

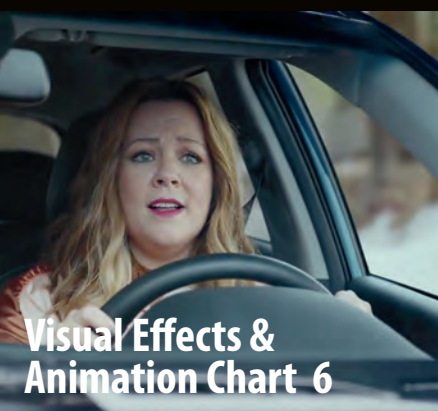


Chat Room:
Toby Oliver ACS 4

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March/April 2017

SHOOT®



Visual Effects &
Animation Chart 6



Top Ten Tracks Chart 8



Up-and-Coming
Directors 20



Photo by Anne Marie Fox/courtesy of Focus Features



SPRING 2017

DIRECTORS

PAGE 12



Festival Circuit 23

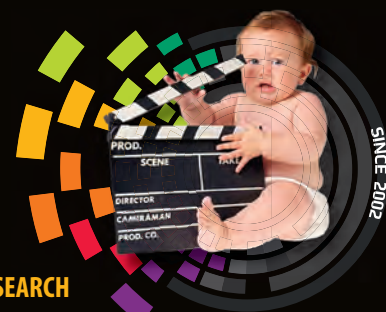


Cinematographers & Cameras 25

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By Robert Goldrich

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Basking In The Glow of Moonlight

When *Moonlight* was awarded the Best Picture Oscar just moments after it had been erroneously given to *La La Land*, media coverage centered on what went wrong to lead to the biggest gaffe in Academy Awards history.

But somewhat lost in the immediate shuffle was what the films represented—*La La Land* being stirring feel-

good entertainment that's an homage to Hollywood while *Moonlight* shined an empathetic light on various characters including a black, gay, born-into-poverty protagonist whom many viewers wouldn't have otherwise encountered in their lives.

Ultimately Academy voters gravitated toward the value of walking in someone else's shoes, providing an empathy and understanding that are sorely needed in today's polarized us vs. them, argumenta-

tive and often alienating times.

That empathetic bent is reflected in this issue's spring Directors Series with profiles on directors such as: Derek Cianfrance of RadicalMedia who won the DGA Award for commercials on the strength of work that included Powerade's "Power Through" campaign spot which introduces us to a female football

work are several in our Up-and-Coming Directors feature story, including Dan & Antonio of Moxie Pictures whose feature *Dina* won the Grand Jury Prize for U.S. Documentary earlier this year at the Sundance Film Festival. *Dina* tells an unconventional love story between two people who have autism spectrum disorder.

And our Cinematographers & Cameras

As reflected in our Directors Series, when you walk in someone else's shoes, the journey can lead to meaningful discovery.

player who excels despite a nay-saying coach; Reed Morano who via Pulse Films made her first major ad splash with Saatchi's "How Do You See Me?" featuring a girl with Down syndrome who shares how she sees herself; and Cole Webley who helmed the 84 Lumber Super Bowl spot which drives us to his online piece depicting the journey of a mother and daughter from Mexico to the U.S. border.

Also evoking empathy through their

series includes coverage of a DP, Simon Niblett, who shot *The Eagle Huntress*, a feature documentary centering on the 13-year-old Aisholopan, a girl living in Mongolia and aspiring to be an eagle hunter, a role that is male dominated.

It's said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. And as reflected in our Directors Series, when you walk in someone else's shoes, that journey can lead to meaningful discovery.

POV

By Neil Goetz



Creating A Successful Trailer Or TV Promo

Those of us who work in the entertainment marketing industry know

all too well that creating a successful movie trailer or TV promo is an inexact science. I'm often reminded of my late mother, Marian. Not only was my mother an incredible cook and a master baker, but she knew that cooking was an art and that baking was a science. She was very instinctual as well as very methodical in her approach to everything she did in the kitchen. My mother's talents were the perfect blend of art and craft, and she remains an inspiration to me when I'm working on a brand new marketing campaign.

Undertaking any new marketing campaign without a pre-conceived, upfront creative strategy, strategic message, and a clear understanding of the intended blend of "art + science," is like taking a walk at night through the forest without a flash-

light. You're going to stumble.

I came into this entertainment marketing industry universe through one of the 4A's ad agencies, where we learned to sell products through the method of "Unique Selling Proposition." I began my career there as a copywriter, where I learned how to communicate the main selling points of an ad campaign through the use of words and ideas. The ad industry's focus on USP always involved story as well... what is the "story" about this product? How will this product improve my life and those of my friends and loved ones? How will using this product make me happy?"

I think those of us in entertainment marketing today should consider looking back at this old school advertising approach, and spend more of our time developing the clear and compelling STORY that our film or TV show is about. Unfortunately today, many marketing campaigns include very few, or even no, "words" by which to con-

vey the intent of their project. In my opinion, this might be a mistake. Once when I was working with Jeffrey Katzenberg, he wanted to just HEAR THE WORDS that were included in a trailer, so he'd know why he made that movie in the first place!

Here are five tips for entertainment marketers developing a new campaign: What is the story? What genre is this? What's the tone? Who is this show for? Do the flash and sizzle overpower the message?

Bottom line: If the campaign you're working on appears to be on shaky ground, my advice is take a step back and re-evaluate it from an "Art + Science" POV, and ensure that both are being handled properly. As my mother said, "Anyone can bake a cake, but it won't taste good unless the right ingredients—measured in the right quantities—are blended together perfectly!"

Neil Goetz is founder/executive creative director of *The Engine Room*.

DP Oliver Discusses *Get Out*

Reflects on 1st-time director Jordan Peele

By Robert Goldrich

Lensed by Toby Oliver, ACS, the comedy-horror film *Get Out*, written and directed by Jordan Peele, is a hit, recently bowing in the #1 slot in the U.S. weekend box office. *Get Out* has also garnered critical acclaim for its dark, subversive commentary about racial tensions.

The film stars Daniel Kaluuya as Chris Washington, a young African-American man, who ventures out to meet his Caucasian girlfriend's family for the first time on their estate. The girlfriend, Rose Armitage, is portrayed by Allison Williams. The story quickly and wryly descends as

he most precious. The photo boards were shot in prep about a week or so out from shooting, with Jordan and a number of the producers standing in for the characters. The other challenge was photographing our main protagonist, played by Daniel Kaluuya. Daniel has quite dark toned skin, so lighting him—particularly at night and where he is standing next to the very fair Allison Williams—required extra thought. Ultimately, Daniel's skin is amazing with a lovely subtle reflective sheen, so I found I needed to mostly light him with larger, softer sources to the side. He looked great.



"I love working with Jordan. He is a smart guy and a generous collaborator who is always happy to hear ideas."

Chris learns that many local black residents have mysteriously gone missing.

Get Out marks the directorial debut of Peele who previously was best known from the varied characters he played in the sketch comedy series *Key & Peele*.

Oliver formed a close-knit collaborative relationship with Peele on *Get Out*, bringing extensive lensing experience to the film. Oliver won an Australian Academy Award for his cinematography on the documentary *Miracle in the Storm*, while being nominated four other times for the narrative features *Looking For Alibrandi*, *Tom White* and *Beneath Hill 60* as well as the TV movie *Carlotta*.

SHOOT: What were the biggest creative challenges that *Get Out* posed to you?

OLIVER: Going into the film, there were a couple of things on my mind. Firstly—a common challenge on these lower budget movies—is how do we achieve and do justice to Jordan's script in a tight shooting schedule of 23 days? The answer is in detailed planning. To that end we spent a lot of the prep time refining and adding to Jordan's existing storyboards and also shooting a set of "photo boards" of every scene that took place at the Armitage estate, where we felt our time would

SHOOT: *Get Out* marks Jordan's directing debut, arguably making the choice of a cinematographer all the more important. Would you shed some light on the nature of your collaboration?

OLIVER: I love working with Jordan. He is a smart guy and a generous collaborator who is always happy to hear ideas about how we might cover a scene. But he is also very clear when he needs something done a certain way. He had been working with this story and developing his script for quite a few years before we went into production, so he had distinct ideas about the performance tone and the atmosphere he wanted. He also had a bunch of storyboards drawn up for key sequences. He knew what he wanted.

It's often the case that a first time director will be paired with a much more experienced DP to help them creatively realize their vision on camera and help ensure that the film is shot to budget and on schedule. I came in to perform exactly that role for Jordan. Judging by the glowing press reviews that highlight Jordan's sophisticated visual style, I humbly hope to think I made a meaningful contribution to the success of the film. Part of that

Continued on page 11

Short Takes

BODEGA GETS "NAKED AND AFRAID" FOR DISCOVERY

Content creation/production company BODEGA, with bases of operation in NY and San Francisco, teamed up with Discovery Channel to launch an all new season of the reality series *Naked and Afraid* with a promo commercial directed by Haley Geffen. Discovery VP, creative Pablo Pulido and sr. writer/producer Luke Aeschliman worked with Geffen to visualize the mentally and physically disarming act of stripping away the most basic form of bodily protection: clothing. The spot is a departure from the series' historically clip-based promos and shows a man and a woman suited up for outdoor adventures, both removing layers of clothing until they are left with only their satchels and the dirt on their skin.



"We focused on how to remove clothes in a stylized way that enhanced our concept," noted Geffen. "We didn't want the act to look silly or even sexy. On the show there's nothing sexy about being naked. So we choreographed their actions and focused on specific motions that added energy to the visuals and uniquely branded the promo without sensationalizing the nudity."

The spot was cut by Northern Lights editor Mark Tyler, who worked seamlessly with the VFX team to incorporate the effects. SuperExploder mixers Ted Gannon and Ted Marcus augmented the promo with sound design that tied together the visual transitions.

MPEG TO HONOR BENSON WITH SERVICE AWARD

The Motion Picture Editors Guild (MPEG), Local 700 IATSE, will honor member Lillian E. Benson, ACE, with its prestigious Fellowship and Service Award on Saturday, April 8, at a dinner at the Sheraton Universal Hotel in Los Angeles. The Fellowship and Service Award was established 10 years ago by the Guild's Board of Directors to recognize an individual who embodies the values the Guild holds most dear: Professionalism, Collaboration, Mentorship, Generosity of Spirit and a Commitment to the Labor Movement.

"Lillian E. Benson has had a long career editing influential and socially conscious films, and has been long active in working to increase minority participation in the filmmaking process," commented Alan Heim, ACE, president of the Editors Guild. "In addition, she has been an active member of the Board of Directors for the American Cinema Editors [ACE] as Secretary and Co-Chair of the Diversity Committee. I am honored to have even a small part in presenting her with this richly deserved award."

Previous recipients of this distinguished honor include Joseph A. Aredas; Donald O. Mitchell; Don Hall; Carol Littleton, ACE; IATSE International President Emeritus Thomas C. Short; Dede Allen, ACE; and Donn Cambern, ACE

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE...

Los Angeles-based multidisciplinary studio Golden—headed by founder/



Ross Cooper

EP Matthew Marquis and founder/director/creative director Jake Banks—has signed Ross Cooper, formerly known by the directing moniker OnelnThree. After winning two Silver D&ADs in interaction design and architecture for the live video installation *The Last Clock*, Cooper began shooting videos for bands like Two Door Cinema Club, Wild Beasts, and The Teenagers. Cooper earned assorted nominations at the Music Video Awards, including for Best New Director, Best Art Direction, and Best Budget Video. He then ventured into spotmaking with a re-creation of his VV Brown video for the song "Leave!" made for French bank BNP Paribas. Cooper has also crafted ads for brands such as Ford, O2, Trident and Betway....



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SHOOT 1st QUARTER 2017 TOP TEN

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Kia Motors' "Hero's Journey" The Mill Peter King, EP; Anastasia Von Rahl, sr. producer; Robert Sethi, VFX shoot supervisor, creative dir; Chris Knight, VFX shoot supervisor, creative dir, 2D lead artist; Tom Graham, VFX shoot supervisor, 3D lead artist; Michael Lori, tracking lead; Daniel Stern, FX lead; Michael Comly, Itg lead; Jacob Bergman, Jeffrey Lee, animation leads; Scott Wilson, Dag Ivarsson, Jason Bergman, Yukiko Ishiwata, Daniel Thuresson, Andy Dill, Tom Robbins, 2D artists; Erik Zimmermann, Berk Hakguder, Daniel So, Robert Spaniol, 3D artists; Juan Zavala, Mike Di Nocco, Katie Yancey, animators; Ziye Liu, Robert Chapman, Patrik Lindkvist, Shaun Comly, lighters; Krystal Sae Eua, Sharlene Lin, Cory Cosper, modelers; Chris Goodrich, Samantha Pedegron, textures; Rasha Shalaby, Itai Muller, matte painting; Bradley Rhone. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke, Maya, Houdini, Zbrush, Mari, Substance Painter)	David&Goliath, Los Angeles	MUZ, bicoastal/international Matthijs Van Heijningen, director
2	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Honda's "Up" MPC London Bill McNamara, creative director; Sophie Hogg, VFX producer; Mike Little, lead 3D; Iain Murray, lead 2D; George K, colorist. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke, Maya, Photoshop)	Wieden+Kennedy, London	Colonel Blimp, London Pedro Martin-Calero, director
3	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Walmart's "The Gift" Zero VFX, Venice, Calif., and Boston Sean Devereaux, VFX creative director/partner; Mike Warner, CG supervisor; Brian Drewes, VFX exec producer; Stella Shalta, VFX coordinator. (Toolbox: Maya, Houdini, Nuke, 3DEqualizer, Mari, Zbrush)	Saatchi & Saatchi New York	Wondros, Los Angeles Antoine Fuqua, director
4	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	RTS/Halo Wars 2's "War of Wits" Electric Theatre Collective (ETC), Santa Monica, Calif. Kate Hitchings, exec producer; Scott Boyajan, producer; Eric Mason, lead Flame; Gretchen Capatan, Kevin Jones, Dave Damant, 2D artists; Adam Singer, graphic animation. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke, After Effects)	215MCCANN, San Francisco	Smuggler, bicoastal/international Randy Krallman, director
5	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Nike's "Equality" The Mission, Venice, Calif. Patrick Ferguson, VFX supervisor; Michael Vaglienty, Susanne Scharring, Edward Black, Adam Flynn, Flame artists; Piotr Karwas, animation director; Diana Cheng, VFX producer; Michael Pardee, managing director. (Toolbox: Flame, Maya)	Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore.	PRETTYBIRD, Culver City, Calif. Melina Matsoukas, director
6	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Microsoft's "Change The Odds" Framestore New York Sarah Hiddlestone, head of production/EP Karen Czukerberg, sr. producer; Raven Sia, sr. producer; Karl Woolley, head of VR; Andy Rowan Robinson, creative director; Steve Drew, compositing supervisor; Raul Ortego, head of Flame; Beau Leon, colorist; Jonah Braun, color assist; Marc Smith, Abram Seaman, designers; Patrick Ross, Georgios Cherouvim, Georgios Papaioannou, Jacob Slutsky, Glory Zheng, Mohamed Edhkouna, Sean Curran, Shayne Ryan, Will Frazier, 3D; Dan Giraldo, Elaina Brillantes, Jose Arauz, Giulia Bartra, Ranran Meng, Chihcheng Peng, Liz Yang, compositing; Callum McKeveny, Rob Go, 2D; Ben Cronin, Deepa Paulus, Katie Rhodes, Megan De Wolf, Paul O'Brien, Savneet Nagi, Tim Greenwood, Tim Osborne, VFX Support from Framestore's London office. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke, Maya, After Effects, Houdini, 3D Equalizer)	M/united//McCann, NY	Tool of North America, bicoastal JJ Adler, director
7	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	GE's "Unimpossible Mission—You Can't Unring a Bell" a52, Santa Monica, Calif. Linda Carlson, Jennifer Soño Hall, managing directors; Patrick Nugent, exec producer; Kim Christensen, head of production; Drew Rissman, producer; Andy Rafael Barrios, VFX supervisor. (Toolbox: Flame, After Effects, Photoshop, Maya)	BBDO New York	Bullitt, West Hollywood, Calif. Diego Contreras, director
8	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	BBC Radio 4's "William Shatner On Mars" Aardman Animations, Bristol, UK Danny Capozzi, director; Helen Argo, producer; Daniel Blore, Alasdair Wynn, After Effects; Dave Connolly, David McKenna, Flash; Luke Panayiotou, paint work; Enty, modelmaking; Benjamin Craske, Dan Pask, Nikk Fielden, editors; Nathan Sale, Adam Cook, studio floor. (Toolbox: After Effects, Flash, Premiere)	not applicable (client-direct project)	Aardman Animations, Bristol, UK Danny Capozzi, director
9	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Geico's "Cuckoo Clock" Alkemy X, New York Steve Sanchez, VFX supervisor; Leah Orsini, EP; Dave Zeevalk, CG supervisor; Ari Amrami, VFX producer; Adam Stockholm, 3D artist; Chris West, compositor; Alejandro Monzon, Ellen Miki, Kristen Millette, Christopher Reimann, paint artists; Kambra Miller, roto artist. (Toolbox: Nuke, Maya, Mental Ray, Syntheyes)	The Martin Agency, Richmond, Va.	Tool of North America, bicoastal Benji Weinstein, director (he has since joined Smuggler)
10	 CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	WeatherTech's "Tech Team" Zoic Studios, Culver City, Calif. Chris Jones, executive creative director; Ian Untereiner, EP/head of production; Jeff Blodgett, EP; Derek Johnson, EP; Anne Sollish, coordinator; Julien Briani, VFX supervisor; Scott Rosekrans, CG supervisor; Vince Blin, Nicholas Daniels, Flame artists; An Dang, Flame assist (Toolbox: Maya, Vray, Flame, Illustrator, Cinema 4D, Octane, Nuke)	Pinnacle Advertising, Schaumburg, IL	Fancy Content, bicoastal Brent Jones, director

See story on #1 Chart entry on page 10



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COMMERCIALS • FEATURES

SHOOT. 1st QUARTER 2017 TOP TEN TRACKS

MUSIC & SOUND

TITLE

MUSIC/SOUND

AUDIO POST

AGENCY

PRODUCTION

1



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Jose Cuervo's
"Last Days"**

Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif.
Andrew Feltenstein, John Nau, composers; Adrea Lavezzoli, exec producer.
Track: "It's Now or Never" by Elvis Presley with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
Lime Studios, Santa Monica, Calif.
Mark Meyuhdas, sound designer

Lime Studios, Santa Monica, Calif.
Mark Meyuhdas, mixer; Susie Boyajan, exec producer

CP+B LA

Rattling Stick, Santa Monica, Calif.
Ringan Ledwidge, director

2



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**Evony's "Battle of
Evony"**

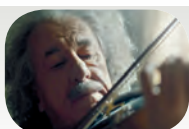
Q Department, New York

One Union Recording Studios, San Francisco
Eben Carr, mixer

BSSP, Sausalito, Calif.

Furlined, Santa Monica, Calif.
Henry Hobson, director

3



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

NatGeo's "Genius"

JSM Music, New York
Music supervision
Joel Simon, chief creative officer
Song: "Bad Romance" written by Lady Gaga and RedOne.

Soundsquare, Prague
Karel Havlicek, mixer

McCann New York

Smuggler, bicoastal/international
Ivan Zacharias, director

4



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

Levi's "Sea of Blue"

SOUTH Music+Sound Design
music supervision
Song: "Nothin' Like This" by The Phantoms

Barking Owl, West Los Angeles
Patrick Navarre, mixer

FCB West, San Francisco

Pulse Films,
bicoastal/international
Mike Piscitelli, Michael
Haussman, directors

5



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**The Recording
Academy/The 59th
Grammys "It Was You"**

Barking Owl, West Los Angeles
Houston Fry, composer; Patrick Navarre, sound design; Kelly Bayett, creative director

Barking Owl, West Los Angeles
Patrick Navarre, mixer

TBWA\Chiat\Day, Los Angeles

Tool of North America, bicoastal
Rachel McDonald, director

6



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**The Lincoln Motor
Company/Harman's
"Cord"**

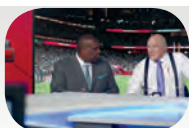
Yessian Music & Sound, New York
Marlene Bartos, EP; Gerard Smerek, mixer/recording producer; Andy Grush, creative director; Michael Yessian, head of production; Brian Yessian, CCO; Weston Fonger, sound designer.
Song: "The Healing"; Gary Clark Jr., artist.

Yessian NY
Weston Fonger, mixer

Hudson Rouge, New York

RadicalMedia,
bicoastal/international
Josh + Xander, directors

7



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

Tide's "Comeback"

Nylon Studios, New York
Adam Moses, composer; Rob Ballingall, sound designer; Hamish Macdonald, global EP; Christina Carlo, NY EP.

Heard City, New York
Philip Loeb, mixer

Saatchi & Saatchi New York

Anonymous Content,
Culver City, Calif.
Max Sherman, director

8



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

Duracell's "Ear Hair"

Butter Music + Sound, bicoastal

Mackenzie Cutler, NY
Sam Shaffer, mixer

Wieden+Kennedy, New York

MIZ, bicoastal/international
Steve Ayson, director

9



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

**University of Phoenix's
"Carlos"**

stimmung, Santa Monica, Calif.
Matt Powell, music; Gus Koven, sound designer; Rory Doggett, creative director; Kristina Iwankiw, exec producer.

Eleven, Santa Monica
Mike Franklin, mixer

180LA

The Corner Shop,
Santa Monica, Calif.
Peter Thwaites, director

10



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >](#)

Vodafone's "Get Closer"

Bang Europe, Prague
Steve Walsh, Viliam Béres, Brad Stratton, composers.

Soundsquare, Prague
Marek Hart, mixer

McCann, Prague

Savage, Prague/New York
Vojta Kotek, director

“Last Days” First In Chart

Beacon Street scores for Jose Cuervo, CP+B LA

A SHOOT Staff Report

Ad agency CP+B LA conceptualized for client Jose Cuervo tequila this two-minute online video—from which a :60 for national TV has been culled—depicting how bar customers choose to spend their last moments when civilization crumbles around them. As the impending doom worsens outside in a most cinematic way, the party crowd brings the “Tomorrow is Overrated” campaign message to life by doubling down on their music, dancing and drinking.

Ringan Ledwidge of Rattling Stick directed “Last Days” which features a man and woman who come together even as the bar is being ripped apart by a tornado and other forces of nature. He selects on the jukebox “It’s Now Or Never” performed by Elvis Presley. A nearby lass is inspired to join the gent to figuratively face the music and literally dance.

“This campaign bluntly points out that whatever awaits us tomorrow might not be that great of a reason to miss out the fun you could be having tonight,” said Kevin Jones, chief creative officer of CP+B LA.

Adam Arkapaw, ACS lensed “Last Days,” with VFX from Electric Theatre Collective.

Beacon Street

Beacon Street Studios in Venice, Calif., served as music house, with sound design and audio post by Lime Studios.

Anerew Feltenstein and John Nau were the Beacon Street composers, working with a Presley rendition of “It’s Now or Never.”

Mark Meyuhas of Lime was both sound designer and audio post mixer.



Andrew Feltenstein (l) & John Nau

Composers Feltenstein and Nau said that among the prime creative challenges they experienced on the job was seamlessly integrating their version of the song with the original Elvis track, making the actors sound as if they were a part of the song without making it sound like a Broadway show while also synching up the piano part to make it look like the female bar patron was actually playing.

Feltenstein and Nau got their sound to complement “It’s Now Or Never” by paying close attention to the original piano sound, citing director Ledwidge as providing helpful guidance.

CP+B and Ledwidge brought Nau and Feltenstein in before the shoot to help flush out the idea musically. The demo was to be used as a guide on set to sing to. But after the piece was shot, the Beacon Street team went back to redo the music and match the way the piano player moved and performed. Beacon Street also re-recorded all of the actors singing. Both Feltenstein and Nau described the spot as a cool project that they were both psyched to be a part of.



Jose Cuervo Tequila’s “Last Days”



Henry Jackman

Jackman Scores Kong: Skull Island

Composer Henry Jackman delivers a powerful score in *Kong: Skull Island*. The film is a reboot of the *King Kong* franchise and will serve as the second film in Legendary’s *MonsterVerse*, and as a prequel to the 2014 film *Godzilla*. This is the first collaboration between Jackman and director Jordan Vogt-Roberts. Jackman stated, “It was an amazing experience to work on a movie whose main character [King Kong] had such a rich Hollywood heritage. Bring-

ing that character into the 21st century meant we were able to use the symphony orchestra one would expect from a *Kong* film, whilst simultaneously involving guitars and modern electronic elements. Working with Jordan was great—he brought his own unique take on an already established story.”

When a scientific expedition to an uncharted island awakens titanic forces of nature, a mission of discovery becomes an explosive war between monster and man. Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L. Jackson, Brie Larson, John Goodman and John C. Reilly star in the original new adventure that reveals the untold story of how Kong became King. The film is distributed by Warner Bros. and opened in theaters on March 10, topping that weekend’s box office. WaterTower Music is releasing the score soundtrack album, both digitally and physically, which too became available on March 10.

Jackman’s other recent projects include the Tom Cruise-led action thriller film *Jack Reacher: Never Go Back* as well as the American period drama, *Birth of a Nation*, which was based on the story of Nat Turner, the enslaved man who led a slave rebellion in Southampton County, Virginia, in 1831.

Bollywood Sound Engineer Nair Chooses Halo Upmix

NUGEN Audio has announced that Sreejesh Nair, a Mumbai, India-based audio/mix engineer and pro audio solutions specialist for Avid, has chosen NUGEN Audio’s Halo Upmix plug-in for stereo-to-5.1/7.1/9.1 upmixing. Nair uses Halo to produce a powerfully immersive upmix on a broad range of cinema projects, including the sound tracks of well-known Bollywood titles.



Sreejesh Nair

With more than 250 film titles to his credit, Nair has served as a senior re-recording mixer for Rajkamal Studios (FutureWorks) in Mumbai, in addition to his role at Avid. While most

of his work has been on Bollywood movies, he has also worked as a version mixer for Hollywood releases from Warner, Disney, Paramount, and other studios. Nair chose Halo Upmix after searching for an upmixing tool that could not only deliver surround output that sounds as close as possible to the original, but also allow him to work efficiently and save time.

“Advances in technology have given audio engineers more flexibility to deliver complex mixes. But the new efficiencies mean we’re expected to deliver much more in less time—while still reaching for inspiration and new ideas,” Nair said. “My colleagues and I first discovered Halo Upmix at IBC2015, and right away we could see that Halo is an extremely immersive tool. I knew I had found the upmixing tool I was looking for when I heard the reverbs, pads, and instruments open up in a Halo-upmixed song to deliver a cohesive-sounding track.”

In addition to Halo Upmix, Nair is a satisfied user of several other NUGEN Audio tools—including the Seq-S equalizer, which allows him to apply a spectral mixing method, and the Monofilter and Stereoizer plugins. In combination with Halo, Nair is able to use these tools to create a sonic placement that is unique in texture and sound. “Sree is precisely the type of audio professional for whom we designed Halo Upmix. He has seen many profound technology changes throughout his career, and he’s helped advance sound engineering in key ways,” said Jon Schorah, creative director, NUGEN Audio.

“Hero’s Journey” For The Mill

Kia Super Bowl ad stars eco-warrior McCarthy

A SHOOT Staff Report

Continued from page 6

A breaching whale. A falling tree. Melting icecaps. A charging rhinoceros. These are the extreme challenges Melissa McCarthy faces in Kia Motors’ hilarious Super Bowl ad for the all-new 2017 Niro crossover out of agency David&Goliath. Titled “Hero’s Journey,” the :60, which tops our quarterly VFX.Animation Chat, aired during the Big Game with McCarthy on a mission to save the environment.

McCarthy learns it can be perilous trying to save the trees, the whales, the icecaps or the rhinos. Each time she gets the worst end of the exchange, including when a surging whale emerges from the sea and dives back down onto her small motorboat, catapulting McCarthy towards the side of a distant ship with a thud. Clearly trying to be a savior carries its pitfalls—albeit in this case McCarthy experiences a harmless strain of cartoon-like violence which has her up and running in no time to take on the next challenge, in this case more mishaps centered on a falling tree, breaking icecaps, and then a hard charging rhino.

Luckily, McCarthy drives a Kia Niro, the vehicle that’s up for any adventure, underscoring that “it’s hard to be an eco-warrior but it’s easy to drive like one.”

Matthijs Van Heijningen of MJZ directed the spot with visual effects by The Mill.

The Mill

The Mill LA primarily worked on “Hero’s Journey” with its London office also contributing. The commercial posed assorted creative challenges, some of which were articulated by The Mill’s Tom Graham who served as VFX shoot supervisor and 3D lead artist on the piece.

Graham shared, “Everyone was in agreement that the CG had to be completely seamless. With full CG ocean shots with a whale and a digital double, a tree falling off a cliff, icebergs crumbling, and a rhino, we knew it would be tight in the amount of time we had. The clients were mainly concerned with keeping the story clear to the viewers with so much happening.”

Additionally, continued Graham, “It was also a challenge to complete a massive job like this in the midst of Super Bowl season!



Tom Graham

We had some heavy rendering to do with large Houdini sims. Therefore, we had to manage our render time and set priorities for each sequence in the commercial. For example, we set high priorities on certain shots for water simulation and ice breaking to get the heavy rendering in a good place that kept us on schedule.”

Helping the process was The Mill’s track record of collaboration with director Van Heijningen. And those collaborations included past Super Bowl commercials such as 2015’s “The Perfect Getaway Vehicle” for Kia and 2012’s “Vampire Party” for Audi. The Mill also turned out effects for Van Heijningen-directed fare that included DirecTV’s “Ice,” “Tree,” “Landing” and “Clap,” Verizon’s “A Lot Can Happen in 48 Hours,” Gatorade’s “Lightning Bolt,” Heineken’s “Crack The Case,” Rexona’s “Over-Engineered,” “Futurisk” and “Unbeaten Protection,” PlayStation’s “Perfect Day,” Brand Jordan’s “Rise Above,” and Arca Ex’s “Birds.”

The Mill team deployed varied software on “Hero’s Journey.” On the 3D front, all assets were modeled in Maya/Zbrush, and textured in Substance Painter (except for the whale which was textured in Mari/Zbrush). The Mill team rendered the rhino, tree and ship in Maya using Arnold. The whale, water and ice were rendered in Houdini using Mantra. 2D tools deployed included Flame and Nuke.

David&Goliath’s creative ensemble included founder/chairman David Angelo, chief creative officers Bobby Pearce and Colin Jeffery, executive creative director Gustavo Sarkis, ECD/writer Ben Purcell, writer Mark Montiero, creative director John O’Hea, associate creative directors Courtney Pulver and Robert Casillas, and exec broadcast producer Curt O’Brien.

VFX & Animation Developments

UK Studio Outpost Provides VFX For Netflix’s *iBoy*

Bournemouth, UK-based VFX studio Outpost is the sole provider of VFX for the Wigwam Films/Netflix project, *iBoy*, directed by Adam Randall and based on the Kevin Brooks novel.



iBoy

The film, starring Bill Milner, Maisie Williams, Rory Kinnear and Miranda Richardson, is the story of 16 year old Tom, who awakens from a coma to discover that fragments of

his smart phone have embedded in his brain, giving him superhero powers. Outpost provided all 150 shots, the vast amount of which were coined “iVision,” which is how the protagonist connects with and manipulates technology. These shots consisted of motion graphic elements that were composited in Nuke. The work also involved numerous digital matte paintings in and around London, green screen window replacements, SFX enhancement and basic cleanup/wire removal/crew removal.

Outpost VFX supervisor David Sadler-Coppard was running this project and on set throughout, working closely with director Randall. All 150 shots were turned around in seven weeks—a tight timeframe to design, animate and comp all the iVision shots as well as a big CG superpower and the entire title sequence. *iBoy* has been made globally available to watch on Netflix.

In the past year Outpost has provided VFX for a slate of feature films including: *Jason Bourne* (Universal), *My Beautiful Broken Brain* (Netflix), and *Under The Shadow* (Wigwam Films). The studio is currently providing VFX on: *Salty* (Salty Films), *Final Score* (Signature Entertainment) and *Interlude in Prague* (Stillking Films).

MPC’s Valdez Wins Oscar For *The Jungle Book*

MPC VFX supervisor Adam Valdez was honored at the 89th Academy Awards® for the studio’s innovative work on Disney’s *The Jungle Book*, winning the Oscar for Visual Effects.

Valdez accepted the award on behalf of MPC’s team of more than 800 artists, production and technologists based in London, Los Angeles and Bangalore, who worked on *The Jungle Book* for two years.

As lead VFX studio, MPC had its artists build a complex photo-real world creating *The Jungle Book*’s stunning CG environments and bringing the film’s iconic animal characters to life. Best friend Baloo the bear, Mowgli’s wolf family, Bagheera the panther, Kaa the python, and the villainous tiger Shere Khan would be built bone, skin, hair and whisker. 54 species of animals and 224 unique animals were created and new computer programs were made to better simulate muscles, skin and fur.

Valdez said on Oscar night, “This is a very proud day for me and my crew at MPC. I speak for everyone who was lucky enough to work with Jon Favreau and the great team at Disney when I say how grateful we are for this honor from the Academy. Taking part in making a great film is a rare gift.



Photo by courtesy of Disney

Being recognized for our craft is deeply gratifying.”

The movie—with its single live actor in a totally digital environment—brought unprecedented challenges. MPC met these challenges by marshaling its resources—including parent company Technicolor and their

The Jungle Book color pipeline and finishing artists—in new ways. MPC and Technicolor have a long history of building large-scale productions across many networks. Utilizing all the resources they’ve been building over the past several years for this project, they were able to put that technology at the service of the storyteller.

This is the second Oscar awarded to MPC for VFX, the first for its contributions to *Life of Pi* in 2013, as well as receiving nine prior nominations.

Toby Oliver, ACS Sheds Light On Lensing Get Out

Continued from page 4

is helping Jordan find the best choice of camera angles to advance the story and emotion while ensuring he gets enough coverage and setups in a day to give him plenty of options in post. Another part is creating a lighting and color plan that hits the right tone, feel and mood for his story. It is also important—and I do this with more established directors as well—to

back them up and support them in making the best version of their movie as humanly possible. There are often budget or political pressures where compromise is required – sometimes significantly. I feel it's the DP's role to help the director keep as much of their vision intact as possible.

SHOOT: What was your choice of camera(s) for *Get Out* and why? Choice

of lenses and why?

OLIVER: I used the ARRI ALEXA Mini for both cameras. I chose them for their cinematic image quality, reliability and much smaller size and weight than the original ALEXA. I find the Mini allows faster changeovers between hand-held Steadicam and studio mode and is also faster to move between setups. We chose to use Angenieux Optimo zoom lenses

exclusively. I showed Jordan a range of prime lens kits in prep, but he felt more comfortable working with zoom lenses. They gave us sufficient flexibility and the Optimos have a lovely cinematic quality. Not too perfect or clinical, which worked well with the ALEXAs. I also used Tiffen Glimmerglass diffusion filters at all times to take the edge off the digital image and add a subtle glow to highlights.

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Kelly Paige

Film Florida Looks To Save State Film Office

For the first time since 2004, Florida does not have a state-wide program to entice film, television and digital media projects and companies to the Sunshine State. Since last summer, Film Florida—headed by president Kelly Paige—has been working with stakeholders to create multiple options for the industry that would bring more work, jobs and spending to Florida.

However, recently the Florida House also filed a bill (HB 7005) that would close, among other agencies, the Florida Office of Film and Entertainment (the State Film Office), an entity that has been in existence for more than 40 years. This bill would also end the Entertainment Industry Sales Tax Exemption program, a program thousands of Florida-based companies have benefited from since 2001, most of which are small businesses.

In response Film Florida has set its priorities which are to fight the proposed tax increase on the industry, to keep the Florida Office of Film and Entertainment open, and to ensure that the world gets the message that Florida is open for business and remains interested in recruiting theatrical feature films and television shows. Film Florida plans to continue meeting with and educating legislators so they understand the importance of our industry to Florida's jobs and tourism economies.

AFCI Sets Speaker Slate For Locations Panel

The Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) and its industry partner Lightsource Asia Media Group unveiled their panelist slate for the Sustainable Production: Think Global, Act Local panel session as a part of the AFCI Locations, Global Production & Finance Conference, that runs April 6-8, 2017 at the Marriott Burbank and Convention Center in Burbank, Calif.

Sustainable Production incorporates practices into the production process that reduce negative environmental impacts, engage positively with the community and align with the overall production budget.

Sponsored by Creative BC and supported by the Motion Picture Production Industry Association of BC and Western Economic Diversification, the Sustainable Production session is scheduled for Friday, April 7, from 2:45pm - 3:45pm, featuring panelists: Julie Bernard, manager of production services, Creative BC;

Matthew Carlisle, EVP, Physical Production, Paramount Television; Lisa Day, director, Energy Initiative, 20th Century Fox; moderator

Zena Harris, president, Green Spark Group; Emellie O'Brien, founder and president, Earth Angel

(NY); and Mike Slavich, director, Sustainability, Warner Bros. Entertainment

In addition to the conference, the AFCI Locations Show will provide more than 2,600 media content producers and industry professionals direct access to at least 80 AFCI film commission members and dozens of service industry partners exhibiting from more than 30 countries representing billions of dollars in film incentives and resources on-site.

Fast Color To Lens In New Mexico

New Mexico Film Office director Nick Maniatis announced that the indie feature *Fast Color* produced by LD Entertainment began principal photography in mid-March running through mid-April in Albuquerque. The production will employ approximately 100 New Mexico crew members, five to seven New Mexico principal actors and more than 300 New Mexico background talent. The feature is directed by Julia Hart (*Miss Stevens*) and produced by Mickey Liddell (*Jackie, Anthropoid, Risen*, and upcoming 2017 release *Megan Leavey*), Pete Shilaimon (*Anthropoid, Risen* and *Megan Leavey*) and Jordan Horowitz (*La La Land, Miss Stevens*, and *The Kids Are All Right*).

Starring Gugu Mbatha-Raw, *Fast Color* is the story of a young woman forced to go on the run when her superhuman abilities are discovered. Years after having abandoned her family, the only place she has left to hide is home.



Welcome

to the Special Spring 2017 Edition of SHOOT's Directors Series. Our mix of profiles includes: James Mangold who made a superhero film, *Logan*, that has broken all the conventions of that genre; Niki Caro who directed the soon-to-be-released *The Zookeeper's Wife* based on the best-selling book of the same title; and Marc Forster, a feature filmmaker (*Monster's Ball, Finding Neverland*) who made his latest Oscars mark during the ceremony telecast

with an ambitious Walmart commercial out of Saatchi NY. All three feature helmers have commercialmaking affiliations—Mangold with Aero Film, Caro with Flying Fish in New Zealand, and Forster's being Tool of North America.

Also in the SHOOT Series lineup of profiles are: Derek Cianfrance of RadicalMedia who recently won the DGA Award for best commercial director of the year; Jim Jenkins of O Positive who reflects on his live Snickers spot on the Super Bowl; Cole Webley of Sanctuary who shares insights into his thought-provoking Super Bowl commercial and online film for 84 Lumber; Reed Morano who's made a major splash in the ad sector via Pulse Films, indie features with *Meadowland*, and TV with the upcoming Hulu series *The Handmaid's Tale* starring Elizabeth Moss; and Henrik Hansen of RSA who's branched out beyond his visual, visceral automotive fare with people-based shorts that delve into the work, philosophy and lives of notable artists.

Meanwhile our ensemble of up-and-coming talent consists of two duos and three individual directors. One duo recently scored the Documentary Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival while securing commercialmaking and branded content representation. Then we have a pair of siblings whose spec work landed them representation within the RSA family of companies. Another director helmed and co-created an online branded series that has propelled his ad/filmmaking career. And then we have two solo directors who made the Commercial Directors Diversity Program grade; the CDDP being the joint AICP/DGA initiative promoting inclusiveness for female and minority directors.

Our Festival Circuit coverage provides directorial perspectives on the SXSW and Tribeca film festivals.

And then in our Cinematographers & Cameras Series, we meet three DPs—a two-time Best Cinematography Oscar nominee who lensed *Logan* for director Mangold; a two-time Emmy nominee who shot Ryan Murphy's *Feud: Bette and Joan* for FX; and the eye behind the lauded cinematic documentary *The Eagle Huntress*, directed by Otto Bell.

Both our Up-and-Coming Directors and Cinematographers & Cameras Series feature stories as well as several of the director profiles have been edited for this print issue. All these stories can be seen in their entirety in our 3/27 Special Directors Series SHOOT>e.dition and on SHOOTonline. So read on and enjoy. As always, we welcome your feedback.



—Robert Goldrich

Editor

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Director Profiles

Niki Caro.....	13
Derek Cianfrance.....	14
Henrik Hansen.....	14
Marc Forster.....	15
Jim Jenkins.....	16
James Mangold.....	17
Reed Morano.....	18
Cole Webley.....	18

Features

Up-And-Coming Directors	
Assembling The Spring Collection.....	20
Festival Circuit	
Director Perspectives On SXSW, Tribeca....	23
Cinematographers & Cameras	
From Superheroes To Hollywood Icons And A Real Heroine.....	25

Niki Caro

Power of the human spirit

By Robert Goldrich

From the horrifically inhumane can sometimes spring the best that humanity has to offer. Such decency and heroism are captured in director Niki Caro's *The Zookeeper's Wife* which tells the real-life story of the former director of the Warsaw Zoo, Dr. Jan Zabinski (portrayed by Johan Heldenbergh), and his wife Antonina (Jessica Chastain), who jointly saved some 300 Jews by hiding them during World War II. Based on a screenplay by Angela Work-

them refuge, sustenance and hope. In the process, Jan and Antonina place themselves and their children in jeopardy.

Based on Antonina's actual diaries, the book and now film provide a woman's perspective on the Holocaust, on surviving, on family, friendship, personal sacrifice, and the need to take action in the face of evil and injustice.

When first approached with the project, Caro had been unaware of the story but upon reading the first few pages of Workman's first draft, she was hooked, particularly drawn to the prospect of being able to convey a feminine POV. Still there were many challenges, including the solemn responsibility of doing full justice to such an important, inspiring, true story.

On a more practical level, Caro noted that the challenges included depicting wartime on a tight budget—not to mention recreating a zoo and destroying it. "Plus I couldn't conceive of telling an authentic story by using fake animals, CG creations or something along those lines, even if we had the budget to do so. We had to devise a way to populate a zoo while filming the animals in a humane and respectful way."

As for the big picture, Caro said she wanted "a combination of the intimate and the epic in framing this story and the way it was shot." On that front, she teamed for the first time with cinematographer Andrij Parekh. "He came highly recommended by one of our producers. He shot some great work such as *Half Nelson* and *Blue Valentine*. I have a really strong instinct for people and saw we shared a very

similar vision for this story. He's a terrific collaborator—we were pretty much joined at the hip throughout. We fought valiantly to shoot on film but it ultimately was too tough to do budget-wise. I wound up greatly admiring Andrij's ability to accomplish what he did in the digital medium. He made digital look so delicate and really gorgeous. We had soft blacks and feminine colors. Some people told me they were surprised to see a Holocaust film look so beautiful. Most accounts of war films are about the male experience, which often take on a rather grim palette. Ours was sort of the opposite as we focused on women, children, animals."

Caro observed that showing this beauty, particularly before the Germans invaded, added a dimension to the story. The devastation of such a beautiful world underscored yet another sense of loss.

Caro also credited another first-time collaborator, production designer Suzie Davies, an Oscar nominee for *Mr. Turner*. "I could tell right away from her selection of images that she absolutely had the right sense of this story. Suzy built me a zoo. What more can I say? It was beautiful and then we had to destroy it. She beautifully captured a period of time before the invasion when Warsaw was the Paris of the north—a cosmopolitan city that was devastated by the war."

In sharp contrast to never having worked with Davies and Parekh prior to *The Zookeeper's Wife*, Caro brought in a trusted confidante, David Coulson, who has edited five of her features includ-



Photo by Anne-Marie Fox/Courtesy of Focus Features

ing *Whale Rider* (2002), *North Country* (2005), and *McFarland, USA* (2015). *Whale Rider* earned a Best Actress Oscar nomination for Keisha Castle-Hughes. For *North Country*, Charlize Theron and Frances McDormand were nominated, respectively, for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress Academy Awards.

For *The Zookeeper's Wife*, while Caro was shooting in Prague, Coulson was editing in L.A. "I would not be able to do that with anybody but David," affirmed Caro. "We have a shorthand and a tremendous trust in each other. He knows exactly what to do with the images. He interprets my work brilliantly. He absolutely knows what I'm intending. He has a deep feel for performance, the rhythms of a film."

Before teaming on features, Coulson cut several commercials directed by Caro. The director said she still enjoys the spot-making experience and would like to be more active on that front in the American market. Caro told *SHOOT* that she's open to connecting with a like-minded commercial production house in the U.S. She continues to be handled Down Under for spots by New Zealand production company Flying Fish where she's helmed, for example, Cannes Lions-honored work for HBF health insurance out of Aussie ad agency Meerkats.



Niki Caro (l) directs Johan Heldenbergh man, adapted from Diane Ackerman's nonfiction book of the same title, this feature film opens on an idyllic life as the Warsaw Zoo flourishes under Jan's stewardship and Antonina's care.

But their world is torn apart when the Germans invade Poland. The zoo sustains heavy damage and is taken over by the Nazis as a command post. Many of the animals are slaughtered yet Jan and Antonina fight back on their own terms as they covertly begin working with the Resistance. Their zoo's abandoned animal cages and underground tunnels, originally designed to safeguard animal life, can now secretly safeguard human life as they "smuggle" Jews in from the Warsaw Ghetto, giving

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Derek Cianfrance

Commerce becomes art

By Robert Goldrich

What started out as a livelihood has become a lively art for Derek Cianfrance as underscored by his recent DGA Award win for Achievement in Commercials.

Cianfrance, who's with RadicalMedia, earned the Directors Guild honor on the strength of four entries: Nike Golf's "Chase"; Powerade's "Doubts" and "Expectations"; and Squarespace's "Manifesto." The Nike and Powerade commercials were conceived by Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore., while the Squarespace piece was out of Anomaly New York.

"You have to maintain a sense of per-

spective about an award like this," observed Cianfrance. "It's tough to say one person's work was or is the best. I don't really subscribe to that as a film watcher or someone who enjoys art. Art isn't sports. There is no clear-cut winner. You're trying to execute concepts in the clearest ways for different brands. There are plenty of directors who do this masterfully and weren't even nominated. Something you just get lucky to be recognized."

Cianfrance feels fortunate in other respects beyond awards. "I'm lucky in recent years to be getting great concepts, to have my filmmaking process take hold in commercials, and to have my feelings evolve about the art of commercialmaking."

On the latter score, Cianfrance recalled years ago having to break open a piggy bank to get change to buy diapers for his then baby son. He had been struggling as a filmmaker, focusing on a feature project. Yet sobered by the prospect of being responsible for supporting a young family,

he became more practical.

"I took a job doing a commercial for a mortgage company or something. When I got to the set, I felt so rusty. And it all came from the nostalgic idea of keeping myself 'pure.' By being 'pure,' I wasn't being as active as I should have been. I realized I had to get to the gym so to speak and start working out, start exploring, getting in shape to make film—whether a commercial or a feature. I learned all over again how to work with actors and crews. I amassed so many hours on set. At the same time when I got to make my feature [*Blue Valentine*], it was the living I made in commercials that saved me. I remember getting a call that we were \$75,000 over budget on *Blue Valentine* and if we didn't find a way to get that money by the next morning we wouldn't be able to continue. My director's fee on *Blue Valentine* was \$75,000. The fact that I was doing commercials meant I could sacrifice my fee. I put my fee back into the movie. I still paid



taxes on that fee so in essence I paid to make *Blue Valentine*."

But that proved to be a more than worthwhile investment. *Blue Valentine* went on to earn an Oscar nomination (Best Actress for Michelle Williams) as well as Golden Camera and Un Certain Regard Award nominations at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival. Cianfrance has gone on to direct such features as *The Place Beyond the Pines* (2012) and last year's release, *The Light Between Oceans*.

As his journey back and forth between commercials and features continued, Cianfrance started to see that both filmmaking disciplines could be truly artistic as his process for spots and longform be-

Continued on page 19



The Light Between Oceans

Henrik Hansen

Artistry and humanity

By Robert Goldrich

Quipping that he could shoot cars until he's "ready for the coffin," director Henrik Hansen of RSA Films is known for his far reaching visual sensibilities, marked by innovative use of light to capture riveting action—often further enhanced by compelling characters who put viewers into the throes of that action.

Hansen continues to take this work to new levels—and in the case of Range Rover's "Inferno Downhill Challenge," new altitudes. The film captures a Range Rover Sport taking on nature's track in the Swiss Alps, the province of "crazy skiers." Hansen zigzags the Sport across the rugged

terrain of an 88-year-old Downhill Challenge course known for its motto, "never brake." The piece meshes breathtaking aerial photography, exhilarating yet at the same time borderline harrowing off-road race footage, candid performance from precision driver Ben Collins (of *Top Gear* fame), and first-person interviews.

This tour de force work, though, isn't enough for Hansen. Not content to rest on his visceral automotive ad laurels, he has independently diversified into short films that are character studies, delving into the lives of artists, creating portraits that shed light on them personally and professionally. Hansen's docu short about custom motorcycle builder Shinya Kimura, founder of Zero Engineering in Japan before going off to launch Chabott Engineering in Azusa, Calif., has earned critical acclaim, including being nominated for a Vimeo documentary award. Hansen profiles the very zen Kimura who shares his unique process for hand-crafting powerful Zero-style, back-to-basics bikes in an era of

contemporary mass production. Kimura test-drives them himself in the Southern California desert. His high-performance bikes are akin to functional art as Kimura's aesthetic values and philosophy yield sculpturally unique designs. Combining form and function, the bikes straddle the line of consumerism and collectible art.

Hansen's latest docu short, *Tracker*, portrays legendary Dire Straits songwriter and front man Mark Knopfler, a virtuoso guitarist. Hansen takes us to a recording studio in Knopfler's rural English home. We meet a famed yet strikingly unassuming artist with a self-deprecating sense of humor—he recalls the band's members originally let him play guitar only because he was their songwriter. Hansen's work environment is an amalgam of old and new tech, replete with the sound (and smell) of magnetic tape. *Tracker*, though, goes beyond work environs as Hansen takes us on a walk along with Knopfler in the woods with his two greyhounds under a grey sky in view of a melancholic yet



majestic sea. It's almost as if we're getting reacquainted with an old friend.

"I want viewers to feel these people," said the Danish-born Hansen of his work portraying Knopfler and Kimura. "You do this by building trust with your subjects. I want people to see the humanity of these artists, their surroundings, how their surroundings affect them."

Hansen also connects us to their artistry. In the case of Shimura, Hansen related, "For his creations, he works intuitively from the back to the front of the bike. We had a weekend to get into his brain, two days to shoot and show his surroundings, his approach, his art."

This intimate portraiture dynamic in turn is evident in Hansen's mainstream

Continued on page 19



Range Rover's "Downhill Challenge"

Marc Forster

Feature filmmaker makes Oscar splash with "Lost & Found" spot

By Robert Goldrich

Marc Forster is no stranger to the Academy Awards, having directed Halle Berry's Best Leading Actress Oscar-winning performance in *Monster's Ball* (2001). Fast forward to last month and Forster made his imprint on the Oscar telecast in an entirely different way, directing "Lost & Found," a Walmart spot that was part of an ambitious campaign from Saatchi & Saatchi NY enlisting the creative prowess of select feature filmmakers—the others be-

ing Antoine Fuqua, and the team of Seth Rogen and Evan Goldberg.

All that Walmart asked of Forster and the other feature helmers was to center their short films (culled down to :60s for airing during the Oscars) on how every Walmart receipt tells a story. Each director was challenged to illustrate his creative vision for one receipt containing bananas, paper towels, batteries, a scooter, wrapping paper and a video baby monitor.

Forster showed us how these mundane items take on a much greater weight in the hands of youngsters, particularly those scavenging in what appears to be a futuristic, post-apocalyptic world. For Forster, the baby monitor carried the most significance in that it yielded a projected image—of a baby who in some respects represented hope, the promise of a new life. And when power gave out on the monitor, kids

turned to another item on the receipt, batteries taken from elsewhere, so that they could again delight in the image of that happy baby.

The Walmart project appealed to Forster because it gave him the opportunity to create on a more all encompassing level, writing the material he was going to direct. At the same time, he enjoyed collaborating with colleagues at Saatchi and Walmart. "They gave me freedom but they also provided great support. It was gutsy of Walmart to place their trust in me."

For Forster the constraints of time were challenging and rewarding. He noted that the turnaround on the Walmart spot—from conception to completion—was a scant few weeks, with the pressure considerable to have the piece—which entailed live action, VFX and fairly sophisticated post—ready in time for the Oscars.



The other inherent time-driven challenge was having to tell a story in 90 seconds online, with a :60 for the Oscars TV audience. "It's a gratifying experience to be able to do justice to a story, to make an emotional connection, within a shorter time frame," related Forster. "Still there are difficult decisions—which we especially felt when cutting the :90 down to a broadcast :60."

Forster directed "Lost & Found" as well as several prior ad projects via production house Tool of North America. He originally had no intent of getting involved

Continued on page 19



Walmart's "Lost & Found"

RSA Films congratulates Henrik Hansen
selected for SHOOT's Spring Directors Issue

Jim Jenkins

Going live on the Super Bowl

By Robert Goldrich

A live commercial gone awry on the Super Bowl is the latest Big Game chapter for Snickers' advertising out of BBDO New York. Starring Adam Driver, the cowboy western-themed spot is fraught with miscues and mistakes—but intentionally so to show that like most of us, Driver, his colleagues and the production crew aren't themselves when they're hungry. This was followed up by a faux apology by Driver on Twitter.

Both the spot and the apology were directed by Jim Jenkins of O Positive, known for his considerable comedic chops.

In *SHOOT*'s survey of agency creatives who were asked to critique this year's crop of Super Bowl commercials, Carolyn Hadlock, executive creative director of Young & Laramore, Indianapolis, related that the live Snickers spot has gone "kind of underappreciated. It could be a game changer in that so many spots are seen online before the Super Bowl telecast. To do a live spot with a little bit of nuance to it, that didn't hit you over the head, was commendable. I applaud the boldness of the brand."

Indeed it was brave to rock the boat in that Snickers has much Super Bowl

success to live up to. Each of the last two Emmy Award seasons has seen a Snickers Super Bowl spot directed by Jenkins for BBDO earn a nomination from the TV Academy. Last year "Marilyn"—the Marilyn Monroe/*Seven Year Itch*/Wilem Dafoe odyssey—garnered an Emmy nod, and in 2015 the Brady Bunch spoof (with Steve Buscemi and Danny Trejo) did the same. BBDO NY's Gianfranco Arena and Peter Kain served as executive creative directors on both Snickers' spots—and were key contributors to the live performance by Driver and his colleagues.

Jenkins credits the success he and O Positive have enjoyed—the company recently earned 2016's most awarded production house mantle from The Gunn Report—in large part to long-standing collaborative relationships with select agencies. (Jenkins' partner at O Positive, David Shane, incidentally was last year's most awarded director per The Gunn Report).

BBDO has been a frequent collaborator with Jenkins. "It's a gutsy agency and maybe it's the success of their work that helps make its clients even more gutsy," said Jenkins. "They sold Footlocker on Mike Tyson giving Evander Holyfield his ear back. They sold AT&T on Martin Scorsese getting a four-year-old to say he wants to kill his father. In terms of Arena and Kain, I've also worked with them on Snickers and many FedEx commercials."

Jenkins directed the alluded to Footlocker and AT&T pieces. The latter had Scorsese interrupt a mundane phone call between a husband and wife, infusing it

with more visceral, pressing motivation as if he were directing a movie. Talking to her hubby via phone, the woman is with her young son in his bedroom. Scorsese barges in and devises a new scenario for their conversation, including getting the lad to feel resentment for his nefarious dad, secretly conspiring for his demise. The bottom-line message—just as you don't want a filmmaker interrupting your phone calls, please don't let your ringing phone interrupt the movie-watching experience in a theater.

Footlocker meanwhile takes us to an idyllic world—highlighted by such occurrences as Dennis Rodman buying a one-way plane ticket to North Korea, and Tyson making peace with Holyfield years after biting off part of his ear in the boxing ring. It's comedy that's quite a departure from the norm—a departure only possible with the involvement of a progressive agency and client.

Jenkins has a deep-rooted appreciation for agency creatives given that he once was one. He made his first industry mark on the ad shop side, which included a long tenure at Ogilvy & Mather, NY. "It doesn't hurt as a director to know the pressures that an agency is under, to appreciate what they've done to develop a concept and gain approval for it," observed Jenkins.

As for the lessons learned from a live commercial on television's biggest stage, the Super Bowl, Jenkins shared, "It sounds obvious but with a live commercial you have to get it all right in one take. It's so different. You're otherwise accustomed



to getting multiple performance options, to massage it all in the edit, to work hard to get the timing just right. It was a brave choice by the agency—like replacing Marcia Brady with Danny Trejo. That's what makes working with BBDO so exciting."

He added what great ingenuity it takes to always try to keep fresh and bring new life to a great concept. "When you have such a solid campaign idea as you're not yourself when you're hungry, the comedy comes right out of the selling premise. The beauty is that BBDO isn't afraid to break new ground with that concept."

Jenkins couldn't resist a quip about Snickers Live on the Super Bowl. "I wouldn't say everything happened exactly as I wanted it to, but it is live television, after all. At least no one announced *La La Land* as winner of Best Picture."

Beyond his work with BBDO, Jenkins sports other notable recent agency collaborations, including the Bud Light "Friendship" commercial for Wieden+Kennedy, NY, and Under Armour's "Break the Game" social campaign featuring NBA superstar Stephen Curry for Droga5, NY.

"I've been very fortunate to work with good creative directors who sell good work consistently, which makes it all the more important to deliver for them," affirmed Jenkins.



Adam Driver goes live for Snickers



CHARLIEUNIFORMTANGO

direct produce shoot edit mix score design animate finish

James Mangold

A genre-defying filmmaker

By Robert Goldrich

James Mangold is not a fan of superhero movies and it's that deep-rooted feeling coupled with contrarian sensibilities that resulted in his directing the groundbreaking *Logan* (20th Century Fox), bringing character-driven drama to a genre that's otherwise typically the antithesis of adult-appeal, emotionally resonant storytelling.

Drawing Mangold to *Logan* was in large part the chance to work once again with his good friend, Hugh Jackman, whom he first directed in the time-traveling ro-

mantic comedy *Kate & Leopold* (2001), and then in *The Wolverine* (2013), a well regarded entry in the *X-Men* franchise. *Logan* marks Mangold's return to *X-Men* with Jackman reprising his longstanding role as Wolverine, a.k.a. Logan.

But Mangold noted that a key condition of he and Jackman doing one more *X-Men* movie—with Jackman portraying Logan for reportedly the last time—was that they not be obliged to work on “another action picture hitting all the standardized default settings. We’ve all been bludgeoned by the sound and fury of conventional superhero movies. It’s not that I wanted by contrast to make a quiet film—rather I wanted to make an emotional one, to have a story mean something and to be about something.”

Mangold wrote the story—and then collaborated on the screenplay with Scott Frank and Michael Green.

“I asked myself what is Logan afraid

of,” related Mangold. “He’s not frightened over the end of the world or by much of anything. His only fear is of love, intimacy. I was intrigued by an aging superhero going through a super long life without feeling true love—and afraid to let it in. So we confronted him with the purest form of love—the interdependence that exists within a family.”

That family consists of the claw-wielding Logan, Patrick Stewart as aging and ill mutant leader Professor X (for whom Logan serves as caregiver), and newcomer Dafne Keen as Laura, a mute youngster with powers similar to Logan. Laura is being pursued by dark forces, putting her, Professor X and Logan on the run, a plot dynamic which makes the trio akin to an endearing, offbeat family, and evolves the ostensibly superhero movie into an unexpectedly intimate dramatic piece.

Helping to attain this unlikely genre-



defying state, observed Mangold, was getting the studio, 20th Century Fox, to agree to make an R-rated movie. That adult rating wasn't sought for the chance to depict more graphic violence than the norm—though *Logan* isn't for the faint of heart. Instead, explained the writer-director, the R rating precluded creative decisions being unduly influenced by marketing opportunities yielding action figures, specially packaged kids' meals, and plots tailored for the attention span of the 12-year-old-and-under crowd. “The R-rating freed us to make a grown-up movie, to depict people who have both incredible

Continued on page 27



James Mangold (l) and Hugh Jackman

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Reed Morano

"How Do You See Me?"

By Robert Goldrich

As a director, Reed Morano made a major initial splash in indie filmmaking and then commercials—both in poignant vehicles starring Olivia Wilde, starting with *Meadowland* (2015) which earned nominations for Best Narrative Feature at the Tribeca Film Festival, Best Directorial Debut at Camerimage, and Best Cinematography (Morano also lensed the picture) at the Film Independent Spirit Awards. Wilde portrays a mother who along with her husband (portrayed by Luke Wilson) grapples with the loss of a child, triggering the couple's downward spiral. The authen-

ticity of the film, tackling a story that's a nightmare for any parent, resonated with viewers on a profound emotional level.

Fast forward to 2016 and Morano struck another responsive chord with audiences—and this time the ad community at large—via "How Do You See Me?" for CorDown, Italy's national organization for people with Down syndrome. Saatchi & Saatchi NY creatives saw the empathetic and emotional gravitas of *Meadowland*, prompting the agency to gravitate to Morano for this public service short. Produced by Pulse Films—Morano's roost for commercials and branded content—to mark World Down Syndrome Day (3/21/16), the piece features a girl with Down syndrome named AnnaRose Rubright narrating the life she wants to have. And in this life, she's played by actress Wilde. This metaphor is aimed to ignite a conversation around how those living with Down syndrome see themselves and how they are often times disadvantaged when people

pre-judge them based on their condition. People with Down syndrome are still too often victims of discrimination, and even more than what is said about them, the way other people look at them is a common indicator of this type of prejudice.

Such insightful, stirring work is a hallmark of Morano's filmography which has since grown to include television. While she's helmed single episodes of Showtime's *Billions* and AMC's *Halt and Catch Fire*, Morano is now making her biggest TV impact on *The Handmaid's Tale*, having directed and served as an EP on the first three episodes of the ongoing drama which streams on Hulu starting next month. Based on the best-selling novel of the same title by Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* is the story of life in the dystopia of Gilead, a totalitarian society in what was formerly part of the United States. Facing environmental disasters and a plunging birthrate, Gilead is ruled by a twisted religious fundamentalism that



treats women as property of the state. As one of the few remaining fertile women, Offred (Elisabeth Moss) is a Handmaid in the Commander's household, one of the caste of women forced into sexual servitude as a last desperate attempt to repopulate a devastated world. In this terrifying society where one wrong word could end her life, Offred navigates between Commanders, their cruel Wives, domestic Marthas, and her fellow Handmaids—where anyone could be a spy for Gilead—all with one goal: to survive and find the daughter that was taken from her.

Learning curve

Morano's directorial ascent is explained
Continued on page 27

Cole Webley

Opening the door to the Super Bowl

By Robert Goldrich

The greatest comeback in Super Bowl history came with this year's tale of two games within one—the first dominated at the outset by the Atlanta Falcons, the second taken over by the eventual winner, the New England Patriots.

In what shaped up as a parallel universe, the accompanying crop of Super Bowl commercials also featured two distinctly different games—those advertisers looking to entertain, often opting for the comedic, balanced by a number of sponsors who instead decided to address social issues, at times touching upon the politically charged topic of immigration.

The latter was perhaps most compellingly exemplified in 84 Lumber's "The Journey Begins," a spot which shows a mother and daughter embarking on a long, arduous sojourn from Mexico to the U.S. for a better life. The broadcast ad ends with a website address, Journey84.com, inviting viewers to continue the trek. The second part of the journey online depicted the mom and daughter encountering a large wall blocking their path but then they come upon a door through which appears a crack of light, showing it has the potential to open. A supered message reads, "The will to succeed is always welcome here." Brunner, Pittsburgh—with a creative team headed by CCO Rob Schapiro—served as agency on the job.

At first the entire journey was to have been captured in a broadcast :90 to be shown during the Big Game. But the FOX network objected to the appearance of a wall, reasoning that it was too controversial a sight during these divisive times. 84 Lumber, Brunner and director Cole

Webley of production house Sanctuary then problem solved, deciding to use the TV spot to drive traffic to the web where the rest of the journey—wall, door and all—could be seen by viewers.

"There was never any thought of scrapping the spot when FOX said we couldn't air it in its intended form," said Webley who added that the statement made by the entire "Journey" is less political than some have construed. "We weren't advocating opening the borders to everyone. At the same time, we wanted to show that there was room in this country for those who aspire to a better life, decent people who legally enter the U.S., reflecting an empathy for them. That's why the door had a crack of light. It's a branding message for 84 Lumber, associating it with a belief in and a commitment to opening up opportunities for people."

In *SHOOT*'s annual Super Bowl survey of creatives, Chuck McBride, founder/chief creative officer of Cutwater, expressed admiration for a previously largely



unheard of company in Pennsylvania, 84 Lumber, and its agency having "the balls" to take on a controversial subject.

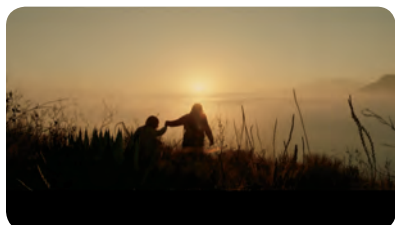
Similarly Paula Maki, managing creative director of mono, San Francisco, told *SHOOT* for that same survey, "Slow clap to the executives at 84 Lumber who must have thought, 'Well if we're going to spend 5 million dollars...' Wow. Wow. Wow. Wow. Every single shot had a purpose. Every single frame propelled you forward into the journey. Who is 84 Lumber? Doesn't matter. We're all going to the website to see what happens to the little girl."

Webley applied a deft directorial touch to the story, noting that it was right in his creative/filmmaking wheelhouse. "Graphic and visceral work does not rep-

Continued on page 29



The Handmaid's Tale



84 Lumber's "The Journey Begins"

Cianfrance's Storytelling Process Impacts Ads, Movies

Continued from page 14

came more akin to one another. He had a taste of that early on years back with his work on the breakthrough *Battleground* branded content series for Nike and Wieden+Kennedy. But he got a needed reminder of that fact with the lauded Dick's Sporting Goods commercial he directed for Anomaly NY in 2013. "Every Pitch" took us inside a baseball game. A batter swings through a pitch and then the camera sweeps around behind the catcher and begins to go from player to player in the field, all of whom are making game chatter, offering motivation and strategic cues to their teammates. It's a great study of the intricacies and beauty of the game as played by young athletes, not

brand spokesman superstars.

Cianfrance recalled telling agency creatives that he knew little about baseball but that he loved the concept and saw it as being cut from the same cloth as a Western. "Every Pitch" was shot in one take with zooms, capturing inner workings of the game that lurk underneath what we see on TV. "We were able to pull the truth out about the inner game of baseball," said Cianfrance, crediting Anomaly creatives Taylor Twist and Mike Warzin with taking a leap of faith, opting for a director who wasn't a baseball aficionado but who could bring his filmmaking process to get to the heart of a story. "I saw that my feature filmmaking process could be applied to commercials, to capture the truth of a

story whatever it might be," noted Cianfrance. "That's when I started to attract concepts that aspired to be more and I've been on my way ever since."

His DGA-winning commercials are in line with that, bringing an empathy that resonated with audiences, a prime example being Powerade's "Power Through" campaign, particularly the "Expectations" spot which includes a female football player who excels despite a nay-saying coach.

The director observed, "We all have felt moments of rejection and doubt. The Wieden+Kennedy creatives allowed us all to delve into those feelings, casting kids who had been athletes themselves. And the coach is not necessarily a bad guy all the time—imagine being someone who

deals with all these kids dreaming to be something that most of them aren't going to be. There are different sides here and the work enables us to explore people, their aspirations, how they interact. It's the same sort of exploration I do in my movies, spending time with people, working with actors. I feel lucky and blessed to have been getting these opportunities in the commercial world. I love working with people, and commercials have given me the chance to delve into and to understand behavior, and to work with great creatives and artists as we explore all this together. We were able to make the Powerade work as pure and raw as possible—and you can only do that if you have an agency and client who are committed to going for it."

Hansen's Moving Imagery, Intimate Portraiture

Continued from page 14

spot work. Going back to Range Rover's "Inferno Downhill Challenge," for example, Hansen noted that he wanted to explore what makes driver Collins tick, "reflecting his inner thoughts and how his body reacts to what he's experiencing on the mountain. After he did his first run, I talked to him and got a sense of what he felt. We also tried to capture the kinetic energy that was part of his experience."

Visual roots

Hansen made his first mark as a commercial still photographer, then diversified into moving pictures, camera operating, and then becoming an accomplished

cinematographer himself. He branched out into assistant directing and ultimately settled into the director's chair.

To this day, Hansen will shoot his own work when agencies request it. His recent directorial endeavors span such brands as Alfa Romeo, Volvo, Dodge, BMW and Mazda. For the latter client, director Hansen teamed with Oscar-winning (*Life of Pi*) cinematographer Claudio Miranda. And the alluded to Dodge work—for Wieden+Kennedy—positions the Challenger, Charger Hellcats and Dodge Viper as "predators," showcasing not only gorgeous photography but also Hansen's penchant for breathing life into vehicles, making them characters in a commercial.

Hansen's preference is to capture as much as he can in-camera. He shared that feature filmmaker John Frankenheimer ranks as "one of my biggest inspirations. I remember as a kid seeing *Grand Prix* and how he did most everything on that film in-camera. There was no hocus-pocus. That's my approach. And if by chance we need to add in post, I try to make that as invisible as possible. I want the camera to capture the story, to get that realism."

To that end, Hansen noted that there are times when he shoots projects with no artificial light. "It can help create an authentic feeling," he explained. "And if there is light added to a scene, I try to make it so that the viewer doesn't feel it."

Being innovative lighting, he said, can include knowing when not to light.

The director credited his team of camera operators with helping him attain that desired authenticity. Those artisans collaborated in detail with Hansen on "Inferno Downhill Challenge," a job for which he served as both director and DP.

Hansen has enjoyed a seven-year tenure at RSA—and counting. The studio provides him with access to cutting-edge resources, and the very best people. Hansen affirmed that the support he receives from RSA has been instrumental in his career, citing his EP Marjie Abrahams as well as his crew, many of whom worked with the late, great filmmaker, Tony Scott.

Feature Filmmaker Forster Diversifies Into Spots

Continued from page 15

in commercialmaking and branded content—until he had a chat with celebrated cinematographer Robert Richardson, ASC, who is on Tool's spot directing roster. Forster and Richardson were working together on a movie when the DP asked him if he had considered commercial-making. Richardson then turned Forster onto Tool, which led to the director meeting with company partner/director Erich Joiner. "We hit it off and I started to take on select commercials," recalled Forster. "The more I did it, the more I liked it, par-

ticularly collaborating with such creative people on the agency side. It's a form of storytelling with its own challenges and rhythms, quite different from feature films. When you get the opportunity to tell stories, no matter in what form, it can't help but make you a better filmmaker."

Filmography

Forster's feature filmography is extensive and varied, garnering assorted accolades over the years including a DGA Award nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Motion Pictures on the

strength of *Finding Neverland* (2004), which also earned nominations for both Best Director at the Golden Globes and the David Lean Award for Direction at the BAFTA Awards. Forster also received a BAFTA Film Award nod a few years later for *The Kite Runner* (2007).

Among Forster's other notable feature directing credits are the James Bond pic *Quantum of Solace*, and the Brad Pitt starer *World War Z*.

Additionally Forster diversified into television series with Amazon's *Hand of God* for which he helmed the pilot and a

second episode, along with serving as executive producer for the overall show.

On the spotmaking front, last year Forster directed "Eyes on Gigi," BMW's interactive global campaign with 360 video from KBS/Serviceplan to launch the new BMW M2 Coupé. "Eyes on Gigi" (the "Gigi" being supermodel Gigi Hadid) subsequently earned distinction at the time as the most viewed 360 video on YouTube.

As for what's next, Forster is embarking on the feature *Christopher Robin*, a live-action version of the classic, beloved Winnie the Pooh stories.

Assembling The Spring Collection

Promising talent poised to break new ground for many seasons to come

By Robert Goldrich



SHOOT's spring ensemble of up-and-coming directors includes a pair of duos—one which recently scored a major coup at the Sundance Film Festival; the other creating and helming spec fare that's opened assorted industry doors.

Also in the mix is a solo filmmaker whose branded documentary fare and entrepreneurial spirit bode well for his directorial career in the ad sector.

And we additionally look at intriguing talent that recently gained major exposure at Commercial Directors Diversity Program's (CDDP) first showcase, held in January. The CDDP initiative was born out of contract talks between the Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) and the Directors Guild of America (DGA). The debut showcase was held at the DGA Theater in Los Angeles.

So here's our spring collection of some promising directors to watch:

Dan & Antonio

To say that the duo of Dan & Antonio—Dan Sickles and Antonio Santini—is up

and coming doesn't do the directors full justice. In fact, they have in some respects already arrived, a status punctuated at the recent Sundance Film Festival which bestowed its Grand Jury Prize for U.S. Documentary upon their feature *Dina*, which tells an unconventional love story between two people who have autism spectrum disorder. This neurodiverse couple consists of a free spirit named Dina and a Walmart door greeter some 20 years her junior, Scott.

Sickles has known Dina since he was a kid. His father, a special education teacher, taught Dina, and started a neurodiverse group which brought many people together. "I've known Dina and other characters in the film pretty much my entire life," recalled Sickles whose dad passed away three and a half years ago. "Antonio first met Dina at my dad's funeral."

From that meeting, Dan & Antonio sprung into action to breathe life into an idea that had been lingering in Dan's mind for some time—that the neurodiverse community and specifically Dina were worth

exploring in a film. "We learned that Dina was getting married and from that, a film about Dina and that relationship started to take hold," related Sickles who's long admired Dina, noting that she taught herself to read when teachers gave up on her in the third grade.

Director Santini noted that as he and Dan have done in the past, they took an atypical approach to the documentary. In the case of *Dina*, they treated her as the star of a movie about her own life. "It's almost a romantic comedy about her—the kind of rom-com film she watches and loves," said Santini.

Dan & Antonio's unconventional brand of documentary filmmaking was first evidenced in *Mala Mala*, which delved into the lives of transgender women in Puerto Rico. Sans voiceover and interviews, the feature plays more like an indie narrative film. For *Mala Mala*, their first documentary, Sickles and Santini drew inspiration from not only the protagonists but also music, TV, music videos and other art forms. *Mala Mala* went on to earn nomi-

From top left, clockwise: Dan & Antonio; Chad Howitt; The Coles; Josh Franer; Sonia Malfa; Dan & Antonio's *Dina*; The Coles' Nike spec commercial.

UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS

nations for both a GLAAD Media Award for Outstanding Documentary and the Best Documentary Jury Award at the 2014 Tribeca Film Festival.

While it's invisible to the audience, Dan & Antonio work painstakingly to attain an intimacy with their subjects. "For both *Dina* and *Mala Mala*, Dan and I spent a great deal of time with the people whose lives we were exploring. We get to know them, have a sense of what projects them best to the camera. Sometimes Dan or I will connect better with a person so we go with whomever has the best rapport with the subject."

Both *Mala Mala* and *Dina* were produced by Moxie Pictures and Killer Films. Moxie recently brought Dan & Antonio onto its directorial roster for commercials and branded content worldwide. The directing duo has some experience in shorter form fare, having done a music video based on *Mala Mala*.

Dan & Antonio feel a kinship to Moxie. "We found the company serendipitously. Working on *Mala Mala* early on, we wound up in a room with director Danny Levinson [president of Moxie Pictures]," recalled Sickles. "Danny approaches things with an open mind—which is rare yet good to find. We were doing a film about trans Latinas in one of the last colonized places in the Western hemisphere and Danny's reaction was 'that's kind of interesting because I've never seen it before.' He's not intimidated by new ideas."

From then on, noted Santini, the directors' relationship with Danny and Moxie has become "familial." Santini added that Levinson and the people at Moxie "understand our interests and eccentricities. There's a lot of mutual trust there. They support what we do."

As for exactly what they do, Sickles related, "We work with polar opposite intentions at the same time—resulting in

intimate universality. We are presenting an intimate personal experience that can speak to everyone." Some 90 percent of the people in *Dina* are on the neurodiverse spectrum but they seem like anyone else, like friends of yours, someone you know and can care about."

This ability to spark empathy is all the more essential in what today seems an increasingly divided world. Dan & Antonio met as students at NYU. Sickles studied acting while Santini was schooled in sociology and the visual arts. The two went to a festival in Austin where they met a woman who inspired *Mala Mala*. "We wanted to tell that story about community and have been working to build community ever since," said Santini. "We're looking to highlight stories we think are going to help us as a whole to connect to each other. We see this disconnect going on between different groups of people. We are spending our lives trying to fill this breach. We

believe in the value of connecting."

The Coles

RSA's Hey Wonderful recently signed The Coles, a directing team consisting of 20-something siblings Sophie and Walker Cole. They gained industry recognition and a slot on the Hey Wonderful roster largely on the strength of some smart, sleek spec commercials they created for Fiat, Nike and Evian.

Yet they hadn't considered directing careers—or for that matter spec fare to showcase their talent—until a friend was fashioning his own spec work. "We grew up in the business but hadn't thought of becoming directors," related Walker. The siblings' dad is veteran commercial director Charlie Cole while their uncle is prominent ad creative Charlie Miesmer, a former ECD at BBDO NY. Initially Walker established himself as an art dealer. So-

Continued on page 22



welcomes

THE COLES

www.heywonderful.com

Directors On The Ascent: The Coles, Franer, Malfa

Continued from page 21

phie enjoyed a successful tenure as a costume designer on films and commercials.

"We were both trying to find a way to sort of create worlds in different ways," related Sophie.

But when a friend came calling for spec concepts, Sophie and Walker started writing scripts and began to see that their calling was to work together as filmmakers. "With our dad and uncle's backgrounds, we naturally gravitated to commercials as our target so to speak," explained Walker. "We never had an issue on the writing side of things and that seemed a great way to conceive of some specs and begin directing. We hit the ground running and didn't see anyone for eight months as we just focused on the work—ranging from light-hearted to more mysterious."

Fiat's "Wingman" features a tireless good-natured bachelor bending over backwards to land a date without success, until he finally dangles a ride in his new Fiat to close the deal. Nike's "Symphony" is strikingly black and white with graphic composition to spotlight both tennis balls and a man's sneakers in a crescendo of motion. And in Evian's "Live Young," we observe a leathery older gent in real time as he bakes poolside. He convincingly rejuvenates himself by spritzing himself with the mineral water.

Marked by tongue-in-cheek comedy moments, the Evian spec, said Sophie and Walker, included a nod to the features *Sexy Beast* (directed by Jonathan Glazer) and *The Graduate* (Mike Nichols).

Sophie said she learned a great deal from the directors she has worked with over the years. Her costume endeavors had her collaborating with the likes of directors Bryan Buckley, Craig Gillespie, Tim Godsall, Stacy Wall, and Jaci Judelson. Sophie described the latter as "a powerful female director" who inspired her. Sophie's work for Gillespie includes his feature film *Million Dollar Arm* (Disney).

Meanwhile Walker's pursuits as a writer and art dealer also laid the groundwork for this new chapter in his and Sophie's career. Several years back, Michael Di Girolamo, who's now founder/managing director of Hey Wonderful, came to an art show where he met art dealer Walker. "He bought some art," recalled Walker of Di Girolamo, noting that the industry vet

made a lasting impression with his zest for new talent. "When we got into directing, we reconnected with Michael. He was one of the first meetings we had. We showed him our spec work and he totally got us. He's created a creative boutique with a hands-on approach to the work and helping to build careers. He and [EP] Sarah McMurray were the reasons we joined Hey Wonderful."

Sophie added that by being part of the RSA family of companies, Hey Wonderful is well positioned to develop directors with high-level support and firepower.

Just prior to joining Hey Wonderful, The Coles took on their first officially commissioned project, an online film-slated to debut later this spring—for Tory Burch's new sport line featuring the Tory Sport Fall/Winter 2017 Collection. The directors were at press time bidding potentially their first job via Hey Wonderful.

Josh Franer

After first establishing himself as a photographer and cinematographer working on varied assignments including music videos and charity projects, Josh Franer felt the need to direct, adopting a narrative documentary-style approach. He made his first major splash with *This Built America*, an online branded series he co-created with Sasha Koehn, selling the concept to Ford via AOL, working with agency Team Detroit. Franer directed 13 episodes of the series which took us to varied companies that exemplified a resurgence of manufacturing in the U.S. The first season garnered more than 18 million media impressions and four million unique views.

Ford's made-in-Detroit F150 pickup truck serves as a natural tie-in to the series which features homegrown American businesses from all 50 states. Franer said his business mindset helped to bring *This Built America* to fruition. "I'm consistently trying to reverse-engineer my filmmaking. Often people make a film not knowing what they're going to do with it. In this case we saw the potential of this series up front. Part of our angle in selling the show was its tie-in to the American-made values and ideals of Ford."

Franer then took the helm in developing substantive content to demonstrate how U.S. business is making a positive difference in society at large. In addition to

higher profile companies like Airstream trailers in Ohio and McIlhenny Co.'s Tabasco in Louisiana, Franer explored the inner stories of lesser known businesses. "One of my favorite episodes involved filming at Chance Rides, an American amusement park ride manufacturer in Kansas," said Franer. "Not only were the people friendly but their story as a post-2008 comeback company was amazing. We filmed at an amusement park and shot at their huge manufacturing facility. The place is so big we got lost several times. I think the episode touches a nerve, its nostalgia tugs at the heartstrings. We found out later that Terry, one of the craftsmen that we featured [he worked on building historic trains] passed away shortly after from cancer. We later found that they used our film as a tribute to his life."

Franer formed Man Made Content to produce *This Built America*, a show which garnered broad attention, including from EPs Robin Benson and Richard Goldstein of CoMPANY. Last year CoMPANY signed Franer for spots and branded content. He currently has some irons in the fire at CoMPANY, including a documentary style Visit California campaign from agency MeringCarson, San Diego and Sacramento, Calif., which depicts the state through the eyes of a fashion designer. Also via CoMPANY for Detroit agency Commonwealth/McCann, Franer is directing a documentary for Chevrolet highlighting a breakthrough camera rig designed for capturing car footage.

Franer's earlier alluded to business mindset has yielded several entrepreneurial ventures—not only Man Made Content but at one point Franer was a creative partner in Buck Mason before selling his stake in the fashion company. He also creative directed a recently launched fashion app called POURED which connects high-end fashion brands with talented staffers. Franer's filmography includes directing some short film fare, including *Homeward*, for Buck Mason, *Homeward* won recognition at the La Jolla International Fashion Film Festival, the Chicago Fashion Film Festival, Milano Fashion Film Festival, Miami Fashion Film Festival and the Berlin Fashion Film Festival.

Sonia Malfa

A self-taught female Puerto-Rican

American filmmaker, Sonia Malfa was one of a select group recently making the AICP/DGA Commercial Directors Diversity Program (CDDP) cut based on a promising body of work which includes: "Leyohmi," a video that takes us on a fantasy experience propelled in part by a stirring performance from classical musician Carolina Eyck and members of the American Contemporary Music Ensemble; and *Espera*, a short documentary about St. Boniface Hospital in Haiti, which helped raise funds for the facility, bolstering its neonatal care unit.

The Eyck music video premiered on NPR's *First Watch*. And Malfa worked in collaboration with boutique agency, Fancy NYC, on *Espera*, a pro bono project.

Malfa broke into the industry by moving up the production food chain, eventually becoming a producer spanning commercials, branded content and such notable projects as an MTV feature documentary on rapper Drake, *Better Than Good Enough*, for RadicalMedia, and an indie narrative feature, *Down The Shore*, starring James Gandolfini. In-between her producing gigs, Malfa would write, develop and direct her own projects, making a major initial splash with *Close Her Eyes*, funded by her personal savings, a \$5,000 New York State Council grant, and \$10,000 raised through a Kickstarter campaign. *Close Her Eyes* tells the story of a visually impaired girl's first kiss. The narrative short was shot on 35mm film, premiered at the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival and went on to play at more than a dozen other fests.

Tempering her joy at having *Close Her Eyes* screen at Tribeca was Malfa learning at that time that her father had cancer and required hospitalization. In recent years, Malfa lost both her parents to cancer. Their passing reaffirmed Malfa's commitment to pursuing her directorial dreams. "It became clear to me how short life is and how important it is that we make every effort to do what we feel most passionate about."

Malfa's other directing credits include music videos for such artists as Del Patio, Little Fish and Maya Nicol. Malfa is currently in post on two projects: *Detachment* with actress Trae Harris; and a short with the working title *Water Whispers*, which

Continued on page 30

Director Perspectives On SXSW, Tribeca Fests



Film festival exposure has been a consistent dynamic in the career of lauded director Amir Bar-Lev, whose commercialmaking/branded content roost is Chelsea Pictures. His Grateful Dead documentary *Long Strange Trip*, which has Martin Scorsese among its executive producers, made its world premiere at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival, and then played to more acclaim this month at the recently wrapped (3/10-18) South by Southwest Film Festival.

Bar-Lev's festival run has spanned varied documentaries, even branded content. On the latter score he helmed *Re: Generation Music Project* which debuted at the 2012 SXSW fest. Made in association with the Grammys and sponsored by Hyundai, *Re:Generation* followed five noted DJs—DJ Premier, electronic duo The Crystal Method, Pretty Lights of dub-step fame, Grammy winner Skrillex and producer Mark Ronson—as they remix, recreate and re-imagine five traditional styles of music.

Sundance has also loomed large in Bar-Lev's filmography, starting with *My Kid Could Paint That* in 2007 and *The Tillman Story* in 2010, both nominated for a Grand Jury Prize. The former looked at the work and unexpected success of a four-year-old girl whose paintings have brought in hundreds of thousands of dollars, buoyed by comparisons to the likes of Picasso. Later, *The Tillman Story* introduced us to Pat Tillman who left a multimillion dollar pro football contract on the table to serve in the nation's military. The circumstances of his tragic death in the line of duty, though, were covered up by the military, which instead used his passing as a propaganda tool. *The Tillman Story* chronicles his family's struggle to unearth the truth.

Bar-Lev returned to Sundance in 2014 with *Happy Valley*, a documentary that delves into the year after Pennsylvania State University assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky's arrest on child sex abuse charges. Bar-Lev described the documentary as “a great moral fable,” exploring the culture at Penn State and raising moral questions about the folks around Sandusky.

Bar-Lev's *12.12.12* for executive producer Paul McCartney chronicled the Hurricane Sandy relief concert featuring performances by The Rolling Stones, The Who, Roger Waters and Bruce Springsteen, among others. *12.12.12* premiered at the 2013 Toronto International Film Festival.

Fast forward to today and the latest festival exposure for Bar-Lev is the aforementioned *Long Strange Trip*, presented as part of SXSW's 24 Beats Per Second program, billed as showcasing the sounds, culture and influence of music and musicians. They don't come much more influential than the Grateful Dead, a motley crew which emerged from the Bay Area's Haight-Ashbury counterculture scene in the 1960s. The Dead generated a unique sound that sprang from a blend of influences: bluegrass, folk ballads, R&B, free-form jazz, classical, and jug band. While *Long Strange Trip* shares the backstory of how the band came together and found their sound, the narrative moves into the emotional, human areas of the band, their successes and foibles, the burdens of fame. It's these elements that have a universal resonance that is getting those who aren't fans of the Grateful Dead to appreciate the band's members more and to see the relevance of their story.

As for what drew him into taking the *Long Strange Trip*, Bar-Lev related, “You can't beat the Dead's journey from a storytelling perspective. It's got everything you want in a great rock and roll saga, but it's also animated by big ideas that are more relevant today than ever before. And yes, I'm also a fan—and like any music fan I'm up for the challenge of convincing skeptics to give something I love a chance. So far I'm pleased that it appears we're winning people over with the film.”

An innovative visual language courses through *Long Strange Trip*. Bar-Lev explained, for example, “We wanted to make something formally inventive, and have the film be psychedelic not in the typical cartoon-like fashion (trails, dopey lettering, etc.) but rather in the way Spike Jonze or Michel Gondry's films are. One of the ways we did this was volume, volume, volume. Rather than pay for individual stills, we bought out many photographers' entire lot—so we could have not just their iconic photo but the photographs taken in the seconds before and after. There's also a lot of echoing in the film. By its end a symbolic language has been created, so visual motifs take on secondary and even

Continued on page 24

Backstories on feature documentary and narrative entries

By Robert Goldrich

From top left, clockwise: Amir Bar-Lev; a Grateful Dead performance at the 2017 Sundance Festival; Justin Benson (l) and Aaron Moorhead; Moorhead in a scene from *The Endless*.

Moorhead & Benson Returns To Tribeca Film Festival

Continued from page 23
tertiary meaning.”

Bar-Lev finds the inclusion of *Long Strange Trip* at SXSW as being especially gratifying, particularly since it is a perfect fit for the music culture there. “Austin is a great music town but more importantly, its motto is ‘keep Austin weird,’” noted Bar-Lev. “I could say the same about what I was trying to do with this film. ‘Keep The Grateful Dead weird.’”

The director is now eager to take on opportunities in commercials and branded content. He said of *Long Strange Trip*, “This film monopolized my last six months or so. I’m coming up for air now, and have a bag of new tricks I’m excited to bring into the commercial arena.”

Bar-Lev has directed multiple advertising projects for 72andSunny, and his “Call of Duty: Endowment” PSA earned industry recognition.

Meanwhile as he re-enters the commercial orbit, *Long Strange Trip* will connect with people outside the festival circuit. Amazon Studios has acquired the four-hour Grateful Dead documentary and plans to debut it in May on Amazon Prime Video in the U.S. and U.K.

Moorhead & Benson

Aaron Moorhead and Justin Benson—aka. the directorial duo Moorhead & Benson—are no strangers to the Tribeca Film Festival, and they’re most grateful for that fact. Moorhead and Benson first met as interns at RSA years ago and put their DIY filmmaking chops together to turn out spec commercials, some direct-to-client low budget spots, and then raised

enough money to shoot their first feature, *Resolution*, a genre-defying horror/mystery which was selected for the 2012 Tribeca Film Festival. The darkhorse film was sold the night of its Tribeca premiere and nabbed various honors on the festival circuit, including Most Innovative Film and Best Screenplay distinction at Toronto After Dark, and Best Directors at both the Macabro Film Festival and the Fantastic Planet Film Fest.

“We made the movie on a micro-budget. We were encouraged to enter it into film festivals but were warned to be mentally prepared for rejection,” recalled Benson. “We wound up getting in. It was huge for a big festival like Tribeca to take a chance on us. Tribeca in some ways gave us our careers as feature filmmakers.”

Moorhead & Benson went on to direct another feature, *Spring*. The atypical romance picture debuted at the 2014 Toronto International Film Festival where it was acquired by Drafthouse Films. *Spring* too fared well on the festival circuit, garnering Best Film at the Paris International Fantastic Film Fest, Best Male Actor for Lou Taylor Pucci at Fantastic Fest (he portrays a man in personal crisis who leaves the U.S. for Italy where he becomes involved with a woman harboring a dark secret), Best Screenplay at the Ithaca International Fantastic Film Festival, and special jury mention at the Sitges International Fantastic Film Festival.

Toronto also loomed large for Moorhead & Benson in another key respect. During that fest, the directors were introduced to Rich Carter, executive producer/founding partner (with director Ted Melfi,

now of *Hidden Figures* fame) of branded content and commercial production house brother. Moorhead & Benson are now on the brother roster, having helmed select work there.

While their early festival success has generated much behind-the-scenes groundwork for prospective projects, Moorhead & Benson got itchy to make another film rather than wait for the other shoe to drop. Benson penned a script for *The Endless* and their DIY instincts kicked in—and Tribeca again responded. *The Endless* is now one of 10 films in the festival’s U.S. Narrative Competition. Those films will vie for the Founders Award for Best Narrative Feature, Best Screenplay, Best Cinematography, Best Actor and Best Actress.

While Benson wrote the story for *The Endless*, the division of labor had Moorhead serving as cinematographer. The duo co-directed, co-edited and handled effects—and shared another key capacity for the first time in a feature, starring as the lead actors, portraying brothers Aaron and Justin who years after escaping a cult end up returning to their former home. The brothers grapple to adjust. However, neither can deny it when strange events begin occurring that seem to mirror the cult’s unusual axioms.

As for what prompted them to get in front of the camera for *The Endless*, Justin related, “Aaron and I have appeared in our own promotional videos and sketch comedy pieces. We acted in them and by doing so developed our acting abilities to a certain extent, particularly in the sketch comedy videos.”

Also behind the decision to make themselves actors were the budget constraints of *The Endless*, and knowing it would be hard to have performers hang out for an extended period if a better paying gig came along.

For Moorhead, *The Endless* story is about the danger of history repeating itself, in this case “repeating past mistakes.” Benson portrays Justin, the older brother, who took the initiative to pull his sibling out of the destructive cult. But the temptation to go back remains. Now living a destitute, dreary life, younger brother Aaron recalls the cult as being his family, making for an existence that seems better than where he’s fled to. The film is an intensely original thriller/drama/suspense genre hybrid. And the cult has some dynamics and elements reminiscent of the Heaven’s Gate group. Back in 1997, 39 members of that cult had committed mass suicide in order to reach what they believed would be a pioneering extraterrestrial existence.

Now that *The Endless* has come to an end, hopefully another door of storytelling opportunity will open up for Moorhead & Benson. “We were pretty much consumed for a long stretch by this film and couldn’t take on commercials and branded content projects,” related Moorhead. “Now we can. We’d very much like to resume building our commercial reel.”

The most notable ad entry on that reel thus far is a brother-produced, quirky tongue-in-cheek, mockumentary comedy spot, titled “DSL-Arm,” for Olympus Cameras out of Boston agency The Fantastical.

The Tribeca Film Festival runs from April 19-30.

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A scene from *Logan*



John Mathieson, BSC



Nelson Cragg



Simon Niblett

From Superheroes To Hollywood Icons And A Real Heroine

DPs reflect on Logan, FX anthology series Feud: Bette and Joan, and The Eagle Huntress

By Robert Goldrich

One cinematographer is a two-time Oscar nominee and his recently released feature has been hailed as groundbreaking, bucking the superhero genre norm.

Another DP takes us back to the Hollywood of yesteryear in his most recent collaboration with lauded TV series creator Ryan Murphy.

And our third cinematographer lensed a feel-good documentary that has proved inspirational to girls all over the world who aspire to achieve in areas that are generally regarded to be exclusively the domain of men.

Here are reflections from cinematographers John Mathieson, BSC, on *Logan*, Nelson Cragg on *Feud: Bette and Joan*, and Simon Niblett on *The Eagle Huntress*.

John Mathieson, BSC

Among the many accolades earned by John Mathieson, BSC, are two Best Achievement in Cinematography Oscar nominations—for *Gladiator* in 2001 and *The Phantom of the Opera* in 2005. *Gladiator* also earned him a BAFTA Film Award for Best Cinematography and an ASC Award nod while *The Phantom of the Opera* won a BSC Award. Mathieson's filmography includes multiple collaborations with director Ridley Scott (*Gladiator*, *Robin Hood*, *Matchstick Men*, *Kingdom of Heaven*) and BSC Award-nominated work for director Mike Newell's *Great Expectations*.

Now Mathieson is garnering attention for director James Mangold's *Logan* (20th Century Fox) starring Hugh Jackman in

the claw-wielding title role, Patrick Stewart as aging and ill mutant leader Professor X (for whom Logan, a.k.a. Wolverine, serves as caregiver), and newcomer Dafne Keen as Laura, a mute youngster with powers similar to Logan. Laura is being pursued by dark forces, putting her, Professor X and Logan on the run, a plot dynamic which makes the trio akin to an endearing, offbeat family, and evolves the ostensibly superhero movie into an on-the-road, character-driven drama with serious emotional overtones.

Logan has become a box office hit and received critical acclaim. Though marked by violence, the story as a character study seems to have resonated with audiences. For Mathieson, his role was not to get in the way of that story. "In some ways this movie is like a play and it was my job not to detract from that play," observed Mathieson. "You follow the characters, the action. You don't do things because they look cool. There's a gritty reality to this film. The more real, the more empathy that's nurtured."

The film is R-rated, its graphic violence hardly for the faint of heart. But Mathieson noted that he doesn't regard *Logan* as an overly violent movie. What makes it seem more violent than it actually is, he conjectured, are protagonists who don't look like other worldly superheroes. Instead these are people we feel for who reside in a very real world. Because we can identify with them, the violence takes on a greater impact."

In capturing this real world set in the year 2029, Mathieson generally steered

away from diffused lighting. On the run and in hiding, our main characters are in a dark world "where you can smell the rust and dirt," said Mathieson. "We had good reason to light things in a toxic, nasty way. It feels burnt and harsh outside. Jim [Mangold] also had sets constructed that were classically real."

Mathieson deployed three ARRI ALEXA XT 4:3 cameras and an ALEXA Mini for *Logan*. Lenses included anamorphic primes (E series—35, 40, 50 75, 100, 135, 180; MAP 55mm Close focus), anamorphic primes, Sph Pana Zeiss Primes, and Sph zooms. Among additional resources utilized were a Frazier Lens System, GoPros and a Canon Handycam (for cell phone hospital footage).

"We wanted to accomplish as much as we could in camera," said Mathieson. "The visual effects team was on board with that, asking us to do everything we could. You need to feel the reality to this story."

Mathieson is no stranger to superhero fare. *Logan* is the second film he's shot in the *X-Men* franchise, the first being the 2011 release *X-Men: First Class*, directed by Matthew Vaughn. Director Mangold also has two *X-Men* features under his belt, having earlier directed superhero star Jackman in *The Wolverine* (2013).

What helps to differentiate *Logan* from other superhero films is a pared down cast rather than a large, star-laden ensemble. Thus the camera can focus on a small core of characters as they interact in a story that's unexpectedly intimate for the genre. The story was written by Mangold who in

turn teamed on the script with Scott Frank and Michael Green. "There's an emotion felt throughout this film," said Mathieson. And it's an emotional resonance that comes from a deeper exploration of the characters, particularly Wolverine. And there's a heightened audience interest in Wolverine since *Logan* reportedly marks the swan song for Jackman portraying that character, ending a franchise run for the actor which began in 2000's *X-Men*, directed by Bryan Singer.

Nelson Cragg

With work in television that has been honored with an ASC Award (in 2009 for *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*) and a pair of Outstanding Cinematography Emmy nominations (for the Beirut Is Back" episode of *Homeland* in 2013 and the "From the Ashes of Tragedy" episode of *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story* in 2016), Nelson Cragg is not only continuing his high-profile lensing career but is also diversifying into directing. On both the cinematography and directorial fronts, he again finds himself collaborating with breakthrough series creator Ryan Murphy.

Cragg shot all eight installments of Murphy's series *Feud: Bette and Joan* which debuted earlier this month on FX. The feud depicted is that between iconic Hollywood stars Bette Davis and Joan Crawford whose rivalry is legendary. Yet to hang onto stardom in their past-their-prime years, Davis and Crawford—portrayed by Susan Sarandon and Jessica Lange, respectively—are brought together

Continued on page 26

Nelson Cragg Reflects On *Feud*, Series Creator Ryan

Continued from page 25

to headline the Robert Aldrich-directed 1962 horror/thriller film *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* While the megastars clash with each other, they too are waging battles against ageism and sexism. It's a story that takes us to Hollywood at an earlier, some would say vintage time, peering into the lives of—and unlikely alliance—between Davis and Crawford.

For Cragg, the creative challenges posed to him by *Feud* included recreating the style of shooting and lighting movies in the 1950s and '60s when such practices as the deployment of hard light and lighting from greenbeds above sets were prevalent. Cragg had to resist the temptation to go with natural light through windows which has since taken hold for many situations. He found himself often using Alfred Hitchcock's classic 1958 release, *Vertigo*, as a point of reference for camera movement, focal lengths and best visual practices of the era. "It's a visual masterpiece," said Cragg, noting that *Vertigo* used a lot of "clean white light" to create a vivid palette—an element he deployed in *Feud*.

Cragg also praised production designer Judy Becker (an Oscar nominee for David O. Russell's *American Hustle*) with designing sets for *Feud* that reflected the set construction of that prior Hollywood period. This authenticity made it easier for Cragg to light and move the camera accordingly, resembling what it would have been like on *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* Towards that end, Cragg for example closed his lenses down to require more light. To recreate the filmmaking of that time, he said, "I had to force myself to use more lighting."

Another creative balancing act for Cragg was reflecting the glamour of the era without compromising the needed sense of realism—particularly the fact that Davis and Crawford are in the twilight of their careers. "This is a story about aging women, fading beauty," observed Cragg. "You don't want to make the actresses look bad but you have to capture their age and what they're up against to retain their stardom. I had conversations with Jessica and Susan about how we should approach them. I remember Jessica telling me that she thought the lighting made her look 'too good' in a certain scene. She said she looked more like Marlene Dietrich, too

glamorous for the scene. She wanted me to make sure she didn't look too good. She was true to the story, realizing it was rooted in what an aging actress had to cope with."

Initially, said Cragg, he and Murphy wanted to shoot *Feud* on film—for obvious reasons given that it's a Hollywood period piece. "I would have loved to shoot film but we ran the numbers and it amounted to a huge difference in money over the course of an entire season," related Cragg. "Shooting film is not something that FX or Fox does to my knowledge."

So Cragg instead opted for the ARRI

respects collaboration, demands great work from you and is willing to help you. If you want to direct, to produce, he's receptive to all that which is so rare in this town."

Similarly, Cragg wants to pass along opportunities for growth to others. For the *American Horror Story* episode he directed last year, Cragg enlisted Feldman as his DP.

While continuing to shoot for Murphy, Cragg is also slated to direct an episode of the upcoming Versace run of *American Crime Story*, as well as an installment of

tary for *The Eagle Huntress* which introduces us to the 13-year-old Aisholopan, a nomadic Kazakh girl living in Mongolia and aspiring to be an eagle hunter. This storied tradition of falconry in that part of the world is largely the domain of men who train golden eagles to respond to their call and hunt foxes and hares in the frozen tundra.

Bell learned of Aisholopan through a photo essay of her captured by still lenser Asher Svidensky that appeared on the BBC website. Bell, Svidensky and cameraman Chris Raymond made the long sojourn to Aisholopan's home in a remote area of Bayan-Olgii. Bell was immediately and unexpectedly thrust into production because that next morning Aisholopan and her father, Nurgaiv, were going to steal a balapan (young eagle) from its nest. It was a pivotal scene that had to be filmed even though Bell lacked the ideal equipment to pull off such a shoot. All they had was Raymond's Canon C300 Mark I, Svidensky's DSLR and a tiny Go-Pro camera. Bell also lacked a soundman, having to resort to a pocket Zoom digital recorder he had brought along to use for interviews.

But Bell and his colleagues had no choice but to make do in that the procurement of an eagle was pivotal to the story. They cobbled together the necessary coverage, which entailed surviving some precarious footing on mountain ledges.

Still, though, Bell realized that if he were to make the documentary he envisioned, one that was real yet with cinematic scope, he needed to enlist the talent of the U.K.-based Niblett who has shot some 200 documentaries and dozens of commercials in more than 150 countries on all seven continents.

For *The Eagle Huntress*, Niblett brought in a select range of equipment, including a RED 4K EPIC camera, a self-made drone and a crane to do full justice to Aisholopan's story, capturing the majesty of the eagle in training, its bonding with Aisholopan, as well as the epic qualities of the Mongolian landscape. Bell said that he knew that with Niblett, his small crew could produce something cinematic in the toughest of circumstances including rugged geography and temperatures dipping to 50 degrees below zero.

Niblett has been building his own film



Feud: Bette and Joan

ALEXA which he described as being "my favorite digital camera, very filmmaker friendly." Cragg has used ALEXA for almost everything he's shot in recent years, including *The People v. O.J. Simpson*, *Homeland*, and *Halt and Catch Fire*.

Cragg also cited the positive contributions of his operators on *Feud*—Andrew Mitchell, Brice Reed and Jesse Feldman, the same team he worked with on *The People v. O.J. Simpson*.

Ultimately, though, affirmed Cragg, the most credit goes to Murphy whom he described as "a tremendous collaborator and one who affords opportunities to the people he collaborates with." In that vein is the earlier alluded to directorial diversification that Cragg has enjoyed. For *American Horror Story*'s season 5, after shooting the first three episodes, Cragg got the chance to direct an episode ("Chapter 5"), marking his first time in the director's chair.

"Ryan Murphy is the most creatively driven filmmaker and that's reflected in his love for collaboration," said Cragg. "He

the Katrina-themed season of *American Crime Story*.

Cragg noted that Murphy's generosity and penchant for inclusion also comes to the fore in his Half Foundation initiative which calls for 50 percent of his show slots to be filled by female directors.

Simon Niblett

When director Otto Bell delved fully into his first feature documentary, *The Eagle Huntress* (Sony Pictures Classics), he gravitated towards cinematographer Simon Niblett based on their collaborations over the years on branded content documentary shorts produced back when Bell was creative director at OgilvyEntertainment. Niblett recalled that he teamed with Bell on varied shoots "always in strange places, situated all over in countries ranging from Uganda to Peru, Russia, Japan—it was extensive experience that enabled us to build a shorthand with each other."

Bell earned a coveted Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nomination for Outstanding Achievement in Documen-

Murphy; Simon Niblett On The Eagle Huntress

equipment for years, all designed to be packed into small cases. He is credited with being the first in the U.K. to fly a RED ONE digital camera on one of his creations. The DP also constructed a 30-foot crane, based on the idea of a ship's mast, which he was able to put into a snowboarder's bag for the lensing of *The Eagle Huntress*. Additionally, a drone outfitted with a Blackmagic pocket camera was used not only for the aerial photography but also as virtual "tripods in the sky" where they could hold rock solid on unusual angles. The crane was used for any shots involving camera moves close to people or in situations where harsh weather made it impossible for drones to fly. A self-described "eagle cam" was made

from a dog's harness to capture an actual bird's-eye view.

The inherent challenge of a feature like this, observed Niblett, is "to make a



The Eagle Huntress
beautiful looking film while preserving the reality of the documentary. You want

to achieve the most cinematic shots with the least amount of disruption or destruction. It's always a compromise, particularly when you throw harsh weather into the mix. But when you're on this kind of quest, there's the opportunity to take a quantum leap forward as to what you can achieve with little money, equipment and time. I've been shooting for 30 years, never really stopped and over time you realize that anything is possible. You become driven to tell the story."

The drive to tell Aisholopan's story yielded notable results. In addition to Bell's DGA Award nomination, *The Eagle Huntress* garnered assorted honors, including a BAFTA nom this year for Best Documentary, and recognition as one of

the Top Five Documentaries of 2016 from the U.S. National Board of Review.

But the most significant result can be found in the inspiration of Aisholopan's message. After 12 generations of eagle hunters in her family passing on an ancient tradition from father to son, Aisholopan was the first girl to say that she wanted to share in that legacy. Exhibiting positive energy, strength and courage, Aisholopan speaks to the soaring dreams of girls who aspire to achieve despite tradition and confining stereotypes. "This entire journey is about her personal victory," said Bell. "That's why I end the film so quietly, with Aisholopan and her dad [after her successful hunt] riding off into the sunset and heading home."

Mangold Looks To Break New Ground In Films, Ads

Continued from page 17
powers and pain," said Mangold.

Breaking through

Mangold's filmmaking career spans many varied genres, sprinkled with Academy Award-winning performances. He directed *Girl, Interrupted* (1999) for which Angelina Jolie won Best Supporting Actress, and *Walk the Line* (2005) featuring Reese Witherspoon in her Best Leading Actress Oscar-winning portrayal of June Carter Cash.

For his debut, the drama *Heavy*, Mangold won a special recognition directing

honor at the Sundance Film Festival. *Heavy* was also nominated for Sundance's Dramatic Grand Jury Prize. Mangold next went on to direct *Copland* with a stellar cast that included Robert De Niro, Sylvester Stallone, Ray Liotta and Harvey Keitel.

And further underscoring Mangold's leap across varied genres are such films as the adventure caper *Knight and Day* starring Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz, and the western *3:10 to Yuma* starring Russell Crowe and Christian Bale. The latter was all the more remarkable in that it's one of the atypical examples which finds a remake of a classic film (the original *3:10*

to *Yuma* directed by Delmer Davies and starring Glenn Ford and Van Heflin) living up to its lineage, earning critical acclaim and standing on its own merits.

Ad arena

Mangold is also interested in generating breakthrough work in commercials and branded content. He is handled in the ad arena by Aero Film, through which he has helmed such notable fare as the trailer for the Call of Duty: Ghosts videogame which follows four buddies on the trip of a lifetime through Las Vegas and beyond. Featuring Megan Fox, the piece is driven in

part by a stirring rendition of "I'm Gonna Live Until I Die" by Frank Sinatra.

For spots and branded fare, Mangold is most intrigued by opportunities akin to Logan. "The studio gave Hugh and I the room to really play, to do something different. I have similar hopes and dreams in advertising—the chance to participate. If I get a job where the boards are so worked out, leaving little more for me than to say 'action,' I feel like a fraud. I want to make a movie—whether its two hours, thirty or sixty seconds. I want to be part of problem solving, to work with others to create something that feels fresh and alive."

Reed Morano Makes Mark As Both DP And Director

Continued from page 18
in part by the way in which she broke into the helming ranks to begin with. While studying film at NYU, her original intent was to write and direct but she diverted her focus to cinematography. "I saw a DP at work and thought it was a fascinating job. You get to work with the director, interpret his or her vision into visuals. You learn the emotion of visuals. Every new job would push me creatively in a different direction—directions I wouldn't have gone in if I had concentrated on directing. I didn't give up directing. I just gravitated towards cinematography, figuring that

could be what I'd end up doing professionally or maybe it would lead to directing."

As a cinematographer, she gained a valuable learning experience—but hers was no steppingstone approach. She excelled as a DP, evidenced by her earning a coveted ASC designation in 2013. Among her notable lensing credits were the lauded documentary *Off The Grid: Life on the Mesa* (winner of the Michael Moore Best Documentary Award at the Ann Arbor Film Festival), and *Frozen River*, a narrative film which won a Sundance Grand Jury Prize, Best Film distinction at the Gotham Awards, and a pair of Film Indepen-

dent Spirit Awards. *Frozen River* was key in putting Morano on the industry map, spawning offers to shoot varied projects, including feature films for Rob Reiner (*The Magic of Belle Isle*, *And So It Goes*) and Craig Johnson (*The Skeleton Twins*), season one of HBO's *Vinyl* for executive producers Martin Scorsese and Mick Jagger, and the pilot for HBO's *Divorce* directed by Jesse Peretz. Morano also lensed several commercials directed by the likes of Mark Romanek, Phil Morrison, Casey Storm, and the team of Will Lovelace and Dylan Southern.

Among those she collaborated with

as a DP was producer Matt Tauber who witnessed her efforts to help a fledgling project through writing and development. "I remember him telling me that I should strongly consider directing," said Morano.

But Tauber offered more than a suggestion. He subsequently sent Morano several projects to consider as a director. None of them appealed to her until she ran across *Meadowland*. Morano was impressed with a particular scene that evoked emotion in a manner she hadn't seen before. She came on board and made her directorial mark, now continuing to aspire to express

Continued on page 29

Whitehouse Post New York Promotes Nate Katz To Editor Whitehouse Post promotes Nate Katz to editor, continuing their tradition of growing talent from within.

MOD Worldwide Appoints Jared Scott As First-Ever Managing Director Branding and creative agency MOD Worldwide announced the appointment of Jared Scott as managing director.

Synthetic Pictures, Yessian Music, Apache Color, Union Editorial and Ntropic Team Up to Host Ad Industry "South By Kick Off" Blowout It wouldn't be SXSW without the unofficial advertising and production kick off party, SXKO, and this year's 5th annual bash proved to be epic, featuring fire dancing, an LED light show, buzzed-about bands, a taco truck and more than 600 attendees ready to get the SXSW ball rolling.

Registration Now Open for SIGGRAPH 2017 Registration is now open for SIGGRAPH 2017, the world's leading annual interdisciplinary educational experience showcasing the latest in computer graphics and interactive techniques.

News from Archion Technologies For NAB 2017 In conjunction with NAB 2017, Archion Technologies will be announcing several additions to its products and services offerings, as well as significant enhancements to its Authorized Channel Partner Program.

VFX Artist/Designer Scott Stephens Joins Team at Flavor Detroit Flavor announced the addition of Scott Stephens to their Detroit staff in the position of senior VFX artist/designer.

Lucky Post Promotes Elizabeth V. Moore To Editor Lucky Post announced Elizabeth V. Moore has been promoted to editor.

Photo + Directing Culinary Superstars Peden + Munk Sign With Concrete + Clay! The wunderkind photography and directing duo Peden + Munk join the roster of Concrete + Clay, an LA-based production studio.

Motion Picture Editors Guild To Honor Lillian E. Benson, ACE, With Fellowship And Service Award The Motion Picture Editors Guild (MPEG), Local 700 IATSE, will honor member Lillian E. Benson, ACE, with its prestigious Fellowship and Service Award.

New "SHOOTonline Mobile" App For Motion Picture Production and Post Industries Now Available SHOOT has unveiled an all-new mobile news and information app delivering an uncluttered, easy to use experience on any mobile device. Download @ iPhone.

SHOOTonline.com or Android.SHOOTonline.com

Justin Leibow Re-Ignites With Wild Plum

Wild Plum proudly adds Justin Leibow to its roster of directors.

The New York Times Op-Docs Debuts Rock Paper Scissors

Entertainment's Documentary Series

"Long Live Benjamin" Directed by Jimm Lasser &

Biff Butler The New York Times Op-Docs debuted *Long Live Benjamin*, a captivating six-part episodic documentary directed by Wieden & Kennedy's Jimm Lasser and Rock Paper Scissors' Entertainment

Jessica Sanders Dives In, Blending Dance and Swim in New Short Film

Filmmaker Jessica Sanders continues to show off her ambition and artistic chops with a new dance-driven film set to Bebe Rexha's hit "I Got You." The short film, produced by Sanders for DanceOn, stars rising actor Ethan Peck and the Aqualillies, the professional synchronized swimming group recently seen in *Hail, Caesar!*

Optimus Teams With Solstice To Create Automated Driving VR for Bosch

Optimus recently teamed with Solstice to produce, edit and do CGI/design on a virtual reality (VR) automated driving experience app for Bosch.

Rising Sun Pictures Sinks Its Claws Into "Logan" Reprising its role on *The Wolverine*, Rising Sun Pictures joined Director James Mangold's team for Logan, the third and final installment in 20th Century Fox/Marvel's "Wolverine" saga.

Bully Pictures' Dustin Lance Black is a Voice for Equality and Activism Dustin Lance Black is one of today's most insightful and inspiring filmmakers on the subjects of LGBT rights, gender equality and inter-racial coexistence. He first rose to fame in 2009 when he was awarded an Academy Award for his screenplay to the film *Milk*.

WCPMedia Services Accelerates Production and Post-Production Workflows WCPMedia Services announced significant improvements to its market-leading, cloud-based media management platform to help television and motion picture producers better store, manage and share assets throughout the production cycle.

Rising Sun Pictures Expands VFX Training Program Rising Sun Pictures is expanding its visual effects educational program, operated in partnership with the University of South Australia.

charlieuniformtango Gives a Shout Out To Winning Partners All of us at charlieuniformtango are grateful to the agency and client partners who allowed us to play a part in winning 30 Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards this year at the 55th Annual AAF American Advertising Awards.

Epic Games, The Mill and Chevrolet Unveil Real-time Film

Epic Games, The Mill and Chevrolet have joined forces to revolutionize the conventions of digital filmmaking with "The Human Race," a short film and augmented reality (AR) presentation.

Blackmagic Design Announced Innovative New Control Panels for DaVinci Resolve Blackmagic Design announced two new portable hardware control panels for DaVinci Resolve, its professional editing and color correction software.

Blackmagic Design Announced The New URSA Mini Pro 4.6K Camera BMD announced URSA Mini Pro 4.6K, a new professional camera that combines high end digital film quality with the ergonomics and features of a traditional broadcast camera.

Director Sam Macon Joins One at Optimus ONE, the production arm of Optimus, announced it has added Director Sam Macon to its roster.

2C Creative Elevates Nikki Coloma To General Manager, Senior Director of Operations Committed to recognizing and rewarding the strengths of its valued team members, 2C Creative ("2C") has elevated Nikki Coloma to the position of General Manager, Senior Director of Operations, effective immediately.

STORY's Blair Hayes Captures a Portrait of McDonald's as "My Place" STORY Director Blair Hayes explores a day-in-the-life of a McDonald's restaurant in a new ad for Burrell Communications. My Place features a series of vignettes that portray McDonald's as a gathering place for family and friends.

Digital Content Studio OffAbbot Creates/Produces First-Ever TV Ad For Hollar.com Looking to make a splash with its first foray into broadcast TV, Hollar.com partnered with production collective OffAbbot to produce the brand's new ad "Bottomless."

Blonde + Co Partners On Social Media Content For H&M Foundation's Initiative Supporting UN Refugee Agency UNHCR H&M Foundation turned to Blonde + Co to handle production and post-production on a new branded content piece in support of H&M Foundation's initiative and the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

Whitehouse Post Expands London Editorial Roster with Three New Hires, Promotion Editorial company Whitehouse Post strengthens its London roster by welcoming three new editors and promoting one from within.

Roundabout Entertainment Adds Craig Price to DI Team Veteran editor, visual effects artist and creative director

Craig Price has joined Roundabout Entertainment. Price will serve as a finishing editor in the facility's growing digital intermediate department.

Foundation Editorial Co. Signs Charlie Lee as Editor Post House Foundation Editorial announced that Charlie Lee has signed on as editor in Austin, Texas.

Reenactment Stock Footage Launches New Website and Projects Reenactment Stock Footage.com, the world's first, and most-expansive licensable historical re-enactment and recreation HD library, has launched an all new website for 2017.

STORY's John Komnenich Directs Mayhem (Dean Winters) in Spot for Allstate STORY's John Komnenich recently directed Allstate chairman and CEO Tom Wilson and actor Dean Winters in a 30-second TV spot produced for Leo Burnett. In the ad, Wilson has trouble reading his lines due to a prankster holding his cue cards.

MTI Film Expands Hollywood Facility To Support HDR MTI Film has completed a major expansion of its Hollywood facility designed to accommodate growing demand for post-production services and support for HDR content.

Technicolor PostWorks' Sam Daley Replicates Black & White Look for Horror Tale "The Eyes of My Mother"

Writer-Director Nicolas Pesce's debut feature, *The Eyes of My Mother*, which was finished at Technicolor PostWorks New York, is a beautifully calibrated horror story of a young woman scarred by childhood tragedy.

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Cole Webley's Poignant Super Bowl Storytelling

Continued from page 18

resent who I am," he shared. "I'm more intent on telling longer narratives, delving more deeply into people and their stories. I'm always looking for a script I can sink my teeth into—and this was it for me. In recent years where longer versions of branding messages are appearing across different platforms, I've been able to tap into more of these story-driven opportunities."

Still this particular opportunity admittedly prompted some initial pause on Webley's part. "I was a little nervous to be honest about how to deal with such an intense subject matter. The agency was too. We wanted to delicately handle this, focusing on the people in the story."

Ultimately the approach of putting viewers in the characters' shoes, creating a much-needed empathy, drove the project, which was produced by Sanctuary with FIXER Partners handling agency production. "For one, we wanted to show that there is a sense of patriotism within immigrants, a deep love of their origins," noted Webley. We didn't want this to come off as a white savior film. The immigrants were not running away from their origin but they felt the real need to make a better life. It's hard for them to leave their homes. In a longer version, we see the mother and daughter bidding farewell to an older man outside their home. We don't know who he is but you see the pain

in his face as he watches them leave. It's difficult for all involved."

Webley acknowledged criticism, though, that the 84 Lumber piece romanticized the journey to the border which in reality can be very dangerous with violence and sexual predators. "I can respect people's thoughts on that but we didn't intend to make a documentary. The network for sure wouldn't have cleared a spot showing the dark aspects of immigration. Our main purpose was to connect an individual story—of a mother and daughter—to the idea of immigration and the will to succeed. We don't want a conversation without Americans thinking about the people behind the conversation."

Speaking for himself personally, Webley added, "I felt it was important that we show the wall and the effect it had on this woman when she first saw it. Building a wall without doors is not the answer."

Spots, shorts, features

At press time, Webley was headed to Madrid to shoot a cell phone commercial. His spotmaking endeavors over the years span such brands as Purina, U.S. Cellular, Apple, New Balance, McDonald's, Lexus, American Express, adidas and Canada's Bell phone network.

Webley also has assorted short film credits including *Con Amor*, which gained expo-

sure on the film festival circuit, and a best of month designation from Vimeo. "I'm always interested in good people doing bad things, and bad people doing good things. My films often live in that gray area," related Webley who described *Con Amor* as centered on a single woman who's faced with a difficult decision that will define who she is and how she loves.

Next up for Webley is a trilogy of short

films focused on love, loss and life. The first one, shot in Chile, is slated to soon be released. Webley has wrapped production on the first two chapters in the trilogy and will soon be embarking on the third.

Also on the docket is feature film development. Webley is working on a feature with the characters in *Con Amor*, as well as other long-form projects. He recently signed with UTA for feature representation.

Flash Back

March 25, 2012 Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and Media & Entertainment commissioner Katherine Oliver joined Steiner Studios chairman Douglas C. Steiner to open five new soundstages at Steiner Studios in the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The new stages, totaling 45,000 square feet, will provide new and expanded opportunities for New Yorkers who work in the film, television and commercial production industry. The Mayor also launched initiatives designed to support and grow the industry, including new grants for training programs that prepare New Yorkers for careers in production and digital fields; a new entertainment component to the City's mini-MBA partnership with NYU's Stern School of Business; and a request for proposals for a "Made in NY" Media Center, which would provide media companies with affordable work space and other services....Clay Mills has been promoted to managing director of Wieden+Kennedy Amsterdam, succeeding Lee Newman, who's leaving the agency. Mills will partner with executive creative directors Mark Bernath and Eric Quennoy to lead the office. Mills joined W+K Amsterdam in February 2010 as group account director on Heineken Global and head of business development....

March 22, 2007 Director Thom Higgins has joined Reactor Films. Higgins comes over to Reactor from Green Dot Films. Earlier in his career, Higgins was partnered with director Leslie Dektor in Dektor Higgins & Associates. During his nine-year tenure there, Higgins was nominated for the DGA Award as best commercial director of 1997....Director/cinematographer Robert Leacock, whose experience includes commercials and documentaries, has come aboard New York-based Identity. He was formerly affiliated with Maysles Films, NY, where he directed spots via its Maysles Shorts division for such clients as Nike, Pfizer and Kimberly Clark, as well as a segment of the Vote for Change Concert on the Sundance Channel. Prior to his couple of years at Maysles—which reunited him with famed documentarian Albert Maysles—Leacock had a long tenure with @radical.media....Academy Award-winning VFX veteran Jim Rygiel has come aboard Millennium Pictures for exclusive U.S. spot representation as a director. Rygiel's work on *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy was honored with Best Visual Effects Oscars in 2002, '03 and '04. The effects house on the three films was WETA Digital in New Zealand....

Morano Moves Into Spots

Continued from page 27

emotions and convey stories in new ways, much like that scene in *Meadowland* which originally moved her.

Morano was similarly motivated to pursue *The Handmaid's Tale*. "The source material was so compelling," shared Morano. "I put together the most extensive treatment/pitch I ever made. I did a lot of writing, deployed a lot of images. I ended up getting the job. Then what turned out to be a great experience and education began. I learned to work with a larger group of people who all brought different taste and thoughts to the table."

Ultimately the major lesson learned, affirmed Morano, "was listening to others, working with them, getting them to support your vision and what you think is right—all this makes you a better collaborator and storyteller."

rator and storyteller."

This experience of collaborating and gaining support for a directorial vision, continued Morano, could prove beneficial to her commercialmaking endeavors which entail dealing with many smart collaborators on the creative, production, VFX and post sides.

Speaking of the ad biz, Morano recently wrapped via Pulse a commercial project shot in Portugal for NatGeo and agency 72andSunny. Though she wasn't at liberty to discuss details of the piece, Morano said it entailed a notable person's inspiring true story.

As for what's next, Morano is about to embark on a theatrical feature which she described as a drama with some elements of dark comedy. Titled *I Think We're Alone Now*, the movie stars Elle Fanning and Peter Dinklage.

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Calendar of Industry Events
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CDDP's Chad Howitt

Continued from page 22

explores the letting-go process for a woman after she has lost a loved one.

Malfa cited cinematographer Lisa Rinzler as being an invaluable mentor. Malfa worked as an assistant director on a feature being shot by Rinzler and the two struck up a rapport. Rinzler saw promise in Malfa as a filmmaker, offered her encouragement, and wound up shooting *Close Her Eyes*, *Espera* and "Leyohmi." An accomplished DP, Rinzler has won a pair of Best Cinematography Independent Spirit Awards (for *Menace II Society* in 1994, and *Three Seasons* in 1999). Rinzler also earned a Camerimage Golden Frog nomination (for *Pollock* in 2000).

"To have a strong woman and a great artist like Lisa as a mentor has meant everything to me," said Malfa. "She saw a talent within me and agreed to shoot my work when she could. Lisa has been a great help to me."

It's that brand of mentoring that Malfa wants to extend to others. "On one hand it's a great honor that the CDDP exists," she related. "Yet in a more ideal world my wish is that at some point there won't be a need for showcases like this. I hope to get established as a director and to mentor other women and people of color. If more of us progress to be able to do just that, perhaps there will be less of a need for diversity programs. Inclusiveness will just naturally evolve as we help and mentor others."

Chad Howitt

Also making the CDDP grade was Chad Howitt on the strength of his short narrative film *From 35,000 feet/Praise Aviophobia*, based on a poem by Geoffrey Davis. Howitt connected with Davis' work via the Motionpoems organization which looks to bring poems to life by matching filmmakers with poets. This year, in its initiative to encourage diversity, Motionpoems focused on African-American poets. Howitt, who is part Thai, Chinese and Persian, related to Davis' poem, which tapped into the fear that even the most experienced travelers can feel on—or just in anticipation of—a plane flight. *From 35,000 feet/Praise Aviophobia* premiered at the Walker Art Center Museum, Minneapolis. The short gained industry exposure at the CDDP showcase in L.A. and can currently

be viewed on the CDDP website.

In terms of backstory, Howitt took a circuitous route to the director's chair yet his journey naturally evolved. He studied graphic design at Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif. There he developed a desire to create graphic design that moved, that had a timing, rhythm and pacing to it. This segued into his later getting into visual effects, including 3D work and compositing in commercials. Howitt even served as a creative director at a small post house. As clients began seeking one-stop shopping where they could shoot, deploy live action, effects, CG, handle sound, edit and finish all under one roof, Howitt too found himself branching out into all areas. He became drawn to live action, so much so that he took on a personal passion project on the side, directing a short documentary, *Welcome to The Last Book Store*, which told the story of not only the downtown L.A. business but also its owner and operator Josh Spencer, a father, husband, entrepreneur and paraplegic.

Howitt made his first significant directorial mark with *Welcome to The Last Bookstore*, which played at Academy Award-qualifying film festivals, including the AFI Doc Fest and Cinequest. He tabbed a cinematographer he had enjoyed working with on several low-profile commercials to shoot *Welcome to The Last Bookstore*. That DP was James Laxton who went on to shoot director Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight* which won this year's Best Picture Oscar. Laxton earned nominations for both an ASC Award and a Best Cinematography Oscar on the basis of *Moonlight*. And shortly after wrapping *Moonlight* in Miami, Laxton came back to L.A. where he shot Howitt's *35,000 feet/Praise Aviophobia*.

"James is a great collaborator and such an unassuming person, a joy to work with," related Howitt. "He didn't hesitate to take on my short film immediately following *Moonlight*."

Meanwhile in his young directorial career, Howitt has shown his talent on several commercials, a well received docu short and now a narrative short film inspired by a poem. Howitt is in the market to land a production house affiliation for commercials and branded content, hopeful that CDDP might prove to be a catalyst in that regard.

street talk

Film and animation production company Not To Scale has added multi-disciplinary director Drew Lightfoot for representation in the U.S. and U.K./Europe. The Canadian craftsman, director and animator has experience working across commercials, music videos, TV shows and feature films. Lightfoot's career in stop motion animation kicked off at the age of 17 when he went to New Zealand to work on an animated TV show before moving on to commercials in Australia, Canada and the U.S. After studying classical animation and dipping his toe into directing, Lightfoot was hired as lead animator on Tim Burton's *Corpse Bride* in London. This led to animation directing work for U.K. directors Dougal Wilson, Frank Budgen and Johnny Green on major campaigns including

Big Yellow Tide and Sony Bravia's "Play-Doh Bunnies," which both won pencils at D&AD. Following these high-profile endeavors, Lightfoot naturally migrated to directing himself, helming commercials for the likes of Volkswagen, PlayStation, Orange, Bud Light, Toyota, Maynards and Virgin Mobile, as well as a wide range of music videos. He became adept at meshing live action and animation....Former Saatchi and Grey creative director Pat Giles and his longtime copywriting partner Amy Giles have teamed to form Danger Pigeon, which they bill as being the very first "character agency," focusing on clients with iconic characters, or on brands looking to develop their "character." Giles led creative assignments for such ad icons over the years as: Lucky the Leprechaun, My Little Pony, McGruff the Crime Dog, TRIX Rabbit, Sonny the Cuckoo Bird, The Pillsbury Doughboy, Count Chocula, and The Green Giant. With clients including General Mills, Blip Toys, Girl Scouts of America, Sesame Workshop, Vayner Media, and Portfolio Animation, Danger Pigeon works with other creative agencies in addition to their own client roster, bringing a specialized expertise to their assignments....

report

The Directors Network (TDN), the talent agency for freelance directors, has recently added helmers Kristin Dehnert, Ross Ching and Mark Nickelsburg. Dehnert is a director and writer with a penchant for comedy. Right out of the gate, she turned out her first national spot, Doritos' "Check Out Girl" which aired during the Super Bowl. Ching's work has garnered wide acclaim for its creative and technical innovation and visual style. He originally specialized in creating internet/viral commercials but has since taken that knowledge to hook audiences in broadcast as well. Nickelsburg is a comedy director whose recent *Tide to Go* commercial went viral, gaining worldwide press and more than a million views in 24 hours....Music and sound boutique Nylon Studios, with offices in NYC and Sydney, has secured Ashley Ford of Friends of Ford to handle West Coast sales representation. Friends of Ford's current roster also includes Digital Domain, London Alley, Alpen Pictures and Say OK. Prior to launching her own shop, Ford spent nearly a decade representing creative talent for such shops as Framestore, Bob Industries, Untitled, Humble, tonefarmer, Luma Pictures, Lost Planet Editorial and Partos Agency....Cinematographer Eigil Bryld has wrapped *Oceans 8* and is available for booking via ICM Partners which represents him for commercials and feature films....DP Tim Suhrstedt, ASC recently wrapped another season of *Silicon Valley* on HBO. He is available via agent Robbyn Foxx at Innovative Artists for spots. Suhrstedt's ad credits include comedy-driven campaigns for ESPN, Nike, McDonald's and AT&T....Wohler Technologies, a manufacturer of video, audio and data monitoring solutions, has named Chris Shaw to serve as regional sales manager for North America. Shaw earlier was director of sales for Wohler from 1999-2006. Most recently, Shaw was VP of global sales, TV at Linear Acoustic....

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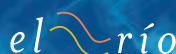
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