

SHOOT



Chat Room 11



TV Awards Season Preview 19



Top 10 Music Tracks Chart 24



Top 10 VFX & Animation Chart 26

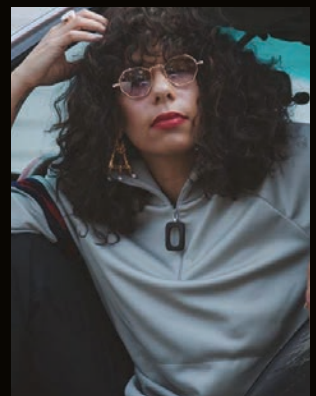


The Road To Oscar

Series Part 14, Page 4



From top left, clockwise: Scenes/BTS from *Another Round*; *Judas and the Black Messiah*; *News of the World*; *Promising Young Woman*; *One Night in Miami...*; and *Mank*



Historic DGA/Oscar Nominees 12 | From Left: Nisha Ganatra, Melina Matsoukas, Emerald Fennell, and Chloé Zhao

WHERE DO TALENTED NEW DIRECTORS GO TO MAKE A NAME FOR THEMSELVES?

See Page 31 for the answer...

6 ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS BEST PICTURE

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
AARON SORKIN

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR
SACHA BARON COHEN

BEST EDITING
ALAN BAUMGARTEN

BEST CINEMATOGRAPHY
PHEDON PAPAMICHAEL

BEST ORIGINAL SONG
"HEAR MY VOICE"

BAFTA NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
3 BEST FILM

DIRECTORS GUILD AWARD NOMINEE
BEST DIRECTOR
AARON SORKIN

AMERICAN CINEMA EDITORS
EDDIE AWARD NOMINEE
BEST EDITED FEATURE FILM (DRAMATIC)
ALAN BAUMGARTEN, ACE



WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY AARON SORKIN

THE TRIAL OF THE CHICAGO 7

TOGETHER WE TRIUMPH



You're invited to tune in

CHICAGO 7 TOWN HALL: VOICES FOR CHANGE

Join Aaron Sorkin, Sacha Baron Cohen, Baratunde Thurston, Dolores Huerta, Jill Wine-Banks, Lee Weiner & Olivia Munn in a conversation moderated by Katty Kay, *BBC World News*.

To watch, scan this QR code on your phone with your camera app.

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By Robert Goldrich

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A Hopeful Preview

'Tis the season for awards show previews. This issue contains a TV Awards Season feature on four DGA Award and two ASC Award nominees who could figure in the Emmy conversation. And our Road To Oscar Series continues with insights into nominees, their work and collaborators.

But transcending any preview is the fervent wish that some of the early awards show returns are a preview of more inclusion to come. Our Historic DGA/Oscar Nominees coverage in this issue will hopefully be a harbinger of an industry where more diverse voices are welcomed and celebrated.

Last month Chloe Zhao received four Oscar nominations for *Nomadland*--Best Picture as a producer, Best Director, Editor and for Adapted Screenplay. That's an all-time record high for a woman. Zhao,

who is also the first woman of color to be nominated for Best Director, is joined by *Promising Young Woman* director Emerald Fennell in the category, making it the first time two women have been nominated for that marquee honor. Fennell scored three Academy Award nominations for *Promising Young Woman*--the others as a producer for Best Motion Picture, and for

Night in Miami... and Radha Blank for *The Forty-Year-Old Version*.

Another woman filmmaker is also in contention to make history. Garrett Bradley--on the strength of *Time*--could become the first Black woman to win the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature.

Furthermore, Nisha Ganatra of Chelsea Pictures and Melina Matsoukas of

Women directors are making history on the awards show circuit spanning feature film, documentary and spotmaking.

Best Original Screenplay.

Akin to the Oscars, the DGA Awards this year saw two women--Zhao and Fennell--nominated for the Guild's top honor for the first time in the same year. Zhao is the first woman of color to become a feature nominee.

Additionally, two women earned DGA Award nominations for Outstanding Directorial Achievement of a First-Time Feature Film Director--Regina King for *One*

PRETTYBIRD, two women of color, are among the nominees for the DGA Award recognizing Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Commercials for 2020. This marks the first time that two solo female directors broke through with nominations in the spotmaking category in the same year.

A preview of things to come? Let's hope so as our hope--which springs eternal--finally springs into action.

By Blake Jones

POV



Five Ways COVID Changed Color Grading

The year 2020 changed work forever. Companies adapted and continue to cope.

Many colorists are freelancers who relied on travel and have been hit hard. But the pressure of the situation catalyzed innovation and the adoption of emerging technologies--developments that will evolve far beyond COVID, including:

--The cloud's silver lining: Colorists create configurations that allow us to continue to work and remain creative. I now run DaVinci Resolve Studio on a Cloud Computing platform, which also has Frame io, ioGates and Google Drive configured. This allows me to handle any project with ease, plus rendering on the cloud computer is five times faster than rendering locally on my laptop.

I use the Asus PA32UCX-P monitor and an Avid Artist Color panel as my grading surface, and the Resolve Speed

Editor keyboard makes editing a breeze!

--The world's your office: Many chose to remotely work in sunnier or cheaper locales. Colorists I know have migrated to Cyprus, Spain or the Canary Islands. They bring their system with cloud computing, plus a monitor like the ASUS ProArt PQ22UC OLED and grading panel like the Blackmagic Resolve Micro. The PQ22UC is flat and lightweight enough to be cabin baggage. The Resolve Micro panel is small, robust and can easily be packed in your luggage. With a small G-Tech storage unit or an Accusys Thunderbolt 3 Raid for local storage, you have a grading and editing suite in your suitcase.

--Cyber face-to-face: Direct contact with clients is still necessary. Some are placing several cameras throughout their grading suite, all tied together with the Blackmagic ATEM Mini Pro switcher. This--with an ATEM Streaming Bridge unit--means colorists can replicate the client-colorist

interaction via a secure stream.

--Chain of tools: The new CloudStudio allows rushes to be fed from location directly into the cloud using a secure link. The editor can edit, using the automatically generated proxies or full resolution media, and has a secure video link with the director. The colorist can access all media and speak with the director, who can view and approve the project--this process has accelerated projects.

--Train to gain: We, instructors at the International Colorist Academy, used to travel all over to help people upskill. But COVID moved learning online--a great opportunity for colorists everywhere to keep advancing their skills without the costs of travel. Our classes are still live in online classrooms, so students get the benefits of an "in-person" instructor and peers in a more accessible way.

Blake Jones is an instructor at the International Colorist Academy.

Director, Producer, DP, Editor, Design, Music POVs

Insights into *Another Round*, *Judas and the Black Messiah*, *One Night in Miami...*, *Promising Young Woman*, *Mank*, *News of the World*

By Robert Goldrich,

The Road To Oscar Series,

Part 14

From top left, clockwise: Mads Mikkelsen (l) and director Thomas Vinterberg on the set of *Another Round*; Daniel Kaluuya in *Judas and the Black Messiah*; Kingsley Ben-Adir in *One Night in Miami...*; Carey Mulligan in *Promising Young Woman*; Gary Oldman in a scene from *Mank*; Tom Hanks (l) and Helena Zengel in *News of the World*; *News of the World* composer James Newton Howard.



Thomas Vinterberg recently became part of recurring history relative to the Best Director Oscar and DGA Award nominee lineups. For 68 of the DGA Awards' 73 years, there's been at least one discrepancy between the Guild nominations and their Academy Award counterparts.

This time around directors Vinterberg and Aaron Sorkin are in line with that predominant trend. Vinterberg earned a Best Director Oscar nod for *Another Round* (Samuel Goldwyn Films). Sorkin, who didn't make the directorial Oscar cut, earned a DGA Award nomination for *The Trial of the Chicago 7* (Netflix).

Four of the five directors vying for the DGA Award and the Outstanding Achievement in Directing Oscar are in sync this year: Lee Isaac Chung for *Minaari* (A24); Emerald Fennell for *Promising Young Woman* (Focus Features); David Fincher for *Mank* (Netflix); and Chloe Zhao for *Nomadland* (Searchlight Pictures).

On the flip side of tradition, if Vinterberg were to win the directing Oscar,

he wouldn't be aligned with but rather bucking history. Only eight times has the DGA Award winner not gone on to win the Oscar. That happened most recently last year when Sam Mendes won the DGA Award for *1917* while Bong Joon Ho scored the Oscar for *Parasite*.

Last month's Best Director Oscar nomination for Vinterberg was a surprise to many, including him. Vinterberg said that he didn't at any time envision that *Another Round* would yield his first career Best Director Oscar nomination. But when that came to pass last month, he was moved by the recognition from his colleagues. Vintner's Danish film also earned an Academy Award nod for Best International Feature.

Written by Vinterberg and his longtime compatriot Tobias Lindholm, *Another Round* centers on four teachers—including most notably Martin (portrayed by Mads Mikkelsen)—at various stages of middle age looking to re-energize and find some compelling meaning in their mundane lives. They decide to experi-

ment upon learning of a hypothesis from an obscure philosopher that we are all born with an alcohol shortfall in our blood. They endeavor to rectify that by each attaining and maintaining a set higher blood alcohol content level to see how their existence will be impacted. The results are wide ranging—from tragic to inspiring, at times emboldening them and generating a new zest for life.

Another Round marks a dramatic—and sometimes whimsical—departure from films that delve into alcohol consumption. It is not a moralistic look at drinking booze but instead an examination of different lives and the needs within not just the middle-aged protagonists but also their young students.

Vinterberg explained how the story evolved. "We live in a very controlled, sometimes slightly mediocre safe zone in our little country (Denmark). I guess our movies are a reaction against that somehow." The writer-director went on to relate that this results in a number of

Continued on page 6

5 ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR
BEST DIRECTOR • BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY EMERALD FENNEL



6 BAFTA AWARDS
NOMINATIONS
INCLUDING
BEST PICTURE OF THE YEAR

WINNER
CRITICS CHOICE
AWARDS

BEST ACTRESS **CAREY MULLIGAN**
BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
EMERALD FENNEL



WINNER
WRITERS GUILD
AWARDS

BEST ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY
EMERALD FENNEL



HER STORY MATTERS. ARE YOU LISTENING?

PROMISING YOUNG WOMAN

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY EMERALD FENNEL



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Vinterberg On Another Round; Bobbitt Talks Black Messiah

Continued from page 4

folks “rooting for inspired, less controlled behavior, for what cannot be planned, executed or measured.”

This in part inspired Vinterberg and Lindholm to dig deeper, researching world history, finding accomplishments made by famous people under the influ-

of truthfulness and sensitivity,” observed Vinterberg.

Grovlen’s handheld approach to *Another Round* followed a guideline that he and Vinterberg agreed upon—described by the director as depicting “the awkwardness of the sober life” and “the smoothness of the drunk life,” until ex-

cessive drinking takes hold. Grovlen has graduated from a local to an international cinematic hero, according to Vinterberg who cited the DP’s much lauded work including shooting the feature *Victoria* in one long take. Grovlen achieves an intimacy with his subjects, continued Vinterberg, that helped make *Another Round* feel “as if what’s happening on screen would have happened even if the camera did not get there in time to catch it.”

And perhaps the major takeaway or lessons learned from Vinterberg’s experience on *Another Round* has to do with a trust in himself. While structure and planning remain integral elements to filmmaking, breaking free from a controlled, contrived safe zone to gain and apply creative inspiration is also important—and akin to what the main characters in *Another Round* are struggling to attain. The film, he said, has “widened my perspective on storytelling.”

At the same time, Vinterberg said it will be some time before he gets a handle on what resonates most for him. “For private reasons this is the most important

car nomination for *Judas and the Black Messiah* (Warner Bros.) and his second BAFTA Film Award nod (the first coming for *12 Years a Slave* in 2014).

Bobbitt read the script for *Judas and the Black Messiah* and said that by “sheer luck” he was later working in New York on another film, which enabled him to meet with director Shaka King who also co-wrote (with Will Berson) the screenplay. Bobbitt recalled that within minutes of meeting King, he was hoping that the film would be offered to him.

“Shaka had such a passion and knowledge for the film,” said Bobbitt. “He’s such an eloquent man with a great aura and great humor. The way he described the film, his ideas—it was exciting.”

Bobbitt also felt a measure of shame in that the story was unfamiliar to him. “I grew up in Saudi Arabia and England through the 1960s so that whole period of American history had been a mystery



Photo by Henrik Ohlsten/courtesy of Samuel Goldwyn Films

Mads Mikkelsen (l) and Maria Bonnevie in *Another Round*

ence. He recalled looking into great world leaders, including Winston Churchill who once famously said, “I never drink before breakfast.” The rest of the day was fair game for Churchill yet his decisions, unorthodox thinking, strategizing and boldness helped to win World War II.

Add to that the creative choice to take some liberties with the aforementioned blood alcohol theory and Vinterberg and Lindholm found the engine for their storyline which champions exploration of one’s life while not imparting a heavy-handed lesson. At the same time, *Another Round* also clearly shows that people can be destroyed by excessive drinking.

Vinterberg as a filmmaker brings the audience into his characters’ lives, collaborating with a cast and crew largely familiar to him, including close friend Mikkelsen who gives a tour de force performance. But Vinterberg also went outside his comfort zone to team with other select artisans for the first time, a prime example being cinematographer Surla Brandth Grovlen. Vinterberg said of the DP, “He has an enormous sensitivity which I saw in his cinematography on other movies.” The director said he was moved by how Grovlen moves the camera. “This movie needed this sense of closeness to the characters, that sense

That sensitive, empathetic feel helps to advance the script despite it going “in all sorts of different directions,” said Vinterberg who pointed, for example, to the silliness of a scene in which middle-aged men try to catch codfish, to a tender moment of reckoning eliciting tears from Martin, to even a musical number at the end of the film.

Among the filmmaking challenges, quipped Vinterberg, was that musical number in which he had to convince Mikkelsen to dance. Both that and the point in the story when Mikkelsen’s character is crying reflect the deep mutual trust between the director and actor. The challenge of the latter scene had nothing to do with the crying in that Mikkelsen is “a fantastic actor” but rather, said Vinterberg, was rooted in all that was around

me. I was being taught about Kings and Queens in England.” But the awareness of the story was also nonexistent, continued Bobbitt, among white Americans. “Every white male of my age from America seemed to not know the story while every single Black male and female I spoke with knew the story.”



Photo by Henrik Ohlsten/courtesy of Samuel Goldwyn Films

A scene from *Another Round*

film I ever have done or will ever do. I lost my daughter while making this movie,” he shared, noting that so much has happened during the past two years in his life spanning celebration and profound grief. As for what he walks away with first and foremost from his experience on *Another Round*, Vinterberg observed that he might be able to fathom a deeper answer 10 years from now. In the meantime, the final frame of *Another Round* informs viewers that the film is dedicated to his daughter, Ida.

Judas and the Black Messiah

Sean Bobbitt, BSC recently scored his first career Best Cinematography Os-

Judas and the Black Messiah recounts the events surrounding the betrayal and assassination of Illinois Black Panther Party chairman Fred Hampton. The film chronicles the true story of William O’Neal (portrayed by Lakeith Stanfield), a petty criminal offered a plea deal to become an FBI informant and gather intelligence on Hampton (Daniel Kaluuya), re-

Coping With COVID-19 During One Night in Miami...

sulting in the brutal murder of the young charismatic leader by Chicago police in 1969.

Bobbitt, whose roots are in news and documentary filmmaking, related, “I did work documenting injustices around the world. To see something of this scale and horror having happened in America

Bobbitt deployed the ARRI Alexa LF and Alexa Mini LF on *Judas and the Black Messiah*. The cameras provided attributes that King and Bobbitt valued. Bobbitt explained that they wanted to ensure that the characters’ flesh tones were captured accurately. “It was important for us to maintain that accuracy throughout

The Alexa LF Mini offered a smaller package that works well in tight spaces, able to serve as a handheld camera.

Reflecting on his experience on *Judas and the Black Messiah*, Bobbitt said, “This film felt special from the beginning. We were filming in Cleveland and pulled in crew from all over America. All of the

to Muhammad Ali, joined Malcolm X (Kingsley Ben-Adir), singer Sam Cooke (Leslie Odom Jr.) and Hall of Fame football player and actor Jim Brown (Aldis Hodge) to discuss racial injustice and how they could use their celebrity to better society. Regina King, a Best Supporting Actress Oscar winner in 2019 for *If Beale*



DP Bobbitt (center, hands raised) on set of *Judas and the Black Messiah*

was shocking. And it’s still happening in America as we speak. This film tells a very powerful story that everyone should be watching and learning, thinking and talking about—to help make sure this doesn’t keep happening.

Judas and the Black Messiah sadly remains all too relevant in society today, underscoring the deep sense of purpose that Bobbitt felt in tackling the story. “When you have a true story like this, you’re duty bound to be faithful to that story itself and the memory of the people. That was important to all of us in the production, that the story be treated with respect and honesty.”

King did just that, affirmed Bobbitt who described him as “a great director with all the skills of great direction—the major one of those being the gift of collaboration. While he is a very open collaborator, he has done the work, knows the story, has been thinking about it for years. He has a strong idea of what the film should be, what it should look like yet he’s still open to suggestions. We spent hours in his office working through the script. We had sessions talking about shots and sequences. We would try to surprise each other with ideas. It’s an incredibly creative and fulfilling way of working.”

the run of the film,” said the DP. “In the past lots of Black actors were forced to wear makeup to be ‘acceptable’ to the camera. That was not a consideration for us. I had worked with the Alexa LF before and knew it would hold those flesh tones beautifully.”

Bobbitt also wanted to be true to the black-and-white and color photographs from the era that King had collected to provide an idea of what they were going for. Bobbitt said that the colors had specific characteristics—black was very black and there were punchy colors that faded over time. “We wanted to echo those colors, that vibrancy. These characters were young people doing something to change the world. They were dynamic and vibrant and we wanted the colors to reflect that vibrancy, to be lively. I knew we could do justice to that with the Alexa LF.”

The lenses of choice were from the ARRI DNA line. They combine vintage lens optics and sensibilities with modern technical advantages, related Bobbitt who added, “They gave us a sense of the period feel. They are spherical, all glass, a little bit softer, not clean and antiseptic. They have character and foibles. They provided a very subtle way of introducing that period look to the audience without smacking them over the head.”



A scene from *Judas and the Black Messiah*

crew was there because they very much wanted to be. They knew the story of Fred Hampton and wanted to be part of telling that story. There was a camaraderie, a collective desire to make this right. As a result, people went out of their way. They were not there for the money but because they wanted this film to be good. What you see on the screen is testament to the desire and hard work of everyone on the crew and to the leadership of Shaka King.”

Further testament is reflected in a total of six Oscar nominations. In addition to the recognition for cinematography, *Judas and the Black Messiah* is up for Best Picture, Original Screenplay, Original Song (“Fight For You,” H.E.R., Dernst Emile II, Tiara Thomas) and Supporting Actor (for both Kaluuya and Stanfield).

One Night in Miami...

Based on the stage play by Kemp Powers who also penned the screenplay, *One Night in Miami...* (Amazon Studios) relates a fictional account of four high-profile Black Americans together in a hotel room in 1964 the night after a 22-year-old Cassius Clay (portrayed by Eli Goree) won the heavyweight boxing title with a stunning knockout of Sonny Liston.

Clay, who would later change his name

Street Could Talk, made her theatrical feature directing debut with *One Night in Miami...* She has numerous TV series to her directorial credit (including episodes of *Insecure*, *Shameless* and *This Is Us*) and is on the commercialmaking/branded content directing roster of Independent Media. King is a four-time primetime Emmy winner for her acting—three for *American Crime* and the most recent coming in 2020 for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Limited Series for *Watchmen*.

Last month *One Night in Miami...* earned King a DGA Award nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement of a First-Time Feature Film Director.

Jess Wu Calder, a producer on *One Night in Miami...*, recently participated in a Producers Guild of America panel discussion consisting of this year’s nominees for the PGA’s Darryl F. Zanuck Award for Outstanding Producer of Theatrical Motion Pictures. She recalled that the pandemic lockdown took hold when *One Night in Miami...* had but three scenes left to shoot in March 2020. Production resumed in July under heavy scrutiny. Calder said that “the eyes of the world were upon us” because *One Night in Miami...* was the largest film at that time to resume lensing in Los Angeles.

Continued on page 8

Editor Frederic Thoraval Discusses Promising Young Woman

Continued from page 7

Yet another complication arose, noted Calder, when King's COVID-19 test produced inconclusive results. King was ultimately cleared to return to work. However, the director was prepared to figure

I never imagined, even when it was on the page. I want to thank producers Jess Calder, Keith Calder and Jody Klein for believing in me and this story. And lastly, I want to thank Regina King, the captain of our ship and the truly visionary artist

times like a dark comedy, a comic tragedy, a thriller, a psychological tale that perfectly dovetails with the #MeToo era, all the above and more.

Thoraval credits Fennell with having a major hand in his Oscar nomination. "She is a brilliant everything--writer, director, an amazing person. She made an impossible dream come true for me." The editor described the script as one that "you start and just can't stop reading. I could see very clearly from the outset that she had a very clear vision of what she wanted to do. It was the kind of movie you knew instantly you wanted to be a part of. When we first met two years ago,

pathy.

Among the lasting impressions that the experience of working on *Promising Young Woman* made on Thoraval was the power of the collective, collaborative spirit. "You feel that every single person on that movie had an impact on it. You feel how much every department contributed, helping to build the world Emerald had in mind. It's a movie that is very honest and was very important to all of us."

The Academy Award nomination is one of several accolades bestowed upon Thoraval's cutting of *Promising Young Woman*. He also garnered his first career BAFTA Film Award and American Cin-



A scene from *One Night in Miami...*

something out if her subsequent COVID test or tests were also inconclusive. King even mentioned a possible Facetime alternative to keep her involved in the process, according to Calder.

The director, cast and crew had a strong sense of urgency to get back to work. Calder explained that for King and colleagues, the film was too important to hold up--particularly given the death of Breonna Taylor, a Black medical worker. In March 2020, Taylor was shot and killed by police officers during a botched raid on her apartment in Louisville, Kentucky.

One Night in Miami... scored three Oscar nominations--Adapted Screenplay (Powers), Supporting Actor (Odom, Jr.) and Original Song ("Speak Now," Odom, Jr., Sam Ashworth).

Upon getting news of his nomination, Powers stated, "I'd like to thank the Academy for honoring the story behind *One Night in Miami...* I wrote this script hoping to give the world a look into the humanity of Black men through the prism of these four icons. I'm thrilled that its message has resonated with audiences the way it has, especially during a time when reasserting the value of Black lives is so important. I want to thank Jennifer Salke and the team at Amazon for throwing so much support behind this film. I want to thank our tremendous cast, who brought life and vibrance to our characters in ways

without whom this film would not exist. I am proud to also be a part of the creative team behind *Soul* (as co-director/co-writer), which the Academy honored with a nomination for Best Animated Feature. Being able to help put two meaningful pieces of art into the world during these challenging times has left me feeling both humbled and grateful."

Promising Young Woman

Frederic Thoraval earned his first career Oscar nomination for editing *Promising Young Woman* (Focus Features), which marked the feature directorial debut of Emerald Fennell who also wrote the screenplay. The editing nod was one of five for the film, the others being Best Picture, Director, Original Screenplay and Leading Actress.

The latter went to Carey Mulligan who stars as Cassie, a medical school dropout. Cassie's once promising prospects have fallen off a cliff. She's working at a coffee house and spends her free time either moping about or pretending to be blind drunk at nightclubs where she ultimately shames guys who try to take advantage of her seemingly impaired state. It's an inexplicably strange double-life until we become privy to what made her quit med school, a terrible trauma suffered by her dear friend and fellow student, Nina, years ago. This genre-busting film plays at



Photo courtesy of Focus Features

Carey Mulligan in *Promising Young Woman*

it was not a job interview. It was more of a talk and we connected very quickly."

Thoraval recalled that "from day one, Emerald gave an energy and something very positive to the making of the film. It was an adventure. She knows every word in the story, is very precise about words but was never attached to them. She was very open, one of the things that made the adventure so good. She wanted whatever worked to go on the screen. It was very collaborative in the cutting room. I never had the feeling that I was working with a first-time director. She had directed a short (*Careful How You Go* which made its mark at Sundance in 2019) before and was quick on everything. It was a very honest, collaborative process."

A priority for Thoraval was creating a connection between the audience and the character of Cassie. "We had to make sure we followed her path," he said, adding that Mulligan's brilliant performance went a long way toward kindling that em-

ma Editors Eddie noms.

Mank

Director David Fincher's *Mank* (Netflix) marked the first time that production designer Donald Graham Burt and set decorator Jan Pascale had worked together. Yet from that collaboration sprung a common bond this awards season in that *Mank* earned a second career Oscar nomination for each.

Burt's first Oscar nod and win came for another Fincher film, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, in 2008. Burt has a long filmography with Fincher as reflected in his Art Directors Guild Excellence in Production Design Award nominations over the years, all for Fincher films--*The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, *The Social Network*, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, *Gone Girl* and *Mank*. Burt won the ADG Award for *Benjamin Button* in 2009 and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* in 2012.

Donald Graham Burt, Jan Pascale Collaborate On *Mank*

By contrast, *Mank* is Pascale's first Fincher film. Her initial Oscar nomination was for *Good Night, and Good Luck* in 2006. Her ADG Award nominations have over the years come for *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, *Argo* and *Sicario*.

Mank tops this year's Oscars field with 10 nominations, the other nine being for Best Picture, Director (Fincher), Cinematography (Erik Messerschmidt, ASC), Original Score (Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross), Sound (Ren Klyce, Jeremy Molod, David Parker, Nathan Nance, Drew Kunin), Costume Design (Irish Summerville), Makeup & Hairstyling (Gigi Williams, Kimberley Siteri, Colleen LaBaff), Leading Actor (Gary Oldman) and Supporting Actress (Amanda Seyfried).

Shot digitally in glorious black and white by Messerschmidt, *Mank* centers on screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz (portrayed by Oldman) as he races to finish the script for director Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* on a tight timetable, secluded in a bungalow in a desert town miles removed from Los Angeles as he recu-

battle with Welles (played by Tom Burke) over screen credit for what became the classic *Citizen Kane*. The *Mank* cast also includes Charles Dance (as William Randolph Hearst), Seyfried (as Marion Davies, Hearst's wife), Tuppence Middleton (as Sara Mankiewicz, Herman's wife), Arliss Howard (as Louis B. Mayer), Sam Troughton (as John Houseman), Tom Pelphrey (as Joe Mankiewicz, Herman's brother), Toby Leonard Moore (as David O. Selznick) and Ferdinand Kinsley (as Irving Thalberg).

Burt connected with Pascale through a recommendation. They struck up a rapport and were off to the races on *Mank*. Pascale jumped at the opportunity, noting that she's been a long-time admirer of Burt's work. Both felt fortunate to have such a great story to tell.

Burt recalled reading the script and then having an early conversation with Fincher who shared his vision for the film in part through a unique scenario. Fincher told him to picture being in a film vault and you see *Citizen Kane* on

dole or grifting. Some aspiring entertainment industry workers found themselves taking on whatever gigs emerged, including making propaganda films smearing the California gubernatorial candidacy of Sinclair Lewis.

There was "a little more real world" in *Mank*, observed Burt, that differentiated it from *Citizen Kane*. At the same time there was an element of *Mank* paying homage to *Citizen Kane*, which made the project all the more challenging and rewarding for Burt and Pascale.

Burt and Pascale did extensive research, even finding some black-and-white photos with the film's characters at

filter for a few weeks, he and Pascale developed an instinct for how colors and scenes would translate into black and white for the movie.

Burt and Pascale worked closely with Fincher and other compatriots, including DP Messerschmidt and costume designer Summerville, to help realize the desired look, tone and feel.

Both Pascale and Burt observed that most rewarding for them on *Mank* was to be part of such a meaningful narrative, a purposeful film that will continue to resonate years from now, sparking people to question some aspect of their lives, to ponder, to have an awakening of



Meticulous production design on display in *Mank*

perates from a car accident in 1940. Attending to him are his secretary Rita (Lily Collins) and his German nurse (Monika Grossmann).

In the process, through Mankiewicz's worldview—marked by his abiding social conscience and wit, at times caustic—we are introduced to not only Hollywood but life in the 1930s, ranging from the struggle of the rank and file during the Great Depression to the grandeur of Hearst Castle and high society. We also become privy to Mankiewicz's own inner struggles with alcoholism, as well as a professional

the shelf. Right next to it there's another film which you don't recognize; it's *Mank*. You watch it and it feels like a film that was made at exactly the same time. It was more like a "sister movie" to *Citizen Kane*.

That vision further intrigued Burt who knew he had to be painstakingly true to the era, transporting us to the 1930s and '40s in California, running the gamut from the larger than life Hollywood glamour at a Louis B. Mayer birthday party or a circus party at the Hearst Castle to the unvarnished reality of the Great Depression which left many unemployed, on the



A scene from *Mank*

Hearst Castle in San Simeon, Calif. Still there was one bit of research Burt didn't care to do. "I didn't want to go to Hearst Castle and look at it. We knew that if we tried to replicate Hearst Castle, it would be a losing battle." Instead the tact was to try to tell the story and make the setting feel extravagant, opulent and full of grandeur with the resources available to them. It was all about conveying a sense of place. To replicate Hearst Castle would clearly have been impossible.

Then there was the consideration of how settings would look in black and white. Pascale said a useful tool emerged on that front—a noir filter on the iPhone. She noted that the filter yielded an image somewhat akin to what the RED Helium Monochrome camera captured. This helped Burt and Pascale to learn about what colors worked and which ones didn't for particular scenes, how to make the set less jarring for the actors.

Burt added that after utilizing that

some sort. "This involves more than the endeavor of just going to a movie," said Burt. "It's being part of a narrative that has greater value."

Pascale added that another takeaway for her was the camaraderie in the process itself of making *Mank*.

"Every department just cared so much. Everybody brought their 'A' game," related Pascale. "You could feel the energy in the production. It was a tough schedule, very busy, getting rid of 21st century things to go back to the 1930s and '40s yet everybody was all in, with a great attitude so that we could achieve the best possible results."

News of the World

James Newton Howard earned his latest Oscar nomination for Best Original Score on the strength of the Paul Greengrass-directed *News of the World* (Universal Pictures). This marked the

Continued on page 10

Composer James Newton Howard Scores News of the World

Continued from page 9

ninth career Academy Award nod for composer Howard, the others coming for: *The Prince of Tides* in 1992, *The Fugitive* in '92, *Junior* in '95, *One Fine Day* in '97, *My Best Friend's Wedding* in '98, *The Village* in 2005, *Michael Clayton* in 2008, and *Defiance* in 2009.

"One never gets tired of being nominated for an Oscar," said Howard, noting that his last such recognition came over 10 years ago. Howard found it reaffirming that he has now returned to the nominees' circle. "I've been doing music for movies for 35 years and to again be nominated means a lot."

Howard was drawn to *News of the World* on several fronts--the story, the fact that it was a Western, and the opportunity to work for the first time with Greengrass, whom he had long admired.

On the genre front, Howard shared, "From the time I was a kid, I thought Westerns had it all--fast paced, good guys, bad guys, romance, a stagecoach careening through the mountains, unbelievably beautiful backdrops. The film music I most closely identified with as a kid was in Westerns."

Howard has already demonstrated an acumen for scoring Westerns as reflected in such credits as *Wyatt Earp* and *Hidalgo*. The composer found the *News of the World* script by Greengrass and Luke Davies, adapted from the best-selling novel by Paulette Jiles, appealing and relevant to today.

The film centers on the relationship and the deep bond that is formed over time between Captain Jefferson Kyle Kidd (portrayed by Tom Hanks), a Confederacy veteran, whose profession is that of a non-fiction storyteller, moving from town to town, sharing the news of presidents and queens, glorious feuds, devastating catastrophes and gripping adventures from the far reaches of the globe. As he travels in the backwoods to reach his next town hall gig where he will regale attendees with stirring stories directly from the pages of newspapers, Kidd crosses paths with a stranded Johanna (portrayed by Helena Zengel), a 10-year old taken by the Kiowa native tribe six years earlier (after the murder of her parents) and raised as one of their own. Johanna, hostile to a world she's never

experienced and dealing with the trauma of being ripped away from two families, is being returned to her biological aunt and uncle against her will. Kidd agrees to deliver the child where the law says she belongs. As they travel hundreds of miles into the unforgiving wilderness, the two

and mood.

That "broken" theme applied not only to Kidd but the era of the film, right after the Civil War when the country was battered, brutalized and divided. The Civil War had left the U.S. with 600,000 dead and assorted communities shattered. The

inspiring to be part of an "uplifting" film.

Much of the film called for Howard to be "restrained" in his approach. It wasn't until well into the film that he could flex his epic Western music chops. "For between the first third to half of the film, the music is very restrained. I felt that was an achievement," assessed Howard. "Paul told me, 'I will ask you at times to write so little that you will feel you're doing nothing at all.' That's hard for a guy who's classically trained. But it all comes down to telling the same story as the director is telling. That's what it's all about."

Howard said he's grateful for getting a lesson in restraint from Greengrass whom he hopes to work with again. "I feel it's a significant new relationship for me," affirmed Howard. "He's a wonderful filmmaker."

News of the World also gave Howard the opportunity to rekindle a longstanding collaborative relationship with editor William Goldenberg, ACE, a five-time Oscar nominee who won for *Argo* in 2015. Howard and Goldenberg worked previously on such films dating back to the editor's first feature cutting solo, *Alive*, followed by *Confessions of a Shopaholic*, *Concussion* and *Detroit*.

Howard said that Goldenberg is a pleasure to work with. All their collaborations have been marked by simple, clear, honest communication and a worthwhile exchange of ideas. "I always felt his agenda was pure. The only thing he's interested in doing is making the movie better," related Howard.

Howard received one of the four Academy Award nominations garnered by *News of the World*, the others being for Cinematography (Dariusz Wolski, ASC), Production Design (production designer David Crank, set decorator Elizabeth Keenan) and Sound (Oliver Tarney, Mike Prestwood Smith, William Miller, John Pritchett).

This is the 14th 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. The 93rd Oscars will be held on Sunday, April 25, 2021.



Helena Zengel (I) and Tom Hanks in *News of the World*



A scene from *News of the World*

face tremendous challenges of both human and natural forces as they search for a place that either can call home.

Howard described Greengrass as "extremely confident and specific of what he wanted the music to feel like in different parts of the movie." For example, the writer-director wanted the music to reflect the character of Kidd, a man who, said Howard, is "a loner, an outsider trying to fit into a broken world. Paul wanted the music to relay that." Howard put together an ensemble of "broken instruments" dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, with musicians playing them in an effort to get that desired feel, tone

and mood. That "broken" theme applied not only to Kidd but the era of the film, right after the Civil War when the country was battered, brutalized and divided. The Civil War had left the U.S. with 600,000 dead and assorted communities shattered. The

News of the World offers some hope. Howard shared that Greengrass believes--and the movie believes--that we can come together. The composer said it was

David Oyelowo

*The acclaimed actor stars in and makes his feature directorial debut with **The Water Man***

By Robert Goldrich

David Oyelowo is acclaimed as an actor (Golden Globe nominations for *Selma* and the telefilm *Nightingale*), perhaps should be more widely known as a producer and is just now starting to exhibit how deserving he is of recognition as a director.

On the latter score, Oyelowo has made his feature directorial debut with *The Water Man* (RLJE Films), which is slated to hit theaters on May 7 with a date for PVOD and digital distribution to be announced. *The Water Man* introduces us to Gunner Boone (Lonnie Chavis), a youngster who shares a special bond with his mother (Rosario Dawson). When her illness dramatically worsens, Gunner delves into books on science and the supernatural, seeking a cure for the cancer she's battling. He learns about *The Water Man*, a creature of local lore who may carry the secret to everlasting life. He runs across a girl named Jo (Amiah Miller) leading a nomad existence who claims to not only know *The Water Man* but to be able to find him deep in the forest where he is on a reclusive mission. Gunner and Jo go on their own mission which takes them into the woods on a quest to connect with *The Water Man* and

tap into his magical healing powers. Gunner's father Amos (Oyelowo) is then tasked with rescuing the kids, necessitating that he immerse himself in his son's world to follow the clues that will lead him to them and put his family back together.

The theme of finding family is prevalent in the story. Gunner seeks to save his mom and preserve his family. Amos looks to reconnect with Gunner, building a bridge to a son with whom he's lost touch. And Jo, alienated from her family, ultimately winds up finding a nurturing one in the Boones.

As for Oyelowo's alluded to producing chops, he and his wife, actress/producer Jessica Oyelowo, are founders of Yoruba/Saxon Productions. Yoruba/Saxon's film and TV projects include *Nightingale*, *Captive*, *A United Kingdom*, *Come Away*, *Five Nights in Maine*, and the upcoming *Solitary*. Yoruba/Saxon also teamed with Shiv Hans Pictures and Oprah Winfrey's Harpo Films to produce *The Water Man*.

Oyelowo is no stranger to helming. He earlier directed a short film, *Big Guy*, and as an actor has collaborated with such directors as Ava DuVernay (*Selma*), Steven Spielberg (*Lincoln*) and Lee Daniels (*The Butler*).



Photo by Karen Ballant/courtesy of RLJE Films

SHOOT: Have you long harbored directorial aspirations?

Oyelowo: I have long had aspirations of directing. Having watched really great directors, I was and am very aware that it is nothing to be taken on lightly. There are so many facets to it. You need a real command of the technical side for how every element of making a movie needs to intersect and overlap in a way. You can have a real sense of storytelling as an actor but there is something unique about bringing actors, cinematography, tone, costume and so much together. It's not just about the arc of the story but developing the individual characters. So much has to go relatively well for a film to make sense.

My career as an actor has been a film school for me.

SHOOT: You've worked with master

filmmakers. What lessons have you learned from them?

Oyelowo: They are all very gifted at picking great collaborators. And they don't micromanage them. They allow them to do their work and to flourish in their work. Ava DuVernay and Steven Spielberg are great examples of that.

I also received a great piece of advice to make sure that your film is tonally even. You decide on the tone of your movie and apply it to every scene. *Selma* is a film about overcoming obstacles and that was applied throughout.

SHOOT: That quality is evident in *The Water Man*. It's an adventure that becomes more moving because it has a sense of purpose as the characters are also looking to find or preserve family. I felt a real sense of family throughout.



Photo by Karen Ballant/courtesy of RLJE Films

"Kindness, love, compassion and appreciation are the primary qualities you need to go in with when directing."

Oyelowo: I strive for work that speaks to you as a human being, that takes you on a journey, that pulls you out of the living room, gives you something to think about. There are great filmmakers who are a bit too present in their work. I much prefer to watch and direct a movie that takes the audience on a journey without showing off my skill or prowess or technical ability as a director.

SHOOT: You mentioned picking the right collaborators. Why did you gravitate to DP Matthew J. Lloyd and editor Blu Murray for your feature directorial debut.

Oyelowo: I wanted the film to feel real, to have a scope but to be intimate at the same time. Matt had shot on an intimate scale but he was also coming off of *Spider-Man (Spider-Man: Far From Home)* before we worked together. I knew that visual effects would be a component of our film. Matt understands blending effects and cinematography but he can still make intimate scenes within a small house work. I wanted to utilize the forest in a way that wasn't dependent on effects. I wanted the setting to feel magical and majestic. I saw that in Matt's work.

Matt and I had another connection-

-which we also shared with Blu Murray. We all gravitated towards *The Water Man*. We had lost our mothers at different points of our lives. There was something about the narrative, the journey of Gunner trying to save his mother, that spoke deeply to Matt, Blu and me. This is a story that speaks to the child in me and the father in me. Those guys also had that special connection to the story.

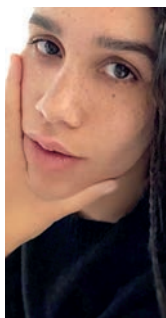
SHOOT: What's your biggest takeaway from your experience on *The Water Man*?

Oyelowo: Kindness, love, compassion and appreciation are the primary qualities you need to go in with when directing. It's amazing what you can get out of your crew if you approach them with kindness, love, compassion and collaboration. It's amazing how well a difficult day can be overcome with these elements. Making a movie is like organizing 25 weddings and having them all happen over the course of 25 days. Every single day you're wrangling 100 to 150 people and directing them to the same goal. The way to get through it is to be a compassionate, humble person. I've seen that in other directors and it's something I try to emulate and will take into any film I direct.

Women Make Mark At DGA Awards, Oscars

Breakthroughs in feature films highlight both competitions; Guild sees historic advances in commercials

By Robert Goldrich



From top left, clockwise: A scene from *Beats by Dr. Dre's "You Love Me"*; director Melina Matsoukas; director Nisha Ganatra; Carey Mulligan (l-r) writer-director Emerald Fennell and Laverne Cox on the set of *Promising Young Woman*; Frances McDormand (l) and Chloe Zhao on location for *Nomadland*; a scene from *Bodyform/Libresse's "#wombstories"*; *Time* director Garrett Bradley.

While a major spotlight has been cast, and deservedly so, on the showing of female feature directors--Chloe Zhao for *Nomadland* (Searchlight Pictures) and Emerald Fennell for *Promising Young Woman* (Focus Features)--in both Oscar and DGA Award nominations this season, hovering a bit under the radar are the accomplishments of women helmers in the commercialmaking arena. They too have made Guild history.

Nisha Ganatra of Chelsea Pictures and Melina Matsoukas of PRETTYBIRD, two women of color, are among the nominees for the DGA Award recognizing Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Commercials for 2020. This marks the first time that two solo female directors broke through with nominations in the spotmaking category in the same year.

The rest of this year's field of DGA spot nominees consists of directors Steve Aysen of MJZ; Niclas Larsson, also of MJZ; and Taika Waititi of Hungry Man.

Ganatra earned her first career DGA nomination on the strength of Body-

form/Libresse's "#wombstories" for AMV BBDO. She successfully diversified into the ad arena via Chelsea after directing *Late Night*, a feature which scored with critics and commercially at the 2019 Sundance Film Festival. *Late Night* was bought by Amazon for \$13 million, which was the highest price paid at the fest for a film by a female director. Ganatra is also an Outstanding Comedy Series Emmy nominee as a producer on *Transparent*.

Matsoukas' Guild nod came for Beats by Dr. Dre's "You Love Me" from agency Translation. This is the third career DGA Award nomination for Matsoukas but first for a commercial. Last year she was nominated for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in First-Time Feature Film for *Queen & Slim*. Back in 2018, Matsoukas garnered her very first Guild nom, for the "Thanksgiving" episode of the TV comedy series *Master of None*.

Matsoukas and Ganatra join a select field of women directors to gain Guild recognition in the commercials category--the first being Amy Hill as half of the

directorial duo Reiss/Hill in 1999; followed by Katrina Mercadante as half of the team known as The Mercadantes in 2015. That same year, Lauren Greenfield also received a nomination, making her the first individual female helmer to earn that distinction in the commercials competition. Greenfield, however, was no stranger to the nominees' circle, having broken through for the feature documentary *The Queen of Versailles* back in 2013.

In 2018, Alma Har'el became the second solo woman director to be nominated for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Commercials since this category was established in 1980.

Har'el then made a major breakthrough last year when she won the DGA Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in First-Time Feature Film for *Honey Boy*.

Food for thought

Fittingly, the entries garnering DGA nominations for Matsoukas and Ganatra break through barriers, and serve as cata-

HISTORIC DGA/OSCAR NOMINEES

lysts for thought—one delving into Black culture and the hypocrisy as to how it's viewed by many in White America; the other bringing out into the open the taboos that hold women back.

The latter, “#wombstories” helmed by Ganatra, confronts a damaging etiquette that women live with every day, dictating what they should—and shouldn't—feel about their bodies. With #wombstories, the brands Bodyform and Libresse push back against the single, simplistic narrative girls are taught from a young age: start your period in adolescence, repeat with “a bit” of pain, want a baby, get pregnant, have more periods, stop periods, fade into the menopausal background.

The reality is, of course, much messier, but society doesn't encourage women to talk openly about the highs and lows of their intimate health, especially. A research study of women and men by Bodyform and Libresse found that two-thirds

of women who experienced miscarriage, endometriosis, fertility issues and menopause said that being open with family and friends helped them cope.

With “#wombstories,” Bodyform and Libresse want to encourage an open culture where everyone can express what they go through without fearing they won't be properly heard or believed and without feeling shame that they are somehow less than what they were taught to be. The pleasure, the pain, the love, the hate. It's never simple but it all needs to be heard. Because keeping it in or leaving it unheard comes at an emotional and physical cost both at an individual and collective level.

For “#wombstories” Bodyform and Libresse worked with Ganatra, a predominantly female crew and an all-women team of animators and illustrators.

From the burning down apartment of a peri-menopausal woman, a monster rip-

ping at an endometriosis sufferer's uterus, a woman's “flood gate” moment during her period and an unexpected sneeze, to the woman who has chosen not to have children and the often-turbulent journey of trying to conceive—these select womb stories chronicle the sometimes beautiful, sometimes brutal human side of the biology and physiology experienced every day. And while only a handful of experiences are shown, they represent the billions of complex experiences out there—from hysterectomies to postpartum trauma, artificial menopause, being a trans-man, and so on.

Meanwhile Matsoukas powerful short for Apple's Beats by Dre honors Black culture, includes Black stars in sports and entertainment, and shows us how while mainstream society embraces Black culture and celebs, it fails to embrace Black individuals. The short opens with the familiar “You love me, you love me not”

refrain, underscoring the mixed message that is a part of systemic racism.

“You love Black culture. But do you love me?” musical artist Tobe Nwigwe narrates. “You love how I sound: My voice, these beats, this flow. Not me though, right?”

He continues, “You love how I look: My hair, this skin. But me? Nah. We don't get to exist. We're forced to survive. We still fight. We still play while the world burns, on fields that ain't even level.”

Matsoukas' piece also ultimately asks us to look inside ourselves so that this perennial injustice can finally be addressed and changed.

Feature marquee brightens

As for the feature film realm, Zhao last month received four Oscar nominations for *Nomadland*—Best Picture as a producer, Best Director, Editor and for Adapted

Continued on page 14

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Chloe Zhao Breaks New Industry Awards Show Ground

Continued from page 13

Screenplay. That's an all-time record high for a woman in a record year for women. Seventy women received 76 Academy Award nominations this year, led by Zhao whose four nods tops Sofia Coppola and Fran Walsh who each got three in 2003. Zhao, who is also the first woman of color to be nominated for Best Director, is joined by *Promising Young Woman* director Fennell in the category, making it the first time two women have been nominated for that marquee honor. Furthermore Fennell tied Coppola and Walsh by scoring three Academy Award nominations for *Promising Young Woman*—the others as a producer for Best Motion Picture, and for Best Original Screenplay.

Akin to the Oscars, the DGA Awards this year saw two women—Zhao and Fennell—nominated for the Guild's top honor in the same year. Fennell and Zhao become the ninth and tenth women ever to be nominated in the prestigious DGA feature category. Zhao is the first woman of color to become a feature nominee.

Additionally, two women earned DGA Award nominations for Outstanding Directorial Achievement of a First-Time Feature Film Director—Radha Blank for *The Forty-Year-Old Version*, and Regina King for *One Night in Miami...* Blank and King bring the total number of women directors nominated in this category to seven since this first-timer recognition was launched by the Guild in 2016 (for work done in 2015).

In a prior installment of its The Road To Oscar Series, *SHOOT* connected with both Zhao and Fennell. Zhao reflected on *Nomadland* which is based on Jessica

Bruder's book "Nomadland: Surviving America in the 21st Century." The film introduces us to Fern (portrayed by two-time Oscar winner Frances McDormand), an independent spirit who after the economic collapse of a small company town in Nevada packs her van and sets off on the road as a modern-day nomad, encountering unique places in rural America and even more unique varied characters including many played by real people (a staple of Zhao's filmmaking up to this point), the key exception being actor David Strathairn who emerges as a friend and a subdued potential love interest.

We meet older transient Americans living on the road in vans and recreational vehicles, taking on seasonal work where they can find it such as an Amazon processing plant where Fern has a regular Xmas-time gig. We experience both a sense of community and loneliness on the road, a dichotomy that is even present in Fern's van which carries feelings of isolation yet at the same time reflects an appreciation of a place to call home. There's a beauty and simplicity to the nomad existence, in some respects showing that there's a shared humanity when you strip life down to surviving with limited resources while trying to connect with and help others—no matter how momentary or transitory those relationships may turn out to be. Some folks carry the weight of grief and loss yet there's a resilience that unites them all. There are many quiet, understated moments yet cumulatively they become substantive, underscoring Zhao's feeling that while politics and media portray us as divided, the reality is that people naturally have and can embrace "a spirit

of co-existence." Getting the chance to delve into this helped satiate Zhao's long-standing desire to as she says, "make a road movie," an opportunity made richer by getting to work with McDormand "to create a character like Fern" who in turn was able to mesh, relate to and be at one with real-life nomads, bringing their lives to the fore.

All this, continued Zhao, was done to be true to Bruder's book. "Jessica did an incredible job documenting and chronicling these lives," assessed Zhao who too wanted to convey the ups and downs of a nomad existence that still, despite its share of melancholy, has its own life-affirming roots, with added inspiration coming from the desolate, beautiful plains, mountains and rivers of the Western U.S. *Nomadland* takes us to different worlds—these natural backdrops as well as inside people's heads and hearts, most notably Fern's inner self.

Filed over four months on location in Arizona, Nevada, California, Nebraska and South Dakota, *Nomadland* takes us into communities where Fern's encounters show how we can make brief friendships that last within us for a lifetime.

Zhao said that among the prime challenges *Nomadland* posed to her as a filmmaker was creating the character of Fern, enabling McDormand to settle into "this real world with real people" in such a way that "we can naturally incorporate these interesting characters we run across without feeling forced."

Zhao observed that making *Nomadland* gave her a deeper appreciation of what people on the road go through on a daily basis. "We were filming for just four months but we find ourselves going to a place where you connect with people, then pack up and leave, and probably are never going to see them again. I was emotionally exhausted. The natural process of making the film helped us to heal as well. You may feel rootlessness but you also feel you're part of something that never ends."

Nomadland earned a total of six Oscar nominations, the other two being for Leading Actress (McDormand) and Cinematography (Joshua James Richards)

Emerald Fennell

In our Road To Oscar Series, Fennell reflected on *Promising Young Woman*,

her feature directorial debut. In the film, Carey Mulligan stars as Cassie, a medical school dropout whose once promising prospects have fallen off a cliff. She's working at a coffee house and spends her free time either moping about or pretending to be blind drunk at nightclubs where she ultimately shames guys who try to take advantage of her seemingly impaired state. It's an inexplicably strange double-life until we become privy to what made her quit med school, a despicable trauma suffered by her dear friend and fellow student, Nina, years ago. This genre-busting film plays at times like a dark comedy, a comic tragedy, a thriller, a psychological tale that perfectly dovetails with the #MeToo era, all the above and more.

Fennell—who first established herself as an actress spanning television and features, and a writer (on such TV series as *The Drifters* and writer/producer on *Killing Eve*) before moving into the directorial ranks—explained simply, "I wanted to write a revenge movie, a classic revenge movie with a real person at the center of it." She added that the vibe she wanted for it was to be as "strange and unlikely as that journey would feel if you were actually in it."

Promising Young Woman made a big impact at last year's Sundance fest. And while its release was also delayed during the pandemic, *Promising Young Woman* eventually found an audience. The stellar cast also includes Bo Burnham as Ryan, Cassie's love interest, Alison Brie as a former school friend, Connie Britton as a med school dean, Laverne Cox as Cassie's coffee house boss, and Alfred Molina as a deeply remorseful attorney.

At first, becoming a director seemed what Fennell described as "an enigmatic thing" but over time she began to develop an appetite for it. "I've written forever," she said, noting that she wanted the chance to "really make something the way you want to make it, to direct your own material."

Fennell said she was fortunate to be able to work with "incredible directors" in film and TV. She cited her experience acting on a BBC series, *Call the Midwife*, as providing an invaluable education, being able to observe different directors and DPs coming in for episodes and being able to do "a side-by-side comparison of what works, what doesn't, what is time-saving,



Chloe Zhao on location for *Nomadland*

Photo courtesy of Searchlight Pictures

Emerald Fennell, Garrett Bradley Give Voice To Women

what isn't, what corners you can cut and the ones you really can't."

This education served Fennell in good stead as she became "kind of obsessive about the details while also knowing

with. If your relationship with a DP isn't easy, it slows everything down. Ben is a combination of being talented and great fun to be around. He could help me get the kind of performances I wanted and

my car in the parking lot to go film on the first day, I just loved it. I loved being part of a team. I'm proud and grateful of how everyone worked so hard. I immediately want to do it all over again."

Promising Young Woman is not Fennell's first project to score at Sundance. Back in 2019, she directed *Careful How You Go* which was in the running for the Short Film Grand Jury Prize.

Fennell also has two Emmy nominations to her credit, one for drama series writing, the other for Outstanding Drama Series—both for *Killing Eve* in 2019.

Promising Young Woman received five Academy Award nominations. Besides the three earned by Fennell, the others were for Leading Actress (Mulligan) and Film Editing (Thoraval).

Time

Another woman filmmaker is also in contention to make history. Garrett Bradley—on the strength of *Time* (Amazon Studios)—could become the first Black woman to win the Oscar for Best Documentary Feature. Last year at the Sundance Film Festival, Bradley broke new ground by winning the Directing Award in the U.S. documentary competition for *Time*, becoming the first Black woman to earn that distinction.

Time tells the story of Sibil "Fox Rich" Richardson whose husband Rob was imprisoned for what turned out to be 21 years. *Time* shows us the impact of Rob's incarceration on her and their six children. *Time* does more than chronicle the injustice of a far too harsh prison sentence on Rob and its profound effect on loved

ones. The film serves as an almost lyrical ode blending intimate original footage captured by Bradley with archival family video taken by Fox of her kids at various stages of their lives.

We see in this blend of home movies and Bradley's footage a mom struggling to raise a family, turning her life around to become a successful professional. Yet all the while audiences feel both her enduring love for Rob and the ongoing ache she and the kids feel due to his imprisonment. He is an absent husband and father but paradoxically for Fox he is seemingly always present—in her heart and mind as she strives to have him set free one day.

Rob and Fox were high school sweethearts who married and had dreams. They planned to start a hip hop clothing store but the business fell through. Desperate, they attempted to hold up a credit union office, a caper that went south. Though no money was stolen and no one was hurt, Fox, the getaway driver, and Rob got prison sentences. At the time, Fox was three months pregnant with twins. Rob was sentenced to 60 years.

Time shows the kids at various ages, not always advancing chronologically but rather taking us in and out of their lives at different junctures to create a tapestry that weaves us intimately into a family that unites and achieves yet feels the pain of a dad and spouse who's away.

Like directors Ganatra and Matsoukas, Bradley is a filmmaker looking to extend her creative reach into the ad discipline. Bradley is on the roster of production house m s s n g p e c e s for commercials and branded content.



Courtesy of Focus Features

Carey Mulligan in a scene from *Promising Young Woman*

you've got to make your days."

She also knew first-hand the importance of selecting the right collaborators, among the prime examples on *Promising Young Woman* being cinematographer Benjamin Kraun, editor Frederic Thoraval and production designer Michael Perry. Fennell had worked, for instance, with Kraun about a year earlier on a commercial project, liked him and was drawn in particular to his work on *Beat*, for which he won a British Independent Film Award in 2019 for Best Cinematography. "He made that movie look spectacular," assessed Fennell, who added, "I was a first-time film director in Los Angeles shooting my baby. I knew my DP was important, someone I could have an easy shorthand

he could make the set itself a fun place to work, which is needed."

Kraun was essential in making *Promising Young Woman* work within the confines of 23 shoot days. Also integral in that regard was producer Fiona Walsh Heinz who did an "amazing" job according to Fennell, noting, "We had no fat. We were up against it but she helped that still feel like a fun place to be in." While the preparation had to be buttoned down, Fennell said they didn't lose the rush of feeling "like you're slightly flying by the seat of your pants."

As for her biggest takeaway from *Promising Young Woman*, Fennell shared, "It sounds so cheesy but I just loved directing in a way that really surprised me. Locking

Congratulations Nisha Ganatra
DGA Nominee
Outstanding Directorial Achievement: Libresse #wombstories

CHELSEA.

From Contenders To Nominees

A look back at our latest round of Road To Oscar Series feature stories

A SHOOT Staff Report

As in years past, a healthy percentage of those *SHOOT* interviewed relatively early on for its The Road To Oscar Series of feature stories--as well as our Cinematographers & Cameras Series--went on to land nominations. For example, three of the five Best Director nominees shared their insights well before last month's announcement of Academy Award nominations--as did four of the five DPs in the running for Best Cinematography, and three of the five nominees who ended up making the cut for the Best Film Editing honor.

SHOOT looks back on the feedback we received from several of those and other artisans. Elsewhere in this print issue--in our coverage centered on the historic accomplishments of women directors this awards season--*SHOOT* revisited our Road interviews with director nominees Chloe Zhao for *Nomadland* (Searchlight Pictures) and Emerald Fennell for *Promising Young Woman* (Focus Features). Zhao set a record for most Oscar nods for a woman in a single year: She scored four nominations, the others being for Best Editing, Adapted Screenplay and as a producer for Best Picture. Meanwhile Fennell garnered three nods, the other two being for Original Screenplay, and Best Picture as a producer.

The remaining director whom *SHOOT* connected with some months back was Lee Isaac Chung who has since earned his first career Oscar nominations--for Best Director and Original Screenplay on the strength of *Minari* (A24). Chung reflected on *Minari* in talking with *SHOOT*. An American production with dialogue mostly in Korean, *Minari* is deeply personal for Chung

in that the story is inspired by memories of his childhood. We are introduced to a Korean-American family that moves to rural Arkansas, a father's dream to start a small farm there, the struggle of immigrants in a new land strange to them, and a boy's touching, tender and charmingly comic relationship with his loving, at times foul-mouthed grandmother who moves in to help. While not a factual representation of his own experiences, Chung's story was crafted to reflect the spirit of those experiences, taking

us on a unique empathetic journey of a family in search of its own American Dream.

Chung observed that another "family" key to the film consisted of the production and post artists who came together with a sense of purpose. Like the film's protagonists, each member of this production family contributed, he said, in heroic fashion within a limited budget and time. The film was produced by Plan B, the company in which Brad Pitt is a partner/EP. Chung credited Plan B producer Christina Oh with helping to assemble the production family behind *Minari*. "I had been doing more arthouse

films and was looking to Christina to help navigate my pulling off this film," shared Chung. Oh brought in artisans for Chung to consider and whom he wound up embracing, including cinematographer Lachlan Milne, editor Harry Yoon, composer Emile Mosseri and production designer Yong Ok Lee. Mosseri, for instance, had worked with Oh on Plan B's acclaimed *The Last Black Man in San Francisco*.

Chung said he struck up an instant rapport with Milne, Mos-

From top left, clockwise: Lee Isaac Chung directs Will Patton (center) and Steven Yeun on the set of *Minari*; Phedon Papamichael, ASC, GSC, cinematographer on *The Trial of the Chicago 7*; Mank DP Erik Messerschmidt, ASC; *Nomad DP* Joshua James Ricards



ROAD TO OSCAR RECAP

seri, Lee and Yoon, feeling a creative kinship to each. In retrospect, he observed that the feeling of family among them helped them all better tell the story of the immigrant family in the film. For example, Chung said of editor Yoon, “I could tell from our first meeting how much of the script he had already digested and the details he understood. I had a trust in him to tell me about things that weren’t working, what was working. When I came back from the shoot, a week later he told me he was going to show me a cut of the film. ‘You will probably hate it. No director ever likes it,’ he said. Once I saw it, I saw that Harry’s instincts for the story and how to maneuver certain problem moments I had on set were so sophisticated. I could see we had a film there. I felt no sadness or depression. I had a good sleep after that. We had lots of conversations and had a good time working together. We had a good way of really talking things through and figuring out the story together. There is no movie without him.”

Minari received six Oscar nominations—the others being for Best Picture, Original Score, Leading Actor (Steven Yeun) and Supporting Actress (Yuh-Jung Yoon).

Lensing

Phedon Papamichael, ASC, GSC picked up his second career Best Cinematography nomination for *The Trial of the Chicago 7* (Netflix), written and directed by Aaron Sorkin.

Papamichael enjoyed collaborating with Sorkin whom he described as being very much about “language, the words on

the page, pacing, the rhythm of the work” and the acting craft, giving the cinematographer the opportunity to capture the visuals in cadence with the dialogue and performances. Papamichael was drawn to Sorkin’s script. “It was a page turner with overlapping dialogue. The DP’s challenge was to “break the monotony” of a drama in which more than 60 percent of the movie takes place in a courtroom. Papamichael in part was able to successfully do this by visually reflecting the tone and tenor of each character and scene. For example in terms of lighting there is “almost an angelic glowing” as Hayden reads out the names of soldiers killed in Vietnam.

The Trial of the Chicago 7 tallied six nominations—the balance being for Best Picture, Original Screenplay, Supporting Actor (Sacha Baron Cohen), Original Song (“Hear My Voice”) and Film Editing.

Meanwhile Erik Messerschmidt, ASC, garnered his first Best Cinematography Oscar nomination for his first narrative feature, director David Fincher’s *Mank* (Netflix). The period piece was shot digitally in black and white, which prompted contradictory feelings in Messerschmidt. “I was romanced and seduced by the idea of shooting black and white, and at the same time intimidated by that prospect,” he said, explaining that the potential pitfall was that becoming so enamored in black-and-white noir rapture could distract from the story. He didn’t want to fall into the trap of the movie becoming what he described as “a parody of black-and-white cinema.” Thus he had to walk a fine line, being stylistically aware of what

black and white could bring to the narrative while not undermining that narrative by deploying a photographic approach too preoccupied with black and white artistry.

Initially part of Messerschmidt was enthused over the chance to delve into noir lighting. But he realized that the movie was “much more varied than that. It’s not a noir film. It would not have been appropriate to take that approach in totality.”

Relative to what he walks away with first and foremost from his experience on *Mank*, Messerschmidt offered, “*Mank* arguably has one of the most talented casts I’ve had the opportunity to work with. To participate in a storytelling process with them and David was a dream for me. It gave me a new perspective on the craft of acting and how David brings that out by working in a specific and nuanced way.”

Mank led the overall Oscar tally this year with 10 nominations—Best Picture, Director, Leading Actor (Gary Oldman), Supporting Actress (Amanda Seyfried), Costume Design (Trish Summerville), Original Score (Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross), Sound (Ren Klyce, et al), Production Design (production designer Donald Graham Burt, set decorator Jan Pascale) and Make-up & Hairstyling.

Another Road To Oscar contender turned nominee is cinematographer Dariusz Wolski, ASC who too scored his first Oscar nomination, which came for *News of the World* (Universal Pictures). The film marked the first collaboration between him and director Paul Greengrass. It also was the first Western for both.

Wolski was drawn to working with

Greengrass, seeing a potential mesh of styles and orientations that appealed to him creatively. Wolski observed that he is known for working with such directors as Ridley Scott (*The Martian*, *All The Money in the World*, *Prometheus*, *Exodus: Gods and Kings*, *The Counselor*, *Alien: Covenant*), Gore Verbinski (*The Mexican*, *Pirates of the Caribbean: The Curse of the Black Pearl*), and the late, great Tony Scott (*The Fan*, *Crimson Tide* which earned Wolski an ASC Award nomination)—all associated with a stylized, commercial and grand approach to cinema.

Greengrass by contrast comes from a documentary approach to filmmaking. Wolski said he was intrigued by the prospect of combining those distinctly different worlds in *News of the World*. As for how Greengrass’ world affected him, Wolski observed, “Maybe I quieted down the camera a little more, was less hectic.”

The fourth DP *SHOOT* connected with “back in the day” before he too, like Messerschmidt and Wolski, became a first-time Oscar nominee was Joshua James Richards who reflected a bit on *Nomadland*.

Richards found it hard to take credit for a film like *Nomadland* which is so unconventional, with the creative orientation being to lens “the world as we kind of find it; heightened naturalism it isn’t.” He said that among the main challenges posed to him by *Nomadland* was following actress Frances McDormand (who portrays Fern) “in this real world with real people who truly live this life—and having her and them come together so that it feels com-

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Cutting Sound of Metal

Continued from page 17
pletely seamless.

These real people, including the elderly and homeless, are overlooked by society. Richards' camera explores their lives and brings them to the fore but in a way that's not purely observational. It also feels poetic in a sense as Richards related, "We get in their shoes and skins."

Richards explained that when he and Zhao enter a world or community of people, they don't do so as filmmakers. "We come in as people first and foremost," he stressed. "The filmmaking approach stems from that. It's more humanistic. We don't want to trample these people's lives. We want the viewers to feel that they are having an experience with these people and that a connection has been made."

The DP, who also served as production designer on the film, continued, "Chloé makes her films based on the art of listening. Too often filmmakers come in with something to say. Her work instead creates empathy." Furthermore, related Richards, Zhao is open to discovering what the film is "as we go along."

Nomadland received six Oscar nominations, the others being the four for Zhao and Best Leading Actress for McDormand.

Film editing

Our Road To Oscar coverage spanned three editors who wound up Academy Award nominees--Zhao; Alan Baumgarten, ACE for *The Trial of the Chicago 7*; and Mikkel E.G. Nielsen for *Sound of Metal* (Amazon Studios).

Sound of Metal totaled six Oscar nominations, the other five being Best Picture, Original Screenplay (director Darius Marder, Abraham Marder, Derek Cianfrance), Leading Actor (Riz Ahmed), Supporting Actor (Paul Raci) and Sound (Nicolas Becker et al).

Nielsen found himself flying back and forth between the picture cut in Denmark (with director Darius Marder) and the sound design in France (with Becker) to ensure that sound and picture were in sync to create the immersive experience they were striving to attain.

Sound of Metal features a tour de force performance by Ahmed as Ruben, a heavy metal drummer who loses his hearing. Rather than focus solely on the character's isolation as a result, director Marder also

shows the support and belonging that can be found in the deaf community. During the course of the film, Ahmed's character loses his identity, then finds a new one only to struggle with trying to regain his original lifestyle before experiencing a defining self-realization.

Though director/co-writer Marder tells this story from his perspective as a member of the hearing world, he has family experience in deafness. His grandmother was late-deafened, meaning she grew up hearing, then became deaf as an adult. She was a cinephile who lost film as a result but fought for open captioning. Marder described *Sound of Metal* as "a film about identity" and "what that means on many levels," particularly "what it means when those identities are challenged" and how one responds--specifically the character of Ruben who loses his hearing and along with it music, his lover (Lou, portrayed by Olivia Cooke) and life on the road.

Ruben, a former drug addict who's been sober for several years, goes to a community house for the deaf, learns sign language and over time becomes part of the deaf community. Marder views *Sound of Metal* as not necessarily "a representation of deaf culture" but rather for the hearing world "an invitation to deaf culture," which if accepted helps viewers to better see our shared humanity while dispelling misnomers about--and removing stigmas from--being deaf.

Nielsen had to make sure not just faces but bodies were visible to accommodate sign language and lip reading, which became integral to many of the acting performances. Nielsen found himself more aware of sound and silence, having attended a "sound camp" that Becker devised for him and Marder. The camp was designed to help the filmmakers explore the nature of sound and deafness subjectively, gaining a first-hand feel for Ruben's sonic perspective. "You have method acting. This was method editing," quipped Nielsen. "We got to experience loss of sound for ourselves."

Caviar, a production company known for its long-form (features, TV) and short-form endeavors (commercialmaking, branded content, music videos), produced *Sound of Metal*. Darius Marder is on Caviar's commercial directors' roster. Furthermore, Zhao is also on that Caviar roster.

JOANN, WHERE EAGLES DARE SPRING AHEAD

JOANN, a mainstay in the sewing, arts and crafts retail stores category, is celebrating the spring season with a new docu-style webisode starring actress Phyllis Smith. Titled *Ring in Spring with Phyllis*, the scripted film follows Phyllis as she humorously attempts to pull off a makeshift wedding for the couple next door.



The episode features notable DIY design expert Rebecca Propes who helps bring Phyllis' wedding planning aspirations to life so that her neighbors don't have to get married in a courthouse. Because, according to Phyllis, "that's disgusting" (she thought they said outhouse).

Created in partnership with creative agency Where Eagles Dare, the episode will live on the JOANN site and YouTube, with a corresponding video tutorial that provides step-by-step instructions for each craft. In this case, Propes will show how to create a paper flower bouquet.

THE ONE CLUB GETS COLORFUL FOR BIPOC CREATIVES

The One Club for Creativity and Russell's Reserve have been brought together by Rich Tu, VP of MTV Digital Design, to launch COLORFUL: A Prelude to Young Guns 19, a new global grant program to help young BIPOC creatives advance their careers.

There is no fee to apply, and the grant is open globally to all BIPOC creatives who qualify for the club's prestigious Young Guns competition (age 30 years and under with at least two years of professional creative experience, and never having won Young Guns in the past).

Candidates must submit links to six projects in their portfolio, as well as a short essay and a 60-second video (phone or webcam acceptable) to introduce themselves and describe their dream project. Deadline for application is April 12. A BIPOC jury of past Young Guns winners will review submissions and select one gifted entrant to receive a no-strings attached \$3,000 grant towards a professional dream project of their choosing, as well as free entry into the Young Guns 19 competition later this spring. In addition, the first 10 qualifying candidates to enter will also receive free entry into YG19.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE....

Miami-headquartered alma, a modern culture marketing agency, has promoted Michelle Headley, Angela Battistini, Leo Peet and Angela Rodriguez within its executive leadership team. Most recently, the agency successfully petitioned the induction of Tom "The Iceman" Flores into the Pro Football Hall of Fame through its campaign with Coors Light; and collaborated with Latin Grammy Award-winning artist J Balvin for an exclusive music video, titled "Dorado" for McDonald's. Headley has been promoted to EVP of operations, continuing her role in overseeing the agency's day-to-day operations in several departments, including production, human resources, and project management. She has led the development of alma Studio, the agency's in-house editorial and post unit. Battistini has been promoted to EVP of account management. Rodriguez has been promoted to SVP of strategic insights. She will also continue to oversee the work done by alma's Culture Lab, an innovation think tank in cultural curation, consulting and research. Peet has been promoted to SVP of finance, where he will continue to oversee the company's financials. Peet has been an alma "soulmate" for the past 15 years, with previous stints at Leo Burnett WW as regional finance director and Contacto Marketing and Communications as CFO....



Michelle Headley

TV AWARDS SEASON PREVIEW



The Undoing



Ted Lasso



Last Week Tonight with John Oliver



Lucifer

A Glimpse Of Emmys To Come?

SHOOT connects with recent DGA and ASC Award nominees across TV categories

By Robert Goldrich

Whether or not the DGA and ASC Awards are a preview of Emmy nominations to come is a matter of conjecture. Whatever your inclination, there's no denying that those recently named nominees for Guild and ASC honors across television categories are worth looking into relative to their talent and the work for which they are being recognized.

SHOOT does just that as a precursor to our Emmy season preview on May 7. This will be followed starting May 14 with *SHOOT*'s weekly 16-part *The Road To Emmy Series* of feature stories. Providing a taste of perhaps what's in store, *SHOOT* now delves into four DGA Award nominees—Susanne Bier, Zach Braff, MJ Delaney and Christopher Werner—and a pair of DPs in the running for ASC honors, Jon Joffin, ASC and Ken Glassing.

Susanne Bier

In a year when women directors have made a major mark on the awards show circuit—with Chloe Zhao for *Nomadland*, and Emerald Fennell for *Promising Young Women* each garnering DGA Award and Best Director Oscar nominations in the same year—Bier, who preceded them in making history, continues to add to her accomplishments.

Bier broke new ground as the first female director whose work won an Academy Award (Best Foreign Language Film for Denmark's *In A Better World* in 2011), Golden Globe (also for *In A Better World* as Best Foreign Language Film), Emmy (Outstanding Directing in a Limited Se-

ries for HBO's *The Night Manager* in 2016) and European Film Award (Best European Director for *In A Better World*, and in 2013 Best European Comedy for *Love Is All You Need*). Just last month Bier added a DGA Award nomination, the first of her career, for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Movies for Television and Limited Series on the strength of *The Undoing* (HBO).

Bier served as an executive producer and directed all six episodes of *The Undoing* (HBO), created by David E. Kelley and starring Nicole Kidman as Grace, whose seemingly perfect life goes off the tracks when her husband, Jonathan (Hugh Grant), disappears about the same time Elene (Matilda De Angelis), a parent at their son's school, is found dead. An adaptation of Jean Hanff Korelitz's novel "You Should Have Known," *The Undoing* became a whodunit that captivated audiences on HBO and HBO Max. The final installment of *The Undoing* was the most-watched night for HBO since the finale of *Big Little Lies* the previous year (also starring Kidman in a collaboration with Kelley). HBO noted that *The Undoing* earned a special distinction—for the first time in network history each episode of a series was seen by more people than the prior one, underscoring how deeply people were drawn into the mystery.

Nielsen also reported that *The Undoing* generated more conversation on social media than any other new scripted TV series in 2020.

Bier was attracted to the story from the outset. "I read the first draft of the first

episode and was drawn into that world, the characters." She also found creatively compelling the opportunity to maintain the truthfulness of the story while nurturing confusion as viewers anticipate what might happen based on their own perceptions. This leads to some internal questioning along the lines of am I seeing the actual person or what I want to see. This dynamic contributed to the must-see allure of *The Undoing*, explaining in large part why, as chronicled by Nielsen, the audience built steadily.

Bier's own *modus operandi* also contributed to that ever growing viewership. In working with the editor, Ben Lester, with whom she's collaborated extensively in the past, including on *The Night Manager*, Bier continued to test cuts with an audience. "It's not the classical studio test, more like friends and family. I use that a lot, in this case for the entire season, all the episodes."

She explained that through this feedback you can see for instance, "at this point they don't quite get it" so you edit accordingly to deepen the viewer connection to the story. "It's a holistic approach to the entire work so that in the editing every element is very much seen as one piece" in the end, related Bier.

The Undoing adds to a body of work for Bier that includes *A Second Chance*, which debuted at the Toronto International Film Festival; *After the Wedding*, which also received a Best Foreign Language Film Oscar nomination; and *Birdbox*, a post-apocalyptic thriller starring Sandra Bullock and which made a major

splash on Netflix.

Additionally Bier is drawn to short-form fare. She is represented in the commercialmaking/branded content arena by production house SMUGGLER.

Zach Braff

Braff is no stranger to the awards show circuit. As an actor, he's scored multiple Golden Globe nominations and an Emmy nod for playing Dr. John Dorian on the sitcom *Scrubs*. As a filmmaker, he wrote, directed and starred in *Garden State* which won Best First Feature at the Film Independent Spirit Awards and Best Directorial Debut from the National Board of Review. Yet it's his latest recognition, a DGA Award nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Comedy Series for the "Biscuits" episode of *Ted Lasso* (Apple TV+), that perhaps most resonates for him.

"I always wanted to be a filmmaker since I was a kid—the second I saw my brother with a camera making his own *James Bond* movie. He told me this was a closed set. I was probably four years old. My directing aspirations went that far back. I went to film school. I PA'd on music videos in Manhattan in the late '90s. I remember being so stressed but passionate about it. To now be acknowledged by my peers, my community, ADs, the directors, everyone in the Guild just feels special. I've been doing this for 20 years or so and I was taken aback by how much it meant to me. It really moved me to be recognized for something I love doing more

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Directing Ted Lasso

Continued from page 19

than anything, making TV comedy.”

Ted Lasso emerged from a series of promos for NBC Sports’ coverage of the Premier League. Jason Sudeikis portrayed Lasso in that campaign, eventually yielding the Apple TV+ series which centers on a small-time football coach, Lasso himself, who’s hired to coach a professional soccer team in England, despite having no experience coaching soccer.

Ted Lasso broke new ground for Braff whose TV series directing had been confined to episodes of shows in which he starred, including *Scrubs* and *Alex, Inc.* *Scrubs* creator Bill Lawrence, who had a creative hand in *Ted Lasso* as well, brought Braff into the Apple TV+ show’s directorial fold. Braff was immediately drawn to the series for the opportunity

mance by an Ensemble in a Comedy Series, with Sudeikis in the running for Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series—Musical or Comedy. *Ted Lasso* also just won two Writers Guild Awards.

While Braff thought *Ted Lasso* had all the elements to be successful—being funny and heartwarming at the same time—he didn’t foresee the extent of its success. “You never know what will click with audiences and this has become a global phenomenon,” said Braff. “I only directed one episode but I’m sure glad I hitched my wagon to Jason and Bill.

Braff also hitched his wagon to RSA Films for commercials and branded content back in 2019, turning out such work as *In The Time It Takes To Get There* for Adobe Creative Cloud out of agency Pereira O’Dell. Braff wrote and directed the short which was lensed by cinematographer Mauro Fiore, ASC, an Oscar winner for *Avatar*.

MJ Delaney

Delaney casts her DGA Award vote every year. This time when the ballot came through, she saw her name on it. That was a thrill in and of itself. “To see myself as an option was something,” she recalled.

Describing herself as “happy just to be on the ballot,” Delaney saw that inclusion go a significant step further as last month she earned her first DGA nomination for “The Hope That Kills You” episode of *Ted Lasso*.

Producer/writer/director/actor Sharon Horgan knows Sudeikis and recommended Delaney to him as a possible director for *Ted Lasso*. Delaney had directed *Dreamland*, a short film written by Horgan, as well as episodic work for the series *Frank of Ireland* which Horgan executive produces. Produced by Amazon Studios and Horgan’s production company Merman, *Frank of Ireland* is scheduled to run on U.K.’s Channel 4. Additionally, the comedy series is slated to debut on Amazon Prime Video in the U.S., Canada and Australia later this month. In 2018 Horgan as EP/writer won the BAFTA for Best Short Form Program for *Morgana Robinson’s Summer*, which was directed by Delaney.

Via Horgan, Delaney got a meeting with Sudeikis, resulting in her directing

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Zach Braff

to again work with Lawrence and to collaborate for the first time with Sudeikis who stars in the title role and created the series with Lawrence, Joe Kelly and Brendan Hunt. Also appealing was the prospect of directing the second episode of *Ted Lasso*, meaning Braff could help lay the foundation for the series in terms of look and tone. In that vein, Braff said that while the pilot was “hilarious,” it didn’t really yet reflect the heart of the show. “Biscuits” introduced that emotional side to the series.

Ted Lasso has become a breakout comedy for Apple TV+ which has already renewed the series for its second and third seasons. Sudeikis won the Golden Globe for his portrayal of Lasso. *Ted Lasso* also earned a Globe nomination in the Best Television Series—Musical or Comedy category. The show has received two SAG Award nods—for Outstanding Perfor-

Better Call Saul’s Last Season Lenses In New Mexico

AMC’s acclaimed series *Better Call Saul*, produced by Sony Pictures Television, began production last month on the sixth and final 13-episode season.

Better Call Saul will employ over 400 New Mexico crew members, over 150 New Mexico principal actors and over 1,500 background talent.

“We are both sad and thrilled to welcome the team of *Better Call Saul* back to New Mexico to film the series’ sixth and final season. *The Breaking Bad*, *Better Call Saul*, and *El Camino* productions have had major positive and lasting impacts for New Mexico in so many ways and will always go down in the history books as the productions that changed the game for the film and television industry in New Mexico,” said Amber Dodson, director, New Mexico Film Office. “Not only did New Mexico’s biggest city, Albuquerque get a major starring role in these productions, but New Mexico’s sky, desert, and locations were showcased unlike anything we have ever seen on the screen before.”



Better Call Saul

Better Call Saul stars Bob Odenkirk, Jonathan Banks, Rhea Seehorn, Patrick Fabian, Michael Mando, Tony Dalton, and Giancarlo Esposito. *Better Call Saul* garnered a 2018 Peabody Award, and, over the course of five seasons, has earned 40 Emmy® Award nominations, four Golden Globe® Award nominations, six Writers Guild Awards, nine Critics’ Choice Awards, five Television Critics Association Awards and four AFI Awards for “TV Programs of the Year,” among many other Guild nominations.

All film and television productions in New Mexico are required to adhere to the state’s operative emergency public health order, associated public health restrictions and COVID Safe Practices. The New Mexico Film Office has released Back2One, a catchall set of principles, general recommendations, and resources for film and television productions operating during COVID-19. Back2One recommendations and other COVID Safe Practices can be found at nmfilm.com

Death Saved My Life—In New Jersey

Haddonfield and other New Jersey towns play a starring role in the thriller *Death Saved My Life*, which recently debuted on Lifetime.

Based on true events, the film stars Meagan Good, and tells the story of a woman who faked her own death in order to trap her husband after he hires a hitman to kill her. The film is written by Barbara Kymlick and produced by Good, Julie Insogna Jarrett and Seth Jarrett.

Death Saved My Life also stars Chiké Okonkwo (*Being Mary Jane*) and Good’s real-life sister, La’Myia Good (*The Wood*). Most of the filming took place at a private residence, Haddonfield Borough Municipal Building, King Court and Zaffron Mediterranean Cuisine in Haddonfield. Additional scenes were filmed at Knight Park in Collingswood, Aloft Hotel in Mount Laurel, and at locations in Oaklyn, Paterson, and Ramsey.

The telefilm tapped into South Jersey’s diverse local cast and crew talent.

“Our film industry is growing and thriving, bringing exciting projects like *Death Saved My Life* to the Garden State,” said Governor Phil Murphy. “Our Film and Digital Media Tax Credit Program ensures we remain a premier film location.”

With the proper protocols and safety measures in place, a steady stream of production activity has continued in the state, according to the New Jersey Motion Picture & Television Commission.

Other projects recently filmed in New Jersey include CBS’s television series’



Death Saved My Life

The Equalizer and *Ways and Means*, and Peacock streaming’s crime drama *Dr. Death*.

Motion picture and television production in New Jersey has increased dramatically since the Garden State Film and Digital Media Jobs Act took effect in 2018. The following year, film and television production generated more than \$400 million for the state economy and created thousands of jobs

Werner Directs HBO's Last Week Tonight With John Oliver

episodes 9 and 10 of *Ted Lasso*, the latter being “The Hope That Kills You.”

Delaney said the biggest takeaway from her experience on *Ted Lasso* comes down to what she believes has contributed to the show’s popularity among viewers and critics. “It shows the virtue of a lack of cynicism,” she observed. “It’s so lovely to see how the atmosphere created in that show has resonated with people during what has been a hard year, a devastating year for many. I think it provided what people wanted and shows how the creators had such great foresight in seeing the value of the story—the spirit of that character which became the spirit of the show was something quite special.”

Delaney added that there’s something to be said for properly placed “sentimentality and earnestness.”

At press time, Delaney was preparing to embark on season 2. Delaney is repped by Moxie Pictures for commercials and branded content in the U.S. The alluded to Merman handles her for ad fare in the U.K. Delaney credits her experience in the short-form arena with positively informing her longer form endeavors.

Christopher Werner

Werner considers himself fortunate. While the pandemic put many careers on hold—and had numerous others scrambling for another way to make a living—he was able to continue working as supervising producer and director on *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO).

On one hand, he was slated to fully “graduate” from directing segments to full episodes of the widely acclaimed series. On the flip side, just when that new career chapter was about to begin in March of 2020, the COVID-19 lockdown took hold. So when the chance finally kicked in for him to take on full-fledged episodic direction, Werner would have to do so mindful first and foremost of the health and safety considerations for all involved. It would no longer be production as usual as Oliver had to move to a makeshift home studio while creative and production colleagues had to collaborate for the most part virtually.

Within those constraints for much of 2020, though, Werner came out the other side with a coveted DGA Award nomination for the second consecutive year. The

latest Guild recognition came last month for the “Trump & Election Results” season finale. Werner had earned his first nod in 2020 for the “SLAAP Suits” episode—this came because he helmed a significant portion of that installment as in-house segment director. That Guild nomination was shared with director Paul Pennolino; that episode also garnered an Emmy nod for variety series directing.

Reflecting on this past year of COVID, Werner shared that the circumstance made him even more grateful for “working on a show that has something to say.” Furthermore as the pandemic stretched into last summer, “I had something to keep me going. Too many people in my industry and others were feeling detrimental effects financially and from a mental health perspective. I was thankful to be able to continue to do what I love and to do it in a way that hopefully gave people an escape, a distraction from what was going on.”

Werner also fully values the distraction he was given. “I had something to do the majority of the day. On days and weeks I had off, I missed that distraction. It was a weird time to take over episodic directing yet it was great to have so much to think about and make sure we got it right. I had to stay focused.”

This mix of being focused and happily distracted amounted to “a real gift” for Werner who helmed a season finale which was perhaps the show’s most ambitious and challenging logistically from a production standpoint, the challenges including his being tasked with providing catharsis via pyrotechnics.

During the episode, Oliver reflected on 2020, relating, “This year ruined lives, jobs, concerts, and sanity. It also brought a new wave of wrenching videos of police brutality that brought on a national reckoning with race and a ferocious and depressing backlash.”

Oliver noted that “what happens next is up to all of us. It’s going to depend on how willing we are to fight, how well we learn from what’s happened, and how much we are able to care about each other. So I don’t know what happens next, but I do know what happens now.”

Safely distanced from a giant 2020 sign, Oliver affirmed, “Let tomorrow be about solutions. Today is about vengeance. Fuck

you, 2020. Get fucked.” With that, he activated a detonator and the sign exploded in a blaze of strangely inspiring glory.

Yet while it helped land him a pair of DGA Award nominations, Werner’s sense of timing, comedic and otherwise, is not infallible. Shortly before the pandemic lockdown materialized, Werner not only took on episodic direction but also signed with Moxie Pictures to break into commercials and branded content.



Christopher Werner

Needless to say, there haven’t been many opportunities in the ad arena as of yet for Werner. He’s hopeful, though, that whenever the industry returns to some semblance of normality, he can again pursue short-form filmmaking opportunities. “How Moxie has handled this situation and their communication with me have strengthened my desire to get involved in commercials,” said Werner who noted that Moxie partners Robert Fernandez and Dan Levinson have checked in with him regularly and been very supportive in terms of laying the groundwork for projects in the U.S. and U.K. “My excitement over working with them has not waned one iota.”

Werner is no stranger to short form, having directed a fair amount of commercial parodies for *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. Werner’s work on the show has also afforded him the opportunity to collaborate with high-profile performers such as Bryan Cranston, Michael Keaton and Tom Hanks. In his producer capacity, Werner was part of the ensemble on *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* which won last year’s Emmy for Outstanding Variety Talk Series.

Lenses

If the Freeform series *Motherland: Fort*

Salem and the Netflix show *Lucifer* were under the awards season radar, they aren’t any longer. Both earned ASC Award nominations last month, respectively, for cinematographers Joffin and Glassing.

This marks the fourth career ASC Award nod for Joffin, the latest coming for the “Up Is Down” episode of *Motherland: Fort Salem* in the One-Hour Television Series—Commercial category. He’s now in the running for his second ASC win, having taken the honor in 2019 for an episode of *Beyond*, another Freeform network series.

Meanwhile Glassing’s recent ASC nomination is in the One Hour TV Series—Non-Commercial category for the “It Never Ends Well for the Chicken” episode of *Lucifer*. This is the second career ASC nom for Glassing, the first coming in 2013 for the half-hour series *Ben and Kate*.

Joffin credited Steven A. Adelson with bringing him into the *Motherland: Fort Salem* fold. Adelson—who’s directed several episodes of the series, including the pilot—served as an executive producer and director on *Beyond* for which he collaborated with Joffin. In fact, Adelson directed the *Beyond* episode (“Two Zero One”) that won Joffin the ASC Award a couple of years ago.

“Steven comes from features,” said Joffin. “He was, for example, a Steadicam operator on *Batman Begins* and found his way into directing. We have a really good connection on using the camera to tell a story. It’s also nice to work with someone like that. He wants to bring a feature mentality to the TV screen. He approached me to do the pilot (for *Motherland: Fort Salem*) and I jumped at the chance.”

Joffin added that he was drawn to the series premise, recalling that the script eloquently conveyed “an epic and big idea” that unfolds in the future. We’re taken to an alternate universe in which witches made a deal years back to defend the U.S. with their magic—in exchange for no longer being persecuted.

Joffin said of the storyline, “It’s about women running America. I like the idea. There’s no hocus pocus. It’s all very organic. Steve had big plans for it. He wanted the show to feel very cinematic.”

That goal called for Joffin to maintain a delicate balance so that the story

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ASC Nominee Reflections

Continued from page 21

would at the same time feel both “natural and elevated” visually.

The cinematic “Up Is Down” episode, though, wasn’t directed by Adelson. Rather it was helmed by Rebecca Johnson. As the sixth episode of season one, “Up Is Down,” hit what Joffin called “the sweet spot” of the show’s visual progression. He observed that it was a pivotal episode in the first year process of a series finding itself.

For *Motherland: Fort Salem*, Joffin continued deploying the Sony VENICE digital camera, making it a model he’s been lensing with professionally for the past two-and-a-half years. He used what he described as “very wide” Zeiss lenses in tandem with the lightweight VENICE to do full justice to the series.

Joffin’s most recent ASC nomination has again placed him in the Emmy Awards season conversation. He already has one Emmy nomination to his credit back in 2008—for Outstanding Cinematography for a Miniseries or Movie on the strength of the part I installment of *The Andromeda Strain*.

That very same episode gave Joffin his first career ASC Award nomination in 2009. His second ASC nod came two years later for an episode of *Alice*.

As for Glassing, he felt deep down that the “It Never Ends Well for the Chicken” episode of *Lucifer* could end well for all involved. “As soon as I read the script, I knew it had the potential of being a unique looking episode. It takes place in film noir flashback mode within our Lucifer world.” He added, “It’s not everyday that an episode like this falls into a cinematographer’s lap.”

Glassing’s approach to this black-and-white episode was to pretend as if he were on a 1940s’ film crew making a film noir movie. “We did very little coverage. We had extended long takes. We did a good job of hitting those film noir notes like silhouette shadows cast against buildings. We didn’t use modern lighting or modern movie-making techniques. There was no Steadicam. There was very little camera movement.”

While they didn’t have the luxury of swapping out cameras, Glassing assessed that the Sony VENICE digital model he had been deploying on the series would

be up to the task to tackle black and white with some fine tuning like upping to 2500 ASA which, he explained, “introduces a little bit of grain” quality. He also dumbed down the Summulux-C lenses he usually uses, opting for filters and netting to lend an older antique look.

Lucifer first played for three seasons on Fox. After Fox canceled the urban fantasy show, it found new life as Netflix picked it up for seasons 4, 5 and an upcoming 6. Based on the DC Comics character, *Lucifer* centers on Lucifer Morningstar (portrayed by Tom Ellis), the Devil, who leaves hell for Los Angeles where he runs



Ken Glassing

his own nightclub and becomes a consultant to the L.A. Police Department. “It Never Ends Well for the Chicken” episode is part of season 5.

Glassing began working on season 4 when the show jumped to Netflix at the 11th hour. At that point series DP Christian Sebaldt had moved on to another gig. Sebaldt put Glassing’s name in the hat to succeed him. “Christian opened the door for me,” recalled Glassing who was drawn to the show, having worked on other Jerry Bruckheimer series like *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: Las Vegas*.

“It was up my alley with a eye-popping comic book style, a gorgeous looking show,” said Glassing who also found appealing a narrative revolving around a sarcastic devil and all that such a character entails. “It’s a visually exciting show and we get to match the cinematography to a larger than life personality.”

This in turn made “It Never Ends Well for the Chicken” all the more challenging and attractive, as Glassing got the chance to bring noir sensibilities to a pop-looking comic book series.

Outlier Deploys Pocket Cinema Camera 6K, DaVinci

Independent feature film *Outlier* was shot on the Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 6K and posted in DaVinci Resolve Studio. The film was produced during the COVID-19 pandemic with limited cast and crew.



Outlier

Trapped in an abusive relationship with her boyfriend James (Logan Fleisher), Olivia Davis (Jessica Strayer) is able to flee with the help of a kindly stranger, Thomas (Thomas Cheslek). Soon Olivia’s fear from past traumas begins to extend to Thomas, who claims he only wants to keep Olivia safe. But as she discovers Thomas is hiding a mysterious project from her, Olivia convinces herself she must flee once more, even if she knows she isn’t safe on her own. With no good choices, Olivia must face her fears to escape her past.

Filmmakers Nate Strayer and Isabel Machado-Rodriguez had decided to escape the pandemic in 2020 by relocating back to a family home in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The plan was to quarantine with family, yet as filmmakers they had little patience to wait for the world to open back up before they produced a project. “After a long discussion about first feature films, budgets involved and what it would take for us to make a film sometime in the future,” said Strayer, “we decided ‘why not do it now while we have all this time?’ That night we all sat down as a family and started brainstorming what locations we had access to, and what types of stories we could tell using them.”

The result was the screenplay for *Outlier*, a thriller designed not only around available locations near their Michigan family home, but also limited cast and crew. With Strayer as director and Machado-Rodriguez as cinematographer, the two decided to shoot the project entirely on their Blackmagic Pocket Cinema Camera 6K. “The idea that we could shoot a feature film that looks just as good as the films we love, on a tiny, lightweight, relatively inexpensive camera seemed too good to be true,” said Strayer.

Later, for reshoots, with Machado-Rodriguez unavailable, Strayer brought in long time collaborator and cinematographer Joe Failla to finish out the film. No stranger to the Pocket Cinema Camera 6K, Failla was excited to continue the photography with the camera.

The process of starting the edit in DaVinci Resolve Studio while shooting made the most sense. Mike Hugo edited in DaVinci Resolve Studio. And Ryan McNeal at RKM Studios did the final grade using Resolve Studio.

Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar with Cooke Lenses

DP Toby Oliver, ACS and director Josh Greenbaum selected Cooke Optics Anamorphic/i Standard and Special Flair (SF) prime and zoom lenses to tell the story of best friends Barb and Star who leave their small Midwestern town for the first time to go on vacation in Vista Del Mar, Florida, where they soon find themselves tangled up in adventure, love, and a villain’s evil plot to kill everyone in town. *Barb and Star Go to Vista Del Mar* was written by its two lead actors, Annie Mumolo and Kristen Wiig, who also wrote the 2011 hit comedy *Bridesmaids*.

When it came to selecting a camera and lens combination, Lionsgate decreed that the image quality and resolution be the same as Netflix requirements — 4K. “That decision meant that we couldn’t use a regular ARRI Alexa camera that only goes up to 3424x2202 resolution. So, we had to find a 4K camera. We eventually decided to use Sony’s Venice camera loaded with the latest firmware update, so that we would have the most available features enabled,” said Oliver. “When it came time to selecting the lenses for the project, Josh made it very clear from the beginning that he wanted to shoot in anamorphic 2.39 to capture the vistas in the film.”



Barb and Star

For his kit, Oliver had the Cooke Anamorphic/i primes in 25mm, 32mm, 40mm, 50mm, 65mm MACRO, 75mm, 100mm, 135mm, and 180mm focal lengths for the SF coated lenses. He also had the Anamorphic/i 35-140mm 4x zoom. Oliver said, “What I really like about Cooke lenses is that they are not overly harsh. They give you ways to take the digital edge off the cameras.”

Directing Team Andy Mahr and Ashton Rodgers Join charlieuniformtango For Live Action Representation Lola Lott, charlieuniformtango principal and CEO, announced charlieuniformtango will now be representing directing team Andy Mahr and Ashton Rodgers.

Gorilla Group Chooses MTI Film Cortex From Big Pic Media for New 4K HDR Mastering Suite Gorilla has chosen an MTI Film Cortex Enterprise mastering and validation system for a new 4K HDR mastering suite at its recently expanded GloWorks facility. Supplied by MTI Film distribution partner Big Pic Media, the Cortex forms part of Gorilla's investment in new 4K HDR technology.

Pace Pictures Finishes "Tremors: Shrieker Island" Pace Pictures provided complete post-production services for *Tremors: Shrieker Island*, the latest installment in the cult horror franchise about giant, worm-like creatures that prey on humans. The LA facility handled ADR, sound mixing, color grading, editorial finishing and deliverables for the film, directed by Don Michael Paul.

Rising Sun Pictures Expands Studio and Staff As Production Rebounds In Australia Buoyed by a boom in motion picture and series production, Rising Sun Pictures (RSP) quickly reached maximum staff capacity at its current location and the visual effects company has moved swiftly to execute expansion plans. Taking charge of the building next to its main studio located in Pulteney Street in Adelaide, RSP took only months to renovate the new section.

Goldcrest Post Adds Colorful Touch To Writer/Director Karen Cinarre's "Mayday" For the new independent drama *Mayday*, Goldcrest Post senior colorist Marcy Robinson worked with director Karen Cinarre, in her feature debut, and cinematographer Sam Levy to hone a unique visual language for a one-of-a-kind story that blends fantasy and reality in colorful and unexpected ways.

11 Dollar Bill Opens Outpost in Los Angeles 11 Dollar Bill has launched a satellite office in LA. Led by Senior Editor Jess Weber, the new location gives the company a formal West Coast presence as it seeks to tap into the local advertising market and expand further into episodic television and other forms of entertainment content.

KiwiCo Kids Say "We've Got This, Grownups" In Brand Spot Directed By Sage Bennett of Namesake KiwiCo reveals its first brand anthem spot, launching the new tagline: Small Today. Big Tomorrow. Guided by its mission to inspire young innovators, KiwiCo delivers science and art projects that provide serious fun and hands-on learning.

SXSW: Kristian Mercado's "Nuevo Rico" Wins Best Animated Short NUEVO RICO, the new film from Kristian Mercado

Figueroa, won the award for Best Animated Short at this year's SXSW film festival. The film's title refers to a dystopian future Puerto Rico, now called Nuevo Rico, where a struggling brother and sister stumble onto a celestial secret that propels them to fame.

Megatrax Releases New Label "Sync Hero" For In-Show TV Use Megatrax has just announced the launch of its first, brand new label in five years. "Sync Hero" was created for in-show TV use. The new label features underscores and beds perfect for scene-setting and storytelling.

iPi Soft Announced Real-Time Integration For iPi Mocap And Unreal Engine iPi Soft, LLC announced a series of new enhancements supporting Unreal Engine suite of development tools for real time content creation. These enhancements include a new plug-in that allows for real-time motion tracking, motion transfer to 3D character and animation streaming into Unreal Engine.

EditShare Announced Support For AWS Media Intelligence Solutions EditShare announced support for the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Media Intelligence (AWS MI) solutions, providing customers with the ability to maximize the value of their content through enhanced metadata and scalable production capabilities.

Coolfire Studios & Osborn Barr Paramore Collaborate To Produce "That's My M-O" Campaign For Missouri Division of Tourism A new marketing campaign entitled "That's My M-O" created by advertising agency Osborn Barr Paramore (OBP) recently launched for the Missouri Division of Tourism.

Blackbird Green Initiative Drives Industry Awareness with Video Emissions Impact Study Blackbird plc (AIM: BIRD) launched a carbon awareness study titled "Video Shouldn't Cost the Earth" developed in collaboration with environmental management consultancy Green Element. The study highlights the impact the video industry has on the environment and outlines key areas where companies can take greater strides.

Goldcrest Post Preps "Grizzly II" For a Debut That Was Nearly 40 Years In The Making Goldcrest Post recently performed a feat of post-production magic for one of the most unusual film releases of the year. *Grizzly II: The Revenge*, a thriller about a giant bear that attacks fans at a rock concert, was shot in 1983 by the late Hungarian director André Szöts. Starring Steve Inwood, and including appearances by George Clooney, Laura Dern, Louise Fletcher and Charlie Sheen, the film was intended to be a sequel to *Grizzly*, a modestly-budgeted independent film that became the top grossing independent film of all time upon its release in 1976, but it was left unfinished.

Senior Engineer and Sound Designer Joel Hopper Joins One Union Recording Studios One Union Recording Studios has hired Senior Engineer Joel Hopper. Hopper brings 18 years of experience in the advertising and recording industries and most recently served as re-recording mixer, sound designer and picture editor at Barrell House, the in-house production unit at ad agency Pereira O'Dell.

ELIAS Music To Represent The License Lab's Production Music Catalog ELIAS Music, a Universal Publishing Production Music company, announced a partnership with The License Lab to exclusively represent its music catalog in the United States.

Association of Music Producers Issues Call For Entries, Sets Plans in Motion For 2021 AMP Awards The Association of Music Producers, sponsors of the AMP Awards for Music & Sound, has announced its call for entries for the 2021 AMP Awards. Deadline for submitting work is April 30, 2021. Full entry details can be found at <https://amp.awardcore.com>.

EIPMA and Space Games Federation Launch the #NOBEL4ISS Equal Space Challenge The Entertainment Industry Professionals Mentoring Alliance (EIPMA) is partnering with Space Games Federation® (SGF), one of its member organizations, to promote the International Space Station (ISS) for the Nobel Peace Prize.

AICP Awards Unveils "Craft That Endures" Films To Spur Entries and Pay Tribute To Significant Anniversaries How do you mark an epic anniversary that celebrates a combined 65 years of achievement in advertising in the moving image, while simultaneously challenging the industry to share in the warm spotlight of achievement? If you're AICP, you do what comes naturally: you create content.

AFX Creative Names Toby Gallo as Director of Tech AFX Creative has expanded its leadership team and concurrently has hired seasoned systems engineer and administrator Toby Gallo to serve as its new Director of Technology.

'A Beautiful Curse' Has World Premiere at Cinequest Film and Creativity Festival *A Beautiful Curse*, the feature debut of writer/director Martin Garde Abildgaard, had its World Premiere at this year's Cinequest Film & Creativity Festival. Filmed

in 2019, the story is startlingly prescient: a lovestruck photographer (Mark Strepan) visits an island whose inhabitants, including the object of his affection (Olivia Vinall), are hit with a mysterious sleeping phenomenon.

Veritone Announced Winners of Inaugural Viral Video Awards, Recognizing Top User-Generated Content from 2020 Veritone, Inc., announced the winners of its first-ever Veritone Viral Video Awards (VVAs). The VVAs were held virtually and gave fans and partners the opportunity to watch and vote for their favorite viral videos from 2020.

11 Dollar Bill Supports JD Sports' US Growth with Dazzling In-Store Video Content 11 Dollar Bill is working with JD Sports to let New Yorkers know there's a new brand in town. The post-production and design studio has been collaborating with the high-end athletic specialty retailer on an array of attention-grabbing video content for its flagship U.S. outlet in Times Square in New York City.



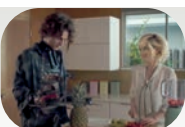







Renowned Colorist Steven Bodner Joins Picture Shop Picture Shop has added distinguished industry colorist Steven Bodner to its roster of artists. Bodner joins as supervising colorist, bringing 15+ years of finishing experience on award-winning episodics and features.

EditShare Reinforces Its Commitment To Customers With Global Service Assurance Program EditShare announced its Global Service Assurance program, a key initiative of the company's overarching business transformation that employs data analytics to manage issues and improve the overall customer experience.

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



MUSIC & SOUND

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Anheuser-Busch InBev's "Let's Grab A Beer"	Ren Klyce, sound designer Barking Owl , West Los Angeles, Calif. Atticus Ross, composer; Kelly Bayett, creative director	Ren Klyce, mixer	Wieden+Kennedy , Portland, Ore.	RESET , bicoastal Adam Hashemi, director
2	 Cheetos' "It Wasn't Me"	Shaggy's "It Wasn't Me" remix Beacon Street Studios , Venice, Calif. Andrew Feltenstein, John Nau, arrangers; Leslie DiLullo, exec producer; Kate Vadnais, sr. producer	Beacon Street Studios , Venice, Calif. Rommel Molina, engineer	Goodby Silverstein & Partners , San Francisco	Hungry Man , bicoastal Bryan Buckley, director
3	 Cadillac LYRIQ's "Scissorhands Free"	Yessian Music , Detroit and New York Dan Zank, arranger; Brian Yessian, CCO; Michael Yessian, head of production; Gerard Smerek, exec producer/music mixer	MackCut , New York Sam Shaffer, mixer	Leo Burnett , Detroit	O Positive , bicoastal David Shane, director
4	 One Medical's "The Plunge"	Q Department , New York Music & sound design	Q Department , New York Mixing	Goodby Silverstein & Partners , San Francisco	Park Pictures , bicoastal Lance Acord, director
5	 Vistaprint's "Yoga"	Henryboy , Brooklyn, NY Bill Chesley, sound designer; Kate Gibson, exec producer Walker , bicoastal Abbey Hendrix, exec producer; Julianne Wilson, music supervisor	Lime Studios , Santa Monica, Calif. Rohan Young, mixer	CALLEN , Austin, Tex.	MJZ , bicoastal/international Craig Gillespie, director
6	 Toyota's "Upstream"	The Elements Music , Santa Monica, Calif. Norman Kim, composer; Kristina Iwankiw, executive music producer LSD , Santa Monica, Calif. Michael Anastasi, sound designer; Kai Paquin, assistant sound designer; Susie Boyajan, exec producer	Lime Studios , Santa Monica, Calif. Matt Miller, mixer; Susie Boyajan, exec producer; Kayla Phunggjan, sr. producer	Saatchi & Saatchi , Dallas Dentsu , Tokyo	RadicalMedia , bicoastal Tarsem, director
7	 Rocket Mortgage's "Certain Is Better"	SOUTH Music and Sound Design , Santa Monica, Calif. Dan Pritikin, Matt Drenik, creative directors; Rusty Logsdon, Jon Darling, composers; Ann Haugen, exec producer; Ignacio Zas, producer Another Country , Chicago Peter Erazmus, sound designer; Tim Konn, exec producer; Louise Rider, producer	Another Country , Chicago Peter Erazmus, mixer; Josh Hunnicutt, audio assistant; Tim Konn, exec producer; Louise Rider, producer	Highdive , Chicago	MJZ , bicoastal/international Craig Gillespie, director
8	 The Boston Beer Company/Samuel Adams' "Horses"	Butter Music , bicoastal Annick Mayer, music exec producer; Stone Ir, music producer LSD , Santa Monica, Calif. Michael Anastasi, sound designer	Lime Studios , Santa Monica, Calif. Sam Casas, mixer; Susie Boyajan, exec producer; Kayla Mashburn, producer	Goodby Silverstein & Partners , San Francisco	Arts & Sciences , West Hollywood, Calif. Matt Aseiton, director
9	 Paramount Plus' "Sweet Victory"	Human , bicoastal James Dean Wells, exec producer; Morgan Visconti, Sloan Alexander, creative leads; Andrew Bloch, composer	Heard City , New York Phil Loeb, Evan Mangiamele, Stefano Campello, mixers; Catherine Sangiovanni, Ronnie Stapleton, Tom Morris, Seth Brogdon, Bennett Kerr, assistant engineers; Sasha Awn, Jackie James, exec producers	Druga5 , New York	O Positive , bicoastal David Shane, director
10	 Huggies' "Welcome to the World, Baby"	Mr. Pape , London "Ode to the little ones" 750mph , London Sam Ashwell, sound designer; head sound supervisor, sound engineer; Martin Critchley, head of production; Jessica Ringshall, exec producer	Heard City , New York Phil Loeb, Jeremy Siegel, mixers; Catherine Sangiovanni, assistant mixer; Sasha Awn, exec producer	Druga5 , New York Mike Ladman, sr. music supervisor	SMUGGLER , bicoastal Mark Molloy, director

"Grab A Beer" Grabs 1st Place Super Bowl spot tops quarterly Music Chart

A SHOOT Staff Report

While it can't compare to an Oscar, scoring the #1 slot in *SHOOT*'s quarterly Top Ten Tracks Chart to kick off the new year is still yet another feather in the cap of composer Atticus Ross. A Best Original



"Let's Grab A Beer"

Score Oscar winner in 2011, along with compatriot Trent Reznor, for *The Social Network*, Ross last month picked up his second and third career Academy Award nominations—for the Original Scores for *Soul* (with colleagues Reznor and Jon Batiste) and *Mank* (in tandem with Reznor).

Like *The Social Network* and *Mank*, the *SHOOT* Chart-topping "Let's Grab A Beer" for Anheuser-Busch InBev entailed collaborating with David Fincher. (Fincher directed *The Social Network* and *Mank*, and served as EP on "Let's Grab A Beer") The Fincher-Ross collaborative relationship has indeed proven noteworthy across short and long-form content.

But "Let's Grab A Beer" carries another artist connection between the Academy Awards and our Top Ten Tracks Chart. The sound designer/mixer on the Anheuser Busch InBev Super Bowl commercial was Ren Klyce, a long-time collaborator with Fincher. Last month Klyce



A-B InBev's Super Bowl spot

earned his eighth and ninth career Best Sound Oscar nominations—for *Soul* and *Mank*. The latter marks the sixth Oscar nod that Klyce has garnered for a Fincher-directed film—the other five being for *Fight Club* in 2000, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* in 2009, *The Social Network* in 2011, and two for *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (Sound Mixing, Sound Editing) in 2012.

Ross worked on "Let's Grab A Beer" via music and sound house Barking Owl, teaming with that shop's creative director Kelly Bayett. Klyce independently served as sound designer/mixer. Adam Hashemi directed the spot through production company RESET for Wieden+Kennedy.

Cheers

The 90-second commercial is a series of touching and humorous vignettes that show people coming together over a beer. We see a woman being included in a business meeting, her talent being sought out unexpectedly as she's handed a bottle of beer as a welcome to join the decision-making process. A guy carrying out of the office his belongings stuffed in a box is cheered when a co-worker flags him down at the elevator to go grab a beer.



Ren Klyce

A friend consoles another at a funeral with a nonverbal invite to have a beer. Working professionals in a restaurant, musicians and varied others bond over a brew. As the ad comes to a close, we're reminded, "It's never just about the beer. It's about being together." That's a message that resonates arguably more than ever during a pandemic marked by lockdowns which have isolated so many of us. And to have that message reach and unite a vast audience on Super Bowl Sunday adds all the more to its relevance and bringing people together to share and enjoy.

Reflecting on the Big Game commercial, Ross told *SHOOT*, "Although the challenge of making music for advertising is, at times, serving several masters at one time, I think we were able to thread the needle on 'Let's Grab a Beer' to create a piece that felt organically tied to the picture, the emotion and the storytelling that satisfied all parties. It didn't hurt to be surrounded by the uppermost talent in the field—if I drank, whilst listening to Ren's mix, I may have even celebrated by 'grabbing a beer.'"

Beyond assorted feature films and commercials, Klyce has worked with Fincher on such TV series as *House of Cards* and *Mindhunters*.

In Sync In Poland



Big Sync Poland team

Big Sync Music, a global music agency, servicing leading brands such as Unilever, Lipton and Google has opened an office in Warsaw, Poland, expanding a global footprint which also includes locations in L.A., NY, London, Paris, Hamburg, Singapore and Sydney. Big Sync Music is a Songtradr company, acquired back in 2019.

Poland holds the strongest and largest economy in the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) region and it's still growing, making it a natural fit for the expansion of Big Sync Music. Alongside its economic benefits, the capital of Poland, Warsaw, is known as a hub for music publishers and the city's talent provides diverse expertise in the industry. The advertising market in Warsaw continues to grow, creating a demand for Big Sync's presence in this increasingly sophisticated market. Having a foothold in the CEE region also strengthens Big Sync's offerings to global clients.

The team is led by head of music at Big Sync Warsaw, Michal Krajewski, who is responsible for managing revenue and operations while overseeing all creative, client relations, and leading the team on the ground in the territory. The Warsaw team consists of four experienced supervisors—Aneta Kabsa, Mateusz Szmigiero and Piotr Ćwikliński who, together with Krajewski, have completed hundreds of projects over the past four years. They come from agency and publishing backgrounds and have worked for networks, independent agencies, and directly with clients within the CEE region and beyond.

Big Sync Music is a global music partner for brands, agencies and content creators, offering such services as music licensing, original composition and sonic branding....

Country Music Association Funds COVID MICS Initiative

Furthering its support of music industry professionals affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Country Music Association has announced continued efforts through its Music Industry COVID Support (MICS) initiative. The Nashville-based trade organization has outlined additional funding to five nonprofit partners—Music Health Alliance, Musically Fed, Notes for Notes, Porter's Call and The Store—which, along with previous nonprofit investments, are funded through CMA's \$3 million long-term COVID-19 commitment that began in early 2020.

Established as a portal for key resources in the categories of food supply, health and wellness, and career services, MICS helps to connect industry professionals with appropriate nonprofit partners offering critical support.

In the state of Tennessee alone, more than 50,000 music jobs have been impacted by the health crisis, and that number is estimated to be hundreds of thousands more nationwide. At the onset of the pandemic, CMA donated \$1 million to The Recording Academy's MusiCares COVID-19 Relief Fund in addition to a \$100,000 donation to Music Health Alliance. CMA has continued to analyze and assess the specific needs of music professionals to determine the most vital resources and services to provide. CMA will announce further nonprofit investments in the coming weeks and months.

Music Health Alliance has provided free healthcare advocacy and support to more than 13,000 music industry members in 48 states across the U.S.

Musically Fed works with artists, promoters, management and venues nationwide to donate unused backstage meals to community organizations to feed the hungry and food insecure.

Notes for Notes is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing youth with free access to music instruments, instruction and recording environments so that music can become a profoundly positive experience in their lives.

Porter's Call works with full-time recording artists from all genres to offer counsel, support and encouragement at no charge.






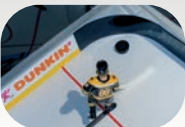




The Store operates as a free grocery store allowing people to shop for their basic needs during economic hardship....

courtesy of FX Networks



COVID MICS

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Insmed's "Unbreakable"	ROOF Studio , Brooklyn, NY ROOF Studio, director; Guto Terzi, creative dir. & environment design, look dev., 3D layout, 3D lgt. compositing; Vinicius Costa, creative dir and prod & environment design, look dev. Lucas Camargo, creative dir. & 3D lgt. look dev. character design; Marcus Lansdell, EP; Vanderlei Santana, head of prodn; Heber Conde, 3D lead, 3D layout, simulation; Bruno Celegao Monteiro, animation lead; Alex Ferreira, Andrea Delfino, Bruna Berford, Bruno Santos, Christian Weckl, Daniel Oliveira, Emerson Manfrin, Francisco Catao, Hannry Pschera, Jesiel Almeida, Jonathan Edward, Jorge Zagatto, Leonardo Felix, Leonidas Maciel, Marcio Nicolosi, Matheus Caetano, Rodrigo Dutra, animation. (Toolbox: Maya, Redshift, After Effects)	AREA 23 , New York	ROOF Studio , New York ROOF Studio, director
2	 Microsoft's "Mesh"	a52 , Santa Monica, Calif. Jesse Monsour, Urs Furrer, VFX supervisors; Kirk Shintani, art dir/CG supervisor; Richard Hirst, Andrew McKenna, Matt Sousa, Steven Wolf, John Valle, Michael Vaglienty, Enid Dalkoff, Flame artists; Dustin Mellum, Ariana Ziae Mohseni, Aemilia Widodo, Weiyo Sha, Bryan Cox, Josh Dyer, Jose Limon, Jade Smrz, Joe Paniagua, Mike Di Nnocho, Derek Friesenborg, Joseph Chiechi, Mike Bettinardi, Christoffer Bjerre, Haram Jung, Lusine Arakelyan, 3D artists; Jeff Han, design art dir; Patrick Nugent, Kim Christensen, EPs. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke)	none	Sanctuary , Culver City, Calif. Mindcastle, director
3	 Doritos' "Flat Matthew"	The Mill LA John Leonti, creative dir/shoot supervisor; Alexander Candlish, shoot supervisor/2D lead artist; Matt Bohnert, 3D lead artist; Franz Kohl, Jake Albers, Marisa Chin, Toby Brockhurst, Jacob Maymudes, Lenz Kohl, AVV Suresh, Rose Mathew, Prajesh E., 2D artists; Melanie Okamura, Christian Sanchez, Ziming Lui, Monique Espinoza, Ken Bishop, Daniel Stern; Hiroshi Tsubokawa, James Robinson, Stefan Kang, Omar Taher, Mike Kash, Elizabeth Hammer, Michael Lori, Krushna Ramrao Kulsange, Akshay Suresh Lanjewar, Asis Kumar Mahakud, Somesh Tiwari, Sudhir Verma, Amish MohanFazal, Showber Shadik, Swathi Balasubramaniam, Upasana Choudhary, Verru Ramesh, Vinayak Balamurugan, Dongili Varaprasad, Manoj Ravi, Ashish Rawat, Lalit Salunke, Sukanta Chakraborty, Ujasingiri Goswami, Mahesh MS, 3D artists. (Toolbox: Flame, Nuke, Maya, Houdini)	Goodby Silverstein & Partners , San Francisco	Superprime , Culver City, Calif. Damien Chazelle, director
4	 Dell's "Youniverse"	MPC , New York Alvin Cruz, creative dir.; Jim Radford, on-set VFX supervisor; Renato Ferri Carone, 2D lead; Andrew Ortiz, 3D lead; Nicole Melius, VFX producer; Chris Connolly, EP; Stephen Dierks, prodn coordinator; Gianna Yarull Urena, Roger Horn, design; Tom McCullough, Mat Ellin, finishing. (Toolbox: Nuke, Flame, Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, Maya, Substance)	VMLY&R , New York	Anonymous Content , bicoastal/international Marco Prestini, director
5	 Klarna's "The Four Quarter-Sized Cowboys"	KEVIN , Venice, Calif. Tim Davies, ECD; Mike Dalzell, head of CG; Sue Troyan, sr. EP; Jami Schakel, sr. VFX producer; Andrew Cowderoy, VFX producer; Carl Harders, Matt Longwell, Bryan Repka, 3D; Robert Murdock, Susanne Scharping, Tim Bird, 2D. (Toolbox: Flame, Maya)	Mirimar , Los Angeles	Biscuit Filmworks , Los Angeles Andreas Nilsson, director
6	 Dunkin's "Empty Net"	Hornet , New York Peter Sluszkza, director; Hana Shimizu, managing dir.; Karen Lawler, head of prodn; Kristin Labriola, head of creative development; Dez Stavacos, prodn supervisor; Trevor Stewart, producer; Gat Rao, character designer; Jennifer Ely, design exploration; John Harrison, VFX supervisor & lead compositor; Richard Coppola, motion control operator; Tim McDonald, art dir; Mikail Ekiz, Matt Somma, Maxwell Sorenson, animators; Guilherme Ferreirainha, Xiaoxiao Tan, Ted Wiggins, compositors. (Toolbox: Dragonframe, After Effects)	BBDO New York	Hornet , New York Peter Sluszkza, director
7	 The Boston Beer Company/Samuel Adams/Wicked's "Horses"	Framestore Matt Pascuzzi, VFX lead; Maura Hurley, sr. producer; Nathaniel Cabra, prodn coordinator; Dex Madeod-Veilleux, EP; Avery Herzog, Elaina Brillantes, Euna Kho, Greg Gaskins, Kane Herd, Zavier Mojica, Ryan Ninko, Raul Ortega, compositing team (Toolbox: Nuke, Flame)	Goodby Silverstein & Partners , San Francisco	Arts & Sciences , West Hollywood, Calif. Matt Aseiton, director
8	 Veloz's "40 Million Reasons To Go Electric"	Laundry , Los Angeles & San Francisco Jayson Whitmore, ECD; James Sweigert, managing dir.; Mattheew Primm, head of prodn; Dean Marchand, producer; Adam Finley, prodn coordinator; Yeri Lee, Whitney Lam, Chris Yoon, Yuying Herr, Jessica La, Symphony Allison, design & illustration; Judah Dobin, Eddie Lin, storyboards; TJ Sochor, Yongmin Park, Stephen Villari, 2D animation; Geoff Ciccarelli, 2D character animatio. (Toolbox: Photoshop, After Effects)	Superconductor , Los Angeles	Laundry , Los Angeles & San Francisco Jayson Whitmore, director
9	 Lincoln's "Thinking Of You"	Psyop/Blacklist , bicoastal Igor + Valentine, directors; Andrew Linsk, EP; Cameron Lewis, producer; Matt Smithson, design & animation; David Stanfield, Eze Matteo, Dante Zaballa, animation (Toolbox: After Effects, Photoshop, Animate)	Hudson Rouge , New York	Psyop/Blacklist , bicoastal Igor + Valentine, directors
10	 Calif. Dept of Health/Calif. Tobacco Control Program's "Jackson"	1stAveMachine , Brooklyn, NY Sam Penfield, partner/EP; Peter Repplier, Nick Litwinko, Michaela McKee, EPs BRUT , Barcelona, Spain Marin Allais, director/producer/creative dir; John Harrison, lead compositor; Jor Ross, art direction & illustration; Richard Ubach, art direction & animation; Angus Pepper, Fernando Abaca, Bujor Stefanescu, Javi Vaquero, Ellis Chan, animation; Maud Beckers, EP; Sara Camacho Gutierrez, producer; Margo Lopez, clean-up lead; Margarita Rojas, Eva Puyuelo, Libardo Bohorquez Gutierrez, Macarena Ortega, clean-up; Hugo Morais, comp & 3D. (Toolbox: Animate, Photoshop, Illustrator, After Effects, Cinema 4D)	Acento Advertising , Los Angeles	BRUT , Barcelona, Spain Marin Allais, director

Creative Through The ROOF

Animation studio produces a visual metaphor

A SHOOT Staff Report

Animation house ROOF Studio (ROOF) partnered with ad agency AREA 23 on a CG film called “Unbreakable” for biopharmaceutical company Insmmed. The two-and-a-half-minute-plus piece—which



“Unbreakable”

headlines *SHOOT*’s quarterly Top Ten Visual Effects/Animation Chart—aims to bring awareness about Nontuberculous Mycobacterial (NTM) lung disease, a condition which can be difficult to identify due to its similar symptoms with other lung conditions. The film was crafted to create urgency for doctors and specialists to recognize and diagnose NTM.

“Unbreakable” is a visual metaphor of the NTM experience. Based on actual NTM patient experiences, the film opens on Barbara the Bunny, a plush toy fabricated in a magical factory. When she comes alive, she realizes something is not quite right as she begins to cough, splitting a piece of her fabric in the process. Barbara is expelled from the factory by “Quality Control” and from there, we follow her journey across the city desperately seeking a specialist for her situation. To her relief, a sweet toy repair shop owner knows just exactly what to do.

“We took a folkloric *Pinocchio*-like approach to tell not only the story behind the physical symptoms of NTM, but also the social ostracization from the chronic cough that patients endure with the condition,” said Guto Terni, ROOF co-founder/creative director. “This approach allowed us to use rich, poetic visuals with a character-driven story around Barbara the Bunny to engage the viewer with the deep concerns of NTM sufferers and their experience. At the same time, it lent us room to be playful and humorous to bring a hopeful tone to the conversation around NTM.”

For ROOF “Unbreakable” was the perfect opportunity to create a film with the same level of craft seen in stop motion

puppet-fabrication films.

“We wanted to design places that would feel rich and inviting—places that you may even wish to visit,” said Vinicius Costa, ROOF co-founder/creative director. “We pursued an extremely high level of detail in every asset to create an experience that would encourage people to keep following this story along through the behind-the-scenes materials in social media. It is common to focus on a video and extract parts for its ‘making of’ but we put equal effort into engaging people with the film and with every asset outside of it. We wanted to bring a much broader approach and this film was perfect for that.”

A bunny with charisma

ROOF put an enormous amount of detail in bringing Barbara, the 24-inch-tall bunny, to life—including everything she comes in contact with in her world—with a sense of realism. Terni said the agency wanted her to express an element of sadness as an NTM patient but also cuteness to help create empathy. In the end, the ROOF team landed on a design that cap-



Insmmed's bunny mascot

tured a charismatic and intelligent bunny.

ROOF developed the entire previsualization of the film in 3D. In addition to providing the client with an early look at the visual style and direction of the film, this pre-production step enabled the team to calculate critical details, such as camera movements, composition, and the volume of texturing the job required.

“Animation is a powerful technique for tackling often-abstract or complicated subjects, and credit goes to the AREA 23 team for being open to exploring its full potential in “Unbreakable,” assessed Terni. “Together, we created a dream project, which will hopefully resonate with healthcare providers and people in general and help those suffering from NTM in particular.”

Hornet Adds Relay Studio, Vucko To Roster



Relay Studio

New York-based Hornet has added Relay Studio to its directorial roster. Relay Studio is a Copenhagen-based design and animation practice composed of Rasmus Bak and Andreas Bjørn Hansen.

Bak and Hansen originally met in their shared hometown in central Denmark, over a decade ago. Separate paths took them each to Los Angeles and then New York City, where they worked together at Buck. After many long days and nights as deskmates—and countless collaborations later—they decided to move back to Copenhagen to start something of their own. And thus Relay Studio was born. Relay Studio’s portfolio sits somewhere between graphic design, motion design, and simple animation. Relay Studio’s work ranges from bold 2D graphics for Arc’teryx, to intuitive interface brand films for IKEA, to animated typography for Samsung, even to entire design systems for Verizon 5G.

The addition of Relay Studio continues an infusion of talent for Hornet which also recently brought Vucko aboard its directing roster. Vucko is a Toronto-based creative practice specializing in design systems and motion, led by Andrew Vucko who has worked with dozens of brands including Google, Netflix, Strava, Spotify and Viacom. Vucko’s exploits range from fast-paced animation language for Zply to a geometric exploration in the personal short *Design in Motion*, to a kaleidoscopic motion system for Spotify Wrapped 2020. Vucko has worked with dozens of brands including Google, Netflix, Strava, Spotify and Viacom.

DNEG’s ReDefine Brings In European VFX Team

Global animation and visual effects company ReDefine has further expanded its presence in Europe with the onboarding of an experienced VFX team based in Sofia, Bulgaria. The key team members are: VFX supervisor Peter Dimitrov whose credits include *Angel Has Fallen* and *The Hitman’s Wife’s Bodyguard*; VFX producer Elena Rapondzhieva whose experience spans VFX, animation and gaming with credits including *Hellboy*, *London Has Fallen*, *Rambo: Last Blood* and *Assassin’s Creed: Origins*; 2D supervisor Dragostin Valev who has worked on TV projects such as *The Terror* (VES Award nominee) and *Genius* (Emmy nominee), and films such as *Wonder Woman* and *Blade Runner 2049*; and CG supervisor Lazarin Kouchev who has worked on projects such as *Rambo: Last Blood*, *The Outpost* and *The Legend of Hercules*.

ReDefine has recently delivered VFX services for shows such as *The White Tiger* (Netflix), *The Undoing* (HBO) and *The 100* (The CW), and animation services for shows such as *100% Wolf*, *Rock Dog 2* and *The Legend of Hanuman*.

Part of the DNEG family of companies, ReDefine maintains studios in London, Montréal, Vancouver, Mumbai and Hyderabad.....

Lindsey Kaiser Named EP At FuseFX L.A.

FuseFX, an award-winning VFX studio that specializes in providing services for television, film, commercials, virtual productions, and VR, has named Lindsey Kaiser as executive producer at its flagship studio in Los Angeles. Kaiser will help oversee day-to-day operations while working to help bring new projects to FuseFX. She brings to her new roost over a decade of industry experience leading VFX and postproduction teams, as well as a deep knowledge of establishing new client relationships. Before joining FuseFX, Kaiser was sr. VP at DNEG. There she served as a key stakeholder in new client relationships and sales.

In addition to bringing Kaiser on board, VP of production Johnny Fisk will transition into the management of FuseFX’s global business development group while expanding his role as VP of production globally. Fisk already plays a critical role working with all the heads of studio and executive producers across all the FuseFX locations and will continue to do so in his expanding position.....



Lindsey Kaiser

The Fallout Tops Juried, Audience Awards

Lily Topples The World takes jury's top documentary honor; Not Going Quietly wins pair of awards

A SHOOT Staff Report

The 2021 SXSW Film Festival, which played as an online event during the pandemic, has unveiled its juried, special award and Audience Award winners. The big picture winner spanning both the juried and audience honors was *The Fallout*, written and directed by Megan Park. Judges bestowed upon *The Fallout* Best Narrative Feature distinction—as did fest audience members.

The Fallout centers on high schooler Vada who experiences and tries to navigate through emotional fallout in the wake of a school tragedy. Relationships with her family, friends and view of the world are forever altered. *The Fallout* was produced by David Brown, Rebecca Miller, Cara Shine, Joannie Burstein and Shaun Sanghani. The cast includes Jenna Ortega, Maddie Ziegler, Niles Fitch, Will Ropp, Lumi Pollock, John Ortiz, Julie Bowen and Shailene Woodley.

A judges' statement on the film read in part, "Writer and director Megan Park delivers a timely, riveting, and thought-provoking film on the toll it takes on a teenager who is facing a world where they no longer feel safe. It is an intense, moving piece that highlights an important issue to which one can't help but feel connected."

Park additionally earned a special directorial kudo at SXSW, a Brightcove Illumination Award for *The Fallout*. She was recognized "for her empathetic and honest exploration of life after tragedy, inspired craft, and stellar guidance of a talented young cast." The Brightcove Illumination Award honors a filmmaker on the rise, celebrating the innovation and creativity of new artists within the SXSW Film Festival official selections.

Meanwhile the judges and audience tastes differed on the marquee documentary feature of the year. The juried honor went to director Jeremy Workman's *Lily Topples The World*

which earned best Documentary Feature distinction. The feature follows 20-year-old Lily Hevesh—the world's most acclaimed domino toppler and the only woman in her field—in a coming-of-age story of artistry, passion, and unlikely triumph. Workman and Robert J. Lyons served as producers.

The judges' statement read, "A joyful portrait of grace in artistry and commitment in engineering, *Lily Topples the World* shows a life online that transcends virality and touches something deeper. In Lily Hevesh, aka Hevesh5, the film features a collaborative, creative soul who comes by community and entrepreneurship naturally. A rare achievement in nonjudgmental subcultural exploration and a gorgeously rendered portrait of burgeoning adulthood that tumbles forward, like Lily's domino art, into something beautiful."

The Audience Award in the Documentary Feature Competition was presented to director Nicholas Bruckman's *Not Going Quietly*. Bruckman and Amanda Roddy wrote and produced the documentary that tells the story of when a young father chances to meet a powerful senator on an airplane, their exchange goes viral, sparking one of the most unlikely political movements in a generation.

Not Going Quietly also made some noise on the SXSW juried awards side, garnering Special Jury Recognition for Humanity in Social Action. The judges' statement read, "Activist is a word much used in contemporary culture. But few give expression to it like Ady Barkan, a California organizer who, upon being diagnosed with ALS in his early 30s, responds not with self-pitying convalescence but by barnstorming his fight across the country, bringing a movement with him. Barkan's tale suggests that grace is not



Photo by Kristen Correll



Photo by Steve Price



Photo by Alex Evans

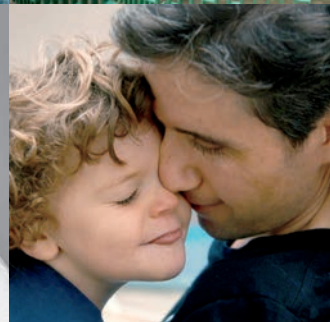


Photo by Michael Dwyer/Respect Television

From top left, clockwise: A scene from *The Fallout*; *Lily Topples The World*; a scene from *Not Going Quietly*; director Megan Park, who wrote and helmed *The Fallout*.

incompatible with ardor, and hardship no obstacle to achievement. Bruckman's film captures him and the powerful women who lead his fight in ways that are richly human, always affectionate and frequently rousing."

In addition to *The Fallout* and *Not Going Quietly*, among the other Audience Award winners were: Director Mary Wharton's *Tom Petty: Somewhere You Feel Free* which topped the Headliners competition; *Language Lessons* from director Natalie Morales which took the Narrative Spotlight honor; Documentary Spotlight awardee *Who We Are: A Chronicle of Racism in America* from directors Emily Kunstler and Sarah Kunstler; *Inbetween Girl* directed by Mei Makino which took the Visions category; director Kier-La Janisse's *Woodlands Dark and Days Bewitched: A History of Folk Horror*, the Midnighters honor recipient; the Global Award recipient *Ninjababy* directed by Yngvild Sve Flikke; and director Nanfu Wang's *In The Same Breath* which earned Festival Favorite distinction.

JURIED WINNERS

Besides *The Fallout*, *Lily Topples The World* and *Not Going Quietly*, the 2021 SXSW Film Fest juried winners (with judges statements) included:

Special Jury Recognition for Multi-hyphenate Storyteller

I'm Fine (Thanks for Asking) Directors: Kelley Kali and Angelique Molina

"Kelley Kali's *I'm Fine (Thanks for Asking)*, financed in part by stimulus relief checks, is a marvel of multitasking and resourcefulness. Kali's film, which she wrote, directed, produced and stars in, winningly captures the pandemic plight of a homeless, roller-skating single mother over a memorable daylong odyssey."

Special Jury Recognition for Breakthrough Performance

Islands Director: Martin Edralin

Actor: Rogelio Balagtas

"*Islands* gives us the story of a painfully shy man set adrift in the world by the declining health of the parents who sheltered him. This story, of someone blooming late in life, hinges on the tremendously compelling, interior performance from rela-

tive newcomer Rogelio Balagtas who can break hearts throughout with his tears and enables the movie to transcend with a single smile."

Special Jury Recognition for Exceptional Intimacy in Storytelling

Introducing, Selma Blair

Director: Rachel Fleit

"Selma Blair's unflinching and raw vulnerability in *Introducing, Selma Blair*, coupled with director Rachel Fleit's almost voyeuristic chronicling of her MS diagnosis, invites us not just to feel empathy for the star. More than that, it invites us into her fight, prompting anyone watching to feel joined with her in battle. That level of disarming intimacy is rarely witnessed on screen, particularly from a public figure, making the feat all the more incredible."

SHORT FILM GRAND JURY AWARDS Narrative Shorts

Play It Safe Director: Mitch Kalisa

"Of the shorts, we have decided to award the Jury Award to *Play It Safe*, for approaching oft-addressed topics in a new way, for its incredible main performance, for its thoughtful direction, and compelling cinematography."

Special Jury Recognition for Visionary Storytelling

Don't Go Tellin' Your Momma

Directors: Topaz Jones, rubberband.

"We are awarding *Don't Go Tellin' Your Momma* a Special Jury Recognition for Visionary Storytelling for its bold filmmaking and mix of music, visuals, and documentary footage."

Special Jury Recognition for Direction

Like the Ones I Used to Know

Director: Annie St-Pierre

"We are awarding *Like the Ones I Used to Know* a Special Jury Recognition for Direction, as its weaving between reality and flights of fancy make it a Christmas tale to remember. Congratulations to all of the filmmakers this year, and thank you for your new works!"

Documentary Shorts

Águilas

Directors: Kristy Guevara-Flanagan and Maite Zubiaurre

"*Águilas* is a film that most poignantly displays the need immigrants feel to come to America – even at the cost of starvation and death. Failed attempts are presented by a backpack, a sweater, and scattered bones. How desperate the dream is of a perfect landing that ends so tragically."

Special Jury Recognition for Courage

Red Taxi Director: Anonymous

"The subjects are courageous, the filmmakers are courageous, and the film itself is courageous both stylistically and in the way it speaks on an issue through editing that is measured, considered, and understanding of the complexities of the post-colonial project."

Special Jury Recognition for Poetry

I Ran From It and Was Still in It

Director: Darol Olu Kae

"Its title invites audiences to expect a wholly distinct storytelling experience and this film delivers. For its audacious storytelling through textured imagery, bold structure and lyrical approach, we award this special achievement."

Midnight Shorts

The Moogai Director: Jon Bell

"A haunting, psychological thriller that explores postpartum depression in an impressive display of disciplined filmmaking...The cinematography is striking, the actor's performances are brave, and the underlying commentary on a country's forced removal of generations of children is heartbreaking."

Flash Back

April 5, 2016 Malik Vitthal, whose feature directorial debut *Imperial Dreams* won the Audience Award at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival, has joined the roster of **The Corner Shop** for commercials and branded content in the U.S. market. This marks Vitthal's first career representation in the ad arena. Vitthal wrote and directed *Imperial Dreams* which is set for a full theatrical release this fall. Inspired by a real life story, the film was set and shot in Watts, Los Angeles. This gritty yet ultimately uplifting film stars John Boyega (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*), who plays a reformed gangster returning home to his 4 year old son after 24 months of incarceration. Boyega's character, Bambi, is looking to leave his former life behind, aspiring to become a novelist.... Beth Rilee-Kelley has been named president of **The Martin Agency** while retaining her COO duties and title. Rilee-Kelley is a 33-year veteran of the company. As **The Martin Agency** was named **SHOOT's Agency of the Year in 2015**....Pete Johnson has been named to serve as ECD at **Deutsch New York**. Joining in June, Johnson currently serves as Arnold's creative co-lead, ECD, in the Boston office. A highly awarded creative, he's worked on an array of brands including **Progressive, Sony, Jack Daniels, New Balance, Carnival and Truth**....

April 5, 2011 Eric Baldwin has become **Wieden+Kennedy's** global creative director for the **Levi's** account, and **Craig Allen** has been promoted to creative director for **Old Spice** and **Electronic Arts**. Baldwin, who has served as creative director on **Old Spice** and **EA** since 2008, will partner with Tyler Whisnand on **Levi's**. Allen joins Jason Bagley on **Old Spice** and **EA**....**Station Film** has signed directors **Scott Corbett, Alex Grossman** and **Jorgan Loof**. In addition to stateside representation, the directors will gain a U.K. market foothold through **Station's** partnership with **Academy Films, London**. Corbett brings ad agency creative sensibilities to the director's chair. Earlier he had freelance tours of duty as a copywriter at **TBWA\Chiat\Day** and **DavidandGoliath, L.A.** He then transitioned to directing, spurred on in part by spec work for **Altoids** and the **Outdoor Life Network**. On the strength of these efforts, including **Altoids' "Jockey,"** Corbett earned a slot in **SHOOT's 2006 New Directors Showcase**. Grossman also sports an agency background, copywriting at **Goodby, Silverstein & Partners** and **Butler, Shine, Stern**. Loof is a photographer and director whose work spans such clients as **IKEA, Volvo, Libero and Nokia**....



Photos from the pages of SHOOT Magazine and SHOOTonline.com

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street talk

Filmmaker Joe Sill has teamed with Jerad Anderson, founder of production company FLORENCE, and screenwriter Matisse Tolin to create L.A.-based Impossible Objects, a world-building lab that uses virtual production to tell branded and original stories. Comprised of a team of artists and engineers, Impossible Objects mobilizes the power of imagination through design and animation, offering tools for visualists to create alternate realities that break through creative limitations. The company's first original project, the short film *Autonomous*, was co-created by Sill and Tolin. Created entirely in a virtual environment and rendered in real-time, the short has spawned plans for a TV series now being developed by Stampede Ventures, produced by Jon Berg and Greg Silverman with Sill and Tolin serving as co-creators. Sill and Tolin began the project by compiling models together to create the world and characters, and utilized the power of a real-time game engine to pre-vis and stage compositions and build out realistic sequences with lighting, texturing, and rigged character animations. Each shot was lit using real-world cinematic lighting principles, and the camera recorded each move as one would on a live-action set. Virtual production and real-time rendering are powerful new tools for creating cinematic effects. With the ability to capture an actor's performance from anywhere in the world and bring it into an infinite number of virtual environments, myriad possibilities are now starting to be realized....VFX house Glassworks has promoted two leaders from its production team in Amsterdam. Belen Palos has been named head of production and Chris Kiser as COO. Palos previously served as sr. VFX producer in both Glassworks Barcelona and Amsterdam branches dating back to 2015. She has produced ad campaigns, animated sequences for features, music videos and immersive content for brands and studios worldwide. Kiser joined Glassworks in 2018 as EP and new business director....

rep report

VP of business development Cortney Haile has been named to spearhead the expansion of ArsenalFX Color's VFX department, extending the company's offerings to include scripted VFX and on-set supervision. Haile brings over 15 years of experience in the content space producing VFX for commercials, TV shows, and features. After working on the production side with Primetime Pictures, Haile entered postproduction in the early 2000s at Lionsgate Entertainment. She went on to lead business development at 2G Digital Post before joining ArsenalFX in 2011 as an account exec and later head of production. In 2015, ArsenalCreative was launched, and Haile became a partner and EP overseeing daily operations and new business development for such brands as Amazon, Beats by Dre, Toyota, Microsoft, and Hyundai....Studio 100 Media, a Munich-based international production and distribution company within the children's and family entertainment sector, has appointed Fabrice Laventure-Darival as sales exec for global distribution. He will be responsible for global distribution activities for Canada, France, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Latin America. He reports to Dorian Bühr, head of global distribution. Laventure-Darival recently worked at Autentic GmbH as sales exec and before that at ProSiebenSat.1 Group's Red Arrow Studios International....ATG Danmon--a systems integrator and supplier of broadcast systems planning, design, installation and commissioning services with clients including TV and multimedia networks--has named Chris Nairn as sales director. Reporting to managing director Russell Peirson-Hagger, he joins from Bang & Olufsen Pro AV where he was sales director, strategic enterprise partner program. Nairn began at Quantel and went into sales management with Sony Professional Solutions Europe. He then became Grass Valley regional sales manager, Northern Europe, before joining Bang & Olufsen....

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SHOOT will compile the **2021 SHOOT New Directors Showcase Reel** and interview the directors for a special feature that will appear in SHOOT's November issue, SHOOT ePubs, SHOOT Publicity Wire and reside permanently at [NDS.SHOOTonline.com](https://www.NDS.SHOOTonline.com), bringing worldwide attention to the work and the directors. In addition, the work will be screened for an audience* of key ad agency, commercial & entertainment production industry decision-makers at SHOOT's 2021 New Directors Showcase Event at the DGA Theatre in New York City on Thursday, November 4th, 2021. Coverage of the event will appear on SHOOTonline and the SHOOT >e.dition in November. The showcase reel and selected New Director Profiles will also be posted on [NDS.SHOOTonline.com](https://www.NDS.SHOOTonline.com) which will remain public and be promoted across SHOOT platforms for at minimum one year. See the 2020 New Directors Web Reel and Showcase website at [NDS.SHOOTonline.com](https://www.NDS.SHOOTonline.com).

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