

20th Annual
NEW DIRECTORS SHOWCASE
Meet The Class of 2022

31 Individual Filmmakers
and 1 duo Make Final Cut...

Rebecca Applebaum
Amandla Baraka
Ilanna Barkusky
Alec Basse
Annie Bercy
Sheena Brady
Jeffrey Brown
Eva Doležalová
Ariel Ellis
Taylor Ellis
Alexander Gilbert
Evan Ari Kelman
Tess Lafia
Maren Lavelle
Kyle LeClaire
Bethany Mollenkof
Jeremy Nachbar
Bola Ogun
Andrew Rhee
Kimberly Stuckwisch
Walter Thompson-Hernández
Steven Tralongo
Drew Vaughan
Clayton Vila
Noah Wagner
Robert E. Wagner
Rog + Bee Walker
Wes Walker
Miles Warren
Gabrielle Woodland
Wukda
Courtney Sofiah Yates

New Directors Profiles
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SHOOT®

The Road To Oscar Series

Part 1, Page 4



From top left, clockwise: Scenes from *Armageddon Time*, *The Banshees of Inisherin*, *Till*, *Everything Everywhere All at Once*. *Top Gun: Maverick*, and *Blonde*.



Cinematographers & Cameras

BTS From left: *Don't Worry Darling*, *Women Talking* Page 24

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Perspectives

By Robert Goldrich



Choir Practice & The Power of Filmmaking

Is it better to avoid preaching to the choir or to listen to its members sing? That's one of the figurative queries to emerge from a session-titled "When Films Change the World"--at the American Film Market (AFM), which wrapped earlier this week.

"When Films Change the World" panelist Danny Gabai, chief content officer, VICE Studios U.S., noted the importance of telling entertaining character-driven stories that have a better chance to reach a broader base. He affirmed you don't want to just be preaching to the choir. VICE, he said, tries to reach out to as many people as possible to affect social change. Gabai cited *Flee* as an example, bringing a unique entertainment value to a major issue that many people often tune out--immigration and the plight of migrants seeking a better life.

Flee director Jonas Poher Rasmussen deploys layers of animation as a young man talks about his family fleeing war-torn Kabul, Afghanistan, in the 1980s. This marks the first time that the man--a childhood friend of Rasmussen who is speaking anonymously under the name Amin--has ever shared this story with others. *Flee* went on to win over a broad-

approach which prioritizes the entertainment value of a project. She said there's little to gain from being didactic and "preaching to the choir."

Panelist Jonathan Prince, co-founder and president of PhilmCo Media, agreed about the entertainment and engagement factors being essential. But at the same time he noted that there are times

"I want the choir to stand up and sing."

--Jonathan Prince of PhilmCo Media

er audience and earned assorted honors, including three Oscar nominations earlier this year--for Best Documentary Feature, Best Animated Feature Film and Best International Feature Film.

Among the companies behind *Flee* were VICE, Participant and Neon. AFM session panelist Elizabeth Haggard, SVP of narrative film at Protagonist, said that *Flee* underscores Participant's "entertainment first" and "filmmaker forward"

when it makes sense to preach to the choir. Sometimes those in the proverbial choir are more inclined to take tangible action to address an injustice. Prince observed that while it's great to raise awareness of a problem and generate empathy, more needs to be done. "Empathy is not enough," he affirmed, adding, "We want the choir to watch our film and then take action." Prince concluded, "I want the choir to stand up and sing."

POV

By Grace Francis



Work & Next Level Leadership

Work takes up a lot of our lives. The number of hours we clock in, but also all the moments--good and bad--that we carry with us after the laptop closes. So many of those moments have little or nothing to do with our job titles, our companies, or our industries--they are about how we are treated by our coworkers and clients.

As a business leader, I'm thinking about employee experience as much as EBITDA. Recently I spoke to the business coach Ruth Farenga as part of her new book, "Next Level Leadership: Nine lessons from Conscious Leaders about how inclusion can radically change the workplace for the better."

Inclusion is the answer to quiet quitting--A lot of businesses are head scratching on quiet quitting; workers who aren't in a position to quit their jobs are adopting an approach of doing only what is re-

quired of them and no more. Some have responded this is the definition of work--a fair exchange of labor, but this misses the point. Quiet quitting isn't about letting go of inbox zero or how many items get ticked off the to do list, instead it is about soul. How it feels to be present and part of something, or to be on the outside yet forced to keep on turning up. Inclusion--whether that is about an employee's identity or lived experience, is the answer here, not to drive productivity, but to create a space where people are connected and able to flourish.

Hybrid working helps, but it also covers up problems--If you are marginalized or minoritized at your place of work, it is likely you have found hybrid working makes office life more tolerable. Working through screens at home not only allows us the autonomy to meet our own needs, it can also help foster environments of psychological safety. This doesn't mean

that the microaggressions and issues in the physical office have gone away, or that hybrid working is perfect--we need to continue to work hard to foster environments that are truly inclusive.

Gen Z are calling out the work that needs to be done in corporate offices. We're seeing the openness of Gen Z and Millennials shape work culture in a way that drives inclusivity and dismantles power structures.

Most recently, interns and entry-level employees on Wall Street are taking to TikTok to discuss previously confidential work cultures and calling out behaviors that don't mirror their expectations for inclusion. If you're a c-suite leader and you want to understand inclusion at your workplace, have a conversation with your Gen-Z staff.

Grace Francis is global chief creative and design officer at creative agency Wong/Doody.

Director, DP, Editor & Production Designer POVs

Insights into *Till*, *Armageddon Time*, *Top Gun: Maverick*, *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, *The Banshees of Inisherin* and *Blonde*

By Robert Goldrich,

The Road To Oscar, Part 1

From top left, clockwise: Chinonye Chukwu (l) directs Jalyn Hall who portrays Emmett Till in *Till*; Jaylin Webb (l) and Banks Repeta in *Armageddon Time*; *Top Gun: Maverick* cinematographer Claudio Miranda, ASC; Stephanie Hsu (l-r), Michelle Yeoh and Ke Huy Quan in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*; Colin Farrell (in window) and Brendan Gleeson in *The Banshees of Inisherin*; Ana de Armas as Marilyn Monroe in *Blonde*; Paul Rogers, editor of *Everything Everywhere All at Once*.



Chinonye Chukwu has found that at times the most profound way into a story can be the path less—or even never before—traveled as reflected in her taking a detour from the conventional protagonist perspective in the last two features she directed, *Clemency* (2019) and now *Till* (Orion Pictures, United Artists Releasing), which is part of the current awards season conversation, most notably for Best Lead Actress Oscar consideration on the strength of Danielle Deadwyler's tour de force performance.

You may recall that *Clemency*, a drama which delved into capital punishment, Chukwu as writer-director chose to center on the impact that executions over the years had on a prison warden, Bernadine Williams. Alfre Woodard's portrayal of Williams earned BAFTA and Film Independent Spirit Award nominations for lead actor while *Clemency* won the Grand Jury Award in the U.S. Dramatic competition at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival.

Chukwu's inspiration for an atypical protagonist POV in *Clemency* came years

earlier when an African-American man, Troy Davis, was executed in a Georgia prison. She told *SHOOT* in 2019, "Hundreds of thousands around the world protested, including a handful of retired wardens and directors of correction. They wrote a letter to the governor pleading for clemency not just on the grounds of the prisoner's potential innocence but the psychological consequences on a prison staff sanctioned to kill him. So many of us were feeling anger, frustration and sadness that I thought what must it be like for those who had to execute him. What must it mean for your livelihood to be tied to the taking of human life."

So when she was later presented with the opportunity to tell the real-life story of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old lad lynched in Mississippi in 1955, Chukwu as director and co-writer (with Michael Reilly and Keith Beauchamp) resisted the understandable impulse to focus on Till himself. Instead she again went with an unconventional choice, casting Deadwyler as Till's mother, Mamie Till-Mobley.

Chukwu recognized the place in history for an often overlooked character. "Without her, the world wouldn't know who Emmett Till was," explained Chukwu. *Till* introduces us to a grieving mom who takes on a sense of purpose as a civil rights activist. Through her heartfelt persistence and eloquence, she got the nation to know and then not forget her son.

Chukwu didn't know much about Till-Mobley going into the project but when her research uncovered the mother's commitment and perseverance, the filmmaker said she would not take on the feature unless "the story was about Mamie." Chukwu also wanted that story to be one of hope, depicting the love and joy between mother and son, using the language of cinema to center on their humanity, to convey "a Black gaze" on what happened. Chukwu focused her energy on creating a humanizing Black point of view as opposed to the camera taking on a voyeuristic bent.

The casting of Deadwyler was key. Chukwu said that Deadwyler and Wood-

Chukwu Discusses Till; Gray Talks Armageddon Time

ard and have a shared bond in their talent “to communicate a story with just their eyes, to get underneath the words on the page, to command a frame, to convey more underneath the silence and pauses.” Chukwu recalled being moved by Deadwyler’s audition tape, eventually casting her as Till-Mobley and spending several months before shooting going through “every emotional beat and nuance,” making discoveries along the way. “We became real partners in this,” said Chukwu who added that by the time Deadwyler came on set, she had “a deep understanding of Mamie and her journey” and delivered a transcendent performance that “channeled Mamie.”

Assorted collaborators contributed to the end result, among them being cinematographer Bobby Bukowski, production designer Curt Beech and costume designer Marci Rodgers. Chukwu said she was initially drawn to Bukowski’s “lighting of Black people and his use of color,” the way he deployed lighting to “show rich depth and definition which was absolutely critical to what I wanted the film to look like. He understood on a deep emotional level what I was trying to do with this film in terms of humanizing Black people, focusing on their humanity, joy, love and community.”

Beech too was what Chukwu described as a “research-forward” artist. The director added that she and Beech had “candid conversations about his own white male privilege, how to challenge that in order to create, to design the sets in a way that encapsulate Blackness and Black people.” She credited Beech with being incredibly collaborative and open, eager to push himself to tell the story in the best way possible.

Chukwu had also long been a fan of costume designer Rodgers’ work, noting that she’s “detail-oriented just like I am. Her presentation to me about what she proposed in terms of costume design was breathtaking.” Rodgers had done period piece work before, is from Chicago [where the Tills are from] and has family from Mississippi. Rodgers went with “a bright color palette” reflecting “a vibrant world” that was “stunning and beautiful,” said Chukwu. “Mamie and Emmett dressed to the nines. Their clothing was an extension of their self-dignity, self-

empowerment. Marci understood how to communicate that through wardrobe.”

Chukwu added that she took much from her experience on Till. “I saw myself in Mamie in a way I hadn’t before. That I will always cherish.”

There were also lessons from pushing herself creatively and artistically, particularly in the context of her first studio film. Though she had many more resources through studio backing, Chukwu shared that her “approach to the craft is the same.” Chukwu added, “I learned about navigating this kind of filmmaking within the studio system. Professionally it was a great education for me. I had a great experience with the studio. They gave me creative autonomy like you wouldn’t believe. That was incredible to receive. I learned a lot about the profession.”

James Gray

Unlike Chukwu, writer-director James Gray didn’t have to seek out the right unconventional protagonist. Rather, he had to look within as *Armageddon Time* (Focus Features) centers on a Flushing, Queens-based sixth-grader, Paul Graff (portrayed by Banks Repeta), in 1980. Based on Gray himself, the youngster is from a middle-class Jewish family who gets an education outside of school—even when he’s in school. The lad befriends a

didate Ronald Regan on TV warning of a coming Armageddon, Trump relatives affiliated with the private school giving motivational speeches for the students to claim their destiny as the leaders of tomorrow, and what seems in some circles a growing disdain for the already marginalized. Paul is in a family looking to assimilate as parents Irving and Esther Graff (played, respectively, by Jeremy Strong and Anne Hathaway) seek a better life for their kids—though they have a hard time reaching Paul. However, Paul does listen to his grandfather (Anthony Hopkins) who advises him to “be a mensch,” to push back against classmates making racist remarks, and stand up against injustices, including those suffered by Johnny. At the same time, grandpa is a stark realist, sadly noting that the last name Graff doesn’t sound Jewish and that may help them in life.

Paul and Johnny reflect society as it’s turning not for the better. Whereas Paul can skate on an offense, Johnny cannot. And the disparity is huge between their opportunities and support (or lack thereof in the case of Johnny). Still, there is a bond between them as friends and dreamers—except Johnny’s dream of a career at NASA meets resistance, if not mocking, at virtually every turn. There’s a stark relevance to today with racism and

by *Armageddon Time* wasn’t a logistical problem or even the constraints of time and budget. Rather it was rooted in the personal nature of the film—and how personal he should make it. Gray said that he grappled with how much the film should “adhere to the facts of my own life,” not wanting that to interfere with expanding the idea of the story. “I was trying to not stay so close to my own story that the film would then become a crimped vision. I wanted it to be welcoming to a larger idea. Really that’s the key to movie directing in general—the need to accept the ideas that expand the scope of your film and reject those that get in the way.”

Also pivotal was the casting. On the adult side, Strong in particular has been singled out in speculative Oscar discussion, portraying a father with anger issues yet an all-too-keen sense of the way of the world and its injustices. But paramount in making *Armageddon Time* viable and credible is the casting of the youngsters. There were auditions from 650 children—watched by Gray who also presided over 25 auditions personally. The field was whittled down to five or six, with the director ultimately gravitating to Repeta and Webb, two actors whom Gray said “hadn’t already done a jillion movies.” But the writer-director found something “intelligent, sensitive and emotionally honest” about them. “I was improvising with them and they would respond in ways that were interesting and intelligent,” said Gray. “A quality in an actor quite underrated is sensitivity of their inner emotional life.” Repeta and Webb had that sensitivity and were “very precocious. We got along fantastically well.”

Gray also enlisted DP Darius Khondji and production designer Happy Massee. Gray had worked with both previously on several films, including *The Immigrant*. “He knows what I like. I know what he likes,” said Gray of Khondji. “He doesn’t want to show how great he is at lighting or through great shots. He is very willing to just serve the film, to serve the story. That’s rare actually.”

Gray cited production designer Massee’s “incredible eye for color,” noting that like Khondji, “Happy can hear the first half of a sentence from me and then complete it.”

For Gray the biggest challenge posed



Banks Repeta (l) and Anthony Hopkins in *Armageddon Time*

Black classmate and fellow outcast, Johnny Davis (Jaylin Webb)—and then has to transition from public to prestigious private school which has its own brand of racism and hypocrisy.

American society is changing during this era as we see then presidential can-

antisemitism seemingly on the rise, the chasm ever growing between the haves and have nots, and escalation of the us-versus-them mentality.

Gray paints a portrait of a moment in time, leaving us to discern its ripple effect.

Lensing Top Gun: Maverick

Continued from page 5

Gray also brought editor Scott Morris on board *Armageddon Time*. Morris had served as an additional editor on the Gray-directed *Ad Astra* starring Brad Pitt. Prior to that Morris had assisted on a couple of other Gray films. "He helped me on *Ad Astra* which I was trying to wrangle into shape. I thought he had the talent to make for a fabulous editor," said Gray who afforded him that opportunity with *Armageddon Time*.

Overall Gray found the experience on *Armageddon Time* to be rejuvenating. "The first thing I take away from it is how rewarding it is to work on a film that is this

their collaborating on the director's debut feature, *TRON: Legacy*, the first of five movies they teamed on—the other three being *Oblivion*, *Spiderhead* and *Only the Brave*.

David Fincher, who directed *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, initially brought Miranda and Kosinski together. Fincher at the time was with Anonymous Content for commercialmaking representation as was Kosinski. Fincher introduced Kosinski to Miranda for the alluded to TV spot they teamed on. (Fincher and Kosinski are both now with RESET Content for commercials and branded fare; Fincher is a co-founder of RESET.)



Tom Cruise in a scene from *Top Gun: Maverick*

personal where the actors care so deeply. It's not a piece of business for them. It's not about their image. It's not about any of the noise past the work itself. I rediscovered a beautiful experience where actors were giving me their best. It was all about the work. I could express myself without fear of having things changed or having to argue for what I wanted. It renewed my faith in film. I rediscovered my love for cinema again."

Claudio Miranda, ASC

A Best Cinematography Oscar winner for *Life of Pi* in 2013, four years after he earned his first Academy Award nod for *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, Claudio Miranda, ASC is once again in awards contention for *Top Gun: Maverick* (Paramount Pictures), a blockbuster record-setting box office hit which reunited him with director Joseph Kosinski.

Miranda first worked with Kosinski on a commercial back in the day, leading to

Miranda felt an immediate rapport with Kosinski. The DP conjectured that his affinity for "trying to get things in camera as much as I can is why I think he [Kosinski] likes me. We both work to get as much in camera as possible."

Among the balancing acts that Miranda had to navigate on *Top Gun: Maverick* was realizing a modern take on the elite aerial squadron while retaining the feeling of the original, beloved *Top Gun* (1986). Towards that latter end, Miranda reached out to Jeffrey L. Kimball, ASC who shot *Top Gun*, directed by the late Tony Scott. Kimball provided Miranda with some cinematic insights, and the original feel was attained partly thanks to digital film grain put in during the final grade by colorist Stefan Sonnenfeld of Company 3. Miranda helped by imparting his sensibilities relative to the Tony Scott feel of the grade.

Scott loomed large for Miranda who

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Hot Locations

Sofsky Named Cherokee Nation Film Commissioner

Tava Maloy Sofsky has been named Cherokee Nation's film commissioner. In the new position, Sofsky will serve dual roles as both film commissioner for the Cherokee Nation and as the tribe's film office director.

Sofsky, a Cherokee Nation citizen, brings more than 23 years of industry-leading experience to her new role supporting the mission and strategic growth of the Cherokee Nation Film Office. She will also now oversee the Cherokee Film Incentive, among other initiatives within the tribal film office.



Sofsky (l) and Loren

Most recently, Sofsky was director of the Oklahoma Film + Music Office. During her tenure there, she oversaw Oklahoma's \$30 million annual film incentive program and helped expand the state's top-rate talent, crew base and infrastructure to include four Oklahoma Certified Sound Stages and more than 25 Film-Friendly Certified Communities statewide. As film commissioner, Sofsky will serve under Jennifer Loren, director of Cherokee Nation Film and Original Content....

Phippen Studios Launches in NJ

Phippen Studios, a boutique post house, has opened in Englewood Cliffs, NJ.

"New Jersey continues to attract the kind of critical infrastructure that can support our burgeoning film and television industry and utilize our skilled workforce," said Governor Phil Murphy.

This studio is the latest expansion of the production company Phippen, a female-led business founded by producers Molly Connors and Jane Sinisi.

Phippen Studios adds to the production infrastructure that has been growing since the reinstatement of the New Jersey Film and Digital Media Tax Credit Program, which offers eligible production companies up to 35% transferable tax credit on qualified film production expenses, plus an additional 2% or 4% diversity bonus for qualified productions.

Since 2021, several major studios have been built in-state including Palisade



Gov. Phil Murphy

Stages and 10 Basin Studios in Kearny, Cinelease Studios Caven Point in Jersey City, and Sustainable Studios in Moonachie. The new facility offers 10,000 square feet of postproduction and office space, in addition to a 25 seat 4K theater, executive suites, conference rooms, kitchens, and outdoor space....

Netflix's Neighborhood Launch

Netflix in Your Neighborhood: New Mexico (the website NetflixNM.com) has been launched, making it easier for fans, both local and from around the world, to find and explore amazing Netflix filming locations in the Land of Enchantment. This is the first U.S. site of its kind for Netflix and gives fans the chance to visit filming locations of popular titles like *Stranger Things 4*, *End of the Road*, *The Harder They Fall*, *Army of the Dead* and *Daybreak*.

Netflix in Your Neighborhood allows users to search for filming locations by film or series title, or by searching an area of the state. Set locations are highlighted in Albuquerque, Moriarty, Los Lunas, Galisteo, Santa Fe, Bernalillo, Sandia Park and Chama, while also featuring directions to these spots. Netflix in Your Neighborhood also highlights tourist attractions and hidden gems near filming locations. Some locations on New Mexico's site include the Aspen Vista Hiking Trail in the Santa Fe National Forest, the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center



Nick Maniatis

in Albuquerque, and Tomé Hill in Los Lunas. The website will be updated as new TV series and films are lensed in the state.

Nick Maniatis, director of studio and production affairs at Netflix. "We know that falling in love with a show can also mean falling in love with a place, so we built this website to make it easier for our fans to find and visit the beautiful New Mexico locations we use every day"....

Paul Rogers Cuts Everything Everywhere All at Once

Continued from page 6

served as a gaffer on three films for that revered director. Acknowledging that it may sound a bit too sentimental, Miranda said he was worried about doing a movie that Scott would be happy with. “It was more an emotional thing for me. What I got from a lot of people who knew Tony and came to me directly is that they felt Tony would have been happy with this movie. That kind of made me feel like we had done something special in a way.”

As for breaking new ground, Miranda knew that would be the case when he had a hard time finding visual movie references for the ambitious new *Top Gun*. “We couldn’t really find a great flying reference, which underscored that in a way we were trying to do something that hadn’t been done before,” observed Miranda who recalled “this oddball movie called *Paths of Hate*, an animation-style film that had a pretty amazing sequence. In animation you can do pretty much anything and that provided a bit of a reference for what we were aiming for.”

A major part of that goal was to take aerial cinematography to new heights, putting viewers in an immersive experience, giving them the feel of being in those fighter jets in flight.

Helping immeasurably on that front were the film’s aerial coordinator, Kevin LaRosa Jr., aerial cinematographers David B. Nowell, ASC and Michael FitzMaurice, and the United States Navy, including the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command, aka NAVAIR, which provided modified fighter jets, technical and logistical support. Miranda related that the popularity of the

original *Top Gun* with the U.S. military community translated into it providing stellar cooperation for *Top Gun: Maverick*.

Miranda deployed Sony VENICE cam-

eras on *Top Gun: Maverick*, including some outfitted with the Rialto system—which enables the camera’s sensor block and lens to be separated from the body, with an extension cable maintaining the connection. This made the VENICE more compact and easier to fit into limited spaces to capture the desired imagery.



Jamie Lee Curtis and Michelle Yeoh in *Everything Everywhere All at Once*

While he enjoys a close-knit collaboration with Kosinski, Miranda related that the director also lets him “go off on my own and see what’s possible in a jet.” This enabled the DP to figure out the number of cameras needed, and the lenses—which turned out to be spherical akin to Kimball’s approach in the original film—and other assorted nuances that would do full justice to the action and the story.

By the way, the collaborative history between director and DP will be added to—creative freedom and all—as Miranda is slated to team with Kosinski on a Formula 1 racing feature film starring Brad Pitt for

are also a bit absurdist in nature. In 2013, Rogers had moved from Birmingham, Alabama—where he worked in public television for seven years—to try his luck in Los Angeles, initially serving as an unpaid intern. On the coattails of a friend, he went to Scheinert’s birthday party at a roller skating rink. When Rogers didn’t have the money on him to rent skates, Scheinert paid the editor’s way into the party. “I thought ‘what a generous guy,’” recalled Rogers. “These are good guys who would make good allies.”

Rogers next encountered The Daniels at a weeklong free summer camp where a number of leading directors teach kids how to make music videos. Rogers wound up cutting the kids’ videos at the free camp where Kwan and Scheinert saw his work. “They told me about this silly music video they were doing,” said Rogers. “They had never worked with an editor before so they gave me a shot. I had been cutting documentaries for public television. I had never cut music videos before.”

Rogers took on the “silly” music clip which then led to his cutting a short film and then a couple of more music videos for The Daniels—and later the feature for Scheinert and then the acclaimed *Everything Everywhere All at Once*.

Rogers described the nature of his collaboration with The Daniels on *Everything Everywhere All at Once* as a healthy give-and-take, back-and-forth process. “They are super adept editors in their own right,” said Rogers of Kwan and Scheinert. “We were constantly passing video back and forth, idea after idea.

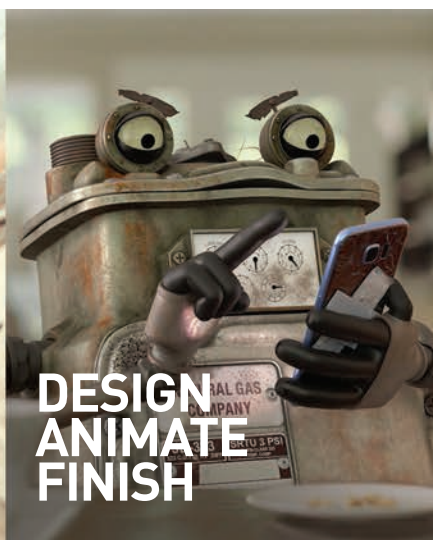
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**DIRECT
PRODUCE
SHOOT**



**EDIT
MIX
SCORE**



**DESIGN
ANIMATE
FINISH**



**CHARLIE
UNIFORM
TANGO**

DAVID SHANE GETS PROGRESSIVE WITH "CAT"

Progressive Insurance and creative agency Arnold Worldwide have been settling arguments this football season with their "Replay" campaign. In this latest spot, a couple wakes up to a cat licking the fruit bowl on their kitchen table. Why? Don't ask them—they don't have a cat.

As the couple bickers over whether the sliding door was closed the night before, the challenge flag is thrown and Progressive comes to the rescue with the official replay akin to how an NFL game resolves a disputed call.

David Shane of production house O Positive directed "Cat."



FILM INDEPENDENT SETS LAB LINEUP

Film Independent, the nonprofit arts organization that produces the Spirit Awards, announced the producers selected for its annual Producing Lab, now in its 22nd year. This intensive program is designed to help creative, independent producers develop their skills and further their careers by introducing Fellows to film professionals who can advise them on both the craft and business of independent producing. Each Producing Lab Fellow will be paired with an experienced Creative Advisor with whom they'll work to develop their project over the course of the program.

The 2022 Producing Lab filmmakers and projects are: Producer Lexi Tannenholz with the project *Booger*; producer Robert Colom with *Mountains*; producer Ava Hamdan with *Out of Water*; producer Shao Min Chew Chia with *The Plutonians*; producer Sabrina Stoll with *Tiny Birds with Broken Brains*; and producer Pin-Chun Liu with *Wonderland*.

For over 21 years, Film Independent's Producing Lab has developed films such as Elegance Bratton's *The Inspection* produced by Chester Algenal Gordon, which recently premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and New York Film Festival and will be released by A24 on November 18; Saim Sadiq's 2022 Cannes Un Certain Regard winner *Joyland*, produced by Apoorva Charan; and Chloé Zhao's Spirit Award-nominated debut *Songs My Brothers Taught Me*, produced by Angela C. Lee and Mollye Asher. In addition, the Producing Lab has supported some of the film industry's most exciting independent talent, including Lizzie Shapiro (*Shiva Baby*), Lena Vurma (*Adventures of a Mathematician*) and Avril Speaks (*Jinn*).

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE....

Creative marketing agency Compadre in Culver City, Calif., has brought creative director Jonathan Guillen and associate creative director Nikki Black on board. Guillen has over a decade of experience working with consumer and entertainment brands turning out work for Warner Bros., HBO Max, Spotify, Audible, FX, Paramount, Universal and Netflix, among others. Black's credits span employers and clients including Blumhouse Productions, HBO Max, Netflix, Audible, Paramount, and DC Entertainment....The ANA elected eight



Jonathan Guillen (l) and Nikki Black

new members to its board of directors: Lisa Beckett, SVP, global marketing, The Walt Disney Company; Norman de Greve, SVP, CMO, CVS Health; Tony Ezell, president, North America, and CMO, Becton, Dickinson and Company; Ramon Jones, EVP, CMO, Nationwide; Greg Lions, CMO, PepsiCo Beverages North America; Shenan Reed, SVP, head of media, L'Oreal; Mayra Rivera, SVP, CMO, USAA; and David Tyrie, managing director, chief digital officer, head of global marketing, Bank of America. Marc Pritchard, chief brand officer at Procter & Gamble, continues as ANA board chairman until the end of 2023....

Welcome to the Special SHOOT 20th Annual New Directors Showcase profile section. It's hard to believe this is the 20th 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 real and spread the word to your colleagues to check out the work.

As you know, the pandemic altered many plans including for our in-person SHOOT NDS event each of the last two years. We are now glad to return to a face-to-face event on Thursday, November 17. 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. Now we start a new annual Showcase streak at the DGA.

We can again get together, share insights and points of view during an afternoon event with panelists and speakers, including an In The Director's Chair session, followed by debuting the NDS Reel on the big screen that same evening—all at the DGA Theatre—and then capped off by an afterparty at The Artery.

Well beyond those proceedings, the Showcase Reel will remain a major means of exposure for new worthwhile talent, continuing to be scrutinized by the advertising and entertainment communities which are increasingly interconnected. Networking and dialogue persist 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 totaling 33 directors—consisting of 31 individual helmers and a duo. Eleven of the directors are unaffiliated with a production company.

Showcase directors' body of work spans commercials, PSAs, spec advertising, promo fare, branded content, short films, music videos, trailers and episodic TV, among other disciplines and genres.

This year's Showcase field sports directors of varied backgrounds. The mix includes recent film school grads, photographers, actors, writers, an assistant director, an athlete who broke in with surf and skiing films, producers, live theater artisans, an ongoing editor and ex-agency creatives.

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 as we come together literally and figuratively this year and for many years to come.

—Roberta Grier

Publisher & Editorial Director
rgrier@shootonline.com



31 Individual Directors, 1 Duo Earn Slots In SHOOT Showcase

Lineup includes 11 directors sans production company affiliations; 15 women make final cut

A SHOOT Staff Report

SHOOT's 20th Annual New Directors Showcase offers a total of 33 up-and-coming directors—consisting of 31 individual helmers and a duo. The field includes 15 women, and 11 directors who are unaffiliated with a production company. The work spans commercials, PSAs, spec advertising, promo fare, branded content, short films, music videos, trailers and episodic TV, among other disciplines and genres.

Several directors have already made a major filmmaking splash such as Miles Warren and Bola Ogun. The latter—a first generation Nigerian-American filmmaker who's repped for commercials via Believe Media—landed her TV directorial debut on Ava DuVernay's *Queen Sugar* after DuVernay saw Bola's short *Are We Good Parents?* The film, which she not only directed but also co-wrote and co-produced, is frequently praised for its portrayal of panicked progressive parents hoping to raise their child in a warm, accepting environment. *Are We Good Parents?* earned Best Short Film and Best Emerging Filmmaker at the AT&T SHAPE Awards. Ogun's directing career has flourished on the episodic front with credits including *Lucifer*, *Charmed*, *Siren*, and she most recently finished her second season premiere block on Netflix's *Shadow & Bone* to gear up for the season three finale block of *The Witcher*.

Meanwhile director Warren's recent eventful career stretch started on last year's festival circuit when *Bruiser*, his

proof-of-concept short for a feature, debuted at Sundance followed by an SXSW screening. The short film resonated with audiences and critics, ultimately yielding the opportunity to create a feature of the same title, which made its world premiere in September at the Toronto International Film Festival. Just prior to it being showcased at the Toronto fest, *Bruiser* became the first narrative feature acquired by Onyx Collective, a Disney content brand specializing in premium entertainment made by creators of color and underrepresented voices. The Onyx Collective deal carries great promise for Warren as reflected in the company's first major acquisition, director Questlove's *Summer of Soul (...Or, When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised)*, which gained worldwide exposure and acclaim, winning assorted honors including the Best Documentary Feature Oscar in March 2022. (Also in early 2022 Warren extended his directorial reach into the advertising arena as he connected with production house Team Bubbly for representation covering commercials and branded content.)

This year's Showcase field sports directors of varied backgrounds. The mix includes recent film school grads, pho-



tographers, actors, writers, an assistant director, an athlete who broke in with surf and skiing films, producers, live theater artisans, an ongoing editor and ex-agency creatives.

Among those with a creative agency pedigree are Sheena Brady and Drew Vaughan. The former at one point served as a writer and creative director at Wieden+Kennedy in Portland, Ore., before making her way to New York where she freelanced for mostly Apple and W+K while building her reel as a director.

Vaughan was an art director at 72andSunny in Los Angeles where he learned how much he loved filmmaking. He later went to NYC and then Austin where he began to work professionally as a director. Now he's back in Manhattan.

Unaffiliated

While Brady has production company ties in the U.S. (World War Seven) and Canada (The Salmon), Vaughan is unaffiliated with a studio. He is one of 11 Showcase directors not connected with a production house. The others are Alec Basse, Jeffrey Brown, Taylor Ellis, Alexander Gilbert, Maren Lavelle, Kyle LeClaire, Jeremy Nachbar, Andrew Rhee, Steven Tralongo and Robert E. Wagner.

Company ties

Twenty-two Showcase directors are affiliated with production companies.

Besides Brady, Ogun and Warren, the Showcase filmmakers with production house roosts are: Rebecca Applebaum of Community Films, Amandla Baraka of Little Minx, Ilanna Barkusky of Cultivate Media, Annie Bercy of SImbr Prty, Eva Doležalová of RSA Films, Ariel Ellis of Woodward Original, Evan Ari Kelman of Wild/Factory and Good Brother (though he continues to seek additional national and international representation), Tess Lafia of Mirror Films, Bethany Mollenkof of Sibling Rivalry, Kimberly Stuckwisch of Scheme Engine (U.S.) and Rogue Films (U.K.), Walter Thompson-Hernández of REVERIE Content, Clayton Vila of Greenpoint Pictures, Noah Wagner of Echobend, Wes Walker from Tool of North America, Rog + Bee Walker of HOUND, Gabrielle Woodland of Bindery, Wukda of Anonymous Content, and Courtney Sofiah Yates of Stept Studios.

This year's Showcase Reel will debut before a live audience on the evening of November 17 at the DCA Theatre in NYC. A special Thank You goes to charlieuni-formtango for once again compiling the Reel.

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 starting on November 18.

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Showcase Directors Applebaum, Baraka, Barkusky, Basse



Rebecca Applebaum

Community Films (U.S.);
Untitled Films (Canada)
betterhelp's "Wanted"
(commercial)

I became a commercial director during the pandemic. My first spot is a pandemic-specific mental health spot and was filmed with the actors socially distanced. And I don't know what I would have done without the great programming and initiatives that BIPOC TV & Film and Hire Higher provided over these past few years. So the pandemic, in a way, has been the impetus for my career.

One strange thing is that for a while I had hardly met anyone in person. All these new professional relationships were fostered through DMs, zooms and phone calls. All my pitches have been online. But I hadn't known any other way. I've wondered if it's been less intimidating this way, as someone starting out. But now that I'm beginning to meet more people in person, it's been really nice to see their faces in 3D and get to know everyone more informally.

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

My first professionally directed work was a pandemic-specific mental health spot called "Distant Friends." I actually made it as a spec, then licensed it to betterhelp. It then went on to get over 20 millions views online. That's what started my relationship with the client and launched my whole commercial directing career.

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?



Ilanna Barkusky

Cultivate Media
Parity's "Speed of Light"
(promo video)

I am originally from Vancouver, Canada. I grew up immersed in sports and the outdoors and started working as an action sports photographer during the years studying for my Political Science degree at university. At 26 years old, during the pandemic, I relocated to the U.S. to take the next steps forward in my career.

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?

The pandemic had a profound impact on my career and life. Through the challenges it posed, I learned the importance of resilience, being resourceful and staying patient. Surprisingly, I was able to create the most significant photography series of my career during this time. To do so, I was aided by the ease of permitting empty locations in my hometown, as well as a concept that supported social distancing. Through that, I learned that opportunities and silver linings always exist, even in tough situations.



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

It is tough to narrow it down, as I draw inspiration from various work and genres. If I were to choose my top favorite of each, I would have to say *Portrait of a Lady on Fire* for a movie, *The Last Dance* for a TV Series, and "Upstream," the Toyota commercial with Paralympian Jessica Long as my favorite commercial.

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)



Amandla Baraka

Little Mix
Blue Shield's "Do You Hear Me?"
(commercial)

which translated into photography and ultimately filmmaking.

6) What is your current career focus: commercials and branded content, television, movies? Do you plan to specialize in a particular genre—comedy, drama, visual effects, etc.?

I majored in public relations when I was in college because I felt like that would have the most impact if we could deliver a positive message. Now that I am directing commercials that are centered around shifting the way that we think and expanding our empathy, I feel like I'm doing work that I love to do. But I want to take that even further and move into television and movies. That was always the goal. I'm setting up that world as we speak. My hope is that when I move into the TV/film side of directing, people see the potential in what I do narratively through the work I continue to do with documentaries and commercials.



2) How did you get into directing?

One of my best friends, Zoe Munlyn, asked me to be in her short while we were still at Howard. It was so cool to see everyone commit to this one story that she created. I had no concept of filmmaking as a possibility until then. When I was rejected from the film program at Howard, I got inspired to apply for Creative Minds in Cannes. The program sent me to the Cannes Film Festival where I developed a keen interest in East Asian film (completely by chance), particularly South Korean thrillers. I had always been a writer (since the age of seven) but I was just beginning to explore the visual side of my creativity through my graphic design minor



Alec Basse

Unaffiliated
Harley Davidson's "Bury the Noise"
(commercial)

3) What is your most recent project?

My most recent project was a spec piece for Wrangler Jeans. The piece was called "Reborn in Blue." We shot it entirely on 35mm which was a thrilling and challenging experience.

6) What is your current career focus: commercials and branded content, television, movies? Do you plan to specialize in a particular genre—comedy, drama, visual effects, etc.?

Lately my focus has been commercials. In the past, I've been able to blend my love of narrative with a marketing sensibility through music videos. It's been a rousing challenge to apply those skills to brands and products I love.



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

Harley Davidson—"Bury the Noise" represents my first professionally directed work. We completed the project in May of 2021.

2) How did you get into directing?

I got into directing through music videos. The Chicago music scene is vibrant and inspiration was rampant. After completing a piece called "Special Moment" for Post Animal, I was hooked. That was an ambitious project with lavish locations and every step of the process was an adventure. I haven't stopped since.

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Showcase Directors Bercy, Brady, Brown and Dolezalova

Continued from page 10



Annie Bercy

Slmbr Party
Riley (excerpt from short film)

2) How did you get into directing?

I was always into media. I loved taking photos and videos, even when I only had a blackberry phone at the time! Still I would do planned photo shoots with my friends and take videos of my church family and school friends. Later, I'd import them and hop on a photo editing website/windows movie maker to bring it to life. I was hungry to learn more and more as I slowly upgraded cameras and went up the ladder of editing softwares and taught myself the Adobe Premiere Suite. This was one of my many hobbies growing up.

In high school, I signed up for any club I showed interest in. I was a cheerleader, working backstage in stage crew, performed plays in theater, sang at the talent shows, and wrote poetry in creative writing. But when it came down to choosing a college, I couldn't figure out what I wanted to major in. I decided to apply to 4 CUNY schools for an English major.

For reasons unbeknownst to me I got denied from all of them, and I was forced to go to community college. Seeing the professors at the university sparked the realization that I was not interested in teaching. So I asked myself, "What do I still love doing when I'm no longer exposed to it?" Creating media content. It was then and onward that I realized I wanted to become a director. Suddenly, all of my interests in high school lined up. Each had to do with bringing an idea to life. I love creating and I love to execute.



Sheena Brady

World War Seven (U.S.);
The Salmon (Canada)
NY Fests Ad Awards' "Judging Will
Get You Heated" (promo video)

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

A few months before the pandemic, I approached a cannabis edible company with some simple scripts. I don't know how "professional" it was—since I was the writer/director/location scout/producer/wardrobe stylist and casting director. I even cleaned the location after.

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

Oddly, the actual shooting is the least stressful part of the process. 96% of the hard decisions have been made (besides post). And even though I've been on lots of film sets over the years as a writer, I still am in awe when I show up to set. I still get giddy, and hopped up on adrenaline. All these talented people on both sides of the camera coming together to help you bring your vision to life is super humbling and special.

I really love callbacks too. We don't get rehearsals in the commercial world, so for me, it is the first time really hearing the scripts outside of my head. And I love being surprised by actors.

And I really enjoy the edit. I miss in person editing. Just a day or two with the editor, in person, is so invaluable. Editing over email isn't for me.



Jeffrey Brown

Unaffiliated
White Eyes (trailer for short film)

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

White Eyes is my first professional directing job. I wrote the feature script and then we put together this short as a proof of concept.

2) How did you get into directing?

I have been fortunate to have been working in the entertainment industry for some time now. I have used this time to work in every department and learn from very talented people in their craft. I have always been writing down my ideas and drafting some scripts. After moving to NY, I met some people that agreed that we should all film a proof of concept based on one of them.

3) What is your most recent project?

White Eyes is my most recent project. I have been both surprised and happy by its response. It's a proof of concept so without reading the feature script there are a lot of unanswered questions but its been really fun to see the audience reactions and see that they want to know more.



Eva Doležalová

Ridley Scott Creative Group/
RSA Films
Oliver Peoples' "Tournament
1987" (brand film)

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

A commercial for Les Inconnus, a French brand of scarves in summer of 2019, filmed at James Goldstein Residence and a James Turrell room.

2) How did you get into directing?

I was drawn to the industry from a young age when I started acting in Czech films and theatre where I also co-wrote plays. With time I started to realize that I want to tell moving stories and create states of minds for the audience rather than act in them. Cinema has had a very strong effect on me since I first started watching films and I wish to create, pass on the same affection for the audience.

3) What is your most recent project?

A Bulgari project that will come out in 2023 aside from our first collaboration on a Serpentine short film project.



Filmmakers Ariel Ellis and Taylor Ellis Make Showcase Cut



Ariel Ellis

Woodward Original

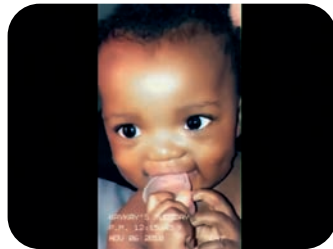
The Innocence Project's "Happiest Moments" (PSA)

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?

I come from a long line of women who never let their circumstances stop them from achieving anything. My mother has always been the blueprint. I wouldn't be in this position had I not watched her defy the odds with grace. Through my mom, I've learned that gentle warmth and strong will are not mutually exclusive.

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

In 2019, I was hired to write and direct a short narrative ad for Uprep Schools in Detroit. I had the privilege of casting and directing nearly 100 real students from the Uprep school district. This project introduced my style and knack for drawing out authentic verité moments from non-actors—a technique I still employ in most of my work.



Taylor Ellis

Unaffiliated

Meta Quest 2's "Untethered" (specspot)

craft has been innate for as long as I can remember. I'm always trying to create opportunities to make the next thing, whatever that may be.

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

I've directed a lot more projects for free than I've been paid to direct, but I got my first paid directing gig toward the end of 2019 with a series of branded content videos for The Home Depot.

2) How did you get into directing?

I've been making films in one form or another since I was a kid. Professionally, I make a living mainly as an editor and cinematographer, but the pursuit of this



3) What is your most recent project?

This spec commercial "Untethered" is my most recent completed work, but I always have at least a couple other projects in the works!

Continued on page 14

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Showcase Directors Gilbert, Kelman, Lafia and Lavelle

Continued from page 13



Alexander Gilbert
Unaffiliated
Balloon Boy
(excerpt from short film)

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

The first project I was hired to direct was a branded content piece that explored and uncovered the extraterrestrial origins of ketchup flavored Doritos.

2) How did you get into directing?

I always wanted to be a DP and spent a lot of my time in film school shooting for my director friends. Towards the end of my time at film school, I had a mentor who said "You have some good ideas, why don't you direct them?" So I did and now we're here!

3) What is your most recent project?

My most recent project is a spec spot that I created with Rattling Stick and Wieden+Kennedy NY for the Commercial Directors Diversity Program.



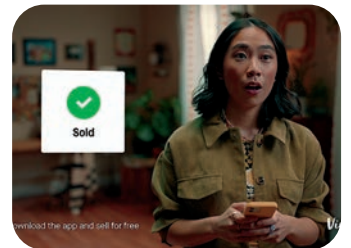
Evan Ari Kelman
Wild/Factory; Good Brother
Seeking Additional National & International Representation
Vinted's "Lucy" (commercial)

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

My first professionally directed commercial work was in November of 2019. It was for Biotine mouthwash. Just two months earlier in September, I had shot a spec comedy commercial for Gigslad in order to really get my career going, which I then sent out to a number of production companies around New York, hoping to bring in legitimate work. I met with Good Brother Films, and almost as a test, they submitted me for the Biotine job—and I think much to all of our pleasant surprise, the client decided to hire me.

2) How did you get into directing?

In a way I've been directing my whole life — first as a child with action figures and Playmobile sets. Soon that becomes home videos with middle school friends, re-enacting scenes from gangster movies. I had so much fun that in high school, I decided to attend New York Film Academy to learn the basics of craft and determine if this was a path I wanted to pursue professionally in a serious way. I learned that it was. For college, I went to NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, which is where my first "good" shorts finally came together, culminating in my undergrad thesis film *Bandito* premiering at Tribeca Film Festival in 2015.



Tess Lafia
Mirror Films
Madeline The Person's "Why I Broke Up With You" (excerpt from music video)

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

I directed a music video for an artist named Samia for her song, "Milk." I messaged her on Instagram, was connected to her label, and flew out to New York with my DP. We had \$800.00 and a camera my grandparents gifted me. It's still one of my favorite videos I've made.

2) How did you get into directing?

My dad was a writer and director, and growing up, he showed me that filmmaking is the best way to tell stories. My brother and I would make short films as children with a camcorder my dad gave us every chance we got.

3) What is your most recent project?

Currently, the project I'm most excited about is a short film that is in the works. It's a dark comedy about a magician whose show goes horribly wrong at a children's birthday party. I plan to shoot at the end of this year.



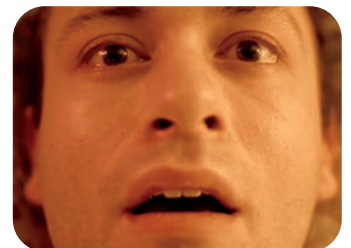
Maren Lavelle
Unaffiliated
Keeper (trailer for short film)

3) What is your most recent project?

My most recent completed project, *Wendy*, just had its World Premiere at Soho International Film Festival in early October 2022! *Wendy* is about a quiet but imaginative eighth grader who attempts to find the courage to approach her secret crush while working on the middle-school production of *Romeo & Juliet* (hint: her secret crush is the actress who plays Juliet). I returned to my alma mater, Cab Calloway School of the Arts, to direct this film and create as specific a world as possible around our characters. I cast the rising 9th grade theatre majors in the film who were phenomenal. It was an incredibly rewarding experience!

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

I love collaboration. I love being on set and in post production with other great, talented, creative minds and working together to realize a cohesive vision. I always say "the best idea wins", meaning, the best ideas don't always have to come from me, as long as they're the best ones! Being able to steer the ship of production, but let others take the wheel when they're more capable at navigating a specific moment or detail is a skill I take pride in, and I enjoy that give and take on a collaborative team.



LeClaire, Mollenkof Earn New Directors Showcase Slots



Kyle LeClaire

Unaffiliated

Faerman Register Co. (excerpt from short film)

a short-form documentary about a public arts project in the town of Westbury, NY, funded by the NY state arts foundation.

2) How did you get into directing?

I went to film school in Buffalo, which is where I began my filmmaking journey.

Since graduating in 2014, apart from professional video production work, I have been actively directing my own, mostly documentary style films, almost completely short form.

3) What is your most recent project?

Besides Faerman Register Co., which was quite a lengthy editing process, I recently directed



4) What is the best part of being a director?
Having the unobstructed opportunity to craft a story that is as close to what you'd initially envisioned in your mind's eye, as humanly possible.



Bethany Mollenkof

Sibling Rivalry

The Sea's "See Us Now" (excerpt from branded content)

The pandemic has really taught me to treat everything as a gift because it can all change so fast. I try not to get stressed out over little inconveniences as much I used to and I am acutely aware of how temporary everything is which convicts me to be present each day. Nothing ever lasts, is ever finished or ends up the way we imagined. This shift in mindset has made me a much more carefree creative and allowed me to be more experimental and less precious.

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)

I am originally from the South, but grew up in Kenya and South Africa. My background is in documentary photography and through my work I try to make the far away, close and the complex, simple.

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?



Continued on page 16

Congrats — Bethany Mollenkof 2022 SHOOT New Director Showcase

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■● Sibling Rivalry



Directors Nachbar, Ogun

Continued from page 15



Jeremy Nachbar
Unaffiliated
Bonobos' "Put On Some Pants"
(specspot)

3) What is your most recent project?

I was fortunate to be selected to create some really cool content for a brand called CLMBR. They are a fitness company out of Denver where they have revolutionized the versadimber.

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

To be at the helm of an immense collaborative incubator is a gift. Yes, I love being on set, who doesn't. But taking a step back, looking at the bigger picture, to bring creatives across different platforms together, to bring an idea to life is really incredible. And then to be able to put our work out there in the world and see all the shitty comments on Youtube... This is what I love about this process.

6) What is your current career focus: commercials and branded content, television, movies? Do you plan to specialize in a particular genre—comedy, drama, visual effects, etc.?

As influenced by my cranky, never-satisfied grandparents, I have that "shticky" dry humor. I have been in the commercial world in some capacity since I was 18. I love learning and growing from being in the commercial world, the fast-paced nature is something I love. Really... maybe it's my attention span. Dunno. I just get them. They speak to me in various languages. As a fluent spanish speaker I am eager to spread my wings in both worlds.



Rihanna

Rihanna Returns With "Lift Me Up" From *Black Panther*
Rihanna has made her highly anticipated return to the airwaves with "Lift Me Up," the lead single from the upcoming *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* original soundtrack. Recently released with the single was a music video directed by Autumn Durald Arkapaw, the cinematographer on Marvel Studios' *Black Panther; Wakanda Forever*. The music video includes footage from the feature.

"Lift Me Up"—a tribute to the extraordinary life and legacy of Chadwick Boseman written by Tems, Oscar winner Ludwig Göransson, Rihanna and Ryan Coogler—leads the forthcoming soundtrack *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever—Music From and Inspired By*, from Roc Nation Records/Def Jam Recordings/Hollywood Records. The soundtrack is produced by Coogler, Göransson, Archie Davis and Dave Jordan. The *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever—Original Score*, composed and produced by Göransson, becomes available on November 11 from Hollywood Records.

November 11 also marks the opening of the Coogler-directed *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* in U.S. theaters....

Zach Balch Reaches Level 77

Level 77 Music, an independent provider of production music, has hired Zach Balch as national division manager. A musician, record producer, recording engineer and production music sales exec, Balch will direct sales for the company's rapidly growing catalog across the U.S. and seek new business relationships among film and TV producers, ad agencies, corporate media and branded media producers. His background includes a post as regional account director at FirstCom Music (now Universal Production Music).

Balch got his start in the music industry with the Texas office of The Recording Academy, producers of the Grammy Awards. He worked with artists and other industry pros involved in Austin's music scene. Joining FirstCom Music in 2014 as regional account director, he placed tracks in national spots for Toyota, Doritos, Coca Cola and other brands. He also made placements in TV shows featured on the El Rey Network and HGTV, and in many feature films. He later formed Flint Creek Records, a recording studio, artists collective and indie label that produced albums for singer-songwriters and other local and regional acts in the Dallas/Ft. Worth area....

Songtradr Launches Smart Sync

Songtradr, the B2B music company under the aegis of CEO Paul Wiltshire, has launched Smart Sync, an advanced technology to track, control, and monetize music catalogs. A key feature includes Songtradr's next generation watermarking technology that solves inherent licensing challenges faced by video games and digital platforms, expanding revenue potential for music rights holders.

Smart Sync offers advanced digital rights management technology allowing labels, publishers, and production music libraries to manage their music for global sync across digital platforms, including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. Additionally, rights holders can take advantage of increased monetization through a suite of subscription and premium sync products, including Pretzel and Songtradr (unique products for customers by vertical: Content Creators, Businesses, Games, Apps, Platforms and Brands). The product also provides catalogs with direct access to global brand sync opportunities through Songtradr Group businesses, such as Big Sync Music and MassiveMusic.

Smart Sync provides rights holders the ability to: monitor digital music use and manage claims and releases on platforms like YouTube; enable automation to determine claims/releases from known and unknown sources; manage rights issues; view performance insights, including audience demographics, territories, and top-performing tracks; and license music to Songtradr's customer base of content creators, businesses, games, apps, platforms and brands....



Bola Ogun
Believe Media
Raising Dion, "Issue 208: Who You Are" (episodic TV excerpt)

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

Queen Sugar in 2019

2) How did you get into directing?

After working on production crews for many years, I felt like I needed to get back to being creative, so I started writing and earned a spot in the 2014 AFI Directing Workshop for Women and Ryan Murphy's Television HALF Mentorship Program. Eventually, I directed a couple of short films, including my short film *Are We Good Parents?* which Ava DuVernay saw at the AT&T Film Awards, and that's when I was brought on to direct an episode for *Queen Sugar*.

3) What is your most recent project?

The Witcher, Season 3

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)

I grew up in Texas doing "Shakespeare in the Park" and musical theater. I went to college to study musical theater, but left early and started working in the industry as a PA between Dallas and Austin on the sets of *Prison Break*, *Walking Tall* and *Friday Night Lights*. Eventually, I made my way to L.A. and continued working as a PA on sets like *The Dark Knight*, *Insidious: Chapter 2* and *Battleship*.



Paul Wiltshire

Continued on page 17

Helmers Rhee, Stuckwisch, Thompson-Hernandez, Tralongo

Continued from page 16



Andrew Rhee
Unaffiliated
Ebay's "Dear Vanessa" (specspot)

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

You guys are getting paid to do this?

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?

Absolutely. Jason Wolk of Spears & Arrows has been an immeasurable resource in helping me get my career off the ground. I'm also extremely lucky to work with Shayne Millington and Pierre Lipton at McCann, two amazing examples in being relentlessly creative and leading others. And I'm extremely grateful to the MAIP program for introducing me to Andrew Kong and Melanie Matlock, both amazing writers who've helped me so much.

But it all started with one of my advertising professors, Jeff Sheets, who was my biggest supporter from the beginning. None of this would have been possible without him. All of these people helped me find my voice and pushed me to make work that's authentic to my identity and experiences. I'm extremely grateful for that.



Kimberly Stuckwisch
Scheme Engine (U.S.); Rogue Films (U.K.)
SkinnyPop's "Whole Bag Kinda Night" (commercial)

3) What is your most recent project?

I'm currently traveling to Bulgaria to film a Taft X Gliss hair commercial, complete with wild dancing and unexpected Gondry-esk camera trickery. Concurrently, I'm finishing post on my first feature film titled "Canvas," inspired by the classic "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane" that we shot earlier this year in Tennessee. On top of that, I help run The Elysian comedy theater in Los Angeles, where we develop and program groundbreaking experimental comedy.

6) What is your current career focus: commercials and branded content, television, movies? Do you plan to specialize in a particular genre--comedy, drama, visual effects, etc.?

I'm currently focusing on features and commercials. As for genre, honestly, any project that has a socially conscious message or one that allows me to explore magical realism is one for me. I also like working with cool people who love what they do. You got a cool brand or a script, you're not an asshole... rad, you're for me.



Walter Thompson-Hernández
REVERIE Content
LA28's "Surf x LA Olympics 2028" (commercial)

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

My first professional directed work was a commercial I directed for the LA 2028 Olympics Committee. It aired during the Summer Olympic games and was about a group of black surfers in Los Angeles.

2) How did you get into directing?

I've been directing things. I just never directed films until recently. I was a multimedia journalist at *The New York Times* for several years where, in addition to writing, I also directed and produced documentaries.

3) What is your most recent project?

I am in the process of completing my first narrative feature. It is titled *The Sky Is Blue*, and is set in the Santo Amaro neighborhood in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil. We have one more shoot in mid-November.



Steven Tralongo
Unaffiliated
McDonald's "Fatherhood" (specspot)

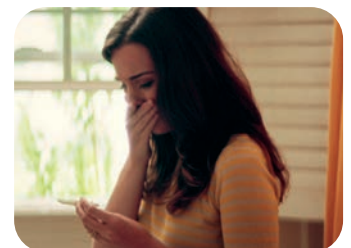
1) What was your first professionally directed work and when was it?

I'd say haven't had one that was strictly as a director yet. My two previous spec spots that I wrote/directed for U-Haul and Pendleton Whisky were both picked up by them for their social media channels, but I'd say I'm still striving for my first pro gig.

2) How did you get into directing?

I came into filmmaking like a lot of people from my generation; through skate and snowboard films, around the height of the CKY/Jackass era. I have a vivid memory of what I felt the first time I put an edit to music, I was hooked.

My first production job out of college was working for the action sports and culture network Fuel TV. At the same time my now wife was working for a commercial production company, so I was able to PA and get on set through some of her connections, and I discovered a whole other world. Later Renny Maslow, when he was at SMUGGLER, was generous enough to let me be a part of his process for a couple commercials and a short film he directed. I went the film school route after that and have been trying to will this into existence since.



Continued on page 18

Directors Vaughan, Vila

Continued from page 17



Drew Vaughan
Unaffiliated
High Desert Cactus' "The Spirit of the Desert" (branded content)

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

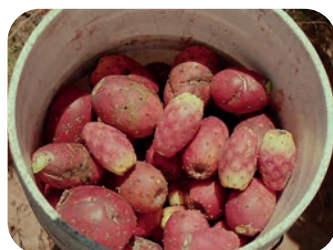
After COVID came for my job, I had some old coworkers, from that job, hit me up for a social campaign they were doing for Capital One promoting March Madness. I mustered up some local production company help, some post support, put together a treatment, then crossed my fingers. Thankfully I won that job and was finally able to say I was getting paid to direct, instead of putting my own money into stuff over and over. Felt amazing.

2) How did you get into directing?

I used to work as a creative in advertising and was lucky enough to get on sets with some of the world's most accomplished filmmakers. I would sit and soak up as much as I could from them because I found their jobs so interesting. As a side gig, I designed a bands album art. Once I finished all the design work, they asked me if I knew how to direct music videos. I did the only logical thing, I lied, and said of course. I've been chasing it ever since.

3) What is your most recent project?

I just directed about 40 pieces of content for Fender—helping to revamp their online learning platform. It was a dream job because I've played Fender guitars my whole life. It was a crazy week of shooting a bunch of different talent, and a bunch of different guitars, but thankfully we finished every day early. I'm only directing with a guitar in my hand from now on.



Clayton Vila
Greenpoint Pictures
Nerve (trailer for short film)

2) How did you get into directing?

I grew up making surf and skate movies in Rhode Island, so I was always drawn to the medium I suppose. I became a professional skier at around 16 years old and started starring in ski movies. Being around cameras sparked my interest again, and I made a bunch of ski movies with my friends throughout my 20s. Eventually, I decided directing/writing was what I wanted to do full-time, so I moved to LA.

3) What is your most recent project?

I've done a number of commercials recently, but the most recent project that I really obsessed over was a short film that I made about the tiny

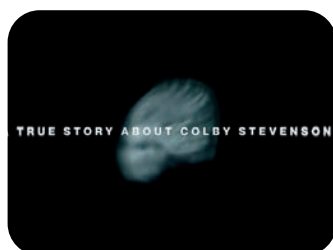
little island I grew up on called Block Island. It's a fascinating place — 15 miles off the coast with only 900-1000 year-round residents. It'll be premiering in a number of festivals this spring.

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

I think watching your idea take on a life of its own is the most exhilarating part. No matter how much you prepare, you have to let go of the wheel at some point. It reminds me of competing as an athlete, so it sort of fills a missing void in my life for that reason.

5) What is the worst part of being a director?

...nothing really. There are obviously difficult times but experiencing difficulties is the only way something becomes fulfilling.



Ross Wilkinson Joins Framestore



Ross Wilkinson

Framestore has brought Ross Wilkinson on board as VFX supervisor. Based in London, he is tasked with driving forward the design and execution of VFX on a range of advertising and episodic projects across the studio's Interactive Advertising division.

Ross joins from Lola Post Production where he was head of 3D and VFX supervisor, having previously risen through the ranks at DNEG. With over 13 years industry experience, he has turned out work including *Inception* which was awarded an Oscar for VFX, the *Harry Potter*, *Avengers* and *Mission Impossible* franchises, plus Netflix's *Black Mirror* (season 5), *Riviera* for Sky Atlantic and BBC's *Les Misérables*.

Animation Collective BRUT Sign Bounty/Banana

Animation collective BRUT, which is on the roster of international production company 1stAveMachine, has signed the directing duo Bounty/Banana consisting of Steven Briand and Julien Jourdain De Muizon.



A scene from *Intensity*

A promo short titled *Intensity* was created to celebrate Bounty/Banana's 10-year anniversary of working together. The animation/live-action *Intensity* is about two dynamic creatives in search of a trailblazing logo which reflects their vision of creative intensity. We are then taken on a rollercoaster ride on an unconventional journey through Paris to find the logo which finally embodies their creative ethos.

Intensity was co-produced by BRUT, a collective signed to 1stAveMachine globally. In addition to creating commercial projects as a multidisciplinary collective, BRUT channels a percentage of profits to invest in their talent's personal projects by providing the resources needed to create the project such as designers, directors, producers, animators, post, editing and sound.

The Bounty/Banana duo has turned out projects for clients such as Hermès, Veuve Clicquot, PlayStation, Post-it, Air Berlin and more. The duo has also worked on TV series for France Télévisions and Canal +, notably with their show *Supa Supa* that gathered more than 1.8 million views worldwide, as well as for Viceland's *Party Legends*, reaching over 10 million.

VFX Legion Takes Quantum Leap

The international team at VFX Legion, the L.A. and Vancouver, B.C.-based visual effects company, delivered two dozen key shots for the first episode of NBC's new series, *Quantum Leap*, creator Donald P. Bellisario's revival of the '90s sci-fi cult classic.



The show picks up 30 years after time-traveler Dr. Beckett (Scott Bakula) stepped into the Quantum Leap accelerator and disappeared as a new team restarts the project. The story follows lead physicist Dr. Ben Song (Raymond Lee) on an unsanctioned leap through time and space to a succession of locations—navigating new challenges while trying to find his way back to the present.

Legion was brought on board to create complex digital environments integrating 2D and 3D assets across several episodes. Studio co-founders, VFX supervisor James David Hattin and VFX producer Nate Smalley, led the effort, assembling a team drawn from Legion's local and international collective of artists. Smalley and Hattin provided creative direction, guiding artists through every phase of the production process.

The initial CG work for the first episode, "July 13th, 1985," called for sets built on a backlot at Universal Studios to be digitally extended, creating expansive cityscapes replicating bustling downtown Philadelphia—circa 1985. To achieve the final shots large green screens strategically positioned at the end of short stretches of fabricated streets were replaced with renderings of historically accurate buildings and signage. Animated pedestrians and vehicles move in sync with the pace of the city.

Continued on page 19

Noah Wagner, Robert E. Wagner, Rog + Bee, Wes Walker

Continued from page 18



Noah Wagner

Echobend

Patagonia's "No Time To Lose" (spec PSA)

Embracing the inevitable curveball. No matter how prepared you are, there's usually going to be a moment where something doesn't go as planned. Younger Me would be surprised by this answer, but over time I've really come to relish these moments... because with an open mind they always serve as opportunities to improve the project. Thus, I not only enjoy the problem-solving, but also how directing pushes me to grow as a human being in the process. Which all goes hand-in-hand with my other favorite part: the camaraderie. There are few feelings more rewarding than overcoming a creative challenge with a brilliant team.

5) What is the worst part of being a director?

There is always room to improve a project, no matter how good it is. Perfectionism in art is futile. So, with each project I just try to leave it all on the field, continually raising the bar for myself.

A close collaborator once told me "art is not finished, only abandoned," which has always struck a chord.

3) What is your most recent project?

Commercially, I just directed a very silly spec campaign for Poo-Pourri. Beyond that I'm currently in pre-production on my first feature, an absurdist romcom noir called "The Dirty Oyster", as well as the pilot for an unscripted show I created about competitive eating and friendship, called "Food Day".

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

Embracing the inevitable curveball. No matter how prepared you are, there's usually going to be a moment where something doesn't go as planned. Younger Me would be surprised by this answer, but over time I've really come to relish these moments... because with an open mind they always serve as opportunities to improve the project. Thus, I not only enjoy the problem-solving, but also how directing pushes me to grow as a human being in the process. Which all goes hand-in-hand with my other favorite part: the camaraderie. There are few feelings more rewarding than overcoming a creative challenge with a brilliant team.



Rog + Bee Walker

HOUND

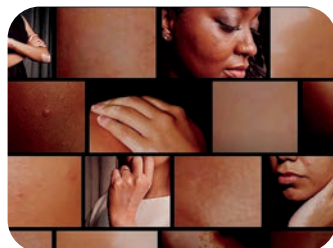
Vaseline's "See My Skin" (commercial)

3) What is your most recent project?

Our most recent project is a spot for Google's 2022 I/O Conference. We directed a spot that explored the AI and tech that Google is incorporating into their mobile cameras and search features. Specifically, we looked at how skin tone renders in the digital space. Our spot featured a Harvard professor who is researching that topic and working with Google, as well as young users who spoke about their experiences as people of color interacting with AI and technology.

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

We really enjoy assembling teams and working with other exceptional creatives like DPs, art departments, stylists, and makeup artists. We really enjoy the working relationships with our EP, our AD, and the producers. We also have the opportunity to travel.



Robert E. Wagner

Unaffiliated

Dodge's "Baby Tricks" (spec spot)

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

Does it count if nobody got paid?! I shot four music videos in four days for a rapper in Gainesville, FL right after graduating from film school in 2008. It was just the cinematographer, a gaffer, and me in the swamps of Northern Florida. I didn't direct anything after that until this spec 13 years later...let's just say I learned some things.

2) How did you get into directing?

Growing up in Miami Beach, our neighbor was a sound mixer. One day he taught me and my brother the process of filming a scene. We broke down and recreated the opening from Dumb and Dumber (our favorite movie at the time) while my dad filmed the whole thing on Hi8. "That's a lovely accent you have, New Jersey?" When I discovered you could do this for a living, I WAS HOOKED!

3) What is your most recent project?

You know that feeling when you're really, really hungry and even the smallest thing can push you over the edge into an irrational fit of rage? Well, I wrote and directed a spec about that. "HANGRY", inspired (loosely) by the true story of deciding where to order takeout from with my wife that escalated from, "What about sushi?" to "You're too indecisive, you're never going to become a doctor!" (my wife is currently finishing medical school and I'm 100% certain she's going to be a fantastic doctor)



Wes Walker

Tool of North America

Gatorade's "The Moment Possibilities Are Born" (commercial)

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

Root Insurance x Bubba Wallace, Oct 2020

2) How did you get into directing?

I graduated from Stanford University with degrees in Psychology and Neuroscience then immediately immersed into the tech industry, working first in Adtech at TubeMogul where Adobe ultimately acquired us and the company went on to form the backbone of Adobe Advertising Cloud. A self-taught filmmaker, I began to freelance working in media production internally as a contract director & cinematographer for Tesla. I grew to love being on set and patiently studied the art of directing and cinematography by watching others, reading forums, and studying Vimeo. After a second round of going freelance and directing + shooting creative music videos I found my way into commercial directing via a collaboration with Tool of North America on my award-winning Root Insurance x Bubba Wallace commercial. I was blessed to receive wide recognition for my first commercial film garnering awards and shortlists from AICP, ADC, Webby, Clio, Clio Sports, Berlin Commercial, and the YDA awards.

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)

I was born in Durango, Mexico and grew up on the U.S. Mexico border in El Paso, TX. I am Black, Mexican, and Cherokee and my cultures and my family are my grounding force, the roots and base from which I am able to feel and intuit the films that want to be moved through me.



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Showcase Directors Miles Warren, Gabrielle Woodland

Continued from page 19



Miles Warren

Team Bubbly

Cakes Da Killa's *Visibility Sucks*
(excerpt from short film)

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

The first professional film I directed was the "New Heights" closing film, which was shot in September 2020.

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?

Being a child of the Internet, the pandemic didn't really change much for me at all—I was already learning and doing, planning, etc., through the Internet. I was FaceTiming everyone anyway. Being in this generation... I think the pandemic messed up a lot of people not used to that lifestyle, but for me, I could still get every kind of learning tool and social connection online. It didn't affect me that much. The only problem was the half a year where we couldn't go anywhere, cause it was impossible to get out there and actually shoot!



Gabrielle Woodland

Bindery

Walmart's *Black & Unlimited*, "The Truth About Life with Beleaf In Fatherhood" (branded series)

2) How did you get into directing?

I got my start in directing after writing and directing a piece on Wilma Rudolph titled "#greatnessliveswithin."

From here, I used that piece as leverage to send to different production companies and labels to say "hey, I can direct."

3) What is your most recent project?

I've been diving into photography a lot more recently in addition to directing. Most recently I shot photos for Adidas x Hoop York City collaboration as well as shooting some photos for Footlocker.

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

The best part of being a director is being able to bring to light stories and issues you maybe aren't seeing talked about in every day culture and bring those to a more mainstream audience. I love doing work on people and topics we've maybe put stereotypes on and showing how un-stereotypical those things really are.



congrats

**MILES WARREN
MILES WARREN
MILES WARREN**

teambubbly.com



**2022 SHOOT
NEW
DIRECTORS
showcase**



Filmmakers Wukda, Courtney Sofiah Yates Make Showcase



Wukda

Anonymous Content

Can We Talk

(excerpt from short film)

UK, within a small town called Reading. I ended up moving to London because I heard about the opportunities. I had a sales job at the time, which helped me fund film projects and camera equipment. None of my family are in the creative industry and it just wasn't seen as an option when I was younger but London definitely changed that perspective.

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

Favorite movie, I'd say *Joker* at the moment because of the way Todd Phillips brings you into another world but still makes it relatable (something I like to do). Favorite commercial, Adidas Originals - "Original is Never Finished," directed by Terence Neale. This project is so original in terms of the song, environments and execution.

10) Tell us about your background (i.e., where did you grow up? Past jobs?)

I grew up in the



Courtney Sofiah Yates

Stept Studios

REI's "#optoutside" (commercial)

the language of editing. I was really inspired by the talent I saw around me there and it pushed me to believe in myself.

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

My first directing jobs were a couple of films for Monder and Document Journal in the summer of 2020

2) How did you get into directing?

I got into directing through my work as a creative at a small advertising agency in New York. There I learned so much about wrangling thoughts into concrete ideas, responding to briefs, image research, physically directing on set and



8) Who is your favorite director and why?

My favorite director is Edward Yang. He is so intricate and meditative in his musings on the phases of life and love.

BINDERY

Congratulations
Gabrielle Woodland
2022 SHOOT
New Directors
Showcase

[BINDERY.CO/GABRIELLE](https://bindery.co/gabrielle)



Mikkel E.G. Nielsen Reflects On The Banshees of Inisherin

Continued from page 7

It was like making something cool with your friends in your dorm room. Ego flies out the window, It felt in a way at times like 'how can we make each other laugh.' We were constantly trading ideas."

This exchange of ideas was done remotely as editing took place during the throes of the pandemic. And there was a method to the madness. While it sounds like an inspiring lark to swap idea after idea all over the place, Rogers affirmed that he and The Daniels in the big picture had to do justice to the emotional journey of the characters. "You risk this ending up to be a family drama where cool stuff happens around it. But the family drama can't come off as a gimmick tying all these parts together. The family is the heart of the film, a beautiful story of a mother, daughter, husband, wife, father. That was the focus of the editing."

Michelle Yeoh stars as Evelyn Wang, a laundromat owner prepping for an IRS audit. She is struggling with a dissatisfied husband (Ke Huy Quen), her critical father (James Hong) and an openly gay daughter (Stephanie Hsu). It all goes topsy-turvy when a different version of the husband appears claiming to be from another universe. Evelyn winds up jumping through the multiverse, picking up talents possessed by her counterparts in other worlds. And somehow things get even crazier but there's an emotional grounding to the outlandishness.

Rogers observed that working under the conditions of the pandemic may have helped him and his colleagues keep the emotional core of the film intact from an editing perspective. "We were all coming at this film from a place of emotional vulnerability, loneliness and longing that everyone was having during this period. We were isolated in our homes, away from family and friends. A lot of my friends drew very close during that period. We had to make more of an effort being apart. We leaned hard into that—maybe harder than if we were just having fun and there was no pandemic separating us."

The editor received some cogent advice from a friend, Matt Hannam, who earlier cut *Swiss Army Man* for The Daniels. "He helped me get through the overwhelming nature of this film by telling me to concentrate on each scene on my

first pass—to concentrate on what I was doing, to live in the moment and not be overwhelmed," said Rogers, by the vast ambition of the movie.

Rogers said he was blessed by the high caliber acting performances which gave him much to choose from. "How lucky I was that everyone was operating on such a high level on set, including the actors who made my job so easy and so much fun. We could have cut another version of this film with completely different takes and it would still be just as incredible. There were so many surprising options, such great improvisation."

Helping to get such optimum performances, continued Rogers, were the approach and mindset of The Daniels. "They are so caring about the people they work with, making it a really fun experience for everyone."

The experience on this film caused Rogers to rethink the idea he had for years that "the intense push of long hours and an intense commitment to the work made it better. This was one of the first projects I did where a work-life balance, a kindness to ourselves was emphasized from the top down by Dan and Daniel. There were no crazy hours. No raised voices. That made the work better. I'm taking that forward with me—in my life and my career."

Mikkel E.G. Nielsen

Mikkel E.G. Nielsen, who won the Best Editing Oscar in 2021 for *Sound of Metal*, returns to the awards season discussion for his work on *The Banshees of Inisherin* (Searchlight) from writer-director Martin McDonagh. While Nielsen was overjoyed to collaborate with McDonagh for the first time, the editor at the same time was saddened by how the opportunity emerged—the passing of McDonagh's go-to editor Jon Gregory in September 2021.

"Jon was supposed to do the film," related Nielsen who felt the deep need to honor the late editor. Gregory's work made "a big imprint on me when I started editing," continued Nielsen, citing Gregory's collaborations with writer-director Mike Leigh in the early and mid-1990s, including *Naked* and *Secrets & Lies*. And of course, Gregory earned a Best Editing Oscar nomination in 2018 for McDonagh's *Three Billboards Outside*

Ebbing, Missouri."

Nielsen recalled Gregory's work being "all about the characters, finding the truth in each character." Nielsen felt compelled to do the same for *The Banshees*

require you to play all these instruments—the actors, pace, balance and tone."

What helped was that McDonagh had written the script for the actors specifically whom he knew so well. McDonagh,



Colin Farrell in a scene from *The Banshees of Inisherin*

of *Inisherin*, and noted that he benefited from the support of McDonagh and his close-knit group of collaborators to help make that happen. "They are a family that's been working together for many years and they welcomed me in."

Set on a small fictional island, *Inisherin*, off the west coast of Ireland, the film introduces us to Pádraic (Colin Farrell), a kind-hearted man who lives with his sister Siobhan (Kerry Condon). Though seemingly mundane, life is good for Pádraic who's content to enjoy the companionship of his sister, care for his donkey, and to meet daily at a pub with his best friend Colm (Brendan Gleeson). But one day, Pádraic discovers that Colm no longer likes and doesn't want to talk to him anymore. This sea change is unprovoked—and maddening to Pádraic who can't fathom what he did to deserve this. Thus begins a downward spiral of self-doubt, depression and anger, in essence a waking nightmare for Pádraic which impacts others as well. But in the torment there is also humor just as kindness occasionally emerges from mean spiritedness.

"I never worked with material like this before," said Nielsen about the mix of comedy and drama, light and darkness at times in the very same scenes. "It was interesting to try to find the balance of that." The editor likened a McDonagh script to "a piece of music. You read it and then know you have elements that will

Farrell and Gleeson, for instance, teamed on the director's feature debut, *In Bruges*, some 14 years earlier. "You sensed there was something in the material that connected with the actors," recalled Nielsen who wasn't aware at the outset that the script was penned with them in mind. Now that he knows that, Nielsen in retrospect said it makes perfect sense given how the performances by the cast seemed to have an extra dimension to them as an unpredictable story unfolds.

At the same time, Nielsen was conscious of another dynamic in McDonagh's story—the island of Inisherin as a character. Thus use of music, bringing in scenes of nature, the countryside and animals were essential during lulls between dialogue.

"Finding the simplicity" was Nielsen's self-described approach to delving into each character, including *Inisherin* itself. Nielsen observed that the island and Pádraic's sister Siobhan were "the sanity" of the story. In many ways, observed Nielsen, "she was the heart of the film."

A prime lesson learned by Nielsen from *The Banshees of Inisherin* sprung from the challenge of finding a balance or rhythm between comedy and drama. He discovered that inherent in that challenge was a dynamic that helped him connect with viewers. Nielsen observed that when sitting in a theater, the audience feeds off of humor. With each laugh, "little by little

Florencia Martin Talks Production Design On Blonde

Continued from page 22

you open yourself up a little bit more” to other things, including drama. You connect and then when the story gets darker, you still have that connection.

Florencia Martin

Earlier this year, Florencia Martin earned her first Art Directors Guild (ADG) Excellence in Production Design Award nomination as a production designer—in recognition of her work on *Licorice Pizza*. However her big break and debut as a production designer—after having first establishing herself as a set decorator—came on a film, *Blonde* (Netflix), which was recently released, well after she received the ADG nod.

An adaptation of Joyce Carol Oates’ fictional portrait of Marilyn Monroe, *Blonde*—written and directed by Andrew Dominik—stars Ana de Armas as the tormented actress who’s depicted as sacrificing so much, including arguably her body, mental and physical health, and very soul for fame and ultimately status as an iconic persona.

Whether all too real or at times taking liberties to paint this portrait, *Blonde* is buoyed by artistry across the board, including the cinematography of Chayse Irvin, costume design by Jennifer Johnson and production design from Martin.

The production design necessitated historical accuracy in terms of re-creating scenes from Monroe’s films ranging from the trailer for *Niagara* to the live ruckus caused by her billowing dress over a NYC subway grate in *The Seven Year Itch*. But beyond capturing such imagery that’s

indelibly imprinted on the public consciousness, Martin had to be true to a period piece spanning the 1930s to the ‘60s in the context of a life’s chronology while also contributing to a tone and feel under-

of images they were trying to re-create but reflecting the tone, style of photography and the environment. “Whether a stark environment or overexposed—or a moment where we were trying to show

that [and laying the groundwork for the set construction] with the director and cinematographer was a joy and the way I love to work.”

Martin affirmed that much was accomplished with a fairly limited budget and a slightly under 40-day shoot spanning color and black-and-white photography, “It’s no surprise to me what the final look and style of the film is. I’m proud of the work that Chayse, Andrew and I did to create this film. All of that dialogue and creative process we put into making the film is really exciting to see on the big screen. To trust that process and give into that process was really rewarding.”

In addition to *Blonde*, Martin could make another awards season splash with her production design on director Damien Chazelle’s *Babylon*, which is slated for release on Christmas Day.

Martin’s achievements as a production designer add to an awards pedigree as a set decorator which includes a pair of Emmy nominations—for *Feud: Bette and Joan* in 2017 and *Twin Peaks* in 2018—and multiple ADG nods including for *Birds of Prey*, *Us* and *Manchester by the Sea*.

(This is the first installment of a 16-part series with future installments of *The Road To Oscar* slated to run in the weekly SHOOT>e.dition, *The SHOOT Dailies* and on SHOOTonline.com, with select installments also in print issues. The series will appear weekly through the Academy Awards gala ceremony. Nominations for the 95th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, January 24, 2023. The 95th Oscars will be held on Sunday, March 12, 2023.)



Adrien Brody (l) and Ana de Armas in a scene from *Blonde*

scoring an existence marked by trauma, juxtaposing the vivacious Monroe we thought we knew with a woman who in reality was often victimized and exploited.

Martin closely collaborated with Dominik and Irvin, forming a core team with art director Peter Andrus and set decorator Erin Fite to stitch together a portrait that is historical as well as marked by tone and mood, lending a 360 view to a legendary star and her private purgatory which went all the way back to her childhood, being raised by a mentally disturbed mother (Julianne Nicholson).

Martin recalled an entire office complex with seven huge walls all collaged full of photographs from top to bottom of every single scene in *Blonde*—not only

the complexity of what she was going through by her messiness or tidiness—we could walk through the movie from left to right with the art department and visually see what our goals were,” said Martin, noting that this helped ensure that she, her team, Dominik and Irvin were all “on the same page.”

Martin added that she spent a lot of time scouting together with Dominik and Irvin. “That’s an important part of my process—to be in a space together with collaborators. It’s pretty amazing when you get to the shoot and you see the final film. Our scouting and framing during our scouting, the images essentially formed the skeleton of what was ultimately made. Sculpting a film like

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Florian Hoffmeister, BSC



Luc Montpellier, CSC



Matthew Libatique, ASC



Sarah Polley (l) & Luc Montpellier

Shooting *Tár*, *Women Talking* and *Don't Worry Darling*

DPs Hoffmeister, Montpellier and Libatique discuss their collaborations with directors

By Robert Goldrich

One DP realized his dream of working with a director whom he feels set the tone years ago for what's possible in indie cinema.

Another continued a fruitful collaborative relationship with a writer-director which has now yielded their most challenging and perhaps most relevant film.

And our third cinematographer, a two-time Oscar nominee, helped create a 1950s' utopia masking a sinister underbelly, serving to heighten a much anticipated psychological thriller.

Here are insights from Florian Hoffmeister, BSC on *Tár* (Focus Features), Luc Montpellier, CSC on *Women Talking* (United Artists Releasing, Orion Pictures), and Matthew Libatique, ASC on *Don't Worry Darling* (Warner Bros.)

Florian Hoffmeister, BSC

For Hoffmeister, the opportunity to lens *Tár* was a dream come true. In fact, he never dared to dream that one day he would work with writer-director Todd Field whom he described as “an auteur in the truest sense.” Hoffmeister shared, “I cherish him as a filmmaker very much,” citing the impact Field’s *In the Bedroom* (2001) had on him. “It spoke to me as an audience member. It was a seminal film in many ways. It set the tone for what’s possible in independent cinema in my generation.”

Field’s first film in more than 15 years, *Tár* delves into the life of a gifted artist at the peak of her career. The fictional Lydia Tár, portrayed by Cate Blanchett, is

a lauded composer, musician, philanthropist and conductor. The EGOT (Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony) winner, mentored by Leonard Bernstein, is the first woman to preside over a prestigious German orchestra.

Hoffmeister was captivated by Field’s script which had an intimate knowledge of the dynamics around a classical orchestra and conductor. “The further you dive in, hidden realities are revealed—hidden little gems,” said Hoffmeister who marveled on how light is shed on Tár’s character. “When you work with an auteur like this,” noted Hoffmeister, “you think how can I serve this with my creativity, my abilities, to make this world appear.”

We first meet Tár during an on-stage interview in front of a live audience with *The New Yorker*’s Adam Gopnik. At the time her career is continuing on a seemingly irreversible ascent as she prepares to debut her autobiography “Tár on Tár” and complete the Gustav Mahler cycle with the orchestra. The interview is shown in real time as if we are members of the audience in the room with Tár and Gopnik. Hoffmeister said the idea was to not move the camera.

This observational bent best served the story, related Hoffmeister who shared Field’s piece of advice that a cinematographer “sometimes wants to contribute too much.” If a scene works a certain way, it doesn’t need any comment. “We were able to watch this interview without any commentary,” explained Hoffmeister. “Any [camera] movement would have been a comment to try to guide the au-

dience. To use a phrase that Todd uses, ‘Don’t gild the lily.’”

Shortly thereafter in the film, there’s another long sequence, presented as one continuous shot, with Tár teaching at Juilliard, walking about the room, addressing the students, including one who annoys her with a politically correct attitude towards music. Clearly music is Tár’s passion and now after being constrained, the camera follows her about, capturing Blanchett’s remarkable performance which reveals much about Tár as an artist and person.

Hoffmeister shared that Field taught him a lesson about how restraint can be a cinematographer’s storytelling ally—and then when that restraint is selectively removed, freeing the camera, the impact can be that much more profound. If restraint is what a scene calls for, “less is more” and “even less is even more,” smiled Hoffmeister.

We are exposed to two Társ in this mesmerizing character study. Initially we are introduced to the celebrated genius and breaker of the glass ceiling as the opening on-stage interview feeds right into that narrative. But over time the private Tár comes to light when we see her anxiety, seemingly almost haunted by an unseen yet felt force as her lofty status begins to erode amid allegations of misconduct.

“I feel tremendously privileged to have photographed Cate in this performance and to work alongside Todd,” said Hoffmeister, adding that the experience “changed some of my perceptions on the field of cinematography. Coming from a

place of restraint—when you set up a shot in this mindset—a lot of the things that you consider part of you suddenly don’t work. Then when you find that sweet spot that does work, it is absolutely liberating. It’s almost like you’re in a confrontation with yourself. You may at first think, ‘no, no, no,’ but in the end you realize this is it, this is right.”

Hoffmeister said that *Tár* was digitally captured, deploying ARRI cameras in different formats, coupled with ARRI Signature Prime lenses. These lenses—which were modified for *Tár*—lent themselves to what Hoffmeister described as the feeling of being present without leaving a commentary.

Tár figures to add to what is already an impressive awards pedigree for Hoffmeister. In 2012-’13, he became the first cinematographer to win an Emmy, a BAFTA and an ASC Award for the same program—the miniseries *Great Expectations*. Hoffmeister’s first Emmy nomination came in 2010 for his work on the “Checkmate” episode of *The Prisoner* miniseries. The DP’s first BAFTA nod came in 2009 for *House of Saddam*. And in 2019, Hoffmeister was again an ASC Award nominee—this time for the “Go For Broke” episode of the miniseries *The Terror*. Earlier this year, Hoffmeister scored his third Emmy nomination—but this one, on the basis of *Pachinko*, came for Outstanding Main Title design, which he contributed to as a cinematographer.

Luc Montpellier, CSC

Women Talking continues a longstand-

ing collaborative relationship between Montpellier and writer-director Sarah Polley, which includes the features *Away From Her* and *Take This Waltz*. They first served together as DP and director on the short film, *I Shout Love*. Montpellier had known of Polley back then as an accomplished actress. Mutual friends had recommended him to her for *I Shout Love*, one of her early shorts through which she diversified into directing.

“We hit it off,” recalled Montpellier. “You never know at that early stage how you will get along. But I felt we had similar ways of seeing the world and about what meant a lot to us in life. Working on her short film was an enriching experience. I watched how her experience as an actor translated into how she directed actors. She had a tremendous amount of curiosity and collaborative spirit. She had been exposed to so many amazing directors as an actor and I could see her already able to direct at a very young age. She created this safe creative environment.”

And such an environment is all the more necessary for a Polley film in that, said Montpellier, “She never shies away from challenging material—with human beings always at the core of it and how they are impacted by something. What keeps me coming back for more with her are her creative spirit and knowing that it will always be challenging material—something that would move society.”

Adapted by Polley from the novel by Miriam Toews, *Women Talking* is indeed challenging, introducing us to the women of an isolated religious community as they grapple with reconciling their reality with their faith.

Dealing with continued sexual and physical abuse from the men in their colony, the Mennonite women come together to discuss whether they should leave or stay and fight. Polley assembled a cast which includes Rooney Mara, Claire Foy, Jessie Buckley, Judith Ivey, Ben Whishaw and Frances McDormand.

Montpellier values how early Polley brings him into the process, sending a script to him that is still being shaped. “We have a discussion about it, throw ideas back and forth, talk about a visual language based on how she feels as a writer and director,” related Montpellier. “She will then go back and rewrite. So instead

of being reactionary to a script, I can be a part of it.”

This progressive way of working, said Montpellier, has proven invaluable in crafting scenes, helping to do full justice to story and characters. For *Women Talking*, there are turning points in the women’s conversation. Opinions shift. “We didn’t want the audience to just observe this. Through subtle and sometimes bold camera movement we looked for the right way to accentuate an emotion.”

The camera movement in a sense was designed to kind of support this idea of shifts within the film as women came together and impacted one another’s viewpoints and opinions.

For a movie driven by dialogue, close-ups are used quite sparingly. “We liked the idea of uniting these women. We wanted every frame to feel full of women’s faces at all times so that you feel you are part of this group debating and trying to figure things out,” explained Montpellier. “We only went to an isolated closeup at specific times. Mostly we wanted the feeling that there’s this group of women uniting”—even when there are opposing views.

“There’s a lot of content in this film that challenges how we think,” said Montpellier, adding that in the spirit of trying to create a tone, a mood, and to facilitate empathy and understanding, the photography is “very much like a supporting actor. It’s there to support these amazing performances.”

Despite his collaborative bond with Polley and the fact that they’ve developed a shorthand over the years, Montpellier felt some trepidation about shooting *Women Talking*.

“I thought it might be better for a woman to take this on,” reasoned Montpellier who offered to take a step back for Polley to consider a female DP. Montpellier recalled that Polley then made it clear to him why he should work on *Women Talking*. “She said this film isn’t just about women. It’s about everyone, the hard conversations we need to have between men and women. Having you photograph this film is honoring what is in the film—a conversation between men and women that’s needed even though the film is women talking amongst themselves.”

Montpellier deployed the Panavision

DXL2, a camera that has an 8K full frame sensor, on *Women Talking*. Polley wanted the imagery to feel as epic as the decision these women were making, noted Montpellier.

“I knew I wanted to shoot this in large format,” said the DP. “I wanted to feel every pore, every blade of grass. It was important to not feel too much like a period piece, to create more of a timelessness. As you watch the film, you kind of don’t know what time it is. A period film tends to disconnect an audience from the subject matter. Shooting in large format gives it a sharper image.”

At the same time, Montpellier sought a softness to mesh with the sharpness, opting for Panavision Ultra Vista anamorphic lenses from the 1950s. Montpellier thought the benefit of large format along with the soft feel of anamorphic, a combination of new and old, would serve to “take the edge off,” lending to “a more classic cinematic feel.” He noted that there were but seven or eight sets of these vintage Panavision lenses still in existence.

Among the cinematographer’s take-aways from his experience on *Women Talking* was seeing the end credits roll in theater as people started to have conversations about the film. “I hope *Women Talking* is a huge contributor to conversations about what is happening in our world among men and women. There is a movement. I had never seen so much conversation in a theater after a film. We can’t forget the power of cinema, especially on the big screen. Every decision we made on the film was made for that communal experience in a dark room on a big screen. We have to remember that this communal experience will never be replicated anywhere else but the cinema. Making a film for the big screen and telling a story for that is what we need to preserve.”

Matthew Libatique, ASC

Libatique was drawn to *Don’t Worry Darling* by its director, Olivia Wilde, who also stars in the film. He had first worked with her on *Cowboys and Aliens* (2011), a feature directed by Jon Favreau. Libatique served as DP and Wilde was in the cast of that film.

Wilde of course went on to direct,

making an auspicious feature debut with *Booksmart* (2019). Libatique had earlier read the script for *Booksmart* and found it entertaining but didn’t put his hat in the ring to do the film because it seemed like the kind of coming-of-age story that he had done before. “When I saw the film, I was blown away,” recollected Libatique. “Olivia added so much to it directorially. In retrospect, there were things in the script I didn’t notice when I first read it. She showed a nuanced knack for creating an atmosphere and vibe that was remarkable.”

Libatique was quick to work with Wilde in light of that, lensing a short film she directed, *Wake Up* (2020), starring Margaret Qualley. And when Wilde approached him with her second feature as a director, *Don’t Worry Darling* starring Florence Pugh, Harry Styles and Chris Pine, the DP was in.

Libatique came to appreciate Wilde’s affinity for assembling a team to “work in the sandbox together.” He found on *Don’t Worry Darling* like-minded, high caliber people with a propensity for collaboration, citing as an example production designer Katie Byron whom he had never worked with before.

Her sensibilities, said Libatique, meshed with his and others to help realize Wilde’s vision which entailed creating an idyllic world that upon scrutiny reveals evils lurking beneath. Pugh’s character, Alice, sees the cracks in the facade, sensing that something is terribly wrong. She tries to get her husband Jack (Styles) on board but meets resistance. Still there’s something percolating that suggests that this notion of Shangri-la is about to be shattered.

The groundwork to create this appealing yet ultimately sinister world was rooted in extensive give and take among team members, including Wilde, Libatique and Byron. Libatique had a substantive, insightful initial phone call with Wilde which got the ball rolling on the atmosphere she wanted to build for the story. “When I arrived in person,” related Libatique, “the next level was in place with a wall of photographs reflecting her [Wilde’s] inspiration. We talked about each image, what it inspires and why.”

Libatique said of Wilde, “She’s so easy

Continued on page 26

Lensing Don't Worry Darling

Continued from page 25

to talk to. The best relationships are the ones where you work with someone you like to spend time with." Informal talks during a walk, during lunch shed more light on the process and how to best bring the film to fruition.

Maintaining that openness can be all the more daunting when you consider that Wilde directs and acts in the film. Still, continued Libatique, she's up to the responsibility of preparing cast and crew for what's in store at every turn, keeping everyone on the same page in terms of the desired vibe and the intentions of the film.

Libatique deployed ARRI Alexa Mini LF cameras paired with Tribe 7 Blackwings and Sigma Classics lenses to create a highly stylized world with a photographic naturalism. With a customized LUT (look-up table) that accentuated each color and skin tone, the look was designed to maximize the production de-

sign, wardrobe and makeup.

A California desert backdrop imbues the motion picture with a natural visual grandeur. Libatique sought to capture a utopian world that viewers might at first aspire to while maintaining an underlying sense of mystique, imperfection and ultimately dread.

A two-time Best Cinematography Oscar nominee, Libatique is known in part for his work with director Darren Aronofsky on such films as *Pi*, *Requiem for a Dream*, *The Fountain*, *Black Swan*, *Noah* and *Mother!* (Coming up next is Aronofsky's *The Whale* which will be discussed in a future installment of this Road To Oscar Series.)

Libatique earned his first Academy award nom for *Black Swan* in 2011. Eight years later, his second Oscar nod came for Bradley Cooper's directorial debut, *A Star Is Born*. *Black Swan* and *A Star Is Born* also garnered ASC Award nominations for Libatique.

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DaVinci Resolve For iPad To Launch In Q4

Blackmagic Design will bring DaVinci Resolve for iPad to the market so creators can extend video workflows in new ways and new places. Optimized for Multi-Touch technology and Apple Pencil, DaVinci Resolve for iPad features support for cut and color pages providing access to DaVinci's image technology, color finishing tools and latest HDR workflows. And Blackmagic Cloud support allows creators to collaborate with multiple users worldwide. DaVinci Resolve for iPad will be available in Q4 2022 from the Apple App Store as a free download, with an upgrade to DaVinci Resolve Studio for iPad also available as an in-app purchase.



DaVinci Resolve for iPad

With optimized performance for Apple Silicon, DaVinci Resolve delivers 4x faster Ultra HD ProRes render performance on the new iPad Pro with M2. HDR is also supported for customers using an 12.9-inch iPad Pro with the M1 chip. Creators can send a clean feed grading monitor output to an Apple Studio Display, Pro Display XDR or an AirPlay compatible display. This lets customers use the external display to quickly create grades on set or color correct clips in post production directly from their iPad.

The new DaVinci Resolve for iPad will open and create standard DaVinci Resolve project files which are compatible with the desktop version of DaVinci Resolve 18. Supported file formats include H.264, H.265, Apple ProRes and Blackmagic RAW, with clips able to be imported from the iPad Pro internal storage and Photos library, or externally connected iCloud and USB-C media disks.

Cooke Optics Launches 2 Facilities

Cooke Optics has made a major investment in two facilities. Crest Rise, a nearly 6,500 square foot production facility located near the existing factory in Leicester, U.K., was specifically commissioned to facilitate a fast introduction of the new S8/i FF T1.4 range, with the aim of achieving annual outputs significantly in excess of any previous Cooke product range. The S8/i FF spherical lenses, at



Cooke Optics' Beijing facility

T1.4, are among the fastest lenses available for full frame capture, providing cinematographers with excellent low light performance as well as great control over depth of field for full frame production. In response to customer feedback, they are also smaller and lighter than contemporary Cooke lenses, while producing optimal image quality and pleasing images that convey the sought-after Cooke Look.

This product range requires a different methodology to produce than other Cooke lenses, as it has been specially designed for the digital camera environment. The facility has adopted a three-tier level approach to environmental control, with all areas positively pressured to minimize contamination during the assembly processes. It features specific modulation transfer function, projection and camera tests, all employed to ensure that the lenses are finely tuned to exact parameters, but without losing hand-built craftsmanship. The facility has been designed with expansion in mind, ready for the implementation of the remaining focal lengths that will make up the complete S8/i FF range of 16 lenses, and Cooke has recruited an additional 12 staff into the assembly process, with a further six staff into the glass production group.

Cooke is also opening a new Creative Centre located at Chaowai SOHO, in the Chaoyang district of Beijing, headed by technical sales manager Anson Gil Mercado. It incorporates an in-house studio where customers can test a wide variety of Cooke lenses, as well as meeting rooms and a lounge area for events. This is the second regional Cooke facility to open in recent months, following the launch of the Burbank, Calif. facility in July.

Cooke Optics CEO Tim Pugh said, "Facilities that improve production and regional outreach are the cornerstone to better supporting our customers worldwide. The S8/i FF production facility will allow us to get premium lenses into the hands of our customers far quicker than has been achieved previously, while our new Creative Centre in Beijing allows local filmmakers to try out our different lens ranges in a relaxed environment, with experts on hand."

Delving Into Brave Prequel Worlds

With the guild awards season fast approaching, we can expect as in years past a series of familiar TV shows, telefilms and limited series to gain recognition—some of which have already scored at the Emmys back in September but remain eligible for the likes of the ACE Eddie, Art Directors Guild (ADG) Excellence in Production Design, ASC, VES, MPSE Golden Reel, Writers Guild and DGA Awards, among other competitions.

But there will also invariably be new content in the running for guild honors—and next year's Emmy derby for that matter. And two of the highest profile entries in that mix are *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power* (Prime Video) and the Star Wars series *Andor* (Disney+).

Amazon Studios has a lot riding on *The Rings of Power*, committing to five seasons of production at a price tag of a reported \$450 million, which is in addition to the \$250 million rights deal struck with J.R.R. Tolkien's estate in 2017.

Meanwhile as is the case with any *Star Wars* project, the bar has been set high—in terms of production value, and for meeting lofty expectations from a voracious fan base.

The maiden voyages of both *The Rings of Power* and *Andor* have been well received. *SHOOT* connected with a couple of the artisans—one for each show—who could figure in the guild awards conversation: John Gilroy, co-producer and editor of *Andor*; and Ramsey Avery, production designer on *The Rings of Power*.

The former is best known for his feature film exploits, earn-

ing two BAFTA Award nominations for Best Editing on the strength of *Michael Clayton* in 2008 and *Nightcrawler* in 2015. The same two films also garnered him ACE Eddie Award nods. And *Nightcrawler* scored a Best Editing nomination from the Film Independent Spirit Awards. Among Gilroy's other feature editing credits are *The Bourne Legacy*, *Pacific Rim*, *Suicide Squad* and *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*.

Andor marks Gilroy's first major foray into television but it came naturally in that the series is a prequel to *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*. Beyond the continuity he brings between those two stories, *Andor* enabled him to once again collaborate with his brothers Dan Gilroy, a writer on the show, and Tony Gilroy, series creator. Their prior collaborations include writer-director Tony Gilroy's *Michael Clayton*. Tony Gilroy also directed and co-wrote *The Bourne Legacy* and was a writer on *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*. Dan Gilroy directed and wrote *Nightcrawler*, and co-wrote *The Bourne Legacy*.

Given his involvement in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* and the familial connection, John Gilroy said he seamlessly transitioned to *Andor*. Also appealing were the storytelling prospects that television provides. "While I wouldn't say long-form television is supplanting movies, less people are going to movie theaters," he said. The chance to tell a story over many more hours than a feature affords him proved enticing. That volume, related Gilroy, makes *Andor* akin to turning out four

Continued on page 28

Shedding light on *Andor* and *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*

A *SHOOT* Staff Report



From top left, clockwise: *Andor* co-producer and editor John Gilroy; Diego Luna (l) and a shoretrooper in a scene from *Andor*; Morfydd Clark (l) and Charles Edwards in *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*; and Nazarin Boniadi (l) and Morfydd Clark in *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*.

Production Designer Avery Seizes The Rings of Power

Continued from page 27

features in two years. “It’s not a marathon; it’s a super marathon,” he assessed.

Andor goes back five years from the events of *Rogue One*, following Cassian Andor (portrayed by Diego Luna who also played Andor in the movie). Season one consists of 12 episodes which cover one year in time. Season two’s dozen episodes will take viewers over the next four years into *Rogue One*.

Whereas *Rogue One* brings us the character of Andor fully shaped as the consummate warrior and leader of the Rebellion, the TV series delves into the early years of the Rebellion, exploring Andor’s complex and long history--and the road he took through his personal life to become the one person that the Rebellion Alliance trusted to carry out a bold revolt. Similarly other fascinating characters--for which *Rogue One* could only provide snapshots--are more thoroughly examined in *Andor*.

John Gilroy teamed with Tim Porter (*Game of Thrones*) to edit the first three episodes, and Dan Roberts (*Peaky Blinders*) on episode six. Roberts was part of an ensemble of British editors brought on the show, including Hazel Baillie, Frances Parker, Matthew Cannings, Simon Smith and Yan Miles. In addition to the episodes he directly cut, Gilroy served as an overall supervisory editor. “We knew there was a lot riding on this,” said Gilroy, noting that all the editors came together--as did the full cast and crew--to deliver a show “that looked great on paper and to make it even better.”

Gilroy also praised the directors, a season one mix consisting of Toby Haynes, who helmed the first (episodes 1-3) and third (8-10) blocks, Susanna White (episodes 4-6) and Benjamin Caron (episodes, 7, 11, 12). Gilroy said that directors seemed to feed off of one another’s work, taking a peek at what had been done before to get a vibe, set a look for a particular set or piece, bringing an element of continuity to the proceedings. The editors too, noted Gilroy, kept a watchful eye on the big picture to attain a semblance of continuity across the board.

Ramsey Avery

Avery aspired initially to a career as an astrophysicist. While he explored various

fantasy books over the years, the first to profoundly influence him was Tolkien’s novel “*The Hobbit*,” which led Avery to “*The Lord of the Rings*.”

“That world felt utterly real to me. It

ADG Awards’ circle, having been nominated as an art director for *Tomorrowland*, *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Minority Report* and *AI Artificial Intelligence*. And now his work on *The Rings of Power* brings him



A scene from *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*

sparked my interest in the whole idea of science fiction and fantasy,” recalled Avery who as a result realized he could “make worlds” and “didn’t have to figure out how they work” as an astrophysicist. Rather than serving as a scientific observer, he could actively create worlds in his imagination and bring them to fruition through design. Little did he know that the profound influence of Tolkien on his art and livelihood would one day translate into his bringing life to Tolkien-inspired worlds in *The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power*.

Avery came into the ambitious project with his share of world-building experience. As an art director, he contributed to the future worlds in such films as *Minority Report* and *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, eventually becoming supervising art director on *Star Trek Into Darkness*, *Mirror Mirror*, *Tomorrowland* and *Guardians of the Galaxy, vol. 2*.

As a production designer, Ramsey has designed the films *10 Cloverfield Lane*, *Hotel Artemis*, *Peppermint*, and the Sundance selections *Waitress* and *Right At Your Door*. In addition, he has designed national commercials for, among others, Budweiser, Microsoft, and Capri Sun, plus a Super Bowl spot for Dodge. He was nominated for an ADG Award for Excellence in Production Design for his design of the live action portion of the trailer for *The Bee Movie*. He is no stranger to the

yet again into the ADG Awards discussion--and more.

There was plenty of room for imagination in *The Rings of Power* as the show takes place thousands of years prior to *The Lord of the Rings* feature films. While Tolkien provided the road map for navigating the worlds in *The Rings of Power*, Avery had creative room on his journey. For example he was tasked with bringing the island of Númenor to life, a kingdom-known for its strength in water and sailing--never previously depicted on screen. Within that environ came a life-sized ship with 30 foot sails. The set for Númenor was built on a lot in New Zealand spanning some five acres.

Avery also had to create such locales as the underground Dwarven kingdom of Khazad-dûm, the elves’ city of Lindon, and pop-up villages of the harfoots. Avery tapped into such talent as illustrators John Howe and Alan Lee known for their Tolkien book artwork as well as concept art for Peter Jackson’s *Lord of the Rings* film trilogy. But the concept art they did for *The Rings of Power* was an original proposition in that Jackson’s movies portrayed the decline of the various worlds of men, elves, Tolkien’s dwarves. *The Rings of Power* in contrast showcases these kingdoms back when they were flourishing. *The Rings of Power* brings to screens for the very first time the heroic legends of the fabled

Second Age of Middle-earth’s history.

When feasible, practical sets were constructed--giving actors an inhabitable space even when the locations are fantastical. Environments had to feel real and honest. Avery also had to design for visual effects when an in-camera approach wasn’t viable. He explained that they took every opportunity to put the camera in a real place--to make the worlds and cultures real. They couldn’t rely too heavily on visual effects--even though they remain important to the process.

Ramsey felt blessed to be working with “a spectacular group of people,” affirming that for instance the “New Zealand crews were remarkable--from art directors to set design to people doing embroidery, stone masons, blacksmiths,” all providing a sense of scope and scale, a foundation to build the story on.

And even when creating Middle-earth settings for their debut on screen, Ramsey related that they had to pass the Tolkien test. “Everybody has an opinion of what Tolkien looks like,” observed Ramsey. “Audience expectations enter into the story we needed to tell.” Somehow the Tolkien DNA had to be distilled in order to the story accessible.

Ramsey affirmed, “As much as I loved the opportunity to help create something near and dear to my core, what I really took away from the experience were the people. I loved working in New Zealand. The people I worked with, their heart and passion. They are not just doing it for a paycheck. They believe in Tolkien and the Middle-earth--and they believed in doing a good job...From the showrunners on down, we had people who were just a pleasure to work with. That’s why the world looks good. Without those people, their heart, none of this would have happened. Their passion made this world come to pass.”

The series is led by showrunners and executive producers J.D. Payne & Patrick McKay. They are joined by executive producers Lindsey Weber, Callum Greene, J.A. Bayona, Belén Atienza, Justin Doble, Jason Cahill, Gennifer Hutchison, Bruce Richmond, and Sharon Tal Yguado, and producers Ron Ames and Christopher Newman. Wayne Che Yip is co-executive producer and directs along with J.A. Bayona and Charlotte Brändström.

Plástico Unmasks Local Heroes in Honor of Reading, for National Library Board What do you get when you combine sci-fi, humor, CGI, and the potential unleashed by knowledge? What you - and readers of ALL ages - get is this work from Plástico, the directing team behind a campaign for the National Library Board of Singapore. Represented by Easy Mondays in the US, the directors bring to life the magic of reading in two new spots for the client, created via Ogilvy Singapore.

Creative Collaboration Company DOMO Gains North American East Coast Representation Via COMMONWEALTH The leaders of creative collaboration company DOMO announced the addition of NYC-based COMMONWEALTH for representation on North America's East Coast, effective immediately.

Nice Shoes Explores The World of Taiko In "Finding Her Beat"

Nice Shoes helped directors Dawn Mikkelsen and Keri Pickett tell the story of the incredible women who are changing the rhythm of the male-dominated art of Taiko in the new independent documentary *Finding Her Beat*. The facility provided post-production services for the film.

Nice Shoes Delivers a Vibrant Look For Award-Winning Indie Dramedy "Pinball: The Man Who Saved the Game" Nice Shoes is proud to be part of a colorful story from New York City's past in providing post-production finishing for the MPI Original feature film *Pinball: The Man Who Saved the Game*. Senior Colorist Marcy Robinson collaborated with Writers/Directors Austin and Meredith Bragg...

Hayden5 Named Honoree on 2022 Inc. Power Partner Awards List Video Production agency Hayden5 has officially been named an honoree of the inaugural 2022 Inc. Power Partner Awards, which honors global B2B organizations with proven track records supporting entrepreneurs and helping startups.

Motion Picture Sound Editors To Honor Jerry Bruckheimer with Filmmaker Award The Motion Picture Sound Editors (MPSE) will honor Jerry Bruckheimer, producer of this year's \$1.4 billion box office hit *Top Gun: Maverick*, with its annual Filmmaker Award.

Senior Producer Janine Conway and Compositing Supervisor Chris Green

Join Fancy House of VFX Fancy House of Visual Effects (Fancy

VFX) has appointed two highly accomplished visual effects veterans to its senior team. Janine Conway joins the studio as Senior Producer, helping to oversee production and business development. Chris Green becomes Compositing Supervisor.

Kesha Keeps The Hunt For Paranormal Alive In Travel Channel Premiere of "Conjuring Kesha" With Help From Hometeam Conjuring Kesha season one premieres on the Travel Channel for Ghostober last month with help from global content production company Hometeam!

Rising Director and Renowned Composer Michael Giacchino Chooses Sarofsky for Marvel Studios' "Werewolf by Night" Opening and Main-On-End Title Sequences Michael Giacchino recently released on Disney+, the Marvel Studios Special Presentation "Werewolf by Night" To the great honor of the creatives and producers from one-stop cross-media production company Sarofsky, the rising director chose their studio to create his momentous film's opening and main-on-end title sequences.

ALIBI Takes Production Music To The Edge With Gritty, Hard-Hitting Rock Releases Distorted, unpolished and raw, rock's harder edge can move audiences in a distinctly powerful way, drumming up pure grit and attitude that practically course through your veins. ALIBI Music's newest releases - "Rock Grooves 5," "Kick Ass Rock," "Punky Girl Rock," "Alt Rock" and "Garage Rock"

Animation Studio Awesome + Modest Joins Strike Anywhere Strike Anywhere, the ingenious creative studio made up of filmmakers, thinkers and producers, adds to its firepower as they bring aboard animation studio extraordinaire AWESOME + modest.

Boris FX Adds Exciting New VFX Effects and Transitions To Continuum 2023 Continuum 2023, the post-production industry's most comprehensive plugin collection delivers top creative tools to Adobe, Avid, Final Cut Pro, and OFX workflows. Boris FX's original flagship suite now features over three hundred effects.

COROS Collaborates With Director Noah Conopask and DOMO To Educate and Inspire Runners With New Product Launch Film For POD 2

To support the launch of the latest running innovative POD 2, performance sports technology company COROS Wearables has released a powerful product film, created to both inspire and educate runners. Directed by Noah Conopask and developed collaboratively by the in-house team at COROS and LA-based creative company DOMO.

New Aveeno Kids Campaign from Doner, The Barkers, and Sarofsky Celebrates Children's Independence A new Aveeno Kids cross-media campaign entitled "Kids Can" has debuted from full-service advertising agency Doner. With three :15 spots ("Dad," "Mom," and "Curly Hair") and numerous shorter versions, the spots were helmed by the directing team of The Barkers, with animation, VFX, and VFX finishing support from one-stop cross-media production company Sarofsky.

Union's Jim Haygood and The Hummer EV Report For Call of Duty: Modern Warfare II When it comes to action movie-style advertising, Union Partner/Editor Jim Haygood is the person to see, due in no small part to his frequent collaborations with Reset's Joseph Kosinski. The director and editor have reunited for "Reporting for Duty" - created via Leo Burnett and airing now - which cross-promotes the revolutionary GMC HUMMER EV and the highly anticipated Call of Duty: Modern Warfare II video game.

Director Stephan Malik Joins Bunker Director Stephan Malik has joined Bunker for commercials and branded content. Stephan is a multi-disciplinary director and photographer. **Iconic Los Angeles Landmark El Cholo Unveils Its 100th Anniversary Logo and New Slogan, as Restaurant Prepares For Its 100th Anniversary** El Cholo, Los Angeles' most iconic, honored and beloved Mexican Restaurant - currently gearing up for its 100th Anniversary during 2023 - has unveiled its new Logo and Slogan: "Creating Memories for 100 Years!" El Cholo is actively planning a series of special events and promotions during 2023 for its longtime customers and Southern California guests.

CoMPANY Director Paul Fox Doubles Up The Humor For OnStar CoMPANY Films Director Paul Fox helps OnStar highlight their new Guardian smartphone app in a new four spot campaign for agency Campbell Ewald - Detroit. OnStar Guardian is an offshoot of the OnStar safety and navigation system installed in numerous General Motors vehicles.

Introducing Pixotope Fly For Creating Augmented Reality with Drones Pixotope, announced Pixotope Tracking - Fly Edition (Pixotope Fly), industry-first markerless camera tracking software solution democratizes the use of airborne AR elements, enabling creatives to easily and efficiently create and track dramatic, high flying 3D graphics in realtime with a drone.

Level 77 Music Secures Representation In Africa Through Red Igloo Level 77 Music, a leading independent provider of high quality production music, has inked an agreement with Red Igloo Music, Johannesburg, to act as its sub-publisher in Africa. Red Igloo will represent Level 77 Music's catalog for licensing and sync across television, film, advertising, games. **Apache Celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month With New Work for State Farm by Colorist Quinn Alvarez**

Apache and Quinn Alvarez continue uplifting the Latinx community through color with three new Spanish spots for State Farm that honored last month's Hispanic Heritage festivities. **All The World (Or Just A Highway) Is a Stage in "Vacations"; The Comedy Short By Award-Winning Director Danny Corey** Valiant Pictures director Danny Corey once drove on a lone desert highway when he spied a construction worker holding a caution sign with no construction in sight. The puzzling happenstance lived in his brain rent-free until some years later when he directed *Vacations*: a dance-happy short celebrating the finer things in life, even if they're stuck in your own imagination.

charlieuniformtango Collaborated on Feature Documentary, "Shouting Down Midnight" Film To launch Trevor Noah Series of Docs Highlighting Hot Buttons in USA charlieuniformtango collaborated on Director Gretchen Stoeltje's compelling documentary, "Shouting Down Midnight;"

Stephen Arnold Music Creates Bold Theme for NewsNation's Newly-Launched "Cuomo" Stephen Arnold Music created a bold, modern theme for *Cuomo*, the new primetime news show hosted by multi-award-winning broadcast journalist Chris Cuomo. Airing weekdays in primetime from 8-9pm ET/7-8pm CT on NewsNation, the show examines the day's most important news stories from all...

Acclaimed Director Kristyna Archer Joins ArtClass Next-Gen production and post-production company ArtClass has welcomed director Kristyna Archer to the roster.

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**

Marc Webb

Director is in post on Disney's live-action Snow White, has window for spots via RadicalMedia



By Robert Goldrich

Director Mark Webb has a filmmaking range that extends from commercials to branded content, music videos, indie and studio features, as well as to television series. His roots are in short form fare, most notably music videos where his credits include My Chemical Romance's "Helena," All American Rejects' "Move Along" and Weezer's "Perfect Situation," all of which contributed to Webb earning director of the year distinction back in the day at the Music Video Production Association (MVPA) Awards. "Move Along" additionally scored an MVPA kudo as pop video of the year, and an MTV Video Music Award. Webb's Greenday video, "21 Guns," was also recognized with MTV VMA honors.

Webb successfully diversified into commercialmaking and then landed his first feature, *(500) Days of Summer*, a hybrid romantic comedy/coming of age story energized by dance numbers, split screens, and engaging performances by Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Zooey Deschanel. It debuted at the 2009 Sundance Film Festival and went on to win best directorial debut distinction from the National Board of Review.

That catapulted Webb into the tentpole franchise arena with *The Amazing Spider-Man* and *The Amazing Spider-Man 2*. He also took on TV series, helming an episode of *The Office* and varied pilots, including for *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* on which he also served as an executive producer.

Webb's endeavors across all these disciplines continue. He is currently in post on Disney's live-action musical version of *Snow White*, which he directed. The movie is slated for release in 2024. Webb is serving as an EP on and directed the pilot for *Career Opportunities in Murder and Mayhem*, a Hulu series scheduled to come out next year, part of his ongoing TV deal with Disney and ABC. And Webb recently signed with production house RadicalMedia for representation in the U.S. spanning commercials, branded content and music videos. He anticipates having a window open up to take on select short-form projects.

"I've been wanting to work with Marc as soon as I saw *(500) Days of Summer*," recalled RadicalMedia president and executive producer-Frank Scherma.

SHOOT connected with Webb to discuss this latest chapter in his career. The director's remarks were edited for clarity and brevity.

SHOOT: What's the appeal of returning to commercials, branded content and music videos?

Webb: I have more time now. It's an interesting time given all the branded content that's out there. There's been a resurgence in commercials and music videos. I love the form of expression, the creativity that goes into that, being able to work with new technologies. I feel like the commercial and content worlds are more supple, you can move a lot more quickly and find new techniques and new ways to convey emotion. That's fun. I enjoy a multi-faceted career-TV pilots, music videos, commercials, big feature films, smaller independent films.

SHOOT: Back in the day, we remember you at the venerable production company DNA for music videos and commercials.

What drew you now to RadicalMedia?

Webb: They have a history with feature film directors. I've known Frank [Scherma] for awhile. I remember talking to him back in the day. He seems to be involved with a lot of the people whose work I love. It seemed like a fun way to re-enter this area with a new group of people.

SHOOT: How has your work in music videos informed your feature filmmaking?

Webb: Music has been a centerpiece of my career--music and romantic comedy for some reason. Way back for *(500) Days of Summer*, I used techniques that I experimented with in the music video world, that were new when they came to features. I still feel deeply connected to evolving technologies. I'm using them in

Snow White in ways I can't fully disclose yet. I've really enjoyed working in all these formats--but it all comes down to telling a story, to create a feeling in the audience.

Regardless of the length of story you're telling, the fundamentals apply. You have to connect to a character; you need to provoke an audience to feel that they're seeing something new even if it's timeless.

SHOOT: What about lessons learned from feature filmmaking and television that you now bring back to commercials and shorter form projects?

Webb: In big visual effects movies, there are mistakes and you learn from those mistakes. And you learn from really being deeply involved with performance, actors and sometimes movie stars. It's a different language. You need to have some experience with that, to speak that language.

SHOOT: It might have seemed to some a giant leap to go from music videos to an actors' performance-driven feature like *(500) Days of Summer*. But the fact is that your music video work was more rooted in storytelling at a time when that wasn't the norm. And that storytelling orientation made the transition to the feature

that much easier.

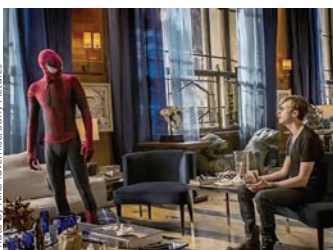
Webb: For a lot of alternative videos, everybody wanted a band performance. After a certain point, I became more interested in story components.

Collaborating with bands was always a thrill. They are intuitively creative. They tend to be more experimental. Certainly the money [in music videos] wasn't as good but the creative freedom was really appealing. Most of them [performers] got on board with telling stories.

SHOOT: What's been your biggest takeaway or lessons learned from your experience spanning short and long-form projects?

Webb: Authenticity is everything. You need to feel something truthful in whatever you're doing. You can feel it in commercials as well as in music videos. Something real and truthful resonates. I remember before YouTube watching new videos and spots every couple of weeks. The great spots had something original to say but said it in a way that felt authentic, real and alive, I love the exhilaration of seeing something new, discovering something new.

"Authenticity is everything. You need to feel something truthful in whatever you're doing."



street talk

London-based creative content agency **Contented** has appointed its first rostered director, **Lemarl Freckleton** who earlier this year was nominated for the Breakthrough honor at the BAFTA Cymru Awards (Welsh branch of the British Academy). Part of global independent marketing agency collective **The Miroma Group**, **Contented** has turned out campaigns for such brands as **The English & Welsh Cricket Board**, **BUPA**, **Gumtree**, **Linkedin**, and the **NBA2K League**. **Freckleton** has already directed projects for **Contented**, including for **The Hundred**. He also brings prior experience working with brands including **New Balance**, **The North Face** and **Burberry**. **Freckleton's** BAFTA Cymru Breakthrough nomination came for his TV series about Welsh language music of Black origin, which explored how

to make the language more accessible. Earlier **Freckleton** directed music videos for household name artists like **Anne-Marie**, as well as up-and-coming performers such as **Clyde Mercury** and **Infamous Isaac**....**Integrated luxury marketing boutique Hudson Rouge** has named **Lara O'Shea** as its new chief strategy officer. **Hudson Rouge** serves longtime client **Lincoln Motor Company** and will continue to grow and diversify its client roster, which includes **Rolex**, **The Macallan**, **Newmark**, **Zhang Yuan**, and **CitizenM Hotels**. **O'Shea** will report to **Michael Stefanski**, president of **Hudson Rouge North America**. **O'Shea** has over 20 years of experience across business and marketing strategy, brand management, consulting, media, journalism, education, and nonprofit—both on the client and agency sides. A graduate of **WPP's** MBA Marketing fellowship program, she has worked across various agencies within **WPP**, including most recently as part of **VMLY&R's** global strategic leadership team. **O'Shea's** appointment signals closer integration between **VMLY&R** and **Hudson Rouge** to service an expanding luxury sector. Earlier in 2022, **Hudson Rouge** officially joined **VMLY&R** as its specialized luxury offering....

report

Michele Ruiz Wright has joined **SMPTE** as director of business development and outreach. **Wright** will lead the Society's marketing and sales teams and partner with **SMPTE** staff and volunteers to guide multiplatform marketing and outreach to new and diverse members and partners. She reports to **David Grindle**, **SMPTE's** executive director. **Wright** is a multidimensional senior executive with experience in pharmaceutical/biotechnology sales, healthcare administration, and

business development for Fortune 100 companies and an international non-profit organization. She is the recipient of numerous accolades and awards for her work as an advocate for health equity, as an author and creator of social-emotional and STEM-focused content and edutainment platforms for elementary students, and as a business and organizational leader. A native of Tuskegee, Alabama, **Wright** is the 2022 **USA Today** Woman of the Year for Arkansas. She and her husband, **Terry Wright**, made history in 2022 as the first people of color to be honored by the **Cystic Fibrosis Foundation (CFF)** with the organization's top honor, the **Breath of Life Award**, and to be named **CF Ambassadors**....**Video broadcast technology company FOR-A** has appointed **Robert Shen** as regional sales manager for South-East Asia and Oceania. He joins from **EVS Broadcast** where he was responsible for the **Axon** product lines in control, monitoring, routing and video processing. Originally trained as a licensed aircraft maintenance engineer in radar and communications with the Republic of Singapore Air Force, he subsequently achieved a degree in computer science and an MBA from **Curtin University**. Since then, he has spent two decades in the broadcast industry with a number of vendors and gaining expertise in **IPTV** and **OTT**, master control and newsroom automation, quality control and turnkey TV installations. **Shen** will be based in Singapore....



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Ian Haydn Smith, **CURZON MAGAZINE**

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