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THE LEADING PUBLICATION FOR COMMERCIAL, INTERACTIVE, & BRANDED CONTENT PRODUCTION

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NAB 2006: Advertising Biz Reaches A Major Crossroads

From Cinema To Cell Phones, New Platforms To Challenge Convention Attendees; Traditional Models Expanding To Encompass Diverse Forms

By Carolyn Giardina

LAS VEGAS—Audience fragmentation has introduced a scenario where commercial advertising is being extended to encompass broadcast television, cinema, 3D, iPods, PDAs, cell phones, the Internet, viral marketing, video games, DVRs, interactivity and on-demand content. With this, traditional advertising models are expanding to include branded content opportunities offering product placement, product involvement, and/or sponsorship programs.

Commercialmakers will have the chance to scrutinize these new content delivery platforms to better understand the opportunities that they create, as well as their impact on production and post, next week at the 2006 National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Convention in Las Vegas.

Many think this could be a significant show,

as these areas have generated a fairly steady flow of news this past year. With standards in sight and deployment deals in place, digital cinema is advancing. At press time there were an estimated 336 digital cinema screens in the U.S., and that number will likely top 1,000 later this year. On the broadcast side, available HD content continues to grow, with series such as Saturday Night Live, American Idol and Late Show with David Letterman going HD this past year; and Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy among those scheduled to go HD next Fall.

Meanwhile, Modeo and MediaFlo both began mobile content delivery trials in the U.S. this past year, and trials and or deployment also took place in countries including Australia, Japan and Korea, as well as throughout Europe.

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Who's Minding The Storage At NAB?

By Carolyn Giardina

LAS VEGAS—Some forward thinking members of the commercial post community believe that datacentric/digital intermediate (DI) style workflows for advertising applications may become a reality in the near future—and will usher in the promise of high-resolution quality, flexibility, and a nonlinear environment.

This makes constructing a workflow that includes color correction systems, scanners/tele-

cine, storage and networking a key focal point at the '06 National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Convention. Another big story at the annual confab in Las Vegas will be the continuing competition between Avid Technology and Apple Computer in the editorial community.

There are many challenges to configuring a successful data workflow, but top of mind for many this year is storage, a vast topic with varying options that

meet different needs. "That's the critical issue for anyone dealing with software-based color correction or digital intermediate systems—you need good storage that has management and diagnostic and disaster recovery tools; you cannot lose your data," warned Joe Bottazzi, partner/director of engineering at New York-based Nice Shoes. "It's a major issue and it's not cheap. You can't afford to buy the wrong

Continued on page 7

Standoff Puts NY Spot Tax Credit On Hold

By Robert Goldrich

ALBANY, N.Y.—Last week Gov. George E. Pataki (R-N.Y.) vetoed more than \$2 billion in tax cuts and spending in the proposed New York State budget that the legislature had passed for fiscal year 2006-'07. The veto puts the governor and both houses at odds, with initial reports that when it reconvenes on April 24, the legislature may elect to override the veto. It would take a two-thirds vote by legislators for an override.

Among the programs placed in a holding pattern due to what's shaping up as a showdown

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Charlex Nabs Best Of Show At Siggraph

By Carolyn Giardina

NEW YORK—*One Rat Short*—an animated short written and directed by Alex Weil, executive creative director at New York-based Charlex, which produced the work—will receive the Best of Show Award for the ACM Siggraph Computer Animation Festival at Siggraph 2006, the 33rd International Conference and Exhibition on Computer Graphics and Interactive Techniques, which is scheduled to take place July 30-Aug. 3 in

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SENIOR PRODUCERS ANNE SKOPAS
AND CARA CUTRONE

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'Tis The Season

The industry awards season is coming fast upon us. While the Cannes International Advertising Festival and the AICP Show are among those that cast a large shadow, there are some smaller yet well-established specialty competitions that merit attention and have some pre-show coverage in this week's issue: namely the Association of Independent Creative Editors (AICE) Awards, and the Association of Music Producers (AMP) Awards.

The fifth annual AICE Awards ceremony is scheduled for May 25 in Los Angeles. The competition raises awareness of the creative contributions made by editors to the art of commer-



cialmaking.

Nominations for the AICE Awards were just announced in this week's edition, with Chris Franklin of Big Sky Editorial, New York, topping the field with five noms. Next is Paul Martinez of bicoastal Lost Planet with four.

In the '06 competition, there are a total of 56 finalists in 18 categories including, for the first time, eight "best of chapter" categories. The AICE chapters in New York, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Dallas, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Toronto each have "best of" nominees. These kudos help to gain recognition for the depth and scope of talent in each AICE regional chapter.

Meanwhile, after its first

four years in Los Angeles, the annual AMP Awards ceremony will shift to New York in '06. (See story in this week's Music Series section.) The gala evening will also shift from the spring to the fall as AMP looks to broaden the scope of the awards while maintaining its core honors. The move to New York is to in part underscore the national reach of the competition, which is already firmly established on the West Coast.

The AMP Decibelle trophy for Mixer of the Year will continue to be bestowed, as will certificates for the two other finalists vying for the honor. Also returning is the Spotted Excellence Award, which enables the industry at large to log onto www.ampnw.com, watch and listen to three finalist commercials, and then decide

which sounds the best.

And '06 will also see the continuation of the annual Special Merit Award in recognition of the best newcomer to the audio mixing discipline.

AMP is considering the launch of other awards competition honors, including the best marriage of an artist or licensed piece of music with a brand.

What's particularly refreshing about the AMP competition is that it's not self-congratulatory in nature. Instead of saluting composers and sound designers, the awards were born out of honoring audio post mixers.

In explaining the rationale for initially centering on mixers, several years ago Jan Horowitz, now AMP president, explained, "A lot of expertise goes into making a great television commercial, and the sound

mix is the critical last step."

Horowitz, who is VP/business manager at David Horowitz Music Associates, New York, continued, "Pulling all the audio elements—the music, dialogue, voiceover and sound effects—into perfect balance supports both the visual image and the advertiser's message. That's what the very best postproduction mixers do, and we think they deserve recognition."

Creative Voice

By Robert Goldrich

In Mel Brooks' *History of the World: Part I*, Moses comes down from the mountain heralding his 12 Commandments. However, two tablets fall from his grasp and break on the ground into pieces. Without skipping a beat, he touts his 10 Commandments.

Addressing a gathering during last month's Online Media, Marketing & Advertising Conference & Expo (OMMA) in Los Angeles last month, Eric Hirshberg, president/chief creative officer of Deutsch LA, said that he once had 10 rules for marketing and advertising.



Eric Hirshberg, president/chief creative officer, Deutsch LA

But he decided to present only eight since "the other two sucked."

Here's an abridged rundown of the eight he shared with confab attendees:

1. The Madonna principle. Hirshberg described Madonna as one of the best marketed brands of

her time, observing that her "Sex Book" was pure branded content, an elaborate commercial for Madonna that spanned all media in terms of reach and coverage. The key point to take away from the Madonna example is that her content

moves "across all touch points," which makes for a most effective campaign. Hirshberg views The Apple Store as perhaps "the best ad of the past five years" because it covers essential bases. It's a place to sell while at the same time elevate and change the perception of Apple.

2. Make brand promises. Keep brand promises. He touted the branding of TGIF Restaurants as being the same as Chili's yet with, figuratively speaking, more rock 'n roll, and the slightly greater possibility, he quipped, of sex. TGIF's ownership sees the value of keeping the music cranked up at their restaurants, giving them an identity beyond being just another eatery.

3. No black sheep. When Volkswagen came up with a great performance vehicle at \$80,000, it simply didn't work because it was contrary to VW's populist brand. The product was of high quality but it contradicted the brand. Clients need to avoid such black sheep. Hirshberg noted that Toyota, by contrast, went the right way. When they wanted to create a car with young, cool, hip appeal, it didn't use the Toyota brand. Instead it created Scion, which has proven successful. Instead of going contrary to the Toyota brand, the automaker went with a brand new brand.

4. Integrated people, not integrated departments. The agency holding company structure tends to separate divisions, with people housed in separate buildings or quarters. At Deutsch, says Hirshberg, "all of our creatives in different disciplines sit together, as one community, delivering one voice for every element of the brand."

5. People don't hate advertising. They hate bad advertising.

6. The most powerful ads make human connections, not advertising connections.

7. Be a brand-driven organization. Defining brand, being true to brand is vital to clients who sometimes fall into the trap of instead being technology-driven, engineering-driven or sales-driven. Brands are what connect with people.

8. Every business decision today is a brand decision. Rather than focusing solely on money, focus on developing a brand's belief system. For Apple, it's empowering creativity. For Volkswagen, it's being the car for the people. For Nike, it's the will to compete and succeed as embodied in athletic effort and excellence. This focus on the brand's belief system will lead to a healthier bottom line than if the company chooses to concentrate strictly on turning a buck.

FLASHBACK

5 YEARS / 10 YEARS



5 Years Ago

□April 20, 2001/Bicoastal/international Propaganda Films has formerly relaunched Propaganda Independent, the Hollywood-based division representing feature filmmakers for spot projects. Director Bryan Singer (*Apt Pupil*, *X-Men*) is on board, as is executive producer Marshall Rawlings....Colorist Victor Mulholland is slated to come aboard Manhattan Transfer, New York, after a long tenure at Post Perfect, New York....Dallas-based post boutique charlieuniformtango (CUT) has opened an office in Austin, Texas....Composer Ben Neill and executive producer Carolyn Sachs have launched music/sound design house Green Beet Productions, New York.....

10 Years Ago

□April 19, 1996/Bicoastal Bedford Falls has restructured its music video arm by paring down its roster, and dissolving its six-month-old Alter Ego division....Mediatech, a Chicago-headquartered duplicator and distributor of TV and radio spots and programs for broadcast and cable, has opened a fourth operating center, an office in Louisville, Kentucky....Disney has redesigned and reorganized its post facilities with an eye towards national spotwork with the opening of Disney i.d.e.a.s., Orlando, Fla. For the past five years, Disney had operated through The Post Group, Los Angeles.....

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Dir. Downing Depicts The Downside Of Living With Cable

BBDO West Takes Odd Couple Approach In DirecTV Commercial "Hold Please"

By Christine Champagne

It isn't easy to live with cable, and no one should have to. That's the message cleverly conveyed in "Hold Please" (:30), one spot in a campaign for satellite TV provider DirecTV out of BBDO West, Los Angeles and San Francisco, that finds an average guy named Stan being annoyed and inconvenienced by his roommate, Otto, who just happens to be a cable guy.

As we see in the spots, Otto (always in his cable company uniform) is unreliable and inconsiderate, failing to pick up his roommate at the airport in one spot and asking his roommate's girlfriend out on a date in another.

In "Hold Please," Otto and Stan are in the living room—Otto is reading on the couch, Stan is at a desk working on his laptop—when the phone rings.

Otto picks up, immediately says, "Hold please," then puts the phone down and returns to his reclining position on the couch.

Apparently, he has no intention of picking the phone back up, so Stan finally asks who is on the line. "I don't know," Otto replies.

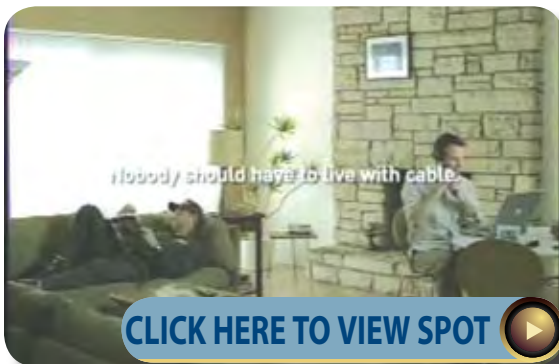
Stan picks up the phone and discovers it is his mother, who is obviously well aware of Otto. "Yeah, that was him," Stan tells her. "He's still living here."

A graphic appears on the screen that reads: "Nobody should have to live with cable."

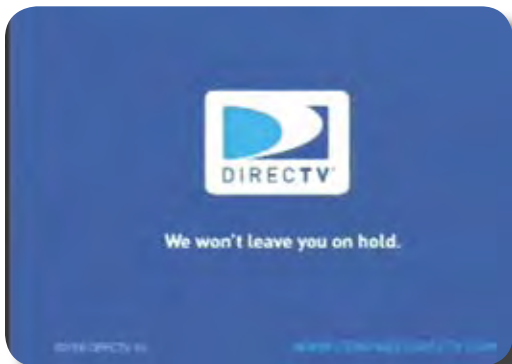
Cut to the DirecTV logo.

THE ODD COUPLE

In addition to delivering the



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)



message that no one should have to live with cable, BBDO West executive creative director Jim Lesser (who worked on the campaign with copywriter James Brown and art directors Jason Roberts and Tito Melega) said it was also important that "Hold Please" and the rest of the spots in the DirecTV campaign entertain viewers, hence the creation of TV's newest odd couple. "DirecTV's reason for being is to entertain you, and every piece of communication they make has to live up to that promise. So we wanted the campaign to be as entertaining as the product," Lesser explained.

Lesser is a satellite TV convert himself, by the way. "You

have to put up with a lot of b.s. when you have cable. I switched to DirecTV when I was tired of putting up with this b.s. several years ago, and then coincidentally got to work on this project," he shared.

As you might imagine, the client loved that Lesser had a real passion for its service and the project.

In turn, the agency sought a director who would dive into the DirecTV project with enthusiasm, and they found that and more in director Michael Downing, who is represented by Harvest, Santa Monica, Calif. Downing not only brought a knack for humor to the job, according to Lesser, but a strong sense of casting.

"The whole campaign lived or died on the casting," Downing reflected, noting that it was crucial that the character of Otto in particular seemed not like a buffoon or a caricature but a real guy.

After an extensive casting call, Lesser found a handful of actors who were possible Stans and a handful of actors who were possible Ottos, then in callbacks experimented with different pairings. Ultimately, Robert Bagnall was cast as Stan, and James Tilton won the role of Otto.

With the actors cast, Downing and DP Anthony Wolberg shot a total of seven DirecTV spots, including "Hold Please," on location in a house in Los Angeles over the course of two days.

In terms of set-ups, Downing kept everything simple so that the focus would be on the per-

formances, capturing all of the action in a wide shot, then going in for medium shots.

After his actors nailed the scripted lines, Downing kept the camera rolling, feeding them ideas for improv.

To help them get into character, Downing worked with the actors on creating backstories for their alter egos. "We decided that they had known each other for quite awhile, that the mother even knew who [Otto] was, and they were kind of just stuck together out of convenience," Downing shared.

While we know where Otto works, what does Stan do for a living? "As far as his job, we were struggling with it. Was he working in insurance? We didn't want it to be super bland, so we were trying to figure out something that seemed a little cool," Downing said. "We finally handed it over to [the actor who plays Stan] in the end to decide for himself what he thought, and he thought Stan was an editor at some kind of publishing company that publishes travel books."

QUIET PLEASE

You'll notice that there are silent moments in "Hold Please" in which we get to feel Stan's frustration and the joke is allowed to breathe. "There was consciously underwriting [with "Hold Please" as well as the other spots] so that there would be a lot said with [the actors'] facial expressions," Lesser noted.

Once the shoot wrapped, Lesser spent a day cutting "Hold

TopSpot OF THE WEEK

Client
DirecTV

Production Company

Harvest, Santa Monica, Calif.
Michael Downing, director; Anthony Wolberg, DP; Bonnie Goldfarb and Scott Howard, executive producers; Francie Moore, producer.
Shot on location in Los Angeles.

Agency

BBDO West, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Jim Lesser, executive creative director; James Brown, copywriter; Jason Roberts and Tito Melega, art directors; Lyra Rider, producer.

Editorial

HutchCo Technologies, Los Angeles.

Jim Hutchins, editor; Steve Miller, assistant editor; Jane Hutchins, producer.

Post

Company 3, Santa Monica.
Brian Robinson, colorist.

Sound Design

stimmung, Santa Monica.
Gus Koven, sound designer; Kelly Fuller, executive producer.

Audio

Eleven, Santa Monica.
Jeff Payne, mixer.

Performers

Robert Bagnall and James Tilton.

"Please" with editor Jim Hutchins of Los Angeles' Hutchco Technologies, then the creatives came in to share their input. Of Hutchins, Downing praised, "He's an editor who can find the tiniest little moments that are funny."

Looking back on the project, Downing said it would have been easy to churn out more than seven spots. "It was pretty collaborative. We were jamming ideas," Downing recalled, adding, "I wanted to keep shooting them. I wanted to turn this thing into a TV series."



Michael Downing

THE BEST WORK YOU MAY NEVER SEE THE BEST WORK YOU MAY NEVER SEE THE BEST WORK YOU MAY NEVER SEE THE BES

America's New National Pastime: "Musical Chairs"

Tim Bieber-Directed Spot Promotes Baseball Via Offbeat Between-Innings Game

By Robert Goldrich

Director Tim Bieber of Mr. Big Film, Venice, Calif., introduces us to the new national pastime, musical chairs, in this :60 promoting the Stockton Ports, a minor league baseball farm team of the Oakland A's.

We open on a high school coach who explains to us that the school board voted to include musical chairs in its athletic curriculum after seeing the "sport" as one of the between-innings activities during a Stockton Ports' game. Clearly, this coach is a bit too intense when it comes to musical chairs, putting his student athletes through the grinder to extract optimum performance from them.

First, we're on the school track where a race is about to begin. The coach fires a starting gun at which point kids sprint for their destination—which turns out to be just a few feet away, some chairs to sit in.

Next comes the video room, in which the youngsters are forced to watch the techniques of musical chair professionals. "I'm not just teaching you about musical chairs," exhorts the maniacal coach. "I'm teaching you about life."

What follows are a succession of practice drills designed to make the kids preeminent in the chairs game. The coach emphasizes that smarts, athleticism and proper daily hygiene are crucial. The latter entails kids taking the wax out of their ears, subject to the coach's inspection. Indeed you have to



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)



hear when the music ends so you know when to sit down. "The girth of a big butt has the ability to deny chair," affirms the coach, as if he's imparting one of life's profound lessons. He then demonstrates the importance of attitude, sitting on a chair and challenging the kids "to take this chair from me." All the kids back down to his intimidating manner.

Another training ritual shows the coach pulling the chair out from under an unsuspecting kid about to sit down. "Not quick enough," says the coach.

This is followed by some temper tantrums on the part of the coach. In one scene he throws away his clipboard in utter disgust. In another, he dropkicks the clipboard, muttering he should have been a car salesman instead.

A voiceover intervenes, "Musical chairs at Stockton Ports," accompanied by a Ports logo, phone number and Web site address for baseball game ticket info.

We then get the coach's parting shot as he lectures to his

student disciples. "I am one with the chair." The kids then repeat in unison, "I am one with the chair."

Bieber directed and shot "Musical Chairs" and two other similarly themed spots highlighting between-innings activities, "Headlight Bashing" and "Human Bowling," in this campaign conceived by a creative team at Gumax Advertising, San Francisco. The offbeat tact of using quasi sports to promote baseball represents a refreshing change of comedic pace.

The Gumax creative duo consisted of creative director/copywriter Walt Whitman and art director/writer Kevin Bonner.

Kate Zimmer executive produced for Mr. Big, with Lisa DeLeo serving as producer.

Editor/audio post mixer was Victor Brown of Mad River Post, Santa Monica. Colorist was Steve Meyer of Zoic Studios, Culver City, Calif.

Principal actors were Bo Folginiti and Kevin Puett.

"Sammy"

By Robert Goldrich

The initial P.O.V. in this spec spot—looking up through toilet bowl water—is a bit of an eye opener. And our sight for moist eyes is a pair of kids—a little boy and his "big" sister.

The spot then shifts to a more conventional perspective of capturing the two children in the bathroom, standing in front of and gazing into the toilet.

"I'm sorry you have to go to heaven Sammy," says the lad, holding a goldfish in his hand.

"I'll miss you," affirms the girl.

"We'll miss you forever," nods the boy.

As Sammy is dropped into the toilet, the girl adds, "Don't forget to give us a call

tonight"—at which point she plops a cellular phone into the bowl and flushes.

A voiceover relates, "Misplace your phone? Skip the grieving process with a great deal on the coolest new phone at Cingular."

Jazzy product shot motion graphics of Cingular cell phones appear on screen. The spot then takes us to the kitchen where the two kids are with their mother.

"Mom, did Sammy call yet?" asks the girl.

"What?" responds the mom in a voice



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

tinged with both bewilderment and disbelief.

An end tag contains the Cingular logo, accompanied by the slogan, "Raising the bar."

Bill Kelman of Apache Films, Venice, Calif., directed the spec piece, which was

conceived by creative directors Jonathan Emmerling and Steve Giraldi. Art director was Rebecca Bloom.

Robbie Howard produced, with Kelly Koskella serving as co-producer. The DP was Damien Collier. Production designer

was Irwin Mehlman, with Rebecca Bloom the art director.

Editor was Ryan Wick. Colorist was Nadeem Chawdhry of Filmworks/FX, Santa Monica. Motion graphics/effects artist was Alan Chamberlain. Audio post mixer/sound designer/composer was Ben Davis of Ben Audio, Venice.

Principal actors were Carissa Bodner, Nolan Gould and Kristin Pfeifer. There was no actual goldfish; it was a rubber fish that Kelman bought at a magic store.

Searching for spec concepts, Kelman linked up with creative directors Emmerling and Giraldi via wheresspot. Emmerling and Giraldi are creatives at Gotham, New York, but they did this project independent of the agency.

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Janimation Takes Two—15 Times—For The Mavs

Scoreboard Intermission Entertainment Migrates To Web; Is A DVD In The Offing?

By Millie Takaki

Being one of the National Basketball Association's elite teams this season isn't quite entertaining enough for the Dallas Mavericks and their colorful owner Mark Cuban. The outspoken Cuban has a strong philosophy about Mavericks' home games—namely that something must always be going on for fans, that the game is just one part of the total entertainment package.

Thus during timeouts and halftime, standard intermission fare isn't enough at the Arena. This has led to the production of 15 two-minute animation episodes of *Mavericks Timeout Ticker*, which are displayed on the Arena scoreboard.

The episodes poke fun at Mavericks and opposing players throughout the league.

For example, a newscast hosted by anchor "Jim Nasium" takes us around the NBA for the latest goings on, which include Mavericks' center Eric Dampier rescuing a cat from a tree, answering a call for help from a little old lady; a charity golf tournament in which the feuding Shaquille O'Neal and Kobe Bryant, former teammates with the Los Angeles Lakers, have apparently patched up their differences. However, deep down there still appears to be a rift as O'Neal uses Kobe's head for a golf ball tee. And when Bryant objects, O'Neal literally puts his foot down, burying Kobe's head below ground level. Picking at the O'Neal/Bryant scab gives Mavericks' fans a bit of devilish delight in that during the Lakers' championship heyday, the Los Angeles team was an arch nemesis of the Dallas club in the NBA's Western Conference. (Bryant is still a Laker while O'Neal has since been traded to



The Mav's Eric Dampier comes to the rescue of an elderly woman's cat

the Miami Heat.)

Among other "stories" covered in the *Ticker* newscast are: a remarkable slam dunk contest in which Detroit Pistons' center Ben Wallace navigates through various dangerous situations (hungry alligators, red hot lava) to jam the ball through a hoop; and a *Wheel of Fortune* game show takeoff in which the words "Technical Foul" are clearly spelled out, but Pistons' forward Rasheed Wallace cannot solve the puzzle—the joke being that Wallace has committed more technical fouls than any other player this year, but in his mind's eye, he's never been guilty of even a single infraction.

Another newscast reports on Houston Rockets' center Yao Ming—whose height is well over

seven feet—recently dunking the basketball without jumping. Anchorman Nasium explains that Ming was able to achieve the feat because he was wearing his mother's stiletto high heels.

Players aren't the only source of comedy for the *Ticker*. Newscast in-the-field reporter Tabitha Liplock is seen at an Arena concession stand where a new menu is being introduced, the main entrees being opposing NBA teams for the Mavericks to at least figuratively devour. The new food items include Fried Raptors (a reference to the Toronto Raptors), the Denver (chicken) Nuggets and Timberwolf Stew (for the Minnesota Timberwolves).

Liplock also reports on another "groundbreaking" exclusive—scientists' discovery of a

left-handed basketball. Film at eleven.

Another *Ticker* correspondent is Oldandrabby, a spoof of *60 Minutes'* newsmagazine commentator Andy Rooney who proceeds to drone on about different aspects of NBA minutia with his "Ever wonder?" queries.

The ego of a local TV sports reporter is also on display as he interviews Mavericks' star rookie Josh Powell. The budding NBA star can't get a word in edgewise as the self-centered reporter asks and then answers his own questions, telling us about his personal life with Powell little more than an observer.

Even Cuban enters the storyline as the airhead anchorman reads a bulletin that the Mavericks' owner has placed a \$100 bill under one of the fan's seats. The anchor is quick to stumble about to see if the money is taped to his chair. Turns out it is but he doesn't notice it. Forced to stand in order to search for the C-note, Nasium is revealed to not be wearing any pants, just some colorful boxer shorts.

TICKER TRIGGER

The *Ticker* fare—which is funny, light and a bit over the top, while also offering a takeoff of sports on happy talk local newscasts—was produced by Dallas-based CG/motion design studio Janimation, which also did all the creative in house. Headed by chief creative director/founder Steve Gaconnier, Janimation

Brandstand credits

Client

Dallas Mavericks

Matt Fitzgerald, VP of marketing

Animation

Janimation, Dallas

Steve Gaconnier, chief creative director/copywriter; Pete Herzog, senior producer/copywriter; Mike Duffy, operations supervisor; Steve Quentin, Rares Halmagean, animators; Chris Gruska, concept artist.

Music/Sound Design

The Sound Spot, Dallas

John Dennis, composer/sound designer

deployed simple Flash animation for the series.

Janimation senior producer Pete Herzog proved in retrospect to be a catalyst for the project. The studio contacted the Mavericks after seeing a smattering of animated shorts on the home arena scoreboard over the past few years. In 2005, Herzog dropped off some Janimation demo reels at the Mavericks' headquarters, leading to a meeting with Gaconnier and Mavericks' VP of marketing Matt Fitzgerald.

The Mavericks liked what they saw and heard, deciding to ramp up their timeout entertainment content. This form of branded entertainment was justified on two prime fronts: being able to entertain the fans during timeouts; and animating the players and the Mavericks' brand makes the team—and the NBA itself—larger than life.

Of the *Timeout Tickers*, Cuban stated, "We love them, but more importantly our fans love them. Our mission is to provide a complete entertainment experience and the *Tickers* are an important component."

Underscoring their importance and how well received they've been, the *Tickers* have been placed on the team's Web site (www.mavs.com) for fans to access. And word is that Cuban is contemplating sending a DVD of the *Tickers* to fans and prospective clients.

Gaconnier and Herzog were part of a Janimation ensemble that included animators Steve Quentin and Rares Halmagean, concept artist Chris Gruska and operations supervisor Mike Duffy. Creative director Gaconnier and senior producer Herzog additionally served as copywriters on the job.

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Efx-Driven Spots

A Tale Of Four Automotive Case Studies As Seen Through The Eyes Of Visual Effects Artists

By Carolyn Giardina

SHOOT sought out visual effects artists to share insights into the making of vehicular spot fare as reflected in some recent noteworthy endeavors. The body of work's range is far reaching—from the time-honored classic art of Japanese origami to a rendition of weather seasons over many years. Add into the mix an inventive Rubik's Cube-type approach, as well as a surreal depiction of a "Scissor-Tree Forest" in which people's heads are replaced by assorted objects. Here's our run-down:

THE ART OF "ORIGAMI"

A new ad for the Mitsubishi Endeavor successfully combines today's digital technology with the classic art of Japanese origami, and in turn continues Mitsubishi's "Driven to Thrill" campaign that celebrates its Japanese heritage.

Entitled "Origami," the unique blend of arts tells the story of a Ryu—a mythical creature that transcends land, water and air—following the Endeavor through an all-terrain maze of origami imagery until the SUV reaches its destination. It ends with the Ryu bowing in respect to the Endeavor's capabilities. The story is told through the images, and also through voiceover in Japanese with English subtitles.

Victor Garcia of bicoastal/international MJZ directed the commercial for BBDO West, Los Angeles; the spot features digital effects and compositing by Venice, Calif.-based Sight Effects.

"Our approach was combining the mediums, not to go with an all CG approach," explains Sight Effects' Melissa Davies, who served as visual effects supervisor on the job with Adrian Hurley. "The goal really was to make it look like a photoreal environment...and we felt it would look more real starting with a real base."

A team of origami artists led by artist Robert Lang created real origami elements. Some were shot as individual elements with a motion control camera on a bluescreen stage at Hollywood's Sunset Gower Studios; others were used as reference to create CG models of the art. The Endeavor was shot on location in Los Angeles. Curtis Clark, ASC served as DP, and lensed the live action in 35mm film.

"We shot the car first, and then matched the direction of the lighting on set with the origami," Davies says. "Then we animated [the elements] and

lit them so they would match each scene...The whole goal was to make everything look like it was folded paper—every element except for the car."

Ryu, for example, was designed and folded by the artist; but in the spot, the character is entirely CG. "We didn't want him to be too fluid," Davies relates. "We wanted him to be an origami element that would have a little bit of a natural motion, so we intentionally made his movement stiff.

"It was a lot of experimentation about how the elements would act—how would water act as paper," she continues. "We envision water to be really fluid. We had to do a lot of experimentation with different frame rates and making it stutter so it felt like waves."

Some shots combined many elements. For instance, a shot of the Endeavor passing through a wheat field including a paper background with separate paper elements including clouds, telephone poles and the road; these were combined with CG elements such as the wheat. Images in other shots included origami trees and buildings.

Placing the Endeavor into these environments involved adding proper reflections onto the car. Time was a critical factor throughout production; Davies explains that the cycle was three weeks from awarding to completion.

The Sight Effects credits include: Joana Cruz, lead visual effects artist; Miles Essmiller and Gavin Miljkovich, visual effects artists; Kim Dail and Jason Mortimer, senior animators; Shun Imaizumi, Jon Jenkins and Robin Scher, animators; and Andrea Morland, visual effects producer. The company did models and animation using Maya, and rendered in Mental Ray. Compositing was completed in Discreet Inferno.

Tom Muldoon of Nomad Editorial, Santa Monica, edited the spot. Stefan Sonnenfeld of Santa Monica-based Company 3 was the commercial's colorist.



200144937-001/Chad Baker/Getty Images

A TUNDRA FOR ALL SEASONS

West Hollywood-based visual effects and design company A52 and director Olivier "Twist" Gondry of bicoastal/international Partizan recent completed a :30 that may appear straightforward but was actually quite complex.

"Throw It In The Tundra," created by Saatchi & Saatchi Los Angeles for Toyota, presents a single shot of a Toyota Tundra parked outdoors, as

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11-Efx-Driven Spots 12-Let The Games Begin



Let the Games Begin

VES, Siggraph Explore Convergence Of Gaming, Film and Advertising

By Carolyn Giardina

The explosive interest in and rapid expansion of the interactive entertainment community holds great promise for experience-based storytelling—and Hollywood and Madison Avenue are taking notice.

In response, the Visual Effects Society (VES) and the Los Angeles Professional Chapter of ACM Siggraph recently presented a program titled “Experiential Narrative in Games and Film,” which dissected the convergence of games, entertainment and advertising. The event was held at the Entertainment Technology Center in USC’s Digital Cinema Laboratory at the Hollywood Pacific Theater.

Speakers brought experience in multiple media to the table. They were David Goyer, writer/director, whose credits include *The Invisible*, *Batman Begins*, *Dark City*, and the *Blade* trilogy; Tom DeSanto, executive producer, *Transformers: The Movie*, *X-Men*, and *X-Men United*; John Gaeta, visual effects supervisor

on *The Matrix* trilogy; Habib Zargarpour, Electronic Arts’ game designer on “Need for Speed: Most Wanted,” which features a BMW in the leading role; and Jonathan Ackley, a LucasArts alumnus. Richard Taylor, cinematics director at Electronic Arts, moderated the discussion. Loni Peristere, co-founder of Culver City-based Zoic Studios, was a meeting producer and participated in the discussion.

The general consensus from the panel was that filmmakers and game designers should work together to create a seamless experience where one medium informs and enriches the other. This would involve combining the emotion and drama of film with the interactivity of video games to create stories in which a viewer can participate as well as watch. Peristere observes that the games will continue to become more sophisticated as the CG world moves toward real time photoreal rendering.

But what is the model of the future? One that is already hap-

pening is the development and release of movie-based video games that hit the market around the time of the film’s release.

“It’s natural to try to extend a successful film,” says Gaeta, who won an Academy Award and BAFTA Award for visual effects on *The Matrix*. “But the trend of trying to create a successful property from one media to another has had some hiccups.”

Specifically addressing the creative side, he points out that a film’s creators play a large role in the success of a film. “But we’ve been separated from the [game development] process,” he says. “Part of the problem is that directors have not been direct participants in the game.”

“It’s about communication,” agrees DeSanto. “I don’t think there’s ever been a good synergy between film and games because they [operate as] two creative creatures.”

“The time to nail down all the relationships [between filmmakers and game developers] is in prepro,” asserts Gaeta. “[Prepro] is the pivotal point. I totally



David Goyer

believe the directors and writers have probably the best insights into [the characters and situations].”

Goyer says that character and story are critical in a successful movie-based game, but while video games today often have the image of the characters in a film, they are not always *about* the characters. Another inherent problem, he suggests, is that “development windows are not long enough to do a proper game,” keeping in mind that a film has already been greenlit when game development begins.

“In order to make a really good game, you need three to four years,” says DeSanto. “[It will be an issue] until video games shorten their development time.”

EA’s Zargarpour, an alum of Industrial Light + Magic and the feature world, where he is a two-time Academy Award nominee and two-time BAFTA Award winner (both for *The Perfect Storm* and *Twister*), relates, “I found making a game requires as much time as making a movie; most people don’t realize this.”

Success is also about proper use of the benefits of each medium. “For any entertainment technology to survive, it has to have a niche,” says Ackley. “When translating a property from one to another, you need to look at strengths and weaknesses of a new medium. To be successful in interactive, the true art is knowing how much control to give.”

Like movie-based games, there is also strong interest in branded games. That business model has been shifting in recent years, driven by increasing demand.

“Three years ago you used to have to pay advertisers to put

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Efx Artisans Reflect On Their Automotive Ad Fare

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two men load its bed with bales of hay, tools and other supplies. The men begin their work in short sleeves on a sunny day, but the weather quickly turns rainy, and their attire instantly changes to rain gear. While the men continue working, their clothes change rapidly through a range of seasons and weather conditions. During the course of the spot, the camera moves around the truck and to a final hero shot of the vehicle. Throughout, the voiceover states: "The loads you haul can be mean, dirty, gritty; sometimes, cold-cutting steel. So you'd better have a truck that's strong enough to take it. That truck is the Toyota Tundra. Load after load, mile after mile, year after year, Tundra endures. Toyota, moving forward."

The spot was lensed on location in Los Angeles with a motion control camera that Gondry programmed to give the shoot natural camera movement. The actors were directed to replicate their movements and the timing of their performance for each take. For different shots, they were also to load different

objects and in different weather conditions that were lensed in camera. "I wanted to give it a natural look, so we had to change the weather," Gondry says. "We shot rain, snow, and nice weather."

Next, the director—who established himself as a respected CG and visual effects artist, after many years of working with his brother, acclaimed director Michel Gondry—used a morphing algorithm that he wrote himself to make a subtle, smooth transition from take to take, showing the changing of seasons and the passage of time.

The application of the morph, he acknowledges, has shifted over the years; it took off as a hero effect, although, Gondry uses it as a seamless one. "Morphing brings a smoothness to an effect," he says, describing the technique as a type of dissolve. "[This job] would have been tough without morphing."

Gondry created the morph sequences himself and provided the work for A52's lead visual effects artist Tim Bird, who worked with Flame artists Alicia

Aguilera, Justin Blaustein, Mike Bliss, Eric Bruno, Ben Loomam and Ryan Yoshimoto to seamlessly blend those elements into the master camera move.

"It was very collaborative," Bird says of working with Gondry. "Morphing shifts things, so we needed to work on the details to integrate the morph into the job."

In addition to the technical challenge, there were many creative tasks required to make the spot work. A52's visual effects team created a wide variety of atmosphere and weather elements. They handled sky replacements, and added clouds, dust, rain, as well as 2D and 3D snow, to appropriate segments. The team also incorporated a digital matte painting created in Adobe Photoshop by artist Helen Maier into all winter segments.

"The intention was to show seasons over a series of years, rather than just four seasons," Bird relates. "We did about 15 seasons in total, and tried not to repeat any of the them."

Partizan's team included executive producer Sheila Stepanek, DP John Zilles and line produc-

er Valerie Romer. A52's executive producer is Mark Tobin, and Scott Boyajan and Dan Brimer co-produced the project for A52.

Mike Hackett of Santa Monica-based Crush Edit cut the spot. End graphics were provided by Solid, Santa Monica.

SMITH & FOULKES GET SURREAL IN "HEADS"

London-based Nexus Productions' directing duo Smith & Foulkes (Alan Smith and Adam Foulkes)—the team behind the acclaimed Honda "Grrr" ad that dominated last year's advertising awards season—has completed "Heads", a surreal Renault Megane spot that successfully combines live action and animation. This entertaining commercial—a co-production of Nexus and The Lift in Madrid—was created by Publicis Lado, Madrid.

The spot—featuring a live action Renault in a fully animated world—dramatizes life in a remote village nestled in the dangerous "Scissor Tree Forest," where all the folk have lost their heads. An animated Spanish Formula one hero Fernando Alonso first drives through the village, observing that each of

the residents' heads are replaced with assorted odds objects such as a toaster, telephone, a boot, a watermelon and a fan. Alonso then enters and successfully navigates through the dark forest in his Renault Megane—with the scissor trees in hot pursuit. The spot ends with a shot of the latest victim of the forest, fitting a bird's nest atop his body.

"We had to design an environment that would fit the story; the car was the starting point," explains Foulkes of the team's goals. He further relates that they went for a "weird, spooky feel" that allowed them to have fun revealing the strange heads without venturing too far into horror film territory.

A key challenge was to tell an intricate story in a very short time frame (a :30 and :45 were created). "Every shot had a purpose to move the story; there wasn't any time to linger on any of the shots," relates Foulkes. "We had to establish the car, we had to establish the village, we had to establish the forest; and we had to [create the ending]."

The team was on a tight production schedule—two months from prepro to delivery—that started by creating a 3D animatic. The

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5 One Show Awards • 20 Cannes Awards • 139 Super Bowl Commercials • 1 Grammy Award • 3 Emmy Awards • 38 Clio Awards • 27 Addy Awards • 4 Andy Awards



Visual Effects Case Studies Range From "Origami" To The Surreal

Continued from page 13

live action shots of the Renault Megane were lensed on a test track in Madrid, with Denis Crossan serving as director of photography. "We had already done a 3D animatic, so we knew what shots we needed and the angles," Foulkes explains, adding that it was essential to replicate the animatic exactly during the shoot, including action, camera positions, distance and speed.

The next challenge was to integrate the live action car in the animated world. Back at Nexus' London headquarters, the footage of the vehicle was placed in the 3D environment, created primarily with Autodesk Media and Entertainment's 3ds max.

The directing duo explains that another important task was the process of creating the fully textured world for the car to travel through and then a reflection of that world to sit on the car, to replace the tarmac test track. A variety of techniques were deployed to believably marry car and road, including using particle

animation to throw up dust and rocks. Mist was added to complete some of the shots. Lighting also needed to be matched; for instance, the team had to darken the car when it enters the forest.

Attention to detail also included the use of the car's headlights to dramatically light up the roadside.

Compositing was accomplished in Discreet Flame systems.

Nexus credits include Darren Price and Ben Cowell, heads of 3D; Reece Millidge, head of animation; and Mike Skrgatic, Sheldon Gardner and Reece Millidge, Flame artists.

Tom Harding at London-based VTR handled color correction.

The spot was produced by Julia Parfitt (Nexus), and Alvaro Weber and Gabriel Jorge (The Lift).

TAKING THE RAV 4 FOR A CUBIC SPIN

The Mill's London headquarters (the company also maintains a facility in New York) has created a clever "spinning cube" effect—resembling a sort of Rubik's Cube—for the new Toyota Rav 4 commercial titled

"It's Whatever You Want It To Be." Directed by Paul Street of London's Streetlight Films for Toronto-based Dentsu Canada, the spot focuses on a Toyota Rav 4 driving through different environments and as the cube spins, the viewer sees half of the car morphing into a more suitable vehicle depending on the terrain. Throughout the spot the Toyota becomes half tank, half London bus, half truck and half rally car.

Lead Flame artists Wes, Rich Roberts and Giles Cheetham created the transition between the two different types of vehicle. The agency wanted to create a cube that was organic in its movement and overall design, and that blended the action of the vehicles seamlessly.

It was important to Street that the cube itself didn't feel like a post effect - he wanted to create the impression that the images were being projected onto a physical object, explains producer Austen Humphries of The Mill.

So to develop the proper execution, The Mill's Flame team,

guided by Humphries, began by spending five days testing various moves and spins on the cube. They also focused on the texturing of the cube and played with lighting effects.

The live action was lensed on location in Los Angeles. To get the needed footage, Humphries explains that the production team used a rig attached to a camera car and tracking marks. Both vehicles used in each shot were lensed in the same place, and the camera was locked so that the backgrounds were the same.

The live action images and an animated cube were sent to editor Tony McGrath of Streetlight Films, who cut the spot and did a rough comp.

Post was then accomplished by the aforementioned Wes, Roberts and Cheetham, as well as Flame assistant Dave Birkhill.

The assignment was compositing intensive. The team had built a rough cube in 2D, which could be animated to spin left or right. With the elements in place, each had to appear as a single image. The work started with reti-

ming the spinning cube at different rates in order to end with the proper shots. The team resized the cars so that the two halves were a better fit, but that meant that the backgrounds no longer matched. So the team replaced a number of backgrounds in the shots.

To enhance the effect, Humphries explains that the team added snow in some images, as well as included a variety of atmospheric elements to make the scenes match. "These were subtle things that tricked [the viewer] into believing the two shots were matched up," he relates.

To complete the look, Mill colorist Seamus O'Kane made sure the lighting as well as the time of day matched in each completed image.

Since the agency was based in Canada and Street in Los Angeles, The Mill's BEAM.TV was used to facilitate postproduction. Humphries explains that each evening the team at the Mill posted versions of the commercial onto BEAM.TV, and they held a conference call with those in Toronto and Los Angeles. The team addressed the comments overnight to create a smooth workflow.

Gaming Is Hot Topic At VES/Siggraph L.A. Chapter Session

Continued from page 12

ads in games; now they pay us," observes Zargarpour, whose "Need for Speed: Most Wanted" featuring a BMW won the '06 VES Award for outstanding real time visuals in a video game.

The relationship between game developers and advertisers is an important one, he relates, as clients pay close attention to how their product is portrayed. "Each car company has a different idea of what they want," he explains, noting that this includes how much damage—and the type of damage—that the developers can inflict on a vehicle in the course of the game. As an example, he explained that on a BMW, windows were allowed to crack, but



Electronic Arts' *Need For Speed: Most Wanted* on the X-Box 360

they could not smash. Ironically, he says, "you can explode a car in a movie, but you can't in a game."

Automotive advertising seems to be an obvious fit for video games, which frequently include chase sequences. Yet speakers

acknowledged that the industry is looking for fresh ideas and new genres—including those for the less frequently targeted female audience.

Among those being looked at are games with portals to the Web. Panelists seemed to think this was a particularly interesting model for advertising to explore, as it could result in product placement as well as product involvement. It was suggested that on a Web site, one could learn more about—and even purchase—products that are featured in games. "It's about commerce," suggests DeSanto. "If people feel the dollars are there, it will happen."

These advertiser opportunities were also viewed as something to consider for another sug-



Habib Zargarpour

gested model, what Gaeta calls a "hybrid" film—that is, a game where the player can affect the outcome. With story choices that a player can make, he observes, "think about how many movies can be constructed in one environment."



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Fast Track Tops Chart

Followed By “Drumline” Beat And “Tough” Score

By Robert Goldrich

The spring top 10 music and sound design chart is topped by a trio of tracks that runs the gamut from monk-like chants to drumline precision to a slightly offbeat filmic treatment of a fantasy/reality mix.

While they are diverse, the spots share a common bond—all three are for automotive clients who took an atypical creative road to convey their messages to prospective consumers.

Our number one entry is indeed a Fast track, literally, which helps to define the inner speed demon character named Fast for the Volkswagen GTI. Next excitement is literally drummed up for the Cadillac’s newly designed DTS. And the Dodge Caliber is put through its paces, impervious to the attempted intervention of a flute-accented pixie.

Here’s our top three tracks rundown:

NUMBER ONE

Let your “Hair” down—as well as your girlfriend—and you are answering the call of your inner Fast in this :30 for the VW GTI out of Crispin Porter + Bogusky, Miami (CP+B). The Fast is a short, squat, slightly sinister looking character with a black body and a red mouth. Ultimately Fast comes to inhabit all of those who drive the GTI, existing not only as a physical icon but also within them.

In this chart topping spot, titled “Hair” (directed by Rocky Morton of bicoastal/international MJZ), a guy is behind the wheel of a GTI with the windows rolled down. His gal pal is sitting in the front passenger seat. While the young man is enjoying the drive, the girl looks uncomfortable as her hair whips about her face. Finally she asks her boyfriend if he can roll the windows up a bit. He tells her no as politely as possible (he wants the windows down so he can hear the roar of the car’s engine) while his inner Fast rages. “Sometimes,” an ominous voice from within the guy (and unheard by the girl) says, “my Fast doesn’t get along with my girlfriend.”

The ad concludes by urging drivers to make friends with their Fast.

The hybrid music/sound design for the entire Fast campaign (a total of four commercials, including “Hair”) was completed at Beacon Street Studios, Venice, Calif., with John Nau and Andrew Feltenstein serving as composers, and Brian Chapman as sound designer. Audio post mixer credits go to Philip Loeb, Rob Difondi, Rob Sayers, Glenn Landrum and Keith Reynaud of Sound Lounge, New York.

A prime element of the sound design track was the hypnotic Fast theme. “You’ll hear the monkish type chants when Fast appears. That was John Nau, my partner, and I sighing again and again and again to make it feel as if a group of monks is meditating,” explains Feltenstein.

The Beacon Street ensemble is accustomed to working with CP+B; their collaborations began about three years ago. “All we got from the [agency] guys

to start was a picture of this Fast character. There was no script for us to see at the time. It was just described to us as one’s inner Fast or zeal for driving,” relates Feltenstein.

Nau adds, “It was clear that this character needed its own theme, sound and voice. And as it turns out, the very first track we did was the one they went with—although we went on to explore different possibilities, maybe turning out twenty [tracks].

“The first one was real, tribal and organic,” continues Nau. “It worked because our track made the inner Fast human, tangible—there was a humanity to this internal voice.”

Feltenstein and Nau’s chanting lasted about three minutes. “You double yourself and hold it [your chanting] as long as you can, at which point it starts to modulate, even changing key. If it sounded perfect, it wouldn’t work. Not being perfect is pretty. And people respond to this, which I think helps them relate to the Fast character.”

Subsequent Beacon Street attempts were a bit too polished with tribal drums and electric sounds, according to Feltenstein. These executions only served to lead them and the agency back to the first approach. Also figuring in the mix were some more conventional sounds, like the VW engine.

Integral to the successful Fast track, notes Feltenstein, is the trust afforded to the music company artisans by CP+B creatives. “They let us do our thing,” he says. “We’re not just asked to knock this or that out. We can experiment and keep doing it ‘til we feel it’s right. After working together over the years, there’s an unspoken language. They’ll say, ‘You know what I mean’—and we do. The freedom extended to us from the whole team there—from Alex [CP+B chief creative officer Bogusky] to Andrew [exec creative director Keller] to Rob [creative director Strasberg], Rupert [executive producer Samuel] and Bill

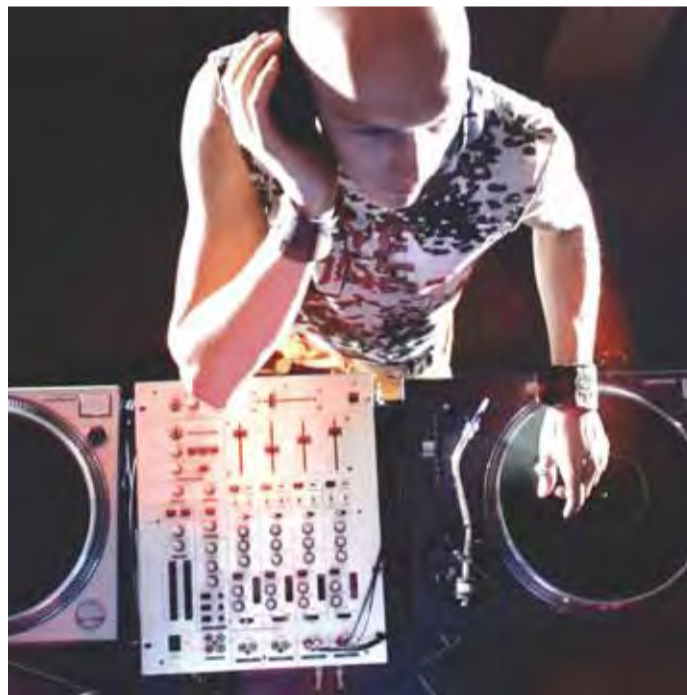
[agency music producer Meadows]—is tremendous and helps us to do our best work.”

NUMBER TWO

Putting a car through its paces is typical vehicular ad fare—but when the hero Cadillac DTS glides fluidly around and through a performing drumline corps, the creative result is atypical, generating excitement and boundless energy for the newly designed automotive model. Conceived by Leo Burnett, Detroit, the spot, “Drumline,” was directed by Paul Hunter of bicoastal HSI Productions.

HUM Music + Sound Design, Santa Monica, sought out and brought composer Jim Casella, a noted drumline artisan, into the project. He worked with HUM creative director Jeff Koz and executive producer Debbi Landon.

“We did a number of renderings from different composers,” recalls Koz. “The job hadn’t even been shot yet. But clearly, Jim’s work was the best. His



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SHOOTS

TOP 10 SPOT TRACKS



		TITLE	MUSIC/SOUND	AUDIO POST	AGENCY	PRODUCTION
1		Volkswagen GTI, "Hair"	Beacon Street, Venice, Calif. John Nau and Andrew Feltenstein, composers; Brian Chapman, sound designer	Sound Lounge, New York Philip Loeb, Rob Difondi, Rob Sayers, Glenn Landrum, Keith Reynaud, mixers	Crispin Porter + Bogusky, Miami Bill Meadows, music producer	MJZ, bicoastal Rocky Morton, director
2		Cadillac DTS, "Drumline"	HUM Music+Sound Design, Santa Monica Jeff Koz, creative director; Jim Casella, composer; Debbi Landon, executive producer.	Margarita Mix de Santa Monica Jimmy Hite, mixer	Leo Burnett Detroit	HSI Productions, bicoastal Paul Hunter, director
3		Dodge Caliber, "Too Tough"	Emoto, Santa Monica Tony Morales, John Adair, composers; Paul Schultz, executive producer. Nomad Editing Company, Santa Monica Francois Blaignan, sound designer	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	BBDO Detroit/New York Loren Parkins, executive music producer	Smuggler, bicoastal Brian Beletic, director
4		Juicy Fruit, "Ant"	Stimmung, Santa Monica Cyrus Melchor, composer; Gus Koven, sound designer; Kelly Fuller, executive producer	Hoffman Sound, Chicago Jim Hoffman, mixer	Energy BBDO, Chicago	MJZ, bicoastal Dante Ariola, director
5		Burger King, "Buckin' Chicken"	Beacon Street Studios, Venice John Nau, Andrew Feltenstein, composers; Brian Chapman, sound designer.	POP Sound, Santa Monica Peter Rincon, mixer	Crispin Porter + Bogusky, Miami Bill Meadows, music producer	Hungry Man, bicoastal Bryan Buckley, director
6		Virgin Mobile, "Greatest Adult Music"	Moneybacon, New York Paul Malmstrom, composer (also partner/creative director of agency Mother, New York)	audioEngine, New York, Hillary Kew, mixer	Mother, New York	@radical.media, bicoastal Peter Darley Miller, director
7		Gibson Guitars, "Empress"	Aardvark Sound, London Oliver Davis, composer/sound designer	Wave, London Parv Thind, mixer	Carmichael Lynch, Minneapolis	Great Guns USA, Venice, Calif. Gurinder Chadha, director
8		Volkswagen GTI, "Wrecking Ball"	Wojahn Bros. Music, Santa Monica Roger Wojahn, Scott Wojahn, composers; Marisa Mastroianni Davis, executive producer	Sound Lounge, New York Peter Holcomb, mixer	Crispin Porter + Bogusky, Miami Bill Meadows, music producer	RSA Films, bicoastal Jonas Akerlund, director
9		Nike, "Second Generation"	Elias Arts, bicoastal Jonathan Elias, David Wittman, composers; Dave Gold, creative director; Dayna Turcotte, producer	Sound Lounge, New York Tom Jucarone, mixer	Wieden + Kennedy, New York	Smuggler, bicoastal Brian Beletic, director
10		Comcast, "Laugh Riot"	Musikvergnuegen, Hollywood Walter Werzowa, composer/sound designer; John Luker, composer; Pat Weaver, producer	One Union Recording Studios, San Francisco Eben Carr, mixer	Goodby Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco	Smuggler, bicoastal Happy, director

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A Sound Agenda

AMP seeks cooperative effort with ANA, and an ASCAP dialogue; membership survey in offing

By Robert Goldrich

The Association of Music Producers (AMP) has an ambitious agenda, with a couple of the prime entries involving two other industry entities: the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP). In fact, the music producers' trade association is hoping that the alphabet soup mix of AMP, ANA and ASCAP will make progress in addressing what it views as a longstanding sticking point,

royalties for commercials.

AMP is looking to form what its national president Jan Horowitz describes as "a coalition of common interests" with the ANA since in many cases advertisers are publishers of their own music. The intent is to have AMP and ANA reach out to ASCAP to come up with a more equitable approach to royalty payments for commercials—as well as music commissioned by advertisers/marketers that winds up playing in emerging media forms beyond the traditional broadcast/cable :30.

A key AMP goal would be to

get ASCAP's electronic tracking, crediting and payment system embodied in its Media Guide technology applied to commercial music as it is to other featured performances. The sophisticated technology was paid for by ASCAP members. And since the commercial community constitutes part of that rank and file, the feeling is that it too should benefit from the tracking system.

AMP would also like to see commercials fetch what it would regard as a more equitable slice of the royalties pie. "In the rest of the world, music is music, with tracking and payment based on duration by performing rights organizations," relates Horowitz who is VP/business manager of David Horowitz Music Associates, New York. In France, for example, a movie score is paid four times the rate of a standard commercial. But in the U.S., she says, the ad industry rate differential is just three percent of what long-form play commands. She notes that a mere bar and a half of the Happy Birthday song on primetime TV merits a payment in excess of \$700. For a primetime commercial showing, the rate is \$19—and if the same spot appears again in the same hour, there is no payment for that additional exposure.

Horowitz adds that advertising music is also facing significant cutbacks in royalties. The most recently issued quarterly payments from ASCAP represented, she says, a 40 percent decrease in rates. Still, she's hopeful that a cooperative effort can be reached.

"We view this as the perfect time for AMP to step in not as an adversary to ASCAP, but to help ASCAP go forward the best way possible in the field of advertising music," states Horowitz. "We need to address the changing landscape together. With the proliferation of new media, for example, how do you best compensate performance?"

SURVEYING THE FIELD

AMP also has a membership survey at the ready. Plans call for it to be distributed soon.

The growth in AMP rank and file has been substantial. Two years ago, the organization had some 60 members. Today that has increased to 110 member houses, representing approximately 1,000

composers, estimates Horowitz.

The survey will help determine the affiliations of these composers (ASCAP, BMI, SESAC), but more importantly it will document the creative depth and reach of this talent. Almost every AMP member house, says Horowitz, is involved in more than commercials, diversifying into such areas as TV programs, documentaries and theatrical features.

"As a music trade association, it's important that agencies and clients know the creative talent and resources of the AMP community," she relates in explaining a key purpose of the survey. "As agencies themselves move into other areas such as long-form branded content for different media, they need to realize that the AMP talent they tap into for commercials can also be deployed on these new emerging forms. Our community's skill set encompasses music and sound, music and images, which applies to all kinds of projects across the board."

INSURANCE

In terms of providing further tangible benefits to its rank and file, AMP is in the process of securing health insurance coverage for employees of its member houses. The trade association companies collectively can earn a group rate that's generally more

protection, but also helps to promote business practices that could reduce the chances of copyright infringement.

SESSIONS

AMP also plans to continue its seminar program, which in the past has addressed such areas as music publishing and E&O risk management. Upcoming sessions are scheduled with top music supervisors and agency music producers.

The former will take place in New York and serve as a counterpart to a similar discussion with major Hollywood music supervisors held last year on the West Coast, as covered in *SHOOT* (12/16/05). The New York panel discussion is slated for next month.

Also in May, AMP will hold its annual get-together with ad agency music producers. Comparing notes with ad shop artisans on trends, issues, and on assessments of the creative and business ends of the music/sound industry has proven to be a valuable dialogue for AMP members.

AWARDS

After its first four years in Los Angeles, the annual AMP Awards ceremony will shift to New York in '06. The gala evening will also shift from the spring to the fall as AMP looks to broaden the scope of the awards while maintaining its core honors. The move to New York is in part underscore the national reach of the competition, which is already well established on the West Coast.

The AMP Decibelle trophy for Mixer of the Year

will continue to be bestowed, as will certificates for the two other finalists vying for the honor. Also returning is the Spotted Excellence Award, which enables the industry at large to log onto www.ampnw.com, watch and listen to three finalist commercials, and then decide which sounds the best. And '06 will also see the continuation of the annual Special Merit Award in recognition of the best newcomer to the audio mixing discipline.

AMP is considering the launch of other awards competition honors, including the best marriage of an artist or licensed piece of music with a brand.

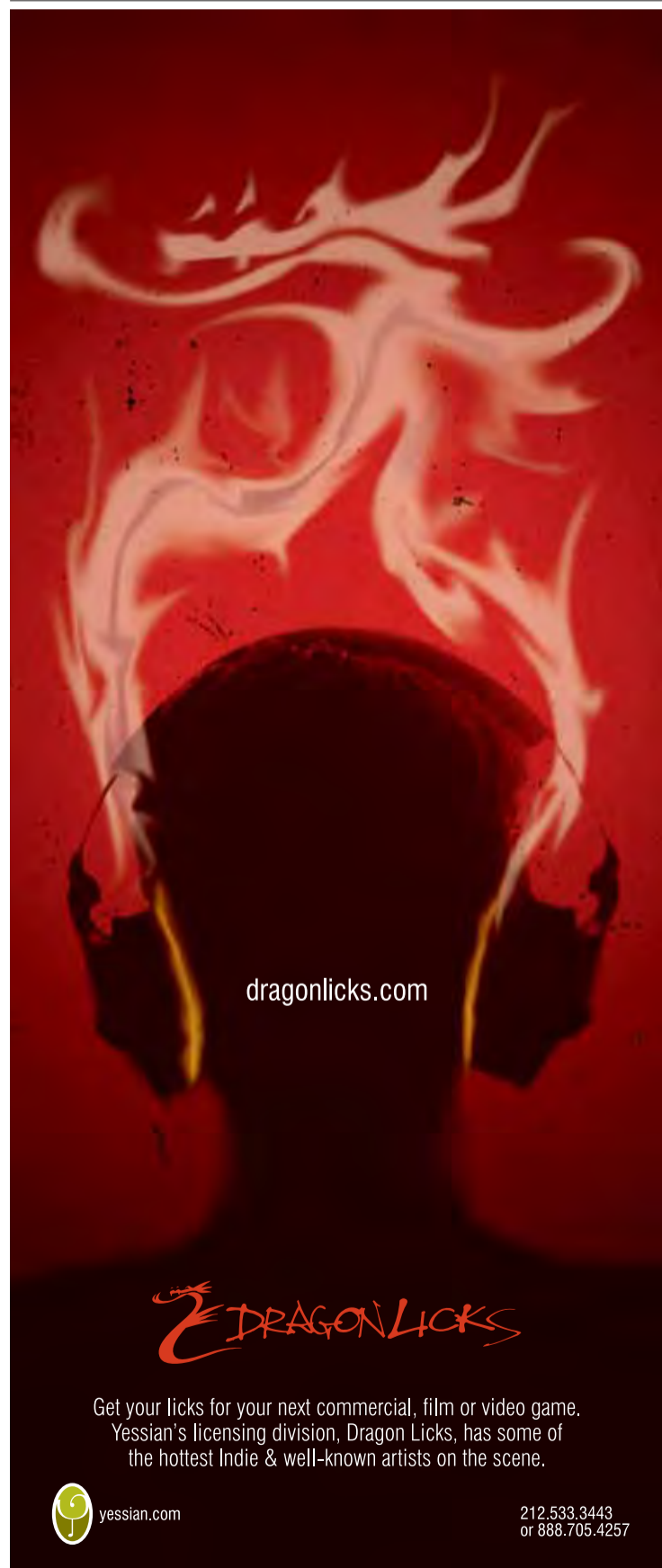
"We view this as the perfect time for AMP to step in not as an adversary to ASCAP, but to help ASCAP go forward the best way possible in the field of advertising music."

—Jan Horowitz

affordable than individual policies for each business.

AMP was able to garner this coverage through its relationship with Chicago-based insurance agency JMB. As chronicled by *SHOOT* in Sept. 2004, JMB helped to develop and then offered an errors and omissions (E&O) insurance policy tailored specifically for the commercial music and sound design biz.


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Three Chart Toppers: Fast Track, "Drumline" Beat, "Tough" Score

Continued from page 15

contributions were so important, with the syncopated rhythms of the renowned Bethune-Cookman College [Daytona, Fla.] drumline intercut with the car—it was a simple and clean idea."

HUM went to Florida to record the Bethune-Cookman drumline on location. However, heavy rain scrapped that plan, so the performers were recorded indoors, where an impromptu recording studio was set up, with cables running from that room to a remote mobile unit from Eastern Sky Studios, Orlando, Fla., and then back to another accommodation in the music building which served as the control room. Eastern Sky owner/engineer David Brown worked with HUM recording engineer Frank Nadasdy.

The drumline musicians then came out to Los Angeles for the shoot, where they appeared with and surrounded the DTS as it motored through downtown streets. The Bethune-Cookman youngsters performed in sync with their precision music that was recorded in Florida. Audio post mixer was Jimmy Hite of Margarita Mix de Santa Monica.

The drumline world represent-

ed a music genre that Koz wasn't intimately familiar with prior to embarking on the Cadillac job. He found the drumline culture to be fascinating and gratifying—the latter feeling linked to working with real people, the talented college students in the Bethune-Cookman drumline under the direction of Donovan Wells and percussion instructor Pedro Orey. While the youngsters are precision-driven percussionists, they aren't professional studio musicians accustomed to commercials.

"That's exactly what made the work special—the kids' enthusiasm, their sense of soul which provided an energy that helped fuel the excitement for Cadillac in the spot," observes Koz. "Their playing, dancing, performing and shouting infused the commercial with a tremendous soulfulness."

NUMBER THREE

A wand-wielding Tinkerbell-like fairy flies through a modern day city. A flick of her wand turns an office building into a gingerbread house, and a commuter train into a toy choo-choo.

She then eyes what will presumably be her next wand-induced transformation: a new Dodge

Caliber being driven against an urban backdrop. However, the magic pixie dust emanating from her wand just deflects off the shiny Caliber. She then musters one last shot at the Dodge, but the magic wand stream just boomerangs back at her, knocking the magical fairy to the ground. Seeing the pixie lying on the sidewalk, propped against the side of a building, a young tough guy laughs somewhat derisively at the sight—not a good idea. A quick sweep of her wand turns the guy into a preppie. And the macho dog he's walking becomes four small canine balls of fluff. A voiceover informs us that the Dodge's just introduced Caliber is "anything but cute."

Titled "Too Tough," this Dodge Caliber ad was directed by Brian Beletic of bicoastal Smuggler for BBDO Detroit and New York. The music was composed by Tony Morales and John Adair of Emoto, Santa Monica, with sound design by Francois Blaignan of Nomad Editing Company, also in Santa Monica.

Adair recollects the first conversation about the commercial with the agency creative team and director Beletic. "We were kicking things around stylistically,"

said Adair, "and it all centered on the marriage of two worlds—the ethereal, magical Tinkerbell world and the aggression and toughness of the car. The trick, though, was to make it all of one piece so that the spot didn't take a hard right turn when the Dodge appeared. It was also agreed that the story should play like a movie—we wanted that atmosphere, that vibe, that sense of scope."

In the initial demo phase, Emoto opted for a heavy guitar to score the Caliber—it was too hard a detour from the magical world, "a little too "ad-dy," assesses Adair.

So instead Emoto opted to play up the power of the magical world so that the shift to the Caliber wouldn't be all that abrupt—but clearly there was a power spike when the automobile appears, accentuated by a live, slightly out-of-control drum performance and some guttural brass. "This made it all seem more like one piece—meshing the ambience and mystery of the magical world with the power of the car chase...The other consideration was a last element the director was interested in—providing a specific voice for the fairy character even though there was no dialogue. We had to



John Adair

be careful to come up with something for the fairy that wouldn't play like a cartoon. Ultimately we went with a flute solo, bringing in the co-principal flutist of the Los Angeles Philharmonic."

Powerful percussive elements, a Marimba riff and an unusual rhythmic treatment were deployed so that the magical aura of the fairy didn't play like the typical magical theme we're all accustomed to in the movies. This, says Adair, helped to support the big gestures whereby the pixie transforms the building and the train. "So it's a filmic quality without being conventional film scoring

Continued on page 21



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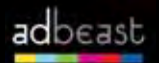
Diane Martel

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Though they will have to wait 'til June to be formally honored at the **Art Directors Club (ADC) Awards** ceremony in New York City, the winners of the 85th annual competition have been announced. Gold Cubes in Advertising were awarded to two commercials: **adidas' "Hello Tomorrow"** directed by **Spike Jonze** of bicoastal/international **MJZ** for **TBWA/Chiat/Day**, San Francisco; and **Sony Bravia LCD TVs' "Balls"** helmed by **MJZ's Nicolai Fuglsig** for **Fallon**, London. "Balls" took not only a Gold in the TV, over 30 seconds, category, but also two Silvers—one for cinematography (**DP Joaquin Baca Asay**), the other for cinema, over 30 seconds. "Hello Tomorrow" garnered Gold in the TV, over 30 seconds category. Scoring Silver were **Guinness' "noitulovE"** directed by **Daniel Kleinman** of **Kleinman Productions**, London, for **AMV BBDO**, London; and **Foster's Carlton Draught's "Big Ad"** directed by **Paul Middleditch** of **Plaza Films**, Sydney, for **George Patterson Y&R**, Melbourne. The latter's Silver was in the TV, over :30 category, while the "noitulovE" Silver came for visual effects, which were done by **Framestore-CFC**, London and New York. Topping the ADC Hybrid competition with the lone Gold was **NTT-Resonant, Inc.**, and the Japanese search engine **goo.com** with a campaign from **Ground**, a division of **Dentsu**, Tokyo....Bicoastal commercial production house **Pony Show** has signed director **Didier Poiraud**, formerly of the **Poiraud Brothers**....Director **Dennis Dugan**, whose feature credits include **Happy Gilmore**, **Big Daddy**, and the recently released **Benchmarkers**, is now available for commercials through **Original Film**, Los Angeles....Director **Laszlo Kadar** has joined **Nola Pictures**, New York....

rep report

Chicago-based independent firm **Liz Laine Reps** has taken on the Midwest and Texas for Los Angeles-based motion graphics/animation house **Nylon Motion**....**Mendy Frohlich** has joined the sales team at **Fluid**, a New York-based original music/sound design/creative editorial studio. She will work directly with Fluid partners **David Shapiro** and **Marc Schwartz**, and sales rep **Jessica Millington**. Frohlich comes over to Fluid from New York independent rep firm **Schafler Artists Management**....**National Television**, a Hollywood-based collective of designers, animators and illustrators, has secured **Hot Betty, Inc.**, an independent rep firm in Chicago headed by **Catherine De Angelis** and **Lily Stefanski**, to handle representation in the Midwest. National has also signed **Michael Waxman** of Venice, Calif.-based **MBW Represents** to cover the West Coast and Texas....**Jazelle Azami** has joined **Partos Company**, Santa Monica, as a commercial rep....Cinematographer **Tobias Schliessler** has completed principal photography on **Bill Condon's Dreamgirls** and is again available for spots through **The Skouras Agency**, Santa Monica....Production designer **Jeremy Reed** is now available through **Innovative Artists**, Santa Monica, after wrapping duties on the feature **Factory Girl** for director **George Hickenlooper**....

bulletinboard

- May 10/New York: The One Show award show and gala at Jazz at Lincoln Center www.oneclub.org....
- May 13-16/Miami: The 47th Annual Clio Festival. www.clio-awards.com....
- May 24/London: The Design & Art Direction (D&AD) Awards. www.dandad.org....
- May 25/Los Angeles: 2006 AICE Awards Show at The Henry Fonda Theatre. www.aice.org
- May 25/New York: SHOOT's 4th Annual New Directors Showcase Event at The DGA Theater, NYC. www.shootonline.com
- June 8/New York: The Association of Independent Commercial Producers (AICP) Show at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). www.aicp.com....
- June 14-18/Maui Film Festival at Wailea www.mauifilmfestival.com....

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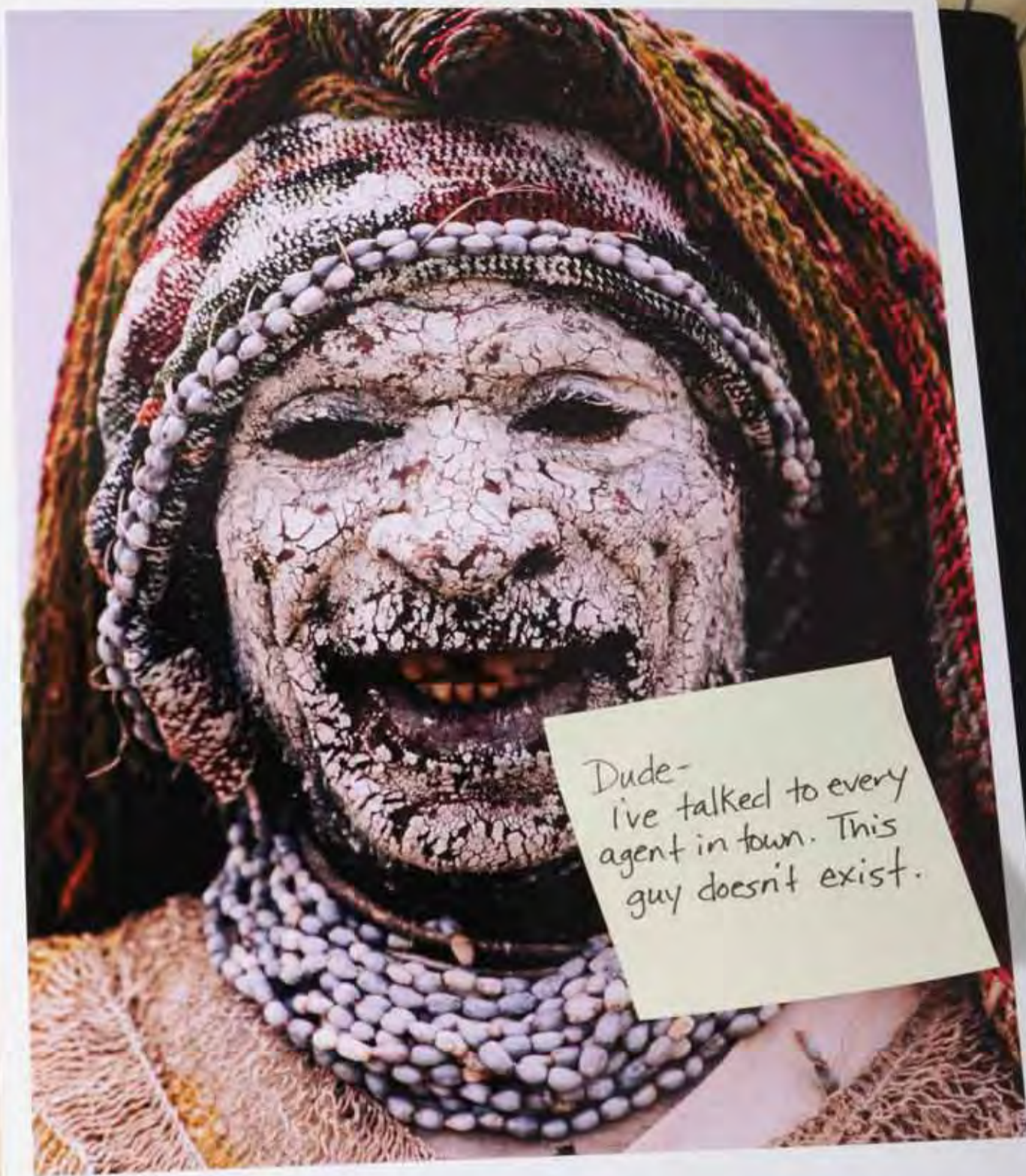


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