

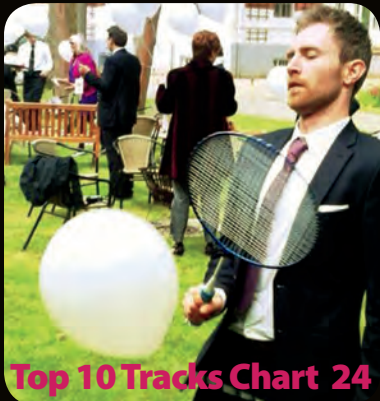
SHOOT®



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DIRECTORS

Fall 2017 Series

Top row (l-r) Sean Baker; Jonathan Dayton & Valerie Faris; Stephen Frears; Craig Gillespie Middle Dee Rees Bottom row (l-r) Todd Haynes; Reginald Hudlin; Miles Jay; Damian Kulash Page 10



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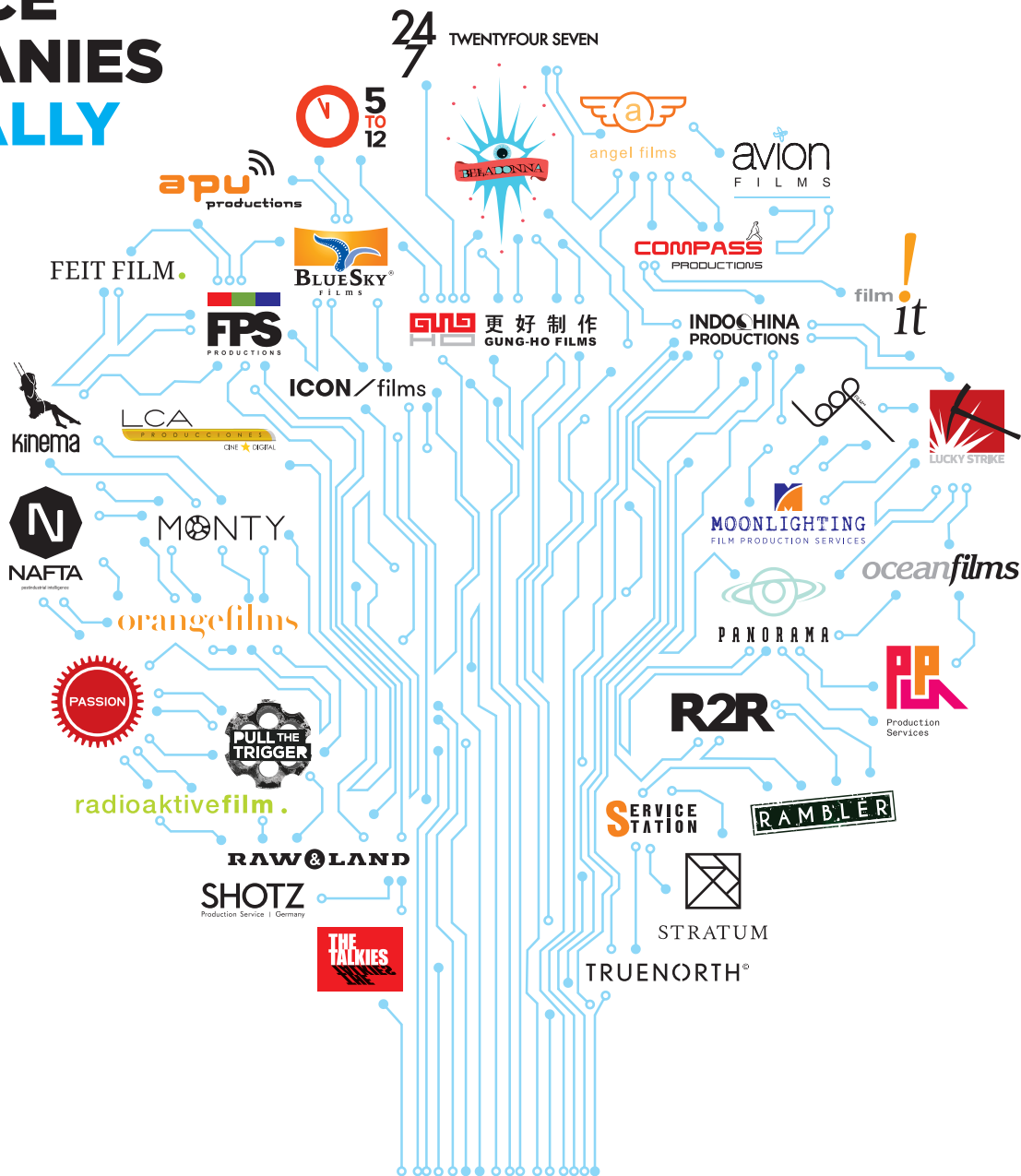
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EDITORIAL

Publisher & Editorial Director

Roberta Griefer

203.227.1699 ext. 13 rgriefer@shootonline.com

Editor

Robert Goldrich

323.445.6818 rgoldrich@shootonline.com

ADVERTISING

Digital & Print Rates & Information
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Advertising Production

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OFFICES

Main Office

256 Post Road East #206

Westport, CT 06880 USA

203.227.1699 Fax: 203.227.2787

West

323.445.6818

Circulation

203.227.1699 ext. 12 circulation@shootonline.com

Editorial Production Manager/Custom Reprints

Michael Morgera

203.227.1699 ext. 11 mmorgera@shootonline.com

SHOOT Publicity Wire

203.227.1699 ext. 12 publicitywire@shootonline.com

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By Robert Goldrich



Progress Report

While the sample size in some cases is limited, there are signs of advancement for female directors that have emerged in recent months. For one, 9 of the 11 films slated for the upcoming AFI Fest's New Auteurs program are directed by women. And in SHOOT's Up-and-Coming Directors fall season collection covered in this issue, three of the five filmmak-

ers are women—Mary-Sue Masson, Sonja Sohn and Leonn Ward.

It's also been a year since the launch of the Free The Bid initiative which recently issued a progress report showing that, for example, the number of female directors invited by BBDO to participate in its bidding process has increased 400%, and the actual number of women directors hired by the agency has doubled.

Last week the AICP announced an

expansion of its Commercial Directors Diversity Program which seeks to increase directing opportunities for women and other historically underrepresented groups of people.

And according to a DGA study published last month, the pipeline of new episodic television directors grew larger than ever before and became markedly

the case of SHOOT up-and-comer Sohn, known for her role as Detective Kima Greggs on the HBO series *The Wire*. Sohn has made her directorial debut with *Baltimore Rising*, a documentary set to debut on HBO next month. The film follows activists, police officers, community leaders and gang affiliates who struggle to hold Baltimore together in the wake

The quality of the female director voices that are getting the opportunity to be heard is inspiring.

more inclusive in the 2016-'17 television season – with the percentage of ethnic minority first-time TV directors more than doubling since 2009-'10 and the percentage of women nearly tripling.

While there's still much to be done, encouraging signs go beyond recent steps forward towards the goal of leveling the gender playing field. Also inspiring is the quality of the voices that are getting the opportunity to be heard. Consider

of the death of Freddie Gray, a 25 year-old African-American who was arrested by the police in April 2015. While being transported in a police van, Gray fell into a coma and was taken to a trauma center. He died a week later due to spinal cord injuries. Sohn felt a compelling need to tell Baltimore's story. *Baltimore Rising* sheds light on the incident, its impact on an already damaged community, and the long simmering issues involved.

POV

By Robert Goldrich



Jason Peterson

The brave new world of Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and Mixed Reality has a lexicon all its own. This prompted Jason Peterson, chairman of Go Digital Media Group and CEO of ContentBridge Systems, and Ramón Bretón, CTO, 3rd i QC, to literally come to terms with this world. Peterson, an Entertainment Merchants Association (EMA) board member, and Bretón, an EMA member, in turn sought input from Philip Lelyveld of the USC Entertainment Technology Center, to fashion a dictionary to better enable content producers and agency creatives to communicate when working in this arena.

The EMA has long maintained a digital steering committee that sets standards for the entertainment industry. In the past, EMA has set standards for mezzanine files, metadata files and core definitions

Coming To Terms With VR, AR, MR

for the digital supply chain that were quickly adopted by the entertainment community. Continuing in that tradition is this work done by Peterson, Bretón and Lelyveld. Below is a sampling of definitions in that VR, AR and MR dictionary.

Augmented Reality (AR) - Computer rendered image or data that is overlaid over the real world where your brain is actually located. It is the addition of sensory input to your brain while your brain is getting its normal sensory input from its surroundings.

Binaural Audio - Reproductions of sound the way human ears hear it. In fact, the word "binaural" literally just means "using both ears." When you listen to a binaural recording through headphones, you perceive distinct and genuine 360° sound. Binaural recordings frequently use a "binaural dummy head," a model of a human head complete with anatomically correct ears and ear canals,

with a microphone located at the base of each ear canal.

Empathy - The intellectual and/or emotional connection with the subject(s) of a piece, which tends to be stronger in VR compared to traditional media, due to the immersive nature of VR technology.

Eye Tracking - A technology that monitors eye movements as a means of triggering changes in the content being consumed. For example, software interactions based on where the user is looking, or increasing the bit rate to the portion of a streaming 360° video that is currently being viewed by the user.

Yaw - In regards to VR, moving the head side to side, rotating along the vertical axis down from the center of the top of the head through the throat.

The full list of core definitions appears in the Friday (10/27) SHOOT >e.dition version of this column as well as on SHOOTonline.com.

Niklas Lindström

Partner in just launched W+K-backed indie agency CALLEN discusses his priorities, Swedish influence



By Robert Goldrich

Niklas Lindström, known for his production acumen yielding breakthrough work, is a partner in the just launched CALLEN, an independent creative agency in Austin, Texas. Founded by former Wieden+Kennedy (W+K) group creative director Craig Allen with partners Lindström and business entrepreneur Holly Petitjean, CALLEN is being backed by W+K as a minority investor. CALLEN enjoys complete autonomy. The only condition W+K placed on its investment is that CALLEN can never be sold and must remain independent.

The investment in CALLEN is a first for W+K. Colleen DeCourcy, co-chief creative officer for W+K, said, "Craig is a unique voice. He's willing to pull himself up on the work and do it for the long term. Our contribution is to believe in Craig, Niklas and Holly, provide some starter cash, and get out of the way. Craig will pay us back, we're not worried about that. The only thing we ask is that he never sell."

DeCourcy continued, "We see this as an alternative to the start-it-and-sell-it mentality we think is damaging to creative people and creative agencies. The advertising industry is feeling the squeeze right

now. We're lucky to have a simple and focused business model that actually works."

W+K witnessed Allen's creative prowess and resulting body of work first-hand. He had been with W+K since 2008 and put his imprint on brands including Old Spice, Nike, Coca-Cola, CareerBuilder.com, Electronic Arts, Oreo and Samsung.

Meanwhile Lindström is known for culture-defining work at several notable industry roosts, most recently as director of interactive production at Droga5 New York, where he created immersive experiences for clients including Under Armour, MailChimp and Hennessy. Prior to Droga5, Lindström headed up digital at Forsman & Bodenfors in Sweden, where he was involved in the production of the widely celebrated "Live Test Series" for Volvo Trucks. Before Forsman & Bodenfors, Lindström led digital projects for BBDO New York, with experience on accounts like AT&T, FedEx, General Electric, Mars and HBO. Prior to that, he spent six years at B-Reel. In addition to helping establish that company's New York office, he produced award-winning ads for Axe, Doritos and Google.

SHOOT: What drew you to CALLEN?

Lindström: First and foremost the people—Craig and Holly and our shared vision of creating a different type of creative company.

This is also the first time in my career I am joining a company from scratch and where I am able to influence organization, talent, and culture.

I co-founded Leo Burnett Interactive in Sweden back in 1999 but that was within an existing agency culture and I also opened the first international office in New York for B-Reel in 2007, also an already existing company and culture so this feels more exciting and pure. And last but not least the great backing and support from Wieden+Kennedy.

SHOOT: What are your priorities in

"My goal is to help build a company that is hard to categorize and define, and that has a rich and unexpected output of storytelling experiences."

terms of initiatives and goals at CALLEN?

Lindström: To figure out a more fluid and more adaptable organization with a more multi-talented staff that can transform and adapt to different client needs. Tighter and smaller teams that are more empowered and accountable and that closely collaborate with our clients. Break down the barrier between different roles and categories internally, make creativity flow throughout the whole company. Have a more agile approach to making where creation and production are more integrated. Most companies traditionally have a separation between creatives, producers, and your in-house production capabilities. What if these capabilities exist within the same team?

My goal is to help build a company



CALLEN partners (l-r) Lindstrom, Petitjean and Allen

that is hard to categorize and define, and that has a rich and unexpected output of storytelling, experiences, and products that truly make a difference.

SHOOT: You've been at Forsman & Bodenfors as well as the production company B-Reel. What does your overseas agency and production house experience enable you to bring to CALLEN?

Lindström: Organizations overseas are generally smaller and individuals have more trust and accountability to solve the tasks at hand. I think that creates a culture where people are better informed, more active and engaged throughout a project lifecycle which yields better end result and more fulfilled team members. The Swedish way of doing things is also built around a strong collective spirit that I hope to bring to our organization—we are always stronger and better than I.

SHOOT: What's the state of production?

Lindström: The state of production today is still focused a lot on video production with different purposes but we also have a continually growing need for non-traditional executions which can span

anything from experiential to building actual physical products. The ever-changing digital and social landscape requires us to produce a more diverse output for the same or less money as earlier. The challenge is to navigate this and use the money where it really makes a difference and balance and protect the creative integrity.

SHOOT: How do you balance agency in-house production with your ongoing need to work with the high-caliber talent in the production/post community?

Lindström: The creative idea guides the choice of production solution and if you need to partner with someone externally. In-house production is normally created for financial reasons and covers the simpler types of production where the expectations are lower. But there are other benefits working closely with people with hands-on skills—it makes the ideas and the work better. That is why CALLEN is striving to build teams with various production skills built in and to be able to deliver a range of output from simpler to executions with higher production value. There will always be a need to work and collaborate with external partners for specific skills and talent.

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Feature Creatures Affirm Our Humanity

Insights from *The Shape of Water* DP, VFX supervisors on *War for the Planet of the Apes* and *Okja*

By Robert Goldrich



Part of this season's Oscar conversation centers on creatively inspired creatures who play integral roles in telling ambitious stories. They include:

- A leader of apes who faces a profound inner struggle.
- A genetically engineered "pet" who's seemingly part pig, manatee, hippo and elephant with playful dog-like traits.
- And a hybrid man/sea creature in a Cold War espionage narrative and love story rolled into one.

Whether from the animal kingdom or an otherworldly place, these non-human characters trigger all-too-human feelings, reaffirming the humanity in all of us.

In this prequel to SHOOT's The Road To Oscar Series, which starts next month, we gain insights from those who helped bring these creatures to life: VFX supervisors on *War for the Planet of the Apes* (Twentieth Century Fox) and *Okja* (Netflix), and the DP of *The Shape of Water* (Fox Searchlight),

Joe Letteri

The Road To Oscar is one that has been successfully navigated by VFX maestro Joe Letteri, a four-time Best Visual Effects Academy Award winner—for *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* in 2003, *The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King* in 2004, *King Kong* in 2006, and *Avatar* in 2010. He is also the recipient of the Academy Technical Achievement Award, bestowed in 2004 for his work as part of a team that developed subsurface scattering techniques for rendering skin and other translucent materials.

Thus far Letteri has a total of nine Best Effects Oscar nominations, the other five coming for *I, Robot* in 2005, *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* in 2012, *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey* in 2013, *The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug* in 2014, and *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* in 2015.

Now Letteri, a partner in New Zealand-based VFX studio Weta Digital, once again finds himself in the Oscar

banter as sr. visual effects supervisor on *War for the Planet of the Apes*. While there's plenty of spectacle in the work, what resonates most for Letteri are the characters. "They're the most interesting part of what we do as artists, helping in those subtle moments when you discover something about a character," related Letteri. "You can see Caesar [leader of the apes] watching what humans are doing. You can see and feel him plotting in his mind. This is the third film we've done in this Apes series [after *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* and then *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes*]. Our being able to spend time with the characters and getting to know them has been invaluable—especially watching Andy Serkis as Caesar. He gives a wonderful inwardly driven performance in this latest film.

"In the first film, he's a chimp growing up and discovering the world," continued Letteri. "In the second film Caesar is coming to grips with the forces buffeting him, the conflicts within the

From top left, clockwise: A scene from *War for the Planet of the Apes*; *Okja* VFX supervisor Erik De Boer; Sally Hawkins (l) and Octavia Spencer in *The Shape of Water*; *Shape of Water* DP Dan Laustsen, DFF; a scene from *Okja*; *War for the Planet of the Apes* sr. VFX supervisor Joe Letteri; Apes leader Caesar.

ROAD TO OSCAR PREQUEL

group and group dynamics. And now in the third film, Caesar crosses his

Performance capture technology—which can record nuances of move-



Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Andy Serkis as Caesar in *War for the Planet of the Apes*

own moral boundary. He wants to kill the people who killed his family. He's driven in a different direction. We had to capture the struggle within him. You get that emotion and drama by delving into what's happening behind his eyes, the subtleties of translating human performance to an ape performance. That requires us to be in the moment with the characters."

Caesar and his followers are forced into a deadly conflict with an army of humans led by a ruthless Colonel. Both leaders have to face their darker instincts, and from that there are lessons to be learned about what it means to be human—and humane.

Letteri said it's imperative that VFX support the development of characters; his track record of having a hand in creating compelling, realistic creatures extends from *The Hobbit's* Gollum to the Na'vi in *Avatar*, and Caesar from the *Planet of the Apes* franchise. For the latter, Letteri cited the collaborative relationship between his team and Matt Reeves who directed both *Dawn of the Planet of the Apes* and *War for the Planet of the Apes*. "We were on the same wavelength, wanting to make this story an emotional journey," said Letteri. "Matt explores and goes with the nuances of the characters who are on that journey. Our work and the imagery we integrate later on has to do everything it can to support the performances of actors as they experience and take the audience on that journey with them."

ment, gesture and emotion, bringing them to animated characters via human actors—has facilitated the creation of memorable apes in *Rise*, *Dawn* and now *War for the Planet of the Apes*. Throughout the process, the technology and its capabilities have progressed as developed and deployed by Weta Digital over the years—to the point where Serkis can focus on his performance as being much more than a stand-in for the character until magic is added later on. Rather than representing Caesar, Serkis can now more fully than ever become Caesar. And while Caesar isn't a person, his emotions are very human. Serkis observed that the playing field has been leveled to where there's no difference between portraying a character in a performance capture suit or taking on a role in costume and with makeup. Thus there's more of an equal footing when an actor in a performance capture suit is in a scene opposite an actor not wearing technological garb.

Performance capture has also advanced in terms of environments. Prior to *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, performance capture hadn't been attempted in an open environment outside a soundstage. For that film, the precedent was set of lensing performance capture in the woods. Most recently for *War for the Planet of the Apes*, action was captured on mountains and in falling snow, conquering the elements, including the technical quandary of properly depicting wet fur.

War for the Planet of the Apes features a dozen key ape characters, which is more than in the previous Ape films. These characters speak with more polish and fluency, posing yet another challenge to Weta Digital in terms of facial expressions and lip sync.

The bottom line, said Letteri, is how the technology—from performance capture to real-time facial animation—enables storytelling, empowering the director to explore characters and get the most out of his cast. "The bar keeps rising as the sophistication of performance grows." In the case of Caesar, this entails conveying the intensity of his emotions, the battling of inner demons, and how he copes with a human predicament.

Erik De Boer

Erik De Boer too is no stranger to Oscar-winning visual effects, having earned one for his contributions to Ang Lee's *Life of Pi*. De Boer also was an artisan on *The Golden Compass*, for which his colleagues won the Academy Award for VFX, and *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, which was nominated for the same honor. All this was done during De Boer's lengthy tenure at Rhythm & Hues.

8-foot-tall, 13-foot long genetically modified pig that looks a bit like a hippo, has big floppy ears like a dog, and moves about like a somehow nimble elephant.

Debuting at this year's Cannes Film Fest, *Okja* centers on the loving relationship between this hybrid creature and Mija (portrayed by Seo-Hyun Ahn). Mija grew up with Okja only to have her "pet" and friend taken away by the corporation that created it. The conglomerate is looking to get a major return on its investment, harvesting these oversized creatures for their meat. Okja is headed for a slaughterhouse, but Mija and some youthful allies are on a wild adventure to save the beloved pet—and perhaps other genetically modified creatures.

For the creation of the Okja character, director Joon-ho turned to primarily two artisans—conceptual artist Jang Hee-chul to design Okja, and De Boer. Hee-chul had designed the monster in Joon-ho's 2007 thriller *The Host*. And De Boer won the Oscar as the animator who crafted the tiger Richard Parker in *Life of Pi*. It was *Life of Pi* which prompted Joon-ho to seek out De Boer.

"The pig was already designed," recalled De Boer who added key touches. "We looked at manatees for skin and



Photo courtesy of Netflix

Tilda Swinton (l) and Seo-Hyun Ahn in *Okja*

Fast forward to today and De Boer, now a four-year veteran of Method Studios, is again generating Oscar buzz, this time as effects supervisor on the feature *Okja* directed by Bong Joon-ho. Method was the lead effects studio on *Okja*, with Creative Party in Busan, South Korea, handling some environment work.

The title character in *Okja* is an

musculature since the character is an engineered animal who needs layers of fat so it can yield lots of pork." De Boer also looked at canines and elephants for the ears. Dogs were also prevalent in terms of capturing Okja's behavior, showing intelligence and a bond with its human owner. De Boer went far more

Continued on page 8

Reflections From Erik De Boer, DP Dan Laustsen

Continued from page 7

than just skin-deep, delving into Okja's innards such as bone structure, arteries, fat and blood, studying all the crevices and how the internal organs shape the

ing with Mija, and connected via radio with me behind the camera," related De Boer. "The laser-cut foam models of Okja were on set like they were standard props. We also had a lot of rehearsal with



A scene from Guillermo del Toro's love story/fable *The Shape of Water* external appearance.

Like the hybrid animal Okja, the movie is a hybrid—part action/adventure, part comedic (with dark humor provided by a cast that includes Tilda Swinton, Jake Gyllenhaal and Paul Dano), part satiric social commentary and part magical fantasy with elements of drama and suspense. To do justice to this multi-faceted story, a prime visual effects challenge was to keep the interactions between Okja and humans, most notably Mija, believable.

While CGI characters have advanced greatly over the years, it still is a feat to mesh them naturally into live-action scenes. And in the case of the creature Okja, this coming together with live action is seemingly constant in the film. Mija or others would have a hand on Okja regularly. At times, noted De Boer, as many as six people were touching Okja. To keep a believable tactile feel to those interactions, a foam puppet rig of Okja—sometimes the entire creature, at other times just part of it—were used during live-action lensing. VFX animation director Stephen Clee controlled the rig, positioning it so that actors could reach out and touch it. This went a long way to helping to create the seamlessness of people and pig interacting in the final film.

"Stephen was in front of the camera puppeteering the Okja rig, work-

Mija so that she was comfortable and knew what was going on. She learned how to pet Okja's neck, making the connection between the two characters believable. Hugging, kissing, petting Okja as much as she does, we had to make this work. Okja is a friendly creature and there's no way to get around our having to make embraces between them look real and natural."

De Boer said watching folks running around—and actors interacting—with foam-cut pieces was a sight to behold during filming. "It was pretty spectacular and at times pretty funny looking."

Dan Laustsen, DFF

The Shape of Water marks the third feature that DP Dan Laustsen, DFF, has shot for director Guillermo del Toro—the first two being *Mimic* (1997) and *Crimson Peak* (2015). Laustsen knew going into *The Shape of Water* that he and del Toro are very much simpatico.

"We have the same taste and opinion when it comes to lighting and camera movement, related Laustsen. "Guillermo knows exactly what he wants to do and how. As a cinematographer, I find him very easy to be around. We understand each other. A lot of stuff we don't even have to talk about."

Being on the same page proved invaluable for such an ambitious movie, which topped last month's Venice Film

Festival with a Golden Lion win. *The Shape of Water* is a fairy tale set during the Cold War era of America circa 1962. In the hidden high-security government laboratory where she works as a janitor, Elisa (Sally Hawkins), a mute, is trapped in a life of isolation. Her life, though, takes on hope, when she and co-worker Zelda (Octavia Spencer) discover a secret classified experiment—a hybrid man/sea creature with whom Elisa makes a special connection. Elisa and this amphibian man (Doug Jones), who too is mute, fall in love.

A relationship between mutes, steeped in a rich emotional silence, is a premise, said Laustsen, that is "very cinematic." The visual becomes all the more important in showing their special connection, against a backdrop of espionage, danger and government Cold War era secrecy. Adding to the fairy tale mystery is how the creature is photographed. "You have to reveal enough of him so that the audience can feel a connection but at the same time," noted the DP, "the key was not to show too much."

This was done in part through inventive use of light. Del Toro observed, "A great cinematographer is like an orchestra conductor—he transmits emotion with light instead of musical notes."

That lighting acumen also applied to helping to re-create the Cold War era. With expressionistic lighting and use of shadows, the film is lit as if it were 1950s'

liquidity" so that the narrative would "ebb and flow like water." The DP observed, "Everything's in motion in the film. Guillermo wanted lots of camera movement, and he likes very precise movement so we worked with all kinds of cranes, dollies and Steadicams."

Laustsen deployed the ARRI ALEXA XT camera with an internal diffusion filter, in tandem with ARRI/Zeiss Master Prime lenses. He said the filter and lenses softened the digital sharpness, "evened out the skin tones on the actors a little bit. This enabled us to get closer to what we envisioned for the film."

For some of the underwater sequences, Laustsen shot "dry for wet," using smoke, wind machines and projection to create a dripping, pulsating feel contributing to the illusion of water. This enabled the actors to perform with their eyes open, tapping into their facial expressions—again heightening feelings of both romance and mystery.

Laustsen has lensed 40-plus feature films, TV movies and documentaries both in his native Denmark and internationally, winning the Robert Award (Denmark's Film Academy Awards) for Best Cinematography three times, including for *I Am Dina*, which also scored the DP a coveted Golden Frog nomination at Camerimage. Among Laustsen's other credits are *Simon and the Oaks*, *The Possession*, *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and *John*



Sally Hawkins in *The Shape of Water*

black and white even though it was actually shot in color.

Another dynamic that propels the film is what Laustsen called "a visual

Wick: Chapter 2. The dailies of his first American movie, *Nightwatch*, caught the eye of del Toro, who then hired him to shoot *Mimic*.



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RODEO SHOW CLEANS UP WITH MUSICAL FARE

Venice, Calif.-based production company Rodeo Show and director Sarah Chatfield pay homage to the musical romcom *La La Land* in a rhythmic new spot for PINALEN® Multipurpose Cleaner out of Cavalry.



The melodic spot features a one-woman dancing number as she twirls, mops and prances through several colorful rooms that represent the multi-purpose cleaner's six vibrant scents. The spot was inspired by *La La Land*, bringing colorful visuals and a vivacious and animated spin to some of the most mundane activities, like cleaning in this instance. To create a seamless and fluid visually-driven performance, the entire dance sequence was shot in one take.

AUTHOR JEFF GORMAN TELLS AD BIZ STORY

Jeff Gorman, an internationally known, award-winning advertising writer, creative director and TV commercial director, has written "Last Stop Before the Sphincter," a book containing 40 stories about what he experienced firsthand in advertising. It gives the reader a realistic, inside look at the ad biz from the mid-1960s to the present, shedding light on those who are the drivers of American consumerism.

Gorman made his first industry mark as an agency creative in Chicago and then moved to the West Coast, most notably working for Chiat\Day where he created Nike's first consumer ad campaign—acclaimed outdoor, print and television work created for the 1984 Olympics. Among the commercials for this campaign was a blockbuster entitled "I Love L.A." which used Randy Newman's song and video. It was the first time a music video was adapted for use as a commercial. Gorman also conceived all of Michael Jordan's first Nike TV commercials, including one he directed entitled "NBA," that elevated Nike's new basketball line into prominence. He also created the lauded print campaign for L.A. Eyeworks that has run for more than 30 years featuring celebrities that ranged from Andy Warhol to Elton John.

Gorman then turned director and formed Johns+Gorman Films (JGF), a TV commercial production company based in Los Angeles. The express purpose of this new endeavor was directing spots with "great, simple concepts." Over the years, JGF became internationally renowned for producing award-winning comedic commercials.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE....

Steve Vranakis, executive creative director at Google's Creative Lab, has begun his tenure as president of D&AD. He will act as a global voice for excellence in design and advertising, championing D&AD's mission to stimulate a fairer, more diverse, properly gender-balanced, and therefore more robust industry, in the pursuit of groundbreaking creativity. Harriet Devoy, creative director of design, marketing communications at Apple Europe, has been appointed deputy president. D&AD has also announced the establishment of a global advisory board. Each year D&AD appoints a president from the board of trustees to further the organization's mission and shape the conversations for the year ahead. An integral element of D&AD's strategy to promote inclusion is New Blood Shift, a free night school aimed at providing creative education to a more diverse group of people. The program is in its second year and helps young creative minds outside the traditional education system get an industry foothold....



Steve Vranakis



Welcome to the Special Fall 2017 Edition of SHOOT's Directors Series. Our mix of profiles includes several filmmakers whose work has entered this season's Oscar conversation, including Sean Baker for *The Florida Project*, Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton for *Battle of the Sexes*, Stephen Frears for *Victoria & Abdul*, Craig Gillespie for *I, Tonya*, Todd Haynes for *Wonderstruck*, Reginald Hudlin for *Marshall* and Dee Rees for *Mudbound*.

Within this group, there are strong ties to commercialmaking. Gillespie, who's with MJZ for commercials and branded content, is a DGA Award winner (and four-time nominee) for Best Commercial Director of the Year. The Dayton/Faris duo, which made its first feature splash with the lauded *Little Miss Sunshine*, has enjoyed ad biz success during a long, ongoing tenure at production house Bob Industries. Haynes is repped in the spot/branded content arena by Moxie Pictures. And last year Baker earned a Tribeca X Award nomination, a competition that celebrates branded storytelling, for the short film *Snowbird* starring Abbey Lee, part of a fashion campaign for KENZO.

Also in the SHOOT Series lineup of profiles are Miles Jay of Smuggler, who recently won the primetime commercial Emmy Award for Squarespace's "Calling JohnMalkovich.com" out of agency John X Hannes; and Damian Kulash who's breaking new branded ground at Park Pictures.

The lead singer, guitarist and founder of rock band OK Go, Kulash has successfully extended his reach into filmmaking over the years as most recently reflected in Morton Salt's "The One Moment" which has won assorted accolades including six Cannes Lions this year along with a Wood Pencil at the D&ADs, and an AICP Show honor for Best Production. The Cannes bounty consisted of a Gold Digital Craft Lion, a Gold Design Lion, a Silver Film Craft Lion, a Bronze Film Craft Lion, a Bronze Film Lion in Viral, and a Bronze PR Lion. "The One Moment" came out of agency Ogilvy.

Meanwhile our ensemble of up-and-coming talent consists of: a noted actress who's making her directorial debut with an upcoming HBO documentary; a music video/spot/short film helmer who's gotten his first meaningful taste of long-form fare via a Netflix TV series he co-created; a still photographer who has successfully diversified into moving imagery, directing spots, shorts and branded fare on both sides of the Atlantic; a filmmaker who brings agency creative chops and BBC production experience to her first production company affiliation in the U.S.; and a director at one with nature, adept at the deployment of drones, and who made a major mark with a short film that scored on the festival circuit.

And then in our Cinematographers & Cameras Series, we meet three DPs—one who has lensed eight Sundance Film Festival premieres in the past seven years; another who's in pre-pro on his sixth feature for the same noted director, the last release being a Disney live-action film that sprung from the beloved animation classic *Beauty and the Beast*; and a lenser who too enjoyed a recent return engagement with a director/writer for whom he previously collaborated with in both the feature and TV series worlds.

Both our Up-and-Coming Directors and Cinematographers & Cameras Series feature stories as well as several of the director profiles have been edited for the print issue. All these stories can be seen in their entirety in our 10/30 Special Directors Series SHOOT>e.dition and on SHOOT-online. So read on and enjoy. And as always, we welcome your feedback.



—Robert Goldrich
Editor
rgoldrich@shootonline.com

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Sean Baker

Achieving a delicate balance

By Robert Goldrich

While the Cliff Notes' version of writer/producer/director/editor Sean Baker's filmography often first points to his revolutionary use of the iPhone camera to lens the critically acclaimed feature *Tangerine*, it's about time to get past that breakthrough which in the big picture is a novelty compared to the storytelling itself. *Tangerine* resonated for the empathy it created for otherwise marginalized people in society, at the same time masterfully

The kids' POV brings a light-hearted, almost magical entertainment to the story. But too much fun could trivialize the plight of the working poor. Conversely a focus on these struggling families runs the risk of becoming preachy, making for an unsatisfying movie experience.

Somehow Baker—who directed, produced, edited and co-wrote (with Chris Bergoch) *The Florida Project*—maintains the right balance, making an entertaining, wonder-filled film that at the same time creates an underlying empathy for those who are marginalized and vulnerable.

"That's the big challenge," affirmed Baker. "We found ourselves doing that balancing act with *Tangerine*. And with *The Florida Project* we felt we achieved something along those lines. You have to achieve it in all stages—the script writing obviously, on set, how the scenes play out, the performances, the style of film, camera movements, postproduction. You go one degree too much into perhaps the comedy side and you face the danger of being disrespectful and condescending, turning what these characters face into a farce. You're playing with behavioral humor—a humor that has to mirror real life and truth. It's the humor characters use to get through the day. Attaining that creative balance was the number one priority."

The Florida Project also provided more logistical challenges for Baker and his compatriots. "The limited hours of when we could film the children was always a concern," related Baker. "We had abridged days because of the kids' available hours.

And after we had cast Valeria [Cotto] as Jancey [one of Moonee's prime running mates], we found out she was five going on six. This cut two more hours off the time we could work with her each day."

Baker gravitated to Zabe for *The Florida Project*, saying he was drawn to the cinematographer's work on three Mexican features, most notably *Silent Light* for writer/director Carlos Reygadas. "It had a mature 35mm look, not as colorful and 'poppy' as *The Florida Project*. But I also saw that Alexis had shot 'poppy' music videos like Pharrell Williams' 'Happy.' I wanted to combine those two styles for *The Florida Project*—a very mature high-brow cinematography with something colorful that would pop out. It's that colorful element that reflects the kids' perspectives as they are playing in their own wonderland—which adults would view quite differently as run down and gritty.

Prior to *The Florida Project*, Baker worked with Zabe on a short for Kenzo titled *Snowbird*, which was in the running for the Tribeca Film Festival's first Tribeca X Award in 2016—an honor bestowed on the year's best piece of branded storytelling. "From that experience, I saw how Alexis works," said Baker. "I love his demeanor. Often on low-budget shoots there's chaos and panic. He's about as Zen as a DP can get, focusing on the art."

Casting

Critical to *The Florida Project* was the casting of the kids including Prince and Cotto. Baker recalled, "I told myself I



will not make this film unless we find a present-day Spanky McFarland [of *Our Gang* and *Little Rascals* fame]—a kid who is charismatic, witty, cute. We had street casting. We had casting calls. I saw Brooklyn's face in the database of a local casting company called CROWDshot. I saw one of her reels and later met her. She came into the room and by chance she was auditioning the same time as Christopher Rivera [who plays the kid Scooty]. They didn't know each other but there was something magical about the chemistry between them although they didn't even know each other yet. Brooklyn is on the level of genius—she can improvise, is enthusiastic, cute. She made us laugh."

Meanwhile Baker found Cotto at a Target store in Kissimmee, Florida. "She had a different quality than other cute kids."

Helping the process was acting coach Samantha Quan. The children were cast before Bria Vinaite (who played Moonee's mom) and Willem Dafoe (as the kind-hearted motel manager). "Samantha had time to work with the kids, turning their summer into an acting camp," related Baker. "Even while I was off working with another sequence or the adult actors, Samantha was continuously helping the kids, getting them to a place where they felt comfortable with improvisation."



The Florida Project

balancing elements of pathos and comedy.

Fast forward to Baker's next feature, *The Florida Project* (A24)—which has earned critical acclaim and Oscar buzz—and we again see a similar artful balance, this time captured on 35mm film by cinematographer Alexis Zabe. *The Florida Project* introduces us to itinerant families living in Orlando budget motels a stone's throw from Walt Disney World. The film's perspective, though, is through the eyes of the children—in particular a six-year-old girl named Moonee (portrayed by Brooklyn Kimberly Prince)—and their challenged existence becomes at times a fun-filled adventure akin to what might be worthy of exploits in the Magic Kingdom.

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Valerie Faris & Jonathan Dayton

The “Battle” within

By Robert Goldrich

Battle of the Sexes (Fox Searchlight) takes us to 1973 when the eighth wonder of the world—believe it or not, that’s what the Houston Astrodome was called—hosted the tennis match of the century, pitting champion Billie Jean King, age 29, against Bobby Riggs, 55, himself a former champ turned rogue hustler/self-promoter who stoked the fires for a big payday in a battle of the sexes tennis match. He upped the ante by adopting a male chauvinist persona, contending that man was superior to woman—and that he would prove it on the court by thrashing King.



Photo by Wanda Sue Gordon/fox searchlight

Battle of the Sexes

Meanwhile King had a lot to prove as the leading advocate for women tennis players deserving prize money equal to what the men were getting. She had just organized the women professionals as they broke away from the tennis establishment and ran their own Virginia Slims-sponsored series of tournaments.

The King-Riggs tennis match is now part of modern sports folklore. But the beauty of the movie *Battle of the Sexes*—definitely directed by the wife and husband team of Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton—is that the tennis match isn’t the only battle being waged. Rather it’s the battle within each player that gives more weight to the story—and ultimately to the tennis match itself. For Riggs (portrayed by Steve Carell), his impish charm masks what some would view as a gambling addiction, which threatens to ruin his marriage. He’s also battling the fate of a notable athlete past his prime, coping with obscurity while still craving attention and

adulation.

King’s battle is even more profound as she struggles with defining her sexuality and who she is. Ostensibly happily married to a devoted, loving man, Billie Jean (played by Emma Stone) has her inner passion stirred by a female hairstylist (Andrea Riseborough). Their love affair comes at a time when a gay lifestyle carried a considerable stigma in mainstream society. As we know, King went on to be far more than just a tennis champion. She became a champion of social change, helping to advance women’s and LGBTQ rights.

Faris affirmed that these inner struggles were among the prime challenges of the film for her and Dayton. “We wanted to get the audience invested in the two characters—Billie Jean and Bobby—so that by the time we get to the tennis match, you’re watching more than a tennis match. You’re all in once you’ve seen what they’ve gone through. We had to balance



their stories with the event itself, bringing more emotional resonance to that event.”

Helping to attain that balance was the creative equilibrium and rapport between Dayton and Faris, honed over years of not only marriage (including raising three children) but also nimble, insightful storytelling, starting with the MTV music documentary show *The Cutting Edge* and then spanning music videos (for the likes of Smashing Pumpkins and Red Hot Chili Peppers) and commercials before successfully dovetailing into feature filmmaking with the acclaimed *Little Miss Sunshine*, and later the under the radar and underrated *Ruby Sparks* followed now by *Battle of the Sexes*.

Continued on page 17

Stephen Frears

The joy and sadness of collaboration

By Robert Goldrich

Among the many collaborators who stand out for director Stephen Frears on the recently released *Victoria & Abdul* (Focus Features) are two he’s had a long, rewarding track record with; however while both have brought him joy, one of them now evokes sadness.

The latter is production designer Alan MacDonald who passed away on Aug. 30 at the age of 61. *Victoria & Abdul* thus marks the final collaboration between Frears and MacDonald. It’s a working relationship that began on the Best Picture Oscar-nominated *The Queen* for which Frears received his second career Acad-



Photo by Peter Mourant/courtesy of Focus Features

Victoria & Abdul

emy Award nomination for Best Director (the first coming for *The Grifters*). *The Queen* earned British Independent Film and Art Directors Guild Award nominations for MacDonald.

Frears and MacDonald later teamed on *Cheri* starring Michelle Pfeiffer; *Tamara Drewe* starring Gemma Arterton; *Philomena*, also a Best Picture Oscar nominee and for which Judi Dench garnered an Academy Award nod for Best Leading Actress; *The Program* starring Ben Foster; *Florence Foster Jenkins* which landed a Best Lead Actress Oscar nomination for Meryl Streep; and now *Victoria & Abdul* starring Dench as long-reigning, aging not so gracefully Queen Victoria.

The film tells the story of the relationship between the monarch and Abdul Karim (portrayed by Ali Fazal), a young man from India who becomes her servant and teacher. The movie is based on journalist Shrabani Basu’s book “Victoria & Abdul: The True Story of the Queen’s Closest Confidant.”

Speaking of MacDonald who was his production design confidant, Frears shared, “I tend to make films on subjects I know nothing about going in. He (MacDonald) would guide me through them. He was very good at that, a very hard working artist with a delicate touch. He had a keen sense of architecture. For *Victoria & Abdul* he created places that had a strong Gothic feel. He brought so much to each project. I will miss him.”

Judi Dench

As for Dench, she is Frears’ other alluded to prime collaborator. *Victoria & Abdul* is the fifth project pairing Frears and Dench, two of which scored Best Leading Actress Oscar nominations—*Philomena* in 2014 and *Mrs. Henderson Presents* in 2006. Dench has a total of seven career Oscar nominations, winning for her supporting role in *Shakespeare in Love* (directed by Madden).

Frears first worked with Dench on *Going Gentry*, a BBC teleplay, in 1981. Two



years later they teamed on the telefilm *Saigon: Year of the Cat*.

While Frears was drawn to the story of *Victoria & Abdul*, that in and of itself wasn’t enough for him to take on the project. “I’d only do the film with Judi,” he affirmed.

Frears began his career in UK television before moving into features. He is a three-time DGA Award nominee, starting with the telefilm *Fail Safe* in 2001, then for *The Queen* in 2007, and then back in the TV arena for *Muhammad Ali’s Greatest Fight* in 2014.

As for what’s next, Frears has another TV turn in the offing—*A Very English Scandal*, a BBC telefilm which centers on British politician Jeremy Thorpe who’s accused of murdering his ex-lover and was forced to stand trial in 1979.

Craig Gillespie

A balancing act on ice

By Robert Goldrich

On the surface, many may find the prospect of re-living the Tonya Harding story an unappetizing *deja vu*. The Olympic ice figure skater along with her then husband, Jeff Gillooly, were implicated in a knee-smashing attack on her prime U.S. skating competitor, Nancy Kerrigan, just prior to the 1994 Winter Olympics. The resulting media circus/feeding frenzy came to be regarded in some circles as a precursor to what is now our society's

increased penchant for sensationalized news and reality TV fare.

However, in the skillful hands of director Craig Gillespie, writer Steven Rogers and their filmmaking compatriots, Harding's story as told in the movie *I, Tonya* (Neon, 30West), proves to be smart, funny and engaging, propelled by Margot Robbie's tour de force portrayal of Harding. Principals in the story, including Harding, her mother (portrayed by Allison Janney) and Gillooly (Sebastian Stan), are shown today, looking back on their lives, providing their accounts of and perspectives on what happened.

"The trickiest challenge of the film is the tone," observed Gillespie. "It's a dance between drama and humor in the same moment."

Indeed *I, Tonya* is a movie difficult

to categorize. It's part tongue-in-cheek documentary, biopic, drama and comedy rolled into one, even at times resembling a morality play of sorts, depicting parental and spousal abuse, sparking some understanding, even a bit of empathy for the infamous Harding.

She's even skating against her personal life as judges fail to give her the competitive scores she deserves in the national championships—triple axels notwithstanding—because she doesn't come remotely close to the desirable all-American image that was a prerequisite back then to get a thumbs-up on the road to the Winter Games.

It's a road littered with assorted offbeat unsavory characters including Harding's aforementioned, acid-tongued mom who drives her daughter from the age of four



to become a world-class skater yet in the process wreaks world-class havoc on her life, undermining her sense of self-worth. Janney's character is both toxic and funny, simultaneously humorous and serious. Gillooly for a fleeting moment seems like the prince who's there to rescue Harding from her upbringing. But ultimately he's a loser of a guy who's lacking in smarts and has a mean streak which translates into intermittently physically abusing his wife. There's Shaw Eckhardt (played by Paul Walter Hauser), Gillooly's buddy and criminal co-conspirator who has delu-

Continued on page 18



I, Tonya

Photo courtesy of NEON

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Todd Haynes

Parallel paths to discovery

By Robert Goldrich

Looking to open up a new world via parallel stories set 50 years apart, director Todd Haynes found his own crew members on *Wonderstruck* (Amazon Studios) personally discovering and being moved by that very same world almost as if life were imitating the art they were trying to create.

Nominated for the Palme d'Or at this year's Cannes Film Festival, *Wonderstruck* introduces us to Rose (portrayed by Millicent Simmonds), a deaf girl who in 1927 runs away from home in New Jersey and makes her way to Manhattan to find someone who was an important

part of her past. Fast forward to 1977 and we meet Ben (played by Oakes Fegley), a deaf lad beset by personal tragedy, who finds a clue about his family that leads him to run away from rural Minnesota to New York. Based on the children's book "Wonderstruck" written and illustrated by Brian Selznick, Haynes' film connects not only two stories, two eras and two runaway 12-year-olds but also provides viewers with a path into the deaf culture.

The crew assembled by Haynes also gained exposure to this culture. Many deaf actors were cast in the silent portion of the film set in the 1920s. Deaf actors portrayed hearing characters, a practice not uncommon during Hollywood's silent era. Sign language was prominent on the *Wonderstruck* sets and locations, with signing and translators all about. "We had crews fumbling through learning sign language," related Haynes. "It was a coming together of different cultures, different worlds. The deaf community had a

different status in the 1970s as compared to the 1920s. In the kids' stories we were trying to capture the deaf culture—and in making the film, our crew and myself personally embraced it. It was a coming together of worlds during our production which was a major takeaway for the crew, a very real personal benefit for me."

Helping to further this feeling of discovery for the movie-going audience was the continuity of artists lending their talents to *Wonderstruck*. The film followed Haynes' critically acclaimed *Carol*, with the director keeping many of the same creative partners on board to jump right onto the next storytelling adventure. These creative artisans included cinematographer Ed Lachman, ASC, editor Affonso Goncalves, costume designer Sandy Powell and composer Carter Burwell. "We just kept the energy going from one film to the next," related Haynes. "We were all engaged in the theme of deafness. We did everything we could to delve



into this world and to convey it."

Pivotal was the good fortune of coming across the right actors, a prime example being Simmonds. "Finding a kid who had never acted professionally before, who was deaf and as special and unique as Millicent meant everything," affirmed Haynes.

Another key was editor Goncalves. "Going into this project we felt the foundation of this film would be in editorial. And that's how it played out," assessed Haynes. "This was clear in Brian's [Selznick] first script adaptation from his book, which demonstrated how scenes might be intercut. It was inspiring on page. But the specificity of how the two stories from different eras would interact,

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Wonderstruck

Reginald Hudlin

Doing justice to Marshall

By Robert Goldrich

At first blush it might seem that director Reginald Hudlin was moving out of his comfort zone when taking on a drama, *Marshall*, that sought to shed light on Thurgood Marshall, the attorney who successfully argued the landmark civil rights case *Brown vs. The Board of Education* and later became the first African-American Supreme Court Justice.

Initially Hudlin came on board the feature *Marshall*—an Open Road Films release starring Chadwick Boseman in the title role—as a producer, brought into the fold by EP Paula Wagner. Hudlin is a jack—and master—of many trades, not only

producing and directing but also writing and as an executive (the first president of entertainment for the BET network). His experience spans varied disciplines—from features to TV and even comic books. As a producer, Hudlin earned a Best Picture Oscar nomination for Quentin Tarantino's *Django Unchained*.

Wagner hadn't thought of Hudlin at the outset when considering directors for *Marshall*. After all, Hudlin's best known feature directorial credits—such as *House Party*, *Boomerang* and *The Ladies Man*—are comedies. However when Wagner sought advice as to prospective directors, a college friend of hers—writer/producer and 10-time Emmy winner (*NYPD Blue*, *L.A. Law*) Steven Bochco—said she already had her director in hand, noting that Hudlin had serious dramatic chops and was ideally suited to helm *Marshall*. Hudlin had directed courtroom and medical dramas for Bochco.

Hudlin was drawn to the *Marshall* script and its subject. A long-time admirer

of Thurgood Marshall, Hudlin described him as "one of those people who helped America fulfill its promise." As for the script, Hudlin liked that rather than capturing Marshall arguing *Brown vs. Board of Education* or as a Supreme Court Justice, the story focused on him as a young man taking on a relatively obscure case—but one that was significant in his genesis as a champion for social justice.

"We knew that a cradle-to-grave biopic would be the wrong approach," related Hudlin. "Taking on a case that no one knows the outcome of was also to our advantage—it's a case that has shocking relevance to today's issues."

Akin to the perception that had pigeonholed him as a comedy director even though reality said otherwise, Hudlin when considering collaborators was open-minded about what they could contribute. Actor Josh Gad, for example, is known for his prowess in comedy. But Hudlin saw him as ideal for the role of Samuel Friedman, a young Jewish attorney



who has to argue Marshall's case in that the judge ruled that Marshall could not speak at trial. Hudlin reasoned that Gadd's humor would bring a welcomed dimension to the character. "Funny might make him less preachy," said Hudlin. "That and the fact that Josh was an amazing actor with keen dramatic sensibilities. Every choice he made was spot on."

When it came to who would play Marshall, though, Boseman was a clear choice in terms of both perception and reality. The actor is known for masterful portrayals of historical characters such as Jackie Robinson in *42* and James Brown in *Get On Up*. "He was not planning on playing another historical figure," recalled Hudlin. "But Chadwick read the script and couldn't walk away."



Marshall

Miles Jay

Emmy win marks diversification into comedy

By Robert Goldrich

Miles Jay first graced the pages of *SHOOT*'s Directors Series in 2013 when he was included in our Up-and-Coming Directors feature on the strength of an interactive short, *Carly's Cafe*, that introduced us to Carly Fleishman, a 17 year old who was diagnosed with severe autism at the age of two. *Carly's Cafe* was an online experience through which viewers could navigate a virtual cafe with the same distractions and pressures that she encoun-

ters. The short earned Jay a Young Director Award at the 2012 Cannes Lions.

Fast forward to the present and Jay returns to *SHOOT*'s Directors Series as we find that circumstances for him have changed yet remain the same. On the "same" score, he's still winning awards, the most recent being the primetime commercial Emmy for Squarespace's "Calling John Malkovich.com" produced by his production company home, Smuggler, for NY agency John X Hannes.

As for what's different, the Malkovich spot is comedy, a genre for which Jay hadn't been widely known. The piece shows actor Malkovich in his fashion design studio talking to someone who has already claimed the domain name John-Malkovich.com. This raises the question of who is being John Malkovich as the famous thespian tries to convince the other

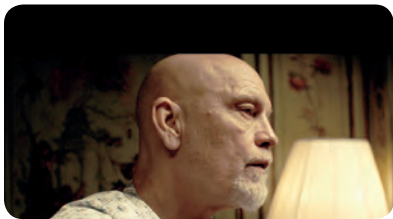
Malkovich to give him back his "rightful" domain name. The underlying sales pitch is that you better take care of business and get your domain name through Squarespace--or you could wind up being an angry Malkovich.

"Getting the chance to direct John Malkovich, being able to get involved early on from the script stage--what a great opportunity. John is really the opposite of his popular persona. He is a sweet, beautiful man."

The Emmy win put the spotlight on Jay's talent for comedy, extending his creative reach beyond the poignant fare for which he first earned his reputation, perhaps best demonstrated in *It Can Wait* for ESPN and AT&T, which told the story of Fletcher Cleaves, a promising high school football player who sustained serious injuries in an automobile accident which



left him a paraplegic. Right before the tragic collision, the driver of the other vehicle was looking down at a text message on her cell phone. A 90-second version of the six-minute short landed Jay a DGA Award nomination in the commercials category last year. Jay blended elements of documentary and fiction, recreating the past and chronicling the present--which six years after the accident finds Cleaves leading an independent life. Rather than focus on the crash itself, Jay delved into everything before and after the accident because, he explained, "That's where you uncover the human story."



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Damian Kulash

Love letter/dance video sparks filmmaking career

By Robert Goldrich

A love letter to Michel Gondry that went unanswered and the increasingly integral role played by visuals in the success of music proved to be key catalysts prompting Damian Kulash—lead singer, guitarist and founder of rock band OK Go—to extend his creative reach to filmmaking. His diversification into directing has made an indelible mark as the last two years on the awards show circuit attest.

Via Park Pictures, Kulash directed Morton Salt's "The One Moment" which won assorted accolades including six Cannes Lions this year along with a Wood Pencil



Morton Salt's "The One Moment"

at the D&ADs, and an AICP Show honor for Best Production. The Cannes bounty consisted of a Gold Digital Craft Lion, a Gold Design Lion, a Silver Film Craft Lion, a Bronze Film Craft Lion, a Bronze Film Lion in Viral, and a Bronze PR Lion.

Back in 2016, the S7 Airlines, OK Go short "Upside Down & Inside Out" directed by Kulash and Trish Sie won numerous awards. At the AICP Show the gravity-defying piece scored a Best Production honor while at the AICP Next Awards it earned honors in the Next Viral/Web Film and Branded Content categories.

As for the alluded to letter to famed director Gondry years ago, it took the form of a rehearsal tape of Kulash and his OK Go cohorts dancing in a backyard. "We wanted to send the tape to Gondry so he would direct a music video for us," recalled Kulash. "We made it as a love letter for an audience of one but I don't think he ever saw it. The rest of the world did, though."

The goofy dance went viral in 2006

and it led to Kulash—who deemed it "a lucky accident"—delving more deeply into visual expression. Over the past decade-plus he has been chasing his creative ideas down an unexpected directorial path.

Also spurring on Kulash's journey has been the very nature of music. "YouTube has become the most popular streaming music platform on the planet," he observed. "So whether you like it or not, your song has to come with a movie."

Those movies over the years have included the band's trailblazing brand partnerships such as: "I Won't Let You Down," which features Honda scooters and thousands of Japanese dancers doing a mind-bending routine with umbrellas; "Needing/Getting," the Chevy 2012 Super Bowl spot in which Kulash himself stunt drives a Chevy rigged with robotic arms, performing the song live by bashing through a vast desert obstacle course of homemade instruments; and the afore-



mentioned "Upside Down & Inside Out" as well as Morton Salt's "One Moment."

Of the latter, Kulash remarked, "It's hard to overestimate the bravery that took on the part of Morton Salt and Ogilvy—being willing to let us play with slow motion and to try to do something that hadn't been done before. We wound up going into a room with a ballistics expert and slow-motion cameras, blowing things up for a month. You discover things that you wouldn't fully know otherwise unless you play and experiment. I'm ten years into directing. I can promise you the work will be great going in but I can't tell you yet exactly what it will look like. It takes client and agency trust to get the freedom

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Dee Rees

A full spectrum of collaboration

By Robert Goldrich

Director Dee Rees' *Mudbound* has put Netflix squarely in this season's Oscar conversation. Rees also wrote the screenplay—in tandem with producer Virgil Williams, based on the novel by Hillary Jordan.

The story centers on two families—one black, the other white—in the rural American South during World War II. The white McAllen family—headed by Henry (Jason Clarke) and his wife Laura (Carey Mulligan)—moves to the Mississippi Delta from Memphis and isn't fully ready for the harsh demands of tending to the land. Their lives intersect with a black family headed by Henry and Florence Jackson

(Rob Morgan, Mary J. Blige).

While segregation, discrimination and racism stack life against the Jacksons, the sharecroppers persevere with great dignity. Though the McAllens do not face such race-related adversity, the two families have other struggles in common—coping with the ravages of Mother Nature, and each with loved ones who go off to war overseas, ultimately having to return to the battle of adjusting to everyday life on the homefront. The war vets—Jamie McAllen (Garrett Hedlund) and Ronsel Jackson (Jason Mitchell) develop a fast and at first uneasy friendship, each bearing the scars of war only to then have to return to the brutality and cruelty of the Jim Crow South.

Helping Rees to fully realize and do justice to this story were assorted collaborators, including several who represent a broad spectrum in terms of their relation to the filmmaker—at one end of the continuum is DP Rachel Morrison, ASC, who had never worked with the director

before. By contrast, editor Mako Kamitsuna has a track record with Rees, cutting her *Pariah* both as a feature and a short. And in a figurative sense somewhere between Morrison and Kamitsuna on the collaborative continuum resides Tamar-kali who performed in musical sequences in *Pariah* and was a vocal contributor to Rees' Emmy Award-winning telefilm *Bessie*. However, Tamar-kali had never scored a feature before—until she was given the opportunity to do so on *Mudbound*.

"We all came together to make something special," said Rees of the mix of collaborators on *Mudbound*.

Len Amato, president of HBO Films, recommended DP Morrison to Rees. This was based in large part on Morrison's lensing of *Confirmation*, which like *Bessie* was a lauded HBO telefilm. "I had known Rachel from around the festival circuit, dating back to the *Pariah* days and her shooting of *Dope*," recalled Rees. "I admired her work and feel fortunate to have connected with her for this [*Mudbound*].



Because of her schedule, she was working on *Black Panther* [the Marvel Comics movie] at the time, we weren't certain we could get her. But she was drawn to the film and contributed so much, including finding photographs of the post-Depression South [images by Ben Shahn, Arthur Rothstein, Dorothea Lange, Gordon Parks from the 1930s and '40s] which were key to the design of the movie."

Rees praised Morrison's approach and evocative rural imagery, capturing how nature can inspire people while also making them feel powerless. On the latter score, Rees explained, "With the photography, I wanted to feel like everything was working against you as a human being. Through her images, Rachel comes to

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Mudbound

Photo by Steve Dietl/courtesy of Netflix

The Duo Of Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton

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Little Miss Sunshine earned four Oscar nominations in 2007, including for Best Picture while winning for Best Original Screenplay (Michael Arndt) and Best Supporting Actor (Alan Arkin). On the strength of the film, Faris and Dayton earned a DGA Award nomination as well as a BAFTA nom for the David Lean Award for Direction, and won the Best Di-

rector honor from the Film Independent Spirit Awards.

Battle of the Sexes marks a new feature filmmaking wrinkle for Faris and Dayton—a real-life story, which in this case is familiar to many, particularly those old enough to remember the King-Riggs match televised worldwide.

“This was our most challenging film because it’s a true story. It’s the life story

of someone [King] whom we revered and respected,” related Faris. “It can be a scary prospect at times to be sure that you’re doing full justice to someone’s story and what she’s about. But ultimately you learn that it’s good to be challenged. As we got more deeply into it, we came to trust ourselves a little more. That was one of the main lessons learned from our experience on this film.”

Division of labor?

Asked about the division of labor between them directorially, Faris quipped, “Jonathan returns more phone calls than I do.” But in a more serious vein, Dayton and Faris have a gender parity—a bit ironic when teaming on a movie titled *Battle of the Sexes*—which permeates their working relationship. “We both do everything,

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Sexes Duo

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collaborate on all elements together. It's a boring answer but it's the truth," said Dayton. "We're problem solving together. Our method is collaboration. There's nonstop dialogue between us. Even now we're still discussing the movie."



Battle of the Sexes

It's an ongoing discussion that has some of its roots in commercialmaking—which in turn has honed the directing duo's ability to engage with others. "You deal with an agency team and you learn to connect with talented creative people, including clients," said Faris. "That experience gives you practice in terms of making your arguments, listening and steering things in the right direction when you get to a feature set—though there's less of a committee there."

Dayton observed, "The two worlds really serve each other. We've worked with cinematographer Linus Sandgren on commercials for years. We have a relationship and a shorthand. We brought Linus on board to shoot *Battle of the Sexes*, after he had won the Oscar for *La La Land*. Commercials are a great place to build relationships. We've also used actors in features whom we first met in commercials."

Faris and Dayton's body of spot work includes such clients as Apple, GAP and Sony PlayStation. The directorial duo currently has a window of availability for commercials and branded content via their long-time ad roost, Bob Industries.

"After spending two and a half years on *Battle of the Sexes*, we're happy to move back into commercials for a stretch," said Dayton, citing the allure of instant gratification. "You talk about a commercial, you're hired, you make it, and it's on the air in a month. It's so satisfying to work with great writers and interesting thinkers to create something."

Gillespie

Continued from page 13

sions of espionage grandeur. Eckhardt is ahead of his time, a perfect fit in today's fake-news culture. Yet paradoxically, all of these characters are at times strangely likable, somehow bringing a perverse appeal to a story which tabloid journalism and apparently much of the public can't get enough of.

Balancing all these characters and dynamics was a daunting job but one which Gillespie was more than up to; the director credited his commercialmaking experience with enabling him to tackle the project. A DGA Award winner for best commercial director of the year—an honor for which he's been nominated four times—Gillespie, whose spotmaking/branded content roost is production house MJZ, explained, "I tend to be kind of fearless in the commercial world. I feel like I have a strong voice which I can build on. In a bizarre way I often take



Allison Janney in *I, Tonya*

more chances in the commercial world than I have in the feature world. So I tried to approach this feature with my commercial mentality—pushing the boundaries a little more, not playing it safe. I had that luxury in part because this was a small independent film."

The result is a movie that takes chances, is fresh, different and genre-bending—and which made its mark at the recent Toronto International Film Festival, taking second place in the People's Choice Award voting.

Gillespie gives much credit to Rogers who wrote the *I, Tonya* script on spec. The director noted that Rogers was inspired by an ESPN 30 for 30 documentary on Harding and Kerrigan, which prompted him to seek out Gillooly and Harding for extensive interviews. The insights he

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NY Attains Post Incentives Milestone

The Governor's Office of Motion Picture and Television Development (MPTV) has announced a milestone with 400 applications received in the state's film and television postproduction tax credit program since the Governor championed a law strengthening the credit in July 2012. The record-breaking number of productions committing to complete postproduction work in New York in the past five years shows how rapidly the post industry has expanded under the enhanced credit, creating jobs and driving investment in the innovation economy.



Howard Zensky

"Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, the postproduction industry in New York is rapidly growing," said Empire State Development president and CEO Howard Zensky. "The 400 applications we've received since the credit expansion in 2012 is a testament to our robust film tax credit programs, which generate billions of dollars in New York State spending, and create hundreds of thousands of jobs each year."

The 400 postproduction applicants are projected to spend more than \$461 million in-state and create more than 4,730 hires statewide. By comparison, just 17 productions applied for the postproduction credit in the 18 months before the program was revamped in 2012, resulting in just \$38 million in New York spending and 214 hires.

Signed by Governor Cuomo in July 2012, the new law increased the postproduction credit from 10 percent to 30 percent across the state. In order to participate in the program, productions must complete at least 75 percent of all postproduction work in New York State at a qualified facility. The post credit is also available to projects filmed predominantly outside of the state that plan to use New York-based postproduction companies for editing. Productions choosing to complete postproduction work in Upstate New York are eligible for an increased 35 percent tax credit.

The successful postproduction tax incentive joins the state's film production tax credit, which has received 1,170 applications, resulting in a projected New York spend of \$18.4 billion and more than 1.1 million hires since Cuomo took office. Productions that apply for the film production credit can claim qualified postproduction expenses under this program, deepening the economic impact of the industry.

Recently, several noteworthy film and television projects have participated in the postproduction credit, including *Manchester By the Sea*, *Silence*, *Deepwater Horizon*, *Hail Caesar!*, *Turn: Washington Spies*, *Masters Of Sex*, *Niko and The Sword Of Light*, *Goldie and the Bear*, *Preacher* and *Berlin Station*.

AFM Preps For Inaugural LocationEXPO

The American Film Market's inaugural LocationEXPO, taking place at this year's market, November 1-8 in Santa Monica, Calif., will welcome more than 50 film commissions and government agencies from around the world. Organizations participating at LocationEXPO come from as far afield as Chile, Spain, Norway, New Zealand, Thailand and Russia.

The diverse participants at LocationEXPO highlight the continuing growth and popularity of AFM among film commissions that in tandem with governmental entities are collectively offering more than a billion dollars in production incentives. The Expo enables them to connect AFM's 7,000+ producers and distributors.

Access to the LocationEXPO booths is free; it does not require an AFM credential. Visit AmericanFilmMarket.com/LocationEXPO to view the full and growing list of LocationEXPO 2017 participants.

The American Film Market is produced by the Independent Film & Television Alliance. The AFM is a marketplace—with over 200,000 square feet of exhibition space—where production and distribution deals are closed. It's expected that more than \$1 billion in deals will be sealed—on both completed films and those in every stage of development and production.

Participants may view more than 500 screenings of 300+ films.

MJZ's Craig Gillespie

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garnered translated into a script which made its way to Gillespie. "It was a great script. Once I read it, I was immediately on board," recalled Gillespie. Robbie was already attached to the film as a producer and acting lead. Janney—whom Gillespie described as "pure gold"—was attached per a mandate from writer Rogers. The most challenging bit of casting was finding someone to portray Gillooly. "Domestic violence is very tricky," said Gillespie. "You have to be respectful of the seriousness of the situation but also need to stay invested in the character, jumping into the next scene which is often comedy. It's hard to find someone who can carry that—but Sebastian Stan came in and we knew we had found the right guy."

I, Tonya adds to a Gillespie feature filmography which also includes *Million Dollar Arm*, *The Finest Hours*, and *Lars and the Real Girl*, as well as TV endeavors such as multiple episodes of Showtime's *United States of Tara*.

Spotmaking pedigree

Several of Gillespie's key collaborators on *I, Tonya* have commercialmaking experience, including cinematographer Nicolas Karakatsanis, production designer Jade Healy and costume designer Jennifer Johnson. Yet *I, Tonya* marked the first collaboration for Gillespie with all of them.

"Nicolas has shot a lot of commercials but I had never worked with him before," said Gillespie. "I love his work, including the feature *Bullhead*. There's

such a beautiful texture to his work. I wanted to deal with mixed media for this movie. We ended up shooting on 35mm film and used the ALEXA for interviews. I felt Nicolas would push the look more, take more chances which I was excited about. I had never done a feature with somebody so key who I had no relationship with before—but it worked out great. He got the humor and tone of the film immediately."

Gillespie praised production designer Healy's contributions to *I, Tonya*, noting it's easy to "get cliché when dealing with these time periods, particularly the 1980s yet she managed to make it feel true without making you think too hard about it. It's a tricky art."

And Gillespie marveled at costume designer Johnson's spontaneity and ability to adapt to a revised scene on the fly with an inventive outfit.

"Coming from commercials, these artists are used to moving quickly and that allows you to take more risks," pointed out Gillespie.

One notable collaborator who's no stranger to Gillespie and sans commercialmaking experience was editor Tatiana S. Riegel. She earlier cut the director's *Lars and the Real Girl* and episodes of *United States of Tara*. "We have such a shorthand, it's almost as if there's no shorthand," said Gillespie about Riegel. "We get each other's sensibilities. She did her first pass on *I, Tonya* and there were a number of scenes I didn't even have to touch. Performance-wise she has great instincts. Simply put, she makes my life easier."

Wonderstruck's Haynes

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contrast and speak to each other would ultimately have to be figured out in the editing room—dealing with the narrative language, the mystery, why these two stories are carrying one film. What is it that's linking the stories of these children?"

Goncalves was also integral for music and sound. "In a black-and-white homage to silent film in the 1920s without audible dialogue, we couldn't put two shots together if we didn't have music. We had to have a temp track underneath," noted Haynes who cited Goncalves' "extraordinary ear and his ability to basically score a film before it's scored. I have a strong interest in music and contributed to that aspect. But 'Fonzie' [Goncalves] was the one who started to piece together the first assemblies of the film; he had to score them, to assemble pieces of music and sound design. His work became the template for what Carter Burwell would later score to—it all really began in the editing room and in the picture cut. That's not how most pictures are put together but we could do it because of that talent in his [Goncalves'] range of capabilities."

In addition to *Carol*, Goncalves is known for his work on such films as *Winter's Bone* for director Debra Granik, *Beasts of the Southern Wild* for Behn Zeitlin as well as the HBO drama series *True Detective* for Cary Fukunaga, and Haynes' HBO miniseries *Mildred Pierce*.

Creative reach

Wonderstruck afforded Haynes the opportunity to reach younger moviegoers in a way he never had before. He can thank

costume designer Powell for that. Powell worked on Martin Scorsese's *Hugo*, based on Selznick's book "The Invention of Hugo Cabret." When Powell read Selznick's *Wonderstruck*, she envisioned it as a Haynes film.

"I've worked with Sandy many times. She's a genius and we're great friends. I think she read one of the early drafts of the *Wonderstruck* script," recalled Haynes who smiled that he saw a *Los Angeles Times* story reporting that Selznick's first response when Powell suggested Haynes was something along the lines of "are you crazy?" But Selznick wound up bringing the script to Haynes who was in the midst of *Carol* at the time. When he got around to reading it, Haynes was drawn to the story.

Among the facets of the story that he found "beautiful" was how Ben and Rose, surrounded by loss and isolation, develop interests and discover creative solutions for coping. "I love how it feels," said Haynes. "It's a tribute to the things we do with our hands—the miniatures that Rose makes, the collectibles that Ben started to fill up his room with, even the way these kids ultimately learn how to communicate. I think this is a great movie for the digital era—showing the handmade ways that help us cope and through which we can enhance our lives."

This lesson for the digital age comes in part from capturing "two extraordinary periods of visual richness—the silent movie era contrasted with the 1970s," said Haynes who entrusted long-time collaborator Lachman with much of that task.

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COMPANY films

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Mary-Sue Masson!

Assembling The Fall Collection

Promising talent poised to make mark for many seasons to come

By Robert Goldrich



SHOOT's fall ensemble of up-and-coming directors includes: a noted actress who's making her directorial debut with an upcoming HBO documentary; and a music video/spot/short film helmer who's gotten his first taste of long-form fare via a Netflix TV series he co-created.

Also in the mix is a still photographer who has successfully diversified into moving imagery, directing spots, shorts and branded fare on both sides of the Atlantic. Another filmmaker brings agency creative chops and BBC production experience to her first production company affiliation in the U.S.

And rounding out our coterie of talent is a director at one with nature, adept at the deployment of drones, and who made a major mark with a short film that scored on the festival circuit.

Here's our fall collection of several promising directors to watch:

Sonja Sohn

A passion project uncovered an unexpected career passion for Sonja Sohn, best known for her starring role as Detective Kima Greggs on the HBO drama *The Wire*. The project she pursued, the documentary *Baltimore Rising*, is set to debut on HBO next month. The film, which marks Sohn's directorial debut, follows activists, police officers, community leaders and gang affiliates who struggle to hold Baltimore together in the wake of the death of Freddie Gray, a 25 year-old African-American who was arrested by the police in April 2015 for possessing what was alleged to be an illegal switchblade. While being transported in a police van, Gray fell into a coma and was taken to a trauma center. He died a week later due to injuries to his spinal cord.

Gray's hospitalization and death triggered a series of protests. After his funeral, civil unrest intensified, with a state of emergency declared by Governor Larry Hogan as the city waited to hear the fate of the police officers involved in the incident.

Baltimore Rising taps into different perspectives on Gray's passing, shedding light on the incident, its impact on different segments of an already damaged community, and the long simmering issues involved.

Sohn felt a compelling need to tell Baltimore's story, one that she felt hadn't been told relative to the Gray case. Sohn's work on *The Wire* in a sense informed her. *The Wire* after all was set and produced in Baltimore, a community for which she developed a strong affinity. "Playing a character, being in the city, I got a whiff of the under-served communities of Baltimore. I got a sense of what folks are dealing with there."

When *The Wire* cast went on a voter empowerment tour in 2008 with the National Urban League, Sohn saw the impact the show had on people, including those who were living in impoverished neighborhoods. She enlisted the support of cast and crew on *The Wire* to devise ways in which they could use their creative resources and media access as a force to help those in need. When the series ended, Sohn remained in Baltimore where she started the nonprofit Rewired for Change which works to help at-risk youth, families and communities.

Delving into how Baltimore was coping with the Freddie Gray case was important enough for Sohn to take a leap of faith, jumping over to the other side of the camera to direct. "I had a deep intuitive sense that the time was now to tell this story. Directing had seemed a bit intimidating to me at first but my belief in the story was enough to override any fear or hesitation."

That trepidation has given way to the aforementioned, unanticipated career passion as she now sees directing "as a path for me," while she continues to be active as an actor, and returns to her early roots as a writer. Sohn was one of the writers and cast members on *Slam* which won a Grand Jury Prize at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival.

Tony Yacenda

The latest new wrinkle in Tony Yacenda's directorial career is Netflix's *American Vandal*, a tongue-firmly-planted-in-cheek parody of crime dramas. Yacenda teamed with Dan Perrault to create the mockumentary series which investigates a prankster crime in a high school parking lot-- faculty vehicles are spray painted with images of giant male private parts. A high school student appears guilty of the crime and is left to prove his innocence by exposing the conspiracy that landed him in hot water.

Yacenda, who's directed all eight episodes of *American Van-*

From top left, clockwise: Sonja Sohn, Tony Yacenda, Leonn Ward and Mary-Sue Masson.

UP-AND-COMING DIRECTORS

dal, describes its premise as “absurd” while embracing a prevalent reaction he’s received along the lines of “I can’t believe this is a TV show but it’s way better than I expected it to be.” The show has garnered a 95 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Indeed the satirical comedy is much darker and subtler than one might suppose, and it underscores Yacenda’s penchant for finding ways to get laughs that aren’t telegraphed ahead of time. “There are certain rhythms that audiences have become accustomed to over the years,” he said. “I look to play off of that, and to occasionally land a comedic beat in a place where the audience doesn’t see it coming.”

Yacenda began his career fashioning some comedy sketches for consumption on YouTube. Generating millions of hits, the content he created and directed got noticed by College Humor, Comedy Central Digital and Funny Or Die, generating freelance directing gigs.

He also became active in music videos, with one in particular, “Save Dat Money” for Lil Dicky, gaining the attention of The Directors Bureau which recently signed him for spots and branded content.

Yacenda’s quirky commercial content spans such brands as Hyundai and NBC Online. *American Vandal* marks Yacenda’s first foray into longer form fare. He has secured UTA for features and TV.

Leonn Ward

SheSays and The Voice of A Woman this year staged their inaugural VOWSS event at the Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity. VOWSS screens a selection of the best short films created by women internationally. Among the work showcased was Irish director Leonn Ward’s *Daily Threads* short, part of Nownews’ *The Way We Dress* series.

Produced by RSA Films in 2016, *Daily Threads* marked Ward’s directorial debut, extending her creative reach beyond still photography. In the short, women are asked about how style impacts their sense of self. “The more I spoke to the girls I filmed, the more we all realized it really doesn’t matter how much a piece of clothing costs—whether it’s cheap or expensive,” related Ward. “Clothes are the armor you put on to face the world, and you really can’t put a price on that.”

Further underscoring Ward’s meaning-

ful plunge into filmmaking is her current directing of an ongoing undisclosed project via RSA for Wieden+Kennedy, Portland, Ore. She has already helmed her first full fledged TV commercial but is not yet at liberty to publicly discuss details of that assignment. Additionally, Ward recently directed an online ad for Isabel Marant.

This flow of directing credits that began last year reflects a continuation of Ward’s ongoing relationship with RSA which began in 2014 when the London office took her on for print/still representation. Susie Babchick of RSA’s photographic division was drawn to Ward’s body of work spanning fine art, editorial and ad photography.

Conversely, Ward was immediately drawn to Babchick upon meeting her. “I felt a comfort with her. I lost my mom when I was a teenager. It was an empty part of my life. Susie fell into that role for me. I knew she would look after me.”

Prior to that, though, Ward exhibited her own measure of self-sufficiency, continually shooting and experimenting. Sought after for her affinity for capturing a vibrant intimacy that puts individual style and character at the heart of fashion photography, Ward worked for the likes of Vogue, Topshop and Stella McCartney.

Ward’s experimental endeavors included extensive work street casting youngsters and teens, lensing them in London, working with her stylist Luci Ellis, an ongoing collaborator to this day. “She’d get clothes, I’d get the film and we hit the streets, dressing kids up who seemed interesting, making up editorial,” recalled Ward. “We were street casting while others were using models.”

Adidas saw this work and was favorably impressed with the fresh look, talent and authenticity that Ward had captured. Adidas awarded her a global campaign, Ward’s first big break on the ad front.

More print ad work came Ward’s way. She then connected with Babchick but didn’t rush into moving images, waiting until she had felt the time was right. Now splitting her time between L.A. and London, Ward has made inroads into commercials, branded content and shorts, sometimes in tandem with her also shooting the print ad portion of campaigns.

Mary-Sue Masson

Having recently landed her first com-

mercial production affiliation in the U.S.—coming aboard the roster of CoMPANY Films—director Mary-Sue Masson is already making an imprint on the stateside ad market as her HARIBO “Kids’ Voices” campaign from London agency Quiet Storm has hit American television. The funny series of spots features adults funneling their inner child when expressing delight over HARIBO’s Gold Bears gummy candy. In the commercials, we see adults talking about Gold Bears but only kids’ chatter comes from their lips. Masson recorded the children, completely unscripted, as they shared what they liked about the candy. Their joyful utterances then pass through the lips of grown ups in different scenarios helmed by Masson.

Masson additionally had a creative hand in the work, helping to sell the concept to the client with a test film in which her own kids were recorded—voices that were then passed on to adults. This helped the campaign to get the greenlight in the U.K. before being adapted for viewers in the U.S. American kids’ voices were recorded in Chicago and the work was then lensed in Toronto for the campaign’s stateside launch.

Masson brings much more to the U.S. than the HARIBO package. She has strong conceptual/creative chops, having earlier in her career been an agency creative, including serving as an art director at DDB London. Her broad-based experience also extends to a tour of duty at the BBC, initially editing content and then writing advertising and promos for the network. Seeing her talent, BBC execs sent her to Elstree Studios to hone her producing and directing skills.

“Coming up with ideas on the ad agency side and making something every week at the BBC where we were in production all the time made for some fantastic learning experiences,” said Masson. The lessons learned have served her in good stead as a director where she is also repped in the U.K. by HunkyDory and in Canada by Sparks Productions.

RC Cone

Director RC Cone finds it “humbling” that someone like Rhea Scott pays attention to him. Scott, who has a track record of building directorial careers, is at the helm of production house Little Minx. She

brought Cone into the company, drawn to his work, most notably *The Accord*, a documentary-style short about surfers in Iceland who brave the North Atlantic wind—personified by Cone as a temperamental drunk—to find good waves. Their relentless battle against the elements pays off when the wind cooperates and they find the perfect waves, captured by epic drone footage shot by Cone himself.

Premiering at the Telluride Mountain Film Festival, *The Accord* went on to win assorted awards on the fest circuit.

Earlier Cone worked for the U.S. Forest Service as a lookout overseeing the Bitter Root Valley in Montana. He spent three summers in a cabin in the woods looking out for fires. During his solitude there he would read, learn how to play the banjo and take photos. “It was a cool, inspirational turning point,” he recalled. “You could go a little crazy up there but it was for the



RC Cone

better. My first kind of play with motion imagery came with stills. I made a stop motion film called *Look* that chronicled my time up there. It was before I knew how to take time lapse photography. It was stop motion time lapse but done manually. I learned from that experience that you have to commit to something, stay with it and that it’s all about story.”

In the winters, Cone would snowboard. He moved to the Rocky Mountains to snowboard and was offered an internship with a production company in the region where he learned digital cinematography. Cone’s filmmaking pursuits grew, working with companies such as Patagonia, Redington and Howler Bros. on adventure documentaries. This reinforced Cone’s love for outdoor cinema and how it connects audiences to the natural world. To help facilitate that connection, Cone became adept at the deployment of drones.

This past summer Cone spent a couple of weeks in Iceland and Greenland, along the way directing a film for Yeti Coolers.



Rachel Morrison, ASC



Tobias Schliessler, ASC



Xavier Grobet, ASC, AMC

Lensing *Mudbound*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Brad's Status*

Reflections from Rachel Morrison, ASC, Tobias Schliessler, ASC, and Xavier Grobet, ASC, AMC

By Robert Goldrich

One DP got the chance to shoot for a director she greatly admired and their collaboration has yielded a Netflix feature that is very much in this season's Oscar conversation.

Another cinematographer is in pre-pro on his sixth feature for the same director; their fifth was released this year, a Disney live-action film that sprung from a beloved animation classic back in 1991.

And our third DP also enjoyed a recent return engagement with a director who's additionally known for his writing chops.

Here are observations from Rachel Morrison, ASC; Tobias Schliessler, ASC; and Xavier Grobet, ASC, AMC.

Rachel Morrison, ASC

The "ultimate no-brainer" is how Rachel Morrison, ASC, described her decision to lens *Mudbound* (Netflix). The film drew her in on multiple fronts, first and foremost for the opportunity to work with director Dee Rees who also wrote the screenplay with Virgil Williams, based on Hillary Jordan's novel.

Morrison has long admired Rees' work and found the story of *Mudbound* compelling, centered on two families—one black, the other white—in the rural American South during World War II. The white McAllen family—headed by Henry (Jason Clarke) and his wife Laura (Carey Mulligan)—moves to the Mississippi Delta from Memphis and isn't fully ready for the harsh demands of tending to the land. Their lives intersect with a black family headed by Henry and Florence Jackson

(Rob Morgan, Mary J. Blige).

While segregation, discrimination and racism stack life against the Jacksons, they persevere with great dignity. Though the McAllens do not face such race-related adversity, the two families have other struggles in common—coping with the ravages of Mother Nature, and each with loved ones who go off to war overseas and return to the battle of adjusting to everyday life on the homefront. The war vets—Jamie McAllen (Garrett Hedlund) and Ronsel Jackson (Jason Mitchell) develop a fast and at first uneasy friendship, each bearing the scars of war only to then have to return to the brutality and cruelty of the Jim Crow South.

Morrison's cinematography captures humanity at its best and worst, as well as the two faces of Mother Nature—its onslaught which makes people feel powerless, and its beauty which evokes hope and inspiration. On the former Mother Nature score, Morrison observed, "The elements always win. We are all put in our place by the elements—rain, wind, the harsh sun. It doesn't matter how prepared you think you are." The DP further observed that even in a world of racial disparity, the elements "level the playing field," impacting people no matter their race or gender. She described nature as "the great equalizer." Morrison shot widescreen as a means of isolating people in the frame against a landscape of fields, conveying human insignificance in the face of nature.

Mudbound also piqued Morrison's interest for the chance to depict the historical era. Archival photographs of the post

Depression South commissioned by the Farm Security Administration provided key visual references for Morrison—these included images by Arthur Rothstein, Ben Shahn, Dorothea Lange and Gordon Parks. That work, noted Morrison, was integral to the design of the movie and many of her compositional choices. And Parks' later work for *Time Magazine*, including his segregation story photo essay in 1956, influenced the use of color in *Mudbound*.

Morrison said that she and Rees wanted to shoot *Mudbound* on film but budget realities necessitated they go digital. Morrison estimated the cost of film would have translated into two less shooting days as compared to digital. They couldn't afford to lose two precious days on an already extremely challenged shooting schedule.

Thankfully among their digital options was the ARRI ALEXA Mini, which Morrison coupled with a mix of lenses—Panavision C and D series anamorphics in addition to Vintage Super Speeds from the 1960s and '70s that lent themselves to reduced contrasts, among other desired features. "We embraced the aspherical softening around the edges of the image because we felt on a subconscious level that it recalled those old Farm Security Administration photos of the era," related Morrison. "The fact that we were shooting in authentic sharecropper and tenant houses from the late 1800s—despite being a huge challenge in its own right—only added to the authenticity."

The alluded to challenge of shooting in those tenant shacks included having to rely primarily on the sun for natural light-

ing to get the most realistic, desired look. Thus shoot days were planned around the sun so it would stream into the Jackson and McAllen houses when it was low in the sky.

Morrison said Rees had "a clear vision" of what they needed to accomplish and how to best do justice to the story. "That's even more important with a story like this in that the script is not very literal and is more a combination of poetry and story. Having a director with a clear vision of what that would look like all in her head was essential. She's very much an actor's director, unwavering in her commitment to the characters and story."

Mudbound is the eighth Sundance premiere Morrison has lensed in the past seven years. Others include the Ryan Coogler-directed *Fruitvale Station* which won the festival's Grand Jury Prize and the Audience Award in 2013; the lauded *Dope* for director Rick Famuyiwa; and director Liz Garbus' *What Happened, Miss Simone?* (shot by Morrison and Igor Martinovic), which earned a Best Documentary Oscar nomination as well as an Emmy nod for Outstanding Cinematography. Morrison also scored an Emmy nomination for cinematography on the strength of Showtime's *Riker's High*, a documentary about the high school within the Riker's Island prison system.

Among Morrison's other credits are the features *Little Accidents* starring Elizabeth Banks and Boyd Holbrook; *Cake* starring Jennifer Aniston and Anna Kendrick; *Any Day Now* starring Alan Cumming

and Garret Dilahunt; and the HBO telefilm *Confirmation*, a return engagement for the DP with director Famuyiwa. A political thriller about Anita Hill's sexual harassment testimony against then Supreme Court nominee Judge Clarence Thomas—starring Kerry Washington and Wendell Pierce in those respective roles—*Confirmation* earned Emmy nominations for Best Television Motion Picture, and Best Leading Actress (Washington).

Tobias Schliessler, ASC

A live-action version of *Beauty and the Beast*—which had to emerge from the giant shadow cast by the beloved Disney feature animation version back in 1991—was too tempting a creative challenge to pass up, according to cinematographer Tobias Schliessler, ASC. But the real clincher was the chance to again collaborate with director Bill Condon. *Beauty and the Beast* is the fifth film the two have teamed on; and they're scheduled to reunite on a sixth with *Bride of Frankenstein*.

The close-knit collaboration between Condon and Schliessler typically starts very early on in the filmmaking process, and *Beauty and the Beast* (Walt Disney Pictures) was no exception. "From the very outset, we discuss everything together—our focus, how to tell the story with camera and light," shared Schliessler. "We work together on storyboards, pre-vis. My input means a lot to him from the very beginning of a project. In a musical there has to be a smooth transition into people singing and dancing. The camera has to be magical in a sense. It must be at the right places for the dance choreography. We sought out the best camera angles and movement for the dance sequences. And the camera has to be in rhythm with the music. We spent a lot of time in rehearsal to find the right camera movement and speed so that the audience could become part of the dancing and music."

Looking to avoid big movie lights that could impede or slow the music and dance, Schliessler deftly used LED lighting on 80 to 90 percent of scenes in *Beauty and the Beast*. Schliessler could control every light through an iPad and for the first time was able to conduct in-camera color temperature lighting changes. *Beauty and the Beast* was among the first films to use the LED ARRI Sky Panels.

Schliessler went with the ALEXA camera in tandem with "very fast lenses." After extensive testing, the DP opted for Leica lenses based on how they reacted to practical candles on the set.

For Schliessler the bottom line is that *Beauty and the Beast* was a gratifying experience. "We took an animation movie, translated it into live action and were able to make it into its own movie—with audiences embracing it like they did the animated film. Bill thoroughly understood what had to be done. He understood the material and gave it a modern feel while still making a classic movie."

Schliessler noted that his fruitful ongoing creative collaborative relationship with Condon came into being thanks to a stroke of luck. "I had moved from Germany to Vancouver, B.C., where I shot smaller Canadian movies," related Schliessler. "I then tried to get my foot in the door in Los Angeles by showing my reel around—back when you would lug around a three-quarter inch cassette. I had a meeting at Propaganda Films with head of production Tim Clawson. I remember him telling me he had this director, Bill Condon, who didn't yet have a DP for his *Candyman* movie and he thought we might connect. The next day I met Bill and he wound up hiring me. The truth was I didn't have the credits for that kind of movie but Bill and I just hit it off. As it turns out, I happened to walk into Propaganda on the right day, entered Tim's office at the right moment, and got a big career break."

From *Candyman's Farewell to the Flesh*, Schliessler later went on to shoot for Condon such films as: *Dreamgirls*, which earned eight Oscar nominations, including two wins for Best Supporting Actress (Jennifer Hudson) and Sound Mixing; *The Fifth Estate* starring Benedict Cumberbatch; *Mr. Holmes* featuring Ian McKellen in a tour de force performance; this year's release, *Beauty and the Beast* starring Emma Watson and Dan Stevens; and *Bride of Frankenstein* which is currently in pre-pro.

Schliessler's filmography extends well beyond Condon, though. The DP recently wrapped Ava DuVernay's adaptation of *A Wrinkle in Time* for Disney and starring Chris Pine, Gugu Mbatha-Raw and Reese Witherspoon. Schliessler also not too long ago lensed Peter Berg's Boston Marathon

drama *Patriots Day* starring Mark Wahlberg. Berg and Schliessler previously teamed on a number of films including the action drama *Lone Survivor* starring Wahlberg; the sci-fi thriller *Battleship*; *Hancock* starring Will Smith; the high school football drama *Friday Night Lights*; and *The Rundown* starring Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson.

Among Schliessler's other notable credits are Tony Scott's crime thriller *The Taking of Pelham 123*, and Antoine Fuqua's *Bait* starring Jamie Foxx.

Schliessler began his career shooting documentaries, diversifying into indie features, TV movies, music videos and commercials. In the latter discipline, he received AICP Show honors for his cinematography on Audi's "Wake Up" in 2000, and Lincoln Financial's "Doctor" the next year.

Xavier Grobet, ASC, AMC

Xavier Grobet, ASC, AMC, was attracted to *Brad's Status* (Amazon Studios) for the story and the chance to again work with writer/director Mike White—two lures that are a bit of a redundancy.

"I am a big fan of Mike," said Grobet. "Everything I've seen of his writing speaks to me. Since we did the TV series *Enlightened* (HBO) together, I experienced how universal his writing is. I fell in love with the episodes he wrote. His characters and situations are so representative of life. You can relate to his characters."

That rang true for Grobet again in *Brad's Status* which tells a story about a middle-aged man named Brad (Ben Stiller) who can't help but compare his life to those of his more successful friends, while touring colleges with his son (Austin Abrams). At times dad even seems to live vicariously through his son who's a strong candidate to get into Harvard.

"What I like most about the film is that it's not a comedy but rather a drama with a sense of humor," said Grobet, noting that its introspective nature prompted him to go with a hand-held camera. "Brad's mind and his anxiety are a prime focus so by shooting it hand held, we create that sensibility of getting into his head."

Grobet opted for the ALEXA coupled with Master Primes. "I like shooting with the ALEXA. It's a quality image I respond to." For *Brad's Status*, Grobet coupled the

camera with Master Primes. "They are high caliber lenses that respond well to light, helping to counterbalance the feel of hand-held work with a high quality, beautiful look and feel."

Brad's Status was "pretty much shot with one camera—only at certain times we'd go with two cameras to accommodate long two-actor conversations so that each actor had a little more freedom for improvising," explained Grobet.

Additionally, *Brad's Status* called for Grobet "to match Montreal for Boston. It was tricky here and there. We had to find the right spots and angles, and benefited from a high level of location scouting."







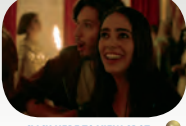



In addition to *Enlightened*, Grobet worked with White on the comedy *Nacho Libre*, which was directed by Jared Hess. White served as one of the writers on *Nacho Libre*. "Mike and I have become friends," shared Grobet. "We enjoy working together. It's a win-win."

Well, maybe not a total win-win. Grobet was at first hesitant to take on one of White's requests—to appear in *Brad's Status* briefly as the character Xavier, the gay spouse of Nick Pascale, one of Brad's former college classmates/multi-millionaire friends. Brad is jealous of Nick's success and was further slighted when he wasn't invited to Nick's wedding. Pascale was played by no other than White, placing him and his DP on camera together for the first time. "I had a couple of scenes as an actor in the movie and that was challenging," related Grobet. "I was so nervous on the first take. Mike saw that and wasn't sure I could pull it off. 'Give me a second take and you'll get it,' I said. Luckily I did, in part by relaxing and being more natural."

Grobet's body of work also includes director Julian Schnabel's *Before Night Falls*, episodes of the acclaimed HBO series *Deadwood*, Rodrigo Garcia's *Mother and Child*, and *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* starring Tina Fey and Margot Robbie.

Brad's Status was nominated for the Platform Prize at this year's Toronto International Film Festival. Grobet's work is no stranger to Toronto. *Enough Said*, a feature he shot starring Julia Louis Dreyfus and James Gandolfini in one of his last roles, was showcased as a Special Presentation at the 2013 Toronto Fest. *Enough Said* was directed by Nicole Holofcener.

MUSIC & SOUND

	TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Porsche's "High Speed Orchestra" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Yessian Music, Hamburg, Germany, and Detroit "Winter" composed by Antonio Vivaldi, adaptation by Jens Schliecker. Uli Witt, sr. producer; Ingmar Rehberg, exec producer; Max Fritz, sound designer; Gerard Smerek, music mixing; Michael Yessian, head of production; Brian Yessian, chief creative officer	Yessian Music, Hamburg, Germany Max Fritz, Michel Riecken, mixers	Grabarz and Partner, Hamburg, Germany	Czar Film, Berlin Bart Timmer, director
2	 Tile's "Lost Panda" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Mophonics, Culver City, Calif. Track: "Girl in My Dreams" courtesy of Stephan Altman, composer/creative director/performer.	Lime Studios, Santa Monica, Calif. Mark Meyuhas, sound engineer.	Deutsch LA Eryk Rich, music director; Chase Butters, music producer; Dez Davis, music coordinator	Smuggler, bicoastal Mark Molloy, director
3	 Face The Music/ Recovery Unplugged's "I Got This" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	"I got this" by Richie Supa Elias, bicoastal Eric Ronick, creative director; Matt Phenix, head of production; Luke Atencio, additional arrangement.	Elias, bicoastal Eric Ronick mixer; Zach Golden, engineer.	Ari Merkin, LLC, Hollywood, Fla.	m s s n g p e c e s, bicoastal Jared Knecht, director
4	 Adobe's "Future Is Yours" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif. Beacon Street, composers; Amber Tissue, sound design; Adrea Lavezzoli, exec producer; Lindsey Lerman, producer.	Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif. Amber Tissue, mixer; Aaron Comacchio, mix assistant; Kate Vadnais, mix producer.	Pereira & O'Dell, San Francisco	Ntropic, San Francisco Ryan Duggan, creative director
5	 YMCA (Y-USA)'s "Us" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	MINBAL, Chicago Benjamin Balcom, composer	Sonic Union, New York Michael Marinelli, mixer; Patrick Sullivan, Justine Cortale, producers	Droga5, New York Mike Ladman, music supervisor	The Corner Shop, Santa Monica, Calif. Maik Vitthal, director
6	 Netflix's "Netflix is a Joke" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Q Department, New York (original music) LSD, Santa Monica, Calif. (sound design) Rohan Young, sound designer	Technicolor, Los Angeles Ruben Gomez, sound mixer	Battery, Los Angeles	Caviar, Los Angeles Neal Brennan, director
7	 Universal Orlando/ Universal Studios Hollywood's "The Mourning After" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	JSM Music, New York Joel Simon, CEO/creative director	charlieuniformtango, Dallas Jack Waldrip, sound mixer; Jake Kluge, sound engineer	TM Advertising, Dallas	Tool of North America, Santa Monica, Calif. Eli Roth, director
8	 Campari/Wild Turkey's "We Sang Our Song" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Songs Publishing, bicoastal Song: "Testify"; Davie, musical artist; Butch Walker, additional music production	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	J. Walter Thompson New York Paul Greco, agency music director	RSA Films, bicoastal/international Matthew McConaughey, director
9	 Honda Australia's "Moving You" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Soundtrack: Annie Lennox and David A. Stewart, "Sweet Dreams"; Jesse Watt, composer Nylon Studios, New York and Sydney, Australia Karla Henwood, music producer; Chelsea Ramsden, music supervisor	Nylon Studios, New York, and Sydney Stuart Welch, sound engineer	Leo Burnett Melbourne	Scoundrel, Chippendale, Australia Michael Spiccia, director
10	 Clash of Clans "Bye Bye Builder" CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT >	Butter Music and Sound, bicoastal Andrew Sherman, chief creative officer/composer/arranger; Ian Jeffreys, managing director/EP; Kristin Kuraishi, producer. Trinitite, Brooklyn, NY Brian Emrich, sound designer	Heard City, New York Evan Mangiamiele, Elizabeth McClanahan, engineers	Barton F. Graf, New York	Psyop, bicoastal Trevor Conrad, director

Yessian Speeds Up Orchestra

Porsche commercial tops quarterly Chart

A SHOOT Staff Report

Porsche is the epitome of finely tuned automotive performance. Also living up to that elevated bar is its sound system.

Reflecting this in a most inventive way is “High Speed Orchestra,” a spot directed by Bart Timmer via Czar Film, Berlin, for Hamburg agency Grabarz & Partner.

An orchestra plays “Winter” from Antonio Vivaldi’s “Four Seasons.” While doing justice to the piece is challenging, even more so for orchestra members is staying on their feet. The musicians inexplicably are flying all about, swaying to and fro while performing. A confused conductor looks on. An explanation then surfaces as we see a Porsche navigating tight curves, making hairpin turns. The accompanying line: “Taking the concert around corners.”

“High Speed Orchestra” from Yessian Music topped *SHOOT*’s quarterly Top Ten Chart. Yessian sr. producer Uli Witt recalled, “From the very first moment we knew that we would encounter quite a few risks during the process, especially the believability of the musicians playing this piece as they are moving from side to side on the stage.

“One big aspect of modern production is that you need to always leave all the options open and commit to bettering the idea during the postproduction phase. Shooting and recording an orchestra that plays Vivaldi’s ‘Winter’ is one thing, but staging an orchestra playing Vivaldi while being hurled through a concert hall is a total different animal. That’s why we came up with a workflow that would let the production focus on the performance of the acting, on the moving platform, the camera performance and grip work, while foregoing the musical precision and quality during the shoot, so not only did we concentrate on the performance on stage, we also had to be able to fix and tune things afterwards.”

Witt added, “We had to create a guide track before the shoot that would preset the movements of the musicians, and that

we would do the groundwork for the dynamic and the humor of the whole film with that; you can’t show something iconic like a Porsche and hear something restrained. At this point we were still entertaining the idea of being able to compose something entirely new once we’d see the first editing results and would need to tweak the music into a certain direction.”

But the Vivaldi piece proved ideal, said Yessian CCO Brian Yessian. “Although we were only using an edit of an existing record of the piece as a skeleton at first, merely for storyboard and production planning, we then went on to create a rearranged track for the musicians on set that we could notate for every instrument on camera—it quickly became clear during the offline edit that the piece was just the right choice for a Porsche film.

“The next step was adding a lot of instruments into the raw guide track that really can’t be found in the original chamber orchestra piece; it’s only 13 to 16 strings and a harpsichord originally. Bart decided to go with a full symphonic orchestra of 40 people to have the biggest visual impact possible. So that’s what we did—re-orchestrate Vivaldi for a full orchestra.”

Yessian sr. producer Witt explained, “After the shoot, we meticulously recreated the guide track instrument by instrument. This allowed us to micro-time each instrument and tweak volume and stereo panning to match everything to the picture, the room and the POV of the camera. When you see the timpani, you need to be able to lift it out of the mix. Lastly we digitally transferred all the camera movements and sound reflections onto the stereo image of the mix so that the viewer would immerse in the midst of a full orchestra, playing one of the fastest and intense classical pieces of music. In the end, after many weeks of work, we were very happy and proud that our very first version of the final artwork remained unchanged and was eventually aired.”



Brian Yessian

Sound Lounge Ups One, Adds 2 Producers

New York-based Sound Lounge has promoted Liana Rosenberg from producer to sr. producer, and added two producers, Becca Falborn and Alicia Rodgers. Rosenberg, Falborn and Rodgers will report to executive producer Mike Gullo.



Liana Rosenberg

In her new position as sr. producer, Rosenberg will oversee workflow for Sound Lounge’s team of producers. This includes not only being in charge of scheduling a talented roster of engineers, but also being responsible for optimizing the outcomes for both clients and the company itself. Throughout her career, she’s worked on a wide range of radio and TV commercials and led sound design efforts for a variety of brands, including, Samsung, Best Buy, Jack Daniels, Wawa and Priceline. Prior to Sound Lounge, she served as production coordinator at Hyperbolic Audio in New York, working on content across a variety of disciplines, including commercials and animations.

In their new roles, Falborn and Rodgers will be responsible for client relations, managing mixer sessions, helping to oversee postproduction and bidding audio projects. Falborn comes to Sound Lounge from Hogarth Worldwide, previously serving as its business affairs coordinator responsible for talent contract negotiating for Mattel and coordinating the Cabela’s account. She’s worked with a variety of brands like Mercedes, Heineken, Apple, and Delta, as well as agencies including Publicis, Grey and Ogilvy. Rodgers has worked on many TV productions for various brands, including brands within the Purina Family, as well as produced numerous test commercials for agencies such as Publicis, Anomaly, BBDO and Merkley & Partners. Prior to Sound Lounge, Rodgers served as global supervising producer at Animated Storyboards, where she worked on many animatics and digital projects for leading ad agencies around the world.

Brian Nolan named SVP of Seventeenfifty

Industry executive Brian Nolan has been named sr. VP of seventeenfifty, Capitol Music Group’s in-house division focused on brand partnerships and sync licensing. Nolan reports to COO Michelle Jubelirer. In his new position, Nolan will draw upon his broad experience as an executive to lead the seventeenfifty team and expand its role in generating and maximizing revenue streams while playing a significant role in breaking new and developing artists and enhancing CMG’s marketing efforts on behalf of its established stars. Nolan is based in Hollywood, Calif., in the company’s iconic Capitol Records Tower.













Brian Nolan

Nolan comes to Capitol after 12 years at Columbia Records/Sony Music, most recently as Columbia’s VP of international marketing. In that role, he led the international marketing campaign for David Bowie’s Star album, one of the biggest selling worldwide releases of 2016. He also led international marketing campaigns for Depeche Mode, John Mayer and Russ, to name a few. Prior to assuming that role, Nolan was VP of Sony Music’s in-house creative agency, where he co-created *Culinary Beats*—a CITI-branded original series that aired for two seasons on Yahoo!—and *On The Road*, which aired on The Travel Channel. He is also an executive producer of YouTube’s *Best.Cover.Ever* original series, which is airing this fall.

Among his achievements within the branding/licensing space, Nolan secured global advertising campaigns for Rachel Platten’s “Fight Song” with Ford, Leon Bridges’ “Coming Home” for Apple and “River” for Beats by Dre. A leader in the sports marketing space, his partnerships with ESPN included a label wide collaboration for the 2014 College Football season. Nolan also secured Turner Sports promotional campaigns for Bruce Springsteen’s “Land of Hopes and Dreams” in MLB’s 2012 Playoffs.

VISUAL EFFECTS & ANIMATION

	TITLE	VISUAL EFFECTS/ANIMATION	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1	 Monster.com's "Opportunity Roars"	The Mill NY Melanie Wickham, EP; Clairellen Wallin, Anastasia von Rahl, sr. prods; Ruben Vandebroek, shoot sup./3D lead; Kyle Cody, 2D lead; Kevin Ives, 3D lead; Kshitij Khanna, Molly Intersimone, Dae Yoon Kang, Yoon-sun Bae, Rachel Moon, Dhruv Shankar, 2D; Adam Dewhurst, Todd Akita, Nick Couret, Jackie Liao, John Wilson, Emily Meger, Jeff Lopez, Seon Crawford, Arman Matin, Ren Hsien-Hsu, Lauren Shields, Tyler Heckman, Sewang Kim, Jonathan McCoy, Incheol Jeong, Justin Hammond, Anna Cardillo, Jimmy Gass, Constance Besen, Hannah Lee, Krystal Sae Eua, Jeffrey Lee, Blake Guest, Tom Graham, Juan Zavala, Nole Murphy, Ziming Liu, Sivasubramanian, Vitaal Kuntla, Leela Shanker, Sendil Kumar J, Karthik Viswanathan, Murali Krishna Reddy, Muthyala Krishnaiah, Gokul Navaneethan, Sathyaraj A, Karthick Karuppuswamy, Sandeep Patil, Mehroze, Jai Kishan, Tarun Kumar, Chaitali Shah, Nijesh, Giri Prasath S, 3D; Cedric Menard, Charles Lee, matte paint. (Toolbox: Zbrush, Mari, Maya, Furtlizer, Houdini, Arnold, Flame)	KBS, New York	MJZ, bicoastal/international Matthijs van Heijningen, director
2	 Absolut's "One Night"	Framestore, New York Andy Rowan Robinson, creative director; Charles Howell, VFX producer; Raul Ortega, Sebastien Boulange, Gigi Ng, Karch Coon, Nick Tanner, 2D; Phil Robinson, Charlotte Bae, Nate Diehl, Georgios Cherouvim, Mohamed Echikouna, 3D; Callum McKeveny, design. Editorial Whitehouse Post Russell Icke, editor; Greg Hayes, Joe D'Ovidio, assistant editors; Antonia Porter, producer. (Toolbox: Maya, Nuke, Flame, Houdini, CapturingReality, Photoshop, Hairo, 3DE, PtGui, Arnold)	BBH London	Park Pictures, bicoastal & London Emmanuel "Chivo" Lubezki, director
3	 Ubisoft/ Assassin's Creed Origins' "From Sand"	MPC NY Tobey Lindback, VFX sup./2D lead; Anthony Ricciardi, Vicky Osborn, Vadim Turchin, 3D lead; Renato Carone, Leslie Chung, Ruairi Twohig, Kelly Bruce, Tamir Sapir, Aaron Baker, Karen Weiss, Mazyar Sharifian, Bilal Mack, 2D; Chris Bernier, Jamie German, Butch Belair, Sue Jang, Graeme Revel, Ashley Bernes, Francisco Fraga, Casey Reuter, Mike Lombardo, Eddy Estevez, Justin Maynard, Stu Mintz, Ryan Reeb, Zhao Wang, Joshua Merck, Alek Vacura, Jemmy Molero, Ash Yee, Reginald Emwula, Wesley Schneider, Anthony Gordon, Lee Wolland, James Vidal, Natalie Homewood, Christine Kim, Nishanth Srinivasa, Kunal Sarkar, Sourodeep Dey, Baskaran S, Gopika Priya, Jyothi Prakash Panda, Manjunath Ramakrishnaiah, Ajai V John, Anbarasu E, Pritesh Krishnappa Kotian, Craig Savio Padua, Deepali Negi, Debalina Das Gupta, Subbaiah Addanki, Gowri Shankar Velusamy D, Bakiyaraj P, Radhakrishna Rethinasamy, Sachin Suresh Rao Dhapudkar, Parineeta Jaiswal, et al, 3D. (Toolbox: Maya, Nuke Studio, Nuke, Arnold, Houdini)	DDB Paris	Eddy, Paris MPC New York Rob Petrie, director
4	 Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation's "What is an MRI?"	Roof Studio, NY Guto Terzi, director, art dir, animation dir, Lookdev, compositing; Derek Henriquez, animation dir; Crystal Campbell, EP; Emily Branham, prod; Shane O'Hara, 3D lead, Lookdev, 3D lgt/rendering, compositing, fur; Pedro Minho, Victor El Gu, Lucas Camargo, Rafael Martin, Fabio Valle, Bruno Jacob, Basia Tran, concept art; Rayza Alvarez, Alex Liki, Jean Marcel, Danilo Gerard, Thiago Batista, Lucas Ribeiro, modeling; Vivi Adade, Danilo Pinheiro, rigging; Alfredo Hisa, layout; Animation: Mallo Ryker, Alex Ferreira Simoes, Diego de Paula, Nico Pateta, Marcelo Zanin, Michel Denis da Silva, Rafael Polanczyk, Renato dos Santos Sena, Heber Conde, Paul Wei, Marcio Nicolosi, animation; Josemar Queiroz, fur, 3D lgt/rendering; Lookdev; Joe Nguyen, Vinicius Paniello, 3D lgt/rendering; Flavio Mac, Lookdev & simulation; Guzz Soares, Gustavo Groppo, Lucas Ribeiro, Lookdev; Marcelo Bortolini, lead compositor & pipeline; John Harrison, Bruno Ferrari, compositing. (Toolbox: Maya, 3D Max, Vray, Nuke, After Effects)	RPA, Santa Monica, Calif.	Roof Studio, New York Guto Terzi, director
5	 GEICO's "He-Man vs. Skeletor"	J.J. Sedelmaier Productions, White Plains, NY J.J. Sedelmaier, animation director/producer; Andy Friz, head animator. (Toolbox: Photoshop, ToonBoom Storyboard Pro, ToonBoom Harmony 14, Procreate)	The Martin Agency, Richmond, Va.	J.J. Sedelmaier Productions, White Plains, NY J.J. Sedelmaier, animation director
6	 Heinz Bean's "Geoff"	Assembly Ltd., Auckland, NZ Damon Duncan, director; Rhys Dipple, technical director/3D artist/compositing; Amanda Chambers, exec producer; Josh Fourt-Wells, lead designer/character design/3D artist; Geoff Kirk Smith, Katie Naehar, Craig Speakman, Craig Baxter, Alex McLeod, Damon Duncan, Marcos Godoy, Anastasia Fileva, Andrii Kryvuila, Gustavo Soares, Alex Scollay, Patrick Blades, 3D artists. Scotty Wilson, environmental design; Pete Ritchie, color grade. (Toolbox: Photoshop, 3DS Max, Maya, Marvelous Designer)	Y&R New Zealand	Assembly Ltd., Auckland, NZ Damon Duncan, director
7	 Norwegian Red Cross' "Restoring Family Links"	Not To Scale, New York Colin Hesterly, director; Eve Strickman, exec producer; Liz O'Connor, producer; Anne Calandrie, animator. (Toolbox: Animate (Flash), After Effects)	Papaya, Oslo, Norway	Not To Scale, New York Colin Hesterly, director
8	 SYFY's "Sana Amanat"	Laundry, Los Angeles PJ Richardson, Anthony Liu, executive creative directors/directors; Garrett Braren, EP; Mickey Briggs, producer; Laura Yurich, additional producing; Yongmin Park, animator; Laundry & Moving Colour, storyboard & concept. Moving Colour, Los Angeles Brian Covalt, animation director; Jacqueline Sheng, producer; Allison Perry, Sara Kipin, designers; Matthew Wade, Joshua Kalinowski, Vesela Stamenova, Kathryn Rose, animators; Zachary Shore, storyboard artist; George Moise, compositor. (Toolbox: After Effects, Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, Adobe Premiere)	72andSunny, Los Angeles	HECHO en 72, Los Angeles Laundry, Los Angeles PJ Richardson, Anthony Liu, directors
9	 MaraNatha's "Too Good For Jelly"	Hornet, New York Peter Sluscka, director; Hana Shimizu, exec producer; Sang Jin Bae, head of production; Kristin Labriola, development producer; Cathy Kwan, producer; Claudia Gaspar, production mgr; Eric Lane, VFX supervisor, lead CG, compositor; Elena Manetta, storyboards; Rachel Rardin, Cassandra Mendez, compositors; Nivedita Sekar, 2D animation & design; John Mattiuzzi, tracking; Anita Chao, Sam Stulim, editors; Samantha Healy, 2D intern; Shawn King, colorist. (Toolbox: After Effects)	Terri & Sandy, New York	Hornet, New York Peter Sluscka, director
10	 M. Butterfly Trailer	Alkemy X, New York Geoff Bailey, CG director/design; Dave Zeevalk, CG supervisor, 3D artist; Adam Stockholm, CG aratist; Anton Moss, Matthew Robertson, compositors; Cambra Miller, roto/paint; Tyler Lockhard, TD; Lucas Andrei, VFX editor; Nick Litwinko, managing director. (Toolbox: Maya, Houdini, Nuke)	AKA NYC	M. Butterfly, New York Julie Taymor, director

The Mill "Roars" To #1 Slot

Purple monster ascends for Monster.com, KBS

A SHOOT Staff Report

Ad agency KBS, production studio MJZ and VFX studio The Mill joined forces to create an epic, 60-foot purple monster for Monster.com's "Opportunity Roars" in which the creature grabs a woman from a high-rise building, rescuing her from an unsatisfying job. At first she screams in horror but eventually she comes around to view the monster quite differently even as he seemingly wreaks havoc on the city. Turns out the beast is taking her to a better place of employment.

Directed by MJZ's Matthijs Van Heijningen, the spot posed myriad challenges to The Mill NY ensemble. VFX supervisor and 3D artist Kevin Ives said, "The design of this character was a unique challenge. Its original introduction was in a U.K. print campaign, where there were only a few poses and limited lighting. The challenge for us was to bring him to life, without veering too far from the original reference material. To do this we looked to nature. We gave Monster a bone structure and muscle system similar to that of humans. We then sculpted the hands to have similar wrinkling and color variety as orangutans, but because Monster is so giant, a straight orangutan scale up would have looked very odd, so we looked to larger animals such as elephants, rhinos and alligators to add coarseness and scale to the skin texture.

"For the fur we looked to bears and apes. The texture was more bear but the back fringe and arms were more chimp or orangutan. We really wanted the fur to look lived in, so we had to groom the fur to have clumps, partings, and flow that re-

flected how his body moved. This actually developed alongside the animation—the more we saw Monster move, the more indication we had of where the hair needed to be pinched and flexed permanently. The goofy walk really came out of Monster's anatomy and the desire to undercut the muscular physique with an awkward comedy. Last but not least, the feet were elephant mammoth.

Kyle Cody, The Mill's visual effects supervisor and sr. compositor on "Opportunity Roars," noted that "the obvious challenge we had creatively was how to composite a 60-foot giant purple monster into live action plates with no reference. It was a fine balance of managing the purples throughout the spot and adding the right amount of haze and atmosphere to the monster in order to show that he is giant...but not too giant.

"One of our biggest creative challenges in compositing," Cody continued, "was the sheer number of set extensions and enhancements we did on each plate. Unfortunately, the weather was not on our side when we shot, and as such the majority of our street photography was dark and dreary. Creatively, the spot has to be hopeful and optimistic so the compositing team set about painting with light to add sunny blue skies, shafts of light and reflected lighting all throughout the streets and buildings. The compositing team and DMP department also managed a great deal of set extensions and matte paintings. Some of the locations we shot at were not the right size, so we created a number of background replacements in order to get the right city feel."



Monster.com's "Opportunity Roars"

VFX Supervisor Benji Davidson Joins Brickyard VFX

Brickyard VFX Santa Monica has brought Benji Davidson on board as VFX supervisor. Davidson's world-class creative experience includes live action directing, creative directing and VFX supervision, and he is known for bringing highly imaginative concepts to life from storyboard to visual delivery. Davidson joins Brickyard from MPC, where he served as VFX supervisor since 2008.



Benji Davidson

In his career, Davidson has worked as an on-set VFX supervisor, lead 2D artist, and director, among other capacities. Originally born and raised in England, he got his start at commercial production company HKM/The Directors Bureau before joining MPC LA. His notable projects include Activision's Call of Duty: Black Ops III's "Seize Glory," EA Sports' Madden NFL 16 "Madden: The Movie," Samsung's "Do What You Can't," and Super Bowl spots for Coca Cola and Acura. He also contributed to the Los Angeles Olympics bid, receiving personal praise from Mayor Eric Garcetti.

IAMSTATIC Comes Aboard BODEGA Roster

The recently launched animation division of New York/San Francisco-based content creation studio BODEGA, under the aegis of executive producer Bill Hewes, has added Toronto-based animation shop IAMSTATIC to its roster for U.S. animation projects. IAMSTATIC, which is led by partners/directors Ron Gervais and Dave Green, directs, designs and produces award-winning projects for commercial, film, television and immersive/digital content.



Dave Green (l) & Ron Gervais

The animation boutique has lent their talents to projects for such brands as Target, Mazda, Etsy, and BMW. It has also worked on noteworthy opening title sequences for major films and television series including Guillermo del Toro's Gothic romance film *Crimson Peak* for Legendary Pictures, the Netflix/Discovery original *Frontier*, CTV's popular drama series *Flashpoint* and the HBO comedy series *Less Than Kind*. Most recently, IAMSTATIC worked on an ambitious stunt film for BMW out of Canadian independent agency Cundari.

Mikros Advertising, MPC Join Forces in Paris

Advertising VFX companies MPC and Mikros will integrate their operations in Paris. The two world-class advertising brands will join forces to provide a single source of creative VFX and production services to the French advertising market.

The move provides advertisers in Paris with access to leading creative talent and advanced technologies under a single banner. The new entity will operate as Mikros-MPC Advertising in Paris, and will be part of the global network of MPC Advertising studios. This will not only enable French clients to access MPC Advertising and Mikros talent in Paris, but also leverage top creative and production talent anywhere in the world.

The MPC Advertising team in Paris will join Mikros' Hauteville studio this month. The Paris team will be led by Julien Meesters.

NOMINT Adds Director Sebastian Baptista

Director Sebastian Baptista (aka Sebas) has joined the roster of London-based NOMINT for commercial representation. Baptista's is known for his work in 2D and 3D animation, along with live action.

Having worked for brands including Google, Massimo Dutti, CNN and Radisson Blu, the NOMINT team now offers Sebas to advertisers. Baptista is recognized for his minimalist, sophisticated style which uses refined vibrant color



Sebastian Baptista

and an intelligent use of space and materials in his motion work. Baptista garnered a reputation in 2D animation as co-founder of London-based animation studio, SnC (Sebas&Clim), after building an international career as a motion designer. After mutually parting ways with SnC, Baptista relocated to Barcelona. Here, he turned his hand to live motion and 3D,

Mexico After The Quake: How Can The Industry Help? Last month, a series of earthquakes hit Mexico. One of those quakes was the strongest in over a century, decimating communities in the state of Oaxaca, collapsing buildings in Mexico City, and killing over 500 people—some of them students buried under the rubble of their poorly built school.

Union’s Daniel Luna Helps “Mama’s Got Bump” Hit 3.9M Facebook Views “Mama’s Got Bump,” the new #loveyourbodyday video from Moms You’d Like to Friend (MYLF), hit the ground running, amassing 3.9 million views on Facebook since its debut.

Writer/Director Romina Schwedler’s Debut Film “The Visit” Wins The U.S. Short Film Award of Excellence At The Catalina Film Festival “The Visit” won the U.S. Short Film Award of Excellence at the Catalina Film Festival last month.

Something’s Awry Engages Kids As Moviemaking Peers In New StikBot Branded Shorts To introduce their newest offering, Zing, maker of StikBot brand stop motion animation toys, tapped Something’s Awry Productions, a production company focused on branded content, to create two new shorts.

Romain Quirot’s “The Last Journey of the Enigmatic Paul W.R.” Awarded Best Narrative at The One Screen Film Festival Romain Quirot’s short film, *The Last Journey of the Enigmatic Paul W.R.* has been awarded Best Narrative in the 2017 One Screen Film Festival.

Promoting Emmy-Winner Justin Grosjean Is Win-Win For Cutters Cutters Studios Detroit announced the promotion of Justin Grosjean to editor. The announcement was made by exec producer Mary Connolly and managing director Kurt Kulas.

Renegade Helps Kids Cope With The Loneliness of Cancer Kids suffering from cancer get advice on dealing with the loneliness that accompanies long hospital stays in an animated short created by Renegade Animation for the Imaginary Friend Society.

Mike Diva And Lord Danger Take Anna Akana On A Wild Ride With Metro Manners PSA The Los Angeles County Metro Transportation Authority (Metro) has teamed with creative production studio Lord Danger and Director Mike Diva to present a new campaign which takes a truly original approach to an everyday subject: manners.

Colorist Michael Smollin Joins Fancy Film Veteran colorist Michael Smollin has joined Fancy Film, the independent post-production facility based in Los Angeles.

Edited by Union’s Marco Perez, CNN “Why We Go” Wins the Emmy Edited by Marco Perez of bicoastal Union Editorial, CNN “Why We Go” has been honored with the Emmy Award for Outstanding Promotional Announcement.

2C Creative Recognized with Nominations in the Clio Entertainment Awards and PromaxBDA Latin America Awards 2C Creative (“2C”) continues to rack up the kudos for the strength and quality of its diverse profile of projects.

Alchemy Post Sound Artists Featured in Sound Event at NAB Foley artists from Alchemy Post Sound will discuss their work in creating sound for feature films and television at NAB in New York.

Cutters Studios Celebrates Client Filmmakers Selected For The 2017 Chicago International Film Festival Cutters Studios details their contributions to several official selections of the 53rd Chicago International Film Festival which ran Oct. 12-26.

Simian Unveils Infusion Plugin For Adobe Premiere Pro Simian, the video sharing and collaboration platform has introduced a new plugin for Adobe Premiere Pro.

Production Music Conference Concludes with Biggest Turnout Ever The Production Music Association (PMA), the leading advocate and voice of the global production music community, announced that its 2017 Production Music Conference drew over 600 attendees from all areas of the music industry.

Director Sheldon Candis Returns To His Roots For “Baltimore Boys” For director Sheldon Candis the story behind Baltimore Boys had a deep, personal resonance. The feature-length documentary, which Candis co-directed with Marquis Daisy for ESPN Films, profiles the Dunbar Poets, the greatest boys high school basketball team of all time.

Introducing The New and Re-Imagined SHOOT Classifieds Section; Free To Post and Get Priceless Industry Reach The publishers of SHOOT are pleased to announce the re-launch of SHOOT Classifieds at CLASSIFIEDS.SHOOTONLINE.COM.

Aubrey Woodiwiss Joins Carbon as Senior Colorist/Director of Color Grading Full-service creative studio Carbon has bolstered its roster in Los Angeles by welcoming acclaimed, multiple award-winning colorist Aubrey Woodiwiss as Sr. Colorist/Director of Color Grading.

Sai Selvarajan’s Audible Static NBC Universal ShortsFest’s Finalist Lucky Post’s Sai Selvarajan presents *Audible Static*, the story of Thaddeus, a teenager in love. With love comes panic. Silence. Racing thoughts, but no words. Just audible static.

Undefined Creative Brands the United Nations Development Programme’s Prestigious Equator Prize 2017 Awards Ceremony UC was recently commissioned by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to produce a fresh package of event graphics for its prestigious Equator Prize 2017 Awards Ceremony.

Flight School’s Debut Original VR Experience Manifest 99 Wins Future of Storytelling Independent Jury Award Dallas-based new media creative studio Flight School has been awarded the Independent Jury Award for its debut original VR experience Manifest 99 at the 2017 Future of Storytelling Festival.

Directors David Serota and Henrik Hedin Join Yard Dog Continuing to add unique talent to its creative roster, Yard Dog has signed directors David Serota and Henrik Hedin for exclusive representation in the United States.

The Syn-Composed Spot “Why We Go” Wins News & Documentary Emmy For Outstanding Promotional Announcement Syn, the global music production house founded by Simon Le Bon of Duran Duran, Nick Wood, and Yasmin Le Bon, wins at the 38th Annual News & Documentary Emmy Awards. The team was presented the Emmy for their work on the spot “Why We Go” from CNN’s well-received “Go There” campaign.

Amanda Blackman Joins AKA NYC Entertainment marketing agency AKA NYC has appointed Amanda LaFollette Blackman to the newly-created post of Senior Vice President of Creative Strategy and Experiential Design.

Swiss Broadcaster RSI Relies On WCPMedia Services To Market Content To World Market Swiss public broadcaster RSI Radiotelevisione svizzera has adopted WCPMedia Services’ cloud-based media management platform to market television content to broadcast partners worldwide.

HOBO Teams With The Brooklyn Brothers For Branded Short For Patrón Featuring Director Guillermo del Toro The short film, “Patrón x Guillermo

Del Toro,” was directed by Casey & Danielle of production company MINDCASTLE, Seattle, WA, for Patrón Tequila and agency The Brooklyn Brothers, and features sound design and audio mix, as well as additional music and arrangement from HOBO Audio.

Whitehouse Post Elevates LA EP Joni Williamson To Director of New Business Development Venerable editorial company Whitehouse Post has reinforced its leadership team by promoting its longtime Los Angeles Executive Producer Joni Williamson to the national position of Director of New Business Development.

MTI Film Applies Finishing Touch to New Videos from Pussy Riot, Cold War Kids and Watt MTI Film colorist provided final post services for three new videos directed by Phillip R. Lopez, including a release from Russian punk band Pussy Riot with the provocative title Straight Outta Vagina.

Alchemy Sound Debuts Second Foley Stage Alchemy Post Sound, a specialist in Foley sound for motion pictures and TV, has added a second Foley stage to facility in New York.

The-Artery Produces Highly Provocative New Music Video “Captain’s Ship” Directed by Roy Raz. Full service creative studio The-Artery has produced a highly provocative new music video directed by longtime Artery collaborator Roy Raz.

Gentleman Scholar Contributes To “Welcome to the Imaginary Friend Society” Short For RPA’s Campaign For The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation In partnership with leading ad agency RPA, the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation has just unveiled a groundbreaking campaign harnessing some of the global creative industry’s brightest stars.

Technicolor PostWorks Masters HBO’s “The Deuce” in HDR *The Deuce*, the new drama from HBO and Exec Producers David Simon and George Pelecanos, is set in 1970s New York City where prostitution and crime were rampant, and the modern adult entertainment industry was just coming into its own.

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Director Todd Haynes

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Lachman's work with Haynes includes *Far From Heaven* in 2002 and *Carol* in 2016—both earning Best Cinematography Oscar nominations. “He’s a perfectionist,” Haynes said of Lachman. “He zeroes in on every detail. It’s humbling to look at Ed’s commitment to his craft and the indelible mark he’s made. I found in him a kindred spirit who loves to do all kinds of research and preparation. He loves to prepare the way I do. We’re film nerds.”

Preparation was essential given that Haynes and Lachman had limited hours each day with the child actor protagonists on *Wonderstruck*. “Ed and I had to make the most use out of the limited time,” said Lachman. “This meant that at times we had to shoot some of the 1920s and 1970s work on the same day.”

Wonderstruck adds to a Haynes filmography that includes *Carol*, and *Far From Heaven* which he directed as well as wrote, earning a Best Original Screenplay Oscar nomination in 2003. He also won the Independent Spirit Award for Best Director on the strength of *Far From*

Heaven. Haynes over the years has been a perennial Spirit honoree, starting with nominations in 1992 for Best First Feature and Best Director on the basis of *Poison* followed by Independent Spirit noms in 1996 for Best Director and Best Screenplay for *Safe*, another Best Director nod in ‘99 for *Velvet Goldmine*, the Best Director win in ‘03 for *Far From Heaven*, and one more Best Director nom in ‘08 for *I’m Not There*. Also in ‘08, *I’m Not There* won the Spirit’s coveted Robert Altman Award.

Haynes’ feature directorial debut *Poison* won the Dramatic Grand Jury Prize at the 1991 Sundance Film Festival. And on the TV front, Haynes personally scored three Emmy nominations for the HBO miniseries *Mildred Pierce*—for Outstanding Directing, Outstanding Writing (shared with writer Jonathan Raymond) for a Miniseries, Movie or a Dramatic Special, and Outstanding Miniseries or Movie. *Mildred Pierce* amassed a total of 21 Emmy nominations, winning five. Also repped for short-form fare, Haynes is on the commercials/branded content roster of Moxie Pictures.

Park Pictures’ Damian Kulash

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to create something special.”

“The One Moment” video dovetails nicely with the brand’s “Walk Her Walk” mantra, inspired by the Morton Salt Girl. “Walk Her Walk” is a call to action for people to step up and become a force for good. The Kulash-helmed video underscores how just “one moment” can make a positive difference.

Kulash joined Park Pictures in 2016, marking his first formal representation as a director. He gravitated towards Park through his wife Kristin Gore who as a screenwriter had worked with company co-founder, director Lance Acord. Kulash has an affinity for the people at Park and feels the production house understands his orientation which isn’t to merely keep

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Flash Back

October 28, 2012 A decade since George Lucas said *Star Wars* was finished on the big screen, a new trilogy under new ownership is destined for theaters after The Walt Disney Co. announced that it was buying Lucasfilm Ltd. from him for \$4.05 billion....Feature filmmaker Gary Ross, who wrote and directed the box office hit *The Hunger Games*, has come aboard the roster of L.A.-based production company Furlined for spot representation. Ross made his directorial debut in 1998 with *Pleasantville* and is known for writing and directing *Seabiscuit*, which received seven Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture and Best Screenplay. He also received Academy Award nominations for Best Original Screenplay for the films *Big* and *Dave*....Bicoastal/international Station Film has signed director Mark Gilbert for worldwide representation except in Canada where he continues to be handled by Toronto-based Untitled Films. His directing credits span such clients as Ikea, DirecTV, Marmite, Pepsi, Mentos, 7-Up, Nicorette and KIA. Gilbert’s work has garnered recognition at Cannes, D&ADs, Clios and the ANDY Awards. He gained inclusion into the 2004 Saatchi & Saatchi New Directors Showcase in Cannes. Prior to joining Station, Gilbert had been handled stateside by production house Hello!...

October 26, 2007 Director Rafael Fernandez, formerly of Rock Fight, L.A., has joined Santa Monica-based Green Dot Films for exclusive U.S. representation. At press time, he was about to embark on his first job under the Green Dot banner, a McDonald’s spot for Leo Burnett, Chicago....Director Sebastian Strasser has come aboard Anonymous Content for representation stateside. His work over the years has scored assorted awards, including spots for Volkswagen, Ikea and Mercedes-Benz that have bagged three Cannes Lions; a Silver in 2006 for Ikea, and Bronze Lions in ‘05 for Mercedes and the VW Golf....Director Eden Tyler, formerly of NY-based Zooma Zooma, has come aboard greatguns:usa for exclusive spot representation. He continues to be handled in Germany by Dirs-n DOPs, for which he has helmed a couple of recent projects, a dialogue/beauty spot for Schwarzkopf hair products, and a global (except for the United States) campaign—featuring testimonials in some 20 languages—for Colgate. The latter, shot in Prague, was out of Young & Rubicam, Paris....Kurt Engfehr—who edited Michael Moore’s *Bowling For Columbine* and then *Fahrenheit 9/11*—has secured his first representation in commercials, coming aboard NY-based Ohio Edit.

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Director Damian Kulash

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busy but rather to take on select “big creative challenges. I’m expanding beyond the confines of music videos in which I’m a singer. I’m looking to take on more unique creative projects in all forms—from 30 seconds to 120 minutes.”

For Kulash that mix includes ongoing “inspiring” work with brands, an unconventional band tour, and a pending theatrical feature film. Regarding the feature, he shared, “My wife is writing it right now. We will direct it together. It’s a real and realistic narrative with some playful elements that are highly visual and right

up my alley.”

And the band tour is hardly your typical rock show. Instead it’s planned as two hours worth of videos and live music, playing out at such venues as UCLA’s Royce Hall.

“Music and film have converged as art forms,” related Kulash. “And for years we’ve done an extremely visual rock show—at times, visually overwhelming. But rather than coming at it again from that side, this time we’re viewing what we’re doing as ‘a film tour.’ Our films are going on tour—with the addition of a live band taking the show over the top.”

Mudbound’s Dee Rees

Continued from page 16

show how nature is indifferent to man’s toil, and to his dreams and ambitions. The land becomes this humbling and leveling force that brings us all down to the basic requirements: Food, shelter, sustenance.”

Of editor Kamitsuna, Rees said “She has great rhythm and taste. Nothing gets past her critical eye. She never rests on ‘it’s good enough.’ I’m reminded of that when we worked on [the feature] *Pariah*. The film was initially going to end with a different poem. But as we’re cutting, Mako is on me to consider writing another poem. That also meant another day of shooting pickups. Turns out she was right. We came up with what became a signature poem and we told the story better.”

Kamitsuna also championed an unconventional change in sequence for *Mudbound*, a chronological turn in the edit which gave a relationship between two characters more “tension” and made it a bit more “subversive,” desired qualities that added further to the story, said Rees.

As for Tamar-kali, Reese assessed, “I knew she could write an entire film score. I wanted her to compose the score for *Bessie* but we couldn’t bring that about. Tamar has a deep music intellect. She created a score for *Mudbound* going back to the idea of nature, making the music feel like it was coming from the ground, the trees, the earth. The music helped you feel the sludge, the muddy ground.”

Rees observed that the ensemble of talent she assembled for *Mudbound* collectively translated into her biggest takeaway

from the experience of making the film. “You learn and it reaffirms the importance of a village of artists whom you can trust. You can’t be you as a director without a village of artists who are passionate about what they do. They’re constantly pushing to make the film better. It’s a friction that elevates everyone and everything.”

“This is also reflected in the casting,” continued Rees. “Casting is ninety percent of directing. Actors who are self-critical, looking to go deeper into their characters, are critical to telling a story well.”

Award-winning pedigree

Mudbound’s early awards season buzz continues a career momentum for filmmaker Rees which has yielded multiple honors over the years. Her debut feature film *Pariah* screened at the 2011 Sundance Film Festival where it received the fest’s US Dramatic Competition Excellence in Cinematography Award (for DP Bradford Young) and was nominated for the Grand Jury Prize, later gaining distribution from Focus Features.

Pariah went on to win the John Casavetes Award at the Independent Spirit Awards (2011), and the Gotham Award for Best Breakthrough Director (2011), among other accolades.

Then the Rees-helmed *Bessie* (2015), the HBO telefilm about legendary blues singer Bessie Smith starring Queen Latifah in the title role, garnered a dozen Emmy nominations—two directly for Rees in the Writing and Directing categories. *Bessie* also earned Rees a DGA Award.

street talk

Bicoastal production and post company Greenpoint Pictures has signed director E.J. McLeavey-Fisher for US representation. He has created documentary content for brands including Samsung, Coca-Cola, Comcast, Microsoft, Converse, Kellogg’s and Lincoln. His short films *Comic Book Heaven* and *The Dogist* have been awarded with Vimeo Staff Picks and have screened at film festivals around the world including AFI Docs, DOC NYC and the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival. His work has been featured on The Atlantic, Slate and Vice, and at the Aspen Arts and SFO Museums. McLeavey-Fisher recently completed his first narrative screenplay while working on a second. He is also in various stages of development and production on documentary projects about a blue-collar stuntman, an avant-

garde saxophonist and a mass kidnapping in the 1970’s....NY-based production company Residency Content has signed Belgian director Sebastien Petretti for his first U.S. commercial representation. He has helmed commercials, music videos and short films, bringing detailed art direction and refined humor to all of his work. He has worked on spots for such global brands as Samsung, Galaxy, Durex and Kyriad Hotels. His short films *Family for Sale*, *Pink Velvet Valley* and *State of Emergency Motherf*cker* were recognized at a number of film fests, including the Palm Springs Film Festival and BFI London Film Festival. Recent work for Petretti with Residency includes a spot for *Dixie To Go* out of *Droga5*....Indie creative shop Mother has made 17 new hires in its U.S. operation spanning offices in NY and LA. The artisans joining Mother are: creative directors Abe Baginsky, Erik Norin and Craig Love, art directors Trevor Gilley, Claire Manganiello, Rachel Ellam and Lindsey Bissing, copywriters Catalina Monsalve, Emily Sheehan, Mike Vitiello, Sarah Sharp and Valentina Sulbaran, creative Heather Schmitz, design director Matt van Leeuwen, and designers Jessica Yan, Ross Gendels and Hoang Truong....

report

The Directors Network, talent agency for freelance directors and DPs, has further fortified its roster, adding director Benzo Theodore and taking on representation for DPs Anthony Arendt and Graham Robbins. Theodore began his career as videographer and photographer for MTV’s infamous *Jackass*. He made his advertising debut with the viral video “Sunglasses Catch” for Ray Ban, which he wrote and directed. It was a success with over 15 million hits,

and revealed the potential of a viral video as a legitimate marketing tool. His spot credits include Crayola, Verizon, Mountain Dew and Hyundai. DP Arendt has worked on award-winning national and international ad campaigns, documentary, feature film, and everything in-between. His spot credits include, Coors, Porsche, TaylorMade, Verizon, and Wells Fargo. Robbins has years of experience shooting with brands like Geico, BMW, Disney, Sony and the NBA. He brings his narrative background to the world of commercials while shooting everything from kids to high speed, animals, cars, tabletop and VR in the commercial world....DPs Andressa Cor, Matthew Woolf and Michael Lockridge have come aboard the roster of Dattner Disputo and Associates (DDA) for representation....DDA also booked the feature *Shadow Girl* for cinematographer Eric Robbins....DP Florian Stadler has joined Innovative Artists for representation in features and commercials. Stadler hails from Zurich, Switzerland, and lives in Los Angeles. He has shot award-winning spots for NASCAR, Zippo, Lucky Brand Jeans, and Marvel. He has worked with production companies like Concrete & Clay, Backyard, Furlined, and Logan....Snell Advanced Media has appointed Sandra White to serve as VP of sales for North America, starting Oct. 30. White had previously been with Tandberg Television and Ericsson.....



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