From top left, clockwise: Scenes from Cyrano, Passing, The French Dispatch, King Richard, The Tender Bar, and Stillwater | The Road To Oscar Series, Part 2, Page 4
FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION IN ALL CATEGORIES INCLUDING

BEST PICTURE
OUTSTANDING DIRECTORIAL ACHIEVEMENT IN THEATRICAL FEATURE FILM
JANE CAMPION

"THE BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR.
A dazzling, uncompromising work by one of the greatest directors of all time."
AWARDS DAILY

★★★★★
WHAT JANE CAMPION HAS DONE HERE IS NOTHING SHORT OF EXTRAORDINARY.
This is a movie in which everything matters, and nothing is wasted. Every shot is laden with meaning in a way that is thrillingly uncommon in today's filmmaking environment."
THE TIMES

THE POWER OF THE DOG
Best Picture has done here is of the year. Including for your consideration in all categories greatest directors of all time one of the dazzling, uncompromising A OUTSTANDING DIRECTORIAL ACHIEVEMENT WHAT JANE CAMPION Every shot is laden with and nothing is wasted. This is a movie in which WINNER work by 3 BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR WINNER JANE CAMPION Film.netflixawards.com, The Cousteau Society, The First Wave Respect Studios; The Tender Bar Cover photo credits: The Road To Oscar, top left, clockwise–

The importance of sitting in a theater, sharing an experience with strangers, has "absolutely cemented in my mind." The idea of making a film about essentially compassion or a film that I hoped would help generate compassion with an audience felt appropriate. And it became more than just appropriate when the pandemic happened, sitting in isolation for all of those months. It became urgent. I was desperate to make the film at this time because I felt like I was starved of human connection—and scared of how I might approach human connection afterwards. I wanted to make a film that talked about that—the simple difficulty of human connection, how we often fail to connect through our own fears, fears of intimacy, of being seen. And maybe through the very process of making the film we might create some connection among the filmmaking cast and crew, and ultimately create a connection between us and the audience. It was important to me that this be a theatrical feature so that what perhaps stood out most for Fraser relative to Dan centered on a return to the movie theater. “Going to a circus in the round is much better than watching a special on pay per view,” he said, noting that the impact of sitting in a theater with strangers, different people coming together from across town to be in a dark room and share an experience—the importance of that has been “absolutely cemented in my mind.”

POV

Color in the Cloud

We’re on the brink of a revolution with the ability to virtualize almost every part of the production and post process. Color grading plays a big part in setting the look, mood and tone of content, but the process has largely remained unchanged and fairly static for many years. Historically color grading is an isolated part of the post process, usually happening right at the beginning of a project or right at the end. While many other post processes such as VFX, design and animation already have been migrating to the cloud with various degrees of success, color grading is only just now making it into the virtual space. And it couldn’t happen at a more promising moment.

COVID concerns, forcing us to work from home, has accelerated the transition, but also, the faster pace of production with compressed schedules and trimmed budgets has made color in the cloud a logical and pragmatic development.

It’s a very efficient way of working. You can concentrate more time on the creative process, which is a key takeaway, and color in the cloud opens up your talent pool to artists based anywhere in the world. You can spend more time making things look great rather than on logistics. Otherwise, you’re always sending and tracking stuff which is a time suck, especially with the schedules that we’re working with these days. The schedules are very compressed so every day, actually every hour is really valuable. If you’re able to cut out logistics of shipping stuff around, you can devote that time to actually doing the work.

When you finish grading, the footage is instantly available to use online. It’s a very efficient forward facing way of working that is going to become the norm in the future. It’s quick and secure. Once the data is in the cloud you can make duplicates and create secure archives easily. As more editorial, color, VFX & finishing companies move to the cloud, the whole process becomes a lot more seamless and the benefits are liberating.

Color in general is such an important part of the process and it’s really exciting to look at it through a fresh lens and think about how it can be improved and modernized, because it has such a profound effect on the end result. And it’s so exciting to be able to look at it holistically as part of the process and not just this thing that happens in a bubble up front or at the end. Color has been side for so long; to actually integrate it in a very modern workflow is groundbreaking. Color in the cloud is potentially one of the biggest revolutions to hit our industry. The quality of the work is up there. It’s some of the best content that I’ve ever seen.

Angus Kneale is chief creative and co-founder of Preymaker
Sharing insights into Cyrano, King Richard, Stillwater, Passing, The Tender Bar and The French Dispatch

By Robert Goldrich, The Road To Oscar Series, Part 2

The classic tale of Cyrano de Bergerac from the play written by Edmond Rostand in 1897 has proven to be timeless. But perhaps the premise of a man who harbors love for a woman—all the while thinking that he was unworthy of her love due to his physical appearance—was more timely than ever as interpreted and embraced by director Joe Wright whose imagination was initially sparked when he saw Erica Schmidt’s musical staging of the epic story at a theater in Connecticut in which Peter Dinklage played Cyrano opposite Haley Bennett as Roxanne.

Wright was deeply moved and he enlisted Schmidt to write a bold new film adaptation, yielding Cyrano (MGM, United Artists Releasing) with a cast headed by Dinklage and Bennett.

The compelling relevance, though, for Wright was rooted in present-day realities. “When I started developing the movie,” Wright recalled, “Brexit had happened in Britain, Trump was in the White House. The idea of making a film about essentially compassion or a film that I hoped would help generate compassion with an audience felt appropriate. And it became more than just appropriate when the pandemic happened, sitting in isolation for all of those months. It became urgent. I was desperate to make the film at this time because I felt like I was starved of human connection—and scared of how I might approach human connection afterwards. I wanted to make a film that talked about that—the simple difficulty of human connection, how we often fail to connect through our own fears, fears of intimacy, of being seen. And maybe through the very process of making the film we might create some connection among the filmmaking cast and crew, and ultimately create a connection between us and the audience. It was important to me that this be a theatrical feature so that there could be a connection between the people in the room (movie theater).

While the pandemic was a driving motivator, it also carried formidable obstacles to getting a movie made. Wright related, “It was on June 28, 2020 when I called Eric Fellner (producer and Working Title co-chair) and said, ‘We’ve been developing this script for two years now and we’re ready. I want to shoot it.’ He said, ‘you are absolutely crazy—in the middle of a pandemic.’ I asked him to give me a likelihood of it getting financed. He said there was about a five percent chance. Okay, great. I’ll take five percent. It’s better than nothing. We went to various financiers, including our usual lot. Everyone was very nervous. No one wanted to make anything. Then we went to Mike De Luca at MGM. He said yes. He explained, ‘If I don’t, then I’m betting against the future of film.’”

Wright said that he found the perfect partners in De Luca and MGM. “The idea of doing a musical at MGM felt right,” related Wright, alluding to the studio’s famed heritage in musicals. However, Wright was looking to create a different kind of musical that departed from that lineage. His goal was “to do a musical that didn’t feel like a musical, to make a musi-...Continued on page 6
“An exhilarating, heart-stopping experience. Take a deep breath, and enjoy.”
CINEVUE

“Excellent. Definitely worth the wait.”
THE HOLLYWOOD NEWS

A QUIET PLACE PART II

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION
BEST PICTURE
MICHAEL BAY | ANDREW FORM, p.g.a. | BRAD FULLER, p.g.a.
JOHN KRASINSKI, p.g.a.

An exhilarating, heart-stopping experience. Take a deep breath, and enjoy.”

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FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION
BEST PICTURE
MICHAEL BAY | ANDREW FORM, p.g.a. | BRAD FULLER, p.g.a.
JOHN KRASINSKI, p.g.a.
**Road to Oscar**

**Directors Share Reflections On Cyrano and King Richard**

Continued from page 4

cal where the songs felt natural and integrated into the drama. There wasn’t any kind of fanfare. There wasn’t the feeling that we would do a big song and then get back into the story.” DeLuca and MGM embraced and supported that vision. The story, the drama, the characters, Wright affirmed, always took priority.

Production designer Sarah Greenwood and set decorator Katie Spencer. McGarvey has twice been nominated for Best Cinematography Oscars—for the Wright films Atonement and Anna Karenina, Greenwood is a six time Academy Award nominee for Best Production Design—for Wright’s Pride & Prejudice, Atonement, Anna Karenina and Darkest Hour. Nominated with Greenwood each time was her long-time creative partner, director Bonelli’s fourth collaboration with Wright—the others having been the “Nosedive” episode of Black Mirror, The Woman in the Window and Darkest Hour.

Wright has known McGarvey for 25-plus years. The DP has lensed five of Wright’s features. “We have a kind of trust and clear-sighted conversation that continues to this day,” shared Wright. “He is a master. But there’s something about Sean’s work that is always deeply humane.”

The working relationship with Greenwood and Spencer dates back to Wright’s very first television job. “As soon as I have an idea of what I might want to do, I talk to Sarah. We start discussing it, I show her early drafts of the script and try to develop the film with her, making it as specific as possible. I often write into the screenplay ideas that Sarah has come up with. Our ideas are so meshed now, it’s difficult to tell if the ideas are hers or mine.”

Wright first worked with editor Bonelli on the Black Mirror episode. The director said of Bonelli, “He has an extraordinary facility both technically and emotionally. It’s rare to get that balance. You get editors who are deeply emotional beings but perhaps not so technically astute. And you get very technical editors who are not able to emotionally gauge the material. I sit next to him over four or five months editing. He pushes me and I push him. It’s a very very close partnership.”

For Cyrano, cast and crew came together during the pandemic with a deep trust which Wright said will continue to impact his filmmaking. “I set out to make a film devoid of any cynicism or irony, to make something for the here and now that was open-hearted...It feels good to have done this and I will continue to do that, to kind of lay yourself open and feel that it will be okay—to trust and not have to protect yourself.” It’s that trust, after all, that can lead to the most meaningful connections with others.

**Reinaldo Marcus Green**

King Richard (Warner Bros.) is a story that director Reinaldo Marcus Green can relate to while also marking a full circle journey for him in which mentors became collaborators. On the former score, Green and his brother were groomed by their dad to be Major League Baseball players. While that would seem at best a long-shot for two Black girls from Compton, Calif., Richard Williams trained them for success on the tennis court, academically and personally, stressing the importance of self-respect, humility and believing in yourself. Both Venus and Serena got their initial training on dilapidated public tennis courts in Compton—often in harm’s way with neighborhood gangs nearby. Yet while Richard Williams was beaten down literally and figuratively in life, he was not dissuaded from dedicating himself to helping all his kids attain excellence. The patriarch, though, was not alone in shaping and nurturing his daughters—three other sisters also provided support, love and camaraderie, as did their mom Oracene, aka Brandy (Aunjanue Ellis), who took on the role of coaching the younger Serena when professional coaches turned their attention to Venus.

“Oracene was as instrumental as Mr. Williams was. That, to me, is what is so exciting,” said Green. “Yes, it’s called King Richard but it’s also Queen Oracene. I’m so excited for the world to know that this woman, whom they saw in the stands, was their coach on the courts and in life.”

Green also had some “coaches”—at the Sundance Directors Lab and at NYU-Tisch Graduate Film School—who helped him develop as a filmmaker. That development was evident in his debut feature, Monsters and Men, which rolled out at the 2018 Sundance Film Festival where it earned a Special Jury Prize for Outstanding First Feature. Green went on to helm the first three episodes of the Netflix series Top Boy, and has since wrapped his
sophomore feature, *Joe Bell*, which premiered at the 2020 Toronto Film Festival.

For *King Richard*, Green wound up recruiting several of those alluded to “coaches,” mentors/instructors who gave him guidance earlier in his career. Cinematographer Robert Elswit, ASC and editor Pamela Martin, ACE were Sundance Directing Lab advisors during the summer when Green was making *Monsters and Men*. Green is an unabashed fan of their work, citing Elswit’s lensing of *Little Miss Sunshine*. At NYU graduate film school where Spike Lee was one of his instructors, Green met legendary production designer Wynn Thomas. Green is also an admirer of Thomas’ work, including his production design on Lee’s films, particularly *Malcolm X*. Thomas has made history on different fronts, credited as being the first African-American film production designer, the first Black production designer to become a member of the Art Directors Guild in Los Angeles, and the first African American nominated for the Art Directors Guild Award for his design work on Tim Burton’s *Mars Attacks!*. Among Thomas’ many other credits are director Ron Howard’s *A Beautiful Mind*, a Best Picture Oscar winner.

Green reached out to Elswit, Martin and Thomas to work on *King Richard*. They accepted. Green described learning that they would collaborate with him as “an incredible moment,” marking his first studio film, Green described learning that there are a lot of voices to listen to, including cinematographer Masanobu Takayanagi, ASC and editor Tom McCarthy who brought in French co-writers Thomas Bidegain and Noé Debré to help bring a unique reflection of the world to life, including cinematographer Masanobu Takayanagi, ASC and editor Tom McCarthy who brought in French co-writers Thomas Bidegain and Noé Debré to help bring *Stillwater* as “a unique reflection of the time it was released in.”

The story contains other twists and turns, along with the suspense of Bill making progress, through startling means, to wards exonerating his daughter when a lead on a male murder suspect emerges. The casting of Damon was key, assessed McCarthy, citing the star’s built-in hero persona that could then be subverted during the course of the film, challenging audiences and altering perceptions as the story sojourns into unexpected places.

Continued on page 8
**DP Ruhe Visits The Tender Bar; Hoffman Edits Passing**

Continued from page 7

third or fourth writer on a movie.” McCarthy added that Mc Ardle “understands my tempo” and his “superpower” is the ability “to be reductive with emotional and intellectual moments, and make them clear. He brings clarity and resonance to the moments.”

McCarthy cited DP Takayanagi’s “work ethic and attention to detail,” describing him as “a master of his craft, incredibly thoughtful” and constantly pressing on the story and what the scene is about, striving to understand the essence of the scene.” The DP, continued McCarthy, was instrumental in getting viewers “to be with Bill and feel him in his space and his place. You can smell and sense the difference in different locations.”

Another collaborator on Spotlight whom McCarthy turned to for Stillwater was venerable producer Steve Golin, the CEO and founder of Anonymous Content, who passed away in April 2019 at the age of 64. “When you lose people in your life creatively and professionally, you don’t realize how huge they are until they’re gone. He was a seminal character who got stuff done and made,” said McCarthy of Golin. McCarthy recalled that Stillwater came to pass because Golin believed in it. “In a hotel over lunch one day I pitched him Stillwater,” related McCarthy. “He said, ‘I’m in. Figure it out, whatever you need.’ I told him I wanted to hire these French writers. ‘Let’s do it.’ Steve said. He freed you up to tell the stories you were passionate about and believed in. Even when we didn’t agree on things, he was pushing for what was best for the movie. There was no other agenda. He was a special filmmaker and a special guy.”

Golin earned three Best Picture nominations, winning for Spotlight in 2016. The other two nods were for The Rev enant, also in 2016, and Babel in 2007.

**Martin Ruhe, ASC**

The opportunity to collaborate again with director George Clooney was among the prime factors drawing cinematographer Martin Ruhe, ASC, to The Tender Bar (Amazon Studios). Ruhe first worked with Clooney as an actor, lensing him in The Americans, and then teamed with the director/producer/actor and his producing partner Grant Heslov on the TV miniseries Catch 22. Ruhe shot episodes directed by Clooney, Ellen Kuras and Heslov—one for the latter earned the DP his second ASC Award nomination last year. The first nod came in 2012 for what turned out to be an ASC Award-winning effort on the telefilm Page Eight. After Catch-22, Clooney and Heslov sought out Ruhe for The Midnight Sky, an apocalyptic sci-fi drama which brought an empathy and deep pathos uncharacteristic of that genre generally. The collaborative relationship with Clooney and Heslov now resumes with The Tender Bar, based on Pulitzer Prize-winning author J.R. Moehringer’s memoir of the same title. The film introduces us to J.R. Sheridan (played by Daniel Ranieri as a boy, Tye Sheridan as a young man) who—in the general absence of his abusive father—grows up in the glow of a bar under the aegis of his proprietor/bartender, J.R.’s Uncle Charlie (Ben Affleck). Charlie leads a band of colorful characters at the bar who all have caring father figure qualities. They collectively fill a void in J.R.’s life as his mom (Lily Rabe) struggles to provide him with opportunities denied her. We are privy to witnessing J.R. grow up, pursuing his dreams—with one foot planted in Uncle Charlie’s bar for guidance and support.

For Ruhe, perhaps the biggest challenge was having to shoot The Tender Bar during the pandemic. He noted that there were crew members “whose faces I never saw” yet the masks didn’t prevent them from collaborating to help create “a warmth and intimacy” that the story required. “The trick with smaller films is to get the tone right, to provide room for the actors,” said Ruhe who added, “To pull through and be able to make this film and tell a story in this environment, a lockdown, felt like a little miracle to me.”

Ruhe deployed the ARRI Alexa Mini, sometimes two of those small cameras, to get close and personal with the cast, not disrupting performances with big heavy gear. Lenses included Cooke S4 and Angenieux Optimo Lightweight Zooms. The bar set that was constructed has a lived-in charm akin to the real thing.

For the most part, though, Ruhe said, “There wasn’t much trickery” as the focus was simply on the actors while realizing Clooney’s desire to pay homage to 1970s and ’80s films. “It’s a warmhearted story and he loved the characters,” shared the DP who conjectured that Clooney was attracted to the project in part for its 180 degree turn from Midnight Sky. “After Midnight Sky, a dystopian film, he wanted to do something warm and heartfelt.”

At press time, Ruhe was set to embark on The Boys in the Boat—co-directed by Clooney and Heslov—centered on the 1936 Olympic team. This underdog crew is chronicled from their Depression-era beginnings to winning the Gold Medal at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin where they beat Nazi Germany’s rowing contingent of so-called “Master Race” athletes.

**Sabine Hoffman, ACE**

University of Washington’s men rowing team. This underdog crew is chronicled from their Depression-era beginnings to winning the Gold Medal at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin where they beat Nazi Germany’s rowing contingent of so-called “Master Race” athletes.

**Sabine Hoffman**

Actor Rebecca Hall makes her directorial debut with Passing (Netflix), fashioning a screenplay adapted from Nella Larsen’s 1929 novel of the same title. The story centers on two Black women, Irene (portrayed by Tessa Thompson) and Clare (Ruth Negga), who can “pass” as white women. While Clare decides to pose as white, Irene maintains her heritage. The two women, who grew up in the same community, last touch with one another until by chance their paths crossed. This sparked an unexpectedly longer term reunion in which Clare returns to her roots—unknowingly to her racist white husband (Alexander Skarsgård)—setting off ripple effects, subtle and not-so-subtle, on the women and their families.

Hoffman described Hall as “an incredible director and writer, wonderful to work with.” The editor credited Hall with authoring an insightful adaptation, leading to a film where both the words—and what’s unsaid—are essential. “What is between the lines, what is not being said, what’s being left out” becomes key, said Hoffman. “The story has so many layers, a lot of complexity.” Editing that complexity was a challenge marked, said Hoffman, by conveying “the ambivalence of the whole story but at the same time providing the audience with a relatable emotional experience.”

That relatability is critical to evoking empathy for the characters, principally Irene and Clare as we see their impact on each other—and those around them. Things start to at first slowly unravel for Irene when Clare re-enters her life. While this unbalances Irene, she is also attracted to the dangerousness of what Clare seems compelled to do.

Part of the journey involves trusting the audience as there’s even ambiguity in the ending, which preserves the spirit of the story. “People seem to be able to see it in all different ways,” said Hoffman, leaving the viewer to complete the story based on his/her/their perceptions.

This is conducive to sparking conversations among people—and within each person as individual perceptions are subject to exploration. That’s a lingering dynamic which Hoffman embraces, noting that she loves watching the film and hearing audiences afterwards.

The process of teaming with Hall to help make this film, observed Hoffman, was akin in some respects to that exploration. Hoffman praised Hall for leaving room for such exploration creatively.
Alexandre Desplat Reflects On Working With Wes Anderson

While Hall was thoroughly prepared and had much already storyboarded up front, Hoffman said that she and her colleagues on Passing felt they had safe space in which to play, to try something else on occasion, helping the film get to a place which reflected the spirit and vision that Hall had for the project. Hoffman assessed that she’s extremely happy with the end result, particularly as a film which can be watched multiple times and continue to engage someone on a deep level.

Passing is part of a growing filmography for Hoffman which includes Queen Bees, Maggie’s Plan and The Glorias.

Alexandre Desplat

Eleven-time Academy Award-nominated composer Alexandre Desplat—who won Best Original Score Oscars for The Grand Budapest Hotel in 2015 and The Shape of Water in 2018—knew that the French Dispatch’ s headquarters in France to write an internation edition of The SHOOT Dailies > edition, The SHOOT Dailies and on SHOOTonline.com, with select installments also in print issues. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards gala ceremonies. Nominations for the 94th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. The 94th Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 27, 2022.

The French Dispatch, Desplat explained that the goal was in large part “to write a French score for a film set in France without any of the clichés of what would be considered French. There’s no accordion, no waltz, nothing of what would be considered French. There’s no cliché. This is a France born out of Anderson’s imagination—with no clichés. The French town where The French Dispatch is based, Ennui-sur-Blase, is fictional. Still the score, continued Desplat, is “very French,” with a mix of humor, love, joy and varied emotions.

Working with Anderson over the years, Desplat also sees a maturity in the director’s use of animation and how it’s woven into his live-action films. The French Dispatch reflects that virtuosity as animation plays a key role in telling “The Private Dining Room of the Police Commissioner” portion of the film. “The subtlety of the way he uses the technique he’s learned in animation is impressive,” said Desplat who added that his approach to the music doesn’t change when animation comes into play in a live-action film. Desplat’s process remains the same—simply striving to compose in a manner that’s right for the story.

Desplat’s first career Oscar nomination came in 2007 for The Queen. Two years later, Desplat scored a nod for The Curious Case of Benjamin Button. In 2010 the composer garnered his third nomination for Anderson’s Fantastic Mr. Fox. A year later Desplat was again an Oscar nominee, this time for The King’s Speech. In 2013, Desplat was nominated for Argo. Then came another Best Original Score nomination in 2014 for Philomena. And the same year (2015) Desplat won the Oscar for The Grand Budapest Hotel, he was also nominated for The Imitation Game.

Then came the win for The Shape of Water in 2018. The next year Desplat was a nominee for Anderson’s Isle of Dogs. And the composer’s most recent Oscar nod came in 2020 for Little Women.

This is the second installment of a 16-part series with future installments of The Road To Oscar slated to run in the weekly SHOOT>edition, The SHOOT Dailies and on SHOOTonline.com, with select installments also in print issues. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards gala ceremonies. Nominations for the 94th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, February 8, 2022. The 94th Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 27, 2022.
Short Takes

GOLDFISH, ZULU ALPHA KILO TEST ATTENTION SPANS
With attention spans declining to unprecedented levels, the best way to somehow gain the interest of teenagers is to challenge them to a game. So to launch their new Kravin’ Ketchup Goldfish flavor, Campbell’s built the Goldfish Focus Faceoff Lens on Snapchat.

Developed by agency Zulu Alpha Kilo and its production arm Zulubot, the augmented reality experience is simple. Players must keep their attention on the Goldfish cracker for more than 9 seconds to unlock a promo code for a discount. Why 9 seconds? That’s the attention span of a real Goldfish and players are challenged to see how their focus measures up. The longer players can concentrate on the cracker, the better their score. The game uses Snap’s eye-tracking technology to measure focus amidst all types of notifications and distractions designed to disrupt them.

ACADEMY LAUNCHES DIGITAL PRESERVATION FORUM
The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences has announced the launch of the Academy Digital Preservation Forum (ADPF), a global online gathering place dedicated to exploring the latest issues surrounding digital preservation of motion pictures. An initiative of the Academy’s Science and Technology Council, the forum—at academydigitalpreservationforum.org—hosts original content and resources and will serve as an ongoing discussion place for stakeholders and practitioners within the field and those interested in learning more.

Andy Maltz, SVP, Science and Technology Council, said, “As long as digital motion picture technologies evolve, there will be a need for collaboration between archivists, technologists and filmmakers. The ADPF provides a foundation for productive communication and problem-solving to ensure future generations can access the movies we enjoy today and those yet to come.”

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE....
Christina Augustinos has been named head of content production for Hero4Hire Creative. Her experience with Nickelodeon and Cartoon Network yielded accolades including Promax, Annie, Webby, and BDA awards as well as an Emmy nomination for Blues Clues & You interactive episodes. Augustinos spent five years at Cartoon Network. She then climbed the ranks at Nickelodeon to VP of production for the brand creative team. There she oversaw production of Nickelodeon brand and promotional marketing campaigns for properties including SpongeBob SquarePants, iCarly, and Big Time Rush. She eventually segued to VP of creative operations for the Noggin video streaming service where she oversaw workflow for interactive content production and the Noggin marketing team. After two years of a global pandemic, the New York Festivals International Advertising Awards will resume in-person judging with an all NYC-based international executive jury. Fede Garcia, BCW’s global CCO, will helm the live judging which is scheduled for two consecutive days in June 2022. Garcia’s 27-year career has spanned advertising roles in Buenos Aires, Tokyo, and New York. A native of Argentina, Garcia previously spent four years with Huge, most recently as global ECD. He also served as group creative director at Translation in New York, where he worked on the NFL, History Channel and HBO. Garcia worked with Ogilvy Tokyo for four years where he oversaw the creative development of campaigns for clients including Coca-Cola, American Express, IBM and Citizen.....

Welcome to the Special SHOOT 19th Annual New Directors Showcase profile section. It’s hard to believe this is the 19th year of the Showcase. We love conducting the New Directors Search and producing the annual Showcase because it gives us the opportunity to introduce and celebrate new talent, complementing our coverage of up-and-coming directors in SHOOT Magazine and on SHOOTonline year round.

Each year we conduct the official NDS Search and receive hundreds of entries consisting of a great variety of short and long-form advertising and entertainment content. Once the field is narrowed down to the final Showcase, each director who has long-form work selected provides an up-to-two-minute excerpt or trailer for the Showcase Reel. Since the shortened versions don’t do justice to the work, we encourage you to seek out the directors to see the full versions via contact info on each director’s profile page on the special SHOOT NDS website: https://nds.shootonline.com.

The following section in this print issue contains thumbnail sketches of the Showcase directors with their responses to select questions. Additional Q&As with each director appear on the NDS site along with the Showcase Reel. We hope you take a look at each director’s profile page, view the reel and spread the word to your colleagues to check out the work.

As you know, the pandemic has altered many plans, including those for our in-person SHOOT NDS Event which didn’t take place this year or last. Prior to the COVID crisis, SHOOT had a string of 15 consecutive years presenting its NDS event to an audience at the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Theatre in New York City. But given the prudent of a safety-first mindset prioritizing everyone’s health and well-being, we decided not to convene in person in 2020 and 2021.

Although we miss getting together, sharing insights and points of view during the daytime Directors/Producers Forum, then debuting the NDS Reel on the big screen that same evening followed by an afterparty at DGA, the reel on its own remains a major means of exposure for new worthwhile talent and will go on being scrutinized by the advertising and entertainment communities which continue to become increasingly interconnected. Networking and dialogue persist—albeit remote and virtual—with the work of Showcase directors serving as a catalyst given the industry’s insatiable need for new talent.

The NDS Reel remains a force for drawing people closer as agencies seek new collaborators, and production companies reach out to directors who can enhance their rosters. The reel also is a platform for new voices to be heard as diverse storytelling perspectives are more valuable and relevant than ever in helping to better society through fostering more empathy and deeper understanding of others, including those often underrepresented in the media landscape.

Fifteen of the Showcase directors are women. The overall lineup of 31 directors consists of 17 who are represented by a production house and 14 who are not affiliated with a company. NDS filmmaker backgrounds are far ranging from acting to photography to an advertising agency pedigree, work in the art department on theatrical movies, film school educated and self-taught, even feature film producing.

An example of the latter is NDS director Oge Egbuonu who earlier this year joined the roster of production studio ms ng eces for commercials, branded content and music videos. Her experience includes serving on the producing team for acclaimed feature films such as Loving (directed by Jeff Nichols and starring Joel Edgerton and Ruth Negga in a story about the U.S. Supreme Court case Loving v. Virginia which legalized interracial marriage), and Eye In The Sky (directed by Gavin Hood) through independent production company Raindog Films.

Helping to enable new voices to be heard is most gratifying for us at SHOOT. We wish all the NDS /filmmakers a long and successful career, and we are excited to play some small part in bringing them to your attention. We hope you enjoy the NDS Profiles and Reel—with the goal of our seeing everyone in person next year!

—Roberta Griefer
Publisher & Editorial Director
rgriefer@shootonline.com

10 SHOOT December 2021
31 Individual Directors Earn Slots In SHOOT Showcase

Lineup includes 14 directors sans production company affiliations; 15 women make the final cut

A SHOOT Staff Report

SHOOT’s 19th Annual New Directors Showcase offers a total of 31 up-and-coming directors. The field includes 15 women and 14 directors who are unaffiliated with a production company. The work spans commercials, PSAs, spec and promo fare, short films, music videos, documentary shorts and features, thesis films, a TV pilot, comedy, drama and dramedy, among other disciplines and genres.

This year marks the rare occurrence of a Showcase lineup sans a directorial team—all are solo helmers this time around. However, two of our 2021 Showcase talents, Isabel Bethencourt and Parker Hill, are no strangers to co-directing as they came together on Cusp, which earlier this year won a U.S. Documentary Special Jury Award for Emerging Filmmakers at the Sundance Film Festival.

Bethencourt and Hill now have individual directorial careers. Bethencourt is repped in the ad arena by Independent Media while Hill is on the roster of production house Tomorrow.

Unaffiliated

Fourteen of the Showcase directors this year are unaffiliated with a production company: Eric Almond for the short Requiem For Black Love; Zeke Anderson for the public service film “When the Motor Stops”; Josh Banks with the short titled M; Henry Behel for Reyka Vodka’s “Made of Iceland” spot; Paige Compton for the AF thesis film Guide On; Mario Garza for the MeUndies “Love Every Flaw” spec commercial; Utsab Giri for Tesla’s “SpaceX” spec spot; John Connor Hammond for the short Protest Photography; Julia Kennelly for the short film Marcy Learns Something New; Natasha Lee for the short film In The Visible; Leah Loftin for the short film The Wolf; Drew Pollins for the “Is It Over?” PSA; Khalid Senna for the short titled Concrete Rose; and Jane Stephens Rosenthal for AFI thesis film The Hideaway.

Company ties

Seventeen of the Showcase directors are affiliated with production companies. Besides Bethencourt and Hill, the NDS filmmakers affiliated with production houses are: Tyler Davis of Tessa Films, recognized for the Images Med Spa spot “So What?”; Ewurakua Dawson-Amoah of Greenpoint Pictures for the short film To the Girl that Looks Like Me; Oge Egbuonu of mssng pceces for Levi’s “Beauty of Becoming” branded content; Abraham Felix of Curfew, recognized for the Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation’s “The Unspoken Curriculum” PSA; Damen Ferguson of Cortez Brothers (U.S.), Birth (U.K.) and Suneeva (Canada) for the Monster.com spec spot “Stare”; Chloe Hayward of Knocklehead for the short film Stopping; LJ Johnson of Current Resident for her TV series pilot Breakdowns; Dave Maruchniak of 1stAveMachines Buenos Aires for The New Yorker’s “The Right Question Changes Everything” spot; Jabu Nadia Newman of Park Pictures for Newness, the British Council and BFI’s The Dream That Refused Me short; Amber Park of Believe Media, selected for Lil Yachty’s “Love Music” music video; Bianca Poletti of Epoch Films for the short film Fertile; Zack Secker of Station Film for State Farm’s commercial “Everyone’s Unique”; Ben Strang of Sarofsky for Agenor’s A Mystery To Me: Vannetta short form documentary; Emily Elizabeth Thomas of Sibling/Rivalry for ESPN/Disney’s “The Mandalorian” branded tie-in promo; and Grayson Whitehurst of Los York for Purple’s “Life-Changing Sleep” spec commercial.

The following pages contain thumbnail sketches of the Showcase directors with their responses to select questions. Additional Q&As with each director—as well as the Showcase reel—can be accessed on nds.shootonline.com.

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Eric Almond
Unaffiliated
*Requiem For Black Love* (excerpt from short film)

2) How did you get into directing?
I've always been interested in directing. When I was growing up I would read the booklets that came in the CD packages. While reading, I would visualize scenarios to go along with the music. Then I started to write these scenarios out. Initially, I wanted to direct music videos but through my journey I eventually realized that I had a stronger passion for narrative directing.

3) What is your most recent project?
My most recent project, *Requiem for Black Love*, is a soul-stirring story about the plight of Blacks in America. The short film follows the journey of two fugitive slaves in search of freedom. Although the two must come to terms with their own mortality, they are convinced that true love can never die. Desperately, they cling to the hope of being able to love again in another lifetime only to find that the future is parallel to the past.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
The best part of directing is collaborating with other crew members and creating a story that can be viewed from multiple perspectives.

5) What is the worst part of being a director?
I appreciate and learn from every opportunity. I truly have never been in a directing situation that I disliked.

Josh Banks
Unaffiliated
*ToF* (excerpt from short film)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
In 2018, I was hired to direct the animated pilot for *Cape Kids*, a children's educational TV show about kid superheroes. I was lucky to work with some talented and experienced actors on that project including David Faustino (*Married With Children, The Legend of Korra*), Keith Powell (*30 Rock*), Carolina Ravassa (*Overwatch*) and Suzy Nakamura (*Avengers: Endgame*). Since then, I have directed several corporate videos and PSAs for national brands, and *M* was my narrative directorial debut.

2) How did you get into directing?
I have been a professional actor for 30+ years, and I'm fortunate to have worked on some amazing productions. By being on set (with professionals who were generous enough to answer my many questions,) I learned about lighting, sound, cinematography, editing and directing. Every film and TV set has been a new opportunity to learn how all the pieces of the industry fit together. I've always had a strong desire to tell stories, and directing naturally evolved from there.

8) Who is your favorite director and why?
I have many favorites: David Fincher for his style and pacing, Steven Spielberg's grand storytelling, Tim Burton's appreciation of the weird, Ridley Scott's command of suspense, Denis Villeneuve's composition...I'm cheating by answering too many (and too few) instead of one favorite, and I'm okay with this.

Zeke Anders
Unaffiliated
“When the Motor Stops” (commercial)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
An airshow commercial for the Central Coast Airfest in October 2018—a job I'm still pinching myself about, just in case it wasn't real. I got called up randomly by the airshow director, who found me on Instagram...the only problem was that he thought I was someone else! When I told him I wasn't who he thought I was, he was nice enough to let me pitch on the job anyway, and the rest is history. It was an incredibly complicated and technical shoot. We were working with about 30 airplanes and pilots—often during an active airshow environment. The best part was directing the Cinemat, the airplane that recently shot on *Top Gun: Maverick*, in capturing aerials of the Canadian Snowbird Aerobatic team and a WW2-era P-38 over the Pacific Ocean. The film went on to win a Clios and a big award in the airshow community.

2) How did you get into directing?
I have always been keenly interested in directing ever since high school. A handful of my student-films won some prestigious awards, including the top honors from the Los Angeles International Student Film Festival. Movies and television were (and still are) a huge influence in my education—but so is theatre. I did theatre all through college which helped shape my perspective as an aspiring director—not only did it teach me how to work with actors, crew, upper management, but how to effectively and efficiently tell a story: the narrative. It was during this era where I also experimented with short films, cinematography and editing. It was an incredibly creative time for DIY filmmaking.

3) What is your most recent project?
My first professionally directed commercial was for a Detroit-based hospital system in June 2018. It was originally scoped as just filming pick-up shots for a revised edit, however the agency was so pleased with the additional scenes that they turned it into a brand new spot. Up to this point, I had a few docu-style/humanity films under my belt and an evolving collection of black and white street photography featuring candid shots of people from around the world. I think the agency Creative Director and Producer saw the potential with my ability to connect with people and gave me the opportunity to helm their project.

Henry Behel
Unaffiliated
“Reykjavík Made of Ice” (commercial)

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3) What is your most recent project?
I did the launch campaign for a limited edition Air, Land, and Sea run of watches made by the Italian watchmaker Unimatic in collaboration with Hodinkee. Another wild ride—I personally flew the camera plane in formation with another plane as it raced a classic car—a 1979 Datsun 280zx - out in the desert. When we were sailing out to the Channel Islands for the “Sea” portion, a pod of two hundred dolphins were kind enough to show up to set. The best moments are always the things you can’t plan.

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THE DIRECTORS GUILD OF AMERICA

congratulates

all of the directors selected for the
SHOOT 19th Annual New Directors Showcase!

You are the future of the industry, and we are here to support and protect you.

To learn more about the many benefits of joining the DGA community, please contact executive Michael Floyd at mfloyd@dga.org

Lesli Linka Glatter, President  •  Russell Hollander, National Executive Director  •  www.dga.org
Helmers Bethencourt, Compton, Davis, Dawson-Amoah

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Isabel Bethencourt
Independent Media
Gap (co-director; excerpt from feature documentary)
Capturing had its own story. I was able to work on so many different types of narrative and documentary projects, that I found myself itching to direct my own projects.

2) How did you get into directing?
I naturally got into directing through cinematography and still photography. Looking through a lens made me realize that everything I was capturing had its own story. I was able to work on so many different types of narrative and documentary projects, that I found myself itching to direct my own projects.

3) What is your most recent project?
Gap, my feature documentary.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
I love directing because I get to work with different people and collaborate in new ways on every project. I genuinely enjoy the unique and intense creative problem solving that comes with making films, and figuring out the best way to bring an audience into a story. Most of all, it’s incredible to get to do a job that encourages exploration, curiosity, and empathy.

Paige Compton
Unaffiliated
Guide Oh! (excerpt from short film)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
The most professional thing I have done to date is my thesis film with AFI. I am currently looking for professional opportunities to direct.

2) How did you get into directing?
I have always wanted to make movies. So after trying all the different positions in filmmaking I found during my undergrad that directing is where I really shine.

Tessa Films
Images Med Spa’s “So What?” (commercial)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
“So What?” - Images Med Spa - September, 2020

2) How did you get into directing?
I’ve been filming and directing videos and shorts with my friends and colleagues since college, but during the pandemic I was a part of a from home sketch comedy show on the streaming service TOPIC. I wrote, self produced and directed weekly sketches that eventually got me on the radar of Tessa Films and CBS.

3) What is your most recent project?
I’m currently serving as associate director of the ViacomCBS 2022 Sketch Comedy Showcase: A yearly outreach and diversity initiative that gives up and coming talent from across the country a platform to be seen by the industry. I’m currently serving as associate director of the ViacomCBS 2022 Sketch Comedy Showcase: A yearly outreach and diversity initiative that gives up and coming talent from across the country a platform to be seen by the industry.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
I find myself itching to direct my own projects.

Ewurakua Dawson-Amoah
Greenpoint Pictures
To the Girl that Looks Like Me (short film)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
The most professional thing I have done to date is my thesis film with AFI. I am currently looking for professional opportunities to direct.

2) How did you get into directing?
I was younger my mum would take my brother and I to “Reading Wednesday’s” each week without fail. Both of my parents, as bookworms, and I became entranced with fantasy novels and loved that books gave me the freedom to imagine my own visuals. However, when my favorite novels were developed into films, I realized that none of the characters I’d connected with so strongly looked like me. I started to re-write my favorite stories to change this, where each lead character looked, sounded, smelled and dressed like myself and my family. Where the protagonist slept in her bonnet before waking up to save the world. Where there was futu on the table and banku cooking on the stove. This started my journey into screenwriting.

11) How has the pandemic impacted your career, art, craft, shaped your attitudes and reflections on life which in turn may influence your work, approach, spirit, mindset?
I graduated from AFI in 2020. And with the full of no work and no promise of it anytime in the near future, I made a commitment to myself to only focus on directing. Focusing on my knowledge and skills to become a more well-rounded director. And also only taking gigs that will help me to learn more and apply more skills to my directing tool belt. I committed to not wasting time on anything else.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
The energy of everyone on set! It takes so much planning and hours to get something produced, and walking on set feels like the payoff of all that work. I’m the most awake on the day, even if I’m tired from the aforementioned planning and man hours. When I’m excited on the day then I can’t wait to show the finished product to the team that helped bring it all together.

Tyler Davis
Cusp

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

4) What is the best part of being a director?
The best part of being a director is that I get goosebumps.

To the Girl that Looks Like Me

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

2) How did you get into directing?

3) What is your most recent project?

4) What is the best part of being a director?

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)
I grew up in Manteca, CA. In the middle of farm country. Until I signed up to join the Army. I spent my 20’s serving in the military and when I got out I pursued my education in film. And the rest is history.

Cusp

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

2) How did you get into directing?

3) What is your most recent project?

4) What is the best part of being a director?
Showcase Directors Egbuonu, Felix, Ferguson, Garza

Continued from page 14

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
   Levi's Voting commercial. Last year in August

2) How did you get into directing?
   I was offered the chance to direct a documentary and I went for it!

3) What is your most recent project?
   Levi's “Beauty of Becoming” global campaign.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
   Being able to tell stories that aren't often told and collaborating with amazing folks.

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1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
   In 2018 I directed a branded doc film for my hometown chapter of the YWCA. We told the story of a Black mother, Penny, who at the age of 34 gave birth to her third child and shortly thereafter had a heart attack. She survived, but her road to recovery was incredibly difficult. She struggled in every aspect of her life and deeply despaired at her inability to live the radiant independent life she lived before the heart attack. Then the YWCA stepped up and gave her the tools and support she needed to become whole again. It was a beautiful story. And for me it was the first time in my independent filmmaking journey that a production company approached me and said “Hey we think you're the perfect person to tell this story.” And I've been fortunate to just keep going ever since.

9) What is your favorite movie? Your favorite television/online program? Your favorite commercial or branded content?
   Another difficult choice! Hard to say. But if I happen to walk past a TV and There Will be Blood, Training Day, Beau Travail, Moonlight, or The Two Towers happens to be playing... I'm probably dropping everything to watch.

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1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
   Most of my experience comes from winning commercial contests and directing spec spots. I only started getting attention from reps this past year after winning a Young Directors Award for my Monster.com spot “Stare.”

3) What is your most recent project?
   I just finished shooting a Geico spec spot that I also wrote called “Accent.” We had a blast shooting it. I could've cut it five different ways because we had so many different alt. versions that all worked, which is really a testament to the great actors that were a part of the shoot.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
   Getting to collaborate with people more talented than me. (Muahahaha!)

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1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
   If by professionally you mean paid, it was 2019 when I worked full-time at Honey, a tech company that saves you money.

2) How did you get into directing?
   I’ve worked as an advertising copywriter for a while now, and every time I'd go to shoot a commercial I want to direct it. So I started creating my own projects, investing in myself to define my style.

3) What is your most recent project?
   The latest projects I’ve directed are two commercials and a short-form web series. I do have several narrative projects in development at the moment.
1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
My first professionally directed work was a short documentary-style video for a cemetery in early 2019.

11) How has the pandemic impacted your career, art, craft, shaped your attitudes and reflections on life which in turn may influence your work, approach, spirit, mindset?
Before the pandemic, I was working full time at Panavision New York, and shooting passion projects on the side, which kept me very busy. Once everything shut down, I used the time to shoot all kinds of videos (including a talk show) in my apartment. It allowed me the freedom to explore and develop my craft in ways that I never could've imagined. While people around the country were desperate to be free, I found freedom in creativity. And isn’t that, to a large extent, what we do? We’re constantly faced with obstacles, from pre-production, through production and into postproduction. But we roll with the punches, we work with the challenges, and do our best work despite the limitations.

Utsab Giri
Unaffiliated
Tesla’s “Space X” (spec commercial)

John Connor Hammond
Unaffiliated
Protest Photography (short film)

3) What is your most recent project?
I recently directed a comedic 30-second television spot for Nations Lending with Boathouse Agency. The spot featured, of all things, Dennis Rodman and a super cute pug. It was an awesome experience to work with Dennis Rodman, especially in a comedic capacity--the guy has great timing!

John Connor Hammond
Unaffiliated
Protest Photography (short film)

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1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
I grabbed a camera and shot my pregnant best friend and her son, it got picked up by lingerie brand Cuup as one of their first campaign films.

2) How did you get into directing?
I had a career in modeling and trained as an actress in London and New York, but I think I ultimately wanted to be the creator rather than the canvas. I became interested in challenging conventional roles of women in cinema which led me to pursue writing and directing.

3) What is your most recent project?
Staying is my most recent project, a passion project stemming from the staggering statistics of domestic abuse over lockdown.

8) Who is your favorite director and why?
I can’t choose!

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
My first directing job was a commercial for ESPN’s SEC network called “We Love It Here” in November 2019. We went to a bunch of schools in the SEC and filmed traditions each of them has around football, tailgating, and school spirit. It was a blast getting to go to games and being immersed in the passion and distinct culture of each university.

2) How did you get into directing?
I’ve always known I wanted to be a filmmaker, and I went to NYU’s film school at Tisch. While there I spent more time writing and producing. It was once I graduated that I discovered photography and that really propelled me into directing. It was like it all clicked for me—the writing now paired with visuals and I understood and connected with storytelling on a new level.

PARKER HILL

CONGRATULATIONS ON ALL OF YOUR SUCCESS WITH CUSP & 2021 SHOOT NEW DIRECTORS SHOWCASE! WE THINK YOU’RE RAD.

tomorrow.tv
1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
I did two spec spots for YouTheFan in November of 2020, the brand loved them so much they bought them! They then hired me to direct a bunch more spots for them!

2) How did you get into directing?
My first foray into directing was after I spent a year pitching a TV pilot to networks and was met with a whole lot of rejection. I decided to write and direct a web series that made ME laugh. It was called Life’s Lemonade and was about adults who run a lemonade stand in Los Angeles.

3) What is your most recent project?
I just wrote and directed two comedy spots for Gutter Helmet. The ad agency and client let me get super weird with them, and I mean weird in the best way! It’s always super exciting when you get to make ads that look and feel like something that hasn’t been done before! I also have been shopping around my indie pilot Breakdowns, which is a mockumentary-style show about a Minneapolis commercial casting office.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
Oh man, that’s hard. I think for me it’s world building, creating a universe that feels authentic to the viewer, even if it’s super bizarre.

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1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
I have not yet professionally directed, although I have been professionally producing and line producing for the better part of a decade. I have written and directed two short films, and I have a television show in development that I hope to direct someday!

4) What is the best part of being a director?
I’m generally drawn to comedy, as it allows me to explore uncomfortable topics in an approachable way – but I often find myself in more of a dramedy space than broad comedy. Although I have yet to direct a commercial, I’ve done a lot of work as a commercial line producer and find the short-form world very exciting creatively as well.

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C O N G R A T S

L J J O H N S O N

SHOOT New Directors Showcase

(write something funny here)

#hireafunnywoman

currentresident.tv
Showcase Helmers Lee, Loftin, Maruchniak, Newman

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7) Have you a mentor and if so, who is that person (or persons) and what has been the lesson learned from that mentoring which resonates with you?

Commercial director Jordan Brady has been very supportive of my pursuit of directing while also demystifying a lot the workings behind building a directing career. His emphasis on the craft and process behind filmmaking is one of the lessons that resonates with me the most.

8) Who is your favorite director and why?

Some of my favorite directors are Yorgos Lanthimos (I thought about Dogtooth constantly for years after first seeing it), Celine Sciamma, Fredric Fellini, Agnes Varda, Todd Haynes, Catherine Breillat, Pawel Pawlikowski, Joanna Hogg—all who create beautifully stylized, subversive films, often about the female experience. I am especially inspired by the work of Rainer Werner Fassbinder. I adore the potent worlds he creates, meticulously framing his flawed characters in such vivid, stylized compositions that are flush with humanity. The influence of his extensive background in the theatre is evident in the elevated worlds he creates.

Leah Loftin
Unaffiliated
The Wolf (short film)

9) What is your favorite movie? Your favorite television/online program? Your favorite commercial or branded content?

Let me turn this into a Top 5...

--Movies: Finisterrae by Sergio Caballero / Rubber by Quentin Dupieux / Post Tenebras Lux by Carlos Reygadas / A Pigeon Sat on a Branch... by Roy Andersson / Waking Life by Richard Linklater

--Shows: The Shivering Truth by Vernon Chatman & Cat Solen / Primal by Genndy Tartakovsky / Tarantula by Carson Mell / Too Old to Die Young by Nicolas Winding Refn / Undone by Hiroko Hulsing

--Commercials: I love Juan Cabral’s compelling way of telling stories. Martin Kalina’s sense of humor. The craziness of directors like Keith Schofield, Oscar Hudson or MeatDept. Pablo Maestres’ world building... but one of my favorite recent commercials has to be Nalle Sjöblad’s work for Etisalat, “Moonwalk”.

--I also recently became obsessed with Kasper Häggström music videos.

Dave Maruchniak
1stAveMachine Buenos Aires
The New Yorker’s “The Right Question Changes Everything” (commercial)

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

Earlier this year, I directed an experimental short film entitled North South Eve that was commissioned by an international luxury chocolate brand. The film was recently invited to have its world premiere this November at the BAFTA-qualifying Aesthetica Short Film Festival in the UK.

2) What is your most recent project?

I just recently completed two Nando’s commercials, one for TV and one for online. At the same time I worked on an online and TV campaign for Adidas Open Forum. Both projects were so different and so much fun. I got to learn different aspects of directing from each brand and tell completely different stories.

Jabu Nadia Newman
Park Pictures
The Dream That Refused Me (short)

2) Who is your favorite director and why?

Shooting is the process of capturing images as visual data. Directors use different techniques and styles to convey their ideas and tell their stories. A great director can bring life to a story, character, or concept through their vision and execution. They can inspire and motivate their teams to create something truly special. A great director is someone who can connect with their audience on an emotional level, leaving a lasting impact. So, which director do you admire the most? Why? Do you have a mentor? If so, who is that person (or persons) and what has been the lesson learned from that mentoring which resonates with you?
1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
Olivia O’Brien x Asos—“Now” Music Video and Back to school product featuring of August 2020. I had creative directed for a couple years prior, but this was my first proper debut in terms of directing a music video.

2) How did you get into directing?
I got into directing after working as an art director and creative director in the music industry space.

3) What is your most recent project?
Lennon Stella’s “Fancy” music video and CHLOE at the 2021 MTV Video Music Awards performance. I have also finished shooting a couple projects that will be releasing early next year in 2022.

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)
I grew up in Los Angeles. I am Korean American.

3) What is your most recent project?
Commercially I just wrapped directing four spots for a Starbucks holiday campaign. It was an incredible, unmatched experience. The creative team was so kind and actively encouraged my ideas, truly a wonderful team to collab with. As far as narrative work, I’ve recently finished directing a dark comedy short about two Millennials on a date.

8) Who is your favorite director and why?
I have a lot of favorites, a few being Paul Thomas Anderson, Agnès Varda, Andrea Arnold, Xavier Dolan, and John Cassavetes. I love all of their work for so many different reasons. Xavier Dolan’s films are incredibly beautiful, every frame is so rich in color and emotion. I’ve seen Mommy at least 10 times! Paul Thomas Anderson is the ultimate filmmaker to me. His characters are always so rich with personality, and he has such a classic but consistently unique way of building his characters’ worlds.

Epoch Poletti
Epoch Films
Fertile (short film)

EPOCH.
Congratulations Bianca on your SHOOT NDS 2021 honor well deserved we are incredibly proud of you.
epochfilms.com
10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)
I was raised in Massachusetts by quirky intellectual parents and an emotionally vacant cat. My love for comedy emerged during elementary school with a fascination for New Yorker cartoons, George Carlin and SNL. I studied psychology at Syracuse University and followed the next logical step: freelance photography.

After a few years my photography career took off. I developed an award-winning portfolio of print advertising, editorial and fine art photography, including several major solo exhibitions praised by Architectural Digest, CNM and Wired.

In 2018 after a decade working in stills, I began to direct. Working in the motion medium quickly became fertile ground for my interests as a comedic storyteller. My sense of humor combined with a highly visual aesthetic seemed to strike a unique tone with creatives.

3) What is your most recent project?
I just wrapped an American Express commercial with one of my favorite production companies, The Heist. I wrote and directed the spot, featuring a fictional family of miniature horse haulers who rise up to the new challenge of hauling standard-sized horses. Getting laughs from the client, agency, and producers all throughout the process made every day of working on it feel like play.

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?
“Bringing Gaming to Life” for AMD Processors in 2019. We shot it as if the camera were exploring a scene that was frozen in time. We used some tried and true camera trickery and then elevated it with 3D modeled props floating in mid-air.

That same year I also was hired to direct the feature film, Ice Cream in the Cupboard. It premiered at Rhode Island International Film Festival, where it won a Best Feature and Audience Choice award. It’s now available to stream on Amazon Prime.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
Weaving together the talent of agencies, production companies, artists, and film crews is a magical process. We are all creatives in separate disciplines, but when we join together, we become filmmakers. Just like Megatron. I love that.

5) What is the worst part of being a director?
Losing a bid. It’s like being slapped in the face with a large wet fish. It hurts and it stinks. But it’s part of the experience of working in commercials and I try to learn from each impact.

Shand has also served as a member of the Association of Film Commissioners (AFCI) board of directors, as well as a chair and member of several of the association’s key committees.

Shand said, “Oklahoma is poised to be the next major destination for filmmaking, and the Cherokee Nation has positioned itself ahead of the curve in preparing for a major economic expansion in the film industry. The Cherokee Nation is well prepared to be a leader in the content creation field for years to come, and I’m glad to be a small part of that.”

Additionally Bretlyn Bevenue is also joining the film office staff and will serve under Shand as an outreach specialist.

Shand Named Cherokee Nation Film Commissioner
Cherokee Nation has named Kevin Shand as the tribe’s new film commissioner and film office manager. Shand previously served as the Colorado state film commissioner and director of the Colorado Office of Film, Television and Media, a division of the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade. Shand also served as executive director of the state’s nonprofit Colorado Film Commission, as well as a film commissioner for Stanislaus County in California.

“Kevin has every skill set we were looking for in filling this opening. He has helped create and manage the Colorado film incentive program and wrote much of the early film legislation for the state,” said Jennifer Loren, director of Cherokee Nation Film Office and Original Content. “His experience working with industry partners, Hollywood directors and filmmakers, location scouting, and much more will help Cherokee Nation Film Office champion the advancement of Oklahoma’s film industry, but most importantly will help further our mission of advancing the presence of more Native Americans in both film and television.”

Kevin Shand
Shand said, “Oklahoma is poised to be the next major destination for filmmaking, and the Cherokee Nation has positioned itself ahead of the curve in preparing for a major economic expansion in the film industry. The Cherokee Nation is well prepared to be a leader in the content creation field for years to come, and I’m glad to be a small part of that.”

Additionally Bretlyn Bevenue is also joining the film office staff and will serve under Shand as an outreach specialist.

Bruised Makes Mark On New Jersey
Halle Berry’s directorial debut Bruised (Netflix) was shot entirely in New Jersey, largely at Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City and Elite Heat Boxing Gym in Newark. The story of a former mixed-martial arts fighter struggling to regain custody of her son and rekindle her athletic career, Bruised spent nearly $10 million in New Jersey and hired hundreds of local cast and crew members. The Bruised cast includes Berry, Shamier Anderson, Adam Canto, Sheila Atim, Stephen McKinley Henderson, Lela Loren and UFC women’s flyweight champion Valentina Shevchenko.

Other recent New Jersey projects include The Many Saints of Newark, Wu-Tang: An American Saga, and Steven Spielberg’s remake of West Side Story. Helping to draw these and other projects into the Garden State is the New Jersey Film and Digital Media Tax Credit Program which offers eligible production companies a 30-35% transferable tax credit on qualified film production expenses, and an additional 2% diversity bonus for qualified productions.
10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)

Khalid Seña
Unaffiliated
Concrete Rose
(excerpt from short film)

I grew up in the Lower East Side New York City. I love my neighborhood because of the various different ethnicities I was exposed to as a kid. It allowed me to interact with others from different walks of life and viewpoints different from mine. This is something I carried with me in my previous jobs working as a production assistant on many sets throughout NYC.

11) How has the pandemic impacted your career, art, craft, shaped your attitudes and reflections on life which in turn may influence your work, approach, spirit, mindset?

Khalid Seña
Unaffiliated
Concrete Rose
(excerpt from short film)

Entering the world as a filmmaker has been difficult post pandemic. Getting my film into festivals has been fun but where things get frustrating is getting the facetime as a filmmaker at these festivals. The majority of festivals Concrete Rose has gotten into have been virtual. So while my film has been getting seen all over the country, me as the director and co-writer haven’t gotten any facetime. With everything being virtual you miss those Q and A’s and those mixers to network.

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

Jane Stephens Rosenthal
Unaffiliated
The Hiddenway
(excerpt from short film)

Everyday I had made so far has been out of love and desire to create. I would say my most professional project would be my latest The Hideaway, which was my thesis film from the American Film Institute.

2) How did you get into directing?

Jane Stephens Rosenthal
Unaffiliated
The Hiddenway
(excerpt from short film)

I’ve always been a director. I just didn’t know I was. I grew up on movies, I’ve always loved movies, I’ve always been in awe of movies, movies have always been a part of saving my life, but I never considered directing. Editing, sure, that was like writing poetry, but it wasn’t until I had written a project for myself to act in called No One Ever Said in 2016 that I considered directing. I did a test shoot, and realized, with the encouragement of an incredible producer that I wanted to see the very personal story I had written on screen the way I intended it, I was going to have to direct it. And I was sold. Here was a chance to mix everything I loved—words, the body, music, image, sound, composition and get to point/place/move and swirl them all together. I’ve never looked back.

1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

Ben Strang
Sarofsky
Anchor’s A Mystery To Me: Vanetta
(excerpt from short film

My first film was a digital series pilot called Beat that was completed in 2019. We shot the project on a remote island in the Chesapeake Bay and the story followed a teenage boy setting out to figure out what happened to his father after a mysterious disappearance at sea.

4) What is the best part of being a director?

Ben Strang
Sarofsky
Anchor’s A Mystery To Me: Vanetta
(excerpt from short film

Being in the field shooting a documentary has always been my favorite part of directing.

I’ve never really been a sit behind the monitor type of filmmaker and the process of living and breathing with a subject and experiencing their life through the camera is just an absolute thrill to me—it feels like jazz improvisation whereas scripted filmmaking feels more like classical music to me.

Continued on page 24
3) What is your most recent project?
A short experimental Western on 16mm film titled *Cowboy Truths*. I make a Western-leaning film about every year. I'm from Texas so the Southern influence is very strong in my work. Not just in the way of cowboys and sunsets, but in a very holistic sense. I like underdogs, the ragtag spirit, colors that look like they've been left out in the sun, grit. *Cowboy Truths* was this year's nod to the Wild West. I am always working on the ongoing project of my feature film script. It's a very important story to me that's been many years in the making. I'm looking forward to finding the right producing team to support it.

4) What is the best part of being a director?
Telling stories for a living. Working with actors. Seeing your visions come to life on the monitor. Collaborating with incredible crew, talent and artists. Dreaming. Playing. Being on set. Watching movies all the time. Writing all the time. Going back to the drawing board when things aren't working and figuring out an even better way forward. Those magic moments where you know you got it. I could go on... there's so much I love about what I do.

7) Have you a mentor and if so, who is that person (or persons) and what has been the lesson learned from that mentoring which resonates with you?
Regarding my foray into commercials, director Jackson Tisi (who's also my best friend) has been a great mentor. He dove into commercial work both immediately and fearlessly after we graduated from NYU, and he's been instrumental in helping me navigate the course thus far. Seth Epstein (founder of Los York) has also taught me quite a bit about the nature of the beast in a very short amount of time. He's invigorated by the process of fostering and guiding budding talent, and I'm beyond thankful for the guidance that he's provided me since I've met him.

8) Who is your favorite director and why?
Choosing one is really difficult. Michael Haneke is up there; his work is exceptionally polarizing and he has no problem waging war on your psyche. I love Paul Schrader's dialogue, he's one of the best writer/directors of all time in my mind. Yorgos and Bergman, too—I love morality plays. I also wish that Sylvia Plath could've dipped her toes into filmmaking while she was here.
ADVICE FOR NEW DIRECTORS

Djay Brawner
Executive Producer/Partner, Tuff Contender

DO NOT GIVE UP! If you have talent, drive, and ambition, you have a shot at making it as a "professional" director. It’s really easy for new directors to look at their peers or others on Instagram and feel like they are succeeding quicker than they are. Which could be true, but it doesn’t mean that you cannot still succeed, and even surpass others. Sometimes you have to just grind it out to get noticed. To have work that speaks to new audiences, it takes time to find and develop your voice — don’t expect it to happen overnight. It didn’t for me, it didn’t for many of the directors we work with at Tuff Contender.

Kira Carstensen
Global Managing Partner, Merman

I think the most important thing for new directors is to not wait for the perfect opportunities to come along; you have to create your opportunities. That means making things that move you, that show the audience how you see the world. In the beginning of your career, this is the time to establish your voice and vision. There will be plenty of time for compromise later. But in the beginning, you have the great privilege of deciding what stories you want to tell. With the ability to self-distribute on YouTube or Vimeo channels, your work will get noticed. The right people will find you if you are true to your voice and vision. The second thing to note is that film is a collaborative medium — you need others to realize your vision. So, if you don’t come from a film school, seek out groups like Women in Film or Film Independent, where you can find support and crew to help you make things.

Hal Dantzler
Executive Producer/Creative Content, charlieuniformtango

To be successful, a director's reel must show creative range, but it must also present a cohesive directorial style that ties everything together and tells people who that director is. These days, we're seeing how important it is to include short-form commercial work—not just music videos or shorts. Agency creatives and their clients need to know that a director can tell their story in a 15, 30, or a 60. And I encourage our directors to find a balance between their love of storytelling and current marketing trends. It's not news that every campaign needs a social component with shorter bits of content. The days of agency creatives rolling their eyes at the idea of doing 15s and 60s are long gone. These elements should be embraced as opportunities to deliver powerful little messages. If long-form is the "comedy special," 6s are the sharp one-liners you'll remember long after the laughter dies down.

Jesse Dylan
Founder/CEO, Wondros

Always practice your craft. Everybody has an iPhone, so you can make things yourself easily while trying to get that break in the business. You'd be surprised how creative you can be on your phone and what you can edit on your own computer. Just continue to make things. Be innovative. Work with the people in your life - family and friends, your pets, your neighbors. You'll probably do some of your most inspired work when you're not getting paid. Have your work ready to go and be prepared to show it if you have the chance. And do your homework. Find out what companies are out there, and have fun when introducing yourself to new people.

Shannon Lords-Houghton
Executive Producer/Owner, Mutt Film

I think the most important thing for a new director is to have a distinct point of view and that’s a very difficult thing to have really though it sounds simple. It’s about knowing what you want to say or show and knowing how best to do that so it helps define who you are and what you want to achieve. Right. Not easy. We see so much work that lacks this element and so when we see someone who has thought about the direction they want to go in, they really stand out. We always say don’t follow trends because by the time you notice them, they are already gone. The best thing to remember is that yes, every story has been told, probably a million times in a million ways, but not by you.

Rebecca Niles
Managing Director, Live Action, ArtClass

Enjoy the process! Take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way in the early days, and strive to make it the absolute best. Research production companies of all sizes, and find fellow directors' work you love, and reach out to them to share your work, even if just one piece. Remember you are emailing a human on the other side and be personable! Don't rush to get on a roster too quickly, develop your style, and ask for advice from those you admire. Eventually, you will find the right team and EP who will help you foster your directorial style and push you in new ways. Getting on a roster won't guarantee a windfall of work, especially at the beginning of your career. Keep going after opportunities to shoot; you never know which small job will get you your first big one.

Hani Selim
Executive Producer/Managing Director, Durable Goods

The saturation and competition of directors in the advertising space is the highest I have ever seen, but directors shouldn’t feel discouraged. Rather, they should find their voice within the noise and hone their specific style. I know directors hate to be pegged into one genre, but understand that creative directors and clients are looking for a specific skill set and genre when choosing a director, so one must specialize. Always be creating, don’t wait for a job.

Also, while the trend to stay freelance is so appealing these days, make sure you understand the pros and cons. Being freelance appears, at the surface, as a way to get as many leads as possible. However, when agencies see more and more that you are being presented from so many production companies, it does lessen your value.

Editor’s Note: SHOOT thanks the above executives for sharing their advice for new directors. See article with their complete comments on SHOOTonline and in the SHOOT>e.dition.

December 2021 SHOOT 25
Delving Into A Documentary State of Mind

Shedding light on
The Rescue, The First Wave and Becoming Cousteau

A SHOOT Staff Report

The guild awards season is on the horizon. And among the marquee competitions is the DGA Awards within which lurks a hot documentary race. The contenders include a mix that runs the gamut from first-time feature documentarians to seasoned filmmakers, a number of whom have been past DGA nominees and/or winners.

Prime examples of first-time solo directors of a feature documentary—who have already registered on the current awards show circuit—are: Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson for Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised) (Searchlight Pictures/Hulu); Jessica Beshir for Faya Dayi (Janus Films) and Jessica Kingdon for Ascension (MTV Documentary Films).

There’s also a hybrid new/veteran director in the discussion—lauded narrative filmmaker Tod Haynes (Far From Heaven, Carol) who’s made an auspicious documentary directorial debut with The Velvet Underground (Apple TV+).

The Velvet Underground was recently nominated for Best Music Documentary at the IDA Documentary Awards. Up for that same honor is Summer of Soul, one of four IDA noms it received, the others spanning Best Feature Documentary, Best Director and Best Editing.

Meanwhile Ascension tied with Summer of Soul for the most nominations, six, in the Critics Choice Documentary Awards. Summer of Soul wound up winning all six of the categories in which it received a nod—for Best Documentary Feature, as well as Best First Documentary Feature, Editing, Archival Documentary, Music Documentary, and attaining a tie for Best Director (with Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi and Jimmy Chin for The Rescue).

Summer of Soul topped the Critics Choice Best First Documentary Feature category which also included Faya Dayi, The Velvet Underground, Ascension, and Kristine Stolaski’s Pry. Atory (Netflix).

On the other end of the documentary experience continuum are the likes of: Vasarhelyi and Chin, Oscar winners and DGA nominees for Free Solo in 2019, who are now being recognized for The Rescue (National Geographic Documentary Films); Julie Cohen and Betsy West, Oscar and DGA nominees in 2019 for RBG and now in the running for My Name is Pauli Murray (Amazon Studios); Orlando von Einsiedel, Oscar and DGA-nominated for Virunga in 2015 (and winner of the Best Documentary Oscar for White Helmets in 2017) who now is generating buzz for heading a collective of filmmakers behind Convergence: Courage In A Crisis (Netflix); and Matthew Heineman, an Oscar nominee and DGA winner for Cartel Land in 2016 (and two years later winning his second DGA Award for City of Ghosts), who once more is front and center in the awards landscape for The First Wave (National Geographic, Disney+).
Neon), which last month won the IDA’s coveted Pare Lorentz Award.

Matthew Heineman

Whereas Haynes diversified from narrative features to make his first documentary, Heineman went the opposite route. A two-time DGA nominee as a documentarian, Heineman moved into narrative film with A Private War which in 2019 earned him a third DGA nomination—for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in First-Time Feature Film. Heineman thus joined Martin Scorsese as the only directors ever to be nominated for both narrative and documentary DGA Awards. A Private War starred Rosamund Pike as the late great war correspondent Marie Colvin.

Heineman’s recently released documentary The First Wave takes us inside Long Island Jewish Medical Center, one of NY’s hardest hit hospitals, during the harrowing first four months of the pandemic. Heineman’s signature approach of character-driven cinema verite casts light on the everyday heroes at the epicenter of COVID-19, including Dr. Nathalie Doucet and ICU nurse Kellie Wunsch, who put their own lives at risk to save the lives of others. The patients and their families are also heroic as Heineman introduces us to COVID-stricken Ahmed Ellis and Brussels Jabon who are fighting to survive.

Finding those people to tell their stories, serving as a microcosm through which audiences could view the emotional and societal impacts of the pandemic, was key. “People don’t like talking about casting for documentaries. But that is what happens. They are the storytellers,” said Heineman who cited Dr. Doucet as an example, willing to share what she was going through, possessing an electric personality and whose caring shone through despite the horror of it all.

“This was the most terrifying film I’ve ever made on almost every level—logistically, emotionally, physically,” affirmed Heineman. “What drove us every single day was the amazing fortitude, courage, love and humanity that we witnessed. Yet I didn’t go to bed feeling sad. Instead I felt deeply inspired. Those two realities can co-exist—fear and danger, the terror of it all, along with perseverance, love and humanity.” To hear Heineman describe The First Wave as “the most terrifying film he’s taken on carries considerable weight given that he received the International Documentary Association’s Courage Under Fire Award in 2015 for Cartel Land, a remarkable and startling film exposing the world of vigilante groups in Mexico and its border towns, and their formidable opponent, the drug cartels.

Heineman explained that in conflict zones around the world, including in Cartel Land, there were times when you could detach yourself, take a breath. But for The First Wave, the feelings of concern were constant. He explained. “In The First Wave, we were living what we were documenting. There was no sort of turning things off. During those early months, even when we weren’t filming, we felt danger—just going to get groceries. Every human being was living with uncertainty that didn’t go away as people were getting sick and dying. Isolation, lack of human connection all obviously existed for us as a film crew.”

Heineman said that “first and foremost” on his mind was “the safety of our crew and our participants. We knew so little about the disease at that time, how it was transmitted. It was terrifying in those early days. Every single aspect of making a documentary carried a potential weapon that could kill us—things as mundane as putting a camera down on a counter, walking into someone’s home. All these things had ramifications that you had to figure out. This was a full-on experience that lasted 24/7 for months.”

Sharing what was going on in the hospitals, what frontline workers, the patients, and the families of those frontline workers and patients were going through is profoundly important—and the world might have been better served if these realities were fully evident from the outset. Heineman observed, “One of the greatest tragedies of COVID is that this pandemic that could have brought the country together but instead it further divided us. It didn’t have to happen this way.”

Continued on page 28
Continued from page 27

“only had everything to lose by participating.” But they rose to the challenge, embraced the idea of being their best selves, to make selfless decisions. She hopes that this carries lessons for us all, including in how we respond to the COVID pandemic.

Vasarhelyi added that the story of The Rescue was one of “people coming together and achieving the impossible.” It reflects how if we all unite, things can be better. For this rescue mission some 5,000 people, a diverse cross-section of humanity, came together for the greater good. “When you cooperate, you can achieve,” she concluded.

Liz Garbus

In making Becoming Cousteau, Liz Garbus found a kindred filmmaking spirit in Jacques Cousteau, the late, great explorer who, beginning development of the documentary, was one of “people coming together and achieving the impossible.” It reflects how if we all unite, things can be better. For this rescue mission some 5,000 people, a diverse cross-section of humanity, came together for the greater good. “When you cooperate, you can achieve,” she concluded.

Liz Garbus

In making Becoming Cousteau, Liz Garbus found a kindred filmmaking spirit in Jacques Cousteau, the late, great explorer known for shedding light on the underwater universe, Cousteau was also well ahead of his time with his dedication to raising awareness of the pressing need to protect our oceans from climate change.

While Garbus has two Oscar nominations—for The Farm: Angola, USA and Silent World in 1957, which he and Louis Malle directed; the live-action short The Golden Fish in 1960, which Cousteau produced; and World Without Sun in 1965, a Violet Award recipient for whom he directed the aforementioned What Happened Miss Simone?—Cousteau is a three-time Oscar winner for the feature documentary The Calypso in Becoming Cousteau

Garbus strongly identified with what she described as Cousteau’s “desire to push boundaries” while continuing “to innovate and expand his filmmaking language.” Additionally Cousteau did some home movies over the years, capturing personal moments of significance—which Garbus incorporated into her documentary—including the first time she saw Simone Melchior whom he married in 1937.

Garbus applied her own innate curiosity, akin to that of Cousteau, to unearth insights into the man, his sense of purpose, coping with personal tragedy (the death of a son, oceanographer Philippe, in a seaplane crash) and being sustained by an all-consuming and abiding love of Mother Nature. Garbus also brings to the fore an attraction among world leaders—Cousteau's words in 1992, he seemed to feel somewhat hopeful that we could do it. He had faith in our capacity to problem solve and innovate. Now, though, we have drawn much closer to the 11th hour. Cousteau’s warning is even more alarming today and it remains to be seen if his faith will prove well founded.

Garbus observed that the “future of our species, and the survival of huge swaths of biodiversity on the planet will depend on innovation in the spirit of Cousteau.”

GUILD AWARDS PREVIEW

Liz Garbus Takes A Deep Dive Into Jacques Cousteau’s World

PHOTO CREDIT: THE COUSTEAU SOCIETY
“Ghostbusters: Afterlife” Veteran Sound Team Recreate And Reinvent The Sounds of a Classic Sony Pictures’ Ghostbusters. Afterlife invites audiences to experience a thrilling new chapter in the Ghostbusters universe. Directed by Jason Reitman and produced by Ivan Reitman. Sound editorial and mixing was based at Sony Pictures Post Production Services where a veteran crew led by Supervising Sound Editor/Re-Recording Mixer Will Files, Supervising Sound Editor Perry Robertson and Re-Recording Mixer Mark Paterson faced the formidable challenge of following in the footsteps of a legend.

Netflix’s “Tick...Tick...Boom!”, PNYA Members Help Recreate The New York of Jonathan Larson, Tick...Tick...Boom! is Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award winner Lin Manuel Miranda’s magical adaptation of the autobiographical musical by Jonathan Larson, who revolutionized theater as the creator of Rent. Fittingly for a film rooted in Broadway, post-production was largely completed in New York City by members of the Post New York Alliance (PNYA). Editor Erik Tobeler Joins 11 Dollar Bill 11 Dollar Bill has added editor Erik Tobeler to its growing team. Tobeler will be based out of the company’s Boulder office and assume the post of Creative Lead.

Award Winning Composer Fred Story Sells Studio To Vocal Ink Production, and Re-Brands His Business as Storyline Music + Mix Multi award-winning composer Fred Story sold his Charlotte-based recording studio to Tim Campbell, owner of the Vocal Ink Production, and, concurrently has re-branded his longtime company Concentrix Music & Sound Design, which will now be known as “Storyline Music + Mix”.

Labียม Recruits Havas International Executive as It Builds on Consistent Growth in The Americas Digital performance agency Labียม, which specializes in retail, media, and consumer performance, has tapped Diana de la Torriente, former EVP Client Services at Havas Media International, as its Senior VP Talent Development, Americas, a new position at the agency.

Motion Picture Sound Editors To Honor Ron Howard with Filmmaker Award The Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) announced that it will honor Ron Howard with its annual Filmmaker Award.

New Cineware For Unreal Plugin Now Available Maxon announced the immediate availability of an update to the Cineware for Unreal plugin.

OTOY Adds Redshift Support To The Render Network OTOY and Maxon announced that Redshift will be coming to the Render Network, providing Redshift users the ability to scale GPU rendering jobs to millions of distributed GPUs on the Render Network.

One at Optimus Signs Director ONE, the production arm of Optimus, has signed Ashley C. Cotte and Chris Vanderwall to its directorial roster.

Sonic Union Crafts Soundscape For Adam Pendleton’s “Who Is Queen?” on Display at MoMA Adam Pendleton: Who Is Queen? at MoMA now through February 21, 2022-, transforms MoMA’s Marron Family Atrium into a monumental multi-story, dynamic installation exploring identity abstraction, and Black Dada.

Creamsource Expands Its Vortex Lighting Series With The Vortex4. Creamsource, announced the incredibly versatile Vortex4 1’x1’ 325W high-powered LED for film production.

31st Annual 2021 Gotham Awards Winners Announced The Gotham Film & Media Institute (The Gotham) announced the winners of the 31st Annual Gotham Awards at a ceremony held at Cipriani Wall Street in New York City.

Pace Pictures Edits/Finishes Crime Thriller “For the Love of Money” Pace Pictures, along with new methods to authenticate C2C connections...

Yacht Club Sets Sales and Expands Production Team Yacht Club has announced its new US sales lineup: Sharon Levy of Lew & Co handles East Coast; Dave Campbell of Rogue Rep covers the West Coast; and Jack Reed of Jack Reed Reps covers the South and Texas.

White House Post London Welcomes Editor Ben Canny White House Post has enhanced its roster with the addition of prolific narrative storyteller Ben Canny, with clients ranging from Nike to Mickey’s, and Mickey’s to Black Mirror. Canny has solidified himself as a go-to for surreal and visual work.

Film Insurance: Why You Need to Take Action Before The Credits Roll While not as fun as editing special effects or spending a day on set, obtaining film insurance is just as important. Clients big and small are waging a battle of their own: to put out effective advertising without the fuss, bureaucracy and overhead attached to “the majors.”

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

Reflections on lensing Respect for director Liesl Tommy, The Many Saints of Newark for Alan Taylor

By Robert Goldrich

With five ASC Award nominations, including a win in 2013 for “The North Remembers” episode of Game of Thrones, and six primetime Emmy nods for cinematography, Kramer Morgenthau, ASC finds himself once again in the awards season conversation, this time for two films, Respect ( MGM, United Artists Releasing) directed by Liesl Tommy, and The Many Saints of Newark ( Warner Bros.) from director Alan Taylor. Morgenthau has already earned a Camerimage Golden Frog nomination for Respect, a moving biopic about “Queen of Soul” Aretha Franklin.

Meanwhile The Many Saints of Newark, a mob drama about Tony Soprano’s coming of age—a feature prequel to the seminal HBO television hit The Sopranos—reunited Morgenthau with Taylor. The two have collaborated on such features as Thor: The Dark World and Terminator Genisys as well as the Game of Thrones series, including the aforementioned ASC-winning “The North Remembers” episode.

While Morgenthau has had a long-time working relationship with Taylor, Respect marked the cinematographer’s first go-around with director Tommy. The feature was also the first directed by Tommy whose helming pedigree had been in TV (Queen Sugar, The Walking Dead, Insecure) as well as on Broadway. Morgenthau discovered he had much in common with South African Tommy who like him grew up in Cambridge, Mass. “We knew some of the same people from there, were in the same circle. She was almost like an old friend,” said the DP who also shared with the director a great love of music and specifically Franklin.

As for what’s next, Morgenthau recently wrapped Sponted, a Christmas musical dance comedy loosely based on Charles Dickens “A Christmas Carol.” The Apple TV+ film is slated to bow come Christmas 2022. And at press time Morgenthau was headed to Atlanta to shoot Creed III, with Michael B. Jordan directing.

All this adds to an extensive credits list for Morgenthau. His other ASC Award noms also came in TV categories for The Five People You Meet in Heaven in 2005, Life on Mars in 2009, Family Limitation in 2011 and the Sleepy Hollow pilot (2014). His nominations were for The Five People You Meet in Heaven in 2005, episodes of Life on Mars in 2009, Flash Forward in 2009, Boardwalk Empire in 2011, the telefilm Too Big to Fail, also in 2011, and Fahrenheit 451 in 2018.

SHOOT: What was (were) the biggest challenge(s) that Respect and The Many Saints of Newark posed to you?

Morgenthau: The music sequences (for Respect). In some ways a dialogue sequence kind of directs you to certain camera angles, certain ways of presenting an ensemble or two people on the screen. A song, though, is almost like shooting a piece of poetry, a piece of performance. We did songs almost in their entirety which is somewhat rare in a biopic, designing them visually, how to best cover them. It’s a bigger challenge than shooting a straight drama—creating for instance Aretha Franklin at Madison Square Garden in an epic concert, with thousand of extras, figuring out what resources we did and didn’t have.

At the same time, it’s one thing to shoot a concert and quite another to make it an intimate experience putting viewers inside the heads of the people in and behind the concert. We did that different times in different ways with a large number of songs....Of course Jennifer Hudson was brilliant (as Franklin).

Morgenthau: Filling (with The Many Saints of Newark) the legacy of an incredible series that took place over 96 episodes in six years where a tremendous character and story arc could be built out in a serialized way. How are we going to do that—a prequel to the whole thing—in just two hours or so, adapting the language of TV to a cinematic experience? And then there’s the pressure of the show itself, the high bar it set, paying homage to it while doing something different and cinematic in that same world.

SHOOT: What was your choice of camera for each picture?

Morgenthau: For The Many Saints of Newark, we wanted to honor the TV series yet open the story for widescreen cinema by shooting anamorphic. We went with the ARRI Alexa LF with Panavision T Series lenses.

For Respect, it was also ARRI Alexa LF cameras with Panavision T Series lenses. Dan Susaki, the lens guru there (at Panavision), optimized the glass for the project. That’s why I love this guy and that place. You used to be able to do things on film, manipulate it photochemically at the lab, push it, pull it, different chemical baths. You can’t do that with a sensor.

But one of the places you can be expressive is through the glass, optimized for these large concerts we were going to be shooting. It helps let you kind of feel what Aretha was feeling, what Jennifer’s character as Aretha was going through. With different LUTs, color science, the camera is a vessel you can steer the way you want.

SHOOT: What was the biggest takeaway or lessons learned from your experience on each film?

Morgenthau: One would be a broad push towards minimalism, a more ambient and environmental approach where you’re creating for lack of a better word a “vibe” for a world where these characters can exist and be believable. This (The Many Saints of Newark) existed in the North Ward and Central Ward of New Jersey. The North Ward is Italian, the Central Ward the Black neighborhood of Newark during a post-war era where lots of change is happening. The takeaway was to keep it simple and be expressive—through broad gestures with shafts of light and making big statements photographically but through texture, color, realism, camera angles that really say something about the characters.

Similar to The Many Saints of Newark, we had very big shoes to fill for Respect, doing a biopic of an icon. We wanted to honor her legacy, to have viewers walk away feeling like they got to know this person, that they got to be part of an incredible experience. Photographically you want to do everything you can for that. I can’t believe I got to shoot this film. My biggest takeaway is that I am so grateful to have been a part of Liesl’s film, shooting Aretha’s legacy—talk about your dream job. Making this film is something I feel I worked towards my whole life.
Chuck Studios, an Amsterdam-based food brand production specialist, is accelerating its presence in the U.S. The company, known for its “Culinary Identity” branding programs that develop distinctly appetizing brand imagery for Unilever, KFC, McDonald’s, Heineken and others, will bring this approach to the U.S. market led by newly named managing director, Daryl Devlin. Olaf van Gerwen, Chuck’s global creative director, has collaborated with Devlin for years, including during Devlin’s stretch heading up U.S. sales for the company. In addition to its Amsterdam headquarters, Chuck maintains offices in Los Angeles, London, Berlin and Moscow. Havas Media Group (HMG) has named Sarah Ivey as its chief strategy officer, North America. Her appointment comes on the heels of her predecessor in that role, Meghan Grant, being elevated to president of HMG U.S. and chief experience officer for North America last month. Based in Toronto, Ivey will report directly to HMG North America CEO Greg Walsh and serve on the agency’s North American executive leadership team. Ivey spent four years consulting with HMG, working with the global team on the agency’s unique Mx or Media Experience, system. She also consulted on key growth opportunities, working on high-profile pitches such as Hyundai Kia, and Facebook. Most recently, Ivey served as founder and head strategist for Agents of Necessity, a global strategy agency. London-headquartered global creative agency Amplify, which also maintains hubs in Sydney and L.A., has hired Bonnie O’Hara as EVP heading up the Live arm of its L.A. office, becoming a member of the sr. management team and working alongside Mark McDermott, EVP, clients, and Marcus Childs, president. This marks a return to the agency for O’Hara, who was Amplify’s third employee when it launched in 2008. O’Hara brings years of transatlantic experience with a focus on culture shaping work for brands such as adidas, Converse, Samsung, Barclaycard and Google.

Pink Sparrow—a design and fabrication shop for experiential event marketing, retail environments and art installations, creating environments for global brands like Google, Nike and Target, as well as agencies like Droga5—has hired Corey Smith as its business director. Smith most recently served as director of business development for Mirror NYC. He will work with leadership and business development teams at Pink Sparrow—which maintains offices in Brooklyn, NY, and Los Angeles—to drive growth via new client acquisition, awareness building, strategic partnerships and physical expansion. He previously worked as production director with events firm 6UP Productions and producer with creative agency MKG. Light Iron, a provider of innovative postproduction creative services and part of Panavision’s end-to-end offerings for content creators, has promoted co-founder Katie Felion to sr. VP, business development and postproduction strategy. Felion has been with the company since it began operations in 2009 and was instrumental in establishing Light Iron’s Outpost mobile dailies system. In her time with Light Iron, Felion has also produced several firsts in file-based finishing, including the first 6K DI, the first studio feature cut on Final Cut Pro X, and Amazon’s first HDR series. In her new role, she is responsible for global sales and business development, new market strategies, and strategic alignment with Panavision so clients can maximize the value proposition of the companies’ shared production-to-post offerings. Bazaarvoice, Inc.—an Austin, Texas-headquartered company deploying technology, services and expertise to enable brands and retailers to tap into the full potential of user-generated content—has named Zarina Lam Stanford as its chief marketing officer. Stanford was previously chief communication and marketing officer of Rackspace Technology and held sr. sales and marketing exec positions at IBM and SAP.
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NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE
BEST FIRST FILM

“A FANTASTIC FEATURE DEBUT FROM MAGGIE GYLLENHAAL.
It demonstrates the effortless fluency in which she already speaks the language of cinema.”

PLAYLIST

THE LOST DAUGHTER

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