

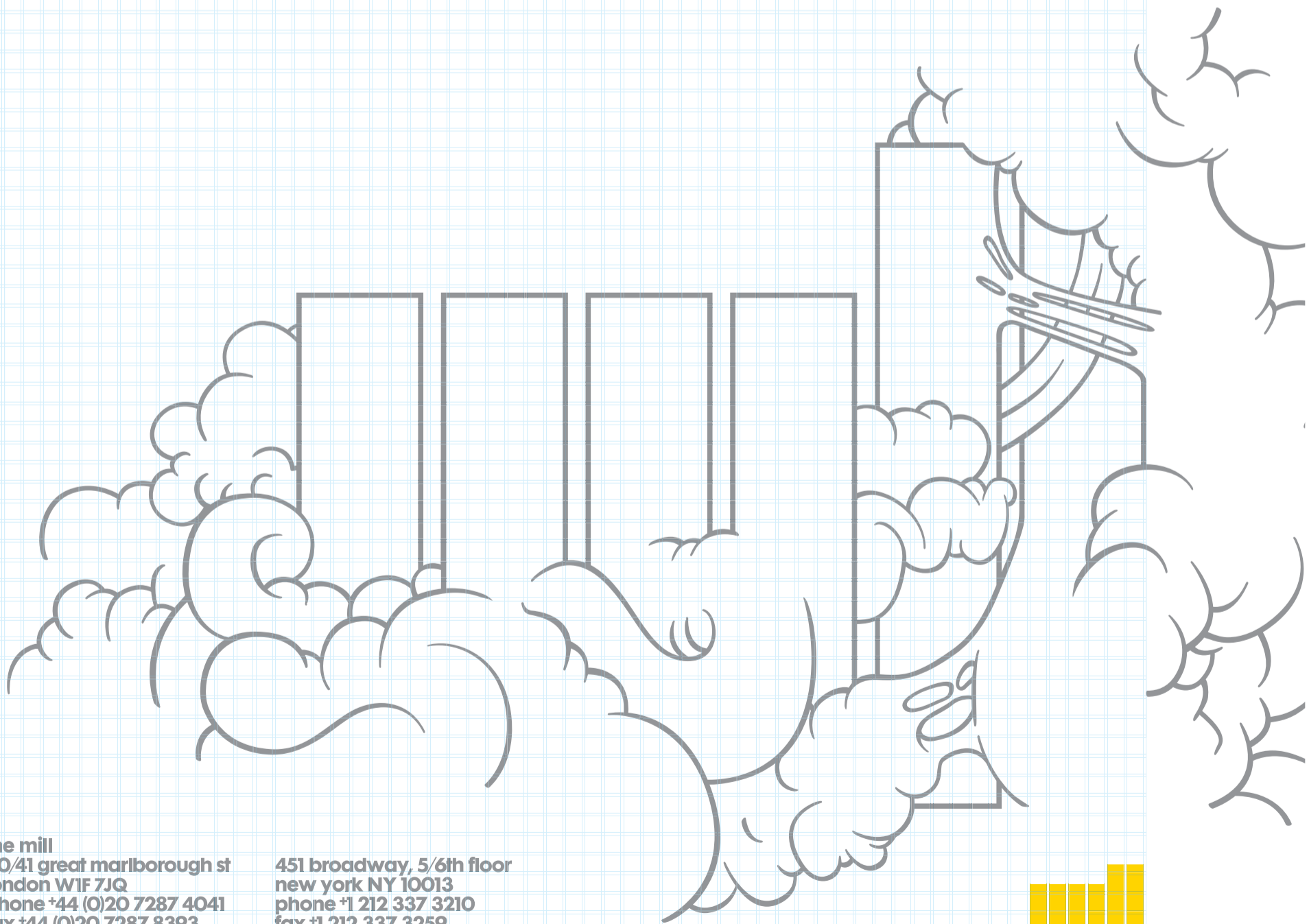
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Directors Issue

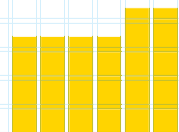


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THE LEADING PUBLICATION FOR COMMERCIAL, INTERACTIVE, & BRANDED CONTENT PRODUCTION

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MARCH 24, 2006

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Prospects Improve For Spot Filming Tax Credits In N.Y.

State Senate And Assembly Include Incentive Language For Commercial Production In Their Currently Proposed 2006-'07 Fiscal Year Budgets.

By Robert Goldrich

ALBANY, N.Y.—The New York Assembly's proposed state budget for fiscal year 2006-'07 includes language that would establish tax credits for filming of commercials. This is viewed as a significant step towards bringing an incentive package for the advertising industry to pass, helping New York to keep and attract more spot filming.

The Assembly now joins the State Senate in incorporating the tax credit provisions into its budget. While the film-friendly language is different between the Senate and Assembly, the fact that both houses have recognized the importance of commercialmaking bodes well for the measure.

However, passage of that measure is not a fait accompli. Legislative jockeying on the budget still needs to take place, and that process is inherently

unpredictable. Furthermore, the approval of Gov. George Pataki (R-N.Y.) is also required once the legislature sends him an agreed upon budget.

At press time, the timetable called for the '06-'07 state budget to be finalized next month and then relayed onto the governor's office for signature. If the spot lensing tax credit incentives are in a Pataki-signed budget, they could go into effect on July 1, when the new fiscal year begins. That's the start date in the Assembly's current budget language; however, the Senate proposal would make the incentives retroactive to Jan. 1, 2006.

Those conflicting start dates between the Senate and Assembly—and other differences—figure to be ironed out in the budget wrangling that will take place at least through the rest of this month, if not into April.

The Senate's budget language for the spot tax cred-

Continued on page 11

Dir. Eric King Signs With Tate USA

By Robert Goldrich
SANTA MONICA—Director Eric King has joined Santa Monica-headquartered Tate USA for exclusive spot representation in the U.S. Via Tate's relationship with Industry Films, Toronto, King additionally gains a sales/production foothold for Canadian commercials. And through Tate's recently struck deal with Janie Balcolm's newly formed, London-based independent reping firm, King will also be exclusively repped by Tate in the U.K.

King comes over from
Continued on page 9

Plum Picks: Gavin Bowden, Beth Pearson

By Robert Goldrich
SANTA MONICA—After a trial run encompassing several projects at Plum Productions, director Gavin Bowden has formally come aboard the Santa Monica-based company. At press time, he was in pre-pro on a Wal-Mart job, a follow-up to the "Smile More" spot which aired heavily during the Winter Olympics telecast on NBC.

That initial Wal-Mart ad as well as two Toyota packages

Continued on page 11

The Road To NAB: Editing, Compositing

By Carolyn Giardina

LAS VEGAS—In SHOOT's first installation of this year's series previewing the upcoming National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention, the cinematography community was focused on workflow (SHOOT, 3/10, p. 1). For those in the editing and compositing space, the influx of digital technology has created a similar necessity for an approach to

workflow issues.

Some are also looking to the future and developing processes in a tapeless environment. Expect workflow and tapeless to be among the post buzzwords at NAB this year. "Technically, this can be accomplished," explained Larry Chernoff, who is CEO of Providence, R.I.-headquartered technology maker MTI. "The challenge is administrative. There's a lot of information that needs to be accessible.

Information also needs to be communicated. "The EDL is a very primitive method of communicating decisions from one application to another," Chernoff relates. "In order to become tapeless, we need a more advanced method."

This year, efforts are being made at technology companies to improve communication between applications, and to advance asset management. Also explor-

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89

santa monica

89

89edit.com

89

new york

Sane "Madness"

Reaching a maximum audience of several hundred thousand at a time hardly seems like nirvana for mass marketers. But 18 major advertisers—including Pontiac, Dell and Marriott—have shrewdly embraced that opportunity when it was offered by CBS.

The eye network is making the early round games of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) basketball championship tournament available on the Web for free. The games, which have spawned bracketology "science" and office betting pools throughout the country, represent a hot ticket. And it's safe to say that college basketball fans, as



well as office worker "Final Four" pool players, will have a keen interest in accessing the action—via CBS' national telecasts (available in HD), and over the Internet.

In fact for the initial weekday morning and afternoon round of games, look for office productivity to go down as workers keep an eye peeled on their computer screens for live, Web-delivered games. Further aiding and abetting this down time at the office is a button that Web viewers can click to instantly replace the games with a fake spreadsheet—that way the boss will be none the wiser about employees slacking off to keep tabs on the NCAA

tournament.

All the available ad slots have been sold in this precedent-setting Web event, which marks the first time that a mainstay national broadcaster has shifted such a valuable, exclusive program franchise onto the Web without charging a fee. The college basketball tournament has long been known as March Madness—hence the Internet service name of March Madness On Demand for the CBS initiative.

Ads will be removed from the TV broadcast and replaced with Web-only commercials sold by CBS Sportsline, which is a unit of CBS Digital Media. The Web service will not feature the Elite Eight, Final Four or championship rounds when there's only

one game at a time. Additionally, Web users won't be able to access local games even in the early rounds when multiple games are being played simultaneously. This is all designed to protect the core TV broadcast business.

It's estimated that broadband capacity will limit the Web audience to a few hundred thousand viewers at a given time. The service is available at ncaasports.com/mmod and could pave the way for other Web broadcasts.

The March Madness on Demand for no charge underscores how mainstream entertainment companies are grappling with ways to leverage emerging media, while creating desirable outlets for their audience constituencies and advertisers.

It's believed that the companies advertising on the Web games will for the most part make their spots interactive as they attempt to engage prospective consumers and gauge how much interest those commercials generate.

In a *Los Angeles Times* article about March Madness on Demand, Deborah S. Fell, a Marriott senior VP is quoted as saying, "It's a cluttered landscape out there in terms of getting information to consumers. This is the type of venue we're looking for."

Production View

By Gary Nolton

In Wake of the Storm

A Community United Post-Katrina Is Captured in TV Spots

Following the successful production of two television spots for Mississippi Power in December 2004, the company's advertising agency, Godwin Group, single bid my production company, Portland, OR-based Limbo Films (with me as director), to return to the Gulf Coast of Mississippi for five days of shooting—exactly one month after Hurricane Katrina had devastated the area. In response to the disaster, this modest-sized power company had increased its workforce from 1,200 to 12,000, borrowing linemen, engineers and support staff from neighboring states, and had restored power to the region in an amazing 12 days. The ads we created tell their story.



Gary Nolton

The series of three spots featured employees of the company, as well as community members who had recently re-opened their businesses to the deep appreciation of residents who were—and still are—in desperate need of prescriptions, clean laundry and hot meals. A local singer/guitarist tells of how it feels to bring music to people's lives again; a laundry mat owner once again has electricity to help wash load after load of dirty clothing for displaced families, giving them just a touch of the comforts swept away by the storm; and lights returning to a high school stadium afford the community a break from its misery with a little Friday night football. Layer after layer of how much our daily exist-

tence depends on electricity was revealed to us.

My producer, Rebecca Hynes, and I were excited for the opportunity to return to many of the areas in which we had filmed just a year prior, to see in person what had occurred there. All of the news footage we had seen did little to prepare us for the reality of daily existence in Gulfport, MS, where we based the production.

With sparse cell phone service, few motel rooms, and limited access to the little things we all take for granted like ice, food, water and fuel, the shoot was full of challenging circumstances that demanded a re-definition of our normal approach to production.

Locations ranged from small businesses to beach-front buildings, which were only accessible by the Mississippi Power's unrestricted access past the armed checkpoints guarding the devastated neighborhoods. One location, in particular, had us sharing a parking lot with giant tractors as they tore apart one of the most famous casinos on the coast, now sitting a half mile from where it was located before the hurricane...a very surreal moment.

Each day brought us unique opportunities to give back directly to residents of the area. One of these particular opportunities was in filming the football team of Bay St. Louis High School, located in one of the areas hit hardest by Katrina. Wearing jerseys that were donated to them by an out-of-state school after having lost all their equipment, the team was filmed by us after a practice, then invited to stay for a feast of fresh barbecued ribs—one of the first meals the boys had enjoyed together since the storm.

For those of us who traveled in

from Portland, it was a continual minute-to-minute reminder of all we have to be thankful for, as well as how ridiculously spoiled we can all become during production, when normally a latte is just a walkie-talkie call away. I personally stood in a line at Wal-Mart for over 90 minutes just to buy bottled water for our production office. But how could I bitch about that when everyone around me was just happy to be warm, dry and alive?

While the motel we retired to each night was the type of place where you are dubious about touching the carpet with your bare feet, how do you complain when the majority of the New Orleans film crew we hired had lost everything they owned, but wore constant smiles just to be working again and have a break from their own dire circumstances?

In the midst of changes affecting every element of life in the area, where a return to "normalcy" was everyone's ultimate desire, the shoot went off seamlessly. This was the result of the tireless efforts and adaptable problem-solving skills of our crew and the ever-positive agency personnel.

The cooperative spirit of the amazing citizenry of Gulfport, Biloxi and Bay St. Louis was nothing less than inspirational. They face daily rejection and indifference from insurance companies, as well as our own government, but continue to carry on the best way possible.

As with so many things in life...it's all just a matter of perspective and feeling another person's point of view. This shoot was a rare opportunity to realize, despite all the pressures of deadlines and client induced headaches, just how lucky we are.

FLASHBACK

5 YEARS / 10 YEARS



5 Years Ago

□ March 23, 2001/BMW, through its agency Fallon, Minneapolis, has commissioned a series of short films to run on the Internet, and has hired several notable feature filmmakers to direct them. Director David Fincher of bicoastal Anonymous Content is exec producing the project...Mike Wang has signed for exclusive commercial representation in the U.S. with Cognito Films, Santa Monica...Steve Ross, the executive producer at Cylo tvc, has been named president of the bicoastal commercial house...Director Marc Chiat has signed with Orbit Productions, Hollywood, for spot representation....

10 Years Ago

□ March 24, 1996/Chris Palmer is joining Johns+Gorman Films, Hollywood. The move marks the first time that the British director has had stateside representation; he will maintain his London production shop, Gorgeous...Director Richard D'Alessio is joining A Band Apart Commercials, Hollywood... Editor David Cornman has joined Palestrini Post Production, New York...Director Charlie Watson will be repped by bicoastal RSA-USA. He was formerly with The End....

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Grass Valley Challenges Industry to Support Open Systems

Company Explores HD, Mobile Content at Pre-NAB Meet

By Carolyn Giardina

Paris-headquartered Thomson's Grass Valley challenged the industry to support open technologies and to leverage IT-based tools during its recent Worldwide Media Event, a two-day precursor to the annual National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) convention, which will be held April 22-27 in Las Vegas.

"We have to adopt new ways of thinking," asserted Jeff Rosica, Grass Valley's VP of strategic marketing and business development. "We must put an end to proprietary systems and closed technology. If we all work toward open, IT-based systems, customers will not be restricted in their choices."

"It will help us to overcome dictated formats and closed solutions," he added. "It also will allow us to work with data files from camera to playout."

Rosica emphasized that this need is particularly critical today. "In the near future, customers will be able to access content anywhere, anytime and on any device." Therefore, he asserted, multidistribution models now mean that "broadcast and media companies are in competition with new providers, notably telcos...and moving from format to format has to be seamless."

And a Grass Valley goal, said Rosica, is to recognize that multidistribution is vital—that content will be moved as files and will be repurposed.

Restating the "HD for everyone" message that major manufacturers have been shouting for the past year, Rosica also suggested that with a high resolution option like high definition available, "it makes perfect sense to use HD and create all deliverables from that one format. If you don't, your options are severely limited."

Developments in HD distribution were outlined during the media event, from broadcast to event content such as the General Motors Reveal '05, from which Grass Valley screened highlights.

In broadcast news, the BBC's Paul Chessbrough reported that BBC HD trials are scheduled to begin this summer. In addressing its suppliers at post houses, he offered, "We met some resistance from independent post houses with expensive infrastructures...The high end will continue to operate [fairly unchanged]. Others need to rely more on talent than kit provision."

HBO's senior VP of broadcast and studio operations Charles Calado reported that HBO Networks currently offer four HD networks.

He also gave a nod to the mobile future, explaining that two premium HBO channels are currently being tested that would be distributed exclusively to domestic markets on Cingular's cell phone video service. He added that internationally HBO is distributing four new channels for Vodafone's cell phone video service, which is offered in regions such as South Africa, Belgium, Austria and the UK.

An in-depth look at mobile opportunities was also provided by Omar Javaid, senior director at Qualcomm, which is currently testing its MediaFlo technology for the delivery of content to mobile devices. The target for a nationwide launch of the service is Q4 of '06. The "Flo Forum"—of which Thomson is a member—was established in '05 to make this happen.

When asked about entertainment and advertising content, Javaid reported, "We are looking to strike content deals... We are very excited about advertising and it is a component of our model."

But he added that he does not expect advertising to play a big role until the subscriber base hits a critical mass. "My feeling is it may happen quickly because we are talking about television [programming], which is easy to grasp," he related. "Advertising will probably grow like Web advertising, which started just as banner ads."

During the event, Grass Valley also previewed its NAB technology announcements. These will be detailed in SHOOT's annual "Road to NAB" series.

SHOOT senior editor, technology and postproduction, Carolyn Giardina can be reached at 1 310-822-0211 or at cgiardina@shootonline.com.

The Road To NAB, Part 2: Editing And Compositing

Continued from page 1

ing these topics are organizations such as the American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Technology Committee's DI subcommittee, which is developing an open method of communicating color, called the ASC CDL (Color Decision List). But at this point in time, the industry does not yet have a complete answer and execution.

At this stage, the motion picture industry is the furthest along in the development and implementation of new digital post systems, largely due to the rapid acceptance of the digital intermediate process, and related DI style workflows. DI is essentially the process of taking images into a random access, data realm for all post processes, including color correction and finishing, to create a digital master, from which all film and digital deliverables may be created. Today it's widely believed that upwards of 50 percent of major features go through a DI process. And an increasing number of independent films, television productions and even some commercials are beginning to use DI-style workflow to meet production needs and budgets.

Still, advertising has a ways to go. "The commercial industry lags not less than five years behind entertainment," Chernoff estimates. "Commercials remain mired in standard definition... The sad fact is local news in Los Angeles is becoming more advanced than the commercial industry."

The question is what impact NAB will have on the evolution of this sector.

Most of the pre-show news came from companies that have integrated editing and compositing capabilities in their DI-style post systems, meaning applications with editing, compositing, color correction and mastering tools. Since many of these companies also inhabit the color correction space (the subject of the next "Road to NAB" installment), look to the next edition of this NAB series for additional product news.

EXHIBITOR NEWS

For this week's NAB chapter, Newbury, U.K.-headquartered Quantel starts off, with its Pablo advanced color correction system that runs on its highest-end iQ finishing system and can support resolutions including 2k and 4k data.

For smaller post houses, Quantel will introduce Pablo on its eQ, which supports standard definition or high-resolution imagery, and is designed to bring the creativity and efficiency of the DI workflow to commercial post.

"We're focused on post hous-

es admitting DI environments for commercials," said Steve Owen, Quantel's head of marketing, postproduction and DI. "NAB for commercial post is about being super efficient and super creative. [For instance,] in a conventional telecine grading you're working in a linear manner. [With a DI-style workflow] you have nonlinear access, and you are doing the color correction before the conform, meaning you can see shots in correct editorial shot order. You get a much better idea of how the session is going."

"Workflows are becoming more datacentric," agreed Maurice Patel, Montreal-based Autodesk Media and Entertainment's head of product marketing. "We are seeing very strong trends toward data pipelines with color grading, editing, and effects."

This concept is generally similar among manufacturers. But as for specifics, some of the key exhibitors—such as Avid, Apple and Autodesk—are holding much of their NAB product announcements until closer to the event, which will be held April 22-28.

Patel did offer a limited update with regard to the company's recent acquisition of Alias. NAB is the first major trade show with the former Alias technology merged under the Autodesk banner, and consequently, attendees will see the rebranding of media and entertainment products from Alias to Autodesk. So the latest version of newly branded Autodesk's Maya will be featured, along with a preview of Autodesk's MotionBuilder next version 7.5.

Tewksbury, Mass.-headquartered Avid Technology's pre-show news was also limited to 3D. The company is previewing its Softimage subsidiary's SoftimageFace Robot, a new software dedicated to the creation of believable facial animation in less time than using traditional methods. With the software, artists may sculpt expressions by directly manipulating various anatomical features such as the mouth, eyebrows and jaw.

Face Robot also offers built-in support for importing and exporting of Autodesk 3ds max and Maya file formats for incorporation into existing pipelines.

San Jose, Calif.-headquartered Adobe Systems revealed that it plans to showcase its Adobe Production Studio (launched in January), alongside the newly acquired Macromedia products in Studio 8. The Adobe Production Studio Premium includes Adobe After Effects 7.0, Adobe Premiere Pro 2.0, Adobe Audition 2.0 and Adobe Encore 2.0, in addition to

Photoshop CS2 and Illustrator CS2. Macromedia Studio 8 includes Dreamweaver 8, Flash Professional 8, Fireworks 8, Contribute 3, and FlashPaper. These products offer broadcast, postproduction and Web professionals the ability to create and deliver content across podcasts, radio, film, video and the Web.

Bruce Bowman, Adobe Production Studio product manager, says the company aims to offer flexibility with the system. "Regardless of if you are working with SD, HD, or uncompressed SDI, the interface stays the same from Web to HD or 2k," Bowman explained. "Our applications are designed to be resolution independent and format agnostic."

Like Adobe, Cincinnati-headquartered Harris Corp.—which acquired Leitch this past year—will be showcasing new technology while addressing production and distribution from television to the Web and mobile devices.

For editors, this will include the forthcoming Leitch VelocityX software-only nonlinear editor, which shares the Velocity editing interface with Leitch's hardware-based editors, VelocityQ and VelocityHD. VelocityX could be used by customers needing an editor in a facility, or portable as a laptop system.

Also on display will be version 9.1 of VelocityHD, which includes support for the HDV high-definition format and variable frame rate processing for content from Panasonic's VariCam camcorder.

For the editorial community, Hollywood-based Lightworks and its parent company U.K.-headquartered Gee Broadcast are combining powerful new hardware with their well-regarded editing console to introduce a new nonlinear editing system, Alacrity MR (multiresolution), which supports HD and SD, compressed and uncompressed, MJPEG, MPEG2 and DV, mixed-format timelines, and multiple real-time streams.

D2 Software, a subsidiary of Venice-based Digital Domain, will demonstrate its now shipping version 4.5 of its Nuke high-end compositing system. The new version incorporates a new image-based keyer and tools for additional creative flexibility when working in 3D. With a focus on making Nuke accessible to the broadest range of users, the newest release also introduces a new UI mode, support for Mac OSX and broader support for Open FX, and a new pricing structure. Nuke is a principal tool in Digital Domain's workflow, and in recent years was introduced as a product and made available to additional companies.

TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK TOP SPOT OF THE WEEK

Ariola Tangles With A Giant Ant For Juicy Fruit

Asylum Generates Gum-Crazed, Sweet Treat-Loving Insect For Energy BBDO, Chicago

By Christine Champagne

It isn't just people who will go to great lengths in order to satisfy their craving for Juicy Fruit. Giant ants are also crazy about the gum as we see in a twisted new :30 titled "Ant."

Part of Juicy Fruit's long running "Gotta have sweet? Gotta have Juicy Fruit"-themed campaign, the commercial created by Chicago's Energy BBDO and directed by Dante Ariola of bicoastal/international MJZ, opens with a guy standing in his front yard summoning what one might assume is his pet dog to play Frisbee.

But as it turns out, a giant pet ant comes bounding around the front of the house, obediently catching the Frisbee and returning it to his master, who takes out a stick of Juicy Fruit gum. The ant is excited, thinking his master is going to share the gum with him. Instead, his owner taunts him with the treat, and, well, the ant isn't having any of that.

Turning on his master, the ant picks up the guy and tosses him across the yard like a rag doll. The man takes refuge in his car, but the ant rips off the door and drags him out of the vehicle and down an ant hole, where we have to assume the insect will finally get his Juicy Fruit fix.

Born out of the minds of Energy BBDO copywriter Zach Hilder and art director Ryan Dickey, "Ant" works because as outrageous as the situation is, you believe it is for real. In fact, the ant seems utterly real as opposed to a cartoon-like character. "We thought the spot would be a little more real and creepy if he looked like a real ant just blown up [in size]," Dickey said, noting, "and we wanted that ant to be ant-like. It needed to behave like an ant."

Early on in the process, Energy BBDO reached out to Ariola for assistance in determining exactly how to create a giant ant that would come across as believable. Ariola, in turn, consulted with visual effects shop Asylum in Santa Monica, Calif. Asylum VFX supervisor Mitch Drain says the artisans at Asylum started on the project by combing through images of ants, looking for the right insect for the spot, then submitting their suggestions to Ariola. "He wanted to go with an ant that was a



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

pretty generic garden variety ant, but he also wanted something that would pop out [on screen]—those were the criteria we were given," Drain recalled. Ultimately, Ariola chose to have them create a black garden ant.

As for movement, it was important that viewers understand upfront that the ant was a pet and not some wild giant ant on the loose, so Asylum animation supervisor/lead animator Matt Hackett did some tests in which he gave the ant not only ant-like moves but some dog-like moves as well.

With approval from the client, Wm. Wrigley Jr./Juicy Fruit, to go ahead with the ambitious production, Ariola and DP Max Malkin headed to Australia to shoot "Ant" as well as another spot in the campaign. Drain and Hackett accompanied them to share their expertise.

The spot was shot on loca-

tion in the front and back yards of a house in suburban Sydney. Ariola said he felt like he was channeling Ed Wood during the shoot as he ran around the lawn holding a stuffed Shetland pony, which served as a stand-in for the ant, providing sight lines for the actor and crew.

Ariola also found himself employing low-tech means to achieve some of the effects in the spot in-camera. For example, Ariola literally tugged at the actor cast as the ant's master with poles to simulate the way the man's body would move in a struggle with the ant. "I'm the biggest proponent of the simplest way is the best," Ariola noted.

Because there was a time crunch involved, editor Kirk Baxter of Los Angeles-based Rock Paper Scissors traveled to Sydney to cut "Ant."

Then the artisans at Asylum got to work, using Maya to animate the ant and Inferno to

composite the character into the footage shot by Ariola. Specific code was written in-house at Asylum, Drain pointed out that helped give the ant a look of translucency in certain areas of its body.

As for Asylum's work, Hilder had high praise, stressing, "They went full-on with it in the little time they had to get it done, and they exceeded everyone's expectations."

For his part, Drain said Ariola made a tough job easier to handle because "he had a really clear vision of what he wanted, and he gave us some really good storyboards."

That said, Ariola was flexible on the set, trying new takes he thought might make the spot work better. Case in point: "Originally the ant was going to pull the man into the ant hole by his collar," Drain shared. "But that just didn't play well as far as getting the action down. It just didn't look right seeing this guy going down head first, so Dante did an alternate version where the guy was pulled down by the leg."

Adding to the suspenseful feel of "Ant" is a music/sound design track created for the spot by Santa Monica's Stimmung, with Gus Koven serving as sound designer and Cyrus Melchor as producer.

Asked what compelled him to take on this offbeat and challenging spot, Ariola mused, "It had a kind of David Lynch vibe about it, and I've always been attracted to that bizarre stuff."

"It had a kind of David Lynch vibe about it, and I've always been attracted to that bizarre stuff."

—Dante Ariola

TopSpot OF THE WEEK

Client

Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co./Juicy Fruit.

Agency

Energy BBDO, Chicago.

Marty Orzio, chief creative officer; Al Wyatt, Todd Hoffman and Jim Hyman, group creative directors; Zach Hilder, copywriter; Ryan Dickey, art director; Diane Jackson, head of production; Matt Hunnicutt, senior agency producer; Rob Neitzke, post assistant.

Production Company

MJZ, bicoastal/international.

Dante Ariola, director; Max Malkin, DP; David Zander, president; Jeff Scruton, senior executive producer; Natalie Hill, producer. Shot on location in suburban Sydney, Australia.

Editorial

Rock Paper Scissors, Los Angeles.

Kirk Baxter, editor; Scott Friske, producer.

Post/Visual Effects

Company 3, Santa Monica.

Stefan Sonnenfeld, colorist; Missy Papageorge, producer.

Asylum, Santa Monica.

Gabby Gourrier, executive producer; Darcie Tang, producer; Mitch Drain, VFX supervisor; Sean Faden, CG supervisor; Matt Hackett, animation supervisor/lead animator; Rob Moggach, compositing supervisor.

Music/Sound Design

Stimmung, Santa Monica.

Cyrus Melchor, composer; Gus Koven, sound designer; Kelly Fuller, executive producer.

Audio

Hoffman Sound, Chicago.

Jim Hoffman, mixer.

Graphics

Daily Planet, Chicago.

Jason White, graphics director; Jon Adler and Nik Braatz, graphics designer.

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

Directors Zack & J.C. Make Noise For Mountain Dew

Spec Commercial Titled “Foley” Comes Out Of Group101 Initiative in New York

By Robert Goldrich

This spec spot takes us into the Foley room where the sound effects are being created for a kung fu movie. As we see the martial arts combatants square off, an ingenious Foley artist is spicing up their battle with appropriate, well-timed audio effects. He bangs together two bowling pins to score a rapid-fire succession of blows in a kung fu sequence. Subsequent hits are accentuated by the popping of balloons.

Wooden boards are the next audio source. The Foley artist cracks one board over his knee, then puts his fist through another, all timed perfectly to the fight action visuals.

Then he needs a big furious impact to accompany a hellacious flying drop kick being delivered by one combatant to the other—possibly the decisive blow of the battle. First the Foley artist tries banging a huge gong. Looking for even greater impact, he puts a sledgehammer to a watermelon.

Finally, he comes up with the perfect effect, popping open a can of Mountain Dew. Yet while that proves to be apt audio accompaniment for the kung fu duel to the death unfolding on film, everything is aurally downhill from there. As the combatants continue their battle, we now hear a swallowing sound as the Foley artist is guzzling the Mountain Dew. Then we see one of the martial artists ready to attack only to hear a loud belch emanate

from him—indeed the Foley artist may have chugalugged his Dew a bit too fast.

An end tag carries the Mountain Dew logo.

This comedic commercial, titled “Foley,” was directed by the team of Zack Resnicoff and J.C. Khoury—a.k.a. Zack & J.C.—via the Group 101Spots initiative, a nearly three-and-a-half-year-old program whereby aspiring directors turn out spec spots to gain experience, exposure and professional industry feedback. Since its inception on the West Coast, Group101 has helped a variety of up-and-coming directors get discovered by the commercialmaking community at large. Last September, Group101 went bicoastal and formally launched in New York. Zack & J.C. are among the first crop of directors to come out of the Big Apple leg of the Group101 program.

Zack & J.C. also wrote, produced, edited and handled sound design for “Foley.” The DP was Martin Ahlgren.

Colorist was Alex Berman at Post Logic, New York. Visual effects were done at R!OT Manhattan, with

Randie Swanberg serving as visual effects artist. Audio post mixer was Mike Levesque via earth2mars, New York. Principal actor was Rob Huebe.

Based largely on “Foley” and another spec piece they directed via Group101, Zack & J.C. landed a real-world job, helping a client-direct Hispanic market spot for vitamin company GenSpec. To facilitate this and other planned work for GenSpec, Zack & J.C. just launched their own New York-based production house, Shoot First Entertainment. While they look to build that venture, the directorial team is also entertaining overtures from established commercial production companies for representation.

Zack & J.C.—who met and began working together in the graduate film program at NYU—have also made their mark in the Web space as their short, *Eat Less Bacon*, recently debuted as part of the Aquafina series of shorts out of Tribal DDB Dallas, appearing on ResolutionsOnFilm.com.



“Ow”

By Robert Goldrich

A silly joke calls our attention to a serious health issue in this PSA directed by Tim Abshire of Backyard, Venice, Calif.

We open on two dorky guys, both a bit overweight, standing in a residential driveway. One is holding a large oddly shaped hunk of concrete. He asks his cohort, “Do you know what this is?”

“No” is the response.

The first guy then proceeds to clunk the other man in the head with the concrete.

The impact elicits a relatively quiet “Ow” from the bewildered victim, who rubs his head.

A supered message relates the simple truth, “What you don’t know can hurt you.”

This is followed by a serious super, which reads, “Learn more about the link

between obesity and heart disease.”

An end tag logo for the American Obesity Task Force (AOTF) then appears on screen, accompanied by a Web site

address, obesityrisk.org. The Web site takes visitors to links about diet, scientific research and other info that can help reduce weight and cholesterol.



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The PSA’s creative silliness is heightened by a live-action approach akin to cartoon-like violence. Getting clocked by a hunk of concrete that hard and big should normally have resulted in considerable pain, if not an outright concussion and/or the victim being knocked unconscious. Instead the guy lets out a rather subdued, matter-of-fact “Ow,” and tends to the “injury” by merely rubbing the side of his head.

Freelancer Lisa Leone served as creative director on “Ow.”

Director Abshire was backed by a Backyard support team that included executive producer Kris Mathur and producer Kyra Shelgren. The DP was Peter Selesnick.

Editor was John Dingfield of Cutters, Chicago. Colorist was Craig Leffel of Optimus, Chicago. Audio post mixer was Ben Keller of Another Country, Chicago.

Congratulations on a great first year Harry Cocciolo.



Directors Issue

Spring 2006

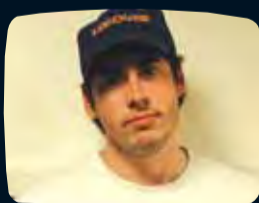
Welcome to SHOOT's spring Directors Series, featuring profiles of helmers who've made an impact on advertising, and a look at promising new talent. Our accompanying Cinematographers Series offers DP feedback on "hybrid filmmaking" and issues related to new technology.

The directorial profiles encompass a wide range. For example, on one hand there's Craig Gillespie of MJZ who recently won the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award for best commercial director of 2005. He garnered the honor for the first time in his career after three nominations. Meanwhile, also profiled is Harry Cocciolo, who was part of our up-and-coming directorial mix last year as a longstanding agency creative making the transition to full-time director. Since joining Tool of North America in '05, Cocciolo has assembled a diverse reel that now makes him worthy of an individual profile.

In our "Fab Five" story on emerging directors, the aforementioned Gillespie also indirectly figures into the equation. Adam Goldstein, a former writer colleague of agency art director Gillespie years ago, now hopes to emulate Gillespie's successful career path to mainstay director. Goldstein, who exited his senior creative director/copywriter post at BBDO New York earlier this year, has joined RSA Films' directorial roster.

And keep in mind that the scope of this Directors Series goes beyond the pages in this section. Just cast an eye to our "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery; it was there, for instance, that we first reported on the emergence of Cocciolo. This week the "Best Work" lead entry is a Mountain Dew spec spot, "Foley," directed by Zack Resnicoff and J.C. Khoury, a.k.a. Zack & J.C. This young team could very well make the grade for inclusion in our next Directors Series—or for that matter, our upcoming, annual New Directors Showcase. This issue, our Showcase event, and every edition of SHOOT reflect our year-round commitment to provide exposure for deserving talent. "Foley" and other work will be available to view in the ScreenWork section of www.shootonline.com and in the pdf version of this issue, beginning Friday afternoon, March 24. So enjoy the issue.

Robert Goldrich, Editor
rgoldrich@shootonline.com



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Bryan Buckley

Helmer Dons His Super Sunday Best

By Christine Champagne

Most directors would be thrilled to have just one spot running during the Super Bowl. Bryan Buckley had half-a-dozen commercials for clients including Burger King, CareerBuilder.com and Sprint-Nextel, in Super Bowl XL. Is that a record for the director? “I think it tied a high for me,” Buckley, a partner in bicoastal/international Hungry Man, muses. “I’m not sure. I think it did, though.”

Buckley says he enjoys being part of the Super Bowl advertising extravaganza (he has seen his work air during the big game since 1999), but notes it’s not like he sets out to do as many spots as he can. “It’s not about sheer numbers of spots. It is really about making sure that all of the spots I do are at a certain level, and each one of them has its own thing going,” Buckley says. Referring to this latest round of Super Bowl commercials, Buckley adds, “I didn’t feel like I was doing the same

thing six times over. There was a good range in there.”

Some highlights: For the Burger King “Whopperettes” spot out of Crispin Porter + Bogusky (CP+B), Miami, Buckley staged an elaborate Busby Berkeley-style musical featuring performers dressed as the ingredients—tomatoes, onions, etc.—that go into the making of a Whopper; he whipped up a Benny Hill spoof involving a couch on fire in the Sprint-Nextel spot, “Couch,” out of Cramer-Krasselt, Chicago; and he took viewers inside wild offices literally inhabited by monkeys and jackasses in two spots for CareerBuilder.com, “Sales Graph” and “Jackasses.”

Of course, it isn’t only Super Bowl fare that Buckley has directed as of late. Campaigns for Bud Light out of Chicago’s DDB Worldwide starring daredevil Ted Ferguson, and Ace Hardware via Goodby Silverstein & Partners poking fun at home improvement shows are also among the attention-getting work Buckley has generated.

THE APPROACH

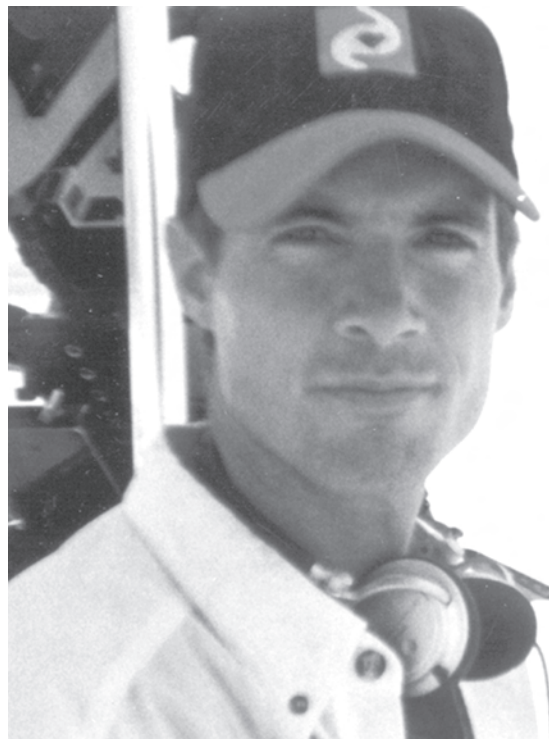
While all of the aforementioned spots vary widely in look, tone and execution, Buckley applies the same basic approach to each job. “I try to go layer by layer into something and push it. You have to because if you don’t, you end up with something pretty generic,” Buckley says. “Everything matters.”

Take the “Whopperettes” spot, for example. It was “a logistical nightmare,” Buckley says laughing. So, of course, he had to invest a great deal of time in choreographing the action of the dozens of dancers and acrobats featured in the spectacle. But that didn’t keep Buckley from honing in on other details such as casting.

How much time and effort could possibly go into the casting of performers to play the roles of tomatoes and mayo? Quite a bit, actually—Buckley put serious thought into what each character would represent. “You had to have a mayo that people could identify with, the everyday girl. The ketchups were statuesque and strong and beautiful because ketchup dominates,” Buckley explains, adding, “Character, even in that piece, played a major role.”

It was also an important consideration in the Sprint-Nextel “Couch” spot, which opens on a guy showing his friend how his new Sprint phone has a song for everything—in fact, when his couch catches on fire, the phone plays the wacky theme from *The Benny Hill Show*. Cut to a bunch of crazy characters a la Benny Hill entering the apartment and running around the burning couch in a panic.

Buckley knew the kicker, with the flurry of action and offbeat 1960s era characters, would be funny. But he was concerned that the opening sequence with the two guys could be boring if the casting was, say, your typical 35-year-old businessmen. Looking for different types, Buckley ultimately chose a little Russian guy (he’s the owner of the new Sprint phone) and paired him with a middle-aged, sort of emotionless man. The stiff guy represented for Buckley the expressionless person so prevalent in the advertising of the ’80s; the Russian guy played off the late ’80s, early ’90s Russian guy gag. The casting of these two charac-



Bryan Buckley

ters “adds a layer of texture to a front end that otherwise would have been a little dry,” Buckley says.

Buckley shot a total of three spots for Sprint-Nextel, by the way, agreeing to take on the project after a getting a phone call from Gerry Graf, executive creative director at TBWA/Chiat/Day, explaining the concepts. “No matter what Gerry calls about, I want to do that job,” Buckley shares. “It’s a combination of, I really enjoy working with him, and I know we’re going to end up in a good place.”

Buckley, who has been directing for 11 years, enjoys working with longtime collaborators like Graf with whom he has a solid relationship,

“It is really about making sure that all of the spots I do are at a certain level, and each one of them has its own thing going.”

—Bryan Buckley

but he is also happy to work with newer creatives like he did in the case of the Bud Light Ted Ferguson campaign, which has DDB copywriter Jeb Quaid playing the character of Ferguson.

The great thing about working with Quaid and his art director partner Aaron Pendleton is that they—as well as the rest of the team at DDB—came up with a great idea and were willing to run with it. “Everybody just got rid of all of the over think-

ing and just did it,” Buckley says, pointing out that he was awarded the job and four days later was shooting the campaign.

Buckley shot the Bud Light campaign in Los Angeles and the previously noted Sprint work in New York. But he is shooting more and more of his spots in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where Hungry Man opened an office last year. In addition to the aforementioned “Whopperettes” spot for Burger King, Buckley has traveled to Brazil in the last year or so to shoot, among other spots, a Starburst ad out of TBWA, New York, called “Fiesta” that finds a mariachi band struggling to escape from inside of a Starburst eater’s mouth as well as “Counterfeit,” a commercial for MINI Cooper via CP+B that warns consumers about the fake MINI Coopers being sold on the black market.

By his own admission, Buckley is in love with the country. “It’s a different mindset in Brazil, more free,” he says. “People are happier down there.”

Those good vibes are infectious, and aside from offering him access to enthusiastic, artistic people, Buckley says Brazil offers a look—in both people and environs—that is different than what we traditionally see on American television and in film. “We haven’t seen a tremendous amount of films with Portuguese/Brazilian influence—with *City of God* being one thing—in the world. So I like working there because it does bring me to a different place,” Buckley says. “It allows me as a filmmaker to suddenly start creating something that’s different without even trying.”



“Couch” for Sprint/Nextel

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“Whopperettes” for Burger King



Harry Cocciolo

Yearling Shows Signs Of A Thoroughbred

By Robert Goldrich

What a difference a year makes. At this time in 2005, Harry Cocciolo, an accomplished agency creative, made the leap into full-time directing, joining bicoastal Tool of North America.

Remarkably, just a scant 12 months later, Cocciolo has fashioned a reel that's generated considerable industry buzz—to the point where his newest work

being wrapped at press time, two Acura spots for Rubin Postaer and Associates, Santa Monica, represents yet another career breakthrough, his first directorial foray into the automotive arena. It's the latest diversification for a helmer who has been able to establish himself in the storytelling, humor, people/dialogue and visual genres in a relatively short time span.

In some respects Cocciolo's progression as a director has evolved to where it parallels

his reach as an agency creative, which encompassed two tours of duty at Goodby, Silverstein & Partners (first as a writer who became an associate creative director, and the second as a creative director/writer), a stint at See, San Francisco as its executive creative director, and a tenure as partner/creative director at the San Francisco office of London agency Leagas Delaney.

To be sure, as an agency creative, he was best known for his work in strong, at times off-the-wall comedy, ranging from "got milk?" ("Trix," "Heaven") to CNET ("Dancers," "Plant") and adidas ("Abandoned Mr. S," "Spelling Trouble"). But while on the ad shop side, this humorous fare sometimes overshadowed his creative involvement in the relevant, emotional brand of storytelling reflected in pieces like AT&T Wireless' "Business Traveler" (directed by Scott Hicks of Independent Media, Santa Monica, for Goodby), a sweet tug at the heartstrings that showcases the special relationship between a father and young daughter. And there was also automotive advertising like Cocciolo's creative work at Goodby for Isuzu.

"My hope [from the outset] was to get to direct a wide range of work, enabling me to continue to be involved in the varied creative I had enjoyed during my agency days," relates Cocciolo. "Realistically, though, that is hard to accomplish given the tendency to categorize directors. I've been very fortunate to get the opportunities I have in my first year at a production company."

That good fortune, observes Tool's managing director Phillip Detchmendy, stems in part from the fact that many agency creatives feel simpatico and like working with Cocciolo. Indeed having been on the agency side, the director understands what ad shop artisans have to go through in order to get a campaign off the ground.

"That's what I thought I would miss most when moving over to the solo life of a director—the camaraderie of being part of a creative team," shares Cocciolo. "Happily, I've been able to retain that feeling of camaraderie with my crew. And even though I'm now further down the line, I've been given the chance by agencies to help bring their ideas to life."

On the crew front, a prime perk for Cocciolo has been the opportunity to work with varied artisans. Rivaling the kick of being able to broaden directorially into cars with the Acura job was being able to collaborate on that two-spot package with DP Max Malkin. "I've wanted to team with Max for a long time—to see how he works and to get a first hand feel of his approach



Harry Cocciolo



"Canyon" for Mastercard



"No Brakes" for Blue Cross



"Tail" for San Francisco Zoo

and what he does visually. It's been a real treat."

The Acura campaign additionally underscores the fact that for Cocciolo, diversification has elements of familiarity. While he breaks new ground directorially by moving into the automotive discipline, the spots also incorporate humor and storytelling, which have been Cocciolo mainstays. The storyline for an Acura MDX spot, for instance, centers on a waiter who works his way down the street and through town in the SUV, eventually meeting another dozen waiters as it's revealed to us that the MDX has a navigation system that also provides info on nearby restaurants, replete with Zagat restaurant ratings.

From his very first spot at Tool—the San Francisco Zoo's "Tail" for BBDO West, San Francisco—Cocciolo made a mark directorially. "Tail" tells the story of a schoolgirl who's an outcast because of a physical oddity; she has a long fur tail. While the circumstance is offbeat, the spot carries the universal emotion of feeling at one time or another isolated—if not shunned—for being different. The commercial walks the fine line of us feeling the girl's pain but not getting immersed in that loneliness thanks to the sense that something magical is about to unfold—and it does, as she finds another girl with a tail, who's standing in line to get into the San Francisco Zoo. A voiceover then asks, "Are you one of us? An accompanying tag reads, "Join Zoomanity."

The charming, intelligent

yet whimsical humor of "Tail" helped Cocciolo earn inclusion in *SHOOT*'s New Directors Showcase last year. From there, he moved on to take on a mix of work such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield's "No Brakes" for Denver agency Cactus, LucasArts' "Dodgeball" and "Paperboy" for Butler, Shine & Stern, San Francisco, the California Lottery's "Snow" via BBDO West, San Francisco, Sprint/Nextel's "Directions" for TBWA/Chiat/Day, New York, Reebok's "Far" and "Paying Dues" out of McGarry Bowen, New York, and MasterCard's "Canyon" from McCann Erickson, New York.

The latter shows a couple camping out—but ill-equipped for the experience. As the costs of various necessities are revealed, they are conspicuously absent, leading to the conclusion that being prepared for an outdoors outing is "priceless."

While he couldn't predict the success he's enjoyed just a year into his directing odyssey, Cocciolo proved prophetic when interviewed by *SHOOT* upon joining Tool in '05. He explained the one consistency in his filmmaking that indeed has since earmarked his body of directorial work over the past 12 months. "It's the humanity of the message," he said. "That doesn't mean that it features people, just that there is a real message there, told in a way that is hopefully relevant to the viewer. It can be funny, emotionally moving or something altogether different. There is power in respecting your audience and finding the humanity in each idea."

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Michael Cuesta

Getting Real Across Different Disciplines

By Carolyn Giardina

Michael Cuesta's body of work spans commercials, television and feature projects. The director is represented by bicoastal The Artists Company, and his reel includes fare for the Ad Council, Dove, Ford, and Smirnoff. He has directed numerous episodes of the HBO series *Six Feet Under*. And his feature debut, *L.I.E.*, was released in '01 to critical acclaim.

admits, acknowledging that :30s are ultimately about commerce. "I treat them as art. Sometimes that has gotten me in trouble, but it also pushed me to do great work.

"I think there are people that say 'it's just an ad' ... but if it is not more than that, then you just keep repeating yourself and your work becomes stagnant," he relates.

That mindset appears to come from Cuesta's yearning to elicit very real performances from his

child singing.

At press time, Cuesta was in production on a Publix campaign via WestWayne, Tampa, Fla. The idea, the director explains, is that the filmmakers go into the stores and talk to employees about what they like about their jobs. He explains that the goal is to feel very real and impromptu.

"I like the humanistic portrait type of commercials," Cuesta relates. "I enjoy working with actors and getting a very real, natural performance.

This is also evident in his feature choices. *L.I.E.* is a performance-driven story about Howie, a Long Island teen who suddenly finds himself alone after his best friend runs away and his father is arrested—all not long after his mother dies in an accident. Howie is befriended by an ex-Marine called "Big John," and in the end, the teen ends up finding himself. In '01, this film earned Boston Film Critics honors for Cuesta as best new director and Brian Cox (Big John) as best actor.

Cuesta's follow up film, *Twelve and Holding*, debuted last year at the Toronto Film Festival and is scheduled for a May '06 release. The film, which takes place in the suburbs of Manhattan, follows three friends and their families after a fourth friend is accidentally killed by a neighborhood bully. Cuesta explains that the film explores how they deal with grief, adjust to the loss, and how the kids are essentially left to fend for themselves.

Cuesta's third film, *The Miracle Life of Edgar Mint*, will be an adaptation of the book by Brady Udall, which follows lead character Mint on a personal journey and is set in the American Southwest.

Cuesta was born, raised and continues to reside in the New York area. He was influenced by his father, Mike Cuesta Sr., who was a photographer/director, and whose career followed a path of advertising photography and television commercials. "I used



Michael Cuesta

to go to the set," Cuesta recalls. "It made sense growing up to do it. [My father] never got into features, and it's something I always wanted to try."

When asked about additional influences, Cuesta cites photographers Irving Penn "for my love of still life and portraiture," and W. Eugene Smith, French filmmaker François Truffaut and Italian filmmaker Michelangelo Antonioni.

Through his career, Cuesta learned a lot, but says he has also enjoyed "unlearning" what he has been taught. "My background is in visual arts/graphic design, but I think I spent a lot of my career unlearning technique," he explains. "Now I take a more low impact filmmaking approach. I started as a photographer, shooting more graphic heavy, over-designed styles. Over the past few years, I like to sit back and not over stylize it. I

find that quite liberating—to let go of technique and let the ideas come through."

Cuesta relates that his background also includes serving as a director/cinematographer on his spot work. "But when I started making films and working with HBO, I decided to bring in a director of photography. [The cinematography background] brings knowledge of what I want visually. I still learn from great DPs that I work with, but when it comes to the camera, that's [most familiar] to me. What I find most challenging is casting and getting the right performance."

Looking ahead at his advertising career, Cuesta says, "I've done the high concept stuff in features, I'd like to do higher concept campaigns... I think it is important for all filmmakers to have a career in filmmaking—commercials, television and features."



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"David" for the Ad Council

Today he maintains a busy commercial schedule, just wrapped a television pilot titled *Dexter*, starring Michael C. Hall (*Six Feet Under*) as a forensic specialist who moonlights as serial killer, and in features, Cuesta is getting ready for the spring release of his second motion picture, *Twelve and Holding*.

What is not on his resume is the heart that he brings to his work, whether it is long or short form.

"I think that one of my strengths—and drawbacks—is I always take shooting a TV commercial personally," the director

actors, as well as influences in the arts—photography, cinematography, and graphic design.

He recently wrapped a PSA campaign for Autismspeaks.com via BBDO New York. "Baseball" captures a poignant home video moment when a wife tapes her husband teaching their son to hit a baseball. The tag increases awareness of autism by explaining that the odds of a child reaching the Major Leagues is 1 in 22,000; the chance of a child having autism is 1 in 166. "Broadway" features a similar concept with a home video of a

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Craig Gillespie

Third Time's The Charm For DGA Award Winner

By Christine Champagne

With his third nomination, Craig Gillespie scored the Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award this year for best commercial director of 2005. "I honestly did not expect it," says Gillespie, who was up against three of his fellow directors from bicoastal/international Morton Jankel Zander (MJZ)—Rocky Morton, Spike Jonze and Rupert Sanders—as well as Noam Murro of Los Angeles-based Biscuit Filmworks. "The work was so good from everybody that I hadn't even gotten my hopes up. So I was surprised [when I won]. I didn't have a speech or anything prepared."

Winning was, well, great, of course, but Gillespie points out that the DGA Awards facilitated an opportunity for him to enjoy some social time with his fellow MJZ directors. For example, Gillespie says, he didn't really get to know Sanders, who only joined the company within the last year, until they got to chat at a DGA-sponsored screening prior to the awards ceremony. He appreciated the chance to bond with his colleagues.

"There was a real team spirit," Gillespie shares. "Everybody was thrilled to be amongst each other."

Gillespie, who has directed spots for clients including Saturn, Honda, Holiday Inn Express and others in recent years, nabbed the DGA honor this year based on the strength of four spots: Altoids "People of Pain" and "Fable of the Fruit Bat" out of Leo Burnett, Chicago; and Ameriquest's "Surprise Dinner" and "Mini-Mart" via DDB Direct, Los Angeles.

Asked how he chooses the work he will direct, Gillespie says he looks for spots that will allow him "to try different things visually and not have my stuff look the same." That said, "I like to figure out what's best for the idea."

In the case of the Altoids "People of Pain" and "Fable of the Fruit Bat" spots, which find a bumbling British anthropologist visiting the primitive peoples of Altoidia, Gillespie says he mimicked the look and feel of French documentaries made of Papua New Guinea in the 1960s. "They were really awkward and stiff and felt very

staged," Gillespie says, noting that stilted look and awkward execution supported the wonderfully silly premise behind the Altoids ads.

The director opted for an appropriately slicker and contemporary look for the Ameriquest "Surprise Dinner" spot, which opens on a man preparing a romantic dinner for the lady in his life only to look like a psycho when she enters the apartment and finds him clutching a knife in one hand and her fluffy white cat in the other after the feline knocks a pot of sauce off the stove.

Gillespie recently tackled Ameriquest work again, by the way, directing two new Ameriquest spots, "That Killed Him" and "Friendly Skies," that proved popular with viewers of Super Bowl XL.

In the darkly funny "That Killed Him," a doctor and a medical technician are standing over a patient lying in his hospital bed. The tech can't resist using defibrillator paddles to zap a pesky fly. After the bug crashes into the patient's chest, the tech says, "That killed him" as the patient's wife and daughter enter the hospital room. The spot ends with the tag line "Don't judge too quickly."

The same tag line accompanies the risqué "Friendly Skies," which shows a woman trying to get past a fellow airplane passenger who is asleep in his seat. But when turbulence hits, she winds up on his lap, with her skirt hitched up above her hips.

Given the strength of these two latest Ameriquest concepts, Gillespie says he couldn't resist the chance to work on the Ameriquest campaign with DDB Direct again. "It's rare that any campaign lasts more than a year, so it was really refreshing to see that they were going with the same campaign and being that they did, I was happy to go with



Craig Gillespie

it," Gillespie says, adding, "I had a great experience with the agency the first time around."

This isn't the first time Gillespie has made a return appearance of sorts to take on a campaign that he previously worked on. In fact, the director recalls doing nearly a dozen spots for Washington Mutual out of Seattle's Sedgwick Road because the work was consistently compelling.

For those of you who might have been turned away by Gillespie last year, he was actually away from spots for about eight months while he shot his first feature film. A dark comedy titled *Mr. Woodcock*, the film centers on a young man who returns home to try to stop his mother from marrying the gym teacher, Mr. Woodcock (played by Billy Bob Thornton), whom

he always hated in high school.

Gillespie enjoyed working on the film, but admits that he was excited about getting back to spot work, which offers him the opportunity to do so many different things. "Today, we're doing massive crashes [for a car commercial]," he reports. "Last week, we were doing new Ameriquest stuff. I like being able to mix it up."

Having directed spots for more than 10 years now and built up a successful career, one has to wonder if there is any territory within commercials that Gillespie would like to cover in the future. There is, he says. "I certainly get to see all the comedy boards which is great," Gillespie remarks. "But in the future I'd like to do something that has more of an epic scale to it."



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Tim Godsall

Cleaning Up With A Comedic Edge

By Fred Cisterna

Spots that promote home cleansing products and cable television services don't usually make for exciting advertising. But Tim Godsall, who directs U.S. market spots via Biscuit Filmworks, Los Angeles, manages to turn such potential channel-changers into riveting commercials. (The Canadian native directs spots in Canada through untitled, Toronto.)

Godsall recently helmed a package of Tilex spots by way of DDB San Francisco, that is far from dull. But when he first heard about the assignment, he was less than thrilled. "I remember hearing there were some boards from Tilex and thinking, 'Oh God,'" he says. "You don't associate any of the classic grocery shelf products with adventurous advertising." However, it turns out that Tilex's "Mother-in-law" and "Wine" definitely have an edge.

The humorous "Mother-in-law" shows a woman and her mother-in-law in the woman's bathroom as they spruce up for a night out. The kibitzing mother-in-law, holding a container of cleanser, says, "Oh Sharon, this stuff won't get rid of the mold in here." The annoyed woman responds, "Will it help you forget our address?" The mother-in-law is taken aback. "There's a better way to deal with your mold," intones a voiceover. "Tilex. The mold killer."

"Wine" might pack an even nastier punch. The spot takes place at a party where one of the guests walks up to the host and asks, "Do you know there's mold in your bathroom? You should really do something about that." The irked host sarcastically says, "Oh, okay, Thanks," before tossing a glass of wine on the guest's dress. The host adds insult to injury by adding, "Oh, and you should really do something about your stupid, ugly dress."

"There was a certain kind of darkness in those that appealed to me," laughs Godsall.

"My hat was off to the client

for allowing that kind of darkness and confrontation into bathroom cleanser commercials. I kept thinking the plug would get pulled on it, because it seemed a little obnoxious for such a formulaic, staid category."

"The team and I agreed that the confrontation should have a

simplicity and a rawness, rather than being overtly wacky. The mild shock of the whole thing seemed like it would make the ads funnier and more memorable."

Time Warner's "New Neighbor," which promotes the company's cable, high-speed online, and digital phone services, was helmed by Godsall for Ogilvy & Mather, New York. The ad is set on a sunny day in the suburbs. A nerdy guy and his new female neighbor stand in

their respective driveways having a friendly chat. There is a sweet clumsiness to their exchange: Do the two like each other? Cut from day to later that night. It's stormy outside as we see the woman undressing through her second floor bedroom window. She sees her neighbor on his rooftop looking at her and she screams. But it turns out the guy isn't a peeping tom; he's simply trying to fix his TV's satellite dish. Playfully cautionary text advocating cable subscribership appears: "Stay

Inside. Stay out of trouble."

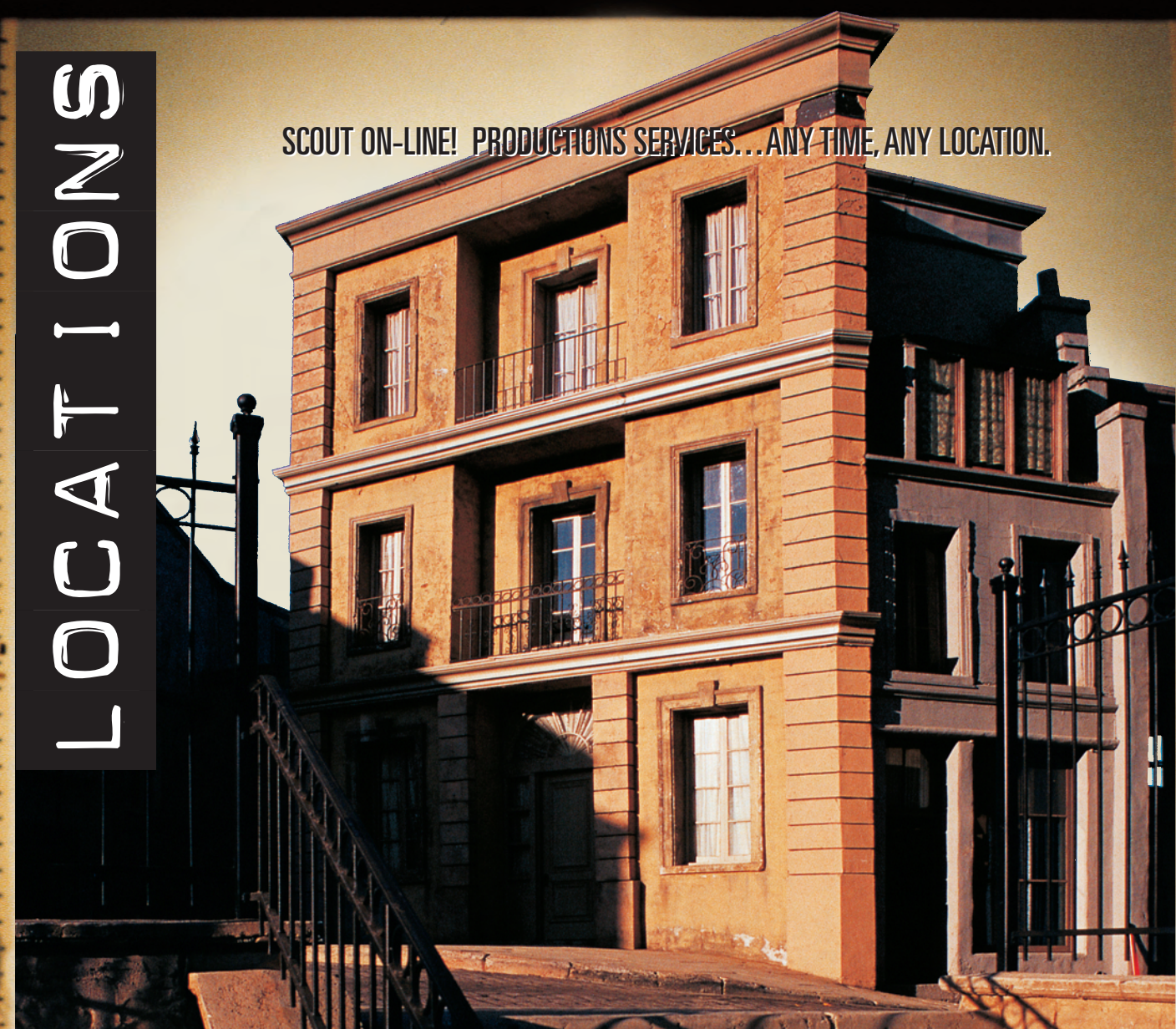
"The thing that struck me with that campaign was taking a business the scale of Time Warner, a corporation that has a very complicated array of services, and bringing it down to a simple human level," say Godsall.

"When most of a commercial is just two people talking, and it's all about creating a certain dynamic, you have to hope your two actors are exceptional," he says, referring to "New


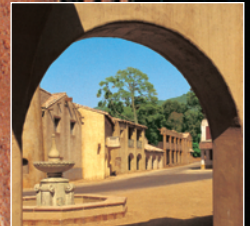


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Tim Godsall

David McNally

Straight From The "Fridge"

By Fred Cisterna

Bud Light's "Secret Fridge," directed by David McNally of bicoastal Villains through DDB, Chicago, earned the top slot in the 2006 USA Today Super Bowl Ad Meter ratings.

But the spot caught McNally's eye even when "Secret Fridge" was only ink on paper.

"When I got the boards, there was a package of three spots and they were all great," he says.

"But I instantly thought ["Secret Fridge"] was a great idea. It made me laugh out loud when I read it on the page."

"Secret Fridge," which takes place on Super Bowl Sunday, shows a guy stocking his refrigerator with Bud Light. When his friend sees the stash, he expresses concern that their buddies—who are coming over to watch the Big Game—will drink all the beer. That's when the first guy proudly shows off his solution to the problem: a revolving fridge that

hides the Bud Light. What the pair doesn't realize is that when the fridge revolves, it ends up in another apartment populated by a bunch of guys who worship the beer-bestowing appliance. The spot ends with the more-than-grateful Bud Light recipients ritually bowing down and chanting, "Magic fridge, magic fridge."

McNally feels that a specific shot strongly contributes to the ad's effectiveness: a dolly that travels from the first apartment, across the wall, and into the adjacent apartment to reveal the fridge worshippers. "The main concern was to figure out how to pay off the joke," he says. "There was some discussion whether to cut to the other side of the wall or go through the wall. We had gone into it thinking we'd shoot it both ways, but when we saw the dolly-across [shot] and everyone on set laughed out loud, we said there's really no point in shooting it any other way."

The rest of the ad was structured around that key shot. "I thought you needed to treat the rest of the spot very simply," he says. "In other words, the idea was that the only time the camera would move was when it dollyed across and revealed the other room. That became our thing: not to clutter it up with anything complicated and to just keep it a very simple, straightforward story."

Mercury's "DMV," which McNally helmed by way of Young & Rubicam Detroit, shows a different side of the director's work. The artful ad depicts a deadly dull Department of Motor Vehicles office, where bored drivers wait to have their license photos taken. Spare images of a camera at work punctuate shots of the mind-numbing process. We soon see licenses bearing photos that show some pretty unhappy faces. But then we see an upbeat young woman step up to the camera whose picture turns out nicely. A text appears: "They're coming. Happy drivers."

"I thought we could treat this experience we all know in an artistic way that conveyed the emptiness, sterility and boredom



David McNally

we associate with the experience," says McNally. "The thing I thought was really important was for the humanity to come out through the characters. We tried to cast people whose faces had a story. To me, the heart of any commercial is the cast."

In addition to being a top-notch spotmaker, McNally also helms

Shortly before Omaha closed shop in 2005, McNally left the production company, and he still speaks highly of his experience there. McNally then took a few months off to find the right shop to represent his work. His search for a new direction led to him joining Villains. He says that his new production company is just

"I'll always do comedy. I like it, and in commercials it's obviously a huge market, but I wanted to branch out and do things that have a little more artfulness and are not just straight ahead comedy."

—David McNally

features; his theatrical debut was 2000's *Coyote Ugly* and his second effort was the family comedy, *Kangaroo Jack*. Both of the films were produced by Jerry Bruckheimer, who was impressed by Bud's "Lobster," which made a splash during the 1999 Super Bowl broadcast, and was directed by McNally via his former roost, now defunct Omaha Pictures, by way of DDB, Chicago.

McNally says both of the features did well, but that after he finished making *Kangaroo Jack*, he decided to reassess his career. "I started getting a lot of scripts. I was evaluating them, and I thought, 'Is this really the way I want to spend the rest of my life, both in commercials and in movies?'"

"I felt it was time for a change," he says. "I'll always do comedy. I like it, and in commercials it's obviously a huge market, but I wanted to branch out and do things that have a little more artfulness and are not just straight ahead comedy."

the right fit, and that they are very supportive of his desire to stretch out.

Another product of McNally's new direction is *American Crime*, a law show that he created last year. Currently, he's directing the show's pilot for Fox Broadcasting. McNally says that the one-hour drama, which is set in Los Angeles, focuses on the forensics of law. McNally, Bruckheimer and Jonathan Littman are the project's executive producers. (Littman is executive producer for the various franchises of *C.S.I.*)

Prior to working on the pilot, McNally directed a package of spots for Klondike out of Campbell-Mithun, New York. He says that the quirky ice cream ads feature odd characters in bland suburban settings. It's clear that the project afforded McNally an opportunity to extend his reach. "It was another foray into something slightly different for me," he says. And that's exactly what he's looking for.



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"Secret Fridge" for Bud Light



"DMV" for Mercury



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Elias Merhige

Attention To Detail, Collaborations

By Christine Champagne

Ask Elias Merhige, who has the feature films *Begotten*, *Shadow of the Vampire* and *Suspect Zero* to his credit, about the differences between working on a feature film and a commercial, and he will tell you there aren't any that are all that significant. "I put the same kind of care and the same kind of detail into both," says the director, who is represented for spots by Santa Monica, Calif.-based Independent Media.

That's evident in his reel of spot work. Merhige, a native of Brooklyn who learned the craft of filmmaking at The State University of New York at Purchase, made a big splash in the advertising industry last year with his first commercial effort, a :30 for PBS called "Bucket Brigade." Created by Fallon Minneapolis and part of the television network's "Be More" campaign, the spot finds a group of villagers banding together to save their beloved library from

burning to the ground. They do so in a wonderfully unique way, scooping the fire out of the building in buckets and bringing the fire down the hill to a well to extinguish it.

Merhige's spot credits also include a :30 for Genworth Financial titled "House Rules." The spot has married tennis superstars Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf accepting an invitation to play tennis in a mythical land far, far away where the rules of the game are vastly more complex. Being the good sports they are, Agassi and Graf quickly get the hang of it, of course, and excel.

With both "Bucket Brigade" and "House Rules," Merhige had to create compelling worlds from scratch. He ventured to Chile to make "Bucket Brigade," scouting out the perfect hilltop setting in a rural town, then building a rustic stone library that looked like it had stood upon that hill for centuries.

For "House Rules," Merhige searched long and hard for a

location with spectacular mountain views that would feel like it was on the edge of the world. He found it in Simi Valley, Calif., and with the help of production designer Nathan Crowley (*Batman Begins* and *Mission Impossible: II*), Merhige constructed a monolithic tennis court in the round that, like the library in "Bucket Brigade," felt like it had existed for centuries.

In the case of two gritty, black-and-white Nike basketball-themed spots, "I Can" and "Slam," which finds a mix of pro athletes (NBA stars Kobe Bryant, Amare Stoudemire and Vince Carter) and everyday folks playing the game they love, Merhige didn't have to so much create a world as he had to find it. "I really wanted to find basketball courts [in Los Angeles] where there was some real street ball going on, and I cast real street ballers," Merhige says.

While the Nike spots play as though Merhige and his crew just stumbled upon people playing basketball, the spots were carefully storyboarded. Merhige is meticulous when it comes to crafting all of his work, personally getting involved in every element from location scouting



Elias Merhige (outside of car) with Aaron Eckhart while shooting *Suspect Zero*.

to storyboarding. "I storyboard everything very precisely, and I handpick my team in terms of my director of photography and in terms of the people that I surround myself with," Merhige shares. "And then I invite them over for dinner, and I have numerous conversations with them."

Merhige is equally as collaborative with the agency creatives he works with. One has

to imagine that the complicated Genworth Financial spot "House Rules" was a seriously collaborative effort, and it was, Merhige confirms. "It was me responding to the idea and to the original script, and then taking it further and presenting possibilities in terms of costume design, production design and the direction that I really wanted to take it in, and

Continued on page 32

ZOO

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 simon west
 luca maroni
 michal utterback
 diane van ussel
 james frost

executive
 producers
 gower frost
 jan wieringa



Peter Darley Miller

Continuity, Comedy, Creativity

By Robert Goldrich

Historical perspective shows not only how far director Peter Darley Miller of bicoastal/international @radical media has come, but also what hasn't changed for him over the years. Paradoxically, it's the latter—an affinity for varied forms of comedy, visual expression,

self-described “risk taking” and his longstanding working relationship with executive producer Frank Stiefel—that's fueled a career progression in which he has been able to break new ground.

Consider the body of work that earned Miller a Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nomination as best commercial director of 1998. While humor

was a common thread running through Miller's entries that year, they also exhibited a wide storytelling range from sophomoric comedy (Slice soda's “Dissection” in which a teenage student in science class asks for another frog after apparently eating the first) to intentionally misdirecting the audience (360 Communications “Chase”) with an action/adventure thriller that looks like murder is imminent but the payoff turns out to be something more mundane, to memorable Gold Lion-winning comedy (Sony PlayStation's “Scout”) and humor that's both big and subtle at the same time (Nike's “The Great Magician”).

Now eight years later, the comedic bent is still evident in Miller's work, including an effort, “Lavagun,” for one of the same clients. Sony PlayStation out of TBWA/Chiat/Day, Los Angeles. At the same time, though, the director has branched out via a brand of work for which he hadn't typically been known—visually styled storytelling through the use of still photographs in an ambitious Mini Cooper campaign from Hamburg agency Jung von Matt. One of the stories, to be sure, still has the comedic sensibilities that have been evident for many years in Miller's work. The spot centers on an obsessive Mini Cooper owner who goes out of his way to pamper his car, even sipping gasoline—ala a wine connoisseur—to make sure it makes the grade prior to being pumped it into his prized vehicle.

Two other Mini Cooper spots, “Air Traffic Controller” and “Laser,” deploy the same succession-of-stills technique to clever storytelling effect. In “Laser,” a master burglar navigates through a hair-trigger laser beam security maze to snatch up his desired booty. But rather than make his escape unnoticed, at the last minute he intentionally activates the alarm system so that he gets the chance to speed away from pur-



Peter Darley Miller



“Puck Dodging” for Nike



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

“Lavagun” for Sony Playstation

suers in his Mini Cooper.

Acknowledging that the look and feel of the Mini Cooper fare represented a departure from his norm, Miller said the risk-taking it entailed by him and on the part of the agency proved most gratifying. Still it should be noted that the three spots weren't as great a stretch for Miller as one might presume in that he was a still photographer for some 15 years before making the transition to commercialmaking. “The work was new for me—yet it wasn't,” he said. “But it helps to keep people guessing as you redefine yourself and open up new opportunities. I'm very proactive about those opportunities. I'm not one of those directors who puts it all on the production company to come up with the work. I try to help seek out projects.”

Still Miller is quick to credit production company support, starting with his longstanding colleague, Stiefel. Miller joined Stiefel+Company, Hollywood, in 1996, and credits its president Stiefel with helping to build his directorial career, the key dynamic being that they were “highly selective about the work.” In '02, @radical media bought Stiefel+Company, which opened up additional avenues for Miller. Stiefel, who is executive producer/executive VP of @radical, continues to be involved in Miller's career—but, says the director, Stiefel has also “let go” and opened the door for others at @radical to contribute.

For example, Miller notes

that @radical proprietor Frank Scherma had a hand in securing the aforementioned Mini Cooper work through the company's Berlin office. Similarly, executive producer Donna Portaro helped secure a plum Nike assignment for him out of Taxi, Toronto. (Imported Film Artists, Toronto, reps @radical in Canada.) “Puck Dodging,” an offbeat comedy spot promoting Nike's hockey line, is currently on Miller's reel. And @radical proprietor Jon Kamen played a role in Miller garnering off-the-wall, buzz-generating comedy ads for Virgin Mobile out of Mother, New York. The Virgin fare includes a spot promoting an adult music offering in which toy dolls play out a flirtatious scenario reminiscent of a cheesy porn movie.

“Frank [Stiefel] went with @radical because he thought it could help to generate more opportunities for all of us—and it certainly has for me,” relates Miller. “That was a part of his [Stiefel's] vision—to gain greater access to the global market, production footholds overseas, and meaningful involvement in movies, TV and branded entertainment.”

Just as his commercialmaking endeavors have broadened, Miller believes @radical will also serve to open long-form doors for him, including in the branded content arena. “It's all about opportunities and getting to work with great creative people,” affirms Miller. “That remains a driving force for me.”

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Rocky Morton

"In Good Company" At The DGA Awards

By Christine Champagne

Looking back on his recent Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award nomination for best commercial director of 2005 (his third career nomination, by the way), Rocky Morton muses that he was "in good company" with a laugh. One can certainly understand why he would see it that way. Three of the five other nomi-

nees—Craig Gillespie, Spike Jonze and Rupert Sanders—are represented by bicoastal/international MJZ, the production company that Morton co-founded 16 years ago. So as long as one of them won (and one of them, Gillespie, did), Morton would at the very least share in the victory.

Adding to the win was the fact that MJZ set a DGA Award record of sorts—this year marked

the first time ever that four directors from one outfit were nominated for best commercial director. (The only non-MJZ director up for the award this year was Noam Murro of Los Angeles-based Biscuit Filmworks.)

Talk about dominance.

While his company is one of the most successful in the commercial production business these days, Morton has been at the top of the spot-directing field for years, directing memorably humorous fare inhabited by unique characters ranging from the Taco Bell Chihuahua to Burger King's Subservient Chicken.

Morton is passionate when it comes to creating characters. "Creating characters is something I love to do," Morton says, going back to the 1980s to point out one of his most significant successes, the iconic Max Headroom.

More recently, Morton collaborated with Miami's Crispin Porter + Bogusky (CP+B) to bring us the Fast character seen in a campaign, including the recent *SHOOT* Top Spot "Hair," promoting the Volkswagen GTI. A modernized version of the old VW Rabbit, the Fast is a short, squat, rabbit-like creature with no moveable parts. "That one pre-



Rocky Morton

sented a big challenge because it was inanimate," Morton says of the character, noting, "The only thing I could do was use lighting to bring him to life."

And he did so with great effect.

In the case of the "Hair" spot, for example, which finds the Fast sitting on the front seat of a GTI in between a man and a woman as they speed down a highway with the windows rolled down, Morton constructed an elaborate rig, a turntable actually, on

which he placed the interior of the car. He then lit the scene, put some glycerin in the Fast's eyes and spun the turntable, causing shadow and light to fall upon the character, giving him a dynamism he might have otherwise lacked.

While Morton had to come up with an ingenious technical solution to give life to the Fast, he relied on old-fashioned acting to create a strangely sexy

Continued on page 31



VW's Fast character

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Jason Reitman

Smoking Gets Him Into Movie Theaters

By Emily Vines

With his first feature *Thank You for Smoking*, director Jason Reitman looks well on the way to realizing his filmmaking ambitions—to make smart, subversive movies that he can be proud of.

Thank You for Smoking premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival last September and was also recently screened at the Sundance Film Festival. The Sundance experience was especially notable for the 28-year-old filmmaker.

When he was growing up, Reitman explains, he had the idea that all comedies were broad laugh fests until he saw three films that all played at Sundance during the 1990s: *Bottle Rocket*, *Slacker* and *Clerks*. “Those three films changed my opinion on what an independent comedy could be and got me thinking about what kind of filmmaker I wanted to be,” he relates. Though he had brought three short films to the festival before (*In God We Trust*, *Gulp* and *Operation*), when he introduced his feature at this year’s festival, he realized a life-long dream.

Thank You for Smoking, for which Reitman wrote the screenplay, is based on Christopher Buckley’s book of the same name. The plot is centered on Nick Naylor, played by Aaron Eckhart, who is a lobbyist for Big Tobacco. He spins his way across the country and ends up in Hollywood trying to get his message about cigarettes into a film. Along

the way, Naylor is also getting to know his 12-year old son.

The film addresses personal responsibility and parenting, but Reitman clarifies, “This is a movie where the main character never sees the light, he doesn’t change roads because he doesn’t have to—this is not a film that vilifies his occupation.”

Reitman shares that he has had offers to direct films since the age of 21, but he waited for a story he could believe in like this one. A film that would establish him as the director he wants to be. *Thank You for Smoking* was the right story for his feature debut because it was smart, independently minded and didn’t apologize for itself, the director explains.

“It takes a very libertarian attitude on the subject of cigarettes, which I think is pretty unusual,” he says. “Most people when they think of a cigarette movie, they think of *The Insider*, and this is the exact opposite. This is a movie that says, ‘Relax, if you want to smoke, smoke, and perhaps we should stop telling each other how to live our lives.’”

He adds, however, that he is not a smoker and doesn’t advocate the habit. “The film is very clear about the dangers of cigarettes, but it’s a libertarian film. It’s a film that says governments should not parent people, people should parent their children.”

COMEDY, OF COURSE

For the past five years Reitman has been directing spots with a humorous slant through Tate USA, Santa

Monica, Calif, for clients like Heineken, Kyocera, Honda and Pacifico. With the time he had between the Toronto and Sundance Film Festivals, he helmed work for Buick, GM and Wal-Mart.

In “Nerd” for Kyocera through Vitro Robertson, San Diego, Reitman introduces a college-aged guy wearing a tie, sweater vest and navy blue blazer who explains that he is “What you’d call, ‘Not cool.’” He continues to tell his story as he engages in his everyday activities like working at the library—where a pretty girl returning a book calls him a freak after he tells her she will owe late fees. “I’m not very well liked,” he continues.

Moments in this nerd’s life continue to play out, like when he keeps quiet on the bottom level of a bunk bed as his roommate engages in sexual activity above him. Eventually he proudly explains that he recently purchased a Slider phone from Kyocera and “it has really made quite a difference.”

Then we see football players chasing him, beating him up and taking his phone. The pretty girl from the library returns another book and has altered her previous comment to him, now saying, “Cool phone, freak.” As we continue to see examples of how he doesn’t fit in, the deluded student relates, “I’d say I’m pretty hot now, and I owe it all to this little beauty right here, the Slider by Kyocera.”

Reitman attributes his interest in comedy simply to having a decent sense of humor. But, he would also like to make scary films and dramatic commercials. “I’d love that opportunity one day,” he says of spotmaking, “But that’s not, I find, how the commercial world works. I find you have to create a name for doing something uniquely yours and you have to stick to that otherwise you won’t work.”

On the reasons why Tate USA is the right home for him, the director points to president/executive producer David Tate, whom he says understands his goals. Noting that executive producer Hugh Bacher was a groomsman in his wedding, he shares, “I truly feel like they’re my family.”

As for his future plans, Reitman is writing a screenplay for another feature and, along with producer Dan Dubiecki, creating an independent comedy company. The aim of that company will be to make independent films—shorts as well as features like *Thank You for Smoking*—that are subversive, unique, humorous,



Jason Rietman

can be made on small budgets and stay true to themselves, Reitman relates.

He and Dubiecki also plan to host a film festival through their new company. Reitman says that one of his favorite parts of making his shorts was going to film festivals and meeting other indepen-

dent directors. He would like to continue to work with them and provide more opportunities for fellow helpers. “I’m really excited about it. Hopefully it will be a brand like National Lampoon for the modern era that becomes a hub for young comedic directors and storytellers.”

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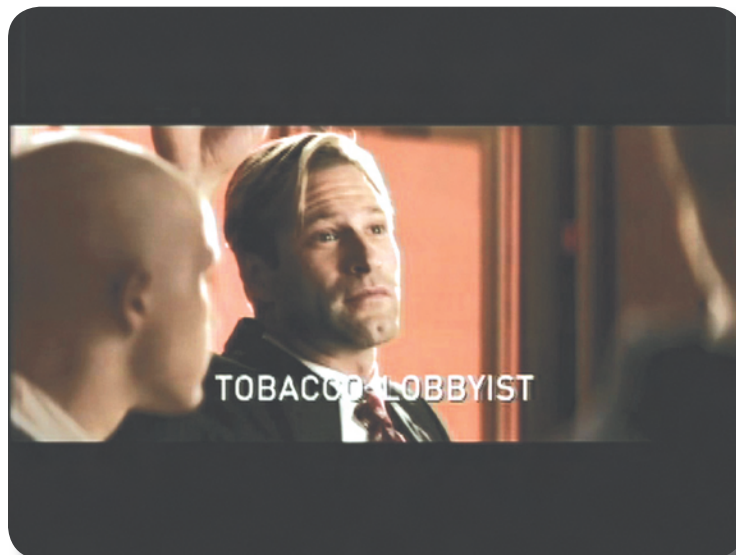
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“Nerd” for Kyocera



Trailer for *Thank You For Smoking*

Michael Rowles

Speaking Softly During The Super Bowl

By Fred Cisterna

Super Bowl broadcasts are brimming with rowdy beer ads and pumped-up car commercials, but this year a quietly striking spot also debuted during the Big Game. Dove's "Little Girls," helmed by director/DP Michael Rowles of bicoastal Order, via Ogilvy & Mather, Chicago, promotes the Dove Self Esteem fund, which encourages young girls to have better self-images.

The spot's original creative came out of Ogilvy & Mather, Toronto, and initially was shown in cinemas in Canada. It was later recut by the agency's Chicago office for the Super Bowl broadcast.

Was Rowles surprised that the marketer chose to air the touching ad during the Super Bowl, which is typically associated with a male demographic?

"I was completely surprised," says Rowles. "It was a very bold move, but it was one way to bring some great press to this cam-

paign. I thought it was a great strategic move on their part."

"Little Girls" opens with a series of shots showing young girls who sadly lack self-confidence. As we see their uncomfortable visages and body language, supertitles such as "hates her freckles" and "afraid she's fat" appear. But the spot's mood shifts after we read the words, "Let's change their minds." Now the girls, obviously feeling much better about themselves, light up the screen with their radiant smiles.

"It was very much like documentary filmmaking," says Rowles, describing his approach to the project. "We went to great lengths to find the right girls. None of them had been in a commercial. We pulled them from Girl Scout troops, dance groups; wherever we could pull real kids."

Rowles says the interview process was key. "We really wanted to get in their heads and almost hear confessions from them about how they felt about

themselves. It was very enlightening to hear these young kids who had such image problems at such a young age."

Later, the director checked out feedback to the spot on the Dove Self Esteem Web site. "It was amazing how many people were so moved by it," he says. "The response was overwhelming to me. I saw hundreds and hundreds of pages of responses."

A few years ago, Rowles started to shoot, as well as direct, spots. The veteran helmer, who points out that he has always been very involved with a project's cinematography, goes on to explain why he made the switch to director/DP.

"I find it so much more beneficial to be a director/camera-man and not have to collaborate with somebody else when I have a vision of what I want to do," he says. "I feel very connected to the image I'm recording and what the actors are doing. There's not that lag; I can feel the moment and I can react immediately. For me, there's a real connection with the camera and the actors when you've cut out the middleman."

Rowles, who recently directed three spots for Tide through Saatchi & Saatchi, New York,



Michael Rowles

talks about how being a director/DP allowed him to work closely with the kids during the Dove shoot. "These are all kids who had never been on a film set," he

says. "There's a little bit of intimidation that comes with that. My goal was to try and get these kids as comfortable as possible and to

Continued on page 32

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STUDIOS

Dougal Wilson

Directing Spots Isn't Astrophysics

By Emily Vines

With a degree in astrophysics, a seven-year tenure as a copywriter, and spots on his directorial reel that include characters made entirely of paper, Dougal Wilson of Blink, London, and its sister shop Furlined, Los Angeles, is not your average director.

Through his impressive academic pursuits at Durham University, Durham, England, Wilson earned a degree in 1992, but decided to follow a career path outside of science and math. While he was studying astrophysics, he also explored his love of drawing and began creating posters for events like student theater productions, and sets for plays.

Instead of going to work as a

physicist after graduation, he took a job as a copywriter at The Leith Agency (now Leith Edinburgh). There he worked for seven years on accounts like Honda and Tennent's Lager, eventually becoming joint-deputy creative director.

During his time at the agency, he realized he was interested in getting behind the camera. Seizing opportunities to create his own reel, Wilson helmed work on and off of the clock. He managed to shoot music videos for friends' bands, a one-minute short about sewage and the environment, as well as spots for the music festival T in the Park, for which Tennent's Lager is a partner. He also helmed spots for the board game Articulate.

His agency experience pays off for the director now. "Having been an agency copywriter, I quite enjoy working with creatives on scripts because I am used to collaboration and used to coming up with ideas with somebody in a room," he says.

HEADING SOUTH

Through a friend of a friend, Wilson's reel ended up in the hands of James Studholme, managing director of Blink, London. Studholme then invited him to move to London and join the production company in November 2001. Wilson has been there ever since. The director also works on projects through Blink's music video arm Colonel Blimp, London, and BlinkInk, London, which is known for animation.

"They basically took a chance on me and launched me, got me jobs and every year I've been busier and doing bigger jobs so it feels like they're doing it right," Wilson relates.

Since joining the shop, Wilson has helmed work for clients like Orange, Boots No. 7, Amnesty International and Clarks. He has recently worked on a Vodafone commercial and is in preproduction on a spot for Beck's.

On the music video front, he has shot work for artists like The Streets and LCD Soundsystem through Colonel Blimp and is now working on his second video for Will Young, the first *Pop Idol* winner.

The Streets video, "Fit But You Know It," won twice at the CADS: Music Vision Awards in 2005 for



Dougal Wilson

Best Video of the Year and Best Urban Video. At that show, Wilson also took home the award for Best Music Video Director.

"When someone finds a correct way to visually interpret a song, it is a tremendously enjoyable thing to watch, so that's why I like music videos and that's why I like thinking of ideas for music videos and the whole process of making them," he explains.

"With commercials, it is a similar thing," he continues. "I love it when you can sum up an idea or make a point in a visually entertaining way. That's again a very satisfying thing to watch and an exciting thing to make because if you make an advert that people enjoy, then all the processes leading up to showing it to somebody are really exciting."

The spots he has directed have also won some honors. For the Orange's "Dance" through Mother, London, he won a Bronze at the 2006 British Television Advertising Awards (BTAA) in the category Best 60 Seconds or Less.

"Dance" is a good example of Wilson's ability to shoot beautiful scenes. That commercial features two performers who utilize a form of dance called contact physical theater, which looks a lot like ballet. The spot is about how relationships grow over time and in it, these two performers beautifully move in unison through a kitchen, into a yard and out to the street.

Wilson wanted "Dance" to feel like a clip from a film and like one shot, though it was shot in three.

Also winning Bronze at the BTAA show was "Laughing Hippy" through Fallon, London. That spot promoted the Glastonbury Festival coverage on the BBC and simply featured a man with long hair and glasses sitting on the grass and laughing; he pauses and resumes laughing. "Must be that time of year again," a super reads. The spot also earned a Silver at the Creative Circle Awards for Best Idea in 20 Seconds.

On the other end of the spectrum is a series of complex spots he did for Orange through Mother—"Bear Trap," "Stunt Rider," and "Rocking Horse." This work involved puppetry and paper. The technique, which he originally used in a video for a band called Klonhertz, used characters made of paper that were animated with puppetry. The strings and rods were removed in post.

Thus far, Wilson has not done any work for the U.S. market through Furlined, which launched last summer, but he is looking forward to the right opportunity arising. "I think it's a good principle to make sure you really, really like a script before you pitch on it because you're going to be doing it for a couple of months at least, so I'm just waiting for something that I like."



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

"Dance" for Orange



"Rocking Horse" for Orange

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Tim Godsall

Continued from page 23

Neighbor.” “In this case, we made sure we got two people who had a certain presence and were able to wing it—take a situation and explore it without a script.”

“I like stranding the actors in the scripted situation, but depriving them of the actual scripted dialogue. These two were great at just rolling with it. They had such a genuine, odd presence, and the innocent awkwardness

we needed for that set-up came naturally to them.”

Before turning to directing, Godsall worked as a freelance copywriter for ad agencies in the U.S. and Canada. He also served as a staff writer and creative director at Kirshenbaum, Bond & Partners, New York.

Godsall helmed his first Canadian spot in the late '90s; he directed his U.S. debut about a year later. In the last few years, he's been doing more and more jobs for the American ad market. His recent endeavors by

way of Biscuit include Coke's "Perfect Match," out of Wieden + Kennedy, Portland, Ore., and a striking Xbox spot which has never aired. His recent work for untitled includes a package of cinema trailers/TV spots for Visa/Toronto International Film Festival via Leo Burnett, Toronto. One of those offbeat comedy spots, "Mobster," made *SHOOT's* "The Best Work You May Never See" gallery in November 2005

As he has moved more and more into the U.S. market, does Godsall think his style and approach to directing has changed? "Hopefully it's ever-changing," he says.

"You end up getting pegged as a certain kind of director because of the first few projects you do. People naturally send you the kind of work you first get known for. But I really like exploring totally different styles of filmmaking. I'm much more interested in doing whatever makes sense for a particular commercial than seeing everything through the prism of a set style or sensibility."

"The things that I love to spend time on involve really working with actors, working with performances and creating a world, and if a spot creatively doesn't offer that, then it doesn't really turn me on."



[CLICK HERE TO VIEW SPOT](#)

"Little Girls"

Michael Rowles

Continued from page 29

build a trust with them because the camera was very intimate with them and very close."

"A lot of kids can freeze up. Sometimes you want to do nothing. If you over-direct real people, they become very conscious of themselves. I try to let them be themselves and discover who they are, as opposed to trying to totally manipulate the situation. I think that really helped us with the Dove campaign."

Rowles has even had to use his skills to get into canine heads for some jobs, a challenge he faced directing American Kennel Club's "Superstar" and "Beyond," via Doner, Detroit. "Superstar"

sends up those familiar athletic shoe spots that feature celebrity athletes with big egos. Here, we see the pooches displaying their athletic prowess minus the cocky attitude associated with their human counterparts.

"These animals really don't have an ego," says Rowles. "The photographic challenge was to highlight these dogs with different shapes, sizes and personalities, and make sure those personalities and the athleticism came across."

"Beyond" captures people hanging out with their dogs in a variety of beautifully lensed settings. "Those were pretty much real people also," he says. "It was showing the emotional connection people have with their dogs and trying to be honest about it."

Remarking on the documentary aspect of spots like "Beyond" and "Little Girls," Rowles says, "The viewer in this day and age is very savvy. When they smell advertising, it may be the moment when they turn the channel. I go to great lengths to try to make it feel genuine and not staged."

"I have a visual style but it's a very fine line between art direction that gives you depth and back story, [and something] that's too distracting [and] feels like an ad. I always try to walk that line."



"Wine" for Tilex

Elias Merhige

Continued from page 25

the agency responding to that," Merhige says.

Without this kind of back and forth during which he and the agency creatives could feed off of each other's ideas, the Genworth Financial spot wouldn't have had the depth it ultimately had, the director adds, but could have rather felt gimmicky.

Like with most of his work, the bulk of the effects in "House Rules" were created in camera, with the only digitally created effect being the ball on fire. "CGI does not give you the same visceral quality that optics and film does," Merhige maintains, noting. "How many times have you seen a feature film, and you see these battle scenes, and you just know that they're all computer generated? It takes you out of it. But

whereas you look at the battle scenes in *Lawrence of Arabia*, and you know that those are all real people, and it has a whole different effect on you completely."

As for his most recent spot work, Merhige had just completed a launch spot for a new Toyota Camry campaign out of Saatchi & Saatchi LA, Torrance, Calif., at the time of this interview. Merhige recalls immediately being drawn to the idea behind the commercial, which allows us to observe a Toyota Camry parked outside of what looks like a Soho or Tribeca art studio falling into a déjà vu-like dream.

"I really wanted to do it, and I'm very selective about the kinds of things I do," Merhige says of the inventive Toyota Camry commercial, pointing out,



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Fab Five

Harvesting The Crop of Up-And-Coming Directors

By Bill Dunlap

This spring's five directors picked by SHOOT as up and comers in the commercial world arrived from a number of different directions. Two came through MTV's "college of production knowledge," one was an agency creative, another started in the music video arena, and the fifth came from a fine arts background.

Whatever their similarities and differences, all five are promising commercial directors who are making their mark in the field.

LENA BEUG

When Lena Beug arrived in New York in 1997 from her native Cork, Ireland, she had, at one time or another, studied German, law and fine art, but she had never considered a career in film.

A little more recently—last September—the 43rd Shark Awards Advertising Festival in Ireland named her Best International New Director and around the same time she signed with Toronto and Vancouver-based Reginald Pike for commercial representation.

Staying with relatives in Brooklyn back in '97, she was able to use what she calls "a very random family connection" to land an internship in MTV's on-air design department.

"I had no computer design skills so it was very much on-the-job learning, which turned out to be a better way for me to learn," Beug says. "I was not thinking about film at all. I enjoyed working at MTV a lot but I was never one of those graphic designers who got excited enough about typog-

raphy and logos and stuff like that. And then I started getting more interested in live action."

At one point, she left MTV to work with some friends at a company they called Thingy. "It was just around the time when everyone was getting video cameras and I had just learned how to use Final Cut Pro. We started making these really bad karaoke music videos for fun. That was the first taste."

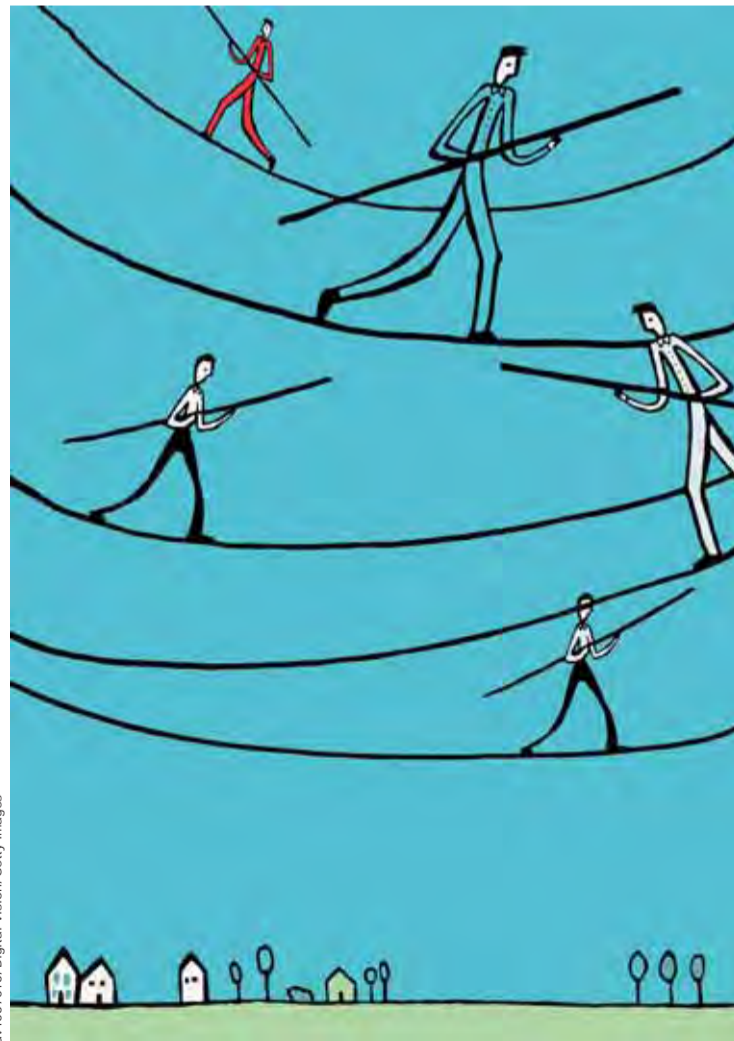
When Thingy petered out, Beug returned to MTV and a couple years ago got to direct her first major project, the Intro Guy campaign, a dozen :30s and :15s featuring the guy who introduces new videos on the channel.

In one, "Car Alarm," the Intro Guy hones his dance moves to the rhythms of a car alarm that he has set off intentionally. "We had so much fun figuring out who that person was," Beug says. "He was this character who was very inspired by music and dancing, an only child of older parents."

Other MTV directing assignments came along and late last year, Beug left to sign with Reginald Pike. Since then she has directed three spots for MADD Canada out of Saatchi & Saatchi, Toronto; "Dirty Shirt" for Hockey Canada and DDB Canada, Toronto; and a campaign for the Milk Board out of Cossette Communications-Marketing in Vancouver.

So far, much of her work has something of an MTV look. In the MADD spot "Papers," for instance, the pirate logo on a package of rolling papers comes to life to remind a young toker that he shouldn't drive in his condition.

"It's funny to me," Beug says, "that when you come out of MTV people say, 'Oh, you're a comedy



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Continued on next page

Up-And-Coming Directors Reflect On Their Careers



Lena Beug's "Dirty Shirt"

Continued from previous page

director.' It's funny to me because I'm actually not that funny as a person. I like funny things, but I also like sweet things. That's always what I hope to do. I don't think it's much fun to be funny at the expense of other people. It's fun to be funny if you're actually creating an interesting character who has a reason to be funny."



Lena Beug

ADAM GOLDSTEIN

Directing has been on Adam Goldstein's radar screen since grade school, but it wasn't until he did his first spec spot a little over a year ago that he realized it was what he should be doing full time. A few weeks ago, he left his job as senior creative director/copywriter at BBDO New York and signed with bicoastal/international RSA Films.

Goldstein, 38, got started in advertising with an internship at DDB Washington while still studying English and creative writing at the University of Michigan. He went on to do multiple tours of duty with Ammirati & Puris, New York, a stint with Ogilvy & Mather, Paris, and the past six years at BBDO, where he did award-winning work for FedEx and Pepsi.

"I was always gravitating toward wanting to direct," he says. "Finally, I shot a spec spot piggybacking on a job to see if it was as much fun as I imag-



Adam Goldstein's "Hitchhiker" for Sirius

ined, and if I was as much of a fit for it as I was telling myself and everybody else around me. Mark Pellington [of Crossroads Films] was directing the spot I piggybacked on. I told him, 'If I had any doubts that this is what I should be doing, they're gone now.' He looked at me and said, 'What's not to love?'"

Goldstein's actual first job was a PSA in sixth grade, part of a promotion by a local TV station in Silver Spring, Maryland. "We wrote it, submitted it and they called us, and I basically directed a couple guys in their studio," he recalls.

Goldstein leaned toward comedy in his spec spots. The spot with Pellington, "Hitchhiker," was for Sirius Satellite Radio. In it, a young hitchhiker is so attracted to a driver's Sirius radio that he accepts a ride even though there is another guy tied and gagged in the back seat. In two spots for BBDO client Levitra, Goldstein set up romantic moments at home that are ruined by a crotchety old geezer in the room. The tagline is "Tired of living with ED?"

Two client-direct PSAs for New York's Coalition for the Homeless feature a real estate agent using jargon from high-end sales pitches to describe out-of-the-street accommodations to a homeless person.

"The Coalition for the Homeless work was just before I signed with RSA and everything else on the reel was through a few different production companies



Adam Goldstein

and financed through the New York State real estate bubble—I sold an apartment," he explains.

"I really enjoy doing comedy and dialogue and performance," Goldstein says. "I love working with talent and finding those little moments in scripts and 'funnyisms' that just come out and make people smile a lot. Right now I'm just loving doing performance-driven comedy."

As he indicates, the decision to leave a good agency career wasn't difficult. Among those offering encouragement and inspiration was Craig Gillespie of bicoastal/international MJZ, who made the same transition with great success. Former art director

Gillespie was Goldstein's creative partner at Ammirati.

"Craig Gillespie is terrific," Goldstein says. "There is certainly no shortage of agency guys becoming directors. What I felt was that regardless of that, there is kind of a shortage of people who concentrate and focus on dialogue."



Aaron Stoller

AARON STOLLER

For about as long as he can remember, Aaron Stoller has wanted to do MTV commercials. "I loved the landscape of the channel," he says. "It was incredibly funny to me. All the stuff I did in college had that tone."

College was the University of Missouri at Columbia and his work in the Communications School there landed him an internship in 1997 at MTV's On Air Promotions department in New York, which turned into a full-time job and subsequently landed him earlier this year at Backyard Productions in Venice, Calif.

While his reel is still heavy with MTV spots, he's already gotten busy with Backyard. "I did some Pringles stuff that was a lot of fun," he says, "and I just finished Burger King with Crispin [Porter + Bogusky, Miami] and I did a Kingsford Charcoal spot with DDB San Francisco."

Stoller credits his MTV experience with much of his success. "It's like the ultimate grad school," he says. "You do it all. You write it, produce it and direct it. You're in the marketing world as well—you're trying to strategize and figure out new angles for the channel and new ways to promote and sell this big brand."

And MTV provided the opportunity for a young director to work with top celebrities. "All the celebrity experience through MTV has been a blast," he says.



Aaron Stoller's "War of the Worlds" spot for MTV

"When I shot with Tom Cruise, for an MTV Movie Awards spot, "I thought, how am I going to approach it. At one point, he put his arm on my shoulder and said, 'You tell me what's funny, because I don't know what's funny.' He made you feel confident."

Stoller likes funny, especially the kind that appeals to the MTV Generation. "I think I've learned really well how to talk to kids," he says, "how to shoot cool stuff without it being forced. It's a delicate thing. I love casting. One of my trademarks is finding the obscure and shopping for freakers but getting people who aren't just bizarre for the sake of being bizarre."

The decision to move into commercial directing wasn't a difficult one for Stoller. "It's a new challenge. It's something fresh. I felt I needed to bite something new off. I like working within the parameters of advertising. It's not just go and make cool stuff. It's go and make cool stuff within these confines."

And he has the examples of past MTV directors who have made the transition successfully, including Lisa Rubisch at Bob Industries, Jim Hosking at Partizan, Brian Beletic at Smuggler and Tim Abshire at Backyard.

"When you start looking in the commercial world, you start looking at spots by people you know and your eyes open up and it's so cool that Tim Abshire did that. Suddenly it becomes accessible. If they made that jump and are doing that really cool stuff, then so can I."

Stoller is currently trying to get a feature comedy off the ground, but he is open to anything right now. "I'm embracing all platforms," he says, "making cool stuff, whether it's for broadcast or the theater or your cell phone. I want to ride this new wave, this new frontier. I want to position myself to provide good content for anything."

JON WATTS

Things have been breaking Jon Watts' way for a while now.

Some short films he made in high school near Colorado Springs, Colo., earned him a full scholarship at New York University. A classmate was director Brian Beletic's sister and Watts impressed Beletic enough to land a job as his assistant after graduation in 2004. Meanwhile, Watts was making a video for a Brooklyn neighbor Jason Forrest, "Stepping Off," which played at ResFest in Los Angeles. It got seen by the right people and led to the Fatboy Slim videos for "Wonderful Night" and "The Joker," and not long afterwards a contract with bicoastal Smuggler. His first job for Smuggler was a campaign for 24-Hour Fitness by Publicis



Jon Watts

& Hal Riney in San Francisco keyed to the Winter Olympics in Turin. And as SHOOT went to press, he was off to South Africa for an under-wraps project.

"I had my first commercial experience doing the 24-Hour Fitness spots and I had such a great time," Watts says. "The videos are great because it's your idea and all that, but it's solo, it's pretty much all on you. I really enjoy the back and forth that happens when you're working in commercials. They have the idea and I love coming up with variations on the idea, like getting a really good collaboration back and forth. Everybody feels like they have a part of it and I really like that."



Jon Watts' "24 Hour Fitness"

The 24-Hour Fitness spots feature athletes from the U.S. Winter Olympics team in different situations, with the tagline "Whatever it takes to make you better." The three spots are clearly part of a single campaign, but they each take a different approach. "Visually, they kind of let me do what I wanted," Watts says. "The creatives, it was like one of their first commercials too. We were all greenhorns, so it was great."

The Fatboy Slim videos illustrate the breadth of Watts' visual style. "Wonderful Night" starts off as a Fred Astaire-like night on the town in tux and spats, but takes a supernatural turn, while "The Joker" masquerades as a homemade amateur-contest video starring kittens.

"After I did 'Wonderful Night,' I was so young, people were kidding me, asking, 'What, did you win a competition?' That became the idea for the second video," Watts explains. "I come from a narrative background at NYU. The storytelling element is most exciting, whether it be funny or straight or whatever."

Watts intends to continue

doing videos as well as commercials and not long ago he finished a short film called *The Invisible Dog*. It's a story written by Watts about a boy who can't have a dog because his mother is allergic. His father brings home an empty pet carrier and tells him it contains an invisible dog.

"It takes a dark twist toward the end and becomes more like a thriller," Watts says. "That's what I like, mixing up genres and people's expectations. Right now, it feels like everything is game, especially in commercials. There are no real rules. That's what's so exciting."

The next step may well be a feature. "I want to make a movie set in Colorado. I'm working on something right now but I don't want to give it away," he says. "I love the videos because you can do crazy, weird stuff and experiment. I like the commercials because of the collaboration and movies, too. It's all part of the same thing. I just like telling stories."

THERESA WINGERT

Theresa Wingert, who signed with bicoastal MacGuffin Films in 2004, brings an artist's sensibility to commercial directing. A fine arts graduate from Western Washington University, she was a printmaker for much of her 20s. It took her some time to get into filmmaking, but she sees similarities between the two disciplines.

The artist's approach showed on "A Promise," a recent spot for Bob Evans, a Midwest restaurant chain, done through Chicago Creative Partnership.

"We were on a farm outside of Columbus, Ohio," she explains. "By studying and observing the farm and the details of this place and working with this really great actor, I was able to construct something that everyone really thought had a visceral appeal. It came from being able to absorb it, a simple farm landscape. I shot a lot of stuff outside the board and they were so patient and gracious about it. I think it over-delivered on many levels and everybody was impressed. It's great when I can be inspired and the agency and client can be inspired also."

The journey from artist to director began with loneliness. "I was in a studio by myself," she says. "From there I went into commercial photography. I had big crews and big shoots in all crazy parts of the world. I mostly did retail stuff and catalog work. I started bringing cinematographers onto my shoots and became self-taught as far as filmmaking. I think it's the thing that challenges my mind creatively the most."

Before signing with MacGuffin, Wingert ran her own production company, Mineral, from her hometown of Seattle. "It was outside the agency and



Theresa Wingert

spot world," she says. "I would pitch my own ideas. I was like a creative director and a director, doing things that were more like two-minute films that were branding pieces."

At MacGuffin Wingert has compiled a reel of big, cinematic spots for clients such as Pfizer, Ford and Chrysler, and last year she completed *Stray*, a short film that has made the festival circuit.

Wingert acknowledges that the film is the opening gambit for a movie. "I'm a commercialmaker," she says, "but I have aspirations to make a feature film as well. *Stray* is a nice example of where my work is headed. I'd love to do a subtle character piece that is essentially a love story. I've got some different pieces of material I'm working on."

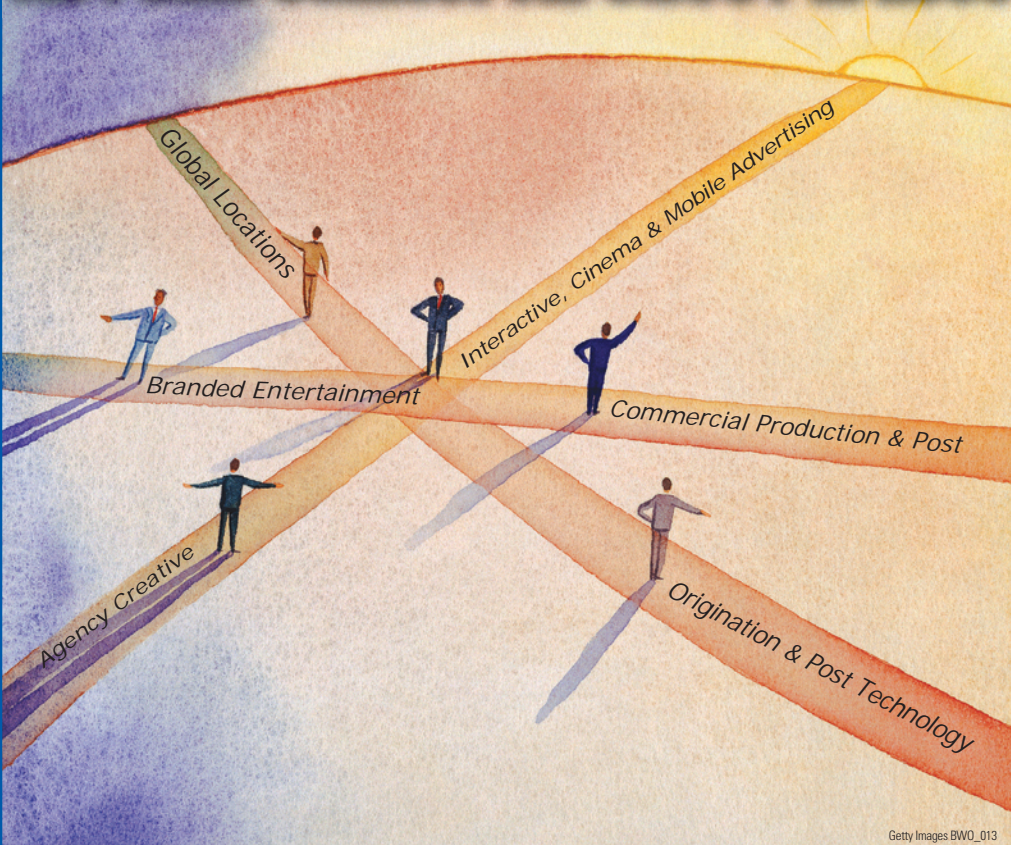
Her artistic style shows on spots like "Crossfire" for Chrysler and BBDO Detroit. "The creatives had a big vision for it and I think I brought a different approach. I love the spot because I think it has this beautiful texture and some beauty to it. I try to challenge myself, so I want to go after that kind of work, car work and stuff that is trickier to get," she says.



Theresa Wingert's "Crossfire"

"I'm most interested in commercials where there is a sensory experience involved. That can involve creative concepts where picture, sound and concept all completely interlock into one tight thing. That's what I'm always striving to do. I would like to do more dialogue-driven and character-driven spots because when you work with really great actors, it brings another level to the piece. My work will always be beautiful and poetic because that's what I'm really into. When you add a great actor to it, it makes it really supercharged."

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Digital Printer Lights

First cinematographers to use new process give it high marks.

By Carolyn Giardina

An essential technology used in the film world is the Hazeltine console, which is an analyzer used in film labs for determining what grade of color and density should be applied to the printing of a distinct length of negative. Precise levels of these grades are communicated through three standard numeric “printer light” settings—three numbers that range from 1-50 and represent the red, green and blue levels in an image. These settings are universally recognized by cinematographers and the application of these settings begins with film dailies.

“It helps me to keep consistency, and it’s easy to isolate and remedy any anomalies,” says American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) president Richard Crudo about the importance of printer lights settings. “But in electronic dailies, there is no way to quantify [the grade] and control the consistency. You have to go through a lot of hoops for them to mean anything.

“Print dailies are so simple,” he continues. “For electronic dailies, sitting in on a [color correction] session is the only way [to accurately control the grade], but you don’t have the time to be there for dailies.”

Crudo and other leading cinematographers have longed for an equivalent of printer lights in the electronic realm. Crudo even wrote a white paper to share his viewpoint with the industry, explaining why he sees a vital need for such a development.

This development has arrived, and cinematographers such as Crudo who have previewed the system are thrilled.

Technicolor Content Services (TCS) is beginning to introduce for select projects Digital Printer Lights, which offer the ability to emulate in the digital realm exactly what a release print would look like at given printer lights settings in a film lab. In its basic form, the system operates within a subset of Technicolor’s DI workflow, emulating the release print look on an HD monitor. Yet its possibilities for applications extend well beyond the dailies process.

The architect of the digital printer lights system is Burbank-based Technicolor Digital Intermediates (TDI) VP of Imaging Joshua Pines, who worked with TDI’s director of imaging production Chris Kutcka to refine the system and develop practical applications for filmmakers.

A prototype of Digital Printer Lights was first previewed last year at the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Convention in a closed door, after-hours meeting attended by a select group of cinematographers and industry representatives. Pines presented the demo, showing the graphical user interface (GUI) on his laptop. Since then, it has been used on two features, and is building positive word of mouth in the cinematography community.

“This is a colossal step in the right direction,” enthuses Crudo. “This is the big overriding issue we are facing. The ASC is clamoring for a universally interoperable system of color management.”

“This is bringing the control back to the directors of photography, even if they don’t supervise [the dailies or color correction session],” says Pines, who is vice chair of the ASC Technology Committee’s Digital Intermediate (DI) subcommittee and is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. “It gives them control to make creative decisions and [obtain]

feedback about exposure...It also reestablishes a vernacular already used by directors of photography.”

In fact, this capability has many applications from dailies to DI/color correction, to the creation of final deliverables. It also tackles the critical areas of communication and color management.

Pines explains that for dailies, the process begins by putting the film footage on a telecine specifically calibrated to produce log output. From here, the footage would traditionally go through a color correction system such as a da Vinci. Instead, using this new process, the images would go through printer lights correction, meaning that the only correction is achieved using the printer light controls and settings. Pines created a GUI to input these setting, and applying the setting involves the creation and application of a series of Look-Up Tables (LUTs). With proper color space conversion, the system is able to emulate exactly what a release print would look like at those settings, but on an HD monitor. This would be the suggested workflow for using digital printer lights to create electronic dailies, Pines explains.

Yet he is quick to point out that there are a variety of applications for this capability. For instance, he suggests that one could use the digital printer light settings as a starting point for a color correction session, either by building on what is already done or by throwing it away and going for a new look. “It’s like coming to a DI session and having already done the first preview,” he says.

Other system configurations could be used for applications such as creating digital previews, or for a simple DI—what Pines calls a “DI Lite” function. A color space conversion at the tail end of a session could also complete a workflow for generating multiformat deliverables.

FIRST USE

ASC VP Daryn Okada—whose recent credits include *Just Like Heaven* and *Mean Girls*—was the first cinematographer to use the digital printer lights system on an actual production. That film, Touchstone Pictures’ *Stick It*, is scheduled for an April 21 release via Buena Vista Pictures

Distribution. Directed by Jessica Bendinger, the film tells the story of a 17-year-old who deals with personal problems while living in the world of competitive gymnastics. It stars Missy Peregrym, Vanessa Lengies and Jeff Bridges.

“A frustration many cinematographers have about HD dailies is it doesn’t represent what a film print looks like,” restated Okada. “With digital dailies, you don’t know what is happening with your work.”

So in production of *Stick It*, Okada relates that the lion’s share of the dailies were created two ways: Using traditional film dailies and using the digital printer lights process to create electronic dailies. “I thought this was a perfect opportunity to test the process because I had print dailies to verify what we were doing,” Okada explains.

Both sets of dailies were created by providing the same printer light settings to the lab for the film dailies and to TCS Hollywood (Complete Post), where the digital dailies were created. “I was amazed in the first week,” Okada says. “What we were getting back on HD and film was identical. I also intentionally shot some under exposed and some over exposed, and it responded exactly the same.

Continued on next page



DPs Assess Digital Printer Lights Breakthrough

Continued from previous page

"It's an entirely new and different way of doing digital dailies," he continues. "There's a magic about being able to communicate finally about doing HD dailies. "Saying 'three points' is exact; you can't get that anywhere else."

Running the test, Okada explains, was ultimately about trust in the people behind the technology. "I was confident because I knew Josh and Chris, and I trusted them," he says. "The only person I know who looked at [this scenario] and went full circle was Josh...And I knew if I got from the beginning to the end on a feature, it would instill confidence in the system."

Okada was already pleased with the test. Then during post, an unexpected benefit surfaced when a decision was made to take the film through the DI process, which was completed at TDI with colorist Trent Johnson. "I thought it was another opportunity to test the concept, because now my film was going to be rescanned at film resolution," Okada explains. "I was pleasantly surprised that the printer lights settings derived during dailies worked with the rescanned film and was used as a reference to start to build the DI...I think my session went so much faster because of that.

"For me, the main issue was there is an electronic color correction look and a film look, and I

wanted my film to look filmic," he adds, explaining that he was able to achieve his desired result. "I will absolutely use it on my next film. I want to know where I'm at... and at that point, I can use the DI process to make it better, not repair something that is wrong," Okada concludes.

With regard to the approach to using this new tool, TDI's Kutcka explains, "You have to ask on each job, 'what do you want to do?' Then you have to take the process and apply it to the workflow...The greatest part about Daryn being involved is having the idea become reality. He felt he got what he wanted."

ON SET PREVIEWS

Already, new applications for the digital printer light capabilities are being realized by fellow ASC member cinematographers. "It's a fabulous development," relates David Stump, ASC, who chairs the ASC Technology Committee's camera subcommittee.

Stump recently tapped the digital printer lights functionality to assemble an on-set monitoring system for a shoot using digital cinematography cameras. This setup essentially enabled him to see, on set, what the dailies would look like if printed to film. It was used for the production of indie feature *What Love Is*, a dialogue-driven film from Los Angeles-based production company Big Sky, directed by Mars Callahan, lensed by Stump and starring Cuba Gooding Jr.

Stump, who has put many of the emerging digital cinematography cameras through their paces, explains, "There has never been a great way to look at the [camera] output on set and critically judge it. [Digital printer lights functionality] enabled me to get a good look at how [the images] can be color corrected in post, and to double check lighting."

Stump relates that his journey with the system began at TDI as he was readying for production. "Josh Pines was doing a



David Stump, ASC



Richard Crudo, ASC

Photo by Douglas Kirkland

quick demo for Daryn and Curtis Clark [ASC, chair of the ASC Technology Committee]. I asked Josh to bring it for a look-see on set. When he brought it by, I wouldn't let him take it back.

"I had a LUTher [Thomson's Grass Valley color space converter] box for each camera and had Josh Pines' prototype control panel as part of my engineering station on set. The program that Josh has developed looks like the control panel for a Hazeline machine...so I was able to print up, print down, and change the color and look to my monitoring stations. And by keeping a log of the settings, I was able to give the numbers to Technicolor. They were able to take same settings and see exactly what I was seeing on set...Because they trusted me, they brought four LUThers on set [*What Love Is* was a four-camera shoot] so I'd have one for each camera, and we kept them there for the run of the show."

This workflow, Stump concludes, not only allowed him to better view his work on set, but it also allowed him to communicate very quickly to postproduction.

Pines adds that for the on-set work, a conversion LUT was required to get the digital camera output to log form similar to that of scanned film. "Everything else holds," he says.

"It means we are finishing the middle of the Golden Gate Bridge," Stump says. "On one shore we have cameras, on the other is the DI process. The bridge is being completed in terms of management of look and color."

Like Okada, Stump is sold on the digital printer lights development, and says he will use it again on his next movie. "I see this becoming something sort of like the Walkie Talkie," he sums up. "Once you have it as a tool, you will wonder how we ever did without this."



Daryn Okada, ASC

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ASC Members Examine “Hybrid” Filmmaking

By Carolyn Giardina

The American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) presented a panel discussion titled “The Art and Evolving Science of Hybrid Filmmaking,” which explored the fusion of film and digital tools and techniques in this transitional period, during the recent HD Expo held at the Los Angeles Center Studios.

ASC members examined how digital tools began to find their way into the filmmaking vocabulary through music videos, commercials and television programs, and how today, rapid advancements in digital intermediate technology are bringing these capabilities to the postproduction workflows of films produced for cinema screens.

Daniel Pearl, ASC, was the first speaker, who described how he was introduced to the use of telecine and digital color correction tools through music videos. The discussion then opened up to panelists discussing their experiences, answering questions and sharing their insights into where all of this is heading.

“The word ‘hybrid’ explains that this is a transitional time where we are using both [traditional processes and new digital tools],” explained Lou Levinson, ASC, colorist at bicoastal Post Logic Studios. “We haven’t really eliminated the pitfalls of doing it yet. We’re trying to make the path as easy as possible as we get through this.”

Emphasizing how quickly this change is taking place, he added, “The real world is out in front of standards efforts. We’re at a point in time where what works is going to end up the standards.”

One of the most keenly discussed topics of the session involved an essential technology in the film world, the Hazeltine console, which is an analyzer used in film labs for determining what grade of color and density should be applied to the printing of a negative. Precise levels of these grades are communicated through standard numeric printer light settings, universally recognized by all cinematographers.

“Using the film side’s Hazeltine theory as a model, it is imperative that we develop and implement the equivalent of a digital printer light capability on the electronic side,” declared ASC president Richard Crudo.

“People need to demand this,” an impassioned Crudo told the audience. “This is one of the most important issues today. We need to be able to assign a value to your work, so for once electronic dailies will have a direct correlation to what your print will look like...It is the only way to facilitate precise, consistent, repeatable communication.”

ASC VP Daryn Okada agreed, and enthusiastically reported that there is an answer in sight. Okada and Crudo commended Technicolor Content Services’ new Digital Printer Lights capability and its architect, Joshua Pines, VP of Imaging at Burbank-based Technicolor Digital Intermediates. This newly developed process gives filmmakers the ability to emulate in a digital environment what a negative would look like at a given printer light setting.

“It’s like a Hazeltine on super steroids,” enthused Okada, who used the digital printer lights during dailies and the DI process on his upcoming feature, *Stick It*. “It’s a doable process,” he emphasized. (See separate story, p. XX, on Digital Printer Lights as well as Okada’s experience with the process during production of *Stick It*.)

During the session, cinematographers also described their experiences using the digital intermediate process. This discussion included Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC; Kees Van Oostrum, ASC; and commercial and feature director of photography Dion Beebe, ASC, ACS. Beebe, fresh from winning an Oscar, ASC and BAFTA Award during this past awards season for his rendering of *Memories of a Geisha*, emphasized that the availability of this new palette of tools does not mean one should shoot a film any differently. Legendary cinematographer Zsigmond said that he would “insist” on using the DI process on future projects.

DI work is generally accomplished in 2k data resolution today, although select projects are beginning to go the 4k route, which require four times the amount of data as a 2k DI.

Zsigmond suggested that the industry should aim higher. “I would like to have 6k, he said. “I think it will get to 8k.”

Is this achievable? “We could probably do 6k now,” answered the aforementioned Levinson, who chairs the ASC Technology

Committee’s DI subcommittee. “It depends on your requirements and budget.”

A far cry for 6k is the commercial world. The advertising community still finishes much of its work in standard definition, relates renowned feature and commercial director of photography Allen Daviau, ASC. “But they have a chance to put their work on the air in both high definition and standard definition,” he says. “Then those who have high definition sets

can see the commercials in HD.

“Agencies need to make up their mind and budget for HD in the beginning,” Daviau asserted. “They still think it costs much more, but it doesn’t.”

Lastly, Daviau raised the archiving issue, questioning if not film, what media will certainly be around in the coming years. Levinson related that the ASC Technology Committee is exploring that question. Presently, there is no answer in sight.

George Spiro Dible, ASC, and industry veteran Bob Fisher moderated the discussion.



HD Expo Panelists (L-R) Cinematographers Allen Daviau, ASC., colorist Lou Levinson of Post Logic, cinematographers Richard Crudo, ASC., and George Spiro Dible, ASC. (co-moderator) participated on The Art and Evolving Science of Hybrid Filmmaking seminar hosted by the ASC during HD Expo. Additional participants not pictured: Cinematographers Dion Beebe, ASC, ACS; Daryn Okada, ASC; Kees Van Oostrum, ASC; Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC; and moderator Bob Fisher. (Photo courtesy Vince Gonzales)



ASC Panelists included (L-R): Cinematographers Vilmos Zsigmond, ASC., Allen Daviau, ASC., Dion Beebe, ASC, ACS and moderator Bob Fisher. (Photo Courtesy Vince Gonzales)

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Picking Up Spot Momentum

Chile Attracts Increasing Share Of U.S. Work; Uruguay Draws From Canada

By Robert Goldrich

“Oh Canada” could become the anthem of Uruguay based on the flow of Canadian spot filming into the South American country. Meanwhile Chile is also attracting its share of commercial work from Canada, but the lion’s share of volume is being generated by the U.S. advertising industry. Yet no matter the source of the business, the bottom line is that both Chile and Uruguay are on the lensing upswing.

Harry Tracosas, founder/president of Global Production Network (GPN), a Los Angeles-headquartered company that represents production service houses throughout the world, has a firm handle on the state of business in Chile and Uruguay. In the latter market, GPN maintains a relationship with El Camino Films, a production shop in Montevideo. In Chile, GPN’s liaison is Santiago-based Benito Cine. In fact, GPN brought Independent Media, Santa Monica, together with Benito Cine to facilitate a shoot in Chile for PBS’ “Bucket Brigade” last year. The spot, out of Fallon, Minneapolis, was directed by Elias Merhige of Independent Media who is profiled in this week’s Directors Series.

“Chile is beginning to boom

internationally because of its diversity of locations including snow, sea, cities and deserts,” assesses Tracosas. “Chile is in an ideal situation for clients from the northern hemisphere seeking summer in the winter and winter in the summer. Additionally, Santiago and surrounding areas have many North American-looking residential areas and cityscapes. And within an hour and a half of Santiago, a whole other world of locations opens up.

“Locally, the advertising business is booming, internationally it’s an emerging market that is growing steadily and rapidly,” continues Tracosas. “U.S. trade relations with Chile are very good which helps a great deal. There are no bonds necessary for cars or equipment going into the country, and clearances are usually quick and without issue.”

Tracosas notes that Chile is becoming more interesting to clients, given budget considerations, talent buyouts and diversity of locations. He reports that most jobs that come to Benito Cine for production services emanate from the U.S. and Canada. Inquiries from Europe and Australia are also starting to become more prevalent.

“Ninety percent of the jobs we produce [in Chile] come from the U.S.,” affirms Georgos Nicolaidis, executive producer of Benito Cine in Argentina and

Chile. “Other Chilean production service companies normally work for the European market, especially Germany.”

Among the recent work hosted by Benito Cine in Chile is Visa’s “Nervous” directed by Pam Thomas of bicoastal/international Moxie Pictures for BBDO New York, and a Chevy assignment out of production company GearHead, Vancouver, B.C.

Nicolaidis adds that home-grown work will grow, but not necessarily creatively. He observes that 2006 “is supposed to be a very good year because the Chilean economy has been growing over the last few years, especially in 2005. But Chilean clients are more interested in efficiency than creativity or building strong brands. There are very good Chilean creatives but clients [are causing them to struggle]. So the result will be lots of commercials during 2006, more than in 2005, but not...[always] very creative.” He adds that emerging media in advertising will also probably grow.

Twist Film, Santiago, is a production company/production services firm with recent activity for Chilean agencies as well as other ad markets. In its home country, Twist owner, director Claudio Droguett, recently helmed a Falabella Rusia Chic spot for Chile ad shop Dittborn & Unzueta. Meanwhile, Twist facilitated

BORDER WATCH :: CHILE & URUGUAY

a Canadian shoot directed by Mark Bennett for Leo Burnett, Toronto.

Key Twist staffers include Droguett, executive producers Polo Luisetti and Axel Brinck, and head of production Yvonne Garcelon.

URUGUAY

Canadian productions have made their way to Uruguay and represent a prime source of business for production service shops like the aforementioned El Camino. According to GPN’s Tracosas, American companies are actively bidding with El Camino, which is headed by executive producer Nicholas Aznarez.

“With only 14 months in the market and after two high seasons (December-May), we have doubled our business from 18 to 36 shooting days per season,” says Aznarez.

Tracosas relates, “Uruguay is definitely emerging as a contender in the South American market and looks to have a bright

future.”

He notes that the new *Miami Vice* feature, starring Colin Farrell and Jamie Foxx, was shot in Uruguay since there are locations there very similar to those in Florida. Uruguay also has locales that are reminiscent of sites in Australia.

“Montevideo is an urban community that replicates Europe very well,” adds Tracosas. “And its surrounding areas have a deep South American feel. Punta del Este is a very high-end seaside community with many looks.” He opined that Uruguay is an “up and comer” in the South American market for global production.

Among El Camino’s latest production service gigs was a Canadian spot for Toyota; production house on the job was Radke Films, Toronto. El Camino also handled recent shoots for Blink, Toronto, and Cinelande, Montreal. The former was for Viagra, while the Cinelande assignment was for Labatt Blue beer.

Internationally Speaking
Location Search
By Massimo Martinotti



Flight 943 of American Airlines left Miami four hours ago and it is now cruising over South America. It is the middle of night, the lights in the cabin are off and most of the passengers are trying to sleep. Looking through the window I see the purple flashes of dozens of lightning bolts that spark from within a gigantic cloud formation: it’s a storm that, 42,000 feet below, is pouring torrential rains over the jungle in a region where the fuzzy borders of Brazil, Peru and Colombia meet. Soon we will start seeing the massive silhouettes of the Andes and, in a little more than 4 hours, we will be landing in Buenos Aires, the first stop on a trip that will ultimately lead me to Uruguay, where we will be shooting.

The process started a few weeks ago when I first saw the boards and the specs of the project. It was clear from the first moment that the location was the main challenge. We needed a beautiful, picturesque, historic, little Spanish town with perfectly preserved architecture and sunny, warm weather.

Of course many towns, both in the Iberian Peninsula and in Latin America, meet these requirements: A few places came immediately to my mind such as Chinchón in Spain, Evora in Portugal, Antigua in Guatemala, Cartagena in Colombia and San Miguel de Allende or Oaxaca in Mexico, but I decided to extend the research a little further. I have the theory that the best sources of information are DPs and production designers because they shoot all over the world and see the locations from a creative angle. A production designer who worked, for instance, in La Mamounia Hotel in Marrakech, knows very well what that place can offer for a completely different project and a DP who shot in Lisbon recognizes the aesthetical values of Barrio Alto when the rain (or a water truck) wets its cobblestone streets down.

I called a few of my usual sources in Madrid, Barcelona, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires and I told them the story. “You should think of Sigüenza”, a Spaniard told me. “Colonia del Sacramento in Uruguay is the right



Photos of: Uruguay courtesy of El Camino Films, Montevideo. Chile courtesy of Benito Cine, Santiago.

Location Search

place, believe me!" affirmed an Argentine. I decided to concentrate our efforts on five towns: I called my offices in Mexico, Argentina and Costa Rica and our associate office in Spain and I asked them to send us photos of the towns situated in their regions.

The five locations, despite their architectural peculiarities, fit the original requirements of the project: a picturesque, historical little town with a Hispanic flavor.

San Miguel de Allende was founded by a monk in 1542 and has been designated a historical landmark since 1930. The town has preserved its colonial look by banning new construction and therefore most of its buildings have kept their original style.

Antigua Guatemala, the first colonial capital of Central America, was established one year after San Miguel, in 1543. UNESCO declared Antigua "Heritage of Humanity" because of its colonial houses, churches, convents, squares and fountains structured according to the traditional Spanish grid design.

Sigüenza, situated in Spanish "meseta," conserves its medieval structure with narrow and winding streets, stone buildings and historic monuments. The Plaza Mayor is a fantastic example of Renaissance architecture while the Cathedral has interesting gothic rosette windows dating from the 12th to the 15th centuries.

Evora, the capital of the Portuguese region of Alentejo, has over 2,000 years of history. It combines Roman ruins, medieval walls, gothic building and churches from the 16th century. Most of the houses of Evora have balconies covered with carnations and many of its streets and squareslike Praça do Giraldo are flanked by an ancient arcade.

In Colonia del Sacramento, Uruguay, there are pink and purple bougainvilleas popping up from the side of buildings almost everywhere. It is a perfectly well preserved colonial town just across the Rio de la Plata from Buenos Aires. Founded as Nova Colonia do Sacramento in 1680 by the Portuguese, it still preserves the colorful houses and cobblestone windy streets, reminiscent of certain sections of the old Lisbon.

While our offices in Latin America and Europe were work-

ing on gathering pictures of the different options, we activated the estimating process. In the last few years we have developed an online-based system that lets us quickly estimate the production costs in up to 28 different countries: By answering 16 basic questions, we can compare figures that, without being final, have proved to be pretty accurate. We detected that Antigua was the least expensive place to shoot, followed by Colonia (5% more), Evora (20%) and San Miguel or Sigüenza (approximately 30% more expensive).

We got the locations pictures within 24 hours and we shared them with the director who decided that we should narrow down the list to three towns: Evora, Antigua and Colonia.

We analyzed the average weather conditions of all three places in the middle of February when we were supposed to shoot. We found out that in that period Colonia has approximately 13 hours and 30 minutes of sunlight a day, Antigua 11 hours and Evora a little more than 10 hours of sunlight. Furthermore Colonia, on average, receives 4.1" of precipitations with temperatures of 73°F, Antigua only 0.2" of rain with 63°F and Evora approximately 3" with an average temperature of 50°F.

Colonia and Antigua offered warmer and longer days, an important factor in this project. Even if we deeply regretted losing the opportunity of eating a delicious *Borrego Assado* (Rosted lamb) at Fialho, the most traditional restaurant in Evora, the Portuguese town was dropped from the list.

If we shot in Antigua, we could cast in Mexico City, Bogota or Miami, cities less than three hours away by airplane. In the case of Colonia, the talent would be selected in Buenos Aires and transported to the location using the hydrofoil ferry that takes one hour to cross the estuary of the river from Argentina to Uruguay.

We showed several casting tapes from previous jobs to the director in order to give him the feeling of what type of talent he could find in all those cities. He determined that Miami and Buenos Aires would give him the models he needed.

Colonia and Antigua were at this point on the same level in many aspects: the textures, the colors, the

density and the atmosphere of both places looked perfect for the spot. The costs were pretty similar and the appropriate talent could have been found at a short distance.

We could have indeed shot in both places.

The Uruguayan town nevertheless had a few advantages in some areas: slightly warmer weather, one extra hour of sunlight a day and a faster connection to a major production center such as Buenos Aires which would make the production more efficient. Finally Colonia was the winner. We proposed it to the client and the

agency. They all fell in love with the atmosphere of that little South American town, and a few days later we got the job awarded.

The first sunlight of a new austral day is starting to flood the airplane, a signal that the flight is going to land in Buenos Aires shortly. I know that Anibal, the executive producer of our office in Argentina, is going to pick me up at the Ezeiza Airport. We are going to have breakfast at La Biela, in the classic neighborhood called Recoleta. I am looking forward to my cappuccino that, honoring the huge Italian influence in Argentina,

is as good in Buenos Aires as it is in Casale Monferrato, the town close to Turin where I grew up.

Massimo Martinotti is the president of Mia Films, a production company based in Miami with offices in Mexico, Argentina and Costa Rica, and associate offices in Europe. He is also a member of the board of directors and executive committee of the Association of Independent Commercial Producers as well as president of the AICP's Florida chapter.

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street talk

Saville Productions, Beverly Hills, has taken on exclusive U.S. general market representation for director **Fabian Bielinsky**, who's active in both features (*Nine Queens*, *El Aura*) and commercials (Telecom Argentina's "Yawn," a Gold Lion winner at the 2001 Cannes International Advertising Festival)...**Nando Costa** has come aboard the design director roster of bicoastal **Transistor Studios**. He formerly was a creative director at Boston ad agency **Modernista**, where he worked on such accounts as **Budweiser**, **Hummer** and **Napster**....**Director Branson Veal** has signed with **MRB Productions**, Beverly Hills. Veal was most recently on the roster of **Mirror Films**, Hollywood. His earlier production house affiliations include **Tombo**, Hollywood, New York-based **cYclops productions**, and now defunct **Harmony Pictures**. He came over from the agency side of the business, having served as VP/executive producer/art director at **McCann Erickson, Seattle**....**Director Michael Bindlechner**, who heads Vienna, Austria-based **Frames filmproduktion**, has wrapped his first project for a U.S. agency, **Stouffers' "Corner Bistro"** for **J. Walter Thompson, Chicago**. He is repped stateside by **Dale Miller** of indie firm **Miller Reps, Chicago**....**Maysles Shorts**, New York, has brought **Lora Nelson** on board as executive producer. She earlier served in the same capacity at **The Film Company**, an EUE Screen Gems satellite. Prior to that, she was director of brand development at **DCODE**, New York, a creative director at **Worldwide Marketing** (a division of **DDB New York**), and a producer at **DDB New York**....**Sue Romweber** has been named senior producer at the New York office of bicoastal editing house **Lost Planet**. She previously served as a producer at **FCB New York**.....

rep report

Free Market Films, a New York-based shop headed by executive producers **Beth Kinder** and **Loretta Tassotti**, has signed independent rep firm **FinnSaxon Represents—Rachel Finn** in Santa Monica and **Mary Saxon** in San Francisco—to handle the West Coast and Texas. **Free Market's** directorial roster includes **Edouard Nammour**, **Clay Staub**, **Martin Hodara**, **Charlie Carlson** and **Liz Hinlein**.... **Marci Miles** and **Kristina "KK" Kovacevic** of independent rep firm **Reelize** are handling the Midwest for **A Band Apart Commercials**, Los Angeles....**Production designer/art director Jon Billington** is now available for commercials and music videos via **The Montana Artists Agency**, Los Angeles....**DP Joe Meade** has wrapped principal photography on the feature **How To Rob A Bank** for director **Andrews Jenkins** (whose spotmaking home is bicoastal **Go Film**) and is currently available through **Innovative Artists**, Santa Monica, for commercials, music videos and features....

bulletinboard

- April 7-9/Santa Monica: Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations Expo at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium. www.afci.org....
- April 22-27/Las Vegas: National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Convention at the Las Vegas Convention Center. www.nab.org....
- 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....

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