfair City* is being used to highlight the growing inequality of

homelessness as it hopes to raise funds for some of the most vulnerable people in our society. *Unfair City* tells the story of Justin Cannon. Formerly homeless, Cannon now advocates and volunteers for Dublin Simon. Cannon was interviewed and his story animated using AI image generators. In this sense, the AI imagery was created by Cannon's own words. The end result is a moving film that feels true to his experience. It also shows how, almost counterintuitively, the use of AI can help make the telling of the story feel human and authentic by protecting the person's dignity and privacy.

Placing second is PAWS NY's aforementioned *The Bridge*.

Third place goes to Coca-Cola's aforementioned "Masterpiece."

Finishing fourth is Air Canada's "Once Upon a Tree" directed by Dan Marsh of animation studio Hornet for FCB Toronto and Montreal. "Once Upon a Tree" is the story of two button-cute nutcracker bears who, after a year of being tucked away together, find themselves on separate sides of the Xmas tree. Distraught at the thought of spending the holidays apart, a series of heroic efforts to reconnect ensue but to no avail. But with a little help from Air Canada, the tiny wooden bears reunite with a heartwarming embrace.

And rounding out the top five is Apple's "Fuzzy Feelings," a live-action/stop-motion animation holiday film directed by Lucia Aniello via Hungry Man, and stop motion-animator and director Anna Mantzaris of Passion Pictures. The film introduces us to an office worker by day and stop-motion artist by night. As an employee, she works for a boss whom she's grown to hate. So at night, her stop-motion creations put him in dire straits. The young woman makes her stop-motion fare by deploying the iPhone 15 Pro camera and a MacBook Air with M2 to edit it. However, when work takes a turn and she starts to see her boss in another light, so too do her stop-motion endeavors as we see the value of working towards a kinder world, and what better time to start than during the holiday season?

### Music/Sound

The top entry in our Music Tracks Chart for 2023 is Dunkin's "Holiday Unboxing" out of Leo Burnett Chicago,

directed by Henry-Alex Rubin of SMUGGLER and scored by music and sound design house Beacon Street Studios. The commercial is shot from the donuts' POV, looking up from a box at the happy folks—including Santa himself—seeking to grab a treat for themselves.

Scoring second place is the aforementioned Coca-Cola's "Masterpiece." Music/sound house was Yessian Music.

Taking third place is American Express' "Rhythm of the Island" starring Lin-Manuel Miranda who shares the sounds of Puerto Rico which give him creative inspiration. The spot was created by Dentsu and directed by Luis Gerard. Music house was Human, with sound design from Bill Chesley of Henryboy.

Finishing fourth is the Courageous Conversation Global Foundation's "Driv-

ing While Black" which introduces a car that protects Black drivers from police and law enforcement agencies. Created in partnership with agencies Goodby Silverstein & Partners and Critical Mass, the campaign addresses police encounters during routine traffic stops through a vehicle equipped with such features as transparent doors, so there's no suspicion of what the driver is in possession of. Or a "10&2" steering wheel that keeps hands visible at all times. And they even eliminated the trunk, leaving officers with nothing to search or seize. Scoring this short film were music house Yessian and sound design/mix shop Lime Studios.

And rounding out the top five is Tubi's aforementioned "Rabbit Holes," with sound design by Brian Emrich, and Walker serving as the music house.

## Flash Back

**December 24, 2018** Producer/actress Jane Fonda will be honored with the Producers Guild of America's 2019 Stanley Kramer Award. Established in 2002, the award honors a production, producer or other individuals whose achievement or contribution illuminates and raises public awareness of important social issues. Fonda is being recognized for her lifetime activism and philanthropic work, and will receive the award at the 30th Annual Producers Guild Awards on January 19, 2019 at The Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles....The Visual Effects Society (VES) has named *Game of Thrones* creators-EPs-writers-directors David Benioff and D.B. Weiss as recipients of the VES Award for Creative Excellence. The award will be presented at the 17th Annual VES Awards in February 2019. The VES Award for Creative Excellence, bestowed by the VES Board of Directors, recognizes individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to the art and science of the visual effects industry by uniquely and consistently creating compelling and creative imagery in service to story....Director Nicole Ackermann has landed her first U.S. representation for commercials and branded content, joining the roster of Merman.....SixTwentySix has added director Robert Nyerges to its roster for exclusive commercial and music video representation in the U.S....

**December 15, 2013** Mike Hughes, The Martin Agency's longest-serving creative director and its president since 1995, passed away on Dec. 15 in his Richmond, Va. home after a long and valiant fight against lung cancer. A graduate of Washington and Lee University, Hughes landed his first job, which was as reporter for the *Richmond News Leader*. Hughes joined The Martin Agency in 1978 as a writer and went on to serve as creative director for three decades and president for 18 years...DNA/David Naylor & Associates has signed feature filmmaker Kimberly Peirce for exclusive spot and music video representation in the U.S. Known for her activist independent vision, Peirce staked her place as a writer and director of singular vision with her debut feature *Boys Don't Cry*, a powerful, fact-based drama about the life and tragic death of Brandon Teena, a Nebraska transgender who was brutally raped and murdered after his double life was exposed. The film went on to win assorted honors, including the Best Lead Actress Oscar for Hilary Swank.....Passport Films has signed director Marieli Froehlich for exclusive U.S. representation....



**ALIBI Goes Back To 'Old School Rap' in Latest Production Music Release** ALIBI Music is going back to Old School Rap with its latest production music release. The new album – 14 royalty-free tracks, plus stems and alt versions – features full male and female lyrical rap, as well as authentic production techniques such as sampling, chopping and turntable scratching.

**DWA Presents Ultimate Events, January 2024 Edition (Hybrid Special)** In the months ahead, this calendar of Ultimate Events will once again open exciting new doors of possibility. Entering any of them can impact your life in epic ways you could never anticipate. Spend a few moments now, investigating and imagining what's in store. Live, learn, dream, explore, and invest.

**Flesh and Bones' Director Aaron Ray Fights For Fair Play in "Victory" For Skillz.** Director Aaron Ray, of mixed media production company Flesh and Bones, partnered with mobile gaming company Skillz to create an anthemic "anti AI" ad in response to AI bots corrupting the gaming industry with unfair practices. **Union Supervising Editors Jim Haygood & Zach Kashkett Collaborate on "Curry & Cyanide" For Netflix India** The trailer has launched for CURRY & CYANIDE: THE JOLLY JOSEPH CASE, India Today Original's first documentary feature with Netflix India, offering an intriguing glimpse into a sorrowful series of events. Bicoastal Union handled offline editorial for the film, with Union's Jim Haygood & Zach Kashkett serving as Supervising Editors.

**Rising Sun Pictures Helps Bring Back Miss Minutes For Season 2 of Marvel's "Loki"** RSP was a key visual effects provider for season two of *Loki*, the popular series from Marvel and Disney+. The studio's primary role was to animate Miss Minutes, an AI driven character in the form of an orange clock who appears throughout the series, spreading propaganda on behalf of the Time Variance Authority (TVA), the organization that monitors timelines in the multiverse. RSP worked under the supervision of Marvel Visual Effects Supervisors Christopher Townsend and Sandra Balej and Visual Effects Producer Allison Paul.

**Motion Picture Sound Editors Elects David Barber, MPSE, as President** The Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) have elected David Barber, MPSE, to a two-year term as President. Barber succeeds Mark Lanza, MPSE, who reached his term limit. Additionally, Miguel Araujo was reelected as Secretary, while Eric Marks was appointed to fill Barber's previous post as VP.

**Whitehouse Post proudly Welcomes Editor Tiffany Taveras To Their Esteemed Roster** Tiffany Taveras doesn't just edit; she crafts stories with meaning

and intention that resonate across high-profile brands, music videos, and film. **Merry Christmas From charlieuniformtango!** Hope you all enjoy our 2023 Christmas music video. It's the first time we've had all female (bad-ass) talent record and perform a song (Vocals: Carissa Henderson, Drums: Marissa LaCour, Bass: Sasha Bowman, Guitar: Alyssa Udovitsch) and is female directed by our very own Alyssa Udovitsch!

**New Coffee-Table Book MALAMA MAUI: Music Photography From Lahaina Chronicles Top Rock Stars at Mick Fleetwood's Hawaii Restaurant** Profits from New Book to be Donated to the Maui United Way Fire Disaster Relief Fund - An elegant and impactful, new, coffee-table book titled MĀLAMA MAUI: Music Photography from Lahaina, featuring unique, vivid photographs of rock music icons and musicians from Maui, Hawai'i, including Mick Fleetwood (Fleetwood Mac), Sammy Hagar (Van Halen), Steven Tyler (Aerosmith), Ross Valory (Journey), John Densmore (The Doors), and Hawaiian bluesman Uncle Willie K, shot between 2016-2017 at Fleetwood's On Front Street in Lahaina, photographed, written, and curated by photographer Sarah Sharaf-Eldien, has just been released **Pixotope Fly Unlocks Industry-First Zoom Capabilities For Tracking Augmented Reality, Extended Reality, and Virtual Studio Workflows** The markerless, real-time through-the-lens (TTL) camera tracking software solution for virtual production is further optimized for greater operational efficiency, creative freedom, and enhanced viewer experience

**Carbon Welcomes Lauren DeFelice as Head of Production** Creative production studio Carbon has named Lauren DeFelice as their new Head of Production. Before joining Carbon, Lauren held roles at The Mill, Framestore, Hornet, and Animal Logic.

**People's Television Launches First Commercial Directors Roster** People's Television, an Emmy®-nominated production studio and creative agency headed by CEO Nicholas Bruckman and creative director Ryder Haske, has announced the signing of directors Yoni Brook, Cutter Hodierne, Chris Hamilton, Ian Moubayed, and Praise Paige to its roster.

**December Release Features Improved Adobe Substance 3D, Unreal, glTF Integrations** Maxon announced comprehensive updates to several products included in the Maxon One subscription offering. Cinema 4D now features enhanced integration with Adobe Substance 3D materials. The December Release also brings improvements to many features in Cinema 4D.

**Motion Picture Sound Editors To Honor Supervising Sound Editor/Sound Designer Dane A. Davis, MPSE with Career Achievement Award** The Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) announced that it will honor Supervising Sound Editor/Sound Designer Dane A. Davis, MPSE with its 2024 Career Achievement Award. Davis is known for his Oscar winning work on *The Matrix*, and for his creative contributions to that film's sequels and scores of other films and TV shows. **"All I Want for Christmas Is You Gone!" Music Video Released** Song-

writer Sudi (Rick) Karatas's newest Christmas song and music video, "All I Want for Christmas is You GONE," was released this month, just in time for the holiday season. Karatas' song brings laughs in the same vein of classics such as "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" by bringing humor to breaking up.

**Heard City Casting Director Carrie Faverty Provides Voice-Over Casting For Documentary Feature "Resistance: They Fought Back"** Heard City Casting Director, Carrie Faverty, provided voice-over casting for the new documentary feature "Resistance: They Fought Back," which sheds light on the largely unknown and courageous story of Jewish resistance during World War II.

**Liz Charky Directs Ogreta In The Music Video For Her Cheeky Portrayal of Loneliness "Shirts & Hopes"** Ogreta (the indie-folk project by Irish artist Penny O'Brien) and director Liz Charky explore the inner conflict of trying to be present while wanting to disappear in the reflective, playful, and humorous music video to 'Shirts & Hopes.'

**Union Editorial Braids Latine Beauty Entrepreneurs For SEPHORA, Digitas, NBCUniversal, and Ventureland** For the first-of-its-kind four-part series *The Foundation of Belleza* (beauty), from Sephora, Digitas, and NBCUniversal, bicoastal Union Editorial assembled a

team of post-production pros worthy of the show's subjects: beauty brand owners Babba Rivera, Desiree Verdejo, Carina Chaz, and Adrienne Bailon-Houghton (who also hosts the series).

**Javier Campopiano, Industry Innovator and McCann Worldgroup CCO, Appointed Exec Jury President for NYF's 2024 Advertising Awards** NY Festivals Advertising Awards proudly announced Javier Campopiano, Global Chief Creative Officer of McCann Worldgroup and McCann, as the industry trailblazer leading the 2024 Executive Jury panel.

**MTI Film Welcomes Industry Veteran Brian Gaffney as VP of Product for Software Division** MTI Film announced the appointment of industry veteran Brian Gaffney as VP of Product for the company's Software Division.

**charlieuniformtango Welcomes Alyson Griffith as Head of Sales** James Rayburn, charlieuniformtango's Editor/CEO announced Alyson Griffith has been named the company's new Head of Sales.

**Motion Picture Sound Editors To Honor FX's "Justified: City Primeval" Producer Michael Dinner with Filmmaker Award** MPSE will honor Award-winning Director/Writer/Producer Michael Dinner with its annual Filmmaker Award. Dinner served as EP/showrunner/director for multiple series including *The Wonder Years*, *Chicago Hope*, *Early Edition*, *Karen Sisco*, *Kidnapped*, *Mr. Sterling*, *Justified*, *Masters of Sex*, *Sneaky Pete*, and *Mayans M.C.*

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# street talk

Director and animator Peter Sluszk, known for his multimedia and stop motion expertise, has joined Troublemakers for representation in France. He continues to be handled in the U.S. market by animation studio Hornet. Sluszk has directed commercial campaigns for such brands as Amazon, Land Rover, Hermes, Citroen, Honda and McDonald's while also creating music videos, short films, and animated sequences for feature films and TV. Sluszk has won awards including Cannes Lion, Emmy, D&AD and One Show Pencil honors, as well as multiple festival awards. His latest stop-motion film, *Hardboiled*, premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival. Sluszk began his career working in TV and music videos, with stints at MTV and animating for noted directors including Michel Gondry.

The addition of Sluszk continues the infusion of talent at Troublemakers, which recently took on representation in France for Le Cube, a design and animation studio with offices in Madrid, São Paulo and Buenos Aires. Le Cube has turned out work for assorted brands, including Google, Facebook, Spotify, Coca-Cola, Nike, Uber and McDonald's....Paris agency Artefact 3000 has brought Anh-Dao Lépiniaux aboard as social lead and Jean-Christophe Royer as sr. creative. Lépiniaux, with a background of four years at Marcel as a community manager for brands like Contrex, Granola, Meetic, and Banque Populaire, later transitioned to independent work for three years. She collaborated with various Parisian agencies (Havas, VLMY&R, MediaMonks, Babel, Rosa Paris) on brands such as FDJ, Samsung, Monoprix, Air France, DS Automobiles, and AXA. Formerly a sr. creative at Publicis Conseil, Royer began his career as a copywriter at DDB, followed by roles at Young & Rubicam and Les Gaulois. He later served as creative director at BETC and Buzzman. His standout work, the "The Bear" campaign for Canal+, received numerous international awards and was voted the best advertisement of all time by The Gunn Report....

# rep report

London-based Academy Films recently opened an office in Los Angeles, marking the first U.S. operation for the venerable production house. Academy and its complete roster of directors, photographers and artists are being repped on the West Coast by 1961 Representation, and on the East Coast by Sasha Stern & Jamie Scalera of Miss Smith....Alyson Griffith has been named head of sales at charlieuniformtango. Griffith began her career on

the agency side. She applied the perspective and experience gained during those years to her talent management company, AG Represents. Now joining her roster is charlieuniformtango, which maintains shops in Dallas and Austin, and has turned out work for brands including American Airlines, JCPenney, Universal Orlando, Samsung, Dr Pepper, McDonald's, Jeep, RAM, and Abercrombie & Fitch. Over the years, charlieuniformtango has garnered honors which have included National ADDYs, AICE Awards, ANDYs and a Cannes Lion....My Code, a multicultural media and marketing services company, has appointed Edgar Hernandez as chief strategy officer. In this new role, Hernandez will lead and oversee My Code's strategic vision across the company including sales and media for My Code's owned and operated platforms. He will lead initiatives to bolster the brands' investment and growth of its people and the diverse communities it serves. Hernandez spent 13 years at Complex Networks, building its reputation for innovative youth-culture marketing. He has 20-plus years of experience in media and marketing, recently serving as chief revenue officer at BuzzFeed where he was instrumental through Complex's integration. He has been working with My Code as a consultant over the past six months, advising on the company's media properties and strategic direction....U.K. manufacturer Optimal Audio has appointed Doha-based MDC as its exclusive distributor in Qatar....



Photos from the pages of SHOOT Magazine and SHOOTonline.com

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Leslie Cunningham



MG Evangelista



Stacy Pascal Gaspard



Merawi Gerima



Jennifer Greco

## Meet The NDS Class of 2023

*Discover Emerging Filmmakers*



Daisy Ifama



Luke Jaden



Somayeh Jafari



Justice Jamal Jones



Daniel Kreizberg



The Kummerl Twins



Nathalie Lamb



Jessica Makinson



Anthony Marinelli



David Nixon Jr.



Chelsea Odufu



Alex Ramsey



C.T. Robert



Danielle Shapira



Sergii Shevtsov



Eli Snyder



Megan Stowe



Sophie Tabet



Anthony Jamari Thomas



Julien & Justen Turner



Boson Wang

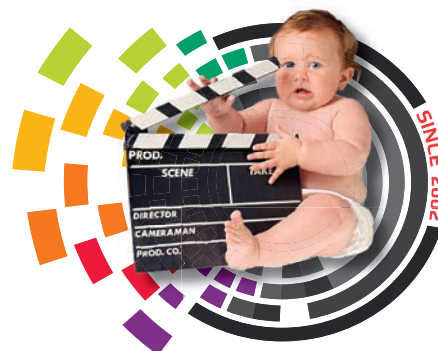
### About The 21st Annual SHOOT NDS 2023 Reel

31 individual directors and 2 duos above made the final cut this year, with work spanning commercials, PSAs, branded content, short films, a music video, a docuseries, documentary shorts and a feature film. The reel debuted at the SHOOT 21st Annual New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA in NYC in October. To view the 2023 NDS reel, director profiles & work, event pics & panel videos visit [NDS.SHOOTonline.com](https://NDS.SHOOTonline.com)

The 22nd Annual SHOOT NDS Search 2024 will be open for entries April 1st, 2024 at [EnterNDS.SHOOTonline.com](https://EnterNDS.SHOOTonline.com)



The SHOOT New Directors Showcase Class of 2023; 21 of the 35 NDS directors were present at the NDS Event at the DGA Theatre in New York City, October 26, 2023 (photo by Doug Goodman)



# The NEW DIRECTORS SHOWCASE

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**SHOOT**

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