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Part 13

From top left, clockwise: Leonardo DiCaprio in *The Revenant*; Tom Hardy and Charlize Theron in *Mad Max: Fury Road*; and (l-r) Rachel McAdams, Mark Ruffalo, Matt Carroll, Michael Keaton and John Slattery in *Spotlight*.

The Road To Oscar

Behind-The-Scenes Insights Into *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *Spotlight*, *The Revenant*, *Carol* and *Amy*. 4



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By Robert Goldrich

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Haskell Wexler

Cinematographer Haskell Wexler, ASC—who passed away in December at the age of 93—will be remembered on many fronts. For his lensing of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, the last film to receive an Oscar for black-and-white cinematography. For his Oscar-winning cinematography of *Bound For Glory*. For directing and earning a DGA Award nomination for the seminal

hybrid drama/documentary *Medium Cool*.

I first met him in the context of his commercial directing exploits. In the mid-1970s he teamed with another luminary cinematographer, Conrad L. Hall, to form spot production company Wexler-Hall. Wexler later partnered with the lauded DP Vilmos Zsigmond on another commercial production house, Cinematic Directions. (Zsigmond died just a week after Wexler's passing.)

What I remember most, though, comes from the last time I saw Wexler but did not get a chance to speak with him. It was in March 2014 when Billy Crystal presented Wexler with the Humanitarian Award at the first annual Location Managers Guild of America Awards. Crystal recalled directing the HBO film *61**, which was shot by Wexler. Crystal said

said, asking, "Are our priorities human or to feed the bottom line?"

Later during the awards ceremony, presenter/producer Harry Bring said he met Wexler for the first time during the International Cinematographers Guild's memorial earlier that month for 27-year-old Sarah Jones, the assistant camerawoman who was killed when a train crashed into

In accepting the award, Wexler, a crew safety advocate, called for "more human conditions in the way we work."

that Wexler implored him to make sure that the production of *61** was "really safe," without any crazy long hours.

This concern about safety was a focus of the Wexler-directed documentary *Who Needs Sleep?* which showed the tragic consequences of sleep-deprived crew members. In accepting the Humanitarian Award, Wexler called for "more human conditions in the way we work." Concerns for crew safety should be paramount he

a production team while shooting the film *Midnight Rider* in Georgia.

Bring said he first hired Jones as an intern and that her death has had a profound impact and will prove to be a lasting influence on the industry, leading to safety being the priority it needs to be. This vital cause is also part of Wexler's legacy as he was an articulate, caring advocate for the wellbeing of people throughout our industry and society at large.

POV

By Sal Malfitano



Composing The Color of Lovesong

As a colorist you always hope that every film you work on will have the opportunity to be recognized as an excellent piece of filmmaking. It makes the hard work and creative decisions that went into the film all the more rewarding. That's how I felt when I learned from director So Yong Kim that *Lovesong* would be in competition at Sundance this year.

Before the first rough cut of *Lovesong* was done, I started discussing the approach for color with the director and her cinematographers, Guy Godfree and Kat Westergaard. Starting this early was ideal, as it allowed us ample time to maximize our effort to find the look that best served the story.

The film is about love that develops between its two main characters, Sarah (Riley Keough) and Mindy (Jena Malone). Their story unfolds in a subtle and natural

way, and we wanted to make sure that the color acted in service of that narrative.

The film inherently looked and felt different just based on the styles and sensibilities Guy and Kat individually brought to the two halves of the film. Cinematography and color grade are utilized along with the art direction to illustrate a passage of time.

Kat's first half was warm, less contrasty and had an inviting and colorful feel. In the second half, shot by Guy, more cool tones come into play, with a bit more contrast. The warm tones are from more artificial sources at this point and these convey how the characters have matured and how their relationship has evolved.

What I loved about our process for *Lovesong* was that the filmmakers didn't come in with any color references. On many projects, creatives will come in with existing films or still frames as looks that they want to reference. We wanted the es-

sence of footage itself to serve as the starting point. We were only ever referring to the beautiful footage that So, Kat and Guy had captured as the basis for where the look of the film would go.

We started grading this film very early in the post process, basically as soon as we had a rough cut that well represented the core of the film. This gave us the opportunity to reflect on, and feel confident about, each creative decision. By the time the final cut was locked, most of the decisions for color had been made, and it was really just a matter of fine-tuning.

The end result is a look that feels as honest and real as the film itself. I'm really looking forward to the rest of the world getting to see what these artists crafted at Sundance and subsequent festivals.

Sal Malfitano is a colorist at Nice Shoes, New York. He has held a constant curiosity about the aesthetic trends in color imagery and the process and science behind it all.

Creating Different Worlds

The artistry reflected in *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *The Revenant*, *Spotlight*, *Carol*, and *Amy*

By Robert Goldrich, Road To Oscar Series, Part 13



Photo courtesy of Warner Bros.

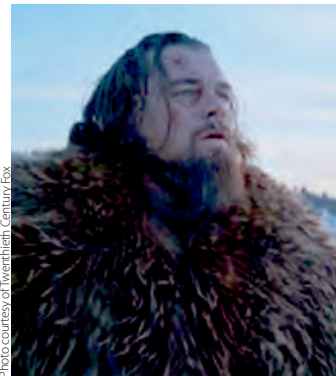


Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox



Photo courtesy of Open Road



Photo courtesy of A24



Photo courtesy of The Weinstein Company

It's been reported that John Seale, ASC, ACS came out of retirement to shoot director/co-writer George Miller's *Mad Max: Fury Road*, but the cinematographer regards that as "a running joke." Seale quipped, "I've 'retired' each of the 10 movies I did prior to this."

Circumstance is what brought Seale into the *Mad Max* world. When Miller's DP Dean Semler bowed out for personal reasons, the director turned to Seale whom he worked with years earlier on the moving drama *Lorenzo's Oil*.

"It wasn't a hard decision," said Seale. "I enjoyed working with George and producer Doug Mitchell on *Lorenzo's Oil*, and I knew *Mad Max* would be an iconic picture. There wasn't a script at the time but the story was laid out all on storyboards. I had no choice but to say yes with the knowledge that we were talking about a standout movie."

This month's unveiling of the Oscar nominations put a punctuation mark on that "standout" assessment. *Mad Max: Fury Road* (Warner Bros.) finished

second in the Academy Award nominations tally with 10: Best Picture, Director, Cinematography, Editing (Margaret Sixel), Production Design (Colin Gibson, production designer; Lisa Thompson, set decorator), Costume Design (Jenny Beaven), Makeup & Hairstyling (Lesley Vanderwalt, Elka Wardega, Damian Martin), Sound Mixing (Chris Jenkins, Gregg Rudloff, Ben Osmo), Sound Editing (Mark A. Mangini, David White), and VFX (Andrew Jackson, Tom Wood, Dan Oliver, Andy Williams).

This post-apocalyptic tour de force earned Seale his fifth Best Cinematography Oscar nomination, the first coming for *Witness* in 1986, then *Rain Man* in '98, *The English Patient* in '97 and *Cold Mountain* in 2004. He won the Oscar for *The English Patient*.

For Seale the *Mad Max* journey had twists and turns. Seale noted that Miller initially set out to make a 3D movie, and had spent years developing and creating his own cameras to do so, particularly to accommodate scenes inside the tight con-

finer of the cab of a truck. Seale wrapped his head around this, ascending a steep learning curve, one he welcomed for what was to be his first experience in digital cinematography. Still, there was some angst over limited sensor range with the 3D model.

Suddenly, though, Miller changed course. Just a few weeks after Seale came aboard the project, he recalled attending a pre-pro meeting at which Miller said he had instead opted to go 2D. "It was a bit of a shock but at the same time it freed us up," shared Seale. "The 2D cameras gave us what we sought because the Alexa sensor was much better and the Alexas were battle proven digital cameras."

Seale deployed 10 ARRI Alexa Plus cameras, four of the little Alexa M cameras, 10 or 12 Canon 5Ds, and a number of Nikons. The M cameras proved ideal for working within the cabin of the truck. "We were fortunate to be able to get four of the little M cameras that Roger Deakins had used on *Skyfall*," said Seale who not-

Continued on page 6

From top left, clockwise: *Mad Max: Fury Road*; *The Revenant*; *Spotlight*; *Carol*; John Seale, ASC, ACS; Stephen Mirrione, ACE; and Amy Winehouse from the documentary *Amy*.



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Best Picture Nominees Mad Max, Spotlight, The Revenant

Continued from page 4

ed, “We did anything we could to break the image down so it didn’t have that electronic look. We gave the image grain and contrast and then George pushes the image a long way in postproduction.

We didn’t want a standard post-apocalyptic look of desaturation of colors. Instead George wanted it an almost ‘scorched earth’ look. It didn’t matter what the apocalyptic event was—a meteor or

a more gradual decay. Whatever it was, it resulted in this scorched earth.”

Initial thoughts of shooting in Australia, though, were thwarted by that scorched earth prerequisite in that heavy rains five or so years ago had turned the Australian Outback desert location into a landscape of wildflowers. “George didn’t want a single trace of green vegetation, not a blade of grass, so we wound up in Namibia,” related Seale who added that the interiors were shot on a stage in Sydney along with some in Cape Town. Green screen work was also prevalent. It was a major undertaking, said the DP, to move the massive crew, trucks and vehicles to the south Atlantic coast of Africa.

Among the massive hardware was the EDGE camera rig, a Toyota Tundra truck with a stabilized crane on the roof, which had a stabilized camera on the end of it.

Still, whatever the machinery and the logistical hurdles, Miller was always in control, affirmed Seale. “He had been honing this film for years in his preparation. This was a very choreographed film, mainly for safety. George is adamant about safety. It’s paramount to him. The stunt work is meticulously planned and choreographed. This was not a what-if film. You knew what the shot was, exactly how the stunts would play out.”

Miller never lost sight of the story in the midst of the heart-pumping action. It’s a tale driven by women seeking a place free of tyranny, sparking an adventure with dimensions that go far beyond an action film. “Eventually there was a script but we

first worked off of George’s detailed storyboards. Amazingly the story and logistics were all mapped out in George’s head. He’s one of the most amazing people I’ve ever worked with. He’s got all this in his head and sometimes you have to work to get it out of there. But in the end, you work it out. He’s an incredible collaborator.”



George Miller (l) and John Seale

Best Picture nods

Producer Steve Golin, founder and CEO of Anonymous Content, earned his second and third career Best Picture Oscar nominations last month—for *Spotlight* (Open Road Films) and *The Revenant* (Twentieth Century Fox). His first nod came in 2007 for *Babel*, which like *The Revenant* was directed by Alejandro G. Iñárritu. Anonymous and Iñárritu have a collaborative relationship in long and short form. For example, Iñárritu’s first DGA Award win, prior to his scoring the Guild’s top honor last year for *Birdman*, came in 2012 for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Commercials on the strength of P&G’s “Best Job,” which was produced by Anonymous Content.

Anonymous’ wide-ranging production portfolio spans multiple disciplines and genres, including spots, branded content, and TV series (including HBO’s *True Detective*, Cinemax’s *The Knick*, USA Network’s *Mr. Robot*, and the upcoming TNT series *The Alienist*). Anonymous also has an extensive track record producing and developing feature films, including *The Revenant* and *Spotlight*.

Anonymous’ development of *Spotlight* took some six years. The project was initially brought to Anonymous by producers Blye Pagon Faust and Nicole Rocklin who had the rights to the story from *Boston Globe* reporters behind the Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation revealing cases of childhood molestation by some 90 local priests and the Catholic Church’s systematic cover-up of that abuse. *Spotlight* takes us through that exhaustive process of investigative journalism—the good steps and the missteps—which for this story began in mid-2001 and extend-

ed through early 2002. The movie’s title refers to the four person *Spotlight* section investigative team at the *Globe*—editor Walter “Robby” Robinson (portrayed by Michael Keaton), reporters Sacha Pfeiffer (Rachel McAdams) and Michael Rezendes (Mark Ruffalo), and researcher Matt Carroll (Brian d’Arcy James).

Golin and his compatriot, producer Michael Sugar, were drawn to the story and decided to develop it, bringing the project to director Tom McCarthy. “He [McCarthy] was busy,” recalled Golin. “He couldn’t write it at the time but wanted to direct it. We hired our [Anonymous talent management division] client Josh Singer to write *Spotlight*. Tom and Josh later went on research trips to delve more deeply into the story. Tom became so enamored with the story that he decided he would write along with Josh.”

As for why he gravitated to McCarthy for *Spotlight*, Golin related, “I loved *The Visitor* [which McCarthy wrote and directed]. It was a brilliant movie. I also liked his film *Station Agent*. I knew Tom had an affinity for journalism. He played a reporter [character Scott Templeton] in the show *The Wire*. His agent is a good friend of mine and it all ultimately came together. What also helped was that Tom and Josh involved the journalists themselves from the *Spotlight* team, adding to the film’s authenticity.”

Faust, Rocklin, Sugar and Golin are the individuals named in the *Spotlight* Best Picture Oscar nomination. *Spotlight* is up for six Oscars, the others being for Directing, Original Screenplay, Editing (Tom McArdle), Best Supporting Actor (Ruffalo) and Supporting Actress (McAdams).

Meanwhile scoring twice as many nominations, 12, which leads this year’s Oscar pack, is *The Revenant*. The film also took 11 years to develop, nearly twice as long as what went into *Spotlight*. It started when Anonymous optioned “The Revenant: A Novel of Revenge,” the 2002 book authored by Michael Punke and based on the true story of the American frontiersman Hugh Glass. Golin teamed with Anonymous cohort, producer Keith Redmon, on the development of *The Revenant*. Anonymous brought Mark L. Smith in to write a draft of the script. Originally another director was attached to *The Revenant* but over an extended

time that choice fell through with Iñárritu entering the picture five or six years ago. Iñárritu and Smith collaborated on several drafts. While Leonardo DiCaprio had been interested in the project for a long time, he went off to do Martin Scorsese’s *The Wolf of Wall Street*, pushing the schedule back for *The Revenant*. Iñárritu segued during the interim to *Birdman*, which scored four Oscars, including for Best Picture and Director in 2015.

The Revenant is an epic story of survival and transformation on the American frontier in the 19th century. DiCaprio portrays legendary explorer Glass who survives a bear mauling and then the betrayal of a member of his hunting team, John Fitzgerald played by Tom Hardy. Fitzgerald was supposed to protect the seriously injured Glass but instead left him for dead—after killing his son. Glass refuses to succumb, undertaking a grueling 200-mile odyssey through the vast and untamed West on the trail of Fitzgerald. What begins as a relentless pursuit of revenge becomes a heroic quest to return home, resulting in a personal, spiritual saga of redemption.

Producers named in the Best Picture Oscar nomination for *The Revenant* are Iñárritu, Golin, Redmon, Arnon Milchan and Mary Parent. *The Revenant*’s other nominations are for Best Director, Cinematography (Emmanuel Lubezki, ASC, AMC), Editing (Stephen Mirrione, ACE), Production Design (Jack Fisk), Sound Editing (Martin Hernandez, Lon Bender), Sound Mixing (Jon Taylor, Frank A. Montaño, Randy Thom, Chris Duysterdiek), Costume Design (Jacqueline West), Lead Actor (DiCaprio), Supporting Actor (Hardy), VFX (Richard McBride, Matt Shumway, Jason Smith, Cameron Waldbauer), and Makeup & Hairstyling (Sian Grigg, Duncan Jarman, Robert A. Pandini).

Asked if he thought when he embarked on his career that he would one day have three Best Picture Oscar nominations to his credit, Golin said he wouldn’t have thought that as recently as last year relative to recently bestowed nominations two and three. “The alchemy of a movie is tricky,” observed Golin. “No one sets out to do a movie that’s not great—yet not many movies come out great. On both these movies, we were

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Insights Into Editing, Costume Design On The Revenant

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fortunate to have super talented people involved and that the alchemy worked out well. Still, we had one movie in development for 11 years, another for six. Who could reasonably think that both would come together in the same year to earn Best Picture nominations?"

The Revenant

Mirrione is no stranger to Oscar, having won the Best Editing Academy Award in 2001 for Steven Soderbergh's *Traffic*, garnering his second nomination in 2007 for Iñárritu's *Babel* (with fellow editor Douglas Crise), and now a third nom for Iñárritu's *The Revenant*.

Babel and *The Revenant* are just part of the filmography shared by Iñárritu and Mirrione. Their first collaboration was *21 Grams* (2003). Mirrione and Iñárritu also teamed on *Beautiful* (2010) and *Birdman* (2014), the latter with Crise. In terms of chronology, said Mirrione, *The Revenant* actually preceded *Birdman*—or at least it was supposed to. "Five years ago, Alejandro brought me the script but when Leo went off to do *The Wolf of Wall Street*," recalled the editor, "the project was put on hold. So we did *Birdman* instead."

Birdman was a formidable challenge in that the film played as seemingly one continuous take, meaning that "one false move and the whole thing would fall apart," noted Mirrione. "We had to be disciplined and plan things out perfectly. In a way it was good that *Birdman* came first, serving as kind of a warm-up, helping us hone the discipline we needed to make *The Revenant* work."

Just as *The Revenant* was a story of survival, so too did the filmmaking team have to endure harsh elements and terrain. Also hanging over them was a looming deadline, necessitating that Mirrione work 12 to 14 hour days for six months straight. "There were huge technical and logistical challenges," said Mirrione. "The big storytelling challenge was that at a critical point we ran out of snow, meaning we weren't able to shoot the final climactic scene of the movie as scheduled. And built into that scene were other scenes that would serve as the dreams of the character Glass, his memories from 10 years earlier. Since we ran out of weather [in Alberta, Canada], we basically closed

up shop for a stretch and came back to L.A., putting the movie together, trying to do that job of finding the story, finding the movie within what we had done. We were hampered by if we show this to somebody, we would just be guessing as to the ending and a lot of Glass' life as



Costume designer Jacqueline West

reflected in his dreams. But what would have been considered a big disadvantage we made work for us. We were able to incorporate a lot of the effects work while we waited to resume shooting—so we moved closer in some respects to the finished edit than we would have been had everything gone according to schedule. The circumstance forced us to be super critical of what we were doing, to solve storytelling issues before that reshoot."

While his base during shooting was an editorial office in downtown Calgary, Mirrione said he had to be "super mobile. There would be times when I'd have to travel out two hours to the side of a mountain in case Alejandro wanted to work with me during a lunch break because that was the only time he had for the rest of the week. Or I'd just have to pick up and go to distant locations, setting up in a hotel for a week. We all had to be very nimble and fast as weather was changing. They had to switch up what they were shooting on a given day much more than they would have wanted to. We had to adjust. If they needed certain elements of a just shot scene cut in order to figure out what to do for another scene, we had to be immediately responsive. It was like Glass' story. Once you climb that mountain, there are issues or problems. Sometimes you slide back down. Luckily we had moments of peace so we could create poetic moments in the film. The

schedule was pressing. Everybody had to be completely focused. If Leo hadn't been able to nail his performance, endure the elements, if the entire cast and crew hadn't been so resilient, this film couldn't have come together like it did. One false step would have been costly."

Among the other Oscar nominees on *The Revenant* is costume designer West. This marks her third nomination, the first two coming for the Philip Kaufman-directed *Quills* in 2001, and David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* in 2009. West's filmography also includes several pictures for director Terrence Malick, all shot by Lubezki, who also lensed *The Revenant*.

The Revenant reunited West with not only Lubezki but also production designer Fisk, an Art Direction Oscar nominee in 2008 for director Paul Thomas Anderson's *There Will Be Blood*, and now nominated in the production design category for *The Revenant*. West has worked on multiple films (Malick's *The Tree of Life*, *The New World*, *To the Wonder*) over the years with Fisk who in a recent installment of our The Road To Oscar Series credited her with making major contributions to *The Revenant*. Fisk said, "Jackie West's costumes were omnipresent, like portable settings unto themselves."

West noted, "*The Revenant* marks the eighth time I've worked with Jack Fisk, the sixth time with 'Chivo' [Lubezki] and of course the first with Alejandro. I was in Italy on the first night of a long-awaited vacation with my husband when I got an email from Jack Fisk who said I have to come home and meet with this director. He told me it was Alejandro whose movies I love. I always wanted to work with him. But I told Jack I could not just leave my vacation. It'll be instant divorce. My agent got involved, one thing led to another and a Skype call was arranged between Alejandro and me. We had an initial call, then another one in France when I was visiting my daughter. Each time Alejandro and I talked for about two hours. I could hear his passion about the film. He was wonderful to talk to. After we Skyped, it was pretty soon that he said he was hiring me."

West described Iñárritu as "an auteur, a metaphorical, metaphysical director who responds to things viscerally, espe-

cially costumes. His career is about delving into the inner workings of characters psychologically. This journey of Glass is marked by enlightenment through pain and suffering. And part of what I had to do was metaphorical, portraying all that in the costumes Glass wore. Alejandro responds to costumes; his body language changes when he likes something. I had to work to get that feeling from him. It goes beyond historical detail, which he cares about very much. But he also cares deeply about the emotions that he feels a costume is portraying, reflecting the character's inner being, what his path is, his backstory—in the case of Glass what he encountered in the wild.

"Alejandro had the poetic idea that Leo [Glass] would wear a bearskin that's left behind in camp when his fellow trappers abandon him," continued West. "There's a wonderful irony that the thing that almost killed him, a bear, ends up saving his life in the wilderness. The bearskin keeps Leo alive, protects him, gives him buoyancy down the river. Glass is not a mercenary like Fitzgerald who's only looking to make money from the wilderness. There's a scene where Glass climbs out of a horse's carcass which protected him during a brutal storm. It's almost like Glass is reborn. He can stand up again and touches the horse in a tender manner, thanking it. He's thankful for the animals. For Glass, wilderness is his cathedral. For that reason, I chose an almost spiritual monastic costume for him, with a hood. Alejandro responded to it—it was one of the first costumes I showed him."

Every costume choice, related West, is important to Iñárritu "who wants things to be subliminal. He wants the costumes to spark something the viewer feels. While this is an epic movie, Alejandro is a very subtle director who shares little details that shed light on the interior of each character. This was a very spiritual journey for Glass—as it was for Alejandro, and he wanted it to be like that for all of us who were making this film."

Carol

Carol (The Weinstein Company) landed six major Oscar nominations. Directed by Todd Haynes, the film tells the story of title character Carol Aird (portrayed

Continued on page 10



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LUNDGREN, JUNIPER JONES POWER *BRAIN GAMES* PROMO

Little known fact: Action star Dolph Lundgren is a genius. Yes, that Dolph Lundgren. Rocky's monosyllabic Russian nemesis Ivan Drago. It's this surprising, perception-shifting nugget that creative content agency Juniper Jones utilized in promoting National Geographic Channel's new season of *Brain Games*. Season 5 premieres on Feb. 14.



Past promos for *Brain Games* had focused, by-and-large, on camera tricks to promote the show. Juniper Jones was committed to thinking outside the box and proposed comedy as one avenue. Although comedy generally falls pretty far outside the norm for *Brain Games* as a property, Nat Geo was open to the idea, as long as the creative supported the endeavor. Once Dolph Lundgren was on the table, Nat Geo jumped at the prospect.

Nat Geo creative director Tyler Korba scripted a spot premised on Dolph as prisoner, trapped inside his own body and strength. Although his IQ is 160, he can't function as a smart man because his powerful body keeps getting in the way. Fortunately, *Brain Games* provides him with the perfect outlet.

Juniper Jones exec creative director Kevin Robinson directed the promo.

ANA's MARKETING WORD OF THE YEAR

Content marketing is the ANA's (Association of National Advertisers) 2015 Marketing Word (actually, it's two words) of the Year based on votes cast by 297 of its marketer members. Content marketing won, with programmatic (ANA's 2014 Marketing Word of the Year), transparency, and storytelling placing close behind. This is the second consecutive year the ANA surveyed its members to identify the Marketing Word of the Year.

"The selection of content marketing as ANA Word of the Year wasn't surprising, as we've seen lots of interest throughout the year in various ANA discussions and forums on the topic," said Bill Duggan, ANA group EVP. "Members are realizing that 'content' provides the means for engagement and 'marketing' is required to drive awareness of content—so the resulting combination of 'content marketing' is powerful."

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE...

Animatics shop Animated Storyboards (ASB) has launched an office in Toronto. Maria Hanafy will lead the new studio as managing director, along with four additional staffers. This marks the 10th office for ASB, with current shops



Maria Hanafy

running in NY, Chicago, L.A., London, São Paulo, Bangkok, Tel Aviv, Düsseldorf and Shanghai. Hanafy has nearly a decade of experience in production, with a background ranging from the agency to the production company, casting and post sides of the industry. After earning a degree in radio and TV from San Francisco State University, she worked for local cable stations, producing, shooting and editing on-air prom content. Shortly after,

she landed a gig as a casting manager at Talent6, spending nearly two years with the S.F.-based casting agency before shifting to the agency side as an associate producer at Publicis & Hal Riney where she handled radio and video production for clients including US Cellular, Hewlett-Packard and Walmart, working with internal creative teams. In 2012, she returned to production and post as an associate producer at Acme Posts/Hamady Productions before joining ASB in 2013. Prior to spearheading the Toronto office, she produced projects for clients out of ASB's NY and Chicago offices...

ROAD TO OSCAR

DP Lachman Discusses Carol;

Continued from page 8

by Cate Blanchett) and Therese Belvit (Rooney Mara), two women who fall in love in New York City in the early 1950s. Phyllis Nagy wrote the adapted screenplay based on Patricia Highsmith's novel, "The Price of Salt."

Nagy scored an Oscar nomination for *Carol* as did Blanchett (for leading actress), Mara (supporting actress), Sandy Powell (costume design), Carter Burwell (original music score) and Ed Lachman, ASC (cinematography).

Carol marks Lachman's second career Oscar nomination, the first coming for Haynes' *Far from Heaven* in 2003. The director and DP have collaborated on four projects over the years, the others being the feature *I'm Not There* and the HBO miniseries *Mildred Pierce*.

Lachman observed that *Carol* in a key respect was "kind of an outgrowth of *Mildred Pierce*," for which he earned nominations for the ASC Award and a Best Cinematography Primetime Emmy. "For *Mildred Pierce* Todd did not reference the cinematic language of the 1940s, film noir or Hollywood melodrama. Instead the look came out of trying to capture the reality of what that time was like. Similarly for *Carol*, we did not reference the cinematic language of that time. Todd's approach was to look at the cultural and social fabric back then. Patricia Highsmith wrote the book in 1949 and it was published in 1952. We didn't want a romanticized view of New York at that time. This wasn't a time of optimism. It was more a retrenchment, a muted time between World War II and the Eisenhower years. It was the beginning of the Cold War, paranoia about McCarthyism. We looked at art photographers and photojournalists whose work at the time showed a more lived-in idea of what that world was. That sense of place and presence of the time period fit in with the story of Carol and Terese's romance. Terese feels an emotional isolation. Carol has a certain hesitation about this relationship with a younger woman—the cultural difference, the age difference, the sacrifices that would have to be made."

This visual approach led to the decision to shoot on Super 16mm film with the Arri 416 camera, using older lenses. "The grain structure of Super 16 refer-

enced the way photographs looked back then," explained Lachman. "I was trying to reference early color film. If I shot on 35mm, I felt I would have lost the look of that time period. If this had been shot digitally, the picture would have played much differently and not supported the characters, their story and sense of place nearly as well."

Lachman noted that Highsmith was a crime novelist and psychological writer who dived into the subjective viewpoint of the criminal mind. "What Todd found interesting about 'The Price of Salt' was that though the book wasn't written in the crime milieu, it dealt with the subjectivity of the amorous mind," said Lachman. "Love was in a sense the crime. It was a taboo love at that time. We see the struggles of realizing that love against the backdrop of the struggles of the times. Yet ultimately both women come of age through their love for each other."

Amy

It's said that one discipline informs another. And for director Asif Kapadia, his narrative feature chops have certainly impacted his documentary filmmaking as reflected in *Amy* (A24 Films), which earned an Oscar nomination as Best Feature Documentary just days after landing him his first career DCA Award nod.

Amy peers into the life of Amy Winehouse, an extraordinarily gifted vocalist and songwriter who died of alcohol poisoning at the age of 27. Her story is made all the more poignant by Kapadia who rather than a typical talking heads approach has fashioned a documentary that thrusts us into Winehouse's life as if we are there and along for a first-hand ride. Audio captured from Kapadia's interviews with assorted subjects serve as narration/voiceover which accompanies home and personal videos of Winehouse, performance footage, news coverage and other relevant imagery. We see Winehouse's budding talent, a stretch of career floundering between her first and second albums, and then the attainment of fame which makes her prey to not only the tabloid media that relentlessly hounded her but also a number of people in her trusted inner circle who were preoccupied with cashing in on her talent, casting a blind eye to the fact that she needed help.

Kapadia Brings Narrative Approach To Documentary Amy

Amy also delves thoughtfully into Winehouse's music, sharing lyrics she wrote that are akin to a diary. Winehouse's words reveal her life's roadmap, the triumphs, lost love and the downward spiral of substance abuse and addiction.

"My background is in narrative films," related Kapadia whose early credits included *The Warrior*, which in 2003 won BAFTA's Alexander Korda Award for Best British Film. "Instinctive from my narrative background is telling a story from the central character's point of view, showing what he or she is experiencing and feeling, putting viewers right there in pivotal moments when key choices are made. I interview a lot of people for a documentary, get their informed opinions, what they saw and experienced. As a filmmaker I have to be invisible, to get under the skin of characters. I try to show the audience what a character is thinking. I show them. I don't tell them. I do that when writing and directing a narrative feature—as well as for a documentary. I let the characters tell the story."

However, attaining that for *Amy* proved to be a major challenge. "Building up trust in people to talk openly about Amy's life was difficult," said Kapadia. "They had seen what the press had done to her and there was an understandable distrust of journalists, the media, paparazzi. No one wanted to be a part of the film at first. There was so much pain around Amy. People didn't want to relive that pain. So we had to give them time. This film was about three-and-a-half years in the making as we slowly built trust and relationships over time."

Ultimately through that trust we meet in Winehouse a consummate artist who might have flourished without pop music fame and all the baggage that went with it. While her career skyrocketed with the breakout hit "Rehab," deep down the music she felt the most kinship to was jazz. Winehouse had the stylings and creative sensibilities of a jazz vet and among her childhood idols was Tony Bennett. We see her in a recording session with Bennett and after a slightly rocky start, she finds the rhythm and is clearly happy performing with him in a soulful rendition of "Body and Soul." This was just a few months before her sudden death.

Kapadia's incisive approach to *Amy* was first showcased in a prior documentary he directed, *Senna*, which explored the life of Formula One driver Ayrton Senna. That film won the Audience Award and was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival. Fast forward to today and Kapadia just returned to Sundance, this time with a narrative feature. (For more on that film, see this week's Sundance feature story.) The Sundance gig caps

an eventful month for Kapadia, following the Oscar and DGA noms. "I never thought it [*Amy*] would come this far," said Kapadia. "Three-and-a-half years of struggling to make the film, to gain the trust of others—there's no way I would have predicted that this would result in an Academy Award nomination. It's very gratifying. And for me the DGA nomination is the ultimate honor. To gain that kind of recognition from your peers, the people you look up to and re-

spect, means everything."

This is the 13th in a multi-part series with future installments of The Road To Oscar slated to run in the weekly SHOOT>e.dition, The SHOOT Dailies and on SHOOTonline.com. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards which will be held on Feb. 28. (For info on SHOOT's Academy Season "FYC Advertising" print, digital and email blast marketing opportunities, visit <http://www.shootonline.com/fyc>)

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Many Happy Returns: Filmmakers Premiere Again At Fest

Directors Kapadia, Feuerzeig, Hosking come back to Sundance; Park Pics' perfect attendance

By Robert Goldrich

Director Asif Kapadia is a double threat on the festival circuit, scoring in recent years on the narrative feature and documentary fronts. On the latter score, his first film to make the Sundance grade came in 2011 when *Senna*, which examined the life of legendary Formula One driver Ayrton Senna, went on to win the festival's Audience Award in the World Cinema–Documentary competition while also being nominated for the Grand Jury Prize.

Fast forward to today and Kapadia's narrative feature, the politically charged love story *Ali & Nino*, recently made its world premiere in the Sundance Premieres section. With a cast that includes Adam Bakri, Maria Valverde, Mandy Patinkin, Connie Nielsen and Riccardo Scamarcio, *Ali & Nino*, a U.K. entry, introduces us to the title characters who are upper class teens living in the Russian province of Azerbaijan just prior to the outbreak of World War I. He is Muslim and she is Christian but despite their cultural differences, they love each other and get married much to the chagrin of disapproving parents. When Ali takes her to spend several months in Persia, she realizes how much her freedom is being constrained. The clash between East and West and between traditional Muslim life and the 20th century independence of her upbringing is very striking. Then the Great War breaks out, and things take a turn for the worse.

Kapadia's return to Sundance capped an eventful month of January, which saw him score his first career DGA award

nomination for *Amy* just a couple of days after that film scored a Best Feature Documentary Oscar nod. *Amy* is a moving exploration of songwriter/vocalist Amy Winehouse's life. Winehouse died from alcohol poisoning in 2011 at the age of 27.

"I was doing two films at the same time," related Kapadia. "As I was finishing *Amy*, I was deeply into *Ali & Nino*, a Romeo and Juliet-type story set around the time of World War I. To get the DGA recognition and the Oscar nomination for *Amy* just before coming to Sundance for the second time to debut *Ali & Nino* has been beyond belief."

Kapadia's roots are in narrative feature filmmaking as reflected in his early career effort *The Warrior*, which in 2003 won BAFTA's Alexander Korda Award for Best British Film, additionally earning him as its director/co-writer BAFTA's Carl Foreman Award for the Most Promising Newcomer.

In several key respects Kapadia has applied his narrative feature filmmaking sensibilities to his documentary endeavors, an approach which helped both *Senna* and *Amy* to resonate with audiences. (See this week's installment of *The Road To Oscar* for more insights into *Amy* and the impact of a narrative feature approach to documentary filmmaking).

Jeff Feuerzeig

Another Sundance returnee is director Jeff Feuerzeig who made his first mark at the festival back in 2005 when his *The Devil and Daniel Johnston* won the Directing Award and was nominated for

the Grand Jury Prize in the Documentary Competition. The film was a multi-dimensional portrait of manic-depressive genius singer/songwriter/artist Johnston.

This year Feuerzeig returned to Sundance with *Author: The JT LeRoy Story*, one of 16 world premieres selected for the U.S. Documentary Competition. This film is billed as being the definitive look inside the mysterious case of 16-year-old literary sensation JT LeRoy. It turns out the celebrated novelist was fictional, created by American author Laura Albert.

Feuerzeig found himself fascinated with the story. "It was called the largest literary hoax of our time a while back with *The New York Times*, *Rolling Stone*, *Vanity Fair* and *Salon.com* covering the story. *The New York Times* exposed the identity of the actual writer back in 2005 or '06. But through everything, there seemed to be one missing voice—that of the writer of the books. She was absent from all the stories that were ultimately about here. I thought to myself, 'That's the person whose story I would like to hear.' I wanted to hear the one voice we hadn't heard from. I sought out Laura Albert."

The biggest challenge *Author: The JT LeRoy Story* posed to him, said Feuerzeig, was rooted "in the complexity of the story. Once I started getting deeper into it, I felt like this was the strangest story about a story I had ever heard. The challenge was to first understand it for myself and then to be able to structure the film so that the audience could also follow the story."

For Feuerzeig, having his film selected for Sundance is gratifying. "I felt the same

way the first time I had a documentary at Sundance. For me nonfiction film is the last vestige of true independent filmmaking. Sundance to me represents the place to be if you're pushing the envelope in the non-fiction genre. My biggest influence in terms of pushing the envelope has been the New Journalism of the 1960s, people like Tom Wolfe, Gay Talese and Terry Southern. They told about the subjective truth, immersing themselves in their stories."

Feuerzeig recalled that winning the Directing Award at Sundance 11 years ago "in many ways put me on the map," helping to meaningfully diversify beyond his mainstay, still ongoing commercialmaking endeavors for which he is represented by Caviar Content. "Sundance helped launch the other side of my career which is screenwriting and making more films."

And further diversification is in the offing as Feuerzeig as a screenwriter is turning out his first narrative feature, *The Bleeder* starring Liev Schreiber and Naomi Watts, and directed by Philippe Falardeau. The film is based on a Feuerzeig-directed ESPN *30 for 30* documentary, *The Real Rocky*, which tells the story of underdog boxer Chuck Wepner who went the distance in a bout against Muhammad Ali and helped inspire the creation of the famed Rocky Balboa character. Schreiber stars as Wepner in *The Bleeder*.

Jim Hosking

Jim Hosking, another director active in commercialmaking—repped in the U.S. and U.K. by production house Hungry Man—also brought a film to Sundance for



The Greasy Strangler

the second time. The first was his short *Renegades* which screened at Sundance in 2010. Now Hosking's first feature-length film, *The Greasy Strangler*, just debuted in Sundance's Midnight section.

Hosking who not only directed but also co-wrote (with Toby Harvard) *The Greasy Strangler*, describes it as "a peculiar comedy, depicting a weird love triangle involving a father and son and a girl they meet. There's some strangling as well. It's really quite an experimental film that I wanted to be funny in an alarming, borderline grotesque way."

The cast includes Michael St. Michaels, Sky Elobar and Elizabeth De Razzo.

Setting out to make a film that could not easily be categorized, Hosking wasn't sure how *The Greasy Strangler* would be received by Sundance officials. Yet in retrospect he concedes that the festival's Midnight program was a categorical fit for his film. Sundance's Midnight fare is billed as anything from horror flicks to comedies to works that defy any genre—unruly cult status-contending films that will keep viewers on the edge of their seats and wide awake.

Hosking's filmography over the years includes notable shorts (i.e., *Little Clumps of Hair* which premiered on the BBC in

2003, *Crabs* which premiered at the London Short Film Festival in 2012, the "G is for Grandad" segment in *ABCs of Death 2* in 2014) and assorted spots.

Hosking noted that his commercialmaking experience has informed

his longer form film work, with their sharing a common bond. "I like to tell stories through the characters and their personalities. Even if I'm making five second spots like I did back in the day, I want the characters to be interesting, to feel well rounded and real. Even if they're on screen for two seconds, these characters should feel like they could live outside those few seconds or even beyond the 30 second commercial during which you see them. That is where comedy and humanity lies—in the characters."

In the ad arena, Hosking first established himself on the agency side of the business, serving as a copywriter at HHCL and then Mother, both in London. He went on to MTV's on-air promotions department in New York where he got the opportunity to continue to be active as a creative while directing select projects. Hosking later decided to focus full time on a directorial career, returning to London where he joined Partizan at the end of 2000. He moved onto such roosts as Skunk in the U.S. and Stink in the U.K., eventually landing at Hungry Man in 2012.

Park Pictures' perfection

When *Other People*, a co-production

between Park Pictures and Gettin' Rad Productions, was tabbed to open the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, it continued a winning streak for Park's features division, headed by Sam Bisbee, Jacqueline Kelman Bisbee and Lance Acord. A sister shop to spot production house Park Pictures, the feature operation has produced five films—all of which were selected for Sundance. The four prior films are *The New Tenants* (2009, a live action short which went on to win an Oscar), and the features *Robot & Frank* (2012), *Infinitely Polar Bear* (2014) and *God's Pocket* (2014).

Written and directed by Chris Kelly (a supervising writer on *Saturday Night Live*, and a consulting producer on Comedy Central's *Broad City*), *Other People* stars Jesse Plemons (*Breaking Bad*, *Fargo*, *Friday Night Lights*), Molly Shannon (*Me and Earl and the Dying Girl*, *Saturday Night Live*), Bradley Whitford (*The West*

Wing), June Squibb (*Nebraska*, *About Schmidt*), Maude Apatow (*Girls*), Madisen Beaty and Zach Woods (*In the Loop*, *The Other Guys*, *Spy*).

Other People centers on a struggling comedy writer, fresh from breaking up with his boyfriend, who moves to Sacramento to help his sick mother. Living with his conservative father and younger sisters, our protagonist David feels like a stranger in his childhood home. As his mother worsens, he tries to convince everyone (including himself) he's "doing okay."

Other People was produced by Adam Scott and Naomi Scott of Gettin' Rad, and Park Pictures' Sam Bisbee. EPs include Park's Acord and Kelman Bisbee along with co-producers Theodora Dunlap, Cody Ryder and Claire Beitcher. *Other People* is keeping good company in that Sundance's opening night slot has recently featured breakthrough films such as *Whiplash* and *What Happened, Miss Simone?*



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Other People

A Tale Of Television's Two Golden Ages

History's lessons; the promise of the future; brand and Empire building

A SHOOT Staff Report

We are in the midst of what's generally regarded as a Golden Age of Television with content creation opportunities across multiple platforms attracting marquee talent, big ticket writers, directors and actors, including feature artisans who earlier in their careers would have resisted the small screen. However, this isn't TV's first Golden era as historians have chronicled a stretch from the late 1940s through 1960 as extraordinary, starting with the likes of *The Philco Television Playhouse*, *Westinghouse Studio One*, *Kraft Television Theatre*, *The Chevrolet Tele-Theatre*, innovations such as the telecast of the stage production of Mary Martin in *Peter Pan*, and brilliant teleplays by Paddy Chayefsky, Horton Foote, Reginald Rose, Rod Serling and others brought into people's homes.

Both Golden Ages are in a sense bookends for *SHOOT* which now celebrates its 55th anniversary. The first Golden era was winding down when *SHOOT* first hit the scene. And *SHOOT* has since broadened its coverage over the years, serving as a predictor of—and chronicling—the media, creative and production dynamics that have helped to bring about today's Golden Age while casting a thoughtful eye as to what is in store for the entertainment and advertising sectors as they come closer together in the years to come.

On the occasion of turning 55, *SHOOT* seeks insights from the industry at large but first here's some food for thought as to where we've been, where we are and where we're headed.

To be sure, the two Golden Ages of Television share similari-

ties, including live TV of yesteryear having as its counterpart today live productions of *The Sound of Music*, *Peter Pan* and *The Wiz Live* on NBC and *Grease: Live* on Fox. And then there's that matter of sponsors being woven into programming as the Philco, Westinghouse, Kraft and Chevrolet references in our opening paragraph attest. Brands today are grappling with ways to make their way into existing programming, have created their own online channels, and are becoming increasingly active in generating original content beyond commercials.

At the same time, today's brand, advertiser and agency efforts also underscore a profound difference between the two Golden Ages. The first era had a limited number of outlets, defined for decades by the big three networks of CBS, NBC and ABC. Now in sharp contrast there are assorted platforms spanning broadcast, cable, satellite, online and mobile. Many of these platforms are sans advertising or at least not ad friendly, accentuating arguably the biggest difference between the two Golden eras—the push/pull dynamic.

When the Big Three ad-supported networks were the only game in town, a captive audience had to “endure” commercials, good and bad, that were pushed at them. Now, though, viewers can push back, empowered to choose what they see and when they see it, zapping commercials or seeking outlets that don't run spots. Thus it's incumbent upon agencies and brands to create content—commercials and otherwise—that is relevant and of entertainment value



From top right, clockwise: Lee Daniels; Anne-Marie Mackay; a scene from the hit Fox primetime TV series *Empire*

CREATIVE/PRODUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

in order to pull, elicit and earn attention from prospective consumers.

Empire

Successfully connecting with consumers through content requires that brands maintain a delicate balance of art and commerce, a prime recent example being a mesh of advertising and entertainment that emerged during this past season of *Empire*, Fox's hit primetime series. Fox joint ventured with Pepsi, BBDO New York and the content creation studio Wondros to create and then integrate a piece of TV advertising into the plot of *Empire*. Series creator Lee Daniels said it was paramount that the fit be "natural and not forced." Daniels wound up playing himself in the series, directing a commercial that was woven into the fabric of *Empire*. This entailed far more than inserting a spot into an episode; rather, a story was told over the arc of three episodes, beginning with the installment that debuted on Nov. 18, 2015. In this initial episode, entertainment impresario Lucious Lyon's son Jamal (portrayed by Jussie Smollett) is building momentum as a pop star, taking a meeting with Pepsi execs to discuss becoming the face of the brand. He comes up with a fresh new track (which was actually created by producer Swizz Beatz) to make his case for being the ideal Pepsi spokesman, wowing the soft drink maker.

The following episode shows the filming of Jamal's Pepsi spot being directed by the Oscar and DGA Award-nominated (*Precious*) filmmaker Daniels. The next installment of *Empire* places us at a press conference during which the ad is

screened. Immediately after, during the actual Fox network commercial break, the Daniels-helmed Pepsi spot is again shown.

The backstory that brought production house Wondros into the equation dates back some 18 months when company founder Jesse Dylan directed and interviewed Daniels for a documentary about Sundance for Robert Redford. Daniels and Dylan connected, resulting in what Wondros chief creative officer Anne-Marie Mackay described as "a very speculative kind of discussion about Lee directing commercials. We decided that if anything came up we felt was suited for Lee, we would reach out to him. In the meantime, Lee asked me to get involved in a Timbaland project with him, writing a script for a short film that embodied Timbaland's music and creative spirit."

During that collaboration, Mackay said she and Daniels bonded further, resulting in a fortuitous phone call that the *Empire* creator made to her when she was working at the Wondros office late one evening. He asked her to come to the Four Seasons Hotel in L.A. immediately because he had some Pepsi people there who said they knew her. Indeed Mackay consulted for Pepsi before joining Wondros and her commercialmaking exploits in years past saw her work with Pepsi and BBDO on multiple occasions. The Four Seasons Hotel meeting got the ball rolling.

Mackay found herself as a common bond/intermediary with ties to Pepsi, BBDO and Daniels that helped her to facilitate what blossomed into a fruitful *Empire*/Pepsi collaboration. "It all had to feel organic in order to work properly,"

observed Mackay. "Pepsi is very music driven so it was a natural storyline to show that part of marking a pop music artist coming of age would be a Pepsi commercial, with a brand lineage that included commercials with Michael Jackson, Madonna, Beyonce. Making Lee the director of the commercial, bringing him into the plot to make Jussie the voice of Pepsi also felt right. And Lee immediately went with the idea of Jussie's character arguing with his father, wanting to be his own man and to tie his music into Pepsi."

Mackay noted that making the commercial was "a big learning curve for Lee who ultimately embraced the idea of being able to tell a story in such a short period of time. It was a wonderful journey for both of us."

That journey was made through production house Pony Show Entertainment, a Wondros sister shop well versed in working with feature and TV directors on commercials and branded content. Mackay exec produced the spot.

Daniels said he had some trepidation going in. "I always like doing things that are sort of scary-like getting into TV. I don't like working in a safe zone. I was terrified when I first embarked on *Empire*. It was something so new to me. It was just like after years of doing theater I found the prospect of jumping into film to be terrifying. In the case of this Pepsi project, I had to get over the fear of playing myself in the series. And then came the hard part of directing a commercial. It's hard to tell a story in the flash of an eye. Again, though, I don't like working unless I'm afraid of failing. It's a great motivator. It

all turned out to be a great experience, different than that of some of my friends who tried out commercial directing. They told me it would be like ants all over a sugar cube—different people giving you notes, telling you to do this or that. But when I got into it, there weren't any notes. It was a unique and fun experience."

For his first foray into commercial directing, Daniels said that Mackay and Dylan provided a bit of a comfort level. "I'm always interested in working with people I like, surrounding myself with people I connect with." At the same time, Daniels observed that it felt "odd being directed by a director" during his guest starring stint in the "Sinned Against" episode of *Empire*, which was helmed by Paul McCrane. The other two episodes in the Pepsi story arc were directed by Sanaa Hamri.

Mackay observed that the *Empire* initiative reflects how producers, creatives and brands need to think outside the box and to be open to exploring "new frontiers" in order to properly connect with viewers and cogently bring together the worlds of advertising and entertainment.

VR

Among those new frontiers is virtual reality, and the ad community has stepped up its involvement in that discipline. Goodby Silverstein & Partners for example has created an imaginative VR experience called "Dreams of Dali," part of The Dali Museum exhibition "Disney and Dali: Architects of the Imagination." "Dreams of Dali" takes viewers inside the mind of the legendary surrealist Salvador

Continued on page 16

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Virtual Reality Among Emerging Opportunities For The

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Dali by transporting them into one of his early paintings, "Archeological Reminiscence of Millet's 'Angelus'" (1935).

As covered in this week's VES Awards focus, visual effects house MPC turned out 700-plus visual effects shots, the title sequence and the VR adventure for the movie *Goosebumps*, based on the best-selling series of children's horror books authored by R.L. Stine. The VES-nominated virtual reality experience enabled

moviegoers to put themselves inside an action-packed scene from the movie. MPC Creative produced the shoot and creative directed alongside Rob Letterman (director of the *Goosebumps* movie). MPC Creative also managed key aspects of the roll out to the public—the team created a custom *Goosebumps* VR app that housed the content which was loaded and quality controlled onto 30-plus Samsung Gear VR Headsets. The project lived as an installation piece in movie theater lob-

bies across North America and abroad. The *Goosebumps VR Adventure* was also part of Technicolor's exhibit at CES.

CES too was the venue at which *The Martian VR Experience*—inspired by the Ridley Scott-directed feature film *The Martian*—was unveiled, featuring a set of episodic first-person adventures from the perspective of astronaut Mark Watney (Matt Damon's character in *The Martian*). The VR project springs from a partnership among 20th Century Fox, Fox In-

novation Lab, RSA Films, and The VR Company. Executive produced by Scott and directed by Robert Stromberg, this interactive, immersive adventure runs 15 to 20 minutes with viewers getting the chance to perform tasks as Watney strives to survive, buying time for his rescue. Viewers can fly onto the surface of Mars, steer at zero gravity through space, drive a rover and experience other key scenes from the hit film in a 360-degree VR environment. *The Martian VR Experience* will be available across tethered VR platforms in 2016.

Creating the sound for *The Martian VR Experience* was Drazen Bosnjak, CCO of Q Department (well known in the commercialmaking community) and its new VR sound technology company called Mach 1. Also showcased at the Sundance Film Festival, *The Martian VR Experience* represents Fox Innovation Lab's first major commercial endeavor in virtual reality. The Lab brought *Wild-The Experience* (based on the feature *Wild*) to last year's CES as a proof of concept.

Sundance too reflects an evolving landscape. This year its New Frontier section showcased some 30 VR projects.

Perspectives

To gain perspectives now that *SHOOT* has reached year 55, we sought feedback from a select group of industry execs relative to lessons learned from the past, where we are today, the promise of the future, and the daunting challenge of meshing art and commerce as well as entertainment and advertising. We posed the following survey questions:

1) *What industry developments and/or whose work over the years has had the greatest positive influence on you?*

2) *What change(s) in the business do you love and why? And, what change(s) in the business do you dislike and why?*

3) *How has your role evolved over the years? What do you like most about that evolution? What do you like least?*

4) *What lessons learned over the years carry the most relevance for your career and business today and in planning for the future?*

5) *Looking towards the future,*

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what are the most pressing questions for which you are seeking answers as you look to evolve your career and your company? Responses can span such sectors as the economy, business, creative, technological, media.

6) What's your New Year's resolution, creatively speaking and/or from a business standpoint, for your own company and/or as an individual?

7) While it's always precarious to predict the future, in your informed opinion what do you envision for the industry—creatively speaking and/or from a business standpoint—in 2016?

We asked each respondent to answer at least two of the questions. Here are excerpts from feedback we received. Full responses can be found on *SHOOT*online and in the *SHOOT*>e.dition.



Andy Azula
Executive Creative Director
The Martin Agency

7) I predict a lot of change — that's the safe answer. But that is what is so exciting about it. We are constantly being challenged by not just how to use new technology but how to make it work for the companies we are partnered with. I see our agency continuing to be a content shop that covers existing and emerging media. I see businesses continuing to find new ways to have bigger voices to a more and more refined target audience. And somewhere in there lies the next brilliant award winning work.



Mark Benson
CEO
MPC

1) The development of technology has had the most profound effect on our business, and the opportunity for our creative, technology and production talent to deliver increasingly remarkable images for our clients. Work that continues to tell stories in evermore creative and imaginative ways. From the craft of photoreal CG creatures, to high-tech VFX techniques, from highly sophisticated interactive capability, to the mind-blowing immersive content of VR experiences.



Don Block
Owner/Executive Producer
GARTNER

2) I have a love/hate relationship with the sense that all of the walls have come down in the industry. The walls between industry verticals, the walls between markets where talent can be accessed, the walls between who does creative, production and post. This new flat world environment creates great new challenges as well as great new opportunities. The challenge and opportunity is how to create new enterprises that maximize all of the new possibilities.

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hey-wonderful.com

RSA Films welcomes Hey Wonderful to the family

CREATIVE/PRODUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

Observations From Agency Creatives, Prod'n. Execs

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Sean Bryan
Chief Creative Officer,
McCann New York

2) I love the explosion of ways in which we can help brands communicate with consumers. We're no longer talking at consumers, we're having a dialog, including through social media and real life experiences. We're able to build relevance for our brands in popular culture and in people's lives. Even the old tools of advertising are being reimagined, for instance long form versions of spots created for broadcast now contribute ongoing online impact and conversations. What bothers me is the disappearance of time for craft. Superb technology's downside is crushed timelines. When expectations are super fast-tracked what's often lost is the time to craft, the time to come up with the truly original, the stunningly unexpected.



Jon Collins
Global President of Integrated Advertising,
Framestore

4) Showing the most courage in times of success and taking chances when things are going well is the best way to ensure that you will lead, not follow. Having been in the industry for more than thirty years, I have seen many cycles, and one of the most apparent is that creativity tends to thrive at the point at which the green shoots of recovery emerge from the ashes of economic recession. After a period of consolidation, creative complacency follows. Then, as the next inevitable economic downturn arrives, there's an air of panic, followed by the desperate attempt to cling onto the status quo. The cycle of creativity comes after the realization that the inability to change will profoundly affect your business.



Karen Costello
EVP, Executive Creative Director
Deutsch LA

1) I am incredibly inspired by the rise and success of companies and brands that are cause related, mission based or just willing to put doing good into their bottom line. I am so passionately convinced in our ability as humans to creatively solve some of the world's problems both big and small and I have seen great movement in companies not only using their profits for good, but working to improve the sustainability of their businesses, address the human toll that is involved in the making of their products and using the scale and power they have as companies to actually affect positive change.



Andreas Dahlqvist
Chief Creative Officer
Grey New York

2) I really like the fact that it's less about sending the perfect message and more about putting an action behind your brand promise. With social and digital media as the amplifier, marketers really need to make stuff that's worthwhile for people. Stuff that's additive rather than interruptive. It's about asking how the marketing can add value. Why anyone would care or share. It's still about getting brands into pop culture and into the conversation but we have more tools than ever to do that and we need to work harder to earn our place at that proverbial water cooler. The key words being 'to earn' in all media at the moment.



Phillip Detchmendy
Executive Producer
RSA Films

7) All of the projects we do are going to continue to be more and more under the microscope and have to do a lot of work for the brand. Not that there were ever throwaway jobs, but now all eyes are on everything. I think we are going to see an increasing trend where there are the larger, more normally funded projects, and then many smaller ones. This is also the year that VR will increasingly come into it's own in storytelling and advertising. Our recently released *The Martian VR Experience* is a prime example of this. Marketing money will continue to grow, but how it is spent will change.

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David O. Russell

Director/writer/producer brings a fable feel to the real-life story of inventor Joy Mangano



By Robert Goldrich

David O. Russell is a five-time Oscar nominee and has been nominated twice for the DGA Award (*The Fighter* in 2011 and *American Hustle* in 2014). The Oscar nominations were for Best Achievement in Directing for *The Fighter* in 2011, *Silver Linings Playbook* in 2013 and *American Hustle* in 2014, with a Best Adapted Screenplay nod for *Silver Linings Playbook*, and a Best Original Screenplay nom (shared with Eric Warren Singer) for *American Hustle*.

Russell has directed actors to a total of 11 Oscar nominations and three Oscar wins spanning *The Fighter*, *Silver Linings Playbook* and *American Hustle*. Now adding a 12th acting nomination to the Oscar tally is *Joy* for which Jennifer Lawrence is up for Best Leading Actress.

Russell not only directed *Joy* but also penned the screenplay

which is based on the story of Joy Mangano, Miracle Mop inventor and home shopping entrepreneur.

We see *Joy*, who's portrayed by Lawrence, go from girlhood dreams marked by innovation and invention to a less than inspired adulthood mired in the mundane as well as responsibilities tending to her dysfunctional family. However, she regains her inventive, entrepreneurial spark and battles the odds—including betrayal and the brutal world of commerce—to create a successful business which is a testament to the power of individual drive and enterprise. Her life story has elements of emotion, comedy, adversity, perseverance and joy, with much of the experience, for better and worse, centered on her family.

The *Joy* cast also includes Robert De Niro, Bradley Cooper, Edgar Ramirez, Isabella Rossellini, Diane Ladd and Virginia Madsen.

SHOOT: What was the biggest creative challenge that *Joy* posed to you as a filmmaker?

Russell: To take someone with more of a quiet strength and do justice to her story. To create the world around her of women and men that was filled with enchantment as well as harsh reality—and to cover all this terrain in 47 days [of shooting]. To create a world that was magic. It's a big world in many ways.

SHOOT: Among those you collaborated with to create this world was cinematographer Linus Sandgren whom you first worked with on *American Hustle*.

Russell: Linus takes every shot personally. He has an amazing passion and is truly becoming one of our greatest cinematographers. We wanted *Joy*'s story to be inspirational, a real yet magical story about childhood and dreams but also

with harsh unforgiving stuff that could be in a Western almost. We wanted to frame things more classically, referencing the work of artists such as [realist painter and printmaker] Edward Hopper. We went for framing like you'd see in a play, defining the isolation of a character within that frame. Linus and I discussed ideas for backlighting and shadows, suggesting a classical approach which would bring a timeless feel to the imagery. That meant locations and framing that had to be defined in a way that reminded us of those great films from the 1940s and '50s to tell this story about a woman who has a quiet power, who is warm yet fierce. We wanted to honor her character and her story.

SHOOT: Your collaborative relationship goes back even further with such artists as production designer Judy Becker and first assistant director Michele ("Shelley") Ziegler who also served as a co-producer on *Joy*.

Russell: We're like a music band that's been together for a long time. I'm extremely proud of Judy. Our relationship is four movies deep and she helps to create cinema that is about people—not personal effects. She captures people and their worlds. She can repurpose locations, make them work to be other cities. I believe in the magic of movies and so does

she. From *The Fighter* to *Silver Linings Playbook* to *American Hustle* to now *Joy*—Judy's fingerprints are across them all, from the wallpaper to designs, delicate patterns on walls, fixtures. She creates a multi-layered world that feels lived in but also enchanting. She heightens the world but it remains real. She can create a feel to an environment that is part of the very fabric of the story.

As for Shelley, she was one of the first people I met when I started preparing for *The Fighter*, which started a whole new chapter of filmmaking for me. We met in New York. She came up from Baltimore on the train. We sat, had coffee, talked for a long time. From that sprung a wonderful collaborative relationship—on *The Fighter*, then *Silver Linings Playbook*, and *American Hustle*. *Joy* is our fourth film together. We spend so much time together making films, there's a closeness that develops. We're friends. Shelley's family and my family are close.

Shelley is like my right hand. She is a remarkable filmmaker. We work together kind of like a Navy Seal team. She has a big heart, is excited about cinema and shares the vision for a movie like her own. We truly make movies together. She helps put the boots on the ground, to put ten pounds into a five-pound bag, to make the impossible possible.

"Linus [Sandgren] takes every shot personally. He has an amazing passion and is truly becoming one of our greatest cinematographers."



Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

First-Time Nominees Shed Light On Their Work

The long and short of it: Reflections from feature and commercial directors

By Robert Goldrich



You never forget your first time. It's a universal adage that also applies to earning a coveted Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nomination. And first-timers were prevalent in this year's field of DGA Award nominees, accounting for three of the five directors vying for Outstanding Achievement in Feature Film and four of the five in the Commercials category.

The feature directors breaking into the DGA circle of nominees are: Tom McCarthy for *Spotlight* (Open Road Films); Adam McKay for *The Big Short* (Paramount Pictures); and George Miller for *Mad Max: Fury Road* (Warner Bros.). Joining them are a pair of four-time nominees: Alejandro G. Iñárritu for *The Revenant* (Twentieth Century Fox), and Ridley Scott for *The Martian* (Twentieth Century Fox). Scott was previously nominated for *Thelma and Louise* in 1991, *Gladiator* in 2000 and *Black Hawk Down* in 2001. Iñárritu won the DGA Award in 2014 for *Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)*. He was also nominated for *Babel* in 2006. Iñárritu won the DGA Award

for Outstanding Achievement in Commercials for P&G's "Best Job" in 2012.

On the commercials front, the four first-timers this year are: Juan Cabral of MJZ for Ikea's "Monkeys" out of Mother, London, and Lurpak's "Freestyle" from Wieden+Kennedy, London; Miles Jay of Smuggler for ESPN/AT&T's "It Can Wait" out of ESPN Creative Works; Andreas Nilsson of Biscuit Filmworks for the Comcast/Xfinity spot "Emily's Oz" via Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, New York, GE's "Time Upon A Once" for BBDO NY, and Old Spice's "Dad Song" from Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.; and Steve Rogers, also of Biscuit, for Nike Golf's "Ripple" and Nike's "Snow Day," both out of Wieden+Kennedy, Portland.

The remaining DGA spot finalist is Tom Kuntz of MJZ who has six career DGA noms. This time around, Kuntz is in the running for Old Spice's "So It Begins" from Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Heineken's "The Chase" for Wieden in Amsterdam, and Clash of Clans' "Revenge" out of Barton F. Graf, NY. He won

the DGA Award in 2009.

SHOOT connected with Cabral, Jay, Nilsson and Rogers shortly after they were named DGA nominees. Rogers said of his first career nomination, "Being recognized by the DGA is important for any director, irrespective of what form you are working in. It's a big deal. More than anything it validates the decisions you make each day, the choices you take, the things you leave in, leave out. It affirms that something you are doing is heading in the right direction whatever that may be. You don't do it because of these things, but these things give you the confidence to go further and be able to make decisions with greater certainty—and certainty, or the illusion of it, is definitely reassuring."

Regarding the biggest creative challenges posed to him by Nike Golf's "Ripple," which delves into the life of star golfer Rory McIlroy, and Nike's "Snow Day" in which famed athletes and celebs have a play day, Rogers observed, "The thing about these two projects, irrespective of the fact that they are both for the

From top left, clockwise: Miles Jay; Andreas Nilsson; a scene from the "Emily's Oz" spot for Comcast/Xfinity; Juan Cabral; Steve Rogers; Tom McCarthy; and Adam McKay.

same brand, was how different they were. 'Ripple' required a lot of research, of delving into the McIlroy history, of retracing the places and people and experiences that Rory had. We had access to his family and friends and the actual places where he grew up in Northern Ireland which certainly helped so that we didn't have to cheat things. It was actually a wonderfully enjoyable experience in a great town with great people who all believed that it could be good. 'Snow Day' was a totally different beast, a behemoth that required me to put aside my aversion to shooting on stage. The difficulty with that particular piece was shooting an Eastern winter in L.A. in July. I also wanted it in camera, which resulted in us constructing an entire working class, suburban street over three stages. We needed to be ready to shoot in any direction at any time because of the availability of the athletes, which meant that we had to be ready, with every set, from the get go. Obviously the availability of athletes is an issue with this type of piece, and as much as we would have liked them available to us most of the time, the reality is that you end up with one or two athletes for very short periods of time so it became a very complicated, logistical exercise. Hopefully you don't see the pain."

Director Jay's second job since joining Smuggler last year was a short film for ESPN and AT&T, "It Can Wait," which tells the story of Fletcher Cleaves, a promising high school football player who shortly after being awarded an athletic scholarship to attend Lambuth University sustained serious injuries in an automobile accident which left him a paraplegic. Right before the tragic collision, it turns out the driver of the other vehicle was looking down at a text message on her cell phone."

On the strength of a 90-second version of "It Can Wait," a six-minute short, Jay landed his DGA nod. To do justice to Cleaves' story—it's now six years later and he is moving into his own apartment to lead an independent life—Jay blended elements of documentary and fiction, recreating the past and chronicling the present. Jay explained that he's drawn to this hybrid approach. "I tend to shoot real-life stories in a cinematic way to get closer to the emotional core. I'm also interested in

shooting fiction stuff that seems so real that it has a documentary feel."

Jay noted that a key to telling Cleaves' story was going initially with a misdirect. "We see this kid who is an underdog. We see him working so hard to better his life. At first it feels like a sports genre story about attaining a dream, in this case a college scholarship, through effort and perseverance. Then it's all swiped from him in a brief moment. But we don't center on that moment. A lot of these anti-texting while driving campaigns spend so much time on the crash. Things build toward the crash. What really means everything, though, is everything before and after the crash. That's where you uncover the human story."

To be recognized by the DGA, your peers, for telling that story is both flattering and humbling, said Jay.

MJZ's Cabral takes us to the kitchen in his two DGA entries. Lurpak's "Free-style" is a combination of food and music. "My treatment was Jimi Hendrix in the kitchen," recalled Cabral. "I wanted to make this preparation of food in the kitchen like a live performance, a live music jam of food, getting into the heads of chefs, mixing colors, flavors, taste buds. My hope is that this spot makes you want to go and dance into the kitchen, even if it's just to get some bread and butter, to throw flair into doing even that."

"Monkeys" has those inquisitive mammals jamming in an Ikea kitchen placed in the middle of the wild. The monkeys explore the kitchen from top to bottom, and side to side, opening drawers, making a mess, trying to make cappuccino, "smiles all around," said Cabral. The spot was a return engagement for the director on Ikea for agency Mother. The prior collaboration yielded "Beds," a breathtaking spot that scored Gold at Cannes, among other awards. With the bar set high, Cabral was a bit wary about revisiting Ikea until he saw the brief. "Monkeys in a kitchen, discovering it—there wasn't a lot more written than that. It appealed to me as different and fun, shot in a refuge [in Costa Rica] where they take care of monkeys and release them into nature on a daily basis."

Cabral was surprised by the DGA nomination. He was in London when he got a phone call from MJZ president David Zander. "I thought it was a Happy New Year phone call," recalled Cabral. "Then he told

me it was the DGA Award and explained what it means. It's very special, something I feel good about. I haven't fully processed it yet but it kind of affirms that I'm okay at what I do and to keep on doing it."

For Biscuit's Nilsson, selecting the commercials to enter into the DGA competition involved "a simple method: send in the three spots that I liked the most and was creatively and technically most pleased with from last year."

One of those entries, "Emily's Oz" for Comcast/Xfinity, illustrates what a blind person sees in her head when she "watches" her favorite movie. The :60 brings to life *The Wizard of Oz* according to Emily, a seven-year-old girl who was born blind. We see her vision of what such iconic characters as the Tin Man looks like, the Cowardly Lion, the Scarecrow and Dorothy herself. Featuring a voiceover by Robert Redford, the spot promotes Comcast/Xfinity's accessibility services, including a talking guide created so that the visually impaired can independently search for and find movies.

Nilsson said of "Emily's Oz," "This is probably the most difficult job I've done because it didn't play by the traditional rules in the creative process. It is a sincere collaboration with Emily and we didn't move ahead with anything until we had her agreement on the direction we were taking. It was only possible with a client that was actually willing and brave enough to let this happen in the right way."

Old Spice's "Dad Song" has moms lamenting while dads rejoice via song about their sons coming of carnal age. Parents are spying on their kids, hidden in the background as their boys turned men court young ladies. One mother, for instance, is lodged under the ice of a skating rink as her son and his date skate over her. That scene posed a unique creative challenge for Nilsson who recalled, "I remember it was hard to get one of the moms into the frozen ice. We found the toughest lady in the Czech Republic to do it. She had a day job in a fish fridge and was the only one we found that could handle the cold. She said ice was her preferred element to live in and that she was considering opening an ice hotel in the small town of Sychrov after the shoot. It was also hard to get Czech actors who didn't speak a word of English to lip

synch to the song. Next time Old Spice should do a song in Czech and shoot it in LA with American actors."

And Nilsson's GE spot shows the virtues of looking at challenges from a different perspective—hence the title "Time Upon a Once." This off-kilter POV, such as being upside down to view situations differently, has been embraced by GE to spur innovation, and is humorously depicted. Nilsson said of the piece, "It's mostly all in-camera and we tried to make it as simple as possible. But when playing with wires like this, there is almost the human element that sometimes becomes tricky. It's easier for actors to do their work when they are not hanging upside down. I guess that's a rule that can be applied on any kind of profession."

Regarding the DGA nomination, Nilsson shared, "For commercials there are a few awards that really make a difference and this is definitely one of them. This is an award that has a great history and one can look at the list of previous winners to see that just being nominated is something to be proud about."

McCarthy, McKay

SHOOT earlier interviewed directors McCarthy and McKay about *Spotlight* and *The Big Short*, respectively, for our ongoing The Road To Oscar series of feature stories, prior to news of their DGA noms. (McCarthy also recently diversified into commercials with a Duracell job for ad agency Anomaly; he is handled by Park Pictures for spots and branded content.)

Several years ago when he was in the editing stages of his film *Win Win*, which he directed and co-wrote, McCarthy was approached by producers with the rights to the stories of *The Boston Globe* reporters whose Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation revealed cases of childhood molestation by some 90 local priests and the Catholic Church's systematic cover-up of the abuse. "I was immediately drawn to the thumbnail version of the story," recalled McCarthy. "An outsider comes to the *Globe* and picks up on a small story in the paper mentioning the Church's possible complicity in certain crimes. He assigns a team of reporters to dig into the story. This circumstance of an outsider—who comes into the country's most Irish

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First-Time Nominees Rejoice

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

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

Beyond critical acclaim, *Spotlight* has elicited positive feedback from different circles. “Journalists across the country,” said McCarthy, “feel we’ve captured their world—and the importance of journalism to society at large...We’re also hearing from survivors and families of the victims who feel they were well represented by the film. They are the heart of this film. And the Catholic community has by and large embraced the movie. People are connecting to the movie for different reasons. We’re connecting with different people on different levels and what’s most exciting is that we’re unifying them through this story and the issues involved.”

Meanwhile McKay blended and unified comedy and drama to tell a true story that is humorous yet a travesty in *The Big Short* which is based on the book “The Big Short: Inside the Doomsday Machine” authored by Michael Lewis. McKay also wrote the screenplay with Charles Randolph. Like the book, the movie introduces us to a small group of Wall Street outsiders who find themselves ahead of the investment curve when they bet against the booming, seemingly “can’t lose” housing market well prior to when the real estate bubble burst in the mid-2000s, triggering the global economic meltdown.

Some five years ago McKay read Lewis’ book and became fascinated with the inside story of the 2008 market crash. It’s a story that McKay aspired to tell in a movie yet on the surface he didn’t seem likely to make the shortlist to direct *The Big Short*.

After all, McKay is best known for his comedy chops, most notably his ongoing collaborations with Will Ferrell. McKay was head writer on *Saturday Night Live* where he met longtime producing and writing partner Ferrell. The two went on to connect with Chris Henchy to launch the comedy website Funny or Die. Director/writer McKay and writer/actor Ferrell have also teamed on such feature films as *Step Brothers*, *Talladega Nights*, *The Other Guys*, *Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy*, and *Anchorman 2*.

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

McKay shows his acumen for drama and character-based storytelling while injecting some of his signature humor into the story, on select occasions breaking through the fourth wall to reach the audience with inventive cameos that tap into celebs to explain financial matters which banks would prefer to keep complicated. For instance, McKay deploys chef/TV host Anthony Bourdain comparing leftover seafood to toxic financial assets. McKay recruited Bourdain for the scene after reading his memoir “Kitchen Confidential.” “He [Bourdain] tells readers that they should not order seafood stew because it’s where cooks put all the crap they couldn’t sell,” related McKay. “I thought ‘Oh my God that’s a perfect metaphor’ for a collateralized debt obligation, where the banks bundle a bunch of bad mortgages and sell it as a triple-A rated financial product.”

DGA feature nominees McKay, McCarthy, Miller and Iñárritu all also landed Best Director Oscar nominations. Scott did not as the remaining Academy Award nom went to Lenny Abrahamson for *Room*.

The DGA Award winners will be announced and honored during a gala ceremony on Saturday, February 6, in L.A.

Numbers Continue To Rise On Super Sunday



While the NFL switched from Roman numerals to a simple 50 for this year’s Super Bowl which will be telecast by CBS on Feb. 7, the numbers game continues to go merrily upward on the advertising front. CBS said that ad time for some of the Super Bowl 50:30s has fetched a per slot price of some \$5 million. This continues a trend that has held true over the long haul as the premium for delivering a mega TV audience has only escalated in this era of media fragmentation. Last year, Super Bowl spot buys went for an average of \$4.4 million per :30, up from \$4.2

million in 2014. The Super Bowl now routinely draws in excess of 100 million viewers, generating not only eyeballs but also much proverbial water cooler/social media talk about both the game and the commercials.

As for the ad creative barometer, while the overall crop of Super Bowl commercials has been known to disappoint at times, there have also been some gems in recent years. For example, cracking the Top 5 in *SHOOT*’s rundown of The Best Spots of 2015 was Snickers’ “Brady Bunch” directed by Jim Jenkins of O Positive for BBDO NY. Fast forward to today and Snickers is slated to be back on the Super Bowl, again via BBDO but with much to live up to given the popularity of the “Brady Bunch” commercial. A teaser spot directed by Jenkins served as a taste of what’s in store as a hungry “Marilyn Monroe” is shown preparing to reprise her iconic “Happy Birthday” performance—although with a far less seductive voice.

Anheuser-Busch (A-B) also has much to live up to as the Super Bowl’s exclusive beer advertiser for the 28th year in a row. The brewer will bow spots promoting Budweiser, Bud Light, Michelob ULTRA and Shock Top. A-B is slated to run three full minutes of ads in this year’s game. Bud Light has enlisted Amy Schumer and Seth Rogen for a spot from Wieden+Kennedy NY rolling out “The Bud Light Party,” a political party that brings together voters who can’t agree on the issues but fully support drinking Bud Light. Among other food/drink advertisers slated for Super Bowl 50 are: Butterfinger from ad shop Santo; Avocados From Mexico with an ad for the second straight year via GSD&M, Austin, Texas; Skittles which too is on tap for a second consecutive year out of DDB Chicago, this time with an ad featuring Aerosmith’s Steven Tyler; Taco Bell with a :30 from Deutsch LA; and the user-generated Doritos spot which wins the “Crash the Super Bowl” contest.

Happy returns

The Super Bowl is also perfectly timed to when folks start contemplating their income tax returns. Intuit’s TurboTax kicked off a campaign last month via Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore., with ads showing that TurboTax is so simple that even real-life geniuses can’t make it any easier to use. That campaign will continue or perhaps a new wrinkle will unfold with a :30 marking TurboTax’s third consecutive year on the Big Game. Intuit will also hand over a :30 to Death Wish Coffee, winner of its “Small Business, Big Game” contest; agency is RPA.

The automotive category is also again prevalent. Both Honda and its luxury brand Acura will run spots. Mullen Lowe LA is turning out an ad for Acura’s new NSX supercar. Agency RPA, Santa Monica, is handling the Honda commercial. Buick, BMW’s Mini, Toyota Prius and Hyundai are also Big Game players. Buick’s :30 will promote its new Cascada convertible and feature NY Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. Innocean Worldwide has four Hyundai spots scheduled. Directors tabbed for the commercials are Peter Berg (whose feature credits include *Lone Survivor*; his spot roost being Pony Show Entertainment), Fredrik Bond (of MJZ), Aaron Stoller (Biscuit Filmworks), and Janusz Kaminski, a two time Oscar-winning (*Schindler’s List* and *Saving Private Ryan*) DP who directs commercials via Independent Media. Among those featured in the Hyundai campaign are Kevin Hart and Ryan Reynolds. Also on tap is Kia with a :60 featuring actor Christopher Walken for David&Goliath, L.A.

Making its Super Bowl debut will be SunTrust Banks with a :30 directed by Dante Ariola of MJZ for StrawberryFrog, NY. Other Big Game first timers are: Amazon with a spot from Leo Burnett Toronto featuring Alec Baldwin and Hall of Fame QB Dan Marino; PayPal with a :45 from agency CP+B; LG Electronics with a commercial directed by Jake Scott of RSA Films; Colgate with a water conservation spot encouraging folks to turn off the tap water while brushing their teeth; outdoor apparel brand Marmot with work out of Goodby Silverstein & Partners; and Apartments.com via agency RPA and featuring Jeff Goldblum and Lil Wayne.

Animation studio DreamWorks is producing a :30 which brings Wix.com back to the Big Game for the second straight year. Squarespace is also debuting a spot out of Anomaly NY.



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From Stop Motion To Virtual Reality

A look at VES-recognized work for the feature *Anomalisa* and the special venue *Goosebumps* experience

A *SHOOT* Staff Report



Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

A shot from the production of *Anomalisa*

From the age-old painstaking art of stop motion animation to the brave new frontier of virtual reality, this year's field of Visual Effects Society (VES) Award nominees offers a remarkable depth and breadth of work over categories spanning features, TV, commercials, video games, special venue projects and student films.

To get a better handle on the VES Awards—which were bestowed earlier this week during a gala ceremony in Beverly Hills, Calif.—*SHOOT* delves into the two aforementioned extremes of the technological continuum, focusing on the stop-motion storytelling acumen embodied in *Anomalisa* (Paramount Pictures) and the VR adventure for the theatrical movie *Goosebumps* (Sony Pictures).

The latter, produced by MPC Creative, was nominated for the VES Award for Outstanding Visual Effects in a Special Venue Project, the individual nominees being MPC LA head of 3D Jason Schugardt, MPC Creative LA EP Mike Wigart, MPC Creative VR lead Alex Harding and MPC Creative LA creative director Daniel Marsh.

Anomalisa's VES nod was for Outstanding Visual Effects in an Animated Feature, the nominees being VFX production supervisor Derek Smith, producer Rosa Tran, DP Joe Passarelli and production designer John Joyce.

Made with an on-camera cast consisting entirely of puppets, *Anomalisa*—directed by screenwriter Charlie Kaufman and Duke Johnson—centers on a lonely, disillusioned man, Michael Stone (voiced by David Thewlis) on a business trip away from his family. He's on the road to deliver a speech about customer service, a subject for which he has written a celebrated how-to book. However,

he feels his area of expertise is of no significance as are all the people he encounters in life—except for a young woman, Lisa (voiced by Jennifer Jason Leigh) whom he meets at the hotel in which he's staying. She is an anomaly, and affectionately named by him as *Anomalisa*. The other characters in the film, including Stone's family, are voiced by a single actor (Tom Noonan), underscoring they're all like everyone else in Stone's mind—indistinguishable and of no consequence in a mundane world.

Amazingly, through puppets and stop motion, insights into the human condition are realized, capturing feelings of isolation, alienation, doubt, hope and wonderment in ways that live action arguably couldn't. This has yielded critical acclaim for *Anomalisa*, including an Oscar nomination for Best Animated Feature Film.

Cinematographer Passarelli said that among *Anomalisa*'s many challenges was “being able to light the small puppet heads like you would live action. In live action you use lighting to enhance the storytelling, to shed light on what each character is thinking. In live action, you use highlights and there's a wide palette. But in stop motion, a character's eyeballs are maybe half the size of your fingernail. The lighting has to be incredibly meticulous to help convey the feelings in a scene. We cut off one-inch squares of LED lights to properly target the puppets and other elements in their environments. We had very stark lighting, for example, during Michael's speech about customer service to the convention audience—during which he comes unglued and clearly thinks his life's work analyzing customer service is a joke. By contrast we brought a warm, inviting quality, putting nets behind the camera lens when Lisa and Michael are having breakfast in the hotel room the morning after their first night together.”

The deployment of nets across the lens helped Passarelli attain the desired look for *Anomalisa*. “At the time the animation program only ran with Canon 7D cameras with Nikon lenses,” he related. “But we wanted to change the DSLR high gloss look and were able to do so and have more control by using nets. For that breakfast scene between Michael and Lisa with the morning sun shining through the hotel room window, we put pantyhose behind the lens to get the right warmth and feel.”

Passarelli is an accomplished live-action DP who goes back a long way with director Johnson. In fact, Passarelli shot Johnson's live-action thesis film when both were students at the American Film Institute (AFI) conservatory. The two kept in touch and connected on other live-action fare with Johnson later diversifying into the animation discipline, directing a stop-motion special for the NBC series *Community*, titled “Abed's Uncontrollable Christmas” which won an Emmy in 2011 for Individual Achievement in Animation. This episode built

momentum for Starburns Industries, a Burbank, Calif.-based stop motion, traditional 2D and CG animation studio launched in 2010. Partnered in Starburns are EPs/writers Dan Harmon (creator of *Community*) and Dino Stamatopoulos, EP/CEO Joe Russo II, EP James A. Fino, and Johnson.

Via Starburns Johnson delved further into stop motion with season 2 of the Adult Swim/Cartoon Network series *Mary Shelley's Frankenhole* for which he brought in Passarelli. "I had never seen a stop motion set before," recalled Passarelli. "It was the same as live action but in miniatures. Duke and I had the same type of conversations for this show as we had in the past for live action."

Passarelli enjoyed the experience which set the stage for what has proven to be an eventful collaboration on *Anomalisa*. Starburns approached Kaufman (writer of such films as *Being John Malkovich* and *Adaptation*) who had penned *Anomalisa* as a radio play. The production house wanted to turn *Anomalisa* into a stop motion movie. Johnson came on to co-direct with Kaufman and gravitated to Passarelli.

"I remember asking Duke," said Passarelli, "Do I need to interview with Charlie to get hired?" He said he had already talked to Charlie about it and Charlie was happy I mainly do live action. He didn't want an animated feel to overtake what we were doing."

Passarelli spent nearly two years on *Anomalisa*—and prior to that he and Johnson teamed on a promotional piece as part of a Kickstarter campaign which successfully raised funds for the project. Passarelli for the moment intends to next embark on a live-action assignment—which doesn't carry the commitment in years that stop motion does. But ultimately he sees himself going back and forth between live action and stop motion fare in that he finds both disciplines to be creatively challenging and gratifying.

Goosebumps

MPC turned out 700-plus visual effects shots, the title sequence and the VR adventure for the movie *Goosebumps*, based on the best-selling series of children's horror books authored by R.L. Stine.

The VES-nominated virtual reality experience enabled moviegoers to put

themselves inside an action-packed scene from the movie. MPC Creative produced the shoot and provided creative supervi-

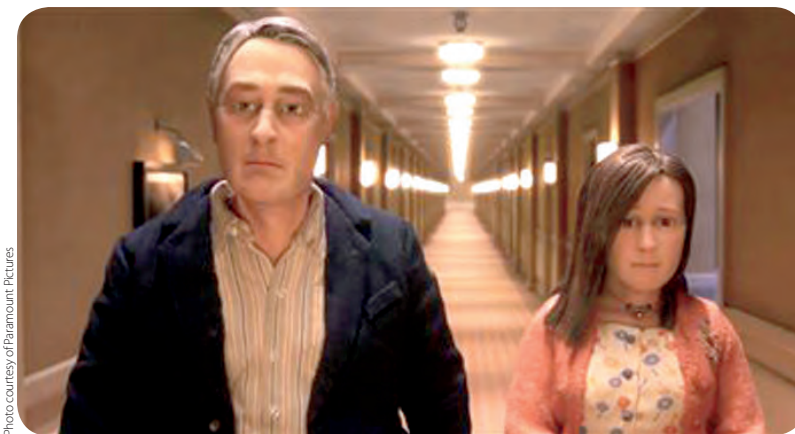


Photo courtesy of Paramount Pictures

A scene from *Anomalisa*

sion alongside director Rob Letterman (who directed the *Goosebumps* movie). MPC Creative also managed key aspects of the roll out to the public—the team created a custom *Goosebumps* VR app that housed the content which was loaded and quality controlled onto 30-plus Samsung Gear VR Headsets. The project lived as an installation piece in movie theater lobbies across North America and abroad. The *Goosebumps VR Adventure* was also part of Technicolor's exhibit at CES.

The *Goosebumps* VR project places an audience member in a car, riding shotgun with Jack Black playing Stine. They are driving through town with a giant praying mantis chasing them down. The VR experience was produced end-to-end by MPC's content production division, MPC Creative; this included everything from live-action production through VFX and final grade. Motion systems technology company D-Box provided the mechanical chairs for the VR experience, which move in sync to what the viewer is seeing inside the headset.

"The car chase scene is a great example of how technique meets the storytelling component of VR," said VES nominee Marsh, creative director of MPC Creative, LA. "In the 360-degree 3D VR Adven-

ture, viewers can look around in all directions throughout the film, but they don't have the control to walk around. Placing

the viewer in the car, they can experience the scale of the scene and momentum of the chase. Jack Black, seated inches away from us, acts as a tour guide as the car flees from the monster. The D-Box chair is the icing on the cake, because it situates people in the experience so they really feel the thrill of the chase."

Fellow VES nominee Harding, VR lead for MPC Creative, said the biggest challenge posed by the *Goosebumps VR Adventure* is the fact that "to some extent you have to reinvent the wheel with this



Alex Harding

stuff. Traditional notions of composition, storytelling and even aesthetics somewhat, go out the window. Everything looks different through the headset and you never know where the viewer will be looking. So the first challenge can be to unlearn what you know. The VFX process is tied to the mechanism of a camera and the photography process—even fully CG work is treated as a simulation of a real camera. In VR we're simulating the human eye. This has implications for how you do everything. You can't tell the story with cuts. You don't have as much freedom with exposure to make a compelling image. You can't embellish with lens flares, etc. You can't use focal lengths to compose shots and direct atten-

tion. Also, you often have to light the shot to look good from all angles—something a DOP rarely has to consider. In live-action VR shoots, you can't really light anything because the lights would all be in frame. We have to find new solutions to solve the old problems.

"On a more technical level, continued Harding, "working on a 360 latlong image in stereo is extremely tricky and you just can't do a lot of stuff you're used to doing. Moving layers around in the image, blurs, glows, they all have undesirable effects due to the nature of the stereo latlong. So we have to work out new tools and workflows for a lot of tasks. We can't cut any corners."

As for lessons learned and how he would best apply them to his next VR project, Harding related, "Keep checking in a headset! The 2D representation on a screen is only so useful. Early on it was logistically too hard to get enough reviews/feedback directly in VR. Now we have tools to allow this and it makes so much of a difference."

He also advised, "Try not to think like you are making a traditional shot-based narrative. There's a different language going on here. In my opinion, the most successful projects out there are the ones that embrace VR and try to understand it for what it is, rather than try to repurpose received wisdom from the filmmaking technique. Of course there are skills and concepts that are still applicable. But there are some that aren't."

Furthermore, Harding recommended, "Don't do things that are uncomfortable for the viewer even if it seems to fit the story. Don't underestimate how important sound is—it's often the best way to direct the viewer's attention to something you want them to see, and it elevates the immersion immensely."

Regarding what the VES nod means to him and his cohorts, Harding said, "I've always enjoyed the more experimental side of our business, involving myself with creative and multi media projects when I can. So this VR work is right up my alley. I get a lot of satisfaction from contributing to something as embryonic and cutting edge as this. So to get our work in this field recognized with a nomination from VES is a dream come true. It goes to show that VR is real and it's got legs."



Ed Lachman, ASC



Emmanuel Lubezki, ASC, AMC



John Seale, ASC, ACS



Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC

Whatever Serves The Story Best—From Super 16 To Digital

Theatrical feature ASC Award nominees reflect a wide range of approaches, tools, palettes

A SHOOT Staff Report

"I went to see *The Revenant* the other night and it hit me how the whole spectrum of film language is being used to tell our stories," said Ed Lachman, ASC, who shot *Carol* on Super 16mm film. By contrast, Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, ASC, AMC, deployed the ARRI Alexa 65 digital camera with lenses from 12mm to 21mm to shoot *The Revenant*.

"From digital to the beginning of the filmic world, we tap into what serves the story best," continued Lachman. "My point is that not all stories should be told the same way. That's why we need to keep film available as an option." (See this week's installment of *The Road To Oscar* for more on Lachman's approach to shooting *Carol*.)

Both Lachman and Lubezki are ASC Award nominees this year for *Carol* and *The Revenant*, respectively, in the theatrical release category of the 30th annual American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Awards for Outstanding Achievement.

They are joined by Roger Deakins, ASC, BSC for *Sicario*, Janusz Kaminski for *Bridge of Spies*, and John Seale, ASC, ACS for *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

The winner will be revealed and honored on February 14 during the ASC Awards gala at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Los Angeles.

Lubezki won the ASC feature category the last two years for *Birdman or (The Unexpected Virtue of Ignorance)* (2015) and *Gravity* (2014), and also took top prize for *The Tree of Life* (2012) and *Children of Men* (2007). He was nominated in 2000

for *Sleepy Hollow*.

This is Deakins' 14th ASC nomination. He previously won for *Skyfall* (2013), *The Shawshank Redemption* (1995) and *The Man Who Wasn't There* (2002). His other nominations include *Unbroken* (2015), *Prisoners* (2014), *True Grit* (2011), *The Reader* (2009), *Revolutionary Road* (2009), *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (2008), *No Country for Old Men* (2008), *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* (2001), *Kundun* (1998), and *Fargo* (1997).

Kaminski was previously nominated for the ASC Award for *Lincoln* (2013), *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (2008), *Saving Private Ryan* (1999), *Amistad* (1998), and *Schindler's List* (1994).

Lachman was nominated in 2012 in the television movie category for HBO's *Mildred Pierce*, and in 2003 for the feature film *Far from Heaven*.

Seale earned top honors from the ASC for *The English Patient* (1997) and received nominations for *Cold Mountain* (2004), *The Perfect Storm* (2001), and *Rain Man* (1989).

In this week's issue, part 13 of our *The Road To Oscar* series includes an interview with Seale who shares insights into the lensing of *Mad Max: Fury Road*, which marked his second career collaboration with director George Miller, the first being the emotionally moving 1992 family drama *Lorenzo's Oil*. To go along with his five career ASC nominations, Seale has collected five Oscar nods, the first coming for *Witness* in 1986, then *Rain Man* in '98, *The English Patient* in

'97, *Cold Mountain* in '94 and now *Mad Max: Fury Road*.

Seale, who won the Oscar for *The English Patient*, shared, "I've always been amazed at the awards and what they represent. I regard the ASC Awards and the Oscars as a wonderful comment on a great crew who worked hard to put together a film that a director and DP had envisioned. It's a vision that cannot be realized without everyone involved, getting all these people on board with a sense of purpose and commitment. On *Mad Max: Fury Road* we had a multi-international team shooting in Namibia. We didn't have the worst conditions in Namibia but also not the best. But this team worked wonderfully together. Every morning they were enthused, ready and loved what they were doing.

"I've always felt any of these lovely accolades—such as the ASC Awards and the Oscars—are a credit to all those crew members. You see what Margaret [Sixel] put into the editing of the film, and the work of so many others. I find it amazing that a film released nine or ten months ago—spurred on by everything that George put into it—has the legs to maintain momentum and go into the awards season with recognition from both the ASC and the Motion Picture Academy. These are tremendous honors."

Lubezki said of *The Revenant*, "Going on this adventure with Alejandro [director Inarritu] and the team was truly one of the most amazing, challenging, interesting experiences of my life."

In addition to Seale, Lubezki too picked

up an Oscar nom this year for *The Revenant* as did Deakins for *Sicario* and Lachman for *Carol*. Lubezki won the Oscar for *Birdman* last year and *Gravity* in 2014.

The only ASC nominee not part of the current Oscar-nominated field of cinematographers was Kaminski. Robert Richardson, ASC, wound up scoring the remaining Best Cinematography Oscar nod for *The Hateful Eight*. Interestingly both Kaminski and Richardson are represented as commercial directors; Kaminski via production house Independent Media, and Richardson through Tool of North America.

Sicario, *Bridge of Spies*

Prior to the ASC unveiling this year's nominations, *SHOOT* in its *The Road To Oscar* series connected with Deakins and Kaminski who discussed their respective work on *Sicario* and *Bridge of Spies*.

Sicario marks Deakins' return engagement with director Denis Villeneuve, the first being *Prisoners* (which earned Deakins nominations for both the ASC Award and the Oscar in 2014).

For Deakins—who has amassed 15 career Oscar nods—the perspective of the story was key. "Denis and I talked about that a lot and thought it had to be centered for the most part primarily around Kate [portrayed by Emily Blunt]. We didn't want to just shoot conventional action. We wanted a viewpoint to it. We put the audience in Kate's position. Then it shifts to Alejandro's (Benicio Del Toro) perspective as we start to understand him more as a character. And finally we arrive

at the perspectives of both Kate and Alejandro. It's kind of a split perspective at the end. Denis steered away from coverage of action just to make it exciting. He went after a personal kind of perspective on the action—the perspective of leading characters.”

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

Deakins’ collaborative relationship with Villeneuve will extend beyond *Prisoners* and *Sicario*. The DP is slated to

lens for Villeneuve what’s referred to as *The Untitled Blade Runner Project*. Inherently that movie poses a daunting challenge given the seminal visual pedigree of the original *Blade Runner* directed by Ridley Scott and shot by the legendary Jordan Cronenweth, ASC. Cronenweth,

who passed away in 1996, had won the BAFTA Award for Best Cinematography on the strength of *Blade Runner*, which also earned him a British Society of Cinematographers Award nomination.

Bridge of Spies meanwhile continues a long and fruitful collaboration for Kaminski with director Steven Spielberg. The DP’s first feature with director Spielberg was *Schindler’s List* in 1993. They have gone on to work on more than a dozen films together.

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

Diving Bell and The Butterfly in 2008.

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

Kaminski’s approach to *Bridge of Spies* shed light, literally, on the relationship between James Donovan (an American lawyer portrayed by Tom Hanks) and Rudolf Abel (an arrested Soviet spy played by Mark Rylance). A single light source peered through frosted covered windows, underscoring the coldness not only of the Cold War but also the first meeting of Donovan and Abel. Over time as a connection evolved between the two characters, the cool light slowly gave way to warmer possibilities.



Janusz Kaminski

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

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

L.A. On-Location Lensing Rises Slightly In 2015



Paul Audley

On-location filming in Greater Los Angeles increased 1.3 percent in 2015 to 37,289 Shoot Days (SD), thanks to a rise in scripted television production and the aid of the California Film & Television Tax Credit 2.0. That was the key takeaway from FilmL.A.’s latest report, “2015 Production Retrospective.” The not-for-profit FilmL.A. organization serves as the official film office of the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles and 20 other area jurisdictions.

Scripted television production is again a growth industry in Los Angeles. In a year where TV reality production fell 8.0 percent (to 5,088 SD), the overall Television category posted a 9.5 percent gain in 2015 over the previous year (to 15,706 SD) and an impressive 19.4 percent increase over the category’s 5-year rolling average.

Among scripted television categories, TV dramas and TV sitcoms led in overall production growth last year. TV dramas increased 19.3 percent (to 4,374 SD) in 2015 compared to 2014. The smaller TV sitcom category increased 100.5 percent (to 2,268 SD) over the same period. Meanwhile, Web-based TV production increased 28.3 percent (to 1,449 SD) and TV pilot production decreased 13.9 percent (to 638 SD).

“Television’s importance to Greater Los Angeles can’t be overstated,” noted Paul Audley, president of FilmL.A. “Scripted television provides long-term job opportunities and high economic value, so these increases should be celebrated.” Once again, the impact of the California Film & Television Tax Credit was evident in the numbers reported by FilmL.A. Incentive-qualified television projects generated 7.2 percent (1,130 SD) of local on-location TV production in 2015. Within select TV subcategories the incentive’s effect was more pronounced. Incentivized production made up 20.3 percent (887 SD) of the TV drama category, 8.4 percent (190 SD) of the TV sitcom category, and 8.3 percent (53 SD) of the TV pilots category.

Local on-location feature production decreased 4.2 percent (to 4,344 SD) in 2015, though the category began to perk up in the fourth quarter thanks to state-incentivized projects. Between October and December, 2015, five state-incentivized feature projects got underway in Los Angeles (*ChiPs*, *The Conjuring 2*, *Rebirth*, *The Sentence* and *The Disaster Artist*), registering 101 SD, and accounting for 9.4 percent of total feature production for the quarter.

Commercial production stayed flat in Los Angeles last year, with the category posting a negligible 0.2 percent growth (to 5,201 SD). Nonetheless, the spotmaking industry remains a major production driver in the Greater L.A. Region. For four straight years, commercials have produced more on-location shoot days per year than feature films.

A Bid To Bring Back Incentives In Indiana

Senate Bill 125 proposes to reinstate the film production incentive program in Indiana. Highlights of the program include:

For productions with qualified spend of less than \$6 million, the program provides a refundable tax credit equal to: 40% of qualified production expenditures paid to an individual or entity located in a municipality or county in which either 25% of the households are below the poverty level as established by the most recent United States decennial census, or there’s an unemployment rate which is 1.5 times greater than the statewide average over the most recent 18 month period for which data is available. In other areas of the state, the tax credit is equal to 35% of qualified production expenditures.

For productions with qualified spend of \$6 million or more, the program provides for a refundable tax credit of not more than 15% on qualified expenditures.

The incentives program, if passed, would take effect on January 1, 2017, with a sunset date of December 31, 2019.

New Jersey Incentives Bill Vetoed

Senate Bill 779, which proposed to re-establish the film production tax credit program, was vetoed last month by Governor Chris Christie.

Amendment Proposed For Kentucky Film Program

Bill Request 436 proposes to amend Kentucky’s film production program by including all counties in the Appalachian region in the definition of an enhanced incentive county.

Productions filming entirely within an enhanced incentive county are eligible to earn 35% on qualified expenditures.

Director S.C. McCullough Delivers The Goods With “We Are Kubota, This Is What We Do” Lush landscapes and candid portraits of satisfied customers set against a dramatic narration kick off a new Kubota national brand film, “We Are Kubota, This Is What We Do” directed by award-winning Director S.C. McCullough and shot entirely on location in Missouri and Kansas. McCullough was...

Lucky 21’s Rob Pritts Directs Spot For Vitamins Leo Burnett tapped Lucky 21’s Rob Pritts to direct the refreshing introduction of Centrum’s new Vitamins.

ASSIMILATE Ramps Up Virtual Reality (VR) Workflow A picture says a thousand words, so launch this link vr360.sweb.media on your Android phone (Samsung S6 or other) via the Chrome mobile browser, click the goggles in the lower right corner, put it in your Google Cardboard, and view immediate headset-based VR from a cloud-based website.

Platinum Platypus Uses Quantum StorNext Pro Studio Quantum Corp. announced that Platinum Platypus, creator of video, motion graphics and animation for both media and corporate enterprises, has implemented Quantum StorNext Pro Studio.

Jim Elkin of Roshambo Films Directs Child Abuse Prevention Spots Jim Elkin completes a series of television commercials/web videos for Roshambo Films and Child Abuse Prevention. Working with Heinrich Advertising, Jim Elkin created a series of stunning and beautifully shot commercials to help battle child abuse. All shot on Canon’s new camera, the C300 Mark II...

JELD-WEN and CMD Leverage HGTV Dream Home Sponsorship A new cinematic spot produced by creative production company Wondersmith for JELD-WEN and CMD has just debuted nationwide. Entitled “Beat,” this and an earlier campaign spot entitled “Beauty Throughout” were directed by Andrew Hardaway specifically to leverage JELD-WEN’s sponsorship of the HGTV Dream Home...

Mobius Awards Taps 25 Entries For Shortlist The 2015 Mobius Awards competition has selected 25 entries representing eight mediums as Best of Show-Grand Prix nominees. They range from a book designed by Here Design, London, for the “Yves Saint Laurent: Style is Eternal” retrospective at The Bowes Museum in the UK to “The Interactive Form...”

Luma Partners with Branding Studio Teak For Product Launch SF-based branding studio Teak recently teamed up with Luma to launch its groundbreaking product and recent winner of the 2016 Consumer Electronics Show’s Innovation & Design Award...

Director Ben Conrad Breaks Out with GenPop Creative and business leader Ben Conrad continues his momentum in the advertising and entertainment spaces with the launch of LA-based live action production company GenPop.

Competition and Color Collide in Breathtaking Season Launch Promos for Spike’s “Ink Master”

To launch the seventh season of its successful reality-competition series, “Ink Master,” Spike turned to 2C Creative (“2C”) for a stand-out promo campaign. The network wanted a new, visually engaging way to drive excitement for a familiar fan-favorite, something that had never been seen before...

Director’s Corner: kaboom’s Carolyn Corben Director Carolyn Corben’s work is distinctive – highlighted with bright colors, choreographed action, strong visual effects and mood-setting narrative. For the last nine years, Carolyn has directed TV commercials in her native UK and beyond...

Rampant Design’s Expands ‘Backgrounds for Editors’ Library with Hundreds of Looping 4K Style Effects Rampant Design announced it has added over 500 Style Effects to its library of seamlessly looping 4K background effects...

Emerson College Seeks Assistant Professor in Digital and Film Production with a Specialization in Cinematography The Department of Visual and Media Arts at Emerson College invites applications for a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in digital and film production with a specialization in cinematography. The appointment commences in the academic year beginning September 1, 2016.

AICE Awards Launches New Category for Documentary-Style Content Documentary-style storytelling – often featuring real people and presenting compelling situations rooted in reality – has become increasingly popular as an authentic means of conveying brand messages. This surging trend is reflected in the AICE Awards’ newest category...

Cogswell Students Release Second Batch of 3D Animatable Rigs Cogswell College has announced that students within its Digital Art & Animation program have released a second batch of 3D animatable rigs – depicting two original “human...”

Screenlight Releases Free Marker Importer Add-on For Adobe Premiere Screenlight, an industry-leading video review and approval platform, announces the release of the very first marker importer for Adobe Premiere Pro, a free add-on that significantly levels-up video editors’ ability to hit the creative mark for their clients...

MASTERSFX Creates “Creepy Doll” Effects Feature Film “The Boy” Character FX artists from MASTERSFX have created the featured creepy doll “Brahms,” the title character starring in Lakeshore Entertainment and STX Entertainment’s horror film, The Boy.

Storyboard Artist Version 7 Now Available PowerProduction Software, the leading developer of visualization solutions for film and video production, announced the availability of StoryBoard Artist Version 7, the essential digital and animatic storyboard creation tool for filmmakers.

Jules Daly of RSA Films Named Chairperson of 25th Annual AICP Show Matt Miller, President and CEO of the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) announced that Jules Daly, President of RSA Films, will serve as Chairperson of the 2016 AICP Show: The Art & Technique of the American Commercial.

Geomedia Highlights Becky Hammon, Tony Parker in Action for SWBC Geomedia, a Texas-based production and interactive studio worked on a recent campaign for SWBC highlighting the company’s spokespeople, Tony Parker and Becky Hammon.

Sony Pictures Entertainment Names Randy Lake President, Studio Operations and Imageworks Sony Pictures Entertainment announced that Randy Lake has been appointed President, Studio Operations & Imageworks. Lake oversees all operations, strategy and planning for Sony Pictures Imageworks, Post Production Services, Production Services, Global Mastering and Servicing, and Asset...

Manhattan Production Music Establishes First-Ever Los Angeles Office Based in New York City, Manhattan Production Music (MPM) has established its first-ever LA office. Concurrently, the company has named Andrew Robbins as its new Senior Director...

Cameron Thomson Forges Global Partnership with WCPMedia Services WCPMedia Services, a leading provider of technology tools enabling studios, content owners and distributors, announced that it has engaged Cameron Thomson Group Ltd., as its global commercial development partner...

Mobius Award Winners Hail From 17 Countries Entrants from 17 countries captured 42 First Place Mobius Golden Statuettes, 43 Certificates for Outstanding Creativity, two Spec Advertising Certificates and four Student Awards in the 2015 Mobius Awards competition.

New RE/MAX Ad Campaign Illustrates True Value of Real Estate Agents RE/MAX, LLC will launch its new ad

campaign at the end of January. Created by the real estate franchisor’s lead advertising agency Camp + King, the “Sign of a RE/MAX Agent” campaign...

Girl Scout Troop 676 Members Find Forever Homes for Overlooked Cats Karen Fling, DVM, owner of East Lake Veterinary Hospital and president of East Lake Pet Orphanage (ELPO) in Dallas announced Squash Blossom Studios has just released a series of seven videos filmed at their recently completed recording studio aimed at finding homes for a group of overlooked cats...

Mode Project Design and Animation Brings Clarity to Complex Storytelling Since 1942, it has been the prize for the best of the best journalism in the public service. The duPont Columbia silver baton has been passed from the hands of Murrow, Cronkite, Koppel —now to Kartemquin Films.

Ripcord Creative, Content Creation and Production Studio, Launches Ripcord Creative has taken the leap. The new creative, production and post production resource, a division of Wildchild, has just been launched by a team of experienced talents hailing from the related genres of broadcast promotion and advertising.

ArsenalCreative Names Andy Bate as Head of 2D and Lead Visual Effects Supervisor ArsenalCreative has announced an expansion of its creative team with the addition of award-winning artist Andy Bate as the head of 2D and lead visual effects supervisor. Formerly a senior flame artist at a52...

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



CREATIVE/PRODUCTION INDUSTRY SURVEY

Continued from page 18



Violaine Etienne
Founder/Executive Producer
Serial Pictures

7) There's a real convergence of influences happening in advertising at the moment. The collaborations between brands and fashion, music, and art is hitting a stride and only going to continue to advance. I think a celebrity isn't just going to be the face of a company anymore, but rather a driving force behind the scenes in the development of the brand and its products. And it won't just be famous actors and musicians. It will also be YouTubers, bloggers, people with a connection to the street, who have a foot in the younger markets. As time goes on, clients are becoming more comfortable with a strategically integrated approach and are, more often, allowing cultural influencers to be the creative conduit.



Corinna Falusi
Chief Creative Officer,
Ogilvy & Mather New York

3) Creative people have had to evolve into thinking like strategists. Back in the day, we had to figure out the most inventive ways of saying what the client wanted. Now, more often than not, we are tasked with figuring out what they want to say, not just how they want to say it. What I like most about that is that we have become smarter and more rounded as creatives.



Bonnie Goldfarb
CEO/Executive Producer
harvest films

6) Creatively speaking, my New Year's resolutions include producing and creating more films that speak to the challenges our world faces in 2016. It's imperative that I utilize the skill sets our business has imparted to me with respect to corporations and brands and use those skills to help move the important social discussions forward.



Steve Golin
Founder, CEO
Anonymous Content

3) My role over the years has evolved to my becoming much more of a mentor to the people I work with. When I started 30 years ago, I wasn't looking to mentor anybody. I was just trying to figure out what was going on. But I remember people who mentored me and were extremely supportive.



Lola Lott
Principal/CEO
charlieunifortango

7) I think overall production companies and post houses will be busier but not necessarily making more net revenues. Budgets are tighter for quick turnaround work but the opportunities are great. I think if you're a creative shop, you'll rise to the top because the content has to be entertaining no matter if it's for broadcast or the internet. Good creative and good quality work will still be king.



Paul Matthaeus
Founder/Chairman,
Digital Kitchen

1) The expansion of what I call the Open Media Environment. It's been a long road getting to something that is really emblematic, but in 2016 I think we can say it's a real thing.

The first step towards the Open Media Environment was the advent of video-over-internet. Now we're streaming 4K. This has enabled website-as-media-server, and the brand as a content network—content-based enterprise strategies that are far richer, high-fidelity expressions.

Flash Back

February 5, 2011

Creative vet **Roger Camp** and brand strategist **Jamie King** have re-joined forces to, in collaboration with **Havas Worldwide**, launch **Camp+King**, a San Francisco-based ad agency. The new venture is being billed as a boutique shop that can tap into the global reach and resources of Havas. Camp+King opens with a client roster that includes **Old Navy**, **Shaklee** and project work for **Yahoo!**. Camp will serve as principal and CCO while King will serve as the agency's principal and CEO. Camp and King formerly worked together at **Publicis & Hal Riney**, San Francisco.....The sci-fi smash *Inception* and the Facebook drama *The Social Network* took top screenplay honors at the Writers Guild Awards. *Inception* writer **Christopher Nolann** won for best original screenplay and *The Social Network* writer **Aaron Sorkin** won for best adapted screenplay. The awards were handed out by the Writers Guild of America in simultaneous ceremonies at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel in Los Angeles and the AXA Equitable Center in New York.....*The King's Speech*, *Inception* and *Black Swan* were the feature film winners at the Art Directors Guild's 15th annual Excellence in 2010 Production Design Awards.....

February 3, 2006

Ang Lee has won the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award for *Brokeback Mountain*. On the short-form front, **Craig Gillespie** of MJZ won the DGA Award as Best Commercial Director of 2005 for the following entries: Amerique's "Surprise Dinner" and "Mini-Mart" for DDB Los Angeles; and Altoids' "People of Pain" and "Fable of the Fruit Bat" out of Leo Burnett USA, Chicago.... Executive producer **Phyllis Koenig** and **Preston Lee**, both formerly of **Area 51 Films**, have teamed to launch production house **Uber Content** on the Hollywood Center Studios lot in Hollywood, Calif. The new venture opens with a directorial roster that includes **Jordan Brady**, **Aaron Ruell**, **Marc Scholermann**, **Theodore Melfi** and **Simon Stock**....**Ernest Luppinnacci**, a founder, partner and chief creative at **Anomaly New York**, is leaving the shop to pursue work in the branded content arena....Four executive producers are joining **GSD&M** in Austin, Texas: **Jeff Johnson**, **Khrisana Edwards**, **Karen Jacobs** and **Monique Veillette**....**Mark Cadman** and **Russ Lidstone** are joining **Euro RSCG London** as chief executive and chief strategic officer, respectively....

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

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DDB, BBDO Perspectives

Continued from page 29



John Maxham
Chief Creative Officer,
DDB Chicago

3) As far as creative lives go, the advertising life is a strange one. In other creative endeavors, continued success and advancement is strictly a function of continuing to do great work. To rise ever higher on the literary ladder, Kurt Vonnegut simply wrote more amazing books. (Not so simple, actually.) But our profession mandates that we change and evolve our roles if we want to advance. This can soon result in a writer or art director not doing as much writing or art directing as they once did. If they're not fans of mentoring, curating and spending time with clients they may find this new creative life deeply unsatisfying.

I know some CCOs (some very good CCOs) who are very executional. They'll sit in edit suites non-stop and review hundreds of cuts. They'll pour over wire frames for hours one day and review dozens of voice-over options the next—giving finely tuned executional feedback on each one. In some ways, this is completely understandable as a way to hang on to the craft of advertising, which is the reason what many of us got in the business in the first place.

I'm lucky I guess, because I'm a better coach than I was a player. And I enjoy it more. At this point, I try not to get so executional. Instead, I seek to hire people who I trust implicitly to execute well. That's not to say I never need to come onto a shoot or post production and give granular feedback. I do. But I tend to look at those instances more as triage than as optimal. My creative product is the agency I'm building. That's my role now and I absolutely love it.



Matt Miller
Executive Creative Director
BBDO San Francisco

2) There are now so many places for ideas to live that our playground has essentially become limitless. I learn about a new platform, partner or technology nearly every week.

A truly big idea now has dozens upon dozens of lives, each nuanced and specialized to the medium in which it lives. I love that.

But at the same time, I hate how we as an industry sometimes think the medium is the idea.

We forget that the power comes from using the medium's strengths to give a unique, new angle to an already amazing idea.

Coming February-July 2016... High Profile Marketing Opportunities

SHOOTonline, The SHOOT>e.dition, SHOOT Magazine

Digital & print platforms conducive to raising awareness of your company, roster, services, software, equipment, fyc messages, award noms/wins & announcements

Bring great exposure, new connections & business your way with 24/7 website, weekly epub, custom email blasts & print issues...

SHOOTonline.com

website with 40,000 unique visitors per month

Start a 7 or 30-day banner

any day of the month

SHOOT Custom e-blasts

Reach 45,000+ with your unique message

The SHOOT>e.dition

weekly email newsletter with 28,000 subscribers

Feb. 5,12,19,26

March 4,11,18,25

April 1,8,15,22,29

May 6,13,20,27

June 3,10,17,24

July 1,8,15,22,29

SHOOT Magazine

March/April Issue + PDF version

Ad Space Deadline: March 15

May/June Issue + PDF version

Ad Space Deadline: May 10

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street talk

Director Anthony Garth has joined Seed Media Arts, the Roy Skillicorn-founded company headquartered in Chicago with offices in L.A., for national representation except for Detroit. Avalon Films continues to handle Garth in the Detroit market. The director's credits span such clients as Chevy, Ford, Lincoln, Dassault, GM, Jeep and Frontier. Garth's Chrysler "Born of Choir" spot and Michigan Tourism's "Pure Michigan" have won multiple awards for agencies McCann Erickson and Doner, respectively. He began his career turning out music videos for the likes of The White Stripes and Jim Jones, and later moving up the charts to Eminem and Kid Rock.... Ben Conrad has launched L.A.-based live action production company GenPop. As co-founder of Logan, creative director/

director Conrad worked with brands including Apple, Nike, BMW and Ford. He is widely known for directing the viral Gymkhana series with rally driver Ken Block, which has racked up 200 million-plus views. Gymkhana also grabbed two Gold Pencils from The One Show, among many other awards. Gymkhana 5, set on the streets of San Francisco, is the most popular installment, reaching over 80 million views on its own. GenPop has assembled a roster of creative technologists and directors spanning live action, animation, projection mapping, experiential and virtual reality. The talent lineup includes Conrad, Andrew Bruntel, Fellow, Riley Blakeway, Collider Studio, Josh Forbes, Master of Shapes, Andrew Gura, Renascent, Steven Ilous, Geoffrey Lillemon, Pieter Henket and tabletop/lifestyle director Tiger in a Jar. Execs include EP Pierre Nobile, Nick Mocerì who heads GenPop's feature and TV ventures, and managing director Alex Anderson.... Editor Chris Murphy has joined Whitehouse Post's L.A. office. He spent the past nearly decade at Canadian shop Relish which continues to handle him for Toronto-based work. He has cut for clients including Google, Bose and Habitat for Humanity....

report

Sara Iversen has joined Alkemy X's NY team as VP of business development. She formerly served as head of sales/EP at BANG Music + Audio Post. Alkemy X is a creative content company offering strategy, ideation, live action, branded content, design, high-end VFX, and post services. The teams at Alkemy, with offices in Philadelphia and NYC, work cross-discipline in commercials, network creative, integrated marketing, social/digital series, longform TV, and features.... JCM Partners is now representing cinematographer Ryan Carmody for commercials and feature films exclusively.... DP Philippe Rousselot has wrapped principal photography on the *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* for director David Yates and is now available for commercial work via Marie Perry and Pattie Sueoka at The Gersh Agency.... DP Noah Greenberg, whose credits include director Robert D. Siegel's *Cruise*, has signed with Dattner Dispoto and Associates (DDA) for representation as have editor Andrew Dickler (Netflix's *Mascots*) and line producer Michael D. Jones (*Cabin Fever* from IFC Midnight).... DDA has also booked DP Maryse Alberti to lens the David Frankel-directed feature *Collateral Beauty* (New Line Cinema), DP Jon Joffin on the Syfy network TV show *Aftermath*, production designer Jason Fijal on the Adult Swim show *Dream Corp.*, editor David Leonard on the AMC series *Broke* (Lionsgate TV), costume designer Caroline Cranston on the TV Land show *Impastor*, and costume designer Mary Claire Hannan on the feature *The Etruscan Smile* (directors Mihal Brezis and Oded Binnun).... iZotope, Inc., Cambridge, Mass.-based makers of tools for audio production, has added John Bigay as chief marketing officer. Bigay will lead the strategic development and execution of global marketing, e-commerce, and education initiatives to accelerate company growth....

OFFICIAL CALL FOR ENTRIES

THE SHOOT. NEW DIRECTORS SEARCH IS ON

BIG SCREEN DGA DEBUT
PROMOTED WEBREEL
WIDESPREAD EDITORIAL COVERAGE
GET CONNECTED



Annual Global Search Seeks The Best Up-And-Coming
Film, TV, Commercial, Music Video and Web Video Directors.

WHERE EMERGING FILMMAKERS GET DISCOVERED THEN EXPOSED



DETAILS & ENTRY FORMS @ ENTERNDS.SHOOTONLINE.COM

A Tremendous Opportunity For New Directors To Get Their Work Seen and Push Their Careers To The Next Level

Each year the final reel of selected New Directors work is screened for 425+ agency, studio, TV & production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's Annual New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in NYC. Plus Selected Directors in the Showcase are invited to attend the SHOOT DIRECTORS/PRODUCERS FORUM & New Directors Showcase Event at NO CHARGE! Plus Showcase Directors are heavily promoted in print and online at nds.SHOOTonline.com.

Do You Have What It Takes To Be The Next Hot New Director?

SHOOT is now conducting the 14th worldwide search to discover the best up-and-coming directors who, based on their initial work, show promise to make positive contributions to advertising and/or entertainment in its traditional and emerging forms. The search is conducted by SHOOT's editorial staff with input from ad agency creatives, heads of production, production company heads and established directors.

SHOOT will compile the **2016 SHOOT New Directors Showcase Reel** and interview the directors for a special feature that will appear in SHOOT's May issue, ePubs, the SHOOT Publicity Wire and nds.SHOOTonline.com, bringing worldwide attention to the work and the directors. In addition, the work will be screened for an audience of key ad agency, commercial & entertainment production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's 2016 New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in New York City on May 26. Coverage of the event will appear on SHOOTonline and the weekly SHOOT >e.dition in May. The showcase reel will be posted in SHOOTonline's NDS section and will remain live for a full year. See the 2015 New Directors Web Reel at nds.SHOOTonline.com.

Don't Let This Great Opportunity Pass By! ENTER NDS 2016!

Don't miss out on what could be a big step towards being noticed by companies that can represent you and ad agency & entertainment industry executives that can hire you. Eligibility: Directing any type of advertising or entertainment content professionally less than 3 years.

What Work is Eligible to Enter?

Category 1: Traditional Broadcast: television spots, spec work, cinema ads, branded content, music videos, trailers, broadcast promos

Category 2: Alternative Media Content: webisodes, spots created for online, mobile-phone content, in-game ads, advergames, virals, alternate reality gaming, ads created for PDAs

Category 3: Film/TV Entertainment Content: feature films, independent films, short films, TV programs

Directors can submit work completed during 15 month period of Jan. 2015-March 2016. (excerpts from shorts, longform film or other entertainment fare should be NO MORE than 5 minutes in length)

Entry Fee \$95.00 for first piece of work, \$40.00 each additional entry from same director. **Submissions must be posted** via online entry form -or- postmarked by **March 31, 2016** if submitted by mail.

2016
**CALL FOR
ENTRIES**

To Enter Online or Download Entry Forms Visit enternds.shootonline.com
New Directors Receive Priceless Career-making Exposure Within The Commercial, TV & Film Industries!



"SHOOT has created an amazing platform to showcase the work of some of the world's most talented emerging directors. As an up and coming director, working both in commercial and features, SHOOT provided me with an extraordinary opportunity to share my work with leading industry professionals. This opportunity extended from an amazing night hosted at the DGA theater to continued press after the event. I am honored to be named one of SHOOT's New Directors as it is a title that does not get overlooked by the industry."

—Joseph Pernice, 2015 SHOOT New Director



"Having previously directed independent films, the SHOOT New Directors Showcase provided a rare opportunity to introduce my work to key players in the commercial world. SHOOT's stamp of approval helped me to connect with production companies, agencies, and directors reps, and I'm excited to say that I've since been hired for several directing assignments."

—Erin Li, 2015 SHOOT New Director

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